

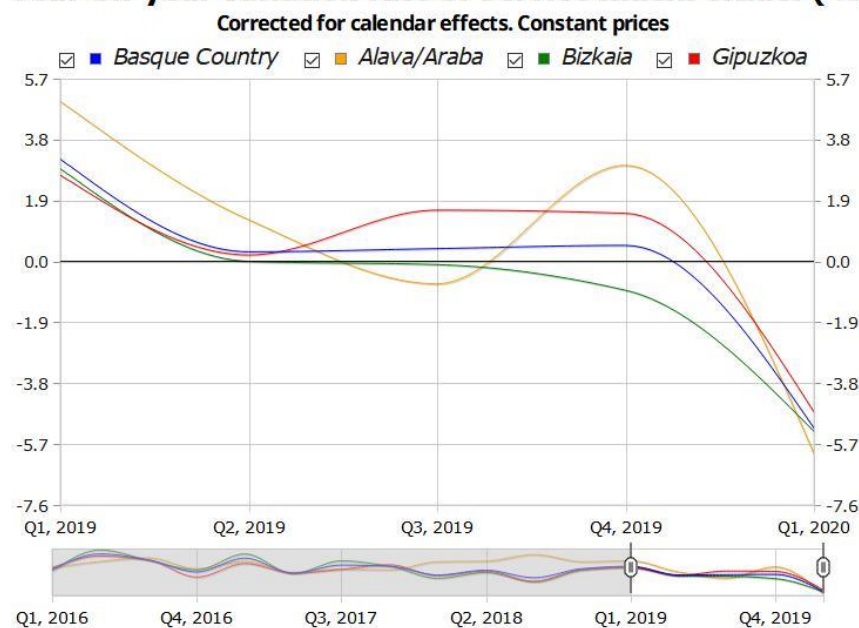
Sales in the Trade sector of the Basque Country were down 5.2% in the first quarter of 2020

Employment in the sector shrank by 0.3% in respect of that observed in the first quarter of 2019

The Trade sector, which comprises Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, and Sale & Repair of Vehicles, saw a 5.2% decrease in sales in real terms, in the first quarter of 2020, compared to the same quarter of the previous year, according to Eustat data.

Compared to the previous quarter, and once any seasonal effects had been eliminated, Trade shrank by 5.4% at constant prices.

Year-on-year variation rate of service index. Trade. (%)



Source: Eustat. Service Index

Within Trade, the year-on-year evolution of real sales, once corrected for calendar effects, was negative for the three branches; standing out was the drop of 16.7% observed in Sale & Repair of Motor Vehicles. Wholesale Trade sales were down 4.6% and Retail Trade sales fell by 3.3%.

By provinces, in Álava sales contracted by 6.0%, in Bizkaia they were down by 5.3% and in Gipuzkoa there was a fall in sales of 4.7%, all compared to the first quarter of 2019 and once the price and calendar effects had been discounted.

The index of people employed in the Trade sector in the Basque Country fell by 0.3% in the year-on-year period between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, which represented a decrease in deseasonalised terms of 0.1% in respect of the fourth quarter of 2019.

Service Index of the Basque Country. Trade.
Constant prices. Provisional data. I/ 2020

	t / t-4	t / t-1	A (t) / A (t-4)
GENERAL INDEX	-5,2	-5,4	-5,2
Sale and repair of motor vehicles	-16,7	-16,0	-16,7
Wholesale trade	-4,6	-4,4	-4,6
Retail trade	-3,3	-3,9	-3,3
PROVINCES			
Araba/Álava	-6,0	-6,4	-6,0
Bizkaia	-5,3	-5,0	-5,3
Gipuzkoa	-4,7	-5,7	-4,7
EMPLOYMENT	-0,3	-0,1	-0,3

q / q-4 Year-on-year growth. Data corrected for calendar effects

q / q-1 Quarter-on-quarter growth. Seasonally adjusted data

Aq / A(q-4) Year-on-year variation up to current quarter. Data corrected for calendar effects

Source: Eustat. Service Index

NOTE ON THE EFFECT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS ON THE SERVICE SECTOR INDEX

Royal Decree 463/2020, of 14 March, declared a state of alarm in order to manage the health crisis caused by **COVID-19**.

The exceptional measures adopted brought the majority of service sector companies to a partial or total standstill during the last two weeks of March. Therefore, the Service Sector Index for this first quarter was affected by this exceptional situation in a sixth of the period to which it refers.

Due to this situation, obtaining the necessary information for compiling the Service Sector Index required a greater degree of effort, by both the companies surveyed and the personnel dedicated to collecting and processing the information.

Eustat would like to thank all the companies that have collaborated in making this effort despite the extraordinary circumstances. As a result, the index for the first quarter of 2020 was calculated with **83.30% coverage** of the sample - whose information was mainly collected during April.

For further information:

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