

16. Preliminary results in using administrative records for population estimates

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The COVID 19 pandemic resulted in postponement of the completion of the National Population, Household and Housing Census of the 2020 round which would be carried out using the “de facto” methodology and field survey in Argentina. As in other countries, this situation accelerated the exploration of different alternatives to meet the objective of providing updated estimates of the total population resident in Argentina and its main demographic characteristics. One of these lines of work, perhaps the most important in long-term strategic terms, consists of the statistical exploitation of administrative records to obtain population estimates. This move is in the process of institutionalization and legalization, formalizing sectoral agreements and deepening methodological exploration.

Over the last four years we have worked with three sectoral administrative registers (taxes, electoral and employment registers) and a multisectoral registry system that provides support for the design of social policies. The research objectives were twofold, and they are considered complementary: 1) to compare the total population that arises from both data sources and 2) to explore the link between the census data and those of each of these registers. For this, the current population projections, and the result of two pre-census tests were used as a reference.

The main findings of the comparison between the records and the projected (or pre-census) population stand out: 1) administrative records had an overcoverage of the population in active ages and older adults in later ages, as well as undercoverage of younger children, with important differences at the subnational level; 2) regarding the link between records and census, a matching result close to 70 per cent was obtained.