

EUSKAL ETXEAK ETA BAZKIDEAK / BASQUE CENTRES AND MEMBERS

0.- INTRODUCTION

According to Law 8/1994, dated 27th May, regarding relations with communities and Basque centres outside the Basque Country Autonomous Community, in part I, Article 2, *“the consideration of Basque Centres-Euskal Etxeak will be given to the associate, foundational entities and other legal non profit-making persons, legally set up outside the Basque Country, whose statutory purposes and ordinary actuation are aimed at achieving the objectives fixed in this law and will be recognised in accordance with what appears in it.*

The Basque Centres—Euskal Etxeak will be considered as the preferable channel of relations between the members of Basque communities and the Basque Country Autonomous Community public authorities.”

As objectives and activities of the Euskal Etxeak we can highlight those indicated by professor Alexander Ugalde (international relations lecturer at the University of the Basque Country) in his article “Euskal Etxeak and Basque action abroad”: *“Among other contributions from the Euskal Etxeak – attending activities, maintaining Basque national self-awareness, projection of Euskal Herria in the political, social, economic and cultural domains, support for Basques who emigrated for social-economic reasons and those exiled for political causes, etc. – we should highlight their contribution to the Basque people’s international projection.”*

Only a brief analysis was possible on the geographic spread of Euskal Etxeak and the characteristics of their members during the 1999 Basque Communities World Congress, so we will return to the idea in 2007 to see how the number of Euskal Etxeak has increased, how their geographic spread has evolved, how the basic characteristics of their members have varied etc.

However, we are not only going to compare current data with information from 8 years ago but we are also going to give a brief description of the characteristics of the Euskal-Etxeak (characteristics of their headquarters, equipment, organised activities, etc.) based on the data contributed by the Euskal-Etxeak themselves.

For this purpose, we have worked, on the one hand, from official data taken from the Basque Centres – Euskal Etxeak register; and, on the other hand, from the information provided by the Euskal Etxeak themselves in response to a call made in 2006 by the Basque Government to update their information.

It must be highlighted, on the one hand, that not all Euskal Etxeak have asked to be part of the Basque Government Register (providing case of Euskal Etxeak which are not officially recognised by the Basque Government, such as the Euskal Etxea in Switzerland, Euskal Etxea in Shanghai, etc.). We are going to focus our study on the Basque Centres or Euskal Etxeak which are recognised by the Government.

More importantly, on the other hand, we do not have data for all the recognised centres, but only centres which have voluntarily provided information. For this reason, this data must not be taken as carved in stone but as a guideline, supposing that, thanks to the laws of large numbers, trends will be reflected.

1.- GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EUSKAL ETXEAK AND THEIR MEMBERS

Currently, there are 161 Euskal Etxeak officially recognised by Basque Government by virtue of Decree 318/1994, dated 28th July, regulating the Basque Centre Recognition and Register outside the Basque Country Autonomous Community.

The vast majority of them are located in the Americas and half are located in Argentina (47% to be precise).

The geographic distribution is as follows:

Table 1.1. Volume and geographic distribution of the Euskal Etxeak recognised by the Basque Government. Evolution and relative increase 1999-2007

| Location country | 1999 | | 2007 | | Relative increase 1999/2007 (%) |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| | No of Euskal Etxeak | % | No of Euskal Etxeak | % | |
| EUROPE | 11 | 9.1 | 15 | 9.3 | 36.4 |
| Andorra | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.6 | 100 |
| Belgium | 1 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Spain | 7 | 5.8 | 10 | 6.2 | 42.9 |
| France | 2 | 1.7 | 2 | 1.2 | 0 |
| Great Britain | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| Italy | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.6 | 100 |
| AMERICA | 107 | 89.2 | 143 | 88.8 | 33.6 |
| Argentina | 51 | 42.5 | 76 | 47.2 | 49.0 |
| Brazil | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| Canada | 1 | 0.8 | 2 | 1.2 | 100 |
| Colombia | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.6 | 100 |
| Cuba | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.6 | 100 |
| Chile | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 1.9 | 0 |
| El Salvador | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| United States | 31 | 25.8 | 35 | 21.7 | 12.9 |
| Mexico | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 1.9 | 0 |
| Paraguay | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| Peru | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| Dominican Republic | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.6 | 0 |
| Uruguay | 8 | 6.7 | 10 | 6.2 | 25.0 |
| Venezuela | 4 | 3.3 | 6 | 3.7 | 50.0 |
| OCEANIA | 2 | 1.7 | 3 | 1.9 | 50.0 |
| Australia | 2 | 1.7 | 3 | 1.9 | 50.0 |
| TOTAL | 120 | 100 | 161 | 100 | 34.2 |

Source: Basque Centres – Euskal Etxeak Register (and own production).

Compared to 1999, when 120 Euskal-Etxeak were officially recognised, the number of centres has increased significantly, particularly in Argentina where the most new centres have emerged (growing from 51 to 76 centres); whilst new destinations have barely emerged since 1999 (only Andorra, Colombia and Cuba, with one centre in each country).

In accordance with the information available on their foundation year (facilitated by 111 out of 161 centres), 4 of the 161 Euskal Etxeak (2.5%) are 100 years old or more. Three of them are located in Argentina and the fourth, which precisely this year celebrates its centenary, is in Mexico.

Furthermore, 21.7% are between 51 and 99 years old, another 31.1% between 11 and 50 years old and 13.7 % 10 years old or less. The remaining 31.1% have not provided us with data on their foundation year.

Table 1.2. Age of the Euskal Etxeak. (Data: May 2007)

| Age | NO | % |
|--------------|-----|------|
| 0-5 years | 10 | 6.2 |
| 6-10 years | 12 | 7.5 |
| 11-24 years | 32 | 19.9 |
| 25-50 years | 18 | 11.2 |
| 51-99 years | 35 | 21.7 |
| >= 100 years | 4 | 2.5 |
| No answer | 50 | 31.1 |
| TOTAL | 161 | 100 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

Ten Euskal Etxeak are 5 years old or less. Of them, 4 are in Argentina, 3 are American and the other three are in Spain, Italy and Australia.

Once again we can appreciate that no new destinations have opened up, and most new Euskal Etxeak are setting up precisely where most already exist (Argentina and United States).

This is paradoxical given that if we look at the emigration data from the Basque Country Autonomous Community (CAPV) and Navarra (CFN) abroad provided for us by IKUSPEGI (the Basque Immigration Observatory), from 2002 to 2005, 70% of the emigration from the CAPV and 62% from CFN went to Europe and a lower percentage emigrated to America (24% for CAPV and 42% for Navarra).

Table 1.3. Destination of the emigration from CAPV and CFN abroad. (Data 2002-2005) (%)

| DESTINATION | ORIGIN | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| | Basque Country Autonomous Community | Navarra |
| Europe | 70.1 | 62.4 |
| America | 24.3 | 31.7 |

| | | |
|---------|-----|-----|
| Africa | 2.3 | 2.9 |
| Asia | 2.5 | 2.4 |
| Oceania | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100 |

Source: Ikuspegi (Basque Immigration Observatory).

On the other hand, 89 out of the 161 registered Euskal Etxeak, meaning a little more than half, have sent us data on their members. In accordance with this data, we can see that the average number of members is 200, in fact, out of the 89 Euskal Etxeak who have provided data from their members, 70% say they have 100 and 500 members, 21% have under 100 members and only 9% have more than 500 members.

table 1.4. Volume of members per Euskal Etxeak. (Data: May 2007)

| Location country | No. of centres in the country | No of centres providing member data | Centres <100 members | | Centres 100-500 members | | Centres >500 members | | Average no of members per centre |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | NO | % | NO | % | NO | % | |
| Andorra | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Argentina | 76 | 60 | 10 | 16.7 | 44 | 73.3 | 6 | 10.0 | 259 |
| Australia | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 212 |
| Brazil | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 67 |
| Canada | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 148 |
| Chile | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 313 |
| Colombia | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Cuba | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 244 |
| El Salvador | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| Spain | 10 | 7 | 4 | 57.1 | 3 | 42.9 | 0 | 0 | 110 |
| United States | 35 | 4 | 1 | 25.0 | 3 | 75.0 | 0 | 0 | 127 |
| France | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 100 | 605 |
| Great Britain | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Italy | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 59 |
| Mexico | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 310 |
| Paraguay | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Peru | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 81 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Dominican Republic | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Uruguay | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 75.0 | 1 | 25.0 | 433 |
| Venezuela | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 244 |
| TOTAL | 161 | 89 | 19 | 21.3 | 62 | 69.7 | 8 | 9.0 | 243 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

Using this data (even though we are aware that it is not reliable as it was only provided by 89 centres) and comparing it with data available in 1999, we can see that the number of women and young people in the Euskal Etxeak has grown.

Table 1.5 Distribution of members according to gender and age. Evolution 1999-2007 (%)

| | 1999 | 2007 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| GENDER | | |
| Men | 59 | 54 |
| Woman | 41 | 46 |
| AGE GROUPS | | |
| < 18 years old | 4 | 7 |
| 18-29 years | 10 | 13 |
| 30-45 years | 21 | 21 |
| 46-64 years | 35 | 33 |
| >= 65 years | 29 | 26 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

Despite this, we cannot forget that there are still slightly more men and people over 45 (currently the average age of members is 51 years old).

2.- ANALYSIS OF DATA PROVIDED FOR US BY THE EUSKAL ETXEAK ON THEIR INSTALLATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Below we are going to describe some of the characteristics of the Euskal Etxeak basing ourselves on the data provided by them.

As we have previously commented, not all the Euskal Etxeak answered the call to collect data. Some have provided all the data requested, others only some specific data and others nothing at all. This makes later analysis difficult although we have seen that the centre's foundation date is a key factor: it can be said that most of the centres answering this question also answered the rest (totally or partially) and on the contrary, those that did not give a foundation year did not answer other questions either.

In this case, 111 Euskal Etxeak (69% of the total) have provided their foundation year. Basing ourselves on this criterion, when carrying out the analysis, it has been considered that these centres have provided the required information. For this reason, from now on, the results presented correspond to these 111 Euskal Etxeak.

This deals specifically with centres which are geographically distributed as follows.

Table 2.1. Geographic distribution of the Euskal Etxeak providing information (Data: May 2007)

| Location country | No. of centres in the country | No of centres providing member data | % centres in each country providing member data |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Andorra | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| Argentina | 76 | 63 | 83 |
| Australia | 3 | 2 | 67 |
| Brazil | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| Canada | 2 | 2 | 100 |
| Chile | 3 | 2 | 67 |
| Colombia | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Cuba | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| El Salvador | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| Spain | 10 | 7 | 70 |
| United States | 35 | 19 | 54 |
| France | 2 | 1 | 50 |
| Great Britain | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Italy | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| Mexico | 3 | 1 | 33 |
| Paraguay | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Peru | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| Dominican Republic | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Uruguay | 10 | 5 | 50 |
| Venezuela | 6 | 3 | 50 |

| | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|----|
| TOTAL | 161 | 111 | 69 |
|-------|-----|-----|----|

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

2.1- Characteristics of the headquarters

This section is going to describe characteristics of the headquarters such as the ownership regime for the headquarters, how often it is used, its condition, the availability of public spaces or exclusive spaces for members, etc.

2.1.1 - Headquarters ownership regime.

Almost half the headquarters (48%) are owned by the Euskal Etxeak, 25% are rented, 10% are loaned and 15% are under another type of regime.

2.1.2 - Condition of the headquarters

Around half the centres (52%) say that their headquarters do not need renovation. 20% say that they do need it and another 10% are already in a renovation or construction phase. Another 3% is in another unspecified state and 15% did not answer the question.

Furthermore, 38% of the centres state that they have access or are fitted out for people with disabilities.

2.1.3 - Frequency of use

In just over half the cases the headquarters are used everyday (58%). 16% say that they are used less and the remaining 26% do not specify how often the headquarters are used.

2.1.4 - Public spaces

28% of the centres have a public bar. In 45% of cases, the bar is owned by the Euskal Etxeak, in 23% of the case it is rented, in 3% of cases it is loaned, 10% use a different type of regime, whilst the remaining 19% do not specify the bar regime.

And 18% of the Euskal Etxeak have a public restaurant. In most cases this restaurant is owned by the centre (40% of cases) or it is rented (35%).

2.1.5 - Exclusive spaces for members

Furthermore, almost half the Euskal Etxeak (48%) have places or "txokos" which are exclusively for members.

Table 2.2. Public and private spaces in the Euskal Etxeak. (Data: May 2007)

| Types of spaces | % of Euskal Etxeak which have these types of spaces |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Exclusive txoko for members | 48 |
| Public bar | 28 |

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Public restaurant | 18 |
|-------------------|----|

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

2.2- Facilities

This section will describe the facilities available in the headquarters.

81% of them say they have a library, which in half the cases can be accessed by the public.

Six out of ten (60%) say they have a meeting room and 22% have a games room.

Regarding sports installations, 24% have a fronton, 4% a swimming pool, 2% a bowling alley and 14% have other facilities, such as a sports centre, gymnasium, football pitch, volleyball, paddle, shuffle board court, petanque, etc.

On the other hand, within audiovisual facilities, half the centres (50%) have a television, a few less have a video (43%), audio or megaphone equipment (37%), DVD (31%), video projector (21%) and very few have an overhead projector (6%).

Finally, regarding the computer facilities 74% of the Euskal Etxeak say that they have a computer (one or more) and in 46% of cases the members have access to this computer/these computers. Furthermore, 32% of the centres have a fax machine and 24% have a scanner. Two out of every three Euskal Etxeak (67%) have access to the Internet.

Table 2.3. Installations in the Euskal Etxeak (Data: May 2007)

| Installations | % of Euskal Etxeak which have these installations |
|--|---|
| CULTURAL INSTALLATIONS | |
| Library | 81 |
| Meeting room | 60 |
| RECREATIONAL-SPORTS INSTALLATIONS | |
| Games room | 22 |
| Frontón | 24 |
| Swimming pool | 4 |
| Bowling alley | 2 |
| Other sports installations | 14 |
| AUDIOVISUAL INSTALLATIONS | |
| Television | 50 |
| Video | 43 |
| DVD | 31 |
| Video projector | 21 |
| Overhead projector | 6 |
| Audio equipment or megaphone | 37 |
| COMPUTER INSTALLATIONS | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Computer(s) | 74 |
| Computer(s) available for members | 46 |
| Scanner | 24 |
| Fax | 32 |
| Internet access | 67 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

2.3- Activities organised by the Centres

This section describes the types of activities organised or carried out in the Euskal Etxeak.

All cases have been counted when these types of activities are carried out, independently of whether they are aimed at children, young people or adults. Consequently, 68% of the Euskal Etxeak organise Basque language classes, 59% run activities related with Basque dances, 34% have a choir and another 26% give sports classes (particularly pelota, but also other sports such as taekwondo, hockey, volleyball, basketball, football, yoga, gym, skating, mountaineering, swimming or sailing).

Furthermore, another 26% of centres say that they organise another type of themed courses such as cookery, music, txistu, guitar, tambourine, mus, introduction to knowledge of Euskal Herria, Basque history, Basque culture, Basque mythology, studying your family tree, literary workshop, bertso workshop, theatre workshop, crafts, painting, macramé, embroidery, arts and crafts, clothing, games for children, language courses (English, French, Italian, German, Spanish), tango workshop, ballroom dancing, wine tasting or computers.

Furthermore, 87% of Euskal Etxeak say that they organise other cultural activities during the year. There are different types:

- Conferences, exhibitions and cultural cycles. Conferences are most popular. They are mainly given on Basque related topics. There are also exhibitions of photos, pictures, etc., film cycles and documentaries, photography competitions, etc.
- Courses: on Basque history, training trainers, etc.
- Cinema, video-club
- Concerts.
- Dance processions.
- Theatre workshops.
- Literary activities: book fairs, book presentations, literary completions, literary cycles, etc.
- Gastronomic activities: lunches and dinners, meetings and gastronomic competitions, etc.
- Sports activities: mountain trips, mus, pelota, tug of war championships, etc.
- Children's activities: story telling, kid's workshops, drawing competitions, "Txiki eguna", Olentzero, etc.
- Fairs and festivals: celebrating local and Basque patron saints festivals (Aberri Eguna, San Ignacio de Loyola, San Fermín, Virgen de Begoña, etc),

pilgrimages, community fairs, federation meetings, Basque weeks, representation of Basque Country in the community events, etc.

- Internal centre activities: producing a video on the history of the Euskal Etxea, managing subsidies for associates in health risk situations, radio programmes, television programme, barnetegi, school grants, etc.
- Other recreational activities: visits to Basque centres, bingo, karaoke,...

Table 2.4. Activities organised by the Euskal Etxeak (Data: May 2007)

| Activities | % of Euskal Etxeak which organise these activities |
|---|--|
| Basque language classes | 68 |
| Dances | 59 |
| Choirs | 34 |
| Sports courses | 26 |
| Other courses | 26 |
| Other cultural activities during the year | 87 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

2.4- Diffusion

This section analyses how the Euskal Etxea make themselves known or diffuse information.

A little more than half the Euskal Etxeak (52%) have their own website.

One out of every three centres (34%) produces electronic publications. 63% of these publications are produced monthly or more often (fortnightly, weekly, etc.).

However, there are more which produce paper publications, 59% to be precise. The frequency of these paper based publications is less than electronic publications, given that in 45% of cases, they are produced monthly or more frequently, in 26% of cases it is quarterly and in 9% it is annual and in 17% it is different to what was suggested (another 3% did not answer).

Table 2.5. Means of diffusing the Euskal Etxeak. (Data: May 2007)

| Diffusion means | % of Euskal Etxeak which have these means of diffusion |
|------------------------------|--|
| Own Website | 52 |
| Electronic publications | 34 |
| Publications in paper format | 59 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

2.5- External relations of the Centres

This section analyses the existence or not of relations between the Euskal Etxeak and other entities, such as the media, education centres and universities, NGOs or companies.

72% of Euskal Etxeak say that they are in contact with the media (television, radio, press, magazines, etc.), 60% deal with education centres or universities, 32% with companies and 26% with an NGO.

Furthermore, another 49% have relations with other entities such as town halls, or municipal entities, sports clubs, churches, other communities, the federation of foreign communities, etc.

Table 2.6. External relations of the Euskal Etxeak (Data: May 2007)

| Entities | % of Euskal Etxeak which have relations with these entities |
|--|--|
| Media | 72 |
| Educational centres or universities | 60 |
| Companies | 32 |
| NGO | 26 |
| Other entities (town halls, sports clubs, churches, other communities, etc.) | 49 |

Source: Drawn up from the call to collect data in 2006.

3- CONCLUSIONS

Currently there are 161 Euskal Etxeak officially recognised by the Basque Government Register of Basque Centres.

In the last 8 years (from 1999 to 2007) 41 new Euskal Etxeak have been set up or founded, of which 25 (or more than half) were created in Argentina. In fact, Argentina is the country with the highest number of Basque centres, given that 47% of the total Euskal Etxeak are located there.

Of the 161 recognised Euskal Etxeak, 111 (or 69%) answered the Basque Government's call for information on their installations, activities and how they operate in general and 89 (55%) have provided information on their members.

It would have been ideal to get information on all the recognised centres, but given that this is impossible, the analysis has used the available data.

In accordance with this, we have seen an increase in the presence of women and young people in the Euskal Etxeak, even if there continue to be more men and over 45s (in fact the average age is 51 years old). It has also been seen that most of the centres have between 100 and 500 members, and the average number of members is 243.

Almost half the centres (48%) own their own headquarters, just over half of these headquarters (58%) are used every day and 48% have a txoko for their members, 28% have a public bar and another 18% have a restaurant which is open to the public. Most of them have a library (81%) and a meeting room (60%).

The majority also have one or more computers (74%) and Internet access (67%). Half of the Euskal Etxeak (52%) have their own website. Furthermore, a third (34%) produce electronic publications, whilst more (59%) produced paper based publications.

Among the most frequent activities in the Euskal Etxeak are Basque language classes, followed by dances, choirs, sports classes or other types of courses (music, txistu, mus, cookery, history and Basque culture, languages, etc.).

Furthermore, almost nine out of ten Euskal Etxeak say that they organise some type of cultural activity during the year: conferences, exhibitions, cultural cycles, Basque weeks, concerts, dance processions, gastronomic, sports, kid's activities, holding local and Basque patron saint festivals, etc.

In general, the Euskal Etxeak seem to be well connected, both with the media (72%) and with other educational centres or universities (60%), as well as with companies (32%), with NGOs (26%) and with other entities such as town councils, sports clubs, church, other communities, etc. (49%).

With regard to the above and looking to the future, several basic needs or premises can be highlighted:

1. "Conquering **new territories**." If the major destination for emigration from the Basque Country and Navarra has been Europe in the last few years, it would be logical and desirable to open new Euskal Etxeak in Europe, which can be used as an emotional and helpful fall back connecting emigrants with their original community. This does not mean that we should even consider neglecting centres in the rest of the world.
2. We should basically encourage more **young** people into the Euskal Etxeak, guaranteeing its survival, its activities, maintaining traditions, etc. as a means or guarantee of generational change over.

3. **Internet** access should be extended to all Euskal Etxeak, as well as each centre ideally having own website to inform on its activities, etc., strengthen information and member involvement, as well as interrelations between different centres.
4. Greater **collaboration** from the Euskal Etxeak when providing data so more rigorous analysis can be run and consequent opportune measures can be adopted.