

Almost 44% of the population of the Basque Country aged over 15 had completed higher education in 2024

The levels of primary education and lower account for 11.1% of the population aged 15 and over, 7 tenths lower than the previous year

In 2024, 43.9% of the population aged 16 and over residing in the Basque Country had completed higher education, whether university studies or vocational training, according to Eustat data. This group amounts to 836,632 people, an increase of 6 tenths of a percentage point compared with 2023. Meanwhile, the proportion of the population who had completed compulsory education or some lower level is 35.5% (677,007 people), 7 tenths of a percentage point lower than in 2023.

Population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country by level of education attained. 2022-2024

Level of training achieved	2024	2023	2022	2024 (%)	2023 (%)	2022 (%)
A.First stage of secondary and lower education (level 0-2)	677,007	685,830	686,009	100	100	100
0.Less than primary	28,713	30,724	31,983	4.2	1.6	1.7
1. Primary education	183,951	192,741	200,395	27.2	10.2	10.7
2.Low secondary education: up to ESO and equivalent	464,343	462,365	453,631	68.6	24.4	24.1
B.Second stage of secondary education and non-tertiary post-secondary education (level 3-4)	392,932	387,896	382,308	58.0	56.6	55.7
3.Upper secondary education: Baccalaureate, intermediate vocational training and equivalent	381,116	376,000	370,307	56.3	19.8	19.7
4.Non-tertiary post-secondary education: level 3 professional certificates and equivalent	11,816	11,896	12,001	1.7	0.6	0.6
C.Higher education (including doctorate)(level 5-8)	836,632	821,517	811,058	123.6	119.8	118.2
5.Higher vocational education and equivalents	298,424	291,217	291,103	44.1	15.4	15.5
6.University degrees, diplomas and equivalents	196,521	193,565	186,876	29.0	10.2	9.9
7.Bachelor's degrees, double degrees and master's degrees	319,821	314,962	311,523	47.2	16.6	16.6
8.PhD level or equivalent	21,866	21,773	21,556	3.2	1.1	1.2

Date September 30, 2025

Source: Eustat. Population and housing census. Education

According to the National Classification of Education (CNED-A), the first education group corresponds to the first stage of secondary education or lower, ranging from basic and compulsory education to lower levels. 35.5% of the population aged 16 and over belonged to this group, a drop of 0.7 points compared to the previous year. This includes 1.5% of people with incomplete primary education, 9.6% with primary education, and 24.4% with the first stage of secondary education completed, including qualifications equivalent to Compulsory Secondary Education, General Basic Education or Elementary Baccalaureate, among others, as well as some vocational training courses.

The second group corresponds to secondary education and post-secondary non-higher education, which comprised 20.6% of the population aged 16 and over, an increase of 0.1 percentage points compared to 2023. This level of education includes upper secondary education and basic and intermediate level vocational training. The third group, higher education, accounted for 43.9% of the population, with another increase of 0.6 points in respect of the previous year. Within this group, 15.7% corresponded to advanced level vocational training, with 298,424 people.

Plentzia-Mungia and Esteribaciones del Gorbea reveal the highest proportion with higher education, along with Urola-Costa

An analysis of the level of education attained by the population aged 16 and over, taking into account the disaggregation by province, revealed small percentage differences. Álava registered the highest proportion of people with a level of education belonging to group A, which corresponds to the first stage of secondary education or lower, with 36.7% of the population aged 16 and over. This figure was slightly higher than the 35.6% recorded in Bizkaia and the 34.8% in Gipuzkoa.

Population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country by the level of education achieved according to historical territory (%). 2023-2024

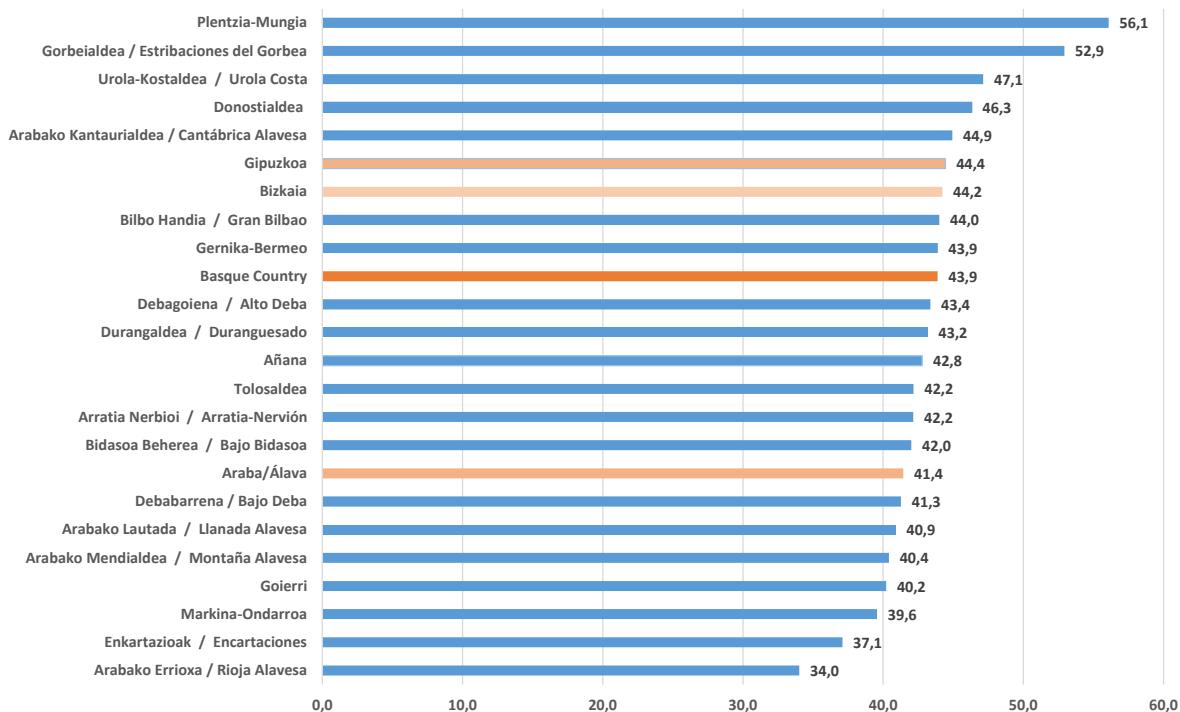
	Basque Country		Araba / Álava		Bizkaia		Gipuzkoa	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Level of training achieved								
A.First stage of secondary and lower education (level 0-2)	35.5	36.2	36.7	37.3	35.6	36.4	34.8	35.3
B.Second stage of secondary education and non-tertiary post-secondary education (level 3-4)	20.6	20.5	21.9	21.6	20.2	20.0	20.7	20.8
C.Higher education (including doctorate)(level 5-8)	43.9	43.3	41.4	41.1	44.2	43.6	44.4	43.9

Date September 30, 2025

Source: Eustat. Population and housing census. Education

As for group B, which includes the second stage of secondary education and post-secondary non-higher education, Álava once again had the highest percentage of 21.9%, compared to 20.7% in Gipuzkoa and 20.2% in Bizkaia. However, in the case of group C, which represents higher education, Gipuzkoa recorded the highest proportion with 44.4%, followed by Bizkaia with 44.2%, while Álava was slightly below this, with 41.4%.

Population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country that has reached a higher education level by territorial areas (%). 01/01/2024



Source: Eustat. Population and housing census. Education

Differences in the level of higher education were more pronounced at the regional level. Plentzia-Mungia and Esterribaciones del Gorbea stood out as the regions where more than half of the population had completed higher education, with 56.1% and 52.9%, respectively. These figures are 12.2 and 9 percentage points higher than the average for the Basque Country. At the other end of the scale, the districts of Rioja Alavesa, at 34%, and Encartaciones, at 37.1%, reveal the lowest percentages, with around a third of the population having received higher education.

Among the Basque capitals, San Sebastián recorded the largest proportion of people with higher education (51.3%), followed by Bilbao with 48.1% and Vitoria-Gasteiz with 40.8%. This ordering matches the trend observed in terms of the provinces, with the population of Gipuzkoa likewise having the largest proportion with higher education.

44.4% of men and 43.4% of women resident in the Basque Country and aged 16 or over have higher education

Among men and women aged 16 and over, those with higher education represent the largest group: 44.4% of men and 43.4% of women. Next comes the initial stage of secondary education and lower, accounting for more women (37.6%) than men (33.2%); and lastly the second stage of education and non-higher, post-secondary education, more common among men (22.3%) than women (19%). By province and in terms of higher education, women residing in Álava stood out for having a higher relative value than men, 41% compared to 41.8%.

Population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country by level of education attained according to historical territory and sex (%). 2024

	Basque Country			Araba / Álava			Bizkaia			Gipuzkoa		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Level of training achieved	1,906,571	916,288	990,283	285,199	138,653	146,546	1,000,326	476,995	523,331	621,046	300,640	320,406
GROUP A	677,007	33.2	37.6	104,642	35.4	37.9	356,201	33.0	37.9	216,164	32.6	36.9
GROUP B	392,932	22.3	19.0	62,375	23.6	20.2	201,700	21.9	18.6	128,857	22.5	19.1
GROUP C	836,632	44.4	43.4	118,182	41.0	41.8	442,425	45.1	43.4	276,025	44.9	44.0

Date September 30, 2025

Source: Eustat. Population and housing census. Education

One in ten people aged 16 and over were still in education and, of these, almost half were pursuing higher education

In 2024, 11.2% of the population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country, equivalent to 213,854 people, were enrolled in some level of education. Almost half of this group of students, 49.4% (a total of 105,559 people), were pursuing higher education. 40.2%, 86,063 people, were at the level of secondary education and post-secondary non-higher education. 7.5%, i.e. 16,012 people, were at the level of first stage of secondary education or lower. Lastly, 2.9%, equivalent to 6,220 people, were enrolled in non-formal education for adults.

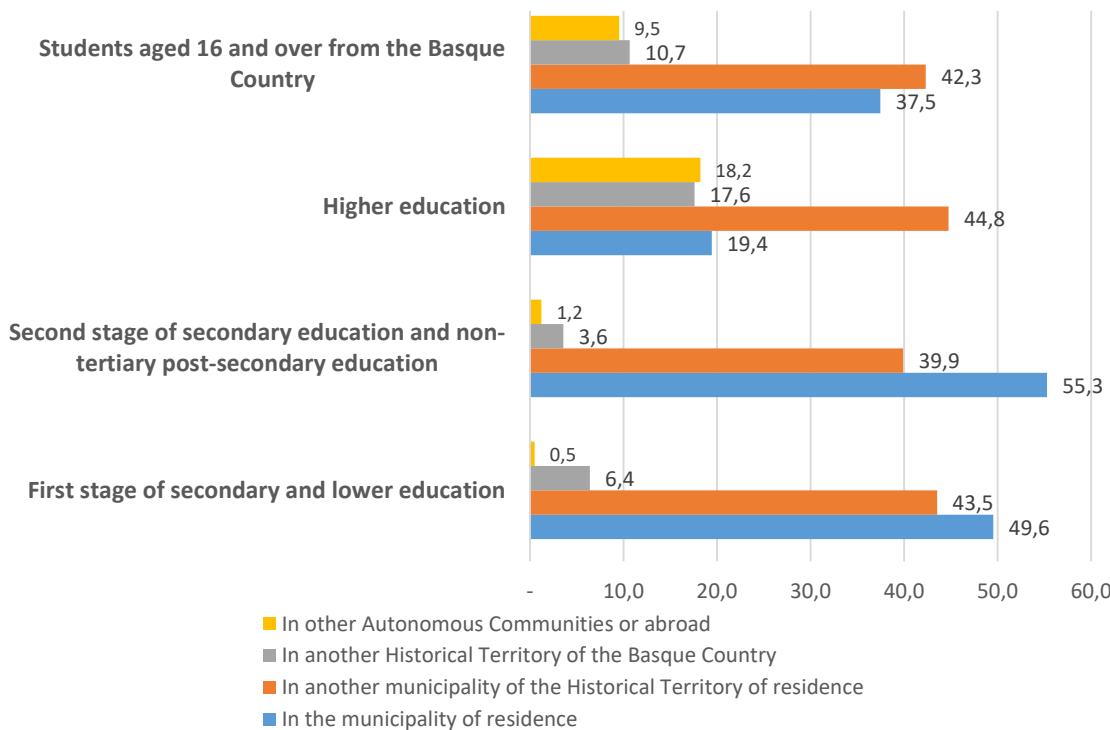
If we look at the student population aged 16 and over as a whole and disaggregated by gender, we can see that there was a higher proportion of women, representing 52.7%, in comparison to men, accounting for 47.3%. This difference was seen at all levels of ongoing education. At the higher level, women account for 53%, indicating a difference of 6 percentage points compared with men.

If we analyse men and women as separate groups, the distributions are similar. Among women, a higher proportion of students belong to the higher education group (+0.7 percentage points), and in particular informal education (+1.2 percentage points). Meanwhile, among men we find a greater proportion of students in the second stage of secondary education and non-higher, post-secondary education group (+1.6 percentage points) and in the first stage of secondary education and lower group (-0.3 percentage points).

The Basque population that pursued higher education primarily moved to another municipality in the same province

In 2024, more than half secondary and non-higher, post-secondary education students were studying in their own municipality (55.3%), followed by the group of students in the first stage of secondary education or lower (49.6%). As for the population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country that pursued university studies or advanced level vocational training, 44.8% (47,263 people) moved to a municipality within their home province. At this level of education, it is worth highlighting that 18.2% of students attended centres outside the Basque Country or abroad, a trend not seen at other education levels.

Student population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country by level of studies in progress and place of study (%).
 01/01/2024



Source: Eustat. Population and housing census. Education

For further information:

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