

Introduction

We are living in times of deep social, economic, technological, cultural, environmental and geopolitical change. Humanity, 6,600 million individuals, is heading inexorably towards a global population of 9,100 million by the middle of the 21st century, and growing at a rate of 600 million per decade. China with 1,300 million people and India with 1,100 million accounts for four in ten people, and their economic presence in the world is of such a magnitude that they are regarded as leading global players.

The revolution led by information and communication technologies has transformed the world in a way unthinkable barely 15 years ago. The energy vectors that have allowed the vast deployment of power for production since the Industrial Revolution –coal, oil and gas– have revealed their darker side by altering the Earth’s global climate.

Apart from the climate crisis and beyond cyclical ups and downs, clean, renewable energies are looking for opportunities against a background trend of increasing oil prices brought about by tensions between the offer available and growing world demand.

The 27-state European Union is taking shape with its 500 million people as a leading reference on an economic, trading, scientific and technological level. Its commitment in favour of a model for development capable of juggling social cohesion, environmental sustainability, quality employment and prosperity linked to the knowledge economy, is a reference for other regions of the world.

These are just a few examples, but they indicate that the tectonic plates that have shaped international reality in the last two decades are starting to shift at an accelerated rate.

In this context, Gipuzkoa has undeniable strengths, but also weaknesses that need to be overcome so that fresh waves of economic prosperity, well-being and social cohesion can be generated over the next 20 years. So the society of Gipuzkoa is one that is rich in terms of gross domestic product and per capita income. It has a very advanced industrial and technological fabric, and a traditionally dynamic and entrepreneurial civil society. At the same time, it enjoys high level social services and is characterised by having one of the highest life expectancies in the world.

Among the weaknesses, Gipuzkoa is a small, densely populated territory which has hardly any significant natural resources and whose model of historical development has left deep imprints on the territory and the countryside. Many of the urban centres that have been enduring industrial development for decades have environmental and urban surroundings clearly in need of improvement. The competitive advantages of Gipuzkoa’s industry situate it in mature economic sectors, while its position in what are regarded as future ones is only incipient.

It should also be pointed out that the legacy of decades of violence has left wounds in the social fabric in need of the right kind of healing over the years to come. At the same time, while the knowledge capital existing in the territory is important, the training alignment must be improved with respect to the demands of the global knowledge society still in its infancy.

The aging of the people of Gipuzkoa reflects the combination of increased life expectancy and a planned but clearly restrained birth rate. Consequently, the future

challenge that will mean preserving social and health benefits is a concern in a society in which a very considerable proportion of the people will have retired from active working life.

In a preliminary way one can sense that Gipuzkoa is well placed to meet the challenges arising out of world economic globalisation as well as the international social, demographic, technological and environmental trends taking place. But it is vital that strengths be mobilised and weaknesses be remedied. To achieve this, the challenge of the future has to be faced with confidence in our own strengths and from a position of modesty at the same time.

In this direction we have to reinforce our capacity for anticipating and prospecting. We in the public institutions have to take a leading role in identifying the challenges that are looming in the long term, and mobilise society in the right direction. That requires promoting strategic reflection and planning that are guided towards the long term, and being capable of looking beyond the legitimate and necessary dialectics and political management on a day-to-day basis. This will be possible only if we consistently commit ourselves to improving governance in our administration. Linear responses from traditional institutional architectures cannot tackle the challenges of the future in a complex, changing society, which is what the society of Gipuzkoa is today.

In this context our new governance involves committing ourselves to certain things: to sharing leaderships between the different institutions that operate in the territory, to systematically fostering private, public strategic collaboration, to mobilising and channelling expert knowledge so that it can advise the institutions, to driving forward thorough processes of participation in public life and establishing a vision that will incorporate multi-sectoral and intergenerational aspects. It involves, likewise, fully defending transparency and accountability to the general public by people responsible for public management.

The improvement in governance is also linked to our commitment to strategic approaches when identifying the challenges of the future. These include:

- the adopting of innovative and experimental initiatives.
- social and institutional learning
- the support of strong juridical and legislative systems
- fresh methods of negotiation, management, planning and measurement of results that will enable the progress and applicability of the public policies to be monitored.

These improvements in the way of approaching governance are already being applied in the most advanced countries close to us. These are the countries that enjoy highly established democratic institutions as well as open, innovative, tolerant, egalitarian and highly competitive societies –countries in the North of Europe like Finland, Denmark or Sweden, or Anglo-Saxon ones like the United Kingdom.

The Charter Provincial Council has set up the Strategic Office of Gipuzkoa, thus responding to these very challenges. The Office is born to be constituted within the institutional machine from which it will foster, seek agreement on, breathe new life into, and develop broad processes of strategic reflection and long-term planning. It is the express and priority intention of the Office to involve the General Assemblies in this endeavour, so that this parliament of Gipuzkoa can imprint a strong institutional leadership on these challenges and concerns.

Societies that are keen to main high levels of economic prosperity and social welfare have to strive to grasp and understand the deep changes that are taking place worldwide. Failure to do so means that they will be overtaken by them. It is about grasping and understanding these changes, not only to adapt to them but also, as far as possible, to be the protagonist in their configuration and development. It is with this intention in mind that the Strategic Office of Gipuzkoa has launched the Gipuzkoa+20 process, which will be outlined on the following pages.

The Strategic Office of Gipuzkoa: Administrative Innovation for a new political culture

The Strategic Office of Gipuzkoa (SOG) is a new Charter Council sphere that has emerged out of an innovative institutional perspective. It is under the direct responsibility of the First Deputy Chairman of the Provincial Council, which means that it is set up as a sphere of leadership that looks transversally and not by sector.

The functions of the SOG have been established by Charter Decree 32/2008 of 20 May (published in the BOG -Official Gazette of Gipuzkoa- 30 May):

- To conduct strategic reflection, by updating the G2020 strategic reflection process (its challenges and chosen scenario), in order to put forward a fresh scenario.
- To draw up and manage a strategy for building the chosen future scenario.
- To monitor and revise the strategy from time to time.
- To adapt the strategy to new situations through strategic anticipation and vigilance.
- To monitor and assess the Business Plan for 2007-2011 of the Charter Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa, in coordination with the Cabinet of the Head of the Charter Provincial Council.

The SOG is set up as a tool of government that will be taking strategic reflection as the basis and drawing up a vision of a desirable and possible future for the Historical Territory of Gipuzkoa. This will be achieved through a medium- to long-term approach by monitoring the building of the chosen scenario at the same time.

The SOG has been set up to incorporate the future variable, the long-term aspect, into the political culture of the Charter Council institution and, consequently, into the territory.

The SOG is designed to go on working by establishing the space it needs within the Charter Council institution from which it can breathe life into the reflection and take a critical look at the future challenges that are anticipated for Gipuzkoa.

The SOG is conceived as a place for cooperation, participation and agreement. Likewise, as a centre for breathing new life into and generating reflections, debates, proposals, and suggestions arising out of a prospective analysis of the future of our Territory. It is intended for the Charter Council institution itself and for the general public of Gipuzkoa.

The SOG feeds on knowledge existing both outside and inside the Charter Provincial Council and promotes joint, ongoing reflection to guide us in the decisions that will have to shape our future.

The first task undertaken by the SOG has been to put into practice the functions that the Charter Provincial Council has entrusted to it by designing a process known as

Gipuzkoa+20. The SOG is the central node, the driving force which will coordinate and breathe life into the G+20 process.

The basic idea that inspires the G+20 process is the one that will benefit the society of Gipuzkoa, its institutions, its social and economic agents, in other words, one that adds value to the Historical Territory.

The Gipuzkoa+20 process. A different process

Aim and nature of the G+20 process

The aim of the G+20 process is to draw up a future vision for Gipuzkoa and a long-term strategy that will serve to generate a positive dynamic in the Charter Council institution itself, as well as in the social and economic fabric of Gipuzkoa, including its network of institutions.

What sets the G+20 process apart is the fact that it pivots on the systematic, periodical reflection on the strategic challenges identified for the Territory 20 years from now, and on the subsequent identification of proposals for political and social action oriented towards dealing appropriately with these challenges.

A broad horizon suited to joint reflection. This horizon for reflection and planning will therefore be Gipuzkoa 2010-2030. An excellent opportunity to hand down a deliberate, responsible legacy to the next generation of men and women of Gipuzkoa.

The G+20 process is conceived as an institutional and social learning process for training in the development of the tools needed for a new political culture in the Territory. What drives us is our concern for the future, our curiosity to know how this is done by countries that are a reference, and our desire to create meeting points dealing with the future of Gipuzkoa and in which all the political powers can feel that they are being recognised. We want to generate an alliance with civil society, aware that the major challenges vitally need public and private collaboration.

The future is always written from the present, from the here and now. The creative and innovative dynamics we want to set in motion today will improve Gipuzkoa's social capital as long as they are capable of arousing the interest and participation of the social agents, the municipalities and the various institutions.

What does +20 mean?

- Exercising our strategic capacities systematically and permanently.
- Having a project for the future as a territory and as a society, a common reference everyone has helped to draw up.
- Observing the future at all times by paying attention to changes.
- Bringing together people, ideas, opinions, projects, etc. all in all, participating.
- And it signifies responsibility towards the coming generations, our sons and daughters.

Who is the Gipuzkoa+20 intended for?

The Charter Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa itself and the General Assemblies. The process will be co-led from the General Assemblies, the Parliament of Gipuzkoa.

- Town and city councils, their mayoralties and councillorships and, in a special way, the capital city, in view of its influence throughout the territory as the main nucleus of inhabitants and activities which characterise it. The process is likewise aimed at the area organisations.
- Organised civil society.
- The education community: universities, vocational training centres and high schools where our young people are being trained.
- Interested citizens in general; they will be offered information regularly and be asked to participate.

Anchoring the G+20 process in the Charter Provincial Council and in the General Assemblies

The organs that make up the Charter Council Institution –Head of the Charter Provincial Council, Council of Deputies, General Assemblies– are participating to drive forward and develop the G+20 process and feel that its results concern them.

The G+20 process and the long-term strategy that will come out of it have their beginnings in the Strategic Office of Gipuzkoa, which reports to the First Deputy Head of the Charter Provincial Council. It is a space that is actively linked to the General Assemblies and feeds on the most advanced knowledge to enable it to carry out ongoing, free, reflection on the short term.

The leaders and agents who influence and participate in the Gipuzkoa system are called to share in this and will have to be connected and aligned with the Charter Council management plans in the successive legislative periods.

The SOG is the node from which the G+20 process is directly driven and coordinated on a day-to-day basis. The First Deputy Head of the Council will report to the Head of the Council, the Council of Deputies and the General Assemblies about its progress.

Furthermore, there is a plan to set up a Committee on the Future, which will be attached to the General Assemblies. The General Assemblies are the parliament of Gipuzkoa, the highest organ of popular representation and participation in the Historical Territory. This Committee is permanent and its profile innovative. Its function will be to contribute towards identifying the major challenges of the future that affect the Historical Territory of Gipuzkoa and collaborate to make the public policies of the Charter Provincial Council take these long-term challenges into consideration. In the G+20 process the Committee will act as the node to stimulate strategic debate and as the space for reflection in the General Assemblies on the future of the territory by providing the process with political criteria and institutional endorsement. The Committee on the Future will supervise the application of the Strategy once it has been passed. It will play a central role by spearheading the G+20 process as a whole together with the Strategic Office.

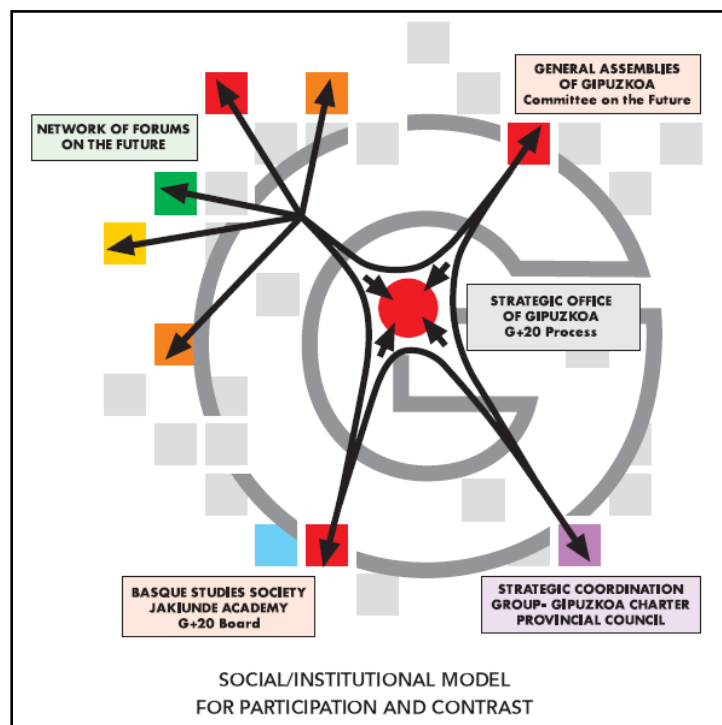
Finally, the Strategic Coordination Group of the Charter Provincial Council will also be constituted. Its function is to ensure the participation of the Charter Council technical areas regarded as crucial in the design of a future strategy for Gipuzkoa. It is conceived as an essential node to ensure that advice is provided on the basis of its deep knowledge of public management, its reality and imperfections for the approaches oriented towards the medium and long term. It is also designed to guarantee that these approaches are progressively and actively incorporated into the Management Plans and sectoral plans of the successive legislative terms, and therefore assumed and implemented by the Charter Provincial Council. It is a space for linking the short- with the medium-long term.

The G+20 Board and the Network of Forums on the Future

The Strategy is for the Territory, so it is essential that the civil society of Gipuzkoa should participate through its most representative social, economic and environmental organisations. The participation of the agents in the reflection and decision process is not something instrumental, it is basic. The involvement and alliance of civil society is an essential aspect that will need to be preserved and continually enhanced.

An advisory council will be set up, the G+20 Board. It will be made up of a large group of people with a recognised professional career and with a high scientific and academic profile –experts from a range of fields of knowledge. Its function will be to provide the process with expert advice and knowledge, in particular the Strategic Office and the Committee of the Future of the General Assemblies. The Basque Studies Society and the Jakiunde Academy will be collaborating in the setting up of the Council.

Likewise, the G+20 process is set to promote a network of Forums on the Future the length and breadth of the territory by incorporating and enhancing already existing mechanisms. Special attention will be paid to the municipalities and their areas, as well as to the area organisations and the mechanisms for participation that have already been set up. The active participation of social, economic, cultural and environmental agents will be sought. The alliance of our universities, vocational training centres and high schools will also be sought.



In what way is the G+20 different from other processes?

Future & Sustainability

- It incorporates the long-term aspect into political culture, thus preparing us for the future.
- It seeks to build a project for the future, a common reference for the society of Gipuzkoa.
- It tries to structure the future of Gipuzkoa through long-term strategic projects that will help to position Gipuzkoa properly in the global knowledge society and within the framework of sustainability.
- It incorporates solidarity and responsibility towards the future generations.
- It develops attitudes of anticipation and vigilance.

Participation & Cooperation

- It configures institutional and social spaces to promote and drive forward a broad, decentralised participatory process.
- It is committed to a Gipuzkoa in a network with all the towns and areas, thus collaborating in a common project.
- It fosters public-private cooperation.
- It aims to be a thoroughly verifiable process.
- It is transparent.

Governance

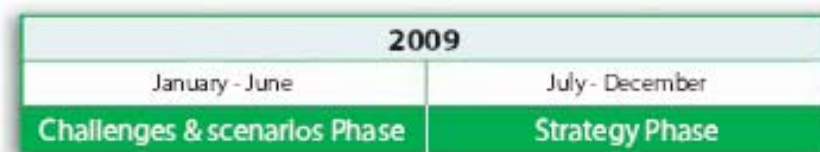
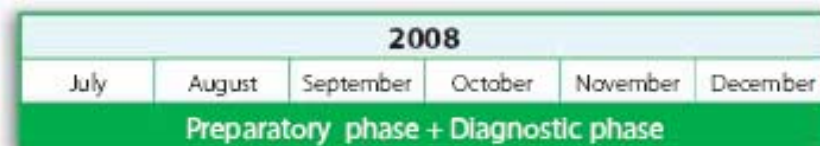
- It is an institutionally anchored process.
- It gives a leading role to the maximum organ of popular representation and participation of the Historical Territory: the General Assemblies, which is the parliament of Gipuzkoa.
- It improves governance.

Knowledge

- It incorporates the most advanced expert knowledge.
- It analyses trends in the international sphere.
- It learns from innovative experiences.
- It seeks references among the countries which are the most advanced in incorporating a strategy of reflection into the parliamentary institutions and the executive organs.

Phases of the G+20 process

The Gipuzkoa+20 process takes about 18 months, from June 2008 until December 2009. It can be divided into various phases:



Documents of the G+20 process

During the preparatory phase the G+20 process was designed and the model for institutional anchoring, participation and contrast was outlined. Three initial documents were produced during this phase and they were designed to establish the bases for the Gipuzkoa+20 process:

- “The Gipuzkoa+20 Process”
- “Organs and Model for Participation and Contrast”
- “International References for Reflection and Strategic Planning”

Henceforth, and throughout the process three core documents are going to be produced. They are the ones that will formulate and give a focus to the G+20 strategic reflection process and will coincide with the three main phases outlined above. These documents will undergo a thorough process of verification, improvement and validation inside and outside the Charter Council institution.

Document “Strategic Diagnosis of Gipuzkoa”

An analysis will be made on how the Historical Territory has evolved in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses that are regarded as central from the perspective of sustainability –economic prosperity, social cohesion, preservation of the natural capital and the environment.

It will be a current X-ray of Gipuzkoa and will include the area realities. The idea is that a critical view should be refined to deal with the aspects of the economic, social, environmental-territorial, technological reality –values that are regarded as crucial for the future.

A document providing a synthesised diagnosis that is intimately linked to the one on “Future Scenarios and Key Challenges” will be produced, since the analysis of the diagnosis needs to focus on the elements most directly linked to the perception of the main challenges.

Document “Future Scenarios and Key Challenges for Gipuzkoa 2030”

Starting with the “Strategic Diagnosis” and bearing in mind the analysis of international trends, the strategic challenges for Gipuzkoa over the next 20 years will be identified, and a scenario envisaged for the Gipuzkoa of 2030 will be described.

In the interests of internal consistency, an endeavour will be made to develop a clear and precise connecting thread to link the main messages of the diagnosis to the key challenges that are discerned in the medium- and long-term future, as well as the lines of work and strategic projects/programmes that are adopted with the future in mind.

Document “Building our shared future together”

Once the key challenges discerned in the future have been identified and a commitment has been made to a specific scenario for 2030, an attempt will be made to identify, formulate and deploy the paths that will have to be taken to advance in the desired direction. This is the function of the territory’s Strategy for the Future.

The main component of the document will be the strategic projects / programmes. They will indicate the roads to be taken. Going down them will allow us to head for the vision and the goals on which consensus will have been achieved. The document will include the very system for monitoring and controlling the Strategy.

Finally, a series of reports and pieces of work that will complement the three central documents referred to above will be presented over time.