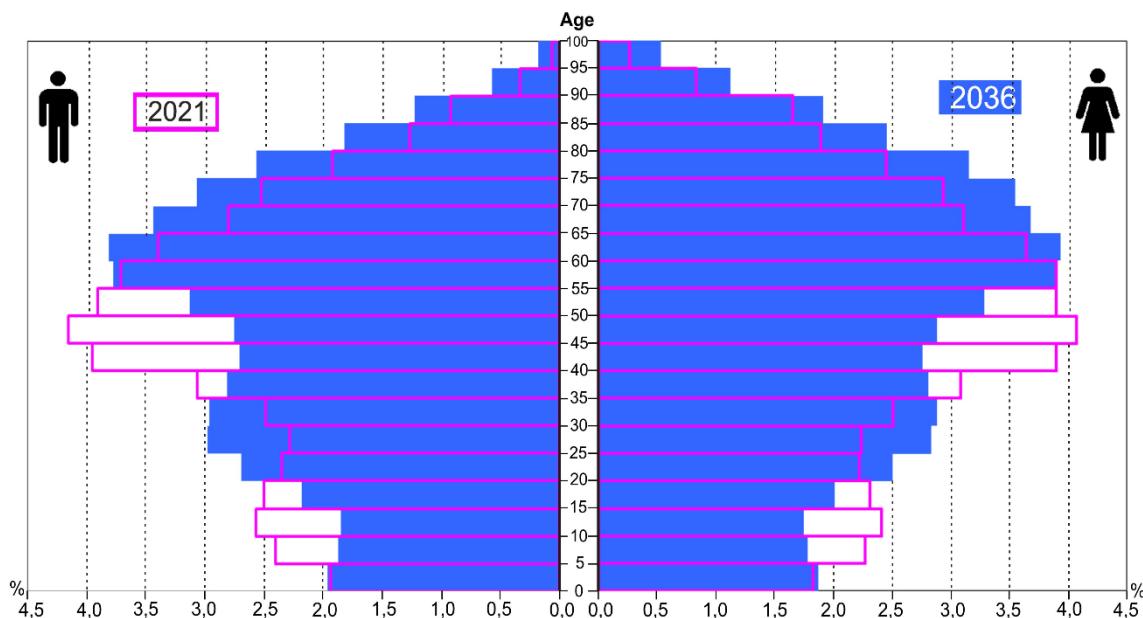


The population of the Basque Country set to rise by 85,000 people between 2021 and 2036

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 2036 there will be 2,278,100 inhabitants in the Basque Country, 1,101,000 of which will be men (48.3%) and 1,117,200 of which will be women (51.7%), according to Eustat Demographic Projections. This will amount to 84,900 more people than in 2021, with an annual growth rate of 0.24%, but with a different rhythm throughout the period of the projection. In the first five years the population will only increase by 0.14% on average, it will even be negative between 2021 and 2022, but from 2026 onwards the annual growth rate is set to stand at around 0.30%.

Population pyramids of the Basque Country



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

Of the population growth between 2021 and 2036, 44.5% will correspond to Gipuzkoa, specifically 37,800 inhabitants; the contribution of Bizkaia will be 28.4%, with 24,200 residents, slightly above that of Álava, which, despite its lower population volume, will stand at 27% and increase by 23,000 people in the period of the projection. These territorial differences are to continue the trend of the most recent decades 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 2036, 15.5% of the population will live in Álava, (1.7 percentage points more than in 2001), 51.3% in Bizkaia (2.7 points less) and the remaining 33.2% in Gipuzkoa (0.9 percentage points more).

Population growth in the Basque Country between 2021 and 2036 will be exclusively due to the migratory balance (immigrations minus emigrations), given that it will provide 194,700 people. In contrast, the natural or vegetative balance (births minus deaths) is

set to be negative in the whole period, which will cause the population to drop by 109,900 residents due to the increase in deaths and the reduction in births. To a greater or lesser extent, this process will occur in the three provinces.

The process of population ageing will continue

The population under 20, which represented 18.2% of the Basque Country in 2021, will fall to 15.3% in 2036, and its number will drop by almost 51,000 people.

It is estimated that the 'adult' population, in other words, the group aged between 20 and 64, will lose 26,900 people over these 15 years, equivalent to a decrease of 2.1%. In relation to the changes in the adult population, the loss of 131,700 people aged between 35 and 54 in the central age bracket will contrast with increases of 74,700 people in the 20-34 age group and 30,000 people in the 52-64 age group.

The population aged 65 and over could increase by 163,200 people, meaning that its weight would reach 29.3% in 2036 (6 points more than in 2021). The largest relative increases will be among the population aged 85 and over, which, in 2036, will stand at 126,700 people, 37,200 more than in 2021, representing 5.6% of the total population.

The fertility rate will recover and the number of births will increase

The number of births in the Basque Country is to increase by 2,900 between 2020 and 2035, due to both the predicted recovery of the fertility rate, reaching up to 1.39 children per mother, and the increase in the number of women of fertile age: between 25 and 39, the primary ages for reproduction, the increase in the female population could reach 13.1% of the initial value. This will not reduce the average age of maternity, set to continue standing at 33 years of age. The low fertility rate in Bizkaia, with 1.34 children per woman in 2035, will continue shaping the Autonomous Region, given that Álava and Gipuzkoa will have around 1.5 children per woman.

Life expectancy to continue its upward trajectory

Life expectancy at birth is expected to reach 84.2 years for men and 89.1 years for women in 2035, compared to 80.7 and 86.3 years, respectively, in 2020, and will continue to be the highest in the European Union. The difference in life expectancy at birth between women and men will change from 5.6 years in 2010 to 4.9 in 2036.

The migratory balance will be positive throughout the period

Throughout the entire projection period, the annual number of immigrants is predicted to be around 44,000, compared to 41,000 immigrants in 2021, reaching 45,500 in 2035, due to the increase in the number of people entering from abroad, going from 47.6% of the total number of immigrants coming into the Basque Country in 2021 to 55% in 2035. The emigration rate, which will be at its highest in 2021 with an outflow of 35,800 people, will decrease to 32,000 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 5,200 people in 2021 and is predicted to rise to 13,500 in 2035, with a migratory balance of 194,700 people over the period as a whole.

Migratory balances of the Basque Country by year according to province (thousands). 2010-2035

	Basque Country	Araba/Álava	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
2010	5,2	1,1	2,2	1,9
2015	3,4	0,6	0,9	1,8
2020	4,5	0,8	1,6	2,1
2025	14,5	2,5	6,8	5,2
2030	13,8	1,9	7,2	4,7
2035	13,5	1,8	7,2	4,5

Date July 14, 2022

Source: Eustat. Demographic projections

By province, the case of Bizkaia will be of particular note, going from a positive balance of 2,200 people in 2016 to 7,200 in 2035. The balance is also set to increase significantly in Gipuzkoa, going from 1,700 to 4,500 people over this period. Even though the balance for Álava is also predicted to grow, it will be at a weaker rate, going from 1,300 people in 2021 to 1,800 in 2035.

The first decade of this century has seen a steady increase in the migratory exchanges between provinces, going from an average of 4,200 in the three-year period 2000-2002, to 6,100 per year in 2019 and 2020. 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 727 people to Álava and 2,412 to Bizkaia, at the expense of Gipuzkoa, predicted to lose 3,319 people who will go to the other two provinces, for which its positive migratory balance will be due to the exchanges outside the Basque Country.

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