Formentera recycled 14.6 % more plastic containers in 2016

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According to the administration's Office of Environment, Formentera notched a 7.27% year-on-year spike in paper/cardboard, glass and plastic container recycling, moving from 2,106.62 tonnes in 2015 to 2,259.82 in 2016. That year the island generated 9,904.90 tonnes of rubbish and recyclable material — 6.31% higher than in 2015, when the figure was 9,316.44 tonnes.

By material, Formentera residents recycled 14.6% more so-called "light plastics" (383.08 tonnes in 2015 compared to 439.10 tonnes in 2016). The next most significant year-on-year rise was in glass recycling, which jumped 9.94% from 854.52 tonnes to 939.54 tonnes. A modest uptick was registered in paper and cardboard recycling – from 2015 to 2016 the figure climbed from 869.02 tonnes to 881.18 tonnes, a 1.3% increase.

Cash savings

Recognising their efforts to "make waste management on Formentera more sustainable", environment councillor Daisee Aguilera thanked the people of the island in general and the big producers (cafés, restaurants, hotels and apartments, shops, etc) in particular. The councillor underscored the potential economic benefits recycling could have for the island, noting "in 2016, the island netted €179,206.74 by selling recycled paper/cardboard, plastics and glass".

Aguilera said the money was used to increase collection frequency and bankroll bin maintenance and educational outreach among businesses (big waste producers) and school children.

In the councillor's words, "if these materials had been sent to the Ca Na Putxa rubbish tip instead of being recycled, we would have paid €137 per tonne plus an additional €30 per tonne tax". Given freight costs are covered by the recycling companies themselves (Ecoembes collects paper/cardboard and plastics and Ecovidrio recycles glass), Aguilera held up waste transfer savings of €377,389.94 in 2016.