



European Green Capital Award 2016

City Introduction & Context



An initiative of the
European Commission



2016



Spain

CITY INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Give an introductory overview of the city and a general background to the application.

Discuss positive and negative factors that have influenced the quality of the environment within the city and its surrounding area.

The city's infrastructure plan should be briefly explained.

Applicants are advised to include any former or outstanding environmental legal proceedings in this section.

Zaragoza wants to be Europe Green Capital 2016. The city is prepared to it and has been applying environmental policies with strong citizen support.

Zaragoza (population 698,917) is a historical city that has been inhabited by all the civilizations in Europe had been. Is communication node for 22 million people of the North-East of Spain (*graphic1*)

Since 1998 Zaragoza -through Horizon Strategic Plan 1998-2010 and the Strategic Framework 2020, is working for the future by the idea that the environmental policies are structuring elements:



Graphic 1. Zaragoza in Europ

CO₂ emissions; reduced a 10.5% (2005-2012)

Since 2010 all EU parameters air quality has been fulfilled. PM₁₀ is close to WHO' objectives.

70.14% of the city electricity consume is produced by 653.81 MW of renewable power installed.

Water consumption per inhabitant; reduced a 26.32% (2000-2012)

Site of Expo 2008 "Water and Sustainable Development" and UN Office "Water Decade"

Production of urban waste per inhabitant; reduced a 12% (2000-2012)

38% of the municipal territory is protected

Protected species of fauna and flora has been passed from 57 to193 (2002-2010)

Urban green areas; multiplied by 2.5 (2005-2012).

Therefore, Zaragoza can present right now the following relevant facts.

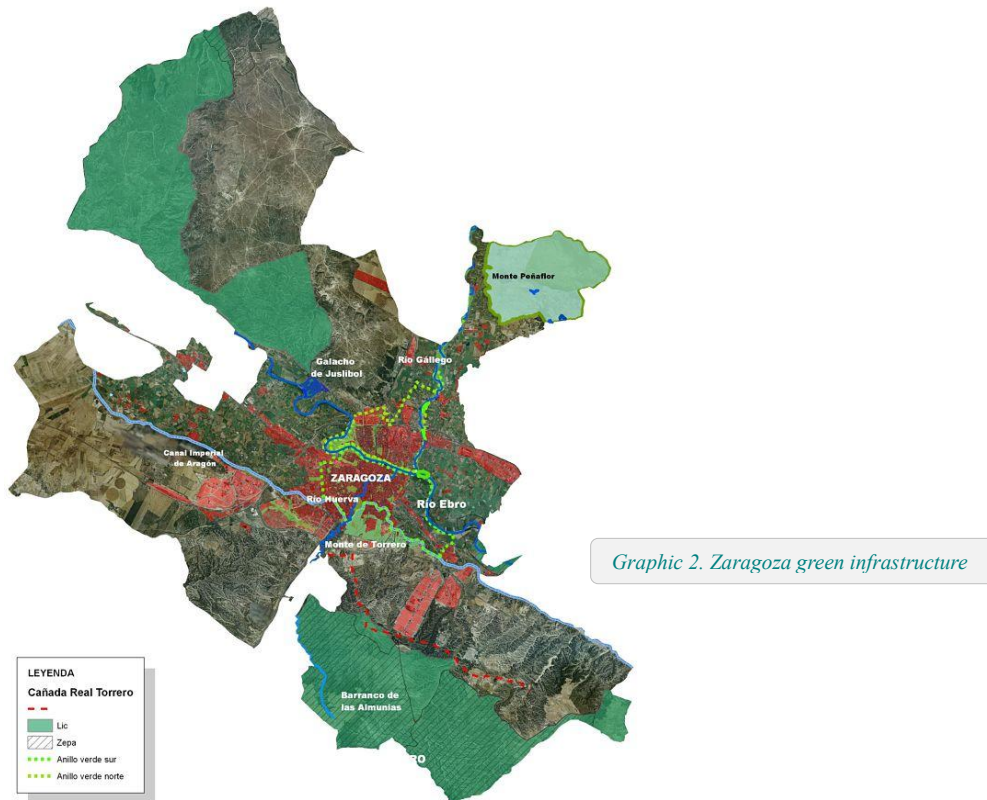
A city towards sustainability

The ecological footprint is 5.2 hectares/inhabitant (2009), one of the lowest in Europe

Zaragoza, a compact and multifunctional city, has a very wide territory with big surfaces for natural and farming areas (*graphic 2*):

Only a 13% of the territory is artificial use; 41% farming; 46% forest and natural vegetation.

Gross density is 7.21 inhab/ha. Net: 151.46 inhab/ha.



Zaragoza is a consolidated city with a ratio of 12.1% m²/inhab of urban green areas (37.6 m²/inhab singular and forest areas).

35% of its territory is protected and shelters 1,213 species of flora and 402 of fauna (11% catalogued).

The Strategy for the Mitigation of Climate Change is a transversal tool affecting housing plans, urban planning, transport, industry and commerce:

Reduction of energy consumption to 24.4 kWh/m²/year in new public bioclimatic households

CO₂ global emissions have fallen a 10.5%; 13.5% per inhabitant (2005-2012). Those produced by urban mobility have decreased a 16.25% and by electric consumption a 27%.

The *Sustainable Mobility Plan* has produced a full reorganization of Zaragoza's traffic (*graphic 3*):

112.11 km cycle roads and 110 km cycling routes.

9.8% population uses the bike everyday.

Tram (North-South) and commuting train (East-West).

Old Town pedestrianized.

As a consequence, the average traffic intensity has been reduced a 14.5%, 28.3% in the city centre.



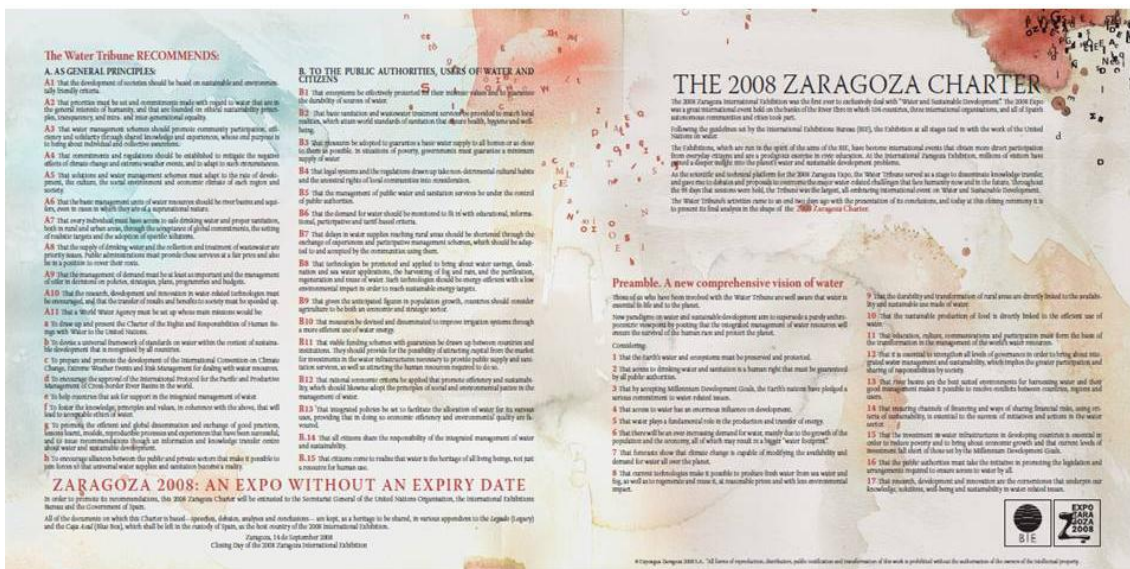
Graphic 3. Quality of life in Zaragoza

The *Air Quality Strategy* is a transversal tool for all municipal departments, producing a reduction of the above mentioned emissions.

It can be stressed PRECOZ system for forecasting pollution indexes 48 hours in advance and allowing it to anticipate emergencies. People are directly and punctually informed.

Thanks to the *Improvement of Water Supply and Management Plan* and the intensive campaigns of awareness, it has been reached a reduction of a 35.8% in water per inhabitant and a 28.4% in home consumption (2000-2012).

Zaragoza holds ZINNAE Cluster, an innovative project on water and energy that pools the main advanced firms of the sector.

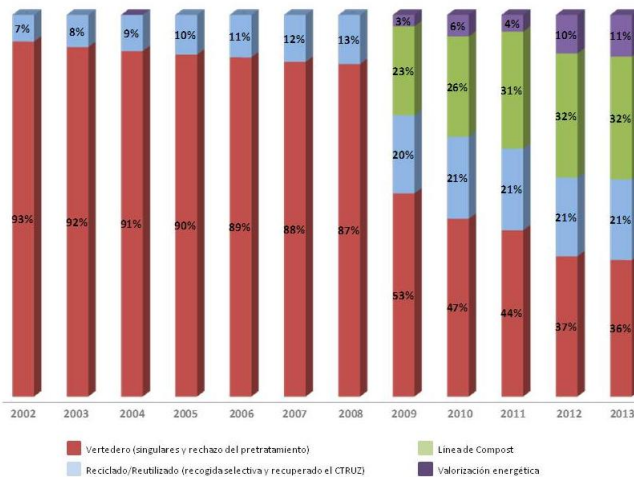


Graphic 4. Zaragoza Chart. Universal Declaration of Water passed by 2010 General Assembly of the United Nations

The *Sanitation and Water Treatment Plan* allows the city to treat a 99% of waste waters. (1% corresponds for few small neighborhoods).

It was one of the firsts Spanish cities to carry out the EC Directive.

Zaragoza has passed *Waste Treatment Aragon Plan* (Regional). In 2009 was launched the modern Waste Treatment Complex allowing the city to send to the dump site an 18.5% of biodegradable matter, compared to the 100% dumped in 2006 (*graphic 5*)



Graphic 5. Evolution of the percentage of the different treatments used

Thanks to the *Fighting against Noise Action Plan* it is estimated that, in determined areas, municipal intervention has produced a reduction of six decibels in noise level (day).

Zaragoza is placed in innovation and *green economy*, production of renewable, innovative systems of water treatment, technological innovation in tram, ecological agriculture and sustainable distribution as well as making good use of the natural environment as a resource of a respectful tourism.



Graphic 6. Zaragoza innovates: Centre of Art and Technology. Digital Mile. H₂O building.

The *Sustainable Energy Management Strategy* has permitted a self-supply of 74% of electric consumption by renewable. Goal for 2020 is to reach full self-supplies.

The Agency of Environment and Sustainability is the municipal tool for planning, management and evaluation of the environmental policies and its transversality.

But still to be done...

The governance of the city and its quality live needs a constant management. The dilemma is to synchronize the citizens’ way of life with environmental demands.

The car is still the most used way of transport and the new traffic regulation has had a strong opposition that the City tries to ease with campaigns of public awareness and citizens’ education.

We have to take into account the economic crisis that forces us to adjust the rhythm of the projects to the current economic capacity. In any case there has been a rejection to develop the policies adopted.

A review of 2020 goals and the launching of the 2030 Strategy are foreseen for the year 2015.



European Green Capital

Zaragoza wants to be European Green Capital because:

It has proved its initiative and leadership to develop environmental policies that have given a positive result and count with a Broad Citizens' support

It is a city with defined strategies and projects

Is planning for 2030 a project of a zero-carbon emissions city in which the green economy will be the axis of innovation, energy efficiency, renewable, preservation of the territory and biodiversity.

Zaragoza's recognition as a Green Capital would be the appropriate incentive to reaffirm these policies. Its citizens and its civil society, that has been very active through the Council of Agenda 21, would have a motif of reflection to remove the doubts about the advisability of these actions.

The Award would grant a European City image, an impulse to its quality of life and would be an attraction to new investment and green jobs.

The selection process would develop a participatory proposal; design specific program of activities and environmental improvement plan.

Moreover, the cost of the designation as Green Capital is perfectly acceptable by the Council Budget.



Zaragoza. Parks with Heart