

Births in the Basque Country fell by 3.2% in 2016

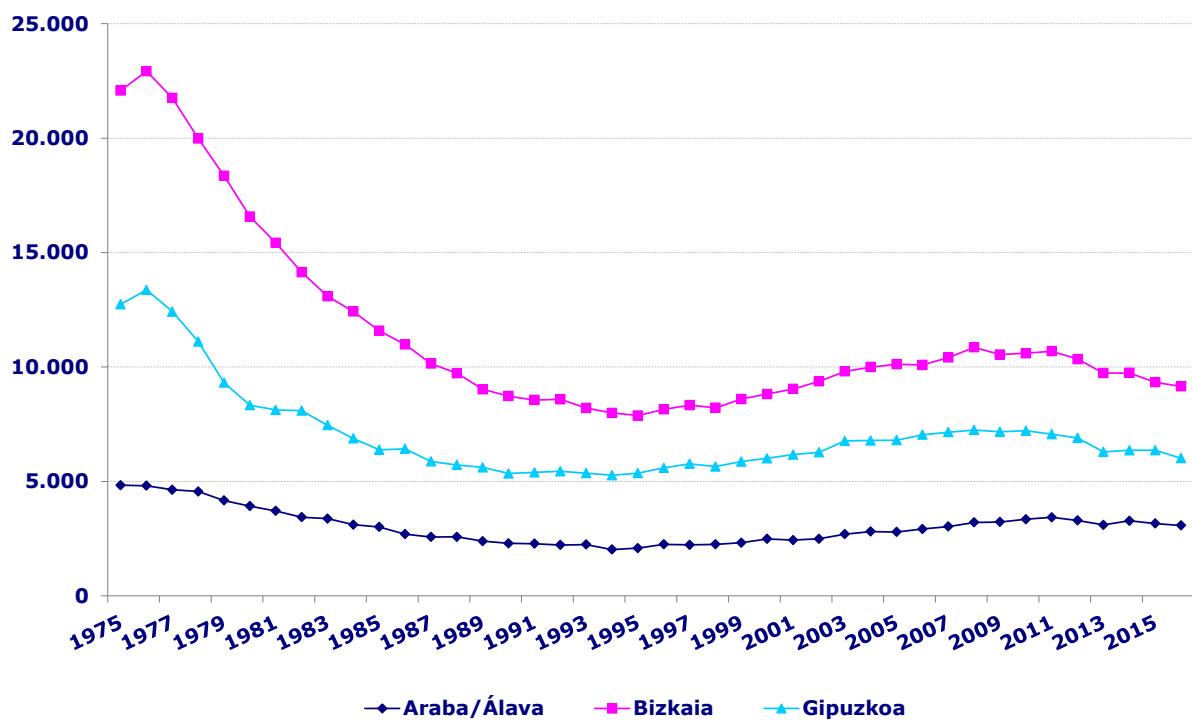
40.1% of foreign women became mothers when they were under 30, compared with 13.1% of mothers of Spanish nationality

In 2016 the number of births in the Basque Country stood at 18,240, down 3.2% on the previous year, according to Eustat data. Among mothers of Spanish nationality the decrease was 5.2%, whilst among foreign mothers there was an increase of 4.6%.

Regarding the distribution by province, Gipuzkoa saw the greatest decrease (-5.4%), followed by Álava (-2.7%) and, lastly, Bizkaia (-1.9%), such that the number of births stood at 6,015, 3,074 and 9,151, respectively.

The birth rate stood at 8.4 births per thousand inhabitants. The highest rate was in Álava (9.5‰), followed by Gipuzkoa (8.4‰) and Bizkaia (8‰).

Graph 1: Live births according to the mother's province of residence. 1975-2016



Source: Eustat. Birth Statistics

In 81.1% of births the mothers were aged 30 or over

The largest group was women between 30 and 34 years old, who accounted for 36.7% of total births, and the rate experienced a fall by one percentage point with respect to 2015. Following this, births among mothers between 35 and 39 years old made up 34.9% and those among mothers aged 40 or over comprised 9.5%, but in the first

group the number fell slightly with respect to the previous year and in the second the number rose by one percentage point. The number of babies being born to mothers aged between 25 to 29 years remained unchanged at 13.3%, and those born to mothers between 20 to 24 years old went up by 0.3%. Finally, teenage mothers accounted for 1.2% of the total, the same as the previous year.

Table 1: Live born by province of residence of the mother. 2016

| | Basque Country | Araba/Álava | Bizkaia | Gipuzkoa |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Total | 18.240 | 3.074 | 9.151 | 6.015 |
| Sex | | | | |
| Men | 9.323 | 1.546 | 4.697 | 3.080 |
| Females | 8.917 | 1.528 | 4.454 | 2.935 |
| Order of birth | | | | |
| First | 9.321 | 1.447 | 4.880 | 2.994 |
| Second | 6.988 | 1.223 | 3.479 | 2.286 |
| Third or posterior | 1.931 | 404 | 792 | 735 |
| According to age of mother | | | | |
| <= 19 years | 215 | 45 | 108 | 62 |
| 20 - 24 years | 809 | 164 | 397 | 248 |
| 25 - 29 years | 2.422 | 425 | 1.145 | 852 |
| 30 - 34 years | 6.693 | 1.113 | 3.243 | 2.337 |
| 35 - 39 years | 6.364 | 1.049 | 3.328 | 1.987 |
| >= 40 | 1.737 | 278 | 930 | 529 |
| According to the marital status of the mother | | | | |
| Married | 10.380 | 1.791 | 5.029 | 3.560 |
| Not married | 7.860 | 1.283 | 4.122 | 2.455 |
| Nationality of the mother | | | | |
| Spanish | 14.338 | 2.188 | 7.368 | 4.782 |
| Foreign | 3.902 | 886 | 1.783 | 1.233 |

Source: Eustat. Birth statistics

21.4% of mothers were foreign nationals

Regarding nationality, 21.4% of mothers were foreign nationals, who gave birth to 3,902 girls and boys. In 2015 the percentage of foreign mothers was 19.8%. The most common countries were: Morocco, with 769 mothers, Romania (324), Bolivia (237), Colombia (226), Nigeria (216), Algeria and Paraguay (with the same number 159), Nicaragua (146), Ecuador (129) and Brazil (119).

Foreign mothers had children at a younger age than those of Spanish nationality resident in the Basque Country: in 40.1% of cases they had children under 30 years of age, compared to 13.1% of mothers of Spanish nationality.

The average age of mothers was 33.4 years, with this average being higher, at 34.1 years, for Spanish mothers, and 30.8 years for mothers of foreign nationality.

The average age for first-time mothers – those who had their first child in 2016 – was 32.5.

In 10 years the number of births outside marriage has almost doubled

In 2016, births outside marriage rose to 7,860, an increase of 0.3% with respect to 2015. These births represent 43.1% of the total. Bizkaia was the only province with a percentage higher than the Basque Country average, with 45%, whereas Álava and Gipuzkoa had lower relative values (41.7% and 40.8%, respectively). If we compare the current percentage with that registered in 2006 (25%), we see that over the last 10 years the proportion of births outside marriage has almost doubled.

Regarding the order of birth, the 9,321 first-born children in 2016 made up 51.1% of the total; second-borns, 38.3%; and third-borns and subsequent children, 10.6% of the total.

The sex ratio among live births in 2016 was 105 boys to every 100 girls. The average weights were 3,308 grams for boys and 3,189 grams for girls.

The number of births rose to 17,799, of which 17,288 were single, 507 twins and 4 triplets. Out of all births, 1,062 were premature (6%).

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