

Barcelona and its future



BARCELONA GLOBAL

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THE ASSOCIATION: BARCELONA GLOBAL

1. Barcelona Global is a private, not-for-profit association that was set up under Act 4/2008 dated 24th April and is a citizen's platform for ideas and action, made up of individuals and companies that are committed to Barcelona and its future. The association's mission is: ***to actively contribute to making Barcelona one of the best cities in the world for talent and business and a place where they can thrive.***

THE CITY OF BARCELONA

2. Barcelona is one of the oldest cities in the world, geographically located in a privileged setting beside the Mediterranean Sea, the cradle of modern civilisation. The city's most remarkable feature that sets it apart from many other large, European cities, is that **the drive and inspiration of its citizens; its civil society, make its architecture, places of interest and status in the world what they are today.** It has never been a capital city, nor a place where important institutions have historically been based but despite that, it has higher standing than many other cities around it that are or have been both these things.
3. Thanks to its port and its geography, Barcelona has always been **a city of meetings and exchange, with a rich business culture and a long entrepreneurial and creative tradition.** Its economic engine has generated **a migratory flow that has given the city the demographic importance** that it now has and has established some values of **freedom, prosperity and culture** that turn it into one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Europe, without losing its stability or its strong character.
4. Barcelona is **a world leader for many European cities** that strive to maintain the richness and essence of their identity in a world that is increasingly lacking in variety and colour. Although Barcelona has been building itself over thousands of years, its restless and non-conformist nature makes it a **young, entrepreneurial, open-minded and tolerant** city.

BARCELONA'S PRIME ASSETS

5. To begin with, Barcelona has some extremely valuable assets that include:
- a. **Sound municipal finances** as a result of the Council's effective and careful financial management. In 2014, Barcelona City Council will invest €426,000,000 in the city, almost half the amount that the Spanish Government will invest in the whole of Catalonia during the same budget period.
 - b. **A port, an airport and first-class logistics and communications infrastructure** with enormous capacity for growth. In the last two years, Barcelona's port has doubled its capacity and the airport is able to grow up to 70% without any additional investment.
 - c. **Increasing tourism** that ranks Barcelona as one of the top European tourist destinations. After London and Paris, Barcelona boasts the highest level of hotel investment in Europe and is the 20th most popular tourist destination in the world.
 - d. **Events that bring together industries and world-class companies.** d. Barcelona is the city in which the third highest number of congresses in the world are held and comes top for its number of international delegates. *El Mobile* (Mobile World Congress) is a benchmark event but there are also others, such as *Sónar* (International Festival of Advanced Music and New Media Art), *Alimentaria* (International Food and Drink Exhibition) and the Smart City World Expo, which clearly demonstrate the city's influence.
 - e. **A dynamic industrial fabric** that rapidly adapts to exportation and globalisation. Companies that have their head office in Barcelona and its sphere of influence account for approximately 20% of Spanish export. Among these are the food, car, pharmaceutical, fashion and chemical industries and the commercial sector, all important and furthermore possessing a considerable number of global brands.
 - f. **A growing capacity to attract international talent.** Barcelona has two of the world's most prestigious business schools.
 - g. **Universities capable of turning Barcelona into an influential hub of higher education.** Currently, it is the eleventh most popular city in the world in which to study.

- h. **Research centres capable of attracting excellence** and competing worldwide. Barcelona is the city that produces the fourth highest quantity of scientific literature in Europe. The population of Catalonia represents only 1.5% of the European population but our research centres are able to obtain 3.3% of the European Research Council funding.
- i. **An entrepreneurial ecosystem** that is growing in scope, employment, capital and talent in the fields of technology, virtual economy, biotechnology and online entertainment. *Wired* magazine highlights that Barcelona is one of the world's key cities in which to launch a startup.
- j. **Design and architecture** that without having a solid business foundation have managed to create what some have called the "Barcelona School" or the "Barcelona Model". The city is packed with benchmark studios that draw together a long list of internationally-renowned professionals.
- k. **A prominent, cutting-edge, healthcare cluster** that driven by a top-quality public and private system and leading medical research carried out in prestigious hospitals, has produced several generations of world-class doctors and researchers.
- l. **Professional sport and an important, internationally-renowned network of amateur sportspeople**, with F.C. Barcelona topping the list and an excellent and proven ability to organise large, international, sports events.
- m. **A "BARCELONA" city brand, highly attractive** and internationally recognised. Its key attributes are particularly related to tourism but also, organisations such as *KPMG*, *Ernst & Young*, *The Economist*, *FDI* and *Cushman & Wakefield* include Barcelona on the list of most attractive European cities for financial investment.
- n. **A sound capacity to create new companies and businesses based on new technologies** (biotechnology, genetics, robotics, ICT, etc) or new designs and trends in plastic arts, services and culture in general.

WHAT ARE WE AIMING FOR?

6. Barcelona is an extraordinary city with magnificent assets but maintaining its future strength, influence and vitality **requires an effort on the part of all its citizens to reinforce its economic development capacity.** The citizens of Barcelona must take an ambitious approach to its future, just like the generations that came before us and take the initiative to breathe new life into this city, so that it can successfully tackle the challenges of the future global society.
7. We cannot lose sight of the fact that the demands of the modern world are giving rise to one of the most accelerated urbanisation processes witnessed on a worldwide scale. **In the 21st Century, cities will be the great driving force behind development.** *The United Nations Environment Programme* estimates that in 2030, 60% of the world population will be living in urban areas and that cities will control 80% of the world's GDP.
8. The first question we should answer is: **“what kind of city do we want?”**. Keeping it simple, we can identify four successful urban models:
 - a. **The “Tourist City”** geared toward tourism. It is a city that because of its particular attractions is primarily focused on visitors, people who go there occasionally and who stay for a limited time. They are cities that offer visitors a compelling package made up of hotels, fairs, conference centres, festivals, shopping centres, good air links, an outstanding selection of places to eat and drink, academic establishments and medical facilities, as well as a range of culture and attractive leisure activities. Examples that clearly fall within this category are Venice or Las Vegas.
 - b. **The “Administrative City”** geared toward the government, where institutions are based. It is a capital city, which as such is the prime location for institutions, politicians, civil servants, international representatives and important cultural organisations. Examples in this category include Berlin, Brasilia and Washington.
 - c. **The “Productive City”** mainly geared and adapted toward the production of goods, services and research. It is a city that organises itself according to the habits and customs of its citizens and seeks to provide them with quality jobs. They can be powerful economic engines and attract specialised talent but they have neither the wish nor the environment to generate migratory flow nor an influx of important visitors. Examples in this category are Zurich, Seattle and Stuttgart.
 - d. **The “Global City”** geared toward the world. The importance of this kind of city goes beyond the territory it occupies. It attracts both tourists and entrepreneurs from all over the world. They are magnets for talent on an international scale and generate an enormous amount of business and employment. The most obvious examples in this category are New York, London, Paris, Shanghai and Hong Kong and to a lesser extent, Amsterdam, San Francisco and Sidney.

9. Having ruled out options b. and c. for understandable reasons, the **strategic dilemma** that Barcelona faces is either to consolidate a “Tourist City” model with undeniable international success, or reinforce its business ecosystem in order to become a “Global City”, strong and influential in all areas.
10. After considerable debate, Barcelona Global considers that the city should not let go of its entrepreneurial and productive past, nor its powerful ability to attract talent, business and culture. In our view, Barcelona should not rest on the laurels of its tourist industry’s success but rather take advantage of it together with its important assets, in order to galvanise its economic potential and step by step become **one of the most influential and competitive “Global Cities” in the world**, without sacrificing its values, uniqueness and quality of life.
11. The Barcelona we aspire to should at very least possess the following indispensable attributes:
 - ✓ **Employment:** high in quality and quantity
 - ✓ **English:** as the de facto third language
 - ✓ **Infrastructure:** virtual and physical of high quality
 - ✓ **Administration:** agile and efficient
 - ✓ **Tax and regulatory framework:** attractive and easy to understand
 - ✓ **Health:** universal and cutting edge
 - ✓ **Sustainability and social welfare:** sensitive, sustainable and supportive
 - ✓ **Citizens:** active, responsible and committed
 - ✓ **Innovation:** actively promoted
 - ✓ **Education:** universal, top quality and highly efficient
 - ✓ **Diversity:** integrated and committed
 - ✓ **Connectivity:** with the whole world, extensive and efficient
 - ✓ **Ambition:** global, unperturbed by the competition and geared toward growth
 - ✓ **Natural attributes:** enabling them to develop and thrive
12. Our aims include building a lively and vibrant city, both in terms of tourism and economy. **Barcelona has to be one of the world’s best cities in which to develop knowledge, innovate, attract investment, generate business and also to live, visit, study, retire, create or work.** its privileged position and exceptional climate give it an appeal that sets it apart from other global cities around the world.
13. To achieve this objective, we must take a broader approach in terms of what we do, whether publicly, privately, as a community or individually and take part in this ambition. We need to re-educate ourselves in order to **overcome our qualms when it comes to thinking and acting with global ambition, step outside our comfort zone and risk going beyond our self-imposed professional limitations.**

14. As is the case with heavy wheels, setting them in motion requires considerable effort (*the wheel effect*). **Kick-starting the city's economic engine will at first be difficult** but once it begins to gain momentum, the inertia of motion will do most of the work.
15. Business should primarily take off in the direction of the global economy and therefore be geared toward exportation and international investment, enabling the financial flows to come from the international markets. If this is achieved, **the attraction of talent, funding sources and the generation of wealth and employment will almost automatically follow.**
16. **The revival of culture completes this virtuous circle.** The most important breeding grounds for culture and arts in all fields are usually situated around the major hubs of development. Global cities attract both artists and thinkers, who find a sense of freedom in them as well as the indispensable contribution of financial support.
17. However, we must not delude ourselves: **Barcelona is still far from being a city of global opportunities.** It does not have first-rate job opportunities, the salaries are still not competitive enough to attract the best and it does not possess important business decision-making centres. Ease of doing business is still hindered by inefficiency just like the taxation and administrative procedures involved and there is room for improvement in the climate for pursuing business activities or starting up. This is what has motivated the founding of Barcelona Global.

OUR ACTION PLAN

18. **Barcelona Global was created for the purpose of helping Barcelona to become an influential and attractive "Global City".** The ongoing task for the association is sharing this vision with society and its representatives until it is accepted and becomes a common aim, in particular studying, proposing and carrying out the specific initiatives required to enable us to head in this direction.
19. **Barcelona Global's action plan has been designed around four focal points of action,** starting from the need to make it easier to generate business, improve our ability to attract international talent, promote the development of industries that create employment and sustainable wealth and strengthen the value of the Barcelona brand as a *world-class city*.

20. The fact that the Action Plan exclusively focuses on initiatives relating to human and economic capital **is not due to a lack of appreciation of social, environmental, demographic or welfare aspects of the city**, which we consider to be priorities and just as essential for the balanced development of Barcelona. Rather, it is because of the obligation placed upon us by the specified purpose for which the association was founded and to which it is committed, which is fundamentally economic.

A. BUSINESS FRIENDLY BARCELONA

21. Initiatives that contribute to improving the conditions of our economic ecosystem and facilitating the development of business and professional activities whether it be driving forward the creation of new companies or promoting the development of existing ones. The following are particularly important in this respect:

- ✓ **Promoting English language learning so that it becomes the de facto third language.** This would involve launching an education plan (through schools, universities and the media etc.) to ensure that by 2030 the whole population of Barcelona speaks Catalanian, Spanish and English fluently. We also need to ensure that all civil servants who work directly with the public speak fluent English. The international appeal of this measure would be so powerful that its effects would be noticed within a very short time and it would be the best catalyst we could have for achieving our international aspirations.
- ✓ **Promoting a taxation system that attracts foreign investors** (a kind of “Beckham Law” for overseas investors) that for a period of time removes the tax on assets and offers income tax relief, both for capital yield and earned income. The Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalonian Government) has sufficient powers to push for a law in this respect.
- ✓ **Promoting a drastic reduction in administrative red tape** applying rational and common sense criteria, so that without losing the necessary quality control and compliance with legal standards and making use of the benefits of technology, the creation and development of businesses and professional services is streamlined as much as possible, progressively restoring confidence in civic responsibility.
- ✓ **Promoting a comprehensive overhaul of the municipal bylaws** that affect business carried out in the city, together with the framework for licenses and permits, bringing them up to date according to current and future needs, with the emphasis on streamlining administrative procedure.

- ✓ **Promoting general tax and employment regulations that stimulate the creation of jobs, innovation and investment.** It is necessary to restore the value of creating jobs and business and to stimulate it in a balanced and responsible manner.
- ✓ **Promoting a new Sponsorship and Patronage Act** that encourages and stimulates the contribution of civil society, as happens in other countries in our cultural environment.
- ✓ **Promoting a structural reform of Spanish and Catalanian regulations on the university model** so that without jeopardising its social objectives it can step up its drive for excellence, broaden its international presence and have greater interaction with the local and global production systems.
- ✓ **Creating a special programme for identifying business initiatives that complement one another** in order to encourage their merger or cooperation and enable them to become more important projects with broader scope. The city is full of small, intelligent and interesting initiatives that on their own have limited development prospects. It is a question of getting to know them and exploring the possibility of their joining forces to create projects that because of their scope, are more attractive and have greater chances of success.
- ✓ **Promoting instruction on entrepreneurial culture in schools** with the participation of the members of Barcelona Global and other volunteers who come on board this educational project.
- ✓ **One-off or ongoing initiatives aimed at attracting, promoting and facilitating startups,** investment and development by means of exchange of information and cooperation.

B. INTERNATIONALLY ATTRACTIVE BARCELONA

22. Action aimed at attracting and embracing talent and enabling it to integrate into the social fabric of the city. This section includes initiatives in the areas of integration, education and administrative regulations concerning immigration.

- ✓ **Monitoring the level of integration of international talent through targeted surveys** discovering Barcelona's strong and weak points. This will be carried out through the *"Barcelona Global International Professional Talent Monitor: Work, Business and Life in Barcelona"*.

- ✓ **Giving an official welcome to talent and international investment** from the moment they touch down in Barcelona, linking them into the city's economic, social, cultural and political circles to enable them to integrate more rapidly.
- ✓ **Organising a programme of events and meetings between the local community and Barcelona's international community** through a major annual event and private, smaller-scale events with Barcelona Global's volunteers, following the guidance of the *BarcelHOLA Events* programme.
- ✓ **Launching programmes that offer the international community the opportunity to receive education themselves or for their children in English**, particularly for those families that intend to take up temporary residence in Barcelona.
- ✓ **Promotion of the setting up of prestigious international schools and universities in Barcelona.** We have to take advantage of Barcelona's attributes that are particularly attractive to young people in order to encourage the world's most prestigious educational establishments to include the city in their programmes for international expansion.
- ✓ **Promoting the creation of an office specifically aimed at international talent that provides advice and deals with administrative processing**, for the purpose of offering information about and assisting with the processes relating to residents permits, work permits, investment, creation of companies, funding, access to productive spaces, education, health, transport and other areas of interest, to make it easier for them to settle in the city.
- ✓ **Promoting special agreements to enable international talent to join the most representative civic associations and institutions on favourable terms.** Barcelona society cannot miss the opportunity of benefiting from the cultural richness that would develop as a result of involving the international talent based in the city in its institutions.
- ✓ **Reinforcing Barcelona's image and prominence abroad** as a host city for international talent with communications drives developed in conjunction with the powerful vehicles of the city's talent: research centres, companies, entrepreneurship centres, business schools and the members of the BGIC.

C. BARCELONA CORE BUSINESS

23. Initiatives aimed at stimulating the branches of economic activity that generate the most employment or value, developing plans to improve competitiveness to enable them to feature among the 10 most influential in the world.

- ✓ With our sights set on excellence, acceleration of growth and international expansion, **Barcelona Global will launch one or several working groups for each branch**, so that with proper leadership and the participation of people who contribute complementary and cross-cutting views, they can devise, design and carry out specific initiatives for promoting strategies for international growth and influence. The idea of working by branches is to maintain Barcelona's economic diversification and the balance between the different economies that are currently represented in the city: those of visitors, services, production, knowledge, innovation and creativity.

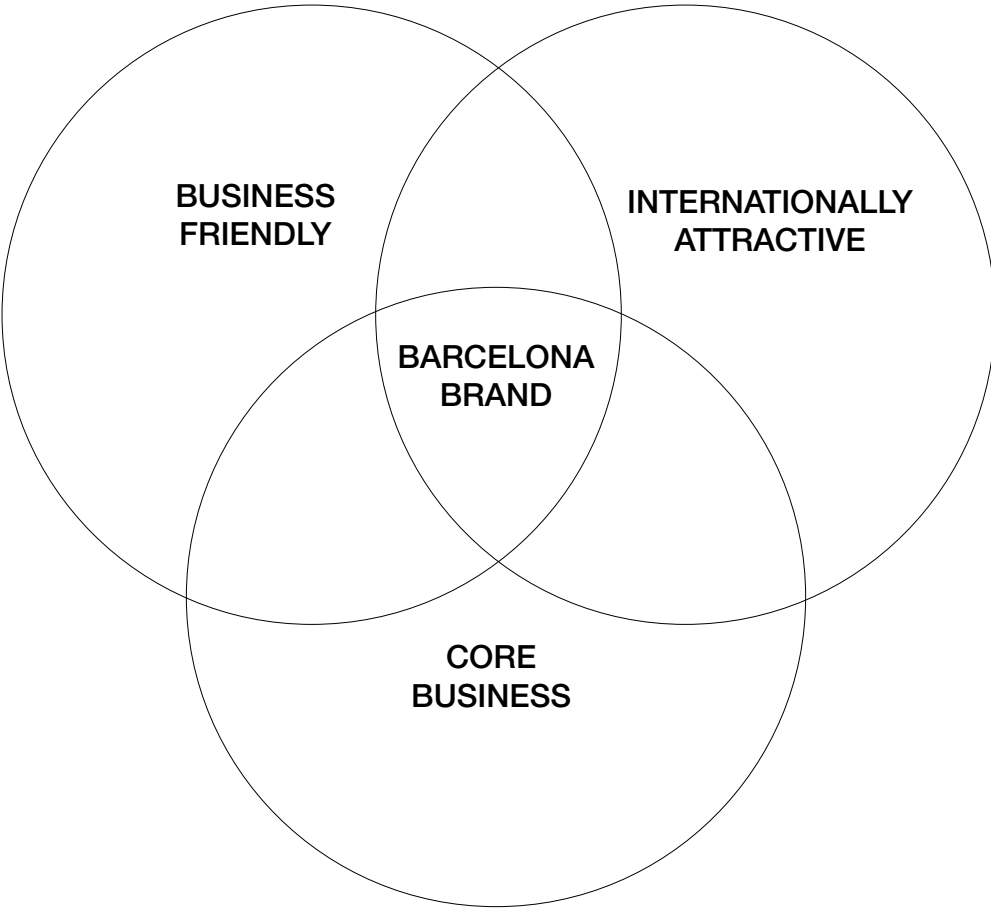
D. BARCELONA BRAND

24. Initiatives to promote Barcelona's image as a *world-class city* in the fields of business, research, education, professional excellence in general and creation of employment.

- ✓ **Spearheading the creation of an agency** whose sole objective will be to safeguard and promote our city brand internationally, with an emphasis on the economic development possibilities that the city offers.
- ✓ **Barcelona Global International Council (BGIC)**: The creation of a network of partners of Barcelona Global resident in influential cities worldwide who act as representatives and identify opportunities for Barcelona in all fields.
- ✓ **The creation of a Barcelona Brand Advisory Board**, made up of the main companies associated with Barcelona Global with the aim of fostering a balanced and cross-cutting view of the Barcelona brand and to advise the Barcelona Global representatives in the Barcelona Brand Agency.
- ✓ **Promoting the expansion of the city of Barcelona's geographical boundaries to include the whole of its metropolitan area as well as other neighbouring municipalities**. This will enable all the municipalities that are incorporated to benefit from the Barcelona brand attributes and large-scale strategic planning (without it necessarily requiring significant changes in their municipal government) and will allow Barcelona to considerably increase in size and international importance, putting it in a better position to compete with cities that are currently larger and have a bigger population.

*The future is the dream of those who create it.
It is entirely in our hands to one day make these
hopes come true..*

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