

Hirikia: Language Technology projects in the frame of the European Capital of Culture 2016

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Introduction

San Sebastian was the European Capital of Culture 2016. Hirikia (“hiri irekia”, *open city* in Basque language) was the digital and technological skin of the capitality. Designed and developed in collaboration with the Computer Technology Faculty of the University of the Basque Country, Hirikia aimed to join research and participation in a multilingual environment.

The basic idea "*Waves of energy*" summed up the "soul" of the "San Sebastián 2016" candidature in a clear message: people and movements of citizens are the real driving force behind transformations and changes in the world. They provided the vital civic energy that makes societies advance and progress. Citizens, in short, played the leading role in the search for solutions to new global challenges.

Hirikia initiative

Europe bases its principles for coexistence on a knowledge society. This means that the main role of ICT continues to be to provide access to information and encourage communication. Technology allows us to relate to culture in new ways, given that users of new technologies are active participants and creators of what is happening in the world.

However, beyond having access, people want to create, recreate and recreate themselves. With the goal of creating a more open city, Hirikia initiative **promoted citizen empowerment and digital accessibility as pillars of the intelligent cities of the future, and encouraged the creation of open and participative spaces and tools, putting technology at the service of citizens.**

On the other hand, languages are living entities that need favourable environments to develop and last through time. They are an essential element for communication and identification, key for coexistence. Europe is home to more than 284 languages and its current challenge consists of **creating the ideal conditions for this richness to develop, seeking the sustainability of its linguistic diversity.**

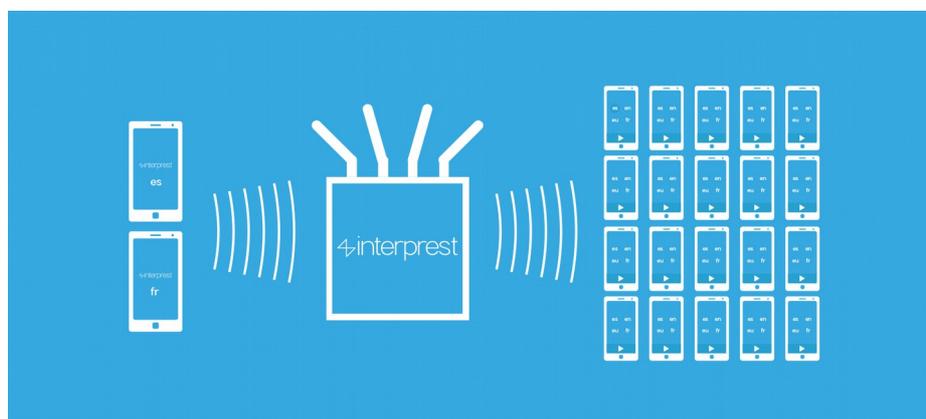
The close collaboration with the Faculty of Informatics of the University of the Basque Country ensured the fulfillment of the objectives as well as the continuity of the main projects.

Projects

12 projects were developed within Hirikia. As a case study, we will show 3 of them: an open hardware project to manage simultaneous interpretation in events, a project that brings together local knowledge and Wikipedia and a summer-lab aimed to revitalise resource-scarce languages. The source-code of all the developed projects is available at: <https://github.com/dss2016eu>

Project1: Interprest

Interprest is a technological platform powered by San Sebastián 2016, the European Capital of Culture and developed by the Talaios cooperative. The main goal of the system is to allow interpretation services. Low cost and portable, adapts to different types of events. It is based on mobile phones communicative system, it is therefore a wireless system. The communication process is really simple: the mobile phone of the interpreter through a small microphone sends the audio and the listener receives it on his cell phone. Website: <http://interprest.io/>



Project2: Donostiapedia

Donostiapedia is a community work in the 21st century based on Wikipedia. Within Donostiapedia different projects were carried out related to Wikipedia and the promotion of minority languages. Among others:

- **Peace Treaties in art:** this is an ambitious public writing competition aimed at creating, translating and improving articles on [a number of paintings](#) showcased in the [Peace treaty exhibitions](#) featuring in [Donostia-San Sebastián, European Capital of Culture 2016](#). The project, promoted by the [Basque Wikimedians User Group](#) in partnership with Donostia-San Sebastián 2016 European Capital of Culture, aims at portraying in the Wikipedia peace and its dynamic dimension by means of art. In keeping with an approach of coexistence and inclusion, the contest wants to encourage with special emphasis the participation of minority languages.
- **Donostiapedia – a book made by all-** It aims to collect all the knowledge possible about San Sebastian and write all together a book which will contain all the knowledge about our city. https://eu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikiproiektu:Donostiapedia_Liburua
- **WikiLiburutegiak:** collaboration of Basque libraries with Wikipedia & Wikimedia projects. <https://eu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikiproiektu:Liburutegiak>

Project3: Codefest

Codefest summer-lab aimed to revitalise resource-scarce languages by providing them with effective tools for electronic communication and by teaching their communities how to use them. Providing resource-scarce languages with effective everyday tools for electronic communication.

Goals:

- Bringing small languages to the fore as part of the European linguistic scenery.
- Promoting communal work.
- Connecting international agents. Promoting open-source-based language technologies and resources.

Codefest's first edition was on July 2016 but we are closing the partnership with Tabakalera for upcoming events. Codefest video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8SQMZPxKzo>

You can find a deeper description (in Basque and in Spanish) of all the projects in the website of the Faculty of Informatics in the University of the Basque Country

[Informatika kulturaren alde \(DSS2016\) // La informática herramienta de cultura](#)