

SURVEY ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY -ESI- Companies 2003

52% of companies with 10 or more employees in the A.C. of the Basque Country were present on the Internet in 2003

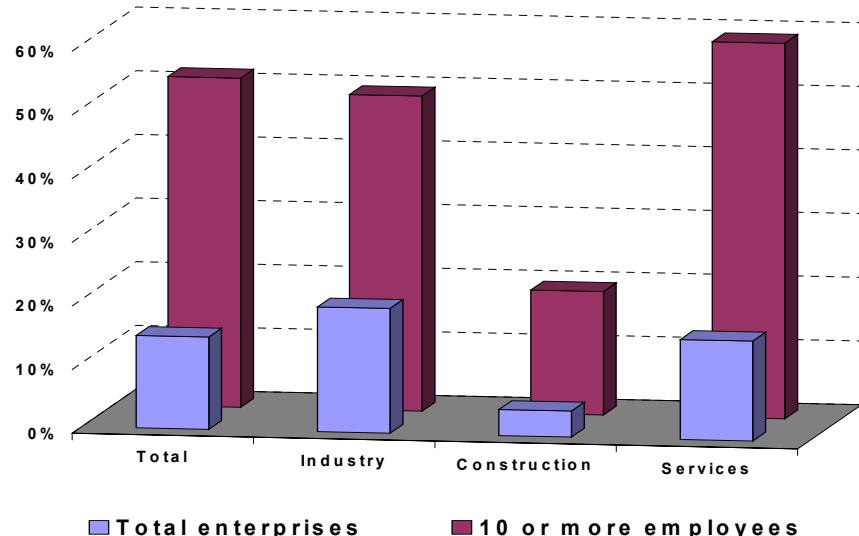
It is estimated that 7,500 Basque companies carried out e-commerce during 2002, amounting to 11.4% of purchases and 16.1% of sales.

The current edition of the Survey on the Information Society in companies, produced by Eustat, confirms the consistent improvement in the percentage of companies that operate on the Internet, either through their own web page or located on another server.

In 2003, companies with more than 10 employees present on the Internet went up eleven points, from 41% in the previous year to 52% in the current one. If, however, the figures include those companies with less than 10 employees, where the majority are self-employed, the percentage falls to 15%, although this is five points up on the previous year.

These figures tell us that the creation of web pages is a recent process and that while nearly one in four, or 23% of the total number of web pages have been created in the last year, in the last five years 85% of the total have been made.

Graph 1: Enterprises present on the Internet by area of activity and employment strata in 2003 (%)



Source: EUSTAT

Despite the increase, the importance of e-commerce was still low among Basque companies in 2002.

Although the presence of companies on the Internet has gained in importance, at least among those companies of a certain size, this is still to be reflected in the figures that are obtained through e-commerce.

The use of the Internet, especially to access web pages or for e-mail, has undergone a sharp increase in the last few years. However, e-commerce has failed to take off completely and at present neither the amount of transactions nor the number of businesses using e-commerce has reached the figures expected.

Even so, in the last year there was a growth of 1.4 percent in the number of enterprises that use e-commerce. While in 2001 the percentage of enterprises involved in this activity was 3.0%, with 2.7% carrying out purchases and a meagre 0.4% making sales, in 2002 the percentage of enterprises that operated through the Internet was 4.4%, purchases accounting for 3.6% and sales 1.3%.

Going into a little more detail and taking size into account, the number of transactions through e-commerce in enterprises with 10 or more employees reached 10.0%, compared to 6.4% the previous year. Furthermore, 8.3% carried out purchases through the Internet and 2.8% carried out sales in 2002 against 5.1% and 1.8% respectively in 2001.

Table 1: Enterprises with e-commerce according to activity sector and employment strata in 2002 (%)

	E-Commerce		Internet Purchases		Internet Sales	
	Total	>=10	Total	>=10	Total	>=10
Total	4.4	10.0	3.6	8.3	1.3	2.8
<i>Area of activity</i>						
Industry	6.8	11.3	5.2	9.2	2.8	3.5
Construction	2.5	5.8	2.5	5.8	0.0	0.0
Services	4.5	10.0	3.6	8.3	1.4	3.0

Source: EUSTAT

Consideration should also be given to the growing importance of sales “induced” by the Internet, which is to say sales to companies which, in making a conventional purchase, have enquired about different prices or characteristics through the Internet before making a decision. So, while e-commerce as such has not taken off as expected, the importance of the Internet in this area is much greater than the exchange figures would lead us to believe.

It is estimated that 7,500 companies in the A.C. of the Basque Country carry out e-commerce, which accounts for 11.4% of their total purchases and 16.1% of their total sales.

As for the **most popular products** in this type of transaction, there are three main groups. Firstly, there are those directly related to the area of computing, from **hardware**, be it computers, peripherals or other components, to all types of **software**.

Then there are those transactions made in **booking airline tickets and hotel rooms** and finally, mention should be made of the **commercialisation of financial services** through the Internet, such as share dealing or making transfers.

Finally, according to various companies consulted, **there could be several reasons why e-commerce has still not reached the trade figures expected.**

57% say their **products or services are unsuitable** for this type of transaction; 28% feel that their **customers are not ready to take part in this activity**; 24% believe that the **laws that govern this market are unclear, as are the areas of delivery dates and guarantees in the event of problems**. Another important drawback for 17% is the **problem of payment security** and finally, 12% of companies believe that **there are still a series of logistical problems**, which, until they are solved, will make its development very difficult.

For further information:

*Euskal Estatistika-Erakundea / Instituto Vasco de Estadística
C/ Donostia-San Sebastian, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz
Tel:+34-945-01 75 00 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01 E-mail: eustat@eustat.es
Contact person: José Miguel Escalada
Tel:+34-945-01 75 07 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01
Press releases on the Internet: www.eustat.es*