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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM, SHOULD THEY RIDE TOGETHER? THE CASE OF THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

Aina Terrades Villalonga

Degree in Tourism

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Thesis Supervisor's Name Bartolomé Deyá Tortella

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Abstract

Sustainability and concern for the environment is a current and important global issue. By 2030, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) aims to make tourism a more sustainable and accessible economic activity for all people through the pursuit of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors worldwide, but it also generates major impacts on the environment, economy, and society of the tourist destination. Covid-19 has marked a before and after in the vision of sustainability, it has left devastating effects on the economy, as in the case of the Balearic Islands, but it has also served to see that things have to change, or other effects such as climate change will make it worse. For this reason, it is necessary to raise awareness among businesses and consumers so that the path towards more sustainable tourism can be possible.

1. Introduction

Sustainable development was first defined in 1987 as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations [UN], 1987, p.37). Sustainable development comprises three dimensions: social, economic, and environmental, to guarantee the quality of life of all people, an equitable growth of the economy and the care and preservation of the environment (Ayuso, 2003).

Concern for the environment has increased considerably since the late 1960s. It was then when it first became evident that something was wrong and social, economic, political, and environmental changes began to be suggested (Zarta, 2018). As concern for the environment increased, tourism activity continued to grow and gain importance, so the first concerns began to be raised about how tourism could affect the surrounding environment (Lalangui, 2017).

Tourism is the economic activity that has grown the most in recent years and moves millions of people around the world every year. It is an activity that has many impacts, both positive and negative, which influence the environment of a place, its economy and society, but in order to achieve sustainable tourism, the involvement of all stakeholders is necessary. (Barrera and Bahamondes, 2012).

For this study, an interview was conducted with two tourism companies that are very aware of sustainability and are a clear example to follow: Garden Hotels, a hotel chain in Mallorca, and Ético, a consultancy firm that helps and advises other companies on sustainability issues.

The aim of this work is to analyse the importance of sustainability in tourism in the Balearic Islands. For this reason, the work is structured in four main parts:

- The first part contextualises and defines sustainable development and explains what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are.
- The second part, which contextualises tourism, studies the evolution of tourism in the Balearic Islands, analyses relevant data on tourism in the Balearic Islands, the most important impacts of this sector and how Covid-19 has affected tourism. (All the data provided throughout the work do not take Covid-19 into account, except for the section dedicated only to the effects of Covid-19).
- A third part, where the importance of sustainability in tourism is studied by interviewing Garden Hotels and Ético.
- And the last part, dedicated to the conclusions of the work.

2. Sustainable Development

2.1 Context of Sustainable development

Over the last few years, the awareness of the environmental impacts and negative consequences has increased due to the different productive activities, which are aggravating the problem of climate change (Bermejo, 2014). It was in the 1960s when the first concerns about the environment appeared, and movements began to emerge that suggested changes in economic, social, cultural, and political aspects. In 1968, an NGO called the Club of Rome held a meeting with different professionals, including educators, economists, and scientists, where present and future issues of concern to humanity such as poverty, environmental destruction, unemployment, and the trend towards massive urbanisation were discussed (Zarta, 2018).

In 1984, the first meeting of the *World Commission on Environment and Development* (WCED) took place, where the aim was to create the basis for a more just and secure future for humanity, but this did not happen until 1987 (Zarta 2018). In this year, the commission presented the report '*Our Common Future*' also known as the '*Brundtland Report*', in this report are written the different environmental problems produced by the poor management of consumption that was carried out in some places and the high level of poverty that existed in others. In addition, one of the first definitions of *Sustainable Development* was given: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations, 1987, p.37). Mebratu (1998) states that the definition of WCED has been a key point in making humanity aware of the future of our planet.

Since then, the awareness of the population and of the different international organizations has increased for the pursuit of environmental measures (Mebratu, 1998). In 2005, the United Nations started an education initiative to promote a transition to a more sustainable world (Zarta, 2018). And it was in 2015, when the UN created the document called: "*Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development*". This agenda includes 17 goals to achieve sustainable development and build a sustainable future, pursuing to end global poverty, improve the quality of life of all people and protect the planet:

This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity. It also aims to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge facing the world and is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development (UN, 2015, p.1).

In 2019, the UN published a report called the "Sustainable Development Goals Report", which sought to find out what was being done well and what needed to be improved in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda. It was found that there had been improvements in some areas, but in others there was still a long way to go. The most alarming area was climate change, as the environment was deteriorating in a very worrying way. Global temperatures are expected to rise by

1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050, causing major global catastrophes, and poverty and hunger are expected to displace 140 million people by 2050. Another major problem was the huge increase in inequality between different parts of the world, with disease, poverty and hunger continuing to affect the most vulnerable countries. For these issues, areas that can improve the situation were highlighted: more effective institutions, increased financing, sustainable economies that promote local produce, resilience, better use of data for more real and accurate information, and technology and innovation. This report called for swift action by relevant institutions and international cooperation in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda as soon as possible (UN, 2019).

2.2 Concept of Sustainable Development

The word *Sustainable Development* refers to a state that is constant and dynamic, i.e., it is not fixed in time. It refers to the continuous progress that a process must make to not maintain stable (Ayuso, 2003). The most famous definition of *Sustainable Development* is the one given in the 'Brundtland Report'. Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Thanks to this concept, the importance of humanity's development has increased along with an improvement in the management of the planet's resources (Macedo, 2005). This definition states that the only way to move forward in a sustainable way is to consider environmental, social, and economic aspects (Johnston et al., 2007).

For some authors such as Sánchez et al. (2012), it is difficult to find a single definition of Sustainable Development as this term has evolved according to different historical moments. Moreover, because it is such a broad term, many contradictions have been created around its definition, since, depending on the field studied, the term Sustainable Development changes its meaning (Lee, 2013).

But despite the contradictions, many of the definitions of Sustainable Development agree that, in order to achieve sustainable development, the environment must be taken into account, respected and a relationship of social equity must be maintained in order to achieve economic growth (Artaraz, 2002). Therefore, sustainable development consists of the following dimensions:

- **Social Dimension:** To ensure that Sustainable Development leads to an increase in the quality of life of all people and that all people can have the same rights, and the reinforcement of the identity of different cultures (Ayuso, 2003). López et al. (2017) state that the social dimension is the great forgotten one. Throughout the literature on sustainable development, the environmental and economic dimensions have played a predominant role, with the social dimension losing out. The recent proposal of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations has opened a new opportunity for the importance of the social perspective to achieve sustainable development.

- **Economic dimension:** To ensure efficient economic development that benefits all stakeholders, and the proper management of existing resources so that present and future generations can benefit (Ayuso, 2003).
- **Environmental dimension:** To guarantee in time, a development compatible with existing natural resources, to preserve the biodiversity of ecosystems and to maintain essential ecological processes and guarantee life (Ayuso, 2003). For Artaraz (2002), this dimension assumes that the economy is circular, using only the necessary resources, without producing waste and closing the cycles, as nature does. In order to achieve sustainable environmental development, it is necessary to involve the relevant institutions in the implementation of environmental policies at the global level and in each country, in coordination with the economic and public sector and society (Vega, 2013).

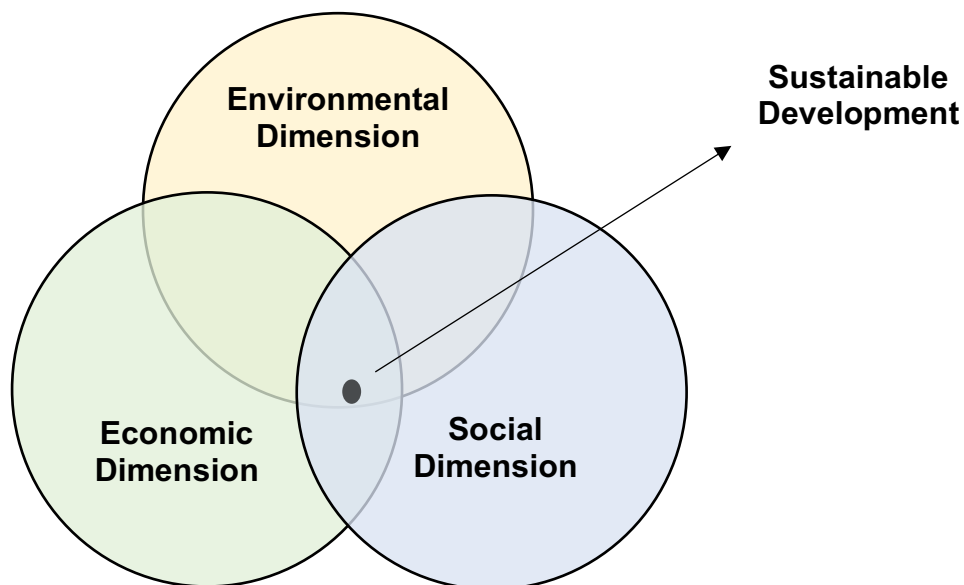


Figure 1. Three dimensions of Sustainable Development. Own elaboration, adapted from Ayuso (2003).

2.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs)

In September 2015, the UN National Assembly published '*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*'. This document proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals covering the three dimensions of Sustainable Development: environmental, economic, and social. These goals took more than two years to be developed, as negotiations took place between the different countries and interaction with society. The different states were allowed to be in charge of setting their own targets to achieve the different goals (Sustainable Development Goals, n. d.).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are:

- 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere:** With the aim of eradicating extreme poverty, guaranteeing equal rights among people and establishing different measures and systems of social protection. But above all to end the huge differences between rich and poor countries.
- 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture:** This objective aims to put an end to hunger and malnutrition, especially among the poorest and most vulnerable people, to increase sustainability in the different production systems and to increase investments for the improvement of rural infrastructures.
- 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages:** By 2030, the aim is to end preventable deaths of vulnerable people, eradicate pandemics and neglected diseases, and address alcohol and substance abuse. It also aims to increase investment in health and research.
- 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all:** To ensure that all children have an inclusive and equitable quality education, eradicate gender disparities in education, literacy for a large part of the adult population, and educational facilities for all.
- 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:** To eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls around the world, as well as acts of violence, and to encourage equality in all aspects.
- 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all:** To ensure universal and affordable access to safe drinking water, improving water quality by reducing pollution and regenerating water-related ecosystems.
- 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all:** Improving by 2030 energy efficiency and facilitating research and use of renewable and cleaner technologies.
- 8. Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all:** Achieve 7% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in least developed countries, achieve efficient production and consumption, and achieve full employment and decent work for all.
- 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation:** Reconvert and modify industries to be sustainable with better technology, increase investment in technological and scientific research, and facilitate access to information technology.

- 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries:** Facilitate orderly and safe migration with migration policies, promoting economic, social and political inclusion of all people.
- 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable:** Ensure basic services and access to housing for all people, protect cultural heritage and seek to reduce deaths and losses from disasters.
- 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns:** Achieving by 2030 a halving of food waste per person, as well as in production chains. Making efficient use of resources and making tourism sustainable and generating jobs while respecting local culture.
- 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts:** Raise public awareness of the effects of climate change and how to combat it and strengthen the capacity for adaptation and resilience to climate effects.
- 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development:** Reducing ocean acidification, marine pollution and banning some fishing subsidies that encourage massive fishing. Also, by adopting measures to strengthen marine ecosystems.
- 15. Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss:** Stop deforestation, implement urgent measures to minimise natural habitats, stop illegal hunting and trafficking of endangered species, and invest to conserve biodiversity and ecosystems.
- 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels:** Ensure fair justice for all, end corruption, ensure accessible information for all and promote non-discriminatory policies.
- 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development:** Improving financing systems, technology, enhancing capacity building and promoting equitable, secure, and non-discriminatory trade (United Nations, 2015).

3. Tourism

3.1 Concept and importance of tourism

The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines tourism as: "A social, cultural and economic phenomenon involving the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal, business or professional reasons". These people are qualified as travellers, and they can be tourists or excursionists, residents, or non-residents (UNWTO, n. d.). It also defines the tourism industry as the set of enterprises, establishments and other organisations that produce and offer tourism services. These industries are (UNWTO, 2021):

Tourism industries	Accommodation for visitors
	Food and beverage serving activities
	Railway passenger transport
	Road passenger transport
	Water passenger transport
	Air passenger transport
	Transport equipment rental
	Travel agencies and other reservation services activities
	Cultural activities
	Sports and recreational activities
	Retail trade of country-specific tourism characteristics goods
	Other country-specific tourism characteristic activities

Figure 2. Main Tourism Industries. Own elaboration adapted from (UNWTO, 2021).

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is an organisation created by the United Nations on 1 November 1975. It seeks to promote tourism in a more sustainable way, responsible tourism and accessible to all people. Its headquarters are located in Madrid, Spain, it is composed of 159 States, 6 Associate Members and more than 500 affiliates. UNWTO aims to address the challenges facing tourism and to seek solutions to bring about positive changes in the tourism sector by contributing to economic growth, inclusive development, and environmental sustainability, seeking to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. (UNWTO, 2021).

Since the existence of humanity, man has been motivated by different reasons to move to different places, for reasons such as hunting, trade, wars, among others. And this has continued to be the case throughout the different epochs. But it was not until the second half of the 20th century that mass tourism appeared (Sancho, 1998). Tourism has expanded and diversified worldwide over the last six decades, becoming one of the most important economic sectors in the world. Every year, tourism moves billions of travellers around the world, with an estimated growth of up to 3.3% per year until 2030. International arrivals have

been increasing from 25 million in 1950 to 1.2 billion in 2015. The UNWTO forecasts that in the long term, international traveller arrivals will grow to 1800 million (UNWTO, 2017).

The tourism industry is a very complex industry due to the involvement of many economic sectors in its development and all the elements that compose it. The expenditures generated by visitors during their stay derive to be income generated by tourism that are considered as exports in the destination country (host country). This income helps to generate employment, generate income and is a valuable source of foreign currency that helps to increase public revenue, to stabilise the balance of payments and promote business activity in the host country (Sancho, 1998).

Internationally, tourism accounts for 7% of total world exports and 30% of services exports. It also ranks third as a global export category, behind fuel and chemicals. Spain is one of the world's leading tourist destinations, ranking third internationally in 2015 in terms of revenue generated by tourism, and first in Europe with 51 billion euros. It is worth noting that 68 million visitors stayed overnight in Spain in 2015. On the other hand, tourism in Spain is characterised by its seasonality due to the fact that it is a sun and beach destination chosen above all by tourists from Northern Europe, strongly affecting the seasonality of employment and income for local workers (UNWTO, 2017).

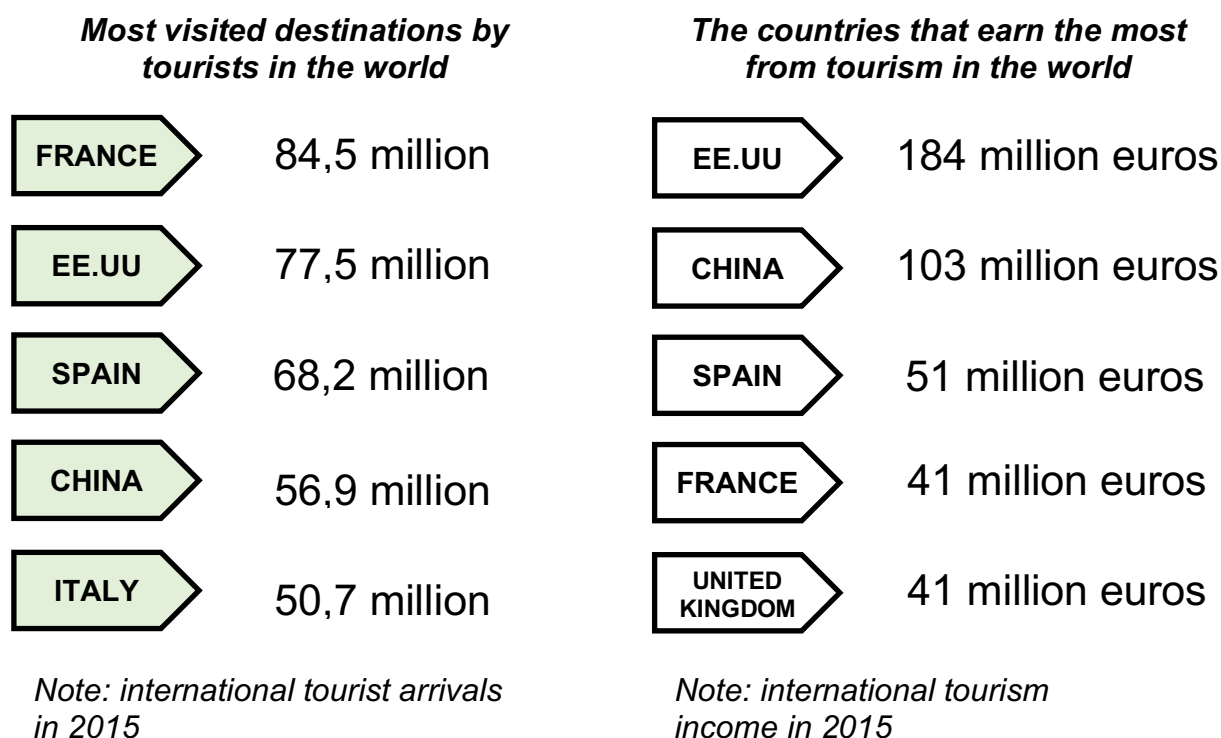


Figure 3. Most visited destinations by tourists in the world and the countries that earn the most from tourism. Own elaboration based on data obtained from UNWTO (2017).

3.2 Evolution of tourism in the Balearic Islands

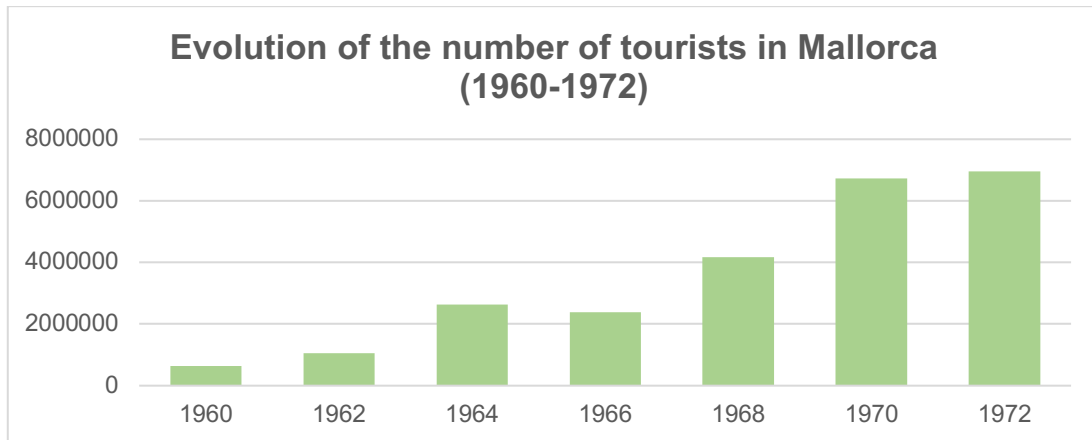
The Balearic Islands, and especially Mallorca, were the place of exile for many writers and artists, many of them enlightened. They wrote many works recounting their experiences, which served to raise awareness of the Balearic Islands in Europe and attracted many poets, writers, and musicians such as Chopin and George Sand. In 1837 there was an important improvement in maritime communications and the first regular line was created, which linked Palma-Barcelona regularly with the steamship *El Mallorquín*. (Pons, 2002).

During the years 1909-1936, tourism was confronted with different events that slowed down its evolution. These included the First World War (1914-1918) and its consequences, such as the subsistence crisis in 1917 and the influenza epidemic in 1918. Another event was the economic crisis of 1929 caused by the crash of the New York stock exchange and its worldwide consequences. Also at this time, there were improvements in the means of communication such as the mass production of cars, a little later on, car excursions started to be made in Mallorca, although it was considered a luxury good. Hotel activity was increased by the creation of high-quality hotels such as the *Hotel Formentor* (1926) and the *Gran Hotel* (1910) and by the creation of the “*Fomento de las Islas Baleares*”, which would be the organisation in charge of promoting tourism in the Balearic Islands (Caro, 2002).

The period between 1936 and 1955 was one of the most difficult for the economy of the islands and for the tourism sector. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the Second World War (1939-1945) took place, and the arrival of tourists was paralysed. The possibility of travelling for pleasure became something that only very few could afford. In 1949, four years after the end of the Second World War, the first tourists began to arrive, and the first regular Palma-Alger foreign route was inaugurated. Due to economic and social improvements, it allowed thousands of people from central and northern Europe to choose the islands as their holiday destination. In 1955, the Mediterranean areas received 19 million tourists, and Spain 2.5 million, thus mass tourism was born (Santana, 2002).

Between 1960-1973, tourist activity grew considerably. This period is known as the tourist boom, due to the massive arrival of tourists in the Balearic Islands, but especially in Mallorca. On the other hand, in Menorca, Ibiza and Formentera, tourist activity was still in its infancy. The airports were located close to the tourist areas and in some cases, it was necessary to expand the facilities with new terminals. All this happened due to the geographical location of the Balearic Islands, which allows for a pleasant climate, natural landscapes, beaches with crystal clear water and its proximity to different European countries. Due to this increase in tourist activity, there were changes in the habits of the local population and in leisure, which contributed to the opening of the islands to the outside world. Between 1968 and 1970, many hotels were built in Mallorca, especially in the coastal areas such as the *Paseo Marítimo de Palma*, *Arenal*, *Magaluf*, and *Santa Ponça*, among others. Also, in *the Port of Mahón* in Menorca and in *Sant Antoni de Portmany* in Ibiza. (Pujals, 2002).

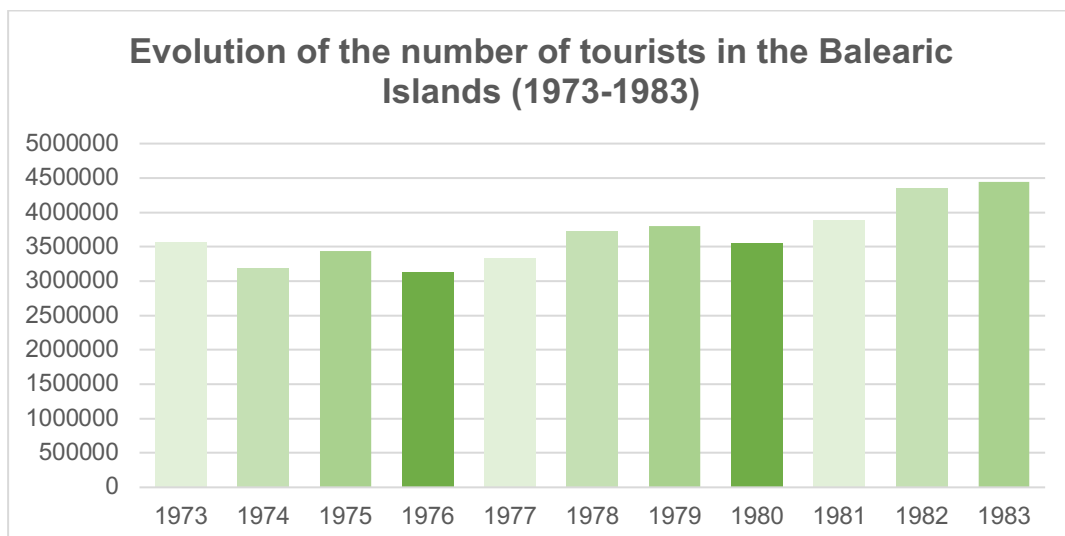
The graphic 1 shows how in one decade the arrival of tourists to the Balearic Islands increased exponentially due to the tourist boom. The number of tourists increased from 636,764 in 1960 to 6,946,491 in 1972, representing an annual increase in the number of tourists of 72%.



Graphic 1. Evolution of the number of tourists in Mallorca (1960-1972). Own elaboration based on data obtained from Picornell et al. (2002).

During the period between 1973 and 1983, tourism worldwide decreased considerably due to two historical events. The first event (1973-1978) was the world crisis provoked by the economic crisis caused by the increase in the price of oil, and the second event (1979-1983) was a tourist recovery until the arrival of the second tourist boom in Spain and the Balearic Islands. In addition, during these years, the creation of the different Autonomous Communities was taking place in Spain (Matas, 2002).

The graphic 2 shows a drop in tourist arrivals to the islands in 1974 of almost 11% compared to the previous year due to the world crisis caused by the increase in the price of oil. From 1978 onwards, there was a slight increase in tourist arrivals, which increased every year until reaching 4,446,220 tourists in 1983.



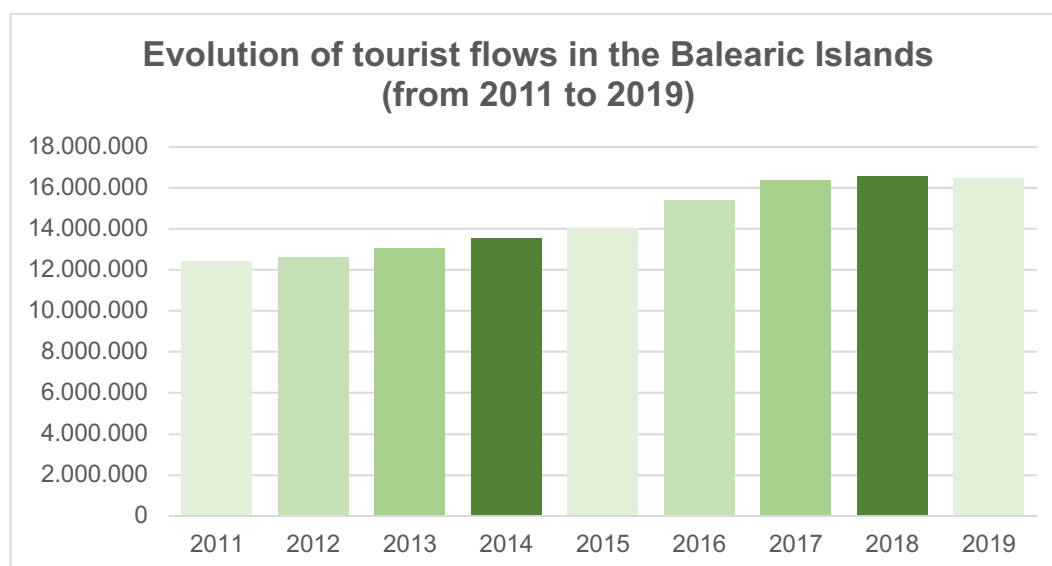
Graphic 2. Evolution of the number of tourists in the Balearic Islands (1973-1983). Own elaboration based on data obtained from Picornell et al. (2002).

The period 1983-2002 was characterised by a significant increase in tourist demand and by the fulfilment of Mallorca's life cycle as a tourist destination. This life cycle consists of different stages, ranging from its inception or creation as a tourist destination, development, consolidation, obsolescence, decline, to the maturity of the tourist destination. The Balearic Islands, and to a large extent Mallorca, have gone through all these stages until reaching saturation as a tourist destination, which is why Balearic society reflected on the benefits and problems of tourism and began to consider a more sustainable development of tourism for the near future (Picornell and Picornell, 2002).

From 2002 to the present day, tourist activity in the Balearic Islands has been affected by various crises such as the 2001 crisis, which affected Spain and lasted until 2003, the world crisis caused by the real estate boom in 2009 and the world crisis caused by Covid-19 in 2020. The last crisis has undoubtedly had the greatest impact on tourism due to health and mobility restrictions and the confinement of many countries. The number of tourists in 2020 fell drastically from 16,444,775 tourists in 2019 to 3,072,840 in 2020. It is worth noting that during the 2008 crisis, GDP in Spain fell by approximately 3.6%, and during the 2020 crisis, it fell by up to 11% (Bardolet, 2013).

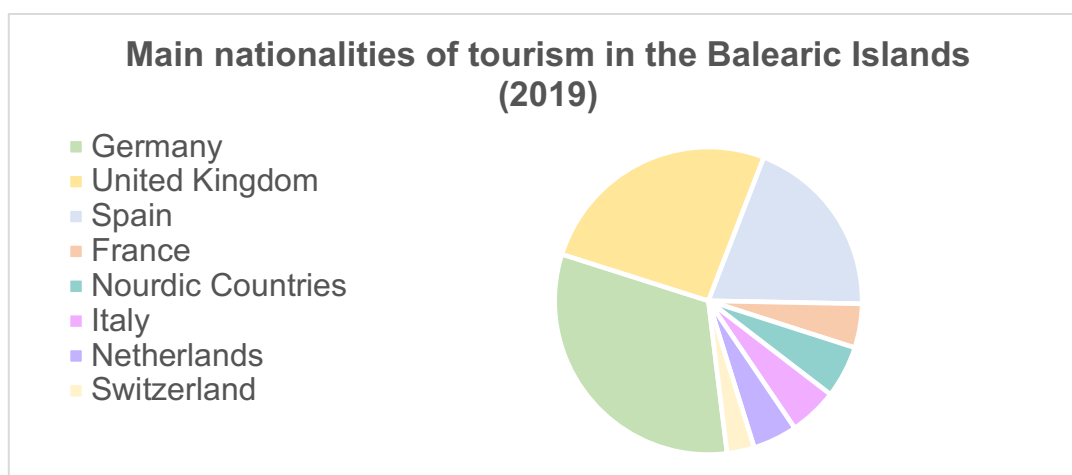
3.3 Balearic Islands tourism data before Covid-19

Over the last few years, the flow of tourists to the Balearic Islands has increased notably from 12,435,958 tourists in 2011 to 16,444,775 in 2019, representing an increase of 32% (see graphic 3). The most notable increase occurred in 2016, with the flow of tourists growing by almost 10% in one year compared to 2015. It is only in 2019 that we can see a small decrease of 0.7% in the flow of tourists compared to 2018.



Graphic 3. Evolution of tourists flows in the Balearic Islands (2011-2019). Own elaboration based on data obtained from IBESTAT (2021).

In 2019, a total of 16,444,775 tourists travelled to the Balearic Islands. The main sending countries are Germany, United Kingdom, Spain, France, Nordic Countries, Italy, Netherlands and Switzerland, and these account for 86% with a total of 14,216,664 tourists in 2019, the other 14% come in smaller percentages from different parts of the world. The country where most tourists come from is Germany with 32% of the total, followed by the United Kingdom with 26% and Spain with 19%. France, Nordic Countries, Italy, and the Netherlands each account for 5% of the total, and Switzerland accounts for 3%.



Graphic 4. Main nationalities of tourism in the Balearic Islands (2019). Own elaboration based on data obtained from IBESTAT (2021).

In table 1, it can be seen how the Norwegian tourist is the one with the longest stay with an average of 6.77 days in 2019, with a difference of 6% less than in 2018. This is followed by German tourists with an average of 6.13 days and English tourists with an average of 5.98 days in 2019. Tourists coming from Belgium, France, Netherlands range between 5-6 days on average, and tourists coming from Spain and other parts of the world between 3-4 days on average.

Origin	2019	2018	% Variation 18/19
Spain	3,39	3,66	-7%
Germany	6,13	6,48	-5%
Belgium	5,68	5,8	-2%
France	5,49	5,53	-1%
Netherlands	5,85	5,88	-1%
United Kingdom	5,98	6,16	-3%
Norway	6,77	7,23	-6%
Rest of the world	3,35	3,59	-7%

Table 1. Average stay of travellers by nationality in the Balearic Islands (2019-2018). Own elaboration based on data obtained from IBESTAT (2021).

Total tourist expenditure in the Balearic Islands has increased significantly since 2016. The most remarkable increase in spending occurred in 2017, with a total expenditure of 16.037 million euros, representing an increase of 11.91% compared to 2016. From 2017 onwards, tourist spending continued to increase, although more moderately, by 1.55% in 2018 and 1.25% in 2019.

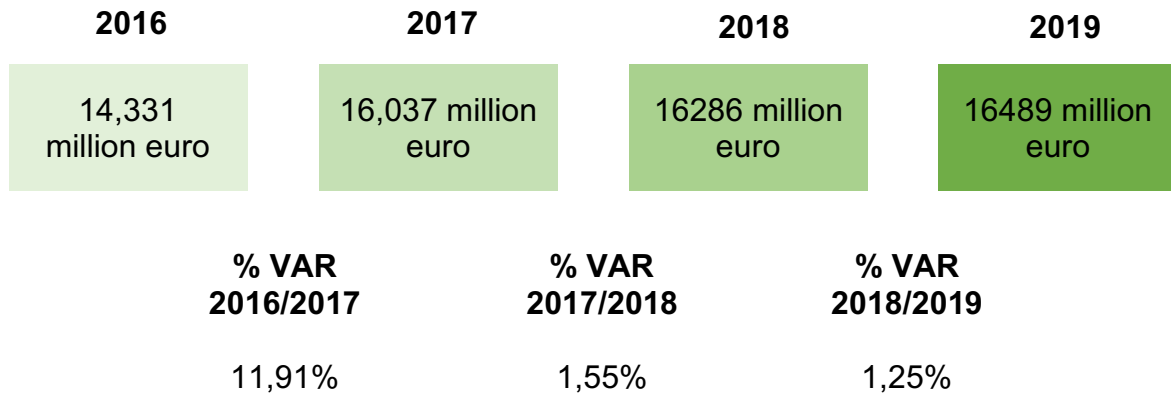
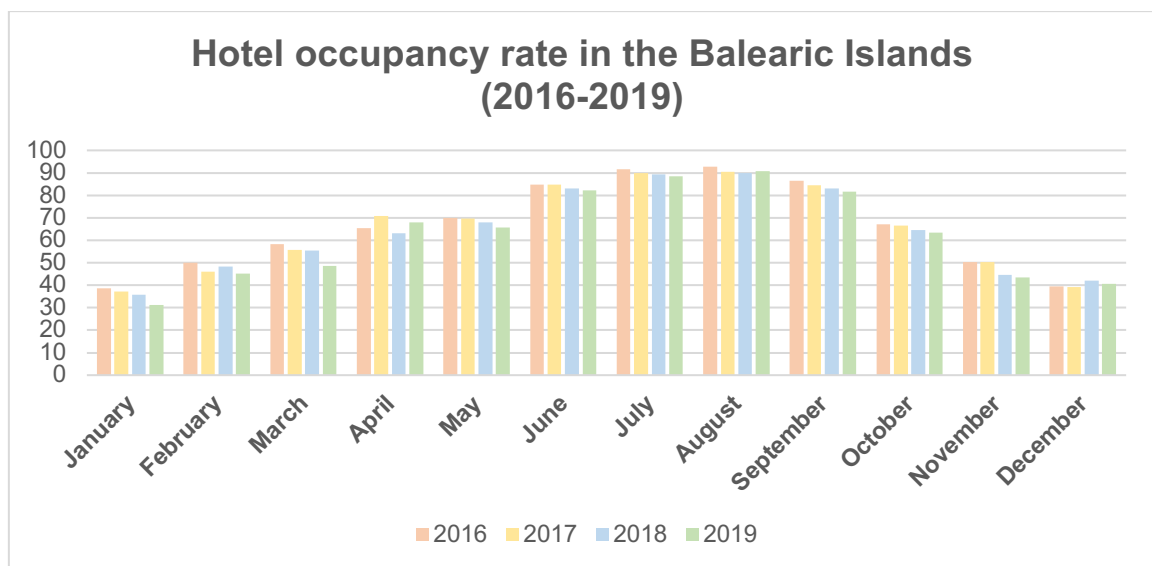


Figure 4. Total tourist expenditure in the Balearic Islands (2016-2019). Own elaboration based on data obtained from IBESTAT (2021).

As can be observed in the graphic 5, the Balearic Islands are highly marked by seasonality. The months with the highest levels of hotel occupancy are June, July, August, and September, with around 90% of total hotel occupancy, although the season starts in May and ends in October in the majority of hotels focused on sun and beach tourism. The months with a lower occupancy rate are December and January with an occupancy rate of around 30-40% of total occupancy. The occupancy rate has been gradually decreasing over the last few years, except for the months of July, August and December, which have remained stable over the years.



Graphic 5. Hotel occupancy rate in the Balearic Islands (2016-2019). Own elaboration based on information obtained from IBESTAT (2021).

3.4 Impacts of tourism

The rapid expansion of the tourism sector has meant that both new and traditional tourist destinations are facing increased pressure on their natural, social and economic environments (Quintero, 2004). Today, tourism is no longer seen as an economic activity that only brings benefits, but also entails costs. Initially, the impact generated by tourism was assessed only in economic terms, but this has changed since the consideration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, so now the impact is also assessed in environmental and socio-cultural terms (Picornell, 2015).

The different impacts generated by tourism are due to the interaction of tourists with the destination and its population. From this interaction arises the term carrying capacity:

The threshold or limit of tolerance beyond which the facilities are saturated (physical carrying capacity), the visitor's welfare decreases (perceptual or psychological carrying capacity), the resident population feels discomfort due to the excessive increase of tourists (social carrying capacity) or the environment is degraded (environmental carrying capacity) (Quintero, 2004, p. 265).

The different social, economic, and environmental subsystems define their carrying capacities. The effect of the impacts will depend on the tolerance limits of each subsystem, which will be positive if they do not exceed the established tolerance limits and negative if they exceed them (Picornell, 2015).

3.4.1 Economic Impacts

Of all the impacts produced by tourism activity, the economic impact is the most researched. The economic impact is the most easily measurable, as economic benefits and costs can be expressed in quantitative terms, whereas socio-cultural and environmental impacts are measured in qualitative terms and are therefore more difficult to assess (Picornell, 2015).

Tourism is an industry dependent on the human factor, so it favours job creation both in the tourism sector and in related sectors. Likewise, tourist spending also favours the destination visited as well as different related local activities, due to a multiplier effect (Ayuso, 2003). Tourist activity is considered to be the driving force of the economy as it favours the development of infrastructures for the improvement of the destination, such as improvements in communications and access roads, for example the improvement of airports and motorways. It also stimulates increased demand for local products and the economic growth of the tourist destination. Tourism can therefore generate economic improvements in the standard of living of the local population, as it increases the distribution of income in the destination area (Quintero, 2004).

On the other hand, the tourism sector also generates economic costs. Firstly, economic overdependence on tourism, as economies that are overly dependent on tourism are more vulnerable to change and are more at risk in situations of

economic crisis, political instability and global pandemics. These types of situations can lead to a decrease in demand and, therefore, the economy of these places is severely affected. Secondly, seasonality of demand as many tourist destinations are only in demand for a few months of the year, such as winter sports destinations, water sports and sun and beach destinations. This results in temporary contracts and generally unskilled labour, workers in the tourism sector being employed for only a few months of the year, and the high fixed costs of the hospitality industry during periods of low tourism (Quintero, 2004). Thirdly, tourism can generate inflation due to a rise in land prices, as the scarcity of land for construction, together with a high demand for land, often leads to a rise in prices. Fourthly, over-dependence on foreign investment capital and finally, the displacement of local economic sectors that are not at the same level as the tourism sector, such as agriculture and livestock farming (Ayuso, 2003).

The impact of tourism on the economy includes both direct and indirect effects, the direct effect measures exclusively the impact of the industries that provide services directly to tourists and the indirect effect measures the inputs necessary for the direct service to tourists to be produced, such as the fishing activity necessary to satisfy the demand for fish in hotels. In the case of the Balearic Islands, in 2014 it was estimated that the volume of activity generated by the Balearic Islands economy necessary to satisfy tourism demand was 13,266.7 million euros, of which 9,644.6 million euros were direct effects of tourism, representing 72.7% of the total, and 3,622.2 million euros were indirect effects of tourism, representing 27.3% (CSTIB, 2014).

Benefits	Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job creation (direct and indirect) - Increased and improved income distribution in the local population. - Increased demand for goods and services - Development and improvement of the destination's infrastructure - Increased demand for local goods - Economic growth of the tourist destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic overdependence of some destinations on tourism - Seasonality of tourism demand - Potential for tourism-led inflation - Excessive dependence on foreign capital - Displacement of local economic sectors

Table 2. Main tourism economic impacts. Own elaboration, adapted from Ayuso (2003) and Quintero (2004).

3.4.2 Socio-cultural Impacts

Tourism brings people from different places, with very different customs and cultures into contact with each other. The socio-cultural impact of tourism is analysed by looking at changes in the way of life of the local population of the tourist destination, affecting value systems, moral and ethical behaviour, lifestyle and traditional culture, among others. Just as economic impacts were focused on the benefits obtained, socio-cultural impacts have generally been analysed from a negative point of view (Picornell, 2015).

Each tourist destination has a certain social carrying capacity, which is usually determined by the evolution of the tourist/resident ratio, as follows (Doxey, 1975, as cited in Picornell, 2015):

- **Euphoria:** In the early stages of the tourism industry, the local population is highly motivated and enthusiastic about hosting tourists. There is a mutual feeling of satisfaction on the part of residents and locals.
- **Apathy:** As tourism grows, tourism activity is perceived as a business from which money can be made and they seek to exploit tourism activity to the maximum.
- **Irritation:** Tourism activity starts to become saturated, and the local population cannot deal with it alone. Politicians try to solve the problems that have arisen by limiting growth and creating new infrastructure.
- **Antagonism:** The carrying capacity is exceeded and the tourist is seen as the cause of the problems. The image of the tourist destination deteriorates.
- **Final phase:** In this phase, the destination enters a stage of decline that is difficult to overcome. There is a diversity of opinions, some speak of what has been lost and others adapt even though they know that it will not be the same as before.

As long as the cumulative impacts of tourism activity and tourist numbers do not exceed the threshold of tolerance and the economic impacts are positive, tourists will be accepted by a large part of the local population. On the other hand, if the social tolerance threshold is exceeded, discontent among the local population towards tourists will begin and may affect the quality of the tourist experience (Ayuso, 2003).

Ayuso (2003) also states that tourism can have positive effects on the local population, such as provoking an interest on the part of residents in their culture, awareness of their history, as well as being a tourist attraction. In addition, tourism can generate an increase in respect and understanding of different cultures. However, it can also have negative effects such as the deculturalisation of the destination due to the adaptation of the visitors' culture, making the destination's own culture disappear. Another problem can arise in places with mass tourism, as it is a type of tourism that does not favour cultural exchange and causes tensions between tourists and residents.

Benefits	Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preservation and rehabilitation of monuments and historical sites in the destination. - Increased interest in local culture on the part of residents. - Cultural exchange - Increased tolerance and respect for other cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mismanagement of mass tourism - Increased social problems and confrontations between residents and locals - Loss of the destination's own culture

Table 3. Main socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Own elaboration, adapted from Ayuso (2003).

3.4.3 Environmental Impacts

The environment of a tourist destination has become the attraction for tourists, and many of these environments are often fragile and more vulnerable to human pressure and at risk of rapid degradation, such as small islands, coastal areas, places with a lot of historical heritage, among others (Quintero, 2004). Some of the impacts at the global level are CO₂ emissions produced largely by air and car travel, disproportionate use of existing resources, loss of biodiversity, and environmental degradation, among others. The most affected areas in Western Europe are the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea, and the North Sea coasts (Wong, 2004).

Tourism can have a positive effect on the tourist destination as it can contribute to the enhancement of the natural environment of a given area, since a well-preserved and well-maintained environment is of great value for tourism. An example would be the restoration of certain buildings and infrastructures of the destination in order to give a good image of the place and attract more tourists (Ayuso, 2003).

On the other hand, tourism also has negative effects on the environment (Araujo and Torres, 2013):

- Extinction of species
- Problems derived from the production of waste and its collection.
- Changes in certain habits of the population
- Massive construction of infrastructures for tourist activity
- Vehicle congestion
- Increased density of people in a given place during high seasons
- Excessive use of the water

In addition to these previous effects, Picornell (2015) adds that the creation of new infrastructures leads to architectural pollution, as large hotel constructions are built in coastal areas causing a *ribbon effect* around coasts and mountains. Also, overloading of infrastructures due to increased density of people in high season leads to pollution and health problems.

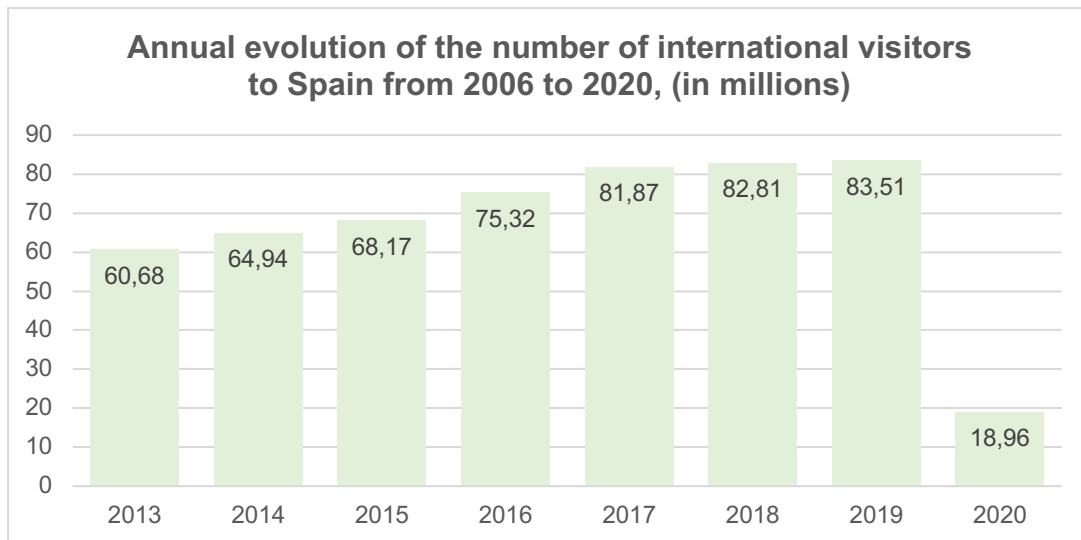
Benefits	Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revaluation of the natural environment - Increased care of natural areas due to their high value for tourism - Restoration of habitats and creation of nature reserves through awareness raising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waste management problems - CO2 emissions from air and car transport - Water pollution from wastewater discharges - Noise and light pollution - Excessive water use - Increasing density of people - Change of traditional architecture to different styles - Alteration of the natural and urban landscape - Destruction of natural habitats - Erosion and degradation of the environment in coastal areas - Increased traffic

Table 4. Main environmental impacts of tourism. Own elaboration, adapted from Picornell (2015), Araujo and Torres (2013) and Ayuso (2003).

3.5 Covid-19. How has it affected the tourism sector?

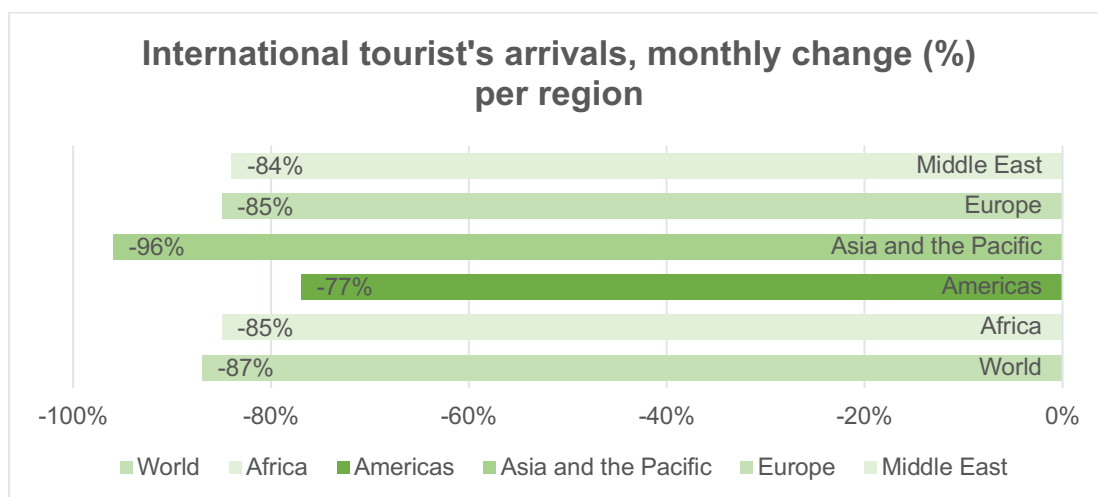
The first detection of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus cases began at the end of 2019 in China, in the Hubei capital, Wuhan. It soon affected all the countries of the world, with the World Health Organisation (WHO) declaring it a pandemic on 11 March. On 14 March 2020, the Spanish government declared a "State of Health Alarm due to COVID-19". This state of alert has led to the imposition of a long list of restrictions to curb the spread of the virus, with mobility restrictions having been introduced on 20 April for 100% of the world's destinations (Fernandez, 2020). Mobility restrictions have affected Spain the most, causing a very large drop in air passenger traffic in Spain. In 2020, Spain recorded a total of 76 million passengers compared to 275 million passengers recorded in 2019. The airports that have been most affected are Palma de Mallorca with a drop of 80% of passengers, followed by El Prat in Barcelona, and Elche in Alicante with a drop of up to 75% of passengers. (Díaz, 2021).

As can be seen in graphic 6, the tourism situation before Covid-19 was very good, worldwide international tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion tourists, being the tenth consecutive year with sustainable growth in tourism, millions of jobs had been generated including a large proportion of women and young people in the labour market, and it was the third most important export sector, generating 50% of exports in many developed countries. In Spain, 83.5 million tourists chose Spain as a tourist destination, generating revenues of 90 billion euros. The autonomous communities with the highest number of tourists were *Catalonia, Andalusia, Valencian Community and the archipelagos* by the British, French and Germans, among others. (INE, 2021)



Graphic 6. Annual evolution of the number of international visitors to Spain from 2006 to 2020. Own elaboration based on data from INE (February 3, 2021).

According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (2021), international traveller arrivals have fallen by 87% compared to the previous year, due to the appearance of new variants of the virus and the introduction of more restrictions on travel (see graphic 7). The Asia-Pacific region has imposed the most restrictions, with a fall of 96% compared to 2020, followed by Africa and Europe with a fall of 85%, the fall in arrivals in the Middle East was 84%. On the other hand, the region with the smallest decline was the Americas with a fall of 77%, due to an improvement in the situation at the end of 2020. By 2021, the tourism situation was expected to improve due to the creation of vaccines, but the process is slower than expected in some countries and cases continue to increase, so mobility restrictions continue to increase.



Graphic 7. International tourist's arrivals, monthly change (%) per region. Own elaboration based on data obtained from UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (n. d.)

In the case of the Balearic Islands, the crisis has greatly affected the islands' dependence on tourism, and according to data published by IBESTAT (2021), the number of tourists received by the islands fell from 16,444,775 in 2019 to 18,96 million in 2020.

3,072,840, representing a drop of 81.31% compared to 2019. It should also be noted that tourists in 2020 spent 82.1% less than in 2019. Domestic tourists spent 50% less and international tourists up to 85.7% less in 2020.

Tourists arrivals to Balearic Islands (2020/2019)			
Origin	2020	2019	% Variation 19/20
TOTAL	3,072,840	16,444,775	-81,31%
Germany	718,648	4,526,809	-84,12%
United Kingdom	223,309	3,691,427	-93,95%
Spain	1,351,288	2,764,993	-51,13%
France	181,897	763,634	-76,18%
Nourdic Countries	63,979	778,676	-91,78%
Italy	114,735	725,544	-84,19%
Netherlands	92,523	663,400	-86,05%
Switzerland	62,909	470,584	-86,63%

Table 5. Tourists arrivals to the Balearic Islands in 2020 and the variation between 2019 and 2020. Own elaboration based on data obtained from IBESTAT (2021).

Over the last year, changes in tourist behaviour due to the pandemic and mobility restrictions have been noticeable. According to the UNWTO (2021) some of these trends are:

- **Proximity:** Local tourism has increased since, in many parts of the world, restrictions limit travel to other countries, so tourists have adapted and visited areas closer to their place of residence.
- **New concerns:** Health and safety measures and cancellation policies on bookings have become the most important issues when deciding and scheduling a trip.
- **Rural getaways:** Due to social distancing measures, mandatory face masks and the quest for outdoor experiences, many people have chosen rural and wilderness getaways.
- **Last minute:** Last minute bookings have increased considerably due to great uncertainty, changes, and mobility restrictions.
- **Social responsibility:** Tourists have placed a higher value on the real experience of a destination by getting to know local communities, and awareness of sustainability has increased.
- **Demographic change:** Young travellers have been characterised as more resilient to the COVID-19 situation than older and retired travellers, who have been the most affected by the reactivation.

Despite all the negative things that the crisis has brought for COVID-19, the UNWTO (2021) affirms that this crisis has also served to think how the tourism sector should be from now on. This standstill has served to transform and change the relationship between the tourism sector and nature and to collaborate in the fulfilment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It is necessary to see how the tourism sector affects the different ecosystems and natural resources, seeking to make tourism sustainable in all areas, socially, environmentally, and economically. The tourism sector should be transformed into a more resilient sector to cope with different economic threats and more efficient in the use of resources. A global response is needed by all stakeholders to activate and promote a transformation in tourism, along with more investment in green economy and economic recovery assistance.

4. Sustainability and Tourism in the Balearic Islands

4.1 The importance of sustainability in tourism

As seen in the first sections on sustainability and tourism, tourism has a great economic, social, and environmental impact and is therefore a sector that is closely related to all three areas of sustainability. A change in destination planning and decision-making is necessary to fully enjoy the benefits offered by tourism, as it is clear that there is no turning back, climate change and its serious consequences, social and economic problems arising from tourism and the loss of cultural and natural heritage, among others (Streimikiene et al., 2020).

De la Fuente (2019), states that sustainable tourism is only possible if all parties involved in the tourism value chain take responsibility by managing their activities that affect the natural and cultural environment, with the aim of bringing greater benefits to the local population of a tourist site and to those who visit it. To this end, research, innovations, and technological development can help this process and provide solutions to address the environmental challenges of tourism development (Streimikiene et al., 2020).

The importance of sustainability in tourism has been present for more than two decades, when different initiatives began to be carried out, such as the entry into force in 1975 of the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES), the first appearance of the term *sustainable tourism* in 1991, the creation of the programme *Towards Sustainable Development* by the European Commission in 1993, the approval of *The code of ethics for tourism in Santiago de Chile* in 1999, and in 2006 the *Tourism Act* was presented in Bhutan for the regulation of sustainable tourism, among many other actions by different institutions. Thanks to global involvement, a before and after in the development of sustainable tourism has been marked (Lalangui, 2017).

The year 2017 was declared the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development with the aim of raising awareness of tourism's contribution to sustainable development, mobilising all stakeholders in the tourism sector and inducing changes in consumer behaviour. The consolidation of the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) was also sought, with

the aim of supporting the continuous improvement of sustainability and cooperating in the recovery of the tourism sector through the collection of regular data and adequate measurements of economic, social, and environmental impact and to be able to make appropriate decisions (UNWTO, 2017).

This year 2021, Mallorca will be presented as a candidate for the World Observatory on Sustainable Tourism of UNWTO because Mallorca is a leading tourist destination and aims to continue to be so, and for this it is necessary to make it known that tourism activity is a means to regenerate the environment, the economy, and the well-being of residents. The Observatory will allow (Fundació Mallorca Turisme, 2021):

- Improve Mallorca's strategic planning process.
- Anticipate the behaviour of demand markets.
- Redesign the communication and digital marketing strategy.
- Relate new demand or new potential demand to the availability of new maritime or air connections.
- Assisting in the definition of new tourism products based on the concept of visitor experience.
- Work to reconcile the feelings of the local population towards tourism.
- Improving the management of tourist flows and movements to the destination.
- Strengthen the products identified as strategic for Mallorca as a destination, such as gastronomic, sports, cultural and MICE tourism, among others.
- Establish an Open Data project on tourism and sustainability, giving access to all members of the Observatory, and facilitating access to data for researchers, stakeholders, and the local community.

4.2 Perspectives on tourism and sustainable development: The case of Garden Hotels and Ético

As we have seen throughout this work, sustainable development and tourism can and should ride together, and more and more companies are becoming aware of this and want to be part of this process, doing their bit to make tourism an activity that brings benefits to tourism companies, to all people and to the environment.

For this work, two interviews were carried out to analyze the perspective of two tourism companies that are committed to sustainability: Garden Hotels and Ético. For the company Garden Hotels, an interview was conducted with Jaume Ordinas, the general auditor at the Garden offices in Inca. And for the company Ético, an interview was conducted via zoom with Laura Garrido, the founder of Ético. In addition, information provided by the websites of both companies was also used.

Garden Hotels is a familiar hotel chain founded in 1986 in Mallorca, with more than 30 years of experience in hotel operation, and is very involved with the environment, the local community, and its suppliers. Its president is Mr. Miquel Ramis, and they currently have 13 hotels of 3- and 4-stars in Spain: Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza, and Huelva.

On the other hand, Ético is a consultancy company that helps and advises tourism companies to become more sustainable. Ético was founded 3 years ago, after its founder, Laura Garrido, detected that sustainability was the perfect formula to generate value to the tourism sector and because of her great concern for the environment.

4.2.1 Interview

As Laura Garrido (Ético) rightly states, there has always been a false belief that sustainable development only encompasses the environmental part, leaving aside the social area, which is the eternally forgotten one. It is necessary to give importance to the three areas of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social, because without all three, sustainable development cannot be achieved. The tourism industry benefits economically to a large extent from its environment, local people, climate, culture, and traditions. If this environment is destroyed or does not function properly, the business economy would not exist either. Thus, Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) explains how sustainability is part of the values of Garden Hotels because they truly believe that taking care of the environment of Mallorca and its inhabitants will also have a favourable impact on the economy. Garden Hotels defends the local product, as buying from local businesses will also benefit the local economy, and the client will also appreciate being more in contact with the culture of Mallorca. Garden Hotels has been investing in many sustainable projects for several years now, even though many of them were not economically profitable, but this has been done because in the end sustainability is part of this hotel chain and that is what they want to transmit. In addition, Garden Hotels has several certifications such as Travelife and Travelife Gold for its excellent management of environmental resources, the special mention of the jury in the EMAS awards for the implementation of improvements in eco-management, as well as an Environmental Management System - ISO 14001, which certifies the optimisation of waste management and the reduction of environmental impact.

Garden Hotels has an external company contracted for environmental consultancy, which is responsible for analysing and advising on energy efficiency, such as which are the best machines that exist on the market and that can work better in the company. Ético is also a company that advises on how to lead a tourism company towards a more sustainable path through communication on sustainability, implementation of sustainable strategies, training of employees and the creation of an annual strategic plan and its continuous monitoring. On staff training, Laura Garrido (Ético) stresses the importance of training and involvement of senior management to convey the importance of this more sustainable process. She also insists on the importance of good communication, both internally and externally, internally so that all workers understand and trust the process, and externally so that they know how to transmit what the company does. This philosophy is reflected in the Garden Hotels company, since, as Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) explains very well, sustainability is part of the hotel chain and all the workers are part of it and in some way are involved in this process of more sustainable change.

Tourism companies, as Laura Garrido (Ético) explains, tend to give more importance to the environmental sphere due to the false belief that sustainable development only covers the environmental sphere. For this reason, Garden Hotels is a benchmark in terms of sustainability, as it attaches great importance to it and carries out all kinds of projects in the three areas of sustainability:

- In the social sphere, they collaborate in social projects of insertion, integration and equality within the local community: promoting local and seasonal production of km 0, promoting local tradition and culture among its customers, they carry out corporate culture policies favouring a good working environment, reduction of inequalities and companionship, and collaborations with non-profit organisations and social campaigns such as Red Cross, Amadip Esment Fundació and Caritas, among many others. Among these projects, it is worth highlighting the collaboration with companies such as Amadip Esment, a local non-profit organisation where people with special needs have been incorporated and which favors social integration. It is responsible for all the supply of stationery for Garden Hotels.
- In the economic sphere, Garden Hotels seeks to promote economic growth that generates equitable wealth while respecting the environment and improving thanks to innovation. They carry out investments to modernise and improve the establishments by prioritising the use of new technologies for a more efficient use of resources, reusing materials to promote the circular economy and ensuring that they comply with the necessary requirements. In addition, they focus on the customer and seek to guarantee their safety and hygiene with different programmes and certification to ensure the safety of their customers.
- In the environmental sphere, they stand out for their 360° environmental awareness, involving their environment, workers, suppliers and customers. In water management, they stand out for the use of automated irrigation systems with self-programming and rain gauges for automatic shut-off in case of rain, monitored meters to detect water leaks, water optimisation with taps with presence detectors in communal bathrooms, awareness campaigns and posters for the responsible use of water by customers, and the use of salt water in swimming pools, although in some municipalities this is not permitted, among other measures. In energy management, they have automatic disconnection systems for air conditioning in case of windows and doors, low consumption LED lighting in all establishments, and some electrical appliances in rooms such as air conditioning do not work unless the room card is on, and they also have heat recovery systems for air conditioning to heat or cool the outside air (depending on whether it is summer or winter) to reuse the energy previously consumed. In waste management, as Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) explains, for the last two years they have been trying to completely eliminate the use of plastics in the establishments, by reducing the consumption of bottled water, providing both customers and employees with refillable bottles and water dispensing machines in the hotels, the elimination of single-use amenities, which are also created by a local

company, the display of products in bulk in the buffets to avoid individual portions, among others. But it is worth mentioning the social and circular economy project carried out by Garden Hotels, in which Jaume Ordinas was the driving force. It is a pioneering project in which the sustainable management of tourist waste is promoted in order to obtain ecological compost, which was not available in Mallorca until now, and thus also help local agriculture. Thanks to this initiative, the clients of Garden Hotels can enjoy local, quality, organic and seasonal products such as the organic lamb of Mallorca (Apaema).

The tourism sector has a significant influence on the environment of a place and although it can have positive effects, it also has serious negative effects. According to Laura Garrido (Ético), the tourism sector accounts for approximately 8% of the total carbon footprint generated, i.e., of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions. She also says that there is still a lot of work to be done to change these emissions and that this is partly positive because in the future there will be many job opportunities in the field of sustainability. About water management, he maintains that it is very necessary to raise awareness among tourists, as water resources are limited in Mallorca and a regulated use of water is necessary in order not to exceed the limits. From the point of view of the hotel sector, Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) explains how the tourists who arrive, no matter how environmentally conscious they are, in the end want to enjoy and relax and if they have to go to the pool they will go to the pool, if it is hot they will use the air conditioning, and in the end the tourists will consume and eat more than they would at home. Therefore, they are aware that it is difficult to change the way tourists behave when they are travelling and want to enjoy themselves, but they can optimise energy efficiency and the consumption of resources to reduce the impact on the environment and on the local population as much as possible. Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) also maintains that his clients are generally very environmentally aware and are grateful in some way for their involvement in reducing environmental impacts.

Covid-19 has served to raise awareness of the role of sustainability in the tourism sector. As Laura Garrido (Ético) states, "this situation has further highlighted the fragility of human beings and, as we are seeing in many studies, climate change could have even more disastrous effects if we do not do something about it". She also talks about the opportunity of the stoppage caused by the confinement to think and rethink on the part of tourism companies to see the improvements that can be implemented, not in the short term due to the lack of investment, but to think about the future and the path they want to choose. In addition, Covid-19 has shown a necessary change in the type of tourism, such as mass tourism, because the situation generates a rejection of tourists towards places with large concentrations of people, and this may also be the time for change, and Mallorca has everything it needs to become a sustainable destination. But Covid-19 has also had a strong and very negative impact on the hotel sector. As Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) explains, the situation has been devastating for the service sector in general, as companies have had to carry on for a year without income, pay workers and take over the maintenance of hotels that have not been able to open, and many establishments have been forced to sell or mis-sell because they could not take this blow. And many of these companies, as Jaume Ordinas

(Garden Hotels) states, are family businesses with values such as sustainability and love for the island, which are going to be lost and there will be fewer and fewer companies that are committed to these values, as many establishments are bought by investment funds where the economic aspect often takes precedence.

Laura Garrido (Ético) talks about the term 'regenerative tourism' because tourism itself is a great catalyst for change due to the wide network of contacts it has, so tourism can be an active part of change by regenerating ecosystems, favouring society and the economy. But this change has yet to take place, and for this reason, the involvement of the entire tourism sector is necessary. As Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels) rightly says, hopefully more hotels will be infected by the values of sustainability and the pursuit of sustainable projects will become easier and easier, although it is sometimes difficult, as regulations often prevent initiatives of this kind, making it an even more complicated process.

5. Conclusions

It is clear that sustainable development and tourism should ride together. We have seen how, at a global level, tourism as we have known it until now is no longer being considered; tourism must consider the economic, social and environmental aspects. The past experiences should serve to correct mistakes and not to make them again, therefore, we cannot return to the unsustainable levels (that is, those levels over the destination carrying capacity) of tourism flows such as mass tourism, that has generated so much controversy. But we can change things and see tourism as an important factor in the process of change thanks to its great potential to improve the situation in all three areas.

Covid-19 maybe has helped us (and accelerated) to realise that something was wrong with our previous view of tourism. It has had a major impact on tourism worldwide, reducing the number of trips drastically, and its consequences have accentuated the problem of the Balearic Islands, with an economy highly dependent on tourism. In the case of Mallorca, the restrictions, and the non-arrival of tourists have highlighted the vulnerability of the island and the high seasonality of tourism. Perhaps now is the time to look for a type of tourist who seeks the quality of the Islands, their nature, and their culture, since Covid-19 has brought about a change in tourist preferences and how they prefer places with a lot of nature, where social distance is respected and where they can feel safe.

In this work, an interview was carried out with Garden Hotels, a hotel chain from Mallorca that is very aware of sustainability, and with Ético, a consultancy company that advises and helps companies to become more sustainable. Thanks to these companies, we can see that there are companies that believe in this process, that know the environmental impact that tourism generates and that take initiatives to reduce the consequences as much as possible.

In order to involve both companies and clients in this process, it is necessary to raise up public awareness. While is true that there are many people who are aware of climate change, poverty in the world and how our consumption habits

affect the planet, but there are many who are not, and that is why talks and classes should be given in schools so that from a very young age we can see how necessary it is for us to act in relation to the environment. We should also increase publicity campaigns to raise awareness of the SDGs and why it is so necessary to achieve these goals by 2030. These could be some measures that would perhaps reach many people and would help to encourage that individual change in people to adopt measures that are more aware of the environment. In addition, if customers are aware of the need for sustainability in tourism, businesses, in response to this change, will have to make changes in their management models to adapt to new customer demands. A change in customer and company awareness is likely to be far more effective than the introduction of regulations, sanctions, and penalties in introducing sustainability measures in the tourism sector.

But there is also a need for the imposition of sustainable measures by the competent authorities in order to ensure compliance in those companies that do not carry them out, such as in the case of the ban on the use of plastic. This is because many companies choose not to implement sustainable practices because they are generally more costly and possibly unprofitable. But if, as we have said before, the customer is aware and is willing to pay a higher price to assume that companies do carry out this type of measures, it is possible that companies will carry them out, as they will experience a change in consumer preferences. On the other hand, it is true, as was seen in the interview with Jaume Ordinas (Garden Hotels), that they have found situations where they wanted to carry out projects with the aim of making them sustainable, but they came up against many public barriers that prevented them from doing so. For this reason, these competent authorities should provide aid and facilities for those companies that want to take part in projects and initiatives of this type, as the sustainable destination of Mallorca is the future, and more and more companies will join this change, but they need facilities and not obstacles that prevent them from moving towards this path.

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7. Annexed

7.1 Interview to Garden Hotels

1. How the history of Garden Hotels began?

Company and environment

2. What is the significance of the environment for Garden Hotels?
3. Is the environment part of your market strategy?
4. Do you define an environmental strategy?
5. What short-, medium- and long-term objectives do you set for the hotel to continue improving your sustainable practices?
6. Do you have a specific department in charge of managing environmental issues?
7. What are the motivations that lead you to adopt this philosophy of environmental care in the hotel?
8. What benefits/benefits/advantages/fruits do you see that you obtain from environmentally friendly practices in the hotel? And what difficulties do they entail?
9. Do you see an improvement in competitiveness thanks to the implementation of environmental practices? Do you think that you differentiate yourself from the competition? How?
10. Does the implementation of eco-friendly practices have an impact on attracting a certain segment of the market that is more environmentally conscious?
11. Do you inform your customers in any way about your environmentally friendly practices?
12. Do your customers value your philosophy of respect for the environment?
13. How environmentally conscious are your customers in general?

Environmental practices

14. What do you think are the most important environmental impacts produced by the development of the hotel's activity?
15. What environmentally friendly practices do you carry out in the hotel?
16. What measures have you used to reduce water consumption, and which have given you the best results?
17. How do you manage the water in the swimming pools so as not to overuse it?
18. In terms of energy, do you have solar panels or other renewable energy systems? Which ones?
19. What techniques do you use to reduce the consumption of light and energy that have brought you the greatest benefits?
20. Has the total elimination of the use of plastic been achieved, and what practices do you use to reduce its use?
21. One of the measures for which Garden Hotels stands out is its waste management (social and circular economy project). What exactly does it consist of? What benefits do you obtain?

22. Do you take any type of measure to try to minimise the production of CO2 gases in the hotel? Which ones?
23. Do you use any means to collect guests collectively in order to try to reduce the number of trips and consume less CO2?
24. Have you noticed an increase in the use of charging stations for electric cars by guests?
25. Do you have a defined environmental policy?
26. What has led you to follow the ISO 14001 management system?
27. Are there any effects of climate change that you have been able to perceive that are affecting you?
28. Are there any environmentally friendly practices that you would like to implement in the Hotel?
29. You are very active in sustainability practices; does it have something to do with the fact that you are a family business?
30. How has the pandemic affected the hotel?
31. Have any of the environmental practices that were in place been affected or reduced because of the pandemic?
32. Have any of the environmental practices that were in place been affected or reduced by the pandemic?

7.2 Interview to Ético

1. How and why did Ético come about?
2. Communication in sustainability, sustainable strategies and training and methodology. Could you explain exactly how you do it?
3. Sustainable development: Social, economic, and environmental. Why do you think companies need all three dimensions?
4. Which of the three dimensions do tourism businesses consider the most, and which the least?
5. In which aspects do companies in Mallorca most need your help?
6. What are the most important environmental impacts generated by the tourism sector?
7. What challenges does Ético face in making companies aware of the issue of sustainability?
8. Why is it important for tourism to be sustainable?
9. Do you think that Covid has marked a before and after in companies when it comes to having sustainability as an important role?
10. How do you think Covid has affected this path towards sustainable tourism?
11. Could Mallorca become a sustainable destination without damaging its economy? What role do you think Ético will play in this process?
12. Which role do you think Ético will play in the future in terms of Mallorca's relationship with tourism?
13. Future perspectives regarding sustainability and tourism.