

The main causes of death in 2003 were circulatory system diseases and tumours

19,305 persons died, 686 more than the year before, but there was a fall in rate of negative natural population growth

The number of deaths in the A.C. of the Basque Country in 2003 came to 19,305, 10,050 men and 9,255 women, 686 deaths more than the year before. This figure represents a 3.7% increase with regard to 2002, according to EUSTAT data.

There were 38 more deaths than births, by which, as has occurred since 1990, the natural population growth was negative, although less so by absolute figures than the year before. By province, there were positive balances in Álava and Gipuzkoa, who gained 337 and 503 persons, respectively. On the other hand, in the case of Bizkaia, the number of deaths was greater than the number of births (-878).

The average age of the deceased was 76.2 years, while in 1990 it was 71 years, i.e. there has been a 5.2 year increase. By sex, males died at the age of 72.2 years on average and females at 80.5.

With regard to infant mortality, 3.2 children under the age of one year per thousand born died. Neonatal mortality, produced in the first 28 days of life, amounted to 41 deaths: 24 were due to early neonatal mortality, occurring during the first week of life, 13 of which happened during the first 24 hours. Among the under one year olds, deaths among males (33) were more common than among females (29).

30.5% of deaths that occurred in 2003, 5,891 deaths, were due to circulatory system diseases; followed by tumours, with 28.7% (5,548 deaths) and, thirdly, at some distance, respiratory diseases, which accounted for 10.7% (2,066).

The cause of death was different according to sex, as among males tumours were more common than circulatory system diseases, while among females the main cause was cardiovascular diseases followed by tumours.

Furthermore, the cause of death varied with age. Among under one year olds, the most common cause of death was diseases that originated in the perinatal period and congenital anomalies; up to the age of 34 the main causes of death were external; from 35 to 74 they were tumours and from 75 circulatory system diseases.

Among deaths by external causes, the most common were road accidents with 260 deaths and suicides with 161. In both cases more males died than females: 184 males and 76 females due to road accidents and 121 males and 40 females due to suicides.

Graph 1: Deaths by cause and sex (%)

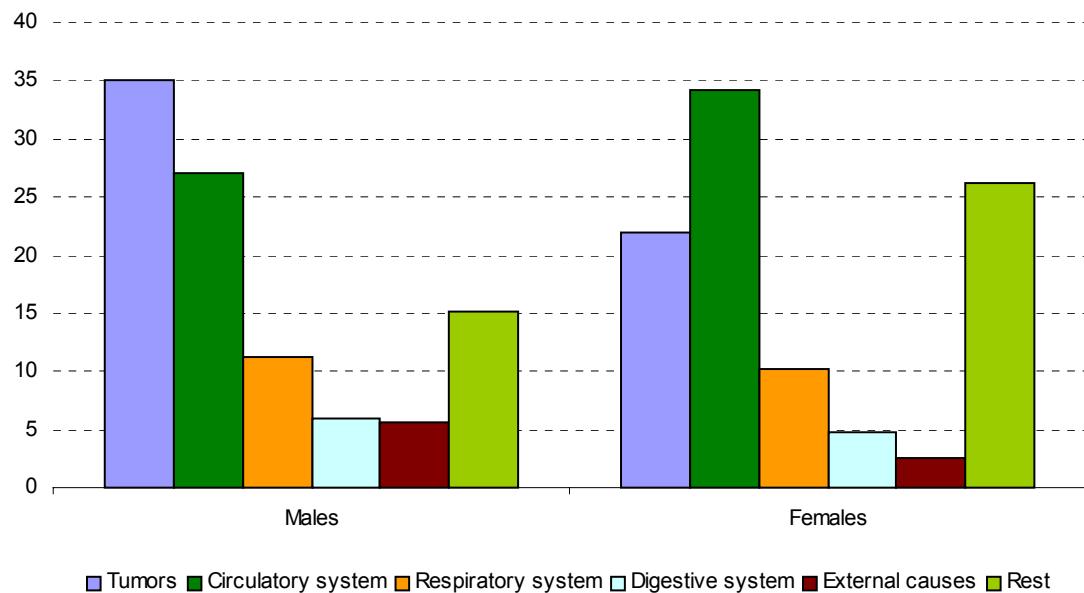


Table 1: Deaths by sex according to cause.

	Males		Females	
	N.	%	N.	%
Total causes	10.050		9.255	
Infectious and parasitic diseases	200	2,0	183	2,0
Tumours	3.521	35,0	2.027	21,9
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	221	2,2	338	3,7
Mental and behavioural disorders	251	2,5	532	5,7
Nervous system diseases	322	3,2	606	6,5
Circulatory system diseases	2.718	27,0	3.173	34,3
Respiratory system diseases	1.128	11,2	938	10,1
Digestive system diseases	596	5,9	445	4,8
Genitourinary system diseases	189	1,9	216	2,3
Symptoms, abnormal clinical signs and laboratory findings	226	2,2	332	3,6
External causes of death	562	5,6	244	2,6
Others	116	1,2	221	2,4

Source: EUSTAT

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