



Formentera's councilor of the Environment and Information Technologies, Sílvia Tur, met this morning in Palma with Joaquín García, the Minister of Economy and Competitiveness of the Govern Balear, to discuss the Govern's action on telecommunications in Formentera.

The encounter – for which the head of the Council's Office of Information Technologies, Jaume Zaragoza, was also present – was guided by the topic of interruptions to Formentera's telephone and broadband service, suffered in two separate instances. Councilor Tur expressed her concern about the repercussions this summer's cuts had had on the economy, the provision of services on the island and on Formentera's image as a tourist destination.

For his part, the minister of the Economy and Competitiveness transmitted his absolute predisposition to collaborating with the Formentera Council in order to find a definitive solution to the problem. Minister García also informed Formentera's councilor that a number of meetings had been held – with Telefónica, the Secretary of State and Coastal Demarcation – on the subject of the impact of the service cuts to Formentera's Internet.

Thus it was also announced that the Communications Directive serving the Balearic Islands, approved as part of Decree 22/2006 [10 March], is under revision. This was justified by a need to update the Directive's content and avoid interruptions to service, which was also an issue reiterated by the Formentera Council. A commitment was made to intercede before Telefónica to ensure that the upcoming implementation of the 4G network in Formentera would advance at the same rhythm as on the rest of the Balearics and that Formentera would not be last in line in the application of new technologies.

The meeting was viewed as highly positive by Councilor Tur and both representatives demonstrated the firm intention to work together to ensure accessibility in Formentera.

Two incidences lie at the centre of debate surrounding Formentera's reduced services; the first on 16 June 2013, and the second on 30 July. During this time a significant number of public services, private businesses, tourists and locals were without Internet service.

Formentera's representatives at the meeting requested the Govern do its best to see to it that Telefónica maintain security measures on the most vulnerable segment of the underwater telecommunications cable that connects Formentera to Eivissa. They also requested the collaboration and coordination of offices of the public administration like the Maritime Authority and the Department of the Environment of the Govern Balear to speed up the declaration of marine protection zones and provide the means to monitor unlawful boat-anchoring.

Last week, Councilor Tur met with Telefónica representatives to learn what actions the company was taking to solve the current problem. Concretely, company representatives stated that work was being finished on the permanent installations that will provide a radio-based telecommunications connection. According to Telefónica, the company's future service would continue to rely on the underwater cable that connects Cala Jondal with Formentera. The representatives explained that the new system would be implemented in the event of any future interruptions to the service assured by the underwater cable, thus guaranteeing regular telephone and Internet service.