



<Innovation in statistical products and processes during the Covid-19 pandemic>

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**Abstract:**

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Statistics Offices have had to respond to many challenges in order to maintain statistical production with enough performance so that data produced, notably in the framework of macroeconomic statistics, could be used for a robust policy-making. In this context, some different measures had to be implemented in a prioritized way. At the same time that these changes could initially pose a problem for statistics offices, they were really offering us an opportunity for change, for the modernization of statistical production that had to be addressed. In this sense, it is foreseen that many of these changes will remain after the end of the pandemic as production of Statistics Offices. In addition, work together with other European Statistical System partners and to have the support of Eurostat in this journey must be considered as a strength that has allowed to achieve the initial goal of maintaining the statistical production.

Because of population was locked-down at the beginning of the pandemic, some changes had to be implemented in statistical processes, for instance, investigating new ways for data collection (boosting telephone or internet channels), developing ways to solve the non-ability to take some prices (use of scanner data) or searching ways to help distinguish the voluntary non-response in economic surveys from the one due to the close of the businesses, as a consequence of a bankruptcy or because of government restrictions. In this line, a set of quarterly indicators for business demography was developed in 2020. In addition, web-scraping tools were also used, for instance in the framework of tourism statistics.

At the same time, INE innovated in new products to satisfy new demands, experimenting with public and private new data sources to offer statistics of higher frequency (daily, weekly) and very low delay or re-using different data not used to date. Indeed, one the lessons learned from the pandemic was that to analyse the short-term macroeconomics, in order to have the ability to react quickly with an effective decision making, basic statistic data have to be available as quickly as possible. INE has been very proactive in this line, producing some experimental statistics to help, on one hand macroeconomic statisticians in their estimates, in a context of deep structural changes. In this vein, daily data from Tax Agency turnover of companies or data of purchases with debit and credit cards were used to obtain quick estimates of quarterly GDP. But also to help society to better understand the social and economic performance in a period of pandemic, estimates from daily population movements were disseminated using data from Mobile Operators. It is also worth to say that private companies understood they had to collaborate with INE attending their social responsibility and due to this, statisticians have shown that it is possible to set partnerships with private companies for using their data for compiling new statistics.

Finally, but not less important, communication with our users was enhanced during pandemic. In this sense and, in addition to the setting up of a dashboard with the main indicators related with pandemic for helping users (media, broader public) to follow the social

and economic performance at a glance, in the case of the dissemination of macroeconomic statistics, the current press releases were accompanied with specific reports linked to the pandemic effects on them. In this line, the evolution of a COVID goods and services basket for CPI or the analysis of the government employment furlough schemes and its effects on national accounts are two examples.

**Keywords:**

<Macroeconomics>; <Experimental statistics>; <Communication>; <pandemic>