YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY: THE SITUATION TODAY

DECEMBER 2009

A sinthesis of the main data
6. Knowledge and use of the basque language

6.1. Number of bilingual young people increased in recent years
6.2. Half of the people who know Basque usually use Spanish with friends and family

7. Health and vulnerability

7.1. Young Basque people view their state of health and physical fitness positively
7.2. Mortality rate reduced by half, with road accidents continuing to be the main cause of death
7.3. Number of voluntary abortions continues to rise in the BC
7.4. Detection of new cases of HIV infection continue to increase, but cases of AIDS fall
7.5. Young people now tend to be slightly older when they have their first experience with psychoactive substances
7.6. Tobacco consumption increases amongst young people in the older age range
7.7. Excessive alcohol consumption rates and percentage of young people who get drunk regularly are down
7.8. Consumption of all illegal substances except cannabis down, as is the number of young people receiving treatment for drug addiction
7.9. The percentage of young people with problems of mental health continues to be lower than the rate for the population as a whole, with women being the most affected

8. Values, attitudes and behaviour

8.1. A majority describe the situation of young people as average, although more now think it is good
8.2. Young people are less interested in politics, less satisfied with the way democracy functions and less related to religion
8.3. Increasing signs of intolerance towards certain groups and growing rejection of immigrants
8.4. Increase in the number of cases of gender-based violence
8.5. Young people give increasing importance to sexuality
8.6. Although the majority walk, the car is still the favoured means of transport at the weekend
8.7. Three of every four young people enjoy more than three hours of leisure time a day, which they usually spend with their friends
8.8. The number of young people with PC plus internet at home has increased, and virtually all of them have cell phones
8.9. Only 6.4% do voluntary work, although four of every ten belong to some association

9. References
Introduction and methodology

Between September and December 2009, the Basque Youth Observatory prepared a report on the current situation of young people in the Basque Country. The report is considered an essential input for the forthcoming 3rd Basque Youth Plan. For an insight into how young people in the region live and think, the report provides a descriptive analysis of the situation of people between the ages of 15 and 29 living in the Basque region of Spain (hereafter, BC) with regard to several major issues: the demographic context, work, housing, education, the Basque language, health and the opinions, values and patterns of behaviour of the target population.

In preparing the report, the authors made use of secondary information-gathering sources (including existing surveys, registers, censuses, databases and specific reports on youth), which provided a detailed picture of the situation of young people in the BC, and, in certain cases, of how this situation had evolved and how it compared with the situation in some neighbouring areas. Data sources used in the preparation of the report are listed at the end.

Basically the present document provides a synthesis of the main data included in the larger situation report. Anyone interested in having all the available information should apply for the main report from the Basque Youth Observatory or consult the original data sources.
Although the total population of the Basque Country increased by 2.8% between 1996 and 2008, the number of young people between the ages of 15 and 29 fell steadily (–30.2%).

### 2.1. Fewer young people and a smaller proportion of the total population

Today, the youth population of the BC accounts for 16.4% of the total population. Although the overall population of the Basque Country increased by 2.8% between 1996 and 2008, the number of young people between the ages of 15 and 29 fell steadily (–30.2%).

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youth population</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abs. Δ % (1996=0)</td>
<td>Abs. Δ % (1996=0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>507,466</td>
<td>2,098,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>453,158 –10.7</td>
<td>2,101,477 0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>396,135 –21.9</td>
<td>2,124,846 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>354,176 –30.2</td>
<td>2,157,112 2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Figure 1

Percentage variation of the population between the ages of 15 and 29 and of the total population. BC, 1996, 2001, 2005 and 2008 (1996 = 0)

between 1996 and 2008, the number of young people (i.e. between the ages of 15 and 29) has gradually diminished. The youth population is calculated to have fallen by 30.2% in a steady decline over the last twelve years.

Indeed, as Figure 2 shows, the youth index, or proportion of young people with respect to the total population, fell steadily in the BC throughout the period in question: from 23.9% in 1996 to 16.4% in 2008. According to 2008 data published by Eurostat, the proportion of young people to the total population is similar to the figures for countries like Italy, where the youth index is 16.3%, whereas the proportion of young people in Spain as a whole (19.3%) or France (19.0%) is higher.

![Figure 2](image-url)

**Figure 2**  
**Youth index (%)**  

**Source:** Population and Housing Census 1996 and 2001, Eustat. Municipal Register of Inhabitants as at 1 January 2005 and 2008, INE (Spanish National Statistics Institute).

Regarding the makeup of the youth population, the proportion of females in the youth group hardly varied, remaining at 95.0% in all age ranges, meaning that, in the BC, for every 100 young men there are 95 young women. Looking at five-year age range groups, the group aged 25-29 is the most numerous of the cohort of young people. Unlike the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups, where the total number of young people fell, the 25-29 age-group actually grew over the period in question. So it is fair to say that the youth group has aged and that, within the group, the proportion of young adults grew, as opposed to the group of young people closer to adolescence.
Another fundamental change in the socio-demographic makeup of youth is the increase in the proportion of young foreigners.

The young foreign population increased by 1,076.5% in the last twelve years.

2.2. Foreigner rate grows

The foreign population in the BC has grown considerably in recent years. From 1996 the group of foreigners increased by 104,117 people; from 0.6% in 1996, the proportion of foreigners with respect to the total population of the Basque Country increased to 5.4% in 2008. The foreign population settled in the BC is generally younger than the region’s Basque population as a whole. Indeed, its youth rate is 33.0%, as opposed to the figure of 16.4% of the population as a whole. Furthermore, growth in the young foreign population has been significantly greater than growth in the foreign population as a whole: the number of young people that do not have Spanish nationality multiplied almost by twelve, from 3,365 in 1996 to 39,588 in 2008.

Figure 3

Source: 1996 data from the Population and Housing Census, Eustat. Data for 2006 and 2008 from Municipal Inhabitants Register as at 1 January, INE.

The proportion of young foreign people with regard to the youth population has grown steadily over the last twelve years: in 1996 young people of foreign origin accounted for 0.6% of the entire youth population of the BC, and in 2008 it accounted for 11.2%, meaning that the proportion multiplied by nearly 20. As a result, the makeup of the youth group has substantially changed, with an ever-broadening variety of nationalities. Young people have arrived in the main from South America, followed by young people from the EU-27 and, finally, from Africa and Asia.
Between 1996 and 2008 the proportion of young foreign people in relation to the youth population multiplied by 20, to 11.2%.

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4**

Foreign index of the youth population aged between 15 and 29 and foreign index of the total population (%). BC, 1996, 2006 and 2008

Source: 1996 data from the Population and Housing Census, Eustat. Data from 2006 and 2008 from Municipal Inhabitants Register at 1 January, INE.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5**

Distribution by nationality of young foreign population aged between 15 and 29 registered in the BC (%). BC, 2008

Source: Municipal Inhabitants Register at 1 January, INE.
3

Work and the economic situation

3.1. 41% works, 39% studies and 10% combines both activities

According to figures published in the *Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008* report, 41.0% of Basque youth was working in that year, 39.1% was mainly occupied with studies, 10.1% combined studies with work, with 7.5% unemployed. So the vast majority of young people in the BC studied and/or worked.

![Figure 6](image)

**Figure 6**
**Occupational situation of young people aged between 15 and 29 (%). BC, 2008**

Source: The authors, from figures included in the *Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008* report, Basque Youth Observatory.
3.2. In the last ten years, the labour force participation rate of the youth population as a whole has fallen and the employment rate has remained stable

In line with the figures in the PRA (Population Activity Survey) by Basque statistics agency EUSTAT, with data referring to 2Q 2009, at present the labour force participation rate of young Basque people (56.2%) is practically the same as the rate for the population as a whole (55.3%). So the percentage of people working or looking for work is similar in the youth group and in the total population of the BC.

However, these labour force participation rates have evolved differently in the case of the youth group. Although the workforce participation rate remained stable for the total population over the years, it fell 6.8 points for the youth group. The figure indicates the young population’s participation in the workforce has actually undergone a gradual decline. The decline has affected both young men and young women.

![Figure 7](chart.png)

**Figure 7**
Employment rate of total population and of youth population aged between 16 and 29 (%). BC, 1999-2008 (annual average), 2009 (1Q and 2Q)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Youth population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>64.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 (1Q)</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2Q)</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Nearly half of the young people between 16 and 29 (47.2%) were working in 2Q 2009. The highest levels of employment amongst young people were achieved in 2006 but from 2008 there was a substantial reduction in youth employment rates. Particularly noticeable is the reduction in employment amongst the young male population.
From 2008, the work situation of young people has deteriorated rapidly, with unemployment rising from 7.3% to 16.1%.

In any case, the most outstanding feature about the labour situation of young people is the rapid deterioration of the labour market and the increase in unemployment, which rose from 7.3% in 2008 to 16.1% in 2Q 2009. Unemployment has got worse for the youth population than it has for the population as a whole, and at present the youth unemployment rate doubles the rate for the population as a whole (7.8%).

Today youth unemployment affects men more than it does women. The proportion of unemployed in relation to the active population in the youth group is higher for men (18.2%) than for women (13.7%). This marks a major change in the trend, to the extent that, until the onset of the present economic crisis, unemployment rates amongst young women were higher than those affecting young men.

Today, unemployment affects men more than women throughout the entire youth group.

Figure 9
Unemployment rates for total population and youth population aged between 16 and 29 (%). BC, 1999-2008 (annual average), 2009 (1Q and 2Q)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Youth Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1Q 2009</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Q 2009</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 10
Unemployment rates for the youth population aged between 16 and 29, according to sex. BC, 1999-2008 (annual average), 2009 (1Q and 2Q)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Youth Population</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1Q 2009</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Q 2009</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Youth population unemployment rate data for women in 1Q and 2Q 2009 should be approached with caution as they are affected by a high sampling error.

The unemployment rate amongst people under the age of 25 almost triples the rate affecting the total population.

In 2008, 35.0% of young people with job experience had never had a paid job that lasted for more than a year.

The youngest group of young people aged between 16 and 24 is most heavily affected by the lack of work, with an unemployment rate of 20.5% as opposed to 7.8% in the total population and 16.1% in the total youth population. Within this group of young people, the difference between the sexes is considerable. 27.1% of young men from 16 to 24 are unemployed, whereas the figure is 12.3% for women.

![Figure 11](image)

**Figure 11**

Unemployment rates affecting the youth population aged between 16 and 24 and the total population, according to sex (%). BC, 2009 (2Q)

3.4. Job instability remains high and most work available continues to be temporary in nature

Job instability is another defining feature of the labour situation of young people. In fact, virtually 35.0% of the youth population with professional experience has never had a job lasting longer than a year. Furthermore, half of the young people now in employment have spent less than a year in their present job.
In 2008, half of the youth population in work had a temporary job (51.0%), as opposed to 32.0% with an indefinite contract.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of paid jobs lasting longer than a year during lifetime amongst young people aged between 15 and 29 with work experience (%)</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or more</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The authors, using data from Euskadiko gazteak 2004 = Juventud vasca 2004 and Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008 reports, Basque Youth Observatory.

Figures included in the Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008 report show that the percentage of young people who had spent a long time (i.e. more than a year) in the same job had grown slightly from 2004. However, in the longer term, the percentage of young people in the same job for a short time increased: between 2000 and 2008, the percentage of young people in work with less than a year in their present job had risen from 40.0% to 50.0%.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of time last job lasted for young people aged between 15 and 29 with work experience (%)</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than a year</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one and three years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three years</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


So «temporary» is perhaps the watchword concerning the contracts young men and women have. In 2008, half of the youth population in work had a temporary job, as opposed to 32.0% with an indefinite contract. 9.0% of young people worked without a contract: it is interesting to note that not having a contract seems to be something largely confined to women. The percentage of people working with no contract was double for women (12.0%) than for men (6.0%).
The percentage of young women working without a contract was double the percentage of young men in the same situation.

Almost half the youth population (48.0%) would change jobs if they could, while 45.0% said they had the job they had looked for.

Even so, the job stability rate of the youth population (i.e. the percentage of young people on indefinite contracts with respect to the total contracts given to young people) remained precisely that—stable—in recent years. Some interesting points can be made about job quality:

- Nearly half the people suffering accidents at work are young people, although the proportion of young people suffering accidents relative to the total has fallen in recent years.
- 48.0% of the youth population would change jobs if possible and 45.0% said they had the job they were looking for. Job satisfaction was closely linked to the conditions in which the young person worked. People working for more than three years in the same job, or who described themselves as self-employed or had an indefinite contract and worked full-time expressed greater satisfaction.
43.7% of people in the youth group live mainly off the earnings of their family of origin; 21.6% live off their own earnings.

### 3.5. Family still main source of income

43.7% of young people lived mainly off the earnings or income of their family of origin. Only 21.6% said they lived off their own earnings and, of that percentage, more than half (58.1%) were still living with their family of origin, which means that their economic independence was to a certain extent relative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Origin of earnings of young people aged between 15 and 29 years, according to age-groups (%)**. BC, 2008

| Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory. |

Having a paid job did not always guarantee economic independence. Although the majority of young people in work were economically independent from their family of origin (55.3% if we add those who declared that they lived exclusively off their earnings and those who lived off earnings shared with their partners), 42.1% of young people in work lived exclusively or partly off their family of origin.
More than half the 25-29 age group (56.5%) have less than 900 a month

Poverty situations are very frequent in families headed by people under the age of 25: in such cases, the poverty rate currently stands at 47.9%, as opposed to 4.1% for the population as a whole.

3.6. Little money available and high levels of poverty, often compensated for by family protection

The main source of earnings or income aside, it seems clear that young people in the BC don’t have much money available, even those who manage to find a job: practically half of Basque youth has less than €300 a month and just 21.7% has income above €900. Even in the highest age range within the group, i.e. from 25 to 29, only 38.5% of people have income higher than that amount. Just 44.0% of young people with jobs have more than €900 a month.

Table 5
Money young people aged between 15 and 29 have available monthly, according to age groups (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15-29</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than €60</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From €60 to €300</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From €301 to €600</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From €601 to €900</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than €900</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.

Figures from the 4-year EPDS poverty and social inequality survey by the Basque Government show that poverty is particularly bad in families headed by people under 25 years of age. In 2008, the maintenance poverty rate in these families was more than ten times higher than the average (47.9% as opposed to 4.1% of the population as a whole), clearly associating emancipation at an early age with the risk of poverty. Indeed, with respect to 2004, poverty rates only got worse for families headed by people under the age of 25, the poverty rate then for the category in question being 39.2%.

1 The concept of maintenance poverty refers to situations of insufficient economic resources to cover, in the short term, basic needs such as food, housing, clothing and footwear.
One thing clear from the figures in the following table is that situations of poverty are widespread in families headed by young people living in relative poverty: in the population as a whole families in a poverty situation scarcely account for a third of all families beneath the relative poverty threshold, whereas the figure exceeds 95.0% in families headed by people under the age of 25.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Poverty</th>
<th>Relative poverty*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The relative poverty indicators include groups in poverty situations.


In any case, when the entire youth population is considered, rather than just the person who is the household reference, poverty situations only affect 5.6% of the population aged between 15 and 24 and 4.2% of the population from 25 to 34. Although these poverty rates are higher than in other age groups of the population, the differences aren’t exactly very great and, indeed, there are other groups, such as children, that experience even higher poverty rates.

Poverty rates amongst young people are clearly held in check by family protection. Taking into consideration the individual earnings of young people only, without taking account of the earnings of the other people in the family group, poverty situations affected 47.6% of the population between the ages of 15 and 24 and 30.0% of people between 25 and 34. Many members of the youth population therefore live in concealed poverty situations, a fact that highlights the importance of support from other people, generally connected in some way with family (understood in a broad sense), in protecting people from the risks of poverty arising from the lack of sufficient income to lead an independent life.
4.1. Although emancipation rates have increased, the majority continue to live with their family of origin

According to the *Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008* report, almost eight out of every ten young people in the BC (78.5%) currently live with their family of origin. The emancipation rate stands at 19.1% for people aged between 15 and 29 and at 40.8% for people between the ages of 25 and 29. The emancipation rate amongst women (22.0%) is substantially higher than the one for men (16.3%).

![Figure 13](image_url)

**Figure 13**

**Distribution of people aged between 15 and 29, according to their habitual home (%).** BC, 2004 and 2008

*Source:* The authors, using results from the *Euskadiko gazteak 2004 = Juventud vasca 2004* and *Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008* reports, Basque Youth Observatory.
In line with the figures released in *Observatorio joven de vivienda en España* (which considers the population between the ages of 18 and 35), in the last six years the percentage of emancipated young people in the BC has grown from 28.9% to 43.6%. *Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008* provides similar data on the increase in emancipation rates, although, in concentrating on a different age group, the emancipation rates recorded are lower. According to the Basque report, the proportion of young people living in a home different from the one occupied by their families of origin increased by five percentage points from 13.9% in 2004 to 19.1% in 2008. The percentage of young people living with their family of origin fell in turn from 83.6% in 2004 to 78.5% in 2008.

And while it is true that the majority (64.4%) of young people would become emancipated if they could and live in a home different from the one occupied by their family, the percentage has actually dropped from 2004 (when it stood at 70.5%), while the percentage of young people preferring to live at home with their families has grown (from 21.2% to 28.9%).

### 4.2. Cost of housing still the major difficulty for the emancipation of young people

Cost continues to be the main obstacle young people encounter when seeking to access housing. Today, the same as eight years ago, most members of the Basque youth population declare the high cost of housing is the principal hindrance to their emancipation.

However, an increasing number of young people consider the comfort of living with the family of origin to be an obstacle or a brake on emancipation. As a glance at Figure 14 makes clear, the percentage of young people with this view grew from 2004 to 2008 from 36.1% to 59.2% At the same time, the number of young people who considered the source of their own income a difficulty for beginning an independent life actually fell by 14.1 percentage points over the last four years.

Apart from the problems young people might adduce as difficulties hindering emancipation, the cost of housing is clearly an objective obstacle. According to *Observatorio joven de vivienda en España*, the average cost of accessing home ownership exceeded 100% of the average earnings of people under 35 (105.5%). From the 2002 figure of 78.3%, the percentage has grown steadily. Given their lower earnings in general, young women face a harder time than young men of their own age.
The average cost in accessing home ownership is greater than 100% of the average income of young people under the age of 35 (105.5%).

**Figure 14**

Obstacles to emancipation identified by young people aged between 15 and 29 (%). BC, 2000, 2004 and 2008*

* Percentage of young people who declare they experience each difficulty mentioned above for becoming emancipated.

**Source:** The authors, using data from *Euskadiko gazteak 2000 = Juventud vasca 2000, Euskadiko gazteak 2004 = Juventud vasca 2004 and Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008*, Basque Youth Observatory.

**Figure 15**

Cost of accessing home ownership for a young person under the age of 35, according to sex (% in relation to average income). BC, 2003-2008

**Source:** Observatorio joven de vivienda en España (OBJOVI), Spanish Youth Council.
4.3. Fewer young people apply for housing in Etxebide and ownership continues to prevail over rented accommodation

Despite increasing difficulties in accessing housing and price increases to 2008, figures released by Etxebide showed that between 2003 and 2009 the number of applications for housing from people under the age of 35 fell from 66,296 to 50,130 (a 24.4% reduction); the percentage of people under 35 applying for housing with respect to the total number of applicants in the period went from 70.4% to 50.6%. Demand for housing in Etxebide rose in any case, in 2009, to 14.7% of the population aged between 18 and 34. Emancipated young people prefer to own rather than rent when accessing housing. More than half (64.3%) of the young people under 30 living away from the family home opted to buy their own home as opposed to a quarter of young people choosing to rent. The huge majority of homeowners are still paying for their housing.

Figure 16
Type of household tenancy of young people under 30 not living with the family of origin (%). BC, 2006

Source: The authors, from figures in the Demographic Survey 2006, Eustat.
5.1. Opinion of education and vocational training systems improves

In recent years, the image young people have of the Basque educational system has improved: today more than half (58.0%) of young people consider education in the Basque Country to be «very or quite good», as opposed to 6.0% who viewed it negatively. In 2000, 44.0% had a good opinion of the educational system.

Figure 17
Evaluation of Basque educational system by young people aged between 15 and 29 (%). BC, 2000, 2004 and 2008

Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.
Vocational Training has also won greater acceptance in recent years: in 2007, 66.0% of young people in the region considered VT quality to be good. However, although 79.0% thought it was easier for young people to find a job by opting for VT rather than a university degree, 50.0% preferred their children to do a university degree as opposed to 37.0% who preferred VT.

5.2. **Schooling rate and training level remain stable**

The schooling rate for young people in the BC has remained stable over the years: the percentage of young people studying has stayed at roughly the same level and women continue to have higher schooling rates at all ages. Logically, schooling rates tend to fall as age increases: in the 2007/2008 school year, nine of every ten young people aged 16 (90.2%) were studying, as opposed to 22.9% of young people aged 24.

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<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>84.4</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>76.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>70.5</td>
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<td>63.3</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>52.2</td>
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<td>50.2</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>40.7</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>31.1</td>
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<td>30.9</td>
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<td>31.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: University and School Statistics, Eustat.*
The percentage of young people completing some kind of post-compulsory secondary education (Baccalaureate, VT training cycles and Visual Arts and Design Diplomas, Social Guarantee Programmes, Special Sports Training Diplomas) has not varied either. In line with other years, in 2008 eight of every ten young people (80.8%) completed post-compulsory studies. The European Union targets for 2010 include 85% of young people aged 22 having finished at least post-compulsory secondary education. At present the BC has not achieved the target, as only eight out of every ten young people (80.8%) had achieved this educational level. When analyzed according to sex, however, women do actually achieve the European target, with 86.6% successfully passing through 2nd Stage Secondary Education as opposed to 75.3% of the men.

Despite the region not achieving the EU target for 2010, young people in the Basque Country performed remarkably well under this indicator. As opposed to the 80.8% of young people completing Post-Compulsory Secondary Education in the Basque Country, in Spain as a whole the figure is 61.1%. Young men and women alike improved on the results in Spain: the Spanish average for men was 55.1% and 67.3% for women.

**Figure 18**

*Population aged between 20 and 24 successfully completing post-compulsory secondary education (CINE, 3A, 3B and 3C), according to sex (%). BC, 2000-2007*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Youth population</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>87.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another target set by the European Union for 2010 was to ensure that just 10% of people aged between 18 and 24 stopped studying after completing Basic compulsory secondary education, known as early abandonment of education. In 2007 women came pretty close to the target (11.0%), but early abandonment of education amongst men still reached 19.6%. The figure was 15.4% when both sexes were considered together.

Once again, the situation in the BC is somewhat better than in Spain as a whole. In this case, 31.0% of the young Spanish population opted for early abandonment of education in 2007, the figure being 36.1% for men and 25.6% for women.

Figure 19
Early abandonment of education amongst population aged between 18 and 24, according to sex (%). BC, 2001-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Youth population</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


At 27.8, the regional rate of people per thousand graduating in Science, Mathematics and Technology is higher than the level achieved in any EU member country.
5.3. Improved job-finding rate for students graduating in vocational training, university degrees and occupational training

In 2007, their graduation year, nearly seven out of every ten (68.0%) students ending vocational training were working. The figure is 5 points higher than the one recorded in 2006 for the 2005 promotion. The improvement came about largely in the number of permanent/indefinite contracts, which went from 9.8 to 13.4. Even so, most people occupied were in temporary jobs (41.3%). The employment rate was higher amongst men for all promotions considered, although in recent years the gap has been gradually closing.

Figure 20
Employment rate amongst VT diploma holders a year after completing training, according to sex (%). BC, 2000-2007*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both sexes</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Years included in parenthesis refer to the year of graduation.

Source: Finding a job. Vocational Training (several years), Lanbide.
University graduates looking for jobs had a worse time in 2008 in comparison to the previous year. Taken from a report produced by the University of the Basque Country (UPV), data is measured three years after graduation and corresponds to 68.0% of the graduate population in each academic year. In 2008 87.8% were working and 7.6% unemployed. 88.2% of the men of this promotion (2005) were in work, slightly above the percentage figure for women (87.5%).

The job-finding rate for people taking part in occupational training courses rose sharply, with a 20.5 points’ increase in the last ten years.

* Years in parenthesis refer to year of graduation.

In 2006 more than half of the young people (57.5%) in the BC were bilingual, as opposed to 25.0% ten years ago.

6.1. Number of bilingual young people increased in recent years

According to figures in the 3rd and 4th Sociolinguistic Surveys of the Basque Country issued by the Basque Government’s Vice-Ministry for Linguistic Policy and quoted in Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, the number of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are bilingual has steadily increased in recent years. In 2006 more than half of the young people (57.5%) in the BC were bilingual, whereas ten years ago only one of every four young people spoke the region’s two official languages. Today there is also a major group of young people (24.9%) that, while not considering themselves bilingual, declare they understand Basque «well or very well.» In short, the available data suggests that four of every five young Basques know the Basque language well.

Territorial differences in the numbers of young people who are bilingual are significant. Gipuzkoa has by far the greater population of young people who speak both Basque and Spanish.
Figure 22
Young people from 16 to 24 who are bilingual, according to province (%). BC, 2006

Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.

As Figure 23 shows, knowledge and understanding of Basque has increased over the years. The increase of Basque language skills is to be found mainly in the younger age groups, although in recent years, the rate of increase in the percentage of young people with knowledge and understanding of the Basque language does seem to be slowing.
It is also interesting to note the positive attitude young people have towards Basque. A huge majority (95.0%) of young Basques under the age of 30 say that they would want their children to learn Basque.

6.2. **Half of the people who know Basque usually use Spanish with friends and family**

Within the family circle, 62.0% of the young people who know Basque tend to use Spanish to Basque. The percentage falls to 53.0% for talking to friends.

Between 2004 and 2008, there was a slight increase in the percentage of young Basque speakers using both languages for family relations, as opposed to a 4-point reduction in speakers using Basque for preference to communicate in the two areas of life.
The preferential use of Basque as a means of communication with family and friends fell between 2004 and 2008.

Figure 24
Use of Basque in the home in young people aged between 15 and 29 (%). BC, 2004 and 2008

Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.

Figure 25
Use of Basque with friends amongst young people aged between 15 and 29 (%). BC, 2004 and 2008

Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.
7.1. Young Basque people view their state of health and physical fitness positively

Young people are happy with their state of health. Nearly nine out of ten young people (86.9%) described their health as good or excellent and five out of every ten (55.0%) thought their physical fitness was between fair and excellent.

While there were no significant differences between the sexes on this point, differences did depend on the socioeconomic class young people surveyed came from. As usually happens with adults, young people from more privileged backgrounds were better pleased with their state of health than young people from a less privileged social classes.

Figure 27

How young people aged between 15 and 29 evaluate their own health, according to their social class (%). BC, 2006

Source: The authors, using data contained in the Osasuna eta gazteak. Euskadiko gazteen ikusmoldak osasunari buruz = Salud y juventud. Concepciones de salud en la juventud de Euskadi report, Basque Youth Observatory.

7.2. Mortality rate reduced by half, with road accidents continuing to be the main cause of death

The mortality rate for young people in the BC fell by almost half in the last ten years, from 0.68 people dying for every thousand inhabitants in 1996 to 0.36 in 2006. For the population as a whole, however, the mortality rate increased slightly.
The masculine mortality rate is almost four times higher than the feminine rate.

The masculine mortality rate amongst young men (0.56 deaths per one thousand inhabitants) is substantially higher than for young women (0.16). Men have higher mortality rates from all causes, but in particular road accidents, suicides and self-inflicted wounds. Masculine over-mortality cannot be explained without taking some account of the influence of factors associated with the traditional masculine role, which results in life styles and patterns of behaviour that mean men tend to be exposed to a greater extent to risk factors affecting health and personal survival. 40.0% of young men have driven on more than one occasion under the effects of alcohol, as opposed to 16.0% of young women, and it is clear that, in general, women usually behave more prudently when it comes to road safety.

Although they have become somewhat less frequent, road accidents involving motor vehicles are still far and away the leading cause of youth mortality: they cause nearly one in every four deaths of young people (24.3%), as opposed to 0.8% in the population as a whole. Even so, despite the upswings in 2007 and 2008, in particular from 2005 the number of deaths amongst young people caused by road accidents has fallen considerably. Youth mortality from road accidents is, it should be noted, an eminently masculine phenomenon: 86.0% of young people dying in road accidents were men.
Road accidents with motor vehicles are still by far the leading cause of youth mortality

Voluntary abortion numbers and rates (VAR) have grown steadily in recent years

7.3. Number of voluntary abortions continues to rise in the BC

The number and rates of voluntary abortions (VAR) has grown steadily in recent years. In 2007, 1,812 abortions were performed on pregnant women between the ages of 15 and 29, 10.8 abortions for every one thousand women in these age groups. If the number of VAR is weighted against the population in each age group, the highest abortion rate in 2007 was to be found in women from 20 to 24 (13.2 women per thousand) and the lowest amongst young women between the ages of 15 and 19 (8.3), although this age range registered the greatest relative increase in voluntary abortion rates in the last five years.

Source: The authors, using data from the Traffic Office, Basque Government’s Ministry of Home Affairs.
New HIV infection rates grew considerably in recent years, probably as a result of more intensive use of diagnostic tests.

Figure 30
Voluntary abortion rates, according to age groups (per 1,000 women). BC, 2002, 2004-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 15-44</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Abortions Register, Basque Government’s Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs.

One major feature is that women having a voluntary abortion had tended to avoid using family planning clinics for the use of anti-conceptive methods: in 2007, 13.8% of young women between 15 and 19 and 21.0% of women aged between 20 and 24 did so, with a general decline from 2003.

7.4. Detection of new cases of HIV infection continued to increase, but cases of AIDS fell

The rate of new HIV infections grew considerably in recent years: 42 new cases in 2008 meant a rate of 0.12 infections per 1,000 inhabitants, as opposed to 0.06 in 2000. However, the increase in cases of detected infections does not necessarily mean an increase in the real extent of HIV amongst the youth population; on the contrary, it is perfectly possible that the increase in the rate of registered cases is due to greater access to infection detection tests.
However that may be, and as occurs with other types of risk behaviour and other health problems, male HIV infection rates are higher, with 6 men infected for every 4 women. The most frequent cause of the virus infection amongst young people is through heterosexual practices, which in the case of women tends to be practically the only channel of contagion.

Unlike HIV infections, the number of cases of AIDS declared amongst the youth population of the BC steadily declined over the years. In fact, AIDS rates in the youth population went from 5.6 cases for every 100,000 inhabitants in 2000 to 1.1 in 2008. For the population as a whole, the rates went from 9.5 to 3.3, without it being possible to say that, in this case, prevalence amongst young women was lower than amongst men of the same age.

### Figure 31

**AIDS rates of young people aged between 15 and 29, according to sex (per 100,000 inhabitants) and of the total population.**

**BC, 2000, 2004 and 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth population</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men 15-29</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women 15-29</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** The authors, using data from the AIDS Prevention and Control Plan, Basque Government’s Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs.
7.5. Young people now tend to be slightly older when they have their first experience with psychoactive substances

In 2008, the average age for experimenting for the first time with any type of psychoactive or other substances rose slightly with respect to the figures for 2004 to an average 15.6 years of age for alcohol and 19.6 for ecstasy. The average age for consuming cannabis for the first time is 16.7 and tobacco 15.9.

7.6. Tobacco consumption increases amongst young people in the older age range

Four out of every six young people (43.5%) say they are non-smokers. Almost 60.0% of young people between the ages of 15 and 19 are non-smokers, although the figure falls to just 29.8% of young people between 25 and 29; in this group, tobacco consumption rates are higher than for the population as a whole. A higher percentage of men smoke in all age ranges than women.

Particularly worrying is the increase in the last four years in the regular consumption of tobacco amongst members of the 25 to 29 age-group. In 2004, 36.6% of the members of this age group were regular consumers of tobacco and by 2008 the figure had increased to 45.6% with a highly significant increase amongst young men aged between 25 and 29, where consumption rates rose from 33.4% to 50.6%.

The percentage of regular smokers fell in the 15 to 24 age group but increased in the group aged between 25 and 29, mainly amongst men.

Figure 33
Non-smokers, regular smokers, occasional smokers and ex-smokers in the youth population aged between 15 and 29, according to age groups and in the total population (%). BC, 2008

Between 2004 and 2008 there was a big reduction in alcohol consumption by young people

### 7.7. Excessive alcohol consumption rates and percentage of young people who get drunk regularly are down

Throughout the week, the alcohol consumption of most young people (85.2%) is zero or low risk, largely because of the low levels of consumption on weekdays. In fact, according to the classification used in Euskadi eta Drogak = Euskadi y Drogas series of reports, on weekdays excessive and risk consumption is lower amongst the youth population than in the general population (0.6% for young people and 2.0% for the general population). At weekends or on public holidays, the trend is reversed and risk consumption levels affect 28.7% of the youth population, as opposed to 13.8% of the total population.

It is important in any case to note that between 2004 and 2008 there was a major reduction in alcohol consumption at the weekend amongst young people, with excessive and risk consumption falling from 39.0% to 28.7%, which may be due to the assimilation of preventive and health education messages broadcast by organizations working in this area. Another interesting indicator for discovering the patterns of alcohol consumption amongst young people is the frequency with which they were drunk in the last year. The indicator for young people improved over the last four years. The percentage of young people drunk more than 12 times a year fell and there was an increase in the percentage of people that were drunk at no time during the preceding twelve-month period.
7.8. Consumption of all illegal substances except cannabis down, as is the number of young people receiving treatment for drug addiction

Illegal drug consumption indicators showed a drop from 2004 for all substances except cannabis. Although the prevalence of consumption fell between 2004 and 2008, the cocaine consumption rate is higher than in 2000. A major feature is that in practically all the drugs considered, male consumption rates are substantially higher than female consumption rates.
Between 2000 and 2008, daily consumption of cannabis increased steadily amongst young men.

Three out of every ten young people (31.0%) had consumed cannabis at least once in the last year as opposed to 27.4% in 2004. Particularly worrying is the increase in the rates of daily consumption of cannabis, which rose from 4.6% in 2000 to 11.0% of young people in 2008. Daily consumption of this substance is very much higher amongst men, rising from 6.3% in 2000 to 16.9% in 2008.
The number of young people beginning treatment for drug addiction fell from 814 cases in 2004 to 699 in 2007, down 14.0% in four years. As occurred in the substance consumption indicators, men are much more active here than women, accounting for 82.0% of the people beginning treatment in 2007. In 2002, young people accounted for 41.6% of all those initiating treatment for drug addiction; the figure fell to 35.5% in 2007.

Two out of every 1,000 young people began treatment for drug addiction in 2007, three out of every 1,000 being men and one per 1,000 a woman.
One out of every ten young people (11.6%) from 16 to 24 presents symptoms of depression and/or anxiety.

Cocaine was the substance motivating the initiation of treatment in virtually half the cases (47.8%), followed by cannabis (20.0%) and alcohol (10.6%). From 2004 to 2007, the presence of these drugs remained unvaried. However, heroin as a motive for seeking treatment became far less frequent (115 cases in 2004 as opposed to 57 in 2007) and the number of young people in treatment for cannabis consumption increased from 125 to 140 cases in the last four years.

7.9. The percentage of young people with problems of mental health continues to be lower than the rate for the population as a whole, with women being the most affected

One of every ten young people (11.6%) between the ages of 16 and 24 presents symptoms of depression and/or anxiety, below the levels for the general population (15.4%). Amongst young people, mental health problems are more prevalent in women (15.9%), twice the rate for men (7.5%).
On a scale of 0 to 100, the mental health rate\(^2\) for young people between the ages of 16 and 24 is 74.9 as opposed to 71.7 for the total population. According to this rate, men enjoy better mental health than women.

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\(^2\) The mental health index takes into account anxiety, depression, emotional control and affective balance. Its value varies from 0 and 100 and values below 52 are linked to diagnostic criteria for depression and related problems.
8.1. A majority describe the situation of young people as average, although more now think it is good

More than half of the young people in BC describe the general situation of their age group as average, good in some respects and bad in others. In the last eight years, the proportion of young people who say that the situation of young people is good or that it is bad has increased, while the numbers of those who see it as average declined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average, good in some respects, bad in others</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Some differences become clear when these results are analyzed by age groups and social class; young people under the age of 20 tend to have a more optimistic view of the general situation of young people, while young people over the age of 24, and those who consider themselves to belong to a lower social class, tend to be more critical.
8.2. Young people are less interested in politics, less satisfied with the way democracy functions and less related to religion

Judging by their stated opinions, Basque youth are moving away from more traditional politics: more than half the young people are dissatisfied with the way democracy works, almost eight out of every ten (78.0%) show little or no interest in politics and more than half (53.4%) say they do not want to take part in politics. Furthermore, young people's interest in politics has declined steadily since 2004.

Figure 39

Interest in politics and evaluation of how democracy works amongst young people aged between 15 and 29 (%).

2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

| Not very or not at all satisfied with how democracy has worked | 62 53 50 57 47 48 55 |
| Not very or not at all interested in politics | 66 64 63 65 71 75 78 |

Source: Gazteen argazkiak 12 = Retratos de juventud 12, Basque Youth Observatory.

The growing distance young people feel regarding politics can also be seen regarding religion. Four out of every ten young people (44.9%) describe themselves as Catholic, while only 7.6% said they were practising Catholics. In the last eight years, the percentage of young people who described themselves as Catholic (practising or not) fell, while the percentage of young people who say they are atheists increased.
8.3. Increasing signs of intolerance towards certain groups and growing rejection of immigrants

A majority of young people are in favour of homosexual marriage, euthanasia, legal sex changes, open, voluntary abortion and the occupation of empty houses. However, they are against the death penalty, suicide and the legalization of all illegal drugs. Opinions are divided on other issues, such as the legalization of cannabis or religious education in schools. Only 24.9% of young people said they were in favour of all illegal drugs being legalized, while the rejection of the death penalty may be described as general (supported by only 8.9% of young people).

Figure 40
Opinions of young people aged between 15 and 29 on a number of situations and issues (% of people in favour of each question). BC, 2008

Source: The authors, using data from the Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008 report, Basque Youth Observatory.
Attitudes towards coexistence with other social groups amongst young people are hardening. 57.8% reject right-wing extremists or neo-Nazis, 46.0% reject drug addicts and 41.8% reject ethnic gypsies. Since 2000, rejection of foreign immigrants has grown from 9.2% to 15.1%.

**Figure 41**

**Neighbour tolerance towards social groups amongst young people aged between 15 and 29 (%)**. BC, 2000, 2004 and 2008*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neo-Nazis, right-wing extremists</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug addicts</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsies</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign immigrants</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuals and lesbians</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentage of people who said they would not be happy having a member of one of these groups as a neighbour.

**Source:** The authors, using data from the *Euskadiko gazteak* 2000 = *Juventud vasca* 2000, *Euskadiko gazteak* 2004 = *Juventud vasca* 2004 and *Euskadiko gazteak* 2008 = *Juventud vasca* 2008 reports, Basque Youth Observatory.

With time, the percentage of young people in favour of facilitating to the maximum the entry of immigrants has steadily declined and attitudes have gradually become far less open and receptive. Furthermore, the perception that there are too many immigrants in the BC has grown substantially since 2000.
The perception that there are too many immigrants in the BC has grown substantially since 2000

Registered cases of gender-based violence involving young people increased substantially in the last four years, particularly between young people in the lower age range

8.4. Increase in the number of cases of gender-based violence

In the last four years, there was a major increase in the number of cases of gender-based violence involving young people, especially the younger age range, registered by the Basque Government’s Ministry of Home Affairs. The number of young women under 18 who report this kind of crime grew 118% in that time, while increasing 62% for women from 18 to 32, similar to that of the population as a whole. In 2008, nearly half (43.7%) of the cases of gender-based violence registered involved women under the age of 32.
Six out of every ten young people believe that being a man or a woman is irrelevant in obtaining a job in equality of conditions. The perception of discrimination is greater amongst older women.

The most frequent cause motivating accusations from women under 32 (57.0% of all criminal and minor offences) is habitual physical abuse in the family milieu. This type of criminal offence has increased by 50.0% since 2005.

Two ideas concerning equality between men and women are important:

- Most young people living with a partner consider that domestic tasks should be shared. However, more men than women believe the tasks are effectively shared (64.0% and 48.0% respectively). In addition, domestic tasks are much less equally shared when couples have children. In these cases, women tend to take on the bigger load.

- Six out of every ten young people believe that being a man or a woman does not affect a person’s chances of getting a job in equality of conditions. However, this idea changes amongst older women, as the sensation of greater discrimination increases. Experience would seem to force them to revise their opinion and be more aware of the real difficulties.
86.0% of all young people think sexuality is important

**8.5. Young people give increasing importance to sexuality**

The large majority of young people in the BC think sexuality is important: 30.0% say it is very important and 56.0% consider it quite important. Just 12.0% of young people of both sexes consider it not very important or unimportant. In any case there are some relatively important differences on the issue depending on the sex of the person answering and the modes of coexistence: men give it more importance than women of the same age, people living with a partner (married or not) tend to think sexuality is very important to a greater extent than those not living with a partner. The importance given to sexuality also increases as age increases.

Although differences are not great, young people have given increasing importance to sexuality: in 2000 it was very important for 24.0%, in 2004 it was very important for 28.0% and in 2008 for 30.0%. In any case, young people of both sexes in the BC give less importance to sexuality than their counterparts in the rest of Spain: in the BC sexuality is very important for 30.0% of young people and in Spain as a whole it is very important for 42.0%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite important</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very important</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.*
8.6. Although the majority walk, the car is still the favoured means of transport at the weekend

Basque youth generally walk on a daily basis (77.0%). 37.0% use the car or the motorcycle and 40.0% use a public means of transport—bus, metro or train—on a daily basis.

![Figure 43](image)

**Figure 43**

*Daily use of transport by young people aged between 15 and 29 (%). BC, 2008*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorbike</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of people declaring they use the means of transport in question every or almost every day.

**Source:** Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.

Women use public transport more frequently, while men use the car to a greater extent. Furthermore, as they get older, their use of the private car becomes more intensive and the distances travelled increase. At the weekend, half the youth population (50.1%) moves outside their home town or district when going out with friends, the car being the main means of transport for such movements.
76.5% of Basque youth say they have three or more hours a day of free time every working day.

**8.7. Three of every four young people enjoy more than three hours of leisure time a day, which they usually spend with their friends**

76.5% of Basque youth say they have three or more hours of leisure time a day on weekdays. The percentage of men with more than three hours a day leisure time is greater than the percentage of women enjoying that amount of leisure time.

![Figure 44](chart.png)

**Figure 44**

Leisure time young people aged between 15 and 29 have available on weekdays, according to sex (%). BC, 2008

- Youth population: 23.6% less than 3 hours, 76.5% more than 3 hours
- Men: 20.9% less than 3 hours, 79.1% more than 3 hours
- Women: 26.2% less than 3 hours, 73.9% more than 3 hours

*Source:* The Basque Youth Observatory’s system of indicators.

Free time varies enormously of course when there are children in the home. However, it is interesting to note that, while young women with children say they have less free time than women with no children, the exact opposite occurs with men, as the percentage of men who say they have more free time increases if they are parents.
On weekdays the main leisure activities for young people are watching television (49.0%), spending time with friends, girl or boyfriends (45.0%) and listening to music (42.0%). Playing sport (26.0%) or spending time on the computer at home (24.0%) are also things young people do fairly regularly. The most frequent activities at the weekend tend to be slightly different from the preferred weekday activities, except in the case of being with friends, or with boy or girlfriends. This is in fact the activity preferred by most young people at the weekend (59.0%), besides going to bars and cafés (33.0%), to discos (23.0%), playing sport (22.0%) or resting (19.0%).

8.8. The number of young people with PC plus internet at home has increased, and virtually all of them have cell phones

77.0% of young people have a computer with internet at home, up 17.0% on the figure registered four years before. The group of young people with no computer at home fell by 8.0% to just 14.0% of all young people in the region, as did the group of young people with PC but no internet at home (down 9.0%). It is also interesting to note that the availability of a PC at home and internet hook-up varied with age and social class: the younger the age range, the greater the percentage of young people with this service in the home. Likewise, the proportion of young people in the lower social classes that say they have an internet connection at home is smaller.

Nearly half the young people in the region (49.8%) say they use internet between one and seven hours a week. However, another quite large group of young people say they use it less than an hour a week (18.4%), and another 17.8% say they use it between seven and fifteen hours a week. 9.2% of young people say they use internet more than 20 hours a week.

Young people use internet for social relations, for fun, as a source of information and, to a lesser extent, to learn and train. It is hardly used at all for shopping or contacting with strangers. For young people, internet is basically communication (44.2%), utility (32.9%) and «essentialness» (32.8%).
8.9. Only 6.4% do voluntary work, although four of every ten belong to some association

Today, just 6.4% of young people in the Basque region do volunteer work in an NGO or similar organizations. Most young people say that at present they do no volunteer work although they would like to (37.2%), while another major group of young people are quite clear about not doing work of this kind, answering that it wasn’t what they were looking for and that they wouldn’t enjoy it (22.5%). Women show greater receptivity than men to voluntary work. Although the percentages of men and women working as volunteers at present are practically identical, more young women say they have done voluntary work at some point in the past (16.4%) than do men (10.0%). In addition, 29.2% of men would not like to do such work, as opposed to 16.0% of women.

However, four out of every ten young people in the BC say they belong to some kind of association. More men (48.9%) belong to an association than do women (33.7%), and association membership decreases the further down the socio-economic scale and as young people get older. Over a certain period between 1990 and 2008, levels of young people belonging to some kind of association remained in a constant range of between 44.0% and 41.0%. At 22.0%, sporting associations are by some way the most popular kind of association amongst a majority of young people.
At 22.0%, sporting associations are by some way the type of organization most popular with a majority of young people.

Figure 45
Percentage of young people aged between 15 and 29 belonging to some kind of association today, according to sex and age groups (%). BC, 2008

Source: The authors, using data from Euskadiko gazteak 2008 = Juventud vasca 2008, Basque Youth Observatory.
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