The percentage of young people in the Basque Country that commute by bicycle has increased

European Mobility Week 2016

On occasion of the European Mobility Week, which will be held from 16 to 22 September, the Basque Youth Observatory is presenting data on the use of bicycles by young people in the Basque Country.

In 2016, 13.4 % of Basque youth aged 15 to 29 say they commute daily or almost daily by bicycle.

This percentage has been increasing little by little in last years, from 4.6 % in 2004, 5.3 % in 2008, to 9.6 % in 2012 and 13.4 % now, in 2016. The extension of cycle lanes (bidegorri) and the increase in the number of towns offering public bicycle loan services may have helped to promote the use of this means of transport.

Boys use bicycles much more frequently than girls. 19.6 % of boys travel by bicycle on a daily or almost daily basis, while only 6.9 % of girls use this means of transport for their regular journeys.

Over the age of 25 the percentage of those that use bicycle in their daily journeys decreases. While 15.5 % of people under the age of 20 commute by bicycle daily or almost daily, just as 16.6 % among people aged 20 to 24, this rate falls to 8.8 % in the case of people aged 25 to 29.

The drop of the use of bicycles in the highest age group coincides with the change of main occupation as age increases. Under the age of 25 most young people is studying, and we can see that 15.3 % of students use bicycles on a daily or almost
daily basis. Over the age of 25 most young people is employed and the percentage of unemployed people also increases. In these groups the ratio of those that use bicycles daily or almost daily is smaller than among students: 11.3 % among workers and 10.2 % among unemployed people.

The greatest difference between groups, however, arises from the province of residence: the use of bicycles by young people is much more frequent in Álava, where 27.9 % of young people commute by bicycle daily or almost daily. In Gipuzkoa this percentage decreases to 15.8 %. And Bizkaia is the province with the lowest ratio of young people using bicycles in their regular journeys: 7.5 %.

We can find another differences if we analyse the use of bicycles in the capitals, medium-size towns and small villages. Young people that live in capitals (Bilbao, San Sebastian or Vitoria-Gasteiz) commute by bicycle more frequently than those who live in smaller towns or villages: 18.0 % of young people living in capitals use bicycle on a daily or almost daily basis, and this percentage decreases to 11.5 % among those who live in towns where live more than 10.000 people and to 8.7 % among young people who live in villages that have less than 10.000 inhabitants.

These data come from a survey carried out in the first quarter of 2016 by the Basque Youth Observatory. In this survey a representative sample of 1500 young people of the Basque Country aged 15 to 29 (750 men and 750 women) has been enquired about this theme and much more. Presented results are a preview of the full report entitled “Basque Youth 2016” that will be published next year. This report will be the fifth number of the collection that the Basque Youth Observatory prepares every four years about the values, attitudes, opinions and behaviors of people under the age of 30.