

Stats News & Views

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

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Main Events

Preparing for CSME: Issues Regarding Trade in Services and Where We Are Going

As the region prepares to establish the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) which will enable the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons, it is vital that measures are put in place to monitor the impact of these movements on our national economies. While the regime governing the movement of goods has been well established, the removal of restrictions to trade in services, is a new area which will require data to monitor, evaluate and analyse the effectiveness of the liberalisation of services in the Region and to facilitate future negotiations at the bi-lateral, hemispherical and global levels.

In this context, the Secretariat, through a consultancy in 2001, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), conducted a situational assessment of the capacity of National Authorities and Regional Organisations in respect of Services Statistics. Among the issues identified in the report were low response rates, constructing and maintaining Business Registers, improving coverage of service industries, expanding and developing product detail, estimating the output of intractable service industries such as *Business and Professional Services* and *Entertainment*, compilation of Foreign Affiliates Trade in Services statistics (FATS) and the possibility of collecting statistics on the presence of natural persons.

The Project did not focus on direct compilation of Services Statistics, but rather sought to stimulate work and build capacity to produce these statistics by

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Main Events

Analysis of Data From Census 2000 and Plans for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (PHC)

Support was procured from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for the CARICOM Secretariat to assist its Member States to conduct more in-depth analyses of the data that were collected in their 2000 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (PHC). The support for these analyses involves the production of National Census Reports (NCR), Regional Special Topic Monographs (RSTM), the production of Basic Tables Volumes (BTV) containing tables of basic data from the census of each Member State.

Perhaps the most important component of the project is the preparation of national analytical reports in a standardized format, according to standard guidelines and utilizing standard statistical tables. The objective of these reports is to use the census data to conduct more in-depth socio-demographic analyses at the national level. There is no doubt that sound and reliable socio-demographic analyses require data of a very high quality. It is for this reason that the databases derived from the PHCs need to be thoroughly cleaned before tables can be generated. Hence, following the mandate of the last meeting of the Regional Census Coordinating Committee (RCCC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)/CARICOM assisted five (5) Member States, namely Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines to clean their databases. It is also anticipated that the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) will support the review of the

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sensitising Member States about the conceptual framework and the classification systems involved. At a regional workshop convened as part of the Project, and two subsequent national workshops, Member States were exposed to the then draft Manual on “Statistics of International Trade in Services” that was produced by the United Nations and other agencies. The Project also focused on the production of services, since in order to strengthen the capacity to produce statistics of international trade in services, it is necessary to strengthen capacity in the compilation of statistics of production of these services.

Among the recommendations coming out of the CIDA Project was the role the Secretariat could play in the creation of a database/compendium of statistics on the production and international trade of services. To this end, the Secretariat attempted a data compilation exercise on trade in services using data submitted by Member States from the services section of their Balance of Payments. The result was the production of a regional report on International Trade in Services. The intention was to produce a second report providing data on production, employment and any other variables available on services. However, due to staff constraints in the Statistics Sub-programme of the Secretariat, this was not realised.

In 2004, the Secretariat requested technical assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Caribbean Trade and Competitiveness Programme (C-TRADECOM) to undertake the developmental work in CARICOM Member States to collect and properly disseminate trade in services statistics. The main activities of that Project were:

- Preparation of Common Guidelines for the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on international trade in services;
- Review and compilation of existing data on worksheets to compile statistics on trade in services and on investment flows and development of methods to fill the data gaps identified;
- Reviewing of survey instruments, questionnaires, data collection procedures, sampling methodology including methods of estimation and imputation for non-response and facilitation of the implementation of these procedures in Member States;
- Conducting of National/Regional Workshops to sensitise and inform users, producers and suppliers

of statistics on international trade in services.

These activities were designed to improve on and advance the recommendations of the previous CIDA Project and resulted in the documentation of draft Common Guidelines with adequate details to inform Member States as to how to collect, compile and disseminate these statistics. Also, as a result of the project, as detailed as possible data were compiled for Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago based on information available from the review of the existing data in those Member States.

In early 2005, the Secretariat in collaboration with C-TRADECOM convened one regional workshop in Barbados and two national workshops in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Belize respectively to disseminate the results of the project and to sensitise stakeholders of the issues involved. So far the results of this project have been very promising as general indications are that Member States will endeavour to implement where possible as many of the recommendations coming out of the process.

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of the remaining Member States. Additionally, the Data Processing Consultant who will be recruited for the project will also assist in the review as part of his terms of reference.

A three-day workshop for the authors of the NCRs. was conducted in March 2005 to strengthen capacity in demographic analysis and report preparation. In addition to achieving the main objectives of the workshop, the forum also served to harmonize methodologies and procedures. Writers are now planning their initial visits to their respective countries, in order to have relevant discussions with the national authorities and collect other information to assist in their research. The target date for the completion of all reports in printable form, is the end of October, 2005. In the meantime, the preparation of the RSTMs, is being organized, and once the writers of the NCRs are well on their way, detailed planning of the RSTMs will ensue.

Meeting with UNECLAC to Implement the CARICOM Secretariat Statistics Unit as a site for the hosting of Social Statistics Databases

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) Sub-regional Headquarters, Port of Spain have been engaged in initiatives to strengthen the production and dissemination of Social Statistics in the CARICOM Region.

In May 2000, UNECLAC and CARICOM met in Georgetown Guyana and agreed that the CARICOM Secretariat should be one of three sites to host the Social Statistics Databases. These databases include data on Survey of Living Conditions, Labour Force Survey data, Population and Housing Census data, from the 1990 Round of Censuses.

On 3 May 2005, in Port-Of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the Secretariat and UNECLAC met to follow up on the decision to host the database at the Secretariat. The CARICOM Secretariat acquired a server for this activity since early 2004, in order to implement the decision on the hosting of the databases.

One of the major outcomes of the meeting was the outlining of an approval to enact the decision agreed to between both Secretariats and endorsed by the Fifth Meeting of The Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) in relation to the hosting of the databases at the CARICOM Secretariat. It was also agreed that a server link to the CARICOM Secretariat Statistics Web Site be established to the UNECLAC website, and arrangements for the Secretariat personnel to uplift copies of the databases from UNECLAC.

Workshop on Strengthening Capacity of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in CARICOM Member States April 4 – 6 2005, Georgetown, Guyana.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat convened a three-day training Workshop on Strengthening Capacity of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in CARICOM Member States - Improvement of Statistics on Fertility and Mortality. The main objectives of the workshop were:

1. To strengthen capacity of Member States to operate, manage and maintain Civil Registration and Vital

Statistics Systems;

2. To enhance Member States understanding of the elements, principles, concepts, definitions and techniques recommended internationally for the development, operation and maintenance of reliable Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems;
3. To promote the use of harmonised concepts and definitions;
4. To strengthen the capacity of participants to produce and disseminate timely, reliable and accurate statistics and indicators on fertility and mortality including relevant indicators to measure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
5. To provide a forum for the exchange of experience among Member States; and
6. To draft a plan of action to support the continuous strengthening of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and the effective compilation of pertinent statistics at the national and regional levels.

The Workshop targeted personnel from the National Statistical Offices and Ministries of Health as producers of vital statistics, and persons engaged in operating and maintaining Civil Registration Systems. Further information can be obtained from our website www.caricomstats.org.

Export-Import Price Indices Methodology Training Course February 14-18, 2005, Bridgetown, Barbados.

This training course served as an introduction to Member States on the compilation and computation of Export and Import Price Indices. It was meant to act as a teaching course for the participants since the computation and compilation of export and import price index is a new area for most countries. It was organised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Statistics department and the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) and covered the following areas:

- Basic price measurement concepts;
- Basic index number theory and valuation principles as recommended by the System of National Accounts 1993;
- Methods of determining index weights and price definitions consistent with 1993 SNA

Past Events and Outcomes

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- Handling temporarily unavailable commodities;
- Compiling export and import price indices; and
- Linking indices with updated weighting structures

The course also included workshops with various quantitative exercises. Saint Lucia shared their experience in this area since this Member State was chosen as the pilot country in the compilation of Import-Export Price Indices in the Region. There was also work done in Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The software used for the compilation of Producer Price Indices (PPI) was demonstrated to the workshop. A similar software package is being developed for the Import-Export price indices.

“Disability Data in the Caribbean” April 14-15, 2005 Kingston, Jamaica

A meeting on Disability Data in the Caribbean was held at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Country Office in Jamaica on 14th-15th April, 2005 and funded by the IDB. In 2004 the IDB, initiated a programme to improve the collection of disability data in Latin America and the Caribbean. To date IDB has held meetings in the two sub-regions of Central America. In 2005, IDB commenced plans to expand this initiative in the Caribbean and the Andean regions.

The objective of the meeting was to review the status of disability data in the Caribbean countries primarily focusing on borrowing member countries of the bank and using data from the 2000 Round of Censuses and exploring the relationship between disability prevalence and other indicators of social development such as gender, educational attainment, labour force participation, geographical location etc. The data presented would form the basis for improving the methodology for collecting, harmonizing and incorporating disability into the development process.

At this first exploratory meeting six countries participated - The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Each country presented the definitions of disability used in the most recent census and or surveys. Presentations were also made by representatives from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working in the area of disability in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, on how disability data are used and the type of analyses needed.

Future Events

Planning for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses

Despite the preoccupation with the analysis of the 2000 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, there is need to start planning for the 2010 Round of PHCs. As a consequence, approaches were made to funding agencies to assist with preparatory activities for the 2010 Round of PHCs. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been one of the agencies that have provided funding for some of the activities. One such activity is to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the activities, procedures and processes adopted during the 2000 Round and to make recommendations for a more cost effective strategy for the 2010 Round. A Census Symposium is also planned for September 2005 to activate the process and to engage and deliberate with officers from Member States who were responsible for the 2000 Round of PHCs in Member States. It is anticipated that an outline strategy can be developed as one of the main outcomes of the Symposium

Question and Answer

In this issue we would like feedback from our readers on the questions below relating to gender. We will feature the answers in our next issue.

1. What is meant by Gender?
2. How do we distinguish between Sex and Gender?

Publications

Forthcoming publications:

- 📄 *CARICOM's Trade—A Quick Reference to Some Summary Data—1996-2001*
- 📄 *Women and Men in CARICOM Member States: Labour Force Statistics 1980,1990 & 2000 censuses;*
- 📄 *Selected Economic Indicators for CARICOM Member States: 1990, 1998-2002*
- 📄 *CARICOM's National Accounts Report –2000-02;*
- 📄 *Balance of Payments of CARICOM Member States: 2000-02*

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