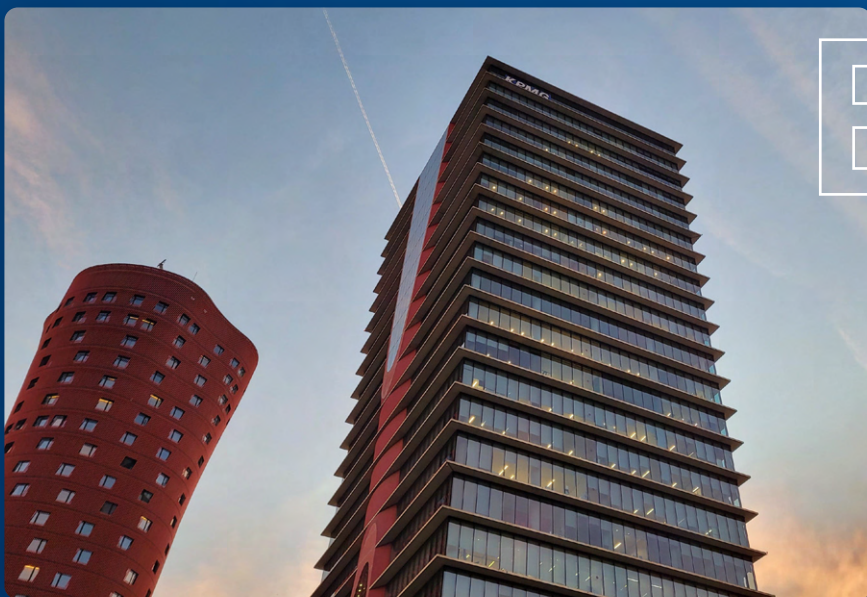


# Guide to entrepreneurship and investment in Barcelona

Discover the role of the City  
of Barcelona in promoting  
high-growth companies



# Barcelona



At **BBVA Spark** we are committed to accompanying entrepreneurs and strategic investors on their path to success. Supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem not only drives new

ideas, but also stimulates productivity from entrepreneurship hubs like **Barcelona**, which helps to reinforce Spain's position as a **global technology center**.

**BBVA Spark Team**

# Índice.

01



Overview of the current **entrepreneurial ecosystem** in Barcelona

02



**Key players** in the ecosystem

03



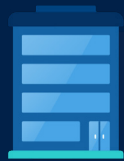
**Journey to the past:** a brief history of entrepreneurship in Barcelona

01

# Overview of the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in Barcelona.

Resilience and leadership  
in the European  
startup ecosystem.

# Regional leadership and nearly 2,500 startups.



**2.495**  
startups & 'scaleups'



**36.75** B€\*  
Ecosystem value

\*B€: Billion euros



**2** in Spain

**8** in Europe



**1** in Spain

**15** in Europe

Fuente: [Top 30 European cities in Dealroom's analysis of entrepreneurial ecosystems.](#) Dealroom.

# Investment resilience.

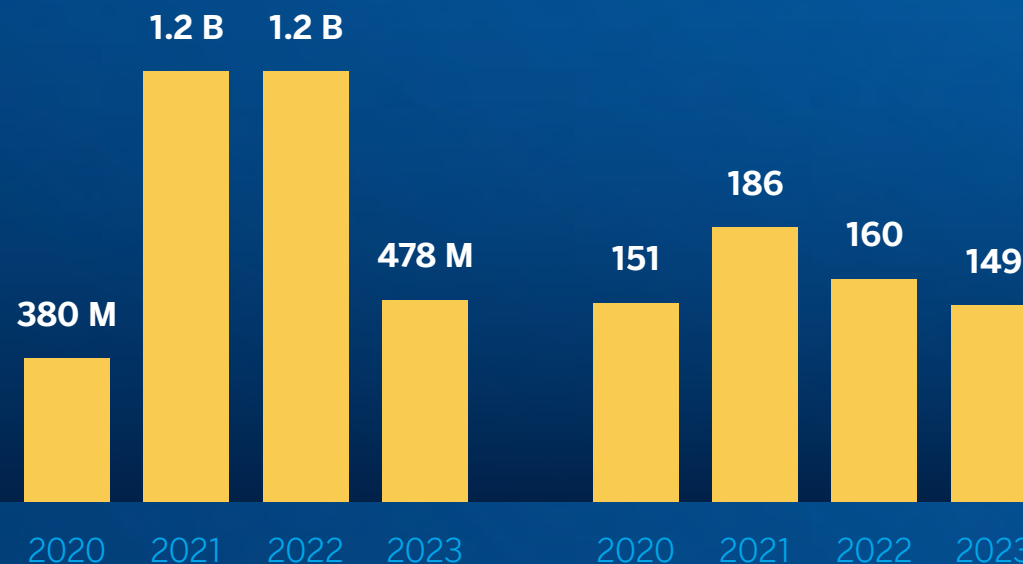
→ **Catalonia** is the region in Spain that has received the most VC investment in the last 5 years: **more than 5 billion euros.**

→ **Barcelona** was the **2<sup>nd</sup> city in Spain in attracting VC investment in 2023** and the first in investment volume per capita.

→ Although investment has decreased compared to the €1.2 billion recorded in **2021-2022**, it exceeds pre-pandemic levels.

→ The average ticket size is lower, but the number of funding rounds remains resilient.

## Investment volume and number of rounds in Barcelona.



**Investment.** (M=Million €)  
(B=Billion €)

**Rounds.**

**Fuente:** [ONE Platform](#). Oficina Nacional de Emprendimiento based on data from Dealroom (consulted on 9 Sep. 2024) and [Spain ecosystem report 2023](#). Dealroom

# Leadership of health-related companies.

## 5 main sectors of Barcelona startups by number:



Health technologies (healthtech)



Business services and software



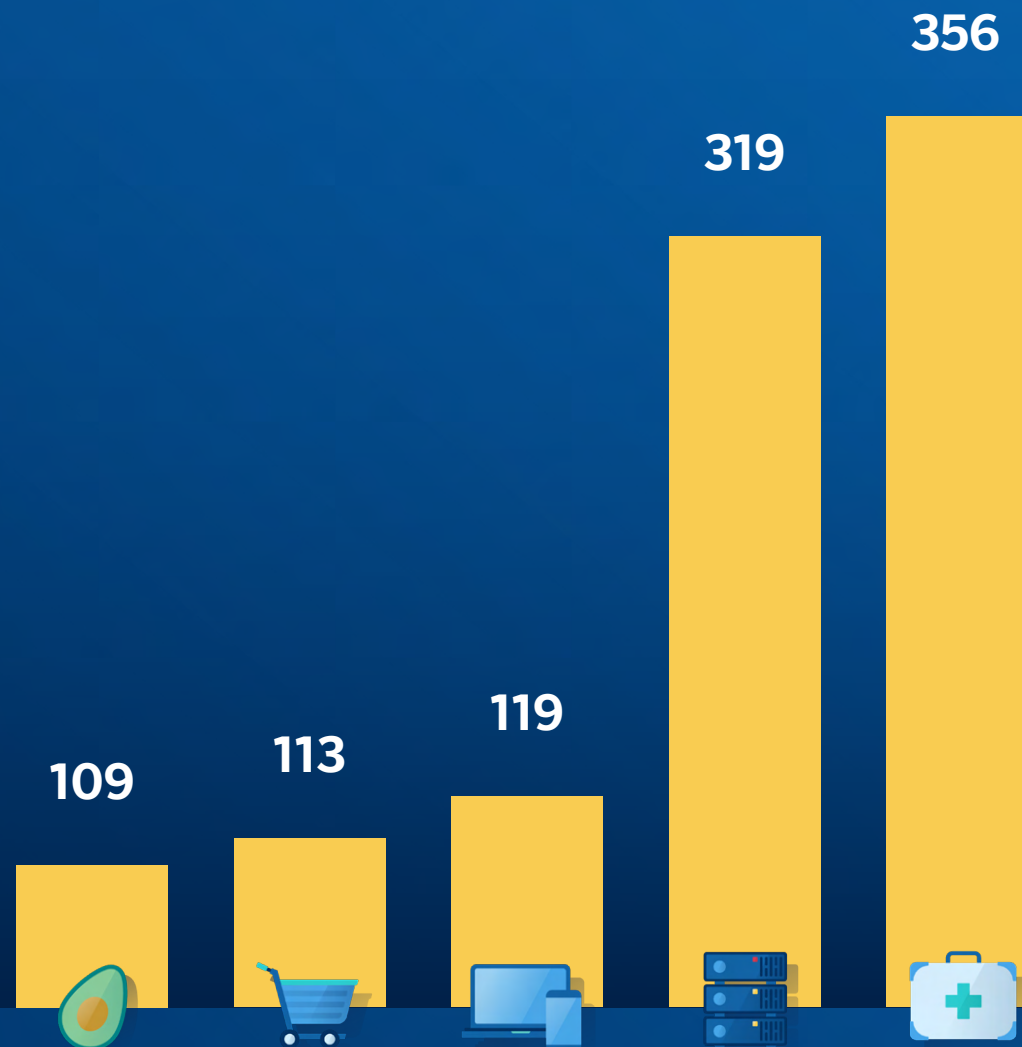
Information technologies and mobile telephony



E-commerce




Food



Fuente: [Spain ecosystem report 2023](#). Dealroom.

# An attractive city for startup founders.

 Barcelona is the 2nd favourite destination for founders wishing to create a startup in the EU.



## Most attractive cities for building a startup in the European Union.



Fuente: [Analysis of the startup ecosystem in Catalonia 2023.](#)



# Strong presence of scaleups.

## Ranking of EU cities by number of scaleups

- 01 **Paris:** 1.217
- 02 **Berlin:** 704
- 03 **Stockholm:** 445
- 04 **Amsterdam:** 313
- 05 **Barcelona:** 283
- 06 **Munich:** 268
- 07 **Madrid:** 248



Fuente: [Analysis of the startup ecosystem in Catalonia 2023.](#)

02

## Key players in the Barcelona ecosystem.

5 unicorns, numerous scaleups and a robust network of universities and research and business centres.

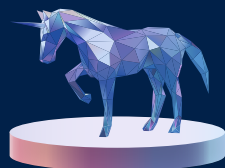
# Notable tech companies.

## Unicorns



- 14 unicorns in Spain
- 5 unicorns in Barcelona

- > **Edreams** | Traveltech
- > **Glovo** | Delivery
- > **Wallbox** | Cleantech | Mobility
- > **Travelperk** | Traveltech
- > **Factorial** | HRTech



## Promising scaleups

- > **Amenitiz** | Hospitality Tech
- > **Cafler** | Mobility
- > **Exoticca** | Travel
- > **Freshly** | Cosmetics
- > **Heura Foods** | Foodtech
- > **Holaluz** | Cleantech
- > **Housfy** | PropTech
- > **Innovamat** | Education
- > **Last.app** | Hospitality Tech
- > **Mundimoto** | Mobility
- > **Olistic** | Healthtech
- > **Paack** | Delivery
- > **Payflow** | Fintech
- > **Qida** | Healthtech
- > **Red Points** | Cybersecurity
- > **Sequra** | E-commerce
- > **Submer** | DeepTech
- > **Sunhero** | Cleantech
- > **Yaba** | Comercio electrónico
- > **Wallapop** | E-commerce
- > **Worldsensing** | IoT

# Support spaces for startups.

## Incubators and accelerators

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- > BCN Health Booster
- > Conector
- > SeedRocket
- > Tech Barcelona (Pier 01)
- > The Collider

## Universities

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- > Universitat de Barcelona
- > Universitat Pompeu Fabra
- > Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya
- > Universitat Ramon Llull

## Co-working spaces

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- > Impact Hub
- > Loom
- > Regus
- > Sit&Plug
- > WeWork

## Business schools

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- > BSE
- > EAE
- > Esade
- > IESE

## Research centres

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- > Barcelona Supercomputing Center
- > Hospital Sant Pau (Recinto Modernista)
- > I2Cat
- > ICREA
- > Idibaps
- > VHIO

# Main VC funds.

- > 4founders
- > Active Venture Partners
- > Adara Ventures
- > Antai Ventures
- > Breega
- > Elaia
- > Encomenda
- > Extension Fund
- > Inveready
- > Nauta Capital
- > Nina Capital
- > Plus Partners
- > Seven Roots VC
- > Yellow VC
- > Wayra Barcelona
- > Zubi Labs



# Public subsidies.



## Barcelona City Council

It offers multiple programmes to support entrepreneurship, including financing and training.

[+ INFORMACIÓN](#)



## Regional Government of Catalonia

Initiatives such as ACCIÓ provide resources for the internationalisation and growth of technology companies.

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## Catalan Finance Institute

It offers financing to companies and entities to promote growth and innovation in the Catalan economy.

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## Government of Spain

National innovation support programmes, such as the Innovation Guarantee Fund (ICEX), are also available to entrepreneurs in Barcelona.

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# Eventos tecnológicos.

## 01 Mobile World Congress

The world's leading event for the mobile technology industry, held annually in Barcelona.



## 02 4YFN

Annual event focused on startups, organised by Mobile World Capital Barcelona, which connects entrepreneurs with investors.

## 03 BBVA Spark Summit

The event where BBVA Spark brings together CEOs and founders of technology companies, investors and leaders of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## 04 Tech Spirit Barcelona

Annual event that showcases the key players in the city's technology scene.

# Entrepreneurship Map of Barcelona.

- 01 22@
- 02 Free Trade Zone
- 03 Factorial – RR.HH.
- 04 Travelperk - Travel
- 05 Glovo - Delivery
- 06 Wallbox - Cleantech





# Barcelona, one of Europe's main entrepreneurship hubs.



± **2,500**

startups and a growing number of scaleups



A benchmark in key sectors such as healthcare technologies and enterprise software



One of the most attractive destinations for founders of tech companies



Institutional support and international events



In short, a vibrant centre for entrepreneurship and business development that you are already a part of.

**Welcome!**

**BBVA Spark Team**

03

## **Journey to the past: a brief history of entrepreneurship in Barcelona.**

From medieval guilds to  
technology hubs: the  
evolution of innovation  
in the city.

# Before the 19th century.



## The guilds, forerunners of innovation

From the Middle Ages onwards, Barcelona stood out for its guild activity.

### Guilds:

- Artisans and merchants grouped by trade.
- Product quality regulation.
- Training of workers and professional categories: apprentice, technician and master.

### Numerous streets still bear the name of a guild:

- Carrer dels Cotoners (Cotton Merchants)
- Carrer dels Formatgers (Cheesemakers)
- Carrer dels Argenters (Silversmiths)
- Carrer dels Curtidors (Tanners)

**During the 17th and 18th centuries, workshops were established in the Raval area, the seed for future factories.**



## Creation of guilds in Barcelona

- Shoemakers' Guild (13th century)
- Brotherhood of Tanners (13th century)
- Guild of Glassmakers and Rush Weavers (15th century)
- Coppersmiths' Guild (16th century)
- Resellers' Guild (17th century)
- Guild of Veil Weavers (18th century)

# 19th Century | The industrial revolution and the birth of modern entrepreneurship.



Around 1830, the **Industrial Revolution** reached Spain through Barcelona with factories that applied the steam engine power to the textile industry.



The role of entrepreneurial families such as the **Güell** and **Batló** is particularly notable.



**Universal Exposition of 1888:** Barcelona was positioned as a centre of innovation and commerce.



## Main factories that opened in Barcelona in the 19th century



Bonaplata  
(1832)



Vapor Güell  
(1846)



España Industrial  
(1851)



Can Batlló  
(1878)

# First decades of the 20th century | Consolidation and technological advances.



Strengthening of **family businesses** in key sectors.



**International Exposition of 1929:** exhibition of technological advances and consolidation of the city.

## Main factories that opened in Barcelona at the beginning of the 20th century

Fabra i Coats (1903)

Hispano-Suiza (1904)

Ebro (1911)

La Canadiense (1919)

Hispano Olivetti (1929)

# 1940-1990 | Automotive and industrial restructuring.



Despite the scarcity of raw materials, the **industrial fabric** recovered in the 1950s.



Barcelona attracted new industries, especially **automotive**, and became one of the main hubs in southern Europe.



The oil crisis of the 1970s reduced the number of factories. This trend was reinforced in the 1980s with **industrial restructuring**.



## Main factories that opened in Barcelona during the second half of the 20th century

- Pegasus (1946)
- SEAT (1950)
- Henkel (1964)

# 1990-2024: Urban transformation and investment attraction.



**1992 Olympic Games:** A catalyst for urban transformation and economic revitalisation.



Increased **international investment**, especially **in infrastructure and technology**.



Creation of innovation centres and hubs by repurposing vacant industrial heritage.



## District 22@

With public and private support, 200 hectares of former industrial land in Poblenou have been transformed into an innovation area featuring co-workings such as Wojo, technology companies such as Adamo Telecom and research centres, such as the Institut TIC de Barcelona, among others.



# Fuentes.

- **Analysis of the startup ecosystem in Catalonia 2023.** Acció – Generalitat de Catalunya
- **Startups.one.gob.es. Oficina Nacional de Emprendimiento.** Base de datos consultada el 10/09/2024.
- **Spain ecosystem report 2023.** Dealroom
- **App.dealroom.co.** Base de datos de Dealroom consultada el 10/09/2024.
- **The Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2023.** Startup Genome
- **Startup Heatmap Europe 2023.** Marq
- **The Startup Ecosystem of Barcelona.** StartupBlink
- **GPA Innova.** GPA Innova
- **Els gremis a la Barcelona medieval.** Xarxa Telemàtica Educativa de Catalunya
- **Los gremios, las poderosas corporaciones que forjaron la Edad Media y el renacimiento.** National Geographic



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