

INTRODUCTION TO THE COI SURVEY

The Organisational Change and ICT use (C.O.I. in French) survey is intended to identify the organisational changes and ICT changes that have characterised corporate life in the last three years and their impact on economic performance in terms of employment and job content. C.O.I. is a matched employer / employee survey device, enhanced by outside information. The business section of the survey seeks to characterise the company's forms of organisation and recent changes in them stemming from the mobilisation of management tools and IT tools. The labour force section of the survey makes it possible to analyse the concrete organisation of labour, the use of these tools by employees, support for the changes in terms of training and wage policy, and to evaluate their effects on working conditions, employee selection, etc. Enhancement through other surveys or administrative files also provides information on economic characteristics and on the structure of the companies' workforce.

Two key ideas are behind the C.O.I. survey. First, analysis of information and communication technologies cannot be disassociated from the study of organisational changes, since these play a mediating role in the genesis of innovative uses of information technology. Then, in order to construct a robust system for measuring change, it is appropriate to bring together the viewpoints of the company's representatives and those of its employees. This combination provides a more complete overview of the organisation through articulation of the tools adopted by management as experienced by employees; this makes it possible to analyse the impact of company decisions on work and to study the interactions between the trajectories of both.

First carried out in 1997, the C.O.I. survey was republished in 2006. It is the product of extensive collaboration. Produced jointly by the Centre d'Etude de l'Emploi (CEE), the Office of Organisation, Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES) and the National Institute of Statistics and Studies (INSEE), it was carried out in association with several French ministerial statistics departments. The C.O.I. survey's "companies" segment is the product of the C.O.I. survey being merged with the European ICT survey and will serve as support for the French response expected as part of Eurostat. The questionnaires were prepared based on collective discussion involving researchers in economics, management, sociology and ergonomics, and union and management representatives, and relied on fieldwork investigations. Because of this, the survey is doubly rooted in research issues and in social demand.

Between November 2005 and April 2006, 17,000 companies with 10 or more employees belonging to the private sector will be questioned. The survey is conducted by postal mail. The employer questionnaire is a 6-page document consisting mainly of qualitative questions: the company describes its strategy and its environment, indicates its organisational tools and the technologies it uses today and those it used in 2003, and assesses the main internal organisational changes occurring between 2003 and today. A slightly adapted version of this questionnaire is planned for companies in the financial sector.

Of the companies that respond, slightly fewer than 7,000 companies with more than 20 employees will serve as the basis for the survey of employees. On average, three employees should be interviewed per company. In all, about 23,000 employees present as of the end of 2005 in the sampled companies will be contacted between October and January, 2007. The labor force section of the survey will be conducted by telephone or, if the employee cannot be reached by phone, in person. There are two employee questionnaires: the main questionnaire involves employees still present in the company for which they were selected at the time of data collection; a secondary questionnaire is for employees who have left the company when they are interviewed. This will make it possible to obtain information on the characteristics of employees who leave their company, in association with the company's organisational and IT changes. The average time is 40 minutes for the main questionnaire and 15 minutes for the secondary questionnaire.

In 2007, a test will be conducted in the administrative branches of the Civil Service. As part of this, 4,000 additional employees will be questioned. The employee questionnaire will be identical to that used for private-sector employees; the employer questionnaire will however be specific to the public sector.

The first combined results for the private sector are expected for May 2007. Fieldwork investigations (post-surveys) will be conducted beginning then.