

At Easter 2003 there were 8% more visitors than at Easter 2002

The highest increase in visitors was in Gipuzkoa (14%) followed by Bizkaia (4%), with a slight drop in Alava (-1%).

There were 55,138 entries by visitors at Easter 2003, 8% more than the same period the year before, according to EUSTAT data. For the comparative calculation of data for 2002 and 2003, Easter is defined as all the days running from Easter Monday until Holy Week Friday inclusive, i.e. a total of 12 days, as agreed by tourist sector agents.

Thus in 2003 there were almost 4,000 more entries by visitors than a year before, the number of state visitors increasing 6% and foreign visitors 14%. The highest growth in the number of Easter visitors occurred in Gipuzkoa with a 14% inter-annual increase, followed by Bizkaia with 4%, although Alava registered a decrease of 1%.

Overnight stays (103,764) at Easter 2003 increased by 6% with regard to the same period in 2002, which represents 6,000 more overnight stays than the year before. Overnight stays rose 14% in Gipuzkoa, 2% in Bizkaia and fell 6% in Alava.

The average length of stay per visitor, therefore, fell slightly from 1.91 days in 2002 to 1.88 days this year.

The level of occupancy by places fell substantially in Alava (eleven percent), to a lesser degree in Bizkaia (almost three percent), but improved in Gipuzkoa (by over five percent increasing from 48.8% to 53.7%). Logically, the level of occupancy depends on two factors: the number of overnight stays and the places on offer. There have been increases in the latter over recent months, particularly in Alava and Bizkaia.

Agrotourism: At Easter 2003 there was an increase in the number of visitors (21%) and overnight stays (10%)

Easter 2003 saw 4,140 entries by visitors to agrotourism establishments in the A.C. of the Basque Country, i.e. 21% more than in 2002. Inter-annual increases were seen in Gipuzkoa (42%) and Alava (11%), but not in Bizkaia where there was a slight reduction of 1%. The number of state visitors increased in the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country, but there was a reduction in foreign visitors, except in Gipuzkoa.

The number of overnight stays came to 11,434, i.e. 10% more than at Easter 2002, rising in Gipuzkoa (22%) and Bizkaia (6%), but falling in Alava (-10%).

The average stay fell from 3.02 days to 2.76 days in the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country and the level of occupancy by places improved one percent (1%).

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Table: Easter results. 2002-2003

	A.C. OF EUSKADI				ARABA/ALAVA				BIZKAIA				GIPUZKOA						
	2002	%	2003	%	Δ%	2002	%	2003	%	Δ%	2002	%	2003	%	Δ%	2002	%	2003	%

HOTEL ESTABLISHMENTS

OVERNIGHT STAYS	97.647		103.764		6	17.536		16.544		-6	34.786		35.531		2	45.325		51.689		14
National	74.414		77.702		4	13.516		13.231		-2	24.886		25.117		1	36.012		39.353		9
Foreign	23.233		26.062		12	4.020		3.313		-18	9.900		10.413		5	9.313		12.336		32
ENTRY BY VISITORS	51.209		55.138		8	8.849		8.791		-1	18.832		19.538		4	23.527		26.809		14
National	37.377		39.434		6	6.938		6.804		-2	12.835		13.508		5	17.603		19.122		9
Foreign	13.832		15.704		14	1.911		1.987		4	5.997		6.030		1	5.924		7.687		30
AVERAGE STAY	1,91		1,88		0	1,98		1,88		0	1,85		1,82		0	1,93		1,93		0
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY PLACES	46,79		46,00		-1	53,42		42,85		-11	41,91		39,16		-3	48,81		53,72		5

AGRO-TOURISM

OVERNIGHT STAYS	10.357		11.434		10	2.024		1.826		-10	3.409		3.601		6	4.924		6.006		22
ENTRY BY VISITORS	3.429		4.140		21	706		787		11	1.205		1.190		-1	1.519		2.163		42
AVERAGE STAY	3,02		2,76		0	2,87		2,32		-1	2,83		3,03		0	3,24		2,78		0
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY PLACES	42,07		43,21		1	43,82		38,12		-6	42,20		41,77		0	41,30		46,02		5

Source: EUSTAT