

The statistical organisation in Spain

The organisation for producing official statistics in Spain is highly complex, not only due to the features of the decentralised system forming part of the statistical organisation in the General Administration of the State (GAS), but due to the emergence of statistical systems in the Autonomous Communities¹, with which it has to be coordinated, and where possible, integrated.

1. The highest-level legal reference in Spain regarding statistical activity is to be found in the Spanish Constitution of 1978, which, in article 149. 31a establishes that *the State has exclusive jurisdiction regarding statistics for state purposes*.

In Autonomous Communities, the highest-level legal base for official statistical activity is in the Autonomy Statutes, approved by means of organic laws. In each of the aforementioned statutes, it is established that the respective *Autonomous Community has exclusive jurisdiction over statistics for Autonomous Community purposes*.

2. Law 12/1989, of 9 May, on the Public Statistical Services (LFEP)² are the basic legal regulations for carrying out the statistical activity in the General State Administration. This law sets out the principles governing the statistical activity, regulates the collection of data, its keeping and dissemination of results, institutes the conditions in which response is obligatory, regulates statistical secrecy, introduces statistical production planning and regulates statistical institutions, both executive and advisory.

On the other hand, between 1986 and 2006, statistical laws were passed in all Autonomous Communities³ except in Aragón.

3. According to the LFEP, the public statistical function in the scope of the GAS is developed by the National Statistics Institute (INE); the ministerial department units and those of any other public institutions dependent on them, to whom that function has been entrusted, and the High Council on Statistics. The following advisory bodies should also be added to these: The Interministerial Statistics Commission and the Interterritorial Statistics Committee.

*The National Statistics Institute*⁴ is an Autonomous Body affiliated to the Ministry of the Treasury, the President of which, ranking as Subsecretary, is appointed and separated by the Government by means of royal decree, after nomination by the Minister of Economy and Treasury. The INE is the central body of the official statistics in Spain, and has important functions and jurisdiction, enshrined in article 26 of the LFEP, summarised below: coordination and supervision of statistical services, formulation of the draft project of the National Statistical Plan (NSP), compilation of the inventory of statistics, proposal of methodological

¹ Spain is divided into 17 Autonomous Communities and two Autonomous Cities. An Autonomous Community is a territorial entity which, within the constitutional code, is conferred legislative autonomy and executive jurisdiction, as well as the ability for self-government by means of its own representatives. The structure of the Spanish State in Autonomous Communities is dealt with in the Spanish Constitution of 1978.

² http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/legnacbas_en.htm

³ http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/legccaa/legccaa_en.htm

⁴ http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/legine_en.htm

rules and investigation, compliance with statistical secrecy, compilation of the general censuses, of large surveys and of the integrated systems of the economic accounts and of demographic and social statistics, use for statistical purposes of data on file at administrative sources and promotion of its use by other statistical services, the putting together of directories, compilation and carrying out of statistical projects entrusted by the NSP, an international relations exercise in statistics and professional perfection of statistics personnel.

There are already *statistical services*⁵ in almost all ministries and in some Autonomous bodies dependent on these. The statistical services of the ministries are involved in compiling the draft project of the NSP and perform the statistical operations which the latter entrusts to them, in addition to others regarding their own activities.

The *High Council on Statistics*⁶ is an advisory body of the statistical services of the GAS, and of the involvement of informants, producers and users of official statistics, where trade union and business organisations and other social, economic and academic groups are represented, together with ministries, the Bank of Spain and the INE. It is presided over by the Minister of Economy and Treasury, the President of the INE acts as Vicepresident and has approximately forty members. It aims to contribute to harmonising statistics, improving the use of resources intended for their compilation, and to adapting them to the users' needs for information, as well as to making it easier for respondents to supply primary data. It passes judgment on the draft project of the NSP and on all projects involving implementation of new statistics submitted to it, in addition to formulating recommendations and dealing with queries.

*Interministerial Statistics Commission*⁷ it is affiliated to the Ministry of Economy and Treasury via the INE. It is a participative organ of the statistical services in charge of this activity in the scope of the GAS. It is presided over by the President of the INE, with the general directors of the INE as members, and the general subdirectors of the organic units of each Ministry in which the main statistical production or coordination activity is located, as well as the head of the Statistics Department of the Bank of Spain. Its main objectives are as follows: to horizontally coordinate the activity of statistical services, to integrate the statistical information systems in relation to the different sectors and themes, to encourage the rational use of available data sources and ascertain the implementation, review or record suppression projects and administrative forms when these are the source of the statistics.

*Interterritorial Statistics Committee*⁸ (CITE) is an official body incorporated in tandem by the representatives of the GAS and of the Autonomous Communities. It is presided over by the President of the INE, and its vicepresident is a representative of the Autonomous Communities elected by majority, with representatives of the Statistics Office of each Autonomous Community as

⁵ http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/resumenorg2_en.pdf

⁶ http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/rd1037_en.htm

⁷ http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/rd1036see_en.htm

⁸ http://www.ine.es/en/normativa/leyes/ley_citte_en.htm

Committee members. The generic mission of the CITE consists of facilitating coordination and boosting cooperation among the State and Autonomous statistical services. Among the particular missions, it is worth noting the deliberation of proposals in relation to the NSP, the adoption of agreements in order to standardise the conceptual statistical frameworks and the studies and reports on cooperation agreements between the different statistical services.

4. In the majority of Autonomous Communities there are statistical bodies similar to those in the General Administration of the State, which have been instructed in their corresponding statistical laws.

Thus, in the Autonomous Communities, the executive statistical bodies are made up of a central office and services producing statistics in Autonomous Councils/departments, in a similar manner to the GAS. The rankings and the names of the central statistical offices in the Autonomous Communities are very varied. These organic units perform the functions of coordinating and planning statistics for each Community, as well as contributing, together with the statistical services of the boards, to the production of the aforementioned statistics, on their own or in partnership with the GAS.

In many Autonomous Communities there is also a Regional Statistics Council as an advisory body with functions, in a certain sense similar to those described for the High Council on Statistics in the GAS. Likewise, in a number of Autonomous Communities the Statistics Committee has been created, with functions similar, on an Autonomous scale, to those mentioned for the Interministerial Statistics Commission on a national level.