QUICK FACTS
COUNTRY PROFILE - SAINT LUCIA

1. OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN SAINT LUCIA

- Official Statistics in Saint Lucia is the responsibility of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), Ministry of Economic Development, Housing, Urban Renewal, Transport, and Civil Aviation. The CSO is organised around the following units: Labour Market Information, Demography, National Accounts, Price Indices, Merchandise Trade, Mapping, Information Technology and General Administration.

  Its Mission is to provide timely access to comprehensive, accurate, reliable information on Saint Lucia to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

- In undertaking its functions, the Saint Lucia (CSO), which was originally established under the Statistics Act Number 13 of 1973 on November 7, 1973, now operates under updated legislation, republished as the Statistics Act Chapter 17.12, Vol. 19 of 2001. The CSO is the principal data collecting, processing and disseminating agency responsible for coordinating, monitoring and supervising the National Statistical System. It thus has the statutory mandate to produce and provide government, the private sector, parastatal and international organisations, the civil society and the general public with statistical information for evidence based decision-making, policy formulation and planning as well as for investment purposes. The statutory mandate also includes the responsibility to provide advisory and technical service to all users on statistical matters.

(Continued on Pg. 2)
1. OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN SAINT LUCIA (Continued)

- The 2020 Round of Population and Housing Census has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with Saint Lucia having to postpone its census enumeration from 2020 to 2022. Census Day, the reference day for the census data, is scheduled to be May 17 2022.

2. KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS ON SAINT LUCIA

✦ Population

The mid-year population estimate for 2020 stood at 181,192 (a growth rate of 0.7 percent over the 2019 mid-year estimate).

✦ Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at constant market prices for Saint Lucia was ECS$Mn 4,437.0 in 2020, which reflected a decline of 20.4 percent over the previous period, 2019, when GDP stood at ECS$Mn 5,572.3. Clearly, this decline reflected the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy in 2020. Estimates available from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank shows a growth in GDP for Saint Lucia of 7.0 percent in 2021, signalling a recovery over the first year of the pandemic. (Source Central Statistical Office and Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) websites).

✦ Prices/Inflation

Consumer Price Index: Overall, prices increased by 2.41 percent by the end of 2021 (ECCB estimate) compared to -2.6 percent at the end of 2020.

✦ Investment

Direct Investment: Net Direct Investment amounted to ECS$Mn 2,794.1, in 2020 (preliminary) an increase of 8.4 percent over 2019. Despite the pandemic, this increase in 2020 was higher than the increase of 3.5 percent in 2019 over 2018 with the value of net direct investment for 2019 being ECS$Mn 2576.5.

✦ Fiscal Deficit, Government Revenues and Expenditure

Central Government Fiscal Operation: The fiscal balance improved slightly from a deficit of ECS$Mn 216.4 as at the end of 2020 to a deficit of ECS$Mn187.86 as at the end of 2021. Current Revenue increased from ECS$Mn925.21 as at the end 2020 to ECS$Mn 987.22 at the end of 2021. Current Expenditure increased from ECS$Mn1,141.62 as at end of 2020 to ECS$Mn1,175.08 as at the end 2021.

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2. **KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS ON SAINT LUCIA (Continued)**

**Merchandise Trade**
- *Saint Lucia’s total trade*: Saint Lucia’s total imports decreased from ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}1665.1 (US$Mn616.7) in 2019 to ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}1366.6 (US$Mn506.1) in 2020 representing a decline of 17.9 percent. Saint Lucia’s total exports also declined slightly from ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}223.6 (US$Mn82.8) in 2019 to ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}150.9 (US$Mn55.9) in 2020 representing a decline of 32.5 percent.

- *Saint Lucia’s imports of Food*: Saint Lucia’s food imports decreased from ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}377.9 (US$Mn140.0) in 2019 to ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}330.3 (US$Mn122.3) in 2020 representing a decline of 12.6 percent. As a percentage of total imports for Saint Lucia, its food import bill was 22.7 percent in 2019 and 24.2 percent in 2020. *Saint Lucia’s food import bill* as a percentage of CARICOM’s food imports stood at 4.4% in 2019 and 4.1 percent in 2020.

**External Debt Outstanding to GDP (Public Sector)**
- *Total external debt outstanding* for the public sector to GDP stood at 91.72 percent as at December 2021, compared to 89.99 percent as at December 2020 and 61.1 percent as at December 2019, showing a worsening of the debt situation during the pandemic years.

**Tourism**
- *Tourist arrivals in Saint Lucia*, stood at 130,699 in 2020 as compared to 423,736 in 2019, a decline of 69.2 percent. This decline was essentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic that affected travel and tourism. Total visitor expenditure for Saint Lucia in 2020 was estimated at ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}977.13 (US$Mn361.9), a decline of 64.6 percent over 2019, which was ECS\textsuperscript{Mn}2759.6 (US$Mn1022.1). *(St. Lucia Tourist Board and Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO)).*

**Unemployment Rate**
- The *Unemployment Rate* for Saint Lucia stood at 23.1 percent in 2021, 21.7 percent in 2020 and 16.8 percent in 2019. The increase in the first year of the pandemic 2020 from 2019 was 4.9 percentage points, with a further increase in 2021 over 2020 of 1.4 percentage points;

- *Youth unemployment* (15-29 years) stood at 40.4 percent in 2021, 45.6 in 2020 and 31.6 percent in 2019, reflecting a decline of 5.2 percentage points between 2021 and 2020 and an increase of 14.0 percentage points from 2019 to 2020. The decline in 2021 might have been due to persons not looking for work over the stipulated reference period and were therefore not counted in the labour force.

- Under Youth employment, Females had an unemployment rate of 48.9 percent in 2020 as compared to 30.4 percent in 2019, an increase of 18.5 percentage points in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. For this same age category, Males had an unemployment rate of 42.4 percent in 2020 as compared to 32.8 percent in 2019, an increase of 9.6 percentage points.
2. KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS ON SAINT LUCIA (Continued)

 ICT Statistics

- Fixed line penetration fell by 3.0 percentage points to **16 percent in 2020** from **19 percent in 2019**;
- Mobile penetration rate was **81.0 percent in 2020**, representing a two-percentage points decrease from 2019;
- Fixed broadband penetration increased by 2 percentage points to **10.8 percent in 2020** from **8.8 percent in 2019**;
- Mobile broadband penetration was **48.1 percent in 2020**, representing approximately a two-percentage points decrease from 2019.

 Environment Statistics

- **Forest Area**: According to the UN FAO, **34.05 percent** or about 20,770 hectares of the total land area of Saint Lucia is forested. (*FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessments 2020*);
- **Disasters/Climate Change**: According to The International Disaster Database (EM-DAT), two (2) Meteorological disasters occurred in Saint Lucia during the period 2010 to 2019 resulting in **14 deaths and affecting 206,000 persons**, overall. Hurricane Tomas (2011) severely affected Saint Lucia resulting in damages in excess of US$M300. [Note there might have been other extreme weather conditions but these were not deemed to be disasters].
3. REGIONAL COOPERATION IN STATISTICS

Regional cooperation in Statistics commenced formally in 1974 with the establishment of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS). The SCCS meets at least annually and seeks to harmonise statistics across CARICOM countries, to widen the scope, range and quality of the statistics produced and disseminated and to engage in South-South cooperation with the support of International Development Partners such as the EU, ECLAC, the IDB and the Governments of Italy and Canada. Several regional statistical public goods have been delivered including a common regional statistical work programme, a common census framework, a model statistics bill, a code of good statistical practices and a quality assurance framework.

4. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS TO 2030

The CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS)-2019-2030 was endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Governments, in 2018 at the Thirty-Ninth Regular Meeting, following the endorsement of the Caribbean Action Plan for Statistics in 2016 and the approval to prepare the RSDS in 2017. The RSDS, as a masterplan for statistics, seeks to strengthen and improve the availability of statistical data for evidence-based decision-making, which is fundamental to the delivery of developmental outcomes. It comprises five strategic priorities- Standards and Harmonisation, Governance, Integrated Statistical System, Innovation and Advocacy and Communication and four drivers – Sustainable Capacity Building, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ICT Infrastructure and Gender Mainstreaming. The RSDS seeks to provide an enabling architecture to realise an efficient CARICOM statistical system that is responsive to the national, regional and global development agenda, such as, to monitor the achievement of the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), for which 230+ indicators are required, and the maximising of the benefits of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

5. 2020 ROUND OF POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS

The Population and Housing Census is a massive and complex statistical exercise that involves the canvassing of the households of a country, normally every ten (10) years, to obtain information on the total population, the age, sex, education, occupation and other crucial socio-economic, environmental and ICT characteristics. In fact, the census information underscores evidence-based decision-making at all levels. The global COVID-19 pandemic that hit the region in 2020 and continuing affected the undertaking of the Census in CARICOM countries. Governments throughout the region should provide the support that the national statistical offices require to enable the successful conduct of this important activity.
KEY RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR COUNTRY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Data is at the core of a modern society, therefore Investment in Statistics and the development and alignment of a national statistics strategy with the CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) can help shape the future of Saint Lucia.

- The Population and Housing Census, which is being undertaken in a pandemic, requires the necessary support by governments to deliver high quality data for decision-making.

- Monitoring and overcoming the COVID-19 impact as well as the impact of natural disasters and climate change, poverty and gender related violence and other challenges require timely, relevant and in general high-quality statistics and Saint Lucia is encouraged to support the development and integration of new statistical methods to make available data for policy and research.

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