

# Description of the survey

Outlined below are their most important characteristics. Persons interested in getting to know this in greater detail may consult the following publications from the National Statistics Institute

- *Description of the survey, definitions and instructions for filling in the survey.*
- *Treatment of information.*
- *The socio-economic condition in the Active Population Survey.*
- *Design of the Survey and Evaluation of the quality of the data. Technical report*

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## 1 Objectives

The Active Population Survey (APS) is a continuous survey whose main objective is to get to know economic activity relative to its human component. This is oriented to giving data on the main population categories in relation to the labour market (employed, unemployed, active persons, inactive persons) and to obtaining classifications of these categories according to various variables. It also makes it possible to obtain temporary homogeneous series of results. Finally, given that the definitions and criteria used adjust to the recommendations approved by international institutions who deal with labour issues, this facilitates the comparison with data from other countries.

Detailed results are obtained for the whole country. For Autonomous Communities and provinces information is offered on the main characteristics with the degree of breakdown that the variation coefficient of the estimators permits.

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## 2 Geographical scope

The Active Population Survey (APS) covers the whole country.

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## 3 Population scope

The survey is directed at the population who lives in family dwellings, in other words, those who use the whole year or the majority of the year as a habitual or permanent dwelling. Excluded therefore are so called *group households*, an example of which, are hospitals, hotels, orphanages, prisons, convents, etc. Families who, forming an independent group, reside in these establishments, as may occur with directors of centres, concierges and porters are included however.

However, not all the population who live in group households are excluded. Males who are doing military service, students on internships, nurses in sanatoriums and prisoners in prisons are included in their dwellings of origin, given that their families give information on them. Nevertheless, these categories will result in being underestimated in some cases, whether the links with their families have weakened or because these have not been declared to the interviewer.

In total, the population excluded from the survey represents less than 1% of the total.

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## 4 Reference periods

We will differentiate the following:

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### 4.1 REFERENCE PERIODS OF THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

This is the quarter. The interviews are divided uniformly over this period and the results obtained refer to an average week of the same.

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### 4.2 INFORMATION REFERENCE PERIOD.

As a general rule, the interview is carried out the previous week

(from Monday to Sunday). The answers to the questionnaire questions will therefore always be expressed in relation to this week. Nevertheless, there are questions with special reference periods among which the following are worthy of note:

- the methods of looking for work (question E-1), the peculiarities of the work day (questions D-19 and D-21 to D-25) and those relative to studies which have been followed (question B-4 and after section B) refer to the four weeks previous to the interview.
- availability to work (questions C-7, D-35 and E-5) refers to the fifteen days following the date of the survey.
- the age of the interviewee refers to the age on the last day (Sunday) of the reference week.
- section I and questions 14 and 15 of minors refer to the situation a year ago.
- section J, doing paid work at some point the previous year.

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## 5 Definitions

The definitions are based on recommendations by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) approved at the thirteenth and sixteenth International Work Statistics conference (Geneva 1982 and 1998, respectively).

On the other hand, all the characteristics defined refer to the *national* and not the *domestic* concept given that it is not possible to collect information on the population who work in Spain and live abroad as the survey is directed at the population who live in family dwellings. Included therefore are:

- Spaniards established in Spain.
- Spanish civilians who are abroad for a period less than a year (on the border, temporary, tourists, patients ...).

- non-diplomatic foreign civilians established in Spain for a period greater than a year.

By agreement, they also include:

Spanish students abroad.

- Spanish military and diplomats who work outside Spain.
- the crews of boats and airships used by resident units in Spain.
- Spanish personnel in national scientific bases abroad.

Excluded are:

- foreign civilians located in Spain for a period less than a year.
- Foreign military and diplomats who work as such in Spain.
- personal not resident in Spain who work in foreign scientific bases established in Spain.
- foreign students in Spain.

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### 5.1 ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

This is the set of persons from some determined units who, in a given reference period, supply labour for the production of economic goods and services or who are available and seek to incorporate themselves into the production.

According to whether the reference period is long (twelve months for example) or short (a maximum of a week) a habitual or short term situation is reflected. In the Active Population Survey, given its periodic character, the latter has been selected.

In this survey therefore, the economically active population includes all persons 16 and over who during the reference week (that previous to that which corresponds to doing the interview according to the calendar) meet the necessary conditions for its inclusion among employed or unemployed persons according to what is defined below.

A group which also facilitates results is the **Potential Active Persons** which is the economically active population plus those denominated potentially active which is defined below in the inactive persons section.

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## 5.2 EMPLOYED

These are persons of 16 and over who during the reference week have worked for others (employees) or exerted an activity for themselves, in the said week having been able to:

- work at least an hour for a wage, salary, company benefit or family profit, in cash or in kind.
- with work but without working, in other words, absent from their job but maintaining a strong link with it. The force of this link is determined in agreement with the belief of the interviewer whether or not to incorporate themselves into the company and whether or not they receive any remuneration.

The following situations are noteworthy:

- persons who care for their household without remuneration, those who provide non-remunerated social or charity services and in general, all those who exercise activities without profit gain are not employed. Neither are seasonal or discontinuous workers in the lesser activity period which have not worked in the reference week employed.
- students who work in exchange for remuneration and apprentices who receive remuneration in cash or in kind are employed. Also employed are those suspended due to an employment regulation who think they will be able to reincorporate into the company and, in general, all those who are absent from their job for reasons such as holidays, illness, maternity leave, etc., all of these situations which imply the existence of a strong link with employment.

Employees (or freelance workers) are subdivided into: public sector employees and

private sector employees. The former included both civil servants and labour contractors whether they are fixed or temporary.

Freelance workers are subdivided into: employers (with company in franchise and without company in franchise), businesspersons without employees and independent workers (with company in franchise and without company in franchise), family aid (persons who work without remuneration regulated in the company by a family member with whom they live) and members of cooperatives (these are partners who work in the same, including those of Anonymous Labour Societies).

Employed are classified according to the type of working day by: working full time or part time. The basis for this classification is the declaration by the interviewee, while the limits that cannot be considered part time work are exceeding thirty five hours a week nor can work be considered full time if it does not reach thirty hours a week.

It is considered that employees have a contract or labour relation when their termination is fixed by objective conditions such as the expiry of a date, carrying out a determined task, etc. In another case, it is considered that the contract (or labour relation) is indefinite.

Within occupation there is a special situation that is **subemployment due to insufficiency of hours**. According to ILO recommendations subemployment exists due to insufficiency of hours when the employed persons wants to work more hours (in the same job, in another job or finding a second job), are available to work more hours, during a subsequent period determined in agreement with the national situation and has worked, during the survey reference period, an effective number of hours less than a certain limit which will be defined by virtue of national circumstances.

In the Active Population Survey the following definition is applied: subemployed are those employed who due to insufficiency of hours wish to work more

hours, who are available to work during the two weeks subsequent to the reference week (or who declare that they are not available due to the prenotice period) and whose effective hours worked in the reference week, both in the main job and a possible second job, are less than the weekly hours that employed persons normally work full time in the activity branch in which the subemployed person has their main job.

Together with the recommendations on subemployment due to insufficiency of hours, the ILO has approved some recommendations on **inadequate employment situations**. These are labour situations that limit the capacities and the well being of workers with respect to an alternative employment situation. The ILO mentions three situations of inadequate employment.

- *inadequate employment in relation to competences*, characterised by the inappropriate and insufficient use of professional competences.

- *inadequate employment related to income*, a result of the insufficient organisation of work or low productivity, tools, equipment or insufficient training or deficient infrastructure.

- *inadequate employment related to excessive working hours* related to a situation in which the employed person wishes or looks to work less hours with a consequent reduction of income.

In any case, the ILO indicates that it is necessary to further develop the statistical definitions and methods to describe the previous situations.

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### 5.3 UNEMPLOYED

Unemployed are considered to be all those persons of 16 and over who during the reference week have simultaneously been:

- without work, in other words, who have not had a job working for others or for themselves during the reference week.

- **in search of work**, in other words, that specific measures have been taken to look for a job working for somebody else or that steps have been taken to set oneself up one during the previous month.

- **available to work**, in other words, in conditions to start work within two weeks from Sunday of the reference week.

Unemployed persons are also considered persons 16 and over who during the reference week were without work, available to work and who are not looking for work because they have already found one which they will start after the reference week. Therefore, in this case effective job search criteria are not demanded.

Similarly, persons absent from their job as a consequence of a suspension due to an employment regulation which means that they cannot incorporate themselves into the company, who have looked for work and are available to work are similarly unemployed.

If a person meets the conditions defining an unemployed person they will be considered as such, although this situation may be accounted for with others such as student or housework.

Unemployed persons are divided into: unemployed looking for their first job and unemployed who have worked previously.

Although the formal definition of unemployed has not changed the guidelines from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) from the first quarter of 2002 enters into force regulation 1897/2000 from the European Commission that introduces a new operative definition of unemployment with instructions on how to interpret the active job search.

According to the said regulation, active methods of looking are considered, in the four weeks previous to the survey, the following:

- Being in contact with a public employment office with the objective of finding work, whatever part they play in the initiative (the renewal of registration due to

purely administrative reasons does not constitute active planning).

- Being in contact with a private office (temporary employment office, specialised contracting company, ...) with the objective of finding work.
- Send a candidature directly to employers.
- Search via personal relations and syndicates, ....
- Announce or respond to newspaper advertisements.
- Study employment offers.
- Participate in a test, competition or interview, in the framework of a contracting procedure.
- Look for land, premises or material.
- Take steps to obtain permission, licences or financial resources.

Spain is especially affected by the requirements demanded from persons whose only way of looking is registering in public employment offices. Up to now merely registering as a job seeker, valid for three months, was enough to consider the person unemployed. As of 2002, in agreement with that indicated in the previous list of active measures, it is required to have had contact with the said offices, with the objective of finding work, so that the person is considered unemployed. The objective of finding work is fulfilled if the person registers for the first time after a period of employment or inactivity, is informed about possible job offers or receives a job offer from the office.

The effect that all this has on the total number of unemployed is that some of the persons who before (up to 2001) were considered unemployed are now (from the first quarter of 2002) considered inactive.

The inactive population deals with all persons 16 and over of either sex, unclassified as employed and unemployed nor population counted separately during the reference week.

It covers the following functional categories:

- **persons who care for the household: persons of either sex, without carrying out an economic activity, who are dedicated to maintaining their own households without remuneration; for example, housewives and other family members who care for the household and the children. (Code 3)**
- **students:** persons of one sex or the other who, without exercising any economic activity, receive systematic teaching at any level of education. (Code 1)
- **retired or preretired persons:** persons who have had a previous economic activity and due to their age and other causes have abandoned it, receiving a pension (or some preretirement income) due to their previous activity. (Code 2)
- **persons who receive a pension other than retirement or pre-retirement. (Code 5)**
- **persons who do social work, charity activities on a voluntary basis, etc. (excluding family assistance). (Code 6)**
- **incapacitated to work. (Code 4)**
- **other situation:** persons who, without carrying out any economic activity, receive public or private assistance and all those not included in any of the previous categories. (Code 7)

Given that the interviewees may highlight more than one situation or category of inactivity in the question corresponding to the questionnaire, they may be classified according to the main and secondary inactivity situation.

For the variable *class of inactivity*, given that a person may highlight up to three previously described situations and that the tables of results only may be assigned to just one inactivity situation, their inclusion in a determined category is governed by the following rule: is the person is under 40, the

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#### 5.4 INACTIVE PERSONS

order of preference is 4 > 1 > 5 > 3 > 6 > 7 > 2. If they are 40 or over, the order of preference is 2 > 4 > 1 > 5 > 3 > 6 > 7. For example, if a woman of 43 is a housewife (3), student (1) and who does charity activities (6) it is considered for the effects of tabulation that the main class of inactivity is that of student and that the second class of inactivity is that of households tasks.

With respect to the reasons for inactivity, inactive persons may be subdivided into the following groups:

- Persons *without work and available* to work who are not looking for work for some of the following reasons:

1. believe that they will not find work having never looked.
2. believe that they will not find work having looked previously.

Both cases constitute the group of **downhearted**

3. do not believe that there is anything available in the surrounding area.

4. do not believe that there is anything that adapts to their qualifications.

5. are affected by an employment regulation (this will be those affected who believe they will not be able to reincorporate themselves into the company).

6. do not know where to go to find it.

7. expecting the season of greatest activity.

8. expecting the results of previous negotiations.

9. waiting to restart their freelance activity .

## 6 Schema

The population may be classified in the following way:

- Under 16 years old

		employees (or work for others)	Public sector employees
			Private sector employees
	Employed		employers

Persons who indicate some of these new reasons not to look for work constitute the **potential active persons**. Potential active persons together with active persons form the group known as **potential active persons**.

- Persons *without work, available* to work and not looking for employment because they:

10. are ill or incapacitated.

11. are prevented by personal or family reasons.

12. are studying or training.

13. are retired.

14. do not need to work.

15. other causes different to those highlighted from 1 to 14

- Persons *without work and not available* to work.

### 5.5 POPULATION COUNTED SEPARATELY

Up to the first quarter of 2001, males who were doing military service (or civil replacement service) were considered population counted separately, that is they were not included among active or inactive population independently of whether they worked in the reference week or not.

From 1 January 2002 obligatory military service is abolished for which the said category also disappears from the survey.

- Persons of 16 years or over	Active population	who work for themselves	business people without employees or independent workers
			members of cooperatives
			family assistance
		another situation	
	Unemployed	seeking first job	
		who have worked before	
	Inactive population	students	
		housework	
		retired or preretired persons	
		receive a pension different from retirement or preretirement	
		carried out charity activities	
		incapacitated to work	
		another situation	

## 7 Rates

- Global activity rate.

This is the quotient between the total number of active persons and the total population.

It is calculated for both sexes and for each one of them separately.

- Specific activity rate.

The specific activity rate for a determined age interval is the quotient between the number of active persons of these ages and the population corresponding to the interval.

This is generally calculated for both sexes and for each one of them separately. The age intervals are usually five or ten years.

The specific activity rate for persons 16 and over is what is usually called *activity rate*.

- Unemployment rate.

This is the quotient between the number of unemployed and active persons. It is calculated for both sexes and for each one of them separately.

- Specific unemployment rate.

The specific unemployment rate for a determined age interval is the quotient between the unemployed of ages included between the interval extremes and active persons of the said interval.

Generally calculation is made for both sexes and for each one of them separately. Age intervals are usually five or ten years.

- Specific Potential Activity Rate.

The potential specific activity rate for a determined age interval is the quotient between the potential active persons (active persons + potential active persons) at these ages and the population corresponding to the interval.

## Design of the survey

The Active Population Survey is a continuous statistical investigation framed within the design of the General Population Survey which is a model used by the INE as a framework for surveys directed at

households. The most important aspects of the design are:

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#### 8.1 TYPE OF SAMPLE. STRATIFICATION

The type of sample used is a two stage sample with stratification of the first stage units.

The first stage units are made up by censal sections. The second stage units are main family dwellings and fixed accommodation (shacks, caves, etc.).

Within the second stage units no sub-sample is carried out, collecting all the information from all persons who habitually reside in them.

The censal sections are stratified with double criteria:

*Geographical criterion* (stratification):

The sections are grouped into strata in agreement with the province and type of municipality (according to demographic importance) to which they belong.

*Socio-economic criterion* (substratification):

Within each geographical stratum the censal sections are grouped in substrata to deal with the socioeconomic category of the households located in the section.

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#### 8.2 SIZE OF THE SAMPLE. FIXING

The size of the current sample is 3484 sections, investigating a theoretical number of 18 dwellings by section. The final sample rises to some 65.000 dwellings a quarter.

The distribution of sections by provinces has been carried out by fixed commitment between the uniform and proportional. Within each province fixing between strata has been based on the proportional.

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#### 8.3 SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

The selection of the sample has been carried out in such a way that within each stratum any dwelling has the same probability of being selected, in other words, anti-weighted samples are obtained. For this the sections are selected with probability proportional to the number of family dwellings existing in the same, in agreement with the data from the last census or register. Within each section dwellings are selected by means of the application of a systematic sample with random start.

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#### 8.4 DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE IN TIME. ROTATION SHIFT

Each period of the survey lasts one quarter. The sample is distributed uniformly over this period, for which each one of the sections is visited in one of the 13 weeks of the quarter.

The total sample is divided into three monthly independent subsamples, each one of them representative of the whole population.

In successive quarters, the sections sample remains invariable. However, in order to avoid families collaborating from tiring, the sample of dwellings is renewed partially in a sixth section.

For these purposes, the total sample of sections is divided into six groups, that are known as **rotating groups** renewing each quarter dwellings from the sections that belong to a certain shift.

Therefore a selected dwelling remains in the sample and is interviewed over six consecutive quarters.

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#### 8.5 ESTIMATORS

Ratio estimators are used, taking the demographic population projections elaborated each quarter by the INE as a variable.

From the first quarter of 2002 **Reweighting techniques** are applied to the estimators



with the object of adjusting the estimates of the survey to the information coming from external sources.

This technique consists of modifying the original elevation factors deduced from the design, in agreement with the following conditions: in the first place, the population of 16 years and over estimated by sex and age group in each Autonomous Community and this same population in each province, must coincide in both cases with the corresponding population projections, in other words estimated population figures coincide with the real ones. In the second place, it must be verified that the elevation factors variation reweighted with respect to the original factors deduced from the design be minimal.

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## 9 Quality of the estimates

The estimates of all surveys carried out by sample are affected by two types of error:

- a) Sample errors
- b) Errors foreign to the sample

Sample errors appear as a consequence of the use of a part of the population to estimate characteristics of the whole population. In general, this is in proportion to the size of the sample causing sample error to decrease, although the characteristics of the design and the nature of the variable investigated also has an influence.

Errors outside the sample include a whole series of errors that occur in the different phases of a survey, from the design of the questionnaire to the publication of the final results, (deficient definitions, errors in the framework, lack of response in the informant units, coding and recording errors, etc.).

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### 9 SAMPLE ERRORS

A good indicator of the sample error of an estimator is its typical deviation.

In the Active Population Survey for the calculation of the sample error of a certain characteristic the reiterated semisample method is used.

The formula that facilitates estimating the sample error is:

$$D(\hat{X}) = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^r (\hat{X}_i - \hat{X})^2}{r}}$$

where:

$r$  = number of reiterations used

$\hat{X}_i$  = the estimate obtained with the  $n$ th reiteration applying the same estimate process as for the complete sample

$\hat{X}$  = the estimate obtained with the complete sample

Each reiteration is a sub sample made up of a number of sections equivalent to 50 per cent of the total sample. 40 reiterations are used in the APS which have been made up by pairing sections within each stratum and randomly assigning in each pair 20 reiterations to the first sample and the remaining 20 to the latter. In this way, each section features in half of the reiterations.

The variation coefficient appears as a percentage in the tables, whose expression is:

$$C.V.(\hat{X}) = \frac{D(\hat{X})}{\hat{X}} \cdot 100$$

The sample error provides us with an existing numerical interval in which there is a certain confidence, measured in terms of probability, of containing the real value of the estimated characteristic. The confidence interval most used is that included among the estimate less twice the sample error and the estimate plus twice the sample error. This interval has 95% confidence of finding in it the real value which is being estimated.

All estimates with high sample errors must be taken with reservations, although it must be the user who, in agreement with the degree of reliability that is specified, determines if a datum with a certain sample error is useful or not for the taking of decisions.

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## B) ERRORS FOREIGN TO THE SAMPLE

This group includes all errors that do not occur as a consequence of the use of samples for the estimate of a determined characteristic.

For the APS a study of the lack of response caused by the refusals of informant units is

carried out, as well as coverage and content errors.

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### 9.2.1 Lack of response

In case of a lack of partial response (some data from the persons surveyed are missing) an automatic imputation is carried out. The lack of total response (dwellings worthy of survey which have not been able to be surveyed through absence, refusal or through being inaccessible in the moment of the interview) received a different treatment according to whether the first or a subsequent interview is being dealt with.

In the first interview absent and inaccessible dwellings are visited again to get the information. If the dwelling is still inaccessible or the family is still absent then they are visited again the following quarter.

Refusals in the first interview are replaced randomly by other dwellings in the same section. If the refusal occurs in second or successive interviews there is no replacement, although visits are repeated in subsequent quarters.

Dwellings not worthy of survey (for purposes different to those of family dwellings, empty and temporary dwellings) are visited in subsequent quarters in case they have changed to being worthy of survey.

Treatment of lack of total response in interviews subsequent to the first consists of repeating the data from the dwelling obtained in the previous quarter.

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### 9.2.2 Coverage and content errors

- **COVERAGE** Errors: these are those caused by the omission or erroneous inclusion in the survey.

- **Content errors:** these occur when one or some of the characteristics of the interviewee are erroneously collected in the survey.

To evaluate both errors, an evaluation survey is carried out quarterly consistent in selecting a subsample of dwellings in which

the interview is repeated. The data obtained in the first interview or original interview (O.I.) are compared with those obtained in the second or repeated interview (R.I.).

From this comparison indicators are obtained both from the coverage of persons and dwellings and content errors of the most important characteristics analysed in the survey.

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## 10 Collection and treatment of the data

The dwellings in the sample are visited or contacted by phone by the interviewers that the INE has in each one of its provincial delegations (one in each province capital plus Ceuta and Melilla). The surveys are collected by means of a laptop or desktop computer which facilitates controlling the most important errors, especially those known as movement errors.

Interviewees are supervised by those responsible for the group, under the direction of a specialised civil servant.

Once the interview has been finalised and revised, the information is sent by teleprocessing to INE Central Services where the information is treated in a computerised manner to guarantee its internal coherence, assigning the elevation factors and obtaining tables and series of results.

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## 11 Dissemination of the results

The same day when the survey comes out a summary of the most relevant results on some informative sheets is available, both in paper format and the INE web page, which as a whole is called a *Press release*.

Moreover the two following volumes are published quarterly:

- *Main Results* (paper and electronic publication on disk)
- *Detailed results* (only electronic publication on disk)

Two other publications are elaborated annually:

- *Annual tables*
- *Migrations Survey (MS)*
- *Evaluation of the quality of the data*

Finally, every two years the:

- *Movements Statistic. Analysis of results is published*

There is also data obtained from the survey in the Monthly Statistical Bulletin (MSB) and in the INE yearbook.

Finally, there exists the possibility of requesting the final survey file with anonymous individual data as well as requests for specific tables that the user needs (as long as the size of the sample permits this).

On the INE Web Page ([www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)) and specifically, in the section *Society*, subject *Labour market*, some questions highlighted here may be consulted in greater detail such as methodological changes in 2002, the reweighting method of original factors or the technical report on the design of the survey and evaluation of the quality of the data. Moreover, additional information may be obtained on the publication calendar of the survey, microdata files or press release.

On the other hand, on the web page it is possible to have available not only the results corresponding to a determined quarter (transversal analysis) but also a series of results in the TEMPUS Database (longitudinal analysis).