



Census of vacant dwellings in Barcelona

Report on the overall results for the city of the project
launched by Barcelona's Municipal Institute Housing and
Renovation (IMHAB)

March 2019



How we did it (1/3)

A team of observers visited all those dwellings that were likely to be empty:

- With low or non-existent consumption of water.
- With no registered occupants.
- Belonging to a financial institution.

Total number in Barcelona:

73 Neighbourhoods
825,677 homes

103,864 dwellings visited
(likely to be vacant)



How we did it (2/3)

The fieldwork for this study was divided into **three phases**, and a total of 96 people took part.

The initial or first phase was carried out from 17 October 2016 to 8 April 2017 and concentrated on 6 neighbourhoods, with a total of 15 people taking part in the fieldwork. Of these, 2 people were assigned the task of facilitator, but all 15 worked in the field.

The second phase was carried out from 1 June to 16 November 2017, concentrating on 11 neighbourhoods, with a total of 25 people taking part in the fieldwork. Of these 25, 3 people were assigned the task of facilitator while the rest worked in the field.

The third phase was carried out from 16 February 2018 to 19 January 2019 and included the remaining 56 neighbourhoods, with 48 people hired through an employment plan. All of them worked on collecting data directly, and the task of **facilitator** was taken on by a team of **3 people**, who were specially designated by the project managers. In order to conclude the collection of information within the established timeline, **an additional 7 observers and a coordinator were added during the final months.**



How we did it (3/3)

	Total N ^o . of dwellings	Dwellings visited	% of dwellings visited
TOTAL NUMBER IN BARCELONA	825,677	103,864	12.6
Ciutat Vella	57,825	8,500	14.7
Eixample	145,178	20,100	13.8
Sants-Montjuïc	88,013	11,583	13.2
Les Corts	40,834	4,001	9.8
Sarrià - Sant Gervasi	77,938	8,166	10.5
Gràcia	70,026	9,846	14.1
Horta-Guinardó	86,938	10,225	11.8
Nou Barris	77,336	10,152	13.1
Sant Andreu	70,548	7,931	11.2
Sant Martí	111,041	13,360	12.0

12.6% of the total number of dwellings in Barcelona were visited.



What we found in dwellings that were likely to be vacant

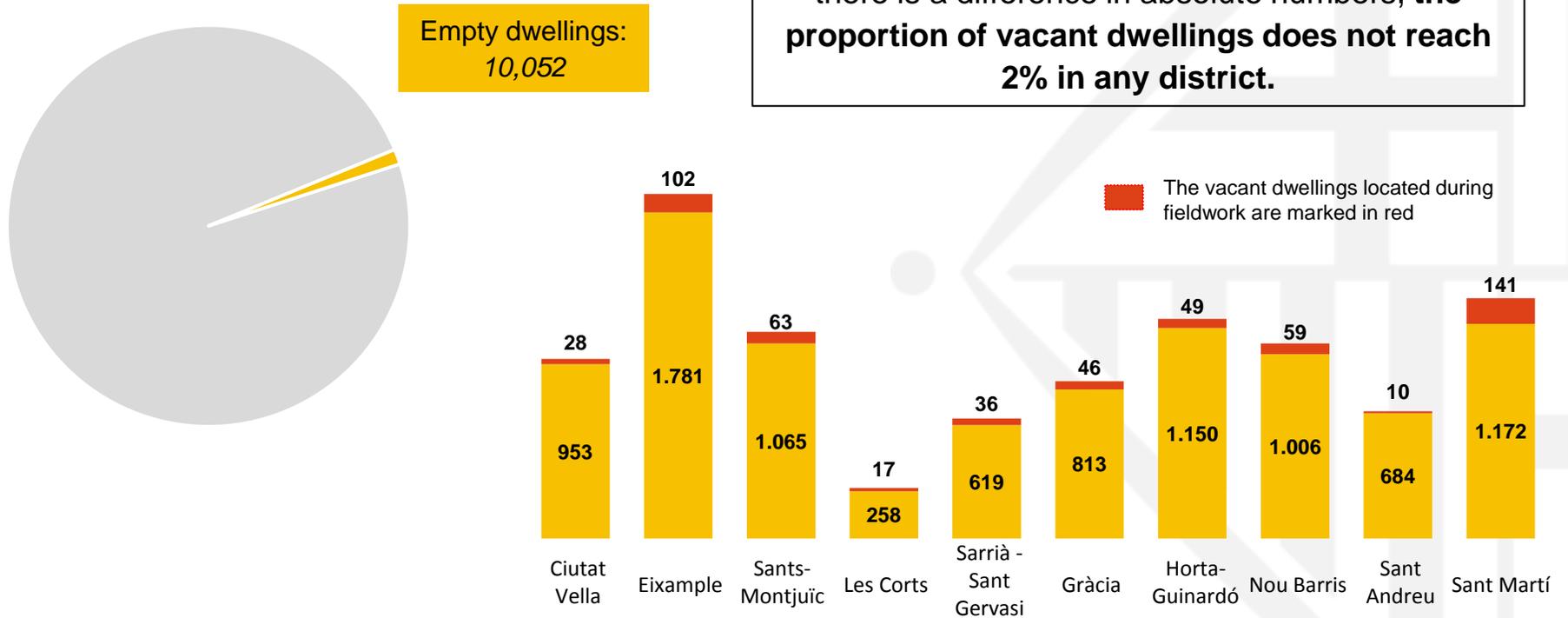
	Total number of dwellings visited	Ciutat Vella	Eixample	Sants-Montjuïc	Les Corts	Sarrià - Sant Gervasi	Gràcia	Horta-Guinardó	Nou Barris	Sant Andreu	Sant Martí
TOTAL NUMBER IN BARCELONA	103,864	8,500	20,100	11,583	4,001	8,166	9,846	10,225	10,152	7,931	13,360
Vacant	9,501	953	1,781	1,065	258	619	813	1,150	1,006	684	1,172
Habitual residence	71,579	4,890	14,047	8,128	3,239	6,414	6,207	7,007	7,124	5,787	8,736
Other uses	13,832	1,440	3,144	1,377	394	779	1,831	1,126	1,128	623	1,990
Occupation not determined	201	52	4	1	0	0	50	6	21	41	26
No data available	3,655	640	319	380	50	166	368	179	509	461	583
Vacant dwellings located in fieldwork phase	+551	+28	+102	+63	+17	+36	+46	+49	+59	+10	+141
Total Nº of vacant dwellings	10,052	981	1,883	1,128	275	655	859	1,199	1,065	694	1,313

No data available These are initial addresses that were excluded for various reasons: the address did not exist, the address was repeated, it was not possible to gain access or no one was able to facilitate the information.

A total of **10,052** vacant dwellings were detected in the city as a whole, which represents **1.22%** of the total number of dwellings in Barcelona.



Vacant dwellings: the number (1/2)





Unoccupied dwellings: the number (2/2)

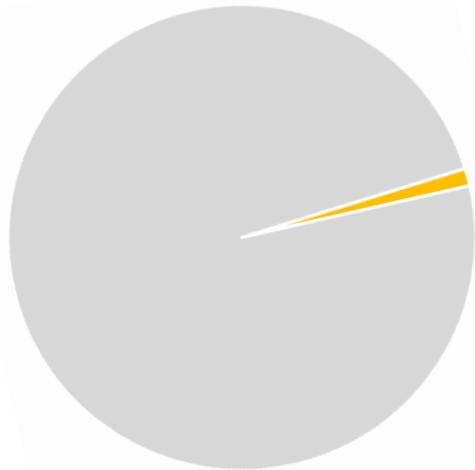
The proportion of vacant dwellings varies depending on the district: Les Corts and Sarrià - Sant Gervasi show the lowest figures while Ciutat Vella shows the highest.

	Total housing stock	Dwellings with valid addresses	Occupied dwellings	Unoccupied housing	Dwellings where occupation was not determined	Other vacant dwellings located	Total unoccupied dwellings	% Unoccupied dwellings over total housing stock
Ciutat Vella	57,825	7,860	6,855	953	52	28	981	1.70
Eixample	145,178	19,781	18,005	1,781	4	102	1,883	1.30
Sants-Montjuïc	88,013	11,203	10,137	1,065	1	63	1,128	1.28
Les Corts	40,834	3,951	3,693	258	0	17	275	0.67
Sarrià - Sant Gervasi	77,938	8,000	7,381	619	0	36	655	0.84
Gràcia	70,026	9,478	8,615	813	50	46	859	1.23
Horta-Guinardó	86,938	10,046	8,890	1,150	6	49	1,199	1.38
Nou Barris	77,336	9,643	8,616	1,006	21	59	1,065	1.38
Sant Andreu	70,548	7,470	6,745	684	41	10	694	0.98
Sant Martí	111,041	12,777	11,609	1,172	26	141	1,313	1.18
TOTAL	825,677	100,209	90,546	9,501	201	551	10,052	1.22



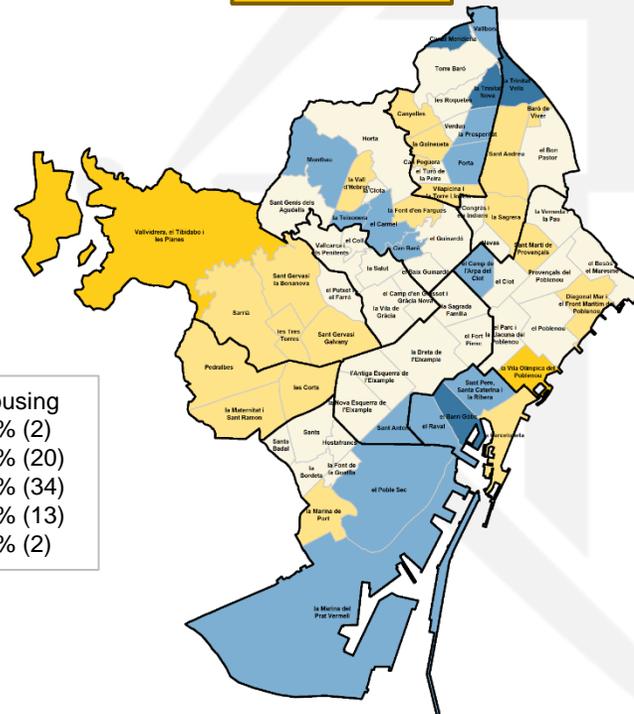
Unoccupied dwellings: geographical location

The proportion of unoccupied dwellings varies slightly according to the neighbourhood, but it never rises above 2.5% of the total number of dwellings in the neighbourhood.



Empty dwellings:
10,052

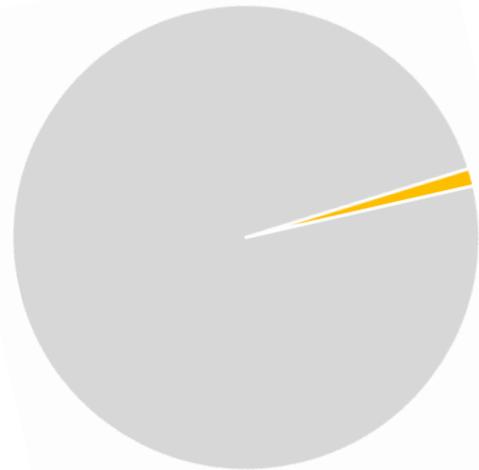
Barcelona



% unoccupied housing	
0 to < 0.5%	(2)
0.5 to < 1%	(20)
1 to < 1.5%	(34)
1.5 to < 2%	(13)
4 to < 2.5%	(2)

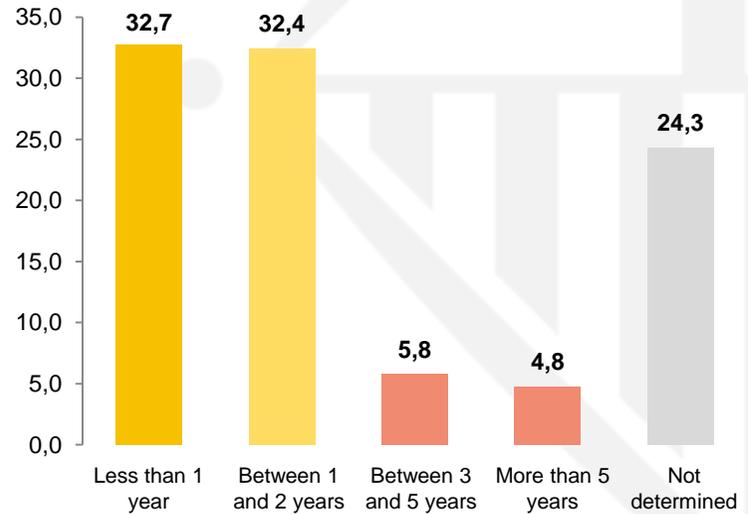


Unoccupied dwellings: time left vacant



Empty dwellings:
10,052

In most cases where information was available, the dwellings had been vacant for less than two years.*



* It must be remembered that in most cases the information is provided by neighbours. This is the reason for the high number of "not determined".



Unoccupied dwellings: locating the owners

Census of vacant dwellings: determining ownership

OWNERSHIP	CIUTAT VELLA	L'EIXAMPLE	SANTS-MONTJUÏC	LES CORTS	SARRIÀ - SANT GERVASI	GRÀCIA	HORTA-GUINARDÓ	NOU BARRIS	SANT ANDREU	SANT MARTÍ	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
PRIVATE OWNERS	593	1,316	803	221	472	654	921	829	495	956	7,260	72.22%
Adjudication / grouping / horizontal division (1)	43	66	31	0	0	45	94	42	7	66	394	7.54%
Sale (2)	368	426	498	0	0	344	511	289	23	596	3,055	58.46%
Inheritance (3) / gift	182	246	274	0	0	265	316	172	28	294	1,777	34.00%
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS/MANAGERS	52	52	80	5	16	48	68	112	58	105	596	5.93%
SAREB	3	2	10	0	0	4	8	26	14	29	96	141.18%
COMPANIES	300	492	225	39	161	152	201	102	83	227	1,982	19.72%
PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	30	15	17	5	4	0	9	20	58	19	177	1.76%
RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS	6	8	3	5	2	5	0	2	0	6	37	0.37%
TOTAL Nº DWELLINGS LIKELY TO BE VACANT	981	1,883	1,128	275	655	859	1,199	1,065	694	1,313	10,052	100%

72% of the privately-owned dwellings in 49 neighbourhoods have been analysed. The remainder are being studied.

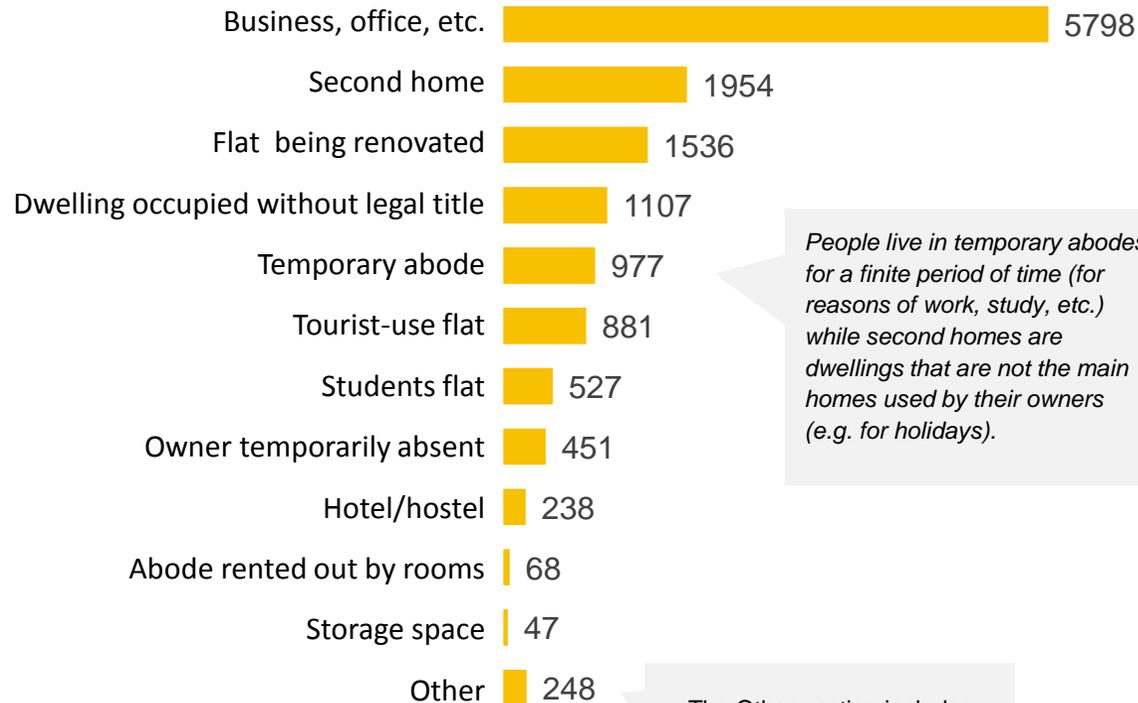
NOTES:

- Adjudication / grouping / horizontal division (1)** Adjudication due to mortgage foreclosure and seizure, adjudication due to horizontal division, liquidation of earnings, due to dissolution of communities
- Sale (2)** Property transfer with a change of owner
- Inheritance / Donation (3)** This includes inheritance, handing over legacies, adjudication of inheritance, consolidation of domain, cancellation of usufruct, judicial auction of inheritance and gifts
- Public institutions** Among others, the Institute of Housing, Infrastructure and Defence Equipment
- Religious institutions** Among others, the Congregation of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri in Barcelona



Other uses located (1/4)

In addition to the 71,579 homes, dwellings used for other purposes were also located.



People live in temporary abodes for a finite period of time (for reasons of work, study, etc.) while second homes are dwellings that are not the main homes used by their owners (e.g. for holidays).

The Other section includes various uses: religious, storage, former porter's lodges, etc.

13,852 were detected that which were not habitual residences, but **were used for a purpose other than housing** (mostly for businesses or offices), **1.7%** of the total number of dwellings in Barcelona.*

** It should be remembered that the aim of the methodology used was to locate unoccupied housing. Therefore, it is not possible to extrapolate the data that does not refer to vacancies in the district as a whole. Even so, it is a good indicator of the approximate scale of other uses for dwellings.*



Other uses located (2/4)

The uses for dwellings are slightly different according to the district analysed. For example, Ciutat Vella and the Eixample contain most of the unlicensed tourist-use flats, as well as those used as offices or businesses.

	TOTAL		Ciutat Vella		Eixample		Sants-Montjuïc		Les Corts		Sarrià - Sant Gervasi	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Habitual residence	71,579	79.1	4,890	71.3	14,047	78.0	8,128	80.2	3,239	87.7	6,414	86.9
Business, office, etc.	5,798	6.4	393	5.7	1,539	8.5	399	3.9	143	3.9	386	5.2
Second home	1,954	2.2	154	2.2	454	2.5	213	2.1	89	2.4	161	2.2
Flat being renovated	1,536	1.7	188	2.7	393	2.2	158	1.6	37	1.0	109	1.5
Dwelling occupied without legal title	1,107	1.2	129	1.9	50	0.3	190	1.9	4	0.1	1	0.0
Temporary abode	977	1.1	182	2.7	156	0.9	98	1.0	29	0.8	45	0.6
Tourist-use flat	881	1.0	227	3.3	227	1.3	146	1.4	6	0.2	6	0.1
Students' flat	527	0.6	24	0.4	134	0.7	78	0.8	54	1.5	27	0.4
Owner temporarily absent	451	0.5	24	0.4	43	0.2	40	0.4	21	0.6	40	0.5
Hotel/hostel	238	0.3	89	1.3	75	0.4	17	0.2	11	0.3	4	0.1
Abode rented out by rooms	68	0.1	20	0.3	11	0.1	9	0.1				
Storage space	47	0.1	1	0.0	2	0.0	6	0.1				
Other	248	0.3	9	0.1	60	0.3	23	0.2				
Not determined	5,135	5.7	525	7.7	814	4.5	632	6.2	60	1.6	188	2.5



Other uses located (3/4)

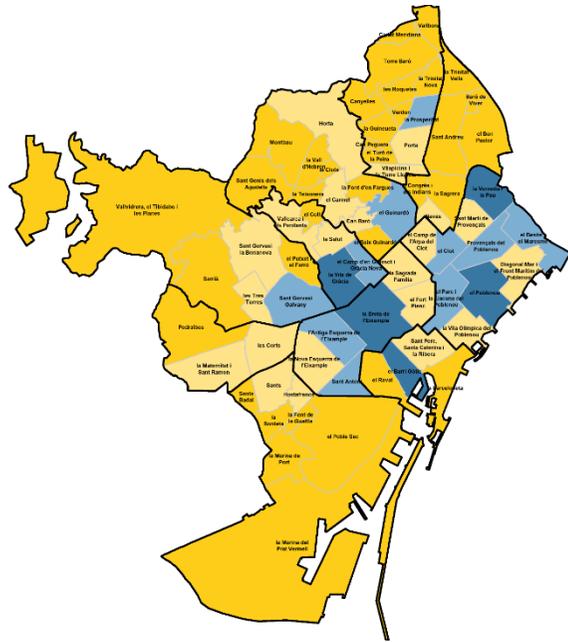
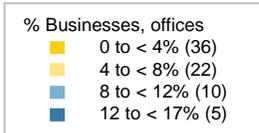
In Gràcia, there was also a major concentration of unlicensed tourist-use flats and a high proportion of dwellings used for commercial purposes.

	TOTAL		Gràcia		Horta-Guinardó		Nou Barris		Sant Andreu		Sant Martí	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Habitual residence	71,579	79.1	6,207	72.0	7,007	78.8	7,124	82.7	5,787	85.8	8,736	75.3
Business, office, etc.	5,798	6.4	966	11.2	411	4.6	351	4.1	142	2.1	1,068	9.2
Second home	1,954	2.2	134	1.6	190	2.1	141	1.6	168	2.5	250	2.2
Flat being renovated	1,536	1.7	133	1.5	142	1.6	125	1.5	73	1.1	178	1.5
Dwelling occupied without legal title	1,107	1.2	51	0.6	121	1.4	309	3.6	114	1.7	138	1.2
Temporary abode	977	1.1	156	1.8	79	0.9	77	0.9	50	0.7	105	0.9
Tourist-use flat	881	1.0	180	2.1	32	0.4	2	0.0	3	0.0	52	0.4
Students' flat	527	0.6	89	1.0	23	0.3	14	0.2	11	0.2	73	0.6
Owner temporarily absent	451	0.5	29	0.3	74	0.8	64	0.7	51	0.8	65	0.6
Hotel/hostel	238	0.3	16	0.2							26	0.2
Abode rented out by rooms	68	0.1	13	0.2	1	0.0	3	0.0	6	0.1	5	0.0
Storage space	47	0.1	16	0.2	18	0.2					4	0.0
Other	248	0.3	48	0.6	35	0.4	42	0.5	5	0.1	26	0.2
Not determined	5,135	5.7	577	6.7	757	8.5	364	4.2	335	5.0	883	7.6

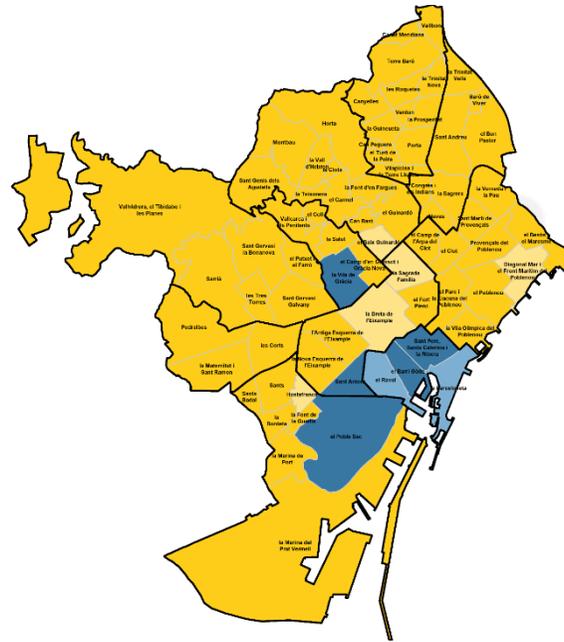
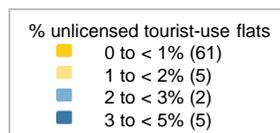


Other uses located (4/4)

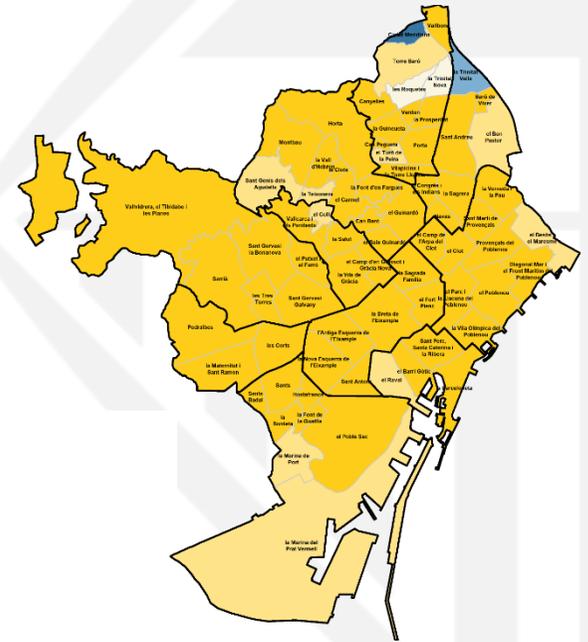
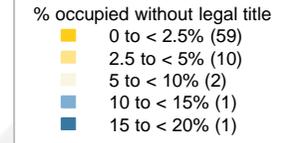
Businesses, offices, etc.



Unlicensed tourist-use flats



Occupied dwellings without legal title

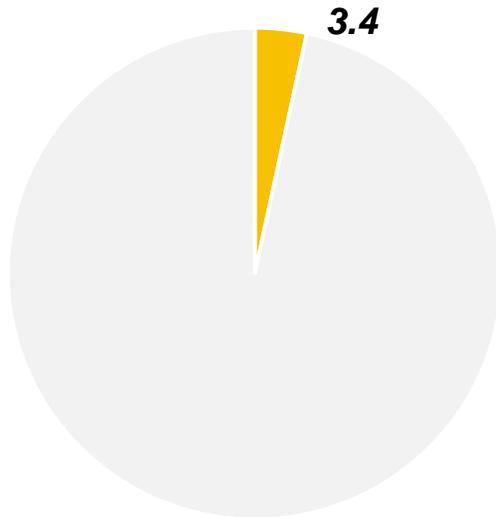




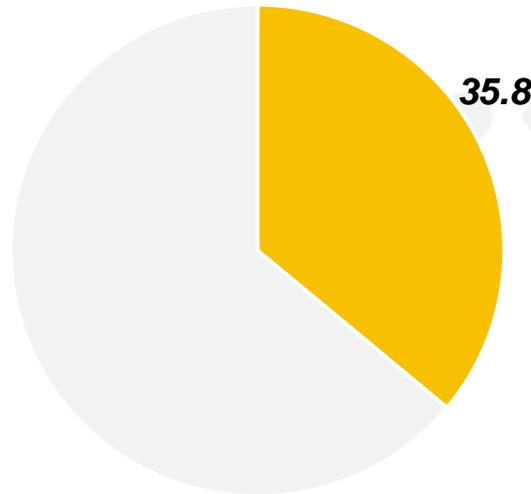
State of buildings and accessibility

The census was also used to make an approximation of the state of the buildings and their degree of accessibility, two key factors for guaranteeing the well-being and equality of conditions among neighbourhoods and the various groups of people.

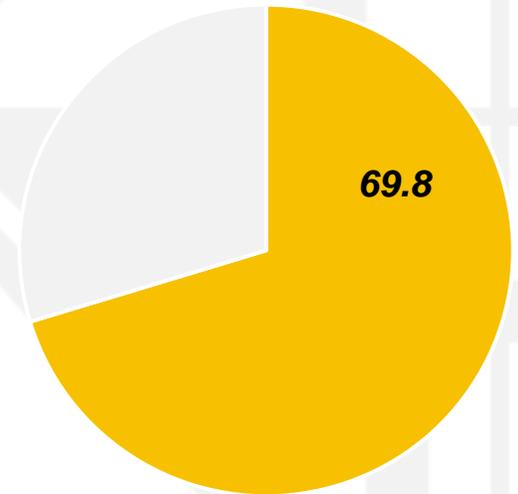
Buildings in poor state



No lift



The entrance is not accessible for people with reduced mobility*





Conclusions

- Only 1.22% of the dwellings in Barcelona are unoccupied, much lower than the recommended proportion which enables the rental market to function well. Most of them have been vacant for less than two years. This data is similar in the various Barcelona neighbourhoods, where the number of vacant dwellings never reaches 2.5% of the dwellings visited.
- Furthermore, there is another 1.7% of dwellings in Barcelona that are used for a purpose other than that of habitual residence. They are mostly used for businesses or offices, but other anomalous situations have been detected, such as unlicensed tourist-use flats, second homes and occupied dwellings without legal title.
- In fact, 881 unlicensed tourist-use flats were detected, and the competent department has been informed, in order to proceed with penalty measures, where appropriate.
- Furthermore, the census enabled the state of the buildings and their accessibility to be detected and identified, with the aim of compiling quantitative data for the diagnostic phase of the Universal Accessibility Plan, in compliance with the government measure concerning the 2018-2026 Barcelona Universal Accessibility Plan.

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**Ajuntament
de Barcelona**

B Institut Municipal
de l'Habitatge
i Rehabilitació