

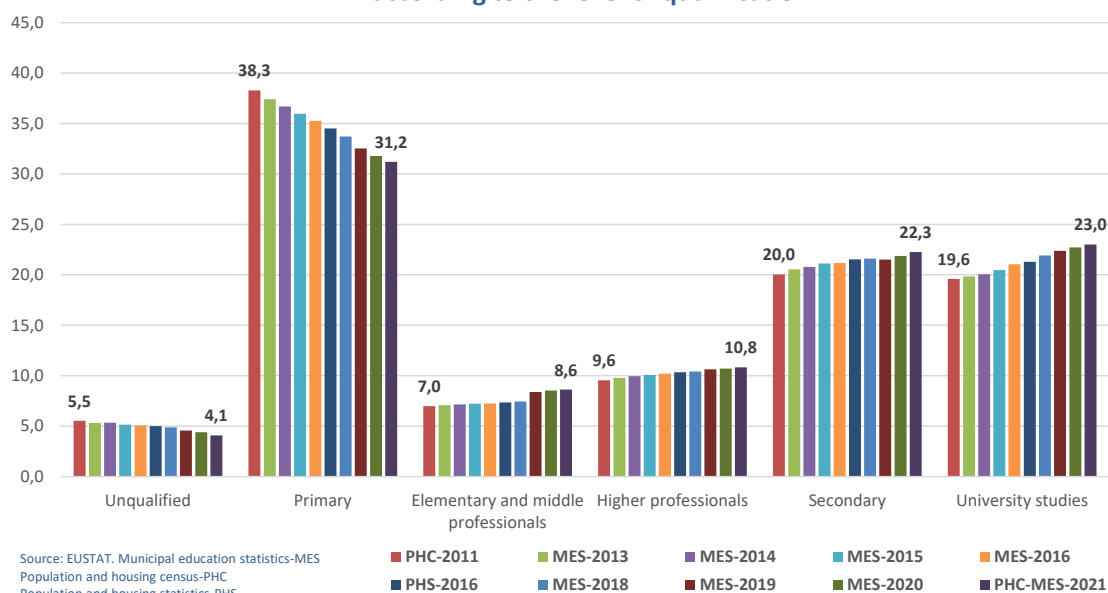
POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS AND MUNICIPAL EDUCATION STATISTICS. 2021

The proportion of the Basque population with an official qualification grew by 1.5 points between 2011 and 2021

25.6% of women held a university qualification, compared to 20.2% of men

95.9% of the population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country, i.e. 1,877,675 people, had some kind of official education qualification in 2021, according to Eustat data. This figure represents an increase of 3 tenths of a percentage point in respect of the previous year and a rise of as much as 1.5 percentage points compared to 2011 (1,764,462 people).

Evolution of the Population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country according to the level of qualification



In 2021, the distribution of the population aged 16 and over, according to different qualification levels, was as follows: 585,884 people had completed primary education, 31.2% of the total of this population, representing a drop for this qualification category of 7.1 points compared to 2011; 418,129 people had completed secondary education, 22.3% of the total population, an increase of 2.3 percentage points over the last ten years; 161,859 people held a basic and/or intermediate vocational training qualification, accounting for 8.6%, up 1.6 percentage points on the proportion recorded in 2011.

Lastly, as regards higher education, 23% had completed university studies (431,953 people), 3.4 percentage points more than in 2011, and 10.8% (203,257 people) had finished advanced vocational training, 1.3 percentage points more. This means that among the population with higher education, whether vocational or university level, i.e. 33.8% in 2021, the increase stood at 4.7 percentage points with respect to 2011; in comparison with the previous year, 2020, the difference was 0.4 percentage points more.

Although the provincial differences were small, the greatest proportion of people with a vocational training qualification was in Gipuzkoa, with primary and secondary education in Álava and with university studies in Bizkaia

The percentage differences by province in the population aged 16 and over with a qualification were small. However, comparatively, a higher proportion of individuals held secondary school qualifications in Álava, 23% compared to 22.4% in Gipuzkoa and 22% in Bizkaia. Álava was also the province with the largest proportion of people with primary education, 32.4% compared to 31.2% and 30.6% in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, respectively. In turn, university level studies were slightly more common in Bizkaia, 24.1% (22.3% in Gipuzkoa, 20.7% in Álava). Lastly, at provincial level, vocational studies, whether basic or advanced, were more common in Gipuzkoa, 11.6% in the case of advanced studies, 9% in basic studies, while in Álava the proportions stood at 11.2% and 8.7%, respectively, and in Bizkaia they were even lower, at 10.2% and 8.4%.

By contrast, the distribution of studies by region presented greater differences than at provincial level. As regards the highest level of education, namely university qualifications, the regions of Plentzia-Mungia, with 31.9% of their population aged over 16, Donostia-San Sebastian, with 25.2%, and Gran Bilbao, with 24.6%, were the three most notable regions. Other regions with 20% or more of their population holding a university qualification were: Etribaciones del Gorbea (23.7%), Gernika-Bermeo (23.5%), Urola Costa (22.2%), Llanada Alavesa (21.5%), Alto Deba (20.8%) and Arratia-Nervión (20.4%).

The level of education with the least pronounced regional differences (apart from the category 'no qualification') was secondary education. There was barely a six percentage point difference between the most significant regions (Plentzia-Mungia, 24.9%, Bajo Bidasoa, 24.6%, Rioja Alavesa, 23.6%) and those with the lowest proportions (Duranguesado and Montaña Alavesa, with 19.2% in both cases).

With regard to vocational training qualifications, of particular note were Bajo Deba, 23.4%, Encartaciones and Etribaciones del Gorbea, both with 22.9%, and the region of Alto Deba, with 22.8%. Conversely, among the regions with the fewest vocational qualifications were Rioja Alavesa, 15.9%, Gran Bilbao, 17.9%, and Plentzia-Mungia, 18.2%.

Lastly, the regions where primary school qualifications were most prevalent were: Rioja Alavesa, 41.8%, Montaña Alavesa, 41.1%, Añana, 37.7%, Encartaciones, 36.6%, and Cantábrica Alavesa, 36%.

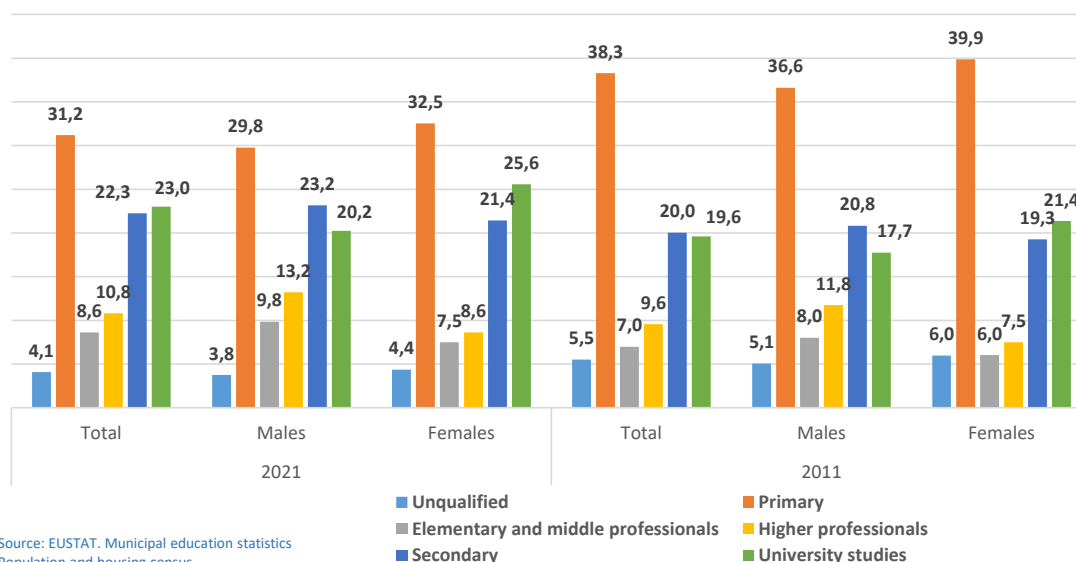
The municipal ranking for university level qualifications was topped by the municipalities of Getxo and Sukarrieta, 42.2% and 41.8%, respectively. We have to go down to sixteenth place to find the first municipality outside Bizkaia: San Sebastián, with 31.8% of the population aged over 16 holding a university qualification. As regards the other two provincial capitals, Bilbao had 27.7% and Vitoria-Gasteiz 21.9%. In terms of secondary school qualifications, municipalities in Bizkaia once again headed the list: Gatika, 31%, Plentzia, 28.9%, and Laukiz, 28.4%. In the case of vocational qualifications, at the top of the list were Galdames (30.4%), Irura (28.5%) and Arama (28.4%).

More women held a university qualification and more men had vocational training

If we introduce the gender variable into the analysis, similar proportions of men and women had higher qualifications, including university qualifications and advanced vocational training (34.2% and 33.5%, respectively). However, the percentage of men with vocational training qualifications (at any level) reached 23.1%, a higher proportion than that of women, 16.1%. Conversely, university qualifications were more common among women (25.6%) than men (20.2%).

Lastly, the differences by gender in the proportions of people with primary school qualifications (32.5% of women compared to 29.8% of men) and those with secondary school qualifications (21.4% and 23.2%, respectively), were moderate and favourable to women in the former case and men in the latter.

Population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country by degree and sex. 2011 and 2021



A final indicator of the education level in the Basque Country is the illiteracy rate. In 2021, this indicator stood at a residual level, only affecting 0.3% of the population aged 10 and over (around 6,000 people): 0.2% in the case of men and 0.4% in the case of women.

Logically, this rate was high among older people and, therefore, while the rate stood at 0.1% for the under 65s, it jumped to 0.8% for the over 65s. The illiteracy rate for women aged 65 and over was 1% and for men in the same age group it stood at 0.4%, a considerable drop compared to 2011, when the rates were 2.1% for women and 0.8% for men aged 65 and over.

For further information:

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