

Hangzhou International Congress “Culture: Key to Sustainable Development”

Session: 2B “Culture: a driver and enabler of social cohesion”

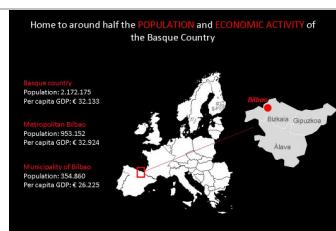
Date and time: 16 May – 10:50 am – 12:00 pm

Speaker: Mrs. Ibone Bengoetxea, Deputy Mayor of Bilbao and City Councillor of Culture and Education



Bilbao: Culture as enabler of social cohesion
Ibone Bengoetxea, Deputy Mayor of Bilbao and City Councillor of Education and Culture
16 May 2013 in Hangzhou, China

Welcome.....

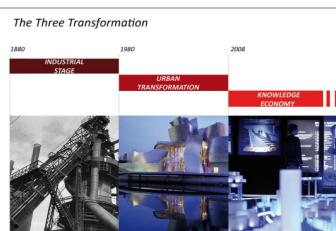


Metropolitan Bilbao is **home to around half the population and economic activity** of the Basque Country. It stands on the crossroads of the main north-south European transport route and the emergent east-west route. The city is gearing up to take advantage of this excellent location to become a true “**hinge point**” in Europe.

The per-capita GDP of the Basque Country stands at around 130% the European average and its human development level is similar to that of the most advanced countries, such as Finland or Austria.



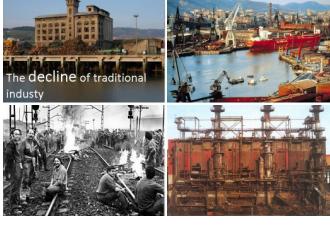
Bilbao has undergone a historical process of reinvention in recent years to face the challenges of the 21st century.

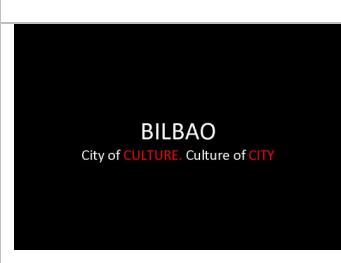


It was in 1983 when Bilbao went through one of the worst crises in its history. But that year also marked the beginning of a new project for the city. A new urban development project which, just over 25 years later, has converted Bilbao into a city with a major international presence.

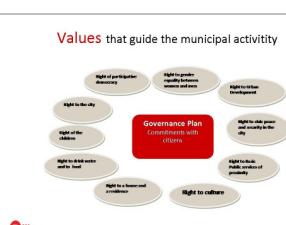
The **keys to that rebirth of the city** have been:

One: The hope generated by the recent devolution of the Basque Country and the creation of the institutions of our self-government.

	<p>Finally, after 40 years of dictatorship in Spain, the Basque Country had its own Parliament and Government able to tackle the challenges faced by Basque society.</p> <p>Two: The political consensus reached between the institutions involved: The Government of the Spanish State, the Basque Government and Bilbao City Council. All of them shared the same strategic vision of the future of Bilbao.</p> <p>Three: The determination to invest considerable resources in this project and to put in place shared instruments for its management. The main one was 'Bilbao Ria 2000', with the participation of all the institutions, which has managed the main urban transformation projects in Bilbao.</p>
 <small>The Industrial Revolution</small>	<p>Bilbao has been known for its industrial character, the character of an iron city. We were a city with an economy based on steel, ship-build and business industries.</p>
 <small>The decline of traditional industry</small>	<p>During the 80s we lived really hard times in our city.</p> <p>The strong industrial reconversion and the generalized closure of companies, gave as result a discouraging scene, covered by the pessimism of citizens and that gave as a result the end of our character of an "iron city... industrial city"</p>
 <small>The floods</small>	<p>Besides this dramatic situation in 1983 the city suffered the most dramatic floods of its history that destroyed most part of the city.</p>
 <small>BILBAO The Urban revolution</small>	<p>As a response to this delicate situation, diverse public and private institutions began a holistic process of revitalization that has given as a result a unique URBAN REVOLUTION.</p>

	<p>The renovation of the city has been based on important urban projects: the rehabilitation of the historic centre, the construction of the Metro and the Tram, the extension of the airport and maritime port, the regeneration of the river the construction of new neighborhoods, the urbanization of the emblematic space of "Abandoibarra".</p>						
							
	<p>The greatest symbol of all this was undoubtedly the GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM.</p>						
<p>The impact of the Guggenheim Museum in 2012</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>GDP Generation</td> <td>296.700.000 euros</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employment maintenance</td> <td>6.330</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Income taxes</td> <td>45.700.000 euros</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> 	GDP Generation	296.700.000 euros	Employment maintenance	6.330	Income taxes	45.700.000 euros	<p>The determination of the political leaders was able to overcome the reticence which the project initially generated in the unions, social organisations, parts of Basque culture and society in general.</p> <p>The great success of the Guggenheim project contributed immensely to the fourth key in the process of regeneration of Bilbao: CONFIDENCE AMONG ITS CITIZENS.</p> <p>Still today, industry accounts for around 27% of the economy of the Basque Country, whereas the average for Spain and Europe is around 16.17%. This has been possible thanks to an industrial policy based on the diversification of sectors, clusters, technification, the opening up to global markets and a commitment to innovation.</p> <p>The per-capita GDP of the Basque Country stands at around 130% the European average and its human development level is similar to that of the most advanced countries.</p> <p>The success of the transformation of Bilbao has firmly established it as a city of advanced services for companies in the region, a university city, a hub of knowledge, trade, culture and tourism.</p>
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	<p>The international recognition has been of tremendous importance, generating a feeling of pride among its citizens and confidence in the future, as well as giving the city an even greater global profile.</p> <p>But over the past 25 years, the transformation of Bilbao would not have been possible without that political and institutional leadership. A leadership that has generated confidence and support among the citizens.</p> <p>Today, the maintenance of that leadership and that trust is, more than ever, associated with one concept: TRANSPARENCY.</p> <p>Transparency implies efficiency in the management of public resources and stringency. Transparency means that Bilbao is a city that can be trusted by those who live there and the companies and professionals who we hope will be drawn to our city.</p> <p>For many years, Bilbao has been working on this policy of transparency. In 2009, it was recognized by the European Institute of Public Administration as one of the most transparent local authorities in Europe.</p> <p>In 2013, we received a great award which combines leadership and efficiency in management: The British City Mayors Foundation named the Mayor of Bilbao, Iñaki Azkuna, the "Best Mayor in the World".</p>
 <p>Municipal cultural policy: the three "Cs"</p> <p>City, projecting its image internationally and attracting tourism</p> <p>Creators, giving business support</p> <p>Citizens, giving response to their cultural needs</p> <p>Bilbao</p>	<p>Bilbao's transformation begins in the 90's, with the Guggenheim Museum as main reference of its development and recognition from all over the world. Culture is the fuse that lights Bilbao's transformation, and currently it is still a pillar of the strategy to keep on boosting innovation.</p> <p>Culture is also a mean to build more united communities, access to rights and make come true the opportunities. We also see the need to allow each culture to live and progress in the city, but underlining the right for all cultures to contribute to the society in which they are. "Cultures" only progress when they are in contact with other cultures, not when they are isolated, and that is why we bet to reinforce the intercultural interaction as a mean to build our city.</p> <p>We can state that culture is a pillar of the city strategy, we talk about a Bilbao in human scale and we refer to a main strategy from</p>

	<p>two focal points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) As an element of economic development, creation of wellness (economic engine) b) As an element of social activities, cohesion, development and inclusion. <p>The first focal point refers to the cultural policies, a work carried out by the Department of Culture, that maybe some of you had the opportunity to know in the Panel of Discussion “The role of Local Authorities”... with specific policies that we can summarize in three big “Cs”</p> <p>CITY: its International promotion and generation of wellness</p> <p>CREATORS: to give response and work with local creative artist, speaking of the creative sector as a whole.</p> <p>CITIZENS: to give response to the cultural need of the people living in the city.</p> <p>We put all our efforts to give response to the right to culture of our citizens; we work with the local artist; we work for our city to be recognized for this work; and for culture to become an economic engine.</p> <p>The second focal point -more related to the subject of the meeting that brings us today- is related with culture as a transversal axis, in which we have to work other more intangible aspects and that are not “property” or “exclusive responsibility” of the people developing the cultural policies.</p>
 Bilbao	<p>We refer to intangible aspects such as, the respect to diversity, the citizen's participation, the collaboration and the joint work with other sectors, the openness, the critical spirit, the thinking, the culture of peace and coexistence.... It has to do with the values that sustain any organization, in this case the values of Bilbao City Council. Values that must guide all the activities of the local government.</p> <p>We use as basis the principle in which the city belongs to the people living in it, citizens that have rights and obligations that take an</p>

	<p>active role in the design of the city and its vital project. That is why the “Governance plan” –from a human rights approach- becomes a useful tool to favour the joint achievement that ideal city, that finds its basis of recognition in the postulates of the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City and the Global Charter for Human Rights in the City.</p> <p>In both cases we talk about Cultural Rights understood as the right to an inclusive, continuous and high quality education; and the enjoyment of culture in its diverse expressions and modalities.</p> <p>Bilbao has a diversified population that includes people from diverse nationalities, origins, languages, religions and beliefs, ages, disabilities.... Must part of the citizens consider diversity as an asset and not a problem, and they accept that all cultures change when they coincide in the public space. In Bilbao we stand for the respect to diversity and a plural identity of the city. The city fights actively against the prejudice and discrimination and it guarantees the equality of opportunities for everyone, adapting its structures and services to the needs of a diversified population, without putting aside the human rights.</p>
	<p>The collaboration with the public sector, civil society and other institutions is crucial for achieving a good management of cultural diversity and the development of policies and activities that foster greater interaction between the diverse groups. The high level of trust and social cohesion help to prevent conflicts and violence, increase the effectiveness of policies and the make a more attractive city both for the people and for the investors.</p> <p>The cultural sector generates not only many services, it also contributes to education, diversity and social cohesion, tourism, economic and business reactivation. Culture constitutes the base of value system and of welfare for the population.</p> <p>In Bilbao, we have remarked how Culture can help in becoming an educating city concerning coexistence values and open to diversity</p>

with the general objective of **favour integration, social cohesion and coexistence in the municipality of Bilbao.**

Holding a close position to citizen, as a public administration, Bilbao City Council tries to answer to this new and complex diversity reality, designing a common strategy to articulate the public policies referring to integration under a consensus and a participation perspective.

Therefore, the new **organizational culture is transparency and citizen participation.**

Modernity is defined by values, so that they acquire more and more importance in the city strategy and therefore in culture policy. The city works to reach values such as innovation, professionalism, community, identity and openness, and it takes into account the following values: **multiculturalism, mobility, tolerance, internal solidarity in a social and working context, universal perspective, cooperation, diversity and equality.**

In a society, to develop the implementation of values, a progressive strategy is needed. This implementation will be possible if a continuous improvement process focusing on key values, identified, understood and assumed by an increasing part of the population, takes part. And this is the objective of the Programme "**Bilbao, a City with values**".

In Bilbao, we have used **Culture as a “factory”** to produce new services and new ideas, to continue shaping Bilbao. Our culture policy model has been characterized as valorising the **cultural historic patrimony of the city**. Recovering our heritage as a raw material, we have achieved to get a central culture articulated by a complete network of culture equipment for consumers and for culture creation.

In these days, **Culture is more than an answer, it is a need.** In a really difficult economic and social context, the creative dimension of Culture can help to response to the new challenges of society: development, democracy, coexistence, justice and social inclusion. In Bilbao, we support a cultural strategy based on proximity, public-private co-operation and citizen participation. A city strategy needs a **collective action and in Bilbao we have shown that this is**

	possible.
Some actions carried out by Bilbao	<p>Bilbao is the perfect example to show how planning culture is the same as making a city.</p> <p>Bilbao presents itself as an open and friendly city, which welcomes all cultural expressions in any of their forms and possible appearances. Being aware of the high citizen level of participation and enthusiasm with which the cultural dynamization is welcome, the institutions and the private sector of the city have encouraged to bring Culture nearer to the destination public, residents and visitors.</p> <p>Some examples of the actions carried out by Bilbao to use Culture as an enabler of social inclusion:</p>
 Culture and inclusive social development	
 Promotion of social inclusion and respect to cultural diversity	
 Culture promotes and facilitates social cohesion and inclusion	
 Culture and Education	

<p>Creativity</p> <p>Bilbao Arte: contemporary art center for artistic production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities for artists' studios Organization of exhibitions, conferences, workshops, seminars, etc. International exchanges 2nd May initiative: flea market, shows cultural events People of the World Festival <p>Bilbao</p>	
<p>Focus on culture, diversity and human rights</p> <p>Promotion of respect, protection and guarantee of human rights at local level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invisible Cinema International Festival (4th edition) Cinema and Scenic Arts Gay-Lebo-Trans International Festival (10th edition) Local acts in own productions of municipal theater Cultural exchanges with other cities, such as Milan, Biarritz, Bordeaux, Quimper... <p>Bilbao</p>	
<p>Cultural programmes to promote women's role</p> <p>Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of municipal action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation with the municipal theater to make possible for poor women and at risk of exclusion to take part in the professionals' and general rehearsals Science and Dissemination Annual Cycle: "Women make science" Documentation Centre for Women: research and development of feminist studies Social and cultural workshops for women Tasks exchange workshops <p>Bilbao</p>	
<p>Effective cultural programmes to face violence and disasters among the young people</p> <p>Artistic examples of street art to recall painful facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geu-Blok: information website for young people against male violence Beldur barik Sin Miedo to banish fear attitudes and empowering women right from the childhood <p>Bilbao</p>	
<p>Many of these activities are carried out in cooperation with neighborhood associations, NGOs, cultural associations, citizens, media and other administrations.</p> <p>Bilbao</p>	<p>Many of these activities are carried out in cooperation with neighborhood associations, NGOs, cultural associations, citizens, media and other administrations.</p>
<p>The basic concepts that define our strategy: openness, interculturalism and diversity as a competitive advantage.</p> <p>We are determined to build an inclusive city where all the people who live in it contribute to its economic and social development.</p> <p>Bilbao</p>	<p>The basic concepts that define our strategy: openness, interculturalism and diversity as a competitive advantage.</p> <p>We are determined to build an inclusive city where all the people who live in it contribute to its economic and social development.</p>



Thank you and you are all welcome to visit us un Bilbao

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