

Challenges and management of mass tourism . Mallorca A2 Option D (2)

Dr Niall Majury
Geography, Queen's University Belfast



Why study Mallorca?



Outline

- ▶ Origins of mass tourism in Mallorca
- ▶ Impact of mass tourism on the island
- ▶ Restructuring of mass tourism
- ▶ Massification of tourism
- ▶ Over-tourism & anti-tourism
- ▶ Policy responses



Mallorca



Origins of mass tourism

- Developed under fascism (1939-1975)

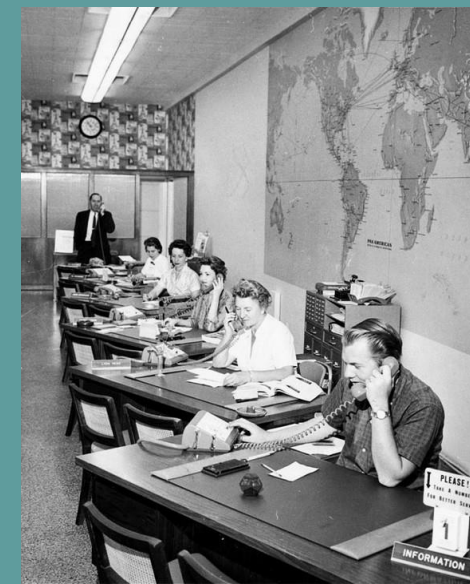
Mainland Spanish government identified the potential of coastal tourism to earn foreign currency & modernize economy (1960s)

- Transition from agriculture to services
- Stem pattern of emigration
- Raise living standards
- Initiate social, cultural & economic change



Agents of mass tourism: (1960-2000)

- ▶ Elite-led development strategy
- ▶ Operation controlled by Tour Operators based in NW Europe
- ▶ Tour operators acted as gatekeepers, arranging most of the components for a holiday
- ▶ ‘Package Holiday’ (flight, hotel, transfers)
- ▶ Customers picked from a brochure



(In 2000 Thomson bought by TUI AG.
Touristik Union International is
Europe's largest tour operator)

Magaluf (1960s/1970s)



'Family resort'



Magaluf (2024)

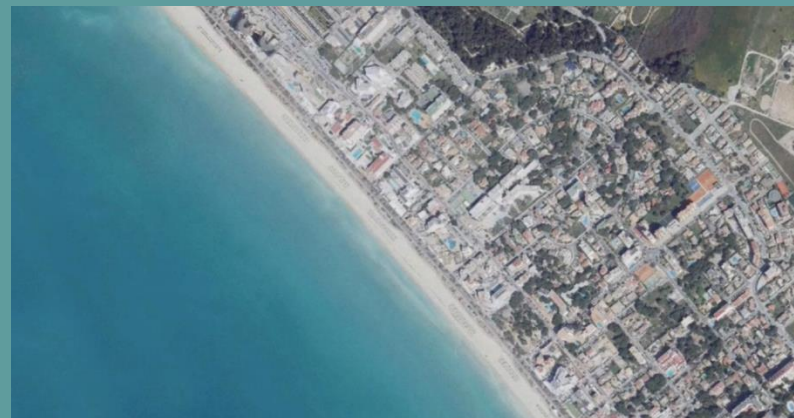


Impact of mass tourism: Single Industry Coastal Forms of Urbanisation

Population
962, 000

Visitors

1960
360k
1970
2.2m
1980
3.9m
1990
6.2m
2000
8.2m
2010
10.1m
2019
11.8m
2020
1.7m
2023
17.8m



Impact of mass tourism:

Loss of wetlands, agricultural land & habitats (1960-2000)



Alcutia – constructed on a dune system and drained wetlands adjacent to Albufera (1988 declared Natural Park and Wetland of International Importance)



Palma's International Airport (PMI) – 31m passengers p.a. – compared to LHR @ 79m, DUB @ 32m and BFS @ 6m (2023)

Impact of mass tourism:

Traditional beach resort as a strip form of dense urbanization, specialized in nature, seasonal in activity



Cala Millor

Video available at:

<https://www.beach-inspector.com/en/b/playa-de-cala-millor>

Restructuring of Mass Tourism

Pulling apart the package tour (2000 onwards)

- ▶ EU liberalization of airline industry (1992-1997)
- ▶ Rise of budget airlines
- ▶ More choice on routes
- ▶ Lower ticket prices
- ▶ Direct sales
- ▶ Growth in EU air travel



Restructuring of Mass Tourism

Pulling apart the package tour (2000 onwards)

- ▶ Internet as a disruptive technology
 - ▶ Direct marketing by Mallorcan businesses
 - ▶ Empower consumers (search, comparison, reviews)
 - ▶ Growth of independently organized holidays
 - ▶ Erosion of power of Tour Operators
- ▶ **Geographical expansion of mass tourism beyond beach resorts**



Restructuring of Mass Tourism

Pulling apart the package tour (2000 onwards)

- Promotion of **Cultural & Heritage Tourism**
- Offer experiences not easily found elsewhere
- Emphasise quality (not low cost & quantity)
- More inclusive of local entrepreneurs & places on the island
- Marketed as 'low impact' tourism



Activity holidays, heritage breaks, culinary tours, arts festivals

'Massification' of Tourism

- ▶ Spaces on the island once neglected by mass tourism have been colonized by the independent tourists
- ▶ Beach tourism now co-exists with cultural / heritage / activity tourism



(Rural villages / farmsteads
& agro-tourism on offer)



(The heritage quarters of
towns & cities on offer)

'Massification' of Tourism

Within 24 years visitor numbers have more than doubled
Tourists' geographic impact on the island is now wider

- ▶ Boom in legal & illegal construction / renovations



Port d'Andratx (SW Mallorca)

2013 - Eugenio Hidalgo, ex-mayor, given 2 year prison sentence for accepting bribes in return for building permits on rural land

Island

2024 - Estimated 3.5 million visitors stayed in illegal holiday apartments & a further 900,000 stayed in second homes they owned

Over-Tourism

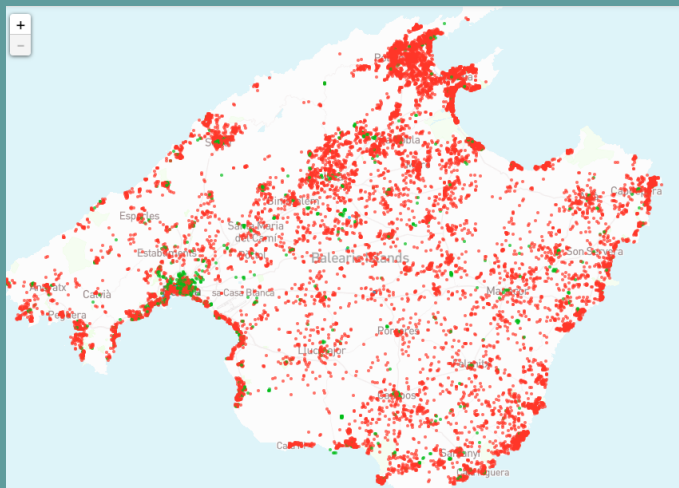
- ▶ Competition over space & housing

Growth in Short-Term Rentals (STR)

15k STRs now listed on the island



(Established in 2008)



(Distribution of Airbnbs, 2024)

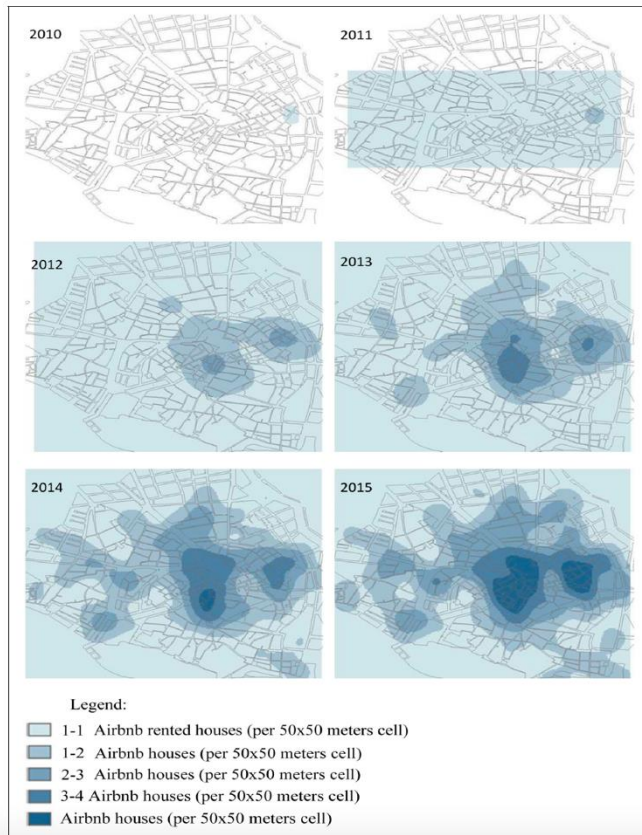
Real estate speculation,
rising property values,
housing affordability crisis for residents

Over-Tourism

► Competition over space & housing



2716 *Urban Studies 56(13)*



Gentrification of Palma's core

Eviction of long-term residents

Conversion of properties to STRs

Closure of bakeries, cafes, retailers

Local character of neighbourhood
replaced by a sanitised hipster's one

Over-Tourism

- ▶ Congestion on roads (120k rental cars)



Rental cars shipped in from Barcelona



Congested rural roads



Continual program of widening & construction of highways across the island

Over-Tourism

- ▶ Pressure on supply of water (aquifers, 2 reservoirs & desalination plant – semi-arid environment), sanitation & waste management



Over-Tourism

► Environmental degradation

3 to 5 cruise ships visit Palma each day

Daily influx of 15,000 visitors

500 ships, 2 million visitors per year



Campaigns to limit or ban cruise ships (lhs) & to prioritize the needs of Palma's residents, not its visitors (rhs)



Over Tourism, Protest & Anti-Tourism



*Menys
Turisme,
Mas Vida*

*(Less
Tourism,
More Life)*

Video available at: <https://p.dw.com/p/4gJdf>

Policy Response? Rejuvenate



Magaluf,
Calvia municipality,

Calvia's LA21 is like
'putting lipstick on a gorilla'

Calvia's Local Agenda 21 (1995/97 onwards)

- Co-ordinated development plan
- Remodel promenades, insert green spaces & cycle paths
- Promote controlled use of water
- Protect remaining heritage & sensitive habitats

Magaluf (2024)



Policy Response? Containment

Regional Government of the Balearic Islands

- ▶ **Sustainable Tourism Tax (2016)**

 - Charge visitors Eco-Tax per night of accommodation (1 to 4 euros)

 - Funds used for environmental & heritage restoration

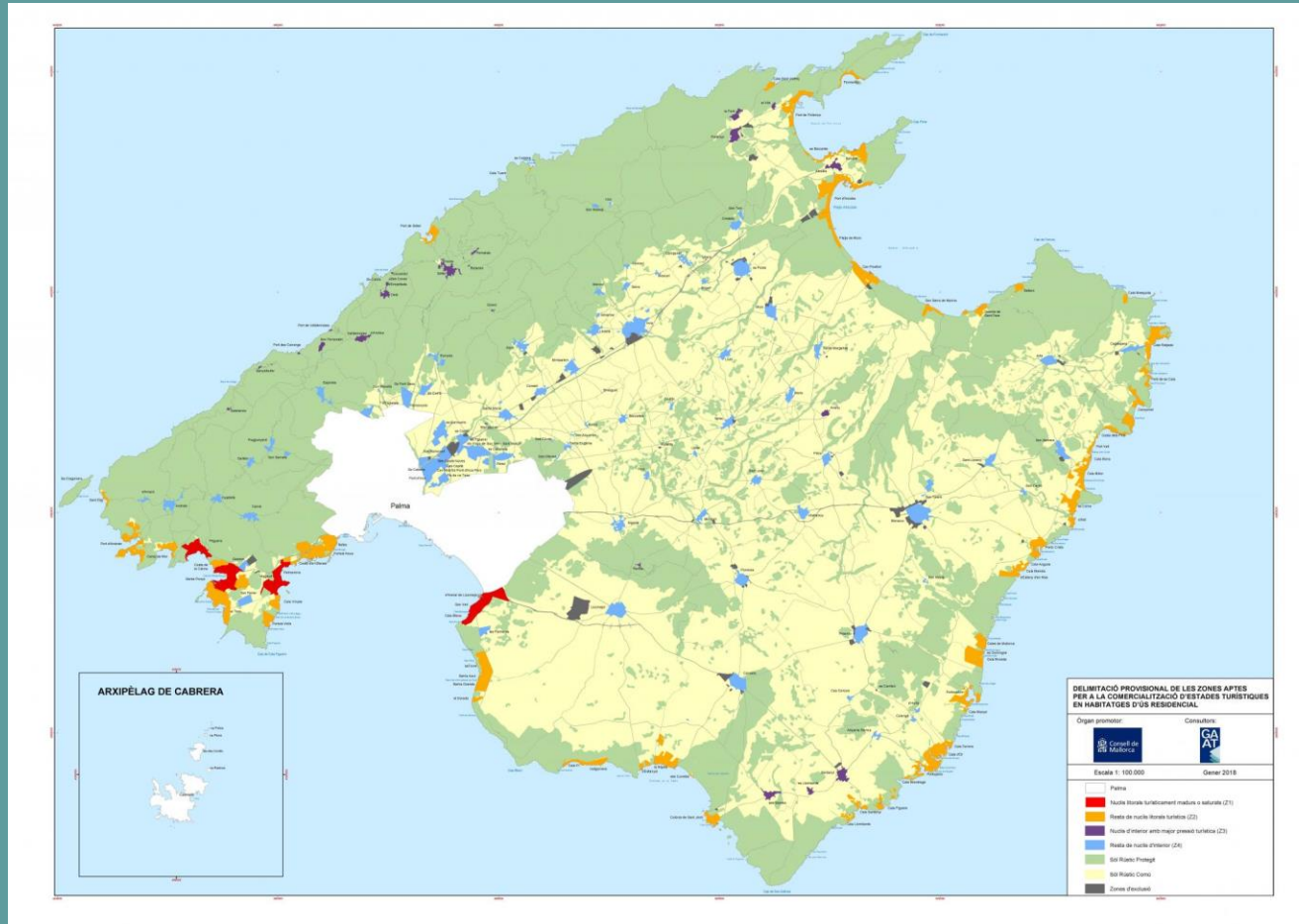
- ▶ **Development Controls (2017-2022)**

 - Moratorium on construction of new accommodation

 - Enforce licence (ETV) for owners of Short Term Rentals (15 staff)

 - Creation of zones to control / phase out STR accommodation

Zoning controls on tourist development



Introduction of Short Term Rental zoning permits (2017) to control geography of tourist development

Verdict - enforcement not sufficiently resourced with 3.5m tourists staying per year in illegal STRs (2024)

Red - coastal tourist saturated areas with controls - **Purple** - town & villages with controls - **Orange** - coastal areas not saturated - **Blue** - interior areas with few renting restrictions - **Yellow** - restrictions on renting apartments but not villas - **Green** - protected rural land, no new ETV licences - **Grey** - areas excluded from renting (i.e. industrial)

Policy Response?

Incitement to drink alcohol legislation (2020)

Geographically targeted at *Magaluf & S'Arenal*

Ban happy hours, free bars & other drinks promotions

Ban drinking on the street or beaches

Off-licence sales only 8am to 9.30pm



Policy Response?

Waste Law (2021)

Ban on single-use plastics



Check out Clean Wave Foundation
(& their documentary)



Policy Response?

Voluntary agreement with Cruise Lines & Shipping Agents (2022-2026)

- Limit of 3 cruise ships a day
- Only 1 of 3 can be a mega (>5000) cruise ship
- Up to 59,500 passengers a week
- Staggered arrival of ships to avoid 'sense of saturation'



Cannot be
legally
enforced

Policy Response?

2024

Forum of Civil Society in Mallorca

- Rethink Mallorca's model of tourism
- 'Quality, not Quantity' versus 'Degrowth'

2024-2025

Government of the Balearics Pact for Sustainability

- Working Groups to report Spring 2025
- 'Limit Tourist Arrivals' versus 'Degrowth'



Policy Tensions

Jaume Garau (Palma XXI)

“The public sector & business sector are simply talking about limiting tourist arrivals, but that would not be sustainable because it is no longer sustainable. There is only one option – degrowth”



Deya, once a secluded retreat in the Serra de Tramuntana, a UNESCO World Heritage site, now a social media event

Any questions?

RESOURCES

Overbooking (2019)

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/overbookingen>

Tot Inclos (2019)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_u0G4ZtsVs

Data on passenger flows & flights from PMI:

<https://mallorcaairport.com/statistics/>

Terreferida (environmental group) (click 'translate' in Google)

<https://terraferida.cat/>

Ciutat per a qui l'habita (critics of Palma's development)

<https://ciutatperaquilhabitablist.blog/>

Tot Inclos (a collective of critics of the island's development)

<https://totinclos.noblogs.org/>

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