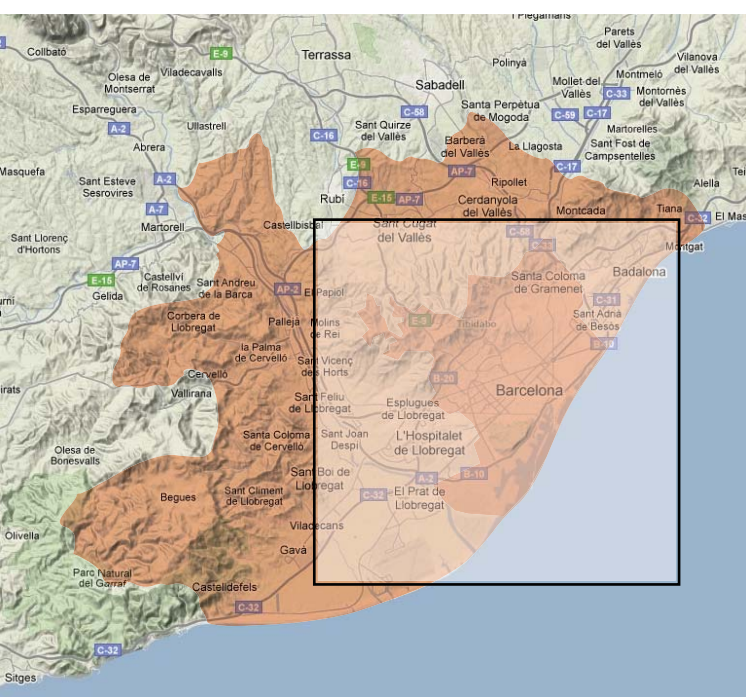


# Barcelona, Spain



Catalonia	31'895Km2	* Inhabitants	7'504'881
Urban Region	636Km2	* Inhabitants	3'218'071
Barcelona	101Km2	* Inhabitants	1'621'537

## Barcelona From tourist to knowledge resort?

After the regeneration processes that culminated in the 1992 Olympic Games, Barcelona has become renowned internationally for its model of post-industrial urban restructuring. Indeed, the 'Barcelona Model' is often held to be exemplary in repositioning the city in the global economy and balancing the economic outputs with social and cultural cohesion goals. However, the results were mixed.

Economically, the Olympics represented a big branding boost, transformed the city into a top touristic destination and consolidated Barcelona as entrepreneurial city. It is now considered the 4th best European city for business by Cushman Wakefield's. Nevertheless, the economic base of the metropolitan area is sustained by decaying mature manufacturing industries (automotive, textile, pharmaceutical, agro-food), retail, education, and increasingly by the expansion of the tourist industry. Once the economic and cultural capital of Spain, Barcelona has been seriously affected by the rise of Madrid as a global financial, service and cultural centre for the Spanish speaking world.

Socially, it is true that during the Olympic regeneration increased public space and social infrastructure was built. Yet, gentrifica-

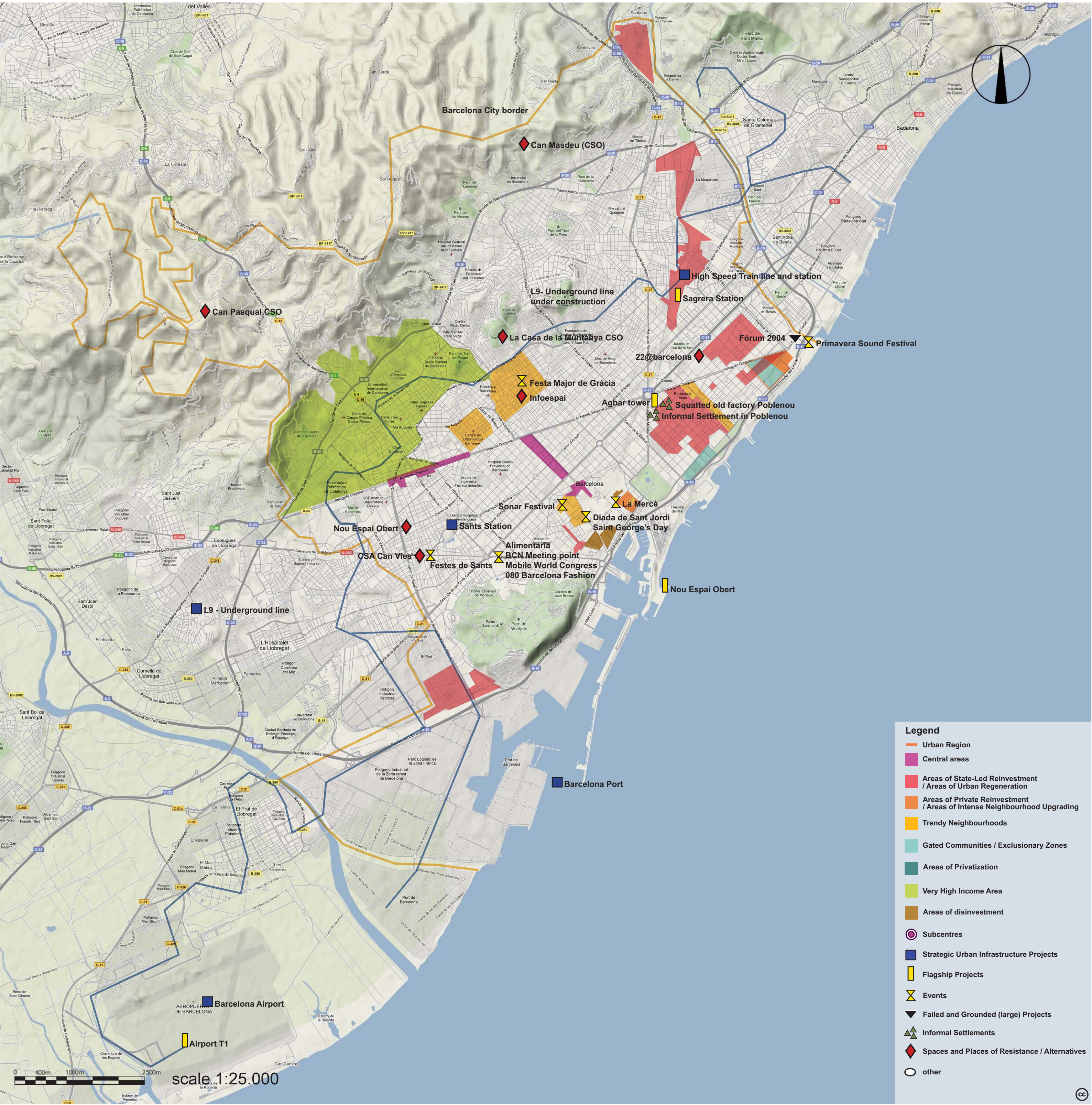
tion and the cost of living in the city increased substantially, meaning worst living conditions for the working class in the city and the expulsion and sprawling of middle classes out of town.

Culturally, Barcelona is now a cosmopolitan city with 16.9% of foreign residents in 2008 (1.9% in 1996), and the cultural offer is wide and vivid, with a relatively big public spending on cultural infrastructure and events. Yet, the effort to become a creative city has gone in hand with the systematic pressure on alternative spaces, cultures and movements in the city, finding resistance and collective action.

To overcome these challenges, Barcelona's aim is to convert the city into a knowledge city supporting ICT, biotech, design, energy, media and aeronautics industries growth. The three main characteristics of this shift are:

A metropolitan scope: based on public-private partnerships involving local authorities, quangos and "civil society" (business associations, trade unions, saving banks, etc).  
A cluster-based district zoning: the crown jewel being the regeneration of the former manufacturing neighbourhood, Poblenou, into the high-tech district 22@.

A focus on talent: putting the accent in the attraction and retention of foreign creative talent by advertising the city as a mix of business/entrepreneurship oriented and a cultural/quality of life place to be, as the ultimate knowledge resort.  
Since the restoration of democracy in Spain, Barcelona city council has been led by centre-left/left coalitions as have been all but one of the metropolitan city councils and, since 2003, the regional government. On the other hand, the strength of urban movements is much lower than during the 1970s francoist resistance, when they achieved important victories. In this sense, the last time when there was a unifying cause of resistance in the city was with the celebration of the Forum of Cultures 2004, a failed event but successful in redeveloping the northern waterfront, breaking the Metropolitan General Plan in favour of gentrification, real state speculation and private space.







# Flagship Project: 22@barcelona

Project	22@
1 <sup>st</sup> Typology	Flagship Project
2 <sup>nd</sup> typologies	Central Business District, Urban Renewal
Dimensions:	3,200,000 m² for productive activity 800,000 m² for housing, facilities and services,
Project Costs	€180,000,000 infrastructure investment alone.
Investors	Various local and regional agencies, public-private partnerships plus private companies
Landmarks	(Jean Nouvel), Media TIC,
Architects	Planning by the city council planning office.



## Description / Reason for this choice / Background

Poblenou ('New Town' in Catalan), also known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as 'The Catalan Manchester', is the former industrial manufacturing area of the city. Its morphology included vibrant working class housing areas with manufacturing factories and alternative cultural centres (in old factories), many of them abandoned. In a highly dense and built city where land for developers is scarce, Poblenou represents the biggest area in the city with space to build and regenerate. For this reason, in 1999, manufacturing zoning (22 in the city nomenclator) in Poblenou became 22@ zoning, devoted to the knowledge economy.

## Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

In the last decade, Barcelona city council has been changing its urban, political, economic and cultural model towards making the city a competitive node of the knowledge-based-economy. If there is a place within the metropolitan area that epitomises this shift, this is Poblenou, a whole neighbourhood that is being transformed into the central space of the knowledge economy and society, as a compact district including mixed business, residential, cultural and higher education zoning.



## Stakeholders and their interests

On the industrial side of the project, 22@ has been led by the public sector and actively promoted by the city council and quangos, universities and other institutional actors with the aim of creating a 'creative' -in R. Florida sense- milieu. On the housing side, though some public housing exists, it has been mostly pursued by local private developers.

## Deals

To increase the attraction of companies into the district, the city council offers firms willing to build (flagship architectural) buildings there the possibility of building more office or housing space per m² than in the rest of the city. Besides, the local and regional governments have worked hard to move big corporations from other parts of the city to Poblenou and locate them in emblematic buildings (Agbar-Suez in Nouvel's Tower; Mediapro in Imagina Tower, etc), moving some public university departments here and locating quangos and municipal economic promotion offices to Poblenou.

## Impacts/Resistances

The project has had a big impact on Poblenou neighbours, who have a strong community spirit. These impacts became clear when the city council allowed the owners of Can Ricart (a big 19<sup>th</sup> century complex that was being used by artist and manufacturing companies) to evict tenants and build offices and luxury apartments. The neighbours actively kept bulldozers out of the property for many years and, after presenting an alternative urbanization plan to the city council, they are currently struggling to avoid Can Ricart becoming just condos or offices.



# Infrastructures: Sagrera Station

Project	High Speed Train station and surroundings.
1 <sup>st</sup> Typology	Infrastructure
2 <sup>nd</sup> typologies	Urban renewal, Flagship project, State-led development.
Purpose:	High Speed Rails and urban regeneration
Dimensions:	End-to-end distance 3.7 km Total surface area 164 Ha Total ceiling for construction 1,248,022 m² (812,000 m² residential; 436,022 m² tertiary sector)
Project Costs	2,250 € without taking into account the building of homes, facilities, businesses, office blocks and hotels.
Investors	"Barcelona Sagrera Alta Velocitat", a private company owned by public institutions (Adif, Renfe Operadora, which represent the indirect participation of the Ministry of Development, Government of Catalonia and the Barcelona City Council).
Landmarks	Train Station, the Bride building, 48Ha park covering the railway lines.
Architects	Various (Frank O. Gehry (The Bride)...



## Description / Reason for this choice / Background

The new intermodal station at La Sagrera will become one of the two main stations in Barcelona, together with Sants Station. The project includes the construction of the High Speed Train line, a smaller station in St. Andreu Condal, train maintenance workshops, the covering of the railways, and the development of the resulting land.



View of the station in 1995.

## Context

La Sagrera is today a dense residential district, framed by its industrial past and by transport infrastructures. Meridiana Av., one of the main entrances to Barcelona, and the railway lines that lead to the north divide the district in two. In the core of La Sagrera, a junction of railways and deadlines and RENFE (Spanish public railway company)'s workshops -some of which semi-abandoned- created a wound within the urban structure. This spot is about to be transformed into one of the new centrality areas.

## Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

The construction boom of the recent years in Spain put an enormous pressure on what was considered the second largest reserve of soil in Barcelona (after Poblenou). The public institutions sought the opportunity to finance a needed infrastructure with the revenues of the land reclassification, since part of the budget was going to be funded by selling publicly-owned land to private promoters. Once the possibility was open, many private companies were interested in more business purposes. In contrast to the airport, though, its location in the middle of the city it also helps to transform a working class neighbourhood in a desirable opportunity for commercial and property investment.

investing in the area. Today, as private investors seem to have vanished, the public promoters will have to finance all the public parts of the project - more than a thousand million euros- and hope that in a not too distant future investors will flow back as the economy, and particularly the construction sector, recovers from the crisis.

This project, alongside the new airport terminal, represents one of the cornerstones of Barcelona's NMM: the need to connect the city internationally for business purposes. In contrast to the airport, though, its location in the middle of the city it also helps to transform a working class neighbourhood in a desirable opportunity for commercial and property investment.

## Deals

Besides the station building, that will be the largest building in the city, the crown jewel of the project was going to be a skyscraper designed by Frank O. Gehry, known as "The Bride" because of its shape (€ 300M). The promoters, Consorci de la Zona Franca (Free-tax Zone Consortium -a public-private partnership), commissioned the building which was largely publicized. In 2010, due to the impossibility of finding investment partners and to the economic recession, the project was abandoned.



## Impacts/Resistances

Although not many resistances have arisen to the project of La Sagrera itself, the neighbours' association FAVB has complaint about the lack of transparency and dialogue of the institutions that lead the project. Many resistances, though, have arisen to the whole project of the High Speed Train crossing the city from one end to the other. The pass of the High Speed Train through La Sagrera means digging a tunnel that will cross the whole city. Opponents claim that a tunnel of such characteristics will be a lot more expensive than other alternatives, and that it will endanger the buildings above it. The tunnel will pass very close to Gaudi's temple of La Sagrada Família, which is the most visited monument in Spain.



# Alternative: The "Hole of shame"

Project z	El forat de la Vergonya - "The hole of Shame" (Officially known as "Pou de la Figuereta").
1 <sup>st</sup> Typology	Urban renewal
2 <sup>nd</sup> typologies	State-led development.
Purpose:	Urban regeneration of a degraded area.
Dimensions:	6000 m²
Project Costs	Budget of 14,600,000€
Investors	Barcelona Council and Generalitat de Catalunya (regional government)



## Description / Reason for this choice / Background

If Barcelona's social and neighbourhood movements were significant in the late years of the Francoist regime, today they are fragmented and disperse. The recruitment of some of the movements' leaders by the first democratic institutions and the improvement of social conditions in the 80s had a scene of relative lack of contest as a result. Yet, these movements never died completely: from the anti-militarist to the anti-globalization and the movements for housing rights, several organisations are active in Barcelona. Within them, the neighbourhood movement has carried on several battles, some with success. A standing out example is the struggle that took place around the Hole of Shame.

## Context

The hole of Shame is located in the district of Ciutat Vella, Barcelona's old town. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the decade of the 1970s most of the district suffered a process of decline and marginalisation. Things only started to change after the first local democratic elections in 1979 when the city council began to make plans to rehabilitate the area. During the first half of the 1980s several *Pla Especial de Reforma Interior* (PERI - Special Plans for Interior Reform) were approved. The PERI consisted of 'surgical interventions' in specific spots, including expropriation of old dwellings for their demolition, eviction of their tenants, and sponged' reurbanisation of the emptied. One of these PERI affected the area of the Hole of Shame.

## Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

Since the late 1970s, and partly as a result of the PERIs, a process of gentrification is going on in some parts of the district while others remain marginalised. The particularity of gentrification in Ciutat Vella is the active role of the city council in facilitating the process. Indeed, if Neil Smith points out as one of the main characteristics of 'third wave' gentrification on the fact of being 'fuelled by a concerted and systematic partnership of public planning with public and private capital', this is what happened in Ciutat Vella right from the beginning (Smith, 2002: 441; see also Hackworth and Smith, 2001).

## Deals/Resistances

The PERI of Pou de la Figuereta (popularly Hole of Shame) was approved in 1985. Due to the long and conflictive process of expropriation and eviction, that caused strong discontent among tenants, the demolition of the three blocks of flats in the area didn't take place until 1998. The original plan of the council was to build a sports centre and an underground car park -that would, in fact, serve the neighbouring and gentrified area of El Born-. But the neighbours weren't pleased with the idea, and organised themselves to reclaim green space, really scarce in the area. Until 2003 the plot of land was left abandoned by the administration, and was squatted by the neighbours, who planted their own garden and built their own children's playground. The Council changed it's mind and opened a "participatory process", but didn't invite the fighting neighbours organisations, and tension reached its maximum in the fall of 2006, when the works began to destroy the neighbours' garden and urbanise the area.



The Hole of Shame before (during the occupation by neighbours) and after the council's rehabilitation.



# Event: Fòrum 2004

Project	Forum 2004
1 <sup>st</sup> Typology	Event
2 <sup>nd</sup> typologies	Failed, Urban renewal
Purpose:	Brand Barcelona & north waterfront regeneration
Dimensions:	341,983 m²
Project Costs	324,000,000 €
Investors	City Council, Hines and other private actors
Landmarks	Convention Centre, Diagonal Mar residential area and shopping mall
Architects	Various, including De Meuron and Herzog,

## Description / Reason for this choice / Background

The Universal Forum of Cultures 2004 was an event intended 'to promote the global consciousness and the exchange of theories, opinions, experiences and feelings around globalisation,' organized around three axes: cultural diversity, sustainable development and conditions for peace. Besides these meaningful objectives, the city's long-term goal was to redevelop the northern part of the waterfront, renamed as Diagonal Mar. The event consisted in an international forum sponsored by UNESCO and co-organised with the regional and central administrations. It was held in a new neighbourhood that, in contrast to the public-private partnership in the construction of the nearby Olympic Village, has been completely privately promoted.



## Context

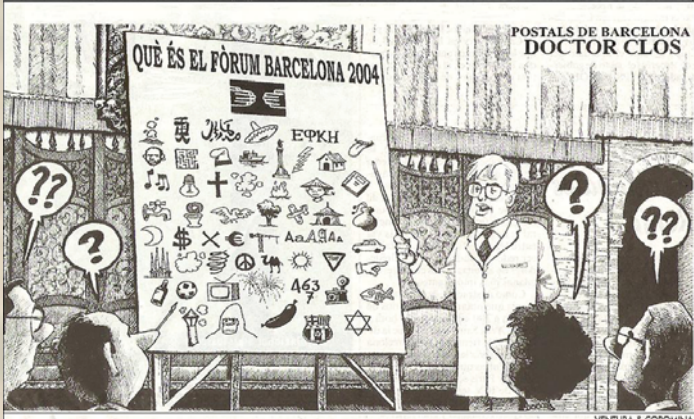
After the success of the Olympic-led regeneration and repositioning of the city internationally, there were still parts of the city underdeveloped or decaying. The city council aimed to keep an event-led regeneration for the northern waterfront.

## Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

The project of redeveloping the northern waterfront through an international event represented a double logic. On the one hand, to keep branding the city by organising international events and creating new touristic spaces. Since the city couldn't opt to a new international fair, cultural capital or anything of the kind, the council invented its own global event. On the other hand, after two decades of public leadership in redeveloping Barcelona, and important portion of the redevelopment was directly led by the private sector, including the first (half failed) attempt to create a gated community in the city, breaking the modernist grid ideated by Cerdà in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, again, and the real estate project kept developing.

## Stakeholders and their interests

Behind the Forum 2004 and its discourses there is a handbook speculative construction of place around working class and marginalised neighbourhoods: convention centre, new access to the sea, expensive apartments, leisure buildings, the biggest shopping centre in the city and a failed relocation of the zoo. Its well-intended aims are only masking a branding promotion of the city and a huge and paradigmatic speculative operation.



The mayor of Barcelona explaining what the Forum2004 would be about.

## Impacts/Resistances

The event itself was a failure. Most citizens did not support the event, conferences and shows were almost empty, it did not have international impact at all, and the clarity and direction of the real estate speculation involved outweighed the theoretically good intentions of the event in promoting peace and sustainability. In terms of resistances, it represented a moment where all groups and movements showed a certain degree of unity and used the event to reclaim the city for the many not the few. Unfortunately, after the event ended, resistances became weak again, and the real estate project kept developing.



# Synthesis:

From 1980s to early 1990s Barcelona built a regeneration model that has been considered a paradigmatic case of successful transformation, with an emphasis on public space and social concerns. This stylized representation of the Olympic-led urban development hides many of its problems, in particular the parallel construction of an entrepreneurial city that occurred simultaneously. Yet, it can be claimed that the path of regeneration during the 1980s was more gentle than the one experimented in other parts of the world, such as Giuliani's Zero Tolerance Policy in New York or the tatcherite measures in Britain, and indeed, a particular model of city.

In spite of this, the events, projects and processes in Barcelona for the last decade have not represented a milder version of neoliberalisation, or a locally led strategic plan. The projects summarised in this poster alongside other similar measures on the metropolitan area have been inspired in and have followed as much as possible the recommendations of urban gurus, international institutions such as the OECD and the planning and architectural patterns seen in many of the other NMM cases. They plan a pro-competitiveness agenda based on the production of knowledge-based-economies: creative districts such as 22@, transports hubs for business men such as Sagrera or empty events to legitimise major redevelopment programmes. Indeed, they are not free from resistances and struggles such the ones briefly commented in these three cases. But some times there are some battles where outcomes are different, like our fourth example, the whole of shame.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that the three mainstream projects described were born during economic expansion times, and particularly in a moment when the Spanish economy was led by a decade long real estate boom and when public and private resources were easily available. Now, Barcelona faces both the economic downturn, which has been strong in Spain, the lack of private borrowing and the heavy public budget cuttings approved by the government. These processes have had an impact on many current projects, with many buildings and initiatives stopped. But, so far, the scale of the projects has diminished but their rationale and goals have not changed.