

9 October 2026

Short-term statistics on business demography

First and second quarter 2026



Main results

- At the start of the first quarter of 2026, 9.5% of employer legal units and 7.7% of self-employed workers ceased their activity by the end of the following quarter.
- 65.5% of active employer legal units were more than five years old at the onset of 2026.
- 13.6% of the employer legal units and 5.9% of the self-employed workers who deregistered in the first quarter reactivated in the second.

More information

- [Detailed results](#)
- [Tables annex](#)

The Short-term Business Demographics is an experimental statistic based on the methodology of the Central Business Directory (DIRCE in its Spanish initials) and its economic coverage is identical to that of the DIRCE. It provides quarterly information on the creation, survival, reactivation, and closure of legal entities and self-employed workers, as well as on their main economic and socio-demographic characteristics. The methodology was revised in 2026 to adapt it to the current economic reality and information needs.

The analysis focuses on two groups: employer legal units and self-employed workers. The information it uses comes from Social Security records, supplemented with data from the DIRCE and the Municipal Register. The analysis focuses on nearly 1.2 million employer legal units and more than 3.1 million self-employed workers registered with Social Security at the beginning of the year 2026.

Quarterly flows of companies

At the beginning of 2026, there were 1,203,242 employer legal units in Spain. At the end of the first quarter, the net growth rate (difference between registrations and deregistrations relative to the total) was 0.7%. At the close of the second quarter, it was 1.5%.

Regarding employment, 5.2% of the units lost their entire workforce during the first quarter. However, 13.6% of these companies reactivated by rehiring and closing the second quarter with employees.

Employer legal units. Year 2026

Quarters	Entries	Remainings	Re-entries	Exits
First quarter	74,755	1,137,295		65,947
Second quarter	70,597	1,151,809	8,952	60,241

Quarterly flows of self-employed workers

At the beginning of 2026, there were 3,152,930 self-employed workers. This figure increased by 0.1% at the end of the first quarter and by a further 0.9% at the end of the second quarter.

Meanwhile, 5.9% of the 148,005 self-employed workers who deregistered in the first quarter re-registered at the end of the second (reactivations).

Self-employed workers. Year 2026

Quarters	Entries	Remainings	Re-entries	Exits
First quarter	151,608	3,004,925		148,005
Second quarter	127,524	3,050,767	8,698	105,766

Survival for employer legal units

Survival indicators are calculated as a percentage of the total number of units remaining at the end of each quarter relative to the initial number in the cohort.

After the first two quarters of 2026, the cohort of employer legal units as of 1 January had lost more than 9.0% of its members.

The most critical quarter was the first, with a loss of 5.5% of cohort member (94.5% of the units survived). In the second quarter, the rate of losses slowed.

Survival of employer legal units

Cohorts	Total units	Monitoring quarters	
		Quarter 1(%)	Quarter 2(%)
1 January 2026	1,203,242	94.5	90.6
1 April 2026	1,212,050	95.0	

Size and age of the employer legal units

A high correlation is observed between the initial number of employees and the probability of survival.

Thus, legal units with fewer than six employees showed the lowest indicators (93.0% in the first quarter and 88.1% in the second). Conversely, units with more than 250 employees returned rates above 99.0%.

Survival of employer legal units by wage earner stratum

Size classes	Cohorts 1 January 2026	Survivals First quarter (1 April 2026)	Survivals Second quarter (1 July 2026)
		%	%
Total	1,203,242	94.5	90.6
1 to 5 employees	872,833	93.0	88.1
6 to 9 employees	132,687	98.1	95.9
10 to 99 employees	181,653	98.9	97.6
100 to 249 employees	10,201	99.5	99.2
250 and more employees	5,868	99.7	99.4

Regarding age, the group that were over five years in existence had the best performance in the first two quarters of 2026, with survival rates exceeding 96.0%. On the contrary, the younger units (less than five years in existence) experienced the greatest relative losses in cohort members, with survival rates of 92.0% or lower.

Sex and age of self-employed workers

By sex, 62.3% of the self-employed workers in the cohort as of 1 January 2026 were men and 37.7% were women. By age, it is worth highlighting the representation of women in the 30 to 39 age group, where they accounted for 41.6% of the total.

Self-employed workers according to sex and age range

The cohort as of 1 January 2026

Size classes	Both genders	Men(%)	Women(%)
Total	3,152,930	62.3	37.7
Less than 30 years	222,515	61.9	38.1
30 to 39 years	540,771	58.4	41.6
40 to 49 years	899,258	61.7	38.3
50 to 59 years	949,089	63.5	36.5
60 and more years	541,297	65.1	34.9

Survival of self-employed workers

The cohort of self-employed workers as of 1 January 2026 lost 7.7% of its members after two quarters. The first quarter was, once again, the most critical, accounting for a 4.7% loss.

Survival of self-employed workers

Cohorts	Total units	Monitoring quarters	
		Quarter 1(%)	Quarter 2(%)
1 January 2026	3,152,930	95.3	92.4
1 April 2026	3,156,533	96.7	

By sex, survival rates were slightly higher in men.

Survival of self-employed workers by sex

Cohorts	Classification by longevity	Total units	Monitoring quarters	
			Quarter 1(%)	Quarter 2(%)
1 January 2026	Total	3,152,930	95.3	92.4
	Men	1,963,343	95.5	92.8
	Women	1,189,587	95.0	91.6
1 April 2026	Total	3,156,533	96.7	
	Men	1,963,778	96.9	
	Women	1,192,755	96.2	

By age, the 50 to 59 age group showed the best progress. On the contrary, those under 30 years of age experienced the greatest relative losses in numbers.

Survival of self-employed workers by age

Reference cohort 1 January 2026

Age	Cohorts 1 January 2026	Survivals First quarter (1 April 2026)	Survivals Second quarter (1 July 2026)
		%	%
Total	3,152,930	95.3	92.4
Less than 30 years	222,515	91.0	85.5
30 to 39 years	540,771	94.3	90.6
40 to 49 years	899,258	96.1	93.4
50 to 59 years	949,089	96.9	94.8
60 and more years	541,297	94.1	90.7

Results by autonomous communities and cities

The regions with the highest net growth rates of units in the first quarter of 2026 were Illes Balears (6.2%), Andalucía and Cantabria (1.3% each).

By contrast, the País Vasco, the Autonomous City of Melilla (both -0.4%) and Canarias (-0.3%) returned the most negative rates.

Results for the five largest municipalities

If the data from the five largest municipalities in Spain are analysed, the highest percentages of company registrations were recorded in Valencia in the first quarter (6.1%) and in the second (5.4%).

As for self-employed workers, the largest increases were seen in Barcelona in the first quarter (6.0%) and in the second (4.9%).

In contrast, the highest percentages of deregistrations of employer legal units were recorded in Valencia in the first quarter (5.8%) and in Sevilla in the second (5.2%).

Regarding self-employed workers, the highest percentages of deregistrations were recorded in Barcelona in the first quarter (5.4%) and in Valencia, Barcelona, and Madrid in the second quarter (3.6% in all three municipalities).

Data revisions and updates

The data published today are final. All results of this operation are available on [INEbase](#).

Methodological note

The Short-term Business Demographics experimental statistics will henceforth be published quarterly. Today, data is presented for the first two quarters of 2026.

In this operation, the data of employer companies always refer to legal units. "Registrations" are considered to be legal entities that did not provide employment at the beginning of the quarter, have hired workers, and still provide employment at the end of the quarter. Similarly, "Deregistrations" are considered to be legal units providing employment at the beginning of the quarter, but which have stopped providing all employment during the same period.

Therefore, the occurrence of Registration and Deregistrations do not necessarily mean that the legal entity has been established/dissolved or has been involved in any process that involves a redistribution of production factors (merger, absorption, etc.). The employment factor is the determinant in identifying demographic flow.

With regard to self-employed workers, "Registrations" are considered to be those natural persons not registered in the RETA [*Régimen Especial de Trabajadores Autónomos* - Special Regime for Self-Employed Workers] file at the beginning of the quarter and registered in it at the end of the quarter. Similarly, "Deregistrations" are considered to be individuals registered in the RETA file at the beginning of the quarter, but who deregister during the quarter.

The detailed methodology document can be accessed in the [project](#).

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

For further information see [INEbase](#)

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