



EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON  
QUALITY IN OFFICIAL STATISTICS  
2024 ESTORIL - PORTUGAL

# Capturing user needs at the local level: a pillar for a listening architecture

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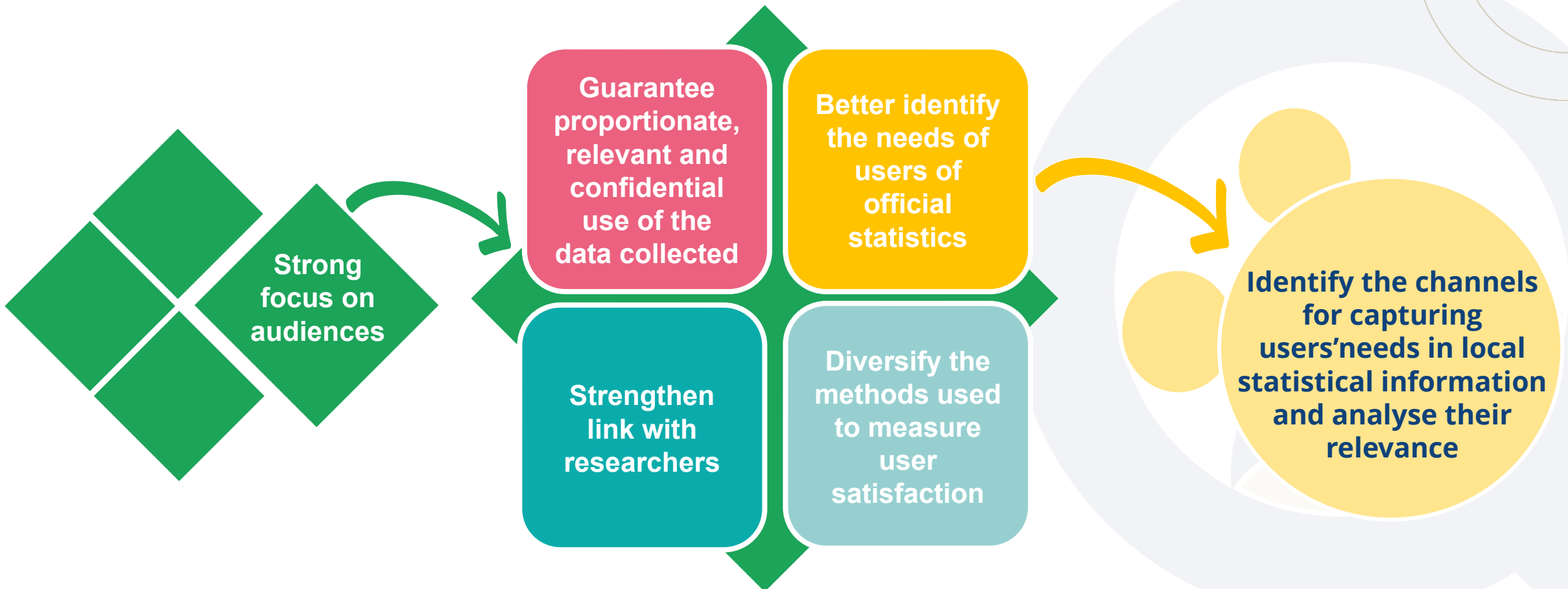
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The conference is partly  
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Union



## Context : European peer review on France in 2021

→ Insee built an ambitious **quality strategy** for 2022-2027

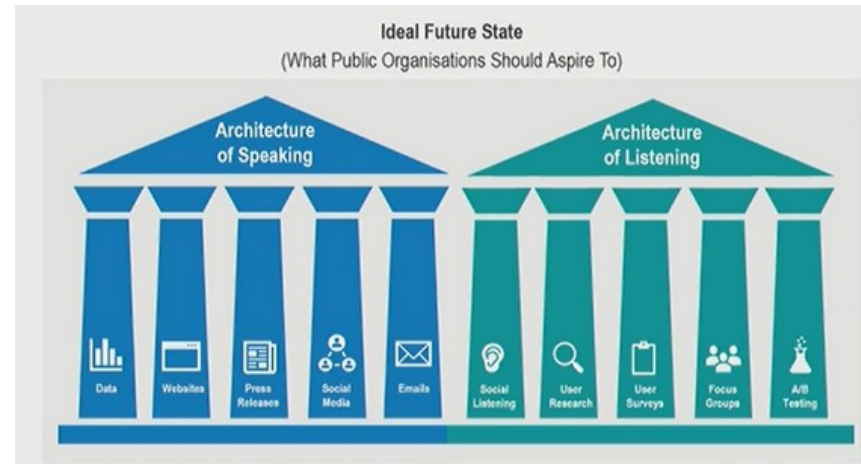




<b>1</b> Professional Independence European statistics are produced in an impartial and independent manner, free from any political or other external influence.	<b>1 bis</b> Coordination and Cooperation National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat work together to coordinate the production of European statistics and to further cooperate at both national and EU-levels.	<b>4</b> Commitment to Quality Statistical authorities regularly and systematically evaluate their processes and the quality of their statistical products.	<b>5</b> Statistical Confidentiality and Data Protection The privacy of data providers and the confidentiality of the information they provide is guaranteed by law.
<b>2</b> Mandate for Data Collection and Access to Data Statistical authorities have access to the data necessary to produce European statistics.	<b>3</b> Adequacy of Resources Human, financial and technical resources are sufficient to produce high quality European statistics.	<b>6</b> Impartiality and Objectivity European statistics are developed, produced and published in a comprehensive and transparent manner, applying equally high standards.	<b>7</b> Sound Methodology European statistics have a sound methodological base and are in line with European and international standards.
<b>8</b> Appropriate Statistical Procedures Statistical procedures are regularly reviewed and updated using well-established management procedures.	<b>9</b> Non-excessive Burden on Respondents Statistical authorities ensure that data are collected only when it is necessary.	<b>12</b> Accuracy and Reliability The data sources and the way statistics are produced are regularly assessed and validated.	<b>13</b> Timeliness and Punctuality European statistics are released in a timely and punctual way.
<b>10</b> Cost Effectiveness Statistical authorities ensure that they use resources efficiently.	<b>11</b> Relevance European statistics are based on user needs.	<b>14</b> Coherence and Comparability European statistics are consistent and comparable between regions and countries over time.	<b>15</b> Accessibility and Clarity European statistics are published in a clear and easily accessible way.



Principle 11 of the *ESS Code of Practice* :  
**Relevance**  
*Indicator 11.1* → implementation of procedures to consult users, verify the relevance and usefulness of statistics, and anticipate new needs



cf. OECD,  
"the importance of listening"

**architecture of speaking**  
→ **architecture of listening**  
Jim Macnamara (2015)



UNECE

Measuring the Value of Official Statistics:  
testing and developing a measurement framework



**consumer-based perspective**  
(actual usage by users) to evaluate  
the value of statistical production  
(≠production-based perspective)  
UNECE (2018)





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## Insee's 15 regional directorates

- privileged contact with local stakeholders
- crucial role in listening to needs, especially regarding the production of local information

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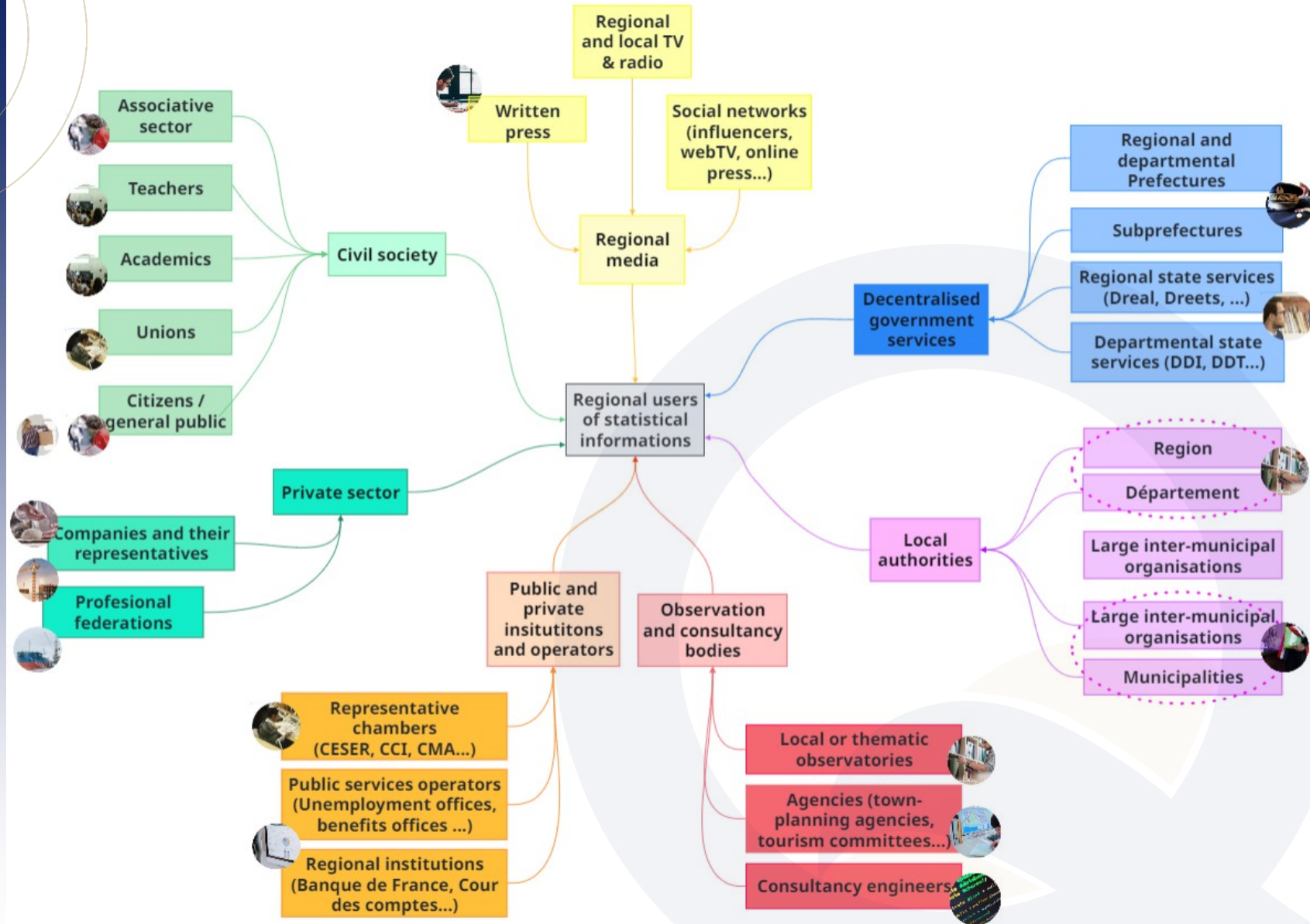
## L'INSEE EN RÉGIONS





## First step : explore the diversity of regional users...

- identify all users, actual AND potential ones
- 26 types of users, grouped into
- 7 main branches which distinguish users according to their nature







## ... and the way in which they use statistical information

- Proto-personas → describe the various contexts of use and relationships with Insee of the different users
- 15 records produced, chosen in order to have at least one record per branch



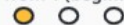
### Student activist in an association

*Function :*  
active member of an  
association

*User type :*  
Beginner-level users, with  
a focus on essential  
messages and an  
intermediate territorial  
anchorage.

#### Level of statistical skills

from 1 (beginner) to 3 (expert)



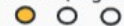
#### Level of computer skills

from 1 (beginner) to 3 (expert)



#### Level of knowledge of sources and data

from 1 (beginner) to 3 (expert)



#### Level of proximity to Insee regional directorates

from 1 (beginner) to 3 (expert)



Skills

#### Why does he use Insee's local statistics?

- ▶ To identify key issues for public debate
- ▶ To improve his knowledge on one or more topics with reliable and comparable data
- ▶ To provide statistical reference information to third parties (customers, elected representatives, the general public), with or without further processing.
- ▶ To supply an information system
- ▶ To evaluate public policies
- ▶ To hear from the "experts" on a topical issue

What  
for?

#### Telling the user experience of this persona

In order to raise public awareness, an association for the protection of biodiversity is launching a petition against the construction of a new economic activity zone.

It asked one of its young activists to draw up an argument, pointing out the excessive urbanisation in the region, with figures to support the argument.

#### What type of regional (territorial, local) statistics does he use?

What?

- ▶ Raw data and metadata
- ▶ Aggregated and/or viewed data (graphs, maps, tables, dynamic reports)
- ▶ Analysed data (studies, publications)
- ▶ Statistical methods and information on sources

#### How does he interact with Insee, in particular with the regional directorate?

How?

- ▶ Uses insee.fr independently, and uses contact@insee.fr to ask questions
- ▶ Asks for customised products and/or expert advice
- ▶ Attends presentations given by the director or the regional establishment.
- ▶ He has direct contact with INSEE experts or the press office/external communications department.
- ▶ He works in collaboration with the director or the regional establishment.

#### How do we capture his needs? What are the resulting benefits?

- No direct knowledge of his needs, unless he responds to an online Inseenaute survey
- Benefits : (i) better understanding of information needs for a 'general public' coverage of topical issues
- (ii) enables us to improve our access to audiences who are not specialists in statistical data



## Second step : critical review of listening channels



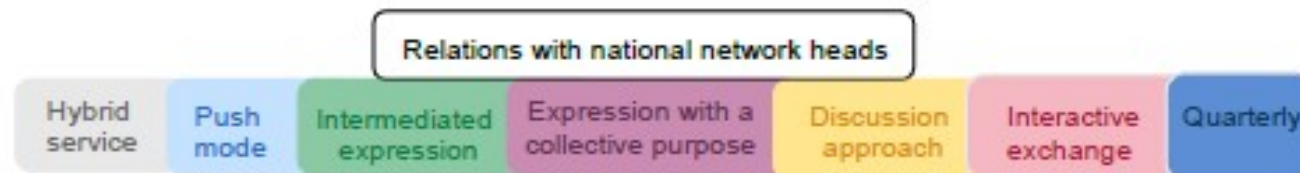
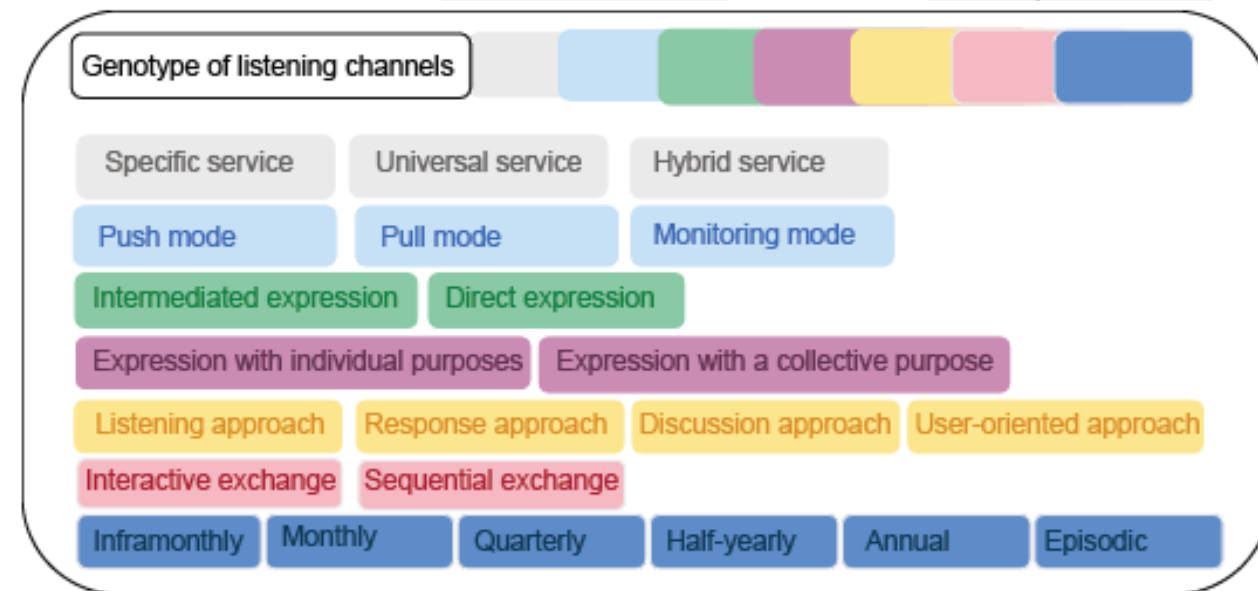
19 listening channels to capture  
the diversity of audiences



Description of each channel  
using a 7-strand genotype

Table 1: Typology of listening channels

Direct channels	Indirect channels	Communication and valorization channels
Meeting at the request of a local stakeholder	Formal exchanges within institutional circles	X (Twitter) / LinkedIn
Listening tour for our partners	Informal exchanges in observatories and clubs	Social network monitoring
Feedback of users' needs to the national steering committee	Press review	Press meetings
Expression at the CNIS (National Council for Statistical Information)	Survey on the insee.fr website	External communications
Expression in local committees between producers and users of official statistics	Specific satisfaction survey	Participation in trade fairs and forums
Relations with national network heads	Feedback via Insee contact (user assistance)	Initiatives for teachers
Focus group with users		







# Analysis of each listening channel

Informal exchanges in observatories and regional clubs						
Hybrid service	Push & pull mode	Direct expression	Expression with individual purposes	Discussion approach	Interactive exchange	Quarterly/monthly
<b>Concise description of the listening channel</b>		<b>The covered audiences</b>				
<p>Multi-institutional mechanisms called "observatories" or "clubs" aim to connect multiple stakeholders with a common theme (e.g., "mobility and transportation," "economic trends," "social inclusion," "environment-climate," "construction-housing," "employment-training," "tourism"). They can be structured under a legal entity, such as a GIP (Groupement d'intérêt public), defining their missions, member structures, and funding. Alternatively, they may have a lighter framework, based on voluntary participation in meetings. The landscape of observatories/clubs varies by region, although some patterns are common (e.g., the network of CARIF-OREF, supported by the State and Regional Council in each region).</p> <p>Insee's regional directorates are typically members or associated structures of these observatories, sometimes even as founding members or facilitators (e.g., business cycle clubs). Importantly, DR Insee are regularly requested to present study results and/or monitoring data in these domains (e.g., economic indicators or thematic dashboards).</p> <p><i>History: Observatories and clubs have been positioned as "rely actors" in the national strategy for regional action as it was redefined in 2019 ("The various observatories should be considered as high-level partners, positioned alongside Insee rather than in competition. They can be effective relay for accessing decision-makers"). This is more of a confirmation of a well-established position in regional practices, dating back to the early 2000s.</i></p>		<p>Observatories and regional clubs are composed of various types of institutions that are members or occasional participants, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional or departmental services of the State</li> <li>Local authorities</li> <li>Specialized agencies (urban planning), public service operators (such as employment centers, social security organizations), regional institutions (such as the Bank of France)</li> <li>Occasionally, private professionals (federations, business groups)</li> </ul> <p>These institutions are typically represented by actors ranging from service managers (e.g., head of knowledge service in a DREAL, head of Mobility service in an urban community) to study and expertise professions (study officer in a local authority or federation, geomatics specialist in a planning agency, statistician in a public service operator).</p>				
<b>Nature of contributions</b>		<b>Formalization of listening</b>				
<p>The very nature of observatories and clubs makes them places of sharing and expression. They bring together the knowledge outputs of each organization, alongside the needs for studies and analysis from public decision-makers. The contribution is thus twofold: (1) identifying the "primary demand" for data and knowledge, and (2) tracking the actual use of our data in observation structures through the studies they publish, and what the "derived demand" for studies is to complement the work of these observatories in terms of analysis and interpretation of data on targeted issues.</p> <p>Participating in these structures is therefore, in itself, a mode of listening to identify new regional study issues and expectations for data and indicators, at a level that intersects a political and a technical component.</p> <p>The thematic specialization of the observatory ensures a qualified expression - stakeholders have an advanced understanding of the subject matter and, most often, knowledge of the sources, data, and concepts related to it. Therefore, the expressed needs tend to be at a rather profound level.</p>		<p>The listening dimension within observatories is informal and remains under the responsibility of the Insee representative and his ability to transcribe the terms of the debates he attends. Insee's regional directorates typically extract from their participation in observatories elements for programming partnership studies and services to be provided (such as advisory services or provision via the universal service). Practices can range from drafting a report for each observatory meeting, to monitoring anticipated work in the regional directorate's work program, to including it in weekly or monthly meeting reports for service follow-ups.</p> <p><i>Examples of reporting: Few written traces shared in the reports of regional directorates. Conversely, the observatories themselves produce summaries and activity plans that may involve areas of statistical cooperation, including an national networks (e.g., <a href="https://www.insee.fr/fr/observ">https://www.insee.fr/fr/observ</a>).</i></p>				
<b>Areas for improvement</b>						
<p><b>Observation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The system is well established and fits within regional institutional histories: each Regional Directorate has been able to develop or specialize its participation according to the priorities to be addressed and the quality of the instances' operation.</li> <li>- The system's purpose is to share knowledge productions: listening is not its ultimate goal, but nevertheless an important component, with the particularity of being able to intersect the expectations of a plurality of actors.</li> <li>- The listening captured at the regional level is already well exploited for local needs and integrated into the programming regional directorate' work.</li> </ul> <p>- For some of these observatories, listening is also established at the national level.</p> <p><b>Proposals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A few Regional Directorates could be identified as "lead agencies" due to their increased involvement in certain types of observatories, with a mandate to supplement their local listening with listening for the benefit of the network, particularly on behalf of the national centers of expertise on the subject.</li> </ul>						

## Concise description of the listening channel

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## The covered audiences

Observatories and regional clubs are composed of various types of institutions that are members or occasional participants, including:

- Regional or departmental services of the State
- Local authorities
- Specialized agencies (urban planning), public service operators (such as employment centers, social security organizations), regional institutions (such as the Bank of France)
- Occasionally, private professionals (federations, business groups)

These institutions are typically represented by actors ranging from service managers (e.g., head of knowledge service in a DREAL, head of Mobility service in an urban community) to study and expertise professions (study officer in a local authority or federation, geomatics specialist in a planning agency, statistician in a public service operator).





## Nature of contributions

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## Areas for improvement

### Observation

- The system is well established and fits within regional institutional histories: each Regional Directorate has been able to develop or specialize its participation according to the priorities to be addressed and the quality of the instances' operation.
- The system's purpose is to share knowledge productions: listening is not its ultimate goal, but nevertheless an important component, with the particularity of being able to intersect the expectations of a plurality of actors.
- The listening captured at the regional level is already well exploited for local needs and integrated into the programming regional directorates' work.
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### Proposals

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# Insights: towards a listening architecture ?

1

**Distinction between national and regional users is more complex than initially thought**

→ need for a multi-level listening system



2

**The general public has specific needs, with great complexity to grasp its expectations**

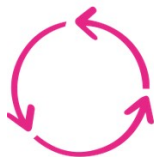
→ development of focus groups ? (teachers, company founders...)



3

**Channels are managed in a disjointed way, valued independently of each other**

→ need for more transversality in order to build a feedback loop on the institute's output



4

**Some channels are not exploited to their full potential** because their primary objective is not to identify needs

→ communicate with the staff, put in place processes to enrich these channels (eg : questioning grids)



5

**There is a tendency to focus more on promotion or communication than on listening**

→ develop listening skills



6

**There may be a lack of capitalisation, particularly in over-the-counter interactions**

→ step up efforts to consolidate and pool the information gathered from all audiences





### Focus on focus group of users

→ feedback in the form of a written note



### Listening tour of our partners

→ interviews and workshop



### Social network monitoring

→ written note of exploration

And the rest...





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