

Over 30% of births were outside marriage in 2008

The number of births continued to recover and stood at 21,315, 3.5% up on 2007

In 2008, there were 6,474 births outside marriage, according to Eustat data. This figure accounted for 30.4% of the total births and was 3 percentage points higher than the previous year (2007). The percentages for Álava and Bizkaia were higher than the one for the Basque Country as a whole, at 30.9% and 30.6%, respectively, while Gipuzkoa was the only provinces with relatively lower values (29.9%). If we compare the percentage for 1990 (7.7%) with the current one, the proportion of births outside marriage has almost quadrupled.

In 2008, the number of births in the Basque Country totalled 21,315, which was a 3.5% increase compared to 2007. This growth was greater than that recorded between 2006 and 2007, which came to 2.8%. The greatest increase in 2008 occurred in Álava (6.0%), followed by Bizkaia (4.3%) and Gipuzkoa, with 1.3%.

The birth rate stood at 9.9 per thousand inhabitants, which was far from the 20 per thousand recorded during the 1960s. The highest figure was in Gipuzkoa (10.4%), followed by Álava (10.2%) and Bizkaia (9.4%).

The start of the strong downward trend in the birth rate can be traced back to 1976. It slowed down from the end of the 80s and reached its lowest point in 1994. The 2008 figures consolidate the rally in the birth rate that began in 1995.

76.5% of women who gave birth in 2008 were thirty years old or over. Women aged between 30 and 34 comprised the largest group, with 42.9% of the total births. On the other hand, the number of mothers over 35 years old (33.6%) who gave birth, rose slightly compared to 2007 and continued to be significantly ahead of the 25-29 year old age group (16.6%). The average age of the mothers was 32.4 years old, while it was 31.3 years old in the case of first-time mothers, similar figures to those of 2007. There was also a certain recovery in the number of mothers under 25 years old, due to the immigrant women, who accounted for nearly 6.9% of the total.

Over the last decade, the number of mothers aged between 25-34 years old has fallen, with the greatest drop being recorded by the group aged between 25 to 29 (5.5 percentage points). On the other hand, the group of mothers aged 25 or over increased by 9.1 points.

In terms of the birth order, first born babies accounted for 56.2% of the births in 2008, which is a similar proportion to the previous year (57.5%). On the other hand, the percentages of second and third & following births, which accounted for 36.1% and 7.7%, respectively, increased compared to 2007.

The number of deliveries came to 20,883, out of which 20,375 were single, 498 double and 10 triple. In the last 10 years, the number of multiple births have doubled (there were 236 in 1998), while the total of single births have risen by 30%.

The breakdown by sex of the live births in 2008 was 106 males for every 100 females. On average, the boys weighed 3,308 grams and the girls 3,189 grams.

Table 1: Live births by province of residence of the mother (2008)

	Basque Country	Alava	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
Total	21.315	3.209	10.861	7.245
Men	10.984	1.676	5.534	3.774
Females	10.331	1.533	5.327	3.471
Order of birth	21.315	3.209	10.861	7.245
First	11.977	1.744	6.206	4.027
Second	7.692	1.169	3.882	2.641
Third or posterior	1.646	296	773	577
According to age of mother	21.315	3.209	10.861	7.245
< 25 years	1.468	295	803	370
25 - 29 years	3.531	527	1.687	1.317
30 - 34 years	9.145	1.278	4.577	3.290
35 - 39 years	6.057	949	3.159	1.949
>= 40	1.114	160	635	319
According to the marital status	21.315	3.209	10.861	7.245
Married	14.841	2.219	7.541	5.081
Not married	6.474	990	3.320	2.164
Nationality of the mother	21.315	3.209	10.861	7.245
Spanish	18.275	2.561	9.329	6.385
Foreign	3.040	648	1.532	860

Source: EUSTAT

For further information:

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