

Executive Summary

Government measure for tourism management 2024-2027



Report
September 2024

Department of
Economics, Treasury,
Economic Promotion
and Tourism



**Ajuntament
de Barcelona**

1 Introduction

The aim of this government measure is to prioritise a form of management that improves the balance between tourist activity and the daily lives of residents, positioning Barcelona as a benchmark in the management, organisation, funding, and social return of tourism.



The key challenge: tourism management

The continuous rise in visitors has highlighted challenges such as regulating tourist accommodation and taxation within the tourism industry

Barcelona is today a global city, internationally known and recognised, with an extraordinary capacity to attract, which seeks to build its present and future as a place to live and coexist, based on the pillars of equity, sustainability, and economic competitiveness. This is the city we aspire to be, and it is essential that Barcelona is able to address both local and global challenges, harnessing its full potential to make this possible and ensuring that all social and economic sectors contribute towards this goal.

Of these economic sectors, the visitor economy is one of the key pillars, accounting for 13.9% of GDP and providing employment for 150,000 people. It is clear, therefore, that the growth of tourism has played an important role in reflatting the city's economy. This dynamism has resulted in the creation and arrival of businesses in this sector, leading to a multiplier effect. However, its impact goes far beyond economic aspects, as it affects the transformation of urban spaces, mobility practices, the commercial fabric, and the daily life of residents.

Its ability to influence the very configuration and identity of the city has brought to the forefront and intensified the debate about its benefits and externalities. There is a consensus regarding the acceptance of tourism as an inherent and indispensable phenomenon of the city, and the importance of its proper management to ensure that it is beneficial. The debate, therefore, revolves around the image to be projected, the social return of tourism activities, the sustainability of the sector, ensuring the well-being of residents, the quality of the tourist experience, urban balance, and economic development.

This debate is not exclusive to Barcelona. It has developed in a similar way in major European urban destinations, which have progressively seen a growing concern among residents regarding tourism.

While many of the challenges faced by tourist cities are shared, each must tackle them in light of its own unique characteristics, and one of the characteristics of Barcelona is its high urban density and ability to remain compact. Barcelona is a small city in terms of surface area, covering 101 km², of which only 27.5 km² are residential. With a population of 1.7 million and 30 million visitors each year, the city experiences very high concentrations of people. Furthermore, visitors tend to concentrate in areas of the city they consider essential to their visit, which creates a significant geographical imbalance in this density across the city's neighbourhoods.

The continuous rise in visitors has highlighted challenges such as regulating tourist accommodation, taxation within the tourism industry, or more recently, managing drought conditions. It is clear, therefore, that an integrated approach is needed to seize new opportunities and address the challenges they present, keeping in mind that this is a socio-economic sector subject to disruptive dynamics and constant evolution, which complicates its management.

It is in this context that Barcelona City Council is launching the new Government Measure for tourism management, which has become one of the key priorities of the 2023-2027 term. Thus, Barcelona remains a leading city that works creatively, thoughtfully, and efficiently to address the challenges and opportunities of tourism.

2 Tourism strategy



2.1 Challenges and improvement opportunities for the city

Based on the diagnosis of the evolution of tourism in Barcelona, the city faces a series of crucial challenges that must be addressed in order to ensure a sustainable form of tourism, which ensures urban balance, the well-being of residents, the quality of the tourist experience and economic development. Understanding the current challenges the city faces in the area of tourism is essential as a starting point for proactively formulating viable solutions towards improved tourism management in Barcelona

CHALLENGE 1. Promote the decentralisation of high traffic areas

High traffic areas experience a high intensity and volume of visits, which generate impacts that must be reduced to ensure a good quality of life for residents and an optimal experience for visitors. An agenda must therefore be established to decentralise the city's attractions and events. This should not be a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather a strategy that is adapted to the specific characteristics, needs, and potential of each area.

CHALLENGE 2. Increase the taxation on practices with greater negative externalities

Financing mechanisms must be found that balance the costs that tourism management imposes on municipal finances with the revenues it generates for the city's coffers. The financial contribution to the municipal coffers from activities that generate the most negative externalities for the city and its residents must be increased, in order to boost the social return fund.

CHALLENGE 3. Reinforce and give visibility to the city's commitment to high-quality and sustainable tourism

Barcelona is fully committed to promoting a model of sustainable tourism development that benefits the entire local population and improves working conditions, creates new quality jobs, and ensures a more equitable distribution of economic benefits. The path is to continue promoting sustainability as an essential future goal for the tourist city and ensure the maximum possible social return from activities, without jeopardising the future well-being of the city's residents. To support the transition of Barcelona's business structure towards sustainability, it is essential to continue promoting the culture of sustainable tourism among the city's businesses and tourism services. It is also important to maintain official certification for tourism operators who commit to responsible management that respects the environment, culture, labour conditions, gender equity, and social and economic return.

CHALLENGE 4. Promote a strong, active, and collaborative governance model

Promoting the development of a tourism governance model means creating a framework with clear public leadership in tourism management, coordinated and shared with all stakeholders in the visitor economy, allowing for effective responses to the global challenges faced by the destination. In that regard, at the metropolitan, provincial, autonomous community, and national levels, it is essential to build a strong, active, and collaborative governance model, strengthening institutional cooperation as well as public-private alignment.

CHALLENGE 5. Strengthen the creation of knowledge about the city's tourism sector

Barcelona is one of the urban destinations with the most information regarding its tourism sector. Nevertheless, this is a very dynamic sector, highly susceptible to external factors, disruptive events or changes in context. Therefore, it is essential to continuously generate knowledge, both on less understood topics and on areas with limited information. This knowledge should underpin urban tourism policies, while also contributing to the broader discussion on this inherently complex phenomenon.

CHALLENGE 6. Promote the digital transformation of the visitor economy

Promoting the comprehensive digital transformation of the visitor economy in Barcelona is essential to optimise tourism management, improve the visitor experience, and simultaneously promote the city's competitiveness and sustainable development. Barcelona must be transformed into a smart and sustainable destination through the digitalisation of public and private initiatives related to tourism, as well as through the implementation of new technologies.

CHALLENGE 7. Minimise the negative externalities of tourism activity in the city of Barcelona

Improving the integration of tourism in the city involves minimising the negative externalities of tourism activity by seeking all possible regulatory, legislative, or fiscal mechanisms to ensure this integration. Special attention should be given to activities with significant externalities, such as accommodation, cruise activities, transport, restaurants, tour services, or any other area of activity.

CHALLENGE 8. Foster strategic promotion

It is important to address the management of the destination from the communication aspect as well. The existing communication strategy and tools must be adapted to the new challenges of the destination. This means carrying out a strategic promotion that strengthens profiles and practices focused on the sustainability of the destination and a greater social return.

CHALLENGE 9. Have the necessary tools and mechanisms in place for tourism management

Local governments have limited powers when it comes to addressing the management of the effects of tourism in urban areas. It is crucial to advocate for the tools needed to manage an activity that affects the city's structure and dynamics. Additionally, strengthening collaboration with other European destinations is necessary to push for greater decision-making and regulatory authority for local governments over the impacts of tourism.

CHALLENGE 10. Promote positive and respectful coexistence between visitors and the city

With the increasing number of visitors to Barcelona, the challenge is to promote positive coexistence between them and the residents. This involves encouraging civic behaviour among visitors, educating them about their rights and responsibilities as temporary residents of the city, and helping them engage with the local culture to reduce their negative impact on the daily life of the community.

Tourism model

MISSION

Barcelona seeks to promote a sustainable and respectful visitor economy that supports the development of other economic sectors, with the primary goal of fostering the prosperity and well-being of its residents, while ensuring their right to the city.

In that regard, tourism management is seen as a key tool to ensure both alignment with the city model and a high-quality experience for visitors that is integrated into the life of residents.

VISION

Barcelona is prioritising greater economic diversification, with a focus on strengthening key sectors like talent and innovation, while decreasing the relative influence of the visitor economy on the city's overall economy. It is essential to establish Barcelona as a leading destination for urban tourism, guided by principles of sustainability, quality, equity, and social impact, contributing to the achievement of the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the 2030 Agenda.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. MANAGEMENT:** Prioritise the management of tourist activity and its contribution through the return fund for local people to mitigate negative externalities, ensure the smooth functioning of the urban metabolism and dynamics, and enhance the quality of the sector while promoting shared responsibility among visitors.
- 2. DIVERSIFICATION:** Encourage the geographical decentralisation and diversification of tourism activity by focusing on polycentrism, through the appreciation of new cultural, sports, gastronomic, educational, and other experiences within the destination's tourism offering.
- 3. STRATEGIC PROMOTION:** Focus on a form of strategic promotion that targets segments and markets that are aligned with the reasons for and interest in visiting the city, that add value to the city's assets, and help enhance and help boost and consolidate local commerce, gastronomy, and services.



3 Action plan



Areas of action and key projects

The analysis of tourist activity in Barcelona highlights the need for a more in-depth approach to managing it and its impacts. This is the key challenge we face today, and it is through this tourism strategy that we aim to address it, adopting an integrated approach. The complexity of the tourism phenomenon requires it. This document tackles the management challenge through twelve strategic areas, which should be viewed as part of a cohesive strategy, where each area is interconnected and, in many instances, strongly interdependent. It is, therefore, an exercise designed to systematise actions and make them easier to understand, while still maintaining the integrated perspective that this complex phenomenon requires.

The set of areas includes a total of 12 key projects and 41 specific actions to be carried out throughout the action plan, each with a defined timeline and an assigned budget. They will be carried out by Barcelona City Council and other entities involved in the tourism sector.

The following section presents an initial approach for each of the twelve strategic areas, outlining the challenges addressed within each area, which will then be further developed into specific actions detailed later.

1. Management of urban spaces

The pressure caused by the high number of visitors in certain areas of the city makes it necessary to manage these spaces and their tourist activity in order to mitigate negative externalities, ensure the smooth functioning of the urban metabolism and dynamics, and enhance the quality of the sector while promoting shared responsibility among visitors. In that regard, the management measures for these areas must be adapted to different scales, based on the specific needs and challenges of each one, as they may experience very different realities.

2. Taxation and funding

Taxation is seen as a key tool for encouraging more responsible and sustainable tourism practices and to discourage those that generate negative externalities. The goal is to achieve greater equity in the distribution of direct and social costs, while ensuring the economic viability of the system through the general pricing system or the specific taxation of certain practices.

3. Internal mobility

Tourist mobility must be managed as an integral element within the increasingly complex and diverse urban mobility patterns in Barcelona. This means promoting a responsible means of visiting the city that is compatible with everyday mobility, ensuring the rational and coherent use of transport systems and public space in the city. The management of tourist mobility must therefore take into account the volume, intensity, and changing dynamics.

4. Accommodation

Regulating tourist-use flats (HUTs) is a key tool to safeguard the right to housing, everyday life, and sustainable tourism. The Special Urban Development Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT) will be reviewed in a manner that upholds its original principles and goals, which include alleviating tourist pressure, promoting urban balance and diversification, and safeguarding the right to housing, rest, residents' well-being, and the quality of public spaces.

5. Coexistence, safety and prevention

The intensity and concentration of tourist activity can lead to a deterioration of coexistence and have a negative impact on the quality of life of residents. Additionally, urban areas with high tourist activity are particularly vulnerable when it comes to safety concerns. That is why, to manage these aspects, it is essential to use the tools available to the local authority to ensure harmonious coexistence between tourist and non-tourist uses, ranging from specific regulations to communication campaigns and mediation services.

6. Sustainability and resilience

Sustainability is an imperative goal. Responsible and respectful management of the environment, culture, working conditions, and social and economic return are imperative. In this context of climate emergency, it is crucial to proactively address its impacts. This means that tourism management measures must also be taken with a focus on resilience, tackling such serious threats as drought and extreme temperatures.

7. Digitalisation and innovation

Digitalisation must be fully integrated into the visitor experience and management. Increasing the comprehensive digitalisation of tourism activities and promotion, as well as visitor service and experience, is a key objective for destination Barcelona in order to ensure its structural competitiveness and guarantee the use of sustainability criteria.

8. Economic development and return

Ensuring economic development and a social return from the tourism industry is key to guaranteeing the sector's positive contribution to the growth and well-being of the city and its local community. Therefore, this area is crucial to ensure the promotion of initiatives of interest in strategic areas for Barcelona, and to foster a sustainable, innovative, and high-quality local economic fabric. This approach will stimulate the attraction of talent and the creation of quality tourism jobs, while also strengthening the links between tourism and the local community by contributing to a balanced economic development and a positive social return for all citizens.

9. Geographical strategy and tourism offering

Tourism has a clearly geographical component; therefore, its management must also be approached with a specific strategy for each area. The focus is on encouraging the geographical decentralisation and diversification of tourism activity, through the appreciation of new cultural, sports, gastronomic, educational, and other experiences within the destination's tourism offering.

10. Promotion, communication and reception

Promotion and communication are also seen as management tools, as they can influence the image of the destination and help to target segments and markets that align with the city's motivations and interests, leveraging digitalisation opportunities to generate a greater economic and social return by increasing the average length of stay and repeat visits.

11. Knowledge

Generating knowledge about the activity, regarding both potential positive effects and externalities, is crucial for making informed decisions, identifying trends, opportunities, and challenges, optimising resource use, and adapting to changes. At the same time, it is essential to invest in innovative methods for collecting, managing, and displaying information.

12. Community and governance

The growth of tourism in Barcelona in recent years and the subsequent increase in both public and private stakeholders involved in its activities have created the need for an effective governance framework to address the complexity of the sector and ensure proper coordination and alignment of the efforts of all those involved.



KEY PROJECTS

As part of the government measure, a total of twelve key projects have been identified for their strategic importance, potential impact, and capacity to address the most critical needs and challenges in the tourism sector. Specifically, a key project has been identified for each area of tourism management, which will serve as a catalyst for its sustainable development and competitive improvement, benefiting the local community, visitors, and the city. The twelve key projects are as follows:

- AREA 1. MANAGEMENT OF URBAN SPACES
 - **Management of high traffic areas (HTAs)**
- AREA 2. TAXATION AND FUNDING
 - **Creation of a tourism return fund for the city's citizens (ReCiutaT fund)**
- AREA 3. INTERNAL MOBILITY
 - **Implementation of the Zona Bus 4.0 to improve tourist mobility in the city**
- AREA 4. ACCOMMODATION
 - **Review of the Special Urban Development Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT) and implementation of Decree Law 3/2023 on urgent measures regarding the urban planning regime for tourist flats, approved by the Government of Catalonia**
- AREA 5. COEXISTENCE, SAFETY AND PREVENTION
 - **Communication campaign aimed at visitors**
- AREA 6. SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE
 - **Promotion of water conservation to address the city's drought situation**
- AREA 7. DIGITALISATION AND INNOVATION
 - **Digitalisation of tourism management and promotion of destination Barcelona**
- AREA 8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC RETURN
 - **Launch of the call for grants to digitalise the private sector made up of the visitor economy**
- AREA 9. GEOGRAPHICAL STRATEGY AND TOURISM OFFERING
 - **Improvement of Barcelona's beaches and restoration of the Forum bathing area (ZBF)**
- AREA 10. PROMOTION, COMMUNICATION AND RECEPTION
 - **New tourism promotion strategy**
- AREA 11. KNOWLEDGE
 - **Analysis of tourist flows using big data techniques for data analysis**
- AREA 12. COMMUNITY AND GOVERNANCE
 - **Support for the creation of an international network of urban destinations**



Area 1. Management of urban spaces

KEY PROJECT

High traffic areas

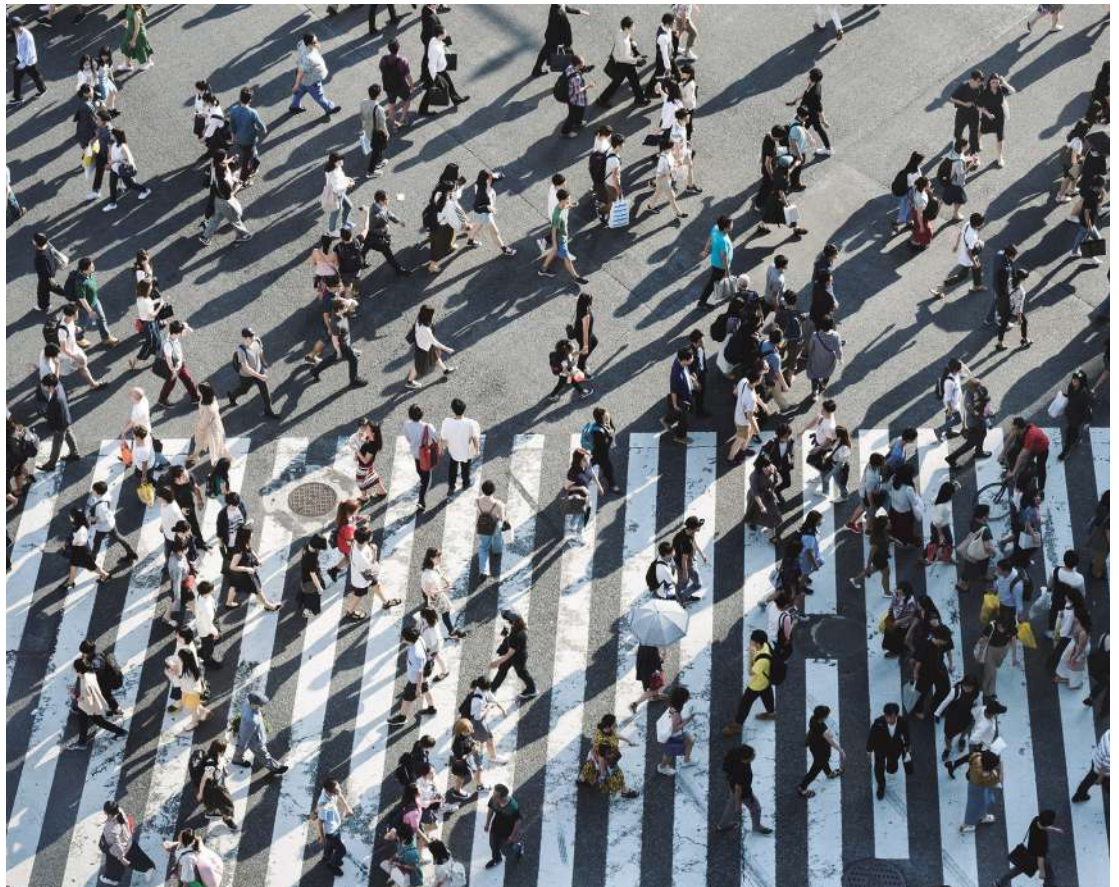
High traffic areas are locations of varying scales (ranging from iconic sites and their surroundings to entire neighbourhoods or parts of them) where a large number of people gather, regardless of whether they are floating populations in all their forms or local residents. They are areas with significant appeal that, consequently, attract a large number of people with varying interests and expectations, leading to competition for their use.

It is essential, therefore, to address and manage these spaces through urban policies in a cross-cutting and multisectoral way, considering that tourism and its use of the city have become a permanent and intrinsic activity in Barcelona.

Both the definition of the HTAs and the main challenges attributed to these areas have led to the identification of fifteen HTAs in the city. Eight of these are primarily tourist-oriented, while the remaining seven also incorporate a local aspect connected to occasional or recurring events and activities such as commerce, sports, culture, or leisure within the city.

The fifteen HTAs defined by the City Council are: Gardunya-Boqueria-La Rambla, the Gothic Quarter, Sant Pere - Santa Caterina - la Ribera, La Barceloneta, Sant Antoni Market, Passeig de Gràcia - Plaça de Catalunya, the Sagrada Família, Montjuïc - Poble-sec, Camp Nou, Park Güell, Turó de la Rovira, Les Glòries, Rambla del Poblenou, the Seafront, and Fòrum Park.

Of these, half are considered predominantly tourist areas: Park Güell, the Sagrada Família, Gardunya-Boqueria-La Rambla, Passeig de Gràcia - Plaça de Catalunya, the Gothic Quarter, Sant Pere - Santa Caterina - la Ribera, and La Barceloneta.



1.1. Official recognition of the HTAs

The complexity of uses and the diversity of challenges within the HTAs require specific management, which can be complex due to the wide range of interests and stakeholders involved, as well as the different levels and scales of intervention with varying areas of responsibility in the HTAs. This specific management will be accompanied by the recognition of these spaces, to allow for differentiated management compared to other urban spaces. This exceptional situation must be managed in an exceptional way.

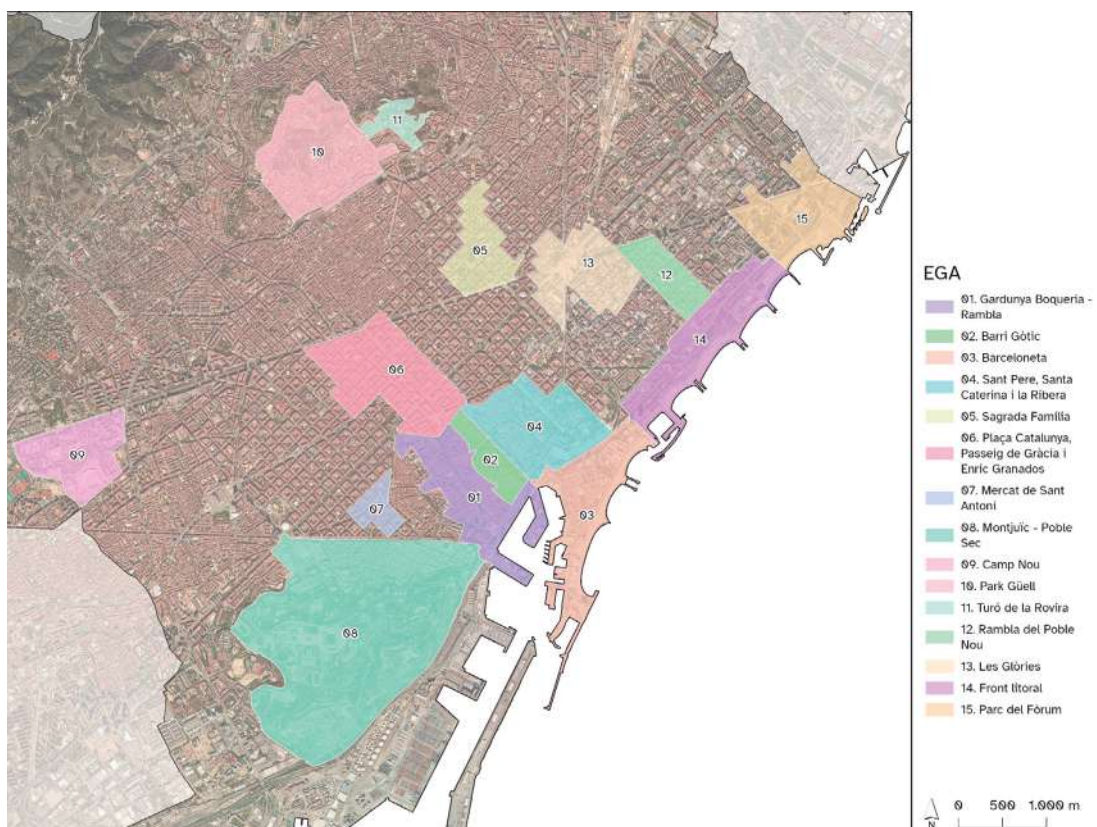
This recognition should enable the:

- Identification and delimitation of an area of intervention.
- Conditioning the implementation of uses and activities within it by adapting the municipal regulatory tools (use plan, terrace regulations, urban landscape by-law, visitor groups, others).
- Provision of extraordinary resources to implement the public initiative.

1.2. Governance: Office for the Technical Coordination of HTAs

The official recognition of these spaces must be accompanied by a dedicated governance body, and each HTA must be capable of leading, aligning, and coordinating the various stakeholders to avoid dualities and contradictions in the implementation of actions, ensuring coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency in their deployment. It should also be responsible for the following:

- Designing operations through expert panels and operative boards internally with the municipal stakeholders.
- Carrying out financial management.



- Facilitating communication with the stakeholders.
- Coordinating working groups and the requests and proposals from the involved parties.
- Communicating the actions carried out.

To that end, a technical coordination office for the HTAs will be established to support them and to drive and standardise (while respecting their diversity) the implementation of tourism management as a public policy in the city of Barcelona. The goal is to create and implement a scheduled and budgeted action plan for each of the priority HTAs. This plan will address areas such as financing, security, mobility, management of attractions, urban design, economic development, communication, and community engagement, among others.

1.3. Action plan for high traffic areas

An action plan will be developed for each of the fifteen identified HTAs, which must define the challenges of each location, identify, categorise, and design the public response, implement the response, and evaluate the public policies. These action plans focus on the following areas of intervention:

- Occupation and saturation of the public space.
- Transformation of activities and uses.
- Movement and flow of pedestrians.
- Difficulties faced by the community and residents to go about their daily lives.

1.4. Promotion of the Tourism Management Board

One of the goals of Barcelona City Council's internal governance is to establish the Tourism Management Board as a shared responsibility platform to lead the city's tourism management and ensure the cross-cutting nature of strategies and actions. The plan is to create two specific working groups within the Board that focus on HTAs and the related data.

The HTA working group's objectives are to:

- Provide a space that includes representatives from all the HTAs, facilitating coordination between the relevant bodies and departments, as well as ensuring the coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency of implementing specific actions in the HTAs.
- Discuss and design the operations to be implemented in the HTAs.
- Promote the transfer of knowledge and the exchange of best practices relating to HTA management in order to highlight them and replicate their experiences in other areas.

Area 2. Taxation and funding

KEY PROJECT

Creation of a tourism return fund for the city's citizens (ReCiutaT fund)

The tax on stays in tourist establishments (IEET) is a tax created by the Catalan Government that has been in effect since November 2012. By law, the income from it must be allocated to fostering, boosting, preserving, promoting and developing tourist infrastructures and activities in Catalonia.

A portion of the revenue from tourism-related taxes will be allocated to offset the costs and impacts of tourism on the city and to promote social return policies aimed at improving the quality of life for residents.

The portion of the IEET allocated to the Tourism Return Fund for Citizens (ReCiutaT Fund) is made possible by the approval of a city-specific surcharge in Barcelona of up to 4 euros per stay, which goes directly to the municipal coffers and, in accordance with the IEET law, must not be used for promoting tourism.

This surcharge is primarily allocated to three actions:

1. Improving control over properties that rent out rooms for tourist use.
2. Enhancing the quality of life for residents in neighbourhoods most affected by tourism pressure, enabling them to restore their economic, social, and cultural activities independent of tourism.
3. Creating new content that can be implemented in settings aimed at improving the decentralisation of tourism.



In parallel with these actions, the ReCiutaT Fund is complemented by additional initiatives aimed at enriching the lives of Barcelona's residents and boosting local economic activity. The new initiatives will include the creation of cultural content for Barcelona, the promotion of local commerce, the development of activities for city neighbourhoods, the attraction of businesses, and other measures aimed at improving tourism management and its impact on the local community.

Thus, in the field of social policies, this commitment will be realised through specific projects. One such project is the Climate Plan for Schools, which aims to provide air conditioning for schools and install aerothermal systems – which produce both cooling and heating – in a total of 170 schools, including 148 primary schools, 16 primary-secondary schools, 3 special education schools, and 3 secondary schools.

In the cultural sector, support will be provided for events related to the cultural and creative industries.

This year, the municipal surcharge has been raised to the maximum allowed amount of 4 euros, and a request has been made to the Catalan Government to review the current regulations to enable a gradual increase in taxation in the future.

2.1. Review of the amount of IEET on short-stay cruises

The Catalan Government is being asked to increase the current rates of the tourist tax for the short-stay cruises (less than twelve hours) so that activities that have a significant impact on intensive use of the city and coexistence to contribute more substantially to municipal revenues. In this way, they will help cover the additional costs that the municipal coffers incur in providing certain public services, such as maintenance, cleaning, and public safety, among others. At the same time, there is a desire to deter this type of cruise.

Likewise, the idea of flexible taxation will be explored, one that is tailored to both the cruise season and the capacity of the cruises, with the idea of creating a scalable system.

2.2. Review of prices for the use of coach parking

As part of the Zona Bus 4.0 project, which aims to reduce, organise, and monitor the discretionary stops and parking of tourist coaches in the city centre, and to minimise external negative impacts, the applicable pricing system will be reviewed.

The new byelaw will introduce a new fee aimed at covering administration costs. Additionally, the updated pricing system will incorporate flexible elements to influence the behaviour of coach operators and regulate their activity based on the specific needs of the city.

2.3. Modify IEET criteria

Act 5/2017, of 28 March, on fiscal, administrative, financial, and public sector measures, and the creation and regulation of taxes on large commercial establishments, tourist stays, radioactive elements, packaged sugary drinks, and carbon dioxide emissions (DOGC No. 7340, 30/03/2017) includes the regulation of the tax on stays in tourist establishments (IEET).

The revenue generated from the tax on stays in tourist establishments is allocated to funding the tourism promotion fund to fulfil the objectives specified in the Act. The resources from the tourism promotion fund must be allocated to projects or actions that aim to achieve one of the following objectives:

- Promoting tourism in Catalonia.
- Promoting sustainable, responsible and quality tourism and protecting, preserving, reclaiming and improving tourist resources.
- Boosting, creating and improving tourist products.
- Improving control and inspection services for tourist establishments and facilities.
- Developing tourism-related infrastructure and services.

Barcelona City Council intends to urge the Catalan Government to revise the IEET objectives and distribution criteria, allowing a larger portion to be invested in mitigating the negative externalities of tourism. A revision of the rates is also being proposed with the goal of enabling the IEET fund to finance plans, programmes, and initiatives that address the strategic challenges of Barcelona's tourism policies.



Area 3. Internal mobility

KEY PROJECT

Implementation of the Zona Bus 4.0 to improve tourist mobility in the city

Barcelona City Council, through Barcelona de Serveis Municipals (BSM), will implement the Zona Bus 4.0, an initiative launched as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan

The Zona Bus 4.0 aims to limit, organise, and regulate the discretionary stops and parking of tourist coaches in the city centre to minimise the negative externalities generated by visitors. The new model of the Zona Bus system will become a tool for managing tourist mobility that will help to:

- Limit the daily volume of authorised coaches.
- Limit the number of operations allowed per space and time slot.
- Organise and relocate the Zona Bus spaces to reduce the effects on coexistence in public spaces.
- Manage demand and encourage the use of intermodal points.
- Monitor the situation of discretionary coach parking in real time.

A través de la digitalización y la conectividad de las zonas bus, el nuevo sistema cubrirá la necesidad de disponer de datos valiosos para poder gestionar, de una manera efectiva y eficiente, las zonas de estacionamiento de autocares y los espacios autorizados próximos a los puntos de visita turísticos.

Through the digitalisation and connectivity of the bus zones, the new system will meet the need for valuable data to effectively and efficiently manage the coach parking areas and authorised spaces near tourist sights.

Therefore the Zona Bus 4.0 will provide complete flexibility in the management of tourist transport, allowing the activation and deactivation of coach stops or parking spaces according to the city's specific needs, and ensuring that they are **equipped to meet current and future challenges and demands**. The new parking areas will help improve the management of high-demand areas, a demand that will have been reduced thanks to the implementation of the Zona Bus.

Likewise, the project includes a detailed description of the operations for each of the unique areas, aiming to redirect discretionary tourist coaches to designated pick-up and drop-off zones or to parking facilities located outside the city centre, with the goal of reducing their impact on urban space and the distance travelled by the coaches.



A number of short- and medium-term goals have been established as part of implementing this initiative. These are to:

- Regulate the number of tourist coaches in the city centre and the use of operational data to analyse and optimise management. Have a better understanding of the operations, which will help minimise unnecessary trips, optimise mobility within the city, and, consequently, reduce harmful emissions.
- Organise pick-up and drop-off operations at tourist points of interest, and coordinate with designated parking areas.
- Involve tourism operators in the efficient management of the most frequented areas, integrating various rhythms, seasons, and timeframes into this management.
- Create parking spaces connected to the public transport network, offering a more affordable alternative with stricter schedules on days when fully booked.
- Implementation of the project will have benefits for tourism mobility management:
- Improvement in available data on tourist mobility, enabling more effective management.
- Improvement in managing the mobility of coaches with reservations in the city centre, ensuring a balance between supply and demand to prevent overcrowding.
- Decongestion during peak hours in high traffic areas.
- Minimisation of the driver's role in the operation of tourist transport.
- Facilitation of fleet management for transport operators.
- Special attention to specific groups, such as children and people with reduced mobility (PRM), to ensure inclusive and accessible tourism mobility for all.
- Greater harmony between tourist and residential mobility, aiming for a more harmonious and less congested city.





3.1. Improvements to and the remodelling of Barcelona Nord Bus Station

This project, carried out by Barcelona Serveis Municipals (BSM), involves the remodelling of the iconic Barcelona Nord bus station with the ultimate goal of transforming it into the main point for the arrival and departure of tourist excursions and establishing it as the hub for tourist mobility in the city.

The station's current two-floor layout necessitates essential improvements to optimise movement flows, ensure universal accessibility throughout the facility, and enable the implementation of a user access control system. Moreover, although it already has energy efficiency systems in place, the project proposes the generation of additional renewable energy, aiming to make the Barcelona Nord station a model tourist space in terms of both energy efficiency and accessibility.

The improvement and remodelling project is therefore divided into the following initiatives:

- Adaptation of the interior space and energy improvements to the walls by relocating all station services to a single level, thereby achieving greater accessibility for all groups, improving the spaces, and updating security systems through the installation of cameras and number plate recognition. This will significantly improve flow management within the space, as well as enhance the perception of safety around the station area, while also presenting a modern and updated image.
- Installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof and an access ramp to improve lighting.

This will improve the building's energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint.

Likewise, the project will take advantage of this opportunity to incorporate the former station lobby, giving greater visibility to an important historical space in the city, with the aim of making Barcelona Nord station a key landmark for tourism in Barcelona. At the same time, a new space will be created to host events and exhibitions related to tourism and its connection with the city.



3.2. Renovation of the Montjuïc escalators

Work will begin on replacing the 22 escalators in the park, with the aim of making it easier for the public to move around. Barcelona de Serveis Municipals (BSM) is promoting the work, which has a budget of 7.8 million euros (3.6 million of this from European Next Generation Funds and part of the Barcelona Sustainable Destination Tourism Strategy), to be carried out in different stages until its expected completion in the first quarter of 2026.

The escalators in the Parc Montjuïc get used 30 million times a year by visitors attending events or cultural venues there, watching or doing sport etc.

The new escalators are based on sustainability, safety and durability criteria. Their installation means Parc Montjuïc will improve accessibility to the mountain, reducing its CO² footprint at the same time.

3.3. Roll-out of the new tourist bus routes approved

A new concession for indirect management of the tourist bus service, which will involve redesigning the current routes to minimise the impacts arising from concentration of the service in the city centre.

This new design will make it possible to introduce new routes closely linked to new tourist attractions in the city, such as cultural venues.



Area 4. Accommodation

KEY PROJECT

Review of the Special Urban Development Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT) and implementation of Decree-Law 3/2023 on urgent measures regarding the urban planning regime for tourist flats by the Catalan Government

With the entry into force of Decree Law 3/2023, of 7 November, on urgent measures regarding the urban planning regime for tourist flats, approved by the Catalan Government, an analysis and adjustment of the supply of tourist accommodation in Barcelona is required.

Application of this decree will result in the elimination of all tourist-use flats (HUTs) in the city, which will have a significant impact on the availability of residential housing.

It is expected that the current 10,101 HUT licences will be revoked.

Moreover, in 2025, work will begin on reviewing the current Special Urban Development Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT), which defines and regulates the tourism offer based on an analysis of the following factors:

- Impact of the floating population
- Impact of tourism on public spaces
- Urban characteristics of the urban fabric

4.1. Inspection of illegal accommodation

In February 2024, the European Parliament approved the proposal that digital platforms for short-term rentals must, for the first time, share data of the properties they advertise with the authorities.

The new European regulation, which has the approval of the European Commission, will depend on each member state and is in line with what Barcelona has advocated since 2018 within the framework of the European Cities Alliance on Short-Term Holiday Rentals.

Specifically, the regulation strengthens the possibility of exercising greater control over the activity of platforms that market tourist accommodation and supports the model that Barcelona has been promoting for years to manage tourist pressure in certain areas, while also ensuring the availability of more affordable housing.

In that regard, platforms that market tourist lets, whether they specialise in tourist accommodation or general-purpose platforms, will be required to ensure the legality of the ads they publish and take responsibility for verifying the accuracy of the data and its inclusion in the Tourist Establishments Register as a prerequisite for publishing them.

In this context, Barcelona City Council will continue implementing a comprehensive programme to strengthen the inspection of illegal tourist accommodation, in order to further facilitate the detection of tourist accommodation without the proper authorisation and ensure compliance with current regulations.

4.2. HUTS Mediation Service

The main goal of the Mediation Service between residents' communities and property owners/managers of tourist accommodation, called the HUTS Mediation Service, is to improve coexistence between the aforementioned associations and tourists using the tourist-use flats (HUTs).

Specifically, the service will respond to mediation requests in conflicts between residents' communities and the owners of tourist-use flats. It is a service initially promoted by the Directorate of Tourism. It will be managed by the Prevention Services Directorate of the Manager's Office for Prevention and Public Safety, which will closely coordinate with the district prevention experts.

The service aims to promote civic behaviour and improve the quality of life for residents of these associations and, indirectly, for the city's neighbourhoods. These benefits will be achieved through the following objectives:

1. Promoting positive coexistence and social cohesion in the city's neighbourhoods that enables the integration of activities that arise from the use of HUTs.
2. Improving the balance between residential life and other uses in residents' communities with legal HUTs through mediation and conflict prevention
3. Promoting an alternative conflict management approach that encourages coexistence between residents' communities, property owners, and tourists.
4. Gathering quantifiable data on incidents caused by the activities of residents in HUTs and other tourist accommodation.
5. Taking direct action against anti-social behaviour occurring within residents' communities and against the misuse of properties.
6. Assistance and mediation in coexistence issues arising between residents' communities and their surroundings, including public areas and establishments open to the public.
7. Working towards harmonious coexistence and the well-being of Barcelona citizens.

This mediation service was created as part of the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan to address the increasing number of conflicts between residents and tourists.

Complaints and claims from citizens are managed through the usual channels (Guardia Urbana (GUB - city police), IRIS, territorial prevention techniques, etc.). Mediation is conducted between residents and accommodation owners or managers (not the guests) and has been warmly welcomed by both parties, confirming its effectiveness as a means of resolving conflicts.

Recognising mediation as an alternative tool to police action has been key both in addressing a large number of calls to the GUB and in providing an alternative management resource for territorial prevention staff. For all these reasons, we consider the continuation of this service to be essential.

Area 5. Coexistence, safety and prevention

KEY PROJECT

Communication campaign aimed at visitors

To continue promoting a communication campaign to encourage visitors to Barcelona to behave in a civic manner, in the way locals do, and not be a nuisance to the city's residents.

This campaign is divided into three clear objectives:

- The need for civility and zero tolerance towards behaviours that cause a nuisance to Barcelona residents.
- Promoting Barcelona as a model of a 21st century city to the rest of the country and internationally.
- Raising public awareness of Barcelona City Council's efforts to defend their well-being in the city.

The campaign is segmented into three different geographic areas: international, national (Spain), and local (Barcelona). Each will have a target audience with specific profiles and identified markets.

The campaign aims to help combat the perception of Barcelona as a party destination and a place for uncivil behaviour.

Versions will be created in Catalan, Spanish, English and French. The campaign's communication material will include outdoor advertising, Barcelona's municipal websites, all available digital channels, and, finally, a media campaign through the press.

5.1. Communication of recommendations on public safety and harmonious coexistence

To ensure that visitors to Barcelona are well-informed and aware of safety issues, the focus will be on communicating and disseminating recommendations on public safety and harmonious coexistence.

The ultimate goal of the initiative is to ensure that visitors have an enjoyable stay, while also encouraging safe and responsible tourism and fostering a positive perception of this activity among the local community.



Area 6. Sustainability and resilience

KEY PROJECT

Promotion of water conservation to address the city's drought situation

On 1 February 2024, the Catalan Water Agency (ACA) declared a drought emergency in the Barcelona metropolitan area. But this declaration had already been preceded by 38 consecutive months of drought, a situation that has worsened over the past year.

Water scarcity is a significant challenge in terms of sustainability and urban resilience, requiring conscious action and management across all sectors of the city, including the tourism industry.

In this context, and considering the restriction scenarios outlined in the Special plan of action in an alert and possible drought situation (PES) approved by the ACA in 2020, Barcelona City Council is collaborating with various public stakeholders and actors in the tourism ecosystem to promote actions that contribute to water conservation:

- 1.** Raising awareness among visitors about the need for responsible water use and moderate consumption during their stay in the city through informational actions carried out in collaboration with the Barcelona Tourism Consortium, the Hotel Guild, and Apartur.
- 2.** Launching a joint awareness campaign with the Catalan Government, aimed at informing the public about the climate emergency situation and, specifically, the drought. This will be displayed at key entry points to the city, such as information offices, the port, the airport, and train stations.
- 3.** Promoting tourism management practices that encourage water conservation, including reducing consumption in tourism services, reusing greywater, and recycling water in swimming pools.
- 4.** Securing the necessary investments for water conservation and reuse in tourism establishments through financial aid calls from the competent authorities. More specifically, the aim is to promote the installation of water-saving taps, showers, and toilets, as well as infrared-activated automatic taps and daily water consumption monitoring systems, among other things.
- 5.** Monitoring and evaluating water consumption data from tourism establishments to optimise its management.
- 6.** Supporting the installation of a desalination plant promoted by the Hotel Guild, to ensure water supply for tourist establishments and generate a social return through surplus water for public services.

6.1. Continuing destination Barcelona city's commitment to quality and sustainability

The Barcelona Biosphere Commitment to Sustainable Tourism promoted by the City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Provincial Council, and the Barcelona Tourism Consortium, aims to extend a culture of sustainable tourism among the city's tourism services businesses.

The commitment recognises good practices in the sustainable management of tourism and service businesses and requires compliance with a set of criteria that promote work around the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. It therefore addresses both the desire of tourism operators to promote more responsible tourism and the wishes of visitors to travel while preserving the environment to the fullest extent.

Companies that meet the criteria and process of the Barcelona Commitment to Sustainable Tourism can obtain the Biosphere certificate issued by the Responsible Tourism Institute.

Among other requirements, businesses that adhere to the Commitment must meet criteria related to water consumption in order to qualify for the certification. For example, it includes best practices aimed at staff and customers for the efficient use of resources and the mitigation of environmental impacts. It also includes actions to ensure that organisations maximise water savings in their facilities, calculate their consumption, and inform their customers about water-saving measures and actions to reduce water usage. Barcelona City Council subsidises the total cost of this process for companies in the city and also those belonging to the Barcelona Tourism Consortium through the IEET.

In 2023, the Barcelona Biosphere Commitment to Sustainable Tourism recognised 487 tourism operators in the city who are committed to responsible management that respects the environment, culture, working conditions, and the social and economic return. At the same time, 555 entities in the surrounding counties have been recognised, bringing the total to 1,043 companies and entities with the Biosphere certificate for destination Barcelona, nearly half of which are in the accommodation category.

THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development



6.2. Cruise tourism management

As part of the collaboration between Barcelona City Council and the Port of Barcelona in the cruise sector, joint efforts are being made with the major cruise companies to focus on promoting more sustainable practices in this field.

However, Barcelona cannot accommodate an annual growth of 9% in the number of cruise passengers. It is important to focus on the passenger volume and the number of terminals. Barcelona City Council considers it essential to adopt measures to contain this growth and manage its impacts in the environmental, mobility and public space sectors, as well as to increase its fiscal contribution.

In that regard, efforts are being made to promote Barcelona as a home port, reduce the current presence of transit cruises and increase taxation on this type of tourism, which adds little value to the city. Efforts are also being directed towards reducing the carbon footprint of cruise passengers and their impact on the city.

Barcelona City Council will urge the Port of Barcelona to reach new agreements to address the outlined objectives. Specifically, it proposes reducing the number of cruise terminals at the Adossat wharf, limiting the maximum number of cruise passengers, decreasing transit cruises and increasing taxation.

It is also considering plans to implement management measures to minimise the impact of cruise passengers on mobility and the use of public space.



6.3. Improving the quality of jobs in the tourism sector

Barcelona City Council, through Barcelona Activa, defines and implements actions to improve the quality of jobs in the tourism sector, aiming to raise working standards for companies in the sector and achieve higher job satisfaction among their employees.

With this objective in mind, several areas of action are identified below.

- Improvement actions: specific measures will be taken to improve working conditions. This could include awareness campaigns, contract reviews, and promoting a better work-life balance.
- Sectoral conferences: meetings and seminars to share updates in the tourism sector, as well as best practices and other relevant information.
- Talent management programme for businesses: support for companies and organisations in addressing their staffing needs to identify the most suitable profiles. Companies can rely on this service for support throughout the entire process, from identifying vacancies to finding talent and pre-selecting and managing applications.
- *Marketplace*: a recruitment and networking activity that connects companies with job vacancies to professionals selected by Barcelona Activa.
- Career guidance, training, and professional transition: tools and activities aimed at promoting employment and supporting individuals throughout their professional journey through specialised sessions that prepare them for the requirements of the labour market.
- Attraction and retention of talent: activities aimed at promoting the tourism sector as an attractive field for professionals from both Barcelona and abroad, along with measures to retain more talent.
- Business landing: support for businesses starting operations in Barcelona, including assistance with finding commercial spaces in the city, attracting the right talent, and facilitating the attraction of investments and business opportunities in the Barcelona tourism sector.

Therefore, to make Barcelona a tourist destination with a more positive and satisfying work environment for everyone involved, Barcelona City Council - Barcelona Activa promotes various services and collaborates with businesses and professionals in the sector.

6.4. Promotion of sustainable tourism in the city's districts

Barcelona City Council promotes sustainable tourism by encouraging corporate social responsibility actions in the city's districts.

An example of the city's efforts are the initiatives carried out in the districts of Ciutat Vella, Sants-Montjuïc, Sant Martí, and Les Corts, focused on increasing the hiring of services and people, as well as purchasing products locally, with local producers and organisations.

Area 7. Digitalisation and innovation

KEY PROJECT

Digitalisation of tourism management and promotion of destination Barcelona

Barcelona City Council and the Barcelona Tourism Consortium have established a collaboration agreement to manage the project “Digitalisation of the Tourism Promotion and Management of Destination Barcelona” as part of the Sustainable Tourism Plan at destinations, funded by the Next Generation EU funds.

This initiative, within the framework of innovation, aims to create a set of actions to comprehensively develop the digitalisation of tourism promotion and management for destination Barcelona. It aims to incorporate a broad view of the visitor’s customer journey and integrate the ecosystem (both public and private) related to the city’s visitor economy.

The set of actions must ensure interoperability among the stakeholders of Barcelona’s tourism ecosystem, digital connectivity between the various products and services for visitors, and the necessary drive to generate scalable value for destination Barcelona, as well as guarantee the application of sustainability criteria for the city through diversification, decentralisation, and deseasonalisation.

For consistency, a key action is defined as the creation of a master plan for projects (both technological and operational) that outlines a functional and logical architecture, which will also be integrated into the master plan.

The planned areas of action are:

- Support structure for digitalisation that implements a technological architecture capable of sustaining a model for the promotion, development, and collaborative management of the destination. This will be equipped with infrastructure and an IT environment that is open, dynamically scalable, and properly sized and managed, allowing for the provision of advanced cloud-based services (SaaS) to support the creation of a collaborative digital environment open to all destination stakeholders, reinforced by a Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) platform that enables the joint and integrated execution of digital projects.
- B2C (Business to Consumer) services. Development and implementation of new advanced services that include customised features and functionalities tailored to the needs of visitors, incorporating the various phases of the customer journey and adapting them to different segments and markets. Various technological channels and tools (website, app, chatbot, e-commerce, CRM) will be enabled to support these services.
- B2B (Business to Business) services. Development and implementation of new advanced services that include functionalities enabling collaborative work among the agents and companies offering tourism services and products, which together form the entire offering linked to the visitor economy of the tourism destination. Various technological channels and tools (digital repository of shared resources, professional website, interactive shared platform, etc.) will be enabled to support these services.
- Barcelona Tourism Observatory (OTB), which is part of the INSTO network of the World Tourism Organization. Digitalisation of its web platform and the incorporation of new advanced tourism intelligence services. The goal is to increase the value and utility provided to the stakeholders in the ecosystem, improve the interaction and visibility of tourism activity information, and enable universal access to data for all involved agents.



- Digital promotion and marketing. Creation of advanced promotional elements and content that incorporate innovative technologies and immersive formats (AR, VR, metaverse, other high-quality audiovisual technologies with maximum impact) to promote their integration into new and emerging digital channels and tools.
- Internal/external governance. Adaptation to a new structure of technological organisation, both internal (intranet, IT devices, training) and external (platforms and channels for digital promotion and commercialisation, interoperability, and the digitalisation of products and tourism services by destination stakeholders). Currently, the Barcelona Tourism Consortium is at the stage of defining and contracting projects to develop it.

Digitalisation is becoming an essential tool for the evolution of the tourism model, promoting greater competitiveness and a proper balance between supply and demand, an aspect that the pandemic brought into sharp focus. In that regard, it should enable better segmentation and personalisation in terms of promoting and marketing tourism; prioritise the interests and attributes of the city; and significantly improve tourism management to help balance urban dynamics with sustainable tourism.

Ultimately, it is about coordinating digitalisation with an optimal integration of the tourism ecosystem to enhance diversification, reduce seasonality, and decentralise the destination.

7.1. Monitoring the work plan for the “Smart Tourist Destination” (DTI) certification

Barcelona City Council has been part of the Network of Smart Tourist Destinations since 15 April 2021. In December 2023, it received the “Smart Tourist Destination” (DTI) certification for the first time, marking the start of the implementation of the action plan designed by Segittur. This demonstrated its commitment to transforming the destination into an environment dedicated to upholding values related to governance, sustainability, accessibility, innovation, and technology applied to tourism.

The certification is valid for two years, meaning it is subject to a renewal process that requires the city to maintain continuous improvement.

The DTI programme is a renewed strategic management model designed to address the challenges of developing tourism activity in different geographical areas. It is therefore viewed as a continuous improvement process that goes beyond simply obtaining the certification. Instead, it requires destinations to engage in an ongoing cycle of diagnosis, monitoring, and updating. This process enhances the planning and coordination capabilities of destination managers, enabling them to tackle increasingly complex and evolving challenges, which both they and the businesses in their regions must face in an environment of growing uncertainty.

7.2. Digital portal of the city’s museums

This initiative, led by the Barcelona Institute of Culture (ICUB), involves designing and developing a multilingual digital platform showcasing Barcelona’s heritage and museums. Its aim is to strengthen and enhance the prominence of the city’s cultural and heritage institutions both nationally and internationally.

The mission is to structure, streamline, and enhance the appeal of Barcelona’s cultural offerings, increasing their visibility and promoting the city’s cultural assets through

a digital showcase of collections, exhibitions, and activities related to the city's heritage and museums.

The goal is to establish a competitive virtual cultural space on an international scale, highlighting the value of both digital and in-person experiences of Barcelona's cultural assets.

The launch of the portal will be accompanied by an international campaign focusing on identity, branding, and communication designed to present it and emphasise its advantages in promoting Barcelona's heritage and museum offerings with a clear international focus.

7.3. Sensor system in high tourist traffic areas

It should be recognised that the best response to the saturation of specific services or areas is not solely a matter of the system's capacity but also involves managing and regulating demand and tourism practices, managing a demand that is undoubtedly complex and requires having accurate, up-to-date data. Technological solutions are considered key partners in generating knowledge. The widespread use of big data analysis, social media, and the ability to obtain real-time data presents an opportunity to improve management, optimise services, and minimise the impact on the urban fabric in high traffic areas.

Applying the most suitable technological solution for data generation in different high traffic areas will allow us to identify patterns of mobility, consumption, space usage, and tourism practices. This will help design urban policies, improve urban space management, and minimise negative externalities.



Area 8. Economic development and economic return

KEY PROJECT

Launch of the call for grants to digitalise the private sector made up of the visitor economy

Thanks to the Next Generation funds, a call for subsidies has been launched by Barcelona City Council and managed by the Directorate of Tourism, aimed at accelerating the transformation and digitalisation of the private sector that makes up the visitor economy in the city of Barcelona.

It is considered a complementary action to the key project “Digitalisation of the tourism management and promotion of destination Barcelona” and enables the private sector to participate and integrate effectively and efficiently into the global digitalisation process of the destination.

The call is established within the framework of the municipality’s promotional policies.

To launch the call, specific guidelines are to be drafted, which will be made available for public consultation before their final approval and the opening of the call. These rules and the call have the following objectives:

- Strengthening the functions of promotion, coordination, and significant contributions from entities in the visitor economy.
- Transforming the visitor economy through close public-private collaboration with promotion and marketing bodies, as well as with the tourism management initiatives available in the city of Barcelona.
- Consolidating the actions that have been started and require significant economic and technical effort in terms of innovation and digitalisation of Barcelona’s tourism system.
- Accelerating the growth of the business and professional network of companies linked to Barcelona’s visitor economy.
- Driving the digital transformation of tourism promotion and marketing, and the integration of new technologies into tourism businesses.
- Fostering the interconnection of products and services of Barcelona’s tourism businesses, as well as between these businesses and other economic sectors. The creation or promotion of networks and flows between the stakeholders involved in the tourism value chain is essential.
- Promoting innovation actions that improve the delivery of services to visitors and the integration of tourism activity into the daily life of residents.

Innovation is the key driver of transformation and growth for businesses, offering benefits such as increased margins, product differentiation, customer satisfaction, and the development of new business opportunities. Therefore, this line of subsidies aims to promote unique projects that include, among other things, improvements in digitalisation and innovation applied to management, promotion, value enhancement, and dissemination for the destination and the tourism sector.

8.1. FuTurisme

FuTurisme, promoted by Barcelona Activa, the Barcelona Hotel Guild, Barcelona Provincial Council, and the Catalan Association of Specialised Travel Agencies, is a programme that supports the creation of innovative and sustainable companies that meet the emerging needs of the tourism sector in Barcelona city and province. More specifically, it is aimed at entrepreneurs who wish to start their tourism activity in the city and the province, as well as tourism businesses that are less than one year old, provided their business projects are located within the province of Barcelona. So far, five successful editions have been held, with 950 participants.

8.2. Promoting tourism entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial culture is a defining characteristic of the city, and innovation is a key element in building a dynamic region. Therefore, one of the city's priorities is to promote responsible and innovative entrepreneurship in the tourism sector that creates value and supports new activities and business models focused on sustainable and responsible tourism.

8.3. European network for the promotion and preservation of iconic establishments

Iconic establishments are one of the city's key heritage elements and contribute to shaping a sustainable city model that prioritises coexistence and social cohesion. Currently, there are 209 historic establishments listed in Barcelona. The city, through the Government measure for the preservation and promotion of iconic commercial establishments in Barcelona. (2021-2024), aims to address the new challenges threatening this type of business. In addition to this measure, Barcelona has initiated the creation of a European network for the promotion and preservation of iconic establishments, which includes Paris, Rome, and Lisbon. This network aims to expand to other European cities, serving as a meeting space for the exchange of policies and, at the same time, as a dialogue platform with the European Commission to develop proposals for supporting and protecting iconic establishments within the European legal framework.



The network's main objectives are to share the experience and knowledge of municipal policies, gather best practices implemented by each of these cities regarding the preservation, promotion, and revitalisation of iconic commercial establishments, and develop proposals to advance the preservation of commercial heritage as a shared identity among European cities.

Thus, this network of cities seeks to explore the support of European institutions in the preservation of iconic shops and advocates for shared governance of these establishments, led by the local authorities.

8.4. Promotion and protection of the traditional commercial fabric in high traffic areas

The high influx of people in high traffic areas (HTAs) causes direct impacts on the environment and presents management challenges, such as the transformation of the economic fabric in these areas towards a tourism-oriented economy. This transformation can result in the loss or replacement of traditional businesses and, at times, an increase in the prices of essential goods. Furthermore, this economic specialisation can lead to tourist monoculture areas dominated by service or nightlife activities, and in certain cases, it may contribute to the rise of illegal activities, such as street vending.

In the action plans for high traffic areas, one of the key focus areas is intervention in the landscape and the commercial fabric. Various strategies will be considered to preserve local commerce, strengthen the relationships between local businesses and visitors, and, ultimately, support the commercial sector in high traffic areas with the aim of ensuring a diversified business landscape. These actions will need to be coordinated with the Directorate of Commerce, and the effectiveness of these measures will need to be regularly monitored.

Area 9. Geographical strategy and tourism offering

KEY PROJECT

Improvement of Barcelona's beaches and restoration of the Forum bathing area (ZBF)

The initiative, carried out by Barcelona Cicle de l'Aigua and part of the Tourism sustainability plan for destination Barcelona funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, proposes a series of interventions on the city's beaches and in the Fòrum bathing area. The aim is to create a safer, more accessible, naturalised space that is adapted to climate change, while also offering a range of tourism services and products with a cross-cutting and inclusive approach.

Improvements will be made to the infrastructure, including the installation of autonomous access points for people with functional diversity, new shaded areas by the beach, a designated space for the installation of the Beach Centre, and new signage will also be put up. In addition, security will be improved on the breakwaters, and a comprehensive intervention will be carried out in the Fòrum Bathing Area (ZBF).

More specifically, the project includes the following initiatives:

- Renaturalisation of the beaches: increasing greenery and introducing coastal species, signage and information boards about the natural values of the area, protection and restoration of biodiversity to support habitat conservation, marking of the Pangea island, and promotion of marine activities in the Forum Bathing Area. Shaded areas and information panels on the coastal ecosystem will also be installed, and a space will be reserved for environmental activities organised by the Beach Centre.
- Safety improvements to the breakwaters, their enclosure, and information signage.
- Greater beach accessibility through the implementation of autonomous bathing solutions for people with functional diversity and improvements to the assisted bathing service.
- Improvement in the services offered at the beaches through the installation of sunbeds, wooden walkways, information panels, and the upgrading of children's play areas, etc.
- Refurbishing furniture and structural elements, incorporating energy-efficient features, and so on.
- Revitalisation of the Fòrum Bathing Area through the creation of marine infrastructure to promote water sports; the development of an educational programme and guided tours of the area; the design of itineraries focused on the fight against climate change, among other initiatives.



Success stories in the city's coastal area: the blue economy, the Olympic Port, and the America's Cup

Aside from the initiatives included in this project, Barcelona City Council has been working for years to improve the coastline, in order to turn it into a sustainable, accessible, innovative space that is open to the public. In that regard, the Government Measure for the promotion of the blue economy in Barcelona, published in October 2021, stands out. Its mission is to develop the potential of the blue economy in Barcelona, in particular by fostering activities focused on innovation, sustainability and technology so that they lead to job creation and the city's economic and social development, and become a focal point of its coastline.

Currently, 95% of the 15 projects and 43 actions outlined in the Blue Economy Measure have been completed or are in progress, positioning Barcelona as a leading city in the European Mediterranean context in terms of economic activity and talent related to the blue economy.

To boost the sectors and activities of the blue economy, the measure focuses on promoting actions primarily centred on innovation, entrepreneurship, employment and training, sustainability, citizen engagement, and the city's narrative and positioning in the blue economy sphere.

As part of the measure's entrepreneurial focus, the new Port Olímpic plays a prominent role. The new Port was inaugurated and integrated into the city in July 2024, and includes:

- Blue Economy Hub: the city's prime location (2,965 m²) for businesses in the sector.
- A renovated Municipal Sailing Centre (2,443 m²) and a new centre for new water sports (3,263 m²), through the Municipal Institute of Sport.
- The gastronomic balcony, with eleven restaurants and three gourmet spaces, will make the Port Olímpic a new culinary landmark in the city.

9.1. Creation of a bike and pedestrian route along the Rec Comtal

The project, carried out by the Besòs Consortium, as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, involves the creation of a path for pedestrians and cyclists following the route of the Rec Comtal, bordering the Ponderosa plain up to the Besòs Drinking Water Treatment Plant (DWTP), and continuing to the Casa de l'Aigua of Trinitat Vella and Trinitat Nova. From there, the plan is to connect it to Avinguda Meridiana.

The Rec Comtal, as a linear water transport structure with an associated side path, serves as an exceptional route to connect the infrastructures of the area. Moreover, within a highly urbanised environment, the areas bordering the Rec in Vallbona hold significant environmental value (connection with the River Besòs and the river park, a point of contact between the Collserola and Marina mountain ranges).

The project involves the construction or consolidation of a path for pedestrians and cyclists along the Rec Comtal route, connecting the infrastructures and landscapes related to water.



9.2. Promotion of a shelter to enhance biodiversity along the Rec Comtal

The project, carried out by the Besòs Consortium, as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, aims to carry out an environmental restoration of the habitats associated with Barcelona's green/blue infrastructure to enhance its role as an ecological corridor and promote knowledge of the natural heritage as a local, metropolitan, and national tourist destination.

The project is in line with restoration of the Besòs and its surrounding area, an ongoing initiative included in the 2021-2030 Barcelona Nature Plan, which serves as a model for reversing the degradation of natural heritage.

The primary aim of the initiative is to boost the biodiversity of this green and blue infrastructure, helping to complement the environmental services provided by the Besòs River, which are limited by its configuration.

9.3. Opening of the Casa de l'Aigua de la Trinitat Nova exhibition space (digital museology)

This project, carried out by the Barcelona Institute of Culture (ICUB), as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, involves the creation of a narrative route following the Rec Comtal, bordering the Ponderosa plain up to the Besòs Drinking Water Treatment Plant (DWTP), and continuing to Casa de l'Aigua, the former water pumping station of Trinitat Vella and Trinitat Nova. From there, the plan is to connect it to Avinguda Meridiana.

The physical route "Camins de l'aigua" will be accompanied by a virtual information centre describing the installations and a visitor guide. This will be an app that includes the permanent exhibition.

9.4. Renovation and refurbishment of Montjuïc Castle

Montjuïc Castle is one of the most prominent public landmarks in Barcelona. Once a military site, it is now one of the city's key tourist attractions. Its location at the top of Montjuïc mountain, its historical importance, and recent renovations have made it a prominent tourist attraction, set apart from the must-visit sites in the city centre.

The castle spaces yet to be adapted include the former guardhouse, the rooms in the armoury courtyard, and the old barracks. This initiative launched as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, will enable the renovation of these spaces.

9.5. Refurbishment of the building at the Fabra i Coats site

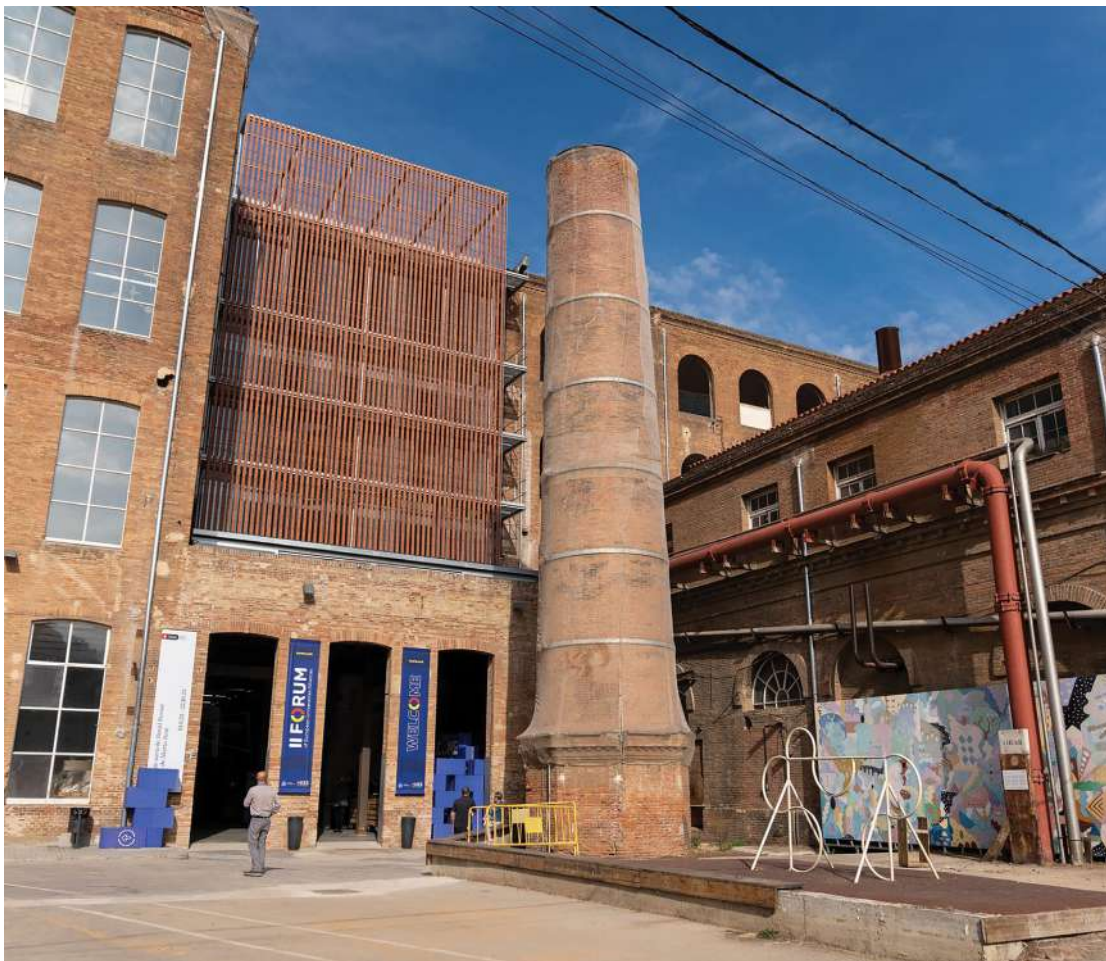
- The project, carried out by Barcelona d'Infraestructures Municipals (BIMSA), as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, involves the renovation of Building F at the Fabra i Coats complex, located between Carrer Segre and Carrer Parellada. The complex will be managed by the Barcelona City History Museum (MUHBA) with the aim of:

- Reclaiming historical memory: the so-called “Building F”
- Reclaiming industrial heritage: renovation of the Fabra i Coats industrial site is also part of the strategy to reclaim the city’s industrial heritage.
- Neighbourhood harmony with community uses: this new museum space will have a multifaceted dimension, becoming a new point of attraction for visitors to the city, a key catalyst for the surrounding area and an essential part of community life in the neighbourhood.

The Fabra i Coats complex will become a new focal point in all urban, social, cultural, and economic dimensions, aligning with the city’s strategy to place new visitor attractions in the peripheral neighbourhoods, while combining these tourist attractions with the interests of the local residents in the facilities.

9.6. Opening of a geological garden on Carrer de Menéndez y Pelayo

The project, carried out by Barcelona Municipal Infrastructures (BIMSA), as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, aims to bring both locals and visitors closer to the history of planet Earth and its connection to current issues such as the climate emergency, the energy transition and the sustainability of natural resources. The garden will display geological content about the Earth’s evolution and its climate over millions of years. It will also function as an educational laboratory and geology outreach classroom, offering guided tours that will benefit the general public, as well as primary and secondary schools. It will allow for the information to be updated in a cost-effective and simple way to adapt it to new perspectives.



9.7. Creación de una sala inmersiva en el Monasterio de Pedralbes

The project, as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, involves creating an immersive and interactive room with a large screen that will surround visitors. On this screen, they will be able to view an interactive 3D audiovisual experience that they can manipulate (rotate, zoom, etc.) using a motion sensor. The experience will also include information about the paintings in various video capsules, which visitors can activate at specific points on the image.

The main objectives of this initiative are:

1. First, although in-person visits to the chapel will continue, to reduce congestion in this small space as much as possible to minimise the impact on preservation of the paintings.
2. And second, to provide visitors with an immersive experience of the paintings through augmented reality technologies, mapping, and interactivity. Given the characteristics of this museological resource, it will be possible in the future to update or expand the explanatory narrative about the paintings in the Chapel of Saint Michael.

9.8. Promotion of an urban art laboratory in Nou Barris

This initiative, carried out by the Nou Barris District, as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, aims to foster changes for the progressive creation of business ecosystems in the fields of design, technology, and the various visual arts.

The aim is to create a tourist attraction in the district through an urban art initiative, which will also help to revitalise deprived areas, foster a sense of belonging and identity among the local community, and involve a process of collective creation that enhances social cohesion.

The project has been designed from a multifaceted approach, focusing on aspects such as positioning the district within the city's cultural landscape through creativity and artistic talent; identifying and giving visibility to local talent; acknowledging its significant cultural value through the involvement of renowned artists; creating opportunities for local economic development; and empowering residents to foster a sense of community. This approach aligns with current municipal policies, where participation is a key element in both the working methodology and decision-making process.

9.9. Renovation of the Collserola fountains and their surroundings

The initiative, led by Barcelona Municipal Infrastructures (BIMSA), as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, focuses on restoring and upgrading several fountains in Collserola Park, along with improving access to them and their immediate surroundings, enhancing the environmental value of the surrounding space.

9.10. Environmental restoration of Ciutadella Park

The project, carried out by Barcelona Municipal Infrastructures (BIMSA), as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, aims to restore the environmental aspects of this historic park, improve its infrastructure to enhance energy efficiency, manage resources, and improve the condition of the vegetation so that it can provide maximum environmental and social benefits.

The initiative is a continuation of the implementation of the restoration project for the entire Ciutadella Park, a park of significant heritage value that is listed as a Cultural Asset of National Interest (BCIN). Furthermore, the park is situated within the future hub of urban knowledge in southern Europe, the “Ciutadella of Knowledge”, a scientific, cultural, and urban initiative promoted by Barcelona City Council and the UPF, together with the Catalan Government and supported by the Spanish Government’s 2030 Agenda.

9.11. Environmental restoration of the Laberint d’Horta park

This initiative launched as part of the Strategy for sustainable tourism at the destination within the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan, funded by the Next Generation EU Fund, involves the complete rehabilitation of the plant labyrinth. And the project includes a comprehensive historical study that will ensure a restoration that respects this heritage asset.

9.12. Promotion of the “Barcelona is so much more” programme

The aim of the project is to continue the collaboration between Barcelona City Council and Barcelona Provincial Council within the framework of the “Barcelona is so much more” programme. It is an initiative that adds value to the entire region and also offers visitors cultural, landscape, and heritage diversity, while providing a more comprehensive view of Barcelona’s reality and helping to alleviate congestion in certain areas of the city.



Area 10. Promotion, communication and reception

KEY PROJECT

New tourism promotion strategy

Barcelona City Council, through the Barcelona Tourism Consortium, will define a new tourism promotion strategy focused on reputation and which targets segments and markets that align with the city's interests. The purpose is to integrate the municipal objectives of this measure into the working dynamics of the Barcelona Tourism Consortium and update its priorities so that tourism promotion aligns with the current requirements of tourism management.

The Barcelona Tourism Consortium must take into account the new tourism management scenario, which also means modernising and adapting its operational model, with new stakeholders, new governance structures, and new objectives, all within a public-private cooperation framework as an optimal setting.

The Consortium will need to focus on the following priorities:

- Consolidating the sustainability of the tourism model and its alignment and coherence with the city model and with the life of citizens, raising the awareness among the stakeholders of the visitor economy.
- Encouraging the geographical decentralisation of tourism activity by adopting a polycentric approach, and giving value to new imaginaries.
- Promoting the recognition or creation of new content based on culture, creativity, quality and the distinctive values of Barcelona as a destination.
- Boosting the comprehensive digitalisation of tourism activity and promotion.
- Prioritising the city's reputational strategy.
- Developing a promotion strategy for the city that champions local commerce and restaurants.

10.1. Creation of an agency to generate audiences for cultural and tourism consumption

This action, carried out by the Barcelona Institute of Culture (ICUB), aims to create a metropolitan entity that connects the offering of cultural and entertainment experiences with consumer profiles, both local and visitor, to stimulate production, distribution, and consumption, as well as promote the creation of trends that support this.

Its creation is divided into the following initiatives:

1. Identification and integration of already available data on cultural and entertainment consumption by both local and visiting audiences.
2. Creation and setting-up of a data repository and the establishment of a cultural and entertainment consumption observatory.
3. Conducting periodic surveys on cultural and entertainment consumption within the metropolitan area to complement the available information.

4. Creation of a multiplatform channel to facilitate the dissemination and distribution of cultural and entertainment consumption proposals and offers in audio-visual format, to highlight the metropolitan offering and ensure its ongoing promotion.

The agency set up to generate audiences for cultural and tourist consumption will be responsible for managing all the collected information with the aim of shaping and linking supply and demand, facilitating the creation of trends, and, consequently, boosting the development of the tourism sector in the city of Barcelona.

10.2. Attraction and acquisition of international events

Barcelona City Council continuously works to strengthen the city's leadership in attracting and securing strategic international events over time, in order to address urban challenges such as competitiveness, digitalisation, and the attraction and generation of talent. Examples of such events include the Mobile World Congress (MWC) and Integrated Systems Europe (ISE).

The city will prioritise international events that align with the identified strategic economic sectors and that boost events with the greatest economic, social, and environmental return, as well as having the most significant impact on the city.



Ambito 11. Knowledge

KEY PROJECT

Analysis of tourist flows using big data techniques for data analysis

The city has made a firm commitment to generating new knowledge on topics that are less known or about which there is limited information. This is one of the reasons why Barcelona has become one of the urban destinations with the most information about its tourism sector, enabling it to manage the effects of tourism more efficiently.

Since 2016, urban tourist mobility has become a key element in the generation of knowledge. It is particularly important to explore this aspect further, as it brings together elements that, in themselves, are highly complex: the city, tourism and mobility.

The best response to the saturation of specific services or areas is not solely a matter of the system's capacity, but also involves managing and regulating tourism demand. Managing demand is undoubtedly complex, requires having accurate and current data on the mobility patterns of the different visitor profiles in the city.

The objective of this project is to conduct a study of visitor flows in the city using GPS mobility data. Specifically, the goal is to analyse the mobility of visitors in the city using commercial-origin GPS data, which is collected through apps (such as X, weather apps, or advertisements that use geolocation).

The population analysed using GPS technology consists of visitors (non-residents) who have come to Barcelona. GPS data allows for detailed tracking of their location and can analyse their exact position at any given moment. The scope and indicators of the mobility study outlined below depend on the conditions under which the GPS data is provided and its level of disaggregation, and are always limited to the geographical scope of Catalonia.

Regarding visitors, their mobility is studied both within the city and outside of it, and their overnight stays are analysed when locations are detected during the night. The period for the availability of GPS data is expected to cover the entire year of 2023.

11.1. Maintaining current knowledge sources as a foundation for decision-making

- a) Survey on the profile and habits of visitors to Barcelona city
- b) Survey on citizen perception of tourist activity in Barcelona
- c) Study of the online reputation of tourist activity
- d) Monthly infographic of tourist activity
- e) Report on the economic impact of tourist activity
- f) Tourism forecast reports

11.2. Updating studies

- a) Update of the cruise passenger profile
- b) Update of the environmental impact of tourist activity

11.3. Promoting new sources of knowledge

- a) Study of the profile and quantification of people visiting the city on excursions
- b) Study of tourist flows in the Ciutat Vella district.



Area 12. Community and governance

KEY PROJECT

Support for the creation of an international network of urban destinations

Given the common challenges faced by tourist cities, it is essential to create stable forums in which to strengthen ties with other cities and destinations that, due to their characteristics, are considered benchmarks in managing tourist activity.

It is crucial to strengthen the international networks of cities in which Barcelona participates, in order to foster joint projects and drive changes in regulatory and legislative frameworks, such as those achieved within the European Cities Alliance on Short-Term Rentals, formed by cities that include Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Bologna, Bordeaux, Cologne, Florence, Frankfurt, Helsinki, Lisbon, Milan and Paris, among others. The network, which addresses the shared challenges of the housing access crisis and the regulation of tourist accommodation, has successfully led to the EU approving a new regulation to tackle the illegal supply of tourist rentals. The European network to protect and preserve iconic shops must be consolidated, as Barcelona is increasingly concerned about the shared risks impacting these landmark commercial establishments. Within this network, the Barcelona Declaration on the preservation and promotion of iconic commercial establishments has been promoted at the European Parliament.

Building on these initiatives, efforts are being made to consolidate the European Alliance on Balanced Urban Tourism, driven by the cities of Barcelona, Amsterdam, Prague, Bruges, Genoa, and Florence, and backed by Eurocities.

It is also essential to activate international networks that strengthen ties with cities facing the same challenges as Barcelona in tourism management, such as overcrowding, negotiations over public space, mobility, the cost of living, coexistence, and the environmental impact, among other issues.



12.1. Promotion of the activities of the Tourism and City Council (CTiC)

The City and Tourism Council (CTiC) is a public-participation body set up to discuss what kind of city we want and, therefore, what kind of tourism best suits Barcelona. This discussion forum brings together public bodies, associations and political representatives so they can share their thoughts and propose improvements in the implementation and development of the tourism sector.

This initiative aims to encourage citizen participation and collaboration between sectors related to tourism, while also improving the governance of the visitor economy and promoting tourism management that takes into account the needs and interests of both the local community and visitors.

12.2. Collaboration with the Catalan Government through the National Commitment to Responsible Tourism

The National Commitment to Responsible Tourism in Catalonia is a benchmark for tourism governance in Europe. This agreement, endorsed by the World Tourism Organization, strives for more inclusive and sustainable tourism that prioritises the well-being of local residents. It is an example of how different regions are working to ensure that tourism is part of the solution to global challenges.

The aim is to improve management of the local community and promote effective governance of the visitor economy. Through this commitment, initiatives will be launched to ensure a form of tourism that respects the environment, local cultures, and the needs of local residents.

