



The councillor of Social Welfare, Youth Services and Equality of the Formentera Island Council, Dolores Fernández, presented details today in press conference on the twelfth year of Formentera's Festa Intercultural (Intercultural Festival), set to take place next Sunday, 6 April at the old Sant Francesc primary schools.

This year's festival was marked by something altogether new: the recently-formed Associació de la Festa Intercultural. The association, with Manel Lodeiro as acting president, was created with the goal of assisting in the day-long event's organisation as well as providing it with a formal legal entity.

This year's celebration will include the participation of twelve different countries (Argentina, Morocco, Brazil, Ecuador, Indonesia, Romania, Colombia, Italy, Paraguay, Peru, Cuba and Uruguay) not to mention – as in years past – some of our country's autonomous communities (Andalusia, Extremadura, the Balearic Islands and Galicia). Organisers have alluded to a strong focus on children's activities throughout the day, while each of the stands will offer a unique gastronomic sampling and music and folk performances will demonstrate the rich palette of cultural particularities represented.

The day will begin at about 11:30 in the morning with workshops and children's activities including Slack Line (a sort of loose hanging tightrope upon which participants must walk without falling), a gladiator battle and a clothespin decoration workshop.

This year's entrance fee has been lowered from four to three euros, and for those under twelve it continues to be free. Like every year, kits with cutlery and napkins will be handed out at the gate, although the Formentera Office of Social Welfare would like to encourage attendees to bring plates, forks, knives and spoons from home, in order to preserve resources. The degustation part of the day's activities is set to take place between 2 and 3:30 pm.

As always, the event owes its organisation to the different associations and island residents who volunteer to make the Festa Intercultural a reality. Their high level of participation

contributes both to the day's continued success and to the realisation of the Office of Social Welfare's goal of organising a day that represents our island's multicultural society.

The Intercultural Festival is not just a day for cultures to mix nor a display of culinary and artistic traditions. It is an occasion to take part in and enjoy a process of teamwork, communication and dialogue. It is an opportunity to generate trust, cooperation and mutual personal enrichment, facilitating integration between new cultures and the society that now acts as their host. In short, the festival represents the practical application of social participation and integration. This year, moreover, decorations for the festival were provided by users of the Formentera Day Centre and the boys and girls of the island's Youth Centre.

The festival is possible thanks to the hard work and support of the island's immigrant groups, community associations and private citizens who volunteer their time and efforts year after year to spend a day among fellow Formentera residents, be they family or just friends. The success of this event is a result of their efforts, collaboration and generosity.