



CITY PROFILE TERRASSA MARCH 2017





CITY DESCRIPTION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Province: Barcelona

Autonomous region: Catalonia

Country: Spain

Area: 380 km²

Population: 215,400 inhab.

Agglomeration: approx. 400,000 inhab.

Terrassa is, alongside Sabadell, one of the two capitals of the Vallès Occidental area, and the 4th largest city in Catalonia.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mayor: Jordi Ballart

Website: www.terrassa.cat

CONTEXT

The city's development and growth were closely linked to the Industrial Revolution. In the early 20th century, factories in Terrassa innovated in textile production and in adapting traditional processes to modern steam engines. These developments were also connected to technological progress and the building of capacities of local workers, in order to respond to new needs.

Terrassa has an intensive, diverse cultural offer, which comprises all areas of creativity and the arts. The city also holds a wide range of cultural facilities, as well as a strong civil society sector, involved in regular activities, an extensive programme of folk celebrations and a rich cultural heritage, which have become one of the city's defining traits.



TERRASSA'S CULTURAL PROFILE

PUBLIC CULTURAL SERVICES

Within the local government, the City's Cultural Department is in charge of cultural competences. The Department includes eight major areas: visual arts; archives; libraries and reading; performing arts; outreach culture; folk culture; museums; and music.

Terrassa's objectives in the field of culture include ensuring citizens' access to culture, disseminating cultural practices among local inhabitants, collaborating with local cultural organisations and improving social cohesion and quality of life through culture.

CULTURAL STRATEGY

TERRASSA'S CULTURAL WHITE PAPER

The White Paper was an initiative of the Local Council on Culture and the Arts, in order to give visibility to the diversity of local life in the 21st century. The resulting Paper was the product of debates, working groups and a shared will to strengthen the place of culture in the city. To this end, an initial analysis was conducted, as explained hereafter.

DIAGNOSIS: THE CULTURE AND ARTS ROADMAP

In 2010, the Council on Culture launched a process which was meant to identify the city's strengths and weaknesses. This led to a document entitled "Civic Covenant for Culture in Terrassa", which was presented in late 2010 and became a roadmap for the future. The methodology involved research, analysis and interpretation of documents, as well as the collection of views and perspectives from citizens and civil society organisations.

The resulting diagnosis identified ten conclusions:

- **Terrassa, a "culturally mature" city:** the city has good facilities, services and programmes in all areas of cultural life, as well as a strong business sector and active, organised civil society.
- **Culture is a defining aspect in Terrassa, but lacks visibility:** several of Terrassa's strong cultural assets (e.g. jazz, "castells", heritage, audiovisual industry) have not been appropriately structured.
- **Terrassa and its surroundings: a cultural capital?** Terrassa could strengthen the cultural leadership in its regional environment, in a similar way to its role in economic, commercial and educational terms.
- **New facilities, a new landscape:** new cultural facilities (e.g. the City Auditorium and Music School, Teatre Principal, the Library Network, etc.) offer new opportunities.
- **The strength of civil society as a specificity:** NGOs, non-formal groupings and other non-profit organisations contribute to the city's cultural vitality.
- **A strong, independent private sector,** which contributes to wealth and employment generation.
- **There is a need to improve networking among cultural projects.**
- **A challenge lies in contributing to social cohesion through culture.**

- **All citizens, rather than those that live in the city centre only, should be reached by cultural activities.** In this field, the City's Cultural Department has established a specific outreach programme ('Cultura al territori'), which includes initiatives and good practices recognised by other stakeholders.
- **A map of Terrassa's cultural fabric and existing initiatives is still pending.**

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Further to the conclusions, the Routemap included a set of principles, objectives and strategies which are summarised hereafter:

PRINCIPLES	GENERAL OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A city-wide project • Culture as a central element • A comprehensive cultural system • A broad territorial perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a shared vision of culture among all local stakeholders, fostering a culture of partnership. • Making the Local Council on Culture and the Arts (CMCAT) a privileged forum for debate around the city's cultural policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural leadership and external visibility • Cultural connectedness • Culture and social cohesion • Cultural innovation and creativity • Governance

As previously mentioned, the results of the initial diagnosis were essential to enable the Council on Culture and the Arts to elaborate the Cultural White Paper – a process which involved three key moments, a Congress on Culture, a programme of conferences and a set of working groups.

THE CONGRESS ON CULTURE IN TERRASSA

This event involved a series of thematic presentations and debates, both online and offline. The Congress effectively enabled local cultural stakeholders to meet, network and broaden existing connections.

PROGRAMME OF CONFERENCES

Following the intense Congress on Culture, a programme of conferences involved presentations by experts in each of the five thematic strategies identified, who presented their views and experiences. The programme aimed to foster a discussion on the state of the art in each of these key areas of culture.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

The most participative aspect in the process, working groups were established in two phases: firstly, on the five thematic strategies identified; secondly, in seven cultural disciplines or forms: cultural heritage, performing arts, visual arts, folk culture, reading and literature, music, and cultural industries.

All activities provided an opportunity to collect views within the city's cultural sector: strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. Discussions also addressed the impact of the crisis on the cultural sector, the role of civil society actors in the city and the challenges brought about by digitisation.

A major conclusion of the process was the need to face the risks of increased exclusion and pessimism, in a context of crisis. Culture was seen to hold substantial potential to enable this.



CONTACTS

For additional information about this exercise, please contact:



City of Terrassa

City Council of Terrassa – Servei de Cultura: cultura@terrassa.cat

Web: www.terrassa.cat/cultura



United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) - Committee on Culture

Email: info@agenda21culture.net

Web: www.agenda21culture.net