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**Peer review on the implementation  
of the European Statistics Code of Practice**

**Country visited: Spain**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Main findings

Spain's system of official statistics is based on principles of legality, to some extent functional concentration and (thematical and regional) deconcentration (most surveys are carried out by INE Spain<sup>1</sup>, Ministerial units compile statistics for their domain and regionally specific statistics are compiled by regional units). The statistical system is based upon a coherent and comprehensive national plan, which includes all statistics prescribed by legislation of the European Union. The present system requires intensive coordination between INE Spain and the other statistical institutes at ministerial and regional level.

INE Spain is organised as a self-governed administrative agency with its own legal personality and assets, and is attached to the Ministry of Economy and Finance. In the Law 12/1989 of 9 May, amended by Ninth Article of the Law 36/2006 of 29 November, the position, tasks and responsibilities of INE Spain and the other Ministries' statistical services are regulated. This law also regulates the planning and production of statistics for Central Government purposes, produced by the Central Government and attached authorities; the organization of its statistical services and their relations with the Autonomous Communities and Local Authorities, the European Communities and international Institutions, as far as statistics are concerned. Article 30 of this Law guarantees the independence of INE Spain in statistical methodology, the publication and dissemination of results and the design of standards on concepts, definitions, statistical units and classifications.

In Spain the National statistical system is highly decentralised. Apart from INE Spain Ministry statistical services are involved in the production of statistics for national purposes with the collaboration, in some cases, of the Autonomous Communities and Local Authorities. INE Spain, the Interterritorial Statistics Committee and the Interministerial Statistics Commission oversee coordination, cooperation and standardization in statistical matters between INE Spain, the Ministerial statistical services and the Autonomous Communities. This structure shows the importance which is attached to coordination and harmonisation. At the same time, from the peer review and from the user survey, carried out by INE Spain, it becomes clear that more coordination and harmonisation is wished for.

A major concern of the peer review relates to this complex structure in which INE Spain operates. There are a large number of players that impact the statistical work. A main aspect is the important role of the Ministerial statistical services and the Autonomous Communities in Spain which has resulted in sizable statistics offices operated by the regions and not subject to direct control by INE Spain. As a result, there is a very important task in coordination and quality management to be filled that will need to be given highest possible attention. Practically all interviewees recognise difficulties in the coordination.

INE Spain is not directly responsible for the entire range of European statistics. Important economic statistics like Government Accounts, financial accounts as well as source statistics like certain price statistics and international trade statistics, are not within the responsibility of INE Spain nor does it have substantial methodological competence or coordination responsibility for these statistics.

Although the division of labour between INE Spain and the statistical units in the Ministries is clear and based on the fact that INE Spain will operate all surveys and that statistical units will produce statistics based upon administrative data there is a need for both coordination and methodological leadership.

INE Spain is focused on its core business, the production of statistics. These are considered by the users to be in general of a good quality. Quality issues are taken very seriously, partly due to the introduction of the Code of Practice. A quality strategy has been launched and INE Spain started a project to develop quality monitors for its statistics.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)* is referred to as INE Spain.

The users of the statistics appreciate the service and willingness of INE Spain to assist them. INE Spain recognizes the importance of impartiality. INE Spain is by all players regarded to be the point of contact considering international obligations and developments.

Some users consider INE Spain to be risk averse especially in the case of politically sensitive dossiers.

The resources of INE Spain in terms of budgetary and human resources seem to be adequate.

The peer review was limited to INE Spain and therefore does not cover the statistics outside its domain.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

With the adoption of the European Statistics Code of Practice, the Statistical Programme (SPC) committed itself to adhering to its principles. At its meeting on 25 May 2005, the SPC endorsed a stepwise monitoring procedure for the implementation of the Code over three years during which countries' self-assessments should be combined with elements of peer review, benchmarking and monitoring on the basis of the explanatory indicators added to each principle of the Code.

During December 2005 / January 2006 the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat have completed their self-assessments, the results have been summarised by Eurostat in a report submitted to the Economic and Financial Committee in May 2006 which has been published on the Eurostat website.

As a next step towards implementation of the Code, the European Statistical System is organising peer reviews to complement the self-assessments starting with 2006. They are considered a vital element for the implementation of the Code of Practice given their capacity to encourage the sharing of best practice and to contribute to transparency in what is, essentially, a self-regulatory approach. This approach is designed to enhance accountability and to help building trust in the integrity of the European Statistical System, its processes and outputs.

The Code of Practice peer reviews follow a common methodology focusing on the institutional environment and dissemination part of the Code comprising the following principles: (1) Professional independence, (2) Mandate for data collection, (3) Adequacy of resources, (4) Quality commitment, (5) Statistical confidentiality, (6) Impartiality and Objectivity and (15) Accessibility and Clarity. In principle, the peer review is limited to the National Statistical Institute and its co-ordination role within a dispersed national statistical system. A short document provided by the National Statistical Institute which summarises key aspects of the functioning of the national statistical system is published together with this report.

During a three days visit on-site and on the basis of information material provided by the National Statistical Institute and Eurostat prior to the review, peer reviews yield a report assessing compliance with the Code of Practice at indicator level and by principle following a four point assessment scale. The report includes a refined set of improvement actions covering all principles of the Code which are being used to feed the monitoring process of the implementation of the Code in the European Statistical System.

While the peer reviewers will undertake to base their assessment to the extent possible on factual information, it is worth noting some of the limitations of the peer review process. For example, peer reviewers are dependent upon the resources made available to them (though experienced reviewers can be expected to identify where appropriate information is not forthcoming). In addition these reviews are conducted on a strategic, organisation-wide and system wide basis. Accordingly it is not straightforward to ascertain that certain practices or behaviours or systems operate in all statistical domains.

### 3. FINDINGS PER PRINCIPLE

#### Principle 1: Professional Independence

*The professional independence of statistical authorities from other policy, regulatory or administrative departments and bodies, as well as from private sector operators, ensures the credibility of European Statistics.*

Overall assessment: The Statistical Law guarantees the independence of INE Spain in statistical methodology, the publication and dissemination of results and the design of standards on concepts, definitions, statistical units and classifications. In practice there seems to be no political pressure to influence the presentation of the results of INE Spain. The professional independence of INE Spain is recognized by all interviewees.

*Indicator 1.1: The independence of the statistical authority from political and other external interference in producing and disseminating official statistics is specified in law.*

#### Fully met

Comments: The *Ley 12/1989, de 9 de mayo, de la Función Estadística Pública* ("the Government Statistics Act", or "LFEP"), Article 30, provides INE Spain with the necessary powers to ensure its impartiality in carrying out its technical duties and to maintain statistical confidentiality. INE Spain's technical role covers statistical methodology, the publication and dissemination of results and the design of standards relating to concepts, definitions, statistical units, classifications, nomenclatures and codes for data classification and the presentation of results.

LFEP article 35 provides the statistical units of government ministries and their attached bodies with the necessary powers to ensure their impartiality in carrying out their technical duties and to maintain statistical confidentiality.

*Indicator 1.2: The head of the statistical authority has sufficiently high hierarchical standing to ensure senior level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies. He/She should be of the highest professional calibre.*

#### Fully met

Comments: Under LFEP article 28, the President of INE Spain is appointed by the Cabinet under a Royal Decree<sup>2</sup> at the proposal of the Minister of Economy and Finance, and is the legal representative of the Institute. Article 5 of the charter of INE Spain, its *Estatuto*, prescribes that the President of INE Spain has the rank of Under-Secretary and is appointed and removed by the Cabinet under a Royal Decree at the proposal of the Minister of Economy and Finance. The President is not appointed for a fixed term.

The hierarchy, laid down in the *Ley 6/1997, de 14 de abril, de Organización y Funcionamiento de la Administración General del Estado* ("the Central Government Organisational Structure and Functioning Act"), determines that a minister is senior to a secretary of state, who is in turn senior to the following officials, in order: under-secretary, director general and sub-director general. The Act further specifies that under-secretaries are appointed on the basis of their professional competence and experience. In case of a vacancy the post is not advertised, but potential candidates of recognized high professional standing and managerial experiences are individually approached. INE Spain is advised to appoint future presidents for a fixed term and to increase the transparency of the procedure of selection and appointment.

Since 1989, the Presidents of INE Spain have been: José Quevedo Quevedo (1989-1996), Pilar Martín-Guzmán (1996-2000) and Carmen Alcaide Guindo (2000 to the present).

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<sup>2</sup> A Royal Decree is a statutory instrument emanating from the executive power; it is passed by a resolution of the *Consejo de Ministros* (the cabinet). In the order of priority of legislation, a Royal Decree ranks immediately below a *Ley*, an act of parliament.

*Indicator 1.3: The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have responsibility for ensuring that European Statistics are produced and disseminated in an independent manner.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: The statistical law regulates the responsibilities of the President of Ine Spain and of the other statistical authorities to produce and disseminate the European Statistics in an independent manner.

*Indicator 1.4: The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: The methodology, standards and procedures of the statistical production for central government purposes is not subjected to ministerial approval. The LFEP, Articles 30 and 35, provides the necessary powers to INE Spain and the statistical units of government ministries and their attached autonomous bodies to ensure their operational impartiality for the purposes of their technical duties.

The *Consejo Superior de Estadística* ("Higher Statistical Council"), for its part, in the exercise of its powers under LFEP, issues a legally required opinion on all methodological proposals relating to statistics for central government purposes (the statistics stipulated in the national statistical plan).

The annual programme implementing the *Plan Estadístico Nacional* – the national statistical plan – is approved annually by Royal Decree and published in the *Boletín Oficial del Estado* (the central government gazette, *BOE*). The annual programme sets the timetable of publication of all the statistics, including statistics under European regulations, which are to be compiled by INE Spain, ministerial departments and the Bank of Spain in that year. A scheduled release date is either a set date or a "no later than" deadline. The annual programme for year *x* is normally published in *BOE* between December of year (*x-1*) and January of year *x*.

In addition, towards the end of each year INE Spain uploads to its website the publication timetable of all its statistics for the following year. Short-term statistics (released at intervals of less than one year) are scheduled for set dates; the rest of statistics are scheduled on a "no later than" basis. The INE Spain timetable, published annually on its website, is identical to the INE Spain timetable published in the respective annual programme.

*Indicator 1.5: The statistical work programmes are published and periodic reports describe progress made.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: LFEP prescribes that the *Plan Estadístico Nacional*, the national statistical plan, or "PEN", is the main instrument governing the statistical activities of central government, and is effective for a period of four years. All statistics under the national statistical plan are classified as statistics for central government purposes. For these statistics response from reporting units is mandatory.

The plan sets out the statistics that must be compiled in the four-year period by central government bodies and any other institutions dependent on central government. Statistics that are mandatory under regulations of the European Union are automatically included in the national statistical plan.

For each statistical operation it includes, the plan sets forth the bodies involved in conducting it, a statement of its purpose and a general description of its content, the target group and territorial scope, the timing of data collection, and an estimate of the costs.

The plan lays down the strategic lines of action<sup>3</sup> that are to guide statistical production for central government purposes throughout its term of effect, and the programme of expenditure for the four-year period to improve and renovate all the resources needed to perform statistical duties.

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<sup>3</sup> At its meeting of 3 July 2007 the Interdepartmental Statistical Commission approved the strategic lines of action of the 2009-2012 national statistical plan.

The national statistical plan is passed into law by a Royal Decree and published in *BOE*. Once passed, the plan is updated by its implementing annual programmes.

The first PEN was the 1993-1996 national statistical plan. The present national statistical plan is the *Plan Estadístico Nacional 2005-2008*. Work is far advanced on the draft *Plan Estadístico Nacional 2009-2012*.

LFEP further provides that the annual programme contains the actions under the national statistical plan to be implemented in the current year, and the related appropriations to be made in the central government budget. In addition, annual programmes add to the national statistical plan any statistics that must be conducted to meet the requirements of European Union legislation, or as a result of changes in national legislation, or in response to emergency needs. Annual programmes are passed into law by a Royal Decree and are published in *BOE*.

An annual programme at least stipulates the specific work to be done in the current year for each statistical operation in the programme, the timing of release of such statistics, details of the involvement of the various government bodies in producing those statistics, and an estimate of the costs.

To assess the execution of the national statistical plan and its implementing annual programmes, LFEP requires that there be submitted to the Higher Statistical Council ("CSE") an annual report on performance, rendering accounts on the projects conducted, problems encountered, extent of completion of the national statistical plan and the rest of issues relating to the scope of inquiry of the CSE. After approval and submission to the CSE, each annual report is published on the INE website. The report on 2006 is available.

*Indicator 1.6: Statistical releases are clearly distinguished and issued separately from political/policy statements.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: When new statistics are released or substantial methodological changes are made to existing ones, INE Spain holds briefing meetings with the key users and the media to ensure the data are not misinterpreted. At briefings INE Spain's experts explain the new features and changes and react to questions from journalists.

The *Plan de actuación del INE*, or INE action plan, published in the closing quarter of the year, pre-announces the main methodological changes in the following year's statistics.

INE Spain restricts itself to a very sober and neutral presentation of the facts in its press releases. A presentation with more attention for the context may lead to a wider coverage.

*Indicator 1.7: The statistical authority, when appropriate, comments publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of official statistics.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: In some cases, the President of INE Spain has been summoned to appear in the *Congreso de los Diputados* (the lower house of parliament) or the *Senado* (the upper house) to explain and clarify certain methodological changes to some of INE Spain's statistical operations.

Moreover, to clarify certain data or counteract campaigns of criticism, the INE Spain's press office calls press conferences, issues press releases, holds meetings with users and experts, etc. If necessary, INE Spain calls a conference with the major mass media (television and radio). To provide information about how to best use statistics and the role of government data, the press office promotes the publication of articles in the press, specialist journals, etc.

INE Spain considers itself the statistical authority but seems to be very reluctant to comment publicly on criticism and misuses of official statistics. From the interviews it turned out that the policy of INE Spain is to be very careful in commenting publicly on the misuses of official statistics, fearing to be considered not independent. INE Spain has a clear policy to react only to non-political critics. Otherwise INE Spain takes a very cautious approach. Some interviewees consider INE Spain far to reserve in this matter.

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The strategic lines of action of the *Plan Estadístico Nacional 2005-2008* appear at pp 2 to 9 [http://www.ine.es/normativa/leyes/plan/plan\\_2005-2008/pen2005-2008.pdf](http://www.ine.es/normativa/leyes/plan/plan_2005-2008/pen2005-2008.pdf)

## **Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection**

*Statistical authorities must have a clear legal mandate to collect information for European statistical purposes. Administrations, enterprises and households, and the public at large may be compelled by law to allow access to or deliver data for European statistical purposes at the request of statistical authorities.*

Overall assessment: INE Spain has got a strong mandate to collect information, not only for the European statistical purposes but also for the other elements of the official statistical system. In the opinion of the peer review INE Spain should use the strength of this mandate to obtain micro data from the tax authorities on a regular basis.

*Indicator 2.1: The mandate to collect information for the production and dissemination of official statistics is specified in law.*

### **Fully met**

Comments: LFEP Article 8 states that the central government shall conduct all the statistics under the national statistical plan and its implementing and updating annual programmes within the deadlines therein laid down.

LFEP Article 20 prescribes that the results of statistics for central government purposes (the statistics stipulated in the national statistical plan) must be released by the departments mandated with producing them, and must be circulated widely. Further, Article 20 requires that the methodology of statistics for central government purposes be made public and always made available to any person so requesting.

LFEP Article 10 determines that in order to produce statistics for central government purposes (the statistics stipulated in the national statistical plan) statistical authorities may request data from any Spanish or foreign natural or legal person resident in Spain and from any institution or public body of central government, the autonomous communities and local government. All natural and legal persons who supply data, whether their cooperation is mandatory or voluntary, must reply truthfully, accurately, fully and within deadline to survey questions duly put to them by the statistical units.

*Indicator 2.2: The statistical authority is allowed by national legislation to use administrative records for statistical purposes.*

### **Fully met**

Comments: LFEP Article 10 provides that, if statistical production requires the use of data from administrative sources, the bodies, authorities and officials charged with the custody of such sources must assist the statistical authorities as expeditiously as possible. This provision of Article 10 may not apply to public bodies charged with the custody or handling of data relating to the needs of national security and defence. Tax data are subject to special laws and regulations.

LFEP Article 15 requires safeguards to maintain statistical confidentiality in the sharing of personal data among government bodies, which sharing is only permitted under certain conditions.

Furthermore, the *Ley Orgánica 15/1999, de 13 de diciembre, de Protección de Datos de Carácter Personales* ("the Data Protection Act", or "LOPDGP"), at Article 21, provides that personal data collected or produced by government bodies for the performance of their duties may be shared with other government bodies if such disclosure is intended to permit the processing of the data for statistical purposes.

*Indicator 2.3: On the basis of a legal act, the statistical authority may compel response to statistical surveys.*

### **Fully met**

Comments: LFEP Article 7 requires that a parliamentary statute specifies those statistics for the production of which the provision of data by reporting units is compulsory. Article 11 further stipulates that data which may reveal ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or ideological beliefs or, in a general sense, any particulars relating to personal or family privacy shall at all events be subject to a strictly voluntary response, and may therefore be collected only with the prior expressed consent of the parties



(reporting units) concerned. LFEP indicates that when a statistical institute (or unit) requests data, it must advise the party concerned of whether or not response is compulsory.

A later parliamentary Act specifies the statistics for the production of which the provision of data by reporting units is compulsory. At present, with the exceptions mentioned before, such statistics are all those included in the national statistical plan.

Questionnaires for statistics relying on direct data collection from enterprises or households include a note to respondents stating that response is compulsory.

LFEP articles 50 and 51 define breaches of the Act and set associated cash penalties, ranging from €60 to €30,000, depending on the seriousness of the breach. If response is compulsory, then notorious or habitual refusal to submit the required data or refusal on the basis of false claims constitutes a very serious breach. Failure to return data is treated as a minor breach if it does not cause serious detriment to the statistical service.

In INE Spain's regular practice, there is a penalty procedure in place for enterprises committing such breaches. Households are never penalised for these violations. Administrative penalty proceedings in respect of breaches are announced in *BOE*, the central government gazette. On average the sanction procedure is applied in 20 000 cases per year.

### **Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources**

*The resources available to statistical authorities must be sufficient to meet European Statistics requirements.*

Overall assessment: INE Spain appears to have adequate resources to meet European Statistics requirements.

*Indicator 3.1: Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to meet current European Statistics needs.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: As financial resources are concerned, INE Spain's self assessment evaluates them as "Completely adequate", especially from 2003 when an additional budget has been provided to comply with the requirements of the EMU action plan.

As human resources are concerned, INE considers them as "Adequate" in magnitude and "Completely adequate" as regards quality. The main reasons which can explain this high level of professionalism are the existence of two dedicated corps of governmental statisticians, qualified ones (ESE holding a five-year university degree and representing 21% of INE civil servants) and technical ones (DEE holding a three-year university degree and representing 39% of INE civil servants) having their own recruitment procedures, and the training courses that are provided by the Public Administration School of Statistics (EEAP) for all statisticians working not only at INE Spain but also at the ministerial departments. Nevertheless recently all vacancies for ESE level could not be filled because of a lack of flexibility of the system of concours.

NB: Civil servants account for only 34% of total INE staff. The others are permanent contract staff and are mainly interviewers located in provincial delegations.

More recently, a system of time management (COSPRO) and an analytical accounting system have been introduced at INE Spain which gives the possibility to monitor the costs of each project or activity.

*Indicator 3.2: The scope, detail and cost of European Statistics are commensurate with needs.*

For European level reply

*Indicator 3.3: Procedures exist to assess and justify demands for new European Statistics against their cost.*

For European level reply

*Indicator 3.4: Procedures exist to assess the continuing need for all European Statistics, to see if any can be discontinued or curtailed to free up resources.*

For European level reply

#### **Principle 4: Quality commitment**

*All ESS members commit themselves to work and co-operate according to the principles fixed in the Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System.*

Overall assessment: INE Spain has started a systematic approach to quality coherent with the European framework for quality. The creation of a Delegate Technical Commission (DTC) in 2005, the starting of implementation of self-assessment through DESAP and the qualitative evaluation of surveys through standard quality indicators implemented in DESAP are presently the main strengths of this approach. However there is no quality management unit and no resources fully dedicated to quality. More efforts are needed to standardize the procedures and to cover regularly all processes and products. The training on quality is still to be fully implemented.

*Indicator 4.1 Product quality is regularly monitored according to the ESS quality components.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: INE Spain started the monitoring of quality according to European quality components. The European quality indicators have been implemented in DESAP for the assessment of surveys even if they are assessed on a qualitative scale. The self assessment exercise comprised the major surveys (it involved 33 surveys). An external audit on ICT-processes has been carried out.

*Indicator 4.2 Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: INE Spain has put in place processes for monitoring the quality of the main phases of statistical processes. However there is a lack of standardisation across the Institute. Quality reports are prepared for statistics submitted to Eurostat. The calculation of quality indicators in line with the ESS is still limited to a part of surveys. Internal audit is not yet carried out on a regular basis.

Quality assessment reaching over the whole of chain starting with source statistics like foreign trade statistics up to National Accounts has not been carried out.

*Indicator 4.3 Processes are in place to deal with quality considerations, including trade-offs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging surveys.*

#### **Partly met**

Comments: Interdepartmental working groups (composed by representatives of different sectors) are in charge of this activity following the best practices and encouraging, even if in an informal way, exchange of views from different production areas. These interdepartmental working groups also informally discuss on quality issues and trade-offs for current surveys. Their work is reported to DTC.

*Indicator 4.4 Quality guidelines are documented and staff is well trained. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.*

#### **Partly met**

Comments: General survey guidelines covering partly also quality issues are available for staff and are in line with the concepts of the European framework for quality. They are not available on the Web. Training courses addressed to quality issues are foreseen but not yet fully implemented. Junior staff is partly involved in the quality programme and most of them are aware of quality issues.

*Indicator 4.5 There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using external experts where appropriate.*

### **Largely met**

Comments: INE Spain has defined a procedure to be followed for reviewing its main products and a monitoring system. Some internal audits have experimentally been carried out. No external experts are involved in the audits at the moment. The users are sometimes involved in the reviews. After this first step the higher management has still to decide upon the follow up and to set priorities together with the DTC.

### **Principle 5: Statistical confidentiality**

*The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes must be absolutely guaranteed.*

Overall assessment: In the System of Official Statistics in Spain the privacy of data providers, the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use for statistical purposes is guaranteed by law. INE Spain has taken organisational and technical precautions to guarantee this in practice.

*Indicator 5.1 Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.*

### **Fully met**

Comments: Statistical confidentiality is dealt with in LFEP, Article 13 which prescribes that any personal data obtained by statistical offices from reporting units directly or from administrative sources should be protected, statistical confidentiality must be guaranteed. Personal data are defined as data on natural persons or corporate bodies which enable immediate identification of the parties concerned or, by their structure, content or degree of disaggregation, lead to indirect identification of the parties concerned. Statistical confidentiality binds statistical offices not to disclose personal data, whatever their origin, in any event.

The *Ley Orgánica de Protección de Datos de Carácter Personal* (“the Data Protection Act”) lays down further provisions on confidentiality. In particular, the Act includes among the duties of the *Agencia de Protección de Datos* (the Spanish data protection agency, or “APD”), *inter alia*, the duty to enforce compliance with the provisions of LFEP on statistical data collection and statistical confidentiality, issues appropriate instructions, issues decisions on the security standards of files created exclusively for statistical purposes, and exercises powers to impose penalties for any breach committed in connection with files under government control. In addition, the Act requires that the APD reports on the content and format of questionnaires, census sheets and other documents for the collection of data for statistical purposes, issues decisions on personal data collection and processing for statistical purposes, and gives its opinion on parliamentary bills requiring compulsory data.

*Indicator 5.2 Statistical authority staff signs legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.*

### **Fully met**

Comments: Under LFEP Article 17, all statistical staff is under a duty to maintain statistical confidentiality. “Statistical staff” is defined as personnel attached to the statistical offices of central government (INE Spain, government ministries and their related public bodies) and to the statistical offices of the autonomous communities and local government bodies.

Such duty to maintain statistical confidentiality likewise binds all such natural persons and corporate bodies temporary involved in any phase of the statistical process under a contract, agreement or convention of any kind.

The duty of statistical confidentiality remains even after persons bound by such duty end their occupational activities or their relations with statistical offices.

At present, INE Spain's civil servants and permanent contract staff don't sign any specific statistical confidentiality clause. Such clause is implied under LFEP upon their accepting office in the civil service or their signing their permanent employment contract. Staff commitment to statistical confidentiality is enforced by their becoming aware of all its legal implications through the entrance examinations and through confidentiality training courses.

However, INE Spain has started a process whereby all its civil servants and contract staff are to sign an *Individual statement on statistical confidentiality* as documentary backing for their awareness of the relevant legal duties and their consequences.

Moreover, non-INE Spain natural persons and bodies corporate who are to gain access to data protected by statistical confidentiality by reason of their temporary involvement in any phase of the statistical process are under obligation to sign an undertaking of confidentiality. Hence enterprises bind themselves under a contract clause, autonomous communities enter into an undertaking of confidentiality by a clause in their *convenio* agreement, researchers at INE Spain premises sign an ad hoc document and the universities sending such researchers sign a clause under the research agreement.

**Indicator 5.3 Substantial penalties are prescribed for any wilful breaches of statistical confidentiality.**

#### **Fully met**

Comments: LFEP, at Articles 48 to 51, classifies the non-performance of the duty of statistical confidentiality as a very serious breach, and stipulates applicable penalties. Very serious breaches are subject to fines of €3000 to €30,000. Administrative liability shall apply without prejudice to any applicable civil, criminal<sup>4</sup> or other liabilities.

If a breach is committed by civil servants or contract staff in the service of government, the breach is subject to the substantial penalties set forth in the specifically applicable laws and regulations.

Otherwise, INE Spain exercises its powers to impose penalties through its President, via penalty proceedings conducted for the purpose. If a breach concerns statistics on exchanges of goods among European Union Member States (INTRASTAT), the power to impose penalties rests with the head of the customs and excise department of the *Agencia Estatal de Administración Tributaria* (the Spanish central tax authority).

**Indicator 5.4 Instructions and guidelines are provided on the protection of statistical confidentiality in the production and dissemination processes. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.**

#### **Fully met**

Comments: INE Spain provides information on the protection of confidentiality at all stages of the statistical process: INE Spain questionnaires for the operations in the national statistical plan include a legal clause on protecting data under statistical confidentiality. Notices prior to data collection announcing a statistical operation notify respondents that data are subject to statistical confidentiality at all stages.

For data processing, INE Spain's employees have available the INE Spain's data protection handbook, which specifies the steps that should be taken at each stage of processing to ensure reporting units' individual data are protected. The handbook is presently under review and its contents are being updated.

The *List of Services* and the FAQ on the INE website inform users of INE Spain's protection of respondents' personal data in accordance with the statistical confidentiality requirements under LFEP.

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter I Discovery and disclosure of secrets of the *Ley Orgánica 10/1995, de 23 de noviembre, del Código Penal* (the parliamentary act introducing the Spanish Penal Code).

**Indicator 5.5 Physical and technological provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases**

**Fully met**

Comments: In statistical operations direct identification data are separated from the statistical information immediately after the data collection phase.

Files containing data from statistical operations are stored in secure repositories on servers of the local network or on a host server, and access to such files requires appropriate clearance. Access is safeguarded by regularly replaced login and password combinations.

Access to servers and IT facilities is restricted to system administrators and operating staff.

These measures are combined with overall policy on automated information security: backup copies, data encryption, and so on.

INE Spain holds administrative databases which contain individual direct identification data, which relate to administrative processes delegated to INE Spain (the population register and the electoral roll). These databases are subject to access audits to track the usage of individual records.

INE Spain is advised to have a further look upon the safety measures (memory sticks act.) regarding the network stations of the personnel of INE Spain.

**Indicator 5.6 Strict protocols apply to external users accessing statistical microdata for research purposes.**

**Fully met**

Comments: Under LFEP Article 13, statistical confidentiality binds statistical offices not to disclose personal data, whatever their origin, in any event. Article 15, however, provides the sharing among government and public bodies, for statistical purposes, of personal data protected by statistical confidentiality if (and only if) the following requirements are met (as verified by the body holding the data in its custody): (a) the body receiving the data carries out a primarily statistical role, in accordance with regulations enacted prior to the transfer of the data; (b) the purpose of the data is, precisely, the production of the statistics for which the recipient body is mandated; and (c) the recipient body is capable of maintaining statistical confidentiality.

LFEP makes no reference to data transfer or privileged access for researchers, who want to carry out research on micro data sets derived from statistical operations. However, INE Spain operates a range of protocols for access to the various types of data set it produces.

These include:

A) *Standard anonymised microdata sets* on its website INE Spain offers all users at no charge anonymised micro datasets derived from 22 statistical operations. The datasets are anonymised using a standard procedure to ensure they can be accessed universally.

B) *Special anonymised microdata sets*. INE Spain sells special anonymised micro datasets, which differ from the standard anonymised micro datasets in terms of structure or record selection criteria. These datasets are provided on request as customised products subject to restrictions of use or special terms and conditions to ensure statistical confidentiality is maintained. Users must sign an undertaking of acceptance of such terms prior to provision of the information.

C) *Non-anonymised microdata sets*. Non-anonymised microdata sets do not contain direct identifiers of reporting units (address, registration number, etc), but have not undergone any process of anonymisation or control of variables that might lead to indirect identification, owing to their level of detail.

In some cases – such as the survey on technological innovation at enterprises – datasets are only accessible at INE Spain's premises, using INE Spain's infrastructure and resources. The researcher must sign a "contract for access by research personnel to confidential INE Spain data for statistical purposes". The contract describes the project and the need for access to such microdata, specifies the

period during which the research team will work at INE Spain, and names research team members and sets out the clauses binding them, including a statistical confidentiality clause.

In other cases, such as with death statistics by cause of death, research may be conducted outside the premises of INE Spain. Access to these data is provided by means of a "protocol for assignment of use of final micro datasets", which determines the purpose of the research, the membership of the research team and applicable confidentiality obligations.

D) *Identified microdata sets*. These files contain data directly identifying reporting units. Access to such datasets is restricted to the following events:

- The statistics departments of the autonomous communities have access to individual microdata transferred to them solely for statistical uses within the scope of their activities under framework agreements published in *BOE* and concluded bilaterally between INE Spain and each regional statistics department, except the Basque Country's statistics department. These agreements include a specific statistical confidentiality clause.
- Access to non-anonymised micro datasets is also possible under specific cooperation agreements, such as the ones signed for epidemiological studies based on death statistics by cause of death. The signatory research body registers the file containing the study subjects' details with the register of the *Agencia de Protección de Datos* (the Spanish data protection agency) prior to the start of the work under the agreement. Later, INE Spain completes the file with certain variables. The agreement also includes a number of clauses, such as a statistical confidentiality clause.
- INE Spain generates customised sample files. These name-bearing non-anonymised datasets are provided to statistical units and other divisions of central government so that they can compile the statistics for which they are mandated.

These files are provided in response to requests for customised data, against submission of a summary of characteristics of the statistical project and subject to the prior signing of undertakings similar to those associated with special anonymised micro datasets. The requested samples are generally drawn from the *Padrón* population register.

- For certain Community statistics, Commission Regulation No 831/2002, concerning access to confidential data for scientific purposes, permits monitored access for scientific purposes to confidential data transmitted to the Community authorities.

### **Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity.**

*Statistical authorities must produce and disseminate European Statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably.*

Overall assessment: Rooted in the law (LFEP) impartiality and objectivity are well implemented at INE Spain. Different procedures exist to correct and publicise errors. Metadata information accompanies statistics disseminated on the website. Dissemination calendars exist for all statistical products and the existing pre released arrangements seem to be under control. All users met indicate a high level of trust in INE Spain's impartiality.

*Indicator 6.1: Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: Impartiality and objectivity are clearly mentioned in the "Government Statistics Act" (LFEP) . Article 30 prescribes that INE Spain is vested in the powers required to ensure its operational impartiality in the performance of its duties regarding statistical methodology and the design of standards relating to concepts, nomenclatures and codes for data classification and the presentation of results. Moreover, Article 35 provides the statistical units of government ministries with the necessary powers required to ensure their impartiality in carrying out their technical duties including dissemination.

According to users, Statistics Spain has not been faced over the last years with any severe controversy concerning its statistical production.

*Indicator 6.2: Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed by statistical considerations.*

**Fully met.**

Comments: The "Higher Statistical Council" which is an independent consultative body issues opinions on the draft National Statistical Plan (PEN) and on all proposals to introduce new statistics taking into account the needs expressed by users but also the burden on respondents and the methodological issues.

*Indicator 6.3: Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.*

**Fully met**

Comments: INE Spain has implemented a procedure to correct and inform main users on errors that occur in disseminated statistics. In some cases, according to the severity of errors, regular users and users who have subscribed to the RSS system (to warn users by email) are notified by email. For some major errors, a pop-up warning also appears on the website. Very few (2) severe errors have been mentioned over the last two years.

*Indicator 6.4: Information on the methods and procedures used by the statistical authority are publicly available.*

**Largely met**

Comments: Article 21.2 of the LFEP requires that a description of the methodology of statistics listed in the PEN is made public. These methodologies are available on INE Spain's database through the website of INE Spain. During the interviews it became clear that some users were not satisfied with the level of detail in the description of the methodology and additional information had to be obtained.

*Indicator 6.5: Statistical release dates and times are pre -announced.*

**Fully met**

Comments: An annual dissemination calendar complements the annual programme of statistical operations implementing the medium term National Statistical Plan (PEN). This publication's time table mentioning either the day or the month of data release is accessible on the INE Spain's website.

Concerning INE's data releases, the precise date is mentioned for short term statistics and the scheduled month for structural statistics on the annual calendar. Moreover a weekly calendar gives precise dates and time for all products. These calendars are easily accessible on the website of INE Spain.

All users met are very satisfied with these calendars.

*Indicator 6.6: All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time and any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements should be revised so as to ensure impartiality.*

**Largely met**

Comments: INE Spain's statistics are simultaneously released to everybody at the same time by a press release uploaded on the website according to a pre-announced schedule. However, some news agencies receive information under embargo half an hour in advance.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Labour receive some results concerning major INE Spain's indicators the day before public release in order to be prepared to respond to questions. This privileged pre-release is only publicised on the SDDS page of the IMF.

Generally speaking, the users consulted did not mention any known leakage over the last years.

*Indicator 6.7: Statistical releases and statements made in Press Conferences are objective and non-partisan.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: All different categories of users (medias, main users...) have clearly stressed the objectiveness of INE Spain's statistical releases.

#### **Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity**

*European Statistics should be presented in a clear and understandable form, disseminated in a suitable and convenient manner, available and accessible on an impartial basis with supporting metadata and guidance.*

Overall assessment: INE Spain's website provides a simple but well organized, harmonized, complete basic offer of statistics with the possibility of user friendly downloads also with regard to anonymized microdata sets. This offer however seems to lack in variety and cross-sectional overview: there are quite few specific reports, thematic analysis.

The dissemination system seems to be based on tables of data rather than databases (with the relevant exception of 2001 Population Census).

There is the possibility to make customized requests against payment; most hardcopy publications are also available against payment.

A recent user satisfaction survey shows a high user rating for INE Spain. Many interviewees reported a large improvement in quality of the products and services of INE Spain over the past years.

*Indicator 15.1: Statistics are presented in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: Spanish statistical law envisages the release of statistical data and analysis in a harmonized and clear way. Following this principle, INE Spain disseminates statistics through its internet website (periodic press releases; INEbase containing tables of data divided into thematic areas and related to the statistical production results; population census database) and hardcopy publications (publicized in the website). Statistical information is provided with useful metadata and/or methodological notes enabling comparable analysis, but there are quite few specific reports and thematic analysis.

In addition, the President of INE Spain holds annual "working breakfasts" with journalists. In the course of the round of working breakfasts, journalists from each media outlet are invited separately and briefed on INE Spain's most recent statistical work and the progress of new output. The President then invites journalists' suggestions and questions.

*Indicator 15.2: Dissemination services use modern information and communication technology and, if appropriate, traditional hard copy.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: The internet website is a good example of a fast information and communication service using modern technologies. Most information is also available in English allowing foreign users to access statistical data. Concerning hardcopies, most of them are available only against payment although a brief summary gives always a general overview of the contents. All tables of the publications are made available on the website.

*Indicator 15.3: Custom-designed analyses are provided when feasible and are made public.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: Users can obtain customized analysis (and customized microdata sets) against payment by submitting a detailed application form available online. Users report a good level of satisfaction for the



availability and the timeliness of INE Spain in meeting these specific requests by processing the original data sets in accordance with statistical confidentiality and quality standards. The results of customer-designed analyses are not always made public. However, the availability of 22 standard anonymized microdata sets (file standard) grants users the possibility of working out some personalized analysis.

*Indicator 15.4: Access to microdata can be allowed for research purposes. This access is subject to strict protocols.*

#### **Fully met**

Comments: Spanish statistical law and the Data protection Act (1999) envisage strict rules concerning the treatment and release of microdata. Microdata can be released only for statistical purposes to bodies belonging to the National Statistical System and to the statistics Departments of the autonomous Communities. Moreover, 22 standard anonymized microdata sets (file standard) are available on the website free of charge and are related to 22 corresponding specific surveys (starting from June 2005). In addition to this, special anonymized microdata sets are sold on request under special terms and conditions to ensure statistical confidentiality. By signing a contract, researchers have the possibility of accessing non-anonymized microdata sets, either at INE Spain's premises or outside.

*Indicator 15.5: Metadata are documented according to standardised metadata systems.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: The Institute reports to have adopted the SDDS standard and refers to OECD Manual as far as metadata are concerned.

*Indicator 15.6: Users are kept informed on the methodology of statistical processes and the quality of statistical outputs with respect to the ESS quality criteria.*

#### **Largely met**

Comments: Each disseminated statistical process is provided with a brief, general methodological description in English that is more detailed in Spanish. Some users judge them too brief for their purposes. The results of the recent user satisfaction survey show differences between researchers and other professional users: researchers are more satisfied than the others concerning the retrieval of metadata on methodology and less satisfied in terms of information detail.

### **4. CO-ORDINATION ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE**

The Spanish Statistical System is characterised by its many different players. Official statistics are produced by INE Spain by statistical units of ministries and by other (regional) public bodies. In such a decentralised system the coordination of the statistical system may become a complex issue. In the Spanish statistical system formal and technical provisions are in place to ensure an adequate level of coordination.

Under LFEP, the central government's statistical role is carried out by INE Spain, by the statistical units of individual government ministries, by other public bodies attached to central government and entrusted with statistical duties, and by the *Consejo Superior de Estadística* (the "Higher Statistical Council"). In addition, the *Comisión Interministerial de Estadística* (the "Interdepartmental Statistical Commission") and the *Comité Interterritorial de Estadística* (the "Inter-Territorial Statistical Committee") operate as consultative bodies.

INE Spain is an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of Economy and Finance ("MEH"). The President of INE Spain, who has the government rank of Under-Secretary, is appointed and removed by the Cabinet under a Royal Decree, at the proposal of the Ministry of Economy and Finance. INE Spain is the central body of government statistics in Spain. Its important functions and duties are set forth in LFEP Article 26. Among its important duties are coordination and oversight of statistical services; drawing up of the inventory of statistics; proposal of standards and methodological research; integrated systems of economic accounts and population and social statistics.

The *Consejo Superior de Estadística*, or "Higher Statistical Council", is a consultative body to the statistical units of central government. As a forum for reporting units, producers and users of

government statistics, members of the Council include representatives of trade unions, employer associations and other social, economic and academic groups and institutions, as well as government ministries, the Bank of Spain and INE Spain. The Council is chaired by the Minister of Economy and Finance. The vice chairperson is the President of INE Spain. About forty members sit on the Council, whose role among others is to support the harmonisation of statistics.

The *Comisión Interministerial de Estadística* or “Interdepartmental Statistical Commission” is attached to the Ministry of Economy and Finance through INE Spain. It provides a forum for the statistical units spread across central government. Chaired by the President of INE Spain, the Commission’s membership includes INE Spain’s director general, the sub-directors general of the ministerial divisions handling the main statistical coordination or production activities, and the head of the Bank of Spain’s statistics department. The key aims of the Commission are to coordinate horizontally the activities of statistical units, integrate the statistical information systems associated with the various sector- and theme-related fields. This Commission analyses and reports on the draft for the National Statistical Plan and its implementing programmes and makes recommendations on the proposals for the inclusion of statistical projects. It also examines proposals and recommendations from the Higher Statistical Council concerning national needs regarding statistical issues.

The *Comité Interterritorial de Estadística*, the “Inter-Territorial Statistical Committee” or “CITE”, is a joint collegiate body of central government and autonomous communities<sup>5</sup> (the self-governing regions of Spain). The Committee is chaired by the President of INE Spain. The vice chair is an autonomous community member elected by a majority. Committee members include the representatives of the statistical offices of each autonomous community. The overall mission of CITE is to support coordination and cooperation among central and regional statistical units. It discusses proposals and recommendations put forward by its members on the draft National Statistical Plan and its implementing annual plans and programmes. It likewise discusses proposals and recommendations on this matter issued by the Higher Statistics Council. It encourages the adoption of agreements to standardise the statistical instruments such as standardised set of concepts, definitions, statistical units, classifications, nomenclatures and codes. The use of these instruments facilitates comparability, integration and analysis of the statistical results. The Committee fosters the sharing of methodological experiences in statistical matters, including data collection and processing procedures.

INE Spain has built a tool (the statistical metadata model) in order to facilitate the integration and coordination of the whole information requested by INE Spain from data providers. The project will allow INE Spain to produce information more harmonised, rationalised and especially more comparable. The project favours the coordination among different actors of the Spanish Statistical System.

Some of the respondents in the Survey on the satisfaction of users of INE Spain’s statistics mention coordination with regional and local statistical institutes as a point of improvement. In general 67% of the professional users consider the official statistics to be fairly or highly comparable and consistent. But the ratings vary strongly per statistics. 84.4% of the users of consumer price indices consider them to be fairly or highly comparable and consistent. For environmental statistics this is less than 40%.

During the interviews it became clear that many statistics producers and users consider the issue of coordination and harmonisation a major problem. In their opinion one of the bodies involved should be given a clear mandate to be in the lead of the coordination and harmonisation of the system of official statistics in Spain. For many of the persons interviewed INE Spain should be this body. Some pointed out that in future the problems may increase by a further strengthening of the position of the autonomous regions. The peer review team recommends that the question of the mandate should be addressed at the highest possible level.

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<sup>5</sup> The territory of Spain is divided into 17 autonomous communities and two autonomous cities. An autonomous community is a territorial entity which, under the Spanish Constitution, has its own legislative and executive powers and is governed by its own representatives. The division of Spain into autonomous communities is enshrined in the Spanish Constitution of 1978.

## **5. GOOD PRACTICES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED**

INE Spain has adopted the European checklist for self-assessment DESAP and has tailored it to its needs by implementing in it qualitative Standard Quality Indicators. This is a valuable approach that combines European harmonisation and customisation to internal needs. The results of the self-assessment activity have led to improvement actions.

INE Spain has made available 22 standard anonymized microdata sets (file standard) on the website free of charge and these are related to 22 corresponding specific surveys (starting from June 2005).

INE Spain has introduced AYUDACOD, a special tool, to promote a harmonised use of the different statistical classification. The search system was made publicly available on the Internet in 2002.

INE Spain offers reporting enterprises free of charge data tailored to their needs.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION OF THE PEER REVIEW TEAM**

### **Principle 1**

It is recommended that INE Spain should actively act as the statistical authority in discussions in the public domain on the (mis)use of statistics.

It is recommended that the term of appointment of the President of INE Spain should be specified to a fixed term.

### **Principle 2**

INE Spain should use the strength of its mandate to collect statistical data to obtain micro data from other authorities like the tax authorities.

### **Principle 4**

It is recommended to enhance the quality network by identifying resources and structures primarily devoted to implement INE Spain's quality strategy. It is recommended to define and set up regular systems for a systematic and thoroughly assessment of statistical processes. In addition to local procedures, tools should be implemented for enhancing the centralised assessment. Such tools might include for example to start a systematic activity of internal auditing, with an external support if necessary, and calculating systematically quantitative Standard quality Indicators for the main quality dimensions and sub dimensions and their systematic assessment at central level.

It is recommended to set up a quality management system over the whole chain of official statistics.

It is recommended to set up a regular programme of training on quality tailored to the needs of INE Spain's staff.

### **Principle 5**

INE Spain should actively stimulate its civil servants and permanent contract staff to sign the specific statistical confidentiality clause.

### **Principle 6**

It is recommended to reconsider the level of detail in the description of the methodology of surveys and statistics on the website.

INE Spain should publish information on all pre releases to Ministries and agencies on the Website.

### **Principle 15**

It is recommended to produce more specific reports and cross-sectional databases and supplying users with a comprehensive and accurate vision of the investigated event. As far as metadata are concerned, site navigating and the analysis of the available documentation seem to show an orientation towards researchers: improving the communication strategy could be a solution.

General recommendations:

Junior staff should be stimulated to contribute to papers and articles for (international) conferences and publications. From the interviews it turns out that those from junior staff with contact with the research community were interested and stimulated by these contacts.

Junior staff turned out to be informed about the results of the recent user's satisfaction survey. They are not actively involved in its follow up. A better internal communication about these matters is recommended.

#### Coordination

It is clear that coordination and harmonisation in the system of official statistics is a major problem, Mainly with the Statistical offices of the Autonomous Communities. To solve this it is recommended to give one of the bodies involved a clear mandate to be in the lead of the coordination and harmonisation of the system of official statistics in Spain. INE Spain seems to be the most logical choice to play this role The peer review team recommends that the question of the mandate should be addressed at the highest possible level.

### 7. LIST OF IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS BY PRINCIPLE OF THE CODE

<b>Principle 1: Professional Independence</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
<b>Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Keep existing agreements in place and, if appropriate, seek to enter into further agreements to support the use of individual administrative data	2007 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Create a programme of specific training for the staff of INE Spain to update specialised knowledge, impart new techniques and statistical best practices, and open up the <i>Escuela Estadística de las Administraciones Públicas</i> (EEAP, the Spanish government statistics school) to outside lecturers of widely recognised reputation (academics, researchers, international experts, etc)	2008
2. Centralise statistician selection and recruitment by consolidating public announcements of vacancies at INE Spain with vacancies at the statistical units of government ministries. The objectives of this proposal are to <u>assure a minimum standard of expertise across all new entrants to government statistical units</u> by using INE Spain's selection tests, and thus allay the drain of INE Spain's human resources	2007
3. Promote the creation of a centralised statistical unit at ministries presently lacking a statistical capability. Such unit should have the government rank and resources required to produce and coordinate statistics at the given ministry. Failing this, promote the creation of a departmental statistical committee to coordinate statistical production within the ministry. Propose to the Ministry of Economy and Finance that budget programme 923.c <i>Compilation and Publication of Statistics</i> , currently used exclusively by INE Spain, be available to government ministries for budgetary purposes.	2007  2008 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 4: Quality commitment</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Assess in numerical terms the Standard Quality Indicators for statistical products and processes with regard to INE Spain's key surveys.	2007
2. Write the associated Standard Quality Reports on products (user-oriented) and processes (aimed at survey officers and senior management).	2007-2008
3. Write Standard Quality Reports for INE Spain's statistics based on administrative data.	2008/2009

<b>Principle 4: Quality commitment</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
4. Prepare a methodological manual reflecting INE Spain's experiences to assess the quality of survey-based and administrative-data-based statistics. Use the various quality reports to identify good practices, with a view to improved planning and implementation of present and future surveys.	2008/2009  2008 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 5: Statistical Confidentiality</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Take steps to ensure that the staff of INE Spain signs a statement of awareness of the provisions of the <i>Ley de Estadística</i> (Spanish "Statistics Act") on statistical confidentiality.	2007
2. Update the INE Spain's data protection manual, make it available to all staff and ensure they use it and abide by it.	2007
3. Create security protocols for links among administrative records, links between administrative records and survey-based data, and data transmission. Develop special-purpose software using open-source platforms to systematise data confidentiality measures.	2008  2008/2009
<b>Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Update the methodological notes associated with publication of the results of statistics in order to highlight the aims, uses and limitations, in terms of information and analysis, of the released data.	2008
2. Announce at one week's notice the exact date of release of structural statistics of INE Spain listed in the schedule of releases attached to the annual programme.	2007
<b>Principle 7: Sound Methodology</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Improve metadata information.	2008 and subsequent periods
2. Shorten the interval for updating DIRCE, the central directory of enterprises.	2007
3. Improve the sampling frame of surveys targeting households and individuals.	2008
4. Use administrative sources to create a directory of farms for the next <i>Censo Agrario</i> agricultural census.	2009
5. Build up relations of cooperation and support with the academic community, institutions, businesses and experts in general to enhance the methodology and methods applied in INE Spain's output.	2007 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Widen the functionalities of the DIA system (automatic editing software developed in-house by INE Spain) for qualitative data processing and add quantitative data processing.	2008 and subsequent periods
2. Coordinate the introduction of NACE Rev 2 across central government bodies (social security, the tax authority and other entities).	2007-2009
3. Increase the accomplishment of cognitive analyses in questionnaires of new surveys and the accomplishment of pilot tests.	2006 and subsequent periods

<b>Principle 9: Non-Excessive burden on respondents</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Implement the guidelines prescribed by INE Spain's <i>Report on the statistical burden of surveys addressed to companies</i> to reduce response burden on enterprises.	2006 and subsequent periods
2. Continue working towards statistical data collection methods directly connected to business management software systems using standard-based developments for information exchange.	2007 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 10: Cost Effectiveness</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Extend the use of the CANOA (Spanish acronym of "standardised analytical accounting for government organisations") system to all activities of INE Spain.	2008
2. Upgrade the COSPRO system, which logs the time devoted by the staff of INE Spain to each statistical project on a monthly basis, so that it logs the data on a daily basis, at least for projects subsidised by the Commission.	2007
<b>Principle 11: Relevance</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Propose the admission to the Higher Statistical Council of representatives of user groups not presently represented.	2008
2. Improve knowledge of the opinions and needs of INE Spain's website users.	2008 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 12: Accuracy and Reliability</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Systematically monitor the conduct of statistical processes and introduce quality improvements as opportunities are identified.	2008 and subsequent periods
<b>Principle 13: Timeliness and Punctuality</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
<b>Principle 14: Coherence and Comparability</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Identify new instruments to reinforce the calculation of a range of quality indicators on coherence and comparability	2009
<b>Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
1. Join the international initiative to foster a standard format for the dissemination of SDMX (standard data and metadata exchange) statistical data and metadata.	2007
2. Update and enlarge the English-language version of the INE Spain's website.	2008-2009
3. Set in motion the new TEMPUS 2 time series bank.	2007
4. Hold courses and seminars at EEAP to impart training on official statistics among key users (analysts, employer associations, labour unions, members of parliament, universities, press, etc).	2008 and subsequent periods
5. Adapt the website of INE Spain to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative.	2008

8. ANNEX A: PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT

1<sup>st</sup> DAY (19 November 2007)

TIMETABLE	ITEM/PRINCIPLES	CONTACTS
09:30-10:00	Welcome  Introduction of Programme  Organisational matters	<b>Board of Directors</b> Carmen Alcaide Miguel Angel de Castro Mariano Gómez Antonio Martínez López and: Antonio Martínez Serrano
10:00-11:30	Meeting with management and senior staff Principle 1 – Professional Independence Principle 2 – Mandate for Data Collection Principle 3 – Adequacy of Resources	<b>Board of Directors and:</b> Pilar Gómez Providencia Núñez Antonio Martínez Serrano
11:30-12:00	<b>Meeting with management and senior staff</b> Principle 5 – Statistical Confidentiality	Miguel Angel Martínez Adolfo Gálvez Yolanda Gómez Antonio Martínez Serrano
12:00-13:00	<b>Meeting with management and senior staff</b> Principle 6 (Impartiality and Objectivity) Principle 15 (Accessibility and Clarity) <b>Presentation of results of the user-satisfaction survey</b>	Alejandro Ramos Donald Peña Francisco Hernández. Florentina Álvarez Antonio Martínez Serrano
14:00-15:00	Interview with Directors and members of the Steering Committee on Quality  Principle 4 – Quality Commitment	Carmen Arribas Pedro Revilla Carlos Ballano Alejandro Salinero Antonio Martínez Serrano
15:00-16:00	<b>Meeting with junior staff</b>	Amor González Antonio del Sastre Belén González Francisco Fernández María Izquierdo Sandra Martín Ana C. Saura Beatriz Ramos Blas Molina Lourdes Prado Rocío Fuente Valentín Pérez
16:00-17:00	<b>Meeting with management/senior staff to review/clarify issues of NSI</b>	Mariano Gómez Antonio Martínez López Antonio Martínez Serrano

2<sup>nd</sup> DAY (20 November 2007)

TIMETABLE	ITEM/PRINCIPLES	CONTACTS
09:30-10:30	<b>Meeting with other national data producers</b>	<b>Bank of Spain</b> Eduardo Rodríguez Tenés <b>Ministry of Education and Science</b> Isabel Muñoz Jesús Ibañez Milla <b>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</b> Dolores Allona <b>Tax Agency</b> Salvador Senent José Luis Rodríguez Quirós
10:30-11:30	<b>Meetings with other Analysts and Researches</b>	“ <b>Universidad de Alcalá</b> ” Luis Toharia “ <b>Asociación Española de la Banca</b> ” Federico Prades

11:30-12:15	<b>Meeting with the Media</b>	<b>"ABC"</b> Juan Fernández <b>"5 Días"</b> José Antonio Vega <b>"Bloomberg"</b> Ben Sills, Staff editor
12:15-13:15	<b>Meeting with members of the High Council on Statistics and some others data providers</b>	<b>"Universidad Complutense Madrid"</b> Vicente Quesada <b>CCOO – Trade Union</b> Carlos Martín <b>CEOE– Business Organisation</b> Paloma Blanco
14:15-15:15	<b>Meeting with main users</b>	<b>Bank of Spain</b> Juan M <sup>a</sup> Peñalosa <b>Institute for Fiscal Studies</b> Angela Blanco
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> DAY (21 November 2007)</b>		
<b>TIMETABLE</b>	<b>ITEM/PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>CONTACTS</b>
09:30-11:30	<b>Meeting with management to sum-up and detailed review of list of improvement actions for all principles</b>	<b>Board Directors and:</b> Antonio Martinez Serrano
11:30-13:00	<b>Conclusions, Best Practices, Recommendations and Follow up (improvement actions)</b>	<b>Board Directors and:</b> Antonio Martinez Serrano

## 9. ANNEX B: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### INE Spain

**Mrs. Carmen Alcaide**, *President*

**Mr. Miguel Angel de Castro**, *Director General, Statistical Processes and Infrastructure*

**Mr. Mariano Gómez**, *Director General, Statistical Products*

**Mr. Antonio Martínez López**, *Director, Statistical Planning and Coordination Cabinet*

**Mr. Antonio Martinez Serrano**, *Director, International Relations*

**Mr. Miguel Angel Martínez**, *Director, Directorate of Statistical Computing*

**Mr. Alejandro Ramos**, *Director, Dissemination*

**Mr. Francisco Hernández**, *Director, Methodology and Techniques*

**Mrs. Florentina Álvarez**, *Director, Labour Market Statistics*

**Mr. Pedro Revilla**, *Director, Industrial and Agricultural Statistics*

**Mr. Carlos Ballano**, *Director, Data Collection*

**Mrs. Carmen Arribas**, *Adviser of the President*

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