

FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS (ECOMEX) 1ST QUARTER 2006

Basque Country Exports registered a 29.4% inter-annual increase in the first quarter of 2006

Imports grew by 19.4% over the same period of the current year

Exports of the A.C. of the Basque Country increased by 29.4% over the first quarter of 2006, according to EUSTAT data. The total figure for exports over the first three months of the year came to 4,162.3 million euros, compared to 3,217.6 million the year before.

Imports came to a total of 4,087.1 million euros over the first quarter of the year, which was 19.4% higher than the same period in 2005.

Non-energy exports registered 21.7% inter-annual growth and non-energy imports increased in value by 5.3%.

Evolution of foreign trade of the A.C. of the Basque Country. First quarter 2005-2006. Thousand euros.

| | EXPORTS | | | IMPORTS | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| | January-March | | Δ % | January-March | | Δ % |
| | 2005 | 2006 | | 2005 | 2006 | |
| A.C. OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 3.217.591 | 4.162.286 | 29,4 | 3.423.064 | 4.087.079 | 19,4 |
| MINERAL AND ENERGY PRODUCTS | 96.586 | 363.554 | 276,4 | 959.255 | 1.493.737 | 55,7 |
| NON-ENERGY PRODUCTS | 3.121.004 | 3.798.731 | 21,7 | 2.463.809 | 2.593.342 | 5,3 |
| ALAVA/ARABA | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 902.939 | 1.102.042 | 22,1 | 552.341 | 690.566 | 25,0 |
| MINERAL AND ENERGY PRODUCTS | 1.240 | 1.605 | 29,5 | 8.884 | 11.155 | 25,6 |
| NON-ENERGY PRODUCTS | 901.700 | 1.100.437 | 22,0 | 543.457 | 679.411 | 25,0 |
| BIZKAIA | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 1.166.667 | 1.701.070 | 45,8 | 2.077.878 | 2.580.615 | 24,2 |
| MINERAL AND ENERGY PRODUCTS | 90.294 | 355.441 | 293,6 | 934.779 | 1.468.098 | 57,1 |
| NON-ENERGY PRODUCTS | 1.076.373 | 1.345.629 | 25,0 | 1.143.099 | 1.112.517 | -2,7 |
| GIPUZKOA | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 1.147.984 | 1.359.174 | 18,4 | 792.844 | 815.899 | 2,9 |
| MINERAL AND ENERGY PRODUCTS | 5.052 | 6.508 | 28,8 | 15.592 | 14.484 | -7,1 |
| NON-ENERGY PRODUCTS | 1.142.932 | 1.352.665 | 18,4 | 777.252 | 801.415 | 3,1 |

Source: Eustat

The **total volume** of foreign transactions, the sum of exports and imports, has risen from 6,640.7 million euros in the first quarter of 2005 to 8,249.4 million in the first three months of the current year.

The **foreign balance**, which showed a trade deficit of 205.5 million euros in the first quarter of last year, was positive in the first three months of 2006, with a surplus of 75.2 million and, as a result, the coverage rate of exports over imports recovered to 101.8%, when a year before it had fallen to 94.0%.

The foreign balance of non-energy products came to 1,205.4 million and the coverage rate came to 146.5%, almost double the levels of a year before.

Exports destined to **the European Union** rose by 19.8%, with increases destined to our main clients: France (14.0%), Germany (19.0%), Italy (43.4%), Portugal (6.8%), Belgium (27.8%) and the Netherlands (15.6%), but decreases in exports to the UK (-4.3%).

Imports from the European Union grew by 10.2%.

Exports to the USA registered sharp growth, with a 131.2% increase, and a 53.9% fall in exports to Japan.

Of the three most significant **import duty sections** with regard to exports, the first, *Metals and their manufactured* grew by 18.2%, *Transport Material* and *Electric Material* rose by 30.6% and 15.8%, respectively. In addition, *Mineral Products* registered a significant increase of 276.4%.

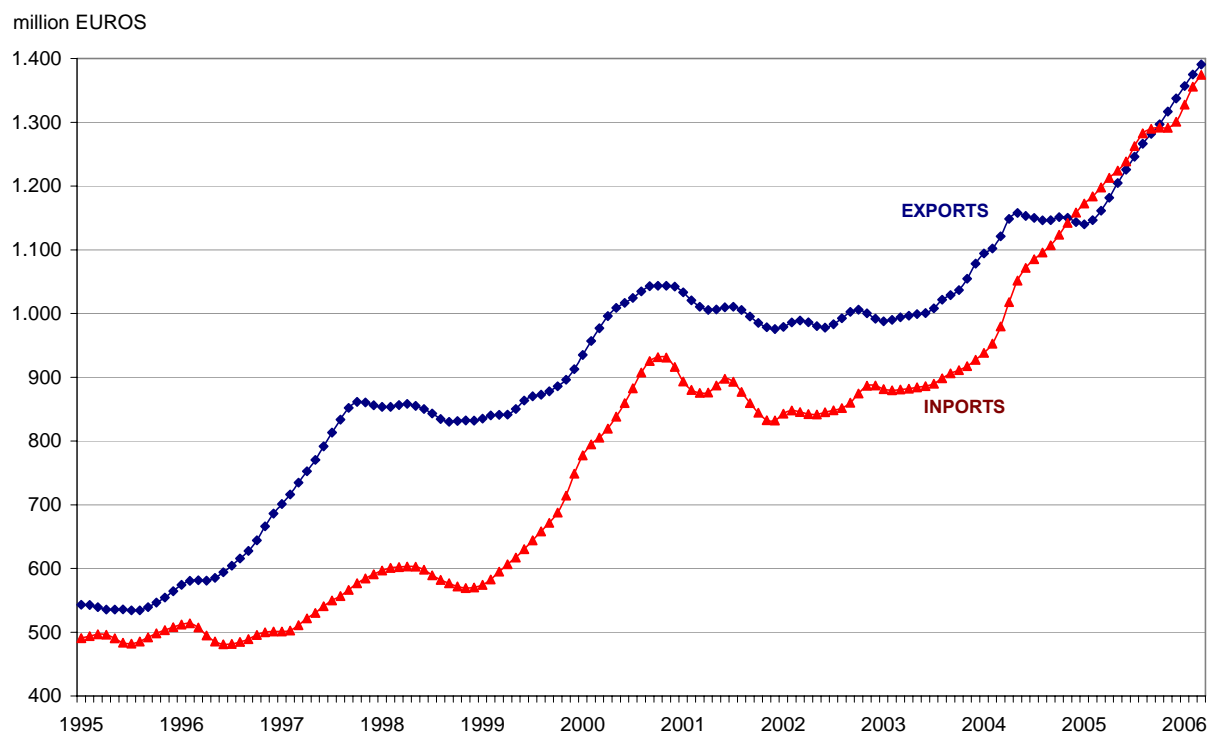
From the point of view of imports by import duty sections, there was a significant volume of imports for *Metals and their manufactured*, which fell by 5.4%, while *Electric Material* and *Transport Material* grew by 6.8% and 33.5%, respectively. The predominant import duty section is *Mineral Products* with 55.7% inter-annual growth.

Exports from **Bizkaia** reached the highest inter-annual growth with a figure of 45.8%, supported by a good performance by *Mineral Products* (293.7%), *Plastic and Rubber* (92.8%), *Transport Material* (39.7%), *Metals and their manufactured* (19.2%) and *Electric Material* (14.1%).

Exports from **Álava** grew by 22.1%, sustained by the positive performance of *Metals and their manufactured* (20.1%), *Electric Material* (20.8%) and, above all, *Transport Material* (25.9%).

Exports from **Gipuzkoa** experienced a significant increase of 18.4%, where the three aforementioned import duty sections are involved: *Metals and their manufactured* (14.9%), *Electric Material* (15.6%) and *Transport Material* (32.9%).

Foreign trade of the A.C. of the Basque Country. (Trend)



Source: Eustat

For further information:

Euskal Estatistika-Erakundea / Instituto Vasco de Estadística

C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz

Tel:+34-945-01 75 00 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01 E-mail: eustat@eustat.es

Contact: Patxi Garrido

Tel:+34-945-01 75 13 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01

Press releases on the Internet: www.eustat.es

Data bank: www.eustat.es/bancopx/spanish/indice.asp