

10% increase in visitors in March 2005

Overnight stays increased by 17% with regard to March 2004

143,867 entries by visitors were registered at hotel establishments in the A.C. of the Basque Country in March 2005, over 13,000 more than the same month the year before, which represents a 10% increase, according to Eustat data. Entries by visitors obtained a net positive evolution in the three provinces, increasing by 13% in Bizkaia, 10% in Gipuzkoa and 5% in Alava, with regard to the same month the year before. The fact that Easter 2005 fell in March directly affects the number of entries by visitors, overnight stays, the average stay and the level of occupancy by places and rooms.

Entries by state visitors rose by 11% and the number of foreign visitors increased by 10%. State visitors increased their presence mainly in Bizkaia (16%), registered an intermediate rise in Gipuzkoa (9%) and a more discrete variation in Alava (2%). The number of foreign visitors rose sharply in Alava (21%), registered intermediate growth in Gipuzkoa (10%) and, finally, developed more moderately in Bizkaia (7%).

Among state visitors, there was an increase in numbers from practically all the Autonomous Communities, except for slight reductions in numbers from Madrid and Aragón. Numbers rose from Catalonia, Valencia, Galicia, Asturias and Andalusia, to name the most significant rises. There was an increase in the number of foreign visitors from France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal and the USA-Canada, among others, and there was a drop in visitors from the UK, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, Holland and Finland.

The number of overnight stays registered in March 2005 came to 270,128, which represents a 17% rise on March the previous year, i.e. 40,000 more overnight stays. Overnight stays also registered a positive inter-annual evolution in the three provinces, with 20% growth in Bizkaia, 17% in Alava and 14% in Gipuzkoa.

The length of the average stay has risen from 1.77 days the year before to 1.88 last March, for the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country, and this improvement affected the three provinces in the Community. In Alava it rose from 1.65 to 1.84 days, in Bizkaia from 1.76 to 1.87 and in Gipuzkoa from 1.83 to 1.90.

The level of occupancy by places improved by 12%, rising from 39.08% in March last year to 43.90% in March this year. The increase is confirmed in Alava (17%), Gipuzkoa (15%) and in Bizkaia (8%). The level of occupancy by rooms improved by 8% on the level for March the previous year.

Agrotourism: Improvement in number of visitors (15%) and, above all, in overnight stays (50%)

8,337 entries by visitors were registered at agrotourism establishments in March in the A.C. of the Basque Country, 15% more than the same month the previous year, rising 23% in Bizkaia, 14% in Gipuzkoa and 3% in Alava. The number of state visitors increased by 16% in the A.C. of the Basque Country, whereas there was a 3% fall in the number of foreigners in the whole of the Community, as a result of the fall in numbers in the province of Gipuzkoa (-35%).

The number of overnight stays at agrotourism establishments in the A.C. of the Basque Country came to 22,624 in March, which represents a significant 50% increase in relation to the same month a year before, with important inter-annual growth rates in the three provinces: in Gipuzkoa there was a 65% increase, 48% in Alava and 34% in Bizkaia.

The average stay per visitor improved in the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country with regard to March 2004, rising from 2.09 days a year before to 2.71 in March this year, this positive evolution corresponding to all three provinces: Gipuzkoa (44%), Alava (43%) and Bizkaia (8%).

The level of occupancy by places increased by 42% and the level of occupancy by rooms improved on previous positions, also by 42%. This improvement in the level of occupancy, both by places and by rooms affected the three provinces in the A.C. of the Basque Country, rising between 20% and 60% in each and every case.

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Table 1: Monthly results

	A.C. OF EUSKADI			ARABA/ALAVA			BIZKAIA			GIPUZKOA					
	03/2005	%	03/2004	%	Δ%	03/2005	%	03/2004	%	Δ%	03/2005	%	03/2004	%	Δ%
HOTEL ESTABLISHMENTS															
OVERNIGHT STAYS	270.128	100	230.254	100	17	44.039	100	37.628	100	17	121.183	100	100.766	100	20
National	206.689	77	171.415	74	21	36.535	83	31.342	83	17	86.088	71	69.635	69	24
Foreigners	63.439	23	58.839	26	8	7.504	17	6.286	17	19	35.095	29	31.131	31	13
Capital	167.119	62	144.208	63	16	31.286	71	28.743	76	9	82.770	68	70.592	70	17
Coast	33.048	12	27.039	12	22	-	-	-	-	-	11.793	10	7.071	7	67
Inland	69.961	26	59.007	26	19	12.753	29	8.885	24	44	26.620	22	23.103	23	15
ENTRY OF TRAVELLERS	143.867	100	130.250	100	10	23.928	100	22.783	100	5	64.850	100	57.225	100	13
National	111.080	77	100.479	77	11	19.269	81	18.938	83	2	48.370	75	41.857	73	16
Foreigners	32.787	23	29.771	23	10	4.659	19	3.845	17	21	16.480	25	15.368	27	7
Capital	90.581	63	85.306	65	6	16.128	67	16.803	74	-4	44.137	68	41.694	73	6
Coast	15.480	11	12.700	10	22	-	-	-	-	-	6.893	11	3.980	7	73
Inland	37.806	26	32.244	25	17	7.800	33	5.980	26	30	13.820	21	11.551	20	20
AVERAGE STAY	1,88		1,77		6	1,84		1,65		12	1,87		1,76		6
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY PLACES	43,90		39,08		12	44,69		38,18		17	43,88		40,46		8
Capital	45,92		41,29		11	46,00		42,49		8	47,47		44,91		6
Coast	43,21		38,89		11	-		-		-	34,71		24,63		41
Inland	39,99		34,62		16	41,77		28,75		45	39,25		36,59		7
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY ROOMS	53,79		49,86		8	53,66		48,73		10	56,53		52,53		8
Capital	56,93		53,19		7	58,04		56,55		3	60,85		57,28		6
Coast	49,67		45,47		9	-		-		-	41,77		32,54		28
Inland	48,65		44,57		9	42,15		29,89		41	51,67		49,21		5
AGRO-TOURISM															
OVERNIGHT STAYS	22.624	100	15.081	100	50	3.907	100	2.643	100	48	7.597	100	5.690	100	34
National	21.615	96	13.718	91	58	3.612	92	2.466	93	46	7.233	95	4.823	85	50
Foreigners	1.009	4	1.363	9	-26	295	8	177	7	67	364	5	867	15	-58
ENTRY OF TRAVELLERS	8.337	100	7.220	100	15	1.338	100	1.293	100	3	3.102	100	2.523	100	23
National	7.998	96	6.872	95	16	1.268	95	1.245	96	2	2.943	95	2.391	95	23
Foreigners	339	4	348	5	-3	70	5	48	4	46	159	5	132	5	20
AVERAGE STAY	2,71		2,09		30	2,92		2,04		43	2,45		2,26		8
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY PLACES	28,65		20,21		42	23,60		17,40		36	31,02		23,53		32
OCCUPANCY LEVEL BY ROOMS	31,26		22,09		42	24,69		20,00		23	33,33		25,79		29

Source: EUSTAT