

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFICIAL STATISTICS AUTHORITY 2021

**Editor: Pascale Pollet
ASP Rapporteur
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PREFACE

In 2021, the French statistical system continued to grapple with the consequences of the health crisis and the information needs generated in order to assess its scope and consequences. Many of the sometimes innovative operations undertaken in 2020 were renewed or extended, particularly on economic and health issues, but there was also a need to reschedule previously postponed operations and launch foundational, forward-looking projects.

In this context, the French Official Statistical Service as a whole has clearly demonstrated its capacity to act responsively and decisively. In addition to providing immediate responses to questions posed by the public, social stakeholders and decision-makers, it has continued to develop methodological and thematic innovations, and to put in place shared infrastructures to enable the appraisal of more comprehensive and cross-cutting perspectives on the beneficiaries of public policies, by assessing their results in light of the diverse forms of economic and social inequalities.

These developments have been underpinned by the consolidation of professional independence and progress in publications and communication activities. Fortunately, breaches of the rules on dissemination and controversies over the figures are now rare, and information from official statistics is increasingly being used as the standard reference in social debate. These achievements will need to be reaffirmed and consolidated over the coming months in the new context following the 2022 elections, and with the need to answer – in a changing economic climate – questions concerning the measurement of unemployment, and above all in the current period, inflation and purchasing power, which are likely to resurface in public opinion.

Official statistics also faces structural problems that cannot be ignored, as they relate to the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice. First and foremost, in a context of pressure on human resources, these difficulties include the fragility of certain Ministerial Statistical Offices, sometimes accompanied by persistent problems of access to administrative data, which may hamper the capacity of these services to carry out all their missions.

There are also concerns about the positioning of official statistics in an environment in which the producers of data that can be likened to statistical information are increasingly numerous and diversified, including in the public sphere, without being affiliated to the Official Statistical Service in any way. However, the information they disseminate and its coherence do not necessarily give rise to optimal coordination, nor to clear and transparent information for users, particularly via the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS). It is important for this information, when produced on a regular basis and conforming to the principles of transparency and autonomy of dissemination, to be gradually included in the regulation provided for by the founding law of 1951 as amended in 2008, on the basis of a specific recognition process.

In the context of general policies on the processing of administrative data and the provision of open access to this data, which provide new opportunities for statistical studies and research, it is also essential to clearly reassert the specific objectives and rules applying to official statistics. Their guiding purpose – ensuring the provision of general information – implies specific requirements, both methodological and ethical. These requirements underpin the obligation of professional independence that official statistics must meet and which must be maintained.

In this respect, the objectivity, impartiality, relevance and quality of official statistics are, now more than ever, key democratic concerns, and could benefit greatly in the future from efforts to improve "statistical literacy" among our fellow citizens, starting at school.

The President of the Official Statistics Authority



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OPINION OF THE AUTHORITY ON THE PRODUCTION OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND ITS COMPLIANCE WITH THE EUROPEAN STATISTICS CODE OF PRACTICE

In 2021, official statistics was confronted with an exceptional context for the second consecutive year, marked by the different waves of the COVID-19 pandemic and their impacts on the economy and society. This situation required the official statistics sector to keep meeting the multiple information needs expressed in relation to the health crisis and its aftermath, by extending and diversifying the observation tools put in place since 2020. The French Official Statistical Service (SSP) was obliged to reschedule operations that had previously been postponed, but it also undertook or continued to invest, sometimes substantially, in renewed topics or methods. These advances coincided with the launch of a "public policy for data", in which official statistics is expected to participate while reaffirming its specificities in terms of professional independence but also with regard to the methodological and dissemination requirements. The French statistical system's compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice, particularly in terms of governance, was the subject of a Community Peer Review in 2021, which, while leading to positive conclusions, was followed by an action plan on the implementation of its recommendations.

In this respect, the Authority has observed developments in the production of official statistics that conform to the Code of Practice and significantly improve its application, with particular regard to the principles of timeliness and relevance of the statistics produced, in addition to the implementation of statistical procedures which are appropriate, methodologically sound and likely to reduce the burden on respondents.

The Official Statistical Service first had to address the health crisis and its consequences, firstly by rescheduling certain operations and secondly by developing the capacity to meet new needs, in a sufficiently adaptable and responsive manner.

The 2021 programme of INSEE household surveys was maintained on the whole, although face-to-face collection activities were suspended for several months and sometimes replaced by telephone or online collection methods, using appropriately adapted questionnaires. However, the schedule for surveys that can only be conducted on a face-to-face basis was altered in 2021, with consequences including the long-term postponement of certain surveys that had been scheduled for the following years. The 2021 Annual Census Survey was also postponed, except in Mayotte, leading to the temporary introduction of an extended six-year cycle for municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants. However, population estimates continued to be produced under the best possible conditions, with methodological adaptations enabling the production of satisfactory estimates at national, regional, departmental and municipal levels. There were fewer disruptions to the scheduled surveys of companies and establishments than in 2020. However, postponements of collections or methodological adaptations were required for several of these surveys, by both INSEE and the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs). In this respect, the ASP has called for a complete review in 2022 of statistical information that has been produced in an incomplete manner, or whose production has been significantly postponed due to the crisis context, and has discussed possible changes of priorities with the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS).

In both 2021 and 2020, the Official Statistical Service sought to meet the different information needs expressed in relation to the health crisis and its consequences, using varied and adapted resources. It demonstrated its capacity to act responsively and creatively by developing new means of documenting and analysing the characteristics of this extraordinary period and its aftermath.

One of the initial responses to these information needs was to enrich the content of surveys in order to provide information about household living conditions, the impacts of the epidemic on people's health and daily lives (EpiCov survey), recourse to short-time working and training, and the burdens on enterprises. The dissemination of indicators and analyses specific to the different dimensions of the crisis also continued at a rapid pace throughout 2021. For INSEE, this concerned demographic data and the publication of its Economic Outlook reports; for the MSOs, it consisted in the short-term monitoring of virological tests, solidarity benefits, applications for short-time working, and data on pupils' progress.

Specific new surveys and operations were also conducted to assess the consequences of the crisis, leading to the first collections and publications during the course of 2021. First and foremost, these activities aimed to remedy information deficits on sensitive subjects: food aid; workers' living conditions and experiences, including the self-employed; use of digital tools and teleworking. They also focused on the use of original sources such as bank account data and the micro-simulation of company accounts. Finally, they relied on the improvement or updating of existing tools, such as the use of data from the "CB" bank card economic interest grouping, the rapid estimation of volumes of paid work based on "DSN" electronic payroll declarations, and the short-term economic monitoring of the turnover of companies in the cultural sector.

In addition to these developments linked to the crisis, the statistical system also sought to initiate or pursue substantive investments in new themes or key tools in 2021, for which long-term efforts will be required in order to realise their full potential.

The Official Statistical Service first completed key operations, such as the renewal of the Employment survey, the census in Mayotte and, via the French Ministry of Agriculture's Statistics and Forecasting Service (SSP), the collection of the agricultural census, which was carried out during the epidemic period. The SSP also started to venture into new fields, based on expanded data sets; coinciding with the launch of new surveys, several advances in the use of administrative files, and of files held by third parties, were therefore made in 2021. Newly developed topics include gender violence (GENESE survey carried out by the Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security – SSMSI). However, the use of gas and electricity meter data and the measurement of the use of plant protection products in agriculture are still in the preparatory stages, and, as indicated by the Authority in a deliberation, the monitoring of the emerging anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) field still needs to be improved by ensuring closer statistical coordination between data providers.

In addition, foundational investments and operations were carried out in 2021 with several objectives: the acquisition of data to optimise statistical production (data from the "CB" bank card economic interest grouping and from tourist rental platforms); the improvement of nomenclatures used in the internal security and justice sectors via the French version of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS); the creation of enhanced registers, such as the project to create a system of statistical registers of individuals and dwellings (RÉSIL), and the project to enable the national identification of students in higher education.

Efforts were also made to develop innovative coding and processing methods, with support from SSP Lab, in order to move towards automatic coding operations based on textual labels, and to enrich the EDP (Permanent Demographic Sample) for Health with data relating to air pollution.

However, the most emblematic projects concerned the matching of individual files and databases. In 2021, the Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP) and the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES) published the first results of the "InserJeunes" system, which assesses the professional integration of young people leaving the vocational stream with a very high degree of precision. Above all, the project developed by INSEE for a "non-significant statistical code" (CSNS), intended to facilitate and harmonise these matches within the Official Statistical Service, led to an initial service offering accessible to all public statisticians. The Official Statistics Authority has expressed the desire for the extension of these operations, within the framework of the coordinating role played by INSEE in application of the Code of Practice, to be accompanied by a service offering whose methodological, technical and legal aspects are dimensioned in such a way as to enable all the components of the Official Statistical Service to seize the opportunities thus offered. It also recommends improving the transparency of the objectives, content and implementation conditions of these operations, and continuing the reflections on simplifying the context of the matches, by seeking to harmonise the processes proposed to statisticians and researchers.

The Authority has also observed significant progress in the field of governance, made by reinforcing the application of the principles of professional independence, coordination and relevance of official statistics to users' needs. As a consequence, the procedures for appointing the heads of the Official Statistical Service were clarified and harmonised in 2021 for those services that are not central government departments, for which a regulation already exists. A series of regulatory provisions concerning the MSOs' missions and organisation were also adopted, clearly stating their professional independence and the coordinating role played by INSEE. The inclusion of these statements in the organisational texts for the MSOs must be completed, pursuant to the action plan adopted in response to the Peer Review, with another review scheduled in three years' time.

In some cases, these reorganisations have coincided with a significant increase in the missions and resources of the statistical offices concerned, in line with an improved matching of resources. This particularly applies to the Ministerial Statistical Office for Public Finance, but also to the MSO for Internal Security (SSMSI), which has stepped up its activities on improving the reliability and dissemination of data on recorded crime, and on the preparation and conduct of "victim" surveys in partnership with INSEE. However, the expected increase in this MSO's resources needs to be maintained in order to enable it to invest in other important themes and ensure its access to all administrative data on internal security.

In 2021, the governance of the statistical system also sought to improve its response to the principle of relevance of official statistics by engaging in dialogue with users. In addition to the activities carried out by the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) – on measuring inequalities in income and wealth, extreme poverty, and information on the environment and ecosystems, for example – consultation with users on developing the Ministerial Statistical Offices' programmes has increased, even if it remains in its infancy in certain cases and will need to be fully exploited within the framework of appropriate internal and external bodies.

Significant developments were also implemented in 2021 with a view to making the outputs of the Official Statistical Service available in a clear, accessible and educational manner, in compliance with pre-defined rules derived from the Code of Practice. For example, the websites and publication products of some Ministerial Statistical Offices were revised (notably in the public finance and local government sectors), leading to a clearer identification of the status of their outputs in relation to ministerial communications. The Official Statistical Service's publications were also enriched, and sometimes supplemented, by overall summary reviews ("Chiffres clés", "Insee Références", "États annuels", etc.), which are intended to serve as the standard reference in

social debate, including on complex and controversial topics such as immigration and internal security. However, improvements are still required, following the peer review, concerning the harmonisation of embargo rules within the Official Statistical Service and the identification of its outputs via a specific logo.

User access was also facilitated in 2021 by the continuous improvement of websites and the increased use of "data visualisation" techniques, both at INSEE (e.g. for the French Economy Tables) and within the MSOs. The desire to better explain the methods and results of official statistics to a variety of audiences also led to the publication of some twenty explanatory articles on the INSEE blog created two years ago, on subjects such as COVID-related deaths, unemployment trends, growth, the cash flow difficulties of businesses, and the advance estimate of the poverty rate in 2020, whose stability justified further explanation and analysis. Finally, INSEE's seventy-fifth anniversary, celebrated in 2021, provided an opportunity to launch a series of initiatives ranging from the release of a mobile phone application and the organisation of exhibitions in railway stations to a "factathon" held in conjunction with journalism training schools.

However, the Official Statistics Authority also had cause to report difficulties and reaffirm concerns raised in the past, regarding the application of the principles of the Code of Practice in certain specific sectors. In addition to a diminishing number of shortcomings and occasional controversies related to the dissemination of data, **the Authority noted persistent structural difficulties affecting defence statistics and statistics on causes of death.**

Following a mission carried out by the INSEE General Inspectorate and the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces (CGA), the Authority firstly observed that the Economic Observatory for Defence (OED) was not functioning, in accordance with the principles described in the charter for Ministerial Statistical Offices, due to problems related to governance, data access and critical size, and asked the Ministry of the Armed Forces to implement a series of measures as soon as possible in order to enable the OED to meet these requirements, while overcoming its difficulties. The Ministry of the Armed Forces' plan to create a dedicated sub-directorate for statistics, with significantly increased staffing, will be reviewed at the end of 2022.

A second cause for concern relates to the statistics on causes of death. The delays observed in the provision of these statistics, overseen by the Epidemiology Centre for Medical Causes of Death (CépiDc) at the National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM), have continued to increase in recent years and have resulted in France failing to meet its European obligations. A joint mission carried out by the General Inspectorates for Research, Social Affairs and INSEE found shortcomings and malfunctions throughout the entire process of producing and disseminating these statistics. The Authority therefore considered it necessary to implement an emergency plan involving the Official Statistical Service via the Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES), in conjunction with the Ministry of Research and INSERM. This plan must aim to ensure compliance with the statistical obligations arising from Community regulations as quickly as possible, while enabling an overall review of the manner in which these statistics are produced. Following these conclusions, DREES, INSEE and INSERM established a team to review the system, and the situation will be re-examined by the ASP at the end of 2022, when the quality labelling of this data is scheduled for renewal.

In accordance with the findings of a mission conducted by IGAS (Inspectorate-General for Social Affairs) and the Inspectorate-General for INSEE on the production of official statistics in the health and solidarity sectors, the Authority also noted problems of coherence and coordination in these sectors. Many public actors contribute to this situation – first and foremost the health agencies and social security funds – in a context that sees DREES, the statistical directorate for these ministries, requiring a structural increase in its resources to enable the

effective performance of all its permanent statistical missions. The ASP has therefore called for a reinforcement of the governance and coordination of statistical activities in this field by adopting measures to increase the coherence of the statistics made available. This is a prerequisite to ensure the adequacy of concepts and nomenclatures, take advantage of the new opportunities provided by the matching of large databases, and meet the information and knowledge needs expressed by social actors.

Inspired by these concerns for coordination and coherence which are central to the Code of Practice, **the Authority also considers it important to guarantee and facilitate general access to all data of administrative origin for the different components of the Official Statistical Service**, subject to the maintenance of statistical confidentiality and on the basis of operational legal solutions adapted to each ministry. Furthermore, the authority also supports the initiatives undertaken by Eurostat and INSEE to add certain data of private origin to the existing sources of statistical information, under conditions to be defined by the future European regulations.

The Authority also considered it useful to extend the effective scope of "statistical regulation" applying to the use - for general information purposes - of data collected by administrations, public bodies and private bodies with a public service remit, as provided for in Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951, as amended, on legal obligation, coordination and secrecy in the field of statistics. Based on the observation that statistical programmes for this data are frequently not transmitted to the CNIS, and that they are often not subject to a quality-labelling process, an experiment was launched involving around ten of these bodies. Conducted during the course of 2021-2022, it consists of granting the status of "official statistics for general information purposes" to some of the information or statistical series disseminated by these bodies on a regular, autonomous and transparent basis. After examining the findings, this process is likely to be widely adopted and, if necessary, adapted.

Finally, the ASP reasserted the specificities of official statistics, in terms of its aims (general information for social actors and the public) and the methodological and ethical requirements (in terms of concepts, nomenclatures, documentation and dissemination) within the policies undertaken by the public authorities to encourage the processing and provision of open access to data collected by government bodies. It believes that stronger and more formalised collaboration between the Official Statistical Service and the actors responsible for ministerial data administration would be beneficial, provided that it is designed to benefit both policy management and the development of statistics, and preserves the resources specifically allocated to these activities.

Considering the other key issues to be monitored and taken into account in the future, the Authority considers that particular attention should be paid to the needs identified by the National Council for Statistical Information with regard to the enhancement and contextualisation of indicators relating to the environment and sustainable development on different geographical levels, as well as, more broadly, to the territorialisation of statistical data used as a standard reference for public policies and to the funding allocated to them by the authorities. Major observational issues have also been identified concerning the distribution of wealth, the inclusion of people living outside the framework of "ordinary households", the relevant measurement of research and innovation, and the understanding of discrimination.

The Official Statistical Service will also need to be capable of providing technical, legal and institutional support – partly on shared basis – for foundational projects with a cross-cutting dimension, such as the implementation, by the Ministerial Statistical Offices for the Ministries of the Interior and Justice, of the longitudinal monitoring of criminal proceedings, tracking developments

from the beginning to the end of their judicial life, based on the finalised version of the International Classification of Criminal Offences.

In addition, in the budgetary context following the 2022 elections, the Official Statistics Authority will pay particular attention to the structural changes in the Official Statistical Service's resources and staff, according to the findings of a retrospective review to be carried out by the INSEE General Inspectorate.

In the longer term, it will examine the future responses to citizens' "statistical literacy" needs, in the sense of the basic skills required for the exercise of citizenship. Indeed, the Authority urges reflection on this issue at interministerial level, in a context marked by a profusion of numerical information from diverse sources.

REPORT

1 The European and international context

For the European Statistical System (ESS), 2021 stood out as a year marked by the aftermath of the health crisis, and involved several initiatives to measure, inter alia, its economic and social impacts at the European level. The ESS was also heavily involved in developing the EU regulations on data policy, as well as in other European projects on trade in goods and population statistics. A new cycle of Peer Reviews was also launched, including an audit of Eurostat by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) in 2021, and a review of the French statistical system in the summer, followed by the adoption of an action plan. Finally, 2021 also saw preparations for the upcoming French Presidency of the European Union during the first half of 2022.

1.1 The impacts of the health crisis on the activities of the European Statistical System

In line with 2020, 2021 was another highly unusual year for the entire European statistics sector. This was the second year of the COVID-19-induced health crisis, with its attendant demands for speed, relevance and quality in statistical production. 2021, like 2020, saw continued demands for Eurostat and the European Statistical System (ESS) to maintain the regular production of official statistics, while sometimes using innovative approaches to meeting users' information needs.

In 2020, the ESS introduced several initiatives to measure the economic and social impacts of the health crisis, and the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) adopted four main approaches to achieving these aims:¹

- **adapting existing surveys**, particularly on employment and the economic outlook, and launching ad hoc surveys, e.g. on epidemiological subjects;
- **publishing key statistics with greater frequency**, e.g. death statistics (as frequently as on a weekly basis), as well as employment, unemployment, and foreign trade statistics;
- **extending the use of private data**, e.g. for mapping the mobility of the population on a daily basis, as in France or Spain, based on mobile telephone data; or for producing statistics on the consumption patterns of specific goods based on bank card transaction data, as in Germany, Italy or Spain;
- **informing different users**, partners and data providers about the changes brought about by the crisis, in order to alert them to the methodological changes and potential fragility of the results obtained in this context.

Progress has also been made in consolidating some of the solutions adopted in an urgent manner. In this manner, the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) have sought to:

- **ensure the improved comparability of key indicators**, including the calculation of GDP, the compilation of death statistics and the measurement of the unemployment rate. To this end, during the course of 2020, Eurostat published a series of methodological notes designed to improve the quality of European statistics;
- **maintain specific access to data obtained during the pandemic**. Access to new sources of public and private data have improved the NSIs' responses to the many questions posed by

¹ For more details, see the 2020 Annual Report on pages 42-46.

economic and social stakeholders, and they have forged new partnerships in the process. However, this access to private data raises questions about the durability, cost and guarantees of personal data protection, which must be addressed in specific ways;

- **keep innovating to ensure the provision of relevant responses** during the economic recovery, especially on social issues, by consolidating the initiatives adopted in the context of the crisis.

In 2021, some of the operations launched during the previous year were maintained, another was suspended, and others reinforced the desire to include new clauses in the European statistical regulations currently under review.

For example, on the initiative of Eurostat and the German NSI, the decision to introduce a monthly European scoreboard was made in October 2020. The first edition of this scoreboard was published in December 2020 and continued throughout 2021, with the intention of improving the monitoring of the economic recovery in the context of COVID-19. Its data is supplied by the national statistical institutes and services, and the scoreboard covers the main sectors of the economy and the labour market, with an environmental dimension. At the end of 2021, it featured 27 indicators and was assessed in a generally positive manner by the NSIs and users.

Eurostat wants to ensure the continued use of the scoreboard by gradually extending its content to social inclusion (impact of the crisis on household living conditions), income inequality, and the environment (air quality in capital cities and greenhouse gas emissions) and by reducing its publication lead times.

In the wake of this European dashboard, the OECD decided to produce a dashboard of indicators to monitor the post-COVID recovery in 2021, with a focus on infra-annual indicators that highlight short-term variations. This dashboard was launched in October 2021 and contains 20 key indicators. Some differences in relation to the European Scoreboard are worth noting: certain indicators are produced by private institutes, particularly those for household living conditions; environmental indicators feature prominently; an indicator on the proportion of households with domestic broadband Internet access is also included.

The faster and more uniform collection of death statistics organised by Eurostat has also been a significant step forward, enabling INSEE to include a comparison with the other European countries affected by the pandemic in its annual death figures at the beginning of 2021, for example. This European comparison of mortality in 2020 was the subject of an article published on the INSEE blog in February 2021, under the title: "Covid et mortalité en Europe en 2020: des statistiques à regarder de près" (COVID and mortality in Europe in 2020: statistics requiring close examination).

2021 was also notable for the adoption of EU environmental guidelines as part of the Green Deal, which have implications in terms of the demands placed on the European statistical system. This European Green Deal includes targets on carbon neutrality, resource efficiency in pursuit of a green and circular economy, biodiversity restoration and pollution reduction. In order to measure the progress made in these guidelines and to assess the post-COVID recovery plans in light thereof, Eurostat has proposed to extend the collection of national environmental data and to reduce the deadlines for the transmission of some of this data. This would make reporting on the accounts for forestry, water, environmental taxes, subsidies and certain parts of the ecosystem accounts mandatory, and could be added to the activities already planned on food waste.

1.2 Involvement of the European Statistical System in the development of EU data policy regulations

Growing concern has arisen over access to administrative or private data, with the health crisis having shown the central and decisive role of this issue in consolidating and extending the scope of official statistics.

New EU regulations could therefore provide a supranational legal framework for the processing of information held by third parties for official statistical purposes. In this respect, three new draft European regulations on digital technology and data, one of which (Data Governance Act) is in the process of being adopted, directly concern official statistics.

1.2.1 The Data Governance Act (DGA) Regulation

This draft regulation aims to set new rules on data governance, in order to facilitate exchanges and the processing of data at the European level "in a framework of trust". Although, in principle, it covers a wide range of public and private data, in practice, the current version of the DGA mainly concerns data held by public bodies that is subject to "third-party rights" (protection of personal data, commercial reasons, data covered by statistical confidentiality, etc.). A central objective of the project is to create common sectoral data spaces at European level, inspired by the French Health Data Hub model.

The rules currently governing access to data by official statisticians in France and the provision of open access to data for researchers, while not strictly identical to those described in the draft regulation, share many similarities (transparency, fairness, non-exclusivity, etc.), which should not call into question the provisions of Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951, as amended in 2008, on legal obligation, coordination and secrecy in the field of statistics.

This Data Governance Act is currently being adopted by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament.

1.2.2 The e-Privacy Regulation

The draft e-privacy regulation in the field of electronic communications aims to clarify the provisions of General Regulation (EU) No 2016/679 on the protection of personal data.

Its objective is to reconcile better privacy protection with the development of innovative sectors – such as the Internet of Things – and the viability of the business models of enterprises in the digital sector.

One of the challenges for statisticians is to develop the capacity to use mobile phone data to produce new statistics (e.g. on population movements). To this end, the Council has granted derogation clauses to enable the European Statistical System to use mobile phone data for research and official statistics purposes, without each mobile phone owner's consent. These provisions must now be discussed in the European Parliament with a view to a final compromise.

This prospect would be all the more attractive for French official statisticians, given mobile telephone operators' current refusal to share data with them without significant financial compensation, which has led INSEE to suspend the pursuit of the work begun in 2020.

1.2.3 The Data Act Regulation

The European Commission will propose the draft digital regulation (Data Act), defining the legal framework for access to private data, during Q1 2022, with a view to starting negotiations in the Council during H1.

Under the aegis of Eurostat, the European Statistical System has prepared a Position Paper on this draft regulation in order to alert legislators to the need to take account of the specific needs of official statistics in this legislation.

A public consultation was launched by the European Commission in June 2021. In its response, INSEE supported the need for a harmonised European regulatory framework for access to private data, including an obligation for enterprises to share certain data free of charge when it is needed for the production of official statistics, with the possibility of financial compensation for the initial investment or marginal cost of such operations. The National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) maintained a similar position, as did the Directorate-General for Enterprises in its response.

To give more substance to this proposal defended by the community of European statisticians, in addition to the Data Act, Eurostat is contemplating a revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 as amended (the "Law on European Statistics") in order to provide the necessary clarifications on this subject.

1.3 Other notable initiatives by the European Statistical System

In addition to these European regulations on data policy, three Community initiatives are of particular interest to stakeholders in the French Official Statistical Service: the future regulation on population statistics, the implementation of the regulation on intra-Community trade in goods, and the envisaged prioritisation exercise on health statistics.

1.3.1 The future European Statistics On Population (ESOP) Regulation

This regulation will require European states to provide new transmissions of population data on an annual basis, starting in 2026.

The adoption of the proposed framework regulation by the Commission is anticipated for mid-2022.

Beforehand, discussions are being held with a view to defining the population required to provide homogeneous data that will be comparable between EU countries, setting the deadlines for the transmission of information, and deciding upon the inclusion of new statistical headings likely to better meet users' needs.

1.3.2 The implementation of the European Business Statistics (EBS) Regulation

The European Business Statistics (EBS) framework regulation provides a new legal basis for the statistical survey on intra-EU trade in goods by repealing the Intrastat and Extrastat regulations from the beginning of 2022. The French legal basis for the declaration of trade in goods (DEB), referring to the Intrastat Regulation, has therefore become obsolete.

As announced to the ASP at the hearing of the Ministerial Statistical Office for Foreign Trade in June 2020, measures have been taken to eliminate the ambiguity over the status of the data collected in the declaration of trade in goods, which integrated, in a single document, the statistical information required to ensure compliance with the Intrastat regulation, and the data intended for monitoring VAT for intra-Community deliveries of goods.

The Finance Law for 2022 repealed these provisions for trade conducted from 2022 onwards, with a monthly statistical survey on intra-Community trade in goods (EMEBI) being put in place on the basis of Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951, as amended in 2008.

1.3.3 The priority-setting exercise in preparation for health statistics

At the meeting of the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) on 29 October 2021, France announced its desire to participate in the next pilot study for the ESS work prioritisation mechanism, which will focus on health statistics, with DREES acting as the point of contact for Eurostat in this regard.

1.4 Peer Review: launch of a new exercise at EU level, and the evaluation conducted by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) concerning Eurostat

Peer Reviews are part of the ESS strategy to ensure compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice. Their aim is to increase the integrity, independence and accountability of the statistical authorities of the ESS. The first round of peer reviews took place from 2006 to 2008, and the second from 2013 to 2015. This review covers Eurostat, European Union Member States and the European Free Trade Association countries (Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Iceland).

At Member State level, the third Peer Review began with France in 2021. Seven more Member States were reviewed in the same year, 13 will be reviewed in 2022 and ten in H1 2023.

The 2021 review of Eurostat was carried out by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) with the aim not only of assessing compliance with the Code of Practice, but also of highlighting the need to exploit new opportunities and to address new challenges in the light of the increasing digitalisation of European economies and societies.

Eurostat's ability to maintain statistical production, and even venture beyond it by producing more experimental statistics during the pandemic, is a testament to the adaptability and flexibility of the ESS. In addition, the peers considered that most of the issues raised in previous reviews had been resolved. They therefore focused their eighteen recommendations primarily on the transitions required to meet these challenges. These recommendations are divided into four objectives:

- **being a model of independence and impartiality:** the conditions for the appointment and dismissal of senior management staff should be specified in legal provisions; systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Quality Reference Framework for other statistics is recommended, in cooperation with the relevant Directorates-General of the European Commission; confidentiality safeguards should also be strengthened;
- **reaching out to users and partners:** the development of an overall strategy for relations with the academic world and improvements to Eurostat's communication and dissemination

methods are expected; the provision of a broader range of data via vintage statistical bases or, once confidentiality protocols have been strengthened, micro-data files is advocated; the revision policy for European statistics should be published;

- **pushing back the limits of what is possible in statistical production:** future European legislation should include clauses to facilitate access to private data by producers of official statistics; Eurostat should mobilise new expertise to exploit the full potential of the different types of data; coordination and cooperation should be strengthened between the statistical systems of the National Statistical Institutes and central banks, on the one hand, and those of Eurostat and the European Central Bank (ECB), on the other; additional resources, both human and financial, will be needed to support these developments;
- **being agile and proactive:** the peers consider that lessons should be learned from the health crisis and that procedures should be put in place with the NSIs to enable the rapid introduction of statistical innovations that would create the best possible conditions for responses to any future crises; if the current legal provisions prove to be insufficient to meet such new and unforeseen needs, a further amendment to Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 could be envisaged.

1.5 The Peer Review of the French statistical system

In France, a visit in relation to the third Peer Review took place between 28 June and 2 July 2021, and led to a set of recommendations. The review ended in January 2022 with the adoption of an action plan for the French Official Statistical Service (SSP).

The Peer Review visit² focused on INSEE and three Ministerial Statistical Offices (the Statistics and Forecasting Service – SSP – of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Statistical Data and Studies Service – SDES – of the Ministries of Housing, Transport, Energy, Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development, and the Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics – DREES – of the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs), which are the main producers of European statistics. In advance of their visit, documentation was sent to the peers, which enabled them to focus their discussions on a few specific points and on areas for improvement or innovation. During this visit, they had opportunities to engage in discussions, either on site or remotely, with many different contacts: the various departments concerned, both at INSEE and in the three MSOs audited; representatives of the CNIS and the Official Statistics Authority, the Quality-Labeling Committee and the Confidentiality Committee; a few young INSEE statisticians; data suppliers and users.

1.5.1 The Peer Review and its recommendations

The peers praised the responsiveness of the French official statistics system during the health crisis, and expressed confidence in the quality of its methods and the neutrality of its analyses. They found a high level of compliance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

In particular, the following aspects were highlighted as strengths of the French statistics system

- the legislative and regulatory framework applicable to the entire Official Statistical Service;

² Ms Jennifer Banim, from Ireland, was the team leader, accompanied by Ms Tina Steenvorden (from Slovenia), Mr Michail Skaliotis (Greece) and Mr Pierre Bischoff (France).

- governance based on bodies such as the ASP, CNIS, the Quality-Labeling Committee and the Statistical Confidentiality Committee, which guarantees professional independence while meeting users' needs;
- the high degree of coordination within the Official Statistical Service, particularly with regard to quality management, with the commitment of INSEE and the MSOs to a quality strategy formalised in 2017;
- the high level of expertise available within the Official Statistical Service, notably thanks to the training provided by higher education institutions such as ENSAI and ENSAE.

The peers made sixteen recommendations in a report published in October on the INSEE and Eurostat websites, only one of which is a "compliance measure". The others are intended to improve or keep improving the compliance of the system, or even to encourage the development of future-oriented activities.

Three recommendations were made to the Official Statistics Authority with a view to improving the clarity of the procedures for appointing the Director General of INSEE and the heads of MSOs, and to ensuring systematic mentions of the principle of professional independence in their organisational decrees.

Two other recommendations aim to encourage the various ministries to increase the involvement of INSEE and the MSOs in developing the administrative data used to compile official statistics, and to increase the opportunities for official statistics to access private data.

1.5.2 The adopted action plan

In response to these sixteen recommendations, which were submitted to the ASP in September 2021, INSEE developed a draft action plan, which was finalised in January 2022.

The envisaged actions aim to:

- **improve the clarity of different practices:** the process of appointing the Director General of INSEE and the heads of the MSOs, systematic use of the Official Statistical Service logo on publications, more detailed identification of the recipients of embargoed statistics, more widespread dissemination of revision and error-correction policies;
- **increase the Official Statistical Service's capacity to mobilise new public or private data:** greater involvement of public statisticians in the design or development of administrative data relevant to the production of statistical information via an appropriate contracting policy; easier access to private data, in connection with the revision of Community regulations;
- **consolidate the "quality assurance" framework defined following the second peer review:** roll-out of quality strategies and process reviews, publication of data quality reports, promotion of a statistical metadata service offering, and formalisation of a standard documentation template;
- **keep improving dissemination and communication:** provision of enriched datasets; improvement of browsing on the Insee.fr website; enrichment of the MSOs' micro-data offerings for research purposes, and diversification of their communication channels.

1.6 Preparations for the French Presidency of the European Union (PFUE)

In the first half of 2022, France will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time since 2008. Preparations for this event were undertaken throughout 2021. With this in mind, INSEE has implemented a specific communication policy, which enables Internet users, via the Insee.fr website, to access recent studies on France in the European Union by the Official Statistical Service.

The main challenge for the French Presidency of the European Union concerns the coordination of the negotiation of the texts being adopted by the Council of the European Union, namely:

- a regulation on agricultural statistics – SAIO³⁴ – under negotiation in trilogue meetings in which the two co-legislators (Council and European Parliament) harmonise their positions under the aegis of the European Commission before the final adoption of the regulation;
- a revision of the text on national accounts, under negotiation in the Council's Statistics Group;
- the draft revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, as amended, which Eurostat intends to propose concerning the conditions for access to private data, data exchanges within the European Statistical System, the potential roles of National Statistical Institutes in national data ecosystems, and possible supplements on access to administrative data. The negotiations on this revision will not start until 2023, but with the support of the French Presidency of the European Union, the representatives of the French statistical system intend to play a major role in the preliminary reflections that could take place during the coming year.

Two of the three draft data regulations mentioned in section 1.2 will also be under negotiation during the French Presidency of the European Union, namely the E-Privacy and Data Act regulations. The Directorate-General for Enterprises (DGE) directly represents France in these negotiations, which require close coordination with INSEE in order to defend the interests of official statistics.

³ Ms Jennifer Banim, from Ireland, was the team leader, accompanied by Ms Tina Steenvorden (from Slovenia), Mr Michail Skaliotis (from Greece) and Mr Pierre Bischoff (from France).

⁴ Statistics on agricultural input and output.

2 Official statistics in France in 2021

This list of the activities carried out by the Official Statistical Service in 2021 is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to highlight what the Official Statistics Authority considers to be the most important aspects of these developments. It is based, in particular, on the activity reports submitted by INSEE's "Statistical Coordination" task force and by all the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs), on the hearings held by the ASP during the year, and on the findings of the general inspectorates' missions that were submitted to the Authority.

In 2021, as in 2020, the Official Statistical Service adapted to the context of the health crisis by rescheduling certain operations and by making the necessary arrangements to meet new needs. However, it also sought to initiate or pursue substantive investments in key tools and new themes, which will require significant long-term efforts to bring to fruition.

All of these activities and initiatives conform to the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice, regarding the timeliness and relevance of the statistics produced, and the coordinated implementation of statistical procedures that are appropriate, methodologically sound and likely to reduce the burden on respondents.

2.1 The Official Statistical Service's activities in the wake of the health crisis

The different components of the Official Statistical Service have had to adapt to the health crisis by modifying the survey schedules and collection procedures, for example. The Service's capacity to address questions concerning the consequences of the crisis has also, and above all, required it to maintain its collective mobilisation on activities begun in 2020 by introducing examinations of problems related to the crisis into its processes, and by launching new activities.

2.1.1 The pursuit or rescheduling of statistical operations in the context of the crisis

The health crisis had a more moderate impact on survey collections than in 2020 due to the experience gained and the types of measures implemented.

INSEE's 2021 household survey programme was generally maintained, although face-to-face collection activities were suspended for several months and sometimes replaced by telephone or online collections.

As a result, INSEE adapted its questionnaires for several household surveys: the Household Survey of Income and Living Conditions" (SRCV) was carried out by telephone using a shorter questionnaire, and the "Living Environment and Security" survey (CVS), in partnership with the Ministerial Statistical Office (MSO) for Internal Security (SSMSI), was also carried out by telephone, using a redesigned questionnaire. This collection was important for two reasons: it had been necessary to cancel the 2020 survey, and 2021 was the year of the last CVS survey, which will be replaced by a new scheme – the "Security Experiences and Perceptions" (VRS) survey – in 2022.

However, modifications were made to the timetable for surveys in 2021 that could only be conducted on a face-to-face basis. For example, the collection of the pilot "International Survey on Information Use by Adults" (PIAAC), carried out in partnership by the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES) – the MSO for the Ministry of Labour, and the Directorate for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP) – the MSO for the Ministry of Education, was postponed until the summer. Similarly, the collection test for the "Autonomy" survey, under the responsibility of the Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES) – the MSO

for the Ministry of Health and Solidarity, was also switched from December 2020 to the summer of 2021, which led to the postponement of the start of the "Autonomy" survey until March 2022.

These delays will have implications for the Official Statistical Service's general survey programme over the coming years, with postponements of the "Working Conditions" (DARES) and "Time Use" (INSEE) surveys, in particular. However, other operations (Lifelong Learning, etc.), notably in response to European regulations, have been given priority status. The Housing Survey by the Statistical Data and Studies Service (SDES) – the Ministerial Statistical Office for the Ministry of Ecological Transition and Solidarity, which had been due to end in mid-2020, was extended until April 2021, with collection being carried out by telephone.

The health crisis has also had a significant impact on **the price surveys conducted for the Consumer Price Index**. Regular adjustments to the collection process and frequent changes to the instructions have led to an increase in the corresponding burden. As a result, publication took place according to schedule for the bi-monthly "Informations Rapides" publications throughout the year. Other planned investments were postponed, such as the survey on the monitoring of scanner data. In the French Overseas Departments, price collections and the publication of the local index had to be suspended for several months.

The Annual Census Survey (EAR) of 2021 was postponed in all municipalities, except for those in Mayotte, according to Article 17 of the Law of 31 May 2021 on the management of the recovery from the health crisis. The law also provides for the temporary introduction of a six-year cycle for municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants, and secures the publication of end-of-year legal populations on the basis of an adapted method. This postponement also led to a one-year delay to the five-yearly collection of data on people living in mobile homes or without shelter, which was scheduled for 2021 in large municipalities, in addition to postponement of the experiment with the use of a service provider (the French Post Office) by municipalities for certain census operations. To address these issues, the INSEE Demographics Department adapted its methods for calculating legal populations and statistical results from the population census, in particular by making greater use of administrative sources. This method cannot be used for several consecutive years without impairing its quality and robustness. However, these changes enabled the continued production of population estimates under the best possible conditions, with methodological adaptations enabling satisfactory population estimates at the aggregate levels: national, regional, departmental and municipal. Socio-demographic structures will now be maintained for a period of six years (instead of five previously), which will therefore require a six-year reference period as of the 2019 Census (released at the end of 2021) in order to enable temporal comparisons. This postponement of the Annual Census Survey also enabled INSEE's census teams to carry out investment activities in 2021, which included an exceptional operation to improve the quality of the Address Control List (RIL) targeting municipalities with the greatest discrepancies in relation to tax data.

The surveys of enterprises and establishments scheduled for 2021 suffered from less disruption than in 2020. However, postponements of collection and methodological adaptations were required for certain surveys.

For INSEE, the "Waste" survey, conducted every four years and used as the basis for European monitoring, was maintained in 2021, but the questionnaire targeting industry and trade was greatly reduced, with a more comprehensive survey scheduled for completion in 2023.

In addition, the collection rate for the 2020 Annual Sector Survey (ESA) remained below the rates observed for the 2018 ESA (by around 3 points, compared to 2018 – the last "conventional" situation before the crisis). In addition to this difficulty, adaptations to the application of collection operations had to be made in order to adjust certain controls that are sensitive to large variations in turnover.

For the Ministerial Statistical Offices, the Statistical Surveys, Data and Studies Task Force (MEDES) for the Ministry of Youth and Sport postponed its survey of holiday camp organisers, which had been scheduled for the summer of 2021, until 2022. The second edition of the periodic survey on teaching (EPODE), for the Directorate for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP), which reports on the diversity of professional teaching practices in elementary and secondary schools, could not be administered in the spring of 2021, as planned due to the change in the school holidays, and was rescheduled for the spring of 2022. The "Research and Development" (R&D) surveys carried out by the Under-Directorate for Information Systems and Statistical Studies (SIES) at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, once again encountered difficulties, as some enterprises were once again unable to respond to the surveys within the desired time frames. Due to the fact that school medical services continued to be kept very busy dealing with COVID in 2021, the results of the 2021 school health survey conducted by DREES are fragmentary and unusable.⁵ The collection of the aquaculture census in French Overseas Departments, led by the Statistics and Forecasting Service – the MSO for the Ministry of Agriculture – was finally postponed due to travel difficulties between metropolitan France and the Overseas Departments.

In this respect, the ASP considers it important, during the course of 2022, to carry out a comprehensive review of statistical information that could only be produced incompletely, or whose production was significantly delayed due to the crisis context, and has discussed possible changes of priorities within the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS).

2.1.2 The extension and expansion of statistical work on the health crisis and its consequences

The Official Statistical Service has used varied and adapted tools and resources in its efforts to meet the different information needs expressed in relation to the health crisis and its consequences. It has been responsive and creative in developing new means of documenting and analysing this extraordinary period. In this way, survey questionnaires have been enhanced to produce new data. Innovative activities have been undertaken with several objectives; some of them, by developing the use of new sources of data – particularly private data – have led to brand new studies, while others have accelerated the renovation of schemes already in place.

2.1.2.1 An initial response to new information needs: enhancing survey questionnaires

Regarding the economic situation and living conditions of households, as in 2020, INSEE's monthly Household Economic Outlook Survey (CAMME) was used on several occasions in 2021 to shed light on the consequences of the health crisis. Questions were first added to identify changes in their income, and others followed on their possible use of food aid schemes. European discussions, led by Eurostat, on a common questionnaire for all Member States, then led to a slight modification of the first questions. Analyses of the effects of the crisis continued in October with the introduction of a questionnaire on social contacts, designed with the National Council on Policies to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion (CNLE), which covers, inter alia, contacts with relatives over different periods of time and the possibility of receiving help from them. The answers to these questions provide information about households' perceptions of isolation and support in the autumn of 2021.

⁵ The survey consists of the transmission, via the School Medicine Information System, of the results of the compulsory examination of six-year-old pupils in the sample.

The "Statistics on Income and Living Conditions" (SRLC) scheme was also modified in 2021, with questions related to the health crisis, defined at European level, added in order to assess its impact on income, the use of government aid, teleworking and home schooling conditions.

In the health field, the survey on the COVID-19 epidemic (EpiCov) carried out jointly by DREES and the National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM), with support from INSEE, which aims to provide information about the spread of the virus in the population and the consequences of the epidemic on people's health and daily lives, has been adapted over time. The third wave of the survey, which began in June 2021, was completed on 7 August, but unlike the previous waves, it did not include serological analyses of blood samples, and its fourth wave was postponed until early 2022. The information from these questionnaires will allow the Official Statistical Service and researchers to carry out a detailed study of the issues of COVID vaccination and the impact of the health crisis on people's mental health, on the one hand, and on their financial and work situations, on the other. The information is collected via a questionnaire administered online or by telephone.

Focusing on labour-market issues, a new "monthly survey on the short-term monitoring of economic activity and labour conditions", known as "ACEMO-COVID", by DARES, has been collected since 1st April 2020. It enables the rapid and frequent provision of information about changes in the workforce and activity, employment conditions (recourse to short-time working, teleworking, etc.) and the preventive measures implemented by enterprises.

The questionnaire for the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS), renamed the "European employer survey on training", which is the fruit of a partnership between the Centre for Studies and Research on Employment and Qualifications (CEREQ), DARES and France Compétences, has also been revised in order to include questions on the health crisis.

Concerning the situation of enterprises, the maintenance in 2021 of the questions added to the INSEE ESA survey in 2020 enabled the continued measurement of the cost for enterprises of health-crisis-related expenditure (additional spending on consumables, services and equipment).

2.1.2.2 Continued dissemination of specific indicators or analyses for monitoring the different dimensions of the crisis

At the demographic level, in addition to the regular publication of information on the number of deaths, INSEE has been publishing the monthly number of births since January 2021, due to a very marked decline observed in relation to the same months of the previous year. This dissemination continued throughout 2021.

INSEE continued to publish its *Economic Outlook* reports on a more frequent than quarterly basis (approximately every two months until autumn 2021), while adding new chapters. Having since returned to a quarterly format, they are now supplemented by "four-page" publications three times a year.

In the social and health sectors, DREES has published a monthly monitoring table of solidarity benefits at the end of every month since the end of December 2020, with assistance from the organisations responsible for managing these benefits. This publication compiles and provides access to the most recent monthly data available, including at the regional and departmental levels, in order to shed light on how the health crisis has affected the changes in poverty in France. This approach will be maintained throughout the crisis.

Since October 2020, DREES has also been disseminating weekly information on the virological testing conducted during the epidemic. Since the summer of 2021, this has been accompanied by

the tracking of the vaccination status of persons in the population aged 20 years or older who have been tested positive for COVID-19, and of hospitalised persons (including the period of time since their vaccination and whether they have received a booster dose). In addition to these descriptive statistics, an analysis is proposed in order to estimate the overall effects of the different vaccination statuses (with particular regard to the protective effect of the vaccine over time and the contribution of the booster dose) by neutralising the differences in age structures. INSEE's SSP Lab⁶ assisted DREES with the performance of this operation, which mobilised data from three information systems. The raw data files presenting the national results, and breakdowns per territory and age group, are available on the DREES website.

DARES continued to publish a dashboard to enable the real-time tracking of the trend in applications for short-time working until June 2021. Published twice a week until February, it was then published on a monthly basis until 31 May 2021.

In the education sector, to assess the impact of the health crisis on pupils' achievements, the Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP) continued to collect data as part of the scheme to evaluate the consequences of the health crisis (DECCS panel), which tracks cohorts of pupils in the first and second years of 1,000 primary schools, over a period of two school years. This DECCS panel sets out to compare the achievements and progress of pupils during two school years: 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, with contextual characteristics (families, teachers, and schools).

Concerning the activity of enterprises, as recorded in the INSEE business tendency surveys, the module of quarterly questions added in October 2020 on the impacts of health measures on productivity, was maintained until October 2021. The collection process for these surveys was revised in order to promote online responses.

Finally, until the end of May 2021, the Under-Directorate for Studies, Statistics and Information Systems (SDESSI) – the MSO for the Office of the Secretary of State for the Civil Service, continued to produce, at up to the departmental level, the weekly survey of government departments on the progression of the epidemic and the generalisation of teleworking.

2.1.2.3 Launch of new studies on the consequences of the crisis

The Official Statistical Service also launched specific surveys and operations to assess the consequences of the crisis, whose first collections and publications were published during 2021.

These new activities had three main purposes:

- **Filling an information gap on sensitive issues**

In collaboration with the voluntary sector and the National Union of Municipal and Intermunicipal Social Welfare Centres (UNCCAS), INSEE and DREES established a system for monitoring food aid in France at the beginning of 2021, with the aim of providing early indications about the progression of economic insecurity in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic-induced crisis. This system consists of two tools:

- the reporting of quantitative data concerning food aid, transmitted by the main networks at the departmental level, with a view to developing a better understanding of changes in the number of beneficiaries and the volumes distributed, in addition to the territorial disparities;

⁶ The SSP Lab is a resource and coordination centre for applied research and experimental development designed to promote innovation and novelty in data sources, technologies and data science methods relating to the statistical outputs of the Official Statistical Service (SSP).

- a barometer survey on the activity of food aid centres. Launched by DREES and INSEE in May-June 2021, this online survey was designed to collect the perceptions of managers of food aid distribution sites regarding the changes in their activities and in the profiles of the people they help.

The first results⁷ of this scheme were published in July 2021. However, the data transmitted by the main networks remains disparate and has not yet enabled any precise consolidation or comparison with the pre-crisis situation, or any estimation of trends. Moreover, the associative networks have expressed a certain reluctance to implement a quarterly reporting system, which is considered too frequent.

INSEE, for its part, carried out a new "Food Aid" survey between mid-November and mid-December 2021, with a view to gaining a better understanding of the people who use food aid services in mainland France, particularly those who have been recently plunged into economic insecurity by the health crisis. This survey was carried out, and the collection targets attained, in record time.

Finally, a TRACOV survey, coordinated by DARES, specifically examined the concrete impacts of the health crisis on the working conditions and daily lives of workers (including the self-employed) during the crisis, with a particular emphasis on teleworking, the use of digital tools and psychosocial risks. Prepared at the end of 2020 and implemented in the field in early 2021, the results of the first edition of the survey were published in May 2021. The second edition of this survey was launched at the end of 2021 to ensure the monitoring of working conditions, especially during the period of emergence from the crisis.

● **Using original sources**

To shed more light on household consumption and savings behaviour during the health crisis, INSEE and university researchers, under the aegis of the Council for Economic Analysis (CAE), worked in collaboration with CIC – Crédit Mutuel to analyse the bank account data of the bank's customer households. An initial CAE publication in January 2021 highlighted a sharp drop in household consumption associated with an overall decline in their financial fragility, while highlighting the specificity of the situation of "young people" (students and young workers), among whom there would appear to have been less of an improvement in financial insecurity than for other households. A special feature in the INSEE *Economic Outlook* published on 11 March 2021 completed this diagnosis by documenting changes in consumption and savings according to other dimensions such as social category and household income. This study was supplemented by an analysis of bank accounts held by customers of Banque Postale, whose clientèle is less affluent than that of CIC, with INSEE benefiting from access to this bank's anonymised data. Its results were published in November 2021.

Innovative micro-simulation activities were also carried out by INSEE in collaboration with the Banque de France in order to measure the impact of the repercussions of the health crisis on business activity. Based on a microeconomic approach, these activities evaluated the impact of the health crisis on the financial situation of more than 645,000 French enterprises in 2020; they were covered in an article published on the INSEE blog at the end of July and included in the report of the committee responsible for monitoring and evaluating emergency measures, published on the same date. They were also presented in the 2021 edition of the INSEE *Références* review entitled "Enterprises in France".

⁷ These initial results are based on quantitative information provided by six national associations (French Red Cross, Restaurants du Cœur, Secours Catholique, Secours populaire français, the National Association for the Development of Solidarity-Based Grocery Stores (ANDES), and the French Federation of Food Banks), an online survey of distribution centres conducted in May-June 2021, and the annual information system on food aid managed by the Directorate-General for Social Cohesion.

- **Participating in the improvement or renovation of existing schemes**

INSEE ensured the continued use of high-frequency data from the "CB" bank card economic interest grouping (EIG) by signing a partnership agreement in March 2021, which enabled the production of different analyses for the service and trade accounts reports, and for the *Economic Outlook* publications. This data is now being used in combination with other sources in order to estimate flash turnover indices in the retail trade, 30 days after the end of the month, which will eventually lead to shorter production times.

Even before the health crisis, INSEE and DARES had planned to place the Nominative Social Declaration (DSN)⁸ at the heart of their statistical monitoring scheme for employment and wages, with a view to enabling the production of faster and more accurate diagnoses of business conditions. In addition, INSEE's agile processing of the DSN enabled it to meet the new needs emerging from the crisis in 2020, by providing estimates of the volume of paid work at very short intervals. This new indicator, which is very closely correlated with activity, provides direct information about the intensity of the crisis according to the characteristics of establishments (sector, end of activity, location) and employees (age, profession, etc.). It has also proved useful in replacing information that is missing from other statistical processes, such as labour cost indices or industrial production indices. In addition, the crisis has accelerated the processing of DNS data for "flash" employment estimates (at around T+40 days), replacing the "calibrations" carried out on the basis of the "Labour-force activity and employment conditions"(ACEMO) surveys. The aim now is to keep reducing the production times, which also corresponds to a European demand.

As noted by the Official Statistics Authority, these potentialities associated with the DSN pave the way towards a collaboration between INSEE, DARES, the URSSAF national fund and other users, to ensure the rapid publication of information on employment and salaries, while preventing the precipitous proliferation of data that could pose risks in terms of accuracy and coherence (cf. point 3.2).

Finally, following the significant impact of the health crisis on the cultural sectors, which the Department for Studies, Forecasting, Statistics and Documentation (DEPSD) – the MSO of the Ministry of Culture had highlighted back in June 2020, it launched a new collection of *Economic Outlook* reports in January 2021. Published on a quarterly basis, these publications measure the economic impacts of the crisis on the commercial aspects of culture, based on the turnover declared by enterprises to the Directorate-General for Public Finances.

2.2 Other significant advances made by the Official Statistical Service, not related to the health crisis

Despite the health crisis, the Official Statistical Service completed certain flagship operations such as the redesign of the Employment survey and the agricultural census, which was collected in the midst of the pandemic. It has also made progress in the observation of new fields, as strongly urged by actors in the social debate, and has continued to invest in and carry out key methodological activities.

⁸ The Nominative Social Declaration (Déclaration sociale nominative – DSN) is the final stage of payroll processing in establishments, and provides information about the situation of each employee. Private-sector establishments have been transmitting the DSN to a number of government bodies, including INSEE, on a monthly basis since 2017; public-sector establishments have been doing so since 2020, with an acceleration of the process in 2022.

2.2.1 Completion of flagship operations

Since the beginning of 2021, INSEE has been using a modernised version of its Employment survey, with changes to both its questionnaire and its protocol, which now includes repeat surveys carried out online; this change was carried out as planned, despite the health crisis context. Comparisons of the old and new versions of the survey enabled the analysis of breaks in series, which proved to be limited. At the end of June 2021, economic indicators derived from the modernised survey were published for Q1 2021, accompanied by back-calculated series covering an extended period. All these changes and results will continue to be extensively announced, both internally to users of the Official Statistical Service, and externally to relatively specialist audiences. Finally, an Employment Survey Users' Committee was also launched in 2021.

In 2021, the first five-year cycle of the population census (RP) was collected in Mayotte. The RP was formerly a comprehensive, five-yearly census until 2017, but the 2017 Law on "True Equality for Overseas France" required the same type of census to be conducted in Mayotte as in Metropolitan France and the other Overseas Departments and Regions (DROMs). This first Annual Census Survey took place in a difficult health context, but it was ultimately maintained and completed by the end of April 2021. For this first survey carried out under their responsibility, the municipalities rallied round strongly and the non-response rate remained very low (3.8%).

Finally, the collection of the agricultural census, coordinated by the Statistics and Forecasting Service (SSP) of the Ministry of Agriculture, ended on 17 May. Despite multiple difficulties, including the health crisis and an outbreak of avian influenza, which prohibited access to poultry farmers in South-Western France for several weeks, collection was conducted in a satisfactory manner and a collection rate of 98% was recorded. The first results were released in December 2021, through coordinated publications at national and regional levels.

2.2.2 Investigation of new fields using expanded data sets

Access to data, both private and administrative, is a key issue for the Official Statistical Service. Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951, as amended in 2008, on legal obligation, coordination and secrecy in the field of statistics, already authorises access under conditions that are sometimes quite restrictive. Changes to legal texts may come into force over the coming months. However, several advances in the Official Statistical Service's use of files held by third parties were made in 2021, together with the launch of new surveys.

In the field of internal security, in preparation for the future "Security Experiences and Perceptions" (VRS) survey, which will replace the "Living Environment and Security" (CVS) survey from 2022 onwards, the MSO for Internal Security (SSMSI) oversaw the methodological work and the collection of the "Gender and Security" (GENESE) survey on gender-based and sexual violence. This survey was part of a call for projects launched by Eurostat to volunteer Member States for the roll-out of a Gender-Based Violence Survey based on a questionnaire established at European level. Online, paper-questionnaire-based and telephone-interview-based collection methods were used; a face-to-face survey of a sample of non-respondents was also conducted to carry out a methodological check on the multi-mode online/paper-based/telephone-based protocol. The survey was conducted between March and July 2021 among 170,000 18 to 74-year-olds living in Metropolitan France, with the first results expected in early 2022. Its protocol was designed to act as a full-scale experiment with a future "multi-modal" victim survey.

With regard to issues relating to the ecological and solidarity-oriented transition, the decision to use data from gas and electricity meters (Linky and Gaspar) was made in order to

measure the effects of energy renovation projects. It also provided an opportunity to experiment with the use of new sources of data and to explore associated questions concerning social acceptability. In the framework of the National Observatory for Energy Renovation (ONRE), the Statistical Data and Studies Service (SDES) sought to estimate the actual effect of renovations on energy consumption, using the monthly electricity and gas consumptions of a sample of one million homes, based on meter data obtained from Enedis and GRDF, the main supply network managers. However, as the statistical use of this data was not initially provided for by the regulations, both network operators and consumer associations were opposed to the transmission of this data to the SDES, despite the French Data Protection Authority (CNIL) issuing a favourable opinion. As access to the desired data is covered by Article 7 bis of Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951, as amended in 2008, on legal obligation, coordination and secrecy in the field of statistics, the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) was asked to issue an opinion by the SDES, which established bilateral contacts with consumer associations. A debate was also organised at a meeting of the CNIS "Environment and Sustainable Development" commission prior to the examination of the request, which enabled researchers, network managers and consumer associations to express their views. These different approaches ultimately led to the CNIS issuing a consensual opinion, in accordance with the legal rules and taking account of the particularly sensitive nature of this data. However, the French Higher Council for Energy issued an unfavourable opinion, considering that the project, although legitimate, should be postponed in light of the tensions surrounding the roll-out of "Linky" connected meters. In this respect, it was agreed to test a draft letter to consumers before publishing the envisaged order to enable the project to be carried out; the results of this test are currently being analysed by the SDES.

On agricultural issues, the European Commission sought to improve the measurement of the use of plant protection products in cultivation practices by increasing the rate of data provision to annual instead of five-yearly as at present. At the request of the Ministerial Statistical Office for Agriculture, the CNIS established a working group in June 2021 in order to investigate how farmers' technical tools could be used to create databases, while also checking whether there was sufficiently broad consent to enable the provision of high-quality statistical estimates from the scope of the data collected, or whether it needed to be supplemented with survey data.

Finally, and despite the progress being made on statistics relating to internal security and justice, the Official Statistics Authority noted that in the emerging field of statistics on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), the current system still suffers from weaknesses that hamper the assessment of public actions carried out in these areas. In its deliberations of 30 November 2021, the Authority proposed several ways to improve this monitoring, including closer coordination of the departments concerned, improving the quality of the information collected and the methodologies used to define and harmonise concepts and nomenclatures, and gradually introducing the longitudinal monitoring of money-laundering and terrorist-financing cases throughout their judicial life, notwithstanding possible changes in their legal classification.

2.2.3 Methodological investments and structural statistical operations

These structural investments and operations included the acquisition of data required to optimise statistical production, the improvement of nomenclatures used for this production, the constitution of enhanced registers and directories, the facilitation of the matching of files and individual databases, and the development of innovative coding and processing methods.

With regard to **data acquisition**, the Order of 5 July 2021 now allows INSEE to receive electronic transmissions of the scanner data required to calculate turnover indices, which were previously collected via the "monthly survey of the activity of large food retailers" (EMAGSA), with the aim of replacing this survey in 2023.

Experimental data on the rental of tourist accommodation by individuals via online platforms (Airbnb, Booking, Expedia, Tripadvisor) was also obtained by Eurostat and subsequently used. This data was presented in a publication covering the year 2019, which was released at the end of 2021. This new approach supplements the scope of the analysis of tourist numbers and comparisons of European territories. It is expected to form part of a long-term process.

With regard to **the improvement of nomenclatures**, the interministerial working group, established to develop a French Nomenclature of Offences (NFI) in the fields of security and justice, coordinated by INSEE and involving the SSMSI, the Under-Directorate of statistics and studies (S/DSE), the MSO for the Ministry of Justice, and their relevant ministerial departments, completed its work at the end of April 2021. This first version is based on the International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes (ICCS), approved by the UN in 2015. While this version of the NFI is a tool that has yet to be calibrated through use, it extends the possible scope of quantitative studies on offences (crimes, criminal offences and minor offences). This field remains insufficiently studied even though the statistical sources of the French Ministries of the Interior and Justice have acquired extensive and exploitable statistical sources in common categories enabling international comparisons. This nomenclature should therefore become the standard reference for the production of national statistics in the fields of insecurity, crime and penal response. It was published on the websites of the MSOs for Justice and Internal Security in December, and has already been used in work on the fight against drugs published by the SSMSI in 2021.

With regard to **the enhancement of registers and directories**, the RÉSIL (Statistical Registers of Individuals and Dwellings) programme aims to create a permanent and adaptive system of statistical registers of individuals, households and residential premises that can be updated using various administrative sources. This system of registers will accommodate matching with other statistical sources – administrative and private – provided that they contain a common identifier with the register under consideration, either directly or through prior identification. The aim is to start production in 2025. The development of the RÉSIL programme requires prior notification and discussion in order to secure the public's confidence in the planned uses. To this end, a symposium organised by the CNIS at the end of January provided an opportunity to discuss a large number of experiments and questions relating to pairing operations.

The "National Higher Education Student Identifier" (INES) webservice was also rolled out by the SIES at the end of 2020. This new scheme is designed to extend the effective scope of the "National Directory of Pupil, Student and Apprentice Identifiers" (RNIE) to higher education. This system enables higher education institutions and national student service applications (Parcoursup (higher education admission process), CNOUS (national student welfare offices)) to register students – if they are not already registered – and to improve the quality of this identifier in higher education information systems. 2021 was the first year of production for this new webservice, whose use by institutions and the various national student services applications was gradually extended during the year.

In the field of **individual data matching**, 2021 saw the publication, by DEPP and DARES, of the first results obtained from the "InserJeunes" system, which measures the professional integration of young people leaving the vocational track in secondary schools or on apprenticeships, based on indicators provided for by the 2018 law on the freedom to choose one's professional future. This system is based on the reconciliation of numerous administrative databases relating to the

schooling of pupils and the training of apprentices, on the one hand, and to employment (particularly nominative social declarations), on the other. This comprehensive data produces more accurate results than the pre-existing surveys (Labour-Market-Integration (IVA) and Professional Integration of Apprentices (IPA)). Provided that student numbers are sufficient, it enables the dissemination of integration rates at the institutional level, offers a new educational guidance service to young people and their families, and enables the more precise management of institutions. It also eases the response burden that was formerly placed on education authorities, schools and young people. The first results, concerning young people who left the education or training sector in June 2018 and June 2019, were published on a public website at the beginning of 2021. Data on young people leaving education or training in June 2020 was published at the end of 2021.

In October 2021, the INSEE project to develop a "non-significant statistical code" (CSNS), designed to facilitate and harmonise individual data matching for official statisticians, led to an initial service offering that was made available to the entire French Official Statistical Service. Via this interface, which is designed to enable the extension of these matches and guarantee their security, users can now use the National Registration Number (NIR) to obtain these non-significant statistical codes. To facilitate matching between databases, the next step is to develop an identification engine for the National Directory for the Identification of Natural Persons (RNIPP), which is essential for processing files containing identity characteristics (surname, first names, sex, date and place of birth) rather than the NIR.

Several noteworthy activities to **develop innovative coding and processing methods** were carried out by the SSP Lab in 2021, in collaboration with other INSEE units or MSOs, which led to progress being made on activities related to identification and automatic coding in registers and directories, based on natural language processing and deep-learning techniques. An experiment was also conducted to automatically code the product labels featured in scanner data, as part of the NOSICA project, which aims to integrate these data into the production of short-term activity indicators.

The SSP Lab is also working with DREES on adding data on air pollution to the EDP⁹-Health sample in order to assess the impact of this type of pollution on health. It also organised the "Funathon" – a collective practice event on data science techniques. The 150 participants analysed a dataset covering accommodation rented via the Airbnb platform in several cities (Bordeaux, Lyon, Paris), which enabled them to perform spatial analyses of the distribution of these dwellings and their characteristics, process the language contained in customer comments and descriptions of accommodation, model the prices of the rental accommodation on offer, and view the results of these analyses.

At the same time, a cross-disciplinary project team was established at INSEE to explore the methodological and quality issues associated with administrative data processing. In 2021, it focused on matching methodologies and the potential contributions of machine learning to official statistics. Most of the new and/or innovative activities, irrespective of whether they were intended to analyse the effects of the health crisis, highlighted the need to develop new information systems to supplement existing databases in order to obtain new or more detailed information. The Official Statistics Authority (ASP), in its deliberation of 22 September on individual data matching, stressed the importance of this "third" type of information collection, alongside surveys and administrative data, and called for their inclusion in the annual reports and programmes transmitted to the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS). The Authority also welcomed the activities carried out by INSEE, in particular the project to develop the non-significant statistical code. It

⁹Echantillon démographique permanent (Permanent Demographic Sample matched to health data)

supports the development of an appropriate "service offering" with a view to extending its use throughout the SSP. The ASP also believes that the transparency of matching operations should be improved, in terms of their objectives, content and conditions. It strongly recommends giving further thought to simplifying the context of matching, while encouraging the reconciliation of socio-fiscal files with those from the French National Health Data System (SNDS), in order to improve the understanding of social inequalities in health.

2.3 Structural rather than ad hoc problems identified by the Authority concerning certain principles of the Code of Practice

The ongoing monitoring operations that the Official Statistics Authority continued to perform in 2021, and its discussions with INSEE, Ministerial Statistical Offices and the various inspection missions appointed in their field, pointed towards relatively few one-off failures or incidents. However, they revealed that the application of the Code of Practice could encounter more structural problems in certain sectors, which were noted by the ASP during its hearings and deliberations.

2.3.1 A limited number of one-off incidents

Relatively few incidents, such as embargo breaches or controversies triggered by different public actors in the political or media spheres, occurred in 2021.

Several embargo breaches, mainly by the media, were reported. In January, the results of the Demographic Review were commented upon prematurely on the France Bleu website and via a journalist's Twitter account. INSEE reacted by issuing a warning message to the head of the relevant section of the website concerned. At the end of November, the population projections were released slightly too early by an online news agency specialising in financial information (AOF). As the news item was widely disseminated by high-circulation newspapers, INSEE lifted the embargo as soon as the publication was posted online and contacted the agency's editor. This agency will no longer receive embargoed publications.

Two further embargo breaches, concerning statistics for 2021, occurred at the very beginning of 2022 which caused the President of the ASP to intervene. The first, on 27 January, was due to an error by the Minister for the Interior's Communications Department, which led to the scheduled release of the crime indicators recorded in 2021 being brought forward by about a quarter of an hour; this error led to an apology by the department concerned. The second occurred during the France Inter morning radio show on 8 February, when during an interview, a journalist prematurely revealed the French foreign trade results for December and for 2021 as a whole; France Inter's editorial staff acknowledged the error and made a commitment to the President of the ASP to remind its teams of the rules to be respected for the publication of official statistics, in order to prevent any recurrence of such an incident.

Furthermore, in response to one of the peer review recommendations, INSEE has undertaken to work with the MSOs on reviewing the list of their priority contacts and the wording of messages accompanying embargoed releases.

Other incidents occurred in the form of controversies, which called into question or attempted to distort the meaning of certain statistical information or publications, particularly in the run-up to the election period.

In May 2021, in an interview with *L'Express* magazine on the results of the household surveys on violence and insecurity carried out by INSEE and SSMSI, the Minister for the Interior, Mr Darmanin,

stated that he is "very fond of victim surveys, but prefers the common sense shown by the butcher in Tourcoing." Following this statement, the President of the ASP sent a message to the Minister's chief of staff, and the head of the SSMSI met with his deputy chief of staff, who reaffirmed the Ministry's interest in this survey, while the Director General of INSEE issued a response on the social networks.

At the end of the summer of 2021, elected officials in French Guiana challenged the population estimate for Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni between 2012 and 2017, claiming that it was too low. These criticisms were based on a misunderstanding of the discrepancies between legal populations and population estimates, despite the communication efforts made by INSEE. Subsequently, other elected representatives made the same criticisms concerning their municipalities. In early October, a meeting was held at the Ministry of Overseas France, attended by the President of the local authority and his executive staff, the President of the National Population Census Evaluation Commission (CNERP), the Deputy Secretary-General of the CNIS and the Head of the Demographics Department at INSEE. The referral to the CNERP and the creation of a working group under its aegis were confirmed.

With the end of 2021 marking the start of the pre-election period, the Official Statistical Service needed to exercise even greater vigilance vis-à-vis any distortion, confusion or unfounded criticism of the statistics it publishes. The monitoring carried out by INSEE on Twitter identified more than a dozen challenges to or distortions of statistical information issued by the Institute, to which it responded when deemed relevant. In addition, the INSEE press office regularly responds to requests for verification from journalists, following comments made by politicians or unverified statements on social networks, which are occurring more frequently. The topics that currently attract the most misinterpretations are immigration, the price index and purchasing power. In this respect, the ASP considers it useful for official statisticians to issue regular reminders of explanations of the calculation methods used and the meaning of these data, by any appropriate means of communication.

In June 2021, a technical incident blocked access to the INSEE website (Insee.fr) for several days. This major IT incident, due to a malfunction in a central file server, could only be entirely resolved from a technical standpoint on 5 July. Although initial interventions contained the problem, it worsened a few days later, preventing access to many files. As a consequence, the relais.insee.info backup site had to be used to ensure dissemination on Insee.fr, which enabled the continued provision of essential information. Solutions were subsequently found, which enabled all applications to be restarted in the short term and improved the resilience of the information system on a permanent basis.

2.3.2 Structural difficulties affecting defence and cause-of-death statistics

In addition to these one-off incidents, the application of the European Statistics Code of Practice to certain specific fields of official statistics has been marred by recurrent and even structural problems. These difficulties, encountered by the Economic Observatory for Defence (OED) and the Ministerial Statistical Office for the Ministry of the Armed Forces, but also in the production of statistics on medical causes of death, undermine compliance with several principles of the Code of Practice, relating to access to data, the adequacy of resources, the soundness of methodologies, timeliness and punctuality.

The severity of the problems observed in these particular areas led to a request for missions to be assigned to members of several general inspectorates, including the INSEE General Inspectorate. Their findings led to hearings and subsequent deliberations by the Authority in 2021.

Following the problems encountered by the OED, the previous President of the Official Statistics Authority appointed the INSEE General Inspectorate and the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces (CGA) to carry out a mission, which confirmed the persistence of major malfunctions, whose most obvious manifestation was the interruption to the production of statistics on military remunerations. The mission also emphasised the structural nature of these malfunctions, which the ASP considered to be related to four problems: management deficiencies preventing the creation of a body in charge of identifying users' needs and prioritising its statistical and research activities; the MSO's positioning within the Directorate of Financial Affairs, which denies it access to a sufficient number of interlocutors and reduces the visibility of its activities internally; the struggle, or even outright inability, to access administrative sources collected by the Ministry; and the inadequacy of this statistical office's resources, which prevents it from meeting this Ministry's additional needs. Noting that the OED does not operate according to the principles described in the MSOs' Charter and the European Statistics Code of Practice, the Authority has asked the Ministry of the Armed Forces to implement a series of immediate measures to ensure the OED's compliance with the characteristics and functions expected of a Ministerial Statistical Office, and will review this situation at the end of 2022. In response, the Ministry of the Armed Forces has undertaken to create a dedicated under-directorate for statistics, with significantly increased staffing, within its Directorate for Financial Affairs, although the issues of access to data have not yet been definitively resolved.

A second major issue that has raised doubts about the application of the principles of the Code of Practice concerns the statistics on causes of death. Indeed, the health crisis has highlighted the delays in the production by the Epidemiology Centre for Medical Causes of Death (CépiDc) of the official and definitive statistics on medical causes of death in line with the recommendations of the World Health Organisation (WHO). These delays have lengthened in recent years and have led to France's failure to meet its European obligations, with data for 2017 not being transmitted to Eurostat until the end of September 2021. The joint IGESR-IGAS-IG INSEE mission, which studied this issue, noted failures and malfunctions throughout the entire process of producing and disseminating these statistics (drafting of death certificates, verification of the completeness of the information collected, mobilisation of the human and software resources required for coding, management of the statistical production chain). The Authority considered it necessary implement an emergency plan involving the Official Statistical Service via DREES, in conjunction with the Ministry of Research and INSERM. This plan should remedy the delays in the provision of statistics on causes of death between 2018 and 2021, and ensure that the statistical obligations arising from Community regulations are met without delay. The Authority also requested that the statistical production of causes of death be subject to an overall review within the framework of appropriate governance system in close cooperation with the Official Statistical Service. Following the mission's observations, DREES, INSEE and INSERM established a unit headed by a high-level project manager in order to review the system. The ASP will re-examine this situation during the renewal procedure for the quality-labelling of this data, scheduled for late 2022.

Furthermore, to ensure the success of such an extensive revision, it is important to make sufficient human, financial and IT resources available to ensure the coding of certificates within the deadlines set by European regulations, and to provide DREES with the necessary statistical and medical expertise. However, although the DREES budget was increased and subsequently maintained in the wake of the health crisis, the Official Statistics Authority renewed the recommendations it had previously made concerning the trend variation in this MSO's human resources, following a mission

conducted by the IGAS and INSEE General Inspectorate on health and social statistics. The Authority identified the need for a structural increase in these resources to enable this directorate to satisfactorily fulfil all of its permanent statistical missions.

2.4 Progress made on governance, still requiring consolidation in certain areas

2021 was a year of progress in the governance of some sectors of official statistics, particularly with regard to the principles of professional independence, the coordination of statistical production, and relevance to users' needs. The Official Statistics Authority (ASP) nevertheless noted, during the course of its hearings and deliberations, the existence of points still requiring consolidation and improvement in these areas.

Progress was also made in certain principles of the Code of Practice in 2021. One such case was the implementation of appropriate statistical procedures and the maintenance of statistical confidentiality in a cost-effective manner, through the introduction of the monthly statistical survey on intra-Community trade in goods (EMEBI) in early 2022, which has clarified the procedures for collecting information on flows of goods intended for European statistics, and the data on intra-Community deliveries intended for monitoring VAT (see point 1.3.2 above).

The implementation of the principle of professional independence was also consolidated in 2021, with specific regard to the procedures for appointing the heads of the Official Statistical Service. Article 1, paragraph 3 bis of Decree No 2009-250 of 3 March 2009 already provided for the issuance, by the ASP, of a public opinion prior to the appointment of officials to posts at the "Director of Central Government" (DAC) level. For posts at other levels, an ASP deliberation of 22 September 2021 (see point 3.4 below) provided for these provisions to be supplemented with a procedure for gathering opinions on candidates' abilities to fulfil their responsibilities in the statistical field, on the basis of a job advertisement explicitly mentioning the statistical skills required. All of these provisions were applied to appointments of MSO managers in 2021. In addition, following the Peer Review recommendations, the ASP plans to explain the different stages of these appointment processes more clearly by summarising them on its website.

In 2021, the ASP was also asked to issue a favourable opinion on **a series of decrees on the missions and organisation of the Ministerial Statistical Offices** which, when the changes were introduced, explicitly mentioned the MSO's professional independence, as well as INSEE's responsibility for the coordination of statistical activities. Such organisational texts particularly concerned the statistical offices at the Directorate-General for Customs and Excise (DGDDI), the Directorate-General for Public Finance (DGFIP), the Directorate-General for Government and the Civil Service (DGAFP), and the Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security (SSMSI). However, the inclusion of these statements in the organisational texts for the MSOs remains incomplete at this stage, as six MSOs have not yet completed the process. According to the action plan adopted following the Peer Review, this process must be completed by 2027 at the latest, with a review scheduled for three years later.

These reorganisations have in some cases coincided with a significant increase in the missions and resources of the statistical offices concerned, in line with an improved matching of resources. This applies to the Ministerial Statistical Office for Public Finance, which is responsible for the production and dissemination of statistics and studies in the tax field, and also for the provision of numerous individual tax databases to the Official Statistical Service and researchers. Another example is the SSMSI, which has continued to develop its activities designed to improve the reliability and regular dissemination of data on recorded crime, and the conduct and preparation of its population-based "victim" surveys produced in partnership with INSEE (see

point 2.2.2above). However, the expected increase in this office's staffing levels needs to be pursued in order to enable it to consolidate and develop other important topics (cybersecurity, violence against children, homicides, relations between security personnel and the public, etc.). Above all, it is essential to clearly guarantee access to all administrative data on internal security, originating from both the police and the gendarmerie, on the basis of legal and operational solutions that need to be adopted without delay.

In 2021, the practical exercise of governance of the statistical system continued to promote the principle of relevance of official statistics through dialogue with users. For example, the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) conducted a detailed examination of the changes to the census questionnaire and engaged in a series of discussions on territorial indicators for which there is significant demand at the local level, particularly in the field of sustainable development. It also examined the measurement of poverty and inequality, with the emphasis on extreme poverty and the potential opportunities provided by distribution of income and wealth accounts. It has shown sustained interest in the production and international comparison of environmental and ecosystem statistics and, more specifically, has set up a working group on the use of plant protection products in agriculture (see Annexe 6).

The need for consultation with users is also taken into account in the development of Ministerial Statistical Offices' programmes. Such consultations have been a long-established and regular practice at DARES, but remain in their infancy at offices such as the MSO for Higher Education and Research (Under-Directorate of Information Systems and Statistical Studies – SIES) and the SSMSI, bearing in mind that in both cases, appropriate internal and external bodies will need to be established if the process is to fulfil its full potential. However, adequate consultation has not yet been implemented in the field of health and social statistics, in which – on major issues whose importance has been further underlined by the health crisis – there are multiple producers of quantitative information and major needs, some of which are not being met, on the part of the public authorities and social actors alike. Based on the lessons learned from the IGAS-INSEE General Inspectorate mission devoted to the "mapping" of these outputs, the ASP has therefore called for progress to be made in this area, which should be encouraged by both DREES and the CNIS.

In addition to consulting users, **the Authority noted, following the work of this inspection mission, the problems of coherence and coordination posed by statistical production activities in the health and solidarity sector.** Many public players contribute to this process, first and foremost health agencies and social security funds, but also, in certain aspects, the French Regional Health Agencies (ARS) and departmental authorities, and they do so in a context in which DREES – the statistical directorate for these ministries – has seen a reduction in its resources (see point 2.3 above). The ASP therefore considers it essential to improve the governance and coordination of statistics in this field by implementing various measures: appointing designated statistical representatives within the various structures who are responsible for interacting with the Ministerial Statistical Office; providing support via the MSO to regional departments operating under the aegis of the Ministry; taking statistical issues into consideration, in close collaboration with DREES, within the coordination bodies representing the different components of the Ministry and its supervised bodies, but also within the framework of binding multi-year contractualisation processes (Agreements on Objectives and Management – COG, and Contracts on Objectives and Performance – COP). These actions are prerequisites for improving the consistency and complementarity of the statistics made available in these fields, by ensuring the adequacy of concepts and nomenclatures, by collaboratively exploiting the promising opportunities offered by the matching of large databases, and by meeting the challenges of acquiring knowledge related to the management of dependency or to the various dimensions of health inequalities, for example.

More generally, in this sector as in others (culture, transport, environment, etc.), the Authority has noted the large number of public actors or bodies that are clearly involved in the production of statistics. Many of these bodies have adopted dedicated statistical dissemination channels or publication products, as part of or alongside broader "open-data" policies, without their activities being systematically integrated into the overall statistical regulation framework (transmission and discussion of their statistical programmes at the National Council for Statistical Information, quality labelling by the ASP of the series they disseminate), and without systematically ensuring their coordination and coherence with the productions of the Official Statistical Service. **In addition to the labelling procedure alone, the ASP has therefore decided to launch an experiment with an "official statistics procedure"** consisting, throughout 2021 and 2022 and at the recommendation of the Quality-Labeling Committee, of recognising the quality of "official statistics for general information purposes" for a specific list of series that they produce on a regular basis in accordance with the principles of transparency and autonomy of dissemination (cf. point 3.3 below). The extension of this approach, together with the systematic transmission of their statistical programmes to the CNIS, should, in future, contribute to raising the awareness of users and improving the coordination of statistical activities, in line with the principles of the Code of Practice.

Finally, **the Authority was keen to reflect on how official statistics fit into public authorities' data policies.** The experience acquired within the Official Statistical Service can indeed provide guidance for other initiatives or applications in the public sphere, and improving the quality and accessibility of administrative data can open up new opportunities for statistical outputs and studies. However, the Authority considered it necessary for the purposes, objectives and rules specific to official statistics to be clearly taken into account, maintained and reaffirmed, in relation to other types of data production or uses (monitoring dashboards, targeting tools for management or supervisory purposes, etc.). Indeed, the general information remit of official statistics gives rise to the guiding need to maintain professional independence, and to comply with specific requirements at both methodological and ethical levels (rigorous definition of concepts, nomenclatures and relevant fields, transparency of processing methods, separation of dissemination from government communication). In this respect, the ASP has called for the definition of a formalised framework for collaboration between the departments in charge of data administration and the various MSOs, in order to facilitate the management of both ministerial policies and official statistics, and to safeguard the resources specifically allocated to the latter.

2.5 Significant developments in dissemination and communication

In 2021, the Official Statistical Service continued its efforts to provide access to its outputs and to disseminate them in a clear, accessible and educational manner, in compliance with a pre-established publication schedule, where appropriate, and in accordance with the European Statistics Code of Practice.

2.5.1 The development of enhanced statistical publications with a clearly identified status

Guaranteeing professional independence entails the provision of statistical information whose publication status is clearly and unambiguously identified, in order to clearly distinguish between such information and governmental communications.

In 2021, the MSOs for Public Finance and for Local Authorities modernised their websites and revised their publication products, while ensuring that their affiliation to the Official Statistical Service is clearly mentioned.

The website of the Department of Fiscal Studies and Statistics (DESF), which also hosts the statistical office for the Ministry of Public Finance, has undergone a major redesign, in terms of both the headings listed and its content, with a complete overhaul of the statistical tables published online. Last summer, this MSO launched a new collection entitled "DGFIP Statistiques" (Statistics of the Directorate-General for Public Finance), which aims to provide annual information on cyclical developments in French taxation. A brief commentary on the annual trends for the main taxes accompanies the release of raw statistics. Another collection – "DGFIP Analyses" – is also envisaged for specific thematic studies.

Similarly, the website of the Department of Local Studies and Statistics (DESL) – the Ministerial Statistical Office for the Office of the Secretary of State for Relations with Local Authorities – has been redesigned with the aim of providing a clearer overview of the MSO's statistical information and publications. The layout of the Statistical Information Bulletin (SIB) publications has been redesigned and, since the beginning of 2022, these publications have clearly displayed the Official Statistics logo and included the MSO label in the header on the first page, thus reaffirming their identity as a product of official statistics. In addition, the "open collectivités" ("Open Local Authorities") web portal, designed to serve as a focal point for statistical information on local authorities, opened at the end of 2021. This portal was created in response to the recommendations made by the CNIS (memorandum of October 2019) and the ASP, following the hearing of the MSO managers in June 2020. It raises the profile of information on local and regional authorities published for public stakeholders and citizens, and provides easily accessible data and documentation, thereby improving the transparency and direct understanding of local and regional public policies.

Finally, the components of the Official Statistical Service have displayed a growing tendency to supplement or enhance their range of publications by producing annual cross-cutting reviews, presented in the form of summary publications and intended to act as a standard reference in the social debate. These may be released as separate publications, or as reviews produced in collaboration with INSEE under the following titles: "Chiffres clés" (Key Figures), "États annuels" (Annual Reports), "Panoramas" (Overviews) or "Insee Références" (INSEE References). These publications provide broad and up-to-date insights on complex and sometimes-controversial issues (e.g. security, immigration, education, pensions, health care institutions and minimum social benefits), which are invaluable for stakeholders and the general public alike.

2.5.2 Facilitating access to official statistics

Facilitating user access to official statistics is one of the Official Statistical Service's constant concerns, as manifested by several actions conducted in 2021: the publication of more visual representations of data based on the data visualisation technique, the almost continuous improvement of websites, the provision of increasing amounts of data in open data format, and participation in communication events to promote the contributions of official statistics and raise the awareness of its interlocutors.

For example, INSEE used data visualisation applications in 2021 to disseminate one of its flagship products – the "Tableaux de bord de l'économie française" (French Economy Dashboards) – in the form of an interactive tool designed to act as a gateway to the SSP's data offerings. Data on private-sector wages and indicators for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were disseminated in the same manner. In another example, INSEE proposed a review of "50 years of immigration in 50 seconds" through a visual animation on immigration in France over this period.

On the MSO side, such data visualisation applications designed to make data more accessible to a broader public were also used by the MSOs for Youth and Sport, Defence, Agriculture and Culture.

Websites are an essential alternative in these efforts to improve access to data or publications. Some MSOs have overhauled or redesigned their own sites. Examples include the Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES), in order to highlight the dissemination of its outputs in open-data format; the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES), which has adopted a new visual identity; the Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance (DEPP) and the Under-Directorate for Statistics and Studies (SDSE) of the Ministry of Justice, in order to disseminate all of its sub-national statistics.

At INSEE, the opening of the Digital Library for Official Statistics (BNSP) has significantly extended and simplified the scope of documentary research, with the aim of bringing together all of the Official Statistical Service's publications. Nearly 40,000 documents are already available and this number is constantly rising with the addition of new publications and the digitisation of older publications.

2.5.3 A desire to better explain and promote official statistics to a diverse audience

At the same time, efforts to improve the transparency and clarity of the information disseminated have continued at the Official Statistical Service, and particularly at INSEE. **The creation of a blog**, two years ago, bears witness to this desire to contribute to the public debate by providing access to information that clarifies the methods used to produce official statistics and interpret their results. In 2021, some twenty articles were published on subjects related to topical events or public debates. Several of them focused on different aspects of the consequences of the health crisis, including COVID-related deaths and mortality rates, unemployment trends, growth, the cash-flow difficulties of enterprises, etc. In November, an article entitled "The poverty rate is expected to remain stable in 2020: what this first estimate says and does not say", written by the Director General of INSEE, accompanied the publication of the first estimate of the poverty rate in 2020.

On 27 April 2021, **INSEE celebrated its seventy-fifth** anniversary, which gave rise to numerous actions organised throughout the year, and many opportunities to talk about the INSEE. New communication media were developed to accompany this event, including the "Insee Mobile" smartphone application, which has been available for downloading since mid-June 2021 and complements the existing channels (Web, social networks and the blog) by acting as a new vehicle for dissemination. Three original events illustrate some of the actions organised. In October 2021, INSEE participated in the "Rendez-vous de l'Histoire de Blois" festival. This year's event was dedicated to work-related topics. Exhibitions on the theme of "75 ans de statistiques vivantes" (75 Years of Living Statistics) were held in 26 major railway stations between October and November 2021. These events, aimed at the general public, presented the topics traditionally covered by the Institute: population, housing, education standards, families, territorial disparities, wages, consumption and, more recently, lockdown-related statistics. Finally, in November, a "factathon" was co-organised with the Centre de formation des journalistes (CFJ), a journalism training school, and "Les Décodateurs du Monde", a participative, fact-checking blog published by *Le Monde* newspaper. Teams of journalism students were asked to write articles on the theme "Inequality in France: beyond the obvious", based on official statistics. This exercise in data-journalism enables INSEE and the Official Statistical Service (SSP) to raise awareness of relevant uses of official statistics among people who are the first point of contact with the general public.

2.5.4 Certain dissemination rules still require clarification

In addition to the efforts undertaken to enable users to **clearly identify the production of official statistics**, some improvements are still needed. Furthermore, the latest Peer Review(see 1.5 above) also drew attention to a **lack of harmonisation in the embargo rules implemented** within the different components of the Official Statistical Service. A working group, bringing together representatives of the MSOs and INSEE, was established at INSEE to carry out work and coordinated communication actions in relation to an "Official Statistical Service" brand. The European peers have confirmed their interest in this approach, as has the ASP, which will be informed of the progress made and will conduct a hearing of the group's rapporteurs. These activities will lead to the creation of a new logo in 2022, reflecting the values of the SSP.

As a follow-up to the peer review and its recommendations, a working group will also be examining the practice of embargoes, and more broadly the publication director's role in the production of these materials. INSEE has also undertaken to publish the SSP's error-correction policy on Insee.fr in the near future; the memorandum describing this policy was drafted in consultation with the MSOs.

3 Activity of the Official Statistics Authority in 2021

3.1 The Authority's sessions

In 2021, the appointment of the new President in mid-April and the arrival of the new Rapporteur in June led to a change in the frequency and dates of the Authority's meetings, which were concentrated mainly in the second half of the year.

In addition, with the health crisis still ongoing, the sessions were held in a hybrid format – face-to-face and by video conference – with the agendas specified below.

Session of 24 March 2021

- Approval of the ASP 2020 Annual Report
- Directorate for Research, Studies, and Statistics (DARES): hearing of Ms Selma Mahfouz, Director of DARES, accompanied by Ms Anne-Juliette Bessonnet, Head of Department
- Renewal of the quality label for statistics on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi (French employment agency): hearing of representatives of DARES and Pôle Emploi, presentation of the opinion of the Quality-Labeling Committee by Mrs Nicole Roth, President of the Quality-Labeling Committee

Session of 08 September 2021

- Presentation of the new team and current issues
- Information and update on the Peer Review by Sylvie Lagarde (Director of the INSEE Methodology, Statistical Coordination and International Relations Directorate (DMCSI)) and Dominique Bonnans (Head of the INSEE Quality Unit)
- Matching of files for research purposes within the Official Statistical Service (SSP): presentation of the conclusions of the INSEE General Inspectorate's mission and ongoing actions by Ms Sylvie Lagarde and Mr Pascal Rivière (Head of the INSEE General Inspectorate)
- Recruitment procedures and hearing panels for heads of MSOs other than the Director of Central Government (DCA): discussion of a draft opinion
- Economic Observatory for Defence (OED): presentation of the observations of the interministerial inspection mission by Ms Danielle Bourlange of the INSEE General Inspectorate and Mr Patrick Dufour of the General Inspectorate for the Armed Forces (CGA).
- Follow-up to the INSEE General Inspectorate's mission on the qualification of statistics of general interest: presentation by Ms Nicole Roth, from the INSEE General Inspectorate, and Ms Claudine Gasnier, Project Manager at the ASP

Session of 10 November 2021

- News items
- Mapping of official statistical outputs in the fields of health and solidarity: presentation of the conclusions of the interministerial inspection mission by Ms Nicole Roth of the INSEE General Inspectorate, Mr Jean-Marc Betemps and Mr Erik Rance of the General Inspectorate for Social Affairs

- Statistics on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT): presentation of the conclusions of the interministerial inspection mission on the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing by Mr Guillaume Lachaussée of the General Inspectorate for Finance and Mr Michel Isnard of the INSEE General Inspectorate
- Death statistics: presentation of the mission by Dr Aquilino Morelle of the General Inspectorate for Social Affairs, Mr Armand Renucci of the General Inspectorate for Education, Sport and Research and Mr Stéfan Lollivier of the INSEE General Inspectorate
- Experimentation with the "official statistics procedure" by the URSSAF national fund: hearing of Mr Alain Gubian, Director of Statistics, Studies and Forecasting

Session of 15 December 2021

- News items
- Evaluation of the State's data expertise and competency needs: presentation of the conclusions of the ministerial inspection mission by Mr François Brunet of the INSEE General Inspectorate and Mr Alexis Eidelman of DARES, followed by an analysis of the specificities of official statistics by Mr Pascal Rivière, Head of the INSEE General Inspectorate, and the Ministerial Statistical Offices' positioning by Ms Sylvie Lagarde, Director of the DMCSI
- Experimentation with the "official statistics procedure" by the French Civil Aviation Authority (DGAC): hearing of Mr Kévin Guittet, Deputy Director of Studies, Statistics and Forecasting at the DGAC, and Mr Thierry Delort and Mr Philippe Lambert, Heads of Office
- Experimentation with the "official statistics procedure" by Santé Publique France; hearing of Professor Geneviève Chêne, Director of Santé publique France, Marie-Anne Jacquet, Deputy Director General and Yann Le Strat, Director of the Data Support, Processing and Analysis Directorate

Session of 18 January 2022

- News items
- Draft mission letter on statistical literacy
- Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security (SSMSI): hearing of Ms Christine Gonzalez-Demichel, Head of the SSMSI, in the presence of the Director General of the National Police Force and the Major-General of the National Gendarmerie
- Hearing of Mr Patrice Duran, President of the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS);
- Hearing of Mr Jean-Luc Tavernier, Director General of INSEE.

Deliberations or recommendations were produced in relation to the issues addressed during these sessions, which will be covered in the following points (see points 3.2 to 3.4 below).

Pursuant to Articles 1, 3 and 4 of amended Decree No 2009-250 relating to the Official Statistics Authority, the ASP also issued the following opinions in 2021:

- two opinions of 9 February 2021, on the draft decree amending Decree No 2007-1664 of 26 November 2007 on the Directorate-General for Customs and Excise (DGDDI), and on the draft decree amending Decree No 2008-310 of 3 April 2008 on the Directorate-General for Public Finances (DGFIP), respectively
- the opinion of 24 September 2021 on the hearing committee for the appointment of the Director of the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES)
- the opinion of 22 April 2021, dated for publication in the French Official Journal of 27 October 2021, on the draft decree amending Decree No 2013-728 of 12 August 2013 on the organisation of the central administration of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Overseas France

3.2 Hearings of Ministerial Statistical Offices

- **Deliberation of 21 May 2021 following the hearing of the heads of the statistical office for the Ministry of Labour, the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES)**

On 24 March 2021, the Official Statistics Authority held a hearing of the Director of Research, Studies and Statistics, accompanied by her Head of Department. "The Authority notes that DARES, the Ministerial Statistical Office in charge of labour, employment and vocational training, develops high-quality and diversified statistics in a responsive manner in order to satisfy the needs, and that these statistics are produced and disseminated in accordance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

DARES has also developed fruitful and lasting relationships with economic and social science research in its field, which is constantly evolving, as shown by the development of teleworking and questions concerning unemployment benefits, for example The insight provided by official statistics plays a crucial role in the evaluation of policies in this field and by informing the public debate. In this respect, the matching opportunities arising from the comparison of databases of different origin and containing different information about the same statistical units promises significant advances by enabling more accurate descriptions of labour market developments through the enrichment of survey data and the improvement of data quality.

In particular, the Authority has noted the opportunities associated with the processing of the Nominative Social Declaration (DSN), which has the potential to revolutionise statistics on the remuneration of labour by enabling the substitution of certain surveys and by enhancing the analyses. This major project, to be carried out in collaboration with INSEE and the Central Agency of Social Security Associations (ACOSS), but also with its other users, can make an important contribution by preventing the precipitous proliferation of data likely to pose risks in relation to the principles of accuracy and coherence that the public expects from official data.

Finally, the Authority approves the DARES proposal to integrate the following elements, during the next amendment of Decree No 93-57 of 15 January 1993 describing its missions, in accordance with Principle 1 of the Official Statistics Code of Practice:

- DARES is responsible for statistical production in the fields of labour, employment and vocational training, in accordance with the principle of professional independence, and in liaison with INSEE, which is responsible for statistical coordination within the Official Statistical Service;

- DARES is the national authority for the production of European statistics in these fields of competence.

The Authority considers the inclusion of these elements in the decree to be essential given the nature of the Authority's activities and its need to closely coordinate its statistical, research and consultancy remits, with professional independence being crucial to ensuring the quality and credibility of the statistics produced.

- **Deliberation of 14 February 2022 following the hearing of the heads of the Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security (SSMSI)**

"On 18 January 2022, the Official Statistics Authority held a hearing of the Head of the Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security (SSMSI), in the presence of the Director General of the National Police Force and the Major-General of the National Gendarmerie.

She noted that since the previous hearing of the heads of this office in 2015 and after the extension of its missions by regulatory texts dated 25 October 2021,¹⁰ the SSMSI has continued to develop its statistical outputs under conditions that ensure the professionalism, professional independence, methodological improvement and objectivity of these statistics.

These advances are manifested by the harmonisation of concepts and nomenclatures relating to recorded crime, and by improvements in the reliability and dissemination frequency of the related short-term indicators and detailed data. These measures are accompanied by population-based surveys such as "Gender and Security" (GENESE) in 2021 and, on an annual basis, "Security Experiences and Perception" (VRS) – the new version of a survey carried out in partnership with INSEE, whose contribution to improving knowledge of impacts on the victims of crime ("victim surveys") and perceptions of insecurity was considered invaluable by the Authority in 2019. Another of its core missions is to prepare, in conjunction with INSEE, a reference publication on the subject of "Security and Society", presenting a vast array of information on crime, its victims, its perpetrators, the places in which it occurs, and the professionals involved in its prevention and in law enforcement.

The Official Statistics Authority considers that this progress should be consolidated and stepped up over the coming months in several areas:

- by carrying out the expected increase in the office's staffing in order to enable it to consolidate or develop topics such as cyber security, economic and financial crime, violence against children, homicides, certain types of property crime, and relations between security personnel and the public;
- by considering, through appropriate governance and consultation bodies, the needs of users both inside and outside the Ministry of the Interior;
- by making a clearer distinction between the communications and figures issued by this Ministry, and the information specifically issued by the Official Statistical Service, accompanied by the scrupulous monitoring of compliance with the embargo rules;
- by ensuring the ex ante association of the SSMSI with planned changes to the information systems of the National Police Force and Gendarmerie, with a view to improving concepts and nomenclatures upstream of the statistical production process.

10 Decree No 2021-1386 of 25 October 2021 amending Decree No 2013-728 of 12 August 2013 on the organisation of the central administration of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Overseas France, and the Order of 25 October 2021 on the missions of the Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security

In the medium term, the ASP reiterates that any change concerning the post of Head of SSMSI must be accompanied by the dissemination of a job description and compliance with the rules of procedure defined by its deliberation of 22 September 2021.

In terms of foundational projects, it stresses the importance of the implementation, by the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs) for the Ministries of the Interior and Justice, of the joint longitudinal monitoring of criminal proceedings, capable of tracking developments from the beginning to the end of their judicial life, independently of any variations in their legal classification, based on the French version of the International Classification of Criminal Offences which is currently being finalised. Such an operation, requiring technical, legal and institutional support coordinated by the Official Statistical Service (SSP), could start with a sampling procedure, and the anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) field, for example, could be one of its initial focuses.

However, the Official Statistics Authority remains concerned about the fragility of the conditions for access to administrative data on internal security by the SSMSI, which is highly detrimental to the exercise of its statistical missions. While its officials are granted open access, subject to statistical confidentiality requirements, to data collected by the Directorate-General of the National Police Force (DGPN), this only occasionally applies to data collected by the Directorate-General of the National Gendarmerie (DGGN), which adversely impacts the completeness and homogeneity of statistical outputs on crime.

The Authority considers that this state of affairs cannot continue and that solutions – both legal and immediately operational – must be found in order to guarantee the application of Article 7 bis of the Law of 1951, as amended in 2008, which provides for access by INSEE and the MSO to individual information collected by the agencies, for the sole purpose of compiling statistics. The ASP will ensure the mobilisation of expertise required to enable the implementation of these solutions in the near future, in compliance with the rules on criminal proceedings and statistical confidentiality. It will review the progress made in early 2023.

The Authority reaffirms that the objectivity and completeness of statistical information on criminal offences and, more broadly, on internal security, is recognised as a democratic issue, to which it will continue to pay close attention in the future."

3.3 Experimentation with an "official statistics procedure" designed to supplement the quality-labelling of statistical operations by public bodies

3.3.1 Renewals of quality labels

- **Renewal of the quality labelling of the French National Old-Age Insurance Fund (CNAV) series.**

The application for renewal was processed in 2019 and 2020. The ASP Annual Report for 2020 provides a detailed description of the application procedure (Part 3.3; pp. 92-94).

The ASP's opinion on the renewal of this label was published in the French Official Journal (JO) in January 2021.

- **Renewal and extension of the quality-labelling of statistics produced by Pôle Emploi and DARES on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi**

The statistics on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi were the subject of an initial quality-labelling procedure concerning the monthly statistics published at national level. The ASP opinion dated 26 March 2014 and published in the Official Journal had been granted for a period of five years, and contained a review clause to check on the implementation its recommendations within two years. The ASP then published a new notice in the Official Journal on 23 March 2016, and subsequently defined the new format for disseminating the series on a quarterly average basis from 2018 onwards. It extended the quality labelling in 2019 and 2020.

In a letter dated 11 September 2020 and sent to the President of the ASP, DARES and Pôle Emploi applied for the quality-labelling of "national and sub-national statistics on the numbers of jobseekers registered on Pôle Emploi lists, whose terms of dissemination and publication were revised in 2018".

The Quality-Labelling Committee examined the application for the first time. For the previous quality-labelling procedure, carried out in 2014, this examination was carried out under the aegis of a tripartite IGF-IGAS-INSEE General Inspectorate mission, which produced an extremely comprehensive report.

In its opinion, the Committee highlighted the progress made by Pôle Emploi and DARES since 2014, including the satisfactory implementation of the recommendations made by the ASP in 2016 and in its 2019 report, following the new quarterly publication format. The Committee also noted the renewal of the Nostra agreement in 2017, which enabled the more precise definition of the organisation of production and dissemination procedures, taking account of the ASP's recommendations.

In its proposal to the ASP at the end of its examination, the Quality-Labelling Committee recommended that the quality label be awarded to the series in question for a five-year period, with the possible inclusion of a review clause.

Following these interventions, the members of the ASP unanimously adopted the following deliberation:

"The Authority unanimously renews, for a period of 5 years, the quality label for the national series for jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi, as listed in Annexe 1.

The Authority, by the unanimous verdict of its members, also issues notification of the quality label, for a five-year period, for the regional and departmental series for jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi, as listed in Annexe 2.

The Authority considers that accrual-based series should be quality labelled on grounds of their specific statistical interest. It has therefore asked DARES and Pôle Emploi to submit these series for quality labelling within one year, taking account of Recommendation No 8 in the opinion of the Quality-Labelling Committee, and to provide public access to them under the same conditions as for the previous series. It also calls for an examination of the changes in the production and publication periods for these series.

Finally, it urges further improvements to the quality of the quality-labelled series by implementing all the recommendations made by the Quality-Labelling Committee. In this respect, it requests the provision of a detailed description of the statistical matching strategy in an ad hoc note.

This notice is addressed to the Director of DARES and the Director General of Pôle Emploi. It will be published in the Official Journal of the French Republic."

3.3.2 Experimentation with an "official statistics procedure"

In 2021, the Official Statistics Authority decided to launch an experiment with an "official statistics procedure".

The Authority's approach was based on the observation that the Official Statistical Service (SSP) may have to cope with environments featuring numerous and diversified public producers of statistical data. However, alongside and often in conjunction with the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs) in their sector, some of these producers play a recognised role in the dissemination of public information and may be associated with dissemination media or publications that are designated as "statistics", without a clear distinction always being apparent to users.

This particularly applies to the cultural, transport, environmental, health and social sectors, as illustrated very clearly by the inter-inspection report on the mapping of statistics produced in these particular areas.

However, as stipulated by Decree No 2009-250 of 6 March 2009, as amended, on the Official Statistics Authority, and pursuant to Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951, as amended, the ASP is required to regulate all data collected for general information purposes by government authorities, public bodies and private organisations with a public-service remit.

As things currently stand, many of these organisations avoid this regulation, totally or partially, either by transmitting their statistical programme to the CNIS or through the quality labelling of their data published under the heading of "statistics". To overcome this shortcoming, which is detrimental to users, the ASP has therefore decided to launch an approach that is progressive, pragmatic and linked to the SSP's outputs.

This approach is based on requirement for the organisations participating in the experiment to transmit their statistical programmes to the CNIS, the completion of a grid setting out the essential principles of the Code of Good Practice concerning transparency and autonomy in publications for the series they regularly disseminate, and clear references to detailed documentation on the fields, concepts and methods used. On this occasion, the complementary aspects and differences (in concepts, scope, frequency) in relation to the statistics disseminated by the MSOs on related topics should be clarified, and further consultation with these bodies should be encouraged.

Once these documents have been examined by the Quality-Labeling Committee, a hearing and an accompanying deliberation by the ASP are likely to lead to recognition of the status of "official statistics for general information purposes", along the lines, albeit slightly modified, of the proposals made in a previous INSEE General Inspectorate report on the qualification of statistics of general interest.

This experiment culminates in a seminar to be held in early 2023 in order to share the various experiences and consider the conditions for widespread implementation, alongside the quality-labelling procedure itself, which the Authority also wishes to pursue.

Just over ten organisations in the above-mentioned sectors were contacted by the Authority. Three of them – the URSSAF national fund, the French Civil Aviation Authority (DGAC) and Santé Publique France (SPF) – received a favourable opinion from the Authority on the status of official statistics for general information purposes for their statistical series proposed as part of the experimentation of the approach (see Annexe 5).

For further information, a detailed memorandum explaining the "official statistics procedure" was posted on the ASP website (see the appendix to the minutes of the ASP meeting of 8/09/2021:

<https://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/compte-rendu-de-la-seance-de-lautorite-de-la-statistique-publique-du-8-septembre-2021/>; and see Annexe 5 of the report)

3.4 The Authority's deliberations, in line with its previous recommendations

In 2021, the ASP's recommendations corresponded to the concerns expressed in previous years on issues in which the Authority had previously undertaken to ensure that the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice are applied and respected within the Official Statistical Service.

Most of the deliberations drafted by the Authority in 2021 were also in response to presentations by the General Inspectorates in charge of various missions, some of which may have been requested by the ASP itself, such as the mission on the situation of the statistical office for the Ministry of the Armed Forces.

In this respect, these deliberations, whose text is reproduced in full below, can be divided into three main categories.

3.4.1 Clarification of the process for appointing heads of statistical offices

In response to a request for clarification made by the Peer Review, the Authority has clarified the processes for appointing heads of ministerial statistical offices, irrespective of whether or not they are appointed at "Director of Central Government" (DAC) level, in a memorandum soon to be posted on its website (<https://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/>). It has issued a deliberation to specify the procedure to be followed at the DAC level, which was not explicitly mentioned in the regulations.

Deliberation of 22 September 2021 on the process of appointing the heads of Ministerial Statistical Offices, other than Directors of Central Government

"Article 5a of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009, as amended by Regulation (EU) No 2015/759 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015, corresponding to Indicator 1.8 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, states that: *"The procedures for the recruitment and appointment of the heads of the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat and, where appropriate, the heads of other national statistical authorities, are transparent and based only on professional criteria."*

The implementation of these provisions is already planned for the appointment of the Director General of INSEE and the heads of Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs) with "Director of Central Government" status. Indeed, Article 1, paragraph 3 bis of Decree No 2009-250 of 3 March 2009 on the Official Statistics Authority (ASP) provides for the ASP to issue an opinion for the attention of the hearing committee established for the appointment of these directors, whose verdict shall be published at the same time as the instrument of appointment.

In order to complete the implementation of Principle 1 of the Code of Practice and to harmonise existing practices, the ASP considers it necessary to implement a procedure for gathering opinions on the professional competencies of any candidates for recruitment as heads of Ministerial Statistical Offices.

Firstly, the vacancy notice published for the recruitment of these managers should explicitly mention the statistical expertise required.

Secondly, when the head of a Ministerial Statistical Office occupies a functional post (deputy directors and heads of department), a member of the Official Statistical Service (SSP) designated by the Director General of INSEE and performing duties at a higher level than those of the post to be filled must participate in the hearing committee established within the ministry concerned.

In other cases, the opinion of a member of the Official Statistical Service designated by the Director General of INSEE must be sought by the appointing authority during the candidate-selection process.

The opinions given in this respect shall, in all cases, exclusively relate to the candidates' ability to fulfil their statistical responsibilities.

The ASP should be kept informed of the process for selecting heads of MSOs in accordance with these principles, and of the choice of the successful candidate."

3.4.2 Deliberations on problems concerning the production of official statistics identified by inspection missions

Deliberations on problems concerning the production of official statistics identified by inspection missions focused on the situation of the statistical office for the Ministry of the Armed Forces, death statistics (see point 2.3 above), and the "mapping" of official statistics outputs in the fields of health and solidarity.

- **Deliberation of 22 September 2021 on the situation of the Ministerial Statistical Office of the Ministry of the Armed Forces**

"The Official Statistics Authority has heard the findings of the joint mission carried out by the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces and the INSEE General Inspectorate in 2020-2021, and has noted the clarity of its observations and recommendations regarding the situation of the Economic Observatory for Defence (OED).

The mission confirmed the persistence of a major dysfunction in this sector, whose most obvious manifestation is the interruption to the production of statistics on the remuneration of military personnel. Malfunctions had previously been noted by the Authority in 2015 and 2017, which had prompted its request to launch an interministerial inspection mission. The study revealed that the reasons for this situation are structural problems for which no clear solution has yet been found, and which the Authority believes cannot be permitted to continue in the long term.

The problems noted by the Authority in this respect are of four related or interrelated types:

- shortcomings in the management of this Ministerial Statistical Office (MSO), which, despite the stated intentions, have not led to the establishment of a committee to identify the needs of users inside and outside the ministry (in particular, the operational components of the Ministry of the Armed Forces, as well as the other components of the Official Statistical Service), and to arbitrate between the different priorities of its statistical and research activities;

- the Observatory is part of the Ministry of Defence's Financial Affairs Directorate, whose relatively low-level status and lack of a cross-cutting focus prevents it from dialoguing with the Ministry's

various interlocutors at a sufficiently high level; as a result, its statistical outputs are only marginally recognised within the Ministry and face competition from data produced by other internal producers who are not part of the Official Statistical Service, which is required to conform to the European Statistics Code of Practice;

- the OED's struggle, or even complete inability, to access certain sources of administrative data collected by the Ministry is at odds with the legal provisions stemming from Article 7 bis of the Law of 1951, as amended. The reasons sometimes given to the OED regarding access to these sources reflect the lack of trust and cooperation between certain components of the Ministry of the Armed Forces and the Official Statistical Service. Efforts to find a solution are currently underway in order to grant the OED access to the "Source Solde" (Military Pay Source) database and enable the compilation of statistics on the remuneration of military personnel, but this process remains incomplete for the time being. The need for the Official Statistical Service to gain access to all defence industry and technology data, and to conduct the scheduled surveys on this subject, must also be reaffirmed, particularly in view of the European regulation currently being drawn up on "the provision of statistics in support of European defence policy";

- the fact that the OED's resources are manifestly insufficient to enable it to carry out its missions and, a fortiori, to take account of the Ministry of the Armed Forces' additional needs; the limitation of the number of staff in this department to nine and the turnover that is observed among these staff reflect clear weaknesses in this regard.

As a result of these problems, the Authority notes that the OED does not currently operate according to the principles described in the SMO Charter, which incorporates the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice. It therefore considers it necessary to adopt a series of measures as a matter of urgency, with a view to making drastic changes to the OED's management, access to data, and resources; the Authority also recommends re-examining the OED's positioning, with preference given to relocation within the General Secretariat for the Administration of the Ministry of the Armed Forces.

This series of measures is essential to enable the OED to meet the requirements and fulfil the functions of a Ministerial Statistical Office, while serving the Ministry of the Armed Forces by meeting its internal statistical needs, and demonstrating the transparency and quality of its statistical outputs to its external interlocutors. If such decisions are not made in the near future, the continued existence of a ministerial statistical office within this Ministry will be called into question.

The Official Statistics Authority considers that a solutions to this issue must be provided as soon as possible by the most senior officials at the Ministry of the Armed Forces, while ruling out any marginal adjustments, which would be insufficient to achieve a satisfactory and viable result in terms of the relevance and sustainability of this service.

It will review the decisions made between now and the end of 2022, when it will deliberate upon whether to maintain the OED's status as a Ministerial Statistical Office."

● **Deliberation of 30 November 2021 on death statistics**

"The Official Statistics Authority has been informed of the main findings of the IGESR-IGAS-INSEE General Inspectorate inter-inspection mission that studied death statistics,

which are a fundamental instrument for official statistics and a major source for the management of public health policies and also for epidemiological research. They are based on an international normative framework under the authority of the European Union (Eurostat) and the World Health

Organisation (WHO). At European level, they are governed by two series of Community regulations, one on the compilation of demographic statistics (Community Regulation No 1260/2013 and implementing Regulation No 205/2014), which must be provided to Eurostat within six months of the end of the reference year, and the other on causes of death (Community Regulation No 328/2011), which must give rise to the transmission of harmonised data within 24 months of this deadline.

However, while significant progress was made both before and during the health crisis of 2020-21 in the compilation and dissemination of general mortality statistics (weekly dissemination, availability at a detailed localised level) based on civil status data and placed under the responsibility of INSEE, the compilation of causes of death, under the aegis of the Epidemiology Centre on Medical Causes of Death (CépiDc) at the National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM), poses problems that have been exacerbated in recent times.

In an opinion dated 14 October 2017, the Official Statistics Authority had carried out the quality labelling of the information derived from the national database on causes of death, noting the CépiDc's commitments to reducing the deadline for online publication of these data to nine months and to enhancing the presentation and documentation of their results, in accordance with the recommendations of the Official Statistics Quality-Labeling Committee. This quality label had been awarded for a five-year period and will therefore be reviewed by the Authority before the end of 2022.

However, the time required to produce cause-of-death statistics would currently appear to have increased in recent years, placing France in flagrant violation of one of its European obligations, as the data for 2017 were not sent to Eurostat until the end of September 2021, and those for 2018 had not yet been sent in November.

Moreover, failures and malfunctions were noted throughout all stages of the production process for these statistics, and particularly in the drafting of medical death certificates, the procedures for verifying the completeness of the information collected, the allocation of the essential human and software resources required for their coding in the terms derived from the International Classification of Diseases, and the management of the statistical production chain itself.

The Authority therefore now considers it necessary to implement an emergency plan involving the Official Statistical Service via DREES, in conjunction with the Ministry of Research and INSERM. This plan should primarily set out to remedy the delays in the transmission of the statistics on causes of death during the 2018-2021 period, to ensure compliance with the statistical obligations arising from Community regulations as soon as possible.

The Authority has also requested an overall review of statistical outputs on causes of death within the framework of an appropriate governance structure, in close collaboration with the Official Statistical Service. Structural measures should be implemented at several levels in order to ensure, over the long term, the rapid and high-quality dissemination of this data, which makes an essential contribution to public health: training/coaching for health professionals and institutions, facilitation of matches with civil status data for verifications of exhaustiveness, improvement of computerised and manual processes used for coding certificates, and revision of the statistical processing chain.

Such an extensive overhaul requires the provision of sufficient human, financial and IT resources to successfully accomplish this project, by reinforcing DREES with the statistical and medical expertise required for its implementation, and by allocating sufficient staff to the CépiDc to enable the coding of certificates within the required time frame.

The Official Statistics Authority will pay particular attention to all these aspects during the renewal of the quality labelling of this data, which is scheduled for the end of 2022."

- **Deliberation of 30 November 2021 on the production of official statistics in the health and solidarity sectors**

"The Official Statistics Authority has noted of the main findings of the mapping of official statistics outputs in the health and solidarity sectors, carried out by an IGAS-INSEE General Inspectorate interministerial inspection mission,

which observed that, in addition to the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DREES), the Ministerial Statistical Office at the heart of the system, these statistics are produced by a number of different public players – first and foremost by health services and social security funds – but that the regional health agencies (ARS) and departmental authorities also contribute to certain subjects. Many of these actors have their own dedicated dissemination channels or statistical publication products and studies, but there are no plans to systematically include their activities in the overall statistical regulation framework (transmission of their statistical programmes to the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) for discussion; quality labelling of the disseminated series); nor is their coordination and coherence with DREES' productions always ensured.

The Authority considers this situation to be unsatisfactory in a context in which health and social policy issues have become major concerns whose importance has been further underlined by the health crisis, and which are subject to multiple and significant needs and requests for statistical information. These needs and requests sometimes remain unanswered, by both the public authorities and the social actors, including the High Councils and observatories established to inform the public debate.

This situation seems all the more problematic given that, as the Authority noted in its deliberations of 21 October 2020 following the DREES hearing, this directorate has seen a sharp reduction in its human resources over the last ten years, while the other public actors in the health and social sector have, according to the mission's findings, assigned around five times more staff to statistical activities.

The Official Statistics Authority therefore considers it essential to improve the overall governance and coordination of the production of official statistics in the health and social sectors via a series of additional measures:

- appointing a group of designated statistical representatives within ministerial departments, health agencies and social protection bodies, with responsibility for interactions with the Official Statistical Service;
- ensuring the provision of support by DREES on these issues to the regional agencies of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, particularly the regional health agencies (ARS);
- ensuring, in close collaboration with DREES, the consideration of statistical issues by the various coordination bodies covering the different components of the ministry and its supervised bodies, and also within their binding multi-year contractualisation processes (Agreements on Objectives and Management – COG, and Contracts on Objectives and Performance – COP);
- transmitting all the statistical programmes of these bodies to the National Council for Statistical Information and ensuring their participation in its activities;

Lastly, extending the list of statistics produced by these bodies, which are examined by the ASP after receiving the Quality-Labeling Committee's opinion, beyond the quality-labelling procedure alone, as part of the "official statistics procedure" currently being tested, is likely to be particularly useful in this sector.

The Official Statistics Authority has also reaffirmed its concern and recommendations regarding the changes in DREES' human resources, which, in addition to the exceptional readjustments made in 2021, require structural reinforcement to enable this directorate to optimally fulfil all of its permanent missions. This reinforcement has become all the more necessary, since DREES's assumption of responsibility for child protection statistics and its involvement in statistical outputs on causes of death will in themselves require the mobilisation of additional resources. As requested by the Authority in its October 2020 deliberation, this reinforcement should be carried out in the framework of a clearly defined and stabilised multi-year employment trajectory.

This series of measures seems essential in order to guarantee coherence and meet the statistical production needs in the health and solidarity sectors, by ensuring the adequacy and harmonisation of the concepts and nomenclatures used, by collaboratively exploiting the promising opportunities arising from the matching of large databases, and by meeting new challenges in terms of knowledge and evaluation related to the management of dependency, or to the various dimensions of health inequalities, for example."

3.4.3 Deliberations on new key topics

In 2021, the ASP was also asked to deliberate on the consequences of the changing digital landscape for official statistics, through the lens of individual file matching, on the one hand, and government data policies, on the other, but also on emerging topics such as statistics relating to the anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) field.

- **Deliberation of 22 September 2021 on individual data matching within the Official Statistical Service (SSP)**

"Having taken note of the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate on individual data matching within the Official Statistical Service (SSP) and the projects developed by the Institute to facilitate this approach, the Official Statistics Authority draws attention to the essential role that this 'third type' of information collection is set to assume, alongside surveys and the direct processing of administrative data, in the production of official statistics and the resulting studies.

These operations certainly produce very precise levels of detail, faster results and substantially enrich the information obtained, with a view to meeting new needs, replacing certain surveys or providing more useful fundamental support. However, they also give rise to legal constraints (anonymisation, rules on the use of national registration numbers (NIR) and/or non-significant identifiers, etc.), administrative problems and IT issues, which point towards the need for these activities to be carried out collaboratively within the SSP.

In view of these needs and the diversity in the practices of ministerial statistical offices (MSOs), the ASP commends the work carried out by INSEE in recent years on the use of administrative data for statistical purposes, and in particular, INSEE's project to develop a "non-significant statistical code" (CSNS) designed to facilitate and harmonise the matching of individual data within the SSP, based on an organisation system designed to both extend and secure its use. It insists on the interest of this project and the need to support it through an adapted "service offering", which will be essential to enable the SSP to seize all the opportunities presented by these rapidly developing but complex

information-processing techniques. It also encourages INSEE to keep examining international experiments and to draw appropriate conclusions from them.

The ASP also considers that the matching operations carried out by the SSP should be subject to greater transparency and the systematic provision of information about their objectives, content and implementation conditions: explicit mentions in all statistical programmes transmitted to the National Statistical Information Council (CNIS) and discussion, for large-scale operations, within its thematic commissions; examination by the Quality-Labeling Committee when matching operations enable the enrichment of sampling frames or operations relating to official statistics surveys.

The ASP would also like to see further reflection on two points, with a view to simplifying the current context of matching operations, which remains complex and fragmented:

- the possible convergence, within their respective legal frameworks, of the matching processes implemented within the SSP and those proposed to researchers at the Secure Data Access Centre (CASD);
- the possible reconciliation of the matching techniques proposed by INSEE to MSOs (use of the non-significant statistical code), in particular for the use of socio-fiscal files, and the matching techniques implemented within the National Health Data System (SNDS) via the National Health Insurance Fund (CNAM) or the Health Data Hub, bearing in mind that both MSOs and researchers need to match individual data using both types of sources simultaneously in order to understand social inequalities in health.

- **Deliberation of 10 February 2022 on the relationship between official statistics and data policies**

"The Official Statistics Authority has taken note of the reflections and orientations that followed the report of the mission chaired by Mr. Éric Bothorel and entitled "Towards a public data policy", submitted to the Prime Minister in December 2020.

Official statistics are a direct and important part of government data policies. The experience acquired within the Official Statistical Service can also guide other initiatives or applications in the fields of data management and processing by government and public or private bodies with a public service remit. At the same time, improving the quality and accessibility of the data collected by them can open up new opportunities for statistical outputs and studies.

However, the Authority deems it necessary for the purposes, objectives and rules specific to official statistics, as opposed to other data outputs or uses (monitoring of dashboards for management purposes, decision-making aids, audits, targeting of specific audiences, forecasts, etc.), **to be clearly taken into account, maintained and reaffirmed in the framework of general data policies implemented in the public sphere.** In fact, as stipulated in the founding Law of 1951, as amended in 2008, official statistics, in addition to statistical surveys (listed each year by the Minister for the Economy), mobilise data produced as a result of the processing – "for general information purposes" – of data collected by government, public bodies or private bodies with a public-service remit.

This general information purpose underpins the requirement for professional independence and the principles of objectivity, impartiality, relevance and quality upon which the production and dissemination of official statistics are based, as set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice, which was adopted in 2005 and revised in 2017.

Official statistics produced on the basis of administrative data are therefore subject to specific requirements, both methodological and ethical (see the INSEE General Inspectorate's memorandum on this subject that was sent to the Authority, appended to this deliberation):

- rigorous definition of the concepts, nomenclatures and fields relevant to public information and enabling comparability in space and time;
- adequacy and transparency of the processing methods used to provide information that is objective, interpretable and meaningful to the public and to economic and social actors;
- dissemination must be separate from government communication, in compliance with statistical confidentiality and under recognised conditions of neutrality and impartiality.

These requirements apply both to information produced by the Official Statistical Service (SSP) and to statistics that are quality labelled or intended "for general information purposes" as part of the "official statistics procedure" launched by the ASP (see memorandum of 15 September 2021).

With regard to the competencies and expertise required for data used by the government, the evaluation report produced jointly by the INSEE General Inspectorate and the Interministerial Digital Directorate (DINUM), with assistance from the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES, the MSO for the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Inclusion), recommends extending the recruitment of INSEE civil servants (administrators and attachés) to meet the need for data scientists, and developing a range of services provided by ministerial statistical offices (MSOs).

The Official Statistics Authority is not empowered to take action in relation to the first point, but it stresses the potential benefits to be gained from devising common training modules for both initial and in-service programmes, and from holding regular discussions between official statisticians and data scientists recruited by government bodies to develop a shared knowledge of the different methods of data processing and of the methodological or ethical issues associated with them. **However, the ASP stresses the importance of ensuring that the development of new recruitment channels does not reduce the number of statisticians trained annually to a level that would fall short of the Official Statistical Service's needs.**

Regarding the role of ministerial statistical offices and the expertise that can be mobilised by them, the Authority noted the diversity of situations and practices, ranging from direct responsibility for ministerial data administration functions (as applies to the Directorate of Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics – DREES – within the Ministry of Solidarity and Health), to tenuous or virtually non-existent relations with the agencies responsible for these functions within the ministries.

The Authority would like to see the development of a formalised framework for collaboration between the departments responsible for data administration and the various MSOs, with the latter also providing a service offering that is adapted to each ministry's context. Such a service offering, taking full advantage of all the expertise and experience acquired by official statisticians in the structuring and processing of data, would contribute to extending the support function for the implementation of ministerial policies provided for in the 2019 Charter for Ministerial Statistical Offices.

However, the ASP considers it important for these collaborations to be conducted not only in compliance with the principles of the Code of Practice (notably the statistical confidentiality of individual data), but also with a view to improving the management of both ministerial policies and the Official Statistical Service, by prioritising objectives such as improving the

concepts and nomenclatures used, compiling easily accessible and well-documented databases, or developing new opportunities for processing and matching for research purposes.

Finally, it is important for these developments to preserve the resources specifically allocated to statistical production, in terms of both the recruitment carried out by each ministry and the resources devoted to this activity by the various MSOs.

- **Deliberation of 30 November 2021 on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism statistics**

"The Official Statistics Authority has been informed of the progress made in developing anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) statistics under the aegis of the inter-inspection mission established for this issue, which has promoted discussions between the actors responsible for this policy and statisticians.

The compilation of these statistics is an international obligation, at European Union level and also for the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body responsible for assessing the effectiveness of the policies pursued by its Member States in this field.

At national level, this is a strategic and innovative field of measures to combat financial crime and terrorism, which is coordinated by the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing (AML/CFT) Steering Committee, whose secretariat is provided by the French Treasury Department (DG Trésor), and which is required to draw up an annual report on the preventive and enforcement aspects of this policy.

The Authority has noted that, despite the progress made over the last few years by a specific project team, the statistical system associated with the AML/CFT field continues to suffer from weaknesses that complicate efforts to evaluate public action taken in this field.

These weaknesses require solutions to be found for this important topic involving multiple actors, which could set an example in terms of statistical coordination and methodology, and should be implemented through several channels:

- by ensuring a more determined and coordinated mobilisation of the numerous different offices, organisations and actors involved in the production of this data, which operate under different statuses (professions subject to vigilance and prevention obligations, institutions responsible for their supervision, tax and customs authorities, intelligence and investigation agencies – both administrative and judicial, and the various competent courts);
- by filling information gaps, e.g. concerning seizures and confiscations or international mutual legal assistance;
- by making methodological improvements to the definition and harmonisation of the concepts and nomenclatures used, and of the information collected, particularly concerning prevention, from the professions subject to reporting requirements;
- by implementing the longitudinal monitoring of money-laundering and terrorist-financing cases detected, in order to facilitate their traceability throughout their judicial life, notwithstanding possible changes in their legal classification, which are common in this field.

The Authority considers such statistical monitoring involving several ministerial departments to be a priority that is also applicable to other parts of the criminal justice system, and which requires the active involvement of the Official Statistical Service via the relevant ministerial statistical offices (MSOs), primarily the MSOs for the Ministries of the Interior and Justice.

The involvement of the relevant MSOs also seems desirable in order to ensure the direct provision of a significant number of the required statistical indicators conforming to recognised statistical quality requirements. In this case, it is important for the statistics they produce to be featured in a publication that is identified in the framework of their own specific dissemination media, in accordance with the Charter for Ministerial Statistical Offices and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

The various MSOs should also be asked to contribute to improving the definition and quality of indicators originating from other bodies or professions, as part of a process of cooperation and consultation that has yet to be organised.

Finally, the inclusion of these indicators, which are included in the annual COLB (Advisory Board for the Fight against Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) report, in the "official statistics procedure" (recognition of the quality of official statistics for general information purposes), which the ASP is planning to develop following an ongoing experiment, could be a means of improving the transparency and coherence of the statistics disseminated in order to provide a public record of the current status of AML/CFT policy, at regular intervals."

3.5 Communication of the Authority

The 2020 report was widely disseminated (see Annexe 2 for the list of recipients). In 2021, the former President of the ASP, Mr Dominique Bureau, accompanied by the new President, Ms Mireille Elbaum, presented the 2020 report to the Prime Minister's office and to the office of the Minister for the Budget and Public Accounts.

The opinions and deliberations issued by the ASP can be consulted on its website. According to their subject matter, the deliberations were transmitted to the relevant designated representatives as soon as they were published online. The deliberation on the situation of the Ministerial Statistical Office of the Ministry of the Armed Forces served as the basis for a discussion between the President and the Rapporteur with the Minister's Chief of Staff in November 2021.

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ANNEXE 1 : Institutional framework and composition of the Official Statistics Authority

Institutional framework

The institutional framework of official statistics in France was amended by the Law on Modernisation of the Economy (LME) of 4 August 2008. In addition, Article 1 of Law No 51-711 of 7 June 1951 on obligations, coordination and confidentiality in statistical matters, as amended by Organic Law No 2010 of 28 June 2010, established the Official Statistics Authority.

The institutional framework of official statistics in France is based on three pillars.

The **National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS)** organises consultation between users and producers of official statistics. In this way, it sheds light on the new needs for information. It organises the programming of official statistics projects and suggests new avenues to explore in order to ensure that official statistics cover societal issues as thoroughly as possible.

The CNIS is chaired by Mr Patrice Duran.

The Official Statistical Service (SSP) drives the conception, production and dissemination of official statistics.

On 31 December 2021, it comprised INSEE and 16 Ministerial Statistical Offices. It is coordinated by INSEE.

INSEE is headed by Mr Jean-Luc Tavernier.

The Official Statistics Authority (ASP) ensures that official statistics are prepared in a professionally independent manner and according to the fundamental principles set out in the “European Statistics Code of Practice”: impartiality, objectivity, relevance and data quality.

It draws up an annual report on official statistical activity, which is submitted to the French Parliament and made public. This report covers 2021, the thirteenth year of the Authority's existence.

Decree No 2018-800 of 20 September 2018 amending Decree No 2009-250 of 3 March 2009 relating to the ASP

Composition of the Official Statistics Authority

At the time of writing, in February 2022, the ASP was composed of the following members:

Ms Mireille Elbaum, President, appointed by a decree of the Council of Ministers of 14 April 2021

Mr Abdeldjellil Bouzidi, appointed by the President of the National Assembly

Mr Denis Badré, appointed by the President of the Senate

Ms Patricia Blanchard, appointed by the President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council

Mr François Weil, President of the Statistical Confidentiality Committee, appointed by the Vice-President of the Council of State

Mr Éric Dubois, appointed by the First President of the Court of Accounts

Mr François Auvigne, appointed by the Department Head of the General Inspectorate of Finances

Mr Antoine Magnier, appointed by the Head of the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs

Ms Martine Durand, appointed by the Minister for the Economy and Finance

Rapporteur: Ms Pascale Pollet

Project Manager: Ms Claudine Gasnier

See the Official Statistics Authority's website: <https://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/>

ANNEXE 2 : Recipients of the report

"This report is submitted to Parliament and made public" (Article 2 of the Decree of 3 March 2009, as amended, on the Official Statistics Authority).

As for each year since 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
 - Prime Minister
 - Minister for the Economy and Finance
 - Minister for Public Accounts
 - President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council
 - Secretary-General of the Government
 - Ministries responsible for the Ministerial Statistical Offices
- to *the major French State bodies*
 - First-President of the Court of Auditors
 - 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, heads of the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSO), INSEE Regional Directors
 - The 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)
- to *agencies with quality-labelled statistical data, or which adhere to the official statistics procedure*

ANNEXE 3 : The Ministerial Statistical Offices as at 31 December 2021

DREES	Ministry of Solidarity and Health Ministry of Labour, Employment and Inclusion Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Recovery Department of Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics
SSP	Ministry of Agriculture and Food General Secretariat – Statistics and Forecasting Service Regional Directorates for Food, Agriculture and Forestry – agencies with specialised expertise in statistical activities
SDES	Ministry of Ecological Transition General Commission on Sustainable Development Statistical Data and Studies Service
DEPP	Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance
SIES	Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation Directorate General for Higher Education and Professional Integration, and Directorate General for Research and Innovation Under-Directorate for Information Systems and Statistical Studies
DARES	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Inclusion Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics
Justice	Ministry of Justice General Secretariat Under-Directorate for Information Systems and Statistical Studies
Local authorities	Ministry of Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Authorities Directorate General for Local Authorities Department of Local Studies and Statistics
Public Finances	Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Recovery Directorate General for Public Finance Department of Fiscal Studies and Statistics Official Statistics Unit
Customs	Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Recovery Directorate General for Customs and Excise Department of Statistics and Foreign Trade Studies
Civil Service	Ministry of Public Transformation and Civil Service Directorate General for the Administration and Civil Service Under-Directorate for Studies, Statistics and Information Systems
Immigration Integration	– Ministry of the Interior Directorate General for Foreign Nationals in France Department of Statistics, Studies and Documentation
Youth and Sport	Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports Directorate of Youth, Popular Education and the Voluntary Sector National Institute of Youth and Popular Education

		Statistical Surveys, Data and Studies Mission
Defence		Ministry of the Armed Forces Directorate of Financial Affairs Economic Observatory for Defence
Culture		Ministry of Culture General Secretariat Department of Studies, Forecasting, Statistics and Documentation
Internal (SSMSI)	Security	Ministry of the Interior Director General of the National Police Force and Director General of the National Gendarmerie Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security

ANNEXE 4 : Opinions on renewals of quality labels

28 May 2021

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Opinions and communications

MISCELLANEOUS OPINIONS

MINISTRY OF THE ECONOMY, FINANCE AND RECOVERY

Opinion of 21 May 2021 of the Official Statistics Authority (ASP) on the renewal and extension of the quality labelling of statistics produced by Pôle Emploi and DARES on jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi

NOR: ECO02116002V

Having regard to the opinions of the Official Statistics Authority dated 26 March 2014 and March 2016,

Having regard to the letter of 11 September 2020 from the Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES) and the French employment agency (Pôle Emploi);

Having regard to the opinion of the Quality-Labelling Committee of 26 February 2021;

Having regard to Article 6 of the deliberation of 30 October 2018 laying down the Internal Regulations of the Official Statistics Authority

The Authority unanimously renews, for a period of 5 years, the quality label for the national series for jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi, as listed in Annexe 1.

The Authority, by the unanimous verdict of its members, also issues notification of the quality label, for a five-year period, for the regional and departmental series for jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi, as listed in Annexe 2.

The Authority considers that the accrual-based series should be quality labelled on grounds of their specific statistical interest. It has therefore asked DARES and Pôle Emploi to submit these series for quality labelling within one year, taking account of Recommendation No 8 in the opinion of the Quality-Labelling Committee, and to provide public access to them under the same conditions as for the previous series. It also calls for an examination of the changes in the production and publication periods for these series.

Finally, it urges further improvements to the quality of the quality-labelled series by implementing all the recommendations made by the Quality-Labelling Committee. In this respect, it requests the provision of a detailed description of the statistical matching strategy in an ad hoc note.

This opinion will be sent to the Director of DARES and the Director General of Pôle Emploi. It will be published in the Official Journal of the French Republic.

ANNEXES

ANNEXE 1

NATIONAL MONTHLY AND QUARTERLY SERIES SINCE JANUARY 1996

GROSS AND SA-WDA DATA

Unless otherwise indicated, the production of these series covers the scope of Metropolitan France

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category (A, B, C, D, E), throughout France (excluding Mayotte).

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category (A, B, C), by gender and age group. Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category B or C, by age group and hourly periods worked.

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi according to administrative categories.

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi in categories A, B, C: duration of current jobseekers' registration, and average duration of registration of jobseekers who are removed from lists.

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi in categories A, B, C: detailed duration of registration by gender and age group.

Inflows and outflows of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi in categories A, B, C and accounting equation, throughout France (excluding Mayotte), for total entries and exits.

Inflows and outflows of jobseekers registered with Pôle Emploi per category and by gender and age group (raw data only).

ANNEXE 2

REGIONAL AND DEPARTMENTAL MONTHLY AND QUARTERLY SERIES SINCE JANUARY 1996

GROSS AND SA-WDA DATA

These series are produced for the whole of France (excluding Mayotte)

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category A, B, C: by new region, former region and department.

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category A, B, C: registered for one year or more, by new region, former region and department.

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi in category A: by new region, former region and department.

Jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category: by new region, former region and department.

Inflows of jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category A, B, C: by new region, former region and department.

Outflows of jobseekers registered at the end of the month with Pôle Emploi per category A, B, C: by new region, former region and department.

ANNEXE 5 : The "Official Statistics Procedure"

ASP memorandum dated 15 September 2021



Towards an "Official Statistics Procedure"

Context

The production of statistics of general interest is traditionally the purview of the Official Statistical Service (SSP), composed of INSEE and the ministerial statistical offices (MSOs), whose mission is to produce information, in a neutral and transparent manner, that is universally recognised, to enable the provision of information that is useful for social debate and decision-making.

However, the legislator defines official statistics as covering a broader scope, including, in addition to the SSP's outputs, the results of *"the use, for general information purposes, of data collected by administrations, public bodies or private bodies with a public-service remit"* (Law of 1951, as amended).

Article 1 of the Decree of 3 March 2009 on the Official Statistics Authority also states that the ASP *"shall ensure that the design, production and dissemination of products resulting from the use, for general information purposes, of data collected by administrations, public bodies or private bodies with a public-service remit are carried out in compliance with the principles of professional independence, objectivity, impartiality, relevance and data quality"*.

The scope of statistics currently produced by public bodies outside the SSP is broad and heterogeneous in this respect. Many of these statistics are reported in the media and influence public decisions.

A number of public structures or institutions primarily produce European statistics. Their data is generally transmitted to Eurostat via the MSOs, which may or may not reprocess them, according to the situation.

Apart from European statistics, other data such as the statistics on exemptions from social security contributions, for example, produced and disseminated by the Central Agency of Social Security Associations (ACOSS), and the morbidity monitoring statistics, produced and disseminated by Santé publique France (SpF), fall outside the current scope of the regulation of official statistics, even though they meet this definition and are widely publicised information of public utility.

Indeed, the current scope of the regulation carried out by the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) and the Official Statistics Authority (ASP), in conjunction with the Quality- Labelling Committee, appears to be significantly narrower than the scope of the data and bodies mentioned by the law, with: the CNIS receiving only some of the statistical programmes and opinions on expediency or conformity (label of general interest and statistical quality), which do not concern all surveys; the ASP focusing its monitoring on the SSP and the "quality labelling" of a limited number of statistics produced by other bodies.

However, the public-service organisations that disseminate this statistical information play a recognised role in the dissemination of public information, alongside and often in conjunction with the MSOs in their sector (e.g. Pôle Emploi, SpF, ACOSS, CNAM). Their publication products are often designated as "statistical publications and studies", which disseminate statistical data and series, sometimes without making a clear distinction – for users and the media – between information which may or may not have been "quality-labelled" by the ASP.

The development of these statistics, which are increasingly produced outside the SSP to meet various needs, has led to reflection on the expediency of "qualifying" them, in order to improve the identification of those that provide real added value and usefully supplement public information. This was the subject of the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate, entitled "Towards a new service for qualifying statistics of general interest", which was submitted to the Authority in June 2019.

In the deliberation that followed the submission of this report, the Authority noted that the "quality-labelling" procedure, which was intended to bring a proportion of "administrative" statistics into the sphere of official statistics, was still progressing too slowly, whereas the processing of data collected and disseminated by bodies outside the SSP for general information purposes was an integral part of official statistics as defined by the Law of 1951. The ASP therefore deemed it necessary, in view of the emergence of these increasing amounts of diversified and heterogeneous data, to identify the most relevant statistics for enlightening the public debate, with a view to extending the scope of "trusted" statistics.

However, the Authority had raised doubts about the practicalities of the qualification mechanism proposed by the INSEE General Inspectorate for qualifying statistics produced outside the SSP. It recommended an effective system to help users wade through the vast amount of statistics currently at their disposal, as part of a simple and comprehensible overall framework that is linked to the existing quality-labelling procedure. In this respect, it recommended, while simultaneously seeking ways to speed up the quality-labelling process, giving further thought to how the planned system could more proactively encourage operators to conform to a "minimum documentation standard" for their statistics, which would be recognised by the SSP's bodies, the CNIS and the Quality-Labelling Committee.

An "Official Statistics Procedure", alongside the current "quality-labelling labelling" process and within the framework of more comprehensive information from the National Council for Statistical Information

In view of these contextual elements, which have become even more prominent since the health crisis, and of the discussions that have already begun (e.g. in the context of the joint activities by the INSEE General Inspectorate and the inspectorates of other ministries), it seems extremely important to continue the process of including greater volumes of data collected or produced by public bodies in the "regulation" of official statistics, and thereby bring it more closely in line with the scope described by the law.

The ASP, in association with the CNIS and the Quality-Labeling Committee, has therefore launched a process of reflection on how to ensure a more comprehensive and effective overall approach, based on a pragmatic process known as the "Official Statistics Procedure" and covering the qualification of statistics of general interest.

Indeed, public bodies or bodies with a public-service remit apparently produce three types of quantitative information:

- information produced on demand, for immediate needs, which is not intended to be lasting, or to be disseminated externally;
- information produced on a regular basis, at a certain frequency, which is disseminated via statistical publication products and studies that are identified and documented as such, and which conform to a number of principles of the Code of Practice;
- information whose standard of technical quality and degree of temporal permanence is also sufficiently high for it to be quality-labelled or to have the potential to be quality-labelled (conforming to all the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice as adapted to administrative sources).

The "Official Statistics Procedure" will be aimed more specifically at the second category of information produced by these public bodies, while the quality-labelling process remains a valuable tool for an entire series of "reference" statistics. It is intended to be broader-ranging but also more streamlined than the procedure followed for the quality-labelling process, since it concerns statistical information that is not initially intended to be quality labelled, but which is included in statistical publication products and conforms to certain principles of "best practice", whose content is likely to be specified beforehand.

Rather than confirming the technical quality of the statistics in question, as is the case for quality-labelling, the aim will be to confirm the existence of the criteria of impartiality, objectivity, relevance and accessibility, as evidenced by: the separation of dissemination from any form of ministerial communication; the transparency of the methods used for the processing and revision of information; the accessibility of this information; regular consultations of users; the dissemination of a publication calendar for information purposes.

This procedure is also intended to form part of a better regulated and more coordinated overall approach, with the organisations concerned undertaking to send an annual statistical programme to the CNIS, and consultation envisaged with the MSO covering the same field of expertise, which will also be informed and involved in this approach.

Milestones to be achieved within one year

The ASP plans to start implementing this procedure in the following manner.

- 1 Experiments will be conducted out on a voluntary basis with organisations likely to have significant volumes of statistics that could be concerned.

They will be asked to transmit their annual programmes of statistical activities and regular studies to the CNIS on a systematic basis, accompanied by any of their surveys that are likely to require a feasibility opinion.

They will also be asked to complete a summary "Official Statistics Procedure" document proposed by the Quality-Labeling Committee, which has been considerably simplified in comparison with the file envisaged as part of the quality-labelling process, enabling them to describe the statistics that are likely to fall within the scope of this approach, and to justify compliance with the criteria mentioned above.¹¹

11 In a second phase, the eligible statistics could, if necessary, be submitted for quality labelling.

- 2 After examination of this document by the Quality-Labeling Committee, the ASP will proceed with a hearing of the organisations concerned, which may coincide with the deadlines for quality labelling or for the renewal of labelling. This process will lead to a deliberation by the ASP and the inclusion of the relevant statistics in a list that will be published.
- 3 To conduct an initial assessment of the procedure and with a view to its widespread implementation, the ASP is planning to organise a seminar during 2022 to discuss the experiments carried out and to formulate proposals, including those of a contractual or regulatory nature, with a view to reflecting on follow-up measures and the possible generalisation of the process. In addition to the regulatory bodies for official statistics and INSEE, this seminar is likely to involve the organisations concerned and the MSOs operating, or liable to operate, in the fields concerned.

The "Official Statistics Procedure" grid drawn up by the Quality-Labeling Committee, and the criteria for the Code of Practice (CoP), which it proposes to use as benchmarks, are enclosed in an appendix to this memorandum.

Opinion concerning the URSSAF National Fund statistics



22 December 2021

Opinion on recognising the statistical series produced by the URSSAF National Fund as official statistics for general information purposes

Following the request submitted by URSSAF (French social security contribution collection offices), and after obtaining the opinion of the Official Statistics Quality-Labeling Committee, the Official Statistics Authority recognises, within the framework of the "Official Statistics Procedure" currently being tested, the following statistical series as official statistics for general information purposes:

- short-time working benefits
- monthly payroll;
- rate of unpaid contributions (excluding administrative taxation) for enterprises with 10 or more employees;
- number of receivership proceedings;
- number of court-ordered winding-up proceedings;
- number of safeguard proceedings;
- exemptions from social security contributions, distinguishing between four types of exemptions: general, geographical, targeting certain groups, other;
- number of individual employers at the end of the quarter;
- hourly volumes declared by individual employers;
- net payroll reported by individual employers;
- number of auto-entrepreneurs;
- turnover of auto-entrepreneurs.

In addition, when regularly produced and disseminated, the flash estimate of the number of economically active own-account workers will be added, based on additional information to be provided by the agency.

These series are described in the document enclosed as Annexe 1.

The Authority would like the URSSAF National Fund to take into account the recommendations contained in the opinion of the Official Statistics Quality-Labeling Committee enclosed in Annexe 2, particularly concerning the explanation of the concepts measured, the accessibility of metadata and the completeness of the information relating to the processing carried out and the provisional or revisable nature of some of the series considered.

The Authority will hold a hearing with the URSSAF National Fund within two years in order to review the enhancement of the information relating to these statistics and the possible increase in their number, at the same time as the renewal of the quality label for data relating to the number of employees, and payroll in the private sector.

ANNEXE 6 : CNIS 2021 Review



Montrouge, 9 December 2021 - No 158/H030

Review by the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) in relation to the Official Statistics Programme in 2021

While 2020 was characterised by a totally atypical situation, due to the pandemic and the health measures put in place, with significant repercussions for official statistics and the CNIS,¹² 2021 did not see a return to the pre-crisis situation. The CNIS held its consultations and meetings in 2021 exclusively in the form of video-conferences, which generally attract much larger audiences than face-to-face events. Although non-commission procedures, which emerged in 2020 as a means of compensating for the urgency and cancellation of commissions, were used occasionally in 2021 according to the producers' needs, the usual modes of consultation, set out in pre-established six-monthly schedules, once again became the norm in most cases. This confirms that the system currently in place corresponds to the needs, but that marginal changes cannot be ruled out in the future.

In particular, the Rapporteurs were able to present the work programmes in the usual manner during the spring commission meetings. The commissions' activities focused on more structural issues, in line with the opinions issued for the medium term 2019-2023, but also on emerging needs. However, it was not possible to hold any large-scale events (symposia, meetings) in 2021. A greater number of events will therefore be held in 2022 – at least some of them in face-to-face format – and the General Secretariat spent H2 2021 planning and organising them.

Finally, special mention should be given to the participation of several Council members in the European Peer Review of the Official Statistical Service in 2021, whose final report mentioned the quality of the governance of official statistics, in particular the highly comprehensive identification of user needs by the CNIS.

As usual, this 2021 report is divided into two parts: firstly, it presents a summary of the main cross-cutting focuses of the CNIS' activities during this year of transition between the crisis and the post-crisis periods. It then reviews the discussions of the CNIS commissions and working groups in 2021, by dividing them into four sectors, namely:

the social sector;

the economic and financial sector;

sustainable development;

territories.

12 See the CNIS Review for 2020

I. Main focuses of the CNIS' activities

① Supporting the increasing use of administrative data and matching in order to enhance statistics

Through its position and role within the Official Statistical Service, the CNIS acts as a witness to methodological developments in official statistics, particularly with regard to the sources and data used (in addition to being a stakeholder through the operations it facilitates).

Producers' requests for access to administrative data under Article 7 bis of the Law of 1951 show an increase in the use of these sources for statistical purposes. For the Environment and Sustainable Development Committee, for example, the number of applications increased from one in 2019 to two in 2020 and five in 2021. In addition to the use of new management data, **these applications are frequently combined with source matching**, which provides important supplementary data in relation to that obtained from surveys, and which can be used to develop the monitoring or evaluation of public policies. The usefulness of matching activities and the attendant methodological difficulties were presented at the March 2021 Employment, Qualification and Earned Income Commission, in connection with the "Generation" survey scheme by the Centre for Studies and Research on Employment and Qualifications (CEREQ).

These new statistical processing activities also reinforce the **need to provide information on the legal and ethical frameworks in which they are carried out**, given the massive volumes of personal data used by the SSP, which may arouse legitimate concerns. This confirms the importance of the educational role of the CNIS commissions. In this regard, the spring Environment and Sustainable Development Commission delivered a presentation to consumer associations and network managers on the Ministerial Statistical Office's use of individual energy consumption data from homes for monitoring and evaluating public policies in support of the ecological transition, and on the ethics of statistical processing.

At a more general level, **the CNIS has scheduled a meeting on matching**, to be held in January 2022, in collaboration with INSEE, at which it will present the progress made in this area, which is included in the CNIS's medium-term plan for 2019-2023 (General Opinion No. 7 on "Developing matches between data sources") and in its guidelines for 2021 ("Assigning a status to statistics based on administrative sources"), while also presenting its key ethical issues.

Furthermore, the matching of administrative sources (between sources or with survey data) is a lower-cost way to meet **the CNIS' long-standing need for longitudinal data**. A review of the current status of statistical panels and cohorts was presented in an edition of *Chroniques* (explanatory articles) at the end of 2020, due to the inability to hold the colloquium initially planned for 2020 in 2021, which has now been rescheduled for May 2022. The "Public Services and Services for the Public" Commission has encouraged the reactivation of the court-monitored minors panel, which will eventually enable these young people's pathways to be monitored via the matching of several civil or criminal justice management databases, which constitutes a major advance in the information system.

Finally, **at the end of 2021, the CNIS began supporting the "Official Statistics Procedure"** launched by the new President of the Official Statistics Authority (ASP). This will ultimately require the CNIS to **broaden the scope of the work programmes of producers of official statistics** which are collected for public information purposes and which need to be coordinated.

Government bodies that regularly produce widely disseminated statistics (generally based on their management data) are indeed invited to engage in an appropriate compliance procedure with the ASP, transmit their work programmes to the CNIS, and submit their survey projects in order to ascertain their eligibility for "official statistics approval".

② The demand for precisely located data

As is the case for individuals, **the need for detailed and precise spatial data has been expressed by repeated requests from several bodies for gridded and geolocated data**, in accordance with Medium-Term 2019-2023 Opinion 5, entitled "Consolidating the supply of official statistics in territorial data". At the same time, the supply continues to grow, with the territorial sustainable development indicators, for example, **being an adaptation of the national indicators defined by the 2018 CNIS WG on the Sustainable Development Goal indicators**, which provide an extremely broad range of data in highly diverse fields and on very detailed (e.g. municipal) and multi-scalar levels. The CNIS is also encouraging producers to continue their efforts to **enhance and disseminate** this type of data by employing the datavisualisation technique and the **more systematic geolocation** of data, via the population census and new geographical approaches to delinquency but also to Overseas France (CNERP, Territories and Public Services Commissions and services to the public). The Territories Commission has also reaffirmed the need for regional consultation mechanisms in the statistical field, involving INSEE, using procedures that are adapted to regional contexts.

③ Measurements of poverty and inequality

Defining and measuring individual poverty are difficult exercises, due to the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon. Nevertheless, official statistics are frequently asked to contribute and this need is shared by the CNIS.

The spring meeting of the Demography and Social Issues Committee was mainly devoted to **the observation of extreme poverty**. In particular, INSEE presented its innovative work on the definition and measurement of extreme poverty, i.e. people who persistently find themselves in a state of great material and social deprivation. Among the existing indicators, the statistical approach proposed by INSEE consists in combining a monetary criterion (standard of living below 50% of the median standard of living) with a social or material deprivation criterion, for which the European material and social deprivation indicator is used.

At the regional and local level, and in order to identify the specificities of the Overseas Territories in terms of poverty and specific challenges for official statistics, the spring Territories Commission meeting put the spotlight on measurements of poverty and precariousness in Mayotte, and underlined the limitations of basing these measurements on the monetary poverty threshold, under which 77% of the inhabitants of Mayotte were living in 2017. This study once again highlights the importance of geolocated data for the mapping and datavisualisation of this phenomenon, which informs the analysis.

With regard to inequalities, the Financial System and Financing of the Economy Commission reported on recent studies by INSEE and the Banque de France concerning **the distribution of income and wealth accounts, which provide an overview of the redistributive nature of the transfer system**, taking account of all levies, benefits (including benefits in kind) and collective expenditure. These studies are naturally in line with the CNIS' current Medium-Term General Opinions 2 and 6, entitled "Measuring all kinds of inequalities", and "Continuing to invest in international comparisons", to which they make major contributions.

④

Future changes to the population census questionnaire

In the wake of the **CNIS reports on the dissemination of the statistical results of the population census in 2011, and on changes to the population census questionnaire in 2012**, and in line with the INSEE-2025 Strategic Plan, **the CNIS, in partnership with INSEE, organised a seminar on the questionnaire and the dissemination of the population census on 7 October 2020.**

Regarding the modifications to the individual census questionnaire, users' requests in 2020 were mainly related to employment and perceived health status. The changes to be made to the housing sheet had focused mainly on household digital equipment and the removal of the question on social housing. The relevance of questions requiring a subjective assessment was also questioned, such as health status and housing quality.

Regarding the dissemination of the census results, users had emphasised the abundance of the existing offerings, while also stressing the need to update the obsolete and overly restrictive legal framework in which they are embedded. Some of the proposed changes were consistent with the activities underway at INSEE, in particular those aiming to improve the accessibility and efficiency of sub-municipal dissemination, and to implement dissemination at the 200-metre-grid level in addition to the European demand for the one-kilometre-grid level, in order to remedy certain limitations associated with the aggregated units for statistical information (IRIS).

These topics were subsequently discussed by the **National Population Census Evaluation Commission (CNERP) in April 2021, and the debate subsequently continued at the autumn Demography and Social Issues Commission, focusing on INSEE's proposals to add four new questions to the individual census questionnaire**, by simplifying the questions on the respondent's socio-professional category, which in turn, had stemmed from a **redesign of the Classification of Professions and Social Categories (PCS) (by the eponymous CNIS working group in 2017-2018)**. The new questions respectively cover disability (a question derived from the European mini-module on perceived health), dual nationality, parents' place of birth, and teleworking.

The committee commended the significant efforts to adapt the census questionnaire to the needs expressed, via the CNIS' activities in particular, and announced its support for the introduction of all the new questions, which will make a significant contribution to knowledge. Reservations about the risk of misuse of information about the geographical origin of parents in the public debate do not seem to be insurmountable, provided that the official statistics sector remains vigilant about their use. It will also monitor further changes to the housing questionnaire.

⑤

New data sources and consultations

As previously noted by the CNIS in 2020, the health crisis has accelerated statisticians' uses of alternative sources to traditional surveys or statistics. Textual data, web harvesting and data from private operators can be used as a refreshing addition to existing data or to provide alternatives to sources rendered irrelevant by the health crisis. Such actions by producers are consistent with Medium-Term General Opinion No 4, entitled "Optimising the use of data sources resulting from the development of digital technology", and the policies pursued by the CNIS in 2020.

Firstly, in the economic field, the Financial System and Financing of the Economy Commission highlighted **both the contributions and limitations of sources that are not designed for scientific purposes**, and which do not provide any guarantees in terms of representativeness, history or stability. This is why the CNIS recommends their systematic comparison with official statistics and with official statistics concepts, and urges the performance of validation studies for

any sources with more permanent potential, while paying particular attention to the knowledge of household composition and the standard of living.

Secondly, the CNIS issued a favourable opinion in 2021 on **the project to use scanner data to calculate short-term activity indicators**, following a feasibility and expediency study of this operation by INSEE, in consultation with mass retailers. **As the second operation to benefit from a CNIS opinion under Article 3 bis of the Law of 1951**, which authorises the electronic transmission of private databases as an alternative to statistical surveys, this project will reduce the response burden on shops. It reflects the growth of statistical processing operations based on private data, which is also perfectly consistent with the recommendations of Medium-Term General Opinion No 4.

Finally, in 2021, the CNIS also launched **a working group on the use of plant-protection products in agriculture**. The statistical measurement of crop-management practices, and the use of plant-protection products in particular, are key issues. To establish five-year indicators for the use of these products in the agricultural sector, the Statistics and Forecasting Service (SSP) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food uses a scheme based on-crop management surveys, which provide precise information about the use of plant-protection products on crop plots at regional and national levels.

However, these surveys are complex and costly, at a time when farmers are increasingly using plot-management software to record their agricultural practices. **The mobilisation of this software data could be an alternative to questionnaire-based collection, within the framework of Article 3 bis of the Law of 1951.**

The CNIS working group has brought ministerial statistical offices (primarily, the SSP and the Statistical Data and Studies Service) and professionals from the agricultural sector together for the purpose of analysing the technical feasibility of the statistical use of the data recorded by the software, establishing a legal framework for the transmission of these data, and demonstrating the general interest and the interest for all players in the data-exploitation chain.

In the event of a successful conclusion to this consultation process, this project to produce indicators on the use of plant-protection products based (partially) on private databases could become the third type of statistical processing operation to benefit from Article 3 bis of the Law of 1951.

⑥ International issues: official statistics mobilised to monitor the European Green Deal

The work programme presented to the Environment and Sustainable Development Committee in the spring underlined that 2021 would be marked by the major European environmental guidelines laid down in the Green Deal, including, inter alia, carbon neutrality, resource efficiency by moving towards a green and circular economy, biodiversity restoration and the reduction of pollution. In order to follow these guidelines but also to assess the post-Covid recovery plans, Eurostat proposes to extend the collection of national data in the environmental field, and to tighten the deadlines for the transmission of certain data. After agreeing on additional improvements to food-waste reporting in 2019, the aim is to introduce mandatory reporting on forestry accounts, water, environmental taxes, positive subsidies and certain parts of ecosystem accounts over the coming years.

A range of different investments and assessments will be carried out in preparation for these reports. For example, the autumn Environment and Sustainable Development Commission was devoted **to two new tools: environmental economic accounts and ecosystem accounts**. The presentations and discussions conducted by the commissions show that the activities undertaken in this field remain in their infancy in France and that both methodological and above all, conceptual difficulties must be overcome: a consensus among both producers and users has not yet

been reached concerning the purposes (i.e. quantifying the price of biodiversity losses in ecosystems, or physical accounts designed to improve knowledge of biodiversity in space), and the heuristic presuppositions (i.e. a relatively rigid definition of the degree of sustainability to which we should aspire).

7 Towards new operating procedures for the CNIS

The commissions' half-yearly meetings – all held as planned despite the unstable health situation – had to be conducted by video-conference, including the CNERP's closed-commission meetings, whose limited number of participants had initially raised hopes of the autumn being held on a face-to-face basis at the INED. These participation procedures led to increased participation in commissions by participants who are located a long way from Paris (e.g. in the regions), including those based in Overseas France and even abroad. An "International Commission", with presentations delivered in English (due to the participation of European speakers) and in French, was held in the autumn, which also enabled representatives of Afristat to attend the event. This unprecedented experiment opens up opportunities for the CNIS to develop its activities and potentially extend the impacts of its work. We are therefore witnessing the gradual renewal of consultation methods, combining the habitual procedures, which remain the relevant frame of reference for habitual activities, with changes triggered by the crisis but which became established as lasting trends in 2021, destined to continue.

An edition of the CNIS *Chroniques* (explanatory articles), inspired by discussions that took place during the 2021 Plenary Assembly, also provides an effective and useful summary of the economic and social transformations and adaptations of the official statistical system that serves as a backdrop to the changes at the CNIS discussed here.

II - Thematic assessment of the discussions in commissions and by the working group

① Progress and expectations in the social sector

("Employment, Qualification and Earned Income", "Demography and Social Issues", "Public Services and Services to the Public" Commissions, and the National Population Census Evaluation Commission)

During the spring session, the Employment, Qualification and Earned Income Commission examined the monitoring of own-account workers' career paths (Medium-Term Opinion No 1 of the Committee's medium term).

INSEE presented an **overview of own-account workers, including the jobs they hold, their income and their career paths**. Own-account workers are defined by the absence of a legal relationship of subordination to a principal. 3.5 million own-account workers were recorded in 2017 (300,000 of whom were employees). One in five own-account workers is economically dependent upon another entity. The annual databases of non-salaried workers are composed of administrative data and data obtained by processing social declarations. They are provided by the social security contribution collection agencies. Once enriched with information on the performance of multiple activities and the characteristics of enterprises, this data is used to describe own-account workers and measure total employment. Three other sources of information on own-account workers are also available: the Employment survey, the Own-Account Workers panel, and the All Workers panel. These panels are used to identify own-account workers who remain in business on a long-term basis, to track trajectories in the active population, to study the proportion of micro-entrepreneurs who move into traditional non-salaried employment, and to study transitions between salaried and non-salaried employment.

Since the beginning of 2020 and the integration of the Régime social des indépendants (RSI – social security scheme for own-account workers) into the general social security system, the **Central Agency of Social Security Associations (ACOSS) has been hosting the Statistical Observatory for Own-Account Workers**, whose three main roles are to ensure continuity in the knowledge of own-account workers, to act as a tool for monitoring, research and decision-making support, and to inform the Council's work on the social protection of own-account workers. In 2020, ACOSS published studies on conventional own-account workers and micro-entrepreneurs, as well as analyses of particular categories of own-account workers. Data was made available in open-data format. In 2021, ACOSS planned to issue regular updates to its cyclical monitoring dashboard for own-account workers. Finally, plans were also made to enhance the data on own-account workers and their social coverage, and to draw up a report on the effects of the health crisis.

The **research opportunities opened up by the recent advances in monitoring own-account workers' career paths** were also presented. Their income is derived from a combination of capital and labour, and the health crisis has led to a further increase in the heterogeneity of this category. The recommendations made in the 2016 CNIS report on the diversity of forms of employment have largely been implemented, which will improve knowledge of the professional situations and career paths of own-account workers, and establishes France as a trailblazer on this subject in Europe. Transitions between wage-earning employment and non-wage-earning employment are better understood, and their effects on income can be measured. To consolidate these achievements and further develop knowledge, the practice of multiple activities and transitions between micro-entrepreneurship and traditional non-wage-earning employment should be further explored. Very

little is known about gender inequalities in non-wage-earning employment, and a specific analysis is required.

The discussions highlighted the need for sub-annual data. Little is also known about the working time of own-account workers, which complicates any discussion of their profitability. Own-account workers' access to national solidarity schemes has not yet been studied. Finally, the psycho-social risks faced by own-account workers, particularly during the health crisis, have yet to be investigated.

The CNIS commends the recent results, especially the implementation of the recommendations of the report on the diversity of forms of employment, and the creation of the Own-Account Workers panel. To go further, it recommends the continued participation in international activities, further exploitation of the sources, and their matching with other databases in order to further enhance the results.

At the autumn session, the review of the **evaluation of lifelong competencies** (the Commission's Medium-Term Opinion No 4) included an **overview of sources on adult competencies and training**. Literacy, numeracy and work-related competencies are evaluated by two surveys based on tests and exercises designed to objectively measure expertise: the *Information and Everyday Life* (IVQ) survey in France and the *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies* (PIAAC) survey in OECD countries.

Data relating to **training** and more generally to the acquisition of lifelong competencies is provided by two types of sources. On the one hand, it originates from administrative sources, including DARES' BREST database on trainees following vocational training programmes, the Ministry of Labour's AGORA database, which lists shared, publicly funded training programmes, and DARES' FORCE system for monitoring access to training and the professional integration of jobseekers and young people monitored by local missions. On the other hand, it is also provided by various surveys, firstly INSEE's Continuous Employment Survey, which was redesigned in 2021 and provides the training take-up rate, the Lifelong Learning Survey (FLV) by DARES and INSEE, which replaces the Adult Education Survey, and CEREQ's Defis (Challenges) surveys, whose five waves in the employee section are designed to study training take-up and its effects on professional careers and salaries.

Other surveys examine the issue from the employers' perspective and measure structural or annual levels of training efforts. Finally, training organisations are questioned about issues such as the transformation of training offerings.

Through **France Stratégie, Pôle Emploi has produced an updated map of competencies by profession** in order to improve the identification and updating of the competencies expected by employers at the territorial level. **Perspectives et rebonds** – a consulting firm – described the **use of statistical data during the roll-out of a restructuring operation**. After initial recourse to massive data, supposedly in order to provide virtually automatic snapshots of employment zones and recruitment areas, it noted a return to a more rigorous statistical analysis methodology, whose results shed light on the actors' knowledge of the functioning of their territory. The debate underlined the difficulty of defining competencies, and questioned the transferability of competency acquisition, which is highly dependent on the context (professional or non-professional) in which it takes place.

The CNIS commends the progress made in the evaluation of professional competencies. With regard to training, it invites producers to develop closer coordination between sources and to educate actors in the field in order to encourage them to improve their exploitation of data on the subject. In addition, the CNIS recommends ensuring that local

actors have access to high-quality information about their territory, as competencies and access to training vary greatly from one territory to another; it also urges the provision of open access to data for researchers in order to achieve this objective.

The Demography and Social Issues Commission initially focused on the statistical observation of extreme poverty, in accordance with the CNIS Demography and Social Issues Commission's Medium-Term Opinion No 6.

INSEE presented its work on **defining and measuring extreme poverty**. In order to identify people living in a state of extreme material and social deprivation on a persistent basis, INSEE combined a monetary criterion (standard of living below 50% of the median standard of living) with a social or material deprivation criterion (European indicator). When deprivations concern at least 7 out of the 13 items, the situation is characterised as a case of severe material and social deprivation. This definition, applied to the entire population, and not exclusively to people living in ordinary housing, was used to calculate an estimated extreme poverty rate of 2.4% in France in 2018. Of the 1.9 million people living in extreme poverty, 153,000 were homeless, 165,000 were living in communities, and one in two were living in social housing. These situations are long-lasting and are more likely to concern women and children, as well as people living in the Overseas departments.

The **observation of food aid**, undertaken in the context of the health crisis by DREES and INSEE, was based on associative networks and covered three components.

As this is a marker of entry into extreme poverty, the aim of this scheme is to ensure regular and monitoring at the territorial level. Sub-annual and departmental data on beneficiaries and volumes of aid distributed, as reported by the associations, are analysed in this way. A barometer survey of associations is designed to identify changes in their activity and in the entrants' profiles. Finally, a survey of beneficiaries will provide further detail about their profiles and collect information about the determinants for entry into food aid schemes.

Discussions with the audience were introduced by the National Council on Policies to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion (CNLE). Understanding the various forms of extreme poverty is a significant step forward, as purely monetary criteria are fragile and insufficient. This improves the analysis of complex situations such as substandard housing and informal work. The discussions highlighted the need for joint qualitative approaches and the involvement of stakeholders in the pursuit of these activities. The scope of the non-take-up of minimum social security benefits will also need to be investigated.

The CNIS welcomes the initiatives developed by official statistics and encourages the development of multidimensional approaches combining quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as dynamic and longitudinal approaches in order to identify the phenomena of entry into, persistence and escape from extreme poverty. The CNIS recommends involving people who are living in a situation of extreme poverty in the discussions. Finally, it stresses the need to renew the "Homelessness" survey.

In the autumn, the DQS Commission examined INSEE's plan to change the population census questionnaire by 2024. After a discussion phase in 2020, which confirmed the topicality of several proposals made in the 2012 CNIS Report,¹³ and enabled the gathering of new requests, while taking advantage of the introduction of the Classification of Professions and Social Categories (PCS) in 2020, which frees up some space on the double-sided questionnaire, and after obtaining a

13 CNIS Report No 130 "Changes to the Population Census Questionnaire", 2012

favourable opinion from the National Population Census Evaluation Commission (CNERP) in October 2021, INSEE proposed changes to the questionnaire which were field tested at the end of 2021. In addition to changes in wording and the removal of questions that had become irrelevant, **three new topics were introduced: teleworking, disability and parents' place of birth.**

The discussions in commission showed that a consensus had been reached on **introducing the first two themes (teleworking and disability)**, which was considered useful in order to improve the adjustment of public policies on the basis of precisely located information. However, **the addition of a question on the parents' place of birth was a source of debate.** This information is considered important for everyone in order to develop a better understanding of inequalities, situations of discrimination, segregation phenomena and difficulties in accessing rights according to people's origins and over two generations, and it is required in order to improve the targeting of actions to be implemented locally as part of social cohesion policies. Some people consider the addition of this question to the census as problematic, as it could pose risks of instrumentalisation in public debate.

The CNIS commended the substantial efforts undertaken in order to adapt the census questionnaire to the needs expressed, particularly via the CNIS' activities. It considers that consultation on the use of official statistics to inform societal debates is fundamental in a democracy and enables the clear identification of points of disagreement and their motivations. It recognises that **the question on the parents' place of birth may pose a risk of** biased use if such information is disseminated in a very precisely located manner. Nevertheless, **it will make a major contribution to statistical knowledge**, as reflected by the collection of this information in several major surveys, which have also shown a high degree of acceptance by respondents. The CNIS will monitor the lessons learned from the test very closely, and has asked INSEE to present these findings to the commission at the June 2022 meeting. It also urges the Official Statistical Service to be particularly vigilant about the processing of information on geographical origins, during both the collection process and the provision of the statistical results and detailed files, and to contact the French Data Protection Authority (CNIL) on this subject.

The Commission on Public Services and Services to the Public reviewed the monitoring of delinquency during the spring session, and then examined the information system for national education staff during the autumn session.

The session on statistical methods for monitoring delinquency provided an opportunity to present the longitudinal monitoring of young people in contact with the law (the Committee's Medium-Term Opinion No 6) and the new Classification of Offences (Opinion No 7).

The Under-Directorate of Statistics and Studies (SDSE) for the Ministry of Justice presented the next Court-Monitored Minors Panel. Extended to include people under 26 years of age at the time of the offence, this panel should provide a more global view of criminal justice trajectories, including alternative procedures and dismissals not entered in the national criminal record. It will also enable the analysis of young offenders' pathways beyond the age of 18, and the description of their social trajectories, including from the perspective of children at risk. In a second phase, it may be possible to extend the scope of the panel by matching it with other sources.

INSEE then presented the creation of the French Classification of Offences (NFI), in line with the International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes, (ICCS) released by the UN in 2015. The categories adopted allow for the separate consideration of areas that are likely to be the focus of public crime-prevention and law-enforcement policies. An interministerial group involving several MSOs and professional specialised directorates (Justice, National Police Force, National Gendarmerie) was established in order to adapt this classification to the French statistics system. It

first drew up a transition table to illustrate the equivalence between between the detailed criminal legal classification and the ICCS before developing a French Classification of Offences. This led to the creation of a hybrid classification combining an international statistical breakdown per public policy area and a detailed coding of criminal-law legislation, which opens up vast opportunities in the field of quantitative analysis.

The SSMSI (Ministry of the Interior) described the implementation of the new classification in its productions, which supersedes Etat 4001 (the Ministry of the Interior's historical classification, adopted in 1972, comprising 107 indices for crimes and offences). In the short term, the NFI will facilitate responses to international requests (UN DC and Eurostat), in cooperation with the MSO for Justice.

The SDSE (Ministry of Justice) also described the process of implementing the NFI in its information system, which has required the creation of numerous transition tables. Indeed, several classifications can be used to qualify a criminal case handled by the justice system. The SDSE has published methodological documents to help data users make this transition.

One researcher highlighted the key issues of the change in classification concerning the comparability of police and justice statistics, which rather than measuring behaviours tend to measure the representation and social classification of these behaviours. Justice statistics can be divided into measurements of prosecutorial activity and statistics on convictions. Police statistics are statistics on outflows towards the criminal justice system rather than statistics on inflows into police departments. As the procedures are sometimes lengthy, their longitudinal statistical monitoring requires the stability of indicators and classifications.

Following the debate, the CNIS issued two opinions. The first **encourages the long-term use of the panel for monitoring young people in conflict with the law, particularly by matching it with other data sources**. The second **welcomes the creation of the French Classification of Offences and recommends the adoption of an appropriate communication strategy to support its implementation, with particular regard to the methodology and to its use in the context of international comparisons**.

The session on the information system for personnel employed by the French national education system reported that substantial progress had been made in relation to the findings observed in 2015.

The **Directorate for Evaluation, Forecasting and Performance (DEPP)** of the Ministry of National Education **presented the "Agents' Statistical Database (BSA)"**, which is based on the different management systems and enables the definition of a strong fundamental scope to enable matching with many other sources, the creation of unique nomenclatures for all staff, and the monitoring of staff over time. To compare the situation of staff with the entire working population, and especially with other civil-service employees, sources external to DEPP, such as the INSEE "All Employees" panel, are used. The BSA is used to manage and inform social dialogue.

The **DEPP** then presented an **overview of teacher surveys**, of which there are two main types: those investigating teachers' working conditions and those devoted to teaching practices. TALIS (Teaching and Learning International Survey) is an international survey organised by the OECD, which describes teaching and learning conditions. It examines individual characteristics, the context of the exercise of the profession, well-being, and teachers' professional practices. The School Climate and Victim Survey covers the quality of social relations and feelings of security and job satisfaction. The surveys of teaching practices includes EPODE (periodic survey of education), which documents teachers' professional practices. The PRAESCO (surveys of content-specific teaching practices) programme was designed to document practices differentiated according to the

subjects taught. Finally, impact assessments of educational schemes have been conducted by DEPP, such as the Digital Technology Plan and the reduction of pupil numbers in the first year of primary school.

An **analysis of the employment trajectories of contract teachers** using BSA data was presented. This type of analysis aims to better define the sociology of public employment in teaching and also to enable international comparisons of teaching careers. The abundance of administrative sources provides reliable panellised data for all employment contracts and reveals the exact assignments of all National Education staff. The main limitation is the lack of upstream (entry into the national education system) and downstream (exit) monitoring.

A researcher then presented the algorithm used for assigning teachers to schools, its limitations and proposals for modifications to it. Teachers at the start of their careers are over-represented in local education authorities (académies) with a large proportion of disadvantaged pupils. Assignments of staff are decided on the basis of three criteria: teachers' preferences, schools' preferences and assignment methods (algorithm). The most experienced teachers ask to be assigned to the most attractive local education authorities, while the youngest are assigned to the least sought-after posts. The researcher identified sources of leverage for change: working conditions and the assignment algorithm. A third approach could consist in changing the scale used for the granting of "assignment points" in order to give teachers a greater incentive to move to less attractive regions.

The discussions focused on the benefits of offering researchers more open access to data, the vast majority of which is consulted on the DEPP's premises. The MSO wants to move in this direction, but this will require investment: in digital technologies, with secure storage capacity, but also in human resources, given the need for prior data cleaning and the creation of clear metadata.

In the opinion it issued, **the CNIS commended the progress made in structuring the information system for national education staff, with the creation of the statistical database of agents, and encouraged pairings that could enrich this database with thematic data. It called upon producers to adopt an educational approach in order to encourage actors in the field to improve their awareness of the results of the studies on these subjects. Finally, it recommended making this data more widely available to researchers.**

In the spring, **the National Population Census Evaluation Commission (CNERP) firstly examined the method used to calculate populations in the absence of the annual census survey in 2021,** and secondly considered the **links between the Address Control List (RIL) and Local Address Databases (BAL).**

INSEE explained how, despite the postponement of the 2021 Annual Census Survey (EAR) and in accordance with the law, the legal populations and statistical results of the census will continue to be produced and disseminated every year, according to the usual schedule. **The calculation methods will be adapted,** both for municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants, by making greater use of tax sources, and for municipalities with 10,000 inhabitants or more, by estimating the average number of persons per dwelling. The performance of these adaptations has already been measured and the results appear to be very similar to those obtained by the usual method.

Municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants, which should have conducted a census in 2022, will do so in 2023 and will then have a population estimate based on a third extrapolation next year. Due to the staggered collection for all municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants, the interval between two collections will be six years for all these municipalities, and the adapted method will be used for five years.

In municipalities with 10,000 inhabitants and more, where census surveys are conducted on an annual basis by sampling, the principle consists in calculating the population by multiplying the number of dwellings observed in the Address Control List (RIL) by the average number of persons per dwelling. The RIL has been updated by INSEE and the municipalities every year, including in 2020.

Tests carried out in the recent past reveal very limited differences between the adapted method and the conventional method. The debate focused on the choice of method, compared to other options envisaged such as double collection in 2022, and on communication with elected representatives, with the aim of choosing the most robust method in order to optimise the "handling" of the postponed collection. A double collection in 2022 would require additional resources for its organisation, which INSEE lacks, and moreover, it would infringe the principle of equal treatment between municipalities. All associations of elected representatives were in favour of postponing the 2021 collection. The new methods used to calculate legal populations will be presented to the national associations of elected representatives, and INSEE's regional directorates will also explain the main adaptations in a more local context. However, moving to a six-year interval could have a destabilising effect, especially for statistical results, and further thought needs to be given to dissemination.

The question of establishing **links between the Address Control List (RIL) and the Local Address Databases (BALs)** has been raised in the context of the "4D" Law.

These two tools seem to have different scopes since the RIL only concerns dwellings in municipalities with 10,000 inhabitants or more, whereas the BALs concern all addresses in all municipalities. Moreover, unlike the BALs, the RIL integrates elements of address characterisation which are essential to the census (type of dwelling, number of dwellings, definition of access points, additional address details, etc.). Similarly, the geolocation variables may differ. Finally, the RIL is subject to quality control procedures (approval of building permits, field surveys, audits and appraisal of processing operations, etc.).

In this context, it is most important to ensure that the desire to develop BALs does not override the obligations associated with the RIL, as this could seriously undermine the quality of the population figures obtained from the population census (RP). The RIL is a fundamental pillar of the census and plays an essential role in its smooth conduct. However, it is beneficial to examine the synergies between the two systems. For example, a module for exporting the RIL in the right format for populating a BAL could be envisaged.

The discussion reveals the importance of maintaining the RIL's role as a tool for monitoring and updating residential addresses in the framework of the population census, and this will be reiterated to the legislator.

During the autumn session, the CNERP **reviewed progress on the planned changes to the census questionnaires** and discussed a new **draft census dissemination order**.

INSEE pointed out that the new Classification of Professions and Social Categories (PCS) requires changes to the individual census questionnaire: the questions on employment enabling this coding in the PCS-2020 will need to be modified. This was discussed at the CNIS seminar on 7 October 2020 and again at the CNERP meeting in April 2021. Since then, **consultations have been held with ministerial statistical offices and INED. This issue was also raised in a discussion with the French National Ombudsman.**

The INSEE Board has agreed to test a new individual census questionnaire with four new questions and the removal of others (related to the occupational coding in the PCS-2020). A timetable has not been defined for the Housing sheet. The decisions will be made in light of other census-related projects.

The four new questions are: the question on health/disability from the European "GALI" mini-module, a question on dual nationality, a question on parents' place of birth, and a question on teleworking.

Modifications to some of the existing questions have been proposed: to the method of obtaining qualifications, the main situation (work-linked training, grouping of internships), part-time employment (more or less than 80%), and types of employment contracts (reduced number of arrangements, with the threshold of 3 months being retained in an ILO resolution). Other proposals include removing the question on the main function, which is not required for occupational coding in the occupation in the PCS-2020 classification, and the question on nationality at birth, which is rarely used, as the country of birth is always collected.

During the debate, the issue of the quality of responses on dual nationality was raised, as the persons concerned are not always aware of their dual nationality. A break in the series will occur. In the online questionnaire, it will be possible to provide assistance by displaying a help balloon. It seems advisable to obtain the CNERP's opinion on this project. Difficulties related to breaks in the census series must be anticipated, but the recoding of previous censuses would be costly and is not envisaged. The wording of the "GALI" question ("Are you limited (...) in activities that people usually do?"), which measures a disability situation, is harmonised at European level and between the different surveys.

The CNERP therefore issued a favourable opinion on the draft modification of the individual census questionnaire examined in the session with a view to testing in November-December 2021.

Following the CNIS seminar in October 2020, which expressed the need for greater detail on nationality data and also for more data at the sub-municipal level, and Eurostat's request for data at the one-kilometre-grid level, an internal INSEE working group reflected on these issues during H1 2021 and the Management Committee approved its proposals in July 2021. **The current dissemination principles are not called into question**; they were initially defined with the French Data Protection Authority (CNIL) for the dissemination of the 1990 census.

Concerning the rules for grid-related-data dissemination, the sensitive variables of nationality, country of birth, previous place of residence and date of arrival in France will not be disseminated. For the other variables, aggregate data for grids with at least 11 households can be disseminated without restriction. However, a specific approach to confidentiality will be applied to grids with fewer than 11 households. Following a cost/risk assessment, there will be no specific treatment of secondary confidentiality (by geographical differentiation).

Customised census products at the municipal and supra-municipal levels should no longer impose criteria in addition to the rules of the order. For sub-municipal dissemination (DIAF-RP), the rule of at least 1,000 dwellings is expected to be maintained; the zoning could henceforth straddle several municipalities, always for more than 1,000 dwellings.

In a second phase, the list of variables considered to be "sensitive", whose dissemination is restricted to certain geographical levels, will be modified. Nationality, country of birth, place of previous residence and date of arrival in France are no longer likely to be considered "sensitive". However, membership of a same-sex couple, and some of the variables proposed for inclusion in the individual census questionnaire (health variables, in particular) are likely to be considered "sensitive". The CNIL will be asked to issue an opinion.

During the debate, there was a clear demand for more serial data on the INSEE website, along with the desire to prevent any misuse of the word "sensitive" from giving the impression that

data does not exist, when it merely relates to the precise level at which the dissemination takes place. **The interest in the new variable on the parents' place of birth was emphasised.**

The representative of the DGOM (General Directorate for Overseas France) informed the CNERP that the President of the Territorial Authority of French Guiana considered the territory's population to be underestimated by 20%. During the last visit to French Guiana by the Minister for Overseas France, it was agreed to reflect on this issue within the framework of existing structures. A discussion was proposed between the CNERP and the President of the territorial authority. The President accepted the principle of such a meeting, specifying that the expectations of Guyanese elected representatives would be better understood if they were set out in a letter to the CNERP.

② Progress and expectations in the economic and financial sector

("Enterprises and Market Strategies" and "Financial System and Financing of the Economy" Commissions)

The Enterprise and Market Strategies Commission discussed the measurement of R&D and innovation in enterprises during the spring session.

The Research Programming Law adopted at the end of 2021 for the 2021-2030 period defines new indicators and new needs in order to improve the evaluation of public policies. The Ministerial Statistical Office for the Ministry of Research and Innovation – **SIES** – presented the current system, whose basic building block is the **annual R&D survey of enterprise**, under European regulations. R&D covers three types of activity: basic research, applied research and experimental development. Its objective is to discover the financial and human resources allocated to R&D by enterprises located in France.

Innovation is measured by the **Capacity to Innovate (CIS) survey**, conducted by **INSEE**. The aim of this European survey is to measure the economic importance of innovation. The main methodological alteration made in the 2020 reporting year was a change to the surveying of enterprises, from a method based on legal units to an approach based on economic units, in compliance with the European FRIBS regulation and in order to take better account of the growing importance of groups.

The **INSEE Economic Studies Department** has conducted four types of studies in recent years: on collaborative public/private R&D support schemes, the impact of research partnerships with industry, the evaluation of the innovation tax credit, and the "Young Innovative Enterprises" scheme. For its part, the **DGE (General Directorate for Enterprises)** is engaged in a plan to evaluate the system governing aid for R&D and innovation at the request of the European Commission. Six studies have already been published, including the evaluation of the CIFRE system (industrial agreement on research-based training), and the evaluation of individual aid from Bpifrance, for example. The debate highlighted the need for sectoral and international comparisons.

In its opinion, **the CNIS underlined and encouraged the pursuit of efforts to clarify the concepts of R&D and innovation. It expressed its desire to see more detailed and greater use of the available data for informing sectoral and international comparisons, and for the questions posed within groups to be consistent with the economic definition of enterprises. In addition, in order to embrace a global approach to innovation, the CNIS also wanted the data collected to include small enterprises.**

At the autumn session, the Committee examined **current developments in the production and dissemination of the structural statistics of enterprises**, following the report by the INSEE

General Inspectorate. A CNIS working group had also addressed the question of how to support the transition from the enterprise as a legal unit to the enterprise as an economic unit within the meaning of the French Law on Modernisation of the Economy (LME) in the dissemination media, and had submitted its report at the end of 2019.

Firstly two presentations specifically examined the case of **intermediate-sized enterprises (ETIs)**. The first presentation was given by the **General Directorate for Enterprises (DGE)**, which is responsible for implementing the "Nation ETI" (ETI Nation) strategy, launched by the French President in January 2020 with the aim of raising awareness of ETIs, developing an "ETI culture" within the government, and consolidating means of promoting them. The DGE made two requests: to produce an overview of statistical studies that take account of the ETI category, and to identify means of improving the statistical tool in order to take better account of this category, which is very often grouped together with large enterprises (LEs), in surveys.

In the second presentation, **INSEE mentioned that together with the ministerial statistical offices, it produces statistics and studies exclusively on ETIs at the national level**. However, at the regional and local levels, it is not always possible to locate these companies, and statistical confidentiality requirements may prevent the dissemination of figures. INSEE has developed tools that enable the analysis of the territorial impacts of ETIs via their establishments, using a database on the employment in establishments since 2008, which includes various files (SIRUS, creations and transfers, CLAP followed by FLORES, LIFI, FARE, etc.).

The ensuing **discussions revealed that** while further analysis of the increased use of ETI/LE segmentation upstream of surveys and administrative operations is required, **the systematic separation and determination of long series require strong assumptions and significant investment**.

INSEE then presented the recommendations of the **General Inspectorate's report on the production and dissemination of structural statistics on enterprises**, with the aim of analysing users' needs. Structural statistics on enterprises are provided by a series of tools, first and foremost the ESANE system (elaboration of annual statistics on enterprises). To launch a new phase of this now-mature system, the report recommends involving the partners more closely in the development of the system, in particular by initiating consultation with the Banque de France on group profiling principles and methods, and finally, by stabilising and improving the production methods.

Business profiling was presented by a researcher who considers it a tool for economic analysis, based on a critical interpretation of the definition of an enterprise within the meaning of the French Law on Modernisation of the Economy (LME): "the smallest combination of legal units that constitutes an organisational unit for the production of goods and services with a certain degree of decision-making autonomy, in particular for the allocation of its own resources". This definition contains grey areas that raise questions: what does decision-making autonomy really mean? To what do "own resources correspond"? Is a fiscal motivation devoid of economic implications? According to this definition, profiling embraces an economic theory that focuses on production activities (technological approach), whereas the academic literature asserts the existence of other approaches (organisational, strategic, productivity- or market-share-based), which may take better account of industry and its decline in Western countries, for example.

In the **discussions**, the emphasis was placed on meeting users' needs: the presentation of data in legal units will be maintained and flagship indicators promoted in order to frame analyses on the basis of reliable and documented results. An action plan will be defined and presented to the researchers.

Following the debate, the **CNIS** issued two opinions. In the first, it **encouraged the Official Statistical Service (SSP) to break down the production of survey data more systematically, where possible, according to the size of the enterprise, in order to enable analyses and studies of these categories of enterprise and their contribution to the main macroeconomic aggregates.** In the second opinion, **the CNIS supports the recommendations made in the INSEE General Inspectorate's report, on making individual data use a high priority in the objectives for the new information system, and to document and accompany the delivery of these data in order to promote user autonomy. It insists that sectoral statisticians should be involved in the development of this scheme.**

In its spring session, **the Financial System and Economic Financing Committee** discussed the **lessons to be learned from the health crisis for official statistics in the financial sector.**

A first illustration of these challenges, presented by **INSEE**, concerned the **field of macroeconomic statistics**: the ability to provide a rapid diagnosis to enable the optimal adaptation of public policies to the economic and social situation; the opportunity to obtain a diagnosis beyond that provided by the major categories of agents in the central framework of national accounts (enterprises, households, general government), given the high level of inequality vis-à-vis the crisis; the need to be able to compare national performance with that of other countries. One response has been the growing recourse to "big data" in order to compensate for occasional losses of survey data. The **Banque de France**, like **INSEE**, **has innovated in its business tendency surveys** by enhancing its open comment space and exploiting these comments using "text-mining" techniques. The institution has also studied the use of "webscraping" in the UK for the high frequency (real-time), precisely detailed monitoring of the real-estate market. The **OECD**, for its part, **describes different international experiments with the successful use of big data.** The **OECD** itself produces real-time economic forecasts for 45 countries based on Google search data aggregated by Google Trends, while the exploitation of data from platforms such as Indeed and social networks such as Linked In by proprietary operators provides near-real-time estimates of labour-market developments, etc. One of the challenges raised by these experiments will concern the definition of the best ways to govern access to private data.

In the second part, two innovative schemes were presented, the first concerning **the measurement of household financial savings**, the second addressing **the impact of the health crisis on the business activity and cash flow of enterprises.** In March 2020, the Banque de France moved from monthly to weekly data collections for monitoring household savings and non-financial corporations. For financial investments other than bank deposits, which are known to have longer lead times, the Banque de France has resorted to "nowcasting" procedures. This experimentation has given rise to the notion of surplus savings (deposit part) compared to a "normal" situation (2019). Finally, INSEE and the Banque de France described a nowcasting experiment on enterprises' cash resources after the COVID-19-related shock: this microsimulation exercise aims to quantify the shock to activity at the individual level on a month-by-month basis in 2020 compared to a counterfactual situation, and to estimate the effects of this shock on enterprises' cash resources.

Concerning big data use, **the CNIS notes in its opinion that this data is highly detailed, rapidly available and "homogeneous" from one country to another, with an almost-nil marginal cost and a low collection burden. However, it requires processing that may be burdensome for statisticians** (transformation of information from sometimes-heterogeneous formats into statistically interpretable signals). **In some cases, a fee is charged for their provision, which poses a fundamental problem since the contribution to official statistics is, in principle, a citizen's contribution to the creation of a public good. Moreover, as digital traces of human**

activities, these data are not designed for scientific purposes and do not provide any guarantees in terms of their representativeness, history and stability of definition, or even of their durability. This is why the CNIS considers that these data may provide useful support for traditional data, when the priority is speed, but it recommends their systematic reconciliation with official statistics and their concepts, and the performance of validation studies for those with more lasting potential, paying particular attention to the knowledge of standard of living and household composition.

During the autumn session, the committee examined **the work currently being carried out by INSEE and the Banque de France on distributed accounts in order to improve the measurement of inequalities within households, respectively concerning income, on the one hand, and wealth, on the other.**

The work on the **income** side is being performed by INSEE, which presented **the method and the lessons learned from the production of distributed national accounts**. These activities follow on from the report of the working group of researchers and statisticians established in response to the Director General of INSEE's initiative on "the measurement of inequalities and redistribution". The method is based on the principle of extended redistribution, i.e. on extending the standard scope of studies on inequality to national net income as a whole (income from the household institutional sector, general government (VAT) and companies (retained profits and corporate income tax). By attempting to bring micro approaches based on surveys or administrative data into line with macro approaches based on national account aggregates, the prototype distributed national accounts provide an overview of the redistributive nature of the transfer system and create a comprehensive approach to redistribution. This general framework enables the construction of new income concepts, such as expanded primary income (before transfers) and net national income after transfers (or expanded standard of living). It can also provide breakdowns according to different variables (socio-professional category, age, geographical area, etc.) and the analysis of time series. Finally, it improves the comparability of income distribution and socio-fiscal redistribution between countries with different tax and social-protection financing systems.

With regard to household **wealth**, the **Banque de France** presented the **project to create distributional accounts for the Eurozone**, led by the European System of Central Banks (ESCB). The objective is to produce a distribution of household wealth, based on the measurement of national accounts, using data from the corrected Household Finance and Consumption Survey (the French version of which is developed by the Banque de France – INSEE partnership via the INSEE Life History and Wealth Survey). Although this is a high-quality survey, it underestimates the wealth of French households by about 30% due to unreported assets (false zeros), the difficulty in determining the wealth of the most affluent households and an under-reporting bias. The ESCB proposes a statistical method for correcting survey data, which, in particular, re-estimates the top end of the wealth distribution and aligns the asset figures with those of the national accounts. The first experimental results should be published at the end of 2022. The next step envisaged is to measure the quality and robustness of the results obtained using administrative data, in particular, and, if necessary, to use such data to supplement or even replace the amounts of certain assets that were poorly recorded in the survey. The Banque de France and INSEE need to work jointly on improving the quality of the Life History and Wealth Survey.

The discussions that followed these presentations underlined the relevance of these activities due to the importance of the social issues associated with the measurement of inequalities. Given the concentration of income (and even more so of wealth), they stress the importance of changing to the percentile level for calculating the balance of transfers for the highest incomes. The European project on distributional wealth accounts is based on a common methodology, in order to facilitate

international comparisons. The matching of different sources – especially administrative – will be studied, according to the legal and technical constraints, and will benefit the Life History and Wealth survey, which underestimates the wealth possessed by households by about one third.

In its opinion, **the CNIS commends this methodological work, which sets out to provide an overview of the redistributive nature of the transfer system based on balanced operations in terms of expenditure and revenue, and on a comprehensive approach to distribution, taking account of all levies, benefits (including in-kind) and collective expenditure. It considers this broader perspective necessary in order to make unbiased international comparisons of living standards and to monitor the trends concerning inequalities in different countries. It encourages collaboration between researchers, such as the group of experts on the measurement of inequalities and redistribution established by INSEE.**

The CNIS urges the pursuit of the work on refining certain estimates, particularly at the top of the wealth distribution (the wealthiest 1% and even the wealthiest 0.1%), and on reconciling data from different sources (e.g. tax sources and wealth rankings).

③ Progress and expectations concerning the environment and sustainable development

("Environment and Sustainable Development" Commission)

During the spring session, the Environment and Sustainable Development Commission addressed the issue of **individual data for the ecological transition**, in order to gain a better insight into individuals' behaviours and thereby improve the management of public policies by devising ways to assess whether these policies are producing the expected results within the envisaged time frame.

The first presentation focused on **improving the observation of the road vehicle fleet and measuring its contribution to CO₂ emissions by implementing the Statistical Register of Road Vehicles (RSVERO)**. This register can be used to produce more accurate observations of CO₂ emissions and gain a better understanding of the automotive mobility of households.

The question of using **individual energy consumption data** to estimate the **effects of energy renovations** was then raised. The SDES has requested access to individual electricity and gas consumption data from Enedis and GRDF meters for a sample of one million homes, in order to match it with administrative data on aid for renovation. As Enedis and GRDF are legal entities under private law responsible for managing a public-service mission, the consumption data from their meters falls under Article 7 bis of the Law of 1951, hence the request submitted to the CNIS, which was analysed at the end of the session. The provision of general information to consumers on the statistical purpose of the data and on how to exercise their rights should be ensured; this should be accompanied by individual information in future statistical surveys on energy renovation.

The discussion then moved on to the benefits of using individual energy consumption data for studying housing energy renovation – a key component of efforts to implement the ecological transition – in order to accurately assess the effects of public policies in this field in light of the budgetary expenditure agreed by the State. However, the only instrument currently available is the Energy Management survey, conducted by SOFRES for ADEME between 2000 and 2013, which provides data on the characteristics of dwellings, energy expenditure and the renovations carried out.

The fourth presentation focused on the views of **consumer associations. Network operators are keen to retain the hard-earned trust of consumers**. They are therefore willing to collaborate with

the official statistics agencies by informing respondents, or even, ideally, by obtaining their consent.

During the **discussions**, it was mentioned that issues associated with fuel poverty confirm the benefits of access to this individual data and the envisaged matching operations in order to supplement the consumption data obtained through energy surveys, which is currently insufficient. While **the right to object and an explicit request for consent** were mentioned during the discussions, it was also pointed out that they **are not provided for by the law and that they expose statistical processing to risks of bias**. The conclusion of the debates highlighted the need to reach a realistic and acceptable compromise, by informing the users individually, and in the future, by defining communication procedures capable of satisfying data collectors and the people in charge of statistical processing.

In its opinion, **the CNIS stressed that it is strongly in favour of the project to collect individual electricity and gas consumption data in order to enable the evaluation and measurement of the ecological transition on a highly detailed level**. It reiterated the absence of a right to object for data subjects, despite requests by consumer associations, for processing operations carried out in the public interest (Art. 21 of the GDPR), but also stressed the **importance of informing the owners of the sampled meters before any statistical use of the data**.

The autumn session was devoted to both **environmental economic accounts and ecosystem accounts**, and the challenges and issues they pose for the monitoring of public environmental policies.

After more than forty years of research and development in environmental statistics, **the expectations for official statistics in this field are growing**. The regulations governing these statistics are gradually taking account of new needs in order to address current and future crises, and have led to the emergence of **new tools and activities for official statistics, with these accounts being one example**. The urgent need to create physical accounts was emphasised, with monetary accounts being a supplementary requirement.

In this respect, **environmental economic accounts can be considered an essential observation mechanism**, which adopts an integrated approach designed to measure the value of key environmental components and the interactions between the economy and the environment. For EU countries, these accounts are produced annually by the Member States pursuant to the 2011 EU regulation, and are transmitted to Eurostat.

In March 2021, the United Nations Statistical Commission extended the System of Environmental Economic Accounts by adopting the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting –Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA), which incorporates the **physical accounting of natural ecosystems as a supplement to the System of Environmental Economic Accounting standard** adopted in 2012. At the European level, a revision of the 2011 Environmental Economic Accounts Regulation is currently under discussion with a view to making certain modules mandatory, including a module on ecosystem accounts.

The committee took stock of the discussions and presented various studies currently being conducted at European level and in France in order to quantify the contribution of ecosystems to the economy and to the lives of individuals and societies.

At European level, the Integrated System for Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Accounting (**INCA**) project was launched in 2015 as a follow-up to the 2014 UN publication of an experimental version of SEEA (Experimental Ecosystem Accounting), in order to produce a 'pilot' integrated

system for economic ecosystem and ecosystem service accounting for the European Union. The final report of phase II of this project was published in June 2021.

In France, activities on the evaluation of ecosystems and ecosystem services have been conducted over the past few years as part of the **EFESE programme (French Evaluation of Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services)** with the involvement of various research bodies and institutes. These evaluations follow the same conceptual framework and aim to shed light on the state of biodiversity and ecosystems and the associated values (utilitarian, heritage and ecological), in order to improve the consideration of these issues in public and private decisions.

Measurements of the costs of ecosystem degradation, based on maintenance and restoration costs, should be included in sustainability dashboards. Indeed, even if the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) were to be achieved, sustainability still would not be ensured: the current performance indicators (SDGs and national wealth indicators) are therefore considered unsatisfactory and insufficient. Ecosystem accounts can make a decisive contribution to monitoring and managing sustainability, by targeting condition indicators that are relevant to ecosystem management objectives.

The discussions stressed the importance and urgency of fully integrating the environmental dimension into national accounting, as this is not yet the case and methodological difficulties remain. The issue of valuation, which is fundamental to offsetting degradation, poses enormous challenges. Indeed, a certain consensus is emerging on the fact that monetary valuation is only reliable for local areas. On a broader scale, a certain number of services are purely environmental and lack any economic dimension, which complicates the estimation of their market prices. Is the monetary valuation of environmental goods and services a matter for official statistics or for research? Trade-offs seem necessary, as well as the consideration of threshold effects for irreversible damage.

In its opinion, the **CNIS commended the development of a system of ecosystem accounts at the European level and stressed that their implementation remains a formidable challenge for the Member States, given the far-reaching methodological issues involved. With regard to France, it underlined the importance of the approach adopted in the framework of the EFESE programme. The CNIS recommended refining the indicators on the state of ecosystems, material flow accounts and pressure measurements, to provide the information required for public decision-making in response to the climate emergency. It encouraged the pursuit of the methodological activities on the valuation of natural capital and asked to be kept informed of progress in this field.**

④ Progress and expectations on territorial aspects

("Territories" Commission)

During the spring session, the Territories Commission examined **the information concerning Overseas France** (CNIS 2019-2023 Medium-Term Opinion No 2 for the Commission).

INSEE presented **its recent investments in the French Overseas Departments and Regions (DROM)**. It carries out the same statistical operations in the DROMs as in the metropolitan regions, although the survey systems sometimes need to be adapted to Overseas France. INSEE also conducts statistical operations that have no equivalent in the metropolitan regions, such as extensions to survey samples and flash reports on economic accounts in each historical DROM within the framework of the CEROM (Flash Economic Accounts for Overseas France) partnership (e.g. on living standards and poverty (excluding Mayotte), employment, and the consequences of the health crisis).

Regional accounts for **Mayotte** and the other DROMs have been available since 2019. Social, employment and labour-market statistics are constantly being enhanced. The precariousness of living conditions, and a highly specific demographic situation, with a considerable number of unqualified Comorian immigrants, who are often unemployed and lacking access to state aid, characterise the current situation in Mayotte. The development of territorial approaches, including the location of neighbourhoods targeted for special measures under urban policy, was presented.

The Directorate General for Overseas France (DGOM) then explained **the use of official statistics in the Ministry of Overseas France**. Different statistical institutes, with their own agendas and priorities, coinciding with the primary concerns of their funding agencies, which are sometimes local authorities, contribute to the heterogeneity of statistical outputs. Some territories with small populations limit the opportunities to use data on grounds of statistical confidentiality. Finally, strategic issues such as security are not yet fully totally covered by official statistics. A geographic and decision-making portal for Overseas France, which centralises statistical data from multiple sources on Overseas France, has been created for internal use by the Directorate General for Overseas France (DGOM).

Finally, the French Development Agency (AFD) presented **the development of official statistics in Overseas France, and their use by AFD for research purposes**. Its representative reported that statistical output is substantial and of high quality, but added that access to this data could be facilitated. The CEROM partnership, bringing together INSEE and AFD, is contributing to the development of statistical information on Overseas France, particularly through its flash economic accounts.

Discussions with the audience focused on **the measurement of economic activities in the informal sector in Mayotte**. The question of data on local finances and taxation was also raised.

Despite the progress made, **the CNIS highlighted the need for further improvements on key issues such as security, the forestry inventory and the mobility survey, but also on methodological issues (GDP estimates in small economies, measurement of informal activities)**. In terms of dissemination and exploitation, **the CNIS encouraged the pursuit of activities that raise the profile of the statistics produced and facilitates access to them, in addition to the work on datavisualisation and geolocation**.

During the autumn session, the Committee firstly noted the **work carried out by official statistics on producing local indicators for public action in the territories**. (*General Medium-Term Opinion No 5 and Opinion No 1 of the Territories Commission*)

The Economic, Social and Environmental Council (EESC) supported the need for territorial sustainable development indicators, particularly in the context of local experiments, with a particular focus on citizens' participation. Available at seven geographical levels of dissemination, INSEE's territorial sustainable development indicators are already widely used at the regional level. **The CNIS encourages the updating and enhancement of this data, in addition to their dissemination at the level of Public Establishments of Inter-Municipality Cooperation Institutions (EPCIs) with their own tax status. It also notes the progress made in terms of statistical knowledge of the territorial aspects of crime and invites the SSMSI to continue its efforts to improve dissemination and diversify the sources**.

The Commission then examined a **review of the current arrangements for consultation between producers and users of official statistics at the regional level**. Despite the existence of an institutional framework common to all regions, it remarked on the heterogeneity of regional situations. In particular, it noted that the regional location of INSEE may facilitate the establishment of consultation bodies. Two regional Committees for Economic and Social

Information (CRIES) and a regional platform exist to date. Multi-purpose and thematic fora have been created, but the fact that a certain number of projects have not come to fruition means that, without minimising the difficulties encountered or the efforts made, this review can only paint a mixed picture.

The CNIS reaffirmed the need for regional statistical consultation mechanisms that involve INSEE, while acknowledging that different arrangements may be desirable, depending on the context. It advised the actors concerned, in particular those with mandates at regional level such as the Regional Economic, Social and Environmental Council (CESER), the Regional Council (Conseil régional) and regional government departments, to analyse the themes and operations that should be priorities for consultation with the involvement of territorial public actors.

ACRONYMS USED

ACEMO: Activité et conditions d'emploi de la main d'œuvre (Activity and employment conditions of the workforce)

AML/CFT: anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism

ARS: Agence régionale de santé (Regional Health Agency)

ASP: Autorité de la statistique publique (French Official Statistics Authority)

BNSP: Bibliothèque numérique de la statistique publique (Digital Library for Official Statistics)

CAE: Conseil d'analyse économique (Council for Economic Analysis)

CASD: Centre d'accès sécurisé aux données (Secure Data Access Centre)

CépiDc: Centre d'épidémiologie sur les causes médicales de décès (Epidemiology Centre for Medical Causes of Death)

CEREQ: Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications (Centre for Studies and Research on Employment and Qualification)

CFJ: Centre de formation des journalistes (journalism training schools)

CGA: Contrôle général des armées (General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces)

CIC: Crédit industriel et commercial (financial services group owned by Crédit Mutuel)

CNAM: Caisse nationale d'assurance maladie (French National Health Insurance Fund)

CNERP: Commission nationale d'évaluation du recensement de la population (National Population Census Evaluation Commission)

CNIL: Commission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés (French Data protection authority)

CNIS: Conseil national de l'information statistique (National Council for Statistical Information)

CNLE: Conseil national des politiques de lutte contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale (National Council on Policies to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion)

COG: Convention d'objectifs et de gestion (Agreement on Objectives and Management)

COLB: Conseil d'orientation de la lutte contre le blanchiment et le financement du terrorisme (Advisory Board for the Fight against Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing)

COP: Contrats d'objectifs et de performance (Contracts on Objectives and Performance)

CSNS: Code statistique non significatif (non-significant statistical code)

CVS: Cadre de vie et sécurité (Living Environment and Security survey)

CVTS: *Continuing Vocational Training Survey*

DARES: Direction de l'animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques (Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics)

DEB: Déclaration d'échanges et de biens (Declaration of Trade in Goods)

DECCS panel: panel established to evaluate the consequences of the health crisis

DEPP: Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance (Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance)

DEPSD: Département des études, de la prospective, des statistiques et de la documentation (Department for Studies, Forecasting, Statistics and Documentation – the MSO for the Ministry of Culture)

DESF: Département des études et statistiques fiscales (Department of Fiscal Studies and Statistics)

DESL: Département des études et des statistiques locales (Department of Local Studies and Statistics)

DGCA: Direction générale de l'aviation civile (French Civil Aviation Authority)

DGAFP: Direction générale de l'administration et de la fonction publique (Directorate General for the Administration and Civil Service)

DGDI: Direction générale des douanes et des droits indirects (Directorate General for Customs and Excise)

DGE: Direction générale des entreprises (General Directorate for Enterprises)

DGFIP: Direction générale des finances publiques (Directorate General for Public Finance)

DGGN: Direction générale de la gendarmerie nationale (Directorate General of the National Gendarmerie)

DGPN: Direction générale de la police nationale (Directorate General of the National Police Force)

DINUM: Direction interministérielle du numérique (Interministerial Digital Directorate)

DITP: Direction interministérielle de la transformation publique (Interministerial Directorate for Public Transformation)

DMCSI: Direction de la méthodologie et de la coordination statistique et internationale (Methodology, Statistical Coordination and International Relations Directorate)

DREES: Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation, et des statistiques (Department of Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics)

DSN: Déclaration sociale nominative (Nominative Social Declaration)

EAR: Enquête annuelle de recensement (Annual Census Survey)

EBS: *European Business Statistics*

EDP-santé: Echantillon démographique permanent - santé (Permanent Demographic Sample – Health)

EIG: Economic Interest Grouping

EMAGSA: monthly survey of the activity of large food retailers

EMEBI: monthly survey of intra-EU trade in goods

ENSAE: Ecole nationale de la statistique et de l'administration économique (National School of Statistics and Economic Administration)

ENSAI: Ecole de la statistique et de l'analyse de l'information (School of Statistics and Information Analysis)

EPICOV: COVID epidemic survey

EPODE: periodic survey of education

ESA: annual sectoral survey

ESGAB: European Statistical Governance Advisory Board

ESS: European Statistical System

ESSC: European Statistical System Committee

ESOP: *European Statistics On Population*

EUROSTAT: Statistical Office of the European Union

FATF: Financial Action Task Force

GENESE: gender and security (survey)

ICCS: *International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes*

INSEE GI: INSEE General Inspectorate

IGAS: Inspection générale des affaires sociales (General Inspectorate of Social Affairs)

INES: Identifiant national étudiant du supérieur (National student identifier for higher education)

INSEE Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies)

INSERM: Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale (National Institute for Health and Medical Research)

IVA - IPA: Insertion vie active des lycéens – insertion vie active des apprentis (survey on the labour-market integration of secondary school students and apprentices)

MEDES: Mission enquêtes, données et études statistiques du ministère de la jeunesse et des sports (Statistical Surveys, Data and Studies Task Force)

MSO: Ministerial Statistical Office

NFI: Nomenclature française des infractions (French Classification of Offences)

NIR: Numéro d'inscription au répertoire (National Registration Number)

NOSICA: Nouvelles sources pour les indices du chiffre d'affaires du commerce de détail (project to develop new sources for turnover indices in the retail trade)

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OED: Observatoire économique de la défense (Economic Observatory for Defence)

ONRE: Observatoire national de la rénovation énergétique (National Observatory for Energy Renovation)

PFUE: Présidence française de l'Union européenne (French Presidency of the European Union)

PIAAC: Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies

ReSIL: Répertoire statistique des individus et des logements (Statistical Register of Individuals and Dwellings)

RIL: Répertoire d'immeubles localisés (Address Control List)

RNIE: Répertoire national des identifiants élèves, étudiants et apprentis (National Directory of Pupil, Student and Apprentice Identifiers)

RNIPP: Répertoire national d'identification des personnes physiques (National Directory for the Identification of Natural Persons)

SAIO: *Statistics on agricultural input and output*

SDES: Service des données et études statistiques (Statistical Data and Studies Service)

SDESSI: Sous-direction des études, des statistiques et des systèmes d'information (Under-Directorate for Studies, Statistics and Information Systems, MSO for the Office of the Secretary of State for the Civil Service)

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SIES: Sous-direction des systèmes d'information et des études statistiques (Under-Directorate for Information Systems and Statistical Studies)

SNDS: système national des données de santé (French National Health Data System)

SPF: Santé publique France (French national public health agency)

SRCV: Statistiques sur les ressources et les conditions de vie (Statistics on Income and Living Conditions)

SSMSI: Service statistique ministériel de la sécurité intérieure (Ministerial Statistical Office for Internal Security)

SSP: Service statistique public (French Official Statistical Service)

SSP: Service de la statistique et de la prospective (Statistics and Forecasting Service)

UNCASS: Union nationale des centres communaux et intercommunaux d'action sociale (national union of municipal and intermunicipal social action centres)

URSSAF: Union de recouvrement de cotisations de sécurité sociale et d'allocations familiales (social security contribution collection offices)

VRS: Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité (Security Experiences and Perceptions survey)

WHO: World Health Organization

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secretariat-general@autorite-statistique-publique.fr

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