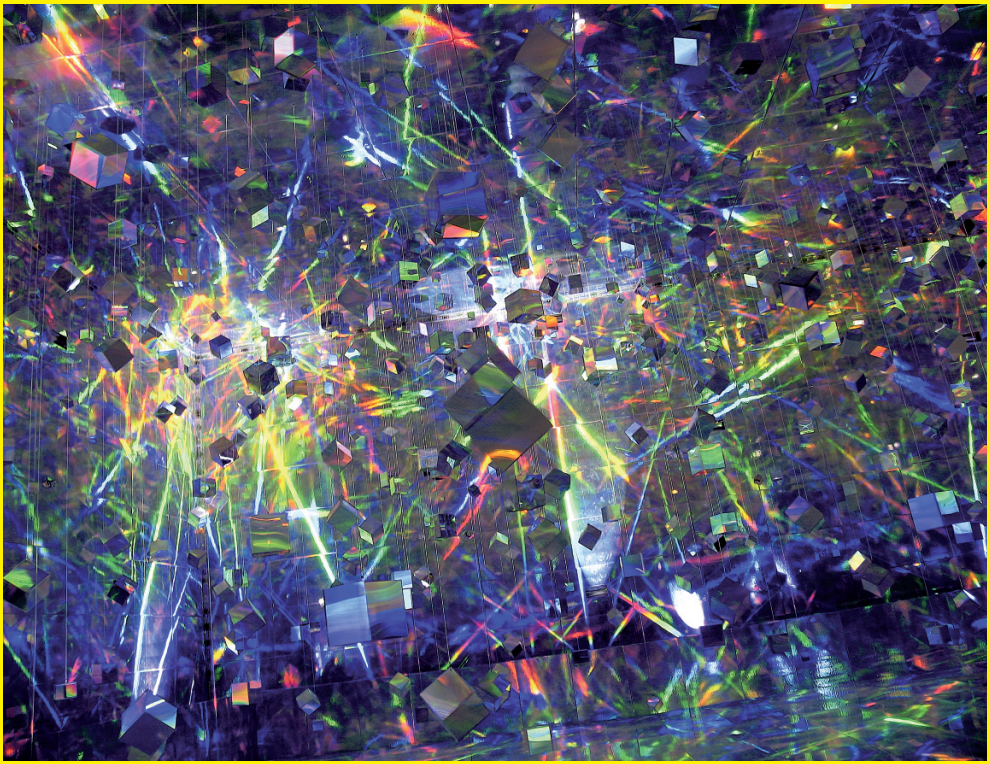
Dennis Day, Annette Grindsted, Brigitte Piquard
and David Zammit (eds.)

Cities and Crises



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Cities and Crises

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Immigration Challenges in Metropolitan Bilbao: A Case Study

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The Bilbao metropolitan area underwent an important internal migration during the second half of the 20th century, but it was not until the final years of that century and especially with the beginning of the 21st century that significant numbers of people from other countries began to arrive and settle. Thus, during the last decade, year on year, the numbers of resident foreigners in the Bilbao metropolitan area continued to rise, and at an increasing rate, following the pattern in the Spanish State as a whole.

Faced with this new reality, there have been numerous responses from different national, regional, provincial and local governments, with the aim of understanding this new scenario and developing the necessary policies to respond to the new needs. In this context we could mention the different modifications of the Spanish Law of Immigration and its subsidiary regulations or the successive regularisation processes carried out at national level; the creation, at regional level, of an Immigration Directorate within the Basque Government; the inclusion of foreign groups in underprivileged situations within the scope of their activity by provincial social services, and the development of municipal departments for immigration in various City councils. Even civil society, through its voluntary associations, has reacted to adapt to a multi-ethnic and multicultural society, developing specialised organisations and *ad hoc* programmes aimed at confronting the specific challenges raised by this new migratory flow.

The increasing arrivals of foreign populations have redirected academic attention away from internal and towards international immigration and led to the posing of new questions when faced with the need to know and respond to a diverse and increasingly multicultural society. For that reason it comes as no surprise that during recent years the

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number of studies and researchers dedicated to this phenomenon has increased, both at state level and in our own context. But there is still much to know, given the great dynamism presented by the current migratory phenomenon and given the shortage of data available to analyse it, although the sources of information are also becoming more abundant. For this reason, there are still many questions about what to do when faced with certain manifestations of this migratory phenomenon and how to do so in the best possible way. It is within this context that we base this article, focused on the topic of immigration in the Bilbao metropolitan area. Until now there have been no studies which have taken the metropolitan area as a reference point to study immigration, although specific studies have been carried out in some of its municipalities, like Bilbao, Barakaldo and Getxo.

This article constitutes a first approach to understanding the reality of foreign immigration in metropolitan Bilbao. To this end, first of all, we are going to focus the article on the recent development of immigration in the Bilbao metropolis, framing the phenomenon in the context of its administrative-political structure, its sociological reality and its socio-territorial panorama. In the second part we will focus specifically on immigration, seeking an overview through the variables of age, sex, nationality and other variables that characterise the foreign inhabitants of Metropolitan Bilbao. Finally, and in view of the reality observed, we will finish with a reflective exercise in which we will consider some questions regarding research and action in the area of immigration.

The Bilbao Metropolis and Immigration

The Bilbao metropolitan area is defined from the territorial point of view by a settled urban concentration on the banks of the Lower Nervión. This is an area that includes 31 municipalities in a river estuary which has historically constituted the dividing axis of two socially differentiated worlds: the right bank, primarily residential in character, and the left bank, industrial in character, which has historically contained the main factories and working-class housing. As in many other places, we are here talking about two separate worlds that live side by side without mixing. The Bilbao metropolitan area has an approximate area of 3.716 Hectares, and a population that reaches almost 900.000 inhabitants, distributed as shown in Table 1. It consists of a central municipality, Bilbao, which has nearly 400.000 inhabitants; three municipalities of over 50.000 inhabitants each: Barakaldo, Getxo and Portugalete; and five municipalities having between 25.000 and 50.000 inhabitants:

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Table 1

Demographic development of the Bilbao Metropolitan Area. Annual growth index

Municipality	District	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	A.G.I. 1991-2001
Bilbao	Bilbao	393.759	381.506	369.839	361.128	349.972	–0.55
Arrigorriaga	Ibaizabal	9.011	9.469	9.913	10.348	11.140	1.17
Basauri	Ibaizabal	52.554	51.931	50.224	46.760	45.085	–1.08
Etxebarri	Ibaizabal	6.548	6.431	6.458	6.248	7.043	0.87
Galdakao	Ibaizabal	26.785	27.232	28.569	29.600	29.544	0.34
Zaratamo	Ibaizabal	1.768	1.609	1.634	1.594	1.651	0.10
Barakaldo	Left bank	118.615	114.094	105.088	99.679	94.478	–1.06
Portugalete	Left bank	58.071	57.794	55.823	53.561	51.066	–0.89
Santurtzi	Left bank	53.919	52.502	50.466	49.224	47.173	–0.67
Sestao	Left bank	40.374	38.148	35.948	33.470	31.773	–1.23
Barrika	Plentzia-Mungia	774	767	877	1.143	1.230	3.35
Gorliz	Plentzia-Mungia	2.986	2.665	2.917	3.847	4.486	4.24
Plentzia	Plentzia-Mungia	2.844	2.770	2.542	3.071	3.643	3.56
Sopelana	Plentzia-Mungia	6.271	7.051	8.135	9.538	10.709	2.73
Urduliz	Plentzia-Mungia	2.643	2.507	2.580	2.764	3.142	1.96
Derio	Txorierri	5.133	5.062	4.871	4.673	4.846	–0.05
Erandio	Txorierri	25.184	25.134	25.055	23.230	22.422	–1.11
Larrabetzu	Txorierri	1.629	1.547	1.472	1.486	1.551	0.52
Lezama	Txorierri	1.827	1.901	2.020	2.046	2.113	0.45
Loiu	Txorierri	1.797	1.685	1.694	1.680	2.199	2.59
Sondika	Txorierri	3.901	3.606	3.345	3.512	3.978	1.73
Zamudio	Txorierri	3.341	3.228	3.179	3.157	3.012	–0.54
Berango	Uribe-Coast	4.136	3.931	4.102	4.596	5.040	2.05
Getxo	Uribe-Coast	67.793	77.856	79.954	81.446	82.285	0.29
Leioa	Uribe-Coast	22.382	24.107	24.815	27.089	28.381	1.34
Abanto/Zierbena	Mining zone	9.461	9.346	9.472	8.527	9.036	–0.47
Alonsotegui	Mining zone			3.075	2.863	2.662	–1.44
Muskiz	Mining zone	6.054	6.224	6.358	6.343	6.558	0.31
Ortuella	Mining zone	9.100	9.200	8.976	8.594	8.684	–0.33
Trapagaran	Mining zone	13.677	13.406	13.239	12.921	12.621	–0.48
Zierbena	Mining zone				1.185	1.215	
Bilbao Metropolitan area		952.337	942.709	922.640	905.323	888.738	–0.37

A.G.I. = Annual growth index

Source: Prepared by the authors from EUSTAT data.

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Basauri, Santurtzi, Sestao, Galdakao and Leioa. The remaining 23 municipalities, have fewer than 25.000 inhabitants each.

For many years, the Bilbao area has been an area of immigration. During the 20th century and until the 1980s, it was constantly receiving populations coming from other Spanish provinces. These people moved from the agricultural areas to work, especially in the industries of the Basque Country and those located in the Bilbao metropolitan area. The economic crisis of the end of the 1970s and the consequent industrial reconversion of the 1980s stopped this massive transfer of people. During the 1980s and 1990s, the Bilbao metropolis changed in appearance, becoming a services zone, after experiencing the closure of numerous industrial companies.

Foreign immigration, on the other hand, has not occurred until very recently, but its growth has accelerated greatly. In 1996 the number of foreigners reached 5.128 (Table 2), which represented only 0,6% of the total population in the metropolitan area, and the majority of them came from European Union countries. Four years later, in 2000, the number of foreigners had increased little, reaching 7.471 people, 0,8% of the total population. It was from that moment on that year upon year the number of immigrants started to grow quickly (Table 1),

Table 2

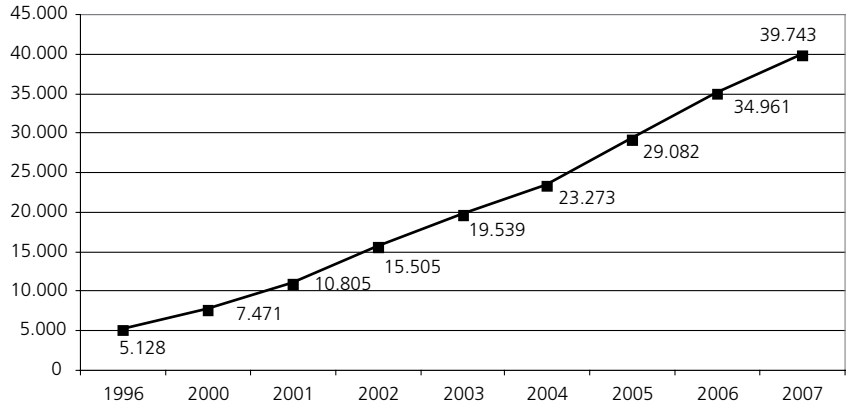
Development of the foreign population resident in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area, according to municipality of residence. 1996 and 2000-2007

Municipality	1996	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Abanto and Zierbena	14	37	45	60	67	83	98	118	129
Alonsotegi	1	0	5	18	26	36	51	62	67
Arrigorriaga	29	58	79	124	190	247	285	310	396
Barakaldo	919	482	631	810	1.078	1.414	1.901	2.535	3.216
Barrika	11	13	19	26	26	30	32	39	49
Basauri	148	216	286	313	435	545	722	887	1.051
Berango	34	64	75	122	165	173	219	211	273
Bilbao	2.217	3.953	6.125	8.820	11.096	13.049	16.215	19.611	21.890
Derio	17	8	17	47	83	83	124	135	169
Erandio	67	114	188	273	436	546	742	1.030	1.285
Etxebarri	30	38	49	55	67	90	142	133	164
Galdakao	70	105	137	214	330	429	507	544	596
Getxo	873	1.327	1.718	2.315	2.778	3.020	3.605	4.003	4.254
Gorliz	37	35	64	81	112	123	145	182	231
Larrabetzu	3	4	4	4	7	9	12	14	23

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Municipality	1996	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Leioa	120	241	335	522	692	806	980	1.146	1.349
Lezama	6	5	7	16	19	39	58	78	100
Loiu	4	11	34	267	147	209	150	164	159
Muskiz	6	13	14	29	50	85	91	112	124
Ortuella	16	26	29	38	46	53	66	77	85
Plentzia	21	39	52	79	97	120	153	162	106
Portugalete	118	154	168	270	336	460	631	743	882
Santurtzi	138	174	255	302	379	557	770	999	1.148
Sestao	108	171	239	309	332	383	543	741	943
Sondika	6	6	17	33	46	69	97	130	149
Sopelana	75	107	122	198	268	325	370	395	441
Trapagaran	19	28	29	56	74	106	121	145	169
Urduliz	10	25	40	46	53	68	109	79	84
Zamudio	2	5	8	38	77	86	109	132	159
Zaratamo	4	9	10	11	12	14	20	29	31
Zierbana	5	3	4	9	15	17	14	15	21
Metropolitan Bilbao total	5.128	7.471	10.805	15.505	19.539	23.273	29.082	34.961	39.743
% Metropolitan Bilbao	0,6	0,8	1,2	1,7	2,2	2,6	3,2	3,9	4,4
Bizkaia total	6.533	9.419	13.120	18.661	23.908	28.876	36.217	43.395	50.092

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI.



Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI

Graph 1

Development of the foreign population in Metropolitan Bilbao.
1996, 2000 to 2007

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representing in 2007 4,4% of the population, with a total of 39.743 resident foreigners. The arrival of foreigners has limited the population reduction that took place until 2001 and this is reflected in Table 1.

This increasing presence of foreign population is centred on the Bilbao metropolitan area, a zone with specific socio-demographic and economic characteristics which constitute the framework for development and living conditions to which these new inhabitants needed to be incorporated. For this reason, we are going to dedicate the next section to presenting some of its main characteristics.

Sociodemograhipc and economic characterization of the metropolitan area

The uninterrupted urban growth of the Bilbao metropolitan area was strongly shaken in the 1980s by a deep crisis in the productive fabric which set off all the alarms for the public authorities. Massive closures of companies, industrial desertification, the appearance of pockets of poverty, € were some of the symptoms that forced a change in course for the metropolitan economy, which culminated in a profound restructuring and the need to find new incentives for foreign investment.

The commitment to a diversified economy based, on the one hand, on industry which urgently needed modernisation of its productive apparatus; and, on the other, on decisive action with regard to installations and infrastructures, gave rise to the strategic Plan of the Bilbao Metropolitan Area, carried out at the beginning of the 1990s, which was the tool on which the metropolitan transformation pivoted. In particular, the commitment to give cultural installations, of which the Guggenheim Museum is a good example, a strategic place as instruments of economic and social recovery was one of the keys to this process.

The transformation of the Bilbao Metropolitan Area cannot be understood except with reference to the socio-political model on which it is based. Although the concept of this Metropolitan Area and its structuring go back to the 1950s, specifically to the creation of the Administrative Corporation of Greater Bilbao, at present the executive competences regarding metropolitan planning fall on the Bizkaia Provincial Delegation, which has the economic competences and resources for the development of planning. From the administrative point of view the composition of the Bilbao metropolitan area is as it appears in Table 3.

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Table 3

Political-Administrative division of the Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Organization	Nature
Metropolitan Area	Territorial organization that forms a socioeconomic unit and which is composed of 31 municipalities. Its size is of 1 million inhabitants. Its area is of 38 km^2. The competence in the matter of metropolitan planning at executive level falls on the Bizkaia Provincial Delegation.
Sub-Area	Territorial divisions of the region based on the geographic location of the municipalities. Organizations which have joint services in the matters of social services, cleaning, employment,...
Municipality	The City council is the highest municipal institution and is responsible for municipal planning. Its municipalities are of medium size
District	Administrative unit relating to census matters. Bilbao Capital is distributed in 8 districts of some 50.000 inhabitants each.
Neighbourhood	Residential areas of historical nature that have a certain social homogeneity and collective identity
Census Section	Lower-level administrative division. Thus for example, Bilbao capital is made up of 8 Districts, 39 Neighbourhoods and 290 Census Sections. Disaggregated information on the resident population is available at this level.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Demography

A progressive ageing of the population is taking place. If in 1991 the average age of the population was 37,9 years, 10 years later it is 41,9 years. The abrupt drop in the birth rate has implied a loss in size of the younger cohorts as a proportion of the total population. Those under 19 years old have gone from 23,7% in 1991 to 16,2% in 2001 (Table 4). This is a significant shift. The general aging of the population has affected the active population. The Replacement Index, which expresses the relationship between workers who leave the job market through retirement and those who join, shows that in recent years many more

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leave than join. Women of fertile age (15-44 years) have diminished. In parallel, the population over 65 years has increased in number, going from 13,3% to 18,9%, that is to say, an increase of 5 percentage points in barely ten years.

Table 4

Demographic indicators, Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Relation of Indices	1991			2001		
	General	Male	Female	General	Male	Female
Average Age	37.9	36.5	39.3	41.9	40.3	43.5
Index of Youth (0-19 years)	23.7	25.0	22.5	16.2	17.3	15.2
Index of Age (> 64 years)	13.3	10.9	15.6	18.9	16.0	21.5
Replacement Index (Outgoing workers (60-64 years) per 100 incoming workers (15-19 years)	71.1	67.9	74.4	96.9	89.5	104.8
Women of Fertile Age (15-44 total years as a % of all women)	47.0	N/A	N/A	43.3	N/A	N/A
Young Workers (15-39 years as a % of total population)	40.5	N/A	N/A	37.2	N/A	N/A
Older Workers (40-64 years as a % of total population)	30.9	N/A	N/A	32.9	N/A	N/A
Index of Maternal Load (children < 5 years as a % of women of fertile age)	13.6	N/A	N/A	16.3	N/A	N/A

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 5 is highly illustrative of the territorial dynamics of the metropolitan area. The larger municipalities, traditional recipients of manpower and industrial in nature, have lost weight to the benefit of smaller periurban municipalities of semi-rural/semi-urban character, which are attracting the economically more powerful social classes. That is to say, a process of increasing residential differentiation has taken place by which the largest municipalities lose population to the benefit of the smallest, which are growing thanks to the fact that they provide areas of low residential density.

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Table 5

Development of population by size of municipality. Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Size Municipalities	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	A.G.I. 1981-1991	A.G.I. 1991-2001
< 10.000	63.942	62.479	65.572	67.329	72.089	0.25	0.95
10.000-25.000	54.143	55.060	56.342	56.037	56.892	0.40	0.10
25.000-50.000	196.014	193.920	190.022	186.143	181.956	–0.31	–0.43
50.000-100.000	244.479	249.744	240.865	234.686	227.829	–0.15	–0.56
More 100.000	393.759	381.506	369.839	361.128	349.972	–0.63	–0.55
B.M.A.	952.337	942.709	922.640	905.323	888.738	–0.32	–0.37

Source: Prepared by the authors.
A.G.I. Annual growth index.

Housing

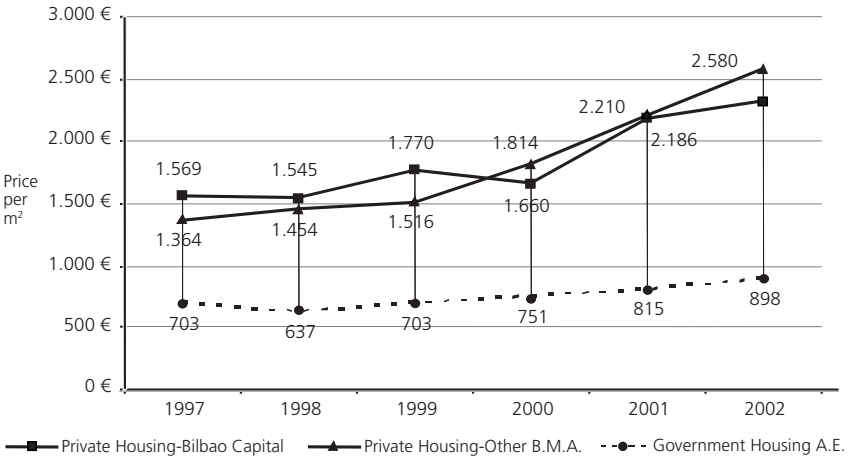
The housing stock of the Bilbao metropolitan area is of approximately 400.000 dwellings, of which 85% are permanently occupied and the remaining 15% are made up of empty or seasonal housing. Owner-occupied dwellings represent approximately 90% of the housing stock whereas the supply of rental dwellings barely reaches 10%.

One of the structural characteristics of the metropolitan area is its lack of vacant land available for future growth. This is a consolidated urban area which has hardly any land available to promote new residential developments. This is due to the relatively rugged topography of the area, which has determined the urban development at the heart of the valley following the course of the river, but which at present is practically saturated. The lack of land partly explains one of the chronic problems of the area which powerfully affects the most disadvantaged classes, we are referring to the high price of housing. The estimates made by the Basque Government in relation to the problem of housing show that there is a deep imbalance between the demand-need for housing and the available supply., There is an unsatisfied demand for housing that extends to approximately 12% of the population which, for diverse reasons, cannot gain access to the housing market. All the people of foreign origin who are registered will be able to apply to become recipients of interventions designed to guarantee the right of foreigners to decent housing as a basic social right.

The average size of a house is 75 square metres and from the point of view of the facilities available we can say that practically 100% of houses have covered the basic needs of the residents as regards home

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facilities such as hot water and heating. On the other hand, as shown in Table 6, a remarkable increase can be seen in recent years in the use of new technological appliances as domestic facilities.



Source: Prepared by the authors from EUSTAT data

Graph 2

Development of the price per m² of housing in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Table 6

Level of facilities of homes in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Level of facilities	1989	1994	1999
Hot water	98.1	99.2	99.4
Telephone	89.8	93.84	95.4
Fridge-Freezer	83.3	62.1	84.9
Washing Machine	97.0	98.1	99.2
Dishwasher	15.0	17.4	23.9
Vacuum Cleaner	67.2	75.6	81.3
Stereo	25.9	46.7	67.9
Camera	61.7	69.5	74.3
Video Camera	4.8	10.2	17.2
Colour TV	91.4	98.5	99.4
Video	32.5	58.8	70.5
Personal Computer	11.3	26.1	30.9

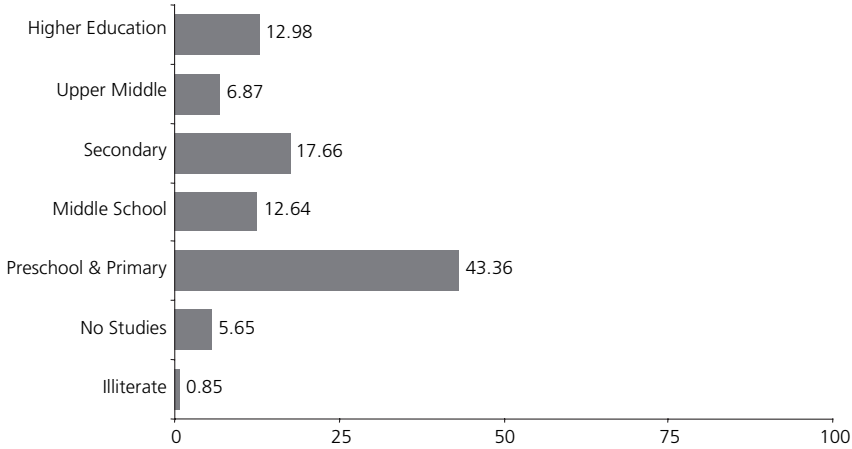
Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of EUSTAT data

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Education

19% of the Bilbao adult population have completed their university studies (higher + intermediate-higher) (Table 3). At the other end of the scale, the population which has not completed primary education represents almost 6% of the total. The most numerous group, however, consists of those who have completed primary education (43%), followed by those people who have completed their secondary and/or professional studies (30%).

Since education is understood in our society as a basic right, as well as an obligation for the population aged between 6 and 16 years, access to education is guaranteed for all the foreign population registered in any of the municipalities of Metropolitan Bilbao (regardless of their legal/administrative status). The scope of education includes both obligatory education as well as other types of educational actions offered or ensured in the Basque educational system from the public sector, in particular, adult education.



Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of EUSTAT data

Graph 3

Level of education of the population of the Bilbao Metropolitan Area, 2001. (%)

Health

Life expectancy at birth is 76,4 years for men and 83,7 years for women in the Basque Country, one of the highest of Europe. The im-

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provement of the health system and habits of life has meant that in the last 20 years an average of 5 years has been gained in terms of life expectancy, going, in the case of the men, from 71 years approximately in 1980 to 76,4 years in 2003. Identically, women have improved their life expectancy in the same proportion, from 78,5 years in 1980 to 83,7 years in 2003.

With regards to Health Expenditure it is observed that its proportion of GDP is still far below that of countries like Switzerland, Germany, France or Norway (Table 7). The health cost per inhabitant is 1.342 €,

Table 7

Health Care Expenditure and Economic Level. Countries of the OECD. 1999

Countries	Total health care cost, % of GDP	Public health cost % of GDP	Public health cost % of total health cost	Cost of health per Inhabitant ($)	GDP per inhabitant ($)
Austria	8,2	5,9	72,1	2.014	24.643
Basque Country	6,1	4,6	76,0	1.342	22.073
Belgium	8,8	6,3	71,3	2.181	24.837
Canada	9,3	6,6	70,6	2.463	26.440
Denmark	8,4	6,9	82,2	2.275	27.069
Finland	6,8	5,2	75,7	1.547	22.702
France	9,4	7,3	78,1	2.125	22.691
Germany *	10,3	7,8	75,8	2.361	22.953
Greece *	8,4	4,7	56,3	1.198	14.327
Holland	8,7	6	68,5	2.259	25.887
Iceland	8,7	7,4	84,8	2.287	26.350
Ireland *	6,8	5,2	76,8	1.534	22.710
Italy **	8,2	5,5	67,3	1.905	23.262
Japan *	7,4	5,8	78,5	1.795	24.102
Luxembourg	6,1	5,7	92,9	2.543	41.656
Norway	9,3	7	75,8	2.612	28.140
Portugal *	7,7	5,1	66,9	1.203	15.696
Sweden *	7,9	6,6	83,8	1.732	21.855
Switzerland *	10,4	7,6	73,2	2.853	27.336
Spain*	7,0	5,4	76,4	1.194	17.027
United Kingdom	6,9	5,8	83,3	1.569	22.689
United States of America	12,9	5,7	44,5	4.358	33.874

* Data as of 1998.
** Data regarding Public Health Cost in 1998.
Source: EUSTAT, Accounts of the Health, 1999.

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above the Spanish average, but very low with respect to that of the more developed countries. Nevertheless, 76% of the total cost is utilised for public health care, which in general gives an idea of the weight of this sector within the health system.

Considered as a basic social right, all registered foreigners in any of the municipalities of Metropolitan Bilbao (regardless of their legal/administrative status), will be able to apply for a health card, which will give them access to the Basque Health Service under the same conditions as the native population.

Labour Market

The recovery from the crisis of the 1980s has noticeably modified the indicators regarding the labour market. The fall in the rate of unemployment and therefore the positive development of the rate of employment have been spectacular. If in 1986 one in four people of working age was unemployed (25,8%), this number had fallen to 9,6% in 2001. The rate of unemployment in 2006 is 5,6%. On the contrary, the rate of employment, which represents the working population as a percentage of the potentially active population, has gone from 74,2% to 85,6%.

Table 8

Development of the Rates of Employment and Unemployment. Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Region	Employment rate (%)				Unemployment Rate (%)			
	1986	1991	1996	2001	1986	1991	1996	2001
Bilbao	74,1	78,4	73,2	85,2	25,9	15,5	14,5	9,5
Ibaizabal	75,2	80,6	74,5	87,9	24,8	16,1	16,0	9,3
Left bank	71,7	76,0	68,9	84,0	28,3	18,6	21,1	11,6
Sopela-Plentzia	76,5	80,9	79,0	88,5	23,5	15,4	11,1	6,8
Txorierri	74,0	79,2	72,8	86,9	26,0	15,6	13,8	7,1
Uribe-Kosta	81,3	83,4	78,2	87,2	18,7	12,3	11,8	8,0
Mining zone	69,8	75,8	70,9	85,5	30,2	18,1	18,7	9,3
Metropolitan Bilbao	74,2	78,6	72,9	85,6	25,8	16,1	16,1	9,6
Basque Country	62,9	65,2	61,8	70,9	22,9	19,2	23,3	11,6

Source: EUSTAT.

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In parallel, the economy of the metropolitan area presents a fairly diversified structure in which commerce, and real estate and enterprise activities and services, predominate over the rest (Table 9).

Table 9

Distribution of the Working Population by Sectors of Activity. Bilbao Metropolitan Area

Activity Sector	2004
Extractive industries	0.01
Manufacturing industry	4.93
Production and distribution of electrical energy, gas and water	0.04
Construction	9.60
Commerce; motor vehicle repair	21.81
Hotel trade	6.94
Transport, storage and communications	6.97
Financial services	2.11
Real estate and rental activities; enterprise services	15.14
Public administration, defense and obligatory Social Security	0.30
Education	1.91
Sanitary and veterinary activities, social service	3.98
Other social and community service activities	5.00
Metropolitan Bilbao	78.74
Bizkaia	100.00

Source: EUSTAT, Labour Market.

Productivity and Standard of Living

The GDP per capita indicates the value of what is produced and is indicative of the degree of wealth of a country. Table 10 reflects the development undergone by the Basque Country as a whole in relation to the remainder of European countries. The data show that while in 1995 the Basque Country occupied position 12 among the countries of the EU-25, in 2004 it occupies 5th place, behind Holland. Following Ireland and Luxembourg in that order, it has been the area that has experienced most growth during the period 1995-2004. In addition, the Basque Country is 24.8 points above the Spanish average and 22.9 points above the European average.

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Table 10

Development of the GDP per capita (Index)

Countries	1995	2000	2004
EU25	100	100	100
Luxemburg	177.6	216.9	222.0
Ireland	99.7	127.2	140.6
Netherlands	119.5	120.7	124.9
Denmark	125.3	127.3	122.7
Austria	128.4	126.9	122.0
United Kingdom	109.8	113.5	118.7
Belgium	119.5	116.0	118.3
Sweden	117.6	118.9	116.0
Finland	106.1	114.0	114.4
France	115.8	114.7	110.3
Germany	121.8	112.9	109.3
Italy	114.7	110.4	104.9
Spain	87.0	93.1	98.1
Greece	71.7	71.9	81.7
Cyprus	85.6	85.5	81.2
Slovenia	44.3	73.5	78.6
Portugal	75.4	81.2	76.5
Malta	-	76.8	70.6
Czech Republic	69.6	64.3	70.4
Hungary	49.3	53.1	61.1
Slovakia	44.3	47.5	52.1
Estonia	35.3	43.2	50.7
Lithuania	33.9	38.2	47.8
Poland	40.5	45.9	46.7
Latvia	29.7	35.2	43.1
Basque Country	104.5	113.9	122.9

Source: EUROSTAT.

Social Protection

In the Basque Country public policies against poverty began with the Integral Plan to Fight Against Poverty of 1989, whose main objective was to restrain the more severe consequences of the poverty which the economic crisis of the 1970s and 80s had imposed on Basque society. After

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the end of the period of application of the Integral Plan to Fight Against Poverty in 1992, it was verified that there was no point in trying to end poverty, which had in fact become endemic, through extraordinary measures, specifically through temporary economic aid. In this way, the actions adopted as regards the fight against poverty became structural and were integrated within the ordinary budgets of the Public Administrations.

The basic income

The model of guaranteed minimum incomes of the Basque Government contains two types of economic benefits and an insertion agreement. The most important benefit, called the Basic Income since the legislative modification of 2000 and prior to that IMI (Minimum Income of Insertion), is at present 81% of the multi-industry minimum wage (SMI), 435.17 Euros a month in 2004 (for households with a single recipient). Its objective is to cover the basic expenses needed for survival and beneficiaries must satisfy the following main requirements: to be older than 23 years, not to have an income above 81% of the SMI (for a single recipient), except when there is income from work, in which case this percentage rises, and to count as an independent economic unit (independent household) for at least a year (demonstrable through registration with a municipality and a corresponding contract of rental or sublet). The basic income is legally considered as a subjective right, which means that it cannot be eliminated, suspended or cut back in cases of insufficient budget.

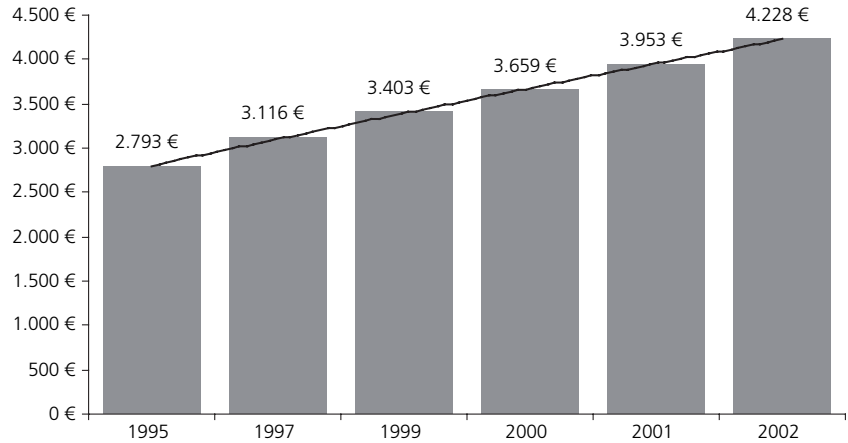
Emergency Social Aid (AES)

The other economic benefit is Emergency Social Aid (AES), designed to cover specific expenses, whether ordinary or extraordinary, necessary to prevent, palliate or avoid situations of social marginalisation. The maximum annual amounts by type of expense and recipient are variable.[2] The conditions for receiving the AES are: one must be over 18

[2] For the year 2004 they were: 3.245,47 Euros for expenses of rent or derived from interest and amortization of credit; 1.081,82 Euros for other expenses necessary for the benefit and maintenance of the home; 1.803,04 Euros for expenses of furniture and home appliances; 1,803.04 Euros for expenses of adaptation, repair and/or facilities in the home; 1,803.04 Euros for expenses regarding primary needs and 3.245,47 Euros for expenses from prior indebtedness.

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years old, not have an income over 1.5 times the Basic Rent (this amount is increased in cases of having a working income) and residence in the Basque Country for at least 6 months. The AES is not a subjective right, which implies that it is cut back when the budget is insufficient, which has been the norm throughout the life of the AES and which, in recent years, is becoming a very serious problem since, given the scarcity of housing, three quarters of this aid go to cover rent, not meeting even half of real demand and leaving the other types of expenses anticipated in the Law very lacking in funds.



Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of EUSTAT

Graph 4

Cost per inhabitant of social protection

Territorial Problematic of the Sub-areas of the Metropolitan Area

Territorially, within the Bilbao metropolitan area we find different zones whose internal peculiarities are presented next:

Bilbao Capital

This is the central nucleus, financial centre and main population entity. It is made up of 8 districts and 39 neighbourhoods. Bilbao is a consolidated urban area without capacity for real territorial growth within the limits of the municipality, due to its relatively rugged topography. Urban

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growth has consequently shifted to the bordering municipalities. The urban crisis of the 1980s gave rise to a Strategic Plan for the renovation of the city on the basis of the recovery of vacant land derived from the closure of various companies and the crisis of the 1980s. This Strategic Plan was pivotal to the beginning of projects like the Guggenheim museum, Metro, Euskalduna Conference and Music Centre, Tram and others.

Right bank

This area includes the municipalities of Leioa, Getxo and Berango. These are mainly upper-middle-class, residential municipalities, population centres with relatively high income and which have served as areas for expansion for those social classes which, seeking to flee from the city centre, looked for pleasant surroundings and high quality of life. Getxo is outstanding for its history, size and importance and constitutes a symbolic referent for certain sectors of society for which this municipality is a central area.

Left bank

A traditional working class enclave in process of deep reconstruction, this area includes the municipalities of Barakaldo, Sestao, Portugalete and Santurtzi. This is an area occupied by major industries which has undergone a progressive process of industrial dismantling and which has been forced to carry out a policy of economic and social regeneration. At present, specific activities are being implemented concerning recovery of polluted land, the development of local use policies and activities aimed at eradicating the problems derived from the concentration of ethnic minorities; like, for example, gypsies in districts that present clear symptoms of degradation. This is the case of the Special Plan for Chavarri in Sestao.

Txorierri

This is an expanding area next to Bilbao, including the following municipalities: Erandio, Loiu, Sondika, Derio, Lezama, Zamudio and Larrabetzu. All of them have a semirural-semiurban nature, abundant land and a concentration of some of the most important infrastructures: Airport, technology parks. They have become places of reference for the upper class in recent years, due to the supply of low density housing. The concentration of high-tech companies and some of the more important research centers gives this area a strategic nature. Some municipalities

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like Derio or Erandio, still have an industrial nature as a result of past developments, although they are undergoing a profound transformation.

Mining zone

As its name indicates, these are municipalities that historically correspond to working-class areas dedicated to the extraction of iron and which at present are particularly industrial in character. This area includes the municipalities of Abanto and Zierbena, Muskiz, Trapagarán, Ortuella, and Alonsotegi. The progressive abandonment of the mines has created a need to replace the old mining uses by others and to reconvert the productive fabric of these municipalities, which until very recently were clearly working class in nature. This is an area of prolongation of the Left bank to the foot of the Triano mountains, which is undergoing full reconversion. The population is mainly working class and has been highly affected by the active political need to implement social welfare programmes to palliate the problems of unemployment and poverty. At present it is immersed in profound changes, derived from innovative projects in the areas of energy and new technologies.

Ibaizabal

Located in the upper part of the river basin, this zone is composed of the following municipalities: Basauri, Galdakao, Etxebarri, Arrigorriaga and Zaratamo. These are densely populated municipalities with an old industrial tradition, which present a profile in accordance with their character of nuclei and which have long played host to incoming workers since a stage (1960s-70s) when the need to find housing prevailed over any other criterion related to quality of life. Basauri constitutes the most populated nucleus and the one with the greatest industrial tradition. Its landscape, shattered by countless industrial activities and neighbourhoods constructed in a chaotic way, with hardly any planning criteria, is a clear indicator of the problems currently presented by these municipalities in urgent need of active policies of regeneration and improvement in the quality of life. Etxebarri and Galdakao, although to a lesser extent, also present symptoms derived from uncontrolled growth that it has been necessary to reverse after many years. Zaratamo and Arrigorriaga have a somewhat distinct character, due to being essentially nuclei of residential expansion.

In fact, the Bilbao metropolitan area is an old industrial area that has experienced a shock during the 1980s-90s due to an economic crisis which has forced a serious reformulation of its role and meaning. The

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political and financial capacity of the Basque institutions has led to a profound transformation of the area in question. The demographic crisis which has affected the area as a whole, derived from an abrupt fall in the birth rate, has been compensated by the arrival of the immigrant population in a slow, but continuous, process which has gained visibility in recent years, attracted by the capacity of the economy to use this population both in the industrial and service sectors.

Overview of Immigraion in Metropolitan Bilbao

The more recent data available, from 1 January 2007, show that at the beginning of the past year 39.743 foreign people lived in the Bilbao metropolitan area, constituting 4,4% of the resident population. This number represents 40% of the foreigners registered in the Basque Country and 79% of the foreign population registered in the province of Bizkaia. Table 11 presents the comparative elements of population in relation to the whole of the Basque Country and the three Basque provinces, and here we can state that the Bilbao metropolitan area represents the greatest urban concentration of the region, since it contains 42% of the region's total population and 79% of that of the province of Bizkaia, of which Bilbao is capital. Given this concentration, the analysis of immigration in this metropolitan zone seems to be a good idea, since it contains four out of every ten foreign people registered in the Basque country.

Table 11

Total population and foreign population in the Basque Country by territories. 1.1.2007

	Population	Foreigners	% foreigners
Alava	305.459	19.392	6,3
Gipuzkoa	694.944	29.040	4,2
Bizkaia	1.141.457	50.092	4,4
Total Basque Country	2.141.860	98.524	4,6
Metropolitan Bilbao	897.511	39.743	4,4
% Metropolitan Bilbao with respect to the Basque Country	42%	40,3%	
% Metropolitan Bilbao with respect to Bizkaia	78,6%	79,3%	

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI. Municipal register.

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The available sources of data allow us a vision of the situation of the Bilbao metropolitan area in relation to the foreign population with regard to several aspects, including their territorial distribution by municipalities and districts, and their breakdown by sex, age and regions of the world from which the immigrants come.

Territorial Distribution of the Foreign Population

The municipalities around the Bilbao capital, comprising in total of 31 population nuclei, are diverse in both size and the number of foreigners resident in them. Altogether there are almost 900.000 inhabitants, of whom 4,4% are foreigners, that is to say 39.743 people. Table 12 shows their territorial distribution. The municipalities of Bilbao (6,2%) and Getxo (5,2%) present the highest population concentrations,[3] considerably above the average of 4,4% of foreigners in the metropolitan area as a whole.

The distribution by districts, taking solely the municipalities of Bilbao and Getxo, also show the unequal territorial distribution of the foreign immigrant population (Table 13). In Bilbao the major concentrations of immigrants are in two districts of the city. One of them, the district of Ibaiondo, is the zone with the highest percentage of immigrants and includes the neighbourhoods of San Francisco (27,8%), Bilbao la Vieja (12,6%) and Old Quarter (10,5%), all located in the old part of the city.

The other zone is located in the District of Rekalde, where 7,5% foreign population reside. In this area are located the neighbourhoods of Ametzola (9%) and Uretamendi (8,2%). The third district that concentrates a high percentage of foreigners is Deusto, where 5,8% of the population is foreign and particularly the neighbourhood of Arangoiti (10,8%). These geographic spaces present the highest immigrant concentrations throughout the metropolitan area. It is possible to indicate that the city of Bilbao, within the metropolitan area, is the zone of highest concentration of the immigrant population, with a percentage of 6,2% in relation to the total population, as shown in Table 13. In Getxo, the districts of Algorta and Neguri group the highest percentage of immigrants, although in all the districts, except in Andra Mari, there are some census sections where 7-10% of the population is composed of foreign residents.

[3] The municipality of Loiu has 7,3% foreign population in its territory, 159 people. But this is where one of the main accommodation centres of Bizkaia is located where unaccompanied minor immigrants live, when the public institutions are acting as their guardians.

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Table 12

Native and foreign population resident in the Bilbao metropolitan area, according to municipality of residence. 1.1.2007

Municipality	Total Population	Native	Foreigner	% Foreigners
Abanto & Zierbena	9.609	9.480	129	1,3
Alonsotegi	2.804	2.737	67	1,3
Arrigorriaga	12.341	11.945	396	3,2
Baracaldo	96.412	93.196	3.216	3,3
Barrika	1.405	1.356	49	3,5
Basauri	43.250	42.199	1.051	2,4
Berango	6.280	6.007	273	4,4
Bilbao	353.168	331.278	21.890	6,2
Derio	5.191	5.022	169	3,3
Erandio	23.960	22.675	1.285	5,4
Etxebarri	8.152	7.988	164	2,0
Galdakao	29.183	28.587	596	2,0
Getxo	81.746	77.492	4.254	5,2
Gorliz	5.176	4.945	231	4,5
Larrabetzu	1.742	1.719	23	1,3
Leioa	29.217	27.868	1.349	4,6
Lezama	2.411	2.311	100	4,2
Loiu	2.180	2.021	159	7,3
Muskiz	6.943	6.819	124	1,8
Ortuella	8.577	8.492	85	1,0
Plentzia	4.081	3.975	106	2,6
Portugalete	48.386	47.504	882	1,8
Santurtzi	47.094	45.946	1.148	2,4
Sestao	29.718	28.775	943	3,2
Sondika	4.432	4.283	149	3,4
Sopelana	12.123	11.682	441	3,6
Trapagaran	12.451	12.282	169	1,4
Urduliz	3.267	3.183	84	2,6
Zamudio	3.226	3.067	159	4,9
Zaratamo	1.687	1.656	31	1,8
Zierbana	1.299	1.278	21	1,6
Total	897.511	857.768	39.743	4,4

Source: NSI.

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Table 13

Native and foreign population resident in Bilbao and Getxo, by districts and neighbourhoods. 1.1.2007

	Total population	Native	Foreigners	% Foreigners
District of Deusto	**51.894**	**48.870**	**3.024**	**5,8**
San Ignacio	14.015	13.249	766	5,5
Ibarrekolanda	11.154	10.674	480	4,3
San Pedro de Deusto	18.746	17.706	1.040	5,5
Arangoiti	3.208	2.862	346	10,8
La Ribera	1.829	1.750	79	4,3
Scattered Deusto	2.942	2.629	313	10,6
District of Uríbarri	**38.783**	**36.640**	**2.143**	**5,5**
Ciudad Jardín	741	709	32	4,3
Uríbarri	13.591	12.619	972	7,2
Zurbaran	9.641	9.227	414	4,3
Arabella	1.681	1.604	77	4,6
Matiko	4.975	4.639	336	6,8
Castaños	6.700	6.433	267	4,0
Scattered Uribarri	1.454	1.409	45	3,1
District of Otxarkoaga-Txurdinaga	**28.808**	**28.129**	**679**	**2,4**
Otxarkoaga	11.428	11.075	353	3,1
Txurdinaga	16.158	15.870	288	1,8
Scattered Otxarkoaga-Txurdinaga	1.222	1.184	38	3,1
District of Begoña	**43.322**	**41.309**	**2.013**	**4,6**
Begoña	5.440	5.252	188	3,5
Santutxu	31.726	30.252	1.474	4,6
Bolueta	6.156	5.805	351	5,7
District of Ibaiondo	**57.916**	**52.016**	**5.900**	**10,2**
Casco Viejo	6.568	5.879	689	10,5
Iturribide	4.551	4.210	341	7,5
Solokoetxe	7.696	7.111	585	7,6
Atxuri	4.938	4.581	357	7,2
San Francisco	7.690	5.554	2.136	27,8
Bilbao la Vieja	2.305	2.015	290	12,6
Zabala	6.218	5.622	596	9,6
San Adrián	10.119	9.734	385	3,8
La Peña	5.601	5.219	382	6,8
Scattered Ibaiondo	2.230	2.091	139	6,2

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	Total population	Native	Foreigners	% Foreigners
District of Abando	**51.458**	**48.743**	**2.715**	**5,3**
Indautxu	28.111	26.760	1.351	4,8
Abando	23.347	21.983	1.364	5,8
District of Rekalde	**47.394**	**43.837**	**3.557**	**7,5**
Ametzola	12.656	11.521	1.135	9,0
Iralabarri	11.748	10.832	916	7,8
Errekaldeberri	15.449	14.411	1.038	6,7
Larrasquitu	2.684	2.541	143	5,3
Iturrigorri-Peñascal	1.375	1.335	40	2,9
Uretamendi	2.694	2.473	221	8,2
Scattered Errekalde	788	724	64	8,1
District of Basurto-Zorroza	**33.593**	**31.734**	**1.859**	**5,5**
Zorroza	11.956	11.358	598	5,0
Altamira	1.287	1.217	70	5,4
Olabeaga	1.084	1.005	79	7,3
Masustegui	4.201	3.948	253	6,0
Basurto	14.304	13.486	818	5,7
Scattered Basurto-Zorroza	761	720	41	5,4
Bilbao total	**353.168**	**331.278**	**21.890**	**6,2**
Total Getxo Districts	**81.746**	**77.492**	**4.254**	**5,2**
Algorta	36.389	34.293	2.096	5,8
Andra Mari	10.825	10.437	388	3,6
Las Arenas	27.868	26.475	1.393	5,0
Neguri	6.664	6.287	377	5,7

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI.

The distribution of the foreign population by sexes in the metropolis as a whole corresponds to the distribution by sexes of the whole population, in which the percentage of women dominates slightly, who represent 52,4% of the total foreign population, as can be observed in table 14.

Many municipalities of the metropolitan area exist in which a high proportion of women immigrants are present. In eight of the municipalities, the percentage of women surpasses 58%, reaching a maximum of 69% in Ortuella. Although we do not have data on the legal situation of immigrants at the level of Metropolitan Bilbao, we can indicate that, as regards the province of Bizkaia, at the beginning of 2007 there were 32.183 foreigners residing in this territory with a valid residence card or authorization, of which 15.591 were women (48,5%) and 16.592 men (51,5%).

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Table 14

Resident foreign population in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area by sex, according to municipality of residence. 1.1.2007

Municipality	Total Foreigners	Men	Women	% Women
Abanto & Zierbena	129	54	75	58,1
Alonsotegi	67	33	34	50,7
Arrigorriaga	396	198	198	50,0
Barakaldo	3.216	1.557	1.659	51,6
Barrika	49	26	23	46,9
Basauri	1.051	533	518	49,3
Berango	273	101	172	63,0
Bilbao	21.890	10.750	11.140	50,9
Derio	169	108	61	36,1
Erandio	1.285	615	670	52,1
Etxebarri	164	81	83	50,6
Galdakao	596	275	321	53,9
Getxo	4.254	1.686	2.568	60,4
Gorliz	231	99	132	57,1
Larrabetzu	23	10	13	56,5
Leioa	1.349	612	737	54,6
Lezama	100	46	54	54,0
Loiu	159	109	50	31,4
Muskiz	124	45	79	63,7
Ortuella	85	26	59	69,4
Plentzia	106	44	62	58,5
Portugalete	882	413	469	53,2
Santurtzi	1.148	561	587	51,1
Sestao	943	455	488	51,7
Sondika	149	70	79	53,0
Sopelana	441	201	240	54,4
Trapagaran	169	74	95	56,2
Urduliz	84	35	49	58,3
Zamudio	159	83	76	47,8
Zaratamo	31	16	15	48,4
Zierbana	21	8	13	61,9
Total	39.743	18.924	20.819	52,4

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI.

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Therefore, we can deduce that, if the foreign population of Bizkaia is counted as of January 2007 as consisting of 50.092 people and that, if of this amount of foreign people, 32.183 were residing in this territory with a valid residence permit or authorization, the other 17.809 foreigners were residing in Bizkaia without the necessary residence permit, that is to say, irregularly. The irregularity situation affects women more, since, if the percentage ratio between the number of foreign women and men residing in Bizkaia whether regularly or irregularly is 51,3% versus 48,7% in favour of women, this percentage ratio changes in favour of the men when speaking about the percentage of foreigners with a mandatory residence permit in the territory of Bizkaia (being 48,5% for women verus 51,5% in the case of men). Table 15 illustrates the data given in this paragraph.

Table 15

Registered foreign population and foreign population with residence permission in Bizkaia by sex. 1.1.2007

	Registered foreign population		Foreign population with residence permission	
Women	25.687	51,3	15.591	48,5
Men	24.405	48,7	16.592	51,5
Total	50.092	100	32.183	100

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI and the Statistical Yearbook of Immigration

When contemplating the distribution by age of the immigrant population (Table 16) the concentration within the productive age range is evident. 83% of all migrants in the Bilbao metropolitan area are be-

Table 16

Foreign population resident in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area, by age groups. 1.1.2007

Age Groups	Total	Percentage
Under 16 years	6.206	15,6
From 16 to 64 years	32.848	82,7
65 years and over	689	1,7
Total	39.743	100

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI.

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tween 16 and 64 years old. Immigrant minors constitute 15,6% of the total. The immigrant population over 65 years old, on the other hand, is very low and represents only 1,7% of the total. This distribution by age groups is very distant far from that presented by the local population, since while the foreign population is young, the native one shows an older distribution of the population.

Distribution of the Foreign Population, According to Place of Origin

As regards the origin of foreigners, almost six out of ten residents in Metropolitan Bilbao come from the Americas (Table 17) and specifically from the countries of South America. Europeans constitute 20% of all foreigners and, of these, 60% come from the countries of the European Union (Table 18). People from the geographic areas of the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia respectively form minority communities, each with a weighting of around 7% of the total foreign population.

Table 17

Resident foreign population in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area by place of origin, according to municipality of residence. 1.1.2007

Municipality	Total foreign	Europe	Maghreb	Rest of Africa	Americas	Asia
Abanto & Zierbena	129	50	8	4	66	1
Alonsotegi	67	24	1	12	29	1
Arrigorriaga	396	152	25	50	155	14
Baracaldo	3.216	682	291	204	1.802	237
Barrika	49	25	0	0	21	3
Basauri	1.051	375	77	72	452	75
Berango	273	117	2	3	146	5
Bilbao	21.890	3.666	1.285	2.395	13.304	1.240
Derio	169	56	23	9	73	8
Erandio	1.285	158	32	31	1.043	21
Etxebarri	164	27	46	8	83	0
Galdakao	596	228	34	24	287	23
Getxo	4.254	1.030	80	27	2.818	299
Gorliz	231	73	10	6	141	1

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Municipality	Total foreign	Europe	Maghreb	Rest of Africa	Americas	Asia
Larrabetzu	23	10	1	0	12	0
Leioa	1.349	231	83	18	935	82
Lezama	100	25	1	11	60	3
Loiu	159	23	77	9	45	5
Muskiz	124	20	12	5	83	4
Ortuella	85	28	5	3	49	0
Plentzia	106	61	0	3	40	2
Portugalete	882	240	63	46	459	74
Santurtzi	1.148	371	85	82	526	84
Sestao	943	142	95	121	555	30
Sondika	149	43	15	13	75	3
Sopelana	441	134	9	13	263	22
Trapagaran	169	38	4	12	102	13
Urduliz	84	37	2	0	44	1
Zamudio	159	36	13	7	103	0
Zaratamo	31	12	0	2	17	0
Zierbana	21	15	0	0	6	0
Total	39.743	8.129	2.397	3.208	23.800	2.223
Horizontal Percentage	100,0	20,5	6,0	8,1	59,9	5,6

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI.

In the Bilbao metropolitan area the municipalities do not all host the same type of immigrants. Thus, for example, we see that almost the whole of the foreign population that resides in Erandio is from the Americas, whereas almost half of the foreign population originating in Europe lives in Bilbao (although they do not represent more of 17% of the foreign population resident in this municipality). As regards the Mahgrebis, more than half are concentrated in Bilbao, although it is possible to say that their relative weight represents half that reached in Loiu, since unaccompanied minors, hosted in a centre in this municipality, are almost all from Morocco. Although 75% of sub-Saharan Africans live in Bilbao, the places in which they are present in relative terms are Sestao and Arrigorriaga. Asians, on the other hand, are relatively more present in Getxo, Leioa, Portugalete and Santurtzi.

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Table 18

Resident foreign population in the Bilbao Metropolitan Area coming from Europe, according to area. 1.1.2007

Continent	Area	Number	Percentage
Europe	UE-27	7.482	18,8
	Rest of Europe	647	1,6

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of NSI.

A comparison of the origin of immigrants of Metropolitan Bilbao with the Basque country as a whole and with the province of Bizkaia (Table 19 and Table 20), reveals that in the metropolis reside almost half of all the Asian immigrants in the Basque Country reside, 49% of all the immigrants from the Americas, a third of the immigrants originating from Africa and 28,6% of all European residents in the Basque country. In relation to the province of Bizkaia as a whole, almost all the Asians and 86% of Americans live in the metropolitan area, as well as a little more than three quarters of the Africans. Two thirds of the immigrants from European countries who live in Bizkaia are located in Metropolitan Bilbao.

Table 19

Resident foreign population in the Basque Country according to area of birth, by provinces. 1.1.2007

	Álava	Gipuzkoa	Bizkaia	Total Basque Country
Europe	5.581	10.767	13.082	29.430
Africa	4.888	3.774	7.145	15.807
North America	145	488	656	1.289
Central America	667	2.122	1.401	4.190
South America	7.108	10.505	25.468	43.081
Asia	1.000	1.340	2.287	4.627
Australia	3	44	53	100
Total foreignt population	19.392	29.040	50.092	98.524

Source: NSI. Municipal register.

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Table 20

Resident foreign population in Metropolitan Bilbao according to area of birth. 1.1.2007

	Metropolitan Bilbao	Percentage	% Basque Country	% Bizkaia
Europe	8.129	20,5	8,3	16,2
Africa	5.569	14,0	5,7	11,1
America	23.794	59,9	24,2	47,5
Asia	2.223	5,6	2,3	4,4
Australia	28	0,1	0,0	0,1
Total foreign population	39.743	100		

Source: NSI. Municipal register.

Educational and Schooling Levels of the Foreign Population

Information regarding the educational levels of the foreign population is collected solely by means of population censuses, carried out every ten years. For that reason in this section we will refer to the data concerning the educational levels of the resident foreign population in the Basque country, gathered in 2001. On that date, three out of ten foreign residents lacked any type of educational qualification (28% did not have qualifications and another 2% were illiterate). Another quarter had a primary education qualification. The most numerous group were those who had a secondary education qualification (33%), whereas only 3% had reached a professional qualification only. Finally, 10% had a university degree.

By continent of origin, in the region of Greater Bilbao, we can see that the European population had the highest educational level, followed by the American, Asian and African populations (Table 21). Whereas among Europeans and Americans more than half of the population had completed their secondary and/or university studies, among Asians three out of four had no specific qualifications or had only a primary education. More than half of immigrants from Africa had no qualifications.

On the other hand, in Bizkaia the foreign population of school age, at the beginning of 2007, represents a fifth of the total foreign population (21%); half of the people who compose this group being in an irregular situation. The majority of these people aged between 0 and 19 years come from Latin America (55%), another 31% are from Europe, 11% are from the African continent and another 3% from Asia.

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Table 21

Resident foreign population in the Great Bilbao according to origin continent and level of studies (horizontal Percentage). Year 2001

Continent	Without any qualification	Primary	Secondary	College students
Europe	21	21	40	18
America	22	28	42	8
Asia	40	31	20	9
Africa	57	19	21	3

Source: EUSTAT.

The resident foreign population of school age in the province of Bizkaia and Metropolitan Bilbao in particular is ever more numerous, diverse and multicultural, a situation which the Basque educational system will doubtless have to deal with if it really wants to fulfill its task of "guaranteeing the effective exercise of the constitutionally recognized right to education, eliminating economic, social and any other type of obstacles that hinder it" (Art. 3.2a, Law of the Basque State schools).

According to data from the Department of Education, Universities and Research of the Basque Government, corresponding to March 2006, at present the educational centres of Bizkaia already have 7.635 students of foreign origin, as a result of continued growth during recent years. These pupils coming from other countries are distributed among the different educational levels as follows: 19,1% are in Infant Education, 42,9% in Primary Education, 25,7% in Compulsory Secondary Education, 5,2% in Baccalaureate and 2,6% in Intermediate and Higher Education.

According to ownership of the schools, we emphasize that just over seven out of ten students (71%) study in public schools, whereas the remaining 29% do so in the arranged private (part public funded) network. The main nationalities of foreign pupils in Bizkaia's schools are, in this order: Colombian (1.436 students), Bolivian (980), Ecuadorian (812), Rumanian (537), Moroccan (478), Brazilian (310), Argentinean (255) and Chinese (245 students).

Among schools in Bizkaia, 189 have a percentage of foreign pupils below 5% (106 public and 83 arranged private). On the other hand, there are 69 schools in Bizkaia with between 5 and 10% immigrant pupils (54 public and 15 arranged private). Schools where immigrant pupils represent between 10 and 20% of the total are 43 in number (33 public and 10 arranged private). Finally, there are 29 schools in which the percentage of foreign pupils exceeds 20% (24 public and 5 arranged private).

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Conclusion

As reflected in the data that we have just analysed, the increasing migratory flow towards the Bilbao metropolitan area is not merely a reality of recent years, but everything suggests that it will continue into the future. This means that, from a spatial point of view, immigrants are in a process of settlement, still awaiting a definitive consolidation.

Urban research related to immigration has demonstrated that, historically, decayed and marginal enclaves have been the places of settlement, at least initially, of these immigrant populations. These places can be categorised into two types of habitat: traditional neighbourhoods and former working-class districts. Nevertheless, their regeneration has contributed to the process of diffusion of the immigrant population towards other areas. In the same way, in the Bilbao metropolitan area, although this recent immigration is initially giving rise to processes of spatial concentration in certain districts, over the years and with the greater arrival of foreigners, we also see an increasing process of diffusion or spatial dispersion throughout the municipalities and neighbourhoods of the metropolitan area.

A challenge that is raised by this situation is to identify the mobility strategies of the different groups within the metropolitan geography. We should also analyse to what extent a transformation of certain neighbourhoods is taking place, identifying the processes of integration-segregation that take place with the settlement of the population of foreign origin. Since this immigration is primarily economic in nature and its position in the labour market is going to particularly determine its legal-administrative characterisation, as well as its social location, the challenge to be faced will be to know and analyze in depth the employment reality of this group, a fundamental aspect when reflecting on its present situation and future perspectives. In this context it will be important to consider the relation between the employment niches open to the immigrant population and their prior educational levels.

An aspect linked to the economic variable is access to housing, which is difficult for the population as a whole, but fundamentally worse among immigrants. The challenge in this area will be to verify the influence on the geographical location of immigrants of variables like scarcity of housing, shortage of rental accommodation, discrimination against immigrants concerning their access to rental accommodation, location with respect to the workplace and so on.

Another challenge to consider is to identify processes of inclusion-segregation linked to the spaces in which daily life develops: leisure places, bars, discotheques, supermarkets, meeting places, sports facili-

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ties and so on. These areas not only displayed different patterns of use depending on the specific kind of space in question, but also reflect how the process of group integration of immigrants is taking place in our society. A field that merits special attention is that of educational integration, given the concentration of immigrant pupils in some schools, and the need for all the schools in Metropolitan Bilbao to be true intercultural spaces, where young people who share a classroom have the opportunity to reach the expected educational levels. The challenge, therefore, will be to research how the incorporation of immigrant pupils is taking place, at least at the levels of obligatory education in the Bilbao metropolitan area, at the same time as analysing how these schools are approaching the challenges of intercultural education.

On the other hand, one of the consequences of recent incoming migration towards the Bilbao Metropolitan Area is the need to restructure current social policies to make them equally accessible to immigrants. A challenge in this field is to understand in depth the accessibility of the different social, educational, health, etc., resources, incorporating both observable elements (distance to the resources, transport system…) and intangible elements related to the perception of accessibility (public perception of the group, adaptation of resources, etc.).

In all the aspects considered, it is important to consider the great diversity manifested by the immigrant body, from the point of view of their national origins, conditions of departure and arrival, gender, social capital, culture, language, religion… These variables will affect the questions that we have just been raising, which means that we must take them into account in analysing situations and elaborating policies in order to promote social integration and cohesion.

Nevertheless, we should point out that, nowadays, the available sources of information present important deficits. If we wish to research the subject and establish immigration policies that fit with reality, we need to improve our information sources at metropolitan level. At present, though, the most complete data come from the census. Since they are collected only once every ten years and thanks to the changeable process of the migratory phenomenon, these data are not very useful for understanding contemporary reality. The Municipal Register is much more up-to-date, but the volume of variables that it contains is very limited. Other sources existing at state level do not pick up data released at municipal level, or lack information regarding variables like sex, level of education and so on.

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