



# Bilbao

## A Basque model of welcome for a participatory and intercultural city

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# 1. Abstract & Takeaways

## Key Takeaways

1

Bilbao has been at the forefront of implementing the Basque immigration and citizenship policy through multilevel, collaborative governance since 2003.

2

The city is committed to inter-institutional cooperation, with a consistent and active presence in both international and domestic networks promoting diversity, inclusion, and intercultural coexistence.

3

A stable collaboration between the City Council and local civil society organisations forms a key pillar of municipal policies on inclusion and participation.

## What is unique about the city?

**Political Autonomy:** Bilbao is the principal city of the Basque Country, an autonomous region within the Spanish state, endowed with substantial financial and fiscal autonomy. This autonomy enables local governments to access greater economic and human resources. Since the establishment of the Basque Government's first 'Immigration Directorate' in 2001, followed by the approval of the first 'Basque Immigration Plan'<sup>1</sup> ("Plan Vasco de Inmigración") in 2003, the Autonomous Community has been recognised for its progressive and inclusive approach to immigration and citizenship policy – among the most forward-thinking in Spain. Following the successive approval of various Basque immigration and citizenship plans, the 'VI Basque Intercultural Plan for Citizenship, Migration, and Asylum', 2022-2025<sup>2</sup>, is currently in force. These policies led to a comprehensive network of public services that support migrant integration, while also fostering collaboration with public institutions, particularly local councils.

Within this context, Bilbao has emerged as the primary testing ground for implementing these policies and the principles of the 'Basque Social Pact on Migration' of 2019<sup>3</sup>. This political declaration sets out shared values and commitments for public institutions, civil society, and individuals alike. This commitment is exemplified by initiatives such as the public service "Harreragune" (see below).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ikuspegi.eus/documentos/legislacion/PLANVASCOINMIGRACION.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://bideoak2.euskadi.eus/2022/02/22/news\\_75231/VIPLAN\\_INTERCULTURAL\\_es.pdf](https://bideoak2.euskadi.eus/2022/02/22/news_75231/VIPLAN_INTERCULTURAL_es.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/migrazioituna/es\\_def/adjuntos/PACT\\_en.pdf](https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/migrazioituna/es_def/adjuntos/PACT_en.pdf)

**“We are committed to promoting a diverse and egalitarian city that recognises and respects difference. We take pride in our social plurality and strive to promote and protect it institutionally, while strengthening our identity as a socially cohesive municipality. We need to build a city shaped by the contributions of all its residents, involving Bilbao’s citizens of foreign origin in both the present and future of the city.”**

Juan Mari Aburto, Mayor of Bilbao, 27 March 2023<sup>4</sup>

## What are the key factors?

**Bilbao’s local approach to migration and diversity is based on three core principles:** public responsibility, public-social collaboration, and multilevel governance. These are underpinned by a strong political commitment and a regional Basque context that is particularly conducive to inclusive policymaking. Factors such as fiscal autonomy, a distinct cultural and linguistic identity, diverse political leadership, and broad societal support for a welfare model all contribute to this favourable environment.

- ◆ **Public responsibility** refers to the commitment of public institutions to ensure the reception, integration, and participation of migrants through universally accessible services and rights.
- ◆ **Public-social collaboration** is embodied not only in participation mechanisms, but also in the active involvement of civil society entities that advocate for migrants’ rights (e.g., through initiatives like “Harreragune” and the Anti-Rumours Strategy as well as migrant-led bodies such as the Local Immigration Council), see below.
- ◆ **Multilevel governance** is demonstrated through close inter-institutional collaboration among Basque-level administrations: the Basque Government (regional level), Biscay Province (territorial level), and the City of Bilbao (local level). This is especially evident in joint initiatives such as “Harreragune”, the ‘Basque Forum on Migration and Asylum’, and the network of local immigration technicians. Originally established under the 2003 ‘Basque Immigration Plan’, these officers are funded by the regional government but work within local councils – particularly in larger municipalities – where they manage migration-related issues and coordinate policy implementation at the local level.

<sup>4</sup> [bilbao.net/cs/Satellite?c=BIO\\_Noticia\\_FA&cid=1279225484454&language=en&pageid=3012566859&pagename=Bilbaonet/BIO\\_Noticia\\_FA/BIO\\_Noticia&autoplay=si](https://bilbao.net/cs/Satellite?c=BIO_Noticia_FA&cid=1279225484454&language=en&pageid=3012566859&pagename=Bilbaonet/BIO_Noticia_FA/BIO_Noticia&autoplay=si)

## What are the most outstanding results so far?

**Involving the migrant and host community alike:** Bilbao's local migration policies have led to significant outcomes in a number of areas. In terms of participation and empowerment, the city has seen the consolidation of 26 active migrant associations that shape the city's participatory budgeting process. These associations also play a key role in the ongoing work of the Local Immigration Council, which convenes various working committees to address specific issues and initiatives.

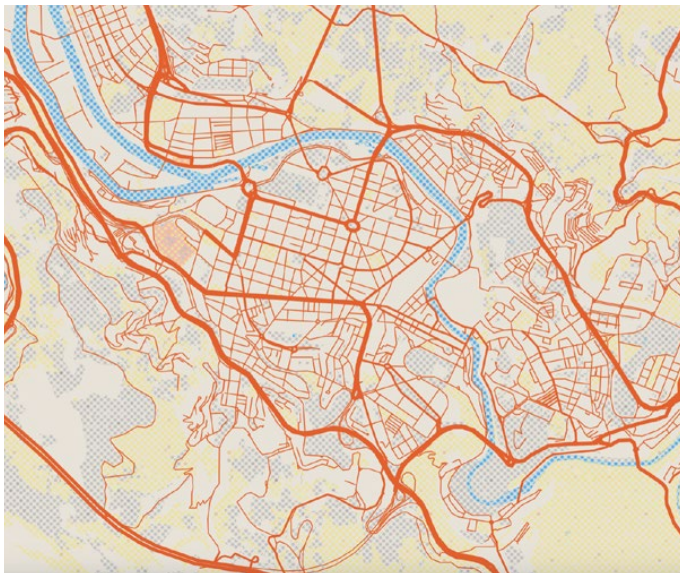
Efforts to engage the wider local population have also been noteworthy. A citywide network of social support organisations plays a crucial role in the local governance of migration, and a network of 'Anti-Rumours Agents' has been established across Bilbao's districts to combat misinformation and promote accurate, positive narratives about diversity. The city has made a point of publicly recognising the valuable contributions of diverse communities, with a particular focus on highlighting the experiences and leadership of migrant women<sup>5</sup>.

On a more strategic level, the Bilbao City Council maintains a strong presence in national and international networks and initiatives focused on diversity. A major milestone in 2024 was the official launch of "Har-reragune", a comprehensive public service dedicated to welcoming migrants. Additionally, the city continues to monitor public attitudes toward migration through targeted studies<sup>6</sup> conducted by the 'Basque Immigration Observatory', "Ikuspegi"<sup>7</sup>, which helps to inform future policy decisions.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=BIO\\_Noticia\\_FA&cid=1279235409655&language=es&pageid=3000075248&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FBIO\\_Noticia\\_FA%2FBIO\\_Noticia](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=BIO_Noticia_FA&cid=1279235409655&language=es&pageid=3000075248&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FBIO_Noticia_FA%2FBIO_Noticia)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=BIO\\_Noticia\\_FA&cid=1279235409655&language=es&pageid=3000075248&pagename=Bilbaonet/BIO\\_Noticia\\_FA/BIO\\_Noticia](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=BIO_Noticia_FA&cid=1279235409655&language=es&pageid=3000075248&pagename=Bilbaonet/BIO_Noticia_FA/BIO_Noticia)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ikuspegi.eus/>



### Population

348.800

### Location

Bilbao is the biggest city of the autonomous Basque Country in the north of Spain

### Mayor

Juan Mari Aburto since 2015, (centre-right to centre-left) Basque National Party

## 2. Local background and context

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Bilbao is the main city of the Basque Country, an autonomous territory in Spain. Over the past 25 years, it has developed one of the most progressive and forward-thinking immigration policies in the country, with a strong emphasis on collaboration between the social sector and institutions at various levels – particularly local councils. The Basque Country holds a unique position in Europe, thanks to its special autonomous status based on an independent treasury system and a robust institutional framework rooted in a collective identity widely shared by its citizens.

Bilbao also enjoys a high degree of political stability. Since the return of democratic local elections in 1979, the city has been continuously governed by the Basque National Party (PNV). Since 2015, Juan Mari Aburto Rique, a member of the PNV, has served as mayor. The PNV has consistently won every election in Bilbao by a clear margin over other political parties and has governed through agreements with parties across the political spectrum at both the Basque and national levels.

In recent terms, the PNV has maintained governing agreements with the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), which is currently the junior coalition partner, with 12 councillors from the PNV and 5 from the PSOE. The main opposition party, with 6 councillors, is Euskal Herria Bildu (Basque Country Gather), a federation of pro-independence and left-wing Basque parties. Other parties represented on the city council include the Partido Popular (Spain's main right-wing party), with 4 councillors, and the left-wing Elkarrekin-Podemos (Together We Can), with 2 seats.

According to official data from the municipal register of inhabitants, as of 1 January 2024, Bilbao had a population of 348,800. Of these, 41,491 (11.9%) were foreign nationals, and 18,947 (5.4%) were Spanish citizens born abroad. In total, 17.3% of the population was of foreign origin. This is 3 percentage points higher than the average in the rest of the territory of Bizkaia and the Basque Country, although 2 points below the national average for Spain.

## 3. Selected local approaches

### 3.1. The public service “Harreragune”: Ensuring equal access for migrants in Bilbao

*“Harreragune” in Bilbao is the first reception and orientation service for migrants arriving in the Basque Country. Its aim is to ensure access to rights and services on an equal footing for all.*

“Harreragune” is a Basque term meaning a space or area of reception and welcome. The initiative is grounded in the principles of public institutional responsibility, public-social collaboration, and multilevel governance (see above), and was launched through an agreement with the Basque Autonomous Community Government. Harreragune represents the first implementation of the Basque model of reception of migrants, designed within the framework of the 6th ‘Intercultural Plan for Citizenship, Immigration and Asylum’ 2022-2025 of the Basque Country<sup>8</sup> and aligned with the principles and values set out in the Basque Social Pact on Migration<sup>9</sup>.

#### Services provided and organisational model

Harreragune provides a wide range of services to all migrants, regardless of their residence status. These include legal advice on migration matters, training and employment guidance, recognition of qualifications, psychosocial support, assistance with family reunification, and opportunities for social and sporting participation. The service also facilitates access to local registration, health care cards, school enrolment for children, learning of Bilbao’s two official languages, job guidance, and advice on administrative migration procedures.

The offices of Harreragune are centrally located, easily accessible, and close to key public and private institutions. The service is personalised and, where needed, coordinated directly with various civil society organisations active in supporting the rights and reception of migrants in Bilbao.

The service has been jointly developed by the Basque Government and Bilbao City Council and is managed by “Zehar-Errefuxiatuekin”<sup>10</sup>, a non-governmental organisation dedicated to defending and promoting the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless individuals, and migrants in vulnerable circumstances. Welcome services at the Harreragune headquarters are provided by NGO staff under the supervision of the City Council. Some of the services involve channelling demands to other public services that may correspond to different public or private institutions.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/mi-grazioituna/es\\_def/adjuntos/VIPLAN-INTERCULTURAL.pdf](https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/mi-grazioituna/es_def/adjuntos/VIPLAN-INTERCULTURAL.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/mi-grazioituna/es\\_def/adjuntos/PACT\\_en.pdf](https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/mi-grazioituna/es_def/adjuntos/PACT_en.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ikuspegi.eus/>



## Pilot results and outlook

Harreragune opened in Bilbao in 2024 and serves as a pilot project, with the intention of expanding the model to other Basque municipalities following an evaluation in 2026. In its first three months of operation, from November 2024, Harreragune had served 1,212 persons from 62 different countries, with the most frequently represented nationalities being Morocco, Colombia, Algeria, and Venezuela. In nearly half of the cases, the service facilitated local registration, and in some cases, it supported individuals without stable housing in accessing accommodation. Also, more than half of those supported were in an irregular situation, making legal advice one of the most sought-after services. The centre has also assisted with family reunification, access to social support, language learning, translation services, job guidance, and psychosocial care. Service demand continues to grow as awareness of the new offer increases, with the number of people supported rising steadily.

## 3.2. The Local Immigration Council: Empowering migrant voices through co-governance and participation

*The Local Immigration Council<sup>11</sup> is a co-governed body comprising the City Council and organisations led by migrants.*

Only migrant-led organisations may participate in the Council, reinforcing its representative nature and promoting the empowerment of migrant communities within the city. According to official data, 41,491 (11.9%) residents of Bilbao are foreign nationals, while a further 18,947 (5.4%) are naturalised citizens of foreign origin. The most common countries of origin include Morocco and Colombia. Currently, 26 migrant-led social organisations actively participate in the Immigration Council, contributing both to the City Council's work and to other participatory structures in the city, including processes related to public budgeting.

The Local Immigration Council works to strengthen the organisational and advocacy capacities of migrants by involving migrant-led organisations in the development of local policies. This ensures that affected communities can put forward their own proposals and recommendations. It also fosters public awareness and encourages shared public-social responsibility in the process of migrant inclusion. To participate in the council, immigrant associations must demonstrate minimum activity and functioning and regularly attend council meetings or activities. There are no elections to join the council, but repeated and unjustified nonattendance by an association results in its exclusion from the Immigration Council, whose membership is clarified annually.

### Structure and participatory framework

The Immigration Council meets in plenary twice a year and conducts most of its work through various thematic working groups<sup>12</sup>. One of the two vice-presidencies of the council is held by a migrant representative,

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=3000076818&language=en&pageid=3000076818&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO\\_contenidoFinal](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=3000076818&language=en&pageid=3000076818&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO_contenidoFinal)

<sup>12</sup> For example the working groups on awareness-raising, gender, communication and participation.

with the other held by a City Council representative. Four additional positions on the Executive Committee are also occupied by members from migrant organisations. The Local Immigration Council has its own operational budget, which is jointly managed by the City Council and the participating migrant organisations.

The Local Immigration Council is one of Bilbao's sectoral councils – consultative and proposal-making bodies through which social organisations in the city maintain a continuous dialogue with the City Council. Established in 2011, the Local Immigration Council is a key instrument of the Department of Equality, Cooperation and Citizenship. The department views the participation and empowerment of migrants and their organisations as an essential component of the city's migration policy.

## Projects, impact and policy influence

Among the Immigration Council's key initiatives is the project "Migrant Women from Bilbao"<sup>13</sup>, which highlights and values the contributions of migrant women to the city. The Immigration Council also supports the strengthening of migrant organisations by facilitating access to funding, physical spaces, and connections with other local associations and civil society actors.

In addition, the Immigration Council is actively involved in other participatory bodies in the city, including the Bilbao Women's Council for Equality<sup>14</sup>, the Civic Council<sup>15</sup>, and the Basque Language Advisory Council<sup>16</sup>. The Local Immigration Council also operates a working group on participatory budgeting, through which it proposes projects that are then submitted for public vote by interested residents.

Over the past two years, several initiatives backed by the Immigration Council have been incorporated into Bilbao's municipal budgets. These include the establishment of a migrant women's network<sup>17</sup> and the launch of the 'Anti-Racist Empowerment School' ("Escuela de Empoderamiento Antirracista"), a project proposed by the Immigration Council's youth working group. The school provides a space for discussion on the various forms of violence experienced by young racialised migrants, with the aim of sharing practical tools for anti-racist activism in everyday life.

## 3.3. The Anti-Rumours Strategy: Challenging stereotypes through grassroots action and community engagement

*The 'Anti-Rumours Agents' are individuals or groups from the local community who commit to acting within their neighbourhood to share positive narratives around migration and diversity.*

The Anti-Rumours Strategy<sup>19</sup> ("Estrategia antiRumores") has been developed and led by the Bilbao City Council since 2013, operating across

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=3000059027&language=es&pageid=3000059027&pagename=Bilbaonet/Page/BIO\\_contenidoFinal](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=3000059027&language=es&pageid=3000059027&pagename=Bilbaonet/Page/BIO_contenidoFinal)

<sup>14</sup> Consejo de las Mujeres de Bilbao por la Igualdad, [https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=3000076786&language=es&pageid=3000076786&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO\\_contenidoFinal&utm\\_](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=3000076786&language=es&pageid=3000076786&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO_contenidoFinal&utm_)

<sup>15</sup> Consejo Cívico de la Villa de Bilbao, [https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?cid=3010910400&language=es&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO\\_contenidoFinal&utm\\_](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?cid=3010910400&language=es&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO_contenidoFinal&utm_)

<sup>16</sup> Consejo Asesor del Euskera, <https://bilbaeuskaraz.bilbao.eus/es/consejo-asesor-del-euskera-de-bilbao/>

<sup>17</sup> Comunidad de Mujeres Migradas Bilbainas, [https://www.deia.eus/bilbao/2025/03/10/bilbao-reconoce-seis-mujeres-migrantes-aportacion-vida-social-economica-cultural-9377606.html?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.deia.eus/bilbao/2025/03/10/bilbao-reconoce-seis-mujeres-migrantes-aportacion-vida-social-economica-cultural-9377606.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ongdeuskadi.org/agenda/v-escuela-de-empoderamiento-antirracista/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.bilbao.eus/infobilbao/cinb2017112.pdf>



various neighbourhoods and districts with the collaboration and commitment of civil society organisations and individuals. The 'Anti-Rumours Agents' work to counter harmful stereotypes and encourage critical reflection on these issues among fellow residents. This is, therefore, a strategy that seeks to influence public perception through alternative, grassroots channels, fostering a bottom-up and multiplying approach to social change.

## Key actions and local implementation

The Anti-Rumours Strategy functions through four main lines of action. The first involves establishing networks of Anti-Rumours Agents in the city's various districts. This work is carried out by City Council officers alongside local communities, identifying individuals active in cultural, neighbourhood, and commercial spheres. Rather than applying rigid selection criteria, the Agents are recognised based on their availability, motivation, and willingness to actively engage with the project. Any resident who is committed to promoting diversity and ready to play an active role can become involved. Once identified, these people or groups, whose engagement is voluntary, receive specific training to equip them for their roles as Anti-Rumours Agents in their respective neighbourhoods and environments.

The remaining three lines of action focus on strengthening institutional communication, engaging specifically with young people, and delivering internal training within the public administration. While the strategy is directly implemented by the City Council, it is also supported by various civil society organisations. The City Council is additionally active on the regional level as a member of the Basque Anti-Rumours Network "ZAS"<sup>20</sup>, a public-private network of entities working on the Anti-Rumours Strategy with actions that complement municipal public policies.

## European context and citywide impact

The Anti-Rumours Strategy originates from a European-level initiative coordinated by the Council of Europe since 2010<sup>21</sup>. This initiative aims to build citizen-led networks that challenge negative stereotypes and clichés surrounding immigration and cultural diversity – narratives which often contribute to discrimination and tensions in social cohesion.

Bilbao City Council joined the European Anti-Rumours project "C4I-Communication for Integration"<sup>22</sup>, co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Since 2013, the City Council has been committed to developing its own local version of the strategy, with the aim of preventing and countering false rumours and stereotypes related to the city's migrant population. This programme is also being implemented in ten other European cities, including Botkyrka (Sweden), Lublin (Poland), and Patras (Greece).

<sup>20</sup> <https://zas.eus/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/anti-rumours>

<sup>22</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/c4i/home.html>

The strategy is currently active across all eight districts of Bilbao, involving more than 500 Anti-Rumours Agents. Over 100 training sessions have taken place, including workshops in schools and other educational

institutions throughout the city. In total, more than 250 activities have been carried out within the district networks, ranging from seminars and basic training sessions to annual gatherings of Agents and young participants, as well as press releases, social media content, and school workshops.

## 4. Advocacy and network activities

The City Council of Bilbao aligns with the Basque policy on immigration, embracing its principle of inclusive citizenship. First introduced in the Basque Immigration Plan, this approach recognizes all residents of the Basque Country as Basque citizens with full social rights, regardless of their nationality or legal status, guiding local policies on immigration and cultural diversity. The City Council actively upholds and promotes this stance across various institutional forums and networks.

Bilbao City Council actively participates in several networks on migration and diversity, involving other public bodies – particularly local authorities – as well as civil society organisations, both nationally and internationally.

- ◆ The main network in this area is the **International Intercultural Cities Network**<sup>23</sup>, a European network initiative supported by the Council of Europe. Bilbao joined the network in 2011 through RECI (Spanish Network of Intercultural Cities), which operates within the framework of the Intercultural Cities Programme, promoted by the Council of Europe in collaboration with the European Commission<sup>24</sup>.

The International Intercultural Cities Network aims to foster cooperation and knowledge exchange among different European cities that implement policies or initiatives promoting interculturality. To this end, it uses tools such as “The Intercultural City: Step by Step” and the “Intercultural Cities Index” (ICC), whose results for Bilbao – evaluated across four assessment cycles – are publicly available<sup>25</sup>.

Based on feedback received through these evaluations, the City Council approved the ‘III Bilbao Intercultural City Plan’ in 2021<sup>26</sup>, which includes 30 objectives and 83 specific actions across various municipal areas. Notably, Bilbao’s relatively low rating in the area of reception services led to the development of “Harreragune”, a dedicated and specialised municipal reception space, created in partnership with the Basque Government and collaborating social organisations.

- ◆ Bilbao also plays an active role in the Council of Europe’s **Committee of Experts on Intercultural Inclusion (ADI-INT)**, formerly known as the Working Group on Intercultural Integration<sup>27</sup>. Established in 2020, this committee comprises representatives from eight cities, ten states, and two European regions<sup>28</sup>, and aims to advance

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/bilbao>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.ciudadesinterculturales.com/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/bilbao>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.ciudadesinterculturales.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/III-Plan-Bilbao-Ciudad-Intercultural.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/committee-of-experts-on-intercultural-integration-of-migrants#:~:text=The%20Committee%20of%20Experts%20on,that%20offer%20effective%20protection%20from>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/committee-of-experts-on-intercultural-integration-of-migrants/adi-int-composition#%7B%22115689108%22:%5B0%5D%7D>

multilevel governance in the field. Since the committee's creation, Bilbao has held one of the eight seats reserved for cities. As a result of the work of the ADI-INT Committee, the Council of Europe adopted the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)10 in 2022<sup>29</sup>, which offers guidance to member states on the development and implementation of multilevel policies and governance structures for intercultural integration. The recommendation highlights the importance of cooperation between national, regional, and local governments, as well as with civil society, in fostering inclusive and cohesive societies.

- ◆ In addition, Bilbao is a member of the **Integrating Cities**<sup>30</sup> initiative, launched in 2006 as a partnership between EUROCITIES and the European Commission to support the local-level implementation of the Common Basic Principles on Integration. Membership requires municipalities to sign the Integrating Cities Charter, a declaration of commitment. Bilbao also participates in EUROCITIES' dedicated working group on migration and integration.
- ◆ Bilbao was also part of the **Equalcity Network**<sup>31</sup>, a project led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Launched in 2019 and concluded in 2021, Equalcity supported local authorities in promoting inclusion and protecting migrants at risk or survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). As a legacy of this initiative, the National Network Free of Female Genital Mutilation<sup>32</sup> ("Red Estatal Libres de MGF") was established in Spain in 2020 to coordinate efforts, share good practices, and raise awareness among municipalities and organisations committed to combating FGM.
- ◆ Finally, within the broader framework of managing cultural diversity, Bilbao has participated in the project "**Municipalities for Tolerance**"<sup>33</sup> since its inception in 2020. Led by the public Pluralism and Coexistence Foundation<sup>34</sup> in collaboration with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces<sup>35</sup> and supported by the Institute of Human Rights of the University of Deusto<sup>36</sup>, the project aims to improve the management of religious diversity at the local level. Currently, 30 Spanish municipalities are involved in the program, which includes the signing of a charter promoting religious diversity and the implementation of a local action plan with specific measures. Bilbao has served as one of the pilot municipalities, helping to test and refine the tools prior to their wider rollout.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>29</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680a6170e>

<sup>30</sup> <https://eurocities.eu/cities/bilbao/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://globalofficebrussels.iom.int/equalcity>

<sup>32</sup> <https://belgium.iom.int/migrant-women-girls-toolbox>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.pluralismoyconvivencia.es/nuestro-trabajo/mejora-de-la-gestion-publica-de-la-diversidad-religiosa/municipios-por-la-tolerancia/>

<sup>34</sup> Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia, <https://www.pluralismoyconvivencia.es/>

<sup>35</sup> Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias, <https://www.femp.es/>

<sup>36</sup> Instituto de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad de Deusto, <https://www.deusto.es/es/inicio/somos-deusto/centros-universitarios/institutos/instituto-derechos-humanos>

<sup>37</sup> Instituto de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad de Deusto, <https://www.deusto.es/es/inicio/somos-deusto/centros-universitarios/institutos/instituto-derechos-humanos>

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The **Moving Cities** project provides an in-depth research of progressive cities in Europe, exploring their most inspiring and successful approaches to migration policies. Find more city reports at [www.moving-cities.eu/en](http://www.moving-cities.eu/en).

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