

European Heritage Days

Migrations and Cultural Heritage.

2016ko
ONDAREAREN
EUROPAKO
JARDUNALDIAK
JORNADAS
EUROPEAS DEL
PATRIMONIO 2016
BIZKAIA
Urria/2016/
Octubre
www.bizkaia.bizkaia.eus/jep
Bizkaia
Diputación Foral



authors

Amaia Apraiz Sahagún
(amaia@ikusmiraondarea.com)
and **Ainara Martínez Matía**
(ainara@ikusmiraondarea.com),
independent cultural heritage
consultants and content
coordinators for the European
Heritage Days programme in
Biscay since the year 2015.

Aintzane Eguilior Mancisidor
(aintzane.egilior@bizkaia.eus)
director of communication
and dissemination at
Bizkaikoa (Diputación Foral
de Bizkaia) and head of the
European Heritage Days
programme since its first
edition in Biscay in the year
2001.

Biscay as an example of the application of the Faro Convention to the local programme of the European Heritage Days.

The present document has been written at the request of the Council of Europe as a report on the work accomplished by the coordination team of Biscay's 2016 edition of the European Heritage Days, which addressed the theme Migrations and Cultural Heritage.

The choice of the theme Migration and Cultural Heritage for the European Heritage Days 2016 in Biscay (Spain) has helped to transpose the guidelines of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society and to give visibility to the heritage of migrant communities. The Diputación Foral de Bizkaia (a provincial government with extensive powers for the dissemination of cultural heritage) has launched a campaign that can serve as an example for other local coordinators that wish to address the same issue in their cultural programmes.

Keywords

European Heritage Days (EHD); Faro Convention; Migrations; Cultural Heritage; Interculturality; Heritage Communities; Biscay.



Biscay, a Basque province lying between the mountains and the sea.

Study case: Biscay, cultural heritage as a catalyst for local participation.

The European Heritage Days in Biscay are the most important programme for the dissemination of cultural heritage in this territory.

Biscay is the second smallest province of Spain, and one of the three Historical Territories that, together with Araba and Gipuzkoa, forms the Comunidad Autónoma del País Vasco - Euskadi (CAPV), one of the 17 autonomous communities of the Spanish State. It is located in the north of the Iberian Peninsula, along the gulf that bears its name, and has a population of 1,150,000 scattered over 112 municipalities. The capital, Bilbao, is a city with a long industrial tradition related to iron ore exploitation, steel industry, and shipbuilding, but which in the last two decades has become well-known thanks to its profound urban transformation, partly due to its investment in culture.

Although it is a provincial government, it has extensive powers. This body is a particular case in the European context and represents the institution that has the greatest influence in the everyday life of the citizens of Biscay. The DFB is the entity that collects and manages taxes from the citizens of Biscay, and has full autonomy from the central government of Madrid.

The European Heritage Days constitute a campaign to raise awareness about cultural heritage with the broad participation of all kinds of local actors, all of them coordinated by the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia. The DFB is the entity which has organized the EHD since the territory of Biscay joined the European initiative 16 years ago.

The programme takes place during the month of October throughout the territory. Almost 100 entities have organized a total of 300 activities in 65 municipalities of Biscay. The activities are very diverse, and include guided tours, conferences and exhibitions, tastings, popular festivals, concerts and plays, mountain routes... The goal is to present the cultural heritage of the Historical Territory of Biscay to the public of Biscay from different perspectives and to make it more readily accessible to them. In the last edition, the participation achieved a figure of 15,000 people.



Some aspects that have characterized the success of this programme are:

1. **Closeness to citizens:** Biscay is a small and decentralised province with extensive powers and fiscal autonomy, which favours a greater closeness between the coordinating institution and the citizens.
2. **Common theme:** The choice of a common theme for all the activities gives cohesion to the programme.
3. **Networking:** An extensive network of collaborators coordinated by a work team in constant communication guarantees the technical quality of this programme.
4. **Time management:** The entire team is committed to strict compliance with the fixed work schedule.
5. **Self-assessment:** Every year, a final assessment of the events is made which allows identifying the successes and possible areas of improvement in the organization and management of future editions.

an **organisational model** which fosters collaboration between members of the coordination team and collaborators.



An extensive
network of
collaborators
and a
coordination
team in
constant
communication.

Since the beginning of the celebration of the EHD in Biscay, we have been trying to define an **organisational model** which fosters collaboration between members of the coordination team and collaborators, all of whom should have perfectly well-defined functions.

The **coordination team**, formed by the general coordinator and the content coordinators, is responsible for:

- the choice of the theme for the programme of activities,
- the presentation of the theme to the collaborating entities,
- establishing a work schedule,
- content advising for collaborating agents,
- the communication plan,
- the coordination and monitoring of deadlines for the development of the program,
- writing the final report and the annual balance sheet.

The **collaborating entities** are very diverse (municipalities, associations, foundations, local museums, companies, individuals...) and are committed to

- implement the programme in the corresponding municipality, museum, or entity at their own costs,
- provide a telephone helpline for information, bookings, etc.
- manage the activity,
- distribute among attendees the surveys provided by the coordination team,
- make an assessment report for the activity, and
- promote the programme locally.

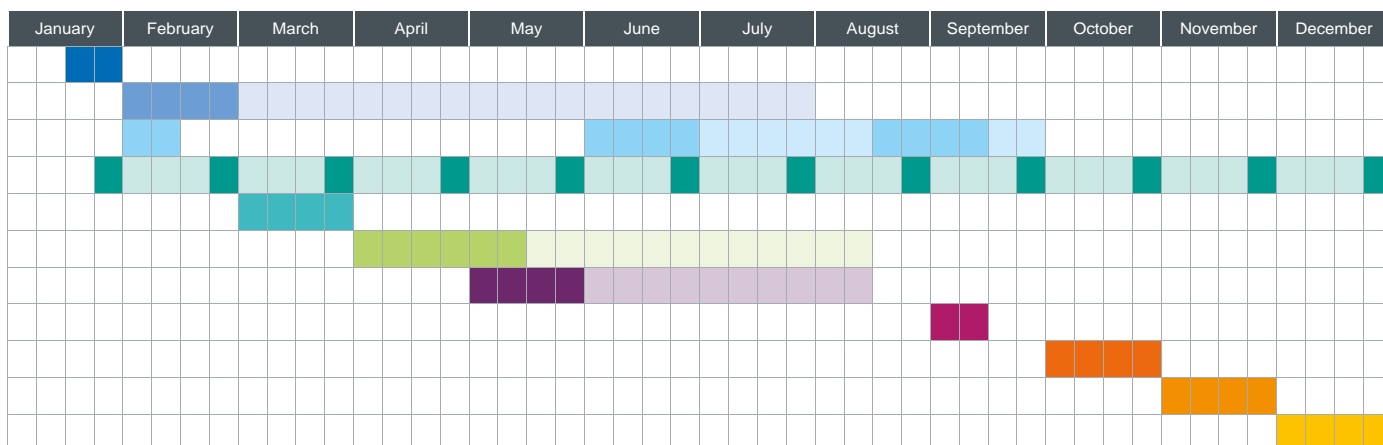
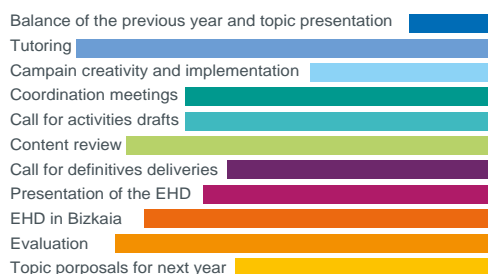
a bunch of
enthusiastic
people.



Efficient time management.

The organisation of the EHD is characterized by a precise and rigorous methodology, which has taken shape gradually throughout 16 years of work and is improved after each edition. The annual work schedule has become the backbone of the programme, since it allows to structure the goals and make progress with the work. The schedule is very useful to manage the times for each stage of work and to ascertain which actions are related.

The schedule starts in January and sets the most important milestones, meetings and steps that will take place throughout the year. In short, it is the framework that supports all the work and constitutes a very useful planning tool.





Decision to opt for an annual theme.

The theme is the unifying element for the entire programme.

The choice of a specific theme for each edition is one of the distinctive features of the organisational model used in Biscay. The theme is the unifying element for the entire programme, around which all the activities are organised: guided tours, conferences, exhibitions, shows, workshops, etc. Some of the themes chosen throughout the 16 years of EHD in Biscay include: industrial heritage; houses, towers and fortresses; traditional crafts; iron ore... The theme is always accompanied by a phrase which makes it possible to identify under a common slogan all the activities included in the programme of the EHD.

For the first time, the mandate from the Council of Europe and the European Commission does not suggest to devote the EHD to a particular heritage or historic event, but to cast light on the **Heritage Communities** committed with the preservation of heritage and its transmission to future generations.

For the 2016 edition, the focus has been moved from the heritage object to the subject, i.e. to the group of people with rights, responsibilities, and even a voice and decision-making power in the definition of priority actions for the protection of heritage. In this new way of understanding heritage as an actual project for society, all associations and groups of Biscay, independently of their origin, nationality, social background, etc., have played a fundamental role working from different perspectives for the promotion and dissemination of cultural heritage. It is, therefore, a vision of heritage as an element of cohesion and coexistence.



Heritage Communities, the new way of understanding the protection of cultural heritage.

Etzetik kanpo. Migrations and Cultural Heritage. An example of the adaptation of a programme of cultural heritage dissemination to the Faro Convention.

From the generic proposal of the EHD Programme, *Heritage and Communities*, Biscay has defined a more specific topic: Migrations and Cultural Heritage.

This topic will provide an opportunity to deepen in all migratory movements that, along history and until today, have had Biscay as their origin or destination. Additionally, it will allow to recognize the role of Heritage Communities in the preservation of local traditions, history, and cultural values and their function as main support for the preservation and revitalization of tangible and intangible heritage, i.e. an invitation to celebrate the role of citizens in the promotion and dissemination of common European heritage.

This pan European theme has posed a particular challenge for the coordination of the EHD, since the paradigm shift that it implies is particularly complicated: in fact, it is not only necessary to identify and define *the what*, the object to be interpreted, but also crucially *the who*, the Heritage Communities of Biscay that have the possibility and duty to take part in the programme. Thus, we adhere to the definition of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) of 27 October 2005, according to which

a heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations. Hence, the efforts have been focused on attracting for the first time to the programme neighbourhood associations, dance groups, sport groups, gastronomic societies, regional centres, immigrant communities, Basque men and women living abroad (even from overseas, who have been present through documentaries and exhibitions but also live through video conference), youth groups involved in the preservation of their cultural heritage, associations for the recovery of historical memory and many other entities which join the list of participants of previous editions. In fact, associations for the protection of heritage, museums, municipalities, individuals, companies... have been present in the EHD of Biscay since its first edition 16 years ago. Therefore, the theme suggested by Europe allows us to work in the same line that the EHD have been promoting for years in Biscay:

an enlarged and cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage in which people and human values occupy a central place, as indicated in the preamble of the Faro Convention. The same document underlines the need to involve everyone in society in the ongoing process of defining and managing cultural heritage, something that presented a challenge in the choice of the slogan for the EHD in Biscay.

Addressing the migration issue as a main theme allows to establish a line of work aimed at (in the words the Faro Convention) recognising individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage, understanding this concept as the group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge, and traditions. We can therefore work with a wide range of forms common to diverse communities which constitute a source of remembrance, understanding, identity, cohesion, and creativity.

Migrations are widely present in Biscay, which has always been a land which welcomes the stranger, but also a starting point for the transmission of ideas, models, and knowledge. Historically, it has been a territory of emigrants: people from Biscay often had to leave their land to prosper far from their place of origin. However, since the Basque Country's industrial boom in 1841, Biscay has attracted a large number of people, mostly from other parts of the Spanish State and foreign to Basque distinctive features (language, customs, etc.). Only recently has it begun to receive migrants from South America, Africa, and Eastern Europe, following a parallel process to that of other

Mediterranean countries.

These migratory flows have shaped a vast cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, which is the reflection of the communities and people that created it and keep it alive; a heritage forged from the cultural manifestations related to objects, architecture, visual arts, and urbanism, but also from intangible expressions such as dance, sports, literature, music, language... Even today, these diverse forms express, enrich, and convey the cultural heritage of Biscay. Every year, thanks to the EHD, cultural heritage reveals itself as a set of ideals, principles, and values, derived from the experience gained through progress and past conflicts. This becomes even more apparent in the theme chosen in 2016, since this year's activities have been aimed at showing how human mobility, i.e. migrations within, from, and to Biscay, constitutes a bridge, an exchange and communication channel between communities which cultural wealth is built thanks to the efforts of the men and women that have opened and continue to open new channels for the transmission of our own heritage, thus becoming the most efficient tool for the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

For this reason, in 2016 the European Heritage Days intended to highlight the creations of men and women who were *away from home*. Hence the slogan chosen to guide the activities contained in the programme: *Etzetik kanpo*, a simple phrase expressed in Basque language, i.e. the language that constitutes one of the elements of common heritage of which we feel most proud, and that recalls multiple and very diverse meanings: away from land,

away from home, away from family... An expression that allows polyhedral views of culture focused on the people that live Biscay's heritage day to day, that enjoy it, make it their own and that, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others, establish bonds with it as an aspect of the right to freely participate in cultural life. It represents a more human dimension centred on the manifestations that the social groups present in the municipalities, towns and neighbourhoods have generated and generate still today, since Biscay recognises the value of cultural heritage situated on territories under its jurisdiction, regardless of its origin. A comprehensive and multidimensional heritage which faces today the challenge of overcoming traditional thinking and finding solutions for a more complex and wealthy society which should express itself at a global level. Cultural heritage thus becomes an element of integration that can contribute to the construction of a peaceful and democratic society, and in the processes of sustainable development and the promotion of cultural diversity.

A participatory methodology.

At the base of these 16 years of work has always been a precise and rigorous methodology which has been developed and evaluated over time in a process characterized by constant improvement and teamwork. The theme of this year for the EHD, accompanied by a new approach which gives a central role to heritage communities, has posed a real challenge. However, it has also served as a touchstone for our way of working, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses, and, above all, it has allowed us to refine the impurities produced throughout these years.

Therefore, we believe that the methodology used for the 2016 edition and exposed below can serve as a reference for national or local coordinators who wish to work with heritage communities and other agents in the framework of the EHD.

Establishment of the working plan

This plan is fixed in January and it sets the most important milestones, meetings and steps that will take place throughout the year: it is the framework that supports all the work and constitutes a very useful planning tool.

Usually, the work is carried out over a year: it starts with the choice of the theme and ends with the assessment of the programme. The work plan allows to set the objectives and partial targets to coordinate all the agents involved.

Definition of the theme

It takes 1 or 2 work sessions to define the European proposal and find a slogan to accompany the general theme. Experts from different cultural fields take part in the project: historians, archaeologists, ethnographers, linguists, documentalists... a reduced group which represent the cultural knowledge of Biscay and discuss and establish the general lines to be implemented by the activities of the programme. The attitude is always to encourage reflection on the ethics and methods of presentation of the cultural heritage, as well as respect for diversity of interpretations that this might have.

Definition of the content

Meetings with professionals working on cultural heritage from the perspective that we choose to prioritize each year in order to determine which aspects need to be addressed, which agents should participate more directly, or what kind of activities are better to reinforce the message of the programme, as well as what

will be the difficulties and challenges we will be facing.

Announcement of the theme

Communication of actions through press releases to give an account of the steps taken and draw the attention of all social agents concerned. The objective is to encourage everyone to participate in the process of identification, study, interpretation, and presentation of the cultural heritage and the public reflection and debate on the opportunities and challenges which the cultural heritage represents. This way we want to recognise the role of voluntary organisations both as partners in activities and as constructive critics of cultural heritage policies.

At this stage, social networks like Facebook or Twitter and the web of the institution play a fundamental role in disseminating the project and, increasingly, obtaining feedback from citizens.

Presentation of the theme

Public presentation of the theme during the morning and the afternoon to introduce the theme, explain it with regard to the European context and indicate the possible lines of development. We present examples of tangible and intangible heritage of Biscay that could be incorporated to the activities of the EHD to give concrete ideas for the programme. The slogan of the EHD is already displayed during this presentation, which reinforces the sense of unity between all participants.



Content design

Personalized meetings, either face-to-face or virtual, are arranged with the agents that request it, and constitute a very useful tool which allows a direct dialogue between the organizing entities of each activity and the coordination team. These sessions generate high added value for the programme, since the final result will establish a clear, adequate, and coherent line of discourse: the fact that all activities are related with the main theme allows to convey the message of the EHD in a more effective way, and makes cultural heritage more accessible to citizens.

Search for new collaborators

Active search of new collaborators out of the usual communication channels, and even out of cultural realm, who bring added value to the EHD. A programme of European level must distinguish itself for its plurality: giving more visibility to heritage communities is, in fact, one of our challenges for the future.

This year it has been essential to arrange meetings with the immigration units of Biscay municipalities and with the rest of immigrant associations and communities that live and work in our towns and cities.

Choice of the logo of the EHD

Materialisation of an attractive and explicit graphic design that communicates effectively the theme of the EHD. It constitutes a process of reflection between the coordination team and the graphic designer to choose the image that best suits the message that we want to convey.

Edition of the activity programme

Every year a brochure is published containing the activities of the EHD, explaining the theme chosen and its relation with the European theme, and describing each activity. We also design a pocket calendar that is delivered together with the catalogue, a very useful tool to help the visitors of the EHD to organise their participation.

Celebration of the European Heritage Days (October)

The EHD start with a presentation event for the media to which all participants are invited. The event takes place in a territory of Biscay which clearly represents the theme chosen. All the activities designed in the programme are conducted over the whole month: a month to enjoy common heritage and show the plurality of peoples which form the current cultural landscape of Biscay.

Assessment

A process of constant improvement based on dialogue, participation, and teamwork. The impact of EHD is assessed thanks to a double system: on the one hand, the direct assessment by the public thanks to surveys, on the other the self-assessment of organizers. These two systems are put together in the propositive meeting organized with the stakeholders in the month of October.

This methodology is constantly being revised and allows to define, improve, and correct all aspects of the work on the basis of practical experience: an essential management tool to perform a task of these characteristics.





Working for interculturality. Examples of activities of the 2016 Biscay EHD.

Biscay's society is committed to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage at all levels: administrative, associative, and individual. This is reflected every year in the European Heritage Days, which always seeks greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned. Seeking this synergy, this year's EHD have successfully attracted to the programme for the first time to migrant communities which had never participated in it and which have shared their understanding of culture and heritage.

The activities organized in the municipalities of **Bilbao** and **Getxo** have been particularly interesting. They are part of the project Intercultural Cities created by the Council of Europe in 2008 from the conviction that one of the greatest challenges in Europe is and will be the management of the growing cultural diversity in the continent. Both cities are developing tools to manage the cultural diversity as a resource of dynamism and socio-economic development, by stimulating creativity and innovation, with the goal of using diversity as a source of economic prosperity, social cohesion, and improved life quality for all citizens. This is carried out from an intercultural perspective which advocates for equal rights, duties, and social opportunities for the construction of a positive discourse on diversity and, above all, for the promotion of social interaction, fighting discrimination and exclusion of individuals and groups.

The capital of Biscay, Bilbao, is also the economic, social, and cultural centre of the Basque Country. After the deep crisis that affected its fundamental economic sectors (metallurgy, steel industry and shipbuilding), the city had to face great challenges: high unemployment, deterioration of urban fabric, important processes of internal migration, problems of social exclusion... Thanks to the management of local policy, to the collaboration between the public and the private spheres and the interinstitutional cooperation, the city is undergoing a process of transformation at all levels, in which culture plays a major role. One of these challenges is precisely to manage cultural diversity: with a population that is home to 7.7% of foreigners, Bilbao aspires to become a reference for new ideas, culture and ways of understanding life that can bring new social and economic opportunities.

In Bilbao, we have contacted with the **Federación Gentes del Mundo** (Peoples of the World Federation), a project created in 2012 and formed by citizens from diverse cultural backgrounds which aims at raising social awareness and promoting cultural knowledge and social inclusion in Basque society. The Federation, which brings together 45 associations, works for the empowerment of migrants, raising



awareness about the importance of cultural diversity as a factor of social wealth and development, and suggesting the creation of spaces for dialogue centred on the reflection for the construction of an intercultural coexistence. Every year, in the month of June, its members organize a festival which hosts workshops of dance, crafts, textiles, painting, tastings, and intercultural gatherings and talks to interact and celebrate cultural diversity. It is, therefore, a community that actively participates in the cultural life of Biscay, understanding the value of heritage as an element

of cohesion and respecting the different interpretations of each community. In response to the invitation of the organizers of EHD in Biscay, the Federation has begun this year a process of reflection to highlight the need to consolidate a line of work in the design of intelligent immigration policies and respect for human rights as a contribution to European cultural heritage. The results of this reflection around the topic of heritage and immigration in the European Union, which took place in several brainstorming sessions during the month of July, were presented in the Sala Ondare (hall of the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia) in October 2016. The session was attended by people from different origins (Colombia, Ukraine, Peru...) who reside in Biscay and understand culture as a means of integration and enrichment of societies, useful for improving life quality and sustainable development.

Bilbao has also hosted the activities organized by members of the **Diáspora Saharaui en Bizkaia** (DISABI), a group created to strengthen the integration and solidarity between the Saharawi people (the indigenous inhabitants of Occidental Sahara) and the other peoples. Their work is especially significant, since many Saharawi live in the part of Sahara occupied by Morocco, exiled in camps in Tindouf

(Algeria) or scattered around the world, with an important community in Biscay. DISABI organizes activities to promote contact between Saharawi people and other groups, as well as improve the life quality of Saharawi and guarantee the maintenance of their culture. In 2016 they have been invited for the first time to participate in the European Heritage Days. During one week, a nomadic tent was installed in the Archaeological Museum where visitors could come to learn about the ways of life and customs of this community, both in their tangible and intangible aspects: the tea ceremony, songs and dances of the community, the ceremony of milk and dates,



women's traditional dresses, everyday objects that they have brought with them from Sahara.... In addition to that, this cultural exchange was completed with a conference about the Basque-Saharawi project of collaboration that for years has been trying to recover through archaeology in the territories of Sahara the past and culture of this people. This conference, given by the prestigious archaeologist Andoni Sáenz de Buruaga, was attended by prominent members of the Saharawi community, who shared the importance that they attach to their traditions and tangible heritage, whether this consists in objects that they carried with them or they left behind in Sahara, and that they recall through poems and songs. It was a moving and enriching activity during which we could discover the culture of one community with an important presence in Biscay but that also highlighted how cooperation between peoples around culture can become an important link for cohesion and coexistence and stressed the soundness of the principle of heritage policies and educational initiatives which treat all cultural heritages equitably and so promote dialogue among cultures and religions.



Another example to highlight is the work led by the **Museum of Reproductions of Bilbao**. It is located in a historic district, Bilbao La Vieja, with a significant presence of groups at risk of social exclusion and where many immigrant communities (mainly Moroccan and sub-Saharan) are choosing to settle. The Museum has generated a varied offer of activities for the EHD that complete its usual programme and are mainly directed to the neighbourhood where it is located. A programme that seeks to

integrate these communities through culture and heritage.

For its part, the municipality of Getxo has also organized several activities that celebrate its cultural diversity. Getxo is a municipality situated in the metropolitan area of Bilbao of residential nature and with a service-based economy. Around 10% of the population was born abroad, mainly in non-EU countries: the Latin American community is the most important, but there are also significant groups of Filipinos, Romanians, and Moroccans. In order to manage this cultural diversity, the council has a Unit of Immigration and Interculturality which main objective is the recognition of diversity, the promotion of interaction and contact between locals and foreigners, the social and political participation, and the prevention of discrimination in all realms.

Several activities organized in Getxo for the EHD 2016 have revolved around migrant communities.

One of them was organized by the association **México Lindo**, a Mexican community in Biscay which has chosen to share one of the oldest traditions of their culture: the Day of the Dead, declared Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003.

The activity has been framed in the intercultural work of Getxo's libraries, *Bibliotecas lugar de encuentro* (Libraries, a Meeting Place) that aims to transform these spaces into places for cultural exchange and mutual enrichment.



For the first time, the programme also has had the participation of **the Immigrant Platform of Getxo**, devoted to analyse and study aspects related with immigration in the municipality and to favour the integration of foreign population through common work and coordination of awareness-raising activities. The workshop *Mila Zapore* (A Thousand Flavours) was organized together with the **Egizu association**, devoted to the dissemination and strengthening of the Basque-speaking community of the locality and its

surroundings. This project offered the possibility to discover the gastronomy of different countries, one of the most significant cultural signs that contribute to generate meeting points for coexistence.

Likewise, the **Centre for Refugee Aid of the Basque Country** collaborated in the organization of the street show *Tras la Frontera* (Beyond the border), created as part of the "Memorias compartidas" (Shared Memories) initiative that aims to raise awareness about the right to asylum, identifying analogies between the current refugees and the Basque exiles caused by the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the dictatorship of general Francisco Franco (1939-1975). In addition to that, the play sheds light on the contribution of women in conflicts and focuses on the current situation and the experiences of Basque exiles. In this sense, the cultural manifestations reveal themselves as a resource to facilitate peaceful co-existence by promoting trust and mutual understanding with a view to resolution and prevention of conflicts.



However, the municipalities of Bilbao and Getxo are not the only ones to have developed activities seeking to encourage interculturalism through heritage. Throughout Biscay many acts have been organized which gave a central role to migrant communities. Among them, they highlight those of Amorebieta-Etxano and Ziortza Bolibar, since they have worked directly with two communities that are beginning to be well-integrated in Biscay: the Russian-Lipovans and the Senegalese community.

In **Amorebieta-Etxano** a meeting has been organized with the **Russian-Lipovans**, with the aim of discovering the history, beliefs, arts, and culture of this people, which has an important community in the Basque Country (about 300 people, of which approximately two thirds live in the surroundings of



Amorebieta). Russian-Lipovans are a community that is characterized by keeping ancient rites within the Orthodox Church. Most of them are from Russian origin. In the 17th century, after being cruelly persecuted and displaced from their places of origin for religious reasons, they settled in the Principality of Moldavia, along the Prut River, and in the Danube Delta, in territories belonging today to Romania. There they have kept their religion, but also their language,

culture, and customs. In the last decades, many have been forced to move again, this time for economic reasons; it is then that a large community which is now well integrated arrives to Amorebieta. The meeting took place in the Orthodox Church of ancient rite that the Lipovans have in the municipality. There, several icons were displayed and their polyphonic music was played, since several Lipovan women have created the choir *Juravca*, which also participates frequently in the festivities of the surroundings. This activity allowed to highlight the features that Basque and Lipovan cultures share (respect of elderly, struggle to defend their own language, interest in preserving their traditions...) but, above all, to show how different manifestations of cultural heritage can reinforce the dialogue between communities of diverse origin that coexist in the same territory.

In the region of Markina-Ondarroa, where the municipality of **Ziortza-Bolibar** is located, there is an important **migrant community**, in this case of Senegalese origin. There, the **Simón Bolívar Museum** has organized an activity based on the meeting between two cultures, the Basque and the Senegalese, that share the issue of migration; and the region of Markina-Ondarroa has been one of the regions that has experienced this phenomenon in Biscay more vividly: hundreds of people have left from there since the 16th century, most of them with destination of America, but also to other countries like



Australia. This trend continued until recent times, and many people have left from there to work mainly as shepherds and *pelotaris*, players of Basque *pelota*. An exhibition of this sport was performed in the fronton of Ziortza-Bolibar by José Antonio Illoro, Txikito de Bolibar, precisely one of those

pelotaris that went to progress in America and that shared with the attendants his experience and the story of the exodus of the Basque *pelotaris*. In this same place, the Senegalese community, that has arrived to the region to work as fishermen, prepared one of their typical dishes: the *thiéboudienne*, word that derives from *ceebu jen*, which means "rice and fish" in Wolof language, which was served with cider produced in the region. All this allowed the rapprochement between two cultures that are moving closer together: in fact, people of Senegalese origin have valued very positively the possibility to learn about the story of Txikito de Bolibar and the Basque game of *pelota*.

An additional example are the intercultural activities that have been organized together with the **British community in Loiu** and the **Icelandic community in Bermeo**. In these cases, we have tried to give visibility to a little-known heritage for the inhabitants of Biscay, which shows the strong relations that, throughout the centuries, the Basque people has maintained with other peoples, such as the British or the Icelandic.



The **Arrantzaleen Museoa** (Fisherman Museum) of **Bermeo** has organized a transnational meeting with Iceland to illustrate the common past that the Basque and Icelandic peoples share around whale hunting. In first place, the **Basque-Icelandic Association** organized in Hólmavík (Iceland) the conference "Basque people in Iceland. Reading between the lines", presented by the Icelandic archaeologist Magnus Rafnsson, on the relations between the Basque people and the inhabitants of Strandasýsla (north-east of Iceland) during the 17th century, when the former arrived to the Icelandic ports to hunt whales and fish cod. Some days later, in Bermeo, the Basque archaeologist Xabier Armendariz pronounced the conference "Basques in Iceland: hunting whale and fishing cod" which revealed little-known details about the endeavour of Basque fishermen in Iceland, both from the commercial and from the human point of view. Encounters and conflicts that illustrate a common history which cultural memory and influence has been kept alive until our days in aspects as diverse as language or Icelandic traditional dress.

Precisely this last aspect, that of the relationship between the Basque Country and Iceland through the manifestations of language, was central in the European Heritage Days of 2016. **Euskaltzaindia** (the Academy of the Basque Language) dedicated one of its lectures to this subject: the Basque philologist Gidor Bilbao conversed on the remains of the Basque language in Iceland, focusing his talk on the Basque-Icelandic pidgin, a simplified language that allowed brief communication between Basque fishermen and whalers and the Icelandic population. A common heritage between two peoples that was also materialized in a dictionary, the first in Iceland to be devoted to a living language, Basque language.

The relationships between Basque and British have also been constant at least from the 15th century, mainly around the trade of iron ore. As a result of these commercial relations and especially from the intense industrialization of the Basque Country from mid of the 19th century, a significant **British community** was established in Biscay, which still has an important presence in the territory and that has left its imprint in cultural heritage. One of the most relevant places is the place known as "English cemetery", an enclave owned by the British Crown located in the municipality of **Loiu** and created in 1926 to move there from the city of Bilbao the cemetery where non-Catholics were buried, especially English protestants. Thus, the EHD of this year have allowed to get closer and visit a place that is a symbol of coexistence between cultures and religions (it keeps its celebrations and rites still today) and that was virtually unknown for citizens.



All these activities have come to join a programme that is growing year by year, incorporating a diversity of views and interpretations of cultural heritage that enrich all the participants in the European Heritage Days in Biscay: coordinators, organizers, public, institutions, associations, individuals, administrations, etc. The interest of the coordination team of the European Heritage Days in Biscay is that the agents that have joined the programme for the first time in this edition are active participants in the future, keeping for the upcoming editions an integrative approach aimed to celebrate the cultural, biological, geological and landscape diversity of our Historical Territory, in order to achieve a balance between these elements. Knowledge of the common cultural heritage, which is the main objective of EHD, is thus acquiring a new nuance, since it is showing the validity of cultural resources as a means to foster pacific coexistence. In addition to that, it contributes to promote its potential to reinforce social cohesion by fostering a sense of shared responsibility towards the places in which people live.

Conclusion

The work carried out through the European Heritage Days in Biscay has been an attempt to implement the principles of the Faro Convention in a programme of dissemination of cultural heritage, in line with the Faro Action Plan 2016-17.

Incorporating to this programme local communities composed by people that, regardless of their origins, work in favour of the protection, preservation and dissemination of common cultural heritage has posed a challenge for the coordination team and all the collaborating agents. This challenge starts a new line of work that -with its successes and areas of improvement opens

a new way to be followed in future editions and that intends to introduce Biscay in a pan-European framework for co-operation with regard to cultural heritage.

In this sense, the European Heritage Days in Biscay can be an effective tool for conducting our cultural policy towards a convergence with the commitments of the Faro Convention, especially when developing innovative ways to foster cooperation between public authorities (in this case the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia, but also other organizing entities like municipalities or the Basque Government itself) and other actors, especially in the Heritage Communities of our Historical Territory. Programs like this can also help to encourage voluntary initiatives which complement the roles of public authorities and encourage nongovernmental organisations concerned with heritage conservation to act in the public interest, taking part in the programme or organizing throughout the years other activities relevant to this principle of respect for cultures and social cohesion.

Collaboration and interaction between different agents, public or private, developed throughout 16 years of celebration of EHD, has created an organizational model that works very effectively. A model of cooperation, with a proper methodology, that we think that can be adapted to new initiatives and projects, y that can be useful for the national and local coordinators of the EHD that want to incorporate in their programs the heritage communities and, more specifically, the theme of migration and cultural heritage.

Immigration is a phenomenon that all peoples must address sooner or later identifying the effective tools to achieve a positive coexistence.

Incorporating the vision or visions of these new citizens represents a great challenge, probably the most complex that European population and institutions face. Working in 2016 with a theme that unites cultural heritage and immigration shows that culture can also be used to address the conflicts for coexistence in Europe.

Biscay has decided to take part in this challenge and has proposed a programme based on three points: interculturality, current migrations, changing society. This challenge, that we want to continue to address in the future, has allowed the involvement of a greater number of social and cultural groups in the project of European Heritage Days. The theme of this year has made possible the participation for the first time of neighbourhood associations and immigrant communities, which played a central role in a programme of dissemination of cultural heritage, but has also enabled to promote the social and cultural contribution that migrant populations bring to the villages and cities of Biscay. A contribution that is taking place all over Europe and that requires a great amount of analysis and work, also in the realms of culture and heritage.

an effective tool for
conducting our
cultural policy
towards a
convergence with
the commitments of
the Faro Convention.





The experience in Biscay has allowed to identify the **successes** in the choice of the theme (i.e. the benefits brought both to cultural heritage and to participating communities), but also to determine the **areas of improvement** that still exist in our territory regarding common work with these communities in the realm of culture.

Successes

- Visibility of social groups of immigrants and people at risk of exclusion, of neighbours who have participated for the first time in a shared cultural programme.
- Dissemination of cultural activities and projects of migrant communities and people at risk of exclusion.
- Socialization of knowledge regarding the phenomenon of migration and the different cultural manifestations associated with them.
- Rapprochement to the citizens of the idea of common heritage as a frame composed by different identities.
- Strengthening of the narrative of diversity in the collective construction of the society of Biscay.
- Awareness of the importance of intangible elements of cultural heritage in migratory processes.
- Improvement of social perception regarding particular neighbourhoods and associations that usually have a negative image.
- Feedback among migrated and local people of Biscay, exchange of cultures and knowledges.

Areas of improvement

- Reluctance to consider as common heritage the cultural manifestations of migrant population.
- Risk of trivialization and simplification of heritage brought by migrated communities.
- Low participation of migrant communities in activities organized by local population or other communities other than their own.
- Survival of a concept of cultural heritage still closely linked to the traditional vision of the monumental and tangible against the intangible and changeable.



These successes and areas of improvement help us identify the challenges that we face as coordinators of the European Heritage Days in Biscay, and therefore enables us to keep emphasising the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society.

Meeting the challenges

- Include Biscay in the Faro Community as a "local community" participating in a dynamic pan-European network, within a framework for constructive dialogue and cooperation.
- Reinforce the idea of common heritage as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity, and contemporary creativity.
- Give continuity to the presence of social and cultural groups with the aim of «broadening» the concept of European Cultural Heritage.
- Promote effective spaces for the cultural exchange between indigenous and migrated populations.
- Strengthen the relationship between all the stakeholders (migrant communities, local agents, administration, privates...).
- Provide tools to migrant communities and people at risk of exclusion to bring them closer and make them enjoy the common heritage, creating specific programmes which take into consideration the value attached by each heritage community to the cultural heritage with which it identifies.
- Expand cultural capital of migrant population throughout Biscay.
- Promote interdisciplinary research in the field of migration and cultural heritage, giving a central role to intangible heritage of migrant communities.

Amaia Apraiz Sahagún
Ainara Martínez Matía
Aintzane Eguilior Mancisidor

Bilbao, 30 December 2016

