

Majorca Daily Bulletin

Sunday–Monday, January 16–17 2022

1.20€ · Founded 1962 · N.17202 · Passeig de Mallorca 9 A, Palma 07011



A TESTING TIME FOR EXPATRIATES WHO ARE ABOUT TO LOSE THEIR UK DRIVING LICENCES: PAGES 6 AND 7

THOUSANDS CALL FOR COVID FREEDOM IN PALMA

● Protesters voiced their opposition to the Covid passport for entering bars, restaurants, a requirement condemned as being **“health dictatorship”**.



Yesterday's protest in Palma.

By Anna Nicholas

WHAT began as a modest congregation of a few hundred people touting anti Covid passport banners in Plaça de Sa Mar, soon swelled to thousands as the mass of protestors of all nationalities took to Avinguda de Gabriel Alomar. To the sound of blaring horns of support and clapping from the occupants of passing cars and balconies, the massive wave of humanity

marched in peaceful solidarity through the streets, stopping the traffic, inviting others to join, and creating a lively and festive atmosphere with music and chanting.

One of the key organisers of the event, Sonia Terentyeva, a slightly built and understated figure, strode with a mic and live music wagon, guiding her flocks. Fearless, intelligent and engaging, like a mesmerising and omnipotent Boadicea, she spoke eloquently about the need

to end Covid passports in the Balears. Underlining the danger of ripping apart the local population and economy, she demanded that the regional government listen to its people and stop masquerading the passports as a health and safety measure, since its use represented purely political expediency and control.

There were countless local families with children of all ages, the elderly, disabled, cyclists, dog walkers and a huge throng of expats. I spoke with Australians, Americans,

Swedes, Germans, Dutch, French and Swiss supporters, all indignant about this new infringement on their personal liberties. The largest foreign contingent appeared to be British and many I spoke with had been vaccinated but were vehemently opposed to Covid passports. The majority felt that it divided society and created disharmony in the community so they marched in unity with the unvaccinated. Helmut Clemens, a key figure in the hospital industry, and vice-

president of PIMEM, joined me as we reached Plaça España. We looked behind us and witnessed what had to be at least 3,000 people convening on the square. Also in attendance was local freedom organisation, Liberrum, and hundreds of owners of Majorcan cafés, bars and restaurants who have largely taken the brunt of the Covid passport regulations. One thing was certain, the voice of the Balearic people could not have been louder. Whether the re-

gional government will take heed is anybody's guess.

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