

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



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# Annual Report of the Official Statistics Authority 2012

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April 2013



## **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 (SSP)** 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-Luc Tavernier.*

**The Official Statistics Authority (ASP)** 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 2012, the fourth 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 Vice-President of the Council of State

M. François Ecalte, 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



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## Preface

Rather than attempting to summarise the action of the Official Statistics Authority in 2012, I would prefer to highlight three themes to which the Authority has dedicated time in 2012 and on which it has achieved some results.

The Directorate General for Public Finances (DGFIP) has clearly indicated its wish to facilitate access for researchers to individual fiscal data, which was impossible hitherto.

Researcher access to the individual fiscal data held by the DGFIP requires a legislative amendment to the Tax Procedure Handbook. The bill on higher education and research contains a provision to this effect giving researchers the possibility of access to individual fiscal data under conditions that guarantee strict protection of statistical confidentiality. The list of individual data that is accessible to researchers has been significantly extended. Additions are gradually being made of individual social data held by the main social security funds whose official statistics under the terms of the Law of 1951<sup>1</sup> as amended in 2009 are or will soon be labelled by the Authority to guarantee their compliance with the law and European standards.

The process of quality labelling of statistics from administrative sources progressed well in 2012 and should become operational on a permanent basis in 2013, further to publication of the Decree on Statistical Governance.

In 2012, the Official Statistics Authority decided to award quality labelling to the statistics produced by the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF) and the statistics from the Department for State Pensions (SRE).

The quality label application for the monthly statistics on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi is currently underway. At the request of the President of the Authority, the Minister for the Economy and Finance, the Minister for Social Affairs and Health and the Director General of INSEE have given their agreement for the creation of a joint mission by their three General Inspectorates to appraise the question of compliance of the production by Pôle Emploi of the statistics on the number of jobseekers at the end of the month with the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Subject to a positive opinion from the Authority, quality labelling is scheduled in 2013 for the statistics on road accidents, the statistics of the Agricultural Mutual Social Fund (MSA) and of the National Old Age Insurance Fund (CNAV).

The extension of the calendar of pre-announced indicators of the official statistical service marked an important step in 2012, although further progress is still required on publication of dissemination calendars.

The calendar will soon be extended to include dissemination of statistics from administrative sources that have been awarded quality labelling. The professional independence of the producers will thus be enhanced by the extension of the provisional indicator publication calendar to all the themes of official statistics.



Paul CHAMPSAUR  
President of the Official Statistics Authority

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000888573>



## **1. Production of official statistics in France in 2012**

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For several years now, the Official Statistical Service has been facing great economic uncertainty, increasing demands from the European Union and acute budget pressures on the national level. In this particularly difficult context and despite cuts to its personnel, the Official Statistical Service found the resources to launch innovative projects in response to demand from the community. Statistical progress was made in 2012 to improve productivity and make gains in efficiency. The Authority judges the overall performance of official statistics in 2012 to have been positive. It will be attentive, however, to ensuring that the Official Statistical Service continues to provide high-quality information despite the pressures upon it.

## **1.1 Statistical innovations**

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### ***A first online data collection trial for the 2012 annual census survey***

For the first time in 2012, an internet data collection trial was conducted in 14 municipalities of very different sizes. In these municipalities, in addition to their paper forms, inhabitants received a code giving them access to a website to fill out their questionnaires (housing form and individual form) online. The results of the trial were positive and mark an important step in the census modernisation programme undertaken by INSEE (HOMERE programme on harmonisation of tools and modernisation of the census).

### ***Prospects for simplification of employment outlook statistics***

Until 2011, the Official Statistical Service (INSEE and DARES), the ACOSS and Pôle Emploi would traditionally publish salaried employment estimates each quarter. At the instigation of INSEE, the DARES and ACOSS, work was undertaken in 2012 to remove any differences between the methods that were used and which could produce different figures. As a result of this process, Pôle Emploi has abandoned its own publication, while the Official Statistical Service and the ACOSS have agreed to modify the overall system with the aim of disseminating a common outlook publication for the whole field of salaried employment, using ACOSS data on the private sector, data from DARES-Pôle Emploi on temporary work and INSEE data on the public sector, agricultural sector and persons employed by private individuals. In the new system, INSEE will prepare the overall outlook for the entire field of salaried employment, while also continuing to produce the total employment level annually. This objective should be achieved by 2016, because it must be fitted in with other upcoming major changes: by that date, the Nominative Social Declaration (DSN) will have replaced the Summary Contributions Statement (BRC) and Annual Declaration of Social Data (DADS) which are currently the two main administrative sources on which the whole system of statistical information on employment and earned income is built.

### ***Towards an improvement in the enterprise survey database***

In 2012, work was conducted using the SIRUS statistical directory to estimate whether companies were “economically” active or inactive, regardless of their existence in the SIRENE administrative directory. This work should allow more effective optimisation of the enterprise survey database by identifying those companies that have ceased all activity before they are surveyed.

### ***A table for conversion between the French and international accounting standards***

In order to carry out the profiling operation effectively, the restatement of corporate accounts from the IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) to French accounting standards was performed.

## 1.2 Significant progress

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- **The issues of business statistics: the statistical directory, globalisation and sustainable development**

### ***Introduction of the Statistical Unit Directory Identification System (SIRUS) and group profiling***

In 2012, the SIRUS project culminated in the operational implementation of the statistical directory. This statistical directory serves to centralise the information that is available on enterprises and to list both the legal units and enterprises, meaning economically relevant units within groups. It is based in particular on the work conducted on group profiling. At the end of 2012, 19 of the 66 groups for which the profiling operation is well advanced are surveyed as profiled enterprises.<sup>2</sup>

Profiling a group of companies consists in defining the structure of the statistical observation of the group that appears the most appropriate for observing the “real” economic activity. The aim is to define intermediate statistical units, which may be different from the group and which may be “operational divisions” of the group, or sub-groups or ad hoc divisions defined in collaboration with the group itself. This operation, referred to as profiling, is justified for large groups that are present in several areas of activity. The units that are defined in this way are limited to French economic territory in the case of multinational groups, are (improperly) referred to as “profiled enterprises” and are treated as enterprises in their own right.

Operations to profile French groups will last several years. Large groups are profiled in close cooperation with the groups themselves.

### ***Global value chains: a better understanding of globalisation***

For a better understanding of the impact of globalisation on production systems, INSEE conducted the GVC survey in 2012,<sup>3</sup> simultaneously with volunteer EU countries. The survey conducted among heads of groups, subsidiaries or independent companies consists in collecting information about the type of activities that are outsourced, their location and impact in terms of employment.

The results of this survey will provide information that is central to the debate on outsourcing processes in different countries and economic sectors.

### ***A publication on the issue of sustainable development***

For a better understanding of the voluntary contribution of enterprises to sustainable development, INSEE published the results of the *survey on enterprises and sustainable development* in 2012: more than half of companies with 50 employees or more declared a commitment to corporate social responsibility.<sup>4</sup>

- **In social matters, surveys and publications in response to debates in society**

### ***Repetition of the homeless survey for a better understanding of housing problems***

In 2012, INSEE and the National Institute for Demographic Studies repeated the survey among homeless support services already conducted in 2001. It will thus be possible to update the data on the number of homeless, their socio-demographic characteristics and the causes of the situation in which they find themselves. For this new edition, the specific sample drawing method was adapted, notably to collect information from non-French speakers. The survey is part of an effort to contribute to setting up a consistent and efficient system for measuring situations of poor housing and homelessness. Its results should be published in H2 2013.

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<sup>2</sup> The 19 groups have been broken down into 33 enterprises (economically relevant units) representing some 2,000 legal units. A total of 76 groups have been contacted. The 66 groups for which the profiling operation is well underway represent 213 enterprises and between 8,000 and 9,000 legal units.

<sup>3</sup> GVC = Global Value Chain

<sup>4</sup> Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is defined as the voluntary contribution of businesses to sustainable development issues, both through their activities and their interactions with their stakeholders. It concerns three areas: environment, social issues and society.

### ***The working conditions survey for a better insight into work stress issues***

The 2012 operation conducted by the Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES) was the sixth edition of the working conditions survey. An extension of the sample into the perimeter of the civil service was carried out in collaboration with the DARES and the Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES). This survey is a response to strong social demand given the current focus on questions of stress in the workplace and preventing psycho-social risks. The intention is that it should be repeated periodically (every 3 years, in principle).

### ***The PIAAC Survey (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies)***

Knowing the level of competency of adults is an important issue for public debate and international comparisons in this area are of very particular interest. Initiated by the OECD and involving INSEE, the DARES and the Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP), dissemination of this survey is scheduled for Q4 2013.

### ***Publications on topical subjects, including many new ones***

There was extensive press coverage of a publication in the INSEE Références collection reviewing the *situation of immigrants and descendants of immigrants* in terms of demography, migratory flows; education, living conditions and employment.

*Insecurity and victimisation* was the subject of a publication by the DEPP on acts of violence committed in public secondary schools in 2011-2012.

Several files on topical subjects, such as *earned income of self-employed physicians, geographical access to healthcare and regional disparities in healthcare consumption* were published in 2012 by the DREES on the occasion of the publication of the national health accounts for 2011.

- **INSEE continues to be closely involved in Stiglitz Report implementation nationally and at European and international levels**

***On the national level***, original studies of the determinants of well-being were published in the INSEE Référence Social Portrait of France, based on the results of the *quality of life survey* conducted in 2011. This survey covered all the aspects of quality of life simultaneously (financial situation, housing conditions, state of health, emotional well-being, social ties, environment, confidence in society, insecurity).

*Disparities in wealth* in the national accounts were the subject of another publication in 2012. Analysis of this new data from a comparison of the wealth account in the national accounts and survey data collected on this subject, responds to the recommendation in the Stiglitz Report to pay greater attention to the distribution of income, consumption and household assets.

In addition to this, to facilitate the inclusion of sustainable development issues in local analyses, INSEE and the SOeS have developed an offering of *80 regional and departmental sustainable development indicators*.

***On the European and international level***, the work by INSEE on inequalities between households in the national accounts is considered innovative and ground-breaking. A working group has therefore been set up, under the aegis of the OECD and Eurostat, in which INSEE is playing an active part, in order to roll out this work internationally. The working group includes some twenty countries and a report on the subject is expected in 2013.

### **1.3 Review by the Authority of the production of official statistics in 2012**

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The Authority notes that the overall performance of the Official Statistical Service work programme is positive insofar as it meets the expectations expressed by society.

It lauds the continuing efforts made to pool resources, and notably the effective collaboration between the OECD, Eurostat and INSEE on implementation of the Stiglitz Report.

The Authority notes with satisfaction the progress made by INSEE in the implementation of RESANE.<sup>5</sup>

However, the ASP joins the CNIS in demanding a better understanding of the consequences of this reorganisation on the business statistics system as a whole (other structural or outlook surveys, demography, foreign trade, national accounts, etc...).

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<sup>5</sup> RESANE: Restructuring of annual business statistics



## **2. Official statistical governance and its conformity to the European Statistics Code of Practice**

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## 2.1 Official statistical governance in Europe and in France

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- **A large number of European initiatives aiming to transform statistical governance**

### *Investigations and control procedures conducted by the Commission*

In cases of manipulation of so-called “excessive deficit” statistics, the European Commission should conduct investigations, seize documents etc. in the statistical system or any government department. These investigation procedures were adopted by a delegated act in 2012. The Commission may thus propose sanctions to the Council, and such sanctions may be up to a maximum of 0.2% of GDP. The Court of Accounts may be invited by the Commission to take part in the investigation. The intention, however, is that this procedure should be implemented only in exceptional circumstances.

Verification procedures by Eurostat are also provided for more normal situations: “dialogue visits” and “methodology visits”.

Eurostat also wants to see cooperation between the National Statistical Institutes and the Courts of Accounts to enhance the reliability of the accounting data used to draw up the accounts of general government. Within this framework, INSEE and the Court of Accounts signed a cooperation agreement in 2012.

### *Revision of Regulation 223/2009, known as the “European statistical law”, to enhance professional independence and systematic access to administrative sources.*

The draft revision of Regulation 223/2009 was published in April 2012.

Discussions of the revision revolve around the following subjects:

- the independence of the heads of the NSIs, in particular questions relating to their appointment, transfer or resignation which must be transparent and be based only on strictly professional reasons,
- the coordination role of the NSIs in national statistical systems,
- the definition of commitments to statistical confidence. These declarations of compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice should be signed by the governments of all the Member States and countersigned by the Commission,
- the introduction of a legal framework allowing broader use of administrative data sources,
- the need to ensure the independence of Eurostat on the level of the European Union, on the same basis as the independence of the NSI at national level.

The scenario supported by the Commission, in which the head of the NSI guarantees application of the Code,<sup>6</sup> does not correspond to the institutional mechanisms of a large majority of Member States. The French situation is somewhere in the middle: it has the particularity (shared with the United Kingdom and also with Greece in recent months) that an organisation such as the Official Statistics Authority plays an important role in enforcing the principles of the Code. In the case of France, the existence of the Authority is also of key importance regarding commitments to confidence in statistics.

It should be noted that this type of institutional setup is encouraged by the 2012 Report of the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB).

There is very broad consensus, meanwhile, on the issue of systematic access to all administrative data.

### *Facilitate access of researchers to European individual data*

Eurostat proposes to modify the regulation allowing researchers access to individual statistical data from all the European NSIs, whether data from surveys or administrative data. This would represent a

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<sup>6</sup> As it is endowed with strong coordination powers, including decision making in matters relating to the development, production and dissemination of statistics for the whole of the national statistical system.

step forward for researchers and their work. It must be examined carefully, however, to ensure that risks of data disclosure in the EU legal area are controlled.

### ***Announcement of an upcoming review of National Statistical Systems***

A new review of National Statistical Systems by auditors, of the “peer review” type, should begin at the end of 2013. It will benefit from the experience of the previous review conducted between October 2006 and January 2008. It should be more demanding in that it will cover all the principles in the European Code<sup>7</sup> and will apply not only to the NSIs but also to other national statistical authorities.

This was one of the recommendations expressed in the report dedicated to European statistics by the European Court of Auditors.

- **Some significant developments in France, in French law and in the Ministerial Statistical Offices**

### ***A new decree on governance of official statistics***

The new decree relating to the governance of official statistics was published on 10 January 2013. It proposes a clarified presentation of the current texts with a single decree for the CNIS, the Official Statistics Authority and the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality. It gives a new role to the Quality Label Committee which will report to both the Official Statistics Authority and the CNIS in order to officialise the mission of the ASP in quality labelling of data from administrative files.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Towards stabilised production of statistics in the three areas of the civil service***

The institutional and organisational framework in which the Ministerial Statistical Office in charge of the Civil Service conducts its work is gradually being stabilised. A single council for the civil service was set up on 31 January 2012 as a body for consultation between the three divisions of the civil service (central government, local government and hospitals), and the specialised formation dedicated to statistical knowledge was set up on 13 June 2012, co-chaired by the Directorate General for the Administration and the Civil Service (DGAFP) and INSEE. Improvements to the statistical operating system will now be presented in all three areas of the civil service and commitments have been given in terms of shortening production times.

### ***Towards a reform of statistics on delinquency***

Since summer 2012, the Minister for the Interior has been saying that delinquency statistics must be improved. He wants to reform these statistics, based on broader computerisation of the administrative processes of the Police, the Gendarmerie and the Ministry for Justice.

In parallel, the Law Commission of the National Assembly has created a fact-finding mission chaired by Jean-Yves Le Bouillonnet on the statistical measurement of delinquency and its consequences.

Work is currently underway on an organisation to guarantee the uniformity of the statistical chain and the transparency of statistical work on delinquency.

In addition to this, the governance of French official statistics will also need to take account of European initiatives, in particular the new regulation setting out European statistical law.

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<sup>7</sup> The previous review covered only Principles 1 to 6 and 15, relating to the institutional environment and data accessibility, and not the principles of a methodological nature (7 to 14).

<sup>8</sup> For further details, see 4.2

## 2.2 Compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice

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The French Official Statistical Service is striving to comply as closely as possible with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice. The Authority is ensuring that the principles are implemented effectively. There are still improvement measures to be taken by INSEE and the Ministerial Statistical Offices to comply with the principles of the European Code.

### Principle 1: Professional independence

- **Challenges to the reliability of figures can be detrimental to the credibility of statistics in the eyes of the public.**

As a general rule and when required, INSEE must express itself publicly on statistical issues, including on any criticisms (and abusive uses) of official statistics, according to Article 1.7 of the Code of Practice.

Twice in the course of 2012, the Institute was called upon to take such steps, thereby complying with this article in the Code.

#### *An incident on the population census results during summer 2012*

On 1<sup>st</sup> August, Le Monde newspaper published an article questioning the method used in the census, and notably the accuracy of the results on the national level and their ability to provide useful information to municipalities at local level to conduct their missions. On the same day, INSEE published a news release specifying that the margin of uncertainty relating to the survey technique used in large municipalities was 0.02% of the total population, and pointing out that the final census data for 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 and the provisional estimates published at the same time for 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 were consistent. The news release also pointed out that the organisation of the census is based on a close partnership between INSEE and the municipalities and that ongoing dialogue is organised permanently with all users of the census through the work of the National Census Evaluation Commission (CNERP), under the aegis of the CNIS.

#### *A criticism of the measurement of poverty rates*

Although this polemic drew less attention, in autumn 2012 Le Figaro newspaper published an article that was highly critical of the INSEE poverty rate measurement. A public response was made in the same newspaper, explaining both the interest and the limits of the indicator, while stressing that it is now a benchmark in international comparisons.

- **DEPP publications**

Further to a letter from the Fédération des Conseils de Parents d'Élèves des Écoles Publiques (FCPE) about delays in certain publications of the DEPP, The President of the Authority asked the INSEE Director General to refer the matter to the INSEE General Inspectorate and have it examine the situation of these publications in relation to the DEPP 2011 work programme.

The conclusions of the report by the General Inspectorate showed that the situation of the publications of the DEPP in 2011 had once again become close to compatible with the work programme that had been published via the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) on 17 February 2011. The delay over the first three quarters of 2011 had been caught up and the programme of work and publications of the DEPP for 2011 was deemed satisfactory because more precise than that in February 2011.

However, it seems important to the Authority that the DEPP should establish a core of recurring memos whose publication should be announced precisely and which should no longer be conditional upon the approval of the Minister.

In 2012, the Authority noted that there were no major delays in the issue of the DEPP publications. However, all the publications are still subject to the approval of the Minister.

### **Principle 3: Adequacy of resources**

In 2013, the budget of the INSEE should allow it to carry out its missions, but the participation of official statistics in European work is constantly growing and the restructuring of the activities of the INSEE, in particular the creation of the Metz centre, are using up a lot of resources.

The 2013 budget also saw the entry into force of *the new employment terms of investigators* (prices and households), in application of the Law against Labour Market Insecurity, or Sauvadet Law. The investigators were previously recruited on a temporary basis and paid “per questionnaire”. As of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013, they have a permanent employment contract and are now counted in the maximum number of jobs at INSEE.

These new employment terms have been a shock for the INSEE production system. They make the drawing of samples and geographical allocation of surveys to investigators more complicated. To cope with the implementation of the new framework, which requires the whole work organisation to be rebuilt from scratch, collection in two surveys, the Housing Survey 2013 and the Living Environment and Security Survey (CVS), has been postponed by a few months in 2013.<sup>9</sup> The schedule for the Employment Survey, however, for which the restructuring project is also being completed in early 2013, has been maintained.

After 2013, against a backdrop of tight budgets, INSEE will need to strive to find some room for manoeuvre. *The efficiency audits* conducted in 2012 by the INSEE General Inspectorate showed that in the medium term, some possibilities do exist in certain areas (population census, regional action, support functions, etc...).

Ultimately, productivity gains will be required but if they are not enough, negative priorities will also have to be identified.

**The Official Statistics Authority has questions as to the consequences of the new investigator employment conditions for the conduct of surveys.**

**Faced with increasing pressures internally and externally, the Authority encourages the Official Statistical Service to act quickly to define the priorities for coming years in terms of new work to be conducted and current work to be suspended.**

### **Principle 4: Commitment to quality**

*See Annexe 5 for 2012 detailed review of the quality procedure at INSEE and in the Ministerial Statistical Offices.*

#### **The INSEE Quality Plan in 2012**

The review of the implementation of the INSEE 2012 quality plan, comprising 22 actions, including 6 new ones launched in 2012, is positive.

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<sup>9</sup> The start of collection for the Housing Survey has been pushed back by 3 months. The collection end date, however, has only been postponed by one month (from mid-November to mid-December), with collection being more concentrated in the second half of the year. Collection for the Living Environment and Security Survey will be conducted from 2 April to 29 June, which is to say in Q2 2013 rather than in Q1.

In this plan containing an intentionally limited number of actions in order to gain in visibility, the quality procedure is gradually shifting towards becoming one of ***process quality improvement*** and ***quality assurance framework implementation***. Two actions in the plan launched in 2010 and 2012 respectively and successfully completed in 2012 bear particular testimony to this commitment: the implementation of quality assurance frameworks for household surveys (one of the actions monitored by Eurostat), and the description of the process for updating the Address Control List (RIL) in the regional divisions.

In addition to this, the 2012 quality action plan continues to place the ***focus on pooling***: the efficiency audits, quality action initiated in 2011 and completed in 2012 with three audits addressing regional action, the population census and continuous training respectively, are a sign of the Institute's determination to find adequate resources to match the objectives that are set. Other audits are already scheduled for 2013.

Similarly, the ***development of internet data collection*** both for business surveys (action started in 2011 and due to come to an end in 2014) and for the census (action started in 2007 and scheduled to be rolled out throughout France in 2015), should scale back the amount of data entry work while also reducing the response burden, at a time when there are many retirements in certain departments.

Finally, ***industrialisation of the handling of confidentiality***, a quality action proposed in 2011 and ready for implementation in 2013, should make it possible to standardise certain processing operations that are currently performed in the departments producing the data, while reducing the number of people involved.

## **Ministerial Statistical Office Quality Plan in 2012**

The 2012 Quality Plan of the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSO) comprises 31 actions, of which 15 are new. Following on from the plans in previous years, the actions concerning the ***use of the internet for the supply of methodological information or for data collection*** (internet surveys) remain predominant, representing almost half of the actions proposed. Actions aiming to ***improve the quality of statistical production, promote the use of administrative files*** and ***raise awareness of the European Statistics Code of Practice*** are also very present once again. Among the new action initiated in 2012, there is ***reinforcing the protection of individual data and confidentiality***, which features in the plans of two SMOs.

### **Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity**

- **Embargo breaches under surveillance**

*See Annexe 7 on the dissemination rules for outlook indicators disseminated on the INSEE website and those of the MSOs.*

The Authority is conducting an attentive examination of breaches of embargos by persons in positions of political or ministerial responsibility. Concerning the action to be taken by national authorities in cases of embargo breaches by a member of the government, the Official Statistics Authority established the following position, set out in a letter dated 25 April 2012: "In the event of a breach of an embargo, the statistical office issuing the statistic in question shall no longer transmit the information to the Minister in question the day before its publication."

In the official statistical service in 2012, no embargo breaches were observed by any member of the government.

However, two breaches of embargos by the audio-visual press are to be reported in 2012, as far as INSEE is concerned.

- The Insee Références on “Regards sur la parité” for which publication was scheduled for 8 March 2012 at midnight was announced on 7 March 2012 on the TF1 8 o’clock news,
- The annual growth forecast in the Note de Conjoncture for which publication was scheduled for 26 June 2012, was announced on the previous day after 7pm by Europe 1 radio.

**The Authority remains attentive to any breaches of the principle of impartiality, as compliance with this principle contributes to the credibility of the information.**

### **Principle 9: Non-excessive burden on respondents**

The implementation in 2012 of the Statistical Unit Directory Identification System (SIRUS) will allow progress to be made in controlling the burden on respondents in business surveys. The directory memorises all the Official Statistical Service survey samples to which a given enterprise belongs and also the average response time for each of those surveys.

In 2012, INSEE introduced a survey among some one hundred or so social housing organisations, with the intention of replacing a part of the Rent and Expenses Survey currently conducted among 5,000 households in order to improve knowledge of rental prices in social housing. The reduction in the sample size will reduce the response burden upon households.

### **Principle 10: Cost effectiveness**

Within the framework of its “Ambition 2015” programme, INSEE created *a Methodology Directorate* on 24 July 2012. This commitment comes in a context of new demands placing the Institute under “antagonistic” pressures, in particular the necessity to develop innovation and standardise production, while improving the efficiency of statistical production at a time of sharp cutbacks in resources.

By grouping together the resources that are essential to maintain a high standard of methodology at INSEE, the Methodology Directorate must provide meticulous steering of projects and statistical processes while adapting them to requirements in terms of resources.

The Methodology Directorate should also encourage the pooling of investments in methodology, in particular by providing services to the MSOs. It should also foster innovation by developing new methods to meet new demands and also the use of sources of data.

The Official Statistical Service has decided to make *multimodal collection*, meaning the partial use of online collection, a core element in its production processes, essentially for collecting information from households.

The Information Technologies (ICT) Survey among households already benefits from this type of collection and other household surveys are conducting experiments with multimodal collection (2012 Working Conditions Survey conducted by the DARES, Living Environment and Security Survey in 2013) before extending its use more generally on a full-scale basis.

*Online collection* of Official Statistical Service business surveys is being generalised (themed surveys by INSEE, TRM survey (Road Haulage Survey by the SOeS), R&D Survey of the Higher Education and Research MSO). It should soon also concern the Annual Sector Survey (ESA) and the branch surveys of the Ministerial Statistical Office for Agriculture.

The reduction in collection costs associated with such techniques provides an opportunity to adopt a broader reflection on statistical products and processes in order to generate room for manoeuvre, while making efficiency gains.

INSEE has decided to *accelerate the introduction of an Official Statistical Service statistical coordination body*. More than half of the production of the Official Statistical Service is now subject to European regulations and it has become essential to coordinate the programme of the *Official Statistical Service*, to debate on its orientations, to organise its distribution between INSEE and the MSOs and to guarantee quality.

**The Official Statistics Authority lauds the creation of the Methodology Directorate at INSEE and the other measures taken by the Official Statistical Service to make efficiency gains. It will be paying close attention to all of its systems and in particular to the introduction of the Official Statistical Service statistical programme coordination body.**

## **Principle 11: Relevance**

- **The CNIS**

*See Annexe 6 for the detailed review of the CNIS for 2012*

The 2012 review of the achievements of the official statistical system as against the expectations of the CNIS is positive.

The work conducted in 2012 shows an opening up of the organisation, demonstrating that it is in phase with the debates ongoing in society, notably on subjects relating to private life and leisure, such as the formation of couples, divorce, care for young children or culture.

In addition to this, two reports submitted their conclusions in 2012, the first on updating the population census questionnaire, the second on the banking professions. The CNIS notes with satisfaction the quality of these reports which make fundamental recommendations for the future of financial statistics and of local statistics.

However, despite certain responses and progress made by the official statistical services, expectations remain and will be all the greater in 2012. The need for statistics providing a European or even international vision is felt all the more keenly. The growing availability of local data is not alleviating the pressures for better knowledge of local territories. The growing use of administrative sources requires reflection on how to enhance their quality. Knowledge of individual trajectories could gain from being more systematic and the possibilities for progress in the dissemination of individual data must be identified.

In these times of budget restrictions and sharp reductions in the workforce, these broad expectations raise questions as to the ability of official statistics to mobilise the means required to meet them.

- **Satisfaction surveys**

In 2012, INSEE continued its programme of satisfaction surveys among users to verify whether the statistics it offers are useful and whether their supply matches demand.

The main surveys conducted in 2012 concerned measurement of changes in the image of INSEE and of economic indicators in the eyes of the public, satisfaction with the insee.fr website, the elaboration of annual business statistics (ESANE) among users of the “enterprise” website and the census collection system, including online and by census personnel.

The results of these surveys were satisfactory on the whole.

INSEE enjoys a positive image among most users. The Institute is deemed to be efficient and is seen as producing very rich and indispensable information.

But weak points still remain: the credibility in the eyes of users of the indicators that receive the most media attention remains fragile, the vast quantities of data on the insee.fr website renders access more difficult and information about the work of the Institute is insufficient.

INSEE will be launching action to improve these results.

In 2012, the SoES introduced a survey to measure satisfaction with its website among web users.

### **Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity**

*Statistics are presented in a form that facilitates proper interpretation (indicator 15.1)*

#### ***Continuing efforts in communication and image***

To enhance the credibility of compound indicators such as the unemployment rate or the price index, new information tools with a pedagogical purpose have been published online on the INSEE website.

In September 2012, a dossier on unemployment with a text explaining the measurement of unemployment and a video on “unemployment figures questions and answers” was placed at the disposal of the public. Since December 2012, an automatic module for calculating the purchasing power of the Euro has been accessible on the website.

Mapping tools in the form of interactive animations have also been introduced to enhance the accessibility and clarity of use of information disseminated locally.

**The Official Statistics Authority lauds the continuing efforts of the Official Statistical Service to enhance the credibility of indicators through targeted pedagogical efforts. It calls for this objective of clarification of communication to be pursued, in light of the weak points revealed in the satisfaction surveys.**

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

#### ***Probable access of researchers to individual fiscal data***

If the provision of the draft law on higher education and research aiming to open up the possibility for researchers to access (individual and corporate) fiscal data is finally accepted, researchers will have access to data after an opinion from the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality and only by the intermediary of a secure access centre under security conditions equivalent to those of the CASD of the GENES (non-dissemination of data, stringent authentication, fair access terms for all institutions: remote access....).

#### ***Continuing addition of sources and a probable reduction in access times to confidential data in the secure remote data access centre (CASD)***

In its 2011 Annual Report, the Official Statistics Authority lauded the success of the CASD, a highly-secure facility allowing researchers to work remotely on detailed individual databases, after an opinion from the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality and in line with the requirements of the CNIL.

The Authority expressed the wish that the CASD should continue its policy of enriching sources of economic and financial data, MSO data and social data that is not within the scope of the MSOs.

Since the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality of 4 October 2012, researchers enjoy effective access to economic and financial data on the CASD.

Regarding the data of the MSOs, the CASD provides data from the Department for Statistics and Forward Studies (MSO for Agriculture). Contracts are under preparation with the DARES and the SOeS. Discussions are being conducted with the DREES.

A contract is also in preparation with the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF).

The Authority also wanted the CASD to shorten the times required for researchers to gain access to confidential data.

Since 2012, the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality has implemented a new procedure for studying accreditation application files as they are submitted by e-mail to its members. Previously, all the files were studied in sessions of the Committee (4 a year). This new procedure should allow a significant reduction in the time required for researchers to gain access to data in 2013.

The CASD has also set up more frequent training and enrolment sessions (sessions during which researchers are given effective access to the CASD).

**The Official Statistics Authority notes with satisfaction that its recommendations relating to the CASD enriching data sources have been put into action. It will be keeping a close eye on implementation of the new file appraisal procedure seeking to shorten the time required for researchers to gain access to confidential data.**

### **3. Recommendations of the Official Statistics Authority**

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### **3.1 Banking system transparency**

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The Official Statistics Authority takes due note of the report on banking business lines in 2012 by the specialised working group of the CNIS. This report makes cautious recommendations to improve statistical information about the activity of the banking system.

The ASP is very keen that these recommendations should be implemented in full, and it will be monitoring implementation attentively.

Although the resulting situation will not be perfect, it is difficult to go further given the differences in national intentions within Europe. It would be a good thing for the European institutions to make progress on harmonisation in this area.

### **3.2 Age and insufficiency of housing statistics**

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It would seem that the next Housing Survey has finally been scheduled for 2013, although the previous survey took place in 2006.

In addition, the decree implementing the Law of March 2011, which is to regulate the supply of old housing prices by notaries, is still awaited. The notarial source of housing prices in the provinces is therefore still not available.

Apart from the file of the DGFIP (FILOCOM file), the data of which refers to concepts that correspond to fiscal imperatives, statistical information on housing is therefore old and incomplete. Significant progress must be made in the course of 2013.

### **3.3 Statistical data produced by local authorities**

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It appears that the statistical data produced by local authorities is increasingly difficult to compare in time and space.

If the statistical production of local authorities were subject to minimum standards, it would in no way reduce their freedom, but would make it possible to have a better understanding of their operations.

This is a major project for which the Official Statistics Authority is in search of interested partners and with which it might be possible to make proposals to the government.

#### **4. Follow up of the recommendations in the 2011 report of the Authority**

In its 2011 Annual Report, the Authority made the following two recommendations:

- add to the calendar of pre-announced indicators to enhance the independence of official statistics
- formalise the quality labelling procedure for statistics from administrative processing

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

#### **4.1 Add to the calendar of pre-announced indicators to enhance the independence of official statistics**

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*Excerpts from the recommendation in the ASP 2011 Annual Report:*

*“The Authority 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.*

*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.”*

The public display of the main indicators or publications that the Official Statistical Service will be disseminating in coming months, quarters or years represents a strong commitment given by statisticians to users.

This constitutes a guarantee of compliance of the indicators and/or the publications and scheduled dates. It is therefore a means for the Official Statistics Authority to reinforce the professional independence of producers.

In 2011, additions were made to the list of indicators of official statistics for which the publication date is announced in advance.<sup>10</sup>

When they exist, the calendars are featured on the websites of the INSEE and of the Ministerial Statistical Offices.

- **INSEE**

As announced, on 8 January 2013 the INSEE published an annual official statistics calendar online, with a longer list than in the existing four-monthly calendar of outlook indicators, and containing links to the calendars of the MSO websites when such calendars exist.

More precisely, there are now three calendars on the INSEE website:

<http://www.insee.fr/fr/publics/presse/agenda.asp>: dates of issue of outlook indicators (INSEE and others), publications and events (seminars, shows) for the coming months.

[http://www.insee.fr/fr/publics/presse/agenda.asp?page=presse/agenda\\_indic.htm](http://www.insee.fr/fr/publics/presse/agenda.asp?page=presse/agenda_indic.htm): issue dates of outlook publications and major outlook indicators (INSEE and others) for the coming 4 months.

<http://www.insee.fr/fr/publics/default.asp?page=presse/calendrier-structurel.htm>: publication dates of the INSEE annual results and links to the calendars of the official statistics services for the coming year.

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<sup>10</sup> The aim here is to check that the dates are announced in advance, without any appraisal of the indicator dissemination lead time.

- **Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES – MSO for Labour and Employment)**

Since January 2011, all the indicators provided for in the extension of the provisional calendar are online on the website of the Ministry for Labour, Employment, Professional Training and Social Dialogue.

More precisely, 4 documents appear on the homepage of the “studies and statistics” section of the Ministry at the following address:

<http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/espaces,770/travail,771/etudes-recherche-statistiques,815/etudes-recherches-statistiques-de,76/>

→ a public document specifying the terms of dissemination of the main statistical publications of the DARES, including notably statistics on the number of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi, and the terms on which the Minister’s Cabinet is informed in advance:

[http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Les\\_modalites\\_de\\_diffusion\\_des\\_Dares\\_Analyses\\_et\\_Dares\\_Indicateurs.pdf](http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Les_modalites_de_diffusion_des_Dares_Analyses_et_Dares_Indicateurs.pdf)

→ a public document specifying the calendar for the dissemination of the statistics on the number of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi for the current calendar year, along with the rule underlying this calendar:

[http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier\\_de\\_publication\\_des\\_statistiques.pdf](http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier_de_publication_des_statistiques.pdf)

→ a document specifying the calendar for the dissemination of the main statistical indicators of the DARES for the coming four months, on a sliding basis:

[http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier\\_des\\_Dares\\_Indicateurs\\_octobre2012-janvier2013.pdf](http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier_des_Dares_Indicateurs_octobre2012-janvier2013.pdf)

→ a document presenting and indicative calendar of the main recurring quarterly or annual publications of the DARES for the coming 12 months, on a sliding basis;

[http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier\\_des\\_etudes\\_Dares\\_recurrentes\\_octobre2012-septembre2013.pdf](http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Calendrier_des_etudes_Dares_recurrentes_octobre2012-septembre2013.pdf)

- **Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES – MSO for Health)**

In 2011, the following annual indicators were not included in the DREES calendar:

- Top-up health insurance policies
- Self-employed physician income
- State of health of the population
- Annual health establishment statistics.

**Top-up health insurance policies:** the date of publication for this survey is not announced. Major modifications to the survey have caused delays in publication of the results.

**Self-employed physician income:** publication was interrupted due to the disappearance of the source on the contributions paid by physicians. A new database is currently being studied. If the results of the appraisal are conclusive, the 2011 data will be published in 2013.

**State of health of the population:** the DREES has undertaken a large-scale effort to reform its state of health indicators to take account of changes in information systems. This work will give rise to the publication of a methodology report at the end of 2013. The publication of the State of Health report in its new form will come in H1 2014. It has not been possible for the DREES to handle the reform and annual publication at the same time.

**Annual health establishment statistics:** the 2011 data was published online on the announced date, which is to say in July 2012, but the announcement of this statistic is not included in the DREES calendar.

The dates of dissemination of DREES publications are at the following address:

[http://www.DREES.sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/calendrier\\_publications\\_DREES\\_2012-2013.pdf](http://www.DREES.sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/calendrier_publications_DREES_2012-2013.pdf)

- **Department for Statistics and Forward Studies (SSP - MSO for Agriculture)**

Except for the Terruti Lucas Survey, the precise dates of all the indicators scheduled for inclusion in the provisional calendar are in the table at the following address:  
[http://agreste.agriculture.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/14\\_01\\_13\\_paraitre.pdf](http://agreste.agriculture.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/14_01_13_paraitre.pdf)

However, the Terruti-Lucas Survey was conducted as scheduled.

- **Department for Observation and Statistics (SOeS – MSO for Sustainable Development)**

In 2011, the SOeS was considering announcing the dissemination calendar for two annual indicators that were not yet included in the list, the first being from the survey of the building land price (EPTB), the second from the directory of social housing (RPLS).

Regarding the EPTB, the SOeS is thinking about the definition of a relevant indicator, given the many characteristics of the survey.

For RPLS, the SOeS proposes to select the indicator of the amount of social housing and will be announcing its publication calendar in the course of H2 2013.

The SoeS calendar may be viewed at the following address:

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

- **Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP - MSO for Education)**

The indicators concerning “girls and boys” are published on 8 March each year, on the occasion of Women’s Day. They are not announced formally. The current practice is that the brochure (and its digital version) comes out on 8 March.

The calendar for dissemination of the annual indicators concerning establishments, pupils, apprentices, students, lifelong learning, results, and diplomas is still not published. These indicators appear in the *Repères et Références Statistiques* book at the start of September each year.

Therefore, the situation has not changed since 2012, but the DEPP has announced that it should be reforming the whole of its editorial policy in the course of 2013.

- **Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies (SDESE - MSO for Justice)**

The main annual indicators on justice for the activity of the previous year appear in the form of “Key Figures” before the end of November.

Since the end of 2012, this deadline has been announced on the Ministry for Justice website at the following address:

<http://www.justice.gouv.fr/budget-et-statistiques-10054/chiffres-cles-de-la-justice-10303/>

These main indicators are the following:

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

There are also detailed tables from the statistical directory that are also published online on the site. A reorganisation of the directory is being considered.

- **General Department for the Administration and Civil Service (MSO for the Civil Service)**

As of 2013, the indicators of the level of employment and wages in the three parts of the civil service will be published each year, on the one hand in the form of early aggregate indicators and, on the other, in the form of detailed final indicators, according to a pre-announced calendar defined in collaboration with INSEE.

For 2013, the calendar is as follows:

- simultaneous publication of the 2011 provisional results on employment (aggregate level) by INSEE and the MSO at the beginning of Q2;
- publication of the 2011 final results on employment and volume of work (INSEE Première) by the MSO and INSEE in Q2 and the detailed results in the Annual Report on the State of the Civil Service;
- simultaneous publication of the 2011 provisional results on wages (aggregate level) by the MSO and INSEE at the beginning of Q3;
- simultaneous publication of the 2012 provisional results on employment (aggregate level) by the MSO and INSEE in Q4.

The pre-announced calendar will be updated as of Q2 2013 in the "statistical publication dissemination calendar" section. It was introduced on the new civil service portal created in 2012 (linked in with the reorganisation of the DGAFP in April).

In parallel, the work on reducing employment-wages result production and dissemination times is already underway and is a priority for 2013 and 2014.

- **General Secretariat of the Ministry for the Interior (DSED, MSO for Immigration and Integration)**

The Department for Statistics, Studies and Documentation (DSED) plans to put an annual immigration statistics publication calendar online on the Ministry for the Interior website in the course of Q2 2013.

- **Under-Directorate for Information Systems and Statistical Studies (SIES – MSO for Higher Education and Research)**

The objective of displaying a calendar for data about higher education and research, university student numbers, total numbers in higher education, academic success indicators, internal research and development expenditure and national research and development spending will not be possible in 2013, but publication of the calendar is scheduled for 2014.

These indicators (except for academic success indicators) are featured in a joint publication with the DEPP entitled "Repères et Références Statistiques" and published in early September.

**The Official Statistics Authority is sensitive to the efforts made by INSEE to publish an annual calendar for official statistics, but it demands that the dissemination calendars should be more easily accessible on the internet.**

**The Authority lauds the progress made by the Ministry for Justice in the publication of its main annual indicators.**

**The Authority will be keeping a close eye on the improvements that the MSOs undertake to make to the publication of their dissemination calendar.**

#### **4.2 Formalisation of the quality labelling procedure for statistics from administrative processing**

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*Excerpts from the recommendation in the ASP 2011 Annual Report:*

*“The Authority asks INSEE to establish and describe the general principles for the implementation of administrative data processing quality labelling. This clarification of the procedure will enable the Authority to move forward with the quality labelling process as soon as the decree on new statistical governance is published in the Official Journal”.*

The process of quality labelling for the statistical processing of administrative data was described in a memo issued by INSEE on 21 November 2012.

Prior appraisal of application files may involve the General Inspectorate of Finances, the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs and the INSEE General Inspectorate.

Whatever the terms of quality labelling that are adopted, an opinion proposing either to award quality labelling or not to statistical processing from the administrative sources of the body making the application will be transmitted to the President of the Authority.

On the basis of this opinion and its reasons, the Authority will validate the quality labelling proposal, or not. This quality labelling will be granted for a maximum period of five years. The decision of the Authority will be published on its website, along with the grounds justifying the said decision, taken from the appraisal of the application. The CNIS and its President will be kept fully informed throughout the procedure. In the event of a refusal, the reasons will be given and recommendations will be provided with a view to quality labelling at a later date.

In addition to this, the decree on statistical governance reforming the working of the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) and modifying, among other things, the position of the Quality Label Committee, was published in the Official Journal of 12 January 2013. It aims in particular to provide a more explicit legal reference for quality labelling by the Official Statistics Authority of statistical sources using administrative data.

In addition to being operational for statistical surveys, the Quality Label Committee sees its remit extended to include appraisal of applications for quality labelling of administrative data.

## **5. Activity of the Official Statistics Authority in 2012**

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## 5.1 Sessions of the Authority in 2012

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The Official Statistics Authority met four times in 2012, for hearings which enriched and nourished the reflections of the members of the Authority.

### *7 March 2012*

- presentation by Joël Allain and Michel Devilliers of the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate on the situation of the publications of the Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP)
- hearing of Michel Quéré and Cédric Afsa, DEPP Director and head of the ministerial statistical office at the Ministry of National Education respectively on the situation of the publications of the DEPP;

### *27 June 2012*

- presentation of the secure confidential data access centre (CASD), interim report by Antoine Frachot, Director of the Group of National Economics and Statistics Schools (GENES) accompanied by Kamel Gadouche, manager of the CASD;
- quality labelling of the statistics produced by the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF): hearing of Christine Chambaz, Director of Statistics, Studies and Research at the CNAF, accompanied by Stéphane Donne.

### *3 October 2012*

- presentation of the editorial and dissemination policy of the Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES) by Franck von Lennep, DREES Director, accompanied by Baudouin Seys, head of department;
- application for quality labelling of statistics on jobseekers at the end of the month (DEFM): hearing of Jean Bassères, Director General of Pôle Emploi, accompanied by Bernard Ernst, Head of the Statistics, Surveys and Forecasts Department of Pôle Emploi, and Antoine Magnier, Director of the Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES);
- quality labelling of the statistics of the Department for State Pensions (SRE): hearing of Emmanuelle Walraet, Head of Statistics and Financial Monitoring at the SRE of the Directorate General for Public Finances (DGFIP);

### *19 December 2012*

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

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

## 5.2 Hearings of official statistics producers

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Since it was created in 2009, the Official Statistics Authority has conducted 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 2012, the Authority conducted hearings of two Ministerial Statistical Offices, the Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP) and the Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES).<sup>11</sup>

- **Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP)**

After publication of the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate examining the situation of the publications of the DEPP as against its work programme for 2011, the Authority heard the General Inspectorate, the DEPP Director and the head of the MSO at its session of 7 March 2012.

**The Official Statistics Authority validated the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate which considers that the situation of these publications was once again more or less compatible with the work programme published by the CNIS in February 2011.**

**The Authority considers that the DEPP succeeded in 2012 in avoiding a repeat of the situation that occurred in autumn 2011.**

**The Authority will be paying close attention to progress on restructuring of the whole editorial policy of the DEPP which the latter is considering in 2013.**

- **Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES)**

The attention of the members of the Authority was drawn particularly to the long delays noted in publication of the Social Protection Accounts, and in the sometimes late publication of survey results, notably those of the 2008 survey of social establishments, which were published in 2012.

The Social Protection Accounts (CPS) draw up uses-resources accounts for all the social protection regimes. They also give a detailed presentation of social protection benefits. As a National Accounts satellite account, they are based on the national accounts aggregates. They have a twofold interest: to show the way in which social protection fits into the national economy, on the one hand, and to make international comparisons on the other. A large part of the scope of these accounts is covered by the Social Security accounts. The fit between the CPS and the Social Security accounts is a major issue.

The delays observed in recent times can be explained, according to the DREES, by the large investments made to update the calculation methods of the different aggregates. In addition to this, the current CPS production process does not provide a good fit with the Social Security accounts. A modification of the calendar and sources used to prepare the CPS is therefore underway to ensure a proper fit of the CPS and the Social Security accounts and to make very significant progress on the publication of the data.

Concerning the 2008 social establishments survey, the data was collected in 2009. The first results were published in September and then in November 2010. In 2012, a document was published including detailed tables on the specific subjects studied in the course of the work.

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<sup>11</sup> With a view to quality labelling of some of their statistics, the Authority also conducted hearings of the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF), the Department for State Pensions (SRE) and Pôle Emploi (see pages 34 and 35).

**The Official Statistics Authority lauds the efforts made by the DREES to disseminate its statistics more quickly. It will be ensuring that it complies with its publication calendar.**

### **5.3 Quality labelling of statistics from administrative sources**

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- **Quality labels granted by the Authority in 2012**

***Quality labelling of the statistics produced by the CNAV***

In 2012, the CNAV applied for labelling in recognition of the quality of its statistics which are widely used by the Official Statistical Service and disseminated more broadly to the general public.

The CNAV covers 96% of the population of welfare beneficiaries. Concerning the RSA (Active Solidarity Benefit), the statistics published by the CNAV cover only the scope of the CNAF (family benefits); the statistics on beneficiaries of “all regimes” (including the MSA) are prepared by consolidation by the DREES.

The CNAF applied for labelling of the statistics within the scope of family benefits only.

At its session of 27 June 2012, the missions, organisation and work programme of the Department for Statistics, Studies and Research of the CNAF were presented to the members of the Official Statistics Authority.

Elaboration of the statistics of the CNAF, within the scope of the CNAF, was explained. These statistics are prepared in full transparency and in accordance with a rigorous process.

The members of the Authority issued a favourable opinion on quality labelling of the statistics on individual welfare beneficiaries within the scope of the CAF.

See Annexe 3, page 44.

***Quality labelling of the statistics of the Department for State Pensions (SRE)***

The quality labelling application by the SRE was made to obtain recognition of the quality of these statistics and a guarantee of the continuity of their publications.

The SRE operates the pensions regime for the State Civil Service and is the second-largest retirement scheme in France after the CNAV. The statistics of the SRE are prepared using administrative data from the pension award application that allocates pension rights to each civil servant at the moment when they take retirement.

The SRE has set up a system for checking the data. This system is monitored by the Court of Accounts within the framework of the certification of the State Accounts. The SRE is also audited periodically by the Court of Accounts.

At its session of 3 October, the Authority members issued a positive opinion on the quality labelling of all the statistics of the Department for State Pensions.

See Annexe 4, page 45.

- **Quality label applications currently underway**

***Monthly statistics on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi***

At its hearing of 3 October 2012, the Director General of Pôle Emploi announced that he had agreed to take part in the quality labelling process for the monthly statistics on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi.

At the request of the President of the Authority, the Ministers for the Economy and Finance, for Social Affairs and Health and the INSEE Director General gave their agreement for the creation of a joint mission by the three General Inspectorates to appraise the question of compliance with the

European Statistics Code of Practice in the production by Pôle Emploi of statistics on the number of jobseekers at the end of the month.

The mission will be conducted during H2 2013 and its report will be handed in to the ASP at the end of 2013.

### ***Quarterly house price indices for the provinces from the notarial databases of notaries in the provinces***

The quarterly house price indices in the Paris Ile-de France region received quality labelling from the Authority in 2011. The High Council of Notaries has also applied for quality labelling of the indices for the provinces.

After studying the file in 2012, the ASP gave two arguments for postponing quality labelling of house price indices from the notarial databases of the notaries working in the provinces.

On the one hand, the current context of shrinking sale volumes results in a deterioration of the coverage rate in the region indices that are published, especially those in Rhônes Alpes, Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, and Nord Pas de Calais.

On the other, the Decree implementing the Law of March 2011 entrusting the notarial profession with a "public service mission" consisting in collecting, centralising and disseminating information on changes of transfers of buildings in return for payment has still not been published.

**The Official Statistics Authority has questions as to the reasons for the delay in the Decree implementing the Law of March 2011. It asks the Government to speed up the procedure.**

- **The quality labelling programme in 2013**

In addition to the two applications mentioned above, the upcoming quality labelling currently being processed for 2013 is as follows:

- statistics on road accidents
- statistics on the National Old Age Insurance Fund (CNAV)
- the statistics of the Agricultural Mutual Social Fund (MSA)

## **5.4 Referral to the Authority (and INSEE) by the cabinet of the Minister for the Interior**

The President of the Authority and the Director-General of INSEE received a referral from the cabinet of the Ministry for the Interior, asking them to examine the conditions in which statistics on delinquency are produced.

Since summer 2012, the Minister for the Interior has sought a "restructuring of delinquency statistics" which he wants to base on the completion of the reorganisation of administrative processes within the Police, the Gendarmerie and the Ministry for Justice. He wants to see a new statistical scorecard introduced and proposes to increase the independence of the National Observatory on Delinquency and Criminal Justice.

In parallel, the Law Commission of the National Assembly decided in the course of the summer to create a fact-finding mission for the measurement of statistics on delinquency and its consequences, chaired by Jean-Yves Le Bouillonec.

## **5.5 Other activities**

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- **Meeting in Brussels of the President of the Authority with the President of the ESGAB (European Statistical Governance Advisory Board)**

The ASP President presented the activities of the Official Statistics Authority to the new President of the ESGAB, Mr Wieser. In these very informative discussions, the questions of statistical quality labelling, the coordinating role of the NSIs and Government commitments to confidence in statistics were addressed.

The ESGAB President and the President of the ASP did not rule out the possibility of entrusting a “mission” on “sensitive” subjects at European level to the experts in the next review of national statistical systems, if there are possible solutions that might be implemented.

## **5.6 Communication of the Authority**

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The President of the Official Statistics Authority, accompanied by members and the rapporteur of the ASP, presented the 2011 Annual report of the Authority to the Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industry, to the First President of the Court of Cassation and to the cabinet of the Prime Minister.

These interviews gave rise to rich debates on themes relating to the problem of embargo breaches, measurement of delinquency statistics, supply of statistics by local authorities, the quality labelling process for statistical processing from administrative sources, etc.

The 2011 Report was widely disseminated (see Annexe 1 for the list of recipients).

This report is also accessible in French and in English on the website of the Authority: [www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr](http://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr)

## **ANNEXES**

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## 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, 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 2012 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 <sup>12</sup>

#### 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) <sup>13</sup>	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

<sup>12</sup> SOeS: Sustainable Development – Department for Observation and Statistics

<sup>13</sup> 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 <sup>14</sup>
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

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## Household Income and Consumption

Labour force employment activity and conditions (Provisional quarterly results) <sup>15</sup>	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*	SOeS
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

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## Foreign trade

Foreign trade by value	Monthly*	Ministerial Statistical Office- DGDDI <sup>16</sup>
Balance of payments	Monthly*	Banque de France

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## 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

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## International

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

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## 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

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<sup>14</sup> DARES: Labour, Employment and Professional Training - Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics

<sup>15</sup> Announced in the four-monthly calendar on the DARES website

<sup>16</sup> 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 <sup>17</sup> /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**

<b>National accounts:</b>	Annual, May-June N+1	INSEE
- Input-output table		
- Institutional sector accounts		
- Financial operations table		
- Wealth accounts. Main results		
<b>Regional Accounts:</b>		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:		
Civil justice: activities, domains, processing times of cases...	Annual	Justice (SDESE) <sup>18</sup>
Criminal justice: activities, condemnations, misdemeanours, offences, repeat offending	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
Sentence enforcement and penitentiary administration	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
Minors and justice	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
Legal aid	Annual	Justice (SDESE)

**Teaching- Education**

<i>Institutions, pupils, apprentices, students, continuing education, results, qualifications</i>	Annual	DEPP <sup>19</sup>
Girls and boys	Annual (8 March)	DEPP

<sup>17</sup> SSP: Ministerial Statistical Office for Agriculture – Department for Statistics and Forward Studies

<sup>18</sup> SDESE: Ministerial Statistical Office for Justice – Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies

<sup>19</sup> DEPP: Ministerial Statistical Office for Education – Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance

## Enterprises

Demography of enterprises and establishments: list at 1 <sup>st</sup> 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 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

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## 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

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## 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 gender and age (estimations)	Annual January N+1	INSEE

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## 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>

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## Health, social welfare

Health account	Annual	DREES <sup>20</sup>
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>

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<sup>20</sup> 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

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## 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</i>

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## 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>

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## 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 E
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)

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### Annexe 3

**Opinion n° 2012-01 of the Official Statistics Authority of 3 October 2012 on the quality labelling of the statistics on beneficiaries of statutory benefits produced by the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF)**

OJFR n°0239 of 13 October 2012 page 16044  
text n° 70

**Opinion n° 2012-01 of the Official Statistics Authority of 3 October 2012 on the quality labelling of the statistics on beneficiaries of statutory benefits produced by the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF)**

NOR: EFIS1236494V

With regard to the letter of 23 May 2012 from the Director-General of the National Family Allowances Fund (CNAF);

With regard to the report from the 27 June 2012 session of the Official Statistics Authority, approved on 3 October 2012,

The Official Statistics Authority:

- serves notice of the quality labelling of the statistics on the beneficiaries of statutory benefits produced by the National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF), for a period of five years;
- indicates that the CNAF will take the necessary measures to ensure that the conditions for access to individual data by researchers will be specified.

The present opinion will be published in the Official Journal of the French Republic.

## Annexe 4

### **Opinion n° 2012-02 of the Official Statistics Authority of 7 November 2012 on the quality labelling of the statistics in the pensions base of the Department for State Pensions (SRE)**

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OJFR n°0268 of 17 November 2012 page 18235  
text n° 64

#### **Opinion n° 2012-02 of the Official Statistics Authority of 7 November 2012 on the quality labelling of the statistics in the pensions base of the Department for State Pensions (SRE)**

NOR: EFIS1238950V

With regard to the letter of 19 June 2012 from the Director-General for Public Finances,  
With regard to the approved report from the session of 27 June 2012 of the Official Statistics Authority, the Official Statistics Authority serves notice of the labelling as public statistics of the statistics in the pensions base of the Department for State Pensions (SRE), the list of which appears in the Annexe, for a period of 5 years.  
The present opinion will be mentioned in the Official Journal of the French Republic.

#### List of statistical indicators put forward for labelling

Number, average age, average annual pension of civil and military pensioners in payment at 31 December, by gender and pension type (civil or military pension, successor in title or assignee);  
Number, average rate and average annual amount of temporary invalidity benefits in payment at 31 December, by gender;  
Number and average annual amount of military invalidity pensions in payment at 31 December by type of beneficiary (invalid, surviving spouse or orphan, relative in the ascending line);  
Number, average age, average duration of receipt of the pension of civil and military pensioners deceased in the year, by gender and pension type (civil or military pension, successor in title or assignee).  
The following indicators for pensions entering into payment in the year, distinguishing:  
— gender;  
— pension type (civil or military pension, successor in title or assignee);  
— among the pensions of successors in title, retirements for seniority;  
— among civil pensions, the statutory category, and, among military pensions, officer categories;  
— number of pensions entering into payment in the year;  
— number of retirements for long careers;  
— number of retirements for family reasons;  
— average executive termination age;  
— average age of first payment;  
— average period of services acquired;  
— average bonus period acquired;  
— average period of insurance, all schemes;  
— proportion of pensions brought up to the guaranteed minimum;  
— proportion of pensions at full rate;  
— proportion of pensions with premiums;  
— average rate of premium;  
— average monthly benefit of the premium;  
— proportion of pensions with reduction;  
— average rate of reduction;  
— average monthly loss due to reduction;  
— average rate of award;  
— average index;  
— average annual amount of the pension (with pension ancillaries).

## Annexe 5

### The official statistical service “quality” procedure in 2012

#### 1. Review of the “quality” procedure in 2012 at the INSEE

Since 2006, the systematic quality improvement procedure adopted by the INSEE Management Board in November 2005 has included quality plans.

Targeting the weaknesses highlighted in the European Statistics Code of Good Practice self-assessment, this procedure consists in the implementation of action plans in various fields, many of which are cross-department and have an impact on all the directorates of the Directorate-General.

The 2012 Quality Plan, which comprises 22 actions including six new ones and 16 of the previous plans, is a major component of this procedure.

#### INSEE 2012 Quality Action Plan

	Actions	Completed in 2012	Expected in 2013	Renewed from one year to the next	Monitored by Eurostat
<i>Actions initiated in 2007</i>	1				1
Actions initiated in 2009	5	2	2	1	
Actions initiated in 2010	5	2	1	1	1
Actions initiated in 2011	5	2	2	1	1
Actions initiated in n 2012	6	5		1	
<i>Total actions in the 2012 plan</i>	22	11	5	4	3

The result of this 2012 action plan is very positive, as out of the twenty-two actions eleven were successfully completed in 2012, five are expected in 2013, and four became long-term actions and will thus be renewed from year to year.

The 11 actions completed in 2012 include some of the key challenges inherent to the principles of the European statistics Code of Good Practice, such as the finalisation of a quality assurance framework for household surveys, the performance of efficiency audits, the set-up of the SIRUS statistical directory and the evaluation of the quality of the information offering as against public expectations.

Of the five actions expected for 2013 two concern user satisfaction, with the follow-up of action plans further to the satisfaction surveys conducted, and the set-up of a long-term measure for responding to and analysing needs. Two actions, respectively covering improved confidentiality of the tables published from business data and improved data collection in the family budget survey, are also expected in 2013.

The actions that have become long-term concern training in the European statistics Code of Good Practice, improvements to the assessment of project costs, the development and collection of business surveys online, and communication about indicators and working methods.

Lastly, two actions have had their deadlines postponed to after 2013: these are the online census collection, and the Programme to Recast and Pool Business Outlook Indicators (PREMICE).

## **2. Review of the “quality” procedure in 2012 in the MSOs**

The 2012 quality plan of the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSO) comprises thirty-one actions, fifteen of which are new. It is led by nine ministerial statistical offices producing European statistics: Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Customs, Education, Civil Service, Immigration, Justice, Health and Labour.

Twenty-three of these thirty-one actions were expected for 2012. Ten of them did meet the deadline and thirteen are postponed to 2013.

In continuity with the plans of previous years, about half of the actions conducted concern the use of the Internet for the provision of methodological information or for data collection (online surveys) and are present in the action plans of each of the nine MSOs. None of these actions reached the deadline in 2012 for any MSO, and most of them have been postponed until 2013 or beyond.

They are supplemented by user satisfaction measurement actions for the Sustainable Development and Customs MSOs. The action is in progress for Sustainable Development and completed for Customs.

The Sustainable Development, Justice and Health MSOs are each leading actions related to the promotion of the use of administrative files. These actions were completed for Sustainable Development, partially completed for Health, and still in progress for Justice.

Actions to raise awareness of the European Statistics Code of Good Practice are present in the action plans of the Immigration and Sustainable Development MSOs. They were completed for the former and are in progress for the latter.

Featuring among the new actions initiated in 2012 is the reinforcement of private data protection and confidentiality, present in the action plans of the Sustainable Development and Labour MSOs, both of which completed this action in 2012.

## Annexe 6

### CNIS Review of the 2012 Official Statistics Programme

In 2012, many of the discussions and the opinions issued at the meetings of the CNIS concerned converging preoccupations that are not related to a particular theme.

These broad concerns are the following:

- The need for a European, even international vision
- Continuing demand for more local information
- An improvement in the quality of administrative sources
- More systematic knowledge of individual trajectories
- Clarification of terms of access to confidential data

These expectations are not new. They have been clearly perceptible to the CNIS over the 2009-2013 medium-term period, and some of them even earlier.

Particular attention should be paid to some of them, however, because despite some answers that have already been provided by official statistics on these subjects, these expectations remain and are growing; they have changed in their nature and become broader in their scope, each of them in their domain.

The first interviews conducted for the medium-term work of the CNIS show that these expectations will once again be part of the major focuses for the 2014-2018 medium-term period.

The pressure today on official statistics comes largely from these broad concerns. They raise questions about the ability of official statistics to mobilise the resources required to answer them.

In 2012, the CNIS was also the forum of debates on issues that are not widely addressed and which concern private life and leisure, such as the formation of couples, divorce, care of young children or culture. This confirms that the work of the CNIS is in phase with the debates underway in society.

The discussions on culture, in particular, opened up more general questions about the way in which statistics can measure and describe a society that is ever changing.

Habits have been completely changed by the considerable diversification in the range of available electronic equipment, and in particular the internet; radio can be listened to on demand at a later time, videos can be viewed at home, while newspapers are now read on screens and in a more fragmented manner...

More than other subjects, this is one that raises questions as to how to adapt the statistical approach to concepts and practices that have been transformed as they have become virtual. By nature, statistics are based on a certain stability of the realities that are observed and the way they are referred to; the question now is how to cope with this new challenge.

#### 1. Broad concerns appearing in the work of the CNIS in 2012

##### **A European or even international vision**

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In 2012, the need for statistics giving a European or even international vision of phenomena emerged more clearly. It is no longer just a case of making comparisons with other countries by juxtaposing national facts, but of measuring facts that extend over national borders.

- **Extensive work undertaken in this respect in the economic sphere.**

The globalisation of production processes poses two major challenges for official statistics:

- How to measure exchanges of goods and services between companies based in France and in the rest of the world, while distinguishing the operations which are in fact being conducted within the same multinational entity.
- How to assess the importance of establishments in France that are dependent on decision-making centres outside the country, and vice-versa.

These challenges require a switch from a directory of enterprises based on legal units to a statistical directory based on a concept of enterprises that comes closer to that of an “economic player”, in accordance with the recommendations of the Salustro working group on “structural statistics on groups of companies and their sub-groups”.

This objective is central to the flagship project of INSEE entitled “RESANE”.<sup>21</sup> Its implementation is progressing as scheduled. The first tests of “profiling” groups of companies carried out in 2012 show the importance of this change of concept to gain a better understanding of the French production system.

Although some questions still remain, which will be discussed in the framework of the medium-term preparation for 2014-2018, the establishment of the foundations of a new system for observing companies has been completed successfully and on time by INSEE.

The challenges posed by globalisation also require accounting data for the full field of multinational companies, which means setting up very close international cooperation between statistical institutes in different countries.

France took up a position in 2012 as the coordinator of European thinking on profiling of groups of companies; this is the surest guarantee of achieving consistency between the RESANE project underway and prospects on the European level.

- **But in addition to the economic field, this need for an international vision was also felt in other areas in 2012:**

#### ***In sustainable development,***

Measurement is required of the social and environmental effects of the behaviour of economic agents on a planetary scale, and not just French territory.

A reminder of this was provided on the occasion of the debate on the “Green Economy”, where all the speakers agreed on the need for indicators of the global impact of consumption and production patterns.

The debates showed that a lot of work remains to be done in this respect, despite the many initiatives underway in the UN, the OECD and Europe, as well as in many countries such as France.

The different statistical approaches to the notion of the “green economy” need to converge further, whether by measuring “green jobs”, “eco-activities” or estimating the ecological impact of the whole of a sector of activity, from production through to distribution.

But measurement tools aside, the very notion of a “green economy” is the subject of debate. Is the aim to study only the *environmental impact* of economic activity, or should the *social effects* also be taken into account?

For the UN, the green economy is that which “*results in improved human wellbeing and social justice*”. This definition implies a worldwide vision of the economy and its consequences, including in developing countries. That was the point of view expressed by the French ambassador in charge of “corporate social responsibility” at the meeting, an opinion shared by many of the participants.

This subject of “corporate social responsibility” was the subject of a half day of debates organised by the CNIS further to publication of the decree of April 2012 setting the transparency obligations of companies in social and environmental matters.

That debate expressed a need for the statistics required for that transparency to cover all the activities of the company, whether they are conducted on French territory or abroad.

However, the representative of the MEDEF stressed the difficulty of such an exercise when subsidiaries are established in several countries with very different regulations, and called for harmonisation of those regulations, beginning with the European level.

#### ***In demographics, the international view also remains of great importance***

Migratory flows remain largely unknown, in particular flows within the European Union, both incoming and outgoing. This lack of information makes it more difficult to conduct a composed debate on this sensitive issue.

It is sensitive because it enlightens the debate on the economic and social effects of immigration, including the question of a possible “brain drain” of French people going abroad.

**This first broad challenge to official statistics requires greater involvement in European and international work.**

#### **Territorialisation of information which is currently only national**

The need for statistical observation of local territories on a detailed level is not new. It is a need that has been felt acutely for 30 years now, since decentralisation in 1983.

Great progress has been made on this subject and continued through 2012, a year when the following points merit particular mention:

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<sup>21</sup> Restructuring of annual business statistics

- The first publication of “square grid data”, meaning data based on a division of the territory into “squares” with sides of 200 metres. It is a method used by other European countries which allows a very fine approach to the territory without reference to administrative boundaries. It has been and will be a basis for redefining the priority areas of cities. In rural areas, it should create the possibility of identifying outlying villages and hamlets that are not in the centre of the municipalities and should therefore contribute to thinking on services in rural areas.
- Mention should also be made of the now-regular publication of departmental indicators on social action, the fruit of collaboration between the official statistics system and the General Councils, represented by the Association of French Departments.
- Finally, mention should be made of the definition of new zones and living zones to allow more relevant analysis of the interconnections between city and countryside.

2012 also brought promise of future progress in other areas of importance to local statistics:

**→ on property conveyancing,**

The decree setting the conditions under which data is provided on property transactions by the High Council of Notaries (CSN) is expected in the course of 2013. The list of data that will be disseminated by the CSN has been defined, but the discussions are not yet closed on the pricing terms of this activity.

The CSN has, however, contacted the CNIS to organise consultation on the terms of application of the decree and there are hopes that a step forward will thus be made in knowledge of property sale prices.

**→ on knowledge of public expenditure at local level,**

At an interview with the new Director General of Public Finances, Bruno Bézard, the latter indicated that all the conditions are now fulfilled to move forward on this issue. The new public accounting system, entitled Chorus, has proven difficult to implement but it has now been completed. It enables the location of expenditure to be identified.

A working group has been set up, in which INSEE and the CNIS General Secretariat are taking part, steered by the DGFIP (Directorate General of Public Finances).

This should at least allow progress on implementation of the recommendations of the report by Yvon Ollivier on the local expenditure of the State.

**→ on the availability of poverty indicators** and income gaps at local level, from the so-called “Filosofi”<sup>22</sup> project of INSEE. Promised for 2014.

**The growing availability of local data is not in any way alleviating the pressure placed upon the official statistics system for better knowledge of local territories.**

Several recent studies, notably by INSEE and economist Laurent Davezies, show contrasting socio-economic growth among the 350 employment areas in France, thereby raising the question of public action at local level. This need to know and understand territorial disparities is reinforced by the prospect of the new decentralisation laws.

Every time a review is conducted of the available data in a given area, the question is raised of its availability on regional and sub-regional levels.

In 2012, such was the case of culture, public-sector employment, disability and dependence.

*For culture*, the aim is to study territorial inequalities in terms of access to cultural goods, services and facilities.

*For disability*, it is to contribute to evaluation of implementation of the law of 11 February 2005 on equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship for the disabled.

*In public employment*, detailed information is expected on levels of employment between the different echelons of local government and on transfers of personnel between the different branches of the civil service, region by region.

*The pressure upon local data is therefore changing in nature. The main progress that is expected is not the production of new data.*

*The priority is:*

- *On the one hand, more systematic territorialisation of national operations.*

- *On the other, harmonisation, centralisation and provision of the information held by local authorities or their operators within the framework of decentralisation.*

*2012 also saw the emergence of concerns as to the ability of official statistics to pursue genuine production efforts in the Overseas Territories and Departments, due to the reduction in its resources for the future.*

This question is a major one. Official statistics has extended a number of surveys and studies to the French overseas territories in recent years.

<sup>22</sup>

Everything must be done to carry on this effort and avoid adjustments to resources being detrimental to information that is indispensable for the balance of local territories.

A mission by the INSEE General Inspectorate on its strategy on statistics for the French Overseas Territories will be completed in 2013.

*The CNIS will be attentive to its conclusions and will request a discussion of its committee on this issue, if it deems necessary.*

### **Improvement in the quality of administrative sources or private operator sources**

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In almost all areas, administrative sources now constitute tools that are complementary to statistical surveys. In some cases, they replace them.

They offer the advantage of providing more regular observation (annual or at shorter intervals) and a finer level of detail (on the geographical level).

They do suffer, however, from producing statistics that are of a quality open to criticism, sometimes linked to poor recording of the information or to changes in management instructions.

The same observation was made once again in 2012, whether for data relating to immigration or that from the General Civil Directory of the Ministry for Justice<sup>23</sup> or, of course, that on delinquency, which is the subject of examination by the Ministry and Parliament.

The situation is not a new one, but growing use of administrative sources and the prospect of their growing availability via open data<sup>24</sup> raise two questions:

- The first is that of the necessary **increase in quality labelling and calibration**. Especially in an “Open Data” context, users want visibility as to the reliability of the data they are using.

*The CNIS must go into greater depth in its work on this question, along with users: What type of information do users expect? What sort of “quality” must be shown? Rather than a “pass/fail” quality label, should we not engage quality improvement processes, and with which bodies? These are some of the questions facing the CNIS and on which thinking must be conducted with the Official Statistics Authority.*

- The second question is that of **great demand for links between richer but more diverse information** from surveys or administrative sources, to address questions on various themes.

This demand to bring together pedagogical documentation on statistics of varied origins was expressed in 2012, for example, on corporate social responsibility (CSR), on land use, banking sector employment and pay and on the trajectories of young disabled people (school and professional integration).

### **More systematic knowledge of individual trajectories**

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Official statistics has made great progress on awareness of inequalities, notably regarding incomes, purchasing power and personal wealth.

We now have a better description of both deprived populations and the wealthier alike. Admittedly, an effort remains to be made to update this information, but it has brought undeniable progress to public debate, as shown by the recent national conference on poverty and exclusion.

A need has emerged, however, for **a more dynamic insight into social facts**; to be able to say to what extent individual trajectories show positive, unstable or negative trends in terms of income, housing or employment.

Indicators are also demanded to evaluate the persistence or not of situations of exclusion, notably among people receiving benefits.

In 2012, the question of knowledge of individual trajectories was brought up:

- In the area of employment, to gain a clearer insight into increasingly varied trajectories, between different types of employers, between civil service and private sector...
- In the area of education and, more particularly, that of disabled pupils and students,
- And for immigrants and descendants of immigrants, to compare their trajectories with those of the rest of the population.

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<sup>23</sup> The General Civil Directory (Répertoire général civil – RGC) provides the main statistical data used to describe disputes that are referred to the courts, the way disputes are settled and the time required to process the cases.

<sup>24</sup> Single inter-ministerial public data portal (data.gouv.fr) created by the Circular of 26 May 2011. The purpose of the portal is to bring together all public data in a single place, which is to say “information collected, created, stored or edited by the State, local authorities, public or private entities fulfilling public service missions”.

*The methods and tools presented by official statistics to the commissions to meet these expectations seem costly, or at least too costly to provide information on a regular basis. This therefore raises the question that is common to users and producers about the priority objectives to be achieved and the tools to be mobilised to that effect.*

### **Clarification of the terms of access to confidential data**

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Great progress has also been made on the dissemination of individual data by the official statistics system in recent years. Most surveys and certain administrative sources are now made available in the form of individual files, via different secure systems:

- free of charge for everyone on the INSEE website or via customised services provided by INSEE,
- for researchers, via the Centre Quetelet and the Secure Remote Access Centre (CASD).

**An amendment to the draft law on higher education and research** proposes to ease the rules on researcher access to the individual data held by the fiscal services, subject to conditions, to gain totally secure access via the Confidentiality Committee and the CASD.

The wording of this amendment is a sign that the **DGFip is now open** to all the issues it did not want to follow up hitherto. Regarding individual data, in addition to this amendment, the DGFip has taken the initiative of contacting the statistical office of the Ministry for Housing, the SoeS, and declaring that it is prepared to review the terms of availability of the Filocom file, as requested in the CNIS reports by Bernard Vorms and Marie-Thérèse Join-Lambert. The new “MSO” status of a unit within the fiscal department is no doubt one of the reasons for this new readiness to work together.

On the subject of individual data needs, the significant progress mentioned earlier has created new expectations indirectly:

- Researchers now have questions on the principles and terms of access, such as lead times and pricing, associated with the different systems available to them and on their consistency with the European code of practice.
- The research departments, meanwhile, notably those linked with professional and trade union organisations and with local authorities, would like to obtain the same status as researchers for access to individual data.

*The CNIS President has asked INSEE for a review of the question, including European practices, in order to collaborate with users to identify the margin for progress in the future in terms of dissemination of individual data to various audiences.*

## **2. Two working groups submitted their conclusions in 2012**

### **The first on renewing the census questionnaire, the second on banking business lines**

The two reports were submitted to the CNIS Board in 2012. Each in their own way, they present prospects that are of interest for the future.

**The report on the upgrade of the census questionnaire** was produced by the CNIS working group co-chaired by Chantal Cases and Jean-Claude Frécon.

The population census in its annual form has existed since 2004 and has changed very little since that date, so for almost ten years.

The working group therefore looked into the changes in society that are likely to have an effect on the questions asked of households on family, housing, transport, employment, immigration, health, disability...

On each of these points, a review was conducted of the administrative sources that either exist or could be used. In addition to its main subject, the report therefore provides an inventory of the sources that are available at local level.

Each of the points also gave rise to a very open consultation. The aim was to check that the expectations did correspond to local needs not taken into account by other sources and that taking them into account would not bring into question the simplicity and relevance of the questionnaire.

Ultimately, proposals were accepted on more detailed or new questions on family ties, housing quality and health.

*The CNIS lauded the rich content of the report but will be remaining attentive, as the recasting of the questionnaire may pose problems in terms of the time and cost of implementation.*

**The report on banking business lines** was prepared by the working group chaired by Alain Duchâteau, of the Banque de France.

The core remit of the group was to make proposals to establish banking activity statistics “per business line”, making a distinction at least between “retail banking” activities and “investment banking” activities.

This question is now highly topical. Extensive consultation has been conducted on the subject, involving the Autorité de Contrôle Prudentielle (ACP), the banks and their federation (the FFB) and the ratings agencies.

Further to the report, a study was recently conducted by the Banque de France into the possibility of producing **a retail banking activity account**. Such an account would be highly mediocre given the current state of the information system on bank accounts.

The greatest difficulty lies in the different nomenclatures used by the banks for their accounting activity.

On this point, as on the other recommendations in the report, the cooperation of the banks is indispensable to achieve greater transparency on banking activity.

*The dynamics set into motion by the working group can and must continue through dialogue with the banking world.*

*The CNIS is pleased to note the now-fruitful collaboration with the Banque de France which should allow progress towards greater visibility into banking activity for the public.*

*The CNIS has also declared that it is open to any suggestions from the Authority as to the way in which they could contribute together towards achieving greater financial transparency, as this is an objective that they share.*

### **3. Progress of the work of the CNIS on the debate surrounding official statistics**

In summer 2012, official statistics were challenged twice in the press: in July regarding unemployment statistics and at the start of August on the population figures from the census. INSEE communication is being reinforced and made more professional, as shown by repeated press coverage, but at the same time, media relations are becoming more complex.

These events, combined with the proposals made by the company CAP, headed by Stéphane Rozès, have comforted the committee of the CNIS in its objective of making official statistics better known, notably among political, administrative and institutional authorities and among associations of journalists. The general public should also be provided with the keys to understanding “figures” that are more pedagogical and closer to their daily realities.

The CNIS is therefore engaging in a process aiming to extend the circle of the “friends” of official statistics beyond its current reach, restricted as it currently is to regular users of the statistics, and to establish the foundations for a closer relationship with the press and more effective communication for the general public.

In 2013, the CNIS is envisaging:

- high-level interviews with leaders from the economic, trade union, political, administrative and media spheres, focusing on the role of official statistics in a democracy,
- one or more encounters with regional players,
- if possible, seminars in small groups to work on any themes that might be identified in the abovementioned debates,
- the presentation, at meetings and seminars, of the pedagogical tools currently being developed by INSEE to accompany the debates,
- the organisation in early 2014 of a conference-debate on “Statistics and Democracy: what are the figures for?” bringing together the institutions represented on the CNIS and on the Economic, Social and Environmental Committee (CESE), statistics producers and the media. The theme could be introduced and illustrated by the publication scheduled for that date by INSEE on “30 Years of Statistics”.

*INSEE and other departments that produce official statistics will be closely involved in these events.*

### **4. Future of the work of the CNIS**

The CNIS is preparing its orientations for the **2014-2018 medium-term period**.

The aim here, through various forms of consultation, is to identify the priority expectations of users for the coming 5 years. This process started in 2012 and will be continuing throughout 2013.

This medium-term preparation will be marked, in particular, by the organisation of three meetings on specific subjects yet to be defined in detail, but which will be broadly as follows:

- A meeting on **the factors in the development of the French economy and its competitiveness**, the aim of which will be to review the statistics that serve to assess the position of France in the world, characterising its production systems and economic growth factors that are cost-related or not.

- A meeting on **the attractiveness and economic dynamics of local territories**, to allow debate on priority expectations in terms of services in the public interest in local territories: transport and mobility, digital services, energy, water, and also areas such as vocational training, etc.

This meeting will also look into knowledge of territorial dynamics: how to measure them, what are the factors of attractiveness, notably those linked to public action.

- A meeting on **individual trajectories**.

It will define the priority subjects on which statistics must provide a dynamic vision, to understand the social trajectories of individuals and indicate the extent to which public aid plays a role in these different itineraries, such as for example:

- The Employment-Training-Unemployment and Retirement itinerary
- Itineraries in terms of income
- Family and Housing itineraries
- Social integration of young people of ages 15 to 30
- ...

## Annexe 7

### Dissemination rules for the main indicators

#### A - Dissemination rules for the main outlook indicators on [www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr)

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#### Motivations of the dissemination rules

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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.

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#### The dissemination framework

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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.

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#### Practical dissemination rules

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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 25<sup>th</sup>) 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](http://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.

## Annexe 8

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

#### FOR THE NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY STATISTICAL AUTHORITIES

Adopted by the European Statistical System Committee

28 September 2011

#### Preamble

##### **The vision of the European Statistical System**<sup>25</sup>

“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 Law”.<sup>26</sup>

Statistical authorities,<sup>27</sup> comprising the Commission (Eurostat), National Statistical Institutes and other national authorities responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics,<sup>28</sup> 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.

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<sup>25</sup> Regulation (CE) n° 223/2009, article 4.

<sup>26</sup> Regulation (CE) n° 223/2009, article 12.

<sup>27</sup> Regulation (CE) n° 223/2009, articles 4 and 5.

<sup>28</sup> Regulation (CE) n° 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

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### **Institutional Environment**

Institutional and organisational factors have a significant influence on the effectiveness and credibility 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.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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.

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

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

**Indicator 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.

**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.

**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.

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

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

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 3.1.** Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to

**Indicator 3.2.** The scope, detail and cost of statistics are commensurate with needs.

**Indicator 3.3.** Procedures exist to assess and justify demands for new statistics against their cost.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 4.2.** Procedures are in place to plan and monitor the quality of the statistical production process.

**Indicator 4.3.** Product quality is regularly monitored, assessed with regard to possible trade-offs, and reported according to the quality criteria for European Statistics.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 5.1.** Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.

**Indicator 5.2.** Staff sign legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.

**Indicator 5.3.** Penalties are prescribed for any wilful breaches of statistical confidentiality.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 5.5.** Physical, technological and organisational provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 6.1.** Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.

**Indicator 6.2.** Choices of sources and statistical methods as well as decisions about the dissemination of statistics are informed by statistical considerations.

**Indicator 6.3.** Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.

**Indicator 6.4.** Information on the methods and procedures used is publicly available.

**Indicator 6.5.** Statistical release dates and times are pre-announced.

**Indicator 6.6.** Advance notice is given on major revisions or changes in methodologies.

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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, non-excessive burden on respondents and cost effectiveness.

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

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

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

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

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

**Indicator 7.5.** Graduates in the relevant academic disciplines are recruited.

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

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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.

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

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

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

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

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

**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 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.

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

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

**Indicator 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.

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

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

**Indicator 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.

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

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

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

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 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.

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

**Indicator 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.

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

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

**Indicator 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.

**Indicator 13.1.** Timeliness meets European and other international release standards.

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

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

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

**Indicator 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.

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

**Indicator 14.2.** Statistics are comparable over a reasonable period of time.

**Indicator 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.

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

**Indicator 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.

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

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

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

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

**Indicator 15.5.** Metadata are documented according to standardised metadata systems.

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

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

## Annexe 9

### Ministerial Statistical Offices

DREES	Ministry for Social Affairs and Health <b>Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics</b>
SSP	Ministry for Agriculture, Agribusiness and Forests <b>Department for Statistics and Forward Studies</b>
SOeS	Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy General Commission for Sustainable Development <b>Department for Observation and Statistics</b>
DEPP	Ministry for National Education <b>Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance</b>
SIES	Ministry for Higher Education and Research Directorate General for Higher Education and Professional Integration Directorate General for Research and Innovation <b>Under-Directorate for Information Systems and Statistical Studies</b>
DARES	Ministry for Labour, Employment, Professional Training and Social Dialogue <b>Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics</b>
Justice	Ministry for Justice <b>Under-Directorate for Statistics and Studies</b>
Local Authorities	Ministry for the Interior Ministry for State Reform, Decentralisation and the Civil Service Directorate General for Local Authorities <b>Department for Local Studies and Statistics</b>
Public Finances	Ministry for the Economy, Finance and Foreign Trade Directorate General for Public Finances Fiscal Management Directorate Under-Directorate for Property, Taxation of Assets and Statistics <b>Office of Fiscal Statistical Studies</b>
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Civil Service	Ministry for State Reform, Decentralisation and the Civil Service Directorate General for the Administration and Civil Service <b>Department of Studies and Statistics</b>
Immigration - Integration	Ministry for the Interior Secretariat General for Immigration and Integration <b>Department of Statistics, Studies and Documentation</b>

Sports	<p>Ministry for Sports, Youth, Popular Education and Associations  Directorate for Youth, Popular Education and Associations</p> <p><b>Studies, Observation and Statistics Unit</b></p>
Defence	<p>Ministry for Defence  Financial Affairs Directorate</p> <p><b>Economic Observatory for Defence</b></p>
Culture	<p>Ministry for Culture and Communication  Cultural Policy Coordination and Innovation Department</p> <p><b>Department for Studies, Forward Studies and Statistics</b></p>
Fisheries	<p>Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy  Directorate for Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture</p> <p><b>Office for Statistics on Fishing and Aquaculture</b></p>

*Publication released free of charge*

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ISBN: 978-2-11-068604-6.

