

## **18,133 births were registered in 2002, 2.8% more than in the previous year**

***The resurgence in the number of births continues and the maternity age rises.***

The number of births in the A.C. of the Basque Country in 2002 came to 18,133, a 2.8% rise compared to 2001, according to EUSTAT data. The greatest rise was in Bizkaia (3.7%), followed by Álava (2.3%) and Gipuzkoa (1.6%).

The number of births stood at 8.8 per thousand inhabitants, still a long way from the 20 per thousand registered in the nineteen-sixties. The highest figure was in Gipuzkoa (9.4‰), followed by Álava (8.7‰) and Bizkaia (8.4‰).

The sharp downward trend in births that began in 1976 and lost momentum towards the end of the 80s reached its lowest point in 1994. The 2002 figures confirm the revival of the birth rate that started in 1995.

Almost three out of four women who had children in 2002 were aged thirty or over. The largest group corresponded to women aged between 30 and 34, making up 45.4% of the total number of births. Additionally, there was an increase, with respect to 2001, in the number of mothers aged over 35, who continue to outnumber those aged between 25 and 29.

In the last decade, all maternity age groups under 30 years old descended in number. In addition, the percentage of mothers aged under 20 was reduced by half. In the 25 to 29 age group, the decrease was even greater (14 per cent), accounting for 20.1% of mothers in 2002. On the other hand, the group of mothers aged 35 or over more than doubled.

With respect to the order of births, first-born children accounted for 58% in 2002, a similar proportion to the previous year. In contrast, third and subsequent children made up only 5.8%.

In 2002 the number of children born outside of marriage totalled 3,272. This figure accounted for 18% of the total number of births and was higher than that of 2001 (16.3%). Álava was the only province with higher figures than the A.C. of the Basque Country as a whole and the one that experienced the greatest increase, going from 16.4% in 2001 to 20.5% in 2002.

The number of deliveries totalled 17,853, of which 17,517 were single births, 315 double and 21 triple.

The sex ratio of children born in 2002 was 103 boys to every 100 girls. On average, the boys weighed 3,285 grams and the girls weighed 3,166 grams.

**Table1: Live births in 2002 by mother's province of residence**

	A. C. of Euskadi	Araba/Alava	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.133</b>	<b>2.491</b>	<b>9.372</b>	<b>6.270</b>
Males	9.219	1.276	4.783	3.160
Women	8.914	1.215	4.589	3.110
<b>Order of birth</b>				
First	10.532	1.461	5.524	3.547
Second	6.548	893	3.332	2.323
Third or posterior	1.053	137	516	400
<b>According to age of mother</b>				
< 25 years	1.023	182	573	268
25 - 29 years	3.641	483	1.768	1.390
30 - 34 years	8.232	1.112	4.198	2.922
35 - 39 years	4.660	638	2.501	1.521
>= 40	577	76	332	169
<b>According to the marital status of the mother</b>				
Married	14.861	1.980	7.716	5.165
Not married	3.272	511	1.656	1.105

**Source: EUSTAT**

**For further information:**

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