

The unemployed population fell by 3,900 and the unemployment rate stood at 11.1% in the first quarter of 2021 in the Basque Country

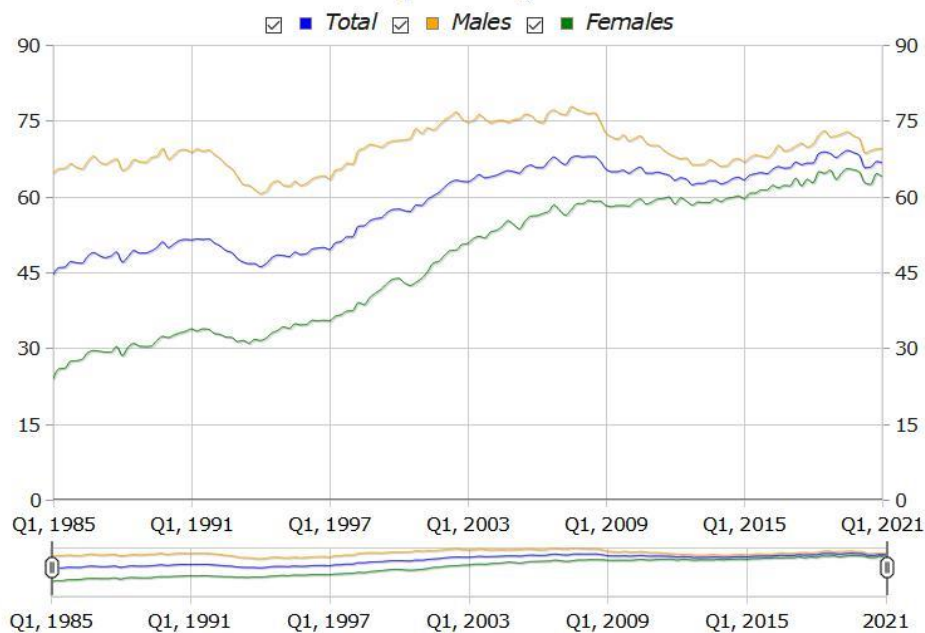
The number of households with all active individuals in work rose by 6,900

Data from the first quarter of 2021 on the labour market in the Basque Country estimates the number of unemployed people in the Basque Country at around 115,700 people, 3,900 fewer than in the previous quarter, according to Eustat data. Furthermore, the number of people in work rose to 929,200, a decrease of 4,400 compared to the previous quarter (-0.5%).

The unemployment rate of the Basque Country stood at 11.1%, 0.3 percentage points down on the fourth quarter of 2020. As a result of the evolution in the employed and unemployed population, the activity rate stood at 56% in the first quarter of 2021, falling 0.3 percentage points in respect of the previous quarter.

Employment rate of the population aged between 16 and 64 in the Basque Country, by sex and quarter

percentage



Source: EUSTAT Population with relation to activity survey

By province and compared to the previous quarter, employment dropped the most in Álava, with 3,100 fewer people in work, followed by Gipuzkoa with 1,800 fewer. In Bizkaia, on the other hand, 500 more people were in work. Regarding the capitals, in Vitoria-Gasteiz there were 3,000 fewer employed people, whereas in San Sebastián there were 1,200 more and in Bilbao 1,000 more. As far as gender was concerned, the fall in employment affected women the most, with 5,300 fewer in work than in the previous quarter, whilst the number of men in work increased by 900.

With regards to nationality, the number of Spanish nationals in work fell by 4,300, whilst the number of foreign nationals in work decreased by 100.

Employment in industry and construction grew

The employed population in the Basque Country was up by 300 in industry and by 2,300 in construction, but this did not compensate the losses of 5,200 people in the services sector and 1,900 in the primary sector.

The employment rate, calculated as the percentage of people in work aged 16 to 64 over the total for these ages, fell by 0.2 percentage points compared to the previous quarter, standing at 66.7%. This figure reached 69.5% for men and 63.9% for women.

With regards to the level of education completed, the employment rate decreased by 1.2 percentage points among people who had completed higher education, to 81.8%; however, it was up 0.3 points among those who had completed secondary and intermediate education, standing at 57.9%; and rose 0.4 points among people educated to primary school level or lower, standing at 59.6%.

As regards nationality, the highest employment rate was recorded amongst Spanish nationals, with 68.6%, whereas for foreign nationals it stood at 50.8%.

By province, Gipuzkoa had the highest employment rate, at 68.5%, a decrease of 0.3 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. Álava came second with 67.6% and a decrease of 0.9 points; and in Bizkaia, the employment rate rose by 0.1 percentage points to 65.4%.

The number of households with all active individuals out of work fell by 1,400

In the first quarter of 2021 it was estimated that there were 901,300 households in the Basque Country, of which a third did not have any active individuals. In almost six out of every ten households, all of the active individuals were in work, 6,900 families more than the previous quarter; furthermore, households where all active individuals were unemployed stood at 35,000, 1,400 fewer households than in the previous quarter.

The first quarter of 2021 revealed an unemployment rate of 11.1%, 0.3 points down on the previous quarter

The unemployed population in the Basque Country, that is, individuals who are available for work, actively making enquiries and seeking employment, was estimated to be 115,700 in the first quarter of the year, 3,900 down on the previous quarter. The number of unemployed men, 59,300, was down by 5,000, whilst the number of unemployed women increased by 1,100, reaching a total of 56,400 for the quarter.

The data for the first quarter of 2021 revealed an unemployment rate of 11.1%, 0.3 percentage points down on the previous quarter. The male unemployment rate stood at 10.9% (-0.8 percentage points) and the female rate was up 0.3 percentage points, reaching 11.3%.

As regards the level of education, the largest employment rate decrease was among people whose highest level of education completed was secondary and intermediate education, by 0.8 percentage points, the unemployment rate standing at 13.4%. For people who had completed primary school level and lower, the unemployment rate fell by 0.1 percentage points to 14.3%. Lastly, the unemployment rate among people who had completed higher education rose by 0.1 percentage points to 7.3%.

With regards to nationality, the unemployed population figure decreased among Spanish nationals by 2,100, to 85,200. Among foreign nationals it fell by 1,800, to 30,500 people out of work.

By province, Bizkaia saw the greatest decrease in unemployment, with 4,500 fewer people out of work and the unemployment rate was down 0.7 percentage points, standing at 12.1%. In Gipuzkoa, with 31,300 people out of work, the number of unemployed fell by 1,600 and the unemployment rate increased by 0.3 percentage points to 9.2%. In Álava, there were 2,300 more people out of work and the unemployment rate reached 11.8%, 1.4 percentage points up on the previous quarter.

As regards the capitals, unemployment decreased in Bilbao and San Sebastián by 400 and 200 people, respectively, while in Vitoria-Gasteiz it dropped 2,700.

According to EUROSTAT, the Statistical Office of the European Union, in February 2021 the deseasonalised unemployment rate of the European Union as a whole stood at 7.5% and that of Spain stood at 16.1%.

In the last year, the number of employed people decreased by 2.2% and the unemployment rate rose from 10.1% to 11.1%

The employed population in the Basque Country decreased in relation to the first quarter of 2020 by 2.2% and the unemployment rate increased by 1 percentage point (from 10.1% to 11.1%), with 9,300 being added to the unemployment figures of the Basque Country, compared to the first quarter of 2020.

98.1% of average registered workers were in work, according to ILO criteria

It is estimated that there were 867,000 registered workers for the quarter on average in the Basque Country, i.e. the number of people residing in the Basque Country who were registered for Social Security at the time of the survey. Of those, the PRA estimates that 98.1% were employed, according to criteria from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a total of 850,400 individuals.

Amongst those employed according to ILO criteria in the PRA, 69,400 people, 7.5%, were not registered in the Social Security system, either because they did not work for companies based in the Basque Country, or they belonged to public mutual societies for civil servants, or because they are in other situations.

38.2% of those unemployed were not registered as unemployed with the Basque Employment Institute (Lanbide)

It is estimated that there was a quarterly average of 108,500 unemployed people registered with Lanbide, i.e. people residing in the Basque Country who were registered in Lanbide at the time of the survey in any one of the categories designated for registered unemployment. Of those, 62.8% were unemployed according to the ILO definition (68,200 people). 38.2% of people unemployed according to the ILO definition in the PRA were not registered as unemployed with Lanbide (44,200 people), even though they may be registered under other categories of job seekers.

Repercussions of COVID-19 on the labour market in the Basque Country

Population data in relation to activity in the first quarter of 2021 have been conditioned by the persistence of COVID-19 and the measures restricting activity established by the Public Administrations.

The figures obtained regarding the working population and the employment rate are conditioned by the massive use of certain resources, such as temporary layoff measures known as ERTes

(Temporary Labour Force Adjustment Plans), which affect the activity, but not necessarily the status of the population in relation to the same. In fact, the vast majority (94.2%) of people who are subject to an ERTE and do not work in the week of reference remain employed because they are expected to return to work in at least 3 months or are continuing to receive more than 50% of their salary. Other palliative mechanisms affect self-employed workers, but equally do not necessarily alter their relationship with the activity.

The PRA is an ongoing survey, which enables an analysis by months and even by the 13 weeks across which our sample is evenly distributed in the first quarter. This, together with the number of variables gathered, allows us to obtain additional information for carrying out a better assessment of the situation of the Basque labour market. The information gathered regarding the work status of every person surveyed refers to the week that by sampling design corresponds to them.

The percentage of the employed population not in work in the week of reference was still higher in the first quarter of the years before the pandemic

In the first quarter of 2021, the number of employed people on ERTEs in the Basque Country was estimated at 31,800, of whom there were 3,400 in Álava, 16,200 in Bizkaia and 12,100 in Gipuzkoa.

**Occupied population with continued employment that is in ERTE, by province (1).
Quarterly data (thousands)**

		Basque Country	Araba/Álava	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
2020	Quarter 1	19,8	4,3	9,1	6,4
	Quarter 2	120,4	18,7	57,7	43,9
	Quarter 3	36,1	4,4	17,8	14,0
	Quarter 4	34,4	5,9	16,9	11,6
2021	Quarter 1	31,8	3,4	16,2	12,1

(1) Data for the current year are provisional and data from the previous year have been revised with the population update based on January 1 of that year

Source: Eustat. Survey on the population in relation to activity

The analysis of the evolution of the percentage of employed people who have not worked in the reference week gives relevant results. In the first quarter of the year, the percentage of employed people who have not worked in the week of reference was higher than in the same quarter of the years before the pandemic. While in recent years the percentage was between 6.9% and 9%, in the first quarter of 2021 it reached 11.7%.

Population of 16 and up with continued employment, in case they worked in the reference week. First quarter of the year (%)

	Didn't work	Worked
1st quarter 2015	8,1	91,9
1st quarter 2016	9,0	91,0
1st quarter 2017	6,9	93,1
1st quarter 2018	7,0	93,0
1st quarter 2019	8,9	91,1
1st quarter 2020	13,9	86,1
1st quarter 2021	11,7	88,3

(1) Data for the current year are provisional and data from the previous year have been revised with the population update based on January 1 of that year

Source: Eustat. Survey on the population in relation to activity

Population stopped and inactive by job search and search features (1).
Quarterly data (thousands). 2015-2021

		Unemployed	Inactive				
			Total	not looking for	Do not make active arrangements	Not available	Neither available nor making arrangements
2015	Quarter 1	181,5	764,8	752,9	3,3	6,5	2,1
	Quarter 2	164,0	770,8	757,4	2,0	8,8	2,5
	Quarter 3	161,1	773,6	758,1	7,1	4,3	4,0
	Quarter 4	159,4	775,9	766,9	3,3	4,1	1,6
2016	Quarter 1	156,1	781,9	772,2	3,6	5,0	1,1
	Quarter 2	151,3	778,9	770,1	4,4	2,3	2,0
	Quarter 3	137,5	784,1	768,7	7,2	4,0	4,3
	Quarter 4	135,1	793,5	775,0	7,0	8,9	2,7
2017	Quarter 1	123,1	800,8	776,1	4,7	17,2	2,7
	Quarter 2	117,8	794,9	785,2	2,0	7,0	0,7
	Quarter 3	123,6	798,0	789,8	3,6	3,9	0,6
	Quarter 4	118,5	801,8	793,8	4,4	2,6	0,9
2018	Quarter 1	120,9	803,1	795,0	3,8	3,1	1,2
	Quarter 2	109,1	790,2	784,9	2,5	2,4	0,4
	Quarter 3	100,5	799,2	791,7	3,4	3,0	1,2
	Quarter 4	110,0	795,5	789,3	2,4	2,3	1,6
2019	Quarter 1	109,3	799,8	782,4	6,9	7,9	2,6
	Quarter 2	104,2	797,5	782,0	7,1	6,3	2,1
	Quarter 3	101,3	796,3	781,0	6,7	5,7	2,9
	Quarter 4	100,8	807,0	789,5	9,3	5,5	2,8
2020	Quarter 1	106,4	806,6	787,2	6,9	8,8	3,8
	Quarter 2	113,3	836,0	806,4	15,5	11,3	2,7
	Quarter 3	103,7	846,4	814,0	10,3	16,9	5,1
	Quarter 4	119,6	818,0	807,7	5,0	4,1	1,1
2021	Quarter 1	115,7	820,4	804,4	9,2	5,5	1,3

(1) Data for the current year are provisional and data from the previous year have been revised with the population update based on January 1 of that year

Source: Eustat. Survey on the population in relation to activity

Analysing the trends in the different characteristics of seeking work that determine whether a person is unemployed or inactive, a decrease of 3,300 was observed among people who declared that they were not seeking work. However, the number of people who were not taking active steps to seek work increased by 4,200, the number of those who were not available for work was up by 1,400, and the number of people who were neither available nor taking active steps to seek work rose by 200.

Methodological note:

As in the first quarter of every year, Eustat has incorporated newly available population data, which has modified and made definitive data from 2019, and from 2020, which are revised with the population update obtained on 1 January this year. This has resulted in changes to the data for every quarter. For example, the unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2020, which was 11.2%, according to the provisional data, is now 11.4% after the revision.

Population in relation to Activity in the Basque Country (1). I/2021

	I/2021	IV/2020	Variation over previous quarter	
	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand	%
POPULATION AGED 16 AND OVER	1.865,2	1.871,2	-6,0	- 0,3
ACTIVE POPULATION	1.044,9	1.053,2	-8,3	-0,8
Males	544,7	548,8	-4,1	-0,7
Females	500,2	504,4	-4,2	-0,8
Araba/Álava	160,3	161,2	-0,9	-0,6
Bizkaia	542,8	546,7	-3,9	-0,7
Gipuzkoa	341,8	345,3	-3,5	-1,0
Vitoria-Gasteiz	121,0	121,4	-0,4	-0,3
Bilbao	165,5	165,0	+0,5	+0,3
Donostia / San Sebastián	86,1	85,1	+1,0	+1,2
Other Municipalities	672,2	681,7	-9,5	-1,4
Spanish nationality	941,0	947,4	-6,4	-0,7
Foreign nationality	103,9	105,8	-1,9	-1,8
EMPLOYED POPULATION	929,2	933,6	-4,4	-0,5
Males	485,4	484,5	+0,9	+0,2
Females	443,8	449,1	-5,3	-1,2
Araba/Álava	141,4	144,5	-3,1	-2,1
Bizkaia	477,3	476,8	+0,5	+0,1
Gipuzkoa	310,5	312,3	-1,8	-0,6
Vitoria-Gasteiz	106,3	109,3	-3,0	-2,7
Bilbao	142,6	141,6	+1,0	+0,7
Donostia / San Sebastián	77,4	76,2	+1,2	+1,6
Other Municipalities	602,9	606,5	-3,6	-0,6
Spanish nationality	855,8	860,1	-4,3	-0,5
Foreign nationality	73,4	73,5	-0,1	-0,1
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6,1	8,0	-1,9	-23,8
Industry	199,6	199,3	+0,3	+0,2
Construction	51,8	49,5	+2,3	+4,6
Services	671,6	676,8	-5,2	-0,8
Wage earners	758,1	763,5	-5,4	-0,7
- With permanent contract	537,5	535,3	+2,2	+0,4
- With temporary contract and without contract	220,6	228,2	-7,6	-3,3
Non-wage earners	171,1	170,1	+1,0	+0,6
UNEMPLOYED POPULATION	115,7	119,6	-3,9	-3,3
Males	59,3	64,3	-5,0	-7,8
Females	56,4	55,3	+1,1	+2,0
16 - 24	12,8	13,4	-0,6	-4,5
25 - 44	58,9	61,8	-2,9	-4,7
45 and over	44,0	44,4	-0,4	-0,9
Araba/Álava	19,0	16,7	+2,3	+13,8
Bizkaia	65,4	69,9	-4,5	-6,4
Gipuzkoa	31,3	32,9	-1,6	-4,9
Vitoria-Gasteiz	14,8	12,1	+2,7	+22,3
Bilbao	22,9	23,3	-0,4	-1,7
Donostia / San Sebastián	8,7	8,9	-0,2	-2,2
Other Municipalities	69,3	75,2	-5,9	-7,8
Spanish nationality	85,2	87,3	-2,1	-2,4
Foreign nationality	30,5	32,3	-1,8	-5,6
INACTIVE POPULATION	820,4	818,0	+2,4	+0,3
HOUSEHOLDS	901,3	901,1	+0,2	+0,0
Households with 1 or more active	609,7	606,7	+3,0	+0,5
- All employed	524,6	517,7	+6,9	+1,3
- All unemployed	35,0	36,4	-1,4	-3,8
Households without active members	291,6	294,5	-2,9	-1,0

(1) The data for the current year are provisional and the previous year have been revised with the updating of the population based on January 1st of that year

Source: Eustat. Survey on the population in relation to activity

**Population in relation to Activity in the Basque Country. Main rates (1).
 I/2021**

	I/2021	IV/2020	Variation over previous quarter (p.p.*)
ACTIVITY RATE	56,0	56,3	-0,3
Males	60,8	61,1	-0,3
Females	51,6	51,9	-0,3
Araba/Álava	58,4	58,4	+0,0
Bizkaia	55,2	55,4	-0,2
Gipuzkoa	56,2	56,7	-0,5
Vitoria-Gasteiz	58,8	58,6	+0,2
Bilbao	54,8	55,0	-0,2
Donostia / San Sebastián	55,6	54,6	+1,0
Other Municipalities	55,9	56,4	-0,5
Spanish nationality	54,8	55,1	-0,3
Foreign nationality	69,8	69,9	-0,1
EMPLOYMENT RATE (aged 16 to 64)	66,7	66,9	-0,2
Males	69,5	69,4	+0,1
Females	63,9	64,5	-0,6
Araba/Álava	67,6	68,5	-0,9
Bizkaia	65,4	65,3	+0,1
Gipuzkoa	68,5	68,8	-0,3
Vitoria-Gasteiz	67,5	69,1	-1,6
Bilbao	64,5	64,8	-0,3
Donostia / San Sebastián	67,2	66,5	+0,7
Other Municipalities	67,1	67,1	+0,0
Spanish nationality	68,6	68,9	-0,3
Foreign nationality	50,8	50,2	+0,6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	11,1	11,4	-0,3
Males	10,9	11,7	-0,8
Females	11,3	11,0	+0,3
16 - 24	24,4	24,2	+0,2
25 - 44	13,0	13,3	-0,3
45 and over	8,2	8,3	-0,1
Araba/Álava	11,8	10,4	+1,4
Bizkaia	12,1	12,8	-0,7
Gipuzkoa	9,2	9,5	-0,3
Vitoria-Gasteiz	12,2	10,0	+2,2
Bilbao	13,8	14,1	-0,3
Donostia / San Sebastián	10,1	10,5	-0,4
Other Municipalities	10,3	11,0	-0,7
Spanish nationality	9,1	9,2	-0,1
Foreign nationality	29,4	30,5	-1,1
INACTIVITY RATE	44,0	43,7	+0,3

*p.p. = Difference in percentage points

the updating of the population based on January 1 of that year

Source: Eustat. Survey on the population in relation to activity

For further information:

Eustat - Euskal Estatistika Erakundea / Basque Statistics Institute

C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz

Press Service: servicioprensa@eustat.es Tel: 945 01 75 62