

3,343 marriages were dissolved in the Basque Country in 2021, up 16.7% on the previous year

The majority, 3,210, were direct divorces (without a prior legal separation), there were 132 separations and 1 annulment.

In 2021, there were 3,343 marital breakdowns in the Basque country, a figure which is 16.7% higher than that of 2020, a year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic when there were 2,864 breakdowns, according to data prepared by Eustat. If we compare it with the data from 2019, we can see that the overall figures are similar, although the percentage of litigation procedures in 2021 increased to 20.7% (three more percentage points).

Of these, 15.9% were processed by the courts in Álava, 53.7% in Bizkaia and 30.4% in Gipuzkoa. Marital breakdown is defined as the dissolution of a marriage due to direct annulment, separation or divorce. In other words, marriages that have ended without a prior legal separation.

Of the total number of direct divorces, 2,541 were dissolved by mutual consent and 669 were contested. As for separations, 108 were dissolved by mutual consent and 24 were contested.

Legal separations in the Basque Country by type of verdict. 2019-2021

	2021		2020			2019		
	Number	%	Number	%	Increase % (1)	Number	%	Increase % (1)
Total	3,343	100	2,864	100	16.7	3,348	100	-0.1
Type of verdict								
Contentious divorce	669	33.1	479	23.7	39.7	576	28.5	16.1
Uncontested divorce	2,541	125.7	2,290	113.4	11.0	2,625	130.0	-3.2
Nullities	1	0.0	2	0.1	-50.0	1	0.0	0.0
Contentious separation	24	1.2	13	0.6	84.6	18	0.9	33.3
Uncontested separation	108	5.3	80	4.0	35.0	128	6.3	-15.6

(1) The variations are on the 2021 data

Date February 3, 2023

Source: Eustat. Statistics on marital breakdown

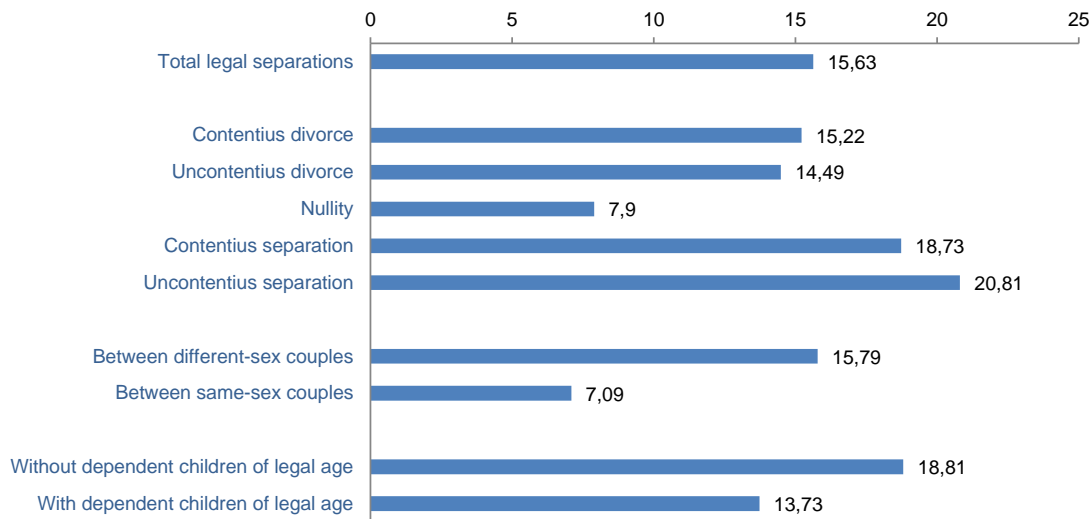
In 66.9% of marital breakdowns the request was filed jointly by both spouses, in 21.6% by the wife and only in 9.7% by the husband.

34.4% of breakdowns occurred before the tenth anniversary of the marriage and 28.2% after 20 years. The marriages dissolved directly through divorce lasted on average 15.4 years, a figure that rose to 23.3 years among those dissolved following a prior legal separation.

33.5% of dissolved marriages had no minor children or dependants of legal age; 54.7% had only minors, 3.9% had only offspring of legal age who were economically dependent and in 7.8% of cases there were both minor and legal age dependants.

In 52.3% of marriages with children, child support was paid by the father, in 42.1% by the mother and in 5.6% by both spouses.

Average duration of marriage now dissolved (years) by type of sentence, marriage and defided minors. 2021



Source: Eustat. Statistics on marital breakdowns

As regards custody of minor children, in 50.8% of cases custody was shared, in 42.3% the mother had custody and in 6.7% custody was attributed to the father.

The total divorce figure rose to 3,515 in 2021, 466 more than in the previous year

Regarding divorces, in 2021 there was a total of 3,515, divided into 305 cases where there had been a prior legal separation and 3,210 direct divorces.

3,453 different-sex couples and 62 same-sex couples (37 female couples and 25 male couples) divorced.

In reference to divorces of partners of different sexes, the majority took place in the 40-49 age range, in the case of both men and women, comprising 40.5% and 42.4% of the total of divorcees, respectively. The average age of women at the time of divorce was 46.3, whilst for men it was 48.6.

Regarding the nationality of spouses, 12.6% of the men and 12.3% of the women were foreign nationals.

As for the civil status of the spouses when they entered into the now-dissolved marriage, 87.7% of women were single, slightly below the figure of 88.9% in the case of men. Most spouses were resident in the Basque Country on the date of the divorce, although 4.3% of men and 2.5% of women resided outside the Basque Country.

In 2021 there were 132 separations and 1 marital annulment

Of the 132 separations that occurred in 2021, 81.8% were by mutual consent and 18.2% were resolved through legal action.

Of the total of 132 separations, 130 corresponded to couples of different sexes and 2 to couples of the same sex. In separations of couples of different sexes, the average age of separated women was 49.5 and that of men was 52.8.

For further information:

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