

FALL IN EMPLOYMENT AND INCREASE IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THE A.C. OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY IN THE 4TH QUARTER OF 2002

The balance for the last 12 months shows 3% growth and nearly a one percent increase in the unemployment rate.

There were 891,200 employees in the fourth quarter of 2002 in the A.C. of the Basque Country, 0.4% fewer than in the previous quarter, according to the Survey on the Population in Relation to Activity (PRA), which the Eustat publishes. In addition, the number of unemployed came to 88,000 persons and the unemployment rate stood at 9% of the active population.

With regard to the previous quarter, the unemployed population increased by 7,700 persons and the unemployment rate rose by point seven percent. As a result of the evolution of the employed and unemployed populations, the activity rate rose slightly and reached 54.6% in the fourth quarter of 2002.

Unemployment rate increased in Álava and Gipuzkoa and fell in Bizkaia

The increase in the unemployment rate occurred in almost all the groups studied, except in the province of Bizkaia where the rate fell to 9.6%, point four lower than three months before, although still remaining the highest. In Álava it increased to 7.8% and in Gipuzkoa to 8.5%, around two percent in each case.

Thus, the male unemployment rate rose to 6.6% (one percent higher) and the female rate rose to 12.4% (point two increase). The youth unemployment rate grew over two percent to 21% (the highest increase), affecting over one in every five active young persons aged from 16 to 24.

The unemployment rate in the A.C. of the Basque country is point six percent higher than in the Euro Zone countries, which reached 8.4% last November (EUROSTAT). As in other periods, the rate for the whole of the European Union was lower than in the Euro Zone (7.7%). Both increased by point ten since August.

88,000 unemployed persons in the A.C. of the Basque Country at the end of 2002

The number of unemployed increased in practically all the groups studied, except in the case of Bizkaia as mentioned, where the rate fell by 1,900 persons and affects a group

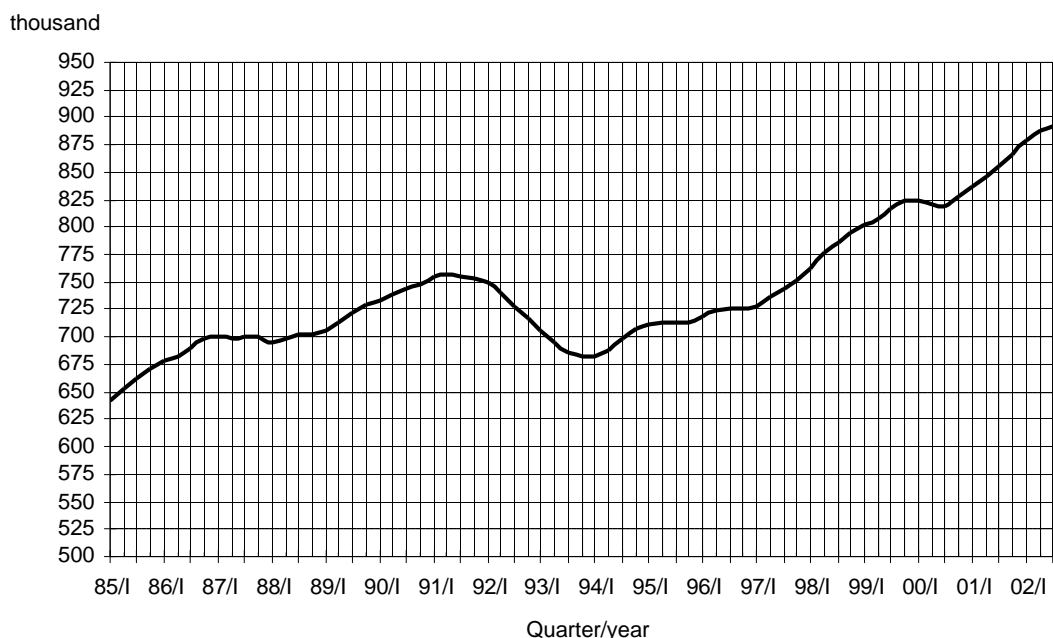
of 48,800 persons. In Gipuzkoa it affected 27,400 persons and 11,700 in Álava, which represents an increase of 6,600 and 2,900 persons respectively.

The group of unemployed that have been seeking employment two years or longer is 15,300 persons (1,300 fewer), which represents a lower proportion with regard to the total unemployed three months before (falling from 21% to 17% over this period).

The employed population fell by 3,300 persons in this quarter

The number of persons employed in the fourth quarter of 2002 was 891,200, i.e., 3,300 fewer than three months before. By provinces, in Álava and Bizkaia there were 700 and 1,200 more persons employed respectively, while in Gipuzkoa the figure fell by 5,200 persons.

Graph 1: Trend for the employed population since 1985 (thousand)



Source: EUSTAT, Survey on the Population in Relation to Activity PRA

The fall in the employed population in the A.C. of the Basque Country affects males exclusively, with 11,300 fewer employed, while among females the previous figure improved by 8,100 more women in employment.

With regard to the third quarter, the number of employed in the Industry and Construction sectors fell (5,600 and 2,400 persons respectively). In the Services sector there was an increase with 3,500 persons and in Agriculture too with 1,400.

The employment rate (percentage of employed persons with regard to the total population aged 16 to 64) stood at 62.8%, point two percent below the rate three

months before. The proportion of males employed over the total number of males of working age fell to 75.1% (1.4 percent lower), while the rate for females increased to 50.4% (over one percent higher).

By provinces, the highest employment rate continues to be found in Álava with 67.7%, over half a percent higher. In Bizkaia the rate was 60.2%, which had not varied practically (+0.1 percent). Finally, in Gipuzkoa the rate fell one percent to 65.1%.

Taking households as the reference, 800 fewer had all their active members unemployed, while the number of those with all their active members in employment fell in 6,300 cases.

26,400 more persons employed than a year before, increases in all three provinces

The employed population grew by 26.400 persons with regard to the fourth quarter of 2001, i.e. by 3%. This increase was approximately 1% for males and over 6% for females. By provinces, the most important increase was in Bizkaia (+4.3%), followed by Álava and Gipuzkoa with almost 2% over the last 12 months.

Over the last year and following with the fall in Industry, there was a 3.9% in the number of employed in this sector, while there were increases in Construction and Services of 10.6% and 4.7%, respectively. In this period the employment rate increased 2.2 percent.

Unemployment rate increased point nine percent over the last year

Unemployment over the last 12 months increased 0.9 percent, slightly over one percent for males and point three percent for females. By provinces, the increase was 2.1 percent for Álava and Gipuzkoa, while in Bizkaia the rate fell by point two percent.

SURVEY ON THE POPULATION IN RELATION TO ACTIVITY (PRA)

	4th quarter 2002		Variation on the previous quarter		Variation on the same quarter the previous year	
	Thousand	%	Thousand	%	Thousand	%
POPULATION AGED 16 AND OVER	1.793,5		-1,0		-1,5	
ACTIVE POPULATION/ACTIVITY RATE	979,2	54,6	+4,5	+0,3	+38,8	+2,2
Males	573,0	66,0	-5,5	-0,5	+12,8	+1,5
Females	406,2	43,9	+9,9	+1,0	+26,0	+2,8
EMPLOYED POPULATION/EMPLOYMENT RATE	891,2	62,8	-3,3	-0,2	+26,4	+2,2
Males	535,2	75,1	-11,3	-1,4	+4,8	+1,1
Females	356,0	50,4	+8,1	+1,1	+21,6	+3,3
Álava	137,4	67,7	+0,7	+0,5	+2,4	+1,5
Bizkaia	458,4	60,2	+1,2	+0,1	+19,1	+2,9
Gipuzkoa	295,4	65,1	-5,2	-1,0	+4,9	+1,4
Agriculture	17,6		+1,4		+4,2	
Industry	248,2		-5,6		-10,1	
Construction	81,2		-2,4		+7,8	
Services	544,2		+3,5		+24,5	
UNEMPLOYED POPULATION/UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	88,0	9,0	+7,7	+0,7	+12,4	+0,9
Males	37,7	6,6	+5,7	+1,0	+8,0	+1,3
Females	50,2	12,4	+1,9	+0,2	+4,3	+0,3
16 - 24	19,5	21,0	+1,5	+2,3	+2,2	+1,0
25 - 44	56,3	9,7	+8,1	+1,2	+9,9	+1,5
45 and over	12,1	4,0	-2,0	-0,6	+0,2	-0,1
Álava	11,7	7,8	+2,9	+1,8	+3,5	+2,1
Bizkaia	48,8	9,6	-1,9	-0,4	+1,1	-0,2
Gipuzkoa	27,4	8,5	+6,6	+2,0	+7,7	+2,1
Seeking first job	14,3	16,3	+2,9		-0,5	
Seeking employment for 2 years or more	15,3	17,4	-1,3		-4,4	
INACTIVE POPULATION/INACTIVITY RATE	814,3	45,4	-5,5	-0,3	-40,3	-2,2
Previously considered unemployed	4,7		-0,2		-14,6	
HOUSEHOLDS	735,7		+1,4		+19,7	
Households with 1 or more active	530,1	72,1	-0,4		+15,5	
- All employed	453,8	61,7	-6,3		+3,9	
- All unemployed	18,5	2,5	-0,8		+0,2	
Households without active members	205,6	27,9	+1,8		+4,1	

Source: EUSTAT

For further information:

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