

= Coat of arms of Basque Country (autonomous community) =

The current Basque coat of arms (Spanish : Escudo del País Vasco , Basque : Euskal autonomi erkidegoaren armarria) is the official coat of arms of the Basque Country , Autonomous community of Spain . It consists of a party per cross representing the three historical territories of Álava , Gipuzkoa and Biscay , as well as a fourth , void quarter . The arms are ringed by a regal wreath of oak leaves , symbolic of the Gernikako Arbola . The fourth quarter constituted since the late 19th century the linked chains of Navarre ; however , following a legal suit by the Navarre Government claiming that the usage of the arms of a region on the flag of another was illegal , the Constitutional Court of Spain ordered the removal of the chains of Navarre in a judgement of 1986 .

= = Origin = =

After the end of home rule in 1839 @-@ 1841 , the Basque governments started a mutual approach out of common concerns in face of their exposure to Spanish centralism . The movement intensified after 1866 , and a motto was coined , the " Laurac bat " , ' the four make one ' , echoing the " Irurac bat " of the Royal Basque Company , which in turn crystallized in a coat of arms including the four historic Basque districts in Spain (called variously the Sister Provinces , the Chartered Territories , the Basque Country , the Basque @-@ Navarrese Country , etc .) , to represent their common bonds , as claimed during that period by the chartered provincial governments , or the 1931 draft Statute of the Basque Country .

In 1936 , the Provisional Government of Euzkadi , presided over by the first president , José Antonio Aguirre , adopted the shield with the arms of the three provinces of Álava , Gipuzkoa , Biscay comprised in the 1936 Statute (the Basque Provinces , as established in the 1833 administrative design) , and Navarre . The president of the government affirmed in the preamble to the Decree of 19 October 1936 , and thereby approved , the emblem and flag that was to be used by the Basque Country . Thus the shield of the Government of Euzkadi contained the arms of Álava , Gipuzkoa , Biscay and Navarre in a single blazon of four quarters surrounded by a crown of oak leaves . The Provisional Government of Euzkadi stated that " the flag must be that which gathers Basque unity and which the use , ever more frequent in the Basque lands , has sanctioned as such symbol of their unity . "

As an official shield , like the 1936 Basque Autonomous Community , disappeared after the pro @-@ Franco victory in the Spanish Civil War , but the coat of arms continued in unofficial use , it was even used in its flag by the rightist pro @-@ rebel newspaper from Donostia El Diario Vasco during wartime (data for 2 May 1937) . On 2 November 1978 , the Consejo General del País Vasco (General Council of the Basque Country) , restored the republican shield , albeit modified as follows :

The Álava quarter lost the motto " En aumento de la justicia contra malhechores " and both the designs of the castle and of the arm with sword were changed . The castle is now on top of a grey rock and the arm and sword are light blue in colour .

In the Biscay quarter , the wolves of the arms of the Haro family were suppressed in 1986 and the field changed from gules to argent , the bordure from argent to gold , the crosses from sinople to gules , and the ground (terrace) from sinople to maroon .

In the Gipuzkoa quarter , the field changed from argent to gold , and the ground (terrace) was removed , leaving only the trees and the waves .

The fourth quarter once contained the linked chains of Navarre ; however , following a legal suit by the Navarre government claiming that the usage of the arms of a region on the flag of another was illegal , the Constitutional Court of Spain forced the Basque government to remove the chains of Navarre , leaving the red background .

In 1991 the Basque Government standardised the colours used in the shield .

Basque nationalists , but not only , have used an unofficially recognised Basque coat of arms , the Zazpiak Bat . It has been argued that it differs from the original one by being divided into six squares and by including the coat of arms of the Basque regions in France . The motto " Zazpiak bat " was

coined by Antoine @-@ Thomson d 'Abbadie in the late 19th century .

= = The quarters = =