In the 1970s Europe was going through an economic crisis which, together with a shift of power from the state to regional and local governments, led to the development of an entrepreneurial mode of governance. In Spain, this process was even more pronounced because it happened simultaneously with the democratization of the country and the division of the territory into 17 autonomous communities.

Declining cities, such as Bilbao and Barcelona, undertook entrepreneurial approaches in the governance of their cities which included city marketing strategies such as flagship projects – the Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao – or ‘Event branding’ – the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona – to successfully achieve an economic transformation. City marketing strategies were incorporated to the city governance to provide a way for the state to compete in the EU Single Market for visitors, investors and foreign companies. They are part of the toolbox of urban planners when it comes to planning for a city in an entrepreneurial way.