



# Elche a City to Invest in



Ayuntamiento de Elche



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**Ayuntamiento de Elche**

Concejalía de Empresa y Empleo

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# Elche a city to invest in

“Elche is an Oasis of palm trees, unique in the Mediterranean”



Elche, a city accommodating over 232,000 inhabitants, is the province of Alicante's second largest, the third in the Valencian Community and the twentieth in Spain (the fourth largest if we don't count provincial capitals).

The municipal limits occupy 326.07 km<sup>2</sup> and enjoy their very own combination of terrain and landscape: countryside, coastline and mountains. Within the municipal boundaries we find 33 dependent areas.

## The Mediterranean Basin

Elche enjoys a privileged position in the centre of what is known as the Spanish Mediterranean Basin, which itself is part of one of the major axes of European development. The five regions which make up the Mediterranean Basin, Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Murcia, Andalusia and the Balearic Islands accommodate over half the national population and generate over half Spanish economic activity.

## Urban Resources

The city enjoys excellent resources in human, cultural, social and economic terms, which have been key factors contributing to progress and quality of life and in providing elements to make the city competitive.

Elche enjoys a series of attributes which make it an ideal city in which to live and work as well as for investment in the development of business initiatives and projects.

## A creative city

Elche is a dynamic, enterprising city, ideal for developing new business opportunities and job creation as it enjoys a series of key location factors for business activities.

## Quality and sustainability

The Elche City Authorities are applying a local development policy based on the concepts of quality and sustainability, encouraging the compatibility of territorial use for economic activities linked with conservation and giving high value to environmental, landscape and cultural assets.

# The major economic activity location factors in Elche

01. Easy access to markets and clients
02. A consolidated business base already present
03. The existence of qualified personnel
04. Available space for economic activities
05. Local support policies for business creation
06. Innovative service and technological network for companies
07. The quality city environment
08. Efficient urban transport
09. Unique natural environment
10. Excellent choice of leisure and cultural activities



# 01. Easy access to markets and clients

“The Mediterranean Corridor is a priority infrastructure in the European Transport Network”

The excellent communications, transport connections and infrastructures to and from Elche provide easy access to markets and national and international clients.

## The Mediterranean Corridor

Land, air and maritime transport available to the city ease the movement and transportation of people and goods within the so called Mediterranean Corridor.

The Mediterranean Corridor stretches all the way from Algeciras to Helsinki and is considered as a strategic communications axis given its high potential for moving passengers and freight; its commissioning will have high economic, social and territorial impact.

## Transport Communications

From Elche there is direct access to the Mediterranean Toll Motorway and to the Dual Carriageway, the axes which follow the length of the coastline from France to Algeciras.

The city is connected directly to Alicante (22 Km) by way of the Vía Parque, with Murcia (63.8 Km) by way of the Autovía del Mediterráneo, with Madrid (432 Km) by the Autovía A-31 and with Barcelona (566 Km) via the Autopista del Mediterráneo.



# 01. Easy access to markets and clients

“From “El Altet” Airport  
over 50 airlines  
fly to more than 75  
destinations”

## **Airport**

“El Altet” International Airport is within the municipal boundaries of Elche and carries the sixth largest number of passengers of all the Spanish airports: AENA figures recorded that in 2011, 9,913,764 passengers went through El Altet.

In 2011, new Airport installations were inaugurated so the terminal now covers 333,500 m<sup>2</sup>, with 6,740 parking spaces and a potential operating capacity of 20 million passengers.

## **Rail Connections**

At present Elche has rail connections to both Alicante and Murcia, and has plans drawn up for a modern functional station for the High Speed Train on the Levante Line which will run through four Autonomous Communities: Madrid, Castilla La Mancha, Comunidad Valenciana and Región de Murcia.

## **Port**

Elche is very close to the Port of Alicante which boasts specialised services and installations making it ideal for both passengers and freight. It is mainly used for boats going to and from Europe, America, North Africa and the Balearic and Canary Islands. One of its highlights is the arrival of Cruise liners.



## 02. A consolidated business base already present

“Elche - World Shoe Capital”

Elche enjoys a consolidated industrial and business base which is needed for the creation and development of enterprising and innovative initiatives for job and company creation.

### **Diversification**

Diversification of the local economic structure rests on the existence of a range of business activities in the fields of agriculture, commerce, construction, industry, services, transport and logistics as well, of course, as tourism. The structure is characterised by a large quantity of dynamic small and medium sized companies and a large number of self-employed people with great capacity for enterprise.

### **The Footwear Industry**

Elche is well-known as a city with strong links to shoemaking as it is the main producer, seller and exporter of shoes in Spain and as such is an international benchmark in the sector in terms of fashion, design and brands.

The shoemaking tradition has, in turn, initiated auxiliary and complementary industries in response to the sector needs for evolution through technological innovation and development.

### **Business Culture**

The local business community stands out thanks to its enterprising, creative and innovative attitude and for its capacity to develop new business opportunities.



## 03. The existence of qualified personnel

“There are 3 Universities offering over 100 qualifications”

Elche offers a wide selection of well trained and qualified personnel at competitive working costs.

### Human Capital

The workforce in Elche is quite well-qualified and is well known for its capacity to adapt to the needs of the labour market.

This qualified personnel is the base on which the great enterprising, entrepreneurial and innovative dynamism so typical of Elche, rests.

### Higher Education

Higher Education available is provided by the Universidad Miguel Hernández, the Universidad CEU Cardenal Herrera and the National Distance Learning University (UNED).

Elche is also home to a chapter of the Mediterranean Industrial Organisation School EOI Mediterráneo, one of the most renowned business schools in Spain which is directly linked to the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism and where varied programmes, Masters degrees and other post-graduate courses take place.

### Languages

A high level of language training is available; the courses at the Official School of Languages being especially good.

### Social Climate

As a consequence of the capacity to communicate between the different professional associations and the main trade unions, in general the city enjoys a reasonable framework of labour relations and a healthy social climate.



## 04. Available space for economic activities

“Elche Business Park an excellent place to locate a business”

Elche can provide a wide range of business premises (plots with infrastructure and buildings for industrial and commercial use, offices and shops) in strategic locations with good access, infrastructures and quality services all at competitive prices.

### PIMESA

Elche City Council has used a state-owned company, “Promociones e Iniciativas Municipales de Elche S.A.” (PIMESA), to develop and transform land in preparation for business activities; “Elche Parque Empresarial”, being a prime example along with “Parque Agroalimentario La Alcudia” and “Bulevar Parque”. Building.

### Elche Parque Empresarial

The most important municipal act has been the creation of the Business Park, “Elche Parque Empresarial”, now housing over 500 companies and employing over 11,000 workers.

Elche Parque Empresarial is outstanding in terms of its excellent services and infrastructure, great modern design and urban planning along with special architectural features, a wide range of economic sectors, the existing business acumen and the creation of a pleasant working environment enjoying good conditions.



## 04. Available space for economic activities

“Quality land and buildings at competitive prices”

### Attracting Businesses

To encourage the implantation of new business projects and facilitate the growth of existing companies, Elche City Council is executing an active development and promotional policy for land use for business structured in a series of action points:

- Promotion and commercialisation of available land.
- Development of land classified in the Elche General Plan.
- Economic Action and Urban Renovation affecting the Carrus and Altavix Industrial Estates.
- New land development.

### Property listings

On the [www.pimesa.es](http://www.pimesa.es) website there is a wide Property Listing for business activities available all over the municipal area to enable the localisation and implantation of all types and sizes of business product.



## 05. Local support policies for business creation

“Innovation and creativity are the basis of local development”

Elche City Council is only too aware of the need to create a “new economic model” to improve our city’s competitive acumen and sustain a growth process, by supporting as much as possible all types of enterprising, business and self-employment projects.

### New Economic Model

The idea is to create an environment in the city which is favourable to the creation and attraction of all types of business as well as the growth and/or modernisation of existing firms, with enterprising spirit to develop private investment projects and the initiatives of self-employed workers and SMEs.

It is a new model to give potential to a series of basic concepts for local and economic development:

- Innovation.
- Diversification of economic activity.
- Reindustrialisation of our productive sectors.
- Business cooperation.
- Making our companies international.

### Economic Impulse Plan

The City Council has approved an Economic Impulse Plan for Elche, the main short-term objectives of which are to boost economic activity and the creation of companies and jobs in our city, establishing a series of actions for the promotion of the economy, employment, training, agriculture, commerce, tourism, industry and the development of investment projects.



## 05. Local support policies for business creation

“Tourism is a key sector in which to invest”

### Elche Enterprise

Elche City Council, through the Company and Employment Council, is developing the Elche Enterprise Plan to encourage enterprising activities.

The project is commissioned and managed by the Municipal Enterprise Office which is run by a specialised technical team to help people, investors, and business people wishing to be enterprising in Elche.

The Elche Enterprise plan aims to develop 20 specific structured actions in the following fields:

- Support and the creation and consolidation of companies.
- Encouragement of an enterprising culture.
- Search for funding sources.
- Coordination of the municipal business support system.
- Encouragement of enterprising initiatives and placing Elche in a position as an attractive place to do business.

### Tourism Master Plan

The Tourism Master Plan for Elche aims to convert this sector into the base for a new economic model, encouraging the creation, promotion and commercialisation of characteristic tourist products using and managing the unique local resources (nature, heritage, culture, economic and sporting).

### Mediterranean Oasis

This new politics and strategy for tourism are centred on the concept of “ELCHE A MEDITERRANEAN OASIS”, as it is a city which has all the resources and assets needed to turn it into a prime tourist destination.



## 05. Local support policies for business creation

"New job opportunities are a priority in local government policy"

The Company and Employment Council offers employment, training and labour relations services. The aim is to improve the qualification level of the local pool of job-seekers and make them available to interested companies in accordance with their needs.

### **Municipal Training Centre**

Elche City Council has its own Municipal Training Centre which is able to issue specialised Professional Qualification Certificates, valid for the whole of Spain and confer official accreditation of the professional skills of the holder in a specific trade.

A Training Plan for the unemployed is underway, providing solutions for the specific training needs of companies in the city as well as generating employment.

### **Job Centre**

Professional careers advice and help with self-employment are considered essential to improve access to the employment market as well as increasing awareness of the current job offer and demand, show where the lack of training lies within the list of job-seekers, improve general qualification and training levels and expand the implementation of best practice in HR management, in the definitive pursuit of raising employment levels in Elche.

### **New Job Opportunities**

Through its Local Employment Pact, Elche City Council is working in coordination with the socio-economic agents in the city to ease the unemployment problems by improving both training and the search for new job opportunities.



## 06. Innovative service and technological network for companies

“Business culture in Elche is dynamic and innovative”

To support economic development the city offers a wide range of services for companies.

### Services Network

The European Centre for Innovative Companies in Elche (CEEI), the Alicante Trade Fair Institution (Institución Ferial Alicantina), the Valencian Community Centre for Management of Business Knowledge (CGCE), the Miguel Hernández University Quórum Foundation (Fundación Quórum), the Elche Conference Centre (Centro de Congresos Ciutat d'Elx), the local Chambers of Commerce (Cámara de Comercio) and the Technological Footwear Institute (INESCOP).

Near to Elche we also find the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (trademarks and designs).

### Research

The Universidad Miguel Hernández Elche runs intensive research activity in the Molecular and Cellular Biology Institute “Instituto de Biología Molecular y Celular”, the Bioengineering Institute “Instituto de Bioingeniería”, the Operative Research Institute “Instituto de Investigación Operativa”, other University Departments, The Research Results Transfer Office “Oficina de Transferencia de Resultados de Investigación OTRI”, the Technical Research Services covering the fields of Science and Engineering, Research Groups and Professors and the Sports Research Centre.

### Science-Business Park

The Fundación Quórum manages the Elche Business Park at the Miguel Hernández University and its mission is to boost the coordination of business actions and the University in the fields of Science, Technological Development and Innovation as well as the management of any activities that contribute to the promotion and rendering more competitive of companies through technology transfer from university research.



## 07. The quality city environment

“Elche enjoys a high level of infrastructure, equipment and services in the fields of education, social amenities, health and sport”

Elche City Council is investing in the creation and maintenance of a safe, clean and accessible city with plenty of green areas and areas for public use.

### Education

Education available in Elche in the public, private and semi-private sectors covers all needs from the very young to the three universities including secondary schools and secondary education centres, technical colleges and adult education.

### Social Installations

Elche offers a wide network of social and assistance installations both in the public and private sectors, in which quality services are provided for the different groups: women, families, the elderly, the disabled, immigrants, etc.

These Social Centres provide support and assessment to all citizens by giving them information and guidance as to the available resources in the area of Social Services, preventing, highlighting and analysing risk situations, providing home-help and offering services of people to live with and social readjustment.



## 07. The quality city environment

“The wide variety of good things favours a balanced healthy lifestyle”

### Health

High level health services are provided in the University General Hospital (Hospital General Universitario), the Vinalopó Hospital (Hospital del Vinalopó) and the private hospital in Elche, IMED. These three centres have the best possible technological media so the professionals can provide the best care within a clinically safe framework.

### Sports

Elche has a magnificent network of sports installations which is in fact one of the best in the whole country. The installations are dotted over the whole of the city, making it easy for a lot of people to enjoy exercise as a healthy leisure time activity the practice of which improves their quality of life.

### Living Accommodation

There is a wide range of types of accommodation available both for rent and for sale allowing for the choice between city, country or seaside living.



## 08. Efficient urban transport

“Sustainable and pleasant public transport”

Elche boasts one of the best public transport systems in Spain made up of a good public bus service and taxis.

The many car-parks around the city blend into the city environment which also provides a lot of pedestrian areas.

### **BiciElx**

As well as traditional modes of transport, the city now has an individualised public transport system in the form of bicycles known as “BiciElx” which can be found in bases all over the city in the different quarters as well as major points of interest allowing users to take advantage of the extensive network of cycle lanes.



## 09. Unique natural environment

“Elche enjoys a rich environment and landscape”

Elche covers 326 km<sup>2</sup>, made up of 33 dependent areas, the Vinalopó river runs through it and the whole city comes together to make an exceptional natural environment.

### Natural environment

Elche has some notable environmental and naturally beautiful assets, noticeably the Palm Groves, (Palmeral de Elche), the Natural Parks known as “El Hondo” and “Las Salinas”, the Natural Landscape of “Clot de Galvany”, the Camp d’Elx (Elche countryside), the area surrounding the Reservoir (Pantano de Elche) and the coast itself.

“El Hondo” is included in the RAMSAR International Agreement for the Protection of Wetlands, and as a Special Protected Area under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds.

### Agriculture

In the Camp d’Elx (Elche countryside) agricultural activity is the most noticeable, enjoying an irrigation system which has undergone modernisation over recent years with large areas growing vegetables, pomegranates, palm trees, lemon trees, etc. Nursery gardening also plays an important part in the area.

The Comunidad de Regantes de Carrizales, has taken on a notable initiative related to the creation of a Parque Natural Agrario (Natural Agricultural Park), covering 1,300 hectares, in which the aim is to make different nature-themed actions: agriculture, different types of tourism and environmental preservation, industries that transform agricultural produce manually and sustainably, and manufacturing related to natural produce and the revival of cultural traditions.



## 09. Unique natural environment

“Elche Beaches boast five blue flags”

Elche has 9 kilometres of beach along the coastline which is a valuable environmental landscape due to the dunes and pine woods as well as for the quality of the waters and sand.

### Beaches

The Elche authorities are proud to fly 5 Blue Flags for their beaches in 2012, awards given on an annual basis to beaches keeping up the standards of water quality, safety, services and user information. The beaches receiving the award are: El Altet, La Marina, Les Pesqueres-El Rebollo, Carabassí, and Arenales del Sol-Zona Sur. The Aula de Naturaleza del Clot de Galvany (The Blue Nature Classroom) is a Blue Flag Centre specially recognised for the work it does on the environmental education on coastal eco-centres and sustainable development.



## 10. Excellent choice of leisure and cultural activities

“Elche is a unique place which stands out due to its Palm Groves, for its long and ancient history and for its first class calendar of cultural and leisure activities”

Elche enjoys cultural assets of exceptional value including its Palmeral of Elche (Palm Grove) which has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site since 2nd December 2000; and the Mystery play of Elche (Misteri d'Eix), included on the UNESCO Intangible World Cultural Heritage List on 18th May 2001.

The Centre for traditional culture - School Museum of Pusol has been part of the UNESCO Exemplary Practices for Saving Intangible World Culture List since 2009.

### Culture

The City Council manages the Gran Teatro, which hosts a full programme of artistic events, the museum network: The Elche History and Archaeological Museum (MAHE), The Paleontological Museum, The Moorish Baths, The Municipal Fiesta Museum, The Palm Grove Museum, The Contemporary Art Gallery and L'Escorxador Cultural Centre as well as the Odeon Cinemas.

The Alcudia Foundation manages the archaeological park of the old city, known as Ilici, where the renowned Lady of Elche (Dama de Elche) was found.

An Independent International Cinema Festival and a Mediaeval Festival are held in the city. The Palm Sunday procession is also well known and has been declared a Tourist Festival of International Interest, as has the Mystery play of Elche. The local fiestas take place in August, in honour of the Virgin of the Ascension when the Nit de l'Albà with its spectacular firework display is not to be missed.



## 10. Excellent choice of leisure and cultural activities

“A wide and diverse series of cultural events can be enjoyed”

### Shopping

A wide range of businesses in the city offer the public a varied and attractive range of shops, restaurants and leisure activities all of which are investing in quality, creativity and innovation, making the city a better place.

The shopping structure is unique with the varied city areas and types of establishment (traditional shops, small, medium and large shops, shopping centres and outlets). The most remarkable thing is the large number of shoe shops, a fact which has become a tourist attraction in itself strengthening the image of Elche as a city specialising in footwear.

The city centre is a lovely place to shop around the well known, prestigious establishments. There are various shopping centres where we can find major brands and the main fashion franchises from all over the worlds of fashion, leisure and restaurants.



## 10. Excellent choice of leisure and cultural activities

“Gastronomy in Elche excels in quality and variety”

### Gastronomy

The gastronomy available in the area has come to the forefront in recent years and now generates a healthy turnover and is a good example of the quality the area has to offer.

Every year there is a prestigious Tapas Contest called “Destápate” in which a large number of restaurants compete showing the resourceful proactivity of the participants.

In terms of gastronomy, Elche offers quality and variety. The restaurant in Elche called “La Finca” has a Michelin Star and two Repsol Suns, two of the highest awards a restaurant can hold.

### Active leisure

The ample variety of leisure activities available in Elche enable people to enjoy themselves while living in beautiful surroundings, enrich their personal well-being and develop a balanced and healthy way of life.

There is a good variety of activities organised in the city related to leisure and culture (cinema, theatre, exhibitions, concerts, etc.) and sport (competitions, events, etc.) as well as night-life (bars, clubs, etc.).

# New Business and Job Opportunities in Elche



Taking into account the key location factors in Elche, the exceptional urban resources, the characteristic economic-social structure, the evolution of the socio-economic environment, the successful business experiences and the economic format implanted by the City Council based on local active policies, a series of new business and job opportunities have come to the forefront, the promotion and development of which are essential to promote the enterprising, business and self-employment initiatives and projects.

- Ecological Agriculture
- Pomegranate Growing
- Palm Tree Growing
- Agriculture-Tourism
- Handicrafts
- Specialised Commerce
- Shoe shops
- Shoe selling
- Specialised Consulting
- Sport
- Technological Development Applied to Business
- Design
- Online Companies
- Shoe Manufacturing
- Professional and Business Training
- Franchises
- Shoe Component Industry
- Creative Industries
- Gardening
- Logistics
- Domestic and Business Maintenance
- The Environment
- Fashion
- Leisure
- Housing Restoration and Repair
- Housing Repair Projects
- Urban Renovation
- The Hospitality Industry
- Business Services
- Repair Services
- Tourist Services
- Nursery Gardening



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