



Consell de Formentera president Alejandra Ferrer gave a press conference and open address to the people of the island to announce activation of the first phase in Formentera's gradual easing of confinement measures. The broadcast was retransmitted on the Consell's YouTube channel [here](#) and listeners were able to tune in to Ràdio Illa to hear Ferrer's discourse live.

The president dedicated her message to the victims of the grave public health crisis as well as their families, and reserved special words for the family of the island's only coronavirus-related death.

Ferrer applauded islanders' sense of individual and collective responsibility, which she said was behind the State's decision to begin phase one of Formentera's de-escalation this Monday, 4 May. "It's been a very difficult few weeks", the president said. "We're reopening gradually; children came first, and this weekend saw athletes, adults, seniors and at-risk groups get their chance at a limited return to certain movement. It's time now for a step forward", she said, "but we've got to do it responsibly if we want to avoid having to take steps backward later".

"Formentera's rollout of phase one is good news, but it needs to happen with caution and responsibility", Ferrer offered. "From today we'll ease out of confinement at the local level, but we've got a long way to go before we're ready for tourism", she said, assuring residents that "first it's going to be inter-island, then national, and, at the end, international". Holding up tourists as "our economy's driving engine", Ferrer said that tourism's return to the island wouldn't just depend on how the health crisis unfolds here, "but on the way the pandemic plays out globally", she said. "We're already working on a new promotion strategy that—when we're ready for visitors—will start with markets close in proximity to Formentera".

Phase one

The president gave an overview of the main pillars already set out by Madrid with regards to phase one, including provisions for vulnerable individuals receiving clinical care. Two-metre physical distancing will remain in place, and riders of public transport will have to wear masks,

as will individuals unable to respect distancing measures. “Handwashing remains crucial as well”, she said.

Per a preliminary reading of the country’s official gazette, Ferrer said people on the island would no longer face mobility restrictions. Highlighting ministerial orders announced mere hours before phase one was due to take effect on Formentera this evening, she asked that in future phases local government be given advance details and a contact person “to help us interpret the new guidelines with sufficient time”.

Starting tomorrow, Formentera residents in groups of no more than ten can return to social contact in public spaces, bar terraces and homes providing safety measures are respected.

Terraces, restaurants and shops

In the new phase, businesses that occupy less than 400 square metres can reopen as long as specific hygiene measures and protocol are followed. Shops must remain below 30% capacity and make sure customers keep a safe distance. Terraces of bars and restaurants can seat half of their normal maximum if a safe distance is kept between tables.

The trade department is teeing up educational materials on protocols and will offer them to reopening businesses in the days ahead.

Consell information service

From tomorrow, *informadors* will be posted in Formentera’s main towns to provide information about unfolding de-escalation measures. Local police, the Civil Guard and Civil Protection, for their part, will continue controls and educational efforts in rural parts of the island.

Public transport

Riders must wear masks aboard public transport, and vehicles will ride at half capacity. Taxis, meanwhile, can carry no more than two passengers at a time, who must ride separately and in the back seat. Established hygiene measures will remain in place everywhere.

The president spoke frankly: “This is a very serious disease. We’re entering a phase of return to normalcy, but this isn’t ‘full speed ahead’ and throw caution to the wind. It may seem contradictory, but right now keeping our distance is crucial if we want to come together again later”.

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Consell de Formentera