

Fact sheet for planning levels

Planning level

Type of plan

Regional

Planning system of Spain						
Planning level	Planning instrument	Content of plan	Legal basis	Policy maker	Legal impact	Scale
Municipalities	"Instrumentos de desarrollo": Planes Periódicos, Planes Especiales, Planes de Desarrollo	Develop with the necessary level of detail what is established by the urban general plan. They allow urban expansion (planes parciales), studies de detalle, and urban transformation (planes especiales, estudios de detalle)	Land Act of the State and Act of each Autonomous Community	Municipalities	Binding	Covers a part of the municipality
Municipalities	Urban General Plan	Sets the urban development model and structure of the city. It classifies the whole land within the municipality, looking to balance the general interest and the economic uses. Establishes the areas for urban expansion, for urban transformation and regeneration, and the areas to be protected (urban and natural)	Land Act of the State and Act of each Autonomous Community	Municipalities	Binding	Covers the whole municipality
Autonomous Communities (Regional Level)	Plans for Environmental Protection	Protection of specific areas because of their valuable natural, ecological, landscape, agricultural or forestry values.	Constitution of 1978 and sentences of the Constitutional Court. Statute of each Autonomous Community	Government of the Autonomous Community	This planning action has mainly a strategic nature rather than normative	Subregional
Autonomous Communities (Regional Level)	Territorial Sectoral Plan	Coordination of sectoral policies in the territory of the region or in a part of it	Constitution of 1978 and sentences of the Constitutional Court. Statute of each Autonomous Community	Government of the Autonomous Community	This planning action has mainly a strategic nature rather than normative	Regional or Subregional
Autonomous Communities (Regional Level)	Subregional Territorial Plan	Further development of what is established by the territorial plan (when it exists) for a specific area of the	Constitution of 1978 and sentences of the Constitutional Court. Statute of each Autonomous Community	Government of the Autonomous Community	This planning action has mainly a strategic nature rather than normative	Subregional
Autonomous Communities (Regional Level)	Regional Territorial Plan	Integral approach to the territory, establishing the basic elements for the organization and structure of the territory of the region, coordinating public and private socio-economic action on it.	Constitution of 1978 and sentences of the Constitutional Court. Statute of each Autonomous Community	Government of the Autonomous Community	This planning action has mainly a strategic nature rather than normative	Regional
Spatial and Urban planning by the Government	No specific planning instrument	N/A	Constitution of 1978 and sentences of the Constitutional Court. Statute of each Autonomous Community	Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda	Binding in the case of the Land Act, but not direct competencies on spatial and urban planning	National

Regional plan

Synthesis map of the Territorial Plan of the Basque Country. Source: Government of the Basque Country

Facts: Territorial Planning Guidelines of the Basque Country (*Directrices de Ordenación Territorial del País Vasco*)

Source: https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/dots_nuevo/es_def/Mapa_DOT.pdf

Legal basis

- Law 4/1990 of 31 May 1990 on Spatial Planning in the Basque Country (*Ley 4/1990, de 31 de mayo, de Ordenación del Territorio del País Vasco*).
- Decree 28/1997 of 11 February 1997 on the definitive approval of the Territorial Planning Guidelines (*Decreto 28/1997, de 11 de febrero, de aprobación definitiva de las Directrices de Ordenación Territorial*).
- Decree 128/2019 of 30 July 2019 on the definitive approval of the Territorial Planning Guidelines (*Decreto 128/2019, de 30 de julio, de aprobación definitiva de las Directrices de Ordenación Territorial*).

Competences

- The Basque Country has full competences in spatial planning in its territory.

Binding force

- The Territorial Planning Guidelines have a strategic rather than a normative nature. They establish the basic elements for the organisation and structure of the whole regional territory, coordinating the public and private socio-economic activities that take place within it. They also determine the public policies that have a direct territorial impact or territorial implications. The regional plan serves as the reference framework for all the other spatial planning instruments (subregional, partial and sectoral plans).

Tasks and content

- The Territorial Planning Guidelines (TPG) take an integral approach. They deal with development trends, regional guidelines, the regional structure, the regional open-space structure, the regional settlement structure, and the regional economy and infrastructure. They set the general principles for all the other spatial planning instruments of the Basque Country.

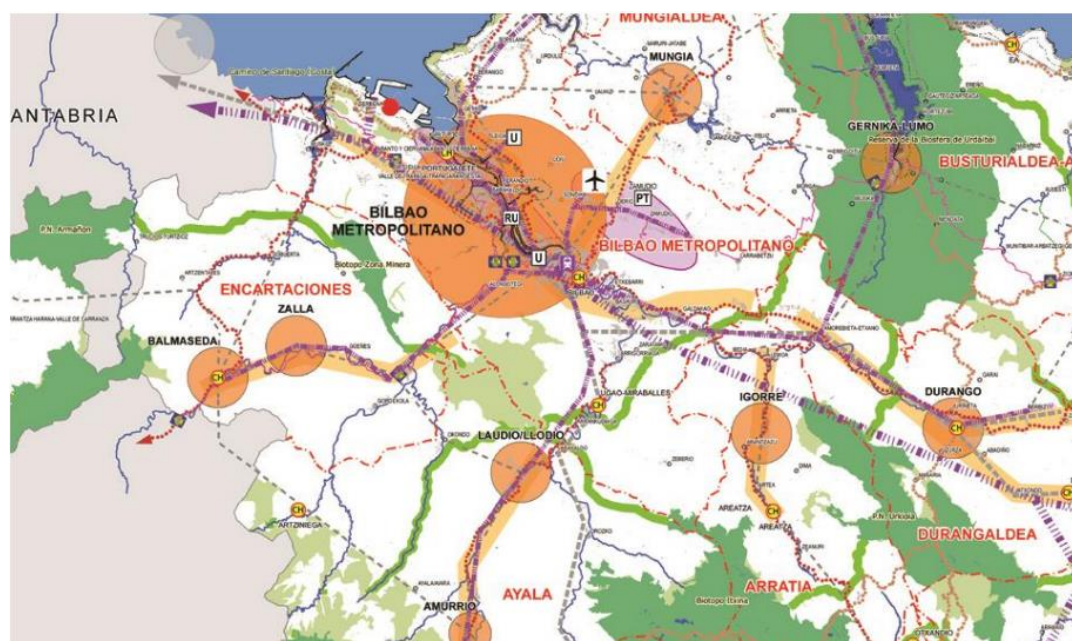
Process, duration, participation

- On 27 July 2015, the government of the Basque Country agreed to initiate the review procedure for the Territorial Planning Guidelines of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, which were approved in 1997. Nearly 20 years after they were approved, the government initiated a four-year process to revise the guidelines that would capitalise on lessons learned from experience acquired in the meantime. The new TPGs respond to new spatial planning challenges and are based on a comprehensive participatory process involving the various public institutions as well as socio-economic and political stakeholders and citizens.
- As far as participation is concerned, there has been a participation process in addition to the mandatory hearing procedures and public information. The participation process comprises both societal and institutional participation.

Duration of validity

- The Territorial Planning Guidelines are valid until they are revised.

Details of the plan



Detail of the synthesis map of the territorial plan of the Basque Country. Source: Government of the Basque Country

Characteristics

Location of the area

The regional plan (TOD) covers the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country in northern Spain. The Basque Country borders Cantabria and the Burgos province to the west, the Bay of Biscay to the north, France (Nouvelle-Aquitaine) and Navarre to the east, and La Rioja to the south. With an area of 7,234 km² and 2.1 million inhabitants, it includes the Basque provinces of Álava, Biscay and Gipuzkoa. Almost half of the 2,155,546 inhabitants of the Basque Country live in the Bilbao metropolitan area, which comprises almost the entirety of the province of Biscay.

Initial situation

Traditionally, this territory had a strong industrial basis (steel and shipbuilding). These activities diminished during the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, giving ground to the development of the services sector and new technologies. The basis of the regional plan is the need to move past the industry-based model and to pursue economic competitiveness, social welfare and sustainable development, in the context of a regressive demographic dynamic and aging of the population. The TPG model rests on the Basque polynuclear capital system, the network of different functional areas, the strategies for rural areas and relationships with adjoining spaces and interior enclaves.

Particularities of the process

The approval of the Territorial Planning Guidelines came after almost 30 years of development of spatial planning instruments. The approval in 1990 of the Law on Urban Planning of the Basque Country and the approval of the first TPGs in 1997 led to the development and approval of 15 partial plans and 10 sectoral plans in the following years. The TPGs have defined criteria that have been assumed and developed for territorial and urban planning. The recent process of revising the TPGs illustrates that a culture of spatial planning has been created among the Basque Country's administrations, social actors and the professionals involved. The territorial plan of the Basque Country integrates the gender perspective as a guiding policy principle for action on a territorial basis. In this regard, it is a pioneering instrument in the Spanish territory and in Europe. The Basque Country approved in 2019 its Urban Agenda-Bultzatu 2050, a strategy towards sustainability for the municipalities of the region in full alignment with the TPGs.

Notes and links

Gobierno Vasco (2019): Directrices de Ordenación Territorial (DOT). Available at:
<https://www.euskadi.eus/directrices-de-ordenacion-territorial-dot/web01-a2lurral/es/> (Accessed: 18 November 2020).

Link to the map provided:

Gobierno Vasco (2019): Directrices de Ordenación Territorial (DOT). Available at:
https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/dots_nuevo/es_def/Mapa_DOT.pdf (Accessed: 18 November 2020).