

The average age of the deceased increased by 3 years over the last decade

Deaths from traffic accidents fell by nearly 60% over the last ten years

The average age at which people died in 2008 stood at 77.4, whereas in 1998 it had been 74.3, which is to say that there was an increase of 3.1 years over the last decade, according to Eustat data. By sex, men died at 71.3 years old on average and women at 81.3. Two hundred and eight people aged 100 or over died, while they numbered 76 in 1998.

The number of deaths in the Basque Country in 2008 totalled 19,437, which was 185 more than in 2007. By sex, 10,1188 men died and 9,319 women. By months, January was the month with the highest number of deaths (2,032) and June with the lowest (1,352).

The population growth rate was positive, as there were 1878 more births than death. The three provinces posted positive balances. Gipuzkoa was the province with the highest increase with 977 people, 795 in Álava and 106 in Bizkaia.

As regards infant mortality, 2.9 babies under 1 died per thousand deaths. Neonatal mortality, occurring in the first 28 days, accounted for 40 deaths; 22 were as a result of early neonatal mortality, dying in the first week, of which 13 died in the first 24 hours. Among the under-ones, the deaths of boys accounted for 48% of the total.

59% of deaths were due to tumours and circulatory diseases

30% of the deaths in 2008 (5,811 deaths) were due to tumours. This was followed by circulatory diseases with 29% (5,692 deaths) and, in third place, some way behind, respiratory diseases, which accounted for 10% of deaths (1941). The prevalence of the two largest groups of diseases has changed since 1998. While deaths from tumours increased by nearly 13%, those caused by cardiovascular disease fell by 9%.

The cause of death continued to differ according to sex, since among men tumours outnumbered circulatory system diseases, whereas among women the main cause was cardiovascular diseases and secondly tumours.

The cause of death also varied with age. In babies of less than one year old, deaths were most frequently due to diseases originating in the perinatal period and congenital malformations; up until 34 years of age, the main causes of death were external; from 35 to 74 the main cause was tumours and from 75 onwards, circulatory system diseases

Deaths caused by Alzheimer's disease doubled over the last ten years

Mental disorders and diseases of the nervous system were the groups of diseases as cause of death that most increased over the last decades. If we take the last ten years, deaths due to dementias increased by 40% (896 deaths in 2008) and as far as degenerative diseases were concerned, deaths caused by Alzheimer doubled (599 in 2008 compared to 304 deaths ten years earlier).

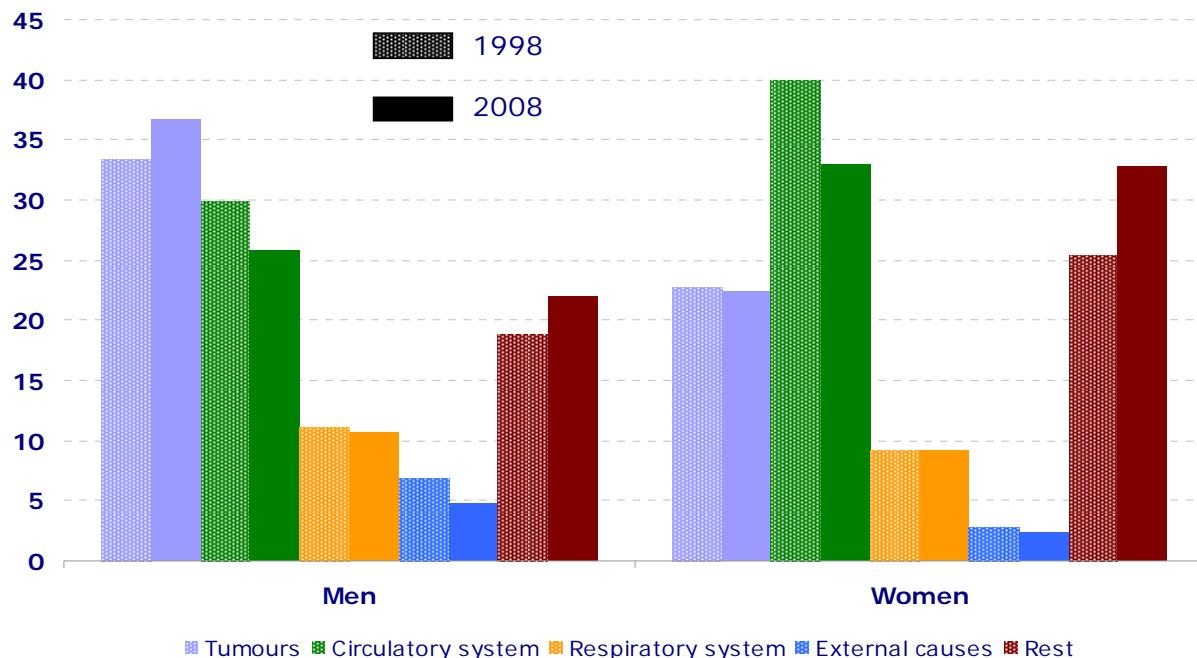
In the case of deaths caused by dementias or by Alzheimer's diseases, the majority of people who died were women. In fact, female deaths from these causes stood at 67% and 70%, respectively in 2008.

Due to the drop in number of traffic accidents, suicide is now the first external cause of death

The drop in the number of deaths from traffic accidents over the last decade was so great (nearly 60%) that suicide has been the first external cause of death since 2006. The greatest difference was in 2008 with 171 suicides compared to 115 deaths from traffic accidents, as the latter had fallen by 21% compared to the previous year. However, it should be pointed out that it continued to be the first external cause of death in the 10 to 29 age bracket.

Both suicides and traffic accidents accounted for the deaths of more men than women: 91 men and 24 women because of traffic accidents and 126 men and 45 women by suicide.

Graph 1: Deaths by cause and sex (%). 1998 and 2008



Source: EUSTAT. Mortality Statistics

Table 1: Deaths by sex, according to the cause. 2008

	Men		Women	
	N.	%	N.	%
Total causes	10.118		9.319	
Infectious and parasitic diseases	194	1,9	187	2,0
Tumours	3.718	36,7	2.093	22,5
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	226	2,2	316	3,4
Mental and behavioural disorders	318	3,1	614	6,6
Nervous system diseases	407	4,0	643	6,9
Circulatory system diseases	2.618	25,9	3.074	33,0
Respiratory system diseases	1.079	10,7	862	9,2
Digestive system diseases	503	5,0	476	5,1
Genitourinary system diseases	228	2,3	220	2,4
Symptoms, abnormal clinical signs and laboratory findings	215	2,1	376	4,0
External causes of death	483	4,8	228	2,4
Others	129	1,3	230	2,5

Source: EUSTAT. Mortality Statistics

For further information:
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