

**GAZTEMUNDU** is a program organized by the General Secretary of Foreign Action of the Basque Government and specifically addressed to the young members of the *Euskal Etxeak*. The program was born in 1996 and in this fifth edition it keeps offering the Basque young men and women a chance to express themselves in an international background.

This year, the organizers have made special efforts –as they did last year– in relation to the English speaking countries, overcoming the language barriers, so that they can also send their representatives without any problems.

### A new impulse for the Program

The representatives of the Basque centers, gathered in the 2nd World Congress of Basque communities 1999, celebrated in Vitoria-Gasteiz last October, suggested the promotion of programs addressed to the younger members of the centers in order to give them a deeper knowledge of the present reality of the country their ancestors left so long ago (sometimes these young people belong to the fourth and even fifth generations).

This proposal from the Congress has become the first of the 70 items of the Four-year Institutional Action Plan (2000-2003). A part of the grants program for the *Euskal Etxeak* will be set aside to finance specific actions such as *Gaztemundu*.

Therefore, the Direction of Relations with the Basque Communities has created a specific budget for *Gaztemundu*, which is a sort of guarantee of a certain future for *Gaztemundu*.



### A double goal

a) Give the young men and women aged between 20 and 30 from the Basque communities the chance to get a direct knowledge of the Basque Country and establish relations with organizations, companies and people working in Euskadi, promoting new exchanges between the young people from outside and inside Euskal Herria.

b) Attract and encourage the participation of these young *Gaztemundu* men and women in the active life of the *Euskal Etxeak*, which are generally in need of a change of generation.

During their stay, (from September 11<sup>th</sup> 2000 to September 23<sup>th</sup> 2000, these young *Gaztemundu* people from the Basque Communities will visit different places all over Euskal Herria (Basque Autonomous Community, Navarre and Iparralde) and they will take part in the presentation and debate of many subjects and in many other activities such as tourist visits and other free time activities in a friendly atmosphere.

More than 200 young people from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, The United States, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela, have already taken part in this program, one of the best, according to the Basque communities abroad.

### The Program's bases

The bases for year 2000 were sent to all Basque centers in December 1999, for the members can only receive them through the *Euskal Etxeak*. After all, one of the main requirements to take part in it is to have been a member of the corresponding center for at least three years.

The requirements are the same as they were in the preceding years: the participants must be aged between 20 and 30 and they must prove they are effectively related to the Basque center.

56 applications have been pre-selected and the applicants have been given a three-month term to prepare the research works that have been proposed. In the present edition there will be 50 participants at most, who will stay here between September 11<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>th</sup>.

After this year's edition, a percentage of the applications will be reserved for the students of the «*Argentinan Euskaraz*» program, developed by the General Secretary of Foreign Action in collaboration with HABE, so that the future Argentinean Euskera teachers will have their own space inside the group.

### Objectives of *Gaztemundu*

- Bringing the younger members of the Basque communities closer to the present Euskadi.
- Encouraging these young *Gaztemundu* participants to take part in the activities of the *Euskal Etxeak*

### New requirements of *Gaztemundu* – 2000

There have been some changes in the requirements to take part in the fifth edition, *Gaztemundu*-2000. The changes have come as a result of the experience provided by the four preceding years, and also following the suggestions of the participants through the question papers they fill in at the end of their stay in Euskadi.

One of the changes is about the subjects of the works the candidates must present. Several new subjects have been included this year, leaving the list as follows:

- ✓ History of the Basque center the applicant belongs to.
- ✓ History of any other Basque institution in their country
- ✓ Experiences and stories of Basque immigrants/ Basque exile
- ✓ Elaboration of a specific project to be applied in or by their Basque center
- ✓ Future of the Basque centers
- ✓ International relations of the Basque centers
- ✓ Institutional policies in Euskadi in a particular sector
- ✓ Ways to promote economic relations between Euskadi and the applicant's own country
- ✓ Basque presence in the Internet
- ✓ Any Basque subject related to the Basque center.

The pre-selected applicants have now three months to elaborate their papers, which must be at least 25 pages long. During the inauguration of the World Congress in October, when he was given the «*Lagun Onari*» distinction, Professor William A. Douglass told the representatives of the institutions and the Basque communities abroad that: **«it is urgent to document the history of the particular colonies in specific periods, and all their associations. We mustn't forget the importance**

**of the biographies constructed both from the archives and aural sources; and this task is urgent –the professor underlines– because the sources get lost with time».** This suggestion has given a new point of view to the surveys of the young *Gaztemundu* participants,

who will contribute with their efforts to the better knowledge of the history and reality of the Basque communities abroad.

The increasing number of applicants has convinced the *Gaztemundu* Organizing Commission that, not only have they been successful in their new proposals, but also that the quality of the surveys will get better and better.

Aurtengo ediziorako zenbait aldaketa egin dira.

Asmoa da partehartzaileen aldetik ere ekarpenak egitea.

*Gaztemundu* euskal etheen aldetik oso ondo baloratu izan den ekimena da.

Fruituak ikusten hasi gara: gazteak Zuzendaritzetan, interneten...

Hamabost egunetan zehar egindako lagunekin harremanetan jarraitu izan dute.

### A fruitful program

*Gaztemundu* is above all a reciprocated bet of mutual attraction between Euskadi and the young Basques living all over the world; this is a medium and long-term project, organized in order to ensure a fruitful future. In fact, this future exists already, for although this is a relatively new program (born in 1996, this is the fifth edition), it has already generated remarkable consequences, such as the creation of solid personal links among the participants, and between them and Euskadi as well. We should also mention the suggestion of organizing a meeting of *ex-gaztemundus* in Uruguay, «*Salto 2000*», which we hope will soon be a reality, there is also the recent creation of a forum in the Internet which is fed practically on a daily basis by the young participants of previous editions, who chose the Internet as the most immediate and attractive way of keeping their relationship alive. There have also been some reports, such as the one published about the Basque Country in the March issue of the Brazilian travel magazine *Terra* by the *Gaztemundu* 1999 Xavier Bartaburu, which describes the fruits the program is already generating.

And finally, although this is probably the most important goal, we can already notice the friendly attitudes, the slow but constant incorporation of the young generations (many of them *ex-gaztemundus*) to the management of the Basque centers, which had until then been somewhat lukewarm to give way to the new generations.

For more information about *Gaztemundu*, please consult the page [www.euskadi.net](http://www.euskadi.net), in «Basques in the world» or contact this address [Benan-Oregi@ej-gv.es](mailto:Benan-Oregi@ej-gv.es)