



History

The Consorcio was founded in 1967, to guarantee water supplies to the area known then as Greater Bilbao. This supramunicipal district comprised 19 municipalities, and was at that time undergoing substantial growth.

On March 17, 1967, 19 municipalities in Bizkaia joined with the now defunct Corporación Administrativa Gran Bilbao [Greater Bilbao Administrative Corporation] to set up and manage a primary water supply network and undertake clean-up operations.

The articles of association approved that to regulate the corporate, functional and financial structure of the organisation have undergone substantial amendments since then, mainly to adapt them to new legislation and to cater for the expansion in membership and in the services provided, such as the management of local water supply networks.

More and more areas have joined the organisation, including Uribe-Kosta, Arratia, Durangoaldea and Las Encartaciones, so that it now comprises 80 municipalities with a total population of almost one million, i.e. around 91,26% of the population of Bizkaia and 48,20% of that of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country as a whole.

The area of operations of the organisation includes the most heavily urbanised and industrialised areas of the province of Bizkaia.

Areas of authority

The Consorcio has authority in a number of specific fields, which are listed in Article 8 of its articles of association. The main areas are:

- The primary water supply network: this covers uptake, reservoir storage, transportation, treatment and delivery to major end users and to distribution network header tanks.
- Clean-up operations in the primary network: this covers mains collectors and interceptors (which connect the sewerage network with wastewater treatment plants), treatment plants (with all the associated waste treatment and disposal facilities) and discharge outlets (via which water is returned to natural watercourses after treatment).
- Controlling of industrial discharges: this covers the authorisation, monitoring, controlling and inspection of waste water discharges into the main drainage network and the sewerage network, with the power to apply sanctions for any infringements detected, including the shutting down of improper discharge points and the termination of the associated water supply contracts.
- Customer relations: the Consorcio is responsible for relations with customers on both the primary and secondary networks in all its member municipalities. This extends to reading meters, contracting services,



monitoring consumption, billing and invoice management, handling complaints and the imposition of any sanctions arising from these activities.

The Consorcio is also responsible for ensuring that customer relations are handled consistently according to its regulations in its member municipalities.

Organisational structure

The governing bodies of the organisation are the General Assembly, the Management Committee, the Chair, the Deputy Chair and the Manager.

The General Assembly comprises representatives of the municipal councils of all the organisations member municipalities, along with the Provincial Council of Bizkaia and the Basque Government. Representation is proportional to the number of inhabitants in each municipality.

The Management Committee comprises the Chair, the Deputy Chair and five representatives of the member municipalities, plus the representatives of the Provincial Council of Bizkaia and the Basque Government.

The Chair therefore heads both the General Assembly and the Management Committee. He/she is elected from among the municipal representatives at the Assembly. The Deputy Chair is elected in the same way.

The Manager is in charge of the four areas into which the organisation is divided: Economic/Financial, Operational, Organisational and Technical.