



Planning

- ✓ The preparation of these demographic censuses started in 1997 with a process that ended with the elaboration of a draft project at the end of 1998.
This draft was distributed among statistical institutes from autonomous communities whose suggestions were elaborated into the draft project.
- ✓ The draft project was given maximal dissemination among potential users of the census information so that they could contribute to the content of the questions. The provision for suggestions was made available, even by means of email.
- ✓ The definitive project and a document of the proposals received, its advantages and disadvantages and a justification of the decisions received came from the analysis of these contributions.
- ✓ Finally, we counted on the experience provided by two pilot studies that facilitated different aspects of the operation and especially, the functioning of collection instruments (questionnaires and survey notebooks for the census agents).

Collection of the information

- More than 35,000 census agents carried out the information collection operation. Also integrated into this operation are the dwellings census and buildings census with just one route for all demographic censuses.
- Over a period of three months, census agents went all over the country, visiting every type of family dwelling, including caves, huts, caravans...; as well as group dwellings and old peoples homes and convents.
- They handed out questionnaires in the different state languages in approximately 14 million households and obtained data from approximately 41 million persons.
- The field structure was based on regional offices (472 in total) with around 950 officials assisted by other auxiliary officials and in area offices, each one of them responsible for a group official (around 5,700 in total). The census agents depended on group officials.
- The whole process was supported by a free telephone service that dealt with queries in all state languages and various foreign languages.



This is how they carried out the censuses 2001



The questionnaires

- For the first time in the history of censuses these were carried out by taking advantage of information contained in the municipal inhabitants register. This innovation facilitated using personalised questionnaires by facilitating collaboration of citizens and making the collection more useful and quicker.
- The bilingual nature of some areas and the personalisation of occupation and activity tables by household strata generated a large variety of questionnaire models of each type.
- Unlike many countries in which questions are asked about religion, race, health, union affiliation or income, with very good results, questions which - due to their subject could have affected citizens sensibility - were avoided.

To compile responses the personalised registry form was also used **apart** from the different questionnaires.

The **housing questionnaire** facilitated getting to know the characteristics and differences that they presented.

The **household questionnaire** directed at all persons who shared the same domicile, dealt with the relationships between inhabitants of the dwellings and generally, questions that all residents had to respond to.

The **individual model** was destined only to persons over 15 who were studying or working and their main objective was to obtain data related to transport and the labour market.

This is how they carried out the censuses 2001



More than 70 million documents were personalised, collected and scanned. 
A logistic challenge

This is how they carried out the censuses 2001

Internet censuses

- One of the novelties of the population census was the possibility of filling it in by Internet, offered to all those persons previously registered in the dwelling where they resided. With this initiative, Spain was the first country in the world which facilitated generally filling in the census by means of Internet.
- The objective was to facilitate responding to the questionnaire easily and in complete confidentiality. Therefore, some authentication mechanisms were established which ensured that each citizen filled in the household questionnaire and that only an electronic signature in the case of error or omission in the printed data was necessary.
- Apart from Spanish and the co-official languages from bilingual autonomous communities, the option of being able to fill it in in some foreign languages (English, French, German and Arabic) was made possible.
- The system was adapted moreover, in order to facilitate access to disabled persons.

Computerised treatment

- ✓ The computerised treatment used was heavily conditioned by the enormous volume of the information to process. In this way, in order to be able to offer the results in the shortest time possible, more advanced computerised techniques were used in the treatment of the questionnaires.
- ✓ In the first place, the capture of the information collected was carried out by means of optical reader by using high performance scanners capable of reading more than one questionnaire per second.
- ✓ Consequently, automatic recognition techniques were applied to responses scanned in all questionnaires which even led to interpreting the literal manuscripts.
- ✓ The speed of the capture facilitated taking the first census result - population figures - in July 2002, just a few months after the collection finished.
- ✓ Finally, the filtering, coding and imputation treatments necessary in order to - in the first place - disseminate a preview of results in December 2002, were applied; in the second place, to produce the final files.
- ✓ In February 2004, based on these files, the dissemination of definitive results started, less than two years after having finished the collection of the enormous quantity of information involved in some censuses.