

The fifth edition of the *Basque Youth Trend Journal* collection, "Beliefs and religiousness of youths in the Basque Country", has been published

According to this study, the percentage of young people living in the Basque Country who state they are Catholic has dropped by more than 20 percentage points in 10 years

Although, traditionally, Basque society has been characterized by its religious-Catholic nature, this situation has been changing in recent years, especially among young people, as evidenced by the results of this research.

Most youths in the Basque Country say they received a religious education at home (74 %), and just over a third state they regularly attended religious services during their childhood or when they were teenagers (35%). Even so, not even half (39%) of the young men and women living in the Basque Country consider themselves believers in any religion and even fewer (23%) state they are very or somewhat religious.

Among the 39% of believers, we find that 37% define themselves as Catholic (7% practising Catholics and 30% non-practising Catholics) and 2% adhere to other religions.

The increasing secularisation of our society can be clearly seen among young people: over the last decade there has been a 22 point decline in the percentage of those who consider themselves Catholic (practising or not) compared with the figure for 1998, which represented the majority (59%).

Furthermore, this departure from religion is confirmed once again by the fact that almost one third of young people (32%) say they "do not believe in God now but did previously".

Moreover, in comparison with Spain, it is noteworthy that the percentage of young people in the Basque Country who declare themselves unbelievers, atheists / agnostics reaches 45%, double the state average, which stands at 20%.

The cause for this decline in the religiousness of young people is founded on the negative view that young people have of religions: 42% believe that there is very little truth in any, 72% believe that religions are mainly a source of conflict rather than peace, 72% say that very religious people are often too intolerant of others, 69% believe that the churches and religious organisations in our society have more power than they should and 51% believe that Spain would be a better country if religion were not so influential.

Consequently, with the future in mind, over half of young people believe that the Catholic Church should adapt to modern times (52%). This opinion is shared largely (71%) by young people who are very or somewhat religious.

These data are based on a survey of young people aged 15 to 29 and, in addition to the analysis of the most important results, the publication provides the questionnaire used in the survey and the possibility of consulting all the data collected based on six variables: province of residence, sex, age group, subjective social class, degree of religiousness and, finally, left-right tendencies.

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