

Network of climate shelters in Barcelona

What, when, why, how.

European Heat Adaptation Community. Webinar
(Jan 15, 2026)

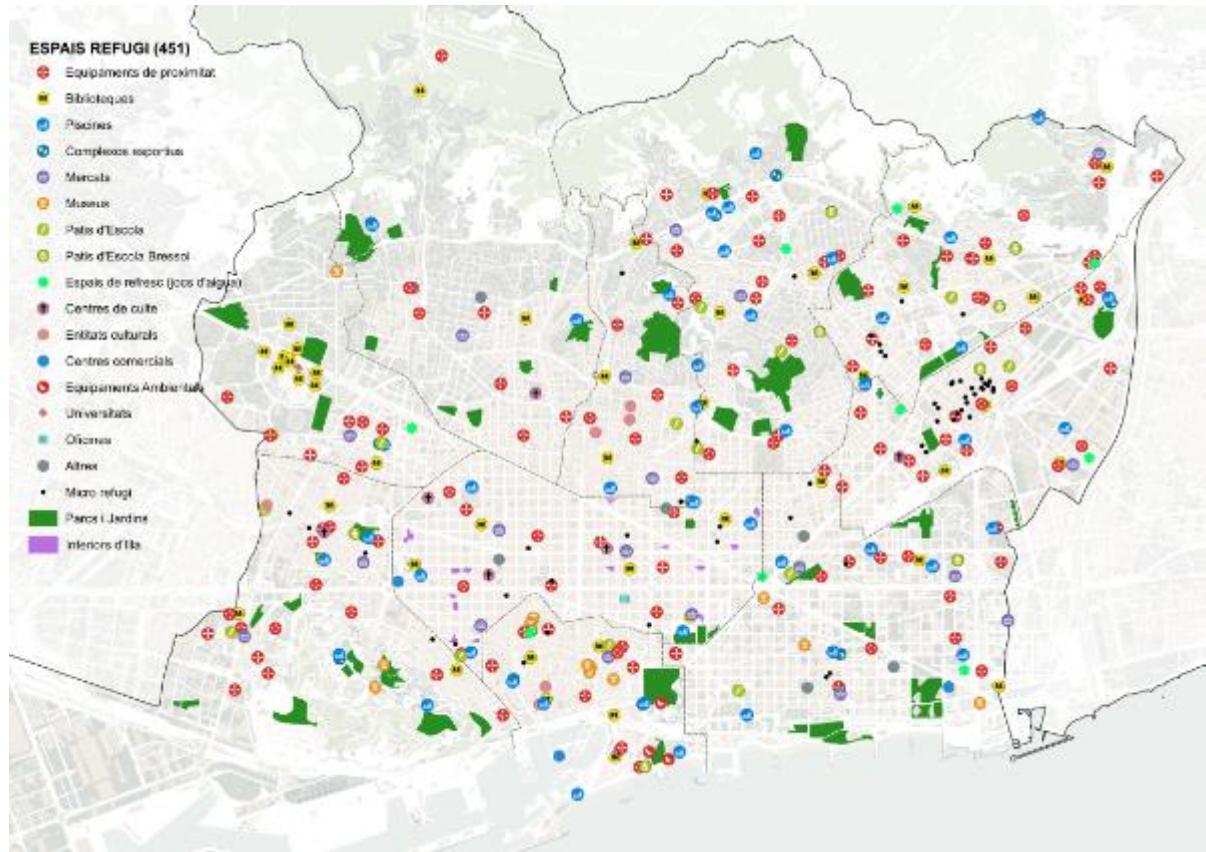
Xavier de Pedro Puente
Climate Change and Sustainability Office
Barcelona City Council. Catalonia. Spain.

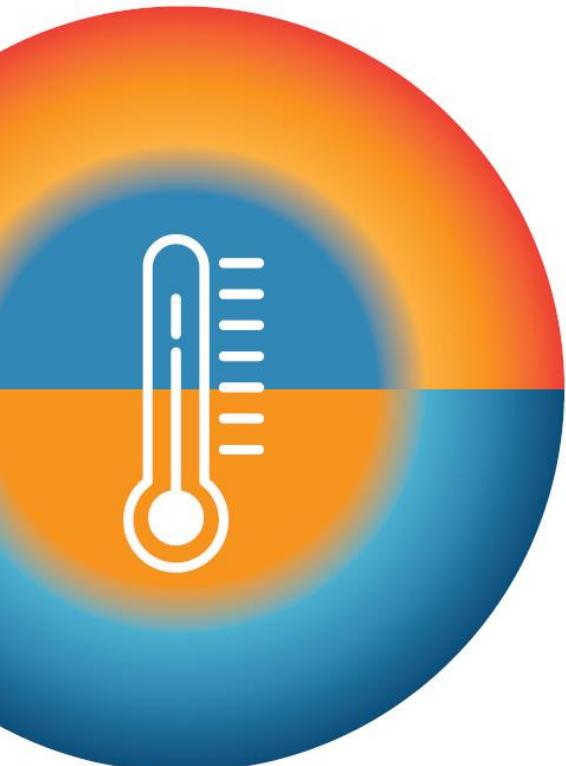


OUTLINE

Climate shelter spaces network in Barcelona:

1. What
2. Why
3. When
4. How





1. What

Type of climate shelter spaces in Barcelona city (2025)

A. Outdoor “Climate shelters”. Minimum space 5.000 m².
Public



Outdoor climate shelter in Park Crueta del Coll.
Source: AjBCN

B. Indoor “Climate shelters”. Minimum space 50 m².
Public or private



Indoor climate shelter in Barcelona Centre of Contemporary Culture. Source: AjBCN

C. Indoor “Micro-shelters”. Space can be smaller than 50m².
Private



Climate micro-shelter at the Pharmacy Torres

What are climate shelters in Barcelona?

They are spaces to protect from excessive **heat or cold**, especially for people that do not have homes adapted to thermal confort.

They are **previously existing** spaces that keep his **usual use**.

They can be **indoor** spaces, like libraries, civic centres or museums. Minimum space of **50m²**.

They can be **outdoor** spaces, like parks or inside blocks of buildings (only during the summer). Minimum space of **5.000 m²**.

All are free except the municipal swimming pools, that have fixed public prices and discounts for vulnerable people.

They can be **public or private**.



Outdoor climate shelter in the Parc de la Ciutadella. Source: AjBCN



Climate shelter at the municipal swimming pools Bernat Picornell.
Author: Paola of Grenet

What are climate shelters in Barcelona?

Preferably, they need to have good **accessibility**, **chairs** or **banks** to seat, **toilets** and availability of drinking water.

In indoor spaces, it is recommended to keep a temperature of **26°C** during **summer** and of **21°C** during **winter**.

They are recommended for **vulnerable people** to heat or cold, like babies, elders or people with chronic diseases, whenever they do not require medical attention.

Some climate shelters **can close on weekends or on August**.
Opening hours can be freely checked at
barcelona.cat/refugisclimatics or dialing the free phone number 010.

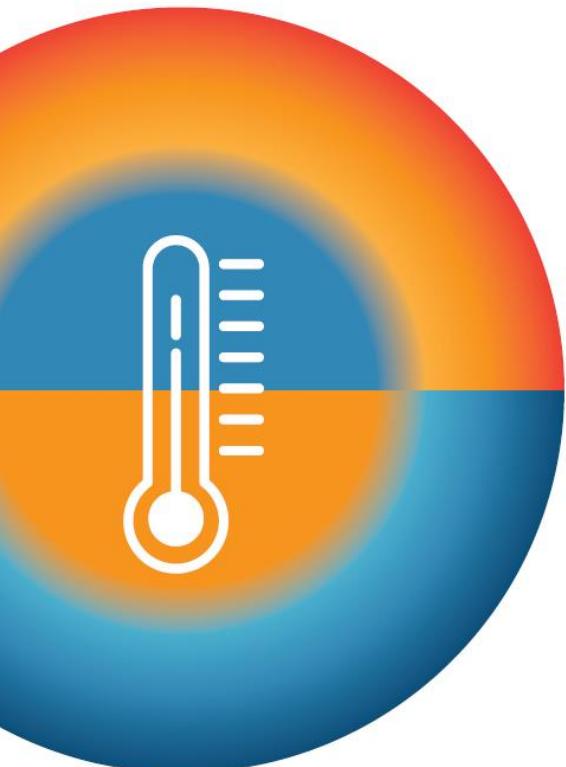
Novelty 2025: **micro-shelters** which can have **less than 50m²**.



Outdoor climate shelter in Museum Frederic Marés. Source: AjBCN



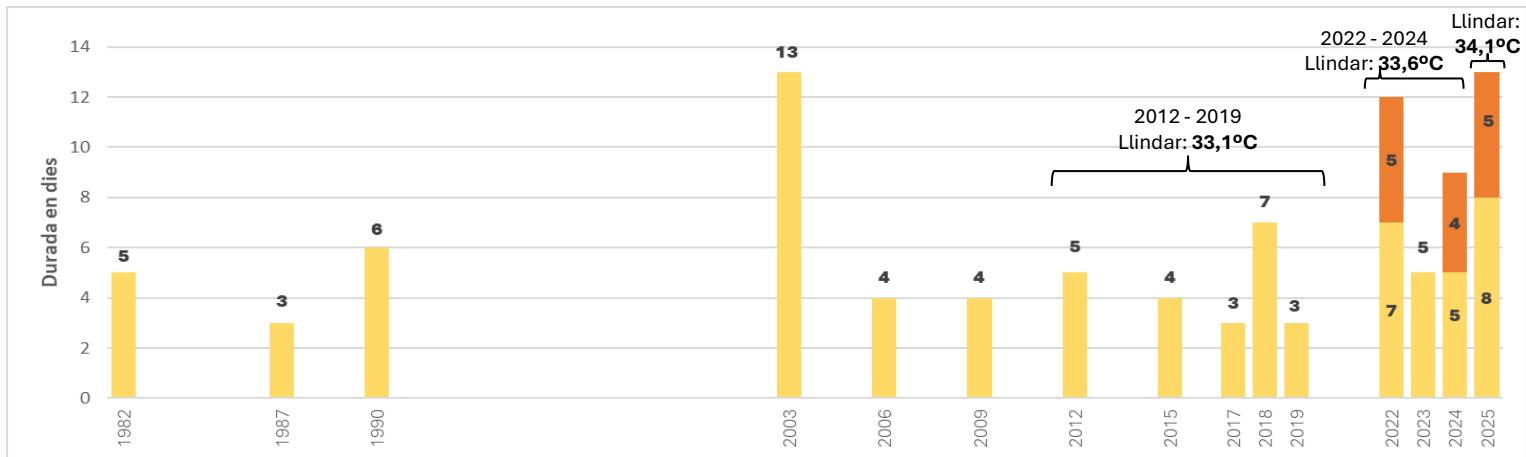
Climate micro-shelter in Bookshop Alibri



2. Why

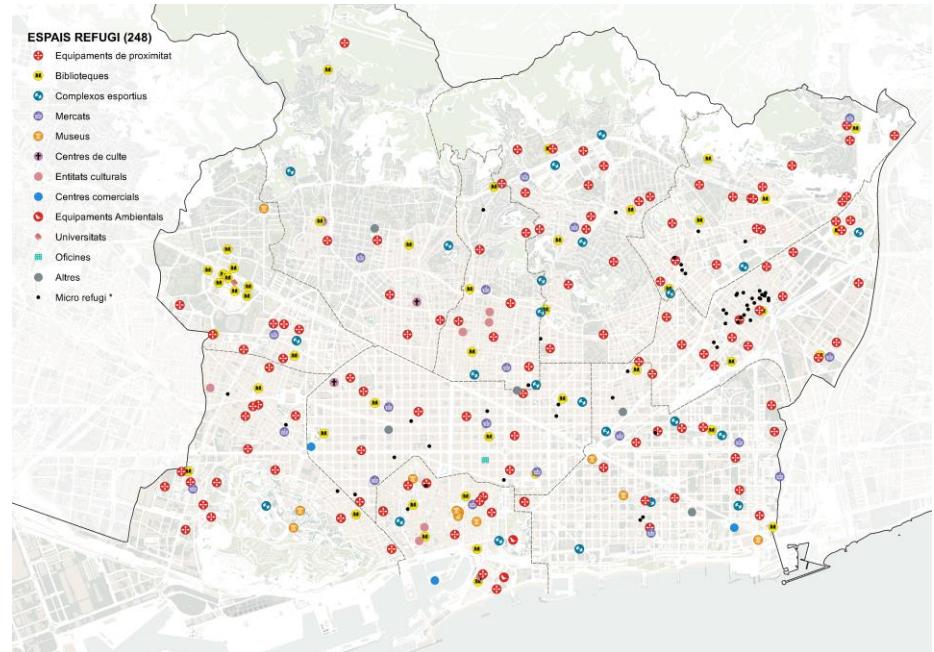
2. Why

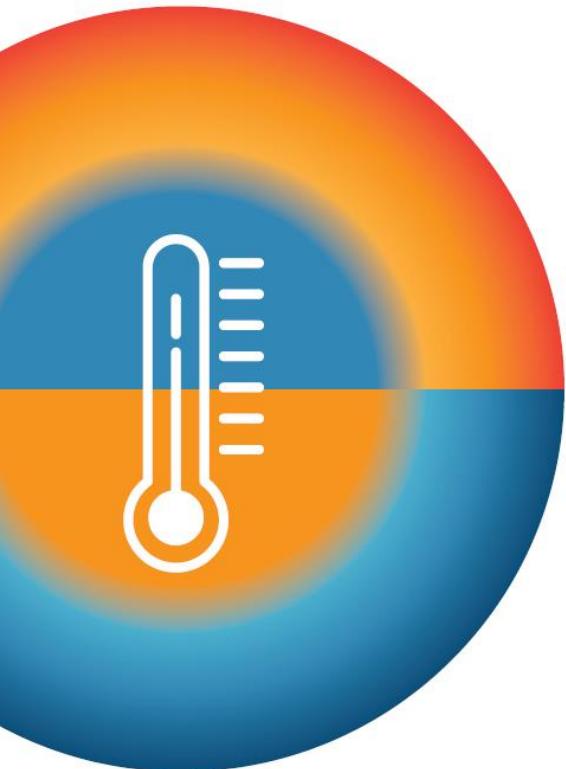
- Climate projections: Heatwaves in Barcelona city getting more frequent and lasting longer in the last decade
- Barcelona wrote first Climate Plan in 2018, and included adaptation measures, not only mitigation
- Idea from C40. Cool cities network. Adapting necessity with opportunity in Barcelona.





- Cold periods in the city also impact on citizens health: climate shelter network open also in winter (currently 296 indoor spaces)

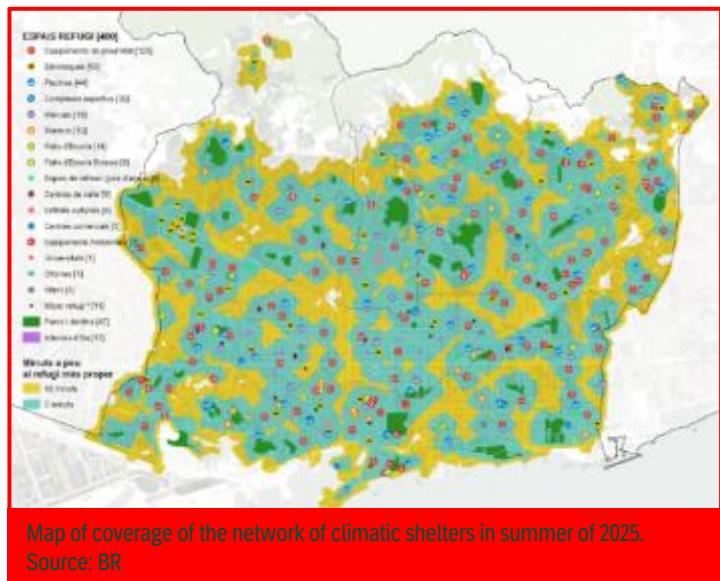
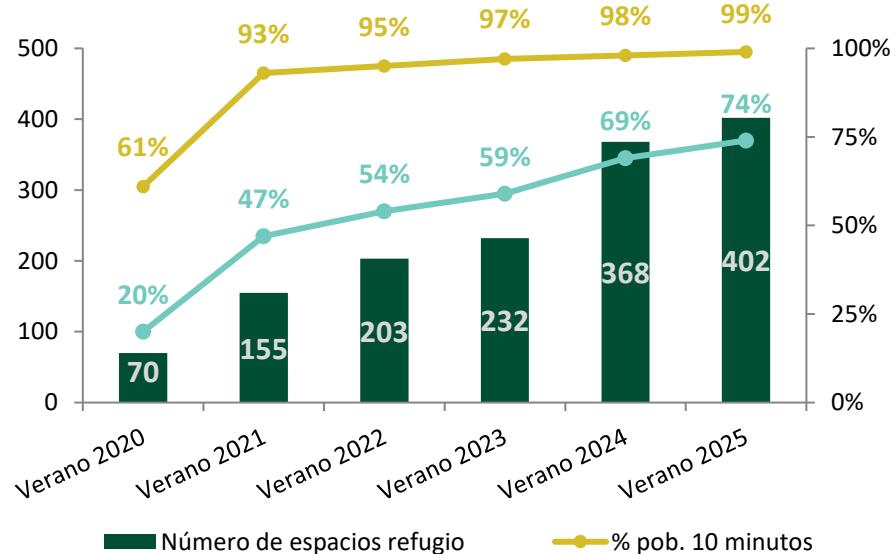


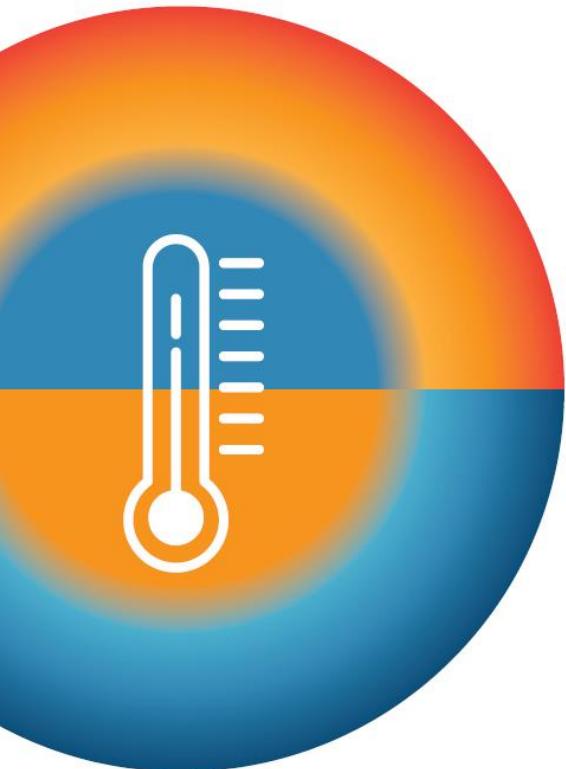


3. When

3. When

- Started in 2020 with 70 shelter spaces, with no extra budget to run the network (currently over 400)
- Number of climate shelter spaces and population served within a **5 minute** and a **10 minute** reach on foot





4. How



Indoor climate shelter in a municipal market.

Source: AjBCN



Outdoor climate shelter in Park Güell indicating cooler areas

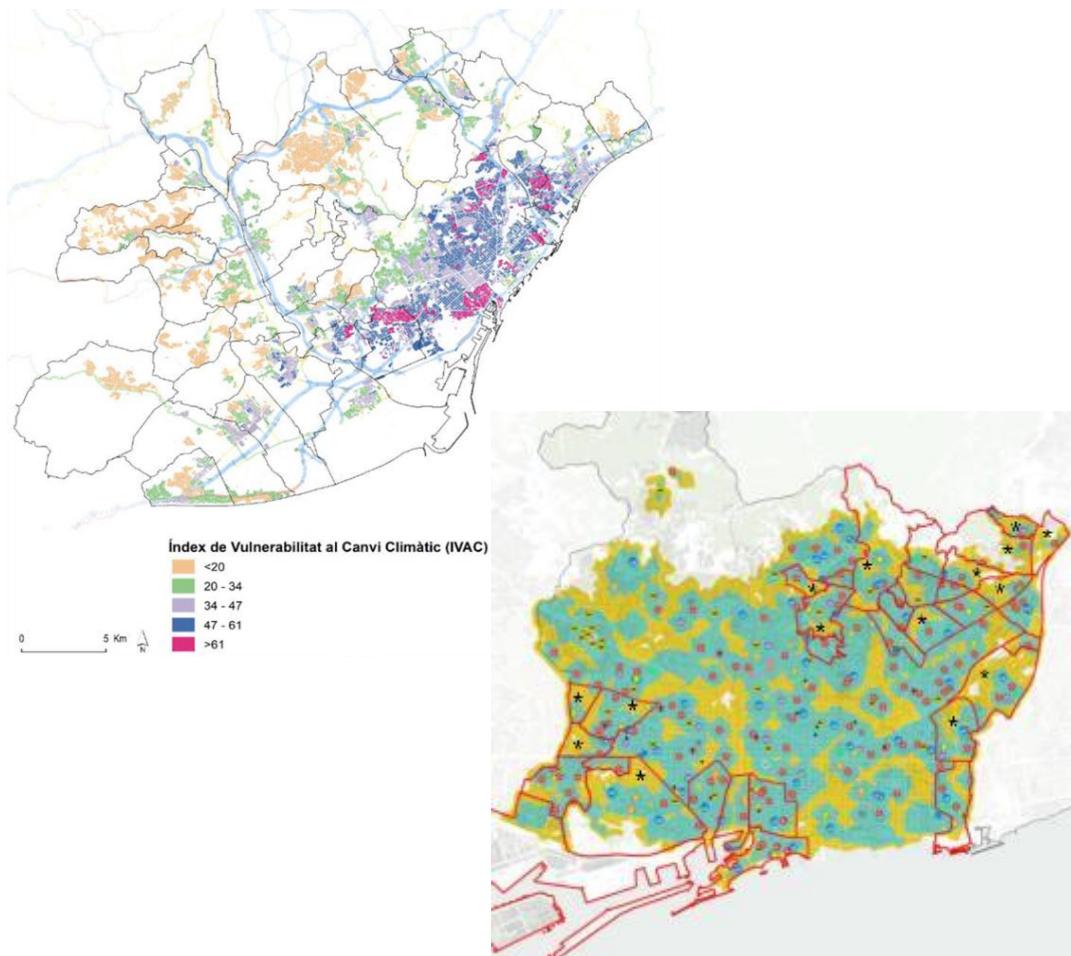
Source: AjBCN

4. How

▪ Governance:

- Coordination team “OCCS” (few civil workers) + district staff + shelter type referents + shelter workers (usual activity, no extra staff)
- Communication protocol: meetings twice per year, extra partial meetings
- Coordination with regional authorities and initiatives
- Usually, **no extra budget to open spaces** (only internal public resources):
 - each shelter has its own usual function, plus allowing usage by citizens in need up to the maximum agreed space (from dozens to 1 seat)
 - extra expenses: communication campaigns and elements, extra technical support from “Barcelona Regional” (public company)

- Seeking **annually** how to improve network in **most vulnerable** areas with low coverage, **new agents**, ...
 - **Public** climate shelter spaces get joined to the Network through the referent of its district or of its equipment type (libraries, municipal sport centers, schools, markets, regional government, etc).
 - **Private** ones and the micro-shelters can join the Network filling up a form in the municipal web
- 2025: **spending exceptional extra budget** to increase coverage opening more public shelters in august



- **Communication campaign**

Web and app “BCN a la Butxaca”

Signaling in shelter spaces + welcome kits

Campaign in media and social networks

2025 pilot: informing squad at the street

Self-printing sheets for each climate shelter space

Diffusion: health & social centres, markets, etc.



- **Feed-back** from citizens: web form. Very useful for issue detection

- **Field work** to assess the network of climate shelter spaces

- **Protocol of internal communication**

- What climate shelter spaces have to do

- What the managing team of the network have to do

- **Training** to care workers from the Home Care Service (S.A.D.)





Lessons learned

- Help people commit to the project. Create Community
- A project-leader team helps
- Good GIS analysis, and consider also weekends & holidays
- Outdoor spaces might not provide expected climatic confort when temperatures too high
- Take into account vulnerability (people, areas, buildings ...)
- Good digital support tools required
- Communication dept. deeply involved in the project
- Work side by side with Social Rights Division and Urgencies and Emergencies center
- Side effect: provide job to “occupation plans” for field work: join onboard people needing to join market labor, ...

Thanks!

<https://barcelona.cat/refugisclimatics>

refugisclimatics@bcn.cat

Barcelona 

