

This morning the Formentera Patronat de Turisme, the acting government entity on issues of tourism, held a special one-off meeting in the plenary hall of the Formentera Council to evaluate the conditions the Govern Balear has announced would accompany the upcoming transfer of authorities in tourism.

The plenary, formed by local political officials, members of the local tourism industry and representatives of the island's business sector, voted unanimously to reject the terms of the Palma administration's plan to transfer responsibility on matters of tourism to the local councils. The decision was coherent with the presentations made by the Council in October of last year, which affirmed that any transfer of authority must be accompanied by sufficient funding.

Once outside, councillor Alejandra Ferrer asserted that the proposal put forth by the Govern "was unacceptable." She continued: "Once again, we demand the Govern present an explanation of the discrepancy between the 5.3 million euros that have been allocated to tourism promotions and the 18 million allocated to the Agència de Turisme de Balears. And once again we are demanding a revision of the proposed terms of the transfer, which, as it stands, are prejudicial to Formentera."

Vicent Tur, representative of the local federation of hotel owners, stated that the proposal "isn't realistic because it doesn't take us anywhere. It doesn't respond to the real necessities of the Formentera brand-name. Promotion of the Formentera brand requires a two-part approach: first, explaining its qualities as a tourist destination, and then separating itself from its association with the rest of the Balearic Islands. This is an association that presently hurts more than it helps." According to Tur, "accepting the plan would condemn us to poor financing in the long-run."

Jordi Marí, representative of the island's small and medium-sized business association, stated after the meeting that "the funding plan might appear fair initially, but it isn't. In the long term it would be quite detrimental." Marí reacted to the Govern's currently-envisioned plan for financing, stating, "The reality is that the other islands in the Balearics are also our competitors. And as the years pass, the three other islands will have more and more financing while Formentera's share will be smaller and smaller. We are not talking about fair conditions of competition here."

Board of tourism unanimously rejects Govern's terms on tourism transfer

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