

MARRIAGE STATISTICS (EMAT) in the Basque Country 2011

In 2011 two out of three marriages were civil

Since 1987, the average age of people entering into marriage has increased by 7 years

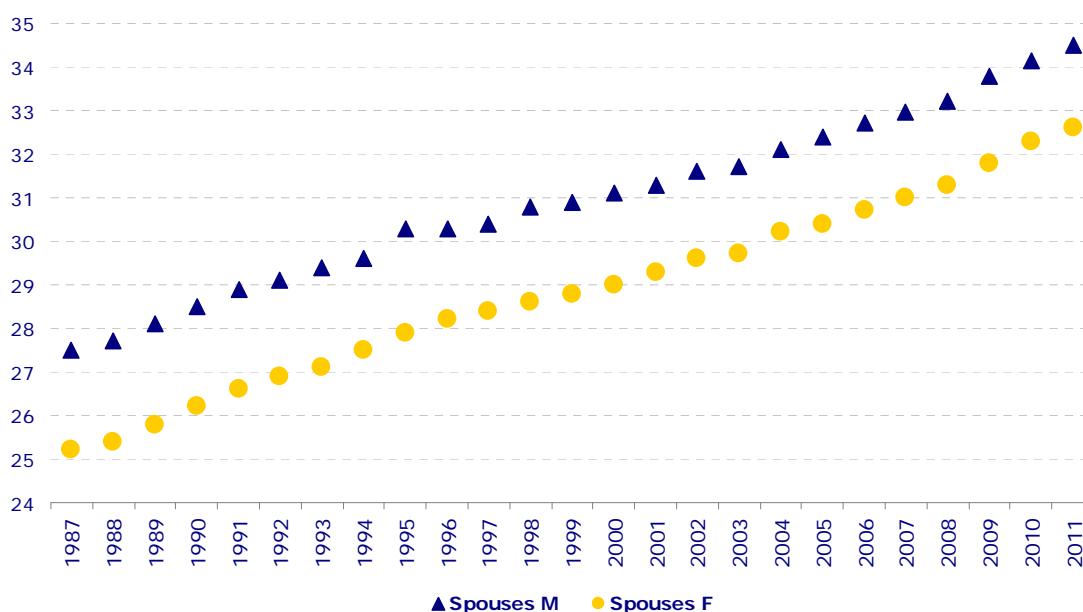
The total number of marriages stood at 8,743 in 2011, 3.7% down on the previous year, of which 150 were homosexual, according to Eustat data.

If we consider marriages of Basque Country residents between people of different sexes, the number stood at 8,593. 340 fewer weddings took place than in the previous year, which was a drop of 3.8%. Of these, 66.8% were civil.

The Basque marriage rate was 3.7 weddings per thousand inhabitants, a higher number than the Spanish rate (3.5‰), but lower than that for European Union countries as a whole, which in 2010 stood at 4.4‰.

In line with the increase in the age of maternity, there was also an increase in the marriage age. In 2011, the average age of single men when they entered into marriage was 34.5 years old, whilst for single women it stood at 32.6. In the last 25 years, since 1987, the average age of husbands has increased by 7 years and 7.4 in the case of wives.

Graph 1: Average age at first marriage by sex



Source: EUSTAT. Marriage statistics in the Basque Country

Taking into account civil status prior to marriage, single men represented 89.4%, a slightly lower figure than the 89.9% of single women.

Summer was the preferred month for partners to get married: specifically July was the most popular month with 1,454 weddings, followed by September with 1,281 and June with 1,206. 57% of weddings took place on a Saturday and 33% on a Friday.

The number of civil weddings has almost tripled since 1990

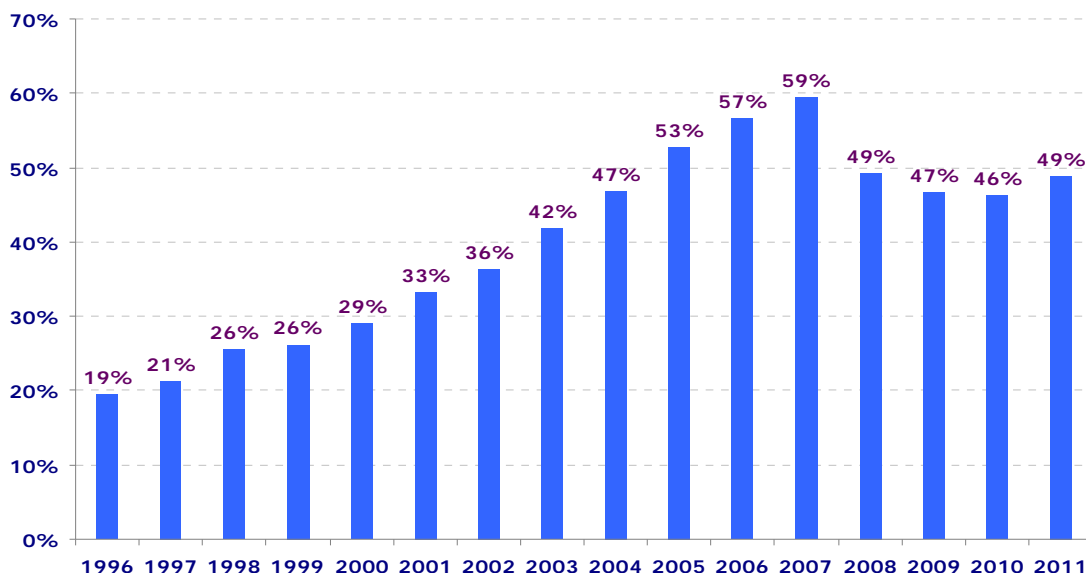
The number of civil weddings has risen throughout the last few years, going from 23% in 1990 to 66.8% in 2011, when they stood at 5,739. There were 2,837 catholic weddings and 17 that corresponded to other religious faiths.

By provinces, the most civil weddings took place in Gipuzkoa (70.4%), followed by Bizkaia (67.9%) and Álava (66.3%). However, in the case of Basque Country residents that got married outside the Autonomous Region, the percentage falls to 50.5%.

49% of new couples lived together before getting married in 2011

49% of partners shared the same residence before marriage, a figure recovered to 2008 levels. The percentage of partners that lived together before marriage has changed over the last few years, from a minimum in 1996, when just 19% of partners had the same address before getting married, to 2007, when the maximum number was reached, 59%, which then saw a reduction from the 2008-2010 three year period.

Graph 2: Couples sharing residence before marriage (%)



Source: EUSTAT. Marriage statistics in the Basque Country

The preferred destinations for the 512 couples who fixed their residency outside the Basque Country after getting married were Madrid, Cantabria and Navarra. There were differences, regarding destination, amongst the marriages that took place in the three provinces: those in Álava preferred Madrid, Navarra and La Rioja; those in Bizkaia Madrid, Cantabria and Barcelona and those in Gipuzkoa Navarra, France and Madrid.

In 15.6% of unions at least one of the spouses was of foreign nationality

Regarding the nationality of those entering into marriage, in 1,342 marriages (15.6% of the total) at least one of the spouses was foreign. In 45.9% of these couples the wife had foreign nationality, in 30.6% the husband and in the remaining 23.5%, both spouses were foreigners.

Amongst recently married women the most common countries of origin were Columbia with 133 spouses, Brazil (114), Bolivia (64), Ecuador (58), Paraguay (50) and Morocco (40). With regards to new spouses, 88 originated from Morocco, 73 from Colombia, 42 from Portugal and Ecuador, 39 from Algeria, 33 from Argentina and 29 from Brazil.

The number of homosexual marriages increased by 5.6% compared to the previous year

In 2011 there were 150 weddings between individuals of the same sex, 91 being between men and 59 between women. Regarding distribution between provinces, 23 were resident in Álava, 44 in Gipuzkoa, 69 in Bizkaia and 14 outside the Basque Country.

For further information:

[*Euskal Estatistika-Erakundea / Instituto Vasco de Estadística*](#)

[*C/ Donostia-San Sebastian, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz*](#)

[*Tel:+34-945-01 75 00 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01 E-mail:\[eustat@eustat.es\]\(mailto:eustat@eustat.es\)*](#)

[*Contact:*](#)

[*Tel:+34-945-01 75 49 Fax:+34-945-01 75 01*](#)

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