

ESTRATEGIA MARCO DE INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN

2020

ESTRATEGIA BASQUE COUNTRY



EUSKO JAURLARITZA
GOBIERNO VASCO

EUSKADI 
BASQUE COUNTRY

ZIELE
REFLEXIÓ
المبيادين
REFLEXION
انعكاس
MILESTONES
FITES
INTERNATIONALISIERUNG
NAZIOARTEKOTZEA
INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN
CHALLENGE
REFLECTION
INTERNACIONALITZACIÓ
الرئديسيية
ESTRATÈGICA
REFLEXIÓ
HELBURUAK
OBJECTIVES
OBJECTIUS
STRATEGISCHE
MEILENSTEINE
ÁMBITOS
RETO
ESTRATEGICA
الأهداف
STRATEGIC
ESTRATEGIKOA
REPTA
التحدي
الإستراتيجية
المحطبات
HITOS
MUGARRI
OBJETIVOS
BASKENLAND
ÀMBITS
EUSKADI

Internationalisation Framework Strategy 2020

BASQUE COUNTRY STRATEGY

A bibliographic record of this work can be consulted in the Bibliotekak network of the Basque Government: <http://www.bibliotekak.euskadi.net/WebOpac>

Edition:
1 May 2014

© Administration of the Basque Autonomous Community
– Basque Premier's Office

Internet:
www.euskadi.net

Published by:
Eusko Jauriaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia
Basque Government Publications Central Service
C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 - 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz

Design and layout:
Miren Unzurrunzaga Schmitz

Printed by:

Legal Deposit:

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
1. STRATEGIC REFLECTION PROCESS	9
2. STATUS DIAGNOSIS	13
2.1. Evolution of the internationalisation of the Basque Country	15
2.1.1 Evolution of the institutional support architecture for internationalisation	15
2.1.2. Milestones of the international activity of the Basque Government	18
2.2 The future of the internationalisation of the Basque Country: challenges and opportunities	21
3. BASQUE COUNTRY STRATEGY	23
3.1. The internationalisation of the Basque Country: a Nation-building Challenge	25
3.2. Alignment with the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term	27
3.3. Vision of the Basque Country Strategy	28
3.4. Outline of the Basque Country Strategy	29
3.5. Internationalisation common vectors	31
VECTOR 1. Basque Outreach Abroad	32
VECTOR 2. Promoting and driving sectoral interests abroad and contributing to global challenges	33
VECTOR 3. Alignment with the European framework	34
VECTOR 4. Knowledge acquisition	35
3.6. Thematic spheres of action	37
3.7. Geographical spheres of action	52
4. EXTERNAL ACTION PLAN	59
4.1. Mission and strategic objectives	61
4.2. Lines of Action and Measures	67
5. GOVERNANCE MODEL, MONITORING AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK	93
5.1. Governance Model	95
5.2. Assessment and monitoring system	97
5.3 Budgetary and Economic Framework	98

Introduction

The future of any society is built on the new global scenario, where it has to integrate in the world and in the international social, economic, political and institutional dynamics.

From a historical perspective, the first two decades of the century are witnessing a geopolitical restructuring and a shift in the centres of economic power. This change arises from the new international trade flows and the emergence of countries with high growth rates, as well as from the technological and scientific innovations that are revolutionising the forms of expression and social communication in the global world.

In this context, the new awareness regarding the environmental and economic sustainability of our societies, the establishing of balanced multilateral relations or the proposals for more balanced globalisation models are increasingly more important. The Basque Country wishes to be an active part of this new situation and therefore driving internationalisation is a priority nation-building goal for the Basque Government. This is the spirit of the Basque Country Strategy.

This objective requires international cooperation strategies and alliances to be established, particularly with those multilateral entities, regions and national circumstances for the economic and social transformation of the Basque Country, as well as for the deployment of sectors committed to the training, innovation and development of our Country.

Basque Country 2020 is a cultural shift. It requires the participation of all citizens, as well as of the public-private stakeholders and institutions linked to the world of business, technology, research, education or culture. This strategy is based on a shared action and reflection process involving the main institutional, economic and social stakeholders of the Country.

The Basque Country Strategy is going to enable us to aspire to consolidate the positioning and influence of the Basque Country and to become an international benchmark. It is the strategy to face the challenges and use the new opportunities that emerge in this present and future global scenario.

We are talking about a long-term and shared nation-building strategy. During this parliamentary term, we are embarking on an initial phase of the Strategy and we invite you to come onboard along with all Basque institutions and stakeholders. From freedom, the Basque Country aspires to grow, to consolidate its position and recognition in a global and open world of which we want to be an active part. We share the idea of Lehendakari Aguirre: “only freedom is capable of uniting the world, and the peoples can only understand each other in freedom”.

Iñigo Urkullu
Lehendakaria

Strategic Reflection Process

The Internationalisation Framework Strategy 2020: Basque Country Strategy (hereinafter the Basque Country Strategy) is a tool that responds to the Basque internationalisation needs and to the objective to achieve an open and global society. Two names for a single concept, a single nation-building strategy. This strategy, as it involves a cultural shift, has to be considered in the long term, which explains the time horizon of 2020 and, even, goes beyond the X Parliamentary Term. However, as regards the specific policies to be developed to achieve the planned changes, the proposal is to embark on an initial phase that will finalise at the end of the X Parliamentary Term in 2016.

Therefore, the document includes, on the one hand, the definition of the Basque Country Strategy in Chapter 3 and, on the other hand, the details in Chapter 5 of the External Action Plan 2014-2016, initially matching the X Parliamentary Term.

The participation and consultation process of different institutional and social stakeholders is the main cornerstone underpinning this Strategy. The participative process has enabled, on the one hand, the objectives and priorities that make up the core areas of the Internationalisation Framework Strategy of the Basque Country overall and, on the other hand, the objectives and lines of action that make up the Plan of Action of the Secretariat-General for External Action.

Furthermore, the Basque track record in the field of internationalisation has also been taken into account, particularly at business and institutional level, and lessons learnt and practices of interest have been established regarding strategies, instruments and organisational models deployed by the governments of Flanders, Quebec or Bavaria, which are already immersed in the expansion process of their outreach abroad.

Bearing in mind that one of the goals of this strategy is to define lines of action that foster the internationalisation of all Basque cultural, economic and social stakeholders, the participation process has assembled and gathered the opinions of stakeholders with very different profiles, including the Secretariat-General for External Action, along with representatives of the Ministries of the Basque Country and other multi-sectoral stakeholders outside the Government that play a key international role.

Thus, the process has involved interviewing 61 representatives of the Ministries of the Basque Government and its public sector, including the Secretariat-General for External Action. On the other hand, an exhaustive survey was conducted involving 37 Basque institutions and stakeholders mainly belonging to the scientific-technology, cultural, business and educational sphere.

Questions relating to the internationalisation of the Basque Country have been periodically published on the IREKIA platform, in order to survey public opinion and gather the contributions submitted for the process to prepare the Basque Country Strategy.

Finally, thematic roundtables have been held in the areas of i) promoting multisectoral interests, ii) European construction, iii) the Basque Country in the world, and iv) the Basque community abroad, which has involved 29 stakeholders with proven international experience. The roundtables run to discuss “promoting Basque multisectoral interests” and “the Basque Country in the world” identified actions, geographical areas and thematic sphere of strategic interest. The roundtable on “European construction” focused on discussing the role that the Basque Country must play in the European Union (EU), along with identifying thematic areas and actions of preferential interest to be deployed in this framework. In turn, the roundtable entitled “Basque community abroad” reflected on the way to reach and engage this community that reside and work outside the Basque Country.

The objective of this broad participatory process has been to foster the internationalisation debate in all its aspects and to identify:

- Thematic and geographical priorities and interests to develop the international activity of all Basque stakeholders.
- Assets and spheres of action with potential, uniqueness and differential value of those to be found in the Basque Country, and which help to project the desired image abroad.
- More suitable mechanisms to promote abroad the sectoral interests that contribute to our sustainable and sustained development.
- Ideal instruments to bring the voice of the Basque Country to Europe and to be active co-participants of European construction.
- More appropriate tools to consolidate the ties with the Basque community abroad and define the instruments to help to ensure that tie serves the internationalisation strategy.

It should likewise be noted that during the construction process of this Strategy, the External Action Inter-Ministerial Committee and the External Action Inter-Institutional Committee were convened to present and contrast the work carried out.

Status Diagnosis

2.1. Evolution of the internationalisation of the Basque Country

2.1.1 Evolution of the institutional support architecture for internationalisation

The Basque Country has a historical tradition of its institutions having relations with the outside world at the highest level. The Basque international activity dates back to the Civil War when the government of Lehendakari Aguirre, the Basque Premier at the time, decreed that relations be developed with the countries that respected the autonomy of the Basque Country and, above all, with those that took in Basque communities. In 1935 and 1937, the Basque Country therefore embarked on opening its international delegations, giving priority to the activities in Europe, where it was present in France (Paris, Bordeaux and Bayonne), the United Kingdom (London) and Belgium (Brussels, Antwerp), as well as in the Americas. Official Delegations were set up in the USA (New York and sub-delegation in Boise), Argentina (Buenos Aires), Mexico (Mexico DF), Dominican Republic (Ciudad de Trujillo, Santo Domingo), Venezuela (Caracas) and Cuba (La Habana). Furthermore, even though there was no official representation in place, actions were carried out in European cities as Geneva and Dublin, and in other countries of The Americas such as Uruguay, Chile, Colombia and Panama. This structure enabled a network of contacts and relations to be set up, which would be prove to be of vital importance while the Basque Government was in exile.

In 1939, the Basque Government in exile focused on consolidating the cooperation ties with those countries that recognised its legitimacy. During World War II, the international action of the Basque Government was noted for the geographical dispersion of its ministers, the adoption of a pro-ally position and increasing the number of Delegations, by establishing general delegations and local delegations, with the latter being dependent on the former. During this second phase of opening delegations abroad, the general ones were located in New York, with the local ones in the Antilles and the Philippines coming under its jurisdiction; in Mexico; in Venezuela, with the local delegations in Central America, Colombia and Ecuador coming under its control; and in Argentina, which supported the local delegation of Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil. The Government initiatives at that time included the proposal of the Basque Delegation in London regarding a European Federation, the presence in the Cultural Union of the Countries of Western Europe, and the participation of the Lehendakari, Jose Antonio Aguirre, in the Council of Europe in America with the contribution of his paper "Coordination of European Nationalities".

¹ De CASTRO RUANO J. L. y UGALDE ZUBIRI, A. La Acción Exterior del País Vasco (1980-2003).

At the end of World War II, the Basque Government in exile was actively involved in the European construction process, which ensured it a place in the international spotlight. In 1947, the Basque Federalist Movement joined the European Union of Federalists. The Basque Team of the New Christian Democrat International Teams, the Basque Socialist Movement for the European Federation, the Basque Delegation of the Congress of European Communities and Regions and the Basque Circle of European Studies were likewise formed. In this line, the Basque Council for the European Federation was set up in 1951. This entity enabled the Basque Country to take part in the private federalist and European trends, mainly in the European Movement.

With the signing of the Statute of Gernika, the Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country, the Basque Government found itself facing the challenge of institutionalising self-government, organising the Basque Public Administration and developing public policies that would include its participation in Europe and in the institutions and bodies coming under the European framework.

This first external action body of the Basque Government was the Office for European Community Affairs, set up 1985. The activity of that Office was aimed at the sphere of the European Economic Community (EEC) and at the economic development of the Basque Country. In order to guarantee the representation, defence and promotion of Basque interests with the institutions and decision-taking bodies of the EEC, the first delegation abroad was set up in Brussels with the initial status of office of the Basque Business Development Agency (Sociedad para la Promoción y Reconversión Industrial -SPRI) belonging to the Basque Government. Subsequently, following the Constitutional Court Ruling 165/1994, of 26 May, the office in Brussels acquired the status of Delegation, was officially opened and legally established in 1996².

In 1991, the Secretariat-General for External Action, within the Lehendakaritza (Basque Premier's Office) was set up and, thus, the Office for European Community Affairs was absorbed by this new entity, which up to the present is the one that helps the Lehendakari to manage and coordinate the external action of the Basque Government.

Furthermore, in order to institutionalise relations with the Basque Diaspora abroad, and pursuant to Act 8/1994, unanimously approved in the Basque Parliament, that same year, the Advisory Council on Relations with Basque Communities was set up. The I World Council of Basque Communities Abroad was held in 1995 and has been held every 5 years by legal mandate since then. The Act established that the World Congress must prepare a draft Four-year Plan of Institutional Action, which must then be approved by the Advisory Council.

From 2002 onwards, the structure for the deployment of the external action was consolidated qualitatively with the creation of five official delegations in Mexico (2002), Chile (2003), Venezuela (2003) and Argentina (2003), together with the one located in Madrid. This network was subsequently expanded with the opening of the Basque delegations in the United States (2007) and in France (2008), along with the creation of the new Basque Country Delegation for Colombia and Venezuela, based in Bogota, in 2008.

² External Action Yearbook 2008-2009, IVAP, 2009.

During the IX Parliamentary Term, the presence of the Basque Government in the outside world was restructured. The Basque Country Delegation to Argentina thus became the Delegation for Mercosur, and its sphere of influence was expanded to Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. The Delegation based in Bogotá would likewise be entrusted with the ties with the countries of Central America, along with the relations with Colombia and Venezuela. The Delegation for the NAFTA (United States, Mexico and Canada) was set up. Finally, the Delegation in Santiago de Chile would assume relations with Peru. In Europe, the French Delegation, which had not been officially opened, would definitively cease to be operational.

The Basque Country currently has 4 Delegations in the Americas, which are the Basque Country Delegation to the United States, based in New York; the Basque Country Delegation to Mexico, based in Mexico D.F.; the Delegation to Argentina – Mercosur, based in Buenos Aires, and the Basque Country Delegation to Chile, Colombia and Peru, based in Santiago de Chile and with an office in Bogotá. As regards Europe, the Basque Country has a Delegation to the European Union in Brussels whose role is to represent, defend and promote the interests of the Basque Country with the EU and it acts as an opportunity feeler with entities and multilateral organisations based in Brussels, as well as with the Länder and Regions representation offices. It likewise has an office in Madrid that ensures a permanent communication channel with the State Central Government and the diplomatic missions there.

Apart from the institutional side of things, the business fabric of the Basque Country has been a trail-blazer when setting its sights on foreign markets. This fact has resulted in early intervention in the international sphere by institutions that have traditionally supported the development of the Basque manufacturing structure.

The first measures by the Basque Government aimed directly at fostering business internationalisation date back to the 1980s. At that time, the policy deployed by the Basque Government Ministry for Trade, Consumers and Tourism and the Basque Business Development Agency (SPRI) has a vision focused on fostering and driving foreign trade, mainly, by means of programmes to support commercial outreach, training in foreign trade and awareness raising in that area.

This approach focusing on trade operations was extended in the 1990s to a more integral perspective of internationalisation, incorporating other initiatives aimed at consolidating the foreign activity of Basque companies, such as setting up on new markets, developing links between foreign and Basque corporations or attracting new foreign investments.

Therefore, the former Basque Government Ministry for Industry and Energy and the SPRI focused their endeavours on a few countries with sufficient potential to generate intense investment activity. The countries considered as strategic to create a favourable climate of cooperation with the Basque Country were Germany, the United States, France, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom, countries where the SPRI set up an External Stakeholders network.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the policies to back the business internationalisation of the Basque Government have placed special importance on increasing the dimension of the Basque industrial groups and on their integration in international innovation systems, with the emphasis on mobilising

business potential still not exposed to foreign markets, geographical diversification and increasing the innovative and technology content of the Basque goods and services.

Along with the different business internationalisation support programmes implemented by the Basque government since 1980s, SPRI has gradually set up an external support network for the industrial fabric in its international activity. Nowadays, the SPRI External Network consists of offices present in 14 countries and a network of consultants, who cover over 55 geographical areas, to provide operational support to Basque business internationalisation. As of today, the SPRI business feeler is operating in the countries where there is an institutional delegation.

In addition to the business and institutional spheres, the Basque Government has likewise been deploying an active policy for the international dissemination of the Basque language and of Basque culture and artistic creations. In order to consolidate this commitment, the Etxepare Institute was created, by means of Act 2/2007, for the specific purpose of universally fostering the teaching, study and the use of the Basque Language and showcasing abroad the Basque culture in all its aspects, from literature to the dramatic arts, and without forgetting films, sculpture, painting or music. The Etxepare Institute is working with foreign professionals in the sphere of translation, journalism and research, among other groups, in order to attain greater international visibility of our culture.

2.1.2. Milestones of the international activity of the Basque Government

The early consideration by the Basque Government of internalisation as a key development factor for the Basque Country has meant that, down through the years, there has been a series of milestones in its external action in the institutional, business, cultural or technology areas, among others.

As regards the international institutional measures implemented since the early 1980s, special mention should be made of the signing of international agreements in very different areas including education, culture, the environment, industry, infrastructures or health. This type of cooperation has mainly been entered into with regional and state governments and international organisations. By way of an example, the numerous agreements signed include the Memorandum of Understanding signed with Northern Ireland regarding Health and Social Welfare (2012) or the one reached between the Basque Government and UNESCO to work together in educational and cultural areas (1997).

Furthermore, the Basque Country has stood out for its active and ongoing participation in international networks, associations and institutions. The Basque Government has taken part and continues to participate in numerous international and European networks, defending the role of regional governments and sub-state entities, and its differentiated economic and socio-political reality. Special mention should be made of the Conference of European Regions with Legislative Powers (REGLEG), the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CRPM), the Association of European Border Regions (ARFE), the Network of Regional Government for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD), along with the Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe (ENCORE), to name some of the most important

ones. The nrg4SD network, created under the leadership of the Ministry for the Environment and accredited with the United Nation's UNEP Programme, is a clear example of the commitment of the government of the BAC to sustainable development globally.

Cross-border and regional cooperation has likewise been a priority sphere of interest. In this area, the Basque Country has smooth relations with regions with which it shares similar interests and problems, including Flanders, Quebec or Bavaria. The relationship with Flanders is based on commercial issues (i.e. getting up and running the Bilbao-Zeebrugge motorway of the sea) and on consolidating participation in Europe. The cooperation with Quebec has led to different agreements in areas such as linguistic policy, the environment or research, while the relationship between the Basque Country and Bavaria mainly consists of exchanging information on industrial policy, R&D policy, entrepreneurship and training.

The collaboration with Aquitaine is the most important example in terms of cross-border cooperation. The consolidation of the Aquitaine-Basque Country Euro-region occurred with the setting up in 2011 of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) after more than 20 years of cooperation through the Common Fund and the Basque Country-Aquitaine Logistic Platform. This framework has likewise helped to channel a close relationship with stakeholders, entities and institutions of the French Basque Country.

In this same context, the Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP) was set up with the support of the Council of Europe, which aspires to provide the Pyrenees zone with a cross-border cooperation structure similar to those to be found along other European borders. The members of the CTP are the autonomous communities of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Navarra, the French regions of Aquitaine, Languedoc-Rosellón and Midi-Pyrénées, and the Principality of Andorra. It was in 2005 when the CTP adopted a legal entity subject to Spanish public law, which acted as further impetus, particularly in the management of European programmes and funds.

Another of the traditional priorities of the Basque Government has been and is to foster closer ties with the Basque community abroad. In order to maintain and expand the ties that these communities and the Euskal Etxeak have with the Basque Country, the Relations with the Basque Communities and Centres Outside the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country Act was passed in 1994³. This legislation mainly seeks to strengthen these entities for the benefit of its members, consolidate their internal cohesion and the effectiveness of their associative actions, along with providing help and economic protection to the Basques living abroad. The introduction of this legislation allowed legal protection to be offered to the existing Euskal Etxeak and to expand the network, which today boasts over 180 Euskal Etxeak in 25 countries.

As regards development cooperation, the policies of Basque public institutions to support projects related to international solidarity have a track record of over 25 years. Development cooperation undertaken in the Basque Country has been one of the most important in the sphere of

³ Relations with the Basque Communities and Centres Outside the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country Act.

decentralised cooperation, both due to its trail-blazing aspect and to the amount of economic resources earmarked or the number of interventions carried out. It should be noted that the Basque Country was the first Autonomous Community to include in its Budget an amount to be used to fund development aid activities.

In 1996, the setting up of the Association of Basque Local Authorities for International Cooperation – Euskal Fondoa would be a qualitative step forward to involve local stakeholders in international solidarity, by facilitating the development of new initiative, joint action and coordination between the different institutions making it up. Euskal Fondoa currently has over 100 members.

In addition, the approval of the Development Cooperation Act 1/2007 and the recent coming into service of the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation as a public entity within, at the time of writing, the Secretariat-General for External Action, have been key milestones in the consolidation of the commitment of Basque society to international solidarity and the eradication of poverty.

If internationalisation is considered from the business perspective, the degree of internationalisation achieved by our productive fabric stands out. Different indicators show that Basque companies are immersed in a clear commitment to outreach abroad. According to Eustat figures, the value of annual exports of Basque corporations was over 20,000 million euros in 2012 (32% of the Gross Domestic Product), which had grown at an annual rate of 12% since 2009. Focusing on the sectors, exports are focused on capital goods, semi-finished products and automotive goods, which account for nearly 80% of the total. As far as export markets are concerned, France and Germany are the main countries that are the destination of Basque production, with the EU-15 accounting for 60% of exports. Trade is growing at an annual rate of 10% with BRIC countries that, currently, receive 6% of our international sales.

On the other hand, Direct Foreign Investment received in the Basque Autonomous Community (hereinafter BAC), totalled 432 million euros in 2012⁴, and occurred in the energy, telecommunications and the manufacturing of pharmaceutical products sectors. The investments by the Basque Country abroad came to 773 million euros and were focused in the financial services, telecommunications or energy sectors⁵.

However, the internationalisation milestones have not only been in the business or institutional arenas. In this regard, special mention should be made of the high participation of the Basque technological centres in European R&D&i projects, where an increase in the return from 131 to 190.74 million euros was seen between the EU VI Framework and VII Framework Technology Research and Development (2007-2013) Programme. Specifically, the Basque Country has been present in a total of 406 activities approved within the VII Programme.

Likewise, in the field of Information and Communication Technologies, the Basque Government launched the first Basque Country in the Information Society Plan, which proposed a series of

⁴ Invest in the Basque Country – SPRI, 2012.

⁵ Eustat.

of actions to foster cultural change and make new technologies within the reach of everyone. In this context, in 2003, the Basque Government signed a collaboration agreement with the UN and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in the Information Society. The aim of the agreement was to define the role that regional government must perform to help people access the benefits of the Information Society, establish real cooperation between regional governments and take part in the United Nations programme to train local stakeholders on the information society.

As regards Education, a progressive increase of the international exposure of Basque students must be stressed. Accordingly, 1.8% of the people enrolled at the University of the Basque Country during the 2010-2011 academic year (including students from the first and second, degree and master's cycles) took part in the Erasmus Programme and the number of Basque institutions taking part in student mobility actions on study programmes and work placements stood at 89, the highest figure in the state of Spain⁶.

In addition, the commitment to public-private partnership in the construction of the Guggenheim Museum, opened in 1997, was a milestone in urban transformation and the fostering of tourism in the BAC. The museum receives an average of over a million visitors a year and has generated a key impact in the Basque economy and society, as it has boosted tourism and the revitalisation of the public spaces of the city of Bilbao.

The Basque Health Service has been involved in different international projects through the different public health innovation and research public entities (BIOEF - the Basque Foundation for Health Research and Innovation, Biocruces, Biodonostia and Kronikgune).

2.2. The future of the internationalisation of the Basque Country: challenges and opportunities

The reality of Basque society has changed due to factors that have modified the local and global environment. In the global context, one of the most important of the causes for change has been the world financial and economic crisis that began in 2008 and which has resulted in a new scenario marked by uncertainty. Even though the crisis affected the Basque Country to a lesser extent than other countries or regions, it is clear that it has reversed our growth trend and has particularly hit employment levels.

Therefore, the economic recovery and job creation are two priority challenges of the Programme of the X Parliamentary Term. Making significant progress in these areas requires new approaches to be adopted that are adapted to an increasingly changing and globalised scenario.

In any event, the current economic situation is not the only factor that impacts the new scenario,

⁶ Data and figures from the ERASMUS in Spain programme, European Education and Training Programmes – Spanish Agency (OAPEE).

both globally and locally. The reversal of the population pyramid, the new applications of the information and communication technologies with a key impact on the way of organising the health or education system, the generating of new energy sources, the concern for the environment or the greater recognition of culture as a factor for development are, to name a few, aspects that condition the new world order.

In this context, internationalisation is not only a fundamental core area to kick-start the economy, but requires the assumption of a significant cultural change as the consequence of the connotations that that concept acquires in the global order.

Therefore, the Basque Country needs to develop a system where the Basque institutions and the socio-economic stakeholders overall become an active and relevant part of its external action. They are all called upon to get involved in consolidating our positioning abroad, in defending and driving our multisectoral interests in the priority international forums and/or territories. Furthermore, its role will be fundamental to consolidate our capacity to impact the policies and legislation of the European Union.

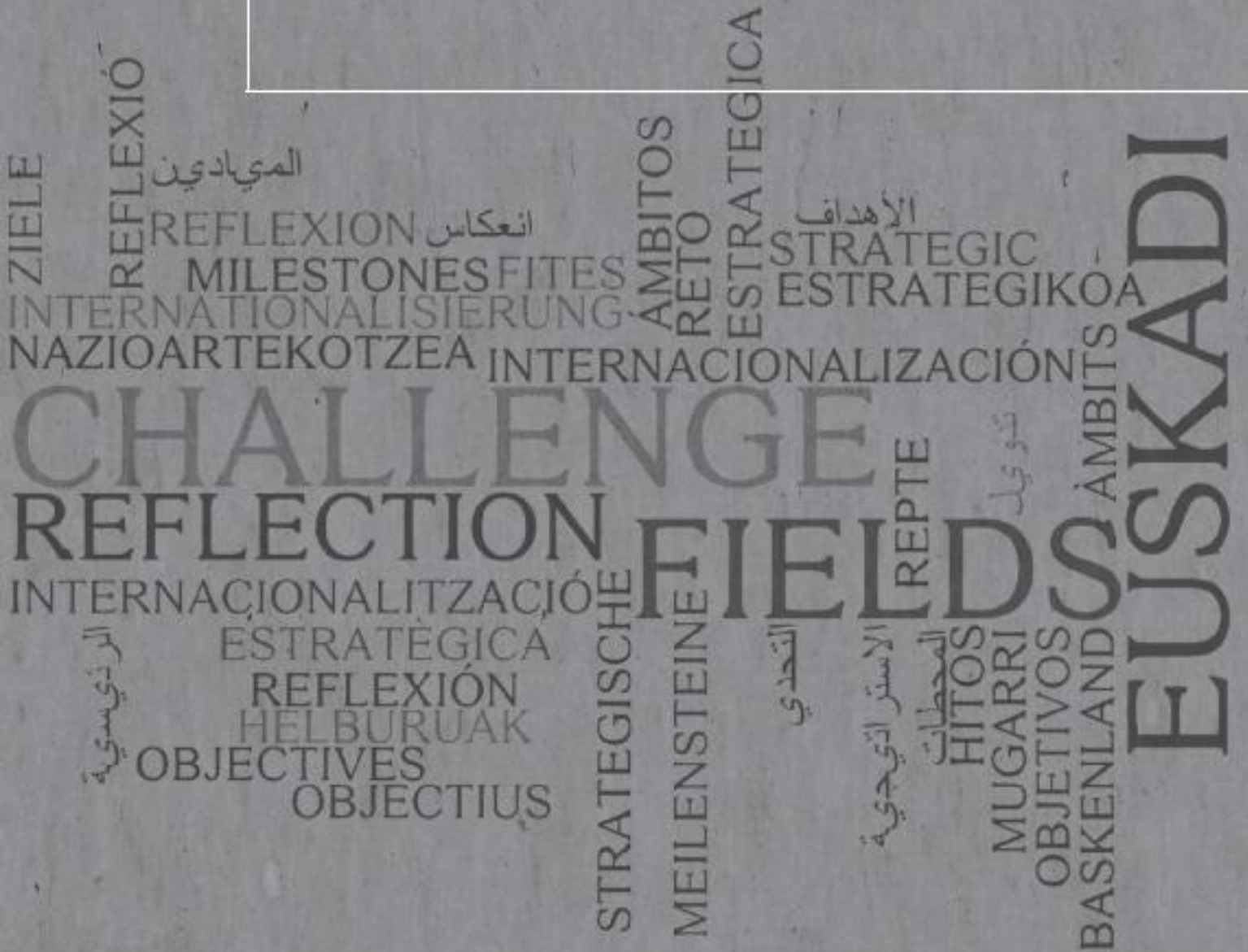
Even though progress has been achieved in this endeavour, there is still much to be done as regards both increasing the number of internationalised Basque stakeholders and the application of an adequately coordinated strategy.

Thus, there are knowledge areas that, for different reasons, are already embarked on an international activity that is more or less autonomous and consolidated. These spheres of knowledge, including the cultural or business arenas, institutional external action or development cooperation, have been the pillars of the international activity of the Basque Country so far.

However, at this stage of the process, the main challenge consists of incorporating stakeholders into the Basque external action, who have, so far, mainly focused on the local sphere, but who bring a huge potential for their measures to be replicated in other geographical areas. This would be the case of the accumulated experience in the Basque Country in the health, environmental or education among other fields.

In any event, and when it comes to generating an all-embracing internationalisation culture, the development of a strategy, the Basque Country Strategy, which establishes common policy guidelines and which can be a benchmark for all the stakeholders of the BAC, acquires special importance. In this context, the development of a nation-building brand is considered essential and which is based on the main assets of the Basque Country, relating both to our cultural or linguistic identity and our industrial bias, tourism, health or educational system, among others. This brand image will have to rally a high level of consensus and endorsement of the Basque institutional, economic and social stakeholders.

BASQUE COUNTRY STRATEGY



Basque Country Strategy

3.1. The internationalisation of the Basque Country: a Nation-building Challenge

The current international scenario is clearly marked by a growing globalisation that highlights the interdependencies between countries, and requires a continuous search for cooperation schemes to guarantee global governance. The exponential increase in interconnections arising from the globalisation has revolutionised the world panorama, exercising a strong influence in areas including technology, intellectual or cultural, environmental, social, political and economic fields.

The geo-economic factors condition international relations to a great extent, and economic strength becomes a key factor of political influence. The recent emergence of rapidly-growing economies in Asia and other parts of the world threatens the supremacy of the Triad (USA – European Union - Japan and Korea) and gives way to a multipolar world pointing to a shift in the balance of power. In this new scenario, the European Union, the main world economic area, continues, despite its weaknesses, to be a key international player.

Contemporary societies are facing global challenges that demand coordinated responses. In this regards, issues such as economic development and sustainability, gender equality, the eradication of the extreme poverty in which millions of people live or the ageing of the population are driving governments to seek answers beyond their respective frontiers. In the current climate, the traditional division between external and internal policy has become blurred and, increasingly more, external action is embodied in an extension of the exercising of internal competences by the public authorities.

This being the case, it is clear that the future of the Basque Country is being played out on the global stage, a reason why the Basque Government considers internationalisation to be a nation-building challenge, apart from being a business need, that involves a huge cultural shift in the present and future. To a great extent, the future wellbeing of Basque society will depend on the capacity of its institutions, persons, companies and socio-economic stakeholders to tackle this challenge. Addressing this challenge is going to require that the public authorities define and deploy public policies adapted to an interdependent and increasingly more competitive world.

As has been reflected in the previous chapter, it is clear that the Basque Country has set its sights and strived to make its mark abroad in recent years. However, internationalisation is a process and this new stage requires a qualitative leap, strengthening and consolidating the foreign outreach in this new stage

achieved so far, and counting the participation of all the institutions and stakeholders of the Country. The Basque Country Strategy is therefore an invitation to Basque society as a whole to ensure a clear international dimension to its agendas.

The Basque Country has to be positioned as a global player and gain visibility on the international stage. The Basque outreach abroad has to be used to achieve an own space in the international and European context in order to foster Basque interests, showcase our identity and values and consolidate them, at the same time as we are contributing to the shaping of a more sustainable and fairer new international order, to serve people.

Internationalisation is now, more than ever, serving the strategy to kick start the economy and to generate jobs. Business internationalisation is an intrinsic part of the institutional outreach strategy abroad. As the Lehendakari announced in his speech at the Plenary Investiture Session, “the Basque Country’s setting its sights on the outside world is going to contribute decisively to our opportunities to progress economically on a market that is increasingly more open”. Consequently, our integration in the international arena is aimed at, among things, guaranteeing the competitiveness of the business fabric and, thus, to achieve high levels of sustainable human development that guarantees the wellbeing of Basque citizenry. Therefore, it will be necessary to set up international cooperation strategies and alliances in sectors where there are leading companies and competitive Basque SMEs, and in those emerging sectors defined as priority by the business policy of the Basque Government.

The internationalisation of the Basque Country is initially setting its sights at the European Union, a supranational area impacting decisively on the exercising of our competences as the main market of our products and services. It is therefore essential to make our voice be heard and directly take part in the community decision taking processes to shape a federal Europe guided by the principle of subsidiarity and the development of a multilevel government. In turn, our presence in the EU must involve great cooperation and use of synergies with innovative and competitive European regions that have areas of complementarity with our own situation.

Along with Europe, the Basque Country has to increase its presence in other geographical areas, with special emphasis on emerging countries and regions. Thus, the international strategy of the Basque Government, in its different aspects, will strive to ensure the broader participation of Basque non-governmental stakeholders and institutions in the benchmark cross-border networks. Our involvement in those structures will help to entrench stables cooperation dynamics that help to both defend common interests and to showcase the best practices that we have built up to transfer them to the outside world and to develop cooperation projects..

Outreach also allows ties to be established and/or maintained with the international vanguard in different fields (scientific-technology, culture, health, the environment, etc). That helps to forge a space to share points of views and good practices and capture new knowledge. Internationalisation thus helps to design and deploy more efficient public policies that help to foster the sustained and sustainable development of our society. In that same line, the commitment to integrating the Basque Country in the work dynamics of international organisations needs to be consolidated, by driving direct economic, social and institutional participation in different key forums and projects.

The enhancing of our international outreach and openness to the outside world has to be underpinned by an integral strategy, the Basque Country Strategy, and a country brand, that based on our strengths and special features, will position us as a global player, benchmark for excellence, as a model for quality of life and social cohesion, as a competitive and innovative territory. The aim is to ensure that the values shared by Basque society, such as the culture of hard work, commitment, resilience, equal opportunities between men and women, or social justice is associated with the image of the BAC and become our calling card internationally. In order to achieve this, it is essential to consolidate the links and ties with the Basque community abroad and those people that feel an affinity with everything Basque, given that it is a fundamental asset to consolidate the international position of our country.

Furthermore, the Basque Country Strategy will ensure that the solidarity contribution of Basque society is channelled to solve global issues, particularly as part of development cooperation.

3.2. Alignment with the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term

The Basque Government Programme for the X Parliamentary term establishes a series of goals and initiatives grouped into three major commitments: Employment and People (Commitment I), Peace and Coexistence (Commitment II) and a new Political Status for the Basque Country (Commitment III). Internationalisation is present across Commitments I and II, and the drawing up of the Basque Country strategy falls within the aforementioned sections of the Government Programme.

In the framework of Commitment I, the Programme envisages driving self-employment and the Basque professional training system, as well as contributing to enhancing the competitiveness of the companies by recovering the Basque industrial policy model, fostering internationalisation as a key factor to generate sustainable competitiveness and economic development, as well as to achieve integral, supportive and fair human development. Therefore, Commitment I of the Programme includes the "Driving Internationalisation" core area, which is broken down into strategic objectives and strategic initiatives aimed at fostering the international outreach and recognition of the Basque Country.

The different objectives and initiatives included in this core area have been formulated both from the point of view of business internationalisation and institutional outreach abroad, by embracing different spheres of action of the Government, including the external action itself and industry, culture or tourism among others areas. Complementarily, Euskadi 2020: Framework Programme for Employment and Economic Recovery, approved in February 2014, includes a core area for action regarding internationalisation, and likewise influencing two differentiated levels, the business and institutional.

In this context, the Basque Country Strategy includes and develops the aforementioned objectives included in Commitment I of the Programme, treating them in a cross-cutting manner and identifying common vectors underpinning the international activity of the Basque Country overall.

In the framework of Commitment II, the Government Programme is committed to addressing once and for all the objectives of peace and coexistence, after decades of division of Basque society as the result of the ETA violence. Accordingly, on 26 November 2013, the Government approved a Strategic Peace and Coexistence Plan, with 18 lines of action, in order to achieve definitive and irreversible peace, along with contributing to the mainstreaming of coexistence in conjunction with institutional, political and social stakeholders. Therefore, the Plan prioritises learning from other international experiences in the peace processes, along with showcasing and offering our experience and knowledge in this sphere, by linking the Basque Country's image and the commitment to peace.

Initiatives aimed at exchanging experiences internationally and the showcasing of a country committed to peace help to fulfil Commitment II of the Government Programme and are included in the Basque Country Strategy.

3.3. Vision of the Basque Country Strategy

Now more than ever in the current economic and socio-political context, internationalisation has become a real extension of the exercising of the competencies attributed by the Gernika Statute to the Basque institutions. Therefore, external action is an essential tool for the most efficient promotion and defence of the interests of the Basque Country in the world.

The Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term is committed to Basque internationalisation as a “nation-building challenge”, the achievement of which involves incorporating the global dimension to all knowledge and policy spheres. We are not starting from zero as we embark on this challenge. Even though the manufacturing fabric has been trail-blazing in incorporating the internationalisation variable into its activity, this experience is not the only one, and other global specific actions have been undertaken by different stakeholders and from different spheres.

However, all the Basque institutional, cultural and socio-economic stakeholders need to act in a coordinated and complementary way, and they also need to do so from a shared vision, in order to prosper on the internationalisation path.

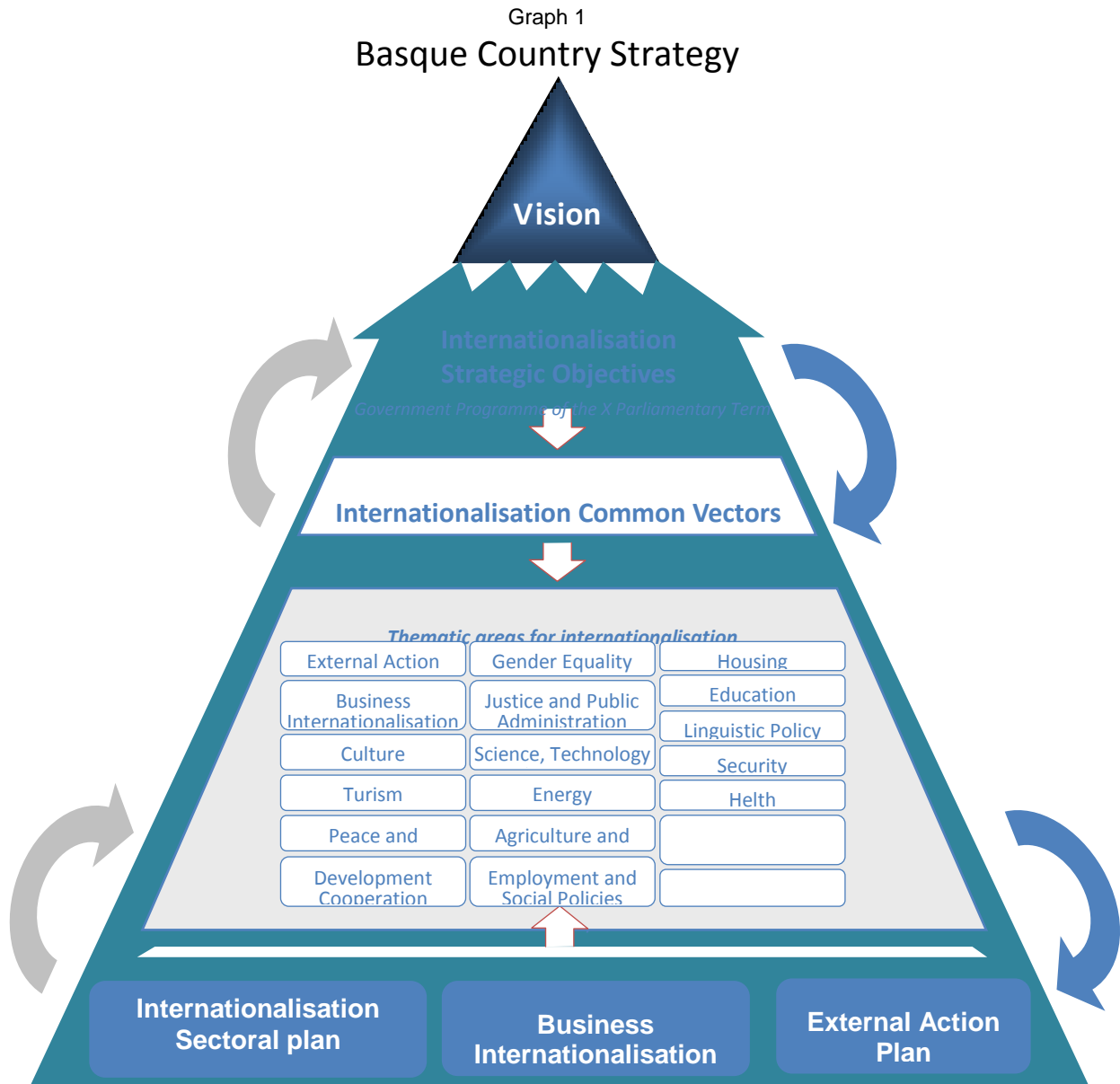
The vision that this Framework Strategy proposes regarding the internationalisation of the Basque Country can be summarised by the following commitment:

VISION

To position the Basque Country in the vanguard of the 21st century as a global player, with its own space in European construction, a highly competitive, attractive country, known for its unique approach, its high levels of sustainable human development, its fairness, its openness to the world and closely connected to the Basque community abroad

3.4. Outline of the Basque Country Strategy

The Basque Country Strategy is based on a vision, as set out above, and common strategic objectives for the Basque Government as a whole and which are based on the priorities expressed by the Lehendakari in the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term.



Source: Own preparation

Achieving the objectives set out in the Government Programme implies executing initiatives that, in many cases, include an international aspect. By way of an example, as a means to achieve the objective of creating a new vocational training model, the Government Programme establishes the initiative to foster internationalisation and the effective integration in the European Union of

Basque vocational training, thus making it patently clear the need to align with the European framework. In the same way, the importance of acting in a global environment is acknowledged in order to drive Basque artistic creation and culture, by assuming the commitment of maintaining the funding of cultural creation projects and international exchanges in this sphere.

Thus, the initiatives that the Ministers of the Basque Government and its Public Sector are going to deploy in the international sphere in the coming years fall within four common vectors of action:

- Basque Country outreach abroad
- Promoting and driving sectoral interests and contributing to resolving global challenges
- Alignment with the European framework
- Knowledge acquisition

These vectors are a shared base of goals assumed to contribute to achieving the vision and the set of objectives set out in the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term.

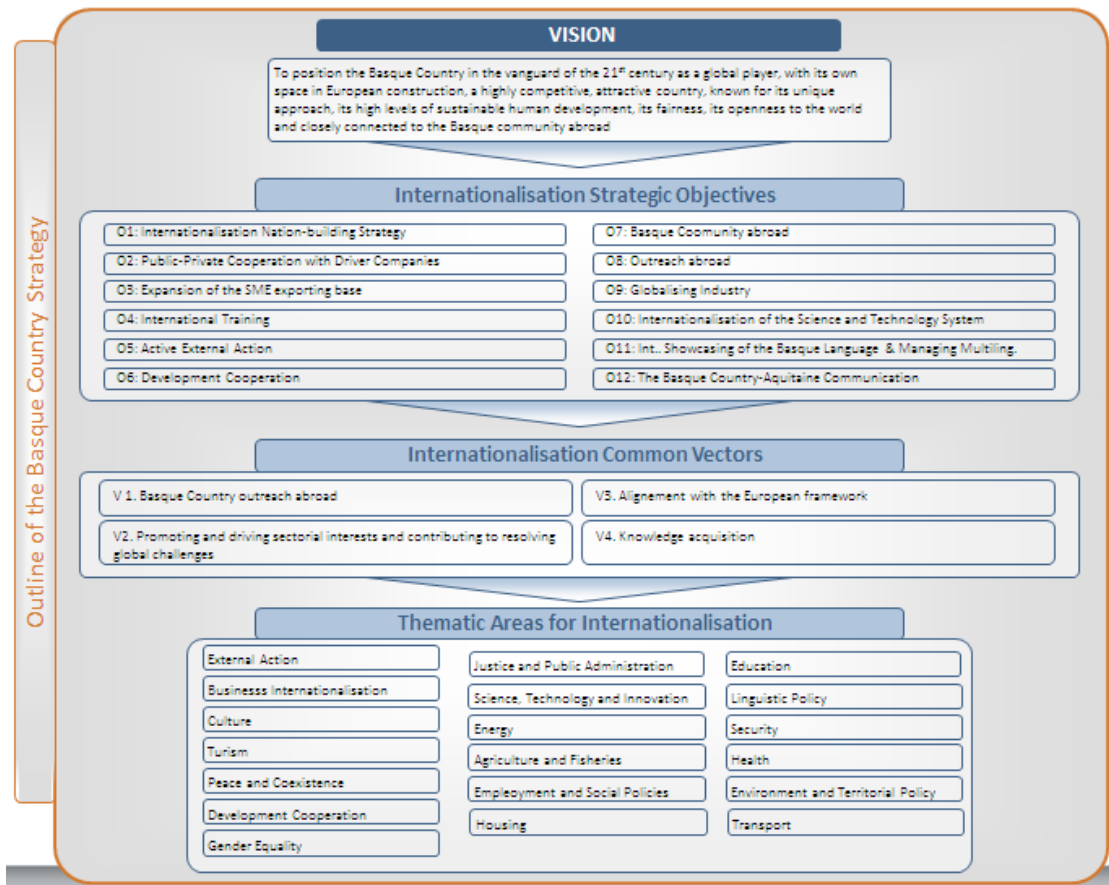
In turn, pursuant to an integrating internationalisation concept, the deployment of the Basque Country Strategy will involve the participation of the different spheres of action that make up the Government activity, even though it should be pointed out that the main focus of this Strategy will be on the international external action, business internationalisation, tourism and culture.

It should also be pointed out that, in the Basque Country Strategy, the international activity of the Basque Government is based on spheres of action instead of following the organisational structure by Departments. In fact, this design is in response to the fact that, often, areas belonging to a single Department have, due to their different nature, different needs in terms of internationalisation, which inexorably leads to approaches that are likewise differentiated.

The spheres of action of the Basque Country Strategy are shown in the above graph according to the following pattern: the knowledge areas first appear that, due to their nature, are more directly linked to the strategy (institutional external action, business internationalisation, culture and tourism), then, the other areas are organised according to the very internal organisation of the Basque Country.

Finally, the implementation of the Basque Country Strategy may eventually result in the defining and approval of Internationalisation Sectoral Plans that specify the lines of action and policies to be implemented in specific spheres. This is the case of the institutional external action, whose Plan is outlined in the following chapter, along with the Business Internationalisation Plan that will specify the instruments to be deployed to increase the presence abroad of the business fabric of the BAC.

Table 1.
Outline of the Basque Country Strategy



Source: Own preparation

3.5. Internationalisation common vectors

Given the importance of the Basque Country turning its sights on the world, the Ministries that make up the current Basque Country, along with the Public Sector linked to them, plan to carry out activities with an international footprint for the coming years. In some cases, it involves continuing and intensifying actions that have already started to be deployed, while, in others, the aim is to open up new courses of action abroad.

The Basque Country Strategy seeks to take a further step forward and provide greater coherence and visibility to the international action of the general administration of the Basque Country. Therefore four internationalisation common vectors have been defined that are the basis on which to deploy the set of actions to achieve the strategic objectives set in the Government Programme. Those four vectors in turn help to embody the internationalisation of the Basque Country as a nation.

Graph 2
Internationalisation common vectors

INTERNATIONALISATION COMMON VECTORS

VECTOR 1. Basque Country outreach abroad

VECTOR 2. Promoting and driving sectorial interests and contributing to resolving global challenges

VECTOR 3. Alignment with the European framework

VECTOR 4. Knowledge acquisition

Source: Own preparation

VECTOR 1. Basque Outreach Abroad

The wellbeing levels to which the Basque Country aspires can only be achieved by means of an appropriate positioning in the global arena and it will depend on how well Basque economic and social stakeholders and institutions managed to position themselves in the world.

Companies and countries currently compete to find their own space in the international context in which they operate. The development of an image or a brand based on the specific features of a territory (*nation branding*) and its subsequent dissemination abroad impact its capacity to attract investments, highly qualified professionals or tourists, and on the capacity to exercise its economic and political influence around the world. The brand therefore provides a competitive edge.

Given the challenge of positioning the Basque Country abroad, and which is established and acknowledged as an excellence benchmark in the international arena, the Basque Country brand is the keystone to transmit an attractive image abroad. The Basque Country is a small county that, like others, needs to detect new opportunities and incorporate knowledge, even though it is undeniable that it also has many attributes and accredited capacities to teach and transfer. The Basque Country has differentiating factors underpinning the international outreach and brand strategy: an own language and identity, deep-rooted and shared values such as the culture of hard work, the commitment to keeping your word and trust; or a proven track record in self-government or industrial policy, just to give a few examples.

The Basque Country brand is seen as a widely accepted calling card and, therefore, valuable as an instrument to support any Basque stakeholder as it sets its sights on the international stage. The aim is not only for private initiative and public institutions to construct and apply this brand, but also for society overall to sign up to the initiative, embrace it and share it in its sphere of action.

In this endeavour and once the Basque Country presentation has been prepared on different medium and in different languages, the Basque Government through its department will actively seek the backing of other institutions, along with the different stakeholders (business, social, cultural, tourist, educational, etc.) for its use and dissemination internationally.

Furthermore, the different spheres of action of the general administration of the BAC will actively contribute to our positioning abroad by means of disseminating in international forums and network those public policies and aspects where the Basque Country is or seeks to become a benchmark.

In any event, the construction of the Basque Country brand is perceived as a collective task, where the set of institutions of the Country is invited to collaborate by contributing, each from its position, the differential knowledge, the models and the innovative public policies where the Basque Country can become an international benchmark.

VECTOR 2. Promoting and driving sectoral interests abroad and contributing to global challenges

The current economic climate, noted for the major economic crisis, the uncertainty and the transformation process of the current economic model, has made economic reactivation and job creation a priority for the Basque Government. The return to growth and job recovery in the Basque Country requires improving competitiveness, strengthening and consolidating the business, economic and social fabric, and the capacity of the companies and other socio-economic stakeholders to operate on international markets. Under this premises, the external activity of the Basque administration in its different spheres is going to be particularly focused towards detecting opportunities and identifying mechanisms that support the internationalisation process of Basque stakeholders.

In this sense, the Departments of the Basque Government and its Public Sector are part of the commitment to deploy policies and tools that enable the achievement of international interests linked to the different tourist, commercial, cultural and productive capacities, among others. Likewise, they will act in the performance of their external activity as promoters of local know-how, emerging as their representatives and opening doors to knowledge and experience hosted in the Basque Country in different sectoral forums.

In keeping with the current importance that international relations acquire in defending the multisectoral interests of the Basque Government, the Basque Government aspires to establish bilateral relations and enter into agreements with other countries and/or regions, catering, among other reasons, for the shared defence of common interests or for formulating cooperation projects. These alliances make likewise facilitate the opening up of new preferential markets for the BAC when exporting or showcasing our models, products or services.

The Basque Country likewise wishes to consolidate its presence in multilateral and international institutions as they are stakeholders with the capacity to generate opportunities to exchange and/or transfer knowledge, exporting of goods and/or services, as well developing projects abroad.

The fact that the Basque Country is a global player implies that, as a society, we have to assume an active role in the solution of global problems. Therefore, along with defending our interests abroad, this vector also brings together all the actions fostered by Basque stakeholder and the general administration of the BAC to channel our joint commitment to the eradication of the poverty and injustice in which millions of people live.

VECTOR 3. Alignment with the European framework

The European Union and its construction process is a preferential vehicle for the international action of the Basque Government.

The EU not only represents the main export markets for Basque goods and services, but it is also the sphere that defines a large part of the legislation that is applicable in the Basque Country. Furthermore, decisions are taken and strategic approaches are discussed in the EU, at the same time that future trends and work frameworks are shaped that fully affect the policies deployed by the Basque administration and its own competences. Therefore, it is necessary to gain space in Europe, actively participate and to have a say in its construction.

In this field, government action is determined, in the first place, by the commitment to consolidate the active presence of Basque institutions and stakeholders and in the main community decision-taking and generation forums, along with fostering the participation of the Basque institutions in other spaces of priority interest for the Basque Country. Thus, looking ahead to the coming years, it is key to seek for agreements with the Spanish Central Government that enable the effective participation to be increased and improved in the Community institutions and in the formations of the European Union where matters within our competence are discussed. The objective pursued is that, with their participation in those forums, the Departments of the Government not only know promptly know and align their policies with the legislation and frameworks adopted, but also that they are part of the process to configure those European policies.

Furthermore, fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders in the programmes and projects that are driven from the European Union is another priority insofar as it allows the integration of the Basque Country in the common European area to be optimised and enables the return of community resources to the Country.

Given these objectives, it will be necessary to make good use of the available channels (partnerships, strategic alliances, forums, networks, informal channels, etc.) in order to strengthen our presence in the programmes and projects with a strategic interest.

Finally, interregional and cross-border cooperation is a preferential policy framework as it facilitates the generation of a social and economically cohesive area and the integration of communion capacities with regions similar to the Basque Country, in order to consolidate our capacity to advocate in the European area.

VECTOR 4. Knowledge acquisition

We live in a changing environment that requires us to be involved in a permanent exercise of anticipation and adaptations, of innovation and of reviewing the old way of operating. Furthermore, technical advances make possible rapid and affordable access to the experience and knowledge generated in other territories.

Taking into account that the Basque society faces challenges that are common to other developed societies, it is pertinent that a substantive part of the international policy of this administration is going to be aimed at observing which measures the more advanced countries and territories are implementing to respond to those challenges. Knowledge acquisition, the search for innovative references and the establishing of alliances with other complementary realities from which to learn have become a common vector to the international action of the different Departments of the Government and its Public Sector.

The positioning of the Basque Country as a key stakeholder in the global arena will require the Basque Government to assume an active role when comparing its strengths and weaknesses with cutting-edge countries. In this context, the adopting of a dynamics that facilitates the constant knowledge acquisition and continuous learning from abroad will ensure intervention by the Basque Public Administration based on innovative best practices.

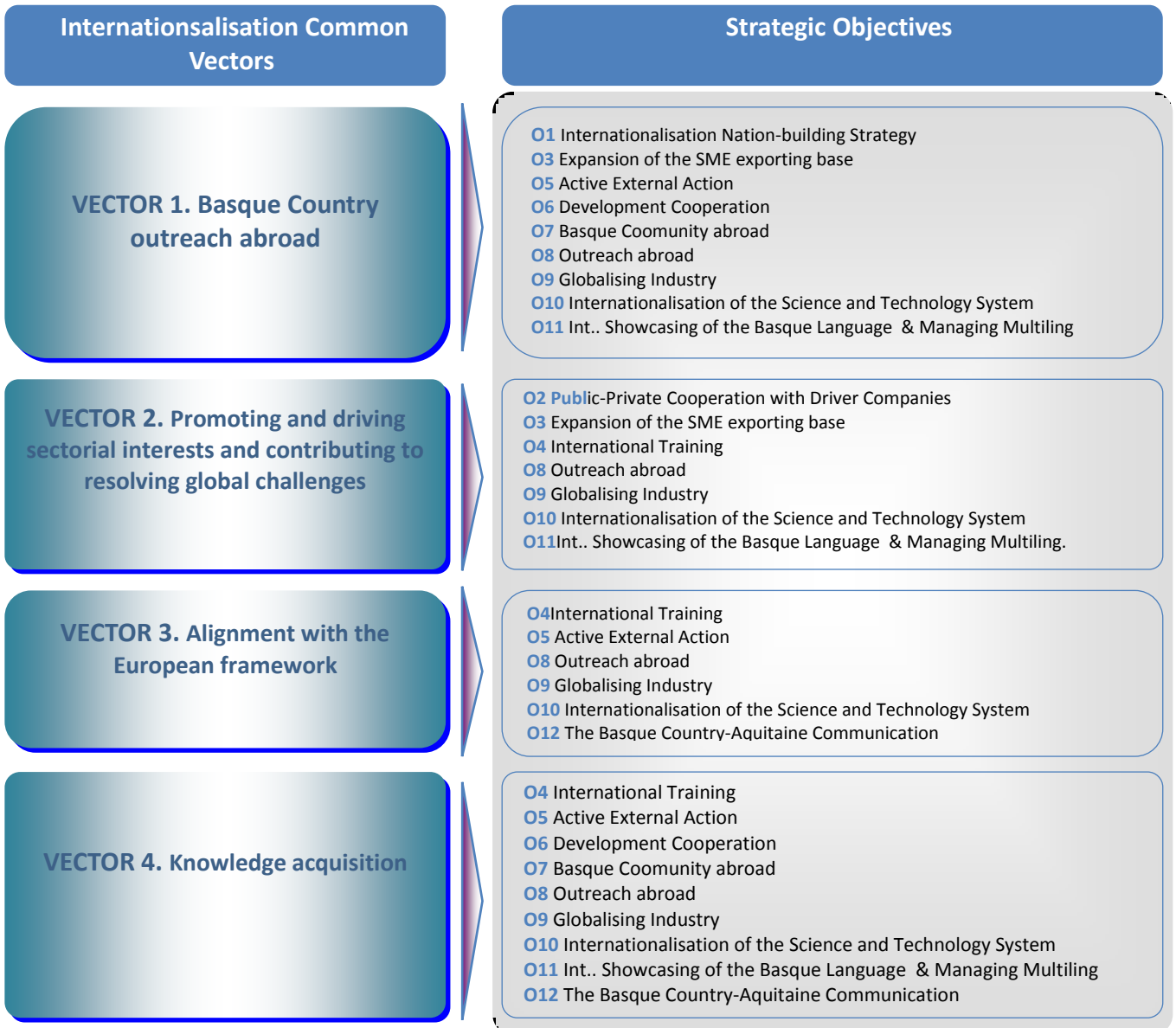
Thus, in order to deploy and/or strengthen many of the public policies and intervention models contained in the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term, learning about the experiences and knowledge to be found in benchmark countries or regions in the area is deemed to be beneficial. Consequently, in coming years, the general administration of the BAC plans to acquire international best practices and knowledge applicable in many of the thematic areas that make up its activity. In this same line is the commitment to attract talent and turn the Basque Country into an attractive place where the professional youth, with high levels and training and qualifications, can achieve professional development according to their expectations.

As part of this vector, establishing bilateral relations with countries and regions that are a model of excellence, along with entering into stable cooperation models with the appropriate contents and which lead to the implementation of joint projects to exchange knowledge and experience has taken shape as a priority instrument of Basque external action.

Nowadays, international organisations are key players in the defining of strategic approaches and innovative public policies aimed at responding to the transnational challenges that the Basque Country is also facing. Knowing in advance the times that make up its agenda and being able to participate actively in the defining of those policies and strategies in areas of interest is likewise perceived as priority for the Basque Country Strategy.

The activities that the Basque Government is going to deploy over the coming years in the framework of the four common internationalisation vectors set out above, contribute unequivocally, as shown in the image below, to achieving the strategic internationalisation objectives set out in the Government Programme.

Table 2.
Impact of the common internationalisation vectors on the strategic objectives of the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term



Source: Own preparation

Thus, in the first vector, Basque Outreach Abroad, this Strategy involves, among other activities, the international construction and deployment of the Basque Country by private initiative, public institutions and Basque society overall. The overall aim is to impact the capacity to attract investments, highly-qualified professionals or tourists, as well as on our margin to exercise economic and political influences worldwide or export goods and services. Thus, it contributes to the strategic outreach abroad objectives of the country, globalisation of the industry or expanding the SME exporting base, among others.

In terms of promoting sectorial interests and contributing to global challenges, the Basque Country Strategy invites the public institutions of the BAC to act abroad as representatives of Basque sectoral stakeholders, opening up doors to knowledge and experience hosted in the Basque Country in sectoral forums held in those markets and strategic thematic areas

for our business and socio-economic fabric. This type of activities, as part of the second internationalisation commune vector, impacts on increasing the SME exporting base or the globalisation of the industry. This second vector, insofar as it is also the driver of a more active role in best management of global issues, directly affects the development cooperation goals.

In the third of the vector, relating to the alignment with the European framework, this Strategy aims to foster the participation of Basque stakeholders in the initiatives that are promoted from the European Union, such as the Horizon 2020 programme or the RIS3 smart specialisation strategies. This activity will contribute to the objective to internationalise the Basque CTI (Science, Technology and Innovation) system envisaged by the Government Programme.

As regards the last vector, knowledge acquisition, the Basque Country Strategy envisages, among other initiatives, those aimed at incorporating talent and converting the Basque Country into an attractive place for young people with high skill and training levels. Furthermore, the focus will be on driving stable cooperation agreements that lead to the development of joint projects to exchange knowledge and experience. Thus, the fourth vector will impact on several strategic objectives of the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term, such as driving international training or deploying active external action.

3.6. Thematic spheres of action

The fundamental objective of this Strategic Framework is to respond to a nation-building challenge, which is none other than to move ahead in the internationalisation of the Basque Country overall. In practice, this aspiration implies that practically all the spheres of Government action are involved, to a greater or lesser extent, involved in the Strategy and foresee developing in the coming years actions in the international arena that respond to several of the four vectors in question.

It is obvious that there are spheres of action that, both due to their proven track record and their very nature, are going to play a more active role abroad than others. Thus, a good part of the initiatives to be deployed abroad are going to come from institutional external action, of the international promotion need of the business fabric and of the tourist sector, along with the outreach abroad of the Basque Language, the Basque culture, etc. Even so, it is not less certain, as is set out below, that the internationalisation is going to be a cross-cutting aspect of nearly all the spheres of governmental actions in the coming years.

EXTERNAL ACTION

The Secretariat General of External Action is the entity is in charge of supporting the Lehendakari in the planning, driving and coordination of one of the priority objectives of the action of this Government: the internationalisation of the Basque Country overall.

In this context, the Secretariat General of External Action will work to achieve greater Inter-ministerial and interinstitutional cooperation and coordination and drive the pooling of international projects with all Basque multi-sectoral stakeholders, so that the Basque Country gains in presence and international visibility.

At the same time, the Secretariat General of External Action, on the one hand, will help to generate an environment conducive for the international positioning and the defending of the multi-sectoral interests of the Basque Country abroad, along with exchanging knowledge and experiences. This is done by developing different lines of action including establishing relations with strategic countries or regions and with international organisations, or the fostering the participation of different Basque stakeholders, both in thematic networks and in high impact international initiatives and projects (vectors 1, 2, 3 and 4). Furthermore, it will also work with the Departments and Public Sector of the Basque Country and will provide integral support services in the implementation the activities that they deploy in the international context in those geographical and thematic spheres that have been defined as priority (Vector 1).

On the other hand, the Secretariat will carry out actions that come under the four vectors defined in the Basque Country Strategy as part of the areas coming under its own competences: the relationship with the Basque community abroad, relations with international and European institutions and development cooperation.

Thus, in order to ensure compliance of all the functions that have been allocated and their effective contribution to the Basque Country Strategy, the Secretariat General for External Action, by means of this document, defines its own Plan of Action to address the following objectives_ showcase the Basque Country abroad (Vector 1), foster multisectoral interests (Vector 2), drive the co-participation of the Basque Country in the European construction process (Vector 3), consolidate the links with the Basque community abroad (Vectors 1 and 2), contribute to the construction of a fairer world (Vector 2) and increase the efficiency and quality of the external action of the Basque Country (vectors 1, 2, 3 and 4).

BUSINESS INTERNATIONALISATION

Business internationalisation is closely linked to the external outreach of the Basque Country. Thus, the Government Programme of the X Parliamentary Term determines strategic objectives aimed at fostering the internationalisation of the Basque industry, as shown in Table 1 herein.

In this context, in the industrial arena, the implementation of multiple initiatives aimed at supporting the companies in their internationalisation process, thus contributing to the Basque Country outreach abroad and promoting sectoral interests vectors, with special attentions focus in this last vector (Vector 1 and 2).

These initiatives are part in the Business Internationalisation Plan 2014-2016, lead by the Basque Government Ministry for Economic Development and Competitiveness, whose deployment should contribute to achieving the following objectives: consolidation and driving the system to support the

activities abroad; ii) differentiated support for Basque Country to access international markets; iii) support for sectors and clusters to reinforce the international positioning of the Basque goods and services; iv) driving and encouraging human capital to embark on international markets; v) attracting strategic investments and vi) multilateral and international cooperation and funding. This Plan results in practice in an integral package of internationalisation support programmes aimed at Basque companies (vectors 1 and 2).

In line with the aforementioned objectives, the Ministry for Economic Development and Competitiveness, in conjunction with SPRI and its external network, plans to continue participation in European and International networks and establish cooperation agreements with other strategic countries and regions for the Basque industrial sectors, along with international organisations. This type of interventions will consolidate the image of the Basque Country abroad, defending our business interests and attracting innovative knowledge (vectors 1, 2, 3 and 4).

In addition, the industrial policy or the clusters policy are, among others, a benchmark that can be exported to other countries and regions. In the same way, the knowledge and know-how of the industry that operates in the strategic sectors of the Basque Country, such as the automotive, aeronautical or machine tool industries, are a value-building assets when showcasing the image of the Basque Country abroad (Vector 1).

CULTURE

Basque culture, language and sports are key aspects in the shaping of a nation-building brand which positions us internationally. Culture is one of the most appropriate spheres to transmit to the world the existence of a community with its own features, and capable of a vision to the European construction that combines globalisation with diversity. Thus, apart from the sector's own needs in terms of internationalisation, culture can and must be an essential aspect when supporting the actions of other spheres of Government. In this sense, the role of the Etxepare Institute must be consolidated as a tool to support the international development of our brand.

The main objective of this aspect is to promote the Basque culture to show the values and dynamics of Basque society (vector 1), internationalise the business fabric linked to cultural and creative industries (vector 2), excel in the own development of "Europe Creative", the European strategic plan (vector 3), and combine knowledge transfer and meeting hubs between international and Basque cultural stakeholders (vector 4).

The institutions and the events that, taking place in the BAC, have an international outreach (San Sebastián International Film Festival, Vitoria-Gasteiz Jazz Festival, European Capital of Culture, etc.) and the potential of assets such as the "Balenciaga-Chillida-Guggenheim triangle" are key aspects on which to underpin the Basque Country brand (vector 1). The international networks and the international activity of the different sports and cultural stakeholders of our Country can play a decisive role in the ongoing decisive showcasing of the brand. In this sense, an appropriate linkage of the culinary creators with other spheres of culture can play a decisive role.

Simultaneously, it is considered relevant to intensify the presence of cultural stakeholders and industries on the markets, at the festivals and trade fairs that offer better opportunities to promote Basque cultural creations and achieve high levels of visibility (vector 2), as well as to establish links with stakeholders with capacity to influence and act as Basque cultural opinion leaders abroad. Likewise, the aim is to delve further into signing agreements and taking part in networks in all cultural creation disciplines (music, film, dramatic arts, plastic arts or literature). Another core area of action to be emphasised is the defence of the interests linked to sport in its international activity (vectors 1 and 2).

On the other hand, it is important to make decisive progress, and in the setting up of the programmes of the “Europe Creative” Strategic Plan (2014-2020). The European Union is, undeniably, a focus of opportunities for the Basque cultural sector and a key area to be prioritised. The aim is likewise to drive joint work in this area in the Basque Country-Aquitaine Euroregion (EAE) (vector 3).

From the perspective of attracting knowledge, it is considered important to obtain information relating to different cultural promotion models used in other spheres, and take part in forums to discuss and shape European cultural policies (Avignon Forum in Bilbao, etc.). It is likewise important to strengthen the support lines to the different creator-in-residence methods given their capacity to connect Basque stakeholders with stakeholders and opinion leaders from other companies, substantially cooperating to reinforce a more open international mindset.

TOURISM

One of the pillars underpinning the development of the Basque tourist sector is the Basque Country Strategy and the consolidation of the Basque Country brand internationally, mainly in countries that best fit the profile of the Basque Country, and which also have good connectivity and a relevant critical mass (vector 1). A strategy based on the positioning as a welcoming and open country, with a huge differential value related to the Basque uniqueness based on the “Basque Style” (a specific culinary heritage, a culture and an identity) and the destination diversity (multiproduct with cutting-edge cities and nature just minutes away).

The Basque Tourist Strategy 2020 establishes internationalisation, new technologies in management and promoting the designation and a commitment to innovation as competitive factors of Basque tourist companies. The Horizon 2020 framework programme of the European Commission, aimed at technological innovation with a service and social focus provides opportunities for the sector. The Ministry for Economic Development and Competitiveness, through Basque-tour, is setting up the instruments to fulfil this proposal (vectors 1, 2 and 3).

The Basque Country aspires to become a benchmark in wine and food tourism. Furthermore, it is committed to boost conference and meeting tourism, city breaks or outdoor and nature-based tourism. The aim is to diversify the offering and attract tourist looking for sophisticated, cultural tourism

and aimed at the art of living, while at the time helping to position the image of the Basque Country abroad with stakeholders of different profiles (vector 1).

In this process to consolidate tourism, Basquetour seeks to acquire knowledge and establish relations with other leading countries, in order to improve the tourism attraction, management and organisation model. This is all implemented through European Networks, organisations such as the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and other destinations with consolidation strategies as “smart destination” (vector 4).

PEACE AND COEXISTENCE

The announcement of the end of violence by ETA in October 2011 places this parliament term at a historical turning point. After decades of terrorism, violence, breaches of human rights and vision, Basque society can now address the goals of peace and coexistence once and for all.

In order to contribute to this process, the Basque Government has set up a Secretariat General for Peace and Coexistence. On 26 November 2013, the Basque Government approved the Peace and Coexistence Plan 2013-16. It is a strategic plan with 18 inter-departmental lines of action that has two main objectives: consolidating the peace in an irreversible and definitive way, and contributing to the mainstreaming of coexistence in conjunction with the institutional, political and social shareholders.

With this Plan, the internationalisation aspect has a dual aspect: learning and teaching. In terms of learning, we need to attract knowledge (vector 4) from other international experiences in peace processes, along with the support to drive those objectives (vector 2). As regards transfer, the Basque Country wants to reach out and offer its experience and knowledge (vector 1), by linking our image to the commitment to peace. By combining both aspects, the Peace and Coexistence Plan specifically defines guidelines for strategic alignment with the European framework (vector 2).

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Basque development cooperation is a fundamental component of the Basque Country Strategy. The Basque Agency for Development Cooperation, as the entity tasked with planning and managing actions in the sphere of international solidarity, has a Strategic Plan and a Development Cooperation Director that defines geographical, sectoral and cross-cutting priorities on which all the field interventions are based, along with a line of work in Education for Development in the Basque Country, aimed at fostering critical awareness. The development cooperation of the Basque Country includes gender mainstreaming in its interventions and a financial reserve for empowering women (vector 2).

Thus, as regards Vector 1, the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation is a key element in the Basque international outreach, include in the area of

responsibility of external action, by means of conveying the institutional, collective and individual solidarity of Basque society towards the eradication of structural poverty and the elimination of inequality in the world.

From the specific nature of decentralised cooperation and from the very identity of Basque cooperation, it will be tailored to and brought in line with the current world context, with special emphasis on monitoring the global trends that are being generated. The Basque Agency for Development Cooperation in the process of its own internationalisation, together with cooperation with other international entities, has set consolidating relations with the European Union as a strategic target, in keeping with Vector 3 that sets alignment with the European framework.

Finally, and as regards vector 4, Basque cooperation aspires to be intensive in knowledge and relations, by connecting societies, by means of a two-way consolidating of skills and technical cooperation (from the conviction that we do not only have experiences to share, but also experiences to learn from). Furthermore, it has to be learning-oriented, fostering research, innovation, evaluation and communication.

GENDER EQUALITY

As regards gender equality, under the leadership of Emakunde-Basque Institute for Women, the fundamental objective is aimed at driving a strategic change in the work carried out so far in the sphere of international cooperation, so that the foundations are laid for a systematised, coherent and global intervention.

Therefore, priority will be given to establishing stable cooperation frameworks and/or dynamics with key international organisations in the field of sex quality, such as UN Women or the European Institute for Gender Equality, along with other organisations such as the Ibero-American Secretariat General. They are organisations that, due to their relevance or characteristics, can help to meet a dual objective: on the one hand, to showcase abroad the trail-blazing work carried out in the Basque Country in this field and which is being disseminated by a “Basque Country in equality brand” associated to quality and to sustainable human development (vector 1), and on the other hand, to attract knowledge and best practices that allow the work developed so far to be consolidated (vectors 2 and 4).

In this sense, the plan is to establish a bilateral cooperation framework with UN Women that enables permanent and stable cooperation channels to be set up to exchange knowledge, experiences and best practices and, as applicable, to embark on common actions (vectors 1, 2 and 4).

Furthermore, it is considered necessary to develop acquired commitments in the cooperation framework entered into by the Ibero-American Secretariat General and the Basque Government, with relation to the exchange of information, experiences, methodology and best practices in the field of equality between men and women (vectors 1, 2 and 4).

In the context of the European Union, the participation in the Euro Gender Network and in the other exchange and cooperation spaces under the aegis of the European Institute for Gender Quality is seen

as another Emakunde priority field of action. Furthermore, consolidating the gender equality strategy is envisaged in the monitoring committees of the operational programmes of the European funds in which Emakunde participates: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF), on the one hand, and to take up the cooperation line with the Committee of the Regions, on the other hand (vector 3).

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND JUSTICE

The international action in this field is going to be based on three vectors: showcasing referential elements abroad (vector 1), the contribution to European construction (vector 3) and acquiring knowledge and best practices (vector 4).

As regards the Public Administration, the established knowledge and experience in areas such as transparency (Open Government); effective public management and Open Data have enabled the Basque Country to be considered as a benchmark in the European Union, ahead of the State of Spain and of the other countries in southern Europe. As far as the judicial area is concerned, there is potential to turn the Basque Country into a benchmark in legislative quality, participative democracy and multilevel governance, particularly in the framework of the European Union (vector 1).

Using this as a baseline, and in order to convert the Basque Country into a benchmark in the aforementioned areas, the Minister for Public Administration and Justice plans to expand the monitoring and cooperation framework to the convention with the Organisation of American States (OAS) (vectors 1 and 3), for whom the Basque Country may represent an pilot example of European governance.

In the same way, this area will continue to contribute to the European Union construction process particularly by participating in the Committee of the Regions, contributing, in so far as it is possible, to the regional participation channels set up by the European Commission or European Council, and based on the application of the principle of subsidiarity. Social innovation will be driven in order to generate synergies among the Basque social innovation stakeholders and other international and European entities (vector 3).

Specifically as regards knowledge acquisition, there is interest in establishing relations with other regions and analysing in other geographical areas in areas such as transparency, participative democracy, meritocracy, evidence-based decision processes and the integration of scientific knowledge in them, electronic government or decentralised management models (vector 4).

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

In the field of Science, Technology and Innovation policies, the international priority is to be aligned with the maximum European standards. From an institutional point of view, the aim is to consolidate the existing relations with the Directorates General for Regional Policy, for Enterprise and for Innovation of the European Commission. The objective is the optimum use of the opportunities that the European

Union offers in the field of Science, Technology and Innovation, particularly as regards the management of community funds to fund R&D&I projects in the framework of the new Horizon 2020 programme (vector 3).

One aspect that is going to set the agenda in the coming years is the need to establish and implement the Basque smart specialisation strategy – RIS3, an ex ante condition required by the European Commission to earmark structural funds within the new Operational Programme 2014-2020. From the thematic perspective, the international action will be focused on sectors such as the automotive industry, engineering, health or hybrid technologies (vector 3).

ENERGY

The international activity in this field is seen as a vehicle to support the Basque energy strategy, which is structured in three areas of action: consumer sectors, energy supply and industrial technology development. More specifically, the Minister for Economic Development and Competitiveness plans to provide institutional support to the industrial fabric of the sector in the deployment of international projects, so that it impacts on the consolidation of Basque driver companies abroad and in the development of business activity in new emerging energy areas (vector 2).

In relation to the foreign outreach of the Basque Country, special mention should be made of the Basque Government's strategic commitment to marine power, a field where there are key investments in the deployment of demonstrator infrastructures, and which is converting the Basque Country into an international knowledge hub in this segment (vector 1).

The organisation of international conferences and congresses in the Basque Country will be complemented with ensuring a close cooperation with other European regions to share experiences and develop joint projects (vectors 1 and 4).

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

The main international activity implemented in this field will be limited to organising fact-finding missions and trips, the search for opportunities and of new funding sources to drive the interests of the Basque industry in those sectors (vector 2).

Furthermore, it is envisaged to continue organising inverse missions in order to showcase exportable and successful experiences in the sphere of the application of the new and innovative technologies to own management models, as are the development of inshore vessel management records technological systems on new developments in buoys capable of detecting tsunamis (vector 1).

In addition, identifying new partners signing strategic alliances and cooperation agreements with international institutions, and participating in excellence networks, technology

platforms, forums and committees of experts are envisaged in order to consolidate the international positioning of the business fabric linked to this sphere, thus, also, contributing to strengthening the Basque Country brand (vector 1).

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICIES

As regards Employment, internationalisation is seen as a means to acquired knowledge about labour relations and employment services models implemented in other European countries that can be used as a benchmark (vector 4). This task will go hand in hand with the participation in the European Social Fund (ESF) through the Operational Programme, along with the participation in European initiatives and programmes linked to employment (vector 3).

In the field of Social Policies, the international activity will focus on the European area, where advanced social service models have been set up from which best practices can be extracted (vector 3). The Ministry for Employment and Social Policies considers that the Basque experience as regards promoting the social economy, the cooperative movement and social innovation, is an asset with great potential to be transferred abroad, so that it helps to consolidate the internationally positioning of the Basque Country in this area (vector 1).

The presence in European networks and programmes related to this sphere of action are activities that are already being carried out and which will continue in the future (vector 3).

HOUSING

The Housing Policy and the social housing concept in the BAC are considered to be models of interest for other countries and regions and, therefore, the interest of the Department for Employment and Social Policies is to showcase the experiences associated to these areas abroad, thus contributing to the positioning of the Basque Country (vector 1). Approximating European policies and establishing relations with European countries and regions is considered necessary in order to learn from benchmark models to fund housing and energy efficiency in construction (vector 4).

EDUCATION

In the field of Education, the activities will be focused on the internationalisation of training and, therefore, it will act in four different areas: Infant and Primary Education, Secondary Education (compulsory and post compulsory), Vocational Training and University Education.

The policy around Primary Education will be based on developing the HEZIBERRI 2020 Plan, which addresses the idea to combine the innovation and development strategic lines established

in the “Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training 2020”. The Plan addresses the very educational challenges of our context and setting, starting from setting up the framework of a pedagogical education model, so that future generations are well prepared to live in the Basque Country and in the world. Likewise, work will continue to provide a European dimension to the educational activity implemented in the sphere of Secondary Education, by means of promoting and driving cooperation and mobility projects in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020) (vector 3).

The Basque Vocational Training Strategic Agenda 2015 includes, as one of its lines of action, supporting and expanding the field of internationalisation in Vocational Training. Specifically, it includes as strategic objectives: analysing, planning and establishing the necessary processes for vocational training to support Basque companies with plants located in other countries and ii) encouraging the international experience of the student population abroad by means of work placements in companies that, having their main plant in the BAC, are set up in other countries. In order to achieve those strategic objectives, the focus over coming years is going to be on the participation in programmes, particularly European ones (vector 3) and consolidating the presence in international networks with the dual purpose of the outreach of Basque vocational training abroad as a benchmark model and to transfer and exchange knowledge (vectors 1 and 4).

From the learning approach, international best practices are planned to be incorporated in the training procedures for manufacturing and the qualification systems and models (vector 4).

At university level, it has been seen that there is a clear correlation between the post that the Universities have in the rankings that are periodically prepared and their internationalisation level, with the best positioned being the most internationalised one. Therefore, the priority action target is focused on promoting the internationalisation of Basque universities. Therefore, the Ministry for Education, Linguistic Policy and Culture will continue to being the driving force behind the Cross-border Euro-regional Campus of the UPV/EHU and Bordeaux University (ehubaq) in order to establish a benchmark international campus in the educational rankings and the innovation and investigation networks. The development of the Cross-border Euro-regional Campus is a get point for the Euskampus Campus of International Excellence (vector 3). Furthermore, it is envisaged to take part in programmes and being the driving force behind the establishing of international cooperation agreements that facilitate the offering of shared qualifications, student mobility and the international visibility of Basque productions and publications (vectors 2 and 3).

On the other hand, from the knowledge acquisition perspective, there is interest in learning about different work schemes and educational models with the university Diaspora. Furthermore, the internationalisation of our science system includes, as a strategic core area, the programme to attract research talent through IKERBASQUE, in order to position the Basque Country among the leading powers in R&D&i. In order to contribute this endeavour, the incorporation of first-rate researchers in the universities of the Basque system and in the Centres for Research Excellence will be fostered (vector 4).

LINGUISTIC POLICY

The main goal in this area is the internationalisation of the Basque language. The focus is therefore going to be on language assistantship and chairs abroad aimed at teaching the Basque language, as a mechanism to create or enter into leading research networks and extend its use. Furthermore, the holding of the International Day of the Basque Language is a crucial aspect when showcasing Basque in the world and of compacting the Basque linguistic community and of Basque origin abroad (vectors 1 and 2).

Moreover, by means of HABE and in coordination with the Secretariat General of External Action, the Basque learning network in the Basque centre (Euskal Etxeak) is going to continue to be consolidated as one of the backbones of the Basque communities abroad (vector 2).

The Linguistic Policy developed and the mainstreaming policy applied to the Basque Language has triggered a significant increase in the number of Basque speakers, which has turned this policy into a benchmark that can be transferred to other situations (vector 1).

In turn, the setting up of agreements aimed at promoting the teaching of the Basque Language and the linguistic policy of the Basque Country, as well as the involvement in networks aimed at promoting minority language in international organisations and forum (Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity) with decision-taking power in the area, will be the priority focuses for action (vector 2).

There will likewise be an emphasis on promoting and fostering cooperation agreements with governments, in whose territories there are minority and minoritized, along with regional languages, in order to exchange knowledge and experiences regarding linguistic policy aimed at fostering the use of that languages (vector 2).

As regards the promoting of the Basque Language in Iparralde (the part of the Basque Country in France), the institutional line of cooperation remains open and fruitful with EEP (Office Publique de la Langue Basque), which is set out in the successive annual annexes to the multi-annual framework agreement currently in force (vector 3).

SECURITY

As regards security, we have opted to establishing direct bilateral relations with other law enforcement agencies and institutions as the way to exchange information, professional and training experiences, and to participate both in European formal decision-taking forums or professional forums (vectors 2 and 4). These relations include maintaining and opening up new ways of contact with other safety agencies, by using and driving the work that has been developed in the field of international judicial and police cooperation with benchmark entities (EUROPOL, SIRENE, INTERPOL, EUROJUST, etc.), whose premises are the recommendations and decisions of the EU regarding Justice and Interior affairs. Relations will likewise be consolidated with the representatives of the law enforcement agencies in the different outstanding diplomatic representations in the State of Spain, all of which is to develop the

functions and competences entrusted to the Ertzaintza (the Basque Police Force), without forgetting other types of international cultural and sports events.

The police force of the Basque Country, the Ertzaintza, has its own characteristics (ex novo establishment and history, size and organisation, efficient management based on quality management systems, exemplary treatment of domestic violence and other operational aspects) that make it a benchmark model for the law enforcement corps in other countries (vector 1).

HEALTH

In the health field, the priority lines of actions in terms of internationalisation will be, on the one hand, the establishing of stage relations and agreements with other countries or regions with similar problems in order to exchange knowledge and professionals of the sector.

The Basque health system is deploying strategies related to active ageing and chronic disease, the integration of care (reflected in Integrated Health Organisations and in the development of the socio-health field), risk stratification, patient empowerment, and the combination of the in person -remote models, with the ICTs as a facilitator tool in multiple measures (e-prescription, telemedicine in general, etc.). Priority will be given to exchanging knowledge and experience (vectors 1, 2 and 4) in these thematic areas, as well as in areas such as customized medicine or managing innovation.

The outreach relations established, part from helping to position us internationally (for example, the Basque Country is a "Reference Site", with the highest score, within the European EIP-AHA initiative), they will also be aimed at driving the capacities installed in the Basque Country in the field of research and innovation of the health system including assets such as the bio-bank or the Health Research Institutes.

On the other hand, the participation in European R&D projects, consortiums and networks that enable greater Basque participation in programmes such as Horizon 2020 or the Innovative Medicine Initiative (IMI), along with consolidating those related with DG SANCO and DG CONNEC, are some of the priorities of the Ministry for Health (vector 3 and 4).

ENVIRONMENT AND TERRITORIAL POLICY

The internationalisation of the environmental aspect is addressed from different perspectives. Institutionally, the green economy concept is being developed, and actions are being implemented aimed at increasing the presence in networks and sectors projects where the BAC already participates. Thus, apart from contributing to the international positioning of the Basque Country, the aim is to optimise the opportunities that emerge both from the European institutions and from the international organisations (vectors 1 and 2).

From the business point of view, a methodology is going to be defined to support the internationalisation of the Basque industry linked to the environmental sector and back the opportunities generated. The Department for the Environment and Territorial Policy considers that the accumulated experience in the field of sustainable territory management, without being detrimental to the specific knowledge in the waste and water vectors, is an asset that can be exported to other states and regions with capacity to drive the Basque productive fabric (vector 2).

From the point of view of funding, international sources will be identified that contribute to the development of strategic environmental projects for the Basque Country (vector 2).

In the field of territorial policy, driving inter-regional and cross-border cooperation will be the main focus of the international action of the Basque Government, leading to the possible development of joint actions with the cross-border regions in the framework of the Working Community of the Pyrenees. In that same line, the knowledge existing in the Basque Country regarding the development of spatial data infrastructures, catalogues and assessments of the landscape, is of special interest to manage the territorial policies in cross-border areas (vector 3).

In the same way, measures are being set up to learn from other regions regarding environmental strategies, along with managing and consideration of the landscape (vector 4).

TRANSPORT

As regards Transport, the international agenda is going to pursue supporting the Basque companies from the sector in the international project in which they participate (vector 2). The existence in the Basque Country of a key critical mass of knowledge and companies with capacity to cover the whole value chain of a railway project, from the planning to the operating, is going to be a value to take into account when positioning the Basque Country abroad and promoting the interests of the sector internationally (vectors 1 and 2).

In addition, there continues to be interest in participating in sectoral projects and networks, both European and internationally, where the cross-border cooperation particularly in the framework of the Basque Country-Aquitaine Euroregion, will be a key field of action (vector 3).

As a summary, the following tables sets out the thematic areas which are going to underpin the international activity of the fields of actions encompassed by the Basque Country Strategy.

Table 3.

List of thematic areas for internationalisation

	Thematic Area for Learning	Thematic Area for Teaching
External Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interinstitutional Cooperation • Efficiency and coherence in the coordination of the nation-building external action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border and inter-regional cooperation • Relations with Basque communities abroad
Business Internationalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Clusters Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clusters Policy • Industrial Policy • Driver/strategic sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Machine Tools – Aeronautics – Automotive Industry
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Promotion Model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basque Cultural Creations • Guggenheim, Chillida, Balenciaga triangle • Sports
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism management and organisational model • Technology Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Tourism • Wine and Food tourism • City break tourism • Outdoor and nature-based tourism
Peace & Coexistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human rights commitment credentials • Coexistence framework models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-departmental strategy model to develop a peace culture • Human rights commitment credentials
Development Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models for managing actions and interventions in international solidarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own model of decentralised cooperation agency
Gender Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and prevention models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of special supporting structures to empower women and change values institutionally
Justice and Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency: Open Government • Participative democracy • Meritocracy • E-Government • Assessment of public policies and transparency • Decentralised management government models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency: Open Government • Effective public management • Regulatory quality • Multilevel governance and participatory democracy • Assessment of public policies and transparency
Science, Technology and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New strategies of Science, Technology and Innovation • Smart specialisation strategy • Sectoral information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Automotive Industry – Engineering – Health – Hybrid technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science, Technology and Innovation Network and Policy

	Thematic Area for Learning	Thematic Area for Teaching
Energy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basque Energy Agency Model: management, investment capacity • Marine power
Agriculture & Fisheries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own development technologies systems Inshore vessel monitoring logs Buoys able to detect tsunamis
Employment & Social Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment services models • Labour relations model • Social services model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social economy – Cooperative movement
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Energy efficiency in construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing policy
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educative model • University internationalisation • University Diaspora • Training procedures for manufacturing • Qualification systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational Training Model • Chairs • Research
Linguistic Policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic Policy
Security		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ertzaintza: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Organisation – Management model - Dealing with gender violence
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active ageing • Customised medicine • Health system transformation • Innovation management • Exporting the health system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health system • R&D&I capacities • Care integration • Patient empowerment model • Remote health intervention model • Unique clinical records • E-prescription
Environment and Territorial Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business backing strategies • Environmental strategy • Green Economy • Treatment of the landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental policy • Waste management • Capacity and growth to develop Sustainable Territorial Strategies
Transport		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity and growth to develop the whole value chain of a rail transport project: planning, design, work implementation, management

Source: Own preparation based on the information obtain from the Ministries of the Basque Government and consulted stakeholders.

3.7. Geographical spheres of action

For the purposes of this Basque Country Strategy, strategic geographical spheres for internationalisation will be those countries and regions that combine a good part of the Basque multisectoral interests and that, therefore, will concentrate the majority of the initiatives that the Basque Government undertakes proactively abroad in the coming years. This prioritization task is in response to the desire to generate a common area, to identify a minimum common denominator that will result in the Basque international outreach develops in coordinated and coherent way. The aim is likewise to develop and adapted external action, capable of fulfilling the commitments arising from that action with the existing capacities.






Logically, under no circumstances does this exercise seek to be restrictive, in other words, it does not imply forgoing one-off opportunities arising in countries not considered in this section or new aspects in the geographical priorities considered in the internationalisation sectoral plan, that under this framework, some Ministers define. Thus, for example, it is obvious that given the nature of its activity, the development cooperation policy is in response to an own priority map of action, where impoverished countries and traditional partners, such as the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), with whom historical cooperation links have been constructed, take on special importance.

That being said, the geographical priorities established in this document have emerged from the analysis of the information obtained during participatory process conducted to define this Strategy. Thus, this section contains the relationship of those countries and/or regions that, divided into two priority rankings, represent an area of opportunity for a substantial part of the sectoral or thematic areas in which the stakeholders and Basque authorities operate.

The first ranking includes the countries and regions that have been identified as priority opportunity geographical areas, in other words, those that are of greatest interest for the Ministries of the Basque Government and its Public Sector, and the external stakeholders consulted. The second ranking is made up of the territories that have been identified as preferential for internationalisation. These countries are the focus of attention of a smaller percentage of spheres of action. Under this context, the Ministries and stakeholders involved in the participatory process to construct this Strategy identify their territorial priorities according to two differentiated motivations. On the one hand, learning and being measured, in other words, learning about experiences and best practices undertaken by other reference regions or countries for the Basque Country, both in the private arena and in the sphere of public policies. On the other hand, teaching and exchanging knowledge, in other words, transferring to the international arena the experience and specific know how accumulated by the Basque socio-economic stakeholders and by the Administration itself as regards design, execution and management of public policies that provide value added, either due to their specific nature, innovative character or by the economic and social impact that have been generated. Under the designation of teaching and exchanging, the destination markets of the exports and investment of the Basque business fabric, along with the Basque asset exposure, are also identified-

The table below sets out the priorities and preferential geographical areas, countries and regions for the international activity of the Basque Government, both for the motivation of learning and being measured and for that of teaching in exchange.

Table 4.
Geographical areas of action of the Basque Government

geographical areas of action		priority countries and regions		Preferential countries and regions	
		learning and being measured	teaching and exchanging	learning and being measured	teaching and exchanging
 EUROPE	Countries	European Union Scandinavia Germany Denmark France	European Union Scandinavia Germany France	The Netherlands Ireland	Russia Turkey
	Regions	United Kingdom Aquitaine Bavaria	United Kingdom Scotland Flanders		
 THE AMERICAS	Countries	United States	United States Latin America Mexico Brazil Colombia Peru	Canada	Argentina Chile
	Regions			Querétaro	
 ASIA	Countries	Korea India Singapore	China India	Japan	Malaysia Indonesia Vietnam
	Regions			Jiangsu	
 AFRICA	Countries		South Africa		
 MIDDLE EAST	Countries			Israel	Gulf Countries

Source: Own preparation

In the first priority ranking, Europe, and more specifically the supranational space of the European Union, is a priority framework of interest of Basque internationalisation. It does not come as a surprise that the alignment with community policies is one of the vectors underpinning this Strategy. The efforts invested and the involvement of the set of Basque institutions and stakeholders in the European construction process are proof of their priority nature. Apart from the commitment to continue participating actively and even to strengthen the role of the Basque Country in the European Union, its members states offer important opportunities to promote our tourist, cultural or industrial offerings, among others.

In this context, Scandinavian countries, particularly Denmark and Finland, are not for being host to system with high social welfare standards as a reference geographical area from which to learn and with whom to exchange knowledge in areas of strategic interest. At the same time, Germany, the United Kingdom and France, the main destination markets of Basque exports, continue to be considered priority countries both from the point of view of the marketing of Basque goods and services and the exchange of experiences.

The growing relevance that interregional relations are acquiring as an instrument for outreach abroad and defending common interests means that, in the context of this Framework Strategy 2020, the regions are geographical sites of high interest for Basque internationalisation, particularly in the European area.

Due to its geographical proximity and due to the obvious cultural, social and historical links, Aquitaine is identified as a priority partner with which to intensify the existing relationship and the cooperation framework through the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation. In turn, Scotland, Bavaria and Flanders represent counterpart territories with which to establish direct links and to exchange knowledge.

In the Americas, the United States represent a priority country both to learn and to export the Basque goods and services, transfer specific knowledge and showcase the Basque Country brand. The United States continues to be the first world power, apart from being a destination market where many Basque companies have set up, is home to a thriving a Basque community and is a yardstick in many of the fields of knowledge where the Basque Country operates., Latin America, due to the existing historical links and it is a region in the throes of economic expansion, but which is still facing socio-economic challenges where the Basque Country has certain experience, is seen as a priority geographical area to transfer and export knowledge, goods and services. Among the countries of Latin America, Mexico is the territory that raises greatest interest, followed by Brazil, Colombia and Peru, to represent the most dynamic countries and with great potential for development and growth in coming years.

As regards Asia, Korea and Singapore, the usual leaders of the world rankings in knowledge areas of strategic interests for the Basque Government, are considered to be priority countries from which to learn and be measured. The emerging powers, India (under both approaches) and

China (under the motivation of teaching and exchanging knowledge) appear among the priorities given the huge potential of their markets. In Africa, the Republic of South Africa will focus the Basque internationalisation action on the continent.

As regards the second priority ranging, in Europe, the Netherlands and Ireland are identified as countries from which to learn and extract best practices, while Russia and Turkey are shown to be as economies of interest when transfer knowledge and assets of the Basque Country, along with marketing Basque goods and services.

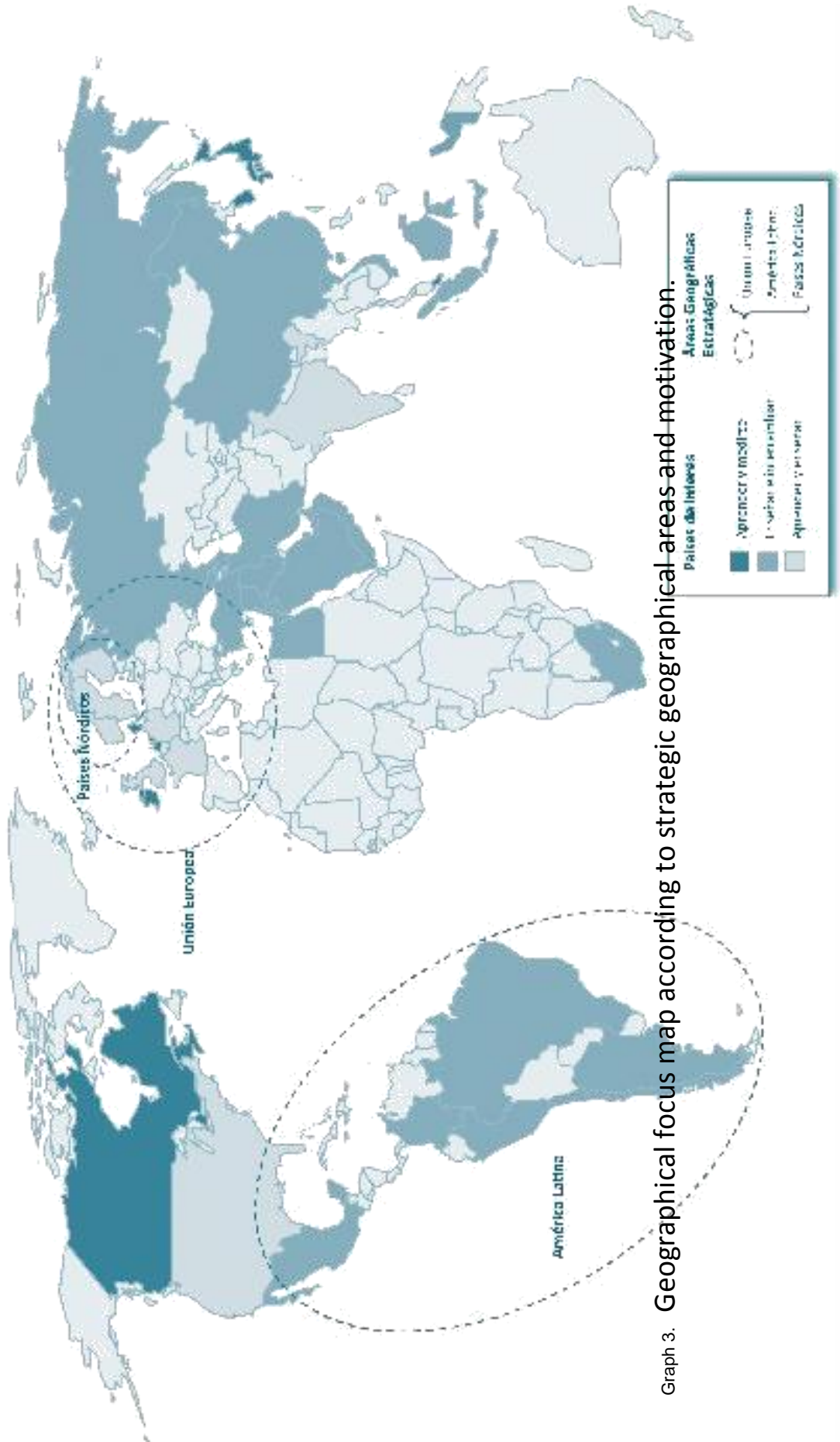
In the Americas, Argentina as a country that is home to the largest number of the Basque community abroad, and Chile, as it is one of the countries with the highest development rates of Latin America, are the target for the Government and Basque stakeholders when establishing links to foster know-how and Basque scientific-technological or industrial production. Canada is perceived as a country of interest from which to learn and to be compared to.

As regards, Asia, the countries of south-east Asia offer opportunities to market the goods and services produced in the Basque Country, with Indonesia, Malaysia or Vietnam standing out. Japan, in turn, is identified as a country with high levels of human development and, therefore, from which to extract best practices transferable to the BAC.

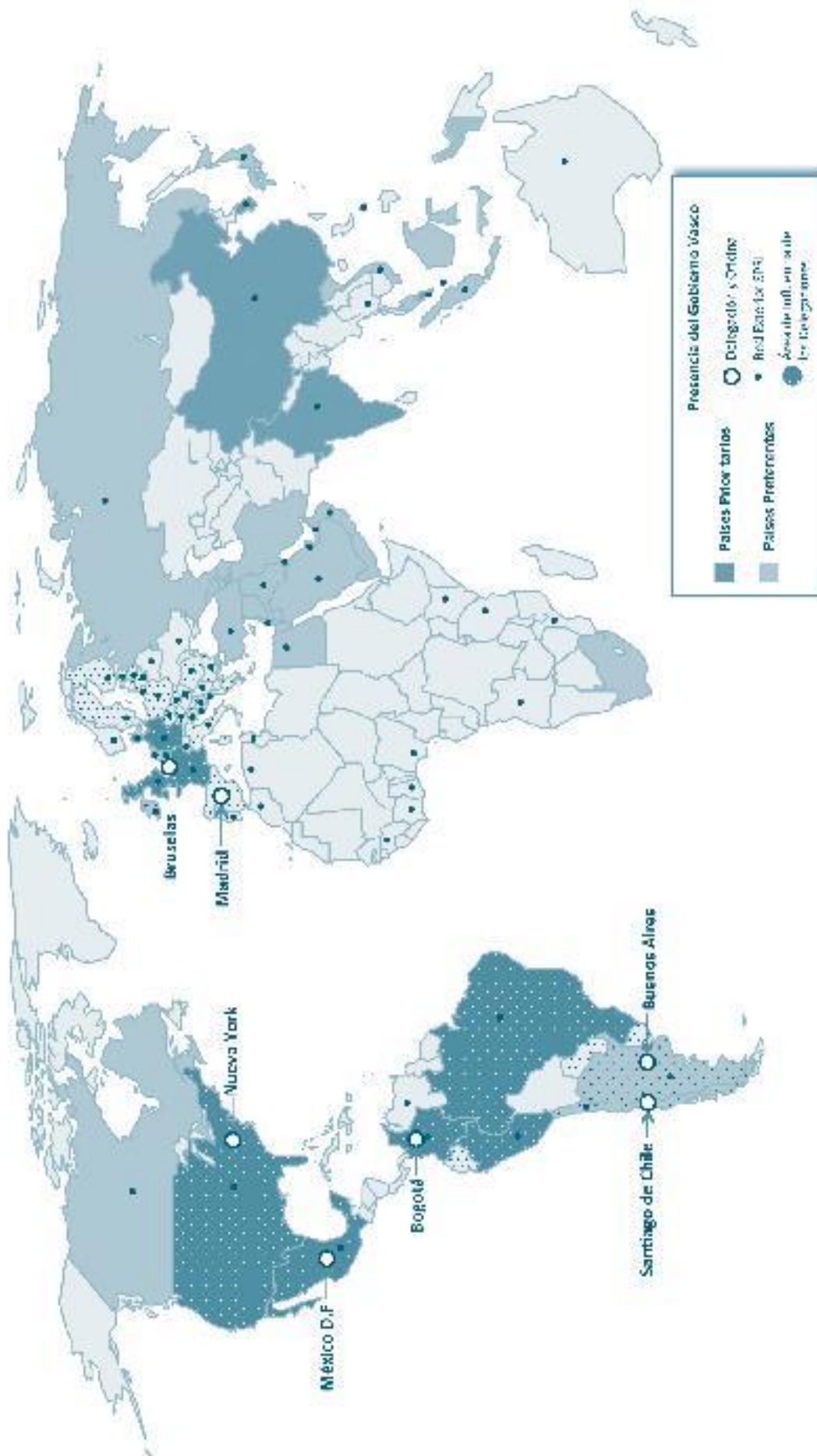
In the Middle East, Israel is a preferential partner from which to learn and the Gulf countries, based on their drive and purchasing power, a geographical area in which to showcase the capacities and know-how of the Basque Country.

The two maps below show the Basque geographical targeting for internationalisation from two differentiated perspectives:

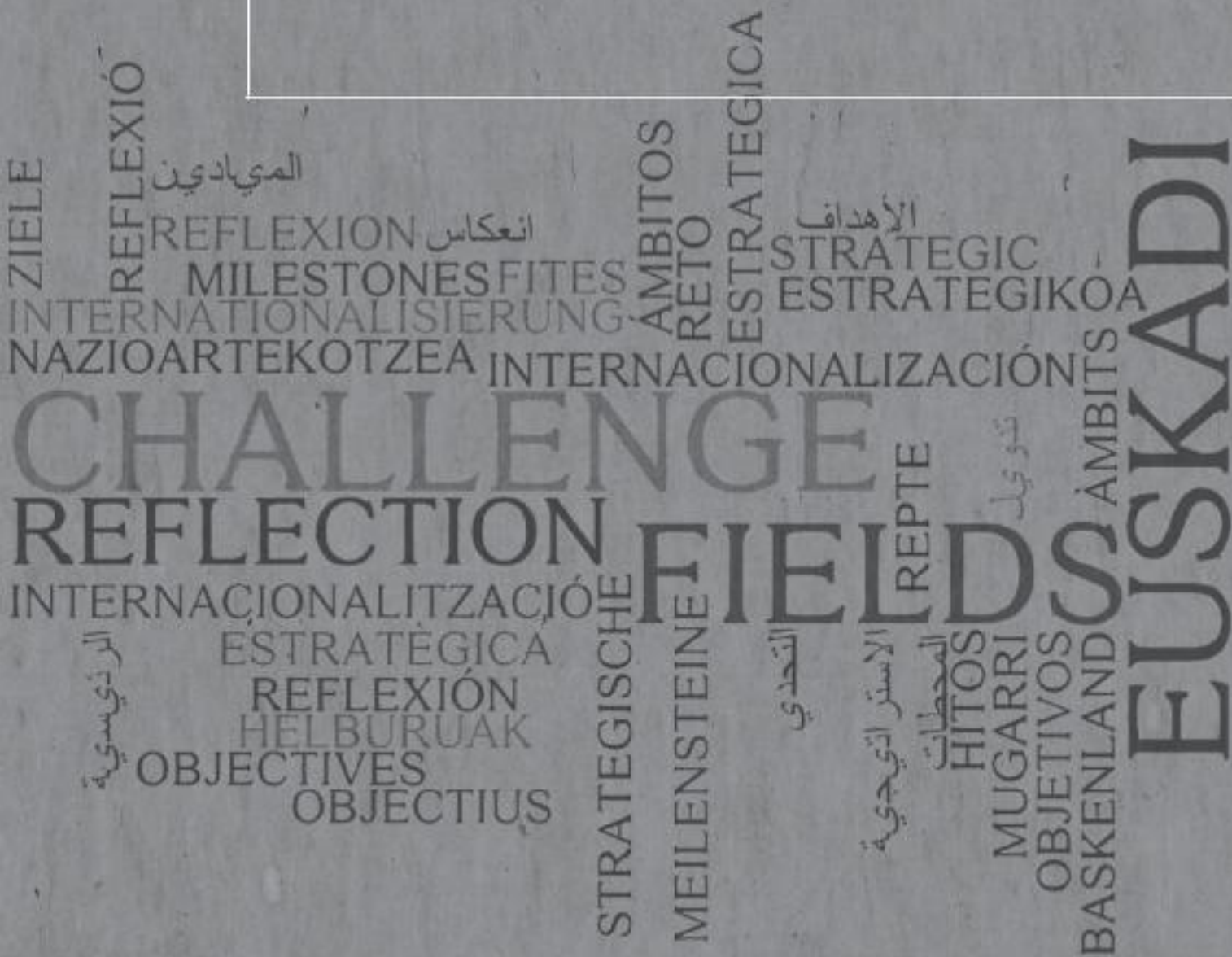
- The first map shows the geographical priorities from the approach of motivation pursued, whether it is learning and being measured, teaching and exchanging knowledge or both.
- The second map represents the geographical focus from the priority order perspective, differentiating between preferential and priority territories, as well as containing the representation of the Basque Government's network abroad.



Graph 3. Geographical focus map according to strategic geographical areas and motivation.



EXTERNAL ACTION PLAN



External Action Plan

4.1. Mission and strategic objectives

On 9 April 2013, the Basque Government announced the operational and organisational structure of the Lehendakaritza or Basque Premier's Office (decree 187/2013) and its Secretariats, which include the Secretariat General for External Action. The latter has been entrusted with helping the Lehendakari to define and direct the political-institutional strategy of the external action of the Basque Autonomous Community.

Furthermore, the Secretariat General for External Action is responsible for supporting and advising the Basque Country on shaping and implementing the internationalisation strategy, along with fostering, driving and coordinating the outreach abroad actions of the Ministries and Public Sector that make it up.

Beyond the functions of coordination and support in the field of internationalisation, the Secretariat is likewise the authority in charge of heading the deployment of four specific lines of action that make up a key part of its own competences: relations in the European framework, external relations, the relationship with the Basque community abroad and development cooperation.

Within this framework, the management of the relations in the community sphere is addressed from a double perspective. On the one hand, the Secretariat General for External Action defines the policy on engagement and implements the approaches and activities linked to the development of the relations with the European institutions, particularly the European Union and the Council of Europe, in those specific matters of interest for the Basque Country. In this field, they include: direct participation in the preparing and application of the community legislation and policies, participation in the bodies and working parties of the European institutions, the application of community law or the channelling towards the European institutions, in particular, towards the European Commission, of the official communications of the Basque Government. On the other hand, it defines the framework for action in relation to inter-regional and cross-border cooperation, by assuming the role of the representatives and/or advisor of the Government in the forums and areas for opportunity for cooperation with other regions.

In the area of Foreign Affairs, its function is that of programming, driving and coordinating the foreign affairs of the Basque Government, under the principles of efficiency and coherence, with the dual purpose of positioning the Basque Country as the global stakeholder and to defend the Basque interests in the world. It will therefore represent the Basque Country institutionally and will establish stable links with other countries, regions and international institutions.

In addition, the Secretariat General of External Action is the authority responsible for managing and complying with the policy regarding the relations in the Basque community abroad that encompasses both the Basques arriving abroad and the descents of those people that left the Basque Country in the past for different reasons. Thus, it is tasked with foster greater rapprochement and expand the links, particularly economic, cultural and social ones, with those collectives, along with

how to generate mechanisms that facilitate their interconnection. The assembling of the historical memory of Basque emigration is another of its allocations in this policy area.

As regards development cooperation, the Secretariat General of External Action operates through the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation, which, pursuant to Act 5/2008, it is the public entity entrusted with planning the development cooperation policy, along with its coordination, management and deployment. In this field, the Agency deploys a specific strategy that regulates the actions of the Basque Government regarding international solidarity.

In order to efficiently exercise the competences allocated, the Secretariat General for External Action is structured in three Directorates – European Affairs Directorate, External Relations Directorate and Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad -, apart from the Basque Agency of Development Cooperation being attached to it. Furthermore, it has 5 Delegations Abroad (Delegation of the Basque Country to the United States, Delegation of the Basque Country to Mexico, Delegation of the Basque Country to Argentina - Mercosur, Delegation of the Basque to Chile, Peru and Colombia with offices in Santiago and Bogotá, and the Delegation of the Basque Country to the European Union located in Brussels), together with a Representation Office in Madrid.

Within this framework, the Secretariat General for External Action is responsible for executing and implementing the External Action Plan set out in this section and which is deployed based on the following mission and strategic objectives.

MISSION

To programme, drive and coordinate the foreign affairs of the Basque Government, under the principles of efficiency and coherence, with the dual purpose of positioning the Basque Country as the global stakeholder and to defend the Basque interests in the world. It will therefore represent the Basque Country institutionally and will establish stable links with other countries, regions and international institutions, will foster the direct participation in European institutions, will consolidate the ties with the Basque community abroad and will channel the deployment of international solidarity initiatives.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Secretariat General for External Action will be carried out in accordance to an own action framework and deploying actions aimed at contributing to compliance to the following strategic objectives.

1. Showcasing the Basque Country in the world

As established in the first vector of the Basque Country Strategy, the showcasing of the Basque Country abroad as a global stakeholder and benchmark in excellence is key regarding facilitating the attainment of the internationalisation objectives by Basque institutions and socio-economic stakeholders.

In the globalised context in which we live, international outreach backed by a brand that enjoys international prestige and recognition is a clear aspect of competitive advantage. In this sense, the Basque Country brand is the main tool on which to base the deployment and appropriate positioning internationally of a country-image based on the dynamic, modern and cohesive nature of Basque society, on our uniqueness and values, as well as on the accumulated knowledge assets.

The Secretariat General for External Action therefore has to assume a dynamic role when consolidating the Basque Country brand, driving and developing activities aimed at dissemination and communication, both through online and in-person events and activities, and driving up support for it from a wide range of Basque organisations. Thus, the positioning of the Basque Country brand internationally is approached as a participatory process in which, apart from the general administration of the BAC, and very specifically its entities abroad, involves other Basque institutions, the Euskal Etxeak network, along with Basque stakeholders from the private sector.

Along with the brand, the opinions and direct knowledge of the people and entities that visit us are another channel for outreach abroad and generate an environment conducive to internationalisation. In this respect, an opening for work has been set and which is focused on attracting to the Basque Country both high-impact international event and key figures from the countries and regions identified as preferential and priority in the internationalisation strategic framework.

Furthermore, the Basque outreach abroad involves developing initiatives and mechanisms for dialogue with international stakeholders that enable the Basque policies, models and capacities to be showcased. It has therefore been vital to use the global outreach forums and events that the international organisations regularly hold to disseminate the expertise to be found in the BAC.

2. Contribute to the sustainable and sustained development of the Basque Country by means of promoting its multisectoral interests abroad.

The External Action of the Basque Government is at the service of defending Basque multisectoral interests where necessary. In the current context, the degree of development and well-being attained by the societies depends on the degree of integration of its companies and organisations in the networks and in the value-adding global chains, so that high levels of competitiveness and differentiation are required. Therefore, it is necessary to support the insertion of Basque agents in those new operation models and facilitate the implementation of international projects in sectors where the Basque Country is a leader and in priority emerging sector, such as transport infrastructures, the environment, energy or culture.

Therefore, and in order to gain in ability to influence and critical mass, the Secretariat General for External Action has undertaken to identify and establish cooperation agreements with regions, either because they are of a complementary nature to the Basque situation or related to the leadership position that they have in certain fields, are strategic partners internationally. This channel seeks to foster joint projects, the defence of share positions or the exchange of experiences, all of which are aimed to facilitate the insertion of Basque stakeholders on the international market.

In addition, and all with the goal of promoting its multisectoral interests, the Basque Country aspires to consolidate its strategic position with the international organisations. Therefore, the external action of the Basque Government is committed to intensifying the dialogue and interaction held so far with those organisations by means, among other mechanisms, of entering into partnership agreements, organising reverse trade missions and fact-finding visits or pinpointing and subsequent insertion Basque stakeholders in sectoral thematic networks initiated by them. These thematic networks will contribute to the exchanging of contacts, experiences, good practices and know-how, along with consolidating the position of the Basque Country at the levels where decisions are taken and the policies are designed that will mark the future of Basque society.

Apart from intensifying the relations with other regions and international organisations, the establishing of smooth institutional relations with strategic countries is logically in priority. Thus, the Secretariat General for External Action will focus its endeavours on fostering and maintaining a stable relationship with the institutions, embassies and consular representations of the preferential and priority countries for the internationalisation of the Basque Country. The available resources and means, including the Delegations of the Basque Country abroad as one of the instruments that provides greatest value added, will be used to achieve this objective.

3. Being co-participants and jointly responsible for European construction

The Basque Country is Europe. Consequently, the European Union is embraced as the preferential and natural partner of the Basque international action. We are striving to contribute the construction of a more integrated Europe, underpinned by the principality of subsidiarity and which puts the citizenry at the centre of its action.

The Basque Government wants to be heard in the European project and directly participate in all those community bodies and at all those community levels where the issues that affect our self-government are discussed and decided. In this respect, ensuring that the Basque administration can, at some time in future, be present in those formations of the European Council and working committees of the Commission that address areas that affect our competences, is a priority for institutional external action. It is likewise committed to playing an active role in the heart of the Committee of the Regions.

On the other hand, the Basque external action proposes deploying the tools and mechanisms need to rigorously comply with the legislation and regulations arising from community law. In addition, the Basque Government will be working with the aim of the Basque Parliament being able to carry out, on the basis of the provisions envisaged in the Lisbon Treaty, an adequate control of the principle of subsidiarity and proportionality of the legislative initiatives of the community instructions insofar as they can affect its competences.

Being co-participants in and jointly responsible for European Construction also implies fostering the interregional and cross-border cooperation between the BAC and potential strategic partners, in order to implement joint policies that contribute to the cultural, social and economic development of the parties, along with its territorial cohesion. Aquitaine, and within it the French Basque Country, will be a priority target. It is likewise necessary to intensify the participation

in forums or association for the existing inter-regional and cross-border cooperation, such as the Working Community of the Pyrenees or the Atlantic Corridor, without dismissing the possibility of getting involved in new partnerships in this area.

Another formula to intensify the insertion within the European sphere consists of increasing the degree of Basque participation in projects and initiatives funded by the EU. In this sense, the Basque Government will work, with the support of the Secretariat General of External Action, on disseminating cooperation and funding information, content and opportunities resulting from the new community financial framework and future programmes. Advice will still be given on formulating and submitting projects to EU authorities.

On the other hand, and in order to bring the EU vicissitudes to the Basque citizenry, it is considered to be priority to drive awareness-raising campaigns and discussions on the progress in European construction and its impact on the Basque Country.

4. Consolidating the links with the Basque community abroad

This Basque Country Strategy is in keeping with the targets set in the Four Year Institutional Plan of Action 2012-2015, emerging from the V World Congress held in 2011.

Act 8/1994, of 27 May, regarding the relations with the Basque Centres and Communities outside the Basque Autonomous Community, expresses the need to conserve and strengthen links with the Basque community, along with highlighting the reality of the Basque Country outside where it is located and fostering the relations, particularly economic, cultural and social ones. The Basque community abroad represents for the Basque Government an asset to spotlight the Basque Country and defend our interests in the world. Therefore, in the same way as in other benchmark countries and regions, the Secretariat General of External Action has set itself the target of identifying and strengthening the links with this collective.

The Basque Community abroad comprises a community organised around Basque centres and federations, on the one hand, and an increasingly larger number of people settled in more than one hundred countries worldwide, on the other hand. The profile of the people making up the Basque community abroad is changing. Even though the Basque community is mainly made up of descendents of those people who left the Basque Country back in the past fleeing from grim political and economic situations in search of a better future, there are now the new migratory trends of people who have moved to other countries, whether or not it is permanently.

The Secretariat General of External Action is aware that the value that this community attributes to the development of Basque internationalisation, and it is committed to designing and implementing a series of instruments to face the challenge of keeping alive and strengthening the link with all the people who make it up. In this line of work, special mention should be made of project to create a global network that is linked to the whole Basque community abroad, the so-called Global Basque Network. An important part of that network will undoubtedly consist of the people that made up the Euskal Etxeak Network that has been woven down through the years, until there are now 187 officially registered countries in 24 countries in 4 continents.

Additionally, and to use the great potential of this community and its contribution to the Basque outreach abroad, the necessary activities will be prioritised to adapt and modernise these existing structures, the emphasis will be on the deployment of the most appropriate communication technologies to thus keep the Euskal Etxeak community alive and active, apart from this being a priority channel to disseminate the Basque situation abroad.

It is likewise essential to maintain, conserve and promote the interest in the Basque People, its history and culture, not uniquely, but yes particularly, by these communities. Therefore, one of the keys lies in supporting the promotion of studies and publications on the Basque Diaspora and working to consolidate the cultural, economic and institutional relations between the Basque Country and those communities.

Under this heading, the Basque Government, through the intervention of the Secretariat General for External Action, will provide support, support and access to services to the men and women make up the Basque community abroad who find themselves in situations of extreme need.

5. Contributing to the construction of a fairer and more balanced world

The external action of the Government likewise seeks to channel the commitment to the solidarity of Basque society, thus contributing to the construction of a fairer and more balanced world. Globally, the Basque Country is seeking to be a player committed to international solidarity and development and foster cooperation that generates social transformation alternatives based on the principles of social justice and equity.

The cooperation that is carried out from the BAC is part of the so-called decentralised cooperation that, being deployed from sub-state institutions and local corporations, is noted for a more direct involvement of civil society. Due to its proximity to the local and regional governments, civil society specifically demands from them that the cooperation is based on principles of solidarity and focusing on human development.

The Basque Government is thus channelling its commitment to the construction of a fairer world through the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation, a public body attached to the Lehendakaritza, the Basque Premier's Office, entrusted with planning and managing the actions in the field of international solidarity.

This Agency is committed to fostering cooperation based on local development. Not only due to affinity in the territorial sphere, but also due to the importance of the local in the development and opportunity that from "the specifics" is provided from implementing processes that generate citizenry and social transformation alternatives that include improving living conditions globally.

These selfless solidarity initiatives and principles by the Basque public sector are set out in the 2007 Basque Development Cooperation Act, which defines the cooperation model of the Basque Government. Thus, the legislation establishes a series of measures and commitments that Basque society and institutions assume in order to foster locally and globally sustainable and human development of the people, particularly the eradication of poverty, effective compliance of the human rights and international relations based on justice.

Likewise, all the initiatives, strategies and processes that are implemented in the framework of development cooperative under the aegis of the Basque Government are set out in a coordinated and

coherent way in the Development Cooperation Master and Strategic Plans prepared by the Agency itself. In fact, during 2014, the aim is to approve the new Master and Strategic Plan and therefore, development cooperation is not doing to be considered in terms of the deployment of specific actions in this document.

6. External Action quality and effectiveness

The Secretariat General for External Action is tasked with helping the Lehendakari to define and coordinate the political-institutional strategy of Basque external action, along with improving the effectiveness and quality of the services that it provides both to the Ministries of the Basque Government and to all those private and public stakeholders that make up civil society. Therefore, the objective will be to consolidate the coordination of the External Action by means of reinforcing the instruments available to the Secretariat, strengthen its structure and adopt the necessary mechanisms to optimise the cooperation both with the Spanish Central Government and with the Basque public authorities.

The capacity will likewise be improved of the Secretariat to offer value added services and information regarding internationalisation to the Basque stakeholders, Ministries of the Basque Government and the Public Sector that carry out a significant amount of its activity abroad.

It is therefore necessary to professionalise this field by means of initiatives aimed both at linking and consolidating the capacities of the professionals of the Public Administration, along with training a new generation of experts that ensure first-rate external action in the future.

It is likewise deemed to be important to consolidate the cooperation with the Basque Country Delegations and, in the future, to analyse the opening of satellite offices and other possible delegations, in order to establish more effective coordination channels and offer services that are more focused on the real needs of the social stakeholders and Ministries of the Basque Government.

4.2. Lines of Action and Measures

The lines of action and measures defined in this plan are aimed both at attaining the objectives of the Secretariat General for External Action and to meet the requirements of the Departments of the Basque Government and participants in the reflection process leading up to the production of this Plan of Action. Thus, the Secretariat plans its activity in order to provide value added and to give a service that contributes to the deployment of international policies envisaged by the different spheres of the governmental action reflected in Section 3.6.

In the specific case of development cooperation, even though the Basque Agency of Development Cooperation is attached to the Secretariat, this document does not envisage a deployment of specific lines of action and measures in this field. As the Development Cooperation Act 1/2007 establishes, the Four Year Master Plan is the document that has to set out the operational goals, instruments and proposals that make up the strategy in this area, after being approved by the Basque Government in the mutli-annual strategic planning general guidelines.

The table below sets out the direct relationship existing between the Lines of Action that will govern the activity of the Secretariat General for External Action, the Internationalisation Common Vectors that have been identified for the Basque Government overall and the Strategic Objectives of the Government Programme of the X Legislature. This table shows that the breakdown of the measures and services that will make up the core of the work of the Secretariat General for External Action are coherent and are in line with the Internationalisation Strategic Framework.






Table 5.
Relationship between Lines of Action of the General Secretariat for External Action, Internationalisation Common Vectors and Internationalisation Strategic Objectives





External Action Objectives	Lines of Action	Internationalisation common vectors	Internationalisation strategic objectives
Showcasing the Basque Country Abroad	LA1.1. Consolidating the Basque Country brand	V1 / V2 / V3	01/02/03/04/05/06/07/08/09/010/011/012
	LA1.2. Generating a conducive environment for internationalisation	V1 / V2 / V3	01/02/03/04/05/06/07/08/09/010/011/012
	LA1.3. Increasing the positioning of the Basque Country	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	01/02/03/04/05/08/09/010/011/012
Promoting Multisectoral Interests	LA2.1. Developing relations with strategic regions for the Basque Country	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	01/02/03/04/05/06/07/08/09/010/011/012
	LA2.2. Intensifying Basque relations with international organisations	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	01/02/03/04/05/07/08/09/010/011/012
	LA2.3. Increasing Basque institutional relations abroad	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	01 / 04/05/06/07 08/09/010/011/012
	LA2.4. Fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders in thematic networks	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	01/05/08/09/010/011/012
European Construction	LA3.1. Fostering the leadership of Basque Country to defend its interests in Europe	V1 / V2 / V3	04/05/08/09/010/011/012
	LA3.2. Reinforcing cross-border cooperation	V2 / V3 / V4	04/05/08/09/010/011/012
	LA3.3. Increasing the participation and presence of Basque stakeholders in Eu institutions, projects and initiatives	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	04/05/08/010/011/012
	LA3.4. Ensuring the application of Community Law	V3	05/08/09/010/011/012
Basque Community Abroad	LA4.1. Connecting to collectives that make up the current Basque community abroad	V1 / V2 / V4	05/07/08/011
	LA4.2. Fostering research and knowledge regarding aspects related to emigration and the Basque Diaspora	V1 / V2 / V4	07/08/011
	LA4.3. Contributing to consolidating the Basque community abroad by means of the Euskal Etxeak network	V1	07/08/011
	LA4.4. Serving the people that make up the Basque community abroad	V1	07/08
External Action Quality and Effectiveness	LA5.1. Consolidating the coordination of External Action	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	05/06/07/08
	LA5.2. Activate the participation of society in the Basque internationalisation processes	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	01/05/08
	LA5.3. Professionalising the External Action of the Basque Country	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	04/05/06/07/08
	LA5.4. Consolidating the coordination with the Delegations	V1 / V2 / V3 / V4	05/07/08

Source: Own preparation

The full content of the External Action Plan 2014-2016 is set out below and whose implementation is entrusted to the Secretariat General for External Action (SGAE). Specifically, 5 Strategic Objectives, 19 Lines of Action and 70 Measures have been identified. Each of the Lines of Action is set out in a datasheet that outlines the justification and the objective sought, along with the measures that will be deployed and the entity responsible for ensuring their correct implementation. The monitoring indicators, the goals to be attained and the timeline planning for 2014-2016 are likewise defined for each of the Measures.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1		
	Lines of Action	Actions
S01: Showcasing the Basque Country Abroad	LA1.1	<p>Consolidating the Basque Country brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1.1.1. Developing Basque Country presentation material, that is multilingual and on different media • A1.1.2. Coordination of the dissemination by the Basque Government of the Basque Country brand • A1.1.3. Development of an online communication strategy • A1.1.4. Actions to disseminate the Basque Country brand organised by Delegations and Euskal Etxeak • A1.1.5. Basque stakeholders signing up to the Basque Country brand
	LA1.2	<p>Generating a conducive environment for internationalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1.2.1. Organization of Learning Tours with leaders from priority countries and regions • A1.2.2. Attracting and coorganisation of internationally renowned events with rotating venues • A1.2.3. Helping to attract and retain talent and knowledge with international outreach
	LA1.3	<p>Increasing the position of the Basque Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1.3.1. Encouraging the participation of Basque professionals in thematic events of the United Nations system • A1.3.2. Feasibility analysis of the setting up of an internationally renowned Basque Country Prize • A1.3.3. International promotion of Basque expertise










STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	Showcasing the Basque Country in the world			01 LEADER
				External Relations Directorate
LINE OF ACTION	LA1.1. Consolidating the Basque Country brand			LA1.1 LEADER
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>External Relations Directorate</p> <p>The Basque Country brand is one of the main exponents of the commitment of the Basque Government to internationalisation. The brand is the vehicle to disseminate the image of the Basque Country abroad, an image based on the dynamic, modern and cohesive nature of Basque society, on an own identity and culture, and on our our knowledge assets. In conjunction with the Communication services, presentation material will be produced on different media and channels will be identified to disseminate the brand in a uniform and unified way, including its positioning online. Furthermore, the Basque Government will disseminate the Basque Country brand abroad, with the cooperation of the Delegation and those agents that wish to sign up to it.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A1.1.1. Developing Basque Country presentation material, that is multilingual and on different media	Materials developed	40	2016	
A1.1.2. Coordination of the the dissemination by the Basque Government of the Basque Country brand	Number of events organised by the Basque Government that includes a space dedicated to the Basque Country brand	150	2016	
A1.1.3. Development of an online communication strategy	Improve the positioning in search engines	increase of 50%	2016	
A1.1.4. Actions to disseminate the Basque Country brand organised by Delegations and Euskal Etxeak	Number of dissemination actions carried out	50	2016	
A1.1.5. Basque stakeholders signing up to the Basque Country brand	Number of stakeholders signed up	100	1 st half of 2015	

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	O1: Showcasing the Basque Country in the World		 O1 LEADER	
 LINE OF ACTION		LA1.2. Generating a conducive environment for internationalisation		 LA1.2 LEADER
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION		<p>This line of action is aimed at positioning the Basque Country abroad by means of the opinions and direct knowledge of key people who visit use over the coming years.</p> <p>Therefore, the Secretariat will deploy in the Basque Country of high-impact measures with the participation of international players and with special emphasis on aspects where we are an international benchmark, or on those policies, models of specific capacities installed in the Basque Country. This line seeks to intensify relations with "decision makers" in countries and regions with common interests to ours.</p> <p>In order to creating an environment that facilitates the showcasing of the Country in the world, a priority is to have suitably skilled people and facilitate the incorporation of highly qualified international professionals in Basque projects in different areas (e.g. research).</p>		
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A1.2.1 Organization of Learning Tours with leaders from priority countries and regions	Number of Learning Tours organised	5	2016	
A1.2.2. Attracting and co-organisation of internationally renowned events with rotating venues	Number of events co-organised	4	2016	
A1.2.3. Helping to attract and retain talent and knowledge with international outreach	Number of support initiatives deployed	10	2016	

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	O1: Showcasing the Basque Country in the World		 O1 LEADER External Relations Directorate	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA1.3. Increasing the positioning of the Basque Country		 LA1.3 LEADER External Relations Directorate	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>This line seeks to place the Basque Country on the map of countries at the cutting edge of certain knowledge areas. A direct and dedicated presence regarding the international community is fundamental to improve the positioning of the Basque Country. Therefore, an active policy aimed at fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders as speakers at high impact international events is going to be implemented.</p> <p>The Secretariat General for External Action will encourage the participation of the Basque stakeholders in the international thematic programmes, events or projects where there is greater showcasing of the Basque Country globally. The emphasis will therefore be on reaching out to international organisations, active dialogue with them and identifying the key forums and initiatives.</p> <p>Similarly, the focus will be on countries and regions identified as priority in the Basque Country Strategy</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A1.3.1: Encouraging the participation of Basque professionals in thematic events of the United Nations system	Number of professionals taking part	25	2016	
A1.3.2. Feasibility analysis of the setting up of an internationally renowned Basque Country Prize	Feasibility analysis prepared	1	2nd half of 2015	
A1.3.3. International promotion of Basque expertise	Number of initiatives to promote Basque organisations abroad	40	2016	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2		
	Lines of Action	Actions
SO2: Contribute to the sustained and sustainable development of the Basque Country by promoting its multi-sectoral interests abroad	LA2.1	<p>Developing relations with strategic regions for the Basque Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A2.1.1. Establishing and implementing bilateral cooperation agreements with strategic regions A2.1.2. Participation in regional networks of strategic interest for the Basque Country A2.1.3. Organization of two-way institutional visits from to regions of interest for the Basque Country
	LA2.2	<p>Intensifying Basque relations with international organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A2.2.1. Establishing and implementing bilateral cooperation with international entities to transfer public models and policies where the Basque Country is a benchmark A2.2.2. Organization of reverse missions A2.2.3. Holding and/or participation in dialogue forums with international organizations fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders A2.2.4. Facilitating fact-finding visits to multilateral bodies A2.2.5. Attracting representation satellite offices of international organizations
	LA2.3	<p>Increasing Basque institutional relations abroad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A2.3.1. Materialization of stable relations between Delegation and institutions in preferential and priority countries A2.3.2. Intensification of the relations with diplomatic representations in and outside A2.3.3. Organization of institutional visits from/to the Basque Country
	LA2.4	<p>Fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders in thematic networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A2.4.1. Identification of key thematic networks in priority areas of interest for Basque stakeholders A2.4.2. Institutional support in the integration process of the stakeholders in the identified networks A2.4.3. Promotion of the Basque leadership in strategic thematic networks

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O2: Contributing to the sustained and sustainable development of the Basque Country by promoting its multi-sectoral interests abroad	 O2 LEADER	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA2.1. Developing relations with strategic regions for the Basque Country	 LA2.1 LEADER	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>This line of action is aimed at the gradual creation of a network of strategic alliances with leading regions with interests shared with the Basque Country. These partnerships will have to foster economic, technological or cultural exchange, to give an example, to share experiences or to jointly defend positions. Along with the bilateral agreements, the emphasis will be on driving Basque participation in interregional sectoral networks, both in terms of the thematic areas addressed and the importance of the members, that are relevant.</p> <p>Therefore, the Secretariat General for External Action will establish cooperation agreements, identify interregional networks and organise institutional visits that open up the way to Basque stakeholders when i) teaching and/or transferring knowledge, models or public policies where the Basque Country is a benchmark; ii) learning about the knowledge existing in other reference sites; iii) undertaking collaboration projects internationally.</p> <p>The specifying of the areas to be covered by the cooperation agreement or the networking will be carried out in strict collaboration with the Government's Ministries.</p> <p>In turn, the Basque Country here acquires a leadership role for the regions and countries immersed in decentralisation processes, thus becoming a benchmark model that adds to the prestige of our image abroad.</p>		
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE
A2.1.1. Establishing and implementing bilateral cooperation agreements with strategic regions	Number of agreements signed to transfer the Basque public policy model	8	2016
A2.1.2. Participation in regional networks of strategic interest for the Basque Country	Number of network in which it participates	7	2016
A2.1.3 Organization of two-way institutional visits from to regions of interest for the Basque Country	Number of joint projects undertaken	35	2016

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O2: Contributing to the sustainable and sustainable development of the Basque Country by promoting its multi-sectoral interests abroad	 O2 LEADER		
 LINE OF ACTION	LA2.2. Intensifying Basque relations with international organisations	 LA2.2 LEADER		
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>Many of the challenges currently facing Basque society are global and are, therefore, uniquely placed on the agenda of key institutional and international institutions. The importance of direct communication with those entities is justified by the fact that a great deal of the areas addressed are competence of the Basque institutions.</p> <p>This line of actions seeks i) to reinforce the strategic position of the Basque Country with regard international entities to better defend our interests ii) make known the Basque differential assets as regards industrial policy, health, the environment, gender equality or, among others, development cooperation, iii) add global solutions to the challenges that affect our society.</p> <p>To achieve this objective, it will be necessary to establish and endow with greater coherence and systematise the action deployed from the BAC as regards the aforementioned entities.</p> <p>Therefore, the Secretariat General for External Action will foster the integrated and coordinated action of Basque stakeholders as regards international organisations, cooperating in the dissemination of public policies, experience and knowledge stored up by them. Thus, the Secretariat will provide its support and advisory services both to the Ministries and Public Sector of the Basque Government, as well as to other Basque stakeholders who so request, whether they are public (Local Councils, Provincial Councils, etc.) or private stakeholders.</p> <p>Thus, measures are planned aimed at establishing cooperation agreements with international bodies, organising reverse trade missions and fact-finding trips to learn about the specific procedures and how these institutions operate, the participation of Basque stakeholders in regional dialogue forums or the integration of the Secretariat General for External Action in horizontal networks.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A2.2.1. Establishing and implementing bilateral cooperation with international entities to transfer public models and policies where the Basque Country is a benchmark	Number of cooperation agreements signed.	6	2016	
A2.2.2 Organization of reverse missions	Number of reserve missions organised	5	2016	
A2.2.3. Holding and/or participation in dialogue forums with international organisations fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders	Number of forums with Basque participation	12	2016	
A2.2.4. Facilitating fact-finding visits to multilateral bodies	Number of visits organised	20	2016	

A2.2.5. Attracting
representation
satellite offices of
international organisations

Number of international
organisations with
representation
in the Basque Country










2










2016










 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O2: Contributing to the sustainable and sustainable development of the Basque Country by promoting its multi-sectoral interests abroad		 O2 LEADER	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA2.3. Increasing Basque institutional relations abroad		 LA2.3 LEADER	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>Maintaining smooth institutional relations with strategic countries is, undoubtedly, very helpful when deployment different types of projects with them. Therefore, this work line seeks to establish and consolidate institutional ties with the countries that concentrate a multiplicity of Basque sectoral interests and that the Basque Country Strategy has catalogued as priority or preferential.</p> <p>Furthermore this line of actions seeks to activate available means and resources to set up stable relations with those priority countries for the external action of the Basque Country. Logically, the Basque Country delegations are seen as the natural instrument to strengthen bilateral relations in those countries where they are present.</p> <p>Furthermore, relations with diplomatic representations are an unrivalled vehicle to facilitate the implementation of projects in their respective countries. Finally, institutional visits are considered an other instrument as the basis to extend and maintain bilateral relations, thus fostering the knowledge, cultural and/or economic exchange with countries considered to be strategic.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A2.3.1. Materialisation of stable relations between Delegation and institutions in preferential and priority countries	Number of events organised by the Delegation with participation of local institutions	100	2016	
A2.3.2. Intensification of the relations with diplomatic representations in and outside the Basque Country	Number of visits diplomatic representations to the Basque Country	80	2016	
A2.3.3 Organization of institutional visits from/to the Basque Country	Number of agendas organised	50	2016	

 <p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>O2: Contributing to the sustainable and sustainable development of the Basque Country by promoting its multi-sectoral interests abroad</p>		 <p>O2 LEADER</p>	
 <p>LINE OF ACTION</p>	<p>LA2.4. Fostering the participation of Basque stakeholders in thematic networks</p>		 <p>LA2.4 LEADER</p>	
 <p>DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION</p>	<p>External Relations Directorate</p> <p>The participation of Basque Government Ministries and other stakeholders in thematic networks is fundamental when acquiring and exchanging contracts, experiences, best practices and knowledge. It is, likewise, fundamental to reinforce the Basque position with regard to the authorities that address decisions and design public policies that will mark the future of the sectors and spheres of action where the Basque Government has direct competences.</p> <p>Thus, the participation of Basque stakeholders in these sectoral networks has, at least, a dual objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To know first-hand and as far in advance as possible the strategic approaches that, in the specific sectoral thematic, prevail internationally so that the Basque Country is permanently connected to the vanguard group. - To showcase Basque proposals so that they are inserted in opinion trends in international forums <p>Thus, by means of this line of action, the aim is to support the Basque stakeholders and Ministries in the identification and in their subsequent insertion in the thematic networks of interest. The aim is also to bring about that the Basque Country assumes a leadership role in some of those networks, either by creating a new network in a strategic thematic area and assuming an outstanding role in one that is already up and running.</p>			
 <p>MEASURES</p>	 <p>INDICATORS</p>	 <p>GOALS</p>	 <p>TIMELINE</p>	
<p>A2.4.1. Identification of key thematic networks in priority areas of interest for Basque stakeholders</p>	<p>Number of thematic areas identified</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A2.4.2. Institutional support in the integration process of the stakeholders in the identified networks</p>	<p>Contacts established and facilitated to the Departments</p>	<p>60</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A2.4.3. Promotion of the Basque leadership in strategic thematic networks</p>	<p>Number of thematic areas where the Basque Country leads or assumes a key role</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>2016</p>	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3		
	Lines of Action	Actions
SO3: Fostering the leadership of Basque Country to defend its interests in Europe	LA3.1 Fostering the leadership of Basque Country to defend its interest in Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A3.1.1. Diving political-institutional lobby actions A3.1.2. Reinforcing Basque participation in European institutions and bodies A3.1.3. Reactivation of the Bilateral commission between the Spanish Central Government and the Basque Country in European affairs and external relations A3.1.4. Establishing partnerships to defend in the European Union of common interests in priority areas for the Basque Country
	LA3.2 Reinforcing cross-border cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A3.2.1. Reinforcing the relations with Aquitaine and preparing a Basque Country-Aquitaine Strategic plan A3.2.2. Consolidating the ties with institutions of the Republic of France that dedicated to cross-border cooperation A3.2.3. Participation in forums or associations for interregional and cross-border cooperation
	LA3.3 Increasing the participation and presence of Basque stakeholders in EU Institutions, projects and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A3.3.1. Updating and consolidation the virtual platform of services to disseminate contents related to the Eu. A3.3.2. Organization of information sessions with professionals in European policies A3.3.3. Driving awareness raising and diffusion campaigns on advances in European construction and its impact on the Basque Country A3.3.4. Coordinating and cooperating with the Ministries of the Basque Government to monitor the European public policies of interests A3.3.5. Participation in programmes and sessions to disseminate best practises in the Basque Country.
	LA3.4 Ensuring the application of Community Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A3.4.1. Coordinating and advising on the action of the Government in compliances of the obligations arising from community law A3.4.2. Dialogue with the Spanish Central Government A3.4.3. Cooperation in the effective application of the principle of subsidiarity

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O3: Being co-participants and jointly responsible for European Construction	 O3 LEADER		
European Affairs Directorate				
 LINE OF ACTION	LA3.1. Fostering the leadership of Basque Country to defend its interests in Europe	 LA3.1 LEADER		
European Affairs Directorate				
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>The European Union is seen as the preferential and natural partner of the Basque institutional external action. The Basque Country is present in Europe in order to contribute to its construction and defend Basque professional, sectoral and socio-economic interests with European organisations and institutions such as the European Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions.</p> <p>This line of action seeks to increase the participation and representation levels of Basque institutions in defending their competences and competencies and interests in the European sphere. The Secretariat General for External Action shall support and open up ways for the Basque Country to be present in all community bodies and authorities when issues are discussed or decided that affect its competences, interests and aspirations within the European Union (EU).</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A3.1.1. Driving political-institutional lobby actions	Number of initiatives promoted	12	2016	
A3.1.2. Reinforcing Basque participation in European institutions and bodies	Number of meetings or sessions with European institutions held	60	2016	
A3.1.3. Reactivation of the Bilateral commission between the Spanish Central Government and the Basque Country in European affairs and external relations	Number of European Councils of Ministers where the Basque Country has taken part	4	2016	
A3.1.4. Establishing partnerships to defend in the European Union of common interests in priority areas for the Basque Country	Number of joint submissions	4	2016	










 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O3: Being co-participants and jointly responsible for European Construction	 O3 LEADER		
 LINE OF ACTION	LA3.2. Reinforcing cross-border cooperation	 LA3.2 LEADER European Affairs Directorate		
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>European Affairs Directorate</p> <p>Being co-participants and jointly responsible for European construction implies promoting interregional and cross-border cooperation between the Basque Country and its main partners. The Secretariat General for External Action will open up a new stage in the cross-border cooperation developed between Aquitaine and the Basque Country so far. Therefore, a Strategic Plan will be defined for the Euroregion that will identify the priority areas of joint action in order to set up a better positioned and cohesive relations, economic and social areas in the European area. This Plan will place special emphasis on fostering nearby cross-border cooperation in order to consolidate the existing ties with the Pyrénées-Atlantiques Department and, in particular, with the Basque territories included in it.</p> <p>The Basque Country-Aquitaine Euroregion will also help to drive the cooperation and joint participation of the Basque Government and the Aquitaine Regional Council in networks and projects where synergies and complementary aspects are used to progress in the consolidation of the territorial cohesion and in order to achieve better positioning in the European area.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SGAE will drive, in strict cooperation with the relevant Departments, the participation of the Basque Country in other forums that foster interregional and cross-border cooperation, such as the Working Community of the Pyrenees or the Atlantic Corridor Commission of the Council of Maritime Peripheral Regions.</p>			
 ACTIONS	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A3.2.1. Reinforcing the relations with Aquitaine and preparing a Basque Country-Aquitaine Strategic plan	Number of cross-border projects funded	200	2016	
A3.2.2. Consolidating the ties with institutions of the Republic of France that dedicated to cross-border cooperation	Number of institutional visits held	12	2016	
A3.2.3. Participation in forums or associations for interregional and cross-border cooperation	Number of forums in which it participates	6	2016	










 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O3: Being co-participants and jointly responsible for European Construction		 O3 LEADER	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA3.3: Increasing the participation and presence of Basque stakeholders in EU institutions, projects and initiatives		 LA3.3 LEADER	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>One of the objectives sought in the defences of Basque interests in the European Union is to increase, substantially, the presence and participation of all the Basque stakeholders in community initiatives and projects.</p> <p>By way of an example, the new programming period of the Cohesion Policy (2014-2020), along with the recently approved Framework Programme to Support R&D and Innovation (Horizon 2020), provide a window of opportunity in terms of additional funding and cooperation with agendas from other countries and regions. The Secretariat General for External Action will work to disseminate among all Basque stakeholders information, contents and opportunities for cooperation and funding resulting from the new financial framework of the European Union. In particular, the aim is to enable greater coordination between the different Ministries and private and public stakeholders involved so that, by means of more coherent and coordinate actions, better results can be obtained.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A3.3.1. Updating and consolidating the virtual platform of services to disseminate contents related to the EU	Updated platform	1	1st half of 2015	
A3.3.2 Organization of information sessions with professionals in European policies	Number of sessions organised	40	2016	
A3.3.3. Driving awareness raising and discussion campaigns on advances in European construction and its impact on the Basque Country	Number of campaigns launched	3	2016	
A3.3.4. Coordinating and cooperating with the Ministries of the Basque Government to monitor the European public policies of interest	Number of queries processed	200	2016	
A3.3.5. Participation in programmes and sessions to	Number of best practices detected, documented and			

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O3: Being co-participants and jointly responsible for European Construction		 O3 LEADER European Affairs Directorate	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA3.4. Ensuring the application of Community Law		 LA3.4 LEADER European Affairs Directorate	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>Basque external action has deployed, since its accession to the European Union, the tools and public mechanisms needed to give rigorous compliance to the legislation and regulations arising from Community Law.</p> <p>Furthermore, within the sphere of its competences, it has guaranteed and backed the transposition of Community Directives and technical regulations, by coordinating the interdepartmental work when necessary.</p> <p>In addition, the focus has been on advising the Basque Parliament to comply with the decentralised dimension of the Principle of Subsidiarity and Proportionality, in so far that the community legislative initiatives could have affected shared competences with the BAC.</p> <p>In the framework of this line of action, the aim is to intensify cooperation, dialogue and coordination with the European authorities involved, along with the national and regional ones, where applicable, in order to comply with the Community Law obligations appropriately and efficiently.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A3.4.1. Coordinating and advising on the action of the Government in compliances of the obligations arising from community law	Number of coordination meetings held	16	2016	
A3.4.2. Dialogue with the Spanish Central Government	Number of exchange of formal communications	80	2016	
A3.4.3. Cooperation in the effective application of the principle of subsidiarity	Strategy or protocol of action to apply the established principle	1	2nd half of 2015	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4		
	Lines of Action	Actions
S04: Fostering, supporting and intensifying Basque relations with the Basque community abroad	LA4.1	<p>Connecting to collectives that make up the current basque community abroad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4.1.1. Defining and implementing a network that links the Basque community abroad: Global Basque Network • A4.1.2. Identifying people of Basque origin and with links to the Basque Country • A4.1.3. Identifying and establishing ties with people of Basque origin with knowledge and/or positioning relevant internationally • A4.1.4. Holding periodic meetings in the Basque Country with members of the Basque community abroad
	LA4.2	<p>Fostering research and knowledge regarding aspects related to emigration and the Basque Diaspora</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4.2.1. Supporting studies and publications on emigration and the Basque Diaspora • A4.2.2. Holding international seminars and meetings on emigration and the Basque Diaspora in conjunction with experts in the sphere of the university and Research • A4.2.3. Creating a documentary base of oral accounts of emigration and the Basque Diaspora • A4.2.4. Setting up exhibitions on the Diaspora and emigration
	LA4.3	<p>Contributing to consolidating the Basque community abroad by means of the Euskal Etxeak network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4.3.1. Reinforcing the role of the Euskal Etxeak as a mechanism to disseminate the Basque situation • A4.3.2. Fostering cooperation between Euskal Etxeak and other Diasporas settled in their countries • A4.3.3. Consolidating the activities of the Euskal Etxeak in the societies in which they are present • A4.3.4. Fostering the incorporation of the Euskal Etxeak to the information and communication technologies • A4.3.5. Presence of young people and woman in the life of the Euskal Etxeak • A4.3.6. Extending the Euskal Etxeak network, particularly in new destinations
	LA4.4	<p>Serving the people that make up the Basque community abroad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4.4.1. Providing aid to family units in situations of extreme need • A4.4.2. Advising and supporting Basque citizens and those of Basque origins who return to the Basque Country

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O4: Fostering, supporting and intensifying Basque relations with the Basque community abroad		 O4 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA4.1. Connecting to collectives that make up the current Basque community abroad		 LA4.1 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>The 187 officially recognised Basque centres so far have around 30,000 members, most of which are people with Basque roots. Along with this collective, there is an unknown but important number of Basque who, for academic reasons, in the framework of business projects, development cooperation initiatives or for other reasons, are settled in over one hundred countries.</p> <p>Many of those people wish to keep alive the link with the Basque Country and showcase the Basque situation where they are. It is also undeniable that the knowledge of the countries in which they live and work is a fundamental assets that can help to get many internationalisation projects underway. Therefore, during this term in office, a network is going to be deployed so the they members of the Basque community abroad and whose people who have a Basque community can communicate with each other and with the BAC. Meetings will likewise be organised between those people, along with identifying others that, due to the key position that they occupy in their respective countries, may be key for the deployment of the Basque Country Strategy.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A4.1.1. Defining and implementing a network that links the Basque community abroad: Global Basque Network	Launching the Network	1	2014	
A4.1.2. Identifying people of Basque origin and with links to the Basque Country	Number of people identified	40.000	2016	
A4.1.3. Identifying and establishing times with people of Basque origin with knowledge and/or positioning relevant internationally	Number of people linked	100	2016	
A4.1.4. Holding periodic meetings in the Basque Country with members of the Basque community abroad	Number of initiatives carried out	3	2016	

 <p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>O4: Fostering, supporting and intensifying Basque relations with the Basque community abroad</p>		 <p>O4 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad</p>	
 <p>LINE OF ACTION</p>	<p>LA4.2. Fostering research and knowledge regarding aspects related to emigration and the Basque Diaspora</p>		 <p>LA4.2 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad</p>	
 <p>DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION</p>	<p>During the hosting of the II World Congress of Basque Communities in Vitoria-Gasteiz, in 1999, the US anthropologist William A. Douglass urged the Basque authorities to start working on gathering the historical memory of our Diaspora, as the sources in many cases were being lost due to the relentless passing of time. Four years later, at the time of the III World Congress, the first fifteen volumes of the Urazandi collection, which contained the history of the most representatives Basque communities in the world, were presented. Years later, all the issues of more than a hundred Basque publications produced in different countries from the end of the 19th century were digitalised.</p> <p>During recent years, interesting exhibitions have been hosted in different countries, which included “The Basque Footprint in Argentina”, “Hidden in Plain Sight: othe Basques” and others. It has also been cooperating in the organisation of annual seminars on the Basque Diapors with the universities in our sphere: Euskal Herria Mugaz Gaindi, which has now been held for the tenth time. In order to continue preserving and disseminating an important part of the history of the Basque Country. This line of action seeks to carry out a series of actions to research and disseminate aspects related to emigration and the Basque Diaspora.</p>			
 <p>MEASURES</p>	 <p>INDICATORS</p>	 <p>GOALS</p>	 <p>TIMELINE</p>	
<p>A4.2.1. Supporting studies and publications on emigration and the Basque Diaspora.</p>	<p>Number of publications</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A4.2.2. Holding international seminars and meetings on emigration and the Basque Diaspora in conjunction with experts in the sphere of the university and Research</p>	<p>Number of delegates</p>	<p>500</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A4.2.3. Creating a documentary base of oral accounts of emigration and the Basque Diaspora</p>	<p>Number of accounts collected</p>	<p>200</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A4.2.4. Setting up exhibitions on the Diaspora and emigration</p>	<p>Number of attendees</p>	<p>5.000</p>	<p>2016</p>	










 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O4: Fostering, supporting and intensifying Basque relations with the Basque community abroad		 O4 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA4.3. Contributing to consolidating the Basque community abroad by means of the Euskal Etxeak network		 LA4.3 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>While this Plan is in force, the Secretariat General for External Action is going to continue to work to consolidate the role of the Euskal Etxeak, along with guaranteeing its internal cohesion, the generational handover and the effectiveness of its associative actions. Along with consolidating the existing Euskal Etxeak network, the aim is to drive its expansion to the new migratory destinations.</p> <p>This line of action seeks to comply with what is established in Article 1 a) of Act 8/1994, of 27 May, regarding Relations with the Basque Communities and Centres Outside the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, which was approved in the Basque Parliament unanimously by all the political groups present. Thus, in keeping with the legislation actions are going to be deployed that are aimed at preserving and strengthening links; transmitting knowledge of the situation of the Basque Country where the Basque communities are linked; at fostering relations, particularly economic, cultural and social ones.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A4.3.1. Reinforcing the role of the Euskal Etxeak as a mechanism to disseminate the Basque situation	Number of activities organised by the Euskal Etxeak	6.000	2016	
A4.3.2. Fostering cooperation between Euskal Etxeak and other Diasporas settled in their countries	Number of joint actions held	30	2016	
A4.3.3. Consolidating the activities of the Euskal Etxeak in the societies in which they are present	Number of joint actions held with other stakeholders	500	2016	
A4.3.4. Fostering the incorporation of the Euskal Etxeak to the information and communication technologies	Number of communication channels used	200	2016	
A4.3.5. Presence of young people and women in the life of the Euskal Etxeak	Number of young people and women with responsibilities	500	2016	

A4.3.6. Extending the Euskal Etxeak network, particularly in new destinations










Number of new Euskal Etxeak officially registered by the Basque Government








10










2016






 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O4: Fostering, supporting and intensifying Basque relations with the Basque community abroad		 O4 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA4.4. Serving the people that make up the Basque community abroad		 LA4.4 LEADER Directorate for the Basque Community Abroad	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	In solidarity with the men and women who make up the Basque community abroad who find themselves in situation of extreme need and the people interested in returning to the Basque Country, work will continue to serve this collective. These are objectives set by Act 9/84, in its Article 1.e), where it establishes “within the framework of the legal system and the budgetary availabilities, the help, assistance and protection of people of Basque origin who are residing abroad”; in, in its Article 11, Points 2 and 2, regarding returning. Furthermore, the Four-Year Institutional Action Plan 2012-2015, approved by the Basque Collectives Advisory Board, establishes in its points 3 and 8, respectively, the continuity of those programmes, as mutual aid is the main founding purpose of the Euskal Etxeak around the world.			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A4.4.1. Providing aid to family units in situations of extreme need	Number of family units looked after	200	2016	
A4.4.2. Advising and supporting Basque citizens and those of Basque origins who return to the Basque Country	Number of applications favourably solved	50	2016	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6			
	Lines of Action	Actions	
SO6: Increasing the effectiveness and quality of the Basque External Action	LA6.1	Consolidating the coordination of External Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A6.1.1. Reinforcing the communication mechanisms and interinstitutional cooperation • A6.1.2. Identifying and transferring opportunities linked to institutional visits • A6.1.3. Reinforcing the communication mechanisms and interdepartmental coordination
	LA6.2	Activate the participation of society in the Basque internationalisation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A6.2.1. Creating the External Action Advisory Council • A6.2.2. Consolidating Basque paradiplomacy • A6.2.3. Development of an integral communication strategy of Basque external action to society
	LA6.3	Professionalising the External Action of the Basque Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A6.3.1. Driving the allocation of experts with external action profile at departmental level • A6.3.2. Continuous training of the technicians of the Secretariat General for External Action in external relations and studies on the Diaspora • A6.3.3. Designing a programmed for mobility and/or exchanges of people who are working in the administration with governments and international organizations • A6.3.4. Call for external action grants
	LA6.4	Consolidating the coordination with the Delegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A6.4.1. Prior study to set up specialist satellite offices • A6.4.2. Development of an online presence strategy • A6.4.3. Analysis to open new Delegations and/or new ways of institutional presence abroad • A6.4.4. Setting up joint initiatives with the Basque community abroad

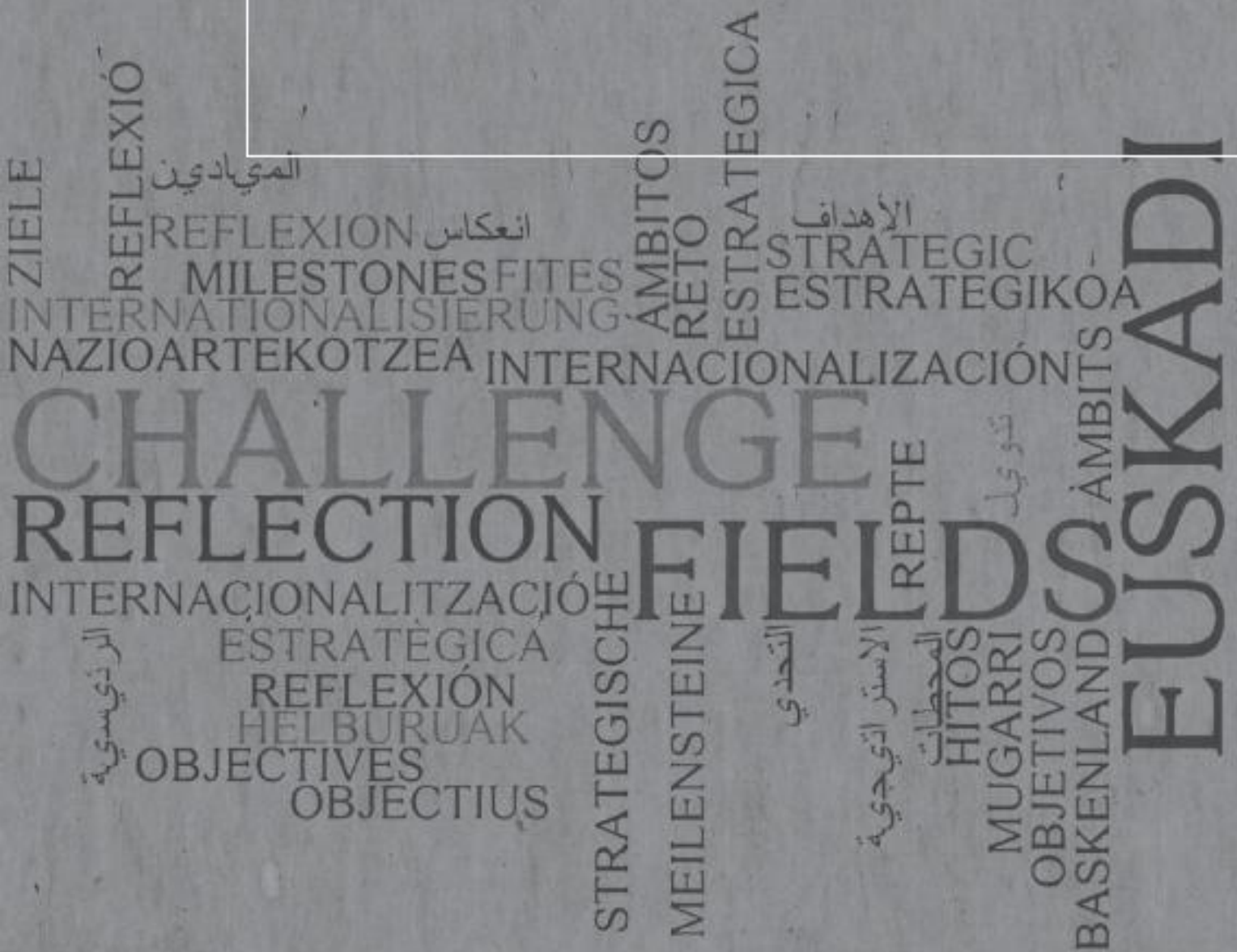
 <p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>O6: Increasing the effectiveness and quality of the Basque External Action</p>	 <p>O6 LEADER</p>		
 <p>LINE OF ACTION</p>	<p>LA6.1. Consolidating the coordination of External Action</p>	 <p>LA6.1 LEADER</p>		
 <p>DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION</p>	<p>The Secretary General for External Action is tasked with helping the Lehendakari in the management of the political-institutional strategy of the external action of the Basque Country and to coordinate it. In the performance of his duties, the development of an effective and efficient external action serving the Government and Basque society is a priority objective.</p> <p>Therefore, this line of action seeks to consolidate the instruments that the Secretariat has available, consolidate its structure and adopt the necessary mechanisms to optimise the coordination of the external action of the Basque Country. Furthermore, cooperation will be fostered with other public administrations in projects of common interest.</p> <p>The aim is likewise to increase the capacity of the Secretariat General for External Action to offer value added services and information as regards internationalising Basque stakeholders, Ministries of the Basque Government and Public Sector that implement part of its activity abroad.</p>			
 <p>MEASURES</p>	 <p>INDICATORS</p>	 <p>GOALS</p>	 <p>TIMELINE</p>	
<p>A6.1.1. Reinforcing the communication mechanisms and interinstitutional cooperation</p>	<p>Number of interinstitutional commissions held</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A6.1.2. Identifying and transferring opportunities linked to institutional visits</p>	<p>Number of opportunities identified transferred to the Departments</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>2016</p>	
<p>A6.1.3. Reinforcing the communication mechanisms and interdepartmental coordination</p>	<p>Number of technical monitoring meetings held</p>	<p>40</p>	<p>2016</p>	

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O6: Increasing the effectiveness and quality of the Basque External Action		 O6 LEADER	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA6.2. Activate the participation of society in the Basque internationalisation process		 LA6.2 LEADER	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>The Government Programme of the X Parliamentary terms refers to the internationalisation of the Basque Country as a nation-building project requiring the intervention of society as a whole</p> <p>With this proposal, the aim is for the design and implementation of Basque external action to involve civil society, particularly those sectors that are more actively deploying international activities. Furthermore, special attention will be paid to that in the process to disseminate the Basque Country model abroad civil society adopts an active role.</p> <p>Under this premise, this line of action envisages implementing actions aimed at integrating multiple stakeholders of Basque civil society, professionals and opinion leaders, that make up the “Basque paradiplomacy” in the different initiatives implemented, with the common objective of internationalising the Basque Country.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A6.2.1. Creating the External Action Advisory Council	Setting up the Council	1	First half of 2015	
A6.2.2. Consolidating Basque paradiplomacy	Number of delegates at the dialogue tables /sessions/events organised	500	2016	
A6.2.3. Development of an integral communication strategy of Basque external action to society	Number of actions undertaken regarding communication of the External action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Irekia · Website / Social Networks · Media 	100	2016	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Information Material · Others 			

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O6: Increasing the effectiveness and quality of the Basque External Action	 O6 LEADER	
 LINE OF ACTION	LA6.3. Professionalising the External Action of the Basque Country	 LA6.3 LEADER Secretary General for External Action	
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>External action is a key area of the institutional and political action of the Basque Government that requires, for its optimum implementation, highly skilled professionals. Having people trained in the area of external relations is a fundamental premise to deploy the Basque Country Strategy and the Plan for External Action.</p> <p>By means of this line of action, the aim is to consolidate the capacities of the Basque administration for the future and present implementation of a professional external action. Initiatives will therefore be deployed aimed both at consolidating the skills of the professional of the Public Administrative currently linked to international relations, irrespective of the area of knowledge to which they belong, and to train a new generation of experts that ensure first-rate future external action.</p>		
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE
A6.3.1. Driving the allocation of experts with external action profile at departmental level	Key people, as specialists in external action, in the Departments	40	2016
A6.3.2. Continuous training of the technicians of the Secretariat General for External Action in external relations and studies on the Diaspora	Number of training sessions held	5	2016
A6.3.3. Designing a programme for mobility and/or exchanges of people who are working in the administration with governments and international organisations	Designing the agreed Mobility Programme	1	Second half 2015
A6.3.4. Call for external action grants	Number of people awarded grants	25	2016

 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	O6: Increasing the effectiveness and quality of the Basque External Action	 O6 LEADER Secretary General for External Action		
 LINE OF ACTION	LA6.4. Consolidating the coordination with the Delegations	 LA6.4 LEADER Secretary General for External Action		
 DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE OF ACTION	<p>The Basque Country Delegations abroad are the best appreciated instruments of the of the Secretariat General for External Action by Basque stakeholders as support mechanisms in the implementation of their international activity. Their creation and development have been a fundamental milestone to consolidate further and the effectiveness of Basque external action. To ensure that the good assessment continues, priority is going to be given to the measures aimed at consolidating the capacities of the Delegations and strengthening their link with the Ministries of the Government, Public Corporation and stakeholders with internationalisation projects, along with the networking of the Basque community abroad. In this context, the defining of a presence online strategy or the development of joint activities with the Basque community abroad are some of the measures envisaged. Furthermore, the suitability of setting up specialised satellite office in the existing Delegations or extending the network of Delegations to new locations will be analysed.</p>			
 MEASURES	 INDICATORS	 GOALS	 TIMELINE	
A6.4.1. Prior study to set up specialist satellite offices	Study carried out	1	First half of 2015	
A6.4.2. Development of an online presence strategy	online presence strategy	1	Second half 2015	
A6.4.3. Analysis to open new Delegations and/or new ways of institutional presence abroad	Analysis carried out	1	2015	
A6.4.4. Setting up joint initiatives with the the Basque community abroad	Number of initiatives set up by the Delegation in conjunction with the Basque community abroad	15	2016	

GOVERNANCE MODEL, MONITORING AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK



Governance model, monitoring and budgetary framework

5

5.1. Governance Model

The many different stakeholders involved in developing international activities, means that there is a need to generate cooperation and coordination mechanisms that ensure coherent foreign action that is sustainable in time.

In this context, the Basque Country Strategy establishes governance mechanisms that the Secretariat General for External action is going to streamline to ensure the correct implementation both of the Strategy and of the External Action Plan. The governance model concerns both the Basque Government and its Public Sector, and other Basque public administrations (Provincial Councils and Local Councils) that wish to be involved in the deployment of the Basque Country Strategy.

5.1.1. Governance Model of the Basque Country Strategy

Attaining the objectives of the Basque Country Strategy requires the endeavours of all the Ministries of the Basque Government and its Public Sectors. In order to coordinate the contribution of each of them to the common strategy, the Secretariat General for External Action shall periodically convene and drive the formal meeting space existing for that purpose, namely, the External Action Interdepartmental Committee.

Specifically, the SGAE will convene the External Action Interdepartmental Committee at least twice a year. Pursuant to Decree 127/2007 regulating the External Action Interdepartmental Committee will act as a body for the efficient and coherent planning and coordinate international activity between the different Ministries of the Basque Government. Chaired by the Secretary General, this Committee will also consist of senior officials representing each of the Government's Ministries. This forum will propose and analyse initiatives that contribute to coordinated attainment of the Basque internationalisation objectives, synergies and possible measures to be developed in cooperation will be identified, and measures will be examined to guarantee efficient use of the available resources.

In addition, the Secretariat deems it necessary for the External Action Interdepartmental Committee to be the body to oversee the monitoring of the activity deployed by the Government overall in the framework of the Basque Country Strategy.

As has been previously mentioned, the Basque Country Strategy seeks to address a nation-building challenge. Therefore, all the Basque institutions are invited to sign up to it and join force to achieve great Basque outreach abroad.

With that being the case, the External Action Inter-institutional Committee will act as the cooperation and collaboration body between the Basque Government and the different Basque institutions involved in outreach abroad actions. Decree 52/2008 regulating the External Action Inter-Institutional Committee establishes that its main purpose is to pool the projects, knowledge, needs and interests in the sphere of the internationalisation of the Basque Country. This Commission will meet at least once a year and, chaired by the Secretary General for External Action, will have a representative of each of the Ministries of the Basque Government with the rank of Deputy Minister, or a representative of each of the Provincial Council with the rank of Provincial Councillor, the mayors of the councils of the capitals of the three Basque provinces and the EUDEL chairman or chairwoman.

As regards the External Action Inter-Institutional Committee, it is envisaged in the future to conduct a reflection on the composition and representation level required from its members in order for the forum to operate better.

5.1.2. Governance Model of the External Action Plan

In the same way as with the Basque Country Strategy, the attainment of the objectives of the External Action Plan requires, given the horizontal nature of the work that the Secretariat carries out, cooperation with other Government areas and with stakeholders outside it. It is necessary to have mechanisms that enable the link to be strengthened with the Ministries and its Public Sector so that it guarantees a smooth information flow, in real time and efficiently.

At a formal level, the External Action Inter-ministerial Committee, mentioned above, is also a governance aspect of the External Action Plan. Thus the SGAE will report on and evaluate the activities implemented and the achievements.

At the same time, the SGAE is committed to consolidating the informal inter-ministerial cooperation and communication mechanisms, by driving permanent contacts with the Ministers, as well as by means of allocating specialists with external action profile within them.

The governance model of the External Action Plan is rounded off by the Advisory Council on Relations with the Basque Communities. Regulated by Decree 234/1995, its main objectives are to ensure support and intensification of the relations of the Basque Country with the communities and Euskal Etxeak abroad, coordinate the institutional action in that area, and foster the awareness raising of Basque society towards this phenomenon. This Council normally meets once a year and will be consist of: the Lehendakari, a representative of the Secretariat General for External Action, the person in charge of the area of relations with Basque communities, a person representing the ministerial areas of Culture, Tourism, Employment, Social Security, Education, Housing, the Treasury, Industry and Trade, a representative of each Provincial Council, a representative of the Basque Local Councils, two people representative the Basque Parliament, one representing the University of the Basque Country, three

people representing the Basque centres designated by the Basque Communities Congress and one representing Euskaltzaindia.

Through this Council, the Secretariat will prepare a four-year plan that sets out the proposed actions for the aforementioned period in relation to the Basque communities abroad, this facilitating their integration in the External Action Plan and their link with the activities implemented by other bodies of the Basque Public Administrations.

Additionally, the setting up of the External Action Advisory Council is considered. That Council would consist of Basque stakeholders outside the Public Administration of different profiles (social, academic, cultural, technological or business, among others) and with extensive knowledge in the international arena. The Advisory Council will have to involve civil society in the governmental external action, by contributing its points of views and pinpointing its interests in priority thematic areas for the Basque Country Strategy. In this sense, as part of the X Parliamentary Term, the Secretariat General for External Action will establish the operating regulations of the aforementioned Advisory Council, defining its organisation, composition and its operation model.

5.2. Assessment and monitoring system

In order to guarantee the optimum development and fulfilment of the strategic objectives and policies of the Internationalisation Framework Strategy 2020, a monitoring system has been established in order to report back on the progress attain in the implementation of the Basque Country Strategy and on the achievement of the objectives of the Action Plan of the Secretariat General for External Action.

5.2.1. Monitoring System of the Basque Country Strategy

The achievements reached in the application of the Basque Country Strategy will be communicated through the Final Report on the Basque Country Strategy that the Secretariat General for External Action will issue at the end of the X Parliamentary Term. This document will report on the most important landmark of the international actions implemented by the Basque Government and its Public Sector under the Basque Country Strategy.

In addition, the Secretariat will annually submit information to the Basque Parliament on the actions implemented by all Basque institutions with the European Union.

5.2.2. External Action Plan monitoring system

In order to measure to degree of implementation of the Action Plan of the Secretariat General for External Action, a monitoring system will be established along with a scorecard to facilitate the process. This tool will include the indicators for the measures and actions in the Plan,

the goal to be achieved for each of them, and the timeline for their compliance. This, this scorecard will be the basis to measure the degree of progress of the Plan and adopt the necessary adjustments for the correct performance of the measures and action and achieve the strategic targets.

Furthermore, as an integral part of the assessment and monitoring model of the External Action Plan 2014-2016 of the SGAE, the following reports will be submitted:

- **Implementation Report**

This report will proceed to rapidly assess the degree of implementation and compliance of the objectives of the Plan and will be the basis to set annual targets.

- **External Action Plan final report**

Once the Plan is deemed to be completed, a global report will be produced summarising the main achievement of its term in force. This document will analyse the degree of compliance of the Strategic Objectives set, their contribution to the Basque Country Strategy, and will be the starting point for the following External Action Plan.

It cannot be ruled out that, in addition to the aforementioned monitoring activities, an independent assessment is conducted of the External Action Plan that analyses the achievement in the period 2014-2016.

Finally, and in order to complete the whole proposed monitoring system, a reflection process will be started to design a system to measure the impact of the External Action of the Basque Government, a system that currently does not exist either in the Basque Country or does not have clear benchmarks internationally. This internal initiative is aimed at identifying or designing a set of indicators that can measure the degree of positioning of the Basque Country as a global player in the world and its degree of internationalisation as a country. This monitoring system will, in turn, enable in a second phase of the Basque Country Strategy, to measure and assess the sectoral actions of each of the spheres of Government.

5.3 Budgetary and Economic Framework

5.3.1. Budgetary and Economic Framework of the Basque Country Strategy

Quantifying the exact budgetary allocation of a Framework Strategy, such as the one in question, is a complex task as it is based on sectoral measures that cannot always result in clearly identifiable budgetary programmes. On the other hand, the defining and quantifying of some of the sectoral plans resulting from the international action of the Government are still pending (for example, the Development Cooperation Master Plan).

In any event, the minimum budget earmarked by the Basque Government for the internationalisation of the Basque Country in 2014 comes to just over thirty-five million euros. Out of these, thirty million are for the spheres of External Action and Business Internationalisation, such as envisaged in the Basque Country 2020: Framework Programme for Employment and Economic Recovery, to which will have to be added over five million for Tourism and Culture. The minimum allocation is thus made up by the budgets for the 4 main components of the Basque Country Strategy.

The envisaged annual budgetary increase comes to 2%, both for 2015 and for 2016.

Component	2014
External Action	7.570.000
Business Internationalisation	22.500.000
Tourims	1.500.000
Culture	3.608.357
TOTAL	35.178.357

5.3.2. Budgetary and Economic Framework of the External Action Plan

The budget available to execute the External Action Plan in the period 2014-2016 comes to seven million five hundred and seventy thousand euros for 2014, with an annual increase of 2% envisaged for 2015 and 2016.