

Two officials of the Govern balear —labour minister Iago Negueruela and department chair Isabel Castro—, meeting in the plenary hall of the Formentera Council to share the results of a 2016 plan to tackle precarious employment, announced improved conditions this summer for 412 Formentera locals.

Also present at the gathering was Formentera's councillor of tourism, land and trade, Alejandra Ferrer, who highlighted 2016 as the second straight year of cooperation between Formentera and Palma on the plan. Calling the joint efforts “necessary to eliminating the precariousness that grips the Balearics”, Ferrer called on the Govern to remain firm in its engagement.

According to the councillor, this July and August, 361 local job contracts became permanent as a direct result of the efforts of two inspectors dispatched to the island. The plan of action is backed by the Palma ministry of labour, trade and industry and assisted by the provincial department of the labour inspectorate. Thanks to the summer push, more than four hundred Formentera residents saw their working conditions improve through changes to employment contracts, extended work hours or new job offers.

This year's encouraging results reflected improvements in the campaign, such as more time to coordinate and plan inspections, said Negueruela, who thanked the Formentera Council for supporting efforts by providing the inspectors lodging as well as other assistance.

In particular, the 2016 figures show a 178% year-on-year spike in individuals who benefitted from better employment conditions. Minister Negueruela pointed to 560 workers who had experienced improvements in the last two years thanks to the campaign.

Temporary contracts

As for revisions of temporary contracts, Formentera boasted more than any other island. Locally, the number of short-term contracts transformed into permanent ones jumped from 121 to 361, a 66.5% increase on last year's figures. A total of 9,256 job contracts were reviewed throughout the Balearics, of which, 3,381 were changed to “indefinite” arrangements, which

means that more than one in three (36%) was previously in breach of the law. Last year contract transformations took place just 25% of the time.

Extended working hours

As for part-time versus full-time employment, Formentera is also the island that logged the most cases of illegal work schedule arrangements, which, according to the inspectors, were up 76%. In due form, working hours were legally extended in 37 cases, up from 21 similar cases in 2015.

It was also reported that 93 employees who should have been registered with social security were never registered. Corrections in those cases were made accordingly. On Formentera there were a total of 13 “transformed social security registrations”.

Punitive measures

On the heels of the inspection crew's efforts in July and August, penalties were pursued in 12 cases for a combined sum of €39,400. In the entire Illes Balears region, 89 such sanctions were brought for a total of €342,230.