



Formentera began local celebrations today of the Balearic Islands' official holiday with a fundraising event for Spain's association to stop cancer (AECC). At 11.00am this morning, runners set off on the fourth Cursa Solidària per a la Dona, a walk-run where 287 participants had the choice between a 5K or 10K circuit, both of which started and finished in Sant Francesc's central plaza.

At roughly 1.00pm, the plaça de la Constitució was also the scene of the Formentera Council's official celebration of the holiday known as “Day of the Balearic Islands” or simply, “la Diada”. Susana Labrador, vice-president of the local administration, addressed onlookers. This year's March 1 address centred on the things that make the four islands of Illes Balears different. According to Labrador, the differences that make the region stronger: “When every island has the ability to decide on which model it follows, which projects get priority in defending the interests of residents...when we can do that with the help of all islanders and the Govern, the region is stronger”.

After Labrador spoke, two traditional dance troupes —es Pastorells and es Xacoters— gave a demonstration of a valuable and intangible kind of heritage that survives today thanks to their effort and dedication.

Near 2.00pm, revellers headed toward the festival tent at sa Senieta car park for a paella to raise money for the AECC.

Festivities will continue at 8.30pm in la Mola's Casa del Poble. The evening's “Concert of the Balearic Islands” will include performances by Calipoe Trio and Bep Marquès.