

The Basque Youth Observatory is presenting a new research paper on emancipation

With the publication of "Youth Emancipation 2015 in the Basque Country", the Basque Youth Observatory is examining the difficulties and the conditions under which young people become independent.

The study is based on the answers given by people aged 16 to 29 to a specific survey on this subject. The same questions have been put to the 30 to 34 age group to study how the residential situation of young people changes, or not, as they get older. Overall, almost 2000 young people residing in the Basque Country aged 16 to 34 participated voluntarily in the survey.

We would like to emphasize 10 aspects of the study:

- 1. Between 16 and 29 years of age, most people live with their original families** (71.5%) and this percentage is higher than the average for the 28 EU member states (66.1%). The percentage of young people aged 16 to 29 who have left home stands at 26.8%, and it is not until people reach the age of 28 that more than half of them become independent.
- 2. Home rentals have increased in recent years and have become the preferred option for the future.** The percentage of independent young people living in rented properties increased from 61.0% of the total number of emancipated young people under the age of 30 in 2011 to 73.6% in 2015. Furthermore, rentals are also the preferred option for most young people who have not left home. While only 18.0% of young people living with their parents preferred renting over buying in 2011, this figure rose to 55.7% in 2015.
- 3. The main difficulty for leaving home is the excessive cost of housing whether for rent or sale.** 62.6% of emancipated youth and 77.0% of young people still living at home who would like to become independent mention this problem. In any case, the number of times this problem is mentioned by both groups has fallen when compared to previous years.
- 4. The main reason for choosing to rent is to avoid long-term mortgages.** This argument has gained a lot of weight in the last few years: in 2011, it was mentioned by 26.0% of young people who rented houses, and in 2015 it was mentioned by 42.5%.
- 5. As the percentage of young people who buy their homes decreases, there are fewer young people with mortgages.** The percentage of young people paying mortgages has fallen from 26.4% of emancipated youths in 2011 to 13.4% in 2015.

6. The average monthly mortgage or rental payments made by independent youths was 539 euros in 2015.

People renting their housing pay, on average, 543 euros per month, while people with mortgages pay 515 euros. These amounts are lower than the average rental payments and than the average mortgage payments for that same year in the Basque Country; however, the housing occupied by young people is usually smaller than the average home in the Basque Country. The average amount paid for rent has remained stable in recent years. Mortgage payments, on the other hand, have fallen by more than one hundred euros from 2011 to 2015.

7. Slightly more than a quarter of emancipated youth are struggling to pay housing costs.

28.6% of emancipated youth state they have difficulties to cope with the housing costs: rent, mortgage, owners' association fee, electricity, water, etc. And one-third (33.2%) expect to have difficulty paying these costs in the year following the survey.

The percentage of young people living independently with difficulties or who anticipate difficulties to pay housing costs has fallen slightly in recent years.

8. One out of every ten people aged 16 to 29 says they currently live with their parents but have lived independently in the past.

10.9% of all young people aged 16 to 29 have lived independently but have had to return to the family home. The most commonly cited reasons for going back to their parent's homes are that they have finished their studies or that they have broken up with their partners.

9. 2.0% of all young people aged 16 to 29 had to return to the family home for economic reasons after living independently.

These economic reasons include losing their jobs or not being able to meet their housing costs. The percentage has declined slightly compared to 2013 when it stood at 3.1% of the total number of young people under the age of 30.

10. From the age of 30, the situation changes and most people have left their original family homes. Between 30 and 34 years of age, the emancipation rate stands at 74.3%. House rentals have also increased among this age group when compared to previous years although the percentage of those who decide to buy a property (48.0%) is still slightly higher than those who decide to rent (43.5%).