

3rd SOCIOLINGUISTIC MAP

2001

ortzentaia biztanleria hizkuntza ikerketa gizartea hiztunak azterketa soziolinguistika udalerri mapa eus
aldaketa elebidun hazkunde ulermen gaztelania ondorioak hezkuntza zerrenda eleaniztasuna pentsamolde urte ari
itika kultura erlazioa zenbakiak soziologia parekotasun ahoskera demografia ohiturak politika hizkuntzalaritza
atzi letrak egoera gaia informazioa erlatiboa aurkikuntza portzentaia biztanleria hizkuntza ikerketa gizartea
terketa soziolinguistika udalerri mapa euskara ikuspegi eraldaketa elebidun hazkunde ulermen gaztelania
zkuntza zerrenda eleaniztasuna pentsamolde urte ariketa kritika kultura erlazioa zenbakiak soziologia r
oskera demografia ohiturak politika hizkuntzalaritza lana idatzi letrak egoera gaia informazioa erlatiboa
ortzentaia biztanleria hizkuntza ikerketa gizartea hiztunak azterketa soziolinguistika udalerri mapa eus
aldaketa elebidun hazkunde ulermen gaztelania ondorioak hezkuntza zerrenda eleaniztasuna pentsamolde
itika kultura erlazioa zenbakiak soziologia parekotasun ahoskera demografia ohiturak politika hizkunt
atzi letrak egoera gaia informazioa erlatiboa aurkikuntza portzentaia biztanleria hizkuntza ikerketa giza
terketa soziolinguistika udalerri mapa euskara ikuspegi eraldaketa elebidun hazkunde ulermen gaztelar



EUSKO JAURLARITZA



GOBIERNO VASCO

KULTURA SAILA

DEPARTAMENTO DE CULTURA

Eusko Jaurlaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia

Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco

Vitoria-Gasteiz, 2005

3rd Sociolinguistic Map, 2001. – 1st ed. – Vitoria-Gasteiz : Eusko Jaurlaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia = Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco, 2005

p. ; cm. + mapa y 1 CD-ROM

ISBN: 84-457-2239-5

1. Lengua vasca-Estadísticas. 2. Sociolingüística-Euskadi-Estadísticas. I. Euskadi. Departamento de Cultura.

809.169(083.41)

801:316(460.15)(083.41)

First published in February 2005

Print run: 500 copies

© Administración de la Comunidad Autónoma del País Vasco
Departamento de Cultura

Internet: www.euskadi.net

Edited by: Eusko Jaurlaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia
Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco
Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 - E-01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz

Filmsetting by: Ipar, S. Coop.
Zurbaran, 2-4 - E-48007 Bilbao

Printed by: Grafo, S.A.
Avda. Cervantes, 51 - E-48970 Basauri (Bizkaia)

ISBN: 84-457-2239-5

Legal record: BI-588-05

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 0. Preface | 7 |
| I. Presentation | 9 |
| 1. Spatial framework | 11 |
| 1.1. Structure, surface area, location | 11 |
| 2. Distribution and evolution of the population | 12 |
| 2.1. Distribution and density of the population | 12 |
| 2.2. Evolution of the population | 13 |
| 2.3. Population pyramid (2001) | 13 |
| 2.4. Size and distribution of the population centres (2001) | 14 |
| 3. Origin of the population (2001) | 16 |
| 4. Educational teaching models in the BAC | 20 |
| II. Language competence | 25 |
| 1. The current situation regarding language competence (2001) | 27 |
| 1.1. Introduction | 27 |
| 1.2. Language competence according to municipality | 29 |
| 1.3. Language competence according to age | 30 |
| 1.4. The recovery of the Basque language, a young, urban phenomenon | 33 |
| 2. Evolution of language competence (1981-2001) | 35 |
| 2.1. Introduction | 35 |
| 2.2. Evolution of language competence according to municipality | 36 |
| 2.3. Evolution of language competence according to age | 38 |
| III. Language mobility index (BILA) | 43 |
| 1. The current situation regarding the BILA index (2001) | 45 |
| 1.1. Introduction | 45 |
| 1.2. The BILA index according to municipality | 47 |



| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1.3. Losses and gains in the Basque language | 50 |
| 1.4. The BILA index according to age | 52 |
| 1.5. The BILA index according to age and municipality | 55 |
| 1.6. Losses and gains in the Basque language according to age | 59 |
| 2. Evolution of the BILA index (1986-2001) | 61 |
| 2.1. Introduction | 61 |
| 2.2. Evolution of the BILA index according to age (1986-2001) | 63 |
| IV. Index of the language used at home, ERABIL | 65 |
| 1. Current situation regarding the ERABIL index (2001) | 67 |
| 1.1. Introduction | 67 |
| 1.2. Analysis according to municipality | 70 |
| 1.3. The ERABIL index according to age | 70 |
| 1.4. The language used at home, according to the density of bilingual speakers in the home | 72 |
| V. Conclusions | 75 |
| VI. Glossary | 79 |

Preface

A few months ago we presented the results of the *Third Sociolinguistic Survey*. The survey fieldwork was carried out in 2001 and readers can access the information both in printed format (with the title *The Continuity of Basque III*) or via the internet (www.euskara.euskadi.net). We are now offering readers who wish to know about the evolution of Basque a new piece of work: the *Third Sociolinguistic Map*. Both of them provide us with information from 2001. They are complementary pieces of research, although there is one notable difference between them: the *Survey* provided data on the whole of the Basque Country, whilst the present document is limited to the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC). Be that as it may, these complementary pieces of work provide us with an appropriate tool to understand what course the results of the language policy that, over recent years, has been carried out and is being carried out in the BAC are taking. And, moreover, to understand whether that course needs correction.

First of all, we are given information on the structure of the population of the BAC. In this regard, bearing in mind the influence of the education system, the distribution of school children, that is to say their distribution in the different bilingual educational models, is also presented.

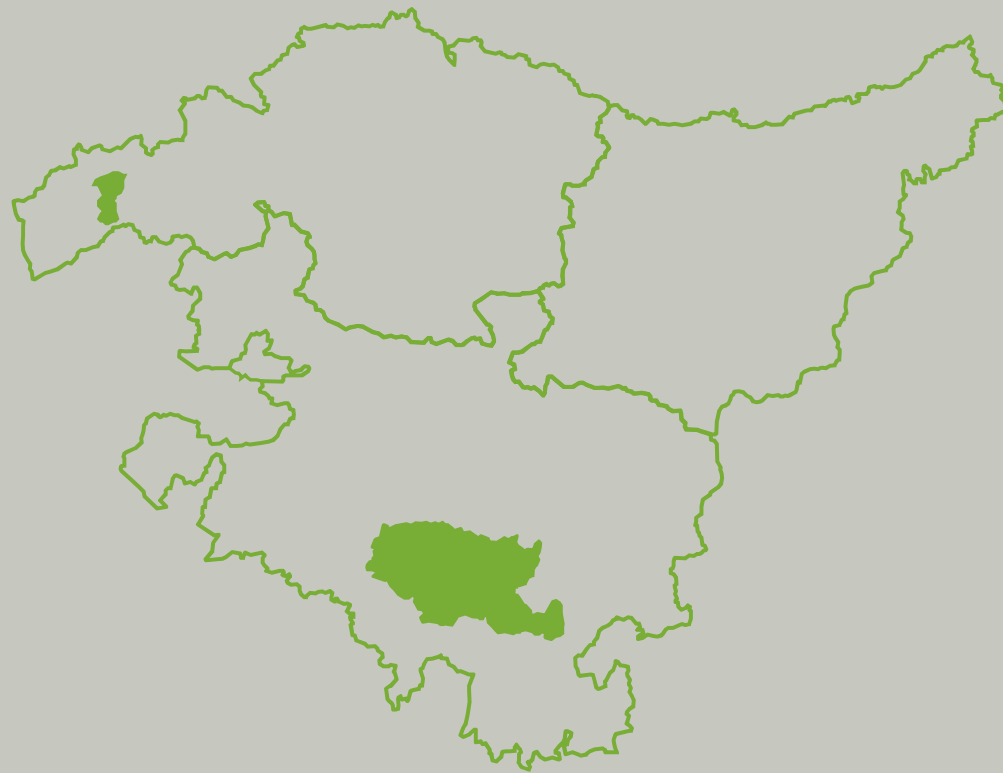
Subsequently, we are given information on the language competence of Basque citizens, once again according to the 2001 census. That competence has evolved not only over time (we are shown the evolution over the period 1981-2001), but also geographically. In this respect, this *Map* shows us the present situation, providing data by municipality. Finally, one can also examine this evolution from the standpoint of age. In this regard, the *Map* portrays the losses and gains of Basque for us.

The census data also provide us with other sorts of information on Basque, i.e. on the degree to which Basque is the language of the home. In fact, the main source of new Basque speakers is schooling, but we need to know how far the Basque learnt at school is reaching the home. Basque cannot be restricted to the school.

In short, that is the information the reader will find in this book. Conclusions will be able to be drawn from the data provided. For example, we will be able to determine which areas we are doing best in and which ones require renewed effort. Year by year, the map of Basque is changing and we need information about that change.

Ms Miren AZKARATE VILLAR

Minister of Culture
Basque Government



I. Presentation

1.

Spatial framework**1.1. Structure, surface area, location**

The Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), a region of Spain that is part of the traditional Basque Country, is made up by the Historical Territories of Álava/Araba, Biscay and Gipuzkoa, and has a total surface area of around 7,000 km². It is located at the north of the Iberian Peninsula and is bordered by the Bay of Biscay to the north and flanked by the Pyrenees and the Cantabrian Mountain Range.

The Bay of Biscay – Mediterranean watershed runs through the region from east to west, dividing it into two halves with very different geographies and climates. The result is that a wide variety of different landscapes can be found in a relatively small area.

Figure 1. Location of the Basque Autonomous Community





2.

Distribution and evolution of the population

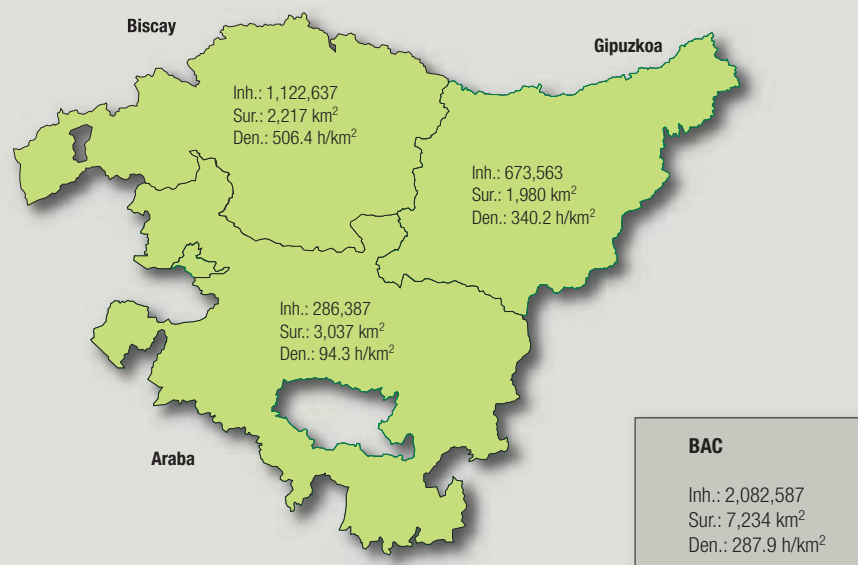
2.1. Distribution and density of the population

According to a census carried out in 2001, the population of the BAC totals 2,082,587, with a density of 287.9 inhabitants per km².

This population is distributed irregularly among the three territories. Biscay, with more than a million inhabitants (1,122,387) contains just over half of the entire population (53.9%), giving it an average density of over 500 inhabitants per km² (506.4). Gipuzkoa, with 673,563 inhabitants, encompasses just under a third of the population (32.3%) and has a somewhat lower density, 340.2 inhabitants per km². Finally, despite being the largest territory, Araba has the smallest population, and therefore a much lower density of just 94.3 inhabitants per km².

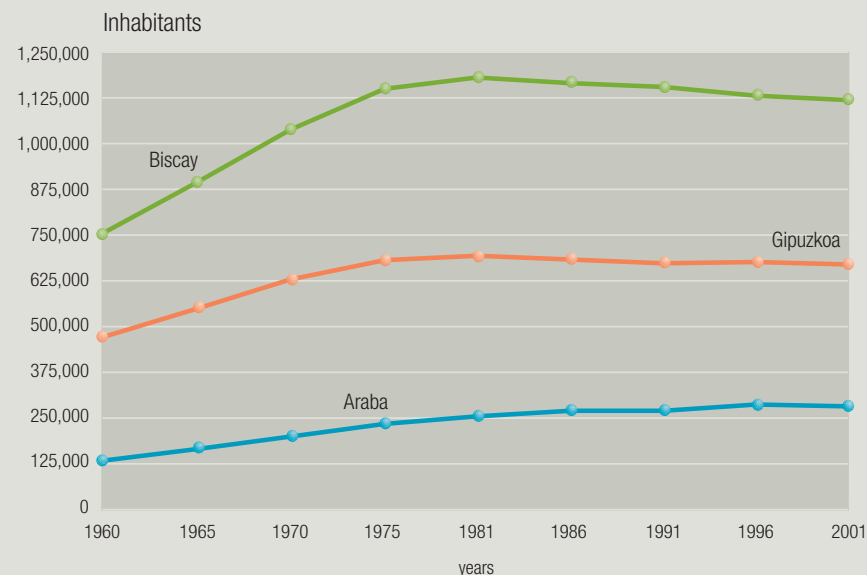
As regards municipalities, of the 250 municipalities in the region, 51 are located in Araba, 111 in Biscay and 88 in Gipuzkoa. If we analyse them according to size, we see that Araba is characterised by the smallness of its municipalities; nearly 90% have less than 2,000 inhabitants, while in Biscay and Gipuzkoa, the municipalities of this size account (in each case) for just over half of the total. Medium-sized municipalities, of between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants, account for around 25% in both cases and the difference lies in the medium-large (10,000-25,000 inhabi-

Figure 2. Population and surface area of the Historical Territories



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census and own sources.

Figure 3. Evolution of the population, 1960-2001



Source: EUSTAT.

tants) and large (over 25,000 inhabitants) municipalities, with the percentage of the former being greater in Gipuzkoa (17% vs 8.1%), whereas Biscay has more municipalities with over 25,000 inhabitants (9% vs 4.6%).

2.2. Evolution of the population

Between 1960 and 1975, the population increased continuously in all the territories, with the most intense growth taking place in the more industrialised regions. This process slowed with the advent of the industrial crisis in the middle of the 70s and changed substantially from the beginning of the 80s onwards. After this date, the population stabilised and even dropped, especially in the case of Biscay. This was due to a series of factors including the economic crisis, the drop in birthrate and the reversal, in some cases, of migratory movements. In this sense, the population of the BAC has dropped by almost 60,000 inhabitants over the last 20 years, a decrease of almost 3 percent.

The situation varies in each territory. Between 1981 and 2001 population of Araba increased by 11%, while that of Gipuzkoa dropped by 3% and that of Biscay decreased by 6%.

2.3. Population pyramid (2001)

Over recent years, the main characteristic of the evolution of the population in the BAC has been its general ageing as a result of an extremely low birthrate. This, combined with other factors such as a certain flow of in-migrants returning to their places of origin, has brought about the stabilisation and even the decrease of the population.

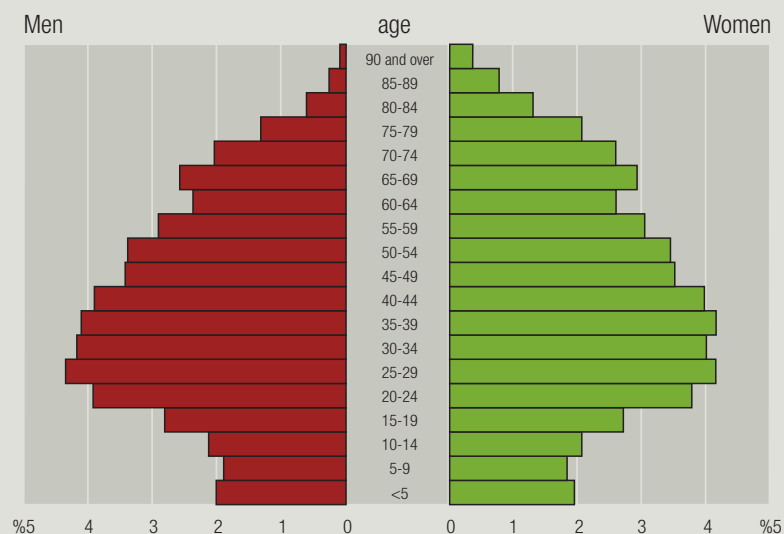
One positive indicator is that, according to the 2001 Census, for the first time in the last 20 years, the

youngest age group (0-4 years) is actually larger than the group immediately above (5-9 years).

Although not enough time has yet passed to confirm this, it seems that the drop in birthrate has slowed, and if the trend continues, we may be looking at the start of a long, slow process of demographic recovery.

The trends that can be seen in the BAC pyramid are repeated with no significant variations in each of the three historical territories.

Figure 4. Population pyramid for the BAC



Source: EUSTAT.



2.4. Size and distribution of the population centres (2001)

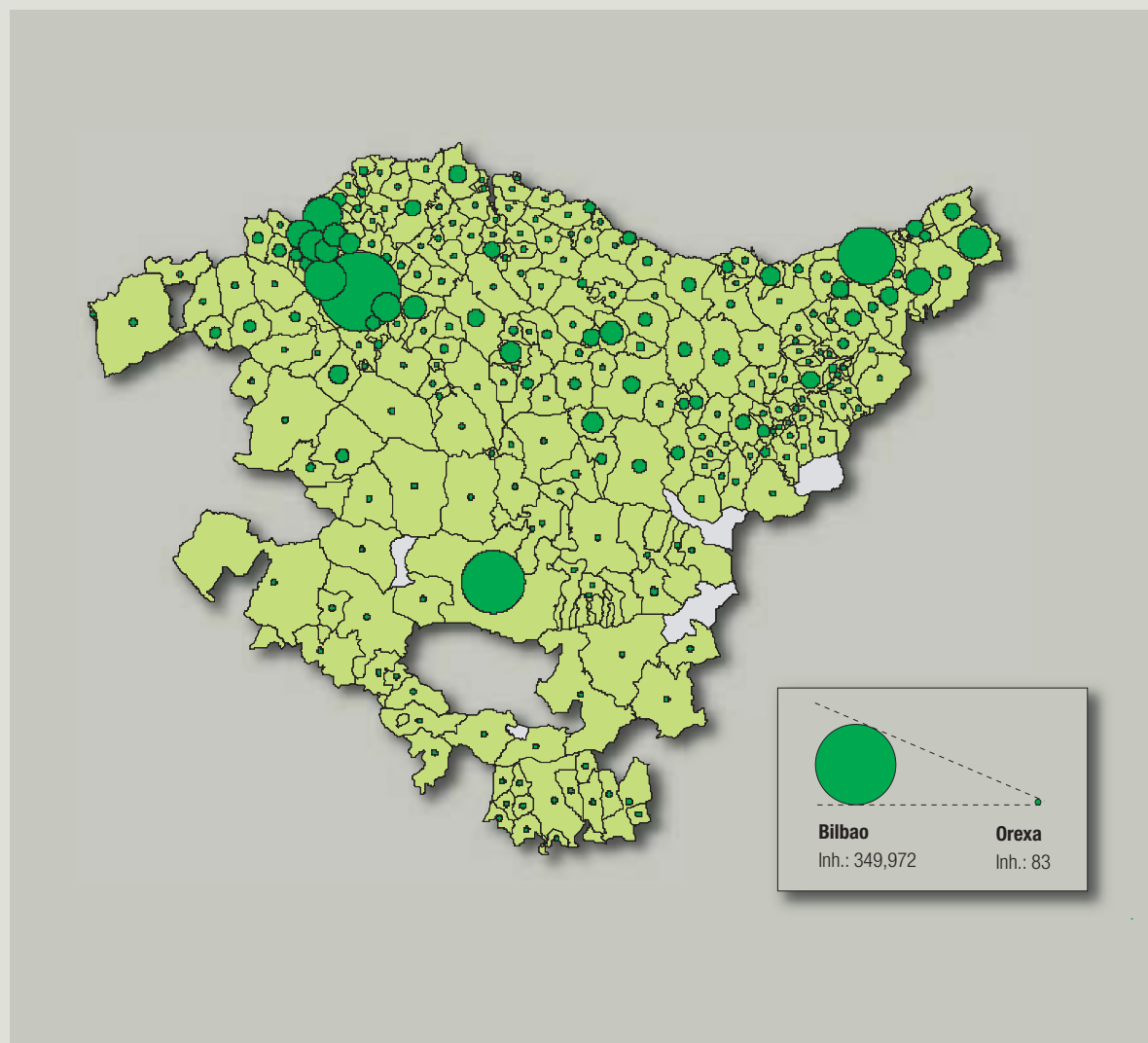
The majority of the municipalities in the BAC are small, with 60.8% of them having 2,000 inhabitants or less.

As we can see on the map, the historical territories have an uneven population distribution, the most notable example being the extreme polarisation in Araba, where almost 90% of the municipalities are small, while the capital, Vitoria-Gasteiz, encompasses practically 75% of the entire population.

There is also a certain polarisation in Biscay, in the area around Gran Bilbao, although it is much less extreme. Gipuzkoa, on the other hand, has a more even distribution, in which the so-called medium-sized cities play a key role. These cities contain between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants and encompass almost half of the population.

All this can be seen clearly on the map, where major population concentrations in the three capitals and metropolitan areas are juxtaposed with large empty spaces corresponding to areas that have been marginalised with respect to the main communication routes. These communication routes can easily be traced by simply following the medium-sized population centres, which line both the Irun-Bilbao motorway and the National-1 dual carriageway which runs through Gipuzkoa. In addition to these centres, the region also contains a number of so-called local capitals (Bermeo, Gernika, Mungia, etc.) which are in turn located along secondary roads.

Figure 5. Distribution of the population according to municipality



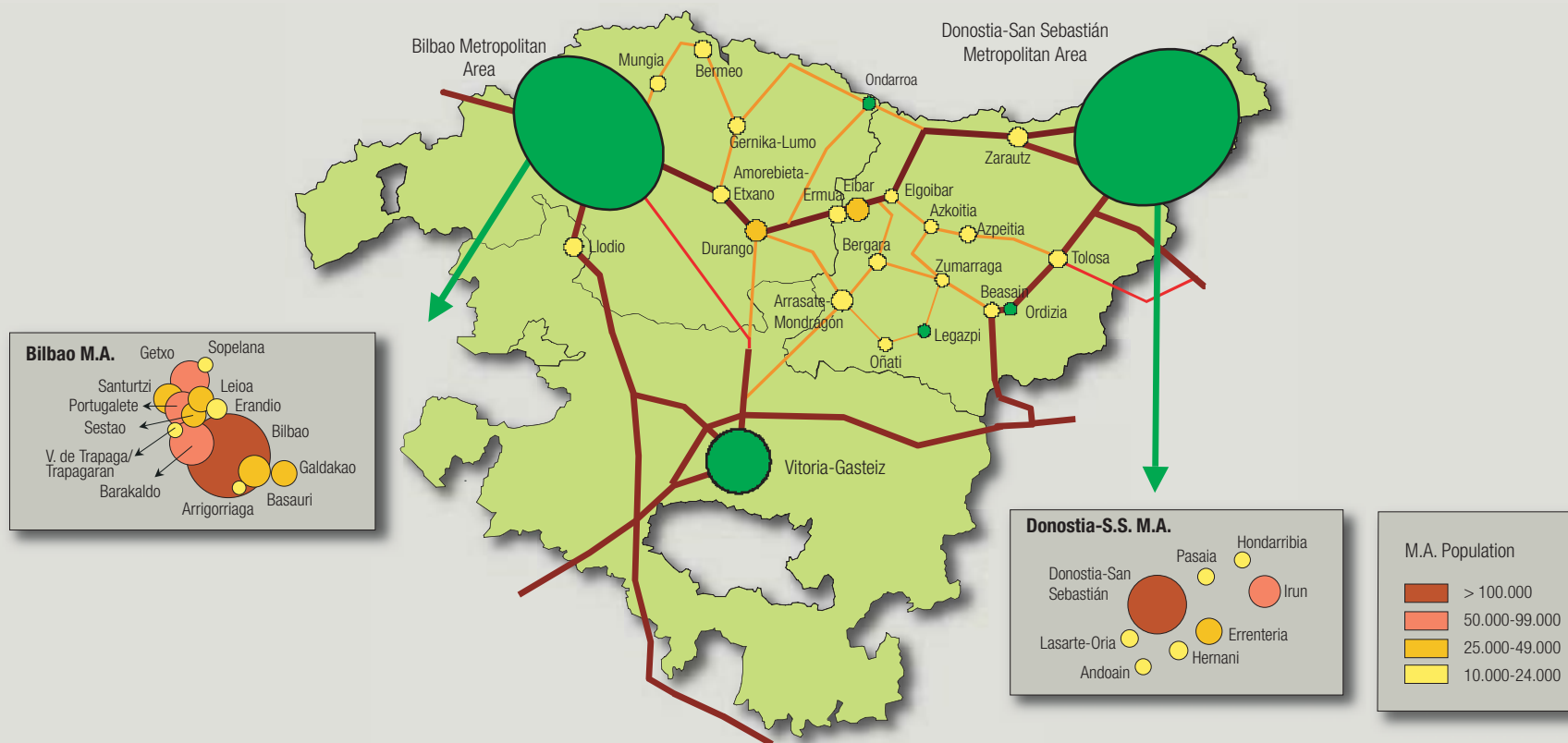
Source: EUSTAT.

The map shows the structure of the urban network, its density in the different territories and its relationship to the road network.

The urban framework is characterised by a close mesh, with a high density of medium-sized centres in Gipuzkoa, and a much more open structure in Biscay. In Araba, this network is practically non-existent due to the immense pull of the capital city.

As regards the metropolitan areas, that of Bilbao has a denser urban network and a greater range than that of Donostia-San Sebastián.

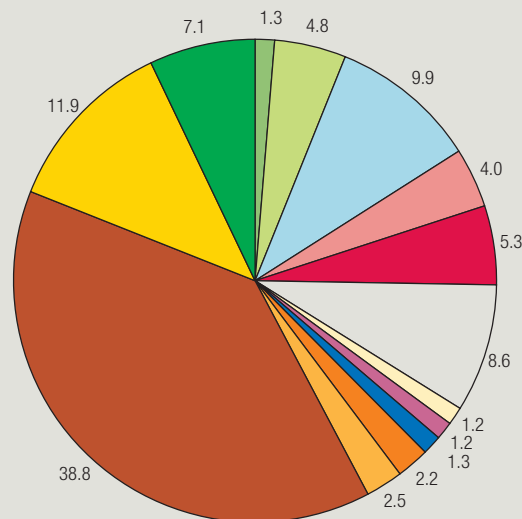
Figure 6. Diagram of the urban network of the BAC



Source: EUSTAT.

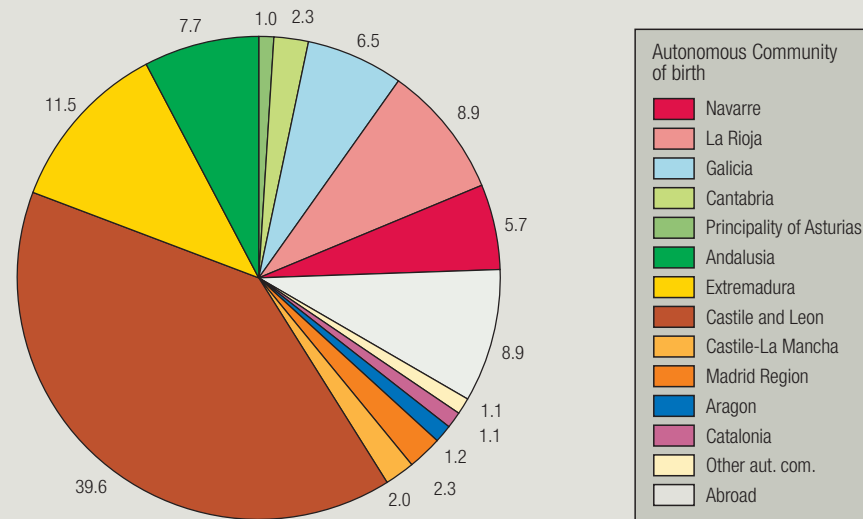


Figure 7. Non-native population of the BAC, according to place of birth. 2001 (%)



Source: NSI. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 8. Non-native population in Araba, according to place of birth. 2001 (%)



3. Origin of the population (2001)

When analysing the structure of the population according to origin, we found that, according to the 2001 Population and Housing Census, of the 2,082,587 inhabitants of the BAC, 27% (564,656) had been born outside the region.

Of these 564,656 non-native residents¹, the majority (52.9%) came from one of the bordering regions: Navarre, Rioja, Cantabria or Castile and Leon, with this last region accounting for 40% of this group.

In addition to these regions, other places of origin include those regions that have a traditionally high rate of emigration: Extremadura (11.9%), Galicia (9.9%) and Andalusia (7.1%).

We should also highlight the number of people resident in the BAC who were born abroad (49,030). This group constitutes 8.6% of the non-native population (2.3% of total population), and is the fourth largest non-native group.

The main places of origin for the non-native population are the same in the three Historical Territories, although the figures oscillate somewhat depending

¹ The concept of the “non-native” population refers solely to place of birth.

on the individual characteristics of each of these territories.

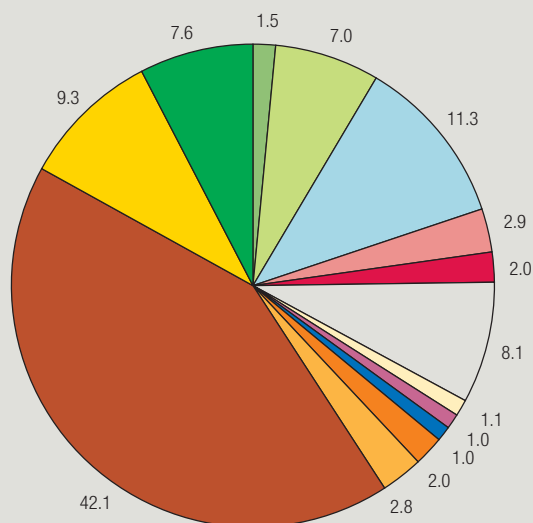
Araba, with a figure of 32.2%, has the highest non-native population in the BAC. In general terms, its data coincide with those of the BAC in general, with Castile and Leon being the number one place of non-native origin, followed by Extremadura. However, we should point out the significant reduction in the number of people born in the Cantabrian area, as well as the importance acquired by the neighbouring region of La Rioja (8.9%), which is the birthplace of

the third largest group of non-native residents, along with those born abroad (also 8.9%).

The percentage of the non-native population in Biscay (27%) is similar to the average, and the main non-native regions of birth are the same as for the BAC in general: Castile and Leon, Galicia, Extremadura and abroad. Nevertheless, we should underline the greater presence of residents from the Cantabrian area, and the lower presence of Navarre and La Rioja. All other regions have near average values.

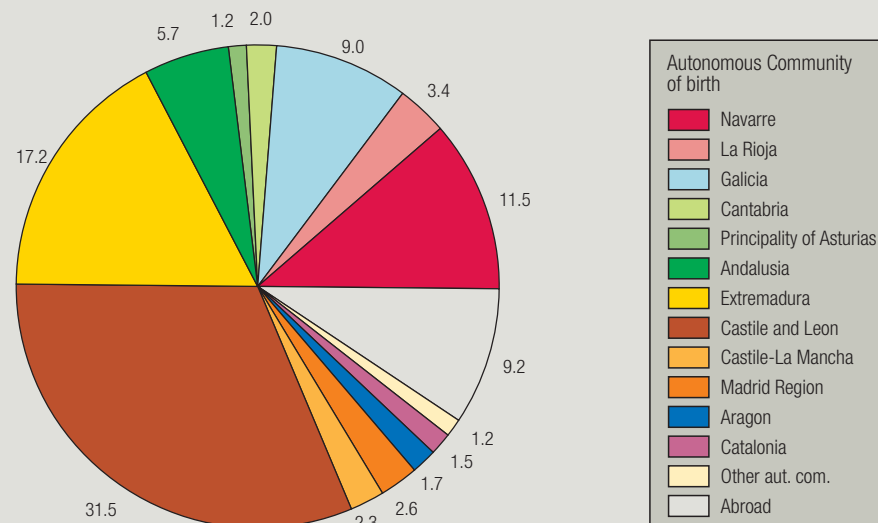
Finally, Gipuzkoa is the territory with the lowest percentage of non-native residents (23.3%), with Castile and Leon (as in previous cases) being the number one region of origin (31.5%), followed by Extremadura, some distance behind. The most important element here is the high percentage of those born in the neighbouring region of Navarre, with a figure of 11.5%, double that of the average for the BAC in general. This region is the place of birth of the third largest non-native group. The number of Gipuzkoan residents born abroad is also the highest

Figure 9. Non-native population in Biscay, according to place of birth. 2001 (%)



Source: NSI. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 10. Non-native population in Gipuzkoa, according to place of birth. 2001 (%)





in the BAC, and this group occupies fourth position, along with those born in Galicia.

If we analyse the group of foreign residents² living in the BAC, we see that it consists of 30,017 people, according to the data provided by the NSI (National Statistics Institute) in its 2001 Population and Housing Census. This figure may seem merely symbolic, but in fact, the trend detected over recent years in relation to the arrival of foreign citizens in the BAC shows a gradual increase which, if it continues, may result in this group having a much greater weight within the population as a whole.

Therefore, this phenomenon should be taken into consideration and, although it may still be somewhat early to carry out an in-depth analysis, we should pay attention to both its evolution and the effects that the social-demographic and cultural peculiarities of this group may have in our society.

In confirmation of the above, we can state that 54.9% (16,493) of all foreign citizens living in the BAC in 2001 arrived between 1996 and 2001. Those that arrived during this last year outnumber those who arrived in 1996 by almost five to one.

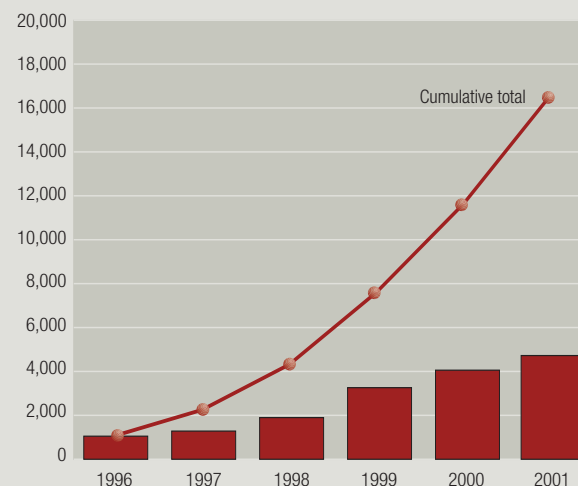
² Foreign: those people who have a single nationality other than Spanish.

As regards the analysis according to Historical Territory, the distribution of foreigners corresponds to the demographic weight of each territory (54%, 32% and 14% of the population, respectively), with 50% (15,054) being concentrated in Biscay, 31% (9,282) in Gipuzkoa and 19% (5,681) in Araba. Finally, the proportion of foreigners in relation to the total population in each of the territories is fairly similar, oscillating between 1.4% and 2%, although there are some differences as regards the process of arrival, as we will see below.

Araba is the territory with the highest proportion of recent arrivals, since almost two thirds of residents (64%) arrived during the 1996-2001 period. At the beginning, the number of arrivals was fairly low, increasing sharply from 1999 onwards. Indeed, in 1999, the number of arrivals was three times that for 1996. In 2001, this number was almost five times as high as in 1996.

The group of foreign citizens in Biscay has been living there for slightly longer than the group in Araba, since the percentage of people who arrived between

Figure 11. Evolution of the number of foreigners arriving in the BAC between 1996 and 2001. Year by year and accumulative data



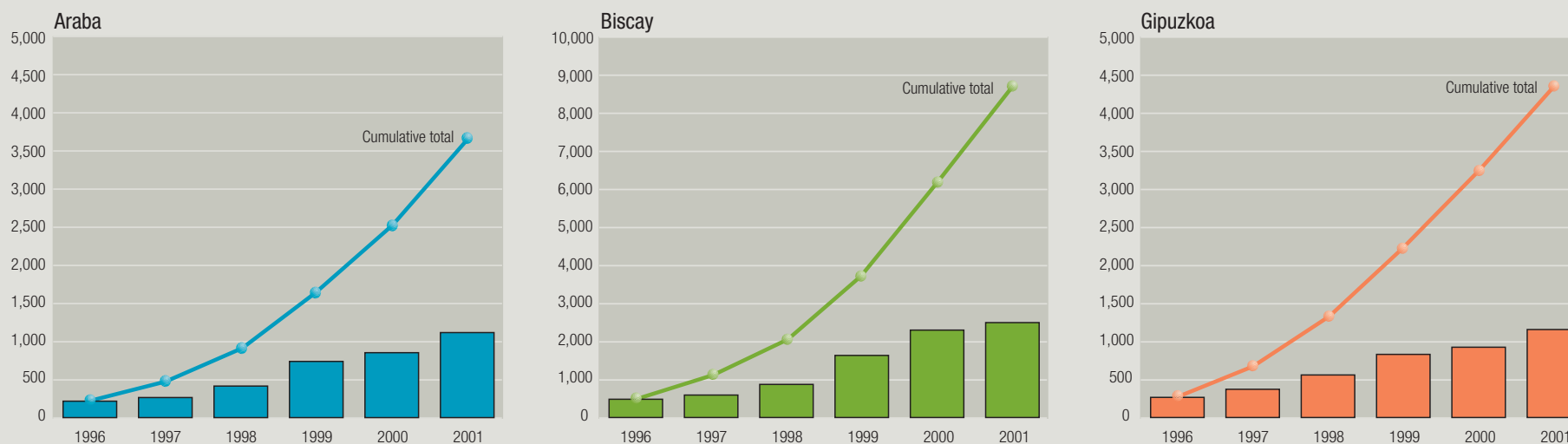
Source: NSI. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

1996 and 2001 is just 57%. Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that, of all those who arrived during this period, over 56% did so in the last two years.

Finally, in Gipuzkoa only 46% of foreign residents arrived during the 1996-2001 period. Nevertheless, in general terms, the intensity of the process in all three territories during this period is similar: after a sharp increase during 1998 and 1999, the number of arrivals tailed off slightly, although Araba experienced another sharp increase in the year 2001.

In any case, the phenomenon is a recent process with a generally upward trend that, for the moment, does not seem to be affected by the specific ups and downs observed.

Figure 12. Evolution of the number of foreigners arriving in the Historical Territories between 1996 and 2001. Year by year and cumulative data



Source: NSI. 2001 Population and Housing Census.



4.

Educational teaching models in the BAC

a) Current situation in the BAC

If we analyse the distribution of students in non-university education in the BAC, we see that during the 2002-03 academic year, the D model (Basque medium with Spanish as subject) accounts for the highest percentage (47%), followed by the A model³ (Spanish medium with Basque as subject) with 30% and the B model (Spanish and Basque medium) with 22%.

The distribution of students among the different models varies according to Historical Territory (HT), with Araba having the lowest percentage of students in the D model (30%), and Gipuzkoa having the highest (over 60%).

The distribution also varies noticeably from one level to another. According to the data obtained from EUSTAT⁴, the lower the teaching level, the higher the number of students enrolled in the D model. This general trend has been detected (with different levels of intensity) in all three Historical Territories.

With regard to Preprimary Education in the BAC during the 2002-2003 academic year, 60% of students were enrolled in the D model, while the figure

³ The X model (with no Basque taught) is now a merely residual option, and its students have been added to those studying in the A model.

⁴ EUSTAT. "Students according to level and bilingual teaching model. 2002-2003" table.

Figure 13. Students according to level and teaching model. BAC. 2002-2003

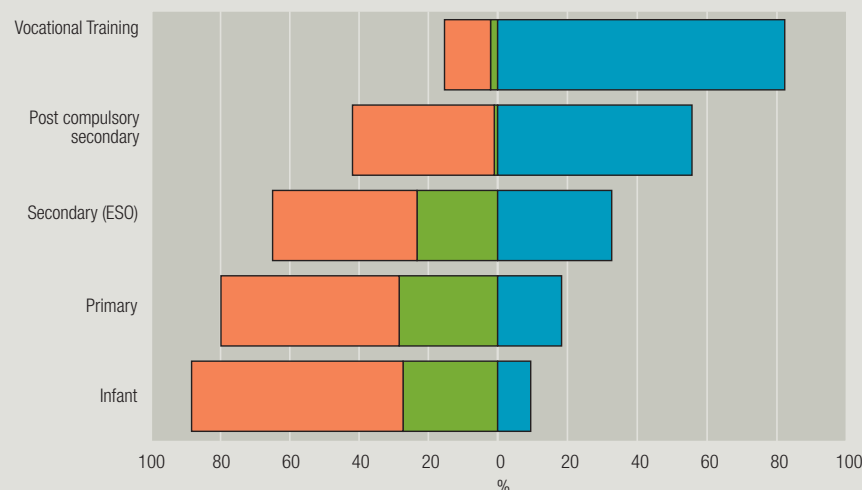
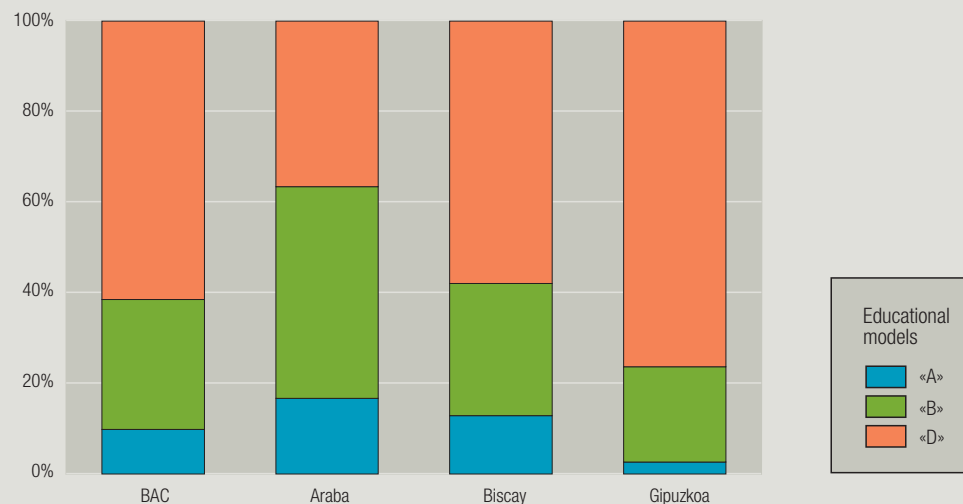
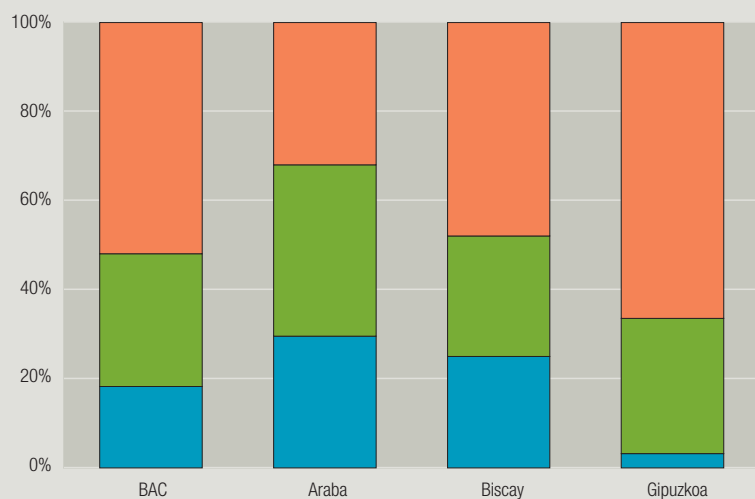
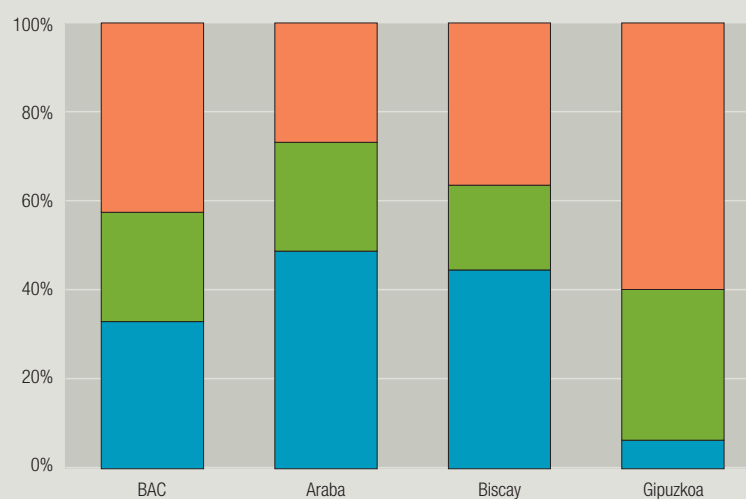
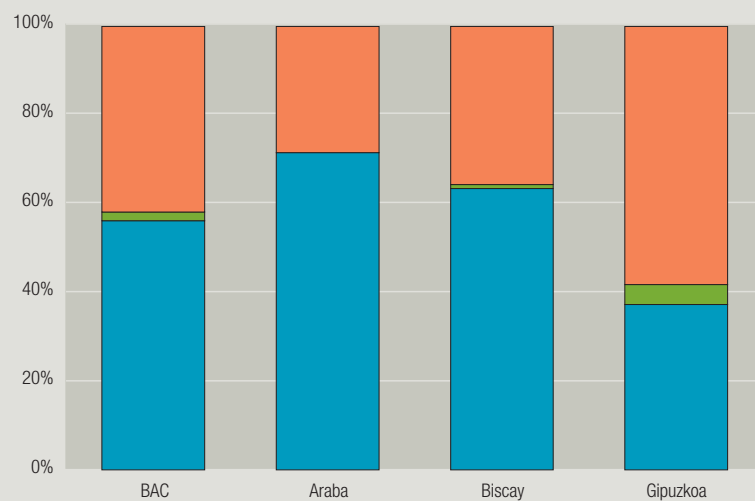
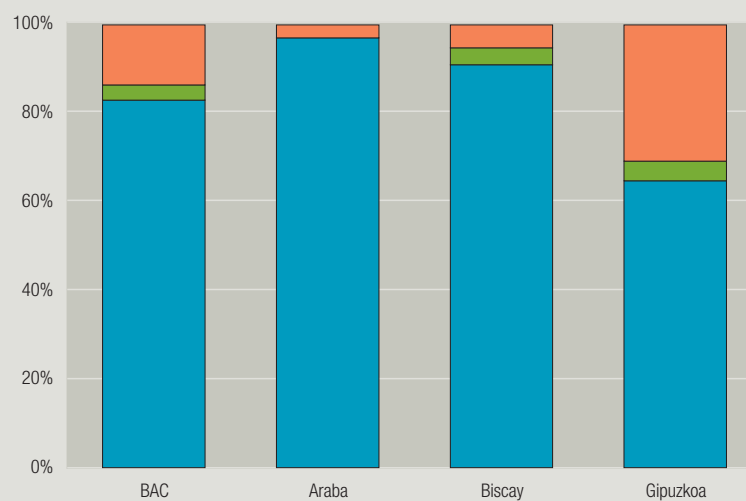


Figure 14. Infant education according to model. 2002-2003



Source: EUSTAT.

Figure 15. Primary education according to model. 2002-2003**Figure 16.** Compulsory Secondary Education (DBH) according to model. 2002-2003**Figure 17.** Post compulsory Secondary. 2002-2003**Figure 18.** Vocational Training according to model. 2002-2003

Educational models

- «A»
- «B»
- «D»

Source: EUSTAT.



for those enrolled in the A model did not even reach 10%. In the HTs, the percentage of students enrolled in the D model oscillates between over 75% in Gipuzkoa to almost 40% in Araba. The A model is, in all cases, the model with the lowest percentage of students, with a maximum figure of 20%. We should underline the high percentage of students enrolled in the B model in Araba (46.7%), where this model is the most popular option.

The D model is the most popular also in Primary Education, accounting for over half of all students in the BAC, while the A model accounts for no more than 20%. As regards the HTs, the trends as regards distribution are similar to those described for Infant Education.

In the next level, DBH (equivalent to secondary school), during the 2002-03 academic year, the percentages for the number of students enrolled in the B and D models were 30% and 40% respectively. Over 30% of students were enrolled in the A model. If we analyse the data according to territory, we see that Araba and Biscay are fairly similar, and the D model is the second most popular option, with the A model taking first place. In Gipuzkoa, however, the D model is the clear favourite.

As regards academic post compulsory secondary education, the A model is the most popular (55%). This is true also for both Araba and Biscay. In Gipuzkoa, however, the most popular model is the D model, encompassing nearly 60% of all students. The B model also has a certain weight (5%).

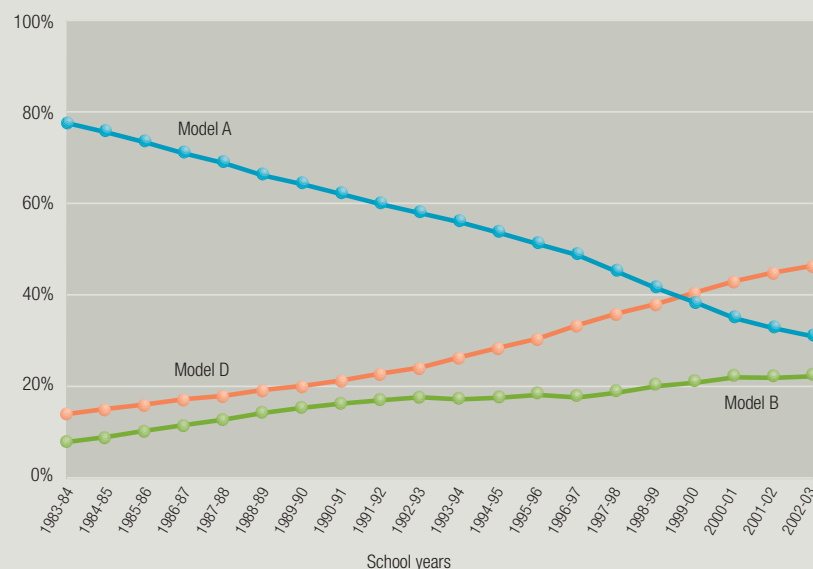
Vocational Training (VT) or Further Education in the BAC can be considered a special case, since the model-based distribution is noticeably different from

the other educational levels. Only 13.6% of students are enrolled in the D model, the presence of the B model is merely symbolic (3.5%) and the vast majority of students opt for the A model (82.9%). Nevertheless, as in the previous cases, there is a clear difference between Araba and Biscay on the one hand, and Gipuzkoa on the other. In Gipuzkoa, the percentage of students studying in the D model is almost 20 percent higher than the average for the BAC (30.7% vs. 13.6%), while the figure for the A model is below the regional average (64.5 vs. 82.9%).

b) Evolution of enrolment according to model, 1983-84 to 2002-03

Over the last 20 years, the evolution of enrolment according to language models at all levels and in all areas shows an inverse trend of the D and A models, with a sharp increase in the number of students opting for the D model, a less pronounced increase in those choosing the B model and an uninterrupted, fairly sharp drop in those enrolling in the A model.

Figure 19. Evolution of enrolment according to language model. 1983-84 to 2002-2003



Source: EUSTAT and the Government Dept. of Education.

In general terms, in the BAC, the A model has dropped from 78% during the 1983-84 academic year to just 31% during the 2002-03 academic year, a decrease of 47 percent. This sharp drop in the A model is distributed unevenly between the other two models. During the same period, the number of students opting for the B model rose from 8.1% to 22.4% (+14.3%) while those choosing the D model rose from 14.2% to 46.5% (+32.3%).

During the first decade, the B and D models evolved in parallel, undergoing a similar increase in both cases. However, during the second decade, the rise in the D model increased sharply, while that of the B model slowed down slightly. Therefore, while during the first growth period both showed percentages of around 10-12%, during the second period, the D model rose by 20% while the B model increased by only 5%. The drop in the A model remained constant throughout the entire period.

From the 1999-2000 academic year onwards, the D model, which accounted for 41% of students, became the largest group, a position which then became gradually more consolidated over the following years.

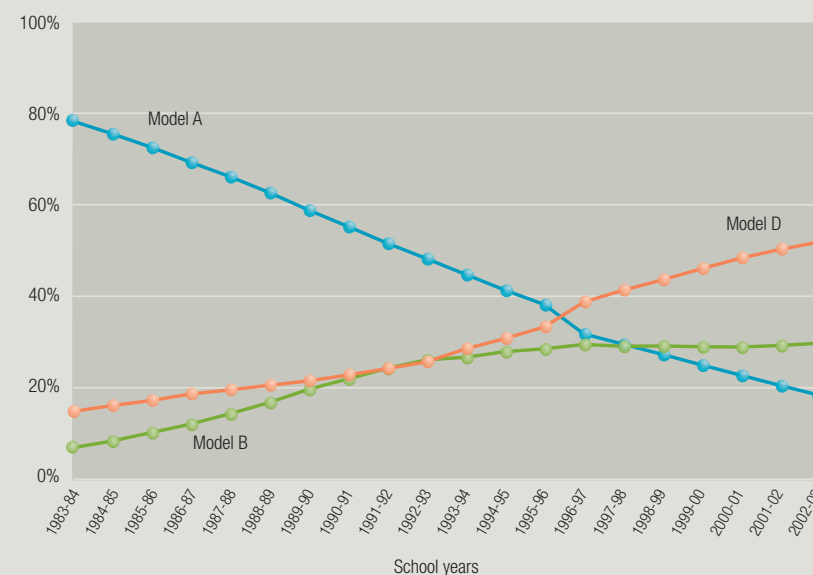
In Pre-school and Preprimary Education, the general trend is similar, although the initial correlation (in 1983-84) between the different models is different: the D model and the B model had similar percentages (26% and 23% respectively), whereas the A model accounted for 50% of all students. This less

Figure 20. Evolution of enrolments in Pre-school and Preprimary Education according to language models. 1983-84 to 2002-03



Source: EUSTAT.

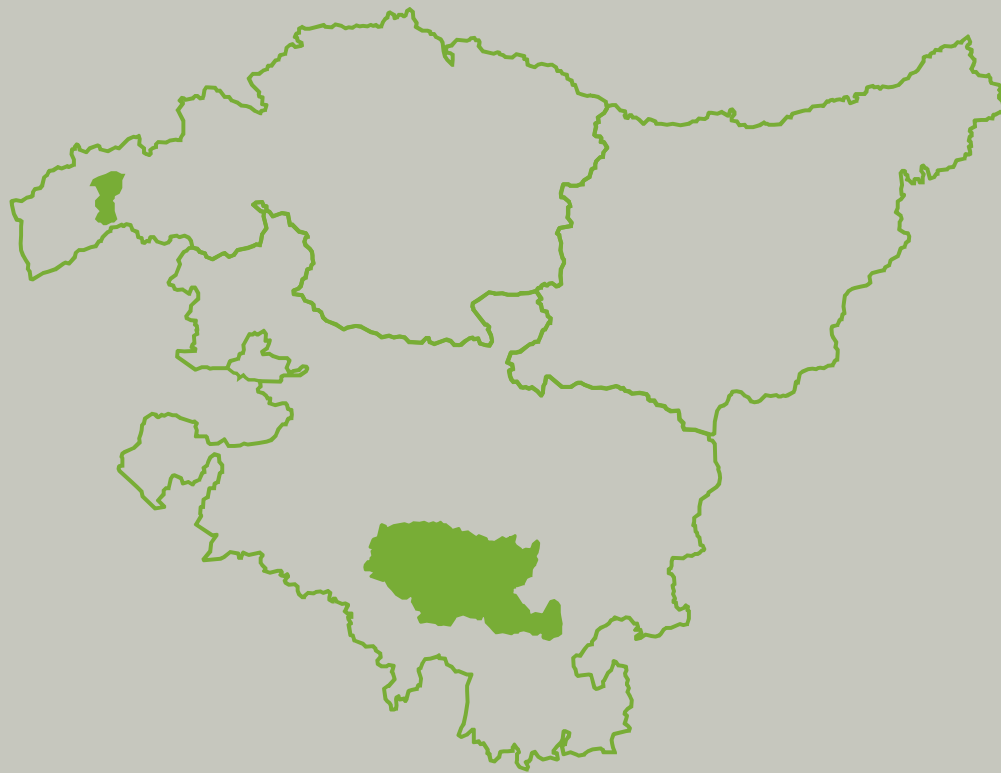
Figure 21. Evolution of enrolments in Primary Education according to language models. 1983-84 to 2002-03





pronounced difference between the models meant that the turning point at which the A model lost its leading position arrived much earlier (1988-89 academic year). During the 1991-92 academic year, the D model became the largest group, with a percentage of around 37%. The intensification of the growth of the D model from the 1992-93 academic year onwards has served to consolidate this position, and during the 2002-03 academic year, it accounted for 60% of the entire student population. The B model has been the second largest group for the past 15 years, a position it has maintained with minor variations oscillating between 25% and 35%. After its sharp drop, the A model accounted for just 10% of the student population during the 2002-03 academic year.

In relation to Primary Education, the trends are similar to those described above. The D model has risen sharply from 15% to over 50%, while the B model has undergone a less pronounced change, rising from 7% to 30%. The drop in students opting for the A model is even more intense than in the previous stage, falling from nearly 80% at the beginning of the period (1982-83 academic year) to under 20% in 2002-03.



II. Language competence

1.

The current situation regarding language competence (2001)

1.1. Introduction¹

The language competence variable refers to an individual's level of basic language skills in relation to Basque (comprehension, reading, writing and speaking).

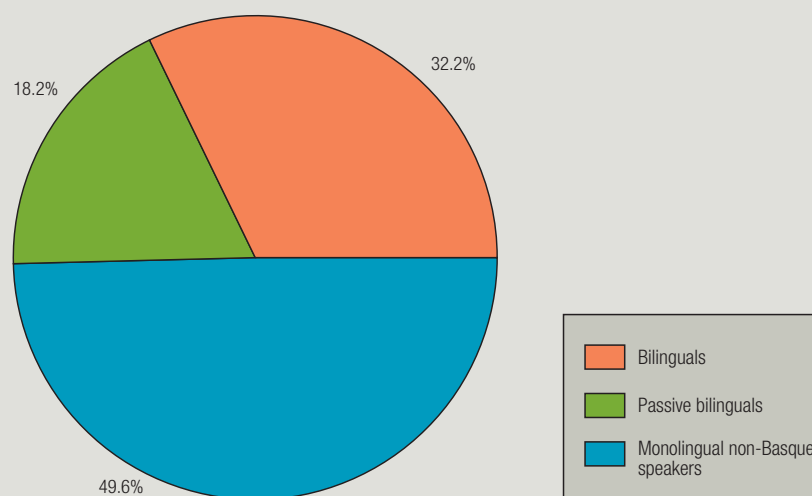
By crossing the different states of these variables, we have established a typology of 3 main groups: bilingual speakers, passive bilingual speakers and monolingual non-Basque speakers. The main difference between the groups is their mastery of the spoken language. In this sense, bilingual speakers are those who speak Basque well or fairly well, passive bilingual speakers are those who speak the language with difficulty but understand it well, and monolingual non-Basque speakers are those who do not speak the language at all.

In accordance with these types and on the basis of the information provided by the 2001 Population and Housing Census, we can state that in the Basque Autonomous Community, the group of monolingual non-Basque speakers (i.e. those who do not speak Basque) accounts for more or less half of the population (49.6%). Almost one third (32.2%) speak the language correctly (i.e. belong to the bilingual group) and the remaining 18.2% are passive bilingual speakers.

If we analyse the distribution according to HT, we see that Araba and Biscay have a lower-than-average percentage of bilingual speakers (16% and 24.8% respectively), and a higher-than-average percentage of monolingual non-Basque speakers. The group of passive bilingual speakers is similar in both territories and is above the average in both cases. As regards Gipuzkoa, the distribution is very different, since the bilingual group is well above the

average for the BAC and accounts for over half of the population. On the other hand, the percentage of both passive bilingual speakers and, especially, monolingual non-Basque speakers is well below the average. This difference in the distribution of the population is due to the different sociolinguistic characteristics of each territory, and has been that way since the first census data regarding language became available.

Figure 22. Language Competence in the BAC. 2001

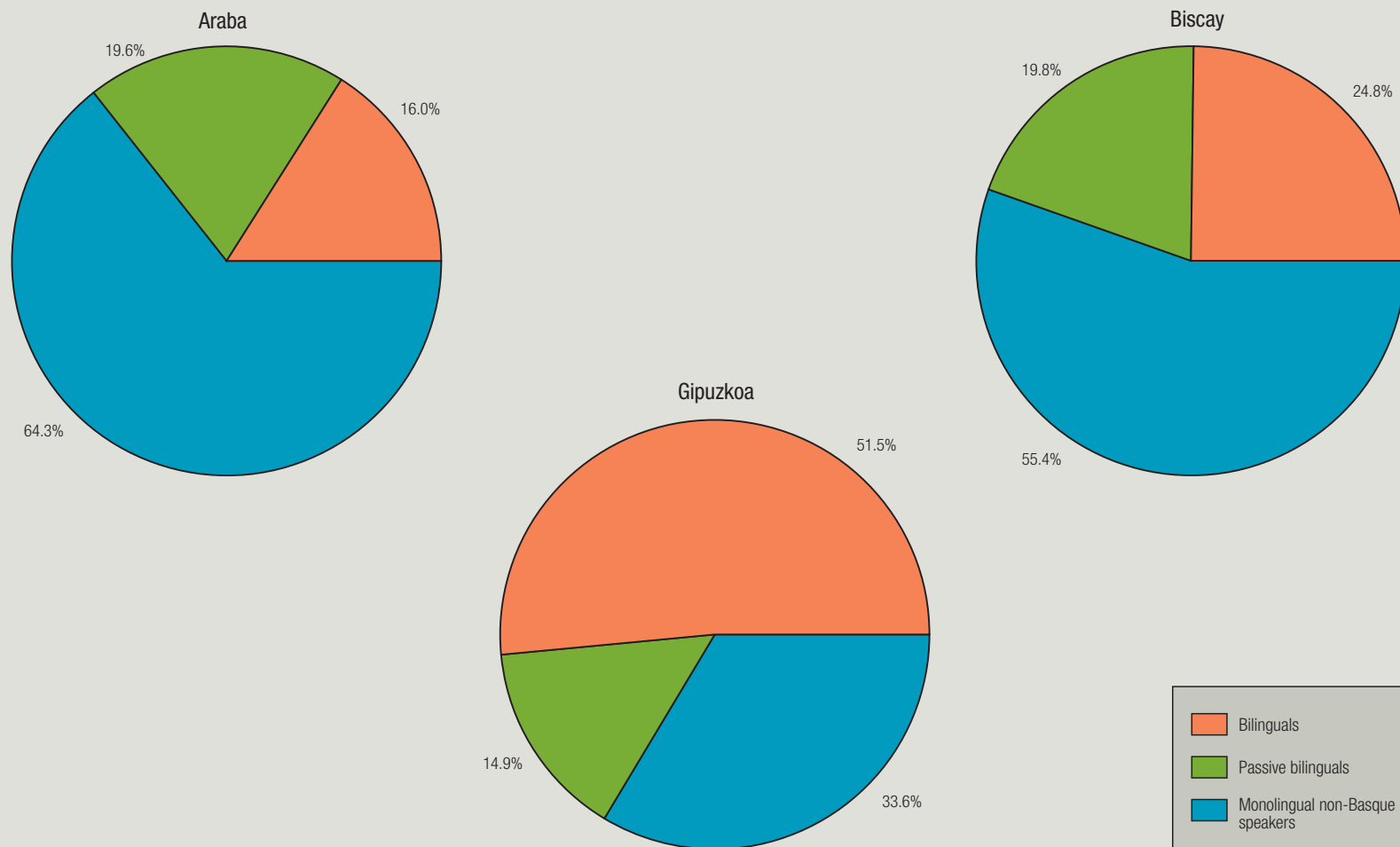


Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

¹ The whole study refers only to citizens aged 5 or over.



Figure 23. Language competence in the historical territories. 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

1.2. Language competence according to municipality

The distribution of the municipalities according to their percentage of bilingual speakers shows a number of clearly differentiated areas.

The most Basque-speaking zone, whose municipalities are characterised by their small size and rural nature, is that zone in which the Basque-speaking population accounts for over 80% of all inhabitants. This zone comprises two compact areas, the first located in the NE of Biscay, encompassing the entire Markina-Ondarroa area and most of the Gernika-Bermeo area; and the second is located in the centre of Gipuzkoa, encompassing most of the Urola Kosta, Goierri and Tolosaldea areas. In general terms, we could say that the larger coastal municipalities and those located along the Tolosa-Beasain corridor are excluded from this zone.

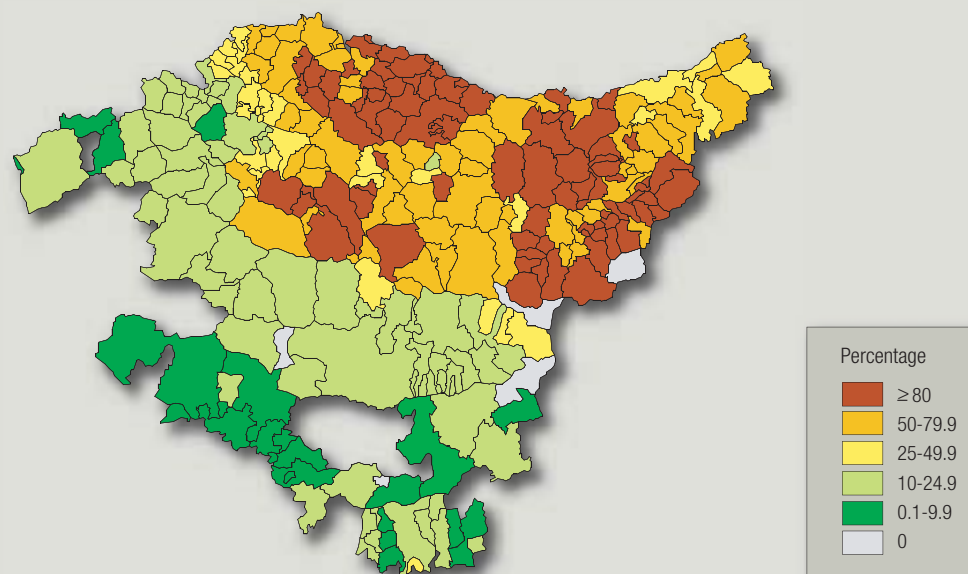
In addition to the two areas mentioned above, there is also another region comprised by the municipalities located in the Arratia valley, and several of the municipalities bordering the Duranguesado area, as well as Aramaio, the only municipality in Araba that belongs to this category. Finally, there are also a number of isolated municipalities, although in general, they tend to be located near the areas described above.

The zones with a Basque-speaking population of between 50% and 80% tend to be located in the gaps between the areas described above. The result is a greater compacting of the space which encompasses practically all of Gipuzkoa, with the exception of Donostia-San Sebastián and a few of the municipalities in its Metropolitan Area, and the eastern half of Biscay, with, again, the exception of a few isolated municipalities.

The municipalities with a percentage of bilingual speakers of between 25% and 50% constitute the smallest group in the BAC and are generally scattered around the region in an isolated manner, with the exception of a small concentration located in the area around Donostia-San Sebastián and another along the Plentzia-Txorierra-Bajo Ibaizabal line (Basañuri-Galdakao), which delimits the “line of contact” between Bilbao Handia (Greater Bilbao) and the more Basque-speaking neighbouring areas.

Finally, the areas with a concentration of bilingual speakers of less than 25% encompass practically the whole of Araba and a large part of the western half of Biscay, with municipalities with a level of between 10% and 25% being the most numerous in almost all this latter area, with the exception of Barakaldo and some municipalities in Enkarterria. In Araba also, the majority of the municipalities have a percentage of bilingual speakers of between 10% and 25%, with those with the lowest percentages

Figure 24. Percentage of bilingual speakers according to municipality. 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.



being mainly concentrated in the western-most areas: Ribera Alavesa, Montaña Alavesa and, particularly, Valles Alaveses.

1.3. Language competence according to age

The language competence according to age graph clearly shows three clearly differentiated moments; firstly, you can see how the percentage of bilingual speakers among the older age groups gradually drops until it reaches a minimum of around 20%, in the 50 to 60-year-old age group.

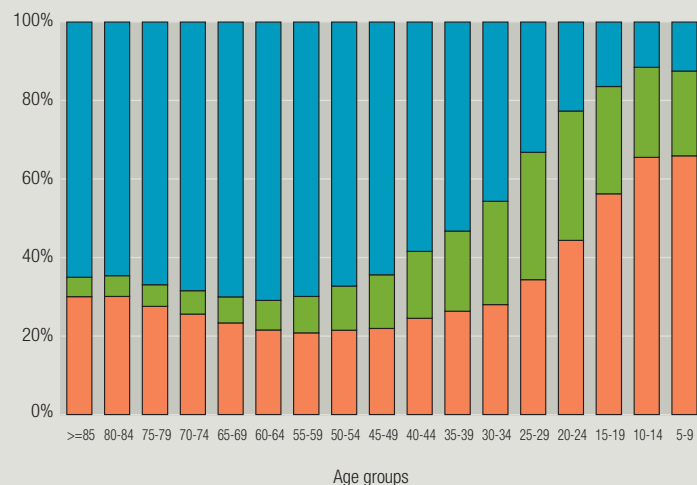
From this moment on, there is a gradual increase in the percentages, with the figures rising slowly at first and then more quickly, until they reach their maximum level in the youngest age groups: over 60% of the population aged between 5 and 14 is bilingual.

As regards the Historical Territories, in general terms the data for all three are similar to those for the BAC, although they differ slightly in accordance with each territory's individual characteristics. In Araba, the percentage of bilingual speakers is lower in the older and mid-range age groups. Only those under the

age of 30 show percentages near or over 20, and there is a sharp increase among the youngest age groups. The data for Biscay are more or less the same as for the BAC in general. In Gipuzkoa, on the other hand, we should highlight the high percentage of bilingual speakers in all age groups, with no group showing a figure of under 40%.

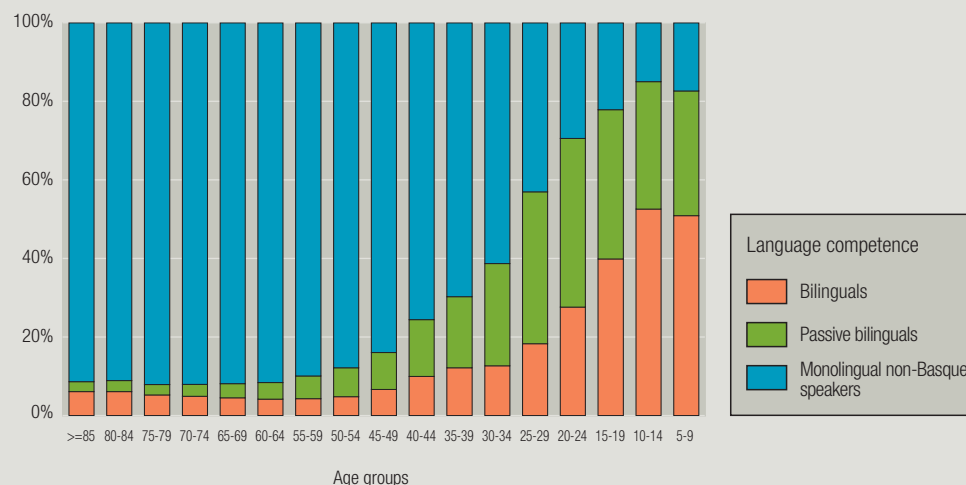
As regards the municipalities, practically all of them reflect the general trends identified above for the different territories. Nevertheless, given their demographic importance, a brief analysis of the three capitals of the BAC is given below.

Figure 25. BAC. Language competence according to age, 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 26. Araba. Language competence according to age, 2001



As you can see, the graph corresponding to Vitoria-Gasteiz is practically identical to that of Araba in general; this is due to the fact that the vast majority of the population lives in the capital city. As evident in the graph, the situation is characterised by the youth of the bilingual population, the majority of whom are aged under 20. The presence of bilingual speakers in the over 50 age groups is almost non-existent. Another important element is the high percentage of passive bilingual speakers, generally in the under 30 age groups.

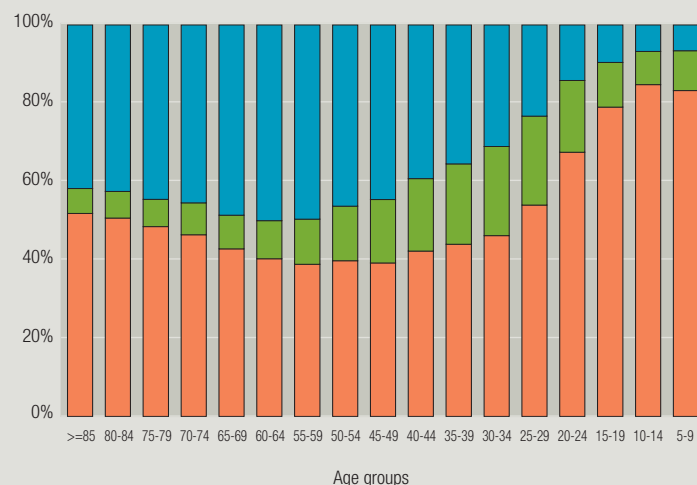
The situation in Bilbao is very similar to that of Vitoria-Gasteiz, the only significant difference being the higher percentage of bilingual speakers among the older age groups.

Finally, the situation in Donostia-San Sebastián differs significantly from both the other two capitals and Gipuzkoa in general. In the Gipuzkoan capital, the difference between the different age groups is more noticeable and the percentages of bilingual speakers are significantly lower than those for the territory as a whole. Nevertheless, in comparison with the other

capitals, Donostia-San Sebastián occupies the same position as Gipuzkoa among the other territories, with highest percentages of bilingual speakers and the lowest percentage of passive bilingual speakers, particularly among the younger generations.

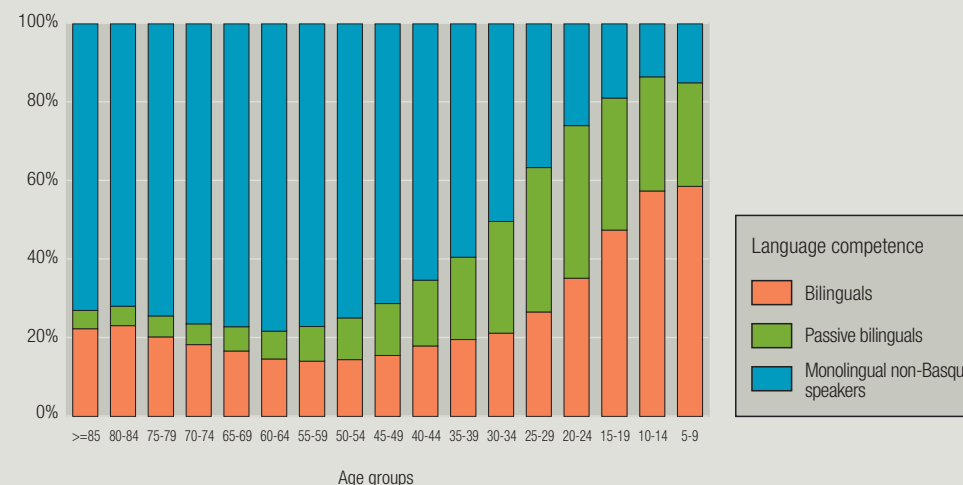
In summary then, we can say that, with the exception of the oldest age groups, the general trends are fairly similar, reflecting a gradual increase in the number of both bilingual speakers and passive bilingual speakers from the mid-range groups to the youngest generations.

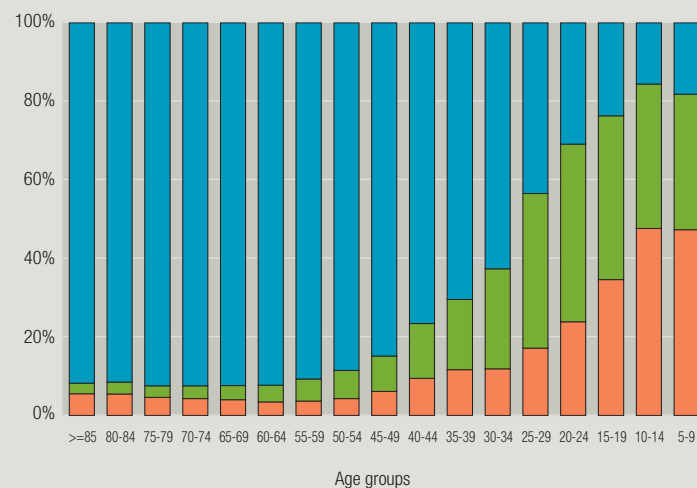
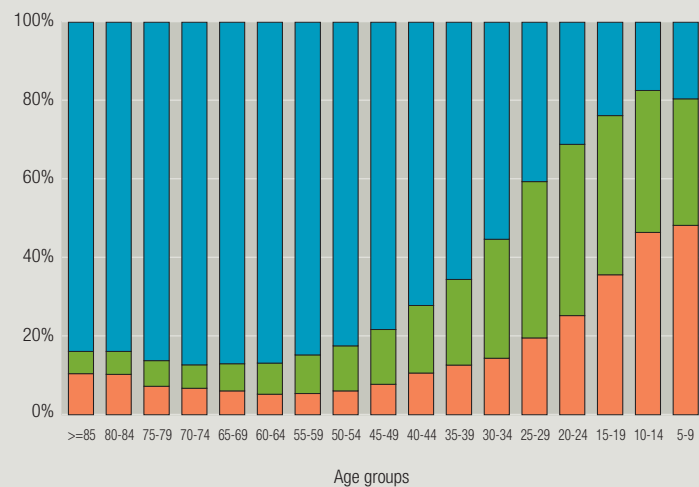
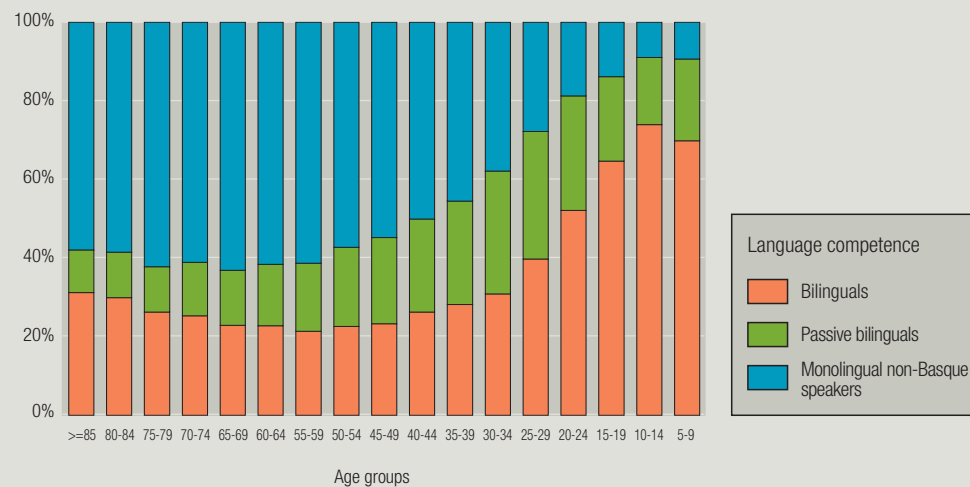
Figure 27. Gipuzkoa. Lang. competence according to age, 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 28. Biscay. Language competence according to age, 2001



**Figure 29.** Vitoria-Gasteiz. Language competence according to age, 2001**Figure 30.** Bilbao. Language competence according to age, 2001**Figure 31.** Donostia-San Sebastián. Language competence according to age, 2001

Language competence

- Bilinguals
- Passive bilinguals
- Monolingual non-Basque speakers

Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

1.4. The recovery of the Basque language, a young, urban phenomenon

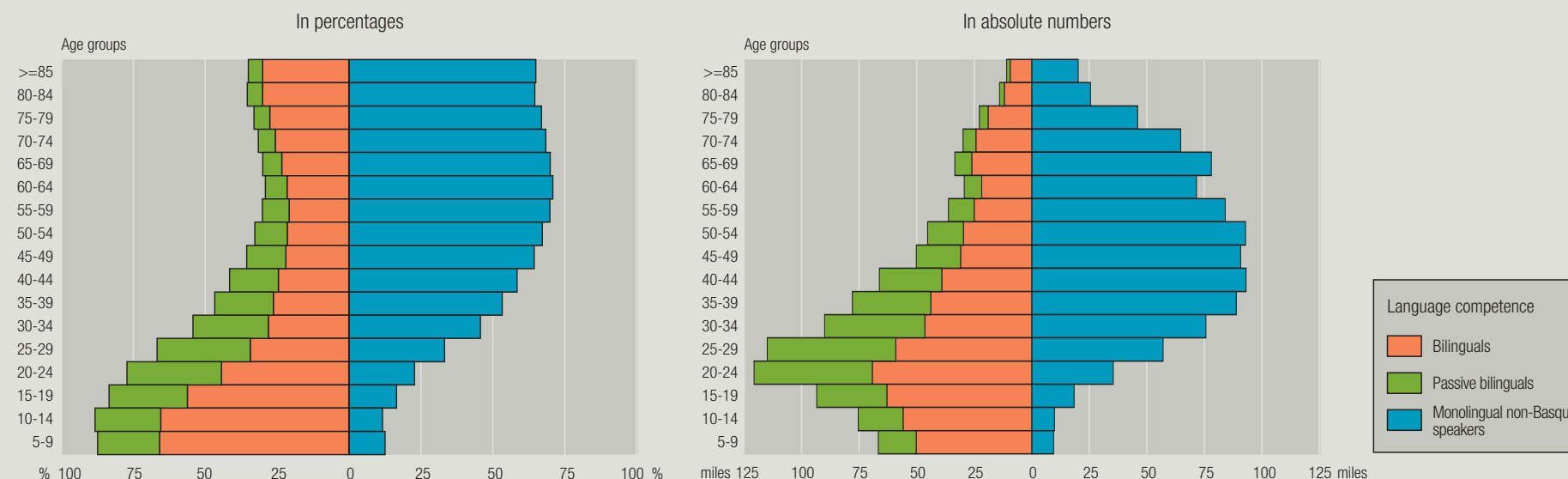
Two factors have stood out throughout both the analysis of the current situation of bilingual speakers and the analysis according to age: the special link between bilingual speakers and the metropolitan areas and the sharper increase among the younger age groups. Are these two factors really

the key features of the process that has been taking place over the last 20 years? Can we affirm that the increase in bilingual speakers is really a young, urban phenomenon?

In the year 2001, the age groups in the BAC in which bilingual speakers constituted the majority (i.e. accounted for over 50% of all citizens in the group) were those corresponding to the population aged

between 5 and 19 (5-9, 10-14 and 15-19). Furthermore, we should also add that the percentage increases as we move down the age scale. In the 15-19 age group, 56.3% are bilingual; in the group aged between 10 and 14, this percentage rises to 65.5%, almost as high as the percentage for the youngest age group (5-9): 65.9%. Moreover, it is not only that the younger age groups contain the highest percentages of bilingual speakers; in absolute num-

Figure 32. Age pyramids for language competence. BAC, 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.



bers also, the highest number of bilingual speakers is concentrated in the under 30 age groups. In fact, almost half of all bilingual speakers in the BAC (47.6%) are encompassed within these age groups.

As regards the urban nature of the phenomenon, we have already mentioned the high number of bilingual speakers located in the capital cities. In fact, the capitals account for just over 20% of all bilingual speakers in the region (21.9%). If we widen this area to include centres with over 20,000 inhabitants (17 municipalities), then the percentage rises to 42.7%. Finally, if we follow the criteria used by the NSI, which considers all towns containing over 10,000 inhabitants as being urban centres, we see that two thirds of all bilingual speakers in the BAC (66.3%) live in urban areas. However, the concentration of inhabitants living in urban areas is higher still, since these areas encompass almost 80% of the population (79.3%). This means that although the phenomenon we are analysing is indeed an urban one, the presence of Basque speakers in the rural environment remains higher than the population average.

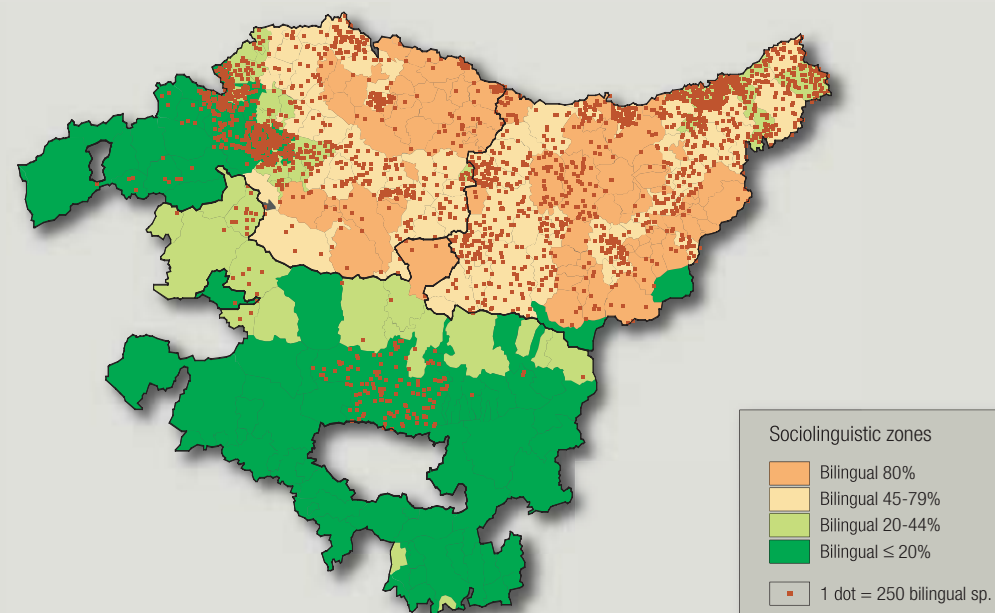
The map opposite gives a clear picture of the spatial distribution of bilingual speakers and their concentration in urban zones, particularly the metropolitan areas. We can therefore see how the majority of bilingual speakers live in and around the three capital cities, in the Ibaizabal corridor, the Deba Valley and the Beasain-Tolosa axis. Furthermore, there is also a series of isolated towns with a high percentage of bilingual speakers, generally located along the coast (Ondarroa, Zarautz, Bermeo, etc.).

Table 1. Urban concentration of bilingual speakers

| Number of municipalities | Range | Inhabitants (2001) | Bilingual speakers (2001) | % of bilingual speakers |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20 | 10-19.999 | 287.429 | 150.561 | 23,6 |
| 11 | 20-49.999 | 353.586 | 91.278 | 14,3 |
| 3 | > 50.000 | 222.936 | 41.511 | 6,5 |
| 3 | Capitals | 710.921 | 140.288 | 21,9 |
| Total | | 1.574.872 | 423.638 | 66,3 |

Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 33. Sociolinguistic zones and real distribution of bilingual speakers, according to municipality. 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 2001 Population and Housing Census.

2.

Evolution of language competence (1981-2001)

2.1. Introduction

Between 1981 and 2001, the percentage of bilingual speakers in the BAC rose from 22% to 32%.

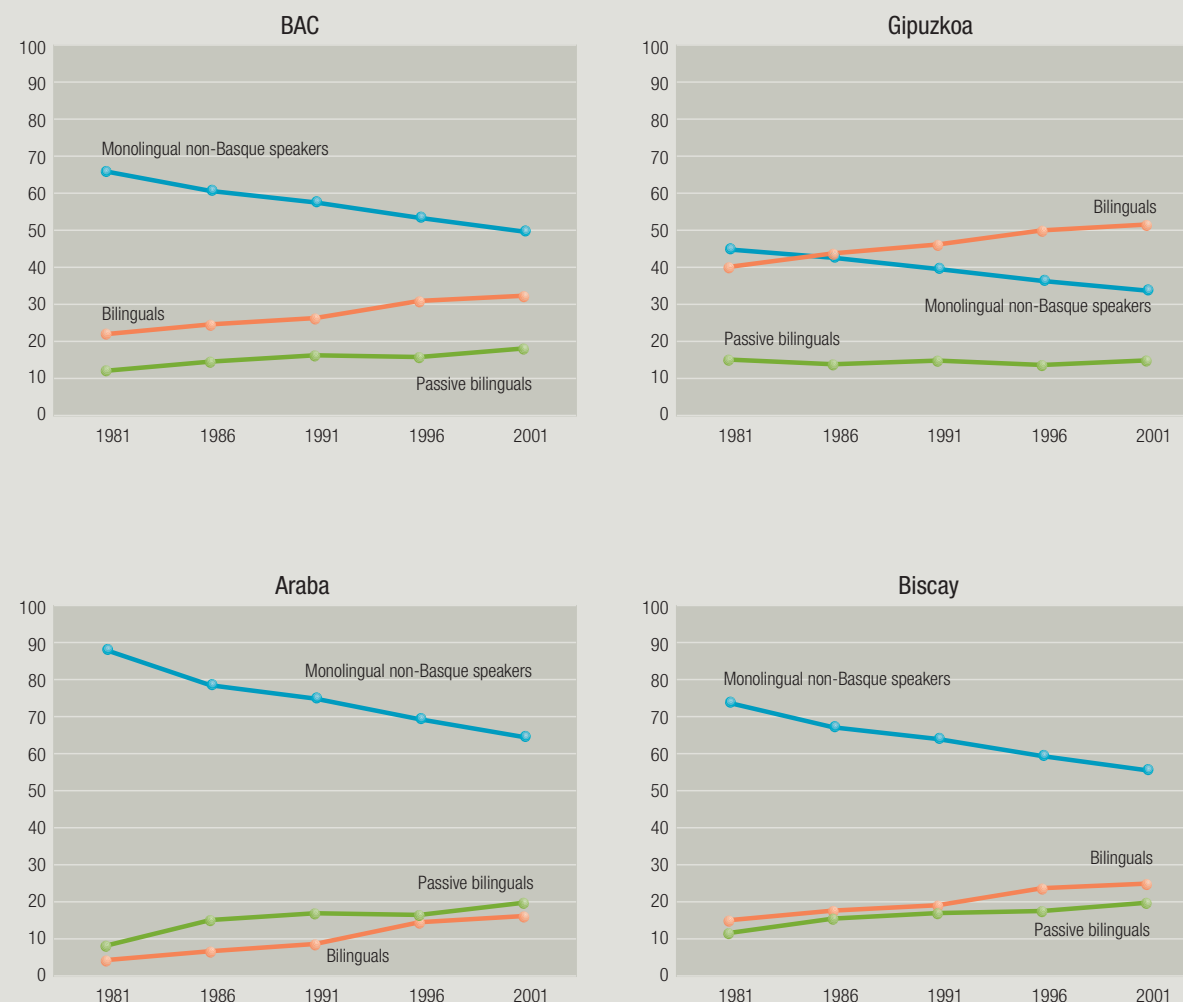
The absolute figures clearly show the true scope of this process. In this way, between 1981 and 2001, the number of bilingual speakers in the BAC¹ has increased from 431,136 to 639,296. In other words, over the last 20 years, 200,000 potential new speakers have joined the bilingual group, a figure that is roughly equivalent to the population of the city of Donostia-San Sebastián.

A gradual increase in the percentage of bilingual speakers has been noted also in the Historical Territories, accompanied by a sharp drop in the number of monolingual non-Basque speakers. The number of passive bilingual speakers has also increased continuously, except in the case of Gipuzkoa, where the figure has remained at a stable 13-15%.

Despite the different sociolinguistic circumstances of each territory, the variation in the percentage of bilingual speakers is similar in all three (an increase of between 10% and 12%). In Araba, the percentage of bilingual speakers has quadrupled over the last 20 years, increasing from 4% to 16%. In Biscay, the figure has risen from 15% to 25%, and in Gipuzkoa from 40% to 51.5%.

² Unless expressly stated otherwise, throughout the whole report we refer to the population aged 5 and over.

Figure 34. Evolution of language competence according to HT. 1981, 1991 and 2001



Source: EUSTAT. 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Population and Housing Censuses.



2.2. Evolution of language competence according to municipality

Before beginning the analysis, we would like to point out that in the case of small municipalities (almost half the municipalities in the BAC have a population of no more than 1,000 inhabitants), even the smallest variation in the number of individuals in any of the groups may have a disproportionate effect on the percentages, and give rise to situations that may seem contradictory.

As regards general trends, we could say that in the vast majority of municipalities in the BAC there has been a (more or less marked) increase in the percentage of bilingual speakers.

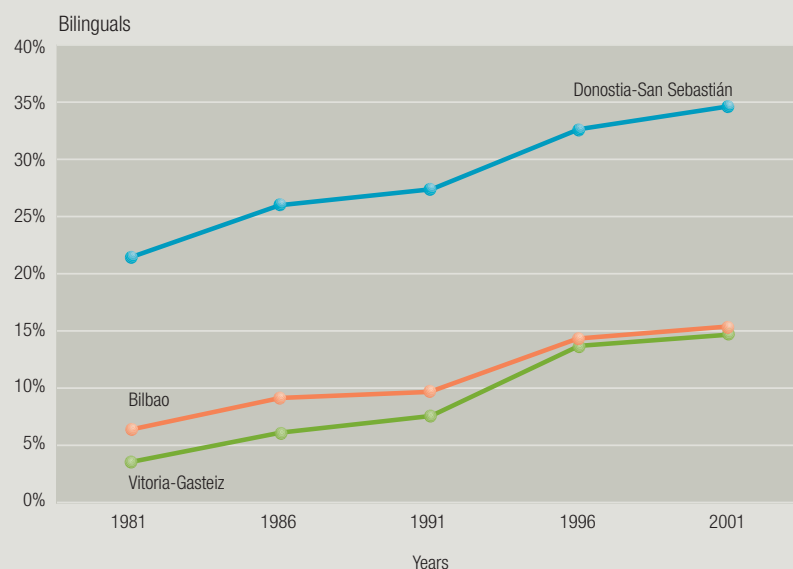
Nevertheless, the best way of observing the intensity of this trend is through an analysis of the maps which represent the percentage values of bilingual speakers at a municipal level. Such an analysis shows us how those municipalities with high percentages of bilingual speakers (mainly located in the eastern half

of Biscay and almost all Gipuzkoa) have maintained fairly similar values over the years, with no significant variations. Nevertheless, in the municipalities in the rest of Biscay and in Araba, where the percentage of bilingual speakers in 1981 was very low, we can see a generalised upward trend which has resulted in a gradual increase in the percentage. In consequence, many of these municipalities have risen up the percentage scale with regard to their bilingual populations.

The evolution of each of the three capitals has been influenced to a certain extent by their different starting percentages (i.e. the percentages shown in 1981). In this sense, Vitoria-Gasteiz, which had a percentage of 3.5% in 1981, had the lowest starting percentage and has experienced the highest percentage increase, with the figure rising to 7.6% in 1991 and 14.7% in 2001, practically four times the initial number. Bilbao, which had a percentage of 6.4% in 1981, has more than doubled this figure over the last twenty years, to reach a percentage of 15.3% in 2001. Finally, Donostia-San Sebastián, which had a significantly higher starting percentage than the other two capitals, has experienced a lower percentage increase, rising from 21.4% in 1981 to 34.6% in 2001.

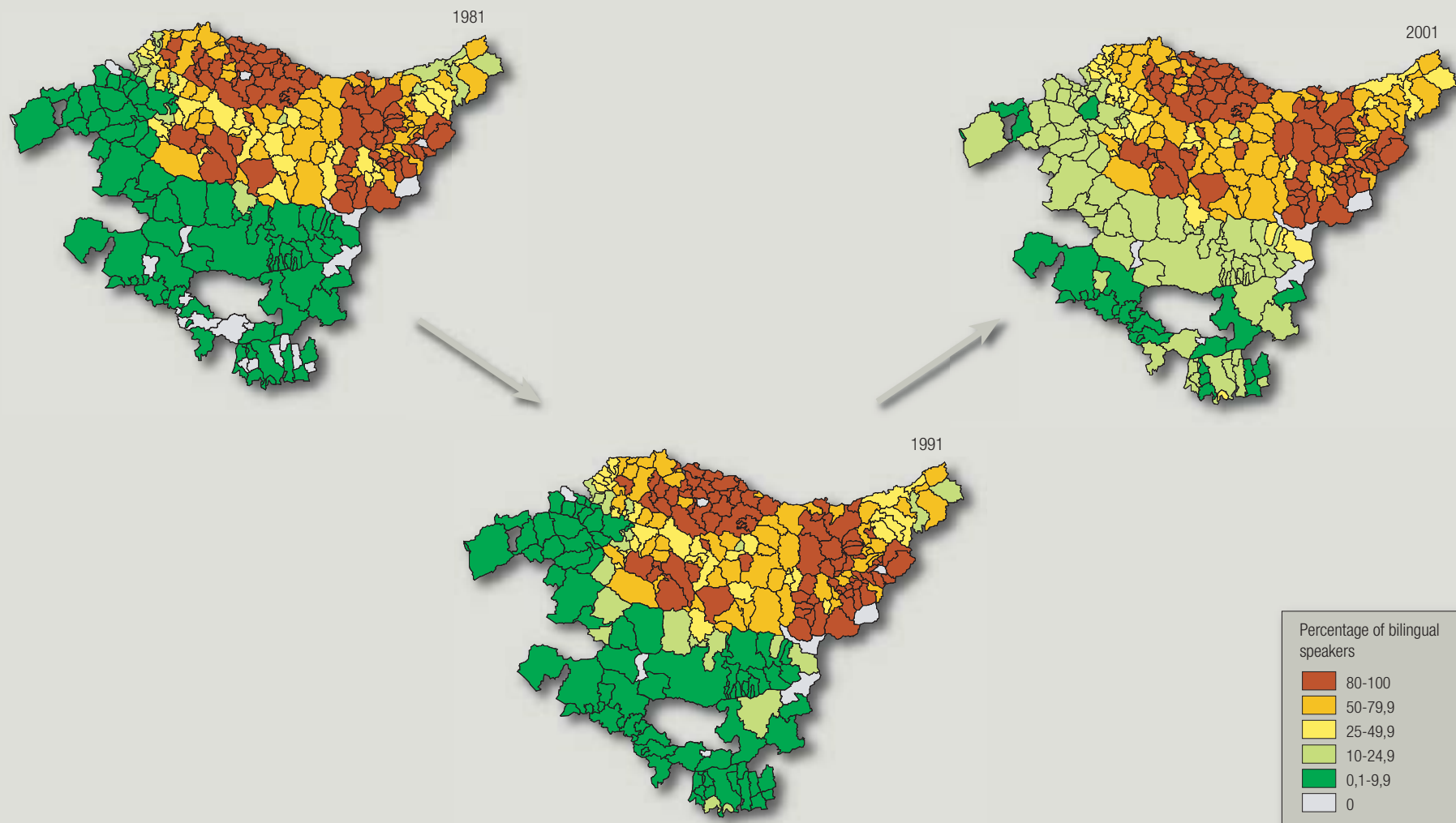
If we analyse these increases in absolute terms, we see that all three capitals have experienced fairly similar increases, oscillating between 24,000 and 28,000 new bilingual speakers.

Figure 35. Evolution of the percentage of bilingual speakers in the capitals. 1981-2001



Source: EUSTAT. 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Population and Housing Censuses.

Figure 36. Evolution of the percentage of bilingual speakers between 1981 and 2001



Source: EUSTAT, 1981, 1991 and 2001 Population and Housing Censuses.



2.3. Evolution of language competence according to age

Our analysis of the situation has given us a clear idea of the structure of language competence according to age groups, and we have seen how the percentage of both bilingual speakers and passive bilingual speakers increases as we move down the age scale, to the detriment of monolingual non-Basque speakers, who have decreased sharply.

We will now analyse the evolution of the different age groups throughout the period in question. To do this, we will first attempt to simplify the classification by uniting those groups with common characteristics, bearing in mind the current distribution of the population according to language competence and age. Thus, we have divided the population into four groups:

- 5-24 years of age: this group is characterised by a high percentage of both bilingual and passive bilingual speakers, and a low percentage of monolingual non-Basque speakers.
- 25-44 years of age: this group is characterised by a reversal in the trend, and it is here that we begin to catch a glimpse of the language recovery process.
- 45-64 years of age: it is in this age group that the number of bilingual speakers is at its lowest.
- 65 years of age: in this group, the percentage of bilingual speakers is somewhat higher, although the percentage of passive bilingual speakers is at its lowest point.

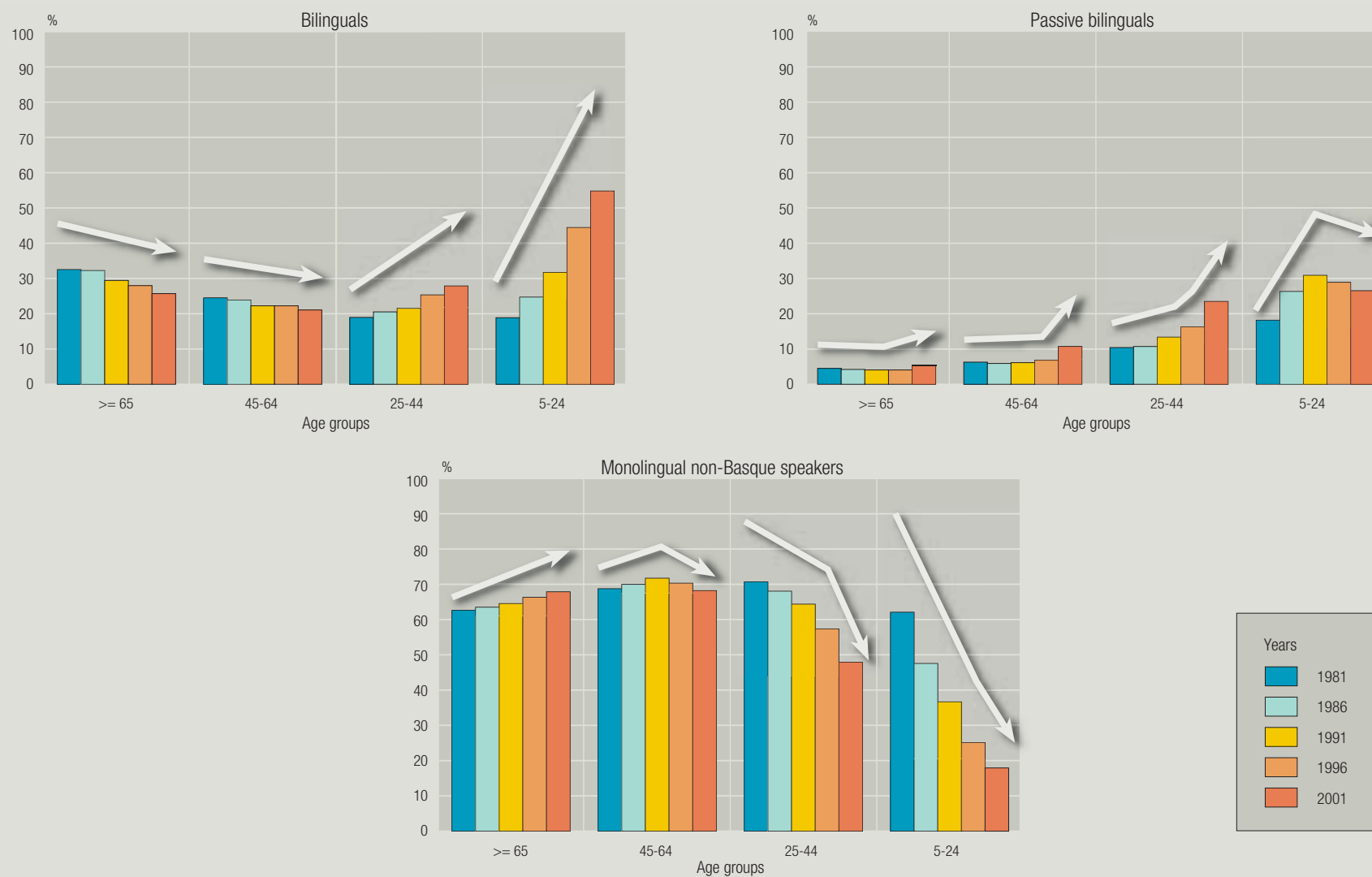
If we look at the graph which shows the evolution of bilingual speakers in each of the different age groups throughout the period in question, we see that the older age groups show a regressive trend. This trend is reversed in the two youngest groups and there is a continuous increase, although there is still a large gap between the 25-44 group and the youngest group (under 25s). In this last group, the growth rate is spectacular, with the figure rising from 19.3% in 1981 to 55.5% in 2001.

As regards the evolution in the different Historical Territories, and bearing in mind the individual characteristics of each one (the percentages are much lower in Araba than in Biscay, and lower in Biscay than in Gipuzkoa), the trends are fairly similar, with the exception of a few small differences in intensity. The only significant change is that which appears in the two oldest age groups in Araba; given the characteristics of this territory, and given that the percentages of both groups are extremely low, a downward trend is more difficult to detect, which is why the values are stable and even increase slightly during the period in question.

The passive bilingual speaker group is the one which, in general, has the lowest percentages. In the oldest age groups, the percentages for 1981 are extremely low, and remain stable until the final phase of the period, during which they increase slightly. This evolution is similar for the two groups over the age of 45, both in the BAC in general and the individual Historical Territories. In the younger groups, the evolution is different. In the 25-44 group in the BAC, the percentage of passive bilingual speakers increases both continuously and significantly throughout the entire period, a process similar to that which occurs in the

HTs, with the exception of Gipuzkoa. In this territory, the growth rate is much lower. As regards the youngest group (5-24 years of age), during the first half of the period, up until 1991, there is a notable increase in the number of passive bilingual speakers in the HTs, with the exception again of Gipuzkoa, where the figures remain stable. During the second half of the period however, between 1991 and 2001, there is a certain drop in the percentage of this group in the BAC, which coincides with the increase in the number of bilingual speakers.

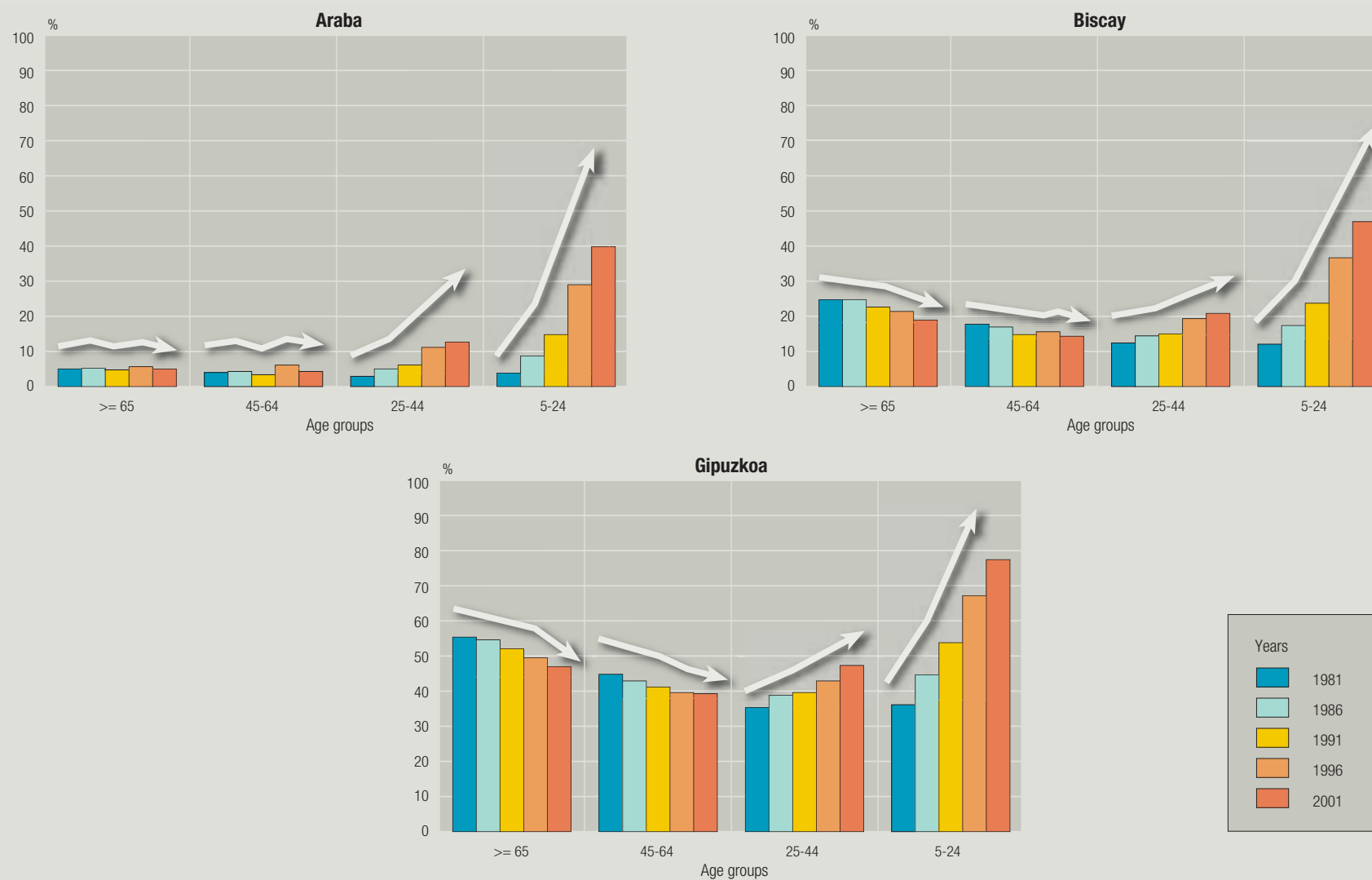
Finally, the number of monolingual non-Basque speakers in the BAC increases slightly in the over 65 age group. The 45-64 age group also started the period with a slight upward trend, but this was reversed during the second decade. The other two groups are characterised by their sharp decrease. Among those aged between 25 and 44, the rate of this decrease is lower in the first decade, although it speeds up from 1991 onwards. In the youngest age group the drop is much sharper, and is particularly spectacular in the case of Araba, where monolingual non-Basque speakers accounted for 80% of the 5-24-year-old population in 1981, and only just over 20% in 2001.

Figure 37. Evolution of language competence according to age in the BAC. 1981-2001

Source: EUSTAT. 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Population and Housing Censuses.



Figure 38. Evolution of bilingual speakers according to age in the HTs. 1981-2001



Source: EUSTAT. 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Population and Housing Censuses.

We will now analyse whether the general trends detected for the BAC and the three Historical Territories are also true for the municipalities; to do so, we will focus our analysis on the evolution of the three capital cities.

As regards the evolution of language competence in accordance with age in the three capitals, in Vitoria-Gasteiz the trend is very similar to that of Araba in general, with bilingual and passive bilingual speakers in the over 45 age groups showing very low percentages which remain under 5% throughout the entire period, with only slight modifications. The 25 to 44 age group began the period with similar percentages, but later experienced a continuous, if not particularly sharp increase throughout the period, with the percentages of passive bilingual speakers being always higher than those of bilingual speakers. In the 25 to 44 age group, the percentage of passive bilingual speakers increased from 6.6% to 24.6%, while the figure for bilingual speakers rose from 2.6% to 12.7%. As regards monolingual non-Basque speakers, the percentages hardly change at all among the older age groups. However, as we move down the age scale, the drop in this language competence group becomes increasingly sharp. In the 45-64 age group the drop is hardly noticeable, whereas in the 25-44 group, the figure decreases from 90.8% to 62.7%, although it still retains an ample majority. Nevertheless, among the youngest sector of the population, those aged between 5 and 24, the drop is quite spectacular, falling from 79.2% to just 23.8%.

Bilbao and Donostia-San Sebastián have evolutions that are similar to those of their respective territories.

In Bilbao the two oldest age groups have very low percentages of both bilingual and passive bilingual speakers, and show a fairly stable evolution throughout the period in question, with a slightly downward trend as regards bilingual speakers and a slightly upward trend as regards passive bilingual speakers, although this percentage levels out during the final years of the period among the younger group. As regards monolingual non-Basque speakers, although the percentage among the older age groups remains stable, and even increases slightly, there is a clear drop among the younger groups. This drop is sharpest in the youngest group, and becomes even sharper as we move towards the end of the period.

Donostia-San Sebastián is characterised by its relatively high percentage of bilingual speakers in comparison with the other two capitals, which has led to a slightly different evolution, particularly as regards passive bilingual speakers, although the evolution of bilingual speakers and monolingual non-Basque speakers is fairly similar. In this sense, the number of people in the oldest group of bilingual speakers remained constant between 1981 and 1986, and then dropped slightly more sharply than in Bilbao (although we should not forget that the starting percentage was three times as high), falling from 34.5% to 26%. In the 45-64 group, this drop did not occur and the percentages remained stable, with small fluctuations, through the entire period, with figures oscillating between 24% in 1981 and 22.5% in 2001. As with the previous two capitals, the evolution of the younger generations is characterised by a continuous increase which lasts throughout the entire period, and

is more intense among the youngest age group, whose percentage rose from 18% to 63% in 2001. Monolingual non-Basque speakers also experienced an evolution similar to that recorded for the other cities, with the older age groups undergoing a slight increase, although in the case of the 45-64 year olds, this increase was interrupted in 1991 and the percentage dropped back down to its initial level (59.6% in 1981, 65.3% in 1991 and 58.4% in 2001). The 25 to 44 group underwent a number of small variations during the first part of the period in question (between 1981 and 1991), but then adopted a decidedly downward trend, dropping from 57.2% in 1991 to 40.4% in 2001. As always, the most drastic change occurred among the youngest generation, i.e. those aged between 5 and 24, whose percentage figure dropped sharply from 49.3% to 13.7%, making it the minority social group in this age range.

Nevertheless, as stated above, passive bilingual speakers in Donostia-San Sebastián underwent a somewhat different evolution from their counterparts in the other two capitals. The three groups aged over 25 all showed a similar pattern, with a small drop between 1981 and 1986, followed by a slow but sure recovery that took them back up to slightly above their original levels. However, the group aged between 5 and 24 hardly varied at all during the first half of the period (32.7% in 1981 and 32.3% in 1991), but then decreased slowly but surely during the second half.

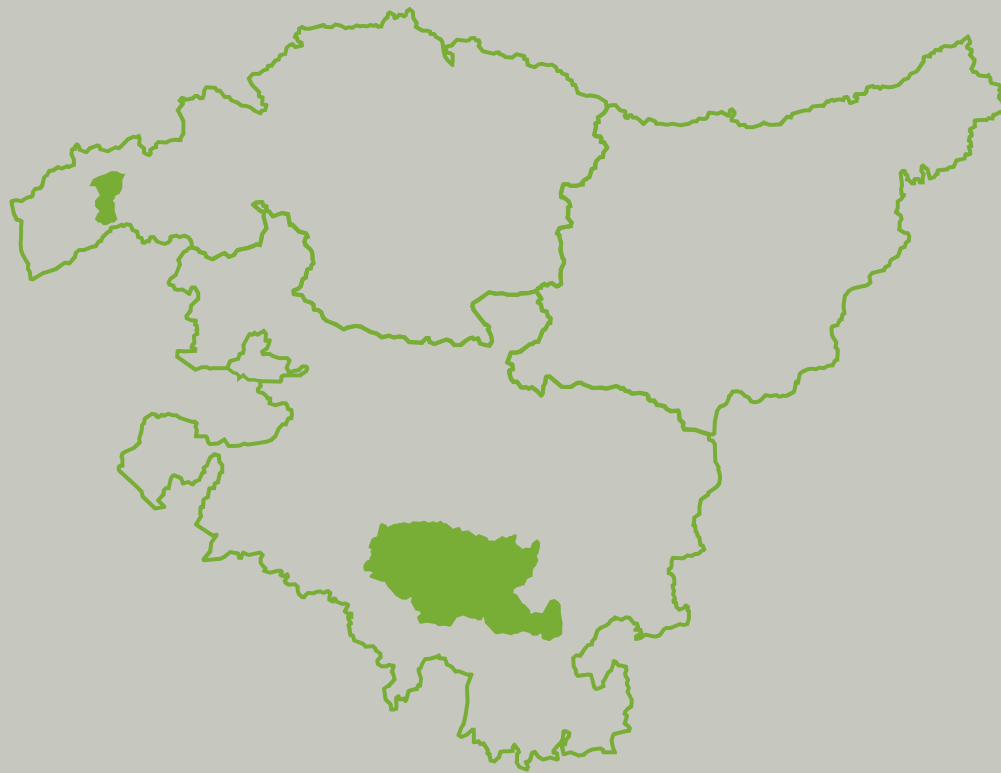


As evident during the analysis of the BAC as a whole, the individual HTs and the three capital cities, the evolution of each of the language groups over the last 20 years has been, with the exception of a few specific variations, more or less similar in all areas.

The number of bilingual speakers dropped slightly or remained constant among the over 45 groups, and increased fairly sharply among the younger generations, with the most drastic increase occurring among the youngest age groups.

The passive bilingual speaker group is the one with the most variations. In the least Basque-speaking areas, the number of passive bilingual speakers remained constant in the older age groups, and increased both consistently and fairly sharply in the 25 to 44 age group. This upward trend occurred also in the youngest group, although it was interrupted during the middle of the period in question, remaining stable or even dropping slightly on some occasions. In zones with a slightly higher percentage of bilingual speakers, the over 25 age groups all showed a similar evolution: a slight drop followed by a continuous rise which brought the figures back up to their original level, and even somewhat higher in some cases. Among the youngest age group, however, the numbers remain stable at first, and then drop fairly sharply.

Finally, the evolution of monolingual non-Basque speakers is always the same: small fluctuations or a slight increase among the older age groups, and a sharp drop among the population under the age of 45, although at the beginning of the period, the 25 to 44 group remained stable for a while. Among the youngest age group the drop is truly spectacular.



III. Language mobility index (BILA)

1.

The current situation regarding the BILA index (2001)

1.1. Introduction

The BILA index is a category obtained by crossing the language competence and mother tongue variables. The category comprises seven groups¹ which reflect the various possibilities in an individual's language development. In this case, the different groups were established in accordance with each individual's mastery of the Basque language, and depending on whether his or her mother tongue is Basque alone, or Basque and Spanish together. An individual for whom Basque is their mother tongue, can either maintain or lose the language, either totally or partially. And an individual for whom Basque is not their mother tongue can learn it (or not), either partially or totally.

This index serves to assess the losses and/or gains in the Basque language, as well as the maintenance of the language by an individual throughout his or her whole life.

Based on the data provided by the 2001 Census, we can say that, in general, the vast majority of people maintain their language skills, with the exception of a few losses that are amply exceeded by gains. In fact, the group of *partially Spanishised* and *totally Spanishised speakers* account for just 2.1% of the population, as opposed to the 10.9% corresponding

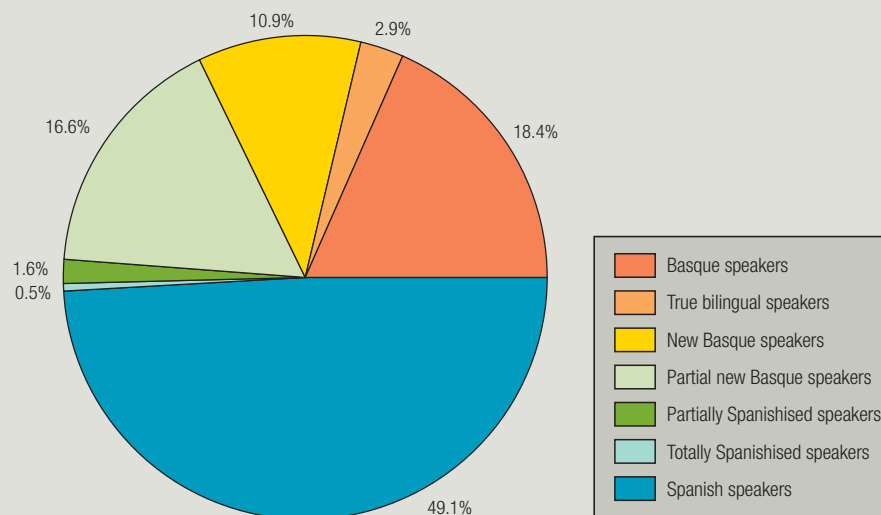
to *new Basque speakers* (who represent the gains in the language). The group of *partial new-Basque speakers* was not included in the analysis, since it was impossible to determine whether their numbers represented a process of language loss or gain.

According to the BILA index, the structure of the population varies significantly from one territory to the next, depending on the sociolinguistic characteristics of each. In Araba, the group of *Spanish speakers* is the largest group (64%) and the group of *Basque speakers* is very small (2.9%), as is the *native bilingual speaker* group (1.5%). The groups which indicate language loss are practically non-existent, since between them both they total just 1% of the population. Ne-

vertheless, we must highlight the importance of the *new-Basque speaker* group, which accounts for almost 12% of the population, the highest percentage in the three HTs.

In Biscay also the largest group is the *Spanish speaker* group, which accounts for over half of the population (55%). Nevertheless, *Basque speakers* also account for a significant percentage of the population (12.1%), although this is not the case for *native bilingual speakers*, whose percentage barely reaches 2%. The groups representing losses, although slightly higher than in Araba, do not exceed 2%. *New Basque speakers* account for 10.4% of the population and *partial new Basque speakers*

Figure 39. Language mobility index (BILA). BAC. 2001

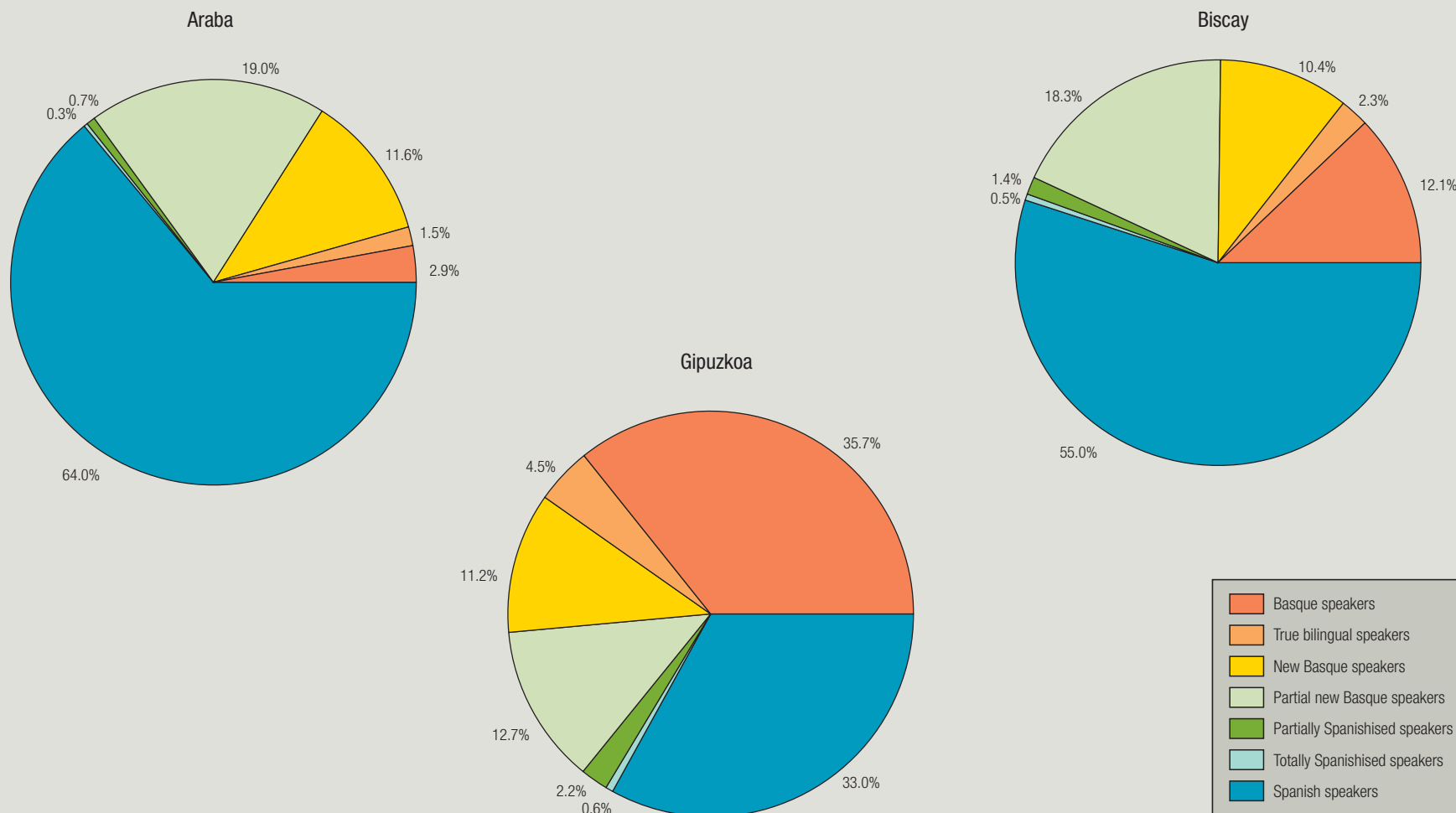


Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

¹ See the definition of the groups in the glossary.



Figure 40. Language mobility index (BILA). 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

(who are studying or have studied Basque) also constitute an important group (18.3%), although their impact is not clearly defined.

Gipuzkoa is by far the most Basque-speaking territory, with *Basque speakers* accounting for 35.7% of the population and forming the largest group, closely followed by *Spanish speakers* (33%). The percentage of *new Basque speakers* is similar to in the other two territories (11.2%) and both *native bilingual speakers* and the groups representing losses are slightly larger than in Araba and Biscay, despite still being fairly small.

1.2. The BILA index according to municipality

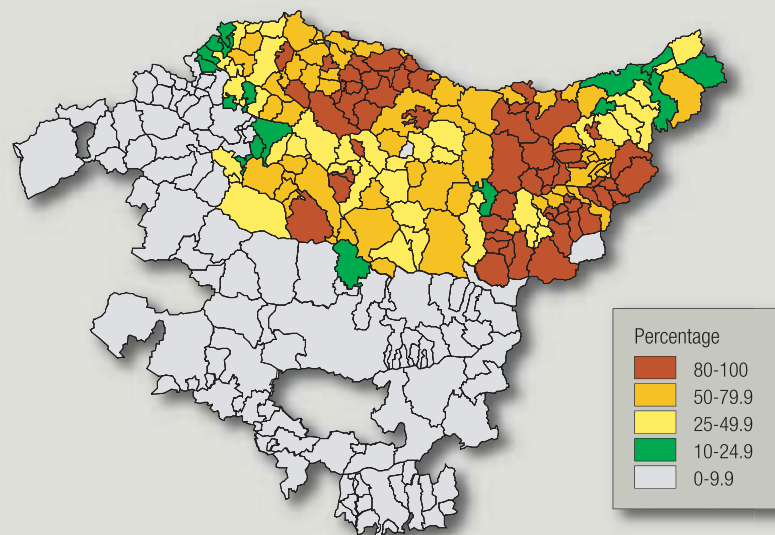
In order to give a general overview of the situation at a municipal level, we will base our analysis on two maps which show the municipal percentages of the two most significant groups: *Basque speakers* and *new Basque speakers*.

In the previous section on language competence, we showed how the recovery of the Basque language is a young, urban phenomenon. We will now attempt to verify whether the analysis of the two principal bilingual groups (Basque speakers and new

Basque speakers) reflects these same tendencies, a finding which would ratify our initial conclusions.

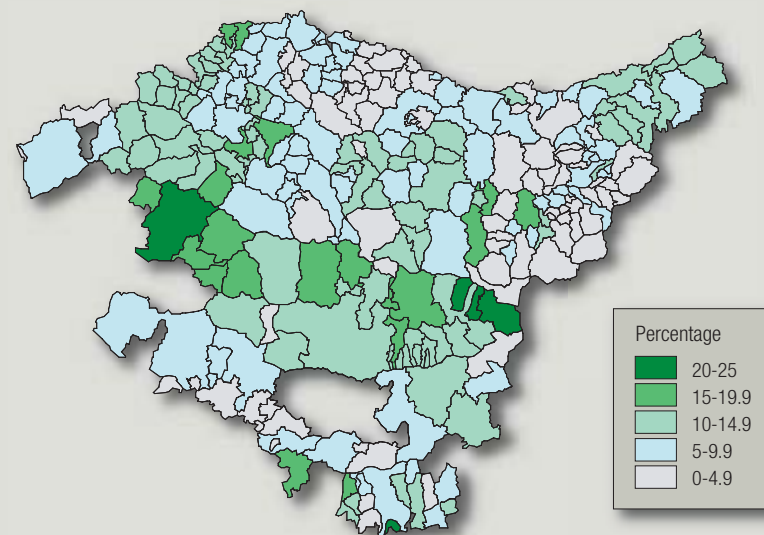
As we can see, the two maps look completely different. On the one hand, we have the map which shows the percentage of Basque speakers, which is very similar in appearance to the one showing the percentage distribution of bilingual speakers, with very low values in Araba and the western half of Biscay, and a compact area of values over the 80% threshold in the north-east of Biscay and inland Gipuzkoa. The map which shows the percentages of new Basque speakers, however, is completely different. Never-

Figure 41. % of Basque speakers per municipality. 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

Figure 42. % of new Basque-speakers per municipality. 2001





theless, before comparing the two, it is important to remember a point that, despite being fairly self-evident, is often forgotten: those areas with a high percentage of Basque speakers (over 80-90%) will necessarily have a low percentage of new Basque speakers, which is why we can say that there is an inverse relationship between the two groups, which is clearly shown on the maps, if you notice that the red areas on the Basque speaker map become blue areas on the new Basque speaker map. This type of inverse relationship also occurs (although less radically)

in the majority of municipalities in the zone in which the percentage of Basque speakers is relatively high.

In the other areas there is a heterogeneous combination of percentages, although the mid-level values tend to predominate. In any case, we should bear in mind that in small municipalities, the variation of a very small group of individuals may cause major changes in the corresponding percentages, meaning that such changes are often insignificant in real terms.

When we analysed the distribution, in absolute figures, of bilingual speakers in the language competence section, we saw that they tend to live mainly in metropolitan areas, which to a certain extent is logical, since these zones contain the highest concentrations of inhabitants.

In the case of Basque speakers, however, there are a number of significant variations in their distribution, since the metropolitan areas (with the exception of Donostia-San Sebastián) lose their leading position

Figure 43. Distribution, in absolute figures, of Basque speakers among the municipalities. 2001

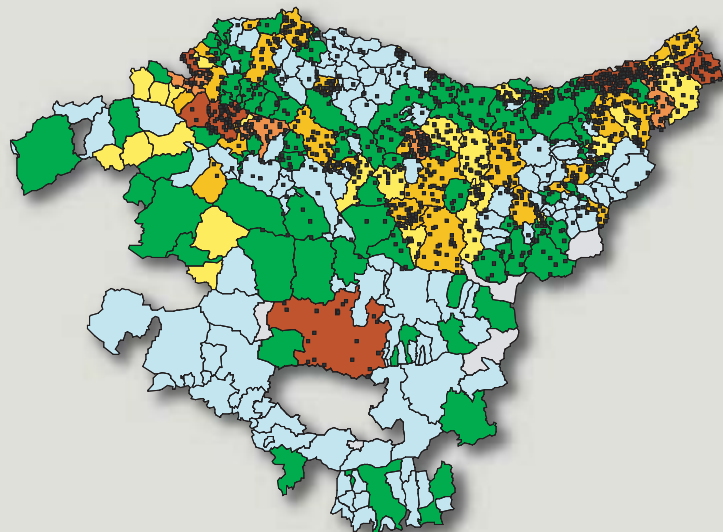
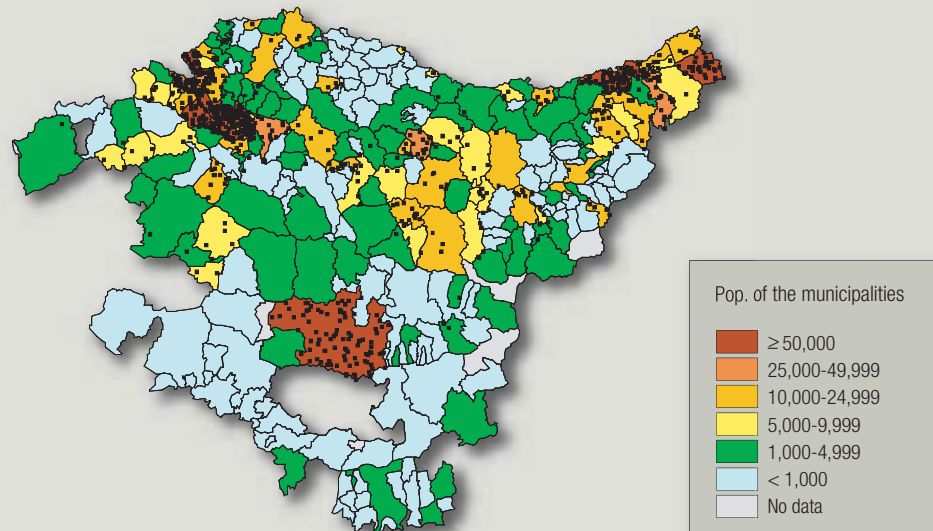


Figure 44. Distribution, in absolute figures, of new Basque speakers among the municipalities. 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

in favour of mid-size towns. In this sense, both the mid-size cities that form the backbone of the Gipuzkoan urban network (Eibar, Tolosa, Arrasate/Mondragón, etc.) and those that constitute the local capitals in eastern Biscay (Durango, Gernika, Bermeo, Ondarroa, etc.) become increasingly important. Despite this, however, the majority of Basque speakers still tend to be located in or near urban areas.

We shall now analyse the distribution, in absolute figures, of the two aforementioned groups (Basque speakers and new Basque speakers) in more detail.

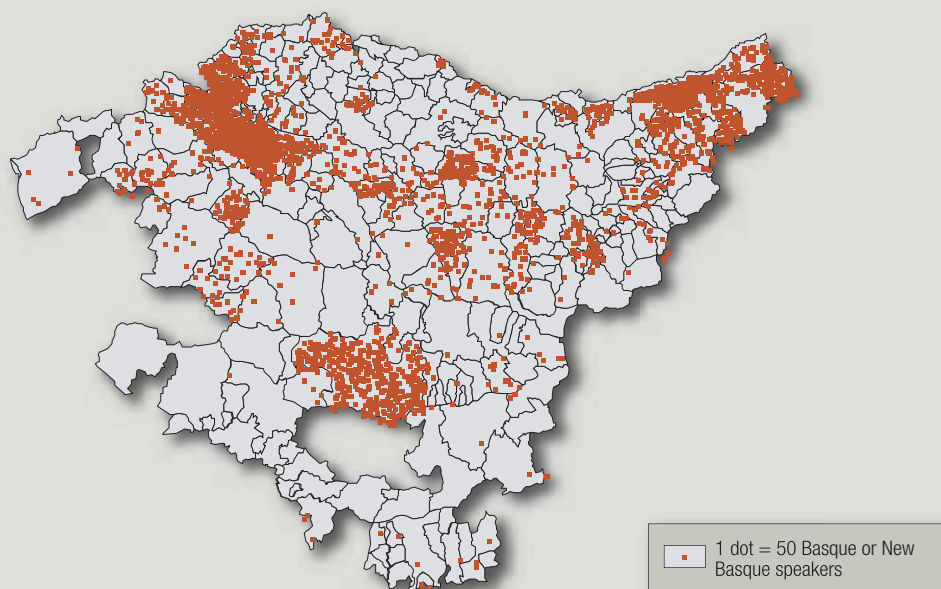
In the case of new Basque speakers, the variation is expressed in an extreme concentration or “polarisation” of this group around the three capital cities and their metropolitan areas. The number of new Basque speakers is directly related to the demographic size of each zone. As such, Gran Bilbao is by far the area with the largest population of new Basque speakers, followed by Donostia-San Sebastián and its surrounding area, with Vitoria-Gasteiz coming third.

One notable element is the sensation of desertification of inland areas, which can be seen clearly if

we compare both maps. The only exception to this is a number of specific areas which generally tend to coincide with mid-size urban centres (Durango, Eibar-Ermua, Arrasate/Mondragón, etc.).

Although this phenomenon could be attributed to the parameters used to compile the map, if we change these parameters and make each dot represent a lower number of people (in the first case each dot represented 250 people, and in the second, just 50 people), we see that obviously there are more dots spread over more areas, but in general, the result is a greater density of dots in same areas. Furthermore, although the sensation of desertification may be less apparent, the phenomenon remains the same. If we look closely at the map we can see how the distribution of new Basque speakers corresponds, in general terms, to the main urban network of the BAC, which serves to highlight even further the urban nature of the phenomenon.

Figure 45. Distribution, in absolute figures, of new Basque speakers among the municipalities. 2001



Source: EUSTAT. Compiled in-house.



1.3. Losses and gains in the Basque language

We have just analysed two of the different groups from the category obtained using the BILA index. One of them, new Basque speakers, is made by those whose mother tongue is a language other than Basque who have nevertheless learned to speak Basque well. This group can therefore be considered as the group of new speakers, those who represent a gain in the language. On the other hand, there are another two groups which represent those who, despite having Basque as their mother tongue, have lost the ability to speak it well either totally or partially (totally or partially Spanishised). These groups represent losses in the language. A comparison between the two groups gives us an idea of the progression of the language, and shows whether we are faced with an upward or downward trend.

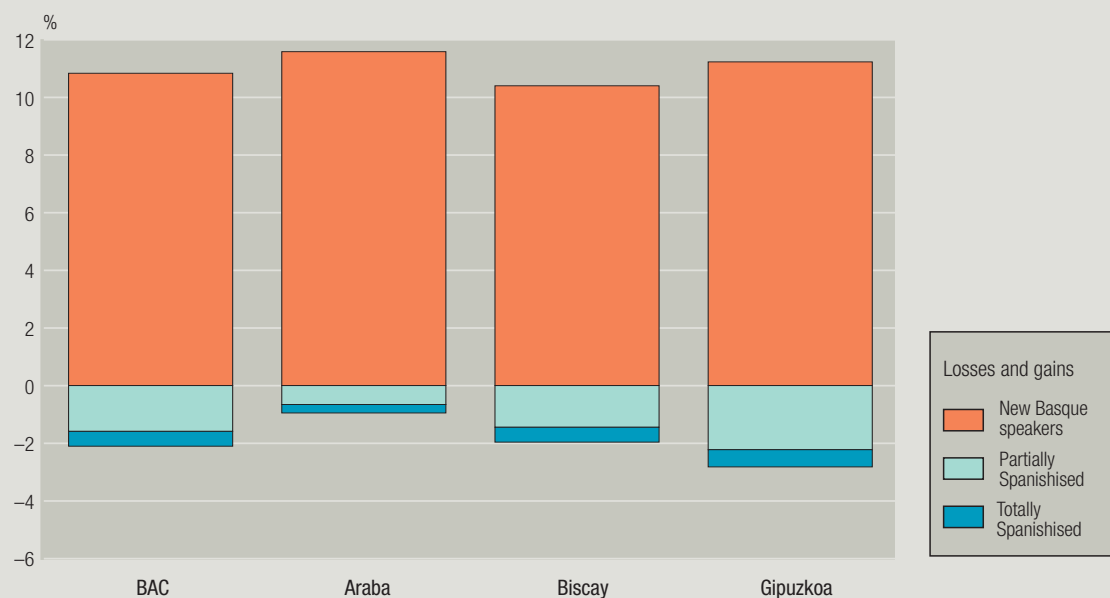
If we look at the graph which shows the results of the said groups, we can see that in both the BAC in general and in each of the individual historical territories, gains in the language far outnumber losses. A visual comparison highlights this great difference and the existence of a positive result which implies a favourable evolution of the language.

We will now attempt to analyse the distribution of losses and gains at a municipal level, using the corresponding maps.

The majority of the municipalities in Biscay and Gipuzkoa which show above average gain percentages are mid-size or medium to large-size municipalities, or are located near such a municipality. In Gipuzkoa, the main centres are Donostia-San Sebastián and the towns located in the surrounding area, as well as other mid-size cities such as Eibar, Zumarraga, Arrasate and Beasain, etc. In Biscay, the principal municipalities are Getxo and its environment, a number of municipalities located along the Left Bank of Gran Bilbao and the main centres along the Ibaizabal axis:

Basauri, Galdakao and Durango. In addition to all these municipalities, there is also a continuous strip of municipalities with above average percentages, running NW-SE along the contact zone between two areas with very different characteristics: the zone with the highest percentage of bilingual speakers, and the zone with the lowest percentage of such speakers. Nevertheless, these two areas do have something in common, namely that they both have a lower-than-average percentage of language gains.

Figure 46. Losses and gains in the Basque language. 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

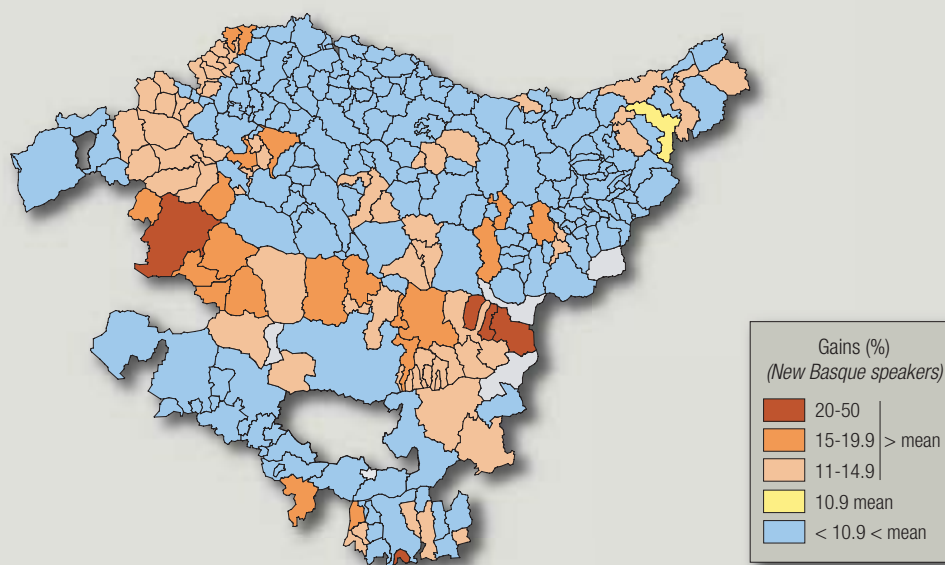
Before talking about losses², whether they be partial or total, we must remember a point that is self-evident, but which is often forgotten during analyses of this type: nothing can be lost if it was not possessed in the first place. This is the reason why there are practically no losses of any kind on the Left Bank of Gran Bilbao and in Las Encartaciones (both located in Biscay), as well as throughout the whole of Araba.

If we analyse the map we see that only a few municipalities have a high percentage of losses. Furthermore, these tend to be scattered about with no discernible pattern. Nevertheless, if we look at the group of municipalities with higher-than-average loss percentages, we see that they are generally located in a series of specific areas. In Alava, the few municipalities that have recorded losses are almost all concentrated in the most Basque-speaking area of the territory, around Aramaio, as well as the neigh-

bouring Biscayan municipalities of Ubide and Otxandio. In Biscay, losses tend to be concentrated in three main areas, which are interlinked to form a tilted “C” which begins in the Ibaizabal corridor (from Durango to Basauri), continues along the Right Bank of Gran Bilbao and finishes along the Biscayan coast, stretching from Getxo towards the east to Ea, affecting municipalities such as Mungia and Gernika also. Finally, there is also another small conglomeration encompassing a number of municipalities from the Arratia area and Llodio, a municipality on the Araban border.

As regards Gipuzkoa, there are three main zones. The first is the Donostia-San Sebastián metropolitan area, the second the Tolosa-Beasain area and finally, the municipalities located along the Deba corridor. These three areas are, without a doubt, the most industrialised areas in Gipuzkoa, a situation that goes hand in hand with better communications and a more advanced urban development process, as well as a more intense change in lifestyles. The same pattern can also be seen in Bizkaia. We can therefore state that the concentration of language losses in the aforementioned areas is linked, to a greater or lesser extent, to one or all of these factors.

Figure 47. Distribution of gains



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

² A loss is a case in which an individual for whom either Basque alone or Basque and Spanish were their mother tongues, but who speaks Basque with difficulty (partial loss) or does not speak it at all (total loss).



Despite everything outlined above regarding language losses, however, we should not forget that the mean percentage of gains in the BAC is 10.8%, a figure that is well above the mean percentages of both partial (1.6%) and total (0.5%) losses. In general terms, therefore, we can say that losses are minimal, and much lower than gains. If we look at the data in absolute numbers, the magnitude of both phenomena becomes clearer. While just over 40,000 people (41,689) have lost their ability to speak the language,

the number of people who have learned it exceeds 200,000 (215,220).

1.4. The BILA index according to age

When analysing the BILA index according to age group, we will focus, as in the previous case, on the Basque speaker and new Basque speaker groups. The highest percentages correspond to

Basque speakers, with a figure of nearly 30% among the over 80 population, followed by gradually lower figures down to the 30-34 mark, which is where they reach their minimum, with a percentage of less than 20%. After this age, the percentages increase slightly to give a figure of around 25% in the youngest group (5-9 years of age). For their part, new Basque speakers show very low percentages in all groups over the age of 50. Below this threshold, there is a slow, gradual increase in their numbers, which then beco-

Figure 48. Distribution of partial losses. 2001

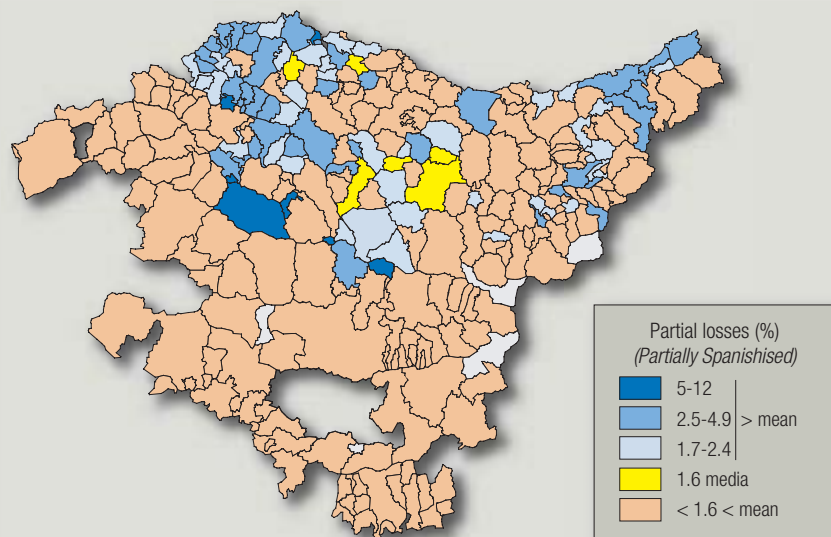
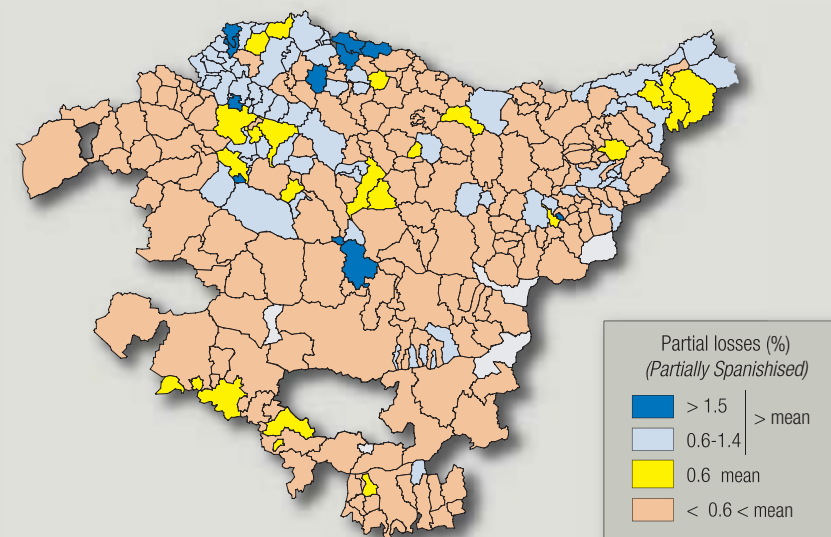


Figure 49. Distribution of total losses. 2001



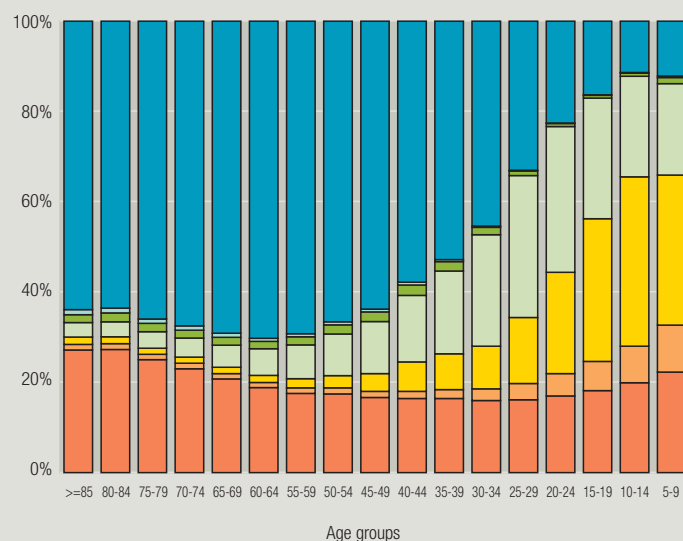
Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

mes more pronounced as we pass the 30 year mark, to reach its highest point among young people aged 10 to 14. In short, we can say that as in the case of language competence, the phenomenon of new Basque speakers is characterised by its youth, while that of Basque speakers reaches its highest percentage among the older age groups, although in absolute figures, the largest number of individuals are grouped in the 25-45 age range.

The language mobility index (BILA) for the historical territories generally coincides with the characteristics outlined for the BAC as a whole. The more Basque-speaking the territory, the greater the percentage of Basque speakers, with the figures for the older age groups being fairly high. These percentages then drop slightly in the mid-range age groups, and finally, in the under 30 population, there is a certain increase which is more intense in Gipuzkoa than in Biscay. The percentages for Basque speakers in Araba are low in all age groups.

As regards new Basque speakers, the general process is more similar throughout the three territories. The percentages are fairly low up until the 40 year old threshold, at which point the numbers increase sharply, with this rise being more pronounced in Araba than in Biscay. The figures reach their maximum point at around the 20-30 year mark. In Gipuzkoa the data is slightly different, with the phenomenon of new Basque speakers occurring slightly earlier, reaching its maximum point in the 30-35 age range, and then dropping again among the youngest generations.

Figure 50. Language mobility index, BILA, of the BAC according to age. 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

Figure 51. Pyramid of the language mobility index, BILA, of the BAC according to age. 2001

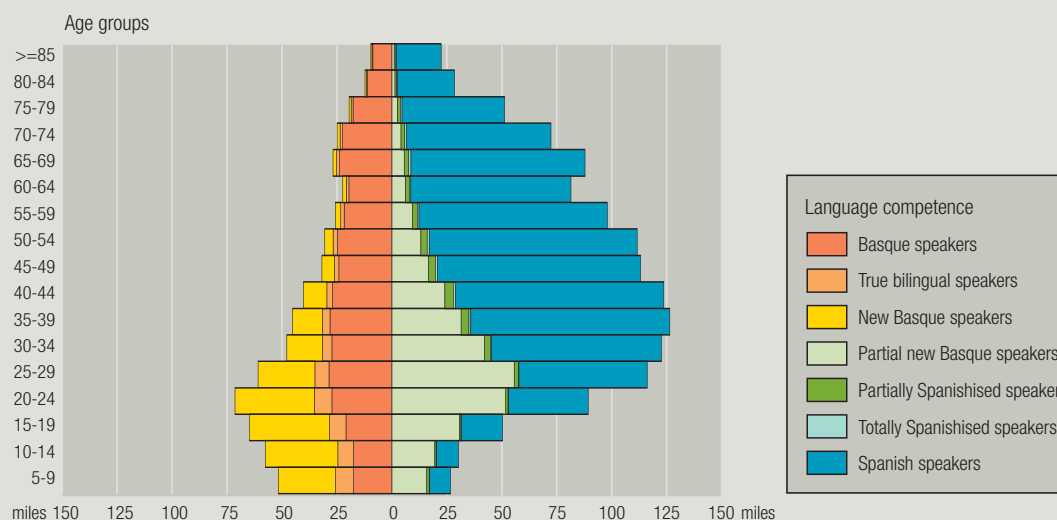




Figure 52. Language mobility index, BILA, of the historical territories, according to age. 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

Furthermore, the phenomenon was never as prevalent in Gipuzkoa as in the other two territories, probably due to the fact that the percentage of Basque speakers has always been fairly high.

In any case, with the exception of the differences produced by the greater or lesser extent to which Basque has become integrated into society in the different territories, the process analysed here follows a pattern that is fairly similar to that identified for the BAC in general. In the majority of cases, the number of Basque speakers has increased. As regards new Basque speakers, the fact that the sharp increase in the percentage of this group is then followed by a gradual decrease among the younger generations may seem contradictory, but it is in fact due to the parallel increase in both Basque speakers and true bilingual speakers.

1.5. The BILA index according to age and municipality

In general terms, we can see a similarity between the distribution of Basque speakers and the distribution of bilingual speakers shown in the language competence section. Nevertheless, the percentages differ depending on the age group, particularly in the Basque-speaking areas. These differences show a decrease in the percentage values as we move down the age scale, with the low values being reached in the group aged between 25 and 44. From here on, there is an upturn in the trend and the percentage values start to increase once again.

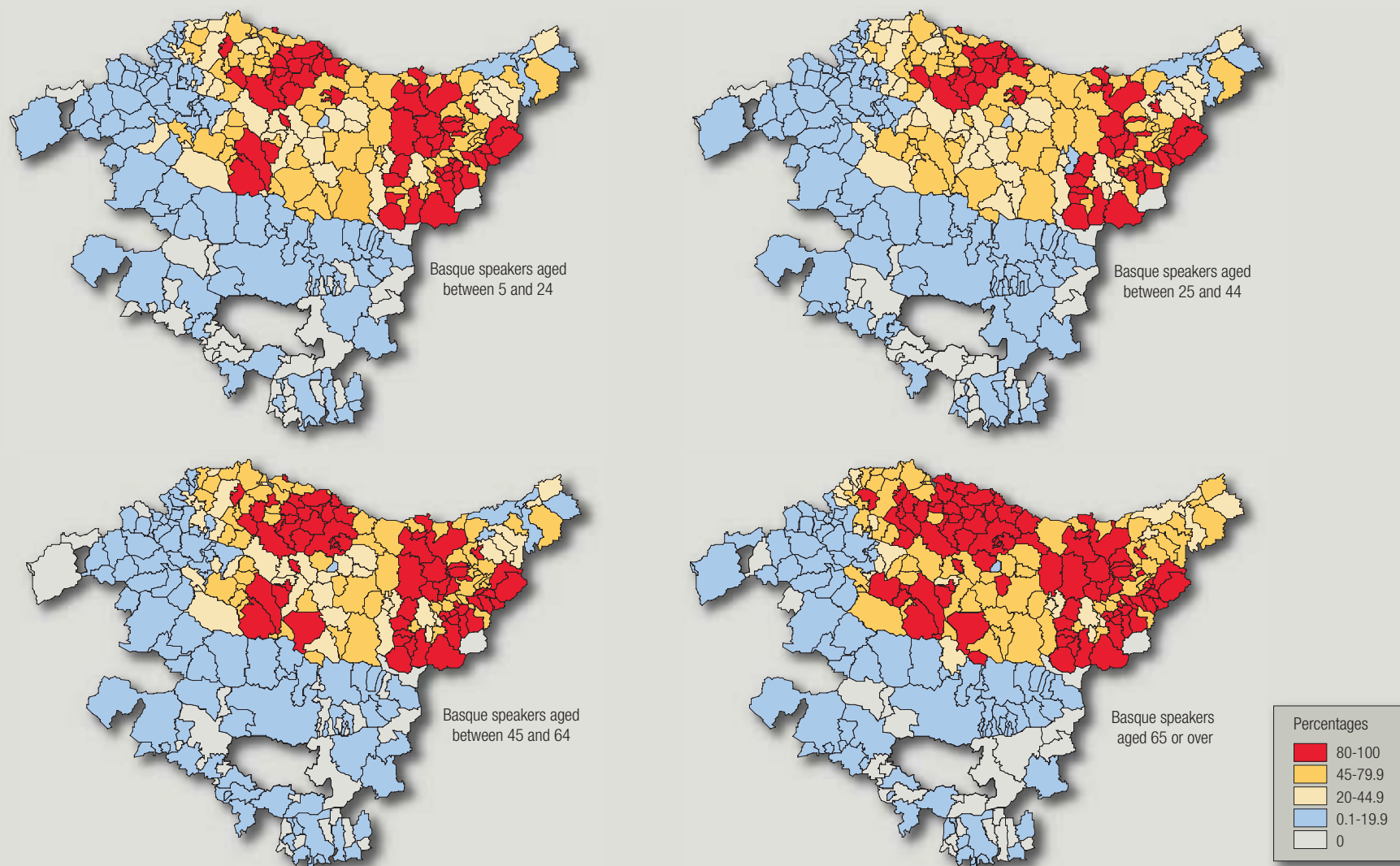
Current trends show a gradual, intense increase in the size of the true bilingual and new Basque speaker groups.

The increase in the percentage of new Basque speakers and true bilingual speakers is a modern phenomenon that has really come to the fore over the last 20-25 years. In fact, if we look at the maps, we see that in both cases there is a radical difference between the youngest group (5 to 24 years of age) and the three other groups. Nevertheless, there are certain differences between the two phenomena. While the increase in the number of new Basque speakers has had a major effect on practically all the BAC, with the exception of those zones with very high percentages of Basque speakers (generally over 80%), the appearance of true bilingual speakers is much more sporadic.

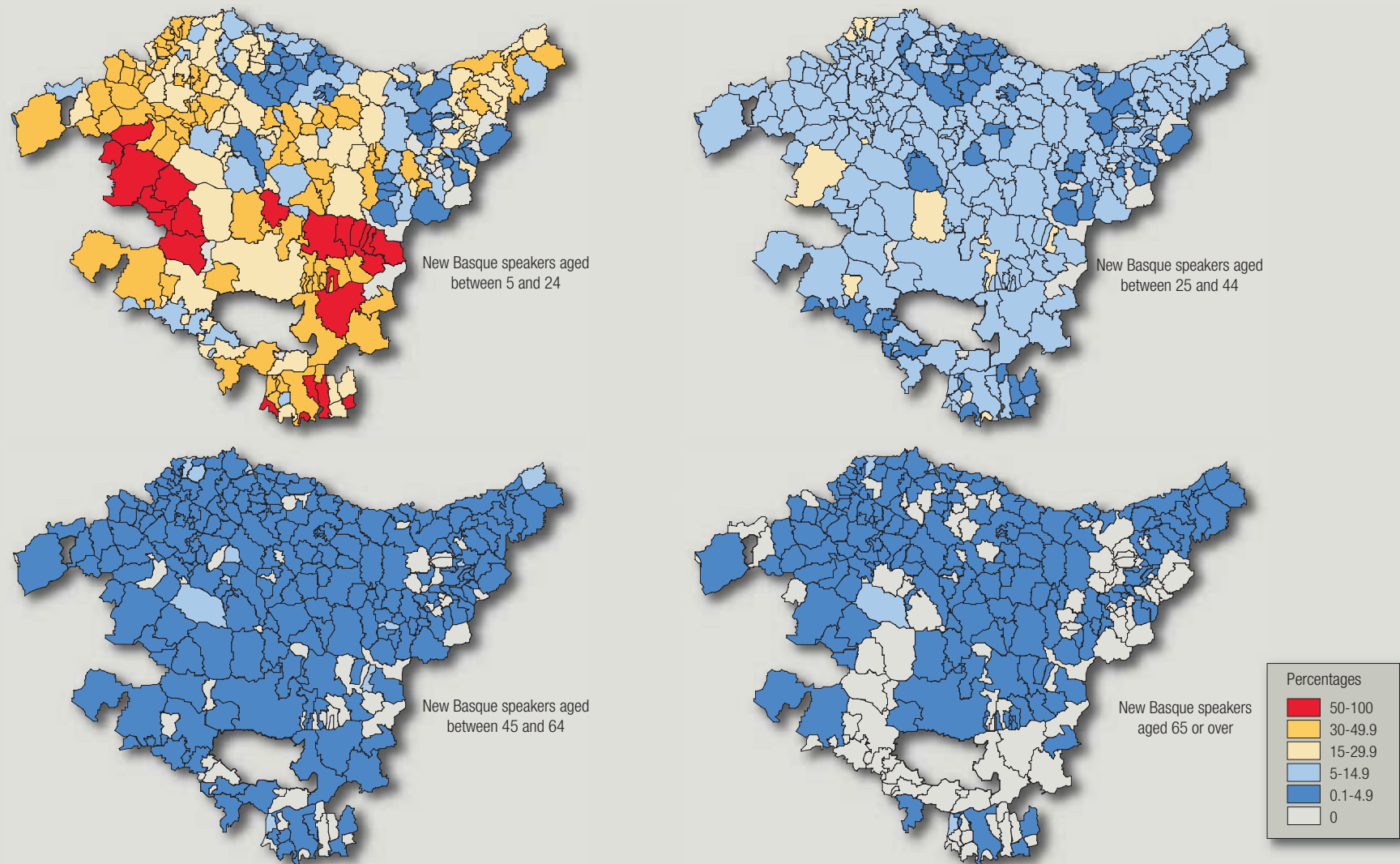
If we look carefully at the municipalities in which the percentages of true bilingual speakers are highest, we see that, in the majority of cases, these tend to be mid-size urban centres and bordering municipalities, something which confirms the urban nature of this phenomenon. Furthermore, all these municipalities are located along the BAC's main roads: the Bilbao-Donostia-San Sebastián motorway, the Nacional-1 and the Getxo-Bermeo-Gernika-Mungia zone. In both Bilbao and Vitoria-Gasteiz, the percentage weight of true bilingual speakers is still very low.



Figure 53. Distribution of Basque speakers by age groups. 2001 (%)



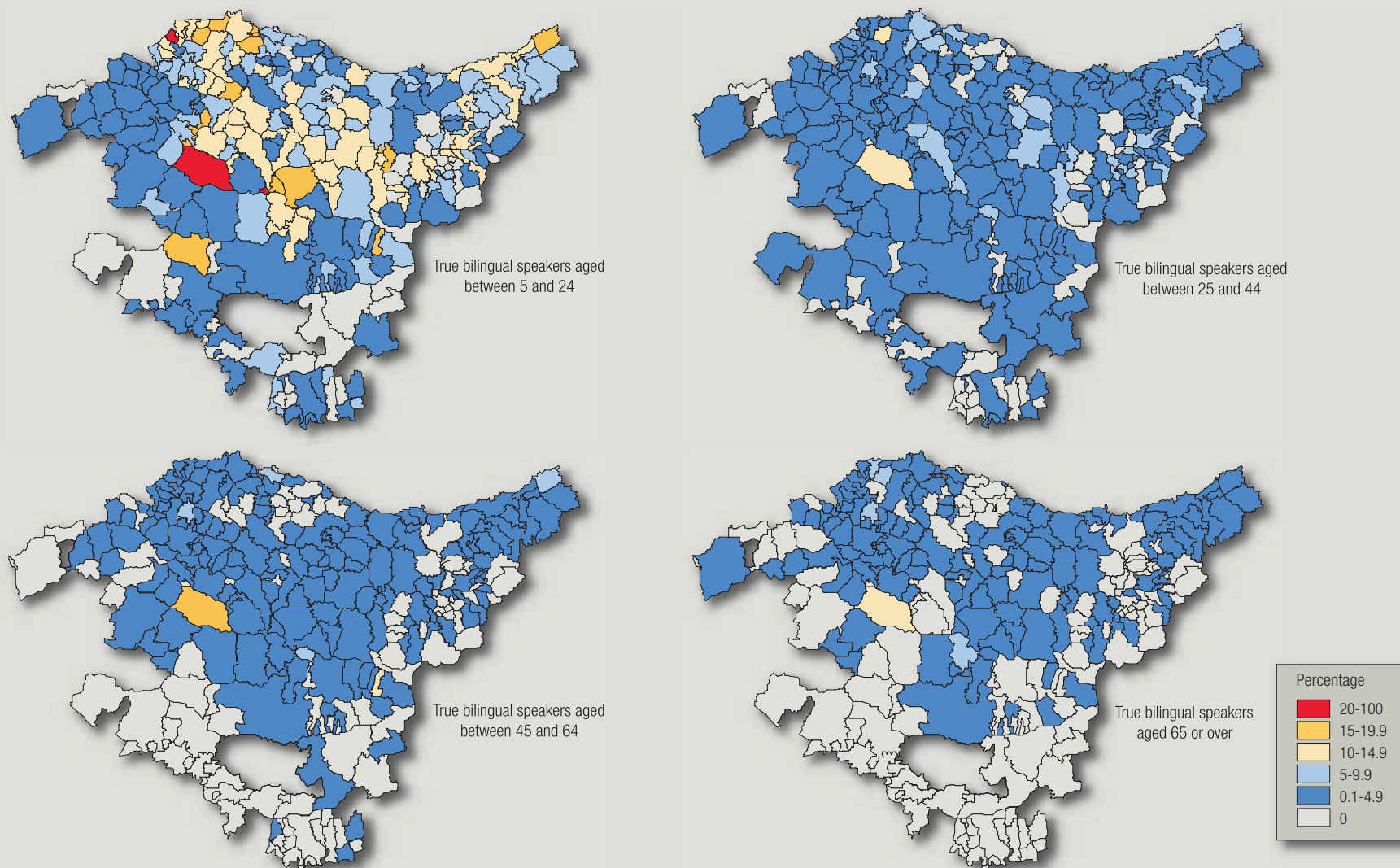
Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

Figure 54. Distribution of new Basque speakers according to age. 2001

Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



Figure 55. Distribution of bilingual speakers according to age. 2001 (%)



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

1.6. Losses and gains in the Basque language, according to age

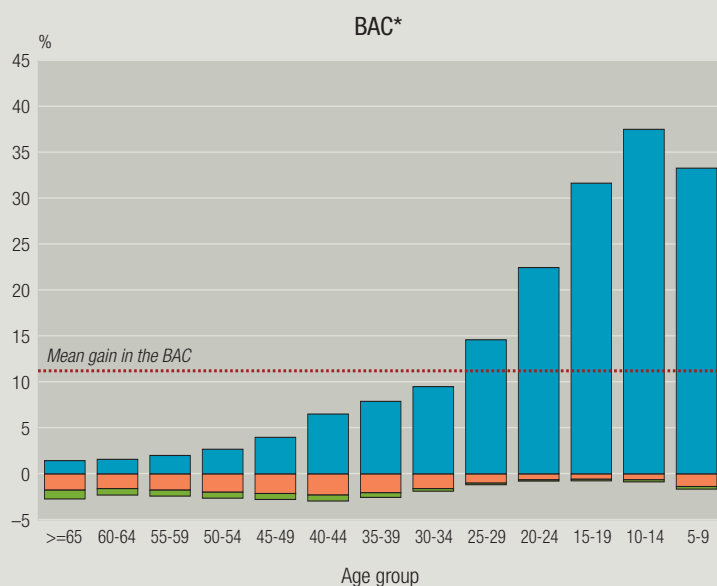
When analysing the classification established during the compilation of the BILA index, two groups were identified which reflect the losses suffered in the Basque language: “partially Spanishised” and

“totally Spanishised”; and another one: “new Basque speakers”, which indicates gains in the language.

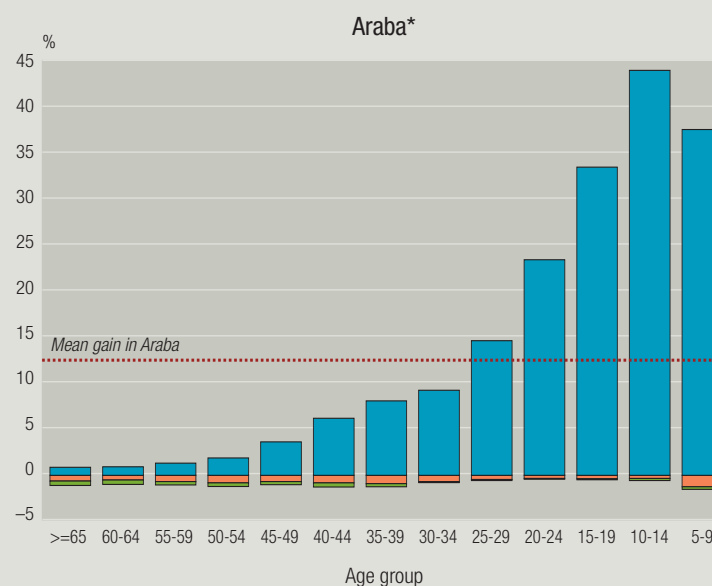
As we can see in the images, the general trend in all cases is the same. Gains increase spectacularly as we move down the age scale, to reach their highest point among the 10-14 age group.

The figures representing losses are very low in all age groups and are practically non-existent in the groups under the age of 25. The highest figures can be found in the central groups, between 35 and 50 years of age, and are lower in the older age groups.

Figure 56. Losses and gains according to age. 2001



* Losses of around -0,5 or less are not shown



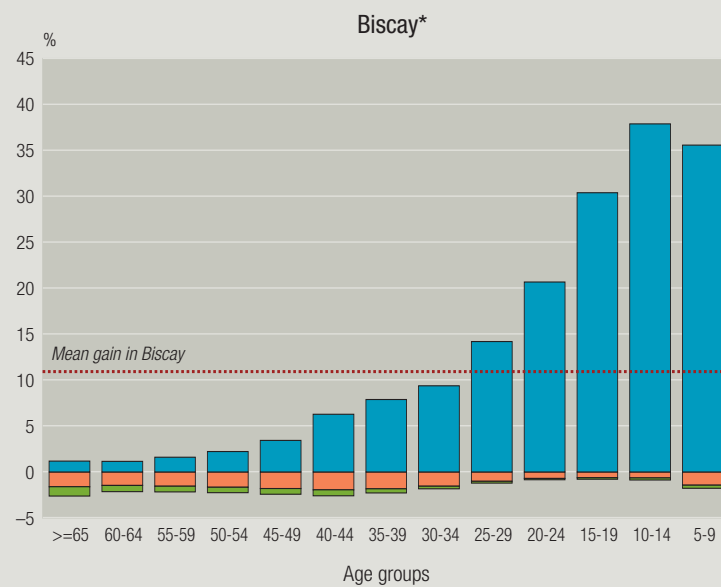
Losses and gains

- Gains
- Partial losses
- Total losses

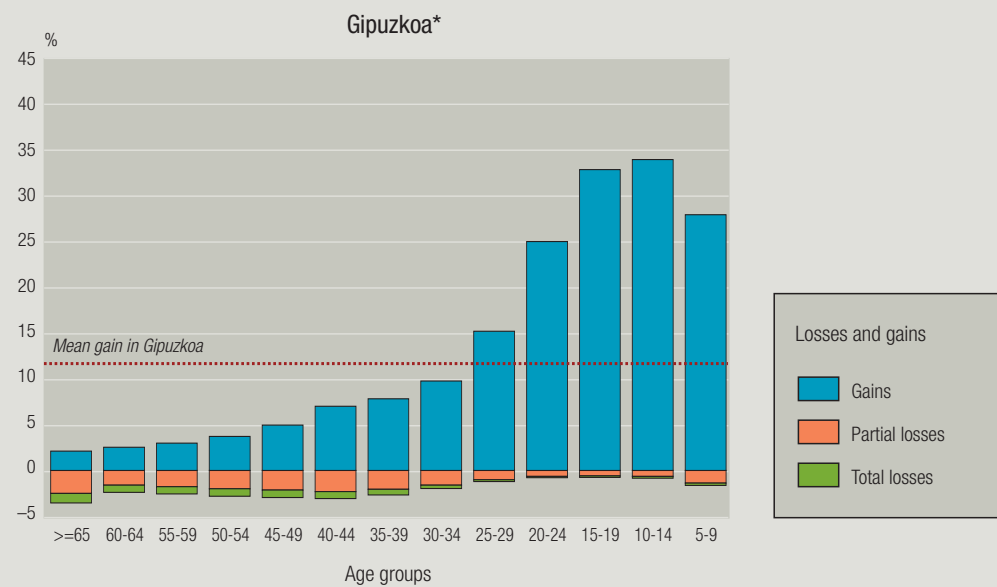
Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



Figure 57. Losses and gains according to age. 2001



* Losses of around -0,5 or less are not shown



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

2.

Evolution of the BILA index (1986-2001)

2.1. Introduction

The size of each group in the BILA Index varies widely both in the BAC as a whole and in the individual Historical Territories. Furthermore, in some cases, groups have varied significantly over the last 15 years.

While the number of *Basque speakers* and *native bilingual speakers* has remained stable or increased slightly, that of *new Basque speakers* has risen sharply, although this increase is lower in the case of *partial new Basque speakers*.

The positive evolution of these two last groups mainly affects the group of *Spanish speakers*, whose percentage has dropped notably (by an average of 10.6% in the BAC). For their part, the numbers of *partially* and *totally Spanishised speakers* have generally decreased slightly.

The different trends outlined above are very similar (although taking place at different levels) in both the BAC as a whole and the three historical territories.

Figure 58. BILA index BAC. 1986

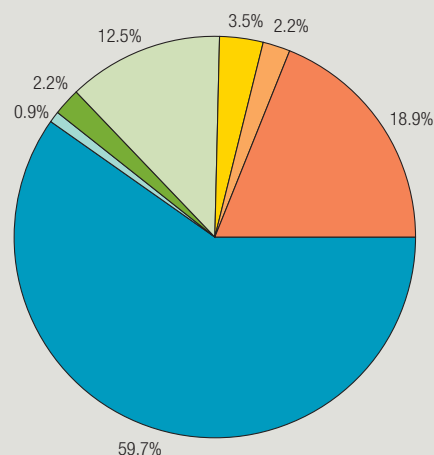


Figure 59. BILA index BAC. 2001

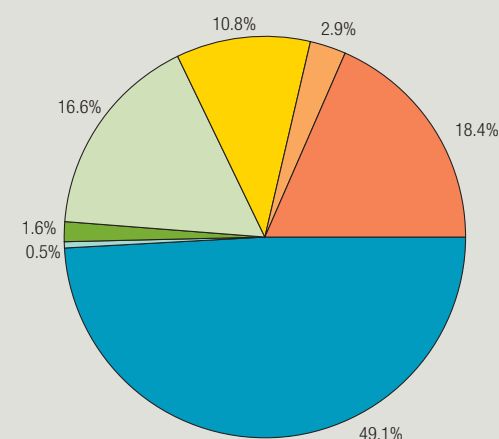
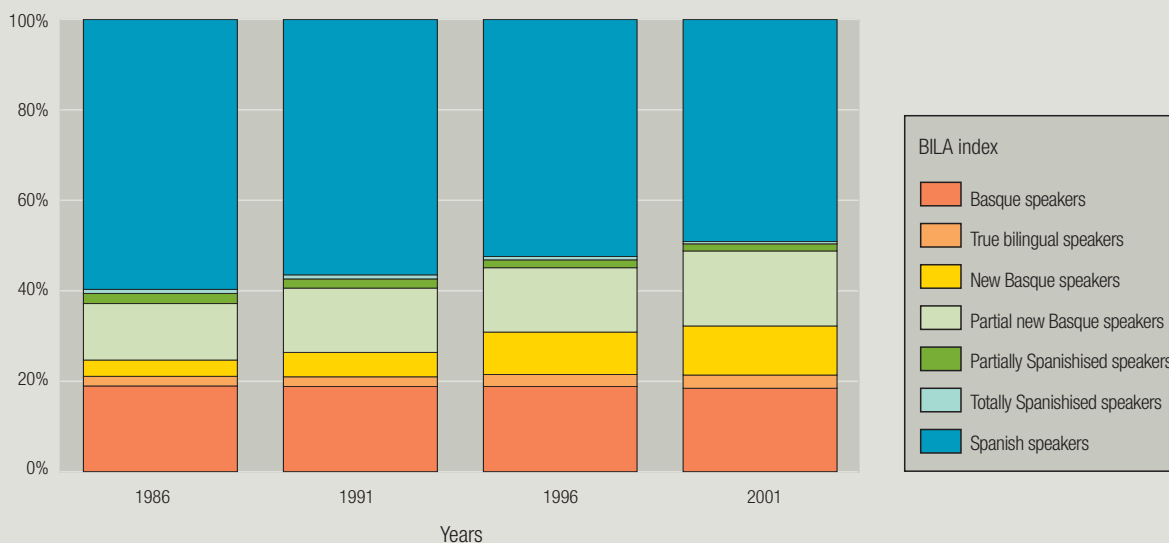


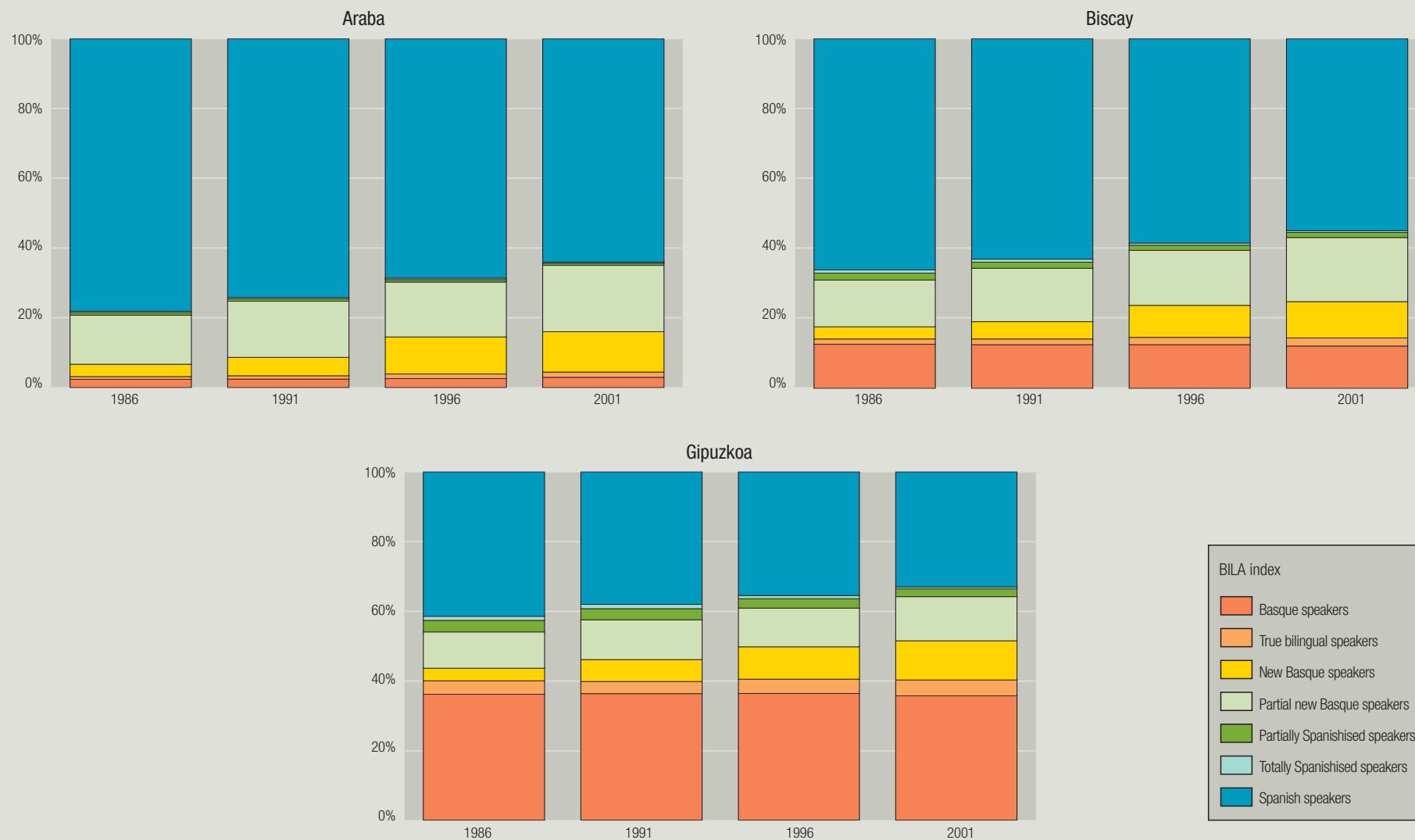
Figure 60. Evolution of the BILA index in the BAC. 1986-2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



Figure 61. Evolution of the BILA index in the Historical Territories. 1986-2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

2.2. Evolution of the BILA Index according to age (1986-2001)

In the older age groups (over 65s), the population is more or less divided into Basque speakers and Spanish speakers, with the latter group being the predominant one with percentages that oscillate between 60% and 70% in all of the dates analysed. After this threshold, however, and as we move down the age scale, the minority groups grow in size and importance, with the exception of totally and partially Spanishised speakers, whose percentages hardly vary at all.

As regards the rest of the minority groups, the one with the lowest increase is that of native bilingual speakers, whose numbers remain constant among the over 40 sector of the population and increase gradually from this age downwards. The rate of increase remains constant throughout the entire period, which means that the values increase year by year, particularly among the youngest generations. Despite this, however, the percentages hardly ever exceed 10%.

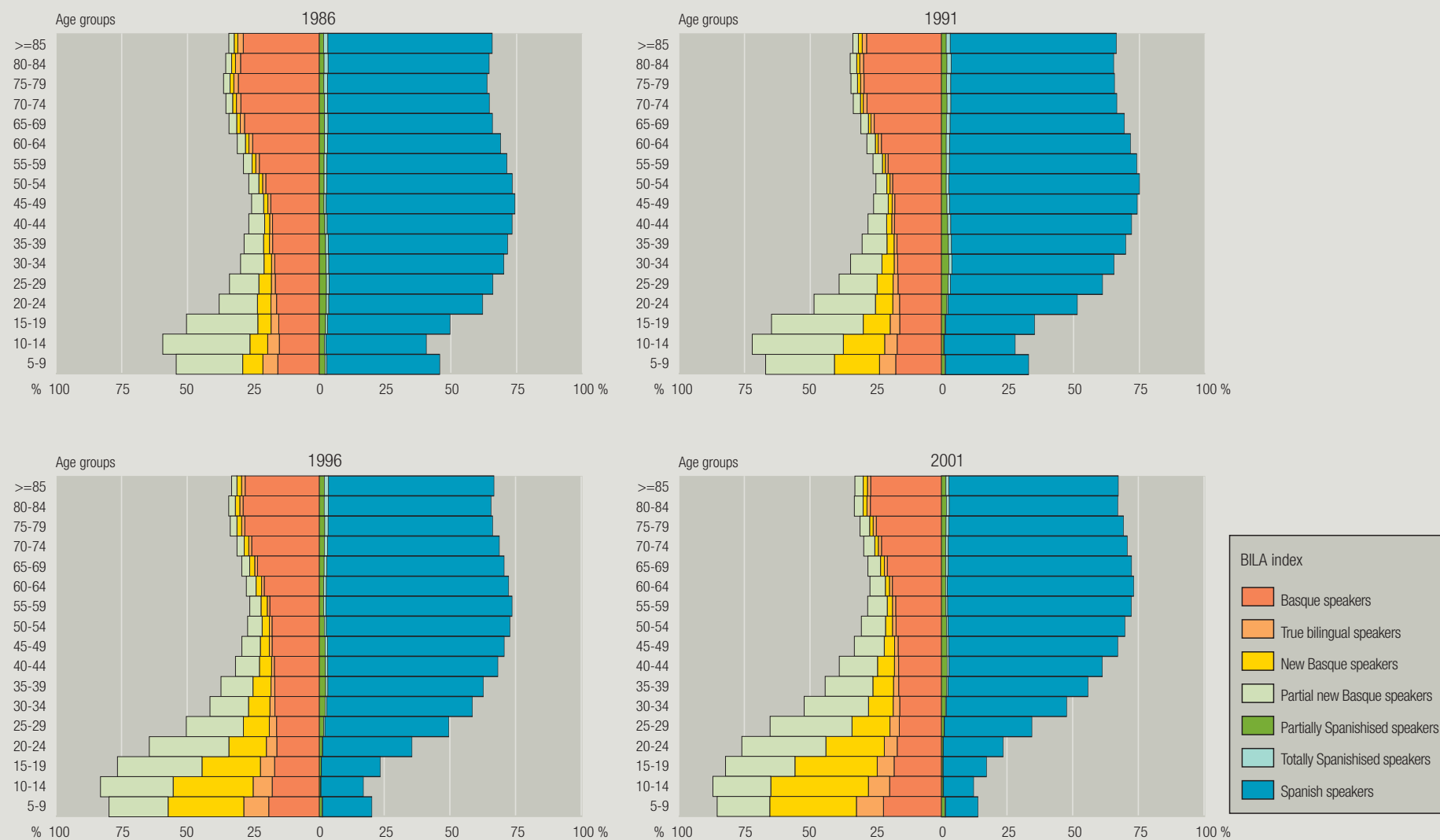
The new Basque group is the one with the highest increase, with the rate of growth rising as the period progresses. From 1996 onwards, this group is the largest one among the youngest generations (under the age of 15).

As regards Basque speakers and Spanish speakers, the dominant groups among the population aged over 65, their evolutions are very different. In the 1986 graph we can see how the percentage of Basque speakers decreases slightly and then levels out among the under 20 segment of the population. The first part of the evolution is similar for the other years also; however, as the period progresses, the resulting stagnation undergoes a renewed boost and begins to increase, slowly but surely, throughout the rest of the period among the younger age groups.

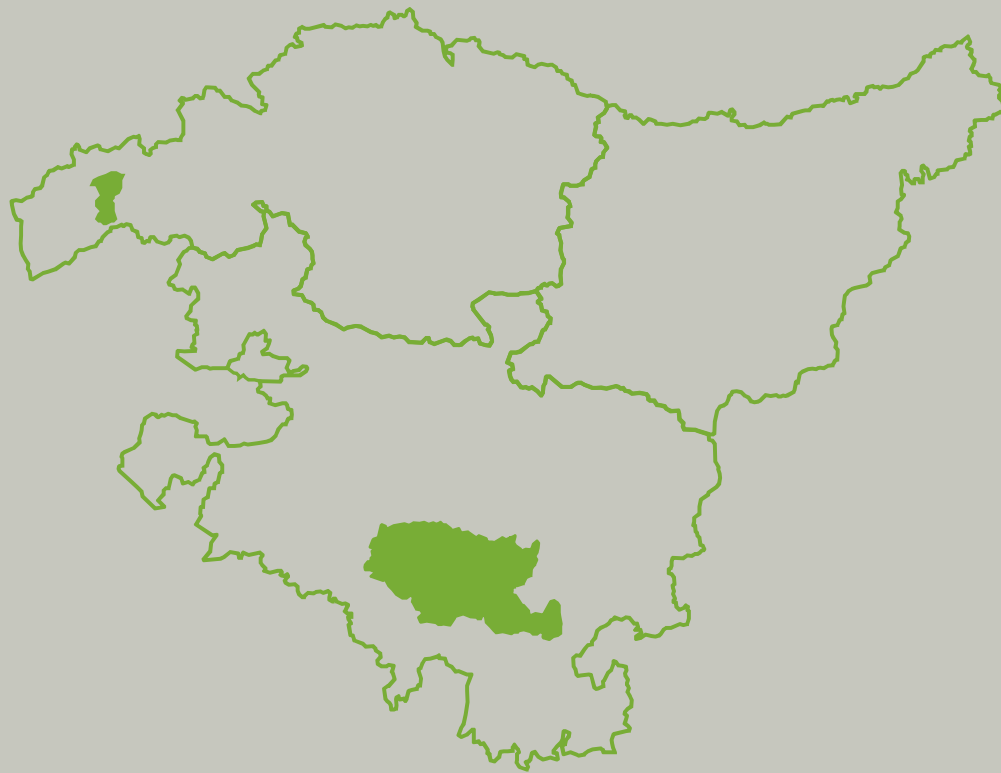
On the other hand, in 1986 the number of Spanish speakers increases steadily until it reaches its highest point in the 45-49 age group, after which it drops as we move down the age scale, with this decrease being particularly sharp among the youngest age groups. This trend continues, and even intensifies, as the period progresses, with this group undergoing a pronounced ageing process, since the same values are maintained in the same group as that group grows gradually older (the maximum value occurs in the 45-49 group in 1986, in the 50-54 group in 1991, in the 55-59 group in 1996 and in the 60-64 group in 2001). Furthermore, the drop in the percentage values for this group becomes increasingly sharp as the period progresses.



Figure 62. Evolution of the BILA index according to age group, BAC. 1986-2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



IV. Index of the language used at home, ERABIL

1.

Current situation regarding the ERABIL Index (2001)

1.1. Introduction

The ERABIL index is obtained by crossing the BILA Index (combination of mother tongue and language competence) with the language used at home variable.

The resulting index reflects the level of Basque use at home of each of the groups obtained from the BILA index, i.e. it tells us whether or not each group actively uses the Basque language in the home environment.

The groups which make up the ERABIL index, then, are the same as those in the BILA index multiplied by three, depending on the language or languages mainly used at home (Basque, Basque and Spanish and Spanish alone). The group made up by Spanish and totally Spanishised speakers is different in that since its members do not speak Basque, they can only be active in Spanish.

Firstly, we will analyse the distribution of the population of the BAC in accordance with the ERABIL index. As we can see, almost half the population is made up by Spanish and totally Spanishised speakers.

Basque speakers represent 18.5% of the population and are the group which contains almost all those inhabitants who are active in Basque, a group which represents 13% of the total population. In this group, active Basque speakers constitute the majority,

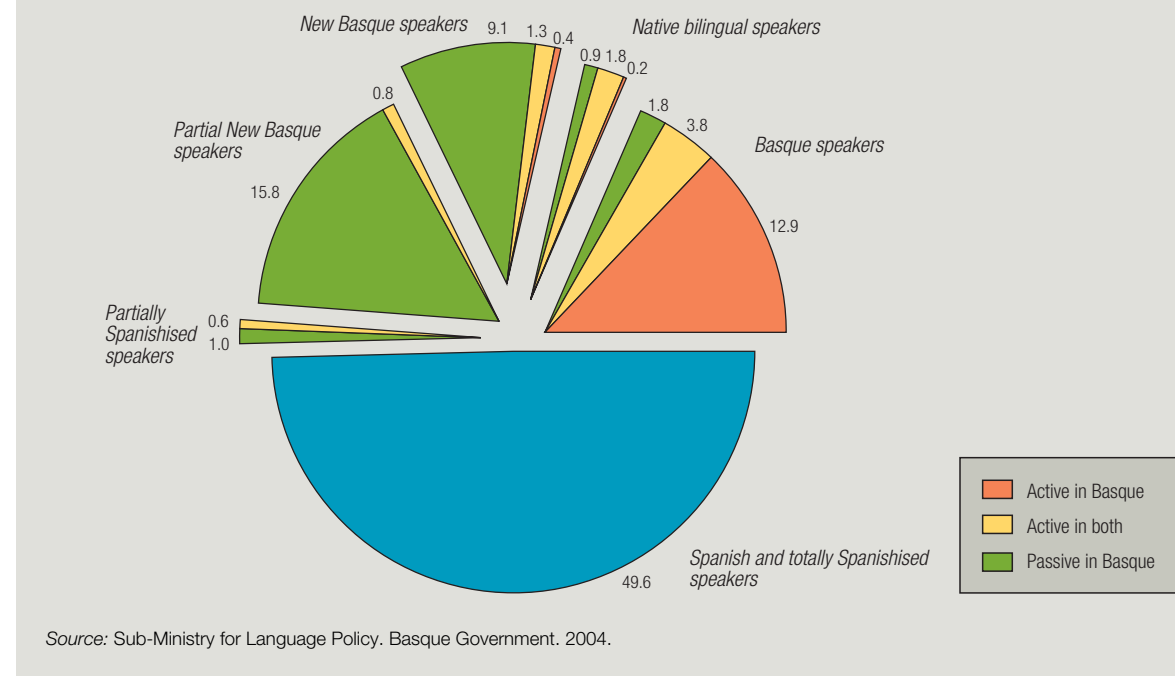
accounting for almost three quarters of the group, while approximately one fifth are active in both languages and one tenth are passive in Basque.

As regards native bilingual speakers (3% of the total), the largest subgroup within this group is that made up by those active in both languages (62%), followed by those who are passive in Basque (30.1%), with those who are active in Basque making up the smallest subgroup (7.4%). Among new Basque speakers (10.8% of the total population), those who are

passive in Basque constitute the clear majority (84.1%), with those who are active in both accounting for just over 10% (11.8%) and those active in Basque accounting for just 4% (4.1%).

The results for the two remaining groups, i.e. partial new Basque speakers and partially Spanishised speakers, are very different. While the former accounts for over 15% of the total population (16.6%), the latter barely accounts for 2%. Nevertheless, although they have a number of common characteristics (neither

Figure 63. ERABIL Index, BAC. 2001 (%)





group contains any individuals who are active in the Basque language, and in both cases passive Basque speakers constitute the majority group), their internal percentage distributions vary significantly. Thus, while just over a third (38.1%) of partially Spanishised speakers are active in both languages, this percentage is lower than 5% (4.7%) among partial new Basque speakers.

In the analysis of the different historical territories, we should bear in mind that the structure of the population varies considerably as a result of each area's individual characteristics. As is only logical, the more Basque-speaking a territory, the greater the use of Basque and the higher the proportion of those active in the Basque language and those active in both languages, and the lower the proportion of those passive in Basque. Furthermore, the group of Spanish and totally Spanishised speakers is considerably smaller in such territories.

Therefore, this last group, which in Araba represents almost two thirds of the population (64.3%), is almost half as small (33.6%) in Gipuzkoa. At the other extreme are those active in Basque, who represent just 1.9% of the population of Araba, 8.5% of the population of Biscay and 27% of the population of Gipuzkoa.

If we analyse the different groups in each territory, we see that, with the exception of Basque speakers, the distribution of the population is fairly similar as regards the relative position of the groups, although not in relation to their percentage values.

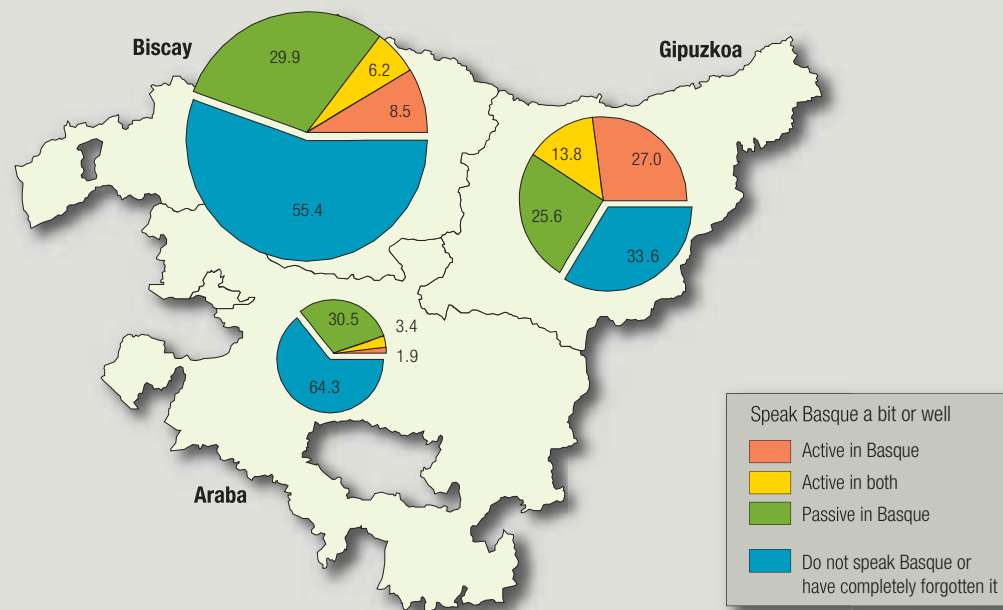
As mentioned above, Basque speakers are the exception; in Araba, just under half are active in Basque, a percentage which increases to two thirds in Biscay and to almost three quarters in Gipuzkoa. This increase

is accompanied by a slight decrease in the number of people active in both languages, whose percentages oscillate between 28% in Araba and 19% in Gipuzkoa, and a sharp drop in the number of people who are passive in Basque, whose percentages vary between 24% and 8% respectively.

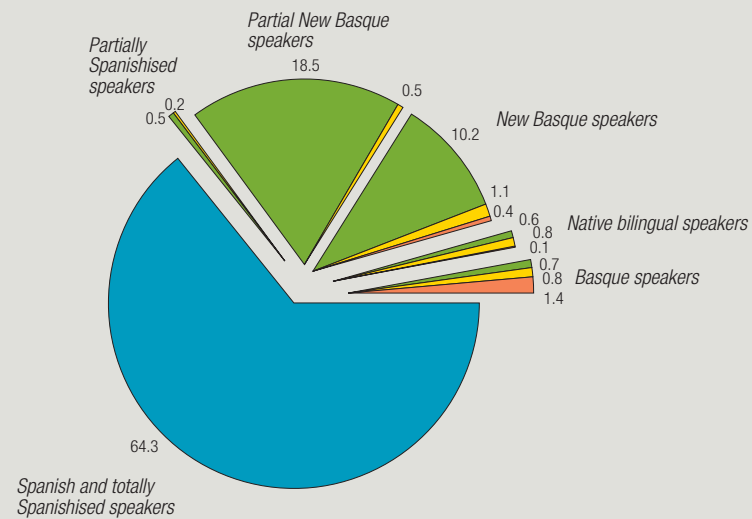
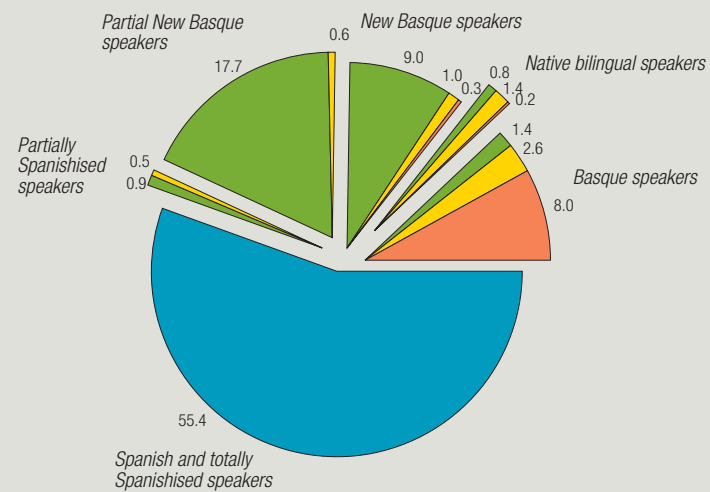
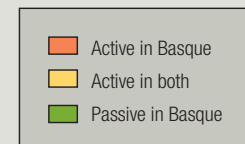
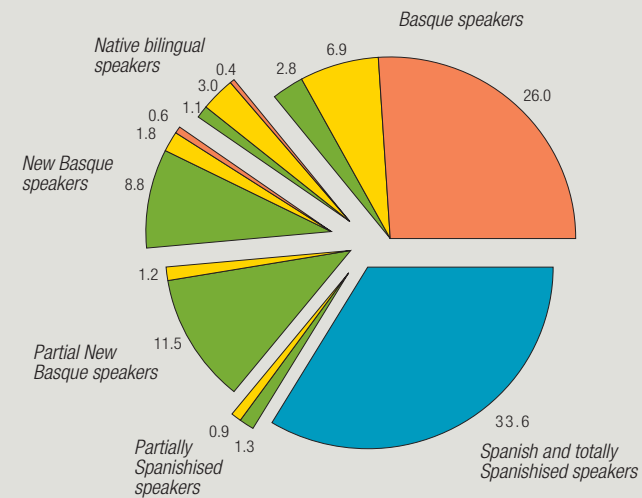
As regards the other groups, the three territories show similar trends and the relative position of the different levels of use is the same in each. Thus, among native

bilingual speakers, the largest group is made up by those who are active in both languages, while among new Basque speakers, partial new Basque speakers and partially Spanishised speakers, those who are passive in the Basque language are in the majority, although we should point out the high proportion of those active in both languages among the partially Spanishised speakers, a phenomenon no doubt related to the fact that Basque (either alone or in conjunction with Spanish) is their mother tongue.

Figure 64. Basque use at home, according to territory. 2001 %



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

Figure 65. ERABIL Index, Araba. 2001 (%)**Figure 66.** ERABIL Index, Biscay. 2001 (%)**Figure 67.** ERABIL Index, Gipuzkoa. 2001

Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



1.2. Analysis according to municipality

The principal trends described for the historical territories coincide with those observed in relation to the individual municipalities. In other words, the use of Basque varies considerably depending on whether or not the municipality is located in a Basque-speaking zone, which confirms the importance of the density of Basque speakers in an individual's network in relation to selecting a language of use.

1.3. The ERABIL Index according to age

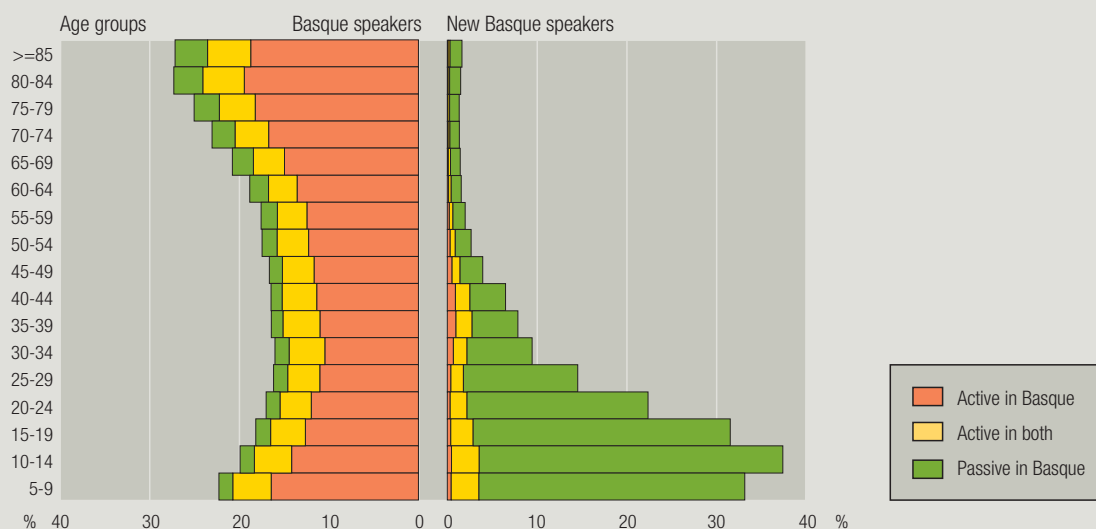
As we said earlier, almost all those inhabitants that mainly use Basque at home are located within the group of Basque speakers. The majority are aged over 65; from that age onwards, as we move down the age scale, the percentage of people who mainly use Basque at home drops considerably, with those aged between 30 and 34 being the ones who least use this language at home. Among the under 30 population, the proportion of those who use Basque rises once again, to recover more or less the level of use recorded for those aged between 65 and 75 among the youngest generations.

However, the percentage of people who habitually use Basque at home never rises above 20% of the entire population in any given age group, and only accounts for one fourth of the over 80 and under 10 population, even taking into account those who use Basque in conjunction with Spanish.

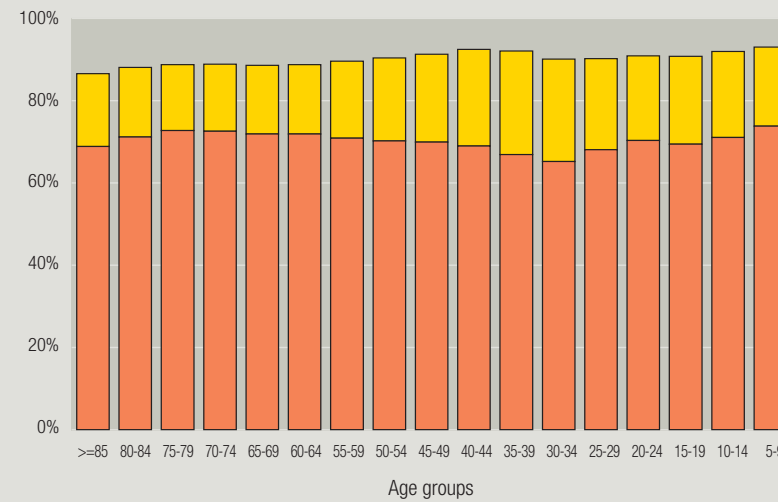
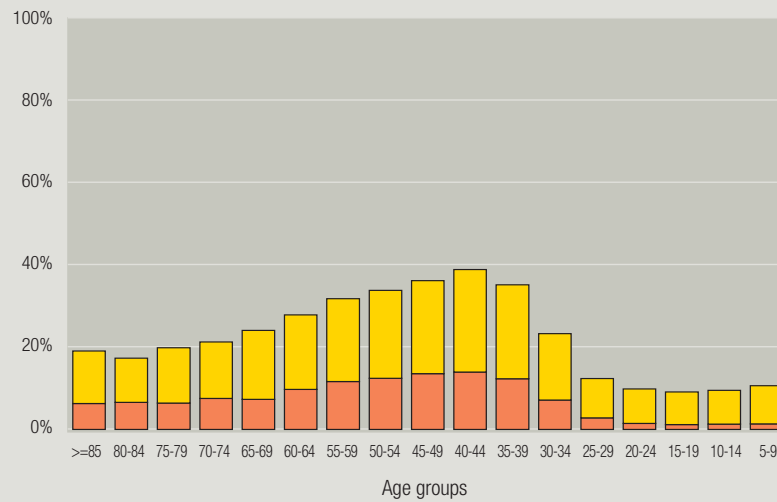
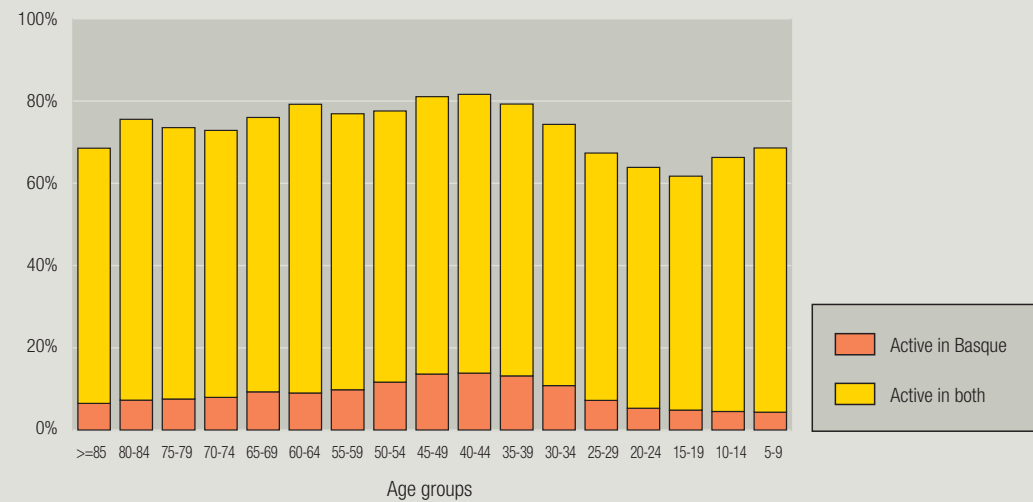
In any case, the use of the Basque language varies considerably depending on an individual's mother tongue, with Basque speakers being those who most use Basque in the home. The percentage of Basque speakers who usually express themselves in Basque at home is very similar in all age groups, and has an average value of around 70%. The number of people who primarily use Basque is slightly higher among the over 50 and under 15 segments of the population.

Similarly, one out of every five Basque speakers uses both Basque and Spanish at home. In this case, the percentages rise as we move down the age scale, reaching its highest point in the 35 to 39 age group. Finally, one out of every ten Basque speakers mainly uses Spanish at home. In this case, the differences according to age are very clear: the proportion of people who use only Spanish at home drops sharply as we move down the age scale, with the figure for the youngest group (6.9%) being half that for the oldest group (13.4%).

Figure 68. BAC, ERABIL Index per age group. 2001



Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.

Figure 69. BAC, Basque speakers per age group. 2001**Figure 70.** BAC, new Basque speakers per age group. 2001**Figure 71.** BAC, native bilingual speakers per age group. 2001

Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



The use of Basque at home among new Basque speakers varies widely. The average percentage of those who mainly use Basque is 4.1%, although there are major differences between the various age groups. Among new Basque speakers under the age of 30, the average percentage of those who generally use Basque at home is less than 2%, while among those aged between 35 and 60, the average is around 13%. This figure drops once again among the over 60s. The average percentage of those who use both languages is considerably higher (11.8%), but the trend regarding use according to age group is similar to that of those who mainly use Basque; low percentages among the under 30s and over 60s, and average figures that are twice as high among those aged between 35 and 60.

The results given above clearly show that the vast majority of new Basque speakers (84.1%) use only Spanish at home. Furthermore, among the under 30s, the use of Spanish is higher than the mean (around 90%).

The fact that Basque use at home is so low among new Basque speakers is due both to the low density of bilingual speakers in their respective homes and to the fact that they generally express themselves better in Spanish.

Native bilingual speakers, on the other hand, mainly use both languages (62.6%), and there are hardly any differences between age groups, although we should point out that the percentages of use are higher than the mean among those aged between 35 and 60. On average, native bilingual speakers that mainly use Basque account for 5% in the under 25 age group and over 10% among those aged between 30 and 55.

The figure then drops once again among the older generations. Finally, almost one out of every three native bilingual speakers (30.1%) use only Spanish at home. The differences between the age groups are not particularly significant in this case, although it is worth highlighting that the proportion is higher than the mean among those under the age of 25.

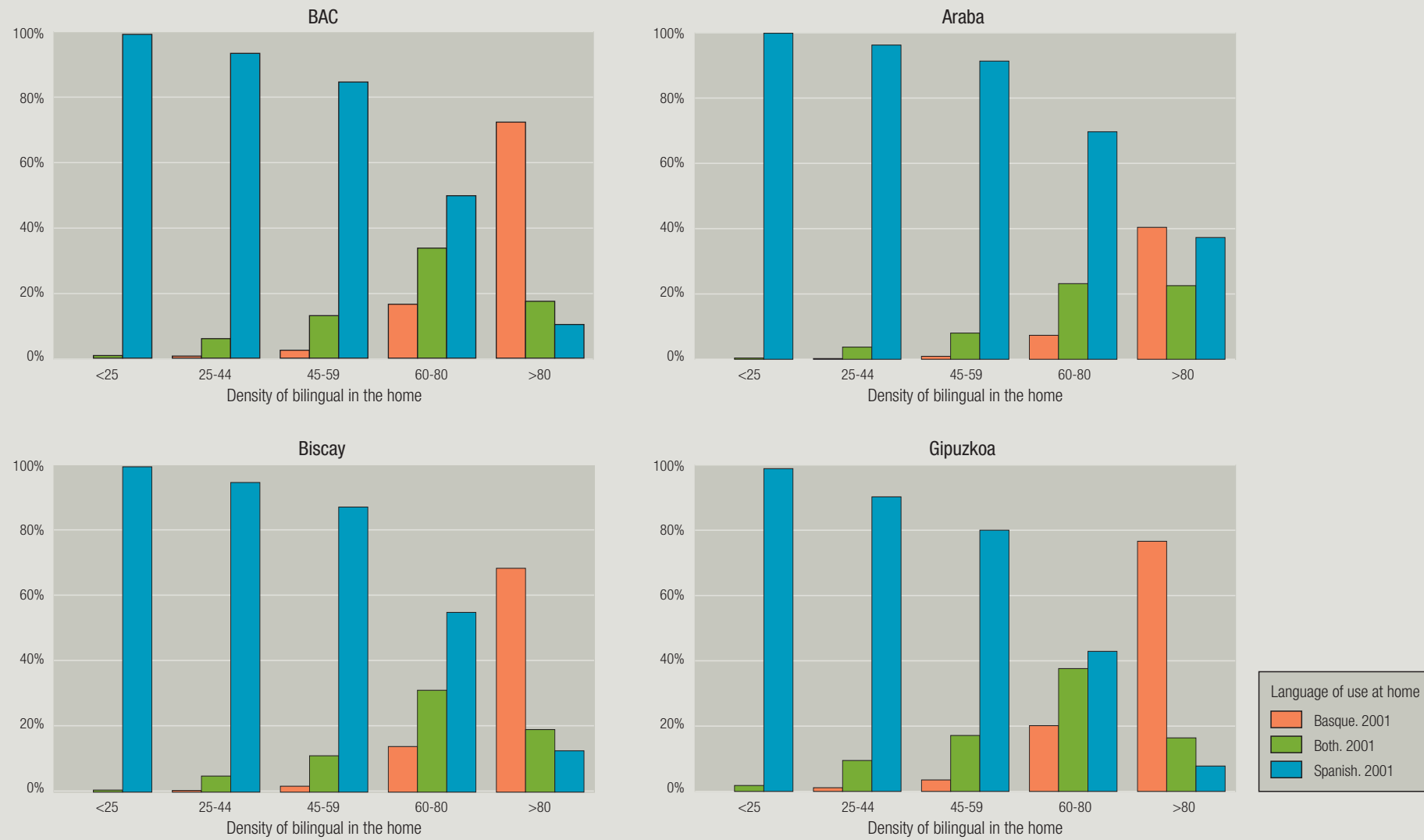
1.4. The language used at home, according to the density of bilingual speakers in the home

Speaker density, together with a relative facility to express oneself in one or other language are the determining factors when it comes to using a specific language. The relevance of both factors has been solidly proved on the basis of the results of the three sociolinguistic surveys carried out in the Basque Country to date. In the case of Basque we further know that the density of bilinguals exerts a greater influence when it comes to using Basque in the home than in other domains of use, for example with friends or at work. Moreover, for Basque to be the language habitually used in the home all members of the family need to be able to speak it. It is enough for a single member of the family not to know Basque for its use to drop noticeably.

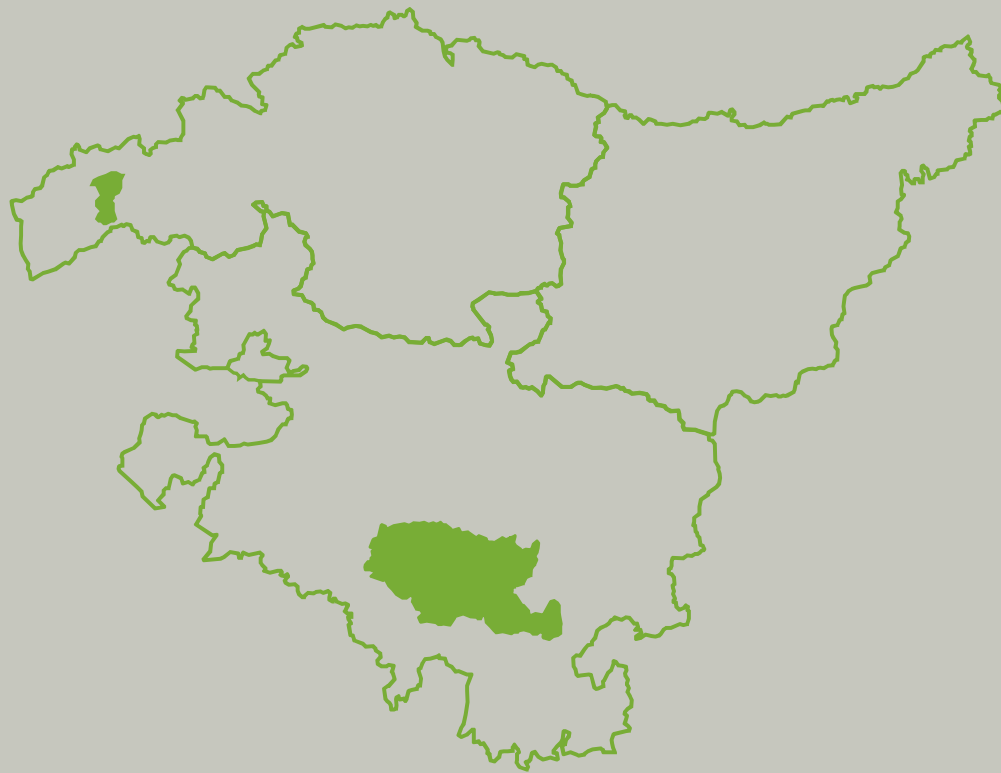
The results of this survey fully confirm that premise. That is to say, when the density of bilinguals in homes in the BAC is over 80%, Basque is the language habitually used at home in 72.3% of the cases; in a further 17.4% both Basque and Spanish are used. The remaining 10.3% mainly uses Spanish.

But it only takes Basque language density in the family to drop below 80% for the use of Basque, even in the best case, that is to say when the density falls between 60% and 80%, to drop to 16.5%, although it is also true that the use of both languages rises to 33.7%. Below a 60% density of bilinguals in the home, hardly anybody uses Basque alone and even the use of both languages is only 13%.

The results for the use of Basque at home in accordance with the density of bilingual speakers in each of the three historical territories confirm the importance of the two main factors mentioned at the beginning of this section, i.e. the relative ease with which an individual expresses him or herself in the language and the density of bilingual speakers in his or her environment. In Biscay and, mainly, in Gipuzkoa, where the percentage of bilingual speakers is high and the proportion of Basque speakers is noticeably higher than in Araba, the percentages for use at home are significantly higher than in that territory. In Araba, the low density of bilingual speakers and the fact that the majority of them are new Basque speakers (which means that the majority express themselves better in Spanish), means that Basque use in the home drops sharply, even when all or almost all family members can speak the language.

Figure 72. Language used at home according to the density of bilingual speakers. 2001 (%)

Source: Sub-Ministry for Language Policy. Basque Government. 2004.



V. Conclusions

Conclusions

The progress made over the last twenty years as regards knowledge of the Basque language in the Basque Autonomous Community or Region (BAC) is evident. Bilingual speakers have increased from one fifth of the population in 1981 to practically one third in 2001, which means that during this time, more than 200,000 new potential speakers have joined the Basque-speaking community. Furthermore, this increase is fairly generalised, i.e. it has occurred in all three territories and, with the exception of the over 65 segment of the population, in all age groups also.

At the same time, the quantitative advance of the Basque language has gradually established the characteristics that define a new type of bilingual speaker that has less and less in common with the traditional concept of a person living in the countryside with a mainly Basque-speaking family and social environment. Currently, the majority of bilingual speakers (66.3%) live in urban centres, mainly in the metropolitan areas of the three capitals and in municipalities with over 10,000 inhabitants, located along the BAC's main road networks, as well as in a few isolated towns along the coast. In other words, the majority of bilingual speakers live in zones with higher population densities, characterised by a greater number of monolingual non-Basque speakers, something which has a clear influence on the possibilities available to such speakers in terms of using the language.

However, before analysing the situation of the Basque language in greater detail, we should consider two phenomena that will have an important effect on the evolution of our language in both the short and medium term. These phenomena are, on the one

hand, the accelerated ageing of the population, due to the extremely low birth rate, and on the other, the arrival from the last decade of the previous century onwards of people born abroad. The ageing of the population is not a new phenomenon, although the arrival of (mainly young) people from foreign countries is. In order to ensure the full integration of these people into our society, it is vital that new initiatives be proposed to enable them to access the Basque language as easily and naturally as possible.

As mentioned above, the increase in the number of bilingual speakers has been spectacular over the last twenty years. However, it is also certain that practically half of the population of the BAC cannot speak Basque. There is therefore still much work to be done.

This has prompted us to analyse the main channels for learning Basque. We know that the intergenerational transmission of language occurs either through the family or through the education and adult learning systems. In the case of the Basque language, the rate for family transmission in the BAC is practically 100%. Losses are few and far between and almost non-existent among the younger generations. Furthermore, although we are awaiting confirmation of this phenomenon by a new study on family transmission that is due to be carried out shortly, we can nevertheless state that family transmission of the Basque language does not only occur in the best conditions, i.e. when both parents are bilingual, but also occurs with increasing frequency when only one parent speaks the language, although in such cases, Basque is generally learned in conjunction with Spanish as a joint first language.

The principal channel for Basque language learning, however, is without doubt the education system. Since the setting up of the various language models, the number of students enrolled in the B and D models has increased steadily, and this increase is directly proportional to the decrease in the number of students enrolled in the A model. Nevertheless, it is true that the situation still varies widely from one educational level to the next. In Vocational Training, for example, the A model is the most popular, while in Preprimary Education, nine out of every ten students are enrolled in the B or D model.

We can therefore define the increase in bilingual speakers as a young phenomenon. Bilingual speakers constitute the majority group among the under 20 segment of the population. Furthermore, the percentage of bilingual speakers increases as we move down the age scale. In absolute figures also, the majority of bilingual speakers (47.6%) are under the age of 30.

The majority of these young bilingual speakers have a totally Spanish-speaking family and social environment. They come from families in which no one speaks Basque, and live in densely populated and mainly Spanish-speaking metropolitan areas. This is the group known as new Basque speakers, i.e. people whose mother tongue is not Basque, but who, as mentioned above, have learned the language at school.

The largest group within the group of bilingual speakers continues to be Basque speakers, i.e. those for whom Basque is their mother tongue and who speak the language correctly. However, a detailed analysis according to territory, municipality or age group shows us a different situation. While in Gipuzkoa and Biscay



Basque speakers generally outnumber new Basque speakers, in Araba, almost three out of every four bilingual speakers are new Basque speakers. These speakers also constitute the majority group in the large metropolitan areas and among young people under the age of 25.

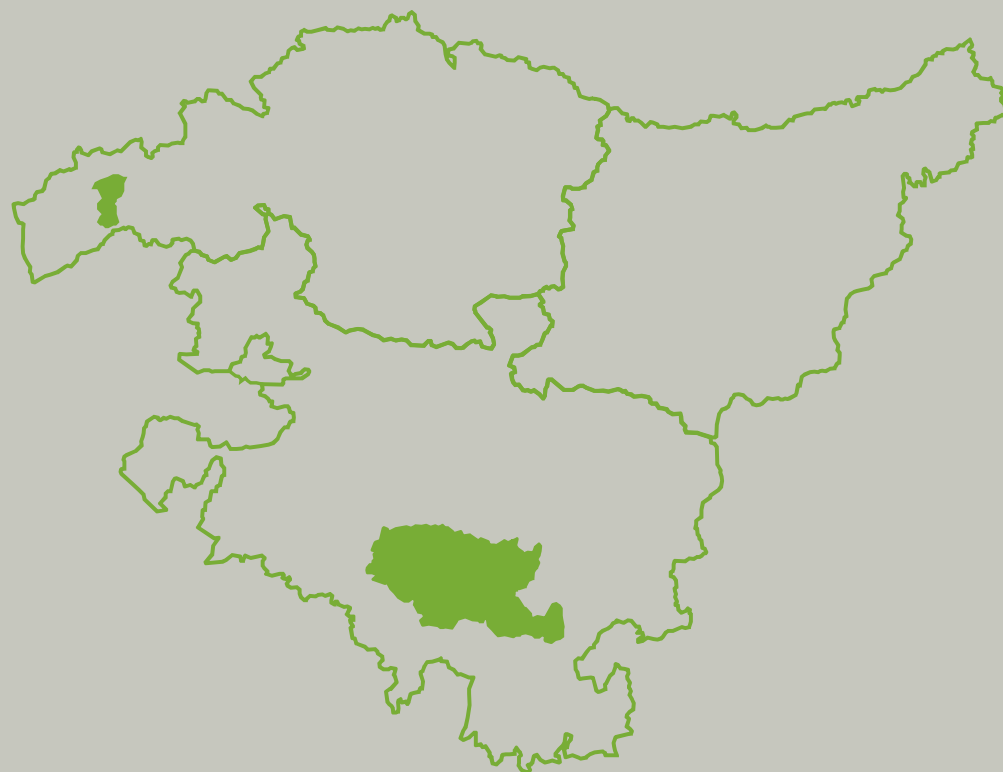
The environment in which young bilingual speakers live is not the most conducive to Basque language use, and the home environment in particular still has a long way to go. The results of the three sociolinguistic surveys of the Basque Country carried out to date show that the factors which most influence Basque use are the density of bilingual speakers in an individual's environment and the ease with which that individual expresses him or herself in Basque, a factor closely related to mother tongue. Similarly, the results show that Basque use at home is only guaranteed when all members of the family speak Basque, and that if just one of them does not speak the language, the percentage of use drops sharply.

If we analyse the real use of Basque at home, or in other words, if we ask ourselves whether, bearing in mind the entire population of the BAC, Basque is currently used more in the home environment than ten years ago, we see that, in general, its use has hardly varied at all, although it has increased slightly among young people under the age of 25. This increase is due to the fact that a growing number of parents learned Basque at some point in their lives and, although they are unable to express themselves correctly (they are passive bilingual speakers), they nevertheless speak Basque with their children.

If we want this growing number of bilingual speakers who have learned Basque at school or through Basqueisation and adult literacy programmes to use the language as their habitual form of communication, if we want an increasing number of people to speak in Basque, to use it more and more often not only at home, but in all areas of life, then we need to ensure that bilingual speakers are able to express themselves fluently and naturally in the Basque language.

This premise, which is not less true for being self-evident, constitutes the purpose and objective of all actions aimed at promoting Basque language use. We will never speak more Basque in more places and with more people if the language is not an easy, satisfying form of communication; and in order to ensure that it is, we need to improve speakers' language competence and give bilingual speakers the opportunity to use Basque in their everyday lives.

In this sense, it is not unreasonable to assume that the growing number of attractive activities, services and products in Basque will, over time, change the habits and customs of consumers and users, encouraging them to see the use of Basque in their daily activities, relationships and habits as an entirely natural occurrence.



VI. Glossary

Glossary: definition of the variables and concepts used in the sociolinguistic analysis (1981-2001)

Language competence (VPL)¹

Category which combines the different levels of basic language skills (comprehension, speaking, reading and writing) in order to establish the level of mastery of the language (Basque).

Bilingual speakers

Those who at least understand and speak Basque “well”.

Passive bilingual speakers (VPL)

Those who speak Basque “with difficulty” or who understand or read it “well”, even though they cannot speak it.

Monolingual non-Basque speakers (VPL)

Those who neither speak Basque nor understand or read it “well”.

Language spoken at home

The language spoken most frequently in the home environment.

Language mobility (BILA)

A typology established by crossing Mother tongue and Language competence (VPL) variables, which aims to analyse the language evolution of individuals. The cross gives rise to 15 different categories, although they have been re-grouped into 7 categories for the purposes of analysis.

Basque speakers

Those for whom Basque is their mother tongue, and who understand and speak it “well”.

Native bilingual speakers

Those for whom both Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, and who understand and speak Basque “well”.

Partially Spanishised speakers

Those for whom either Basque alone or Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, but who speak Basque “with difficulty” or do not speak it at all, despite understanding or reading it “well”.

Totally Spanishised speakers

Those for whom either Basque alone or Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, but who do not speak Basque, nor understand nor read it “well”.

New (L2) Basque speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, but who understand and speak Basque “well”.

Partial new Basque speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, and who speak Basque “with difficulty” or who understand or read it “well”, despite not speaking it.

Spanish speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, and who do not speak Basque nor understand nor read it “well”.

Use of Basque in the home (ERABIL)

A typology established by crossing the reduced Language Mobility category and the Language spoken at home variable. Its aim is to assess individuals’ level of language “activity”. The typology includes 36 different categories, although they have been re-grouped into 15 categories for the purposes of analysis.

Active Basque speakers

Those for whom Basque is their mother tongue, who understand and speak it “well”, and whose primary language at home is Basque.

Basque speakers active in both languages

Those for whom Basque is their mother tongue, who understand and speak it “well”, and whose primary languages at home are both Basque and Spanish.

¹ VPL: Classification established by the Sub-Ministry for Language Policy’s Service for Basque Studies and Promotion.



Passive Basque speakers

Those for whom Basque is their mother tongue, who understand and speak it “well”, but whose primary language at home is Spanish.

Active native bilingual speakers

Those for whom both Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, who understand and speak Basque “well” and whose primary language at home is Basque.

Native bilingual speakers active in both languages

Those for whom both Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, who understand and speak Basque “well” and whose primary languages at home are both Basque and Spanish.

Passive native bilingual speakers

Those for whom both Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, who understand and speak Basque “well” but whose primary language at home is Spanish.

Active partially Spanishised speakers

Those for whom either Basque alone or Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, but who speak Basque “with difficulty” or do not speak it at all, despite understanding or reading it “well”, and whose primary language at home is Basque.

Partially Spanishised speakers active in both languages

Those for whom either Basque alone or Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, but who speak Basque “with difficulty” or do not speak it at all, despite understanding or reading it “well”, and whose primary languages at home are both Basque and Spanish.

Passive partially Spanishised speakers

Those for whom either Basque alone or Basque and Spanish are mother tongues, but who speak Basque “with difficulty” or do not speak it at all, despite understanding or reading it “well”, and whose primary language at home is Spanish.

Active new Basque speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, but who understand and speak Basque “well” and whose primary language at home is Basque.

New Basque speakers active in both languages

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, but who understand and speak Basque “well” and whose primary languages at home are both Basque and Spanish.

Passive new Basque speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, but who understand and speak Basque “well” and whose primary language at home is Spanish.

Active partial new Basque speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, and who speak Basque “with difficulty” or who understand or read it “well”, despite not speaking it and whose primary language at home is Basque.

Partial new Basque speakers active in both languages

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, and who speak Basque “with difficulty” or who understand or read it “well”, despite not speaking it and whose primary languages at home are both Basque and Spanish.

Passive partial new Basque speakers

Those for whom either Spanish or another language other than Basque is their mother tongue, and who speak Basque “with difficulty” or who understand or read it “well”, despite not speaking it and whose primary language at home is Spanish.

2001



Eusko Jaurlaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia
Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco

ISBN 84-457-2239-5



Price: 10 €