



ETORKIZUNA  
**ERAIKIZ**  
think tank

**NEW POLITICAL CULTURE**  
**REPORT OF THE 12th MEETING**

16/06/2021

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## SPACE FOR DELIBERATION ON THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

ZOOM, 16 June, 2021, 5-7 pm

### 1. Programme

Theme	Person responsible
Introduction and presentation of the session	Xabier Barandiaran, Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa
Assessment of the process and presentation of proposals for the next cycle	Miren Larrea, Orkestra
Plenary session: sharing of assessment and proposals	Miren Larrea, Orkestra
End of session	Eider Mendoza, Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa

### 2. Group members

In attendance:

1. Sebastian Zurutuza. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
2. Ander Arzelus. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
3. Xabier Barandiaran. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
4. Ion Muñoa. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
5. Goizeder Manotas. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
6. Eider Mendoza. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
7. Itziar Eizagirre. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
8. Mikel Pagola. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
9. Miren Larrea. **Orkestra.**
10. Asier Lakidain. **Sinnergiak**
11. Naiara Goia. **Aranzazu Laboratory of Social Innovation.**
12. Mikel Irizar. **Eusko Ikaskuntza.**
13. Gorka Espiau. **Agirre Lehendakaria Center**
14. Ander Errasti. **Institut d'Estudis de l'Autogovern.**

15. Fernando Tapia. **University of the Basque Country**
16. Eva Sánchez. **Orkestra.**
17. Mikel Gaztañaga. **Orkestra.**

### 3. Introduction and presentation of the session

The session was opened by the Head of Strategy and Research, who thanked all the participants for coming. *“July and August are always complicated. We all have a lot to do during these months. We tend to have a busy schedule. So I want to thank everyone for the effort.”*

The Head of Strategy and Research explained that *“today's meeting has three objectives:”*

1. The Assessment: *“In this last part of the process we have been making an assessment of this last year. So I see today's session as finishing off that assessment. Unlike other days, we are going to do today's assessment in one group. We will take stock of the whole year's work. We have compiled some results, but also some concerns that need to be resolved.”*
2. Improvement of the Think Tank: *“After the evaluation and assessment of the process I would like to make a proposal for improving the Think Tank. The Think Tank should be judged positively. It has many positive things, but there are things that need to be improved. We need to strengthen the Think Tank even further. That's why I think we should place the Think Tank at the centre of Etorikizuna Eraikiz.”*
3. Changes: *“At the same time, I would like to mention a small change in the group running this Think Tank group. From now on it will be DFG6 who will lead the New Political Culture group. I think it makes a lot more sense like that”*

He added that *"the meeting will be in two parts. The first part will be used to assess the process. And the second part will be used to make proposals."* He then handed the floor to the Orkestra Driver.

#### 4. Assessment of the process and presentation of proposals for the next cycle

The Orkestra Driver said that *"the first part of the session will be all about the assessment. The second part is going to be about improvements going forward."*

She asked the participants whether *"anyone would like to give an opinion on the assessment, or make any contribution about it at this early stage."* She reminded them that *"this process is ending now, so anyone wants to comment on anything, this is the time to do it."* The Orkestra Driver then handed the floor back to the Head of Strategy and Research.

The Head of Strategy and Research took the floor and added that *"in the overall assessment, the process was rated very positively. We have created a space for collaborative governance. And at the same time, a very important degree of trust has been built up. In other words, the process has been successful in building trust. So we can conclude that we have met the goals we set out at the beginning."*

He added that *"after talking to different participants who have been involved in the process, meeting the different groups that make up the Think Tank, meeting the deputies (provincial ministers), and attending several meetings, I conclude that a lot is being learned from the Think Tank process. We are finding answers to questions together. A very interesting network is being created. We have brought together around 100 people from different spaces. That's very important. And keeping that network alive is not easy. In fact, it is very difficult. The commitment can be said to be there. And, although there is work to be done, what has been achieved so far is something to be valued. And that is why we also need to strengthen the Think Tank. It needs to be reinforced."*



He then proposed certain improvements for the Think Tank:

1. *"The first improvement has to do with governance. Until now, we have had a promoter group and the coordination group. In other words, you have been working with two groups at the same time. One group worked on the logistics, while the second has been working from a more political perspective. But, experience has shown us that there is a high degree of repetition between the two groups. In reality, the operational group is more involved than the coordination group. The coordination group was not very efficient. So as a result, from now on the Think Tank will have a single coordination group."* He said that he himself would be coordinating the group. However, it will also include DFG1, DFG3 and DFG5 from the Provincial Government and the Orkestra Driver. The Head of Strategy and Research concluded by saying that *"the change in management is also an improvement from a governance point of view."*
2. *"Among the objectives of the Think Tank is to create a space for co-generating knowledge. That is why it has to be related to academia (Orkestra, Mondragon University, etc.). But that space needs to be reinforced. We need a single space for knowledge generation. And that space is the Think Tank. This is why the work*



*that DFG5 used to do now has to be done by the Think Tank. We need to think of the Think Tank as a centre for generating thought and strategy. The Think Tank has a great responsibility: it should be a beacon for change in the ecosystem. The system needs to be simplified: it needs to be clearer and better."*

3. *"On the other hand, there is the issue of dissemination. A very big effort is being made in the Think Tank groups. But, externally, we need to highlight Etorikizuna Eraikiz, and the Think Tank has to be the one to lead the dissemination of Etorikizuna Eraikiz, through courses, conferences, etc. The Think Tank should be responsible for this dissemination. And it will be DFG1 who will lead that process."*
4. *"On the other hand, there is the working methodology. My proposal is that the groups should have a similar methodology. In other words, the methodology has to be shared. There is a difference in the methodologies. But, because of its ambition, this Think Tank requires some uniformity in terms of methodology. Each group cannot have its own methodology. They each need to have similar methodology. There should be as little difference as possible between what is said and what is done. It is important to develop and share a sense of concept. It is important to focus on methodology. We need to work on it."*

He explained that *"the assessment of the Think Tank has been very positive. Networks are being created that influence the ecosystem. And in that sense these four points are intended to reinforce the Think Tank. Or at least it is a proposal for improvement. And given that the Think Tank is based on democratic values, we will now discuss the proposal and the assessment. You have the floor now."*

The Orkestra Driver thanked the Head of Strategy and Research and asked whether anyone had any other proposals or questions.

ECO1 said *"I agree with the approach taken by the Head of Strategy and Research. I thought it was a timely contribution."*

The Orkestra Driver discussed the Action Research methodology. She said that *"although there seems to be a consensus, there are often latent conflicts. I would like to*

*work on some of the proposals or notes that have been made. Something motivating, that is related to the nature of the Think Tank.” “There has been talk of conceptualization in the Think Tank, that there should be agreement on what the concepts mean. At the same time, the Head of Strategy and Research mentioned the Action Research methodology.”*

*She stressed that “even so, there are some things on which the participants disagree. We don't all see the same thing. Some want to reinforce the conceptualization, the thinking part, and not focus so much on action. This is why it is important to understand that there are a variety of perspectives in terms of methodology, priorities, etc. That doesn't mean that there is complete disagreement, but there are a variety of opinions and perspectives that need to be acknowledged. That is why it is important to decide where to place the focus.”*



*She added that “there is also the question of the subgroups. Some people say that the subgroups have contributed to a certain loss of focus. On the other hand, others say that the subgroups have contributed enormously, that they have been very positive, and that it is precisely there that the added value lies. So, there is a difference in perspective. Therefore, the question would be: do you want to continue working in the subgroups? There are some questions which will be discussed in the full group. One question could*



*be, how can this deliberation group influence the ecosystem of the provincial government's policies?*

*She also stressed that "we should reflect on the projects that were proposed. We have to choose the projects. And there is also the question of the fragmentation of projects. Whether to focus on one or a few projects, or to be involved in many different projects. That is why it would be good for people to make their contributions in the plenary session." She added that "in July there will be no session, except for the meeting for drafting the book."*

*The Orkestra Driver concluded by saying that "now is the time to raise any criticisms and give your opinions on the issues that have been addressed."*

## 5. Full session: sharing of assessment and proposals

*DFG1 said that "at the beginning, our concern was that the knowledge generated would not come to anything in practice. That is, it would ultimately be shelved. Knowledge had to be directed towards actions. But, it is difficult to strike a balance. We have four groups, and not all of them have the same logic. There is an asymmetry. In our group, the risk is of focusing on actions and neglecting the creation of knowledge. In this group, we have to prioritise knowledge generation. We have to create the knowledge first. I may be taking it to the extreme, as everything is always a combination of factors."*

*DFG6 said "I have no special contribution to make. There are some concepts that are new to me. There is theory, and there is also practice. It is a dialectic between theory and practice. Also, I've had some difficulty understanding some things. Because of the content and the language. Still, I have learned a lot from the process. The theory is important, and then you learn from practice. Or you test out whether it's valid or not."*

ECO1 added *"I agree with what has been said. As for the format, we need to take into account the value of face-to-face meetings. Or at least to have something mixed. Doing it online is fine, but you have to bear in mind that you often lose a lot in the process."*

The Head of Strategy and Research commented that *"I noticed that there were different languages in the subgroup. In some cases, we didn't understand each other. There were different paradigms, which led to a lot of misunderstandings. One thing must be clear: collaborative governance in Europe is going to be strengthened. And we have to be sure we do our homework if we are to catch that train. And that means that we must work with the same conceptualization. We need to know what we are talking about when we talk about collaborative governance. A strong sense of concept means being better able to explain the conceptualization in other projects. We need to know what we are talking about. And that requires shared work, and everyone share at least to some degree the conceptualization and the paradigms. We need to objectify the value created. Subjectivism is fine. For example, when ECO3 talks about the Think Tank having influenced the Badalab project. But, it is necessary to create an objectification so that we can talk about it elsewhere. What is important is the dialectic between objectivity and subjectivity."*

He went on to explain that *"one project involves drawing up a map of collaborative governance in Gipuzkoa. Collaborative governance needs to be strengthened. It is necessary to create discourses and methodologies, so that we can import and expand. And also so that it can be applied elsewhere. That is why it is necessary to emphasize the objectivity of the products that are created. I believe that this should be the group that expands and promotes collaborative governance in the territory. There is a lot of work to be done, but it is an opportunity. The goal could be to create a school for collaborative governance."*

ECO6 said he wanted to make some contributions. The first was *"that I agree with the Head of Strategy and Research. And we have to have a starting point. That is, a common conceptualization. Or a common framework."* His second contribution was on the Think Tank's capacity to influence. He said *"the ability to influence is something very important*

*and ambitious. But, the reality is that we get together for two hours a month and it's difficult to have an impact in that time. We need ways of influencing and impacting. That's why I wonder whether we dedicate enough time to the project. There is a lot of ambition, but we need to provide the means by which these ambitions can be materialised. You have to make what you're doing tangible. Are we generating trust? But how can we make that tangible? How do you measure that? We need to think about that."*

*ECO3 took the floor, saying "Like ECO6 there are a lot of things I don't understand. You need non-conformism. But not dissatisfaction. After the year-long process, we are still here, wanting to do more. We don't get paid. I think we're doing something right, don't you? This year there has been a lot of reflection, and there has also been an emphasis on practice. We've had an influence on some things like, for example, Badalab. Out of what we learn from practice we also have to create knowledge, and vice-versa. We are not doing things wrong, though it is true that there are improvements we can make. There has to be a dialectic between plan and action."*

*DF3 said "I've seen a lot of loss of focus. And the thinking should be geared towards action. There has been a great loss of focus which is related to the subgroups. And that hasn't helped much. I felt that we were missing a link, a thread between thought and action. There is a need for a common conceptualization, or a common framework."*

*DFG7 added that "we need to reach consensus on the terms. In the subgroups we are working from different paradigms. Several projects are being worked on, in which collaborative governance is being imported. So one could say that the practice is in place (and also a certain legal security, guarantees, etc.). It needs to be validated technically. Possibly, we didn't have enough time. The OECD is working with what we are doing. That is why we are not far away. Or we are doing things right. But we need to carry out a technical assessment."*

*ECO9 took the floor to comment on the issue of the subgroups; "I think the subgroups serve their purpose, and for that reason, I think they should stay. It is in the subgroups*

*that we develop trust and familiarity. And that is why I think it is right to use them in the Think Tank. It is true that there is a need for clarity in the conceptualization. For example, with a glossary in the upcoming book about the concepts that have been worked on. This would be a conceptualization that we would create and it would show how these concepts have been worked on over the last year."*

*DFG5 added "I'm going to comment on something different, as I don't want to repeat what has already been said. In a Think Tank, action is understood when concepts and ideas are put in the public space, in circulation, or on the table. But, we have neglected this issue. I mean, we haven't worked it out. A Think Tank needs a relationship with the public. I think this is even more important in the case of a public Think Tank. That's why I think there needs to be a connection with the general public. The ideas have to be set out. Not only because it gives a Think Tank legitimacy, but also because the goal is to introduce concepts and ideas into the public debate through communication, dissemination, etc. You have to develop clear concepts, clear questions, and that is also action. That is also a way of making an impact. I think these ideas need to be made explicit."*

*ECO12 added that "we are collaborating in projects, in Badalab, Arantzazu Lab, etc. And in these projects, it is a reality that we are influencing. We are putting it into action. And there is mutual feedback between action and knowledge creation. The deliberation process involves the entirety. Another challenge is explicitness. In what ways are we going to make it explicit? For example, building trust. How do we make that trust tangible? Can there be indicators? Are they correct enough to make the trust tangible?"*

*ECO10 commented "I strongly agree with what has been said. I joined the process late. But, I think knowledge has been generated. We have learned what the Think Tank is. Or, at least, what it should be like. And that's a lot of progress. There are many types of Think Tanks. We have been defining and negotiating what the Think Tank should be. In other words, what we mean by a Think Tank. In addition, we have managed to turn the group into a community. We have common goals, with a shared trust, we have created a shared ethical dimension. That's all very good. We have to create a repertoire with some of the*

*concepts we have been using and incorporating into the process. In my opinion the most valuable practice is the activity of the Think Tank itself. On the other hand, how can we influence the provincial government? And its activity? This is a very difficult question. In order to have a direct impact on the Provincial Government, it is necessary to create legitimacy. I've probably been very abstract, but I've tried to set out some of my reflections."*

ECO6 said that *"in reference to what ECO10 said about the different characteristics Think Tanks should have, I think we should rethink what a modern Think Tank should look like. People elsewhere are making the same reflections. That's why we should get our radar working. We should be looking elsewhere for inspiration. Or, at least, to know what is being done in other places. For example, I recently read a very interesting article about what Think Tanks should be like in the 21st century."* He said he would share the link to the article via the chat.

The Orkestra Driver commented on the drafting of the book. She gave a short explanation of the process of writing the book. *"I invite you all to participate in the meeting to be held on 6 July at 11:00 a.m.. This meeting will discuss how to write based on experience. In any case, you have all taken on different commitments with regard to the writing of the book. In this book we can take some steps in relation to the challenges that have been raised. Some of you are writing a chapter on conceptualization. This chapter could set out some of the basic concepts behind the process. In other words, in this chapter it will be possible to overcome the conceptual confusion."* At the same time, she said, *"the information is in the reports and in the working documents. However, that information is not suitable for dissemination. You have to summarise that information, or create messages that might be valid for dissemination."*

She said *"we will have to decide what to do with the subgroups, as many of you have commented on the need to reorganize them. Nonetheless, the reality of the subgroups is a reflection of the diversity that underlies the groups. Each participant approaches the knowledge and the topics in a different way. The subgroups reflect that diversity. The goal has been to create spaces where people can feel comfortable. This way of*

*organizing the groups has allowed each group to work in different areas: theory, methodology, practice, etc. However, we feel we are now in a position to work together. But we need to identify how to do that. Given that the subgroups have allowed that action and reflection to be worked on at the same time, and that process has been accompanied by a situation of diversity among the different members of the group. It may be time to move beyond that dichotomy."*

The Orkestra Driver added that *"if we take action research as a methodology, that requires getting past this dichotomy, but there is something we have to overcome in our language. And sometimes it is felt that first the knowledge needs to be created, and then that knowledge can be put into practice. In the methodology of action research, practice is also understood as a space for creating knowledge. Knowledge can be created in different ways. Knowledge can be created by discussing theory, but also by putting concepts into practice and testing them against the real situation. One thing we all agree on is that the aim of the Think Tank is to co-create knowledge. However, the way to co-create knowledge can be approached from theory, or from practice. All of this will be discussed in September."*

ECO3 said he wanted to mention *"something related to the account/story. And what we are doing today is very valuable. What we have done this past year has been like a preview. This year has functioned like a test. And we have seen that we have built trust, that we know how to manage complexity, that we are prepared to work together and that we are willing to work. The issues that are being raised reflect problems that tend to arise in growth, because we want to move forward and we want to improve. The book concludes and documents this first phase. However the Think Tank —with a new, refined methodology and discourse— starts in September. For that reason, we can't demand too much from the process of this past year. We need to focus the improvements on September. That's how I see it."*

DFG3 said that *"when I referred to the subgroups, I was not saying that we need to get rid of them, but that we have to consider whether they should continue permanently. That's the doubt I have."*



The Head of Strategy and Research took the floor to make some comments. *"In my opinion, there are some things that need to be incorporated or improved if the Think Tank is to continue being a think tank. These are things that have to be agreed upon. But, these questions need to be answered, as this Think Tank has some relevant institutional requirements. And one of those requirements is conceptualization. I don't think the glossary and the conceptualization should be separate. We need to create a consensual conceptualization. We all have to share a common language. I believe that is a must. It is impossible to move forward without this common conceptualization. On the other hand, there is the explicitness of the action. Creating knowledge creation, let's admit it (I do, anyway), is a form of action. So because we need a common conceptualization, we need an objectification of action. I believe that these two axes are fundamental. And in relation to what I said before, we have an ecosystem, which is Etorkizuna Eraikiz. And Etorkizuna Eraikiz has to be both our object and our subject. On the other hand, we have to learn a lot from what has been done; in other words, from the practice. However, our Think Tank needs a code for discourse and a code for action. So that we can communicate."*

The Orkestra Driver spoke again, commenting that *"there are some principal challenges. And one of them is to create a system for the objectification of practice. How can that be achieved? We will begin that question or discussion in September. On the other hand, there is the conceptualization of the book. The glossary will help in that conceptualization, but also in improving its dissemination. That is to say, it can be an aid to us in the dissemination."*

ECO1 said *"on the subject of objectification, it cannot be a traditional assessment system, since an innovation process requires other types of monitoring and tools, and indicators to make an assessment. This is why, in addition to using more traditional indicators, we need to generate our own indicators. And the creation of these own indicators is related to this deliberative process. I want to stress that traditional tools of objectification should not be used, as they will certainly not work for us."*

The Head of Strategy and Research remarked that *"ECO1's last point made is very interesting. We cannot use classic indicators. But, objectification should not be viewed in the same way as subjectification. And we need to have a discussion around this."*

According to ECO1, *"we have to look for hybrid indicators. And, we have to look for them from among us."*

## 6. Assessment and end of session

The Orkestra Driver again took the floor to close the session. She reviewed some of the topics addressed during the session such as *"objectification, theory and practice, conceptualization, the book, etc. Some of the most important contributions will be included in the working document, and from September onwards we will continue to work with the material we have compiled."*

The Head of Strategy and Research thanked all the participants, saying that *"it has been a pleasure to be working in the Think Tank over this last year. And I will continue to take part in the process. I'm going to hand the floor over to DFG6."*

DFG6 thanked the Head of Strategy and Research, and commented that *"a lot was said during the session. I believe we will find the best way to understand each other and shape the project."* Again, she thanked all the participants *"for working on this project and for collaborating to create a space where we can talk at leisure"*.

The Orkestra Driver concluded the session by thanking all the participants and reminding them to complete the assessment. She also reminded them that a meeting would be held to write the book and that the process will resume in September. *"Have a good summer, and thank you very much"*.

## 7. Appendices

### a. Presentation used during the session



### Deliberation Group on the New Political Culture 16/06/2021

Session Location



September 2021 - 2023



June 2020-May 2021



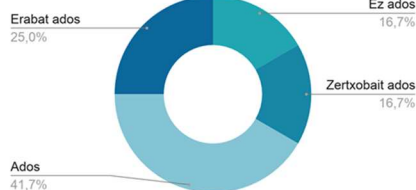
Objectives of the session:

1. Share the assessment
2. Organise for drafting of the book
3. Lay the groundwork for the next phase

## Assessment



Gipuzkoako Foru Aldundiaren politiken ekosisteman eragiten ari gara jada



Jarritako helburua bete dugu



Closing of the previous phase: drafting of the book

6 July, at 11:00 am



## Bases of the new phase



- Governance of the think tank and discussion group
- Dissemination
- Academic work
- Process facilitation and methodology

## Issues for deliberation: the "what" of the think tank

- I felt some words were very repetitive and actually meant very little [complexity, systemic, experimentation, etc.]. Moreover, they are repeated almost automatically. I agree with some of these words, but it would be helpful to work on them analytically, compare them with other ideas and forms of practise or ways of doing things and to define the differences and talk about their cultural implications
- New Political Culture and Collaborative Governance - Conceptualisation: the need to define a shared understanding and a consensual definition of these two key "starting" concepts (in order to focus action and guide future thinking)

Do we need new topics/concepts for deliberation or is it a matter of exploring further those we have discussed so far?

## Methodology: the “how” of the think tank

- Certain ideas about the need for action, experimentation, etc. are repeated often. As far as I know there are already increasing numbers of spaces for this and I would be concerned if the Think Tank were to tend in that direction.
- I understand that some people felt more comfortable in the second part of the process. However that is one question, and another is whether or not that is the function of the Think Tank. One way or another, we should resolve our doubts about the nature, meaning and purpose of this Think Tank.
- From the assessments it is clear that we are sure what the objective of the Think Tank's deliberation is: reflection, cogeneration and tendency to action. However, given that this is the case for all four groups, I wonder whether this New Political Culture group should perhaps focus more on reflection than on action. The four groups are different in character. I think the this group's ambition requires it to stand back further from the day-to-day in these early stages.
- We need to continue to co-generate knowledge through deliberation, but as someone in the group wrote, I think we need to make the leap to practice.
- If this rewarding and innovative link between projects and reflection is maintained, significant steps can be expected in the creation of a new political culture.
- I did not get as much from the experts' participation as I had expected. I think it is much more interesting to go back over the experience accumulated in the organization and validate it technically in order to organise the action around the axes of collaborative governance and, in general, to bring visibility to the progress and the shortfalls. We need to work on the practical and solid conceptualisation of collaborative governance, rooted in the practice of the Provincial Government.

Given that time is very limited, where do we need to place the focus?

## Single group - continue by subgroups

- The subgroups have led to fragmentation (reported in previous documents)
- We are very satisfied with the subgroups. It is true that it is necessary to work more on the links between the subgroups (I believe that this will also bring visibility to the links with the action).
- In the deliberation process, some groups generate theoretical knowledge and others generate practice-oriented knowledge. That is where our added value lies. We are focusing on different sections that are part of a whole. This can tie in with our group structure (from the working documents) and be productive)

Do you want to continue working in subgroups?



To work on in the full session



With what has been discussed today, we will start the new dynamic at the SEPTEMBER SESSION (there are no sessions in July).

Taking into account the **assessment** and the **bases of the new phase**:

- How can this deliberation group influence the DFG policy ecosystem? (to follow the think tank's mission)
- How will we work on co-generating knowledge?
- What could the role of the experts be?
- What can the role of each one of us be?

Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

After seeing how the team has rated the year's work, what is your reflection for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas



Please remember  
to fill in the  
assessment  
questionnaire

## THINK TANK

Process of deliberation on new political culture: Working Document No. 13

### **Deliberation Group on New Political Culture: A YEAR'S JOURNEY AND CRITERIA FOR THE FUTURE**

(16 June 2021)

#### Introduction

June 2021 was a milestone for the deliberation group on the new political culture.

Following the assessment of the year covered so far, the group laid the foundations for the new period, 2021-2023.

This document contains three contributions that have served as the basis for this work:

- a) Inputs from group members after reading the assessment report
- b) Bases of the new phase shared by Xabier Barandiaran
- c) Interventions from participants from the June session, taking into account the previous two inputs.

#### Post-assessment learning

With regard to the specific themes, some members of the group have contributed to the concepts worked on so far. They have questioned some of these concepts and stressed the need to work further on others:

“I felt some words were very repetitive and actually meant very little [complexity, systemic, experimentation, etc.]. Moreover, they are repeated almost automatically. I agree with some of these words, but it would be helpful to work on them analytically, compare them with other ideas and forms of practise or ways of doing things and to define the differences and talk about their cultural implications”

“New Political Culture and Collaborative Governance - Conceptualization: the need to define a shared understanding and a consensual definition of these two key "starting" concepts (in order to focus action and guide future thinking)”

Regarding the methodology of the Think Tank, some of the participants expressed concern at an excessive tendency towards action:

“Certain ideas about the need for action, experimentation, etc. are repeated often. As far as I know there are already increasing numbers of spaces for this and I would be concerned if the Think Tank were to tend in that direction”

“I understand that some people felt more comfortable in the second part of the process. However, that is one question, and another is whether or not that is the function of the Think Tank. One way or another, we should resolve our doubts about the nature, meaning and purpose of this Think Tank”

“From the assessments it is clear that we are sure what the objective of the Think Tank's deliberation is:

reflection, cogeneration and tendency to action. However, given that this is the case for all four groups, I wonder whether this New Political Culture group should perhaps focus more on reflection than on action. The four groups are different in character. I think this group's ambition requires it to stand back further from the day-to-day in these early stages”

Others considered that integrating action into the knowledge generation process was one of the values of the Think Tank:

“We need to continue to co-generate knowledge through deliberation, but as someone in the group wrote, I think we need to make the leap to practice”

“If this rewarding and innovative link between projects and reflection is maintained, significant steps can be expected in the creation of a new political culture”

“I did not get as much from the experts' participation as I had expected. I think it is much more interesting to go back over the experience accumulated in the organization and validate it technically in order to organize the action around the axes of collaborative governance and, in general, to bring visibility to the progress and the shortfalls. We need to work on the practical and solid conceptualisation of collaborative governance, rooted in the practice of the Provincial Government”

At the same time, several working groups have been set up to foster collaboration in translating reflection into action. These groups have been operating for almost a year.

These are the opinions on those groups: On the one hand, one problem related to these groups was identified:

“The subgroups have led to fragmentation (reported in previous documents)”

On the other hand, the contribution of these subgroups has also been recognized:

“We are very satisfied with the subgroups. It is true that it is necessary to work more on the links between the subgroups (I believe that this will also bring visibility to the links with the action)”

“In the deliberation process, some groups generate theoretical knowledge and others generate practice-oriented knowledge. That is where our added value lies. We are focusing on different sections that are part of a whole. This can tie in with our group structure (from the working documents) and be productive.”

## Basic criteria for phase 2021-2022

Xabier Barandiaran presented the main axes for the period 2021-2023. In addition to the information contained here, he also set out who will be responsible for working on each of the axes. These criteria are the same for all four Think Tank focus groups.

### a) Governance of the Think Tank

Going forward, the Think Tank will have a single management team. The Coordination Group will disappear and the Coordination Group and Promotion Group will be combined into a single group.

### b) The Think Tank's reflection, research and academic work

The development of the Think Tank is based on methodology of action research. The Think Tank is a broad space of experimentation at whose centre lies the creation and dissemination of new knowledge with different agents. It is therefore essential that the Think Tank becomes the driving force behind academic creation and that ETORKIZUNA ERAIKIZ should be the centre of the different research and strategic reflections.

### c) Dissemination and sharing

The work carried out by Etorkizuna Eraikiz Think Tank must be publicised in wider society. The Think Tank, beyond the social agents participating in the different groups,

must become a space for reflection on the new political agenda with the different social agents and the general public.

#### d) Think Tank working methodology

Given that the Think Tank's working methodology is that of action research, it is advisable to follow the same working process in all the groups, using the following steps: (1) Establish the objectives of the action; (2) Agree on the basic conceptualisation; (3) Design and develop the action and its assessment.

### Reflection of the group on the future of the Think Tank

The following lines set out the group's reflections on the topics compiled in the previous sections. The aspect that generated most controversy was the working methodology, and these contributions have therefore been included in a specific section.

#### *Think Tank working methodology*

In addition to the considerations from the assessment, the following remarks were made:

- a) There is a clear diversity in the group and we have different approaches to theory and practice.
- b) Within each subgroup we also speak different languages; we are starting from different paradigms.
- c) We have been able to manage the complexity to work together.
- d) We have created knowledge, negotiated and offered a repertoire of knowledge.
- e) Our mission is to have a solid conceptualization, a common playing field.
- f) You can prioritise reflection in the short term and resort to action in the longer term.
- g) Things that now appear as dichotomies (reflection/action), we had initially overcome.
- h) Two projects are proposed for this group: on the one hand, drafting a map of collaborative governance and, on the other, selecting some concrete projects and using them to put into practise the ideas we worked on during the deliberation phase.
- i) We have already selected a number of projects and implemented the aspects addressed in the deliberation in them: Aurrerabide, Badalab, ArantzazuLab.
- j) The action does not necessarily have to be a "project".
- k) Etorikizuna Eraikiz itself can be the reference for this deliberation group.



- l) The Think Tank itself is a prototype that we can use for experimentation.
- m) Rather than influencing other projects, we can make the process itself tangible. We are making an impact, the question is: How can we measure that impact?
- n) We must overcome subjectivity and measure what we do within "recognizable" categories.
- o) It is very difficult to measure what we do within the "recognizable" categories". The objectification system cannot be a traditional assessment system, we need hybrid indicators. In addition to the previous sections, the following aspects were also mentioned in relation to the Think Tank.
  - a) There is an imbalance between the ambition we have at Think Tank and the resources available to us.
  - b) Non-conformism is necessary; it is not the same as dissatisfaction.
  - c) The book will conclude this phase; the next phase will be a more refined Think Tank.
  - d) The issue of collaborative governance is gaining momentum in Europe, we should keep ahead of the game in Gipuzkoa and show ourselves as a benchmark.
  - e) The digital format has influenced the formation of the group, we should resort to mixed processes.

Based on these ideas and in order to prepare the September proposal, the following ideas have been collected:

- a) The first step in answering the need the group identified for clear theories and concepts could be the chapter on theory in the book to be written by the group.
- b) This chapter can be used to draw up a glossary in the book.
- c) It is not necessary to keep the subgroups stable.

## c. Individual exercise templates

### Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

I think it is an appropriate space for exchanging knowledge and creation. Organising a space for dialogue between different people to share theory and practice is always very rewarding. On the other hand, if the experience offered by an online space is not comparable to the potential offered by a physical space, the organisation of the digital sessions has been good. I did not get as much from the experts' participation as I had expected. I think it is much more interesting to go back over the experience accumulated in the organisation and validate it technically in order to organise the action around the axes of collaborative governance and, in general, to bring visibility to the progress and the shortfalls. We need to work on the practical and solid concept of collaborative governance, rooted in the practice of the Provincial Government, in order to share common ideas and a common language. This would strengthen the institution's action by providing greater coherence and coordination between departments. We have to reach a consensus on the terms and that requires that the terms be clear.

In terms of subsequent phases, it would be helpful to establish concepts to promote spaces for action and to share the results elsewhere.

### Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

On the one hand, it is clear from the results of the assessment that the group sees the need for a medium-long term perspective to see the transformations that have arisen in this Think Tank. I believe that this is positive and it reinforces the work that we have developed together.

On the other hand, I see conflicting opinions about the guest experts and, going forward, I think it will be very important to get this element right in upcoming sessions. Including experts who are fully aligned with the group's needs can strengthen our cohesion and reduce the sense of "disengagement" that has been mentioned.

In addition, I would like to pick up on two perspectives from the assessment with which I agree:

1. "Can we bring in other projects for discussion in addition to the ones dealt with this year? Perhaps we can find projects of interest in the construction of a new political culture and invite those responsible to join the deliberation team."
2. "I believe that, insofar as we refer to ourselves as a "Think Tank", we should create the right conditions to disseminate content, ideas, concepts, etc. to society. As well as the transformations that the participants (us) are going to make in their respective fields, I think that a Think Tank like this needed to be clearer in its dealings with society, especially when the promoter is a public body. And for that I think it should disseminate and share ideas, debates, messages, reflections, etc."

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

I think the group has now acquired a good dynamic and we are very comfortable with the subgroups. It is true that it is necessary to work more on the links between the subgroups (I believe that this will also bring visibility to the links with the action).

At an operational level, I think another key issue is the frequency of the sessions and the involvement of the people. That's something I think we can review.

The formula for providing expert knowledge also seems to me to be a key issue.

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

- New Political Culture and Collaborative Governance - Conceptualisation: the need to define a shared understanding and a consensual definition of these two key "starting" concepts (in order to focus action and guide future thinking)
- Think tank's capacity to influence ("Driving public policy transformation"): resources and necessary conditions (Resources - personal, economic, time, deadlines, commitment of the institution, people in charge, etc.). Dedication of two hours per month of those who participate vs. Level of ambition. Is it possible for some people to offer more responsibility, commitment and dedication to the process?
- Increase the impact on the ecosystem (from trust and collective cohesion, to deepening processes and working on mutual integration). Personal responsible for action? Modify extent of action?
- Looking after the different balances: types of knowledge (methodological, experimental, theoretical); reflection/action; external expert/team member ...
- Sharing the results of the Think tank - Method, process and results - (strengthen the dissemination system)
- Looking for inspiration. Are there any other similar experiences? (e.g. "Reimagining the modern think tanks"- [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/we\\_need\\_to\\_reimagine\\_the\\_modern\\_think\\_tank?utm\\_source=Enews&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=SSIR\\_Now](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/we_need_to_reimagine_the_modern_think_tank?utm_source=Enews&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=SSIR_Now))

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?**

**You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

I will start from my own experience. From the beginning we were asked to relate what we were working on in the group with the action project we had closest to hand. In my case it was BADALAB. When it came to creating a centre of reference centre, a relatively 'conformist' model of governance (foundation) was chosen, with a view to enabling it to be homologated with other centres. When we started dealing with the topic of New Political Culture, I realised that the collaborative creation of BADALAB made this case particularly interesting for going further in cooperation and exploratory work. The team understood it well, because it was placed on the long list of projects and there it remains, even though the list has been cut down a lot. With this support, and with the opportunities that have opened up in reflection, we are carrying out very daring experimentation in the way the laboratory is run. On the one hand, we have agreed on shared governance without hegemonies of power between public institutions and social agents, something which is very unusual in this country. And on the other hand, we will give this governance an innovative legal structure as a consortium, with the flexibility to allow it to react as well as possible to this complexity.

I am convinced that the governance at BADALAB will be a very advanced experiment, that it will lead us up some unknown paths and that we will face many teething troubles. That's why I think that if the experiment goes well, it will be a very valuable precedent for rolling out collaborative governance securely.

And all this is due to the work of the Think Tank. Without it, BADALAB would be just another foundation.

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?**

**You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

2) Looking ahead, I think the year's work has yielded some interesting results:

- We have generated trust in the group
- We are building a basic shared vision
- There is a strong commitment to the people involved and a collective will to move forward
- We have very clearly identified the importance of action to feed reflection; we are not looking for pure speculation.
- The think tank is already having a clear influence on the selected projects

I believe that once this foundation is laid, the group will enter a productive phase. On the one hand, because we have learned from the mistakes made in the first round and I am sure that the methodology will be refined to make the group's performance more effective; and, on the other hand, because the experiments that are being undertaken will provide more and more information to open up new lines of reflection.

If this rewarding and innovative link between projects and reflection is maintained, significant steps can be expected in the creation of a new political culture.



## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

When I joined the Think Tank group, I felt it had ambitious goals: 1) to generate transferable and applicable knowledge through collaborative governance; 2) to shape a new political agenda and culture in order to influence the policies of the provincial government. Of course, these goals cannot be achieved overnight. The approach of the Think Tank is consistent with studies on Communities of Practice (COP), which argue that innovation arises from the actions of groups created by people who often have common goals (or practices). Of course, it is also consistent with other methodologies of collective thinking and social innovation. My impression is that through group deliberation we have made progress in the first goal of the Think Tank, because together we have generated knowledge and, consequently, we have learned together. The reason has been possible is that in a year of work sessions, perhaps sometimes unconsciously, we have worked on three dimensions: the company (common goal), mutual commitment and, to a lesser extent, the shared repertoire. I believe that this is the most solid basis for the work of the future.

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

Of the three dimensions mentioned above, perhaps the most difficult is the creation of a shared repertoire. It takes time. We can easily work on the common goal and our commitment to others, but to create the repertoire we have to practice, work through trial and error until we come up with the solution. In other words, we need different prototype iteration cycles, *as the only way to connect knowledge and power is by doing it*. That, in my opinion, is our role —or challenge— for the future. We need to continue to co-generate knowledge through deliberation, but as someone in the group wrote, I think we need to make the leap to practice. I know.

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

**Having seen how the team rated the year's work, what are your reflections for the future?  
You do not have to answer all the sections; we just want to gather the main ideas**

1. My general impression is that despite living through the same process, each of us imagines very different things. Not only from the point of view of assessment, but also in terms of the group's expectations and objectives.
2. Of course, think tanks come in many different forms. But I totally agree with one of the assessments: the need for a working team to set a course or offer an in-depth —and in some cases innovative— reading of the general situation.
3. I felt some words were very repetitive and actually meant very little [complexity, systemic, experimentation, etc.]. Moreover, they are repeated almost automatically. I agree with some of these words, but it would be helpful to work on them analytically, compare them with other ideas and forms of practise or ways of doing things and to define the differences and talk about their cultural implications That exercise would offer a lot of surprises. On the other hand, we should do the same exercise with other ideas, concepts and perspectives.

## Template for Dynamic 1: individually, before the session

4. Certain ideas about the need for action, experimentation, etc. are repeated often. As far as I know there are already increasing numbers of spaces for this and I would be concerned if the Think Tank were to tend in that direction. In addition, the shortcomings in the valuations of these spaces have been recognised and the importance of making good local interpretations is being demonstrated. Other than that, I think that the goal of this Think Tank should be the one that Xabier Barandiaran set out on the first day. There is a clear lack of a rooted/popular/innovative approach in Gipuzkoa.
5. There is a tendency to replicate what we hear from elsewhere. Any nation must be open to external ideas —and I mean external, not just in spatial terms— but ultimately, every nation has its own possibilities, limitations, impossibilities, difficulties and even challenges. So what I would ask of the Think Tank is precisely to take stock of what we are. What I feel is missing in the Think Tank is a conceptual exercise [note three] and a precise local knowledge, and the effort to combine the two.
6. In my opinion, the diagnosis made on the first expert sessions and the response to it are symptomatic: the diagnosis was that the experts did not go beyond the theory and that there was other knowledge in the group. My impression is that this is not a fair comparison. However, what was really being highlighted was probably something else: the fact that the reflections were more abstract than theoretical, and that, however valuable theirs were, they said little about our own, and as a result, we were not using our own as a an opportunity for thinking in an innovative way. That was my impression, but another path was taken. I understand that some people felt more comfortable in the second part of the process. However that is one question, and another is whether or not that is the function of the Think Tank. One way or another, we should resolve our doubts about the nature, meaning and purpose of this Think Tank.



## d. Session programme

**THINK TANK****SPACE FOR DELIBERATION ON THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE**

VIRTUAL MEETING, 16 June 2021

**CHALLENGE TO BE WORKED ON IN THE SESSION**

In the April 2021 session, the members of the group made an assessment of a year's work. These assessments were discussed in the coordination group (political leadership of the think tank) and in the driving group (group working on the think tank as a whole, beyond the individual think tanks). As a result of this process we have a series of reflections and proposals that we want to transfer to the deliberation groups.

This June session will be devoted to sharing the results of the assessment, working on the basic criteria proposed and jointly working on the new stage of the think tank that is to be defined to 2023. **Remember that in the case of the Think Tank, it is not only the topics we are dealing with that are new, but also the way in which we work together.** Laying a solid foundation for this second aspect will be essential for meeting the Think Tank's goals.

**AGENDA FOR THE SESSION**

- Introduction
- Presentation of the assessment. Space for the exchange of opinions
- Proposed basic criteria for the work until 2023
- Dynamics for the development of the criteria
- Closing session