



Today the Balearic government presented its 2022 spending plan in the assembly hall of the Consell de Formentera. With Formentera-specific line items totalling €16.2 million, the plan will mean an increase of 3.7%, or €600,000 more than in 2021.

Also at the gathering were Ana Juan, President of the Consell de Formentera; by videoconference, Rosario Sánchez, Regional Minister of Finance and Foreign Affairs; Joan Ignasi Morey, Director-General of Spending, and Vice Presidents Alejandra Ferrer, Susana Labrador and Rafael Ramírez. A subsequent meeting included local union representatives and economic stakeholders.

▣ 'A satisfactory budget, but we aren't complacent'

President Juan remarked, "At the current juncture this is a satisfactory budget for Formentera, but we are not conformists: Formentera will continue to demand, request and work to get the resources we need; is our commitment and I am sure that the Govern will continue to be sensitive to our requests". Juan outlined important investments in health like the 061 emergency response headquarters, investments in education like the expansion of IES Marc Ferrer, and investments in mobility that would mean guaranteed early-bird and late-night ferries to and from Eivissa. The Consell's top official signalled that as the budget has moved through parliament, amendments submitted by Deputy Antonio J. Sanz have meant numerous improvements, including €2.1 million increase in spending for Formentera in 2022. One such increase will go be used to develop public housing policies.

Picking up where President Juan left off, Director-General Morey asserted the Govern was especially sensitive to Formentera's requests. Subsequently, he highlighted the main investments.

In 2022 Formentera-specific expenditures together with current and capital transfers and investments amount to €16.2 million. The uptick is due mainly to increases in financing, where the Consell de Formentera will receive a total of €9 million, up one million from this year and,

with the 2015 budgets as a baseline, up 83.7% (or €4 million). Local investment is on the up as well, and will mark a €1.1 million increase in 2022. With inputs from the administrative public sector (regional ministries and the Balearic health service, IBSalut) and from companies linked to the region's instrumental public sector, investments are projected to hit €4.2 million in 2022.

More robust financing for the island councils in 2022 stems from a larger advance for 2022 -this represents the lion's share of the island council financing system and can be traced to the Balearic Islands' improved income forecasts as well as to one-off compensation for sagging income from the other part of the system, the settlement of the year 2020, to be disbursed in 2022.

IBSalut foresees €1.99 million for a new 061 emergency response service base on Formentera (including a works project expected to start in 2022, 24/7 Basic Life Support ambulance, Advanced Life Support ambulance and Non-emergency Health Transport Unit) as well as €1.2 million for purchases, equipment, furniture, new acquisitions by the Àrea de Salut d'Eivissa i Formentera (Formentera and Can Misses hospitals).

In social affairs and sport, the budget includes €351,000 line item for 18 new places for dependent people in the Formentera residence. Related construction costs totalled €2 million. The Balearic Ministry of Social Affairs will assume 70% of the price-tag, while the remaining 30% will come from the Consell de Formentera.

Spending on education and vocational training will include €716,275 to expand and upgrade public schools, which, apart from small-scale initiatives, centre on IES Marc Ferrer (€691,152). €279,000 has been budgeted to add places for zero to three year olds in schools in Sant Ferran and Sant Francesc (total investment is €558,000), plus €164,044 euros to maintain the network serving zero to three year olds, as well as €142,309 to digitalise schools (digital classrooms, new devices and digital educational material).

Spending on Mobility includes plans for a €554,000 line item in 2022 for a tender to ensure that residents of Eivissa and Formentera will always have a boat available at 6.00am and 10.00pm. The budget includes €63,288 for an 18-unit public housing development in Sant Ferran.

Spending linked to the environment will include €4.3 million between 2022 and 2024 to equip

Formentera's desalination plant with a new tank and repair the existing one (spending in 2022 will total €728,000). The budget also envisions €500,000 for a pilot test of a deposit, return and refund system on packaging (an initiative which has featured collaboration from the island's government); €364,165 to maintain and operate the treatment plant, €100,000 for investments in forestry machinery and €62,000 for the control of invasive species, biosecurity and climate change.

Spending on agriculture, fisheries and food is expected to include €36,000 from the Mechanism for Recovery and Resilience to draft a project for sustainable optimisation of water resources (total price-tag: €1.1 million) and Balearic Agrarian and Fishing Guarantee Fund (Fons de Garantia Agrària i Pesquera, FOBAIBA) expects the bulk of its €500,000 euros in aid will go to the primary and agri-food sectors. Likewise, €50,000 has been earmarked for the investment project entailing monitoring Formentera's marine reserves.

In spending on the energy transition, productive sector and democratic memory, the budget provides €150,000 for solar installations and shared self-consumption in spaces which the Consell de Formentera has ceded use rights; €6,000 for solar panel monitoring, condenser batteries and air quality measurement equipment upgrades, plus €110,000 as part of an agreement with the Eivissa-Formentera Chamber of Commerce, and €50,000 for an action at the new Sant Francesc cemetery object included in the Civil War Mass Graves Plan.

Spending on employment includes plans to allocate €1 million so that Formentera and the SOIB can pursue policies of active employment for a diversity of groups. Spending on universities and research includes living and travel cost allowances for university students (€15,378) and funding for the municipal government on language policy (€10,000).

Money from the European Union will go to restore Sa Casa de sa Roda (€186,965), to digitalise and create documentary descriptions of cultural interest objects and sites (€30,000) and to add to the catalogues of the island's two libraries (€4,307). The Formentera Museum and Cultural Centre Foundation is likewise expected to receive €75,000.

Plans are in place for the Balearic Institute of the Women (IBDona) to work next year with the Consell de Formentera to create a 24-hour crisis centre for victims of sexual violence and a 365 days/year support service at the hospital. The Balearic School of Public Administration (*Escola Balear d'Administració Pública, EBAP*) plans to support decentralisation by offering islanders on Eivissa and Formentera courses on

Eivissa, including basic courses for local police officers and training so others may be included in a pool of interim candidates to fill public servant positions in law enforcement.

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