

IMPROVED COORDINATION AND SCREENING

Unaccompanied young immigrants

Francisco Candil, the Canary Island Government Deputy Minister for Social Affairs, Carmen Morales, the Canary Island Commissioner for the Protection of Minors, as well as representatives of the Gran Canaria and Tenerife Island Councils, the Juvenile and Foreigners' Prosecutor's Office, and the Policía Canaria recently discussed measures to improve the protocols for the care of young immigrants in an inter-institutional working meeting.

Minors, as soon as they enter Spanish territory, are subject to the law regarding the protection of minors and thus automatically have the right to stay and are cared for in special accommodation among their peers. At present, around 300 young immigrants who arrived to the archipelago without their families are being cared for in the Canary Islands. Youngsters in this age group have the best chance of not being deported, so immigrants are happy to state that they are under 18 years of age, apparently, around 30 per cent of the claims are untrue. Therefore, all cases are assessed to try to determine how old the refugees actually are. In case of doubt, a medical examination will provide a final assessment. Until clarification is received, questionable persons whose age is estimated to be higher are accommodated separately as it's deemed preferable that adolescents and adults do not live together.

The young immigrants receive language and school lessons or are prepared for a working life. At the age of 18 years they have to leave the receiving centres. In most cases, they then gradually move into a kind of assisted living until the young adults are able to stand on their own two feet. ■

MOTHER SENTENCED TO FOUR MONTHS IN PRISON

Attack on teachers for poor grades

The court at Puerto del Rosario in Fuerteventura has sentenced the mother of a student to four months imprisonment and a fine of €4 a day for 20 days.

The incident in question took place on March 25 when the interim school reports were being collected. A mother who did not agree with the evaluations of her child became very aggressive towards the teacher. Her partner encouraged her not to sign the school report. The situation heated up so much that the mother attacked the teacher physically. She inflicted scratches on her arms and bruises on her neck. After the woman's partner also tried to join the attack, another father intervened and separated the opponents.

The Teachers' Association ANPE Canarias welcomed the verdict. They provide psychological and legal advice to their teachers, something that unfortunately is increas-



Teaching these days is not easy

Photo: freeimages

ingly necessary. In the school year 2017/18 the teachers' defence system was activated 147 times. There were a total of 75 aggressive attacks in the province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife and 72 in the province of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Twelve of the cases took place in kindergarten, 49 in primary school, 73 in upper

secondary school, 11 during vocational training courses and the rest in other forms of training.

The teachers' association supported the recent ruling as an important signal. It has long demanded that the teacher be regarded with an authority equal to that of police officers and doctors in order to guar-

antee their integrity. More and more often parents aggressively express their displeasure at their children's poor performance and actively attack the teachers instead of questioning their own children. From the teachers' point of view, the ruling makes it clear that parents must respect teachers. ■

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