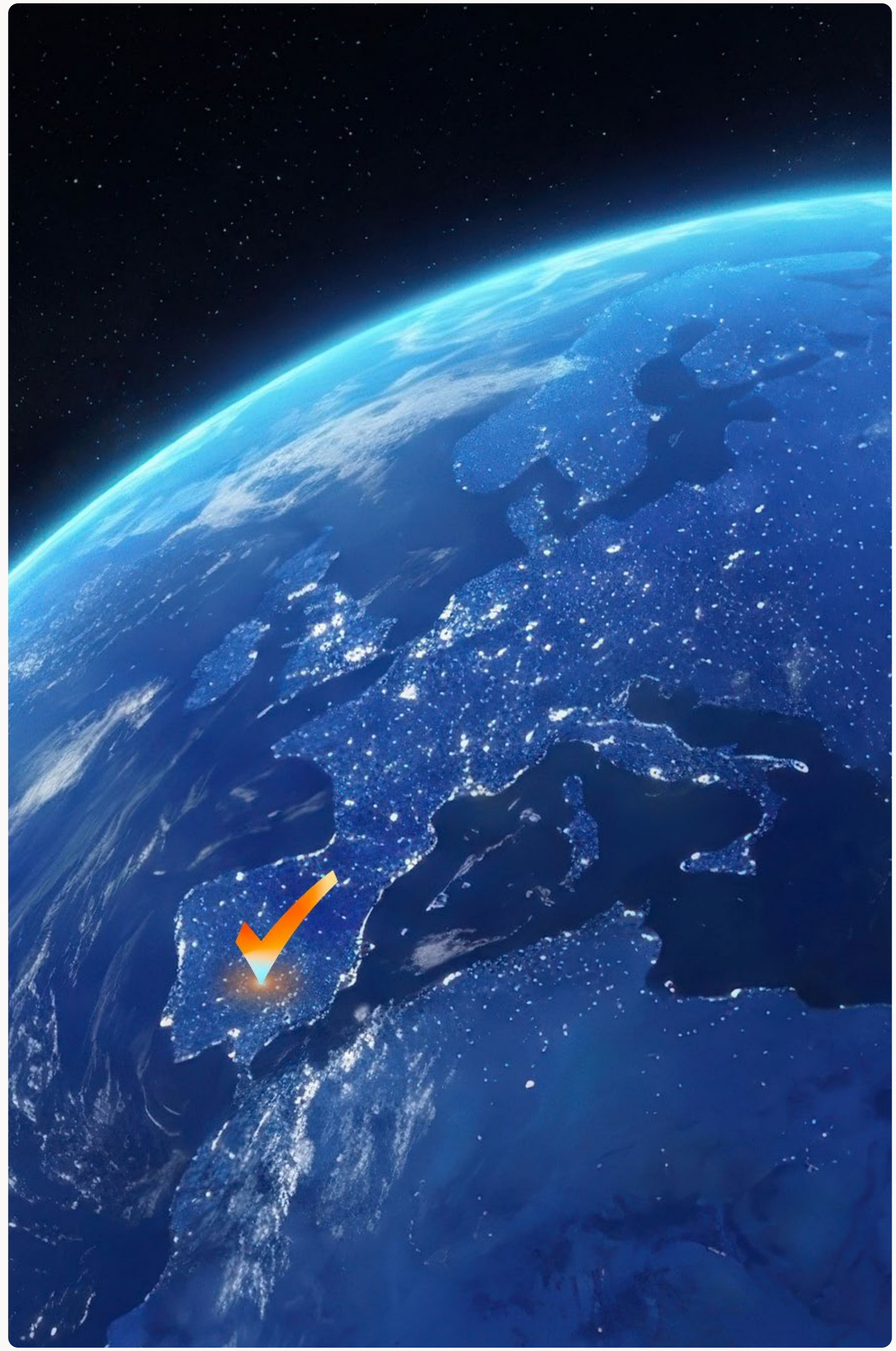
What enterprises must do now to prepare for mandatory e-invoicing in Spain

A practical 180-day action plan for multinational Tax, Finance, and IT teams



GUIDE

Contents

UNDERSTANDING COMPLIANCE

What does Spain's e-invoicing mandate mean for enterprises?

Spain is expanding its e-invoicing framework as part of a broader effort to strengthen tax transparency, improve payment visibility between businesses, and modernise digital transaction reporting.

Spain already mandates e-invoicing for business-to-government (B2G) transactions. It is now extending requirements to domestic business-to-business (B2B) transactions under Ley 18/2022 ("Ley Crea y Crece"). **Large businesses (€8 million+) must comply by 1 October 2027.***

The legislation requires businesses to issue, send, and receive e-invoices in an approved structured format. The current mandate draft positions Universal Business Language (UBL) as the official format aligned with EN16931. Formats such as Facturae, CII, and EDIFACT are no longer referenced in the draft.

Businesses can use private e-invoicing solutions, but they must send a copy of each invoice to the public platform, operated by the Spanish Tax Agency (Agencia Estatal de Administración Tributaria, or AEAT).

Critically, organisations must also **report the status of invoices** (e.g., payment, rejection, non-payment) to the public platform via the VeriFactu system. Interoperability between systems is mandatory, including default routing through the public platform if no exchange agreement exists between parties. Selecting the right partner is critical.

Key milestone dates*

Obligation	Date	Applies to
B2G e-invoicing	15 January 2015	Suppliers to Spanish public administrations
VeriFactu	1 January 2027	Taxpayers subject to corporate income tax
VeriFactu	1 July 2027	All other taxpayers
B2B e-invoicing	1 October 2027	Companies with annual turnover exceeding €8 million
B2B e-invoicing	1 October 2028	All remaining companies

*Dates based on the phased rollout established under Ley 18/2022 ("Ley Crea y Crece") and current draft implementation timelines. Keep in mind that regulatory guidance, obligations, and enforcement practices may evolve as implementation approaches.

Why act now?

The longer organisations wait to prepare, the more timelines compress. Enterprises that lag risk:

- Invoice rejection and delayed revenue due to noncompliant formats
- Increased audit exposure tied to structured data accuracy and VAT reporting
- Operational inefficiencies and fragmented architectures that become difficult to scale across countries
- Limited vendor and integration capacity as deadlines approach
- Compounding complexity as EU mandates (including VAT in the Digital Age, or ViDA) accelerate

Businesses face a choice with how to approach Spain's rollout: implement compliance tactically or address it strategically. Treating the effort as a one-off IT project creates permanent complexity. Last-minute scrambles introduce fragmentation as mandates multiply.

Instead, Spain should be approached as a strategic operational design decision, not a compliance patch. That level of change doesn't happen in a single quarter. Building a globally scalable compliance model means starting now.

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Evaluate operational risks and system-level readiness

E-invoicing in Spain is not just a tax configuration update. It represents a cross-functional operating model change that requires alignment across Tax, IT, Finance, Shared Services, Security, and Procurement.

Enterprises must support the official UBL format, in alignment with EN 16931. They need to ensure master data consistency across customers, suppliers, VAT identifiers, legal entities, and tax classifications. And they must monitor and report the status of every invoice to the public platform.

This impacts ERP configuration, invoice generation, validation logic, exception handling, and long-term archival aligned with local tax and accounting retention obligations. For multinational enterprises, these requirements rarely exist in isolation. They intersect with existing ERP landscapes, shared services models, and cross-border VAT structures.

Use the following diagnostic checklist to identify your readiness gaps and track compliance progress.

Spain e-invoice mandate — operational checklist

Is your organisation able to…	Yes
1. Create EN 16931-compliant invoices in UBL format?	☐
2. Ingest and process structured invoices from suppliers and transmit them to the public (AEAT) platform?	☐
3. Validate structured data completeness before transmission?	☐
4. Handle rejection, correction, and resubmission workflows?	☐
5. Process and transmit life cycle status events, such as receipt, acceptance, rejection, and correction, to the public platform?	☐
6. Maintain visibility into invoice life cycle statuses across systems?	☐

Enterprise risk indicators

- Multiple ERP instances
- Shared systems and tools
- Cross-border VAT complexity
- Manual exception handling
- PDF-based workflows
- No structured validation
- No life cycle monitoring

COUNTDOWN ACTION PLAN

Your role-based execution blueprint

Spain's mandate leaves little room for stalled implementations. Enterprises that begin early retain flexibility. Those that delay compress testing, increase dependency on third-party availability, and have fewer platform options.

Successful enterprises prevent these issues by assigning clear sponsorship across Tax, Finance, IT, and Program Lead, with defined escalation paths and budget authority. The following road map outlines the minimum coordination required.

	Head of Tax	Program Lead	Finance
NOW Assess exposure	Confirm in-scope domestic B2B transactions and entity exposure	Inventory ERP instances, billing systems, EDI tools, and middleware	Model invoice rejection or delayed acceptance scenarios
	Define life cycle and interoperability obligations	Map end-to-end invoice life cycle	Assess impact on AR cycles, cash application, and reconciliation
	Quantify VAT reporting and audit exposure	Identify structured format generation and ingestion gaps	Secure preliminary implementation budget

150 DAYS OUT

Early 2027

Architect and select

Head of Tax	Program Lead	Finance	IT
Define governance model	Define interoperability model	Validate cost of ownership assumptions	Validate ERP capability for UBL generation and ingestion
Align on structured data requirements	Initiate vendor evaluation and technical workshops	Align on financial impact of different solution models	Begin schema validation testing
Establish audit trail, retention, and documentation standards	Choose solution for format generation and transmission to public platform	Refine revenue assumptions based on structured invoice dependencies	Launch InfoSec and data governance reviews

100 DAYS OUT

Mid-2027

Build and integrate

Head of Tax	Program Lead	Finance	IT
Finalise compliance interpretation for issuance and validation	Oversee ERP integration build	Validate downstream impact on AR/AP processes	Perform sandbox testing
Define validation and completeness rules	Define exception thresholds and escalation workflows	Confirm reconciliation logic between ERP and invoice data	Validate rejection and retry logic
Align with advisors on audit and documentation standards	Establish invoice life cycle tracking and reporting requirements	Model cost variability of rejection and retry scenarios	Confirm secure connectivity across systems and partners

60 DAYS OUT

August 2027

Validate and certify

Head of Tax	Program Lead	Finance
Validate audit trail completeness across invoice life cycle	Execute pilot across entities, customers, and suppliers	Validate AR/AP workflows for structured invoices
Confirm retention compliance and documentation readiness	Validate end-to-end workflow	Confirm reconciliation accuracy and reporting alignment
Establish KPI benchmarks	Refine exception handling workflows based on pilot results	Stress-test revenue timing assumptions under rejection scenarios

	Head of Tax	Program Lead	IT
30 DAYS OUT **September 2027** **Prepare for production**	Sign off on compliance readiness and reporting outputs	Finalise go-live checklist and readiness validation	Validate production credentials and failover logic
	Confirm audit documentation and control processes	Confirm SLA expectations, ownership, and support structure	Confirm system performance under expected volumes
	Finalise escalation protocols for compliance failures	Activate monitoring and alerting systems	Finalise security, access controls, and data integrity

	Weeks 1–2	Weeks 2–4	Ongoing
GO-LIVE **Before 1 October 2027** **Activate and stabilise**	Monitor submission success rates daily	Reconcile ERP outputs with invoice processing and reporting data	Monitor regulatory updates and EU/ViDA alignment
	Track rejection codes and retry patterns	Optimise exception handling thresholds and workflows	Maintain audit-readiness and documentation integrity
	Validate structured data quality and compliance consistency	Address integration or interoperability issues	Refine processes to support scale and cross-border expansion

COMMON PITFALLS

Avoid the chaos of fragmented compliance

Enterprise e-invoicing programmes rarely fail because teams misunderstand the regulation. They fail because organisations approach regulatory compliance as a one-off IT project rather than a cross-functional operational programme. The following pitfalls create cost volatility, compliance gaps, and long-term system complexity.

Governance and architecture risks

Spain's mandate introduces interoperability requirements that affect how invoices are exchanged across platforms. That means architectural decisions made now will determine how well your organisation can scale across jurisdictions.

Temporary, country-specific solutions become permanent technical debt. As mandates compound and evolve, redesign becomes inevitable. Each new jurisdiction multiplies integration overhead, erodes governance consistency, and increases regulatory exposure.

Plus, planning for Spain in isolation creates long-term constraints that will need to be undone as EU-wide frameworks (including ViDA) take shape.

Predictability and control gaps

Spain's mandate depends on structured data accuracy, not just invoice transmission. Assuming compliance without validating EN 16931 data completeness introduces immediate risk.

Without centralised visibility into invoice life cycle events, organisations are forced into reactive, manual intervention. This creates inconsistent processes, hidden costs, and unreliable reporting. As invoice volumes scale, even small data quality issues compound into significant operational disruption.

Agility and future-readiness risks

Spain's mandate is not an isolated event. It should be viewed alongside broader European developments in France, Poland, Germany, and under ViDA.

If you treat Spain as a one-off implementation or refuse to act now, each subsequent mandate will trigger new integration cycles, increase system fragmentation, and reduce control. Over time, compliance will become a constraint on growth and will increase exposure to missed deadlines and regulatory scrutiny.

OPERATIONALISING COMPLIANCE

From reacting to mandates to enterprise control

Mandates are not isolated country events. They are signals that compliance must operate as a centralised, enterprise-wide capability.

Spain's October 2027 deadline may seem far off, but timelines can compress quickly, and the scale of change required is substantial. Structured data, interoperability, and validation requirements introduce system-level dependencies that cannot be addressed reactively.

Leading enterprises are redesigning their compliance operating model in response. Rather than layering country-specific solutions onto existing systems, they establish a governed global workstream. In this model, structured invoicing, reporting, and monitoring are integrated directly into core ERP processes.

The most resilient organisations treat e-invoicing as a continuous capability, not a one-time benchmark. Building compliance into the operational backbone of the business (rather than bolting it on country by country) reduces disruption and preserves scalability as mandates multiply.

Enterprises are exploring AI-assisted compliance models that can monitor structured transaction data, identify exceptions, and support reporting workflows across jurisdictions. By reducing reliance on disconnected manual processes, these approaches can help organisations improve visibility, consistency, and responsiveness as requirements evolve.

The benefits of operationalised compliance

- ✓ **Control:** Execution is centralised and visible across jurisdictions in real time
- ✓ **Predictability:** Cost, performance, and reporting obligations remain consistent as transaction volume grows
- ✓ **Agility:** Mandate updates and new country rollouts are absorbed without reengineering core systems

WHY AVALARA?

Trade compliance pressure for predictable advantage

Mandates create urgency. Your response determines whether compliance becomes an ongoing burden or a governed, scalable capability.

With Avalara E-Invoicing and Live Reporting, your organisation can:

- ✓ Build structured invoicing and reporting directly into core ERP workflows
- ✓ Centralise visibility across jurisdictions through a single integration model
- ✓ Absorb mandate updates without reengineering local systems
- ✓ Scale into new markets without restarting the compliance cycle
- ✓ Improve monitoring and exception handling through AI-assisted compliance workflows

Rather than deploying multiple single-country solutions, Avalara enables enterprises to implement structured compliance once, then scale it globally. It's how compliance becomes controlled infrastructure, not recurring disruption.

Spain readiness working session

In a 45-minute working session, we will:

- ✓ Confirm your in-scope entities and transaction types
- ✓ Identify system and data gaps
- ✓ Assess compliance and audit exposure
- ✓ Align on a prioritised, 90-day action plan

Schedule your session

Want more?

Download: *IDC MarketScape on European Compliant e-Invoicing (Avalara excerpt)*

Disclaimer: Tax rates, rules, and regulations change frequently. We hope you find this information helpful; however, this resource is for informational purposes only and does not provide legal or tax advice.