

Consell de Formentera president Alejandra Ferrer and Balearic government spokeswoman Pilar Costa appeared before representatives of the media to offer an assessment of the epidemiological situation on Formentera.

Ferrer explained that the island's government had opted to press the Govern balear for tighter restrictions in a bid to curb local spread of Covid-19. The Balearic ministry of health will approve raising the pandemic response to tier 2 on Monday, with the change to take effect 22 December, a day later. Once again the president encouraged islanders to be responsible in the run-up to Christmas, and stressed the importance of establishing "stable bubbles" for the festivities ahead.

"Caution and responsibility are crucial", said Pilar Costa. "Fortunately the islanders who have tested positive show mild symptoms or none at all, but viral loads and contagion capacity mean we need to exercise the utmost caution. We're asking everyone to keep playing by the rules; if we protect ourselves we'll protect our loved ones too."

Epidemiological developments

For the seven-day period starting 11 December, local cases out of 100,000 more than quadrupled when they leapt from 74 to 300. The week brought diagnosis of 35 new infections, thirty in the previous three days. At the same time, the rate of positive tests has climbed from 8.6% to 19.6% to more than double.

Levels under both indicators easily surpass European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control's benchmarks —3% positivity and 60 cases per 100,000— to qualify an area as at risk.

Vulnerable individuals are prevalent among the new infections: islanders over 65 now represent 273.4 cases in 100,000; on 11 December, the figure was zero.

Finally, traceability has fallen among the new cases: 60% on 11 December, the figure has dropped to 50% a week later.

Key changes

Passage from tier 1 to 2 will mean the adoption of more restrictive measures: the twenty-person limit on outdoor gatherings will be halved, going from ten to six for indoor spaces. Bars and restaurants must additionally reduce capacity depending on the risk levels they face: medium risk establishments with space for 50 will need to cap admission at 70%; spaces where capacity normally exceeds 50 may accept no more than half that number. High risk establishments must fix capacity at 40%. Until now up to ten individuals could be sat at the same indoor table; the number will now be lowered to six. Under tier 2 protocol bar and restaurant managers can fill outdoor seating to 75% of normal capacity or a maximum of ten to a table, while under tier 1 standards the per-table limit was 15. Tier 2 protocol means bar service is also against the rules, as are, in another key change, traditional feast day celebrations.

19 December 2020
Communications Department
Consell de Formentera