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TITLE: The current situation in Spain on gathering information on the Information Society and the ICT sector

Debate on the national coordination of ICT statistics

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The current situation in Spain on gathering information on the Information Society and the ICT sector

There is a whole statistical field relating to the Information Society (IS) and dealing with the development of ICT and the impact of its use on the economy and society. More specifically, statistics on the Information Society include subjects relating to the production, preparation for use and impact of ICT and services providing audiovisual content.

IS statistics are linked to:

- The Knowledge Society, as the Information Society influences and is in turn influenced by innovation, research and development (R&D) and learning.
- The National Accounts, for measuring the overall impact of the Information Society on the economy.
- Statistics on companies, in relation to measuring the impact that ICT use has on business activities.
- Social statistics, with regard to measuring household IT equipment levels and the degree to which ICT is used and harnessed in homes.

In accordance with international recommendations, information on ICT and the IS in Spain is gathered by different organisations, using different methods.

Regarding the use of ICT in households and in enterprises, information is gathered through surveys of a selected sample of homes and businesses. This is the mechanism used by the Spanish National Institute for Statistics (INE), which carries out its surveys according to Spanish and European regulations. They are carried out according to the annual development programme of the National Statistical Plan and the directives of the European Parliament and Council on EU Information Society statistics.

Information on the degree of penetration of telecommunications infrastructure and the status of the ICT market is compiled from administrative records or by requesting information from enterprises operating in the ICT sector.

In the case of telecommunications, companies operating in this sector are obliged to provide data on their finances, the rollout of infrastructure, subscribers and other market-related information to telecommunications regulators. Gathering such information falls within the functions of both the State Secretariat for Telecommunications and the Information Society (SETSI) of the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism and the Telecommunications Market Commission (CMT).

In the case of enterprises in the IT and Content sectors, the SETSI (State Secretariat for Telecommunications and the Information Society) gathers the financial and market information that such companies are obliged to provide by means of the Spanish Observatory for Telecommunications and the Information Society (ONTSI).

The role of the ONTSI, besides preparing its own studies and reports on ICT and the IS, is to gather all the information produced in Spain and make it available to society in a centralised, ordered form, giving an overview of the state of development of the Information Society, the ICT sector and the content sector.

The role of each of these institutions in measuring ICT and IS in Spain is described below.

INE

The National Institute of Statistics (<http://www.ine.es/>) is an independent administrative body with legal status and its own assets, which is attached to the Ministry of the Economy and Competitiveness. Under Spanish law, this entity has a leading role in public statistics-gathering, and it is directly responsible for carrying out large-scale statistical operations.

The most notable of these relate to new Information and Communications Technologies, with these surveys forming part of the 2009-2012 Spanish National Statistics Plan. The INE collaborates intensely in the OECD and Eurostat working groups, maintaining a unified and standardised methodology.

As part of this collaboration, the INE publishes, among its other surveys, three fundamental statistical surveys on the ICT and IS sectors:

- Survey on the use of ICT and eCommerce by enterprises
- Survey on the use of ICT by households and individuals
- ICT sector indicators

CMT

The Telecommunications Market Commission (<http://www.cmt.es/>), an independent public entity regulating the Spanish electronic communications and audiovisual services markets, was created by Royal Decree-Law 6/1996, of 7 June, on the deregulation of telecommunications.

The purpose of the CMT is to establish and monitor the specific obligations to be met by operators in the telecommunications markets, encourage compliance with fair competition regulations in the audiovisual services markets, resolve conflicts between operators and, where necessary, act as an arbitrator in any disputes.

More specifically, Article 20 of Law 2/2011, of 4 March, on Sustainable Economy, on Publication of the Actions of Regulating Bodies, establishes the obligation on the part of the CMT to publish an annual report on the markets, which from 2012 will be called the "sector economic report".

Other reports drawn up by the CMT relate to the monitoring of broadband prices in Spain and Europe, and electronic commerce using credit and debit cards in Spain.

SETSI

The responsibilities of the State Secretariat for Telecommunications and the Information Society (SETSI) (<http://www.minetur.gob.es/telecomunicaciones/es-ES/Paginas/index.aspx>) include encouraging, studying, proposing and implementing general policies on telecommunications, audiovisual media and development of the Information Society.

To do this, it gathers additional information on telecommunications operators, broadband and mobile telephone coverage and the telecommunications sector to complement that provided by operators to the CMT.

ONTSI

The ONTSI (<http://www.ontsi.red.es/ontsi/>) is a body attached to the public corporate entity Red.es that reports to the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism (MINETUR). Its mission is to encourage the development of the Information Society in Spain and implement projects in line with the strategic priorities of the State Secretariat for Telecommunications and the Information Society (SETSI). It prepares, gathers, processes and organises indicators and prepares studies and provides information and news updates on the Information Society. It is currently the leading public Observatory of the Information Society in Spain.

It also acts as a meeting place and forum for the ICT sector and the various public authorities for defining and evaluating policies. It is a leading reference centre for all aspects of measuring the IS, and its indicators and studies are used to support policy making, planning and decision making.

It also ensures methodological coordination with other observatories of the Information Society, be they international or regional, public or private.

Over the course of its 10 years in existence, it has drafted a range of studies, reached agreements with the main players in the sector, and has developed large databases of indicators to help assess the evolution of the IS.

The ONTSI has played a decisive role in implementation of the IS, since all the players concerned: public authorities, the corporate sector, professionals, etc. use it as a tool to support them in their decision making and forecasting.

The mission of the ONTSI is defined in RD 164/2002, of 8 February, which establishes its own functions and those that the SETSI may require it to perform.

In this context, the ONTSI performs the following tasks in line with its legally-required indicator functions:

- It gathers, organises and analyses indicators on the IS, publishing this information and making it accessible to the public on the ONTSI website. The ONTSI website has a specific section presenting information on IS and ICT sector indicators, including a selection of the main indicators. The ONTSI website also regularly publishes a series of dossiers containing indicator information.

- It monitors specific key indicators on the various IS development initiatives and plans in Spain (Spanish Digital Agenda) and abroad, especially those introduced by the EU (Digital Agenda for Europe).
- It draws up studies and reports, and generally advises the State Administration on matters relating to telecommunications and the Information Society. As part of this the ONTSI provides support to the State Secretariat for Telecommunications and the Information Society (SETSI), the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism (MINETUR) and the General Directorate of red.es, providing them with the latest data on the IS and the ICT sector.
- It monitors the ICT sector.
- It represents Spain in meetings both at home (INE, SETSI, etc.) and internationally (Eurostat, OECD, European Commission, ITU) that relate to ONTSI's work (IS and ICT indicators, plans to promote the IS, etc.).

The SETSI and the ONTSI play very important roles in monitoring enterprises in the ICT and Content sectors, and draw up an annual report on them.

To obtain an overview that is as accurate as possible, both statically and dynamically, of the enterprises that make up the ICT sector in Spain, the SETSI, through the ONTSI, gathers information on these businesses in the sector in Spain. The ONTSI uses this information to draw up its report on the ICT and Content sectors in Spain. This report complements and adds to the data published by the INE on ICT sector indicators. It also contains data published in the CMT annual report on the telecommunications sector.

The legal basis for this report lies in the Fourth Additional Ruling of Law 56/2007, of 28 December, on Measures to Promote the Information Society, which states that the SETSI may request information from individual manufacturers of products and providers of IT, IS and digital content services.

The main objective of the study is to obtain information about the current situation and recent structural and economic evolution of each of the activities within the ITC sector, such as the number and size of the enterprises comprising each branch of activity, accounting data (revenue, purchases, expenses), employment structure and investment. In addition to the ICT sector, it also analyses the content and audiovisual services sector.

As well as these functions, the ONTSI produces specific studies on aspects relevant to the development of ICTs and the Information Society.

These include its annual report "La Sociedad en Red" (The Networked Society), its report on "cloud computing" and studies on B2C electronic commerce, and the understanding and use of social networks in Spain. Finally, it produces quarterly reports on "Las TIC en los hogares españoles" (ICT in Spanish households), based on a panel of surveyed households.

To conclude, it is important to highlight the significance that the Government of Spain places on its goal of establishing suitable systems for gathering information, thereby enabling statistics to be coordinated in Spain and internationally, especially statistics concerning the ICT sector and the Information Society, given the rapid pace of change and evolution in these areas. The ONTSI also plays an important role in the Information Society in Spain, as a body that concentrates and centralises all ICT statistics.