Alberto De Michelis
Honorary Director-General of the European Commission.
European citizen of Italian nationality.

Alberto De Michelis was born in Rome (Italy) on 7 February 1938. He studied political sciences and economics at the University of Florence (Italy) and economics and statistics at the IPSOA Institute in Turin before joining the European Commission (Directorate-General for Social Affairs) in 1962 and then Eurostat in 1963.

During his first 20 years in Eurostat (1963–83), Alberto De Michelis worked in many sectors of Eurostat (national accounts, price statistics, foreign trade statistics, cooperation with developing countries) and he was involved, as statistician of the European Commission, in major international negotiations (GATT, Kennedy Round, Associated African, Caribbean and Pacific countries).

After five years as head of the 'Agriculture accounts and structures' division between 1983 and 1987, he became head of the 'Planning, budget, relations with other Community institutions and international organisations' division in 1987. Under the direct responsibility of the Director-General of Eurostat, Yves Franchet, Alberto De Michelis was in charge of the reorganisation of the programming and planning of the resources of Eurostat and of the discussions in the Council concerning the organisation of the ESS. He was also responsible for the development of the Training of European Statisticians (TES) project.
In January 1993, he became Director of Directorate 'Economic Statistics and Economic and Monetary Convergence'. His directorate was in charge of the major projects concerning statistical information for the economic and monetary union (ESA–95, financial accounts, HICP) for the Community budget (GNP for own resources), for the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and for international price comparisons (purchasing power parity (PPP) and corrector coefficients).

Alberto De Michelis left Eurostat voluntarily in April 2000.

Alain Chantraine
Honorary Director-General of the European Commission.
European citizen of Belgian nationality.

Alain Chantraine was born in Liège (Belgium) on 19 December 1940. He graduated in financial sciences from the École des hautes études commerciales de Liège (Belgium) in 1962 and joined Eurostat in November of the same year.

During his early years at Eurostat he compiled the first Community input-output tables (for six countries) and helped in the drafting of the first version of the European System of Integrated Economic Accounts (ESA). In 1970 he became head of an agricultural sector dealing with land use, production and crop product balances. The Director-General, Jacques Mayer, then asked him to become his personal assistant, with responsibility for statistical matters.

He subsequently headed two Eurostat units: 'Short-term industrial statistics' from 1977 to 1980 and then 'National accounts' until 1986.

On being appointed Director in 1987, he took charge of statistical processing and dissemination. When Eurostat was reorganised in 1993, he became Director of general affairs, international and interinstitutional relations and external and intra-Community trade statistics. During this time he dealt with matters such as the introduction of Intrastat and cooperation with the countries of central and eastern Europe and the CIS countries.

In 1997 he became responsible for statistical planning, internal management, legal affairs and the management of human and financial resources.

As Director, he was a member of various committees, both within the Commission (sound and efficient management, promotions, training) and in the Member States (Statistics Advisory Committee in the United Kingdom and the Central Committee for Statistics in the Netherlands).

Alain Chantraine retired in December 2000.

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Alberto De Michelis and Alain Chantraine

Memoirs of Eurostat

Fifty years serving Europe

1953 2003 eurostat

The views expressed only bind the authors and should not be considered as constituting the official position of the European Commission.

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet.
It can be accessed through the Europa server (http://europa.eu.int).

Information on Eurostat can be found on its web site (http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat).

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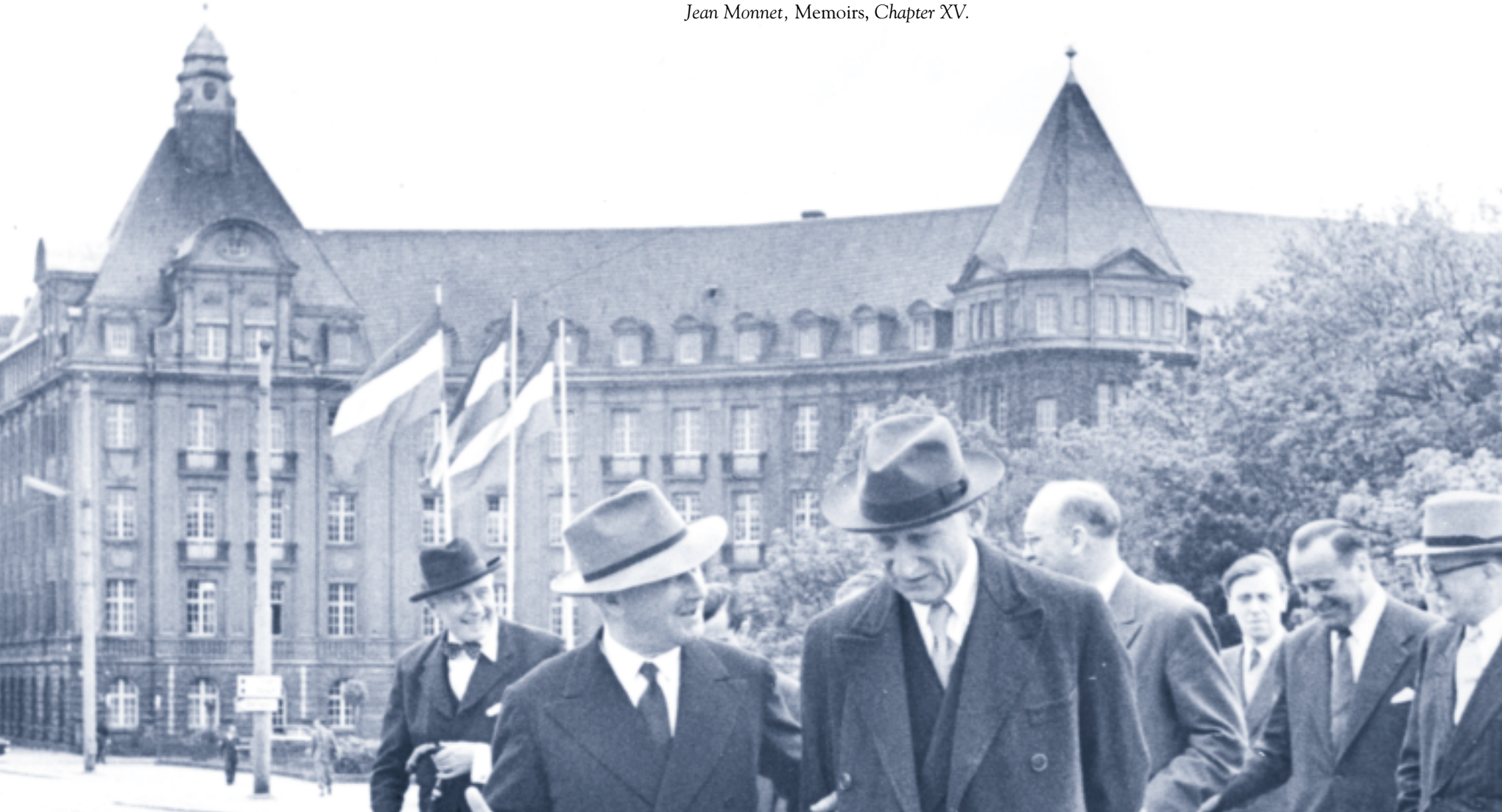
The High Authority … provided a powerful instrument for action by making public data that had hitherto been concealed or poorly observed. Our statistical surveys at European level brought surprising revelations in the most basic fields.

Jean Monnet, Memoirs, *Chapter XV.*



Thank you

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We also thank our wives, who for a while had thought we were retired.

Lastly, we want to thank all those who gave us encouragement during the writing of this history, especially our friends Yves Franchet and Daniel Byk, without whom this brief history would have remained no more than a memory.

National statistical institute (NSI) and international organisation correspondents:
Claudia Cingolani (I), Teresa Clode (P), Bruno Dietsch (F), Enrico Giovannini (I), Sabine Köhler (D), Inge Kramer (A), Ada van Krimpen (NL), Olav Ljones (NO), Margarida Madaleno (P), Matti Niva (S), Antero Pohjola (FIN), Leah Pybus (UK), Pedro Ruiz Salvador (E), Malcom Sorrel (UK), Kim Volby Pedersen (DK).

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NSI directors-general:
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←
Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman in front of the headquarters of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community, place de Metz, Luxembourg.

To everyone who helped to build Eurostat,
directors-general, directors, heads of unit,
administrators, assistants and clerks,
secretaries who supported us, in every sense,
drivers who safely took us hither and thither,
translators and interpreters, who helped us to talk to each other,
technicians and messengers,
and all the statisticians in the national statistical institutes
who have contributed, over the last 50 years,
always with determination and conviction,
to making Eurostat what it is today.

Foreword

When Eurostat was drawing up its corporate plan in 1994, it defined its mission as: 'Providing the European Union with a high-quality statistical information service'.

Reading the history of Eurostat written by two protagonists who know it well — Alberto De Michelis and Alain Chantraine — quickly reveals that this definition can be applied to every stage that they describe in the life of Eurostat.

Eurostat's ability to fulfil its mission develops in close correlation with the intensity of European integration. For example, the period of crisis which Eurostat experienced between 1981 and 1985 coincided with a time of sluggish political progress with regard to European integration.

The revival of European integration began in the mid-1980s and continues today. To echo Alain Chantraine, it is a love story between the euro and statistics that is being written. And like all love stories, there are moments of heated tension.

Stendhal wrote in his Life of Napoleon *that what Europe lacks is not good intentions but the energy that is needed to change the weight of habit ([1]). This comment is very pertinent to this stage of European integration, in which all the economic and social partners must rethink their habits in order to build a common future.*

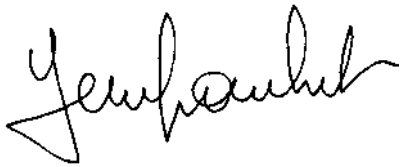
Eurostat, together with the Commission, cannot avoid this need for deep-rooted reform to meet the challenges of Europe's aspirations.

([1]) Stendhal, Vie de Napoléon, *edited by V. Del Litto at the 'Cercle du bibliophile', Edito-Service SA, Geneva, 1970, p. 75.*

The history of Eurostat will soon be written with 25 Member States, with probably another 10 or so in the next 10 years. The European statistical system will be expanded and organised in a more efficient network, in line with the European convention and then the European constitution.

In penning this history of Eurostat, Alberto De Michelis and Alain Chantraine provide all those involved in European statistics, at present or in the future, with the knowledge they need to implement these new changes.

On behalf of everyone connected with European statistics, I should like to express my heartfelt gratitude for their contribution to our knowledge.



Yves Franchet
Director-General of Eurostat

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The early days at Luxembourg

The construction of the European Union began on 18 April 1951.

In Paris, six countries signed the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community to make war among them materially impossible by ensuring 'real solidarity'. The Treaty of Paris provided for the introduction of a system to obtain the information needed for the measures taken in the iron and steel sector, and on 1 October 1952, the High Authority decided to create 12 divisions and services, including statistics.

18 April 1951: the Treaty of Paris establishes the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community).

From the outset, Europe's statisticians turned to the topics which would become a common thread through their statistical programme: harmonisation, relations with the national statistical institutes, international relations. The tasks of the statistical division already formed the core work of what was to become the motivating factor for Eurostat and its extensive work programme, 'to inform Europe', from European administrators down to ordinary Europeans.

Close cooperation with the national statistical systems quickly became a prime task. From 1955 onwards, the directors-general of the national statistical institutes met at least twice a year, on account of the importance of such meetings for mutual exchanges of information and for deciding on the general outline of future action.

In 1958, it was decided to create three common services for the three executive bodies (ECSC, EEC and Euratom): the Legal Service, the Press Office and the statistical service.

It was in the same year that the part of the Statistical Division that was already in Luxembourg had to move. It moved into premises that will always be remembered by those who worked there: the Staar Hotel.

1952>1958

From 1952 to 1958

The European Coal and Steel Community

The construction of the European Union began in Paris on 18 April 1951, when six countries signed the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community. By ensuring 'real solidarity', the Treaty of Paris made war not only unthinkable but also materially impossible. A requirement for the single market was to have qualitative and quantitative information on which to base political decisions.

It was 18 April 1951 that saw the official birth of an ambition that is still being pursued today: the construction of the European Union (EU). Six countries were in Paris to sign the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). These six countries — Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands — resolved to pursue an objective that was both political and inherently economic. 'Real solidarity' — the words of Jean Monnet — was to be the basis on which the Treaty of Paris intended to make war among these European countries not only unthinkable but also materially impossible. The areas that were selected — in efforts initially limited to two vital sectors — were energy in the form of coal and heavy industry represented by steel. The aim was to lay common bases for development and to attempt to achieve general integration by tackling, in concrete terms, the problems that arose and the most suitable solutions for solving them.

A look at the Treaty of Paris reveals all the difficulties of operating a Community. These were then covered further in the Treaties of Rome and in the other treaties which subsequently served to extend and complete it.

The basic idea underlying the Treaty of Paris is the development of free trade across a much broader area than that of single nation States. This was the first hint of the single market that was to emerge for the economy as a whole 40 years later, on 1 January 1993.

The conditions had to be established that would allow the single market to be created and maintained:

- merge separate economies with transition periods

long enough to eliminate differences but also limited in time;

- establish common rules preventing monopoly positions and encouraging competition among firms;
- decide on common rules bringing about genuine social justice that wins the support of the labour force for the economic changes to come;
- facilitate investment, in sectors where investment is massive and needs to be scheduled over a long period, by opening up new sources of finance to which firms would not have direct access;
- introduce intervention measures to ensure production capacity in times of crisis and to avoid interruptions in supply and price changes that could occur in times of shortage;
- lastly, back all these measures with qualitative and quantitative information allowing them to be monitored and making it possible to plan the new actions required as a result of structural and short-term economic changes in the sectors concerned, and also in other sectors relying on coal and steel.

That was the brief outline of the Treaty of Paris, and it was the same idea that was taken up, on a broader scale, a few years later by the Treaties of Rome.

Statistics in the ECSC Treaty

Article 46 of the Treaty of Paris lays down the objectives which presupposed the availability of statistics. Article 47 states that the High Authority may obtain the information it requires to carry out its tasks. On 1 October 1952, the High Authority decided to create 12 divisions and services, including statistics.

To put these provisions into practice, the Treaty of Paris had created a number of institutions, the most important of which was the executive body, the High Authority. The other bodies were the Council, the Assembly and the Court of the ECSC, which would subsequently become the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the Court of Justice of the European Communities.

On 13 August 1952, the ECSC High Authority met for the first time in Luxembourg under the chairmanship of Jean Monnet, who, as the member of the French Government responsible for the plan, had been one of its most ardent supporters. The High Authority had nine members: two Belgians (Albert Coppé and Paul Finet), two Germans (Heinz Potthoff and Franz Etzel), two Frenchmen (Jean Monnet and Léon Daum), a Dutchman (Dirk Pieter Spierenburg), an Italian (Enzo Giacchero) and a Luxembourger (Albert Wehrer).

As we have seen, the Treaty of Paris set up a system so that the measures in the coal and steel sector could be taken on the basis of qualitative and quantitative information. Article 46, in particular, laid down the objectives which presupposed the introduction of statistical documentation.

→ *See 'Objectives laid down by the High Authority in Article 46 of the Treaty of Paris'.*

The report of 25 September 1952 of the High Authority start-up group — a group that had been set up by Jean Monnet in August 1952 to get the institution operating — provided for the temporary creation of an auxiliary statistical division to help the new economic and industrial divisions that had just been set up. In particular, the auxiliary statistical division was supposed to provide the High Authority with the statistical information needed for the report on the general situation in the Community which the institution had to give to the Parliamentary Assembly within six months after being set up. At its 14th meeting, on 1 October 1952, the High Authority decided to create 12 divisions and services, including statistics. It was not until 25 June 1954 that the High Authority decided to change the name of the service to the Statistical Division.

Objectives laid down by the High Authority in Article 46 of the Treaty of Paris

— Conduct a continuous study of market and price trends.

— Periodically draw up programmes indicating foreseeable developments in production, consumption, exports and imports.

— Lay down general objectives for modernisation, long-term planning of manufacture and expansion of productive capacity.

— Take part, at the request of the governments concerned, in studying the possibilities for re-employing, in existing industries or through the creation of new activities, workers made redundant by market developments or technical changes.

— Obtain the information required to assess the possibilities for improving working conditions and living standards for workers in the industries within its province, and the threats to those standards.

Article 47 also stated that, 'The High Authority may obtain the information it requires to carry out its tasks. It may have any necessary checks made.'

Rolf Wagenführ, Director-General from 1952 to 1966.

European statistics take off

A note from the statistical service in 1952 already mentioned the topics which would serve as the common thread of the European statistical programme for the next 50 years: harmonisation, relations with the national statistical institutes (NSIs) and international relations. The first official act of coordination by a Community institution in the field of statistics was a statistical service note of 31 December 1952 announcing a meeting in Luxembourg.

The statistical service came into being at the end of 1952. It consisted of seven people: Professor Rolf Wagenführ, from Germany, who was in charge, Camille Legrand (Belgian), Fritz Grotius (German), Hans Freitag (German), Ferdinand Schön (Luxembourgish), Helmut Reum (German) and Theodorica von Buttlar (German), secretary to Professor Rolf Wagenführ and the service. There were lots of Germans at the start of what was to become Eurostat.

It was at the same time (September 1952) that the statistical service drafted a note for the High Authority on the 'inclusion of statistics in the organisation of the High Authority'. This note mentioned the topics which would be a common thread of the European statistical programme and its relations with the NSIs over the next 50 years.

→ *See 'Extract from the note on the "inclusion of statistics in the organisation of the High Authority"'.*

In his book, *La statistica in Europa* ([1]), Professor Rolf Wagenführ mentions the initial difficulties which stemmed primarily from the fact that the High Authority's specialist services began collecting statistical information in the Member States in a very haphazard manner and without any coordination with the statistical service. On 13 March 1953, the High Authority decided to curb this proliferation of questionnaires which non-statistical departments were sending to the Member States and set up a committee, chaired by Albert Coppé, to manage the statistical activities of the High Authority. The committee immediately introduced three measures.

First of all, it announced provisions (Note No 69 of 26 March 1953) whereby the various political services of the High Authority should refer all their statistical activities to the statistical service. The note pointed out that 'any statistical survey planned by the sectoral services must be systematically harmonised in time with the statistical service and that any questionnaire had to be sent to the statistical service to be checked and reviewed before being sent out'.

It would then go on to organise the collection of initial statistical data from existing international sources: the Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva and the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation in Paris. In this regard, it is interesting to read the note of 31 December 1952 from the statistical

([1]) *Rolf Wagenführ*, La statistica in Europa, *Ferro Edizioni*, *Milan*, *1967*.

service to the members of the High Authority, which told them that the service intended to organise, on 13 and 14 January 1953, 'a preparatory meeting in Luxembourg, to which would be invited the statisticians of the Member States of the Community with a view to adopting a common stance' for the meeting on coal statistics that the Economic Commission for Europe was arranging in Geneva. This was the first official act of coordination expressed by a Community institution in the field of statistics.

Thirdly, it was keen to organise statistical coordination with the national authorities in the Member States. The committee decided to set up the first coordination structures: 19 May 1953 saw the first meeting of the Steel Statistics Committee, followed two days later, on 21 May, by the Coal Statistics Committee. These two committees joined two other committees on social statistics (wages and employment) which had already met in March 1953. It should be pointed out that these 'committees' consisted mainly of representatives (management and unions) of the industries concerned and the relevant ministries, with the statistical institutes attending solely as observers. In the words of Professor Rolf Wagenführ, 'it was the start of ongoing collaboration between the social partners in the field of statistics, which helped to clarify talks between them'. This dialogue between statisticians and the social partners, which began in 1953, continues today, especially in the realm of social and industrial statistics.

Extract from the note on the 'inclusion of statistics in the organisation of the High Authority'.

- Harmonisation
"Statistical definitions and methods in the countries of the union vary ... to such an extent that it is impossible to compare figures. In order to create comparable documentation, the High Authority will need to clarify definitions, harmonise nomenclatures, fix standard methods for statistical investigation."

- Relations with the NSIs
"Since official statistics in the Member States cannot or will not give up viewing industry as part of their national economy, it could happen that unless there is harmonisation at Community level very different figures would appear for the same process, which would inevitably lead to different conclusions. It will therefore be advisable to have close cooperation with national statistics."

- International relations
"The standardisation of definitions and methods is a problem which the OEEC (the future OECD) as well as the Economic Commission for Europe are currently considering closely. The High Authority will need to be involved in the work of these bodies to ensure comparability with other countries."

From 1953, the statistical service moved into the building situated at 29, rue Aldringen.

The Statistical Division gets down to work

In order to obtain comparable data for the six countries, it was necessary to compile new uniform statistics, separate from national statistics which were piecemeal and lacked comparability. Because of the growing number of officials, the part of the Statistical Division that was already in Luxembourg had to move in 1958 to a building that would never be forgotten by those who worked there: the Staar Hotel.

The High Authority of the ECSC found premises in the Place de Metz in Luxembourg but the Statistical Division's offices were in Rue Aldringen from 1953. A few years later in 1958, because of the growing number of officials, the part of the Statistical Division that was already in Luxembourg had to move to a building that will never be forgotten by those who worked there: the Staar Hotel at the junction of Avenue de la Liberté and Avenue de la Gare. This would be the home of the Statistical Division until the merger of the executive bodies and the transfer of the Statistical Office of the European Communities (from now on, referred to as the 'Statistical Office') from Brussels to Luxembourg in 1968. But we shall come to that later.

The Staar Hotel had been a luxury hotel at the end of the 19th century but it was showing the signs of age. During the war it had been the headquarters of the Gestapo and when the Statistical Division moved in — to quote Silvio Ronchetti, at the time a young High Authority official but subsequently Director-General of Eurostat — 'nobody wanted to go down to the cellars where the statistical files were supposed to be kept because it was so grim and depressing'. We shall mention the Staar Hotel again in the next chapter, with comments from two Statistical Office officials who spent 10 years working there.

The service provided the first indication of its work in May 1953, when it submitted to the High Authority the first statistical report on the coal and steel industry, which was to be annexed to the first general report on the activity of the Community. The report comprised two parts. The first part on the Community in the context of the world economy comprised a set of general tables comparing the Community, the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom. The second part contained statistics on the structure, production and external trade of the coal and steel sector in all the Member States. The sources for the figures were the OEEC in Paris and the Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva.

→ *See 'The statistical service of the High Authority steadily grew in size'.*

It was February 1953 before the first French official, Jacques Charrayre, joined the statistical service, and not until June 1954 that the first Italian official, Silvio Ronchetti, was recruited.

The statistical service of the High Authority steadily grew in size

November 1952 → 7 out of 60 officials

July 1953 → 15 out of 305 officials

February 1954 → 18 out of 500 officials

April 1956 → 23 out of 600 officials

January 1958 → 41 out of 750 officials

The work of the Statistical Division developed with the introduction of common and harmonised methodologies for compiling coal and steel statistics. This was the start of European harmonisation, which got under way in collaboration with national statisticians and with the social partners.

Social statistics assumed particular importance. The ECSC Treaty stated that the standard of living of workers in the coal and steel industry must be raised. In order to be able to measure and compare the data needed for an assessment, the statistical service organised, in May 1954, the first expert committee to compare actual wages. The agenda for the meeting included the harmonisation of annual surveys of wages, prices and household budgets for workers in the coal and steel industry.

Writing about the outcome of this first meeting and subsequent meetings of the committee, Professor Rolf Wagenführ noted that 'in order to obtain comparable data for the six countries, it was necessary to compile new uniform statistics, separate from national statistics which were piecemeal and lacked comparability' ([1]).

Statistical work on standards of living continued in the next few years with the introduction of other surveys:

- labour cost survey (conducted annually since 1953);
- survey on household budget of workers (1956–57);
- surveys of prices and economic parities (1954 and 1958);
- survey of housing conditions (1958).

→ *See 'The Statistical Division's three sectors'.*

First publications

The Statistical Division decided on its policy for disseminating statistical information: every publication would be free of charge, apart from the *Bulletin statistique*. The first tables appeared in the first annual ECSC report.

On 20 December 1952, the Statistical Division started the regular publication of a weekly statistical bulletin allowing developments in the Community's coal industry to be followed. The first bulletin — just a few duplicated pages — contained data on production, number of coalface workers, average daily production underground and total stocks at mines.

The Statistical Division was given the job of preparing the tables appearing in the first annual ECSC report. From the general report of 1956 onwards, these tables appeared in a comprehensive statistical annex.

([1]) *Rolf Wagenführ*, La statistica in Europa, *Ferro Edizioni*, *Milan*, *1967*.

The Statistical Division's three sectors

As mentioned earlier, in June 1954 the statistical service changed its name to become the Statistical Division, organised in three departments.

— **Coal statistics** was headed by Camille Legrand (B).

— **Steel statistics** was headed by Fritz Grotius (D).

Statistics in these two departments covered:

- production and stocks
- orders and order books (steel)
- deliveries and purchases within the EC
- trade with non-member countries
- coal industry users
- energy balances
- employment and performance
- prices
- coalfields.

— **General statistics,** headed by Pierre Gavanier (F), covered the following sectors:

- investments
- wages
- costs and receipts
- supplies and requirements
- transport
- consumer prices
- short-term trends
- purchasing power parities
- household budgets
- external trade.

This department also dealt with methodological matters and international statistics and comparisons.

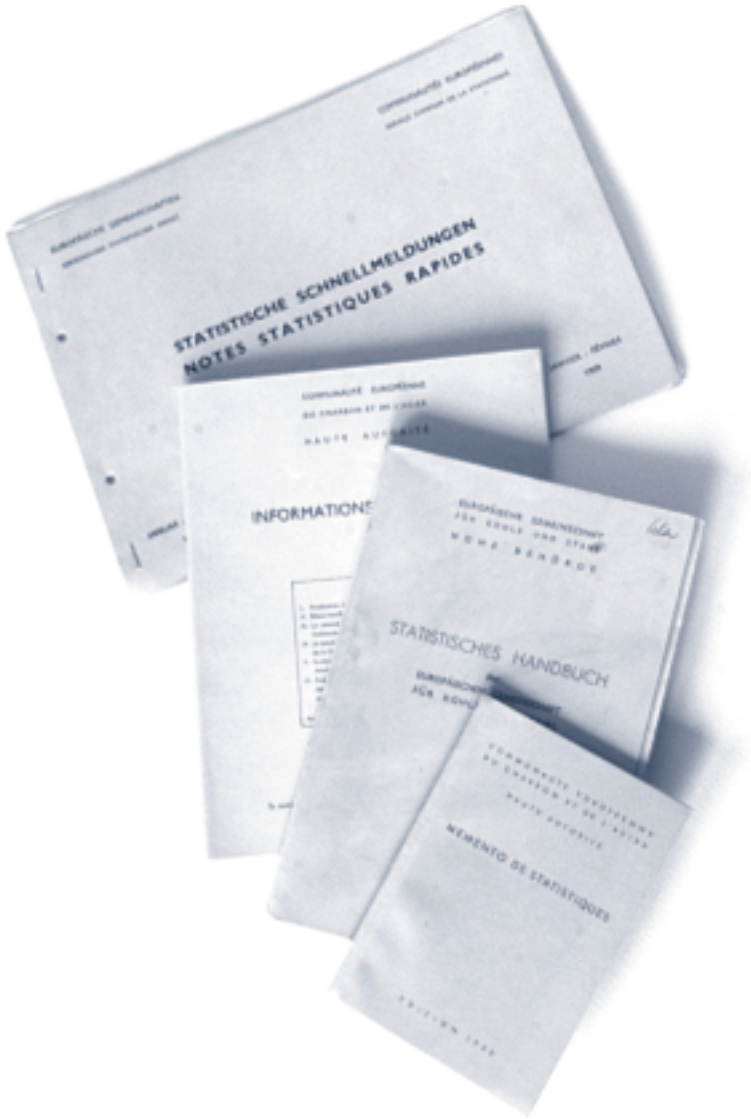
Details of the Statistical Division's publication programme — which was to run for several years from 1955 — can be found in the boxed text.

→ *See 'Statistical Division's publication programme from 1955'.*

In line with the recommendations of the High Authority's finances-budget-administration group, the Statistical Division decided on its policy for disseminating statistical information. Every publication would be free of charge, apart from the *Bulletin statistique* which would cost BEF 300 a year for six issues.

In 1955, the monthly print run was about 3 800 copies, of which about 2 800 were distributed free of charge. Annual subscribers totalled about 730. As for the *Mémento de statistiques* — a kind of yearbook — 10 000 copies were printed on average. About 7 000 were distributed free of charge and the rest were held in stock, waiting for a demand that often never materialised ...

Technical production of all the statistical publications was the job of the High Authority's print service, which was the forerunner of the Publications Office. The *Bulletin statistique* and the Mémento were produced in four languages (French, German, Italian and Dutch). *Informations statistiques*, which saw its print run rise from 700 to 15 000 copies in five years, between 1953 and 1958, initially appeared in two languages (French and German) and then in four languages, with the addition of Italian and Dutch.



Statistical Division's publication programme from 1955

Informations statistiques:
a monthly publication covering methodology questions or a whole topic.

Bulletin statistique:
appearing every two months with a review of general statistics.

Mémento de statistiques:
annual publication covering general topics.

Notes rapides:
appearing twice a month on specific topics, e.g. coal, steel, coke, ores, etc.

Bulletin du commerce extérieur:
detailed monthly publication on the Member States' external trade.

Cahiers trimestriels 'Charbon et acier':
internal publication for the High Authority and Commission experts.

Ad hoc publications:
such as the publication on economic parities in the Community.

First meetings of the directors-general of the NSIs where a common statistical service was mentioned

At the outset, cooperation with the national statistical systems was dominated by the High Authority and representatives of the social partners and the ministries. In 1953, the Statistical Division convened for the first time a 'Working party of NSI directors-general'.

In 1958, it was decided to set up three common services for the three executive bodies (ECSC, EEC and Euratom): the Legal Service, the Press Office and the statistical service. On 20 May 1958, President Hallstein announced to the European Parliamentary Assembly that a joint statistical office would be set up.

When the ECSC began its work, cooperation with the national statistical systems was limited to their attendance at committees dominated in the main by officials of the High Authority (statisticians and sectoral officials) and by representatives of the social partners and the ministries. In 1955, the committees and working parties were as follows:

- a 'Coal Statistics Committee' with a subcommittee;
- a 'Steel Statistics Committee' with six working parties;
- an 'Employment and Wages Committee' with nine working parties.

This meant that the Statistical Division organised about 15 meetings in Luxembourg during every three-month period.

The Statistical Division decided in 1953 to give a boost to coordination with the national statistical institutes by convening for the first time a 'Working party of NSI directors-general'.

This meeting took place in Luxembourg on 15 July 1953 in the offices of the Statistical Division at 29, rue Aldringen. There were two items on the agenda:

- a report by the Statistical Division on its tasks within the High Authority;
- matters requiring common work on prices, stocks, household budgets, business and trade.

This first meeting was attended by four NSI directors-general, André Dufrasne (B), Lanfranco Maroi (I), Philippus Jacobus Indenburg (NL) and Antoine Bastian (L), and by two representatives, Raymond Dumas (who some years later was to become the second Director-General of the Statistical Office) from INSEE ([1]) and Kurt Herrmann from the Statistiches Bundesamt. The directors-general of these two NSIs at that time were Francis-Louis Closon and Gerhard Fürst respectively.

([1]) Institut national de statistique et études économiques.

The meeting was chaired by Heinz Potthoff, member of the High Authority. The directors of the NSIs decided to meet again a few weeks later, again in Luxembourg, to continue discussing the organisation of statistical cooperation in the Community.

The second meeting took place in Luxembourg on 17 September 1953 and was chaired by Albert Coppé, Vice-President of the High Authority, who had been appointed by Jean Monnet to be in charge of the work of the statistical service. Item 6 on the agenda was 'Work method and membership of statistical committees'. At the request of Gerhard Fürst, Director of the Statistisches Bundesamt, the DGINS formally asked for the NSIs to be invited to any meeting where statistics were discussed and where the results obtained were sent to the NSIs for their opinion, as this was considered to be the only way of achieving harmonisation. As mentioned earlier, national statisticians were sometimes invited as observers to attend meetings of committees set up by the High Authority but they were not members of the committees. The Statistical Division endeavoured to ensure that this decision of the NSIs was complied with, in spite of some resistance which came primarily from national representatives on the committees.

From 1955, the directors of the NSIs decided to meet at least twice a year. As the minutes of the meeting of 3 and 4 March in Luxembourg point out, this was because of the 'importance of such meetings for mutual information and for fixing the guidelines for future action'.

Among the meetings which the directors of the NSIs subsequently held, there are some that deserve a mention.

In view of the particular circumstances of the Saarland, the High Authority decided to send an invitation for the January 1956 meeting to Rudolf Köster, the head of statistics for the region, the status of which was still not clear. Was it French, German or autonomous? This decision was not repeated for other meetings, because some countries opposed the idea and because a political solution to the matter was then found.

On 28 and 29 May 1956, at the invitation of Francis-Louis Closon, Director-General of INSEE, the DGINS meeting was held in Paris. This first experiment was followed by others, and from 1957 the directors-general decided to meet at least once a year away from Luxembourg in one of the Member State capitals.

A very important meeting was held on 12 and 13 February 1957, in The Hague, where topics of Community statistical integration were discussed for the first time. Prompted by the enthusiasm of the time — the six Member States were to sign the Treaties of Rome two months later — Francis-Louis Closon

'Statistical tasks stemming from European integration'

— Set up a common statistical service for the common market, the ECSC and Euratom.

— Create a consultative body, a 'Community Statistical Council', comprising the directors of the national statistical institutes in the Community.

— Establish clearly defined and demarcated links between the common statistical service and the Member States to deal with all the statistical requests made by the countries.

— Make initial use of the data that were available in the countries, together with methodological notes.

— With regard to new work, give priority to the harmonisation of concepts and methods and, where possible, of survey methods in order to arrive at a common analysis of facts.

— Learn from the work of international organisations.

called for a 'single statistical service' for the Community.

The idea was discussed in the months that followed, and in Geneva on 19 June 1957, the directors of the national statistical institutes of the Community asked the Statistical Division to prepare a document on the guidelines to be put to the political authority concerning the common organisation of European statistics.

As Professor Rolf Wagenführ says in his book, the document entitled 'Statistical tasks stemming from European integration' was of extreme importance for the development of the future statistical office of the European Communities ([1]). After analysing the situation following the entry into force of the Treaties of Rome (European Economic Community) in three main areas, external trade, agriculture statistics and social statistics, as well as energy in connection with the Euratom Treaty, the document offers some comments on organisation.

→ *See 'Statistical tasks stemming from European integration'.*

This document, written in April/May 1957, foretold the future development of the European statistical system.

It was just before the signing of the Treaties of Rome on the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom),

([1]) *Rolf Wagenführ*, La statistica in Europa, *Ferro Edizioni, Milan, 1967.*

which were to come into force on 1 January 1958. On 10 January, the new Commissions of the EEC and Euratom were installed in Brussels and at the end of the month it was decided to set up three common services for the three executive bodies (ECSC, EEC and Euratom): the Legal Service, the Press Office and a common statistical service, which was to operate under the authority of the Director of the Statistical Division of the High Authority.

To start with, the High Authority decided to second from Luxembourg to Brussels a small group of Statistical Division officials (including Jean Petre) to begin organising the new service.

As for the Euratom Commission, it decided to create an atomic energy statistical division (protocol of 9 July 1958) as part of its organisation, while leaving all the other fields to the Statistical Division. At the beginning of 1958, the Statistical Division had 41 officials of all grades (18 A, 13 B and 10 C).

In a memorandum entitled No 1 of 10 March 1958, the Commission of the EEC, under the presidency of Walter Hallstein, entrusted the Statistical Division with the following tasks:

- preparation of questionnaires for surveys in the Member States;
- decision on the survey methodologies to be adopted;
- convening of the statistical committees of the Member States;
- examination of replies to questionnaires;
- publication of results.

A few days later, on 20 May 1958, President Walter Hallstein announced to the European Parliamentary Assembly (the future European Parliament) in Strasbourg that a Statistical Office would be set up to serve the three executive bodies.

The Statistical Office of the European Communities ...

... between Brussels and Luxembourg

8 April 1965: the signing in Brussels of the Merger Treaty of the three executive bodies (ECSC, EEC and Euratom).

The Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) were signed in Rome on 25 March 1957.

The EEC Treaty marked the birth of European legislation on statistics, which made it possible to construct what in 'Eurospeak' has become known as the *acquis statistique communautaire*.

On 10 March 1958, Memorandum No 1 announced that from the beginning of March 1958 an external statistical service had been created. On 11 June 1959, it was renamed the Statistical Office of the European Communities (SOEC), the three Communities being the ECSC, the EEC and Euratom.

The Statistical Office's watchword was the harmonisation of methods. A work plan was devised in a variety of statistical fields, and a dissemination policy was drawn up. The Statistical Office expanded, along with its budget, but the increased workload always had to face a shortage of manpower.

At the beginning of the 1960s the relations between the Statistical Office and the national statistical systems were already following the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The circumstances with regard to statistics varied greatly from country to country. The Statistical Office strengthened its network of contacts with the NSIs and the statistical departments of the various ministries. In May 1962, the six-monthly meeting of the 'Working party of the directors-general of the NSIs' was renamed the 'Conference of the directors-general of the National Statistical Institutes' (DGINS, as its French acronym), the name by which it is still known today.

From the outset, the Statistical Office demonstrated its willingness to cooperate with any international body which had a statistical service. Development cooperation received special emphasis.

In June 1966, Professor Rolf Wagenführ retired from his post as Director-General of the Statistical Office and was replaced by Raymond Dumas.

The Treaty which merged the three executive bodies (signed 8 April 1965) came into force on 1 July 1967 and provided greater consistency with Community administrative organisation by combining executive functions in a single institution, the Commission of the European Communities. At the time, the merger decision resulted in some hard bargaining, which affected statistics as well. The offices of the Statistical Office, which at the time were spread between Luxembourg and Brussels, would nearly all be brought together in Luxembourg.

1958>1968

From 1958 to 1968

The Treaties of Rome and the three executive bodies

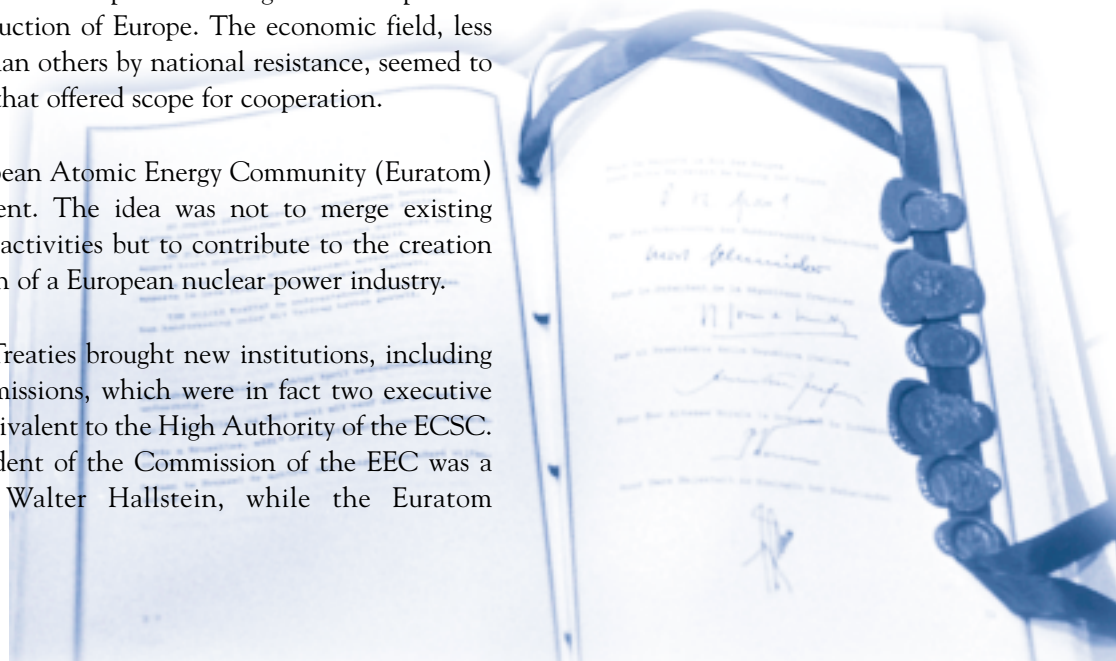
On 25 March 1957, the six founding members signed the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) which introduced new institutions, including two Commissions: the Commission of the EEC and the Euratom Commission. At the beginning, the Euratom Commission set up its own statistical service, with other statistical sectors remaining the responsibility of the Statistical Division of the High Authority. What kind of structure, under what political authority, with what objective, and where: these were the questions that arose during a lengthy period of transition.

On 25 March 1957, the six founding members of the European Coal and Steel Community (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) decided to intensify their cooperation by signing the Treaties of Rome. These Treaties in fact comprised two separate treaties: the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The EEC had as its task 'by establishing a common market, to promote a continuous and balanced expansion, an increase in stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living and closer relations between the States belonging to it'.

On the basis of the Treaty of Paris signed on 18 April 1951 establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, the Treaties of Rome broadened the area of supranational cooperation and gave new impetus to the construction of Europe. The economic field, less affected than others by national resistance, seemed to be a field that offered scope for cooperation.

The European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) was different. The idea was not to merge existing economic activities but to contribute to the creation and growth of a European nuclear power industry.

The two Treaties brought new institutions, including two Commissions, which were in fact two executive bodies equivalent to the High Authority of the ECSC. The President of the Commission of the EEC was a German, Walter Hallstein, while the Euratom



Commission was led by a Frenchman, Louis Armand. The President of the High Authority of the ECSC at that time was a Belgian, Paul Finet.

At the beginning of its work the Euratom Commission decided to set up its own statistical service, which remained independent until mid-1959. The job of the Nuclear Power Statistics Division was to compile information on this particularly sensitive sector. The Euratom Treaty had set some ambitious objectives for the Community, 'to contribute to the raising of the standard of living in the Member States and to the development of relations with other countries by creating the conditions necessary for the speedy establishment and growth of nuclear industries'.

The other statistical sectors remained the responsibility of the Statistical Division of the High Authority, which started by transferring a small group of officials from Luxembourg to Brussels in response to strong demand for data from the Commission of the EEC. From the start of 1958, in fact, the Commission had been organising its departments in the Belgian capital.

There began a lengthy period of transition and wrangling among the three institutions, which lasted until the end of 1959. What kind of structure, under what political authority, with what objective, and where: these were the questions to which answers had to be found by the 'Working party on general affairs' (later to be called the 'Committee for the cooperation of the three executive bodies') which was given the job by the three institutions of arranging the organisation of the three common services: the Legal Service, the Press Office and the statistical service.

Statistical Office of the European Communities

On 10 March 1958, President Walter Hallstein signed Memorandum No 1 informing the Commission's political divisions that from the beginning of March 1958 an external statistical service had been set up. On 11 June 1959, this service took the name of the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the three Communities being the ECSC, the EEC and Euratom.

On 6 March 1958, just a few weeks after it had taken office, the Commission of the EEC under its President, Walter Hallstein, held a meeting with the Director of the statistical service of the High Authority to hear what he had to say about the 'organisation of the common statistical service'. It noted that Rolf Wagenführ would present a draft memorandum setting out the conditions under which the divisions and services of the Commission could call on the statistical service. It was also agreed that the Group for Economic and Financial Affairs (which would subsequently become the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs) would consider the matter and, if necessary, report to the Commission.

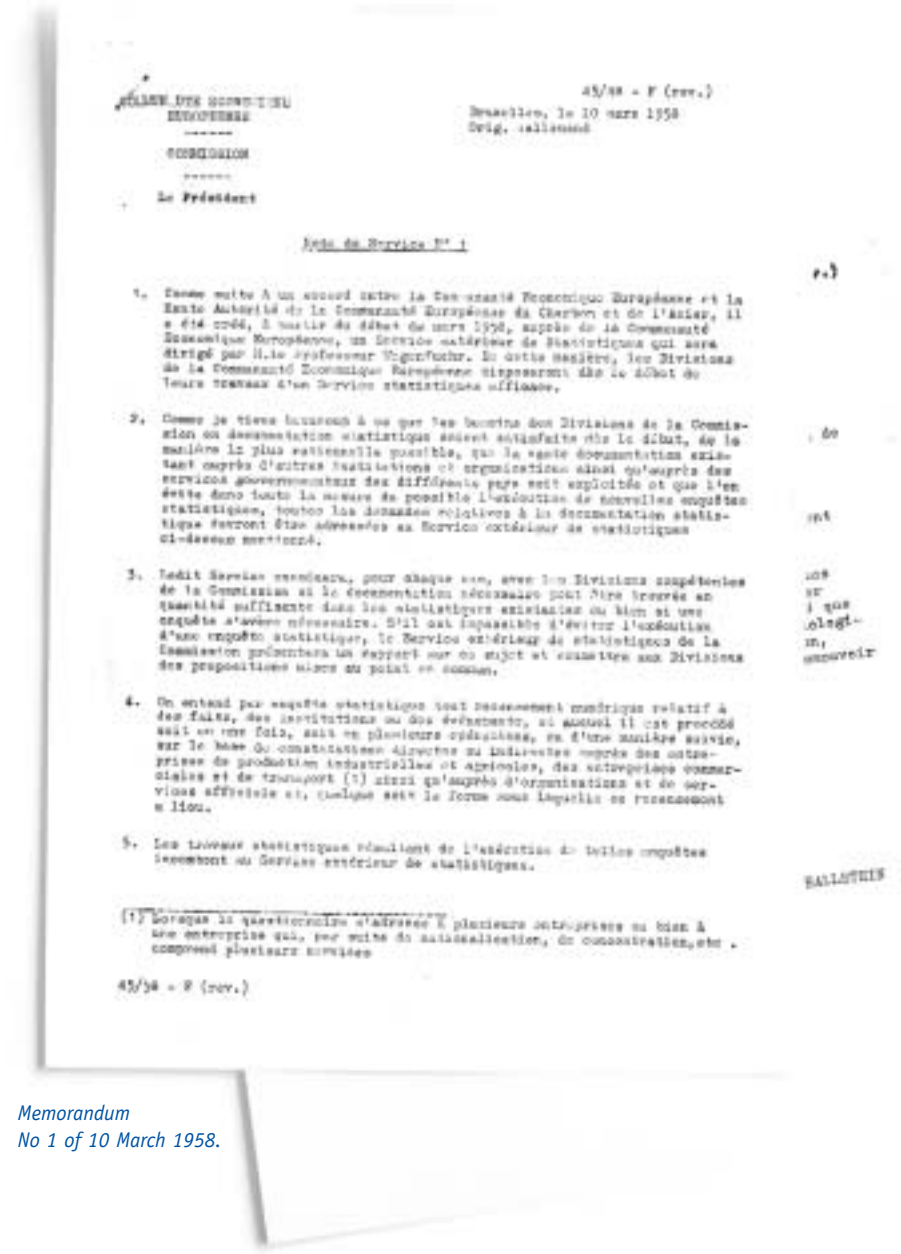
The Commission of the EEC was wary of the influence of the High Authority of the ECSC on the statistical service and asked the future Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs to ensure that statistics were dealt with by a genuinely interinstitutional service.

On 10 March 1958, President Walter Hallstein signed Memorandum No 1 informing the Commission's political divisions that from the beginning of March 1958 an external statistical service had been set up under Professor Rolf Wagenführ and that the EEC divisions would thus have from the outset of their work an efficient statistical service. The meaning of the word 'external' is not clear. It was probably the word that was chosen at the time to indicate that the statistical service did not belong to one but to all three institutions.

Following the meeting on 6 March 1958 of the Hallstein Commission, which had asked Professor Rolf Wagenführ to prepare a report on the organisation of statistics, the latter submitted to the 'Working party on general affairs' on 8 May a document proposing a common statistical office for the three institutions. The document covered three areas:

— organisation of a common statistical office within the institutions:

  • creation of a Directorate-General within the Commission of the EEC;



45/58 - F (rev.)

Bruxelles, le 10 mars 1958

Orig. : allemand

COMMISSION

Le Président

Note de Service N° 1

1. Comme suite à un accord entre la Communauté Economique Européenne et la Haute Autorité de la Communauté Européenne du Charbon et de l'Acier, il a été créé, à partir du début de mars 1958, auprès de la Communauté Economique Européenne, un Service extérieur de Statistiques qui sera dirigé par M.le professeur Wagenführ. En cette matière, les Divisions de la Communauté Economique Européenne disposeront dès le début de leurs travaux d'un Service statistique officiel.

2. Comme je tiens toutefois à ce que les besoins des Divisions de la Commission en documentation statistique soient satisfaits dès le début, de la manière la plus rationnelle possible, que la vaste documentation existant auprès d'autres institutions et organisations ainsi qu'auprès des services gouvernementaux des différents pays soit exploitée et que l'on évite donc toute la mesure du possible l'exécution de nouvelles enquêtes statistiques, toutes les demandes relatives à la documentation statistique devront être adressées au Service extérieur de statistiques ci-dessous mentionné.

3. Ledit Service coordonne, pour chaque cas, avec les Divisions compétentes de la Commission si la documentation nécessaire peut être trouvée en quantité suffisante dans les statistiques existantes ou bien si une enquête s'avère nécessaire. S'il est impossible d'éviter l'exécution d'une enquête statistique, le Service extérieur de statistiques de la Commission présentera un rapport sur ce sujet et soumettra aux Divisions des propositions visant au point de commun.

4. On entend par enquête statistique tout recensement numérique relatif à des faits, des institutions ou des événements, et auquel il est procédé soit une fois, soit en plusieurs opérations, en d'une manière suivie, sur la base de constatations directes ou indirectes auprès des entreprises de production industrielles et agricoles, des entreprises commerciales et de transport (1) ainsi qu'auprès d'organisations et de services officiels et, quelque soit la forme sous laquelle ce recensement a lieu.

5. Les travaux statistiques résultant de l'exécution de telles enquêtes incombent au Service extérieur de statistiques.

HALLSTEIN

(1) Lorsque le questionnaire s'adresse à plusieurs entreprises ou bien à une entreprise qui, par suite de multidiversification, de concentration, etc., comprend plusieurs services

45/58 - F (rev.)

Memorandum No 1 of 10 March 1958.

The Management Committee in 1958.

- task of collection, processing and disseminating statistics in the fields covered by the Treaty;
- coordination of all 'statistical' activities of the institutions;
- creation of a 'watchdog committee' comprising three members of the institutions;

— transformation of the conference of directors-general of the NSIs into a genuine 'Council of Directors' with the job of providing direction and guidelines for the statistical activities of the Community;

— division of the common statistical office into seven directorates: general statistics, agricultural statistics, energy statistics, industry and craft statistics, external trade statistics, social statistics and statistics of costs, prices, finance and credit.

The fact is that the Statistical Division wanted to set up a really integrated service in the form of a centralised statistical organisation serving the three institutions. Professor Rolf Wagenführ comments in his book that given the rapid increase in demands from Brussels it was not enough to have a small 'detachment' in the Belgian capital where the two new executive bodies were located ([1]).

On 11 June 1959, in a decision by the three executive bodies, the statistical service took the name of the Statistical Office of the European Communities (SOEC), the three Communities being the ECSC, the EEC and Euratom. The Euratom statistical service was thus incorporated in the organisation of the Statistical Office. This is the official name still in use today, in spite of the much better known name of Eurostat, which dates only from 1973.

After being set up, the Statistical Office of the European Communities was run until March 1960 by a Management Committee headed by Giuseppe Petrilli, member of the Commission of the EEC. Giuseppe Petrilli chaired the first meeting of the committee, held in his office in Brussels, on 24 July 1959. There were five items on the agenda: purpose and operation of the committee, progress of the work of the Statistical Division, programme of work and publications for 1960, division of the budget among the institutions and miscellaneous business, including staff matters.

At the end of 1959 the three executive bodies decided to reorganise their common services. The crux of the discussion was the place of the two other common services, the Press Office and the Legal Service. After some tough negotiation, the Commission of the EEC managed to obtain responsibility for these two services, with statistics being left to the High Authority.

In March 1960, management of the Statistical Office thus passed to a Management committee consisting of three members (one for each institution) under the chairmanship of Albert Coppé, Vice-President of the High Authority. The two other members were Giuseppe Petrilli (whose place was taken by Lionello Levi-Sandri the following year) for the EEC and Paul De Groote

([1]) *Rolf Wagenführ*, La statistica in Europa, *Ferro Edizion, Milan, 1967*.

for Euratom. The Management Committee was to continue with the same structure until the three executive bodies were merged in 1967. On 19 July 1960, the Management Committee adopted its rules of procedure and began to meet two or three times a year to consider problems of organisation, budget and staff. Decisions by the three members had to be unanimous (Article 2 of the rules of procedure), especially in the case of appointments and promotions of officials at the Statistical Office, whose names were put forward by the Director-General. This unanimity would pose problems in 1966 when Professor Rolf Wagenführ retired and the Management Committee had to decide on his successor.

The Statistical Office gets organised

The Euratom statistical service was thus incorporated in the organisation of the Statistical Office. When the three executive bodies were merged in 1967, the Statistical Office services that had to move from Brussels and those from Luxembourg moved into three different buildings in Luxembourg: Centre Louvigny, rue Aldringen and the Tower Building in Kirchberg.

The Statistical Division's proposal was accepted only in part: in October 1958 the three executive bodies decided to set up a statistical service under a Director-General, Professor Rolf Wagenführ, supported by Barbara Frese as secretary, with four directorates.

→ *See 'The statistical service's directorates and specialised services in 1958'.*

The offices of the Statistical Office were at that time divided between two European capitals. Luxembourg had the Directorate-General, social statistics and the part of industry and energy statistics which had existed since the ECSC Treaty. Brussels hosted general statistics, agricultural statistics and most of the statistics on industry and energy. The situation would continue like this until 1967, when the merger of the three executive bodies resulted in most of the Statistical Office departments in Brussels moving to Luxembourg.

The Statistical Office offices in Luxembourg were all in one building, the Staar Hotel, but in Brussels they were spread among various buildings and had to move several times between 1958 and 1967. The Statistical Office was first located in Rue des Marais in the heart of the city. The Euratom Statistical Division was located with the institution's other services in Rue Belliard. It should be noted that Walter Hallstein indicated Memorandum No 1 that rue Belliard was the official seat of the Statistical Office, although the majority of its officials were in the rue des Marais. In 1962, the Statistical Office directorates in rue des Marais were transferred to three separate buildings, including one on Avenue de Tervueren (which now houses the German Embassy in Brussels) which accommodated general statistics, trade statistics and energy statistics. Transport statistics moved to a rented duplex apartment at the end of Avenue de Tervueren. François Desgardes remembers that the offices were

The statistical service's directorates and specialised services in 1958

DIRECTORATES:

General Statistics
Raymond Dumas, French

Trade and Transport Statistics
Vittorio Paretti, Italian

Energy Statistics
Camille Legrand, Belgian

Industrial Statistics
Fritz Grotius, German

SPECIALISED SERVICES:

Agricultural statistics
Roger Steylaerts, Belgian

Social statistics and prices statistics
Pierre Gavanier, French

The Nuclear Power Statistics Division headed by Jean Darragon (French) stayed provisionally under the administrative responsibility of the Euratom Commission, although since 1959 it had been attached to the Energy Statistics Directorate headed by Camille Legrand.

The two specialised services were upgraded to directorates in 1963.

One of the buildings that hosted some officials in 1962 located on the Avenue de Tervueren in Brussels.

'quite unsuitable, had only one telephone on each floor and were served by a haphazard messenger service'. As for agricultural statistics, they moved into the ground floor of a building on Avenue de Broqueville, not far from the Directorate-General for Agriculture which was growing not only in political importance (the common agricultural policy had just been introduced) but also in size. In 1966, the Statistical Office had to leave Avenue de Tervueren and move to two locations: one in Avenue de Cortemberg and the other, more importantly, in rue de la Loi in the new Charlemagne Building. When the three executive bodies were merged and it was time to move to Luxembourg in the middle of 1968, the Statistical Office was occupying four buildings in Brussels: Charlemagne, Belliard, Cortemberg and Broqueville. It was no fun for the removal men.

This brings us back to the Staar Hotel. At the end of the last chapter we mentioned that the services operating in Luxembourg had been forced to leave Rue Aldringen and move to a late 19th century building opposite Luxembourg station at the junction of two of the city's main streets, Avenue de la Gare and Avenue de la Liberté. An amusing description has been given by someone who was a young administrator at the time.

→ *See 'Staar Hotel'.*

This was the pioneering spirit that reigned at the Staar Hotel when the Statistical Office was starting up. At the end of 1966, some officials who had been working there for 10 years addressed a petition to the new Director-General of the Statistical Office, Raymond Dumas, to complain about 'the deplorable state of the offices ... and the real danger from the central heating system ... the premises are unworthy of an institution such as the High Authority and of the officials working there ...'. It was two years before the High Authority accepted the request to move out of the Staar Hotel. It was not until the three executive bodies were merged and the Statistical Office services from Brussels and Luxembourg were moved into three different buildings in Luxembourg: the Louvigny Centre not far from the main post office, rue Aldringen which had first housed the ECSC statistical service, and the Tower Building which had been completed a few months earlier on the Kirchberg plateau.

Priorities in the 1960s and statistical legislation

Objectives of the Statistical Office in 1959: collecting available data in the various countries, ensuring the comparability of concepts, definitions and methods, filling data gaps. The watchword was the harmonisation of methods. Every six months the Statistical Office organised a meeting of the 'Conference of the directors-general of the National Statistical Institutes'. Sectoral committees were beginning to be organised. The Statistical Office work plan took shape. The EEC Treaty marked the birth of

European legislation on statistics, which made it possible to construct what in 'Eurospeak' has become known as the *acquis statistique communautaire*.

Statistical programme

Within the preparatory work for the creation of the Statistical Office, there is a document of April 1959 that is worth mentioning entitled, 'Objectives, organisation and work plan of the Statistical Office'. The document describes the objective as follows, 'As part of gradual economic integration, the task of the Statistical Office is to collect the available data in the various countries, to ensure the comparability of concepts, definitions and methods, to fill the data gaps that exist generally or in some countries, and lastly to improve the quality of statistical data'.

During this time the Statistical Office organised regular meetings every six months of the Conference of directors-general of the National Statistical Institutes (DGINS). One of their main concerns was the 'question of determining how the large number of requests from the various directorates-general of the EEC could be centralised' (meeting in Luxembourg on 4 May 1959). The job of the conference was to discuss and determine the work programme and the surveys to be carried out the following year.

The sectoral committees were beginning to be organised and start working in their fields of

Staar Hotel

by François Desgardes

'When you said you worked at the Staar Hotel, the local people smiled knowingly. There was a simple reason for the smile: before the war the hotel had been a house of ill repute. I don't know whether it was true or just a rumour. At any rate, the building was the only one to be hit by a bomb during the war: a case of inevitable divine justice, perhaps confirming that there was some truth in the nasty rumours. The practical result of this retribution was that the building had been shaken to its foundations, the walls were all askew, none of the floors were level, and if you dropped a pencil it rolled crazily towards a corner of the room. For the same reason, the lift didn't work properly. It was of the old type, a bit like a zoo cage, and creaked alarmingly as it went up and down. Every morning Professor Rolf Wagenführ, the head of the service, bravely — or perhaps recklessly — took this lift up to his office. The coke-fired boiler — we were working for the ECSC, after all — was of the same vintage as the lift. It exploded in sudden cold spells during the Luxembourg winter, the pipes would burst and leak water over the lobby, producing a cloud of steam that stank of rotten eggs. But none of these events seemed to affect the humour and the work of the inmates of the Staar Hotel. At the front on the first floor there was a large room that was used for management meetings when they were held at the end of the day. During these meetings the door would burst open and a workman in overalls would nod to everyone, stride across the room, bend down behind the director's chair, open a kind of box attached to the floor, fiddle with a long perforated strip inside, screw shut the lid of the box and exit without a word. He was switching on the illuminated ribbon display that ran along the first-floor balcony of the Staar Hotel across from the station to inform travellers and passers-by of the latest news from the Grand Duchy and around the world. The management meetings would then continue in surrealistic surroundings, with the director's silhouette backlit by the illuminated news that rolled from right to left to provide a mirror account of the world's latest disasters.'

responsibility. The Agriculture Statistics Committee ([1]), chaired by Stephanus Louwes, held its first meeting in January 1961, followed in May of the same year by the first meeting of the Industry Statistics Committee under the chairmanship of Fritz Grotius. Other committees that began working were the Social Statistics Committee (chaired by Pierre Gavanier), the Transport Statistics Committee (Camille Legrand) and the External Trade Statistics Committee (Vittorio Paretti). Between 1960 and 1961, the Statistical Office formed various working parties: national accounts, input-output tables, external trade, nomenclatures, household budgets, agricultural production, structure of agriculture and agricultural labour force, etc. This basis for the future European statistical system took shape at the beginning of the decade and showed the way for the operation of the system.

The catchword for the work that was being done at that time was the harmonisation of methods. All the NSIs acknowledged the importance of introducing common methods, even though they were all reluctant to go beyond a certain point. The change would be too great for some countries, and the break in series would have adverse effects when it came to economic analysis. Considerable progress was nevertheless achieved in many statistical sectors, and the methodological documents that regularly appeared in issues of *Informations statistiques* were evidence of the ideas that were burgeoning and the suggestions that were being discussed in the Statistical Office's various working parties.

Without going into too much detail, this is what the Statistical Office work plan looked like in the 1960s.

General statistics

Development of short-term statistics with the publication of *Notes rapides* every month, collection of data from overseas countries and territories (subsequently to be associated with the EEC by the Treaty of Yaoundé), together with a series of publications devoted to the countries of eastern Europe (Soviet bloc).

National accounts

Harmonisation of national accounts, including social security accounts and agricultural accounts, harmonisation of balances of payments and financial accounts. At the DGINS meeting in September 1963, the Statistical Office presented a document entitled 'Harmonisation of the national accounts of the Six', which had been prepared with the help of an expert from INSEE, André Vanoli. After analysing the needs of Community users, the document pointed out the shortcomings of the existing systems (OECD and UN) and recommended an 'ambitious and modern solution': a system of economic accounts for the specific use of the Community. The work began and progressed in a spirit of cooperation and rivalry with

([1]) Not to be confused with the Standing Committee on Agricultural Statistics, which was created by Council decision in 1972.

the UN statistical bureau, which at the time was responsible for drawing up the system of national accounts (SNA). The outcome was the 1968 DGINS decision on the European system of integrated economic accounts (ESA) first edition.

Input-output table

In 1967, the Statistical Office published a Community input-output table for 1959 in 37 branches. It was the first time that an international body had published such a table for a group of countries. The table was compiled by hand, without computers, by a small team ([1]) led by Raymond Dumas and with outside help from one of Europe's leading experts on input-output tables, Professor Vera Cao-Pinna of Rome University.

Price statistics

In 1966, the Statistical Office conducted a survey covering 250 products to compare absolute price levels as an aid to monitoring the effects of the common market on consumers. It is also worth mentioning studies that were carried out on the harmonisation of the structures and methods of the six Member States' consumer price indices. It was not until 1995, as part of the Maastricht convergence criteria, that harmonisation was achieved.

Purchasing power parities

Two projects were developed during the 1960s. First of all, there were surveys of the places of employment of officials in the Member States in order to calculate the weighting for officials' salaries. These surveys of price levels were carried out by Statistical Office statisticians who criss-crossed Europe by car: to Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg, but also to Varese, Aix-en-Provence, Amsterdam, Karlsruhe, and so on, in other words, to the most important cities close to the joint research centres. The grand tour lasted for about three months.

The second project the Statistical Office was involved in was the project devised by the World Bank and the statistical bureau of the United Nations on international price comparisons, better known as purchasing power parities (PPP) among countries.

Energy statistics

Energy balance sheets, coal industry and comparable classifications for nuclear power. Work also began on the economy of the oil industry, supplies of crude oil and the production of hydrocarbons.

External trade statistics

Statistics for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, work on price and volume indices, seasonal adjustment, statistics on distribution channels and, in particular, the introduction of a uniform nomenclature for external trade statistics in conjunction with the Customs Cooperation Council. In the words of Marcel Mesnage, Head of the External Trade Division at the

In the 1960s, the Statistical Office organised sample surveys on the calculation of salary correction coefficients, sending out a group of EU officials to collect prices in the different working locations (including Euratom) in the six member countries. The exercise lasted about three months. To mingle with the local population being surveyed, the group disguised itself by wearing local dress ... (Volendam, Netherlands, 1963).

([1]) Alain Chantraine, Hans-Heinz Gärner and Gérold Junior, at the time called 'the three musketeers'.

time, 'At the start of the 1960s these statistics had an important and direct role in the construction of the Community. There was, in particular, heated discussion about the relative levels of customs protection in the EEC, the United States and the United Kingdom, although there were no quantitative comparisons to back up the discussion. It was the Statistical Office which provided the first objective data, and they were then regularly used as a basic tool by the Commission at GATT negotiations.'

Transport statistics

The work primarily concerned the distribution of traffic among the various modes of transport and the compilation of a common transport nomenclature. In addition, this nomenclature was linked to the existing statistical and tariff classification (CST) for international trade, which meant that it was possible to produce regular summary tables of trade and transport.

Agricultural statistics

Work focused on the collection of existing statistics and the harmonisation of statistics in all fields (structures, prices, production, etc.) in order to prepare and monitor the common agricultural policy (CAP), which would be introduced in 1962. The Statistical Office began to compile supply balances, especially for cereals (total balances and production, use and market balances), which would be essential for the operation of the CAP in the cereals sector, which at the time was the primary and biggest sector. In 1965, the Member States organised the first survey of the structure of agricultural holdings (see 'The "epic journey" of Community agricultural statistics').

Industrial statistics

Preparation of the nomenclature of the industries in the European Communities (NICE) and of a common industrial survey for 1963, studies of the market structure and situation of certain branches of industry on the basis of the new common nomenclature of branches of activity in industry, monitoring of coal and steel industries. In 1962, the Statistical Office published, for the first time an *Annuaire de la statistique industrielle*, a yearbook containing details of production and supply in Community industry.

Social statistics

Continuation of ECSC work: surveys of the household budgets of coalminers and steelworkers, prices surveys and economic parities for workers' wages and labour cost surveys (Council Regulation No 10 of 31 August 1960). With the arrival of the EEC, the latter survey was extended to cover the whole of industry. Other surveys were introduced: employment and labour, overall purchasing power parities, hourly wages, occupational diseases, and so on.

Population statistics

In 1960, the Statistical Office introduced a survey on the size and structure of the active population in the six Member States.

The programme, which was introduced at the start of the 1960s, shows the extent of the work undertaken by the Statistical Office with the agreement of the DGINS conference.

Statistical legislation

In connection with the statistical programme, it is worth recalling the rules that existed concerning the Member States' obligation to supply data.

The relevant article in the ECSC Treaty is Article 47, 'The High Authority may obtain the information it requires to carry out its tasks. It may have any necessary checks made.' This provides a lot of scope, without any constraints, and the Statistical Division of the High Authority made use of it when it set about organising the collection of statistics from coal and steel undertakings.

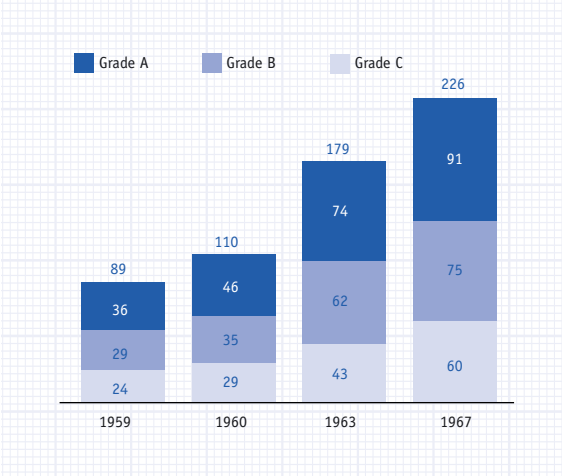
The only obligation was to consult the relevant statistical committees — the Steel Committee and the Coal Committee — which, as we saw in the previous chapter, were made up of representatives of the professional associations of the sectors in question. This was the situation that applied throughout the life of the ECSC Treaty, and the Statistical Office continued to organise the collection of coal and steel data on this basis until the Treaty expired in 2002.

The situation was very different with the EEC Treaty. The relevant article was Article 213, which subsequently became Article 284 when the Member States approved the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999. The article stated, and still states, 'The Commission may, within the limits and under conditions laid down by the Council in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, collect any information and carry out any checks required for the performance of the tasks entrusted to it.'

The qualifying condition, in relation to the ECSC Treaty, was the prior agreement that was required from the Council of Ministers, and the Statistical Office had to apply the procedures laid down in the Treaty to get the Council to adopt the legal acts that were required for statistical operations in the Member States. The EEC Treaty, and the Euratom Treaty as well, marked the birth of European legislation on statistics, which made it possible to construct what in 'Eurospeak' has become known as the *acquis statistique communautaire*.

The first survey conducted on the basis of a regulation of the Council of the EEC (Regulation No 10) investigated labour costs and the remuneration of workers and employees. The survey covered 14 branches of industry.

Number of Statistical Office officials



In closing this section, it is worth recalling what the Director-General of the Statistical Office, Professor Rolf Wagenführ, said in his book. 'A fundamental question needs to be asked: would it not be better for the Commission (or a statistical institute that is autonomous in statistical matters) to collect individual data directly, given that this would be the only way of coordinating and harmonising in an effective manner the information coming from the Member States? ... More serious thought needs to be given to the idea of adopting a special statistical law for the Community ([1]).' We are in 1967 and the special statistical law for the Community will only be introduced 30 years later.

Human resources, budget, mechanical data processing

The Statistical Office began to grow and its budget increased, but the expansion of its work was hampered by a lack of staff. In 1959, the Commission of the EEC decided to set up a data-processing workshop coming under the Statistical Office. The equipment of the Statistical Office at the time comprised about 40 machines. The Statistical Office was the first in Europe to use computers to compile detailed external trade statistics.

Human resources

The Statistical Office continued to grow and between 1959 and 1967 there was a steady increase in the number of officials (mid-year average).

→ *See 'Number of Statistical Office officials'.*

The Director-General nevertheless complained to the Management Committee, 'Unless one wants to jeopardise the work of the Statistical Office, a big effort will be needed to increase staff. Unless this is done, the various directorates-general will look for their own staff for statistical work, which is definitely not in line with the idea of the Statistical Office as coordinator.' On 29 June 1959, the Director-General of the Statistical Office wrote to the Director-General for Administration that 'the process of expanding our work

([1]) *Rolf Wagenführ*, La statistica in Europa, *Ferro Edizioni, Milan, 1967*.

Organisation chart at the end of 1959

The Statistical Office organisation chart in 1959 detailed the following departments and officials:

— Directorate-General: one A1, one A (assistant), four B and six C officials;

— General statistics: one A2, eight A (including four Heads of Unit), five B and two C officials;

— Trade and transport: one A2, five A (including two Heads of Unit), three B and two C officials;

— Energy: one A2, six A (including two Heads of Unit), three B and four C officials;

— Industry: one A3, five A (including two Heads of Unit), eight B and five C officials;

— Social statistics: one A3, seven A (including two Heads of Unit), four B and five C officials;

— Agriculture: one A3, two A (including two Heads of Unit), four B and four C officials.

In all, there were 108 officials (49 A, 31 B and 28 C grades), split between Brussels (57, including the Director-General) and Luxembourg (51).

The breakdown by nationality at that time was: Germany 30 %, France 22 %, Italy 17 %, Belgium 13 %, the Netherlands 9 % and Luxembourg 9 %.

On 5 September 1967, a few months before the move to Luxembourg, the Statistical Office was organised as follows:

The Director-General (Raymond Dumas) with his secretariat consisting of two A grade officials (Helmut Schumacher and Egide Hentgen) one B grade and four C grades. The Director-General's office also included an adviser for mathematical methods (Guy Bertaud), an adviser for regional statistics (Jean Reynier), a publications department, an archives service, a library and a drawing office, employing a total of two A, four B and six C grade officials.

The Directorate for General Statistics and Associated States, headed by Vittorio Paretti, had six divisions, with 21 A, 12 B and 10 C grade officials.

The Directorate for Energy Statistics, headed by Camille Legrand, had two divisions, with 10 A, 11 B and 5 C grade officials.

The Directorate for Trade and Transport Statistics, headed by Silvio Ronchetti, had three divisions, with 12 A, 12 B and 9 C grade officials.

The Directorate for Industry and Craft Statistics, headed by Fritz Grotius, had three divisions, with 13 A, 11 B and 8 C grade officials.

The Directorate for Social Statistics, headed by Pierre Gavanier, had three divisions, with 13 A, 8 B and 5 C grade officials.

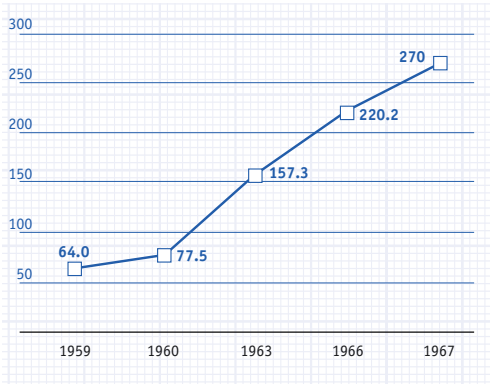
The Directorate for Agricultural Statistics, headed by Stephanus Louwes, had three divisions, with 17 A, 16 B and 13 C grade officials.

It is clear that the directorate which had grown most during the 10 years that the EEC had existed was the Directorate for Agricultural Statistics, because of the increasing importance of the common agricultural policy in the Statistical Office's statistical programme.

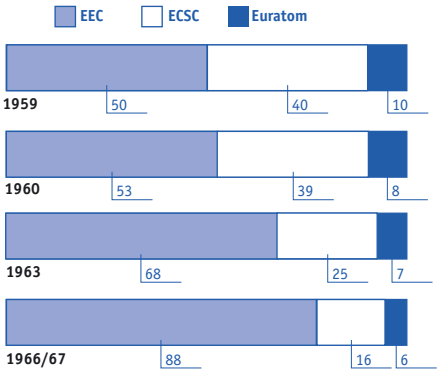
The organisation of the Statistical Office was changed slightly at the time of the move to Luxembourg to take account of the changes demanded by the priorities of the new Commission and of the departure of some heads of division as part of an early retirement scheme.

Statistical Office budget

Total expenditure
(million BEF)



Expenditure by institution
(in %)



has not finished, since we are constantly getting new requests'. The Statistical Office would use the same argument in support of more staff throughout its history.

→ *See 'Organisation chart at the end of 1959'.*

Budget

The Statistical Office budget, drawn up in Belgian francs, also grew.

→ *See 'Statistical Office budget'.*

The budget was funded by carefully calculated contributions from the three institutions, based on the relevance to each institution of the work in the statistical programme.

The ECSC share declined even more than Euratom's share. The main component was the salary bill for ECSC officials, who were fewer in number than those recruited and paid under the EEC budget.

Equipment and mechanical data processing

For its calculation work the Statistical Office had about 40 machines, mainly made by Monroe and Olivetti.

In 1959, the Commission of the EEC decided to set up a data-processing workshop coming under the Statistical Office. Professor Wagenführ put Vittorio Paretti in charge, and the initial task was to calculate the salaries of the Commission officials. The workshops first statistical work involved external trade and the processing of social surveys.

However, the Commission's data-processing resources soon proved inadequate for the volume of data to be processed. From 1963 the Statistical Office used the electronic computing equipment at the scientific information processing centre at Ispra in the north of Italy, Ispra being the most important of the research centres that had been set up under the Euratom

Treaty. The equipment was used to compile analytical tables for external trade. This cooperation lasted for several years until the mid-1970s, when the European Commission got a powerful computer centre which was capable of taking over the compilation work. In the words of Marcel Mesnage, who was Head of the External Trade Division at the time, 'The Statistical Office was the first in Europe to use computers to compile detailed external trade statistics. The familiarity of computers nowadays makes it hard to imagine just how radically methods of work began to change at that time.'

Dissemination policy

At the start of the 1960s the Statistical Office introduced its dissemination policy. Only the *Mémento de statistiques* and the *Informations statistiques* were distributed free of charge. Publications appeared in the four Community languages.

At the start of the 1960s, the Statistical Office introduced its dissemination policy, involving of course conventional printed publications.

→ *See 'The Statistical Office published:'.*

Apart from regular ECSC publications (*Notes rapides* on coal, steel and iron ore; *Bulletin statistique* every fortnight; *Bulletin du commerce extérieur* for coal, steel, scrap, iron ore; *Mémento de statistiques annuel* for the same products) the Statistical Office also published specialised works.

It should be remembered that these publications came out in the four Community languages: French, German, Italian and Dutch. It is amusing to note that the first written question from a member of the Parliamentary Assembly (the future European Parliament) to the High Authority in connection with statistics concerned the languages used for these publications.

It was in September 1958 when a Dutch member of the Assembly, Wilhelm Lichtenhauer, asked, 'Why is *Informations statistiques*, which has been coming out for five years, not published in Dutch?' The answer from the High Authority was that 'all official publications appeared in the four Community

The Statistical Office published:

— ***Note statistique* every month on the economy of the Member States**

— ***Statistiques du commerce extérieur***

- origin and destination of Member States' trade
- trade by groups of goods and by product

Each of these publications appeared every two months.

— ***Bulletin statistique* every two months**

— ***Bulletin général des statistiques* covering all economic and social fields**

— ***Mémento de statistiques***
This was, in fact, a statistical yearbook which took over the title of the ECSC publication and expanded it to cover the whole economy.

— ***Cahiers méthodologiques***
The idea for the Statistical Office was to publish the methodologies underlying the statistical series that appeared in the various publications. In response to requests from users and from the NSIs, it was decided to disseminate these metadata which would later be incorporated in *Informations statistiques* (see below).

— **Special reports on non-member countries**
The first of these reports dealt mainly with the Soviet Union. They later covered other economies, especially those of the countries which became associated with the Community in 1963 as a result of the Yaoundé Convention. We shall come back to this when we look at the Statistical Office's external relations.

— ***Informations statistiques***
This first appeared as a proper publication in 1960, after being produced since 1954 as stencilled copies for a restricted number of users. It quickly became one of the Statistical Office's flagship publications, with a circulation of more than 30 000, containing articles on methodologies, results of studies, notes on non-member countries, etc. It appeared until the mid-1970s.

languages and that *Informations statistiques* would in future be published in the four languages'. This practice was followed by the Statistical Office until the start of the 1970s.

The other question that had to be tackled was the free distribution and the sale of Statistical Office publications. This was a general problem affecting the publications of the three executive bodies. It was decided to distribute *Mémento de statistiques* and *Informations statistiques* free of charge, while other publications would be put on sale. This did not apply of course to a group of special users: NSIs, ministries of the Member States and international organisations with which there were reciprocal agreements for the transmission of publications. The department in charge of sales was the Publications Service, which would later become the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Relations with the NSIs and the DGINS conference

At the start of the 1960s, the situation with regard to statistics differed tremendously from one Member State to another. The Statistical Office decided to strengthen contacts. In May 1962, the six-monthly meeting of the Working party of directors-general of the NSIs became the Conference of directors-general (DGINS). Relations between the Statistical Office and the national statistical systems already complied with the principles of

subsidiarity and proportionality. Relations remained excellent throughout the 1960s in spite of political differences that slowed down but did not halt the introduction of Community surveys.

The NSI network had begun to operate under the ECSC Treaty. The Statistical Division of the High Authority had set up various working parties that were attended by official statisticians from the Member States. It had also introduced the idea of bringing the directors of the NSIs together on a regular basis to discuss strategy and priorities. It will be remembered that the first meeting of the working party of NSI directors was held in Luxembourg on 15 July 1953.

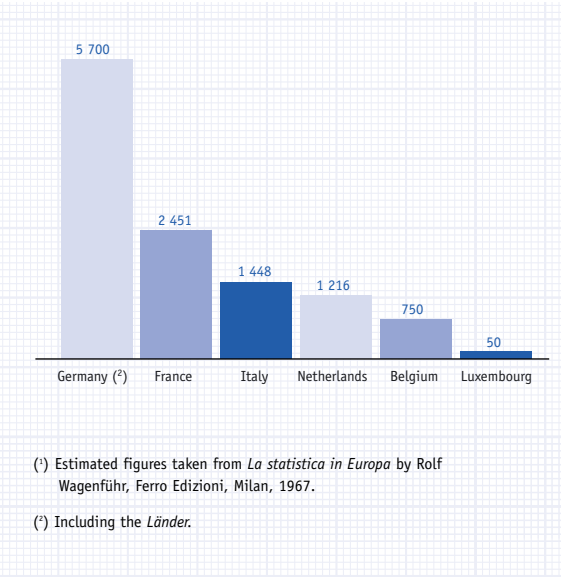
Earlier in this chapter we saw that on the one hand there had been a surge in demand for statistics with the arrival of the Commission of the EEC, which had seen its responsibility expanded to cover the whole economy of the six Member States. On the other hand, however, its scope for the direct collection of the statistical information required to carry out its task had been restricted by Article 213, which gave the Council the final say on Commission proposals.

The Statistical Office thus decided to strengthen its contacts with the NSIs and the statistical departments of the various ministries, with a view to discussing the work to be done and to preparing the decisions which were due to be taken by the Council. Matters were not left entirely to the Council. At the start of its activities the Statistical Office took a softly-softly approach to harmonising statistical projects for the six Member States, involving decisions by national experts and the directors-general.

It has to be remembered that at the start of the 1960s the situation with regard to statistics differed tremendously from one Member State to another. The differences concerned not only the administrative organisation, about which very little could be done, but also the quality of the statistics that the various countries produced. On several occasions, the Statistical Office pointed out in documents to the Commission as well as to the NSIs that a considerable effort needed to be made with regard to the quality of the data to be used for important economic decisions. Professor Rolf Wagenführ emphasised that 'in every country of the Community certain rules have to be complied with ... which differ greatly from country to country. The requirements are particularly strict in the Federal Republic of Germany, where each new set of statistics needs a new law. The system that applies in Luxembourg seems to be the most flexible. Between these two extremes are the systems of France, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium, where a statistical council is involved. The biggest problem everywhere is the lack of financial resources for implementing projects' (1).

→ *See 'Permanent staff of the NSIs in 1962'.*

Permanent staff of the NSIs in 1962 (1)



(1) Estimated figures taken from *La statistica in Europa* by Rolf Wagenführ, Ferro Edizioni, Milan, 1967.

(2) Including the *Länder*.

(1) *Rolf Wagenführ*, La statistica in Europa, *Ferro Edizioni*, *Milan*, *1967*.

At work, in the Tervueren offices in 1964.

Relations with the NSIs remained excellent throughout the 1960s in spite of political differences that arose between the Commission and some Member States on the one hand and France on the other: the 'empty chair' and accession talks with the United Kingdom. The effect was to slow down but not to halt the introduction of certain Community surveys. The six Member States did take one major political decision in 1963, however, with the introduction of the common agricultural policy. It would have a big impact on the development of agricultural statistics in Europe over the next 25 years. From the outset, the implementation of the CAP required statistics that were not only detailed and up to date, but in particular comparable, so that decisions could be taken affecting the changing structure of agriculture in the Member States and the common organisation of markets.

In the 1960s, the six-monthly meeting of the 'Working party of the directors-general of the NSIs' was renamed the 'Council of Directors' (see *Huitième rapport sur l'activité de la communauté*, 1960) and eventually in May 1962 it took the name by which it is still known today, the Conference of directors-general of the National Statistical Institutes.

The conference had no official status, since it was only an EEC working party, but it played a vital role in laying the basis for what was to become 30 years later the European statistical system.

At the time, there was no talk of subsidiarity or proportionality, ideas that would be introduced with the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. However, the organisation that was set up by the Statistical Office at the start of the 1960s with regard to relations with the national statistical systems already followed these ideas, that is to say, data could be collected better by national bodies, and involvement was to be no more than was needed to achieve the Community's objectives.

The most significative conferences of the DGINS during the first decade of the Statistical Office were the following.

At the DGINS conference ([1]) in Rome in October 1958, the directors-general worked out the procedure to be followed for deciding on new statistical surveys:

— Commission approval of the survey proposal;

— meeting of statisticians to look at existing possibilities;

— meeting with those involved (trade unions, ministries, etc.) to determine what they wanted;

— meeting of statistical experts to devise the survey methods;

— final meeting to consider survey results with those involved.

This procedure was very similar to what was introduced nearly 40 years later by the 1997 statistical

([1]) Gerhard Fürst (D), André Dufrasne (B), Raymond Dumas (F), Benedetto Barberi (I), Gérard Schlechter (L) and Philippus Jacobus Indenburg (NL).

law. There was one important difference, however: the presentation of results to those requesting the information.

A second topic considered at the October 1958 meeting was whether to adopt a common stance in dealings with international organisations. This proposal by the Statistical Office was rejected on account of the strong opposition voiced by the Dutch statistical service, which wanted to retain its freedom of decision on account of 'the technical nature of the problems'. Barrie Davies, Director of Statistics at the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in Geneva, was also very guarded about a common position of the six countries of the Community, unless it supported the programmes of the ECE statistical service.

In February 1962, the DGINS conference ([1]) met in Paris. The main item on the agenda was agricultural statistics. The Deputy Director-General of the Agriculture DG, Hans-Broder Krohn, came to tell the meeting about the repercussions for statistics of 'the introduction of a common policy in the field of agriculture ... for which the comparability of figures was of prime importance, for without such comparability serious complaints could be expected from one or other Member State'. Hans-Broder Krohn listed all the statistics that his directorate-general would need for the new CAP. It is interesting to note that the directors-general of the NSIs took a very guarded position on these proposals and indicated 'their concern at the prospect of some imbalance between the information to be prepared for agriculture and the information that might be collected for the rest of the economy'. The fact is that over the next 20 years agricultural statistics would take on a considerable importance that was justified by what was at stake as a result of the only genuine common policy and the sums of money it would involve (more than two thirds of the Community budget).

In October 1962, the DGINS conference met in Wiesbaden and discussed for the first time the long-term work programme for the Statistical Office. Some 16 months later, in February 1964 in Brussels, the directors-general approved a programme containing some interesting points that would mark the activity of the Statistical Office for almost 40 years. First of all, the document defined the role of the Statistical Office as 'a central coordinating body to unify, supplement and improve the official statistics in the Member States which are important for the progress of European integration'. The document went on to say that 'within the European executive bodies the Statistical Office is the centre where the statistical requirements of the executive bodies are expressed' and that 'it has sole responsibility for conducting statistical surveys'.

The DGINS document was also careful to restrict the work of the Statistical Office:

([1]) Gerhard Fürst (D), André Dufrasne (B), Claude Gruson (F), Benedetto Barberi (I), Gérard Schlechter (L), Philippus Jacobus Indenburg (NL), Petros Couvelis (EL).

Conference of the directors-general of the National Statistical Institutes (DGINS), Wiesbaden, 1968.

'The Statistical Office's tasks do not include:

- economic and social analyses;
- opinion polls;
- forecasts.'

The influence of the Statistical Office's German head, Professor Rolf Wagenführ, can be detected here, with the reference to statistics in the strict meaning of the term, without the involvement of other judgement-based disciplines.

The DGINS conferences between 1964 and 1968 mainly dealt with the statistical work to be carried out jointly in every economic and social sector affecting European integration. In 1965, the directors-general tackled a very important topic: the compilation of external trade statistics after the removal of customs checks between Member States. The aim was to get ready for the statistical consequences of the single market without borders which the Treaties of Rome had planned for 1967. The question remained topical for several months until it was realised that the single market would not be arriving so soon. In fact, it was 1993 before the single market came into being, together with what it entailed for statistics on intra- and extra-Community trade.

In November 1967, the DGINS conference met in Paris at a meeting chaired by the new Director-General of the Statistical Office, Raymond Dumas. The meeting was attended by Raymond Barre, Vice-President of the Commission after the merger of three executive bodies, in his capacity as member of the Commission responsible for economic, monetary and financial affairs and statistics. He stressed the importance that the Commission attached to the availability of 'a functional set of statistics providing information on the mutual effects stemming from its actions involving policy in the short and medium term, regional policy, agricultural policy and policy affecting sectoral structures, capital markets, incomes, social security, external trade, transport, etc.' A broad canvas, indeed.

It was not the first time that a member of the Commission — and a vice-president to boot — had attended a DGINS meeting. Albert Coppé, as President of the Management Committee of the Statistical Office, had done so on numerous occasions. However, Raymond Barre's presence at the meeting was indicative of the importance that this renowned economist — who was to become Prime Minister of France 10 years later — attached to the role of statistics in the construction of Europe.

International relations and development cooperation: CESD

From the outset, the Statistical Office showed its willingness to cooperate with any international body which had a statistical service. In addition, there was

strong emphasis on development cooperation, ranging from technical assistance to the training of statistical managers.

From the outset of its official activities, the Statistical Office was keen to show its willingness to cooperate with any international body which had a statistical service.

With the OECD, there was particularly active cooperation in the fields of national accounts and energy balances and the methodological aspects of seasonal adjustment.

The Statistical Office regularly attended meetings of the conference of European statisticians. It cooperated with the statisticians in Geneva in several areas: national accounts, input-output tables, external trade, transport, and so on.

There was also ongoing cooperation with the International Labour Office on classifications for employment and unemployment and on social security statistics. With the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) cooperation focused on agricultural statistics, and with the UN Statistical Commission on external trade nomenclatures.

During the 1960s, there was also very close collaboration between the Statistical Office and the statistical service of Greece, a country with official links to the Community as an associate pending future accession. The high point of this cooperation was the DGINS conference that was held in Athens in October 1963. The Greek statistical service was involved in much of the Community's statistical programme. But this was before the colonels took over.

One area where the Statistical Office was particularly involved was development cooperation. The European Community had developed close links with the countries that had been former colonies of the Member States, especially in Africa. This relationship was put on a formal basis in 1963 with the Yaoundé Convention, and then from 1975 with four successive Lomé Conventions. The Yaoundé Convention included 18 countries known as the Associated African and Madagascar States (AAMS) ([1]), and the relevant Commission Directorate-General (Directorate-General for Associated Countries, which would subsequently become the Directorate-General for Cooperation and finally the Directorate-General for Development) asked the Statistical Office to supply statistical data to help in preparing development plans for these countries.

Most of these countries were former colonies of France, with which they had continued to enjoy special relations. The French statistical institute (INSEE) and the French Ministry of Cooperation had developed a programme of technical assistance, whereas the work of the Statistical Office initially

([1]) *AAMS: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, Upper Volta, Zaire.*

The CESD and its successors

From the start of the EEC in 1959, the Statistical Office was eager to foster the development of statistics in African countries which had recently gained independence, since statistics were seen as being needed for their economic and social development. With the help of authorities in France (INSEE — Institut national de statistique et études économiques and the Ministry of Cooperation), the Statistical Office decided to set up the European Training Centre for Economist Statisticians from the Developing Countries, known by its French abbreviation as CESD. It was located at the ENSAE (École nationale de la statistique et de l'administration économique) in Paris, in order to benefit from the expertise of that statistical establishment. The first meeting of the CESD took place in Wiesbaden on 2 and 3 October 1962, when its status as a non-profit-making organisation was approved. Funding was provided by the European Development Fund (EDF) of the European Commission and the Aid and Cooperation Fund (ACF) of the French Government. Since then the CESD has provided training for two levels of statisticians: statistical engineers (for those with five years of post-secondary training) and statistical economists (three years of post-secondary training). The training of statistical economists stopped in 1977, when this type of training was transferred to Africa (Abidjan, Yaoundé and Kigali) but the training of statistical engineers continued until 1995. The schools in Kigali (Iamsea) and Yaoundé (ISPEA) were set up jointly by Eurostat, the French cooperation ministry and the CESD. The centre has since trained 221 statistical engineers from 22 countries and 410 statistical economists from 29 countries. The CESD management board has been chaired successively by Rolf Wagenführ (1962–66), Vittorio Paretti (1966–89), Yves Franchet (1989), Jean-Pierre Behmoiras (1989–96) and Xavier Charoy (since 1996), and the directors of the Centre have been Serge-Christophe Kolm (1962), Guy Le Hégarat (1962–72), Gérard Maarek (1972–76), Pierre Delorme (1976–77), Yves Franchet (1977–80), Lamine Diop (1980–94) and André Bellon (1995–2002). There was a major change in 1980 when the chairman of the management board, Vittorio Paretti, appointed an African Director, Lamine Diop, who is now the Director of Afristat ([1]). Since 1980 the CESD has played a part in statistical research for the developing countries, and since 1990 it has been involved in coordinating the programmes of the statistical schools in Africa. Since the 1970s, the Statistical Office and the CESD have fostered the creation in the EU Member States of other centres for training and research assistance for the developing countries. In 1972, a centre for training was set up in Munich. But it was the 1990s that saw the greatest proliferation of CESD successors: CESD-Lisbon in 1990, CESD-Communautaire in Luxembourg in 1992, CESD-Madrid in 1995 and finally CESD-Rome in 1998. This explains why the parent organisation became known as CESD-Paris in the 1990s.

([1]) Afristat, located at Bamako (Mali), is the equivalent of Eurostat for the French-speaking countries of Africa.

focused mainly on the training of statistical managers from these countries. The first step was to organise study grants for people from the AAMS countries so that they could attend universities and statistical training courses in Europe. But the biggest step for the impact it would have on the training of African statisticians was the setting up in 1962 of the European Training Centre for Economist-Statisticians from the Developing Countries, known by its French abbreviation as CESD.

The centre was set up and financed by the Statistical Office and INSEE and located at the Ecole Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Economique (ENSAE), which was — and still is — the training centre for senior French statisticians. It provided training for two levels of statistical staff: engineers for statistical work and engineers for statistical economics. The CESD was run by a management board chaired by the Director-General of the Statistical Office and comprising the six directors of the NSIs and representatives of the cooperation departments of the Commission and the French Government. From 1966 the head of the CESD was Vittorio Paretti, at that time Director of Energy and Overseas Associates Statistics.

The most important direct involvement by the Statistical Office in cooperation work has been, since 1965, the secondment every year of some of its administrators to African countries for five or six months. These Statistical Office officials were to provide support for students following the CESD course for statistical engineers as part of a long-term (five-month) scheme and at the same time to devise technical assistance programmes for the countries in question. The first training schemes were organised by the Statistical Office and the CESD n 1966 in Togo, Dahomey (later to be renamed Benin) and Mali and in 1967 in Rwanda, Chad and Gabon. This type of assistance continued until 1972 in various African countries: Central African Republic, Zaire, Congo, Burkina Faso, etc.

The Statistical Office moves to Luxembourg with a new Director-General

The Treaty merging the three executive bodies signed in 1965 ensured greater consistency for the administrative organisation of the Community by creating a single institution, the Commission of the European Communities. The merger decision resulted in a lot of hard bargaining, which affected statistics as well. In April 1965, it was finally decided that Luxembourg would be the home for the whole of the Statistical Office. The move, however, would take place three years later in 1968.

In Brussels on 8 April 1965, the Member States signed the Treaty merging the three executive bodies with effect from 1 July 1967. While retaining the three original Treaties (ECSC, EEC and Euratom), the governments of the six Member States wanted to ensure greater consistency for administrative

organisation of the Community by creating a single institution, the Commission of the European Communities, for the functions that had hitherto been performed by three separate executive bodies.

It will be remembered that the provisional seats of the three Commissions that had emerged from the original Treaties were Luxembourg for the ECSC and Brussels for the EEC and Euratom. The merger decision resulted in a lot of hard bargaining between Belgium and Luxembourg, and also between the services that were located on one side or the other of the Ardennes. What was involved was the transfer from one capital to the other of hundreds of officials to ensure that the political and technical services resulting from the merger of the three executive bodies would be rationally organised. Luxembourg, the original seat of three of the ECSC institutions, the High Authority, the Council and the Court of Justice, whereas the Assembly was located in Strasbourg, wanted to keep some important institutions and a sizeable number of officials.

Statistics became a bargaining chip. The Statistical Office was already divided between the two capitals, with four directorates and about 130 officials in Brussels and two directorates with about 60 officials in Luxembourg.

In April 1965 the three executive bodies decided to locate the whole of the Statistical Office in Luxembourg. This decision took effect on 1 September 1967, but from the outset it was hotly challenged by most of the directorates in Brussels. The Brussels-based statisticians were quite rightly wary of being far away from the Commission‘s political departments.

It has to be remembered, too, that back in the 1960s communications between Luxembourg and Brussels were not easy: four hours by train, roads that were blocked in winter, and of course no Internet. The Statistical Office’s entire approach from the outset had been based on supporting the Community policies devised by the departments of the Commission, with which there were frequent meetings to discuss requirements and to present results. Moving to Luxembourg would jeopardise special relations that had taken 10 years to build up.

The Management Committee of the Statistical Office followed Professor Rolf Wagenführ’s suggestion and decided to support moving the whole of the Statistical Office to Luxembourg. German culture and organisation were factors influencing Professor Rolf Wagenführ’s suggestion. In Germany the Statistisches Bundesamt was located in Wiesbaden while the political capital and all the ministries were in Bonn. What was wrong in keeping politics and statistics apart, when it worked so well in Germany? In response to the objections from those who were advocating Brussels, the Commission of the European

Communities in 1968 adopted a compromise proposal from Raymond Barre: the Statistical Office could keep a liaison office in Brussels for contacts with the Commission departments there. This liaison office consisted of three divisions of the Directorate (General Statistics) headed by Vittorio Paretti, who had led the argument against opting for Luxembourg. But then the Luxembourg Government got into the act, since there was no mention of a liaison office in the documents dealing with the allocation of departments between Brussels and Luxembourg. We shall come back to this in the next chapter.

Professor Rolf Wagenführ retired in June 1966, a year after the decision to move to Luxembourg, and went back to Heidelberg University. There were four candidates jockeying to take over: three internal candidates (Raymond Dumas, Fritz Grotius and Vittorio Paretti) and a Director of the ECSC, Pierre Maillet. The Management Committee, which in 1966 still governed the Statistical Office, needed to decide unanimously in accordance with its rules of procedure. Albert Coppé, the head of the committee, was vehemently against a candidate from any Commission department, including the Statistical Office, and openly advocated looking for a candidate from outside. The two other committee members, Lionello Levi-Sandri and Paul De Groote, preferred an internal candidate. After a lot of discussion on the committee, Albert Coppé finally accepted the idea of an internal candidate.

Professor Rolf Wagenführ was thus replaced, on 1 June 1966, as Director-General of the Statistical Office by Raymond Dumas, Director of General Statistics, who took Marie-Louise Gillot as his secretary.

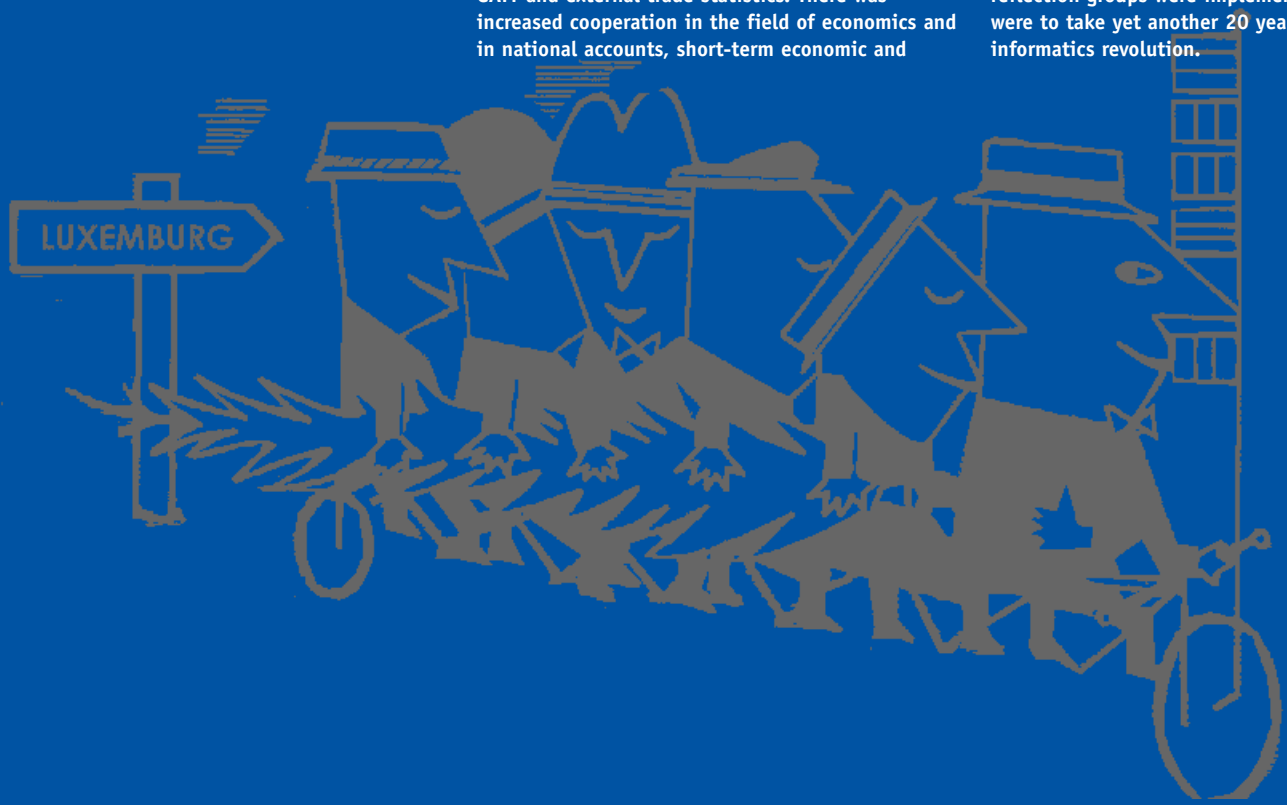
As we have already seen, when the three executive bodies were merged, the responsibilities of the new members of the Commission were reorganised. Responsibility for the Statistical Office went to Raymond Barre, Vice-President of the Commission, who was also in charge of economic and monetary affairs. The President of the Commission at that time was a Belgian, Jean Rey, who kept the post until 1973, when the Community experienced its first enlargement with the accession of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Raymond Dumas, Director-General from 1966 to 1973.

The move to Luxembourg

Following the Treaty merging the three executive bodies, there was a single Commission, and the Statistical Office relocated to Luxembourg. As the individual areas of European policy began to take shape, so the demand was to grow for increasingly comprehensive and concrete statistics. There was the common agricultural policy and agricultural statistics; the trade negotiations forming part of GATT and external trade statistics. There was increased cooperation in the field of economics and in national accounts, short-term economic and structural statistics, price statistics, the impact of economic developments on the consumer, social statistics. The first statistical classifications at European level were approved.

Cooperation mechanisms between the Statistical Office and the national statistical systems also began to develop. The findings from some of the reflection groups were implemented, whilst others were to take yet another 20 years. Then came the informatics revolution.



Drawing for greeting cards from the Commission in 1970.

1968>1972

From 1968 to 1972

The Community's political framework

During the second half of the 1960s, European political development generated huge demands on the Statistical Office for statistics. There was the common agricultural policy, greater harmonisation in the field of social policy, closer cooperation in the economic field, preparation of the first enlargement, the Commission-led GATT negotiations, and so on.

As we have seen, the Merger Treaty came into force on 1 July 1967. This created a single Commission, with Jean Rey of Belgium as President. This same date saw the start of the six-monthly rotation of the Council Presidency. Germany had the first Presidency, until the end of 1967. July of the following year saw the customs union enter into force. The last of the import taxes between the six Member States was abolished 18 months earlier than provided for under the Treaties of Rome. The common customs tariff also replaced national tariffs on imports from outside the six-member customs union.

During the second half of 1968, the three institutions (Council, Commission and Parliament) began to discuss the need to make the Community's institutional mechanisms more democratic. There was talk of political union and, at the start of 1970, a commission of experts headed by Etienne Davignon (Belgian) received a mandate from the Council to come up with proposals in this field.

Talk also began of economic and monetary union (EMU). Following the Hague Summit of December 1969, when the Heads of State or Government had committed themselves to stepping up economic cooperation, the Council appointed, early the following year, a commission of experts headed by Pierre Werner, the Luxembourg Minister for Finance, to make the relevant proposals. The Werner plan was approved by the Council in 1971. At the Paris Summit in December 1972, the Six plus the three

countries that were to become members of the Community in 1973, set 1980 as the deadline for achieving EMU. In the meantime, in April 1972, the 'snake' was introduced, with its margin of fluctuation of 2.25 % between currencies. In the initial euphoria, nobody imagined the hardships which the oil crisis one year later would bring, an event which was to delay monetary union by more than 20 years.

In 1967, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark and Norway asked for accession negotiations to begin. After a few years of wavering and discussion between the Six, negotiations began in Luxembourg in June 1970. These led to the signing, in 1972, of the Treaty of Accession for the four countries. Norway subsequently withdrew its candidature after a national referendum failed to produce a majority in favour. The other three countries ratified their accession, which took effect in 1973. This was the first enlargement of the Community.

In 1969, the Commission proposed that a system of own resources be introduced to finance the Community policies. The Council approved this proposal, which entered into force in April 1970. A portion of VAT and all customs duties on agricultural produce imported from non-Member States would constitute the basis of the new Community budget.

During the 1960s, a series of EAGGF-funded support mechanisms had been introduced under the common agricultural policy (CAP) geared to the common organisation of markets, price guarantees and export subsidies for Community agricultural produce. The Manshold memorandum of 1968 had made it clear that price and market policies had their limitations and could not by themselves provide a wholly satisfactory response to the problems of European agriculture. The socioeconomic environment of holdings and the development of other sectors were equally important. Hence the need for a policy that would improve agricultural structures, particularly since structural differences in agriculture between the Member States had not disappeared with the CAP. Indeed, in some cases, they had been exacerbated. The year 1972 saw the adoption of the first socio-structural directives aimed at increasing the area of holdings (and thus making mechanisation more effective), improving the educational and training levels of the heads of the holdings or providing them with the training to enter other areas of activity.

At the Hague Summit of December 1969, the Heads of State or Government also undertook to bring about greater harmonisation in the field of social policy, particularly employment, social protection and salaries. At the proposal of the Commission, the Six reached an agreement at the end of 1970 on the reform of the European Social Fund and the creation of a Regional Fund.

In the meantime, trade negotiations were continuing in the shape of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Community signed a series of preferential tariff agreements with countries outside Europe as well as free trade agreements with several European countries. These agreements were basically negotiated by the Commission, which had to handle a huge amount of data provided by the Statistical Office. The Commission was also very active in Unctad, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

The Statistical Office relocates to Luxembourg

The Statistical Office moves to Luxembourg. In 1974, work begins on the future Jean Monnet building, which opens its doors to the first of the Eurostat departments in 1975. For the new arrivals, the first priority is finding somewhere to live, with accommodation in short supply. A nagging fear persists that if statistical units continue to develop within the Brussels-based directorates-general, they could marginalise the activities of the Statistical Office proper.

Once the Merger Treaty had been signed in Brussels (8 April 1965), the Statistical Office departments located in Brussels had to move to Luxembourg. The merger of the three executives was scheduled for 1 July 1967 with the creation of the new, single, Commission. This decided on the timetable for the transfer of the various Luxembourg departments to Brussels and vice versa. For the Statistical Office, the move was scheduled for the summer of 1968.

A few months prior to the move, Raymond Dumas had the Commission endorse an important restructuring of the Statistical Office departments to take account of changes in Community policies. The number of units within the Directorate for Agriculture was increased, 'since changes in the common agricultural policy have considerably increased the demand for, and the frequency of, surveys', as was pointed out in a memorandum from Raymond Barre, Vice-President of the Commission with responsibility for the Statistical Office to Jean Rey, President of the Commission. The same memorandum also suggested setting up a Division for Regional Statistics and

Raymond Dumas during the first party of the Statistical Office at the old casino in Luxembourg in 1969.

At the Statistical Office's first party in Luxembourg in 1969, we see Vittorio Paretti, Monique Simeoni, Guy Bertaud, Egide Hentgen and his wife.

Accounts to meet the growth in demand for data from the Directorate-General for Regional Policy which had just been created by the new Commission.

A number of officials from the Brussels Office did not want to transfer to Luxembourg and so were posted to other Commission directorates-general. This had an adverse affect on the overall quality of the Statistical Office which took some years to redress. Similarly, in the other direction (Luxembourg to Brussels), a number of officials from ECSC departments who should have moved to Brussels preferred to stay on in Luxembourg and were thus posted to the Statistical Office. Most of these were B- and C-grade officials, for whom there was no shortage of openings at the Statistical Office.

In terms of the coordination of activities with those of the Commission's other departments, the Statistical Office had made its concerns known to both Raymond Barre and President Jean Rey himself. The main fear was that the Brussels-based directorates-general would develop their own statistical units that would grow over a period of time and so marginalise the activities of the Statistical Office proper. Jean Rey took the initiative by sending an in-house memorandum in April 1968 reminiscent of the Hallstein memorandum of 10 years earlier: it was the Statistical Office's job to collect data, harmonise methods and results, coordinate statistical work and liaise with the competent statistical authorities at national level. Nothing new about that. This memorandum was designed to reassure those in the Statistical Office and in the NSIs who, in the confusion following the move of the departments from Brussels to Luxembourg, suddenly found themselves inundated with requests for data, requests that came directly from the Commission departments without being routed through the Statistical Office.

Along with the Statistical Office, the Commission also transferred the two data-processing workshops to Luxembourg, as these had been previously split between Brussels and Luxembourg, like the Statistical Office had. To begin with, the idea was that, once the data-processing workshops had been brought together as a single entity, it would come under the responsibility of the Statistical Office. However, after long and difficult discussions between departments, the Commission decided to set up a separate directorate known as the computer centre, forming part of administration. At the Statistical Office, opinions were divided between those who thought that the development of informatics at the Commission should proceed under the auspices of the Statistical Office and those who preferred to wash their hands of the concerns and difficulties that were appearing on the horizon of this new discipline. The idea of the latter group was to give the Statistical Office its own computer centre whose sole objective would be to process statistical operations, the secret hope being that this would make it easier to obtain confidential data from the NSIs.

The relocation of the Statistical Office to Luxembourg went well. Most of the departments from Brussels were put either in the Louvigny building opposite the main post office and above the head office of the BIL (the Banque Internationale à Luxembourg) or in the adjacent building on the Rue Aldringen, which had been the original premises of the ECSC's statistical service in 1953. The other directorates, that is, those from the Staar Hotel era, were given offices on the Kirchberg plateau, in the European Parliament's brand new Tower Building.

The lack of a single site meant that interdepartmental communications were just as difficult as they were when the Statistical Office was divided between Brussels (five different buildings) and Luxembourg. The Director-General, Raymond Dumas, thus organised monthly information meetings for Statistical Office staff, asking each directorate to explain its main activities to its colleagues. For this type of meeting, and for working parties involving the NSIs, there was a problem with rooms, as those at the Centre Louvigny were too small, as were those at the rue Aldringen. Nor were there enough rooms in the Tower Building for all the Statistical Office's meetings. Meetings were thus held above the Europe Cinema by the station, or on the top floor of the Post Office's new headquarters, again by the main station. In the early 1970s, the Luxembourg Government decided to construct a new building in Kirchberg to house all the Commission departments in Luxembourg including,

Memories, memories: Luxembourg after the arrival of the officials from Brussels and their families

Come Saturday morning, the newly arrived Statistical Office officials would spend the morning, and sometimes the whole day, at the Weckbecker agency looking for a flat or a house. Then they would take to the streets. Even though it was the capital, Luxembourg had very little to offer in terms of shops as we know them today, particularly food shops.

At the time, it was government policy to promote small local shops. Officials thus found themselves travelling in order to shop — to Trier or Thionville for greater choice and lower prices, or to the GB supermarket in Arlon to satisfy consumer habits acquired in Brussels. Most people went to the market on the Place Guillaume, having parked near the 'Maison Moderne' or the former Court of Justice on the Rue du Fossé, or in the Grand Rue, which was not pedestrianised at the time. Parking meters and underground car parks were still a thing of the future.

On a fine day, officials would retreat with their purchases to the terrace of a café on the Place d'Armes by the bandstand. Then they would eat together in the 'Foyer Européen', now an exhibition hall. Come the feast of Saint Nicholas, the square would be given over to the Christmas market, to the delight of all those discovering northern European traditions for the first time. That was where people exchanged tips: for screws, there was only one place — Gilbert, for nuts and bolts it was Lassner, for curtains it was Hertz.

For food, particularly Italian specialities, the place to go was the Economat on the Place de Strasbourg, where customers were invariably greeted with a smile by the owners as they entered the shop. The most popular luxury item shops were Sœurs Weber on the Grand Rue, Bourkel et Kempf-Köhler for its catering service, its game and its melt-in-the-mouth macaroons. Fish and cheese, on the other hand, could only be bought in Thionville.

The only shop open on a Sunday morning was Epilux near the station, where you could find everything you had forgotten to buy during the week, together with a wealth of imported products and a warm family welcome.

Home electrical appliances were the preserve of Reisch and Lessel, which had yet to be swamped by products from Japan and south-east Asia.

(continued on page 56)

(continued from page 55)

For clothes, Brasseur or Lady Shop in the Galerie Louvigny came with a recommendation, as did Rosenstiel, a department store on the corner of the Grand Rue and Philippe II. For those looking for something more chic, Freddy Eisen on rue Louvigny could put a serious dent in the family budget.

In the Charcuterie Hoffmann on Philippe II there was never a shortage of people keen to taste the finest ham in Luxembourg. And just down the road at Moïtzeim, displays of spectacles of every description shared window space with prostheses and wheelchairs under a 'by appointment — suppliers to the Court' sign. Most odd!

Namur, on the Grand Rue, was home-from-home for connoisseurs of fine chocolate and gourmet breakfasts, whilst Schäffer was the haunt of housewives in search of odds and ends.

On Saturday evenings, and sometimes on Fridays or Sundays, Statistical Office officials would gather at the Nouveau Théâtre, where Luxembourg's *grandes dames* would invariably be decked out in their finest gowns for the Karsenty galas.

After the show, the place to go was the Italian restaurant on the Place de la Foire — Luxembourg's only Italian eatery at the time — to enjoy fresh pasta prepared by the Rossi family.

This was the Luxembourg of the 1960s. The old hands at the Statistical Office, who had known the town in the early 1950s when the ECSC was set up, told stories of 'Charly' (the narrow-gauge steam train that linked Echternach to the city), of herds of cows crossing the Pont Adolphe, and of wild boar rooting around in the grounds of Radio Luxembourg. That was another era.

And now, alongside the banking establishments, which have changed the face of Luxembourg in every sense of the word, there are the shopping centres, Auchan, Cactus, Match, a wealth of international restaurants, designer shops, the rapidly developing Kirchberg plateau, new motorways — the list goes on. What a long way Luxembourg has come in the space of 50 years …

Blanche and Anne Marie

of course, the Statistical Office. In 1974, work began on the Jean Monnet building, which opened its doors to the first of the Eurostat departments in 1976, and the move was completed in 1977.

As for social life, the first priority for those moving from Brussels to Luxembourg was to find somewhere to live. The capital of the Grand Duchy did not have the same choice as the Belgian capital, and the new arrivals found themselves faced with poor-quality accommodation. The Weckbecker agency, one of the few estate agents in Luxembourg at the time, was inundated with requests, and there was much wrangling amongst the new arrivals over what little accommodation was on offer. Vittorio Paretti cut to the chase and bought, in the village of Septfontaines on the Belgian border, an 11th century castle which was virtually in ruins and converted part of it into a flat. As for the officials' canteen, this was in the old Casino building on the rue Notre Dame, which had been renamed the 'Foyer' by the Commission, whilst the Kirchberg-based directorates used the canteen on the top floor of the Tower Building.

The newcomers to Luxembourg were always warmly welcomed by the old hands, both individually and collectively. The tradition of the Statistical Office's annual party was revived and expanded, dances were organised in the Foyer or in the beautiful castles in and around Luxembourg. Treasure hunts were organised in the countryside and forests of the Grand Duchy. A

football match was organised and almost all the staff turned up to see the old hands, captained by Silvio Ronchetti, graciously allow themselves to be defeated 5 to 1 by the newcomers under an inspired Stephanus Louwes (or was it the other way round? Memory has a funny way of playing tricks!). In short, people enjoyed themselves, even though Luxembourg had a reputation of a 'city where nothing happens' prior to the arrival of the officials from Brussels.

The structure of the Statistical Office at the time of the move

The Commission decides to leave a number of Statistical Office officials in Brussels to ensure the link with the client directorates-general. However, the creation of this 'outstation' meets with a negative reaction from the Luxembourg authorities. The outstation remains in Brussels until 1980, after which it is considerably reduced in size.

→ *See 'Directorates and units'.*

As we saw in the previous paragraph, some of the Statistical Office's senior managers — amongst them Raymond Dumas, the Director-General, who had to comply with a decision taken by his predecessor, Professor Rolf Wagenführ — were very concerned about the impact that physical separation might have on relations with the other user departments that had remained in Brussels. At the proposal of Raymond Barre, Vice-President of the Commission responsible for the Statistical Office, the Commission decided to leave a number of officials in Brussels to liaise as best they could with the client directorates-general. At the time, this liaison structure was called the 'antenne', or outstation. After sometimes quite fraught discussions, the decision was taken not to transfer to Luxembourg three divisions of Vittorio Paretti's Directorate A — the Jean Petre, Pierro Erba and Marcel Mesnage departments. The reason for this decision was simple — the links with the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs were considered of paramount importance (Raymond Barre was in charge of economic and monetary policy) and, for its part, the Statistical Office feared that the move to Luxembourg would open the door to the development of an autonomous 'statistical' structure within this directorate-general. Incidentally, it was at just this moment that the short-term economic surveys were launched by the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, and the Statistical Office was bypassed for this important statistical operation. The fact that Vittorio Paretti had half his directorate in Brussels meant that he had to make the return journey each week between the Charlemagne building in Brussels, where the outstation was located, and the Centre Louvigny in Luxembourg, where his three other divisions were. Crossing the Ardennes was not always easy in the middle of winter — these were, after all, the days before the motorway was constructed. Fortunately the Château de Septfontaines was in the middle ...

The football match organised in the presence of almost all of the Statistical Office personnel. The 'old hands', led by Silvio Ronchetti, against the 'raw recruits' guided by Stephanus Louwes: 1-5.

Directorates and units

Raymond Dumas, Director-General (secretary: Marie-Louise Gillot; followed by Monique Bour)

Egide Hentgen (L), his assistant

Guy Bertaud (F), advisor on mathematical methods

The following services were attached directly to the Director-General — budget, graphics, publications, the library, the mail service and all the Statistical Office's C grades.

In all, there was one A1, one A3, one A4, two Bs (draughtsmen) and 62 C-grade officials.

DIRECTORATE A
General Statistics and Associated Countries: Vittorio Paretti

— National accounts (Jean Petre)

— Financial accounts, monetary accounts, balance of payments (Pierro Erba)

— Intersectoral relations (Hugo Krijnse-Locker)

— Regional statistics and accounts (Jean Reynier)

— Short-term economic statistics, data processing (Marcel Mesnage)

— Associated countries (Raymond Salvat)

DIRECTORATE B
Energy Statistics: Camille Legrand

— Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels (Kees Zijlstra)

— Electrical energy and the nuclear industry (Jean Darragon)

DIRECTORATE C
Trade and Transport Statistics: Silvio Ronchetti

— Domestic trade (Theodor Schwarz)

— External trade (Rolf Sannwald)

— Transport (Helmut Reum)

DIRECTORATE D
Industrial and Craft Industry Statistics: Fritz Grotius

— Steel and allied industries (Jacques Charrayre)

— Metalworking, structure of industry, craft industry (Victor Schetgen)

— Consumer goods, indexes and industrial classification indexes (Mattheus Burger)

DIRECTORATE E
Social Statistics: Pierre Gavanier

— Salaries (Joseph Nols)

— Standard of living, employment (Wil van der Weerden)

— Social security, industrial accidents (Joachim Wedel)

DIRECTORATE F
Agricultural Statistics: Stephanus Louwes

— Prices, agricultural accounts, methods (Helmut Schumacher)

— Products, balance sheets (Günther Thiede)

— Agricultural holdings and structures (Luciano Baroncelli)

In all, the Statistical Office employed 220 officials, 84 of whom were A grades, 72 B grades and 64 C grades.

The geographical distribution of senior management was as follows:

— one Director-General, French

— one Assistant, Luxembourger

— one Adviser, French

— six directors: two Italians, one German, one Frenchman, one Dutchman, one Belgian

— 20 heads of unit: five Germans and five French, four Dutch, two Italians and two Belgians, one Luxembourger and one Swiss (Rolf Sannwald), for whom the Commission had granted a derogation from the principle of Community nationality.

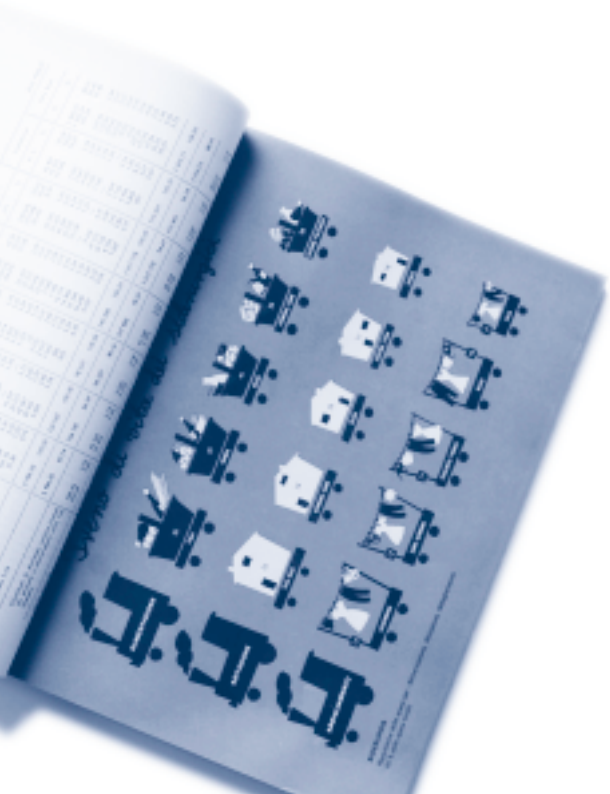
The creation of the outstation (around 15 officials) met with a negative reaction from the Luxembourg authorities. When the decision was taken to merge the executives, the Government of the Grand Duchy under Pierre Werner, demanded the equivalent transfer of officials between Brussels and Luxembourg in order to keep a large number of officials in the European institutions in the Grand Duchy. After due assessment, the Statistical Office was allocated around 220 officials. The Luxembourg authorities were concerned not so much about the 15 officials who remained in Belgium, rather that this might set a precedent and open the way for more defections to Brussels. On 4 July 1968, Raymond Barre addressed a memorandum to Albert Borchette, Luxembourg's permanent representative to the EC at the time, explaining the Commission's decision about the outstation. Raymond Barre outlined the reasons for setting up the outstation (liaison with the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs and the monetary and economic policy committees), determining why these three divisions had been chosen ('in the field of accounts and the short-term economy, the Statistical Office is defining and developing the statistical frameworks needed to make headway towards the harmonisation and concentration of economic policies') and, finally, Raymond Barre expressed the hope that 'as soon as possible, the seat of the three divisions in question would be transferred to Luxembourg'. The outstation, in the form of three divisions, remained in Brussels until 1980. Thereafter, Eurostat kept an outstation in Brussels, but one that was much reduced in size.

As for the structure of the Statistical Office (see above), this remained virtually unchanged until the arrival of the three new Member States in 1973.

The work of the Statistical Office

Between 1967 and 1973, the Statistical Office continues its harmonisation work in several fields — agricultural statistics, industrial statistics, national accounts, price statistics and purchasing power parities. There is a major expansion of social statistics, a number of new surveys are launched and harmonised social protection accounts are compiled. Three new nomenclatures: Nimexe, NIPRO and NACE. A threat to external trade statistics looms: the Benelux countries present a report in 1969 on the grave consequences of abolishing customs checks between the three countries.

Between 1967 and 1973, the Statistical Office continued its harmonisation work in several fields. The development of agricultural statistics was, of course, the Statistical Office's main priority owing to the consolidation of agricultural policy in terms of market and product prices and the new direction of this policy in terms of agricultural structures. Supply balances were completed for all products. The 'summary findings' of the first major survey on



agricultural holdings (1968) were published in 1971 and 1972, providing figures for the Community's 55 regions and 199 districts. More detailed studies of this survey were carried out in conjunction with the Directorate-General for Agriculture with a view to testing the various options open to the common agricultural policy. During this period, several items of legislation were adopted by the Council in order to improve the harmonisation of certain surveys: pig production, the production of milk and dairy products, eggs for hatching and chicks, cattle numbers, cattle slaughterings, and so on. Agricultural statistics were so important at the time (the EAGGF alone absorbed almost 90 % of the Community budget) that the Council decided to create a Standing Committee on Agricultural Statistics, which met for the first time in September 1972 with Stephanus Louwes in the chair. This committee, which still meets, has analysed and shaped the development of Community agricultural statistics for almost 30 years and, along with Eurostat, has been one of its main driving forces (see 'The "epic journey" of Community agricultural statistics').

In terms of economic statistics, the second half of the 1960s was characterised by work on harmonising national accounts. The Statistical Office helped the United Nations' Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva draw up the system of national accounts (SNA), which entered into force in 1968. The idea of a separate system of national accounts for the six Member States had been presented to the DGINS by the Statistical Office in 1963 on the basis of a document drawn up by André Vanoli, a national accountant from France's INSEE. A team was set up consisting of Statistical Office statisticians led by Vittorio Paretti (Jean Petre, Piero Erba, Hugo Krjinse-Locker, Alain Chantraine, Gustav Löhmann and Letizia Cattani) and high-ranking European experts (Vincenzo Siesto, Günter Hamer, Franz Goevaerts, Kees Oomens and, of course, André Vanoli). The team worked away tirelessly, though it did treat itself to 'some exquisite meals', as Vincenzo Siesto and André Vanoli recall. Three years later, the ESA-69, the European system of integrated accounts, was born.

Over the same period, the Statistical Office, coordinated by Piero Erba, published a series of papers on the methodology of the balance of payments, and an attempt at a harmonised and more detailed methodology for the financial accounts.

In the field of prices, the Statistical Office joined forces with the NSIs in November 1970 to conduct a price survey for all private consumer goods (420 basic items) in shops of all kinds in around 50 cities in the six Member States. This was the first major overall survey of prices which allowed general conclusions to be drawn about levels of consumer prices in the Community. For purchasing power parities (PPPs), the Statistical Office had already come a long way in terms of methodological work and processing the findings of surveys. The experience accumulated over a period of

A PPP meeting in 1972

by Donal Murphy, former Director-General of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Ireland

Having participated in Statistical Office meetings at all levels and on different topics over almost 30 years from 1972 (pre-accession) to my final Statistical Programme Committee meeting (SPC) in November 2000, the meeting that I recall most vividly is the first one I attended in 1972. This was a three-day meeting of the 'Prices' working group in Luxembourg chaired by Silvio Ronchetti, who was a Statistical Office Director at the time and subsequently became Director-General. I remember staying in the exotic-sounding former El Dorado Hotel next door to the Luxair building near the railway station. The meeting was conveniently held in a conference room at the top of the Post Office building across the road. It was also the first meeting for colleagues from the UK Department of Employment (Fin Forsyth) and Statistics Denmark (John Jensen).

The purpose of the meeting was to scrutinise the comparability of the individual prices collected for over 700 consumer goods and services for each of the six original Member States to estimate purchasing power parities (PPPs). The painstaking approach adopted was quite a shock and raised worries about the physical endurance that would be needed in this new Community work environment. On the first day the prices for each item were scrutinised in laborious detail. I recall 'strawberry jam' taking more than half a day — there were long discussions about the comparability of the quality of jam priced in different countries! This scrutiny process speeded up on the second day and then there was a mad sprint on the final day to finish all items.

In retrospect, this working party proved to be an enjoyable introduction to the European statistical system. Good friendships were formed as the group met frequently (as it still does) and members participated directly as observers in the national price surveys. Some of the national representatives at the time were Siegfried Guckes from Germany, Hugues Picard from France, Jan Vollebregt from the Netherlands, Luciana Tappi Giovannini from Italy. Richard Kuhner was the head of the relevant Statistical Office unit at the time. To ensure strict comparability, a complex system of overlapping multinational pricing teams operated at the time including the use of two chauffeur-driven Commission Mercedes for suburban pricing in each capital city — resources appeared to be more freely available in those days!

My main initial contribution to the PPP project was the addition of 'Guinness Stout' and 'Irish Whiskey' (insisting on the inclusion of the letter 'e') to the pricing list to ensure Irish representativeness! My family was young at the time and I also noticed that the list did not then include 'baby food', 'baby clothing' and 'nappies', which featured significantly in my household budget at the time!

I have fond memories of those early days of what subsequently proved to be a long involvement with the European Community system.

almost 20 years (the first surveys on the equivalence of real wages in the coal and steel industries dated from 1954) made the Statistical Office the world leader in this field, and Hugo Krijnse-Locker was the leading and universally recognised expert.

One sector that was particularly important at the time the ECSC work was launched was that of social statistics. The team, led by Pierre Gavanier, consisted of Joseph Nols, Joachim Wedel and Wil van der Weerden, and had come up with a number of proposals. As from 1969, Regulation No 101 on the survey of salaries in industry allowed, in the course of one and the same year and for industry as a whole, for a census to be conducted of salary costs, work which had hitherto been done from one year to the next by different sectors of industry. On 19 November 1971, the Council approved the three-year programme of social statistics. A labour force survey had been carried out for several years, allowing comparable statistics to be drawn up on employment. The NSIs began to forward results on magnetic tape from the 1968 survey. Problems then began, as the Commission did not have the computing capacity to keep up (as will be seen later) and the NSIs refused to process results on behalf of the Statistical Office. The funding of the labour force survey also came under scrutiny. For the 1969 survey, the NSIs received funds that were proportional to the sample of households surveyed, BEF 80 per household being used as a basis. Germany received BEF 16.8 million for 210 000 households, France BEF 4.8 million for 60 000 households, Italy BEF 10.8 million (135 000 households), Belgium BEF 2.5 million (31 000 households) and Luxembourg BEF 1.4 million for 5 000 households (working out at BEF 280 per household). The Netherlands did not take part in the survey.

In 1972, the Statistical Office had the NSIs approve a fundamental revision of some of the survey concepts and methods with effect from the following year. As part of the three-year programme, the Council also endorsed the compilation of comparable salary statistics with two new surveys — the survey of salary costs in trade and services and the pilot survey on wages in the farming sector. The Statistical Office was also able to put the final touches to two other very important surveys on labour force costs covering all enterprises employing at least 50 staff and on the structure and distribution of salaries in industry (manual and non-manual labour).

During this period, the Statistical Office regularly published, under the watchful eye of Bernard Eyquem, harmonised social protection accounts for the Community as a whole. The development of these statistics heralded the Council decision of 9 November 1972 setting up a European social budget, the statistical basis being provided by the social accounts. The pilot survey on vocational training for adults was carried out in 1970, along with two other surveys to which the Council attached great

importance as a means of comparing the social security systems of the Six. The first of these was on the potential benefits of, and services yielded under, social security schemes and the type of service provided in each country, whilst the second was on accidents at the workplace in the steel industry.

In the field of industrial statistics, the Council adopted two directives in June 1972. The first was on the organisation of statistical surveys on the short-term economy of industry and the craft sector (3 June) and the second on the organisation of coordinated annual surveys of industrial activity (6 June). The object of the latter was to compile annual statistics on a number of consistent and comparable parameters to allow the situation of, and economic developments in, various branches of industry to be compared. It covered the number of people in employment, staff expenditure and all data needed to calculate the value added of the branches concerned. The aim of the first directive was to ensure that short-term economic statistics on industry and the craft sector were compiled on a regular basis, these being needed to chart short-term trends in the countries of the Community.

In the field of classifications, the Statistical Office finished its work on the common nomenclature of industrial products (NIPRO), thus providing a framework of definitions for the industrial branches of NACE (the general classification of economic activities in the European Community). This classification had been approved in 1969 for processing and presenting the results of national surveys for Community purposes. It was not until the early 1990s that the first classification of activities, NACE, was also adopted for national purposes.

External trade statistics were also specially important. At a meeting of the DGINS in May 1969 in Wiesbaden, the NSIs and the Statistical Office drew attention to the importance of having a common, harmonised methodology for compiling external trade statistics based on binding legislation. However, concerns were also beginning to be voiced about the consequences that abolishing customs checks at the borders might have for the creation of the common market provided for by the Treaty. At the Brussels conference in November of that year, the Benelux countries submitted a report on the grave consequences that abolishing customs checks between the three countries on 1 September 1970 would have on statistics. A Statistical Office team consisting of Silvio Ronchetti, Rolf Sannwald and Jacques Dispa began work on the matter and, one year later at the DGINS conference in Luxembourg, submitted a document on the use of VAT data to replace customs sources. The directors-general rejected this method, so the Statistical Office began to explore other approaches. In the meantime, under the responsibility of Gerard Vanderplasche, the Statistical Office set to work on preparing the Nimexe ([1]) regulation, which was presented to the NSIs in May 1971 in Rome. The

([1]) Nomenclature of goods for the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States.

Council approved this regulation on 24 April 1972. It was a major success for Community statistics because, for the first time, a classification, that is, one of the cornerstones of statistics, had become a common instrument in the six Member States. In the meantime, of course, The Statistical Office continued to work on a common methodology. The 'methodology' regulation was adopted two years later, on 24 June 1975 (Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75).

The DGINS discuss the future of Community statistics

The DGINS reflect on their role from two different points of view — national and Community. The shape of cooperation begins to emerge: in 1972, a document suggests a legal basis for the programme, its funding and the processing of confidential data. As early as 1971, there are plans to set up what was to become the Statistical Programme Committee and the European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres (CEIES). Each country agrees on the principle of harmonisation — provided it is done according to their own methods. General recognition of the Statistical Office's role of 'honest broker' is still 20 years off.

As we have seen, the future of European statistics had already formed the subject of lively debate at the Hague and Brussels DGINS conferences. The question reappeared on the agenda at the May 1969 DGINS meeting in Wiesbaden. In point of fact, the talk was not of setting up a European statistical system — this concept had not yet entered either the language or thinking of statisticians. The idea was to bring about a gradual convergence of working methods rather than create common structures and cooperation arrangements. This was an interesting approach but one which, in the long term, would prove limited, particularly during critical points of European integration.

The DGINS suggested 'a reflective approach ... that would allow the NSIs to think about the functions ascribed to them, namely:

- analysis;
- the processing of information;
- the dissemination of information;
- staff training; and
- coordination;

and to do so from two points of view — national and Community'.

The outcome of the discussions was interesting, prefiguring the arguments subsequently used by the NSIs to further, but also block, Statistical Office proposals:

- there was an enormous demand for figures, but the NSIs should be on their guard;
- suppliers of data should not be over-burdened;

- the NSIs should enlighten those who were asking for surveys;
- they should restrict or stop unjustified requests;
- they should alert market research bodies, professional associations, research institutes and (obviously) the European institutions.

Before starting work on a new survey, the NSIs should:

- ascertain how urgently the information was needed;
- work out how much it would cost; and
- assess the economic usefulness of the findings.

In this context, the idea of a multiannual statistical programme was born. In May 1971, the DGINS conference in Rome discussed the most suitable way of examining the programme. 'The Council working parties, which have been asked to give their opinion on specific areas (social, agricultural, industrial), lack overall vision. It is important to organise the participation of the users to examine the programme ... More importantly, there should be a body at executive level consisting of NSI representatives with an overall view of the programme. Thought might also be given to setting up a broad committee akin to the monetary or economic policy committees.'

Some months later, in Brussels, the Statistical Office and the DGINS mooted the idea of creating a 'statistical conference' to forge or strengthen links between European statistics and users. So there were plans as early as 1971 to set up what would become the Statistical Programme Committee (SPC), as well as the Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres (CEIES). However, a few months later, in May 1972 in Marseilles, the DGINS got cold feet and decided that:

- the DGINS conference was capable of examining and implementing the programme itself;
- it could invite to the conference the Commission directors-general that used statistics;
- existing committees could be consulted — employment, medium-term policy, monetary, and so on;
- European users would be consulted via the Economic and Social Committee;
- an MEP should be asked to take part in the conference discussions about the programme.

As for the future SPC and CEIES, these were still 20 years off.

On the subject of the statistical programme, its implementation, the relevant funds and the division of responsibilities between the NSIs and the Statistical Office, the document addressed to the DGINS conference by the Dutch Presidency in the second half of 1972 makes interesting reading.

→ *See 'Extract from the document addressed to the DGINS conference by the Dutch Presidency'.*

Extract from the document addressed to the DGINS conference by the Dutch Presidency

'In order to provide a solid foundation for statistical work by the Communities and for the coordination of national statistics, and to enhance the comparability of the latter, the Council should take a decision based on Article 235 of the Treaty. The framework decision might cover the following basic points:

- Community funding arrangements according to the method approved to date by five delegations (Germany against), i.e. new statistics and surveys to be carried out once only should be financed by the Community, whilst new statistics and periodic surveys should be financed out of national budgets;
- the binding nature of the programme;
- delegation of executive powers to the Council and/or the Commission, the Council regulating this matter according to arrangements to be defined;
- professional secrecy;
- an advisory committee (e.g. the Committee of Directors-General, which would be able to coordinate national and Community programmes);
- obligation on the Commission to present a three-year programme each year to ensure that work progresses smoothly;
- the need for a decision before and apart from budgetary discussions.'

This document is interesting because it anticipates what was to happen 20 years later: multiannual and annual programmes, the SPC, the committee procedure, the programme's binding legal basis, its funding, and the processing of confidential data, all of which would be codified in the statistical law of 1997. As Jean Monnet would have said, 'there is no such thing as ideas before their time — it's just a question of waiting for the right moment'.

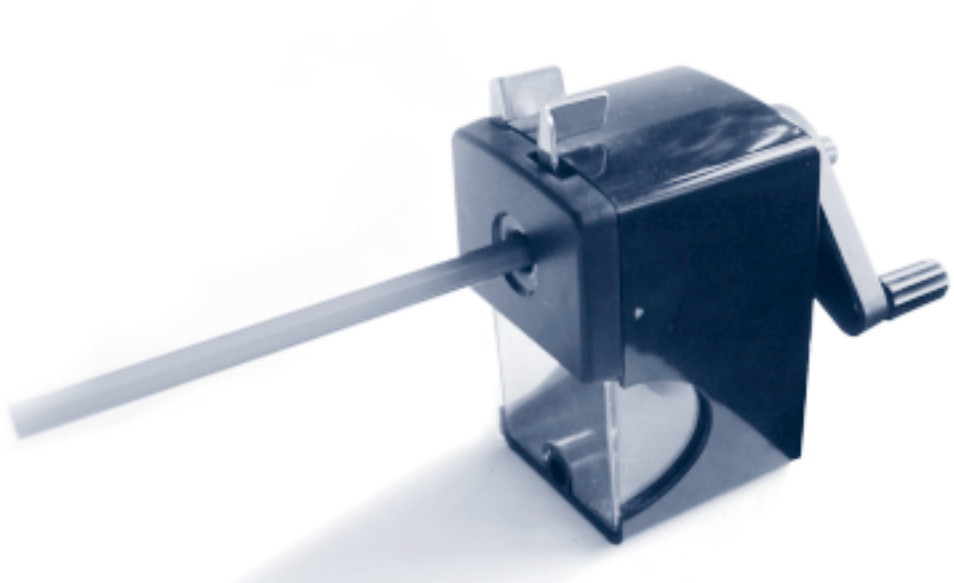
Relations between the Statistical Office and the six NSIs were generally good, and the overall political climate still favourable. However, there was a slow but increasing reluctance on the part of NSI middle managers to accept the Statistical Office's proposals in many fields. A phenomenon was becoming apparent that would become all too familiar in the coming years: the Director-General of the NSI would agree in principle to certain work; the young NSI administrator participating in the preparatory working party would show an open mind but not commit himself to anything; the head of division or director in the NSI, who had not been in on the discussions, would block the proposal and have the Director-General adopt a negative position. It was in the early 1970s that people began to lose sight of the difficulty of the task in hand: each country agreed in principle on the need for harmonisation, provided it was done according to its own method. The Statistical Office was looking less and less like an honest broker.

Things were also changing within the NSIs — work at national level was taking precedence, major censuses (population, industry, agriculture) had to be prepared, there were shortfalls in funding, a changing IT environment, vacant posts. In a word, things were deteriorating and the only areas that saw any headway in terms of statistical harmonisation were highly politicised areas such as agriculture (CAP) and external trade (customs union and GATT negotiations).

The dissemination of data and the beginnings of computing

The foundations for the development of informatics and for the first databases are laid in 1970 with a data-processing base which disseminates information rapidly and is accessible online. Even so, there is nothing remotely resembling a dissemination policy. Not until the second half of the 1970s would there be a division responsible for, amongst other things, 'dissemination', and it is not until the early 1980s that a directorate, responsible for 'processing and dissemination' of data as a whole, comes into being.

The Statistical Office's relocation to Luxembourg provided an opportunity for revising the publication programme. People were beginning to realise that the distance from Brussels might seriously damage relations with the Commission's political directorates-general, the main clients. Surprisingly enough, however, nothing was done and the structure of the Statistical Office remained quite orthodox — in the new organisation chart, all the directorates were domain-based and horizontal matters such as dissemination were dealt with in the operational units. One small unit (comprising two officials of C grade — Carla Wehrenberg and Irène Advenier-Schneider) and one drawing office (three officials of B grade: draughtsmen — Johannes Rackau, Ludovic Schiphorst and Peter Schupp) attached directly to the Director-General helped the directorates prepare publications. There was nothing remotely resembling a dissemination policy. Not until the late 1970s would the organisation feature a division responsible,



amongst other things, for 'dissemination', and it was not until the late 1980s that a directorate was set up for the processing and dissemination of data as a whole.

The start of the new decade also marked the appearance of computers and the first databases. The groundwork was done in 1970, when the Statistical Office started work on the Cronos project, a base for the processing of data, their rapid dissemination, and accessible online. This project did not become operational until the mid-1970s.

It was at the DGINS conference in Wiesbaden in May 1969 that the decision was taken, at the suggestion of the Statistical Office, to set up a working party on the electronic processing of information to run joint projects and exchange experience at national level. The University of Grenoble, which was already at the forefront of computer development in Europe, was involved in the work on Cronos and Osiris, a generator of tables derived from a database. We will return to this in the next chapter.

For the processing of large volumes of data, the Statistical Office enlisted the help of Ispra, where the Community had set up a Joint Research Centre (JRC) in the early 1960s under the Euratom Treaty. The JRC, near Varese in Italy, was equipped with powerful and relatively underused computers, and so it was that the Statistical Office was able to come to an agreement with Ispra for the use of its computing facilities. External trade data were regularly sent to Italy (or taken there by officials of the Statistical Office), where they were analysed, processed and returned to Luxembourg, where a small team of Statistical Office officials led by Hans Wittwer (Rolf Sannwald's division) pored over thousands of pages of figures each month looking for possible errors.

Checking all the data forwarded by six (and subsequently nine) countries was a painstaking task indeed: values, quantities, additional quantities, origins and destinations, sometimes modes of transport, at various classification levels (CCT or SITC) had to be checked in order to prepare Eurostat publications — aggregated monthly figures and highly detailed annual figures. The annual publication on external trade ran to some 10 hefty volumes, accounting, as people said at the time, for a good few hectares of felled trees. The officials who worked at the Val des Bons Malades (Silvio Ronchetti's Directorate) sometimes had to scale mountains of paper just to get to their desks. Fortunately, computers have changed all this!

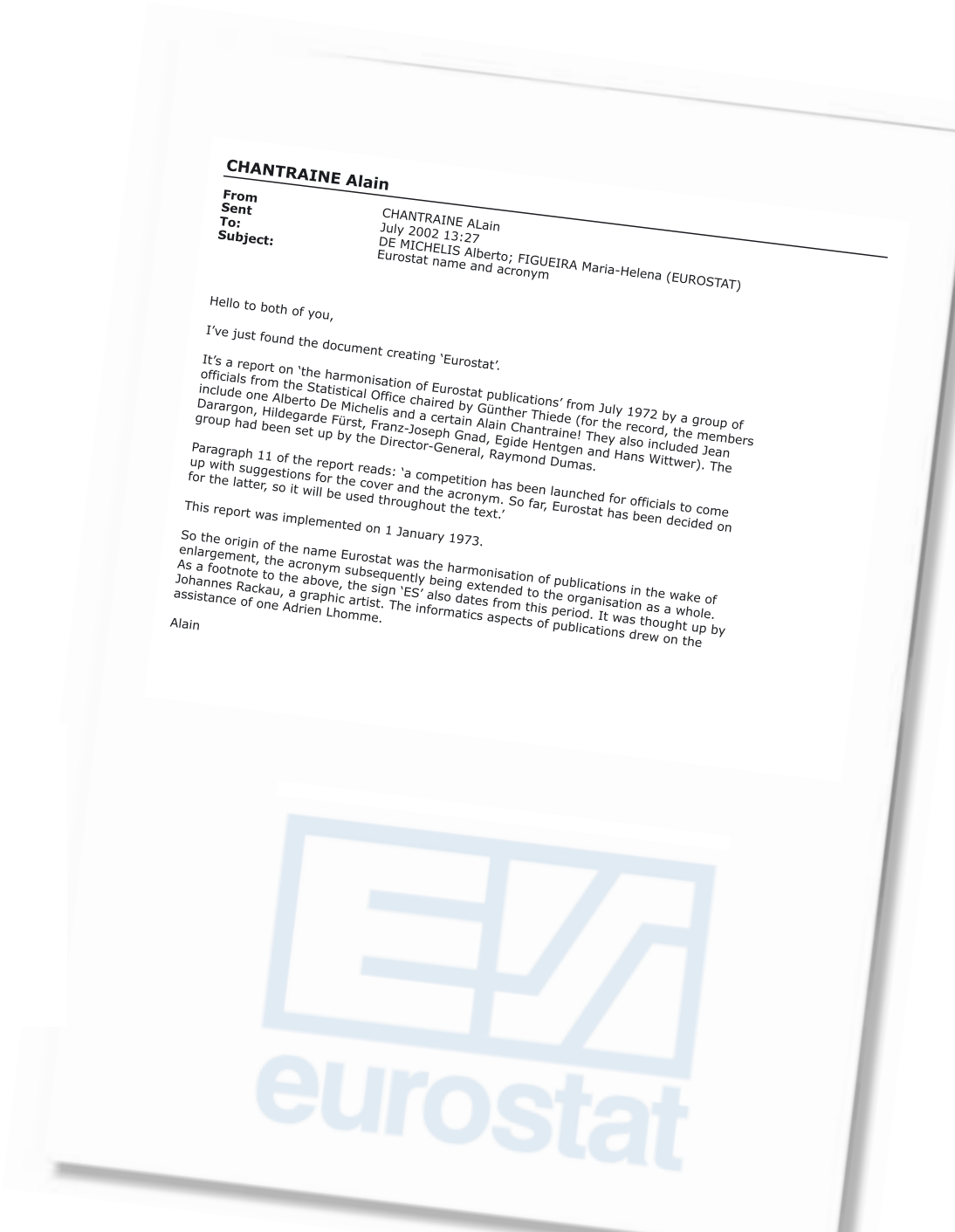
It was not until the late 1970s that the Commission's computer centre acquired the computing equipment that allowed it to process external data in Luxembourg, along with data from the main surveys forwarded by the NSIs to Eurostat.

The Statistical Office of the EC becomes Eurostat

Eurostat — brief and to the point.

One consequence of three new countries (Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom) joining the Community was an increase in the number of official languages, English and Danish joining French, German, Italian and Dutch. The abbreviation SOEC had to appear in all languages in the Statistical Office's publications, which was visually confusing and proved awkward for non-linguists — SOEC, OSCE, ISCE, SAEG, BSEG, SDEF. The Director-General, Raymond Dumas, set up an internal working party in 1972 to find a solution to this question.

→ *See the document opposite.*



CHANTRAINE Alain

From: CHANTRAINE ALain
Sent: July 2002 13:27
To: DE MICHELIS Alberto; FIGUEIRA Maria-Helena (EUROSTAT)
Subject: Eurostat name and acronym

Hello to both of you,

I've just found the document creating 'Eurostat'.

It's a report on 'the harmonisation of Eurostat publications' from July 1972 by a group of officials from the Statistical Office chaired by Günther Thiede (for the record, the members include one Alberto De Michelis and a certain Alain Chantraine! They also included Jean Darargon, Hildegarde Fürst, Franz-Joseph Gnad, Egide Hentgen and Hans Wittwer). The group had been set up by the Director-General, Raymond Dumas.

Paragraph 11 of the report reads: 'a competition has been launched for officials to come up with suggestions for the cover and the acronym. So far, Eurostat has been decided on for the latter, so it will be used throughout the text.'

This report was implemented on 1 January 1973.

So the origin of the name Eurostat was the harmonisation of publications in the wake of enlargement, the acronym subsequently being extended to the organisation as a whole. As a footnote to the above, the sign 'ES' also dates from this period. It was thought up by Johannes Rackau, a graphic artist. The informatics aspects of publications drew on the assistance of one Adrien Lhomme.

Alain

eurostat

The first enlargement and the advent of computing

Europe in the 1970s ...

Progress was being made, even though some of the initial euphoria was beginning to wear off. The European Council was meeting three times a year: three new countries joined the European Communities (Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom), three others (Greece, Portugal and Spain) were knocking on the door, the ecu and the European Monetary System were being set up. If anything, the oil crisis brought the Member States closer together.

Eurostat: the introduction of computers; birth of Cronos.

In the various statistical fields, Eurostat was continuing and, indeed, stepping up, its role as initiator and catalyst, whilst rising to the greater challenge of bridging the gap between different statistical cultures. Cooperation with international organisations was gathering momentum, and a cooperation programme with developing countries was set up.

Between 1976 and 1977, all of Eurostat's departments moved to the Jean Monnet building. The atmosphere at work was generally good, though on the professional level, storm clouds were gathering.

Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom – members of the European Community.

1973>1980

From 1973 to 1980

The political framework of the enlarged Community

At institutional level, the 1970s were marked by a number of events — the Heads of State or Government meeting as the European Council; direct elections to the European Parliament and the creation of the Court of Auditors of the European Communities in Luxembourg. Politically, the 1970s were marked by the accession negotiations of Greece, Portugal and Spain, the Tindemans report on the stages of political union, the oil crises, the Tokyo round of GATT and the crisis over the common agricultural policy. On the economic level there was the ecu and the European Monetary System.

The new Commission took office at the start of 1973. Its President was François-Xavier Ortoli (France), who remained in office until January 1977 and, for the first time, the 'college' ([1]) was joined by two Commissioners from the United Kingdom, one from Denmark and one from Ireland. Roy Jenkins (United Kingdom) took over from François-Xavier Ortoli in 1977 and remained in office until January 1981.

On the institutional level, the decade was marked by three major events. The first was the decision by the Heads of State or Government at the Paris Summit of December 1974 to meet as the European Council three times a year to set the political course of the Community's work. The first meeting of the European Council took place in Ireland (Dublin) in March 1975. The second event was direct elections to the European Parliament in June 1979, the relevant decision having been taken in 1975 at the Rome Summit. The third event was the creation of the Court of Auditors of the European Communities in October 1977 in Luxembourg.

In the political field, mention should be made of the European Council's discussion of the Tindemans report, the Prime Minister of Belgium, on the political stages of union. The Commission, for its part, had already made a declaration to the Heads of State or Government in 1974, in which it stressed the need to bolster European integration by streamlining national policies and framing common policies.

In the second half of 1973, clouds began to gather on the world horizon. In October, the Middle East was

([1]) College: the term used to describe the body of Commissioners as a whole

The logo designed by Johannes Rackau in 1972 still in use today.

jolted by the Yom Kippur war, which marked the start of the first oil crisis, when OPEC ([1]) decided to ban or reduce exports of petroleum to western countries and to massively increase the price of crude oil. At the Copenhagen Summit of December 1973, discussions basically centred on what measures should be taken to cope with the crisis, and the Nine agreed on the idea of introducing a common energy policy. This agreement did not enter into force until 1979, at the European Council in Strasbourg.

Sensing that a crisis was looming with the United Kingdom over the common agricultural policy, the Commission presented a series of measures in 1973 to accommodate it and to improve management of agricultural markets. One year later, in April 1974, the United Kingdom asked for fundamental changes to be made to the CAP and for fairer ways of financing the Community budget. In other words, the United Kingdom wanted to renegotiate its financial contribution to the budget. Discussions began on the reform of the CAP. The UK Government, satisfied with this initiative, backed the 'yes' vote in the referendum it organised on keeping the country in the Community. The referendum was held in June 1975 and 67 % voted 'yes'. The renegotiation of the United Kingdom's contribution to the Community budget would last several more years and would not end until the mid-1980s.

At the GATT conference held in Tokyo in September 1973, ministers decided to launch a new round of multilateral trade negotiations to liberalise trade. The Tokyo Round began, debate was heated and it was the Commission's job to defend the Community's position. Agreement was finally reached in 1979, with the Community signing it in December.

At international level, the Community began discussions with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP countries) with a view to adopting a new association agreement. The new convention was signed in Lomé (Togo) in February 1975 and entered into force in April 1976. It would be renewed in October 1979 (Lomé II). At the same time, the Community signed other cooperation agreements with developing countries, that is to say, the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) and the Mashreq countries (Egypt, Jordan and Syria).

The 1970s also saw the start of new accession negotiations: Greece asked to join in 1975 and did so in 1981; Portugal submitted an application in March 1977 and Spain in July of the same year. They both joined nine years later, in 1986.

On an economic level, the Community created the European currency unit (ECU) in 1975, consisting of a basket of currencies from the member countries. This was first used in the Lomé Convention and for operations by the European Investment Bank before gradually being extended to other areas of Community activity, particularly the budget. The Council also

([1]) OPEC: Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

discussed possible strategies for significantly increasing economic growth and creating a European Monetary System (EMS) based on the ecu. This entered into force in March 1979. In 1977, the Council formally adopted the sixth directive for establishing a uniform base for Community value added tax (VAT).

At the Paris Summit in December 1974, the Heads of State or Government decided to create a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which was set up the following year, even though the Community guidelines on regional policy were not adopted until three years later, in February 1979. In November 1976, the Council managed to reach agreement on the first steps to be taken along the road to a common fisheries policy that would expand in the coming years.

Eurostat is reorganised

The internal feuding in the late 1970s was the result of the increasingly marginal role played by Eurostat in the work of the Commission and the image of powerlessness this created amongst the NSIs. One thing led to another — a bad atmosphere amongst senior managers, poor external image, poor relations with the Commission. It was simply a question of time before it was all to come to a head.

The accession of the three new Member States would trigger an important change in the way Eurostat was organised. Raymond Dumas retired in 1973 and his place was taken by Jacques Mayer, another Frenchman, who was a Director from INSEE. Jacques Mayer reorganised the service to accommodate officials from the three new Member States. He took on Christel Simmet as secretary and appointed George W. Clarke as adviser. George W. Clarke was from Britain's Central Statistical Office (CSO) and would keep this post until he retired in 1988. Criticised by some and appreciated by others, Clarke was, for a period of 15 years, the *éminence grise* of a succession of directors-general, thus assuring the continuity of statistical policy in Eurostat. Jacques Mayer kept Egide Hentgen as his administrative assistant and appointed Alain Chantraine his personal assistant. He restructured the directorates, appointing David Harris (British) Director of demographic and social statistics. The structure of Eurostat in mid-1973 was as follows.

→ *See 'The organisation plan of Eurostat in 1973 — directorates and units'.*

For two years, political responsibility for Eurostat remained part of the portfolio of Commissioner Ralph Dahrendorf (Germany), who since 1971 had also been responsible for research, science and education, and scientific and technical information. Between 1975 and 1980, two other Commissioners were in charge of Eurostat — Guido Brunner, also from Germany, from 1975 to 1977, and François-Xavier Ortoli, from 1977 to 1980. The latter had been President of the Commission from 1973 until early 1977 when, as Vice-President, he took over responsibility for economic and financial affairs as well as for Eurostat.

Jacques Mayer, Director-General from 1973 to 1977.

The organisation plan of Eurostat in 1973 — directorates and units

Eurostat management consisted of the following nationalities:

— one Director-General: Jacques Mayer (French);

— one Adviser: George W. Clarke (British);

— one Assistant: Egide Hentgen (Luxembourgish);

— six Directors: two Italian, one French, one German, one British, one Dutch;

— 22 Heads of Unit: two Belgian, one Danish, six German, four French, three Italian, one Luxembourgish, three Dutch, one British, one Swiss.

DIRECTORATE A
Statistical Methods, Information Processing: Guy Bertaud

— Informatics (Marcel Mesnage)

— Methods, technical assistance for statistics: this post remained unfilled for some time (Helmut Diehl acting holder of post)

— Rapid information, short-term economy, Information on non-member countries: (Eric Snowdon)

DIRECTORATE B
General Statistics and National Accounts: Vittorio Paretti

— Sectoral accounts and additional systems (Jean Petre)

— Financial statistics and accounts, balance of payments (Piero Erba)

— Transactions in goods and services, fixed-capital statistics (Hugo Krijnse-Locker)

— Regional statistics and accounts (Raymond Salvat)

— Environment statistics: Alberto De Michelis (from 1975)

DIRECTORATE C
Social and Demographic Statistics: David Harris

— Household surveys — employment (Wil van der Weerden)

— Salaries and income (Joseph Nols)

— Social accounts and indicators, health (Joachim Wedel)

— Statistics on research, science and education (Hildegarde Fürst)

DIRECTORATE D
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: Stephanus Louwes

— Agricultural accounts and structures (Helmut Schumacher)

— Agricultural balances and products (Günther Thiede)

DIRECTORATE E
Energy, Industry and Crafts: Fritz Grotius

— Energy (Jean Darragon)

— Steel industry (Jacques Charrayre)

— Structure of industry, metalworking, chemical and construction industries (Victor Schetgen)

— Short-term industrial economy, production, consumer industries (Mattheus Burger)

DIRECTORATE F
Trade, Transport and Services: Silvio Ronchetti

— External trade (Rolf Sannwald)

— Transport and communication — tourism (Hans Georg Baggendorff)

— Domestic trade (Richard Kuhner)

— Services (Cleto Simeoni (from 1975))

In 1977, Jacques Mayer left Eurostat and returned to INSEE. The choice of successor was again between those in favour of an in-house replacement and those who wanted somebody from outside the Commission. The in-house candidate was Vittorio Paretti, who did not, however, have the backing of many of the Statistical Office's senior managers. He filled the post on an ad interim basis for a few months and in September 1977 the Commission appointed to the post of Director-General Aage Dornonville de la Cour, Director of Denmark's statistical institute. De la Cour's induction was quite memorable, Vice-President François-Xavier Ortoli coming to Luxembourg in person to tell staff in the new Jean Monnet building that he had put 'the best statistician in Europe' at the helm of Eurostat.

→ *See 'The organisation plan of Eurostat in 1979 — directorates and units'.*

When he took office, Aage Dornonville de la Cour made a few organisational changes to Eurostat, appointing Helmut Schumacher Director of Industry and Environment Statistics to take over from Fritz Grotius, who had retired. He appointed as his assistant his compatriot Niels Ahrendt, Egide Hentgen being appointed to head the new Dissemination Unit in Guy Bertaud's Directorate. Alain Chantraine was appointed Head of the Short-term Industrial Statistics Unit and Eric Snowdon took over from Helmut Schumacher in agriculture. After a disagreement with the Directorate-General for the Environment over who was responsible for what in terms of data collection — Vittorio Paretti and Michel Carpentier, the Director-General for Environmental Policy could not agree on what was statistics and what was not — Eurostat decided to get rid of the Environment Unit and incorporate these statistics as a minor component of the 'Classifications and Industrial Production' Unit. Alberto De Michelis was appointed Head of the Statistics on the ACP Countries Unit in Silvio Ronchetti's Directorate.

At the start of his term of office, relations between Aage Dornonville de la Cour and the directors of the Statistical Office were fairly good. In a bid to have on his side Vittorio Paretti — a strong personality in Eurostat but one whose outspoken nature made him quite controversial — Aage Dornonville de la Cour tried, without success, to have him appointed Deputy Director-General. Having failed in this, owing to opposition from the Commission and from the Italian cabinet, which was reluctant to have an Italian appointed to a Director-General's post, even in a deputy capacity, Aage Dornonville de la Cour had Vittorio Paretti appointed Director responsible for the technical coordination of Directorates A, B and F, a sort of organisational trade-off. By early 1979, the face of Eurostat had changed completely.

Midway through 1979, François-Xavier Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Eurostat, together with Christopher Tugendhat, Commissioner responsible for Administration, sent the Commission a

Jacques Mayer and his successor, Aage Dornonville de la Cour.

The organisation plan of Eurostat in 1979 — directorates and units

Director-General: Aage Dornonville de la Cour (Secretary: Sys Nymand)

Coordinating Director of Directorates A, B and F: Vittorio Paretti

Adviser: George W. Clarke

Assistant: Niels Ahrendt

Software design and development: Marcel Mesnage

Informatics management: David Heath (from 1980)

DIRECTORATE A
General Statistics, Methodology and Liaison Work: Vittorio Paretti

— Methods, classifications, studies and dissemination (Egide Hentgen with Mattheus Burger as Head of Sector for nomenclatures)

— Prices and PPPs (Hugo Krijnse-Locker)

— Brussels liaison office (Piero Erba)

DIRECTORATE B
National Accounts: Guy Bertaud

— National accounts (including balance of payments and financial statistics) (Jean Petre)

— Regional statistics and accounts (Raymond Salvat)

DIRECTORATE C
Demographic and Social Statistics: David Harris

— Household surveys — employment (Wil van der Weerden)

— Salaries and income (Gustav Löhmann)

— Social accounts and indicators, health (Joachim Wedel)

— Employment statistics and education (Hildegarde Fürst)

DIRECTORATE D
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: Stephanus Louwes

Adviser: Günther Thiede

— Agricultural accounts and structures (Eric Snowdon)

— Agricultural balances and products (Hans Georg Baggendorff)

DIRECTORATE E
Industry, Environment and Service Statistics: Helmut Schumacher

— Energy (Jean Darragon)

— Steel (Franz-Joseph Gnad (1980))

— Short-term industrial statistics (Alain Chantraine)

— Industrial, transport, service and environment statistics (Victor Schetgen)

DIRECTORATE F
External Trade, ACP and Non-Member Countries: Silvio Ronchetti

— External trade methodology and classifications (Rolf Sannwald)

— External trade statistics (Joseph Nols)

— Studies, analyses of external trade, ACP and non-member countries (Alberto De Michelis)

joint communication about the role of Eurostat and its expansion. This double-edged message said that 'thanks to restructuring, rationalisation and technical advances, Eurostat now provides the Commission with an improved statistical service ... However, the supply of data still fails to meet demand; there are coordination problems and resources are clearly inadequate if the potential volume of statistics is to be fully exploited. Increasingly, the use of computers is running into serious problems … The Commission is asked to recognise the increasing dependence (of its services) on statistical backup, and the need to provide Eurostat with the necessary technology and resources to coordinate and execute essential Commission work'. It seemed as though a period of grace was about to begin. Not so.

The idyll within Eurostat did not last long, as relations between Aage Dornonville de la Cour and certain directors, particularly Vittorio Paretti, were gradually deteriorating. Vittorio Paretti was forced to leave Eurostat in 1980 following the Commission's decision to apply Article 50 of the Staff Regulations, which provides for a contract with a director or a director-general to be terminated. This was the first time that this provision had been applied to an official of Eurostat, and it further soured relationships between senior managers in the Directorate-General. Guy Bertaud and Stephanus Louwes took early retirement the same year (1980) and, some months later, in 1981, Helmut Schumacher left Eurostat after a series of disagreements with the Director-General.

This ongoing wrangling was the result of the increasingly marginal role played by Eurostat in the Commission's work and the image of powerlessness this produced amongst the NSIs. A look at the minutes of DGINS meetings from the end of the decade gives a hint of the crisis which would be sparked at the beginning of the 1980s and which we will look at in more detail in the next chapter. Then there was the political environment of European integration, a process which was rapidly deteriorating and which proved that the old divisions along national lines were still very much alive, even in the statistical field. As Jacques Mayer said, 'when I returned to INSEE in 1977, I was surprised to see that the vast majority of people simply didn't care about the problems of European statistics', and this feeling was certainly shared in all NSIs. As for Eurostat's presence at world level, our institute merely played a secondary role, the forefront of attention being occupied by organisations with much sounder images, such as the United Nations' statistical service with its Geneva-based office, the Economic Commission for Europe, the statistical departments of the OECD or that of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

One thing led to another — a bad atmosphere amongst senior managers, a poor external image (NSIs and international organisations), poor relations with the

The departure of Guy Bertaud.

Aage Dornonville de la Cour's proposals

1. The role of Eurostat

— The coordinating role of Eurostat within the Commission and the Community should be reaffirmed and ...

— ... the inefficient use of other Directorates-General' resources for statistical work should be stopped.

2. The dependence of Eurostat

— The interinstitutional role of Eurostat under a Community Statistical Council should be examined and ...

— ... Eurostat should be attached directly to the President of the Commission's cabinet.

— The status, dependence and structure of informatics within Eurostat should also be examined.

3. Organisation and management of Eurostat

— The structure was sound, but new blood was needed at senior management level, 'senior management is weak and opportunities for early retirement and other changes in senior personnel are necessary. The Statistical Office urgently requires new blood at Director and Head of Division level'.

— Eurostat could do more to reduce the number of administrative units, but ...

— ... Eurostat needed to be expanded and the number of A-grades increased.

4. Career prospects

— Older officials should be encouraged to go in order to allow younger managers to be promoted.

5. Staff secondments

— Temporary posts should be created to allow officials to be seconded to and from the NSIs.

6. The European Institute of Applied Statistics

— The possibility should be examined of setting up a Luxembourg-based institute to promote permanent training for senior managers in the field of European statistics.

Commission's departments, which were often critical of Eurostat's ability to meet their needs and, last but not least, increasingly strained relations with the relevant Commissioners, who took a very dim view of the sad figure Eurostat cut, both inside and outside the Commission. It was simply a question of time before it all came to a head.

In 1978 the Commission, under the Presidency of Roy Jenkins, undertook a major internal reform, asking Dirk Pieter Spierenburg to draft a report on each directorate-general after a series of 'hearings' with all the services concerned. Dirk Pieter Spierenburg had been the Dutch representative in the first High Authority of the ECSC (1952–57) and in 1958 had been appointed Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the European Communities. He had returned to the Netherlands a few years later. The proposals contained in the report he produced for the Commission after an exhaustive inquiry involving all the departments would have major repercussions for the structure of the organisation. The Spierenburg report would be followed in 1979 by the Ortoli report, which called for a whole series of measures to be taken.

In January 1980, Aage Dornonville de la Cour presented the Commission with a Eurostat status report containing a number of proposals.

→ *See 'Aage Dornonville de la Cour's proposals'.*

This report, which Aage Dornonville de la Cour drew up without consulting the directors, particularly on point 3 (early retirement of officials), merely soured relations between senior managers in Eurostat and led to major changes in the organisation as from 1981. We will see what these changes were in the next chapter.

At the same time, the Commission was busy preparing a set of follow-up measures to the Spierenburg report. One particularly significant document dates from 31 January 1980, two of the points it raises being of interest. In the field of computing, the authors of the document (Lamberto Lambert and Walter Verheyden of the Secretariat-General of the Commission) were of the opinion that the CDIC (Management Committee for Data Processing in the Commission) 'should let some digital applications continue on a decentralised basis (in the political directorates-general), the central computing facilities being kept for administrative, documentary and statistical applications. The Statistical Office, which is particularly hard hit by the Commission's current shortage of computing equipment, would then be less inclined to ask for its own computer'. And this is what would happen for some time to come, until the decentralisation of informatics.

The second point concerned Eurostat in particular. The document was quite telling in terms of what Brussels thought the Statistical Office should be doing. It said, for instance, that '… the Statistical Office should concentrate more on providing the vertical directorates-general with the statistical data they need to do their work'. By phrasing it thus, the Secretariat-General made it quite clear that the user directorates-general had a fairly dim view of the Statistical Office — 'Eurostat isn't much use to us' — and made no bones about Eurostat's ability to appreciate the significance of data by adding 'though the analysis and interpretation of statistics can readily be done by the directorates-general qualified to do so, data must continue to be collected centrally by Eurostat'. Quite!

Statistical priorities and achievements

The arrival of the new countries has an impact on the contents of the programme and on the team spirit of the statistical community. Eurostat's 'community' role is to smooth the way for compromises, helping the parties concerned overcome national differences, something that becomes increasingly difficult during the 1970s. To remedy this, the statistical programme becomes a genuine instrument of dialogue and decision-making for the Commission and the NSIs.

From 1973, the statistical programme became a genuine instrument of communication and decision-making for the Commission departments and the NSIs. Prior to this date, the Statistical Office had had work programmes that never got further than policy

Aage Dornonville de la Cour, Director-General from 1977 to 1982.

papers, even though on 31 March 1971 the Commission sent the Council, for information, a document entitled 'Work programme for the Statistical Office of the EC'.

In early 1974, the Commissioner responsible for Eurostat, Ralph Dahrendorf, sent the Commission a document in which he described the general outline of a statistical programme which the Commission should undertake to implement (funnily enough, out of caution, it was not called the 'first statistical programme' — it acquired this title only after the decision setting up the second programme was taken two years later). The communication covered several topics — the need for a multiannual statistical programme, its scope, a broad outline of what it should cover (data collection, synthesis, harmonisation, research, dissemination) and, finally, the implementation stages.

→ *See 'Statistical programme for 1976 to 1978'.*

To underline the importance he attached to statistics, Ralph Dahrendorf took part in the first of the enlarged DGINS conferences held in Brussels in June 1974, taking the chair for part of the meeting. This was an 'enlarged' conference because all the Commission directorates-general that used statistics took part in it. June 1974 saw a dozen directorates-general take part in the meeting, and representation was at a high level (director-general or director).

Statistical programme for 1976 to 1978

The programme covered the years 1976 to 1978, and a detailed timetable was provided.

— March and April 1974: preparation of the draft programme by Eurostat after an initial consultation of the Commission's departments, producers and users of data.

— May 1974: discussion by the enlarged DGINS conference, which had been expanded to include representatives of Commission directorates-general and various committees — economic policy, short-term economic policy, monetary policy, medium-term policy, and so on.

— June and July 1974: discussion and approval by the Commission and transmission to the Council.

— September to November 1974: consultation by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.

— December 1974 and January 1975: discussion by the Council — it was suggested that the DGINS become the Council working party, with approval by simple resolution (unless, the Dahrendorf communication pointed out, the DGINS wanted a more binding act, which turned out not to be the case).

The document submitted to the Commission, which adopted it, also had the following to say about funding:

— no funding or contributions for major censuses;

— limited funding for occasional operations;

— funding for the start-up of new periodical operations.

This document was approved by the Commission on 29 April 1974 (SEC 74 898/3) and would be followed by other communications of the same type, such as:

— the second statistical programme would form the subject of a communication to the Commission from Commissioner Guido Brunner in 1976, covering the period 1977–79;

— the third programme (1978–80) would be communicated by Vice-President François-Xavier Ortoli in 1977;

— as would the fourth programme (1979–81), in 1979.

Discussions were of an equally high level, and led to the drafting of the first programme. The participants from the DGINS were: Renaat Dereymaeker (B), Niels Verner Skak-Nielsen (DK), Jean Ripert (F), Hildegarde Bartels (D), Thomas Linehan (IRL), Luigi Pinto (I), George Als (L), Gijsbert Goudswaard (NL) and Claus Moser (UK).

From 1979 on, the intervals between Commission decisions on the statistical programme grew longer, the fifth programme (1982–84) not being submitted to the Council by Commissioner Michael O'Kennedy until 1981. From 1980 on, there would be no more three-yearly rolling programmes, but successive programmes of three years.

Before we go into the details of the programme, it should be remembered that the accession of the three new countries, particularly the United Kingdom, would have an impact on the contents of the programme and on the team spirit within the statistical community. The incorporation of three new statistical systems into the six-country Community system (which had started up some 20 years previously and had settled into its own way of doing things) would immediately run into difficulties. There were two reasons for this — firstly there was the political climate of European integration, which was deteriorating and would continue to do so until the mid-1980s, then there was the clash between two major statistical systems — France's INSEE and the United Kingdom's CSO.

The British system, which was very much a decentralised set-up, had a tradition of openness and of cooperation with the global statistical system (United Nations and OECD), upon which it exerted a not inconsiderable influence. Within a European context, by contrast, it was France and the other old Member States, particularly Germany, which played an important role in the survey programmes, and especially the classifications of activities and products which were the cornerstones of national statistics and international comparisons.

In addition to tensions with the CSO, there were those with the Danish statistical system, which basically gave priority to collecting data from administrative registers and archives, whereas most of the established Member States had a system of field surveys. The main fear of both Eurostat and the NSIs during the first expansion was that results would not be comparable if methods were too divergent, particularly in the agricultural and social fields.

Furthermore, between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s, the British statistical system was faced with considerable internal pressure in respect of resources, which forced it to make a number of painful choices about priorities and the organisation of work. This explains why it was opposed to the changes imposed by accession.

As for the hard core of highly traditional NSIs, particularly France, Germany and Italy, it must be said

Party thrown for the departure of Jacques Mayer.

that they did not do enough to adapt their programmes to the post-expansion deal. The 'Community' role of Eurostat was, and still is, to smooth the way for compromises, helping the parties concerned move beyond national differences and to agree on new statistical operations, classifications, common definitions and methods. This was becoming increasingly difficult.

We will now look at the contents of the various programmes, concentrating on the main thrust of these between 1973 and 1981.

Statistics in the macroeconomic field were still the responsibility of the team led by Vittotio Paretti — with Jean Petre, Piero Erba, Hugo Krijnse-Locker, Raymond Salvat, Gustav Löhmann, Walter Bianchi, Jean-Claude Liausu, Dieter Glatzel and Letizia Cattani. Eurostat's main concern was the implementation of the European System of Accounts (ESA) in all countries. This was the first edition of the ESA, which had been approved in 1968. It was not until 1975 that the ESA was used for the first time by all nine Member States and the resultant data forwarded to Eurostat. The problem for Eurostat was that, for certain NSIs, the workload involved in supplying harmonised ESA data whilst continuing to draw up accounts according to national methods was simply too great. The solution was to encourage countries to use the ESA for both European and national accounts. Other areas of activity at the time included incorporating the Community institution accounts into the system, improving the measurement of aggregates in real terms, the regionalisation of accounts to take the development of regional policy into consideration and, finally, quarterly accounts, though Eurostat did recognise that the OECD was making major headway here and that work should not be duplicated. The end of the decade saw the first revision of the ESA (second edition 1979), which had been published for the first time in 1968.

As regards input-output tables, Eurostat and the NSIs gave priority to drawing up the 1975 and 1980 five-yearly input-output tables (available four years later) in spite of the heavy workload created by annual work. This task was under the responsibility of Marco De March.

As for the balance of payments, Eurostat collaborated in the methodological work on the manual prepared by the IMF and, having endorsed it, made a number of proposals to further work on the compilation of more harmonised data within the Community, though this did meet with resistance, particularly from the three new countries.

The work on purchasing power parities was also very important, the aim here being to produce aggregates that were more comparable between countries. Work was organised to keep pace with small-scale annual surveys on major categories of prices and detailed surveys every five years to begin with and every three years subsequently (during the 1980s). On an

organisational level, multinational teams had begun to be used (1975 survey), that is, teams composed of statistical enumerators from various NSIs — though for annual data collections, Eurostat preferred to use 'Euronational' teams for budgetary reasons, in other words, teams consisting of Eurostat officials and national statisticians. This would continue in subsequent years.

In the social field, the Council adopted a very important resolution in January 1974 on a Community social action programme, the priorities of which were 'to achieve full and better employment', 'to promote improved working conditions and an improved standard of living for workers so as to make possible their harmonisation while the improvement is being maintained' and 'to encourage the social partners to participate in economic and social decisions and workers to participate in the running of business'. The first oil crisis had a major negative impact on employment in all the Member States. This political decision had repercussions for the development of social statistics, because the resolution meant that a series of measures had to be prepared and evaluated on a statistical basis. In May 1974, the DGINS conference in Dublin adopted a multi-annual programme of social statistics covering the following fields:

— 'social' classifications

— social accounts

— social indicators (including qualitative indicators)

— work on employment

— salaries and income

— family budgets

— education and vocational training.

In the field of employment, the decision was taken to carry out a labour force survey every two years. Many years later, this would become an annual survey. The project leaders here were Joseph Nols, Wil van der Weerden, Gustav Löhmann, Joachim Wedel, Hildegarde Fürst and Bernard Eyquem, under the responsibility of David Harris.

In the field of industrial statistics, Eurostat's main concern was the implementation by the NSIs of the two Council directives on annual structural surveys and on the short-term economic data decided on in 1972. The reason for this concern was that some countries were late in carrying out the phase-one surveys provided for in the directive, even though the phase-two surveys were scheduled to begin in 1977 and were designed to generate subsequent variables to be added to the questionnaire. The expansion of the questionnaire was ultimately postponed until much later (1980). The Director-General for Industrial Policy attended in person the DGINS meeting held in Luxembourg in November 1974 to reaffirm the Commission's needs in terms of projects under way and projects being prepared in the field of industrial and trade policy. In spite of this, the DGINS asked Eurostat for a deadline extension for the supply of

survey data and postponed the first wave of annual surveys to 1979 for companies employing fewer than 20 people. As for the development of detailed (i.e. sectoral) statistics on industrial production, the NSIs opted for a frequency of every three months. The working parties also tackled, for the first time, the study of business groups, and Eurostat launched work on industrial prices and on inter-sectoral scoreboards. The introduction of a business register based on harmonised data was mooted by Eurostat for the first time in Rome in 1978, but the DGINS thought the idea unrealistic and so shelved it. Fritz Grotius and Helmut Schumacher were successive heads of industrial statistics, and were assisted by a number of heads of unit — Victor Schetgen, Jacques Charrayre, Mattheus Burger, Franz-Joseph Gnad and Alain Chantraine.

In the field of transport statistics, a new programme was presented to the NSIs in 1977 with the backing of the Commission's Director-General for Transport, who attended the DGINS conference in May in The Hague and who stressed the importance of market-based statistical indicators. Since the accession of the new countries, Hans Georg Baggendorff and then Victor Schetgen had been responsible for these statistics. One year earlier, in Wiesbaden, the Directorate-General for Transport had made a very bad impression on the DGINS. Without consulting Eurostat, and acting on a Council decision, it had introduced a system for monitoring the goods transport markets to create an early warning system to detect critical market situations. The DGINS took great offence at having been excluded from this project, which provided for the Commission to carry out direct surveys of transport enterprises. The 1977 conference aimed to clear the air and put the NSIs back at the centre of the NSI survey mechanism. In 1980, the Council adopted two directives on the carriage of goods, by inland waterway and by rail.

As for agricultural statistics, the decade was characterised by major farm structure surveys that began with Council decisions in 1966 and 1967. These took place in 1975 and 1977. The Council also passed a series of directives for surveys of fruit trees (1976 and 1977), livestock and cattle production (1973), pig production (1976) and milk and dairy products (1972), as well as regulations on areas under vines (1979) and cereals (1976). The stubborn defence of the directives on pig production and day-old chicks made Gertrude Hilf a household name amongst European statisticians. In 1978, after lengthy discussion by the Standing Committee on Agricultural Statistics, set up in 1972 by the Council, the Commission passed a key decision on the classification of agricultural holdings. In addition to these specific surveys, there was the common agricultural policy and its demand for highly detailed data on the external trade in agricultural produce, which resulted in constant amendments to Nimexe. The 1970s saw the organisation of agricultural markets

and consolidation of the CAP: agricultural statistics were undergoing a period of great expansion and this was beginning to concern the NSIs, particularly since agriculture was swallowing up an ever greater share of the Eurostat budget. At the Brussels meeting in November 1977, the DGINS asked that the Statistical Office's priorities be critically reviewed and called for agricultural statistics that were more concise and more flexible so that there would be more room for other areas of Community statistics. During this decade, agricultural statistics were the responsibility of Stephanus Louwes, Günther Thiede, Luciano Baroncelli and Helmut Schumacher and, later on, Eric Snowdon and Hans Georg Baggendorff.

In the field of external trade statistics, as we have seen, the Nimexe regulation (Council Regulation (EEC) No 1445/72 of 24 April 1972) was approved by the Council in 1972. It was repealed in 1987 to make way for the decision introducing the Combined Nomenclature (CN). In 1975, the Council approved Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75 on the methods for compiling external trade statistics and statistics of trade between Member States, which is remembered at Eurostat as the 'Method' regulation. In 1977, the Council established by regulation the geographical nomenclature, and one year later the Commission decided on the statistical threshold. The main authors of this important statistical harmonisation operation were Rolf Sannwald and Jacques Dispa, under Silvio Ronchetti. This move towards harmonisation of trade statistics was basically the result of Community policies bringing pressure to bear on Eurostat to provide more detailed and comparable information. A glance at the minutes of the first meeting of the enlarged DGINS and directorates-general of the Commission chaired by Ralph Dahrendorf in 1974 shows that almost every Commission representative spoke about his own field and then about external trade statistics, such was the importance of these data to every single aspect of Community economic policy.

In the field of energy statistics, the 1970s saw a number of developments linked with the 1973 oil crisis. Led by Jean Darragon and François Desgardes, work concentrated on the global energy balance (particularly for petroleum products), the breakdown of various sectors of consumption (particularly households and services) and the new three-yearly survey of energy consumption and use (heating, lighting, industrial operations, etc.). This survey was designed to pave the way for, and flank (as from 1976), the measures that the Community was planning to introduce in order to cope with the oil crisis that began in 1973. It should be noted that energy statistics had always been organised outside the NSIs circuit. Eurostat had set up a highly efficient network involving the relevant ministries and trade representatives. A code of conduct applied: the professional associations supplied raw data to Eurostat which, in return, provided them with the resultant processed figures. Although this did not go down well

No escaping information technology ...

with many of the NSIs, which felt left out of the decision-making process, it did prove highly effective. It was not until 1983, that the DGINS put energy statistics onto their agenda.

Another hive of Eurostat activity in the 1970s was nomenclatures and classifications for the business sector. Work focused on two things — the need to continue adapting national nomenclatures to NACE, which had been approved by the DGINS in 1969, and on NIPRO (the common nomenclature of industrial products) and NACE-CLIO, the classification for input-output tables. Eurostat and the NSIs also continued work on concordance between NACE-NIPRO-Nimexe for industrial production statistics. Prodcom would not see the light of day until the mid-1990s. In the classifications field, Eurostat collaborated closely with the United Nations Statistical Office, with which it organised a meeting of the joint group in Brussels in November 1977.

Statistics on trade and services also formed part of the statistical programme, but did not meet with much success, as the NSIs were finding it increasingly difficult to find the resources to devote to these new sectors.

Information technology establishes itself ... with some difficulty

In the early 1970s, the Commission takes the decision to install European computers in the computer centre. The upshot is the need to rewrite all the old programs running on hardware produced by the quasi-monopoly IBM. The Osiris project makes Eurostat one of the world's first organisations to develop a language for describing statistical tables linked to a generator.

The 1970s saw the introduction of information technology at the Commission in general and in Eurostat in particular. In the previous chapter, we saw how the Commission had transferred to Luxembourg not just Eurostat but also the 'joint data-processing department', which became known as the computer centre in 1971. Between 1968 and 1972, the Commission ran the operations of the computer centre via a Users Committee consisting of various directors-general from the Commission with the Director-General of Administration as chairman. In 1973, this committee became known as the Management Committee for the computer centre and then, in 1976, the CDIC, the Management Committee for Data-Processing in the Commission. The Eurostat directors-general have always been members of these committees.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Commission took the decision to equip the computer centre with European computers in order to promote the industry and free it of the IBM monopoly. The arrival of BULL (French) and ICL (British) mainframes meant rewriting all the old programs, which ran on IBM

hardware. This caused a considerable delay in new work, not just in the statistical field.

In spite of these inauspicious beginnings, Eurostat began to install terminals that were linked to the central computer. Growth was rapid, the advent of networked terminals being a boon to the processing of large quantities of data such as external trade statistics, major survey data (employment, prices, households, industry, agriculture, etc.) and input-output tables. But all was not plain sailing. Problems were caused by the extremely high cost of computer hardware, its lack of reliability (tests were fairly cursory and experience was in short supply), the shortcomings of the European computer industry (meaning that equipment was not maintained, rapidly became obsolete and had to be replaced), unwieldy programming and the need to establish priorities within the computer centre.

In spite of these difficulties, Eurostat's informatics activities continued. It tried without success to encourage the NSIs to develop joint development tools. Each NSI pressed on with its own solutions, paying scant attention to Eurostat and its ideas. Not that there was ever very much hope of things being any different, given the variety of hardware, the lack of communication between systems and the fact that the national informatics policies being established in the 1970s were entirely uncoordinated.

Eurostat's Osiris project made it one of the first organisations at international level (along with the US Census Bureau) to develop, in conjunction with the University of Grenoble, a language to describe statistical tables that was linked to a generator. As Marcel Mesnage observed, 'the Osiris system, written in Pascal with a view to portability that was probably over-ambitious for the time, was unable to make up for previous disappointments and failed to convince users in spite of the advanced technology it employed'. Its use thus remained relatively restricted.

A subsequent project called Sigise, which aimed to unify all statistical preparation and calculation operations in a system that was accessible by network, never got past the initial study and demonstration phase. The failure of Sigise marked the — not unexpected — demise of the informatics experts and hailed the advent of decentralisation, an idea with which the new personal computers and the Internet would be very much in line. With the advent of this era, many statisticians were anxious to obtain the tools they needed on the market.

The role of informatics within Eurostat remained unclear until the service was reorganised by Jacques Mayer, who joined in 1973. Until then, there had been a division called 'Short-term economic statistics and information processing' headed by Marcel Mesnage, Adrien Lhomme being in charge of data processing. Adrien Lhomme had been head of the

Marcel Mesnage, Jean-Claude Farget, Ovidio Crocicchi and Jean-Claude Petit reflect on the future of Eurostat's information systems (1982).

The changeover from machine processing to informatics within Eurostat

by Marcel Mesnage

When it was set up in 1958, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, which was later to become Eurostat, was the main user of machine-processing services. Nobody at the time realised how close to an end this pre-computing era was.

Since they had been invented by Hermann Hollerith in the late 19th century, punch-card machines had been the basic tool for statisticians working with large volumes of figures (e.g. external trade statistics or the processing of field surveys). These machines would be located in centralised workshops and were as noisy as any factory floor. They were operated by highly specialised professionals, and work was slow and painstaking. The preparation of a statistical table was a veritable labour of love, involving a succession of machines (sorters, classifiers, tabulators) and hundreds of connections of tangled cables (the equivalent of today's programming was known as 'tweaking the wire'). And all to obtain lists of virtually unpresentable figures (no lower case or accented characters) which had to be smartened up with pre-printed text before being meticulously placed and mounted by setters with the help of generous quantities of glue.

Ranks of perforators carried out the laborious task of preparing the cards. In this day and age of gigabytes of memory on minuscule and super-fast disks, it is strange to think that the only mass memory available at the time was huge stacks of cards which had to be constantly reclassified, replaced, recoded and reinterpreted, for the most part mechanically. The hapless operator who knocked over or mixed up a stack of cards was the author of catastrophe. But in spite of all this, machine processing was a tried and tested system that worked. Statisticians also used other electric machines, and, indeed, were not averse to using a slide rule or cylinder calculator.

Of course, electronic calculators were already around but, outside the scientific world, they were a token addition to machine processing — they did nothing to alter the actual organisation of work. In 1960, the first shockwaves were felt with the arrival of hybrid monsters such as magnetic drum calculators (programmed by oscilloscope and with 'large' memories of 8 000 positions) and interlinked card machines (obsolete as soon as they were introduced). But the first major upheaval, and one which hailed the advent of informatics proper, was the appearance of commercial computers that used magnetic tapes. The first machines of this type were installed in 1962 at CETIS, the European scientific information processing centre at Euratom in Ispra, and an enthusiastic account of their use by a US colleague at the UN who was responsible at the time, as I was, for external trade statistics, convinced me to accept an offer to work with CETIS to try something similar. This was a quantum leap in the speed and volume of working memories and marked the start of a real adventure. This also marked the first time that data were transmitted long distance (from Ispra to Brussels) over a telephone line, a modest forerunner of the informatics networks of the future.

Logically, it was only a matter of time before these machines were replaced by computers. This also marked the beginning of two decades of problems. The programming explosion called for new professional qualifications and simultaneously disqualified the bulk of machine processing operators at the very time when personnel management policies were becoming more strict. The machine

processing interface, a marriage of interpersonal skills tempered by a good dose of shared experience, was swept away by a tidal wave of analysts, who were seen as magical mediators of arcane techniques and unforeseeable implementation deadlines.

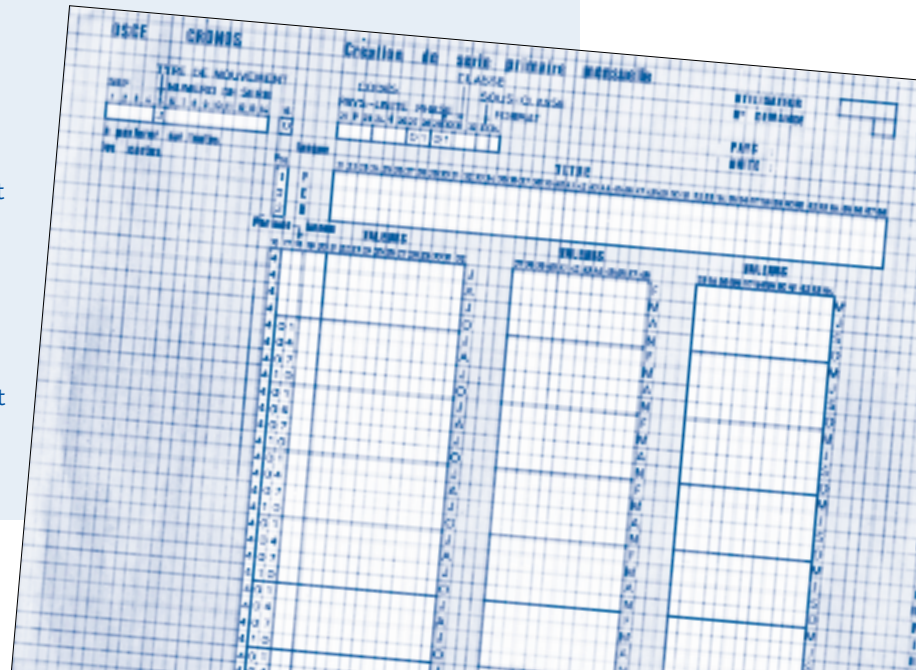
Later, the sense of isolation would become more acute when access to the 'machine rooms' was restricted. By contrast, a spirit of openness emerged in scientific circles, users being given direct access to machines by 'shared-time' terminals, first just glorified typewriters and then terminals with screens, and with the idea of databases, where free consultation replaced systematic results. In Eurostat, I was honoured to design and execute work along these lines at the very beginning, one of the projects being the Cronos system. Studies for this database of time-series began in 1970, and the project was extended for a relatively long time in spite of a problematic start-up. At the time, difficulties were not so much of a technical nature (even though the concepts were new and the development methods unwieldy) as linked with difficulties in managing material and human resources, in particular the basic incompatibility of various types of equipment that resulted in considerable wastage of time and resources.

During the 1970s, the compelling obsession of informatics experts was to convert systems to keep pace with the breakneck speed of technology.

In spite of the appearance of screen terminals, informatics remained largely centralised, with star-shaped networks, and this perpetuated something of the 'factory' aspect of machine processing. It was not until the emergence of personal computers and grid networks (intranet/Internet) in the mid-1980s that a new era began and machine processing was definitively consigned to oblivion.

After the astonishing success of the Internet, there was still the hurdle of the incompatibility of hardware, and the valiant standardisers duly set about finding a solution. Ultimately, it was the market that did so via the rather monopolistic channels of IBM/MS-Dos and then Bill Gates/Windows.

With hindsight, it seems that, over the past 30 years or so (from approximately 1960 to 1990), Eurostat statisticians have almost intuitively endeavoured to remain one step ahead of the trend towards the decentralisation of both material and human resources, whether via conceptual innovations (such as Cronos or the Osiris language, which dates from the 1970s and was a precursor of today's tabulators) or by means of ad hoc organisational solutions (proactive participation in equipment management, shouldering of analytical work and then the use of specialist equipment).



UDAP-statistics (Decentralised Applications Unit) at the computer centre in the early 1970s. The structure decided on by Jacques Mayer in 1973 introduced an informatics division into Guy Bertaud's directorate. This structure remained in place until 1979, when Aage Dornonville de la Cour, Director-General from 1977 on, reorganised Eurostat and set up two divisions attached directly to himself:

— Software design and development: Marcel Mesnage

— Informatics management: David Heath.

As far as coordination between the NSIs was concerned, it was not until January 1978 that Eurostat managed to organise a meeting on standardising files and the exchange of information between the countries managing the databases. This provided Eurostat with an opportunity to present Cronos and Osiris to the informatics experts from the NSIs. They made fairly short shrift of the presentation. The main concern of the NSIs was that Eurostat should not duplicate any of the work being carried out by various other international organisations in this field, and they made no commitment whatsoever to joint projects.

Publications and electronic dissemination: Cronos

A tool is needed to rapidly disseminate short-term statistical information capable of being updated automatically and consulted online. Thus, Cronos is born.

The Brussels-based departments of the Commission want data that are topical and constantly under revision, however, this is not always what they get, thus frustration sets in.

The first problem that the accession of three new countries to the Community caused Eurostat was how to present data on nine countries rather than six, particularly in two new languages (English and Danish). Raymond Dumas and then Jacques Mayer asked the various departments to come up with suitable suggestions. It should be remembered that, with the exception of a small coordination team attached directly to the director-general, each directorate (and virtually every unit) was directly responsible for defining the contents, form and production procedure of the publications and for compiling a list of addresses to which publications would be sent (both free of charge and against payment). It was not until 1979, with the restructuring decided on by Aage Dornonville de la Cour, that a unit (run by Egide Hentgen) was given the task of, amongst many other things, disseminating data. In the second half of the 1970s, Eurostat began to classify its publications according to target readership and contents, using a colour coding system — violet for general statistics, green for agriculture, yellow for social statistics, red for external trade, brown for transport, and so on. There was a growing awareness of the importance of a catalogue that users could readily understand. An

entire set of new publications was defined, and minor changes made to those which were already popular and enjoyed a wide circulation, for example, 'Eurostatistics' and 'Basic statistics'. (See 'Dissemination! The evolution and the technical revolution'.)

However, it was informatics that brought about the real change in dissemination during the 1970s.

There was a good reason why Cronos was designed at the beginning of the 1970s by the Division for general and short-term economic statistics (part of Vittorio Paretti's Directorate). A system had to be developed for the rapid dissemination of short-term economic information via a database which was updated automatically and which could be consulted online. Cronos did not begin to take shape until 1972. Everyone remembers the 'Cronos fiches': each Eurostat unit had to fill in, by hand, the short-term economic data for which it was responsible; one 'fiche' per series.

→ *See 'Cronos: ruler of the Titans ...'*

This was long and painstaking work, calling for close attention to detail and careful checking. The 'fiches' were then sent to the computer centre to be coded. This laborious but indispensable procedure was followed for several years, until countries began to forward data on magnetic tape. This is how Eurostat's first database came into being and was subsequently

Cronos: ruler of the Titans ...

by Paolo Gugliuzza

Between 1970 and 1975, the database for macroeconomic time-series was devised and executed by Marcel Mesnage's team — Roger Cubitt, Robert Bijnens, Filips Crucke, Patrick Ostyn, G. Barsotini, Ovidio Crocicchi, Guido Vervaat amongst others.

Cronos was a database of statistics recorded in the form of time-series with fixed periodicity (M, Q, B, A) and a set of terms ('numerical values') charting the development of a phenomenon over a period of time.

Series were identified by a 10-digit number with associated parameters such as titles taken from common nomenclatures (geonomenclature and unit) and organised as a file subset (FSS).

The GSI (general short-term indicators) were managed by Statistical Office Unit A2, the other domains (PAPI, ZPA1, ZEN1, etc.) being processed by managers in the Statistical Office.

There were two types of series — primary and derived. The terms for the derived series were calculated from the primary series using formulae defined by the user or by using that of the Cronos system (library of calculation functions such as SEAS: seasonal adjustment system).

The base management system comprised data and programs for creating, updating or consulting the base. Some 400 programs in Cobol, Fortran, Pascal, LDH (logical dialogue handler) and TPMS (teleprocessing management system) ran on an ICL/VME 3980. There were some 200 procedures in SCL, the system control language, for the VME interface.

The interrogation functions could be used on- or offline. Functions included selective interrogation, calculation, generator and framing.

Display, Explain, Trace, Table, Compute, Save and Suppress were the online functions. The Job Monitor allowed functions to be managed offline.

The CADOS documentary system had been developed to make it easier for users to access Cronos and ensure smooth system management. It had four functions, search using keywords or hierarchical search, information on PDC, contents classification plan, data freshness filter, titles and consistency with the classification plan.

In December 1994, the last system manager, Paolo Gugliuzza, carried out the last Cronos archiving operation after 20 years of loyal service.

developed. Cronos, linked to Osiris software, also become the database that was used to prepare Eurostat's regular publications.

The first outside users of this database were, obviously, the Commission services in Brussels, even though the link between the central computer in Luxembourg and the terminals in the Brussels-based directorates-general were not always very reliable. Difficulties were not just technical in nature. Users expected highly topical and constantly revised data, but this was not always what they got. This caused frustration in Brussels, and this in turn had a negative impact on the way Eurostat was seen by the user services in the Belgian capital. By the end of the 1970s, Cronos was generating over 600 000 series and outside users were beginning to show an interest in accessing the information. In the next chapter, we shall see how the dissemination of Cronos on Euronet developed from 1981.

International cooperation

The development of international cooperation by Eurostat moved in two directions in the 1970s: cooperation with international organisations, and the introduction of cooperation programmes with developing countries. The defence of Community positions was not always recognised by these international organisations and was sometimes undermined by NSI representatives, either deliberately or due to a lack of coordination.

The development of international cooperation by Eurostat moved in two directions in the 1970s. The first was active participation in the work of international organisations, the second was the introduction of cooperation programmes with developing countries linked to the Community.

Eurostat's collaboration with international organisations was mainly focused on the fields of short-term economic statistics (OECD), classifications (UN), the methodology for economic accounts and the balance of payments (UN and IMF), employment statistics (ILO) and agricultural statistics (FAO). There was also fairly significant cooperation with the World Bank on the cooperation programmes with developing countries. The NSIs, particularly those in northern European countries, were very keen on the principle of tight coordination between the Community and those international organisations over which they exercised most control — there was a predominance of Anglo-Saxon statisticians in the statistical services of these organisations — and they did not hold back in asking Eurostat to be more receptive to work carried out at a global level.

Eurostat, however, continued to play only a minor role because the defence of Community positions was not recognised as such by these international organisations — except when it came to getting the European Commission to finance certain projects — and was sometimes undermined by the NSI

representatives who tended to return to positions at the UN on issues where they had had to make concessions within Eurostat working groups. With some NSIs, this was a deliberate policy in order to delay decisions and weaken Community positions; with others, it was simply a lack of coordination and internal communication which led them to adopt conflicting positions on the same issue. The NSI specialist who took part in the Community meetings did not coordinate the positions he had adopted with those of the official in charge of international relations who attended the UN and OECD meetings. This still happens too often nowadays.

Eurostat developed a significant programme in the field of cooperation with statistical institutes in associated countries (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) under first the Yaoundé and later the Lomé Conventions. Relations with the Development Directorate-General were very good and substantial resources were released by this Directorate-General for statistical work. Eurostat managed to ensure that the Lomé Convention included budgetary headings for statistics (the statistical component) on the basis of which several projects were financed in a number of countries. The responsibility for these activities fell to the unit headed by Alberto De Michelis within Silvio Ronchetti's Directorate. Daniel Byk was the administrator in charge of African projects.

We have seen in the previous chapters that in cooperation with INSEE and Germany, Eurostat had supported the creation of two training centres in Paris (the CESD in 1962) and Munich (Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft Fortbildungs-Zentrum München). In the 1970s, the policy developed in the Community was that of transferring the basic training (of qualified statisticians) to Africa. Eurostat and especially France (INSEE and the Ministry of Cooperation) — with encouragement from the Jean-Pierre Behmoiras, Yves Franchet and Gérard Winter team — favoured the development of training courses for qualified statisticians (second stage) in existing training centres and the establishment of new centres in African countries. Thus, the Statistical School in Abidjan, which had been set up in 1960 to train statistical agents, began to train qualified statisticians after 1977, as did the International Centre for Statistical Training in Yaoundé. Eurostat was also behind the establishment of the completely new centre in Kigali (Rwanda) — the Institut Africain et Mauricien de Statistique Appliquée (IAMSEA) — in 1976.

In the English-speaking African countries, training issues were the responsibility of the universities who wished to retain their autonomy and were suspicious of any form of cooperation susceptible to interfering with their projects. The attempt to set up an Institute of Statistical Training in Tanzania was short-lived. Eurostat's collaboration with the British Department of Statistical Cooperation was also less well-developed

Seminar on purchasing power parities in Yaoundé, Africa, December 1980.

than that entertained with similar departments in France, which led some commentators to say that Eurostat preferred to help the French-speaking countries of Africa over the English-speaking countries. The development cooperation circuits in the United Kingdom and English-speaking countries took in the UN and the World Bank more often than the Community. France and the French-speaking countries, on the other hand, had a longer tradition of cooperation with Eurostat and the Commission (Development Directorate-General).

In addition, technical assistance projects were set up by Eurostat with the cooperation of some Member States in a number of African countries. These programmes dealt in particular with:

- external trade statistics in the context of the export earnings stabilisation system for associated countries (Stabex) and a project aimed more at the countries in the ECWA (Economic Community of Western Africa);
- agricultural statistics for the food strategy policy which the Development Directorate-General was developing in Africa, particularly in the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries;
- price statistics as part of the international comparison programme (ICP-Africa).

Relations with the NSIs

The DGINS emphasised the risks involved in increasing the number of sectoral coordination committees in order to push on with decisions without their agreement. The two 'hottest' topics were generally statistical secrecy and seasonal adjustment.

Working relations with the NSIs are monitored through discussions at the DGINS conference which is held twice a year — in spring in one of the Member States and in November in the Commission's premises in either Brussels or Luxembourg. Every week there are also numerous committees and working groups which bring dozens of national statisticians to Luxembourg. Some countries, which lie furthest away from the Grand Duchy and have fewer statisticians, have had to make a considerable effort to attend all the working group meetings. Thomas Linehan, the Director of the CSO in Ireland, gibed that Luxembourg airport had become a meeting place and handover point between CSO statisticians arriving in Luxembourg and those who were leaving.

In November 1974, the DGINS conference discussed the nature and role of the committees and working groups and the responsibilities of the national delegates. The DGINS emphasised the risks involved in increasing the number of sectoral coordination committees which might push on with decisions without the agreement of the directors-general, and

they took decisions on how these committees were to operate and on the power of their representatives.

One topic which has caused friction — for a very long time — in relations with the statistical institutes has been that of statistical secrecy. Discussions on this topic between the Statistical Office and the NSIs can be found in the minutes of DGINS meetings dating back to the beginning of the ECSC. At that time, the issue was whether the Statistical Office could give the NSIs the basic information collected directly from the steel industry. It is worth remembering that under the ECSC Treaty the Statistical Office could organise statistical surveys of undertakings in the Member States directly without involving the NSIs. After 1958, with the Treaties of Rome and Article 213 ([1]) thereof and with the expansion of the Community's competences, the situation was reversed and the problem became that of the transmission of confidential data by the NSIs to Eurostat. The topic was back on the table each time Eurostat was supposed to produce the Community total for a given set of statistics and was obliged to estimate the data for certain countries which refused to send it the correct statistics under the pretext of confidentiality. In 1975, Eurostat asked a French expert, Gerard Ader, to conduct a study into the problems concerning the statistical secrecy of businesses. At the same time, the European Parliament gave an internal committee the task of looking into problems relating to the protection of personal information. The DGINS were worried about the consequences which a study of this type could have on their organisation and entrusted to Eurostat the task of ensuring that the interests of the statistical bodies were taken into consideration by the European Parliament.

The Ader report was presented to the DGINS conference of May 1976 in Wiesbaden. There were long and heated discussions, particularly on the point relating to the transmission of confidential data to Eurostat. The fears expressed were always the same: Eurostat could be obliged to transmit these data to other Commission departments — despite the assurances given by the Commission's Legal Service at the meeting. The DGINS recognised that progress had to be made, but they only came up with the decision to set up a working group, with a specific mandate decided at the meeting, which would examine the Ader report and submit proposals to a future conference. This group would not, in fact, complete its work until much later, at the end of the 1980s.

Another thorny issue in relations with the NSIs was the seasonal adjustment of the data used at Community level. Eurostat was of the opinion that a common method for correcting seasonal variables should be adopted by all countries, whereas most of the NSIs thought that the differences in national structures meant that different methods should be used for each Member State. Eurostat had adopted the Dainties programme and integrated it into the Cronos

([1]) Article 213 was replaced by Article 284 in the consolidated Treaty of 1999, 'The Commission may, within the limits and under conditions laid down by the Council in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, collect any information and carry out any checks required for the performance of the tasks entrusted to it.'

The Jean Monnet building in Luxembourg, Eurostat's headquarters until 1998.

database, thus making it possible to produce seasonally-adjusted series using the same method. The data compiled by Eurostat using this method were published in the monthly publication, *Latest figures*. This did not please certain NSIs who accused Eurostat of disseminating different series from those published nationally. In 1975, the decision was taken to set up a working group to examine the criteria and the objectives of methods of seasonal variations and investigate the possibility of using a common method for each group of series. Some 25 years later, the situation has not changed.

There was more to relations between Eurostat and the NSIs than just these bones of contention. There was a tradition, alive to this day, that the country which organised each spring DGINS conference laid on a very enjoyable dinner, as did Eurostat each November. One of the main stars of these enjoyable events was the Director of the Irish CSO, Thomas Linehan, an accomplished pianist and amateur poet who would add a humorous touch to the DGINS evenings.

→ *See* Statistical poems *by Thomas Linehan, Director, Central Statistics Office, Ireland, 1967–2001.*

This friendly atmosphere extended beyond the DGINS. The Eurostat official who chaired the working group which brought delegates from all the Member States to Luxembourg had two tasks to accomplish: firstly, to ensure that the meeting went well and then to organise the evening meal in a restaurant alongside the river Moselle (between Luxembourg and Germany) which served the very tasty local delicacy of fried Moselle perch. Others had a preference for the Brasserie Mansfeld in the Gründ district of Luxembourg. The dinner provided an opportunity to find an amicable solution to any disagreements which may have arisen at the meeting earlier in the day. Often the atmosphere on the second day of the meeting was more conducive to taking decisions which had been 'concocted' over a good glass of Moselle wine or a Luxembourgish beer (or two or three or more) the evening before.

The move to the Jean Monnet building and social life

Between 1976 and 1977, all of Eurostat's departments moved into the Jean Monnet building. Seen from the outside, a marvel to behold! … but once inside, it was very hot in summer and very cold in winter. The climate in terms of staff relations was, however, better and all officials who have left Eurostat to work in other directorates-general in Brussels recognise that it was — and still is — much easier to establish contact between different colleagues at all levels in Eurostat than elsewhere.

At the beginning of 1975, Eurostat's departments had spent more than four years occupying two different Buildings: the director-general and most of the

directorates (A to E) were housed in the Tower Building in Kirchberg which — along with the adjacent Schumann building — was one of the two European Parliament buildings, whereas the offices of Directorate F, headed by Silvio Ronchetti, were located in a small building in the Val des Bons Malades. At that time, there were very few buildings on the Kirchberg plateau and the Val des Bons Malades was still the countryside. At Eurostat, all eyes were fixed on the new building which the Luxembourg Government had decided to build in the vicinity of the European Investment Bank and the Court of Justice of the European Communities, to the left of the motorway linking the town with the airport and just past the Grande Duchesse Charlotte bridge. Ground was broken for the construction of the Jean Monnet building, which was to house the whole of the Commission in Luxembourg, on 9 May 1974, the anniversary of the Robert Schumann declaration. A footbridge had been built over the motorway between the Tower Building and the new area made up of buildings housing the European institutions (the Commission, the Court and the Bank) and a new Holiday Inn hotel.

At midday, during their lunch break, Eurostat officials from the Tower Building would cross the footbridge to take a look at this modern glass building which was emerging from the ground and would house the Commission services. Between 1976 and 1977, all of Eurostat's departments moved into the Jean Monnet

Information for the nation

Information for the nation!
That in short is our vocation.
If others have the facts we need,
Then give us access too, we plead.

As for confidentiality,
We give a steadfast guarantee
To protect with strict propriety.
We offer this with pride.

The individuality
Of each and every entity
Is grouped with other company.
Its identity we hide.

We publish? — Yes — in aggregate.
This does some users irritate
We do our best to mitigate
The impact of our rule.

Apart from this protectiveness,
We practice no selectiveness.
Our aim is user friendliness,
Our goal — a data pool.

Statistics

Though we don't know what we measure,
We publish it with pleasure,
And we hide our mortal terror
Of a quite substantial error.

A respondent

I am an 'observation',
I was captured in the field.
My conscience said 'cooperate',
My instinct said 'don't yield'.

But I yielded up my data.
Now behold my sorry plight,
I am just a poor statistic
Who no more has any right.

The Bootstrap and the Jackknife,
Oh the tortures I've endured!
Stochastic asymptosis
(Be advised — do not be lured)
Seasonal analysis
To isolate my trend.

Factorial paralysis
Near brought me to my end.
They analyse my variance,
Logarithmetise my means,
Inspect my correlations,
And then range twixt both extremes.

But I have a plan to beat them,
I'll climb up into the trees,
Pretend I am a chi-square,
And get freedom by degrees.

(Statistical poems *by Thomas Linehan, Director, Central Statistics Office, Ireland, 1967–2001).*

In Eurostat, conviviality is the order of the day … and colleagues have not lost the habit of partying.

building, once the first two blocks of the new building had been completed. Seen from the outside, it was a marvel to behold! The Eurostat officials were very proud of their new building as this was the first time since the Community institutions had been set up in 1958 that they had all been together under the one roof. There was, of course, a scramble to find the best offices in the hope of avoiding those which looked onto the internal courtyards. One of the pleasant surprises was to discover broad corridors with yellow cupboards, a fresh yellow colour which was a welcome change from the grey of previous furniture.

Getting to know the 'Jean Monnet' could also be a painful experience, however. The building was entirely clad in glass, which made it very hot in summer and very cold in winter. Some of the south-facing offices were uninhabitable at the height of summer (despite what some cynics may think, Luxembourg does have a summer) at certain hours of the day: at 50° C, it was like sitting in a sauna. The officials had no choice but to leave their offices and work elsewhere or go back home. In winter, the Administration had to install extra heaters in the north-facing offices and it was not unusual for officials to bring in their own heaters from

home or work with their coats on as the temperature plunged between 10° and 12°C.

In short, the 'Jean Monnet' may have looked good, but it had its faults. Other than that, everything was fine. The meeting rooms were big and there were plenty of them, the canteen worked well, one of the banks — the BIL — had opened a branch in the building and there was also a post office and a newsagent run by a very nice man, even if you never understood a single word he said to you. But what the officials most appreciated was the swimming pool in the bowels of the building where they could go for a swim 'outside office hours' as the note on the door reminded them. David Heath was one of the more athletic statisticians who made most use of this facility. This in-house swimming pool would then see its use decline at the beginning of the 1980s, when the new Olympic Pool opened its doors just a few hundred metres away from the Jean Monnet building.

We have seen previously that the social life of Eurostat officials coming from Brussels had been made easier by the openness of the welcome given by old 'Luxembourgers' from the ECSC period. One of the special features about Eurostat which should be emphasised in comparison with other Commission directorates-general in Brussels is that there was generally a very warm atmosphere among colleagues, even during working hours and without any rigid distinctions on the grounds of hierarchy or category. It was — and nowadays still is — easy for an official to see his or her administrator, head of division or Director to discuss work-related issues without any restrictions. All officials who have left Eurostat to work in other directorates-general in Brussels recognise that it was — and still is — much easier to establish contact between different colleagues at all levels in Eurostat than elsewhere. This friendly atmosphere also smoothed the way for contact outside of working hours: work colleagues who had become friends would see each other in the evening, play tennis or bridge together, meet at the theatre or cinema or go for beautiful walks in the forests or along the Moselle.

This was the good side of life in Luxembourg, especially as the town itself kept on growing; high-quality — not to say 'luxury' — shops started to open up in the town centre. There was no longer any need to run off to Belgium, Germany or France to buy decent clothes, furniture or the latest high-tech products to hit the market.

It was on a professional level that things started to deteriorate. The atmosphere at Eurostat had become very sombre and at the beginning of the 1980s the situation did not look promising.

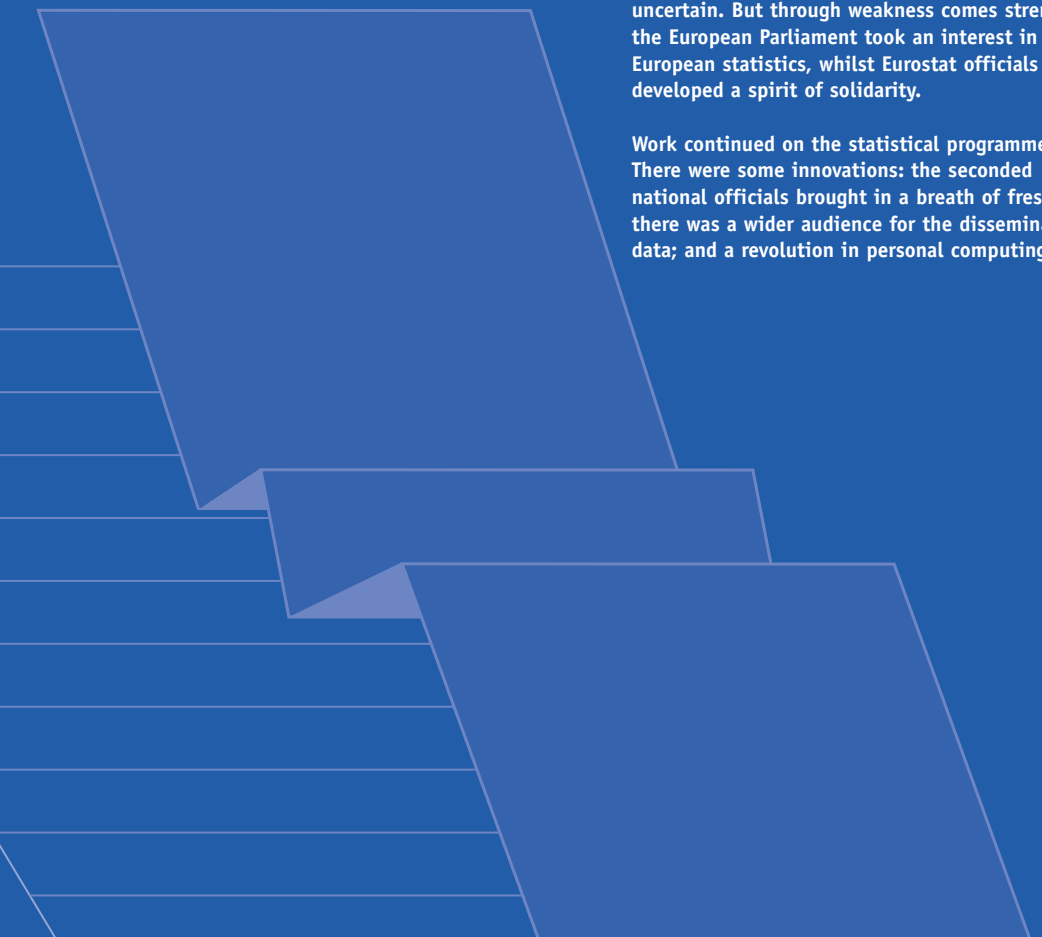
End of year celebrations in 1973. Eurostat is proud to have always avoided the hierarchical divides. This continues to this day.

The difficult years

At the beginning of the 1980s, Europe seemed to run out of steam.

This meant hard times for Eurostat: its position weak within the Commission, its management uncertain. But through weakness comes strength: the European Parliament took an interest in European statistics, whilst Eurostat officials developed a spirit of solidarity.

Work continued on the statistical programmes. There were some innovations: the seconded national officials brought in a breath of fresh air; there was a wider audience for the dissemination of data; and a revolution in personal computing.



1981>1985

From 1981 to 1985

From the Thorn Commission to the Delors Commission

The decisions taken by the European Councils at the beginning of the 1980s lacked inspiration and perspective. Then comes a fresh impetus with a new Commission under Jacques Delors in 1985; the accession of Spain and Portugal in 1986. In 1985, Eurostat returns to the fold of the member of the Commission responsible for economic affairs.

In January 1981, the Jenkins Commission made way for the Thorn Commission. Gaston Thorn, a Luxembourger, organised the new Commission by assigning a portfolio to each member of the Commission. Eurostat, after some less-than-transparent horse-trading, went to the Irishman, Michael O'Kennedy, who was also responsible for 'Personnel and administration; Translation services and the organisation of conferences; Publications Office'. The reasoning behind this was simple: one member of the Commission was allocated all the services which were mainly based in Luxembourg, in order to facilitate more frequent contact between the political level and these services. In the case of Eurostat, nothing was to come of this: neither Michael O'Kennedy nor his successor came to Eurostat to meet with the Director-General or his staff. In mid-1982, Michael O'Kennedy was replaced by his compatriot, Richard Burke, with the same responsibilities, including Eurostat.

On 1 January 1981, Greece became the 10th Member State of the European Community. In France, the presidential and general elections led to an important change in the political framework as François Mitterrand and the socialists came to power. At the beginning of the 1980s, other general elections were held in several other countries: the Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy.

Europe was progressing very slowly. A look at the decisions taken at the European Councils during that period, shows that the items on the agenda lacked inspiration and perspective and attempts were being made, sometimes with great difficulty, to reach agreement on minor issues. The Member States continued to wrangle about the Community budget

In 1981, Greece becomes the 10th country to join the European Community.

and the arrangements for reducing the UK contribution, the importance of the common agricultural policy which still swallowed up three quarters of the Community budget, or the launch of a joint research and development programme in the field of information technologies (Esprit), which would not finally be decided upon until February 1984. In short, the political climate was not very promising.

Attempts to rouse Europe from the torpor in which it was languishing were few and far between: at The Hague in 1981, draft European legislation (the Genscher-Colombo plan) to improve the institutional mechanism was discussed, without any immediate effect. In 1983, a draft Treaty on the European Union — the foundations for Maastricht — was submitted to the European Parliament by Altiero Spinelli, an Italian MEP, and approved by Parliament in 1984. The European Council decided to give the ecu a more important role and to strengthen the European Monetary System (Dublin, 1984).

Europe would not regain its momentum until 1985, when the new Commission under Jacques Delors took office and France and Germany were in the driving seat with the backing of the founding Member States. There then followed decisions on strengthening monetary cooperation and, especially, the signing of the single act. Following the decision taken at the Luxembourg Summit of December 1985, the single act was signed in The Hague in February 1986. This would lead to the introduction of the single market in 1993. With the arrival of the Delors Commission at the beginning of 1985, Eurostat came under the authority of a German, Alois Pfeiffer, who was also responsible for 'Economic affairs, employment and credit and investment'. This was an important and coherent portfolio which saw Eurostat return to the fold of economic affairs — a situation which still applies today in 2003.

In June 1985, the Council also gave its approval for two new countries — Spain and Portugal — to join the Community and they became full members on 1 January 1986.

The organisation of Eurostat between 1981 and 1985: three directors-general

In 1981, Eurostat was at its lowest ebb and had become a 'foreign body' inside the Commission. The rumour went round that the Commission was thinking of breaking Eurostat up into different departments and incorporating these into the political directorates-general in Brussels. The Luxembourg Government was strongly opposed. The European Parliament recommended 'that the other institutions be dissuaded from setting up separate statistical services' and more importantly requested that it be consulted in future on all new statistical programmes.

Reorganisation in 1983: the creation of a directorate for dissemination and statistical information and the first 'data shop' was set up. The first seconded national officials (SNOs) are to understand the workings of Community statistics and bring in fresh ideas.

At the beginning of 1981 the implementation of the Spierenburg Report recommendations mentioned in the previous chapter had important and serious consequences for Eurostat, with the loss of one Directorate (down from six to five) and six units (down from 23 in 1978 to 17 in 1981). Eurostat was still headed by Aage Dornonville de la Cour with George W. Clarke as Adviser. The post of assistant was vacant, following Niels Ahrendt's appointment as Head of the Unit for Short-term Industrial Statistics. Two departments reported directly to the Director-General: Design and Development of Software (Marcel Mesnage) and IT Management (David Heath).

→ *See 'The responsibilities for sectoral statistics were shared by five directorates'.*

Eurostat still had a small branch office in Brussels, headed by Jean-Claude Liausu, for keeping in touch with other Commission departments. The organisation chart also shows an increase in the number of advisers to directors and the creation of heads of sector posts within units. These were, for the most part, former heads of unit (Jean Petre, Joachim Wedel, Wil van der Weerden, Cleto Simeoni) appointed to these fallback posts following the disbanding of Units resulting from the implementation of the Spierenburg report.

During the course of 1981, Helmut Schumacher, after a long battle with the Director-General, left Eurostat and was replaced by Jean Darragon at the head of Directorate D as acting Director. Marcel Mesnage, who was the Head of the Design and Development of Software Unit, also left Eurostat for the Directoratre-General for Administration, which was responsible for IT in the Commission.

The position of Aage Dornonville de la Cour was to become increasingly precarious following a series of disputes with his immediate entourage and with the member of the Commission responsible for Eurostat. This added to the weakening of Eurostat's position within the Commission. The Commission attempted to terminate its association with Aage Dornonville de la Cour by invoking Article 50 of the Staff Regulations. Following a round of appeals to the Court of First Instance, he managed to push back the deadline to the end of 1982 when he retired at the age of 65.

In 1981, when Eurostat was at its weakest, rumour had it that the Commission was thinking of breaking Eurostat up into different departments (units or directorates) and incorporating these into the political directorates-general in Brussels: macroeconomic

The responsibilities for sectoral statistics were shared by five directorates

Directorate A
General Economic Statistics: *Piero Erba*

Directorate B
Demographic and Social Statistics: *David Harris*

Directorate C
Industry, Transport and Services Statistics: *Joseph Nols*

Directorate D
Agricultural, Forestry, Fisheries and Energy Statistics: *Helmut Schumacher*

Directorate E
External Trade, ACP and Third Countries Statistics: *Silvio Ronchetti*

Pieter de Geus, Director-General from 1982 to 1984.

statistics would go to the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, agricultural statistics to the Directorate-General for Agriculture and so on. We have found no written evidence of this idea but, at the time, it was at the back of everyone's mind. The guarantee that Eurostat would remain intact, and in Luxembourg, stemmed from the fact that the Luxembourg Government was firmly opposed to the possibility of Eurostat being moved to Brussels. A small group of officials began to wonder whether the solution might be to make Eurostat the joint responsibility of the Commission, the Parliament and the Council, and to give it interinstitutional status, similar to the Publications Office. In fact, the group's main aim was to get cover from the Parliament given the growing lack of interest shown by the Commission in the work of Eurostat. One MEP, Robert Glinne, got hold of this dossier and, on behalf of the Socialist Group, presented a resolution to the Parliament advocating that 'the current Statistical Office (Eurostat) be transformed into an interinstitutional body provided with the means required to compile and develop European statistics and be run jointly by the Community institutions'.

The European Parliament appointed one of its members, Newton Dunn, a British Conservative, to present a report on the status of Eurostat. This report, which was approved by the plenary session of Parliament in September 1982, concluded that Eurostat should remain an administrative unit within the Commission, but emphasised the need to develop cooperation with the other institutions and with Parliament in particular. Two other points which were highlighted in the resolution approved by Parliament were to have important consequences for Eurostat's work. Firstly, the EP recommended 'that the other institutions be dissuaded from setting up separate statistical services' and that 'all the institutions should have access, under the same conditions as the Commission, to the Statistical Office'. In practice, small groups of 'statisticians' started to form within the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Court of Auditors. The second point was to have even more importance: the EP requested 'that it be consulted in future on all new statistical programmes', emphasising that in the past it had merely been informed of the work carried out by the Statistical Office. This was to be the starting point for a new type of relationship between Eurostat and Parliament which, for quite a while, lent support to Eurostat in budgetary decisions.

When he retired at the end of 1982, Aage Dornonville de la Cour was replaced by Pieter de Geus, from the Netherlands. Pieter de Geus was a virtual unknown in the world of statistics but had a good reputation as a manager. He had been Minister of Defence for a few months in a transitional Dutch Government and efforts were being made to find him a position within an international institution. After a few months spent in the Cabinet of the Dutch member of the

Commission, Karl-Heinz Narjes, Pieter de Geus was appointed Director-General of Eurostat from December 1982.

When he took up his post, Pieter de Geus found that the organisational situation at Eurostat had deteriorated badly. The post of Director, left vacant by the departure of Helmut Schumacher, was still not filled as were several vacant positions for Heads of Division. Thanks to his personal contacts at the Commission, Pieter de Geus succeeded in filling in some of the gaps. The post of Director was awarded to a new arrival from Greece, Photis Nanopoulos, Greece having become the Community's 10th Member State in 1981.

The new Director-General brought in Annette De March to run his secretariat, kept George W. Clarke as Adviser and Alain Biron as Assistant (he had been appointed to this post by Aage Dorniville de La Cour in 1981), and reorganised his entourage and the Eurostat directorates. Having noted that relations with the Directorates-General in Brussels had become very strained over the previous years and that Eurostat had become a 'foreign body' within the Commission, Pieter de Geus attempted to strengthen the Liaison Office by elevating it to the level of a division (A3) and giving it the requisite resources. What he failed to anticipate was the opposition of the Luxembourg Government which refused to give its approval that a Head of Unit post leave Luxembourg for Brussels,

The organisation of Eurostat in 1983 — directorates and units

Directorate A — Processing and Dissemination of Statistical Information: Joseph Nols

— Processing (David Heath)
— Dissemination (François de Geuser)
— PR and management of studies and publications (Egide Hentgen)
— Data shop (in Brussels) (Letizia Cattani)

Directorate B — General Economic Statistics: Piero Erba

Adviser for Articles 64 and 65 of the Staff Regulations [1] *(Wil van der Weerden)*

— Economic accounts (Alain Chantraine)
— Regional and financial statistics (Raymond Salvat)
— Price surveys and consumer price indices (Hugo Krijnse-Locker)

Directorate C — External Trade, ACP, Non-member Countries and Transport: Silvio Ronchetti

— Methodology and classifications (Rolf Sannwald)
  • Methodology (Richard Kuhner)
  • Transport (Brian Wilson)
— Production (Gertrude Hilf)
— Analyses and development (David Heath)

Directorate D — Energy and Industry: Photis Nanopoulos

— Energy (Jean Darragon)
— Industry (Niels Ahrendt)
— Services (Cleto Simeoni)
— Iron and steel (Franz-Joseph Gnad)

Directorate E — Demographic and Social Statistics — Agricultural Statistics: David Harris

Adviser (Eric Snowdon)

Demographic and social statistics
— Employment and labour force surveys (Hildegarde Fürst)
— Wages and salaries, income and social protection (Gustav Löhmann)
— Population, education and social statistics (Joachim Wedel)

Agricultural statistics
— Agricultural accounts and structures (Alberto De Michelis)
— Agricultural balance sheets and products (Hans Georg Baggendorff)

[1] These are the articles concerning the method of calculating officials' salaries and weightings.

Richard Kuhner, Bernard Langevin and Bernard Eyquem at the party given for a colleague's departure (Jean Monnet building, 1982).

evoking the 1965 Treaty on merging the executive bodies and the assurances given by Raymond Barre, the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for the Statistical Office in 1968. It should be borne in mind that Luxembourg had not appreciated the cut in the number of A2 and A3 posts between 1980 and 1981 (upon the implementation of the Spierenburg report), especially since these posts had remained in the budget and had been allocated to other Commission directorates-general in Brussels. The Liaison Office remained a small-scale operation headed by Jean-Claude Liausu and a data shop was set up under the responsibility of Directorate A, with Letizia Cattani in charge.

→ *See 'The organisation of Eurostat in 1983 — directorates and units'.*

This reorganisation led to two main changes. Firstly, there was the creation of a directorate for dissemination and statistical information in order to highlight the importance of disseminating data to internal users and users outside the institutions. Also, in order to boost data dissemination in Brussels, where most of the internal users were located and where external users tended to seek statistical data, Eurostat set up its first data shop, headed by Letizia Cattani. The data shop would be housed in the 120 Rue de la Loi building, with its entrance on Rue Joseph III where it stands to this day. Secondly, and for the first time in the history of Eurostat, the new structure planned to do away with the Directorate for Agricultural Statistics. This decision was dictated by the desire to scale down the importance of agricultural statistics within Eurostat's structure, even though the CAP was still very important on a political and budgetary level. It was not very well received by certain NSIs, particularly those for which the CAP remained one of the cornerstones of the Community and which considered that the development of agricultural statistics offered essential technical support. It would not be until 1988 when Yves Franchet was to decide on Eurostat's next reorganisation, that agricultural statistics regained the rank of 'Directorate'.

From 1980 on, Eurostat launched a 'staff exchange programme' with the NSIs. The programme got off to a slow start as there was no solution to the problem of financing the secondment of Eurostat officials to the NSIs, even though resources for funding national officials were available in the Eurostat or in the Commission budget. Very few Eurostat officials applied to spend a few months in the NSIs and language problems did not make the situation any easier; there were plenty of volunteers who wanted to spend time in Paris (like Brian Newson) or in London (like Klaus Lohning), but Wiesbaden or Copenhagen were no great crowd-pullers.

However, towards the mid-1980s, a more successful initiative was the introduction of the 'seconded national officials (SNO) programme'. This proved to

be very useful on two counts: on the one hand, the national experts who came to work at Eurostat — often for lengthy periods — came to understand the workings of Community statistics; on the other hand, they brought to Eurostat fresh ideas, experience from out in the field and scientific knowledge which Eurostat's own officials lacked. The SNO programme was to develop and continues to the present day with a small change to the title (Seconded National Experts (END)).

Less than two years following his appointment as Director-General, Pieter de Geus handed in his resignation and returned to the Netherlands in September 1984, leaving Eurostat without a Director-General. The most senior Director by grade, Silvio Ronchetti, took on the post in the interim. In May 1984, in view of Pieter de Geus' impending departure and the difficulties looming on the horizon, the DGINS, at their conference in Germany (Schloss Reinhartshausen), had sent the Commission a statement affirming that 'given the specific nature of the post of Director-General of Eurostat, the DGINS emphasise that this post should be removed from the national quotas, in order that the criteria regarding competence in the field of statistics and in the field of management be given all due consideration'.

At the end of 1984, the Thorn Commission was drawing near the end of its term in office. In January 1985, under the new Delors Commission, Eurostat was removed from the portfolio of Commissioner Richard Burke and became the responsibility of Alois Pfeiffer. This transfer was to create even more confusion with regard to finding a replacement for Pieter de Geus: Richard Burke did not want to be involved in recruiting a new Director-General for Eurostat and Alois Pfeiffer had other priorities. When the matter of appointing a Director-General at Eurostat was to reach the table, the Commissioner would stall over three solutions: bringing in someone from outside, as had been the case with Jacques Mayer, Aage Dornonville de la Cour and Pieter de Geus; allocating it to a Director from one of the Commission's political services transferred from Brussels to Luxembourg; or giving the post to Silvio Ronchetti, the internal candidate. This situation was further complicated by the fact that the Italian members of the Commission were opposed to the appointment of an Italian at Eurostat as this would have implications for the balance of nationalities within the Commission. At that time, no country wanted an A1 or A2 post at Eurostat, which was considered to be of no political importance. Silvio Ronchetti's interim appointment was to drag on relentlessly. A petition signed by a number of Eurostat officials was sent first of all to Commission President Gaston Thorn and then to Jacques Delors. Some of Eurostat's senior management (Niels Ahrendt, Daniel Byk, Alain Chantraine and Alberto De Michelis), frustrated at the Commission's failure to take a decision, made a direct appeal to

Conference of the Directors-General of the National Statistical Institutes at Schloss Reinhartshausen in 1984.

Silvio Ronchetti, Director-General from 1984 to 1987.

Commissioner Alois Pfeiffer to put an end to the uncertainty surrounding the post, as this was weakening Eurostat's position both within the Commission and vis-à-vis the NSIs.

It would be another few months before the situation was resolved with the official appointment of Silvio Ronchetti, on 1 October 1985. But Silvio Ronchetti was due to retire soon, and when he took up the position, Alois Pfeiffer gave him the task of making arrangements for his successor who was to arrive in September 1987 with the appointment of Yves Franchet.

In September 1984, Ronchetti, acting Director-General, did not change the immediate entourage chosen by Pieter de Geus. He kept Annette De March in his secretariat, the ever-present George W. Clarke as Adviser and Giuseppe Calò as Assistant. The latter had been appointed by Pieter de Geus when Alain Biron left for Brussels. George W. Clarke had, after all, provided a measure of continuity since the Jacques Mayer era, through good times and bad. In representing Eurostat on the world stage at the meetings of international organisations, he had come up with ideas which were sometimes his and his alone, often very 'British', and at times open to criticism, but they had the virtue of being consistent. This was a very clever man who was both revered and feared at the same time and who continued to play a very important role in Eurostat policy.

The only change in Eurostat's organisation chart was the appointment of Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz as Head of the (IT) Processing Unit in Directorate A. There were no plans for changes regarding the post of Director of Directorate C, as Silvio Ronchetti's position was dependent on a decision by the Commission. Rolf Sannwald stood in as acting Director and would only be appointed *ad interim* once Ronchetti's appointment as Director-General was official.

Further work on the statistical programmes

The number of problems on the ground were to increase from all sides: in 1981, the census in the Federal Republic of Germany ran into problems following a judgment by the Constitutional Court; the future of external trade statistics after the completion of the single market; sign of a lack of interest in 1979 when the Commission decided that the statistical programmes would only be approved every three years rather than annually; the first in-depth discussions by the DGINS on the upstream or downstream harmonisation of Community statistics; the Community survey on the structure of wages.

We saw in the previous chapter that in 1979 the Commission had decided that it would no longer approve the statistical programmes each year, but only every three years. This was evidence of the lack of

interest shown by the College and the Commission member responsible for Eurostat in statistical work. A large number of directorates-general and particularly the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, the Directorate-General for Industry, the Directorate-General for Transport and others continued to criticise Eurostat's work, further annoying the Commissioner in charge.

In 1981, Eurostat reached the end of the fourth statistical programme for 1979 to 1981 which had been approved by the Commission in 1979. In May 1980, Eurostat proposed the general outlines of the fifth statistical programme covering the period from 1982 to 1984 to the DGINS Conference in Copenhagen. In 1981, the DGINS Conference met in Athens, as Greece had become the 10th member of the Community at the beginning of the year. The DGINS agreed on the fifth statistical programme but stressed that any new projects would have to undergo a budgetary evaluation before receiving final approval. This was a requirement which, at a time of limited resources, would appear more and more often before the DGINS for discussion. The sixth statistical programme (1985–87) was to be approved by the DGINS at the May 1984 conference in Schloss Reinhartshausen.

Let us take a look now at the content of these programmes which, in fact, were little different from those which had been previously approved.

In the area of macroeconomics, the work was centred on the revision of the SNA and the ESA which was due to start at international level. Eurostat was working on the accountancy of inflation, national accounts and the imputed output of bank services. In May 1982, the DGINS recommended that 'the ESA should be revised in the longer term, 1990, and its scope should be limited'. We all know what was to happen. The ESA-95 was approved 14 years later and implemented in 1998. Eurostat insisted that the NSIs' progress towards the adoption of the ESA as the national accounting method, as the Community system was only being followed by three countries — France, Italy and Luxembourg. There were worries about checking the quality and comparability of national accounts data, given the extensive use which was made of them in policy-making and particularly for dividing up regional and social funds. This issue kept cropping up in the agendas of NSI meetings, but was only really to be resolved through work on the gross national product (GNP) and the ESA-95 regulation in the 1990s.

In the field of social statistics, Eurostat suggested to the NSIs that the labour force sample survey, which had been biannual, be carried out annually. The NSIs accepted (with Denmark and the Netherlands against), provided that the questionnaire remain unchanged for a long period of time. The big issue from 1982 to 1985 was whether or not the Community survey on the structure of wages should be

retained. There were two opposing schools of thought at Eurostat: those who wanted it to be kept (Joseph Nols, Silvio Ronchetti, Piero Erba, Hildegarde Fürst) and those who thought it should be dropped (particularly Aage Dornonville de la Cour, David Harris and George W. Clarke). The Directorate-General for Social Affairs was more in favour of developing it, which sowed the seeds of discord among European statisticians given the consequences this could have for the survey budget — especially since the aforementioned directorate-general was asking increasingly for new statistics without making any financial contribution towards compiling them. This matter was discussed by the DGINS on two occasions: at Leeds Castle in 1983 and at Schloss Reinhartshausen one year later where the majority of the NSIs wanted this survey to be removed from the programme, with only France, Italy and Germany opting that it stay. These were the first very detailed discussions held by the DGINS on the upstream or downstream harmonisation of Community statistics. Statistics on wages and salaries were produced using different methods, and harmonised in terms of output and data presentation. At Heerlen (the Netherlands) in 1985, the NSIs held their first in-depth discussions on developing statistics dealing with poverty and income distribution. Edmond Malinvaud, Director-General of INSEE, emphasised to some of his more reluctant colleagues that 'statistics should evolve on a parallel with the emergence of new social phenomena and poverty is linked to the current economic crisis'. It was the duty then of European statisticians to meet the expectations of those taking policy decisions. It was following this very interesting discussion that poverty statistics were to become one of the major topics of Community social statistics.

Discussions were also held on how intra-Community trade statistics would be compiled after the removal of customs controls at the EU's internal frontiers. In Athens (May 1981), Eurostat put forward a proposal which was rejected by all the DGINS: to compile export statistics only and take these to be import statistics for the partner country. The underlying reason for the NSIs rejecting this idea was a lack of trust in the quality of the data produced by their colleagues across the border. Eurostat and the Committee on External Trade Statistics were given the task of coming up with 'more serious alternatives', in the belief that border controls and customs documents would not be abolished so quickly. When the Commission White Paper on the completion of the single market was approved in 1985 (Delors Commission) with the aim of abolishing all controls as of 1993, the DGINS, meeting in Palmela (Portugal) in May 1986, hurriedly issued a statement warning 'the national and international political authorities against presenting statisticians with a fait accompli through a decision taken at a political level (the abolition of border controls) which would make it impossible to collect the data they needed to continue to produce these statistics'. Eurostat wanted nothing to do with

this statement, which earned it some harsh words from the NSIs and the statistical departments of the customs services in the Member States for a certain while after. We will see all this later on.

In the field of external trade statistics, progress was made on classifications and in the introduction of the 'single document'. Work continued on the harmonised system and was to be completed in 1985 when a decision was taken by the Council of Ministers to bring it into force as of 1987. The work was conducted under the responsibility of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) and Eurostat was to defend the interests of statisticians, particularly when it came to retaining a reasonable number of Nimexe headings. The other main topic of discussion as part of the statistical programme was the 'single document' which the Commission intended to impose on the Member States as a first step towards completing the internal market. This was 1982. The Member States fought hard against this idea, the resistance being put up mainly by national statisticians who did not want to change their methods of collecting and compiling external trade data. The discussions within the Council, where major divisions had emerged between Member States regarding the Commission's proposals, worried the DGINS who asked Eurostat to stand up for the interests of statisticians. The arrival of Pieter de Geus changed Eurostat's tack, as it now played the role of 'honest broker' and managed to convince the NSIs of the political merits of the Commission's proposal, whilst refocusing the contents of the single document in order to take the needs of statisticians into account. The Council was to give its final approval to the single customs document in October 1992.

The May 1993 DGINS Conference at Leeds Castle was very important for energy statistics. Jean Darragon, who was temporarily in charge of the 'Agriculture and Energy' Directorate, pending the arrival of Photis Nanopoulos, had drawn up a programming document for the 1980s which was approved by the DGINS. The first thing that should be understood is that in most countries energy statistics were compiled by the competent ministries or trade associations. The DGINS were worried about this development, which was outside their control (particularly the data from private trade associations) and they agreed with Eurostat's proposals on regaining control in this area. The discussions identified four key priorities:

- energy balance sheets
- energy prices and price indices
- energy input-output tables, which had become less useful over the course of time
- a standardised international energy nomenclature.

None of this work was new, and some of it had been launched back in the 1960s and 1970s, under the responsibility of Kees Zijlstra, when the field of energy

was a Statistical Office Directorate. The Leeds Castle Conference gave it a fresh boost.

Following this meeting, an 'Energy' working group was set up by Eurostat which developed closer links with the International Energy Agency in Vienna from a position of strength in view of the backing it received from the NSIs.

In the field of agricultural statistics, the responsibilities of the NSIs in many Member States were limited to certain types of work. The majority of the data came from the Ministries of Agriculture which had large networks of agents who could act as interviewers in the different regions of the Community. The Directorate-General for Agriculture played an important role in introducing the statistical programmes as it did not hesitate to fund part of the work. Ejner Stendevad, a Dane who used to work for Eurostat, was Head of Division at the Directorate-General for Agriculture and filled the role of statistical correspondent. He played a key part in developing four large projects in the 1980s: the Italian plan (1981), the Greek plan (1985), the Portuguese plan (1984 and 1986), and the Irish plan (1988). These projects, which were decided on the basis of a Council decision, aimed to reorganise the whole system of agricultural statistics in these four countries, which were having problems in providing data of the quality required for the implementation of the common agricultural policy. Community funding was to be used to introduce a series of continuous surveys which would fill the statistical gaps identified in these countries. Despite a number of delays, there is little doubt that the plans played a fundamental role in improving agricultural statistics in these countries. The Directorate-General for Agriculture in general and Stendevad in particular continued to support Eurostat even in times of difficulty when the responsibility for agricultural statistics could have shifted from Eurostat to the Directorate-General for Agriculture. In November 1985, Guy Legras, Director-General of the Directorate-General for Agriculture, made a memorable speech to the DGINS Conference in Brussels, explaining to the Directors-General of the NSIs the part played by agricultural statistics in the process of European integration. This speech put an abrupt end to any conjecture about making drastic cuts in agriculture's standing within the Community statistical programme, as a number of countries wanted, whilst paving the way for an initial inventory and draft revision of these statistics, which was made the topic of the Maastricht seminar in 1987 (see special section on agricultural statistics). Between 1981 and 1985, the survey on the structure of agricultural holdings (1985) was overhauled on the basis of a Council regulation which also made provision for significant Community funding for the Member States. Work started on the Eurofarm project aimed at creating a database containing the main individual pieces of information from the structure of an agricultural holdings survey. Vineyard and fruit

trees surveys were carried out, preparations were made for a Commission decision on the classification of agricultural holdings and a start was made on research into measuring the total income of agricultural households.

Development cooperation had, since the 1960s, been an important but marginal field of activity in the Statistical Office's work programme. There had been few opportunities to discuss the technical assistance projects at DGINS Conferences as the number of NSIs involved was very small: mainly INSEE and to some extent the British CSO and the Statistisches Bundesamt. The NSIs of Spain and Portugal would become members only in 1986 but they had been involved in cooperation activities for a number of years. We previously looked at the actions which, towards the end of the 1970s, had been initiated by Eurostat in the African countries in particular. These programmes had grown at the beginning of the 1980s at the instigation of David Heath and Daniel Byk. In November 1983 in Brussels, the member of the Commission responsible for development, Edgar Pisani, came to the DGINS Conference to present the Commission's blueprint for development policy and he stressed the important role which statistics played in the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes implemented under the EC–ACP Convention. This was the first time that any member of the Commission, other than the member responsible for statistics, had taken part in a DGINS conference.

Looking at population statistics, it is necessary to take a step back into the past. Since the 1960s Eurostat had been striving for convergence in the dates of the 10-yearly population censuses and the content of the questionnaires, meeting with a polite but basically disinterested reception from the NSIs. In October 1972, the DGINS had taken the decision to synchronise census operations in March and April 1981. In 1975, the NSIs had agreed on common definitions, on the principle of conducting a census of Community nationals in each Member State and on the tables to be supplied to Eurostat. This was a limited success given the volume of preparatory work. In 1981, the census had run into problems in the Federal Republic of Germany, following a judgment delivered by the Constitutional Court on respecting the private life of citizens and the confidentiality of census data. In addition, there was a widespread increase in the number of problems encountered during field operations. At the conference in Schloss Reinhartshausen, each Director-General presented the lessons and conclusions to be drawn from the 1981 population census and they decided to investigate possible alternatives to censuses. Without much success.

We have already seen in the section on external trade that the harmonised description and coding

Statistical seminars from 1980 onwards

1980:
Collection and quality control of basic information in household surveys: Gijsbert Goudswaart

1980:
Community systems of statistics on wages and income: Gijsbert Goudswaart

1981:
Databases and problems related to disseminating the content of these databases via networks

1981:
Employment and unemployment

1982:
Regional accounts and statistics: Edmond Malinvaud

1983:
Recent developments in analysing large data sets: Edmond Malinvaud

1984:
Personal data protection, IT and progress in statistical documentation: George Als

1984:
Demographic censuses: Luigi Pinto

From 1985, the seminars took on other forms but continued to be organised on various topics of common interest.

system for goods and services was introduced to replace Nimexe after 1987. On the rest of the nomenclatures' front, Eurostat's main efforts were spent on working together with the United Nations Statistical Office and the Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva) in order to ensure the consistency of classifications of products and activities. In 1985, the UN and Eurostat finalised the integrated system of classifications of activities and products (ISCAP), the nomenclature which ensures correspondence between statistics on activities and products. The most serious problem in the first half of the 1980s was that of the impact which revising the external trade nomenclature and the implementation of the harmonised system would have on the revision of the SITC. The United Nations Statistical Office wanted to press on quickly with revising the SITC without waiting for decisions on the harmonised system. This would cause widespread confusion as some countries had already amended their industrial classifications to take account of the NACE and non-coordinated amendments to other nomenclatures could have resulted in delays in statistical operations and results which were not comparable between Member States. It would be the end of the decade before a solution was found to this problem following never-ending discussions between New York (UN) and Luxembourg (Eurostat) at meetings of the Statistical Commission, in specialist working groups or at the ACC Sub-Committee. The discussions were made all the more difficult by the fact that the positions held by the NSIs of the Community countries often tended to be far from consistent.

With regard to industrial statistics, Eurostat continued to do battle with the NSIs over the application of the 1972 directives on short-term trends and the structure of business. Some results were now beginning to appear, but it had taken more than 10 years. Eurostat's projects now included something new on the horizon: 'Services statistics'. The service sector accounted for more or less half of the Member States' gross domestic product (GDP) and the lack of statistical knowledge about this important sector was beginning to be felt. The Commission's departments responsible for industrial policy were pressuring Eurostat for harmonised figures for the whole Community. The NSIs were very reluctant to introduce a common programme, since everyone was aware of the scale of the project and the lack of resources — and eagerness — was putting a damper on national statisticians' enthusiasm. The first step forward in this areaa would not be until 1986, when the DGINS approved the first programme on services.

In response to a proposal from Eurostat, the DGINS Conference took the initiative in 1979 of organising one or two seminars every year on a statistical theme. The topics were decided by the conference, the seminars were chaired by a Director-General and they were organised by Eurostat with the assistance of the

NSI of the country in which they took place. The results were presented to the conference by the person who chaired the seminar.

→ *See 'Statistical seminars from 1980 onwards'.*

Finally, and at the request of the NSIs, in 1981 Eurostat started to run introductory seminars on Community statistics in Luxembourg. These seminars were aimed at new NSI officials. The first seminar was organised on 25–27 March 1981 and was attended by 44 statisticians from all the NSIs. This initiative was a huge success and the seminars are still being run to this day.

Distributed computing and the arrival of personal computers

The personal computer: a revelation. A good number of officials happily took work home to process data with their own software ... a certain anarchy, but very imaginative and effective!

The mid-1980s was a turning point in the work of Eurostat: personal computers made their appearance and spread rapidly. We have seen that the 1970s and early 1980s were the era of the computer centre, large central computers and a network of terminals. IT was an arm of the Directorate-General for Administration and the processing of statistical operations was not a priority: officials' salaries, management of the budget and general documentation often took precedence over statistics, much to the dismay of Eurostat. Since the mid-1970s Eurostat had been asking, without success, for its own independent computer centre. We saw previously that the Secretariat-General was opposed to this solution (Lambert-Verheyden report), but asked the CDIC (Management Committee for Data Processing in the Commission) to ensure that the computer centre gave priority to statistical work. Throughout this period therefore (early 1970s to mid-1980s), the division responsible for designing Eurostat's computer tools (Marcel Mesnage then David Heath) had focused its activities on developing statistical software and databases for the processing and dissemination of data. Management of the computers was still, however, centralised. The successes were limited, however, by the difficulties which Eurostat services encountered whenever they tried to use the tools developed by their in-house IT staff on the central computer. In addition, as Marcel Mesnage pointed out, the false dawns of the European industry could sometimes have a major impact on the speed and reliability of the development of programs, particularly due to the prohibitive cost of converting applications on incompatible European equipment which quickly became obsolete.

The turning point began with the spread of PCs. At the start of the 1980s, Microsoft and Apple found converts amongst Eurostat statisticians who, for their own personal use, started buying their first PCs primarily

January 1981: Opening of the Cronos-Euronet by Simone Veil, President of the European Parliament.

from Hi-fi International, a specialist shop which in the course of a few years would become a real treasure trove in Luxembourg. PCs were a revelation: many officials would happily take work home to process data with software they had found on the market or developed themselves. It was, of course, anarchy, but an imaginative and, in some cases, very effective anarchy which forced Eurostat to ask itself questions about the development of distributed computing throughout its services. We have seen that the Director-General of Eurostat had been a member of the CDIC since it was set up in the 1970s. Pieter de Geus suggested to the Committee that Eurostat be chosen as the Commission's pilot service for the introduction of PCs. Although the principle was accepted, the problems began when it came to buying the equipment; Eurostat had no say whatsoever in the procedure and was obliged to follow the decisions taken by the Directorate-General for Administration which was responsible for all invitations to tender and purchasing. As was the case with the first large computers in the 1970s, with the changeover from mechanical techniques to IT, these decisions were based more on political criteria (priority for European products) than on managerial criteria (reliability and effectiveness of resources). The result was sub-optimal — to use a euphemism — and initial experiences were far from conclusive, and all the more so because the scarcity of statistical data processing software packages on the market meant that every good Eurostat official would take pleasure in developing ad hoc tools without any internal coordination. This was therefore the start of a period of creative disorder, and it would not be until the mid-1990s, when Yves Franchet and Alain Chantraine got to grips with the problem, that the situation improved.

The dissemination policy and Cronos on Euronet

In the early 1980s, Cronos handled the dissemination of around 700 000 time series. A wealth of well-structured information, but not always very up to date.

In the early 1980s, Cronos handled the dissemination of around 700 000 time series. Many non-institutional users wanted to access this wealth of well-structured information, even if it was not always very up to date.

At the same time, the Commission had started to develop its information market policy, and there was a place for statistics in this policy. This database was used both for preparing a number of Eurostat publications via the Osiris table generator and for disseminating data to the Commission services in Brussels.

From 1981 onwards, Eurostat aimed at two types of external users: privileged users (mainly the NSIs and the national ministries) who were linked to the central system, and the general public. To service these latter 'clients', Eurostat launched an invitation to tender in 1980 to use the services of the Euronet telecommunication network servers. Two companies were chosen: the CISI (Compagnie internationale des services informatiques) in Paris and Data Centralen

from Copenhagen. Some 400 000 of the existing 700 000 series were thus disseminated via Euronet in order to protect the confidential nature of certain statistics.

→ *See 'The main fields covered by Euronet in 1981'.*

First attempts at planning activities: Statistical programme analysis of resources (SPAR)

IT, personnel, study and mission appropriations, meetings, and so on were all activities managed by different units where resources were squandered. The principle of effective centralisation had not yet entered the management culture at Eurostat in 1982.

In late 1982, when the reins were being passed from Aage Dornonville de la Cour to Pieter de Geus, Eurostat looked into the problem of coordinating certain activities which were managed by different units resulting in a huge waste of resources: IT, personnel, study and mission appropriations, meetings, and so forth. This may seem absurd nowadays when coordination activities are centralised at directorate level, but at the start of the 1980s, this principle had not yet entered the management culture at Eurostat.

George W. Clarke, Adviser to the Director-General, launched the SPAR project with the aid of Egide Hentgen (Head of the Division for 'Public relations and the management of studies and publications') and David Heath (Head of the 'IT management' Division). The document presenting this project dated 5 August 1982, betrayed a reluctance to introduce proper coordination: 'integration of all resource planning ... may not be necessary'. The proposal was simply to plan certain actions at a central level in order to help the Director-General take decisions. In short, it was rather a timid approach.

SPAR was therefore launched in 1983 on activities from 1982: it was based on some existing tools such as centralised information held by the Director-General's secretariat on missions and meetings or Promos, an IT programme which gave information on manpower and equipment requirements per project. The aim was to calculate the percentage of various types of resources (human resources, appropriations, missions, meetings, equipment, etc.) which had been required to carry out each project.

SPAR was not a success: the management culture was still an alien concept to the vast majority of Eurostat officials. It did, nonetheless, play a useful role in getting Eurostat staff to start thinking about these modern management tools which would only really get going in 1990 with the statistical programme monitoring system (TBPS) and activity-based management (ABM).

The main fields covered by Euronet in 1981

— General statistics (prices, unemployment, etc.)
— Industry
— Energy
— Research and development
— Agriculture and fisheries
— National accounts
— Associated countries (ACP)
— External trade

Transition and resurgence

Europe came to life again under the Delors Commission.

The objective was the single market, which was good news for Europeans and a challenge for statisticians. The demand for high-quality statistics rose sharply.

The European statistical system took shape as its component parts and tools led to better preparations and improved the decision-making processes, for example, the SPC, CEIES, CMFB, 'comitology'. The statistical programme became a legal instrument which was more tailored to Community policies and had an allocated budget.

Internally, Eurostat's structure underwent continual revision and modernisation with Yves Franchet, the new Director-General, at the helm. The Management Committee pitched together working on all files as they came up.

On 7 November 1989 Europe was to experience its happiest hour since the end of the Second World War. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the continent was no longer divided. The Phare and Tacis programmes paved the way for intensive cooperation among statisticians.

Poster to promote Eurostat publications (design: Alphonse Hutsch).

1985>1991

From 1985 to 1991

A new Commission

On 3 January 1985, the Delors Commission took office, reread the Treaties of Rome and put them into practice. The single market needed one currency and this single currency should lead to the Union; from vicious to virtuous circle.

On 3 January 1985, as Eurostat officials wished each other a happy and successful new year in their various languages, they were aware that a new Commission had just taken office in Brussels, where its members were getting to know each other and looking forward to the next five years.

What these Eurostat officials did not know was that their life was about to change.

The Delors Commission began to divide up the dossiers. Jacques Delors had arrived with the credentials of a former finance minister, but he also had a reputation for being thorough and serious. François Mitterand had come to an agreement with Helmut Kohl on his appointment to the Brussels post, which was great news for the process of European integration.

The responsibility for Eurostat fell to Alois Pfeiffer, a German member of the Commission who was also in charge of economic affairs.

One of the first actions by the new Commission was to develop a strategy to revitalise the Community. Several options were available: monetary union, European defence, political union. The strategy adopted was much more realistic: to reread the Treaties of Rome (particularly the EEC Treaty) and put them into practice. Thus began the task of listing the obstacles which still stood in the way of a genuine 'common market'. Once this single market was completed, it would very quickly become clear that Europe needed one currency and that this single currency would lead to a political union which would then need to be defended: the seemingly vicious circle was now virtuous!

Statisticians' concerns

Internal customs would disappear with the single market, but customs officials collected the information required to compile intra-Community trade statistics. Put customs officials into statisticians' uniforms so that they do not leave their posts!

The fall of the Berlin Wall, an event for Europe.

Visit of Professor Vilares, new Director of the National Institute of Statistics, Portugal.

One of the more visible obstacles to the free movement of goods was the existence of internal customs in the common market. The Commission very quickly therefore took the decision to abolish them. A further justification for doing so was the fact that internal customs duties had disappeared and that customs posts were primarily a VAT administration at the national borders.

However, customs officials collected the information required to compile statistics on intra-Community trade in goods. There was unrest in the corridors of Eurostat: all the different services (agriculture, industry, national accounts, balance of payments and, of course, external trade statistics) were on the alert.

The first months of 1985 were hectic. The tense atmosphere gained another notch on 1 July 1985 when the Commission published its White Paper on the completion of the internal market. One paragraph was devoted to intra-Community trade statistics: statisticians just had to get themselves organised and why not carry out some surveys!

In Heerlen in May 1985, the DGINS Conference continued along the lines of 'business as usual'. On the menu, there was just the one main course: new peripheral statistics such as poverty and income distribution, high technology, international trade in services, or items such as the hidden economy or the environment. All these topics would occupy statisticians for at least the next 20 years and each was more interesting than the last, but they did not for one instant correspond to the pressing needs of the moment. This was still an era in which statisticians lived on a different planet from politicians: Eurostat was busy competing with international institutes such as the United Nations Statistical Office or the OECD.

And Eurostat complained that it was not being taken seriously by the new Commission.

The appointment of a Director-General was at the bottom of its pile of dossiers. Eurostat officials then sent Jacques Delors a copy of the petition they had previously addressed to Commission President Gaston Thorn (see above).

Having been given the task of promoting this dossier to further up the pile, the Commission took the wise decision to make Silvio Ronchetti's appointment as Director-General permanent. From 1 October 1985, Silvio Ronchetti was approaching the age of retirement, which gave the Commission time to reflect on its plans for Eurostat. Given the communication problems which existed between sectoral directorates-general which had urgent needs and a Eurostat which was already dreaming of the 21st century, the pressure was piling up in Brussels for statistics to be organised along UK lines, meaning a demographic department and statistical digests directorate in Luxembourg with sectoral statistics

being spread across the so-called 'operational' directorates-general in Brussels.

Advocates of this idea had not, however, placed Silvio Ronchetti into the equation. He had set himself three priorities for his two years in office: to defend the unity of European statistics in opposing this idea of decentralisation, to strengthen the internal structure of Eurostat, and to find a capable successor who would finish the job of reshaping Eurostat. History will show that he managed to achieve all these objectives.

A transitional Director-General

The study group report on Eurostat's priorities for 1986 was a corporate plan in all but name. Its ideas would take root: the CDIS, the CEIES, a service attitude vis-à-vis the directorates-general, a more managerial working method, new methods of financing and burying the idea of splitting Eurostat up into tiny parts across the Commission. Another innovation was the new method of recruiting the next Eurostat Director-General: press advertisements.

In the corridors of Eurostat, Silvio Ronchetti was often compared to Pope John XXIII: good-natured and open to everyone, he was also a hard worker who was conscious of the tasks he had to fulfil and the little time he had in which to achieve them.

Already during his time as acting Director-General, Silvio Ronchetti had sought to ensure continuity at Eurostat and reach a good understanding with his fellow directors. One of the problems he had to cope with was the departure of a number of directors and heads of unit who had left — some taking early retirement — when Spain and Portugal joined. In April 1987, a Portuguese Director, José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao, was brought in to replace him at the head of the External Trade Statistics Directorate and Alain Chantraine took on the post of head of IT and dissemination vacated by Joseph Nols. Some 15 years before this became compulsory at the Commission, he also created a Resource Management Unit which would later be headed by Alberto De Michelis.

The life of a Director-General can also sometimes present unexpected challenges. Palmela, for example, where the DGINS Conference met in May 1986 will always remain in the minds of those who took part or were closely involved.

The events bordered on psychodrama as it almost looked as if the directors-general were organising a putsch. A real baptism of fire for the new Director-General!

And what an introduction for the two countries — Spain and Portugal — which had just joined the Community.

Eurostat had started to look into the alternatives to customs documents for recording imports and exports as part of the implementation of the White Paper on the single market. It had reached the conclusion that

Silvio Ronchetti and the group of colleagues leaving on early retirement at the time of the joining of the new member countries in 1986.

Annette De March and Silvio Ronchetti on the occasion of the Eurostat dance at the casino in Mondorf on 30 October 1986. A tradition which unfortunately died out …

the approach to adopt would be to collect information directly from importers and exporters. Even back then, some strategists had already thought of the solution which (in my personal opinion) was — and is — the most intelligent and economical one: to collect data on export flows only.

Shock! Horror! There would still be a need for information which was as detailed and reliable as that provided by the customs authorities. Collecting the data from enterprises would result in massive costs for these enterprises and the statistical institutes — those States which were islands would not be able to determine the origin of goods on the one ship — a single document was to be introduced in 1988 only to be scrapped in 1992, and so it went on. Any argument would do to keep customs officials in their jobs, even if it meant asking them to put on a statistician's uniform! A statement, which Eurostat refused to put its name to, was to be drawn up by the directors-general and sent to Alois Pfeiffer at the Commission. This statement urged the political authorities not to present statisticians with a fait accompli and make it impossible to collect statistics on intra-Community trade. Fortunately, the statisticians did not manage to scupper the single market and Intrastat could begin to take shape.

In May 1986, in order to clarify the situation for his successor, the Director-General set up a study group to look into Eurostat's medium- and long-term priorities. This group was made up of Piero Erba, Photis Nanopoulos, Alain Chantraine and Alberto De Michelis. All the directors and heads of unit contributed to its findings. Having heard of this project, the member of the Commission, who was still unsettled by the outcome at Palmela, asked for the group's report to be sent to him. He particularly wanted to examine the match between Eurostat's priorities and its resources before he presented the next statistical programme to the Council in mid-1987.

The study group report contained the seeds of a number of ideas which would take root over the years to come: the CDIS ([1]), the CEIES ([2]), a service attitude vis-à-vis the directorates-general, a more managerial working method, financing some of the work from the Commission's operating budget. It was, in fact, a corporate plan in all but name. Other ideas would not get off the ground: statisticians have always been dreamers.

The effect of this report was, nevertheless, to kill off once and for all the idea of splitting Eurostat up into tiny parts across the Commission, by giving the green light to preparations for the next statistical programme and providing coherent guidelines for the development of Community statistics.

Another saga would run during the period from 1986 to 1987: the recruitment of the next Eurostat Director-General. It has been seen that it had become something of a ritual to draw the Commission's

([1]) Steering Committee for Statistical Information.

([2]) European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres.

attention to the importance of ignoring any national quotas in appointing a competent Director-General. Back in 1977 and 1984, the DGINS had already sent resolutions to the Commission. They took this course of action again in November 1986 and appended a request that they be consulted on the choice made by the Commission. The Commission would have none of it.

It is also worth remembering that Eurostat officials had, for their part, sent a petition to the Thorn Commission and to the Delors Commission.

Having exhausted all internal avenues, the Commission used a procedure which was 'innovative' at the time: to recruit a Director-General via the press. Hopes started to rise again as the Commission publicly declared its intentions, which guaranteed the success of the operation.

With the exception of a few cranks who were well off the mark, the response to this press announcement produced an interesting list of candidates, one of whom had to be the right person for the job. A range of nationalities was represented, although French and UK nationals were most in evidence.

A certain Yves Franchet had made a very good impression at the first interview. Whilst his origins were at INSEE, where he had been a former Director of the National School for Statistics and Economic Administration (ENSAE), he had left the world of pure statistics a number of years before and had held a number of posts with the World Bank. He was then working in Washington in a top management post at the Inter-American Development Bank. Looking back, it is quite conceivable that if, as they had requested, the DGINS had been consulted, Yves Franchet would not have been the favourite.

Nonetheless, after boosting passenger figures on the Washington–Brussels route by calling him for a number of interviews to make sure of its choice, the Commission appointed him Director-General. On 1 November 1987, the Washington–Brussels–Luxembourg flight brought Eurostat's new Director-General back home to Europe.

Yves Franchet, Director-General since 1987.

Managing change

When Jacques Delors' term of office was renewed in 1989, statistics went to Henning Christophersen, the first member of the Commission to attend regularly DGINS meetings and pay frequent visits to Eurostat. Also in 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall. A political challenge for Europe, but a challenge too for Eurostat and the NSIs.

Yves Franchet's first few years at Eurostat can be characterised as a time of change, be this internal (and managed) change or external.

Silvio Ronchetti had infused some new blood into the Eurostat management team, with the appointment of

7 November 1989: the Berlin Wall comes down!

two new directors. The enlargement of the Community had provided an opportunity for a number of top officials to take or make plans for slightly earlier retirement (Joseph Nols, David Harris, George W. Clarke, Egide Hentgen, Rolf Sannwald). The post vacated by David Harris was to be allocated to the Spanish, and it would be filled not long afterwards by Yves Franchet with the appointment of Fernando Alonso de Esteban to social statistics. Lothar Jensen was to take up the post of Assistant to the Director-General and Alberto De Michelis would become adviser (charged with programmes, the budget and external relations). This was a well-tuned management team: most of its members were under 50, could offer complementary skills and were of different nationalities. In short, it was a tight-knit team that was likely to be in place for a while, which was a vital asset for managing the changes sought by everyone at Eurostat.

Over this period, a number of the 'leading lights' amongst the directors-general of the national statistical institutes would also change: in France, Jean Claude Milleron replaced Edmond Malinvaud; in Denmark, Hans Zeuthen replaced Niels Verner Skak-Nielsen; Egon Hölder replaced Günter Hamer a little later in Germany, and a new structure was introduced in Italy, with Vincenzo Siesto representing ISTAT at meetings of the directors-general.

Changes also took place within the Commission. With the death of Alois Pfeiffer, the member of the Commission responsible for Eurostat, his dossiers were handed over to Peter Schmidhuber who had been appointed to complete Pfeiffer's term of office. A former Eurostat employee, Hugues Baker, was put in charge of the statistical dossiers within the new Cabinet, and this started to help improve the links with Brussels.

In 1989, Jacques Delors' term of office as President of the Commission was renewed and responsibility for economic and financial affairs and statistics was given to a Dane, Henning Christophersen, who was also Vice-President of the Commission. As an economics professor and former Finance Minister, Henning Christophersen had an interest in statistics, which, for him, was a dossier in its own right and not just a chore he had to accept.

His Nordic management ethos would remain in the memory of all Commission officials who were trained in time management when he was in charge of personnel administration. The Statistical Office learnt that he himself knew how to manage his time because he was the first member of the Commission to regularly attend DGINS meetings and he visited Eurostat with no less frequency. The signs in Brussels also looked promising.

In 1989, the geopolitical situation in Europe was to be turned upside down with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Germany was unified and one by one the countries of central and eastern Europe reclaimed their autonomy

from the Soviet Union. This was a political challenge for Europe, but on a smaller scale it was also a statistical challenge for Eurostat and the NSIs.

Laying the foundations of the European statistical system

The European statistical system, the structure for managing European statistics, took shape: the SPC, 'comitology', the Committee on Statistical Confidentiality, the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance-of-Payments Statistics. And to cap it all, the 'statistical law'. Modelled on the National Statistical Councils, the European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres (CEIES) is born at European level. The rebirth of economic and monetary union in 1989/90 results in substantial improvements in the economic and financial indicators required to monitor the convergence of economic policies.

In order to cope with the demands of the single market, statistics needed to be organised in a more formal fashion with the introduction of decision-making structures. The dominant working method up to that point had been primarily based on the goodwill of internal parties at the Commission and in the Member States. This worked for six countries, but became more difficult with 12 when there were greater demands to be met in terms of reliability and speed. In order to consider these issues, a major seminar on the future of the European statistical system was organised in Brussels in April 1989, and Jacques Delors and Henning Christophersen took a very active part. They encouraged statisticians to coordinate their activities with all other actors on the economic and social stage.

The period from 1989 to 1991 therefore saw the birth of the various committees which would involve different partners in the process of programming statistical work in each of their individual fields.

Within the Commission, there was a need to manage priorities and resources. The Commission's new lease of life in all policy areas of the Treaties meant that a discussion forum was needed in order to list the requirements of the different Commission directorates-general, prioritise the different demands and determine how the projects would be carried out. To this end, the Commission set up the CDIS (Steering Committee for Statistical Information at the Commission). Twice a year, the CDIS sought to bring together the top management (of at least Director level) of the directorates-general to examine developments in the statistical programme. The CDIS worked well for two or three years. Eurostat was taken seriously and the directorates-general played the game. After a few years, a certain weariness with the same demands being made time and again by the directorates-general led to the CDIS becoming less representative and interest in the discussions waned. To Eurostat's mind, the CDIS

April 1989, a seminar on the future of the European statistical system is held in Brussels.

From left to right: Jean Rippert, Georges Als, Jacques Delors, Yves Franchet, José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao, Alain Chantraine.

The Women's Organisation Committee around Raymond Salvat.

The CEIES

The task of the Committee, as set out in Article 1 of Council Decision 91/116/EEC of 25 February 1991, is to assist the Council and the Commission in coordinating the objectives of the Community's statistical information policy, taking into account users' needs and the costs borne by the information producers.

The proposal for the CEIES was made by Jacques Delors and Henning Christophersen at a seminar in April 1989 on the future of the European statistical system. It is made up of the DGINS and representatives of all spheres of economic and social life in Europe.

It is chaired by the member of the Commission responsible for statistics and the Vice-Chairman is a leading figure from outside the Commission. Its three Vice-Chairmen have been: Professor Patrick Geary (Ireland), Karen Siune (Denmark) and Joachim Lamel (Austria).

It meets in plenary session in November of each year.

Its sub-committees organise open seminars three or four times a year on topics of importance to European statistics (see Eurostat's Internet site: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat).

Its work has had a significant influence on the Commission's five-year statistical programmes.

was also supposed to replace the cumbersome interdepartmental consultation procedure on annual programming, but the Commission directorates-general did not go along with this simplification. The CDIS ended up running as a form of electronic forum rather than as actual meetings.

The DGINS Conference had also shown its limitations when it came to the process of statistical programming. The European institutions moved in a more legal direction by setting up the system known as 'comitology' to manage Community policies, as with 12 members it was becoming more difficult to work on the basis of 'gentlemen's agreements'. The Commission therefore proposed in 1989 to set up a Statistical Programme Management Committee involving the Member States. The regulation setting up the SPC (Statistical Programme Committee) was adopted by the Council on 19 June 1989. Given the workload facing the SPC, it was quickly decided that four meetings a year would be held to bring together the directors-general of the NSIs. The SPC worked very well from the outset and to this day it acts as an effective management board for the European statistical system. Following this significant reduction in its administrative workload, the DGINS Conference was then transformed into 'annual discussion seminars' on topics chosen in advance with the active involvement of national contributors.

In most European countries, the NSIs are advised by a supreme council on statistics, although their competences and powers differ widely from one country to another. There was no such body at European level. However, in introducing a more dynamic dissemination policy, Eurostat's objective was also to serve European society as a whole and the idea of a statistical council — which had been mooted in the past — resurfaced. As an aside, it should be said that the initial proposals for a statistical council had met with a very frosty reception from the Council of Ministers' legal experts, whose arguments were along the lines of 'there's only one Council in the Treaties and that's us!'

These were the origins of the European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres, which is better known by its acronym of the CEIES. Chaired by the member of the Commission responsible for statistics and co-chaired by a leading figure in European society, the CEIES brings together the DGINS, representatives of academia, the two sides of industry and the media, with a balanced breakdown of members by country and background.

In 1989/90, the Commission and the Council relaunched the dossier on economic and monetary union. The first stage called for substantial improvements in economic and financial indicators to ensure the convergence of economic policies. A large number of financial and balance-of-payments indicators were not produced directly by the NSIs,

but by the central banks. The Statistical Programme Committee had no authority over the central banks.

There were two possible solutions. The first was to throw in the towel and leave the central banks in control of managing this information, accepting all the possible risks of inconsistency. However, as Eurostat had invested a great deal of effort in coordinating the rest-of-the-world account with the balance of payments, and in incorporating financial accounts into the ESA (European system of integrated economic accounts), it opted for the second solution, which was to set up a coordinating committee between the statistical institutes and the central banks. This was a challenge, because there were but few countries where this cooperation was harmonious.

The Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance-of-Payments Statistics (CMFB) took up this challenge with gusto. The CMFB, which was set up by Council Decision 91/115/EEC on 25 February 1991 and brought statisticians and central bankers round the one table, surpassed all expectations in managing to run the statistical programme in its field effectively and without any lasting ruptures between two communities of statisticians who barely knew each other, even within the same country.

Events will later show how much it contributed to the successful introduction of the euro.

The Chairmen of the CMFB have been both central bankers and statisticians: Hans van Wijk, Bart Meganck, Wolfgang Duchatczek, John Kidgell, Raphael Alvarez, and Steven Keuning.

Managing the statistical programme and resources

The 1989–92 programme was a turning point in statistical programming as the statistical programme became a legal act; it was allocated specific budgetary resources for the first time; the Statistical Programme Committee featured in it; and the programme was strictly focused on Community policy requirements. As the old programmes had too often been just an excellent list of good intentions, the 'Statistical programme monitoring system' appeared in 1989: an effective programme management tool for some, 'big brother' for others.

The 1985–87 statistical programme as described in the previous chapter, followed its course, even though the White Paper on the single market had turned its priorities upside down. A fair number of fields, however, had not been touched.

The next programme was supposed to have covered the years 1988 to 1991. Because of the uncertainty about the future of Eurostat (see above regarding Alois Pfeiffer's query on priorities and resources) and the changes it was anticipating at the top, it was decided to adopt an interim programme for 1988 and leave it up to

the new Director-General to draw up the next programme for 1989 to 1992. The programme for 1988 was not just a continuation of the previous programme, but started to take into account the priorities identified by the Commission's new policy initiatives.

The 1989–92 programme was a turning point in statistical programming. The nature of the programming process and its incorporation into the decision-making and budgetary mechanism were significant innovations.

The statistical programme became a legal act: this time it was a Council recommendation and no longer just an informational document.

For the first time, it was allocated specific budgetary resources. Previously, statistical work had been financed from the Commission's general 'studies' budget. The 1989–92 programme, on the other hand, made provision for the creation of a 'statistical policy' heading in the Commission's operating budget. Over the years, it can be seen that the introduction of this heading has led to an appreciable increase in statistical resources to the benefit of Eurostat and the Member States. It was also the source of some internal management problems as the budgetary appropriations grew faster than the means to manage them.

As Eurostat was unable to carry out all the work itself, it had to call on help from the outside, which it found in the form of non-profit-making associations modelled on the legal status of the CESD. Training of European statisticians (TES) and Eurocost came into being. Eurostat also received help by subcontracting work to private companies. The chapter on 1997 to 2002 will look at the problems caused by this development.

→ *See 'Training of European statisticians'.*

Finally, the 1989–92 programme made provision for a special committee to be set up to manage it in coordination with the Member States: the Statistical Programme Committee (see above). The creation of this committee was not just important for the future, but it also marked the point at which statistics became part of the legal architecture in the process of building Europe. In order to have any chance of survival and receive funding, all new major projects had to be based on a legal act. This development was hotly disputed, as statisticians were not used to working in this way. Prior to 1990, there had been few statistical legal acts, and these had been concentrated in those fields where genuine common policies existed: agriculture and external trade. Some countries could see no advantage in having statistics controlled by legal experts. For other countries, on the other hand, this was a sine qua non for carrying out any new work. Within the Community institutions, this attitude also became the rule.

In basic terms, the programme was much more oriented to the needs of Community policies. The internal market was its key priority. This time round, statisticians accepted that physical borders would have to be removed within the Community.

The programme contained two draft legal acts which both related to Community standards. One was a draft directive on calculating GNP for the management of the Community's own resources. This directive came into force in February 1989.

All the Member States were to adopt a regulation on the general classification of activities: the NACE. For the first time, a general statistical standard became compulsory in all the Member States. The regulation was adopted in October 1990.

The programme had been drafted and followed up in close cooperation with the national statistical institutes, this being the era of 'programming missions'.

The Eurostat Director-General decided to visit all the national statistical institutes in the company of all his directors. In each country, the new management team spent two or three days getting to know the national statisticians and extending their knowledge of the different national statistical systems and management methods. These missions were of benefit to all those involved. The national statisticians felt that they were being listened to and understood for the first time in a long while. The missions were also of educational value for the Eurostat statisticians who could steep themselves in a wide range of statistical (and gastronomic) cultures that extended from the Nordic countries to the Mediterranean. Whilst a gastronomic classification may not have found its way into the annexes to the statistical programme, it certainly exists in their memories.

Internally, there was also a need to tighten up management of the statistical programme. The old programmes were too often no more than excellent lists of good intentions. Within Eurostat units, once the programme had been adopted, it disappeared into a cupboard and the work went on as before.

When the study group on resources and priorities had been set up in 1986, Eurostat had already become aware of its lack of internal management tools. Few projects had a formal structure and little was known about who did what and with which resources. The documentation collected with some difficulty at this time was used as the basis for introducing the outlines of a programme management tool 1989/92: the TBPS (statistical programme monitoring system). Within Eurostat, there was almost an uprising: statisticians were being asked to justify whether their projects tallied with the policy objectives, to give a detailed description of their objectives, and to allocate their colleagues' time and their budgetary resources to the various projects. They saw this as 'big brother' bursting into Eurostat.

The reorganisation of Eurostat

After the arrival of Yves Franchet, the 'Directors' meetings' became a 'Management Committee' which would work on a

The Management Committee in 1989.

Training of European Statisticians

by Rudolf Teekens, Director of the TES Institute

In 1989, well before 'lifelong learning', 'learning organisations' and 'information society' became fashionable, the European statisticians took the view that their, what they then called, 'professional' training was a necessary ingredient for sustained statistical development. After receiving positive advice from a group of wise men, consisting of Jean-Jacques Droesbeke, Robert Loynes, Phillipe Tassi, Manuel Vilares, Willem de Vries and Alberto De Michelis, the SPC gave the green light to start a training project in 1989. In 1990, Eurostat gave the initiative a further boost by setting up a small team led by Rudolf Teekens and consisting of Alex Zivoder, Martine Corman and Inge Rommelfanger. This team was expected to set up the first annual training programme for the project 'Training of European statisticians (TES)'.

And thus it happened. After 10 hectic months of preparation when the team had to deal with 'Fifteen courses in search of a convener', the training programme started in April 1991 with the course 'The functioning of the EC and its statistical system'. This first training programme turned out to be something lasting. In spite of some mutual stubbornness, the chemistry between the old hand in European statistics and the applied academic seemed to work. During 12 years without interruption Eurostat, together with the Member States of the European Union and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) have sponsored annual training programmes for their own official statisticians and those of other countries.

Like many of the Commission's external activities, the TES project has led rather a nomadic life: from being initially housed by a private service firm, the foundling was given shelter by the CESD-Communautaire. After five years of rather peaceful co-existence, the Member States created an independent non-profit-making association (asbl), hijacking the acronym: the TES Institute, thus providing the organisation with much needed operational autonomy. This was not the end of its roaming life. When by the end of the 1990s, the Commission started a radical overhaul of its policy with regard to external activities and subsidies, it was time again for a change. In close consultation with Eurostat, the Member States of the EU and of the EFTA created an intergovernmental foundation that is scheduled to take over the activities of the TES Institute in 2004. The name of this foundation, 'European Training and Research Institute for Official Statistics (Etrios)' reflects the expansion of the target population beyond 'European statisticians'. On the threshold of the 21st century the trainees from EU and EFTA countries constituted only 50 % of all persons trained annually.

Also from a geographical point of view, the TES project can hardly be said to have had a sedentary existence. Since it started with three persons in a cosy two-room apartment in the residential quarter of Belair the team has moved five times to end up with 11 persons (not counting the pool of about 200 expert trainers) in a spacious office-cum-training-facility in Howald at the southern outskirts of Luxembourg town. Here the generosity of the Government of Luxembourg cannot go unmentioned. Since its creation in 1996, the TES Institute's office space is provided for free by the Government of Luxembourg; apart from the vicinity of Eurostat another good argument to keep the location in Luxembourg.

Since the beginning of the project until the creation of the TES Institute in 1996, the training activities were closely followed by a scientific committee.

During the first six years of existence of the TES Institute, its presidency has been assumed by the following illustrious statisticians: Pilar Martin Gúzman, Jan Plovsing, Timo Relander and Robert Weides. In Eurostat, the responsibility for the TES training programme remained with Alberto De Michelis until his retirement in 2000 when Photis Nanopoulos took the helm.

Here are a few words about how the training is conceived, organised and executed. The main partners of the TES Institute have always been Eurostat and the NSIs and universities. The NSIs and Eurostat have a dual role here, both requesting training for their employees and at the same time being reserves of expertise from which trainers can be recruited. This duality has been central in the partnership.

Obviously, Eurostat's main role has been to coordinate policy guidance and to define training actions in the realm of the European statistical system. The applied character of the training requires not only practitioners from the work floor but also a sound theoretical underpinning; a good reason why universities have been part of the network since the launch of the project.

Whilst training is not the main mandate of statistical offices, the TES Institute has come in as the partner which — under the watchful eye of Eurostat — organises the training courses, both with respect to academic content and training methodology on the one hand and all logistic arrangements on the other.

The TES Institute performs its other task, monitoring the quality of the training courses offered in its various programmes, through 'hot' evaluations by the participants at the end of the courses and by feedback from client organisations on the medium-term effect of training on the performance of the participants on the work floor.

From 1991 until the end of 2002 the 377 TES courses, seminars and workshops have attracted some 7 800 participants of whom more than 4 100 came from statistical offices in the European Union and the EFTA, about 2 100 from central European countries, some 600 from the Mediterranean basin countries and more than 600 from CIS countries.

TES courses have always been about exchanging experiences on how to apply theoretical concepts to solve day-to-day practical problems in the area of official statistics. It has been this formula which, together with a severe quality management, may be considered as the key to the survival of the TES Institute.

The Eurostat organisation chart in 1991 — directorates and units

Director-General: Yves Franchet
Secretary: Annette De March
Adviser (Programming, Budget, External Relations): Alberto De Michelis
- Programming (Klaus Reeh)
- Budget Management (Roger Linguenheld)

Assistant: Lothar Jensen
- Statistical Research (Daniel Defays)

Directorate A — Dissemination and Computer Processing: Alain Chantraine

— Computer Processing (Gilles Decand)

— Public Relations, Dissemination, Statistical Digests (François de Geuser)

— Information — Data shop (Letizia Cattani)

— Database Management and Publications (Roger Cubitt)

Directorate B — Economic Statistics and National Accounts, Prices, Coordination of Work relating to the Single Market: Piero Erba

— National Accounts (Enrique Lozano)
- Deputy (Marco De March)

— Statistical and Accounting Coordination, National Accounts Methodology (Brian Newson)

— Prices, Purchasing Power Parities, Correction Coefficients (John Astin)
- Correction Coefficients (Dino Gerardi)

— Financial and Monetary Statistics (Jörg-Dieter Glatzel)

— Nomenclatures (Adrien Lhomme)

Directorate C — International and Intra-Community Trade Statistics, Relations with Non-member Countries: José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao

— International and Intra-Community Trade Methodology and Classifications (Jacques Dispa)
- Specific Tasks in the Field of International Trade Methodology (Richard Kuhner)

— Compilation of International and Intra-Community Trade Statistics (Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz)

— Balance of Payments and Analysis of International Trade (Frank Schönborn)
- Methodology and Studies on Balance of Payments (Jean-Claude Roman)

— Relations with Non-member Countries (Thomas Scott)

— EFTA and Central and East European Countries (Klaus Löning)

Directorate D — Enterprise Statistics: Photis Nanopoulos

— Energy (Franz-Joseph Gnad)
- Deputy Head of Unit (Pierluigi Canegallo)

— Industry (Daniel Byk)

— Iron and Steel (Franz-Joseph Gnad (acting))

— Services and Transport (Marco Lancetti)

Directorate E — Social and Regional Statistics: Fernando Alonso de Esteban

— Employment and Unemployment (Hildegarde Fürst)

— Living and Working Conditions (Lídia Barreiros)

— Social Digests (Bernard Langevin)

— Regional Statistics and Accounts (Hubert Charlier)

Directorate F — Agricultural, Fisheries and Environment Statistics: David Heath (acting)

Adviser (in charge of coordinating Units 1, 2 and 3) (David Heath)

— Agricultural Accounts and Agricultural Structures (Giuseppe Calò)
- Deputy Head of Unit (Fritz Pfähler)

— Agricultural and Fisheries Products (Hans Georg Baggendorff)
- Deputy Head of Unit (Robert Peeters)

— Environment (Gertrude Hilf)

collegiate basis on all Eurostat dossiers. The role of the MIMAC: an information mechanism or a decision-making body?

As we saw earlier, Yves Franchet's initial period at the head of Eurostat was characterised by a certain number of changes among the directors. This also, over the course of time, had repercussions at Head of Unit level. New units were set up, particularly those handling cooperation with eastern Europe and the environment. Preparations were under way for reconstituting a directorate for agricultural statistics.

→ *See 'The Eurostat organisation chart in 1991 — directorates and units'*

It was not just the staff that changed, but also the working methods and internal communications.

After the arrival of Yves Franchet, the 'Directors' meetings' became a 'Management Committee', called the CD in internal jargon. This would not just be a change of name. The Management Committee was intended to work on a collegiate basis on all Eurostat dossiers. It met at a set time: every Monday at three o'clock. The Management Committee very quickly became Eurostat's internal decision-making body and the outcome of its discussions were eagerly awaited by all.

In order to properly prepare and provide information on the work of the CD, each Director would gather together his key players (heads of unit and others) just before or just after the Management Committee meetings. These directorate meetings ensured that there was a good circulation of information.

There was also a Heads of Unit Committee which had come into being more or less spontaneously prior to Yves Franchet's arrival and was known by its French acronym, COCU (cocu = French for 'cockold').

It was institutionalised under its more serious English acronym of MIMAC (Middle Management Committee).

The MIMAC met once a month to discuss issues of general interest to Eurostat. At regular intervals over a number of years, MIMAC would wonder about what role it should play. The Management Committee saw it as a body for providing information, whereas the heads of unit would have liked to upgrade it into a decision-making body. This was for the MIMAC a source of frustration, but above all it was a sign of renewed vigour at Eurostat: everyone felt involved.

Other internal coordination groups or task forces were set up. One of the more interesting innovations was the creation of the Allocation of Vacant Posts Committee (CAV). In any organisation, it is always very difficult to redeploy staff already in position. However, the new policy initiatives meant that questions had to be raised about some of the work carried out and the priority areas had to be strengthened. It was decided that whenever a post

became vacant (transfer, retirement, etc.), the unit which had this post should make it available to Eurostat as a whole. The CAV, after having spoken with the Head of Unit, would decide whether the post would return to the unit in question or be allocated to a project with greater priority. Over the months and years which followed, this system led to substantial staff restructuring. After a few years, of course, the possibilities for change dried up considerably.

The reorganisation of informatics

Drama at the Commission's Informatics Directorate at the beginning of the 1990s: Jacques Delors' Cabinet proposed that informatics (IT) be completely decentralised to the directorates-general.

At the beginning of the 1990s there was drama at the Commission's Informatics Directorate: having been informed of major difficulties in IT management at the Commission (the accounting system, personnel management system, etc.), Jacques Delors' Cabinet proposed that IT be completely decentralised to the directorates-general. There was still the problem of coordinating the information systems and managing the large computers, which had to remain centralised. Since these computers were located in Luxembourg, as was Eurostat (a main user), the Delors Cabinet thought it logical that responsibility for them be given to Eurostat. This was a very onerous task for Yves Franchet: to revitalise Eurostat and take charge of reorganising IT at the Commission. Before accepting the responsibility, Yves Franchet suggested to Jacques Delors that a more thorough organisational study be carried out and made available, and that the Informatics Director at Eurostat, Alain Chantraine, carry it out.

The study showed that decentralisation was desirable and possible. However, the tasks which had to be managed centrally at the Commission were far greater than the Delors team had imagined, so the problem remained of who would manage the central Informatics Directorate. A temporary solution was found by assigning it to another Director-General (Eddie Brackeniers) who had departments in Luxembourg: the Translation Service. Whilst this combination was not entirely logical, the advantage of this solution was that the Translation Service was running smoothly and required much less effort than Eurostat.

Decentralisation worked well for the Commission services, and was beneficial for Eurostat. It gained control over its IT resources and could organise its own 'distributed computing' in accordance with its specific needs. Also, it did not have to manage IT for the whole Commission, so it could continue to focus on its own work.

Looking east

7 November 1989: the Berlin Wall comes down. Statisticians react quickly as all the statistics in the new German *Länder* have to be adapted. This is not a matter of simple addition as the two systems were fundamentally different. At European level, there is the introduction of

Phare for the central and east European countries and Tacis which covers the former Soviet Union.

On 7 November 1989, the Berlin Wall came down: a symbolic date which marked the birth of a different Germany, and a different Europe.

Statisticians from the east and west of Europe had met each other over the years at the Conference of European Statisticians (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe). They lived, however, within two economic and political systems which existed side by side but had no links between them. The occasional east-west comparison programme on national accounts or prices was not enough to raise any hopes of aligning the systems, as the points of departure were simply too far apart.

In 1988 and 1989, a wind of change was blowing through the east. Poland, which had not forgotten the Solidarity movement, began to stir again. Hungary followed.

The Commission wanted to track these changes and set up the Phare (Poland-Hungary: aid for economic restructuring) programme. The first thing it needed to know was where to look for statistical information and what it was worth. Eurostat, together with INSEE and the Statistisches Bundesamt, sent a fact-finding mission to Poland in 1989 to look into possible aid for reconstructing its statistical system. This mission was followed in 1990 by a mission to Hungary. This was the start of a cooperation programme which would grow and grow. It would expand geographically, with Phare being extended to all the central and east European countries and technical assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (Tacis) covering the former Soviet Union. Its content would also be expanded: after an initial period of mutual information-gathering and training, projects of an increasingly specific nature would be set up. It will be seen that these projects have enabled the statistical institutes of those countries which will soon join the European Union to present top quality dossiers on adopting the Community *acquis* during the negotiations.

The fall of the Berlin Wall led to the unification of Germany, which meant radical changes to the geographical shape of one Member State. All its statistics had to be adapted and this was not a matter of simple addition as the two systems had been fundamentally different. Whilst this was primarily an internal German problem, it did also have certain repercussions for Europe. Firstly, all of the Statistisches Bundesamt's resources were trained on this task, making it impossible for Germany to undertake any new work at European level. Secondly, the European priorities for adapting various European statistics had to be incorporated. An internal working group had been set up at Eurostat to talk with the Statistisches Bundesamt about taking these priorities into account. In hindsight, it can be said that the statistical unification process went smoothly.

The fall of the Berlin Wall allowed the reunification of Germany. All the statistics had to be adapted! The statisticians of the German Länder *during a visit to Luxembourg.*

Love affair between the euro and statistics

Political developments in the 1990s all involved statistics:

the Maastricht Treaty planned for the creation of the euro, the Stability and Growth Pact set strict criteria monitored with the help of European statistics. The former Article 213 A of the EC Treaty and the 'statistical law' provided a legal framework for the European statistical system.

Eurostat, the mainstay of the statistical network, was to modernise, with a 'corporate plan' describing its raison d'être, mission, legitimacy and vision.

Cooperation between Eurostat and the NSIs was strengthened as objectives and tasks were mapped out more boldly. The statistical programmes contained clear priorities.

In 1998, Eurostat had a new home: the Bech Building.

Publicity campaign of the Commission for the euro in 1998 (illustrated by Albert Rocarols).

1992>1998

From 1992 to 1998

From Maastricht to Amsterdam

The Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992: the creation of a single currency; the creation of a European Central Bank. In 1993, the single market became real. Major steps forward for European statistics in 1997: the former Article 213 A of the EC Treaty. Statistics also featured on the list of policies which were to be subject to a co-decision by the European Parliament.

On 1 January 1993, the barriers were raised. From that date, goods and persons have been able to cross borders without having to stop. Capital had been slightly ahead of the game. Whilst it is still necessary to carry a few documents, such as a passport or Intrastat declaration, this is no great inconvenience. A former customs post between Luxembourg and Germany was even converted into a shopping centre!

The process of European integration marched forward without waiting for the next stage. On 7 February 1992, a new Treaty was signed in Maastricht.

The Maastricht Treaty set Europe on course towards the creation of a single currency, brought in the concept of European citizenship and the concept of subsidiarity, gave the Community new powers (environment, culture, education, consumer protection, trans-European networks) and planned to build two more pillars of European integration: police and justice and foreign policy and defence. Wary about the Commission's zeal, the Heads of State or Government nonetheless decided to keep these two new pillars under their control and manage them on an intergovernmental basis.

The Maastricht Treaty also included the process for setting up a European Central Bank, starting with the establishment of a European Monetary Institute and the European System of Central Banks and ending in 1998.

In May of that same year (1992), the Treaty on the European Economic Area was also signed, which affiliated all the European Free Trade Association countries — except Switzerland — to a certain number of Community policies. Austria, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein became new partners and the first three of these would join the Community family as full members in 1995.

Franz-Joseph Gnad, Head of Unit responsible for Relations with the EEA in 1992.

Conference of the Directors-General of the National Statistical Institute in Dublin in 1992.

The following years would be spent preparing for the introduction of the single currency. The new Commission under the Luxembourger Jacques Santer was wholly committed to this task from 1995 onwards. 'Mister Euro' in the new Commission was Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the member of the Commission responsible for economic and financial affairs — and for statistics.

In December 1996, the Growth and Stability Pact was added to the mechanism for managing the future single currency. One of its provisions was to underline the importance of budgetary discipline by the Member States.

In accordance with the plans made at the time the Maastricht Treaty was signed, a new Treaty was to expand upon some of the topics raised in 1995, but deferred to a later date so as not to slow down the process. This is a technique often used in the process of European integration: that of taking one small step at a time. A measure was adopted on matters where agreement has been reached and discussions continues on the next step.

The new Treaty on European Union was signed in June 1997 in Amsterdam. The Treaty institutionalised certain points which had only been touched upon at Maastricht, such as the three pillars of European integration or the introduction of new policies, and social policy in particular.

For statistics, it was a major step forward. They were given a separate article in the Treaty and they also featured on the list of policies which would be subject to a co-decision by the European Parliament.

→ *See 'The former Article 213 A of the EC Treaty (Article 285)'.*

Statisticians in the thick of the action

In the mid-1990s, statisticians and their indicators were put under great pressure: the EU's own resources are based on GNP and the Maastricht convergence criteria are used to determine which countries are ready for the euro. Two methods of getting below the 3 % limit for public deficit: reducing public expenditure and 'creative accountancy' … Harmonisation becomes the means of avoiding 'number wars'.

A quick read through the political events of 1992 to 1998 is enough to form a good idea of the huge amount of pressure statisticians were working under during this period. They were already used to statistical indicators being employed for the administrative management purposes of own resources based on GNP. The Maastricht Treaty added to this the now (in)famous Maastricht convergence criteria. Economic convergence prior to the introduction of the single currency was to be achieved through controlling public deficits and inflation. Public debt, interest rates, exchange rate fluctuations and the balance of payments were all to be monitored. It was

The former Article 213 A of the EC Treaty (Article 285)

'1. Without prejudice to Article 5 of the Protocol on the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank, the Council, acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 251, shall adopt measures for the production of statistics where necessary for the performance of the activities of the Community.

2. The production of Community statistics shall conform to impartiality, reliability, objectivity, scientific independence, cost-effectiveness and statistical confidentiality; it shall not entail excessive burdens on economic operators.'

the 'public deficit' and 'inflation' criteria which were to make the greatest demands of the European statistical system.

A protocol to the Maastricht Treaty laid down the arrangements for calculating public deficit and public debt as defined in the European system of integrated accounts (ESA). The denominator had to be harmonised. The immediate upshot of this was a proposal to the Council that the ESA become compulsory in each Member State as the only means of avoiding the 'number wars'. The ESA became Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 on 25 June 1996. As for examining government deficits, this would be a whole saga in itself.

→ *See 'ESA-95'.*

The efforts of the preceding years had never led to serious work on harmonising price indices: the national indices were too closely linked to national or contractual wage negotiations. By including the inflation rate amongst the strictest convergence criteria, the Maastricht Treaty was to make it essential to have greater harmonisation and an eventual solution to fundamental divergences, such as the inclusion of housing (rents, mortgage payments) in the price index. Eurostat therefore proposed the creation of a harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP). The new index was to be used as a convergence criterion and would perhaps even replace the national indices one day. A step-by-step approach was therefore used: phases laid down the items in the index which had to be harmonised, starting by resolving the simplest problems and finally achieving full harmonisation. The basic Council Regulation (EC) No 2494/95 concerning harmonised indices of consumer prices was adopted by the Council on 23 October 1995. The implementing decisions were to occupy price experts and the SPC for years to come.

It was not just the euro. Other policies either continued to develop or become established. Intrastat, for example, which was producing its first results, had to be radically upgraded. The Edicom programme helped in this. Eurostat had more resources available for improving Intrastat than for setting up the convergence criteria. The Commission's work was increasing in the fields of educational and vocational training, the environment, trans-European networks (transport, energy, telematic networks), migration, framework research programmes, and so on. Eurostat's work in those fields was to increase. Elsewhere, ambitious projects were being set up, especially in the industrial field with the Prodcom project and in the social field with the 'household panel' project.

The requests for statistical information kept coming from Brussels, while there was hardly any increase in Eurostat's resources. No end was in sight because, during this period, the Commission was preparing a complete revamp of the financing of its policies with

ESA-95 — The European system of national and regional accounts

by Alberto De Michelis

It was February 1993, and the UN Statistical Commission gave its definitive approval to the SNA-93. The revision of the world system of national accounts had been prepared for nearly 15 years by high-level experts — including Eurostat's Piero Erba and Brian Newson — under the responsibility of the intersecretariat group. The text took a long time to finalise, however, and it was only thanks to the energy and competence of Carol Carson, Director of the Bureau of Economic Analysis (US), appointed by the intersecretariat group, that the revision of the SNA was finally completed.

At the time of the first version of the SNA, in the 1960s, Eurostat had decided to draw up a 'European' version of the system of accounts which was more in line with its economic system. A team led by Vittorio Paretti and comprising Jean Petre, Piero Erba, Hugo Krijnse-Locker, Gustav Löhmann, Alain Chantraine, Letizia Cattani and other Eurostat officials, as well as high-level national accounts experts such as Vincenzo Siesto, André Vanoli, Günter Hamer, Frans Goevaerts and Kees Oomens, had prepared the first version of the ESA, which was to become the point of reference for European national and regional accounting. After the approval of the SNA-93, the second edition of the ESA prepared by Eurostat in the late 1970s had to be updated.

Eurostat took two decisions at the time. The first was to set up a team of experts under the responsibility of Alberto De Michelis and comprising Enrique Lozano, Jörg-Dieter Glatzel, Werner Thon, Marcel Ernens, Christine Coin, Christian Ravets, Werner Bier and Gian-Luigi Mazzi for the quarterly accounts. This team embarked on the revision of the ESA, taking the SNA-93 as its reference point, with the help of the 'National accounts' working party comprising the best national accounts experts such as Heinrich Lützel, Jean-Etienne Chapron, Steven Keuning, Enrico Giovannini, Mariano del Moral, Pedro Díaz Muñoz and Ann-Marie Bråthen. The new text was completed in 1995.

The second decision was to establish a regulatory basis for the revised ESA. What was the reason? Quite simply because, during the work on harmonising GNP — the Community's fourth own resource — Eurostat had found that most of the Member States were not using the ESA as a reference point for preparing accounts at national level, and the European system was being used only for transmission of the data to Eurostat. This method was introducing numerous distortions in the interpretation and application of the accounting rules and definitions, and was producing major differences in results between Member States. This was no longer acceptable since the national accounts were becoming the reference point for the application of a growing number of Community policies: economic and monetary union, own resources, regional policy, social policy, agricultural policy, and so on.

In June 1996 the Council approved the regulation proposed by Eurostat in 1995 after some additional technical discussions which improved the content of the ESA. The new 'system of national and regional accounts' was implemented from 1999 by the Member States of the European Union, the EFTA countries, and by all the candidate countries both for transmission of the accounts to Eurostat and as a basis for their national systems.

the adoption in 1998 of Agenda 2000, which was to influence work during the following period.

The Treaty on the European Economic Area (EEA) meant that the European statistical system had to work on a 'variable geometry' basis. When an item was discussed in the SPC, Eurostat had to get used to the idea of considering whether it was covered by the EEA Treaty. If so, it worked with 18 members. If not, it had only 12 members. Some 'oversights' led to diplomatic incidents at the first sittings, but the only consequence was to raise the temperature somewhat at the meetings. Over time, habits changed — but more slowly within Eurostat than in the SPC.

The European Monetary Institute, the European Central Bank and the Committee for Monetary, Financial and Balance-of-Payments Statistics

The European Monetary Institute (EMI), with its seat in Frankfurt, set up a statistical division and committee. A division of labour with Eurostat becomes established. The ECB's goad, 'If you don't do it, we'll do it ourselves!'

Two important lessons from the 'France Télécom' affair: the independence and authority of statistics depend on good communication between Eurostat, the NSIs and the central banks — and with the outside world, particularly the press.

The Maastricht Treaty had set up the European Monetary Institute and the European System of Central Banks to prepare for the single currency. Its seat was established in Frankfurt to mark its independence from the other Community institutions and at a reasonable distance from the Deutsche Bundesbank, on the model of which it was to operate. Like any new institution, the European Monetary Institute set up a statistical division and a statistical committee. To Eurostat, it was obvious that the Committee for Monetary, Financial and Balance-of-Payments Statistics (CMFB) was thus the proper body to organise cooperation with this new institution.

At the start, there was mistrust and more mistrust! Over time, however, cooperation became established. The head of the EMI's statistical service, Peter Bull, came from the Bank of England, which had a good record of cooperation with the Central Statistical Office. With the support of Alberto De Michelis and Dieter Glatzel, he managed to convince his colleagues within the CMFB: the field of activity of each of the partners must be properly delimited. It was obvious that duplication of work and contradictions between two institutions whose common objective was to make a success of a joint project had to be avoided. The price index and national accounts were the responsibility of Eurostat. Banking and monetary statistics were the responsibility of the central banks. Responsibility for the balance of payments and financial accounts was shared. If everyone stuck to their commitments, this division of labour would be adhered to.

Eurostat and the European statistical system were faced with a major challenge. When a need arose, the line adopted by the EMI and subsequently by the ECB was — albeit in more diplomatic terms — 'Tell us if you can do it, otherwise we'll do it ourselves!' For the European statistical system, this was a marvellous goad, which Eurostat put to good use to have its proposals accepted.

In the field of balance of payments, where cooperation with the central banks was a tradition, the division of labour functioned without major problems, and cooperation continued.

The challenge related much more to the price index and calculation of the deficit.

For the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP), a basic regulation ((EC) No 2494/95) was adopted by the Council on 23 October 1995 after long discussions in the working party and in the Statistical Programme Committee. And yet, work on implementation was only starting. A programme of work was established and a list of implementing decisions drawn up. A start was made with some initial measures and transmission and dissemination arrangements, before tackling one-by-one the problems of coverage, processing of new products, taking account of changes in quality, calculating weightings, and so on. For several years, the Statistical Programme Committee started all its meetings by adopting some decisions implementing the regulation on the price index which had been prepared by the working party. Thanks to the electronic forms for exchanges of views, the discussion was very short and it was enough to count the votes in favour, those against and the abstentions. Only once, after the system had been run-in, was there a mishap: the Director-General of an NSI did not vote as he had intimated, and the majority was reversed! The ensuing battle (appeal to the Council of Ministers after consulting the European Parliament on a highly technical point) was a lesson to everyone.

Finally, however, the challenge was met. The HICP was accepted both by the European Central Bank, which made it its reference index, and by the Member States. Some Member States even abandoned their old price index in favour of the HICP, which thus became the national reference. Events during this period were a help, as inflation dropped to very low levels. The differences in measurement between the Community and national measures could only be very small, and most countries had inflation rates far below the 2 % laid down by the Maastricht Treaty. The switch from one system to the other was proceeding painlessly.

As for the public deficit, the Maastricht Treaty and the stability pact set the limit at 3 %: to qualify for the euro, countries had to bring their public deficit down to below 3 % of their gross domestic product. Many countries were above that limit. They used two widely differing methods to get below the limit. The first involved balancing their books, mainly by reducing public spending.

Working lunch of the CMFB Executive Body in 1998.

The 'France Télécom affair': A night at the Bundesbank

by Enrico Giovannini

The importance of statistics in the process that led to the creation of monetary union has been widely recognised, before and after January 1999. However, only a few people know that the process was in danger of being interrupted for statistical reasons, and how this risk occurred. This is the story of what happened on a certain night in October 1996.

At that time, I was Director for National Accounts at the Italian Statistical Institute and one of the members of the Executive Body of the CMFB. At the beginning of October, the Committee was asked to advise Eurostat on a particular transaction which had occurred between France Télécom (FT) and the French Treasury. In particular, the problem was whether the payment made by the former to the latter (to pay the future pensions of FT's workers) would have reduced the public deficit or not.

After several discussions in the relevant Eurostat working parties, and following the procedure in force at that time, the CMFB advised in favour of recording the transaction as reducing the deficit, even though the opinion of its members was split nearly 50–50. In particular, several national central banks (NCBs) were against the proposed solution. Eurostat decided that the transaction concerned could be used to reduce the French public deficit, but this decision was strongly attacked by several financial analysts and newspapers. Articles were published quoting the famous phrase 'Lies, damned lies and statistics', and attacking the credibility of the statistics produced by Eurostat and by the entire European statistical system. For their part, senior representatives of some NCBs severely criticised the reliability of European statistics. An unscheduled meeting of the Executive Body was called, with only one day's notice, for the following evening at the headquarters of the Bundesbank in Frankfurt, to discuss the situation.

The meeting started after dinner and took place in the visitors' rooms, where we were locked in until the next morning. The meeting started with a harsh attack by NCB representatives against the way in which Eurostat had reached its decision, against the content of the decision, against the doubtful competence of the national statistical institutes (NSIs) which had voted in favour of the adopted decision, etc. At that point, they said, the credibility of the entire 'Maastricht process' was in doubt, and they announced the intention of some NCBs to withdraw from cooperation with Eurostat and the NSIs on preparing the statistics needed for evaluating the famous convergence 'criteria' for monetary union candidates.

To cut a long story short, the meeting ended at 2 a.m., after a hard but frank discussion, in which all members 'gave of their best' to express their positions and to find possible solutions.

The following morning, during breakfast, the atmosphere was still very strained, but in a few days it became clear that the discussion had been successful. In fact, it created the basis for a more precise and transparent procedure for reaching decisions on cases in which the rules for recording transactions were not clear. It also made it clear to all members of the Executive Body that all institutions concerned had played by the rules and that the spirit of cooperation was strong and sincere.

After that night, several meetings (and nights) were spent by the CMFB and its Executive Body in discussions on other cases, and in some of these meetings the opinions expressed by their members were different. Nevertheless, the procedure established after the 'FT affair' demonstrated its value, reinforcing the cooperation between NCBs, NSIs, Eurostat and the European Monetary Institute (now the European Central Bank) and improving the quality of European economic and financial statistics.

From time to time, when I buy something using euro, I still think of that night, which in my memory will always be the 'night at the Bundesbank', and I thank the very clever and forward-looking people with whom I spent it.

The second, less appealing, method was called creative accounting. To give a simple example: The central banks' reserves of gold were valued in the balance sheets at a somewhat outdated nominal price. By revaluing them at a more recent price, the balance sheet showed an added value. Several countries thought they could use this added value to lower their public deficit. This works once, and the next year another trick will be found. What was not reckoned on, was the vigilance of Eurostat, the CMFB and the Statistical Committee of the European Central Bank. All such cases were examined by the 15 Member States in those committees, which reached a decision. In the case of gold, the decision was that the revaluation amounted to a reduction of the public debt. This decision was binding and would apply to all countries undertaking this kind of operation. Imagination was running riot amongst public and national accountants: the number of cases of creative accounting was rising by the day. One of the most famous was that of France Télécom.

→ *See 'The "France Télécom affair": A night at the Bundesbank'.*

The French Government decided to privatise the public telecommunications undertaking. However, the employees' pension funds remained public, and future pensions would still be paid by the State. How was the privatisation revenue to be recorded between reducing the public deficit and reducing the public debt? The discussion was heated and, what is more, leaked to the press. A crisis was only narrowly avoided. Finally, the reduction in the public deficit was accepted. Eurostat had learnt two important lessons: the independence and authority of statistics emerged strengthened from the operation, thanks to the smooth functioning of the system of communication between the specialists in the NSIs and the central banks; above all, however, communication with the outside world — and with the press in particular — had to be improved. Channels for explanations were set up and soon bore fruit.

International cooperation

The European statistical system, which was becoming increasingly important in the international context, had to review its relations with international organisations. Unfettered competition had to be avoided.

The countries of eastern Europe ask Eurostat for help in adapting their statistical system to the market economy. Their statistical and computing knowledge are of a high technical level, but the burden inherited from the planned economy is heavy. An enormous task.

The European Economic Area was working well. The fact that 18 European countries were working together in a management system with an increasingly strong legal framework gave the European statistical system growing clout in the international context. The European objectives, which were also espoused by the countries of central and eastern Europe, made it

Signing of the common agreement between Eurostat, the United States and Canada at the Château de Bourglinster in 1991.

necessary to fully review relations with international organisations. The OECD and the UN Conference of European Statisticians were trying to find their place in the system of international cooperation. Stepping up dialogue with those bodies avoided the looming danger of out-and-out competition, although there were some differences over competing projects, particularly concerning technical assistance to the countries of eastern Europe. By drawing up an 'integrated presentation' of the three organisations' work programmes, the partners managed to avoid duplication and overlap in their projects. Active participation in the meetings of the United Nations bodies (UN/New York, IMF, World Bank) also strengthened the dialogue at global level. The positions adopted by the European Union were finally being listened to and taken into account in international programmes. The top US and Canadian statisticians felt the need to sign a stepped-up cooperation agreement between the statistical systems of the three economic areas. A formal ceremony was held in June 1991 at the Château de Bourglinster in Luxembourg.

These transatlantic excursions did not blind us to what was happening to the east of the European Union. German unification and political developments in the countries of central and eastern Europe called for help from Eurostat. In Germany, all the statistical problems were principally resolved by the Statistisches Bundesamt. Eurostat merely monitored the process and reiterated its priorities.

Poland and Hungary were first — but soon followed by the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia — in calling more insistently for help from Eurostat in adapting their statistical system to the market economy.

The task was enormous. It emerged very soon that Eurostat could not manage on its own. There were, however, resources available through the Phare programme. The only possibility was to mobilise the entire European statistical system. A huge operation to coordinate the technical assistance was mounted. All the statistical institutes which were able to, shared the task and organised the complex management of the aid projects according to a programme drawn up jointly.

Several pitfalls were avoided. The full mentoring of a country by a Community Member State had to be avoided. One could have imagined, for instance, Bulgaria being mentored by the Netherlands, Poland by Sweden, Hungary by France, Slovenia by Italy, and so on. However, this would have favoured the 'export' of national systems. Instead, it was decided to set up multinational project teams which worked according to Community standards, while respecting each other's culture. For example, if an east European country wanted to set up a system based on registers, it was a Nordic country which took charge of that project.

Another pitfall was wanting data very fast and, if necessary, going to get them on the spot without

transferring any knowhow. This spectacular technique is well-known and, in the short term, would have enhanced Eurostat's image in the Commission.

A different strategy was chosen, and it is bearing fruit today. The initial years were devoted to intensive training. Alongside training in the field, the courses given by TES for the European Union's statisticians were literally invaded by statisticians from the east. The training provided by the statisticians of the ESS also gave them a clear picture of the needs and technical status of those countries of which little had hitherto been known. It quickly emerged that the technical level was very high in statistical and even computer terms, and that the weaknesses lay more in the burden inherited from the planned economy: a cumbersome management system, a lack of knowledge of the concepts of the market economy and computer hardware. After this period of training, it was time to launch full-scale pilot projects. Progress was spectacular in the case of some projects such as the enterprise panel. On 17 January 1994, less than five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, those countries were in a position to sign a joint declaration in the presence of Henning Christophersen in which they undertook to provide the European Union with statistical data according to Community standards. The programme of gradual upgrading has been adhered to.

The political upheavals extended further eastwards. The Soviet Union was breaking up and, under Gorbachev, became the Community of Independent States. The countries of the former Soviet Union were regaining more autonomy and, to that end, were reorganising their administration — including their statistical systems. Once again, the European Union was called upon and set up the Tacis programme, which naturally included a statistical component. Eurostat coordinated the efforts of the European statistical system with those of the international organisations (United Nations, IMF, World Bank and OECD) within an intersecretariat group initially headed by a former Director-General of INSEE, Jean Rippert. Eurostat played an extremely active role there, since it had the Tacis funds, whereas certain organisations were poorer but were able to mobilise experts other than those of the European Union, who were already much in demand.

The intensive cooperation with the countries of central and eastern Europe, as well as with the former Soviet Union, was not allowed to divert attention from the historical partners of the European Union in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, bound together by the agreements of Yaoundé and Lomé and, after the accession of Spain and Portugal, the countries of South America.

The European Union continued to be in demand. A number of bilateral agreements were signed and frequently included a statistical chapter. One of the most important was that signed with China, which

17 October 1994: signing of the common declaration of seven central and east European countries, under the Presidency of Henning Christophersen.

Euro-Mediterranean Conference: once again, Eurostat organises important technical assistance programmes such as Medstat with the European statistical system.

Eurostat's Annual General Meeting (1994 and 1996).

had requested Eurostat's assistance in reorganising its foreign trade and industrial statistics.

More recently, after the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Barcelona in November 1995, cooperation agreements were signed with most of the countries bordering the Mediterranean, and statistical cooperation is intensifying in this region. Here again, together with the European statistical system, Eurostat is organising major technical assistance programmes: the Medstat programme.

How big the world is for little Eurostat! Fortunately, it is not quite so big when it manages to mobilise the whole of the European statistical system!

The statistical law and the 1993–97 programme

The statistical law of 1997 — a powerful lever for the European statistical system — lays down the planning process, the basic principles for compiling statistics, the principles for dissemination and guarantees of confidentiality. In 1997, the Commission adopts a formal decision on the role of Eurostat: Eurostat is the sole 'Community authority' entrusted with the production of statistics. The 1993–97 statistical programme is no longer a 'list of good intentions': it contains a list of priorities. It is still difficult to lay down the negative priorities.

The explosion in demands for statistical information and, in particular, its increasing use for monitoring Community policies called for a more formalised structure for Community statistics.

The need was becoming more pressing by the day. The Amsterdam Treaty was being drawn up by the Intergovernmental Conference, and the draft texts included an article on statistics. The definition of the powers of the European Central Bank contained provisions on the collection of statistical information (see above).

After several years of negotiations in the Eurostat and Council working parties, the Council adopted on 17 February 1997, a regulation ((EC) No 322/97) on Community statistics, generally known as the statistical law.

This legal text codified the existing working arrangements for the European statistical system and represented a milestone in the recognition of European statistics. The planning procedure was set out in detail, the basic principles for compiling statistics, and in particular those of impartiality and independence, were reiterated, and the principles for dissemination and guarantees of confidentiality were clarified. The text was examined and discussed in depth in all the political circles involved in the decision-taking process: Commission, Council, European Parliament, Economic and Social Committee, European Monetary Institute and national authorities. The place of statistics in the construction of Europe was publicly and legally

recognised. This was and will in future remain a powerful lever for implementing the Community statistical system.

Without losing its stride, the Commission adopted on 21 April 1997, a formal decision (97/281/EC), published in the Official Journal, on Eurostat's role. Eurostat was designated the sole 'Community authority' entrusted with the production of statistics. Within the Commission, Eurostat finally had a tool which shielded it from any political interference in its work. As any public statistician can imagine, the paragraph on dissemination was the one discussed most heatedly.

The 1993–97 programme was the subject of a Council decision in July 1993. It was drawn up with all the previously established committees, but was not yet based on the statistical law. However, it took over in advance a number of provisions on which the Council already indicated its agreement.

This programme was beginning to no longer look like a list of good intentions: Chapter II of the Council regulation on the statistical programme contained a list of priorities, even though they were very broad. A single market, the social field, single currency, international relations and technological development were the general priorities. Each of the descriptive chapters gave a more detailed list of the activities to be undertaken. When one reads the details, however, it emerges that all the ongoing work was listed, and that that list exceeded the resources available. It was still very difficult to lay down the 'non-priorities'. Progress still had to be made, but it was a step in the right direction.

Cooperation with the NSIs

Geographical enlargement, new responsibilities, limited resources: the only solution is increased productivity, and only the European statistical system can produce it. Effective preparation of the meetings of the Statistical Programme Committee becomes necessary. Automatic rotation in a 'partnership group' of the Member States helps in this. Eurostat is not the only one calling the shots, but the facilitator of the network.

As set out above, the period 1992 to 1997 was marked by growing tension between geographical enlargement and the advent of new responsibilities on the one hand, and the resources available on the other. In such a case, the only solution for an undertaking is to increase productivity. Although efforts were made in-house, that was not enough. Another way of working had to be found.

Although some people were averse to the name, only the European statistical system was capable of taking up the challenge. The European statistical system meant: working in full partnership between Eurostat and the national statistical systems and forming a single body of statisticians with an objective which nobody wanted to call federative. How could this approach be followed without offending national susceptibilities?

The discussions among 15 or sometimes even 18 countries were never-ending. For a *tour de table* to obtain the agreement of 15 or even 18 countries on a simple point, a whole hour had to be set aside on the agenda for the meeting. If there was the slightest opposition, it would take two hours to reach the conclusion that the subject had to be re-examined. The idea then arose of having the meeting prepared by a small group representing the various sensitivities: north/south, small/large, old/new, etc. Result: stalemate. It proved impossible to group the countries in a way which was acceptable to, and accepted by, everyone. But the CMFB had managed to set up an executive bureau which worked well. It was when the idea was on the point of being abandoned that a proposal for automatic rotation was tabled in 1995. The country which held the Presidency of the Council was placed centre-stage. The two countries which would be following in the Presidency and the two which had preceded it would meet on the day before the meeting of the Statistical Programme Committee and would prepare the following meeting: a general discussion and selection of the items which were sufficiently ready to be tackled in the plenary session. Each country was present for two and a half years in this 'partnership group'. The order of the Presidencies was such that the various sensitivities were represented. A miracle: it worked and continues to work. This group made it possible to involve all the countries and give them responsibility for the agenda and the decision-making process. Eurostat was no longer considered to be the only one calling the shots, but was the facilitator of the network. A more efficient management system emerged which could one day serve as a model in other fields.

Another striking innovation in this period, with a view to speeding up the discussions, was the use of electronic mail. Why waste an hour at a meeting to find that everyone was agreed? An e-mail can do the job! It was therefore decided to accompany the agenda and the table documents with an electronic form on which everyone could indicate their agreement, disagreement or brief comments on Eurostat's proposals. The form was compiled and distributed the day before the meeting and the floor was given only to those who had a substantial contribution to make. This simple technique speeded up the meetings and freed up time to concentrate on the essential points. The combination of these electronic exchanges of views and the preparation of the work by the partnership group made it possible to handle the vast number of decisions implementing the regulations on the introduction of the single currency. Without that, the directors-general of the NSIs would have spent a third of their time meeting in Luxembourg. Even in 1992, they had been very loath to have the number of SPC meetings increased from two to four per year.

→ *See 'Some positive views by former and current DGINS'.*

A third innovation was introduced on the basis of a Dutch proposal: the 'LEGS', an abbreviation for 'leadership groups'. If a problem arose which could not be tackled by Eurostat, particularly because of a lack of

Some positive views by former and current DGINS

To an increasing extent, Community statistics also determine national statistical programmes. Eurostat must nevertheless bear in mind that there are considerable needs for data at national and regional level, which have to be met with the limited resources at the disposal of the national institutes. Relations between Eurostat and the NSIs are excellent and cooperative, while demonstrating the essential differences that must exist in a partnership marked by quality.

Johann Hahlen (German)

Some of my colleagues were annoyed, irate even, when they came back from an important meeting in Luxembourg with the feeling that some member of Eurostat had barked at them like a sergeant major. Others were disheartened, 'How can they be so far off the mark?' If you ask me, though, I think we did a lot of good work together over the years.

Edmond Malinvaud (French)

The Treaty of Maastricht marked the increased use of statistics. But it also marked what I would call a drift towards statistical legalism. The French statistical system, unlike other statistical systems, is not in the habit of relying on texts. Gentlemen's agreements on schedules and deadlines should be worked out in future, in order to avoid regulations and directives.

Paul Champsaur (French)

Using the expertise and experience of the Member States, and because of the need to obtain statistics from the Member States on a harmonised basis, Eurostat has made a major contribution to fostering the improvement of the European statistical system and knowledge of the European economy and society. This has also led to the development of national statistical systems, particularly in my own country.

Donal Murphy (Irish)

A strength of Eurostat is the ability to introduce statutory EU statistical requirements which can be of assistance to NSIs in the search for increased levels of national resources to develop the statistical infrastructure.

Donal Garvey (Irish)

The pressure on national statistics towards integration and harmonisation caused by the EMU has brought about considerable changes in the production of national data and caused acceleration in terms of time and ways of dissemination that could not otherwise have been achieved.

Luigi Biggeri (Italian)

The possibility of organising and disseminating comparable and reliable statistical information for the European Union as a whole provides significant value added in comparison with the information that is available for each individual country.

Manuel Vilares (Portuguese)

The programming mission of the top management of Eurostat to Statistics Finland was a very important event. The assessments Eurostat made on the compliance of statistics influenced future programming and budgeting plans. On the other side, another event was to teach the top management the Finnish sauna culture.

Heikki Salmi (Finnish)

The construction of the ESS is an ongoing process where Eurostat works at the centre and is empowered with considerable resources — human and financial. It is important to strengthen benchmarking within the ESS and Eurostat has a role to play here.

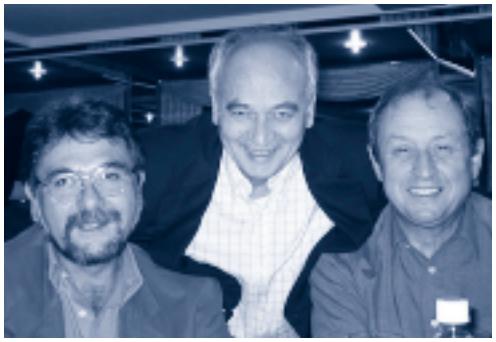
Svante Öberg (Swedish)

Eurostat did play a remarkable role in two senses. For one thing, it complemented other statistical offices in Europe in making significant improvements in European statistics. Moreover, I think it played a key role in helping to create the European Union.

Lord Moser (British)

Through the fundamental improvement of the ESS and all the comparable statistics that are disseminated, Eurostat should be given credit for a major contribution to a better statistical knowledge of Europe.

Svein Longva (Norwegian)



Aristotelis Bouratsis, Giuseppe Calò and François de Geuser.

resources, several NSIs that were especially involved would come together to study the question and make proposals to Eurostat and all the partners in the Statistical Programme Committee. Eurostat limited itself to funding the travel expenses for the meetings. Trials started in 1997 — and they worked! The Netherlands, which had put forward the proposal, set the example and took charge of health statistics. France took charge of the introduction of the euro for the collection and presentation of national statistics, and Italy took charge of cultural statistics. In all cases, progress was made with the dossiers, whereas they would have been put off interminably if Eurostat had been obliged to tackle them on its own. Other 'LEGS' were subsequently set up.

The explosion in dissemination and communication

In the 1990s, dissemination policy improves: a switch from the production of statistical graveyards to more attractive publications better targeted at the various user groups; electronic dissemination; the data shop network. The statistical law helps to find a compromise for relations with the press: Eurostat disseminates its figures according to a timetable published in advance, but refrains from any judgment.

Eurostat's data were increasingly being used for the management of the major Community policies. The advent of the euro accelerated this trend. The own resources, the regional cohesion funds, major trade negotiations, the management of the common agricultural policy, were all based on Eurostat's data. For the management of the euro and that of the own resources, however, the link with the data with a Eurostat label was legally stronger.

On the other hand, the statistical law laid down that Eurostat's information must be made available to all the citizens of Europe simultaneously and in an easily accessible form. Dissemination policy was playing an essential role. From being desirable, it was becoming indispensable.

The ground had been prepared for a long time. The problems with dissemination had already been the subject of lengthy debates in the Statistical Programme Committee and the units responsible. Some measures had been drafted: more attractive publications, improved organisation of electronic dissemination, a start on dissemination networks at the NSIs, and so on (see 'Dissemination! The evolution and the technical revolution').

The period from 1992 to 1998 saw all these projects consolidated. All the bricks were there, and it was a matter of building the house. A particular effort was made by Eurostat to switch from producing boring statistical lists to more attractive publications targeted at the various user groups.

Technology helped. A CD-ROM could easily contain the publication with the external trade statistics which had previously required the felling of several fine trees: about a dozen large volumes dispatched each year throughout Europe in runs of more than 1 000 copies. The environmental cost was appalling! Gradually, all the 'large' publications (mainly the results of censuses or surveys) were replaced by CD-ROMs. Paper publications were devoted to the general presentation of the methodology, results and analyses.

Internet also came to the help of electronic dissemination. Information dissemination contracts with specialised firms, each with its own system of databases, gradually became a thing of the past. The Internet allowed global standardisation of data presentation and easy and simultaneous access to information for everyone.

Eurostat on its own could no longer meet the growing public demand from 15 countries in 11 languages. Once again, the European statistical system was called upon. The network of data shops which had previously been set up was given a better structure. A charter of rights and obligations and a quality guarantee was proposed to them. New data shops were opened. European statistical information was coming closer to the citizen.

A second component of this dissemination policy concerned relations with the press — the natural link in dissemination to the man in the street. Lengthy in-house debates in the Commission first concerned the substance: what could Eurostat say to the press without a prior check by the Spokesman's Service of the Commission, which obviously served the members of the Commission. The independence of statistics vis-à-vis politics was at stake. The statistical law helped to find an acceptable solution: Eurostat could disseminate its figures according to a timetable published in advance, but its comments would have to refrain from any value judgment on the situation described.

It was also necessary to learn to communicate on the decision-making procedures. The France Télécom affair mentioned earlier had made for headlines in the leading daily newspapers of Europe. A proper communication strategy had to be established to avoid every decision by Eurostat becoming the subject of the same uproar. Eurostat learnt not to let information go without explaining it properly.

Internal organisation, the corporate plan, Qualistat

The world outside was on the move. Things had to move inside Eurostat.

A 20-page brochure to present Eurostat: its raison d'être, its tasks, its objectives, its legitimacy, its strengths and weaknesses, its threats and opportunities, its vision for the next 10 years. And how to achieve this? The answer in one word: Qualistat!

In 1998, Eurostat moves to the Bech Building.

Jacques Santer, President of the Commission, makes the opening speech to inaugurate the Bech building.

In 1998, Eurostat moves to the Bech building.

Eurostat's mission

Providing the European Union with a high-quality statistical information service

The elements of Eurostat's mission statement:

Quality: (i) quality of data defined by criteria of reliability, accuracy, prompt availability, accessibility, relevance, guarantee of confidentiality, cost-effective production, and (ii) quality of Eurostat management: total quality management

Statistical information: statistical data used for management and decision-taking

Service: statistical information is a user-friendly service, backed by a set of metadata which allow proper use to be made of the service

European Union: European institutions, national governments, socioeconomic partners, researchers and members of the public in the European Union.

The Commission had come up with the idea of sending Yves Franchet and Alain Chantraine on a training course on strategic planning given by an American, Mike Khami. Apart from the US-style show put on by this communication artist, some ideas formed: Eurostat had to adapt to the new internal and external conditions; that would require the total commitment of the Management Committee and, above all, a lot of time (5 to 10 years); outside help was needed to get away from Eurostat's traditional self-admiration. It was then that an initial contract was signed with a highly renowned firm of consultants, a big-five ([1]) firm, Arthur Andersen, that has since disappeared. The consultants came up with a nice analysis of Eurostat's strengths and weaknesses and the challenges and opportunities facing it, and the outcome was a 'corporate plan'. At the end of the contract, a tendering process was organised for the implementation of the plan, and the decision fell on a less well-known consulting firm, which however came up with some less conventional ideas. After some preliminary analysis, the consultants gave their verdict, 'We're not here to do your work for your, draw up your own corporate plan and we'll make sure you don't make too many mistakes.' Three directors, Lídia Barreiros and, as it happens, Alain Chantraine and Alberto De Michelis, were then appointed to draw up this wonderful document. Next, it had to be discussed,

([1]) Widespread expression in the field of consultants to describe the five big companies: Arthur Andersen, Ernst & Young, KPMG International, Pricewaterhouse Coopers and Deloitte & Touche.

revised and amended by Eurostat's various internal bodies. Eventually, a pamphlet of fewer than 20 pages summed up Eurostat's raison d'être, mission, objectives, legal basis and values, together with a frank analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities, and a vision of what Eurostat should become over the next 10 years. To arrive at that point, the document set out six major objectives, with a detailed plan of action and performance indicators for each.

It was a leading computer expert who said, 'We know what to do, we just need to do it.' And just doing it was something that Eurostat thought about for many years, and is still thinking about today. There were some knee-jerk reactions and mumblings from the trade unions such as, 'Eurostat is not a private enterprise', 'it won't work here', 'if it ain't broke don't fix it', and so on. Over the years, among the statisticians at Eurostat those who were against the idea became merely sceptical, and most officials gradually warmed to the ideas of those who saw the need for modernisation.

Since the implementing strategy for the corporate plan was based on the idea of total quality management, the implementing programme was called 'Qualistat'. An official was appointed to take charge of coordinating all the in-house working parties which were going to deal with each part of the medium-term plan.

One of the requirements for success was to win the unconditional support of the Management Committee. And support was forthcoming. One of the contributing factors was the organisation of annual seminars. For two days the Management Committee hid away deep in the 'Gaume' countryside to take stock and decide on the actions for the coming year. The little village of Torgny and its wonderful Auberge de la Grappe d'Or should get the Order of Merit of European Statistics, if such a thing existed.

The period was also marked by another big event: between September 1998 and February 1999, Eurostat moved into a single building. Since its move to Luxembourg, Eurostat had been spread among various buildings or shared offices with other Commission departments.

At the time, it was 'Economic statistics' that were on their own in a distant building, out in the Airport Centre.

The Jean Monnet Building, which was erected in 1975 with an expected life-span of 20 years, was beginning to need serious renovation. There was a risk that people would have to move round every six months while the building was renovated bit by bit. But then came the opportunity to rent a building that was big enough for everyone at Eurostat for the next few years. It was the right size, and there was room for expansion. There was only one disadvantage, which caused a lot of comment: the offices were located in the upper

Departure of Messrs Klaedtke and Canegallo.

Organisation plan of 1993 to 1997

Director-General: Yves Franchet

Secretary: Pierrette Sandt

Adviser (legal matters and confidentiality) (...)

Assistant and Head of Administration, Staff and Internal Management Unit (Lothar Jensen)

Directorate A — Dissemination and Public Relations; Computer Processing; Relations with ACP Countries: Fernando Alonso de Esteban

Adviser (computer security) (Ulrich Wieland)

— Computer processing (Gilles Decand)
  • Sector-specific applications (Jean Heller)

— Public relations, dissemination and statistical digest (François de Geuser)

— Information — Data shop (Letizia Cattani)

— Database management, publications and geographical information system (Roger Cubitt)

— Relations with ACP and other developing countries (Bernard Langevin)

Directorate B — Economic Statistics and Economic and Monetary Convergence: Alberto De Michelis

Adviser (Brian Newson)

— Economic accounts, methods and analyses (Enrique Lozano)
  • Statistics for own resources (Marcel Ernens)

— Production of national accounts data (Marco De March)

— Price comparison (John Astin)
  • Weightings (Antoine Avdoulos)

— Financial accounts and monetary and financial statistics (Jörg-Dieter Glatzel)

— Balance of payments (Jean-Claude Roman)

— Macroeconomic classification and statistical and accounting coordination (Adrien Lhomme)

Directorate C — General Matters; International and Interinstitutional Relations; External and Intra-Community Trade Statistics: Alain Chantraine

— Planning, relations with Community institutions and international organisations, European Economic Area and enlargement (Franz-Joseph Gnad)

— Budget policy and management (Francisco Javier Sobrino)

— Analysis of international transactions (Frank Schönborn)

— External and intra-Community trade (Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz)

— Relations with central and east European countries and newly independent States (Klaus Löning)
  • Deputy Head of Unit (Ovidio Crocicchi)

Directorate D — Business and Energy Statistics, Research and Development, and Statistical Methods: Photis Nanopoulos

— Energy and raw materials (Pierluigi Canegallo)
  • Deputy Head of Unit (Peter Tavoularidis (from 6 December 1996))

— Industry, iron and steel, and coordination of surveys on enterprises (Daniel Byk)
  • Iron and steel (Richard Golinvaux)

— Research, development and statistical methods (Daniel Defays)

— Distributive trades, services and transport (Marco Lancetti)
  • Transport (Ernesto Azorín)

Directorate E — Social and Regional Statistics and Structural Plans: Lídia Barreiros

— Population, migration, employment and unemployment (Hildegarde Fürst (until 30 November 1993) and Hubert Charlier (from 1 April 1994))

— Living conditions (Wolfgang Knüppel)

— Working conditions (Michail Skaliotis)
  • Regional accounts and indicators, and structural plans (Hubert Charlier)

Directorate F — Agricultural, Fisheries and Environmental Statistics: David Heath

Adviser (Thomas Scott)

— Agricultural accounts and structures (Giuseppe Calò)
  • Deputy Head of Unit (Fritz Pfähler)
  • Structural surveys and forestry statistics (Hans Andresen)

— Agricultural products and fisheries (Hans Georg Baggendorff)
  • Deputy Head of Unit (Robert Peeters)

— Environment (Gertrude Hilf)

floors of a big shopping mall. The argument raged: some people said that it was the way to go, by opting for what was already common in the United States or Scandinavia, while others said that it was hardly suitable for a public administration, especially a European one. After a few months in the Bech Building feelings calmed down, and the smell of croissants or the sound of Christmas carols wafting up from the mall were problems that were quickly solved. Just for the record, mention should also be made of the fact that the actual move into the Bech Building was a logistic triumph. In a single day, that had been planned months in advance, everyone found himself in a new office, with his phone connected and his computer hooked up to the Internet, without a single box of papers going astray.

Between 1992 and 1998 there were several changes that affected Eurostat's internal organisation. There were changes in 1993, following the transfer of José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao to Brussels and the appointment of Alberto De Michelis in 1992 as Head of the Directorate of Economic Statistics to replace Piero Erba.

→ *See 'Organisation plan of 1993 to 1997'.*

In 1997, as part of the SEM 2000 scheme, Eurostat received an extra Director — on a temporary basis — to take charge of planning and managing human and financial resources. The outcome was further reorganisation. The organisation chart that resulted will be found in the next chapter, since although the faces have changed the general structure is still in place.

First Heads of Unit Qualistat seminar at Pont-à-Mousson, in October 1996.

The story continues ...

The last few years are not part of history.

It will be up to those who write 'A hundred years of Eurostat' to pick out the salient events. The Prodi Commission is still in office. The European convention has just come up with its first proposals. The European Union still has 15 Member States, 12 of whom have adopted the euro. The reform of the Commission has still to produce its full results.

This chapter is going to look at the major challenges, opportunities and risks that lie ahead of European statistics.

1999>2002

From 1999 to 2002

The Commission sways and falls

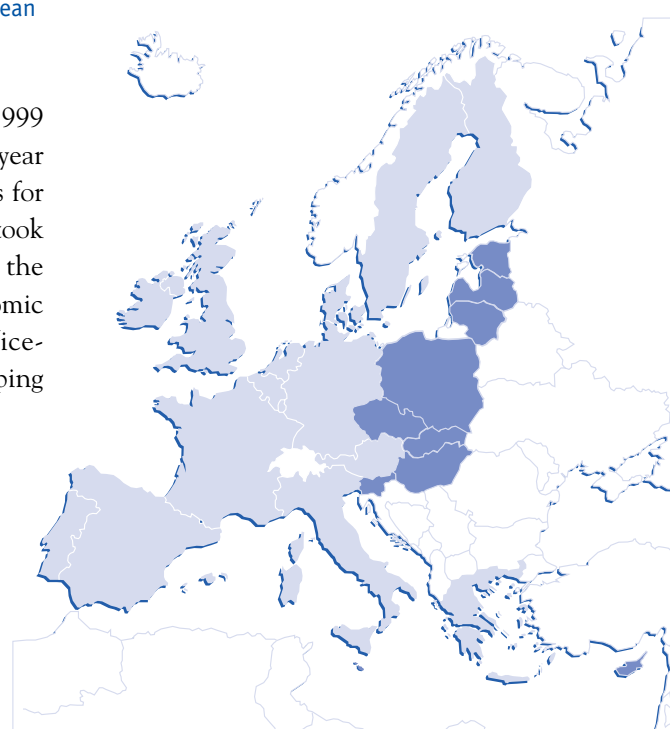
The Santer Commission comes under fire and despite its excellent work is accused of mismanagement and nepotism. In 1999, the whole Commission resigns.

The Santer Commission had done some excellent work: the euro was on track, other political issues were making good progress, Agenda 2000 ensuring the funding of the European Union until 2006 was ready for adoption, in-house schemes had been launched to tighten internal management (SEM 2000, MAP 2000). But the Commission was nevertheless under fire — unwarranted, in some people's eyes — from the media and from the European Parliament, who accused it of mismanagement and nepotism. While some of the accusations were justified, their extent was no more than could be found in many national administrations or private organisations. But politics are politics, and at the start of 1999 Jacques Santer was obliged to ask for a vote of confidence from the European Parliament, accept a report by an independent group of experts and, finally, submit the resignation *en bloc* of the Commission.

New Commission, new Treaty, new convention

The Treaty of Nice, in 2000, sets out the institutional provisions allowing the European Union to be enlarged. It is a first step forward, although a number of points remain outstanding. The task of the European convention: to consolidate and simplify all the treaties since 1957 and to see how the treaties can be converted into a 'European constitution'.

Romano Prodi of Italy was appointed in March 1999 to lead a new Commission to complete the final year of Jacques Santer's mandate and to take the reins for the following five years. The new Commission took office in September. Pedro Solbes Mira was the member of the Commission responsible for economic and financial affairs and statistics. The Vice-President, Neil Kinnock, was in charge of sweeping administrative reform.



9 November 1999: conference on the EMU question, organised by the Europe Forum with the support of Eurostat and ISTAT.

The Treaty of Amsterdam of October 1997 had postponed the question of how the institutions were to be organised and how decisions were to be made after future enlargement. The job had to be finished. A new Intergovernmental Conference was organised, and the outcome was the Treaty of Nice in December 2000. This Treaty covered a whole series of institutional provisions in connection with enlargement such as the number of members of the Commission and Members of the European Parliament, weighting of votes in the Council of Ministers. Its main merit lies in its very existence, and how it deals with some of the practical matters allowing an enlarged European Union to operate. A number of points remain outstanding, however. In particular, the European Charter of Fundamental Rights has been officially proclaimed by the three EU institutions but it has not been incorporated in the Treaty.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights had been drawn up by a convention which had brought together representatives of Community and national institutions. The method turned out to be effective. The Heads of State or Government decide to repeat the experience and to organise a new European convention, whose job would be to consolidate and simplify all the treaties that had accumulated since 1957, to make them clearer and easier to understand with regard to responsibilities at various levels of power, to see if the Charter of Fundamental Rights could be incorporated and, lastly, to see how the treaties could be converted into a 'European constitution'.

The European convention and statistics

What next for European statistics? Will the statistical law be revised as part of work on the constitution? What will be the outcome? What will be the decision-making procedure after enlargement to 25 Member States?

At the end of 2002, after a year of talks, the European convention will begin to talk about the shape of the project it has put forward. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's current proposal is to draft a fairly short European constitution and to use a process which has still not been worked out to add a series of more technical and more detailed annexes, which could then evolve on the basis of procedures that would be easier than revising treaties.

What will be the role of statistics in these 'annexes'? Will Article 285 of the EC Treaty survive the simplification process?

Another aim of the convention is to provide a proper definition of subsidiarity, that is, to state clearly which policies need to be implemented at European level and which at national or local level. How will these proposals apply to statistics?

The statistical programme of the European statistical system will also need to adapt to whatever common policies are decided. The convention in fact sets out to define the policies which really need to be managed at federal level, those which will be shared and those which should. There will be a big difference in statistical requirements. There will also need to be adjustments as a result of the changes in the way the three pillars are managed.

An enlarged Europe will function efficiently if decision-making can be easier and faster. Co-decision by the Council and the European Parliament will definitely stay. Some people would also like to see national parliaments involved. If you think about topics which are as technical as statistics, you can imagine how hard it will be to push through a statistical regulation. Even now, when everyone is in agreement, it takes eight or nine months to adopt a regulation. How can matters be simplified? What sort of process for adopting statistical legislation will marry democratic control and technical efficiency?

The results of the European convention will be vital for the future construction of Europe. They will also have repercussions for the European statistical system. Statisticians will have to pay careful attention.

From 15 to 25

On 1 May 2004, the European Union is scheduled to take in 10 new Member States. The biggest enlargement: Europe will regain a long-lost unity. 'Pioneering statisticians' are the first to close the file on negotiating the *acquis communautaire*. Two-tier statistics becomes a risk: improving the time required for production and publication remains a requirement for all Member States — old and new. Two key projects: 'euro-indicators' and 'structural indicators'.

The accession talks with the eight central and east European countries and with Malta and Cyprus are over. It was announced at the Copenhagen Summit in December 2002 that Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia would join the European Union on 1 May 2004, and other countries should follow in 2007. It will be the biggest enlargement that the European Union has ever experienced. Less than 15 years after German reunification, it is Europe's turn to be reunified in a voluntary and democratic manner.

Statisticians were the first to be involved in talks about the *acquis communautaire* and the transitional measures for the adoption of Community legislation by the newcomers. Thanks to cooperation under the Phare programme since 1989 and the rapid progress achieved by the statistical institutes in the accession countries, their statistical systems will be able to cope with the work of the Community statistical programme. It is not all done yet, but if the same pace is maintained 'countries in transition' will soon be a term of the past.

The fourth meeting of the 'Policy group for statistical cooperation' in Bratislava (Slovakia), in October 2001.

Changes will continue to be made at Eurostat. For the old hands, it will be just another enlargement — the fifth — since the Community was first set up. A lot of problems have become routine. Updating databases, defining entities that change over time, long time series, compiling metadata and methods, working languages: these are all matters which have cropped up with each enlargement. The same goes for the administration of the Commission, which has to adapt budgets and incorporate new officials, and so forth.

Be that as it may, if you move from 15 to 25 in a system designed for six countries, it will be too much for the way things are done. Eurostat operates with about 80 working parties and has meetings on about 200 days every year. With 25 countries, the amount of time spent on discussion is likely to get out of hand. If productivity is to remain at the same levels as present, there will probably need to be twice as much time for meetings. Eurostat will need to come up with some imaginative solutions that will allow everyone to have his say at Community level and enable Eurostat to make proposals that are acceptable to everyone.

There are ways it can be done: preparatory work by smaller task forces, smaller working parties along partnership lines, greater use of e-mail, stricter monitoring by steering groups, and so on. Other ways of working will need to be thought out and introduced.

The 10 new Member States will be working hard to catch up during the transitional period. During this time, projects will continue to move forward and new needs will emerge. The situation will need to be carefully managed, to avoid the risk of two-tier statistics.

Eurostat's aim is to produce information about the whole Community. A constant problem has been having to wait for results from the slowest country before figures for the whole Community could be compiled. After enlargement, the problem is likely to get worse as more results are likely to be slow to arrive.

The introduction of the euro had already posed the problem for all the short-term economic indicators. Compared with the United States, Japan or Canada, the European Union was always late in getting the main indicators showing the economic situation. At the end of 1998, Eurostat set up a service to produce a set of 'Euro-indicators'. The idea was to compile for the whole euro zone, and also for the European Union, indicators based on the most up-to-date data and Eurostat estimates. The request for the project came from the Council of Ministers (Ecofin) after it had been vigorously advocated by Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister. A statistical group, headed by Johnny Akerholm, was set up within Ecofin. In 2000, the group devised a plan of action for improving the situation. At the same time, a European

statistical system benchmarking study, mainly involving the United States and Canada, was conducted under the guidance of Svante Öberg. The action plan began to bear fruit: delivery times were shorter and new statistics compiled, the estimates were more transparent and the information was published in real time on Eurostat's web site.

When there is political will and support, things get done.

The European statistical system should learn from this in other fields. The main structural indicators could be the next step. The excessive deficit procedure is moving along similar lines. As a result of the 'Europe first' project — European data ahead of complete national data — the European statistical system should define the vital areas where this practice needs to be applied.

Reform of the Commission, along the lines of the Eurostat model

Reform of the Commission: Eurostat often quoted as an example, but still a lot to be done.

The Santer Commission had already decided to tighten up how the Commission's departments were run. There had been a tremendous increase in the Commission's responsibilities, but its organisation and human resources had failed to keep up. The Commission was still operating with a management style from the 1950s which had shown very little change.

Two projects had been adopted: 'Sound and efficient management' (SEM 2000) and 'Modernisation of administration and personnel' (MAP 2000). As the Eurostat experience had shown, a thorough overhaul of an organisation takes a lot of time. The Prodi Commission gave Neil Kinnock the task of completing the job. With a new person at the top, the name changed too and was now called 'Operation reform'. There was a change in method as well. Since the softly-softly approach of SEM 2000 and MAP 2000 had been slow in producing results, Operation reform stepped up a gear with a plan for radical modernisation.

The changes introduced by SEM 2000 and MAP 2000 were consolidated and supplemented by a new review of all the Commission's tasks and resources. It went by the name of 'Designing the Commission of tomorrow'. Eurostat was ready for this new review; it had the corporate plan. Answers were given to all the questions that the screeners posed. The statistical programme monitoring system provided all the details on activities and resources. Eurostat was one of the few Commission directorates-general to survive unscathed. Indeed, the report asked the Commission to be clearer in its priorities and to ensure better

Eurostat's Annual General Meeting (1999).

coordination of the demands made on Eurostat and of the statistical output of its directorates-general.

Better still, Eurostat was often quoted as an example to reluctant directorates-general, 'If Eurostat can do it, so can you.'

Since this did not always go down well with people in Brussels, Eurostat even had to keep its head down for a while!

The reform project was published at the start of 2000, along with a 'roadmap' for implementing the reforms. It was a corporate plan, Commission-style. But unlike the Eurostat plan, the project's shortcoming was that it gave a clear definition of neither the mission nor the long-term vision of the Commission. It was too risky to tackle such a political hot potato during the negotiation of the Treaty of Nice or the convention. It can disturb people if you make too much noise about what you are going to do. To voice your ambitions too loudly runs the risk of collision. The reform failed to elicit the undivided support of Commission staff, especially those who had been there for a while. Old habits were being shaken up without the finality of the vision being fully comprehended.

Reform was nevertheless welcomed among the management departments: budget, auditing, staff management, general organisation. Management modernisation schemes were full of good ideas, and each central management service wanted to study them and adapt them and introduce them as quickly as possible. For financial management first, and then for staff management, new rules and directives and requests for information came pouring out of Brussels. The heads of unit, while they could understand the justification for all these measures, were overwhelmed by their management duties. They were the ones who had to make sure that reform went through. They began to wonder if they would have to do their statistical work at the weekends. Their jobs changed: from heads of statistical units they became managers of statistical projects.

Time will tell. Any radical change needs a tremendous effort when it is introduced. When the European Union is enlarged, and the new habits have become routine, people will have got used to new ways and management at the Commision will have changed.

The reform of the Commission also produced upheavals in the Eurostat Management Committee. A strict and absolute rule was introduced for directors-general and then for directors. The Commission decided that after five years a Director-General or Director had to change jobs. First in line for a move was Yves Franchet, who had been Director-General of Eurostat for nearly 15 years. Since he was close to retirement, the Commission instead asked him to get ready to hand over to his successor in 2003. Next it was the turn of the directors. Several had been in

charge of their directorates for more than five years. In spite of the appointment of four new directors at the end of 2000, three Eurostat directors (Pedro Díaz Muñoz, Lothar Jensen and Photis Nanopoulos) had to move to other jobs, while a Director from the Directorate-General for Social Affairs (Gabrielle Clotuche) was transferred from Brussels.

In 2003, Eurostat will be moving forward with a senior management team that has been entirely replaced in the last couple of years.

Between 1999 and 2002 there was little change in the general organisational structure at Eurostat. Following the retirement of several directors (Alberto De Michelis, Alain Chantraine, David Heath) and heads of unit (Bernard Langevin, François de Geuser, Adrien Lhomme, John Astin), there were lots of staff changes, as can be seen when the situations in 1999, 2002 and 2003 are compared.

→ *See 'Comparison of organisation in 1999, 2002, 2003'.*

Planned withdrawal of Technical Assistance Offices

Ongoing challenges: better management of external contracts; clearly defined responsibilities and modes of cooperation. The Statistical Executive Agency: still under construction but offering opportunities.

In the years between 1980 and 1990, the responsibilities of the Commission's departments increased greatly, but were not matched by any extra human resources. Budgets increased too, and the various Commission directorates-general opted for the clever move of having some of their management work done by outside contractors. Various approaches were used, ranging from strictly controlled subcontracting to indirect use of department staff. To use in-house 'Eurospeak', the options ranged from Technical Assistance Offices to 'notional internal services'. At Eurostat, the divisions often funded their work from the budgets of other directorates-general and managed to cover almost every type of approach. With the 'Sound and efficient management' and 'Reform' projects, it was relatively easy to tidy up subcontracting by providing more definite specifications and ensuring that contracts were based on products or results rather than the manpower that external firms devoted to the job. It took a little longer to deal with the 'unofficial' posts, since some budget rules had to be changed.

Among the novel approaches that Eurostat had come up with, there was the work carried out by non-profit-making organisations. One of them, the CESD, had been around for some time. Originally geared to training, the CESD had also become the Eurostat go-between for all cooperation activities. Cooperation was expanded to cover the Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, and then to the central and east European countries, the CIS

Comparison of organisation in 1999, 2002, 2003

	1999	2002	1 January 2003
Director-General	Yves Franchet	Yves Franchet	Yves Franchet
Adviser for liaison with the institutions in Brussels		James Whitworth	James Whitworth
Assistant	James Whitworth	Maria-Helena Figueira	Maria-Helena Figueira
Quality management and internal evaluation	Werner Grünewald	Werner Grünewald	Werner Grünewald
Internal audit	Christine Duren	Christine Duren	Christine Duren
Directorate R			
Planning, Resources, Legal Affairs	Alain Chantraine	Marian O'Leary	Marian O'Leary
1. Administration and staff	Lothar Jensen	Ovidio Crocicchi	Ovidio Crocicchi
— Training and staff development	Alan Clarke	Birgitte Jansson	Birgitte Jansson
2. Work programme, planning	Roger Cubitt	Gilles Decand	Gilles Decand
3. Budget policy and management	Roland Lane	Roland Lane	Roland Lane
4. Legal affairs, statistical confidentiality	Efstratios Chatzidoukakis	Efstratios Chatzidoukakis	Efstratios Chatzidoukakis
Directorate A			
Statistical Information Systems. Research and Data Analysis, Technical Cooperation with Phare and Tacis Countries	Photis Nanopoulos	Photis Nanopoulos	Pedro Díaz Muñoz
1. Computerised management of information systems	Daniel Defays	Daniel Defays	(Georges Pongas (acting))
— Information systems architecture	Georges Pongas	Georges Pongas	Georges Pongas

	1999	2002	1 January 2003
2. Information and communication technologies for the Communiy statistical system	Wolfgang Knüppel	Wolfgang Knüppel	Wolfgang Knüppel
3. Reference databases	Jean Heller	Jean Heller	Jean Heller
4. Research and development, methods and data analyses	Harald Sonnenberger	Jean-Louis Mercy	Jean-Louis Mercy
— Research in statistics	Jean-Louis Mercy	Jean-Louis Mercy	…
5. Technical cooperation with candidate, CARDS and Tacis countries	Ovidio Crocicchi	Nikolaus Wurm	Nikolaus Wurm
— Technical cooperation (Phare countries)	Nikolaus Wurm	…	…
6. Statistical indicators for euro-zone business cycle analysis	Klaus Reeh	Klaus Reeh	Klaus Reeh
Directorate B			
Economic Statistics, Economic and Monetary Convergence	Alberto De Michelis	Bart Meganck	Bart Meganck
1. National accounts methodologies, statistics for own resources	Brian Newson	Brian Newson	Brian Newson
— Methodology of ESA and coordination coordination for final VAT system	Joachim Recktenwald	Joachim Recktenwald	Joachim Recktenwald
2. Economic accounts and international markets, production and analysis	Marco De March	Marco De March	Marco De March
3. Price comparisons, correction coefficients	John Astin	Jean-Claude Roman	Jean-Claude Roman
— Correction coefficients		Amerigo Liotti	Amerigo Liotti
— Harmonisation of consumer price indices	Alexandre Makaronidis	Alexandre Makaronidis	Alexandre Makaronidis

	1999	2002	1 January 2003
4. Accounts and financial indicators, statistics for the excessive deficits procedure	Jörg-Dieter Glatzel	Jörg-Dieter Glatzel	Jörg-Dieter Glatzel
— Financial accounts and excessive deficits procedure	…	…	…
5. International trade in services, direct investment, balance of payments	Eduardo Barredo Capelot	Eduardo Barredo Capelot	Eduardo Barredo Capelot
Directorate C			
Information and Dissemination, Transport, Technical Cooperation with Non-member Countries (except Phare and Tacis countries), External and Intra-Community Trade Statistics	(Daniel Byk (acting))	Daniel Byk	Daniel Byk
Adviser — enlargement, cooperation and analysis	Daniel Byk	Marco Lancetti	Marco Lancetti
1. Information and dissemination	Amador Rodriguez Prieto	Amador Rodriguez Prieto	Amador Rodriguez Prieto
— Information	n.a.	Philippe Bautier	Philippe Bautier
2. Transport	Ovidio Crocicchi	John Allen	John Allen
3. Technical cooperation with non-member countries (except Phare and Tacis countries)	Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz	Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz	Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz
4. Methodology, nomenclature and statistics of external and intra-Community trade	Marco Lancetti	Christine Coin	Christine Coin
Directorate D			
Business Statistics	Pedro Díaz Muñoz	Pedro Díaz Muñoz	Lothar Jensen
Adviser — Phare/Tacis coordination, budgetary aspects	Francisco Javier Sobrino	Francisco Javier Sobrino	Francisco Javier Sobrino

	1999	2002	1 January 2003
1. Methodological coordination, structural indicators, classifications and registers	François de Geuser	Daniel Defays	Daniel Defays
— Nomenclatures	Niels Langkjear	Niels Langkjear	Niels Langkjear
2. Structural business statistics	Bernard Langevin	Inger Öhman	Inger Öhman
3. Production and short-term business statistics	Adrien Lhomme	Gunter Shäfer	Gunter Schäfer
— Short-term business statistics	n.a.	…	
4. Energy statistics	Direction F	Peter Tavoularidis	Peter Tavoularidis
5. Information society and tourism statistics	n.a.	Bettina Knauth	Bettina Knauth
Directorate E			
Social and Regional Statistics and Geographical Information System	(Hubert Charlier (acting))	Lothar Jensen	Gabrielle Clotuche
1. Labour market	Hubert Charlier	Antonio Baigorri Matamala	Antonio Baigorri Matamala
2. Living conditions	Antonio Baigorri Matamala	Anne Clémenceau	Anne Clémenceau
— European Community Household Panel	n.a.	…	…
3. Health, education, culture	Michail Skaliotis	Marleen De Smedt	Marleen De Smedt
— Health and safety	n.a.	…	…
4. Population, social protection	n.a.	Michail Skaliotis	Michail Skaliotis
— Social protection	n.a.	Teresa Bento	Teresa Bento
5. Regional accounts and indicators, geographical information systems	Gilles Decand	Directorate F	Directorate F

	1999	2002	1 January 2003
Directorate F			
Agricultural, Environmental and Energy Statistics	David Heath	Giuseppe Calò	Giuseppe Calò
Adviser — development and review of Statistics Directorate	Derek Peare	Derek Peare	Derek Peare
1. Economic and structural statistics for agriculture	Giuseppe Calò	Hubert Charlier	Hubert Charlier
Deputy Head of Unit		…	…
2. Land-use, agricultural products and fisheries	Rainer Muthmann	Marcel Ernens	Marcel Ernens
— Fisheries		David Cross	David Cross
3. Environment and sustainable development	Inger Öhman		
— Coordination of data collection and processing	n.a.	Ulrich Wieland	Ulrich Wieland
4. Regional accounts and indicators, geographical information systems	Directorate E	Roger Cubitt	Roger Cubitt
— Regional accounts and indicators	n.a.	Berthold Feldmann	Berthold Feldmann
— Geograhical information systems	n.a.	Daniel Rase	Daniel Rase
5. Food safety, rural development and forestry	n.a.	Sylvie Ribaille	Sylvie Ribaille
Ex–4. Energy, raw materials	Peter Tavoularidis	Directorate D	Directorate D

countries and the countries of the Mediterranean. To cope with this expansion, the CESD originally based in Paris set up a network of national bodies in Rome, Lisbon and Madrid and CESD-Communautaire in Luxembourg.

The 'Training of European statisticians' (TES) project was a logical extension of the legal model that the CESD provided.

Another project for calculating weighting coefficients (purchasing power parities for staff serving in various parts of the world) led to Eurocost being set up.

The Commission took a dim view of Eurostat's involvement in the running of these non-profit-making bodies and insisted on a clearer division of responsibilities. As part of its reform, however, the Commission decided to do away with all these Technical Assistance Offices and to put in their place 'executive agencies', bodies with a uniform status headed by European officials and set up to help the Commission implement its activities. Although they have to comply with more rules and regulations, these agencies are successors to the early CESD.

The regulation governing the executive agencies was adopted by the Council of Ministers at the end of 2002. Since it has been watching developments from the outset, Eurostat was quick to apply for the creation of a statistical agency to help it with its management work. By creating an agency, it would be possible to make a clear distinction between Eurostat's functions as a public administration and those which could be hived off to an outside body under its supervision. Cooperation and training were natural candidates, but in every field there are straightforward or routine administrative tasks — preparing publications, managing databases, providing computer support, etc. — which can be out sourced.

In the last two years the project has been minutely studied: separation of tasks, cost-benefit analysis, reassignment of staff, and so on.

The introduction of the statistical agency will necessitate a massive effort to restructure Eurostat's internal activities over the next three or four years. The added value that Eurostat can offer and its focus on strategic tasks will be achieved if it can free itself of its routine, technical activities. The success of the operation will depend on the proper definition and management of the respective roles of Eurostat and the executive agency, together with complete transparency in relations with the national statistical systems.

'Partnership Group' meeting in Denmark in February 2000.


DGINS
PALERMO
2002

Aiming for a genuine European statistical system

Qualistat for the entire European statistical system.

The DGINS conferences in Palermo in 2001 and in Madrid in 2002 brought new life to the construction of the European statistical system. Madrid focused on strategic planning in connection with enlargement. The need for a corporate plan and for a project along the lines of Qualistat was mentioned. Thought needed to be given to the medium-term prospects for the European statistical system. This was covered in Palermo.

The legal basis for the European statistical system is obviously the statistical law. It will be remembered that in 1997 the idea of a European statistical system had been scrupulously avoided in the main part of the Council regulation. It gets only a passing mention in one of the preambles. The European convention and the Intergovernmental Conference which will follow it are likely to make a thorough revision of how the construction of Europe operates. There is no doubt that the introduction of a European constitution and/or a new Treaty will be a good time to revise the statistical law. It will provide an opportunity to accord a legal basis to the European statistical system and to raise its profile not only in the Member States but also in the Community institutions and throughout the world.

The legal basis is needed. But then joint working practices will be needed to give some shape to the idea. The 'what' and the 'how' will have to be clearly defined. The 'what' is the content of a statistical programme that is genuinely Community-inspired. There needs to be consistency and linkage between national and Community programmes, with a common definition of European priorities. The definition of the major European policies that come out of the European convention should provide a sound political basis. It is also in this context that proper definition will need to be given to the projects that are feasible only in a European context, with aggregation of national data used as a last resort, and to 'Europe first' projects for which European importance outweighs national interest. For all these projects, quality criteria will need to be clearly defined. What we need is Qualistat for the European statistical system!

The SPC is obviously due for a lot of lively discussion.

The 'how' is the way in which all the parts comprising the network of national statistical systems and Eurostat will function. The operation of the SPC, the partnership group, the sectoral steering groups, the working parties, the task forces and so on, will also need to be thoroughly overhauled.

Eurostat is going to have fun discussing all this.

←
Conference of the Directors-General of the National Statistical Institute (DGINS) in Palermo in 2002.

The ‘epic journey’ of Community agricultural statistics

Giuseppe Calò

The development of Community statistics has sometimes accompanied, sometimes followed, and sometimes anticipated the development of the common policies provided for in the Treaties.

Let us take a look at what happened in agriculture.

As already mentioned, the common agricultural policy (CAP) first saw the light of day in 1962 following long negotiations between the then six Member States. From the outset, it was designed to meet two main objectives, which corresponded to the two funds subsequently created: the EAGGF Guarantee Fund and the EAGGF Guidance Fund.

The first objective was to implement structural measures that would enable agricultural holdings to optimise investment in a sector which was still having difficulty in guaranteeing food supply and to make holdings competitive on the world market.

The second objective, by contrast, was to encourage farmers to produce more through securing their incomes by means of guaranteed prices which protected them from fluctuations on the world agricultural market.

As was to be expected, not all Member States agreed on the priority to be given to one or other of these objectives, but it was abundantly clear that proper management of the CAP required the availability of harmonised data on the structure of agricultural holdings and on actual production, plus reliable data on agricultural prices and income.

During a period of about 10 years starting from 1962, the managers of the CAP brought political pressure to bear on the Statistical Office to collect harmonised data on various outputs, depending on the policy priorities that emerged each year from successive Councils of Agriculture Ministers.

While the emphasis at the time of the CAP's inception had been on modernising structures through a reorientation of existing holdings, which had not yet specialised to any great degree and whose performance was at a low level, priority was soon switched to evaluating as accurately as possible the output figures for various agricultural products and, in particular, the cost to the Community budget of producing at guaranteed prices.

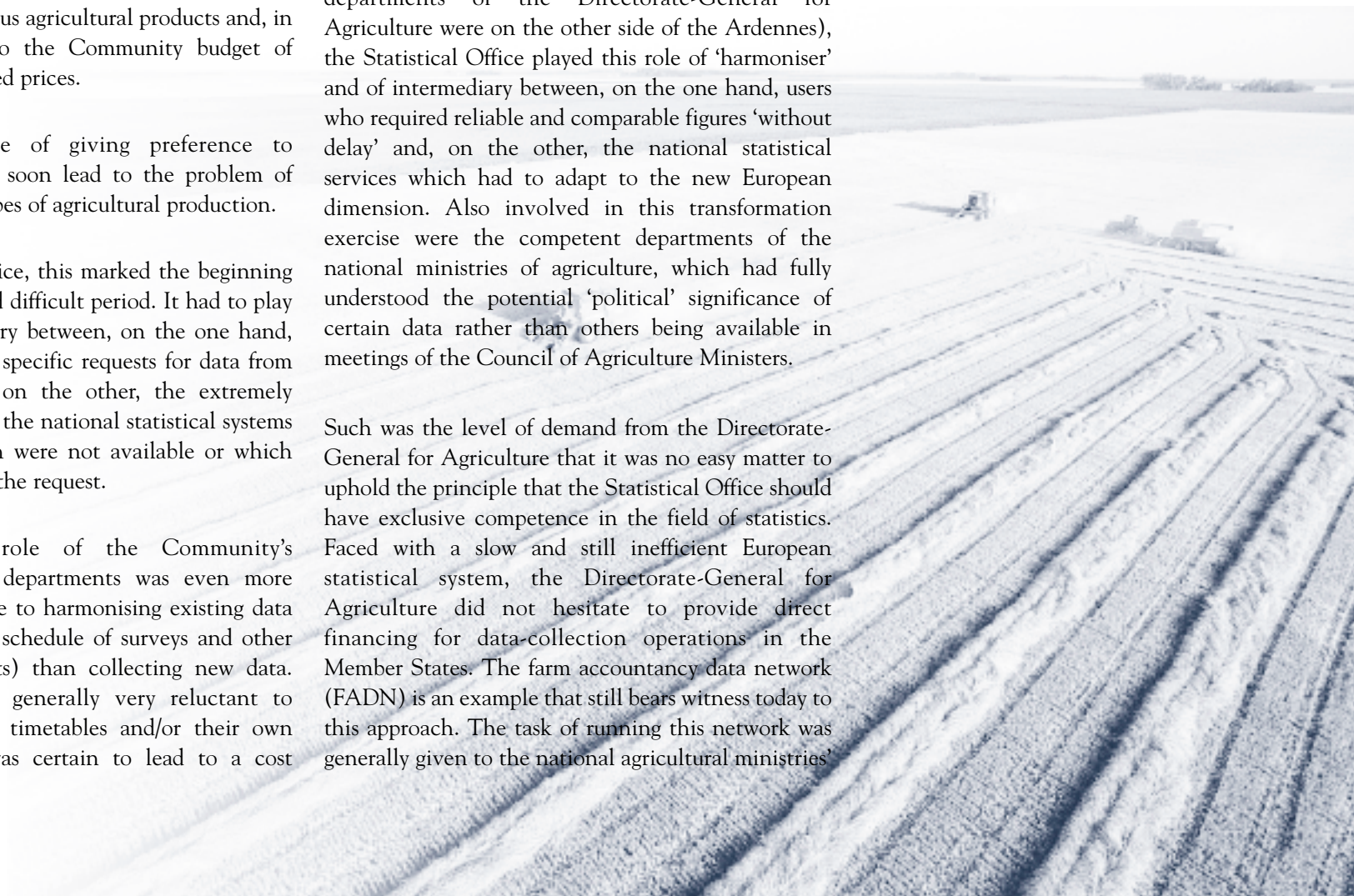
The political choice of giving preference to production aid would soon lead to the problem of surpluses in various types of agricultural production.

For the Statistical Office, this marked the beginning of a quite complex and difficult period. It had to play the role of intermediary between, on the one hand, ever more urgent and specific requests for data from CAP managers and, on the other, the extremely divergent situations of the national statistical systems to provide data which were not available or which could not fully match the request.

Paradoxically, the role of the Community's agricultural statistics departments was even more sensitive when it came to harmonising existing data (common definitions, schedule of surveys and other methodological aspects) than collecting new data. Member States were generally very reluctant to abandon their survey timetables and/or their own definitions, as this was certain to lead to a cost increase which normally had to be borne by the budget of the national statistical services.

Between 1962 and 1972, first in Brussels and later in Luxembourg (with the additional problem that the departments of the Directorate-General for Agriculture were on the other side of the Ardennes), the Statistical Office played this role of 'harmoniser' and of intermediary between, on the one hand, users who required reliable and comparable figures 'without delay' and, on the other, the national statistical services which had to adapt to the new European dimension. Also involved in this transformation exercise were the competent departments of the national ministries of agriculture, which had fully understood the potential 'political' significance of certain data rather than others being available in meetings of the Council of Agriculture Ministers.

Such was the level of demand from the Directorate-General for Agriculture that it was no easy matter to uphold the principle that the Statistical Office should have exclusive competence in the field of statistics. Faced with a slow and still inefficient European statistical system, the Directorate-General for Agriculture did not hesitate to provide direct financing for data-collection operations in the Member States. The farm accountancy data network (FADN) is an example that still bears witness today to this approach. The task of running this network was generally given to the national agricultural ministries'



economic departments, which in turn were competing with their opposite numbers in the national statistical services.

Over the years, the role of the Directorate-General for Agriculture has very much left its stamp on agricultural statistics. This powerful and independent Directorate-General, accounting alone for over half of the Community's budget, has always been a clearly identifiable, demanding and preferential (and, to be fair, virtually the sole) client for agricultural statistics. Its coordination with Eurostat has always been very well structured and it was prepared to help wherever possible.

The Statistical Office, for its part, gave priority to the organisation in 1966 of the first Community survey on the structure of agricultural holdings. However, this project did not prove very efficient, at least at the beginning, as results were not immediately available owing to the sheer scale of the operation. This caused a good deal of displeasure in the private office of the ebullient Agricultural Commissioner, Sicco Mansholt.

Nevertheless, a second such exercise followed in 1970/71, and these surveys are still the mainstay of the system even now.

It was clear that Europe's statistical services had to be revamped, and in one of the numerous restructurings of the Statistical Office, the new Director-General, Raymond Dumas — who had himself been responsible for agricultural statistics — created a directorate just for agriculture. Stephanus Louwes, the founder of the Agricultural Statistics Committee, was appointed as the first Head of this new Agricultural Statistics Directorate, which comprised two divisions and one specialised service:

— Prices, agricultural accounts and methods (Head of Division: Helmut Schumacher, the former Assistant to Raymond Dumas);

— Products, balances (Head of Division: Günter Thiede);

— Agricultural holdings and structures (Head of Specialised Service: Luciano Baroncelli).

These three units embodied the threefold mission of the CAP: to provide income support, secure food supply and reorientate agricultural holdings. However, the specialised 'structures' department was very soon integrated, as a section, into the division headed by Helmut Schumacher, who was himself replaced in the second half of the 1970s by Eric Snowdon. Special mention should be made of the Community typology for agricultural holdings, which was the fruit of several years' work undertaken by a working party under the joint aegis of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Eurostat. With its twin focus on the FADN and the structural survey, this effort illustrates the closeness of links between the two departments.

Worthy of particular note is the key role played by Günter Thiede in the harmonisation of agricultural production statistics and the compilation of supply balances, regarded as essential for the common management of the markets.

Through the 1970s, Günter Thiede, who had been the prime mover behind the 1966 structure survey, provided a major impetus for putting in place the Community legislation which we have today in the agricultural statistics sector. Legislation was regarded as the only way to rapidly implement the harmonisation needed. The form chosen was very often that of a directive, which gave Member States some leeway regarding methodology, while guaranteeing the use of common definitions and a regular flow of data according to a jointly agreed timetable. Nevertheless, regulations were used too in cases where the political authorities required even faster and further-reaching harmonisation.

In order to make it acceptable to national authorities, this legislative activity was backed up by a major Community financing package, at least for a pre-determined period which generally covered the first three surveys. It is interesting to note, after the event, that the Council was more readily inclined to approve legislative texts when they concerned productive activities with serious problems of overproduction.

This legislative effort also called for ongoing coordination, a task which the Council could not assume directly. It was against this background that the Standing Committee on Agricultural Statistics (CPSA) was created in 1972 along the lines of the committees set up to manage the common agricultural policy.

As there was no specific allocation of responsibility for statistics at Council level, proposals from the Commission were referred to the Council's Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA), a standing committee which examined proposals concerning the CAP and which was clearly a key player.

It should be stressed that, even today, notwithstanding the clearly defined responsibility of the 'General Affairs' Council in the area of statistics, proposals concerning agricultural statistics always come under the purview of the SCA and the Council of Agriculture Ministers.

This was the time of the production surpluses resulting in the skimmed milk powder and frozen butter mountains. It was thus essential to know precisely how production potential was developing so as to prevent excessive stocks from building up and avoid conflicts such as those set off by milk producers in the Netherlands, wine producers in the south of France and fruit growers in northern Italy. With each crisis, there was a corresponding demand for statistics, and a legislative text was put in place covering surveys on the sector concerned.

However, parallel developments in Helmut Schumacher's agri-monetary statistics field, particularly in relation to prices and estimates of agricultural income, were accomplished without legislation. The debate on whether or not to legislate has come up time and again throughout the history of common agricultural statistics. To be sure, the sheer scope of coverage and the headlong pace of events have often propelled agricultural statistics into the vanguard to confront issues that did not become commonplace in other Eurostat departments until later.

In the quest for information on the development of production potential (wine, fruit, olive oil, etc.), European decision-makers eventually gave systematic preference to statistical surveys over administrative-type operations such as the compilation of vineyard and olive grove registers. After several very expensive trials, these administrative exercises proved to be relatively inefficient: by the time results became available, they were already out of date for practical purposes.

National statistical services willingly accepted this legislation because it was accompanied by a substantial Community financing package. Moreover, because it became a national right/obligation, it was an important reference for national Ministers for Agriculture to obtain additional funding.

This situation also contributed towards consolidating, in terms of human resources, the national statistical services dealing with agriculture, and towards creating a permanent infrastructure which would subsequently be resized with each enlargement.

The late 1970s saw the advent of a new European-level strategy which was largely the result of the ideas of the Director, Stephanus Louwes. Instead of financing specific surveys in all Member States, the idea was to finance restructuring plans for agricultural statistics systems in countries where the associated infrastructure was not up to carrying out the large number of Community surveys now in place. Blanket financing across all Member States had ultimately meant that surveys were now being funded in countries where they had already been carried out on a regular basis before there had been any Community legislation. In order to target the financing effort more effectively, it was decided to provide assistance as necessary in a given Member State without extending coverage to other countries where it was not needed. It was in this way that the plans for restructuring the Italian, Irish, Greek and Portuguese agricultural statistics systems came about one after another (in Portugal's case, restructuring was preceded by a pre-accession plan).

By the beginning of the 1980s, when David Harris was appointed Director of a large directorate responsible for social and agricultural statistics, Hans Georg Baggendorff had taken over from Günter Thiede and Alberto De Michelis had succeeded Eric

Snowdon. From the outset, Alberto De Michelis took up an old idea of Helmut Schumacher's and initiated, with the help of Fritz Pfähler, the setting up of a model for forecasting/simulating the impact of the CAP on the world market and on the Community budget. Known as SPEL, this model was based on a database and extrapolation algorithms. Towards the end of the decade, the structure surveys were placed on an even sounder footing by a regulation which introduced a 10-year programme, a computerisation system (Eurofarm) and a specific financing mechanism. This privileged position would cause difficulties afterwards whenever financial resources had to be reallocated, and the problem was not resolved until the relevant funding was brought under the Directorate-General for Agriculture budget line almost 10 years later. During the same period, statistics on cereals (and a little later on other crops) came to be covered by legislation following the introduction of 'stabilisers' in the CAP.

Towards the end of the 1980s, the Statistical Office embarked on a process of in-depth rationalisation, particularly following the arrival of Yves Franchet, who came under pressure from various Member States to improve the balance of the European statistical system, which included both highly developed sectors (external trade and agricultural statistics) and sectors which clearly were in need of development (industrial statistics and social statistics). Moreover, the environmental issue, which nowadays is being integrated more and more under the heading of 'Sustainable development', became an absolute priority.

Yves Franchet implemented another restructuring of the Statistical Office, with one of the two agricultural units being merged into a new unit responsible for Environment Statistics and the other into the Energy Statistics Unit, thus emphasising the 'territorial' mission of this new directorate.

Yves Franchet appointed David Heath to head the directorate, and Alberto De Michelis was succeeded by Giuseppe Calò.

David Heath remained at the helm for over a decade and successfully accomplished the task of maintaining the quality of agricultural statistics (despite opposing pressure), while at the same time trying to focus such additional resources as were available on environment statistics. Agricultural statistics once again broke new ground with the launch of a screening exercise in consultation with users both within and outside the Commission, as well as with producers of statistics. This effort not only revealed some scope for downsizing but also highlighted the importance of most of the existing structure and the need for certain developments. A further innovation was the Agriflex approach, which was applied above all by Hans Georg Baggendorff to current agricultural statistics to enable

national agricultural statistics services to concentrate their increasingly scarce resources on the key issues.

Traditionally, the agricultural statisticians of the Member States and Eurostat have regarded themselves as part of one big family. By pursuing this approach with renewed vigour in the 1990s, they together found solutions to common problems. This approach made the task of integrating statisticians from the accession countries a lot easier.

The prospect of the EU's forthcoming enlargement taking in countries with still largely agricultural economies, and the revamping of the CAP to take account of themes such as the environment and rural development have completely changed the perception that agriculture and associated policies and statistics were not important any more. The challenge now was to find a way, without additional resources, of adapting this sizeable organisation to meet new requirements outside the realm of traditional agricultural statistics, while at the same time continuing to satisfy existing demand efficiently and taking an imaginative approach to the new needs emerging from a continually evolving policy. Studies were carried out, *inter alia*, on remote sensing and area frame surveys.

A focus of interest during that period was the launch of a new legislative and financial instrument designed to rationalise the agricultural statistics system. This new instrument took the form of a Council decision and was subsequently given the name 'TAPAS' (technical action plan for agricultural statistics). It was no longer a question of undertaking major developments, but rather of rationalising and enhancing the system already in place. The aims of the TAPAS project were to enable the Commission to intervene in national systems on an ad hoc basis in what it considered to be priority areas and to simplify the system where appropriate.

The main advantage of the TAPAS approach was that it allowed prompt action in specific areas without the need for a new legislative instrument. TAPAS was recently used on a large scale in helping national statistical services to develop agri-environmental actions in support of other Community efforts in this direction.

Today, the European statistical system can be regarded as a set of sub-systems at various stages of development. Among these, the 'Agriculture' sub-system is an outstanding example of harmonisation which, even if it is comparatively more advanced than other sub-systems, is functional, dynamic and flexible.

Foreign trade — Game of mirrors

Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz

External trade statistics have a remarkable ability to monitor their own quality. Mirror exercises are remarkably effective in this respect so … ([1])

Mirror of the past

Reminiscing rather than looking in the mirror is a sure sign that you're getting on
(JÉRÔME TOUZALIN)

1976

The dog days in Luxembourg, Year 1 of Regulation No 1736 ([2]) on statistics relating to the trading of goods.

Alain Biron writes the words, I design the layouts, Adrien Lhomme keeps an eye on things, the functional analysis of the general programme is up and running, country/products — products/country … 132 characters ('say 33, four times'), thank you, doctor! … the Val des Bons Malades is near — the now old hands in external trade — Rolf Sannwald, Hans Wittwer, Roger Cordier, Angelo Ferlini, Peter Schupp, Alice Disiviscour — decided on it as their headquarters, soon to be joined by the new programming team of Charles Kelhetter, Charles Logel — and all under the watchful eye of Pierre Horiot. Setting up is straightforward, not a wrong note, the score has been thought out by Marcel Mesnage …

Reflections in the mirror …

1978

Italy's data still haven't arrived, but the year's work will get done on time — Gérard Graff zooms off to Italy — Rome's just down the road.

1979

Beijing, Regulation No 1736 ([2]) is translated into Chinese!

One percent of Luxembourg has visited the People's Republic of China. If we want to balance the exchanges, Luxembourg is going to have some infrastructure problems … (Rolf Sannwald).

1980

Dakar! The 'harmonisation of trade statistics' symposium is awaiting its chairman, Silvio Ronchetti

He always accused mirrors of falsehood.

Jean de la Fontaine

([1]) The translation is not the easiest one. Thanks to Roger Cubitt for the Windowlene.

([2]) Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75.

has discovered that the Treaties of Rome makes a good pillow, and the siesta continues ...

1981

Port Cotonou, 70 % of Benin's foreign trade!

At the far end of Cotonou's sweeping beach, in a little fishing village, Richard Kuhner, in designer shoes and colonial shorts, is outraged at the terms of trade offered by a young local girl in a tee-shirt sporting a magnificent 'vive les animeaux' motif ([1]).

1981

Belgium's data haven't been collected for months, so the largest estimation exercise ever is launched (thanks to the mirror) — great success, no asymmetries detected.

Mirror technology

1980

The new technologies find ripe pickings in the field of external trade, though the role of pioneer is not without its dangers — witness the letter sent out by one of Josiane Libouton's trainees — 'Thank you for the interest you have shown in Community statistics. I am sending you the diskette by fax'; or the online demonstration of Comext at ISTAT in Rome, where a mix-up in communications meant that the replies on the terminal came up before the requests. The clash of the databases would be a mighty and noble one, the magnificent race worthy of the Palio so dear to Alberto De Michelis. Georges Pongas wins the day, Comext takes the best of SIENA. Even the Cronos base quakes, the revenge of history or a Greek tragedy — to be devoured in turn by one's own son.

1990

The Comext CD-ROM ([2]) is issued. The first in what would prove to be a long line, it confirms its place as a bestseller from year to year and is now sufficiently mature to fend for itself in a stand-alone version.

Mirror methodology

To become aware is to transform the veil that covers light in a mirror

1981

Methodology experts from Eurostat (Jacques Dispa, Richard Kuhner and others) and from the G6 (Guy Schuller, Francesco Latarullo, Wolfgang Bergman, Wim Satyn, Marc Alexandre/Françoise Rivet, Maurice De Lanoye) discover the imperatives of production and deign, thanks to the persuasive talents of Gertrude Hilf, to set up a 'Production' working party. This gradual shift from concept to realisation also applies to the indices thought up by Klaus Reeh and produced by Douglas Koszereck.

The 1980s

Resistance is, however, mobilising; yes to processing, but priority given to the harmonisation of specific

([1]) The wrong spelling of the word 'animeaux' in the French version is done on purpose.

([2]) Comext, SIENA, CD-ROM Comext, IDEP: databases and logistics of Eurostat.

movements of goods. Jürgen Heimann is fidgety, Joao Sousa is doing his utmost to keep track of them all; the fuelling and provisioning of vessels — straightforward, but a sensitive environment; spacecraft launchers — unpredictable; satellites in synchronous orbit — too fast. It's time to push for a more economic approach: Jürgen Heimann gets busy and, courtesy of the 'threshold' regulation, exempts more than one million enterprises from making declarations of any kind.

Mirror of words

A Nimexe form between two mirrors

1982

Exit Nimexe ([1]) — the handsome tomes bound in gold and personalised thanks to the attentions of Alphonse Fouarge and Klaus Loenig are archived for posterity. What will become of the ex-Nimexe? The Ex-CNs — the system of generalised preferences can continue and Roger Cordier can stay in his job.

The 1970s to the 1990s

Preparations for the GATT negotiations run into the small hours at the computer centre in Luxembourg. Christiane Bisenius and the team of IT experts are up all night, churning it out until the croissants arrive in the morning. The documentation distributed in Geneva for the implementation of the HS would, laid end to end, go once round the world. Globalisation is under way, the Bambusch appeals for assistance.

1984

The textile negotiations (MFA) ([2]) come to a successful conclusion because the statistics are wrong (in the words of the Geneva delegate). Eurostat is welcomed with open arms in Geneva, a liaison is set up and a rapid (7 220-bauds) link is established with Luxembourg.

The 1970s to 2000

The nomenclature specialists — Gérard Vandeplassche, Lieven Poot, Alphonse Fouarge, Josef Lambertz, Ramos José Olivarés — spend their time classifying, declassifying, reclassifying; a 'Wine' working group is set up; a new heading is added for camembert, but feta will have to wait another 20 years or so. The appearance of the electronic CN and IDEP are noted on the market — but notoriety is yet to come.

The mirror cracks — the Intrastat system

1985

The idea of observing a single flow is rejected, the loss of autonomy and statistical competence, the over-dependence on the other 11 ... all these result in the creation of a system in which 'imports' become 'arrivals' and 'exports', 'dispatches'. This system, which is closely linked to the VAT system, will be reviewed at the end of the transitional taxation period that enters into force on 1 January 1993.

([1]) Nimexe, CN, HS: nomenclatures of Eurostat.

([2]) Multifibre agreement.

Comedi — Edicom. Mirror words

1988

As an Intrastat flanking measure and a way of minimising the burden on enterprises, the emerging trans-European networks and associated funding mechanisms seem to hold high hope. Paul Hervé Theunissen is the first to take the plunge; the decision is taken, but getting it approved will be harder. The debate as to whether it should be called Comedi or Edicom ([1]) is an important one: 'EDI-first', and the legal base will be 121, 'COM-first' and it will be the internal market. This initial agonising will be followed by a stormy legal passage: an appeal to the Court of Justice on the grounds of inappropriate legal base, an annulment, a change of identity, a much-discussed resurrection, a conciliation procedure. The unstinting support of the European Parliament and its rapporteur Astrid Lulling, and of Eurostat's Alain Chantraine and Yves Franchet, finally gives the green light to Edicom, which prospers as Edicom 1 and then 2, and then ...

The slimming or illusory mirror

1995

The SLIM/Intrastat ([2]) initiative to simplify single market legislation was, and still is, a great challenge for Eurostat, particularly since striking a balance between reducing the burden on enterprises and maintaining detailed declarations, between producers and users (and vice versa), seemed to be asking the impossible. Thanks to 'YES' ([3]), CEFIC ([4]), UNICE ([5]) and the Member State NSIs for their contributions. Let us not forget the setting up of the anti-Intrastat NGO ([6]), which still has premises on the Avenue Guillaume in Luxembourg; the Intrastat nomenclature brandished by the UEAPME ([7]) and the Hermès scarf revolt at a session of the European Parliament; the German Greens' objection to the Intrastat forms; the unanimous vote by the internal market ministers to implement the SLIM/Intrastat project; the same unanimity by the same Council against simplification measures that were deemed to be too radical; the seminar in Luxembourg and the booting out of the President ...

The outcomes of the SLIM exercise may have been slower in arriving than anticipated, but examine the effectiveness! Marco Lancetti takes over, under Daniel Byk.

'Mirror, mirror on the wall ...' A dazzling, resplendent future ...

Perhaps the future will bring us the benefit of African wisdom, 'The donor's hand is always above the receiver's one', so there will always be more exports than imports. And if your doubts are not yet stilled, then follow the advice of the Mali poet Massa Makan Diabaté: 'If you don't like what you see in the mirror, put it back in your pocket'. Though I doubt this would have been much use to Christine Coin, her four musketeers (Daniel Byk, Jacques Lanneluc, Henri Tyrman, Eric Jouangrand) and their teams who, twice 20 years after Dumas joined Eurostat, would set their hearts on placing Extrastat and its identical twin Intrastat side by side in the Pantheon of statistical history.

([1]) Comedi, Edicom, SLIM: names of Council and Commission decisions.

([2]) Intrastat: Intra-European Community trade statistics — Extrastat: Extra-EU trade statistics

([3]) Young entrepreneurs for Europe.

([4]) CEFIC — Council for the European Federation of the Chemical Industry.

([5]) UNICE — Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe.

([6]) NGO: non-governmental organisations.

([7]) UEAPME: European Association of Craft and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Dissemination! The evolution and the technical revolution

François de Geuser

Until the end of the 1970s, it was possible to think that the only aim of a statistical project was to produce a publication. If it was not published, it was as if the project did not exist. It did not matter whether the publication was actually distributed or not. The whole of the computer environment was also geared to publication, with the aim of providing statisticians with the tools to automate the preparation of their publications.

The availability of an increasing mass of data that are relatively easy to access has prompted two considerations: firstly, about users and their needs, and secondly, about the public or private nature of the data held by Eurostat. In other words, can they be consulted by anyone or is it necessary to define categories of user depending on their level of access (what kind of access, to what kind of data, etc.), or even should data be free or charged for.

There were two maxims in vogue at the time. Firstly, anything that is not used is useless, and so something had to be done so that the massive investment in databases produced a return by making them as widely accessible as possible to ensure their use. Secondly, anything without a price is without value, which led to an epic debate on pricing and dissemination free of charge.

Electronic dissemination

Since the mid-1970s, the development of data collection among the Member States — which matched the increasing diversity of Community policies needing more and more information — has resulted in the steady accumulation of a vast pool of data.

Statistical fields diversified, and the computer environment in turn responded to needs by providing database management systems that had been developed in-house: Cronos for time-series, Comext for the massive amount of multidimensional external trade data, and REGIO for data on the regions. Eurostat's efforts were all geared to creating and updating these complex and cumbersome systems which evolved as the IBM mainframe gave way to ICL

and changes were made to the management system. How often did statisticians wish they could insert in their publications a note along the lines of 'data unavailable because the system has crashed, or is down, or has changed'? People used to say too that Cronos was like a cactus, or a prickly pear, sprouting more and more stems until it needed supports to hold it up.

Cronos was designed for about 30 000 times series but quickly contained nearly one million.

The data were documented according to classification plans, which provided a kind of catalogue of the whole database. There was virtually no information about the information. There were attempts to automate catalogues — such as CADOS for Cronos data — but it was still impossible to link the catalogues to the actual data. The only way to search was to use the classification plans, which were far from being a priority for the statisticians, with the result that some statistical fields were completely undocumented.

As systems like Euronet were used more and more to control access to the computers, people began to think about how these databases could be used.

The services of the Commission and the national statistical institutes were ranked first on the list of special users. The former were there because they were the obvious clients and it was useful to find out what they wanted, and what they were complaining about, on users' committees. There must be lots of people who remember heated meetings with some Directorate-General or other when Cronos came in for a lot of criticism. The latter were on the list because it seemed essential for them to be able to access their data so that they could check when, or even if, they had been updated.

Using intermediaries such as the CISI (abbreviation for the French, Compagnie internationale de services en informatique), the Atomic Energy Commissariat (AEC) computer centre in France, or the GSI (abbreviation for the French, Générale des services informatiques), and then as the database market developed (WEFA, Datastream, etc.), the next group consisted of public users, especially businesses, research centres and economic institutes. It was a time when dissemination consisted primarily of presenting the databases at big international online exhibitions, not only throughout Europe but also in the United States and Japan, and of training sales staff so that they could help people asking for information.

The increasing complexity of data meant that eventually some thought needed to be given to setting up a service, in addition to the product itself, to provide a tailor-made response. An information office was set up, the idea being to provide customised responses which went beyond searching for and retrieving data to providing the various information

that was needed to make the best use of the data. There was a first major discussion on relations between data producers and disseminators, and then there was further discussion on whether to channel income back to producers or to keep it so that disseminators could continue to boost efficiency, for example, by advertising to get themselves known.

Dissemination in print

A tangible shape to all the work of the statisticians was given by the publication of the data collected by the Member States. Most of these publications were produced more or less automatically and contained only a minimum amount of introductory text. Osiris, the software for tables, and Sabine, the software for nomenclatures, allowed the automatic production of manuscripts which could then be passed on for dissemination, either in print or by electronic means on magnetic tape, disks, and so on. There was always a time lag when it came to publications, and they took up a lot of time. It was not unusual at Eurostat to come upon trolleyloads of printouts, which nobody really knew what to do with, or some irate and frantic statistician looking for some electronic text or other that he needed to take to the Publications Office.

It became increasingly necessary to free statisticians from the worry of how 'their' publication should actually be published and disseminated, since people were having delivered to their office stacks of copies in various languages, which they then set about distributing, while the bulk of the print run went to the shredders.

Eurostat's dissemination policy was based on the need to simplify its catalogue by drastically trimming the number of publications and introducing the classification system described earlier, while at the same time responding to users' needs. Before proceeding with a publication, people had to ask why, how and for whom, in order to decide on the content and quality of the publication and how much effort should be put into marketing it.

The outcome was that a whole new range of products was developed and old products that were already popular — Euro-statistics, Basic statistics — were revamped. The creation of Europe in figures was a particular milestone in Eurostat's dissemination policy. The target audience had been defined: young people of 16 to 18, nearing the end of secondary education. The concept, covering all the Community languages, was tested on a school in Luxembourg. The content was standardised in four-page chapters, with photographs, tables and short explanations. The authors were statisticians, but for the first time a journalist was given the job of rewriting the text to adapt it to the target audience. It was a smash hit, in spite of some mistakes in the general concept — nobody had thought to ask the education authorities to approve a book that was going to be handed out at

school — and 300 000 copies were distributed, and another 80 000 sold. The second edition gave rise to an interesting experiment, since the English version was co-edited by MacMillan Education for the United Kingdom and Gill and Macmillan for Ireland.

As for the yearbooks, there were some major innovations, such as the Portrait of the regions, which got an award, and the Social portrait of Europe, which used more or less the same concept as Europe in figures, in other words, it set out to present a mix of statistics, comments and tables to a broader public and to those specialising in particular fields.

Lastly, in order to reach as many users as possible with the latest data on short-term trends or the latest news of various statistical projects, a series entitled Statistics in focus was introduced. These publications were short — four pages — and gave details of recent updatings or extracts from longer publications. The deadlines for their publication were also very short, which meant that the data were always recent.

The efforts to improve all of Eurostat's publications could be successful only if considerable efforts were also put into marketing and publicising the Statistical Office and its publications. Along with its publisher, the Publications Office, Eurostat attended book fairs, online exhibitions and other specialist events for the farming sector or students in various countries.

An external communication service was set up, with the creation of a Press Office which issued news releases in conjunction with the Spokesman's Service. They were distributed in the press room in Brussels and publicised Eurostat's work. To provide statisticians with a channel of communication among themselves and with the authorities, a magazine — Sigma — was created to provide topical news about statistics which went beyond mere figures and presented interviews with people involved in statistics at every level and also with users of statistical information.

An information campaign was set in motion to allow people in any Member State to see how their country fared in relation to the others and to Europe as a whole. Key figures were offered in a brochure entitled Facts through figures, which had only tables and a few photographs. The first editions of this brochure had been intended to be distributed to young people by banks — one bank was on the point of ordering a million copies when it realised that the brochure was an odd size and that the cost of mailing it was more than it had cost to make — and by education authorities. Eurostat tried to find sponsors, but met with very mixed success.

Eurostat's efforts to ensure that the wealth of information it has can be used for the benefit of the public have been entirely in line with the policy of the European Commission, which with its 'Objective 92' set out to promote the single market.

Conclusions

Alain Chantraine and Alberto De Michelis

Eurostat: growing from its roots. Believe in the future!

To paraphrase an African-American writer of the beginning of the last century, an institution without knowledge of its origins, history and culture is like a tree without roots ([1]). Eurostat is beginning to have roots. These should allow it to grow. Nowadays, with deadlines to meet and day-to-day problems to cope with, few will know these roots. It is hoped that the moments spent looking at this publication will have given renewed vigour to those who are to write the history of the next 50 years.

We have also thought about those who will make their contribution to European statistics in the coming years. They will come from a variety of locations that we could never have imagined when the peaceful integration of Europe began back in 1952. They will find that Eurostat will welcome them, as it did their predecessors at the time of earlier enlargements. They will bring with them their experience and enthusiasm and they will help the system develop so that it can be even more successful in meeting society's challenges by 'providing the European Union with a high-quality statistical information'. Even if the idea was not defined and clarified until the corporate plan was drawn up in the 1990s, this is the task that has been at the basis of Eurostat's development for the last 50 years.

Five decades of upheaval: we have lived through them and occasionally played a part in them. But in spite of all the changes, the foundations that were laid at the start have been solid enough to stand the test of time. They have absorbed all the changes. From the early days of the ECSC, Professor Rolf Wagenführ wanted an independent statistical service to coordinate the needs of the institution. The fact is that if data are to be credible and relevant to the use that will be made of them, they need to be compiled by a statistical service that is separate from the bodies with the powers of decision. This has been the watchword of all his successors.

The long tradition of international cooperation — for which Adolphe Lambert Quételet was one of the pioneers — has allowed statisticians to form a family of experts used to the work of international comparison. Europe's statisticians, drawn from an ever-expanding area, have a common language and experience of working with their neighbours. When they come together in joint institutions, they are able

Wherever things could be expressed numerically, numbers have been used as guides; discussion stopped in order to count; facts were wanted, not words.

Adolphe Lambert Quételet, Instructions populaires sur le calcul des probabilités, *introduction, 1828.*

([1]) Marcus Garvey: 'A people without the knowledge of their past history is like a tree without roots.'

to come up with working methods which have always been ahead of their time.

Because it takes a long time for their work to be carried out, statisticians need to take a longer view of things than most. This is true in the case of their projects, and also for their methods of cooperation. Even though it is still under construction, the European statistical system provides an excellent example of this. By working together with the national statistical institutes, Eurostat is shaping a new way of inter-administration management which could well serve as a model for other fields of European endeavour.

Like any human endeavour, Eurostat has known highs and lows and its history is marked by both continuity and innovation. This has made Eurostat what it is today: a statistical service which is respected throughout the world and which many national and international statistical bodies are happy to work with. We feel that the hard times that Eurostat has experienced have nevertheless served to strengthen its character and will enable it to deal with the inevitable crises that will occur in the future.

If you look at some of the documents that were written by Eurostat back in the 1950s and the 1960s, you will find that a lot of the ideas that have been put into practice in recent years were already around at that time: subsidiarity in relations with the NSIs, a European statistical law, cost-effectiveness of actions, exchanges of confidential data between NSIs and with Eurostat, the quality of published data, dialogue on an institutional basis with users, a body with the power to use 'comitology' — a word that did not appear in 'Eurospeak' until 1987 — to decide statistical work, or the creation of a European statistical training centre in Luxembourg. These are all ideas that cropped up in documents which Eurostat prepared and discussed with the NSIs in the first 20 years of its existence. It is something to be remembered by cocky young statisticians who think they are the only ones with new ideas. But it is also an encouragement to come up with novel ideas which others might consider adventurous or even fanciful. If the ideas are in line with European integration, they will come true one day. It was Jean Monnet who said in his Memoirs that there are no premature ideas, only right moments that you have to wait for.

We mentioned earlier the Eurostat 'family'. It is true that the members of this family were closer together when they first set out on their statistical adventure back in the 1950s. There were not so many of them, and they all knew each other. They were all fired by the same enthusiasm — and you really needed enthusiasm back then to come to Luxembourg to work for a new institution that was starting from scratch. This sense of family has been a constant feature throughout the history of Eurostat. One of our former colleagues, Bernard Eyquem who answered our questionnaire wrote, 'It would be inexcusable to tell the story of the Statistical Office, and of Eurostat,

The yearly cocktail offered to Eurostat's staff by the Director-General and the directors (2002).

without mentioning the team spirit that has marked decades of work by its officials. As elsewhere, of course, one or two notable people have provoked reaction. But repeated contact with colleagues in other directorates-general made me realise the special nature of relations in our service. They already existed in the very first ECSC statistical department before I arrived, and they were maintained and developed among everyone, especially after 1959. I can say that we were quite simply the envy of people elsewhere for a general atmosphere where a spirit of cooperation and an enthusiasm for work were backed by mutual respect and frequent expressions of comradeship, and indeed genuine friendship, at both the individual and general level. It should be said that a pioneering spirit prevailed for a long time in all the services of the Commission, but at the Statistical Office there was obviously something more, that was precious and delightful.' This invaluable titbit of information on the story of Eurostat over the last 50 years demonstrates a feature that remains true today, even when Eurostat has become an organisation of more than 600 people.

The 600 people are all highly qualified. They all come from different places, with basic training that often differs greatly, and have a wide range of experience. Whether former NSI staff, university professors or lecturers, executives and secretaries from the world of business, or even young people starting their first job, the officials at Eurostat have always managed to demonstrate their professional expertise, even when the going has been tough for the institution. Of course, Eurostat like any human organisation has had — just as it has now and probably will have in the future — some 'bad apples'. However, the vast majority of those working at Eurostat, whether in the past or at present, have been able to demonstrate their expertise by doing their job in a conscientious and often selfless manner. It is a second constant feature in the story of Eurostat.

A third feature that has marked the story of Eurostat concerns its relations with the NSIs. From the very outset, in 1952, those in charge at Eurostat realised that the harmonious development of European statistics depended on close cooperation with the NSIs. Nowadays, this seems so obvious as to be almost not worth mentioning. The principle of subsidiarity was not recognised in Community law until the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, but it has been there in practice as part of the European statistical system for nearly 50 years. The increasingly close cooperation with the NSIs has known some difficult moments but has always remained a cornerstone of Eurostat policy. It is a fundamental strategic decision which has grown apace in the last 15 years, in line with European integration. Should we use the word 'federal' to describe the system that Europe's statisticians are in the process of setting up? We realise that the word can jar with some people, and perhaps 'federal' is not the most suitable word. Some 15 years ago, if you

mentioned the European statistical system, you got an almost indignant reaction from some people in charge of European statistics. Today, it is an everyday expression that European statisticians use when they talk about how they cooperate. When the time is right, the rest will follow.

Another factor that has been a feature of Eurostat is its ability to adapt to technological progress, to changes in ways of communicating with users and to modern management techniques.

There is no doubt that the most obvious of these changes has been the technological revolution wrought by the information society. Statisticians have swapped their paper and pencils and calculating machines for personal computers that are now as powerful as the old mainframe machines. Documents shuttling to and from the NSIs have given way to real-time networks. The statisticians have kept up with progress, often even faster than society as a whole.

The job has changed too. The traditional view of statistics was of a discipline contributing to an understanding of social and economic circumstances. At times, there was a temptation to adopt an 'art for art's sake' approach, with statistics serving statistics. Perhaps there was no political aim to act as motivation. The last 20 years have seen statistics firmly rooted in the construction of Europe, as it was in the early years. Users — the customers — have again become the focus of a statistical service serving society. It is worth mentioning that everywhere in Europe, and at Eurostat of course, it was not until the 1970s that the idea of disseminating and publishing statistics for the general public took hold. Statistical institutes have switched from being purveyors of figures to suppliers of information for the purpose of taking decisions. Everyone in society is entitled to this information.

Decisions taken on the basis of information provided by the European statistical system now affect every area of economic and social life. In the beginning, information was used for trade talks or discussions on agriculture and for the financial management of own resources or the allocation of the Structural Funds, but now it is also used for managing monetary and macroeconomic policies. Sets of statistical indicators are routinely used for assessments of measures concerning employment, training, health or the environment. The data all come from the European statistical system. There can be no doubt that Eurostat's ability to call on the whole of the system has helped it win the trust of those in charge of Community policies. From being too demanding in the eyes of the national statistical institutes, Eurostat has become the channel for Community needs and the orchestrator of a network of national statistical systems, now including the statistical services of the central banks. In all sensitive areas, cooperation within the European statistical system has gradually

assumed a more legal basis. The 'gentlemen's agreements' of the early days have given way to legal texts underlying joint work. Successive enlargements have obliged Eurostat to put its work programmes and projects on an increasingly formal basis.

The ability to anticipate change has been another feature of Eurostat's work. Take one example: it was 1989 and the Treaty of Maastricht was still two years away. Eurostat decided to strengthen its ties with the statisticians in the central banks, with whom relations had been somewhat neglected from the outset. As the creation of a common monetary policy started to speed up, the national central banks needed to be more closely involved in formulating Community statistical programmes. It was thus decided to set up a cooperation and coordination body for statisticians in the NSIs and those at the central banks. After several months of discussion, the Council acted on Eurostat's proposal and created the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance-of-Payments Statistics (CMFB), a committee which would subsequently play a vital part in the introduction of the euro.

In these conclusions we have sketched the positive aspects in the history of Eurostat, with regard both to the continuity of its work and to its adaptation to technological progress and the modern-day society. It is up to others to comment on any negative aspects that may have marked its work over the last 50 years. We trust we have been sufficiently objective in this short history of Eurostat by mentioning the shortcomings and the internal reasons for the difficult moments that the institute has experienced. In these concluding remarks, we want to stress in particular the qualities that underlie the success of Eurostat. We are sure that when the 100th anniversary comes round those qualities will still be there to meet the challenges that will exist in the middle of the 21st century.

A review of the last 50 years shows that there have been fat years and lean years. The fat years have always been at times when several factors coincided. The magic formula has always been based on a political determination to move forward with the construction of Europe. The other ingredients have always been the strength of vision at every level of Eurostat management and the quality of cooperation with the national statistical systems.

The European Union is about to face its biggest ever enlargement. Let us hope that the magic formula will continue to work on a broader basis.

Annexes

European Community — Eurostat: half a century of history

	The Community	Eurostat
1952	ECSC Treaty enters into force on 23 July High Authority President Jean Monnet, takes office in Luxembourg on 10 August	ECSC statistical service established on 1 October Rolf Wagenführ appointed Head of Service First statistical service organisation chart, listing seven officials, approved by the High Authority Statistical service occupies premises in rue Aldringen First statistical bulletin published on 20 December
1953	Creation of common market in coal and steel Creation of ECSC Court of Justice Creation of European political community discussed	High Authority assigns statistical service responsibility for all statistical activities First statistical service report on the economic situation in coal and steel sector First DGINS meeting on 15 July in Luxembourg Second DGINS meeting in September, again in Luxembourg First annual survey of labour costs in the coal and steel industry Third DGINS meeting in November, again in Luxembourg
1954	France rejects creation of EDC (European Defence Community) Creation of Western European Union (WEU) Resignation of Jean Monnet as High Authority President	Statistical service becomes Statistical Division organised in three sectors First survey of prices and economic parities No DGINS meetings
1955	Messina Conference on European integration Saarland approves reunification with Germany Council of Europe adopts 12-star blue flag; this flag becomes EU emblem in 1986.	Publication of first real income comparison for coal and steel workers First statistical pocketbook published (1954); 12 500 copies, including 7 000 distributed free of charge Two DGINS meetings in Luxembourg chaired by Albert Coppé (High Authority Vice-President)

	The Community	Eurostat
1956	High Authority reaffirms right of free movement for third-country iron and steel products within the six Member States Meeting in Venice, the Six endorse creation of an economic community Opening of EEC and Euratom Treaty discussions in Brussels	First DGINS meeting outside Luxembourg: Paris (May) First survey of workers' household budgets Three DGINS meetings in Paris, Luxembourg and Wiesbaden
1957	Signature of the Treaties of Rome (EEC and Euratom) on 25 March Signature (Brussels) of protocols and statutes of the institutions	Second survey of workers' household budgets Rolf Wagenführ prepares organisation of new ECSC, EEC, Euratom statistical service Three DGINS meetings in The Hague, Luxembourg and Geneva
1958	Treaties of Rome enter into force on 1 January EEC (Walter Hallstein) and Euratom (Louis Armand) Commissions take office on 7 January Robert Schuman elected President of the Parliamentary Assembly Council adopts regulation on official languages (French, German, Italian and Dutch) First meeting of Parliamentary Assembly Foundations of common agricultural policy (CAP) laid in Stresa (Italy) Entry into force of first European monetary agreement	Walter Hallstein (Service Note No 1) announces creation of 'external statistical service' First small group of EEC statisticians starts work at rue des Marais, Brussels The three institutions decide to set up a common statistical service (October) First common service organisation chart lists three directorates and three special services Second survey of prices and economic parities Luxembourg common statistical service moves to Staar Hotel First Parliamentary (NL) written 'statistics' question on publication languages Two DGINS meetings in Luxembourg and Rome
1959	Council assigns Commission responsibility for GATT negotiations Seven countries (Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) sign EFTA Treaty EEC starts association negotiations with Greece and Turkey	Common statistical service becomes the Statistical Office of the European Communities (SOEC), 11 June 1959 Giuseppe Petrilli (EEC) chairs first meeting of the SOEC Management Board 'Nuclear Power Statistics' division (Euratom) incorporated into the SOEC (April) Statistical Office of the European Communities (SOEC) staffed by 36 A-grade, 29 B-grade and 24 C-grade officials

	The Community	Eurostat
		EEC Commission creates machine-posting workshop under the SOEC's responsibility The SOEC organises two DGINS meetings in Luxembourg and Brussels
1960	Council adopts European Social Fund Eurocontrol created (air navigation safety) OEEC becomes OECD	Albert Coppé (ECSC High Authority) becomes President of the SOEC Management Board First Council 'statistical' regulation on labour costs and compensation of employees The SOEC employs 110 staff (59 in Brussels and 51 in Luxembourg), including 46 A, 35 B and 29 C grades The SOEC budget: BEF 77.5 million (53 % EEC, 39 % ECSC, 8 % Euratom) First salary adjustment survey for EEC–ECSC–Euratom officials Two DGINS meetings held in Brussels
1961	Member States and institutions discuss merger of executives (ECSC, EEC and Euratom) Ireland, Denmark and UK apply for EEC membership First regulation on free movement of workers enters into force	Harmonisation of national accounts commences Harmonisation of foreign trade statistics commences Two DGINS meetings held in The Hague and Rome
1962	First regulations on CAP and creation of EAGGF Parliamentary Assembly becomes European Parliament First major reductions in customs duties between the Six	Harmonisation of CAP agricultural statistics commences DGINS meetings acquire definitive designation as DGINS Conference The SOEC housed in three different buildings in Brussels (Tervueren, Belliard and Broqueville) Creation of CESD in Paris Initial discussion of a 'long-term work programme' Two DGINS meetings held in Paris and Wiesbaden

	The Community	Eurostat
1963	Suspension of UK accession negotiations Reduction of internal duties and moves towards a common customs tariff Signature of Yaoundé Convention with 16 African countries and Madagascar	The SOEC has 179 officials (74 A, 62 B, 43 C) by the middle of the year Common industrial survey carried out Establishment of NICE (nomenclature of the industries in the European Communities) The SOEC begins to use Ispra JRC computers for external trade statistics Two DGINS meetings held in Brussels and Athens (first outside EEC)
1964	Establishment of EAGGF Start of trade negotiations (Kennedy Round) Court of Justice establishes principle of precedence of Community law UN Assembly creates Unctad	First work on social security data Strengthening of relations with Greece, which is regularly invited to attend the DGINS Conference Two DGINS meetings held in Athens and Luxembourg
1965	Signature of Executive Merger Act (ECSE, EEC and Euratom) in Brussels France breaks with EEC over CAP funding, 'empty chair' Commission proposals on EEC own resources	First talks on trade statistics after elimination of customs inspections The SOEC decides to send officials on long-term missions to Africa Two DGINS meetings held in Luxembourg and The Hague
1966	Luxembourg Compromise: unanimous vote required on vital issues Council adopts provisions on CAP funding	SOEC occupies four buildings in Brussels: Charlemagne, Broqueville, Cortemberg and Belliard First major purchasing power parity (PPP) survey in EEC capitals Rolf Wagenführ resigns after 14 years in charge of European statistics Raymond Dumas appointed Director-General Two DGINS meetings held in Rome and Luxembourg

	The Community	Eurostat
1967	Harmonisation of indirect taxation and adoption of VAT in the six Member States First medium-term economic programme United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark and Norway apply for membership Merger of executives comes into force on 1 July Single Commission under Jean Rey Jean Rey becomes Commission President	Three executives decide to group all SOEC departments in Luxembourg Raymond Barre becomes Commissioner with responsibility for SOEC SOEC has 226 officials (91 A, 75 B and 60 C) including 91 in Luxembourg Raymond Barre attends DGINS Paris meeting First mention of a 'special statistical law for the Community' Two DGINS meetings held in Paris and Brussels
1968	Entry into force of customs union with introduction of Common Customs Tariff Council, Parliament and Commission discuss democratisation of the institutions	The SOEC moves from Brussels to Luxembourg: some 130 agents affected The SOEC officials housed in three buildings: Louvigny, Tower and Aldringen First major survey of agricultural holdings Two DGINS meetings held in Wiesbaden and Geneva
1969	Commission proposes creation of a system of own resources Signature of second Yaoundé Convention Commission presents regional policy proposals to Council Hague Summit: Enlargement, economic and monetary union and alignment of social policy	DGINS approves ESA-69 DGINS discusses future of Community statistics Raymond Dumas reorganises the SOEC: 6 directorates, 20 divisions The SOEC 'antenne' installed in Brussels: three divisions affected DGINS meetings in Wiesbaden and Brussels
1970	Council creates Werner Committee on the future of EMU Luxembourg Treaty: own resources and extension of EP powers Start of accession negotiations with Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom in Luxembourg Reform of European Social Fund (ESF) Establishment of a regional policy agreed	Major joint survey of private consumer goods prices Community survey of adult vocational training Eurostat arranges study of Cronos dissemination base DGINS meetings in The Hague and Luxembourg

	The Community	Eurostat
1971	Council adopts Werner plan on coordination of economic policies Creation of system of monetary compensatory amounts for agriculture	Council approves (resolution) first three-year social statistics programme First Council statistical directive on milk and dairy products First DGINS discussion of multiannual statistical programme (Rome) DGINS meetings in Rome and Brussels
1972	Council adopts first EMU provisions Introduction of 'currency snake' (+/– 2.25 % margin) Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom sign Accession Treaty Norway rejects EEC membership in referendum Paris Summit defines new areas of Community responsibility	Council adopts two directives on industrial activity and economic situation Working group established by Raymond Dumas decides to rename SOEC 'Eurostat' Council approves Nimexe regulation First Council regulation on a labour force sample survey DGINS meetings in Marseilles and Luxembourg
1973	Denmark, Ireland and United Kingdom join EEC Free trade agreement between the EEC and Austria, Switzerland, Sweden and Portugal Tokyo GATT Conference on world monetary system and trade liberalisation	Ralph Dahrendorf becomes Commissioner with responsibility for Eurostat INSEE Director, Jacques Mayer, becomes Eurostat Director-General Eurostat proposes first statistical programme (1976–78) to DGINS Reorganisation of Eurostat services; departure of Pierre Gavanier and Camille Legrand Creation of Munich training centre for statisticians from developing countries First Council statistical directive on cattle population DGINS meetings in Copenhagen and Luxembourg

	The Community	Eurostat
1974	Commission sends Member States memorandum on policy convergence United Kingdom proposes far-reaching CAP reform Start of negotiations with ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries Paris Summit: decision to establish European Council (three meetings per year) Council adopts (resolution) a Community social action programme	Ralph Dahrendorf presents 1976–78 statistical programme to Commission Consumer price survey conducted for first time by multinational teams Ralph Dahrendorf attends first enlarged DGINS Conference in Brussels DGINS approve multiannual social statistics programme DGINS meetings in Dublin, Brussels and Luxembourg
1975	Signature of Lomé Convention with 46 ACP countries Establishment of ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) Adoption of European unit of account Council adopts first consumer protection programme UK referendum on continued EC membership: 67 % vote in favour Revision of Treaty: increase in EP budgetary powers and creation of Court of Auditors	Guido Brunner becomes Commissioner with responsibility for Eurostat Eurostat presents revised data dissemination system Council approves 'Method' regulation for external trade statistics First Eurostat officials move from Tower Building to Jean Monnet building DGINS meetings in London and Brussels
1976	Council examines national economic situations and approaches Commission conducts GATT discussions (Tokyo Round) Italy receives EEC support during monetary crisis Decision on election of EP by universal suffrage Establishment of a common fisheries policy	First statistical programme (1976–78) commences First Council statistical directives on fruit trees and pigs Council regulation on cereals Commission approves second statistical programme (1977–79) Establishment of IAMSEA (African and Mauritian Applied Statistics Institute) in Kigali Discussion of Ader Report on statistical confidentiality in the business sector Retirement of Director Fritz Grotius DGINS meetings in Wiesbaden and Luxembourg

	The Community	Eurostat
1977	Portugal and Spain apply for EC membership Council adopts sixth directive on the introduction of a uniform VAT basis of assessment Extension of Common Customs Tariff to the three new Member States Court of Auditors set up in Luxembourg Council decides to locate JET (Joint European Torus for thermonuclear fusion) in Culham (United Kingdom)	François-Xavier Ortoli becomes Commissioner with responsibility for Eurostat All Eurostat officials housed in Jean Monnet building Jacques Mayer resigns and Aage Dornonville de la Cour is appointed Eurostat Director-General Council approves 'geographical nomenclature' regulation for external trade Commission approves third statistical programme (1978–80) DGINS meetings in The Hague and Brussels
1978	Start of EEC–Yugoslavia cooperation negotiations European Council (Copenhagen) decides on election of EP by direct universal suffrage European Council (Bremen) discusses creation of a European Monetary System (EMS) Entry into force of association agreements with the Maghreb and Mashreq European Council (Brussels) decides to create the EMS (currency: ECU)	Eurostat reorganisation: Vittorio Paretti coordinates activity of three directorates First (difficult) discussion of the introduction of a harmonised business register First Eurostat yearbook on the 20th anniversary of the common market Commission approves fourth statistical programme (1979–81) DGINS meetings in Rome and Luxembourg
1979	Opening of negotiations with Spain and Portugal Reform of the ERDF Court of Justice 'Cassis de Dijon' judgment: freedom to consume foodstuffs manufactured in the EEC Signature of Greek accession agreement in Athens First election of EP by direct universal suffrage, 7–10 June Signature of second EEC–CAP Convention in Lomé Community signs 'Tokyo Round' trade agreements Jenkins Commission decides on major reform of Commission (Spierenburg Report)	First disagreements within Eurostat Management Board DGINS approves ESA (second edition) Council regulation on wine-growing areas The fourth statistical programme is established (1979–81) DGINS meetings in Paris and Brussels

	The Community	Eurostat
1980	European Council (Luxembourg) examines UK contribution to Community budget Negotiation of various association agreements: ASEAN, Brazil, Yugoslavia, India, etc.	Aage Dornonville de la Cour sends Commission a report on reorganisation of Eurostat Director, Vittorio Paretti, is forced to resign Two directors (Guy Bertaud and Stephanus Louwes) take early retirement DGINS meetings in Copenhagen and Luxembourg
1981	Greece becomes 10th EEC Member State Presidential elections in France: François Mitterrand elected First discussion of interinstitutional machinery (Genscher-Colombo plan)	Eurostat reorganisation (Spierenburg Report) involving loss of one directorate (6 to 5) and six units (23 to 17) Helmut Schumacher, Director, resigns Cronos base (600 000 time-series) linked to Euronet Commission approves fifth statistical programme (1982–84) DGINS meetings in Athens and Brussels
1982	Three European Councils (Brussels and Copenhagen): discussions	Aage Dornonville de la Cour retires to be replaced by Pieter de Geus EP approves Newton Dunn (MEP) report on Eurostat statute Fifth statistical programme (1982–84) begins Council approves by decision planned reorganisation of agricultural statistics in Italy DGINS meetings in Dublin and Luxembourg
1983	Commission sends Council Green Paper on EEC financing Helmut Kohl becomes Chancellor of Germany Council adopts first framework programmes on research and development Altiero Spinelli (MEP) presents draft Treaty on European Union to European Parliament	Pieter de Geus reorganises services: agricultural statistics lose directorate status Eurostat opens first data shop in Brussels Major DGINS discussion of energy statistics Edgar Pisani, Commissioner for Development, attends DGINS Conference DGINS meetings in Leeds Castle (Kent) and Brussels

	The Community	Eurostat
1984	Council adopts Esprit project (IT research) Brussels European Council: disagreement on UK compensatory amounts Council adopts resolution on reduction of internal-frontier controls Commission Green Paper on telecommunications services and equipment Dublin European Council: strengthening of EMS and greater role for ECU Signature of third EEC–ACP Convention	Departure of Pieter de Geus and start of lengthy acting Director-Generalship of Silvio Ronchetti Commission approves sixth statistical programme (1985–87) DGINS decide to terminate Community survey of salary structures DGINS meetings in Schloss Reinhartshausen (near Weisbaden) and Luxembourg
1985	New Commission, President Jacques Delors, takes office Signature of Spanish and Portuguese accession agreements Commission White Paper on completion of the internal market Signature of Schengen Agreement: elimination of frontier controls between Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands Creation of Intergovernmental Conference on speeding-up of integration Commission Green Paper on CAP reform Adoption of Single European Act (completion of single market)	Alois Pfeiffer becomes Commissioner with responsibility for Eurostat Council decision on harmonised system due to enter into force in 1987 Start of sixth statistical programme (1985–87) Eurostat initiates development of poverty and income distribution statistics Council approves by decision planned reorganisation of agricultural statistics in Greece Community survey on structure of agricultural holdings carried out Silvio Ronchetti appointed Eurostat Director-General DGINS meetings in Heerlen and Brussels
1986	Spain and Portugal join Community Signature of Single European Act: single market to be completed in 1992 Adoption of European flag and European anthem GATT launches new cycle of trade negotiations, Uruguay Round	Eurostat decides to establish Eurofarm project Council approves by decision planned reorganisation of agricultural statistics in Portugal Retirement of Joseph Nols, Director DGINS meetings in Palmela and Luxembourg

	The Community	Eurostat
1987	Ecofin adopts measures to strengthen EMS Council adopts 1987–91 technological development framework programme European Council examines implications of Single Act which came into force on 1 July	Council approves by decision planned reorganisation of agricultural statistics in Ireland Silvio Ronchetti secures approval of seventh statistical programme in respect of a single year (1988) Yves Franchet becomes Eurostat Director-General DGINS meetings in Seville and Brussels
1988	EEC and EFTA countries examine implications of establishment of the single market Commission publishes study: 'Europe 1992 — The overall challenge' Entry into force of interinstitutional agreement on budgetary discipline Creation of Court of First Instance within the Court of Justice European Councils (Hanover and Rhodes) analyse all implications of Single Act	Eurostat acquires new organisation chart Interim statistical programme First Eurostat document on European statistical system concept Farm structure surveys extended to 1997 Special DGINS meeting in Luxembourg on 1989–92 programme Regular DGINS meetings in Sorrento and Luxembourg
1989	Delors Committee presents EMU report Peseta and escudo join ECU basket European Council (Madrid) adopts resolutions on the environment Austria applies for EEC membership Fall of the Berlin Wall Signature of new Lomé Convention between EEC and 69 ACP countries European Council (Strasbourg) decides to convene a conference on establishment of EMU	Henning Christophersen, Commission Vice-President, assigned responsibility for Eurostat Seminar on future of the European statistical system 1989–92 statistical programme National Statistical Institutes (NSI)s involved in dissemination of Community statistics First cooperation mission to a central European country (Poland) Creation of SPC GNP harmonisation regulation (own resources) First SPC meeting (November) DGINS meetings in Nice and Brussels

	The Community	Eurostat
1990	European Council (Dublin) discusses common approach to German unification Creation of European Foundation for Vocational Training (Dublin) Creation of European Environment Agency (Copenhagen) One thousandth Commission meeting, 21 February German unification, 1 October European Council (Rome) launches two Intergovernmental Conferences	Creation of Committee on Statistical Confidentiality NACE regulation adopted Creation of Training of European Statisticians Institute Two SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Copenhagen
1991	European Council (Luxembourg) discusses the Gulf crisis and Kurdish problem Creation of EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), London First meeting of CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), Berlin Sweden applies for EEC membership Council agrees on creation of European Economic Area (EEA) Community as such becomes FAO member European Council (Maastricht) reaches agreement on revision of Treaties	Creation of the Steering Committee for Statistical Information (CDIS) Creation of European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres (CEIES) Creation of Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance-of-Payments Statistics (CMFB) Seminar on human capital Intrastat and Prodcom regulations adopted Two SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Luxembourg
1992	Maastricht Treaty signed 7 February Treaty on European Economic Area signed Commission prepares Green Paper on environmental impact of transport Finland applies for EEC membership Danish referendum rejects Maastricht Treaty Commission White Paper on common transport policy	SPC asks Eurostat to prepare statistical law SPC admits EEA countries within their areas of competence Initial pilot survey on household panel Departure of Piero Erba, Director Two SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Athens

	The Community	Eurostat
1993	Single market comes into operation Start of accession negotiations with Sweden, Austria, Finland and Norway European Council (Copenhagen) fixes the political, economic and institutional criteria for the admission of new Member States Establishment of European Monetary Institute in Frankfurt Establishment of Tacis programme (assistance to CIS countries) Council decision on headquarters of the agencies Commission Green Paper on EU social policy Commission White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment	1993–97 statistical programme Application of Intrastat system Regulation on the harmonisation of business registers Eurostat faces EP rejection of Community budget Departure of José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao Two SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Dublin
1994	Agreement on European Economic Area enters into force Committee of the Regions established by Maastricht Treaty meets for first time Signature of GATT Trade Agreement (Uruguay Round) in Marrakesh Poland and Hungary apply for EU membership First joint actions in the fields of justice and internal affairs Council decision on Leonardo programme (vocational training)	Eurostat produces its corporate plan The CMFB establishes the Executive Body SPC to meet four times a year in future DGINS meeting in London
1995	Austria, Sweden and Finland join EU Santer Commission takes office Schengen Agreement enters into force (Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Portugal and the Netherlands) Commission Green Paper on EMU European Council (Madrid) fixes 1 January 1999 for entry into force of single currency (euro) Several central and east European countries apply for EU membership	Yves-Thibault de Silguy becomes the Commissioner with responsibility for Eurostat Basic regulation on price indices (HIPC) adopted Establishment of Eurostat/NSI Partnership Group Change in CEIES operating procedures involving organisation of seminars Four SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Meersburg

	The Community	Eurostat
1996	European Council (Turin) launches Intergovernmental Conference on revision of Treaties Commission action against BSE Rome Tripartite Conference (MS and social partners) on growth and employment Commission approves several Green and White Papers European Council (Dublin) adopts legal framework for euro and the Stability and Growth Pact	ESA-95 becomes a regulation Council adopts programme to improve agricultural statistics Leadership groups established First 'stagiaires' from candidate countries at Eurostat (Phare programme — programme for statistical cooperation) Four SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Vienna
1997	European Council approves revision of Amsterdam Treaty Commission presents document 'Agenda 2000 — for a stronger and wider Union' Extraordinary European Council (Luxembourg) approves employment policy guidelines Commission continues to publish White and Green Papers on several aspects of European integration Community establishes Euro-Mediterranean cooperation at Barcelona Conference	An article of the Amsterdam Treaty devoted to statistics 'Statistical law' enshrined in a regulation Commission decision defines Eurostat's role Eurostat directors: nomination of Pedro Díaz Muñoz, departure of Fernando Alonso de Esteban Four SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Helsinki
1998	London Conference of 15 Member States and 10 candidate countries On a proposal from the Commission, the Council decides that 11 countries will constitute the euro zone in 1999 Council defines technical specifications of euro coins and notes Creation of European Investment Bank, President: Wim Duisemberg The European Council (Cardiff) discusses various topics linked to the strengthening of the Union Court of Auditors' report on fraud in Commission's budget management Council adopts fixed and irrevocable conversion rates between the currencies of the 11 euro-zone countries	Eurostat moves to Bech building Four SPC meetings 1998–2002 statistical programme Improvement of labour force surveys Economic situation monitored pursuant to a regulation Eurostat directors: departure of Lídia Barreiros DGINS meeting in Stockholm

	The Community	Eurostat
1999	Euro officially launched as single currency for 11 countries Collective resignation of Santer Commission following accusations of budgetary incompetence Prodi Commission takes office European Council (Berlin) approves Agenda 2000 proposals EU–US Summit in Bonn on strengthening of transatlantic cooperation European Council (Tampere) discusses content of a Charter of Fundamental Rights	Pedro Solbes Mira becomes the Commissioner with responsibility for Eurostat Eurostat creates Euroindicators Internet site First 'Staff opinion survey' done in Eurostat Four SPC meetings DGINS meeting in The Hague
2000	Opening of pre-enlargement Intergovernmental Conference on institutional reform European Council (Lisbon) on employment, economic reform and social cohesion Signature of Community–ACP Convention (follow-up to Lomé agreements) in Cotonou Danish referendum rejects euro membership Presidents of Commission, Council and Parliament formally announced Charter of Fundamental Rights European Council reaches political agreement on Treaty of Nice	Eurostat considers creation of an executive statistical agency Action plan to improve euro-zone statistics drawn up with Ecofin Reinforcement of Qualistat Acceleration of preparation for enlargement Setting in place of decentralisation of decisionary powers to unit heads for the budgetary processes Implementation of the Lisbon strategy Eurostat directors: departure of Alain Chantraine and Alberto De Michelis, nomination of Daniel Byk, Bart Meganck, Lothar Jensen and Marian O'Leary Four SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Porto
2001	Greece becomes 12th euro-zone member WTO conference held in Doha, Qatar Commission publishes several White and Green Papers	Publication of first quick estimate of inflation in the euro zone Benchmarking exercise with the United States Eurostat directors: departure of David Heath and nomination of Giuseppe Calò DGINS meeting in Madrid Four SPC meetings

	The Community	Eurostat
2002	Euro notes and coins brought into circulation European Union ratifies Kyoto Treaty ECSC Treaty expires after 50 years European Council (Copenhagen) fixes 1 May 2004 as accession date for 10 countries European convention established to draft a European constitution	Adoption of action plan for the future of European statistical system Introduction of the concept 'Europe First': communication from the Commission to European Parliament and Council Eurostat directors: departure of Photis Nanopoulos and arrival of Gabrielle Clotuche Four SPC meetings DGINS meeting in Palermo

The Presidents of the Commission

High Authority of the ECSC 1952–67

Jean Monnet was the first President of the High Authority of the ECSC from August 1952 to November 1954 (eventually resigning because of the failure of the European Defence Community plan). He was succeeded by René Mayer (France), who held office from June 1955 to December 1957. Paul Finet (Belgium) was the next President of the High Authority, from January 1958 to October 1963, when Dino del Bo (Italy) took over until the merger of the three executive bodies in June 1967.

Euratom Commission 1958–67

From 1958 to 1967 all the Presidents of the Euratom Commission were French. Louis Armand (January 1958 to January 1959) was followed by Etienne Hirch, who held office until January 1962. Pierre Chatenet was then President of the Euratom Commission from January 1962 until the three executive bodies were merged in June 1967.

Commission of the EEC 1958–67

Walter Hallstein (Germany) was elected President of the Commission of the EEC and held office from January 1958 to June 1967, when the three executive bodies were merged.

Commission of the European Communities 1967–2005

Since a single Commission was created, the following have held the office of President: Jean Rey (Belgium), from July 1967 to July 1970; Franco Maria Malfatti (Italy), from July 1970 to April 1972, when he resigned to take up a post in the Italian Parliament; Sicco L. Mansholt (Netherlands), who completed Franco Maria Malfatti's term of office; François-Xavier Ortoli (France), from January 1973 to January 1977; Roy Jenkins (United Kingdom), from January 1977 to January 1981; Gaston Thorn (Luxembourg), from January 1981 to January 1985); Jacques Delors (France), from January 1985 to January 1995, thus serving for the longest time in office; Jacques Santer (Luxembourg), from January 1995 to March 1999; Romano Prodi, former Prime Minister of Italy, who in January 2000 was appointed President of the Commission until January 2005.

From left to right: Albert Coppé, Raymond Barre, Ralph Dahrendorf, Henning Christophersen, Yves-Thibault de Silguy, and Pedro Solbes Mira.

Eurostat and the members of the Commission

ECSC, 1952–57			
1952–57	Albert Coppé	B	Vice-President High Authority ECSC
EEC-ECSC-Euratom, 1958–67			
1958–60	Giuseppe Petrilli	I	Vice-President Commission EEC President of the Management Committee of the OSCE with Albert Coppé (B) of the ECSC and Paul De Groote (NL) of Euratom
1960–67	Albert Coppé	B	Vice-President High Authority ECSC President of the Administrative Council of the OSCE with Lionello Levi-Sandri (I) of the EEC and Paul De Groote (NL) of Euratom
Commission of the European Communities, 1968–2002			
1967–70	Raymond Barre	F	Economic and financial affairs
1971–74	Ralph Dahrendorf	D	Research, science, education, Information, research centres
1975–77	Guido Brunner	D	Idem
1977–80	François-Xavier Ortoli	F	Economic and financial affairs, Credit and investments
1981–82	Michael O'Kennedy	IRL	Personnel and administration, Interpretation and conferences, Publications office
1982–84	Richard Burke	IRL	Idem
1985–88	Alois Pfeiffer	D	Economic affairs, Employment, Credit and investments
1988–91	Peter Schmidhuber	D	Economic affairs, Regional policy
1992–95	Henning Christophersen	DK	Economic and financial affairs, Monetary affairs, Credit and investments
1996–99	Yves-Thibault de Silguy	F	Idem
2000–...	Pedro Solbes Mira	E	Idem

Directors-General of Eurostat

(Chronological order)

Rolf Wagenführ	D	1952–66
Raymond Dumas	F	1966–73
Jacques Mayer	F	1973–77
Aage Dornonville de la Cour	DK	1977–82
Pieter de Geus	NL	1982–84
Silvio Ronchetti	I	1984–87
Yves Franchet	F	since 1987

Directors of Eurostat

(Alphabetical order)

Barreiros Lídia	P	1993–98
Bertaud Guy	F	1973–80
Byk Daniel	F	since 2000
Calò Giuseppe	I	since 2001
Chantraine Alain	B	1987–2000
Clotuche Gabrielle	B	since 2003
De Esteban Fernando Alonso	E	1988–97

De Michelis Alberto	I	1993–2000
Díaz Muñoz Pedro	E	since 1997
Dumas Raymond	F	1958–66
Erba Piero	I	1980–92
Gavanier Pierre	F	1954–73
Girao José Antonio Brito da Silva	P	1987–93
Grotius Fritz	D	1954–76
Harris David	UK	1973–88
Heath David	UK	1992–2001
Jensen Lothar	D	since 2000
Legrand Camille	B	1954–73
Louwes Stephanus	NL	1968–80
Meganck Bart	B	since 2000
Nanopoulos Photis	EL	1983–2002
Nols Joseph	B	1980–86
O'Leary Marian	IRL	since 2000
Paretti Vittorio	I	1958–80
Ronchetti Silvio	I	1968–84
Schumacher Helmut	D	1976–81
Steylaerts Roger	B	1958

Eurostat organisation charts

1952
The pioneering years, with no organisation chart

The statistical service was set up at the end of September 1952. It consisted of seven people: Professor Rolf Wagenführ (D), who was in charge; Camille Legrand (B); Fritz Grotius (D); Hans Freitag (D); Ferdinand Schön (L); Helmut Reum (D); and Miss Theodorica von Buttlar (D), who provided secretarial services.

1957
Last year before the Treaty of Rome

Director: Rolf Wagenführ (D)

Assistant: Helmut Reum (D)

Heads of sector:

— Steel statistics: Fritz Grotius (D)

— Coal statistics: Camille Legrand (B)

— General statistics: Pierre Gavanier (F)

1962
Joint EEC–ECSC–Euratom organisation chart

Director-General: Rolf Wagenführ (D)

Assistant: Helmut Schumacher (D)

Directorates and directors:

— General statistics: Raymond Dumas (F)
— Statistics of energy and overseas associates; data processing: Vittorio Paretti (I)
— External trade and transport statistics: Camille Legrand (B)
— Industry and craft trade statistics: Fritz Grotius (D)
— Social statistics: Pierre Gavanier (F)
— Agricultural statistics: Stephanus Louwes (acting) (NL)

1968
Move to Luxembourg

Director-General: Raymond Dumas (F)
Assistant in Luxembourg: Helmut Schumacher (D)
Assistant in Brussels: Egide Hentgen (L)
Methods adviser: Guy Bertaud (F)
Regional statistics adviser: Jean Reynier (F)

Directorates and directors:

— General statistics and associated States: Vittorio Paretti (I)
— Energy statistics: Camille Legrand (B)
— Trade and transport statistics: Silvio Ronchetti (I) (acting)
— Industry and craft trade statistics: Fritz Grotius (D)
— Social statistics: Pierre Gavanier (F)
— Agricultural statistics: Stephanus Louwes (NL) (acting)

1973
First enlargement

Director-General: Jacques Mayer (F)
Adviser: George W. Clarke (UK)
Assistant: Egide Hentgen (L)

Directorates and directors:

— Statistical methodology and information processing: Guy Bertaud (F)
— General statistics and national accounts: Vittorio Paretti (I)
— Demographic and social statistics: David Harris (UK)
— Agriculture, forestry and fisheries statistics: Stephanus Louwes (NL)
— Energy, industry and craft trade statistics: Fritz Grotius (D)
— Trade, transport and services statistics: Silvio Ronchetti (I)

1977
Arrival of Aage Dornonville de la Cour

Director-General: Aage Dornonville de la Cour (DK)
Adviser: George W. Clarke (UK)
Assistant: Niels Ahrendt (DK)

Directorates and directors:

— Statistical methodology, information processing: Guy Bertaud (F)
— General statistics and national accounts: Vittorio Paretti (I)

— Demographic and social statistics: David Harris (UK)
— Agriculture, forestry and fisheries statistics: Stephanus Louwes (NL)
— Industry and environment statistics: Helmut Schumacher (D)
— External relations, transport and services statistics: Silvio Ronchetti (I)

1983
A new director-general but a directorate less

Director-General: Pieter de Geus (NL)

Adviser: George W. Clarke (UK)

Assistant: Alain Biron (F)

Brussels liaison office: Jean-Claude Liausu (F)

Directorates and directors:

— Processing and dissemination of statistical information: Joseph Nols (B)
— General economic statistics: Piero Erba (I)
— External trade, ACP and non-member country statistics, transport statistics: Silvio Ronchetti (I)
— Energy and industry statistics: Photis Nanopoulos (EL)
— Demographic and social statistics, agricultural statistics: David Harris (UK)

1987
Year of transition

Director-General: Silvio Ronchetti (I)
Adviser: George W. Clarke (UK)
Assistant: Giuseppe Calò (I)

Directorates and directors:

— Processing of statistical information: Alain Chantraine (B)
— General economic statistics: Piero Erba (I)
— External trade, ACP and non-member country statistics, transport statistics: José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao (P)
— Energy and industry statistics: Photis Nanopoulos (EL)
— Demographic and social statistics, agricultural statistics: David Harris (UK)

1991
An extra directorate

Director-General: Yves Franchet (F)
Adviser (programming, budget, external relations): Alberto De Michelis (I)
Assistant (administrative affairs, personnel, internal management): Lothar Jensen (D)

Directorates and directors:

— Dissemination and statistical processing: Alain Chantraine (B)
— Economic statistics and national accounts, prices, coordination of work for the single market: Piero Erba (I)
— International and intra-Community trade statistics, relations with non-member countries: José Antonio Brito da Silva Girao (P)
— Business statistics: Photis Nanopoulos (EL)
— Social and regional statistics: Fernando Alonso de Esteban (E)
— Agricultural, forestry and environmental statistics: David Heath (acting) (UK)

See also p. 156, the organisation plan after the reorganisation in 1993.

1997
The Maastricht years — and another directorate

Director-General: Yves Franchet (F)
Assistant: James Whitworth (UK)

Directorates and directors:

— Resources: Alain Chantraine (B)
— Statistical information system; research and data analysis; technical cooperation with Phare and Tacis countries: Photis Nanopoulos (EL)
— Economic statistics and economic and monetary convergence: Alberto De Michelis (I)
— Information and dissemination; transport; technical cooperation with non-member countries (except Phare and Tacis countries); external and intra-Community trade statistics: Daniel Byk (acting) (F)
— Business statistics: Pedro Díaz Muñoz (E)

— Social and regional statistics and geographical information system: Lídia Barreiros (P)
— Agricultural, environmental and energy statistics: David Heath (UK)

2002
September: Yves Franchet celebrates 15 years at Eurostat!

Director-General: Yves Franchet (F)
Assistant: Maria-Helena Figuera (P)

Directorates and directors:

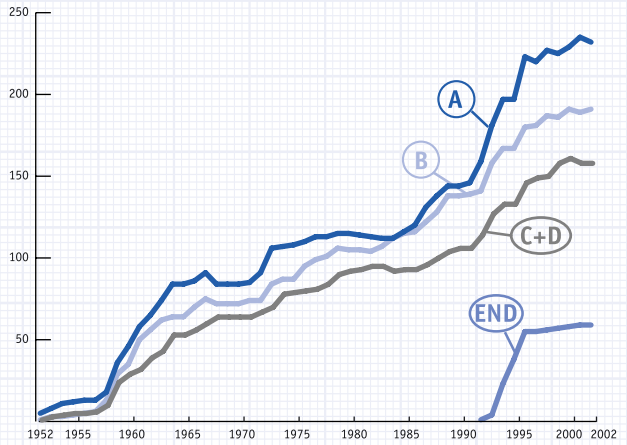
— Resources: Marian O'Leary (IRL)
— Statistical information system; research and data analysis; technical cooperation with Phare and Tacis countries: Photis Nanopoulos (EL)
— Economic statistics and economic and monetary convergence: Bart Meganck (F)
— Information and dissemination; transport; technical cooperation with non-member countries (except Phare and Tacis countries); external and intra-Community trade statistics: Daniel Byk (F)
— Business statistics: Pedro Díaz Muñoz (E)
— Social and regional statistics and geographical information system: Lothar Jensen (D)
— Agricultural, environmental and energy statistics: Giuseppe Calò (I)

Fifty years of 'Staff'

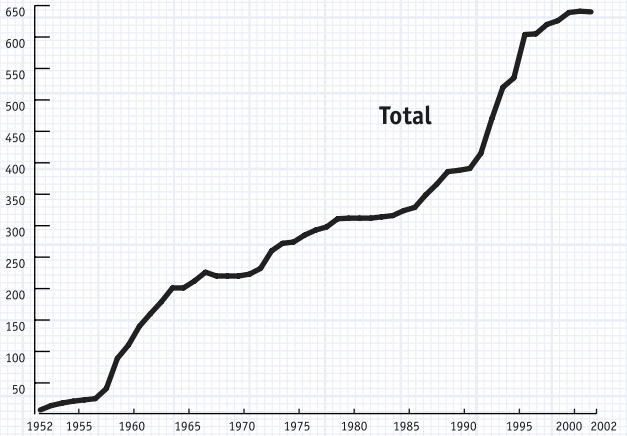
Years	A	B	C	D	END	Total
1952	5	1	1			7
1953	8	3	3			14
1954	11	3	4			18
1955	12	4	5			21
1956	13	5	5			23
1957	13	6	6			25
1958	18	13	10			41
1959	36	29	24			89
1960	46	35	29			110
1961	58	50	32			140
1962	65	56	39			160
1963	74	62	43			179
1964	84	64	53			201
1965	84	64	53			201
1966	86	70	56			212
1967	91	75	60			226
1968	84	72	64			220
1969	84	72	64			220
1970	84	72	64			220
1971	85	74	64			223
1972	91	74	67			232
1973	106	84	70			260
1974	107	87	78			272
1975	108	87	79			274
1976	110	95	80			285
1977	113	99	81			293

Years	A	B	C	D	END	Total
1978	113	101	84			298
1979	115	106	90			311
1980	115	105	92			312
1981	114	105	93			312
1982	113	104	95			312
1983	112	107	95			314
1984	112	112	92			316
1985	116	115	93			324
1986	120	116	93			329
1987	131	122	96			349
1988	138	128	100			366
1989	144	138	104			386
1990	144	138	104	2		388
1991	146	139	102	4		391
1992	159	141	110	4	1	415
1993	181	158	123	4	4	470
1994	197	167	129	4	23	520
1995	197	167	129	4	38	535
1996	223	180	142	4	55	604
1997	220	181	144	5	55	605
1998	227	187	145	5	56	620
1999	225	186	144	14	57	626
2000	229	191	147	14	58	639
2001	235	189	147	11	59	641
2002	232	191	147	11	59	640

Staff changes by grade



Staff changes — Total



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