

## **7% decrease in visitor entries and 12% fall in overnight stays in March 2003**

***The fall in the number of visitors and overnight stays, in an inter-annual comparison, should take into account that Easter in 2002 was in March.***

When interpreting the results it should be born in mind that homogenous information is not available to measure the inter-annual evolution of visitor entries and overnight stays, as Easter in 2002 took place in March and this year in April, so that only a descriptive evolution is given of the inter-annual results for March.

121.163 entries were registered in hotel establishments in the A.C. of the Basque Country in March 2003, according to Eustat data, 7% less than the same month the previous year, which represents an inter-annual decrease of 8,500 entries. The incidence of visitor entries varied in the three provinces. In Bizkaia, despite the aforementioned Easter date, figures remained stable (0%), in Alava there was a 5% drop, while in Gipuzkoa there was a sharper drop of 13%.

The number of visitors from the State fell 5% for the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country while the number of foreign visitors fell 11%. State visitors increased in Bizkaia by 6% and fell in Alava (-6%) and Gipuzkoa (-15%). The number of foreign visitors fell in all three provinces: Alava (-3%), Bizkaia (-17%) and Gipuzkoa (-6%).

The number of overnight stays registered in March 2003 came to 214,992, i.e. almost 39,000 fewer than the same month the year before, which represents a 12% reduction. Overnight stays also fell in all three provinces although to differing degrees, as in Bizkaia there was a 5% fall, while in Alava and Gipuzkoa the decrease was sharper, with -16% and -17%, respectively.

The length of the average stay by visitors fell from 1.88 days in March the previous year to 1.77 last March, and this decrease affected all three provinces. The level of occupancy by places fell from 46.57% in March 2002 to 39.30% in March this year.

### **Agrotourism: 20% all in visitor entries and 36% drop in overnight stays.**

6,154 entries were registered by visitors in agrotourism establishments in the A.C. of the Basque Country, 20% less than the same month the year before, falling 33% in Alava, 26% in Bizkaia and 10% in Gipuzkoa. The decrease in the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country applies both to state (-21%) and foreign visitors (-10%).

The number of overnight stays in the agrotourism sector came to 11,393, 36% fewer than in March 2002, with sharp decreases in all three provinces: 51% in Alava, 43% in Bizkaia and 24% in Gipuzkoa.

The average stay per visitor fell from 2.31 days in March the previous year to 1.85 days registered in March this year, which represents a 20% percentage decrease. The level of occupancy by places fell in the same way by 40%.

Once again it must be stated that the inter-annual comparison is distorted due to the fact that Easter 2002 was held in March.

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**Table 1: Monthly results**

HOTEL ESTABLISHMENTS																			
A.C. OF EUSKADI					ARABA/ALAVA					BIZKAIA					GIPUZKOA				
03/2003	%	03/2002	%	Δ%	03/2003	%	03/2002	%	Δ%	03/2003	%	03/2002	%	Δ%	03/2003	%	03/2002	%	Δ%
ENTRY BY VISITORS																			
121.163	100	129.734	100	-7	22.687	100	23.926	100	-5	49.567	100	49.712	100	0	48.909	100	56.096	100	-13
94.098	78	99.469	77	-5	18.548	82	19.645	82	-6	38.510	78	36.326	73	6	37.040	76	43.498	78	-15
27.065	22	30.265	23	-11	4.139	18	4.281	18	-3	11.057	22	13.386	27	-17	11.869	24	12.598	22	-6
OVERNIGHT STAYS																			
214.992	100	243.861	100	-12	36.324	100	43.192	100	-16	93.227	100	97.987	100	-5	85.441	100	102.682	100	-17
159.938	74	184.640	76	-13	29.674	82	36.227	84	-18	65.906	71	68.315	70	-4	64.358	75	80.098	78	-20
55.054	26	59.221	24	-7	6.650	18	6.965	16	-5	27.321	29	29.672	30	-8	21.083	25	22.584	22	-7
AVERAGE STAY																			
1,77		1,88		-6	1,60		1,81		-12	1,88		1,97		-5	1,75		1,83		-4
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY PLACES																			
39,30		46,57		-16	36,64		50,41		-27	41,72		46,65		-11	38,06		45,05		-16
AGRO-TOURISM																			
ENTRY BY VISITORS																			
6.154	100	7.686	100	-20	982	100	1.474	100	-33	1.921	100	2.602	100	-26	3.251	100	3.610	100	-10
5.783	94	7.275	95	-21	952	97	1.444	98	-34	1.877	98	2.437	94	-23	2.954	91	3.394	94	-13
371	6	411	5	-10	30	3	30	2	0	44	2	165	6	-73	297	9	216	6	38
OVERNIGHT STAYS																			
11.393	100	17.792	100	-36	1.729	100	3.530	100	-51	3.592	100	6.310	100	-43	6.072	100	7.952	100	-24
10.567	93	16.639	94	-36	1.684	97	3.383	96	-50	3.477	97	5.714	91	-39	5.406	89	7.542	95	-28
826	7	1.153	6	-28	45	3	147	4	-69	115	3	596	9	-81	666	11	410	5	62
AVERAGE STAY																			
1,85		2,31		-20	1,76		2,39		-26	1,87		2,43		-23	1,87		2,20		-15
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY PLACES																			
16,74		28,09		-40	13,67		30,28		-55	16,99		30,98		-45	17,73		25,40		-30

Source: EUSTAT