



Fair Ground of Gipuzkoa – PRESS DOSSIER

FICOBA, the Fair Ground of Gipuzkoa

The Ficoba project has been promoted by the Fair Ground of Bidasoa-Bidasoako Erakustazoka S.A., composed of the Town Hall of Irún (99.08%) and the Bidasoa-Txingudi Transfrontier Consortium (0.92%). An ambitious initiative whose purpose is to promote and push forward socioeconomic transfrontier exchange and to recover the area of Txingudi, which was the location of the former frontier of Irún, the main entry from Europe into the Basque Country.

In 1998, Irún, Hondarribia and Hendaye signed the constitution of the Bidasoa-Txingudi Transfrontier Consortium. With this agreement, the three municipalities were pioneers in Europe in setting up a narrow framework of economic and commercial exchange between transfrontier towns, cities and villages. Five years later, Irún has embodied that spirit of collaboration in the creation of Ficoba.

The month of February 2000 saw the beginning of the construction of the main building of the Fair Ground on the land of the former customs esplanade of Santiago. The all-round project has involved a final investment of €21 million, 11 of which correspond to civil works, 3 to town planning and the rest to equipment. This investment has been carried out mainly by the Town Hall of Irún (€7.3 million), with the collaboration of the Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa (€2.4 million), the European ERDF funds (€1.8 million), the IZARTU programme of the Basque Government (€1 million), the Bidasoa-Txingudi Transfrontier Consortium (€0.06 million) and short-term finance from banks (€1.75 million). The rest will be covered by potential increases in capital or financing from banks.



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With a view to the management of the Fair Ground, the Ficoba Foundation has been established, with the participation of the town halls of Irún and Donostia-San Sebastián, the Fair Ground of El Bidasoa-Bidasoako Erakustazoka, S.A., the Bidasoa-Txingudi Transfrontier Consortium, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Gipuzkoa and the Chamber of Commerce of Bayonne. Invitations to take part have also been extended to the BAB Association (Biarritz-Anglet-Bayonne), Adebisa (Bidasoa Activa), the Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa and the Basque Government.

Transfrontier project

Ficoba is a project with a clearly-defined transfrontier vocation which, beginning with its strategic location, looks to boost and promote the interrelation and economic exchange in its immediate area of influence, which covers a population of over one million inhabitants.



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As the Fair Ground of Gipuzkoa, Ficoba provides a dimension and positioning that marks a difference. The attraction of its regional and transfrontier character is joined by the benefit of its 'human' size, which means it can offer customised made-to-measure services in a more direct and efficient way. Ficoba has a carefully designed infrastructure with modern exhibition and telecommunications facilities.

An avant-garde enclosure

Ficoba covers a surface area of over 70.000 m², with a complex designed by the architects Astigarraga & Lasarte, and comprising an area of general services, three exhibition pavilions with a surface area of 5,000 m², an outside area of 7.500 m² specially designed for fairs and exhibitions, a parking area for 1,000 vehicles, 340 of which are underground, as well as accesses and roadways. Based on these facilities, there is a multifunctional enclosure for formalising business deals and promoting communication between companies and customers.

The symbol of the fair is a 25-metre high tower which holds the advertising for the different events held at Ficoba.

With a view to providing a better service for exhibitors and for the companies and institutions interested in organising conventions, conferences and meetings, the Fair Ground offers a variety of spaces.

The main building contains a press room, 6 private offices for use by exhibitors and a VIP club.

There are also three multi-purpose meeting rooms with capacities for 100, 45 and 25 people. This building also has an auditorium for 392 people, equipped with a P.A. system and three simultaneous interpretation booths.



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Besides offering an additional service to the various fairs, the multi-purpose design of the auditorium means it can also be used for cultural events, conferences and other functions.

The additional attractions at Ficoba include a wide range of value-added services such as seminars for exhibitors, daily statistics for the profile of the visitor, a virtual extension of the fair, etc.

The services which the Trade Fair Enclosure offers to exhibitors and visitors are now completed with a panoramic cafeteria and restaurant with space for 500 people run by the chef Iñigo Lavado, who, among other awards, won the Best New Restaurant Award in the Madrid Fusion Congress in January 2005. Born in Irun in 1975, Iñigo Lavado, despite his youth, has vast professional experience which he has developed in highly prestigious restaurants. He has worked with chefs such as Pedro Subijana in the Akelarre restaurant in San Sebastian, Ferrán Adriá in El Bulli or the French chef, Alain Ducasse. From 2001 up until his incorporation in Ficoba, he formed part of the Martín Berasategui Group in which he assumed various responsibilities. The last position he held was kitchen and restaurant manager in the Kukuarri restaurant in the Hotel NH Aránzazu in San Sebastian.

The interior design at Ficoba has been carried out at the hands of the designers Javier Machimbarrena and Santos Bregaña, as have the signs on view at the Fair Ground. Both designers have performed similar work for the Guggenheim Museum, the Basque Government and the Martín Berasategi Group.



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Infrastructures and services

- Three pavilions with a total surface area of 5,000 m².
- An open-air exhibition area of 7,500 m².
- Water manholes, drains, electricity and voice, data and image transmission points.
- High-speed Internet connection.
- Auditorium equipped with video conference and simultaneous translation with a capacity for 392 people.
- Three multi-purpose rooms for seminars with a capacity for 125 people.
- Six private offices for interviews between exhibitors and visitors.
- Multimedia press room.
- Panoramic restaurant and cafeteria with a capacity for 500 people.
- 1,000 parking spaces.
- Business premises.
- Tourist information.
- Banking services.
- Security and cleaning services.
- Hire of modular stands.
- Infirmary and nursery.
- Cloakroom service.



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Unique services

- Offices for meetings between exhibitors and visitors.
- VIP room for visitors.
- Updated information on visitor profiles.
- Training seminars for exhibitors.
- Preliminary list of accredited visitors.
- Matchmaking services.
- Bus Mailing service.
- Virtual extension of the fair.
- Demodrome.