



The president of the Formentera Island Council, Jaume Ferrer, met this morning with Rafael Garcia Vila, island director of the national government, to discuss issues of illegal and unfair labour practises here on the island of Formentera. The goal of the visit was to ensure the full application of current legislation regarding workers legality, residency permits, legal contracts and work safety.

Present at the meeting were councilor of Tourism, Commerce and Transport, Alejandra Ferrer; representatives of the Guàrdia Civil, local police forces and local island business entities like the Cambra de Comerç (Chamber of Commerce), the Petita i Mitjana Empresa (Association of Small and Medium-sized Businesses), Agrupació Hotelera and the CAEB. Also in attendance was the Govern Balear's delegate to Formentera.

Principally in discussion at the meeting were the problems of unlawful exercise of a profession and unfair competition in construction and food service, but also on the table were instances of ambulatory vending on Formentera beaches, as had been reported on several occasions by the Association of Small and Medium-sized Businesses as well as Formentera's business owners themselves. Small businesses make up what is essentially the totality of the island's commercial community, and as such, it is extremely important that the legality of business competition be ensured. This is an issue of top priority for the Formentera Council.

Both the Council and the Direcció Insular de l'Estat voiced their commitment to studying possible solutions and the different island business associations will draft reports outlining the problems currently in existence in order to develop a working map of the situation. The Office of Tourism and Commerce of Formentera manifested its absolute willingness to supply the Direcció Insular with any and all documentation at its disposal in order to facilitate the task of work inspectors and implement measures necessary to eradicating illegal work practises.

Regarding the subject of ambulatory vending, the president of the Formentera Council explained that two police officers are dispatched to keep track of and intercept infractors of this sort of illegal activity. Statistics on ambulatory vending compiled at the end of every summer reflect that the number of reports of such infractions have increased, and this thanks to more exhaustive controls by local police. Thus, in 2009, police issued 42 charges of ambulatory vending, a number that rose to 85 in 2010, 87 in 2011, and 116 in 2012.

The Formentera Island Council has at all times acted with the maximum speed in the solution of this problem, which represents serious possibilities of damages to our local island's economy. Both the Council, the Administració de l'Estat and local business associations have committed to convening an additional meeting at the end of the summer tourist season in order to analyse possible solutions.

Background information To recount the matter chronologically, toward the end of 2012, representatives of the Formentera Island Council met with island construction businesses in order to collect first-hand information regarding an issue that has affected Formentera over the course of the previous year. 24 January 2013, the Association of Small and Medium-sized Businesses d'Eivissa i Formentera delivered a letter to the Council and requested that measures be taken to impede what is known as 'intrusisme laboral', or unauthorised and illegal practise of a profession, thus upholding current laws in place.

The president of the local Council, Jaume Ferrer, authored a letter to the island director of the Administració General de l'Estat per Eivissa i Formentera, Rafael García Vila, on 27 February, outlining the details of this issue which is currently affecting local workers and business owners. The problem occurs when individuals begin practise of a profession without possessing the necessary accreditations, thus entering into direct competition with local, properly-accredited professionals. Ferrer, for this reason, requested the involvement of the Central Administration in resolving the issue and putting an end to the illegal activity.

The Formentera Council has, in the solution of this matter, put every available resource within the reach of local citizens, and requested the implication of the local authorities like Inspecció de Treball, Guàrdia Civil, and the Department of Economy and Competition of the Govern Balear.