

The Formentera government's official celebration of *Dia de les Illes* —Balearic Islands Day— took place today at 12 noon in Plaça de la Constitució. President Ferrer gave an address underscoring the progress seen on Formentera since 2007, when a retooling of the regional autonomy statute left the island with its own
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, or council.

Ferrer said that challenges lay ahead for Formentera, like protecting islanders' basic rights, "one of the most important of which is access to acceptable housing. This is an issue that must be dealt with forcefully and in coordination at every level of government".

The president likewise spoke about the need for a renewed commitment to Formentera's social, economic and environmental sustainability, and underscored plans to push the needle in that direction. The year 2020 will mark the second anniversary of Formentera's scheme to restrict in-bound vehicles during the heavy months of summertime crowding: "It's a way to continue preserving our island for future generations, guarantee quality of life for our inhabitants and deliver a more enjoyable experience to our visitors".

Other challenges cited by Ferrer included regulating moorage at Estany des Peix, closing the water cycle and eliminating single-use plastics. "In times like these, it's important that we unite behind common objectives: for a just society, a safeguarded environment and a healthy and shared economy. We want a society that is educated, free, cohesive and supportive."

Poetry reading

Before Ferrer's public address, a reading was done of five fragments of poetry from four poets, one from each island in the Balearic archipelago. Formentera's former mayor, Isidor Torres, read a segment of Majorcan poet Guillem d'Efak's "Les illes", after which Selva Garrone, a teacher, read a piece of "No t'he parlat avui..." from fellow Minorcan Pere Gomila.

Following that, Sasha Riccardo and Munay Guzman interpreted two fragments from two poems,

"Lletra menuda" and "Sal i Silenci", by Eivissa poet Nora Albert. Finally, writer/director of the Sant Ferran school Neus Costa interpreted a fragment of "L'espera de la letargia", by hometown poet Maria Teresa Ferrer.

Members of the local Formentera cabinet, opposition party representatives and the head of the Balearic government's office of modernisation and digital administration, Ramón Roca, and others, were also on hand for the event, which concluded with a performance of traditional dance in the square by local troupes Es Xacoters and Es Pastorells. Those in attendance were treated to a sampling of signature Formentera fare at the event's closing.

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