

The Formentera Department of Equality has organised sensitivity trainings and a guided discussion in which participants ask questions like how they perceive equality, what preconditions and challenges they think exist to attaining it and how invested they are in the process. The sessions are being led by anthropologist and social worker Ritxi Bacete and are part of Formentera's Internal Equality Plan.

Twelve municipal employees —six men and six women— gathered today for day-two of training: participants sat for a full-house session where participants were encouraged to pool ideas that had emerged in earlier discussion groups where participants were divided by gender. The sessions gave birth to a parallel discussion group aimed at gathering information on gender equality, in general, and the situation on Formentera, in particular.

Following the same formula, Formentera's elected officials formed two groups as well and will take part in the sessions this evening.

The goal, said President Alejandra Ferrer, is to find out "how people view gender equality and what they think is standing in our way to achieving it". Ferrer confided that, though the first reflection centred mainly on equality within local government, "we're also interested in checking in and getting islanders' thoughts on equality more broadly". She added, "True equality will mean incorporating men in this fight too: their involvement is essential to doing away with all forms of violence against women and building a fairer society for all of us".

Equality chief Vanessa Parellada spoke of the importance of "opening up cracks" in the way people look at equality, themselves and our purported companions in the struggle for gender equality. "Men and women aren't rivals in this", she insisted, "and we can start by developing a critical vision of what we are and what surrounds us and aspiring to an 'oil slick' effect with the people we're close to."

Following the sessions, Ritxi Bacete will work with the FDE to craft proposals including possible measures to apply internally and define policies on equality and future strategies for getting

closer to equality on Formentera.

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