

Distr.
GENERAL

CES/AC.71/2003/19 (Summary)
3 December 2002

Original: ENGLISH

**UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

**ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC
COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)
STATISTICS DIRECTORATE**

Joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD meeting on the management of statistical information systems
(Geneva, 17-19 February 2003)

Topic III: Efficient management of increasing technical complexity

**IT CONTRIBUTION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF COMPLEX PROCESSES:
THE ITALIAN LABOUR FORCE SURVEY**

Supporting paper

Submitted by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), Italy¹

Summary

1. The aim of this paper is to describe the technological solution which was selected to guarantee the effective management of the new process used for conducting the Italian Labour Force Survey (LFS).
2. Official statistics undergoes a continuous and natural evolution similar to any production environment. The change is due mainly to three factors: first, the fast development of society and its interrelationships, which creates new phenomena to be investigated; second, methodological advancements which allow increasingly effective products to be realised; and finally, technological progress which improves efficiency in the processes and timeliness of products.
3. ISTAT has recently undertaken a comprehensive project in order to fulfil the requirements of the new Regulation on the organization of the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS), adopted in 1998. Evaluating the complexity of this transition from the organizational and technological viewpoints, the need to deploy an integrated information system supporting the survey process was recognised. The aim of this information system is to allow the LFS manager not only to manage, in a classical way, but also to control and monitor all the tasks involved, from sample acquisition to data processing.
4. The use of computer networks, and related services allowed to improve the quality of the statistical environment, to increase the timeliness of products; to contribute to reducing the statistical non-sampling errors (mainly human errors), to reduce costs, and to improve the integration rate of agents and activities.

¹ Prepared by R. Balestrino (balestri@istat.it), S. Bergamasco, G. Budano and A. Toma.

5. The changes, introduced by the new LFS include:

- the switch from a single reference week to a continuous survey;
- the redesign of the questionnaire;
- a new sampling design.

6. ISTAT decided to recruit 310 professional interviewers. Their tasks are:

- To contact the households on the basis of weekly sampling lists, the questionnaire updates and the formative and informative material;
- To carry out Computer Aided Personal Interviews (CAPI);
- To transmit daily the data collected and the list of interviewed households.

Each interviewer is monitored by a regional supervisor and by ISTAT LFS Head Office.

7. This brief description of the system's functional requirements demonstrates the main issues of the deployment architecture, which are the availability and reliability of system communication and networking security, as well as the necessity of an information system capable of supporting the process survey in an integrated way.
