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PRESIDENT, GOVERN DE LES ILLES BALEARS
CARRER DE LA LLOTJA, 3
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Madame President,

The approaching holidays will mean a marked increase in mobility, not just between the Balearic Islands and mainland Spain, but between the islands too — a situation quite similar to the one expected with the long weekend in early December.

Several days ago you proposed implementing from 20 December various controls (PCR screenings at points of departure, antigen tests at ports and airports) on visitors to the Balearics. The subject of inter-island travellers, however, was left unmentioned.

The current situation is different on each island, and we know that the smallest of actions can carry drastic consequences.

For example, many teachers on Formentera hail from assorted corners of Mallorca, a place at high risk of Covid-19 infections. Should these teachers spend the holidays with their families —a decision that would be entirely understandable and deserving of our respect— the fallout from returning Covid-19 cases that elude detection and tracing could be disastrous. Considering teachers' contact with Formentera children, the situation could set off an avalanche of outbreaks. On a small island like ours and given the healthcare infrastructure we share with Eivissa, the effects would be difficult to gauge or contain.

The same would occur when individuals who study on Mallorca came to Formentera spend the holidays with their families, or when their families went to visit them.

These are but two examples that illustrate our current situation, and they could be extrapolated

across the Balearic Islands.

So we at the Consell de Formentera wish to express our concern. In order to guarantee everyone's right to a safe return, control measures for inter-island travellers must be identical to those applied to travellers from outside the region.

Travel within the region is envisaged under emergency orders, but high case counts on particular islands warrant a volunteer system of controls to stem inter-island spread of Covid-19.

And so, Balearic residents who stay more than 72 hours on an island with over 150 cases per hundred thousand inhabitants should be able to opt for free, scheduled screenings, the same as those offered during the long weekend earlier this month.

On Formentera we've always asked that measures be commensurate to our situation, and that doesn't mean forgetting the solidarity that's now more vital than ever. The curfew was our occasion to demonstrate just how seriously we take this cohesion. Today we are in phase one of lockdown, but the situation could change from one day to the next. Timely preventive measures are our primary means of making sure it doesn't.

The Consell de Formentera is at your service for any collaboration we can offer.

Cordially,

Alejandra Ferrer Kirschbaum
President, Consell Insular de Formentera