



Universitat
de les Illes Balears

BACHELOR'S THESIS

THE IMPACT OF THE SWEDISH COMMUNITY ON PALMA'S MULTICULTURALISM

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Double Degree in Business Administration and Tourism

Faculty of Tourism

Academic Year 2022-23

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Key words:

culture, multiculturalism, tourism, Swedish, Palma, Mallorca

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Abstract

When Mallorca became a tourist destination, the variety of its population changed. The arrival of foreigners, who came for distinct reasons, and, especially, their settlement on the island made Mallorca's cultural diversity grow to the point where Mallorca is nowadays a multicultural territory. This phenomenon is more visible in the city of Palma because it is where larger foreign communities live. It is the case of the Swedish community in Palma. Their arrival and settlement are in some way linked to tourism, which is the object of this research. More precisely, this research reflects the cultural importance of this community in the multiculturalism of Palma pursuing three objectives: link the arrival of Swedish tourists with the increase of Swedish residents, list the different Swedish cultural elements existing in the city of Palma and observe and determine the level of interaction of their culture with the local culture.

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PART I: CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE RESEARCH

1. INTRODUCTION: OBJECTIVES, INTEREST AND TOPICALITY

1.1. Objectives

In this research, we have analyzed the importance of Swedish tourism in Palma's multiculturalism. In the last 30 years, Scandinavian tourism has grown, and therefore, so has the number of Swedish residents on Mallorca. They have settled on the island and have created a community where they can practice their culture and interact with the native population.

The number of Scandinavian tourists compared to the number of other foreign visitors (such as British or German) is quite small. Nevertheless, in recent years they have increased in number and rank fifth in Spain's average expenditure per day in 2022 (INE, 2023). First, they came looking for a sun-relaxed vacation, escaping from the cold in their own country. But like many other European citizens, thanks to their high purchasing power and their interest in Mediterranean locations (Urbieta, 2023), many Swedish have slowly settled on Mallorca. Some of them may have not come for tourist reasons like for example work or retirement. Anyway, the origins start with tourist activity. So, the first objective of this research is to relate this growth of Scandinavian tourism to the rise in the Swedish population in Mallorca together with quantifying the approximate size of the community.

The second objective is to gather all the cultural elements that make up the Swedish community in Palma and observe how they interact with the city: language, customs, values, worldview, geographic location (the neighbourhoods where they have settled), social status, or roles.

Lastly, when we talk about a multicultural society, we talk about a region "...relating to or including people from different cultures." (Cambridge dictionary, 2023). This can be applied to the city of Palma where groups of people coming from different 130 countries coexist with the native population (Pérez & Medina, 2004). Taking the same path, the concept of multiculturalism says that "...different cultures within a society should all be given importance..." (Cambridge dictionary, 2023), which is the last objective to develop. Even though each culture in Palma has its place, not all of them have the same weightiness and level of exposure. So, knowing the tourist backgrounds of the Swedish community, we want to show the relevance of this group in the city of Palma.

To sum up, the three main objectives to achieve are:

1. To relate the origins of the Swedish community to tourism.
2. To gather the main elements that make up the Swedish community.
3. To show the cultural relevance of the community in Palma's multiculturalism.

1.2. Interest and topicality

Today, there are plenty of resident foreign communities that participate in Palma's multiculturalism that could be related to tourism. But, for our research, we have picked the Swedish one. In order to contextualize this choice, it is important to answer the following question: What is the interest in this group?

We believe that the Swedish resident community in Palma works as an interesting example to illustrate the relationship between tourism and multiculturalism for several reasons. The first one is that it is a relatively small group compared to others that have settled due to tourism (such as the English or Germans) and, therefore, it is easier to study. Secondly, despite being a little community, we think that it has an outstanding cultural influence in the city, among other things, because of:

- The occupation of historical buildings in Palma's old town (Swedish Consulate, Rialto Living)
- The influence on the economy with the incorporation of businesses (Swedish bakeries, real estate agencies...)
- The celebration of religious Swedish festivities in emblematic buildings in city centre (Santa Lucia...)
- Etc...

Thirdly, the Swedes, apart from practising and promoting their culture, they seem to be willing to interact and participate with the Majorcan way of life in the cultural spheres. At the same time, the locals seem to have a higher level of acceptance towards this group than to other foreign resident communities. All in all, the interest rests on the quality of the Swedish cultural contributions to the multiculturalism of Palma.

For the development of these hypotheses, we have used a mixed methodology. We used qualitative data because most suppositions, like the interaction of the community, the perceptions of the locals, and the contributions to multiculturalism, cannot be quantified or be found in a numeric graph, they need to be approached from a qualitative point of view where we can define the attributes or characteristics in the process of multiculturalism.

2. METHODOLOGY: from quantitative to qualitative

The main focuses of this research were: to relate the origins of the Swedish community to tourism, to gather the main elements that make up the Swedish community and to show the cultural relevance of the community in Palma's multiculturalism. In order to achieve so, a mixed methodology was used, combining techniques for obtaining both quantitative and qualitative information.

A quantitative approach was necessary to measure the Swedish tourism and population in Mallorca and Palma. Among the main sources, public statistical institutes, such as the INE and IBESTAT, are where most of the information is found. But some difficulties appeared when making the difference between those born in the issuing country and those who have dual nationality or just the Spanish one. Besides, temporary residents, who may also participate in Swedish circles, are not counted in the census. So, we took the population values as an approximation since it was complicated to collect the exact number.

On the other hand, the last two objectives (the study of the Swedish cultural elements and their importance in the city) required a qualitative methodology. This approach had a greater weight because the research is further focused on the cultural importance and influence on the multiculturalism of the city and not so much on the size of the community. What's more, multiculturalism is a process and involves changes, perceptions, and interactions that cannot be measured with a quantitative approach, instead we needed qualitative data to describe the characteristics of this phenomenon.

We collected qualitative data through observation (ethnographic research) and interviews. The ethnographic research was performed through the attendance at the celebration of Santa Lucia at the Cathedral of Mallorca on the 13th of December of 2022. It was key for the investigation because a great part of the community was involved and we were able to detect vehicular languages, the attendees' profiles, the distinguished attendees, social circles' interaction, the press' role, the festivity's protagonists, the festivity's organization performance... To reaffirm and contrast our hypothesis and the information taken from the festivity and we carried out various interviews (Swedish consul, Swedish church and locals in contact with the Swedish community). Interviews also provided information on the origins of the Swedish established on the island. Other than these two sources, we also analyzed press texts (such as *Ultima Hora* or *Vanity Fair*) and social media/digital sources (*Svenska Skolan's* and *Ikea's* website...).

Overall, this research is based on the analysis of qualitative data due to the purpose of the investigation, but at the same time quantitative data was also important to develop the first part.

Type of qualitative approach	What	Description
Method 1: Observation	Ethnographic research at Santa Lucia's celebration 13/12/2022, Palma	Research where we studied the Swedes in their cultural setting, in this case in the celebration of a cultural event.
Method 2: Interviews	Swedish consul 03/03/2023 (Interviewee 1) Church 09/05/2023 (Interviewee 2) Local involved with the Swedish community 13/12/2022 (Interviewee 3)	Personal interviews that provide direct feedback from people related to the Swedish community in Palma
Method 3: Digital sources	<i>Svenska Skolan's</i> webpage and instagram Ikea's webpage Online Newspapers' articles Etc.	Analysis of cultural content published online regarding cultural Swedish influence as extra feedback and support to our hypothesis

Table 1. Qualitative methodology (Source: Elaborated by the author)

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: multiculturalism due to tourism

Multiculturalism due to tourism is what this research is all about. So, our starting point or conceptual framework begins with how tourism has been a migrant facilitator in Mallorca and leads to the growth of different cultures in a tourist destination. The following diagram gathers all the elements of the theoretical framework:

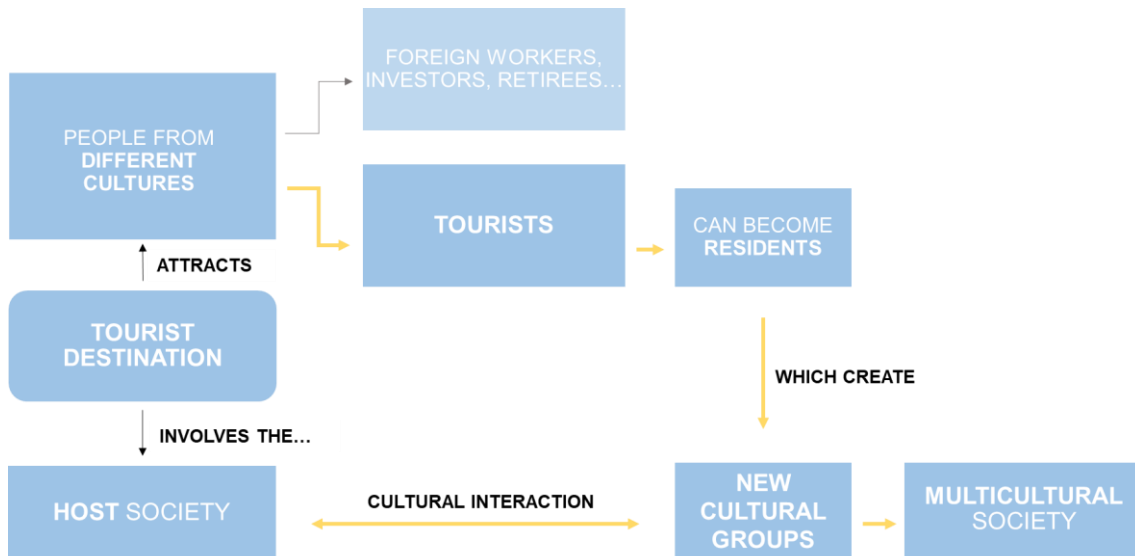


Figure 1. Conceptual framework (Source: Elaborated by the author)

Since the arrival of tourism to the Balearic Islands in the 1960s, the population has grown, notably propelled by the immigrant population. Tourism gave room to people from the Spanish peninsula to become part of the islands (the majority to make up for the lack of labor in the construction and restoration sectors), many emigrants returned, people from South American and North African countries moved in search of a better future and the islands became known in the North European countries, who, through their trips, decided to move to invest, work, retire or reside temporarily in the archipelago (Fundación BBVA, 2009).

Population and tourism growth pushed the Balearics to be more and more attractive until becoming a globally known consolidated tourist destination. This similar pattern was followed by regions like Bali and the Canary Islands, which are still receiving millions of visitors a year and welcome new residents from across the globe annually.

With the ease of movement, in the last two decades, tourism has been seen as a 'pre-immigrant facilitator' (Bowen & Schouten, 2008) and new reasons for migration related to tourism are being studied (residential tourism, lifestyle tourism, and tourist migrants, among others). Although there is still a lack of

studies in this area, our research on Swedish tourist migration pretends to add value to this field.

Often, immigration is related to multicultural diversity. Therefore, multiculturalism is a phenomenon that occurs in plural or heterogeneous regions. In the literature there is no homogeneous definition of multiculturalism, however many of the authors agree on the point that multicultural civilizations imply the existence of some type of interaction between different cultures. According to Berry and Sam, societies are perceived as multicultural if they are formed by diverse cultural groups, if there are policies that manage cultural variety, and if either positive or negative attitudes from the resident population emerge towards this diversity. Immigrants, ethnocultural residents, indigenous peoples, sojourners, and refugees are part of these cultural groups and each of them has the will to create cultural exchange according to the voluntariness of contact and the degree of mobility (Berry & Sam, 2014), shown in the following table:

Mobility	Voluntariness of contact	
	Voluntary	Involuntary
Sedentary	Ethnocultural groups	Indigenous peoples
Migrant Permanent temporary	Immigrants sojourners	Refugees Asylum seekers

Table 2. Multicultural groups according to the voluntariness of contact (Source: (Berry & Sam, 2014))

According to the table, immigrants will be more likely to create that contact by having moved voluntarily. In a greater way, their descendants will do so as they are already part of the host region.

In the context of tourism, intercultural relationships have been studied from different perspectives. The tourist-host relationship has been studied by the diverse social sciences since the last quarter of the 20th century (Merinero-Rodríguez, Pulido-Fernández, 2016). In the fields of anthropology and sociology, they develop the cultural implications for both sides of this bond and they conclude that tourism does not always imply quality cross-cultural exchange. More recently, in harmony with the evolution of tourism, the study of other kinds of relationships has increased, such as tourist-to-tourist interactions, which are more focused on tourist satisfaction, and not so much on cultural implications. In this research, our objective is to study the relationship between the tourist resident with the local population (a tourist resident-host relationship).

PART II: RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

4. Swedish presence on the Balearic Islands

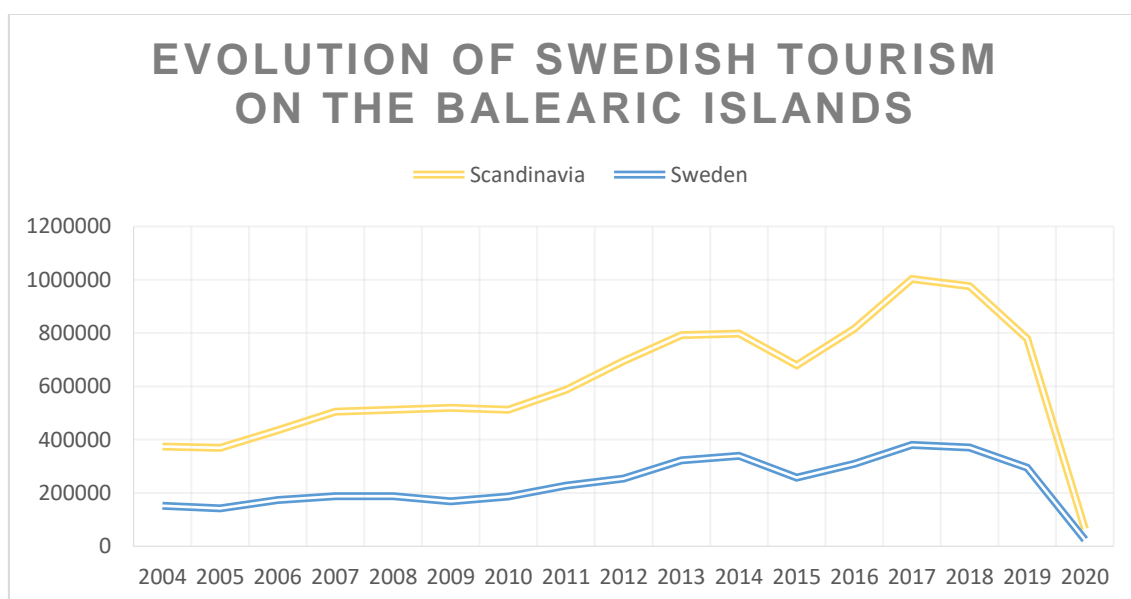
The first objective of the study aimed to establish a possible correlation between the increasing number of Swedish tourists on the Balearic Islands and the growing Swedish population on the island of Mallorca, particularly in its capital, Palma.

4.1. Evolution of Swedish tourism on the Balearic Islands

Tourism in the Balearic Islands has acted as a magnet attracting people from all over the world and the Swedes are no exception. In fact, the island of Mallorca has always been very attached to Sweden since de '60s.

“...La historia de los suecos con Mallorca surge a través del turismo como es lógico, comienzan a venir a la isla como simples veraneantes o en diferentes épocas del año buscando un descanso de sol y playa lejos del poco benigno clima sueco...” (MallorcaDiario, 2017)

Nowadays, the island is still very popular in Sweden to the point where two-thirds of the tourist packages sold to Swedish in Spain in 2017 corresponded to the Balearic Islands (Economía de Mallorca, 2017), a year in which the connecting flights with Palma also increased by 27% and in which the number of Scandinavian tourists reached its peak (Graph 1.). Moreover, it was the most searched tourist destination in 2016 (Economía de Mallorca, 2017) and the only Spanish destination among the most searched in 2021, after Covid (Tourinews, 2021).



Graph 1. Evolution of Swedish tourism (Source: Elaborated by the author from data extracted from IBESTAT)

Considering the previous events, we could expect that Swedish tourism has been growing since the last century until today. So, we took the “*flows of tourists by country of residence*” from 2004 (the last available year online) to 2020 (the start of Covid-19) from IBESTAT and elaborated a graph to see how Swedish tourism evolved in the last two decades.

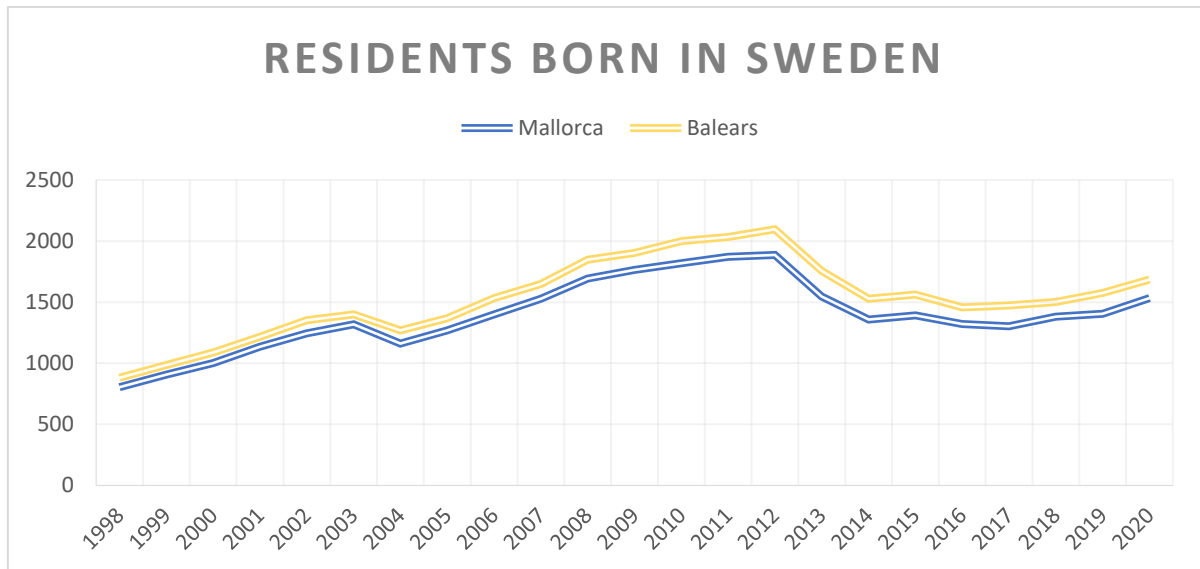
As the graph shows, in the first 10 years there was a constant increase in the number of Swedish tourists (from 142.000 tourists growing to 338.000 in 2014). After 2014, we observe a slow fluctuation until 2017, when the number of visitors reached its peak (380.000 tourists), followed by a gradual decrease until the dramatic fall of 2020 when Covid-19 hit. As a result, we can extract that the flow of tourists had an upward tendency and doubled in 20 years.

Moreover, according to *Tourinews* and Nordic Travel Leisure Group in 2023 “... “Mallorca es de lejos el destino número uno” para ellos en verano y que “ha sido así desde los inicios de los paquetes vacacionales en 1956”...”. (Tourinews, 2023)

4.2. Evolution of Swedish residents on the Balearic Islands

Swedish tourism has been growing and it is strongly linked to the Balearic Islands, but is tourism related to the fact that there is a Swedish community on Mallorca?

According to IBESTAT data on the foreign population by country of birth, the Swedish population in the Balearic Islands and Mallorca behaved as follows:



Graph 2. Foreign population of Mallorca born in Sweden (Source: Elaborated by the author from IBESTAT data)

The graph illustrates the constant growth of the Swedes from 1998 to 2020 in both territories, reaching a small peak in 2012. However, it only shows the residents registered in the census, which allows us to know the trend that the Swedish residents has had, but on the contrary, it does not give us real information on the number of the total population. Most of them are either not registered in the census or were born on the island but maintain the Swedish nationality.

According to official data, the Swedish population in Mallorca consisted of 1.533 Swedes in 2020 (Graph 1.), while, the Swedish Consulate estimates, with a big difference, that nowadays there are around a total of 15.000 on Mallorca, among which we can distinguish three profiles of residents (Interviewee 1).

The first group are the ones that came in the 60s as tourists and they decided to stay because of love, either with a local or with the island. During the tourist boom, many local men chased after girls who came for vacation, of whom some stories ended up creating an emotional bond (Janer Torrens, 2020). The sons and daughters (and their children) of the relationships born in that time are

today integrated with the Majorcan society and also linked with their Swedish roots and, therefore, some still participate in the community (Interviewee 1).

The second group comprises individuals who migrated to Mallorca for business purposes, although many of them were already familiar with the island's appeal as a tourist destination (Interviewee 1). Their primary intention was to establish a business, with many of these enterprises being linked to the tourism industry. Due to their substantial purchasing power and ability to assimilate into the local community, they were able to establish a permanent presence on the island. Notable examples of such individuals include Barbara Bergman and Klas Kall, the owners of the luxury home goods store Rialto Living, and Johanna and Mikel Landström, the owners of the Hotel Portixol and Palma Sport and Tennis Club. These individuals represent a prime example of successful entrepreneurs who have been able to establish themselves in Mallorca's business community (Durán, 2015).

In third place, we have Swedish middle-high class families who recently have come to Mallorca looking for a better quality of life. The greater amount of hours of sun is one of the main factors of attraction, together with fiscal deductions in the Personal Tax Income for renovations of second homes existing in their home country. Apart from that, Mallorca also counts on a solid Swedish community with a school and a church and has good flight connections only 2 and a half hours away from Sweden. Usually, these families stay an average of 5 years on the island if they can't connect with the community and the local society (Interviewee 1).

As an answer to the first question on this point (*Is tourism related to the fact that there is a Swedish community on Mallorca?*), what we see is that tourism acted as a driving force for the Swedes to settle on Mallorca, especially for the older generations where it played a direct role. The first newcomers were definitely attracted as tourists meanwhile their following compatriots, the second and third groups, were far driven by the opportunities offered by the island (such as a change in the quality of life or business potential).

So, while tourism may no longer be the primary factor driving Swedish migration to Mallorca, it has played a crucial role in creating a context that facilitates flight connections and enhances the island's visibility. Today, the tourism industry continues to be important in attracting new tourists and keeping Sweden in touch with Mallorca, which guarantees flight connections throughout the year.

In a few words, there has been a presence of Swedes since the 60s, with an increase in the last 20 years, which have been interacting (or not) with the island. In the next section, we will analyze the cultural extent that the community has had in the city of Palma.

5. Swedish presence in the city of Palma

Palma's population is diverse and dynamic, with a mix of locals, immigrants, and international residents, which implies a high cultural diversity. In fact, the percentage of foreign-born residents in Palma represented 23.7% of the total population, a proportion similar to the Balearic Islands (23.1%) but significantly higher than the rest of Spain (14.4%) in 2020 (Ajuntament de Palma, 2020). Among this large amount of foreign population, Palma is home to Scandinavians attracted by the good weather, excellent flight connections, and international schools (Urbiet, 2023). Among them, we find half of the Swedish community in Mallorca (Table 2.).

<i>Year</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2021</i>
<i>Total Swedish on Mallorca</i>	<i>746</i>	<i>1.803</i>	<i>1.417</i>
<i>Total Swedish in Palma</i>	<i>380</i>	<i>851</i>	<i>719</i>
<i>% of Swedish living in Palma</i>	<i>51%</i>	<i>47%</i>	<i>51%</i>

Table 3. Swedish residents in Palma (Source: Elaborated by the author on the basis of data supplied by IBESTAT)

The Swedes are settled in specific neighbourhoods such as Santa Catalina, Son Armadams, El Terreno and Cala Major/San Agustí. These areas are renowned for their high standard of living, proximity to the sea and the city center, and cultural attractions, which make them a preferred settlement (Urbiet, 2023). Consequently, they have developed a school, a church, many businesses and other establishments, according to the needs and preferences of the Swedish community.

5.1. Cultural Swedish elements in the city of Palma

Education: Svenska Skolan

The Swedish School of Palma (in Swedish "Svenska Skolan") is a private school that follows the Swedish curriculum and is taught in the Swedish language. It is located in the neighborhood of El Terreno and is recognized by the Swedish government. The school is primarily aimed at Swedish children living on Mallorca, but also admits children of other nationalities who want to study in Swedish.

The school was founded in 1967, shortly after the beginning of the tourist boom, to provide education for the children of Swedish workers who had moved to the island. In the beginning, it only had six students, and classes were held at the Jaime I Hotel. However, after five years, in 1971, the school had grown up to 60 students and moved to a large house on the outskirts of Palma (Llull, 1971). In 1996, the school relocated to a modernist unique chalet in El Terreno, where it currently teaches approximately 140 students (Bergas, 2022).

The basic language of instruction is Swedish, but Spanish and English are also used. Taking courses in Catalan, the mother tongue of the Balearic Islands, and other languages, such as German and French, is optional.

The school has the aim of keeping students connected with Sweden, which is why it follows the Swedish curriculum and promotes Swedish culture. At the same time, it connects students with the island of Mallorca through cultural and environmental activities such as museum visits or nature trips. (Svenska Skolan, 2023)

Religion: Svenska kyrkan Mallorca

The Swedish Church in Palma, or "Svenska kyrkan Mallorca" in Swedish, is a Lutheran church located in El Terreno as well as the school, and it was founded in 1981 by the Swedish community living on the island.

The church acts as one of the cultural hubs for the community, offering a wide range of services for individuals of all ages. It functions as a gathering place for people to worship, socialize, and connect with one another. Additionally, it provides support to those in need, to offer spiritual guidance or assistance of any kind. Moreover, it is also accessible to tourists who seek advice about the island, need a translator, and wish to attend the church's services. That's why it often collaborates with the Swedish Consulate (Interviewee 2).

Additionally, the church encourages the celebration of Swedish cultural and religious events. One such event is Santa Lucia's festivity, which is organized annually in partnership with the Swedish school. This festival honors the life of Saint Lucia, a symbol of hope and light during the dark winter months. Through events like these, the church plays an important role in fostering a sense of community and brings visibility to Swedish cultural tradition in the city.

All the different Christian churches of Mallorca (like the Anglican, the Norwegian, and the Catholic, among others) have established a network to stay in contact. One of the main goals of this network is to foster intercultural and interreligious dialogue among the various communities. Through shared events and pilgrimages, members of these churches have the opportunity to learn about each other's traditions and beliefs. By being part of this group, the Swedish church has the chance to build relationships with people from different backgrounds. (Interviewee 2)

Economy: Businesses that add cultural value

Palma's Swedish-owned businesses aim to add value to the city while also giving a touch of Swedish culture. Most of them present themselves as high-quality establishments and are oriented toward clients who look for quality products. The most notable businesses that promote Swedish culture in Palma are:

Palma Bread

Palma Bread is a Swedish bakery with two bakeshops, one located in the neighbourhood of Santa Catalina and the other in San Agustí. While it offers a variety of different pastries, it specializes in the cinnamon bun, a typical Swedish pastry. During the Santa Lucia festival, school students visit the bakery to pay tribute to the Swedish businesses in the city. Their staff consists of both local and Swedish people. (palmabread, 2023)

Rialto Living

Rialto Living is a lifestyle shop located in a historical house in the city center of Palma that belonged to a high-class family in the 18th century and that in 1926 was converted into a cinema. In 2007, a couple of Swedes, Klas Kall and Barbara Bergman, who had been visiting Mallorca for 20 years as tourists, decided to move to Palma motivated by the search for a calmer way of living and start their own business converting this emblematic cinema into a lifestyle store. Nowadays, it preserves the structure of the old house, and it offers a selection of stylish international and local products. (Rialto Living, 2023)

Ikea

Ikea, despite being a multinational company, preserves Swedish character with the names of its furniture, its Scandinavian style, and its famous Swedish meatballs. Thanks to its restaurant and supermarkets, IKEA makes available Swedish food products for everyone. This serves to bring the Swedish culture closer to the locals while also allowing the Swedish community to stay connected with their home country.

Additionally, it is interesting to note that Ikea offers special promotions during Swedish festivities, like Santa Lucia, and that these offers are only available in the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands, and not in the rest of Spain (IKEA, 2022). This could be due to the fact that these two regions have a higher concentration of Swedish residents and tourists compared to other parts of the country.

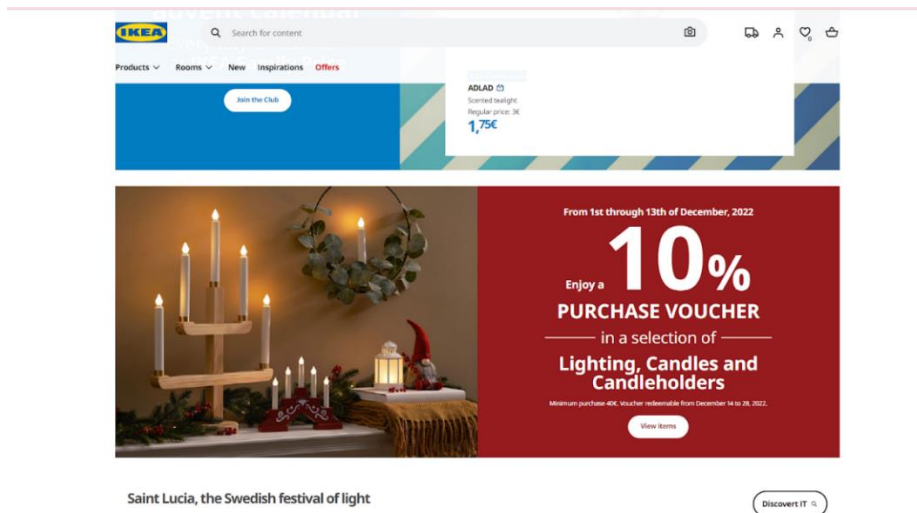


Image 1: Ikea's discounts due to Santa Lucia's festivity in Mallorca's site (Source: www.ikea.com)

To further link the connection between Swedish culture and tourism (and to add value to the point 4.2.), it is worth highlighting that in other parts of Spain, Swedish Consulates and churches are often located in areas with high tourist activity. For instance, besides Palma, there are Swedish Consulates in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Jerez de la Frontera, and Torrevieja, and Swedish churches in Torrevieja, Fuengirola, Tenerife, and Gran Canaria (Interviewee 2).

5.2. Other Swedish elements important for the community

There are other non-cultural elements that favour the existence and make the community grow.

Palma Sport & Tennis Club

Located in Santa Catalina, Palma Sport & Tennis Club it is a sports center that offers tennis classes and other leisure activities, and it is popular among Swedes living on Mallorca. It is owned by Johanna and Mikel Landström who also own other businesses such as Hotel Portixol are known for their philanthropy and support of several non-profit organizations on the island. (Palma Sport & Tennis Club, 2023). Recently, there has been an increase in the number of Swedes who play tennis and paddle tennis in groups, which allows them to communicate in their native language without the need to speak the local language. However, when they interact with the locals, they make an effort to communicate in Spanish (Interviewee 3).

Real Estate Agencies

The real estate market is not a cultural element of the community, but it needs to be mentioned since it has played and plays an important role in promoting Palma to the Swedes. What's more, it is a source of income for many Swedish residents and enables interaction with local professionals such as lawyers, real estate agents, and contractors and can foster cooperation and mutual understanding between cultures.

In Palma, the neighbourhoods of Santa Catalina, Son Armadams and El Terreno have revaluated in the last 15 years. Consequently, they have also attracted the attention of foreign investors.

In fact, "El Terreno is increasingly integrated into the international residential real estate market...". "...The average gross income in 2017..." was "...among the highest in Palma, exceeding the municipal average by almost 17,000 Euros...". and this "...increase in income, in a dynamic real estate market, shows that demographic contingents with greater purchasing power have chosen the neighborhood as their place of residence..." (González-Pérez, 2021)

As a result, Swedish real estate agencies emerged in Palma. So, as more and more people looked to invest in properties outside their home countries (Interviewee 1), the presence of these Swedish real estate agencies expanded their services to meet the needs of these international buyers.

In 2023, there are more than 10 Swedish real estate agencies operating in Palma. The most important ones are the following:

- *Fastighetsbyrån*: This is one of the largest real estate agencies in Sweden, with offices in Spain and Portugal too. In Palma they offer a wide range of properties for sale that are mostly located in the neighbourhoods of Santa Catalina, Son Armadams, and el Terreno. Their target market mainly consists of international buyers, so they primarily operate in Swedish and English. However, they do have a few staff members who speak Spanish. (Fastighetsbyran, 2023)
- *Bjurfors*: like *Fastighetsbyrån* it is another Swedish real estate agency with an office in Palma. They specialize in luxury properties, mainly located in historical neighbourhoods of the city. All their agents were born in Sweden and speak English, Swedish and Spanish and most of them have been living on Mallorca since the late 90's and the early 2000's. (Bjurfors, 2023)
- *Mallorcaresidencia*: unlike the other agencies, *Mallorcaresidencia* was not born in Sweden. However, it is also focused on the luxury segment and their team is formed by international members too. It "was founded in of 2005 by a local Majorcan who for many years split her time between Mallorca and Stockholm. She established *Mallorcaresidencia* because she discovered that Mallorca lacked an international real estate agency specializing in exclusive properties that would appeal to the Scandinavian buyer. Today it does more sales to Swedish buyers than any other agency on the island." (Mallorcaresidencia, 2023)

6. Cultural interaction of the Swedish community in Palma

We have observed that the Swedish community in Palma has certain elements of their own culture that keep them connected to their country and traditions. However, are they a closed community or do they interact frequently with other citizens to share their culture? What are their contributions to the cultural variety of Palma?

One of the most important events organized by the church is the Christmas Bazar which takes place in the church building in which “many Spanish neighbours show interest every year” (Interviewee 2). But the most intercultural event is the concert of Santa Lucia, organized by the Svenska Skolan in collaboration with the church. “They have been holding this concert for more than 25 years. At first, they did it in Plaça de Cort, and since 2017, when the school reached its fiftieth anniversary, they have held the recital inside the temple.” (Bergas, 2022). The occasion is quite relevant for two reasons: first, it mixes all kinds of Swedes with other locals and, second, it is a Lutheran festivity celebrated in the Cathedral, the most important temple in Palma, which can bring to light the openness of the Catholic church when it comes to certain events.

During the observation of the Swedish community in the Cathedral, we observed the Swedish character, behaviour, and interaction with all the elements of the celebration.

It was noted that the event was well-organized, with doors opening at 7:15 pm with long queues outside the Cathedral and the concert starting at 8:00 pm on time. Informational brochures were given at the entrance, explaining the context of the festivity in English and Spanish. The concert lasted a bit longer than an hour and it was very dynamic.

Even though the Cathedral was full, the atmosphere of the event was relaxed, with people speaking softly and not applauding frequently or loudly. The attendees included groups of friends, families of all generations, couples, organizers, friends of Swedes, press members, chaplains, and priests. The front rows were booked for VIP guests. Among them, there were important Swedish figures such as Princess Brigitta, who has been involved with Mallorca for more than 35 years (Mercer, 2018), Swedish businesspeople with firms in Mallorca, consulate staff, Majorcans linked to Swedish businesses and city hall politicians.



Image 2. Santa Lucia in the Cathedral of Mallorca (Source: elaborated by the author)

Attendees used various languages, including Catalan, Spanish, English and mostly Swedish. Presentations and speeches were conducted in Spanish, Catalan, and Swedish; the songs performed were in Catalan, Spanish, Swedish, and English. The language of communication between Swedes and Majorcans was Spanish, while Swedes conversed in Swedish.

Another notable element of the event was the speech given by the Palma councillor of *Seguretat Ciutadana*, Juana Maria Adrover, who, on behalf of the mayor, emphasized the city hall's support for the community and mentioned how Palma is grateful to embrace its cultural variety. In fact, the city hall works with other communities, like the Chinese, and allocates part of the budget to organise events to raise awareness of Palma's multiculturalism (Velázquez, 2023).

Apart from the previous, events of this magnitude aren't celebrated by larger foreign groups who may have a similar tourist origin to the Swedes. Germans, for example, celebrate the Oktoberfest but not with the main to share their traditions or values of their community, since it has become a more commercial event. The British, Bulgarians, or Romanians, who are in the top countries by foreign nationality (Ajuntament de Palma, 2020) don't present their culture on such occasions either.

However, by being a smaller community, the capability of bringing together such events may be due to the strong sense of community and collaboration within smaller groups, as well as the willingness of the wider community to participate and learn about different cultural traditions.

All in all, we have observed that the existence of various cultural elements could make the Swedes a closed culture in which they wouldn't have the need to get

in touch with the other residents. Their character can be closed sometimes, a thing that makes them similar to Majorcans. In some sense, there are Swedes who keep themselves in a closed circle due to their age, their short longevity or their short stays on the island, or simply because they don't want to (Interviewee 1).

Nonetheless, part of the community is interested in showing their culture and working together with other residents. Swedish Institutions in Palma, like the school and the church, mostly promote their culture within their sphere but also have the will to make their culture visible in the city through organizing events, workshops, and activities that allow people from outside.

PART III: CONCLUSIONS

7. Conclusions

The research has allowed us to successfully accomplish the objectives outlined in the introduction (link the origins of the Swedish residents to Mallorca, gather all the elements that make them a community and see the extent of their cultural contributions to the multiculturalism of Palma), and we are now able to draw conclusions based on our findings.

Firstly, we have learned that Sweden has been associated with Mallorca since the tourist boom, which helped to popularize the island in that country. So, we can confirm that the origins of the Swedish community relied indeed on tourism because it was the factor that attracted most Swedes to the island, which was unknown at the time. Taking back the concept of the conceptual framework, we could say that tourism acted as a “pre-migrant facilitator”. Nevertheless, the factors that attract new Swedish residents have shifted to job opportunities and lifestyle changes. Therefore, it is possible for new residents to settle on Mallorca without having been tourists before. Although it should be considered that tourism remains the main economic activity in Mallorca, and thus, continues to play a significant role in job creation and maintaining both countries connected.

Secondly, Palma as the capital of Mallorca, hosts half of the Swedish community of Mallorca and therefore, gathers the Swedish cultural elements that have adapted to the necessities of the community as it has been growing. Elements like the school and the church emerged initially through the need of a few Swedes and have been preserved thanks to their sense of community, allowing them to practice their traditions, culture, and language, as well as engage with the local and other cultures, through church events, cultural school trips, and work connections...

Economic possibilities have played an important role in making the previous possible and could have influenced better acceptance by the local society. Due to their higher purchasing power, the Swedes have been able to settle easily and open most of their businesses in the popular areas of the city, such as Santa Catalina, El Terreno or the city centre, in which they have combined their idiosyncrasy with the slower island life.

Thirdly, the Swedes in Palma, while having their own cultural elements and interacting frequently with each other, are not a closed community. They actively participate in promoting and sharing their traditions with other residents particularly with Majorcan and residents from other European countries. What's more, the Swedes who have been living on the island for over than 30 years have create a network that involves them in the cultural climate.

On the other hand, this willingness to collaborate and share cultural traditions is not necessarily seen in other larger foreign communities in Palma. This success in promoting their culture may be due to their strong sense of community and collaboration within smaller groups, as well as the wider community's openness to learn and embrace culture. This was evident in Santa Lucia's concert held in the Cathedral, where attendees of various profiles and four different languages were present. As a result, we can say that the Swedish's contributions to the cultural variety of Palma have a significant impact on the city's multiculturalism.

Overall, the Swedish community's efforts to promote their culture while also integrating with the wider community reflect the importance of cultural diversity and the potential for communities to coexist in a multicultural city like Palma.

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