

Activity, employment and unemployment in the Basque Country. Fourth quarter of 2025

Highlights:

Quarter-on-quarter variation

Employment: The employed population of the Basque Country stood at 1,012,300 people, 6,000 more than in the previous quarter. The employment rate of the population aged 16-64 stood at 71.6%, up 0.4 percentage points.

By sector of activity, 9,100 people worked in the primary sector (-700), 200,800 in industry (-2,500), 60,200 in construction (+1,300) and 742,100 in services (+7,800).

Unemployment: The unemployed population of the Basque Country stood at 68,000 people, 5,600 fewer than in the previous quarter. The unemployment rate stood at 6.3%, down 0.5 percentage points.

Activity: 56.2% of the population aged 16 and over in the Basque Country was active, one tenth of a percentage point less than in the previous quarter.

Year-on-year variation

Employment: Compared to the same quarter of the previous year, the employed population of the Basque Country increased by 15,400 people and the employment rate of the population aged 16-64 rose by 0.3 percentage points.

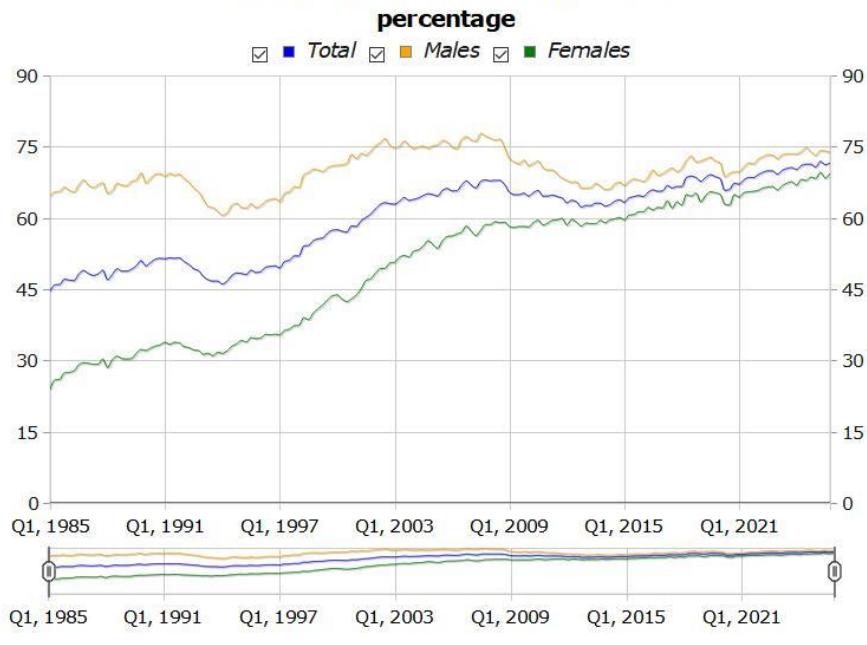
Unemployment: The unemployed population of the Basque Country decreased by 7,600 people in respect of the same quarter of the previous year. The unemployment rate fell by 0.7 percentage points.

Statistical analysis

Data from the fourth quarter of 2025 on the labour market in the Basque Country showed 6,000 more people in work and 5,600 fewer unemployed people than in the previous quarter, according to Eustat data. In the fourth quarter of 2025, the number of people in work stood at 1,012,300 and the number of unemployed people was estimated to be 68,000.

The unemployment rate in the Basque Country fell to 6.3%, 0.5 percentage points down on the third quarter of 2025. As a result of the evolution in the employed and unemployed population, the activity rate, calculated on the basis of the population aged 16 and over, decreased by 0.1 percentage points compared to the previous quarter and stood at 56.2% in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Employment rate of the population aged between 16 and 64 in the Basque Country, by sex and quarter



By province and in relation to the previous quarter, there were 2,700 more people in work in Álava, 1,800 more in Bizkaia and 1,500 more in Gipuzkoa. With regard to the capitals, there were 3,600 more people in work in Vitoria-Gasteiz and 1,000 more in Bilbao, whereas in San Sebastián there were 600 fewer.

There was an increase in employment among women, with 7,500 more women in work, whilst the number of men in work decreased by 1,600. As regards nationality, the number of Spanish nationals in work increased by 3,200 (+0.4%) and the number of foreign nationals in work rose by 2,700 (+2.7%).

Employment was up in the services sector and construction, and down in industry and the primary sector

The employed population in the Basque Country increased by 7,800 (+1.1%) in the services sector and by 1,300 (+2.2%) in construction. By contrast, in industry it fell by 2,500 (-1.2%) and in the primary sector it decreased by 700 (-7.1%).

The employment rate, calculated as the percentage of people in work aged 16 to 64 over the total for these ages, rose by 0.4 percentage points compared to the previous quarter, standing at 71.6%. This rate stood at 73.8% among men and 69.4% among women, 1 percentage point higher than in the previous quarter for women and 0.3 percentage points lower for men.

By age, the employment rate rose by 1.1 percentage points among people aged 25 to 44, standing at 82.6%. Among people aged 45 and over, it increased by 0.4 percentage points to stand at 77.2%. However, amongst young people aged between 16 and 24, the employment rate decreased from 29.2% to 27.7%, 1.5 percentage points lower than the previous quarter.

As regards nationality, the highest employment rate was recorded amongst Spanish nationals, with 73.5%, rising 0.2 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. Among foreign nationals, the employment rate rose by 1.4 points to stand at 58.3%.

By province, the employment rate in both Gipuzkoa and Álava stood at 73.2%. Compared to the previous quarter, Álava saw an increase of 1.3 percentage points and Gipuzkoa of 0.3 points. Lastly, the lowest employment rate was in Bizkaia, standing at 70.2% and increasing by 0.2 percentage points compared to the third quarter.

In relation to the types of contracts of salaried individuals, the number of people with permanent contracts increased by 4,200 in respect of the previous quarter and, in relation to the fourth quarter of the previous year, the increase was 19,700 people.

In six out of every ten households all active individuals were employed

In the fourth quarter of 2025 it was estimated that there were 930,500 households in the Basque Country, of which a third did not have any active individuals, 3,200 fewer households than in the previous quarter. In 6 out of every 10 households, all of the active individuals were in work, 7,600 more families. Furthermore, the number of households where all active individuals were unemployed stood at 22,900, 1,300 more households than in the previous quarter. The remaining households with active individuals, where not all members were either unemployed or employed, numbered 34,200, 4,200 fewer than in the previous quarter.

The fourth quarter of 2025 posted an unemployment rate of 6.3%

The unemployed population in the Basque Country, i.e. individuals who are available for work, actively making enquiries and seeking employment, was estimated to be 68,000 in the fourth quarter of the year, 5,600 fewer than in the previous quarter. The number of

unemployed women, 34,400 individuals, decreased by 3,700, while the number of unemployed men fell by 1,800, reaching a total of 33,600 for the quarter.

The data for the fourth quarter of 2025 revealed an unemployment rate of 6.3%, down 0.5 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. The unemployment rate for women fell by 0.7 percentage points to stand at 6.6%, and the unemployment rate for men decreased by 0.3 points to 6%. Amongst young people aged between 16 and 24, the unemployment rate was 12%, 2 percentage points lower than in the previous quarter.

With regard to nationality, the unemployed population figure decreased among foreign nationals by 4,500, standing at 13,200. Among Spanish nationals, unemployment decreased by 1,100 to stand at 54,800 people out of work.

By province, in Bizkaia, the number of unemployed people fell by 5,600 to stand at 38,700, and the unemployment rate decreased by 0.9 percentage points, standing at 7%. In Álava the number of unemployed people dropped to 11,000, 1,500 fewer, and the unemployment rate stood at 6.5%, 1 percentage point less than in the third quarter. In Gipuzkoa, the number of unemployed people increased by 1,600 and there were 18,300 people out of work, with the unemployment rate rising by 0.4 percentage points to stand at 5.1%.

As regards the capitals, compared to the previous quarter, there were 1,600 fewer unemployed people in Vitoria-Gasteiz and 400 fewer in Bilbao, while in San Sebastian there were 900 more people out of work.

According to EUROSTAT, the Statistical Office of the European Union, in November 2025 the deseasonalised unemployment rate of the European Union as a whole was 6% and that of Spain was 10.4%.

Compared to the fourth quarter of 2024, the number of people employed rose by 15,400 and the unemployment rate fell by 0.7 percentage points

Last year, in comparison with the fourth quarter of 2024, the number of people in work rose by 1.5%, an increase of 15,400 people. There were 9,400 more people working in the services sector, 3,500 more in industry, and 3,400 more in construction. Agriculture, on the other hand, saw a decrease of 1,000 people. Regarding unemployed people, the number of people out of work in the Basque Country fell by 7,600 and the unemployment rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points (from 7% to 6.3%).

96.8% of average registered workers were employed, according to ILO criteria

It is calculated that there were 958,800 registered workers for the quarter on average in the Basque Country, i.e. the number of individuals resident in the Basque Country who were registered for Social Security, weighted by the number of days worked in the quarter. Of those, the PRA estimates that 96.8% were employed, a total of 928,400 individuals, according to criteria from the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Amongst those employed according to ILO criteria in the PRA, 49,600 people (4.9%) were not registered in the Social Security system, because they belonged to public mutual societies for civil servants, or because they were in other situations.

36.6% of unemployed people were not registered as being unemployed

It is estimated that there was a quarterly average of 88,200 unemployed people registered with Lanbide, i.e. people residing in the Basque Country who were registered on Lanbide at the time of the survey in any one of the categories designated for registered unemployment. Of those, 47% were unemployed according to the ILO definition (41,400 people). 36.6% of unemployed people according to the ILO definition in the PRA were not registered as unemployed with Lanbide (24,900 people), even though they may have been registered under other categories of job seeker.

Population with relation to activity in the Basque Country. 2025/IV

	IV/2025	III/2025	t/t-1	
	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand	%
POPULATION AGED 16 AND OVER	1,922.9	1,918.7	4.2	0.2
WORKING POPULATION	1,080.3	1,079.9	0.4	0.0
Men	555.3	558.7	-3.4	-0.6
Women	524.9	521.1	3.8	0.7
Araba/Álava	167.9	166.8	1.1	0.7
Bizkaia	556.0	559.8	-3.8	-0.7
Gipuzkoa	356.3	353.3	3.0	0.8
Vitoria-Gasteiz	126.8	124.8	2.0	1.6
Bilbao	165.1	164.4	0.7	0.4
Donostia / San Sebastián	87.4	87.1	0.3	0.3
Other Municipalities	701.0	703.6	-2.6	-0.4
Spanish nationality	964.3	962.2	2.1	0.2
Foreign nationality	115.9	117.7	-1.8	-1.5
EMPLOYED POPULATION	1,012.3	1,006.3	6.0	0.6
Men	521.7	523.3	-1.6	-0.3
Women	490.5	483.0	7.5	1.6
Araba/Álava	157.0	154.3	2.7	1.7
Bizkaia	517.3	515.5	1.8	0.3
Gipuzkoa	338.0	336.5	1.5	0.4
Vitoria-Gasteiz	118.3	114.7	3.6	3.1
Bilbao	151.4	150.4	1.0	0.7
Donostia / San Sebastian	82.8	83.4	-0.6	-0.7
Other Municipalities	659.7	657.8	1.9	0.3
Spanish nationality	909.5	906.3	3.2	0.4
Foreign nationality	102.7	100.0	2.7	2.7
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	9.1	9.8	-0.7	-7.1
Industry	200.8	203.3	-2.5	-1.2
Construction	60.2	58.9	1.3	2.2
Services	742.1	734.3	7.8	1.1
Salaried	843.4	840.0	3.4	0.4
- with a permanent contract	680.3	676.1	4.2	0.6
-- With temporary contract and without contract	163.1	163.9	-0.8	-0.5
Unwaged	168.9	166.3	2.6	1.6
UNEMPLOYED POPULATION	68.0	73.6	-5.6	-7.6
Men	33.6	35.4	-1.8	-5.1
Women	34.4	38.1	-3.7	-9.7
16 - 24 years	7.8	9.9	-2.1	-21.2
25 - 44 years	30.6	31.3	-0.7	-2.2
45 years and over	29.5	32.4	-2.9	-9.0
Araba/Álava	11.0	12.5	-1.5	-12.0
Bizkaia	38.7	44.3	-5.6	-12.6
Gipuzkoa	18.3	16.7	1.6	9.6
Vitoria-Gasteiz	8.5	10.1	-1.6	-15.8
Bilbao	13.6	14.0	-0.4	-2.9
Donostia / San Sebastian	4.6	3.7	0.9	24.3
Other Municipalities	41.2	45.8	-4.6	-10.0
Spanish nationality	54.8	55.9	-1.1	-2.0
Foreign nationality	13.2	17.7	-4.5	-25.4
INACTIVE POPULATION	842.7	838.8	3.9	0.5
HOUSEHOLDS	930.5	929.1	1.4	0.2
Households with active individuals	614.1	609.4	4.7	0.8
- All employed	557.0	549.4	7.6	1.4
- All unemployed	22.9	21.6	1.3	6.0
- Rest	34.2	38.4	-4.2	-10.9
Households without active individuals	316.5	319.7	-3.2	-1.0

The data for the current year are provisional and the previous year have been revised with the updating of the population based on January 1 of that year.

t/t-1 Variation of the last quarter observed with regards to the immediately preceding quarter

Date January 23, 2026

Source: Eustat Population with relation to activity survey

Population with relation to activity in the Basque Country. Main rates. 2025/IV

	IV/2025	III/2025	t/t-1 (p.p.)
EMPLOYMENT RATE	56.2	56.3	-0.1
Men	60.1	60.6	-0.5
Women	52.5	52.3	+0.2
Araba/Álava	58.6	58.4	+0.2
Bizkaia	55.1	55.6	-0.5
Gipuzkoa	56.8	56.5	+0.3
Vitoria-Gasteiz	58.9	58.1	+0.8
Bilbao	54.5	54.6	-0.1
Donostia / San Sebastian	55.0	54.8	+0.2
Other Municipalities	56.3	56.6	-0.3
Spanish nationality	55.4	55.4	+0.0
Foreign nationality	63.3	64.3	-1.0
EMPLOYMENT RATE (aged 16-64 years)	71.6	71.2	+0.4
Men	73.8	74.1	-0.3
Women	69.4	68.4	+1.0
Araba/Álava	73.2	71.9	+1.3
Bizkaia	70.2	70.0	+0.2
Gipuzkoa	73.2	72.9	+0.3
Vitoria-Gasteiz	73.2	71.1	+2.1
Bilbao	67.8	68.0	-0.2
Donostia / San Sebastian	73.9	74.1	-0.2
Other Municipalities	72.0	71.7	+0.3
Spanish nationality	73.5	73.3	+0.2
Foreign nationality	58.3	56.9	+1.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.3	6.8	-0.5
Men	6.0	6.3	-0.3
Women	6.6	7.3	-0.7
16 - 24 years	12.0	14.0	-2.0
25 - 44 years	7.1	7.4	-0.3
45 years and over	5.0	5.5	-0.5
Araba/Álava	6.5	7.5	-1.0
Bizkaia	7.0	7.9	-0.9
Gipuzkoa	5.1	4.7	+0.4
Vitoria-Gasteiz	6.7	8.1	-1.4
Bilbao	8.3	8.5	-0.2
Donostia / San Sebastian	5.3	4.2	+1.1
Other Municipalities	5.9	6.5	-0.6
Spanish nationality	5.7	5.8	-0.1
Foreign nationality	11.4	15.0	-3.6
INACTIVITY RATE	43.8	43.7	+0.1

The data for the current year are provisional and the previous year have been revised with the updating of the population based on January 1 of that year.

t / t-1 Variation of the last quarter observed with regards to the immediately preceding quarter

p.p = Difference in percentage points

Date January 23, 2026

Source: Eustat Population with relation to activity survey

Further information:

- Statistical tables: [\[view more\]](#)
- Databank: [\[view more\]](#)
- Graphs: [\[view more\]](#)
- Microdata: [\[view more\]](#)
- Methodology: [\[view more\]](#)
- Definitions: [\[view more\]](#)
- Codes and Naming Conventions: [\[view more\]](#)
- Calendar: [\[view more\]](#)
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