

Children in the A.C. of the Basque Country begin school at an increasingly early age

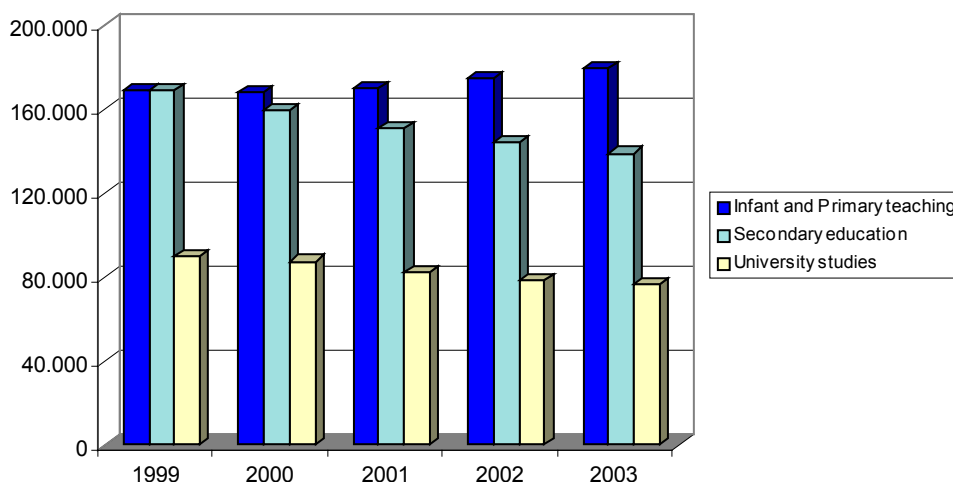
Although Infant Education is not a compulsory part of the education system, 98% of children in the A.C. of the Basque Country between 2 and 5 years old are enrolled in the education network.

The total number of pupils in the general system of the A.C. of the Basque Country in 2002/03 was 395,486, a reduction of 0.5% compared to the previous year, according to Eustat data.

The fall in the number of pupils has eased off, the decrease in numbers being, for the second year running, less than the overall trend of the last fifteen years (-2.7% average annual decrease).

This school year saw a 2,054 fall in the overall number of pupils, although this figure did not affect all levels to the same degree, since in the majority of cases the number of enrolments increased. The most important increase was in Adult Education, which grew by 11%; followed by Infant Education (5%), Technical Training (1%) and finally, Primary Education (0.3%). On the other hand, the levels suffering a decrease were Baccalaureate (-6%), Compulsory Secondary Education (-4.5%) and University Studies (-2.2%).

Evolution of pupils in the general system of education



Source: EUSTAT

Special mention should be made of Infant Education (2-5 year-olds), where 63,980 children enrolled for the year. The schooling rate thus came to 98.8% compared to 91.1% in the previous year.

It is also worth noting that in Baccalaureate, despite the fall in the number of pupils, the net schooling rate was 63.7 %, similar to the previous year. One of the causes of this reduction in the number of enrolments was the declining numbers in this age range of the population (16-17 year-olds). In the case of Technical Training, the rate for the middle cycle came to 5.1% and for the higher cycle it was 12.4 %. These figures show that the majority of pupils finishing Compulsory Education opt for the Baccalaureate.

76,589 students enrolled in University in 2002/03

With 2.2% less enrolments than the previous year, the fall that began 5 years ago in the numbers of University students continued apace. However, it should be noted that the proportion of young people aged between 18 and 29 enrolled in University education was similar to that of the previous year (21%). Comparing the net rate for the 18 to 21 age range, it can be seen that 35.6% study in universities, while 12.4 % opt for non-University higher studies (Higher Training Cycles).

61% of University students study long-term degrees, among which figure Business Administration and Management, Law, Industrial Engineering, Psychology, Computer Engineering, Economic Sciences and Fine Arts, leading the ranking of chosen degrees. As regards short-term studies, the most popular are Business Studies, Engineering (Mechanical, Industrial Electronics and Management Information Technology), Social Education and Infant School Teaching.

The number of women in University education (54%) surpasses that of men, following a general trend prevalent in Europe.

The number of enrolments in Permanent Adult Education continued to rise in 2002/03, with 18,372 students, 62.7% of whom were women.

In Basic Education, model D accounted for 61.4% of enrolments in Infant schools and 51.8% in Primary

At pre-University levels, not including Permanent Adult Education, the distribution of pupils in 2002/03 by educational model was 30.5% in model A (Basque as a subject), 22% in model B (bilingual) and 46% in model D (in Basque).

In Infant Education, 61.4% of pupils studied via model D and 28.6% by B, leaving only 9.3% who followed model A. In Primary Education, model D was also the most popular, having 51.8% of pupils, while model B was next with 29.7% and then A with 17.7%. Both in Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO) and Baccalaureate, the proportion of pupils studying in Basque was just over 40%, while in Technical Training it came to

13.6%. The general trend at all levels pointed to an increase in enrolments in model D compared to the previous year.

Pupils by educational levels and models (percentages)

	02/03	% var.	02/03 (*)			01/02 (*)		
			Model A	Model B	Model D	Model A	Model B	Model D
Total	395.486	-0,5						
Basic Education	179.895	2,9						
Infant Education	64.043	4,9	9,3	28,6	61,4	9,8	28,8	60,7
Primary Ed	97.480	0,3	17,7	29,7	51,8	20,0	29,1	50,0
E.P.A.	18.372	11,1						
Secondary Education	139.002	-3,8						
E.S.O.	74.319	-4,5	32,4	24,5	42,4	34,1	24,7	40,4
Baccalaureate	34.469	-6,1	55,8	2,0	41,9	57,3	1,7	40,7
Technical Training	30.214	1,0	82,9	3,5	13,6	82,6	4,0	13,4
University Studies	76.589	-2,2						

(*) X Model data are not shown

Source: EUSTAT

5% of the working population of the Autonomous Community works in the education sector

48,294 people worked in the education system of the A.C. of the Basque Country during the year 2002/03, representing 5% of the working population. The teaching body consisted of 35,432 people, of whom 64% were women, while non-teaching staff consisted of 12,862 people. The University accounted for 14.5% of teachers.

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