Biblioteques de Barcelona

BARCELONA LIBRARIES PROJECT 1998-2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Barcelona Libraries Project 1998-2010:
a proposal with potential

1   Targets

An analysis of the situation prior to the Barcelona Libraries Project 1998-2010 revealed the need for:

- A change in the distribution of duties in a competitive environment as regards cultural offer, traditionally split between the public and private sectors

- The need for new, multiple and flexible forms of citizenship and identity within an increasingly globalised economy of information, communication and culture. This is the threshold from which we are able to call up our cultural diversity as part of the productive diversity required to create a mature society and economy

- The way to access the new economy of knowledge, made possible particularly by the mergers of computer technology and the computing industry, radiodiffusion and telecommunications using new wide band services and important changes in the post-industrial economy of cultural services

In order to become a dynamic part of this infrastructure and to consolidate and top their position, libraries must undertake to:

- Reinvent the strategic position of early nineteenth century public libraries, whilst being aware that the parameters of their activity must change to adapt to modern times. They must adopt the role of leader and guide in the search for and understanding of data, information, images, icons and symbols

- Grasp changes in the needs and expectations of real and potential users in the early stages

- Enter the economy of knowledge on a local and international scale; this is understood to be financial activity centred around knowledge generated by the sectors of art, culture and education. Employment in these sectors has recently grown significantly

- Get to grips with the cultural market and define their involvement in the cultural offer

2   Legal framework and scope

The Library System of Catalonia Act[1] attributes the responsibility of public libraries to the towns, and the Public Library support services to the Department of Culture of the Generalitat of Catalonia and the provincial *diputacions* (provincial administrative bodies).

2.1.   *Generalitat of Catalonia*

Department of Culture. National Services

- Issue legislation regulating the various aspects of Public Libraries

- Supervise compliance with the Library legislation and the standards that originate from it

- Create and maintain the Map of Public Libraries

- Follow up and supervise the application of guidelines for the Map of Public Libraries

- Make use of national support services for Public Libraries

- Advise on and collaborate with the purchase of book stocks

- Coordinate and manage the collective catalogue of Public Libraries

- Carry out library research, continuous staff training and retraining

- Promote libraries and encourage Public Reading

- Set up an assistance scheme each year to equip libraries with infrastructures, construct new ones and renew and expand existing ones

---

[1] Act 4 (18 March 1993) on the Library System in Catalonia, approved by the Parliament of Catalonia.

Department of Culture. Regional Services

In the area of Regional Services, the Department of Culture of the Generalitat shall undertake to:

- Facilitate selective archive and bibliographical information

- Coordinate interlibrary lending

- Equip the lending support book stock

- Process surplus or duplicate funds

- Redistribute funds

2.2 Diputació of Barcelona

The Diputació of Barcelona shall undertake to:

- Obtain the foundational resources of libraries that are to be newly created or constructed.

- Obtain resources for the conservation of basic collections

- Perform centralised cataloguing of the material available

- Create the collective catalogue of Public Libraries

- Provide libraries with computer facilities

- Provide libraries with technical support

2.3 Barcelona Town hall

Barcelona Town hall shall undertake to:

- Create, regulate and organise the Public Library Network.

- Coordinate and run the Network: targets, growth, models, opening hours, services, conditions and access to libraries

- Build district and local libraries, furnish these and make provisions for the maintenance of these facilities

- Study the situation of each service in line with the targets that have been set

- Set up and coordinate the Network communication policy

- Complete the archive collection

- Appoint and hire staff

- Create the conditions required for the library to operate in coordination with the rest of the

  Public Library System

- Promote pilot schemes to optimise services and introduce new concepts

- Promote reading campaigns

- Provide staff with technical and managerial training

- Make a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the level of user satisfaction and services on

  a regular basis

- Create and determine the make-up and operating system of the Public Library Commission

3 Standards

Standards to be attained by local and district libraries

		Local library		District library.	
Archive collection		**Initial**	**Final**	**Initial**	**Final**
Bibliographical	General	8,400	20,000	30,500	75.000
(volumes)	Child (25%)	2,800	5,600	10,200	20.400
Reference (titles)		500	1,000	1,300	2,600
Periodical publications (titles)		60	60	140	140
Audiovisuals (archives)		800	1,600	3,000	6,000
Annual purchases (vol. 10%)					
Premises (m^2)					
	Hall	15-30		110-150	
	Multi-purpose room	50-60		150-200	
Areas of	General area -Lending	200-270		930-1.450	
public use	-Reference				
	Magazines/Audiovisuals	90-100		250-400	
	Children's area	90-120		300-360	
	Office	15-20		40-100	
Internal staff	Storeroom	30-40		150-230	
areas	Staff room	10-10		30-35	
	Car park			40-75	
Programme surface		**500-650** m^2		**2,000-3,000** m^2	
	Cleaning cupboard/Facilities	"The constructed surface is the result of adding 30% onto the programme surface for logistic and constructive areas"			
Logistic	Circulation				
areas	Toilets				
Constructed surface (30% log. and cons.)		**650-845** m^2		**2,600-3,900** m^2	
Furniture					
	General area	30-40		115-145	
Reading	Children's area	20-25		65-75	
audiovisual,	Magazines -Table	4-4		15-20	
and catalogue	-Informal	8-10		20-25	
query	Audiovisual	6-8		20-25	
points	PC-general	6-8		15-20	
	PC-CD-ROM	1-2		5-9	
	Multi-purpose room	35-45		115-150	
Shelving -33 bk. x m^2		395-760		2.120-2.725	
Display cabinet CD-225 CD/module 60 x 90 cm		5-7		17-25	
Staff					
	Librarians	1-2		6	
Type	Assistants	3-4		9	
	Assistant librarians/other	1-2		3	
Opening hours (in hours)		30-40		45-60	

Permanent library (2 district libraries, one of which is the Provincial Library)		60-84 hours
Volumes per inhabitant of the city of Barcelona	**0.75 vol. / inhab.**	

4 The new public library model

4.1 A new concept

The traditional idea of libraries as the exclusive territory of students or a warehouse of books on countless subjects must give way to a new type of public library, open to everybody, with technological support to assist the democratisation and circulation of information, the transmission of knowledge, academic education, continuous education, auto-information and leisure.

If libraries are to continue to play an important role in social development, firstly, they must exist, and secondly, they must be receptive to changes in the environment and anticipate needs in the following way:

- They need to allow the passage of **information into knowledge** with their added value services
- They must be thought of as **local, public social centres**
- They must be **dynamic, motivating and invigorating**
- They need to be set up as cultural references within the territory, incorporating **new services,** such as providing information points on resources and activities, adding impetus to complementary cultural activities and organising reading campaigns, both outside libraries and in the buildings themselves. In addition to their traditional services, libraries need to provide more contemporary ones: self-learning equipment, user training in a range of areas…
- They need to have a **good knowledge of the environment** and provide solutions for the particular needs of that environment

- They need **to focus on users**, their likes and dislikes and their customs. This adaptation will affect library space and services as well as the type of book stock, its quality and library opening hours

- **Infrastructures must be adapted**, with up-to-date archive collections and computer connections to allow access to the technologies of information and communication

- **Communication strategies** are required and cultural marketing techniques must be used to promote the services available and to connect with potential users (professional people, companies, the retired, the unemployed, housewives...)

- They need to be **integrated and coordinated, and they must work with other institutions and facilities** operating in their area of influence to economise on effort and globalise activity.

4.2   New functions

As the stepping stone to subject matter, libraries need to redefine their functions.

Libraries and education

- Libraries need to promote other forms of literacy, such as computer literacy, to both adults and young people

- They need to form part of the creative and educational infrastructure

- They must be considered as part of the country's institutions of education and training

- Libraries and librarians are not only points of access to local culture; libraries now offer access to the whole world using the Internet. We can emphasize what is local by what is worldwide, and vice versa

- Libraries can operate more democratically with more of a training emphasis by holding more forums and promoting discussion, debates and information exchange, in contrast to the negative point of view that considers the information superhighway to be dominated by the

world's economic powers. Libraries have a task to undertake, a duty to perform, ensuring that

all that is considered to be local is well represented

Towards the new types of living and identity

Libraries stockpile the sources of identity of a community or country. They contain the information we need to understand our past and the resources we require to make plans for the future. They are points of understanding and exchange between the cultures of yesterday and today; between "majority" cultures and those seen as minority or marginal cultures; between sectors of public and private activity.

Libraries and librarians can make us aware of our resources as a population and show us how to use them without prejudice or limiting commercial constraints. Free informative networks are required between institutions.

Libraries and the society of leisure

Books are in no danger of disappearing but it is very likely that the consumer's relationship with books will be dependent on secondary services offered by new the technologies of information and communication.

Libraries and cultural industries

Libraries have a special role to play as a cultural institution because of their ability, capacity and distribution network, but also because, unlike any other public or private organisation, they carry the product directly to the user as:

- Source and supply of subject matter and incubator of new products

- Catalogue and classifying agency

- Distributor

- A place for consumption and stimulation of demand

Library "competitors"

Libraries are at a disadvantage in their current scope of action and position with regards other public and private agents who participate in the same sectors.

Competitors of libraries are all those agencies that are active in the industries of culture and subject matter: from parallel institutions with public funds such as museums and art galleries, which, in a multimedia world, could win customers from the monomedia library, to commercial suppliers.

Thus, competitors with public funds are museums, art galleries, universities and others, while commercial competitors include the mass media, research agencies and those offering business services, bookshops, record shops, video clubs, multimedia creators, games arcades and others.
One strategy for libraries is to consolidate their important role as an agent, investigating possible strategic alliances, instead of establishing direct competition.

How to become a key component of the creative infrastructure
Libraries need to persuade the community that they are essential components of the creative infrastructure.
They will need to do this by:

- Positioning themselves securely as agents

- Setting a series of agreed targets, as a priority matter, for training in the Internet, multimedia services and wide band, etc.

- Working with other cultural organisations in the public and private sectors to create a capacity for multimedia and supply of subject matter

- Participating actively in leading organisations dealing with the policy and planning of information services and setting up multimedia

Libraries and businesses
        The makeover of the library service cannot leave out financial agents. Libraries and businesses have complementary productive functions. For business, libraries are possible:

- Suppliers of subject matter

- Suppliers of tools for organisation, research and data analysis

- Suppliers of means to put data into context

- Suppliers of information on the circumstances of the market

If libraries can meet the needs of ordinary readers, they can easily meet the demands of a business without adding any extra weight to the traditional role of the library. If these services are performed in exchange for payment, this could also provide a source of funds to finance them.

This idea would allow libraries to respond strategically and automatically to the needs of small businesses thus earning them support in the business world which they do not currently have.

In this area, libraries can offer:

- Specialised data bases

- Knowledge of industry and products

- Business information for clients and competition

- Industrial data such as trends and forecasts

- Market data

- Territorial information

- Administrative techniques

- Legislation

- Specialised information cuttings

4.3 New services

The library service must **reinvent its traditional mission in this context and embrace certain principles**, such as:

The challenge to move on from a monomedia past to a multimedia present and future to provide a better service to potential and real users, thus winning support

The principle of responding to user needs by making them aware of their role in the design of the public library model

It is a very simple matter: we need to be aware of the needs, interests and expectations of users and respond to these if we are to provide the service required by the population.

Towards the end of this century, most private homes and workplaces will have access to wide band digital networks.

Libraries have to move on from considering information technology as an administrative system if they are to occupy a position where the new technologies of communication become the basis of service and interrelation with the user.

In this context, libraries are rediscovering themselves to take on new roles. They are, therefore, in a good position to:

- Become the **supplier** of traditional services, versions with new formats and traditional services with a different set-up, such as reference collection networks for users, author and topic searches, commercial research services, etc.

- Become a **browser** of the new horizons of the economy of knowledge. Provide the population with all the information that new technology has to offer. Thus, libraries clearly have a fundamental role

- Become the **agent** of sources of innovation. Libraries could help local authors to carry out their primary research; put them in contact with a publisher; help them to self-publish and allow them to try out their product in a reading session or a library presentation. Clearly, in this case, the library acts as an agent. However, instead of an author, this person could be a user wanting to create a new computer programme or a new 3-D model. They are also considered to be authors because they are, in fact, key examples of a living industry in the process of development. Users become authors

Since libraries now have a new role as cultural references of the territory, each library, bearing in mind the type and size, must offer the following **services**:

- General and local information service made up of the libraries own book stocks and external stocks that can be accessed using the catalogue and other telematic systems

- Areas of reception, information and delivery of informative material: leaflets, brochures, etc.

- Service for reference and archive collection reading on any support, for both adults and children, to meet information, training and leisure needs:

  - specialised archive collections

  - periodical publications

  - Internet connections

  - CD-ROM

  - compact disks

  - other

- Lending service for library archive material

- Interlibrary lending service

- Door-to-door lending service

- Lending service for private and public institutions

- Specific services for children and beginners

- Specific services for disabled groups

- Specific services for diverse cultural groups

- Specific services for businesses

- Selective information service and specialised archive collection

- Computer applications service: computer facilities for users needing to produce material

- Audio and viewing service

- User training service. The specific needs of different types of user shall be taken into consideration, with a special emphasis on schools

- Telematic support advisory service and help for beginners

- Information service, with advice and assistance on getting to know the centre

- Made-to-measure advice service

- Self-learning support service

- Work group support service

- Mobile and external services to cover the service in ill-equipped or poorly communicated areas

- Reading promotion activities: story-telling, book presentations and signings, dramatised readings, musical auditions, etc.

- Cafeteria and cloakroom service

- Public telephone, fax, photocopier and other copying methods

Agreements will be made with other libraries in the city to enable public library users to access their book stocks.

4.4 Typology

The Barcelona libraries project 1998-2010: Libraries in the twenty-first century, aims to equip each district with a central library and local libraries. The number of the latter will vary according to population density and accessibility.

Types of library

Type of library	Programme surface (m^2)	Archives (volumes)	Opening hours (hours per week)
Local Library	500-650	20,000	30 - 40
District library	2,000-3,000	75,000	45 - 60
Central Metropolitan Library	15,000	600,000	60-84

Distribution of opening hours according to library type

Type of library	Hours	Hourly distribution
Local Library	30 hrs	5 afternoons (5.25 hours from Monday to Friday)
		2 mornings, including Saturday (4 hours)
	40 hrs	5 afternoons (5.25 hours from Monday to Friday)
		3-4 mornings, including Saturday (3.3 to 4.15 hours)
District library	45 hrs	5 afternoons (5.25 hours from Monday to Friday)
		3-4 mornings, including Saturday (3.3 to 4.15 hours)
	60 hrs	Monday to Saturday (10 hours)
Permanent Library	60 hrs	Monday to Saturday (10 hours)
	84 hrs	Monday to Sunday (12 hours)

4.5 Infrastructures and facilities

Buildings

Considering that many libraries forming part of the public network have yet to be built, that some facilities need updating for the new plan and that the city of Barcelona has limited building space, we need to take a realistic view of the infrastructures.

The features of the buildings that are to house the public network of libraries will depend on the type of library (town centre, district, local), the study of the local situation where it is to be located and the space available in each district.

Public library buildings must be attractive, welcoming and flexible places to respond to the needs of a very diverse public They need to reflect the new concept of a library as a cultural reference of the territory and, although they must have minimum common services, they must reflect the needs and special nature of the area or district where they are based.

These buildings must be thought of as flexible spaces with easy access and prospects for growth. They need to have distinct areas for different services and these should be organised and indicated in

a way that makes them easy to use. They should also boast safety conditions and a level of comfort that invites users to return again and again.

The useful internal space of a library should be divided into two appropriately signposted areas. The size and features of each of these areas will depend on the number of inhabitants who will use the equipment. To ensure that services run smoothly, the library will ideally be structured into these areas: circulation area, user area and internal staff area

Equipment

Libraries must introduce and manage new technologies, as schools, but not simply by equipping centres with computers; they also need to advance their entry into information networks by promoting exchanges, encouraging the production of their own material and helping to separate and process existing information. Libraries need to become absolute centres of local information and must not only provide access to an area of information, but also process it and work with it to make it digestible.

The computerization of libraries involves:

- Finishing the computerization of the archive collection catalogue in the libraries of the Network

- Providing Office applications, computers with word processor, spread sheet and data processing applications for public and internal library use

- Permitting access to the book stock of the Library Network from both this equipment and other cultural and/or sports equipment or using the Internet

- Offering multimedia: introducing new technological supports such as video, music CD, CD-ROM, etc. that allow access to an area of information unavailable on hard copy

- Access to the Internet and e-mail as a way of accessing a host of information, such as forums for debate and as a cultural instrument of creation

Computing Equipment[2]

Local library ($600m^2$)

---

[2] See table 7.18. Barcelona Libraries Project 1998-2010: basic standards of computing equipment. Diputació of Barcelona January 1998.

- General: 6-10 PCs, 3-4 optical scanner, 1 card printer and 1 list printer

- CD-ROM: 2 PCs, 2 CD-ROM readers, 1 CD-ROM tower and 1 shared printer

District library

- General: 18-27 PCs, 8-14 optical scanners, 1 card printer and 1 list printer

- CD-ROM: 9 PCs, 9 CD-ROM readers, 1 CD-ROM tower and 2 shared printers

4.6   Opening hours

The Barcelona Libraries Project 1998-2010 establishes an increase in opening hours with two schedule types: minimum opening hours and optimal opening hours for local and district libraries and two permanent libraries (Born and one of the district libraries).

Local Library

> Minimum hours: 30 hours
> Optimal hours: 40 hours

- District library

> Minimum hours: 45 hours
> Optimal hours: 60 hours

- Permanent library

> Minimum hours: 60 hours
> Optimal hours: 84 hours

4.7   Human resources

A new generation of equipment requires a generation of professionals with social skills and an ability to, on the one hand, generate interaction and dialogue with other public culture services in the area (civic centres, educational services, culture expansion schemes…), and on the other, with the ability to set up a new relationship of forces with other agents of social initiatives, the private culture sector, etc., with a greater inclination towards complementing rather than competing.

The professional profiles required to guarantee the new direction of libraries must consider the tasks of management and organisation of equipment and people who work at the library, specific technical tasks in library sciences and the tasks of information and customised user attention. Thus, the basic functions required to guarantee the operation of this equipment are: manager, library technician, assistant technician and support staff. Some of these functions could be carried out by the same person, depending on the size and amount of equipment in the library.

Type of library	Hours	Manager	Qualified librarian	Assistant librarian	Support staff
Local Library	30 hrs		1	3	1
	40 hrs		2	4	2
District library	45 hrs	1	3	6	2
	60 hrs	1	5	9	3
Permanent Library	84 hrs	1	7	13	3

4.8 User Profile

Ideally, for more precise knowledge of the needs of library users in Barcelona, a complete and exhaustive study should be carried out on the profile of current users of the libraries in Barcelona, which should also include the opinion of non-users. The big challenge is to adapt to the diverse needs of beginners, adolescents, adults and elderly people.

The Public Library Commission

This organisation is regulated by legislation[3] and has the following functions:

- Collaborate with the central library in the fulfilment of its duties

- Analyse the need for facilities or services in the respective district or town

- Schedule activities to promote and encourage the use of libraries

- Coordinate the activities of public libraries and schools

---

[3]Act 4 (18 March 1993), on the Library System in Catalonia, approved by the Parliament of Catalonia.

- Carry out any other function assigned by the Town hall

As the legislation indicates, any town with a town centre library may have a Public Library Commission.

The role of the Public Library Commission, defined as a *senate* that assists and advises the Mayor or Mayoress of Barcelona, is to support the different agents associated with reading.

The Town hall is responsible for the make-up and operation of the Commission. The idea is for this organisation to include a number of representatives:

- Municipal libraries in the city

- Metropolitan central library

- Schools of library sciences and documentation

- Professional college

- Professionals in cultural management

- Teaching (state primary and secondary schools, adult education)

- Museum libraries

- Other libraries: university and specialist

- Centres of teaching and resources

- Industries of culture: publishers, record companies, video companies, etc.

- Professional associations in the sector

- Agents representing new technological supports

- Appropriate government administrations

The Commission shall set up the necessary channels to communicate all aspects discussed and make recommendations and to counsel the *Consorci* in the management of municipal libraries. The operating system will be decided on the basis of targets and functions to be performed. The

Commission will meet, on average, twice a year and may set up territorial and/or topical commissions.

5 Financial assessment

The financial cost of the Libraries Project 1998-2010 has been analysed under three concepts:

The **Investment Plan,** which includes the construction, extension and renovation of buildings, land purchase, furnishing and equipping of archive collections.

The **Maintenance Plan,** which includes supplies, materials, activities and communication; building maintenance, facilities and furnishings and financial expenses.

The **Staff Plan** classified into the following professional categories: management, librarian, assistant and assistant librarian.

The information has been analysed and quantified in the financial study on the Barcelona Libraries Project 1998-2010. However, a detailed analysis highlighting the fundamental areas reveals the following:

5.1 Investment Plan

In line with the current distribution of functions between Barcelona Town hall and the Diputació of Barcelona, the investments made by the **Town hall** are the **Work Plan and the purchase of furnishings**. The Work Plan and the purchase of furnishings adds up to 5,846 million pesetas, of which 4,691 million are destined towards the Work Plan and 1,155 million for the purchase of furnishings. Of all the concepts included in the Investment Plan, these two (work and furnishings) are essential for the Plan's execution. The total cost is perfectly manageable if we bear in mind that it relates to an action that is to be carried out over 12 years (1999 to 2010). The financing of works and furnishings may consist in the inclusion of a permanent annuity in municipal activity plans (annuities of 487 million over 12 years, corresponding to the 320 million a year of the Municipal Activity Plan 95-99). It is worth pointing out that these amounts could be reduced with the resources obtained from the obligatory supportive duties for the public library system of the Generalitat of Catalonia or from agreements with banks.

Purchase of the required land, included in the global investments plan, is the responsibility of the **Town hall** which, if it has to be purchased, would total 1,493 million pesetas. The situation of libraries

may be managed using locations that are already available, re-use of already existing space or cession of public land, as set forth in the Libraries Project.

Equipping the libraries with **archive collections**, as part of the Investment Plan, is the responsibility of the **Diputació of Barcelona** This includes both new funds and annual replacements (10%) and can vary from the minimum contribution of 2,003 million to a maximum of 4,983 million by the end of the period (2010). Management of this concept, in line with the new library model, is essential for the success of the Plan. This element of basic qualification will have a direct effect on the lines of the growth of demand.

5.2   Maintenance Plan

If we look at ordinary expenditure for the year 2010, when library equipment is in operation and the targets of the Project have been reached, the **ordinary annual expenses** of the **Town hall** will be: 239 million pesetas in supplies; 19 million pesetas in perishable materials; 185 million pesetas in activities and communication, and 987 million pesetas in building maintenance.

5.3   Staff Plan

In accordance with the targets of the Project, the **provision for staff expenses** payable by the **Town hall (assistant staff and assistant librarian)** shall increase logically. An option with minimum standards situates staff expenditure in 2010 at around 990 million pesetas. In budgeting terms, the increase in staff expenses could be related, firstly, to the availability of new positions that were already budgeted for in the general workforces of the participating administrations, and, secondly, to the development of a line of income that could contribute to financing the hire of new staff. The possibilities of lines of income as a means of financing new staff expenses are real. The options studied have proven this to be so. The comparison between the possibility of income for service to businesses and institutions and the minimum option of provision of staff expenses shows a possible road for not significantly compromising the public budget.

5.4   Other considerations

Public use of libraries is currently very far from the use achieved in similar European cities (in terms of annual visits to libraries and annual loans per inhabitant). This contrast could be explained by differences in culture and habits. However, a more plausible explanation is that this comparative difference is due to the non-generalisation of modern libraries across the city, with innovative technologies and uses, seen by the population, companies and institutions, as bodies with an

increasing capacity to resolve specific problems and needs related to the search for information and documents. If this is true, it is likely that the integral reform proposed here, even if it only has a small effect, it will cause a considerable increase in demand.