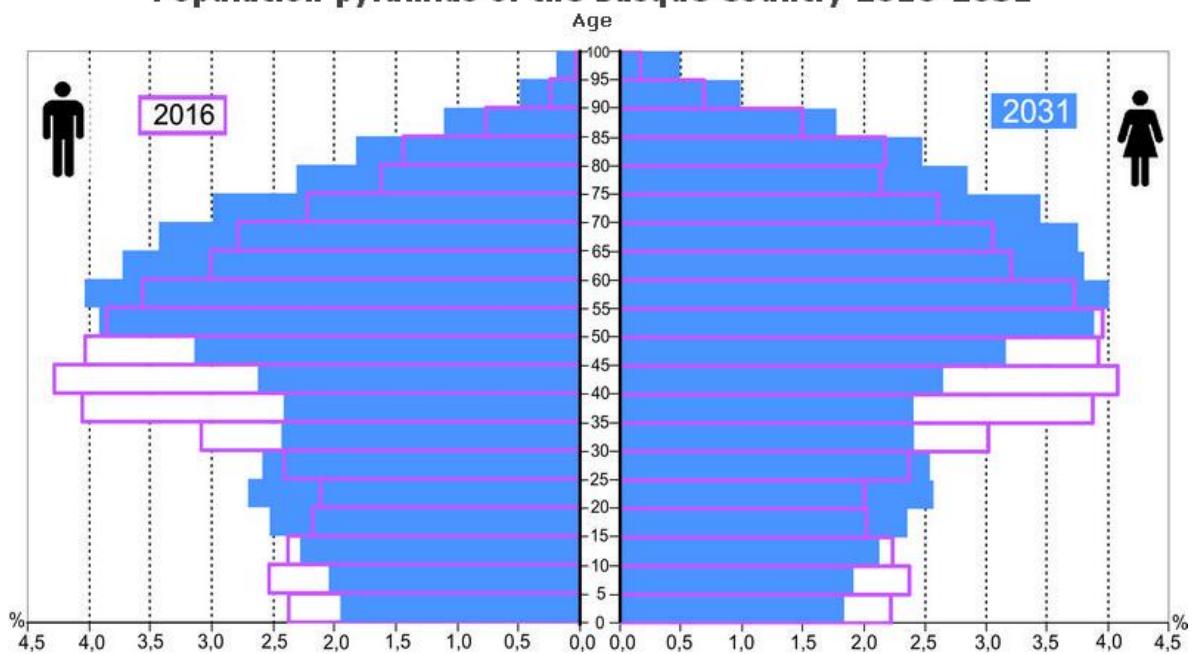


The population of the Basque Country will increase by 14,000 people between 2016 and 2031

The migratory balances will compensate for the increased number of deaths and a fall in the number of births

It is estimated that on 1 January 2031 there will be 2,186,200 inhabitants in the Basque Country, 1,064,200 of which will be men (48.4%) and 1,117,200 of which will be women (51.7%), according to Eustat Demographic Projections. This will amount to 14,300 more people than in 2016, with an annual growth rate of 0.04%, meaning that the population size of the Basque Country will stabilise. The growth rate will be at its highest at the end of this decade, but it will not reach annual rates of 1%. It will then slow down to an average rate of 0.03% between 2021 and 2031.

Population pyramids of the Basque Country 2016-2031



Source: EUSTAT. Demographic Projections 2036. Population on 1 January

Despite the fact that between 2016 and 2031 the populations in Álava and Gipuzkoa are predicted to grow by 15,300 and 28,000 inhabitants, respectively, the fall in the number of residents in Bizkaia, specifically 29,000 fewer people, will result in weak population growth for the Basque Country during this period. These territorial differences will continue the trend of the most recent five-year periods in the Basque Country as a whole, which have seen a progressive rise in the population weight of Álava at the expense of Bizkaia. It is predicted that in 2031, 15.4% of the population will live in Álava, (1.8 percentage points more than in 2001), 50.8% in Bizkaia (3.2 points less) and the remaining 33.8% in Gipuzkoa (1.5 percentage points more).

The combination of the balances in both components of demographic growth, **the natural component** (births minus deaths) and **the migratory component** (immigrations minus emigrations), will result in the population size broadly stabilising between 2016 and 2031. Natural growth will have increasingly negative balances due to the rise in the number of deaths and the fall in the number of births, meaning that the population will decrease by 74,200 people for this component during the period in question. In contrast, the migratory balance will add 88,500 people.

The process of population ageing will continue

The population under 20, which represented 18.2% of the Basque Country in 2016, will fall to 17% in 2031, and its number will drop by almost 25,000 people.

It is estimated that the 'adult' population, in other words, the group aged between 20 and 64, will lose 111,900 people over these 15 years, equivalent to a decrease of 8.5%. In relation to the changes in the adult population, the loss of 201,000 people aged between 29 and 51 in the central age bracket will contrast with increases of 35,200 people in the 20-28 age group and 54,000 people in the 52-64 age group.

The population aged 65 and over could increase by 150,900 people, meaning that its weight would reach 28.2% in 2031 - nearly 7 points more than in 2016. The largest relative increases will be among the elderly population, which will stand at 112,900 people, 5.2% of the total population.

The fertility rate will recover, but the number of births will fall

The number of births in the Basque Country will drop by 18,900 in 2015 to 16,400 in 2030, as the predicted recovery of the fertility rate, reaching up to 1.53 children per mother, will not compensate for the fall in the number of women of fertile age: the reduction of the feminine population between 25 and 39, the primary ages for reproduction, could reach 20% of the initial value.

Life expectancy will continue its upward trajectory

Life expectancy at birth will reach 83.7 years for men and 88.8 years for women in 2030, compared to 80.2 and 86.1 years, respectively, in 2015. The difference in life expectancy at birth between women and men will change from 5.9 years in 2015 to 5.1 years in 2031.

The migratory balance will help to stabilise the population

Throughout the entire projection period, the annual immigration rate will be 36,500, although this will increase to over 37,000 during the final five-year period due to the increase in the number of people entering from abroad, going from 41% of the total number of immigrants coming into the Basque Country in 2016 to 47% in 2030. The emigration rate, which will be at its highest in 2016 with an outflow of 32,200 people, will decrease to 29,900 people in the final year, as a result of a fall in the number of people aged 15 to 34, who are those most likely to emigrate.

The migratory balance, which is the result of both of these components, will be 3,900 people in 2016 and will rise to 7,100 in 2030, with a migratory balance of 88,500 people over the period as a whole.

Migratory balances (in thousands) per year by Province. 2010-2030

	Basque Country	Araba / Álava	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
2010	5.200	800	2.400	2.000
2015	3.400	600	1.000	1.800
2020	5.400	1.000	1.400	3.000
2025	6.500	1.100	2.200	3.200
2030	7.100	1.100	2.800	3.200

Source: Eustat. Population projections 2031

After the erratic performances in the migratory balances for Álava and Bizkaia in the first five years of this decade, with even negative balances in Álava, it is estimated that they will be positive in the three territories, with sustained growth over the entire projection period. The situation in Bizkaia will be noteworthy, going from a positive balance of 400 people in 2016 to 2,800 in 2030. However, it will not reach the balance for Gipuzkoa, which will stand at 3,200 people. Even though the balance for Álava will also grow, it will be at a weaker rate, going from 800 people in 2016 to 1,100 in 2030.

The first decade of this century has seen a steady increase in the migratory exchanges between provinces, going from an average of 4,000 in the three-year period 2000-2002, to almost 6,000 per year in 2014 and 2015. Part of this increase is related to the foreign population which is characterised by a greater residential mobility.

Nevertheless, despite this increase, the total volume of internal movements is low and its impact on the demographic evolution of the provinces is not very significant, as the internal migratory balances are small. It is estimated that this situation will continue during the projection years, and that the internal migratory balance of the Basque Country for the entire projection period will bring 674 people to Álava and 736 to Gipuzkoa, at the expense of Bizkaia, which could lose 1,410.

For further information:

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