

THE CONSORCI DE LA ZONA FRANCA CONFIRMS THE
CELEBRATION OF THE SIXTH EDITION OF THE BNEW IN
OCTOBER 2025

BNEW 2024 ends a successful edition with more than 12.700 professional visitors

- The 5th edition of the Barcelona New Economy Week registered participants from 106 countries and facilitated more than 10.000 networking contacts, presenting challenges and solutions in the face of an economic scenario that is evolving at a dizzying pace, requiring us to be prepared to adapt to all the changes.
- More than 350 *speakers* have offered 140 hours of content distributed in 100 panels, sessions and debates in 7 sectors connected simultaneously among them: Digital Industry, Mobility, Sustainability, Aviation, Talent, Health and Experience.
- Spain's competitiveness in the development of air connectivity, the importance of young and senior talent and the advances in the health sector thanks to the application of new technologies mark the program of the last day.

Barcelona, 10 October 2024.- The fifth edition of the **Barcelona New Economy Week (BNEW)**, organized by the **Consorti de la Zona Franca de Barcelona (CZFB)**, has established itself as the major benchmark event for the new economy with a record participation of attending professionals.

During these last four days, **12.746 professionals – 7.522 face-to-face and 5.224 online** – have enjoyed all the panels, sessions and debates on the new socio-economic challenges faced by companies, large corporations and startups in the development of industry 4.0. This new edition of BNEW has been the perfect opportunity to establish more than **10.129 networking contacts** thanks to the state-of-the-art digital platform developed specifically by the CZFB.

Pere Navarro, state delegate in the Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona, highlighted, as a final balance of this fifth edition: ***"BNEW has exceeded all expectations of attendance in an edition that has contributed to shed light on the large number of changes and***

advances that are taking place and for which we must be prepared. Once again, we have generated new business opportunities, created alliances to respond to great challenges, and shared knowledge and experiences among professionals. In just 5 editions, BNEW has contributed to positioning the city of Barcelona as one of the great world capitals of the new economy". Navarro also announced that the Consortium is already working on the sixth edition of the event to be held in 2024, and that the new dates will be announced shortly.

For her part, **Blanca Sorigué**, general director of the Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona, noted that *"BNEW has connected all the sectors we have brought together – talent, sustainability, mobility, health, aviation and digital industry – because we live in a very dynamic world that is continuously changing. No sector today can be understood without everything else."* Sorigué added that *"after this fifth edition we can categorically affirm that BNEW has established itself as an essential event among the B2B sector that evolves every year to offer a unique and disruptive event with a spectacular staging".*

The 2024 edition has given prominence to seven key interconnected verticals: **Digital Industry, Mobility, Sustainability, Aviation, Talent, Health and Experience**. Seven major themes that have promoted synergies between them to discuss the application of new technologies and face the challenges of the new economy. **DFactory Barcelona**, the internationally renowned industry 4.0 ecosystem promoted by the Zona Franca de Barcelona, has turned Barcelona into the world capital of the new economy, bringing together more than **350 speakers** who have offered **140 hours of content** distributed in **100 panels, sessions and debates**.

Healthtech: accessible and sustainable

On the last day of BNEW, he highlighted the holding of a session on the application of new technologies in the health sector, which is leading to great medical advances and allowing operations that were not possible before. **Santiago de Torres**, Executive Chairman of Atrys Health, moderated this session, which was attended by **Josep María Campistol**, General Manager of the Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, **Manel del Castillo**, Managing Director of the Hospital Sant Joan de Déu in Barcelona, and **Montserrat Vendrell**, co-founding partner of Aliath Bioventures.

Josep María Campistol explained that *"we are in a very complex moment for healthcare worldwide due to the significant increase in demand, the lack of professionals and funding. This generates problems of sustainability, accessibility, and equity. The only way to reverse this situation is through technology. A better future requires disruption, boldness, and new healthcare profiles".*

For his part, **Manel del Castillo** stressed that *"it is becoming increasingly clear that if we want to improve accessibility, we must reduce the workload of less value-added tasks of professionals, with other support professionals and with the help of technologies.*

Technology is a great ally, allowing us to create the so-called liquid hospital: having patients at home and attending to them thanks to telemedicine. In this way, technology can be an element of humanization, allowing us to look at, listen to, and better attend to patients”.

Finally, **Montserrat Vendrell** commented on how investors have a key role in analyzing the disruptions that are emerging, what potential they have, ***“who will pay for it, which hospitals could benefit, how the market will respond, the patients... We see very good technologies, but the challenge is to see how they can be introduced into the system. We must support technology because its impact is transversal in the world of health, advances like AI are transforming the entire value chain and have great potential to improve diagnoses and treatments, and the sustainability of the system”.***

Strategic Projections for the Development of Air Routes in Spain

Another of the outstanding presentations of today's session was *"Strategic Projections for the Development of Air Routes in Spain in a Global Context"* by the BNEW Aviation vertical, which this year has been launched as a featured vertical. The debate, moderated by **Jaume Adrover**, CEO of GPA, was attended by **Ignacio Biosca**, Director of Data and Aeronautical Market at AENA, **Jordi Pla**, Interim Chief Network and Strategy Officer at Vueling, and **Gabriel Schmilovich**, General Manager of Strategy at Volotea.

This session offered a comprehensive view of Spain's competitiveness in the development of air connectivity, both present and future, considering airlines, airport infrastructure and current demand, assessing their capacity to continue growing.

During his speech, **Ignacio Biosca** highlighted that ***“Spain is the fifth country in the world in terms of passenger numbers, only behind countries with a larger size, such as the United States, China, or India. This means we are very competitive, because to compete we need many profitable routes. In fact, the Airports Association, in their traffic forecasts, tells us that in 2050 we will still be in this position. This confirms us as a tourist destination, but there are also other factors to consider, such as the capacity of airports, costs, and efficient operations”.***

In **Jordi Pla**'s opinion: ***“Barcelona is already an air hub with very significant values; it has a good geographical location and low-cost services that today offer multiple short-haul destinations. This short-haul connectivity will allow it to continue growing and to become an airport with even more long-haul connections. Likewise, it is essential to give importance to direct competitiveness, but without underestimating indirect competitiveness: although Vueling predominantly operates point-to-point, we also offer connectivity between other secondary cities”.***

Finally, **Gabriel Schmilovich** commented that ***“the train is a strategic method, as some passengers can arrive by plane and complete their journey by train. This increases opportunities for customers. Our challenge is for the industry to be sustainable, to***

reduce CO2 emissions, but it's a task for everyone. We need institutions that can offer us SAF, the most ecological and clean fuel, so that the future of aviation can develop in a more sustainable way".

The role of young people in the new economy

Within the BNEW Talent vertical, the mayors of Viladecans and Cerdàniola del Vallès, and the mayors of Gavà, Sant Feliu de Llobregat and Sant Boi de Llobregat, have presented their projects to energize young people and motivate them with technological and sustainable challenges.

Similarly, the last day of BNEW has also hosted a series of meetings in which 30 startups, selected from among the 170 startups participating in BNEW 2024, have been able to explain their projects and share their talent with different investors and corporates.

The Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona has confirmed that there will be a sixth edition of the Barcelona New Economy Week in October 2025.

About the Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona

The Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona is a public company that acts as a driver for the technological and industrial development by providing support to companies in their transition to the digital age. Boosts innovation through the 3D Incubator and Logistics 4.0 Incubator; promotes the transformation of Industry 4.0 from the DFactory Barcelona technology hub and connects the new economy and its key socio-economic sectors. It organises congresses of economic interest for Barcelona, such as the largest logistics trade fair in Spain and Southern Europe, the SIL, as well as major benchmark events with an innovative format such as the Barcelona New Economy Week (BNEW) or the Barcelona Woman Acceleration Week (BWAW).

Its plenary has representatives from the Spanish government, the Generalitat of Catalonia, the Barcelona City Council, and the main economic entities of the city.

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