

# HORIZON 2025

# AN AMBITIOUS STRATEGY FOR INSEE



DIRECTIONS,  
GOALS AND ACTIONS  
**2016-2025**



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# Editorial

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**Some time ago, we at INSEE developed the habit of presenting our goals in a strategic document. INSEE Horizon 2025 is therefore pursuing this long-established tradition.**



**Jean-Luc Tavernier**  
Director-General  
of INSEE

Strategic reflection is not as straightforward as one would think. In terms of statistical production, surveys, managing sovereign registers, INSEE's missions are clearly defined; its reputation and its position are rarely challenged; its governance is transparent; its commitment to common values, along with that of all the European National Statistical Institutes, contributes to its professional independence. However, there is limited room of manoeuvre in terms of budgets and regulations: staff numbers have been falling steadily for almost fifteen years; international regulations – European for the most part – affect statistical production significantly; decisions by the State apply to the Institute, while respecting its values and its integrity. Who could have foreseen a few years ago that in the last few months we would see the merger of some of the French administrative regions, free access to the business directory SIRENE, or the decision to create a national voter registration base which is compulsory for the municipalities?

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“ WE ARE CONVINCED THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO TAKE TIME FOR A MOMENT OF STRATEGIC REFLECTION. ”

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Although the purpose of this type of exercise is certainly not to try to describe the future with any accuracy, and although INSEE is a sound and recognised institution, we are nevertheless sure that it is essential to occasionally take time for a moment of strategic reflection. The needs of our users change and grow; technologies evolve and provide new opportunities; easy access to data represents both an opportunity and a threat; men and women change too, as almost half of our employees will have retired in the space of the next ten years.

The large number of staff members participating in INSEE Horizon 2025 also shows that it can be useful from time to time to give meaning to our missions, to reaffirm our values, to declare our ambitions. At the end of this joint reflection, four strategic directions emerged; they are divided into sixteen goals and dozens of actions, covering the entire scope of the Institute's work and some are of interest to our official statistics partners.

The first of these directions, **Making statistics meaningful and reaching out to all types of public**, refers to INSEE's specific characteristic among statistical institutes. INSEE never publishes its statistics without providing comments, thanks to the economic and social expertise of its statisticians and economists, thereby guaranteeing the quality of both statistics and studies. This direction also involves facilitating access to information, not only for our regular users, those who are able to decipher the mysteries of the website, but also for all citizens, especially young people, who must be informed via an appropriate style of language and adapted products.

Statistics do not like volatility; the search for statistical coherence over time leads naturally to a certain stability in the methods used. Yet official statistics are an area that is constantly innovating, in order to reduce the response burden on individuals and enterprises who are surveyed, to make full use of administrative data and, in the future, private data too, to take advantage of technological progress. **Innovating and being at the forefront with data sources** echoes this concern: INSEE will not be left behind when it comes to Big Data and will use all relevant sources of information while never letting go of its commitment to quality. There is also a need to ensure that current information sources are secure, by constantly explaining that the information being asked for is needed for good reasons, and providing an objective assessment of the quality of our products.

More and more often it is the case that purely national data are not sufficient. In an environment where financial resources and people are considerably more mobile, where the performance of public policies is judged by comparing results with our neighbours, INSEE must see to it that its analyses are made in an international context and ensure, with its partners, that data are comparable from one country to another. **Contributing actively, with the French Official Statistical System, to European statistics** also involves sharing good practice and sometimes pooling investment, while highlighting our areas of excellence for our partners and learning from their experiences.

Throughout its history, INSEE has been able to use complex tools and to adapt its organisation. The fourth strategic direction, **Demonstrating collective agility and sobriety**, means recognising that there is some progress to be made, especially in designing simple, user-friendly tools, adapted to the needs of users and also to the needs of employees, to develop the ability of managers to capitalise on their skills and welcome change. This is all the more necessary when such a large proportion of people are due to retire, therefore the Institute must be particularly vigilant in order to retain a skill base in the many areas where it carries out its work.

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“ **INSEE’S AIM IS TO CONTINUE TO INFORM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEBATE, AS IT HAS DONE FOR 70 YEARS.** ”

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The aim of INSEE – the aim which unites and motivates all of its employees – is to continue to inform the economic and social debate, as it has done for 70 years. A great deal of progress has been made: diversity in situations is now much better described, geographic disaggregation by territory is now operational for many statistics, especially in the overseas departments, publication deadlines have been tightened considerably, and there is a wider variety of dissemination tools. Nevertheless, some subjects could be better covered by official statistics. Equal opportunities and discrimination, intergenerational and geographic

mobility, especially temporary or permanent emigration, disincentive effects on recruitment, the location and demographics of establishments – these are just a few examples. Regarding data collection, experiments with online responses to household surveys will certainly continue, administrative sources must be exploited to the full and the recent “Digital Republic” bill will enable the Institute to draw on private databases whenever it is justified. With its many skills, INSEE is also able to contribute more to the evaluation of public policies.

In this document INSEE presents its ambitions for the future. Achieving these ambitions will depend on the resources that can be allocated. The Institute will of course continue to increase its productivity by bringing in innovations in statistical procedures and by becoming more flexible in redeploying internal resources. This document shows how these gains can be usefully mobilised to improve official statistical publications and ensure that they are better known; it will enlighten the budgetary choices for INSEE in the years to come.



# Introduction

## Three challenges for official statistics

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What role should INSEE play in the next 10 years?  
This is the question that this strategic report intends to address.

Since it was created just after the Second World War, INSEE has supported the country through a major period of reconstruction and modernisation. The establishment of a reliable and rigorous information system has given a better understanding of social changes and helps clarify public policies.

From the 1970s to the 1990s, INSEE contributed to the construction of European official statistics, while strongly maintaining its professional values. At the beginning of the 2000s, the emergence of new tools for processing information improved the production and dissemination capacity of official statistics.

Today, although INSEE's technical qualities, independence and professional excellence are recognised both nationally and internationally, it also has a key role to play in helping the public, in all their diversity, to understand the changes that are happening in our environment.

In the years to come, there will be three main challenges to face.

### ► Changes and uncertainties

The questions surrounding globalisation, the arrival of new communication tools, the diversification in lifestyles, the wide variation in types of household and the many types of employment contract are all issues that give rise to new expectations. Our users expect INSEE to be able to measure and understand these changes, for example by identifying the risks of social and territorial divides to which they give rise.

### ► Digital inflation

Technological changes have turned the way information is produced and disseminated upside down. With the arrival of Big Data, everyone's activities can be recorded in real time and a trace can be kept. At the same time, Open Data encourages public administrations to open up access to the data they hold.

# INSEE, an unusual history

## IN BRIEF INSEE'S AMBITIONS

1 - SPEAKING TO EVERYONE

2 - USING MODERN MEANS TO  
PROCESS AND DISSEMINATING  
INFORMATION

3 - BEING OPEN TO SOCIETY  
AND THE WORLD

While these data are useful for providing knowledge and supporting action (e.g. in the area of health), disseminating them requires some very strict obligations in terms of protection and confidentiality. These changes lead to new responsibilities for official statisticians in a world where data seem cheap and easy to collect since they are so smoothly accessible.

### ► Reconfiguration of institutions

Controlling public spending has now become a necessity and public policies, which are so often targeted, are subject to scrutiny to determine their effectiveness. The reconfiguration of public institutions has strengthened the importance of the European and regional levels. These stakeholders expect official statistics to provide measurements and analyses which will throw light on the effects of policies on the intended populations, in order to improve their coherence and effectiveness.

INSEE presents specificities regarding the other national statistical institutes. It has a specific feature which was honed even further between the 1950s and 1970: the combining of statistical production and economic studies. "Towards 1960, with the expansion of planning, France began to apply statistics to this area and to economic regulation policies", as described on the website. National accountants and economists responded to the urgent need for planning in this post-war period, and this had a considerable knock-on effect on surveys and statistical sources.

In the following decades, INSEE's role was that of flagship for the Official Statistical System and the Ministerial Statistical Offices, producing and disseminating data in their areas of expertise. INSEE agents worked towards a planned expansion of this system, and were involved in the move towards decentralisation in the 1980s with the development of regional studies, in consultation with the new public stakeholders.

Although these changes may have generated some tension between the different professions in official statistics (statisticians, computer technicians, national accountants, economists), together they were able to maintain a sound basis of shared values within INSEE and official statistical system, while showing how well these professions complemented one another. For full control over the statistical process, statisticians mobilised the full and willing cooperation of all these sister professions.

### REMINDER: THE ROLE OF THE STATISTICIAN

As well as measuring figures, statisticians work on additional assignments:

- Upstream, they define the entities that are to be observed (enterprises, households), according to detailed classifications (socio-occupational categories, branches and sectors of activity)
- Downstream, they contribute to methods of description and analysis to derive major trends in the phenomena measured and reveal any unusual aspects.

# Background

## A strong identity for moving forward

To be sure it has the means to fulfil its ambition, INSEE will rely on its identity and the strong values shared by all those who contribute to official statistics.

### ► An excellent reputation

While INSEE and official statistics enjoy an excellent reputation and have built up a considerable capital of confidence, it is essential to take care to maintain this credibility in the long term. INSEE may excel in the major areas covered by official statistics, but it still needs to consolidate in areas linked with the concerns of society today.

#### DO YOU KNOW INSEE?



**90%**  
know it



**80%**  
think that it  
is a useful body



**71%**  
have a good opinion of it



**74%**  
trust it

#### CREDIBILITY OF INDICATORS



**77%**  
think that the birth rate  
is a good reflection of reality



**45%**  
think that the price index  
is a good reflection of reality



**37%**  
think that the unemployment rate  
is a good reflection of reality

Source: survey of French people, May 2015



## ► Clear missions

INSEE's main goal is summed up in its signature, "Measuring to understand". To inform the economic and social debate, INSEE is pursuing six ambitious missions simultaneously, and they can only become stronger in the years to come:

- To collect and produce data
- To analyse figures
- To disseminate statistics and studies
- To coordinate the Official Statistical System
- To teach and develop research
- To contribute to the construction of an international statistical space

The statistical space, and especially the European space, is growing with the activity of international institutions and with the expansion in the production and dissemination of transnational data. Now enshrined in a European regulation, INSEE's role as coordinator of French official statistics will grow in this context of technological transformations.

In this respect, INSEE's historic ability to analyse and disseminate the figures produced is an asset which guarantees their relevance, quality and intelligibility.

“ **INSEE IS BECOMING ESTABLISHED AS THE BENCHMARK FOR COMPANIES CARRYING OUT QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE STUDIES.** ”

HEAD OF AN OPINION POLL INSTITUTE

In order to fulfil its tasks to the best of its ability, INSEE must make an effort to open up more not only to its users, but also to the academic and scientific community. In its strategic directions for 2025, the Institute will also ensure that it strengthens its contribution to teaching and research regarding statistical production and analyses.

## NATIONAL STATISTICAL COORDINATION: A RESPONSIBILITY ENSHRINED BY THE EUROPEAN REGULATIONS

In 2009, the European Community institutions adopted Regulation no. 223 on European statistics, which was amended in 2015. This regulation sets out a number of principles relating to the aims and governance of the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. Article 5 states the following: "The coordinating responsibility of the national statistical institutes (NSI) shall cover all other national authorities responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, which are determined in the European statistical programme. The NSIs shall, in particular, be responsible at the national level for coordinating

statistical programming and reporting, quality monitoring, methodology, data transmission and communication on statistical actions of the European Statistical System."

To guarantee this responsibility, article 5a of regulation 223 confers exclusive responsibility to NSIs and hence to INSEE, "for deciding on processes, statistical methods, standards and procedures." These are the guarantees that will ensure that official statisticians can work in full professional independence.



## ► Providing responses

In this fast-changing environment, how do we firmly establish the role of official statistics, their values, usefulness and relevance? After consulting its users, especially the opinions of those using the website, INSEE identified 4 answers to their questions.

### **Making a subject that is complex by nature accessible via simple and attractive publications**

*“The jargon of economics is not understood by everyone and sometimes makes deciphering a graph or a table more complicated.”*  
An internet user

### **Showing the general public how the indicators are representative of reality**

*“The price index is not representative of what is consumed on a day-to-day basis.”*  
An internet user

### **Answering questions on the Institute’s independence from the world of politics**

*“Since the figures are often contradictory and change over the months, I suspect that some adjustments are made.”*  
An internet user

### **Coping with the expansion in statistical data**

*“In the future, we will be moving towards greater infobesity. The bad data is chasing out the good data.”*  
A company director



## ► Shared values

Official statistics are based on a set of key values shared by all those who contribute: reliability, quality, independence, general interest, public service, usefulness, respect for the interviewee. The effort put into the strategic process launched by INSEE has confirmed that official statistics employees adhere very strongly to these values.

These values are the same ones that steer European statistics. All European statistical institutes have adopted a Code of Practice, which lists common commitments, based on fifteen principles. It is by respecting these fundamental values and being attentive to our users' needs that official statistics will play their role to the full.

# IN BRIEF

## COMMITMENTS BY EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

- Professional independence of statistical authorities
- Impartiality and objectivity of statistics
- Sound methodology and quality of statistical procedures
- Confidentiality of data provided by households and enterprises
- Reliability, relevance and coherence of statistical output
- Accessibility and clarity of disseminated data
- Non-excessive burden and cost effectiveness of statistical surveys and processes

## STRONG COHESION

When the strategic reflection process was launched, all INSEE employees were consulted confidentially via the intranet. The aim was to question them about the values on which INSEE and official statistics should be based and their role in the public arena.

### VALUES

More than 85% put forward reliability and independence. In addition to these two values, many agents mentioned the sense of public service and the general interest, the usefulness of the surveys and the respect for the respondents.

### ROLE

For almost 70% of staff, the role of INSEE consists not only in informing the public debate by disseminating statistical information, but also being at the cutting edge of statistical techniques and providing researchers with information of the highest quality.

These results are proof of the cohesion of opinion throughout INSEE which constitutes a strength that can be relied on.



## Official statistics responding to users' needs

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Initially, the mission of official statistics was to respond to requests for information from the modern Nation States. Since then, demand has diversified and now comes from a variety of sources: politicians, public decision-makers, researchers, private decision-makers, journalists, citizens. To provide statistics that are adapted to the needs of its users, the Official Statistical System has put in place a permanent response system with the CNIS (National Council for Statistical Information). During the preparation of the INSEE 2025 strategy, some major trends came to the fore.

### ► A changing environment

Several factors have turned the environment of official statistics upside down: Big Data, Open Data, a greater use of administrative sources, etc. Given the quantity and variety of data that are now freely accessible, the use of figures in social debate has increased exponentially. The ease with which data can be exchanged makes it a simple matter to make a request and gain access to administrative sources. However, these sources have their own calendars and official statisticians must reconcile their use with the users' wish for up-to-date information

### ► Support needed

The abundance of data leaves users exposed to numerous pitfalls. They are fully aware of these risks and are the first to want support. To provide this support, official statistics must make more of an effort to educate, aimed at all types of public: online tools and training, conferences, comments and analyses. This support involves emphasizing the quality requirements to which official statistics have always adhered. Enabling users to find their way through the mass of statistics and to select just the right figures for their purpose is a major goal for official statistics.

## ► Towards more interactivity

The use of new dissemination and communication tools alters the relationship between official statisticians and users. Many people now want extensive access to data produced by public administration in order to examine the analyses produced by INSEE and official statistics. This trend fosters essential cooperation between the worlds of statistics and research.

Moving on from a relationship where the user is in a passive position, a much more dynamic relationship has emerged based on interactivity and autonomy. By bringing different types of public together in the analyses and providing a range of tools (tables, graphs) so that each person can build its own indicators, this will enhance the statistical culture and through this the influence of official statistics.

## ► More demanding users

Users acknowledge the efforts that have been made by official statistics in recent years to examine in more detail a larger and more innovative range of topics:

- Development of localised data to provide support for territorial reform
- Production of statistics in the field of sustainable development
- Progress in safety statistics
- Progress in describing how enterprises operate in the context of globalisation

But it is necessary to go even further. INSEE must be capable of responding to the need to analyse society in all its diversity, from socioeconomic changes to international issues. In future, official statistics will invest yet more in sensitive topics such as the dynamics of inequalities and social mobility, migratory flows and changes in the ways the economy is financed.

In a context of growing social demand, the production of statistics that are reliable and robust cannot be achieved without a collective awareness of the effort that this will entail.

In an environment where data dissemination has become commonplace and public spending has been reduced, enterprises, households and decision-makers will have to demonstrate a willingness to get involved: completing questionnaires (on paper or online) is a civic act which must be carried out if official statistics are to function as they should. And French society in general. INSEE will continue to rigorously protect the confidentiality of personal data.

## HOW TO RECONCILE DEVELOPMENT, QUALITY AND SOBRIETY?

## ► Strong commitments towards users

This may not be a new challenge, but it is taking on a new dimension. To meet it, the Official Statistical System is making commitments at several levels:

- Modernisation of its operations and data collection tools
- Use of data produced outside the public domain in partnership with private data producers, on a basis defined by law
- Development of pooling operations and exchanges with French and European partners
- Actions to strengthen citizens' and enterprises' confidence in official statistics
- Increased cooperation with academics and research to develop innovations
- Establishment of clearly identified quality processes
- Balance between the vigour of the younger generation and the know-how of the older generation in INSEE and in the Official Statistical System

In order to provide a concrete response to these commitments, consultation was organised within INSEE and the Official Statistical System. Four strategic directions were identified, encompassing sixteen detailed goals.

# Strategic Directions

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## DIRECTION A

### ► Making statistics meaningful and reaching out to all types of public

The Official Statistical System has set itself the target of disseminating figures that are accessible to all, thanks to cutting edge tools and specially adapted products. In order to work collectively, INSEE will test out its figures in real situations and international comparisons to improve their relevance, quality and coherence. The Institute will ensure their usefulness in informing local and international decisions, while covering a varied and coherent area of investigation, without duplication.

## DIRECTION B

### ► Innovating and being at the forefront with data sources

To provide an Official Statistical System that is relevant to all, INSEE will consolidate the relations of trust it has with those it surveys, by working and communicating on three priority areas:

- Respect for confidentiality, given the extended range of sources to which INSEE now has access.
- Methodological rigour, thanks to excellent tools for data collection, measurement and analysis.
- Professional independence, hand in hand with the development of partnerships linked with the worlds of teaching and research.



## DIRECTION C

### ► Contributing actively, with the French Official Statistical System, to European statistics

In addition to coordinating the French Official Statistical System, INSEE works within the very exacting European statistical framework to strengthen its basic principles (values and independence, coordination, technique) and take advantage of external good practice. In this way, INSEE brings its own individual features to its European partners: skills in data collection, statistical processing and analysis, in each of its establishments. At international level, INSEE adopts an active stance on the main statistical questions that are addressed.

## DIRECTION D

### ► Demonstrating collective agility and sobriety

While INSEE is going to see a major change in its age pyramid, it will continue to rely on the individual and collective skills of its agents to create innovative products and design participative internal tools. Cross-disciplinarity, interaction between the different generations, recognition and openness lie at the heart of the changes that INSEE will introduce to add further momentum to its operational methods.



## DIRECTION A: Making statistics meaningful and reaching out to all types of public

The mission of the official statistical system is to analyse the reality of French society from all angles – demographic, economic, social – and in a language that is accessible to all. By making an effort to work collectively, INSEE and the Official Statistical System put the figures that they produce into perspective in terms of international comparison to improve their relevance, quality and coherence.

Statisticians do their utmost to explain the meaning and the usefulness of the figures they produce by applying methods to ensure that they can be easily understood. They also supply feedback on the conditions under which data were produced when their own analyses and public debate highlight the limitations of these figures.

### ► Goal 1

**Making the figures meaningful in order to improve their relevance, quality and coherence**

The figures do not speak for themselves. To fulfil its mission to provide information of general interest on economic and social issues, INSEE produces figures that are easy to interpret, and which stand the test of reality. This way of proceeding applies to the message contained in a specific piece of data, but also to ensuring the coherence of the different messages carried by official statistics as a whole.

### KEY ACTIONS

- To describe the organisation of data production and its changes, statisticians no longer look at the notion of enterprise in relation to the legal units of which it is made up, but as an effective economic unit. In line with a better monitoring of the demographics of enterprises, this strategic direction will provide a better analysis of company restructuring.
- New investments will be made on the work on inequalities in standard of living and their sensitivity to social and tax decisions, in order to measure this information better and more quickly. This will be helped by the creation of demographic accounts by household and family type and by bringing income statistics together in a coherent whole.
- Geo-data technology will be put to use to refine the territorial dimension (new regions, metropolitan areas, local territories) of the statistical tools (registers, surveys, administrative records) and the studies for which they are used.

## ► Goal 2

### To support and inform the public debate, including on sensitive topics

In order to support and inform the public debate it will be necessary to identify users' needs beforehand and subsequently to capitalise on the data via suitable analyses and dissemination methods. INSEE will monitor the official statistics to ensure that they cover a wide scope and put out coherent messages on the realities described, including the most sensitive topics.

## KEY ACTIONS

- A localised observation system for employment and public spending will be consolidated in order to build up a global and coherent view of the regional economy and contribute to the assessment of the impact of local decisions.
- Major European metropolitan areas will be compared, in collaboration with European Union partners, for a better understanding of the diverse reality of metropolitan dynamics.

## KEY ACTIONS

- A communication system based on contributions from the Official Statistical System and efficient tools will be put in place to disseminate products adapted to user needs online.
- A collaborative publication prototype will be tested which will make users aware of the many facets of phenomena that are measured statistically.
- An educational pack will be produced, aimed at the younger generation, giving them easier access to economic, social and demographic core data.

## ► Goal 3

### To develop a statistical culture for all types of public

The Official Statistical System ensures that its analyses are accessible to all citizens. For this, it uses the most recent communication tools to adapt to the expectations of every type of public: schoolchildren and students, private and public decision-makers, experts and researchers, etc. Specifically, it is testing interactive dissemination tools which use the skills of the users. This educational scheme concerns not only the bodies being surveyed (individuals, households, enterprises) but also stakeholders in the data collection process (municipalities, associations) and users, or potential users, from different types of public.

## ► Goal 4

### To enhance the reputation of the Official Statistical System

INSEE works hard to maintain its partnerships (media, scientific and academic community, intermediary bodies, associations, national education) in order to consolidate the reputation of official statistics and help to ensure that they are used in an informed way. All the agents at the Institute are keen to demonstrate the ethical rigour and the professional excellence that the Official Statistical System does its best to embody.

## KEY ACTIONS

- Communication will be organised around official statistical practices and innovations to give a better understanding of the joint contributions by INSEE and the Ministerial Statistical Offices.
- INSEE's work in the regions will be improved by stronger territorial coordination of the Official Statistical System and consultation with local stakeholders to give prime visibility to the new regions created by the recent territorial reform.



## DIRECTION B: Innovating and being at the forefront with data sources

Statistics are evolving in line with changes in today's world. With the digitization of human activity, the production of figures is associated with activities being traced or recorded. This spontaneous abundance of information requires the intervention of statisticians able to order, process and document these data with precision so that they can be useful for providing knowledge and supporting action.

INSEE's professional independence is guaranteed by national and European law; the goal of official statistics is to be of general interest, and to ensure that confidence is maintained with the people and the organisations being surveyed. INSEE sees the digital revolution as a unique opportunity to stimulate its capacity for innovation and that of the Official Statistical System, composed of various Ministerial Statistical Offices.

### ► Goal 1

**To guarantee the innovative capacity of INSEE and the Official Statistical System by developing an outward-looking Research & Development culture**

To develop products that are adapted to users' new needs and to consolidate their ability to process multiple sources, INSEE and the various bodies of the Official Statistical System are forming partnerships amongst themselves and also with administrations, other national statistical institutes, universities and private partners. They are testing methodologies, which are assessed in association with experts and external users. To achieve excellence, they promote rewarding internal and external professional career paths, and bring in managers from outside.

### KEY ACTIONS

- A lab for Official Statistical System will be created to develop R&D in statistical production. The data and statistical methods developed by official statistics will be made available to communities outside the Official Statistical System.
- Within a year, a simple and fast survey methodology will be tested on a new topic or for a new region, the aim being for INSEE and the Ministerial Statistical Offices to respond to requests for an "express service".

## ► Goal 2

**To strengthen the quality process and make it better known in order to manage the risks and derive maximum benefit from innovations**

By using new data sources it should be possible to improve the diversity, relevance and robustness of statistical studies and to shorten the time required to make them available. INSEE selects and processes these new sources according to precise and opposable quality criteria which define the checks to be made, from data collection to dissemination. Quality control is carried out by managers with experience in applying international standards, the aim being to better control risks and to take advantage of innovations. The “Official Statistics” brand will act as go-between for this system with users and partners and will train them in identifying reliable figures (defined, documented, traceable, robust).

### KEY ACTIONS

- Tools for the quality system will be used inside INSEE and the Official Statistical System: risks affecting statistical processes will be mapped; sober quality assurance frameworks compliant with the best international standards will be implemented; testing will be carried out on ISO-standard certification.
- The automatic generation of survey questionnaires will continue so that surveys can be adapted to a wide range of possible supports (e.g. Smartphones).
- Work will continue on harmonising statistical methods and production in the overseas departments with those in Metropolitan France, and this will provide homogeneous national statistics, wherever possible.

### KEY ACTIONS

- The new statistical sources and the accompanying matching processes will receive investment in order to expand the range offered to users, especially in priority topics. For example, for observing prices, bringing in scanner data will be a model for using private data, created in partnership with major retailers.
- Reducing the lead times for statistical production and dissemination will be a priority to meet users’ needs for fast results.
- The Official Statistical System will set out the main topics on which it will publish in the next five years.

## ► Goal 3

**To work on emerging subjects with the Ministerial Statistical Offices and other statistical institutes**

The new data sources will enable official statistics to actively monitor topics which are now central to public debate (environment, health, well-being). This will encourage the Official Statistical System to forge partnerships, both in the administrative sphere and beyond. INSEE intends to work on these subjects with the Ministerial Statistical Offices and National Statistical Institutes abroad in order to be even better prepared to meet users’ needs.

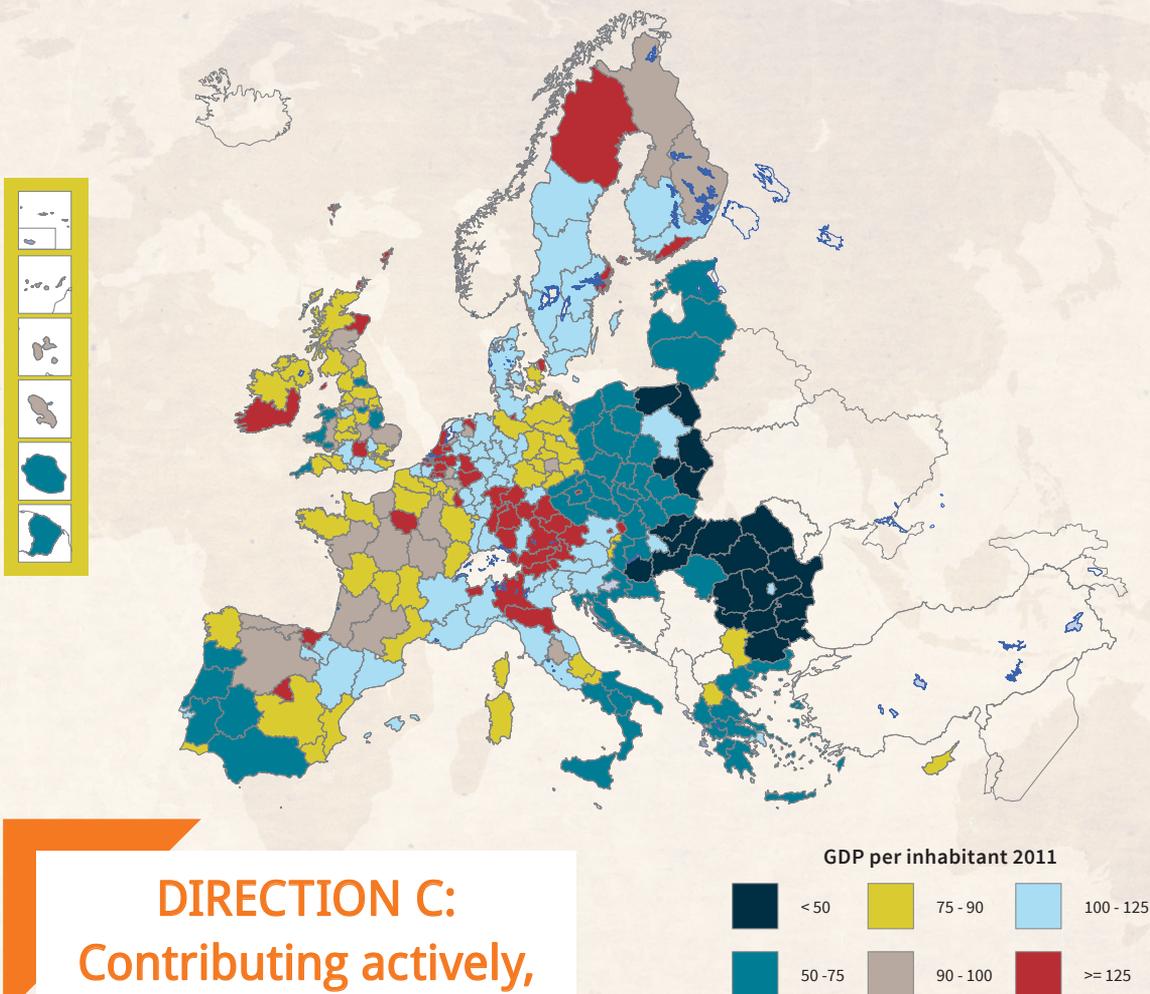
## ► Goal 4

**To strengthen the capacity and legitimacy of the Official Statistical System to collect data**

To extend access to official statistical sources (surveys, administrative sources) and, in the future, to private sources, INSEE and the Official Statistical System will inform citizens and enterprises about the legal framework and the ethical guarantees (protection, use, data confidentiality) in order to gain their trust.

### KEY ACTIONS

- The Official Statistical System will experiment with data certification for an identified topic, to promote a better awareness by citizens of the contribution and the limitations of figures published by different bodies.
- INSEE employees, and especially the survey interviewers, will be mobilised to carry key messages from the Institute to those being surveyed and to the general public and thus heighten their visibility and their credibility.
- Analyses based on administrative registers and records will be systematised in order to capitalise on the information they contain. This is a way to develop the population census and optimise costs, explored together with European partners.



## DIRECTION C: Contributing actively, with the French Official Statistical System, to European statistics

Statistics at European level are in existence now, but they have taken a very long time to fully mature. INSEE was responsible for coordinating the inclusion of the French Official Statistical System into the very demanding framework of the European Statistical System. INSEE brings to its partners its unique qualities (ability to analyse statistics, to process information and to carry out studies), and plays an active role in the construction of European statistics and in discussions around the statistical issues being debated by international bodies. This positioning enables the Institute to benefit from external good practices, in addition to contributing to strengthening its fundamental values: professional independence, technical expertise, national coordination of statistical activities.

## ► Goal 1

### **To be fully involved in building European and international statistics**

To take advantage of its inclusion in the global network of official statistics, INSEE and the Official Statistical System foster direct relationships between their managers and experts and foreign colleagues; they have discussions and share good practices with the other NSIs; they are in partnership with Eurostat, the OECD and other bodies, especially for the development of innovative investment; they mobilise national bodies focused on Europe or internationally. In order to bring this European strategy to life, the Official Statistical System aims to improve the effectiveness of its internal consultation processes and the coherence of its decision-making on international issues.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- INSEE will contribute actively to joint projects proposed in Eurostat's Vision 2020 by putting forward its expertise in three key areas of international comparison: information systems, statistical production, and survey methodology. The label of the European Official Statistical System – proof of the commitment shared by all officers – will be highlighted.
- To better demonstrate France's position in relation to the other EU countries, European comparisons will be systematically included in INSEE's analyses. Notably, this will mean continuing the harmonisation of short-term production indicators between European countries and will lead to the development of new indicators.
- The statistical breakdown of the French territory (urban units, urban areas, employment zones, living zones) will be redrawn according to European and international definitions, to which French statisticians have contributed. Development of cross-border data and studies will receive new investment at the level of the regions and the territories that are directly concerned.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- The entire French Official Statistical System will work to further fulfil its European commitments. The different operational departments at INSEE will make concrete proposals to the European Statistical System headed by Eurostat, to position themselves as leader or co-leader of European projects. These commitments will give French statisticians a better knowledge of the statistical systems of partner countries and help them refine their understanding of data comparability.
- INSEE moves ahead in designing and implementing company profiling methods, and will play its part by sharing experience with other national institutes and promoting European coherence in the identification of enterprises for a better understanding of the globalisation of European economies. This work will be needed to build a high-quality European statistical system and also to improve the comparability of national structural business statistics.

## ► Goal 2

### **To invest in expertise on international comparisons by sharing good practices and using them appropriately in statistics and studies**

To give a clearer view of the way the French economy and society function, INSEE and the Official Statistical System will develop methodological comparisons with good practices from abroad, looking at statistical, organisational and managerial processes. Examining these processes will show what adjustments are needed to meet the expectations of users concerned in order to have a good level of comparability of data and research between European Union Member States.

## KEY ACTIONS

- The European and international culture will be enhanced across the Official Statistical System through dedicated actions: a common core of documentation via an intranet, regular communication on international subjects and training modules adapted specifically to strengthen the level of English of INSEE employees.
- Managers and experts will be encouraged to apply for posts with an international dimension through a personalized career monitoring scheme and experience gained in this way will be acknowledged. The practice of immersing managers in European statistical institutions and exchanges with foreign institutes will be encouraged.

## ► Goal 3

### **To promote an international culture within the Official Statistical System**

To encourage staff to play a leading role in European and global statistical construction, INSEE and the Official Statistical System will launch internal communication actions on the functioning of national institutions and supranational bodies and on their positioning with regard to international issues. This culture of openness will be reflected in professional career paths via the introduction of programmes and incentives focusing on mobility, training and recognition of skills.





## DIRECTION D: Demonstrating collective agility and sobriety

To fulfil its missions in a context of limited resources, INSEE is streamlining its operations and undertakes to take some serious decisions. It will mobilise the individual and collective skills of all its staff by promoting a transversal approach to their contributions; an effort will be made to design and implement user-friendly and interactive in-house tools; it will improve its ability to value the skills of each person and to bring in the necessary changes. By managing the registers well, providing statistics that meet the needs of users and completing robust products, delivered on time, the description INSEE provides of a more and more complex world will be consolidated further.

### ► Goal 1

**To develop a management style that promotes the sharing of goals and knowledge**

To promote the sharing of knowledge, managers are trained in participative management techniques. As participants in the change process, they ensure that their teams' goals are meaningful and encourage employees to appropriate them; they help each person to enhance their skills and ensure that good practices are passed on; they encourage units to decompartmentalise for a better flow of information within networks, both internal and external.

### KEY ACTIONS

- Access to INSEE's educational products will be modernised with the inauguration of the Web4G website in autumn 2016: this will be a place to welcome internet users and a tool for a shared culture within INSEE.
- Experimenting with and organising professional communities and projects, using the appropriate collaborative tools, will be encouraged at INSEE and will open up to the outside.
- A specific training programme will be offered to all managers, with modules based on collaborative management. New initiatives will be launched to ensure that know-how can be passed on, given the increased numbers who will be retiring in the coming years.

## ► Goal 2

### To develop the skills of tomorrow in professional career paths for a high-quality service

To guarantee that a high-quality service will be provided for its users, INSEE puts developing the skills of its employees at the centre of its objectives. INSEE will support and advise them throughout their professional path to build fulfilling careers.

## KEY ACTIONS

- INSEE will endeavour to anticipate the changes that will be needed in the professions and in skills through the activities and techniques it will use in the coming decade. It will draw the necessary conclusions to adapt its recruitment and training policy.
- A better range of professional career paths will be available, adapted to the skills and development of each individual. For the experts on which INSEE's solid scientific base is founded, their career paths will be enhanced, enabling them to capitalise on their expertise and a more varied range of positions will be offered.

## KEY ACTIONS

- Mobility campaigns for managers can be adapted to make professional career paths more flexible and optimise the use of skills.
- Adequate resources for a new project, whether computer-based, statistical, organisational or methodological, will be made available quickly to commit to a key topic as soon as possible and in compliance with quality requirements

## ► Goal 3

### To increase flexibility in resource allocation

To ensure that the resources required will be available to complete priority projects on time, INSEE must become more flexible. Whether it be in the allocation of budgetary resources, mobility rules, the occasional use of external recruitment or the outsourcing of some services, the Institute will be more open to solutions to make this flexibility possible.

## ► Goal 4

### To improve the way operations are carried out by cultivating sobriety and flexibility

The Institute must be able to make flexible adjustments to its operations in order to improve existing services and offer new ones to users, both internal and external. It will draw fully on lessons learned from existing operations and current projects and will allocate resources in a flexible and reactive way to anticipate any unforeseen expense.

## KEY ACTIONS

- The urbanisation and modularisation of INSEE's information system will continue, the aim being to optimise both the services provided and costs. Projects will continue to be modular via a balance between the use of internal teams with generic skills and high-performing external solutions.
- The pooling and exchange of services between units will be encouraged in order to spread the burden. Pooling resources will also apply to setting up and monitoring training operations between Regional Offices.

## KEY ACTIONS

- Measurement of the cost of INSEE's operations and investments will be systematised, notably ensuring that coordinated responses can be provided to the many requests from institutions concerning the estimated cost of their work.
- INSEE will gain in efficiency in its day-to-day practices: meetings will be run better through the use of a reference guide for preparation, organisation and follow-up; procedures will be clarified, with results explained to the agents involved; better internal communication thanks to the development of easy-to-handle collaborative tools, and moderate use of e-mails.

## ► Goal 5

**To generate the means to achieve our ambitions by making savings**

With the simplification of INSEE's internal operations, it will be easier to free up the resources needed to achieve our declared aims. Working methods in the units and between units will eliminate the unnecessary; project management and procedures will become more sober; information and decision-making channels will be shortened to ensure flexibility and responsiveness.



# Conclusion

## Commitment in action: 72 actions for a new decade

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Embodied in **4 strategic directions** and **16 goals**, INSEE's strategic approach lists the ambitions that will come to life by 2025, through **72 actions** involving all of INSEE's employees and establishments as well as the Ministerial Statistical Offices.

This plan of action was prepared in 2015 and 2016, and is the result of a process of selection and synthesis based on proposals put forward by INSEE agents and official statistics employees at INSEE 2025 meetings, which were attended by around a thousand staff members.

In addition, there were reflections from 8 thematic working groups, the Regional Offices and the general directorate departments. From these debates 72 actions were outlined by teams with all the appropriate skills. This report can never be exhaustive, but the actions described in these pages present a good illustration of the content of the strategic directions and the meaning behind them.

With this collective project, which focuses on dynamic and innovative management methods, INSEE is exploring new ground, yet still pursuing its key missions.

## A THREE-PART ACTION PLAN

### • STRUCTURING ACTIONS

Continuing long-term operations, aimed at making sustainable operational improvements to the work of INSEE and the Official Statistical System, and strengthening its professional core.

### • INNOVATIVE ACTIONS

Commitment to innovative projects, exploring new areas, and optimising the quality, relevance and consistency of the figures produced.

### • EXPERIMENTAL ACTIONS

Experimenting with new products and processes to assess their usefulness before they are put to general use.



This action plan highlights initiatives with a strong capacity to stimulate the collective momentum of INSEE and the Official Statistical System. It will result in work programmes that take into account the circumstances that determine the resources needed to develop INSEE's production activities and studies. Their operations will be assessed and revised over time, to keep in line with economic and budgetary constraints. Agility and sobriety will be employed to achieve the stated aims.

**The INSEE plan brings together actions that can create synergies at several levels:**

- A good grip on changes in the productive system and new territorial dynamics.
- Better identify, prevent and deal with the inherent risks in statistical production and guarantee the quality of the figures disseminated.
- Keep at the forefront of new survey methods associated with information and communication technologies.
- Promote interactive and educational communication.

As it marks its 70 years of history, INSEE is embarking on an ambitious strategy and an operational action plan with a view to being even better able to meet the expectations of all the types of public who use its figures and its studies. It will continue to contribute to the quality of public debate at a time when changes of all kinds are generating a collective desire for a better understanding of today's world.

**AT THE HEART OF THE OFFICIAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM, INSEE EMBARKS  
ON A NEW DECADE WITH CONFIDENCE AND ENERGY.**



# Appendices

## INSEE 2025 working groups

In autumn 2014, eight working groups were created, bringing together motivated and competent people from a range of units at INSEE. Each group leader then became the respective reference person in the INSEE 2025 steering committee. The aim of the project was to answer questions on thematic issues to provide inspiration for developing INSEE's future strategic directions.

### THE 8 THEMATIC QUESTIONS

#### **New statistical sources**

What should INSEE's position be towards the proliferation of new data fields which create opportunities for using them efficiently in official statistics, but also competitive risks and questions on the status of these official statistics?

#### **Europe**

What strategy of influence should INSEE build up in relation to Europe, and what will be the consequences?

#### **Uses of statistics**

How to carry out monitoring that will enable us to respond adequately to future demands made on official statistics?

#### **Production under control with quality integrated**

How to satisfy users by controlling the statistical production process and studies, while providing managers with a satisfactory work environment? How to achieve this objective in a context of limited resources?

#### **Professional excellence**

In which areas should the Institute have professional excellence, the source of its legitimacy and its reputation? How should work be organised to achieve this goal?

#### **Networking**

At INSEE, what work should be done through networks by 2025? What changes from the current mode of operation?

#### **Transmission of knowledge**

In a context of high staff turnover, how to ensure the transmission of knowledge to those who will be coming to INSEE, either newly recruited or through mobility?

#### **Computer application base**

How can INSEE have a computer application base that is in tune with today's technology and adapted to the needs of users, while still targeting stability, sobriety and safety?

# Meetings and workshops

The INSEE staff were asked to contribute to the collective discussion needed for the INSEE 2025 operation. The result was that five large meetings were held in the spring of 2015 in Caen, Lyon, Paris, Nancy and Bordeaux. These meetings brought together employees from the host site, but also from other Regional Offices, national establishments (Metz, Libourne) and the Ministerial Statistical Offices. In all, almost a thousand employees from the different departments attended, including survey interviewers.

## 3 KEY QUESTIONS

- **What official statistical service for tomorrow?**
- **What snapshot and of which France?**
- **Living and working together at INSEE.**

The purpose of the discussion was to get the employees to express their current perception of INSEE, their expectations and their vision for the future of the Institute, and their suggestions. In preparation for these meetings, a film was made with more than 140 INSEE employees, interviewed in small groups. The 25 hours of exchanges that were collected gave rise to a film which was shown at each meeting to start the debate between staff and management.

## THE MAJOR THEMES OF THESE WORKSHOPS

- ▶ Highlighting the Official Statistical System brand, reflecting the coherence of an official statistical system which is necessarily a reference, for the quality of its internal cooperation.
- ▶ The growth in territorial statistical services at a greater level of detail, and even very localised statistics, encourages dialogue with regional and local stakeholders, with a view to evaluating public policies.
- ▶ Regional Offices networking after reorganisation in line with the new regional breakdown and taking this into account in international comparisons.
- ▶ More educational and interactive communication, adapted to the diversity of user profiles.
- ▶ Adapting survey methodologies and the future of traditional surveys in a context of upheaval in data collection methods.
- ▶ Attention to managing career paths individually and recognising individual skills, the aim being to encourage mobility, provided the timing of projects is respected, and open to category B managers.
- ▶ The need for middle management and local management, boosting the dynamics of the teams, in a spirit of inclusiveness for all the different staff categories.



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