



“Woka Experience”

Engaging Society to Find Solutions to the Financial Crisis

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innobasque
berrikuntzen agencía vasca
euskal agencía de innovación

Overview

1. The Basque Country
2. Innobasque
3. World Café
4. Introduction
5. The financial crisis and WOKA Euskadi
6. WOKA Recommendations: Implications for Basque Society and Europe



Introduction

- This document represents the results of a process of **open and collaborative reflexion** with respect to the economic crisis. The results represent concrete suggestions for transformation based on this collective process.

- The **objective** of this presentation is to **describe WOKA initiative, present the results and share insights** about the use of the World Café in order to motivate others to explore the use of dialogue in all sectors of society.



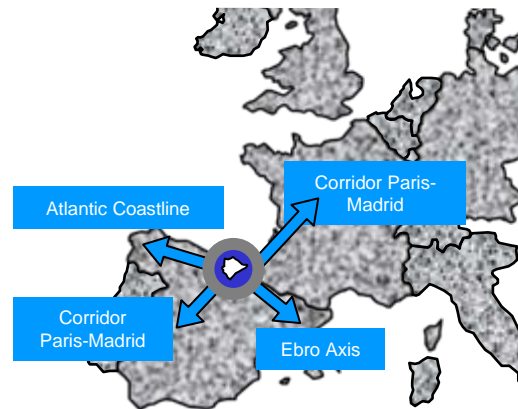
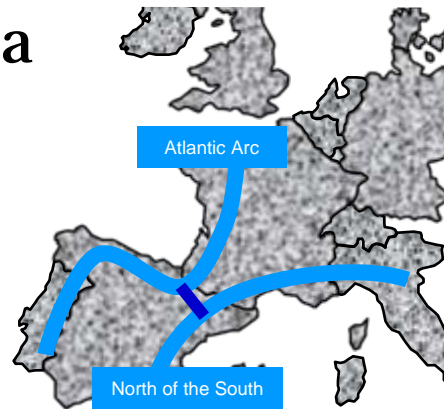
Euskadi (the Basque Country):

Basque Country in Spain is nowadays an advanced region with a high level of self-government

A small big country

Euskadi has:

- Area: 7,234 Km²
- Population: 2.1 M
- Airport: 3
- Technology Parks : 4



The 1st Basque Great transformation: 25 years of radical transformation

The 80's:

- ❑ Severe economic, political and social crisis: an industrial region in decline
- ❑ high unemployment (25%)
- ❑ collapse of basic industry
- ❑ obsolete infrastructures
- ❑ During the 80's and 90's, the Basque Economy underwent an overall restructuring process after the recession



25 years later:

- ❑ Growth of GDP over the last 10 years is above the Spanish and European average
- ❑ Exports account for 29.01% of production (50% in products with a medium/high technological content)
- ❑ Unemployment has fallen drastically (from 25% to full employment in 2008) *Last crisis data (Jul 2009): Unemployment : Basque Country 10.5%; Spain: 18.5%; EU-Euro: 9.5%*
- ❑ Above European average in per capita income 2007 (142%)
- ❑ 4,500 companies certified with ISO 9000
- ❑ 710 companies certified with ISO 14001 and/or EMAS
- ❑ EFQM European awards: 8 winners and 4 finalists.
- ❑ 17 companies with Gold Q Basque Quality Management award



Innobasque

- Innobasque, the Basque Innovation Agency, launched in July 2007, is a public-private alliance set up to lead the process to transform the Basque Country into an innovative society in all aspects.
- **Innovation and cooperation** are the cornerstones of the transformation led by Innobasque. This requires a concerted effort at the level of all capabilities : Social, business, university, science, technology , people, financial, strategic, etc.
- Goal of Innobasque: to help Euskadi become “the” **European benchmark in innovation.**

Innobasque : A public-private collaboration platform.

Innobasque has 1053 partner organisations.

TYPE OF MEMBERS	MEMBERS	
	N°	%
TECHNOLOGICAL & SCIENTIFIC AGENTS, FOR NON PROFIT ORGANISATIONS	197	18,8
ENTERPRISES AND ASSOCIATIONS	776	73,8
PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF BASQUE COUNTRY	43	3,9
PUBLIC-PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS	31	3,0
ORGANISATIONS D'EMPLOYEURS and TRADE UNIONS	5	0,5
TOTAL	1.053	100

The Financial Crisis as an opportunity

- Although the Basque country was relatively better off than many other regions, the impact of the crisis was beginning to reach **key industrial sectors**. The effect was a loss of confidence amongst both consumers and business leaders.
- Whatever action that was decided upon needed to position the Basque country better economically in order to take advantage of the next upturn.
- Based on their experience with the World Café Gathering in 2008, Innobasque saw an opportunity to activate the population and to seek **collective solutions to the financial crisis**.



2nd World Café European Gathering

Bilbao

June 5-7, 2008

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2nd World Café European Gathering



**Pre-event
on May 18, 2008**

**25th anniversary of Radio
Euskadi**

**1000 participants in front of
the Guggenheim museum**

2nd World Café European Gathering



Local Cafés on June 5, 2008

11 simultaneous World Cafés
in Bilbao representing
various sectors of society

800 participants

2nd World Café European Gathering



**Central Café
on June 6 and 7, 2008**

**Bi-lingual Café on Renewal
Participants from 15
Countries**

110 participants

The birth of the WOKA Euskadi idea

- During the first months of 2009 Innobasque convened a discussion forum, with the purpose of reviewing a series of specific proposals on how to deal with the financial crisis.
- The members of the discussion forum sensed that this historic opportunity to “rethink” our society required something else besides the review of proposals. At the heart of our deliberations was the following question:
 - “**What would happen if the citizens of an entire country decided to think together and take accountability for their future?**”
- The crisis provided a **question that matters** for Basque society as a whole.

The realization of the WOKA Euskadi idea

- To highlight that this was not just a single conversation but a societal collaborative effort, Innobasque decided to give the initiative a new name derived from the Basque for World Café

World **K**Afea = **WOKA**

- To underline the societal aspect of the initiative, it was decided to hold all World Cafés on the same day – the day of WOKA.



And Woka was born:



The realization of the WOKA Euskadi idea

Participating organizations were requested to:

1. Host a World Café event in their organisation with the appropriate stakeholders.
2. Logistics: Provide and manage a place to host it, technicians, furniture (round tables for 4 people + chairs), catering (cafés).
3. Contributing towards the promotion of the WOKA initiative in their environment.
4. Send in the conclusions of their World Café to Innobasque.

The realization of the WOKA Euskadi idea

Participating organizations with the following support:

1. Background information on the financial crisis to be shared with participants
2. A thorough design of the World Cafè process to be held at each organization including set-up instructions, powerpoint presentations, hosting suggestions and a uniform process for harvesting the information from the conversations
3. A training session for World Café hosts
4. Branded table cloths and coffee cups
5. Coverage of the event:
 - Involvement of the conventional media
 - Blogs

Objectives of the WOKA process

- ❑ Foment cooperation to help exit the financial crisis based on a program agreed to by the majority of agencies and people participating.
- ❑ Generate a virtuous dynamic of cooperation among companies, universities, knowledge centers and government
- ❑ Establish an effective platform for public-private cooperation
- ❑ Lead the 2nd economic-social transformation of the Basque country based on the principles of people as the center of innovation and knowledge.

Invitation Process

- Invitations were sent out to 1160 individuals/partners with the hope of attracting 100 organizations. The contact list came from the networks of Innobasque and the Basque regional government,

TYPES OF INVITED MEMBERS	
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL AGENTS	197
COMPANIES; NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS; ASSOCIATIONS	776
PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS FROM THE BASQUE COUNTRY	41
PUBLIC7PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS	31
EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS	5
TOTAL	1.160

The realization of the WOKA Euskadi idea

- **119 Organizations** decide to take part in the WOKA – representing all key sectors of society: private, public and non-governmental organizations. **113 World Cafés organized.**

- **5000 + participants** took part in a World Café conversation in **one day** – May 18, 2009.

The realization of the WOKA Euskadi idea

□ Each partner made their event in the way they wanted (Woka dinners, outdoor Wokas...) but all of them with the same **two questions**:

1. Due to this crisis, ¿What are the most significant changes that are happening?

2. We want to be rid of this crisis as soon as possible, and better prepare the Basque country to overcome the changes you have identified. ¿What concrete measures do you propose to create this transformation?

The WOKA at a glance:



Fotos from WOKA:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/innobasque/sets/72157617678120609/>

Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/innobasque#p/u/17/ZJ57pKKzrZ8>

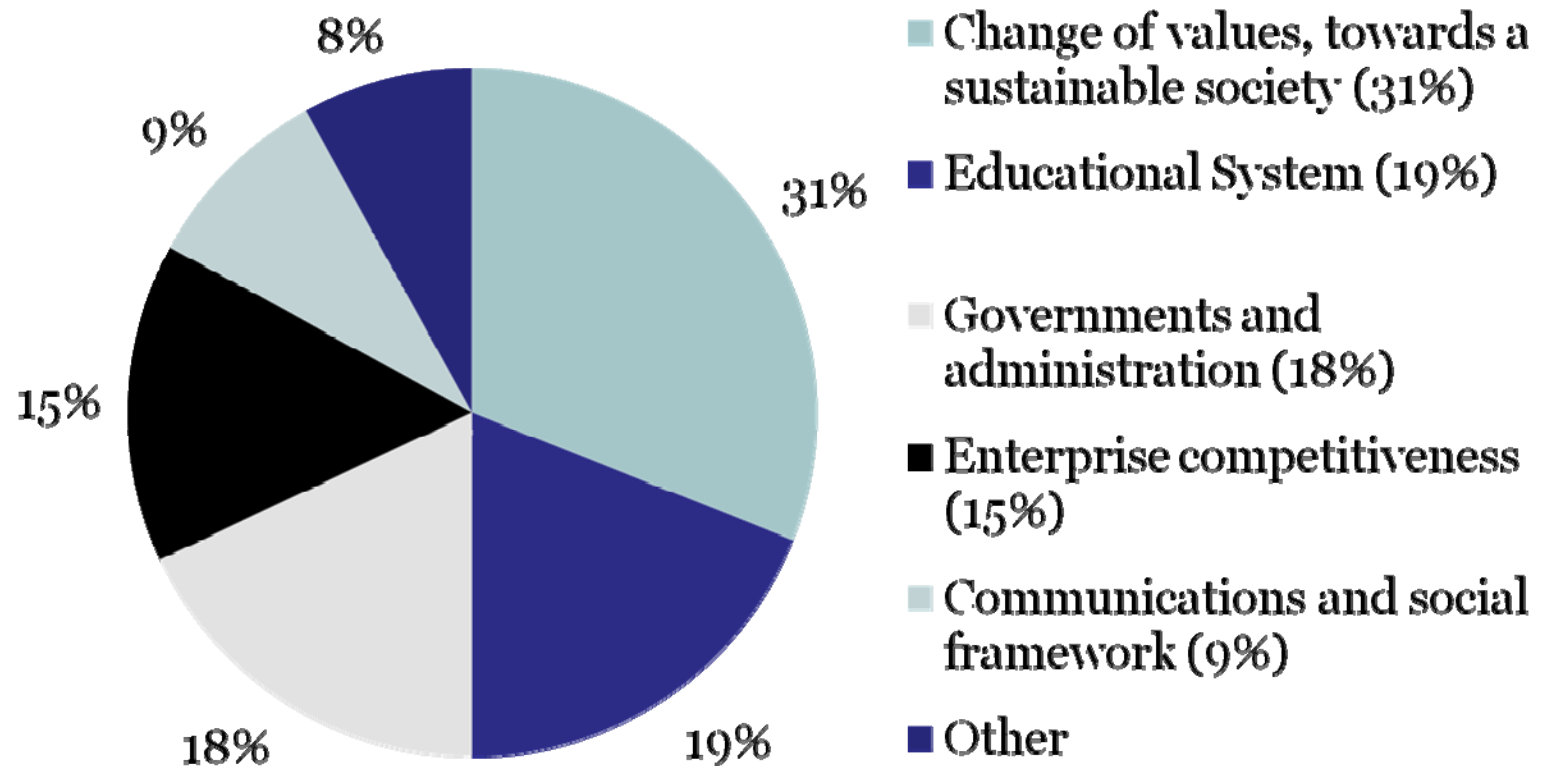
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The Harvesting of the Conversations

1. The results were received from each organizer in the same format.
2. The conclusions were sent to Innobasque. Analysts at the Basque University analyzed, compared, integrated and organized the responses into appropriate categories.



Outputs from the Woka: Proposed Measures



Examples of proposed measures

The collective wisdom that emerged from the WOKA understood that there were no quick fixes to our current crisis. The solutions lay in the longer term transformation of Basque Society.

The following are a sampling of suggested measures:

- Support research into **social innovation**
- Develop new models of **participative government**
- Develop and communicate **a set of values and principles** to guide social transformation and innovation
- Provide the infrastructure to support **life-long learning**
- Improve the **co-operation and transfer of information** between universities and the private sector
- Support the development of **organization structures centered around people** as the source of innovation and competitive advantage



Examples of proposed measures

- Plan sustainable transport system
- Invest in eco-innovation and sustainable agricultural practices
- Make a commitment to the realization of a low CO² economy
- Foment social cohesion particularly in multi-ethnic environments
- Emphasize innovation in public administration
- Support the deepening of an entrepreneurial culture within the Basque country



How to communicate the results?

- All proposals were collected and sorted into a document by Innobasque, then were uploaded to the webpage and later sent to all participants.
- The information and conclusions were gathered in the document called “From innovation to the future” and were officially presented in the General Innobasque Assembly on the 18th of June.

What are the next steps?

1. Mobilize Innobasque and Basque government partners to implement and lead these measures in order to help change the current model.
2. Promote different initiatives, articulating the cooperation between enterprises - organisations (private sector), administrations (public sector) and the social framework.

Innobasque considers WOKA as the first stepping stone towards the process of transformation:

Visión 2030 *to become THE innovation reference in Europe by 2030*

World Café Europe



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