

Sustainability Report

January 2023 - December 2023



BIOSPHERE



GLOBAL
DESTINATION
SUSTAINABILITY
MOVEMENT

Bilbao Convention Bureau

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This document has been prepared with the collaboration and knowledge of all of the Bilbao Convention Bureau team and the approval and signature of its director.

Kepa Olabarrieta

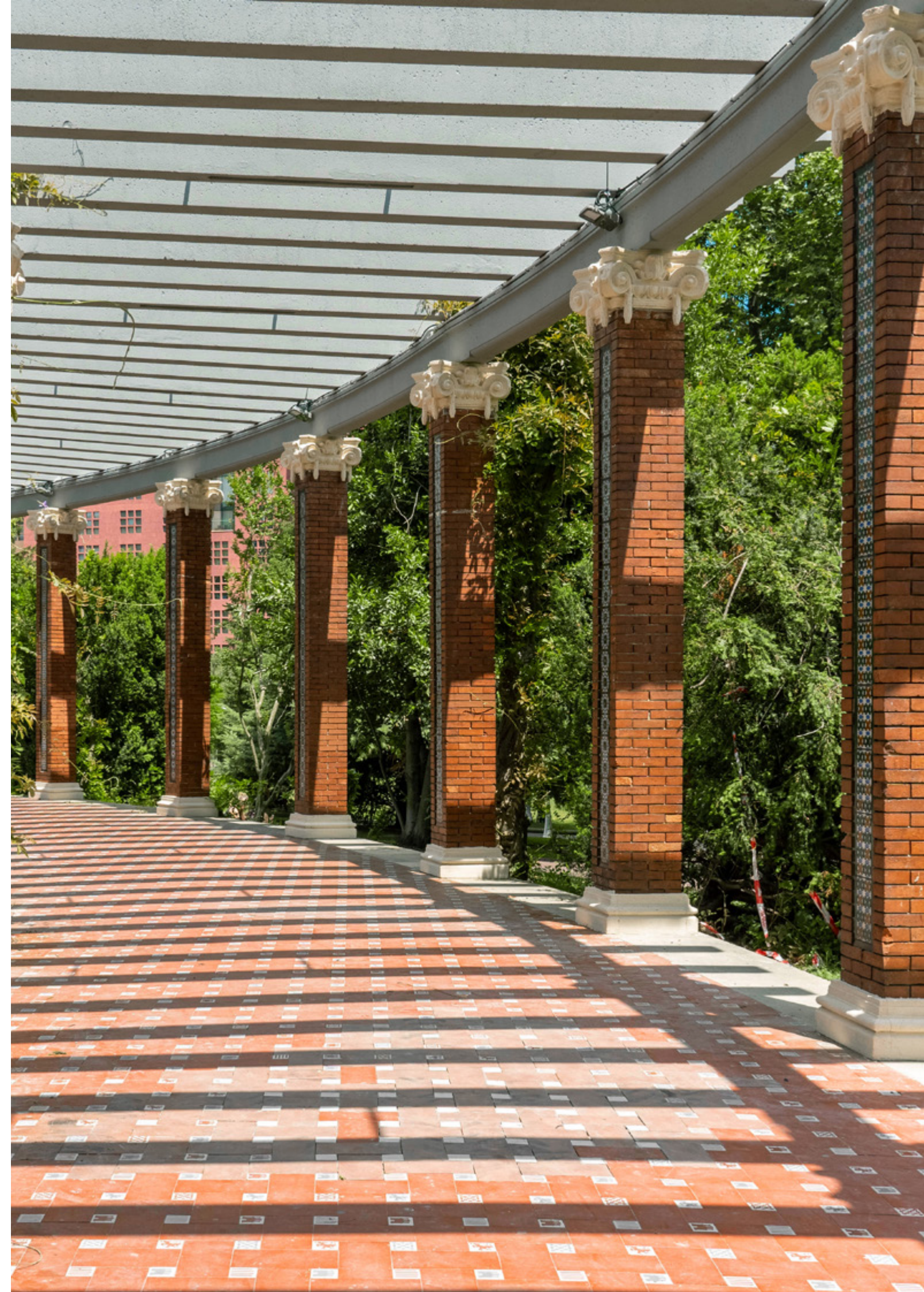


Introduction

This document describes the evolution of Bilbao Convention Bureau (BiCB) and partner companies in the area of sustainability in 2023, always taking the BiCB Sustainability Strategy for 2021-2027 and the 2021-2027 Action Plan as the foundation.

During 2023, the MICE market stabilised following the pandemic. Thanks to this, it has been possible to develop new initiatives and projects with respect to sustainability.

In 2023, the focus was not only on continuing to improve in the area of environmental sustainability but also to advance in terms of social sustainability by means of projects based on the Positive Impact and Legacy of meetings and conferences held in Bilbao.





Partner participation

Our standing commission for work #BilbaoArimaBerdea, in which some of the partner companies of Bilbao Convention Bureau take part together with key representatives of the city's ecosystem have continued to work together and share experiences, difficulties and good practices in the area of sustainability through training sessions, regular meetings and the LinkedIn group #ArimaBerdea.

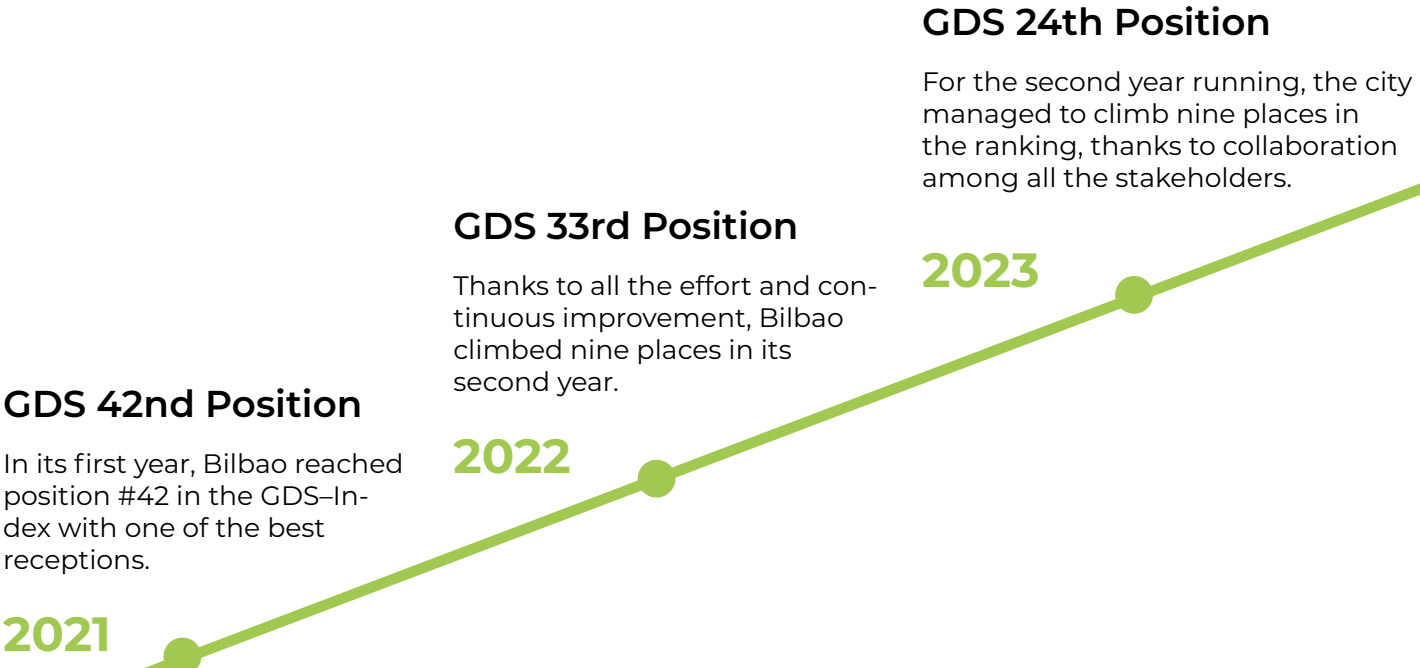
This group is formed by hotels, venues and agencies as well as local associations, universities and members of the City Council.

The group is the perfect ecosystem for complementing and sharing the BiCB's path in terms of sustainability.

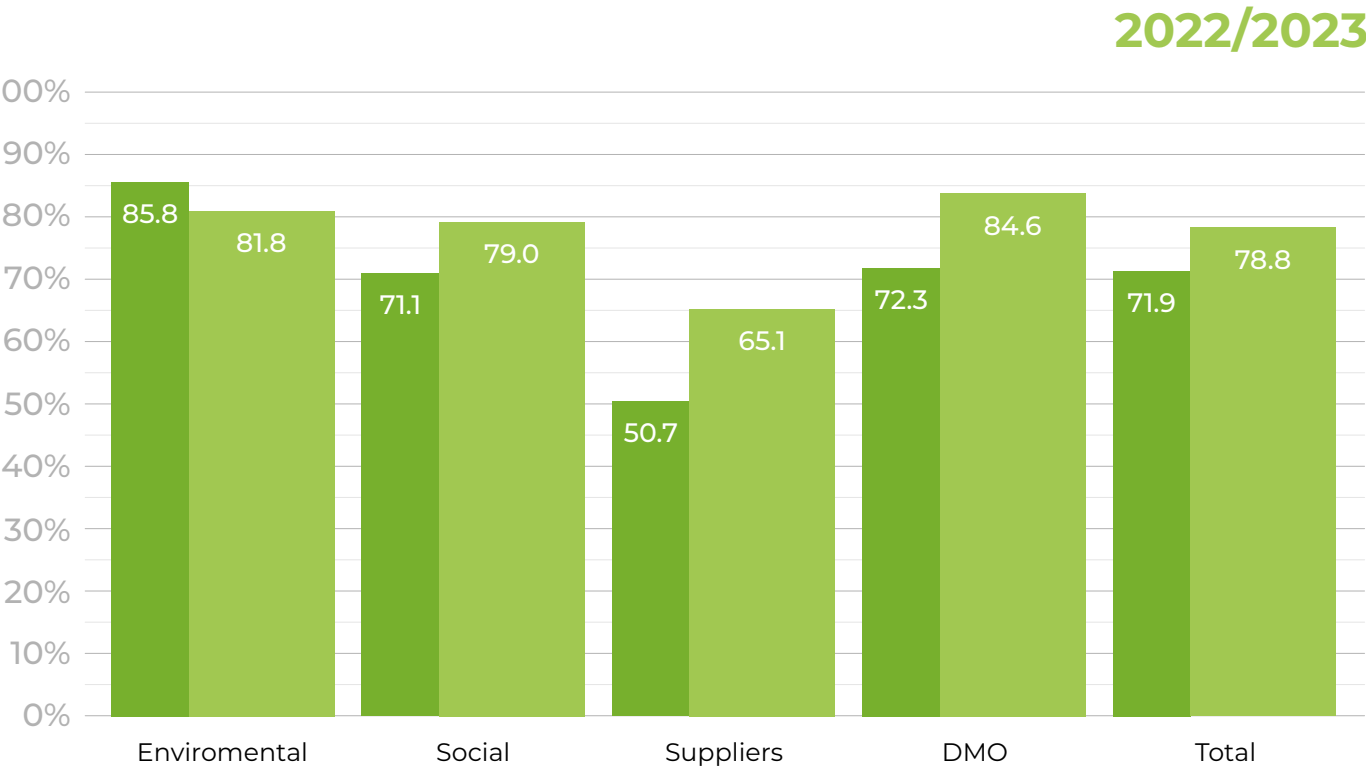
GDS - Index

At the same time, for the third year running, Bilbao's participation in the GDS-Index has been managed. This international ranking measures the sustainability of cities as a MICE destination based on different environmental, social and economic indicators.

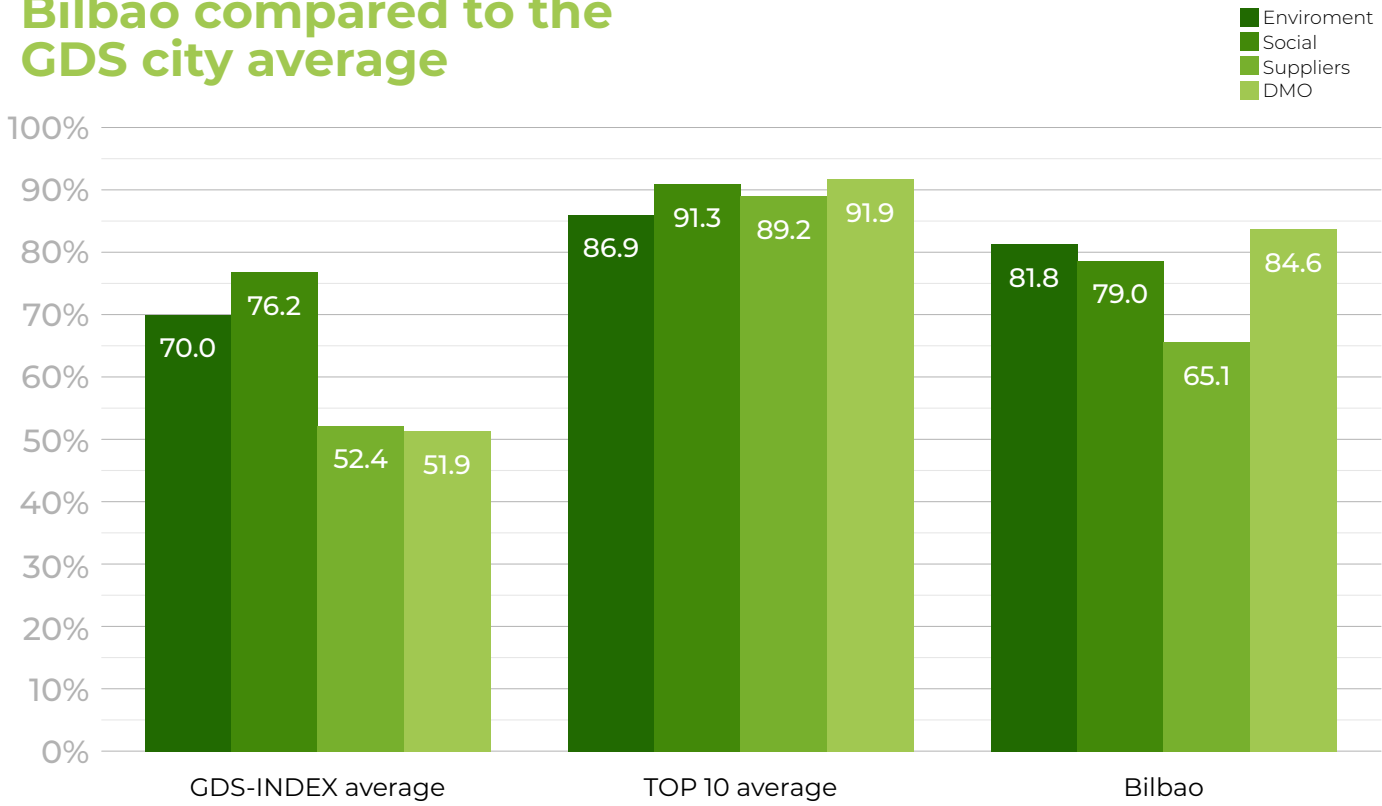
Bilbao obtained an excellent score, reaching the 24th position, and thus making it to the TOP30 of the ranking, an improvement of nine points over the previous year's score.



GDS-INDEX Results



Bilbao compared to the GDS city average



Actions taken

Bilbao Convention Bureau has promoted certain initiatives to offer partner companies and the destination more tools and resources in order to become a more sustainable MICE destination.

- **Calculation of the carbon footprint** *(Action 9.4A)*

Based on the ambitious goal of being able to calculate the carbon footprint of MICE events, carbon footprint data associated with the means of transport used by participants at the conferences was collected through questionnaires completed by the participants.

In addition, the carbon footprint of the BiCB office was measured based on the [lhobe methodology and the impact of its activity](#) on CO2 emissions.

In line with our indicator, “CO2 emissions avoided” and the commitment of the City Council to reach climate neutrality, progress is expected to continue in this area and the office footprint to be reduced and offset for 2024.

- **Door-to-door selective waste collection** *(Action 6.2C)*

Together with the City Council, an initiative has been set up to change and improve the waste collection process of major producers, starting with more than 20 hotels in Bilbao.

On completion of one year of the pilot project, the project has been continued, introducing a permanent door-to-door selective waste collection from hotels.

Bilbao Convention Bureau is responsible for monitoring the hotels, promoting, and publicising the initiative among the partner companies.

- **Process of continuous improvement and digitalisation** *(Action 8.1)*

As part of Bilbao Convention Bureau’s process of continuous improvement, the Web page has been updated with the news about sustainable resources including the certifications for events such as Erronka Garbia or the new carbon footprint calculator, together with information about new training sessions, news and good practices of the Bureau and of the partner companies. At the same time, Bilbao Convention Bureau has created a portfolio of sustainable tools for event organisers.

In order to minimise our environmental impact, the use of paper surveys has been eliminated. Since the start of the year, all surveys are now conducted in digital format.

- **Donations** *(Action 4)*

Progress has been made in terms of social sustainability, working in collaboration with the Red Cross to manage donations, particularly of furniture.

In addition, workshops to raise awareness and help publicise solutions have been held for the donation of food waste at meetings and conferences thanks to our partners, Oreka.

- **Certifications** *(Action 3.2)*

Bilbao Convention Bureau has launched a programme of subsidies to help hotels, venues and partner agencies, together with the BiCB, access the BIOSPHERE certification.

This certification focuses on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and is specifically for organisations from the tourism industry.

- **Positive impact and legacy** *(Action 8.1)*

Work has taken place to create a portfolio of sustainable tools to enable event organisers to have a vision of the key associations in the city and to develop measures with the aim of creating a positive impact on the city and a legacy for residents.

In addition, Bilbao Convention Bureau has joined a Learning Community on Impact measurement, organised by **ESADE and BBK-Kuna**, to provide the organisation with the necessary skills for the monitoring and measurement of impact measures implemented or promoted from the Bureau.

- **“For a Social Contract Agenda 2030” Declaration** *(Action 8.1B)*

In 2021, the Agenda 2030 Euskadi Forum was formed as an area of multi-agent and inter-institutional governance. In September 2022, the United Nations decided to place the global headquarters of the Local 2030 Coalition Secretariat in Euskadi, specifically in Bilbao.

In 2023 the Agenda 2030 Euskadi Forum continued to take steps forwards, setting up the Basque Alliance for the SDGs, with the “For a Social Contract Agenda 2030 Euskadi” Declaration, which includes a series of commitments and involvement based on the Agenda 2030. Bilbao Convention Bureau has signed the declaration together with another 50 Basque associations in order to continue moving forward in their commitment to the Agenda 2030.

- **Training** *(Action 1.4)*

It should be noted that the BiCB offers ongoing training at internal level to its staff. In addition, it also offers training sessions open to partner companies via different online platforms such as Anfitriones, as well as face-to-face training in Bilbao on environmental and social sustainability.

In 2023, of particular note are the workshop organised by Bilbao Convention Bureau together with GDS Movement on “Bilbao as a Forum for Sustainable Events”, a full day conference directed at the entire MICE sector in Bilbao, and the training session “Sustainable Development Goals” given by Alex Carrascosa and directed at BiCB staff and partner companies.



Alignment with the SDGs

Any decisions taken aimed to be in line with the SDGs defined in the Sustainability Strategy at all times.

In addition, Bilbao Convention Bureau has signed up to the Glasgow Declaration and to the Basque Alliance for the SDGs.

- Carbon footprint calculation



- Selective collection on request of non-domestic waste



- Various training sessions



(Sustainability Policy for agencies, sustainable food, reuse of materials and circular economy)

- Donations of food and materials



- Various measures with positive impact and legacy



- Update of the Web page





Measurement of KPIs

Environmental KPIs

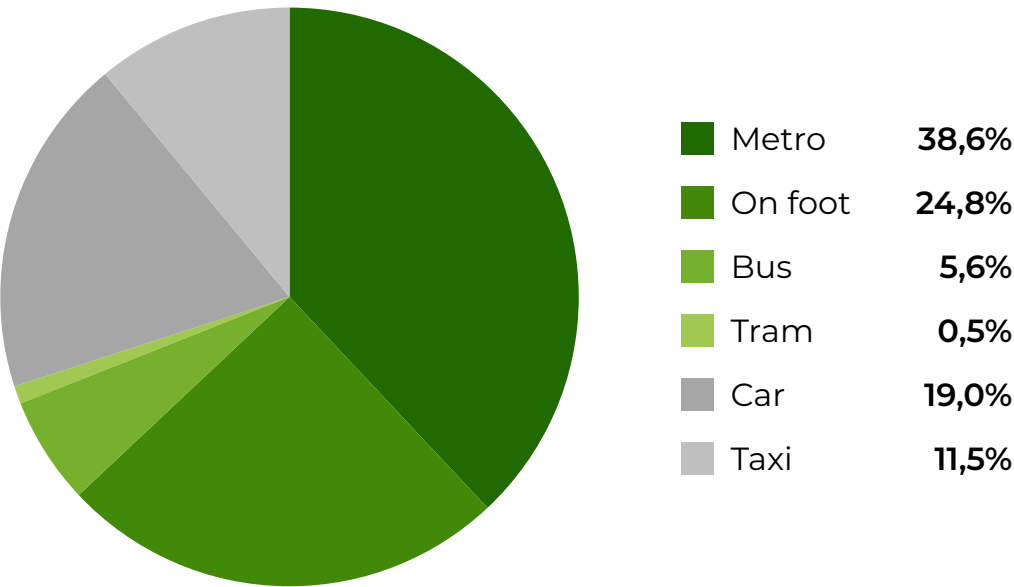
Carbon footprint

In line with the City Council of Bilbao’s commitment to reach carbon neutrality, at BiCB we continue to move forward in the measurement and offsetting of the carbon footprint in the following segments of our activity:

- CF of the BiCB office in 2023
This was calculated based on areas 1, 2 and 3 **12,02 t_{eq} CO₂**
- CF of the BiCB office in 2023s
Emissions from transport and accommodation were considered **5,54 t_{eq} CO₂**

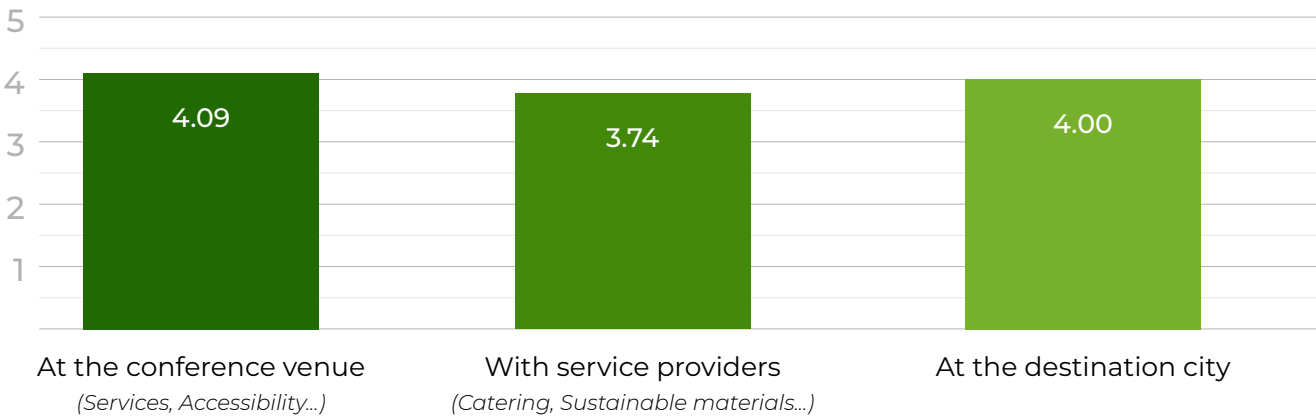
Mobility of conference participants

69.5% of the participants at the conferences travelled by public transport or on foot.

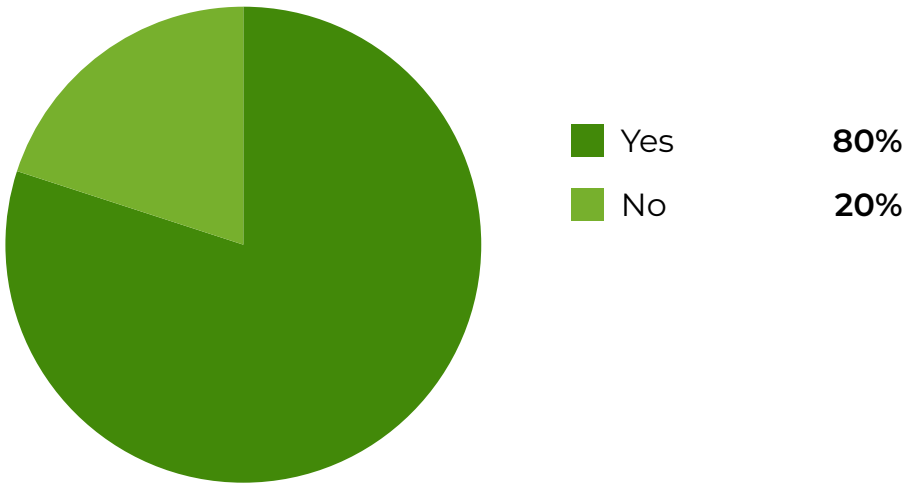


Environmental sustainability by conference organisers

Survey of the organisers on commitment to sustainability in the MICE sector in Bilbao:



Survey of organisers on the importance of sustainability certifications / policies when deciding on a destination or when contracting suppliers:



KPIs Sociales

• Training

During 2023, the BiCB trained a total of 66 people at a number of sessions organised for staff from BiCB, partner companies and the MICE ecosystem in Bilbao. These include:

- One full day workshop on “Bilbao as a Forum for Sustainable Events” given by GDS Movement
- Training about Sustainable Development Goals given by Alex Carrascosa.

• Accessibility

Participants at the conferences held in Bilbao gave a score of 4.69 out of 5 to the perceived commitment of the city with respect to accessibility.

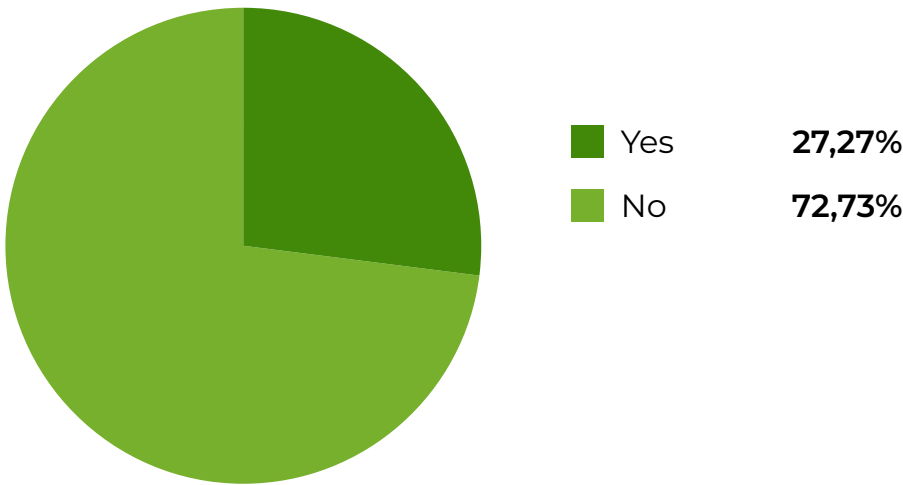
• Equality and Inclusion

With regard to equality and inclusion in recruitment, conference organisers gave low scores to the promotion of the recruitment of individuals with functional diversity and those at risk of social exclusion.

As a result of the assessments received, the recruitment of organisations with inclusive policies is being promoted by means of a portfolio of sustainable tools developed for event organisers.

• Positive impact measures

The majority of organisers did not suggest any positive impact measures for the design of the event, although it should be noted that this indicator has risen by seven points with respect to the previous year.



Economic KPIs

The impact of the direct expenditure of participants and companions to the conferences held in Bilbao in 2023 exceeded €254 mill.

The average expenditure by delegate per day amounted to €363.73.



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