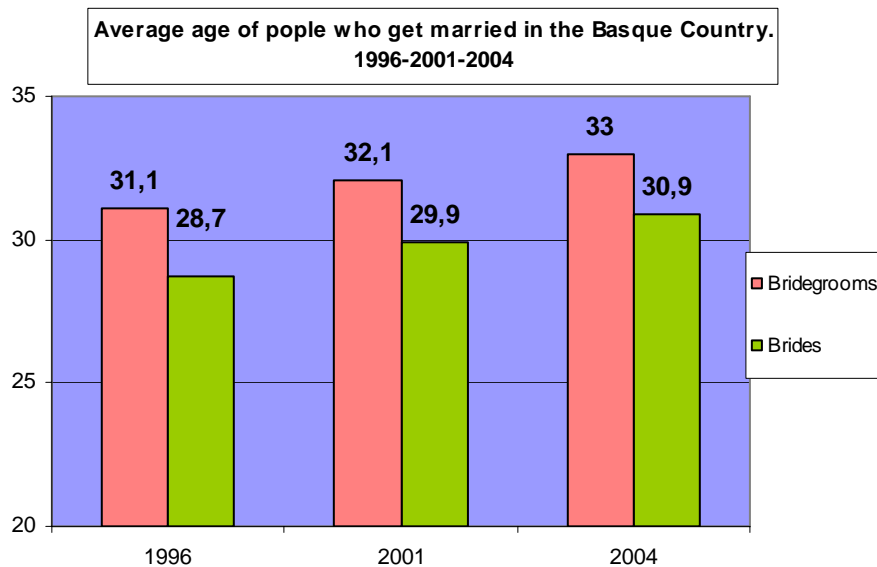


Over 30 is the average age at which people get married in the Basque Country

Civil marriage is an option chosen by more and more young people. Young people from Gipuzkoa present the highest marriage and cohabitation rates in the Basque Country.



Women marry younger than men: men marry at an average age of 33 while for women, the average age is 31. If we compare these figures with those from 1996, we can see that the average age at which people get married has increased for both sexes: 31 for men and 29 for women.



Source: Eustat and own data

The marriage rate among Basque Country people has increase slightly over the last ten years, although not among young people in the 15 to 29 age group.

27.2% of male individuals who got married in 2004 were young men between the age of 15 and 29 and, among married women, 44.9% were in the 15 to 29 age range. On the other hand, in 1996, of all men who got married, 40.9% were young men and of all women, 62.7% were girls between the age of 15 and 29. This fall has been especially noticeable among the youngest people because in the most adult range (25-29 group) there has been an increase in the marriages if compared with previous periods.

Concerning sex, the percentage of girls who got married in the period studied was always greater than the percentage of boys.

People getting married between 15 and 29 in the Basque Country, by sex and age group. Total figures and percentages. 1996-2001-2004						
	1996		2001		2004	
	Bridegrooms	Brides	Bridegrooms	Brides	Bridegrooms	Brides
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
<=15-29	40,9	62,7	32,9	52,5	27,2	44,9
<=15-19	0,6	1,3	0,5	0,6	0,4	0,9
20-24	10,4	18,2	7,0	13,1	7,0	11,3
25-29	89,1	80,5	92,7	86,3	92,6	87,8

Source: Eustat and own data

Civil marriage is an option that is chosen by young people with greater frequency and has experienced a significant increase over the last 10 years: today three of every ten young people between 15 and 29 prefer a civil ceremony. In spite of the increase in civil marriages among young people, religious ceremonies are the preferred option (2004: boys 70.5%, girls 69.2%).

Cohabitation, without getting married, is an alternative frequently preferred by young people. 4% of young people decided to live together without getting married in 2001; 3% more than in 1991. The situation by age groups indicates that 7% of the population between 25 and 29 live with their partner without getting married, 2.5% in the 20 to 24 age group and, finally, 0.2% in the 15 to 19 age group. Throughout the period studied, the percentage of girls who lived with their partners without getting married was higher than the percentage of boys.

Population in the 15 to 29 age group that cohabit without getting married in the Basque Country, by age group and sex. Total figures and percentages. 1991-1996-2001

	1991		1996		2001	
15-29 years	531.381	100	507.233	100	433.805	100
Cohabit - not married	7.353	1,4	12.787	2,5	17.491	4,0
Men	2.957	40,2	5.232	40,9	7.044	40,3
Women	4.396	59,8	7.555	59,1	10.447	59,7
15-19 years	180.200	100	156.534	100	107.079	100
Cohabit - not married	202	0,1	219	0,1	237	0,2
Men	46	22,8	49	22,4	46	19,4
Women	156	77,2	170	77,6	191	80,6
20-24 years	176.265	100	178.762	100	150.059	100
Cohabit - not married	2.085	1,2	2.796	1,6	3.683	2,5
Men	647	31,0	797	28,5	1.173	31,8
Women	1.438	69,0	1.999	71,5	2.510	68,2
25-29 years	174.916	100	171.937	100	176.667	100
Cohabit - not married	5.066	2,9	9.772	5,7	13.571	7,7
Men	2.264	44,7	4.386	44,9	5.825	42,9
Women	2.802	55,3	5.386	55,1	7.746	57,1

Source: Eustat and own data

If we look at the figures based on Historical Territories, Gipuzkoa presents the highest marriage rate (5.1), higher than the marriage rate for the entire Basque Country (4.8), and it is the territory where the number of marriages has increase continuously from 1991 to 2004.

The average age at which people marry in the three territories is 33 in the case of boys and 31 in the case of girls. In the three territories, the average age at which people get married is increasing.

In 2004, Gipuzkoa was the territory with the highest percentage of young people between 15 and 29 who got married (29.0% boys and 47.4% girls).

People getting married between 15 and 29 in the Basque Country, by sex and age group. Total figures and percentages. 1996-2001-2004						
	Álava		Bizkaia		Gipuzkoa	
	Bridegrooms	Brides	Bridegrooms	Brides	Bridegrooms	Brides
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
<=15-29	27,1	43,7	26,0	43,7	29,0	47,4
<=15-19	0,5	1,0	0,5	0,7	0,3	1,0
20-24	7,1	10,5	7,5	11,8	6,3	10,8
25-29	92,3	88,5	92,0	87,4	93,5	88,1

Source: Eustat and own data

The increase in the number of civil marriages is especially notable in Gipuzkoa, where 32.4% of boys who got married chose this system. In the case of girls, the rate was 33.8%.

Cohabitation without getting married increased among young people in the three territories. Gipuzkoa presents the highest cohabitation percentage (4.7%), followed by Alava (4.3%) and, finally, by Bizkaia (3.5%).