Members of the monitoring commission for the Balearic Islands “PDR”—the *Progama de Desenvolupment Rural*
, or “Rural Development Programme”—for 2014-2020 gathered today in the plenary hall of the Formentera Council. The event was attended by Bartomeu Escandell, the Council president's office chief and rural affairs councillor; Mateu Ginard, the agriculture and livestock minister of the Govern balear; spokespeople from the European Commission; the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food and Govern de les Illes Balears; and industry representatives.

On the day's agenda was a proposed increase of the PDR budget with €155 million from the Sustainable Tourism Levy (*Impost de Turisme Sostenible*), though Ginard indicated that the figure could reach €167 million by 2020. Attendees took a look back at some of the programme's successes as of December 2018, including assistance payouts of more than €47 million to rural families that practice traditional agriculture. That figure is expected to hit €72 million by year end.

Councillor Escandell said he welcomed the opportunity to host the island's first PDR gathering, and indicated that key projects for the island's primary sector would benefit from the plan. “In recent years Formentera has been leading with primary sector revitalisation efforts”, he intoned, “and the role of PDR funding in those has been essential”.

Money for young agricultural workers, for the Cooperativa del Camp, to rebuild drystone walls, to activate the irrigation pond, plus door-to-door organic composting pick-up, has come thanks to the support of the EU's Leader fund.

The decision to decentralise the annual encounters, historically celebrated on Mallorca, was made at the start of the legislative session in an effort to show the ministry and the European Commission some of the effects of “insularity” (a process whose real impact is often doubled or even tripled) on the Balearic primary sector. In the last two years, PDR meetings have been held on Mallorca, Menorca and Eivissa.

Compensation for the knock-on effects of insularity happen to be at the heart of the islands' biggest appeal in talks over the 2021-2027 Common Agrarian Policy (CAP). Acting minister of agriculture Luis Planas said on a May 7 stop in Palma—his last official visit to the islands—that he shared the viewpoint of the Balearic administrations on this point.

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Àrea de Comunicació
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