

Overview of the Government Measure to Promote the Blue Economy in Barcelona 2021-2024



Ajuntament de
Barcelona



Barcelona
Activa

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1. Introduction

Over the past three years, Barcelona has made a strong commitment to promoting the Blue Economy as a strategic pillar for the city's economic, social, and environmental development. The Government Measure to Promote the Blue Economy has established a strategy aimed at boosting competitiveness and job creation, with a focus on sustainability and technological innovation. This measure has helped to develop the Barcelona coastline, harnessing the significant potential of the sea as a driver of economic growth and opportunities for the sector.

The Blue Economy has made a notable impact on GDP generation, contributing 4.3% to the total, and has also played a role in creating quality jobs, which currently account for 1.4% of the city's employment. Barcelona, with its rich maritime heritage, has seen how key sectors like marine research, aquatic-related economic enterprises, and nautical pursuits have become established, contributing to the development of a city intertwined with the sea across all dimensions: economic, urban development, scientific, educational, and sport.

This overview highlights the progress made and underscores the city's commitment to continue leading a sustainable and socially responsible economic model.

2. Overview of the Government Measure to Promote the Blue Economy in Barcelona 2021-2024

In October 2021, Barcelona City Council, through Barcelona Activa, published the **Government Measure to Promote the Blue Economy**, which outlined the strategy to promote Blue Economy sectors in the city and established a roadmap for its implementation through a set of **43 measures and 15 projects**.

The Government Measure to Promote the Blue Economy is aimed at stimulating economic activities related to the Blue Economy by fostering innovation and environmental sustainability; to integrate these activities into the social fabric of the city, covering cultural, leisure, sports, and culinary dimensions; and to promote and increase the visibility of Barcelona's Blue Economy at both local and international levels, showcasing the city's assets and opportunities.

Achievements and upcoming milestones of the Government Measure

In 2024, **three years after the publication of the strategy, a review of the status of the defined measures and projects is being undertaken**, and this report is being drafted to compile the key achievements and upcoming milestones. It also aims to identify new opportunities and needs within the Barcelona Blue Economy ecosystem, enabling its adaptation to new realities and providing a better response to the future challenges that the Blue Economy will face.

Thanks to the collaboration of the entire ecosystem, the Blue Economy is now a reality in Barcelona, and we will continue to support it as a strategic sector for the city.

Below are the **8 pillars of action from the 2021 Measure**, which represent the sectors of the Blue Economy that have been targeted in recent years and in which the 15 projects are grouped:

1. Blue Economy Hub: new hub of economic activity

2. Blue employment and training

3. Innovation and transference in the Blue Economy

4. Development of Blue Economy sectors



5. Connecting the Blue Economy with the city and its citizens

6. Conservation and regeneration of the marine ecosystem

7. Local and international promotion, story and positioning

8. Public-private governance



The report highlights that 95% of the projects and measures launched under Barcelona's Blue Economy strategy are either completed or currently in progress.

✓ 9 completed projects

▶ 6 projects in progress



Pillar 1. Blue Economy Hub: new hub of economic activity

1. New Port Olímpic



2. Blue Economy entrepreneurship programme



Pillar 2. Blue employment and training

3. Study of new jobs related to the Blue Economy



4. Reskilling in the Blue Economy



Pillar 3. Innovation and transference in the Blue Economy

5. Nautical training and technology hub (now the PTMB)



6. InnovaBlue (collaborative innovation programme)



Pillar 4. Development of Blue Economy sectors

7. Collaboration protocol with the Port of Barcelona (APB)



8. Support to investment funds in the Blue Economy and sustainability



Pillar 5. Connecting the Blue Economy with the city and its citizens

9. Barcelona Sea of Science



10. Blue Pavilion



Pillar 6. Conservation and regeneration of the marine ecosystem

11. Barcelona water clean-up plan



12. Sant Martí seafront promenade project



Pillar 7. Local and international promotion, story and positioning

13. Blue Economy Observatory



14. Celebration of an international Blue Economy event



Pillar 8. Public-private governance

15. Public-private Blue Economy Board



3. Current status of the projects



A new hub of economic activity

1. New Port Olímpic

Definition

Since 3 April 2020, Barcelona City Council, through Barcelona de Serveis Municipals (BSM), has been transforming and managing the new Port Olímpic, which is based on four main pillars: integration with the city; becoming a reference point for the Blue Economy; promoting hospitality and nautical businesses with an overarching emphasis on sustainability; and public management.

Achievements

- Completion of the construction of the Recer breakwater and the Moll de Mestral wharf, in which the premises of Blue Economy businesses will be located.

8,121 m2 dedicated to the Blue Economy and sports, of which 50% is already occupied

- Establishment of the first businesses in the Blue Economy premises, totalling 22 companies.
- Port Olímpic is a sports and cultural centre in the city of Barcelona. During the 37th edition of the America's Cup, it hosted the bases for the women's and youth competition teams. In addition, it played a key role in the Cultural Regatta.
- Transformation of the Municipal Sailing Centre.

Future milestones

- Port Olímpic will continue its transformation with the Moll de Marina wharf.

2. Blue Economy entrepreneurship programme

Definition

Creation and implementation of a benchmark programme of excellence for the setting up of businesses in the Blue Economy, thereby becoming a pole of attraction for the city's economy.

Achievements

- October to December 2022

First edition of the programme

**14 projects selected for the boot camp
56 hours of training
70 hours of tutoring and mentoring
11 accelerated projects
9.5/10 overall satisfaction rating**

- June to October 2023

Second edition of the programme

**15 projects selected for the boot camp
56 hours of training
70 hours of tutoring
18 hours of specialisation and networking
12 accelerated projects
8.5/10 overall satisfaction rating**

Future milestones

The entrepreneurship programme (B-Blue) is now part of Barcelona Activa's service portfolio, and new editions are planned:

- Autumn 2024 - Launch of the 3rd edition of the programme, with the acceleration of up to 12 additional projects.





Employment and training

3. Study of new employment opportunities

Definition

Analysis and promotion of the new job opportunities resulting from the Blue Economy in the city, followed by the identification of opportunities in terms of creating quality jobs and workers' upskilling and reskilling needs.

Achievements

- Carrying out of a study on new job opportunities in the Blue Economy by the BCN FP (vocational training) foundation in 2021, with updates in 2022 and 2023.
- Publication of content on professional profiles related to the Blue Economy on the Barcelona Activa Employment website.
- Sessions and workshops presenting job opportunities and networking in the Blue Economy at various editions of the Employment Fair.
- In the context of the America's Cup, development of marketplaces to fill vacancies at the new America's Cup Experience information centre, with a total of **32 job postings**.
- As part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Projects with Hiring Opportunities (PIC), a total of **3 job creation projects** have been carried out in 2024, providing support for organisation of the America's Cup. The contracts for each of the **21 participants in the PIC have a duration of 7 months** and include a training pathway.

Future milestones

- Promotion of specific actions to raise awareness of opportunities in blue economy sectors and offer academic and professional guidance to students in secondary schools, in collaboration with the ecosystem.
- Creation of new content for professional guidance based on studies of sector trends.

4. Reskilling in the Blue Economy

Definition

Specialist sector-specific reskilling in the Blue Economy. The training consists of specialised, short-term courses designed to help individuals find employment in a specific sector, develop their professional potential, and acquire the knowledge and skills most in demand in the Blue Economy.

Achievements

- Design and implementation of professional training courses in the Blue Economy for reskilling and upskilling, taught by training centres / leading experts.
- Support for the Forma't al Port (Train at the Port) project and participation in the YEPMed programme which is focused on international trade in the port sector.

Since 2019: **+ 90 courses**
+ 700 participants
+ 5,000 hours of training

Future milestones

The training offer is now part of Barcelona Activa's service portfolio, and new editions are planned:

- **14 editions** of reskilling training courses, including **6 editions of online training** in the Blue Economy **≈ +600 hours**.
- **2 editions of nautical English courses**
- 345-hour Marina operator course, coordinated between the Port Olímpic, the Nautical Institute and Barcelona Activa.



2020



2020

3. Current status of the projects



Innovation and transfer

5. Barcelona Maritime Technology Park (PTMB)

Definition

The PTMB is a strategic public project related to nautical and maritime engineering that focuses on high value-added activities in research, training, knowledge transfer, and entrepreneurship, addressing the global challenges of the Blue Economy at the city level.

15,600 m2 of unique infrastructures and services that complement other innovation offerings in the city-port sphere, providing

a comprehensive response to the market of agents and sectors, with an estimated investment of €56 million.

Achievements

- 2024 - Final Plan (BIMSA and UPC)
- 2024 - Procedural agreements (Port Authority of Barcelona and Barcelona City Council)
- 2024 - Special Urban Development Plan for Public Facilities (Barcelona City Council).

Future milestones

- Q1 2025 - Comprehensive management and financing agreements (involving all parties).
- Q1 2025 - Tender for the construction.
- Q3 2025 - Start of construction (28 months).
- Q3 2027 - Completion of construction.



6. InnovaBlue

Definition

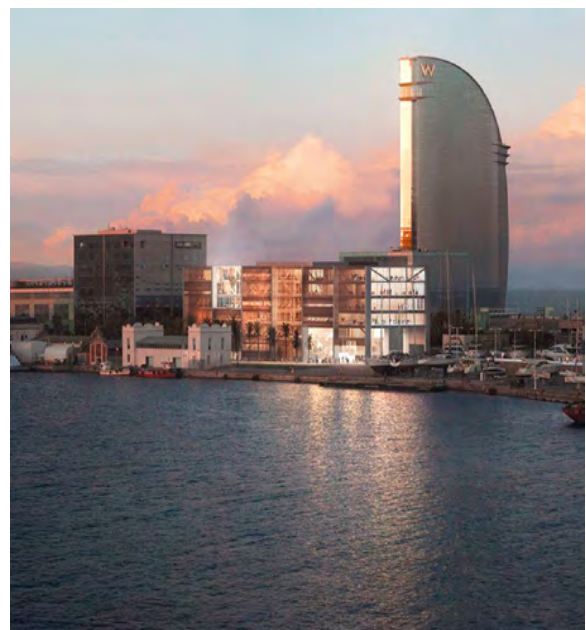
InnovaBlue, aligned with the Barcelona Innovation Coast (BIC) project, has several objectives centred around enhancing Barcelona's blue competitiveness, increasing technology transfer and knowledge in this area, and promoting collaboration among ecosystem stakeholders in terms of innovation.

Achievements

- 2022 - Creation of the innovation methodology, resulting from collaboration between universities and the private sector.
- 2022 - Support for the identification and presentation of the PERTE (Strategic Project for Economic Recovery and Transformation).
- 2023 - PERTE MB92
- 2023 - Identification of potential partners and initial promotion of a candidacy for the KIC Water, Marine, and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystem, planned for 2025 by the Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

Future milestones

- 2024 - Promotion of the KIC Water, Marine, and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystem with the formation of a consortium led by the UPC and coordination of the candidacy materials.





Sector development

7. Protocol with the Port of Barcelona

Definition

Barcelona City Council actively collaborates with the Port Authority of Barcelona (APB) to promote the Blue Economy in the city and actively supports the actions carried out with a view to achieving the SMART (sustainable, multi-modal, agile, resilient and transparent) transformation of the Port of Barcelona, as presented in the **4th Strategic Plan of the Port 2021-2025**.

Achievements

- April 2021 - Collaboration protocol between Barcelona City Council and the Port of Barcelona.
- Close collaboration in promoting the Blue Economy in the city.
- Achievement of the strategic objectives for 2040 to transform Barcelona into the SMARTest Logistics Hub in the Mediterranean.
- 2023 - Collaboration on specific programmes such as: B-Blue, Tomorrow Blue Economy, Blue Economy Observatory.

Future milestones

- 2025 - Collaboration on projects such as KIC Water, Blue Tech Port, and the establishment of a UNESCO DCC centre in Barcelona.

8. Support for investment funds

Definition

Support for private funding initiatives and the creation or attraction of investment funds (venture capital) whose main investment focus is the Blue Economy and sustainability, aimed at promoting innovative companies in Barcelona and preserving the competitiveness of the ecosystem.

Achievements

- Implementation of Barcelona Accelera II (funded with €30 million).
- Specification of new investment funds for the coming years to support new sustainable initiatives with funding needs.

€9.5 million allocated for multisector investment through the Barcelona Deep Tech Fund.

Future milestones

- Monitoring of companies in which investments have been made.
- Collaboration on additional activities with management firms and venture capital entities.
- Exploration of new lines of funding.



Port de Barcelona



3. Current status of the projects



Connection between the city and its citizens

9. Barcelona Sea of Science

Definition

Barcelona Mar de Ciència (Barcelona Sea of Science) is a joint initiative of Barcelona City Council and the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) that establishes a space for knowledge transfer, education, awareness, outreach, and citizen participation concerning the seas and oceans. The goal is to make the research conducted by the teams at the Institute of Marine Sciences (ICM-CSIC) visible and to ensure that the citizens of Barcelona become active participants, transforming marine research into a living heritage of the city, particularly in the neighbourhood of La Barceloneta. Additionally, by promoting knowledge about the ocean and the ecosystem services it provides, the initiative aims to encourage more people to engage in preserving its health and integrity (“One Health”).

Achievements

- Establishment of specific instruments for institutional agreement.
- Definition of specific uses and activities in a functional plan.

Future milestones

- Drafting of the preliminary plan, the final plan, and the construction plan.
- Execution of the necessary works to renovate the space.

10. Blue Pavilion

Definition

The Blue Pavilion project is aimed at developing Barcelona’s waterfront, and creating a large open space for sports, encompassing facilities for beach and water sports, as well as urban areas related to this area (promenades, parks, and other coastal zones designated for sports).

Achievements

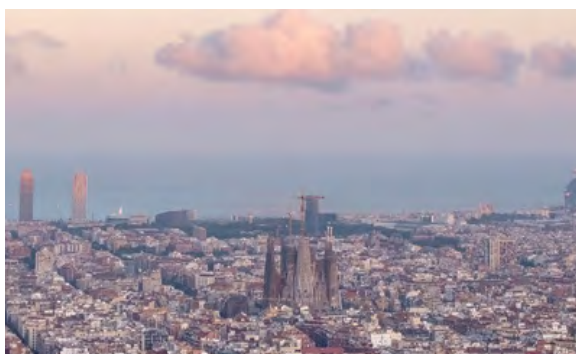
- Definition of **7 flagship projects and 4 priority action areas** —spaces where the transformation will begin, along with a total of 232 specific actions. This is an action plan that will be developed between 2022-2030, and will involve an expected **initial investment of €26.7 million**.
- Progress in defining the marine platform, also intended for sports use.
- Coordination of communication efforts, signage, and promotion of activities at the Blue Pavilion.

The City Council, through B:SM, has invested **€4.2 million in the comprehensive renovation of the Municipal Sailing Centre** to enhance service delivery for members and users.

- Promotion of the Viu la Vela (Experience Sailing) project, taking advantage of the opportunity presented by hosting the America's Cup, which has allowed **7,000 schoolchildren to discover the sport of sailing**.

Future milestones

- Consolidate the success of the results from the actions implemented.





Conservation and regeneration of the ecosystem

11. Barcelona water clean-up plan

Definition

An urban planning instrument with an 80-year plan, designed to address the challenges and future demands of society for a healthy ocean. This is the first sewer and drainage plan that takes into account adapting to climate change, protecting the environment and sustainable maintenance.

Achievements

- Approval of the Special Urban Development Plan (PEU) for underground infrastructure.
- First urgent phase of actions for the expansion, improvement, and commissioning of new infrastructure for the primary sewage network system.
- Installation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).

Future milestones

- Execution of the construction plan.



12. Sant Martí (Nova Mar Bella) seafront promenade

Definition

Transformation of the urban space at Nova Mar Bella (Sant Martí district) into a linear park along the waterfront, extending to the Forum, contributing to the continuity of the landscape and the mobility of people (bicycles and pedestrians) along the entire city coastline. The project aims to improve coastal resilience against the impacts of climate change and seeks to reactivate a coherent model of connection between the city and its coastline.

Achievements

- Final construction project area 1. Central promenade.
- Final construction project area 2. End of Bac de Roda.

Future milestones

- Execution of the works in phases.

Procés participatiu sobre la urbanització del **passeig marítim de la Mar Bella**, entre el CEM La Mar Bella i el Fòrum

Presentem el nou passeig marítim de la Mar Bella



Sessió de presentació de l'avantprojecte. 18.30 h
Sala d'actes del Museu de Ciències Naturals.
Pl. Leonardo da Vinci, 4-5.

26 de maig

Informació i inscripció prèvia:
decidim.barcelona/processes/pgmaritimmarbella




3. Current status of the projects

Local and international promotion, story and positioning



13. Blue Economy Observatory

Definition

Creation of a Blue Economy observatory to define and study a set of indicators that illustrate and define the local situation of the economic sectors that make up the Blue Economy and how these contribute to the city's economy, environmental sustainability and social development, while ensuring coordination and coherence with other Blue Economy observatories in other regions.

Achievements

- 2021. Initial study of the Blue Economy Observatory to define indicators.
- Second data study on indirect and induced effects of the Blue Economy and an update of environmental indicators.
- Promotion of an active working group between Barcelona City Council, the Port of Barcelona, and the UB Chair of Blue Economy to establish a joint observatory.
- Definition of a stable Blue Economy Observatory model in Barcelona to monitor relevant indicators related to environmental, economic, and social aspects, along with the ongoing improvement of these indicators.

Future milestones

- Preparation of an initial highlights report on the current state of Barcelona's Blue Economy, developed in collaboration between the City Council, the Port, and the UB Chair.



14. Hosting an international event

Definition

Study on the feasibility of organising an international event related to the Blue Economy, aimed at showcasing Barcelona's assets, actors, and projects. This event would also serve as an international meeting point for the blue ecosystem, bringing together innovation, financing, and large companies as well as start-ups connected to the Blue Economy.

Achievements

- **Attracting the 37th edition of the America's Cup**, an international sports event, and establishing a Municipal Executive Committee with the **Barcelona Capital Nàutica foundation (FBCN)** to facilitate coordination of the event. Celebration of the 37th edition of the America's Cup from August to October 2024.
- October 2022. Barcelona, **host of the World Ocean Conference (WOC), the Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS), and the Global Blue Finance Summit (BlueFIN)**, all of international significance.
- November 2022. Barcelona, celebration of the **Tomorrow.Blue Economy World Congress**, as part of the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC) at Fira de Barcelona.
- April 2024. Celebration in Barcelona of the **UNESCO UN Ocean Conference**.

Future milestones

- Formal candidacy to host a **permanent UNESCO Blue Economy centre in Barcelona**.
- Establishment of the Tomorrow.BlueEconomy World Congress, scheduled for 5-7 November, 2024, which will include SmartPorts, SOS, and BlueFin over the next three years, facilitated by an agreement between Fira de Barcelona, the City Council, the Port, and the World Ocean Council.





Public-private governance

15. Public-private Blue Economy Board

Definition

The Blue Economy Board serves as the public-private sectoral governance body, representing the main sectors that comprise the Blue Economy in Barcelona. It aims to co-design the city strategy and promote its implementation while also serving as a forum for consultation, debate, and new proposals regarding everything related to the city's Blue Economy strategy.

Achievements

- April 2021. The constitutive session of the public-private Board was held, introducing the concept of the Blue Economy, as well as the mission, vision, and objectives of the city and its blue ecosystem, along with the projects outlined in the Governance Measure.
- October 2021. The Government Measure to Promote the Blue Economy was presented.
- September 2022. The 2nd public-private Blue Economy Board meeting was held with the aim of sharing progress in the implementation of the Governance Measure one year after its publication, defining next steps, gathering feedback, and creating a moment for joint discussion and reflection.
- 2024. Signing of the collaboration protocol between the Government of Catalonia and Barcelona City Council to promote the Blue Economy.

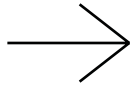
Future milestones

- October 2024. The 3rd public-private Board meeting, held three years after the publication of the Blue Economy strategy and coinciding with the 37th edition of the America's Cup, brought together public and private sector agents and the Blue Economy ecosystem. The aim was to share the progress made in the Blue Economy over the past three years, exchange best practices, explore future opportunities, and outline the next steps to ensure the sustainable development of blue sectors in the coming years.



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4. Key achievements and future projects



Barcelona embraces the sea with a maritime legacy that encompasses all its dimensions: economic, urban development, scientific, educational and sport, among others.

ACHIEVEMENTS, three years after publication of the Government Measure:

Blue infrastructure and international positioning



New Port Olímpic



**37th edition of the
America's Cup**



*Tomorrow.Blue Economy
World Congress* and
agreement with Fira,
Barcelona City Council, Port of
Barcelona, and WOC

95%

projects completed or in progress
Other projects promoting the blue
economy



5,000 h training + 2 studies

23 B-Blue accelerated projects

€9.5 million multi-sector
investment



Blue Pavilion Government
Measure to create a large open
space for sports along the
waterfront.



Participation in **over
110 local and international
events.**

FUTURE PROJECTS:

Blue infrastructure



Maritime Technology Park for
research, innovation, training, and
entrepreneurship



Blue Tech Port to promote
innovation and entrepreneurship



Barcelona Sea of Science to
promote knowledge transfer and
outreach to the general public

International positioning



Candidacy for a
permanent UNESCO Centre
(DCC Blue Economy).

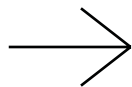


Candidacy for the **KIC Water,**
Marine, and Maritime Sectors and
Ecosystem, for 2025 (EIT)



**Public-private
governance**

5. Media impact



The media impact over the past three years has been very significant:

Barcelona, a global leader in Blue Economy



A growing sector for start-ups



The 37th America's Cup boosts the Blue Economy in Barcelona



UNESCO advocates for the Blue Economy in Barcelona



Investment and effects of the Measure



Maritime environment and infrastructure



barcelonactiva.cat/economiablava

