

## **The creation of the Fast and Exceptional Enterprise Survey in COVID time**

Sofia Rodrigues, Almiro Moreira and Paulo Saraiva (Statistics Portugal)

*sofia.rodrigues@ine.pt, almiro.moreira@ine.pt, paulo.saraiva@ine.pt*

### ***Abstract***

The impact of the pandemic COVID-19 extended to all sectors of the economy. In order to identify some of the main effects of the pandemic on business activity, Statistics Portugal (INE) and the Bank of Portugal (BoP) launched the Fast and Exceptional Enterprise Survey (COVID-IREE). It was based on a quick answer questionnaire about turnover, number of employees, use of public support instruments, availability of liquidity, use of credit and prices charged. The survey remained active as long as justified and its frequency was adjusted in view of the evolution of the restrictions to economic activity. It was addressed to a wide range of micro, small, medium and large firms, representing the various sectors of economic activity (around 8.000 companies). There were 11 editions of this survey: 4 weekly editions (between April 6 and May 1), 5 fortnightly editions (between the first half of May and the first half of July) and 2 ad-hoc editions (one in November 2020 and another one in February 2021).

The flexibility and integration associated with the Integrated Survey Management System implemented at Statistics Portugal allows a fast and flexible response to different types of needs. In this survey, in less than five days it was possible to meet the identified need to know the situation of companies during this exceptional period, from the design of the questionnaire to the start of collection. Communication with the companies was also one of the crucial aspects in the success of this collection operation. It was adapted to the exceptional situation experienced, and the importance of the information to be collected for the implementation of public policies adapted to this context was reinforced. The reminder system was strengthened, accompanied by more personalized telephone contacts. Personalized feedback reports were also created for this survey, accompanying the frequency of the survey itself.