

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



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Annual Report of the Official Statistics Authority 2010

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Institutional Framework and Composition of the Official Statistics Authority

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

It is based on three pillars.

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

The CNIS is chaired by Jean-Pierre Duport.

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

It comprises INSEE and 15 Ministerial Statistical Offices. It is coordinated by INSEE.

INSEE is headed by Jean-Philippe Cotis.

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

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

This report covers 2010, the second year of existence of the Authority.

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

Composition of the Official Statistics Authority

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Official Statistics Authority – Annual Report 2010

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Preface

In 2010 the Official Statistics Authority took the initiative in two important areas:

- extension of the list of pre-announced indicators;
- certification of official statistics.

Gradual progress will have been made within two years and the final result will be achieved after a few years.

The question of certification only concerns the statistics produced by the bodies responsible for public service, apart from the Official Statistical Service (OSS). Indeed, this service is supposed to respect European rules and its statistical productions are theoretically official public statistics. For the statistics not produced by the Official Statistical Service, however, we need to verify the ability and the will of the bodies that produce them to respect the spirit of the European rules.

A study of this issue led us to replace the term “certification” by “quality labelled” since this latter term was already used by the Label Committee of the National Council for Statistical Information. The process envisaged is a case of extending the examination carried out by the Label Committee of studies for statistical purposes to the statistics originating from administrative data.

Additionally, the Official Statistics Authority approves and follows the steps taken by the Official Statistical Service to improve compatibility between the drawing-up of statistics based on private data and the strict protection of these data. This is true, for example, of statistics on school trajectories, or of the provision to researchers of a secure access to individual databases.

These advances will make the statistical system increasingly reliable and more accessible, constantly referring to the European Statistics Code of Practice.



Paul CHAMPSAUR

President of the Official Statistics Authority

1. Production of official statistics in France in 2010

The year 2010 was marked by new, more numerous requests from the European Union on statistical matters, and by major budgetary restrictions at national level.

Against this difficult backdrop, the official statistical service broadly satisfied the needs expressed by users; it managed to adapt to the new orientations of public debate, most notably in the social and environmental domain.

Budget restraints required the official statistical service to make productivity gains, increase efficiency and prioritise requests.

On balance, 2010 was quite positive for the official statistical service. This was thanks to the implementation or continuation of innovative operations; a few weaknesses remain, however, and the Authority will be monitoring them closely.

1.1 Innovative operations

Alongside the usual productions, the work carried out by official statistics led to the completion of structuring projects that had been engaged for several years, and the development of innovative operations.

The Authority will mention a few innovative operations which attest to the quality of the work carried out by official statistics in response to the expectations of public actors and society.

- **Further to the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report on the measurement of economic performance and social progress**

In 2010, public statistics developed some important work to meet new demands in the social domain.

⇒ As well as GDP, other measures, more directly linked to the well-being of households, were put forward.

⇒ Close attention was focused on inequalities (a new measure of inequalities in household income and consumption), on income disparities, and on the analysis of very high wages.

⇒ The 2009-2010 Assets Survey was adapted to provide a better understanding of high incomes, professional assets and intangible assets (social and cultural).

⇒ The redistributive effect of public funding of health and education for households is now measured.

⇒ The objective measurement of quality of life is no longer restricted to purely material or monetary aspects; thanks to already-available indicators, it now includes working conditions, degree of social integration, health and education, economic insecurity (unemployment, for example) and physical insecurity, thereby giving a global view of inequalities.

The subjective aspect of this measurement is accounted for via the enrichment of several existing surveys, most notably the Statistical Panel on Resources and Living Standards and the Time Use Survey.

▪ **Sustainable development and environment**

The official statistical service finalised the indicators which now form the core of the dashboard serving to facilitate tracking of the national sustainable development strategy. This is a set of 15 leading indicators related to the nine challenges addressed in the strategy and four indicators of economic and social context, jointly produced by the Observation and Statistics Service (SOeS) of the Ministry for Sustainable Development and INSEE.

The choice of these indicators was subject to a wide-ranging consultation of civil society, first in a commission bringing together representatives of the five stakeholders of the Grenelle Environment Forum, the Economic Social and Environmental Council (CESE) and the French National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS), then in a National Conference on Sustainable Development Indicators, held on 20 January 2010.

This consultation led to significant changes to the nature and number of indicators used, in order to provide a better response to the expectations of citizens and to provide better balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development. For example, the new indicators include the underemployment rate, the ratio of the average standards of living of the extreme deciles, the participation rate of women in governance authorities, and the carbon footprint, which is used to assess the greenhouse gas emissions (expressed in CO₂ equivalent) caused by consumer purchases, including those generated outside France.

▪ **2010 agricultural census**

Simplifying and lightening the workload of farmers, as well as reliability of data, were among the main preoccupations of the statistical services of the Agriculture Ministry in the agricultural census organised in 2010. The questionnaire did not include certain questions when the answers were already available in other existing administrative files. New themes could thus be incorporated to reflect the way the sector has evolved, such as the production of renewable energy, diversification of activity, or farm marketing methods. Another major innovation was data entry as early as the collection phase, ensuring time savings and better data reliability.

The first results of the 2010 agricultural census will be accessible online in September 2011.

▪ **Employment Survey and employment estimates**

Two main measures were implemented to improve the robustness and coherency of employment statistics.

The Employment Survey sample size was increased by 50% in order to improve the accuracy of the quarterly measure of unemployment.

A new system for publications of the quarterly employment estimates has been set up; it comes further to the recommendations of the working group, chaired by INSEE and attended by the DARES¹, Pôle Emploi and the ACOSS,² on the provisional estimates of paid employment in the market sectors published 45 days after the end of the quarter and those published 70 days after.

The scope of statistical forecasting techniques used for the 45-day estimate has been widened; the 45-day employment estimate is published as an early composite estimate which is broadly

¹ Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics, a Ministerial Statistical Office which reports to the Ministry for Work, Employment and Health

² Central Agency of the Social Security Organisations

provisional in nature, and that at 70 days is the reference as it is made using quasi-exhaustive data. A meeting is held prior to publication of the early 45-day estimate, organised between the DARES, INSEE, the ACOSS and Pôle Emploi in order to compare the template forecasts. Still under study is the possibility of quarterly employment statistics on small enterprises.

▪ **Enterprises**

The reflections underway over the last few years with the aim of satisfying the expectations of economic actors have taken concrete form:

⇒ The new system of structural information on enterprises (Ésane), which is innovative in terms of both the data collection and processing methods and the statistical estimation methods, has yielded its first results.

Ésane combines administrative data and the data obtained from a company survey sample. The workload of businesses has been lightened as the questions relating to data already available in administrative sources have been removed. Major productivity gains have been achieved.

Efforts should now turn to the dissemination of results, in particular the question of breaks in series and documentary support.

⇒ The new breakdown of enterprises into four categories – micro, small/medium, intermediate, large – has provided a clearer vision of these businesses and of the production fabric. The new classification confirms the dualism of production capacity, with micro-enterprises clearly differentiated from the larger firms. Exports, organisation as a group, international deployment and research & development are virtually all limited to large and intermediate enterprises.

⇒ INSEE steers a European appraisal group devoted to profiling groups, that is, breaking down their accounts into business lines. This contribution from France to European statistics is a positive move forward as it also satisfies national needs for an understanding of globalisation mechanisms.

▪ Other operations in the **social domain** have thrown light on new themes:

- the *Trajectories and Origins Survey* (TeO) carried out at the end of 2008 by the INED³ and INSEE, the results of which were published in 2010, gives an overview of the immigrant or immigrant-descendant populations;

- the *Disability and Health Survey* conducted by INSEE in 2008 has yielded its first results, most notably regarding the degree of autonomy of adults and elderly persons living at home;

- to enrich the debate on the pension reform being examined by Parliament, the health statistics service (DREES) produced a panorama of pensions and retired people in 2008 along with a concrete evaluation of the specific death rate of retirees according to various criteria;

- the *Perinatal Survey* conducted by the governmental health statistics service (DREES) provides more in-depth knowledge of medical practice during pregnancy and childbirth, and of perinatal risk factors.

³ National Institute for Demographic Studies

1.2 Further methodological investments

Official statistics are being improved thanks to the methodological investments made:

- Set-up within INSEE of a *Methodology Directorate* in order to ensure rationalisation and better quality of work, planned for autumn 2011;
- The planned *unified online collection system* will substantially reduce the cost of collecting information whilst also shortening deadlines. Online collection of survey data, which was started by INSEE in 2004, is now developed for surveys on businesses and households. This new project comes as part of the drive to harmonise practice;
- The new system of structural information on enterprises (*Ésane*) has resulted in substantial productivity gains (see § 1.1 Enterprises).

1.3 Review by the Authority of the production of official statistics in 2010

The Official Statistics Authority has noted the progress made by the official statistical service, as well as its ability to innovate in order to meet new demands and to clarify debate on the workings of society.

It emphasises the special effort made in the area of sustainable development, notably the dashboard designed to facilitate understanding among citizens of what is at stake in the national sustainable development strategy. The Authority calls for the consultation engaged to continue and to result in the construction of territorial sustainable development indicators to meet growing local needs.

The Authority has noted one area in which official statistics needs to increase its expertise capacity: observation of the activity of French businesses internationally, in particular outside Europe, for a better understanding of globalisation. The lack of data on the international-to-international turnover these businesses achieve makes it difficult to estimate the market share of French enterprise outside Europe.

As part of the work underway on the transparency of the banking system, the Authority will be monitoring the deployment of work on financial groups and the work by INSEE, the Banque de France and the French Prudential Supervisory Authority on the conditions for setting up statistics by business line.

While the growing contribution by French official statistics to European work is a necessity, it should not, in this period of budgetary restrictions, run counter to national objectives. The Authority reiterates its request to the official statistical service to ensure better prioritisation of requests, giving priority to those that respond to essential issues of society and examining the possibility of discontinuing or spacing out statistical operations responding to others.

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

The French official statistical service endeavours to comply with the European Statistics Code of Practice as best possible. A few improvement actions still need to be undertaken by INSEE and the ministerial statistical offices in order to comply with this Code fully.

2.1 Strengthen the independence of official statistics

In its 2009 annual report, the Authority already stressed that attention needed to be paid to the professional independence of official statistics.

INSEE benefits from genuine professional independence, and this was not called into question in 2010.

In the statistical offices of ministries, the situation also appears to be globally satisfactory, but does still require particular vigilance, since the use of these statistics for the evaluation of public policies is growing; this function, which is more directly in phase with public policies, could make the separation between dissemination of their results and ministerial communication less easily discernable.

The Director-General of INSEE also guaranteed that the statistical production function in the statistical offices of ministries, which is protected by professional independence, would be conserved and would not be excessively reduced by assessment, steering or public policy evaluation missions.

The Authority asks the official statistical service to ensure that the statistics produced to make evaluations are systematically brought to the public's knowledge.

Independence will be consolidated by **the extension of the calendar** of indicators to all official statistical themes.

Publishing on the due date means that the statistical services have to be punctual and the governmental authorities have to work transparently.

The basic principle behind this extension is the early announcement of the publication dates for official statistics indicators.

This proposal was presented by the Director of Dissemination and Regional Action of INSEE to the members of the Authority during the session of 5 November 2010. A first list of indicators was selected for implementation in 2011. It contains all the indicators which are already included in the announcement of the dissemination date, as well as other indicators, most notably from the ministerial statistical offices. This list features in *Annexe 2*.

Certain principles were retained in this session:

- ◆ the objective of this extended calendar is to bolster the independence of official statistics. The presence of statistics in this calendar neutralises any discussion about their date of dissemination. Any postponement must be exceptional, reported and justified;
- ◆ the list of indicators selected will be reviewed each year and, where possible, extended, further to a proposal by INSEE to the Authority;
- ◆ the indicators must concern both official statistics in the strict sense, notably the surveys given the quality label by the CNIS, and the statistics disseminated by the social management bodies (CNAF, CNAM, CNAV...).

The calendar will be accessible on the INSEE website and the websites of the ministerial statistical offices. The website of the Authority will link to that of INSEE.

2.2 Consolidate the credibility of official statistics and improve confidence in these statistics

According to the law, official statistics are broken down into two types of information: surveys, and exploitation of administrative data.

The list of surveys is formalised each year by a ruling of the Ministry for the Economy. All these surveys have first been examined by the CNIS⁴ which gives them the “public interest” and “statistical quality” labels.

This “labelling” should be extended to official statistics originating from the use of administrative sources.

The Authority asked the Director-General of INSEE to request that the General Inspectorate of INSEE put forward proposals of procedures and scheduling for the appraisal of the quality of official statistics produced outside INSEE and the ministerial statistical offices.

A summary of the report by the General Inspectorate appears in *Annexe 3*, and the full report can be viewed on the website of the Authority www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr.

This report includes a draft “labelling” schedule for the coming two years, accompanied by elements relating to the means required for this schedule to be made and case studies to be performed: statistics on employment (ACOSS), jobseekers (Pôle Emploi), property market (Notaries/INSEE), as well as monetary and financial statistics (Banque de France).

The comments and decisions of the Authority on the case studies presented in this report are as follows:

▪ Quarterly employment estimates by the ACOSS

On a topic of such importance, figures drawn up from the same source may be announced by three different bodies: ACOSS, INSEE, Pôle Emploi. The Official Statistics Authority would like the scheme to evolve towards a single quarterly statistic on paid employment at national level, originating from just one actor, the ACOSS. The Authority considers that the publication of an estimate by Pôle Emploi is unjustified and will merely serve to confuse users.

Contact will take place between the President of the Official Statistics Authority and the Director-General of Pôle Emploi.

However, the Authority notes that two sources will remain – ACOSS and INSEE – with figures that may sometimes diverge. The General Inspectorate justifies the coexistence of these two sources by the fact that the scope of the ACOSS is paid employment while that of INSEE is total employment (including the self-employed and temporary employment). Furthermore, INSEE processes its statistics more homogeneously at regional and departmental scales.

It would be desirable for INSEE publications to clearly indicate the scope of figures that differs from that of the ACOSS.

The Official Statistics Authority validates the proposal by the General Inspectorate of INSEE to have the quarterly statistics on paid employment at national level labelled by the ACOSS. It requests that the conditions of dissemination of these statistics be improved, as recommended in the report. This improvement should also include greater transparency of INSEE-ACOSS discrepancies common to the two publications.

▪ Statistics on registered jobseekers at the end of the month (Pôle Emploi - DARES)

⁴ National Council for Statistical Information

The members of the Authority take a great interest in this statistical source, as it periodically feeds political debate. It needs to be improved. Many countries have analogous statistics.

The quality label may only come into play once a new Pôle Emploi-DARES convention has actually and significantly improved the transparency of the changes in jobseeker management likely to have an effect on the series.

- **Quarterly old-housing price indices built from notarial databases**

The Official Statistics Authority is envisaging quality labelling for the quarterly old-housing price indices for the Île-de-France region.

- **Banque de France**

The President of the Official Statistics Authority will contact the Governor of the Banque de France to look at the possibilities of labelling certain Banque de France productions.

In conclusion,

The Official Statistics Authority expects to receive a letter from the ACOSS and from the Paris Chamber of Notaries undertaking to comply with the recommendations featuring in the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate;

The Official Statistics Authority will label the quarterly paid employment statistics of the ACOSS and the quarterly old-housing indices of Île-de-France from notarial databases. The bodies concerned will receive the date of effect of the label as well as the validity period;

The Official Statistics Authority asks INSEE to appraise the legal aspect of this dossier (decree on the label committee, etc.);

The Official Statistics Authority will, in forthcoming sessions, interview the data producers likely to receive the label.

2.3 Develop the “quality” procedure of the official statistical service

See in *Annexe 4* the 2010 Review of the quality procedure at INSEE and in the ministerial statistical offices

Quality plan at INSEE in 2010

The aim of the INSEE quality plan is to gradually incorporate the dimensions of the global quality procedure, namely: measure time and costs, describe processes, forecast and adapt skills requirements on a continuous basis, place users at the heart of activity.

The 2010 quality plan was fairly positive overall; of the ten INSEE actions reaching their completion deadline in 2010, eight reached their objective.

Vigilance is maintained for the actions tracked by Eurostat. Four improvement actions selected following the peer assessment of January 2007 are still to be completed: the extension of the quality review of corporate statistics to all business surveys was on hold in 2011, with only one review issued; phase 2 of Résane, which concerns the inclusion of company groups in the process, will be refocused initially on the construction of the Sirius statistical directory, an indispensable prerequisite to the introduction of groups into the Résane system; the online data collection for the

Population Census (Homere programme) has been delayed; the group profiling action has been suspended since 2008, and will be reintroduced into the 2011 quality action plan.

Quality plan in the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSO) in 2010

2010 saw progress compared to previous years. However, it was a mitigated success in that of the eighteen actions reaching their completion deadline in 2010, only nine are completed.

The MSOs have made efforts to put the calendar of publications and a definitions page online, but some have encountered difficulties in relation to the communication policy of their ministry.

The actions that provide information about quality (reviews of statistical operations, quality sheets and process descriptions) have made swift progress in the field of corporate statistics.

The techniques of online collection or collection from administrative sources are developing, but progress is often dependent on the recasting of computer applications and has stretched over a longer period, with longer deadlines.

Taking account of user satisfaction, particularly internet users, in access to data is new to the MSOs and the actions in this area have made significant progress.

2.4 Increase relevance

⇒ *The CNIS*

See in *Annexe 5* the 2010 review by the CNIS

The 2010 review of the work programme of official statistics in relation to the needs expressed is positive overall.

The responsiveness of the system in providing the data and studies required to understand the crisis was satisfactory in many domains, notably social. The comparison of the macro- and micro-economic data gave a picture of the diversity of situations faced with the crisis. The statistics are thus more easily understood by users.

In the economic domain, the far-reaching transformation of the system of information on enterprises should provide the expected information on the production fabric. Projects such as Résane require a long-term investment. The inevitable complexity of building the information system partly explains the time required to answer the new questions raised by the civil society.

However, the lack of means could ultimately make the statistical observation system more fragile.

Almost half the surveys presented before the CNIS are related to European regulations or international projects. The active participation of the OSS in numerous working groups now means that national requests such as social classifications, group profiling or the recommendations of the Stiglitz report can be relayed. But Eurostat requests must remain compatible with the means at the disposal of the official statistical services to meet purely national demand too.

The CNIS is prepared to mark priorities in its requests. However, it would like the definition of negative priorities to be done in a coordinated manner, with Europe on the one hand and the OSS on the other.

⇒ *Satisfaction surveys*

INSEE is continuing with its programme of satisfaction surveys among users in order to verify their utility and the suitability of supply to demand.

These surveys have covered topics such as the INSEE website pages devoted to the statistical results of the population census, study partners in regions, replies to emails given by the INSEE Contact service, the commercial products and services from Sirene, and the book *France Portrait Social*. The 2009 survey on the image of INSEE and its indicators was repeated among the public and internet users.

Two important lessons can be learned from these surveys:

- INSEE produces and disseminates very rich data but the profusion of information on its website makes it difficult for the public to access;
- INSEE benefits from a positive image and inspires confidence but is little-known to the public. The split between the general public on one side and internet users and opinion leaders on the other is similar with regard to the degree of confidence in indicators.

The Authority would like the official statistical service to boost its communication in order to improve the credibility of indicators.

2.5 Facilitate access to data by researchers

The Official Statistics Authority lauds the efforts of INSEE and the GENES⁵ in setting up a remote data access system (*centre d'accès sécurisé distant aux données*, CASD), a highly secure system allowing researchers to work remotely on detailed individual databases, after approval from the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality and in compliance with the requirements of the CNIL.

The CASD project is one of the winners of the first wave of calls for projects entitled *Équipements d'excellence* (Equipex).

The Authority will continue to monitor closely the rise in the number of provisions supplied by the CASD in response to requests from researchers, particularly as regards the time required for access to the CASD and extension to corporate statistics. It asks to be informed of any extension of CASD access rights to other audiences (local authorities, etc.). The GENES will present a status report on this dossier to the Authority in 2011.

2.6 Respect impartiality

The Authority wishes to make sure that all users have access to statistical publications at the same time and under the same conditions.

Like all industrialised countries, France adhered to the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) in 1996.

The schedule for dissemination of data and monitoring of observance of this standard are accessible on the INSEE website. The dissemination rules are given in *Annexe 6* of the report.

INSEE endeavours to adapt the timetable of indicator dissemination to the demands of the media. In order to allow a commentary on the main economic indicators in morning interviews on radio

⁵ Group of National Economics and Statistics Schools

or television without breaking the embargo, INSEE brought forward the dissemination time for four of them from 8.45 am to 7.30 am.

The Authority remains attentive to any failure to observe the principle of impartiality, as this observance guarantees the credibility of information, in particular among institutional users and the financial markets.

3. Recommendations of the Official Statistics Authority

The Authority is the guarantor of the quality of data produced.

It notes with interest the efforts made by official statistics to meet both EU and international expectations:

- reinforced coordination of the work programmes in the official statistical service,
- projects for interregional pooling at INSEE,
- major investments,
- More systematic use of administrative sources,
- increased participation in European works, particularly methodological working groups, known as ESSNets, which can potentially take European statistics forward whilst preserving national objectives.

It is satisfied with the measures envisaged by the CNIS and the official statistical service to move towards greater efficiency and a better definition of the priorities of official statistics.

The discussions in the course of this first year of activity have allowed the Authority to identify five ways to improve the quality, independence, and relevance of official statistics against a backdrop of budgetary constraints:

3.1 More systematic use of administrative sources

The Authority shares the concerns of the ESGAB⁶ (European Statistical Governance Advisory Board) and calls for more systematic use to be made of administrative sources, whilst preserving the various categories of confidentiality, in particular fiscal and statistical confidentiality.

Below is a reminder of a few examples of useful administrative files to enrich official statistics:

- the elaboration of statistics on trajectories, using administrative files but protecting privacy, is a method used by the statistical office of the Education Ministry;
- the implementation of the recommendations of the working group on the measurement of state expenditure at territorial level requires the provision of data from the Public Finances General Directorate (DGFIP). These data must first be precisely defined by the official statistical service;
- the failings of the system for observation of the financial system could be rectified with the help of the Banque de France and the Prudential Supervisory Authority (ACP).

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

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

⁶ The 2010 Report of the ESGAB (European Statistical Governance Advisory Board) can be viewed on its website: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/esgab/documents/FR_ESGAB%20report%202010_FINAL.pdf

3.2 Development of local data

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

The use of administrative files is often mentioned as a solution to meet local demands whilst reducing the workload of the survey.

The annual declarations of social data (DADS) for all employees in the public and private sectors, and the work engaged by INSEE on local employment estimates will generation information that is coherent between the various geographical levels.

Tax sources should also be used in certain domains, for example Filocom⁷ for the local property markets.

The work in progress with the local councils should lead to the joint definition and construction of department-level social indicators. But the statistics produced using their management files (RSA⁸, old-age and disability benefits, childcare) raise issues of conceptual harmonisation which need to be resolved in order to improve the quality and comparability of data.

INSEE is continuing with its investments in the dissemination of infra-municipal data, the production of population statistics via “square” grids” (data on regular grids, which are smaller than the usual zoning units) and the application of this grid system to other geolocated sources of data on households and enterprises, whilst protecting statistical confidentiality.

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

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

3.3 Further statistical work on the transparency of the banking system

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

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

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

⁷ Fichier des LOGements par COMmunes – File on housing by municipality

⁸ Active solidarity income

3.4 Shorter dissemination deadlines

The Authority acknowledges the goal stated by INSEE to disseminate the files from the household surveys in the year following collection and the efforts made to rapidly provide the results of the Trajectories and Origins survey and the 2009-2010 Assets Survey on the investment preferences of the French people.

Other statistics are still published too late. For example, the poverty rate, calculated from tax income, is currently only available for the year 2008. The housing survey is set to be postponed until 2013; its results would thus be disseminated seven years after those of the previous survey, compared to five-year intervals previously. In this context, the Authority will be closely monitoring the rapid publication of results.

The Authority would like to ensure that the dissemination of official statistics is as swift and extensive as possible. It would like this deadline-shortening objective to be pursued, and would like to be informed of any difficulty keeping future operations within acceptable deadlines.

3.5 Clarification of dissemination and communication

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

More suitable communication could improve confidence in indicators. For example, despite the efforts of INSEE and the DARES to facilitate understanding of the labour market indicators, journalists still often confuse the number of jobseekers at Pôle Emploi with unemployment in the sense of the ILO.

The gap between people's individual situation and the figures published is also a cause of mistrust of the price and purchasing power indicators.

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

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

4. Further to the recommendations of the 2009 report of the Authority

In its 2009 report, the Authority made some recommendations. It is important for the public to be made aware of the progress made in this respect.

Production and dissemination of official statistics in France in 2009

(pages 11 to 13 of the 2009 report)

⇒ The right balance needs to be found between European and national demands.

The Director-General of INSEE, recently elected President of the European Partnership Group, explained to the members of the Authority that it was his responsibility to ensure progress was made in governance and sustainability of the statistical system. To do so, he has set himself several targets: ensure that European statistics develop in a direction that satisfies national needs; make efficiency gains in the production of European statistics in order to free up means for national statistics; adopt priorities in work programming, whether this work is purely national or European in scope; improve dialogue with users on programming.

⇒ The Authority encourages INSEE to move quickly to enhance coordination of official statistics programming and to enter into dialogue with the CNIS to ensure that priorities are outlined for coming years regarding new work to be undertaken and current work to be suspended.

The Director-General of INSEE undertook to ensure that the 2012 work programmes are built following collective debate, in order to define, alongside the ministerial statistical offices and after an assessment by the CNIS, the investment priorities and the operations likely to be reduced or discontinued. Complementarity between national and European statistics will be examined within this framework.

⇒ The Official Statistics Authority lauds the work of the CNIS commission on the “Financial System and Financing the Economy” and will be highly attentive to the follow-up on three of its working themes:

1. “Reconciling” the notions of financial institution net banking income and value added, which was the focus of considerable and interesting work by INSEE and the Banque de France. The Authority will be attentive to the annual publication of the proposed indicators.

Banking activities for own account, considered by the national accounts as distributive transactions, have increased substantially over the last decade (investment banks). In France, this has meant that value-added in the sense of the national accounts now only account for half of net banking income. Taking this divergence into account affords a better understanding of how the sector is evolving, in particular in terms of employment and payroll.

The Banque de France and INSEE have committed to publishing net banking income and value added each year.

2. The introduction of statistics on financial groups according to their activities.

INSEE, the Banque de France, the Prudential Supervisory Authority and the Autorité des Marchés Financiers are prepared to take part in a technical group responsible for exploring the possibility and conditions for setting up statistics by business line, among other things distinguishing deposit banks from merchant and investment banks. It is likely that this work will soon have to be extended to European level in order to succeed.

3. Enriching the publication of financial institution solvency and liquidity indicators, based on a European framework to the extent possible.

The Official Statistics Authority calls for broader public dissemination of these indicators using statistical aggregates complying with the strict application of rules on access to individual information and those on statistical confidentiality.

The Official Statistics Authority will contact the European authorities, if necessary, to ensure that the dissemination methods being envisaged in France are harmonised on the European level to the extent possible.

The Authority regrets that no action has been taken following this recommendation.

⇒ On the need to enhance knowledge of trajectories

Those responsible for official statistics should move towards a dialogue with the relevant administrations and with the population to come to a decision on this question, with the support of the Official Statistics Authority, if necessary.

The work on knowledge of trajectories is continuing.

The Evaluation, Forward Planning and Performance Directorate (DEPP) at the Ministry of National Education is working on the construction of school trajectories with the aim of providing society with an overview of equal opportunities in the educational system.

This work has come up against opposition as regards pupil identifiers. These concerns stem from the desire to protect children against all risks of unwanted labelling. The technical modifications (identifier encryption) and legal amendments (separation of the registration functions from the use functions) envisaged appear to be necessary in order for the system to respect privacy. The parallel development of another data collection strategy based on a panel of 30,000 pupils is interesting but limited, as it will not provide information at local level.

The purpose of the ELFE project⁹ (French longitudinal study starting from childhood) is to track 20,000 children from birth to adulthood, addressing the many aspects of childhood from the angles of health, the environment and the social sciences.

⁹ The main partners involved in the Elfe project: the National Institute of Demographic Studies (INED), the Health Observatory (InVS), the National Health and Medical Research Institute (INSERM), INSEE, the Evaluation, Forward Planning and Performance Directorate (DEPP) at the Ministry of National Education, the Research, Studies and Statistical Evaluation Directorate (DREES), the Health General Directorate (DGS), the National Family Allowance Fund (CNAF).

Launched in 2007 as regional pilot studies with 1,000 families in 12 departments in France, ELFE will be extended to the whole national territory from 2011. The cohort will be based on the INSEE's permanent demographic sample.

Official statistical practice

(pages 17 to 22 of the 2009 report)

⇒ The Official Statistics Authority is in favour of awarding compliance certificates to statistical indicators.

The members of the Authority would like the word “certification” to be replaced by “labelling of statistics from administrative sources”.

The General Inspectorate of INSEE submitted to the Authority its report on the “labelling of official statistics from administrative sources”; after providing a reminder of the principles of the procedure, this report presents case studies and a work programme for 2011 (see a summary of this report in Annexe 3).

⇒ Announced start-up of a secure remote data access system.

The Official Statistics Authority will be attentive to ensuring that the centre does actually promote more exchanges, and that these exchanges between the research world and producers of official statistics are quicker and simpler than today.

INSEE and the GENES have set up a remote data access system (CASD), a highly secure system allowing researchers to work remotely on detailed individual databases, after an appraisal by the Confidentiality Committee and in compliance with the requirements of the CNIL.

The social data accessible via this system must be completed by corporate statistics.

⇒ Calendar of official statistics to be published

The Authority encourages INSEE and the Ministerial Statistical Offices to continue their work on extending the calendar for publications.

The Authority proposes that this calendar should be drawn up on the basis of the seven working themes of the CNIS, which cut across the official statistical service.

The Authority will take steps, if necessary, with the authorities concerned by the implementation and monitoring of this calendar.

A proposal to extend the calendar of indicators to all official statistical themes was presented by the Director of Dissemination and Regional action of INSEE to the members of the Authority during the session of 5 November 2010. A first list of indicators selected for 2011 features in Annexe 2 of the report.

The Authority notes with satisfaction that the vast majority of its recommendations have produced effects from the official statistical service.

It will monitor their set-up on an annual basis.

The Authority will ensure that the solvency and liquidity indicators of financial institutions are extensively published in compliance with the rules of access to private information and those governing statistical confidentiality.

5. Activity of the Official Statistics Authority in 2010

5.1 2010 sessions of the Authority

The Official Statistics Authority met four times in 2010 and once in early 2011. These sessions enriched and nourished the reflections of the members of the Authority.

17 March 2010:

- Hearing of Pierre Audibert, Director of Dissemination and Regional Action of INSEE, on the plan to extend the list of pre-announced indicators
- Presentation by Jean Gaeremynck, President of the Statistical Confidentiality Committee, on the scope of official statistics
- Hearing of Alain Chappert and Jean-Pierre Puig, general inspectors at INSEE, on the “labelling” of public statistics

23 June 2010:

- Hearing of the Evaluation, Forward Planning and Performance Director and the MSO Director of the Ministry of National Education on school trajectory statistics;
- Hearing of Jean-Paul Pollin, President of the Financial System and Financing of the Economy Commission of the CNIS;
- Hearing of the Director of the GENES (Higher Education and Research Directorate) on the secure remote data access system offering researchers access to detailed data.

5 November 2010:

- Hearing of Pierre Audibert, Director of Dissemination and Regional Action of INSEE, on the plan to extend the list of pre-announced indicators in the calendar of publications of official statistics;
- Presentation of the first report by the General Inspectorate on the labelling of official statistics, by Alain Chappert and Jean-Pierre Puig;
- Status report on the census in France following the controversy on the census in Canada, by Stefan Lollivier, Director of Demographic and Social Statistics at INSEE

16 December 2010

Hearing of Jean-Pierre Duport, President of the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS)

19 January 2011

Hearing of Jean-Philippe Cotis, Director-General of INSEE

The decision statements of the sessions and the presentations by Jean-Pierre Duport, President of the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) and by Jean-Philippe Cotis, Director-General of INSEE, are accessible on the website of the Official Statistics Authority

5.2 Authority communication

On the occasion of the publication of the 2009 report, the President of the Official Statistics Authority met with the institutions represented in the Authority (see the recipients of the 2009 report in *Annexe I*).

These interviews will be requested once again after the 2010 report has been issued.

The website of the Official Statistics Authority <http://www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/> is periodically updated with main news items.

Annexes

Annexe 1: Recipients of the Report

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

As in 2009, this report shall be submitted:

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

To the other representatives of the Nation and institutions represented within the Authority

- President of the Republic
- Prime Minister
- Minister for the Economy, Industry and Employment
- President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council
- Vice-President of the Council of State
- First President of the Court of Accounts
- Head of the General Inspectorate of Finances
- Head of the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs

To the representatives of French official statistics

- President of the CNIS
- INSEE Director General and all the heads of the Ministerial Statistical Offices
- Banque de France and other producers
- Members of the INSEE board
- Ministers responsible for the Ministerial Statistical Offices

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)

This report is also published on the website of the Authority: www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr

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

1. Indicators already announced

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

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

Activity in industry

Indices of orders received in industry by value	Monthly	INSEE
Monthly outlook survey in industry	Monthly*	INSEE
Quarterly outlook survey in industry	Quarterly*	INSEE
Turnover in industry and construction	Monthly	INSEE
Industrial production index	Monthly*	INSEE
Energy outlook	Monthly*	SOeS ¹⁰

Activity in building and public works

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

Activity in trade and services

Bimonthly outlook survey in the wholesale trade	Bimonthly*	INSEE
Monthly outlook survey in the retail trade and automobile sales and repairs	Monthly*	INSEE
Monthly outlook survey in services	Monthly*	INSEE
Turnover in the retail trade and personal services	Monthly	INSEE
Turnover in the wholesale trade and various services to businesses	Monthly	INSEE
Transport services production index (IPST) ¹¹	Quarterly*	SOeS
Messaging results	Quarterly*	SOeS
Road haulage results (TRM)	Quarterly*	SOeS

Investments and stocks

Investments in industry survey	Quarterly*	INSEE
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Enterprise results and demography

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

¹⁰ SOeS: Sustainable Development – Department for Observation and Statistics

¹¹ Announced in the four-monthly calendar on the SOeS website

* indicator announced 4 months in advance

Employment and Labour Market

Persons leaving the list of job-seekers registered with Pôle Emploi	Quarterly*	DARES ¹²
Registered job-seekers and job offers collected by Pôle Emploi	Monthly*	DARES/Pôle Emploi
Temporary employment	Quarterly*	DARES
Overtime	Quarterly*	DARES
Salaried employment snapshot	Quarterly*	INSEE
Unemployment as defined by ILO and labour market indicators (Labour force survey results)	Quarterly*	INSEE
Salaried employment	Quarterly*	INSEE

Household Income and Consumption

Labour force employment activity and conditions (Provisional quarterly results) ¹³	Quarterly*	DARES
Labour force employment activity and conditions (Working time and wages)	Quarterly*	DARES
Household consumer spending on non-energy industrial goods	Monthly*	INSEE
Monthly household outlook survey	Monthly*	INSEE
New vehicle registrations	Monthly*	INSEE
Road vehicle registrations	Quarterly*	SOeS
Basic wages – Comparison of France-Germany	Annual	INSEE
State civil service gross wage index – index scale	Quarterly	INSEE
Revised hourly labour costs – All employees	Quarterly	INSEE
Labour cost index in industry, construction and services	Quarterly	INSEE

Foreign trade

Foreign trade by value	Monthly*	Ministerial Statistical Office-DGDDI ¹⁴
Balance of payments	Monthly*	Banque de France

Prices

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

International

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

National Accounts

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

¹² DARES: Labour, Employment and Professional Training - Department for the Coordination of Research, Studies and Statistics

¹³ Announced in the four-monthly calendar on the DARES website

¹⁴ General Directorate of Customs and Indirect Taxes

2. New indicators proposed for 2011

Agriculture

Account forecasts for agriculture	Annual at the moment of the Accounts Commission	SSP ¹⁵ /INSEE
Provisional accounts for agriculture	Annual	SSP/INSEE
Foreign trade in agri-business	Monthly	SSP
Arable crops	Monthly 10 months / year	SSP
Milk	Monthly 11 months/ year	SSP
Vine-growing	Monthly July to November	SSP
General Farm Census (RGA)	Not periodical	SSP

Trade

Trade accounts	Annual	INSEE
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National Accounts – Public Finances

National accounts:	Annual	INSEE
- Input-output table		
- Institutional sector accounts		
- Financial operations table		
- Wealth accounts. Main results		
Regional accounts:	Annual	INSEE
- GDP and added value by branch, by region		
- Gross disposable income by region		
- GDP and added value by Department (periodically)		
- Accounts for the Overseas Departments		

Living Conditions – Society

Average consumption of certain food products	Annual	INSEE
Prices of certain products: bread, diesel...	Annual	INSEE
Culture and recreation expenditure	Annual	INSEE
Characteristics of the stock of main residences	Annual	
Indicators from the Justice statistical directory:		
Civil justice: activities, domains, processing times of cases...	Annual	Justice (SDESE) ¹⁶
Criminal justice: activities, condemnations, misdemeanours, offences, repeat offending...	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
Sentence enforcement and penitentiary administration	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
Minors and justice	Annual	Justice (SDESE)
Legal aid	Annual	Justice (SDESE)

Teaching - Education

Institutions, pupils, apprentices, students, continuing education, results, qualifications	Annual	National Education
Girls and boys	Annual (8 March)	(DEPP) ¹⁷

¹⁵ SSP: Ministerial Statistical Office for Agriculture – Department for Statistics and Forward Studies

¹⁶ SDESE: Ministerial Statistical Office for Justice – Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies

¹⁷ DEPP: Ministerial Statistical Office for Education – Department for Evaluation, Forward Studies and Performance

Enterprises

Demography of enterprises and establishments: list at 1 st January and creations during the year	Annual	INSEE
Community Innovation Survey (CIS)	Every 2 years	INSEE
SINE surveys (Information system on new businesses)	Not periodic	INSEE
Annual output survey	Annual	INSEE

Industry, Agri-Food, Construction

Annual survey of energy consumption in industry (EACEI)	Annual	INSEE
“Information and Communication Technologies” (ICT) survey	Annual	INSEE
Studies and investments by industry to protect the environment	Annual	INSEE /SSP

Population

Official population	Annual	INSEE
Statistical results of the census	Annual	INSEE
Demographic review: national demographic indicators drawn from population estimates (population, fertility, life expectancy, age on marriage and on maternity...)	Annual	INSEE
Regional and departmental population by sex and by age (estimates)	Annual	INSEE

Income, Wages

Main results on wages	Annual	INSEE
Income of the self-employed	Annual	INSEE
Main results of the Fiscal and Social Income survey, including: poverty rates according to the threshold, number of people living under the poverty threshold by age, number of poor people	Annual	INSEE
Wages in the three parts of the Civil Service with the change over one year	Annual	Civil Service Ministerial Statistical Office (DGAFP) ¹⁸

Health, Social Welfare

Health account	Annual	DREES ¹⁹
Pensions and pensioners	Annual	DREES
Departmental welfare benefit	Annual	DREES
Minimum income beneficiaries	Annual	DREES
Third party compensation benefit and additional disability benefit (ACTP-PCH)	Quarterly	DREES
Top-up health insurance contracts	Annual	DREES
State of health of the population	Annual	DREES
Social welfare accounts (semi definitive)	Annual	DREES
Annual (health) establishment statistics (SAE)	Annual	DREES

Services, Tourism, Transport

Services accounts	Annual	INSEE
Tourist accommodation (hotel, campsite, holiday villages) and occupancy rates	Annual	INSEE
Road passenger transport	Annual	SOeS

¹⁸ DGAFP: Ministerial Statistical Office for the Civil Service – General Department for the Administration and Civil Service

¹⁹ DREES: Ministerial Statistical Office for Health and Solidarity – Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics

Territory - Environment

Infra-municipal level urban data by district: census, jobseekers, salaried employees, fiscal income, births, recipients of family benefits...	Annual	INSEE
Teruti Lucas land occupancy survey	Annual	SSP

Work - Employment

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

Transversal indicators

Equal opportunities indicators	Annual (8 March)	INSEE
Inequality indicators in the Freyssinet report	Annual (November)	INSEE
Sustainable Development indicators	Annual, updated on an ongoing basis	SOeS/INSEE

(These groups of indicators have been designed to be “meaningful.” They contain indicators that have already been announced in a given theme)

Annexe 3: Overview of the report by the INSEE General Inspectorate on a quality label for statistics using administrative sources

The Official Statistics Authority (ASP) wanted to set up a quality label procedure for official statistics based on the use of administrative sources and produced outside the Official Statistical Service (INSEE and Ministerial Statistical Offices). To this effect, it has asked the INSEE General Inspectorate to propose such a procedure and test the possibility of quality labelling using a few actual cases. This report responds to that demand, also outlines a quality label programme and makes an exploratory analysis of the costs implied.

1 - Procedure

The report begins by situating the procedure to be implemented in relation to the existing procedure for surveys within the framework of the CNIS. It shows that this new procedure:

- ✓ is an ex-post label procedure as against an ex-ante procedure for surveys;
- ✓ concerns a stock of existing processed data, while the procedure for surveys concerns a flow of new surveys;
- ✓ checks the compliance of these statistics with the European Statistics Code of Practice, the content of which must be adapted to those bodies that are statistical institutes and to output limited just to processing of administrative sources. The report proposes such adaptation;

It then proposes a procedure involving a Quality Label Committee with extended powers and resources (in particular with the creation of ad hoc training in using administrative data). This committee would work henceforth for two authorities: the CNIS for the survey quality labels and the ASP for administrative source quality labels. This implies writing a specific decree for the Quality Label Committee and adapting the decrees relating to the CNIS and the ASP. The report proposes these different texts. It also proposes to modify the ruling relating to the Quality Label Committee.

All in all, the procedure would be as follows: the ASP determines its annual programme of administrative sources to be examined after hearing the CNIS President and the Director General of the INSEE; the Quality Label Committee appraises each case in the programme and proposes an opinion to the ASP, possibly with a plan of action to ensure full compliance with the Code; the decision by the ASP to award the quality label (or otherwise) is indicated on its website, along with any conditions that might apply to it, once the organisation in question has given an undertaking to comply with them.

2 - Case studies

For the three cases that were studied, the report presents an evaluation against the adapted code of practice mentioned above. This evaluation results in the following conclusions.

The quarterly statistics of the ACOSS would seem to be eligible for the quality label provided that there is greater transparency regarding the scale of, and possible reasons for, their divergences in relation to the equivalent statistics from the INSEE prepared on the basis of the same sources, which will also receive the quality label as an output of the official statistics service, and that their dissemination conditions are gradually modified to bring them closer to the standard for outlook indicators (in particular, no press conferences subject to embargo). However, this must not result in dissemination constraints on series with the quality label, which would not apply to the series without the label: we are referring here to the estimates made by Pôle Emploi using the same source. The ASP will keep watch to ensure that there is no such form of adverse selection.

The monthly statistics on jobseekers at end of month (DEFM) produced jointly by Pôle Emploi and the DARES would seem to be eligible for the quality label once the new agreement between the two bodies, the amendment of which is scheduled in any case, guarantees greater transparency on the changes that can occur upstream from the statistical processing in the administrative management of job seekers and the

computerised management of the files in which they are recorded. The new agreement will also need to provide for more precise, more frequent information exchanges between the statistical teams of Pôle Emploi and the DARES to ensure better processing quality. Finally, it must also provide more effectively for compliance with the principle of equal access for all to the information, which is currently hindered by all-too-frequent breaches of the embargo; a return to the standard calendar for dissemination of the main outlook indicators could contribute to this.

The price indices for old properties in the Ile-de-France region based on the notaries' databases would seem to be eligible for the quality label right away, on condition once again that a change is made to their dissemination to bring it closer into line with the usual practice for outlook statistics concerning embargos. Contacts are underway with the Ile-de-France Chamber of Notaries to determine this change. The calculation of the indices for the provinces recently encountered difficulties that suggest their submission for the quality label should be postponed, despite the fact that an improvement has been observed very recently and could well continue. If this does prove to be the case, they could be awarded the quality label quickly as they are indices constructed by the same method as those for the Ile-de-France region.

The quality label initially considered for the statistics of the Banque de France could not be examined for legal reasons. It appears that part of the statistics prepared within the framework of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) is already subject to a validation process steered by the ECB, which there would seem to be little point in duplicating. Regarding the statistics produced for purely national purposes, the report considers that they could be a matter for the ASP and therefore possibly for a quality label. However, this is not the opinion of the Banque de France which considers that its independence excludes any form of control and that the rules followed for production at the request of the ESCB cover all the statistical output of the Bank.

The report then outlines a possible quality labelling programme which, aside from the extensions suggested by the case studies, could apply in particular to the statistics collected by the social security funds (CNAM, CNAV, CNAF, MSA), road accident statistics, certain transport statistics, statistics on crime and delinquency and statistics on the environment. A feasibility study could be a prerequisite in certain cases prior to effective start-up of the procedure.

Finally, the report makes an exploratory estimate of the necessary resources and suggests that such a programme can reasonably be undertaken without creating any additional positions, provided that

- a quality label programme is adopted that enables the assessment task to be shared within the official statistical service,
- resources are redeployed within the Quality Label Committee and the INSEE General Inspectorate chairing it.

The full report by the INSEE General Inspectorate is available on the website of the Authority
www.autorite-statistique-publique.fr/Rapports

Annexe 4: the Official Statistical Service “quality” procedure

1. – Review of the “quality” procedure in 2010 at the INSEE

1.1 The new action in the quality plan 2010 in line with the global quality procedure

The INSEE Quality Plan aims to integrate, gradually, the dimensions of the global quality procedure recommended within the framework of the “Ambition 2015”, which is to say to:

- measure times and costs,
- describe processes
- forecast and adapt skills requirements on an ongoing basis,
- place users at the heart of the activity.

In 2010, half of the new actions concern these four dimensions.

The Quality Plan 2010 comprises 30 actions of which 10 have a deadline in 2010. To this must be added 3 actions implemented further to the “peer” review.

Two objectives in the Quality Plan 2010 have been selected within the framework of the incentive system. They concerned the publication of a Sustainable Development scoreboard for the year 2009 and signature of the “recognition of confidentiality obligations” form. Both these objectives were achieved.

1.2 Of the ten INSEE actions with a 2010 deadline, eight have been achieved

For those actions with a 2010 deadline, the outcome is positive on the whole: eight actions out of ten have been successfully completed. These are actions aiming to secure our procedures and professional environment (improving handling of requests by the INSEE Contact service, implementing macro-controls for the second ESANE campaign, creating a single document listing the professional risks in the regional units, etc.) and reporting to our users (publication of the 1st annual report of the CNIS, publication of a memo explaining the revisions made by the annual accounts campaign).

However, for two indicators, the target has not been achieved. The publication on insee.fr of quality information sheets for business surveys saw no progress this year. The producers are convinced that the sheets are useful, but are having difficulty finding time to create them, in particular for precision calculations. The publication of the 3 quality information sheets scheduled for 2010 is postponed to the first half of 2011. It is important to make progress on this point because principles 4 and 15 of the European Statistics Code of Practice require us to publish quality information sheets intended for users.

The introduction of an applications service quality scoreboard could not be completed. The creation of the centre in Metz and the list of strategic applications with back-up plans determined by the Management Committee resulted in the action being redefined.

1.3 More mixed outcomes for the 20 INSEE actions currently underway

The interim targets of 12 INSEE actions currently underway have been achieved. They concern measuring costs and sharing processes (deploying MAREVA, improving project cost evaluation, informing the CNIS of the cost of a statistical survey on submission of the application for its usefulness opinion, PREMICE), improving the insee.fr website (publishing a Sustainable Development scoreboard, translating the definitions on the insee.fr website into English) and improving relations with users (deploying the Marianne standard in SIRENE services, conducting satisfaction surveys).

On the other hand, there are slight delays on 8 INSEE actions, which could be detrimental to achieving the final objective. In particular, the generalisation of the use of SOFT at the INSEE looks unlikely. It can also be noted that the objective of rolling out training in the European Statistics Code of Practice has not been achieved. The objectives, access and content of this training will be reviewed in 2011.

1.4 Continuing vigilance for the actions monitored by Eurostat

France has already completed most of the improvement actions decided on further to the peer assessment in January 2007. Four of them remain – those which will be the most difficult to implement.

Three of them feature in the Quality Plan 2010.

The extension of the quality review of business statistics to all business surveys marked a pause in 2011 with just one review being issued. There remain 4 reviews to be conducted to complete this action in 2011.

Phase 2 of RESANE concerning the inclusion of groups of enterprises in the process will first be refocused on constructing the SIRUS statistical list, an essential prerequisite if groups are to be included in the ESANE system.

Finally, online collection of the population census (Homere programme) has got behind schedule. The programme director only took up office after summer 2010.

A fourth action recommended by the “peers” has been suspended since 2008. It will be reintroduced in the Quality Action Plan 2011. This is the action to profile groups. It can be noted, however, that since October 2009, France has been managing a European ESS-net on standardisation of group profiling (Meets Profiling large and complex Multinational Enterprise groups).

In its 2010 report, Eurostat asked France to avoid getting further behind schedule on Homere and on the group profiling action. This should be possible as the teams in question have just been reinforced.

1.5 Reflection on quality boosted by a quality assurance procedure

2010 was the year of quality assurance framework implementation at national and international levels.

- *At the INSEE, a quality assurance framework for household surveys:*
In 2010, a working group combining the UMS of the DSDS, the quality unit, the quality label committee and the GI defined the quality assurance framework for household surveys. This reference grid will be tested in 2011 on two surveys: Family Budget and Information and Daily Life. Also, the audit carried out in 2009 by the General Inspectorate on the SILC survey will be transcribed into this analysis grid.
- *In the European statistical system (ESS), the quality assurance framework will be the European Statistics Code of Practice:*
In September 2009, Eurostat set up a Sponsorship on Quality group to work notably on defining a common quality assurance framework for the European Statistical System (ESS). This group, in which France took part, decided that this framework would be the European Statistics Code of Practice. It will be slightly modified, however, to take better account of the use of administrative sources.
- *At the United Nations, a review of existing quality assurance frameworks:*
A group of experts chaired by South Africa and in which France took part conducted an inventory of national and international quality assurance work.

2. – Review of the “quality” procedure of the Ministerial Statistical Offices in 2010

The Quality Action Plan of the Ministerial Statistical Offices is part of the framework of the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice. The Quality Plan 2010 of the Ministerial Statistical Offices is the third annual plan.

Nine Ministerial Statistical Offices²⁰ that produce European statistics had chosen one or several actions to improve their positions in relation to the European Statistics Code of Practice. The Quality Action Plan of the Ministerial Statistical Offices comprised 36 actions, of which 18 with 2010 deadlines.

Of these 18 actions with 2010 deadlines, nine have effectively been completed and the target achieved, at least partially for the Code of Practice awareness-raising actions. Two actions are in more serious difficulties, one on the “Definitions and Methods” section and the other on complete process descriptions.

²⁰Situation at end 2010: Agriculture and Fisheries, Sustainable Development, Customs, Education, Civil Service, Immigration-Integration, Justice, Health-Solidarity, Work.

Ministerial Statistical Office measures and corresponding principles in the European Code	Number of actions	of which number with 2010 deadlines	of which number completed in 2010	Ministerial Statistical Offices involved
<i>1 – Raising awareness of European quality rules (principle 4)</i>	5	5	1	Justice, Health, Education, Immigration
<i>2 – Writing new full process descriptions (principles 4, 7 and 8)</i>	2	1	0	Agriculture, Sustainable Development
<i>3 – Quality reviews of business statistics (principles 4, 7,8 and 12)</i>	4	1	0	Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Work, Civil Service
<i>4 – Recognising confidentiality obligations (principle 5)</i>	1	1	1	Civil Service
<i>5 – Internet publication calendar (principles 6 and 13)</i>	2	1	0	Civil Service, Work
<i>6 – “Definitions and Methods” section on internet (principles 6 and 15)</i>	6	2	1	Agriculture, Civil Service, Justice, Health, Work, Education
<i>7 – Survey collection by internet (principles 9 and 10)</i>	5	3	2	Sustainable Development, Immigration, Health, Work
<i>8 – Use of administrative files (principles 9 and 10)</i>	5	2	2	Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Health
<i>9 – Measurement of user satisfaction (principle 11)</i>	3	2	2	Sustainable Development, Health, Customs
<i>10 – Cost-benefit and risk assessments of operations (principles 3 and 10)</i>	1	0	0	Sustainable Development
<i>11 – Dissemination of quality information sheets on internet (principles 4 and 15)</i>	1	0	0	Work
<i>12 – Administrative sources quality analysis (principles 8, 9 and 10)</i>	1	0	0	Justice
Total:	36	18	9	

1 – Raising awareness of European quality rules

European Statistics Code of Practice awareness-raising action continued in 2010. Two Ministerial Statistical Offices (justice and health) have completed the planned actions. Two other Ministerial Statistical Offices (Sustainable Development and Immigration) did not have training staff until the end of September 2010. For these two Ministerial Statistical Offices and for the Education Ministerial Statistical Office, these actions have been delayed slightly, but should take place in the first half of 2011. At present, these training courses only concern new arrivals.

2 – Writing new full process descriptions

While the action of the Agriculture Ministerial Statistical Office is progressing in a satisfactory manner, that scheduled by the Sustainable Development Ministerial Statistical Office is at a standstill due to the reorganisation currently underway in department.

3 – Quality reviews of business statistics

The Agriculture, Sustainable Development and Work Ministerial Statistical Offices are progressing in a satisfactory manner. The Civil Service Ministerial Statistical Office conducted 3 reviews in 2010.

4 – Recognising confidentiality obligations

The only Ministerial Statistical Office concerned (Civil Service) has achieved its target. However, this Ministerial Statistical Office reports that continuing compliance with this obligation sometimes poses difficulties in terms of its application on a permanent basis.

5 – Internet publication calendar

The Work Ministerial Statistical Office has reached its target. For the Civil Service Ministerial Statistical Office, the target will be achieved in 2011, with the delay being down to the reworking of the website.

6 – “Definitions and Methods” section on internet

Of the six Ministerial Statistical Offices concerned, five (Agriculture, Civil Service, Justice, Health, Work) are progressing in line with their objectives and one of them even reached its target in 2010. The Education Ministerial Statistical Office is encountering difficulties and is no longer able to add to its section on internet.

7 – Survey collection by internet

The four Ministerial Statistical Offices (Sustainable Development, Immigration, Health, Work) which are planning new internet collection have made progress. For the Sustainable Development Ministerial Statistical Office, one action with a 2010 deadline (two internet collection operations for the themed survey and the warehouses survey) has been completed and another is underway. For the Immigration Ministerial Statistical Office, the internet information reporting system works, but for technical reasons, it will only be fully used in 2011.

8 – Use of administrative files

Two actions completed in 2010 have made streamlining possible: the farm census and annual health institution statistics. The three other actions (Sustainable Development Ministerial Statistical Office and Health Ministerial Statistical Office), with longer timescales are progressing normally.

9 – Measurement of user satisfaction

Three Ministerial Statistical Offices had programmed action to measure the satisfaction of internet users. The Sustainable Development Ministerial Statistical Office conducted a satisfaction tests among users of its website, in accordance with the planned target. The Health Ministerial Statistical Office is continuing its action in 2011 on use of the “Platines” website. The action of the Customs Ministerial Statistical Office is following the planned schedule

10 – Cost-benefit and risk assessment of operations

The Sustainable Development Ministerial Statistical Office has introduced a “costs and risks” component to two usefulness appraisals (electricity surveys and housing accounts table).

11 – Dissemination of quality information sheets on internet

The reworking of the Work Ministerial Statistical Office website delayed online publication of the survey quality information sheets (for users), but they will go online gradually in 2011.

12 – Administrative source quality analysis

The work on the National Criminal Record (CJN) has got a little behind schedule – for reasons of workload organisation choices – and the target has been postponed to 2011.

Annexe 5 – CNIS review of the official statistics programme 2010

The consultation system set up in 2009 at the CNIS, structured around 7 commissions covering the main topical themes, is showing very encouraging results. Discussion is easier with a larger number of users who are more concerned by the themes which correspond to their preoccupations. Representation of the various components of civil society - associations, professional and trade union organisations, researchers, administrations and of course statisticians - is more balanced and the positive influence on the debate has been felt.

In 2010, each of the commissions met twice, in the spring and autumn, and the presentation of the work programmes was done around precise themes. The review is based on the demands expressed in the commissions and working groups and the actual achievements of official statistics in 2010.

Some difficulties have been encountered with certain surveys and on the Public Services and Services for the Public Commission about the university graduate professional integration survey. The interest of the subject is obvious since the aim is to understand the real professional openings for students with Masters from French universities. But the usefulness opinion for it was postponed because the Commission did not consider that it had been provided with the assurance that it is indeed a statistical survey and not an administrative survey.

The previous medium-term review had highlighted the need for greater responsiveness on the part of the Official Statistical Service to fast-moving changes in the economic and social environment. The review of the official statistics programme 2010 therefore focuses on the responsiveness of the Official Statistical Service to demand for an understanding of the crisis and its consequences and on the response to demands relating to Sustainable Development and to local information.

A. – Understanding of the crisis and its social consequences

▪ The labour market

The work undertaken since 2008 as a continuation of the Foucauld Report has made it possible to have timely access to the indicators required to measure changes in unemployment and its “halo” at national level.

For a full analysis of the labour market, the Official Statistical Service must still make progress on knowledge of labour market tensions, a recurring demand from the MEDEF employers’ organisation, and on the understanding of the recurrence of unemployment by analysing transitions between employment and unemployment.

▪ Inequalities in living conditions and purchasing power

Major steps forward have been made by the Official Statistical Service in recent years, further to the recommendations of the Freyssinet and Quinet Reports: publication of the main inequality indicators, the combination of macro-economic data and individual information, presentation of the accounts by household category and disposable revenue per consumption unit. The Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report has given new impetus to this work with its developments on well-being and quality of life.

There are indicators showing the consequences of the crisis on the daily life of households and their opinions on the economic outlook. However, certain indicators, such as the poverty rate, are based on data that is too old, which is not satisfactory.

▪ Housing

Housing and construction statistics

The working group on “Statistical Information on Housing and Construction” chaired by Bernard Vorms, Managing Director of the ANIL, showed that there is too much information but it is not easy for users to know what these figures correspond to. It stressed the need for transparency regarding the methods used. It considers that private data can make up for the lack of official outlook statistics as long as the quality of that data is known.

Following the recommendations of the working group, the Executive Committee of the CNIS recommended a *private data calibration* procedure under the responsibility of the CNIS. A first experiment will be conducted using data from

the FNAIM. The Executive Committee of the CNIS will make a formal decision on how to proceed after this experiment in H1 2011.

This question may raise fears of privatisation of part of the work of the Official Statistical Service. But the concern of the CNIS is quite different: to respond to a genuine demand of society and help the public find its way through the maze of data in some fields.

The *Filocom fiscal file*²¹ is the only available source providing local decision makers with information on the detailed geographical level of housing policy. This information is not very accessible for reasons of fiscal confidentiality. This difficulty could be resolved by a procedure to make the data anonymous. The support of the ASP could prove necessary to move forward in this field.

To track the market in old property, preference is given to the *notarial data source*. A draft law under discussion in Parliament creates a public service remit for the notarial profession in collecting, centralising and disseminating information on transfers of ownership of real property for payment. This official basis should enable us to move towards earlier supply of information.

For new builds, the *Sitadel database* should provide monitoring of building permits and should be improved.

Improper housing

The working group chaired by Marie-Thérèse Join-Lambert must issue proposals to improve the measurement and knowledge of improper housing conditions. Official statistics has undertaken considerable work to define and count those people who are excluded from housing. A *homeless survey* is scheduled in 2012.

The group issued an alert as to certain risks concerning the *2013 housing survey*: the reduction of its sample, excessive simplification of the questionnaire bringing into question the observation of housing on the regional level and perhaps even on the national level.

The CNIS is not in favour of bringing forward data collection for the housing survey which would imply the data being less complete. The Official Statistics Service must stick to the date of 2013 and to the questions that were planned. The CNIS would like a decision to be made rapidly to this effect.

B. – Understanding of the crisis and its consequences on the economy and finance

▪ ***Globalisation of the economy***

The new system of structural information on enterprises (*ESANE*) is starting to produce its first results. This new system combining administrative data and survey data will be more consistent and will provide a truer image of the production system of the 21st century. This new system does generate shifts in the results in relation to those of the former system, however. These divergences are due to the system itself but also to the change in classification. The professional organisations and economists are demanding urgently that the results that are published should be accompanied by all the indications required to understand them to avoid interpretation errors.

To move forwards in understanding the mechanisms of globalisation, it would no doubt be necessary to have an information system on the *economic activity of the subsidiaries of groups abroad, on intra-group exchanges and on profits reinvested abroad*. In this field, a survey was carried out in 2010 on the activity of subsidiaries but the other subjects have not yet been explored.

The INSEE is addressing this problem, notably by steering a European expert group dedicated to *group profiling*, meaning breaking their accounts down into business lines.

▪ ***Analysis of new production activity organisations***

The CNIS is asking, with the professional organisations, the MEDEF, the CGPME and the researchers represented on the CNIS, that the emphasis should be placed on the analysis of new production activity organisations in the medium term.

The seminar organised last 19 November by the INSEE, under the aegis of the CNIS, on the network organisation of chain stores was a big success among professionals. But the outline of the themed survey programme to be carried out to understand these new organisations may not be possible given the resources of official statistics.

▪ ***Banking system transparency***

The financial crisis revealed the weaknesses of the financial system observation system. The work of the De Margerie Group highlighted the gap between the added value of financial services and net banking income measured by the accounts of the profession. This gap being largely due to the activities of the investment and financing banks for

²¹ Fichier des LOGements par COMMunes (File of housing by municipality)

which the banks operate on their own behalf, the need to go deeper into the *analysis of the banking sector by profession* to establish relevant diagnoses becomes a priority.

The working group of the INSEE, Banque de France and the Prudential Supervisory Authority (ACP) created to this effect will be starting in September, a little behind schedule, due to organisational difficulties that delayed its formation.

Observers of the banking sector also regretted that they do not have information on the *solvency and liquidity of the banking system* to provide a better insight into the level of risk taking, the level of equity or the liquidity of credit institutions. The CNIS is requesting the publication of statistics that should be at the disposal of the ACP. On this subject, it seems it will be necessary to wait for decisions to be made at European level.

On the subject of the relations between finances and enterprises, the economists also asked where they could find the information to enable them to say whether there is a credit crunch (rationing of lending) for SMEs or not. This information is now available with the issue of a publication by the Banque de France on lending to enterprises and the survey by the INSEE on lending to SMEs.

The working group chaired by Pierre Valentin produced a consensual definition of *micro credit* that not only takes account of the wishes of the ministries, but is also compatible with the European definitions. The Banque de France is setting up a statistical system that will be able to quantify its different components, notably according to the size of the enterprise (less than 10 or less than 3 employees) and whether it is a loan or an equity participation (loan on honour).

C. - Sustainable Development

La National Conference on Sustainable Development Indicators organised with the CESE and the Sustainable Development Commission on 20 January 2010 was the highlight of the consultation with the associations and trade union and professional organisations. The INSEE and several Ministerial Statistical Offices - SOeS, DARES, DREES – have devised and published the *indicators in the scorecard used for National Sustainable Development Strategy*. The CNIS has asked that a technical group should continue to perfect these indicators and add to them if necessary. It will also continue its consultation on territorial indicators.

Progress has also been made in gradually assessing all the *environmental costs* in relation to the main aggregates in the national accounts.

D. - Territories

The *census* remains the key source of information on the local territories. The CNIS appreciated the compliance with the dissemination calendar that had been announced for these statistics that are precious for local authorities. The annual frequency is also a major step forward, although it is not easy to use the data. A CNIS working group will be making proposals to facilitate internet access to this data.

The supply to town halls of information on how the official population is calculated, at the initiative of the CNIS and more precisely of the National Commission for Population Census Evaluation chaired by Senator Jean-Claude Frécon was much appreciated.

The use for statistical purposes of the *Annual Declarations of Social Data (DADS)* for all public and private-sector employees will open up the possibility of extending the scope of local studies. The work undertaken on *local employment estimates* will produce information that is coherent between the different geographical levels.

Other useful administrative files, and notably those of the DGFIP, are not yet available. The Cuillier Report noted the need to use fiscal files to analyse the extension of built zones within areas where Territorial Coherence Schemes (SCOT) are being defined. The CNIS would like the support of the ASP to find a solution allowing the statistical use of this information without bringing fiscal confidentiality into question.

Strong demand has been expressed to the CNIS for methodological coherence in local statistics: coherence between the different statistical sources available on a given subject, coherence in classifications, concepts and methods, and coherence in the statistics produced from the management files of Conseils Généraux (local councils). The work undertaken with the Conseils Généraux to define and constrict departmental social indicators together, should be a pilot operation in such matters.

The latest progress made in the production and dissemination of population numbers according to a square grid bring hopes for the future. It will thus be possible to get multi-theme information on the sub-municipal level for districts that correspond to the scale of public intervention.

In conclusion, the 2010 review of the official statistics work programme in the light of the needs that have been expressed is positive on the whole.

The responsiveness of the system in supplying the data and studies required to understand the effects of the crisis has been satisfactory in many areas, notably the social field. The combination of macro- and micro-economic data has shown the diversity of situations in the face of the crisis. The statistics are therefore easier to understand for users.

In the social field, in 2011 the CNIS will have to review two fields that it has not yet addressed: that of immigration on the one hand and that of delinquency on the other.

In the economic field, the profound transformation of the information system on enterprises should provide the expected data on the production system. Projects such as RESANE demand investments in expertise over a long period of time. The inevitable scale of the work to construct the information system partly explains the response times to the new questions being raised by civil society.

Difficulties remain in the access to available information sources, and notably those held by the Prudential Supervisory Authority on banking risks and the fiscal files that are most useful to define housing policy on the local level.

The CNIS is aware of how useful administrative data is to show the diversity of situations and to track individual paths, whether in health, finding a job or the transition from employment to retirement. But all measures must be taken to guarantee the confidentiality of this individual data. The CNIS supports the statistical office of the Ministry for National Education which wishes to introduce an identifier encryption procedure.

The shortage of resources could ultimately make the statistical observation system more fragile. Several thematic surveys on the organisation of the production system may not be conducted.

The involvement of the Ministerial Statistical Offices in the evaluation of public policies is becoming considerable. The CNIS has observed on its Commissions sometimes urgent submission of surveys intended to assess new measures. The question is sometimes raised of the distance to be kept between the function of statistical production and that of political steering, as is the question of the effective dissemination of the results. At a time when the resources of official statistics are limited, the usefulness of such surveys must be checked. A precise analysis of the future use of such studies could serve to enlighten us to this effect.

Almost half of the surveys presented to the CNIS are related to European regulations or international projects. The active participation of the Official Statistical Service in the very many working groups now makes it possible to pass on national demands such as social classifications, group profiling or the Stiglitz Report recommendations. But the demands of Eurostat must remain compatible with the resources at the disposal of official statistics which must also respond to purely national demands.

The CNIS is therefore ready to establish priorities in its demands. It would like this definition of negative priorities to be handled in a coordinated manner with Europe on the one hand and with the official statistics service on the other.

Annexe 6: Dissemination rules for the main outlook indicators

Motivations of the dissemination rules

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

The dissemination framework

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

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

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

Practical dissemination rules

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

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

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

Annexe 7: Opinion of the Official Statistics Authority on the draft decree creating the Public Establishment of the National Economics and Statistics Schools.



Opinion n°2010-01

of the Official Statistics Authority

dated 17 July 2010

on the draft decree creating the Public Establishment of the National Economics and Statistics Schools.

With regard to Decree n° 2009-250 of 3 March 2009 relating to the Official Statistics Authority and notably Clause 2 of Article 1,

With regard to Article 37 of the draft decree creating the public establishment of the GENES, amending Clause 7 of Article 1 of Decree n° 46-1432 of 14 June 1946 establishing the public administration regulation for the application of Articles 32 and 33 of the Finance Act of 27 April 1947 relating to the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies for Metropolitan and Overseas France,

With regard to the request of 18 June 2010 from the Director General of the INSEE asking the President of the Official Statistics Authority to be a full member of the Board of the GENES,

The Official Statistics Authority:

- issues an opinion in favour of the draft decree creating the Public Establishment of the National Economics and Statistics Schools, subject to the deletion of the line "The President of the Official Statistics Authority or their representative" from Article 8.

The present opinion will be sent on the one hand to the Minister for the Economy, Industry and Employment and on the other transmitted for information to the Director General of the INSEE. It will be mentioned in the *Official Journal* of the French Republic.

Issued in Paris on 17 July 2010

The President

Paul Champsaur

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