

SURVEY ON THE POPULATION IN RELATION TO ACTIVITY (PRA) 4th quarter 2003

The balance of the labour market in the A.C. of the Basque Country in 2003 shows a 0.7% increase in employment and a point two percent fall in the unemployment rate

In the fourth quarter of 2003 there was a 0.9% reduction in the number of people employed and a point seven percent rise in the unemployment rate.

Labour market figures for the A.C. of the Basque Country in the fourth quarter of 2003 put the number of people in employment at 897,300, 7,700 less than in the previous quarter, according to the Survey on the Population in Relation to Activity (PRA) published by Eustat. Additionally, the unemployment rate rose from 8.1% in the last quarter to 8.8%. With this data, the balance for the last 12 months closed with a 0.7% increase in employment and a point two percent fall in the unemployment rate.

In the last three months, the number of people out of work grew by 7,000 and the unemployment rate by 0.7 per cent. As a result of the evolution of the employed and unemployed population, the rate of activity reached 55%.

Decrease in the unemployment rate in Álava and Gipuzkoa but an increase in Bizkaia

The number of people unemployed, estimated at 86,800 in this fourth quarter, fell in Álava and more so in Gipuzkoa. The number of jobless in Álava fell by 500, leaving a group of 10,600 people affected by unemployment; the unemployment rate in Álava came to 7.1%. In Gipuzkoa there were 23,600 people out of work, 3,200 less than three months ago, the rate being 7.2%. In Bizkaia, with a total of 52,600, there was an increase of 10,600 in the number of unemployed, making the unemployment rate 10.3%.

The male unemployment rate stood at 6.6%, an increase of point five per cent and the female one, much higher at 11.9%, rose one point. The youth unemployment rate also increased by just over one and a half points, affecting almost one in four young active people between 16 and 24 years old (22.8 %).

According to EUROSTAT –the Statistical Office of the European Union–, in November 2003 the Euro Zone countries registered an unemployment rate of 8.8%, the same registered by the A.C. of the Basque Country in this the fourth quarter of 2003. As in other periods, the unemployment rate of the European Union as a whole (8%) was lesser than in the Euro Zone.

The group of people seeking their first job descended in number

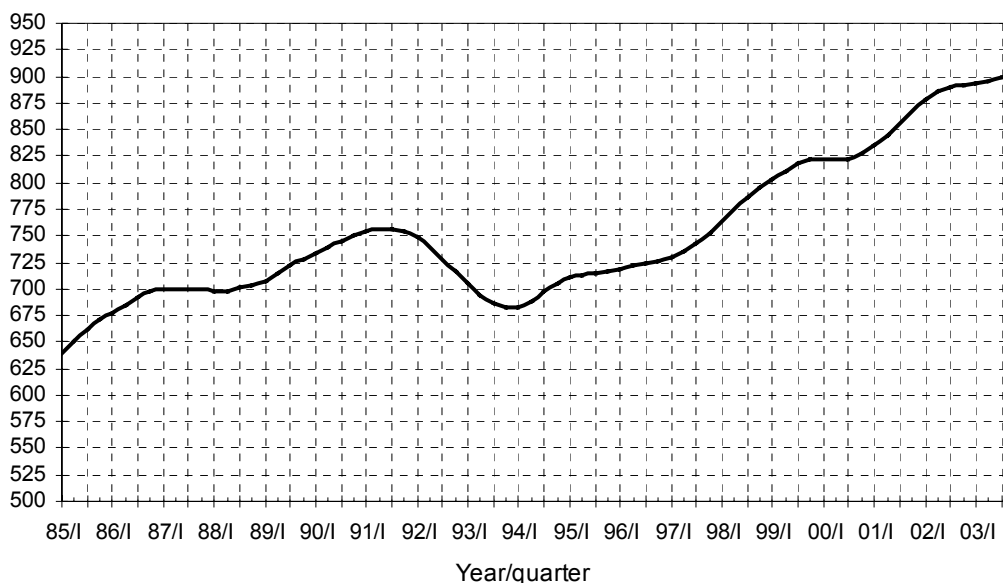
The number of men out of work, made up of 37,500 people, rose by 2,500. For women, 4,500 more joined the number of unemployed, a situation affecting a total of 49,300. The increase in the number of people out of work affected all age groups: young people aged 16 to 24 (+1,200), those of between 25 and 44 years old (+4,400) and those of 45 and over, where the number of unemployed grew by 1,400.

Elsewhere, the group of unemployed seeking their first job comprised of 11,300 people (3,900 less), which meant that this represented a smaller proportion of the total number of jobless than was the case three months ago (going from 19% to 13% during this period).

The number of people in work fell by 7,700 in the fourth quarter of 2003

The number of people in work in the fourth quarter of 2003 came to 897,300, which is to say 7,700 less than three months ago. Employment fell in all three provinces, the worst results being in Bizkaia with 5,700 less jobs, followed by Gipuzkoa with 1,600 less and finally Álava, where 400 jobs were lost.

Graph 1: Trend in the working population since 1985 (in thousands)



Source: EUSTAT

The loss of employment occurred in construction and, to a lesser extent, in industry

With regard to the third quarter of 2003, the fall in employment can be mainly put down to the slump in construction (7,700 less jobs) and to a lesser extent in industry (1,600 less). 900 jobs were created in the service sector and 700 in agriculture and fishing.

The decrease in the employed population in the A.C. of the Basque Country affected both men and women, but it was the former who experienced the worst evolution in employment with 6,600 jobs less than in the previous quarter, meaning that three out of four jobs lost were those of men.

The employment rate, the percentage of employed people aged between 16 and 64 over the total number of people of these ages stood at 63.5%, point six per cent less than three months ago. For men, this rate came to 75.2%, whereas for women it was only 51.7%.

By province, the highest employment rate remains that of Álava with 68%, a fall of point two per cent. Next comes Gipuzkoa with 66.9% a fall of point four per cent. Bizkaia has the lowest rate, with 60.2%, a fall of 0.8 per cent in relation to the third quarter of 2003.

In almost two out of three households all members were working (63%), although it should be pointed out that in the last three months 7,100 households have ceased to have all their active members in work. Additionally there was a 1,500 rise in the number of households where all their active members are unemployed; a situation affecting 2.7% of the 738,000 households of the A.C. of the Basque Country.

BALANCE FOR 2003

Last year, the employment rate rose almost point two per cent in Gipuzkoa, point three in Álava and remained unchanged in Bizkaia

The employed population grew in relation to the fourth quarter of 2002 by 6,100, 0.7%, which means that there was an increase in the employment rate of point six per cent. For women the increase was 1.3 per cent, while for men the rate remained unchanged.

By province, Gipuzkoa increased its employment rate by almost two points, Álava by just less than half a point and in Bizkaia there was no change over the last 12 months.

Over the last year industry continued to lose weight, with 1,700 less jobs, while there were notable rises in the service sector, where there were 6,400 more jobs, in agriculture (+800) and in construction (+600).

The unemployment rate fell by two points last year

Unemployment in the last 12 months fell point two per cent in the A.C. of the Basque Country, just under half a point for women and remained unchanged for men. The youth unemployment rate grew by 1.8 per cent. By province, there was a fall in Gipuzkoa (-1.3%) and in Álava (-0.7%), while in Bizkaia the rate grew by point seven per cent.

SURVEY ON THE POPULATION IN RELATION TO ACTIVITY (PRA)

	4th quarter 2003		Variation on the previous quarter		Variation on the same quarter the previous year	
	Thousand	%	Thousand	%	Thousand	%
POPULATION AGED 16 AND OVER	1.789,7		-1,3		-3,8	
ACTIVE POPULATION/ ACTIVITY RATE	984,1	55,0	-0,7	+0,0	+4,9	+0,4
Males	570,8	66,0	-4,1	-0,4	-2,2	-0,0
Females	413,3	44,7	+3,4	+0,4	+7,1	+0,8
EMPLOYED POPULATION/ EMPLOYMENT RATE	897,3	63,5	-7,7	-0,6	+6,1	+0,6
Males	533,3	75,2	-6,6	-0,9	-1,9	+0,0
Females	364,0	51,7	-1,1	-0,2	+8,0	+1,3
Álava	138,3	68,0	-0,4	-0,2	+0,9	+0,3
Bizkaia	455,9	60,2	-5,7	-0,8	-2,5	-0,0
Gipuzkoa	303,1	66,9	-1,6	-0,4	+7,7	+1,9
Agriculture	18,4		+0,7		+0,8	
Industry	246,5		-1,6		-1,7	
Construction	81,8		-7,7		+0,6	
Services	550,6		+0,9		+6,4	
UNEMPLOYED POPULATION/ UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	86,8	8,8	+7,0	+0,7	-1,2	-0,2
Males	37,5	6,6	+2,5	+0,5	-0,2	-0,0
Females	49,3	11,9	+4,5	+1,0	-0,9	-0,4
16 - 24	19,8	22,8	+1,2	+1,7	+0,3	+1,8
25 - 44	54,8	9,5	+4,4	+0,8	-1,5	-0,2
45 and over	12,2	3,8	+1,4	+0,4	+0,1	-0,1
Álava	10,6	7,1	-0,5	-0,3	-1,1	-0,7
Bizkaia	52,6	10,3	+10,6	+2,0	+3,8	+0,7
Gipuzkoa	23,6	7,2	-3,2	-0,9	-3,8	-1,3
Seeking first job	11,3	13,0	-3,9		-3,0	
Seeking employment for 2 years or more	13,5	15,6	+1,8		-1,8	
INACTIVE POPULATION/ INACTIVITY RATE	805,6	45,0	-0,5	+0,0	-8,7	-0,4
HOUSEHOLDS	738,0		+2,5		+2,3	
Households with 1 or more active	540,7	73,3	+0,4		+10,6	
- All employed	465,0	63,0	-7,1		+11,2	
- All unemployed	20,2	2,7	+1,5		+1,7	
Households without active members	197,3	26,7	+2,1		-8,3	

Source: EUSTAT

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