

# The efficacy of rebranding through architecture: analysing different aspects and dimensions of rebranding, what is the efficacy of urban rebranding strategies?

*Stacey Barratt*

University of Huddersfield, Queensgate, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD1 3DH

---

## ARTICLE INFO

### *Article history:*

Received 30 November 2020

Received in revised form 31

January 2021

Accepted 06 April 2021

---

### *Keywords:*

Rebranding strategies

Urban regeneration

Iconic architecture

Socioeconomic context

Tourism

Titanic Belfast

Turner Contemporary

Guggenheim Bilbao

---

## ABSTRACT

Rebranding strategies are fundamental to counteracting economic degeneration and improving the inter-city competitiveness of urban areas. Iconic architecture is often associated with brand identity in this context. This article outlines three key approaches: market-led, top-down, and flagship rebranding strategies, each with an accompanying unique architectural precedent: Titanic Belfast, Northern Ireland; Turner Contemporary, Margate, England; and Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain. Addressing the reasons for deterioration and investigating the rebranding strategy of each case study, including the impact of socioeconomic phenomena such as deindustrialisation, globalisation, and gentrification, allows their distinct architectural significance and overall efficacy to be critically assessed. Ultimately, it is concluded that top-down rebranding strategies are comprehensively the most effective and sustainable.

## Introduction

Urban rebranding describes the way in which the unique physical characteristics of a city are identified and enhanced through regeneration with the overall objective of encapsulating its essence (Rehan, 2014). Alongside promotional marketing, this enables a city to transfigure its existing visual image into a new desirable brand. This results in the attraction of new residents, visitors, and investors to improve inter-city competitiveness and counteract the effects of a declining quality of life. There are three crucial rebranding strategies: market-led, top-down and flagship (Raw, 2013). The research question examines these strategies with an associated precedent to assess the efficacy of each rebranding strategy and understand the significance of major architectural developments in the process. Architecture and rebranding have a mutual relationship with tourism because iconic architecture can give cities a form of regional or global identification (Scerri, Edwards, & Foley, 2016) connected to their brand. Through exploiting unique “structural, functional and aesthetic aspects” as well as heritage and context, architecture can

offer “a commodity of touristic consumption and objectified cultural capital” (Scerri, Edwards, & Foley, 2016, p. 1), leading to greater tourism and investment too.

There are several case studies depicting urban rebranding strategies where iconic architectural developments are essential to their efficacy. Determining the appropriate precedents, it was important to recognise the key player of each rebranding strategy: market-led rebranding is directed by a private investor or company with the objective of generating profit from investment; top-down rebranding offers a coordinated and well-planned approach, usually involving public organisations who are concerned for its local and regional impact; and flagship development strategies where a building acts as a catalyst to attract further investment and regeneration (Raw, 2013). Iconic architecture represents an important theme when investigating the research question as it often plays an integral role in rebranding. Due to the widespread publicity of these buildings, large

volumes of contemporary data can be accessed and used to accurately inform the investigation.

The three selected examples are: Titanic Belfast, Northern Ireland; Turner Contemporary, Margate; and Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain. Directed by Harcourt Developments, the Titanic Quarter regeneration scheme and Titanic Belfast represent a market-led rebranding strategy. The private company bought development rights of Queen's Island and contributed to 50% of Titanic Quarter's funding so have a controlling stake (McConnell & Overbeck, 2010).



Figure 1: The Titanic Belfast in The Titanic Quarter, Belfast © 2012 William Murphy, used under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic License

Next, Thanet District Council and Kent County Council are major players in Margate's top-down rebranding strategy. They are responsible for attracting substantial investment to fund the culturally significant Turner Contemporary (Margate Renewal Partnership, 2009), and have a mutual objective of sustained economic regeneration with a refined focus on generating employment for existing and new residents.



Figure 2: Turner Contemporary and Droit House Visitor Centre, Margate (Author's own, 2019)

Finally, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao utilises a flagship development strategy cultivated by Bilbao Ría 2000; a non-profit development agency founded in 1992. The agency, alongside the government, aimed to revitalise Metropolitan Bilbao (United Nations, n.d.) through identifying 'opportunity

areas', including a brownfield site in Abandoibarra which later possessed Bilbao's iconic landmark.



Figure 3: Nervión River Waterfront, Bilbao showing the Guggenheim Museum © 2009 Phillip Maiwald, used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported License.

Investigating three precedents connected via their similar socioeconomic context, considered from their spiral of decline to their present thriving economies, it can be concluded which strategy is most efficacious. Titanic Belfast and Guggenheim Bilbao are examples of shipbuilding and steel production cities who endured deindustrialisation from the mid-to-late twentieth century due to cheaper production in the Far East (Hodson, 2019). However, Margate's degeneration resulted from the availability of cheap package deals for abroad holidays (Glancey, 2015) which led to rapid decline in British seaside towns. Gentrification is a common theme in each precedent as it is largely associated with improvements in areas such as quality of life, the built environment, and job opportunities. Addressing the cause of deterioration in these cities, the specific context of each case study is comprehended and their responsive rebranding scheme to counteract decline is critically investigated. Close attention is paid to architecture's role, and a conclusion determining the efficacy of market-led, top-down and flagship development rebranding strategies is reached.

## Literature review

The relationships between architecture, context and urban brand image are investigated in order to understand the role of architecture within rebranding strategies.

### *Sign value*

In a netnographic study of the Titanic Belfast conducted by Paraskevaïdis and Weidenfeld (2019), the concept of *sign value* in visitor attractions is explored to obtain a deeper understanding of the relationships between modern culture, contextual heritage attraction value, and the crucial role of the mass media in fabricating a desirable destination. Focusing on Titanic Belfast as a highly-publicised contemporary iconographic building for its “authentic connection to the Titanic saga” (Paraskevaïdis & Weidenfeld, 2019, p.2), the report concludes that “the concept of sign-value is meaningful in revealing aspects of sign-consumption” (Paraskevaïdis & Weidenfeld, 2019, p.14), highlighting the importance of promoting Titanic heritage as a brand across tourism and hospitality in Belfast, creating a sense of perceived authenticity of the city. This encourages sign-consumption via ticket and souvenir sales and leads to profit maximisation that benefits major players of Belfast’s rebranding strategy.

The importance of mass media and communication when rebranding is highlighted in an *international comparative investigation* by Bennett and Savani (2003, p.73), who argue that “successful urban regeneration can only be achieved when people become aware of the existence of new place products... [implying] a critical role for the marketing function during the process of rebranding”. Conversely, Paraskevaïdis and Weidenfeld accentuate the negative impact of mass media in urban regeneration – perpetual public judgement can lead to high expectations generated via marketing strategies and desirable imagery, potentially resulting in public disappointment.

### *Heritage*

Rebranding strategies can be designated into specific categories including, but not limited to, heritage, culture, and leisure (Raw, 2013). Heritage is a significant historical and conceptual focus for the Titanic Belfast and contributes to the architectural significance of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

A Historic England report on *Place Branding and Heritage* (Johnson, Marshall, Evans, & Pirie, 2016) investigates the role of heritage in place branding and the extent to which heritage adds value. Johnson et al (2016, p.8) elucidates that *place* contributes to “a sense of belonging and identity” through supportive elements such as: historic, symbolic, cultural, economic, and physical. Collectively, this enhances the sign-value of the place and could improve its universal appeal, competitiveness, and success to residents, commuters, or visitors. Conversely, in reference to Figure 4, Johnson et al (2016, p.9) believe that heritage can be involved in each dimension of place, culture and economy, where it provides “authenticity and distinctiveness in signifying the culture of place”, consequently adding value. This improves its attraction and competitive advantage, meanwhile directly and indirectly contributing to local and cultural economies (Johnson et al, 2016). Therefore, through emphasising the value of heritage in place branding, urban regeneration and marketing strategies can effectively enhance the image and perception of a city, leading to the creation of a *sense of place* and an increase in competitiveness.

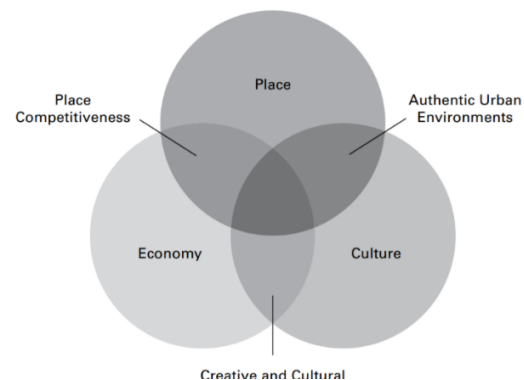


Figure 4: Creative City Vision: Place, Culture and Economy (Johnson, Marshall, Evans, & Pirie, 2016)

### *Identity*

There are conflicting views on the rebranding approach, as reflected in the aforementioned investigation by Bennett and Savani (2003), and a journal article titled ‘Iconic Architecture and the Culture-ideology of Consumerism’ by Sklair (2010). Specifically, they differ on whether a place should capitalise on the area’s heritage, such as the shipbuilding context of Bilbao and Belfast, or alternatively invent an entirely new identity and distance themselves from past urban decline and associated negative connotations in mass media (Bennett & Savani, 2003). For instance, Manchester

needed to detach itself from heavy industry associations, so since 1991 they have pursued a major rebranding scheme to become a dynamic centre of leisure and amenity, dubbing the slogan ‘The Life and Soul of Britain’ to promote its development (Bennett & Savani, 2003). On the other hand, heritage rebranding allows a place to produce a new image via iconic architecture instead of creating a new identity – reflecting their shipbuilding industry history resulting from deindustrialisation in the case of Guggenheim Bilbao and Titanic Belfast – which has strong symbolic and aesthetic significance attached to them (Sklair, 2010).

The utilisation of a city’s identity can be somewhat controversial in the community. Some sources believe it selectively reshapes and disregards their history instead of enhancing the whole history of the area. For instance, Pete Hodson (2019) presents the thoughts among working class stakeholders in Belfast in response to the Titanic Quarter redevelopment. There are many issues highlighted, primarily concerning which stakeholder ultimately benefits from heritage regeneration as ex-shipyard workers are yet to reap the benefits of investment and improvements in the area – they are suffering from “socio-economic exclusion from the Titanic Quarter [as] the new apartments and jobs on offer are beyond the reach of the local working class” (Hodson, 2019, p.226). This reflects the severe impact of gentrification on Belfast’s existing working class, of which citizens of Bilbao are experiencing a similar outcome where the Basque Government focuses expenditure on the docklands to develop the tourism industry. Yet, this leaves behind other, poorer parts of the city without any contemporary improvements, leading to social exclusion of local people (Martinez-Perez, 2014). Therefore, this exemplifies that gentrification is a fundamental problem involved with rebranding strategy outcomes and thus has a great impact on their sustainability when existing communities are concerned.

### ***Globalisation***

Investigating connections between iconicity and consumerism, Sklair (2010, p.136) hypothesises that “iconicity plays a central role in promoting the culture-ideology of consumerism in the interests of those who control capitalist globalisation”, exemplifying the immense influence globalisation emanates worldwide in verifying iconic architecture. Hence, globalisation is a central theme

in several sources as it has eased global transportation of products, making it quicker to export large quantities of goods. Consequently, this resulted in many countries and businesses opting to outsource production in cheaper locations in the Far East during the 1960s, contributing to deindustrialisation of the UK and Western Europe (Hodson, 2019). Additionally, globalisation contributed to cheaper foreign holidays and, alongside the attraction of better weather and new opportunities, subsequently instigated a rapid decline in British seaside towns, including the quaint town of Margate (Glancey, 2015). More recently, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has globally disturbed tourism and consumerism, consequently affecting the success of contemporary rebranding strategies.

### **Methods**

Primarily, the most appropriate method to investigate and evaluate the efficacy of market-led rebranding, top-down rebranding, and flagship developments, is the case study method. This allows each strategy to be compared relative to an appropriate case study where their outcomes can be formally comprehended. A criterion of economic, social, and cultural impacts have been determined to assess the efficacy of each case study due to restrictions on the extent to which the significance of the architectural precedents can be quantified as architectural appeal is largely subjective.

### ***Economic factors***

Attributable to Belfast, Bilbao and Margate experiencing economic decline resultant from deindustrialisation (Belfast and Bilbao) and a decline in the popularity of British seaside resorts (Margate), the selected economic factors refer to employment: GDP (Gross Domestic Product), employment levels, and unemployment rates. GDP measures the total value of goods and services produced in the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2019) and has a relationship with employment rates where rising employment results in rising GDP respectively. Unemployment rates can indicate whether job opportunities for existing and new residents have been established successfully.

### ***Social factors***

To assess the attraction to the area in relation to residents and the working-age population, the investigation examines population growth and deprivation. Deprivation has been addressed as it helps to realise the full image on whether the

rebranding strategy effect has trickled down to existing struggling communities in the area.

### ***Cultural factors***

Cultural factors highlight information directly related to visitor and business attraction to the city concerned, obtaining quantitative data such as visitor numbers, as well as more qualitative information such as evidence for new businesses, and tourism awards related to their regeneration.

### ***Case study comparison***

Initially, the gathered data intends to be compared within the precedent through a designated period reflecting a series of socioeconomic statistics five years prior to the building's completion, compared with the same factors for five years following its completion in order to establish any correlations related to the case study. For instance, the Titanic Belfast was opened on the centenary of the Titanic's sinking in April 2012 (Paraskevaidis & Weidenfeld, 2019), so the criteria would compare data from 2007 to 2017 in order to assess whether socioeconomic conditions have improved and conclude whether the strategy was successful. Following the assessment on the efficacy of market-led, top-down and flagship development rebranding strategies individually, they will be cross-analysed to explore any notable similarities or differences between the outcomes in order to attain a conclusion on the overall efficacy of rebranding strategies as a range of aspects and dimensions have been considered.

### **Case Study 1 | Market-led rebranding: Titanic Belfast, Northern Ireland**

In 1921, Ireland divided into Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland under the Anglo-Irish Treaty (Newsround, 2019). Subsequently, Northern Ireland was overseen by a unionist government who supported the treaty, but nationalists strongly opposed it and desired an independent Ireland (BBC Newsbeat, 2012). This led to three decades of discrimination, political conflict and violence in Northern Ireland, infamously known as 'The Troubles' (Dorney, 2015).

Emerging in the mid-nineteenth century, shipbuilding became a prominent industrial sector in Belfast, Northern Ireland (Hodson, 2019). Queen's Island harboured the renowned global shipbuilding enterprise: Harland and Wolff, who dominated the industry internationally by the early twentieth century and was Belfast's largest single employer, reaching a peak of 35,000 employees

(BBC News, 2019). Notably, the company constructed the world-famous RMS Titanic. However, they have encountered longstanding financial problems since the 1960s, resultant from global shipbuilding competition, especially in east Asia (Hodson, 2019). This contributed to deindustrialisation and a significant loss of manufacturing employment, as Figure 5 depicts.

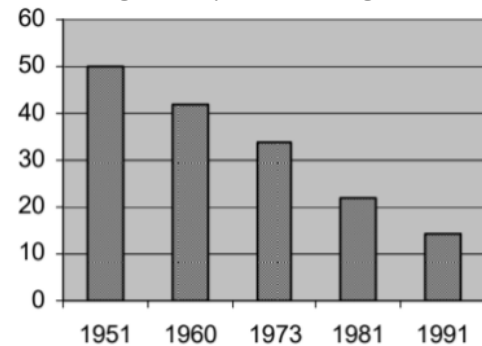


Figure 5: Percentage of workforce in manufacturing employment in %, 1951-1991 (Plöger, 2007)

Between the early-1950s and late-1980s, H&W's workforce had reduced massively from 35,000 to 2,400 employees (Hodson, 2019), and it has continued to struggle financially since, leading to greater unemployment and decreasing economic performance of Belfast, particularly with the Troubles' enduring impact.

### ***Rebranding strategy and architectural significance***

The Titanic Quarter Regeneration Project focuses on redeveloping 75 hectares of brownfield land, previously serving as a huge dockland on Queen's Island beside the River Lagan where RMS Titanic was designed and built, to construct "one of Europe's most spectacular waterfront developments" (Harcourt Developments, 2007, p.8). Concentrated on heritage and culture, Northern Ireland's early strategic framework for tourism aims to attract more visitors, create a memorable positive impression, and encourage repeat visitation (Northern Ireland Tourist Board, 2004). Meanwhile, Belfast City Council emphasises diversification and increasing the employment population, residential population and maximising tourism opportunity (Belfast City Council, 2015).

Developing a strong brand image is crucial to the rebranding of Belfast in order to dissociate the negative connotations of its conflicted history. Titanic Belfast is one of five signature tourism projects identified to enhance its tourism offering (Belfast City Council, 2008) and represents the cultural lynchpin of the Titanic Quarter. Headed by urban architect Eric Kuhne, the iconic building aims

to emphasise the authenticity of H&W’s industrial legacy and Belfast’s maritime heritage via its thoughtful positioning at the heart of Harcourt Development’s proposed Lagan Village, which lies near the site where Titanic and Olympic ships were forged (Cattermole, 2013). Therefore, architecture is a significant contributor to the rebranding strategy’s success. Opening on the centenary of the Titanic sinking, the building establishes a visual connection in the form of an iconographic bow-shaped sculpture (Hodson, 2019), allowing tourists to become immersed in the heritage and Titanic experience as a leisure service. Thus, this generates a clear, memorable representation of Belfast’s heritage globally, and so attracts global media and stimulates tourism and investment (Paraskevaidis & Weidenfeld, 2019).

**What is the efficacy of the rebranding strategy?**

Voted the World’s Leading Tourist Attraction in 2016 (Titanic Belfast, 2016), Titanic Belfast has exceeded expectations where it has more than doubled its projected 400,000 annual visitors (Belfast City Council, 2008) – in 2017/2018 there were 841,563 visitors, increasing by 13% year-on-year (BBC News, 2018). This indicates that rebranding was successful as Harcourt Developments had established a desirable brand and attractions to complement the context.

As illustrated in Figure 6, transforming from an industrial secondary economy to a growing knowledge economy, largely based on management and financial services as well as IT and communications (Belfast City Council, 2015), the city has enhanced the quality of its employment and business offerings. Thus, improving the city’s economic performance.

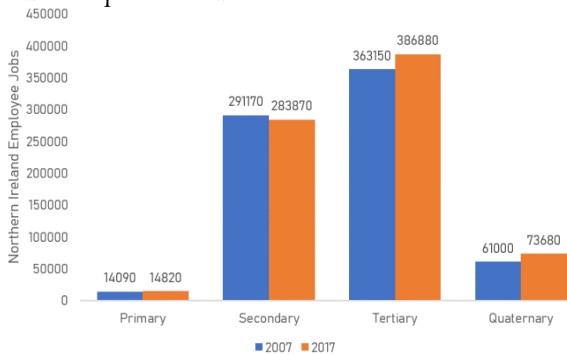


Figure 6: Economy structure in Northern Ireland 2007-2017 (Author’s own, 2020; with data use from NISRA, 2019)

With the lowest corporation tax levels in Europe (Titanic Quarter, 2012), alongside Belfast’s low rents and access to concentrated intellectual resources in universities and research institutions, substantial foreign direct investment has ensued where Belfast is ranked 4th out of 28 UK cities based

on number of projects (Belfast City Council, 2015). Notably, this includes creative organisations like HBO who used Titanic Studios to shoot multi-E Emmy Award Winner: Game of Thrones, and financial businesses such as CitiBank. These businesses have created proficient employment opportunities, encouraging new residents to East Belfast where the working population increased by 4% between 2007 and 2017 (NISRA, 2018), and unemployment rates have since reduced to a historic low in 2019 at 2.9% (Campbell, 2019). Belfast’s economic trend, illustrated in Figure 7, also illustrates a faster pace of GDP growth from 2011-2012 too when the strategy began advancing.

Recognising the gradual improvements in Belfast’s economic performance indicates that their market-led rebranding strategy is successful so far as regional and global city attraction has improved and is contributing to the economy sustainably.

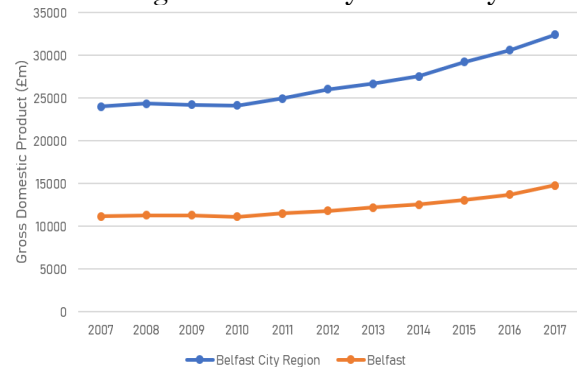


Figure 7: GDP of Belfast and Belfast City Region at current market prices 2007-2017 (Author’s own, 2020; with data use from ONS, 2019)

On the other hand, the market-led strategy may focus too heavily on attracting people, business and therefore profit to the city, revealing insufficient regard for the existing Belfast community who have suffered from post-industrial redundancies and through the Troubles. Despite the thriving economic growth, 50 of the top 100 most deprived Super Output Areas are in Belfast in 2017, with many located just outside the city centre, including Water Works and Ardoyne (NISRA, 2017). This could be a result of economy diversification where a focus on high-skilled employment in the Titanic Quarter only benefits 40.1% (2017) of the existing population who have degree level qualifications, excluding most of Belfast from employment opportunities (NISRA, 2018). This exacerbates socioeconomic class exclusion, with gentrification contributing to the issues as it forces working-class consumers away from the expensive city centre and Titanic Quarter, so illustrating that the existing community has yet to reap the benefits of regeneration and the strategy’s success.

## Case Study 2 | Top-down rebranding: Turner Contemporary, Margate, England

Margate, located in Thanet, Kent, represents one of England's first seaside resorts dating back to the eighteenth century. The town's popularity was a result of its railway connections with London, so it attracted frequent middle-class holidaymakers and residents (Barker, Brodie, Dermott, Jessop, & Winter, 2007). However, from the 1960s Margate and other British seaside towns experienced a steep spiral of decline due to greater leisure time, increased disposable income and affordability of foreign holidays (Glancey, 2015). This resulted in declining tourism which, alongside concentrations of cheap property, poor qualifications of the population, and its relative remoteness, soon led to socioeconomic decline in the region (Thanet District Council, 2006).

Consequently, deprivation was exacerbated where Thanet District was ranked 65 out of 354 local authorities in England for being the 'most deprived areas' in 2005 – Cliftonville West and Margate Central demonstrated the most deprived wards which correlates to Figure 8 where they denoted the highest unemployment rate in Thanet in 2009 (Thanet District Council, 2005).

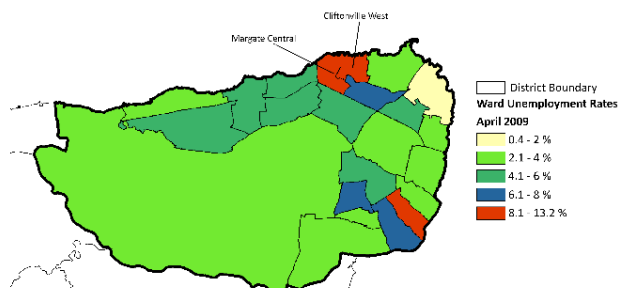


Figure 8: Ward Unemployment Rates in Thanet, April 2009 (Thanet District Council, 2010)

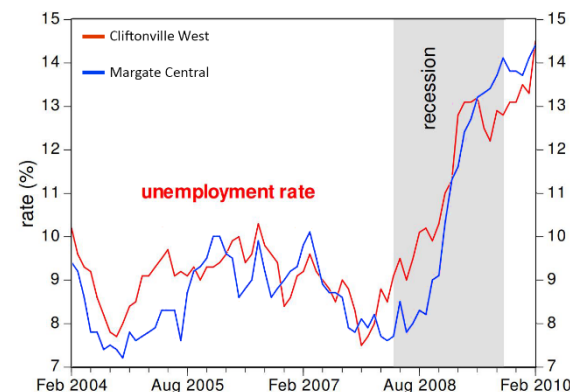


Figure 9: Unemployment Rate of Cliftonville West and Margate Central, February 2004–2010 (SEEDA, 2010)

During the early twenty-first century, these wards experienced a fluctuating but higher than average

unemployment rate in comparison to the south-east of England; but this was worsened further by the 2008-09 recession, reaching over 14% in 2010 (SEEDA, 2010), as reflected in Figure 9. Thus, this highlights the urgency of Margate's rebranding as its tourism industry, employment, and deprived neighbourhoods are struggling, and therefore contributing to a severe spiral of economic decline.

### *Rebranding strategy and architectural significance*

Envisioning a prosperous district, Thanet's Local Plan 2006 outlines the significance of economic diversification, such as developing new retail and leisure facilities, as well as generating new employment opportunities, in order to achieve an improved quality of life for residents, quality of environment to attract visitors and inward investors, and ultimately result in sustained economic regeneration (Thanet District Council, 2006). Driving the rebranding strategy is a cultural vision through 'Creative Margate' – a ten-year programme aimed to shape Margate into an "innovator and hub for culture-led regeneration" (Margate Renewal Partnership, 2009, p.2). They aim to support the growth and retention of creative industries with substantial emphasis on community engagement, particularly in the Old Town. Enhancing the historic built environment, the programme rejuvenates listed buildings and re-purposes vacant ones for creative businesses to integrate with Margate's rich heritage, meanwhile serving as artistic inspiration (Margate Renewal Partnership, 2009). Two major heritage redevelopments are Theatre Royal Margate, a Grade II\* listed theatre from the late eighteenth century (Farnham Maltings, 2019); and Dreamland Margate, the oldest-surviving amusement park in Great Britain built in the late nineteenth century containing the iconic Scenic Railway (Dreamland Margate, 2019). Centrally positioned on the seafront in the cultural hub of Old Town, whilst offering a striking backdrop to Droit House Visitor Centre, is the prestigious Turner Contemporary art gallery which was designed by David Chipperfield Architects and completed in 2011 (Barker et al, 2007). The strong, geometric architecture beside its connection to romantic landscape painter JMW Turner has led to the gallery symbolising an iconic cultural landmark to the town, thus creating a new cultural identity associated with Margate, attracting greater tourism and cultural investment as a result.

**What was the efficacy of the rebranding strategy?**

Ultimately, the Turner Contemporary has acted successfully as a catalyst for regeneration and rebranding Margate, insofar as it has directly attracted one million new visitors from opening to 2019 (Local Government Association, 2019). In fact, 48% of visits are specifically for the gallery, with a quarter travelling from London and 5% from overseas, reflecting a global iconographic appreciation (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2017). This increases footfall and profit in local businesses including accommodation providers, and quality cafes and restaurants in Old Town. Therefore, this leads to the multiplier effect where greater expenditure in services increases tax for councils to reinvest into the town which can contribute to further employment and a better quality of life. This can be reinforced by Kent economy’s high net additional visitor-related expenditure in 2015-16 which generated approximately £7.8 million (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2017), and the consistent tourism growth of 19% in Margate (Local Government Association, 2019).

Overall, the rebranding strategy has successfully developed a re-emerging cultural destination and improved the residential quality of life as the scheme aims to integrate the community and encourage participation in arts and culture, including public art programmes and workshops, leading to a sense of civic pride. Demographic trends reflect a steadily increasing population from 50,354 in the 2011 census, to 54,080 in 2018 (Kent County Council, 2019) thus implying the area is becoming desirable to residents too. Moreover, the economy has improved significantly, growing by £89m since 2011, and employment has increased by 45%

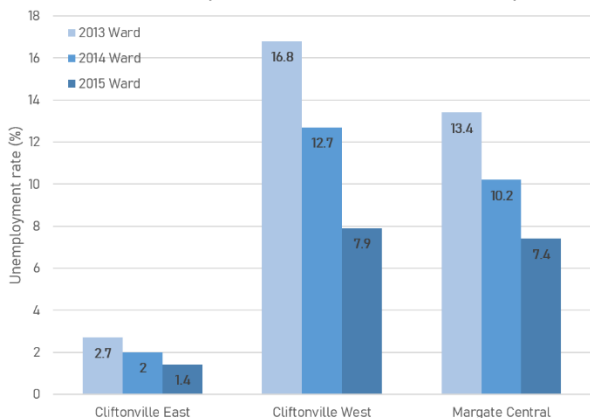


Figure 10: Margate Ward Unemployment Rates, 2013-2015 (Author’s own, 2020; with data use from Kent Public Health Observatory, 2017) (Gupta, 2019).

Simultaneously, unemployment has declined, shown in Figure 10, most importantly in the deprived areas of Cliftonville West and Margate Central where most developments are occurring; although these proportions are still greater than Thanet district average of 3.03% and the UK average of 1.94% in 2015 (Kent County Council, 2017). Additionally, deprivation within these electoral wards has not improved and they are still among the 10% most deprived wards in England and Wales (Kent Public Health Observatory, 2017) which could be linked to welfare dependency of the population where Figure 11 reveals that Margate Central’s attendance allowance is over 25% higher than Kent County Council, and pension credits over 75% higher.

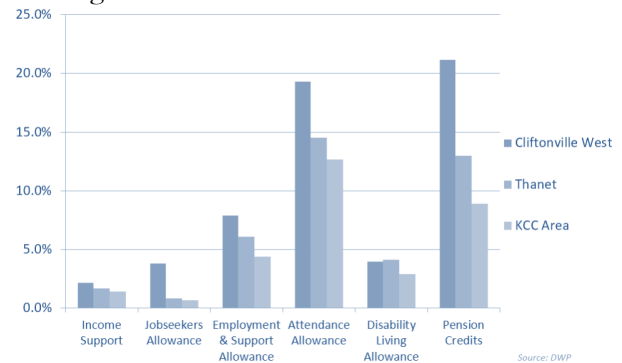


Figure 11: Benefits claimants in Margate Central, November 2018 (Kent County Council, 2019)

Despite this, Margate has evidently improved massively due to the Turner Contemporary and the council’s efforts to expand employment opportunities for existing and new residents. As a top-down rebranding strategy, it exemplifies greater concern on the impact of more stakeholders and continues to attempt to overcome community issues such as deprivation.

**Case Study 3 | Flagship development: Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain**

Emerging in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Bilbao represented a “productive [industrial] and financial powerhouse” that thrived on iron ore exports, steel economy and shipbuilding (Power, 2016, p.11). Strategically positioned beside the Nervión River, the city in Basque Country served as a hub, connecting mainland Spain to Western Europe. Employment opportunities and urban expansion attracted mass immigration, increasing the population (Plöger, 2008).

Unfortunately, from the 1970s Bilbao experienced an industrial crisis following on from political adversities, serious pollution, and the oil shock of 1973 which affected its heavy industries. Hence, this drastically affected unemployment, as shown in



Figure 12, where 60,000 manufacturing jobs were lost between 1975 and 1995 reflecting almost half of the existing industrial employment. Bilbao's population also declined by 16% between 1980 and

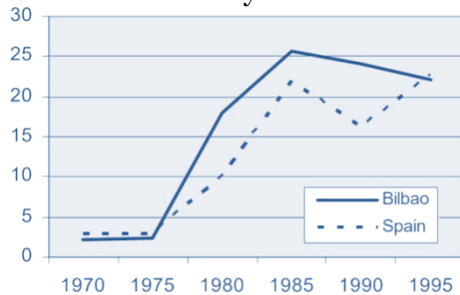


Figure 12: Official unemployment rate, Bilbao, 1970-1995 (Plöger, 2008)

1995 (Plöger, 2008).

Furthermore, Bilbao was subjected to perilous regional politics under Caudillo Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975), leading to a loss of autonomy, subordination, and discrimination (Plöger, 2008). This resulted in extreme antagonism and the formation of nationalist armed group ETA in 1959 who fought for Bilbao's full independence, leading to an unsafe image of the city that discouraged visitors, investors, and residents thus advancing economic decline.

### ***Rebranding strategy and architectural significance***

Rejuvenating Bilbao and its contaminated Nervión River were critical to rebranding the city as a *contemporary post-industrial metropolis*. Drafted in 1991, the strategic plan for the Revitalisation of Metropolitan Bilbao outlines four focuses: establish a high-tech sector, revitalise the inner-city, improve the environment and strengthen cultural identity (United Nations, n.d.). Leading the operation was Bilbao Ría 2000 who developed the Abandoibarra district masterplan and invested €560 million between 1997 and 2006. This focused on regeneration of the central business district through enhancing transport infrastructure, encouraging waterfront developments, and crucially cultivating cultural projects (United Nations, n.d.).

Culture signifies a fundamental pillar to Bilbao's new urban policy, reflecting a contemporary market shift from manufacturing to the service industry with greater emphasis on tourism (Bengoetxea, 2013). Notably contributing to Bilbao's global presence is the iconic flagship cultural development: the Guggenheim Museum. Designed by architect Frank Gehry, and inaugurated in 1997, the building was developed specifically to attract international tourists and reimagine Bilbao as a *post-industrial* city; dissociating itself from its conflicted socioeconomic past (Bennett & Savani, 2003). Despite this, Gehry's

bold architectural design endeavours to achieve some local resonance through its concept of an abstract conflation of fractured frames and contorted titanium panels, forming a "metallic flower reminiscent of ships' hulls and prows" (Iyengar, Novak, Sinn, & Zils, 1998, p.1) suitably situated on the brownfield waterfront site. Representing a new urban heart of Bilbao, the Guggenheim Museum acted as a catalyst for redevelopment and regeneration, where from its opening in 1997 it has attracted over 19 million visitors to the city of which two thirds are foreign (BBC Arts, 2017), as well as substantial private sector investment – accordingly then, it partakes of a significant role in Bilbao's strategy.

### ***What was the efficacy of the rebranding strategy?***

According to the Revitalisation of Metropolitan Bilbao plan, the rebranding strategy was massively successful to the extent that Bilbao is now a globally recognised example of the merits of combining cultural investment with ostentatious architecture in order to generate economic uplift – dubbed the *Bilbao effect* (Moore, 2017). Regarded as the core of Basque Country's economy, Bilbao has experienced an increase in GDP per capita since 1996, rising by 71% to €26,253 in 2005 (Eustat, 2016). This indicates that the population is becoming wealthier, perhaps as a result of tertiary employment growth in Vizcaya province, representing 65% of Basque Country's industrial base (Faíña, López-Rodríguez, & Montes-Solla, 2010), thus developing a more skilful, diversified economic base that offers higher salaries.

Unemployment reduced greatly too, illustrated in Figure 13, reaching 11% by 2004 (Power, 2016).

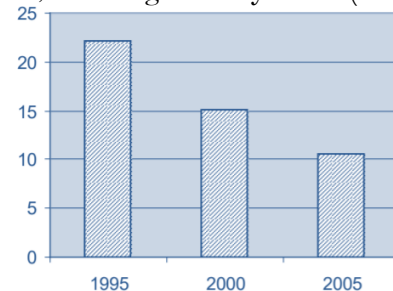


Figure 13: Unemployment rate, Bilbao %, 1995-2005 (Plöger, 2008)

Therefore, the strategy has assisted economic development in the region, contributing to a better quality of life. Importantly, Guggenheim Bilbao has supported government funds, where within the first three years over €100 million was raised by visitor spending; recouping the €84 million construction cost and generating profit for the government each year since (BBC Arts, 2017). This instigated the multiplier effect as greater funds allowed the inner

city to be regenerated in order to preserve Bilbao's new cultural identity, particularly the Nervión River where €1 billion was invested, introducing a new water sanitation system (United Nations, n.d.). This restored the city's environmental quality which, alongside the economic improvements and better quality of life for residents, could have contributed to Basque separatist group ETA declaring ceasefire in 2006 (BBC Arts, 2017) so improving crime and negative perceptions of Bilbao.

Conversely, the urban restructure of Abandoibarra and other focus areas for investment led to increased land values, resulting in a lack of affordable residential property for the local population (Martinez-Perez, 2014) – exemplifying the effect of gentrification. This suggests that the government are excluding much of the city from investment, exacerbating decline in already neglected outer city areas. Additionally, the prominence of tertiary employment has contributed to the government's failure to protect and revitalise the industrial employment opportunities for skilled manufacture labour force within Metropolitan Bilbao (Gómez, 1998). Acknowledging the connection between these factors, this has resulted in a sense of social exclusion as existing residents' housing and employment needs are insufficiently fulfilled. As Abandoibarra experiences economic growth via attracting visitors and investors, the capital generated from these operations is not being reinvested into areas that need regeneration, so leading to wider decline. Hence, Bilbao as one entity is not fully experiencing the benefits associated with the rebranding strategy's immense success.

## Analysis and Findings

### *Cross-analysis of case studies*

Investigating the efficacy of market-led, top-down, and flagship rebranding strategies, the case studies can be cross-analysed. Belfast and Bilbao indicate distinct similarities in both their rebranding approach and iconic architectural outcome, namely the inspiration of shipbuilding heritage to reshape their civic identity and rebrand themselves as places to be 'consumed' (Hodson, 2019). Regarded as a '21st Century Bilbao' (McConnell & Overbeck, 2010, p.232), the Titanic Belfast successfully attained 'the Bilbao effect' phenomena where cultural investment in the Titanic Quarter stimulated more FDI, ensuring economic uplift. Although Harcourt Developments directed the market-led rebranding strategy, Titanic Belfast could be considered a flagship development too as it is arguably the masterplan's most significant attribute.

These ostentatious flagship schemes have become the nucleus of cultural policies, consuming historic identities and becoming the predominant tourist attraction. For instance, modifying the docklands' identity from formerly 'Queen's Island' to 'Titanic Quarter' accentuates the Titanic legacy and is reinforced by Kuhne's iconic conceptual reiteration of the historically infamous ship. Meanwhile, unlike the Guggenheim, Bilbao's plethora of museums are not experiencing many tourists, relatively – the second most visited museum in Basque Country, San Sebastián Aquarium, attracted over 340,000 visitors in 2018 compared to Guggenheim's 1.22 million (Basque Government, 2019), indicating that the museum may have usurped interest from other attractions. Unfortunately, in both cases, although succeeding in attracting visitors and investors, their flagships ultimately contributed to rising real estate, land prices, and rapid gentrification. This enhanced the social exclusion and discrimination of existing residents in each city, especially working-class communities with low qualifications who are undesirable to new high skill quaternary industries. Furthermore, the immense economic expense of flagship developments reduces investment in neglected peripheral constituencies, so these areas continue to decline whilst the central business district thrives. This is especially clear in Belfast's case where there are several deprived Super Output Areas outside the city centre, such as Water Works and Ardoyne. Thus, the scope of economic improvement is limited in these examples.

Despite the iconicity of Chipperfield's Turner Contemporary, the extent to which the town's compelling new brand identity relies on the gallery is lesser than other examples. Margate's top-down rebranding strategy does not concentrate on one major architectural development, but several medium-scaled cultural ones across the town including the Turner, Theatre Royal and Dreamland (Margate Renewal Partnership, 2009). This broadens Margate's scope for tourism as it encourages visitors to expand their exploration away from the seafront. Additionally, the strategy emphasises cultural collaboration with the local community, directly addressing social cohesion and job creation rather than attracting a new employment base, meanwhile offering supplementary support to existing local businesses. Therefore, through strategically planning economic development across the entire district, addressing socioeconomic factors as well as cultural attractions, it has benefitted the existing community rather than neglecting their existence. This contributes to a more sustainable rebranding strategy compared to Belfast and Bilbao, whose

strategies focused on one distinct area, because Thanet District Council researched, acknowledged, and planned for the scheme's future socioeconomic impact and can therefore viably progress forward.

**Table of findings**

Collating socioeconomic data relevant to each case study, these graphs display population change and economic growth within Belfast, Margate (Thanet) and Bilbao. These figures offer a valuable insight into their economic development and their efficacy.

**Population**

The population of each urban area has an increasing trend, where only Belfast's increasing rate of population growth correlates to the arrival of their architectural project. Whilst Thanet remains consistent, Bilbao experiences a steeply declining population until 2004 where growth catalyses alongside their global reputation.

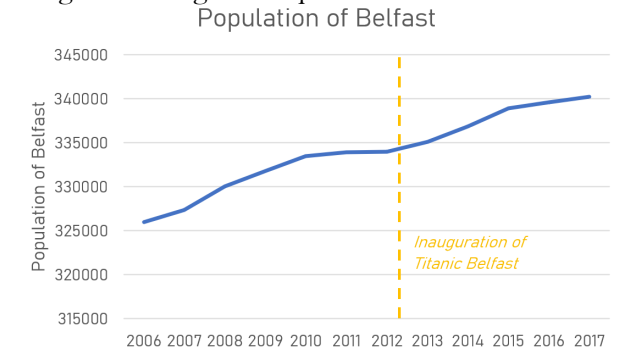


Figure 14: Population Growth of Belfast, 2006-2017 (Author's own, 2020; with data use from NISRA, 2018)

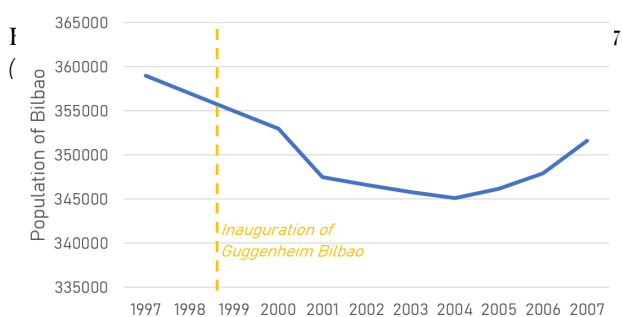
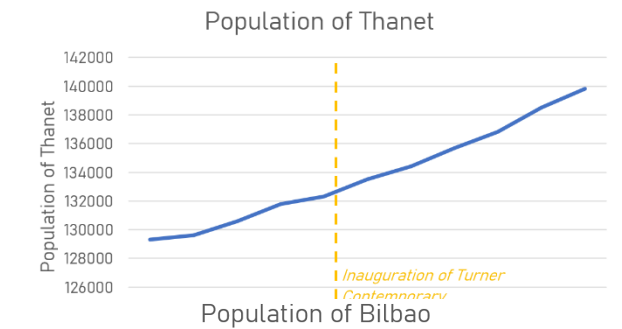


Figure 16: Population Growth of Bilbao, 1997-2007 (Author's own, 2020; with data use from Eustat, 2019 and Macrotrends, 2019)

**GDP per capita**

Steadily increasing over time, Belfast, and Thanet's GDP per capita indicates that their economies are improving consistently in comparison to the UK which fluctuates considerably. Interestingly, Bilbao and Basque Country's figures are very similar, perhaps emphasising the city's significance to the Basque economy.

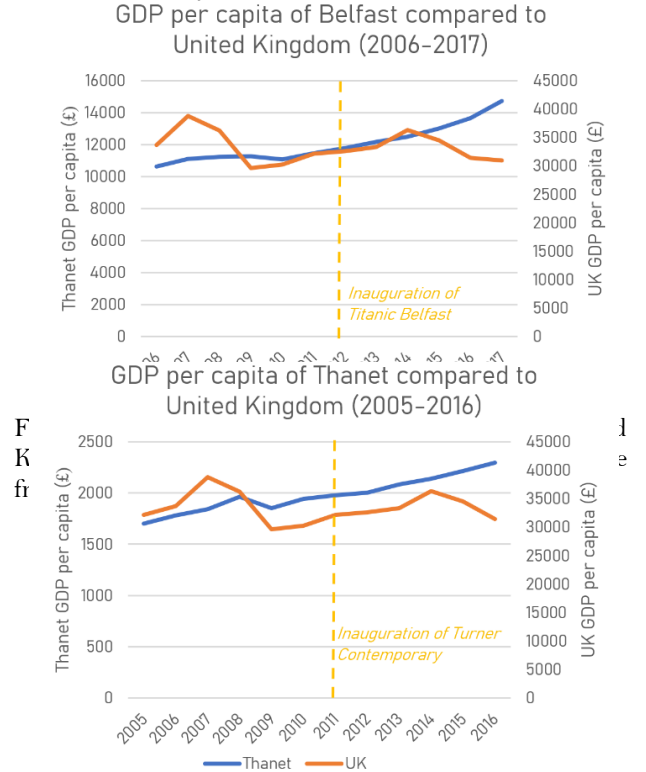


Figure 18: GDP per capita of Thanet compared to United Kingdom, 2005-2016 (Author's own, 2020; with data use from ONS, 2019 and The World Bank, 2018)

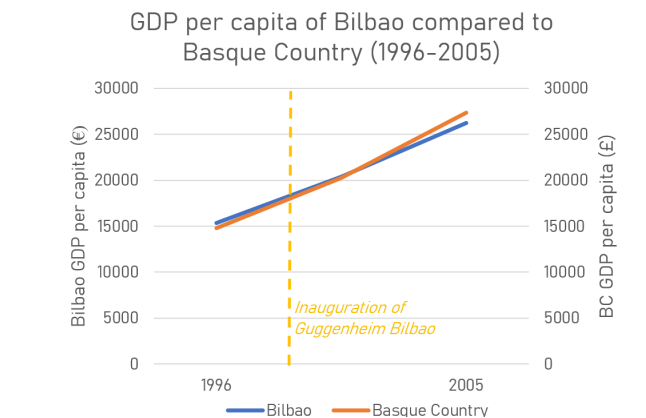


Figure 19: GDP per capita of Bilbao compared to Basque Country, 1996-2005 (Author's own, 2020; with data use from Eustat, 2019)

*Population in employment*

The volume of population in employment represents perhaps the most discerning graphs, where there is a strong correlation between the opening of the architectural precedent and a rapid increase in employment for each example.

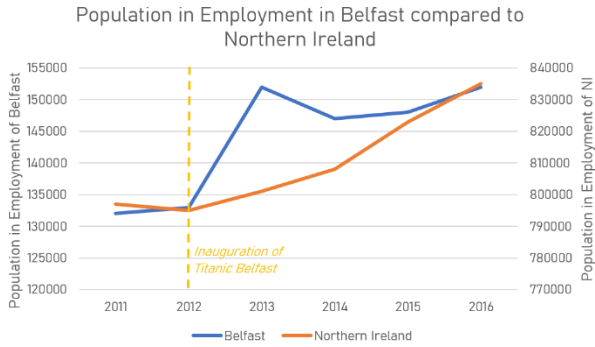


Figure 20: Population in employment in Belfast compared to Northern Ireland (Author’s own, 2020; with data use from NISRA, 2019)

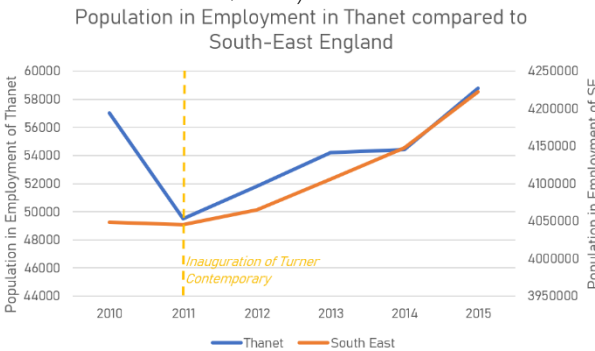


Figure 21: Population in employment in Thanet compared to South-East England (Author’s own, 2020; with data use from Nomis, 2019)

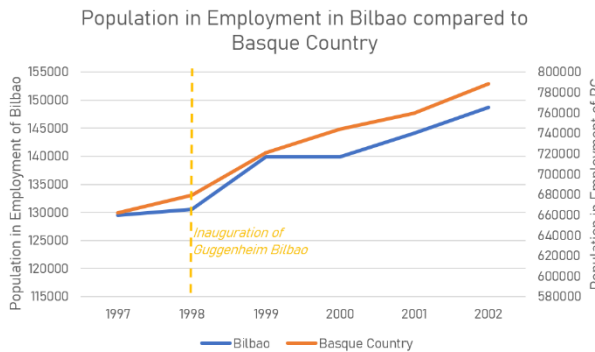


Figure 22: Population in employment in Bilbao compared to Basque Country (Author’s own, 2020; with data use from Eustat, 2019)

*Proportional comparison*

As displayed in Table 1, the key socioeconomic factors of each case study are quantified in order to allow the data to be proportionally compared. This reduces limitations of the conclusions via addressing the varying scale of the discussed

	Titanic Belfast	Turner Contemporary	Guggenheim Bilbao
Date of completion	April 2012	April 2011	October 1997
Cost of building	£100 million (in excess) (Titanic Belfast, 2009)	£17.4 million (Murray, 2011)	\$84 million (BBC Arts, 2017)
Architect	Eric Kuhne and Associates	David Chipperfield Architects	Frank Gehry
Statistic at completion:			
Population	333,962	132,300	359,000
GDP per capita	£11,770	£1,980	€17,022 (approx.)
In Employment	133,000 persons	49,500 persons	129,503 persons
Statistic five years post-completion:			
Population	340,220 (2017)	138,500 (2016)	346,170
GDP per capita	£14,731 (2017)	£2,297 (2016)	€23,202 (2002, approx.)
In Employment	144,000 persons (2017)	64,700 persons (2016)	148,723 persons (2002)
Percentage change:			
Population	+1.87%	+4.69%	-3.57%
GDP per capita	+25.2%	+16.0%	+36.3%
In Employment	+8.27%	+30.7%	+14.8%

Table 1: Table comparing the three case studies in proportion to each other (Author’s own, 2020; using data gathered in Figure 14 – Figure 22).

precedents and assesses their efficacy more accurately.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, on the efficacy of urban rebranding strategies, market-led, top-down, and flagship schemes have been explored. Headed by Harcourt Developments, the market-led strategy proved to be effective in attracting investors (FDI), visitors, and highly skilled residents to Belfast, consequently contributing to its economic uplift. Improving the quality of the urban environment was critical to its success, but this assignment was delegated to Eric Kuhne and his company CivicArts who developed the masterplan and designed Titanic Belfast. Thus, Harcourt Development’s disinvolvement within the process, other than approving projects, emphasises their sole objective of generating profit and therefore the wider socioeconomic impact of Titanic Quarter’s development was not considered to be part of the strategy. Consequently, this contributed to limited social development in Belfast’s outer city districts as rising employment opportunities did not complement their existing population’s skill base, and so quality of life is declining in these areas unlike the desirable and investable Titanic Quarter.

Meanwhile, Thanet District Council’s top-down rebranding approach represents a broader strategy that concentrates on a series of heritage and culture developments across Margate, including the new Turner Contemporary, to respectfully regenerate the seaside town without expropriating its historic image completely but instead enhancing it through

culture. Community engagement has successfully improved civic pride in the town, whilst the broadening of economic opportunities has increased employment by 45% and grown the economy by £89million since 2011, so highlighting the lasting positive impact of the strategy. Despite drastic reductions in unemployment rates, particularly in the most deprived areas of Cliftonville West and Central Margate which both halved, deprivation is still a significant issue in these wards. Deprivation continues to be a deep-rooted issue in both Margate and Belfast due to the depth involved in convalescing social conditions such as health and disability; barriers to housing and services; and crime. When observing additional social indicators, such as employment, income, and the living environment, conditions have noticeably improved in both regions since their rebranding strategies were initiated. Thus, this indicates that regional approaches to improve deprivation rates are positively progressing.

Fixating on the Guggenheim Bilbao as a cultural flagship landmark in Abandoibarra's urban rebranding strategy, the scheme was immensely successful where transport enhancements and improving environmental quality transformed Bilbao into an accessible and alluring city, leading to over a million annual tourists visiting the Guggenheim Museum, which directly and indirectly generates €400 million each year (BBC Arts, 2017). Following its worldwide success of catalysing economic development, 'the Bilbao effect' phenomena was created and many cities aimed to replicate it. Belfast and Margate may have been influenced by the Bilbao effect given that their strategies focus on cultural regeneration to develop a positive and enticing brand image. In this instance, Belfast relates more to the Bilbao effect than Margate, as Belfast's rebranding selectively enriches and exploits heritage for commercial gain and profitability, thus emphasising its market-led objectives. Conversely, Margate enhances their traditional British seaside image and introduces culture through its connection with JMW Turner instead. However, it is acknowledged that other non-branding factors may have influenced these outcomes, such as rapid technological advancements which may have increased the exposure of attractive places to visit; transport improvements enabling cheaper foreign travel to Bilbao or easier access to previously inaccessible places like isolated Margate; or perhaps

government incentives to attract businesses including low corporation tax.

Ultimately, each rebranding strategy reflects unique socioeconomic outcomes but the long-term impact of these may be determined by the extent to which existing communities were regarded as significant stakeholders within their visions.: Belfast and Bilbao may experience a prolonged consequence for their neglect whilst Margate experiences consistent change and improvement in the community. In the short-term, Bilbao and Belfast's rebranding strategies have proven to be successful in catalysing rapid economic development, as indicated by decreasing unemployment rates and rising economic values. However, it is critical that issues of social exclusion are addressed as it could eventually lead to resentment and conflict, which these cities have both historically experienced. Addressing these issues, it can be concluded that top-down rebranding strategies are most efficacious because they are headed by public organisations, such as Thanet District Council, who investigate socioeconomic conditions of the area, often involving local focus groups, and produce solutions to the problems in order to stimulate economic growth. Therefore, through stakeholder inclusion during the planning process, urban rebranding strategies can ensure that investments are thoughtfully distributed to the benefit of the entire town. Thus, this offers a more sustainable approach to regeneration and urban rebranding.

## References

- Barker, N., Brodie, A., Dermott, N., Jessop, L., & Winter, G. (2007). *Margate's Seaside Heritage*. Swindon: English Heritage. Retrieved from Historic England: <https://bit.ly/2ZSApyR>
- Basque Government. (2019, January 11). *Basque Museums: Excellent Visitor Numbers*. Retrieved from Basque Country: <https://bit.ly/2ZVgVJP>
- BBC Arts. (2017, October 16). *The Bilbao effect: How 20 years of Gehry's Guggenheim transformed the city*. Retrieved from BBC Arts: <https://bbc.in/2RKFH14>
- BBC News. (2018, April 16). *A titanic number of visitors for top NI tourist spot*. Retrieved from BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-43780403>

- BBC News. (2019, August 6). Harland and Wolff: *The troubled history of Belfast's shipyard*. Retrieved from BBC News: <https://bbc.in/33Of2A1>
- BBC Newsbeat. (2012, September 4). *Northern Ireland's violent history explained*. Retrieved from BBC: <https://bbc.in/33NhHcS>
- Belfast City Council. (2008, May 28). *Titanic Signature Project*. Retrieved from Belfast City Council: <https://bit.ly/33IfijL>
- Belfast City Council. (2015, September). *Belfast City Centre: Regeneration and Investment Strategy*. Retrieved from Belfast City Council: <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk>
- Bengoetxea, I. (2013, October 1). *Hangzhou International Congress "Culture: Key to Sustainable Development"*. Retrieved from UNESCO: <https://bit.ly/3cdiV5e>
- Bennett, R., & Savani, S. (2003). *The Rebranding of City Places: An International Comparative Investigation*. *International Public Management Review*, 4(2), 70-87. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/35QGejZ>
- Campbell, J. (2019, May 14). *Northern Ireland unemployment rate hits historic low*. Retrieved from BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-48266312>
- Canterbury Christ Church University. (2017). *Reinventing Margate*. Retrieved from Canterbury Christ Church University: <https://bit.ly/33IgPX3>
- Cattermole, P. (2013). *Building Titanic Belfast: The Making of a Twenty-First-Century Landmark*. Belfast: Titanic Belfast Publications.
- Dorney, J. (2015, February 9). *The Northern Ireland Conflict 1968-1998 – An Overview*. Retrieved from The Irish Story: <https://bit.ly/3iMxNKc>
- Dreamland Margate. (2019). *About Dreamland*. Retrieved from Dreamland Margate: <https://www.dreamland.co.uk/about-dreamland>
- Eustat. (2016). *Gross domestic product per capita in the A.C. of the Basque Country by territorial scope*. Retrieved from Eustat: <https://bit.ly/33J7rCK>
- Eustat. (2019). *Employment in establishments in the Basque Country by territorial area*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/35NwlUm>
- Eustat. (2019). *Gross domestic product per capita in the A.C. of the Basque Country by territorial scope*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/32NxjOl>
- Eustat. (2019). *Population of the Basque Country by territorial area, large age groups and sex*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/32MvTnr>
- Fañña, J. A., López - Rodríguez, J., & Montes - Solla, P. (2010). *Case Study: Basque Country (ES)*. Retrieved from European Commission: <https://bit.ly/33DBCuM>
- Farnham Maltings. (2019). *Theatre Royal Margate*. Retrieved from House: <https://bit.ly/3iSEVVu>
- Glancey, J. (2015, June 10). *Britain's Seaside Ruins*. Retrieved from BBC Culture: <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20150609-britains-seaside-ruins>
- Gómez, M. (1998). *Reflective images: the case of urban regeneration in Glasgow and Bilbao*. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 22(1), 106-121. doi: 10.1111/1468-2427.00126
- Gupta, T. (2019, October 4). *Turner Contemporary: Did art transform 'no-go zone' Margate?* Retrieved from BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-49804664>
- Harcourt Developments. (2007). *Titanic Quarter: Regenerating Belfast*. London: Fox International. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2Gv8H4I>
- Hodson, P. (2019). *Titanic Struggle: Memory, Heritage and Shipyard Deindustrialization in Belfast*. *History Workshop Journal*, 87(Spring 2019), 224-249. doi: 10.1093/hwj/dbz003
- Iyengar, H., Novak, L., Sinn, R., & Zils, J. (1998). *Steel Flower*. Modern Steel Construction.
- Johnson, M., Marshall, M., Evans, G., & Pirie, V. (2016, November 25). *Place branding and heritage*. Retrieved from Historic England.
- Kent County Council. (2017). *Unemployment in Kent*. Retrieved from Kent County Council: <https://bit.ly/35UejzY>

- Kent County Council. (2019). *Ward profile*. Retrieved from Kent County Council: <https://bit.ly/3kBCUxA>
- Kent Public Health Observatory. (2017, April). *Thanet CCG Locality Profile for Margate*. Retrieved from Kent Public Health Observatory:
- Local Government Association. (2019, February 10). *Dreamland and Turner Contemporary, Margate*. Retrieved from Local Government Association: <https://bit.ly/3kzL1KR>
- Macrotrends. (2019). *Bilbao, Spain Population 1950-2020*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3mxmAzD>
- Maiwald, P (2009). Guggenheim museum Bilbao HDR [Online image]. Retrieved from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guggenheim\\_museum\\_Bilbao\\_HDR-image.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guggenheim_museum_Bilbao_HDR-image.jpg)
- Margate Renewal Partnership. (2009). *A Cultural Vision for Margate: Creative Margate Ten Year Delivery Plan*. Retrieved from Margate Renewal Partnership: <https://bit.ly/2ZWR0lc>
- Martinez-Perez, A. (2014). *Socio-spatial impact of great urban projects in Bilbao and applicable lessons for other cities*. *Revista Bitácora Urbano Territorial*, 24(1), 1-13. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2RIhMcj>
- McConnell, T., & Overbeck, K. (2010, October/November). *Titanic Belfast: Architecture for a New Age*. *Irish America*, 25(6), 39-46. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/33Lw6GM>
- Moore, R. (2017, October 1). *The Bilbao effect: how Frank Gehry's Guggenheim started a global craze*. Retrieved from The Guardian: <https://bit.ly/3mAF1TX>
- Murphy, W (2012). *Titanic Belfast: Visitor Attraction And Monument To Belfast's Maritime Heritage* [Online image]. Retrieved from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/80824546@N00/7181499281>
- Murray, C. (2011, April 28). *Turner Contemporary, Margate, by David Chipperfield Architects*. Retrieved from Architects' Journal: <https://bit.ly/3iPPad1>
- Newsround. (2019, January 21). *Ireland independence: Why Jan 1919 is an important date*. Retrieved from CBBC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/46480953>
- NISRA. (2017). *Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017*. Retrieved from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency: <https://bit.ly/3mzE2Dw>
- NISRA. (2018). *Index of Outcome Delivery Plan*. Retrieved from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency: <https://bit.ly/32LZ6i5>
- NISRA. (2018). *Interactive Content: Population*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/32MwIN3>
- NISRA. (2018). *2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates for Northern Ireland*. Retrieved from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency: <https://bit.ly/33HE9o1>
- NISRA. (2019). *Quarterly Employment Survey Historical Tables September 2019*. Retrieved from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency: <https://bit.ly/35ThM1q>
- NISRA. (2019). *Labour Market Structure - Employment Activity and Qualifications level by Local Government District 2009 - 2018*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3j1eX2l>
- Nomis. (2019). *Economically Active - Time Series*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3ch6cyz>
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board. (2004). *Tourism in Northern Ireland: A Strategic Framework for Action 2004-2007*. Retrieved from Titanic Belfast: <https://titanicbelfast.com/BlankSite/files/e7/e7c46933-2dc2-4e6d-a04c-7f189057b2ca.pdf>
- ONS. (2019, December). *Dataset: Regional gross domestic product local authorities*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/35VLW4a>
- ONS. (2019, December). *Dataset: Regional gross domestic product city regions*. Retrieved from Office for National Statistics: <https://bit.ly/2FEDvzI>
- ONS. (2019, July). *Interactive mid-year population estimate toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2FXIPiA>
- Paraskevaidis, P., & Weidenfeld, A. (2019). *Sign consumption and sign promotion in visitor attractions: A netnography of the visitor experience in Titanic Belfast*.

International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 31(4), 1937-1955. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-07-2018-0543

Plöger, J. (2007, October 26). *Belfast City Report*. Retrieved from Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion: <https://bit.ly/2RPpXDD>

Plöger, J. (2008). *Bilbao City Report*. Retrieved from LSE Research Online: <https://bit.ly/2Eh0PTd>

Power, A. (2016, May). *Bilbao City Story*. Retrieved from LSE Research Online: [eprints.lse.ac.uk/67843/1/casereport101.pdf](https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/67843/1/casereport101.pdf)

Raw, M. (2013). *My Revision Notes: Edexcel AS Geography*. London: Hodder Education

Rehan, R. M. (2014, August). *Urban branding as an effective sustainability tool in urban development*. HBRC Journal, 10(2), 222-230. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hbrj.2013.11.007>

Scerri, M., Edwards, D., & Foley, C. (2016). *The Value of Architecture to Tourism (PhD)*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/32NqigM>

SEEDA Research and Economics Team. (2010). *Margate (Thanet) Economy Update*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/35RkZyH>

Sklair, L. (2010). *Iconic Architecture and the Culture-ideology of Consumerism*. Sage Journals: Theory, Culture & Society, 27(5), 135-159. doi:10.1177/0263276410374634

Thanet District Council. (2005). *Cliftonville Development Plan Document: Introduction*. Retrieved from Thanet District Council: <http://thanet.devplan.org.uk/document.aspx?document=81&display=chapter&id=589>

Thanet District Council. (2006). *Thanet Local Plan*. Retrieved from Thanet District Council: <https://bit.ly/32KXkxO>

Thanet District Council. (2010). *Thanet Local Development Framework*. Retrieved from Thanet District Council: <https://www.thanet.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ELR.pdf>

The World Bank. (2018). *GDP per capita (current US\$) - United Kingdom*. Retrieved from

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?en d=2018&locations=GB&start=2005>

Titanic Belfast. (2009, December 15). *Facts & Figures*. Retrieved from Titanic Belfast: <https://titanicbelfast.com/Explore/The-Titanic-Belfast-Building/Facts-Figures.aspx>

Titanic Belfast. (2016, December 2). *Titanic Belfast named King of the World!* Retrieved from Titanic Belfast: <https://bit.ly/2RFrsV8>

Titanic Quarter. (2012). *About*. Retrieved from Titanic Quarter: <http://www.titanic-quarter.com/about>

United Nations. (n.d.). *Bilbao Ría 2000-Transformation of Bilbao, Spain through public/private partnerships*. Retrieved from Sustainable Development Goals: Knowledge Platform: <https://bit.ly/32MN73V>