

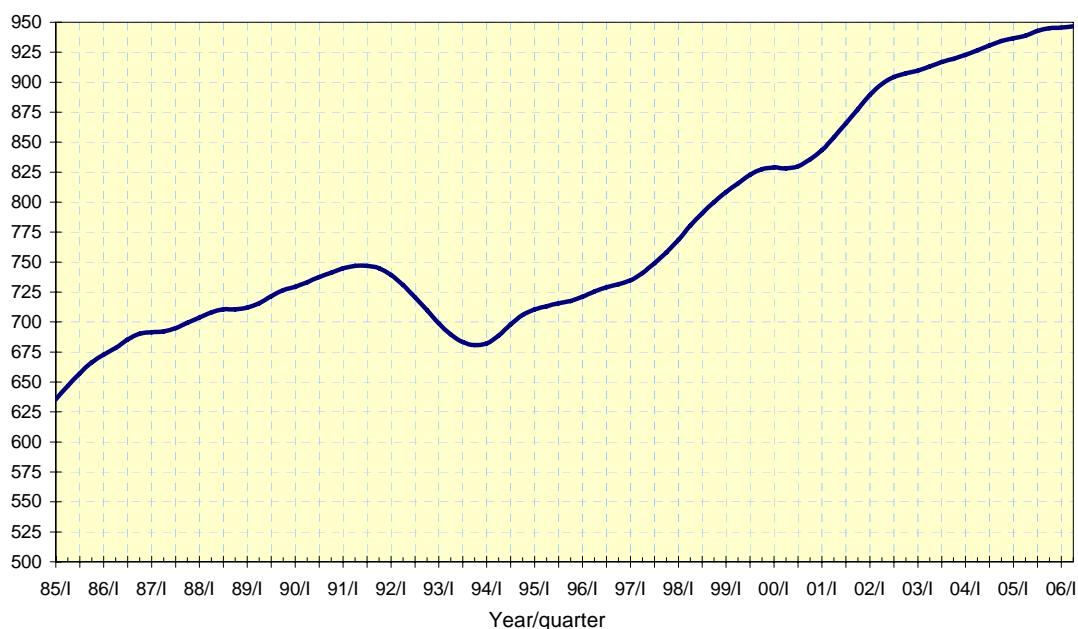
SURVEY ON THE POPULATION IN RELATION TO ACTIVITY (PRA) 2nd quarter 2006

The working population remained stable and the unemployment rate fell by point ten in the 2nd quarter of 2006 in the A.C. of the Basque Country

The unemployment rate fell to 4.2%, with decreases in all three provinces

The working population in the whole of the A.C. of the Basque Country stands at 942,500, practically the same as three months before. With regard to sex, the improvement only affects females, with 1,900 more workers than the previous quarter, while among males there were 2,000 fewer workers. By provinces employment only increased in Álava with 1,400 net jobs more, while it fell in Gipuzkoa with 1,000 jobs fewer and, finally, Bizkaia lost 500 jobs, according to Eustat data.

Trend in the working population since 1985. A.C. of the Basque Country. (Thousands)



Source: EUSTAT

Construction and industry increased jobs, while the services lost jobs and there was hardly any variation in agriculture

With regard to the first quarter of 2006, there was an important increase in the number of construction workers, with 4,000 more employees, and in industry with another 3,700, which generated net employment after six quarters with continuous losses in jobs. Agriculture lost 300 jobs and services another 7,600.

The employment rate, percentage of persons employed from 16 to 64 on the total of these ages, came to 65.6%, the same as three months before. This rate for males was 74.5%, while for females it only represented 56.5%.

By provinces the highest employment rate corresponded to Gipuzkoa with 69% and a point two decrease; followed by Álava with 68.2% but with a point three percent increase; Bizkaia has the lowest rate, with 62.9%, the same as the previous quarter.

In the second quarter of 2006 it was estimated there were 785,700 households in the A.C. of the Basque Country, a third of which did not have an active person. In over 6 out of every 10 households all active persons are employed, 8,700 more than the previous quarter.

The unemployment rate stands at less than 5%

Data for the second quarter of 2006 on the labour market in the A.C. of the Basque Country offered an unemployment rate that was point nine percent below the previous quarter and coming to 4.2%, reducing the number of unemployed by 9,200s.

In relation to the first quarter of 2006, and as a result of the evolutions of the working and unemployed population, the activity rate fell by half a percent and stood at 54% in the second quarter of 2006.

Drop in both the female and male unemployment rates

The female unemployment rate fell to 4.5% (one percent lower) and the male rate fell by point eight percent. The youth unemployment rate fell to 5.9 %, affecting unemployment with 3,700 active youths aged 16 to 24.

The group of unemployed women, which affected 19,100 persons, fell by 4,300. In the same way, among males, 4,900 left unemployment in the last quarter, a situation which affected a total of 22,100.

The unemployment rate in the A.C. of the Basque Country in the first quarter of 2006 was 3.7 percentage points below the rate for countries in the Euro zone. According to EUROSTAT- Statistics Office of the European Union-, in May 2006 in this geographic area the unemployment rate fell to 7.9%. The rate for the whole of the European Union, taking into consideration the 25 countries that make it up, fell to 8.2%.

Drop in the unemployment rate in all three provinces

The number of unemployed, i.e. persons who are seeking employment, take active measures to find work and in addition are available to work, is estimated to be 41,200 in the second quarter, 9,200 persons fewer than three months before. By provinces, in Álava, with a total of 5,100, there was a decrease of 1,500 persons, the rate falling to 3.5%, in Bizkaia there were 26,200 unemployed, 6,600 fewer than three months ago, but with a less favourable rate (5.1%) and, in Gipuzkoa it was estimated 1,000 persons fewer unemployed than three months before and with the most favourable rate in the three provinces (3.1%).

Over the last year the services sector created 17,800 net jobs

The working population has grown over the last twelve months by 12,300 persons, 1.3% more. There was a 3 percentage point increase in the female employment rate, while among males the rate fell by point eight. In the three provinces the employment rates increased: Gipuzkoa (1.3 points), Bizkaia (one point) and Álava (0.9 percentage points), with regard to the second quarter of 2005.

During the last year, the services sector created 17,800 net jobs, while industry continued to decrease with 7,500 fewer jobs.

The unemployment rate fell 1.7 percentage points over the last year in the A.C. of the Basque Country

The unemployment rate over the last year fell by 1.7 percentage points (from 5.9% to 4.2%), by which 17,500 persons had abandoned unemployment in the A.C. of the Basque Country over the year. All three provinces reduced their unemployment rates over the last twelve months: Bizkaia (2.5 percentage points fewer), Gipuzkoa (1.1 percentage points fewer) and Álava point three percent.

SURVEY ON THE POPULATION IN RELATION TO ACTIVITY (PRA)

| | 1st quarter 2006 | | Variation on the previous quarter | | Variation on the same quarter the previous year | |
|---|---------------------|------|--------------------------------------|-------|---|-------|
| | Thousand | % | Thousand | p.p.* | Thousand | p.p.* |
| POPULATION AGED 16 AND OVER | 1.822,8 | | -0,4 | | +1,9 | |
| ACTIVE POPULATION/ ACTIVITY RATE | 983,7 | 54,0 | -9,3 | -0,5 | -5,2 | -0,3 |
| Males | 563,4 | 63,5 | -6,8 | -0,8 | -9,8 | -1,2 |
| Females | 420,3 | 44,9 | -2,4 | -0,2 | +4,7 | +0,5 |
| EMPLOYED POPULATION/ EMPLOYMENT RATE | 942,5 | 65,6 | -0,1 | -0,0 | +12,3 | +1,1 |
| Males | 541,3 | 74,5 | -2,0 | -0,4 | -5,9 | -0,8 |
| Females | 401,2 | 56,5 | +1,9 | +0,3 | +18,3 | +3,0 |
| Álava | 141,9 | 68,2 | +1,4 | +0,3 | +2,5 | +0,9 |
| Bizkaia | 483,7 | 62,9 | -0,5 | -0,0 | +5,5 | +1,0 |
| Gipuzkoa | 316,9 | 69,0 | -1,0 | -0,2 | +4,4 | +1,3 |
| Agriculture | 11,9 | | -0,3 | | +1,1 | |
| Industry | 241,2 | | +3,7 | | -7,5 | |
| Construction | 81,2 | | +4,0 | | +0,8 | |
| Services | 608,1 | | -7,6 | | +17,8 | |
| UNEMPLOYED POPULATION/ UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | 41,2 | 4,2 | -9,2 | -0,9 | -17,5 | -1,7 |
| Males | 22,1 | 3,9 | -4,9 | -0,8 | -3,9 | -0,6 |
| Females | 19,1 | 4,5 | -4,3 | -1,0 | -13,6 | -3,3 |
| 16 - 24 | 3,7 | 5,9 | -4,9 | -6,3 | -6,5 | -8,2 |
| 25 - 44 | 30,6 | 5,3 | -3,0 | -0,5 | -8,9 | -1,5 |
| 45 and over | 7,0 | 2,0 | -1,2 | -0,3 | -1,9 | -0,6 |
| Álava | 5,1 | 3,5 | -1,5 | -1,0 | -0,4 | -0,3 |
| Bizkaia | 26,2 | 5,1 | -6,6 | -1,2 | -13,6 | -2,5 |
| Gipuzkoa | 10,0 | 3,1 | -1,0 | -0,3 | -3,4 | -1,1 |
| Seeking first job | 3,6 | 8,7 | -0,9 | | -2,1 | |
| INACTIVE POPULATION/ INACTIVITY RATE | 839,1 | 46,0 | +8,9 | +0,5 | +7,1 | +0,3 |
| HOUSEHOLDS | 785,7 | | +8,3 | | +24,8 | |
| Households with 1 or more active | 531,5 | 67,6 | +0,9 | | +8,7 | |
| - All employed | 496,1 | 63,1 | +8,7 | | +22,2 | |
| - All unemployed | 10,7 | 1,4 | -2,1 | | -1,4 | |
| Households without active members | 254,2 | 32,4 | +7,4 | | +16,1 | |

*p.p. = Difference in percentage points

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: M^a José Santamaría Gallardo
 Tel:+34-945-01 75 33 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01
 Press releases on the Internet: www.eustat.es
 Data bank: www.eustat.es/bancopx/spanish/indice.asp