

Today, before a gathering of the Commission for the Management and Promotion of Tourism (*Comissió d'Ordenació i Promoció Turística, COPT*), Alejandra Ferrer, Vice President and Councillor of Tourism, sat down with Carlos Bernús, Head of Tourism Promotion, and Catalina Ramis, a specialist at the Formentera Data Observatory, for a press conference to share with industry representatives details about a project involving sensor antennas and research into tourist mobility flows and empathic listening on social media.

Flow of tourists

The June 2020 installation of ten sensor antennas at strategic points of the island means that, for the first time this year, the island's government can present data on crowds in various areas of the island and mobility flows involving tourists, day visitors and Formentera residents. According to Ms Ramis, the data indicate that from June to October 2021, 541,419 visitors came to Formentera. Of this number, 361,531 were day-trippers and 179,888 were tourists who spent at least one night on the island.
Councillor Ferrer explained that the data serve to back Formentera up in requesting competent administrations "to help regulate this influx of visitors, especially in the case of day trips." The idea, said Ferrer, "is that day visitors arrive in a more orderly manner and in line with the island's carrying capacity and port". Moreover, she said, if Formentera's tourism marketing division knows how day-trippers move, the island's government can "make policies to better distribute them so some sites are not overrun by crowds" and "tourist and islander satisfaction goes up".

Empathetic listening on social media

Over the course of the summer season, Formentera's representatives listened to feedback from the island's visitors on social media and online broadcasting channels. All told, an initial 22,858 visitor comments reached 110,674,824 individuals.

In the words of the deputy premier and tourism chief, "the aim of the Empathetic Listening project is to learn about the various actions and online reactions of Formentera's visitors regarding the island's offer as a tourist destination. The data are differentiated based on whether tourists are Spanish, English, French, Italian or German so decision-makers can understand the insight more clearly and chose wisely as they attempt to improve the destination".

The study's authors identified a high degree of tourist satisfaction with their holidays and experiences on Formentera. Tourists indicated that the island awakened feelings and emotions of "happiness and admiration for distinctly well-preserved nature, landscapes and beaches". Other highlights were "the light, beauty, magic, sense of tranquility and people". They described Formentera as "an authentic and unique paradise" and "a sustainable destination".

Leading concerns included the large numbers of tourists at specific times and places on the island. Day-trippers in particular said crowds caused a diminished sense of charm and other issues.

COPT

Ferrer, Bernús and the COPT's political and industry representatives met after the press conference. Participants sat for a review of marketing activities this year included in the Economic and Tourism Promotion Plan approved jointly with the sector. The events' schedule was presented as well so that the industry can plan the start and end of its season. In addition to agreeing on marketing activities for 2022, COPT members agreed to convene again after the International Tourism Fair (Fitur), which coincides with the end of the 2022 Tourism Promotion Plan.

2 December 2021
Communications Office
Consell de Formentera