

This platform made public its doubts about this "listening process" at the time of its launch. Even so, with caution, we chose to participate in it, always making it clear that if we saw any type of instrumentalization, we would immediately stop participating. We have always made it clear that Busturialdea does not need a Guggenheim Museum, and today we are even more convinced about it, and we are willing to say so in this process and in all the campaigns. On July 23, the Agirre Lehendakaria Center Foundation announced the first results of the "Listening Process" launched by the Provincial Council of Bizkaia and the Basque Government. After a careful analysis of the report presented and in light of the institutional silence regarding the results published therein, the Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop platform wishes to state the following: that the institutions launch. If what citizens have expressed in the streets isn't enough, we believe this process is another tool to denounce the imposition of this project and ensure that it is documented. Listening to the citizens isn't enough. We must take what they say into account and respect them, above all, since the "listening process" is an instrument that the institutions themselves have put in place. The Basque President Pradales said it very clearly: "You can't govern without listening to the people." This is a unique opportunity to set an example and deliver on what's been said!

Having seen and read the headlines published by the media, it seems clear that Murueta will not be the site for the expansion of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. We have always said so: this is the heart of the Biosphere Reserve, an enormously vulnerable area, showing the effects of overtourism, and one that requires urgent active management measures. The exclusion of Murueta seems to open the possibility of a new location in Urdaibai, but we have clearly stated that Busturialdea cannot be the place for such a large-scale tourism project. Moving the project away from Murueta would mean saving the heart of the Biosphere Reserve, but under no circumstances are we willing to sacrifice any other part of it. Merely avoiding the illegalities that this project in Murueta would entail cannot compensate for the damaging consequences of mass tourism on the region. We will do everything in our power to ensure that one does not replace the other.

We believe it is necessary for the Guggenheim Urdaibai project to be immediately made public. Regarding the participants in the Listening Process who are considered as perception group 004 in the report it is clearly stated that they cannot express an opinion as they do not know what the project is. The lack of information and transparency is the most repeated narrative in the interviews, and if the goal is truly to ensure that citizens' narratives are clear, it is necessary to know what this project is right now, despite the fact that, for now, according to current laws and regulations, the project is not viable. This is the reality we have, a situation that the institutions have created by putting the cart before the horse.

The institutions must abandon this project today and respond responsibly to the real needs of Busturialdea! Clean up the land and the aquifer that have been contaminated and, as they have repeatedly promised, carry out the restoration work; without pre-conditions and respect the Biosphere Reserve by investing public money for the benefit of citizens and nature and without expecting economic benefits in return. Finally, an erroneous or biased reading of the report's results shows no respect for this process. Stating in headlines that the GU project has no opposition is pure manipulation of the truth, since citizens have very clearly expressed their willingness to accept other cultural infrastructures, though not specifically the Guggenheim museum.

The Strategic Plan for the Busturialdea-Urdaibai Region proposes cultural infrastructures, something which can easily be done by repurposing an existing building for a museum, but without using more cement or infringing the law.

Stop the Guggenheim Urdaibai project in Urdaibai!

In Busturialdea, 29 July 2025

