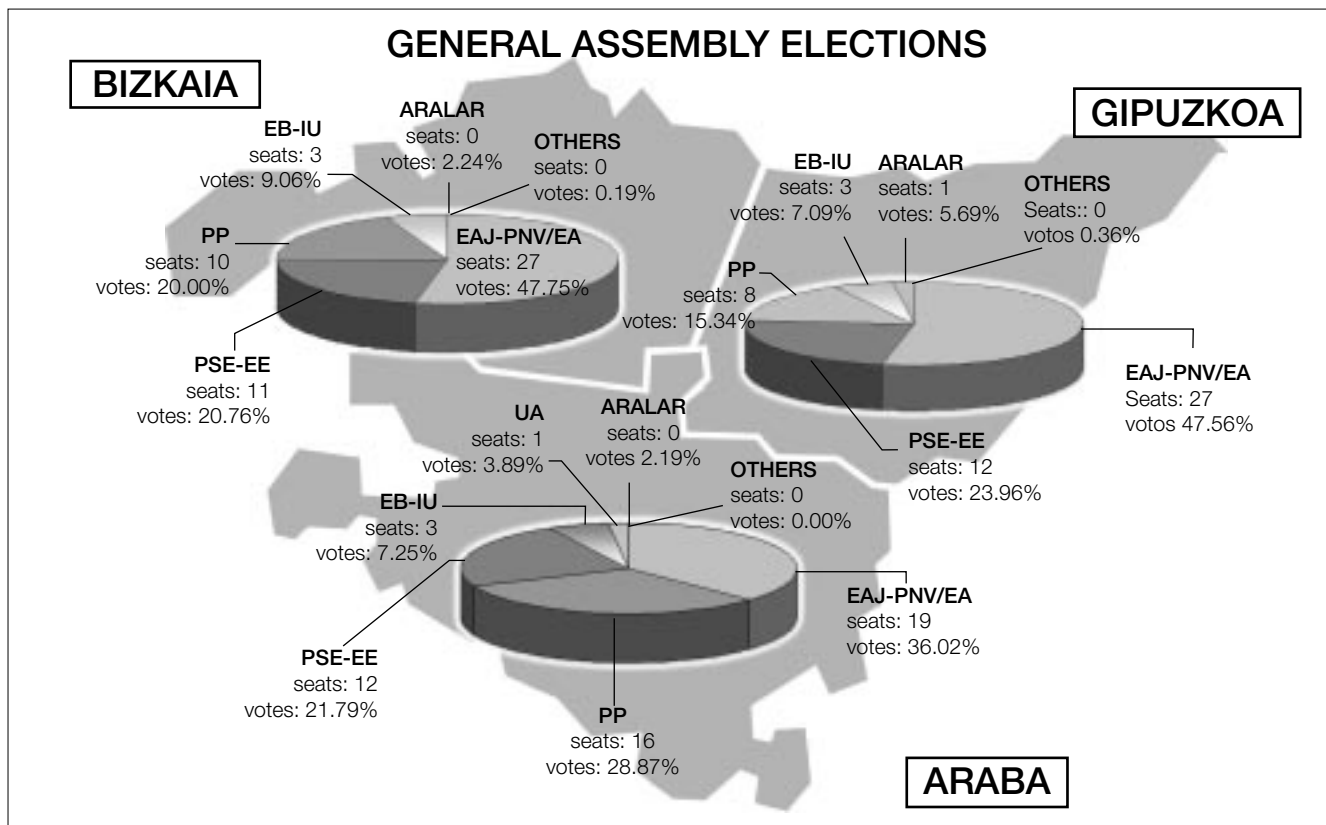


# BASQUE NEWS

N. 62 - 2003



## The PNV-EA coalition wins the Municipal and Provincial Elections

The PNV-EA coalition has won the Municipal and Provincial Elections held in the Basque country. The campaign was polarised by the radical nature of the positions of all the parties involved: the Lehendakari Ibarretxe's proposal of peace and dialogue and the decision of the High Courts in Madrid to ban the candidatures presented by AuB (successors to the former Batasuna party).

These elections were very reminiscent of the ones held on May 13 2001, due not only to the stance taken by PP and PSOE but also to the prominence these parties gave to the alternative policy proposed by the Lehendakari. In fact, they focused their efforts on asking the public to vote for them and in so doing, wreck the Lehendakari's plan.

Voters once again showed their confidence in the PNV-EA coalition which consolidated its position and

obtained a majority of votes in many towns and villages traditionally controlled by Basque socialism.

In Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa the nationalist parties obtained good results with sufficient majorities in their respective provincial parliaments to control the provincial councils of both territories.

Indicative of the fact that the Basque Country does not have a nationalist majority, there were also a number of changes in Alava, the territory controlled by PP and PSOE. The PNV-EA coalition obtained the highest number of votes, ousting PP from the top spot obtained at the last elections. The Socialists, who had hoped to topple PP in Alava, were severely punished by the electorate. Nevertheless, the PP received the highest number of votes in the capital Vitoria, although the difference between the PP and the PNV-EA nationalists was only just over one

thousand votes.

The triumph of the nationalists in Alava does not ensure them an absolute majority, however, and PP and PSOE have begun a bitter political dispute to determine how to share power in this province, in spite of being the second and third political force, respectively. They will not respect the fact that the PNV-EA coalition obtained the highest number of votes and the question is whether they will reach an agreement between them to oust the PNV and EA candidate.

It is also significant that in Alava, a party such as Unidad Alavesa, which based its election manifesto on taking Alava out of the Basque Country and on setting up the provinces's own autonomous community, failed to obtain any support. The proposal to separate this province from the Basque Country was not well received by voters in Alava. ►

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Socialist mayors in towns such as Baracaldo, where PNV-EA were beaten by a tight margin, have recognised that in those constituencies where PSOE had joined forces with PP, PSOE obtained poor results and in those locations where they fought the election on their own behalf, such as in Donostia-San Sebastián, they obtained much better results. The Socialists strengthened their position in Donostia-San Sebastián. The city's Mayor had been accused by PP and by representatives of groups that had asked the public to vote for PP, of being very close to the nationalists.

### The political gains of IU

Izquierda Unida, the party that governs together with nationalists, also obtained good results, winning a good deal of support in virtually every constituency. The backing this party received in Bilbao and in Gipuzkoa is significant, and now, for the first time, IU has three representatives on the provincial parliament of Gipuzkoa.

Banned AuB candidates received significant support (131,816 votes for the General Councils of the Basque Autonomous Community), although this figure was lower than in previous elections. In Navarre, for example, AuB came second to Aralar, a left-wing nationalist party which had taken part in the elections for the first time and which defends its ideas by rejecting the use of violence.

As ETA had asked its supporters to vote for the banned party AuB, in several municipalities the number of votes this party obtained in the form of void ballot papers, exceeded the number of votes obtained by the victorious party. This has led all the parties to reflect upon the effects of the forbidding the participation of AuB in the elections and the results obtained in these constituencies.

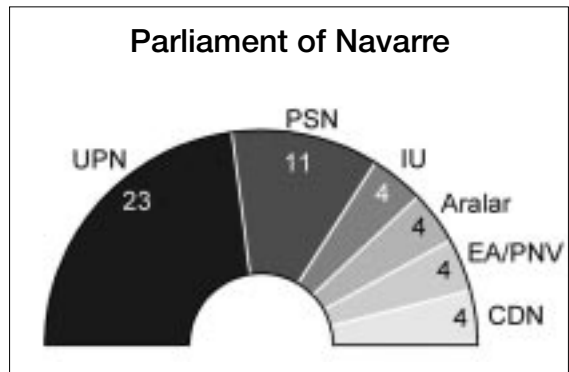
If elections had been held to the Basque Parliament, the PNV-EA coalition would have obtained an absolute majority. At this time, PNV-EA have a majority and the only way to defeat Ibarretxe's government is for PP and PSOE to vote jointly with Batasuna, which has occurred on numerous occasions in the past, even when the latter's intention has been to disrupt the workings of democratic government. An outstanding example of this was the appeal brought before the Basque Parliament declaring the unconstitutionality of the Law on Political Parties which made Batasuna illegal. Against its own interests, this party voted together with PP and PSOE to prevent this appeal from being presented.

## Navarre: UPN forced to negotiate

Unión del Pueblo Navarro-UPN has won the parliamentary elections in Navarre although it does not have sufficient majority to govern alone. A few days before the elections took place, it was pointed out that all the opposition parties might agree to join forces in

order to seize control of institutions from UPN. Nevertheless it is considered a foregone conclusion that Miguel Sanz will be elected as the new President of the Provincial Community thanks to support from CDN led by Juan Cruz Alli, who obtained 4 seats. These seats, in addition to the 23 seats obtained by UPN, gives them an absolute majority.

Most of the political formations in Navarre have increased their number of parliamentary representatives except for the Socialist Party who will have the same number. IU obtained an additional seat



and has become the third most-voted-for party. PNV-EA also obtained an additional seat and, with 4 parliamentarians, recovered its maximum representation in the provincial parliament. Aralar, the party which broke away from Batasuna and is led by Patxi Zabaleta, achieved considerable success in this, the party's first elections, obtaining 4 seats.

In Pamplona, the UPN obtained the highest number of votes allowing the present mayor, Yolanda Barcina, to continue in City Hall for another four years

### News in brief

- **The Left Bank of the river Nervión has ceased to be a socialist stronghold.** The Left Bank of the river Nervión, traditionally considered a socialist domain, has succumbed on this occasion to the PNV-EA coalition, which has achieved record results in this area. Thus, for the first time in Portugalete and Sestao, the nationalists obtained more councillors than the Socialists and in Santurce both parties achieved the same number of seats. Likewise, in Barakaldo, PSE-EE defeated the nationalist coalition by the narrowest of margins - only 2000 votes and one councillor.
- **The Socialists of Gipuzkoa** have expressed their satisfaction about the good results obtained in the elections in that province. In addition to traditionally socialist town halls such as Irun, Renteria, Lasarte and Eibar, the PSE will control several locations that until now had been in the hands of the nationalists such as Andoain, Zumarraga and Pasajes. In Urnieta, the Socialists have made important progress.
- **The nationalists** will govern with an absolute majority in the main municipalities of the province of Alava, as is the case of Amurrio, Llodio, Salvatierra, Alegría and Legutiano. In the Rioja Alavesa area, PP has retained control of Laguardia Town Hall.
- **The total number of void ballot papers** in support of the left-wing nationalists who had been banned from taking part, were in excess of the votes obtained by the winning party in three locations in the Basque Autonomous Community (most of these in Gipuzkoa) and in five locations in Navarre. Specifically, successors to the former Batasuna obtained the highest number of votes in Ajangiz, Itsasondo, Leaburu, Aizarnazabal, Hernani, Irura, Altzo, Oiartzun, Pasajes, Usurbil, Hernialde, Belaunza, Lizarza, Leiza, Basaburua, Araitz, Arantza and Olazagutia. In most of these locations, PNV-EA were runner-ups.

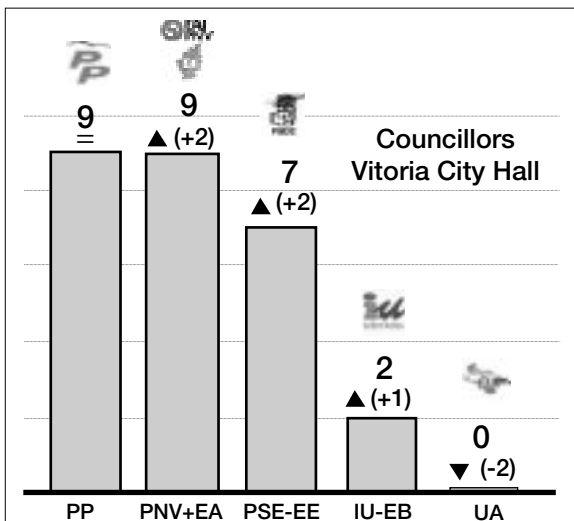
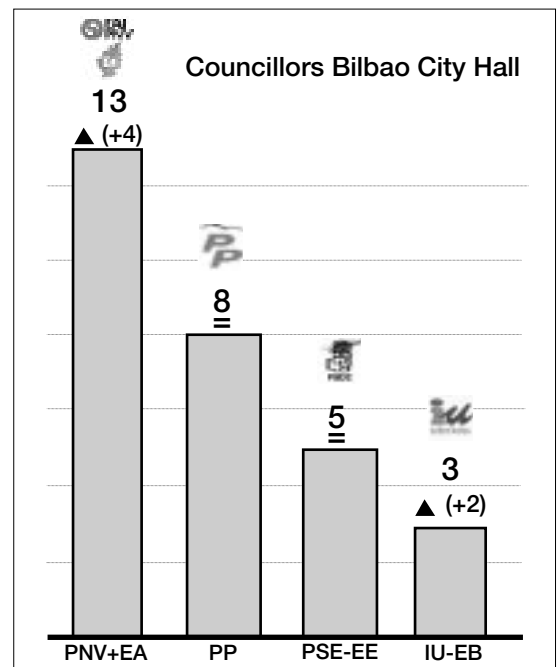
## Historic triumph in Bilbao of the nationalist Iñaki Azkuna

Bilbao had become the centre of the electoral battle between the PNV-EA coalition and PP. The pre-election surveys of voting trends had predicted a draw or only a slight difference in the number of councillors assigned to each party, making it impossible to predict which way the balance of power would swing. Nevertheless, and as the results became known, it was soon clear that the PNV-EA, led by Iñaki Azkuna, who had run for reelection, had won a historic victory.

On this occasion, the nationalist coalition obtained 13 of the 29 councillors that make up Bilbao

City Hall and obtained 82,000 votes, 30,000 more than the second most-voted-for party, which is PP with 8 councillors. For its part, PSE/EE maintained the results of previous elections (5 councillors) and Izquierda Unida-IU tripled their number of councillors from one to three, achieving the best results in their history.

In spite of his clear-cut victory, Azkuna will have to rely on the support of IU in order to govern with a comfortable margin and in this way avoid the instability of recent years, during which time he has had to lead a minority and budget-less government.



## Vitoria-Gasteiz: PP wins with a handful of votes

Just over 1000 votes (1400 to be exact) have allowed PP to obtain a majority in Vitoria-Gasteiz over its rivals, the PNV-EA coalition. This will give Alfonso Alonso another four-year term of office as Mayor of Vitoria-Gasteiz, as, although both parties obtained the same number of councillors (9), there is a still-to-be-formalised agreement between PP and PSE/EE to maintain control of

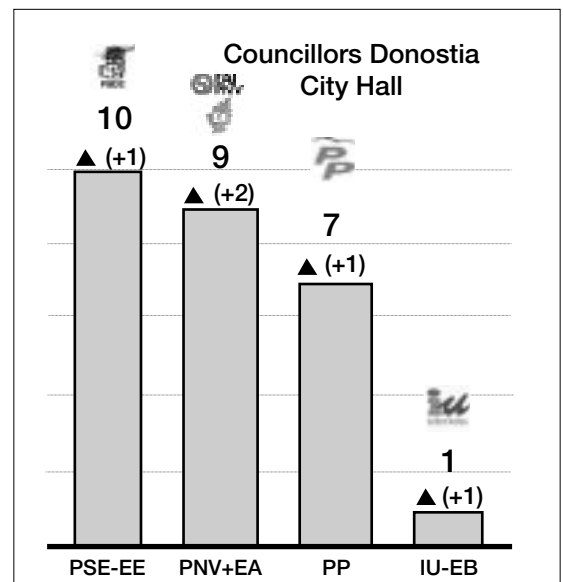
the institutions in Alava. In Vitoria-Gasteiz, PNV-EA obtained very good results and increased its number of councillors by two, the same as PSE-EE. Partido Popular maintained the same number of councillors, IU increased its number of representatives in Vitoria-Gasteiz City Hall and Unidad Alavesa suffered a heavy defeat, losing both of its councillors.

## The Socialist Odón Elorza wins again in Donostia

Once again, Odón Elorza of the Socialist Party obtained the maximum number of votes in Donostia-San Sebastián, although he did not obtain sufficient majority to govern alone. However, the most spectacular increase was obtained by the nationalists who increased their number of seats by two, falling just one short of the Socialists. For its part, PP maintains its position as the third-largest party in Donostia-San Sebastián City Hall although the gap between

PP and its two larger rivals has widened. IU obtained a seat for the first time in its history.

Of the 27 seats up for grabs, the Socialists obtained 10 (an increase of 1 with respect to the last session), which means that in order to govern they will need to reach agreements with other political parties, although the candidate that received the highest number of votes, Odón Elorza, has already declared his intention of not closing the door definitively on any possibility of forming a coalition.



# Municipal Elections 2003

## Araba

MUNICIPALITY	PNV/EA		PNV		EA		PSE-EE		PP		IU		ARALAR		UA		OTHERS	
	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes
Agurain/Salvatierra	9	1,323					1	251			0	66			0	16	0	92
Aiara/Ayala	9	1,019					0	83	2	290					0	4		
Alegria/Dulantzi	5	447					2	176	1	164	1	119			0	3		
Amurrio	9	3,234					1	692	2	944	0	177	1	373	0	64		
Aramaio	9	637					0	18	0	10					0	2		
Asparrena	5	450					0	53	1	84	0	24	1	129	0	3	2	231
Iruña de Oca	2	280					2	240	2	190	0	22			0	23	3	436
Laguardia	4	451					0	46	5	572					0	3		
Llodio/Laudio	10	5,026					3	1,832	3	1,833	1	584			0	237		
Oyón/Oion	5	621					2	259	4	504	0	49			0	10		
Zuia	6	687					1	107	2	265	0	38			0	17		

## Bizkaia

MUNICIPALITY	PNV/EA		PNV		EA		PSE-EE		PP		IU		ARALAR		OTHERS	
	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes
Amorebieta			8	3,937	1	908	2	1,299	1	905	1	948			4	1,901
Arrigorriaga	9	2,972					3	897	1	586	1	439			3	1,018
Basauri	10	10,743					6	6,920	4	4,196	1	2,088			0	146
Bermeo			7	3,574	10	4,748	0	373	0	292	0	435				
Durango	10	6,834					2	1,851	4	2,556	1	1,097	1	914	3	2,077
Elorrio	8	1,720					2	472	2	495	1	282				
Erandio	12	6,636					5	2,835	3	1,561	1	1,036				
Ermua	3	1,528					9	4,698	4	1,962	1	928				
Galdakano	11	7,696					4	2,807	3	2,228	3	2,400				
Gernika			10	4,703	5	2,145	1	577	1	631	0	314				
Getxo	11	20,280					3	6,499	9	16,106	2	3,511	0	1,321		
Leioa	11	8,047					4	3,097	4	2,747	2	1,507	0	375		
Lekeitio			9	2,251	4	996	0	59	0	114	0	73				
Markina			9	1,563	2	448	0	41	0	66						
Mungia			13	5,283	1	598	1	645	2	842	0	368				
Ondarroa	12	2,841					0	109	1	301	0	97				
Plentzia			7	1,279	1	223	0	78	1	222	0	90			2	372
Sopelana			9	2,846	0	243	1	616	1	561	3	926			3	971
V. Trapagarán	6	2,501					9	3,550	1	493	1	700				
Zalla	11	3,456					2	758	0	312	0	288	0	151		

## Gipuzkoa

MUNICIPALITY	PNV/EA		PNV		EA		PSE-EE		PP		IU		ARALAR		OTHERS	
	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes	Coun.	Votes
Andoain	7	2,677					7	2,566	2	727	1	526				
Arrasate	9	4,677					5	2,375	2	1,262	3	1,438	2	1,057		
Azkoitia	11	3,263					1	468	1	488	0	90				
Azpeitia	15	5,459					1	356	1	355	0	138				
Beasain	11	3,465					3	1,178	2	766	1	469				
Bergara	10	3,913					1	723	1	503	1	460	4	1,452		
Deba	11	1,963					0	116	0	105	1	177				
Eibar	7	5,552					11	7,729	2	1,397	1	932				
Elgoibar	12	3,683					2	860	2	749	1	338				
Errenteria	7	5,456					10	7,512	2	2,110	2	1,938				
Getaria	8	852					0	27	0	27			3	329		
Hondarribia	11	5,009					1	714	1	893	1	525				
Irun	8	9,663					9	11,101	5	6,042	1	2,400				
Lasarte	5	2,551					10	4,834	1	779	1	802				
Mutriku			9	1,337	2	364	0	136	0	116						
Oñati	14	3,807					1	310	1	361	1	515				
Orio	10	1,703					1	236	0	102						
Tolosa			8	3,225	4	1,979	2	801	2	951	1	557				
Zarauz	15	6,906					3	1,659	2	1,317	1	717				
Zumaia	7	2,383					2	700	0	289	1	337				