



Bilbao's transformation

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Bilbao and the Basque Country at a glance

The **Basque Country** is one of Europe's most competitive regions, with a GDP above the European and Spanish averages, low unemployment levels, a highly internationalized economy, low unemployment levels and excellent public services.

The Basque Country enjoys a very high autonomy level, including the regulation, collection and management of its own taxes.

Bilbao's metropolitan area has 1.0M inhabitants, concentrating nearly half of the Basque Country's population, and making it the largest city in northern Spain.

Bilbao's transformation story, from a grey polluted industrial brownfield to a flourishing green city has become a world-known success story.

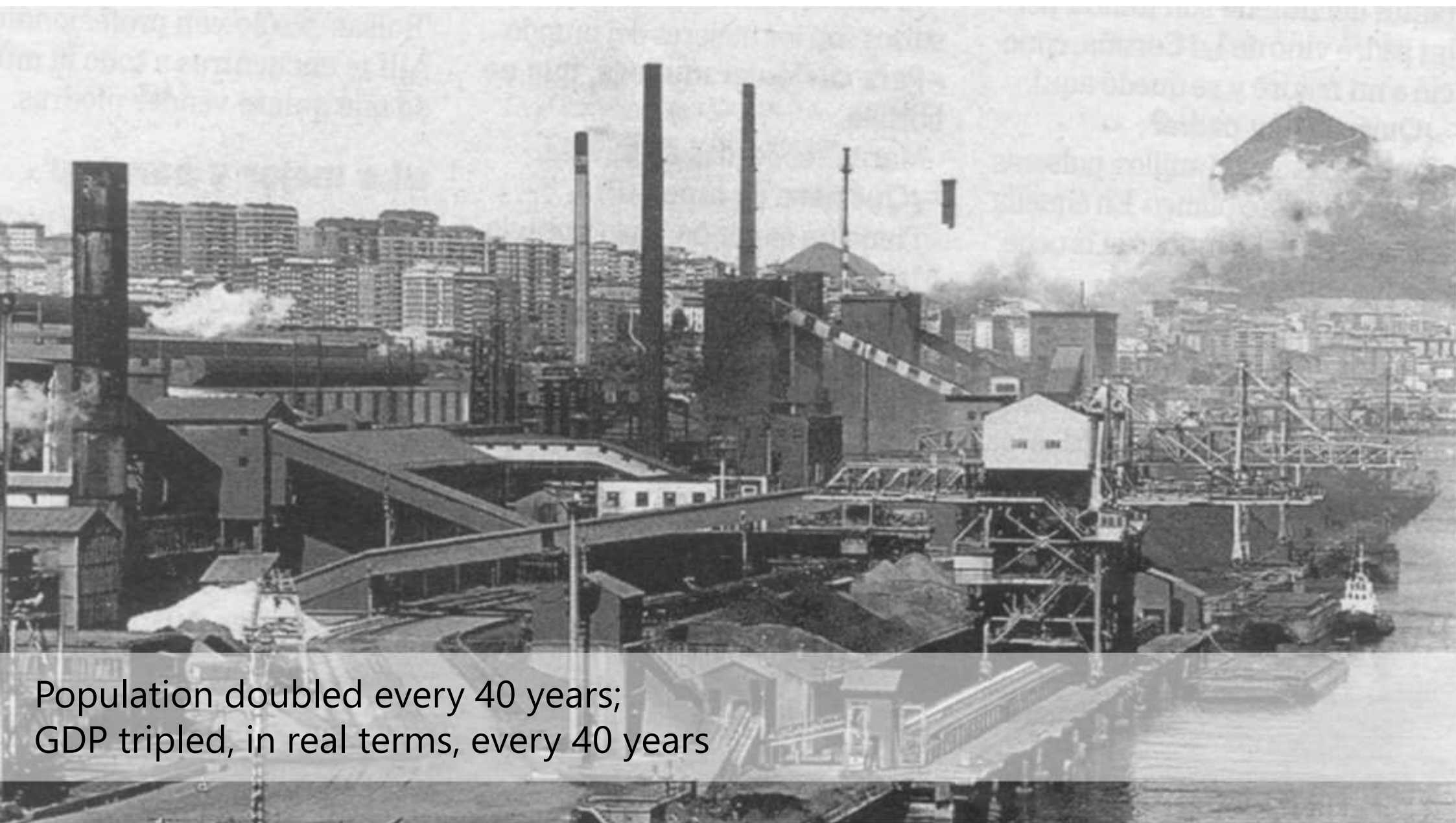


The background of the slide is a dark, textured surface, possibly a piece of dark wood or metal, covered in numerous fine, light-colored scratches and scuffs that create a complex, web-like pattern across the entire frame.

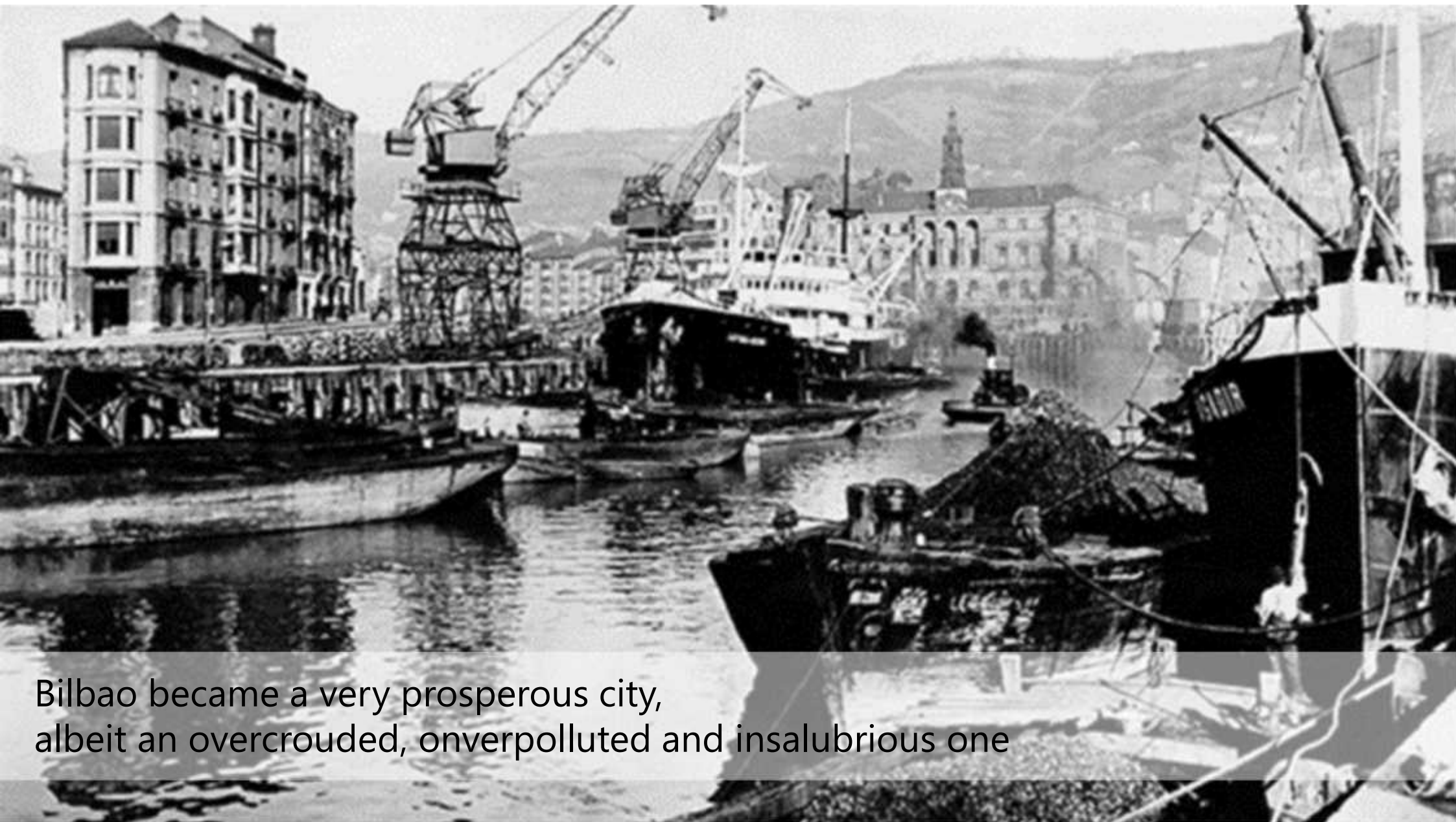
Bilbao
an industrial city



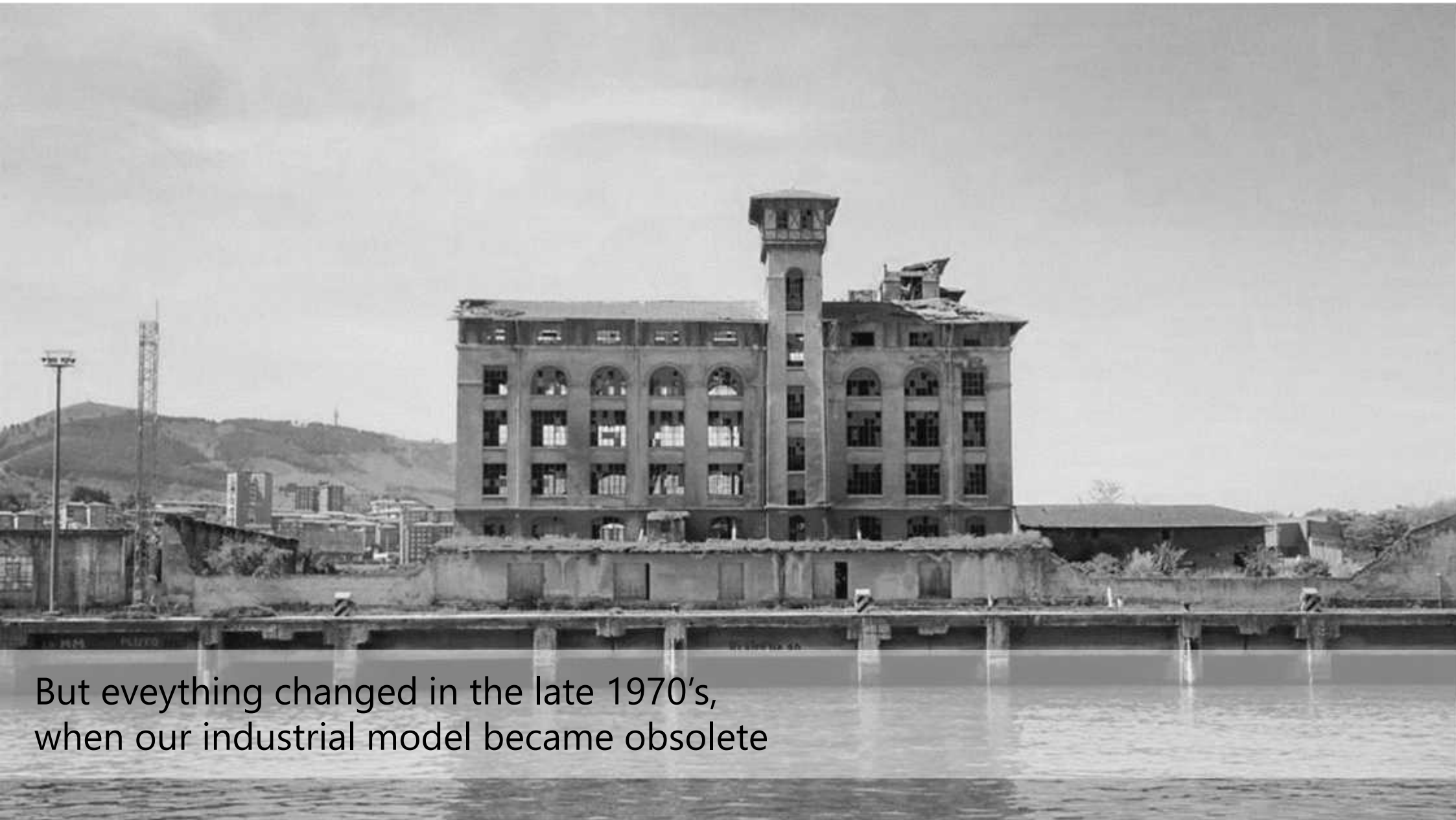
Between 1850 and 1970,
Bilbao became one of the largest industrial hubs in south-western Europe



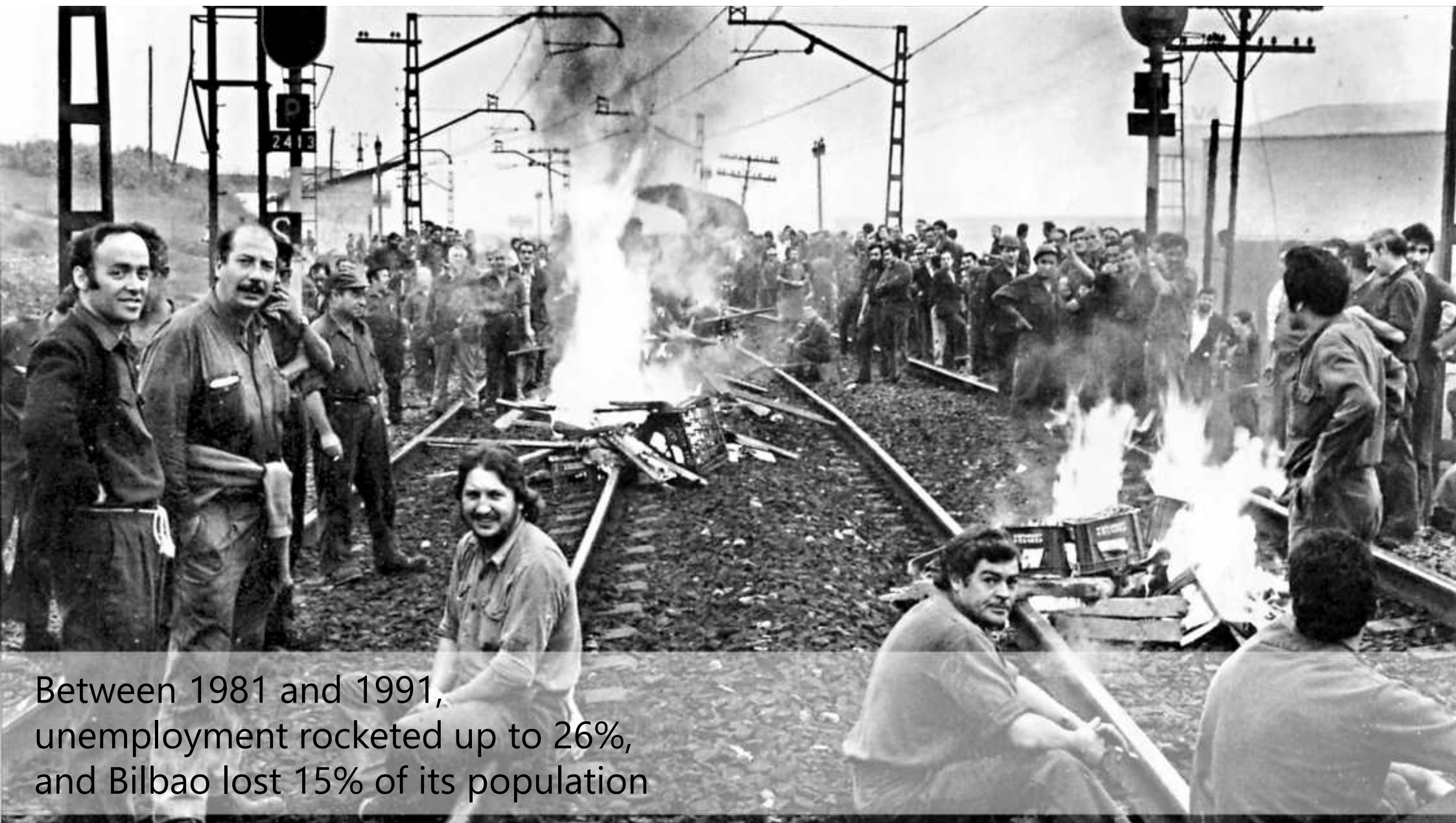
Population doubled every 40 years;
GDP tripled, in real terms, every 40 years



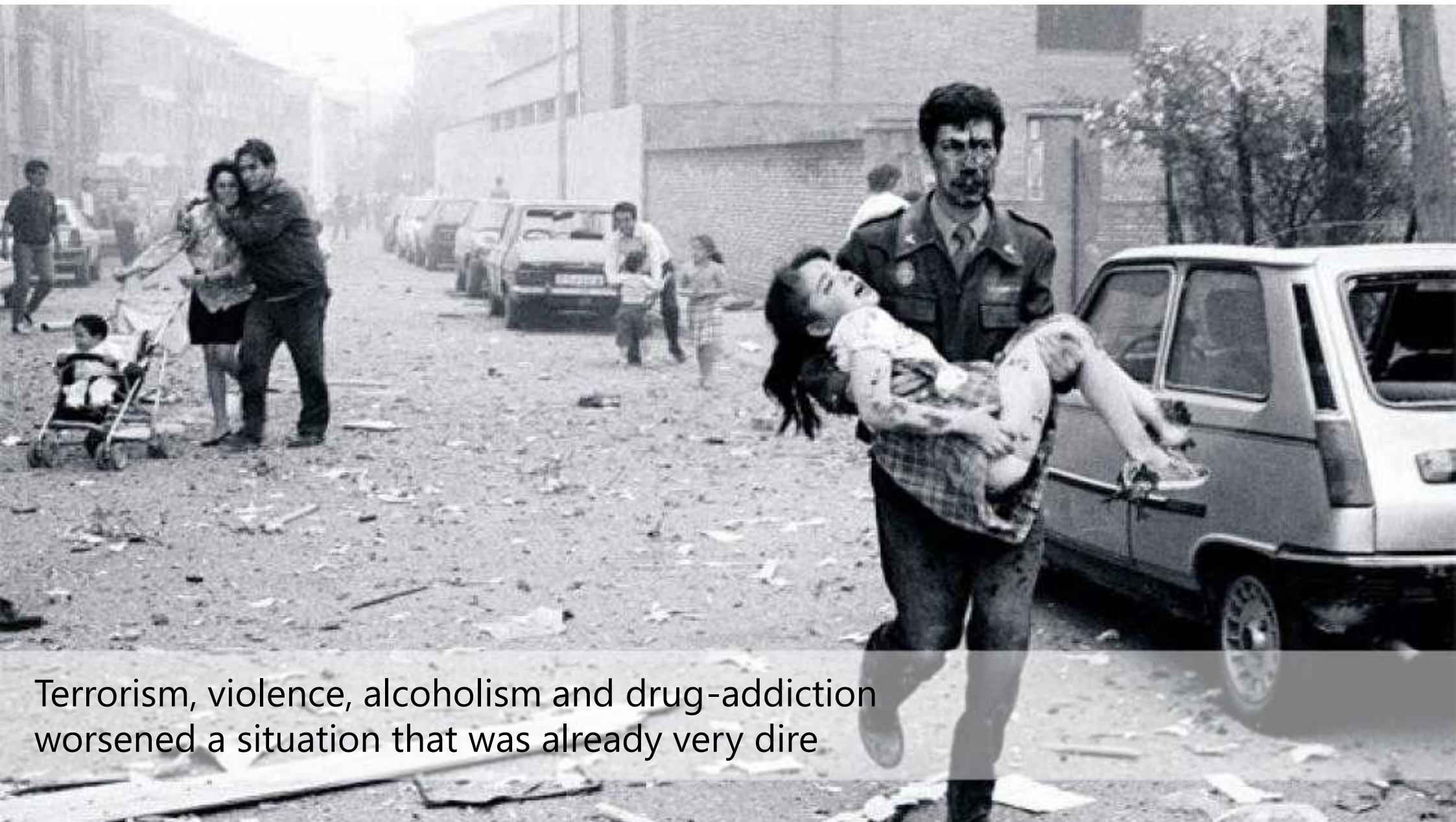
Bilbao became a very prosperous city,
albeit an overcrowded, overpolluted and insalubrious one



But everything changed in the late 1970's,
when our industrial model became obsolete



Between 1981 and 1991,
unemployment rocketed up to 26%,
and Bilbao lost 15% of its population



Terrorism, violence, alcoholism and drug-addiction worsened a situation that was already very dire



The massive floodings of 1983 only worsened a very precarious environmental situation

Bilbao needed a change



Bilbao,
a liveable city

Industry was expelled from the city

Environmental emergency
demanded swift action.

Public administrations
bought industrial land.

Public administrations
also created a network
of technological parks
in rural areas,
away from the city.

Industrial companies
then migrated to these
parks, liberating Bilbao
from industrial activity.

Along with this activities,
the industrial port moved
to the sea-side, outside
from the centre of the city.



Land and water were cleansed

A strong effort was made in the decontamination of both the estuary and the polluted soils of brownfield areas.

A consortium of public administrations invested a total of over 1.000 €M in cleaning the estuary. In addition, new reservoirs, pipe systems and water treatment plants were created.



New infrastructures were created

New mobility infrastructures included metro, tram, a new airport terminal and a new port.

New infrastructure for citizens included the creation of a set of public sport-centres, the refurbishment of two old theatres, and the creation of many new parks.

New infrastructures for economic activities were created including a new convention centre, and a new exhibition centre.

...and of course the Guggenheim Museum.



Capital gains enabled the recovery of the investment

Developers, private companies and investors purchased the land plots enabling the recovery of the CAPEX invested in the recuperation of the industrial areas of Bilbao.

New office spaces, new residential blocks, new hotels and other establishments have now populated this areas, transforming the estuary into the new city centre of Bilbao.





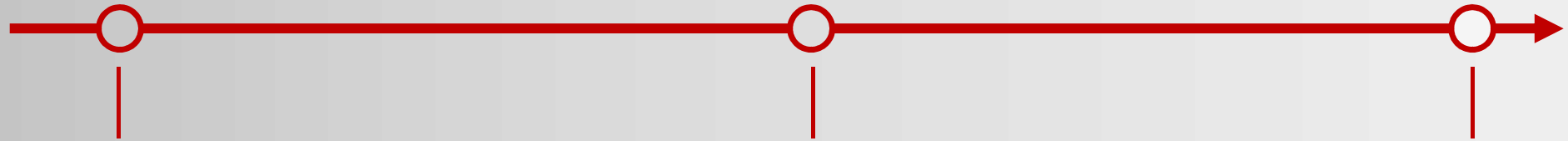
Yet, the world is changing again,
and all cities must change with it
or face dire consequences



Bilbao,
a comprehensive city



Bilbao is a city in permanent transformation



Industrial city



- Public leadership
- Public investment
- Wealth generation outside the city
- Remediation of contamination and mitigation of climate change
- Infrastructure-focus

Liveable city



- Public leadership with heavy citizen participation
- Public-private co-investment
- Wealth generation within the city
- Resilience
- Citizen-focus

Comprehensive city





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