

Overview

- ▶ Mayor: Juan María Aburto
- ▶ Lead staff on innovation: Jordán Guardo
- ▶ Population of municipality: 345,122 (2016)
- ▶ Innovation/open data website: <https://www.bilbao.eus/opendata/es/inicio>

Spotlight on Bilbao | Close-to-the-citizen Approach

Bilbao has been **integrating bottom-up approach to its municipal strategy**. Each councillor, each department director and each public official with knowledge of specific areas of their work try to provide precise and accurate solutions to citizens' needs. **While creating a big picture and political leadership at the highest level, Bilbao takes into account a close-to-the-citizen approach** in everything the city does such as creating a new bus line, or setting up an innovative district heating system.

Vision and approach to innovation capacity

The city's innovation strategy

Along with 56% of cities surveyed, Bilbao does not have an **explicit innovation strategy**.

The city most closely associates innovation capacity with the following terms:

Human-centred design

Resident engagement

Crowd sourcing

Approaches to innovation capacity

Similar to over one-third of cities surveyed, Bilbao approaches innovation capacity in **specific policy areas**.

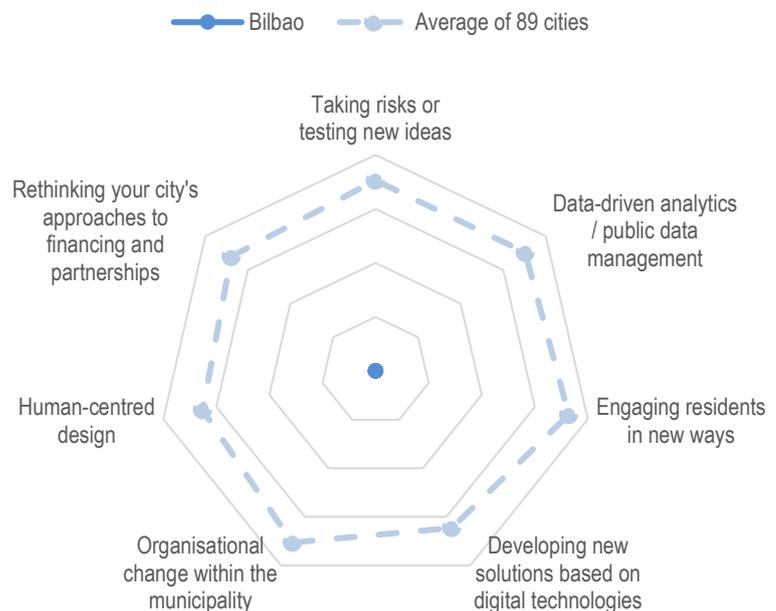
The **top two priority policy areas** for the city's innovation work include:

Social welfare / social services

Digital governance

Most common innovation activities

Data non-available



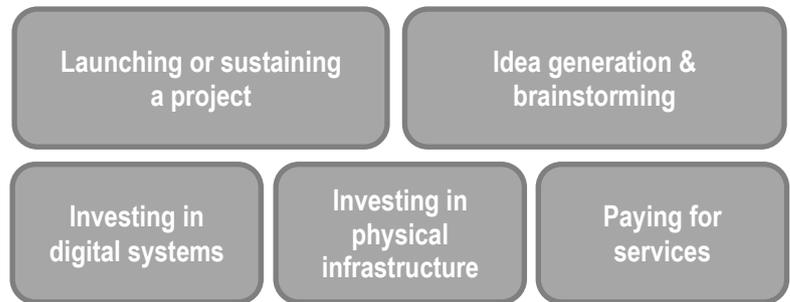
Funding for innovation capacity

Funding to support innovation capacity

Like 23% of cities surveyed, Bilbao does not have dedicated funding to support innovation capacity.

Types of activities being funded

Among all cities surveyed, **launching or sustaining a project**, and **generating ideas & brainstorming** are the two most commonly funded activities.



Organisational structure & staffing



Bilbao **does not have a dedicated team for innovation**. Instead, the city has created an organisation divided into small departments, each one of them with a technical director and a political councillor. On top of those departments, the leading councillor for one of them will act as a coordinator of several (up to 5) departments. Above them stands the Mayor. This organisational structure enables a **citizen-centric approach, where micro-management level is taken care of their departments while having a common coordinated ground**. This is also done for innovation projects and innovation strategy, where a three-level approach is created.

Partnerships for innovation & data



Bilbao has developed partnerships to promote its innovation capacity with **other public agencies, private firms, not-for-profit organisations, and city residents/resident associations**.

To improve data use, the city has also developed **data partnerships with the private sector, academia and think tanks** to collect and analyse data, as well as **with other cities**. The city also has **formal cooperative agreements and European co-funded projects** including programmes like Interreg, Horizon 2020 or Urbact.

Measuring outcomes

Policy areas that **benefit from sufficient data**, or **lack sufficient data**, to support innovation capacity in the city:



NB: No response provided by the city for the policy areas in grey.

Innovation is **helping the city** to:

- ✓ **Improve internal government operations**
- ✓ **Anticipate and manage future challenges**

The most **critical success factors** in supporting the city's innovation work:

- ✓ **Focus on measurement**
- ✓ **Leadership from Mayor**
- ✓ **Culture of innovation in city**
- ✓ **Support from outside city administration**