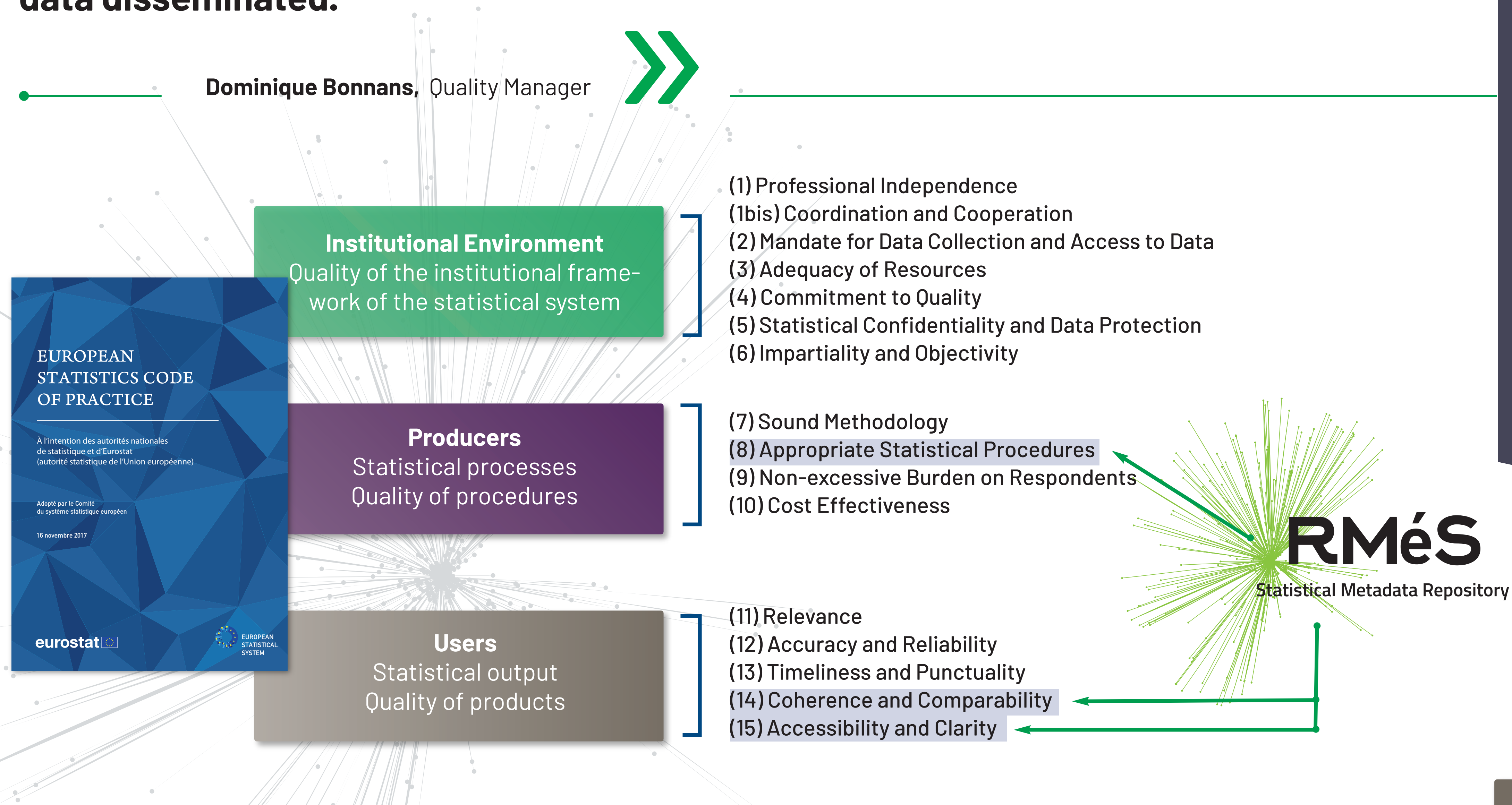


# Statistical Metadata and Quality



**Metadata are one of the cornerstones of the European Statistical System's Quality Strategy. This strategy is based on the Code of Practice (CoP) and a Peer Review process. By improving the transparency of statistics, metadata ensure compliance with the principle of accessibility and clarity set out in the Code. In addition, the sharing of metadata also contributes to the consistency and comparability of the data disseminated.**

Dominique Bonnans, Quality Manager



## Metadata and CoP

Metadata is anything that can give us some useful information about other data sets and help the users to better understand the statistics produced. In fact, there is no data without metadata. Statistical metadata are concepts, classifications, questionnaires, variables and their related codes as well as any element that describe a statistical operation. Without all this documentation, the statistical results could neither be properly used or analysed, nor reused or matched with other results. Metadata therefore contribute to the clarity of the data that they describe.

Whenever they are disseminated on our Insee.fr website, our statistics are accompanied by all the metadata necessary for them to be easily understood and reused in an appropriate manner, in accordance with the principle of accessibility set out in the Code of Practice. All these metadata are stored and managed in our pooled statistical metadata repository, which is called RMéS.

The implementation of international standards for describing metadata facilitates their use, automatically or manually. This also allows sharing with other entities. Metadata therefore promote compliance with the principle of coherence and comparability. In this way, our RMéS repository helps to structure and harmonise our metadata fully in line with the respective European standards. At the same time, it guarantees a thorough harmonisation of all the statistical metadata involved in our different internal processes.

Various web-services are provided throughout the life-cycle of any of our statistical operations in order to update our RMéS repository or extract any metadata from it. This management of metadata throughout entire processes is one of the appropriate statistical procedures recommended by the code.

## 2014 and 2021 Peer Reviews

Since its adoption in 2005, the European Statistics Code of Practice has become a reference for evaluating Quality. In order to enhance public confidence in European statistics, it was decided in 2005 to organise Peer Reviews that regularly assess compliance with the principles of this Code.

At the end of these reviews, each National Statistical Institute is required to develop an action plan that aims to improve their practices. The Peer Reviews, set up following the adoption of the Code, intend as a priority to verify NSIs compliance with its principles. Beyond this "audit" function, reviews also enable NSIs to benefit from the wise counsel of their peers in a dynamic of continuous improvement.

In 2014, three of the eighteen recommendations submitted to France by the European peers have really given a new impetus to our efforts in improving statistical metadata. The French Official Statistical Service has in effect committed to publishing for all European statistics, both a quality report and all the metadata relevant to our users, while ensuring a compliance with the dedicated European standards. The resulting actions that have been since implemented will be evaluated during our third Peer Review in 2021.

A few dates...

## 2005

Adoption of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP)

## 2011 and 2017

Revision of the CoP

## 2007, 2014 and 2021

Peer review in France

## Three peer recommendations

The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should continue to develop its metadata system on the basis of European standards. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.1)

The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should develop further its system to report product quality to users on a regular basis based on the European standard quality criteria. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 4.3)

The user-oriented quality reports and metadata files for all official statistics should be published on the websites of the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies and the Ministerial Statistical Departments as a matter of course. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.5)

RMéS

Statistical Metadata Repository