

In a morning press conference, Alejandra Ferrer and Josep Marí, the Consell de Formentera president and chief of interior, respectively, unveiled details about a push to educate tourists and remind islanders about simple steps to prevent the local spread of covid-19.

Ferrer said that Formentera residents' responsibility during confinement and the subsequent loosening of lockdown measures was "key to the island's gradual reopening to the outside world. Every day overnight accommodations and restaurants work to follow hygiene protocol and make distancing guidelines as pleasant as possible. This is why we ask that each one of our visitors take their part of personal responsibility; with your help, we can make Formentera a place everyone can continue to enjoy. Please, 'Protect Formentera, for you and for everyone!'"

The slogan defines a campaign built around simple visual aids conceived to educate tourists and remind residents about the four basic rules this summer amid the public health crisis:

1. Individuals from different households must respect 1.5-metre physical distancing
2. Masks must be worn any time individuals from different households cannot respect safe 1.5-metre distancing
3. Wash or sanitise hands frequently
4. Groups must not exceed 25 individuals

Beaches

In the president's words, Formentera has, "by its very nature, always been a place where keeping a safe distance is easy: our 69 kilometres of coastline make it possible to get away from the crowds and find oneself, finding nature, peace and quiet at the same time. This year with the public health crisis, keeping one's distance is more than just an option, it's an imperative for each one of us". To that end, the local office of tourism has announced a new section of its website where visitors can get information about all the island's beaches and avoid the most crowded. Beachgoers will additionally find displays highlighting distancing and safety measures.

Another poster aims to remind shop visitors and public transport and ferry riders that masks are required in all three places. The graphic on general measures can be found at Consell displays across the island as well as restaurants and beaches. Hotel and business owners and anyone else can view and download the material at a section created especially for the campaign, ww w.formentera.es/covid . Forthcoming content will also include video reminders about rules, and can be seen in ferries and on the Consell's social media pages.

Checks on compliance

With safe distancing more crucial now than ever before, the Consell de Formentera has created a network of collaborating informants to keep eyes on crowds this summer. "Security forces, parking attendants, coastal concession holders and business owners are working together to tackle unsafe crowding", said interior conseller Josep Marí. Informants who see groups forming will call 092 and notify the authorities so the situation can be defused and order maintained. "We're trying to prevent crowds before they form", explained Marí.

As part of a data observatory, the Consell de Formentera has put up ten antennas in key points on the island like La Savina, Ses Illetes, Sant Francesc, Es Cap de Barbaria, Es Pujols, Sant Ferran, Migjorn and La Mola to track individual movements based on mobile phone signals. President Ferrer described the apparatus as "a digital tool originally commissioned to give us a picture of the visitor flows across the island".

This summer, data processed by the towers will be used to strengthen control measures and prevent crowds. The information will be be used internally and shared with security forces to help coordinate efforts and reduce situations of risk. The collected information will be incorporated into a digital tool that flags crowding at distinct beaches and formulates recommendations for visitors. The info can be viewed on social media and on the tourist office website, www.formentera.es .

Local Security Junta

Conseller Marí said that efforts extended beyond covid-19 preventive measures to take aim at other possible security issues like illegal watercraft bound for Formentera, or respect for safety guidelines among enthusiasts of water sports tourism. To that end, Marí indicated the Consell had turned to the Harbour Master's Office and Maritime Civil Guard for help making sure rules are followed. The Local Security Junta will gather in mid-July to discuss these and other issues related to local security.

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