

Barcelona Turisme Global®

Commitment to tourism as a driving force behind the Barcelona's talent hub

Executive Summary

After more than 40 hours of interviews with some of the main private tourism stakeholders in Barcelona, reviewing the sector's main strategic documents, and updating the proposals that Barcelona Global has been developing for the last 4 years, this document seeks to **strengthen tourism and the visitor economy as a strategic sector in Barcelona by constructing an action plan based on 10 proposals committed to quality, sustainable and competitive tourism, which acts a driving force behind the city of talent we aspire to create.**

Understanding tourism as one of the most important economic sectors in our country and our city, in terms of job creation, well-being, citizen and urban development, as well as wealth, Barcelona Global is committed to tourism that will become a driving force behind the economy of talent, based on knowledge and creativity, as well as improving quality of life in the city. This is a commitment that be highly demanding of the diferent administrations, as well as the sector's businesspeople and the general public. Quality tourism will only be possible if the quality of life, public space, cultural offerings, public safety and lifestyle of the people of Barcelona are at as high a level as possible.

The following improvements are essential to achieve this: (1) a better framework for dialogue and greater fluidity and trust between the public and private sectors to build the city and tourism model we aspire to create together; and (2) improving the reputation of tourism as a sector among citizens and key opinion makers in the city.

Moving beyond the highly-critical opinions towards the public administration (especially the municipal administration) held by those interviewed in this report, it is now important to create a framework for dialogue and positive proposals with an ambitious agenda that will allow Barcelona to commit to the best quality urban tourism and a competitive and sustainable sector, loved by the city and admired by the world.

Barcelona Global is thus putting forward a set of proposals that, with the will from relevant administrations (especially Barcelona City Council) and the other actors involved, can be translated into concrete initiatives with dates and commitments for all parties.

Barcelona Global is encouraging the creation of a set of initiatives linking each proposal to an action plan and commitments to be implemented in the coming months. It is a plan that will make Barcelona better for citizens and visitors alike.

The methodology involves the top management of the various relevant administrations, public operators in the sector, and private sector managers, with the aim that they will submit their proposals and commitments to the appropriate participation bodies.

It is a set of proposals based on a shared diagnosis and a set of known and shared commitments (which in many cases lack a concrete calendar), and objectives.

Barcelona Global proposes to provide the necessary resources to coordinate the proposals to be submitted to the relevant administrations and to implement it through an agreement with the City Council.

The 10 proposals put forward by Barcelona Global are as follows:

1. The quality of Barcelona as a destination, focusing on four key aspects:
 - a. Public space
 - b. Public safety
 - c. Cleaning
 - d. Use of technology
2. A facilitating administration that will work on the following areas:
 - a. PEUAT (Special Tourist Accommodation Plan)
 - b. Shop opening hours
 - c. Speeding up the granting of business licences, especially in sectors with free competition.
3. Designing grants for the sector as a whole to enable investment in quality of service and employment.
 - a. Submitting a proposal for the redesign of ICO guarantees.
 - b. Using European Funds for the competitiveness and sustainability of the sector.
4. Intercontinental connections from Barcelona Airport, as well as proposals to prioritise cruise ships to and from Barcelona.

5. Prioritising culture as a key factor in the creation of a quality city offering for both residents and visitors.
6. Reenergizing the city centre for the people of Barcelona, visitors and economic activity, with special emphasis on La Rambla, Via Laietana, Ciutadella, Paral·lel and Montjuïc.
7. New commitments to new sectors of the visitor economy to attract new visitors with high added value.
 - a. The Barcelona of health and wellness.
 - b. The Barcelona of higher education.
8. Making the tourist season in Barcelona less seasonal, focussing on Christmas and winter.
9. Renewed public-private collaboration based on shared action plans and commitments.
10. Renewed ambitious promotion of the city to which all of the sectors involved are committed.

A civic commitment to a model of tourism that the city needs: quality, sustainable and with a positive impact on the city of talent we aspire to create.

A commitment for Barcelona to lead the recovery of quality urban tourism through collaboration and public-private commitment.

A commitment to a city where the quality of life and the city's offering for its citizens is the main argument for visiting it.

A set of proposals that have already emerged from dialogue with the sector as a whole and to which the vision of Barcelona City Council and other key stakeholders in the sector must be added.

Introduction

With this third document on tourism and Barcelona, Barcelona Global is seeking to identify the measures to be taken by the various public administrations and operators, as well as by the private sector and civil society, so that tourism, one of the most important sectors in our economy, will emerge strengthened from the greatest crisis an economic sector has suffered in such a short period of time in the city and is a driving force behind the improvement of Barcelona as a city in which to live, work and create.

This document is also unique in having been prepared after more than 40 hours of personalised interviews with some of the main tourism stakeholders in the city. It therefore also includes the perception and proposals of these stakeholders concerning the city and tourism we want.

This document is being proposed as a working basis to reach consensus between the public and private sectors on specific initiatives to improve Barcelona as a destination where tourism acts as a driving force behind the economy, quality of life and the city of talent.

The time is now, when there is a great opportunity, but also great risk that Barcelona as a destination will depreciate and become a low-quality tourist destination with all that entails in terms of coexistence, sustainability, employment and contribution of value to the rest of the economy, as well as the negative impact on the Barcelona brand and attraction and retention of talent.

Based on the cross-cutting character of Barcelona Global, the aim is to create a framework in which the various stakeholders in the city and country can coordinate their efforts so that Barcelona can take advantage of the opportunity it has to use tourism to advance as a city of talent.

Barcelona Global views tourism as one of the most important economic sectors in our country and our city, in terms of both job creation (115,000 jobs) and wealth (tourism in Barcelona accounts for 14% of GDP) and in terms of its impact on other key sectors of our economy, such as all those linked to the talent economy.

The time is now, not only because of the dire consequences that the pandemic has had on tourism, but especially because many of the actions the city needs to take are long overdue. The current context in which we are coming out of the pandemic is thus the factor that should accelerate action and, especially, the will to move together, the public sector with the private sector, in relaunching Barcelona as a leading city for urban tourism and the visitor economy.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of tourism at the national level and specifically for our city.^{1,2,3} Although there are, as yet, no clear expectations of a recovery in tourism, the pandemic disaster is not only measured in extraordinary personal misfortune, but also in the risk that the sector will not be able to meet the need for ongoing investment in improving the city's offering and positioning.

This exceptional situation we have had to live through, together with the pre-existing need to improve Barcelona's tourism model and adapt it to the new realities, places the greatest of demands on the public sector, together with the key stakeholders in tourism (businesspeople, entrepreneurs, investors, and infrastructure and facility managers), to promote the necessary steps to position Barcelona as a leading city for the visitor economy.

These proposals should be articulated in a consensus document with milestones, budgetary commitments and the involvement of the city's main tourism stakeholders in their design. Such a document should be produced as a matter of urgency.

These proposals must aspire to create a city based on a dynamic, quality offering, targeting at a wide range of visitors, as well as its citizens, which will act as a driving force behind other key sectors of our economy, such as the talent economy (entrepreneurship, research, investment, academia, creativity and entertainment). This is a sector in the middle of a digital transformation and sustainability is its major future challenge.

1. The difference in the tourism balance of payments between January and September 2020 compared with the same period in 2019 shows a decrease in Spain's share of GDP of 3%, compared with 1% in Italy and 0.3% in France. In comparison with other countries, such as Germany or the Netherlands, we see a GDP increase in the tourism balance of payments of close to 1%. Data extracted from the *El coste de la crisis del turismo* (The Cost of the Tourism Crisis), a graph created by *El Confidencial* with data from the European Central Bank and Eurostat.

2. According to data from Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona (Barcelona Hotel Association), after 18 months, the hotel sector in Barcelona still has more than 17,000 people on furlough (ERTE).

3. At the end of September 2020, spending in shops based on card payments in Ciutat Vella, a high tourist density area, was 33% of the same period in 2019. In contrast, in the Sarrrià-Sant Gervasi and Nou Barris districts, which are more residential areas, shop spending levels were 65% and 84%, respectively. Data extracted from PULSO, an application to measure changes in consumption and commercial activity.

METHODOLOGY OF THE DOCUMENT

This document has been drawn up with the **involvement of more than 30 of the main tourism stakeholders in Barcelona**, who took part in various meetings held with the “Barcelona Global Challenges” methodology, as well as **more than 40 hours of in-depth interviews with 25⁴ businesspeople and managers of some of the city’s main tourism assets** (hotels, restaurants, bookshops, tourist attractions, museums, and professional and other associations).

We also reviewed the following official documentation: *Plan estratégico de turismo para la ciudad de Barcelona* (Strategic Tourism Plan for the City of Barcelona), *Líneas Estratégicas del Consorci Turisme de Barcelona* (Strategic Lines of the Barcelona Tourism Consortium), *La Estrategia de Marketing Turístico del destino Barcelona* (Tourism Marketing Strategy for Barcelona as a Destination) and the Government Measure *Creación de nuevos imaginarios y contenidos para mejorar la movilidad y la sostenibilidad turística* (Creation of New Imaginaries and Content to Improve Mobility and Tourism Sustainability). The document is also a re-reading of the proposals that Barcelona Global presented at the Barcelona Global Summit on Tourism in 2018 and the report *Turismo y ciudad, un reto compartido a gestionar ahora* (Tourism and the City, a Shared Challenge to be Managed Now), presented in July 2019. These documents set a working direction that is fully valid but that needs to be updated.

It is thus a document that brings together, on the one hand, Barcelona Global’s position and proposals and, on the other hand, the direct feelings and perceptions of some of the main private tourism stakeholders in the city. This is a perception that now, more than ever, it is important to gather and share. In drafting this document in accordance with the methodology, the authorship of each of the statements has been omitted in order to guarantee their anonymity.

THE TOURISM WE WANT

Barcelona Global understands that Barcelona’s main attraction is being a city that one experiences, a dynamic, inhabited city in which local residents and visitors share large and small cultural, sporting, gastronomic, leisure and entertainment experiences, which make Barcelona a unique city. We want the city to be recognised again for its quality of life and experience, as a global lifestyle benchmark.

A city capable of surprising the world with its architecture, urban planning, leisure, culture, lifestyle, gastronomy, sport, health, wellness, medical excellence, academic positioning and entrepreneurial initiative. This, combined with its climate and surrounding environment, offering a mixture of sea, plain and mountains, makes Barcelona an exceptional destination we should be proud of, while taking responsibility for improving it.

Sustainable tourism based on visitors who are aware of and interested in Barcelona as a destination and who are seeking enriching experiences in the fields of art, music, theatre, lyrical poetry, gastronomy, sport, nature, architecture, literary tours, wellness, shopping, or simply strolling around our streets, neighbourhoods, markets and shopping areas. Tourism that combines family, youth, senior and adult leisure with visitors who come to Barcelona on business to attend a trade fair, a corporate meeting or a product presentation.

In the context of the visitor economy, international students who choose to study at one of our universities or business schools, or visitors who come to Barcelona for medical or wellness treatment, can be added to this tourism. There is ample room for improvement in Barcelona’s positioning in these wellness and education sectors and this document argues that is something we should commit to.

TOURISM AS A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE BARCELONA’S TALENT HUB

The value per se of tourism as an economic sector is a recurring debate in Barcelona. Many people associate tourism with a low value-added sector, with low wages and intensive degradation of the environment and public space. This view arises from the fact that certain tourist models (from which Barcelona is not excluded) confirm these statements. Accordingly, Barcelona’s tourism policy has the responsibility and challenge to develop a sector with high added value and a high impact on the city’s economy and employment.

A commitment to quality tourism (not necessarily associated with expensive tourism) is the best response to the commitment to make Barcelona a benchmark for sustainable tourism that has a positive impact on the city. If the city is functional, safe, clean and has a high level of cultural, gastronomic, sporting and experiential offerings for its resi-

4. José Adell, Grupo Julià; Enrique Alcántara, Apartur; Joaquín Aulsejo, Alma Hotels; Timo BueteFisch, Cooltra; Manel Casals, Gremi d’Hotels de Barcelona; Marko Daniel, Fundació Joan Miró; Jordi Espelt, H10 Hotels; Elena Foguet, Value Retail; Gary Gautier, Casa Batlló; Gabriel Jené, Barcelona Oberta; Juan Julià, Axel Hotels; Marta Lacambra, Fundació Catalunya La Pedrera; Amancio López, Grupo Hotusa; Oscar Manresa, Oscar Manresa Restaurants Group; Inés Miró-Sans, Casa Bonay; Montserrat Moragas, Laie; Roger Pallarols, Gremi de Restauració de Barcelona; Lluís Sans, Santa Eulàlia; Pepe Serra, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya; Paco Solé Parellada, Restaurant 7 Portes; Tomás Tarruella, Grupo Tragaluz; José María Trenor, Cotton House; Manel Vallet, Catalonia Hotels; Anton Vidal, Poble Espanyol; Liran Wizman, Sir Victor.

dents, that will ensure it is attractive to the visitors we want: those who come for an outstanding experience among us, who are respectful of the environment, who value unique propositions, who sympathise with and respect the local identity, and who project onto it the desire to experience it.

A desired city that is lived as a unique experience, with a certain aspirational component, is the best way to present the city to the talent we want to attract and retain in Barcelona. The opportunity that Barcelona Global is promoting for our city is the opportunity that talent represents for our future. Creative talent, entrepreneurs, researchers, investors and managers who, by visiting and experiencing Barcelona, can assess, at a particular moment, the suitability of Barcelona as a city in which to live and work.

Accordingly, it is essential for Barcelona, as one of the main urban tourism destinations in the world, to convey to its visitors that the city is much more than a postcard: **it is a city in which to carry out research projects, entrepreneurship, creation, work or investment; in short, a city to live and work in, not just to visit.** This is why it is essential to show visitors and the world the Barcelona of research, universities, health, industry, creation, entrepreneurship and investment so that tourism multiplies Barcelona's opportunities to become the city of talent we aspire to create. We have not taken sufficient advantage of this opportunity in the past, as shown, for example, by the fact that at Barcelona airport (the main point of entry for many of our visitors) there is no information (unlike many other cities) about Barcelona's research, universities, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Tourism has brought much more to Barcelona than we sometimes realise. Barcelona is much better known around the world than it deserves for its size, population or economic weight, and is much more greatly admired than we as Barcelona citizens recognise. The city's global recognition is the best way to present the city to attract and bring back the talent the city needs to be a benchmark for entrepreneurship, creativity, industry, research and investment. The flight routes we have thanks to tourism are the best way to ensure that everyone from digital nomads to new entrepreneurs, investors and managers choose Barcelona as the headquarters of new companies or as a city in which to expand start-ups in Europe.

It should also be highlighted that a major part of the city that we as citizens of Barcelona have and admire is made possible by visitors who make a set of cultural, heritage and gastronomic experiences possible that otherwise could not be enjoyed in a city such as ours.

Barcelona has to be aware that the tourism we aspire to create and can have is the best campaign to position Barcelona as a city for talent. Tourism can provide us with the initial experience of the city for talent we want to attract and the reach we need to be known and recognised in the world. Two things are needed to achieve this: (1) visitors' experience must be optimal and (2) visitors must get to know all that Barcelona and its surrounding area have to offer talent as a city of research, knowledge, universities, medicine, industry and creativity. This is no small challenge, but one for which we have the creativity, the vision, the initiative and the means to achieve.

Tourism at the service of the Barcelona of talent is an opportunity that we cannot allow to slip through our fingers. It is highly demanding both for the various administrations involved in the governance and regulation of tourism and for the key stakeholders in the private sector, who must also align their strategies towards this objective.

Accordingly, there are narrative, communication and promotional requirements to be undertaken soon so that the millions of visitors who will visit us for leisure or business will also get to know the Barcelona of talent that we are and that we want to share with the world. Tourism capable of transforming visitors into entrepreneurs, students, researchers, artists and investors so that our city can become one of the best cities in the world for talent and economic activity.

Barcelona Global's commitment to a specific tourism strategy is a commitment to the Barcelona for talent we aspire to create, based on the Mediterranean values that characterise us: welcoming, with a strong identity, hard-working, creative, enterprising and cosmopolitan. A city promoted and recognised for its quality of life and for being a lifestyle model.

And it is this commitment that motivates us, through public-private dialogue, to draw up and put forward specific proposals to make tourism one of the key driving forces behind the Barcelona for talent we aspire to create.

Perception of the sector: a successful model at risk

One of the values of this document has been open dialogue with some of the main private tourism stakeholders in Barcelona. Accordingly, it is relevant for Barcelona Global to summarise the main conclusions drawn from their feelings about the current situation and tourism in Barcelona today.

In the eyes of the main stakeholders in the sector, the model that has made Barcelona one of the world's leading models for urban tourism is at risk if Barcelona does not rapidly regain its position as an attractive city based on its quality lifestyle.

The perception of the main stakeholders in the sector is thus of great concern in an environment in which there has been little constructive dialogue between the administration and private stakeholders, which has borne little fruit in recent years, according to the majority of those interviewed.

One of the elements that stands out is that there has been a rapid change in the private stakeholders shaping tourism in the city with the arrival of funds that have bought up tourism assets in the hands of local entrepreneurs at very positive prices. This change in the ownership structure of some of Barcelona's tourism assets is relevant and must be taken very much into account when designing not only the city and tourism policies that are needed, but also when designing the model of dialogue with the sector that is required.

It was also detected that Barcelona as a destination, which was widely recognised in the past for its quality and for being associated with a certain lifestyle, is threatened, in the eyes of the sector, by a loss of narrative in this field and a lack of attractive propositions to continue being the Barcelona that is one of the most valued destinations in terms of lifestyle and experience.

If Barcelona is not recognised as a leading city in terms of lifestyle and quality, it runs the risk of depreciating as a destination, with all the implications that this phenomenon will have for the quality of the tourism model we have. While in previous stages the challenge was to reduce or eliminate the negative impact that tourism and the visitor economy could have on its environment, today the challenge is also to recover Barcelona's shine in the eyes of the world and with a city proposition based on a quality offering.

The key tourism stakeholders in Barcelona who were interviewed for this document agreed that they have felt very much alone, not only during the terrible times of the pandemic, but also for many years now, faced with an administration that has only recently begun to show partial signs (mainly within the City Council's economic departments) of being open to the sector and to working together.

Apart from the success or otherwise of the steps taken by the various governments, our interviews with key stakeholders in the sector revealed a **lack of empathy on the part of the administration towards the problems and the diverse situations that these stakeholders have had to face during the worst and least-expected crisis in the history of modern tourism**. This lack of empathy begins with scarce dialogue with local authorities and ends with the design of aid to the sector from higher-level administrations.

It is thus regrettable that, unlike other countries in which aid has been granted directly to the sector, in Spain, with some exceptions, aid has so far been limited to ICO loans and guarantees, with all the strain this places on companies' balance sheets. This is a particularly disheartening fact in a country such as ours in which tourism has the weight it has.

Despite all this, however, **it should be noted that, also during this period, there have been actions in which the public and private sectors have collaborated and achieved good results. One noteworthy example is how the proactivity of administrations, in mutual agreement with cultural operators, has made safe culture possible. Uniquely in Europe, Barcelona was able to enjoy safe live music and theatre performances, as well exhibition visits, during the worst times of the pandemic. Another noteworthy example is the municipal sensitivity to rapidly expanding outdoor seating on streets** for the majority of the restaurant sector. This has given a sector tremendously affected by the pandemic breathing space and is the beginning of a resolution to a conflict over outdoor seating with the administration that should never have existed.

The sector is basically saying that it is exhausted by its experience and now has an unexpected debt structure, and is perplexed by the administration's lack of sensitivity to what it is going through and the

importance of its contribution. Even during the toughest moments of the pandemic, this contribution was extraordinary: offering hotels, preparing food, and providing materials and resources in response to the pandemic that the health services were unable to cope with on their own due to its magnitude.

The sector shares a vision and a worrying perception of its future and its commitment to the city. If this is not corrected rapidly, it could jeopardise the quality tourism we aspire to create. The situation expressed by the sector can be summarised in the following 5 points:

- 1. The sector states that its finances and debt structure are under great strain. They may find it difficult to invest in modernising their infrastructure and in the quality of their offerings.**
- 2. International funds have flooded into the city,** buying up relevant tourism assets in Barcelona, especially in the accommodation sector. This situation should bring about a considerable shift in the way public-private collaboration develops.⁵
- 3. The administration is perceived by many of those interviewed as being hostile to the sector.** This hinders investment and the renewal of offerings due to continuous moratoriums on licences in some areas of the city. This does little to facilitate investment (recent events such as investment in the airport or to create a sub-site of the Hermitage in the port are very high-profile examples that should not obscure the continuous problems with licences and permits that all kinds of operators in the city encounter). They also see the administration as displaying insensitivity to the current situation by applying a surcharge on the tourist tax in the middle of the pandemic.
- 4. The city centre has lost much of its non-tourist economic activity in recent years.** This jeopardises the diversification of the centre and its attractiveness to the rest of the city.
- 5. And, lastly, public safety, street cleaning and the quality of public space are being called into question. This mirrors some of the challenges we have to face as a city, which are part of the basic needs that every city must take care of but which Barcelona appears to have overlooked, in the sector's opinion, which Barcelona Global shares.**

In spite of the harshness of the crisis, the perception of a degree of contempt by some administrations for the sector, its legal certainty and the management of public space, and the serious episodes of tour-

ismphobia that have taken place in the recent past, we should emphasise that **Barcelona has continued to be a destination valued as never before for international investment in the sector.** This is demonstrated by the valuations and recent purchases of major tourist assets in the city. These investments show that Barcelona is perceived globally as an attractive destination and that, if it is developed with quality, it has a great future.

The sector recognises that it faces a challenge in terms of public perception and that it needs to work on and invest in being perceived as a key stakeholder in terms of employment, economic activity, support for culture, improving the city's main infrastructure, and no less importantly, as a catalyst for Barcelona as a talent hub and a global brand which, just as it attracts visitors, can attract students, investors, researchers and creative people to the city.

In view of all this, the sector notes that for too long Barcelona has been lacking a clear strategy in relation to its role within the visitor economy, which brings together both great positive impacts and important negative externalities. The Strategic Tourism Plan drawn up in 2017 with a 2020 horizon is now outdated and it also lacked the tools and consensus necessary to make it more than partial reality. So it is key for Barcelona to apply an ambitious, inclusive tourism strategy that maximises the benefits and reduces the externalities. The strategy will need to be defined with the new stakeholders in the sector that have emerged as a result of the crisis (with more international funds coming into the sector) and with the inclusion of other sectors such as culture, entertainment, sport, iconic shops, education and even health, as already seen in the latest government measures on tourism approved by the City Council.⁶ This strategy goes beyond the progress that has recently been made in the field of tourism promotion, where, after many years, the sector is celebrating that the emphasis has returned to the promotion of the city on an international and national scale.

There is a call for this to necessarily be a shared strategy, with the added point that one of Barcelona's unique features is that it is an entrepreneurial city in tourism. 70% of Barcelona's hotels are in the hands of businesspeople from Barcelona. Most of the city's tourist attractions are either publicly owned or owned by Barcelona businesspeople, as is a large part of the city's tourism-related service sector and its major festivals, not to mention the restaurant sector, which is largely family-owned. However, this situation has

5. According to Cushman & Wakefield's 'Hotel Investor Beat' report, up to August 2021, significant purchases were completed representing a total investment of 440 million euros.

6. Government Measure - Creation of New Imaginaries and Content to Improve Mobility and Tourism Sustainability

started to change rapidly with the entry of more investors into the sector. This is changing the ecology of tourism in Barcelona, resulting in the need to develop new approaches to the way tourism and public-private collaboration are managed in Barcelona.

It is this uniqueness (which large international funds will now have a stake in) that is opening up the **unique opportunity to recreate a climate of public-private collaboration that has been lost in recent years and must be urgently recovered**. It is a climate that should be based not only on negotiations, but on a permanent and fluid personal relationship between the different political decision-makers and the private stakeholders in the sector. The size of the sector, the number of stakeholders and its importance for our city require very close dialogue between public and private stakeholders in the sector. Generating mutual understanding should be one of the first priorities for the city's political decision-makers, according to the sector, which believes it ceased to be generated long ago.

The fact that local entrepreneurs are at the helm of key tourism assets in Barcelona is an opportunity to have a bigger and better impact on making Barcelona one of the best tourist destinations in the world. We must also be able to integrate the new investment stakeholders into this strategy. They, it should be remembered, base their decisions on other incentives and other sources of information. Information management, promotion policies and the management of expectations in the sector will need to be carried out in a more professional way, as there are also large investment funds with decision-making centres outside of our city that have other incentives and other ways of making decisions than the sector has been used to up until now.

That is why this document proposes taking a step forward in the creation of a set of measurable proposals with commitments concerning the 10 points set out below. Barcelona Global, as a cross-cutting and independent body, is putting itself forward to coordinate these efforts.

10 commitments to become a quality destination again

The time to lay the foundations and implement policies and programmes for quality tourism as a driving force behind the talent economy in Barcelona is now. This calls for a concrete plan with commitments to ensure it happens.

In terms of tourism, Barcelona does not have a diagnosis problem. There is broad consensus on the need to increase the quality of tourism through initiatives for reduced seasonality, decentralisation, use of technology, promotion and an increase in the cultural offering, prosecution of illegal accommodation, limiting the supply of accommodation, investment in trade fair infrastructure, greater public-private collaboration in *Turisme de Barcelona*, the need to update key areas of the city centre, the need for a metropolitan tourism policy, and a commitment to public safety and street cleaning.

Tourism viewed as a “city policy” and not as a departmental or sectoral policy. Tourism is so important for Barcelona and so important for our economy that it must be managed as a city issue with a vision shared by the different areas involved: urban planning, economic promotion, finance, mobility, public safety, street cleaning, urban landscape, technology and culture. This city policy must also call upon the other competent administrations, the Spanish and Catalan governments, which undoubtedly have a key role to play not only in the regulation of tourism but also in its improvement and promotion.

Barcelona’s problem is not the (widely shared) diagnosis. The problem today is implementation and alignment so that this implementation is carried out in collaboration with the main private tourism stakeholders in the city. This collaboration requires more focused forums for dialogue than currently exist.

It is this lack of dialogue that often causes good initiatives promoted by all parties (and especially by the City Council) to go unnoticed or not have the potential they could have if they were part of a process of dialogue and shared implementation.

In view of all this, Barcelona Global proposes to develop the set of initiatives arising from the 10 proposals set out here, visualising the actions and commitments of all parties.

1.

A commitment to quality

The future of tourism in Barcelona depends on a clear and determined commitment to quality: the quality of the offering, the quality of the experience and, above all, the quality of the city. Since we are starting with a high-quality hotel offering and trade fair infrastructure, the main challenges focus on ensuring the quality of the experience and, especially, that which has made us unique: the quality of the city as a whole.

A COMMITMENT TO THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC SPACES

Pre- and post-Olympics Barcelona’s commitment to the quality of public spaces has made Barcelona the most appreciated and valued capital in the south of Europe, both by its citizens and its visitors. The cleaning of facades through the *Barcelona posa’t guapa* campaign, the pedestrianisation of the centre, taking care of urban furniture, renovating the interiors of city blocks, converting former factories into new parks, superblocks, combining industrial heritage with contemporary efficiency, and the commitment to architectural quality in public and private buildings, has earned praise from the world of architecture, urban planning and many cities around the world that have made use of the so-called “Barcelona Model” of urban planning and public space.

The commitment to the quality of public spaces is a demanding commitment that can easily be thrown into crisis by the impact of new situations if they are not planned and implemented with the rigour they deserve. The pressure on public space in Barcelona is and has always been very high, due to the urban density of our city. Accordingly, the emergence of new phenomena has brought tension into this space and some of the responses have been far below the level the city represents and deserves.

Recognising the need to make the city more walkable, more sustainable, and greener, the quality of our public space has been called into question by what are hopefully temporary solutions that have caused

Barcelona to drift away from its track record of excellence in the treatment of public space and introduced needless confusion and public controversy. The proliferation of horizontal signage of different colours, concrete blocks, streets that are traffic-calmed but overcome with colours where few people walk due to the way in which it has been done, must be reversed in order to provide Barcelona with that excellence in public space that used to characterise it.

Returning to quality in the design of interventions in public space is key not only for the enjoyment of the city by its citizens, but also to improve the profile of our visitors. It should not be forgotten that in recent decades Barcelona has been a leading city in the design of public space. It is essential to regain this leading position, which the urgency of many of the measures implemented has jeopardised.

A plan to improve public space, street furniture, signage, and remove graffiti on walls and shutters is urgently needed and appeals to both shopkeepers (responsible for their shutters) and the administration (responsible for cleaning, maintaining street furniture, and street signage).

Barcelona has proven to be capable of performing and repeating such an improvement in public space when necessary, as exemplified in the current reform of the **Olympic Port**, neglect of which had become a problem for the city and public safety. Now the City Council and Barcelona Municipal Services (BSM) have begun a process of investment and creation of a new city offering, focussing on quality with its own management model. This example should not be the only one and could be replicated in other areas of the city that share the same problems.

On another note, but closely related to the quality of public space, although the pandemic has removed the abuse of public space by **illegal sales** of drinks, counterfeit goods and illegal products, there is a risk that, with the return of tourism, public streets will again be filled with street vendors and drug dealers selling to tourists and local residents in certain areas of the city. Apart from what this means for shopkeepers who comply with all the regulations and pay taxes, such sales cause problems for passers-by and local residents.

The gradual recovery of activity in the most touristic areas must include strict maintenance of legal trade throughout the city and not a return to what we saw in the past, which only detracts from the quality of Barcelona as a city, its public space and its image as a tourist destination.

Being aware of the distortion and urgency caused by the pandemic, now is the time to recover the excellence of Barcelona's public space through a decisive implementation plan.

A COMMITMENT TO BETTER AND GREATER PUBLIC SAFETY

Although Barcelona is one of the safest cities in the world, it has unfortunately suffered for too many years from **petty crime** that is an inconvenience to visitors and citizens alike.

Accordingly, it is worth highlighting a significant change in this area at Barcelona City Council, which has committed itself to and is carrying out a significant increase in Local Police numbers to 3,500 by 2023, higher than ever before, while including key competencies such as English among the requirements to provide this service to the city. This change is also reflected in improved coordination between the two police forces and the increase in the number of Catalan autonomous police officers. However, the public safety we deserve also requires measures that go beyond those necessary in terms of personnel, police coordination and support for their work. It is also important to implement the legislative proposals put forward by the *Foment del Treball* employers' association and accepted by many parliamentary groups so the justice system has the key tools to manage this phenomenon. Tourists are seen as the main targets of street robbery gangs and the techniques and violence employed in recent years have only worsened. It is critical to stop this spiral to improve the destination's experience and ensure that visitors and local residents alike have the peace of mind needed to live in and visit our city.

Separate mention should be made of the **disorder and uncontrolled violence that have recently resulted from demonstrations connected with various political and social causes and even the unfortunate mass public drinking**. Violence targeted at the police, street furniture, shops, hotels and businesses in central areas of Barcelona has nothing to do with the aforementioned demonstrations or gatherings, but must be dealt with diligently and urgently. There is an urgent need to monitor and control local and international violent individuals who take advantage of Spain's lax criminal law (compared with Italy's) and use any excuse to attack Barcelona's peaceful coexistence. Barcelona must put an end to the image that it is a city where legitimate demonstrations and even mass entertainment can lead to the most unjustifiable violence.

A COMMITMENT TO A CLEAN CITY

The image that the streets of Barcelona (especially in the city centre) have been conveying lately, as a result of neglect, antisocial behaviour and a lack of diligence in cleaning, could be much improved. The renewal of the street cleaning contract cannot be an excuse for a relaxation of and reduction in the high standards of street cleaning to which Barcelona was accustomed. Accordingly, it is essential for Barcelona to regain the quality of street cleaning and public space that made it unique. This is a task for everyone: the administration being demanding of the cleaning services, and citizens and businesses having the necessary civic-mindedness.

Barcelona is calling for a plan in this field involving residents, shopkeepers and the administration to speed up the updating and cleaning of the city, especially the city centre.

A COMMITMENT TO A QUALITY SERVICE EXPERIENCE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

In the visitor industry, hospitality is an essential factor in ensuring the quality of tourism supply and demand. In this area, some of Barcelona's main tourist attractions, such as La Pedrera, Casa Batlló, Roca Village, and Parc Güell, have successfully adopted the highest possible quality standards for visitor services. They have managed to target their offering at a combination of tourists and local residents, and are examples of the model of an interesting city we aspire to create.

Technology is an opportunity that we must take advantage of, and Barcelona, the mobile world capital, must also be a destination recognised for its intensive use of technology in the way people visit and experience the city. This is a significant opportunity for the city's entrepreneurial and technological base to test, spread and grow new tech initiatives born and conceived in Barcelona.

A city that lives and breathes useful technology throughout the entire experience: from public transport to booking museum visits, restaurants, major attractions, shopping, mobility and visitor information. Barcelona has innovative experiences developed by the public sector such as SMOU in the field of mobility, as well as being a pioneer in shared mobility with local companies such as Cooltra or, for some time now, SEAT itself. The millions of visitors should be the greatest ambassadors of the technological potential of entrepreneurs born and raised in

Barcelona, taking advantage of this platform's potential to showcase their businesses to the world.

However, one pending task on which it is important to work urgently is the quality of all services that visitors receive in Barcelona from the very moment they arrive. Services such as **taxis** (where normal use of global services such as Uber and Cabify is still not possible), the long-awaited T-Movilidad card, tourist information and visitor incidents, complaints and restaurant services in some tourist areas quite frankly have room for improvement. The fact that Barcelona is one of the few global destinations without global mobility services such as Uber and Cabify not only surprises visitors accustomed to using these services, but is a contradiction in a city that claims to be the mobile world capital, especially when the city is a pioneer in fields such as shared mobility and the integration of mobility-as-a-service platforms. The latent conflict in taxi services requires solutions that must arrive before the full resumption of economic activity and especially the return of visitors.

Finally, in terms of **data use**, Barcelona has a long way to go. Since 2018, Barcelona Global has been recommending more intensive use of technology and data to improve the visitor experience in terms of flow management, mobility and identification of tourist attractions. New applications have recently been tested in this area and what is now needed is their maximum integration with all platforms, while ensuring the commercial neutrality of platforms so that all operators can be integrated.

Public safety, street cleaning, public space and a quality visitor experience are key elements in the quality tourism model we aspire to create. In turn, these values are shared by the citizens of Barcelona, who are calling for a clean and safe city with exemplary public space for the use and enjoyment of all.

2. A commitment to a facilitating administration

The quality tourism we aspire to create requires a facilitating, active and dynamic administration that guarantees legal certainty in the sector and in investment, provides agile decision-making, promotes a quality offering in all dimensions of tourism in Barcelona, is tough on antisocial behaviour, and maintains an open and constructive dialogue with the city's private tourism sector.

Since tourism is one of the most important sectors in the Spanish economy, it is remarkable how little sensitivity the government has shown and how slow it has been in providing aid to a business sector that has suffered like no other from the impact of the pandemic. While **furloughs** (ERTE) have alleviated the serious employment situation of workers in the sector, companies have received little or inadequate aid due to the magnitude of the shutdown. While **ICO loans** made it possible to deal with the contingency initially, enduring mobility restrictions have caused the debt structure of part of the tourism business sector to jeopardise the very structure of the sector in Spain. This is especially true in Barcelona, where it has been built by local entrepreneurs and families.

Even before the pandemic, the **obstacles and the administrative regulations put in place by Barcelona City Council, especially by its urban planning department and certain districts, hindered, and continue to hinder, decisions to improve facilities, services and also make new investments in quality offerings for Barcelona.** There was a general feeling in all the interviews that Barcelona City Council creates legal uncertainty in any business using public premises with overuse of moratoriums, changing criteria, and being slow in granting licences and taking decisions. If this is not resolved, it could become the main obstacle to the commitment to quality tourism in Barcelona. This lack of administrative agility affects not only tourism, but also has an impact on the city's overall economy.

The **Special Tourist Accommodation Plan** (PEUAT), overturned by the courts, and its provisions aimed not only at limiting hotel supply in the city centre, but also at hindering and imposing conditions on any improvement of existing hotel facilities, has created the paradox of increasing the precariousness of Barcelona as a destination and its hotel facilities. If what was sought was a more sustainable and quality tourism model, making it more difficult to invest in its improvement has advanced the opposite objective of hindering the ongoing improvement of the city's hotel facilities. However, there is agreement on the need for the local administration to regulate the number of accommodation spaces in the city, as well as the need to promote their ongoing improvement.

This trend to hinder investment in improving the city's accommodation offering moves us away from the latest trends in urban tourism based on the overall experience in which the hotel is not just a place to stay but also a city attraction in itself, offering community, gastronomy, experiences, leisure and entertainment.

In the hotel sector, in which it is estimated that the average time needed to undertake a hotel improvement

is around 9 years, Barcelona runs the risk of extending this period and beginning to suffer from a degree of obsolescence of its hotel facilities, due to the difficulties posed by the administration and the sector's lack of investment capacity after the crisis. This is a risk that Barcelona, with some of the most modern and high-quality hotel facilities in Europe, cannot afford to take.

According to those interviewed in the sector, the City Council is far from playing the role that would be desirable and has become the main obstacle to the ongoing improvement of the tourist offering that Barcelona needs, in terms of both accommodation and activities for residents and visitors.

While major tourism operators in the city, such as the major urban attractions, have invested in improving queuing, hospitality and reducing the impact on public streets, many cases were identified in the interviews in which the City Council is continuing to hinder and even prevent the necessary investment to ensure the consolidation of improvements in public streets that, on the one hand, make life easier for citizens and, on the other, improve the quality of the experience for visitors. There is often a misalignment between the expressed will of municipal leaders and the usual practice in the districts of hindering the implementation of improvements in visitor services and the relationship with the surroundings.

Accordingly, it has been detected that the districts' technical services, much to their regret, are log-jammed with contradictory instructions causing a total slowdown in all public tender projects. This creates legal uncertainty that is neither sustainable nor justifiable in view of the need for more and better investment in Barcelona.

For entrepreneurs and businesspeople in Barcelona's tourism sector, this is a difficult situation to understand, especially when many of them have recently set out on the path of internationalisation of investments and have found that in most of the international and Spanish cities in which they invest, public policy and regulation facilitates their efforts, which is the opposite of what is perceived in Barcelona.

Far from recognising the positive contribution of tourism to our extraordinary city, the attitude of the administration and some politicians towards tourism activity is perceived as unhelpful. The lack of dialogue (with some exceptions), the poorly justified and reasoned refusal of new international investments in cultural offerings, the lack of flexibility to create innovative offerings with a mix of uses and the implementation of new commercial, leisure and cultural formats, the contradiction that administrative

instruments often compete in programming with the private sector, the untimely application of the tourist tax surcharge just as visitor numbers were starting to recover, and the continued questioning of tourism operators by key political players, are signs of just how much work remains to be done to build a sector that is strategic for the future of Barcelona.

In a world in which competition for visitors seeking destinations with personality will grow as it will in the coming years, regulation and the facilitating role of the administration is a key factor for the future of tourism and in this regard there is a long way to go in Barcelona.

In spite of this situation, it is also necessary to recognise the support provided by the public sector, especially the City Council and the Catalan Government, to the improvement and growth of key infrastructures for the city's tourist activity, such as Fira de Barcelona, which will soon be expanded with new pavilions that should enable Barcelona to continue to lead the way in terms of congresses, trade fairs and conventions in Europe, which have produced such good results. The city's strong partnership with GSMA to continue to host the Mobile World Congress for the time being until 2024 is, in this context, a good practice that has been extended to the recently captured new ISE Show. The proactivity shown for culture and festivals by local operators of large infrastructure such as the Olympic Ring or the Forum (Barcelona Municipal Services) are also examples that more active and productive collaboration is possible that produces results. These examples should guide municipal policy in relation to tourism, rather than the difficulties mentioned above.

A commitment to a facilitating administration must start from this situation and perception of the sector in order to urgently transform it. It is thus necessary to avoid the **proliferation of moratoriums on licences for business in which there is free competition** (mainly bars and restaurants) in traffic-calmed areas, where it is usual for cars to be replaced with spaces for public interaction, such as outside seating areas and bars. A policy to restrict these businesses is positive for neither tourists nor local people. Barcelona must manage to perfectly combine being a city to live in with being a city to relax in. **Excess regulations and variability over time and between the city's neighbourhoods in opening hours, outdoor seating, sound insulation, facilities and ad hoc moratoriums by zones and situations creates legal uncertainty in the sector that Barcelona can no longer afford if it wants to regain the leadership in public space that has always characterised it.**

A commitment to an administration that facilitates the renewal of tourism and accompanies it with a

quality offering is essential now, at a time of recovery. Accordingly, it is necessary to promote measures such as making the PEUAT more flexible, maintaining strict rules for accommodation in tourist apartments, and adapting shop opening hours to tourism and citizens' new shopping habits.

MAKING THE PEUAT MORE FLEXIBLE, ALLOWING ICONIC HOTELS TO BE BUILT IN LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE CITY CENTRE

The mechanism Barcelona City Council decided to use to limit growth in the supply of hotel accommodation in Barcelona, the PEUAT, has been declared illegal by the courts. The council is currently processing an update to it. The new regulation should thus be an opportunity to correct aspects of the previous regulation that proved to be counterproductive and promote the renovation and construction of new quality tourist accommodation in Barcelona.

The legal uncertainty generated by the PEUAT is an experience not to be repeated. It is necessary to take great care to ensure that Barcelona does not convey an image of uncertainty to investors.

It is hoped that the new PEUAT will **correct the mistake of preventing renovation of and investment in existing hotels unless they reduce the number of rooms**. This measure prevents the necessary modernisation of our hotel facilities and reduces their quality in the medium term. It is thus urgent to clarify and provide a framework of complete legal certainty for investments in hotel accommodation in Barcelona that have been stalled for too long by the illegal PEUAT.

The existence of protected historical heritage in the centre of Barcelona that is unused and is unlikely to be put to use as shops, offices or homes should be a reason to encourage its transformation into "unique" hotels. This is the most appropriate way to ensure the heritage is maintained and draw higher-quality visitors. **An active policy to regain the use of unused historical heritage that it is difficult to turn into homes or offices by using it for quality hotels** would thus be desirable.

Finally, the failed attempt to attract Four Seasons to Barcelona should teach us a lesson about the importance for the rest of the city of also having this type of hotel offering. An active policy (like we had in the past) is needed to attract certain tourist brands to Barcelona. Previous experiences with Ritz Carlton, Mandarin and W. Edition are examples to follow and promote.

MAINTAINING STRICT RULES FOR ACCOMMODATION IN TOURIST APARTMENTS LOCATED IN ENTIRE BLOCKS

One opinion shared by all tourism professionals in Barcelona is that following the crisis in the growth of tourism in the city from 2010 to 2020, there is an uncontrolled proliferation of illegal tourist accommodation. This caused tensions in homeowners' associations and attracted a type of visitor who focussed more on partying than enjoying the city. While the City Council has put a significant effort into ending this phenomenon, the lesson has not yet been fully learned. It must thus be ensured that this situation is dealt with quickly so that all tourist accommodation in Barcelona is legal and in a suitable condition.

The current situation regarding room rental also requires the necessary attention so as not to fall into the same errors as in the past and avoid the proliferation of poorly-prepared accommodation that reduces the quality of Barcelona as a destination. Accordingly, it is necessary not to authorise tourist accommodation in shared flats, as Barcelona City Council is proposing to do.

It is clear that online apartment and room rental platforms must be allies in this policy of strict rules for tourist accommodation in Barcelona and the requirements stipulated must be absolute.

SHOP OPENING HOURS

A city such as Barcelona, with its local shopping areas and its tourist character, needs greater flexibility in shop opening hours. The fact that shops are closed most Sundays of the year makes the destination less attractive, and creates a loss of income, jobs and opportunities for both shops and the city. It is not only the emergence of e-commerce, but also citizens' new habits, together with tourism, that make it advisable for Barcelona's shops to be open every Sunday of the year.

The city is currently awaiting the fulfilment of the agreement that the main shopkeepers' associations reached with the City Council to open during a large part of the tourist season. The agreement, which is pending a ratification vote by the council, needs to be ratified quickly. Also missing is a vision of a city in which shops can open every day, regardless of the tourist season, in a global context in which online commerce is a major threat to local shops. In addition, tourism is the main ally for the survival of local,

artisanal and neighbourhood commerce, which is threatened by the proliferation of e-commerce. Providing Barcelona's local shops with the best commercial promotion tools and e-commerce structures can also contribute to their improvement and survival under the umbrella of the Barcelona brand.

3. A commitment to provide aid to the sector in line with the economic recovery and to provide incentives for investment and quality

Among its Western peers, Spain has provided some of the lowest levels of direct aid to businesses in the tourism industry. In addition to this scarcity of direct aid, the design of much of it may lead to a situation in which, in the coming years, the sector will have little incentive to invest in improving the appeal of its offering and renovating facilities.

The structure and design of the aid received as a result of the crisis has led to a critical situation in the sector. If solutions are not found (especially with respect to the ICO loans designed during the state of alarm), there is a certain risk of a very significant halt in investment in the ongoing improvement of the city's tourist establishments and attractions. There will also be a reduction in the attractiveness and added value of their offering and even in employment levels in the sector. This halt in investment and improvement in tourist accommodation, new hotels, restaurants and attractions, and in the quality of employment, could jeopardise Barcelona's excellent positioning in these areas before the pandemic.

While we await the allocation of the 7 billion euros promised by the Spanish government in aid to the sectors most affected by the pandemic, it is clear that in order to ensure the necessary investment in improving the city's hotel supply and tourist attractions, it is essential to provide aid to reduce the financial burden caused by the increase in debt during the pandemic. This aid may be used for debt repayment, but also for new investments to improve the efficiency, quality and quantity of jobs and sustainability of the tourism offering. As noted below, a project for the sustainability and improvement of tourism infrastructure in Barcelona within the context of the European Union's Next Generation Funds would be desirable and timely.

The ongoing need to modernise and make the city's hotel and accommodation facilities sustainable in line with the objectives of the New Green Deal would also make it advisable to consider **providing funds to support investment in modernising their facilities, in terms of both environmental sustainability (perfectly eligible for European Recovery and Resilience Facility funds in the field of environmental sustainability in the New Green Deal) as well as in terms of modernising supply.** This aid must come in addition to the €20,000,000 pledged by the City Council and bring about decisive action by other administrations in this field. This fund should allow for a very long-term return on investment so the pandemic's effects do not impact on plans to modernise Barcelona's stock of tourist accommodation.

It is thus necessary for Barcelona to propose measures for both aid to the sector to recover investment, and to create shared projects based on the sustainability and digitalisation of the sector.

4.

A commitment to an intercontinental hub and prioritising cruise ships to and from Barcelona

PRIORITISING THE INTERCONTINENTAL CONNECTIVITY OF BARCELONA AIRPORT IN CONJUNCTION WITH REUS AND GIRONA, AS A DESTINATION FOR NON-URBAN TOURISM.

Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat Airport is one of the main drivers behind competitiveness, employment and the future of Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain and the Euro-Mediterranean Region. Its successive expansions in 1992 and 2009 have demonstrated the importance of having a competitive airport with all that means in terms of quality employment, being a Mediterranean capital, industrial development, logistics, innovation and the visitor economy.

The expansion proposed by AENA should allow Barcelona to become one of Europe's main airport hubs and avoid congestion in its main infrastructure, which with 53 million passengers in 2019 is approaching its maximum capacity of 55 million.

The construction of the satellite terminal, the lengthening of the runway, the development of the airport city with all that entails in terms of logistical, industrial and service capacity, medium-distance rail connec-

tions, and the improvements to the airports of Reus Costa Daurada and Girona Costa Brava, are an opportunity that Barcelona must grasp with consensus, enthusiasm and strict environmental rules. This is especially so at a time when the economic crisis caused by the pandemic requires investment effort from all quarters.

Following its expansion, Barcelona Airport will be able to strengthen its role as an intercontinental hub for which we have been striving for years. It will give meaning to the work we have been doing for years to attract intercontinental and long-haul flights and increase the airport's contribution to Catalonia's GDP from 7% to 9%.

Attracting a greater number of intercontinental routes should be a priority in the expansion of Barcelona Airport. Therefore, organising traffic with Reus Costa Daurada and Girona is key to ensuring tourists visiting both Costa Brava and Costa Daurada take these airports into account. It is also important to divert low-cost flights that do not provide connectivity with Barcelona to these airports and so avoid saturation when the situation returns to normal.

Missing out on the opportunity offered by AENA to expand the airport makes no sense for Barcelona's competitiveness and its talent economy. Barcelona airport's proposed expansion has not been debated as it should have been, nor has the necessary evidence been provided showing that this enlargement will be as environmentally friendly as possible. The debate concerning this airport expansion has focused only on the lengthening of a runway and its effect on the Natura 2000 area. However, it also contains many other elements that have no reason not to be implemented, regardless of the decision on the runway. This is the case for the satellite terminal, the connections between Barcelona and the Girona and Reus Costa Daurada airports, and the entire industrial and logistics area planned around the airport.

Barcelona must aspire to have the best intercontinental connectivity, so it is necessary to require a rigorous debate and proposals that will enable this objective to be achieved.

PRIORITISING CRUISE SHIPS TO AND FROM BARCELONA

The success of having managed to position Barcelona as the seventh cruise ship port in the world and the first in the Mediterranean in 2019 is an asset for the city. This has given us the intercontinental con-

nections required not only for the cruise industry but also for the development of the talent industry (research, entrepreneurship, digital hubs) and business tourism. Part of Barcelona's intercontinental connections could not be understood without the cruise industry, which it is necessary to keep promoting.

It is an industry with major implications for sustainability. The joint effort and investment made by the Port Authority and the cruise terminal concessionaires to reduce emissions from cruise ships while they are in Barcelona port is noteworthy.

However, Barcelona must start managing demand in the cruise industry, discriminating positively in favour of those that arrive and depart from our port. These are the visitors who have the greatest positive impact on the city in terms of spending per visitor, days of stay and the city's connectivity. The city's Port Authority has the tools to make this possible.

5.

A commitment to prioritise culture as a city asset

For too many years, Barcelona has sold itself to the world with little regard for the fact that one of its main assets is its cultural offering and its heritage. From the outset, Barcelona Global has proposed that investment in culture should be the main driving force in shaping our tourism. Examples such as Miami (which managed to transform itself into a new cultural destination in the United States thanks to Miami Basel and the renovation of districts such as the Design District), London itself with its commitment to museums, theatres and musicals, and the commitment to museums in Amsterdam, to cite just a few examples, are models to follow, as Barcelona Global has always proposed.

Culture is not just a way of attracting more and better visitors. It is the essence of what Barcelona represents to the people of Barcelona themselves and it has made Barcelona a city that is admired and full of cultural events in every corner of the city. From the museums and auditoriums of all kinds in our city, through our world heritage architecture, to the extraordinary street sculptures, which are the result of a unique project that began in the 1980s and illustrate the cultural Barcelona that is admired and on which we now have the opportunity to build a new proposal in the city and in the world.

Accordingly, the cultural offering must lead the recovery of the Barcelona story around the world. This strategy should be pursued in two areas:

1. **Showcasing the existing offering internationally**
2. **Generating new cultural activity based on key focal points such as international circuits, music, digitalisation and knowledge.**

SHOWCASING THE EXISTING OFFERING INTERNATIONALLY

Barcelona has a cultural offering that is often not given enough attention either locally or in terms of international promotion. The example of **Barcelona Obertura** (the alliance promoted by Barcelona Global between L'Auditori, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Palau de la Música Catalana, Ibercámara and OCM, with the support of Barcelona City Council and Turisme de Barcelona) illustrates how it is possible to enhance the existing offering of the city's major music venues and promote them internationally, attracting specialised visitors and building an international reputation in classical music. It has also been found that international communication increases the value and repute of the participating facilities among local audiences too. The "Come for the music and stay for the rest" campaign is a good summary of what the local offering can contribute to the visitor profile we are aiming for.

The Barcelona Obertura initiative could be extended to the field of art through a similar initiative involving **Single-Artist Museums**. Barcelona should highlight the fact that it is the city in which four of the great modern artists who defined the 20th century decided to display part of their heritage, legacy and future influence. The fact that Barcelona has the **Picasso Museum**, the **Joan Miró Foundation** (Centre of Contemporary Art Studies), the **Tàpies Foundation** and the **Dalí Museum** in Figueres, is a major asset that should be valued in terms of both international promotion and generation of joint content. The great **Picasso / Miró** exhibition planned by the Picasso Museum and the Joan Miró Foundation is an extraordinary example to be applauded and continued. Initiatives similar to Barcelona Obertura with slogans such as "Come for Picasso / Miró / Dalí / Tàpies / Gaudí and stay for the rest" would be a good way of highlighting our extraordinary heritage, which can shape the type of cultural visitor we aspire to have, while providing new resources for those museums.

Along these lines, Barcelona should also take advantage of being the **World Capital of Architecture for 2026** to construct its own contemporary narrative of architecture and urban planning, creating a **Centre for Interpretation and Dissemination of Architecture** in the city for this purpose. This has been long awaited but as yet has no opening date or operational model. The archives, models and documentation collected for this purpose by the Mies Van de Rohe Foundation, MNAC, the City Council itself, the School of Architecture, FAD, MACBA and COAC, to name but a few, are an extraordinary foundation to start up this centre for dissemination and interpretation. The city itself, with its fine architectural examples from all periods of history, would be its greatest exhibitor. Having this venue ready for 2026 would be another excellent opportunity to promote the city through its pre-existing content.

The progress made in the field of the **festivals** of all kinds that the city organises is an example of Barcelona's potential to position itself globally as an active city at the forefront of cutting-edge disciplines such as music and electronics, documentaries, horror films, design, comics, manga and book films, to mention just a few. Organising the offering in this field in the calendar and providing incentives for the professional parts of all festivals would undoubtedly help to improve Barcelona's positioning in these fields, where it already has an extraordinary offering and international image. It would be important to address the gap in the offering in the period from late November to February (especially at Christmas). Music can be one of the growth vectors in addition to exhibitions. Music is a field in which Barcelona not only has internationally prestigious operators (such as Sonar, Primavera Sound, The Project and Cruïlla) but also highly competitive private infrastructures alongside large mixed-use infrastructures (culture and sport) that are professionally managed by the public sector for large concerts and festivals that are global leaders, such as the Olympic Ring in Montjuïc, whose reach needs to be maximised. Accordingly, it is important for the City Council's recent acquisitions of cultural facilities to be aimed at creating a quality offering planned by professionals with the necessary experience so the city has a powerful offering for both citizens and visitors.

Lastly, it would be appropriate for the **Cultural and Scientific Capital of Barcelona**, recently recognised and funded by the Spanish Government with a contribution of €20,000,000 per year, to be made tangible through substantial improvements in the offering and programming capacity of Barcelona's major cultural institutions. These made an extraordinary effort both in times of cutbacks during the 2008 crisis, and in logistical, security and programming efforts

during the pandemic. This is a great opportunity for exhibitions at MNAC, ACVA, CCCB, Picasso, the Joan Miró Foundation and the Tàpies Foundation, and the programming of the Liceu, L'Auditori and Palau de la Música to have the resources to become greater global and local centres of reference.

GENERATING NEW CULTURAL ACTIVITY BASED ON KEY FOCAL POINTS SUCH AS INTERNATIONAL CIRCUITS, MUSIC, DIGITALISATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Apart from adding value to what already exists and enriching it with more proposals, the city must also be prepared to create and consolidate new cultural offerings aimed at both local and international audiences.

Initiatives kick-started with the **biennials of science and thought** are fields in which to deepen and consolidate the offering created, no doubt by linking them more closely to some of the city's great institutions of thought and culture, such as CCCB and CIDOB. These types of events, conceived of as a long-term commitment, can also help to position Barcelona as a destination linked to thought and ideas. These initiatives can be extended to fields such as Technological Humanism and the impact of technology on society, as a complement to the existing Mobile World Congress. This work by Digital Future Society deserves more respectful attention and certainly a stronger link with the aforementioned biennials.

In the field of international circuits, it is admirable that Barcelona hosts the **Manifesta biennial**, which has a markedly metropolitan profile. It is necessary to ensure it has a double multiplier effect both for the local creative scene (and locals living abroad) and for the international promotion of Barcelona in global creativity circuits. This is a great opportunity that it is urgent to begin to bring to fruition with the first proposals of this kind.

The start of the **"Blockbuster" exhibitions** in collaboration between the Provincial Council and Barcelona City Council in Drassanes, and the Balenciaga and Blinky exhibitions in DHUB, are a field to be explored in greater depth. However, greater involvement by the city's major museums such as **MACBA, MNAC** and the single-artist museums would be desirable, as they can also become (and in some cases already are) new promoters of international exhibition projects. MNAC's exhibitions in Japan, the planned Picasso-Miró exhibition in collaboration with the Picasso Museum in Paris, and the international reach of major exhibitions at **CCCB** are examples to

follow and increase. This will require greater attention and certainly larger budgets.

Fields such as **creativity and digitalisation**, and **art and science**, in which timid steps have been taken in different areas of the city are work areas to be consolidated with greater local and international ambition. Barcelona has a long way to go in this field and can rapidly become a good international benchmark. Initiatives such as UOC's initiative to bring together key stakeholders, such as research centres, Sonar, Barcelona Tech and La Fira, in an art, science and technology project, have blazed a trail that should be strengthened, and one in which DHUB should also surely play a prominent role.

Finally, serious consideration should be given to the opportunity for Barcelona to consider (as it is already working on) organising a third **Universal Exposition** on the centenary of the 1929 Expo. This would make it possible to reuse and update all the facilities in Montjuïc, while offering the world the opportunity to share the progress made with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is an objective that, once again, we unfortunately appear to be late in targeting.

6. A commitment to a dynamic and active city centre

Back in January 2020, just prior to the pandemic, Barcelona Global put on the table the need to put ambitious policies in place to recover and boost the economy of the centre of Barcelona. The centre stretches beyond Ciutat Vella to Paral·lel, Poble Sec, the lower part of Eixample and parts of Poble Nou. This large, central area of the metropolitan city has lost more than 700,000 m² of office space over the last few decades to hotels and apartment buildings. This is an area that has also experienced first-hand the growth in the number of visitors over the past decade and has experienced a rise in rents and a pushing out of traditional shops and services, as well as so-called historical shops. Montjuïc mountain should be included in this area for the purposes of this document. This is also a key area for Barcelona's citizens and the tourist offering.

The proposal that Barcelona Global argued for at that time remains fully valid and is required now even more than before. This proposal is based on identifying nearly 300,000 m² of unused or underused space

in that area and the need to transform those buildings (and others that may be identified) into new productive spaces by creating a municipal office aimed at speeding up and providing administrative support and permits for these usage transformations. This process is also in tune with the most cutting-edge trends among talent to work in urban centres rather than in traditional economic zones.

Barcelona's city centre deserves special attention in the coming years from the various administrations involved, especially the City Council.

Barcelona cannot afford to leave the improvement of La Rambla on its eternal to-do list, any more than improvements to Via Laietana, Montjuïc, Ciutadella and Paral·lel. These are key areas for citizens and visitors that deserve to be renovated and cared for, improving their public space, urban planning, commerce, the activities generated and, when appropriate, attracting new cultural and civic activity to those areas.

42nd Street and Broadway in New York are international examples of key city environments that fell into decay and were recovered for tourism and the city. Gran Vía in Madrid is another recent example. This makes clear that a determined will to recover and dignify spaces is not only possible but necessary. Barcelona has overcome great challenges of this kind, as in the case of the management of Parc Güell, which should serve as an example for other spaces in the city. In Barcelona, this commitment to recovering spaces in the centre is particularly concentrated in areas of high tourist intensity such as La Rambla, Paral·lel, Montjuïc and Via Laietana. The future of the densely populated neighbourhoods that surround them also depends on the recovery of these four strategic areas.

The municipal commitment to purchasing facilities near Paral·lel, such as El Molino, the former Sala Barts and the Arnau theatre, must be accompanied by private management of these facilities to ensure a top-quality offer for both locals and visitors. The city's positive commitment to the recovery of these spaces must be linked to a management model that prioritises quality and excellence, competing on a level playing field with the existing private offering of shows to serve as a lever for their ongoing improvement, ultimately generating a city offering that combines quality, innovation, internationalisation and cosmopolitanism, as well as large audiences. The slowness in reforming the Arnau theatre is an example not to be followed, because the worst thing that can happen in a changing environment such as Paral·lel is for facilities such as this to remain closed, which affects the quality of the entire area. Meanwhile, **La Rambla** is suffering from complete inactiv-

ity on the part of the City Council, despite repeated unfulfilled promises of improvement. Private activity stands in contrast to this inactivity by the public sector, as exemplified by the project to recover Teatre Principal as a new major entertainment and cultural facility for the city, the recovery of the Wax Museum, and projects such as the Photographic Museum of Barcelona, and the new MOCA in Carrer Moncada, promoted by private investors.

Via Laietana runs the risk of falling into the same dynamic as La Rambla, where promises and plans for reform and improvement follow one after the other with the corresponding announcements and promised but missed deadlines. In the case of Via Laietana, it is also a strategic street for travelling to and from key areas of the city such as Barceloneta, which, depending on how mobility in the area is designed, could unfortunately be partly cut off from the centre of Barcelona.

The area around **Parc de la Ciutadella** includes a unique set of historical facilities that are in disuse or practically abandoned and require urgent investment for their recovery and to prevent the area's decay. If this reform goes hand in hand with the visitor economy, it can have a better impact on the city.

Another key area where urgent intervention is needed is **Parc de Montjuïc**, where some of the most beloved and iconic city facilities are concentrated, such as Pavelló Mies Van de Rohe, Fira de Montjuïc, Museo Nacional, the Joan Miró Foundation, Poble Espanyol, the Olympic Ring, Montjuïc Castle, Caixa Fòrum, the Grec and Lliure Theatres, the Botanical Gardens and some forgotten ethnographic and archaeological museums. All of this is in an area that today lacks the mobility, public safety, lighting and accessibility services it deserves for the quality of the services on offer. It is an area that, far from being considered an area of metropolitan interest, is managed by the district itself with the same tools with which local facilities and parks are managed. Due to both its offering and its potential, Montjuïc deserves much more and requires investment in services, mobility, access roads and even a new offering for citizens to make it the urban park that the city has always wanted to have at its centre. A park such as Montjuïc could be given comprehensive, professional, quality, city management, as has been achieved in other critical spaces such as Parc Güell.

If Barcelona stops investing in improving and expanding the mix of uses in its city centre, the quality destination we aspire to have will suffer and we will not be able to position the city where we want it to be.

7.

A commitment to new reasons to visit Barcelona

Barcelona has been a pioneering city in the concept of urban tourism and its diversification. Barcelona's tourism mix incorporates family tourism, leisure, festivals, parties, culture, fairs and conventions, and this (with exceptions) is one of its strengths. **While previously Barcelona was committed to consolidating its leadership, for example in business tourism by expanding and improving the fairs and creating CCIB and the necessary infrastructure for congresses, now Barcelona should take a further leap forward and commit to two new sectors closely linked to the visitor economy, which also have a great economic impact on the city and the configuration of its sectors.** However, trade fair and convention tourism, in which Barcelona, under the leadership of Fira de Barcelona, has managed to become a benchmark with a strong impact on the city, must be maintained and even increased.

POSITIONING BARCELONA AS A WELLNESS AND HEALTH DESTINATION

Physical and mental wellness and health are becoming more and more common reasons to visit a destination on a regular basis. The global health and wellness industry attracts a large number of quality global visitors and has a significant impact on economies that commit to these activities, as well as on improving their own health and wellness systems.

The fact that Barcelona has public and private health services of proven excellence, is a leader in the Mediterranean diet, has excellent hotel facilities, and also has some major players in the cosmetics and wellness industry, can be elements that, if used well, can have an impact on improving the visitor profile by attracting people seeking health and wellness treatments to the city.

Barcelona's major hospitals such as Clínic and Vall d'Hebron are among the 100 best hospitals in the world. Barcelona's medical teams and clinics in disciplines such as cancer, ophthalmology (Barraquer, IMO, Instituto Catalán de la Retina), reproductive techniques (Dexeus Mujer), cosmetic surgery (Clínica Benito), urology, Alzheimer's (Fundaciones ACE and Pasqual Maragall), sport and cardiology, to name but a few, are considered among the best in the world. Barcelona's public and private health care

network is therefore a great asset that the city is not making the most of in order to attract international patients who would find the necessary treatment for their pathologies in Barcelona, while at the same time providing a significant source of income for the health care system, its professionals and the city as a whole.

It is a city that not only has the aforementioned excellent health care, but is also the **capital of the Mediterranean diet and has extraordinary accommodation and wellness facilities to develop**. Wellness is a sector that is growing all around the world, in which Barcelona could become a leading destination.

Past controversies over the opportunity to position Barcelona in this field should give way to taking steps to ensure that Barcelona's medical excellence is also consolidated through its internationalisation.

POSITIONING BARCELONA AS AN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION HUB

In the same vein, Barcelona has the opportunity to become a new international higher education hub in Europe. Higher education is becoming a large sector around the world, with millions of students moving from one country to another to study for a degree. It is estimated that while, at the beginning of this decade, 5 million people moved from one country to another to study for a degree, by 2030 there will be more than twice as many. Apart from the traditional global champions such as the United States and the United Kingdom (with the later addition of Australia and Singapore), Europe has the potential to grow and contribute more in this field. Cities such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen have already implemented their respective plans to internationalise and improve their university systems and have been reaping the rewards for some years now in the form of more international students, improved academic excellence, greater talent attraction, and more and better local employment.

Barcelona and its university system cannot remain on the side-lines of the growth that the international education sector is experiencing. Therefore, as Barcelona Global has proposed in the past, it is necessary to immediately undertake the necessary regulatory reforms to advance the internationalisation of this sector.

Barcelona Global's proposals include (1) the creation of degrees focussed on internationalisation, as Berlin and Amsterdam have done with the liberal arts; (2) attracting international campuses to Barcelona; (3) alliances between international research centres and local universities; and (4) creating programmes within the context of the European University. All this must be done without overlooking the need for the national and regional regulatory framework to facilitate the internationalisation of the sector.

The internationalisation of both health and education are levers to add value and quality to the visitor economy in Barcelona.

8. A commitment to reducing seasonality

LARGE EVENTS AS A DRIVER BEHIND PROMOTION AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Barcelona today, as well as its urban planning, influence, civil society and culture cannot be understood without the major events that have marked the city's history. However, since the experience of the Universal Forum of Cultures in 2004, Barcelona's approach to major events has been rather distant and, with a few small exceptions, resistant to them. This can be seen in the city's reluctance to bid for a new Universal Exposition to celebrate the centenary of 1929 and associate Barcelona with the 2030 Agenda goals.

However, Barcelona is a city that has traditionally made the most of major events, taking advantage of them to renew and reinvent important areas of the city and to project the city to the world as a relevant and attractive metropolis for economic activity. Major events have been an "excuse" for Barcelona to improve the city and their legacy can still be seen very clearly: from Parc de la Ciutadella and the 1888 Exposition, Montjuic today, which is the result of the 1929 Exposition, through the city opening up to the sea, the ring roads, the Olympic Village of the 1992 Olympic Games, to the Forum area of 2004 with all the infrastructures and new neighbourhoods associated with it.

Barcelona's ability to use major events as an excuse for improvement is admired and has been emulated by many other cities with mixed results. In recent years, with the exception of the Mobile World Congress, Bar-

celona has been reluctant to bid for major events that could help it renew its message to the world, whether through sport or culture. Fortunately, **the fact that Barcelona has been chosen to host Manifest and as the World Architecture Capital should mark a shift in this trend and accompany the recovery of the city and the necessary quality narrative.**

Accordingly, Barcelona could emulate Venice in organising major cultural and sporting events, providing itself with an instrument whereby the three administrations and the private sector share responsibility for organising and attracting major international events such as the Universal Exposition, the Olympic Games or other sporting championships, as well as major cultural events.

Like Venice, Barcelona could study the feasibility of creating a **public-private vehicle to which the three administrations (Central Government, Catalan Government and City Council) could all contribute and from which fiscal and budgetary incentives could be channelled to provide Barcelona with an ongoing policy to attract major events with great international reach**, such as the Olympic Games, Universal Expositions and various world championships.

The experience Barcelona has built up in this field is an asset that needs to be used more and has been under-utilised recently. Barcelona bidding for world championships and major global events again would be good for both the city and for its global positioning. Barcelona has excellent infrastructure that makes this possible, whose use should be maximised, such as the facilities of Fira de Barcelona (in Montjuïc, the Forum and Hospitalet), the Olympic Ring (not all cities have exemplary, modern Olympic infrastructure like Barcelona), those used for the World Aquatics Championships, and the facilities of FC Barcelona and RCD Espanyol.

This commitment may or may not take the form of a public-private consortium as in the case of Venice. However, in any case, it requires the commitment of all the administrations and the involvement of the private sector to aspire to host major events with a global impact that contribute to building Barcelona up as a city.

It goes without saying that this commitment must be completely compatible with keeping Barcelona an established venue for major events linked to the **Circuit de Barcelona / Catalunya** such as Formula 1 and the Motorcycle Grand Prix. There should be no doubt about Barcelona's willingness to maintain and even lead them.

It is also worth highlighting the role that one of Barcelona's most important global reference points, **FC Barcelona**, can play in this segment. **The Espai Barça project can create a new and very relevant asset for the city, which should be placed at the centre of the strategy to reduce the seasonality of the city's offering.**

PRIORITISING CHRISTMAS AND WINTER AS A STRATEGY TO REDUCE THE SEASONALITY OF TOURISM IN BARCELONA

After many years of decline in the city's Christmas offering, the City Council has regained the desire to make the Christmas period a special time for the city. Barcelona has hitherto not managed to significantly attract visitors looking for destinations to spend the Christmas holidays and enjoy culture, gastronomy and shopping. It is necessary to continue encouraging the emerging efforts in this direction, to give them greater ambition and international reach by encouraging the creation of a parallel cultural offer focussing on the **creation of a new (musical) event with global reach during those dates** in coordination with the city's excellent programmers and organisers of music festivals.

It should also be recognised that the fact that after many years a renowned designer has been put in charge of the lighting design for the centre is a path to continue expanding in the coming years. **Merging Christmas with Llum BCN in 22@** could be considered. This has already received the support of the ISE Show.

9. A commitment to new public-private collaboration

Since the 2018 Tourism Summit, Barcelona Global has been echoing the need to recover the culture of public-private collaboration in many of the city's fields of operation, planning and management.

The case of tourism is particularly important as this was one of the successful examples of public-private collaboration with La Fira and Turisme de Barcelona as great and recognised examples. Moreover, the idiosyncrasy of Barcelona's tourism sector, with large

private stakeholders at the forefront, provides many arguments that the best way to plan and manage tourism in Barcelona is through public-private collaboration.

Today, however, we are far from the model that we aspire to and need as a result of mistakes on both sides. However, as highlighted in the sector's perception, the lack of fluid dialogue and mutual understanding between the public and private sectors means that, moving beyond the traditional structures of public-private collaboration, greater mutual understanding is needed than has hitherto existed.

As recognised by the **Government Measure on the Creation of new Imaginaries and Content to Improve Mobility and Tourism Sustainability**, the balance between the public and private sectors in Turisme de Barcelona has been precarious for years. The Tourism and City Board has proven to be of little use by not having private representatives as such and giving equal weight to all stakeholders. It has favoured more discussion about the model than a problem-solving approach. Furthermore, the use of the tourist tax still lacks a management model shared with the sector.

At this stage, yet again proposing greater public-private collaboration in tourism in Barcelona seems repetitive, but it is necessary. The examples set in attracting and managing trade fairs and congresses by Fira de Barcelona, and the setting up of the Barcelona & Partners investment attraction agency by Barcelona Global with the support of other administrations such as the City Council and the Provincial Council show that it is not only possible, but that it achieves results.

The priority focus of public-private collaboration should be a new model for the promotion of tourism in the city through **Turisme de Barcelona** (and even more so now that it has professional management, a stated desire to include new stakeholders in its governance, as stipulated in its new statutes, and more resources coming from the public part of the consortium), management of the tourist tax, and the approach to certain city challenges linked to mass tourism such as mobility and shopping based on the Business Improvement Districts (now Apeu - the Urban Economy Promotion Act).

However, this public-private collaboration requires not only public sector will, but also private sector leadership and resources. The recent years of little empathy between the parties have undoubtedly hindered this climate, which is necessary for a good collaboration framework.

The situation caused by the pandemic and the disenchantment and exhaustion of some key local tourism stakeholders, who see investment opportunities in other "friendlier" destinations, together with the interest in Barcelona from international funds that see our city as a destination with ongoing potential, has led, and everything appears to indicate that it will lead, to an increase in transactions involving the city's tourism assets. According to Cushman & Wakefield's "Hotel Investor Beat" report, Barcelona is the leading European city for hotel investors among the main urban destinations, ahead of London and Paris. In total, deals worth 440 million euros have been closed, involving more than 2,000 rooms. These deals, and some that are currently underway, have once again shown that Barcelona has great value and future prospects, given the amounts paid by international investors to purchase some of the hotels that have come to light. This change in ownership of some of the city's tourism assets is no minor matter. If it is consolidated and increased, it could change Barcelona's tourism ecosystem from an ecosystem of entrepreneurs and family businesses into an ecosystem of investment funds with more short-term profitability criteria and commitments sometimes more focussed on finance than the impact on the city.

To illustrate this situation, it is important to understand that one of the keys to Barcelona's enormous success in attracting major events and trade fairs has always been the strength of the family business fabric behind a large part of the city's hotel offer (articulated around the Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona association), which has led to an increase in Barcelona's competitiveness in the business tourism segment. Cities with hotel facilities in the hands of large international funds do not have the negotiation tools that Barcelona has had and that have achieved such good results in experiences such as the Mobile World Congress as the main example.

The ownership of major tourist assets by Barcelona families has also allowed the deployment in Barcelona of a design, technology and even gastronomic industry with an identity, as well as the involvement of the sector in city events that would otherwise not have taken place because the decision-making centres are distant from our local situation.

Taking this peculiarity of our tourism ecosystem into account is key to ensuring that we can aspire to determine the type of tourism we want and have the tools to make it happen. This situation undoubtedly conditions the way in which public-private collaboration in tourism in Barcelona should be designed and implemented.

The future for tourism in Barcelona relies on the commitment of tourism entrepreneurs who are from Barcelona, who have shown that they are committed to their city in the long term and who are calling for an agile, open, facilitating and clear administration that the sector agrees is not currently there. This is a future in which it will be necessary to urgently integrate the dynamics of investment funds that have placed and will continue to place their trust in the city as a quality destination with a great future. These investment funds have acquired major assets in the city at high prices. Through this commitment, they are showing their interest in the Barcelona model and they should also actively work with us on the model of quality tourism that we should commit to.

It is a dialogue that needs to be renewed on a daily basis, which is why we propose translating the proposals included in this document into concrete measures within the framework of renewed public-private dialogue.

10. A commitment to promotion of the city

In recent years Barcelona has suffered from under-investment in international promotion of the city. This has now just begun to be reversed with the design and implementation of a tourism promotion plan launched by Turisme de Barcelona in agreement with Barcelona City Council.

Promoting the city is key to conveying that unique touch perceived in the Barcelona experience by people abroad. Accordingly, it must be based on conveying that mentioned above concerning culture as the city's main attraction, the authenticity of Barcelona's proposition, and targeting particular segments of visitors we want to encourage as a city. This promotion should be largely based on social conversations and should also be segmented by unique groups such as music, art, opera, gastronomy, sport and architecture lovers, to offer just a few examples. It is also necessary for Barcelona to again concern itself with ensuring the trend-setting media echo the city's proposals.

The quality of the city and its offering needs to be promoted appropriately and forcefully, conveying to the world the image of the city that we want to share with visitors: a city of culture, unique experi-

ences, fine food, which is family-friendly, a place to stroll around, avant-garde, the birthplace of trends, with architecture, shopping, music, art, health and wellness, **while also conveying that not everything is allowed in Barcelona.** It is necessary, now more than ever, to convey to the world that Barcelona is a city to experience intensely but with respect, to **move away from the image of a city of uncontrolled partying that has sometimes been conveyed. This is an image that must be combatted in the streets and in promotions, as it does the greatest damage to Barcelona's desire to become a quality destination.**

The promotion must convey an aspirational image of the Barcelona we want and the Barcelona we want visitors to know. This promotion should be carried out in mutual agreement with the city's major tour operators, developing ad hoc campaigns that highlight Barcelona's many unique moments throughout the year. **"Come for... and stay for the rest"** is a good way to highlight music, architecture, festivals, gastronomy, sport and popular traditions, as well as the city's quality.

Moreover, the fact that Barcelona has become one of the top urban tourism destinations in Europe has made the city a priority destination for international visitors. This fact, which is positive in itself and a sign of Barcelona's quality as a destination, must be repaid, now especially, with **a renewed commitment to attracting local visitors, from both the rest of Spain and the south of France.** This commitment to local visitors must be based on the continuous renewal of the city's cultural, gastronomic and entertainment offering in order to radiate the capital status effect that Barcelona needs. Local visitors are visitors who can become regular customers of the great cultural facilities. The high-speed railway is the best way for them to arrive.

This is aspirational promotion that highlights what makes us different and repositions Barcelona as a quality city in terms of experiencing life and lifestyle.

Commitment to tourism as a driving force behind the Barcelona's talent hub

Coordinators

Barcelona Global

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Participants in Challenge meetings

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Angel Díaz, Advanced Leisure Services
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Bruno Hallé, Cushman & Wakefield
Mathieu Herrero, Areas
Marta Labata, Barcelona Serveis Municipals
Arturo Mas-Sardà, PortAventura World
Arnaldo Muñoz, Busuu
Marian Muro, Turisme de Barcelona
David Rico, CaixaBank Hotels and Tourism
Maria Segarra, Intueri
Constantí Serrallonga, Fira Barcelona
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Entrepreneurs and professionals interviewed

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Joaquín Ausejo, Alma Hotels
Timo Buetefisch, Cooltra
Manel Casals, Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona
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Jordi Espelt, H10 Hotels
Elena Foguet, Value Retail
Gary Gautier, Casa Batlló
Gabriel Jené, La Mallorquina
Juan Julià, Axel Hotels
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Montserrat Moragas, Laie
Roger Pallarols, Gremi de Restauració
Lluís Sans, Santa Eulàlia
Pepe Serra, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya
Paco Solé Parellada, Restaurant 7 Portes
Tomás Tarruella, Grupo Tragaluz
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Manel Vallet, Catalonia Hotels
Anton Vidal, Poble Espanyol
Liran Wizman, Sir Victor

Barcelona Global is a private, independent, non-profit association made up of 215 companies, research centres, entrepreneurs, business schools, universities and cultural institutions, and more than 870 professionals who want to make Barcelona one of the best cities in the world for talent and economic activity.

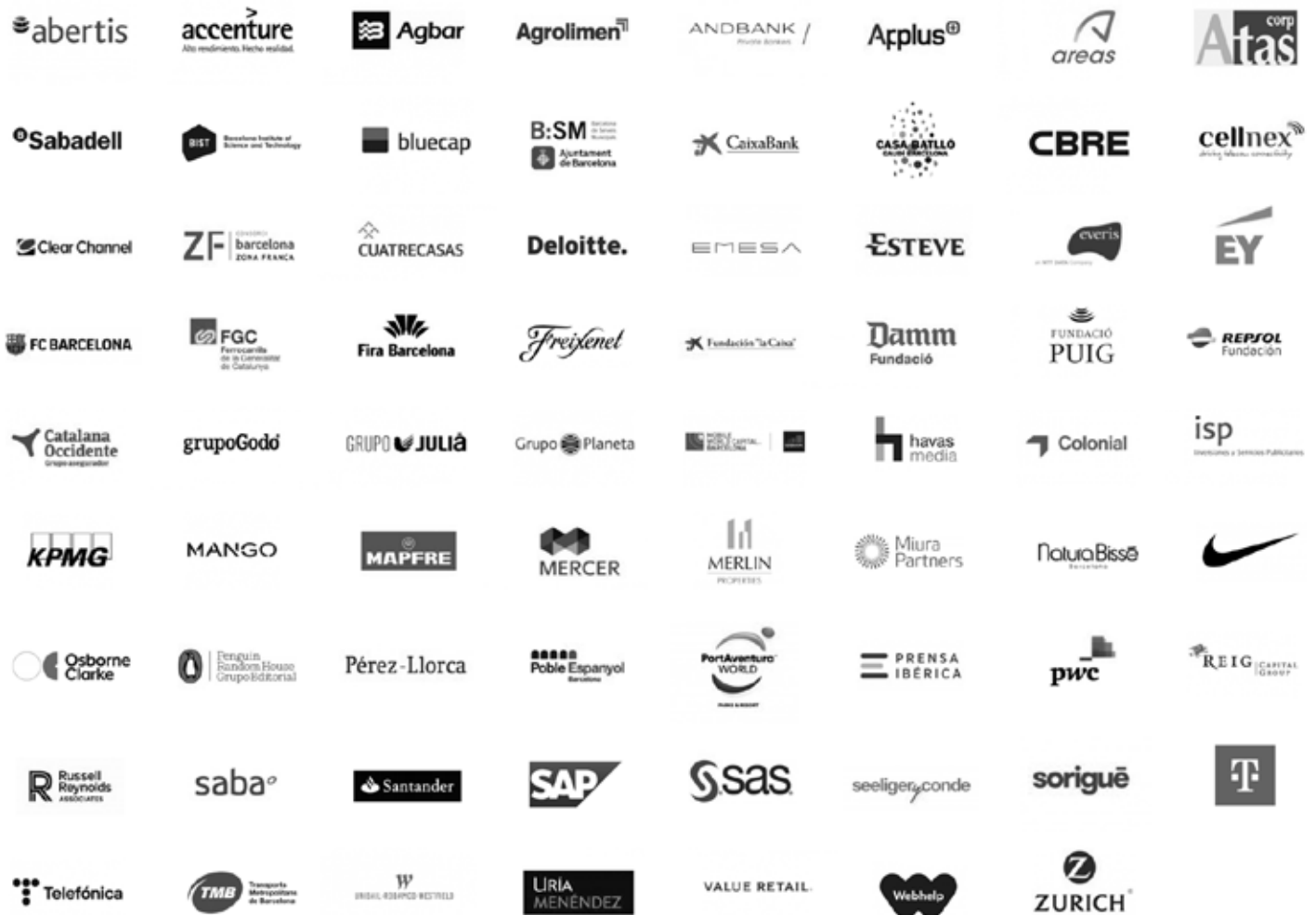
The association also has a network of 145 members who live and work abroad, and 20% are international members who have chosen to live and work in Barcelona.

Barcelona Global develops strategic proposals for the future of Barcelona, promotes specific projects together with its members, and mobilises them so that they know each other and can better support the Barcelona of talent we aspire to create.



Make it happen!

Corporate protector members



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And more than 870 committed professionals



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