The Consell de Formentera government commission has green-lighted three proposed lines of educational assistance totalling nearly €94,000. In the words of education and culture councillor Susana Labrador, beyond traditional aid for students and families which will be issued for the 2020-2021 school year, in view of the Covid crisis, several special lines of assistance seek to offer a leg-up to crisis-hit families.

The government commission approved ten €1,250 grants for Formentera students who attended higher-education programmes in 2018-2019.

The same commission also signed off on money so local primary and secondary schools can administer the textbook reuse programme and approved direct assistance to programme participants and children from large families or single-parent homes. Seventeen individual grants for pupils enrolled during the 2019-2020 school year, as well as assistance for the island's four public schools, pushed total aid nearly €3,000 beyond the initial €45,000.

The commission likewise ratified €33,900 for 80 grants to offset double and triple insularity (inequity due to living on an island once- and sometimes twice-removed from services) and to help students pay for off-island university, vocational training, formal education and education in the arts.

Special assistance in light of Covid crisis

Councillor Labrador said islanders would soon be able to apply for educational assistance for the 2020-2021 school year, pointing out that the traditional total of €95,500 would be more than doubled to palliate the toll of the Covid crisis. The funding will be used for the following:

- Assistance to mitigate double and triple insularity during 2020-2021 school year
- Grants for higher education in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021
- Financial assistance to purchase textbooks (as part of reuse programme) and laptops (part of digitalisation programme for year one pupils in secondary education)
- Special aid for purchase of computer equipment

According to Labrador, the lines of financial aid will be tailored for the particular situations and difficulties faced by crisis-hit families. A panel made up of educational associations has been informed of the assistance and has given them the green light. When the panel convened for its first meeting 10 November, the gathering served to bring together their proposals.

13 January 2021
Communications Department
Consell de Formentera