

REVIEW OF REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDELINES **LURRALDEA 2040**

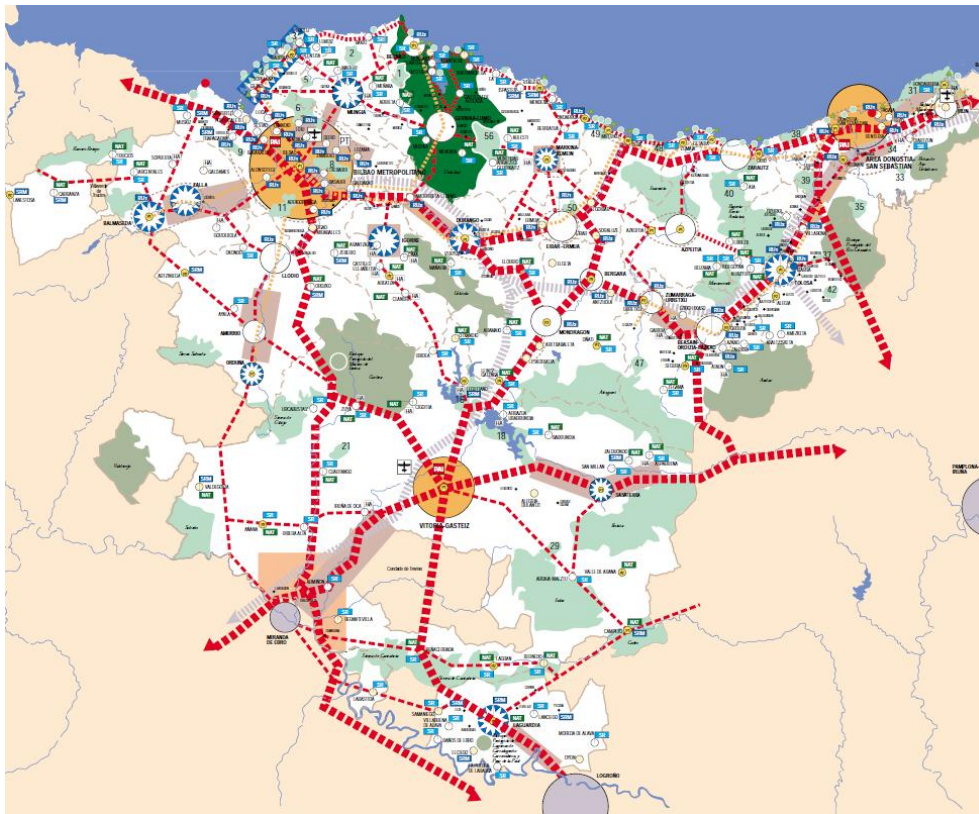
Introduction

By means of an agreement with the Basque Government Council dated July 2015, the process to review the 1997 Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) for the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (ACBC) has begun, in light of Spanish Law 4/1990 dated 31 May, on Regional Planning for the Basque Country.

The ACBC is a small coastal territory (7,235.08 km²) with a highly varied terrain. It is formed by three provinces (Álava, Biscay and Gipuzkoa) and three capital cities (Bilbao, Vitoria-Gasteiz and San Sebastian). With a population of 2,171,886 inhabitants in the year 2017, a high population density, 300 inhab./km², and a very high urban density, 4,432.86 inhab./km². The Basque economy was historically characterised by its solid industrial foundation (24.5% Gross Value Added) and high energy dependency (94%).

I.- Review framework, conditions and guiding principles.

The regional planning policy in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (ACBC) legally began with the approval of Spanish Law 4/1990, dated 31 May, on Regional Planning for the Basque Country, which incorporates regional planning instruments into the legal system, which are the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG), Partial Regional Plans (PRP) and Sectorial Regional Plans (SRP).



Summary Map of Regional Planning Guidelines of 1997

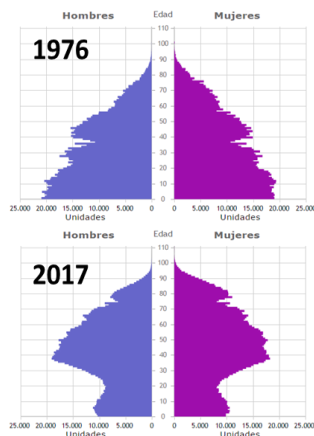
Upon analysing the document for review of Guidelines, the starting point is the conviction that the regional planning cycle that began with the aforementioned law 4/90 has come to an end. In this cycle, guidelines were approved in the year 1997, and later on, the fifteen partial regional plans and the ten sectorial regional plans. All of this consolidated regional planning policy in a certain way, which leads one to consider that, today, in the ACBC there is a culture of regional planning that touches all individuals related to the administration, or professionals working in regional planning, town planning or the environment.

Based on a **diagnosis** of what this first regional planning cycle entailed, we should note minimum contributions, which are: delimitation of functional areas, planning the physical environment into categorisation and homogenisation of undeveloped land treatment with river, wetland, coast or agro-forest SRPs, solid treatment of flood potential issues that have nothing to do with how we worked twenty years ago, residential quantification (residential capacity or maximum number of dwellings that the Basque Government establishes in town planning for municipalities), which meant that there were no developments or urban expansion from other territories in the ACBC, and while our terrain may have helped us, our urban plans posited urban expansion in a logical and contained fashion, and land planning for economic activities as an Autonomous Community highly dedicated to the industrial sector that also had guidelines for industrial quantification.

Elements that could be improved were also detected. The criticism was that, at times, there was insufficient coordination between the PRPs and the SRPs, proposed SRPs and those not promoted, such as the SRP for Mineable Zones or Tourism SRPs, and coordination of sectorial policies as something constantly pending completion, in the sense that an essential task in regional planning is coordination of sectorial policies, which is not always an easy task, since it requires breaking away from the sectorial administrations' trend of entrenching themselves in their sectorial competences, normally supported by their own law, which forces us to propose strategies for administrative integration in this review.

As **a socioeconomic link** in the revision, we should note that the latest predictions from the EUSTAT (Basque Institute of Statistics) cite a somewhat positive stabilised demographic evolution in general for the ACBC over upcoming years, more positive in Alava, and to a lesser extent in Gipuzkoa, with the population decreasing in Biscay. However, there is a fundamental piece of data from the sociological perspective, which is that by the year 2030, it is predicted that 67.7% of the population will be younger than 15 or older than 65, placing us in the kind of society we are going to have, or that we have or have had, and this shall only grow more acute. This chapter includes the challenge of climate change, because many times climate change issues are handled as material for study. This document takes a leap and presents what this means for regional planning or town planning, predicted sea level rises of 29 to 49 cm, the consequences for each one of the municipalities, the rise in temperature, decreased precipitations, etc.

Socioeconomic, regional link



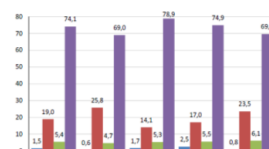
Proyecciones demográficas 2017-2031

Ámbito Territorial	2017	2020	2026	2031
Álava	323.800	327.900	333.700	337.600
Bizkaia	1.137.300	1.132.000	1.119.200	1.109.500
Gipuzkoa	713.000	720.000	730.300	738.700
CAPV	2.174.100	2.179.900	2.183.200	2.185.800

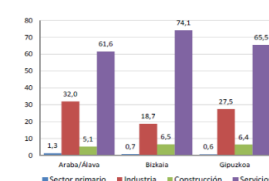
Dependencia

Intervalo de edades	total	Porcentaje	Tasa de dependencia (P0-15+P65+)/P16-64 (%)
0-15	301.300	13,81%	67,70%
16-64	1.301.200	59,66%	
≥65	578.500	26,52%	

Composición del VAB por sectores en la CAPV y en Europa. 2015 (%)



Composición del VAB por sectores en los TT.HH. 2014 (%)



Cambio Climático

Ascenso del nivel del mar (finales del siglo XXI)	Precipitaciones Disminución	Temperaturas Incremento
29-49cm	10-30% V. Mediterránea 10% V. Cantábrica	Invierno 1,5º - 2,5º Verano 4,5º - 7º

The basis for the new regional strategy is aligned with the worldwide regional challenges identified by the UN (Agenda 2030 New Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the 2015 17 Objectives for Sustainable Development, or the New Urban Agenda HABITAT III of Quito from October 2016), throughout the European Union (European Union Urban Agenda, approved by the Amsterdam Pact) or in the ACBC (2016 Basque Declaration from the Conference of Sustainable Cities and Towns of Bilbao).

The **basis for the regional model** within a concept of the region as a physical structure, plus society, projects a sustainable, inclusive, living, smart, balanced, inter-related and participatory region. Sustainable, integrating the three environmental, economic and social variables, the cultural dimension, with an inter-generational concern and a drive toward a region with richer and better-preserved ecosystems, with dense settlements, with a firm belief in urban regeneration and collective, more energetically-efficient transport, in addition to others, inclusive, with concern for cared-for town planning, living, with an analysis of the global impact caused by people's actions on the planet.

There are ten **guiding principles** for the Guideline review that bear on the nuclear concepts: the concept of green infrastructure and ecosystems services as going a step beyond planning for the physical environment, the rural habitat as a sign of ongoing concern for its maintenance, due to its essential role in landscape protection, the Transformation Axes, a concept to meet the needs of the greater linear structure in the valley beds, beyond the poly-nuclear system of capitals or the source of functional areas, optimised use of land that has already been artificialized, fundamentally promoting urban regeneration and blended uses, a flexible, effective response to ground for economic activities, upon which and due to territorial conditioning elements it shall be necessary to establish regeneration, renewal, re-densification strategies for land already existing, including landscape management in regional planning instruments, sustainable resource management: water, energy sovereignty, circular economy and connected self-sufficiency, sustainable mobility and logistics, new concerns or transversal issues (universal accessibility, gender perspective, the Basque language, climate change, health and regional inter-relation), and finally, promotion of good governance.

The **defining elements** for the Regional Model are:

- I Physical environment and green infrastructure.
- II Rural habitat.
- III Urban habitat.
- IV Landscape, cultural and natural heritage and tourist resources.
- V Sustainable resource management.
- VI Mobility and logistics.
- VII Transversal issues.
- VIII Governance.

Finally, it should be noted that the 1997 Guidelines sought to show fundamental determinations on one sole map as a quick representation of the key contents affecting each municipality.

A brief review of the regional model of the review leads us to state the following key elements:

II.- Functional Areas:

The 1997 Guidelines established a delimitation of **functional areas**, which was affirmed over the course of all these years, by establishing a suitable scale to develop plans that make the general orientations defined operable. No change was introduced to this delimitation, but the designation was changed.



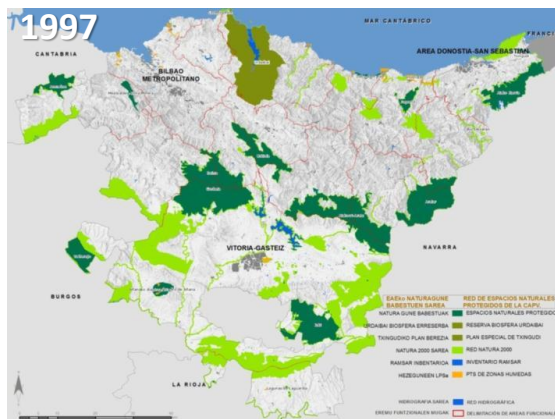
Functional Areas of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country

III.- Physical Environment Planning and Green Infrastructure:

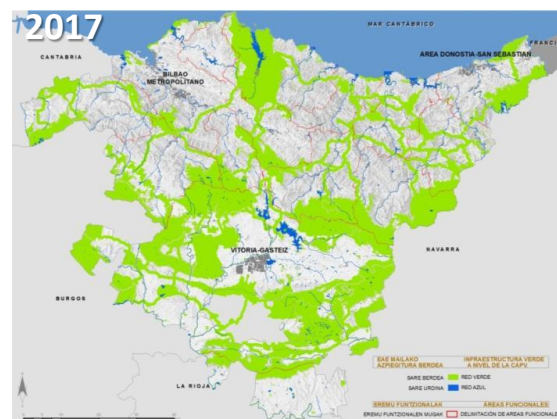
The chapter on **physical environment planning** in the 1997 Guidelines is one of the most important chapters. In addition to being a chapter that has taken on value in all disciplines,

going from a recommended guideline to a regulatory guideline, having assumed all its precepts in an ordinary way, with total normalcy; in other words, uses are regulated based on a global categorisation of the RPGs in force, imposed for city planning of municipalities, so this review only carries out adjustment tasks and removes the category "No Vocation for Defined Use." Moreover, regarding Superimposed Conditioning Factors, climate change was added, an aspect expounded on later. Also of note are a few specifications regarding planning for rural nuclei, with greater limits on building possibilities.

The concept of the green infrastructure is a fundamental disciplinary contribution included by the document, and implies conceptual maturation arising from a richer vision than before, which viewed natural spaces as an archipelago of islands. Currently, firstly, the concept of an ecological corridor, and then the concept of the green infrastructure, enrich the vision, taking a multi-scale, multiconceptual leap, by encompassing environmental, health, economy and leisure aspects, or multi-regional when inserting the urban setting, as well. The concept of green infrastructure is concerned as a fundamental aspect, due to the regional fragmentation caused by grey infrastructures built by past generations, and the need to suture the regions, introducing the conceptual contribution that green infrastructure is laid over the grey infrastructure in regions where they meet. The concept of green infrastructure relies on the concept of ecosystems services, which helps to provide a view of nature's contribution to the well-being of people.



1997 Regional Planning Guidelines

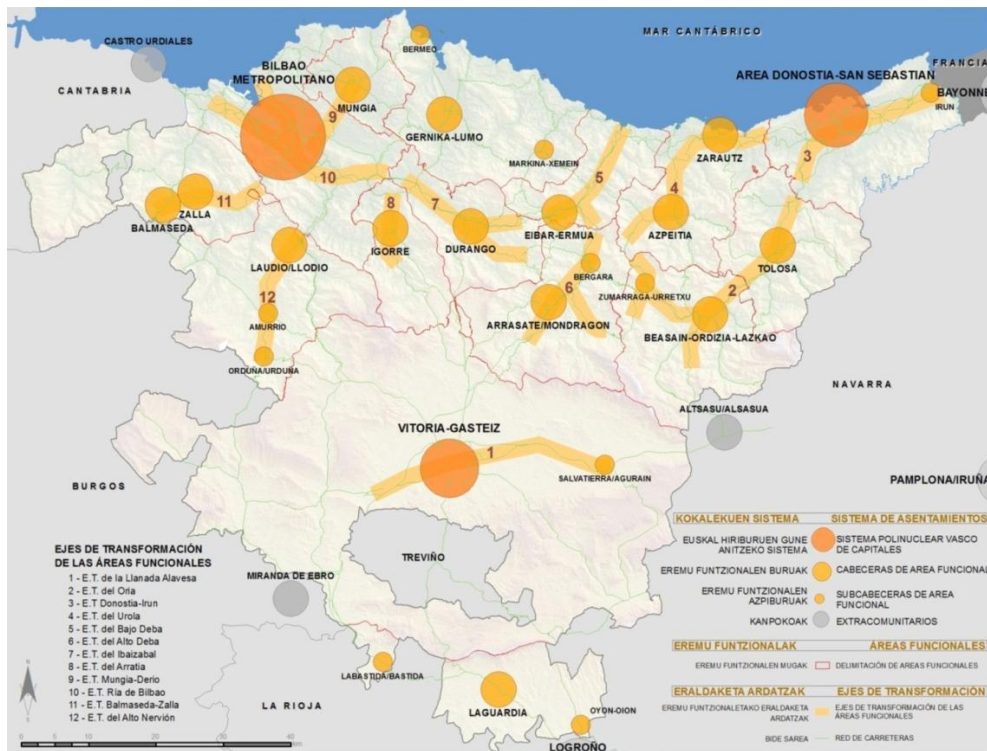


2017 Regional Planning Guidelines

IV.- Urban Habitat

The **urban system** defined by Guidelines from 1997 with the Poly-Nuclear Capital System, which is home to 70% of the population with housing and employment, and the Capitals and Sub-Capitals in the Functional Areas, with a fundamental role in balancing the urban system, was completed with the concept of Transformation Axes, as a basic element to articulate urban spaces and to protect open spaces.

Urban regeneration is suggested to boost regional reuse and recycling, developing new uses in spaces that are already occupied by development. This issue is already firmly-rooted in the ACBC as a small territory, where the need to administer land as a scant resource is an everyday experience, and where the need to regenerate the existing city is well-assimilated.



Urban System of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country

The concept of the **urban growth perimeter** is perhaps one of the most novel concepts in the Guidelines review document, Urban Habitat planning. This concept has given rise to great debate over municipal responsibility, which could be understood as an invasion of their jurisdiction regarding regional planning over urban planning. This is based on the premise of understanding that the region's purpose must be addressed at all scales, and cannot be limited to the field of town planning at the municipal scale, with the land classification blueprint. Thus, since approval of the Guidelines in the year 1997, residential quantification was addressed, which has meant that land dimensioning was dimensioned based on existing urban sections. At this time, and more in the Cantabrian area, there must be mid-term guidelines in regional planning for urban growth, in the sense that the city must not exceed certain limits over the upcoming 20 years, and this reflection must be included in the Partial Regional Plans. This reflection can also help to contemplate decrease; in other words, given expansionist town plans, pursuant to new sustainability guidelines, and given the need to reduce residential or industrial-classified land, to move toward re-densification strategies, the urban growth perimeter can be helpful to declassify land, which for a town hall is no easy task.

In **land planning**, economic activities took place in disciplinary fashion beginning at times when land actions for activities with a high technological component were highlighted, until rating ordinary economic activity land at its proper level, since the ACBC is a region heavily dedicated to the industrial sector, accounting for 25% of total employment, which improved the response to the latest economic crisis. However, the landscape limitations in our territory prevent continuing over upcoming years with a new land occupation policy, so focus must be placed on regeneration, renewal and re-densification of the existing industrial land. Regarding commercial equipment in regional and town planning, we must preserve the urban life of populations, and in this regard, there must be a balance between urban commerce and peripheral commerce.

Residential quantification is an issue with a long history in the ACBC, with undeniable contributions to the urban result. The review document improves the current system, providing a

double entry into the issue, without adding limitations to the urban land, and imposing limiting criteria when developable land is classified; moreover, regarding sustainability, it incorporates the uninhabited dwelling variable.

V.- Landscape and Tourist Resources

The **landscape** is inserted into regulations in the ACBC in regional planning, insofar as the concern is not so much to protect or improve protruding or sublime landscapes, but rather to plan everyday landscapes, in our case, peripheral landscapes, landscapes in the back parts of population nuclei, access points or the rural-urban border.

As far as **tourist resources** are concerned, the Tourism Law states that a Tourist Resources SRP must be drawn up, a task already set forth in the Guidelines in force and not completed. However, the need to make exploitation of tourist resources within a context of sustainable tourism compatible is an entirely current problem, and quantification guidelines to make tourist development compatible with the resident population's quality of life are needed.

VI.- Sustainable resource management

As far as the **Water** section is concerned, the SRP for river and riverbed planning in the ACBC meant reaching an administrative consensus to integrate the environmental, hydraulic and town planning variables, including an updated flood risk vision already in force in the review, and adding different aspects related to supply and sanitation, bearing on regional policy corresponding with water planning.

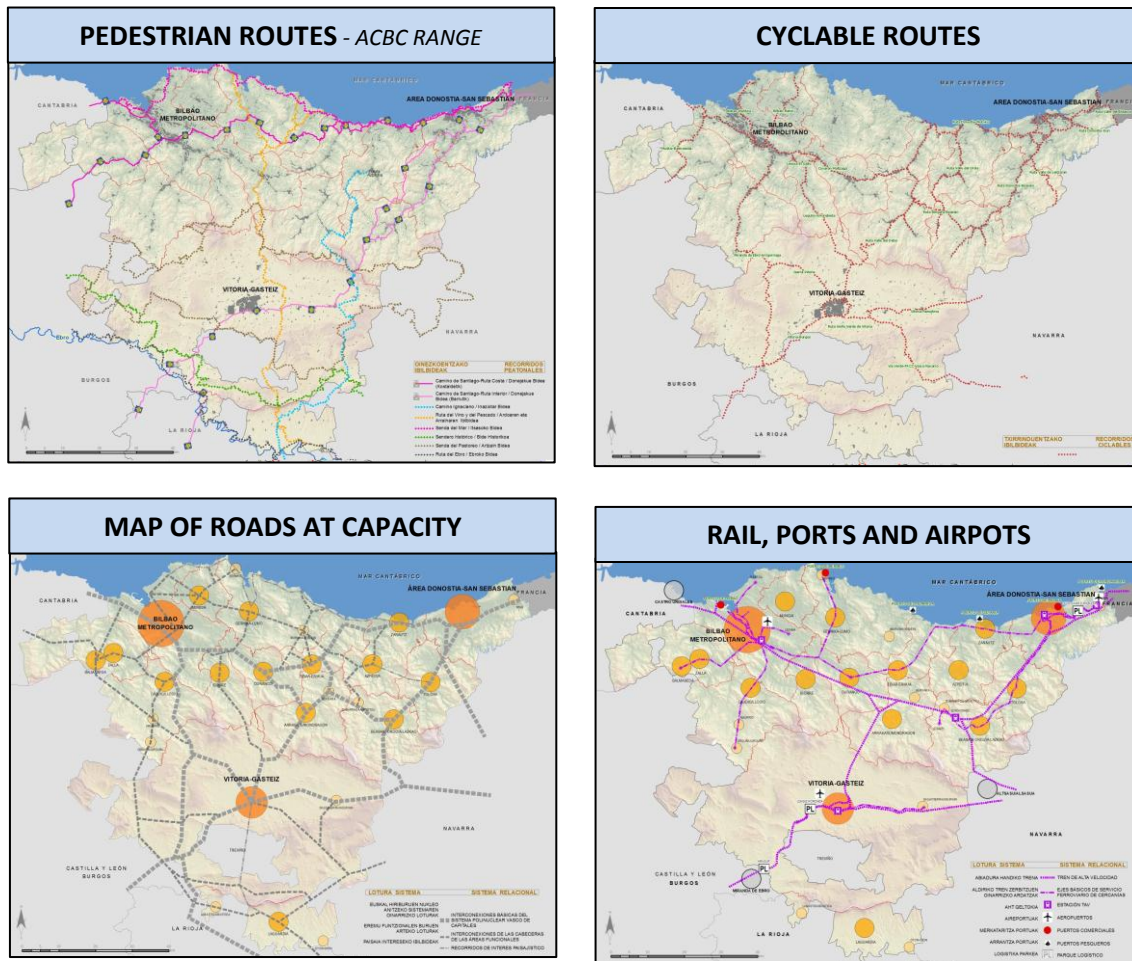
As far as **Energy** is concerned, energy efficiency and renewable energies are the two main axes in the 2030 Basque Country Energy Strategy, and are mandatory requirements for regional sustainability and climate change. The substantial increase in efficacy and energy efficiency, moving away from coal through the generalised use of renewable energy sources and progress toward energy self-sufficiency, are the challenges faced in energy in reviewing the Guidelines.

Transitioning toward a model based on **Circular Economy**, where the products and resources used remain within the economic flow the longest amount of time possible, is a basic priority to achieve sustainable development, where waste generation is reduced to a minimum. In this regard, the document proposes task challenges for upcoming years.

VII.- Mobility and Logistics

Regarding **sustainable mobility**, the document is line with the 2030 Basque Country Sustainable Transport Director Plan, in order to attain an integrated transport model as an instrument for social cohesion and economic development. Moreover, regarding **sustainable logistics**, the efficient use of different means of transport is promoted, and their interaction with logistics infrastructures for effective freight distribution.

In reviewing the Guidelines, and at a regional scale, different mobility modes are addressed: As far as **pedestrian mobility** is concerned, although this is fundamentally urban mobility, different routes are included, due to their scale and structure capacity (St Jacques' Way, Ignatius' Way, Wine and Fish Route, and more), and regarding **cyclist mobility**, the issue is analysed not thinking so much of sprawl as in transport, integrating the policies implemented by each Provincial Council.



Mobility and Logistics Maps

Regarding **roadway mobility**, the document considers that the ACBC roadway map is mainly at capacity, with a few metropolitan roads, variant roadway, etc., having no bearing on the document in the hypothetical series of infrastructure works to be built. Regarding **rail, ports and airports**, insofar as they constitute the regional planning scale, the high-speed line is included, with the two Navarre connection alternatives, as well as railways with metropolitan operation revolving around the three capitals or the EuskoTren Bilbao-San Sebastian line, clearly metropolitan in nature. As far as airports are concerned, it bears on the Basque Airport System concept, and as far as Ports are concerned, the ports of general interest of Bilbao and Pasaia and the fishing ports of Ondarroa, Bermeo, Getaria and Hondarribia are singled out.

VIII.-Transversal Issues

Since approval of the RPGS in 1997, certain issues have taken on special relevance in designing public policies, and although they exceed regional planning, they must be taken into account by it, and thus in the review of Guidelines. The transversal issues worked on are: universal accessibility, gender perspective, climate change, health, the Basque language and regional inter-relation. They all lead to a dense, complex and cohesive city model.

Universal accessibility, equal opportunity and design for all persons must be assimilated by regional planning and town planning. Regarding the **gender perspective**, as well as town planning, this issue has been added to town planning plans by including the black-dot map or the hazard map, and progress was made in disciplinary fashion in mobility issues beyond

residency-employment mobility to include everyday mobility normally related to activities conducted by women. The gender perspective is a whole field of work related to cared-for town planning, with the chain of social tasks, so as to reach the objective of equality and to create regions and cities to contribute to improving quality of life for all citizens, beyond any axis of difference.

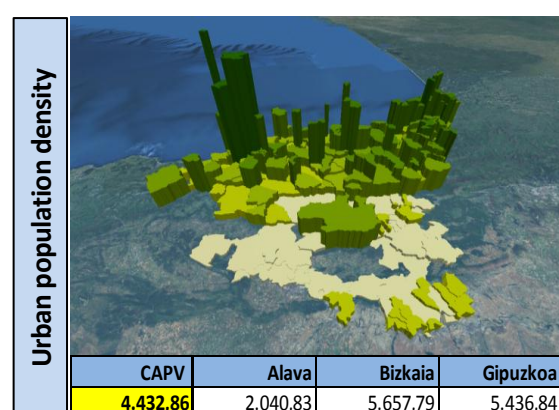
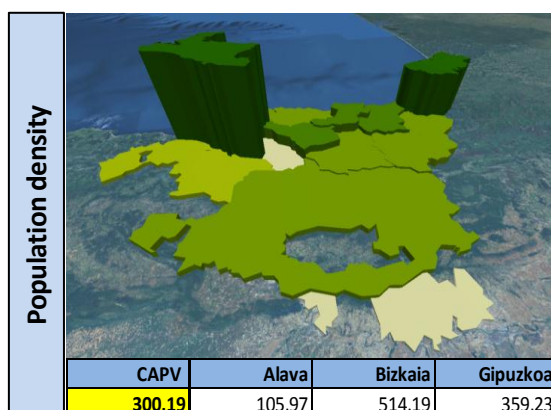
Health is being inserted in regional and town planning, and its insertion is in response to a very clear maxim observed in the historical study of the city, insofar as both town planning and medicine itself have done more for the population's health, which we can see is true upon hearkening back to the 19th century's improvement and sanitation blueprints. At this time, new diseases have emerged, such as obesity, and mental illness is still present. The effects on active mobility or standards for open spaces as elements that have an effect on the population's health are regional planning tasks.

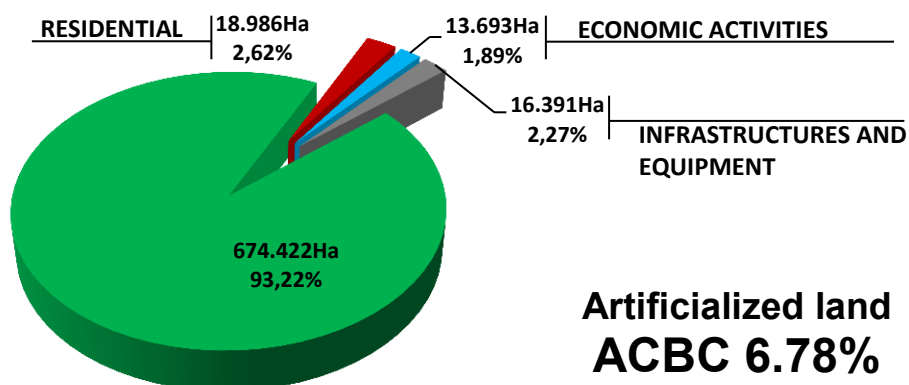
As far as **Climate Change** is concerned, and specifically in adapting the review, the review suggests the following three tasks, in addition to others: review of the Coastal SRP to include the regional implications or the rising sea level or extreme waves, continuing tasks for prevention of flooding, included in the Rivers and Riverbeds SRP, as well as adaptation to the heat island phenomenon, advocating permeation and plant life in the consolidated city.

IX.- Governance

While roll-out of the approved Guidelines, the PRPs and the SRPs has created a culture, a work experience at these scales, and a culture of relationship to town planning, or a praxis of administrative integration, it has been observed that it is necessary to complete the Guidelines review document with a chapter on Governance. This chapter is mainly focused on establishing regional indicators to monitor the town-regional planning action, with administrative integration exercises or regional planning coordination, and finally giving shape to Regulations for Application.

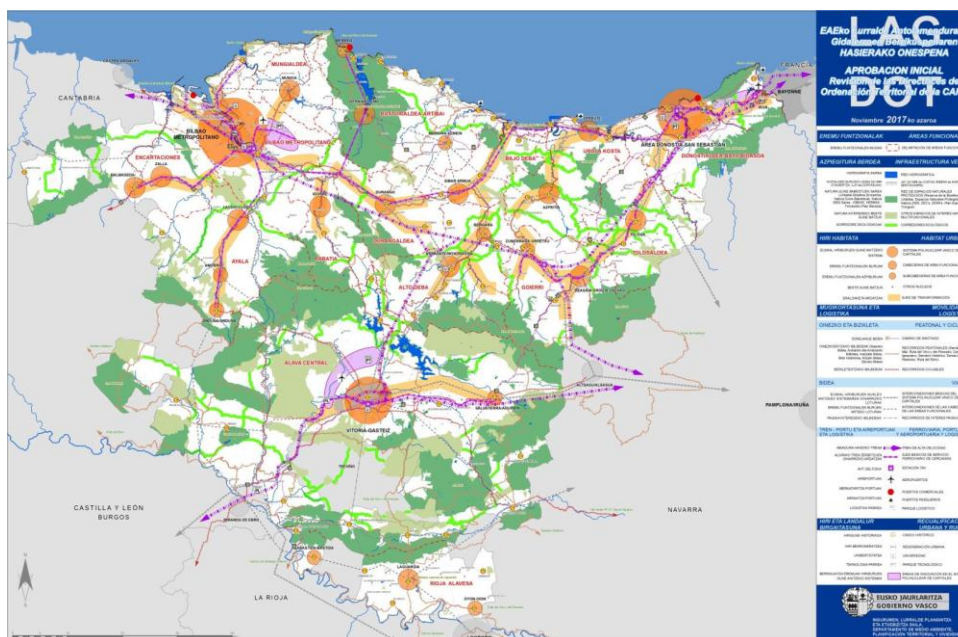
Human action on the region must be measured and evaluated so as to take suitable measures. In this regard, **regional and urban sustainability indicators** are established (Regional Model - Land Classification, Population Density, Urban Model, Housing Density and Artificialisation). Also necessary are **partial and sectorial regional planning coordination criteria** to address issues that may arise, and **Administrative Integration** criteria are required for more streamlined processing of the town planning review.

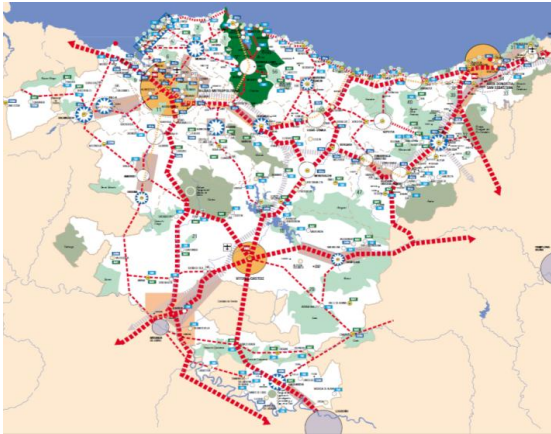




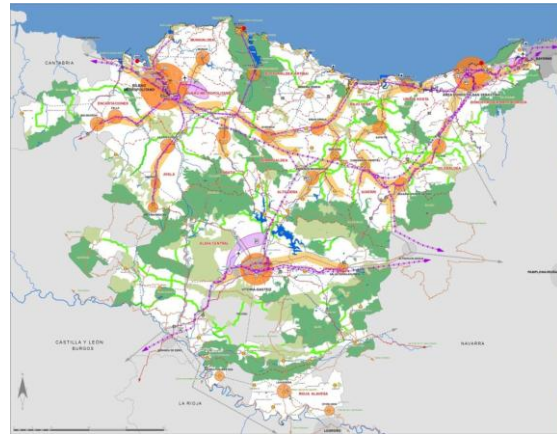
Regional and Urban Sustainability Indicators

Finally, as a central aspect of the document, are the **Regulations for Application**, with a distinction between Use of Space and Planning Guidelines, and Recommended Guidelines. The former are regulatory criteria, and the latter are recommendations or lines of action. The graphic representation of the document in the **Summary Map** should also be noted.





1997 Regional Model of RPGs



2017 Regional Model of RPGs

In short, in reviewing the RPGs, progress is made on the 1997 RPG, showing the summary maps for the regional model from both documents. From a model with a high influence of grey infrastructure as a structural element of the region, to a new model whose structural role will be played by green infrastructure.

(Regional Planning, Town Planning and Urban Renewal Management,
Basque Government)
(Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. April 2018)