

The Formentera Department of Education reports that the administration has submitted 18 separate declarations concerning the Balearic government's draft bill on education. According to education chief Susana Labrador, the briefs, sent during a period of time set aside specifically for public comments, are aimed at not just making sure the real needs of each island are represented, but also "enriching the wording of the legislation and highlighting the significance of decisions affecting education".

"The hand we were dealt on Formentera means our residents endure a condition of triple isolation", said Consellera Labrador. As it was presented, the text of the draft bill makes no mention of Formentera's "insularity" — a condition which, as far as education, infrastructure, amenities, supplies, resources and services are concerned, "has grave repercussions", according to the comments submitted by Formentera. "Such assets, if scattered across Eivissa and Mallorca, are, on Formentera, nowhere to be found. These deficits, blind spots and needs are not going anywhere." Formentera's representatives say an appropriate education bill would do something to compensate the de facto isolation, like initiating a policy of grants, over and above the general system of grant moneys already in place at the regional and national levels, to benefit locally-domiciled students who study off the island.

Local decision-makers also insisted that Catalan, the native language in the Balearic Islands, be the go-to language in education — exactly as is laid out in regional legislation that was adopted on 29 April 1986.

Formentera's representatives likewise agitated for the possibility of collaborative agreements between island governments and town councils — not just in the first stage of early-childhood education or lifelong learning for adults, but in vocational programmes as well, and special schooling arrangements that the current draft legislation ignores.

Free schooling for children under 3

Formentera's policymakers voiced their hope that, ultimately, the legislation would make reference to the goal of removing costs for educating children under three years old. They additionally argued the bill must specifically state how much funding such a move would require and how island and town councils ought to assume the cost.

The comments also include improvements in areas such as occupational training, human

resources, funding, application of the bill and student grants.

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Department of Communications

Consell de Formentera