

City of Gijon Integrated Action Plan

 **2ND
CHANCE**
**WAKING UP THE
SLEEPING GIANTS**



European Union
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Driving change for
better cities



Strategy of Gijón for the reactivation and reuse of the Old Tobacco Factory

English summary of the Integrated Action Plan in the framework of the 2nd Chance network Waking up the "sleeping giants"



Date: March 2018

Strategy of Gijón for the reactivation and reuse of the Old Tobacco Factory

English summary of the Integrated Action Plan

- 1. Initial situation.**
- 2. Vision & objectives for the reactivation.**
- 3. Functions & uses for the building.**
- 4. Actions & next steps for the reactivation.**
- 5. Management & Governance structure for the building and the reactivation process**
- 6. The elaboration process of the reactivation strategy.**
- 7. General prospect dealing with vacant properties in Gijón.**
- 8. Contacts.**

1 Initial situation

Gijón is a city that has a deep will to promote the sustainable urban development of the municipality that has lived an authentic industrial regeneration. For years, it has taken part in a large amount of initiatives with the aim of making Gijón a more efficient city in a multilevel system.

It starts from the need to rehabilitate vacant buildings for a sustainable development of the city. This dynamic will boost the rich heritage of the municipality providing new services to the public.

An example of this is its participation in the 2nd Chance project for the regeneration of disused spaces. The building of *Tabacalera*, is one of the most significant spaces of our city, for its historical component and for having been one of the main economic engines of the city during the years in which the Factory of tobacco production was active.

Our target building is the most complete architectural example of the city because in place it gathers the most important historical moments of Gijon. Thus we have vestiges of Roman times such as the deposit and well located in the cloister space, the monastery of the Augustinian Recollects whose construction began in 1670 and consists of cloister, church and vicar, volumes that are still preserved today and finally the remains of the Tobacco Factory that left the traces patents in the previous spaces.

Having a building of such characteristics, and with the possibilities that a space like *Tabacalera* offers, makes it necessary to get involved in its regeneration and involve all sectors of the city, to help in its awakening.

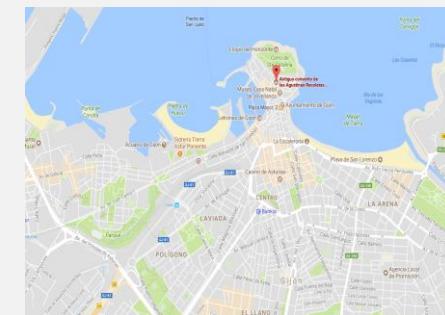
Old Tobacco Factory (AKA <i>Tabacalera</i>)	Periodista Arturo Arias Square, 12, 33.201, Gijón, Asturias.												
Owner: Gijón City Council	Size (m ²): 8.931 m ² built Vacant since: 2002												
Surfaces according with the construction phases:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Phase</th><th>Useful</th><th>Built</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Original situation</td><td>3.736,27</td><td>6.087,40</td></tr> <tr> <td>Consolidation phase</td><td>5.702,43</td><td>8.931,45</td></tr> <tr> <td>New annex buildings</td><td>3.159,28</td><td>3.508,84</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Phase	Useful	Built	Original situation	3.736,27	6.087,40	Consolidation phase	5.702,43	8.931,45	New annex buildings	3.159,28	3.508,84
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Location

The *Tabacalera* building is located in Cimavilla, the upper district of the city which has a population density of 2,769 inhabitants, a place where fishermen, cigar makers, soldiers and artisans have lived together.

Despite not being the largest neighbourhood in Gijón in terms of population and extension, it emerges in the upper area of the city as a social meeting point, bringing together in its streets the old and historic centre of Gijón (it is the neighbourhood that gave rise to our current municipality), having been a protagonist of the Roman, medieval settlement, nerve centre of the current sports port of Gijón, among others; premises that make the neighbourhood an authentic outdoor museum, full of places with great historical, cultural and gastronomic components.

Within the neighbourhood, *Tabacalera* is presiding over the Periodista Arturo Arias Square (popular journalist of the city) core of the neighbourhood of Cimavilla, being a social meeting point for generations of Gijón and the epicentre of the neighbourhood.



Physical conditions

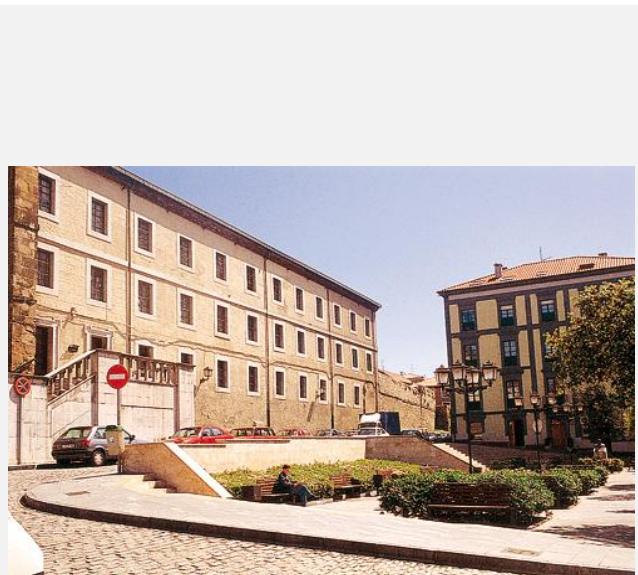
Currently, the building is part of a process of structural and constructive consolidation in order to stop the process of deterioration that the passage of time is subjecting to the building:

- Stabilization of the structure of the whole set.
- Insulation and protection of the building against atmospheric agents.
- Adaptation of facades and exterior elements of the historical environment in which it is located.
- Preparation of the complex for its future public use.

With these premises the development of the following works has been defined:

- Consolidation of the old convent and church.
- Restructuring of the old vicarage.
- Excavation and construction of the basement that will house the storage rooms and facilities, the server spaces and the main access from María Bandujo street.

The adaptation of the property to any specific use is not the subject of this Phase I.



2 Vision & objectives for the reactivation

Vision

The working document (key of the European project) conceives the Tabacalera building as an abstract space, which can make the uses of a laboratory for citizen participation, being a pretext to promote the redesign and reconstruction of our city.

In this context, the purpose of the Integrated Action Plan is to provide the building with long-term sustainable solutions that allow:

- Open communication channels in the relations between citizens and their institutions through citizen participation.
- Regenerate the social, cultural and economic fabric of the neighbourhood and the city.
- Preserve and enhance the tangible and intangible heritage.

The fusion of these three lines of work has organized the tasks of the URBACT Local Group during all its working sessions.

Objectives and benefits

The objectives that are exposed next, respond to a conception of the social, economic, historical and labour reality of the city and of Cimavilla.

With them, it is intended to address the problems exposed during the participatory process, assemblies and meetings:

Social:

- **Active inclusion:** everyone, regardless of class, gender or age, must have a public and open meeting, training and integration space in Tabacalera. While we are working to try to reverse it, we must bear in mind that the aging of the population of Gijón is a reality that must promote the search for strategies to transmit memory and heritage to new generations. Through various activities Tabacalera

must be a space of enrichment from the intergenerational coexistence.

- **Urban dynamisation:** Tabacalera must be a flexible and evolving space; an open space that offers continuous services, but can also respond to new and specific needs. Open to the neighbourhood and to the city, it must be a lever of change that causes an effective activation of daily life in Cimavilla and Gijón.
- **Cooperation:** Tabacalera must be a place to exchange training and experiences. From commitment and respect, we must seek to enhance the existing wealth in the integration of profiles and complementary interests, thus enhancing creativity.
- **Personal development:** Tabacalera must be a place of training in the broadest sense of the term. Inhabitants and visitors must have in Tabacalera a place of reference in which to develop formatively and personally. In that sense, the development of an educational activity and training

in the surrounding space of the building would be of great importance for its interaction with the activities carried out in it.

Economic:

- **Circular Economy and Sustainability:** An efficient use of resources will be promoted in order to maximize the potential of the materials and products. In this way, a sustainable, clean and competitive economy will be promoted.
- **Creative cultural economy:** the building must be a place from which to think, design and carry out formulas that allow cultural and creative activities to have a greater economic profitability. Through the joint effort of institutions, groups and individuals its necessary to carry out policies that allow the passage of amateur to professional so that this reverses positively in the neighbourhood and the city through the generation of

economic income, dignifying working conditions of the creative professions.

Historical:

- **Historical memory:** Tabacalera has to give testimony of its reality as a building that exemplifies the past of the neighbourhood and the city from its Roman origin, its religious era and its recent factory activity. These wickers are an essential part of the identity of Cimavilla and Gijón. For that reason they not only have to be preserved, also put into value through exhibitions, workshops and activities.

Employment:

- **Labour Attraction:** Asturias, traditional and currently, is the land of emigrants. Tabacalera in itself and the dynamism that it will cause in the city must serve as an

incentive for the recovery and conservation of generations that, due to the absence of possibilities, continue to be forced to abandon their environment. Tabacalera, together with other policies that reinforce its activities, must seek to offer personal and work development contexts.

- **Inter-generational learning:** the aging of the population of Gijón is a reality that should stimulate the search for strategies to transmit memory and the possibilities offered by traditional trades to new generations. Through various activities and projects, Tabacalera must be a space for enrichment through coexistence and inter-generational learning.

- **Diversification of the economic model:** Tabacalera must be a pole of cultural and economic activity that contributes to diversify the fabric of the city through the development of industry and employment in the cultural and creative sphere.

3. Functions & uses for the building (site)

Initial approach

Tabacalera obeys a conceptual triangle composed of three uses connected and fed back to each other: think, produce and show.

Thinking:

Tabacalera must be a space to think and design the cultural, social and economic transformation of the city. It will include reunion and meeting spaces among the agents involved in the activity that will host the building and that will allow the creation of synergies and facilitate the conception and implementation of projects that may arise.

Production:

It would be to generate dynamics so that tangible production can appear in the environment of the activity of the building.

Regarding intangible production, *Tabacalera* will be the space for the production of ideas and knowledge regarding artistic creation and social action.

For this reason, we believe that the establishment in *Tabacalera* of a physical and periodic meeting point is essential, in which meetings among the administration, civil society and the private environment take place, with the aim of seeking new types of closer and more dynamic relations between these agents.

In any case, the work in *Tabacalera* will seek an appropriate integration with the activity of the neighborhood.

Showing:

The Tobacco Factory must be a space that, on the one hand, tells the history of the city, from its Roman origin to the industrial age, paying special attention to the history of the women who inhabited the building. And on the other, it must continue to be an active part of the economic, social and cultural transformation of the city.

Functions and uses

Tabacalera must be a dynamic project, open to present and future needs through a set of modular and multi-purpose spaces. It is believed that, at least at this time, it would be difficult to ascribe specific uses to each meter of the building, since it would limit the possibility of dialogue and experimentation necessary for the creativity. Therefore, without setting out an exhaustive list of specific uses, we propose some axes that we consider vital to respond to the objectives defined in this *Integrated Action Plan*. Each of these axes, in turn, crosses the three components of the general model: Thinking; Production; and Showing.

Creation axis: It will be sought that Tabacalera acts as a binder of cultural and creative production in the city, as well as a catalyst for new activities, with the aim of enhancing the economic dimension of the cultural and creative sector as a source of sustainable and dignified employment. To achieve this, it is necessary to take into account established agents that are signs of cultural identity of the city, incorporating them to take advantage of their traction capacity and establishing around them

creation, design and work spaces that enhance their transversal character.

Museum and exhibition axis: Tabacalera has a museum character that gives historical testimony of the heterogeneous identity of the city. On this basis, the contents and activities of the building will be articulated, taking as reference the women who worked in it. The dissemination of heritage and cultural production will seek social return through interdisciplinary formulas so that users and citizens can participate in them in an active way.

Social and participatory axis. Tabacalera must necessarily be connected to its neighborhood and its city. This connection will result in a continuous search for Tabacalera as a place to meet and reflect on the moment of cultural, economic and social transformation that Cimavilla and Gijón are experiencing that will encourage transformative initiatives, serving as the nucleus of citizen participation in the design of municipal policies related to its activity and incorporating the social fabric of the neighborhood and the city.

4. Actions & next steps for the reactivation

In 2009, a contest was held for the transformation of the *Tabacalera* complex in the Gijón Museum. In 2012, the corresponding Execution Project was drafted, in 2015 the Consolidation Project, which is actually the first phase of the previous one, and in 2016 the construction works started.

All this architectural process, including the construction work, turns around of the adaptation of the *Tabacalera* building for its global use as a museum. On the other hand, the municipal Plenary commissioned the development of a process of citizen participation in order to update the functions and uses of the original project. This participatory process took place between the end of 2016 and during the year 2017. As a summary of the process, the following conclusions were reached:

1. The potentialities of the building are exploited to explain and interpret the history of Gijón, integrating the story into the global discourse of the other patrimonial facilities of the city.

2. The uses linked to the creative processes are maintained, also opening them to the community.
3. It is proposed the creation of a cultural center of proximity, participatory and open, that contributes to community development and cohesion and that becomes a dynamic agent of the life and activity of the neighborhood and its neighbors, generating a daily flow of users that will make *Tabacalera* a living space, a space where things happen every day.

As a result, *Tabacalera* was proposed to be an equipment at the service of the community dedicated to the processes of creation, engine of the transformation of Gijón throughout its history, its transformation in the present moment and its projection in the future.

ACTIONS	
PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBLE	INVOLVED AGENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gijón City Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood associations. • Local URBACT Group. Second Chance. • <i>Tabacalera</i> Platform. • Other groups in the city.
RELACIÓN DE ACCIONES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses and initial functions. • Adequacy of the building. • First uses of the building • Promotion of <i>Tabacalera</i> Building as Historical Heritage. • Inclusion of <i>Tabacalera</i> Project in regional, national and European work lines. • Financing projects. 	
CALENDARIO APROXIMADO	
2018-2022	

5. Management & Governance structure for the building (site) and the reactivation process

The collaboration between the economic sector, the City Council and the social movements of the city is essential as result of diversity of actors involved and the potential impact of the activities that take shape in *Tabacalera*, in the neighborhood and in the city. The main objective in the design of the uses that will take place in the building is to respond to the aspirations that the different actors involved have projected about it, opening spaces of consensus and collaboration in which society can propose activities, initiatives and economic, social or personal growth projects of the people who intervene in them.

The public-private and social collaboration will allow all the actors to find their role in each of the activities developed in the building: either actively, participating in one or another form of the *Tabacalera* ecosystem, or proactively, designing, executing and evaluating the different projects.

The inclusion of social movements, local initiatives of circular economy, collaborative and innovation in municipal public management have to go hand in hand in the definition of uses of *Tabacalera*. It is essential that all the actors work together creating a space for permanent learning. If we put the focus on the process, we will ensure the success in the result; so the collaboration in the management of *Tabacalera* could be in itself an ideal scenario in which all the agents win.

All the agents, Institutional, social, cultural, business, producers, entrepreneurs, students, professionals, and citizens as a whole will find a space in which to collaborate, through open formulas that allow adapting to the specialties of each person, each group or each project, fleeing from closed formulas. This co-management model offers a formula that allows preserving the independence and identity of each of these actors while offering the possibility of generating synergies and collaboration strategies.

In summary, the co-design, the co-execution and the co-evaluation of the policies aimed at promoting activity in *Tabacalera* should be the backbone of the relationship between the Administration

and the different agents who are part of the innovation and economic and social development movement, to achieve a space of collective growth and a more prosperous and diverse future for the city.

6. The elaboration process of the reactivation strategy.

The convergence of the urban regeneration models reflected at the projects developed by the URBACT Program and the situation of our vacant building at 2016 was one of the reasons that increase the feeling to participate by the Gijon City Council at this project.

In parallel, a remarkable process of association was born at the neighborhood with the target of reactivate the building of *Tabacalera*.

The consequence of these processes it's the embryo of a reactivation strategy that involved transversal sectors linked with the building, the neighborhood and the city and that joined efforts to create the present document.

In October 2016, the ULG of the 2nd Chance project was created in Gijón, involving representatives of the public administration, the neighbors of the barrio and different sector involved with the building and the city.

The ULG represents a meeting point among the different initiatives develop around the building and the barrio till the moment.

The final goal of all this common work is to guarantee the enrichment of the project through an active listening for greater efficiency of the final plan of uses of the building taking into account the citizen participation generated around *Tabacalera*.

This confluence of public and private actions, connect between them and represents a gradual method at the constitution of a route to reactive *Tabacalera* orientated by the URBACT methodology reflected at the current ULG.

7. General prospect dealing with vacant properties in Gijón.

The URBACT model to deal with vacant buildings and spaces is and will be an important tool in conjunction with others at time to confront future regenerations of vacant urban spaces at our city.

The works executed during the two years on the frame of the project have generated a tendency of collaborative job among the different sectors involved that we can reuse in other vacant spaces at the Gijón city. The methodology to replicate the model has the following aspects basically:

- Identification of the vacant space.
- Necessary measures to adopt a solution.
- First contact with associations and groups with a prominent role in the social environment.
- Common work following the URBACT methodology.
- Opening of an interlocution with the Administration.
- Development of a participative process.
- Presentation and debate around the different proposals.

- Elaboration of an Integrated Action Plan according with the URBACT instructions.

This URBACT Good Practice encourages the citizen interaction and the search of a consensus among all the sectors involved. Also, it allows to our city the consecution of new goals at different levels as could be the development of new cultural areas or economic activities; the generation of employment or the boost of synergies.

Its future application at the city will be more than desired in order of the results that the 2nd Chance Project has generated throughout its execution both from the point of view of the local Administration, as well as from all the sectors that have been involved and grown together with the first in the achievement of reactivating *Tabacalera*.

8. Contacts

MEMBER	WEBSITE
European Affairs Department	https://internacional.gijon.es/
Municipal Foundation of Culture	http://cultura.gijon.es/
IMPULSA Enterprises	https://impulsa.gijon.es/
Municipal Service of Architecture and Maintenance	http://www.gijon.es
Municipal Service of Planning and modernization	http://www.gijon.es
General Direction of Infrastructures	http://www.gijon.es
Gijón Film Festival	http://www.gijonfilmfestival.com
Permacultural Laboral Space	http://www.laboralpermacultural.com/
Tabacalera Platform	https://www.facebook.com/tabacaleragijon/
Cimavilla Neighbors Association	http://avvcaigia.blogspot.com.es/p/asociacion.html
Tragacantos Cultural Association	-
Videogames Creative Association	http://www.uneva.org/web/
Music Box	-
Local Editors Book Association	-
Hospitality Association	-
Jovellanos Neighbors Association	http://avvjovellanos.blogspot.com.es/



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