



IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS SPAIN

**PEER REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND
IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL
SYSTEM OF SPAIN IN RESPONSE TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Recommendation

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation should review the legal basis for the appointment of the President of INE to enable non-civil servants to be considered for appointment; in addition, the Law on the Public Statistical Function should highlight the reasons for dismissal of the President of INE in the sense of Regulation 223/2009. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

INE has a divergent view on the first part of this recommendation (the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation should review the legal basis for the appointment of the President of INE to enable non-civil servants to be considered for appointment) *and therefore no improvement action is foreseen in this regard.*

Improvement sub-actions are proposed on the second part of this recommendation (the Law on the Public Statistical Function should highlight the reasons for dismissal of the President of INE in the sense of Regulation 223/2009).

Current situation:

Under the existing Spanish Law on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector¹, the President of INE can only be recruited from the cadre of civil servants. By definition, this excludes certain potential candidates. In addition, the Law on the Public Statistical Function does not specify the requirement that candidates for the post of President should have an appropriate professional background, or the potential reasons for dismissal. In addition, the peer review team noted that recommendation 1 from the 2015 peer review of the Spanish statistical system has not yet been implemented. The recommendation was that: “The National Statistical Institute should carry out actions to promote the necessary legislative amendments, laying down clear provisions for the appointment and dismissal of the President of the National Statistical Institute, in line with the European statistics Code of Practice (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 1.8).”

Improvement sub-action 1.1: Elaboration of a legal report

INE will elaborate a report analysing, from a legal point of view, the modifications to be proposed in the Spanish legislation with the goal of highlighting the reasons for the dismissal of the President of INE in agreement with Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics. This report will be elaborated in agreement with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation.

Deadline: Q2 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 1.1: INE and Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation.

Improvement sub-action 1.2: Implementation of legal reform

Legal reforms identified in the preceding report will be implemented in due course and form.

Deadline: Q2 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 1.2: INE and Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation.

¹ In Spanish, *Ley 40/2015, de 1 de octubre, de Régimen Jurídico del Sector Público* (<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2015-10566>). Art. 63.3.

2. Recommendation

INE should coordinate the development of a comprehensive set of agreements with administrative data holders. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.6)

Current situation:

INE has agreements with some but not all administrative data holders. According to this recommendation, a systematic approach would help to ensure continuous data provision, provide an opportunity to ensure that all relevant information is collected and, when published, provide clarity on how administrative data are used for statistical purposes. To accomplish this recommendation, INE shall make use of a recent statistical programme in the National Statistical Plan called Inventory of Administrative Sources.

Improvement sub-action 2.1: Compilation of a list of all administrative registers that can be used as a source of data for official statistics.

INE will make use of INE statistical operation called Inventory of Administrative Sources to compile a list of all administrative registers with potential use in the production of official statistics.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 2.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 2.2: Compilation of a ranking of administrative registers as a source of information in INE statistical operations

Based on the Inventory of Administrative Sources, the information provided will be analysed in order to assess the administrative registers most used in INE statistical operations, in search of a more efficient approach.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 2.2: INE

Improvement sub-action 2.3: Proposal for agreements with the holders of the administrative data most used by INE in its statistical operations.

Once the administrative registers most used as a source of information in INE's statistical operations have been identified, INE will contact their owners for the development, processing and agreement on collaboration agreements (sub-action conditional on the two preceding ones).

Deadline: Q1 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-actions 2.3: INE

Improvement sub-action 2.4: Signing of agreements with the holders of the administrative data most used by INE in its statistical operations.

Once an agreement has been reached with the owner of the administrative data, it will be signed (sub-action conditional on the preceding one).

Deadline: Q3 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 2.4: INE

Improvement sub-action 2.5: Publication of collaboration agreements on INE's website

Once the collaboration agreements detailed in sub-action 2.4 have been formalised, INE will publish the agreements signed with administrative data holders in the Transparency section of its website (sub-action conditional on the four preceding ones).

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 2.5: INE

3. Recommendation

INE should review the role, membership and operation of the High Council of Statistics to ensure that the needs of users – on topics relevant to them – can be more fully taken into account. This review should evaluate the role that external (and sectoral) user groups might play and how they might support the High Council of Statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

Current situation:

The High Council of Statistics (CSE, in Spanish) is made up of representatives of the producing agencies, users and respondents. However, the Interministerial Statistical Commission (CIME, in Spanish) also gives a voice to the production agencies, which means that user input is diluted proportionally. User input would be strengthened by the creation of external user groups to capture the needs of, for example, business, academia and researchers, civil society and trade unions.

Improvement sub-action 3.1: Preparation of a report on possible changes to the High Council of Statistics (CSE)

INE, in collaboration with the High Council of Statistics (CSE), will prepare a report identifying a potential course of action with the aim of taking into consideration users' needs within the CSE. This report will analyse, among other aspects, those organs with these functions that already exist in other countries.

Deadline: Q1 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.1: INE and CSE

Improvement sub-action 3.2: Decision and implementation of modifications

INE, in collaboration with the High Council of Statistics (CSE), will decide and implement those modifications identified in the report of sub-action 3.1.

Deadline: Q2 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.2: INE and CSE

Improvement sub-action 3.3: Fostering citizen participation in the High Council of Statistics (CSE)

INE will propose that the CSE be open to citizens' opinions on all subjects discussed by the CSE via its functional mailbox, so not only regarding opinions about new projects. To this end, the address of the mailbox will be permanently available on the CSE section on INE's website.

Deadline: Q1 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.3: INE and CSE

Improvement sub-action 3.4: Greater visibility of the High Council of Statistics (CSE) in society

INE will propose a prominent section for the CSE on INE's website.

Deadline: Q1 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.4: INE and CSE

4. Recommendation

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation should commission a review of the structure of INE, focusing in particular on the role of – and need for – the statistical activities of the provincial offices. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.2 and 10.4)

INE has a divergent view on this recommendation and therefore no improvement action is foreseen.

Current situation:

INE comprises the headquarters in Madrid and offices in each province – 52 in total. These report to the President of INE via a single contact point, and the determination of the collection procedures and instruments is done through the sub-directorate general for data collection. There are no links, neither organic nor functional, between the provincial offices and the Central Statistical Bodies of the Autonomous Communities. The provincial offices have both administrative and statistical responsibilities. The former includes legal responsibility for the management of the Electoral Census and the Municipal Register of Inhabitants. They are also assigned relevant functions in the management of the electoral process. The statistical responsibilities relate to data collection and editing for household and business surveys, and to submission of the data to the headquarters for subsequent processing.

In the collection procedures, collection via both administrative registers and multi-mode has been promoted, combining the collection of both data sources in an efficient way.

The CAWI data collection mode is used in the majority of economic surveys and is also being promoted, in line with the type of survey, in operations aimed at households. In the latter, the CATI data collection mode is also used to a significant extent and there are seven Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) centres in different provinces to conduct surveys in different languages.

The IRIA system allows the organisation and distribution of work in a very agile and efficient way among the delegations.

5. Recommendation

INE should coordinate a review of the statistical arrangements in those Ministries producing official statistics, which do not have a centralised statistical unit, to identify ways to strengthen user engagement, develop common standards, exploit administrative sources most effectively and use harmonised statistical tools. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.1 and 10.3)

Current situation:

Some ministries producing official statistics have centralised units (Ministerial Statistical Units) that support, among other things, the implementation of common standards by all persons and teams producing official statistics. Other ministries producing official statistics do not have such centralised units. Although the statistical organisation is the responsibility of the ministry, it is important that arrangements are in place to ensure that the benefits associated with Ministerial Statistical Units are enjoyed.

The Law on the Public Statistical Function confers on INE the overall coordination of the state statistical services and the supervision, control or oversight of their technical competences. Taking into account indicators 1bis.1 and 10.3 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, the current and previous National Statistical Plans (PEN 2021-2024 and PEN 2017-2020) include among their strategic lines the sharing of statistical services and tools for the entire government statistical system.

For its part, the Interministerial Statistical Commission (CIME, in Spanish) is the body for the participation of the statistical services responsible for the production of state statistics. Its objectives include the horizontal coordination of statistical services and the strengthening of cooperation between them, the integration of statistical information systems by homogenising and standardising the conceptual and methodological aspects of statistics, the promotion of the rational use of available data sources (both statistical and administrative), and the exchange of data files and directories between statistical services.

Improvement sub-action 5.1: Establishment of a list of ministries that have a Centralised Statistical Unit

The CIME Secretariat will submit to this collegiate body the list of ministries that have a Centralised Statistics Unit or a unit that performs the corresponding functions and will publish it on an annual basis in the CIME Annual Report of Activities.

Deadline: Q3 2023

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.1: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 5.2: Promotion of the creation of a Centralised Statistical Unit and/or Ministerial Statistical Commission in those ministries where it does not yet exist

INE's Presidency, as chair of the CIME, will promote the appropriate measures to encourage ministries with dispersed statistical production to have internal coordination instruments, either centralised statistical units or ministerial statistical commissions. These measures will include discussing the merits of such a unit in the CIME and making institutional contact with the ministries concerned to encourage its creation.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.2: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 5.3: Promotion of measures to strengthen user participation in official statistics produced by ministries.

INE will make available to the ministries its own measures aimed at strengthening the participation of users of its statistical products and will propose that they take appropriate measures, developing a guidebook including these aspects that will be discussed in the CIME and published later.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.3: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 5.4: Compilation and dissemination of information on the sources of information used by ministries that do not have a Centralised Statistical Unit.

INE, through the Inventory of Administrative Sources and the Inventory of Statistical Operations, will compile and disseminate the information on those data sources used by the ministries that do not have a Centralised Statistical Unit, to ascertain the level of use of administrative registers or direct data collection.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.4: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 5.5: Promotion of measures to develop common standards and use harmonised statistical tools.

INE will make available to the ministries its own measures aimed at the development of standards and statistical products, and IT tools that may be used by the ministries.

Specifically, the sharing of the IRIA collection tool, dissemination protocols and tools, the promotion of the use of customised samples, INE's so-called DataStat data space and the computer tool for the Standardised Methodological Report of INE's statistical operations, will be proposed. These measures will be presented at the CIME, and INE will propose the signing of agreements for their adoption by the ministries concerned.

Deadline: Q4 2027 (conditional on accomplishment of internal so-called PRIAC projects)

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.5: INE and CIME

6. Recommendation

INE should work with the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics to develop formal agreements covering mutual responsibilities in relation to data transfer, methodology and quality, statistical confidentiality thresholds, common standards, dissemination policy and user engagement. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 3.1 and 7.2)

Current situation:

According to the peer review team, INE provides valuable advice on technical statistical matters to the Other National Authorities (ONAs) that develop, produce and disseminate official statistics. However, the nature of the advice provided and the circumstances in which it should be sought have not yet been formally established. Establishing more detailed protocols regarding data transfer, statistical confidentiality thresholds, metadata and the use of standard classifications would improve the comparability of statistics by Other National Authorities and strengthen co-ordination. Doing so, and publishing the advice, would provide clarity on expectations, for the NSI and each of the Other National Authorities.

On the one hand, INE, according to the Law on the Public Statistical Function, is the body in charge of the general coordination of the state statistical services and the monitoring, control or supervision of their technical competences. On the other hand, the Interministerial Statistical Commission (CIME, in Spanish) is the participation body of the statistical services responsible for the production of state statistics. Its objectives include the cross-cutting coordination of statistical services and the strengthening of cooperation between them, as well as facilitating the exchange of data files and directories between statistical services and the joint use of these files, while respecting the rules on statistical confidentiality and promoting the most appropriate dissemination of the results of statistics for state purposes and their methodologies. Its mission also includes integrating the statistical information systems related to the different sectorial and thematic fields, thus homogenising and standardising the conceptual and methodological aspects of statistics, especially in terms of definitions, statistical units, classifications, nomenclatures and codes.

Improvement sub-action 6.1: Annual update of the list of Other National Authorities

INE, through the CIME Secretariat, will continue to propose the updated list of ONAs on an annual basis for its approval.

Deadline: Annually periodic action (starting in Q1 2024)

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.1: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 6.2: Elaboration of criteria for defining Statistical Service

INE will elaborate and propose to the CIME for its approval the criteria for defining the concept of a Statistical Service responsible for producing official statistics.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.2: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 6.3: Development of a Data Transfer Protocol

INE will propose for approval by the CIME a protocol for data transfer between INE and the Statistical Services.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.3: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 6.4: Harmonisation of the confidentiality and statistical secrecy criteria common to the entire National Statistical System

<p>The Statistical Confidentiality Committee will define common confidentiality and statistical secrecy criteria for the entire National Statistical System and submit them to CIME for approval.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.4: INE and CIME</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.5: Adaptation of INE quality indicators to the rest of the operations of the National Statistical Plan and inclusion in the Standardised Methodological Report</p> <p>INE will work with the CIME Permanent Commission to adapt the quality indicators to be included in the Standardised Methodological Report (IME, in Spanish) of the statistical operations included in the National Statistical Plan.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.5: INE and CIME</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.6 (overlaps with improvement sub-action 5.5): Promotion of measures to develop common standards and use harmonised statistical tools.</p> <p>INE will make available to the ministries, through the CIME, its measures aimed at the development of standards and statistical products, and IT tools which can be used by the ministries.</p> <p>Specifically, INE will propose to share its in-house developed IRIA collection tool, dissemination protocols and computer tools, especially that for the Standardised Methodological Report of statistical operations. INE will also propose to promote INE's so-called DataStat data space.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.6: INE and CIME</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.7: Proposal of agreements to develop common standards and use harmonised statistical tools.</p> <p>INE will draft agreements to develop common standards and use harmonised statistical tools, and present them at the CIME for signing.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.7: INE and CIME</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.8: Formalisation of agreements to develop common standards and use harmonised statistical tools.</p> <p>INE will propose the formalisation of agreements to develop common standards and use harmonised statistical tools.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 6.8: INE and CIME</p>

7. Recommendation

INE should consider establishing a standardised process of staff appraisals and a system for evaluating the performance of employees. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.6)

Current situation:

According to the peer review team, INE has highly qualified staff and participation in training programmes is facilitated. However, there is no systematic human resources evaluation process to determine the assignment, performance and training needs of INE personnel. INE explained that staff performance evaluation systems have not as yet been developed in the Spanish Administration and that INE has not unilaterally developed them.

A system of staff appraisal based on communication with the staff would further allow talent management and ensure that both the career expectations of staff and the needs of INE are met. Therefore, the peer review team sees a need to improve communication with employees about their performance.

Improvement action 7: INE will implement the staff performance evaluation system developed by the foreseen Law on the State Public Service or else, in case this law has not entered into force by January 1, 2025, will celebrate annual staff dialogues.

INE will implement measures according to the foreseen Law on the State Public Service once this has entered into force by the competent administrative unit.

As this measure depends on the initiative of another administrative unit, if the relevant standard has not been promulgated by January 2025, INE will establish a procedure for heads of unit, at a level to be determined, to hold meetings with their staff at least annually, and summaries of these meetings will be discussed at the directorate level.

Deadline: Q1 2027

Responsible institution for improvement action 7: INE

8. Recommendation

INE should increase its competitiveness in the labour market and consider improving the package offered to new recruits with the objective of reducing the need for outsourcing. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1, 7.5 and 10.2)

Current situation:

According to the peer review team, INE is ambitious about standardising processes and developing modern tools for its statistical work. Notably, the coordinated action of the methodology unit and the ICT unit makes it possible to share resources and investments and contributes to the identification of the potential for innovation and modernisation to optimise statistical processes. However, there is frequently a need to outsource important tasks (particularly in IT) because INE is not competitive enough in the labour market to hire staff with adequate competencies.

Improvement action 8:

INE will act, within the corresponding legal margin, on working conditions by means of formulas which are well accepted by public employees working at INE.

INE does not operate in the Spanish labour market, and it is subjected to the special regulations for State civil servants regarding the list of job positions and their assignments. However, it does act, within the corresponding legal margin, on working conditions, which could be well accepted by public employees working at INE.

In particular, actions related to the fields of teleworking, attractive career development-oriented training, and participation in national and international events will be identified.

Deadline: Q1 2026

Responsible institution for improvement action 8: INE

9. Recommendation

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation should ensure that adequate resourcing is made available in the annual work programme to guarantee that the objectives of important innovation projects are achieved. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 3.2)

Current situation:

INE and the Other National Authorities (ONAs) plan to launch numerous innovative projects. INE's plans are widely supported by the High Council of Statistics (CSE, in Spanish) and other bodies. According to the peer review team, resources are currently sufficient, but those devoted to innovative projects that are not part of regular statistical production may be vulnerable in times of financial difficulties. It therefore seems important to maintain the level of resources, both in the medium and long term.

Although this recommendation is explicitly addressed to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation (MAETD, in Spanish), both INE and the statistical services in charge of the production of government statistical operations are subjected to public sector budgetary constraints: the provision of new staff is subject to the State Public Employment Offer.

The current National Statistical Plan (PEN 2021-2024) incorporates among its strategic lines the need to maintain, during its period of validity, a regular and sufficient annual job offer for new statistical staff of the Administration, and to give greater publicity to these statistical bodies.

Improvement sub-action 9.1: Annual Public Employment Offer

INE will continue to apply for new staff positions in all State statistical bodies on an ongoing basis in order to ensure adequate resources to take on major innovation projects.

Deadline: Annually periodic action (starting in Q1 2024)

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.1: INE and METD

Improvement sub-action 9.2: Analysis and adequacy of the staff by categories and levels

INE will analyse the distribution of staff by categories and levels and will propose, where appropriate, its adaptation.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.2: INE and METD

Improvement sub-action 9.3: Information on entry training of INE statistical staff and knowledge acquired since entry

INE will review the technical knowledge of new staff entering the statistical bodies and will monitor the knowledge that staff have acquired, since their entry, through training courses.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.3: INE

Improvement sub-action 9.4: Optimisation of incorporation processes for new staff and their distribution among INE working units

INE will review the recruitment processes for its new staff and will try to reduce the time it takes for new staff to take up their posts and internships. Similarly, objective criteria will be established to prioritise relevant projects in the allocation of these new resources.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.4: INE

10. Recommendation

INE should reconsider the practice of giving the Central Statistical Bodies of the Autonomous Communities pre-release information under embargo. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 6.7)

INE has a divergent view on this recommendation and therefore no improvement action is foreseen.

Current situation:

The Autonomous Communities have each passed separate territorial Laws on Public Statistical Functions regulating their statistical activities.

The Statistical Institutes of the Autonomous Communities develop statistical work programmes in their territories that, on numerous occasions, coincide with the National Statistical Plan. In order to avoid duplicities, agreements are established between INE and the autonomous institutes so as to overcome the disadvantages of possible duplications, such as the increase in the response burden. Those agreements also stipulate that the result of the operations carried out by INE will be provided under embargo to the autonomous institutes.

The central statistical bodies of the autonomous communities (OCECA) are governed by laws and regulations which guarantee statistical confidentiality. Currently, 16 of these bodies receive information from INE under embargo, both relating to their territory and to the national total, for the purpose of preparing and publishing news releases relating to their respective territorial scopes in a synchronised manner with INE. This practice was implemented to enhance the impact and reach of statistical results published by INE. In the years during which it has been carried out, it has demonstrated positive effects that justify keeping the current practice as it is. Moreover, the agreement signed with the OCECA establishes provisions for sanctioning leaks of embargoed information.

11. Recommendation

INE should discontinue the practice of giving pre-release access to news agencies.
(Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 6.7)

INE has a divergent view on this recommendation. In INE's view, this practice is compliant with the ES CoP 6.7. In this line, in order to improve the current practice of delivering pre-release access to news agencies, INE will improve the mechanisms for sending this sensitive information to these users.

Current situation:

INE has a clear policy on pre-release access, which is made public on its website. In INE's view, this practice is compliant with the ES CoP 6.7. Certain news releases of key short-term statistics are presently sent under embargo to a limited number of news agencies about 30 minutes before the official dissemination time.

The objective of sending press releases under embargo to a small number of news agencies is that they have enough time to prepare their information and to review the data which they are going to publish. This minimises the risk of competition among news agencies to provide information as soon as possible, or of them making mistakes when disseminating INE data. Therefore, we believe that the embargo offers positive results, since it prevents errors in the dissemination of information to society as a whole, and it is in accordance with the ES CoP.

The constant monitoring that exists between the agencies, as well as INE's control mechanisms, constitute sufficient guarantees against disclosures ahead of the publication time. Above all, a self-controlling mechanism exists since the agencies run the risk of being penalised and, therefore, of not having access to the embargoed information compared to their competitors.

Improvement sub-action 11.1: Encryption

INE will encrypt the information sent to news agencies to guarantee that this data cannot be disclosed by other users who are not authorised.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 11.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 11.2: User Authentication reinforcement

INE will reinforce the mechanism of authenticating users who are accessing embargoed information.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 11.2: INE

12. Recommendation

The three Other National Authorities reviewed (the Subdirectorate General for Analysis, Coordination and Statistics in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Subdirectorate General for Foresight, Strategy and Energy Regulations in the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, the Subdirectorate General for Economic Studies and Statistics in the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda) developing, producing and disseminating official statistics should indicate a standard daily time for the release of their statistics. INE should monitor the situation in the remaining Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicators 6.5 and 13.2)

Current situation:

All the Other National Authorities reviewed have publication schedules. However, no daily dissemination time is indicated for any of them. This is considered a gap in the transparency of the dissemination of official statistics. At the same time, the monitoring of INE is necessary for the Other National Authorities that compile, produce and disseminate official statistics.

The Annual Programme contains an annex with the release calendar (day and month). The time is not specified.

Improvement sub-action 12.1: Sharing of INE dissemination protocols with ONAs

INE will share, through the CIME, with the Other National Authorities and with the other state statistical services, the dissemination policy of the Institute as well as the related protocols, and shall explain and discuss it according to the needs of the ONAs.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 12.1: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 12.2: Publication of an integrated dissemination calendar for PEN statistics on INE website

INE shall publish on its website a dissemination calendar of the state statistical operations in which the operations compiled by the Institute are integrated with the statistics published by the ministerial departments.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 12.2: INE

Improvement sub-action 12.3: Establishment of a protocol for monitoring the release calendar of European statistics under the responsibility of the ONAs.

INE shall design a monitoring protocol that analyses the date and time of release of the statistical operations of the ONAs, with a record of the incidents in the release, in accordance with the dissemination calendar of the state statistical operations.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 12.3: INE

13. Recommendation

INE should publish the response burden of all surveys on its website and include it in the National Statistical Plan. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 9.2)

Current situation:

INE regularly monitors response burden. In recent years, INE has reduced the response burden imposed by several surveys, while maintaining full compliance with EU regulations. This important information is, at present, not easily accessible to users.

Improvement sub-action 13.1: Develop a complete methodology for indicators that measure the response burden of the data suppliers of the surveys carried out by INE.

INE will develop a detailed methodology to compute indicators measuring different aspects of the response burden for all surveys within the National Statistical Plan conducted by INE.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 13.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 13.2: Present this methodology to Other National Authorities (ONAs) at the CIME to agree on action plans for its adaptation and application to statistical operations within the National Statistical Plan (PEN).

The preceding methodology will be presented to Other National Authorities (ONAs) at the CIME in order to further adapt it to their production conditions, providing support to the extent feasible in the statistical operations within the National Statistical Plan (PEN) under their responsibility. Action plans for the application in these operations will be promoted through the CIME.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 13.2: INE and CIME

Improvement sub-action 13.3: Prepare the formats with the indicators that will be published periodically on INE's website.

The preceding full-fledged methodology will be applied to surveys of the National Statistical Plan, thus producing response burden indicators to be published periodically. INE will conduct the necessary production tasks to disseminate this information.

Deadline: Q2 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 13.3: INE

14. Recommendation

INE should regularly inform users on updates of methodological information and improve the information about the mechanisms and procedures for coordinating methodological issues in the Spanish statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.4, 8.4 and 15.1)

Current situation:

The peer review team noted that INE has produced standardised methodological reports and metadata for users. There are also instruments for coordinating the Spanish statistical system in terms of methodological issues. However, there might be a certain lack of clarity on these two issues. It was reported to the peer review team that the information on updates of methodological reports is not visible to users. In addition, the mechanisms for coordinating methodological issues in the Spanish statistical system could benefit from more transparency.

Improvement sub-action 14.1: Methodological updates announcements

When there are important methodological changes in a statistical operation, in addition to the methodological note included in a press release and the information published on the website, announcements will be made on social networks so that the news reach a bigger audience.

Deadline: Q4 2023

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 14.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 14.2: Visualisation of the date for methodological updates at INE

The information for users regarding methodological changes will be improved by making the date of the latest update of the methodological notes more visible for the users on the web.

Deadline: Q4 2023

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 14.2: INE

Improvement sub-action 14.3: Visualisation of the date for methodological updates at ONAs

Coordination actions with the ONAs will be carried out through the CIME to also incorporate their update dates of the methodological notes on the web.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 14.3: INE and ONAs

Improvement sub-action 14.4: Deployment of subscription services

Subscription services will be deployed for users by statistical domain. These services will notify interested users of, among other news, the updating of methodological notes.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 14.4: INE

<p>15. Recommendation</p> <p>INE should introduce systematic quality audits of statistical products involving external experts as appropriate. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicators 4.3 and 4.4)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>The quality management system of INE is based on a set of different instruments which are designed to serve as a framework for guaranteeing quality. This includes a policy for approving and following up on standards for statistical work, which cover classifications, concepts and the European SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), and a system for the continuous specification and monitoring of quality indicators.</p> <p>INE has endeavoured to check the quality of important statistical products such as the Consumer Price Index, the Life Conditions Survey, Death Statistics according to cause of death, and Statistics on R&D Activities and on Higher Education. This has been accomplished through assessments by external experts in the context of meetings of the Spanish Society of Statistics and Operations Research, as well as analyses carried out by members of the High Council of Statistics (CSE, in Spanish). There is high awareness about quality, which is also recognised by users. On the other hand, the peer review team learned that there are no systematic reviews of the quality of processes. According to the team, the existence of such reviews and the inclusion of external experts in such assessments is seen as essential in order to be compliant with the ES CoP.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 15.1: Procedures for expert identification and audit process</p> <p>INE will elaborate the procedures to identify external experts for each statistical domain and to establish the audit process.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2024</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 15.1: INE</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 15.2: Preparation of work for conducting the audits.</p> <p>INE will prepare the methodology for conducting the audit process and define criteria for selecting statistical processes for the audit.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q2 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 15.2: INE</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 15.3: Implementation of the audit process</p> <p>The audit process will be conducted according to the arranged design, plan, and preparation.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q3 2027</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 15.4: Reporting to INE staff about the outcome of the audit process</p> <p>The outcome of the audit process will be communicated internally to INE management for appropriate action.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 15.4: INE</p>

16. Recommendation

INE should guarantee that users have adequate possibilities to provide feedback on a regular basis. The feedback should be analysed and the findings used to develop plans to improve the quality of its products and the usability of its outputs. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 11.3 and 4.3)

Current situation:

INE has conducted user satisfaction surveys at three-year intervals, the most recent having taken place in 2019. Follow-up actions were defined. The peer review team learned that it is not clear whether INE will continue this practice. However, the opinions of users and possible follow-up actions are an important stimulus for improving the quality and dissemination of statistical products.

Improvement sub-action 16.1: Procedures for User Group Identification

INE will elaborate procedures for the identification of user groups.

Deadline: Q2 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 16.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 16.2: Design of a User Satisfaction Survey

The User Committee will design a User Satisfaction Survey for statistical operations of the National Statistical Plan (PEN, in Spanish) to ensure review on a regular basis.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 16.2: INE

Improvement sub-action 16.3: Conducting the User Satisfaction Survey

The User Committee will conduct the User Satisfaction Survey every 36 months.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 16.3: INE

Improvement sub-action 16.4: Analysis of the User Satisfaction Survey

The User Committee will analyse the outcomes of the User Satisfaction Survey and will formulate, promote and develop improvement actions to be included in the PEN.

Deadline: Q2 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 16.4: INE

17. Recommendation

INE should extend the successful approach to the coordination of seasonal adjustment activity to other methodological areas. Expertise from the methodology unit should be applied to all topics relevant for statistical methodology. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.1).

Current situation:

According to the peer review team, there is a high degree of expertise regarding methodological knowledge within INE and a specialised department anchored in its organisation guarantees that support is provided whenever consulting is needed.

There is a specialised working group on seasonal adjustment providing guidelines and standardised approaches on this important issue to relevant staff in the office. The methodology unit receives some questions about different methodological topics when statistical domain experts find a new problem that requires a complex solution. However, in most cases the statistical domains experts decide to solve themselves some other problems.

Improvement sub-action 17.1: Creation of the Committee for Statistical Methods

INE, through its Executive Board, will create a Committee for Statistical Methods and its functioning rules, which will be coordinated by the Subdirectorate-General for Methodology and Sampling Design and will be composed of representatives of each working unit at INE. The functions of this committee will be focused on assessing and managing methodological enquiries (not in resolving them).

Deadline: Q4 2023

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 17.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 17.2: Creation of communication protocols with the Committee for Statistical Methods

INE will establish communication protocols regarding methodological enquiries, through which all working units will be able to submit their methodological consultations.

The Committee will analyse the consultations, identifying and proposing solutions to solve the enquiries (e.g. assigning the enquiry to an existing working group, creating a new working group, expanding functions of an existing working group).

Deadline: Q4 2023

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 17.2: INE

Improvement sub-action 17.3: Creation of new working groups

The structure of these working groups is based on the “Hub and Spoke” model. The core composition (Hub) will pivot upon the Subdirectorate-General for Methodology and Sampling Design and Subdirectorate-General for Information and Communications Technologies and any other subdirectorate in charge of cross-cutting statistical business functions. This will be complemented with domain experts (Spokes) involved in the methodological issues at stake.

Deadline: Q4 2023

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 17.3: INE

Improvement sub-action 17.4: Solutions of methodological enquiries

The goal of each working group is to develop standard methodology, to implement this in institutional software, and to provide guidelines (in accordance with the ESS guidelines, if appropriate). The Committee will provide methodological and technical support for and training on the specific issues at stake.

Deadline: Q4 2023
Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 17.4: INE
Improvement sub-action 17.5: Monitoring indicators The Committee will regularly provide indicators to evaluate its performance, such as the number of enquiries received/solved, the number of new working groups, etc.
Deadline: Q4 2024
Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 17.5: INE

<p>18. Recommendation</p> <p>INE should complete the description of all processes of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model and develop quality guidelines for all its level and phases. (Improvement related: ES CoP, indicators 8.4 and 4.2)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>Since the second round of Peer Reviews in the ESS, INE adopted the GSBPM as a production standard and started to provide standardised descriptions of production activities for most of their processes, according to an approved national adaptation of this standard developing the third level of the international version. A great deal of these activities has been documented accordingly, but some are still missing. These descriptions pave the way for identifying standard production elements (input/output data, input parameters, statistical processes, and metrics indicators) to feed an institutional metadata system and a metadata-driven production process.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.1: Organisation and planning of the development of quality guidelines for GSBPM production activities.</p> <p>Decomposed in two sub-actions (see below)</p>
<p>Deadline: Q3 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.1: INE</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.1.1: Creation of working group</p> <p>INE will create an internal working group to coordinate, organise, and prioritise actions regarding the development of quality guidelines for GSBPM production activities.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.1.1: INE</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.1.2: Selection of prioritised GSBPM activities</p> <p>INE will identify and prioritise GSBPM production activities at an institutional level for the development of their quality guidelines.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q2 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.1.2: INE</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.2: Completion of GSBPM descriptions</p> <p>INE will complete the descriptions of the remaining GSBPM production activities.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.2: INE</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.3: Development of quality guidelines</p> <p>INE will develop quality guidelines for identified and prioritised GSBPM production activities.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.3: INE</p>

19. Recommendation

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation, in close cooperation with INE, should amend existing legislation or introduce new legal provisions for applying European and national statistical classifications in administrative data where appropriate. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.1 and 2.2)

Current situation:

Some administrative data are not suitable for use for statistical purposes due to the use of non-statistical classifications. As a consequence, some additional tasks have to be carried out by INE and Other National Authorities to make these data usable for statistical purposes. To make these administrative data more suitable for statistical purposes, statistical classifications should be applied where appropriate. In this respect, legislative change may be required.

Improvement sub-action 19.1: Review and analysis of the Inventory of Administrative Sources

INE will review and analyse the Inventory of Administrative Sources to determine exhaustively which statistical classifications are being used in each administrative register susceptible to statistical use. Once the complete results of the Inventory of Administrative Sources statistical operation are available, INE will review the administrative sources used by the statistical operations to check whether the design of the registers conforms to the statistical standard.

Deadline: Q2 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 19.2: Approval and adoption of CNAE-2025.

INE will promote the necessary legislative modifications for the adoption of CNAE-2025. INE shall carry out the necessary legislative changes so that the National Classification of Economic Activities 2024 is the only classification system used. Among these measures, the development and approval of the Royal Decree for the adoption of CNAE 2025 is noteworthy.

Deadline: Q2 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.2: INE and METD

Improvement sub-action 19.3: Implementation of the CNAE 2025 in the administrative registers that include economic activity as a classification variable.

INE shall take all necessary measures so that the administrative registers that include economic activity as a classification variable are adjusted to the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE-2025). These measures will be aimed at supporting the large holders of economic activity registers, mainly the Social Security Ministry and the National Tax Agency, and may be associated with legislative changes, if necessary.

Measures will include presentation at the CIME, meetings with owners of major registers and preparation of coding support.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.3: INE, MISM and AEAT

Improvement sub-action 19.4: Legislative changes, if necessary, for the adoption of the remaining national and European classifications in all administrative registers.

Once action 19.1 has been completed, the necessary legislative changes will be proposed to bring the administrative registers used for statistical purposes into line with the harmonised classification systems.

Deadline: Q2 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.4: INE and METD

Improvement sub-action 19.5: Conversion into legislative acts by the competent authority of the legislative changes proposed by INE.

The METD will submit legislative changes to the appropriate bodies for approval and establishment as legislative acts.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.5: METD

20. Recommendation

INE and administrative data holders should create a system for providing feedback about data quality issues. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.7)

Current situation:

INE makes constant efforts to improve the accessibility and usability of administrative data. Contacts are fostered and, when necessary, there are efforts to sign adequate agreements. However, there is no systematic procedure to give feedback to holders of administrative data on quality issues in their administrative data.

Improvement sub-action 20.1: Establishment of quality indicators for administrative records.

INE will establish indicators to assess the quality of the administrative registers used as input for its statistical operations.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 20.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 20.2: Establishment of a protocol between INE and administrative data holders for communicating data quality issues.

INE shall design a communication protocol with the holders of the administrative registers, through which questions and issues related to the quality of data used as input for its statistical operations are transmitted.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 20.2: INE and CIME

21. Recommendation

INE and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation should amend the relevant legal provisions in order to make it mandatory for holders of administrative records and registers, which are or may be used for statistical purposes, to inform INE about the specifications of and planned changes to the registers. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 2.2 and 8.7)

Current situation:

The Spanish Statistical System intensively uses the administrative data held in a range of administrative registers or generated by other holders of administrative records. Nevertheless, to make administrative data more suitable for statistical purposes, the statistical authorities should be involved from the beginning when administrative registers and other sources are designed, modified or discontinued. There is no specific legislation on the obligation to consult the statistical authorities.

The current National Statistical Plan (PEN 2021-2024) includes a strategic line on updating and adapting legal regulations on statistical matters to include the aspects mentioned in the recommendation, which has materialised in the approval of the amendment to the Law on the Public Statistical Function. However, further regulatory developments are needed, as legal provisions need to be established for the holders of administrative registers to allow access to the registers and to detail the transfer of such registers for statistical purposes, while ensuring that INE will be informed by the holders of administrative-registers in advance on the creation, modification and deletion of administrative registers for their potential statistical use.

Improvement sub-action 21.1: Amendments to the Law on the Public Statistical Function

INE will prepare amendments to the Law on the Public Statistical Function aimed at making it compulsory for the holders of administrative registers that are subject to statistical use, to inform INE of the specifications and changes envisaged in the registers which they own.

Deadline: Q4 2022

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 21.1: INE

Improvement sub-action 21.2: Regulatory development of the Law on the Public Statistical Function with regard to INE's prior report on projects for the creation, suppression or modification of administrative registers.

INE shall take the necessary measures to take its participation in projects for the creation, suppression or modification of administrative registers effective, including the regulatory developments of the LFEP that are necessary for this purpose.

These measures would be:

1. The identification of registers suitable for statistical use.
2. The creation of working groups with the holders of these registers.
3. If necessary, the preparation of the legislative aspects to facilitate their statistical use.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 21.2: INE