

The Basque Country maintains levels equal to or better than the European Union-27 in six of the eight Europe 2020 indicators

The indicators relating to employment and poverty show setbacks in the Basque Country, as in the case of Spain and the EU-27

The Basque Country positioned itself at European Union-27 levels or above in six of the eight indicators selected in the Europe 2020 strategy, according to Eustat data. In some of them, relating to education, the objective set for 2020 has been reached.

The European 2020 Strategy was set in motion by the European Commission in March 2010 with the objective of emerging from the crisis stronger and preparing the European Union economy for the following decade. The Commission proposed three mutually-reinforcing priorities:

Intelligent growth: Development of an economy based on knowledge and innovation.

Sustainable growth: Promotion of an economy that makes more efficient use of resources, that is greener and more competitive.

Integrated growth: Creation of an economy with a high level of employment that has social and territorial cohesion.

To define the place that it wants to occupy in 2020, these three priorities were transformed into five **objectives**:

- 1) 75% of the European population between the ages of 20 and 64 should be employed.
- 2) Internal expenditure on R&D should reach 3% of GDP.
- 3) The “20/20/20” objective should be met in terms of climate and energy: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20%, saving 20% of energy consumption and promoting the consumption of renewable energies up to 20%.
- 4) The school drop-out rate should be lower than 10% and at least 40% of the youngest generation should have completed higher education.
- 5) The risk of poverty in the EU should threaten 20 million fewer individuals.

The monitoring of these objectives is carried out via eight main indicators, which have been created and compiled for the Basque Country.

Table 1.- Europe 2020 Indicators. 2010

	EU-27	Basque Country	Spain
OCCUPATION			
Employment rate (20 to 64 years) (%)			
Total	68,6	68,3	62,5
Females	62,1	61,4	55,8
Males	75,1	75,1	69,1
R&D			
Gross internal expenditure on R&D (% GDP)	2,0	2,1	1,4
CLIMATE AND ENERGY			
greenhouse gas emissions, base year 1990 =100 (1)	83	104	130
Share of renewable energies in gross final energy consumption (%) (1)	11,7	8,2	13,3
Energetic intensity of the economy (kilogram oil equivalent per €1000)	168,0	136,8	168,4
EDUCATION			
Education drop-out rate (18 to 24 years) (%)			
Total	14,1	10,8	28,4
Females	12,1	9,0	23,1
Males	16,0	12,7	33,5
Level of higher education (30-34 years) (%)			
Total	33,6	43,7	40,6
Females	37,2	52,3	45,9
Males	30,0	34,7	35,7
POVERTY (2)			
Population at risk of poverty or exclusion (combination of the following three) (%)	23,5	20,1	25,5
Population living in households with very low work intensity (%)	10,0	5,8	9,8
Population at risk of poverty after receiving welfare (%)	16,4	17,4	20,7
Population at risk of serious material deprivation (%)	8,1	2,0	4,0

Sources: Ente Vasco de la Energía (EVE); Department of the Environment, Territorial Planning, Agriculture and Fishing; Department of Employment and Social Affairs; Eurostat and Eustat. EUSTAT. Structural indicators. Europe 2020

(1) UE-27 and Spain 2009

(2) Estimated and provisional data for Basque Country

The Basque Country, compared to the European Union average, posted better or similar results in six of these indicators: Employment Rate, Internal Expenditure on R&D, Energy Intensity of the Economy, Education Drop-out Rate, Higher Education Level and Population at Risk of Poverty or Exclusion.

On the other hand, the values of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and of the Renewable Energies Quota were below the European average. As regards the state as a whole, however, all of the indicators except the Renewable Energies Quota produced better figures for our community than for Spain as a whole.

Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the path towards the set objectives could have ups and downs in the various years analysed, and more in economic situations such as the current one that is already producing setbacks in some indicators compared to the initial values.

The **Employment rate for the population between the ages of 20 and 64** showed figures similar to the European average: 68.3% for the Basque Country compared to 68.6% for Europe, and 6.7 points from the objective (75%) although it exceeded this, with 75.1%, when we refer to the total for men. In comparison to the values produced by this indicator the previous year, it can be seen that in the three territories analysed, the European Union, Spain and the Basque Country, the employment rate fell, as a direct consequence of the economic crisis. This fall, however, was greater both in Spain (one point and two tenths) and the European Union (four tenths), whereas in the Basque Country the employment rate for the population aged between 20 and 64 fell two tenths in relation to the data from the previous year.

The **Gross interior expenditure on R&D** reached similar figures in the Community (2.1%) and in the EU-27 (2.0%), still some distance from the objective of 3%.

Energy intensity is an indicator that measures the dependency of GDP growth with regard to energy consumption and the extent to which it is used efficiently, wherein a lower figure indicates less environmental pollution and destruction of resources. In this case the figure for the Basque Country (136.8) is notably better than the European average (168) and the figure for Spain (168.4), with a slight improvement in relation to the previous year.

The **Education Drop-out Rate** of the population between the ages of 18 and 24 and the **Higher Education Level** of the population between the ages of 30 and 34 didn't only show better comparative results, but for women as a whole they exceeded the objectives set by the EU (less than 10% and at least 40%, respectively). The objective for the higher education level for the total population was also met and we were very close to the desired objective for the education drop-out rate. There was an improvement in the two indicators compared to the data from 2009 both in the Basque Country and Spain and the European Union.

The **Population at risk of poverty or exclusion** indicator is a combination of three indicators:

Population living in households with very low work intensity: Individuals who live in households with a household work intensity under the 20% threshold set.

Population at risk of poverty after receiving welfare: The poverty threshold set for this indicator is 60% of the average national median equivalised disposable income.

Population at risk of serious material deprivation: Individuals who do not have resources at their disposal to confront at least four of nine situations: 1) pay the rent and corresponding bills, 2) adequately heat his or her dwelling, 3) confront unforeseen expenses, 4) regularly eat meat, fish or equivalent proteins (alternate days), 5) spend a week on holiday outside the household, 6) have access to a car, 7) have access to a washing machine, 8) have access to a colour TV, and 9) have access to a telephone.

Both for the composite indicator and two of the three that make it up, the Basque Country posted more encouraging rates than the European Union average, and more than three points below the average in the case of the aggregate indicator of Risk of Poverty or Exclusion, that affected 20.1% of the Basque population against 23.5% of Europe as a whole and 25.5% of the Spanish population. However, the poverty indicators also suffered setbacks in relation to 2009 in the three considered spaces, a consequence of the deterioration of the economic situation, which meant a distancing from the set objective.

On the less positive side, two indicators, both in the climate section, produced worse figures than the EU-27 average: **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**, with an index of 104, against the 83 of the EU-27 for 2009, and the **Quota of Renewable Energies in Gross Final Energy Consumption**, which represented 8.2% in the case of the Basque Country and stood at 11.7% for the European average, also in 2009. In relation to the previous year, however, there was a reduction in differences in the emissions index, given that it reduced by more than 16 points in the case of the Basque Country, the reduction for the European Union average being just above 6 points and above 12 in the case of Spain (from 142.3 to 130), although in both cases the data are from 2009.

As regards the use of renewable energies, the indicator also improved compared to the previous year, from 6.5 to 8.2% in the case of the Basque Country, although still a distance not only from the objective (20%) but also from the European (11.7%) and Spanish (13.3%) averages with both cases being, furthermore, data from 2009.

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