

BIRTH STATISTICS OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY (ENAC) Most popular first names 2010-2012

Ane and Markel are the most popular names amongst newborns in the Basque Country

Parents favoured names that were Basque and single

Ane was the top ranking first name for girls chosen by parents, as has been the case since 1996, according to information provided by Eustat on births that occurred between 2010 and 2012 in the Basque Country. June and Irati were in second and third place, followed by Nahia, Uxue and Izaro.

The preferred name given to boys by their parents was Markel, followed by Jon and Iker. After these, the names most used were Oier, Ander and Unai.

The Civil Register allows a maximum of two single names and one compound; although this is the case, parents opted for one single name. In the list of the hundred most popular names there were no compound names, even though it used to be a very frequent custom.

Different spelling for the same name

Basque names predominated, some registered with different spellings, as was the case with Ane-Anne, Itxaso-Itsaso, Leire-Leyre, Jon-Ion and Aritz-Haritz. Except for the case of María and Miren, the Basque forms of names predominated those in Spanish; this was the case for Ane and Ana, Xabier and Javier, Jon and Juan, Mikel and Miguel.

The names Naia and Nahia deserve special mention as they can be different names. On the one hand, Naia can be a spelling variant of Nahia, which is the form currently accepted by Euskaltzaindia [the Royal Academy of the Basque Language], and this is possibly the most plausible explanation of why it comes eighth in the list of most popular names amongst newborns in the Basque Country. On the other hand, Naia exists in various other languages such as French, Catalan and English, and in Spain it's found in various toponyms. Finally, Nahia, with "h", is no doubt a Basque name and is in fourth place on the list of girls' names. With 1,104 cases, the two combined would reach first place, at 3.61% of girls.

Mothers of foreign nationality also opted for Basque names

If we look at the nationality of Mothers, those with foreign nationality also preferred Basque names, but with differences as regards the general ranking. In the case of girls, there were three Basque names amongst the top five: Naiara, Ainhoa and Nahia, although the first on the list is Sara, of Hebrew origin. Amongst the boys, the Basque names Iker and Ander are in first and fourth place respectively; Adam - a Hebrew name - is in second place; Mohamed - of Arab origin - is in third; and in fifth place was Rayan, which has a number of possible origins.

The most common name for mothers was Ainhoa and amongst fathers it was Aitor

The 10 most common names amongst women who were mothers in the 2010-2012 period were Ainhoa, Leire, Nerea, Amaia, Sonia, María, Marta, Ainara, Susana and Mónica. For this generation of women, born on the whole between 1972 and 1982, the 3 most common names were Basque, but Castilian names were still very prevalent. Although the most popular names were single names, more than 14% of mothers had a name composed of María.

Regarding men who were fathers between 2010 and 2012, the 10 most repeated names were Aitor, Javier, David, Iñigo, Asier, Oscar, Gorka, Iker, Francisco Javier and Iñaki. In this case they were men born mainly between 1970 and 1980, a period in which compound names gave way to single names and Basque names started to become predominant.

Table 1: The 25 names used in newly born in the Basque country 2010-2012

	Girls			Boys		
	Name	Frequency	%	Name	Frequency	%
1	Ane	956	3,13	Markel	926	3,03
2	June	783	2,56	Jon	901	2,95
3	Irati	686	2,25	Iker	832	2,72
4	Nahia	637	2,08	Oier	808	2,64
5	Uxue	581	1,90	Ander	790	2,59
6	Izaro	549	1,80	Unai	776	2,54
7	Nora	546	1,79	Mikel	674	2,21
8	Naia	467	1,53	Aimar	653	2,14
9	Lucía	458	1,50	Unax	613	2,01
10	Sara	450	1,47	Julen	589	1,93
11	Maialen	443	1,45	Eneko	577	1,89
12	Haizea	438	1,43	Ibai	564	1,85
13	Paula	422	1,38	Asier	481	1,57
14	Leire	408	1,34	Xabier	394	1,29
15	Maddi	383	1,25	Beñat	386	1,26
16	Naroa	381	1,25	Aitor	376	1,23
17	Eider	341	1,12	Alain	370	1,21
18	Iraia	341	1,12	Oihán	353	1,16
19	Laia	315	1,03	Danel	331	1,08
20	Malen	305	1,00	Martin/Martín	324	1,06
21	Enara	294	0,96	Aner	303	0,99
22	Noa	287	0,94	Amets	297	0,97
23	Aitana	257	0,84	Aritz	281	0,92
24	Nerea	256	0,84	Ekain	281	0,92
25	Garazi	243	0,80	Urko	269	0,88

Source: Eustat. Birth Statistics of the Basque Country

For further information:

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