

54.9% of Internet users and 28.7% of establishments engaged in e-commerce in the Basque Country

58% of web users participate in social media, while 53.4% of companies use such platforms for business purposes

The percentage of Internet users who had acquired goods or services over the Internet in the past 3 months was 54.9%, while in the case of companies, the proportion of establishments engaging in e-commerce was 28.7%, with 25.7% of them making purchases and 8.5% sales, according to the data from the 2023 Information Society Panorama drawn up by Eustat.

These figures are to a great extent explained by the fact that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment in the Basque Country has registered continuous year-on-year growth, although not all equipment has increased in the same manner and with the same intensity. An uneven distribution of ICT was observed in the sphere of households and those who comprise them, depending on variables such as age and relationship with the activity. In the case of companies, the disparities mainly depended on the number of people employed who had ICT, on the province where the company was located and its sector of economic activity.

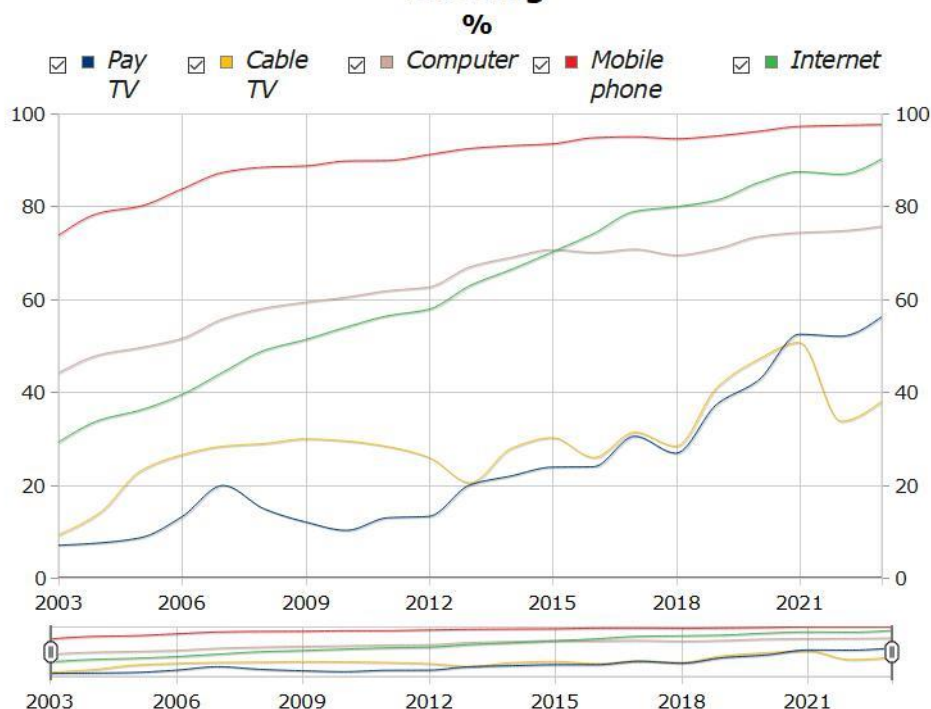
Sphere of households and those who comprise them

Focusing the analysis on the sphere of households and those who comprise them, connectivity-related technological equipment had a place in the majority of homes in the Basque Country, revealing an upward trend. 90.2% of Basque households had an Internet connection (broadband in almost all cases), a rise of 27.3 percentage points since 2013. Among those families with at least one person aged between 16 and 74, Internet connection availability rose to 97.8%.

Computers were found in 75.7% of households, 8.7 percentage points higher than in 2013, while laptop computers were present in 59.3% of households, reflecting a slightly greater increase over the last 10 years (10 percentage points). Furthermore, almost all households (97.6%) already had a mobile telephone, i.e. 5.2 percentage points more than 10 years ago.

In terms of the population aged 15 and over residing in these households, the percentages were slightly higher: 93.9% had access to the internet at home (22.5 percentage points more than in 2013), 82.6% had a computer (up 7.2 points) and 98.6% a mobile phone (3 more points).

Families of the Basque Country for ICT equipment of housing



Source: Eustat. Survey on the Information society. Families

Among other household equipment, it is worth highlighting that in 2023, more than half the population of the Basque Country (62.5%) already had pay-TV. This equipment, associated with communication in households, has grown considerably, given that 10 years ago only 22.7% of the population had this.

The number of internet users aged 15 and over (in the last 3 months) accounted for 88.3% of the Basque population in this age group, a percentage that increased by 22.8 percentage points in 10 years (65.5% in 2013).

There are numerous activities that can be carried out online. Those geared towards communication and searching for information were the most common among those undertaken for personal reasons. Practically the entire Basque internet user population communicated via WhatsApp or other instant messaging applications (97.3%) and, to a lesser extent, used email (85.2%), read news stories, newspapers or magazines (75.9%) and searched for information on goods or services (84%). Participation on social networks reached 58% among the internet user population aged 15 and over and rose to 91.2% among people aged between 15 and 24.

Likewise, activities directed towards consumption and household economy were responsible for a large number of operations carried out over the internet. 71.3% of people online used the internet for banking activities in 2023. As for leisure- and culture-related activities taking place outside the home, 36.8% of the user population booked tourist-related accommodation or travel, a figure 4.6 percentage points higher than the previous year, 2022.

The electronic administration enables procedures to be carried out with the administration via telematic means. In this sphere, 58.7% of internet users submitted forms completed online to the administration, 57.8% gathered information and 47.9% obtained official forms via this channel.

Finally, in terms of e-commerce, the percentage of users who acquired any kind of goods or services online in the last 3 months was 54.9%, equivalent to a total of 917,000 people. This figure represents 48.4% of the overall Basque population aged 15 and over, almost twice the number of people who made a purchase over the Internet 10 years ago (1.9 times higher), and 39.7% up on 2018, five years ago. This group tended mainly to purchase clothes, shoes and accessories, household goods, accommodation, tickets to cultural events, personal care and hygiene, transport and sports equipment.

Business sphere

As for companies in the Basque Country, a clear positive pace of development was noted for all technological equipment over the period 2013-2023. Levels of internet access currently stand at 94.7% and the availability of a website at 54.4% of businesses in the Basque Country, situating them in comparatively high positions within the context of EU27 countries.

There is a similarly noteworthy convergence in levels of technological equipment between large and small firms. This is due to a dual tendency: on one hand, large companies are reaching the maximum level of equipment in the main technologies and, on the other hand, companies with fewer employees increasingly have a higher level of technological equipment.

In turn, there has also been a gradual rise in the proportion of employed people who use technological equipment. In the 2013-2023 period, the percentage of those with a computer in their company went from 66.7% to 75.7%, an increase of 9 percentage points. Meanwhile, Internet access, which stood at 58.8% in 2013, amounted to 73.2% of employees in 2023, an increase of 14.4 percentage points.

However, unlike in equipment, there were no significant differences in the percentages of employed people using these technologies when company size was taken into account.

As for Public Administration, it should be pointed out that practically all public establishments in the Basque Country had ICT equipment in 2023: 99.9% had both a computer and an Internet connection.

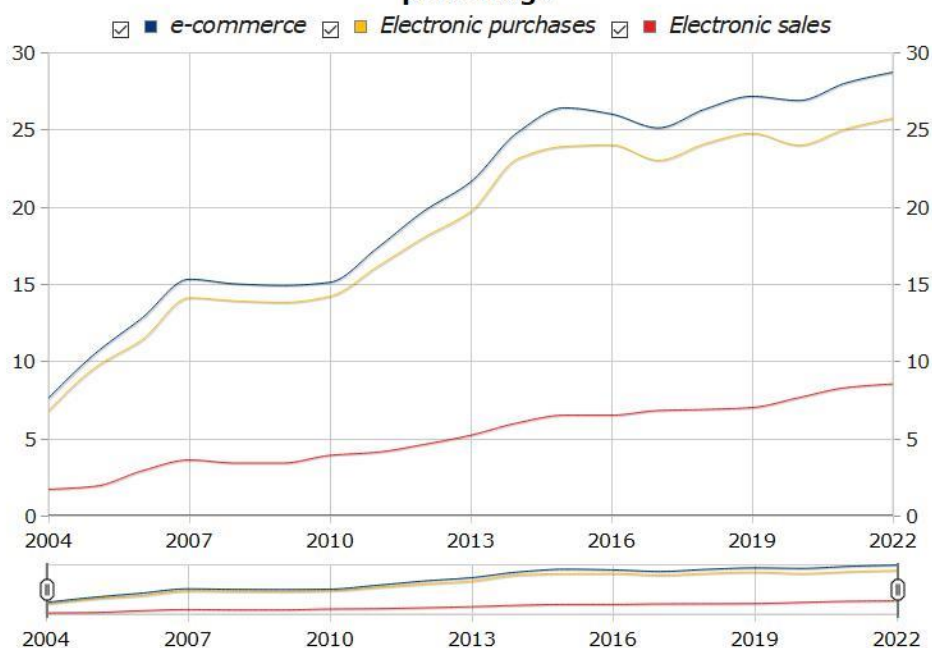
A relevant aspect of the information society is the relationship that companies have with the Administration. This is reflected by the fact that 98.0% of Basque companies with Internet access conducted electronic procedures with the Public Administration in 2023. There has been unquestionable progress in this sphere, since in 2013 the number was 63.8% of establishments, a change of more than 30 percentage points in just ten years. The difference narrows if we consider only companies with 10 employees or more, where the figure amounts to 98.5% of establishments of such size, having risen by 7.2 percentage points from an initial figure of 91.3% in 2013.

In terms of the information society, the situation is different in the Primary Sector: according to the most recent available figures, for 2022, we find a lower degree of ICT penetration compared with other sectors, mainly because of the fragmented nature of the sector – 97.4% of establishments have 9 employees or fewer – as well as the specific features of the business itself. In this group, only establishments with fishing activity achieved much higher equipment

percentages. However, this detail scarcely affected the total for the sector, because agricultural companies comprised 96.0% of the total for primary sector establishments.

Returning to the company sector, with regard to e-commerce, the most notable feature in the Basque Country is the uneven distribution of the system depending on whether we consider purchases or sales.

e-Commerce in establishments in the Basque Country percentage



Source: Eustat. Survey on the information society. Companies

As of 31 December 2022, the proportion of establishments engaged in e-commerce was 28.7%, with 25.7% of them conducting sales, and 8.5% purchases. These proportions are higher than those seen ten years previously, in 2012, when 19.7% were involved in e-commerce, 18.0% making purchases and 4.6% sales. If we take size into account, at those with 10 or more employees, e-commerce expanded during the period 2012-2022 from 27.7% to 39.0%.

Regarding for the evolution of economic volumes in the Basque Country over the period studied (2012-2022), the turnover of e-commerce sales rose from 7,207.6 million euros in 2012, to 19,673.1 million in 2022. In the case of sales, in 2012 this figure was 10,699.2 million euros, rising to 26,608.4 million in 2022. Therefore, although the percentage of companies purchasing online was higher than that for those making sales via this system, the economic amounts that were the object of transfer were much higher in the case of electronic sales.

Lastly, among the nine indicators analysed for what is known as Industry 4.0, referring to the digital transformation of companies, we would highlight the following:

- The use of Social Networks for business purposes, with 53.4% of establishments.
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- Cloud Computing, with 31.0% of establishments paying for this service.
- Cyber-Security activities, undertaken at 22.7% of establishments.

The list continues with proportions of between 10% and 20% for Mobile Applications for Customers, Internet of Things (IoT), and Big Data Analysis. Finally, with below 6% of establishments, were Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and 3D Printers.

Note: The structure of the Information Society Overview is concentrated in 6 large blocks: ICT equipment, computer use, internet use, electronic administration (e-administration), e-commerce and Industry 4.0. These blocks are analysed from the point of view of families, the general population, companies, the administration and the rural world. In addition, there is an analysis of the differences between provinces, ages, in relation to the activity of people or size regarding the number of employees, and also placing the Basque Country in an international context.

<https://es.eustat.eus/panoramadelasociedaddelainformacion/2023/inicio.html>

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