



Members of the island's league of civic leaders gathered yesterday at 7.30pm to take stock of 2020 figures for formentera.eco and assess the latest plan to limit vehicles on the island. When the Consell d'Entitats reconvenes next Monday, attendees will share feedback from respective groups and render their verdict concerning the project's definitive approval.

With enhanced tier 4 public health orders in place, in-person participants at the encounter were limited to Consell de Formentera chief Alejandra Ferrer, mobility chair Rafael González, citizen participation chair Vanessa Parellada, a clerk and a senior Formentera Department of Citizen Participation staffer. Representatives of civic groups and political parties, together with members of the media, tuned in online.

Over thirty association members logged on for the Consell d'Entitats' first treatment of formentera.eco. President Ferrer applauded the strong showing, calling the turn-out "crucial to making sure Formentera's longstanding march toward sustainability is shaped by both political and economic stakeholders". Ferrer confided that "2020 was very tough, and 2021 will be too", but asserted abandoning hard-fought gains was a non-starter: "Backpedaling on our vision for Formentera is out of the question."

Ferrer pointed to "unique visitor experience" as imperative, and said the secret to Formentera's setting itself apart lay in "protecting heritage sites, traditions, culture and our physical landscapes". "Vibrant tourism and a growing economy need to translate to better quality of life for Formentera residents", insisted the première, "and to get there, projects like formentera.eco are essential."

formentera.eco 2020

Presentation of 2020 formentera.eco figures fell to the Formentera Department of Mobility chief Rafael González. One year prior to the scheme's rollout, local legislators aspired to ultimately see a 16% drop, punctuated by yearly -4% benchmarks, in the total number of in-bound vehicles, intending for the figure to be reached gradually over the 2020-2024 term. All told, 19,725 motorists got the green-light from formentera.eco in 2020, just shy of the established maximum of 21,487.

For twenty days starting 5 August and in the heat of the summer rush, visiting motorists claimed more than 95% of the total permits available to them (formentera.eco authorisations ran out altogether for the four-day period starting 13 August). The island generally managed to avoid maxing out entirely, Ramírez said, highlighting the decision to lower the permit ceiling for resident drivers in an effort to temper fallout from the pandemic. As the councillor put it, “What the figures show is that, the Covid crisis notwithstanding, regulation is still necessary”.

formentera.eco 2021

Proposal terms as communicated to Consell d'Entitats:

- 4% ceiling reduction (relative to 2020 figures)

2019: 22,382

2020: 21,486

2021: 20,591

- Regulatory period subject to discussion:

Option 1: Last week in June until first week in September

Option 2: July and August

- Fee-based or free of charge?

Free advance reservations can be made in the permit request section of the formentera.eco site, expected to go online again in March. Bookings will be finalised in May and, pending developments of the pandemic, will be free or subject to payment. Permits are guaranteed for travellers with bookings for overnight accommodations or arrangements to travel with a personal vehicle made before March.

Sustainable mobility

By González's lights, “the formentera.eco endgame is a brand of sustainable mobility where foot traffic, bikes and public transport all gain ground against cars”. He pointed to a number of routes forward on the path to sustainability:

Public transport

- €100,000 to restore Formentera public transport to the 2019, pre-Covid level.

- Free rides for people under 18 and dependent individuals plus companions.

- Public transport by taxi: engage chauffeurs' association in discussion of proposed increase in seasonal licences as needed. Ride-hailing services prohibited.

Promoting bicycles

- Complete bike lane in Port of La Savina.

- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel on Camí de sa Guia between La Savina and Ses Illetes.
- Revamp parking and expand cycling zones at Ses Salines reserve.
- Encourage pedestrian and cyclist travel on Camí des Brols linking La Savina and Sant Francesc with Es Pujols.
- Subsidies on purchases of traditional and electric bikes. (€15,000 in funding already available).

Communications

- Website and app Próximo Ferry provides arriving travellers with information about public buses
- Local sustainable mobility and formentera.eco information stand in Port of La Savina.
- “Metrominut” maps/leaflets featuring distances and travel times between Port of La Savina and Ses Illetes/Es Pujols/Sant Francesc to promote pedestrian and cycling options.

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Communications Department

Consell de Formentera