

Residential Variation Statistics

Methodological note

Source and content

The Residential Variation Statistics (RVS) are compiled by the INE, basically from the exploitation of the information regarding registrations and cancellations due to changes of residence registered in the Municipal Registers, with variation dates from the reference year, and reflected in the INE register database up to the month of March (inclusive) of the year following the year of the study.

From these, all internal annual residential variations and part of the external ones are obtained in this way; the former are those produced between the different municipalities in Spain, and the latter are those movements from or to foreign countries.

Other types of registrations and cancellations are also recorded in the Registers, among which we find registrations due to birth and by omission, as well as cancellations due to death, for undue inscription and by expiration. Initially, registrations by omission, cancellations for undue inscription cancellations by expiration do not correspond strictly to migratory movements, but rather, as their names indicate, are "adjustments" of the Population Registry.

Nonetheless, as of the year 2004, the RVS has also included registrations by omission and cancellations for undue inscription of foreign nationals, which are considered to be, respectively, Registrations due to residential variation from abroad in which the country of origin is not shown, and Cancellations due to residential variation bound for another country where the destination country is unknown. This is due to the fact that, unlike what happens with Spaniards who, when they move abroad, should complete Consular Registration, from which the Register of Spaniards Resident Abroad is formed, and on contrasting this with the INE register database, a previous municipality of residence is obtained, and therefore, a municipality of origin of the residential variation, and vice versa, is available; with foreign nationals, this is not possible, and therefore the only way to detect the residential variation is via the statement of the citizen when he/she completes the registration form. If he/she does not state the country of origin, the reason for registration in the Register appears to be by omission, when in reality, it is a matter of a change of residence; regarding Cancellations by residential variation bound for another country, for the same reason, the only way to register the cancellation in the Municipal Register as a change of residence to a foreign country would be when requested to do so by the non-Spanish citizen, which does not occur very often. Therefore, until the year 2006 when Law 7/1985 Regulating the Local Regime Databases, the majority of cancellations of foreigners registered in the Municipal Register were as a result of automatic cancellation procedures undertaken by Municipal Councils, which had an effect as cancellations due to undue inclusion.

Finally, as of 2006, cancellations by expiration have been included. These cancellations arise as a result of the legislative modification introduced by Organic Law 14/2003 on foreign nationals, to Law 7/1985, Regulation of the Basis of Local Regimes, which establishes that those non-community foreign nationals who do not have permanent residence permits, are required to renew their registration every two years. If this renewal does not take place, the City Councils should declare the expiration of the registration.

Internal residential variations, both of Registrations and of Cancellations due to residential variation, when the destination or place of origin is a municipality of Spain, since the movements are the same, the only difference being from the point of view of measuring them. When we find ourselves in registration or destination municipalities, we speak of internal residential variation, while when referring to municipalities of cancellation or of origin, we speak of Cancellation due to residential variation.

The balance by residential variation is the difference between Registration and Cancellation by residential variation, and it always refers to a territory. Internal residential variations or the entire national territory have a balance of zero, therefore the balance by annual residential variation in Spain is the difference between Registrations and Cancellations due to external residential variations.

It is important to point out that annual residential variations in statistics do not refer to the number of persons involved in a residential variation, but to the number variations made, since a citizen might change his/her residence from one municipality to another more than once in a year.

It is also necessary to highlight that the RVS always covers inter-municipal movements. Therefore, although some tables these movements are published, grouped by province or Autonomous Community, it should be borne in mind that a portion of these have their origin and destination in municipalities from the same province or Community, respectively.

The variables that are used are sex, date and place of birth (country, if abroad), nationality and, of course, the origin and destination of the movement.

Compilation and dissemination of results

These traditional INE statistics have experienced significant changes over the years, broadening their coverage, incorporating computerised treatments and changing content and dissemination methods.

Until 1980, only movements inside the country were accounted for, by using the numerical relations that City Councils sent for the annual Review of the Municipal Register. As of said year, coverage was expanded to include entries from abroad, differentiating the part relating to Spaniards, who were possibly returning from a period of emigration, from those corresponding to foreigner nationals, who arrived in Spain with the intention of establishing residence here.

In 1988, RVS documents were implemented and computerised (a single Registration/Cancellation document), based on which a file was obtained with

individualised registers for each change of residence, allowing for greater filtering of the data, and therefore a significant improvement in the quality of the statistics.

In 1996, a new management system was established for Municipal registers, based on the computerisation of all of them and coordination by the INE. The first few years that the system was implemented, the RVS results were obtained directly from the interchanging files that City Councils provided to the INE, without contrasting with the existing database. Since 2001, however, the statistics have been obtained directly from the INE registry base, and for this reason, the municipality of origin may not be the one stated by the citizen, but rather the one that appears in the INE database.

As for the publication of statistical results, the changes have meant substantial improvements, including the name of the operation.

The first publication appeared in 1983, entitled 'Migrations. Results by Autonomous Community', which, besides internal migratory movements, incorporated data on assisted emigration and on resident foreigners in Spain, obtained, respectively, from the Ministry of Labour and from the General Police Directorate. Up until that point, there was no specific publication on migrations, and this data was only disseminated in the Statistical Yearbook of Spain and in the Statistics Bulletin.

In 1985, this publication was changed and the number of results tables and variables crosses in relation to the two previous publications significantly increased. There were further content changes in 1988 and 1992. In 1988, data was introduced by province capital and municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, and in 1992, by place of birth and nationality.

In 1999, this was modified and was then called Residential Variations Statistic, with content similar to the previous publication as for INE data, but eliminating external sources, assisted emigration and foreign nationals resident in Spain.

As of 2002, the foreign emigration chapter was incorporated, bearing in mind cancellations due to change of residence communicated by City Councils, which mainly refer to movements of Spaniards abroad that have been registered in Consular Office Registers. Similarly, some foreign national cancellations are covered, but only to the extent that City councils have knowledge of their return abroad, which occurs in an unknown percentage of cases.

The substantial difference between registered cancellations of Spaniards and of foreign nationals is due to the fact that registry legislation includes communication to Municipal Councils, after coordination by the INE, of the registrations of Spaniards produced in the Consular Office Registers, while for foreigners this is not possible.

As of 2006, cancellations by expiration have been incorporated in the foreign emigration tables, including specific tables for these cancellations as well. Likewise, new tables have been added, with the total domestic and foreign migratory balances, by province and by Autonomous Community. As of 2011, data on residential variation was also published for all the municipalities of Spain.

In 2010, the concepts contained in the publication thus far were (migration, immigration and emigration) were adjusted to others more related to management of Municipal registers.

Main concepts

Residential variations (up until 2010, Migration): Change of residence from one municipality to another, moving abroad or arriving from abroad. Since 2004, the entries and exits of foreign nationals have been incorporated in the foreign migration tables, in which the country of origin or destination is not recorded (registrations by omission and cancellations for undue inscription, respectively, registered in the Municipal Registers).

When the residential variation is between municipalities inside the national territory, we speak of internal residential variation.

Registration due to residential variation (up until 2010, Immigration): Change of residence to a municipality belonging to the geographical scope which is being studied at each moment.

Registration due to internal residential variation: the origin is another municipality within the national territory.

Registration due to residential variation from abroad: the origin is abroad.

Cancellation due to residential variation (up until 2010, Emigration): Change of residence from a municipality belonging to the geographical scope studied.

Cancellation due to internal residential variation: the destination is a municipality within the national territory.

Cancellation due to residential variation bound for a foreign country: the destination is abroad.

Balance due to residential variation (up until 2010, Migratory balance): Difference between the number of Registrations and Cancellations due to residential variation.

Legislation

- Law 7/1985, of 2 April, governing the Bases of the Local Regime, amended by Law 4/1996, of 10 January and Law 14/2003, of 20 November.
- Royal Decree 2612/1996, of 20 December, which modifies the Regulation on Population and Territorial Demarcation of Local Entities approved by Royal Decree 1690/1986 of 11 July.
- Resolution of February 17, 2020, of the Presidency of the National Statistics Institute and the General Directorate of Autonomous and Local Cooperation, by which technical instructions are issued to the City Councils on the management of the Municipal Register.

- Resolution of July 20, 2018, of the Presidency of the National Statistics Institute and of the General Directorate of Autonomous and Local Cooperation, by which technical instructions are issued to the City Councils on the annual review of the Municipal Register and on the procedure for obtaining the proposal of official population figures.

Dissemination plan

The data on residential variations is presented according to the following variables:

- Origin and/or destination of the movement
- Sex
- Nationality
- Place of birth
- Age
- Size of the municipalities of origin and destination
- Relationship between origin and destination

Both domestic and foreign variations are tabulated separately for Spaniards and foreign nationals. Tables are obtained on the following levels: municipal, provincial, Autonomous Community, national and provincial capital.