

# Burgos Today

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Reconocimiento - No Comercial - Sin obras derivadas - Genérica



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## NEWS BULLETIN

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Thanks Pria and welcome to our programme. In this new edition of BurgosToday we'll spare a thought for all those drivers, taxi drivers who perform a job that has entered the high risk occupation league. Here are the headlines:

Data from the Central Statistics Office findings shed some remarkable light on Burgos City population and housing figures.

Lamb has a new identifying logo and a catchy slogan: One you can trust.

Taxi drivers infuriated and frustrated as violence against them spirals out of control.

First-time buyers under 36 years of age will see their mortgage-related fees cut down. La Junta estimates that this measure will affect 13.000 people.

- **3,389 homes with no heating**

*According to the Central Statistics Office Burgos City has 57,737 principal dwellings*

The Housing Census 2001 reveals distressing figures on the social, economic and population fronts for households in Burgos. By way of example, it shows that as many as 496 dwellings in Burgos County were rated as in severe decay, 1,561 were in poor repair and 7369 had mild structural deficiencies. The figures for Burgos City are 125 in severe decay, 548, one third of those in the county were in poor repair and 2,980 dwellings with various faults.

On the other hand, the surveys of thousands of households conducted in Burgos reveal that up to 3,389 principal dwellings, that is those where a family would habitually reside, had no heating system, prompting occupants to use electric or gas-fired heaters. As to type of household fuel used, gas is resorted to 38,924 households, electricity for 4,090, oil is chosen by 12,126, 437 households still burn firewood and 1,285 others coal.

We have also learned that 25% of those 57,737 dwellings registered do not have a lift for access.

As to most frequent complaints, it is street noise that tops the list. Inner city residents have been long decrying noise pollution.

Most dwellings surveyed had net usable areas ranging from 76 up to 90 square metres.

**Population matters.** Polls conducted by the Central Statistics Office may also shed some light on population-related issues. According to Census figures as of January, 2007 Burgos County totals a population of 265,718 people.

**Non-nationals.** The number of foreign immigrants is ten times as high as that obtained in 2001, which makes Burgos rank as the county within Castilla y Leon with the largest foreign community numbering 23,634. Valladolid is a close second with 22,921. Further down the list are León, 18,965 y Segovia, 15,677. Among them Romanians make up the largest minority, 4,046, Bulgarians are next with 3,361 and Portuguese come in third with 3,089.

**Population growth.** Burgos population increased by 1,844 residents in 2006. We also learned that 10,967 people out of those 265,718 are over 85.

- **Lechazo labelling quality**

*The new identification will enhance quality control*

The association promoting the label of quality “Lechazo de la Meseta Castellano y Leonesa” showed for the first time the new brand identification which will guarantee that lamb production is in compliance with all quality regulations throughout its various stages.

- **Burgos taxi drivers claim that robberies are far too frequent**

*In the wake of a fellow taxi driver in Madrid some 50 of them rallied yesterday at El Plantío*

The violent death of a taxi driver in Madrid is a shocking remainder that this remains to be a high risk occupation. This Argentinian-born father of two daughters was only 45 and died from a lethal stab wound in the neck. As soon as they learned about the fatal incident all associations representing taxi drivers in Castilla y León rallied to protest and called for greater security measures.

In Burgos, over 50 taxis gathered outside the council swimming-pool at El Plantío sports facilities as they thought that would cause least traffic disruption. The trace of grief and distress was clearly visible in their faces as they lamented very little was being done to help them.

Long-faced, angered taxi drivers discussed security measures for their jobs as assaults and robberies were on the increase and in broad daylight. Some conceded that many incidents went unreported. Plastic shields or screens separating the driver from the back seat was an option agreed upon by many.

## VISIT PAID TO A NURSING HOME

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Entrepreneurship is not in short supply and we should be glad to hear it and recognise it. I say this, by the way, prompted by frequent contemptuous remarks by some, few I believe, which border on claims of money-grabbing and dishonest pursuits every time a new business starts off.

Many are as I said those who readily see a business opportunity and go for it, might and soul. This the case with the increasing demand for caring facilities for two sections of our population which are as vulnerable as frequently neglected: kids and the elderly.

For the first group they start up nurseries, for the second nursing homes.

There has been a recent proliferation of nursing homes at the initiative of entrepreneurs who wanted to perform a service for a section of our population who demand proper accommodation and care at a time when they cannot or are less willing to provide it to themselves.

Some of them have not been free from controversy and some distressing incidents involving non-compliance with health and safety regulations and blatant neglect of due care have forced summary closedowns and hefty cash penalties.

That's bad because the public may jump to the wrong conclusions about establishments which have opened their doors for only one purpose: help our senior citizens spend the final stage of their lives in the most caring and loving atmosphere.

Anyway as we always resist trusting hearsay we went to find out for ourselves.

This is a family run, private nursing home. At the entrance we should meet .... eh .... Let me see .... Carmen González, director of nursing and administrator of this ... magnificent place. Yeah there she is.

....

She seemed to be in a hurry to explain everything in small detail. She sounds practical, level-headed, ambitious, a powerful mix of nerve and discretion.

*It was my Dad who came up with the idea of opening a nursing home. Probably it was out of sympathy for those people he was gradually nearing himself. He sold his previous business, two shoe shops, and bought this huge countryhouse out here.*

Did he count on you from the beginning?

*Yeah, he knew we would come if we were summoned, if you like.*

The initial investment must have been colossal.

*It was. We got a loan from the bank. It was the red tape that was most nerve-wracking. I can understand that crowd in Gerencia de Servicios Sociales but they should also bear in mind that we are getting them out of trouble here and very cheaply.*

.....

As we walk down a pathway round the front of the house we come up to a lovely outdoor seating area where two men in their late 70's and a woman who looks incredibly young despite her age are making the most of the early afternoon sun.

...

Those up there look very pleased.

*And they are. The hallmarks of our accommodation are space and comfort, which combined make this place a truly luxurious home.*

I'm sure you would like to emphasize that last word, home.

*Definitely. At the end of the day it is a home that relatives want for these fellows.*

.... And how does that materialize?

*It is a sort of emotional touch that .... that sometimes comes down to flashing a smile as they move about, sitting opposite them and listening to their stories retold a hundred times, or even accommodating their own furniture in their rooms.*

Oh, that sounds extremely motivating.

*It is indeed. There are so many tender memories attached to those beds or chests of drawers, or paintings ...*

.....

At some stage the conversation got technical and business-like.

....

*We take special pride in our high dependency unit which is taken care of by our experienced nursing staff, fully trained in the care of residents with maximum dependency.*

Among those must be those with Alzheimer's disease, is it?

*Sure. It causes confusion and emotional instability you know. But they also tend to have impaired movement so there is lots of lifting and pushing involved. It can be physically demanding, very. You should also check that they take their medication.*

Speaking of which, is there any real danger of some of these fellows self-prescribing medication?

*Some of them are terrible at that. Nurses have to be very alert constantly to prevent an overdose which could be fatal. They know who ... who are the trouble-makers, if you like, and keep a constant eye on them...*

*After an initial assessment a Care Plan is designed for each of these highly dependent people and our staff ensure continuity and consistency of care.*

And when they suddenly feel down ...

*It is time for us to remind them of their achievements, for which only they can take the credit. We make them consider how much they have contributed to society, their family, what they have passed on to their children. We also recommend them to take up hobbies, exercise, pursue cultural or academic interests, all intended to fill up their time entertainingly but fruitfully.*

I can understand how they feel .... Hola, Buenos días ..... That lady who rolled by just now. What's her name? What's her story?

*That's Felisa, .... Felisa Cifuentes I think. She's been with us for a while, probably five years now. It's a tragic story and unfortunately, not very uncommon these days.*

What is it?

*She was dumped by her own children when she became a widow. Nobody would put her up despite the fact that she implored them in anguish not to send her here. It was no use. It must have been kind of heartbreaking.*

Was she not well able at the time?

*What do you mean?*

Could she not have stayed in her home?

*Which home. She had no home of her own. She had made that tragic mistake that some old folks do: transfer the ownership of their home to their children in the hope that they will allow you to stay in it for as long as you live.*

And they don't.

*Surely not.*

Any resentment lingering on?

*Do mothers harbour any resentment ever?*

I must admit that that question went unanswered. I limited myself to smiling. He sounded truly human, truly understanding and sympathetic. I think that he knows what he is running and how to do it. Now I know how enriching the experience of just being among these old people can be, and how inspiring ....