

# PROMOTING HEALTHIER CITIES, TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE PROVINCE OF BARCELONA



Urban environment and health



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**HEALTHY CITY DESIGN INTERNATIONAL**  
RESEARCH • POLICY • PRACTICE

## Abstract

The project is based on the inclusion of health as a decision axis of urban policies. The overall objectives of the project are consistent with the objectives established in the WHO strategy in planning and urban design. One of the first results of the project is the creation of an online guide with contains recommendations, collection of good practices, bibliography and regulations. This guide has already encouraged the inclusion of the health point of view in the development of some urban projects: the health impact assessment of urban planning (Vic and Olesa municipalities), the use of the HEAT tool (WHO) in the public space design (Collbató municipality), and some guides and manuals to manage both urban green and public spaces.

## Introduction

There is solid scientific evidence of the relationship between our health and the environment in which we live and work. Under this evidence, it is important to generate synergies between the different areas of political action to promote healthy urban environments and thus contribute to improving the health of the population.

Keeping in mind the impact on the health of the design of any element of our cities and is the clearest example of the strategy "health in all policies".

The project "Urban Environment and Health", started in 2010, is a cross-cutting project carried out in the Barcelona Provincial Council, in which more than 50 professionals from different academic disciplines and diverse fields are involved.

The crosscutting development of the project made him deserving of the prize "EPSA 2015 Cross-Cutting Award Winner".

## Creating tools, guides, performing studies

**The Urban Environment and Health guide**  
The guide is an online product whose purpose is to create urban environments that encourage citizens to live healthily and that minimize the environmental factors that could give rise to health risks for the people who live in them. It is a cross-cutting, multidisciplinary project sponsored by Barcelona Provincial Council.

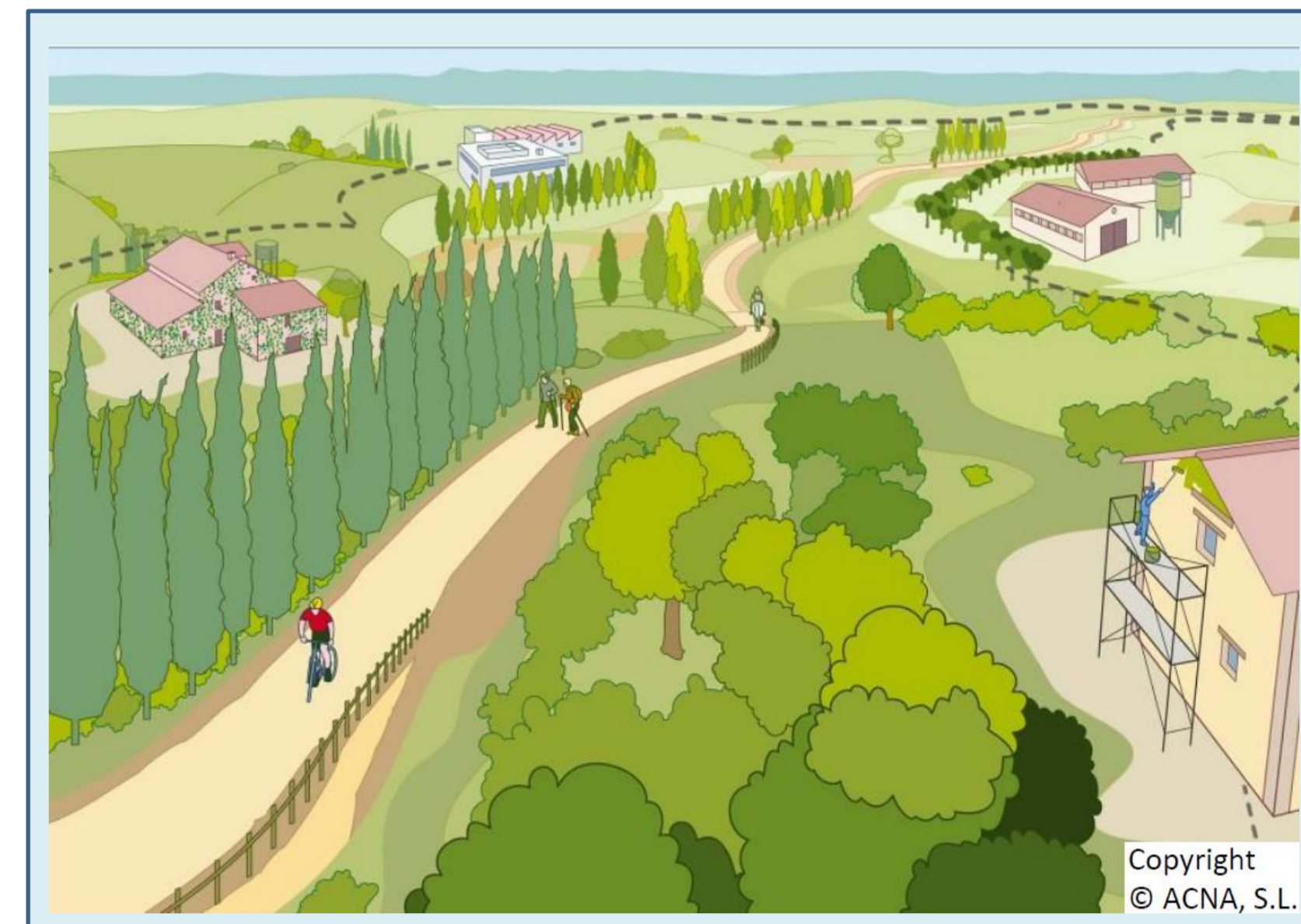
*"The health of individuals, the health of towns, and the health of the planet are indissolubly linked"*  
(Hugh Barton 2010)

Areas of action | Guided search

- Frequently asked questions (FAQ)
- Questions answered by each file
- List of files included in the guide

Resource center website: a web online guide with recommendations developed in 78 worksheets. It contains good practices, bibliography, laws and regulations. (1970 visits per month)

<https://www.diba.cat/en/web/entorn-urba-i-salut/guia-online>



Study to identify both sports & leisure pathways for everyone at Barcelona Province and identify the design features of paths to make use of them for all citizens (1,316.72 Km identified)



Guide to carry out urban green masterplans, as a tool to improve the quality of life of citizens, and as a tool for adaptation and fight against climate change

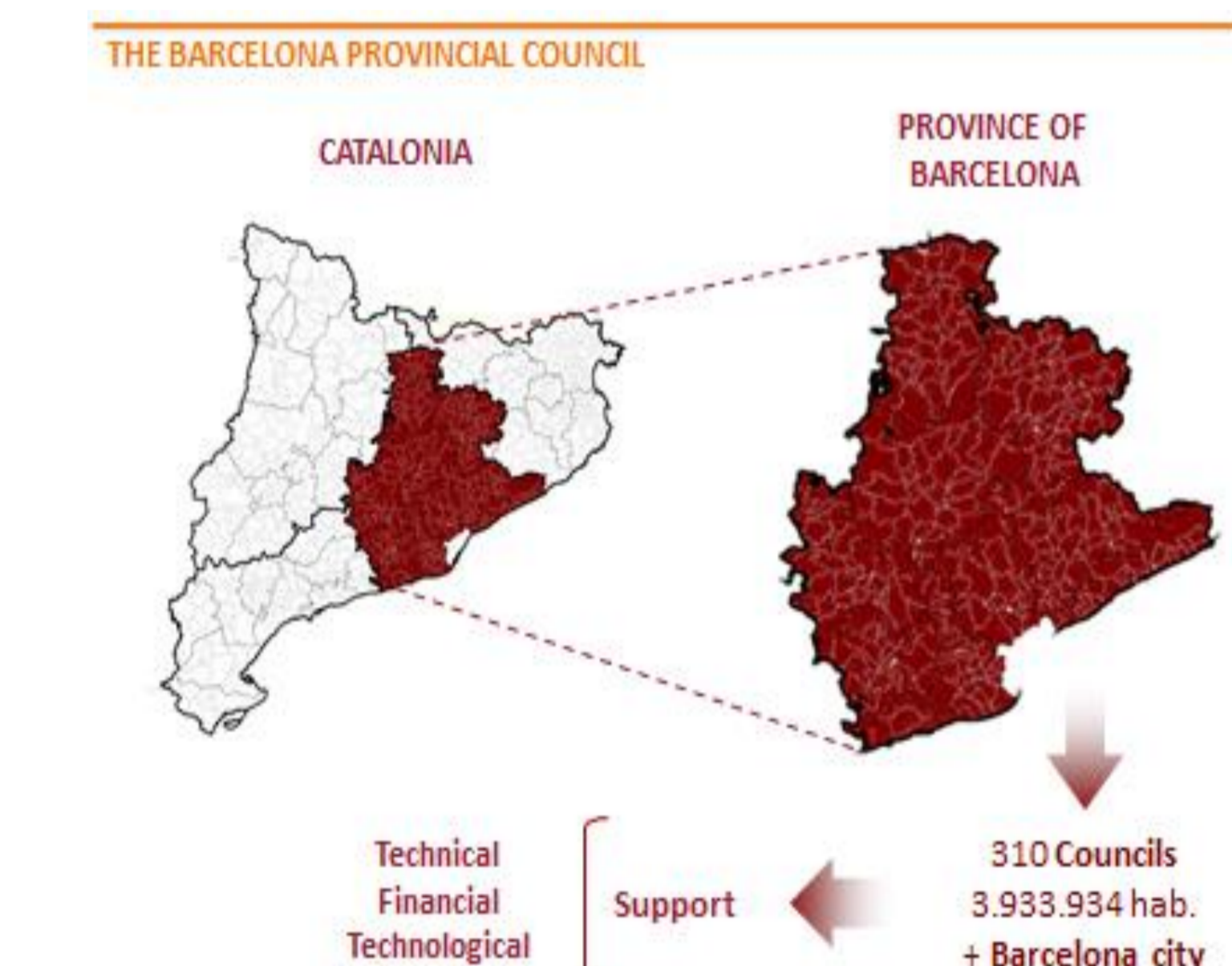
Determinante específico de salud	Categoría de determinante de la salud	Población impactada	Capacidad de medición	Impactos en salud		Área geográfica impactada	Opción de acción				
				Grado de sensibilidad (nivel de evidencia)	Temporalidad del impacto						
Propuestas del espacio del espacio público	Accesibilidad al Pábul Vall	Problemas de acceso, accesos, limitaciones, espacios libres de estacionamiento, accesibilidad, uso mixto de usos	Actividad y bienestar del proyecto que promueve el caminar (comercios, parques, domos, etc.)	Positivos: efectos beneficiosos	Negativos: efectos adversos	Calculable (CA), Probable (PO), Especulativa (ES)	Definitivo (D), Probable (PO), Especulativa (ES)	Grupos de edad: niños, jóvenes, adultos, ancianos, discapacitados, etc.	Corta y largo plazo	Cataluña, zonas metropolitanas, región	Intervención directa
Actividad física	Incremento	Comportamiento/ Estilo de vida	Operación	Toda la población		Calculable (CA)	D	Toda la población	Corta y largo plazo	Barris	Barris
Tasa de empleo	Incremento	Andamiaje económico	Operación	Población activa (18-65 años), ambos sexes, nivel educativo no especificado / No se especifica si la población local o no		Calculable (CA)	PO	Población activa (18-65 años), ambos sexes, nivel educativo no especificado / No se especifica si la población local o no	Largo plazo	Barris	Barris
Red de servicios comunitarios para personas y ciudades	Incremento	Comportamiento/ Estilo de vida	Operación	Toda la población		Calculable (CA)	D	Toda la población	Corta y largo plazo	Barris	Barris
Mejora de acceso a la zona industrial de la Póbul de la Llençosa C-55 / C-58D	Actividad física	Dimensión	Comportamiento/ Estilo de vida	Operación	Trabajadores de la zona industrial	Calculable (CA)	D	Trabajadores de la zona industrial	Corta y largo plazo	Barris	Barris
Seguridad vial	Incremento	Andamiaje físico	Operación	Trabajadores de la zona industrial		Calculable (CA)	D	Trabajadores de la zona industrial	Corta y largo plazo	Barris	Barris

Urban planning Health Impact Assessment tool was used to make an estimate of the impact on health and help in the decision-making process. This HIA evaluation analysis was done previously to the Súria city municipality Urban Planning design approval.



Guide to active temporary uses of vacant spaces  
<https://www.diba.cat/en/web/espais-buits>

**Green spaces online web**  
<https://verd-urba.diba.cat>  
2 handbooks to manage green spaces and 1 handbook to active public spaces were performed



## Aims

The project promotes environments that encourage the population to live in a healthy way, and minimizes those factors that can pose a health risk. It has three basic objectives:

- Draw up proposals and recommendations to incorporate the health perspective into the design and management of the different elements that make up the urban environment.
- Promote improvement processes in municipalities to build healthier environments and cities.
- Compile and disseminate good practices in urban planning and healthy architecture at the local level.

Think tank provides sectorial departments with new tools and strategies

Pilot projects prove to be viable

Involved departments incorporate them into the products that they offer to local entities

**22 Urban green masterplans** (12 more in progress) total budget: 400,000 €

**11 Active temporary uses of vacant spaces**, (4 more projects in progress) 617,000 € given to the municipalities

**81 vacant spaces 17 sports & leisure pathways** programs to arrange since 2017, with a total budget of 145,325 € (14 more in progress)

Methodology and obtained results.

## Pilot Projects, Training, Disseminating

### Performing pilot projects:

- Implementation of the WHO Health Assessment Toolkit (HEAT) in the public space plan in one of the municipalities.
- Sports & leisure pathways program at 9 regions.
- 1.000 path project in Osona region, to promote active population.
- Active temporary uses of vacant spaces in urban continuity projects and works.
- Pilot project "connecting Urban City center with natural spaces" at 4 municipalities.
- 3 urban masterplans in a small and medium town using the Urban Planning Health Impact Assessment Tool.
- Elaboration of a methodology and indicators to measure the impact on health of actions established in the general urban planning.

**Training:** 500 politicians and technicians have received training during the years 2011 to 2017, new courses are ongoing on October 2018.

**Disseminating:** 8 presentations outreach program were performed, locally and internationally.

## Conclusions

- Health and quality of life are closely linked to the environment in which people live and work. The improvement of urban environments is aligned with ODS 3 and 11.



- The Barcelona Provincial Council provides support and tools to the city councils of the province to promote healthier cities and towns.
- It is necessary to strengthen the cross-cutting work and the commitment of the different fields of work and disciplines in the improvement of health and quality of life.
- The main impact we seek is to change our way of planning cities incorporating the health perspective and getting healthier cities. We managed to place Urban Health in the political Agenda and as one of the objectives of public policies. "Bringing back people at the center".