

The number of marriages increased by 0.4% in 2017 with respect to the previous year

In the last 25 years, the average age of husbands and wives has increased by almost eight years

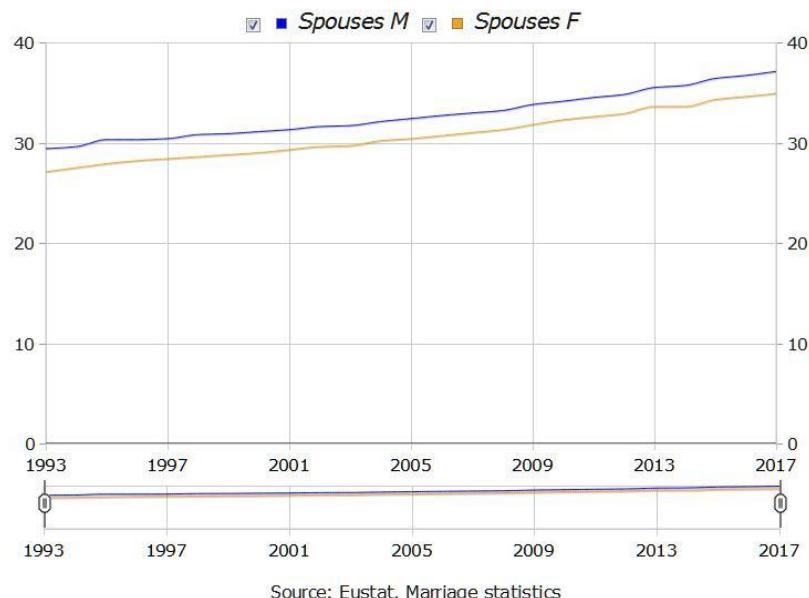
The total number of marriages stood at 8,060 in 2017, 0.4% up on the previous year, of which 199 were homosexual couples, according to Eustat data.

If we take into account the marriages of residents of the Basque Country between individuals of a different sex, the number was 7,861, just 13 weddings more than the previous year.

The Basque marriage rate was 3.4 marriages per thousand inhabitants, a lower number than the Spanish rate (3.6‰), and that of the European Union (28 countries), which in 2015 (latest available data) stood at 4.3‰.

There was an increase in the age of marriage alongside a delay in the age at which women become mothers. In 2017 the average age of single men when marrying was 37.1, while that of single women was 34.9. In the last 25 years, the average age of husbands has increased by 7.7 years and by 7.8 in the case of wives, the difference of two years between them remaining stable.

Average age at first marriage en the Basque Country by sex



Taking into account civil status prior to marriage, single men represented 85.8%, a very similar figure to the 85.5% of single women.

Summer was the preferred time for partners to get married and specifically September was the most popular month with 1,304 weddings, followed by July with 1,280 and June with 1,170.

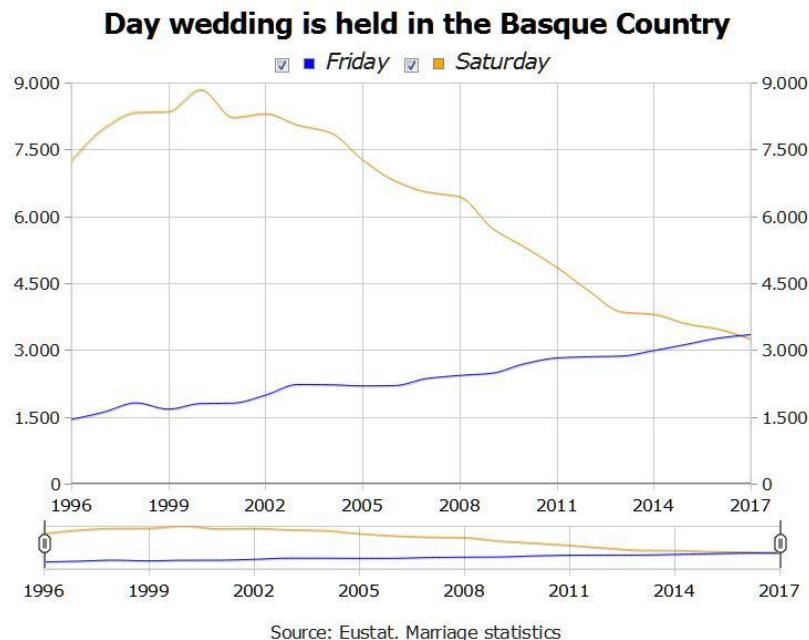
The number of civil weddings has tripled since 1990

The number of civil weddings has risen throughout the last few years, going from 23% in 1990 to 83.1% in 2017, when they stood at 6,530. There were 1,304 catholic weddings and 27 that corresponded to other religious faiths.

By provinces, the most civil weddings took place in Bizkaia (85.9%), followed by Gipuzkoa (83.7%) and Álava (83.1%). However, in the case of civil weddings of residents outside of the Basque Country, the percentage fell to 65.6%.

Weddings celebrated on Fridays exceeded those on Saturdays

More than half of weddings were traditionally celebrated on Saturdays, both because 90% of religious weddings took place on this day and because it was the day chosen for over 40% of civil weddings. The large increase in civil weddings, along with the fact that, from 2009, almost half of them were celebrated on Friday, along with the significant reduction in religious weddings, meant that 2017 was the first year in which there were more weddings on Fridays than on Saturdays, although the difference was only of 98 (3,346 compared to 3,248).



The preferred destinations for the 405 couples who fixed their residency outside the Basque Country after getting married were Madrid, Cantabria and Navarra. There were differences, regarding destination, amongst the marriages that took place in the three provinces: those in Álava preferred Madrid, Burgos and La Rioja; those in Bizkaia Madrid, Cantabria and Barcelona and those in Gipuzkoa Madrid, Navarra and Barcelona.

In 17% of marriages at least one of the spouses was of foreign nationality

Regarding the nationality of people entering into marriage, in 1,336 marriages (17% of the total) at least one of the spouses was foreign; in 43.9% of these marriages, it was the wife who had foreign nationality, in 23.7% of them it was the husband and in the remaining 32.5% both spouses had foreign nationality.

In the case of marriages in which only the women had foreign nationality, 71.5% of them were from an American country, followed by 20.5% of them who had a European nationality. If it was only the man with foreign nationality, this was shared across American and European countries in similar percentages (34.5% and 33.2% respectively), with African countries in third place (25.3%).

In the marriages in which both spouses were foreigners, most had American nationality, although the percentage was greater amongst women (69.3%) than men (61.7%). The second nationality continent was Africa, with 26% of men and 20.8% of women.

The number of homosexual marriages rose by 10.6% with respect to the previous year

In 2017, 199 weddings between people of the same sex were celebrated, the highest figure since 2005, when homosexual marriages were legalised, which represents an increase of 10.6% compared to the previous year. Between 2005 and 2011 marriages between men exceeded those between women, a trend that was reversed in 2012, reaching 116 marriages between women and only 83 between men in 2017. Regarding distribution between provinces, 23 were resident in Álava, 75 in Gipuzkoa, 79 in Bizkaia and 22 outside the Basque Country.

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