



Stats News & Views

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

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Main Events

Regional Strategy to Support the Conduct of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses.

A Regional Strategy of Support for the 2010 Round of Censuses in the Region was developed to incorporate all phases of the census exercise - from planning to dissemination. Under this strategy, the goal was to develop and adopt a common framework for gathering, processing, analysing and disseminating census data for region-wide comparability in the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses. It has been supported by various international and regional organizations including United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the Department for International Development (DFID), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Community under the Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF). The CARICOM Secretariat coordinated this strategy in collaboration with other international organizations in an effort to forge consensus on various areas including common core questions; common methodologies; common methods of processing and analysing of data; and dissemination of recommendations and best practices. Several activities have been planned to achieve this consensus as well as to assist Member States and Associate Members in the conduct of successful census exercises.

Supporting Census Activities in 2009 -2010

- May 2009 – CARICOM Workshop on Census Organisation and Administration for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census in Grenada funded by DFID.

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Main Events

Second CARICOM Technical Working Group Meeting on National Accounts/Short Term Indicators and International Trade in Services/Investment Statistics - 12-16 April 2010, Christ Church Barbados

The CARICOM Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting on National Accounts/Short Term Indicators and International Trade in Services/Investment Statistics met for the second time in April 2010 in Barbados. The main objective of this meeting was to create a way forward by expanding upon the main decisions and recommendations made at the first meeting held in Trinidad and Tobago in October / November 2009. Some of the main issues discussed were the matters which arose out of the first meeting—the development and maintenance of countries' Business Register, the construction of short-term indicators such as Consumer Price Indices and Producer Price Indices – their gaps in the data and the technical assistance needed to fill these gaps.

Implementation of the SNA 2008 and consideration of activities on the production of trade in services/ investment statistics were among the items tabled at this meeting.

The meeting was attended by members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) formed in the first meeting and consisted of persons from Member States and one Associate Member. The meeting was also attended by an Eastern Caribbean Bank (ECCB) representative, a representative from the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) as well the Consultant for Trade In Services and Investment Statistics.

Some of the main decisions were as follows:

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Main Events

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- May 2009 – CARICOM Workshop on Common Methodologies for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Grenada. This is a component of the Common Census Framework Project.
- June 2009 — Fourth CARICOM Demographic Analysis Workshop organised to strengthen regional capacity in Demographic *Analysis*. It was executed by the CARICOM Secretariat and facilitated by the University of the West Indies - Mona, Jamaica and Salises St. Augustine, Trinidad.
- Sep 2009 – *CARICOM Workshop on Census Data Processing* for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Saint Lucia funded by DFID.
- Oct 2009 – The conduct of a DevInfo 6.0 and CensusInfo Training back to back, organised by the CARICOM Secretariat in collaboration with UNICEF for the DevInfo and with UNSD, UNFPA and UNICEF for the CensusInfo Workshop
- November 2009- Training of Trainers Workshop in Census Methodology on the Common Methodologies agreed upon by countries for use in the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the Region.
- February 2010 - Workshop on Census Mapping and GIS, organised by CARICOM Secretariat with funding under the Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF) was designed to harness best practices in the use of imagery for the production of census maps to be used in the development of a Census and Statistics Geographic Information System (GIS) framework
- March to May 2010 – Technical Assistance missions in the area of common methodologies, concepts and definitions. Two consultants were hired in these areas to assist Member States and Associate Members.

Currently, a consultant is assisting Member States and Associate Members with their mapping and GIS. Future workshops are being planned in the areas of Census Data Processing and Census Data Processing Editing.

Main Events

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- The CARICOM Secretariat should conduct a new inquiry on the standards and methodologies adopted by Member States and the phases and milestones reached as it relates to the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA 2008).
- Member States and Organisations will be responsible for developing an industry-specific questionnaire with each industry assigned to a particular country or organization.
- A manual with guidelines on best approach practices be developed for updating/maintaining the Business Register (BR). Trinidad and Tobago will develop a draft manual on maintenance of the BR in the Region. The expected date of completion is August 2010 for discussions at the Third Technical Working Group (3rd TWG) Meeting which could feed into the European Union (EU) funded project activity.

The meeting achieved its objectives.

Past Events and Outcomes

CARICOM/UNSD Workshop on the Implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA) 2008, 12—16 June 2010, Antigua and Barbuda

The CARICOM Secretariat in collaboration with the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) convened a meeting on the **Implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA) 2008**. The purpose of the seminar was to initiate the formulation of an implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and to provide support in the area of economic statistics for the CARICOM countries with the objective of developing comparable economic statistics for Member States. It is expected that this initiative would lead to a multi-year programme to move countries over to the 2008 SNA, as well as establish a minimum common data set of annual and high frequency statistics.

This three (3) day workshop was based on the System of National Accounts 2008 and was designed for Senior Managers responsible for compiling Economic Statistics and specifically for the National Accounts departments who would be in a position to contribute substantively to the implementation of the this programme.

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The meeting took the form of discussions and presentations made by the CARICOM Secretariat, the UNSD and Member States. It commenced with an overview of the developments since the adoption of the SNA 2008 by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC). The general changes as well as those specific to the Region were discussed. Other presentations were also made regarding an assessment of the status of National Accounts compilation in the Region, as well as initiatives for improving the scope, detail and quality of the National Accounts and supporting economic statistics in the Region. It was recognised that part of the implementation strategy required input from regional partners as well as countries. Some of the plans at the country level were:

- A review of the Strategic Framework and detailing of National and Regional Implementation Programmes;
- Adaptation of classification frameworks, business registers and frames, surveys, administrative data sources and information technology infrastructure.

The High Frequency indicators were also introduced at this forum and a decision was taken for them to be discussed at the upcoming Sixth Advisory Group on Statistics (6th AGS) meeting.

Training Workshop on Trade Data Processing, 8-10 March 2010, Gros Islet, Saint Lucia

As part of the efforts to implement the New Eurotrace software in Member States, a follow-up workshop was organised to complement the first CARICOM Training on Merchandise Trade Statistics conducted in July 2009 in Trinidad and Tobago. The objectives of this workshop were to address problems faced by Member States in the use of this software and to provide additional training on some aspects as requested by Member States. Training was provided in the following areas:

- Creation and modification of Data Entry Forms using Eurotrace Editor;
- Modification of the Eurotrace Domain to cater for changes in format and content of trade data and metadata being collected; applying validation rules, using Error Wizard and Eurotrace Editor.
- Incorporating the “data quality checking” procedure into the Eurotrace Domain; and
- A general overview of Comext, the dissemination

module, focusing mainly on using the aggregate function and creating user lists.

During the course of the workshop, participants provided details on the current position of the National Statistical office in their country as it related to the implementation of the software. It was noted that the software was installed and running in countries, however the actual production of trade data using the software had not yet commenced. The Bahamas’ representative indicated that the software would be installed at the Statistics Office in the near future. At that time, the Integrated Microcomputer Processing Systems (IMPS), developed by the U.S. Census Bureau, was being used to process trade data in this country. Countries which have not yet begun using the New Eurotrace software indicated that they will implement the software soonest and will liaise with the CARICOM Secretariat for assistance. Trinidad and Tobago was able to move ahead relative to the use of the software, therefore an exchange programme can be developed to provide further assistance to countries with challenges. Another suggestion as it related to countries, was the creation of an online forum for CARICOM countries where these challenges can be discussed and best practices can be shared.

Preparatory work has commenced on a second phase of the project to enhance merchandise trade data processing in Member States. The focus of this new phase would be to improve the quality of the data being produced. Finally, it was decided that the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Merchandise Trade will assist in advancing technical work in this area.

Workshop on Census Mapping and GIS, 23-26 February 2010, Belize City, Belize

Funding for this workshop was provided by the Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF) as part of the support to the Regional Strategy for the 2010 Census Round. The overall objective of the workshop was to harness best practices in the use of imagery for the production of census maps to be used in the development of a Census and Statistics Geographic Information System (GIS) framework. It focused on work currently being put in place by the Statistical Institute of Belize in map production and verification as well as the enabling of GIS for the conduct of its 2010 Round of Census. In this regard, the Director-General of the Statistical Institute of Belize agreed to allow other Member States to participate in this workshop.

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Past Events

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During the workshop, Member States presented on the current preparation of maps and mapping techniques used in their country for round of censuses. Other presentations were made on the different satellite products and options, the creation of critical datasets for the census enumeration process and mapping exercises and the development of a Census and Statistics GIS.

Several issues were noted and conclusions arrived at among participants. These related to the successful completion of the 2010 census exercises in Member States. Among such conclusions and recommendations were the following:

- The need for closer collaboration at the national level on GIS data. This would allow for stronger coordination and increased capacity for statistics offices in creating the Census and Statistics GIS.
- The increased use of GIS as a tool for mapping and data dissemination within the Region. Also the need to enhance these systems at the regional level for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses.
- The need to track imagery for land use change, development, and nomadic populations since it provides efficient and effective ways to verify what is on the ground before and after the census.
- The need to counter the high cost of satellite Imagery. It was therefore recommended that block purchasing be done where countries have access to vendors. It was further recommended that CARICOM act as a bargaining agent with regard to the purchasing of Imagery at a country block level.

Future Events

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Statistics (AGS), 19 to 21 July 2010, Barbados

The objective of the Meeting is to advance the development of statistics through the work of the AGS focusing on matters discussed at the Fifth Advisory

Group (5th AGS) Meeting held in October 2009 in Saint Lucia. The main topics to be discussed at this forum are the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) project on a Common Framework for Statistics Production, the High Level Advocacy Forum on Statistics, activities for Caribbean Statistics Day/World Statistics Day, the Minimum Data Set and the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

Eighteenth Meeting of the Regional Census Coordinating Committee (RCCC), 22-23 July 2010, Bridgetown, Barbados

The objective of this meeting is to obtain early feedback from those countries who have conducted their censuses in the months of May and June, on their experiences. It will assist in identifying among other issues challenges and best practices. Focus would therefore be given to identifying and providing support to any immediate requests for technical assistance from those countries. It is the hope that the challenges encountered and solutions applied would also be instructive to those who have not yet conducted their Census exercises.

Caribbean Statistics Day , 15th October 2010

The rationale for the observance of Statistics Day is to highlight statistics and its crucial role across a wide spectrum of activities – from daily decision-making faced by individuals, businesses, students etc. to planning, policy-making and analysis and research activities of governments, academia and other users.

The Thirty Fifth Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (35th SCCS).

The 35th SCCS will be held in Rosseau, Dominica from 8th—9th November 2010. This annual meeting will continue to discuss the various aspects of statistics with the countries as the Secretariat continues to provide its assistance to them.

Publications

Forthcoming publications:

- 📄 *Selected Economic Indicators 2002-2006.*
- 📄 *CARICOM's Intra-regional trade: 2003-2008*
- 📄 *CSME Profile:2005-2008*
- 📄 *CARICOM's Trade in Services: 2004-2008*

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