

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



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Annual Report of the Official Statistics Authority 2011

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Institutional Framework and Composition of the Official Statistics Authority

The institutional framework of official statistics in France was modified by the Law on Modernisation of the Economy (LME) of 4 August 2008.

It is based on three pillars.

The National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) provides a forum for users and producers of official statistics. It highlights new needs for information, guides programming of official statistical work and suggests ways to ensure that these statistics correspond as closely as possible to the questions of society.

The CNIS is chaired by Jean-Pierre Duport.

The official statistical service drives conception, production and dissemination of official statistics.

It comprises INSEE and 16 Ministerial Statistical Offices. It is coordinated by INSEE.

INSEE is headed by Jean-Philippe Cotis.

The Official Statistics Authority ensures that official statistics are prepared in all professional independence and according to the fundamental principles in the “European Statistics Code of Practice”: impartiality, objectivity, relevance and data quality.

One of its missions is to write an annual report on official statistical activity. This report is handed in to Parliament and made public.

This report covers 2011, the third year of existence of the Authority.

Decree n° 2009-250 of 3 March 2009 on the Official Statistics Authority sets out its missions.

Composition of the Official Statistics Authority

(notice published in Official Journal n° 0121 of 27 May 2009):

Mr Paul Champsaur, President, appointed by a decree of the Council of Ministers of 25 March 2009

Mr Francis Mer, appointed by the President of the National Assembly

Mr Yves Fréville, Vice-President, appointed by the President of the Senate

Mr Philippe Le Clézio, appointed by the President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council

M. Jean Gaeremynck, President of the Statistical Confidentiality Committee, appointed by the President of the Council of State

M. François Ecalle, appointed by the First President of the Court of Accounts

M. Philip Dane, appointed by the Department Head of the General Inspectorate of Finances

M. Pascal Penaud, appointed by the Head of the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs

M. Bruno Durieux, appointed by the Minister for the Economy, Industry and Employment

Official Statistics Authority – Annual Report 2011

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Preface

On the basis of the analyses conducted in 2010, the Official Statistics Authority made progress in 2011 on the issue of official statistics quality labelling to ensure compliance with the principles of European statistics.

It awarded quality labelling to the quarterly housing price statistics for the Île de France (Paris) region produced jointly by the Paris Chamber of Notaries and INSEE, and to the quarterly employment statistics produced nationally by the ACOSS (Central Agency of the Social Security Organisations). It defined a formal appraisal procedure based on the extension of the role of the Quality Label Committee. The much-needed modification of the regulations governing official statistics has now been launched to replace the present informal appraisal procedure by an often more complex formal appraisal conducted by the Quality Label Committee.

The production and dissemination of official statistics by the Official Statistical Service gave rise to the examination of several cases in 2011.

First case: dissemination of official statistics was marked by several embargo breaches. On these occasions, the principle of impartiality set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice was breached. There are cases when official statistics are transmitted under embargo by the statistical service that produced them to the public or administrative authorities, no earlier than the day before the day of publication. None of the embargo breaches that were observed were the result of early transmission of the statistics, so the official statistical services were therefore not responsible. We should perhaps consider simple measures against any public or administrative authorities that commit breaches of such an embargo, by stopping sending them any information the day before when they might be tempted to release too early.

Second case: one statistical service published fewer official statistics than expected. This problem arose in autumn 2011 at the Evaluation, Forward Planning and Performance Directorate (DEPP) of the Ministry for National Education. In October 2011, this department did not make the publications expected according to its work programme. The Official Statistics Authority asked the INSEE Director-General to refer the matter to the Institute's General Inspectorate in order to have that body examine the publication situation of the DEPP.

Another case was one of manifestly mistaken use of figures produced by official statistics and likely to discredit the said service. This case concerned school trajectories of the children of immigrants. The first principle in the European Statistics Code of Practice states that "where appropriate, the Statistical Authority comments publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of statistics." The Statistical Authority in question is the National Statistical Institute, in this case INSEE. INSEE responded by issuing a reminder of the statistical data in question from 2005 and then publishing a press release explaining what could actually be deduced from these statistics on the school trajectories of children of immigrants. The Authority monitored this affair closely and backed INSEE, without having to step in directly.



Paul CHAMPSAUR

President of the Official Statistics Authority

1. Production of official statistics in France in 2011

The year 2011 was marked by economic turbulence and worsening budget tensions from which the Official Statistical Service could not be immune.

Despite this context, statistical progress was made in 2011. In a fast-changing world that is in search of enlightenment as to its future, the official statistics service has succeeded, on the whole, in remaining a reference.

It can sometimes be criticised for being too slow, but its work sometimes requires major investments to provide a statistical interpretation of our society that is capable of providing a credible framework for debate.

The Authority judges the overall performance of official statistics to have been positive. In the light of budget uncertainties, it will be attentive to ensuring that the restrictions on the margin for manoeuvre of the Official Statistical Service that can be foreseen in coming times are not detrimental to the quality of production.

1.1 Innovative operations

On prices and social affairs

The possibility of using *supermarket data* to obtain exhaustive, detailed information on certain segments of the price index is being studied. The supermarket chains that have been contacted seemed open to such a possibility. An improvement to the efficiency and quality of production would enable INSEE to reallocate certain resources to other work.

The “victims”¹ survey among pupils in public lower secondary schools was conducted in Spring 2011 by the Ministry for National Education among 18,000 pupils in State schools. For the first time, they were invited to answer a questionnaire on school climate and any aggressions they may have suffered. The results were published last October.

The Annual “Lifestyle and Security” Survey conducted by INSEE and the National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses (ONDRP) may evolve in anticipation of the upcoming regulation on the European public safety survey scheduled for 2013. The objective is to uphold the continuity of the existing indicators and therefore modify the existing questions as little as possible.

The Housing survey will be conducted in 2013 with a sample of an identical size to that in previous editions, thanks to five regional extensions financed by the regions.

In corporate statistics

The official statistical service is closely involved in implementation of the conclusions of the *Assizes of European Simplification*. Among the 80 measures adopted by the government, 6 directly affect official statistics. The first five aim to eliminate redundancy and to optimise sampling plans. It should be possible for the official statistical service to implement these measures. The last measure, which consists of making all surveys by public operators that are not included in the annual ruling subject to mandatory declaration, should not require any further legislation and its implementation should be possible within the framework of the law of 1951.

¹ The aim of this survey is to measure the prevalence and consequences of all kinds of acts of violence suffered by pupils and staff in the school environment.

The *new system of structural information on enterprises (ESANE)* combines data of administrative origin and survey data. It should prove to be both more consistent and of better quality. The response burden on enterprises is considerably reduced by systematic use of the available administrative data. The official statistical service, meanwhile, will make large productivity gains thanks to a big effort to innovate in its organisation and methodology.

The results of the ESANE system for the 2009 period went online in October 2011. This dissemination marks a major landmark for this large-scale project.

In 2011, INSEE set about the second phase in the operation, which consists in breaking the groups down into homogenous business lines, an operation referred to as “*profiling*”. The organisation of groups working in several fields of activity into legal entities increasingly follows management and accounting principles, to the detriment of an economic view that is easy to interpret along sector lines.

1.2 Statistical progress

▪ Stiglitz report implementation

INSEE has involved itself closely in the implementation of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report, both nationally and on the European level, by making more effective use of the information that is directly available and by adapting survey to produce new indicators.

2011 saw the first dividends of the investments that have been made. For example, there was the publication of an original study on measuring subjective well-being, another on the quality of the time spent on different activities in daily life and yet another on the dispersion of assets.

In 2011, France played a leading role in the European-wide implementation of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report through the Sponsorship Group co-chaired by INSEE and Eurostat.

Finally, the OECD, with the support of INSEE, organised an international conference bringing together many high-level personalities of all nationalities. Above all, the meeting provided an opportunity to conduct a worldwide review of the progress made in implementing the Stiglitz report.

INSEE is to continue working on subjects of well-being and of the valuation of non-market activities.

▪ Close involvement in public debates about sustainable development

In application of the Grenelle Environment Forum, tracking of the national sustainable development strategy was the subject of a report submitted to Parliament and made public. It is based on a dashboard of 54 indicators.

The Observation and Statistics Service (SOeS) of the Ministry for Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing and INSEE have largely contributed to this first report, by producing and coordinating the dashboard. To ensure the broadest dissemination of the report, all the indicators are available on the INSEE website, along with international comparisons.

1.3 Review by the Authority of the production of official statistics in 2011

The appetite for statistics increases in times of crisis and the Official Statistics Authority is therefore pleased that in 2011, France boasts a high-quality official statistical service.

The Authority also lauds all the efforts made to pool resources, notably by working in liaison with the OECD and Europe for the implementation of the Stiglitz report.

The Authority members have been most sensitive to the necessary restructuring of business statistics undertaken by INSEE through enterprise “profiling”. The case of intermediate groups seems very important. But the Authority stresses that the absence of financial commitment from the State is worrying and may prevent the INSEE from dedicating itself fully to this matter.

The Authority approves the fact that the Housing survey has been maintained for 2013 with a sufficiently large sample size to consolidate the quality of the survey.

Given that the official statistics service has been weakened by a reduction in its resources, the Authority lauds efforts made by the INSEE to prepare recurring plans to make savings and to increase pooling.

2. Official statistical practice and its conformity to the European Statistics Code of Practice

The Authority is one of the pillars of official statistical governance in France.

As such, it is preoccupied by current developments in European governance, which should have consequences for governance on the national level.

As the guarantor of compliance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice, the Authority is attentive to the terms on which official statistics are produced in France.

2.1 Governance of official statistics

▪ In Europe

In a troubled context, there are a number of European initiatives aiming to modify statistical governance profoundly. The European Commission, under the impulsion of the Ecofin Council, has undertaken to propose a review of the framework regulation on European statistics (223/2009). The main motivation is to reinforce the professional independence of statisticians and access to administrative data. Eurostat proposes a system in which statistical independence on the national level would be based on the director general of the National Statistical Institute (NSI), who would become a genuine national “Head Statistician”. They would be entrusted with the role of statistical coordination of all the national statistical authorities in order to guarantee their professional independence and the quality of their output.

In order to ensure the professional independence of the head of the NSI, the draft regulation also provides that procedures for their appointment and the end of their term of office must be transparent and based solely on professional criteria. These procedures must be established by law.

The Commission will also be proposing “Commitments on Confidence in Statistics”. These are declarations of intent in which each head of government will undertake to facilitate the application of the Code of Practice by statisticians according to terms and a timescale that will be specific to each of them.

▪ In France

These European initiatives, and in particular the notion of head statistician, should have important consequences for French statistical governance.

In this new environment, the INSEE Director-General would be the “Head Statistician” with increased responsibility, strong executive power and a say on what goes on in Ministerial Statistical Offices.

Nationally, there are some institutional singularities that will need to be managed. The INSEE Director-General is a Director General of the Ministry for the Economy, Finances and Industry, which does not fit the interpretation of the texts referred to above.

A new decree relating to official statistical governance is under preparation. The aim is mainly to provide a clarified presentation of the current texts, with just a single decree for the CNIS, the Official Statistics Authority and the Statistical Confidentiality Committee. It gives a new role to the Quality Label Committee which will report jointly to the Official Statistics Authority and the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) in order to officialise the mission of the Official Statistics Authority in quality labelling of data from administrative files.

2.2 The new European Statistics Code of Good Practice

2011 was marked by the adoption of the new European Statistics Code of Good Practice.²

This new Code now includes the quality declaration of the European Statistical system in its preamble. It still contains the same fifteen principles, but they have been enriched by nine new indicators.

The new indicators concern principles 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the Code.

The Authority notes mainly the modifications made to principles 1 and 8.

- The new Code aims to **reinforce the professional independence** of the National Statistical Institutes (INS) and other national statistical authorities by a new provision incorporated within Principle 1 “Professional Independence” and expressed in new indicator 1.8.

Indicator 1.8: The appointment of the heads of the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat and, where appropriate, of other statistical authorities, is based on professional competence only. The reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated are specified in the legal framework. These cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence.

- The new Code aims to **enhance access to administrative data**. In addition to access to administrative data to produce statistics, it provides for greater involvement not only of statisticians, but also of the administrations that hold the information in the production of high-quality statistics. Three new indicators (8.7, 8.8 and 8.9) reinforce the possibilities for use of administrative data.

Indicator 8.7: Statistical authorities are involved in the design of administrative data in order to make administrative data more suitable for statistical purposes.

Indicator 8.8: Agreements are made with owners of administrative data which set out their shared commitment to the use of these data for statistical purposes.

Indicator 8.9: Statistical authorities cooperate with owners of administrative data in assuring data quality.

² The new Code is reproduced in Annexe 9 and is accessible at the following address
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-32-11-995/FR/KS-32-11-995-FR.PDF

2.3 Compliance with the European Statistics Code of Good Practice

The conditions in which official statistics are conducted in France require the Authority to exercise genuine vigilance as to implementation of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice. The Authority has had cases referred to it relating to some of these principles.

Principle 1: Professional independence

- **Misuse of figures may bring statistics into disrepute in the eyes of the general public.**

The President of the Authority received a letter dated 16 September from the trade union confederations demanding that the Official Statistics Authority express itself “*now, a few months before major elections, to call all those concerned to make rigorous use of official statistics publications, in compliance with embargo rules.*” The letter was written further to what was deemed to be misuse of figures by a member of the government, which had received extensive media coverage

The trade union organisations referred to principle 1 of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice, and more particularly Article 1.7: “*The statistical authority comments publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of statistics as far as considered suitable.*”

It should be pointed out that the Statistical Authority referred to in the European regulation is clearly the National Statistical Institute (NSI), which is to say INSEE. In the case at hand, this organisation had fulfilled its proper role.

As a general rule, the role of INSEE is not to express itself systematically on all analyses, remarks and opinions based on the data it disseminates, although it must express itself publicly on criticisms and manifest misuses of official statistics.

Further to public debate about statistics on the school trajectories of the children of immigrants, a large number of comments in the press gave rise to questions as to the role of INSEE. The duty of INSEE is to publish relevant data and facilitate access to and understanding of the said data, notably for the press. The data in question was not necessarily easily accessible, since it came from a publication from 2005; INSEE ensured that journalists seeking information were systematically referred to this statistical source. Thereafter, given the scale of the controversy and the comments being made, INSEE decided to publish a news release explaining what could be deduced on the subject of the school trajectories of the children of immigrants, based on the statistics published in 2005. In so doing, INSEE complied with Article 1.7 of the Code of Good Practice.

Throughout this affair, the Official Statistics Authority remained in constant contact with INSEE and supported it in its action.

The President of the Official Statistics Authority referred the trade union confederations to the European Statistics Code of Good Practice. The Authority gave its full approval to their wish to see all the players in the upcoming elections make careful use of official statistical publications.

- **Delays in the publication of statistical information require particular attention.**

At the Ministry for National Education, there would appear to be a fall in the number of publications of studies and statistics. The Federation of State School Parent Teachers Associations (FCPE) sent the President of the ASP a letter bringing his attention to what it considered to be delays. Several press articles reported the criticisms made by the FCPE and mentioned dissimulation or delays in the publication of school assessment data. The Director-General of INSEE is monitoring this issue closely. As the person responsible for coordination of the official statistical system, it seems important to him to clear this matter up promptly.

This concern is shared by the Official Statistics Authority because withholding statistical information constitutes a breach of the principle of professional independence.

The President of the Official Statistics Authority and INSEE Director-General make a clear distinction, however, between statistics and studies. Delays in the publication of studies are not within the remit of these two institutions.

To clarify the situation at the Ministry for National Education, the President of the Official Statistics Authority has asked the INSEE Director-General to refer the matter to the INSEE General Inspectorate to examine the situation regarding the publications of the Evaluation, Forward Planning and Performance Directorate (DEPP) in 2011 in relation to its statistical work programme.

The Authority will analyse the report from the General Inspectorate, hear those responsible for the DEPP and then announce the action it intends to take in this matter.

Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources

Operating budgets for 2012 are down sharply. INSEE has nonetheless managed to ringfence a considerable programme of surveys. Producers have expressed uncertainties as to their ability to meet upcoming deadlines, however, and there are fears that there may be some postponements or surveys that are conducted on a minimal basis with restricted samples.³

Defining negative priorities to meet budget constraints is a necessity for the institute, but restructuring INSEE activities is a difficult exercise at a time when certain projects such as RESANE, elaboration of registry office statistics and the opening of a production centre in Metz are taking up considerable resources.

Participation of the official statistical service in European work is constantly increasing. Half of the surveys in the official statistical survey programme for 2011 are totally or partially in response to European demands. INSEE is becoming increasingly involved in European and international statistics, as shown by the election of its Director-General for two years as President of the European Partnership Group. Within this framework, work has been undertaken to define negative priorities for 2012 and the following years. The pooling efforts undertaken on the European level will also contribute to allowing some room for manoeuvre for national institutes.

Faced with increasingly tight budgets, the Authority will be keeping close watch on the reliability of the statistics that are produced, given the risk of a decline in the quality of statistics.

Principle 4: Commitment to quality

³ The Housing survey will finally be conducted in 2013 with an identical sample size to that of the previous year.

see *Annexe 5* 2011 review of the quality procedure at INSEE and in the Ministerial Statistical Offices

- **The INSEE quality plan in 2011**

The review of the 2011 quality plan at INSEE is positive. Twelve actions in the plan out of the total of fifteen with completion deadlines in 2011 had been completed by the end of the year.

In 2011, INSEE made progress in its compliance with the Code. Among the actions initiated in 2007 further to the peer review,⁴ four were still underway at the beginning of 2011; two of these have now been completed and have achieved their objectives to the full. They concern the production of quality reviews for business surveys and profiling of groups. The situation of the two actions still underway is more mixed. While compilation of the SIRUS statistical directory of enterprises is progressing on schedule, the same cannot be said of online collection of the population census, the deadline for which has been pushed back to 2015 to allow more extensive field tests.

During their visit, the peers had also pinpointed the poor content of the insee.fr website in terms of definitions (in French and in English). This led to the implementation of a quality action which was successfully completed in 2011, with the opening in December 2011 of the English version of the “Definitions” and “Sources and Methods” sections of the site, containing over 1,000 references.

At the request of Eurostat, new improvement actions are added each year. In 2011, it was decided to add an action on the introduction of a quality assurance framework for household surveys. This action clearly illustrates one of the new directions of the INSEE quality procedure, which is to say the extension of quality assurance frameworks to all statistical production processes.

- **Quality plan in the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSO) in 2011**

The 2011 quality plan of the MSOs comprises 32 actions, of which 26 initiated prior to 2011 and six new ones.

More than one-third of the actions concern use of internet for supplying methodological information or for collecting information (online surveys). Improving statistical output quality also represents a large share of the actions in the plan (writing quality reviews, quality sheets and process descriptions). The use of administrative files to lighten the burden on respondents is also a concern of the MSOs. Finally, the plan still comprises actions to raise awareness of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice, although this awareness raising is often an integral part of the training of newly-appointed staff and is no longer the subject of one-off quality actions.

The review of 2011 saw progress over 2010: 13 of the 22 actions with completion deadlines in 2011 were completed (against 9 out of 18 in 2010); two actions with deadlines in 2012 were also completed. Particularly outstanding efforts were made on writing up quality reviews and on the use of administrative files. On the other hand, most of the actions concerning improvements to metainformation⁵ on internet were postponed to 2012. All in all, 8 actions with completion deadlines in 2011 were postponed to, or extended into 2012, while one was abandoned.

⁴ The “peers” are members of another national statistical institute or of Eurostat.

⁵ Metainformation: sources, methods, definitions...

Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity

Embargo breaches are detrimental to the principle of impartiality.

See Annexe 8 Dissemination rules for the main outlook indicators published on the INSEE website and the indicators of the Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES)

The statistical authorities (NSIs) must comply with principle 6 of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice, and mainly its Article 6-6: “*All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.*”

The President of the Official Statistics Authority received a letter from trade union organisations at INSEE, Pôle Emploi, the Ministry for Labour, the Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing and the Banque de France concerning the problem of embargo breaches by the Government.

Economic indicators are supplied under embargo to the political authorities the day before their publication, which is set for 7.30am for four indicators and for 8.45 am for the others.

The dates and times of publication of the “key” outlook indicators of the DARES are announced in advance in the four-monthly programme released each month by the DARES on the website of the Ministry for Labour and Employment (www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr) and by the INSEE press office on the 25th of each month (www.insee.fr). The dates of release of the monthly “Registered job-seekers and job offers collected by Pôle Emploi” are set for the whole of the calendar year in December of the previous year on the basis of a precise rule guided by data availability. These indicators are published in *the Dares Indicators* collection. The time of publication is set for 6.00pm for the monthly publication of the “Registered job-seekers and job offers collected by Pôle Emploi” and for 8.45am for the provisional and definitive quarterly estimates of the “Labour force employment activity and conditions survey” (ACEMO).

Sometimes, the comments are released by the Government several hours before release to the public. Embargo breaches by Government members are a longstanding phenomenon but they would seem to be becoming more frequent today.

Leaks can occur earlier, notably those relating to the number of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi at the end of the month.

The Authority and the INSEE Director-General place great store by compliance with the principle of impartiality.

Statistics cannot be awarded quality labelling as long as there are embargo breaches like those on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi at the end of the month.

It may be necessary to consider a simple measure against those political or administrative authorities that commit embargo breaches, by no longer sending them information in advance, the day before, if they are likely to be tempted by releasing it too early.

Principle 7: Sound methodology

The robustness of official statistics was not found lacking in 2011. The official statistical service is drawing the benefit today from all the methodological work carried out over the years.

Important reforms are still underway. The rapid development of online collection and the RESANE project should enable improvements to be made to productivity.

In the longer term, further gains can be made in productivity and quality by use of the housing directory and the standardisation of treatments on the European scale. This standardisation aims to reduce costs while maintaining the same statistical quality, by greater integration of data collection and processing methods on terms shared by the different European institutes.

The major operation of modernising management of the national identity directory of natural persons and of the electoral roll was practically completed in 2011. This highly innovative work has allowed significant progress: more reliable and more efficient management of these files and lower costs.

A methodology division is to be created within the INSEE at the end of 2012 to enable greater efficiency of the official statistical service.

The Authority is following the progress of these innovative systems closely.

Principle 11: Relevance

▪ The CNIS

See *Annexe 6* the 2011 review by the CNIS

The 2010 review of the work programme of official statistics in relation to the needs expressed is positive. Official statistics has demonstrated its ability to adapt to an ever-changing world. The surveys and work presented to the CNIS have shown a lot of groundwork to deliver a core of framework data serving as a reference for many debates.

The deterioration in the economic situation has brought three themes back to the centre of attention: poverty, economic competitiveness and the question of European integration.

The four main themes selected by the CNIS for the medium-term period of 2009-2013 concern sustainable development, understanding the effects of globalisation, awareness of inequalities and of the role of local territories in the economic and social development of the country.

In addition to these themes, the CNIS raises the issue of the methods and communication of official statistics.

But official statistics is being weakened by cutbacks to resources at a time when expectations are high and when the availability of efficient diagnosis and decision-making assistance tools are important in a period of economic instability.

▪ Satisfaction surveys

Satisfaction surveys are one of the ways available to INSEE to listen to users of its products and adapt its offering.

The surveys conducted in 2011 covered regional studies through partnerships, the INSEE Première collection, INSEE Actualité Magazine, the service provided to researchers using household data, the image of the INSEE among INSEE website users and the image of the INSEE among the general public.

The surveys that have already been completed show satisfactory results regarding the quality of work of the institute. It is judged to have a good performance level and to produce reliable and indispensable data. But some weak points still remain: the image of indicators among the general public remains fragile, information about the institute's activities is insufficient and the independence of indicator production is not sufficiently recognised.

To correct the latter point, INSEE will be launching actions to highlight its professional independence more effectively.

Certain Ministerial Statistical Offices also conduct satisfaction surveys: the DARES, for instance, carries out a satisfaction survey every year among public-sector decision makers, but the response rates remain low and there is considerable room for progress.

Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity

Access to microdata is allowed for research purposes (indicator 15-4).

In its 2010 annual report, the Official Statistics Authority lauded the efforts made by INSEE and the GENES⁶ to set up a secure, remote data access system (CASD), a highly secure facility allowing researchers to work remotely on detailed individual databases, after approval from the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality and in compliance with the requirements of the CNIL.

The Authority has expressed the wish that the CASD should reduce the time required for researchers to gain access and that they should be given access to business statistics. It wanted to be informed of any possible extension of access rights to the CASD to other target groups (local authorities...).

The successful application of the CASD in the *Équipements d'excellence* (Equipex) call for projects within the framework of the *Investissements d'Avenir* of the Ministry for Higher Education and Research, provided greater resources for the operation of the CASD but also, and above all, to develop further services around the CASD.

Researchers are delighted by progress on this issue. In practical terms, they have started effective work within six months of the service being made available. The longest lead times have been observed for projects requiring sources that are not present in the CASD when the application is made. In 2012, one solution to reduce waiting times for researchers will be to set the date of the enrolment session (session during which the researchers are given effective access to the CASD) 15 days after the sessions of the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality approving the researchers' project. Today, the waiting time for the enrolment session is generally about 3 months.

A first core of the business data that was most widely demanded at previous meetings of the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality will be placed on the CASD. The official announcement of the start of integration of these databases on the CASD is scheduled for the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality of June 2012. The CASD will also be announcing the outlines of the switch to a pay service. The first researchers to work on the business data in the CASD will be those presented to the following meeting of the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality, in October 2012.

The Committee on Statistical Confidentiality has sovereign powers regarding any extension of CASD access rights to other audiences. The law of 1951, as amended, states that access to data is granted only for statistical, historical or official statistical research. The definitions of research and of official statistics remain a matter for the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality.

⁶ Group of National Economics and Statistics Schools

3. Recommendations of the Official Statistics Authority

As scheduled, the DREES calendar now includes:

- Pensions and pensioners (2011)	March 2012
- ACTP-PCH ⁸ (Q4-2011)	March 2012
- ACTP-PCH (Q1-2012)	June 2012
- ACTP-PCH (Q2-2012)	September 2012
- ACTP-PCH (Q3-2012)	December 2012
- Social welfare accounts (semi definitive 2010)	June 2012
- Minimum income beneficiaries	June 2012
- Welfare beneficiaries (2011)	September 2012
- Health accounts (2011)	September 2012
- Social welfare expenditure (2011)	December 2012

The calendar may be accessed on the DREES website at the following address:

http://www.sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier_publications_drees_2012.pdf

The following annual indicators are not yet shown in the calendar:

- *Departmental welfare benefit*
- *Top-up health insurance contracts*
- *Self-employed physician income*
- *State of health of the population*
- *Annual health establishment statistics.*

▪ **Department for Statistics and Forward Studies (SSP - Ministerial Statistical Office for Agriculture)**

The following indicators are now shown in the calendar, as scheduled:

- Account forecasts for agriculture	Annual, December N+1
- Provisional accounts for agriculture	Annual, June N+2
- Foreign trade in agri-business	Monthly
- Arable crops	Monthly 10 months/ year
- Milk	Monthly 11 months/ year
- Vine-growing	Monthly July to November

Also included is the annual indicator concerning the production marketed by the agri-business industries in physical quantity and in value (provisional result for 2011 published in July 2012) which had not been planned (Prodcom IAA).

The precise publication dates are indicated in the table at the following address:

http://agreste.agriculture.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf_19_01_12_paraire.pdf

The annual Teruti Luca land occupancy survey is not included in the calendar

▪ **Department for Observation and Statistics (SOeS – Ministerial Statistical Office for Sustainable Development)**

The sustainable development indicators were published in the first report to Parliament in October 2011.

The following indicators are now shown in the calendar:

⁸ Third party compensation benefit and additional disability benefit

Eco-activities and environmental employment (annual), salaried employment and the labour market in transport (quarterly), transport outlook (quarterly) and road haulage results (quarterly).

The SOeS is considering announcing the publication calendar of two annual indicators that are not included in the list: building land price survey and social housing survey.

The calendar can be consulted at the following address:

<http://www.statistiques.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/calendrier-parutions.html>

▪ **Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP - Ministerial Statistical Office for Education)**

The indicators concerning “girls and boys” are announced and published on 11 March.

The publication calendar for the annual indicators concerning institutions, pupils, apprentices, students, continuing education, results and qualifications is not shown. These indicators appear in the form of a publication in the month of September each year.

▪ **Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (SDESE - Ministerial Statistical Office for Justice)**

The calendar for the following indicators has not been published:

- *Civil justice: activities, domains, processing times of cases...*
- *Criminal justice: activities, condemnations, misdemeanours, offences, repeat offending...*
- *Sentence enforcement and penitentiary administration*
- *Minors and justice*
- *Legal aid*

The date of dissemination of the annual statistical directory comprising these indicators should be displayed in the near future.

▪ **General Department for the Administration and Civil Service (Ministerial Statistical Office for the Civil Service)**

The annual indicators on wages and on the level of employment in the three civil service organisations are not yet included in a calendar. Publication of such a calendar is planned once the new editorial policy has been implemented on the occasion of the reorganisation of the department which should take effect in March, after being delayed for several months.

The Authority has duly noted the progress made in the publication of the indicator dissemination calendar. It demands that in 2012, publication of the calendar for all the planned indicators should be effective and will be closely following those of the Ministry for Justice and Liberties. It also hopes to see the official statistical service add new indicators to this calendar.

It lauds the determination of the INSEE to display a general calendar for all the official statistical indicators on its website as clearly as possible.

The Authority asks the official statistical service to ensure that the lead times provided in the calendar are satisfactory.

3.2 Labelling of statistics from administrative processing

In order to guarantee the quality of official statistics, the Authority has undertaken a process of labelling of statistics from processing of administrative sources, as is done for surveys.

This labelling concerns statistics from administrations (outside the official statistical service), from public and private bodies providing a public service and producing statistics of general interest.

To streamline the system, a declaration-based labelling procedure could be applied to official statistical service bodies (INSEE and Ministerial Statistical Offices) that are already required to comply with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice and are already subject to checking procedures, both on the European level and nationally, covering all of their activities.

- *The procedure*

Those bodies considering labelling for their administrative files that are used for statistics must make a formal application to that effect to the Authority. The ASP will select the processing according to the importance of the subject and to feasibility criteria.

The Authority will determine its labelling programme after receiving the opinion of the President of the CNIS and the INSEE Director-General.

The legal framework for this labelling has not yet been settled upon, as the revised decree on official statistical governance is still being studied. As soon as the decree is published, the Quality Label Committee which is operational for statistical surveys will see its remit extended to include the appraisal of files for the labelling of administrative data. It will be based on the recommendations made in the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate.⁹

The files which the Authority has decided to have assessed will be appraised by the ad hoc formation of the Quality Label Committee. The heads of the body in question wishing to have their statistics labelled may be heard by the Committee which will call in experts who are members of the official statistical service who are specialists in the field in question.

Given the reduced resources of this Committee, the INSEE experts working with the Quality Label Committee, backed by the INSEE General Inspectorate, will appraise the simpler files; in more complicated cases, the General Inspectorate of Finances and that of Social Affairs may be called upon, as required, to conduct preliminary audits for the appraisal of the files.

The Quality Label Committee will issue an opinion proposing to award the label to the treatment in question, or not. The opinion will be transmitted to the President of the Authority.

On the basis of the opinion and reasons given by the Quality Label Committee, the Authority will validate the labelling proposal, or not. This labelling will be granted for a maximum of five years. The decision of the Authority will be published on its website. The CNIS and its President will be kept fully informed throughout the procedure. In the event of a refusal, reasons will be given, along with recommendations likely to allow labelling to be granted at a later date.

⁹ This report is online on the Authority website <http://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/rapports.html>
See also section

▪ ***Prospects for future labelling***

In 2011, the Authority granted quality labelling to the quarterly statistics on house prices in the Paris/Ile de France region¹⁰ and the quarterly employment statistics from the ACOSS.¹¹

New possibilities are currently being explored for the 2012 programme:

- statistics on road accidents;
- the statistics published by the National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses (ONDRP);
- statistics from notarial sources in the provinces;
- payroll statistics from the ACOSS;
- statistics of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi;
- the statistics produced by the different social security funds: National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF), National Health Insurance Fund (CNAM-TS), National Old Age Insurance Fund (CNAV) and the Agricultural Social Mutual Fund (MSA);
- State pension service statistics.

¹⁰ Annexe 3

¹¹ Annexe 4

4. Follow up of the recommendations in the 2010 report of the Authority

In its 2010 Annual Report, the Authority made five recommendations:

1. More systematic use of administrative sources
2. Development of local data
3. Further statistical work on the transparency of the banking system
4. Shorter dissemination deadlines
5. Clarification of dissemination and communication

As every year, the Authority analyses the way and the extent to which the official statistical system has taken its recommendations into consideration.

4.1. More systematic use of administrative sources

Excerpts from the recommendation in the ASP 2010 annual report:

The Authority shares the concerns of the ESGAB (European Statistical Governance Advisory Board) and calls for more systematic use to be made of administrative sources, whilst preserving the various categories of confidentiality, in particular fiscal and statistical confidentiality...

The Authority would like the official statistical service to go further in its use of administrative sources and lend support to the CNIS in the implementation of its recommendations.

The Authority calls for all measures to be taken to guarantee the confidentiality of private data (encryption of identifiers, depersonalisation of files, etc...).

In 2011, the official statistical service made wider use of administrative files to prepare statistics, in order to reduce the burden of information collection from enterprises and households.

- *Civil service employment:*

The statistical office of the Ministry for the Civil Service, INSEE and the statistical offices of the Ministry for the Interior and the Ministry for Labour are implementing a programme intended to produce uniform statistics between the three civil service organisations. The aim is to facilitate comparisons between public sector and private sector employees. The simultaneous provision of data on employment and on pay in the three civil service branches will result in the stabilised production of statistics in 2012.

- *Health expenditure:*

The data from the Health and Welfare Protection Survey by the Institute for Research and Documentation in Health Economics (IRDES) is paired with medical insurance reimbursement data and data from the voluntary top-up cover bodies.

This project should make it possible to “chain link” health expenditure, obligatory reimbursements and top-up reimbursements to show ultimately the actual healthcare expenditure borne by households.

- *School trajectories:*

Pairing of individual files is a necessity to meet the growing expectations in terms of recognition of school trajectories. The statistical office of the Ministry for National Education, for Youth and Associations is constructing tools that can track these trajectories in strict compliance with individual data confidentiality requirements.

The National Registry of Pupil and Student Identifiers (RNIE) will only contain the variables required to issue a unique number to each pupil, which they will lose once they are considered as having ended their initial training.

The FAERE system (Anonymised files for studies and research) is intended for pairing files to construct pupil trajectories in the education system. The pupil identifier will benefit from dual encryption to provide strictly anonymous data. This data will allow detailed analysis of guidance processes.

The third system is the renewal of the pupil monitoring panels which combine administrative sources and particular surveys of pupils and their families.

4.2. Development of local data

Excerpts from the recommendation in the ASP 2010 annual report:

The needs that have emerged over recent years as part of the decentralisation of State missions have grown in number and require the scope of local data and geographical scales to be extended in order to provide a better understanding of disparities and the specific features of these territories...

Budgetary constraints permitting, the Authority asks INSEE to continue in its efforts to disseminate data at a fine geographical level and recommends the use of administrative data to obtain this local information.

It encourages the production and regular dissemination of comparable department-level indicators covering the scope of social policies and territorial sustainable development indicators.

The Authority lauds the efforts made by the official statistical service to make more room for local statistics.

The statistical office of the Ministry for Agriculture published the first results of the *farm census* less than one year after collection and with a response rate of over 99%. Almost 500,000 farms were thus surveyed and one million people involved, drawing up a detailed picture of French farming.

The *new division into urban units* has replaced the work carried out in 1999. A map of urban concentration in France has thus been drawn up. In 10 years, the territory covered by urban municipalities has increased by 19% in Metropolitan France. Cities now occupy 22% of the territory and are home to more than three-quarters of the population.

The *breakdown into employment zones* was updated by the Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES). This division of the territory was keenly awaited for the implementation of public territorial policies, in particular those concerning the labour market.

Departmental social indicators were published in August on the INSEE website. A working group had defined a core set of indicators that are shared between the central and departmental levels, in the main areas of departmental welfare action.

The members of the Authority give their backing to the position of the National Council for Statistical Information which is calling for methodological thinking to be conducted into finding a better fit between national surveys, survey extensions, administrative sources and the use of innovative statistical methods to meet the expectations of local territories in the present difficult budget situation.

4.3 Further statistical work on the transparency of the banking system

The work underway on the transparency of the banking system has progressed, but the recommendations made on this matter by the Authority in its 2009 report have not produced effects.

The conditions for setting up statistics on financial groups by business line, in particular distinguishing deposit banks from merchant banks and investment banks, will be explored starting from September 2011 by a technical group made up of representatives from INSEE, the Banque de France, the Prudential Supervisory Authority and the Autorité des Marchés Financiers. This work will need to be extended to European level in order to succeed.

The Official Statistics Authority would like to see extensive public dissemination of the indicators of solvency and liquidity of financial institutions, supported where possible by a European framework.

Following on from the work of the group chaired by Gilles de Margerie on financial groups, the “Financial System and Financing the Economy” Commission of the CNIS created a technical group in September 2011 to work on business lines in the banking sector.¹² The idea is to try to separate, in statistical terms, the different banking and financial activities by analysing the breakdown of profitability and remuneration within these businesses, as well as the way their risks are hedged. The greatest attention will be devoted to complying with commercial confidentiality rules.

The technical group comprises representatives of INSEE, the Banque de France, the prudential authorities and trade associations.

It will be presenting a draft report to the competent Commission of the CNIS in March 2012.

4.4 Shorter dissemination deadlines

The Authority acknowledges the goal stated by INSEE to disseminate the files from the household surveys in the year following collection... Other statistics are still published too late... The Authority would like to ensure that the dissemination of official statistics is as swift and extensive as possible. It would like this deadline-shortening objective to be pursued, and would like to be informed of any difficulty keeping future operations within acceptable deadlines.

The 2011 farm census is an exemplary achievement, both in terms of quality and of dissemination lead times. The statistical office of the Ministry for Agriculture published the first results of the farm census less than one year after collection.

Certain statistics are published late with figures that are often far from up to date. Those on poverty rates published in December 2011 concerned the year 2009. The source used is the “Fiscal and Social Income” survey, the statistical pairing of the employment survey file with the tax files (income tax returns) of the Directorate General for Public Finances (DGFIP) for year n and the data on welfare benefits received in the course of year n as collected from the National Family Benefit Fund and the Central Agricultural Welfare Mutual Fund. This process leaves little room for speeding up publication of the statistics.

The Authority raises the question of the level of precision of statistics: the higher that level, the longer treatment and processing times are and the later the publication date will be. A fresh look could perhaps be taken at the compromise between cost, accuracy and speed.

¹² The mandate of the technical group is presented on the CNIS website

http://www.cnis.fr/cms/site/Cnis/lang/fr/Accueil/activites/Organisation/Groupes_de_travail/Groupes_de_travail_actifs/statistiques_bancaires_lignes_de_metiers

4.5 Clarification of dissemination and communication

The INSEE website is very rich in information but is often only useable by experts, as the concepts are often obscure and browsing is non-intuitive...

The Authority asks for data dissemination to be adapted to the needs of all audiences.

To boost confidence in the quality of the data produced, the Authority would like to see the communication of the official statistical service based more on targeted educational procedures.

The official statistical service is carrying on its communication efforts.

This can be illustrated by several examples.

On the INSEE website, the “unemployment” file clearly explains the differences between unemployment as defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the monthly statistic of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi.

In the “price index and purchasing power” file, for the first time INSEE presents a set of pedagogical tools for measuring changes in prices and purchasing power. An insight is provided into the different components of purchasing power. The method for calculating the price index is explained for the general public. The interest of the file will be assessed with users.

Mapping tools have been created on the INSEE website to enhance the accessibility and clarity of use of information disseminated on the local level.

INSEE is striving to exploit modern dissemination means more and more effectively. It is playing an active role in the data.gouv.fr public data portal. It has opened a Twitter account to reach new web surfers. It is using Slideshare and Dailymotion to extend the dissemination of its pedagogical documents. New practical services are being proposed, such as a simplified website for mobile phones. Interactivity is being introduced, such as through the customised dissemination of infra-municipal information from the census for public bodies.

The Authority appreciates the communication and pedagogical efforts of INSEE for the benefit of users and asks that they should be extended without harming the scientific quality of statistical output.

The Authority is pleased to note that all its recommendations have been put into effect by the official statistical service. However, improvements are still required on dissemination times and on communication.

5. Activity of the Official Statistics Authority in 2011

5.1 2011 Sessions of the Authority

The Official Statistics Authority met four times in 2011, for hearings which enriched and nourished the reflections of the members of the Authority.

29 March 2011:

- hearing of Alain Bauer, Professor of Criminology at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers and Chairman of the Steering Committee of the National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses;
- presentation of the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate on the quality labelling of official statistics, by Alain Chappert and Jean-Pierre Puig.

21 June 2011:

- presentation of the RESANE programme (Restructuring of annual business statistics) ;
- presentation of the Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES);
- quality labelling of the quarterly statistics on housing prices in the Île de France region.

29 September 2011:

- hearing of Benjamin Camus, Under-Director of Statistics and Studies at the Ministry for Justice and Liberties;
- presentation of the draft decree on governance of official statistics;
- application for Ministerial Statistical Office (MSO) status by the Office for Statistical Studies in Fiscal Matters (Office GF 3C) at the Directorate General for Public Finances (DGFIP);
- examination of the request from the President of the National Council for Statistical information (CNIS) relating to access to data in notarial databases
- labelling of the quarterly statistics on salaried employment on the national level by the ACOSS

14 December 2011:

- hearing of Jean-Pierre Duport, President of the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS)
- hearing of Jean-Philippe Cotis, INSEE Director-General

The minutes of the decisions of these sessions are accessible on the website of the Official Statistics Authority <http://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/>.

5.2 Referral to the Official Statistics Authority by the President of the National Council for Statistical information

The quarterly statistics on housing prices in the Île-de-France region, produced jointly by the Paris Chamber of Notaries and INSEE, were awarded quality labelling by the ASP. In parallel, Articles 15 and 16 of Law 2011-331 of 28 March 2011 made the notaries' profession responsible for a "public service mission" consisting in collecting, centralising and disseminating information on conveyancing of property for payment. However the notaries' profession tends to settle for a minimalist vision of these obligations, causing a blockage of

the negotiations over the implementing decree for the law in question. This information would be extremely useful for preparing national or local statistics on property prices and would make it possible to enrich and refine the existing statistics on the features of homes.

More than six months after publication of this law, no draft decree giving details of the terms of application of the articles in the law has been transmitted to the Council of State.

This being the case, the President of the CNIS referred to the President of the Authority to ask him to contact the Minister for Justice and Liberties with a view to making progress in the discussions with the notaries.

The President of the Official Statistics Authority sent a letter to the Minister for Justice and Liberties to obtain information on the reasons for the delays in publication of the decree and the date on which the text would be submitted for the examination of the Council of State.

The new draft decree would seem to meet the expectations of the SoeS. **The Authority will be following the publication and implementation of the decree attentively.**

5.3 Hearings of official statistics producers

Each year, the Authority conducts hearings of several Ministerial Statistical Offices or bodies entrusted with a public service mission, to ensure that their statistical output is produced in compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice.

In 2011, the Authority heard two Ministerial Statistical Offices, the Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES) and the Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies at the Ministry for Justice and Liberties, plus the National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses (ONDRP). It also heard the Office for Statistical Studies in Fiscal Matters at the Directorate General for Public Finances (DGFIP), which was applying for Ministerial Statistical Office status.

▪ *Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (Dares)*

The Authority looked into the “coproduction” of statistics on jobseekers at the end of the month (DEFM) with Pôle Emploi. This data, of great social significance, raises some questions.

The statistics on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi are complementary with those of the INSEE employment survey which measures unemployment as defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The DARES carries out its statistical treatment on raw data that relies on the management of Pôle Emploi and can be affected by various factors: changes to operational practice in monitoring and accompanying jobseekers, changes to the terms on which information relating to jobseekers is entered by Pôle Emploi staff, changes to the rules on updating jobseeker information.

It is important to identify and, if possible, assess the effect of these factors in order to interpret trends in the statistics appropriately.

Marked divergences between the trends in the estimated number of unemployed as defined by the ILO and the number of ‘category A’ jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi appear from time to time. The DARES is trying to analyse recent divergences in trends and will be publishing its works soon.

The Official Statistics Authority will be particularly vigilant regarding the improvements the DARES undertakes to make to the transparency of the raw data

production methods, and notably on the way changes in management of jobseekers are handled.

Its demands that dissemination conditions ensure equal access to information for all users.

The Authority asks that the control systems within Pôle Emploi and the systems for exchanging information on factors likely to affect data production be reinforced.

▪ ***Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies at the Ministry for Justice and Liberties***

The members of the Authority mainly focused their attention on the fit between the work conducted within this sub-department and that of the National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses (ONDRP).

The approaches to “activities of the police and gendarmerie” (persons referred to the courts) and to “justice” (legal proceedings taken, or not) are not easy to reconcile.

The Ministry for Justice and Liberties focuses on the person accused by the police-gendarmerie and who is referred to the courts. Its prime objective is to follow the criminal justice process and provide some partial answers to the following question: what are the types of delinquency and what are the criminal responses provided? A given fact may be ascertained by the police or gendarmerie with an initial qualification and may then be requalified by the Justice system which fixes the final qualification of the offence. It is therefore essential to define a set of conventions with the ONDRP to have consistent, matching information.

The Authority is pleased to note the transparency and quality of the work of the Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies.

It joins in the request of the CNIS that official statistics should be allowed to participate as early on as possible in thinking on the new administrative provisions. The quality of future statistics depends on it.

▪ ***The National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses (ONDRP)***

The mission of the ONDRP is to collect statistical data relating to delinquency from all ministerial departments and public or private organisations with direct or indirect knowledge of facts or situations of assaults on persons or property. It is also responsible for centralising data on sentencing, enforcement and application of criminal measures and sanctions.

The Observatory is striving to create the right conditions for stable, reliable production of figures on delinquency. It is trying, with the Ministry for Justice, to improve the fit between these figures and those on the activities of Justice.

The President of the ONDRP Steering Committee asked about the terms for obtaining Ministerial Statistical Office status (MSO). The Authority President reminded him that the MSOs are in central government administrations or decentralised State departments or are departments of the ministries with national powers. However, the ONDRP is a department of the National Institute for Higher Studies in Security and Justice, a national public institution of an administrative nature placed under the authority of the Prime Minister, which is incompatible with MSO status.

However, the President of the Authority indicated that the ASP was ready to examine some of the output of the ONDRP with a view to quality labelling.

The Authority is highly appreciative of the efforts made by the ONDRP to improve the reliability of the administrative files used to prepare delinquency statistics. It is attentive

to the transparency of the respective fields of action of the ONDRP and the Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies at the Ministry for Justice and Liberties.

- ***Office for Statistical Studies in Fiscal Matters at the General Directorate for Public Finances (DGFIP), applying for Ministerial Statistical Office status (MSO)***

The main activity of this office is the production and appraisal of statistics. It also handles simulations of legislative measures that are under preparation or have been passed and assesses costs for the State budget.

To fit the definition of MSO, a precise analysis was undertaken of the principles of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice that must be respected; the DGFIP gave the following commitments in front of the Authority:

- consolidation of data confidentiality and compliance with the dual secrecy rule (statistical secrecy and fiscal secrecy);
- compliance with statistical independence and non-participation in tax audits.

Admission to the MSO network will require the DGFIP to shorten lead times for publication of statistics on incomes, for example, or those on local authorities, to announce its publications in a pre-announced calendar, to give a better explanation of the sources and methods and, above all, to place more data at the disposal of academics and researchers.

The members of the Official Statistics Authority gave a positive opinion on the award by the Minister for Economy, Finance and Industry of Ministerial Statistical Office (MSO) status to the Office for Statistical Studies in Fiscal Matters.

They noted on this occasion the determination of the DGFIP to work towards opening up fiscal statistics and, to that effect, to make individual databases more accessible to experts from outside the economic and financial administration, in order to enable such experts to conduct independent simulations of the effects of fiscal measures.

5.4 Communication of the Authority

The President of the Official Statistics Authority presented the 2010 Annual report of the Authority to the Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industry, who gave a very warm welcome to the work of the Authority, and principally the publication of the indicators announced in advance.

Other interviews gave rise to some rich debates.

The 2010 report was widely disseminated (see the list of recipients in *Annexe I*).

This report is also accessible, in French and English, on the website of the Authority www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr

Annexes

Annexe 1 : Recipients of the Report

“This report is submitted to Parliament and made public” (Article 2 of the Decree of 3 March on the Official Statistics Authority)

As in 2009 and 2010, this report shall be submitted:

- *to Parliament:* to the Presidents of the National Assembly, the Senate and their commissions

- *to the representatives of the Nation*
 - President of the Republic
 - President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council
 - Prime Minister
 - Minister for the Economy, Industry and Employment
 - Ministries responsible for the Ministerial Statistical Offices

- *to the major French State bodies*
 - Vice-President of the Council of State
 - First President of the Court of Accounts
 - Head of the General Inspectorate of Finances
 - Head of the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs

- *to the representatives of French official statistics*
 - President of the CNIS
 - INSEE Director General and all the heads of the Ministerial Statistical Offices
 - Banque de France and other producers
 - Members of the INSEE board

- *to the representatives of European official statistics*
 - President of the ESGAB (European Statistical Governance Advisory Board).
 - Members of the ESGAB
 - Eurostat
 - European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC)

Annexe 2 : List of indicators for 2011 for which the publication is announced in advance

1. Indicators already announced

Most of the economic outlook indicators are already announced in the schedules on the insee.fr website and, when applicable, on the sites of the Ministerial Statistical Offices.

Certain indicators are announced **4 months in advance** (indicated by a *). The others are announced **1 month in advance**.

Activity in industry

Indices of orders received in industry by value	Monthly	INSEE
Monthly outlook survey in industry	Monthly*	INSEE
Quarterly outlook survey in industry	Quarterly*	INSEE
Turnover in industry and construction	Monthly	INSEE
Industrial production index	Monthly*	INSEE
Energy outlook	Monthly*	SOeS ¹³

Activity in building and public works

Monthly outlook survey in the building industry	Monthly*	INSEE
Quarterly property development survey	Quarterly*	INSEE
Quarterly public works survey	Quarterly*	INSEE
Quarterly building trades survey	Quarterly*	INSEE
New construction	Monthly*	SOeS
New housing sales	Quarterly*	SOeS

Activity in trade and services

Bimonthly outlook survey in the wholesale trade	Bimonthly*	INSEE
Monthly outlook survey in the retail trade and automobile sales and repairs	Monthly*	INSEE
Monthly outlook survey in services	Monthly*	INSEE
Turnover in the retail trade and personal services	Monthly	INSEE
Turnover in the wholesale trade and various services to businesses	Monthly	INSEE
Transport services production index (IPST) ¹⁴	Quarterly*	SOeS
Messaging results	Quarterly*	SOeS
Road haulage results (TRM)	Quarterly*	SOeS

Investments and stocks

Investments in industry survey	Quarterly*	INSEE
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Enterprise results and demography

Business climate and turning point indicators	Monthly*	INSEE
Cash flow in industry survey	Half yearly	INSEE
Business creations	Monthly*	INSEE
Business bankruptcies	Monthly*	INSEE

¹³ SOeS: Sustainable Development – Department for Observation and Statistics

¹⁴ Announced in the four-monthly calendar on the SOeS website

* indicator announced 4 months in advance

Employment and Labour Market

Persons leaving the list of job-seekers registered with Pôle Emploi	Quarterly*	DARES ¹⁵
Registered job-seekers and job offers collected by Pôle Emploi	Monthly*	DARES/Pôle Emploi
Temporary employment	Quarterly*	DARES
Overtime	Quarterly*	DARES
Salaried employment snapshot	Quarterly*	INSEE
Unemployment as defined by ILO and labour market indicators (Labour force survey results)	Quarterly*	INSEE
Salaried employment	Quarterly*	INSEE

Household Income and Consumption

Labour force employment activity and conditions (Provisional quarterly results) ¹⁶	Quarterly*	DARES
Labour force employment activity and conditions (Working time and wages)	Quarterly*	DARES
Household consumer spending on non-energy industrial goods	Monthly*	INSEE
Monthly household outlook survey	Monthly*	INSEE
New vehicle registrations	Monthly*	INSEE
Road vehicle registrations	Quarterly*	SOeS
Basic wages – Comparison of France-Germany	Annual	INSEE
Civil service gross wage index – index scale	Quarterly	INSEE
Revised hourly labour costs – All employees	Quarterly	INSEE
Labour cost index in industry, construction and services	Quarterly	INSEE

Foreign trade

Foreign trade by value	Monthly*	Ministerial Statistical Office- DGDDI ¹⁷
Balance of payments	Monthly*	Banque de France

Prices

Imported oil and commodity prices	Monthly	INSEE
Consumer prices – annual averages	Annual*	INSEE
Index of prices in large-scale distribution	Monthly	INSEE
Consumer price index	Monthly*	INSEE
Rents reference index	Quarterly*	INSEE
Old property price indices	Quarterly	INSEE / Notaries
Producer and import prices indices in industry	Monthly*	INSEE
Construction cost index	Quarterly	INSEE
Commercial rents index	Quarterly	INSEE
Producer price indices for services to business	Quarterly	INSEE
Agricultural price indices	Quarterly	INSEE /SSP
Price index for home repairs and improvement	Quarterly*	SOeS
Freight transport price indices (IPTF)	Quarterly*	SOeS

International

Monthly European outlook surveys	Monthly	INSEE
Quarterly European outlook surveys	Quarterly	INSEE

National Accounts

Quarterly national accounts – initial results	Quarterly*	INSEE
Quarterly national accounts – detailed results	Quarterly*	INSEE
National accounts of general government – initial results	Annual*	INSEE
Quarterly Maastricht debt of general government	Quarterly*	INSEE

¹⁵ DARES: Labour, Employment and Professional Training - Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics

¹⁶ Announced in the four-monthly calendar on the DARES website

¹⁷ General Directorate of Customs and Indirect Taxes

2. New indicators (in italics, indicators scheduled for display in 2011 but for which the calendar has not been set)

Agriculture

Account forecasts for agriculture	Annual, December N+1	SSP ¹⁸ /INSEE
Provisional accounts for agriculture	Annual, June N+2	SSP/INSEE
Foreign trade in agri-business	Monthly	SSP
Arable crops	Monthly 10 months / year	SSP
Milk	Monthly 11 months / year	SSP
Vine-growing	Monthly July to November	SSP
General Farm Census (RGA)	Not periodical	SSP

Trade

Trade accounts	Annual	INSEE
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National accounts - Public finances

National accounts:	Annual, May-June N+1	INSEE
- Input-output table		
- Institutional sector accounts		
- Financial operations table		
- Wealth accounts. Main results		
Regional accounts:		INSEE
- GDP and added value by branch, by region	- Annual December 2012 GDP 2009 definitive, GDP 2010 semi-definitive, GDP 2011 provisional	
- Retropolation since 1998	- July 2012	
- Gross disposable income by region	- December 2011: 2008	
- GDP and added value by Department (periodically)	- Transmission to Eurostat	
- Accounts for the Overseas Departments	- N+2	

Living conditions - Society

<i>Average consumption of certain food products (abandoned pending a review of the methodology)</i>	Annual	INSEE
Prices of certain products: bread, diesel...	Monthly, published with CPI	INSEE
Culture and recreation expenditure	Annual, July N+1	INSEE
Characteristics of the stock of main residences	Annual	
Indicators from the Justice statistical directory:		
<i>Civil justice: activities, domains, processing times of cases...</i>	Annual	Justice (SDESE) ¹⁹
<i>Criminal justice: activities, condemnations, misdemeanours, offences, repeat offending</i>	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
<i>Sentence enforcement and penitentiary administration</i>	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
<i>Minors and justice</i>	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
<i>Legal aid</i>	Annual	Justice (SDESE)

Teaching - Education

<i>Institutions, pupils, apprentices, students, continuing education, results, qualifications</i>	Annual	DEPP ²⁰
Girls and boys	Annual (8 March)	DEPP

¹⁸ SSP: Ministerial Statistical Office for Agriculture – Department for Statistics and Forward Studies

¹⁹ SDESE: Ministerial Statistical Office for Justice – Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies

²⁰ DEPP: Ministerial Statistical Office for Education – Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance

Enterprises

Demography of enterprises and establishments: list at 1 st January and creations during the year	Annual January N+1	INSEE
Community Innovation Survey (CIS)	Every 2 years H2 2012, 2014	INSEE
SINE surveys (Information system on new businesses) "Auto-entrepreneurs"	Not periodical January 2012	INSEE
Other start-ups	February 2012	INSEE
Survey of « Information and Communication Technologies" (ICT)	Annual T1	INSEE
Annual output survey	Annual T4 N+2	INSEE

Industry, Agri-Food, Construction

Annual survey of energy consumption in industry (EACEI)	Annual H2	INSEE
Studies and investments by industry to protect the environment	Annual Q4	INSEE

Population

Official population	Annual 31/12	INSEE
Statistical results of the census	Annual July	INSEE
Demographic review: national demographic indicators drawn from population estimates (population, fertility, life expectancy, age on marriage and on maternity...)	Annual 17/01/2012	INSEE
Regional and departmental populations by sex and by age (estimates)	Annual January N+1	INSEE

Income, wages

Main results on wages	Annual, July	INSEE
Income of the self-employed	Annual, Q1 2012	INSEE
Main results of the Fiscal and Social Income survey, including: poverty rates according to the threshold, number of people living under the poverty threshold by age, number of poor people	Annual	INSEE
State agent wages	Annual, Q4 N+2	INSEE
Territorial civil service wages	Annual Q3 N+2	INSEE
<i>Wages in the three parts of the Civil Service with the change over one year</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Civil Service MSO</i>

Health, social welfare

Health account	Annual	DREES ²¹
Pensions and pensioners	Annual	DREES
<i>Departmental welfare benefit</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>DREES</i>
Minimum income beneficiaries	Annual	DREES
Third party compensation benefit and additional disability benefit (ACTP-PCH)	Quarterly	DREES
<i>Top-up health insurance contracts</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>DREES</i>
<i>State of health of the population</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>DREES</i>
Social welfare accounts (semi definitive)	Annual	DREES
<i>Annual (health) establishment statistics (SAE)</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>DREES</i>

²¹ DREES: Ministerial Statistical Office for Health and Solidarity – Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics

Services, tourism, transport

Services accounts	Annual twice a year July and December	INSEE
Tourist accommodation and occupancy rates	Quarterly	INSEE
- Hotels, campsites	- 15/02 Q4 N-1	
- Other accommodation	- not yet published	
Road passenger transport	Annual	SOeS

Territory - Environment

Infra-municipal level urban data by district:		INSEE
- census, jobseekers,	- Annual Q4 and T+1	
- fiscal income,	- Annual N+1.5	
- births,	- N+1	
- recipients of family benefits...	- N+ 4	
<i>Teruti Lucas land occupancy survey</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>SSP Agriculture MSO</i>

Work - Employment

Labour market tensions	Quarterly	DARES
Labour force movements	Quarterly	DARES
Various recurring publications (25 approx.)	Various	DARES
Quarterly paid employment estimates by region	Quarterly	INSEE
Paid employment and self-employment estimates by region	Annual	INSEE
Annual results of the Labour Market survey	Annual	INSEE
Local unemployment rate by region, department, employment area	Quarterly	INSEE
<i>Level of employment in the three civil service organisations</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Civil Service MSO</i>

Transversal indicators

Equal opportunities indicators	Annual (8 March)	INSEE
Inequality indicators in the Freyssinet report	Annual November	INSEE
Sustainable Development indicators	Annual October	SoeS/INSEE
Departmental social indicators	Updated in January and July	

(These are groups of indicators that intended to be “meaningful”; they contain indicators already announced in a precise theme)

Annexe 3 : Opinion n° 2011-01 of the Official Statistics Authority of 21 June 2011 on the quality labelling of the quarterly statistics on housing prices in the Île de France region

OJFR n°0151 of 1 July 2011
Text n°144

Opinion n° 2011-01 of the Official Statistics Authority of 21 June 2011 on the quality labelling of the quarterly statistics on housing prices in the Île de France region

NOR: EFIS1117079V

With regard to the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate on quality labelling of official statistics of 29 March 2011,

With regard to the letter of 31 May 2011 from the President of the Paris Chamber of Notaries;

With regard to the letter of 9 June 2011 from the INSEE Director-General, in which he confirms that the commitments given in the letter of 31 May 2011 from the President of the Paris Chamber of Notaries seem to him to comply with the recommendations in the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate;

The Official Statistics Authority hereby serves notice of the quality labelling of the quarterly statistics on housing prices in the Île de France region, produced jointly by the Paris Chamber of Notaries and the INSEE, for a period of five years.

The present notice will be mentioned in the Official Journal of the French Republic.

Drawn up on 21 June 2011.

The President,
P. Champsaur

Annexe 4 : Opinion n° 2011-02 of the Official Statistics Authority of 29 September 2011 on the quality labelling of the quarterly employment statistics of the ACOSS

OJFR n°0270 of 22 November 2011
Text n°67

Opinion n° 2011-02 of the Official Statistics Authority of 29 September 2011 on the quality labelling of the quarterly employment statistics of the ACOSS

NOR: EFIS1128621V

With regard to the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate on the quality labelling of official statistics of 29 March 2011;

With regard to the letter of 13 July 2011 from the Director General of the ACOSS;

With regard to the letter of 20 July 2011 from the INSEE Director-General, in which he confirms that the commitments given in the letter of 13 July 2011 from the Director General of the ACOSS seem to him to comply with the recommendations in the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate,

The Official Statistics Authority hereby serves notice of the quality labelling of the quarterly employment statistics produced on the national level by the ACOSS, for a period of five years.

The present notice will be mentioned in the Official Journal of the French Republic. It cancels and supersedes that published in the Official Journal of 15 October 2011.

1. Review of the “quality” procedure in 2011 at the INSEE

The outcome of five years of the INSEE quality procedure is more than positive

All the INSEE departments have participated actively in the quality procedure since its launch. No fewer than 90 quality improvement actions have been conducted since 2006, of which 70 have now been completed. They have brought collective progress in conduct of household surveys (deployment of the CORE²² to all surveys, implementation of a quality assurance framework), in the handling of projects (roll-out of the MAREVA²³ analysis method, improvements to project cost evaluation), in the production of business statistics, in the transparent presentation of working methods on the insee.fr website (quality section, household and business survey quality information sheets), in listening to users and in user satisfaction (Marianne quality labelling, introduction of satisfaction surveys, feedback systems)...

Of the fifteen actions with completion deadlines in 2011, twelve have achieved their objectives

Twelve actions of the fifteen in the plan with completion deadlines in 2011 had been completed by the end of the year. Of the three that had not been finished, two are simply delayed and should be completed by the end of 2012 (application service quality scoreboard, implementation of the commitment to apply the Marianne standard to the INSEE Info Service). However, the action to “Inform the CNIS of the cost of a statistical survey on submission of the request for its usefulness opinion” still requires a lot of work; this action is suspended pending the reorganisation of the INSEE General Directorate.

A more mixed review for the eighteen actions with deadlines after 2011

Concerning the eighteen quality actions with deadlines after 2011, thirteen are ongoing and one has been completed. This is the action to “Improve efficiency of outlook surveys.” In the course of 2011, internet collection of outlook surveys progressed sufficiently to consider switching to “internet only” surveys, meaning that outsourced data entry is no longer necessary.

Four actions, however, have had their deadlines or objectives redefined. The action to “Collect the census by internet” has had its deadline postponed to 2015. The action to “Generalise time measurement” will be replaced by a more targeted action to “Measure time in the outlook surveys division”. Although it has partially achieved its objective, the action to “Control the publication production process” is to be replaced by an action on controlling online data publication on the insee.fr website. Finally, it has been decided to suspend the action to “Give MSO staff access to continuous education” pending the new organisation of statistical coordination.

Progress on the European Statistics Code of Practice

Since 2007, Eurostat has been monitoring progress of the quality improvement actions recommended by the peers. In 2011, the INSEE progressed in its compliance with the Code. Among the actions launched in 2007, four were still underway at the start of 2011; two of these have now been completed and have achieved their objectives to the full. They concern the production of quality reviews for business surveys and starting the profiling of groups. Only the actions on online collection of the population census and the compilation of the SIRUS statistical directory of enterprises have not been completed.

During their visit, the peers had also pinpointed the poor content of the insee.fr website in terms of definitions (in French and in English). This led to the implementation of a quality action which was successfully completed in 2011, with the opening in December 2011 of the English version of the “Definitions” and “Sources and Methods” sections of the site, containing over 1,000 references.

At the request of Eurostat, new improvement actions are added each year. In 2011, it was decided to add an action on the introduction of a quality assurance framework for household surveys. This action clearly illustrates one of the new directions of the INSEE quality procedure, which is to say the extension of quality assurance frameworks to all statistical production processes.

²² Organisation framework for conducting surveys

²³ Method for the analysis and reporting of value

2. Review of the “quality” procedure in 2011 in the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSO)

Nine MSOs²⁴ producing European statistics have chosen one or several actions to make particular improvements to their position as regards the European Statistics Code of Practice. In 2011, the quality action plan of the MSOs comprised 32 actions, of which 22 with completion deadlines set for 2011. 13 of the 22 actions with completion deadlines in 2011 were completed (against 9 out of 18 in 2010); two actions with deadlines in 2012 were also completed. Particularly outstanding efforts were made on writing up quality reviews (type 3 actions) and on the use of administrative files (type 8). On the other hand, most of the actions concerning improvements to metainformation on internet (type 6) were postponed to 2012. All in all, 8 actions with completion deadlines in 2011 were postponed to or extended into 2012, while one was abandoned. In 2012, thirteen actions should be completed, given these postponements.

Actions and corresponding principles in the Code	Number of actions	of which number with deadlines in 2011	Actions completed in 2011	of which number with deadlines in 2012
1 - Raising awareness of European quality rules (principle 4)	4	3	2	1
2 - Writing new full process descriptions (principles 4, 7 and 8)	2	2	1	
3 - Quality reviews of business statistics (principles 4, 7, 8 and 12)	4	4	4	
4 - Recognising confidentiality obligations (principle 5)				
5 - Internet publication calendar (principles 6 and 13)	1	1	0	
6 – “Definitions and Methods” section on internet (principles 6 and 15)	6	4	1	
7 - Survey collection by internet (principles 9 and 10)	6	2	1	
8 - Use of administrative files (principles 9 and 10)	4	3	3	
9 - Transmission of files via the eDamis portal (principle 8, 11 and 13)	For information			
10 - Measurement of user satisfaction (principle 11)	1	1	1	
11 - Cost-benefit and risk assessments of operations (principles 3 and 10)	1	1	1	
12 - Dissemination of quality information sheets on internet (principles 4 and 15)	1	0	1	1
13 - Administrative sources quality analysis (principles 8, 9 and 10)	2	1	0	
Total:	32	22	15	2

1 - Raising awareness of European quality rules

The plan comprises four actions to raise awareness of the European Statistics Code of Practice: two were completed, including one before the deadline which had been set (2012) (MSO-Education and MSO-Justice). The other two are postponed to the first half of 2012 (MSO-Sustainable Development and MSO-Immigration). This training is now included in the training schedule for new arrivals in most MSOs.

2 - Writing new full process descriptions

Two MSOs have actions of this type. For the MSO-Agriculture, the reference document describing the statistical information preparation process has now been written up and each item is currently being updated as it comes into application. For the MSO-Sustainable Development, preparation of process descriptions for the main aggregates is underway after a break in 2010 due to reorganisation of the department; the action has been extended into 2012.

²⁴Situation at end 2011: Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Customs, Education, Civil Service, Immigration, Justice, Health, Labour.

3 - Quality reviews of business statistics

The 4 MSOs - Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Civil Service and Labour – with actions of this type in 2011 all achieved their objective: all the quality reviews of business surveys and indicators were carried out. These reviews will now be conducted regularly.

5 - Internet publication calendar

Only the MSO-Civil Service had this objective in its quality actions. This action could not be carried out in 2010 due to restructuring of the website. Reorganisation of the DGAFP, resulting in changes to editorial policy, have once again forced the MSO to postpone this action. But the principle of displaying statistical information publication calendars was validated by the cabinet in the course of the year and the modification of the editorial policy should be taking effect at the end of 2012

6 – “Definitions and Methods” section on internet

The improvement of public information on websites is a key preoccupation of the MSOs: six of them were concerned by this action aiming to enhance understanding of online statistical data. However, the context was not always conducive to progress. The MSO-Agriculture has to abandon a project for a metadictionary for budget reasons, although it did continue putting more definitions online on its website, which is a priority for coming years for the dissemination of the farm census. The MSO-Education is still encountering difficulties enriching its website area but will be carrying on its efforts in 2012 with a more realistic objective. The action has been postponed to 2012 for the MSO-Civil Service due to the renovation of the DGAFP website in the wake of the department’s reorganisation. However, 45 statistical definitions were put online by the MSO-Justice of the 120 definitions scheduled by the end of 2012 and the action was completed by the MSO-Labour whose website section now contains a glossary of 23 definitions of the main concepts uses in its statistics and studies.

7 - Survey collection by internet

Five MSOs were planning further internet collections: Sustainable Development, Civil Service, Immigration, Health and Labour (2 actions). Of the two actions with deadlines in 2011, just one was completed: internet collection of two surveys on professional elections was carried out by the MSO-Civil Service. The action was postponed to 2012, meanwhile, by the MSO-Immigration. The other three MSOs are progressing on schedule.

8 - Use of administrative files

The three actions of this type with deadlines in 2011 were completed in 2011, in line with their objectives. They all concerned the MSO-Health and resulted in pairing of files with publication of a study, time savings in account production and the development of an annual indicator calculation system. A fourth action on the compilation of a directory of rented social housing is underway at the MSO-Sustainable Development and should be completed in 2012.

10 – Measurement of user satisfaction

Just one MSO had an action of this type: Customs. A satisfaction survey among website users was conducted and the results were published in 2010; the main corrective measures were applied in 2011.

11 - Cost-benefit and risk assessments of operations

The MSO-Sustainable Development has introduced the principle of a usefulness assessment with a “costs and risks” component and a risk analysis on the launch of a new operation. Such an evaluation was carried out in 2011. Henceforth, usefulness assessments will systematically be based on this approach in terms of costs-benefits and risks.

12 - Dissemination of quality information sheets on internet

All the quality information sheets of the business surveys (for users) scheduled by the MSO-Labour have gone online.

13 - Administrative sources quality analysis

Two MSOs are concerned. At the MSO-Justice, statistical production is increasingly based on data coming directly from management databases and it is therefore necessary to define a method to analyse the quality of the data. The action concerned the new organisation of statistical production within the framework of the decision-making information system: the experiment has been launched and will be extended and completed in 2012. At the MSO-Health, implementation of automated data exchanges between administrative files is underway and will be completed in 2012.

Annexe 6 : CNIS review of the 2011 official statistics programme

France has an official statistical service of a high standard. Its greatest strength is in helping to understand the world as it is and also as it changes. In 2011, official statistics succeeded in adapting, on the whole, and in remaining a reference.

The risks of destabilising this indispensable tool for dialogue about our society are great. This year once again, a worrying divergence has appeared between the expectations of official statistics and the resources placed at its disposal to respond to them. The more society changes and the more complex it becomes, the more we need figures to provide a key to understanding. The demand made by the CNIS is the expression of this expectation, also sometimes expressed by the political authorities, as was the case this year on poor housing conditions and on the social economy.

Official statistics still has some room for improving its efficiency and it is working on it, as can be seen with the 2011 farm census, an exemplary achievement in terms of quality and of dissemination lead times. Increased use of internet data collection and administrative data is contributing to the improvement of statistical operation productivity.

Faced with cuts in their resources, producers have nonetheless succeeded in completing their 2011 programme and should do the same in 2012. However, they are expressing many uncertainties as to their ability to meet the forecasts for 2013. There are fears that there may be some postponements or surveys that are conducted on a minimal basis with restricted samples.

A. Activity of statistics producers in 2011, in response to user concerns

The deterioration in the economic outlook in 2011 brought three themes back to the centre of attention: poverty, economic competitiveness and European integration.

▪ Poverty

Poverty is regularly measured by the monetary poverty rate. This is available for each department and has been announced for 2013 on very detailed geographical levels, which will open up the possibility of studying territorial disparities.

However, this poverty rate is not enough. Its publication lead time is too long and prevents a short-term approach. Nor does it describe difficulties in terms of housing, health and transport.

The rich reflection carried out by the working group on improper housing conditions defined the different dimensions of these housing issues and established the foundations of the statistical tools required to measure them. The Housing Survey is the keystone of all this. The CNIS has demanded on several occasions that the conduct of the survey should be maintained in 2013 with an identical sample size to that in the previous survey.

▪ Economic competitiveness

Due to the economic crisis, a greater insight is expected into the drivers of the competitiveness of the French production system.

In 2011, official statistics launched large-scale work to provide the indispensable foundations for information on enterprises, notably with the first release on a fine detail level of the data from the ESANE²⁵ system and the “Outward Fats” survey (monitoring of subsidiaries abroad).

Official statistics is also conducting surveys of research, innovation, competitiveness clusters and sectors.

The Banque de France and the INSEE have contributed to supplying a certain amount of new information in 2011 about the financing of small and very small enterprises, with quarterly monitoring.

These initiatives, however, are creating demand for all the available information to be linked together to interpret it effectively.

▪ European integration

The Greek crisis revealed the importance of more effective observation of government finances and the resilience of the banking system. It raises broader questions for States and citizens as to the need for greater European integration.

²⁵ Elaboration of Annual Statistics on Enterprises (ESANE)

Official statistics can make a contribution in two areas: better knowledge of the banking system and of the positioning of France within the European Union.

Knowledge of the banking system, its different businesses and the related systemic risks remain of great topical importance. A CNIS working group is underway on this subject, chaired by the Banque de France. It will deliver its conclusions in the second half of 2012.

Official statistics can also contribute to a better *perception of France's position in Europe* using the many European statistics in which it participates to inform European policies. The indicators of macroeconomic imbalances Eurostat is scheduled to publish in 2012 could provide a better understanding notably of the positioning of France within Europe and of the country's issues.

B. Themes selected by the CNIS for the medium term 2009-2013

▪ Sustainable development and its three pillars: economic, social and environmental

The issues of sustainable development differ according to who is speaking and to the geographical level concerned. Official statistics has contributed to extensive consultations on all geographical levels to position its contribution to the issue effectively.

On the *European level* a European "Sponsorship Group", co-chaired by France and Eurostat, has been set up to monitor the recommendations of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report. The innovative work of the INSEE on analysing income spreads and consumption in national accounts, and the first results of the quality of life surveys have contributed to the thinking being conducted on the European level.

On the *national level*, the consultation committee for defining indicators to track national sustainable development strategy (SNDD), chaired by Philippe Le Clézio, contributed to the publication in 2011 of a series of indicators that were presented to Parliament.

On the *territorial level*, a debate within the CNIS brought together 150 people on the theme of territorial sustainable development indicators. It revealed a huge number of initiatives and the need to identify the indicators that are the closest to citizens.

In 2011, the official statistics service was therefore particularly active, open to consultation and productive in sustainable development. However, there remain some shortcomings if we are to gain a better understanding of certain facets of sustainable development: the property market, public security, life in society and use of space.

Knowledge of the *property market* is of decisive importance. In the social domain, it influences purchasing power and quality of life; in the environmental domain, it is one of the factors that explain urban sprawl; in the economic domain, it interacts closely with financial markets. The Vorms report on housing and construction provided a contribution and essential proposals for improved statistical tools in this area. On the national and local levels alike, more detailed data is required. Notarial and fiscal sources must be exploited further to this effect.

Public security is another important factor in quality of life on which progress was needed in terms of measurement. The INSEE and the ONDRP²⁶ make the best use possible of the "victim" survey but expectations can only be met through projects to restructure the respective information processes of the police and the justice system. From 2013, it should be possible to study the whole of the process, from ascertaining the fact through to criminal sentence enforcement. On this point, it is essential that official statistics should be involved as early on as possible when reflecting on new administrative systems. The quality of future statistics depends on it.

Life in society is also the focus of demand from stakeholders in sustainable development. They want to be able to measure the intensity of citizen participation in public life, whether through participation in associations, volunteer work or political or trade union activities. The report of the working group on knowledge of associations, chaired by Édith Archambault, proposes some possible ways forward. The CNIS will be following its recommendations attentively.

Finally, regarding *use of space*, official statistics are expected to act as referees in all initiatives on the subject. Many local planning documents refer to this notion, especially to assess urban sprawl, and the tools that are used differ from one territory to another, for lack of standardisation.

▪ Effects of globalisation

The contribution of official statistics in this area is of the utmost importance; it must inform society of how the economy and production system fit in with the rest of the world. Extensive work is underway in France and in Europe.

²⁶ ONDRP: National Observatory of Delinquency and Penal Responses

Profiling will provide a truer representation of economic realities. It will also make it possible to survey economic units (“groups”) to provide a view of the effects of globalisation.

The European survey of “global value chains” will provide information on outsourcing processes in different countries and economic sectors. The first results are expected in 2013.

The “Outward Fats” survey of the foreign establishments of French groups, the *statistics on direct investments abroad* prepared by the Banque de France and the *“subsidiaries” survey* conducted by the Treasury and Economic Policy Directorate (DGTPE) provide an insight into the effects of globalisation.

Official statistics are also questioned on the economic contribution of sectors with little or no exposure to globalisation: local activities, crafts sales or service activities on the one hand, and the association sector or the social economy and economy of solidarity more broadly on the other. A *survey of associations* is announced for 2014.

The question of *the contribution of local territories* to economic life and their vulnerability to the effects of globalisation could be the subject of more detailed discussions within the CNIS.

▪ Inequalities

This responds to two main expectations:

* *provide a better description of social diversity*. On this point, official statistics has made great progress in recent years. It has broken the taboo of the “dictatorship of the mean”. Purchasing power, consumption and, more recently, assets are now presented according to different household profiles;

* *understand life trajectories*. People are living longer while their trajectories are changing and diversifying in ways that as yet remain to be studied: transitions between the education system and working life, within the labour market, to retirement. Expectations are great in terms of information, notably to assess public policies for training, integration and welfare. Significant contributions have been made in this field, with various surveys of professional integration, by the CEREQ and the statistical office of the Ministry for Research, and the studies by the DARES on employment of seniors and by the INSEE on professional trajectories.

2011 is also the year when the ELFE system is starting up to identify the drivers of life trajectories from birth onwards. Such studies of trajectories, however, do come up against difficulties in terms of large-scale processing, high costs and the need to have a single identifier making it possible to track individuals over time without any risk of breaches of confidentiality.

▪ The role of territories in the economic and social development of the country

Three important points concern this theme, in addition to those mentioned previously.

* *the question of the contribution of local authorities to official statistics*. The decentralisation of public policies has naturally transferred control over management data to different levels of local authorities. It thus becomes more difficult to have a national, harmonised view of certain decentralised policies. 2011 marked a large step forward with the publication of “Departmental social indicators”, produced by close collaboration between the Association of French Departments (ADF), several Departmental Councils and official statistics. The CNIS will be attentive to ensuring that the latter carry on their joint efforts on the sustainability and proper use of their work.

In areas such as dependence, disability or transport, the availability on the national level of consistent information about the whole territory poses a problem.

* *the representative nature of the major national surveys, such as the housing survey or the employment survey on more detailed geographical levels*. Extending the samples of these surveys would be highly costly. There is no doubt a subject here for methodological reflection by official statistics to find a better fit between national surveys, survey extensions, administrative sources and the use of innovative statistical methods to meet the expectations of local territories.

* *knowledge of public expenditure in these territories by the State and local authorities, per sector of intervention*. This questions remains without an answer. The CNIS is still awaiting the follow-up to the 2008 report by Yvon Ollivier on this subject. The new accounting process of the DGFIP, “Chorus”, has still not been adapted to meet this expectation.

C. The CNIS raises the issue of official statistics methods and communication

Many discussions within the CNIS concern what happens before and after statistical production.

At the upstream end, several highly constructive dialogues have taken place on how to “standardise” and “classify” certain phenomena. Several of these are worthy of mention: those on the classification of “improper housing conditions” and of “psychosocial risks”, on the contours of the association sector, on microcredit within the framework of the working group chaired by the Banque de France, that underway on the renovation of the census questionnaire.

Still at the upstream end, the CNIS is playing an important role to achieve convergence of points of view on the possible repercussions of the methodologies being considered, such as in the debates on the study of school trajectories and the follow-up needed in terms of encrypted identifiers.

The CNIS has entered into a dialogue with local decision-makers on the interest of a “square grid”. It has debated experimental use of private sources and data from supermarkets for calculating the price index.

At the downstream end, users mention the proliferation of statistics and are in search of help in choosing, linking together and interpreting data on a given theme. This opens up a new subject for reflection: precisely to what extent does official statistics have the mission of responding to this expectation and the resources to do so?

Communication efforts by the INSEE on the price index and purchasing power have been much appreciated. These efforts should be continued and further pedagogical tools developed to enable everyone to understand how they are situated in their daily life. This extension must have limits, however, and must not deform the message. Official statistics is increasingly facing demands to present so-called “compound” indicators, such as the human development index (HDI) or, more recently, the compound indicator on urban exclusion. These efficient, more expressive communication tools allow an open dialogue. Must official statistics ignore them?

D. the CNIS is participating in extending the scope and quality of statistics

The CNIS and the ASP are working towards the same objective: extending the scope of statistics to contribute to public debate by their quality and legibility for the public.

the CNIS contributes to this on the one hand by its dialogue with local authorities and the work it is doing with them to ensure that they contribute to the common fund of official statistics and, on the other hand, by experimenting with a calibration procedure for private statistics.

The review of this first experiment did not conclude that a sustainable procedure could be implemented as yet. The CNIS has decided to carry out a second experiment with the objective of scaling back the resources used and to develop a confidentiality contract for the organisation in question.

In conclusion, official statistics has shown its adaptation abilities and is now turning to a new challenge: achieving recognition by extended communication.

2011 confirmed the interest of the debates in the 8 commissions of the CNIS which regularly bring together between 50 and 70 people. Participation of users has been reinforced. The confrontation of several points of view on the same subject remains highly attractive and the rich debates should give rise to greater communication.

The availability of efficient tools for diagnosis and decision making is particularly important in times of economic and social instability. Efforts must be made to convince the public authorities of this need. The President of the CNIS will therefore be proposing to the Council that there should be a public debate on official statistics to make its usefulness and efficiency more widely known, mainly targeting decision-makers, and to promote its work and their interest for democracy and public action.

Annexe 7 : Ruling of 16 December 2011 modifying the list of Ministerial Statistical Offices²⁷

OJFR n°0300 of 28 December 2011

Text n°28

Ruling of 16 December 2011 modifying the list of Ministerial Statistical Offices

NOR: EFIS1134262A

The Minister for the Economy, Finances and Industry,

With regard to Law n° 51-711 of 7 June 1951 as amended, on statistical obligations, coordination and confidentiality;

With regard to Decree n° 2009-250 of 3 March 2009 on the Official Statistics Authority;

With regard to the Decree of 23 June 2009 on the composition of the Government;

With regard to the Decree of 14 November 2010 appointing the Prime Minister;

With regard to the Decree of 29 June 2011 on the composition of the Government;

With regard to opinion of the Official Statistics Authority dated 14 December 2011,

Rules:

Article 1

The list of Ministerial Statistical Offices indicated in the annexe to the abovementioned Decree of 3 March 2009 is replaced, as of the date of publication, by the list in the annexe to the present ruling.

Article 2

The Director General of the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies is responsible for the implementation of the present ruling, which will be published in the Official Journal of the French Republic.

A N N E X E

The following are regarded as Ministerial Statistical Offices:

In the services of the Minister for Defence and Veterans:

The Economic Observatory for Defence in the Financial Affairs Directorate.

In the services of the Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing:

The Observation and Statistics Service of the General Commissariat for Sustainable Development.

In the services of the Minister for Justice and Liberties:

The Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies of the General Secretariat.

In the services of the Minister for the Interior, Overseas territories, Local Authorities and Immigration:

The Department for Local Studies and Statistics of the General Directorate for Local Authorities.

The Department for Statistics, Studies and Documentation of the General Secretariat.

In the services of the Minister for Labour, Employment and Health:

The Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics.

In the services of the Minister for National Education, Youth and Associations:

The "Education" Ministerial Statistical Office, composed of the Sub-Department for Statistical Analysis and the Office for Statistical Studies on Schooling, within the Evaluation, Forward Planning

²⁷ Given that some statistical office names have been modified, this ruling will soon be updated

and Performance Directorate.

The Mission for Studies, Observation and Statistics of the Directorate for Youth, Popular Education and Associations.

In the services of the Minister for the Budget, Public Accounts and State Reform:

The Department for Statistics and Economic Studies of the General Directorate for Customs and Excise.

The Office for Fiscal Studies and Statistics of the General Directorate for Public Finances.

In the services of the Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fishing, Rural Areas and Local Development:

The “Agriculture” Ministerial Statistical Office comprising the Department for Statistics and Forward Studies of the General Secretariat and the specialised statistics departments of the Regional Departments for Food, Agriculture and Forestry.

The Office of Statistics on Fishing and Aquaculture of the Directorate for Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture.

In the services of the Minister for Culture and Communication:

The Department for Studies, Forward Studies and Statistics of the Delegation for Development and International Affairs.

In the services of the Minister for Solidarity and Social Cohesion, of the Minister for Labour, Employment and Health and the Minister for the Budget, Public Accounts and State:

The Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics.

In the services of the Minister for the Civil Service:

The Office for Statistics, Studies and Evaluation of the General Directorate for the Administration and Civil Service.

In the services of the Minister for Higher Education and Research:

In the Sub-Department for Information Systems and Statistical Studies of the General Directorate for Higher Education and Professional Integration and the General Directorate for Research and Innovation.

Drawn up on 16 December 2011.

For the Minister and by delegation:
The Director General
of the National Institute for Statistics
and Economic Studies
J.-P. Cotis

Annexe 8 : Dissemination rules of the main indicators

A. - Dissemination rules for the main outlook indicators on www.insee.fr

Motivations of the dissemination rules

Observing dissemination rules is a way of providing users, and particularly institutional users and financial markets, with a guarantee of independence and transparency that is essential to ensure that the information has credibility. These rules also guarantee equal access to information for all users.

The dissemination framework

It is based on two essential rules: announcing the dates and times of publication of macroeconomic information in advance and treating all users equally, which is achieved by embargo procedures for some information.

Among the international standards, the SDDS (Special Data Dissemination Standard) standard of the International Monetary Fund is among the most widely used. France (like all the industrialised countries) adhered to this standard in 1996. In particular, it requires that countries supply a description of the conditions in which the data was constructed and disseminated and prepare a publication schedule for the coming four months. The methods and sources used by INSEE are described in the Definitions and Methods section. The SDDS standard also fixes data dissemination deadlines. The data dissemination schedule and monitoring of compliance with this standard are accessible (in English) on the IMF website.

European Regulations or gentlemen's agreements, especially on short-term statistics, set dates for mandatory transmission of most data to Eurostat with a view to publishing the corresponding European information. Finally, the European Statistics Code of Practice establishes principles of professional independence, impartiality and objectivity (principle 1 and principle 6), among other things.

Practical dissemination rules

The dates and times of publication of the main economic indicators and the outlook reports and reviews are announced in the four-month schedule disseminated and published online at the end of each month (on the 25th) by the INSEE Press Office. The dates for the first month in the schedule are firm, while the dates in the following three months may be modified in the schedule sent the following month.

The consumer price index, quarterly national accounts (first results and detailed results), unemployment in the sense of the ILO and paid employment are published at 7.30 am. The other main indicators published in the *Informations Rapides* collection are disseminated at 8.45pm. Economic indicators are supplied under embargo at 6.00 pm on the day before their publication to the cabinets of the President of the Republic, Prime Minister and Minister for the Economy.

In order to guarantee perfectly equal treatment in access to information for all the audiences of the INSEE, the main indicators are disseminated mainly via the www.insee.fr website at the exact time when the embargo is lifted. This measure guarantees that the information is made available to all users at the same time. Only press agency journalists receive the information that is under embargo 15 minutes before its publication, by fax and e-mail. Journalists of the audiovisual and written press receive it by e-mail at the time when the embargo is lifted. These principles also apply to the other indicators (non-main indicators), for which dissemination is set for 12 noon. For the latter, only press agency journalists receive the information by fax and e-mail in advance, subject to the embargo, at 11.45 am.

B. – Dissemination rules for the indicators on the www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr website

The Dares Analyses and Dares Indicators collections, to which a hundred or so new issues are added each year, are divided into four main categories:

“key” outlook indicators; other outlook indicators; studies and analyses giving rise to regular (quarterly or annual) updates; other studies and analyses.

These four types of publications are distinguished notably by the precision with which their release date can be announced in advance.

Dissemination rules for the “key” outlook indicators of the DARES

The “key” outlook indicators are the DARES indicators which are the most useful for macroeconomic analysis of the labour market outlook: quarterly employment and wage estimates from the labour force employment activity and conditions survey (ACEMO); monthly figures on job-seekers registered with Pôle Emploi.

In accordance with the European Statistics Code of Practice and Regulation n° 223/2009 of the European Parliament and Council on European Statistics, these “key” indicators are disseminated according to very precise rules aiming to:

- ensure equal access to information for all users;
- provide a guarantee of the independence and essential transparency for the information to be credible;
- provide the European authorities within short, known timescales with information about all countries in order to elaborate the indispensable Community indicators for steering the economic policy of the European Union.

The dates and times of publication of these economic indicators are announced in advance in the four-monthly programme disseminated at the start of each month by the DARES on the website of the Ministry for Labour and Employment and by the INSEE press office on the 25th of each month. The release dates of the monthly “Registered job-seekers and job offers collected by Pôle Emploi” publication are set for the whole of the civil year in December of the previous year on the basis of a precise rule relying on the availability of the data.

These indicators are published in the Dares Indicators collection. Publication time is set for 6.00pm for the monthly publication on “Registered job-seekers and job offers collected by Pôle Emploi” and for 8.45am for the provisional and definitive quarterly estimations from the ACEMO survey.

In order to guarantee perfectly equal treatment in access to information, these indicators are disseminated mainly via the www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr website at the exact time when the embargo is raised. The main press agencies receive the publication by e-mail under embargo a short time prior to release (at 5.00pm for the monthly publication on job-seekers; at 8.15am for the publications from the ACEMO survey). The main editorial teams of the national and regional written press and national television and radio stations receive the publication by e-mail at the time when the embargo is raised; the monthly publication on job-seekers is transmitted to them under embargo 15 to 30 minutes before the time of release. These indicators are transmitted under embargo the day before their publication, at 6.00pm, to the cabinet of the Minister for Labour and Employment.

Dissemination of the other outlook indicators of the DARES

The other outlook indicators of the DARES with a quarterly frequency (labour force movements, temporary work, labour market tensions, overtime) are announced in the four-monthly calendar released at the beginning of each month by the DARES to provide those people who are interested a good level of visibility as to when they will be released. The date of release of these indicators is a little less precise than that of the “key” indicators in that only the week of release is announced. This broader time range allows a certain amount of margin in release dates in order to adjust as effectively as possible to the effective availability of the data. The release weeks scheduled for these publications are also liable to be adjusted at the start of each month. These indicators are published in the Dares Indicators collection and generally go online at 8.45am. They are mainly disseminated via the www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr website. The publications are transmitted to the cabinet of the Minister for Labour and Employment in the days prior to their online publication.

The release calendar for the main recurring studies of the DARES

Certain statistical monitoring and analysis studies by the DARES are updated regularly, generally on a quarterly or annual basis: employment and unemployment outlook for the previous quarter; annual expenditure on employment and the labour market or annual expenditure on continuing education and apprenticeship; annual reviews of employment policy support and vocational training systems; annual reviews of the labour market situation for specific groups (young people, seniors...); annual reviews of pay, occupational accidents, the obligation to employ disabled workers...

These publications are disseminated in the Dares Analyses collection. To allow those interested a certain visibility of the release calendar for these publications, at the start of each month, the DARES publishes a provisional list online, indicating the months of release of its main recurring publications over the coming 12 months. The provisional months of release of these publications are liable to be adjusted at the start of each month according to data availability and events relating to production. These publications are mainly disseminated via the www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr website. The publications are transmitted to the cabinet of the Minister for Labour and Employment in the days prior to their online publication.

Other DARES publications

Certain DARES publications cannot be included in a publication calendar released several months in advance. These are publications relating to one-off studies and analyses for which it is difficult to anticipate precisely when they will be finalised, and recurring publications for which the publication calendar cannot be as closely controlled, notably due to uncertainties around the effective data availability dates.

These publications are disseminated in the Dares Analyses collection, mainly via the www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr website. The publications are transmitted to the cabinet of the Minister for Labour and Employment in the days prior to their online publication.

Annexe 9 : European Statistics Code of Good Practice adopted by the European Statistical System Committee on 28 September 2011

European Statistics Code of Good Practice

FOR THE NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY
STATISTICAL AUTHORITIES

Adopted by the European Statistical System Committee

28 September 2011

Preamble

The vision of the European Statistical System²⁸

“The European Statistical System will be a world leader in statistical information services and the most important information provider for the European Union and its Member States. Based on scientific principles and methods, the European Statistical System will offer and continuously improve a programme of harmonised European statistics that constitutes an essential basis for democratic processes and progress in society.”

The mission of the European Statistical System

“We provide the European Union, the world and the public with independent high quality information on the economy and society on European, national and regional levels and make the information available to everyone for decision-making purposes, research and debate.”

To realize this mission and vision, the members of the European Statistical System strive for joint cooperation and continuous interaction with users according to the Principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice and general quality management principles including commitment of leadership, partnership, staff satisfaction and continuous improvement, in addition to integration and harmonization.

The European Statistics Code of Practice

The European Statistics Code of Practice is based on 15 Principles covering the institutional environment, the statistical production processes and the output of statistics. A set of indicators of good practice for each of the Principles provides a reference for reviewing the implementation of the Code. The quality criteria for European Statistics are defined in European Statistical Law²⁹.

Statistical authorities³⁰, comprising the Commission (Eurostat), National Statistical Institutes and other national authorities responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics³¹, together with governments, ministries and the European Council, commit themselves to adhere to the Code.

The Principles of the Code of Practice together with the general quality management principles represent a common quality framework in the European Statistical System.

²⁸ Regulation (EC) n° 223/2009, Article 4.

²⁹ Regulation (EC) 223/2009, Article 12

³⁰ Regulation (EC) 223/2009, Articles 4 and 5

³¹ Regulation (EC) 223/2009, Article 1. In the Code of Practice, «other national authorities responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics» are referred to as «other statistical authorities».

European Statistics Code of Good Practice

Institutional Environment

Institutional and organisational factors have a significant influence on the effectiveness and creditability of a statistical authority developing, producing and disseminating European Statistics. The relevant issues are professional independence, mandate for data collection, adequacy of resources, quality commitment, statistical confidentiality, impartiality and objectivity.

Principle 1: Professional independence. Professional independence of statistical authorities from other policy, regulatory or administrative departments and bodies, as well as from private sector operators, ensures the credibility of European Statistics.

Indicators

1.1 : The independence of the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat from political and other external interference in developing, producing and disseminating statistics is specified in law and assured for other statistical authorities.

1.2 : The heads of the National Statistical Institutes and of Eurostat and, where appropriate, the heads of other statistical authorities have sufficiently high hierarchical standing to ensure senior level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies. They are of the highest professional calibre.

1.3 : The heads of the National Statistical Institutes and of Eurostat and, where appropriate, the heads of other statistical authorities have responsibility for ensuring that statistics are developed, produced and disseminated in an independent manner.

1.4 : The heads of the National Statistical Institutes and of Eurostat and, where appropriate, the heads of other statistical authorities have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.

1.5 : The statistical work programmes are published and periodic reports describe progress made.

1.6 : Statistical releases are clearly distinguished and issued separately from political/policy statements.

1.7 : The National Statistical Institute and Eurostat and, where appropriate, other statistical authorities, comment publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of statistics as far as considered suitable.

1.8 : The appointment of the heads of the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat and, where appropriate, of other statistical authorities, is based on professional competence only. The reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated are specified in the legal framework. These cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence.

Principle 2: Mandate for data collection. Statistical authorities have a clear legal mandate to collect information for European statistical purposes. Administrations, enterprises and households, and the public at large may be compelled by law to allow access to or deliver data for European statistical purposes at the request of statistical authorities.

Indicators

2.1 : The mandate of the statistical authorities to collect information for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics is specified in law.

2.2 : The statistical authorities are allowed by law to use administrative data for statistical purposes.

2.3 : On the basis of a legal act, the statistical authorities may compel response to statistical surveys.

Principle 3: Adequacy of resources. The resources available to statistical authorities are sufficient to meet European Statistics requirements.

Indicators

- 3.1 : Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to meet current statistical needs.
- 3.2 : The scope, detail and cost of statistics are commensurate with needs.
- 3.3 : Procedures exist to assess and justify demands for new statistics against their cost.
- 3.4 : Procedures exist to assess the continuing need for all statistics, to see if any can be discontinued or curtailed to free up resources.

Principle 4: Commitment to quality. Statistical authorities are committed to quality. They systematically and regularly identify strengths and weaknesses to continuously improve process and product quality.

Indicators

- 4.1 : Quality policy is defined and made available to the public. An organizational structure and tools are in place to deal with quality management.
- 4.2 : Procedures are in place to plan and monitor the quality of the statistical production process.
- 4.3 : Product quality is regularly monitored, assessed with regard to possible trade-offs, and reported according to the quality criteria for European Statistics.
- 4.4 : There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using also external experts where appropriate.

Principle 5: Statistical confidentiality. The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes are absolutely guaranteed.

Indicators

- 5.1 : Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.
- 5.2 : Staff sign legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.
- 5.3 : Penalties are prescribed for any wilful breaches of statistical confidentiality.
- 5.4 : Guidelines and instructions are provided to staff on the protection of statistical confidentiality in the production and dissemination processes. The confidentiality policy is made known to the public.
- 5.5 : Physical, technological and organisational provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases.
- 5.6 : Strict protocols apply to external users accessing statistical microdata for research purposes.

Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity. Statistical authorities develop, produce and disseminate European Statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably.

Indicators

- 6.1 : Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.
- 6.2 : Choices of sources and statistical methods as well as decisions about the dissemination of statistics are informed by statistical considerations.
- 6.3 : Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.
- 6.4 : Information on the methods and procedures used is publicly available.
- 6.5 : Statistical release dates and times are pre-announced.
- 6.6 : Advance notice is given on major revisions or changes in methodologies.
- 6.7 : All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so

as to ensure impartiality.

6.8 : Statistical releases and statements made in press conferences are objective and non-partisan.

Statistical processes

European and other international standards, guidelines and good practices are fully observed in the processes used by the statistical authorities to organise, collect, process and disseminate European Statistics. The credibility of the statistics is enhanced by a reputation for good management and efficiency. The relevant aspects are sound methodology, appropriate statistical procedures, nonexcessive burden on respondents and cost effectiveness.

Principle 7: Sound methodology. Sound methodology underpins quality statistics. This requires adequate tools, procedures and expertise.

Indicators

7.1 : The overall methodological framework used for European Statistics follows European and other international standards, guidelines, and good practices.

7.2 : Procedures are in place to ensure that standard concepts, definitions and classifications are consistently applied throughout the statistical authority.

7.3 : The business register and the frame for population surveys are regularly evaluated and adjusted if necessary in order to ensure high quality.

7.4 : Detailed concordance exists between national classifications systems and the corresponding European systems.

7.5 : Graduates in the relevant academic disciplines are recruited.

7.6 : Statistical authorities implement a policy of continuous vocational training for their staff.

7.7 : Co-operation with the scientific community is organised to improve methodology, the effectiveness of the methods implemented and to promote better tools when feasible.

Principle 8: Appropriate statistical procedures. Appropriate statistical procedures, implemented from data collection to data validation, underpin quality statistics.

Indicators

8.1 : When European Statistics are based on administrative data, the definitions and concepts used for administrative purposes are a good approximation to those required for statistical purposes.

8.2 : In the case of statistical surveys, questionnaires are systematically tested prior to the data collection.

8.3 : Survey designs, sample selections and estimation methods are well based and regularly reviewed and revised as required.

8.4 : Data collection, data entry, and coding are routinely monitored and revised as required.

8.5 : Appropriate editing and imputation methods are used and regularly reviewed, revised or updated as required.

8.6 : Revisions follow standard, well-established and transparent procedures.

8.7 : Statistical authorities are involved in the design of administrative data in order to make administrative data more suitable for statistical purposes.

8.8 : Agreements are made with owners of administrative data which set out their shared commitment to the use of these data for statistical purposes.

8.9 : Statistical authorities co-operate with owners of administrative data in assuring data quality.

Principle 9: Non-excessive burden on respondents. The reporting burden is proportionate to the needs of the users and is not excessive for respondents. The statistical authorities monitor the response burden and set targets for its reduction over time.

Indicators

9.1 : The range and detail of European Statistics demands is limited to what is absolutely necessary.

9.2 : The reporting burden is spread as widely as possible over survey populations.

9.3 : The information sought from businesses is, as far as possible, readily available from their accounts and electronic means are used where possible to facilitate its return.

9.4 : Administrative sources are used whenever possible to avoid duplicating requests for information.

9.5 : Data sharing within statistical authorities is generalised in order to avoid multiplication of surveys.

9.6 : Statistical authorities promote measures that enable the linking of data sources in order to reduce reporting burden.

Principle 10: Cost effectiveness. Resources are used effectively.

Indicators

10.1 : Internal and independent external measures monitor the statistical authority's use of resources.

10.2 : The productivity potential of information and communications technology is being optimised for data collection, processing and dissemination.

10.3 : Proactive efforts are made to improve the statistical potential of administrative data and to limit recourse to direct surveys.

10.4 : Statistical authorities promote and implement standardized solutions that increase effectiveness and efficiency.

Statistical output

Available statistics meet users' needs. Statistics comply with the European quality standards and serve the needs of European institutions, governments, research institutions, business concerns and the public generally. The important issues concern the extent to which the statistics are relevant, accurate and reliable, timely, coherent, comparable across regions and countries, and readily accessible by users.

Principle 11: Relevance. European Statistics meet the needs of users.

Indicators

11.1 : Processes are in place to consult users, monitor the relevance and utility of existing statistics in meeting their needs, and consider their emerging needs and priorities.

11.2 : Priority needs are being met and reflected in the work programme.

11.3 : User satisfaction is monitored on a regular basis and is systematically followed up.

Principle 12: Accuracy and reliability. European Statistics accurately and reliably portray reality.

Indicators

12.1 : Source data, intermediate results and statistical outputs are regularly assessed and validated.

12.2 : Sampling errors and non-sampling errors are measured and systematically documented according to the European standards.

12.3 : Revisions are regularly analysed in order to improve statistical processes.

Principle 13: Timeliness and punctuality. European Statistics are released in a timely and punctual manner.

Indicators

13.1 : Timeliness meets European and other international release standards.

13.2 : A standard daily time for the release of statistics is made public.

13.3 : The periodicity of statistics takes into account user requirements as much as possible.

13.4 : Divergence from the dissemination time schedule is publicised in advance, explained and a new release date set.

13.5 : Preliminary results of acceptable aggregate accuracy can be released when considered useful.

Principle 14: Coherence and comparability. European Statistics are consistent internally, over time and comparable between regions and countries; it is possible to combine and make joint use of related data from different sources.

Indicators

14.1 : Statistics are internally coherent and consistent (i.e. arithmetic and accounting identities observed).

14.2 : Statistics are comparable over a reasonable period of time.

14.3 : Statistics are compiled on the basis of common standards with respect to scope, definitions, units and classifications in the different surveys and sources.

14.4 : Statistics from the different sources and of different periodicity are compared and reconciled.

14.5 : Cross-national comparability of the data is ensured within the European Statistical System through periodical exchanges between the European Statistical System and other statistical systems. Methodological studies are carried out in close co-operation between the Member States and Eurostat.

Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity. European Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable form, released in a suitable and convenient manner, available and accessible on an impartial basis with supporting metadata and guidance.

Indicators

15.1 : Statistics and the corresponding metadata are presented, and archived, in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.

15.2 : Dissemination services use modern information and communication technology and, if appropriate, traditional hard copy.

15.3 : Custom-designed analyses are provided when feasible and the public is informed.

15.4 : Access to microdata is allowed for research purposes and is subject to specific rules or protocols.

15.5 : Metadata are documented according to standardised metadata systems.

15.6 : Users are kept informed about the methodology of statistical processes including the use of administrative data.

15.7 : Users are kept informed about the quality of statistical outputs with respect to the quality criteria for European Statistics.

For further information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/quality> – E-Mail: ESTAT-QUALITY@ec.europa.eu

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