

## **The Basque Youth Observatory has published "Basque Youth 2016", a report on the attitudes, concerns and needs of young people**

Every four years, the Basque Youth Observatory prepares this report which reflects the ideas and values of young people aged 15 to 29 in the Basque Country. With this in view, the Observatory conducts a survey of 1500 young people who are asked about various current issues. The information collected is presented in eight chapters:

1. Family situation, education and occupation
2. Assessment of their personal and social situation
3. Political attitudes and participation
4. Social values and attitudes
5. The Internet and social media.
6. Leisure, sport, culture and the Basque language
7. Inequalities between men and women
8. Health and sexuality

These chapters provide a breakdown of the information based on socio-demographic and attitudinal variables, the evolution of the results, and the comparison with data referring to Spanish or European youths when such data are available.

These are some of the salient findings:

- More than half of the people aged 15 to 29 are studying and **most of them live in the family home with their parents**. Compared to previous years, there has been an increase in the number of young people who have completed vocational training cycles.
- **Most feel satisfied with their personal situation** and, furthermore, this aspect has increased when compared to previous years. Work-related problems are still the greatest cause for concern among young people, although they mention this less than in recent years.
- Although still a minority, the percentage of those who think that the institutions take the views of young people into account has increased. Perhaps this is also why there has been **an improvement in the score given to the work performed by the public administrations in the field of youth affairs**.
- **The level of interest in politics has increased substantially** and is the highest recorded since the year 2000, exceeding the average interest rate of the general population. In 2016, four out of ten young people said they were very or fairly interested in politics. In addition, four out of every ten also expressed an interest or desire to participate more actively in public affairs.
- **Most young people define themselves ideologically as leftist**, the highest value of the series. Most also believe that our society needs in-depth reforms or even a radical change.

- **Young people define themselves mainly as non-believers**, atheists, agnostics or indifferent regarding religious matters; thus, reversing the trend found among the general population aged 18 or more in the Basque Country, most of whom describe themselves as Catholic.
- **The support for same-sex marriage**, sex change as a form of sex reassignment, and free and voluntary abortion **has also increased**. These issues, along with euthanasia, are supported by more than three-quarters of young people.
- **The percentage of young people who think that there are too many foreigners in the Basque Country has fallen significantly**. In any case, regarding the management of immigration, the option most widely supported by young people was to allow only people who have work contracts to settle in the country. In the case of refugees, young people are in favour of granting them housing and social aid.
- Practically **all Basque youths use some type of social media every day**; usually three social media outlets every day. People aged 15 to 19 are the most frequent users of social media, especially girls.
- **WhatsApp is the social network par excellence**; almost all young people use it on a daily basis, regardless of their age and sex. Instagram is the second most commonly used social network among people under the age of 20, while the second option for people between 20 and 29 years of age is taken by Facebook.
- Just over one-third of young people have used social media in the last year to promote or support some type of social discussion or protest, or to contribute their opinion on an issue. Among people with an interest in politics, this **cyber-activism** becomes a majority trait.
- Just over one-quarter of young people have had **a negative experience on social media**: being expelled from a WhatsApp group, identify theft on a social media outlet, or the dissemination of an awkward or humiliating image without their consent. The youngest group (15 - 19) is the most vulnerable in this respect.
- **One-half of young people do sport at least three days a week**. The regular practice of sport has increased from 2012 to 2016 among both young men and women; however, it is still more frequent among young men. There are also substantial differences regarding the type of sport practised by men and women.
- We can also find **significant differences in other leisure activities based on sex**: watching YouTube videos, playing video games or spending time in "lonjas" (premises young people rent to meet and spend time together), are more frequent among men; while going shopping or window shopping is far more common among women.
- Slightly more than half of young people say they are involved in some type of artistic activity as amateurs. The percentage of those who engage in artistic activities has increased compared to previous years, and **the most widespread artistic activity is photography**.

- In addition, more than half of young people say they have read a book for leisure, i.e. not related to their studies or work, in the previous month. **Reading is more common among young women** than young men.
- Compared to previous years, and despite the fact that **the knowledge of the Basque language has increased** and there are more people than ever who speak Basque fluently, **the number of young fluent Basque speakers who use the Basque language to speak to friends has fallen**, particularly in Bizkaia and, in general, less than half of the young people in the Basque Country who are fluent in Basque use it in their relationships with friends as much as or more than Spanish.
- Young people perceive that, during staff hiring processes, even when men and women have the same training and experience, **men are more likely to get the job than women**.
- **Women are more frightened than men when walking alone at night** in their towns or neighbourhoods. In addition, this level of fear has increased compared to previous years and is even more prevalent among girls under the age of 20.
- **There is a growing awareness of the seriousness of various forms of violence, whether visible or not**, that can occur in a couple. The idea that disregarding, insulting or not allowing your partner to decide things are very serious forms of abuse has gone from being a minority view 20 years ago to being supported by most young people today.
- Nine out of ten **young people feel that their health is good or very good**, while two out of every ten reported having suffered some type of psychological problem (anxiety, stress, depression, etc.) in the year prior to the survey. Most say they follow a healthy lifestyle, eat a balanced diet, and lead an active life. Compared to four years ago, the percentage of smokers has fallen, as has the percentage of people who admit to having been drunk in the month prior to the survey.
- **Young women say they have more psychological problems than young men**; however, young men present a greater prevalence of all the risk behaviours analysed: smoking, getting drunk, driving or riding in a vehicle whose driver exceeds the rate of alcohol allowed, taking illegal drugs or having unsafe sex.