



Today Ana Juan, president of the Consell de Formentera, took part in the fifth Conference of Presidents in Portixol (Mallorca). Chaired by Francina Armengol, regional president, the meeting was attended by Susana Mora, Catalina Cladera, Vicent Marí and Ana Juan (presidents of the island councils of Menorca, Mallorca, Eivissa and Formentera, respectively); Mercedes Garrido, regional minister of presidency, public function and equality, and Miquel Mir, regional minister of environment and territory.

Attendees of the gathering agreed to begin transferring powers of territorial planning on rural coastline to the island councils. With the 40-year anniversary of the passage of the Statute of Autonomy approaching, the move will mark a forward step in the deployment of competences foreseen in Article 70 of the 2007 version of the Statute.

President Juan called the development "good news for Formentera", explaining that it would "put us in a position to make our own decisions on sensitive local issues, and thus advance in self-government". Juan has also pledged that the island's government would advocate so that the change came with "appropriate financial means and resources".

As such, the agreement brings the Balearic Islands closer to the transfer of competences envisioned in the Statute of Autonomy while also strengthening island institutions to improve local public services.

### **Water Pact**

At the encounter it was also announced that from next year, the regional government will make a one-off investment of €20 million in Balearic municipalities to tackle losses in municipal drinking water distribution networks. Attendees also discussed the importance of taking forward the Water Pact (*Pacte del Aigua*) and commitments to improve water management. While the Balearic Ministry of Environment and Territory has invested €64.4 million in water supply since 2015, and a separate €395 million has gone toward purification and sanitation, leakage still presents a significant problem in municipal drinking water distribution networks.

For her part, President Juan highlighted encouraging data concerning Formentera's network that were released this week. The data put the efficiency of the local network at 92.71%, placing Formentera ahead of the other islands in the region. President Juan said that Formentera's budgetary allocation would go to "investments in supply and sanitation networks as well as reservoirs, to advance water management on the island".

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