

MARRIAGE STATISTICS (MAT)**Year 2000**

7.1% INCREASE IN MARRIAGES IN THE A.C. OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY IN THE YEAR 2000

Ever increasing age of spouses: since 1986 husbands' age increased by three and a half years and wives increased by four.

In the year 2000 there were 11,384 weddings by residents of the A.C. of the Basque Country, 750 more than the previous year, according to data prepared by the Eustat. In 1999 the figure was lower than normal, which could indicate that some weddings were put back to coincide with the end of the century.

The Basque wedding rate (5.1 weddings per thousand inhabitants) is identical to the whole of the European Union countries (5.1‰ in 1999) and slightly below the rate for the Spanish State (5.3‰).

July took first place as the most chosen month for getting married with 1,937 weddings, followed by September with 1,874 and June with 1,449.

With regard to the type of ceremony, 8,060 were Catholic marriages, 3,315 were exclusively civil and 9 corresponded to other religious confessions. Over the last fifteen years there has been an upward trend in the number of civil weddings, rising from 20.6 % in 1986 to 29.1% at present.

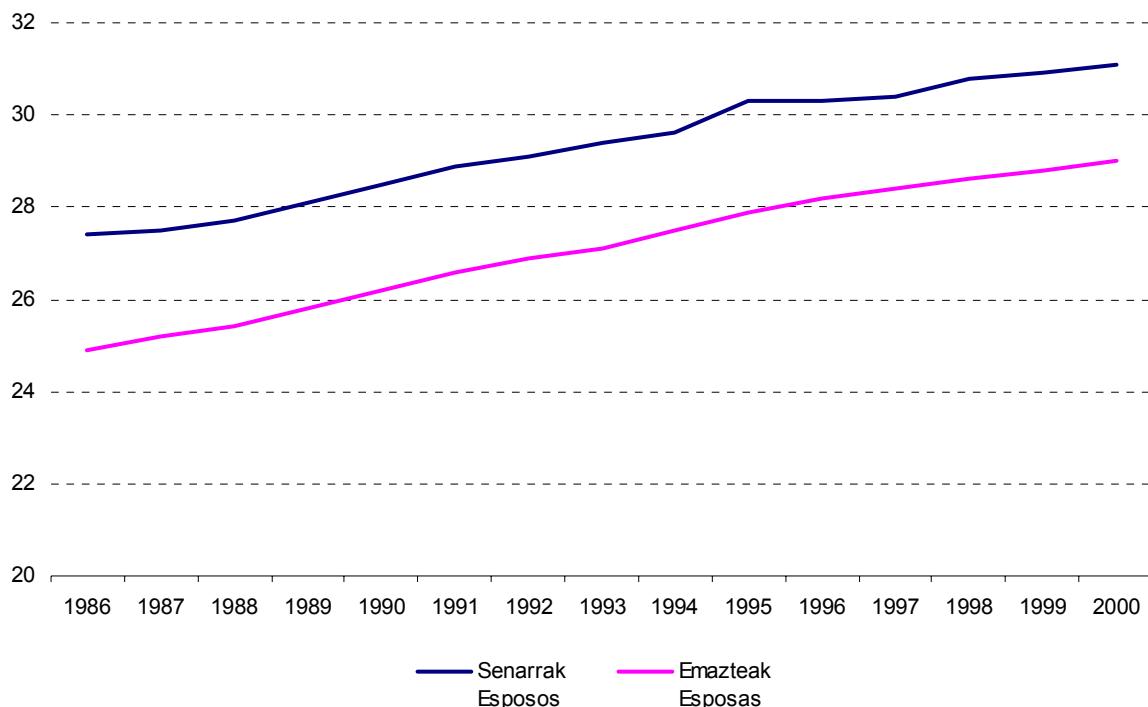
By provinces, Gipuzkoa was where there was a greater proportion of civil weddings (31.6%), followed by Alava (29.7%) and Bizkaia (28.9%). The percentage of civil weddings fell to 20% when weddings were held outside the Community.

With regard to the civil status of the spouses how married, 94.3% were single males compared to 94.9% of single women.

Parallel to the increase in maternity age, there was an increase in the age of spouses. In the year 2000, the average age of single males who married was 31.1 years and

29.0 for single women. Since 1986 the average age of newly wed husbands increased by over three and a half years and four in the case of brides.

Graph: Average age of spouses



The preferred destination for the 874 couples who established their residence outside the A.C. of the Basque Country on marrying was Cantabria, followed by Madrid, Castilla y León and Navarra. There were differences with regard to destination between marriages held in the three provinces: in Alava couples preferred to move to Castilla y León, La Rioja and Madrid; in Bizkaia to Cantabria, Madrid and foreign countries and in Gipuzkoa to foreign countries, followed by Navarra and Madrid.

With regard to the geographic origin of spouses, 62.4% of marriages were held between residents of the same municipality in the Community and 10.9% live in adjoining municipalities.

For further information:

 Eustat	Euskal Estatistika-Erakundea / Instituto Vasco de Estadística C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz Tel:+34-945-01 75 00 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01 E-mail: eustat@eustat.es Contact person: Javier San Vicente Tel:+34-945-01 75 36 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01 Press releases on the Internet: www.eustat.es
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