



Today Rosario Sánchez, Balearic finance and foreign affairs minister, and Josep Marí, Balearic minister of mobility and housing, presented the new regional budgets to Ana Juan, Alejandra Ferrer, Susana Labrador, Rafael Ramírez and Bartomeu Escandell (the president, vice-presidents and finance councillor, respectively, of the Consell de Formentera). In the morning, the officials also met with and presented the spending plan to social and economic actors on the island.

In 2023 the Balearic Government's Formentera-specific spending will reach €25.4 million, a record high, with direct investment to grow and a historic €11.4 million to be allocated to finance the municipal government. These are some of the standout features of the Balearic Government's draft general budget for 2023, which, according to Minister Sánchez, is currently moving through parliament.

President Juan underscored features of the budget like "aid for stronger social cohesion, fiscal measures to deal with the effects of inflation and the energy crisis due to the war in Ukraine, and quality of life improvements for residents across the board". She also pointed up passage of an amendment presented by the deputy of Formentera, Antonio J. Sanz, for €120,000 to fund a new field of buoys for ecological moorings. "Work must be ongoing and include more policies to protect our sea", Juan asserted, "the goal being to gradually safeguard the entire coast of Formentera".

Assistance

Among various lines of assistance, the officials underlined €0.6 million for a winter benefit of up to €600 for the unemployed, including eligibility for employees considered "fixed discontinuous".

Roughly 54 Formentera residents will benefit from a 15% increase in the guaranteed social income. Ultimately retained in the budget, the increase will mean 148 beneficiaries receive doubled dependency benefits in December and January. As well, roughly 26 local families will be able to forego co-pays at day centres and for home assistance, both essential for dependent individuals.

One line item which has continued to grow in recent years is localised spending, which in 2023 will hit €25.4 – 57%, or nearly €10 million, more than in 2022. This figure includes current and capital transfers to the Consell de Formentera, which next year will top €14 million, as well as close to €11 million of investment in government departments and companies and entities of the regional public sector (a year-on-year increase of 159%).

Additional investment will be funded through the Sustainable Tourism Fund (ITS) as part of the 2023 Plan, endorsed by the Commission late October, which will account for a total of €2.4 million for Formentera.

Particularly noteworthy are line items of €1.2 million to implement sewerage and upgrades at the tourism centre of Es Ca Marí, and €320,000 to guarantee Formentera's drinking water supply.

Funding increase

At €11.4 million, funding for Formentera reaches a new high, increasing €2.5 million from €8.9 million last year.

This is equivalent to an increase of 137%, or €6.6 million more, compared to the €4.8 million Formentera received in 2015.

Public housing and 061 base

Two point six million euros will go to build a development of 17 public housing units and €2.7 million to build a local emergency response base.

In education, the budget includes €326,000 to expand IES Marc Ferrer, as well as money to start drafting plans to expand CEIP El Pilar and to implement accessibility upgrades at CEIP Mestre Lluís Andreu.

In employment, €0.7 million euros will go to active employment policies for various local groups.

As for investments for the Balearic Energy Institute, the spending plan envisions a million-euro storage project to make the island's electricity system more stable. In energy transition policies, plans envision continued installations of solar panels and other renewable energies in public spaces (€127,000); promoting self-consumption in public spaces of the region (€250,000) and opening an energy transition office (€141,517).

Water cycle and treatment plant

Next year substantial environmental investments will mean money to promote the water cycle, including by installing a new tank at the island's desalination plant (€885,035) and the start of plans to expand the wastewater treatment plant at year end, which will receive €4.6 million in total investment.

In agriculture, fishing and food, water quality improvements will come from a €200,000 investment in the Formentera reservoir, plans for which include regenerated water and efficiency upgrades in water pumping. Another point of interest for Eivissa and Formentera residents is an 103% increase in the basic, per-hectare payment under the new common agricultural policy (CAP).

The budget also forecasts investments through the regional public entity of telecommunications and innovation (IBETEC), including €716,667 for Formentera's channel-based provision of fibre optics and €188,376 for stations equipped with emergency services communication systems (TETRA).

Under the Graves Plan, approximately €80,000 will help put in motion phase two of plans to exhume Cementeri Nou in Sant Francesc and conduct a graves study at the historical cemeteries of Sant Francesc, La Mola and Es Pujols.

The budget also includes about €15,000 for travel grants which the Consell de Formentera awards university students; €75,000 for the Formentera Museum Foundation and Cultural Centre; €28,000 for the Ethnological Museum and €10,000 for the "Vive la cultura" programme.

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