

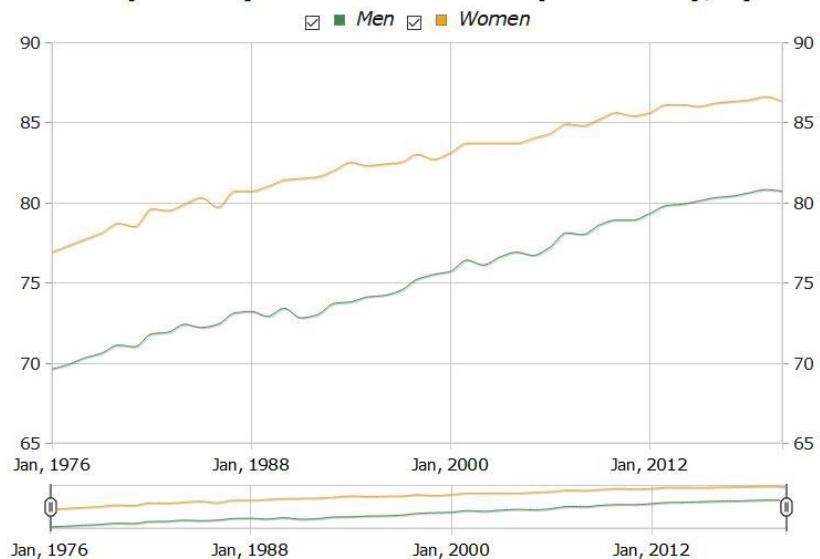
## The pandemic has led to a decline in life expectancy of 0.6 years for men and 0.5 years for women in 2020

***Even so, the life expectancy of women exceeded that of the European Union as a whole by 2 years***

Life expectancy in 2020 stood at 80.7 years for men, one tenth less than in 2019, while it fell by 3 tenths for women, reaching 86.3 years, according to Eustat data. This drop was due to the excess mortality caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. If it were not for this increase in mortality, life expectancy would have reached 81.3 years for men and 86.8 years for women, i.e. 5 tenths more for men and 2 tenths more for women than in 2019.

Nevertheless, this decrease in life expectancy between 2019 and 2020 was far from that seen in Spain as a whole, given that it was down by 1.3 years for men and 1.2 years for women, this being among the highest in the countries of the European Union.

**Life expectancy at birth in the Basque Country, by sex**



Source: Eustat. Indicators for the analysis of demographic phenomena

Both men and women in the Basque Country saw an increase in their life expectancy, despite some fluctuations. Compared to the indicators observed in 1976 (a life expectancy of 69.6 years for men and 76.9 years for women), life expectancy increased by 9.4 years for women and 11.1 years for men. Men gained 3 more months

of life per year, reaching 80.7 years, while women enjoy 2.6 more months per year, reaching 86.3 years. The gap between the life expectancies of the two sexes narrowed to 5.6 years, from a maximum of 8.7 years difference 25 years earlier. In any case, very few developed countries had such a high life expectancy, particularly for women.

Tumours were the main threat to the years of life expectancy. If tumours were completely eliminated, men would prolong their lives 4.1 years and women 2.8 years. If we make the comparison with the COVID-19 free life expectancy (81.3 years for men and 86.8 for women), the increase for men would be 4.3 years and for women it would be less, 2.3 years. External causes of death, however, were less detrimental, taking 10 months from the lives of men and 4 months from women. These figures dropped to just 1 month in the case of traffic accidents for men and a negligible amount for women. The figures for these last two circumstances were given both in terms of total deaths and as if COVID-19 deaths had been removed.

### ***Fecundity combined a low index of births per woman and a high average maternity age***

Fecundity in the Basque Country was at exceptionally low levels in comparative terms, given that in 2020 the average number of children per woman was 1.2, below the 1.53 seen in the European Union (latest data, 2019) and a long way from the average of 2.7 children in 1976 and the 2.1 required for generational replacement. The lowest index was in Bizkaia, with 1.15 children per woman, whereas Álava reached 1.29 and Gipuzkoa stood at 1.26.

On the basis of the data from the Indicators for analysing demographic phenomena, it was predicted that women would have an average of 0.61 first children, assuming that almost a third of women would have none; 0.44 second children; and 0.15 third or subsequent children. In other words, in the latter case, fewer than two out of ten women will give birth to a third or subsequent child, representing a decrease of 81% compared to 1976.

Another characteristic of the fecundity of Basque women was their high average maternity age, which stood at 33 years, more than 2 years above the European Union average (latest data, 2019) and 4.4 years more than in 1976. The average maternity age was lower in Álava (32.4 years) than in the other two provinces, whilst in Bizkaia it stood at 33.1 years and in Gipuzkoa it was 33.

### ***The pandemic also caused the drop in marriages***

The percentage of first marriages according to the marriage rates for 2020 stood at 34.8% for men and 38.9% for women. These rates were significantly lower than those for 2019, which were themselves the lowest since 1977, due to COVID-19 confinements; specifically, there was a decrease of almost 12 percentage points (11.9) for men and 11.6 for women. It is assumed that marriage rates in 2020 were extraordinary and is expected that the marriages postponed in 2020 will take place in the coming years.

An analysis of the marriage rate showed that the age for marriage continued to rise. The average age at which people enter their first marriage was 38 for men and 36.2 for women. However, this average age was 7 months higher for men and 8 months higher

for women than in 2019, which is a significant rise, given that in recent decades the increase from one year to the next was 2 or 3 months.

As in the case of fecundity, a considerable number of marriages took place at specific ages. In just 10 years, between the ages of 30 and 39, 43% of men and 42% of women got married.

***On average, an inhabitant of the Basque Country will carry out more than three emigrations during his or her lifetime***

Normally, emigration is intra-provincial. In other words, the municipality of destination is in the same province as the municipality of origin. Such was the case of more than half of the migrations (1.9 out of a total of 3.5 for men and 1.8 out of a total of 3.2 for women). In contrast, on average men emigrated 1.4 times to destinations outside of the Basque Country, which represented 40% of the total number of emigrations, whereas women emigrated this way 1.2 times, which represented 38% of the total.

By province, there was quite a pronounced difference in the case of men between Bizkaia and Álava: Álava had an average number of emigrations of 2.8, whilst in Bizkaia it was 3.7 per person; Gipuzkoa stood in the middle with 3.4 emigrations. These differences among men were due to intra-provincial mobility, as Bizkaia had 2.2 movements, whereas in Álava it represented only 0.8. Álava stood out in terms of movements between provinces, with 0.4 per person, double those in Bizkaia (0.2); Gipuzkoa stood in the middle with 0.3. Women had the same ratios, but with lower rates.

Amongst women, as the distance covered by the emigrants decreased, their average age went up. Thus, those who moved within the same province were the oldest, 34.6 years, and those who emigrated outside of the Basque Country did so with an average age of 33.9. This was also the case for men, but with higher average ages. Thus, the youngest, with an average age of 34, were those who emigrated within the province, and the oldest, 35.5 years, were those who moved outside of the Autonomous Region.

With regards to changes of residence within the same municipality, the men and women of Álava showed the highest mobility rate, with 6.8 and 6.9 movements on average, respectively, a distance from Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, with averages of around 6 transfers per person.

If the number of emigrations are added to changes of address, both sexes will change their place of residence 9.4 times, either within their municipality or outside of it.

## Indicators for the analysis of demographic phenomena. 2019/2020

Mortality Indicators		Basque Country	
		Men	Women
<b>Life expectancy from birth</b>		80,7 years	86,3 years
	<b>Life expectancy without external causes</b>	81,5 years	86,6 years
	<b>Life expectancy without traffic accidents</b>	80,8 years	86,3 years
	<b>Life expectancy without tumours</b>	84,8 years	89,1 years

Fertility Indicators		Basque Country	
		Women	
<b>Average of children per woman</b>		1,20	
	<b>First children</b>	0,61	
	<b>Second children</b>	0,44	
	<b>Third and subsequent children</b>	0,15	
<b>Average age of maternity</b>		33,0 years	
	<b>First child</b>	32,0 years	
	<b>Second child</b>	33,9 years	
	<b>Third and subsequent child</b>	34,3 years	

Marriage Indicators		Basque Country	
		Men	Women
<b>Average number of first marriages per 100 individuals</b>		34,8	38,9
<b>Average age at first marriage</b>		38,0 years	36,2 years

Emigration Indicators		Basque Country	
		Men	Women
<b>Average number of migrations</b>		3,5	3,2
	<b>To a destination outside the Basque Country</b>	1,4	1,2
	<b>To a destination in the same province</b>	1,9	1,8
	<b>To a destination in another province</b>	0,2	0,2
<b>Average number of changes of residence in the same municipality</b>		5,9	6,1
<b>Average age at emigration total</b>		34,7 years	33,7 years
	<b>To a destination outside the Basque Country</b>	35,5 years	33,9 years
	<b>To a destination in the same province</b>	34,0 years	34,6 years
	<b>To a destination in another province</b>	35,4 years	34,4 years
<b>Average age at change of residence in the same municipality</b>		33,3 years	33,6 years

Source: Eustat. Indicators for the analysis of demographic phenomena

## For further information:

Eustat - Euskal Estatistika Erakundea / Instituto Vasco de Estadística  
 C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz  
 Press Service: [servicioprensa@eustat.es](mailto:servicioprensa@eustat.es) Tlf: 945 01 75 62