

Barcelona's Innovation District – 22@Barcelona

Tech & Mobility | 0 |



Barcelona is a city that has invested in innovation over the past few years. However, a lot of this innovation in Barcelona started in 2000. In this year, the city introduced the 22@Barcelona innovation district. The 22@district started as a government initiative to transform the decayed historic cotton district of Sant Marti. The main goal of this government initiative was to transform this neighborhood into a booming knowledge center.

Creation of the 22@District

The development of the 22@district in Barcelona took place in the Sant Marti area. This covered the Poblenou neighborhood. In 2000, this neighborhood was ready for redevelopment, with 200 hectares of privately owned land in close proximity to the city center. In 2010, 10 years after the start of this smart city project the area already had 114,000 m² of new green space, 7,000 companies, businesses, and shops. Impressively enough, half of these moved after the start of the smart city project in 2000. Since 2000, this area experienced a 23% increase in residents. Furthermore, there are currently over 90,000 employees working in this area. The 22@district started as an [innovative smart city project in Barcelona](#) and now serves as a model of innovative urban design and planning for cities around the world.

With the development of the [22@district](#), the local government of Barcelona has been able to create new employment, housing, and live-work spaces. This has been made possible with the use of five knowledge-intensive clusters: Information and Computer Technology (ICT), Media, Bio-Medical, Energy, and Design. The creation of this smart city project was also aimed to bring together the international and local communities with the use of both formal and informal networks. When creating the 22@district, the local government wanted to recognize that international and local human capital is not sufficient for economic growth.

Many researchers have proven that for a city to benefit from highly educated and well-trained members of a community it needs to proactively engage with both local and new international community. Before the creation of the 22@district, the international community lacked a certain level of engagement with the city. Therefore, the 22@district project was also played a key role in the integration of the international community. The foundation of this district was sought to help overcome the challenges presented from the tradition of international firms and business persons. Before, the creation of the 22@district most of them used Barcelona as a "stopping point" on their path to advancement.

22@DISTRICT BARCELONA

The five clusters in the 22@district were strategically placed. The local government ensured that these five clusters were placed close to each other and also near the city center. The choice to have these clusters within a proximity was to create interaction among them. Furthermore, by having these clusters within a proximity of the city center it provides businesses the opportunities to share results on a larger scale.

Furthermore, when creating the 22@district its creators had [more in mind than to just attract international businesses](#). Instead, they also wanted to create an appealing and exciting place to live. This smart city project aimed to create 4,000,000 m² of office, commercial and research space. With this development, the local government wanted to bring life to 35 km of streets in the neighborhood of Poblenou. Within this,

220,000m² was dedicated to the creation of new public facilities, green spaces and residential development including social housing.

The 22@district was a collaboration between both local and international professions. In fact, many internationally renowned architects were invited to help to create a compelling skyline of landmark buildings along the renovated monumental Boulevard. With the Avinguda Diagonal as an urban spine of the district. Furthermore, they have also developed great public spaces in this district. This includes the Parc Diagonal Mar and Parque Central de Poblenou. Both of these public spaces serve as an outdoor “playground” and provide great spaces to congregate.

Furthermore, a fascinating building in this district is the Torre Agbar. The Torre Agbar was created as a mark of the physical and spiritual gate to the innovation district. This building was designed by the French architect Jean Nouvel.

Furthermore, this district in the smart city Barcelona facilitates the economic innovation of the city. This comes due to the fact that they connect technologically advanced companies, universities, training centers and research centers. These create a unique space for innovation and collaboration between all these entities. This ultimately leads to the increase of productivity and talent.

Conclusion

The 22@district in Barcelona was an innovative project during its start in 2000. The innovation in this district has not stopped over the past 17 years. In fact, it is still used as a model of innovative urban design and planning for cities around the world. The 22@district has enabled the connection between the local and international community of the city of Barcelona. This has provided better integration and increase the productivity of both communities. Furthermore, with the implementation of this smart city project, the city of Barcelona was able to provide the international community with more motives to stay in this city.