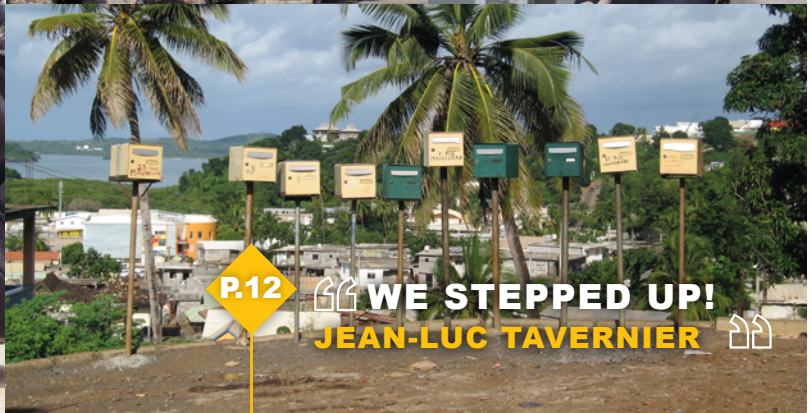


P.7

## SPECIAL SECTION

Official statistics  
in the face of the  
health crisis

# 2020 ACTIVITY REPORT



P.12



WE STEPPED UP!

JEAN-LUC TAVERNIER



# CONTENTS

**3**

Editorial

**4-5**

Guest expert:  
Laurence Boone,  
OECD chief economist

**6**

INSEE and official statistics

**7-16**

**Covid-19 special section**

8 - The essentials

9 - Interview

10 - A look at what INSEE had done

11 - Interview

12-13 - The big interview

14-15 - INSEE tackling

Covid-19 in the regions

16 - Using official statistical service data to break down received ideas on the health crisis

**17-20**

Establishing economic diagnostics

**21-24**

A look at the workings of the french economy

**25-28**

Understanding businesses

**29-32**

Observation of the society

**33-36**

Conducting the population census and using the results

**37-40**

Describing and analysing regions and territories

**41-44**

Managing large directories and registers

**45-48**

Disseminating and communicating its statistics and studies

**49-52**

Improving its methods and innovating

**53-56**

Contributing to the creation of european and international statistics

**57-60**

2020 by region

**61**

The women and men at INSEE

**62-63**

Organisational chart

**64**

INSEE by region and employees by region and category

**65**

Employees

**66**

The women and men at INSEE

**67**

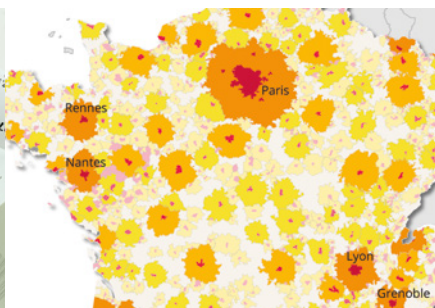
Staff training and budget

**68-70**

Surveys conducted in 2020

**71-72**

Key figures



# EDITORIAL



**Jean-Luc TAVERNIER**

*General director, INSEE*

2020 will be remembered for the Covid-19 epidemic and its demographic, economic and social repercussions, the likes of which have never been seen before in modern history.

From the start of the lockdown in France, INSEE succeeded in reorganising its work to ensure the continuity of its missions and also provided new results of use to decision-makers and citizens alike. By using new data sources, such as credit card transactions

and indisputable information on the social and economic consequences of the crisis.

This is even more worthy of merit given that our teams have continued to process the annual essentials under unusual and often difficult conditions, demonstrating INSEE's remarkable capacity to adapt. Several survey tools were reoriented, while others were created from scratch in record time so as to interview households and companies on the consequences of the first lockdown.

***“INSEE and the french official statistical service as a whole were able to provide rapid and indisputable information on the social and economic consequences of the crisis.”***

or mobile phone data, and new methods, primarily nowcasting, the Institute was able to shed light on at least three topics of interest: the real-time change in France's economic situation, the distribution of the population across national territory and the number of deaths from all causes.

INSEE and the french official statistical service as a whole were able to mobilise themselves to document this unprecedented situation, so as to provide rapid

Our work for the general interest and public information has been highly valued.

We can see this in the impact of many of our publications and the very positive feedback we have received from all our partners. It is in exceptional situations such as this that a nation becomes aware of the vital importance of public services, their resources and, crucially, their organisation and reactivity in times of crisis.

# GUEST EXPERT

*Laurence BOONE,*

**Chief economist at the Organisation for economic co-operation and development (OECD).**

*“INSEE paved the way for other national statistics institutes to publish estimates of the downturn in economic activity”*



## **On 26 March 2020, INSEE released an estimate of the downturn in economic activity.**

This in itself was a notable event given the fact that this crisis that we are experiencing is, in many ways, exceptional. At the outbreak, we had no reference point for understanding its impact on businesses, households and employment. At about the same time as INSEE, we, at the OECD, took the decision to provide an estimate of the downturn in economic activity. But, of course, the figure provided by INSEE was established using the database of regularly produced data and a series of sources that were not all public and that we did not have access to. This publication on 26 March was therefore both useful for the French government to calibrate its responses to the crisis in terms of economic policy and very promising for institutes such as ours as it allowed us to share good practices with other national statistics institutes (NSIs). INSEE was the first institute to attempt this, paving the way for other NSIs to publish estimates of the same type.

## *Biography*

Laurence Boone has held various consultancy and economic analysis posts for both private and public sector actors. Notably, she was chief economist for Barclays Capital France, director of European economic studies at Bank of America Merrill Lynch and chief economist at the Axa Group. From 2014 to 2016, she was a special advisor for European and multilateral economic and financial affairs to the President of the French Republic. Laurence Boone has been the OECD chief economist since 2018. She manages the economic affairs department, which has 182 employees and produces, in particular, the OECD Economic Outlook as well as a large range of analyses and recommendations for public action.

**2020 was punctuated by rapid and sometimes unexpected developments in the epidemic along with measures taken to try to contain it. How do economic analysts work in a context of extreme uncertainty such as this?**

Our work relies on both data and the ability to model, i.e. to build scenarios in an effort to anticipate what could happen. In terms of the data, the crisis came at the same time as a digital revolution impacting both the economy as a system and economics as a discipline. For the first time, there were a lot of us using high frequency data to understand what was happening in (near) real time. Here, I am talking specifically about the mobility data used by INSEE, the Bank of England and the OECD, as well as anonymous bank card data. These data enabled us, I think, to refine our diagnoses. Beyond these data, this period of great uncertainty forced us, in our capacity as economists, to be humble. Rather than authoritatively affirming that “scenario A and scenario A alone will happen”, we had to be prudent and offer a range of probable scenarios. Our aim was to frame the possibilities and, at INSEE, at the OECD and elsewhere, we managed to achieve this successfully.

**How do the OECD and INSEE complement each other in their missions to inform public debate and decision making through the production and dissemination of data on society and the economy?**

The work of the OECD statistics department relies wholly on data produced by the NSIs of our member states, including INSEE. Collecting data ourselves that have already been collected by other institutes would make no sense. Instead, our role is to understand the methods

and procedures used by each NSI to allow us to harmonise the data downstream. Aggregating the data and making them comparable really forms the core of our job. Exchanges take place between INSEE and some of the OECD teams on a very regular basis. In my

economic affairs department, the France office experts are in direct contact with their INSEE counterparts not only for data provision but also to compare their analysis results. This applies to all subjects for which the OECD produces expert reports, from employment and education, to health.

*“This period of great uncertainty forced us, in our capacity as economists, to be humble”*

**In terms of international data comparability, what challenges will need to be overcome in the years to come?**

I see at least three.

The first relates to these new data that I would classify as “microeconomic”, in that they tell us about the individual behaviours of economic actors, whether consumers, entrepreneurs or employees. Using these data during the crisis has significantly increased quality. But we will need to better manage them, specifically in terms of analysing their complementarity with traditional data. In this crisis situation, we innovated and achieved great things. Now is the time, I think, to gather feedback on the experience.

The second challenge that we must face relates to estimating public-sector activity. For example, in the health and education sectors, the UK chose to record the hours of care or education actually delivered to patients and students. INSEE generated a different estimate, and Italy yet another one... The result is

that it is now difficult to compare the drops in GDP seen in the second quarter of 2020 between countries. Coordination and a real discussion between the NSIs on this topic would be useful, in my opinion.

The third and final challenge concerns health and death data. It has become apparent that different countries have very different ways of recording deaths, which makes harmonisation a slow and complex process. Here, there is still progress to make.

*“INSEE is one of the most innovative, accurate and reactive NSIs in the world”*

**As you work with numerous NSIs, what specific feature of INSEE would you highlight?**

I'm not being sycophantic when I say that INSEE is one of the most innovative, accurate and reactive NSIs in the world. I can only congratulate the Institute for its high level of availability and the quality of the economic data that it provides us. It is the leading institute within the European Union in terms of innovation and statistical rigour.

# INSEE AND OFFICIAL STATISTICS

## Primary objective: informing the economic and social debate

INSEE collects, produces, analyses and disseminates information on the French economy and society. This information is of interest to public authorities, administrations, social partners, businesses, researchers, the media, teachers and private individuals and allows them to improve their knowledge, carry out studies, develop forecasts and make decisions.

## INSEE: National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (*Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques*)

INSEE is a directorate-general of the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, with offices across France, whose employees are state officials.

INSEE is subject to public accounting regulations and its funds are part of the general state budget. It performs its work in complete professional independence. Article 1 of the French statistical law provides that “the design, production and dissemination of official statistics shall be carried out in complete professional independence”. The Official Statistics Authority (*Autorité de la statistique publique, ASP*), created by the law on the modernisation of the economy of 4 August 2008, primarily works to ensure compliance with the principle of independence.

## INSEE coordinates the work of the official statistical service

The official statistical service is made up of INSEE and the ministerial statistical offices, which carry out statistical operations in their area of expertise. Under INSEE’s coordination, the Institute itself and the ministerial statistical offices decide on the methods, standards and procedures used to draw up and publish statistics.

## INSEE in international and national bodies

INSEE works with Eurostat (statistical office of the European communities) and its counterparts in the European Union on a daily basis. The Institute therefore contributes to the construction of the European statistical system and is also involved with the statistical work of the UN (United Nations), the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). It participates in the annual meetings of the UN statistical commission, the conference of European statisticians and the OECD committee on statistics and statistical policies.

## A little bit of history...

The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) was created by the French finance act of 27 April 1946 (articles 32 and 33). The newly formed Institute took over the official statistics activity that had been performed without interruption since 1833.



**1946 – 2021:  
INSEE at 75**



In April 2021, INSEE turned 75.

To celebrate this anniversary, INSEE will be putting together an exhibition in partnership with SNCF under the motto “INSEE, providing you with population data for 75 years”.

It is a motto that illustrates the calling that the Institute has been following since its creation: informing the public debate. The 2021 activity report will cover the exhibition and other events affirming that the Institute is resolutely focused on innovation and is there for all communities.



# Covid-19 special section

# 2,208

In 2020, 2,208 tweets were posted on the @InseeFr account. They were viewed 12 million times and generated 420,000 interactions (such as a like, retweet or comment). The INSEE Twitter account gained 9,200 followers within one year, reaching 78,200 by the end of the year.

# 4,000

This is the number of portable computers provided to staff from 16 March 2020 onwards to enable remote working. The IT network, which was designed for 1500 simultaneous users at the start of the year, was adapted in just a few weeks to cover all staff from June onwards.

# 57,200

This is the number of page views for the two INSEE blog posts published in spring 2020 on the methodological challenges of measuring the death rate. Over the year, the blog welcomed more than 150,000 unique visitors and 360,000 page views.

# 40%

This is the percentage of the consumer price index (CPI) basket of goods for which price collection became impossible overnight when the first lockdown was imposed. To replace access to shops, backup collection via internet and phone was set up within one week. To complement this, use of scanner data from large retailers was also increased.

## HOW INSEE HAS ADAPTED: THE ESSENTIALS

# 12

To report on the impact of the health crisis on the French economy, INSEE replaced its quarterly economic outlook reports *Notes de conjoncture* with 12 economic outlook updates *Points de conjoncture* offering real-time estimates of the fall in gross domestic product and household consumption.

# 96,200

The approximate number of serological tests included in the Epidemiology and living conditions (EpiCov) survey set up by the statistical office of the ministry of Health (DREES) and the National institute of health and medical research (INSERM) in collaboration with Santé Publique France and INSEE. EpiCov provided information on the dynamics of the spread of the epidemic and its impact on living conditions.

# 50,000

The approximate number of companies interviewed via the Impact of the health crisis on business organisation and activity survey. This survey was conducted in record time, with just eight months between the launch decision and publication of the initial results.





**Julien POUGET**

*Head of the department of short-term economic analysis*

# INTERVIEW

## Following the economic situation in near real time

*“The new data have enabled us to meet a need for more immediate information than in the past.”*

### **In specific terms, what is nowcasting?**

Since march 2020, the health situation has been the primary factor impacting the economic outlook. Specifically, household consumption has fluctuated in line with the restrictions in place. However, changes in the epidemic thwarted many forecasts. Traditional economic forecasting tools therefore became largely inoperative.

In this unprecedented and highly changeable context, we decided to concentrate on measuring the present so as to report as quickly as possible on the scale of the changes in activity, rather than looking to forecast changes in the economic aggregates over future quarters as usual. These early estimates of the present situation were published more frequently (fortnightly during the first lockdown) and used in part new data sources.

### **Which sources did the department of short-term economic analysis use?**

We had to draw on all available resources to find the data that could be used to rapidly report losses in activity linked specifically to the lockdowns. Usually, INSEE's forecasts are based primarily on business and consumer surveys that give an idea of the business climate each month. However, their monthly frequency was insufficient for reporting the very sudden movements in activity, not to mention the fact that the conditions under which the data are collected were affected by the situation.

The crisis therefore forced us to use data available on a more frequent basis. Some of these data were already part of our toolboxes, for example business electricity consumption or text analysis of press articles; others were newer, such as aggregate bank card transaction amounts, scanner data from large retailers, statistics on rail freight, data on the activation of mobile telephone networks or even the number of route searches and specific keywords on the internet.

### **Was this exercise fruitful?**

The combination of these high frequency data, direct reports from professional federations and what we knew about the activities shut down by regulation allowed INSEE to publish, a few days after the first lockdown began, an estimate of losses of activity: around a third, both in terms of GDP and household consumption. This quick estimate received a certain amount of attention, as complete uncertainty abounded at the time, both in France and in many other countries facing similar lockdowns. It was subsequently refined and then confirmed (around -30%) by “hard” figures from the national accounts. And INSEE continued to use this range of data to follow the fluctuations in activity throughout the year, specifically during the first “unlocking” and then during the second lockdown.

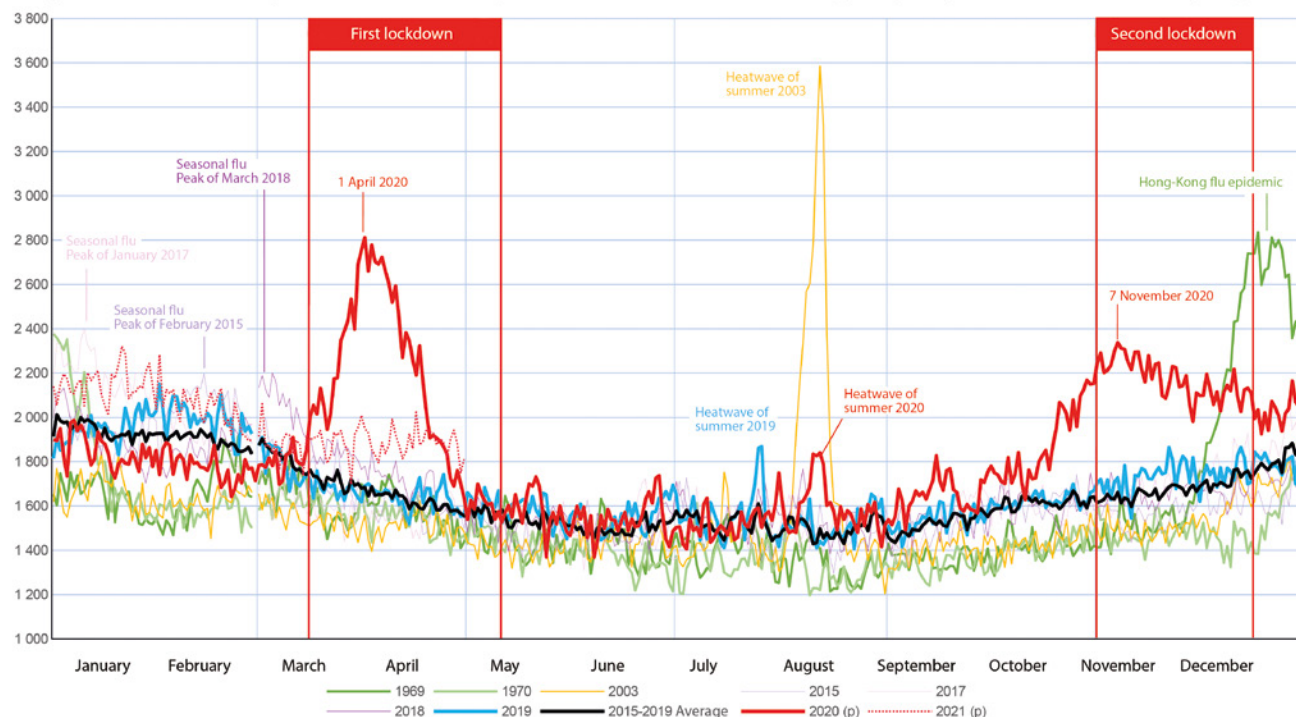
### **What lessons can be learned from this experiment?**

The new data used enabled us to meet a need for more immediate information than in the past. But the contribution of these sources cannot be judged solely in terms of their usefulness during the health crisis: when economic fluctuations lessen, it may be difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff!

That said, some sources (including scanner data from large retailers and aggregate bank card transaction amounts) will undoubtedly be among the most promising. They take advantage of the dematerialisation of the economy while closely mapping purchases that directly constitute a part of consumption as will subsequently be measured by the national accounts. Furthermore, they enable near real-time analyses at both macro- and micro-economic level, making it possible to study the differences between sectors and between regions, for example. It goes without saying that data confidentiality and personal privacy are respected here.

## Daily deaths in 2020

compared with the last five years (2015-2019), during the heatwave of 2003 and the Hong-Kong flu epidemic (summer 1968 – spring 1970)



## How INSEE has documented the consequences of the health crisis

### Technical support for two official statistics surveys

With INSEE's assistance, DARES, the statistical office of the French ministry of Labour, adapted its quarterly business survey, known as Acemo (*Activité et conditions d'emploi de la main-d'œuvre*, Activity and employment conditions for labour).

Acemo-Covid is a short survey (with around 20 questions) that has primarily allowed DARES to produce data on the use of remote and short-time working and, more generally, to assess the way in which companies adapted their workforce in the face of the Covid-19 crisis.

Between April and December, 38,000 establishments were surveyed each month on three issues: changes to workforce and activity, changes to employment conditions and the preventive measures implemented.

For its part, DREES, the statistical office of the ministry of Health, created the Epidemiology and living conditions (EpiCov) survey. This survey was managed together with the National institute of health and medical research (INSERM) in collaboration with Santé Publique France and INSEE. EpiCov has a dual objective: to estimate the momentum of the epidemic at a national and departmental

level and to study the effect of lockdown and of the epidemic on household living conditions. As part of this survey, serological tests were carried out by 12,400 people using a self-sampling blood kit in the first wave (May 2020) and by 83,800 people in the second wave (October 2020). These tests made it possible to estimate the proportion of people who had been in contact with the virus and to determine their socio-demographic profiles.

### A household survey in exceptional circumstances

To report the impact of the health crisis on the organisation and activity of businesses, INSEE created an ad hoc survey with a questionnaire sent to 50,000 companies. It was hoped that the survey would, among other things, lead to an understanding of the results and conditions of business activity during the first lockdown, the duration of shutdown, supply difficulties, changes in opportunities and supply and company partnerships. The questionnaire was conducted independently, with the initial survey results published from December 2020.



Sylvie LE MINEZ

*Head of the demographic and social statistics unit*

## Enhancing existing surveys

INSEE added specific questions to the monthly consumer confidence survey (CAMME). Conducted among 2000 people by telephone, this survey aimed to measure the opinion of households on their economic environment, their personal financial situation and their intentions regarding saving and consumption. The aim of these additional questions was to assess the effects of lockdown on the lives of households. The first use of these data took place back in June. The Institute also used the open-ended responses of companies in the business outlook surveys to gauge, through textual analysis, the general concern caused by the epidemic.

## Population movement analysis

Before the first lockdown was imposed, many residents of large metropolitan areas left. Following this, public authorities voiced their need for figures on these population movements. In line with the European general data protection regulation (GDPR), INSEE used geolocation data provided by a mobile phone operator. From 8 April onwards, an initial study enabled INSEE to map the departments where the population had fallen or, on the contrary, where it had risen following the migrations that preceded the start of the lockdown. For example, around 10% of Parisians (excluding students) left their homes to “relocate”, most often to the countryside.

### How did INSEE report the change in mortality rate?

Every Friday from 27 March 2020, INSEE published the total number of deaths from all causes. These were deaths recorded up to 7 days previously for the communes that submit their data digitally and 11 days previously for the rest. As the weeks passed, this publication was enhanced with new tables. There are now breakdowns by gender, age group and death location type, as well as multi-year overviews. Interest in these figures is clearly massive. INSEE’s data form part of those analysed each week by the ministerial crisis rooms at national level and by the prefectures at regional level.

### How has the mortality rate changed over the period?

In 2020, the number of deaths in France increased by 9% compared with 2019. This increase, the highest for 70 years, is equivalent to an additional 56,000 deaths. This was concentrated over two periods, spring and autumn, which correspond to waves of the Covid-19 epidemic. The daily death data for 2020 allow us to run a simple comparison with the previous years, but it is not possible to directly infer an estimate of excess mortality, which requires further statistical processing to take account, specifically, of population ageing and the upward trend in life expectancy. Incorrect figures were also circulating on social networks.

### Did you worry at any point that INSEE would not be able to set the record straight on this matter in the minds of our fellow citizens?

During that period, the INSEE figures were a key benchmark for analysing the mortality rate. By publishing blog posts, responding to numerous requests from journalists and Twitter users and constantly adding to the site dedicated to the daily deaths, we were able to correct the inaccurate figures or interpretations. These had gone viral on social media, and in some cases even made it onto news programmes! Our ability to inform the public debate with robust data increased the confidence that our fellow citizens placed in the Institute. The fact that INSEE provided the latest individual data each week, enabling everyone to make their own calculations and analyses, was also welcomed by many users. However, debates move on, and so we must remain vigilant and continue publishing solid facts on these subjects.

# THE BIG INTERVIEW

*“Official statistics has been able to rally and adapt”*

**From an organisational point of view, INSEE and its staff adapted to the changing environment of 2020. What impressed you the most over this period?**

Our collective agility and mobilisation right from the very start of the health crisis. I was even surprised by the speed with which we set up remote working. In just a few days, the vast majority of staff were provided with laptops connected to the network and, after an adjustment phase, which was of course to be expected, we were able to carry on with almost all of our publications.

*“This period proved that INSEE had great capacity for innovation”*

In several cases, we also had to adjust our data collection mechanisms on the ground to the health conditions, for example our price data collection or face-to-face interviews. The supervisors of these operations, the teams in the regional offices and, of course, the interviewers showed a huge amount of professional care. And this period also proved that INSEE had great capacity for innovation.

**And which of these innovations struck you the most?**

Firstly, the situation forced us to use new information sources to analyse the economic outlook. We also created several surveys to interview households and companies on the consequences of the first lockdown. Finally, we were very mobilised, sadly, by monitoring the number of deaths. At the request of the Prefects, we carried out daily transmissions and, at the peak of the crisis, I wanted to move from a monthly publication to a weekly one. This required an increase in work and creativity from the staff as we had to provide data each week with new, more detailed information and accompany the data we shared with comments and analyses so as not to allow inaccurate interpretations to take hold.



**Jean-Luc TAVERNIER**

*General director, INSEE*

**On 26 March 2020, INSEE became the first national statistics institute in the world to publish an estimate of the downturn in economic activity. Can you tell us how this decision came about?**

First I decided to cancel the planned publication of the economic outlook Report for March as it didn't really make sense to do it; the information from our surveys had mostly been collected before the start of the lockdown and was not sufficient to allow us to measure the downturn in activity. And I asked the teams to provide bi-monthly economic outlook updates. We had to step up by bringing our expertise to the economic situation in a very short space of time. The dilemma was straightforward: either we published figures with an uncertain margin of error, or we published nothing. Perhaps it was bold, but I took the risk to publish an estimate of -35%, which I thought was reliable. Looking back, I don't regret the decision as that estimate turned out to be right, on the whole.

**We have spoken a lot about INSEE, but it was the entire official statistics community that rallied over the period...**

Yes, you're right, and that rallying was remarkable! INSEE provided specific support for Acemo-Covid and EpiCov, two surveys carried out by the statistical offices of the ministries of Labour and Health (DARES and DREES), respectively, in partnership with INSERM. These are vital sources of information for understanding the spread of the epidemic and its economic and social consequences. I will add that Banque de France also provided a high level of expertise on the economic situation and institutions such as the French economic observatory (OFCE) and Rexecode produced important analyses.

**To analyse the economic situation, regional movements, etc., INSEE is increasingly using new data provided by external organisations. What is the future of these partnerships?**

These have been crucial in analysing the situation over the course of the crisis. To publish our activity downturn estimate, we relied specifically on data from the Groupement des Cartes Bancaires economic interest group together with data provided by companies and professional associations. We also used mobile phone data to identify the places where French people were confined during the lockdown. I really hope that these partnerships, which have been catalysed by the crisis, become permanent. In some cases, this is complicated for legal and financial reasons.

*“We prevented a crisis of confidence in the quality of economic and social information from adding to the ongoing crisis”*

**In November, you announced the postponement of the annual census survey (excluding Mayotte). A difficult decision, but a necessary one?**

Yes, it was necessary. And it was definitely difficult because the census is one of INSEE’s fundamental missions and many of our staff had already prepared for the 2021 survey. But the decision was taken for health reasons. Besides, the commune authorities responsible for collecting the data were having increasing difficulties in recruiting census agents. The important thing is that, thanks to methodological innovations, we will be able to produce annual estimates of the legal populations. It is, however, still essential that the census surveys can resume their usual schedule from next year, as the quality of the legal population estimates cannot be guaranteed if data collection is postponed beyond one year.

**How did INSEE help with the international coordination of the monitoring of the health, economic and social consequences of the pandemic?**

The entire European statistics system was mobilised. We shared our good practices. And, as is often the case, I myself insisted on the need for our statistics to be comparable, both those relating to GDP and those on excess deaths.

**How was INSEE’s role perceived from the outside during this extraordinary period?**

I am not in the best position to tell you, but the feedback seems to be very positive. The OFCE has even said that France had the best statistics institute in the world.

**Has the crisis made the Institute’s actions more visible?**

If nothing else, the need for reliable statistics has been felt more than ever before. The circumstances were,

*“The need for reliable statistics has been felt more than ever before”*

unfortunately, ideal for the spread of misleading information and other “alternative facts”. We have been very vigilant in this area: thanks to our communication efforts, the creation of our blog, our presence on social

media and our relationships with the press, we prevented a crisis of confidence in the quality of economic and social information from adding to the ongoing crisis.

**How will the Institute continue to document this ongoing multi-dimensional crisis?**

For good reasons, we do not have a statistical infrastructure that allows us to identify new situations of poverty in real time. This is an area that we must work on with the various associations working in this field or by using bank data.

# SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE HEALTH CRISIS IN THE REGIONS



## Regional offices joining forces

In their efforts to document the Covid-19 crisis and its many consequences, the regional offices quickly decided to join forces. They formed working groups chaired by a regional director and coordinated by the department for regional action with the aim of both pooling investments and sharing data and analyses of various topics. All the “study and dissemination” services of the regional offices were mobilised. The regional offices were then able to collect data and analyses from the working groups to provide information in a way that was suited to the needs of their local partners. The first working group established looked at the death statistics. Three further groups followed, which examined living conditions associated with lockdown, the economic impact of the health crisis and recovery in economic activity, respectively. Over the summer, a fifth working group gathered information on the impact of the health crisis on tourism (see opposite). Following initial exchanges with charitable organisations, a sixth working group was formed around the impact of the epidemic on income and poverty.

## Expertise for public decision-makers in times of crisis

All the INSEE regional offices have been regularly asked to provide information on the developments and consequences of the health crisis. Whether regional health agencies (see opposite), prefectures, regional and departmental councils, etc., numerous public stakeholders across the regions have been making these requests. For example, the Corsica regional office gave presentations in the Prefecture offices on various topics, including the economic consequences of the crisis, its impact on tourism and living conditions in lockdown. The La Réunion-Mayotte regional office had an audience with the senate delegation for overseas departments regarding the socio-economic consequences of Covid-19, a topic which was also the subject of presentations to the State’s social partners and services held at the request of the island Prefect. In Île-de-France, the regional office, in partnership with Banque de France, conducted a regional study on the economic impact of the first wave of the epidemic using high-frequency data such as those relating to bank transactions. The results of that study were presented in October 2020 during a webinar bringing together over 200 participants, specifically elected representatives and business leaders.

## Regional communication adapted to the essentials of the crisis

The social, institutional and media call for clarification on the development and consequences of the epidemic was huge. To meet this, the regional offices adjusted the dissemination and communication of their data. As of the first lockdown, the majority of these offices first adjusted their publication calendars to report on the economic slowdown caused by the health crisis and associated restrictions. Their analyses took the form of economic outlook reports or updates, dashboards or flash reports. They also set up reactive communication systems for example, the Normandy regional office chose to issue a weekly press release on changes in the death rate and a bi-monthly dashboard of regional economic activity. Finally, Twitter became a heavily used communication channel during the crisis, with two regional accounts created in 2020 (see section “Disseminating and communicating its statistics and studies”).

## The impact on tourism analysed by the regional offices

The tourism sector, and hospitality in particular, was significantly shaken by the health crisis. Indeed, in addition to the two lockdowns, this sector suffered from administrative shutdown measures and various access restrictions imposed by decree in line with the health crisis. The “Regional economic studies” regional action service unit, attached to the Occitanie regional office, used business figures from VAT returns to monitor the monthly changes in hotel, restaurant and campsite activity, by region and by department. An ad hoc working group (see opposite) pooled and coordinated the work of the regional offices on this issue and enabled a series of studies to be published from autumn onwards. These made it possible to assess the extent of the impacts suffered by the tourism sector broken down by region and time of year. Among other things, they show that Brittany’s summer tourist season balance sheet was more favourable than the national level. The situation is worse in the regions that rely more heavily on foreign tourists. This is especially the case for Île-de-France: in this region, from July to September 2020, the number of overnight stays in hotels fell by almost 70% compared with the same period in 2019 (compared with -34% in France as a whole).



**Yves CALDERINI**

*INSEE Grand Est regional director*

### **What role has the INSEE Grand Est regional office taken on during the health crisis?**

At a very early stage, the work of the “studies and dissemination” service was reoriented to allow for publications on the ongoing crisis. From autumn onwards, we also sought to forge partnerships so as to mobilise new data, even approaching voluntary charity such as food banks. We also rallied to help public players to assess the effects of the crisis on their area of responsibility. For example, I presented the regional and national economic conditions as an introduction to economic and social conferences organised jointly between the regional Prefecture and the regional Council. We wrote notes for the Commissioner for the fight against poverty. Furthermore, from mid-March onwards, we brought the urgent need to monitor excess mortality expressed by the Haut-Rhin Prefecture to the attention of the INSEE head office. On this subject, we developed a study partnership with the University of Strasbourg. Beyond this, we explored the area of health statistics: at the start of the lockdown, the Regional Health Agency’s crisis room enlisted the regional office as a data specialist.

### **What specifically were the Regional Health Agency’s needs?**

We firstly provided help to produce reports of their activity for the prefectures in the form of dashboards. Then we worked on a day-to-day management survey on the monitoring and adaptation of the capacities of the region’s intensive care units. For each hospital, whether public or private, the survey enabled them to monitor bed openings, patient transfers to other hospitals, occupancy rates, etc.

### **How did you organise yourselves internally?**

We set up a project team with an experienced project manager and experienced study manager. They worked full-time on this task, providing almost daily updates with the Regional Health Agency crisis room. They also performed traditional statistical work with the aim of transforming management files into data that could be used for statistical purposes. A methodological note was also produced. From the start of the crisis, we also thought it important to analyse the data and to disseminate that analysis for the general public. We agreed that this consultancy and expertise would lead to a publication. This came at the end of July and covered the activity of the intensive care units in Grand Est during the first wave of the epidemic.

# Using official statistical service data to inform the debate on the health crisis

## The first lockdown led to a rise in births

**FALSE:** nine months after the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the birth rate actually fell sharply in France. In December 2020, there was a 7% drop in new-borns compared with December 2019. The drop continued much more markedly in January 2021, with 13% fewer births than in January 2020. We have to go back as far as the end of the baby boom in 1975 to see a drop of this size.

## People in a couple argued more during the first lockdown

**TRUE:** in May 2020, 13% of people in a couple stated that they had argued more often than usual about daily life, children or professional life, an observation slightly more common among women than men (14% compared with 12%). This was the case for 19% of people in a couple living in overcrowded housing and 18% of those with three or more children.

## 2020 saw a widescale relocation of economic activity

**FALSE:** less than 1% of companies had decided to relocate by autumn 2020. The sectors most severely affected were the textiles and clothing industry (almost 4%), the pharmaceuticals industry (2%) and information & communications (2%). For these very few companies, the changes in location initially took place within France.

## The first lockdown led to a drop in the carbon footprint linked to household consumption

**TRUE:** compared with 2019, the carbon footprint linked to household consumption reportedly fell by 36% in April 2020 and 19% in May. In detail, direct emissions linked to housing reportedly remained generally stable in 2020 while direct emissions linked to transport fell sharply as a result of the travel restrictions (-52% in April 2020, -25% in May).

## Home-working became widespread for all categories of workers

**FALSE:** during the first lockdown, 47% of people who worked at least one hour per week stated they had worked at home over the previous four weeks. But this share varied significantly by socio-professional category: 81% of executives worked from home compared with just 18% of unskilled white-collar employees and 4% of blue-collar workers.

## In spring 2020, job losses affected those in the most insecure situations first

**TRUE:** 715,000 jobs were lost in the first quarter of 2020 and 25% of the temporary jobs in existence before the health crisis had still not returned by the end of the period. Young people, who are more likely to have temporary jobs, were particularly affected: 9% of those aged between 15 and 24 employed before the lockdown lost their job compared with less than 2% of those aged between 40 and 65.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Publications

“The challenges posed by the health crisis in relation to social inequalities: an assessment of the first lockdown”, overview of “France, social portrait”, *INSEE Références*, December 2020  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5233869](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5233869)

“Nombre de naissances en 2020”, *Detailed figures*, May 2021  
▶ [www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/5388165](http://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/5388165)

Cindy Duc, Catherine Souquet,

“Impact of Covid-19 crisis on business organisation and activity”, *INSEE Première* n°1830, December 2020

▶ [www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4994488](http://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4994488)

“In 2020, the carbon footprint of household consumption decreased during lockdowns”, *Economic outlook* - 4 February 2020

▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5056679?sommaire=5040926](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5056679?sommaire=5040926)

Jean-Luc Tavernier, “Fonctionnement de l’Insee dans la période de confinement”, *Courrier des statistiques* n°5-2020, December 2020

▶ [www.insee.fr/fr/information/5008681?sommaire=5008710](http://www.insee.fr/fr/information/5008681?sommaire=5008710)

Jean-Luc Tavernier, “La statistique publique à l’épreuve de la crise sanitaire”, *INSEE blog*, May 2020

▶ [blog.insee.fr/la-statistique-publique-a-lepreuve-de-la-crise-sanitaire/](http://blog.insee.fr/la-statistique-publique-a-lepreuve-de-la-crise-sanitaire/)



Each quarter, INSEE draws up an economic diagnosis covering a period of three to six months. In order to make these predictions, INSEE's economic analysts make use of all of the short-term statistics published by the Institute, together with the business leaders' responses to outlook surveys. On the basis of these qualitative surveys, INSEE calculates the business climate in the various sectors, which makes it possible to predict economic activity. These surveys, which are harmonised at European level, also provide useful indications of production capacity. "Downstream", the national accounts provide an initial estimate of the trend in activity of a quarter (as of 30 days after it has ended), based on the most rapidly observable changes and by making hypotheses about less rapidly available data.



# Establishing economic diagnostics

## Testimony

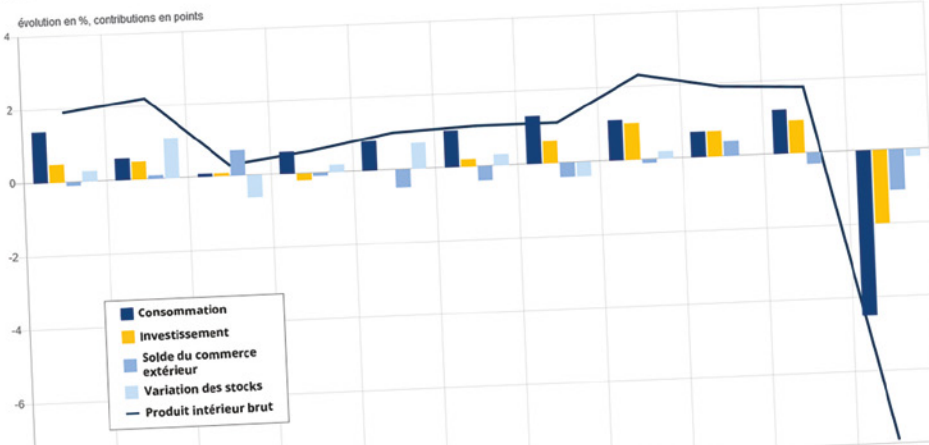


INSEE has adjusted its monitoring of the economic situation in line with the crisis context. We used new methods and data to continue publishing our traditional indicators and to report on the rapid, widescale changes in economic activity over the past year. We also adapted the frequency and nature of our publications, specifically by replacing the quarterly economic outlook Reports with 12 economic outlook Updates offering real-time estimates of the fall in GDP and household consumption.

**Didier BLANCHET,**  
Director of economic studies  
and reports



## Contribution des principaux agrégats à la croissance du produit intérieur brut



### How did INSEE report the historic fall in GDP in 2020?

The health crisis and associated containment measures had immediate economic repercussions that INSEE sought to clarify in real time. From the start of the first lockdown, it seemed that the framework for analysing the economic situation would, for as long as the pandemic lasted, be closely linked to that used for the health situation. In this context, it was necessary to both continue publishing the usual indicators and rapidly innovate to best cover the sudden, widescale shifts in economic activity.

Despite the difficulties associated with collecting data during lockdown, almost all economic indicators were published on time in the form of *Informations Rapides* [quick info] (around 340 were issued over the year). In many cases, the publication was supplemented with an increase in comments and methodological explanations enabling readers to interpret and qualify the meaning. Indeed, particularly during the first lockdown, the proportion of missing responses in the company surveys grew, price data collection was suspended and the relevance of certain statistical concepts was questioned at times given the uniqueness of this period.

Working with even greater agility than usual to adjust their methods, the national accounts continued to issue summaries of the various indicators to report, each quarter, on the change in the economic situation in all its dimensions: restricted consumption, production partly stopped due to the protection measures, significant impact on external trade, preserved purchasing power overall, etc.

Upstream, INSEE changed up the nature and frequency of its economic outlook Reports. The short-term forecasting exercises, for which publications are usually issued four times per year, were replaced with real-time estimates of the drop in GDP and household consumption (see Covid-19 special section), using new data sources (bank card transactions, scanner data from mass distribution retailers, etc.). In total, 12 economic outlook Updates were published over the year: in particular, the first published urgently on 26 March 2020 stated that GDP had fallen by around a third – an estimate that was ultimately close to that subsequently measured in the national accounts.

## The crisis at macroeconomic level: some key figures for 2020

**-7.9%**

Drop in French GDP in 2020 compared with 2019. This annual average masks some very significant movements during the year. For example, in April 2020, economic activity fell to more than 31% below its pre-crisis level (fourth quarter of 2019).

**-7.1%**

Drop in household consumption in 2020 as a specific result of the containment measures.

**+0.4%**

Near stability of overall purchasing power of all households in 2020, specifically due to the exceptional employment and income support measures (in particular short-time working) and despite the drop in activity.

**-7.7%**

Fall in investment of non-financial companies in 2020. This drop was half of that predicted by its usual determining factors.

### Deceptive drop in unemployment during the crisis

The labour market was significantly affected by the health crisis. Over 2020, the unemployment rate fell noticeably during the second quarter (7.1%) before rising in the third (9.1%) and then finally settling at 8% in the fourth quarter, slightly below pre-crisis levels (8.1% in Q4 of 2019). But, to some extent, this fall over the year belies the true situation. Due to business restrictions associated with the second lockdown between 30 October and 15 December, numerous people without employment transitioned to inactivity, as they were unable to actively seek employment under the usual conditions. The unemployment rate is a crucial indicator but it alone cannot reveal all the interactions taking place on the labour market, which are sometimes complex and changing. This is why, for many years, official statistics has been attempting to provide a series of complementary indicators. In 2020, the restrictions affecting the labour supply were given greater attention in publications. The indicator that shows these is formed of the sum of the unemployed, those in the unemployment halo and the underemployed, the number of which leapt with the short-time working scheme in 2020. In total, in the fourth quarter of 2020, more than one in five labour market participants was faced with limitations in terms of job availability. This is 2.1 points higher than one year previously, but 7.9 points below its peak in Q2 of 2020.

### Exceptional mobilisation of the national accounts department

From the very start of the lockdown, the quarterly accountants began thinking about how to publish the Q1 accounts at the end of April. There was no end of challenges. They firstly agreed to identify indicators that were likely to be lacking, to look for alternative sources and to draw from nowcasting work. They then had to consider the statistical adjustments that would need to be made to report on the extent of the economic impact. The usual methodology aims to straighten out changes and discard outliers; however, in this context, writing these off would have skewed the accounts upwards. New phenomena also had to be estimated and described: the drop in public administration production, the impact on hospital care, the setup of short-time working and various aid schemes, the arrival of protective masks, etc. It was also necessary to adapt dissemination so as to explain, comment on and provide the tools to enable understanding. This work continued quarter by quarter, both during and after lockdown. By coordinating with the annual accountants, the quarterly accountants were able to re-estimate the changes, re-adjust their methods and match the quarterly accounts with the new annual account. Overall, the first outline for this unusual year by the quarterly accounts was confirmed by an initial, more detailed profile, but there is still a lot to do to refine the sketch and complete the picture.

# Measuring and forecasting in a time of crisis: how does it compare to the 2008-2009 period?

How can we anticipate an economic crisis, assess its extent once it has begun, and finally forecast the conditions for returning to normality? These are the questions that we have to ask no matter the cause of the crisis. However, the experience gained from the 2008-2009 crisis has proved useful for the INSEE statisticians, who were also faced with other challenges. Firstly, in terms of the difficulty in predicting the outbreak of a crisis, while we can warn of an increasing financial, economic or health risk, it is seldom possible to predict the exact moment at which that risk materialises. And very difficult to anticipate its consequences. From this perspective, despite very different trigger factors, the difficulties faced by economists at the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 were comparable to those faced by epidemiologists with Covid-19.

Conversely, in terms of measuring the intensity of the crisis and anticipating the return to normality, the current crisis is considerably different from that of 2008-2009, in particular because the traditional surveys used have been heavily disrupted. This led INSEE to innovate. In 2008-2009, we continued to release forecasts every three months in line with the usual economic outlook Report calendar, using the usual business tracking tools. But they only revealed the extent of the impact little by little. This is why, in spring 2020, INSEE chose to focus on measuring immediate economic activity at an increased frequency (initially once a fortnight), by supplementing the usual economic outlook surveys with less conventional sources: bank card transactions, qualitative feedback from the field, etc. This approach allowed the Institute to report very quickly on the extent and suddenness of the impact, and then to monitor the rebounds and relapses in economic activity as the epidemic developed.

## The DSN, a new source for economic analysis

The Nominative Social Declaration (Déclaration Sociale Nominative - DSN), the last step in payroll processing in establishments, is a useful source of information on the situation of each employee. Since 2017, establishments in the private sector have been sending this declaration each month to a single submission point from which it is redistributed to a series of administrative authorities, including INSEE; the same has been taking place in public-sector establishments since 2020. Even before the health crisis, INSEE had been planning to place the DSN at the heart of its employment and employee statistical monitoring system, for the specific

purpose of enabling it to draw up faster and more accurate economic diagnostics.

Flexible use of the DSN allowed INSEE to meet new needs that emerged in 2020, in particular by publishing data on the volume of paid work. This new indicator, which correlates very strongly with business activity, provides direct information on the intensity of the crisis broken down by characteristics of the establishments (end sector of activity, place of work) or of the employees (age, profession, etc.). It was also very useful as it replaced missing information required to produce labour cost or industrial production indices.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- Economic outlook 2020 (including the 26 March 2020 report, in which INSEE published its initial estimate of the loss of economic activity linked to the health crisis)  
▶ [www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4473296](http://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4473296)
- Julien Pouget, "Nouvelles données pour suivre la conjoncture économique pendant la crise sanitaire : quelles avancées ? Quelles suites ?", July 2020  
▶ [blog.insee.fr/nouvelles-donnees-pour-suivre-la-conjoncture-economique-pendant-la-crise-sanitaire-queelles-avancees-queelles-suites/](http://blog.insee.fr/nouvelles-donnees-pour-suivre-la-conjoncture-economique-pendant-la-crise-sanitaire-queelles-avancees-queelles-suites/)
- "Éclairage sur le marché du travail au 4<sup>e</sup> trimestre 2020", supplement to *Informations Rapides* n°37, 16 February 2021  
▶ [insee.fr/fr/statistiques/documentation/Note\\_%C3%A9clairage\\_EEC\\_T4\\_2020\\_v2.pdf](http://insee.fr/fr/statistiques/documentation/Note_%C3%A9clairage_EEC_T4_2020_v2.pdf)
- Vladimir Passeron, "Pourquoi le chômage n'a-t-il pas augmenté avec la crise en 2020 ?", *INSEE blog*, May 2021  
▶ [blog.insee.fr/pourquoi-le-chomage-na-t-il-pas-augmente-avec-la-crise-en-2020/](http://blog.insee.fr/pourquoi-le-chomage-na-t-il-pas-augmente-avec-la-crise-en-2020/)
- "In Q4 2020, the unemployment rate fell back again to 8.0%. ILO Unemployment and Labour Market-related indicators (Labour Force Survey results) - fourth quarter 2020", *Informations rapides* n°37, February 2021  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5056886](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5056886)
- Yves Jauneau et Joëlle Vidalenc, "Labour market at a glance in 2020 - Employment resists, halo of unemployment increases", *INSEE Première* n°1844, March 2021  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5359575](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5359575)

In order to study the workings of the economy, we have to elicit more than just a simple description of the economic situation from the figures. As a producer of national accounting data, INSEE develops tools and implements methods that enable the most to be made of these data. As an essential supplier of economic indicators for France, which it publishes on a monthly or quarterly basis, INSEE relies on its expertise to monitor and analyse the situation in the economic sectors and households. Lastly, so as to help public decision-makers when setting their policies, INSEE produces assessment studies on a wide variety of public policies, from pensions to fiscal reform, education to regional analysis.



# A look at the workings of the french economy



## Testimony

**Didier BLANCHET,**  
Director of economic studies  
and reports



We were able to use new data to continue delivering our key indicators despite the data collection limitations imposed by the pandemic. Through new studies, we both documented the consequences of the crisis and continued our mission to analyse the workings of the French economy in general.



## Scanner data: a new source for calculating the consumer price index

To calculate the consumer price index (CPI), INSEE collects the prices of a fixed basket of goods and services in shops or on the internet each month. But, since January 2020, a new source has been added to the mix: scanner data. The prices of 80 million products bought in supermarkets and hypermarkets in metropolitan France are now included in the CPI. These prices relate to purchases of industrial food, entertainment, hygiene and beauty products, representing around 10% of consumers' monthly basket. Using these data offers two key benefits. As they are exhaustive in terms of the purchases made in shopping centres, they provided very detailed information on the quantities consumed by consumers. They also allow us to understand the real price charged at the points of sale, including promotions, in particular. In the past, interviewers could only gather the prices displayed at the point of sale and could only apply discounts given to all customers. Now, customised promotions, such as those given to loyalty card holders, are included in the CPI calculation. To ensure that using these scanner data does not affect the ability of the consumer price index to report on inflation, methodological adjustments are necessary. Inflation is still a measure of pure price changes, at constant product quality and with a given consumption

structure. This neutralises any rise in prices that accompanies an improvement in product quality. Likewise, if household consumption habits change to prioritise higher quality products, for example more organic products, this will not be seen as a price increase.

## How were consumers behaving in lockdown?

In parallel to the scanner data used to calculate the CPI, INSEE used anonymised bank card data to measure consumption spending by the French public. The drop in purchasing under the effect of the first lockdown was breath-taking. From 9 April, INSEE documented the rush to the shops on Monday 16 March, noting a 40% increase in bank card spending compared with the same Monday in 2019, with food purchases almost tripling. Then, during the first two weeks of lockdown, overall consumption, recorded as the total amount of bank card transactions, plummeted by 50%. In the second quarter, consumption was 17% down on 2019, although it recovered in April and rose strongly in May. Coupled with scanner data, the bank card data therefore allowed INSEE to track, in detail, the trend in consumption spending. The same sources were used to report consumer behaviour during the second lockdown (from 30 October). The economic outlook Report of 15 December estimated a 15% drop in consumption in Q4 compared with 2019.

# The self-employed: one status but different economic and social realities

With the development of services such as Uber and Deliveroo, self-employed status now lies at the heart of many debates on the future of work and social protection. To take stock of this situation, INSEE released a publication in 2020 on the self-employed, a heterogeneous population that covers farmers, tradesmen, craftsmen and even some professionals. In France (excluding Mayotte), 3.2 million people were in self-employment at the end of 2017, either as their main job or to supplement salaried employment. 440,000 of these worked in agriculture. In the other sectors, the self-employed represent 10% of people in employment, with this figure fluctuating between 6% in Hauts-de-Seine to triple that (19%) in Hautes-Alpes. Self-employed people are, on average, older than employed people. They are more likely to be men than women; outside of agriculture, women represent just 37%, while they account for 49% of employees. There are more self-employed people in business areas with a greater proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises and where local proximity is favoured. For this reason, self-employed people have preferred sectors: trade and commercial handicrafts, health and social work, and construction. 49% of self-employed people (excluding agriculture) work in these sectors, which account for just 36% of private-sector employees. In 2017, the number of self-employed people had grown by a third compared with 2008. This trend can be explained by the success of the “auto-entrepreneur” status, created in 2009 and renamed “micro-entrepreneur” in 2014. At the end of 2017, one in three self-employed people (excluding agriculture) were economically active micro-entrepreneurs, i.e. 928,000 people. There are a high number of micro-entrepreneurs working in home delivery, non-store retail or some individual services such as property repairs, personal care, non-regulated health activities or cultural activities. They also represent the majority of ride-hailing transport drivers. Three out of ten micro-entrepreneurs combine self-employment with a salaried job, compared to one out of ten traditional self-employed workers.

# 3.2 million

**AT THE END OF 2017, 3.2 MILLION PEOPLE IN FRANCE WERE SELF-EMPLOYED, WITH SELF-EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTING THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME OR SUPPLEMENTING THEIR WAGE INCOME.**



## High wages: more often directors than traders and footballers

In 2017, the top 1% of private-sector employees, i.e. 163,000 people, earned more than 8,680€ net per month per full-time equivalent, a pay level corresponding to 7.5 times the French minimum wage. Eight out of ten of these were men. This top 1% does not form an homogeneous group, both in terms of the professions represented and the amounts actually received. At the top of the salary scale, the highest-paid 1000 employees were, for example, receiving over 89,530€ net per month. This analysis of annual salaries and private-sector employees was carried out using the nominative social declarations (DSN) and annual social data declarations (DADS) that companies send to the administration and which INSEE reprocesses afterwards. While the professions of the highest-paid employees are very varied, there are still four main profiles that stand out. Firstly, employees managing their companies include salaried directors (CEOs, chief executives, managing directors, etc.) and their senior management officers. Other senior managers with high levels of responsibility or expertise (excluding banking) form a second, more heterogeneous profile. The third covers banking and financial market executives and notably includes portfolio managers and traders. Professional sports players may account for only a small number of private-sector employees but, logically, have a high presence at the top of the wage scale.

# Avenues for environmental economic accounting

Since the publication of the 2009 Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report on indicators “beyond GDP”, the number of works seeking to improve the way economic performance is measured have multiplied to take into account well-being and sustainability.

In this latter area, INSEE has focused specifically on the climate issue. The project begun in 2018 resulted in several major publications in 2020. These have allowed us to assess the extent to which the decarbonisation measures taken at national and global level are sufficient to contain global warming as specified in the Paris Agreement. These publications also aimed to take into account the degradation of natural capital, i.e. all natural resources, in the aggregates of the national accounts, such as domestic product or net saving. This degradation occurs as a result of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Using a simplified macroeconomic model (which economists call “stylised”), it is possible to construct optimum emission reduction trajectories by 2050 and to estimate climate spending needs (i.e. in decarbonisation

technology) to enable these targets to be reached. This is a new model used at INSEE, which the Institute hopes to improve in the future, the results of which build on those of the 2019 Quinet Commission on “the value of climate action”.

The model also allows us to take another look at the notion of the “social price of carbon”. This price is not a market value. It represents the value collectively given to an action in favour of the climate, based on its CO<sub>2</sub> reduction efficiency. For example, if the value is 250€/tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>, any action that allows emissions to be reduced at a cost below this value should be taken.

These works conclude that current economic trajectories are not sustainable, but that, by significantly increasing decarbonisation efforts, we can return to an economic path that is compatible with the Paris agreement. By exploring new climate sustainability indicators, we can identify avenues for the development of an environmental economic accounting system and place these indicators at the heart of the future challenges of official statistics.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Publications

“Que disent les données de transactions par carte bancaire sur les comportements de consommateurs “confinés” ?”, Economic outlook update - 9 April 2020

► [www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4478165?sommaire=4473296](https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4478165?sommaire=4473296)

Jean-Marc Germain, Thomas Lellouch, “Social Cost of Carbon and commitments for climate: some avenues for an environmental economic accounting”, *INSEE Analyses* n°56, November 2020

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du rapport Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi : quelques illustrations”, in “The French economy”, *INSEE Références*, 2010 edition

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“La valeur de l'action pour le climat”, report of the commission chaired by Alain Quinet, France Strategy, February 2019

► [www.strategie.gouv.fr/publications/de-laction-climat](https://www.strategie.gouv.fr/publications/de-laction-climat)

“Employment and earned income of self-employed workers”, *INSEE Références*, 2020 edition

► [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4630705](https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4630705)

Mickaël Bardet, Guilhem Théron, “Coiffeurs, avocats, chauffeurs VTC,

exploitants agricoles... Un même statut d'indépendant, des réalités économiques et sociales disparates”, *INSEE blog*, 25 September 2020

► <https://blog.insee.fr/coiffeurs-avocats-chauffeurs-vtc-exploitants-agricoles-un-meme-statut-dindependant-des-realites-economiques-et-sociales-disparates/>

Emmanuel Berger, Odran Bonnet, “High wages in the private sector – More often directors than footballers and traders”, *INSEE Première* n°1800, May 2020

► [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4769580](https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4769580)

“Directors, footballers, traders... Who earn the most in France ?”, Datagora Instagram post, 5 June 2020

► [www.instagram.com/p/CBDu5E2DsC/](https://www.instagram.com/p/CBDu5E2DsC/)



Understanding businesses, their activities, investments, recruitment activities and the way they are organised and fully comprehending their development and diversity is a key challenge for public policies. INSEE therefore gathers structural information (size, nature of the activity, characteristics of the workforce, type of organisation, etc.) from businesses, together with cyclical information and information on specific topics (energy consumption, use of new technologies, innovation, etc.). It gathers this information predominantly by using administrative sources, carrying out surveys and, just recently, by using private sources made available by economic actors.



# Understanding businesses

## Testimony

**Sylvain MOREAU,**  
Director of business  
statistics



The health crisis has significantly impacted business activity and the way companies are organised. Our usual tools were not always suited to describing this unprecedented situation, which had a considerable impact on data collection. Thanks to the involvement of all the teams, we were able to develop our methods, mobilise external data and produce robust data. And, in order to document the consequences of this crisis on the French productive fabric as accurately as possible, we set up an ad hoc survey, the initial results of which were available by the end of the year.



## Following the economic situation with fewer companies answering surveys

Each month, INSEE calculates and publishes indicators to track the activity in the non-financial market sectors. The Institute also publishes industrial producer price indices on a monthly basis and producer price indices in services each quarter.

To produce these indices, INSEE uses monthly tax declarations of business value-added tax (VAT) and conducts surveys among businesses. During the first lockdown, VAT data showed an abnormally high number of companies recording zero turnover, due to the administrative shutdown measures, but also due to the relaxation of declaration obligations granted to companies during this exceptional period. Additional information was therefore used to differentiate companies whose turnover really had fallen to zero from those who did not submit their declarations.

The surveys posed similar difficulties. Although they are obligatory, there are always between 10% and 15% of companies that do not respond on time or at all. In “normal” times, statisticians know how to deal with missing responses. They take the results from a comparable company

in terms of size and activity and assign them to the company that has not responded or use the results from the previous year.

However, during the first lockdown, an unusually high number of companies did not respond. When too many companies do not respond, on top of an unprecedented economic situation, the usual assignment methods do not work as, in this case, the group of non-responding companies was likely to include a higher proportion of companies that had stopped operating than the group of companies that did respond. To continue closely tracking the economic situation, the experts at the business statistics Directorate used new sources, such as electricity consumption. They also used known sources that had previously been used to produce other indicators; for example, the short-time working data were used to estimate falls in production.

We were able to record late responses for March and April when we conducted the survey campaigns in May and June after the lockdown had been lifted. The revisions of the indices that resulted were very moderate, which subsequently validated the adjustment strategies implemented during this difficult period.

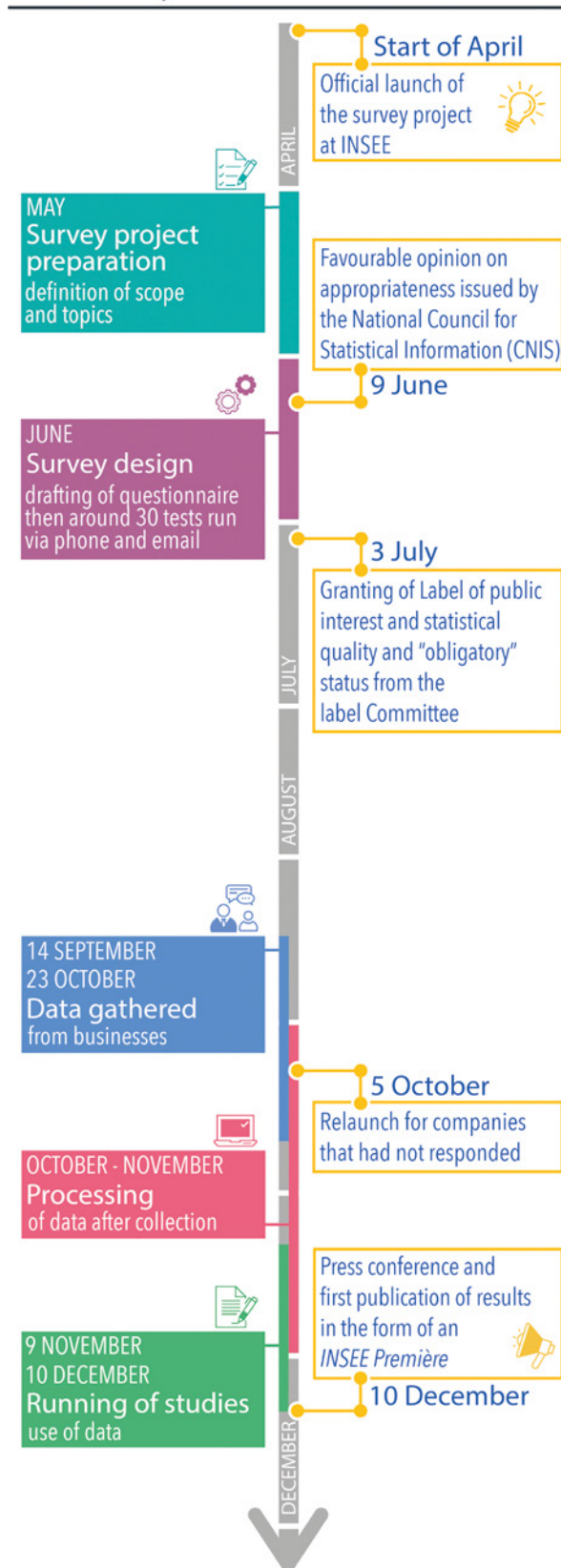
# How did INSEE measure the impact of the health crisis on businesses

Eight months. This is the time between the decision to launch the survey on the impact of the health crisis on the organisation and activities of businesses and publication of the initial results. This may seem like a long time, but for a survey of this scale, it is actually very short. The idea for such a survey emerged shortly after the first lockdown was imposed (17 March 2020). The decision was formally adopted in the first few days of April with the aim of publishing the first results before the end of the year.

From the outset, the challenge was to create a simple questionnaire prioritising questions with quick responses and that did not require the use of accounting documents. On 3 July, the survey was granted the public interest label and “obligatory” status from the official statistics quality label Committee. For that survey, 50,000 companies based in France (including overseas regions and departments, Mayotte included) were interviewed. The teams from the business statistics directorate expected a return rate of around 50%. In the end, this will be 45%, 20 to 25 points less than the usual thematic surveys. In addition to the effects of the situation, this return rate also reflects the brevity of the collection period: it was run over just six weeks, compared with the average 15 weeks for traditional business surveys.

As with other stages of this process, the results were published within a shorter timeframe than usual, in the form of an INSEE Première released on 10 December 2020. The impact of the health crisis on the organisation and finances of French companies has been huge. The application of health protocols has generated direct and indirect costs. 70% of companies reported the existence of indirect costs, associated with social distancing (limits on numbers of customers admitted, spacing of meetings, reorganisation of employees in the production chain, etc.) and with restricted use of space (for employees or customers). They valued the direct cost of purchasing masks, alcohol gel and other supplies required to comply with the protective measures at 3% of their 2019 turnover. In addition to the information that the survey allowed us to collect and use at the end of 2020, this activity was also a rich learning experience for observing the national productive fabric.

## Impact of the health crisis on business activity and organisation: survey carried out in record time



# 848,200 companies

WERE SET UP in 2020.

## Record number of business start-ups despite health crisis

In 2020, the total number of business start-ups in France reached a record level, with 848,200 business births, or 32,900 more than in 2019, despite the health crisis. The increase was again driven by registrations of sole proprietorships under the micro-entrepreneur scheme (9%), while start-ups of conventional sole proprietorships fell (-13%) and company start-ups remained stable. Therefore, in 2020, the proportion of micro-entrepreneurs among the total number of start-ups reached 65%, while that of conventional sole proprietorships sat at 10% and that of companies at 26%.

## Hypermarkets remain top for sales of food products

In 2018, 65% of food products were sold by large food retailers (hyper and supermarkets). However, their market share has fallen since 2010 in favour of retail sale via mail order houses or via Internet. Non-food products are mainly sold by specialised stores. Hypermarkets have lost ground in this segment, with supermarkets and retail sale via mail order houses or via Internet gaining ground. Sales of clothes in hypermarkets have been declining since 2010, while specialist stores continue to perform strongly.

# 3 in 4 live

LESS THAN 2 KM FROM A BAKER

## Less accessible businesses in suburban areas

Inequality in access to day-to-day services and retail outlets was at the heart of the Gilets Jaunes movement. In the 2020 edition of the "Companies in France" publication, INSEE studied the accessibility of shops in metropolitan France. The first finding was that the vast majority of the population lived near to shops: three out of four consumers lived within 2 kilometres of a bakery and 65% of the amounts spent at pharmacies took place in the municipality of residence. Consumers differ by the regions they live in. As such, one in three residents has limited access to clothing and products in terms of leisure, culture and sport. The further away from city centres, the less accessible shops are: on the outskirts of small and medium-sized urban centres, one in three residents has little access to all the products available.



## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION +

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INSEE conducts a large number of surveys of households and individuals. Regular surveys measure changes to or the persistence of major economic and social situations (income and living conditions, employment, etc.) and structural surveys, which are conducted every five to ten years, concentrate on specific behaviours or phenomena. INSEE also makes use of a number of administrative files to supplement its survey data. When combined with data from the population census, the data from administrative files provide valuable information on the population, family structures, employment, wages, income distribution, etc.



# Observation of the society

## Testimony



**Christel COLIN,**  
Director of demographic  
and social statistics



In 2020, INSEE did a lot of work to observe society in the context of a health crisis, with, for example, innovative work to measure population movements under the effect of the introduction and then the lifting of the first lockdown. We also continued our work in more traditional areas: poverty, inequality and the use of information and communication technologies. We have also published a series of portraits of socio-professional groups, tracing the evolution over the last forty years of their respective shares in total employment and of the socio-demographic characteristics of the individuals who make them up.



## In the spring of 2020, where did the French spend lockdown?

On the eve of the first lockdown, media reports indicated a mass exodus of urban dwellers in a hurry to reach the countryside. The analysis carried out by INSEE, in particular on the basis of aggregated anonymous mobile telephone data, makes it possible to account for this phenomenon and to portray its complexity, or even to qualify its scope. Because, in response to the question “Where did the French spend lockdown?”, INSEE and its experts replied, “mainly... at home!”. In further detail, a first deviation from this concerned foreign visitors and inhabitants of the French overseas departments and regions (départements et régions d’outre-mer - DROM): 1.3 million of them left the territory of metropolitan France before the lockdown was put in place (17 March). After the travel ban was introduced, INSEE counted 1.4 million more people in metropolitan France living in their department of residence than before. The high mountain departments were thus emptied of a part of the population present due to the effect of the closure of winter sports resorts, with the population decreases being significant in Savoie (-30%) and in the Hautes-Alpes (-27%).

The city of Paris had 450,000 fewer people during lockdown than on an average day before the lockdown. Half of these departures were attributable to people who were passing through returning to their homes, with the other half being Parisians who left to settle in another area during the lockdown period. Similar phenomena were observed for the cities of Lille, Toulouse, Grenoble and Lyon. Indeed, large cities contain many people passing through for work or tourism, as well as young adults, students or young workers, who have been able to join their families in another department. They include people who have a second home in a department other than their main place of residence (14% of the departmental population for Paris). In total, however, more residents returned to a given department than left, with the exception of Paris and, to a lesser extent, the Hauts-de-Seine. During the gradual release of the lockdown (between 11 May and 2 June 2020), during which travel was limited to 100 kilometres, the metropolitan population returned to Paris to only a very limited extent (+56,000 people compared to during the lockdown), particularly during the week when economic activity picked up again. These were mainly non-Parisians. Weekly travel between urban centres during the week and more rural or coastal departments at the weekend also began to pick up from this period onwards.

## Inequalities and poverty: an overview

### 9.1 million

INSEE publishes the poverty rate and the main indicators of inequalities in standards of living with a two-year delay, linked to the availability of tax data. In order to assess the situation more quickly, the Institute produces leading indicators. In 2019, the monetary poverty rate is expected to fall by 0.3 points in metropolitan France to 14.5% of the population. It had increased by 0.7 points in 2018, in particular due to a fall in housing benefits. In 2019, **9.1 million people are thought to have been in extreme poverty**, which is around 210,000 people fewer than in 2018. The poverty threshold is set at 60% of the median standard of living, which is the threshold used at European level.

### 22%

In 2017, housing expenditure is the area that most clearly differentiates between households according to their standard of living, followed by expenditure on food, transport, leisure and culture, and restaurants and hotels. The share of housing expenditure, excluding mortgage repayments, is higher for low-income households, who are more often tenants, single-parent families and single people. In 2017, housing accounted for an average of **22% of the expenditure of the poorest 20% of households**, making it their largest item of consumption, whereas it was only the 4th largest item of expenditure (12%) for the wealthiest 20% of households.

### 70%

In metropolitan France, one person in seven lives below the monetary poverty threshold. Poverty situations are often long-lasting and year-on-year persistence tended to increase between 2008 and 2017. **70% of people who were poor in 2016 were in the same situation in 2017**, while 63% of people who were poor in 2008 were still poor in 2009. This persistence of poverty is particularly high for people with few or no educational qualifications, children and people over 65. Getting out of poverty is not always a permanent escape. Only 20% of people deemed poor in the first year are no longer deemed poor over the following three years.

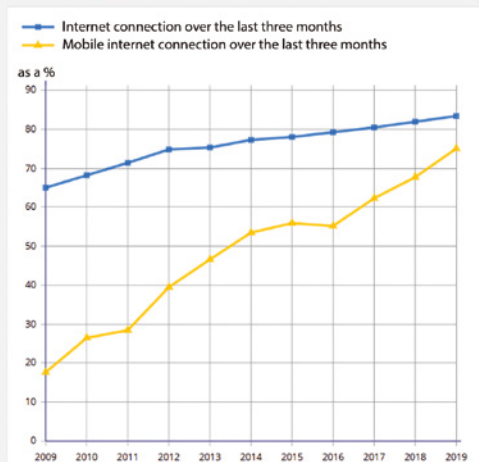
### 28.4%

In 2017, on average, gross disposable household income in France stood at 45,876€, with household consumption standing at 38,570€. Thus, their saving rate is 15.9%. This saving rate increases with income: after their consumption expenditure, **the poorest 20% of households put aside 2.7% of their disposable income in 2017, compared with 28.4% for the wealthiest 20%**. The poorest households dedicate a greater proportion of their expenditure to “unavoidable” consumption. The youngest households have a lower than average income, but also a lower level of “unavoidable” expenditure.

## Major increase in Internet use between 2009 and 2019

In ten years, the number of households with computer equipment and household internet use has increased dramatically, according to the French annual household survey on information and communication technologies (ICTs). In 2019, 83% of people aged 15 or over residing in France used the internet in the previous three months, compared to just 65% in 2009, while the proportion of people with internet access at home rose from 67% to 88%. In addition, 81% of households have broadband internet access in 2019, compared to 61% in 2009. Mobile internet use has also increased significantly. Thus, in 2019, 75% of people connected to the internet while not in the home using a mobile device, compared to less than 18% in 2009. The over 75s are catching up: in 2019, 32% of them have used the internet in the last three months (19% daily) compared to 8% and 5%, respectively, in 2009. Similarly, 22% of them use mobile internet, compared to less than 1% in 2009.

Proportion of people who connected to the internet over the last three months



Coverage: all individuals aged 15 or over living in an ordinary household in France. Sources: INSEE, Survey on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), 2009 to 2019.

# 1982-2019: forty years of development of socio-professional groups

Industrial and blue-collar workers, low-skilled employees, farmers, etc. In forty years, the proportion of these socio-professional groups within the employed population and the socio-demographic characteristics of the individuals in them have changed. To reflect this development, INSEE published a series of portraits of socio-professional groups in 2020. Since 1982, the proportion of industrial and blue-collar workers in the total employed population has fallen by 10 points, to stand at 19.6% in 2019. This group comprises professions that are still largely male, with eight industrial and blue-collar workers in ten being men, a proportion that has remained stable since 1982. This trajectory is shared by farmers, a group that is shrinking in number (7.1% of the

total employed population in 1982, 1.5% in 2019) and has become more male over the period. Conversely, middle-level professions are a growing group (+6 points in the total employed population since 1982) and one that is becoming more female, with the proportion of women rising from 41% to 53% between 1982 and 2018. In almost forty years, the proportion of managers and higher intellectual professionals has, in turn, more than doubled, rising from 8% of the population in employment in 1982 to 19% in 2019. Within this group, men remain in the majority but the presence of women has doubled over the period (21% in 1982, 42% in 2019). In turn, craftsmen, tradesmen, shopkeepers and heads of business account for 1.8 million people in 2019 (6.7% of the total employed population in France), 71% of whom are men. After having increased from the early 1980s to the late 2000s, the proportion of low-skilled employees has been declining since 2008, reaching 27% of the total employed population in 2019. At that time, three quarters of low-skilled employees are women.

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The population census is one of the historical activities performed by INSEE, which organises and controls the annual surveys, exploits the data and disseminates the results. This operation is carried out in partnership with the municipalities that carry out the survey on the ground. Using their responses, the Institute provides precise statistics on inhabitants, families and their housing: distribution by gender, age, nationality, profession, housing conditions, commute to work, transport used for commuting, etc.; fundamental information for many public and private-sector stakeholders.



# Conducting the population census and using the results

## Testimony

**Christel COLIN,**  
Director of demographic  
and social statistics



In late 2020, due to the pandemic, INSEE decided to postpone the census survey scheduled for 2021 to 2022, with the exception of Mayotte. Even though there is no survey of inhabitants conducted in 2021, INSEE will calculate updated populations for each municipality at the end of 2021, by adapting its methods. The census and the permanent population sample derived from it are essential sources for producing demographic analyses or analyses of changes in lifestyles. In 2020, we published studies on step-parents and fertility according to standard of living.



## A first annual census survey in Mayotte in 2021

In 2021, 11 municipalities in Mayotte will organise their first annual census survey. Indeed, the law of 28 February 2017 on scheduling relating to true equality in French overseas departments put an end to the system of five-yearly comprehensive censuses and stipulated that the municipalities of Mayotte should be treated in the same way as the municipalities of other French departments. Thus, the 10 municipalities of Mayotte with more than 10,000 inhabitants will carry out a survey every year on a sample of dwellings and the 7 municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants will carry out a comprehensive survey once every five years. The survey was still carried out in 2021, despite the health crisis. When the decision to postpone the census survey was taken in November 2020 for all the other French departments, the health situation in Mayotte was indeed still favourable and allowed the preparation operations to continue. Moreover, postponing the survey by one year would have had the consequence of delaying the updating of the legal populations of the municipalities. Indeed, in order to publish a first update of these populations, all the data necessary for the initial calculation must have been collected, i.e. all municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants must have been surveyed at least once and five samples must have been surveyed in municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants. For Mayotte, having its first survey in 2021, the first update of legal populations will be published in December 2025, eight years after the last update in 2017. This is already quite a long time and could not be extended given that the health situation allowed the survey to be carried out.



**Aurélien DAUBAIRE**

*INSEE Inter-regional director, La Réunion-Mayotte*

### **Why did INSEE decide to proceed with the census in Mayotte in November 2020?**

At that time, Mayotte was not on lockdown and the health situation in the archipelago allowed the survey to be prepared under good conditions. In consultation with the authorities, it therefore went ahead. A strict health protocol was put in place, with specific measures taken to ensure the safety of both respondents and census agents. This first survey is highly anticipated. It will be the culmination of an exceptional mobilisation of all stakeholders of INSEE and the municipalities concerned.

### **What are the difficulties on the ground?**

The survey in Mayotte is similar to the one carried out in other departments and regions, both overseas and in metropolitan France. However, the collection of the survey will have to take into account the characteristics of the archipelago's habitat and population, in particular the existence of numerous shanty towns made up of tin houses and the difficulties many respondents have in expressing themselves in French.

The survey method was partly adapted, with the shanty towns being surveyed comprehensively in a 5-year cycle. The other difficulty we face is that the internet is still not widely used in Mayotte. We will therefore be using a large number of printed forms which census agents will have to complete through interviews.



## In 2019, 800,000 step-parents live with their partner's children

The page of the census survey questionnaire on the dwelling has been amended, in 2018, to better identify the relationships between inhabitants of the

same dwelling. The census therefore makes it possible to carry out new studies on families, in particular because it now makes it possible to differentiate between step-parents and parents. In France, in 2019, 800,000 step-parents are living with children their spouse already had before their relationship. The family is thus blended. Within these families, the majority of children from a previous relationship live with their mother. Accordingly, the step-parents form a very male population: 73% are men.

## 38% of blended families have 3 or more children

The age gap between partners is higher in blended families: it is five years or more for 46% of these families, compared with 30% for "traditional" families, where all the children are those of the couple. The step-parents are less likely to be married and are more often in a common-law relationship. They also generally live in larger families: 38% of blended families have 3 or more children, compared to 21% of families with a minor child.

Four step-parents in ten live exclusively with their partner's children, without any other children present in the home. The ages of these step-parents vary greatly. Thus, 22% of the step-mothers concerned are under 30 years of age, compared to only 11% of mothers in "traditional" families; 29% of the step-fathers concerned are 50 years of age or older, compared with 18% of fathers in "traditional" families. 6 step-parents out of 10 live with both step-children and their own children (born before the relationship or children of the current couple). Step-parents living with their children from the current relationship are younger and more likely to be married: 50%, compared with 38% for other step-parents.

The man is generally older than his partner in couples with blended families. However, one time in five the woman is at least two years older than her partner.

## The women who have the most children are the poorest... And the wealthiest

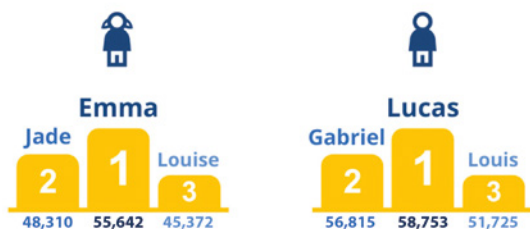
For the first time, INSEE published a study of fertility according to standard of living in 2020. In the past, analyses were already carried out by highest qualification or socio-professional group, without the standard of living variable being used. However, thanks to the permanent demographic sample (*échantillon démographique permanent* - EDP), a panel of individuals born on certain days of the year, the Institute has data on births and standards of living in a single source. The panel makes it possible to measure women's fertility by age, traditionally summarised using the TFR (total fertility rate). It also allows for women's fertility to be measured according to age and birth order through the TFROA (total fertility rate taking into account birth order and age), an indicator that includes the number of children already born to each woman. The TFROA seems more suitable than the TFR for analysing fertility by standard of living, as a family's standard of living depends partly on its size.



## High fertility at both ends of the standard of living scale

This analysis of fertility by standard of living leads to a general observation: in France, fertility is highest, on the one hand, for the poorest women and, on the other, for the wealthiest. Under the fertility conditions of the years 2012-2017, 20% of the poorest women have on average 2 children, a level similar to that of the wealthiest women (1.9 children). For the latter, the two-child family model is the most common: one in two of the wealthiest women is in this situation, with these women giving birth to their children later. Fertility is lowest for women with a mid-level standard of living, of around 1,400€ per month. Women born outside France are over-represented among the poorest women and have a higher fertility rate. The level of the woman's highest educational qualification has an inverse influence on fertility. For the wealthiest women, those with the highest educational qualifications have more children. The opposite is true for the poorest women.

## Emma and Lucas, the most common forenames given to children between 2009 and 2019



Reading note: between 2009 and 2019, 55,642 girls were given the name Emma



insee.fr

## From Jean to Gabriel, from Marie to Emma: the ranking of forenames since 1900

On *insee.fr*, an interactive tool makes it possible to determine the most popular names in France since 1900. All these data and the display of the results are extracted from the file on forenames. This source is composed of

the bulletins sent to INSEE by the civil registrars of the municipalities, which are themselves drawn up based on parent declarations. A quick search of the INSEE file on forenames shows that Marie and Jean were the most commonly given forenames in 1900. These two forenames remained the most popular until 1955. In that year, Marie was replaced as the most popular forename for the first time by Martine. Jean's period as the most popular forename ended three years later, with 22,110 boys being named Philippe and 21,234 being named Jean in 1958. As for girls' names, after Martine and Marie, Brigitte becomes the most popular forename in 1959, with Catherine in second place. The year 1960 confirmed the decline of Jean and Marie, with both names leaving the top three in favour of Catherine, Sylvie and Christine for girls and Philippe, Patrick and Pascal for boys. The 1960s saw Sylvie, Nathalie, Philippe, Thierry and Christophe successively take over the top spot. In 1975, Stéphanie and Sébastien took first place, followed by Céline and Nicolas in 1980, then Élodie and Kévin in 1990 and, finally, Léa and Thomas in 2000. Between 2009 and 2019, the most common forenames given to children were Emma and Lucas. After the unbroken spell of dominance of Marie and Jean from 1900 to 1955, a new duo emerged in 2016: Emma and Gabriel have been the most common forenames given to children in the last four years.

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Thanks to its regional offices, INSEE is developing detailed knowledge of the French territories. Each year, the regional offices produce studies, very often in partnership with local public-sector stakeholders. These studies and statistics are primarily of interest to local stakeholders, but their general scope also makes them useful to civil society and the general public. In the regions, the INSEE offices provide advice and expertise to public-sector stakeholders in response to their requests related to the deployment of public policies, participate in focus groups and regional committees, and assist them in using data.



# Describing and analysing regions and territories

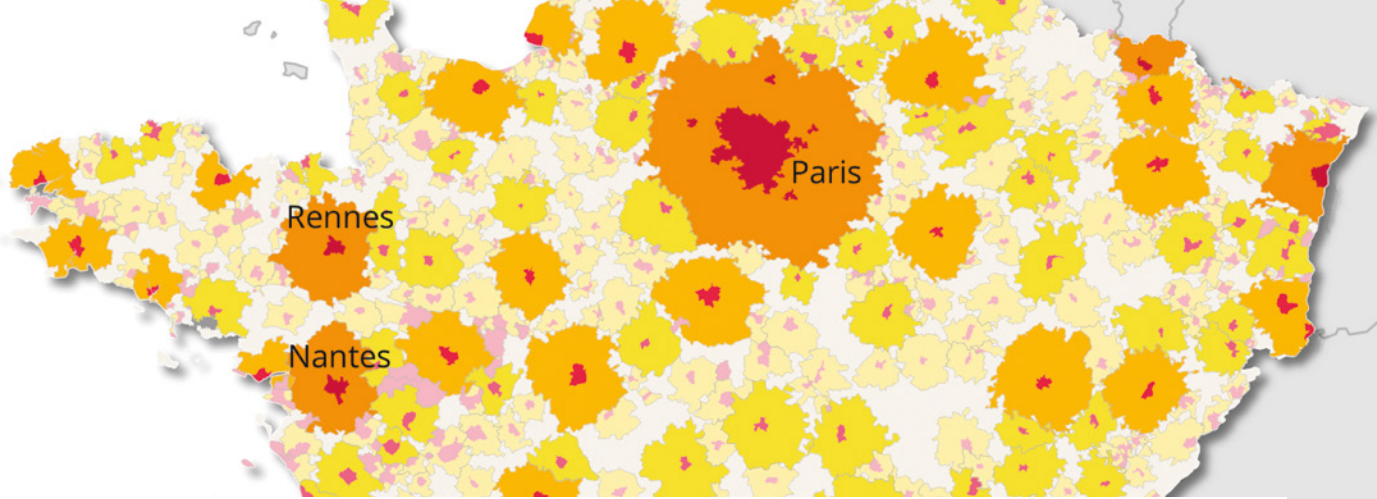
## Testimony



**Alain BAYET,**  
Director of dissemination  
and regional action



In 2020, INSEE performed new zoning of towns into functional areas. This functional approach to urban space is complemented by a new definition of rural, which allows a better characterisation and analysis of rural territories. This new zoning and the very high income households are two themes that have led to coordinated publications by our regional offices. In 2020, we also continued to document poverty and inequality within the territories, particularly in the overseas departments and regions.



## Town functional areas: a new zoning to better understand the demographic of urban areas

In 2020, INSEE replaced its system of zoning towns into urban areas, which had been in place since 2010, with the zoning of towns into functional areas. The functional area of a town defines the extent of its influence on the surrounding municipalities. This zoning makes it possible to account for the peri-urbanisation that has been taking place since the 1970s.

Many households, especially families with children, choose to move to the outskirts of towns, while continuing to work in the town. In order to describe the functioning of a town, it is therefore important to take into account the links that the town centre has with these sometimes distant municipalities.

The functional area of a town comprises an urban cluster and a periphery. The urban cluster corresponds to an aggregation of municipalities in the centre of the area, defined on the basis of population and employment. The periphery is made up of municipalities where at least 15% of the active people work in the urban cluster. Within the urban cluster, the most densely populated municipality is called the central municipality. In some cases, including

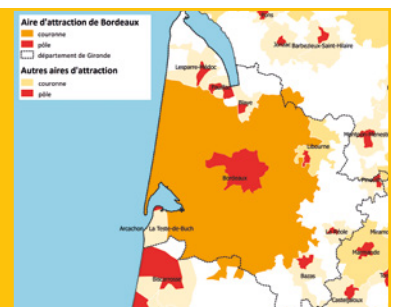
Paris, the area may include multiple urban hubs. This zoning is part of an international harmonisation of methods: the largest functional areas of towns correspond to the cities and “functional urban areas” used by Eurostat and the Organisation for economic cooperation and development (OECD). This new zoning thus facilitates international comparisons and makes it possible to see the influence within France of large foreign cities, for example the influence of Luxembourg on a wide strip of borderland alongside the Moselle.

In France, 93% of the population lives in one of the 699 functional areas of towns, 682 of which are in metropolitan France, with the other 17 in the French overseas departments and regions.

The functional approach to towns makes it possible to study regional disparities from two perspectives: the total population of the area and the difference between the urban hub and the periphery. Thus, the proportion of young people and managers is highest in the largest areas. Families with children have a greater presence in the peripheries, whereas young adults, students and active young people are more numerous in the urban hubs. Over the last ten years, population growth is twice as high in the peripheries than in the urban hubs, as a result of peri-urbanisation.

### The example of the functional area of Bordeaux

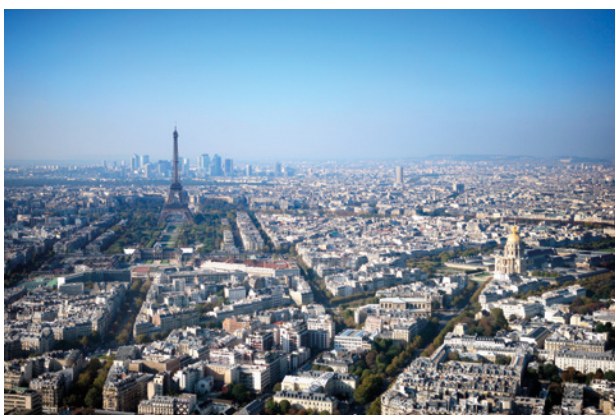
The Bordeaux area has 1.3 million inhabitants. It is one of the 14 largest areas in France. It is made up of an urban hub, composed of the municipality of Bordeaux and 17 other municipalities, housing a total of 735,000 inhabitants. The periphery, in turn, contains 257 municipalities and has 606,000 inhabitants. The urban hub is included in the Bordeaux urban unit but is much smaller, since the urban unit comprises 73 municipalities. The urban hub has a strong attraction for the municipalities in its periphery: half of the active people in the periphery have a job in the urban hub.



## 43% of very high-earners live in Île-de-France

In 2017, a person is in the “very high-income earners” bracket, i.e. the wealthiest 1% of the population, if the initial income (income received before any direct taxation and receipt of social benefits) of their tax household per consumption unit (CU) exceeds 108,670€ over one year. This threshold corresponds to monthly income of 9,060€ for a single person and 19,020€ for a couple with two children under the age of 14, with the reference person of the household counting as 1 CU, the second adult counting for 0.5 CU and two children counting for 0.3 CU each.

In France, in 2017, 641,628 people belonged to a tax household with an initial annual income that meant it fell within the very high income bracket. 43% of these people (275,900) lived in Île-de-France. This concentration is explained in particular by the economic weight of the region: Île-de-France is the leading economic region in France and managerial staff account for 30% of employment there, compared with 18% at national level. Elsewhere in France, the wealthiest 1% are more likely to live in border areas, coastal areas and metropolitan areas. 11% of them live in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.



In the Occitanie region, 37,600 people belong to a very high-income household and benefit from significant income from assets. They are more concentrated in urban areas, particularly in Toulouse and Montpellier. In Nouvelle-Aquitaine, a large majority of households with very high incomes live in the most highly populated departments of the region, especially along the coast.

In the rest of the region, their presence is often linked to the production of prestige goods, such as wine around Saint-Émilion or spirits in Cognac. Salaried employment is the main source of income for these very high-income households. However, they are more likely to receive non-salaried income and income from assets than other households. They are more likely to be couples without children or households with at least one member over the age of 60. These data on very high-earners are taken from the Localised social and fiscal file (Fichier localisé social et fiscal - FiLoSoFi).



David LÉVY

*Scientific consultant of the regional action department*

### What is the definition of rural areas used by INSEE until 2020 and what were its limitations?

Until 2020, rural areas were defined based on urban units. An urban unit is a municipality or a group of municipalities with a continuous built-up area (no separation of more than 200 metres between two buildings) with at least 2,000 inhabitants. Municipalities belonging to an urban unit were defined as “urban” and other municipalities were defined as “rural”. The main limitation of this approach was that it provided a “hollow” definition of rural space, by opposition rather than by complementarity.

### What is the new definition of rural areas adopted?

In 2019, the Rural Agenda mission expressed the desire for INSEE to propose a new approach to rural areas, one that is not the opposite of the definition of urban. The new definition is based on the municipal density grid. This typology, which is used by Eurostat, allows municipalities to be categorised according to the concentration of the population in a territory, by measuring the number of inhabitants on squares of 1 km<sup>2</sup>. It divides the municipalities into three categories: the first two correspond to urban areas (densely populated municipalities and municipalities of intermediate population density), the third corresponds to rural areas. For example, in a densely populated municipality, the majority of the population is found in areas with more than 1,500 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>.

### What needs does this new definition meet?

This definition was the subject of a broad consensus among the users consulted (public statisticians, urban planning agencies, researchers, elected representatives, etc.). It should therefore be used in many studies and used in the definition of public policies. Moreover, as it will be harmonised at European level, it will make it possible not only to perform comparisons between countries, but to better characterise border areas as well. According to this definition, 88% of municipalities in France are rural and contain 33% of the population, which is higher than the average for European countries (28%).

## French overseas departments marked by poverty and inequalities

In 2017, in the French overseas departments, the standard of living of the inhabitants is generally lower than that of the population of metropolitan France, except for the wealthiest people. For example, the median income of the inhabitants of Martinique is 20% lower than that of the population of metropolitan France. That of the Guyanese population is 46% lower, with an even greater gap between Mayotte and metropolitan France. Inequalities in standards of living are more pronounced in the French overseas departments because many households there have very low incomes. The poverty rate measured in accordance with a national threshold (1,010€ per month for a single person or 2,120€ per month for a couple with two children under the age of 14) is two to four times higher in the historic French overseas departments than in metropolitan France and five times higher in Mayotte. In further detail, poverty affects one person in seven in metropolitan France, compared to one in three in the West Indies, four in ten in La Réunion, one in two in French Guiana and three quarters of the people of Mayotte. In metropolitan France, only the department of Seine-Saint-Denis has a poverty rate close to that of the French overseas departments (28%). In the French overseas departments, as well as metropolitan France, such poor people are frequently unemployed, with few or no educational qualifications, and they are over-represented in single-parent families and among people living alone.

## POVERTY IN THE FRENCH OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS IN 3 FIGURES

**1/3** In 2017, in Guadeloupe and in Martinique, one person in three lived below the national poverty threshold that year, compared to one person in seven in metropolitan France. People whose standard of living is below 60% of the median standard of living, i.e. 1,010€ per month for a single person in 2017, are considered poor.

**10** In 2017, in French Guiana, the income of the wealthiest 20% of people was 10 times higher than the income of the poorest 20%. This standard of living inequality indicator is around 6 in Guadeloupe and Martinique, 5 in La Réunion and 4 in metropolitan France. Inequalities are more marked in the French overseas territories than in metropolitan France because many people there are on low incomes.

**70%** In French Guiana, 70% of the disposable income of the poorest 20% of households is made up of non-contributory social benefits (separate from those granted in return for contributions, such as unemployment benefits, retirement pensions, etc.). In Martinique, Guadeloupe and La Réunion, social benefits represent more than half the income of these poorest households, compared to one third of the income of the poorest 20% of households in metropolitan France.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION +

- David Audenaert, Marie-Pierre de Bellefon, Olivier Pégaz-Blanc, "Functional areas: more 15-29 year-olds and executives in the centres and highly populated areas", *INSEE Première* n°1827, November 2020  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5237328](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5237328)
- Marie-Pierre de Bellefon, Pascal Eusebio, Jocelyn Forest, Olivier Pégaz-Blanc, Raymond Warnod,

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▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5209514](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/5209514)

- Marina Robin, Simon Guevara, "43% of very high-income earners reside in Île-de-France", *INSEE Focus* n°192, May 2020  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4964163](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4964163)
- Ludovic Audoux, Claude Mallemanche, Pascal Prévot,

"Significant poverty in the French overseas departments, particularly in French Guiana and Mayotte", *INSEE Première* n°1804, July 2020  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4772978](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4772978)

- Hugo Camille, et al., "Ma région ? C'est l'Essentiel !", *INSEE blog*, 12 January 2021  
▶ <https://blog.insee.fr/ma-region-cest-lessentiel/>

### The essentials about... my region !

Since 1 January 2016, France has had 18 regions, 13 of which are in metropolitan France and 5 are in the French overseas departments. In order to give the best possible account of the specific nature of each of these 18 regions and to ensure that key figures are available in a few clicks, INSEE has published on [insee.fr](http://insee.fr) "L'essentiel sur..."

les régions". Each regional "Essential" offers essential data, a set of questions and answers providing more specific insights, methodological details and links to publications by INSEE or other organisations to extend the research.



INSEE's statisticians know how to handle large files while guaranteeing their security and confidentiality. The Institute has therefore been entrusted with the fundamental mission of managing directories of companies and individuals, even though they are not exclusively used for statistical purposes. In particular, the directories in question are the Digital system of the national directory of businesses and establishments (*Système informatisé du répertoire national des entreprises et des établissements - SIRENE*) which is used to identify businesses, the National directory for the identification of natural persons (*Répertoire national d'identification des personnes physiques - RNIPP*) and the Single electoral register (*Répertoire électoral unique - REU*) which replaced the General electoral register on 1 January 2019.



# Managing large directories and registers



## Testimony

**Christel COLIN,**  
Director of demographic and social statistics



In 2020, during the Covid-19 epidemic, the National directory for the identification of natural persons was used to monitor the development of mortality. By disseminating the death figures widely and with a very short delay from the time of their declaration, INSEE has responded effectively to the strong social and institutional demand made of it on this subject. The Single electoral register, used for the first time for the 2019 European elections, was again used for the 2020 municipal elections.



## Thanks to the National directory for the identification of natural persons, the evolution of mortality was monitored week after week

Just a few days after the first lockdown in March 2020, INSEE was asked by various stakeholders to provide recent data on deaths at the level of each department. The objective of this was to better understand the initial effects of the Covid-19 pandemic by measuring excess mortality from all causes.

INSEE has managed the National directory for the identification of natural persons (RNIPP) since 1946. In this context, Decree n° 82-103 requires municipalities to send information on deceased persons to the Institute within a maximum of 8 days after the declaration at the town hall. The data on more than 9 deaths in 10 are sent to INSEE by the municipalities digitally. From the start of the first lockdown period, INSEE suggested to the municipalities still using paper that they switch to sending the data digitally via its free software Aireppnet. 4,900 municipalities took the plunge. But these were small municipalities with few deaths. Accordingly, digitisation increased only slightly (+ 2 points). The vast majority of municipalities

that use paper are very small and have problems with computer equipment or personnel. In order to meet the demand for data on deaths in real time or almost real time, INSEE quickly became involved. Usually, such data are released at the end of each month for the previous month and for the whole year in October of the following year. At the onset of the health crisis, daily programmes were developed to extract data from the National directory for the identification of natural persons and methodological expert examinations were implemented. In effect, it was necessary to determine the delay with which INSEE would release the data in order to meet the twofold requirement of recency (to monitor the crisis) and comprehensiveness (to make the data meaningful). The choice was made to use a delay of 11 days for total deaths and 7 days for those sent digitally, which are reported to the Institute more quickly.

INSEE has also decided to disseminate these new data as widely as possible, by updating the insee.fr website every Friday. The major internal mobilisation effort resulted in the online launch of the dedicated website on 27 March 2020, only 10 days after the first lockdown was introduced and in spite of an unprecedented requirement for the teams to work remotely. The dissemination was then enriched with an individual file on deaths allowing researchers, the media and citizens to produce their own graphs and analyses on the basis of the data made available by the Institute. This work will continue in 2021.

## Legal Entity Identifier, a directory resulting from the crisis of 2007-2008

The desire to create a global system allowing the unique identification of legal entities trading in financial markets strengthened during the so-called “sub-prime” crisis. Launched by the G20 in 2011, the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) initiative resulted in a global directory that can be used as a common repository in late 2012/early 2013. Initially used at international level to identify entities trading in derivatives in the US or Europe, LEIs have since been become widespread in Europe, applying to all entities trading in financial markets. New regulations also require their use in many countries outside Europe and the United States, notably in China and India. In France, the ministry of Economy and Finance proposed in 2013 that INSEE be a local issuer of LEIs because of its experience in managing directories and identifiers. It was confirmed in this role in 2018 through its accreditation by the Global LEI Foundation (GLEIF). INSEE currently manages 87,000 LEIs. This activity has bolstered the Institute’s dominant position within the process for the identification of French economic entities. The second stage of the initiative, launched in mid-2017, consisted of supplementing the identification data of LEI applicants with those of their direct and ultimate owners. These so-called “level 2” data provide significant improvements in terms of knowing the composition of groups and their financial basis.

### Key figure:

# 87,000

**THE NUMBER OF  
LEGAL ENTITY IDENTIFIERS  
MANAGED BY INSEE  
in 2020**

## Key figures for the Single electoral register in 2020

**47.7 million** people were registered on the French electoral rolls (excluding New Caledonia) as at 14 February 2020, 1.3 million of whom were living outside of France and registered on a consular list.

**94%** of French people of voting age were registered on an electoral roll in metropolitan France and in the French overseas departments. Thanks to the automatic registration procedure, 99% of adults under the age of 30 are registered, compared to 91% of those aged 30-44 and 93% of those aged 45 and over.

**544,000** extra people were registered on the electoral rolls between 14 April 2019 and 14 February 2020. Only part of this increase in registration is due to demographics: 657,000 young people born in 2001 and early 2002 were automatically registered on the electoral rolls during this period, while only 409,000 deceased persons were removed, i.e. a net balance of + 248,000.

**208** consular lists allow French citizens living outside France to vote. Four of them had more than 50,000 voters in February 2020: the consular post in Geneva managed the largest of these lists (114,000 voters), followed by London, Brussels and Montreal.

**330,000** voters who are nationals of another EU Member State were registered on at least one of the two supplementary lists of municipalities in February 2020. Nationals of another EU Member State residing in France can apply to be registered on an electoral roll to vote in municipal and European elections. With 111,600 registered voters, the Portuguese were the most numerous, followed by the Italians (55,300), the Belgians (47,500) and the Spanish (33,900). The 46,000 Britons on the lists had been removed following Brexit on 31 January 2020.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Publications

Dissemination of the number of deaths (from all causes) by day, by region and by department.

Number of daily deaths updated each week by INSEE to scale.

► [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4493845](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4493845)

Alain Bayet, Sylvie Le Minez et Valérie Roux, "Mourir de la grippe ou du coronavirus : faire parler les chiffres de décès publiés par l'Insee... avec discernement", *INSEE blog*, April 2020.

► [blog.insee.fr/mourir-de-la-grippe-ou-du-coronavirus-faire-parler-les-chiffres-de-deces-publies-par-linsee-avec-discernement/](http://blog.insee.fr/mourir-de-la-grippe-ou-du-coronavirus-faire-parler-les-chiffres-de-deces-publies-par-linsee-avec-discernement/)

Alain Bayet, Sylvie Le Minez et Valérie Roux, "Statistiques sur les décès : le mode d'emploi des données de l'Insee en 7 questions/réponses", *INSEE blog*, May 2020

► [blog.insee.fr/statistiques-sur-les-deces-le-mode-demploi-des-donnees-de-linsee-en-7-questions-reponses/](http://blog.insee.fr/statistiques-sur-les-deces-le-mode-demploi-des-donnees-de-linsee-en-7-questions-reponses/)

Dominique Guédès, "47.7 million voters on the French electoral lists in February 2020", *INSEE Focus* n°186, 26 February 2020

► <https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4492931>

Pierrette Schuhl, "The Legal Entity Identifier: international context and role of INSEE", *Courrier des statistiques* n°1, December 2018

► [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4195372?sommaire=4195376](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4195372?sommaire=4195376)

### The sirene business Register

Sirene lists all the companies (legal entities and individual companies) and establishments present on French territory since 1973. Each company is identified by an identification number, or "Siren", and each establishment is identified by a "Siret" number, which begins with the Siren of the company to which it is attached. Sirene has covered administrations since 1983 and the agricultural sector since

1995. In 2019, 11 million companies and administrations and 12 million active establishments were listed. INSEE updates Sirene on the basis of declarations completed by companies when they are set up and then when other events affecting them occur, such as a change of address or activity or a closure. These declarations are made to the Centre for formalities and businesses (*Centres de formalités des entreprises*) and sent to INSEE, which thus updates the Sirene register on an ongoing basis. Since January 2017, the database of companies and establishments from the Sirene register has been freely available via [sirene.fr](http://sirene.fr) and [data.gouv.fr](http://data.gouv.fr). Since July 2018, it has also been accessible via APIs (Application programming interfaces).

• [Sirene open data](http://sirene.fr/sirene/public/static/open-data)

► [sirene.fr/sirene/public/static/open-data](http://sirene.fr/sirene/public/static/open-data)

► [api.insee.fr/catalogue/](http://api.insee.fr/catalogue/)

► [www.data.gouv.fr/fr/datasets/base-sirene-des-entreprises-et-de-leurs-etablissements-siren-siret/](http://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/datasets/base-sirene-des-entreprises-et-de-leurs-etablissements-siren-siret/)

### The single electoral Register

The single electoral Register (*Répertoire électoral unique - REU*), established by law n°2016-1048 of 1 August 2016, which entrusted its management to INSEE, has been operational since 1 January 2019. It details the electoral situation of all voters. The register is updated by the municipalities and consular posts, which validate the applications for registration submitted by voters and remove voters who no longer wish to be registered. Based on the information received by the administrations that hold it, INSEE automatically registers people who are about to reach voting age and those who have just acquired French nationality; the institute removes from the register voters who have lost their electoral capacity (following a conviction or loss of nationality) and records registrations and removals ordered by the judicial authority. Finally, in the single electoral Register, INSEE notes

removals due to death and changes in civil status. The register is continuously updated and covers the entire territory of the French Republic, with the exception of New Caledonia. The electoral roles established for an election are extracted from the single electoral Register. The latter is managed via the ELIRE website developed by INSEE.

• [Establishment of the single electoral Register](http://www.insee.fr/en/information/4489573)

► [www.insee.fr/en/information/4489573](http://www.insee.fr/en/information/4489573)

• [Access to the ELIRE website](https://repertoire-electoral.insee.fr)

► <https://repertoire-electoral.insee.fr>

### National directory for the identification of natural persons

The National directory for the identification of natural persons (*Répertoire national d'identification des personnes physiques - RNIPP*), which includes all persons born in France, together with persons born abroad who need to be registered in the social sphere, i.e. to hold a NIR, a registration number in the National directory for the identification of natural persons, which is more commonly referred to as a "social security number" (or "INSEE number"). It is governed by decree n°82-103 of 22 January 1982. For each person present on French territory, the National directory for the identification of natural persons includes their NIR and information on their civil status: surname, forename(s), date and place of birth and, where applicable, date and place of death. INSEE updates it based on statistical bulletins, sent by civil registrars, relating to a birth, a death and any other act modifying the civil status of persons. The National directory for the identification of natural persons is an instrument for verifying and certifying civil status for social security bodies, banks and directories (Sirene and the single electoral Register).

• [RNIPP](http://www.insee.fr/en/metadonnees/definition/c1602)

► [www.insee.fr/en/metadonnees/definition/c1602](http://www.insee.fr/en/metadonnees/definition/c1602)

INSEE aims to reach out to all audiences and to make its figures speak for themselves to ensure that any curious citizen is able to access them. With more than 40 million visits per year, insee.fr showcases the output of the official statistical service in full and remains a key tool. In order to diversify their audience, the statistical studies and data are relayed on social networks and other external communication media, such as the INSEE blog. In order to reach out to all audiences, INSEE participates in events for the general public to reinforce the educational nature of its missions and answers questions from data users.



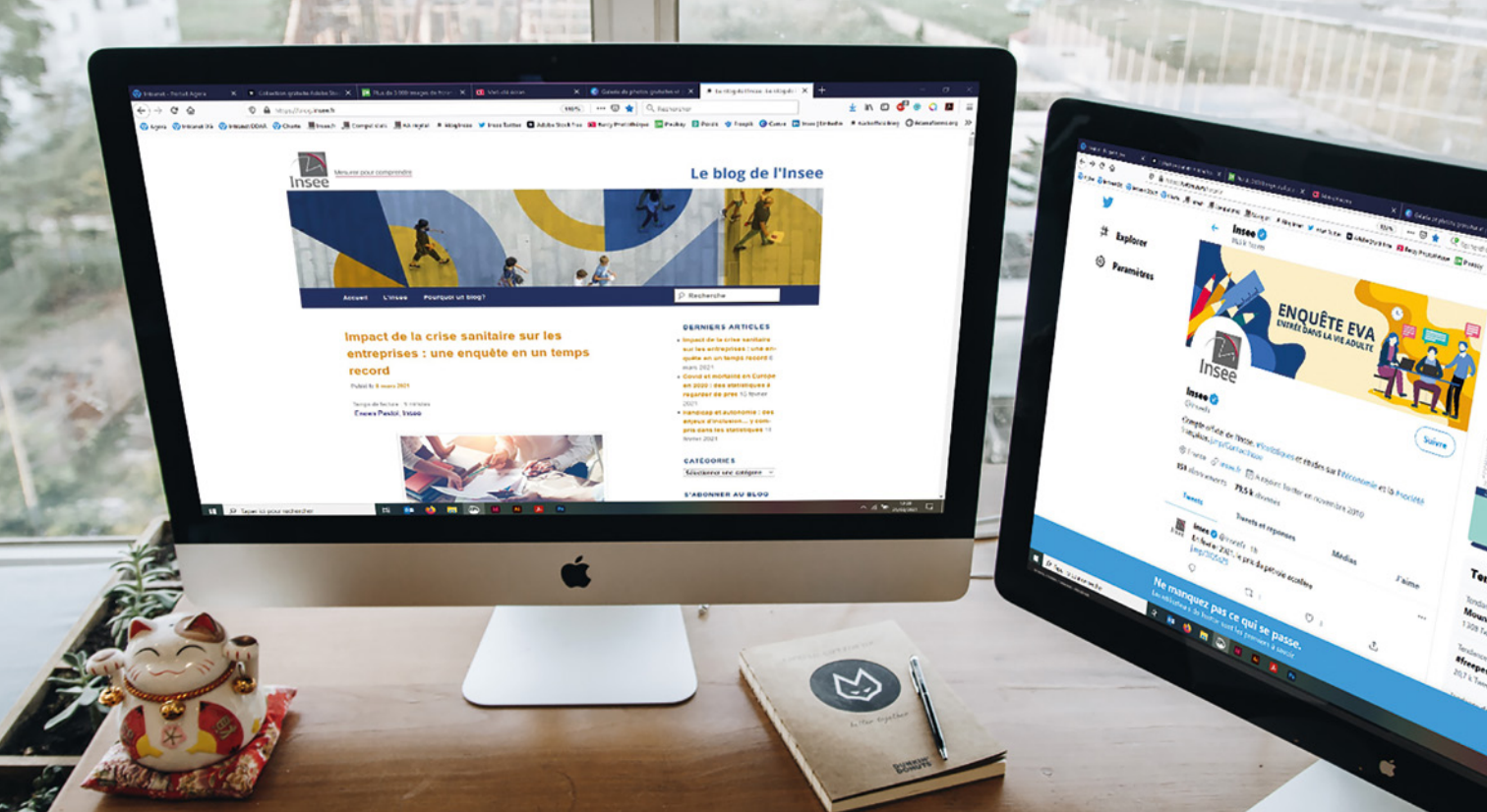
# Disseminating and communicating its statistics and studies

## Testimony

**Alain BAYET,**  
Director of dissemination  
and regional action



The health crisis has caused a major increase in requests being made to INSEE. The mobilization of the teams in charge of relations with all our audiences (companies, individuals and administrations) has, among other things, made it possible to support the roll-out of emergency aid or short-time working. During this crisis, INSEE's presence in the media and on social networks was also strengthened, and new links were forged with data journalists. Finally, the launch of the blog has opened a new way for communication with a wider audience.



## The INSEE blog: a tool to shed light on public debate

Launched in early 2020, the INSEE blog has very quickly found its audience. Indeed, this new communication medium has had more than 150,000 unique visitors and 360,000 page views over the past year. The regular publication of articles has enabled the Institute to take part in debates in its field of expertise and to correct erroneous information when it was circulating in the press or on social networks. Articles providing an update on mortality figures and analysing excess mortality in relation to the health crisis were among the most popular posts on the blog. From *“Google en sait-il plus que l’Insee sur les Français ?”* to *“Oui, la statistique publique produit des statistiques ethniques”*, via *“Que peut faire l’Insee à partir des données de téléphonie mobile”* and *“Chômage : les Français mentent-ils aux Français ?”*, 30 articles were published in 2020. With its blog, INSEE wants to reach as many people as possible, particularly those who are not familiar with the concepts of economics or statistical tools, but who are seeking to better understand economic and social phenomena and how they develop.

## A sharp increase in activity on social networks

INSEE became more prominent on social networks in 2020. That year, there was a sharp increase in activity and more discussions with the public, in connection with the INSEE publications devoted to the health crisis, particularly those on the economic situation and deaths. The number of followers has increased on all the Institute’s social media accounts: + 9,200 followers for the national Twitter feed @InseeFr (78,200 as at the end of 2020), + 11,400 on LinkedIn (25,700) and + 2,100 on the YouTube channel (3,300). 2,208 tweets were posted in 2020. They were viewed almost 12 million times and generated almost 420,000 interactions (such as a like, retweet or comment) in 2020, after 112,000 in 2019. On other social networks, consultation statistics have also increased, with INSEE experts having an increasing presence, particularly on LinkedIn. This larger audience has allowed new content such as infographics and videos to be developed. 2020 was also marked by the launch of two regional Twitter accounts, in Hauts-de-France in June and in Brittany in November. Finally, as part of a partnership, INSEE published several posts on Datagora’s Instagram account.



## Communication kits to encourage responses to surveys

To promote its household surveys and encourage the people concerned to respond, INSEE has been producing communication kits on various (print and digital) media since 2017. In 2020, INSEE made these kits available for several surveys: “*Histoire de vie et patrimoine*”, “*Entrée dans la vie adulte*” and “*Migrations, famille et vieillissement*”. This action is fully in line with guideline A of the INSEE 2025 strategy “Making the figures tell a story and reaching out to all parts of the community”. Local authorities have taken ownership of these communication kits and regularly distribute them to their citizens, actions that are reported both by the regional daily press and on social networks.

## More than 11,000 participants in the European statistics competition

Organised by Eurostat, the European statistics competition (ESC) takes place in two stages, one at national level and one at European level. The 2020-2021 iteration involved 11,000 secondary school students from 16 European countries. In France, 81 teams of secondary school students from the year 12 and year 13 classes and 9 teams of students from the year 11 classes competed, giving a total of 227 participants. The ESC challenges invite each participating team to test their theoretical knowledge in the field of statistics, to focus on the data produced by the official statistics stakeholders and to discover or rediscover their societal issues. This competition represents a first introduction to data analysis and is highly appreciated each year by its participants, whether they are students or teachers. In 2019-2020, the French team MARS finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the European stage.



Marie-Paule LLATI-SCHUHL

Head of the press office

## Seminar with data journalists

### In 2020, the press office organised a first seminar for data journalists. Why address them?

Through data visualisation, these journalists help the general public to better understand complex issues. They use datasets to create their infographics. These data journalists are increasingly making requests to the press office. We thus received around 20 requests in 2019 and more than around 40 in 2020. It was therefore important for us to get to know this community of users of our data better and to understand their working methods and expectations.

### How are the seminars you offer organised?

These are themed workshops led by two experts, one from the data producing department and one from the dissemination department. The first such workshop was held in October 2020 in a hybrid format, half remotely and half face-to-face, with our colleagues at insee.fr. This workshop was an opportunity to make contact with the participants. We first scanned the main INSEE databases to familiarise ourselves with them and manipulate the different datasets. In a second step, the workshop participants were able to discover the potential of local data that allows them to know everything (or almost everything) about the municipalities and inter-municipal areas: population, household size, age, economic fabric, place of work, etc.

### What is your assessment of this experience?

A very positive one! We welcomed 21 data journalists with various profiles: data processing specialists and cartographers, as well as fact-checkers, i.e. journalists specialised in verifying information. During the discussions, not only did technical needs regarding formats emerge, but they also revealed questions about what can and cannot be done with our data, its comparability, etc. We asked the participants to give us an idea of the themes that should be explored in future workshops. In particular, they mentioned the API Sirene, together with data on employment, wages and compulsory levies.

## INSEE Contact, more available than ever to respond to requests

INSEE Contact responds to questions and requests for information from the public regarding the Institute's data, publications and various services. To do this, the service uses various tools to take into account the specific habits and needs of each of the audiences it addresses. The media used include interactive voice servers, a frequently asked questions (FAQ) section and chatboxes on [insee.fr](https://www.insee.fr), telephone and email. Internet users are also increasingly asking questions via the social network Twitter. In 2020, INSEE Contact remained contactable, with remote working allowing continuity of activity for this essential service provided by the Institute. Almost 100,000 requests were processed during the year. Among the other concerns raised, the decrees relating to the government's business support measures have prompted many companies to ask INSEE about their eligibility, which is linked to their sector of activity. However, this flow of requests did not impair the quality of the service provided by INSEE Contact. Indeed, more than 2 users out of 3 were satisfied with the responses provided. To strengthen the INSEE Contact team, a third response centre was created in September 2020 in Dijon, at the premises of the INSEE regional office for Burgundy-Franche-Comté.

## APIs: an expanded catalogue and Sirene in face of the crisis

APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) are automatic data exchange programs that have become essential for updating and matching databases. In 2020, INSEE acquired three new APIs, relating to local data, indices and time series and statistical metadata. They complement the two Sirene and Nomenclatures APIs that have been available since 2018. At the end of January 2020, the new "refusal to register with the Trade and Companies Register" service was added to the basic Sirene API offer. The consolidation of the information system made it possible to respond to the increase in institutional demand linked to the payment of aid to businesses in the context of the health crisis, in particular the requests for identification from the Services and payment agency (*Agence de services et de paiement - ASP*) following the short-time working measures. Requests from administrations calling upon the Sirene API via the account of the Inter-ministerial digital directorate (*Direction interministérielle du numérique - Dinum*), most often to identify companies or establishments, more than doubled during the lockdown period (1.5 million requests in January and February 2020 compared to 3.2 million to 4 million monthly requests from March to June), even reaching 5.5 million in December. In total, 31 million requests were made via Dinum in 2020, compared to 11 million in 2019.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Websites and blog

- INSEE  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/en>
- INSEE blog  
▶ <https://blog.insee.fr/>
- Sirene  
▶ [https://www.sirene.fr/sirene/public/accueil?sirene\\_locale=en](https://www.sirene.fr/sirene/public/accueil?sirene_locale=en)
- Local statistics  
▶ <https://statistiques-locales.insee.fr/#c=home>
- INSEE API  
▶ <https://api.insee.fr>
- The census and me  
▶ <https://www.le-recensement-et-moi.fr>

### Social networks

- INSEE on social networks  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/3127332>

### Event

- European statistics competition (2020-2021)  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/4801350>

### Communication kits for surveys

- Histoire de vie et Patrimoine, an INSEE survey  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/2964509>

- Entering adult life  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/3713056>
- Migration, family and ageing (a survey on demographic changes in the French overseas departments)  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/4230338>

### Press area

- Press service, press releases and press kits  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/en/information/2107814>

### INSEE Contact

- INSEE Contact  
▶ <https://www.insee.fr/en/information/2414818>



There is growing social demand for reliable and robust statistics on a variety of complex topics. To meet this demand, INSEE is constantly improving its methods. The Institute is experimenting with the use of new data sources and is developing statistical methods to make the best use of them. It is also striving to optimise the data collection protocols of its surveys. These actions are carried out in close collaboration with the ministerial statistical departments, as well as through partnerships with private or public stakeholders.



# Improving its methods and innovating

## Testimony

**Sylvie LAGARDE,**  
Director of methodology,  
statistical coordination and  
international relations



In 2020, we continued the work begun on mobile phone data. In addition to providing a better understanding of social mixing, these were very useful in reporting on population movements when the first lockdown was announced. At the same time, INSEE has continued to focus on improving survey collection protocols by increasing responsiveness and developing list collection (autocompletion) and its mixed-mode approach, i.e. the use of multiple response modes (face-to-face, online, telephone) for a single survey.



## Measuring social mixing using mobile phone data

Anonymised mobile phone data, from the activity of relay antennas, make it possible to approximate the position of mobile phone users. They thus provide the possibility of knowing the distribution of the population at different times of the day and of analysing, for example, social mixing beyond the places of residence through which it is traditionally determined.

Indeed, people with high and low incomes rub shoulders in towns at different times of the day, whether in the workplace, in shops, or in cultural and sporting venues. As the telephone data used are anonymous, mobile phone users are assigned a residential area based on the locations detected by the network during the night. Data on standards of living aggregated to the 500 m square containing a user's place of residence allows the estimation of the user's position in the standard of living scale and, thus, their potential inclusion within the high or low income groups. This approach therefore makes it possible to estimate the intensity of encounters

between different social groups within the area at different times of the day. In the conurbations of Paris, Lyon and Marseille, social mixing is greater during the day, between 10:00 and 18:00, when people are outside their place of residence. In contrast, there is less social mixing at night, when people are mostly located in their home neighbourhood. Although social mixing increases during the daily commute, most people on low incomes remain in the north-east part of the Paris conurbation; the same is true for people on high incomes in the west part of Paris. However, the difference between day and night is more pronounced in the west part of Paris than in its east part. The fact that, generally speaking, there is less segregation during the day is due to movements of the population. However, there are at least two factors that limit movement between the centre and the periphery of each conurbation: the morphology of the towns and the public transport available. People on low incomes more often live in areas where it is more difficult to move around (the city centre in Marseille, which is very large and has a lower density of public transport, and the periphery of Lyon and Paris).

# The National council for statistical information (CNIS) and the quality label Committee: a reactive procedure in times of crisis

Examination by the thematic commission of the National council for statistical information (CNIS), followed by the official statistics quality label Committee is a significant step in the development of all official statistics surveys. The health crisis has driven the Committee and the CNIS to speed up their procedures without compromising on the statistical quality of the survey projects submitted. First of all, as they were recognised as necessary and urgent, several surveys aimed at monitoring the health crisis, including EpiCov, the survey on the prevalence of the virus in the population and its consequences on the daily life and health of individuals, were deemed appropriate by decision of the President of the CNIS, without examination by the CNIS thematic commission, as provided for in the legislation. The label Committee then worked on the basis of partial dossiers, completed as the investigation progressed, issuing favourable examination opinions rather than full and complete compliance opinions, as the constraints of consultation and testing of the questionnaire were partially lightened. It also made requests for further information, to ensure the quality of ex post adjustments and processing.

## PCS 2020: the benefits of list collection (autocompletion)

In 2020, INSEE worked to implement the updated statistical classification of professions and socio-professional categories (PCS 2020) in the Labour Force survey. One of the many innovations contained in the PCS 2020 is list collection. From now on, as the respondent specifies their profession, job title suggestions are given from a list of several thousand options. With the job title selected from this list and the answers to two questions, the PCS 2020 can be coded at its detailed level, the profession. This protocol allows for easier and more accurate collection and coding of the PCS than in the past, but also for more extensive use. Indeed, the job titles collected can also be assembled on a customised basis (e.g. to define digital occupations). They also allow for coding of the International standard classification of occupations (ISCO) of the International labour office (ILO). Ultimately, the intention is for all digitised surveys carried out by the official statistical system and the private sector to use list collection for the PCS 2020.



**Élise COUDIN**

*Head of the SSP Lab, a monitoring, leadership, innovation and experimental unit dealing with data science and new data sources for official statistics*

### How can mobile phone data be used?

Unlike survey data, these data are not collected with the primary aim of producing statistical information. Expert assessment work must therefore be carried out to assess the quality of the information that can be derived from them and to establish methods for statistical processing while respecting privacy. To this end, INSEE has launched collaborations with Eurostat, with other national statistics institutes and with certain operators. Our work on spatial mixing is thus based on a partnership with Orange Labs, as the National commission on informatics and liberty (*Commission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés - CNIL*) has authorised the conservation of this dataset, dating from 2007, for research purposes.

### Why were these data used to analyse population movements prior to the first lockdown?

Because we needed indicators that were available quickly! We therefore contacted the mobile phone operators and three of them provided, free of charge but for a limited time, anonymous daily counts of network activations, department by department, as well as mobility indicators. We combined these indicators with each other and with resident population estimates to account for the presence of the population in the territory during the lockdown, the return movements during the lifting of the lockdown and the recovery of economic activity.

### What lessons can be learned from this experience?

It confirmed the benefit provided by these data for official statistics and for helping in the public policy decision-making process. It also underlines the need to continue to invest in methodology in close collaboration with operators in order to build reliable and robust statistics, knowing how to connect public interest and operators' interest while ensuring respect for privacy.



## The challenge of managing the mixed-mode approach for the EpiCov survey

The EpiCov survey was introduced at the start of the first lockdown by the National institute of health and medical research (*Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale - INSERM*) and the Directorate of research, studies, evaluation and statistics (*Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques - DREES*), with support from INSEE and the French national public health agency (*Santé publique France*). Its objective was to measure the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic and its impact on living conditions. In order to cope with the constraints of collecting data during a health crisis, the EpiCov team has chosen a multi-mode protocol. Some people selected for the survey were particularly motivated to respond because they wanted to better understand the health situation or simply have access to a screening test at a time when tests were not widely available. This generated an initial bias, known as "self-selection" bias, in other words the fact that people who felt particularly concerned by the subject of the survey were more inclined to participate than other people. Very quickly, the experts also highlighted a mode-related effect impacting the symptoms reported by the respondents: people responding online reported more symptoms than those responding by telephone, when the respondents have similar socio-demographic characteristics. There was no standard correction method available, either at INSEE or in the specialised literature, to neutralise this bias. Based on the differences observed between individuals who responded online and those who responded by telephone, INSEE developed a method based on modelling that effectively allows for correction of the self-selection bias. EpiCov has thus been a powerful driver of methodological innovation.

## POUR EN SAVOIR +

### Publications

Lino Galiana, Benjamin Sakarovitch, François Sémécurbe, Zbigniew Smoreda (Orange Labs), "La mixité sociale est plus forte en journée sur les lieux d'activité que pendant la nuit dans les quartiers de résidence", *INSEE Analyses* n°59, November 2020  
 ► [insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4930403](https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4930403)

François Sémécurbe, Milena Suarez Castillo, Lino Galiana, Elise Coudin, Mathilde Poulhes, "Que peut faire l'Insee à partir de données de téléphonie mobile ? Mesure de population présente en temps de confinement et statistiques expérimentales", *INSEE Blog*, 15 April 2020  
 ► [blog.insee.fr/que-peut-faire-linsee-a-partir-des-donnees-de-telephonie-mobile-mesure-de-population-presente-en-temps-de-confinement-et-statistiques-experimentales/](https://blog.insee.fr/que-peut-faire-linsee-a-partir-des-donnees-de-telephonie-mobile-mesure-de-population-presente-en-temps-de-confinement-et-statistiques-experimentales/)

Thomas Amossé (Cnam), Olivier Chardon (INSEE), "Une nomenclature socioprofessionnelle renouvelée pour mieux décrire la société actuelle", *INSEE Références*, July 2020  
 ► [www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4506075?sommaire=4504425](https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4506075?sommaire=4504425)



**Emmanuelle  
BASCHERI**

*Head of the online collection  
department of the business  
statistics directorate*



**Anne  
HUSSEINI-SKALITZ**

*E-questionnaire design expert in  
the methodology and international  
statistical coordination directorate*

### What response methods does INSEE currently offer to businesses?

Online collection is a key method for business surveys and it is becoming increasingly important. In April 2011, one of the objectives of the French national conferences on administrative simplification was the "100% digitisation of official statistics surveys", so as to lighten the statistical burden on businesses. The collection platform that is currently in use embodies this objective. It is also the first link of a complete service offer that allows survey designers to describe their questionnaire, to manage the collection medium, to collect responses via the internet, to have a repository of contacts within businesses and manage it and to send letters, emails and, of course, paper questionnaires to businesses that want them.

### What are the benefits of mixed-method collection?

Offering the respondent the option of responding online reduces mailing and postage costs, and sometimes response times. At the same time, sending out a paper questionnaire if necessary helps to improve the response rate and population coverage. We have recently seen the added value of this two-method approach. At the beginning of the March 2020 lockdown, the online collection announced by a notification email allowed companies to continue to respond to the surveys, while very few paper mailings were able to reach their recipients.

### What difficulties do statisticians face with the online collection method?

The surveys undertaken rarely involve the use of interviewers. Non-responses, whether total or partial, are thus less easy to control. However, they can be minimised online by adding warnings when responses are missing. Moreover, beyond a certain duration of the questionnaire, the risk of random responses or giving up should not be overlooked. The design of the questionnaire must therefore be well thought out.

INSEE and the ministerial statistical departments constitute the French official statistical system (*service statistique public - SSP*). At European level, INSEE represents the SSP and puts forward its positions when preparing the regulations governing the production of European statistics. It collaborates more broadly with other national statistical institutes within the European statistical system coordinated by Eurostat and cooperates with international organisations (OECD, UN, etc.). Finally, the Institute has long been involved in international cooperation and assistance to national statistical institutes in need of technical expertise.



# Contributing to the development European and international statistics



## Testimony

**Sylvie LAGARDE,**  
Director of methodology,  
statistical coordination and  
international relations



The pandemic in 2020 has confirmed the need for INSEE to coordinate with its European counterparts and the benefits of such coordination. Since the start of the crisis, we have held discussions with Eurostat and between national statistical institutes regarding how to respond so as to ensure continuity in statistical output and to monitor the health, economic and social impacts of the crisis. One of our concerns has been to make our data as comparable as possible. We have also carried out remote technical assistance to support the work of our partners in developing countries.



## European national statistical institutes dealing with the health crisis

In Europe, like INSEE, national statistics institutes (NSIs) have adapted to analyse the health crisis. Of course, the initiatives were dependent on the extent of the deployment of remote working, as well as the initial progress of innovations within each institute. Three types of actions have been undertaken. Firstly, ad hoc surveys were launched and others were adapted by introducing new questions, as done by INSEE. The idea was to document the impact of Covid-19 on the economy and on the functioning of businesses, as well as on the living conditions and social practices of households. Through its monthly survey on the social impact of Covid, the Irish NSI has thus studied the changes in the daily habits of households, their perceptions of the crisis and their opinions on the health policies implemented in the country in an original manner. In a more targeted manner, other NSIs (Spain, Italy, etc.) have conducted surveys seeking to analyse the spread of the epidemic, in the same manner as the Epidemiology and living conditions under Covid-19 (EpiCov) survey in France.

Subsequently, the institutes published indicators more frequently and more quickly, particularly

concerning deaths, for which Eurostat then began to publish weekly statistics for most European countries. Similarly, additional indicators for understanding the labour market during this particular period have been published at European level, for example on work absences or on certain components of the halo around unemployment and underemployment. From December onwards, Eurostat used the usual economic outlook indicators, as well as these new indicators, to disseminate a monthly dashboard fed into by the NSIs.

Finally, in this very special context, the NSIs used new data sources to monitor the impact of the crisis in real time. Bank card transactions, electricity consumption and road traffic provided information on the evolution of economic activity. In addition, in order to report on the evolution of the population's mobility in relation to the lockdown measures, the use of mobile phone data proved to be very useful: the Spanish NSI was thus able to display, in the form of interactive maps, the daily movements of people at very fine geographical levels, down to the neighbourhood level.

Eurostat provided methodological coordination of these actions. In close consultation with the NSIs, it has drawn up around 20 methodological documents which are available on its website. These form a toolbox to help NSIs adapt their methods and continue to produce the most comparable statistics possible.



Jean-Pierre CLING

Head of the statistical coordination & international relations department

## Excess mortality in Europe: where is France ranked?

Since last year, Eurostat has been collecting the data produced by European NSIs on weekly deaths from all causes. These data allow a comparison between the European countries affected by the pandemic in terms of excess mortality in 2020 compared to the previous years.

In almost all European countries, deaths increased in 2020 compared to the previous year. France sits around mid-table, with + 9%. The rise is 14% or higher in seven European countries, including Spain, Poland and Belgium. In contrast, mortality remained close to previous years in the Baltic and Scandinavian countries (excluding Lithuania and Sweden) and increased only slightly in Germany and Slovakia.

The first wave of the Covid-19 epidemic in the first half of the year affected only a few European countries (Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, etc.). The second wave of the health crisis in the autumn spread much more widely. In particular, in Eastern European countries unaffected in the spring, excess mortality caught up with or even exceeded that of the countries most affected by the first wave of the epidemic. This was particularly the case in Poland and Bulgaria.

Several factors could explain the differences in excess mortality across European countries over the last year, although it is not possible to rank them. In addition to the impact of the reference period (2019 or a longer period), there are: differences in age structure and population density, firstly, as well as differences relating to health, access to care or the health and lockdown policies implemented in the countries.

# 9%

**WITH AN EXCESSES MORTALITY RATE OF 9 %  
in 2020 compared to 2019,  
FRANCE SITS AROUND MID-TABLE  
IN THE EUROPEAN RANKINGS**

### What impact has the pandemic had on international technical assistance?

Our assistance is usually provided mainly through the organisation of missions abroad, workshops and seminars, in addition to hosting foreign delegations. From March onwards, the worsening of the health crisis led to a total interruption of international travel that lasted all year.

Technical assistance therefore continued remotely on projects already under way, such as support to Tunisia and Cape Verde in national accounting within the framework of our bilateral cooperation, participation in the European project to support the countries neighbouring the EU to the east in the area of statistical coordination and the use of micro-data, and the organisation of themed workshops for the countries of the Maghreb region, which have been extended to the Afristat-member countries.

### Has the crisis changed the objectives of this assistance?

We have kept our previous objectives while also launching new actions to help our partners respond to the crisis. It was necessary to help them to both ensure the continuity of their statistical production activities in this context, while also measuring the economic and social consequences of the health crisis. In partnership with Afristat, Paris21 and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, INSEE thus organised a series of webinars for an audience of French-speaking statisticians on current topics: civil status, telephone surveys to compensate for the impossibility of face-to-face interviews, etc.

### What lessons can be learned from this experience?

The good news is that we have been able to adapt our international technical assistance! There are even some advantages to working remotely. For example, our webinars have attracted many more participants (around 100 each time) than regional meetings would normally do, and at a much lower cost. Of course, remote support also has its limitations, especially when it comes to working together on a tricky technical issue. In any event, this crisis is providing us with an opportunity to rethink the processes we use for our activities. Once the situation returns to normal, it is likely that new forms of remote support will continue to be used in addition to traditional forms.

## The French official statistical system shares its experience on governance statistics

During the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations statistical Commission, which was held in New York (USA) from 3 to 6 March 2020, INSEE jointly organised a seminar held as a side event in parallel to the plenary session, on the subject of “Trust, security and discrimination”, together with the Organisation for economic co-operation and development (OECD) and the Cape Verde NSI. This seminar looked at statistical indicators used to monitor governance, in line with the “Peace, justice and strong institutions” sustainable development goal (SDG 16). Governance refers to the quality of the functioning of the state and public institutions, respect for the rule of law and the participation of citizens in public affairs. Statistics on governance measure discrimination, access to justice and its functioning, corruption, citizen security, etc. The French official statistical system has extensive experience in this field, with the Victimisation-living environment and security survey conducted annually since 2007. Following this seminar, the French ministerial statistical departments for internal Security and Justice became members of the Praia Group, a group of UN experts coordinated by the Cape Verde NSI, which is responsible for defining harmonised methodologies for the development of governance statistics.

## Statéco issue n°114: spotlight on food and agriculture in Africa

The journal Statéco was created in 1972 in order to share the statistical and economic work as well as methodological initiatives undertaken by the French official statistical system in cooperation countries. Issue n°114 of this journal, co-edited by INSEE, the Institute of research for development (IRD) and Afristat, dealt with the monitoring of the second sustainable development goal (SDG 2) of the United Nations “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” in Africa. The authors of the articles in this new issue of Statéco are statisticians, officials from international organisations and researchers from France, Africa and the UK. They show that monitoring SDG 2 in Africa is both necessary and difficult. It is necessary because Africa is the continent where the food and agricultural situation is the most critical in the world, a situation that has been worsened by the Covid-19 health crisis. It is difficult because Africa is also the continent with the greatest gaps in data, which calls for strong investment in this area by official statistics. This issue forms part of the Project to support the monitoring of sustainable development goals in Africa (*Suivi des objectifs de développement durable en Afrique - SODDA*). Implemented between 2017 and 2020, this project is funded by the ministry of Europe and Foreign affairs and managed by Expertise France with the scientific and technical support of INSEE.

## Jean-Luc Tavernier on 75 years of the Spanish NSI

The Spanish NSI (INE) organised a video conference in November to mark its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with over 150 participants. Jean-Luc Tavernier, Director-general of INSEE, spoke on a panel on “High-quality statistics for a datafied society”, together with the Presidents of the Spanish and Portuguese NSIs. In his speech, the Director-general presented the major trade-offs faced by statistical institutes

such as INSEE. In particular, he showed that NSIs have to trade off accuracy and reliability against timeliness in the production and dissemination of statistics in a context in which digital multinationals disseminate data in near real time. He also analysed the dilemma between the objective of international comparability of data and the use of administrative data, which are by nature not very comparable across countries, and the dilemma between the public's demand for simple messaging and the increasing complexity of the phenomena studied.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Publications

Umar Dahoo, Lisa Gaudy, “In France, like in Europe, an excess mortality linked to Covid-19 occurred in late March/early April”, *INSEE Focus* n°200, July 2020  
▶ [www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4641454](http://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/4641454)

Sylvie Le Minez, Valérie Roux, “2020: unprecedented rise in deaths in 70 years”, *INSEE Première* n°1847, March 2021

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*Statéco*, Issue n°114/2020

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Benoît Ourliac, “Covid and mortality in Europe in 2020: statistics to be watched closely”,

*INSEE blog*, 15 February 2021

▶ <https://blog.insee.fr/covid-et-mortalite-en-europe-en-2020-des-statistiques-a-regarder-de-pres/>



# 2020 BY REGION

## Antilles-Guyane

How can the statistical literacy of young people be improved? In 2020, INSEE Antilles-Guyane increased its activities aimed at secondary school and university students. In Guadeloupe, regional action staff gave presentations combining knowledge of the territory and INSEE business areas to classes in year 11, year 12, year 13 and Sciences Po preparatory courses in four secondary schools in the archipelago. In Martinique, INSEE took part in the webinar “*An nou viré, an nou rété*” (we return to the country and we stay there) to promote the return of young people to the island. Finally, the territorial service of French Guiana presented a socio-economic overview of the territory to the students of the *École des Mines*, focusing on the problem of performing a census of illegal gold diggers.



## Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

The health crisis and the measures taken to contain it have negatively impacted the economy of the Franco-Vaud-Genevan region, i.e. the border area between the departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie and the Swiss cantons of Geneva and Vaud. The cross-border statistical observatory, the result of collaboration between the statistical office of the canton of Geneva and INSEE Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, which began in 2001, has ensured reactive monitoring of developments in the situation. Taking up the challenge of creating an outlook summary from country-specific sources, two publications were issued in 2020 with the latest economic and health data.

## Centre-Val de Loire

In partnership with the Regional chamber of commerce and trade (*Chambre régionale des métiers et de l'artisanat - CRMA*), INSEE Centre-Val de Loire published a study in November 2020 on the creation and durability of businesses in the region. This study shows in particular that businesses in the Centre-Val de Loire region are slightly less sustainable over three years than the national average. To make the most of this work, which sheds new light on a rich regional economic fabric with 150,000 businesses, a joint video presentation was produced and posted on the CRMA's YouTube channel.

## Bourgogne-Franche-Comté

The PCS 2020 is the new version of the nomenclature of Professions and Socio-professional Categories (*Professions et Catégories Socioprofessionnelles - PCS*) which, in particular, makes it possible to define the social position of an individual. For more than two years, INSEE Bourgogne-Franche-Comté has been involved in a working group dedicated to updating this nomenclature. The new version has been updated to better describe society and to reflect recent developments in employment. Among other innovations, the PCS 2020 includes a tool that allows more precise definition of the social situation of a household. Previously, this was assessed solely based on the socio-professional group of the reference person in that household. From now on, the “Household” PCS takes into account the situation of the various adults in the household to distinguish, for example, between a household composed of two managers and a household composed of one manager and one low-skilled employee or blue-collar worker. This new tool allows for a more detailed analysis of social inequalities between households.

## Bretagne

INSEE Brittany has set itself the task of informing citizens and public stakeholders as effectively as possible about the effects of the health crisis on the region's economy by bolstering its communication on the economic outlook. Information was thus disseminated to a wide audience via the *insee.fr* website, the local press and Twitter. The economic outlook publications have also been adapted with, for example, the publication in July of a special edition of *INSEE Conjoncture* devoted to the crisis.



## Corse

What are the characteristics of the island's second homes and what are the profiles of their owners? In 2020, INSEE Corsica took up a subject that is at the heart of the island's current situation in a study carried out in partnership with the Corsican agency for sustainable development, urban planning and energy and the Regional directorate for the environment, development and housing (*Direction régionale de l'environnement, de l'aménagement et du logement - DREAL*). This work shows, for example, that a third of the 72,000 second homes are located less than 500 metres from the sea, that their owners are on average older and more affluent than those of the main homes and that there are very few non-French people (8%) in their ranks.



## Hauts-de-France

One Hauts-de-France region inhabitant in six is digitally illiterate, which amounts to 800,000 people aged 15 or over. Of those people, more than nine in ten have not used the internet a single time in the year. To obtain these results, INSEE Hauts-de-France used the national survey on information and communication technologies (ICTs survey) and the population census.

## Île-de-France

In a region where housing is a major issue, INSEE Île-de-France has published several studies on this subject using new sources, including the Requests for land values (*Demandes de valeurs foncières - DVF*) and the Demographic file of tax origin on dwellings and persons (*Fichier démographique d'origine fiscale sur les logements et les personnes - Fideli*). One of these publications showed how difficult it is for tenants in the Île-de-France region to buy property, particularly in Paris and the west of the city. INSEE also analysed, together with the Paris urbanism agency (*Atelier parisien d'urbanisme - Apur*), the number of second homes in the capital, which represented 9% of housing, a much higher proportion than in other large French cities, with the exception of Nice. Finally, INSEE Île-de-France revealed that over-occupation of housing was four times more frequent than in other regions.



## Grand Est

Between 2012 and 2018, land artificialisation increased in the Grand Est region while its population stagnated. This paradox is analysed in a series of studies carried out in partnership with the Regional directorate for the environment, development and housing (DREAL), which shows that the progress of artificialisation is due in particular to the development of industrial and commercial zones. The data provided by the cross-border statistics centre, combined with the use of the European Corine Land Cover database, have shown that artificialisation is, however, lower in the Grand Est region than in Wallonia and Saarland, and that it is progressing three times less rapidly than in Luxembourg.

## La Réunion-Mayotte

In a series of studies published in 2020, INSEE La Réunion-Mayotte provides a territorial overview of income and of the level and composition of household consumption. Based on the responses to the Family budget survey, the poverty rate, the average monthly consumption expenditure and the rate of ownership of cars or household appliances have been calculated. These studies highlight major disparities in consumption depending on standard of living. For example, in La Réunion, the poorest 20% of households spend an average of 160€ per month on transport, compared with 890€ for the wealthiest 20% of households.

## Normandie

One thirtieth of the area of Normandy, specifically 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> located on the coastal strip and around the bends of the Seine, is exposed to the risk of marine submersion.

In a study carried out in partnership with the Regional and interdepartmental directorate for the environment and energy and the Regional directorate for food, agriculture and forestry (*Direction régionale de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et de la forêt - DRAAF*), INSEE Normandy shows that 6% of the region's housing is located in "areas potentially below sea level" and is therefore affected by the increased risks caused by rising water levels.

In addition to these 110,000 dwellings, there are almost 16,000 establishments representing around 130,000 jobs.



## Nouvelle-Aquitaine

What is the quality of life like for children in Nouvelle-Aquitaine? In a study published in 2020, INSEE Nouvelle-Aquitaine found that six people in ten live in areas that are not very densely populated and are therefore often far from everyday facilities and services. Regardless of other favourable factors in their environment, such as air quality or spaciousness of housing, some of these children combine this remoteness with belonging to families with low standards of living. These study results follow on from work carried out by the Directorate of research, studies, evaluation and statistics (DREES) of the ministry for Health and from the strategy to prevent and combat poverty.

## Occitanie

In the Occitanie region, one inhabitant in two lives in an area where strong heatwaves will become very frequent by 2050. Based on data and climate simulations proposed by Météo France, INSEE Occitanie has estimated the number and location of inhabitants soon to be affected by this phenomenon. This is determined using two indicators: "summer days" (days with a maximum temperature above 25°C) and "tropical nights" (nights with a minimum temperature above 20°C). By 2050, the entire coastline of the region would experience more than 82 summer days and 19 tropical nights per year.

## Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

In October 2020, the Territorial Analysis unit within INSEE Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur published the zoning of towns into functional areas. This zoning defines the extent of the influence of a town on the surrounding municipalities. It allows the analysis of territorial disparities between the centre and periphery, as well as between small and large areas. The construction method used, which is consistent with international definitions, also highlights the influence in France of large foreign cities.

## Pays de la Loire

In summer 2020, at the request of the Prefect of the region, INSEE Pays de la Loire built an automated tool to monitor the economic and social outlook. Thus, a dashboard is now produced each month and is used as a basis for numerous interventions with regional public stakeholders. It represents and comments on the evolution of different indicators, from both internal and external sources, selected for their relevance in monitoring the crisis and the recovery.



## The essentials about... the regions

"L'essentiel sur... les régions" (The essentials about... the Regions) brings together INSEE data and publications region by region. Built in the form of an interactive infographic, each page provides a thematic overview and presents data on demographics, living conditions, the economic outlook, the labour market, etc. A set of questions and answers related to the problems of the territory is provided for each region, as well as information on the sources and statistical methodology used.

*The essential about... the regions*  
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# The women and men at INSEE

# ORGANISATION CHART

as at 31 December 2020

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



**Jean-Luc Tavernier**  
Director general



**Pascal Rivière**  
Internal audit unit



**Benoît Ourliac**  
Director general's office



**Karine Berger**  
General secretariat



**Jean-Séverin Lair**  
Information technology services



**Sylvie Lagarde**  
Methodology, statistical coordination and international relations directorate



**Sylvain Moreau**  
Business statistics directorate



**Didier Blanchet**  
Economic studies and national accounts directorate



**Christel Colin**  
Demographic and social statistics directorate



**Alain Bayet**  
Dissemination and regional action directorate

**Nicolas Vannieuwenhuyze**  
Financial affairs and planning of work resources

**Patrick Redor**  
Legal affairs and litigation

**Benoît Rouppert**  
IT production and infrastructure

**Patrick Sillard**  
Statistical methods

**Pierrette Schuhl**  
Registers, infrastructures and structural statistics

**Julien Pouget**  
Short-term economic analysis

**Valérie Roux**  
Demography

**Guillaume Mordant**  
INSEE info-service

**Jean-Louis Lhéritier**  
Human resources

**Jean-Michel Quellec**  
Living and working conditions

**François Hada**  
Statistical centre of Metz

**Christelle Minodier**  
Coordinator  
of cross-cutting actions

**Mylène Chaleix**  
IT system development

**Arnaud Degorre**  
IT innovation and strategy

**Dominique Bonnans**  
Quality

**Jean-Pierre Cling**  
Statistical and international  
coordination

**Élise Coudin**  
SSP Lab

**Alain Jacquot**  
Short-term statistics

**Élisabeth Kremp**  
Sectoral economic outlooks

**Sébastien Roux**  
General economic studies

**Guillaume Houriez**  
National accounts

**Vladimir Passeron**  
Employment and earnings

**Valérie Albouy**  
Household resources  
and living conditions

**Pascal Chevalier**  
Consumer price index  
and household surveys

**Sylvie Le Minez**  
Demographic and social studies

**Christine Lagarenne**  
Dissemination

**Michel Duée**  
Regional action

**Hélène Erkel-Rousse**  
Library resources and archives

**Isabelle Anxionnaz**  
National Council for Statistical  
Information secretariat  
(CNIS secretariat)

Manager	Regional office
Olivier Lena	Antilles-Guyane
Jean-Philippe Grouthier	Auvergne Rhône-Alpes
Moïse Mayo	Bourgogne Franche-Comté
Éric Lesage	Bretagne
Yvonne Pérot	Centre-Val de Loire
Véronique Daudin	Corse
Yves Calderini	Grand Est
Jean-Christophe Fanouillet	Hauts-de-France
Marie-Christine Parent	Île-de-France
Aurélien Daubaire	La Réunion- Mayotte
Philippe Scherrer	Normandie
Daniel Brondel	Nouvelle-Aquitaine
Caroline Jamet	Occitanie
Pascal Seguin	Pays de la Loire
Albert Lopez	Provence-Alpes- Côte d'Azur

# INSEE BY REGION





# WORKFORCE

by region and by activity

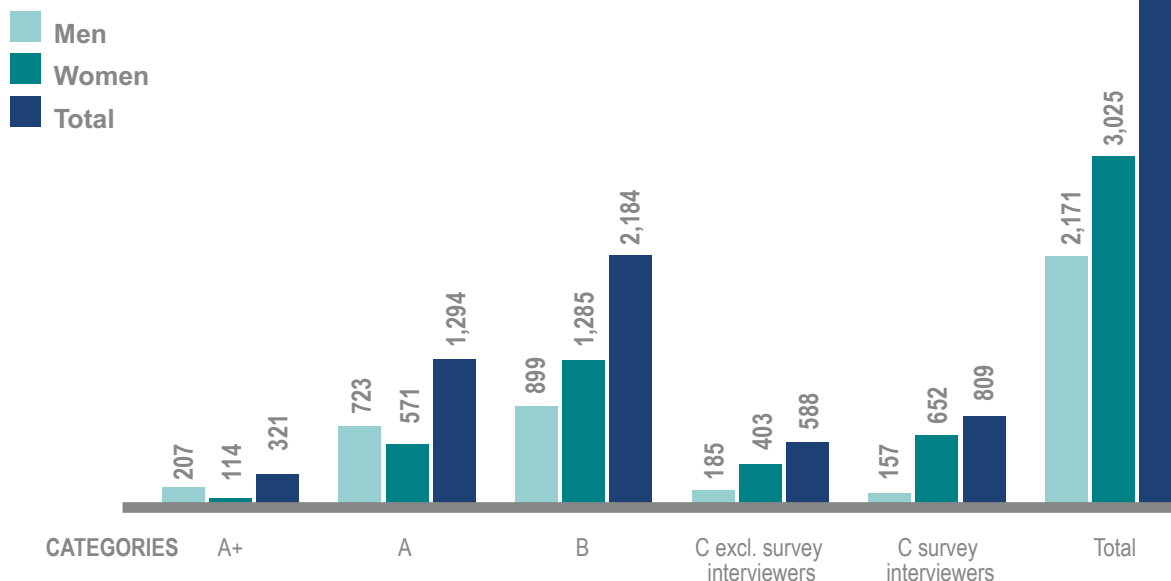
Assignment/ Personnel category	A+	A	B	C excl. survey interviewers	C survey interviewers	Total
<b>Head office</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,493</b>
Paris*	259	485	397	49		1,190
Metz	3	65	165	70		303
<b>Regional offices</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>1,622</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>3,703</b>
Antilles-Guyane	3	33	68	24	116	244
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes	8	60	137	37	87	329
Bourgogne-Franche-Comté	1	31	112	20	32	196
Bretagne	4	32	64	14	47	161
Centre-Val de Loire	3	48	74	27	32	184
Corse		10	25	2	5	42
Grand Est	4	60	158	34	73	329
Hauts-de-France	5	78	138	46	53	320
Île-de-France	3	33	97	39	71	243
La Réunion-Mayotte	2	30	43	22	48	145
Normandie	4	52	167	46	41	310
Nouvelle-Aquitaine	4	57	149	37	68	315
Occitanie	4	54	142	40	67	307
Pays de la Loire	7	122	144	51	26	350
Provence Alpes-Côte d'Azur	7	44	104	30	43	228
<b>Insee total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>2,184</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>5,196</b>

\* Including staff from the INSEE training centre in Libourne (CEFIL)

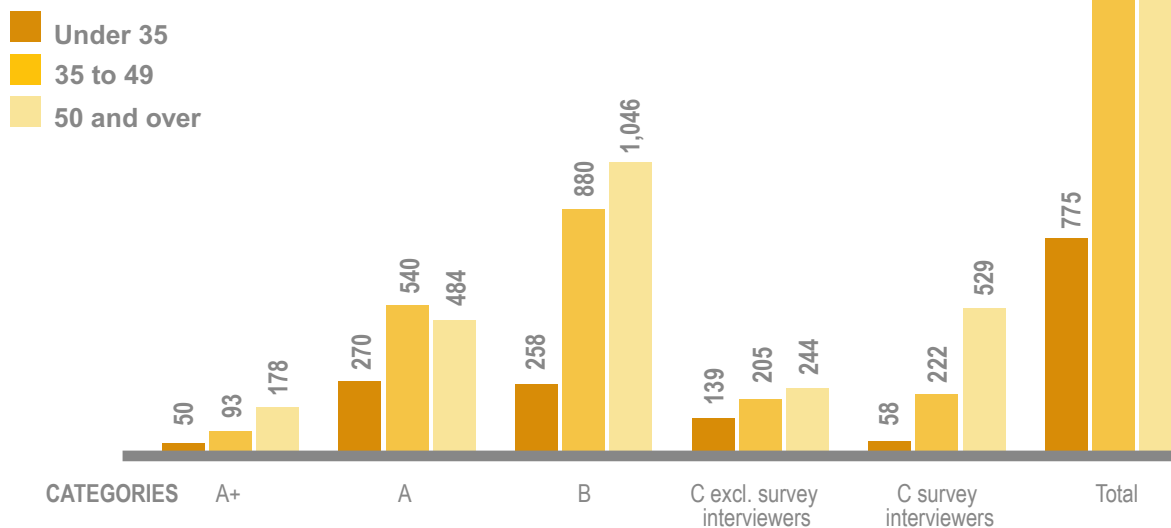
# THE WOMEN AND MEN

at INSEE as at 31 December 2020

## Workforce by category and by gender



## Workforce by category and by age group



# TRAINING

of INSEE personnel

## Training programme participation rate<sup>(1)</sup>

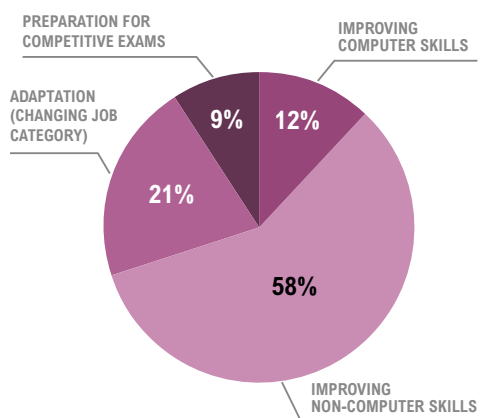
	A+ in %	A in %	B in %	C in %	Total in %
Women	52	78	75	87	79
Men	60	74	72	79	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>76</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Percentage of employees having attended at least one training program during the year.

## Average number of training days per trained employee

	A+	A	B	C	Total
Women	3.9	5.9	5.8	7.7	6.5
Men	3.5	6.4	6.8	8.0	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.6</b>

## Type of training programme



# INSEE

budget

Allocation	In €m according to the initial budget law 2020
Staff budget	368.9
Operating budget	39.3
Investment budget	4.2
Intervention budget	20.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>433.2</b>

\* The full cost includes the cost of supporting and cross-disciplinary functions (administrative management, property, IT, etc.) for each operation.

Sources: Initial Budget Law (*Loi de finances initiale – LFI*) and calculation via large-scale operations/performed by the Department of Financial Affairs and Planning of Works Resources.

## Allocation of the budget according to the total cost\* of INSEE's main activities

Activities	Share of Insee's 2019 budget in %
Population census	17.0
Household surveys	16.3
Regional activity (including regional distribution)	14.6
Structural statistics from companies	7.5
National distribution	7.1
Company registers	6.4
Short-term statistics from companies	5.7
Consumer Price Index	5.0
Strategic, coordination, international management	4.5
Administrative statistics concerning employment and earnings	4.2
Marital status, electoral register (including demographic statistics)	3.9
National accounts	3.2
Studies	2.3
Themed surveys of companies	1.3
Economic outlook	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

# SURVEYS CARRIED OUT IN 2020



## Associated with the health crisis

- **Epidemiology and living conditions (*Epidémiologie et conditions de vie - EpiCov*):** implemented by DREES and INSERM, in collaboration with Santé Publique France and INSEE, the objective of this survey was two-fold: to estimate the momentum of the epidemic at a national and departmental level and to study the effect of lockdown and of the epidemic on living conditions. As part of this survey, serological tests were carried out by 12,400 people using a self-sampling blood kit in the first wave (May 2020) and by 83,800 people in the second wave (October 2020). These tests allowed the proportion of people who had been in contact with the virus to be estimated and their socio-demographic profiles to be determined.
  - **Survey on the impact of the health crisis on the organisation and activity of companies:** the questionnaire for this survey was sent to 50,000 companies with the aim of obtaining information, among other things, on their results and operating conditions during the first lockdown period, as well as on the duration of their closure, their supply difficulties, the evolution of their outlets and the adaptation of their offer and their partnerships.
  - **Activity and employment conditions for labour during the Covid-19 health crisis (*Activité et conditions d'emploi de la main-d'œuvre pendant la crise sanitaire Covid-19 - Acemo-Covid*):** in order to assess the way in which companies made economic changes to their workforce as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the Directorate of research, economic studies and statistics (DARES) carried out a monthly Acemo-Covid flash survey, with the support of INSEE, in place of the quarterly Acemo survey. Between April and December, 38,000 establishments were surveyed each month on three issues: changes to workforce and activity, changes to employment conditions (short-time working, remote working and other circumstances) and the preventive measures implemented.
- 
- **Household or private individual surveys**
    - Demographics
      - **Census survey**
    - Living conditions
      - **Monthly consumer confidence survey (*Enquête mensuelle de conjoncture auprès des ménages - CAMME*):** measures the opinion of households on their economic environment, their personal financial situation and their intentions regarding saving and consumption.
      - **Trajectories and origins survey** (*Enquête trajectoires et origines - TeO2*): aims to study the living conditions and social trajectories of persons residing in metropolitan France based on their origins and other characteristics (gender, age, social background, neighbourhood, etc.).
  - **Migration-family and ageing survey (*Enquête migration-famille et vieillissement - MFV*):** a survey carried out specifically in the historical French overseas departments for this version; it focuses on the issues of ageing and migration, which are major challenges for these departments. Positioned at the crossroads of these two dynamics, the family and its changes influence migration strategies and determine the forms of inter-generational solidarity.
  - **Living environment and security in Mayotte survey (*Enquête cadre de vie et sécurité à Mayotte - CVS-Mayotte*):** its main goal is to gain information concerning any criminal acts of which households and their members in Mayotte have been victim; it also provides the rate of complaint by offence of which people have been victims and thus makes it possible to measure unreported offences.
- ## Housing
- **Quarterly survey on rents and charges:** measures change in rents in the private rental sector, particularly to be incorporated in the calculation of the consumer price index (CPI).
  - **Experimental survey on housing conditions:** an online survey to prepare for the national reference survey, which aims to describe the housing conditions and expenditure of the French people.

The experimental survey aims to ensure that the questions asked are sufficiently clear and adapted to the situation of each household.

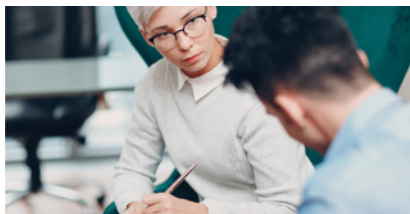
## Resources

- **Annual survey on statistics on income and living conditions (*Enquête annuelle statistiques sur les ressources et les conditions de vie - SRCV*):** the French part of a European statistical operation that provides indicators on poverty and exclusion in the member States.
- **Life history and wealth survey (*Enquête histoire de vie et patrimoine - HVP*):** aims to collect information on the composition and evolution of households' wealth in its various forms: financial, real estate and professional assets, as well as on their debt. It also provides comprehensive information on the factors that explain wealth: family and professional biography, inheritances and gifts, income and financial circumstances.

## Employment, qualifications, professional integration, salaries

- **Labour force survey;** a survey conducted continuously, every week of the year. This is the largest of the household surveys in terms of sample size. It allows the quarterly measurement of the unemployment rate, as defined by the International labour office, and thus permits international comparisons based on a standardised concept. It also provides comprehensive data on employment, working conditions and working hours.
- **Annual Labour force survey in Mayotte**
- **Annual survey on entry into adult life (*Enquête annuelle sur l'entrée***

**dans la vie adulte - EVA):** covers a panel of young people to measure their professional and social integration and links the conditions of their integration with their schooling and university paths.



## Business surveys

### Housing

- **Quarterly survey of social housing providers, on rent in the social housing sector (*Enquête trimestrielle auprès des bailleurs sociaux, sur les loyers du secteur locatif social - ELBS*):** measures change in rents within the social housing sector, particularly to be incorporated in the calculation of the consumer price index (CPI).

### Productive system

- **Annual survey by sector (*Enquête sectorielle annuelle - ESA*):** focusing on services, construction, agri-food industries, transport and trade, the annual surveys by sector ask companies to provide basic information about their activities (from which their principal activity can be deduced), events that have happened during the year, such as a merger or absorption, and information specific to each sector.
- **Annual output survey (*Enquête annuelle de production - EAP*):** conducted in the manufacturing industry, the annual output survey gathers the same information as the ESA as well as a detailed breakdown of billing and quantities. facturations.

- **Outward foreign affiliates trade statistics survey (O-FATS) :** annual survey of French business groups located abroad which provides information on their subsidiaries, their location, their activity and their employee numbers.
- **Survey on observation of prices in industry and services (*Enquête observation des prix de l'industrie et des services - OPISE*):** measures the monthly or quarterly change in transaction prices for goods and services. It covers the industrial production indices for the domestic and foreign markets, and the indices for import prices of industrial products.
- **Monthly business survey of food supermarkets (*Enquête mensuelle sur l'activité des grandes surfaces alimentaires - EMAGSA*):** measures changes in the activity of major food retailers, by sales type and broad product category.
- **Annual survey on the use of information and communication technologies and electronic commerce in companies employing at least 10 people (*Enquête annuelle sur l'usage de l'informatique, des technologies de l'information et de la communication et le commerce électronique dans les entreprises d'au moins 10 personnes occupées - TIC*):** the aim of this survey is to improve understanding of computerisation and the spread of information and communication technologies within companies.
- **Structural survey of companies in Mayotte:** the aim of this annual survey is to be able to produce reports, especially for the branches, providing a description of the formal and informal economy of Mayotte, with an accurate breakdown of value added by sector, and to monitor and update the SIRENE register.

- **Survey among enterprises created in 2014:** conducted among a sample of persons who created a new enterprise during the first half of 2014; this is the third wave of interviews of the survey panel for the New enterprises information system (*Système d'information sur les nouvelles entreprises - SINE*). Having been launched in November 2019, the collection of this survey was completed in March 2020. The aim of this third set of interviews was to evaluate the five-year survival rate of young enterprises, to gain an understanding of the conditions in which they are developing, the difficulties encountered and, for enterprises that are not micro-entrepreneurs, the effects on employment.
- **Survey on networks of ensigns:** aims to identify establishments offering retail sales or services that are affiliated with a network of ensigns in order to understand the links that they maintain with the head of the network, to quantify the significance of networks of ensigns, to assess the diversity of the types of organisation and to analyse the specific features of affiliated establishments.

## Tourism

- **Collective tourist accommodation occupancy survey.** This survey allows the occupancy of collective tourist accommodation (hotels, campsites and others) to be monitored together, in particular, with the number of overnight stays by tourists by country of residence. It has been replaced by a more streamlined survey, without questions on non-residents, in spring 2020 and late 2020.

## Industry

- **Monthly branch surveys (*Enquêtes mensuelles de branche - EMB*):** used to calculate the industrial production index (IPI).
- **Annual survey on the aerospace**

**sector in Greater South-West France:** measures the economic power of the aerospace sector in Greater South-West France, that is to say of regional units whose activity contributes to the aerospace construction field at a global level.

## Environment and sustainable development

- **Survey of environmental protection studies and investments (*Enquête sur les investissements dans l'industrie pour protéger l'environnement - ANTIPOL*):** the aim of the survey is to update knowledge of the total cost and type of studies, investments (yearly) and current expenditure (every three years) for environmental protection.
- **Annual survey on industrial energy consumption (*Enquête annuelle sur les consommations d'énergie dans l'industrie - EACEI*):** provides information on quantities consumed by energy type and related costs and also provides a breakdown of the use of each energy type.

## Financial system and financing the economy

- **Annual leasing survey** measures the distribution of leasing contracts by institutional sector and sector of activity, information that is required to perform an economic analysis of company accounts.

## Companies and market strategies – outlook

- **Monthly outlook survey in industry**
- **Quarterly business outlook survey of investment in industry**
- **Half-yearly survey of the cash flow situation in industry**
- **Monthly outlook survey of the retail trade and the trade and repair of motor vehicles**
- **Bi-monthly business outlook survey of wholesaling**

- **Monthly outlook survey of the building industry**
- **Monthly outlook survey of services**
- **Quarterly outlook survey of public works**
- **Quarterly outlook survey of the building trades**
- **Quarterly business outlook survey of real estate development**

## Employment, professional integration, salaries

- **Annual survey on the cost of labour and wage structure (*Enquête annuelle sur le coût de la main d'œuvre et la structure des salaires - ECMOSS*):** the purpose is to monitor, on an annual basis, the structure of employee earnings and working time. It alternates between asking for explanations of wage discrepancies one year and measuring and providing a breakdown of labour costs for employing establishments the following year.

## Other surveys

### Prices and purchasing power

- **Consumer price index (CPI)\*:** a tool to measure inflation, the CPI is used to estimate the average variation in the prices of products consumed by households between two given periods. The CPI excluding tobacco is used to index-link the minimum wage (*Salair minimum de croissance - SMIC*), many private contracts, alimony and annuities.
- **European survey on purchasing power parity (PPP)\***

\* Survey requiring no response time on the part of companies.

### Regions

- **Outlook survey on local public investment:** survey of regional authorities, launched in 2016 in partnership with the Caisse des Dépôts.

# KEY FIGURES FOR 2020

Activity impacted by the health crisis



## Economic outlook



**20,000**

companies surveyed every month

**2,000**

households interviewed every month

## Companies



**280,000**

companies surveyed

**30**

enquêtes

## Society and employment



**80,000**

people interviewed for the Labour force survey

**473,000**

households interviewed

**12**

surveys



**809**

survey interviewers

## Population census <sup>1</sup>

**5** million housing units surveyed

**60%** of the population respond by internet

**9** million people identified

**24,000** census agents

**7,825** municipalities involved



## Price index\*



**90** staff employed

**200**

survey interviewers

**160,000** prices collected by survey interviewers

**30,000** sales outlets

**500,000** prices collected by survey interviewers, either manually or digitally

**80** million prices tracked using scanner data

<sup>1</sup> Census figures in metropolitan France, Antilles-Guyane and la Réunion.

\* Scanner data have been used to calculate the consumer price index (CPI) since January 2020.



## ANALYSES ET PRODUCTIONS

### Publications

**339**

Informations Rapides reports



**88**

Insee Première and Insee Focus

**34**

Documents de travail and Insee Analyses

**504**

regional studies  
one third of which are conducted  
in partnership with regional public bodies

### Large registers

RNIPP : **112 million** people living or having lived in France  
REU : **47.7 million**<sup>1</sup> registered voters  
Sirene : **11 million** active businesses and **12 million**  
establishments  
LEI : **75,000** active registrations



### Europe and international

**150**

international groups  
including **4/5** Europeans  
in which participate  
experts from INSEE.

**88**

cooperation actions  
international  
including **65%** in accounting  
national and economic

<sup>1</sup> Figure excluding New Caledonia.



## DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION



**40** million visits  
including **13** million  
on mobile



**79,300**  
followers



**26,700**  
followers



### Media

**58,200**

mentions in the press  
(all media)

of which

**13%**

for audiovisual



### User assistance

**260,000**

calls per year  
to the voicemail servers  
(Insee contact, SIRENE,  
Indices, Coltrane, Esa)

dont

**55,000**

received telephone responses

**48,000**

email requests



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