



ACADÉMIE DES SCIENCES  
MORALES ET POLITIQUES  
INSTITUT DE FRANCE



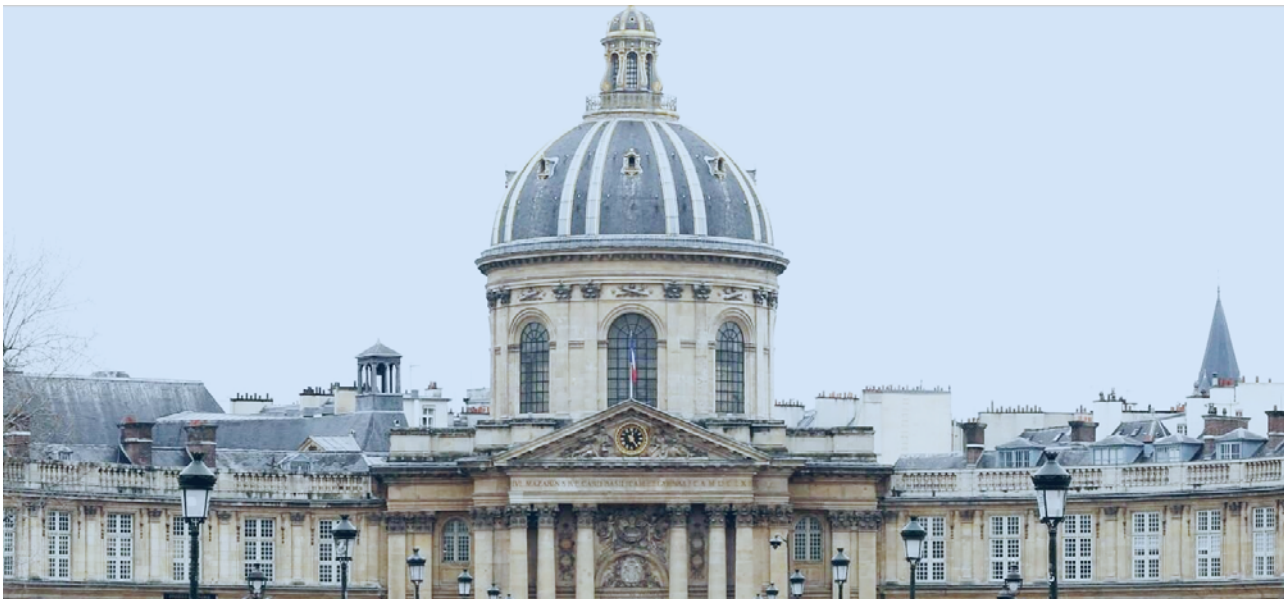
ACADÉMIE  
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## JUNE 19, 2026: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

organized by the Official Statistics Authority  
and the National Council for Statistical Information

# “The independence of official statistics to meet the needs of society”



Mr. Bernard Stirn, Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences and MM. Etienne Ghys and Antoine Triller, Permanent Secretaries of the Academy of Sciences, invite you to the International Conference organized by the ASP (Official Statistics Authority) and the CNIS (National Council for Statistical Information) to be held

**on June 19, 2026, at the Auditorium of the Institut de France**  
(3 Mazarium – 3 rue Mazarine, Paris 6th arrondissement)

Recent events have shown, notably through the example of the United States, that the production and provision of official statistics can be undermined when basic principles, in particular professional independence, are not supported or are even challenged by political leaders. The consequences of such a weakening of official statistics are potentially very significant for socio-economic actors and researchers who use of these statistics, as well as for shedding light on public policies at the various levels of responsibility.

Aware of the challenge in democratic countries of respecting professional independence in official statistics and ensuring that they meet the needs of society as a whole, the Official Statistics Authority (ASP) and the National Council for Statistical Information (Cnis) are organising a Workshop on 19 June 2026 devoted to the regulation of statistical systems at international level.

This one-day Workshop will be selective in terms of the geographical area covered and will focus on recent developments. It will first discuss cross-cutting issues in the area of professional independence. The emphasis will then be placed on the US and UK experiences, before reviewing the EU framework in which the French system operates.

## OPENING (9:00 AM)

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**Philippe Aghion**, Philippe Aghion, Member of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, Professor at the Collège de France, INSEAD and the London School of Economics, 2025 Economics Nobel Prize Winner

**Bertrand du Marais**, President of the National Council for Statistical Information

## FIRST ROUNDTABLE (9:20 AM)

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### **The independence of official statistics to meet the needs of society: cross-cutting considerations**

#### **Chair:**

Jean Pisani-Ferry, Senior Fellow at Bruegel Institute

#### **Participants:**

**Martine Durand**, Former OECD Chief Statistician, Member of ASP

**Michael Billig**, Emeritus Professor of Social sciences, Loughborough University, Member of the British Academy

**Chris Giles**, Economics commentator for the Financial Times

**Howard Shelanski**, Professor of Law at Georgetown University

#### **Questions for speakers:**

*How important are independent and high-quality official statistics for the practical exercise of democracy, economic regulation and the provision of accurate information to decision-makers, other stakeholders and citizens?*

*What are the conditions for effective independence that serves the needs of society?*

*What can we learn from the experiences of countries where this independence has been challenged?  
What might be the consequences for trust in official statistics in the future?*

## SECOND ROUNDTABLE (11:00 AM)

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### The experience of countries outside the European Union

#### Chair:

Steve MacFeely, Chief Statistician of OECD

#### First panel: The case of the United States

Steve Pierson, Director of Science Policy, American Statistical Association (ASA)

Nancy Potok, CEO of NAPx, former Chief Statistician of the United States and former Deputy Director of the Census Bureau

Erica Groshen, Senior Labour Economics advisor at Cornell University ILR School, former Commissioner of the US Bureau of Labour Statistics

Ole J. Forsberg, Associate Professor of Mathematics at Knox College, Illinois

#### Second panel: The case of the United Kingdom

Ed Humpherson, Head of the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)

Denise Lievesley, Former Principal of Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, Lead Reviewer of the Independent Review of the UK Statistics Authority

Michael Billig, Emeritus Professor of Social Sciences, Loughborough University, Member of the British Academy

#### Questions for speakers:

*From your perspective, what is the state of official statistics in your country?*

*Are the difficulties encountered of the same nature and scope in all domains of statistical activities (economic indicators, population, employment, income, health, social or societal issues...)?*

*Are the operational problems encountered in the statistical system in your country primarily due to questioning of political origin or to underlying structural difficulties (problems of resources, organisation and coordination, adaptation to new digital environments, mistrust, etc.)?*

*How do oversight bodies, former officials in charge of the statistical system, researchers, economic actors and users in general, react to these situations and what options do they have for action?*

### Lunch break (1:15 PM)

## THIRD ROUNDTABLE (2:30 PM)

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### Professional independence guarantees to meet users' needs within the EU and in France

#### Chair:

Jean-Luc Tavernier, member of the General Inspectorate of Finance, Insee Former Director General

#### First panel: The European Union Framework

Mariana Kotzeva, Eurostat Director General

Roxane Silberman, Chair of European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC), member of Cnis

#### Second panel: The case of France

Fabrice Lengart, Insee Director General

Jean-Philippe Vinquant, , Chair of the Committee on Demography and Social Issues of Cnis

Louis Maurin, Director of the Observatory of Inequalities

Jean-Marc Vittori, Editorial writer and commentator for the newspaper Les Échos

Antoine Triller, Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences, Chair of the Scientific Expertise, Political Decision-Making, and Democratic Functioning Committee of both Academies

#### Questions for speakers:

*Are the European Statistics Code of Practice and the EU monitoring and response mechanisms to possible breaches adequate to guarantee the effective independence of official statistics at the European Union level and across all Member States?*

*Is it possible and necessary to improve the way user needs are collected at the EU level and the effective consideration of these expressed needs?*

*What guarantees the French official statistical system has regarding professional independence, and how is this professional independence exercised in practice? Is its institutional link to the French administration an obstacle?*

*Is the dialogue between researchers, non-profit organisations and official statisticians sufficient and appropriate for addressing their needs? In a media-driven environment, how can we distinguish between 'legitimate' questions about official statistics regarding their contents or methods from attempts to discredit their operations and results?*

*Does the mistrust shown by some opinion groups or media towards science extend to official statistics? How can we foster and support their appropriation by decision-makers, economic actors and, more broadly, citizens?*

*How can we ensure that official statistics are considered and defended as a 'democratic achievement'?*

## CONCLUSION

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Mireille Elbaum, President of ASP

**END: 5:30 PM**