



# Stats News & Views

Facts, Figures and Updates from the Statistics Section of the Caribbean Community Secretariat

December, 2006

Volume 5, Issue 1

## Main Events

### Thirty-First (31st) Meeting Of The Standing Committee Of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS)

The Thirty-First Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (31<sup>st</sup> SCCS) took place in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago during the period 6 - 8 November 2006. Some of the main technical areas reviewed at this meeting are highlighted in this Issue, under past, present and future events. The June Issue of this Newsletter was not produced. This Issue covers the work of the sub-programme for the entire period January to December 2006.

### Development of the Tourism Satellite Account - CARICOM/Spain Cooperation Agreement and CARICOM/ Japan Friendship Agreement

In 2006, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) undertook developmental work in the area of Tourism Statistics, focusing on the development of a Tourism Satellite Account framework in the Region. The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) is essentially a tool used to describe the importance, magnitude and impact of tourism in an economy. The initial thrust in the development of the TSA at the CARICOM Secretariat originated in the developmental work in the area of International Trade in Services undertaken in 2001/2 and 2004/5. While engaging in this developmental work, it was recognised that tourism as a traded service required more intensive treatment to hasten the production of statistics on the tourism sector, which is thought to be significant in most Member States. The recommended approach was to institute the development of the TSA in Member States.

In 2003 the Secretariat received funding from the **Government of Spain** and convened a workshop to

## Main Events

### Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF)

The **Ninth European Development Fund** process is expected to be launched in 2007. The implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the compliance required for other commitments imply that quality and timely information must be available on production and movement of goods, services, capital and labour within the Region, and between the Region and the Rest of the World.

By far, the most significant attempts to facilitate a regional view of statistics occurred in 2001 when the issue of statistics was taken to the Eighth Meeting of the Resumed Session of the Community Council of Ministers (Council) in The Bahamas; and in January 2005, with the presentation at the Fifteenth Meeting of Council of a Resolution on Regional Statistical Development that was prepared jointly by the Secretariat and the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) together with a Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP) in support of the CSME. This Work Programme and the Resolution were respectively approved and passed by Council and mechanisms are being put in place for implementation.

The overall objective of statistical support under the 9th EDF, is to provide the decision-makers of CARIFORUM with the information necessary to monitor and guide progress in the establishment and the strengthening of the CSME. The purpose of the statistical component of the Project is to strengthen the capacities of the regional and national statistical systems for sustainable improvement in the production of Economic Statistics. These objectives as contained in the Ninth (9th) EDF document, Result 4, Improved and

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## Main Events

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sensitise statisticians and personnel from tourism authorities on the TSA methodological approach.

In February 2006, the Secretariat carried out a two-week Pilot Technical Assistance Mission to Saint Lucia to explore the development of the TSA in that Member State. This Mission was also funded by the Government of Spain through the **CARICOM-Spain Cooperation Agreement** and included representatives from Barbados, Dominica and Grenada as part of the capacity building process.

The Mission followed the first four steps of the approach recommended by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the development of a TSA as listed below:-

- A good understanding of the TSA framework and its proposed tables;
- A description of the country's tourism activity;
- A description of the country's System of Tourism Statistics (STS) in statistical terms;
- A statistical description of the country's system of National Accounts and related systems;

In August/September 2006 there was a follow-up mission in Saint Lucia to monitor the work undertaken by this Member State after the technical assistance visit in February 2006. There were also initial visits to Grenada, Dominica and Barbados, to commence the process of developing the TSA in these Member States. The visits were also funded by the Government of Spain. The missions in Grenada and Dominica were partly funded by the **CARICOM-Japan Friendship Agreement**.

### Strategy for 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses In the CARICOM Region.

The Caribbean Community engaged the services of a Consultant to conduct a "Project Identification and Feasibility Study" to inform a Regional Census Strategy for the 2010 Census Round. Some of the recommendations for the 2010 Round of Censuses resulting from the study include:

- Member States should prepare National Census Project Proposals containing resource requirements;

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## Main Events

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Harmonised Economic Statistics Developed and Circulated, will be achieved through the realization of the following three inter-related areas:

- Harmonising the inter-regional statistical infrastructure (Activity 4.1)
- Improving statistical programming, production and dissemination of key economic statistics (Activity 4.2); and
- Training staff and using Economic Statistics for Monitoring of the Regional Integration Process (Activity 4.3)

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- Detailed assessment of the status of Census Mapping should be conducted at an early stage;
- All questionnaires should be pre-tested before finalization;
- The Regional Census Coordinating Committee should coordinate the printing of census questionnaires and other documents;
- A Pilot census to test the overall elements of the census exercise should be undertaken by all Member States ;
- All Member States should develop in-house capacity in census editing and tabulation;
- The experience in analyzing the 2000 census data should be evaluated and this should be used to inform a programme of Census Data Analysis for the 2010 Census Round;
- Five regional training programmes were recommended in the areas of: Census Management; Census Mapping and Geographic Information System (GIS); Data Capture with Image Scanning; Census Data Editing and Tabulation; and Census Data Analysis.

## Current Events

### Preparation of a Correlation Table based on the Revised Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) 2007

The latest version of the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System, HS 2007, was prepared and disseminated by the World Customs Organisation (WCO). In keeping with this update, the

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## Current Events

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Secretariat produced a revised Common External Tariff (CET) based on the HS2007. This revised CET was dispatched to Member States and it is anticipated that it would be implemented in January 2007.

The United Nations Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) was also updated by the **United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD)**.

Based on the revision of these two classification systems, the Secretariat, with funding from Canada through the **CARICOM Capacity Development Programme (CCDP)**, engaged a Consultant to prepare a Correlation Table linking the CET based on the HS 2007 with the SITC Rev 4. It was anticipated that this project would be completed by November 2006 and the new correlation table (HS07-SITC Rev 4) was scheduled to be dispatched to Member States by December 2006.

Member States were urged to support this process by implementing the updated CET and Correlation Table to enable international and regional harmonised Merchandise Trade Statistics.

### Support to Grenada to Update the Merchandise Trade Database

As a result of the effect of Hurricane Ivan on Grenada, trade data compilation and submission by this Member State was considerably delayed. Following a request for assistance, a project was developed by the Technical Assistance Services Unit (TASU) and the Statistics Sub-programme to enable the processing of trade data for 2005 and 2006. The project was funded under the **Canadian CARICOM Capacity Development Programme (CCDP)** and is focused on entry and verification of Merchandise Trade data for the period January 2005 to July 2006. The Project commenced in August 2006 and it is estimated to be completed by April 2007.

## Past Events and Outcomes

### Regional Demographic Analysis Training Workshop, 3 July to 11 August 2006

The CARICOM Secretariat organised an intermediate level training course in the area of Demographic Analysis. The course was funded by the **Canadian CARICOM Capacity Development Programme (CCDP)**. Participants came from Member States and

## Past Events and Outcomes

Associate Member States across the region. Two members of staff of the CARICOM Secretariat statistics sub-programme also attended the workshop.

The Curriculum was drafted by a Consultant contracted by the Secretariat and circulated to Directors and Chief Statisticians for comments. The following topics were included in the course: Sources of Demographic Data; Assessing the Quality of Demographic Data; Demographic Theories; Fertility Measures; Nuptiality Measures; Mortality Measures; Stable Populations and Model Life Tables; Migration Measures; Indirect Techniques of Estimation; Population Estimates and Projections.

It is anticipated that the training attained by the participants on the course would contribute to bridging the gap in the area of Demographic Analysis expertise in the Region.

It is the intention of the Secretariat to repeat the training once a year for the next three (3) years.

### Hands-On Training Workshop on data processing of Merchandise Trade Statistics with Eurotrace Software package, Luxembourg

In April 2006, in order to develop a core set of trainers on the New Eurotrace Software, Eurostat hosted a "Training of Trainers" Workshop, in Luxembourg. This course targeted participants from the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Region. Two participants from the CARICOM Region (the CARICOM Secretariat and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) benefited from this Workshop through funding received from the **Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC)**.

The major objective of this workshop was to facilitate the training of Trade Statisticians and Computer Experts from regional and sub - regional organisations in the implementation and management of the trade data processing systems using the new version of the Windows-based Eurotrace software. The trainees are expected to train users within their respective regions in the use of the software and to provide technical assistance where necessary. It is expected that the software will help to enhance the processing, analysis and tabulation of Merchandise Trade Statistics at the national and regional levels resulting in increased efficiency in the compilation and dissemination of trade statistics.

In July 2006, Eurostat hosted a follow up "Training of Trainers" Workshop aimed at advancing the knowledge

## Past Events and Outcomes

of the participants in the software. The Secretariat benefited from this Workshop through funding received from **the Canadian CCDP**.

The training focused on the use of the three modules in the Eurotrace package. These are the Database Management System, the Data Editor and the Comext Standalone Data Dissemination Browser. In addition, solutions to operational and technical problems with the software were discussed.

Eurostat plans to phase out user support for this package. In its place, regional support groups would be established to provide training and support services to users.

### **DevInfo 5.0 Training Course – Barbados, 18 – 22 September, 2006.**

A Regional DevInfo v 5.0 Training workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean was conducted in September 2006 in Barbados funded by the **United Nation's Children Fund (UNICEF)**, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and **DevInfo Latin America and the Caribbean (DevInfoLAC)**. The workshop was held in partnership with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and in close collaboration with the **United Nations Development Group (UNDG)**.

The main objective of the workshop was to provide initial training on the features, administration and use of DevInfo v 5.0 in order to enable its use in Member States in the dissemination of relevant statistics and indicators. DevInfo is a software that enables the establishment of an Information Management System to present and disseminate indicators such as those relating to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), human development and in other areas. A new version, DevInfo v 5.0 was released in May 2006 and it offers a range of new tools and features including a fully web-enabled version for more effective dissemination and presentation of indicators. The Workshop targeted participants in Member States engaged in compiling and disseminating social statistics and indicators.

DevInfo is recognized internationally as part of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) that aims to reduce the degree of duplication of efforts in the submission of data within countries and in the exchange of data with international organizations.

Resulting from this training, Saint Lucia, Guyana and Barbados were selected as pilot countries for the implementation of the software. CARICOM has also built a Regional adaptation of the DevInfo software.

## Future Events

### **Enhancement of Trade Data Dissemination – The Facilitation of Online Access to Tradsys**

Funding was received from the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** to execute a project aimed at enhancing the dissemination of trade data in CARICOM through the facilitation of online access to the regional trade information system (Tradsys).

The project is divided into the following components:-

- Component 1 – Harmonisation and Strengthening of Trade Data Submission by Member States;
- Component 2 – Update Tradsys and launch online interface with user manual;
- Component 3 – Operation and Maintenance of Tradsys: Training and Equipment.

Component 1 aims at improving the timeliness of trade data submissions to the Secretariat. The expected outcomes of this component include a report of individual country assessments, recommendations and an action plan on steps to be taken to enhance the systems of trade data processing, submission and management in respective Member States. A Draft Data Submission Protocol would be produced for implementation in Member States. A Consultant has been recruited by the CARICOM Secretariat and it is anticipated that work on this component will commence in January 2007.

For Components 2 and 3, the expected outcomes include the updating of the current Tradsys; the creation of an online interface for access by the Secretariat's staff and external privileged users; training for the Secretariat in the maintenance of the online facility and in the relevant computer languages used in the development of the online interface.

## Publications

Forthcoming publications:

- 📖 *CARICOM's National Accounts Report –2000-03;*
- 📖 *Balance of Payments of CARICOM Member States: 2000-03;*
- 📖 *Selected Economic Indicators 2002-2004.*
- 📖 *CARICOM's Agricultural Commodities:2000-2003*
- 📖 *CARICOM's Trade in Services:2000-2004*

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