

The number of marriages rose by 1.7% in 2014 with respect to the previous year

The average age of husbands has increased by 7.2 years and by 7.4 in the case of wives over the last 25 years

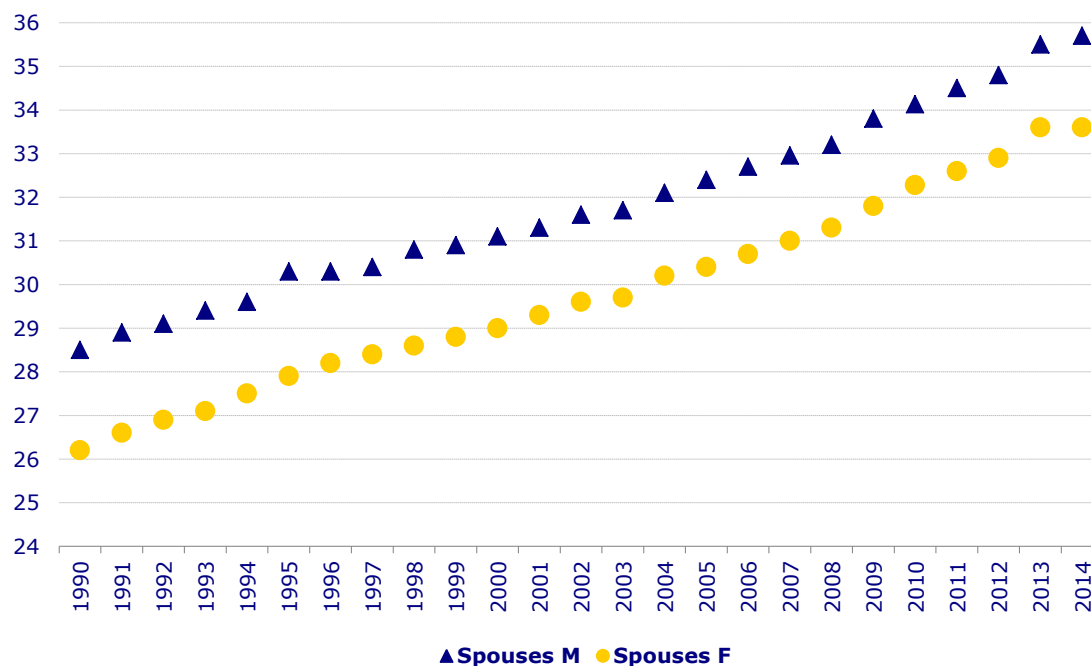
The total number of marriages stood at 7,937 in 2014, 1.7% down on the previous year, of which 139 were homosexual couples, according to Eustat data.

There were 7,798 marriages of Basque Country residents between individuals of a different sex, 123 fewer than in the previous year, which equates to a drop of 1.6%.

The Basque marriage rate was 3.4 weddings per thousand inhabitants, a similar number to the Spanish rate (3,45‰), but lower than that for European Union (28 countries), which in 2011 (latest available data) stood at 4.4‰.

There was an increase in the age of marriage alongside a delay in the age at which women become mothers. In 2014, the average age of single men when they entered into marriage was 35.7 years old, whilst for single women it stood at 33.6. In the last 25 years, the average age of husbands has increased by 7.2 years and by 7.4 in the case of wives.

Graph 1: Average age at first marriage by sex



Source: Eustat. Marriage statistics

Taking into account civil status prior to marriage, single men represented 88.3%, a slightly lower figure than the 89% of single women.

Summer was the preferred time for partners to get married: specifically, July was the most popular month with 1,183 weddings, followed by June with 1,126 and September with 1,080. 49% of weddings took place on a Saturday and 38% on a Friday.

The number of civil weddings has almost tripled since 1990

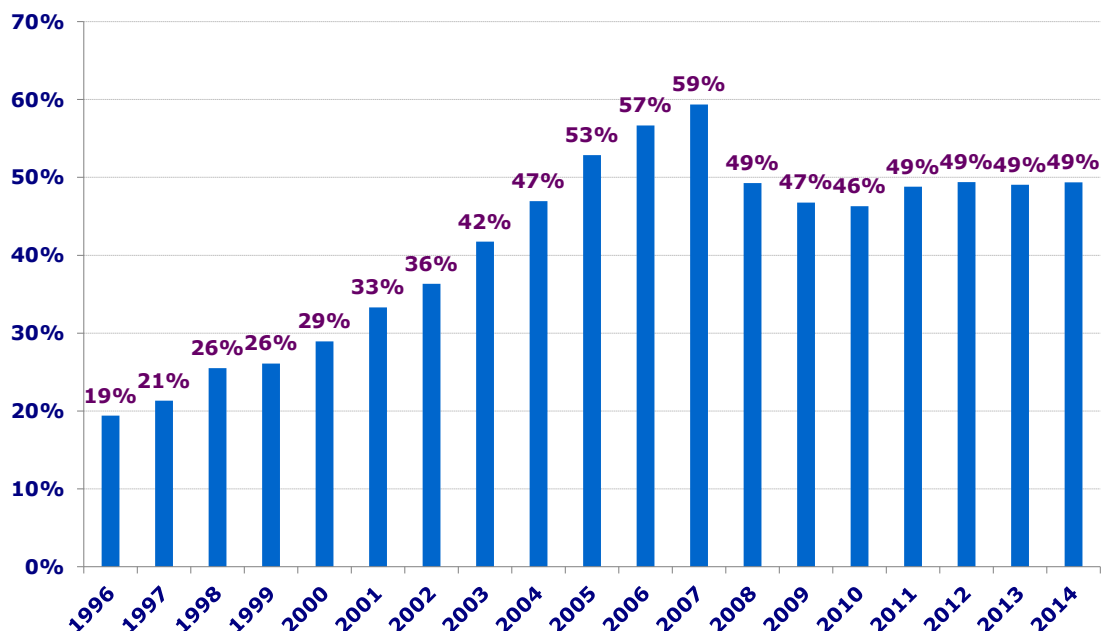
The number of civil weddings has risen throughout the last few years, going from 23% in 1990 to 75.6% in 2014, when they stood at 5,899. There were 1,877 catholic weddings and 22 that corresponded to other religious faiths.

By provinces, the most civil weddings took place in Bizkaia (78.9%), followed by Gipuzkoa (77.5%) and Álava (73.3%). However, in the case of Basque residents whose wedding took place outside of the Basque Country, the percentage fell to 58.1%.

Almost half of new couples lived together before getting married in 2014

49% of partners shared the same residence before marriage, a figure that has remained constant since 2011. The percentage of partners that lived together before marriage has changed over the last few years, from a minimum in 1996, when just 19% of partners had the same address before getting married, to 2007, when the maximum number was reached, 59%.

Graph 2: Couples sharing residence before marriage (%)



Source: Eustat. Marriage statistics

The preferred destinations for the 486 couples who fixed their residency outside the Basque Country after getting married were Madrid, Navarra and France. There were

differences, regarding destination, amongst the marriages that took place in the three provinces: those in Álava preferred Madrid, La Rioja and Burgos; those in Bizkaia Madrid, Cantabria and Barcelona and those in Gipuzkoa France, Navarra and Madrid.

In 14.5% of unions at least one of the spouses was of foreign nationality

Regarding the nationality of the individuals entering into marriage, in 1,128 marriages (14.5% of the total) at least one of the spouses was a foreign national. In 46.2% of these couples the wife had foreign nationality, in 26.1% the husband and in the remaining 27.7%, both spouses were foreigners.

The most common country of origin among recently married foreigners were Colombia, with 100; Bolivia and Brazil, both with 72; and Romania, Morocco and Paraguay, with 43 each. With regards to new foreign spouses, 67 originated from Morocco, 61 from Colombia, 45 from Bolivia, 32 from Portugal and Argentina, and 31 from Ecuador.

The number of homosexual marriages rose by 10.3% with respect to the previous year

In 2014 there were 139 weddings between individuals of the same sex, 79 being between women and 60 between men. This figure is a 10.3% rise compared to the previous year. Regarding distribution between provinces, 26 were resident in Álava, 39 in Gipuzkoa, 63 in Bizkaia and 11 outside the Basque Country.

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