

19 April 2024

Economically Active Population Survey (EAPS) Population base change in EPA estimates Revised Series 2021-2023

Main results

- The EPA has included the figures from the 2021 Population and Housing Census in its estimates from 2021 to 2023.
- In the fourth quarter of 2023, the new census data increased the population residing in family households by 337,600 people. Consequently, the total number of employed individuals increased by 142,800 compared to the estimate based on the previous population base, and the number of unemployed individuals increased by an additional 30,300 people.
- The unemployment rate was 11.80% in the fourth quarter of 2023 with the new population base, four hundredths higher than in the previous estimate.

More information

- [EPA Changes 2021](#)
- [Detailed results](#)

The change in population base in the EPA involves the incorporation and updating of population and housing series derived from the 2021 Population and Housing Census, replacing those that have been used until now based on the 2011 census. This entails the revision of the weighting factors of the survey, which are calculated based on the mentioned populations, from the first quarter of 2021.

Today, the INE is communicating the methodology of this incorporation, the differences between the new data and the previous ones, and is publishing on its website the details of the quarterly retrospective series from 2021 to 2023, as well as the corresponding anonymised microdata files. The EPA for the first quarter of 2024, which will be published on 26 April with new populations, will be comparable with the data from these new series.

The INE announced this change in population base in the EPA estimates on 26 January, as established by the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Revision of series from 2021: a habitual and mandatory procedure

The 2021 Census was entirely conducted from administrative sources and its publication was completed in June 2023.

The publication of new population figures necessitates a review of household survey data, which are based on these population totals. This is a habitual procedure, planned in the methodology of the survey and recommended by the European Union Statistical Office (Eurostat). Additionally, it is not exclusive to the EPA. It is common to all household surveys in almost every EU country and is conducted every decade.

In the case of Spain, with the implementation of the new annual censuses, these decennial updates to the EPA will no longer be necessary in the future.

On previous occasions, the EPA revision necessitated reconstructing series for more than a decade (in 2014, retrospective revisions were made back to 2001). But given that the 2021 census has not introduced

significant changes in the 2011-2021 period, it was not necessary to revise data beyond the first quarter of 2021 on this occasion.

Therefore, the decision was made to maintain population figures in the EPA until 2020, incorporating the new census base from 2021. As this is a continuous quarterly survey - which also provides annual averages - the change was made in the first quarter of the year to align with the calendar year.

In this case, a small adjustment was made to the calibration of factors, grouping household sizes of *four and five and more* into *four and more*, which allows for more robust estimates, avoiding volatility in certain cases.

Difference in EPA population and housing estimates

The data obtained for the fourth quarter of 2023, about the population in family households according to the new series based on the 2021 census, increased the population by 337,600 people compared to the previously used estimates.

The increase in ages 16 to 64 was 259,200. By nationality, 78,800 are Spanish and 180,400 are foreigners.

For the group aged 65 and older, Spaniards increased by 145,000 people, while foreigners decreased by 2,000.

Lastly, the number of individuals under 16 years old experienced a decrease of 64,600 people with the new base. In the case of Spanish people in this age range, the decrease is more pronounced (109,600 fewer).

Population in family dwellings. Fourth quarter of 2023

Thousands of persons

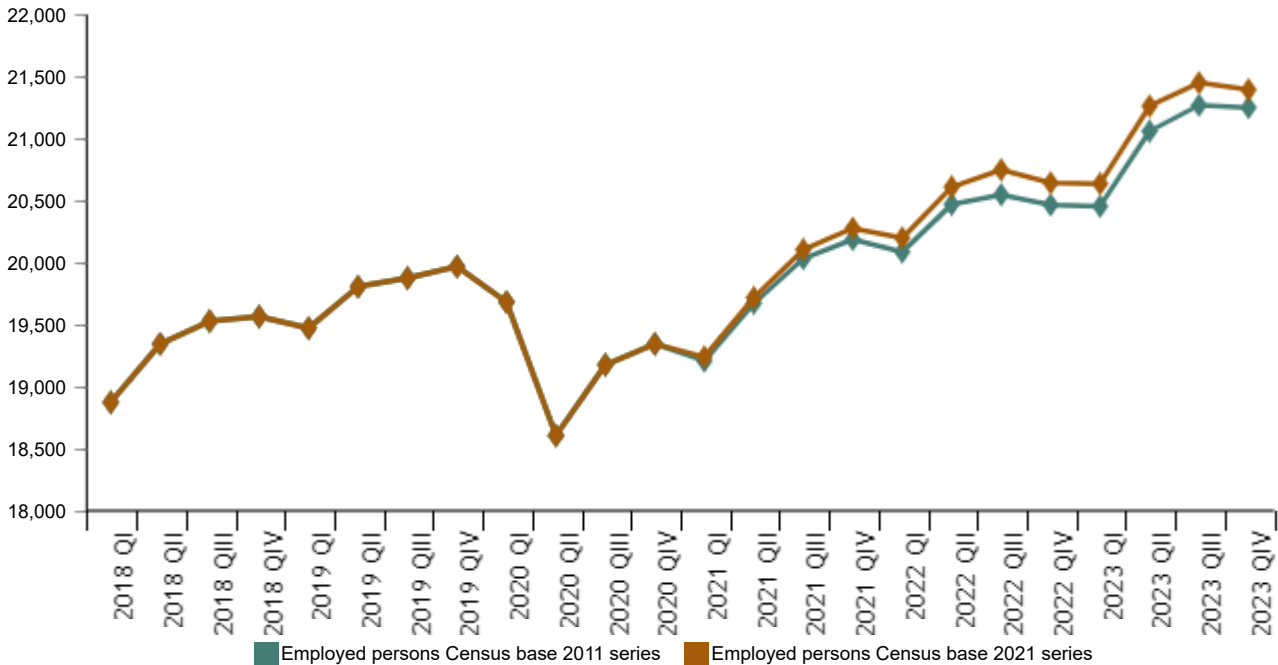
		Census base 2011 series	Census base 2021 series	Difference (2021-2011)	Percentage
Total population	Total Nationality	47,848.4	48,186.0	337.6	0.71
	Spaniards	41,686.1	41,800.4	114.3	0.27
	Foreign nationals	6,162.3	6,385.7	223.3	3.62
Population aged 16 to 64 years	Total Nationality	31,239.3	31,498.5	259.2	0.83
	Spaniards	26,517.6	26,596.4	78.8	0.30
	Foreign nationals	4,721.7	4,902.1	180.4	3.82
Population aged 65 years and over	Total Nationality	9,579.6	9,722.6	143.0	1.49
	Spaniards	9,035.8	9,180.8	145.0	1.60
	Foreign nationals	543.8	541.8	-2.0	-0.37
Minors under 16 years of age	Total Nationality	7,029.6	6,965.0	-64.6	-0.9
	Spaniards	6,132.8	6,023.2	-109.6	-1.8
	Foreign nationals	896.8	941.8	45.0	5.0

Differences in employment and unemployment

Analysing the main indicators related to activity, employment in the fourth quarter of 2023 stood at 142,800 more employed individuals than the figure previously estimated with the old population series.

Impact of the population changes on employment

Absolute values in thousands



Meanwhile, the employment rate experienced a decrease of 16 hundredths in the fourth quarter of 2023.

Impact of the changes on the employment rate

Percentages

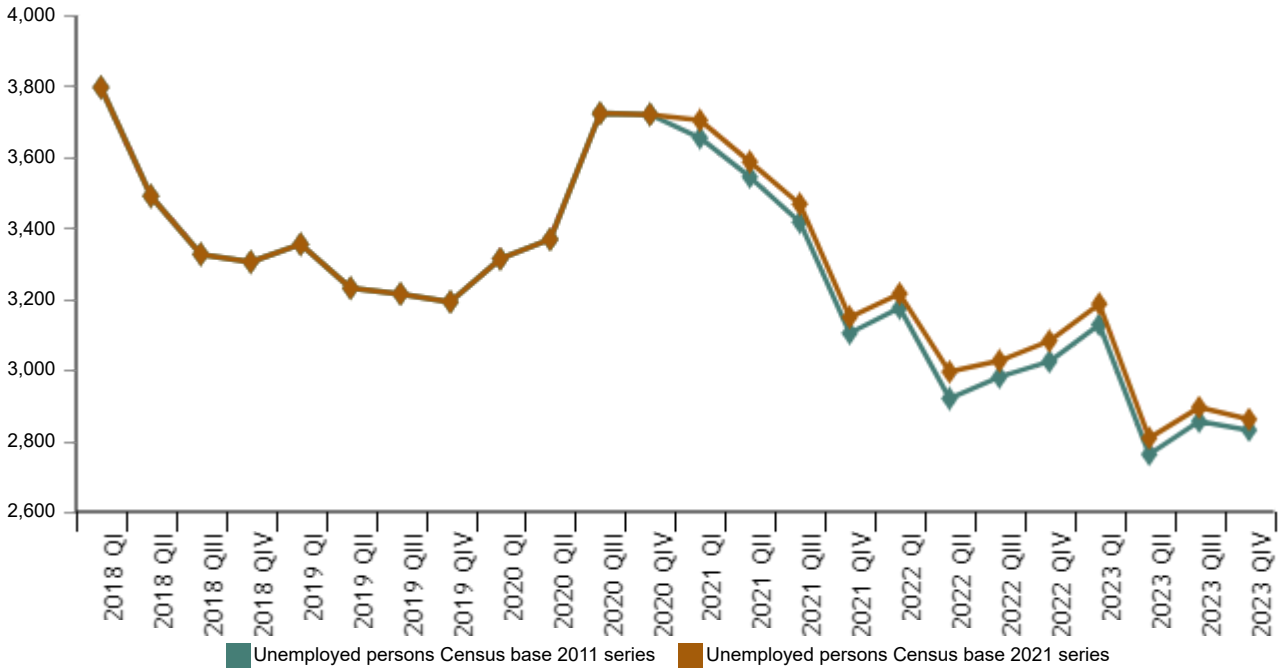


The estimated number of unemployed people in the fourth quarter of 2023 according to the new series was 2,860,800, which is 30,300 more than estimated with the old series.

Current press release at: <https://www.ine.es/dyngs/Presna/en/cbEPA2021.htm>

Impact of the population changes on unemployment

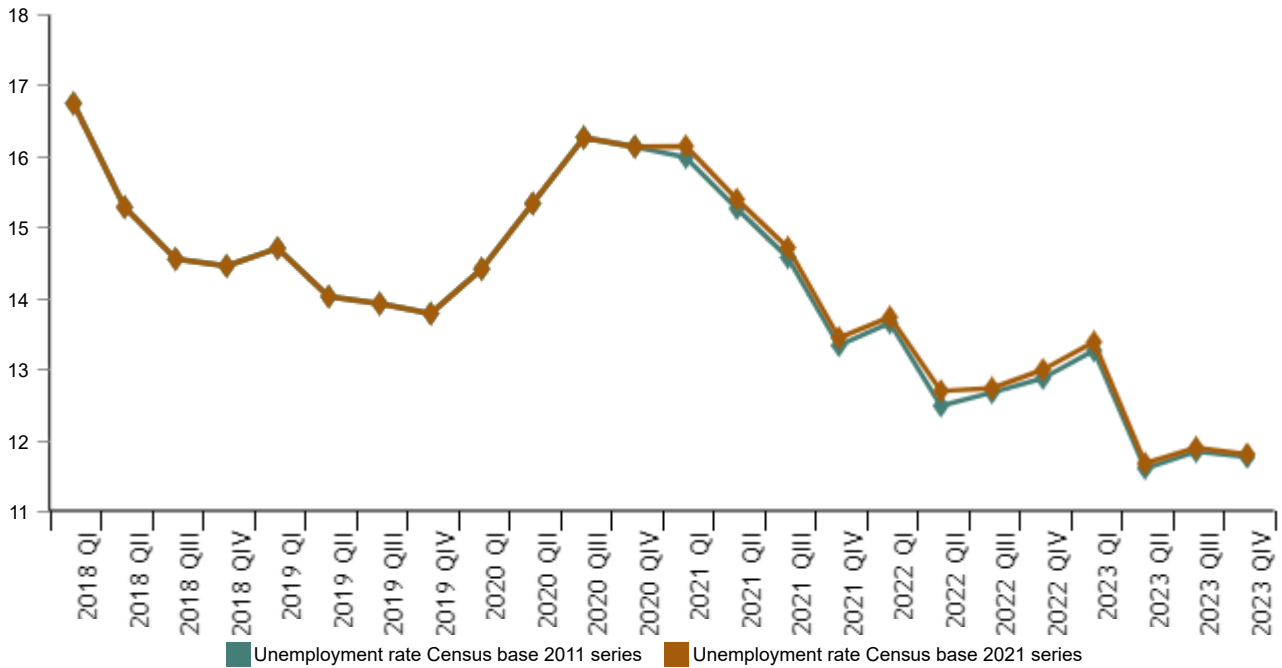
Absolute values in thousands



With the new census data, the unemployment rate barely changes, it increased by fourth hundredths in the fourth quarter of 2023, going from 11.76% to 11.80%.

Impact of the changes on the unemployment rate

Percentages



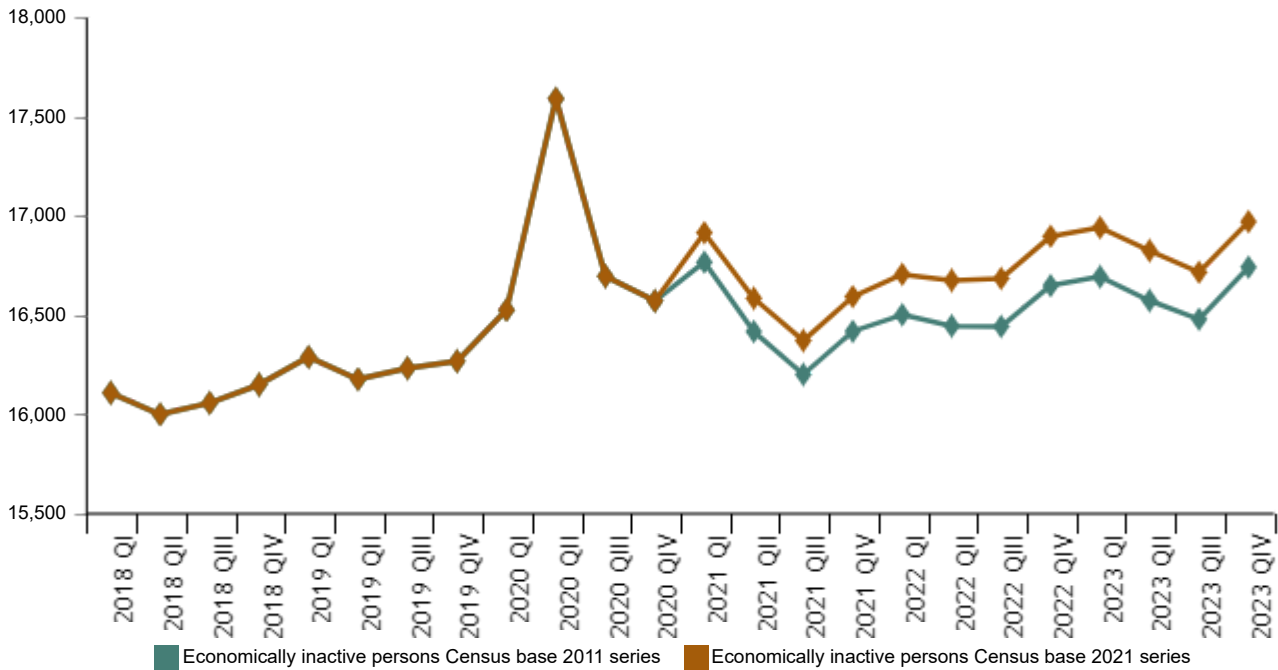
Current press release at: <https://www.ine.es/dyngs/Prensa/en/cbEPA2021.htm>

Inactive individuals and activity rate

In the new population base, the number of inactive individuals was 229,000 more people than what was estimated for the fourth quarter of 2023.

Impact of the population changes on inactivity

Absolute values in thousands



Finally, the activity rate resulting from the new populations derived from the 2021 census decreased by 16 hundredths in the fourth quarter of 2023 compared to the previous data.

Impact of the changes on the economic activity rate

Percentages



Current press release at: <https://www.ine.es/dyngs/Prensa/en/cbEPA2021.htm>

Methodological note

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) has been carried out since 1964. It is a continuous, quarterly research activity addressed to families, whose main purpose is to obtain data on the labour force and its various categories (employed, unemployed), as well as on the population outside the labour market (inactive).

As of the third quarter of 2009, the survey includes an additional sample in Galicia that is collected by the Galician Statistics Institute (IGE), using the same fieldwork system and methodology as the INE.

Type of survey: quarterly continuous survey.

Population scope: population residing in family homes.

Geographical scope: the entire national territory.

Reference period of the results: the quarter.

Reference period of the information: the week before the interview.

Sample size: in 2021, the number of census tracts was 3,822, of which 234 were the additional sample from Galicia. With the change in the arrangement of sections, this number has increased gradually and will reach a total of 5,298 in the first quarter of 2024, of which 288 will be the additional sample from Galicia.

The number of homes selected per section will go from an average of 20 to 14. Currently there are around 55,000 dwellings and 130,000 people.


Sampling type: two-stage stratification in the first stage units, i.e. census tracts. The second-stage units are inhabited family dwellings.

Collection method: personal, telephone and web interviews.

For more information, you can access the [methodology](#) and the [standardized methodological report](#).

INE statistics are produced in accordance with the Code of Good Practice for European Statistics. More information in [Quality at INE and Code of Best Practices](#).

For further information see [INEbase](#)

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