

## 19,267 births were registered in 2003, 6.3% more than the previous year

***The resurgence in the number of births continued and the maternity age increased***

The number of births in the A.C. of the Basque Country in 2003 came to 19,267, an increase of 6.3% with respect to 2002, according to EUSTAT data. The highest rise was in Álava (8.1%), followed by Gipuzkoa (7.9%) and Bizkaia (4.6%).

The number of births came to 9.4 per thousand inhabitants, well behind the figure of 20 per thousand registered in the 1960s. The highest figure was found in Gipuzkoa (10.2‰), followed by Álava (9.4‰) and Bizkaia (8.9‰).

The strong downward trend as regards the number of births, which began in 1976, slowed down towards the end of the 80s, reaching its lowest point in 1994. The figures for 2003 consolidate the resurgence in the birth rate that got underway in 1995.

Three out of every four women who had children in 2003 were aged thirty or over. The most numerous group corresponded to women aged between 30 and 34, accounting for 45.9% of the total number of births. In relation to 2002, there was also an increase in the tally of mothers aged over 35 (29.7%), which easily outnumbered the 25 to 29 age group (18.8%).

In the last decade, all maternity ages under 30 have lost weight, although the 25 to 29 age group has done so the most (13 percentage points). On the other hand, the group of mothers aged 35 or over doubled in size.

As for the order of birth, first-born children accounted for over 58% in 2003, a similar proportion to the previous year. Conversely, third and subsequent children accounted for a mere 5.8%.

The number of children born to unmarried parents in 2003 came to 3,830. This figure represented 19.9% of the total number of births and was higher than in 2002 (18%). Gipuzkoa was the only province with higher relative values than the A.C. of the Basque Country as a whole and also experienced the highest increase, going from 17.6% in 2002 to 20.5% in 2003.

The number of births came to 18,931, of which 18,536 were single, 377 double, 16 triple and 2 quadruple.

The relation of the sexes among the children born in 2003 was 108 boys to 100 girls. On average, the boys weighed 3,284 grams and the girls, 3,168 grams.

**Table1: Live births in 2003 by mother's province of residence**

	A. C. of Euskadi	Araba/Alava	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
<b>Total</b>	<b>19.267</b>	<b>2.694</b>	<b>9.806</b>	<b>6.767</b>
Males	9.988	1.390	5.077	3.521
Women	9.279	1.304	4.729	3.246
<b>Order of birth</b>				
First	11.198	1.562	5.828	3.808
Second	6.926	973	3.451	2.502
Third or posterior	1.143	159	527	457
<b>According to age of mother</b>				
< 25 years	1.071	180	607	284
25 - 29 years	3.620	488	1.697	1.435
30 - 34 years	8.845	1.246	4.431	3.168
35 - 39 years	5.025	683	2.706	1.636
>= 40	706	97	365	244
<b>According to the marital status of the mother</b>				
Married	15.437	2.168	7.892	5.377
Not married	3.830	526	1.914	1.390

Source: EUSTAT

**For further information**

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