

## Explanatory note on the publication of the *Official population figures of the municipalities on 1 January 2022*

National Statistics Institute  
21 December 2022

During the 1996-2021 period, the INE has published two sets of population figures:

- **Population figures** based on population censuses. These figures were updated every six months from different sources and the maximum level of detail offered was by province or, where appropriate, by island. Municipal data was only published once every ten years, on the occasion of the decennial censuses.
- **Official population figures of the municipalities on January 1st of each year**, resulting from the revision of the Municipal Register, based on the population count as established by Law 7/1985, of April 2, regulating the Bases of the Local Regime (LBRL), and the Regulation of Population and Territorial Demarcation of Local Entities (RPDT), approved by Royal Decree 1690/1986, of July 11. These municipal figures are declared official by means of a Royal Decree published at the end of each year. The information used for this purpose was used to generate the base files for the annual **Continuous Census Statistics**.

As of the publication of the 2021 Population and Housing Census, carried out on 30 November 2022, the population census is annual. This means that population data at the municipal level will be available every year, also based on the municipal census but applying slightly different procedures to better approximate the count of the resident population, with much greater thematic richness than the so-called official population figures of the municipalities and the Continuous Census Statistics.

The *official population figures of the municipalities* continue to be published both through an annual Royal Decree and on the INE website itself. However, in order to avoid confusion, it should be noted that, **except for those cases in which the use of this registered population is expressly required in accordance with the procedure of the LBRL and the RPDT, whenever it is necessary to know the population of any administrative unit, including that of the municipalities, the INE will provide the resident population data provided by the annual censuses**. Although the differences between one and the other are minimal (in very few cases do they exceed 1%), the census figures should be considered the best possible approximation of the resident population in Spain and its municipalities; in order to obtain these figures, more precise methods are applied than the administrative count of the registered population

For this reason, again in order not to confuse users, some data derived from the count of the registered population, which were published during the period 1996-2021 - such as summaries by autonomous communities, provinces, capitals and islands - are no longer updated, although they can continue to be consulted at "[Related links](#)". This information will continue to be available, but the source link will be the [Population Census](#), updated each year.