

The blue economy in San Sebastián, Spain

Source: OECD Global Survey on Localising the Blue Economy (2022)



FACTS AND FIGURES

Fact box

- **Population:** 187 850 [1]
- **GDP:** EUR 7.1 million [2]
- **Area:** 60.89 km² [3]

Drivers for the blue economy



Boost economic activity



Adapt to climate change



Foster local culture and identity

Blue economy sectors

San Sebastián, a European coastal city on the Bay of Biscay in the Celtic Sea flanked by the Urumea River and the Oria River, is home to all blue economy sectors below, except water-based renewable energies. With three urban beaches and a multitude of water-based recreational activities, such as surfing, a substantial share of the city's economy depends on coastal tourism. San Sebastian is also home to one of several AZTI, Basque research institutes dedicated to the science and development of cutting-edge technologies specialised in the marine environment and food.



Seafood



Water-based renewable energy



Shipping



Port activities



Shipbuilding and repair



Water passenger transport and related services



Water-related tourism



Blue bioeconomy, biotechnology and research and education

BLUE ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

The main environmental impacts of blue economy sectors in San Sebastián relate to greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity loss, water and air pollution, pollution from plastics, disturbance of natural habitats and wildlife, depletion of natural resources and waste generation.

Top 3 climate threats to the blue economy in San Sebastian



Sea level rise



Flood



Wind-related hazards (e.g. storms, tornadoes, hurricanes)

[1] Donostia City Council (2021), www.donostia.eus/ataria/es/web/donostia-data/biztanleak (accessed 15 March 2023)

[2] EUSTAT (2020), PIB municipal y per cápita a precios Corrientes, www.en.eustat.eus/elementos/ele0011100/gross-domestic-product-gdp-of-the-basque-country-by-territorial-scope-current-prices/tbl0011123_i.html (accessed 15 March 2023)

[3] Unidad Municipal de Información del Ayuntamiento de San Sebastián (2021)

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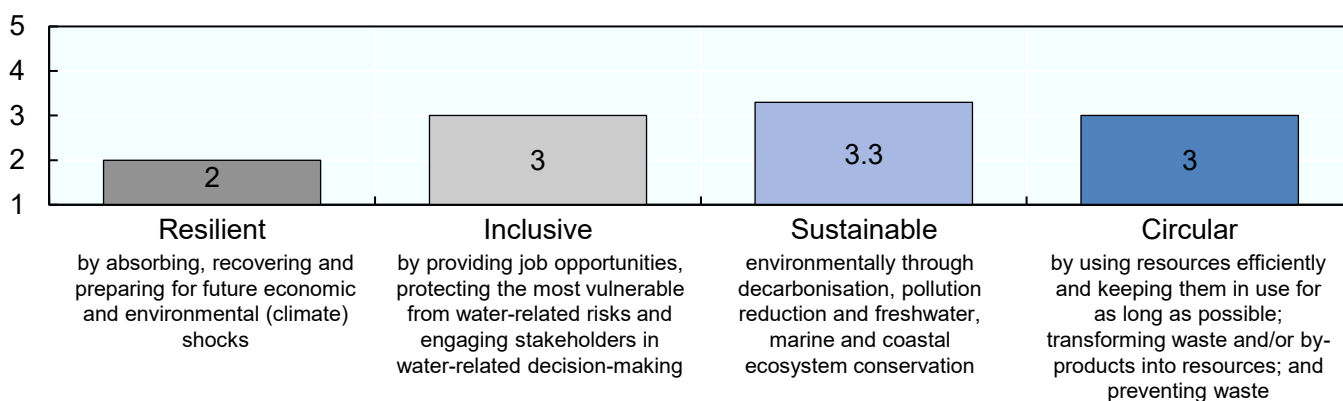
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GOVERNANCE OF THE BLUE ECONOMY

Fomento San Sebastián, the municipal company responsible for the city's socioeconomic development strategy, set up a [Surf City Cluster](#) as a network of businesses, institutions and other actors promoting initiatives and projects for the surf sector through entrepreneurship, innovation, marketing and international market positioning. The neighbouring city of Getaria created the [Blue Point](#), a marine pollution and blue economy intelligence centre, which aims to design of a replicable model to clean up the seas and create jobs in the “circular blue economy” simultaneously focusing on the new global value chain formed around localisation, fishing, recycling and the reuse of marine plastics.

THE RISC-PROOF BLUE ECONOMY ^(*)



(*) Survey respondents were invited to define their level of agreement (with 5 "Agree" and 1 "Disagree") for statements for each of the RISC dimensions (from question 2.1.1 to 2.1.4 of the OECD Global Survey on Localising the Blue Economy (2022).

TOP CHALLENGES

- Lack of a clear and holistic strategy

FUTURE PRIORITIES

- Foster decarbonisation
- Enhance resilience to climate change
- Tackle pollution of water bodies
- Boost technology use and uptake
- Foster a science-policy dialogue