



Stats News & Views

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

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Main Events

CARICOM's Workshop on National Accounts Paramaribo, Suriname, February 6–17, 2011.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) convened a Workshop on National Accounts which was held in Paramaribo, Suriname from February 6–17, 2012. The workshop was hosted at the Central Bank of Suriname. It was attended by persons working in the area of national accounts from statistics offices in the Region as well as CARTAC.

The main objective of this workshop was to provide training on the methodology for compiling National Accounts statistics based on the updated System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA). It therefore consisted of a series of lectures, discussions, and practical exercises. Lectures and class discussions focused on general concepts and compilation practices, while the exercises provided participants with an opportunity to put the knowledge learnt into practice. It targeted participants who are responsible for compiling National Accounts estimates, and discussed problems they encountered in compiling these statistics in their respective countries.

Some of the main areas of work, covered in this workshop were:

- An overview of the SNA 2008 highlighting differences of the SNA 1993;
- A general overview of the sequence of accounts in the National Accounts;
- Examination of the output of specific industries. Each industry in the national accounts was listed and the procedure for compiling its data examined; and
- Price and volume measures in National Accounts Supply and Use Tables (SUT) – Compilation Issues.

Main Events

CARICOM's Workshop on Statistics of International Trade in Services and Creative Industries Bridgetown, Barbados, 13-16 March 2012.

A Regional Workshop on Statistics of International Trade in Services and Creative Industries was held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 13-16 March 2012. The meeting was organised by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Secretariat, in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat and the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) with financial assistance from the Spanish Trust Fund.

The primary objective of the Workshop was to assist in developing trade in services statistics, particularly in relation to the development of creative and cultural industries in the Region. It targeted participants — from regional institutions and other “partnering organisations”, and facilitated the sharing of experiences and possible best practices in the development of such statistics.

Presentations were made by representatives from the WTO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), University of the West Indies (UWI) and the CARICOM Secretariat, and provided a background of the capacity building initiatives undertaken in the Region through the CARICOM/CIDA and USAID projects as compilation

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Current Events – CARICOM's Workshop on Data Processing and Merchandise Trade; Tenth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Statistics (10th AGS)

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Discussions were also held on the informal sector since it was a major primary issue on the research agenda of the 1993 SNA. In the 2008 SNA a new chapter on 'Informal aspects of the economy' was introduced. The chapter covered two themes: the non-observed economy and the informal sector.

The lecture for this session elaborated on various aspects of the new chapter and discussed the implications of incomplete coverage of GDP, hidden/illegal and informal activities within the production boundary, defining of the non-observed economy (NOE) and informal economy, characteristics of informal activities, issues in measuring NOE / informal activities and survey methods / general estimation methods.

The workshop was a success and covered many areas which provided participants with the knowledge they needed to equip them for smooth transition to the SNA 2008.

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CARICOM's Workshop on Statistics of International Trade in Services and Creative Industries Bridgetown, Barbados, 13-16 March 2012.

well as the 9th EDF. Data available from the Balance of Payments (BOP) and Extended Balance of Payments System (EBOPS) as well as from core cultural services were also examined. Plans for future developmental work to be done in the region was discussed.

The presentations provided guidelines and considerations for mapping cultural and creative activities to either one of the following Modes of Supply namely: Cross-border trade, Consumption abroad, Commercial presence and Presence of natural persons. It also provided information on how these services and modes of supply may be captured, measured and compiled from various data sources, including Business, Household and Expenditure surveys, Visitor surveys and other Cultural surveys. The use of the BPM6, EBOPS 2010 and the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS) 2010 in the compilation of these statistics was also examined in detail. The meeting also clarified key concepts and definitions.

Participants presented their country's experience on

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developing trade related indicators for cultural products or products issued from creative industries and participated in group discussions which further examined the challenges regarding both the measurement of these activities and by extension its economic contribution to the country. It was recognised however, that while the contributions of the creative and cultural industries (in particular the music and ICT industries) is significant, it has been difficult to measure for a number of reasons. The major ones being lack of technical support to clarify concepts and conduct specialized surveys, lack of human and financial resources and failure to disclose information on income by artistes.

Group discussions also examined possible best practices and other data sources that can be used to collect data for the BOP, as well as identifying the key culture and creative industries in the Region. The workshop was a success.

Current Events

Workshop on Data Processing of Merchandise Trade Statistics using the New Eurotrace Software Package, Guyana, 12 – 13 June 2012.

The CARICOM Secretariat convened a Training Workshop on Data Processing of Merchandise Trade Statistics using the New Eurotrace Software Package at its Annex Building in Guyana from 12-13 June 2012. It was funded by the European Union under the Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF) and five countries (Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis) along with the CARICOM Secretariat participated.

The objective of the Workshop was to address issues related specifically to the Eurotrace Database Management System, Eurotrace Editor and the Data Submission Protocol module identified by the countries. In this regard, the following issues were addressed through the exchange of experiences:

Implementation of Correlation Tables - Harmonized Commodity and Coding System (HS) to the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and Broad Economic Categories (BEC);

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System errors encountered when using the Eurotrace Editor;

- Error correction using the Eurotrace Database Management System (DBMS); Error Management Tab and the Editor;
- Issues relative to the compliance with the Data Submission Protocol;
- Differences between data generated with Eurotrace DOS and Eurotrace Windows.

Among the recommendations of the Workshop was the need to develop a *best practice manual* for the use of the software. The manual would highlight areas where countries would have successfully overcome challenge(s) or may have found innovative ways of dealing with certain issues, such as, recoding data to the most recent classification and managing errors. Documentation of some of the areas has commenced.

The Workshop received tremendous support from Mr. Melroy Henry, the St. Kitts and Nevis representative who willingly shared his experiences and in this regard was much of the issues identified by the countries were addressed. The workshop was a good example of South-South cooperation.

Tenth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Statistics (10th AGS) , Suriname, 18-22 June 2012.

The Tenth Meeting of the CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics (10th AGS) was convened from 18-22 June 2012 in Paramaribo, Suriname. The purpose of the meeting was to build on the progress made on several key areas which were discussed at the Eighth and Ninth Meetings of the AGS.

The CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics (AGS) was charged with the mandate to guide the improvement of the range and quality of statistics and statistical infrastructure in the Region, in particular facilitating the improvement of statistics through the implementation of the programme areas of the Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP) as well as to consider the needed to reform the SCCS as a forum for statistical development, among other areas. Some of the key areas were:

- The Inter-American Development Bank Funded Projects – Common Framework for Statistics Production in CARICOM under which the following were discussed:

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- a. The current work being done on the Draft Statistics Model Bill;
- b. Common Approach to Data Warehousing, Archiving and Dissemination of Statistics; and
- c. A Common Literacy Survey for the Region.

Other key areas included, inter alia:

- The Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the SCCS;
- Establishment of the Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians (CAPS);
- International Comparison Programme 2011; and
- Caribbean Statistics Day 2012.

Major discussions were held At the Ninth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Statistics (9th AGS) and the 36th Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (36th SCCS), held in October 2011 in Belize, discussions were held on the formation of a Professional Association of Statisticians. Post the 9th AGS and the 36th SCCS, it was agreed that the Association be called the “Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians”. It was then suggested that a logo and motto be given to this group. Caribbean Statistics Day 2012 was used as a platform to launch the competition for the logo and the motto.

Past Events

Second Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Economic Frameworks in Support of an Assessment on the Economic and Social Impacts of Climate Change in the Caribbean, 2 –3 February 2012, Port-Of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

A meeting was held on the Development of economic Framework in support of an Assessment of the economic and social impacts of climate change in the Caribbean on 2nd and 3rd February 2012 in Port-Of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. It was sponsored by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Caribbean Support for the Australian Agency for International development. It was attended by international experts in the field on econometric modeling as well as national data .

Past Events

The workshop activities covered work done—data collection, success and challenges faced in the areas of the agricultural sector, the coastal and marine sector, the energy and health sector as well as the tourism and water sector. Data collection to determine the economic and social impacts of climate change in the Caribbean was also discussed. It entailed the challenge experienced by national data collectors with a general approach to alleviating these issues. The workshop achieved its objectives.

International Comparison Programme (ICP) on Prices and National Accounts, 26 – 30 March 2012, St. Kitts and Nevis.

A meeting was held on the International Comparison Programme (ICP) from 26 – 30 March 2012 in St. Kitts and Nevis. It was jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), CARICOM, the Caribbean Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB). This meeting was one of a series held on the compilation of price data and detailed GDP components by expenditure which are required for the calculation of Purchasing Power Parities.

The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- Analyse the status of the price and national accounts data collection process in the context of the 2011 ICP;
- Validate the data already submitted to the ECLAC;
- Identify major gaps;
- Identify challenges faced by the Region as a whole; and
- Identify and discuss strategies for future data collection.

The meeting commenced with a discussion of the summary and conclusions which came out of the meeting held in October 2011 in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. An assessment of the state of price statistics in the Region was also done as well as the updated calendar of activities for 2012 – 2013 perused. The core list as well as countries' CPI basket were also examined. The workshop also examined the country master file (location outlet). Interactive work sessions were also completed.

The national accounts component of the meeting focused on the collection of data for various aspects such as private health, housing rental survey, private education and water. The national accounts questionnaires were also examined.

Future Events

Future Events for the next half of the year include the following workshops / meetings:

Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (37th SCCS) St. George's, Grenada, 29-31 October 2012.

The CARICOM Secretariat will convene the Thirty-Seventh (37th) SCCS meeting from 29th – 31st October under the theme “*Working Together to Improve Statistics in the Twenty-First Century and Beyond*”, which is the theme of the AGS. It will focus on the outcomes of the initiatives at the country-level, with regard to the production and dissemination of key statistics required by users.

Twenty-Second Meeting Of The Regional Census Coordinating Committee (RCCC), St. George's, Grenada, 1 November 2012.

The Twenty-Second Meeting of the RCCC will review the progress made by countries that conducted their census enumeration activities in 2010 and 2011, in the area of census data processing relative to the capturing and cleaning of the census data.

Other Meetings.

Other meetings include the Eleventh Meeting of the Advisory Group on Statistics (11th AGS), fifth (5th) Research Seminar, and a Workshop on a Common Framework for a Literacy Survey.

Publications

Forthcoming publications:

- *CARICOM's Trade—A Quick Reference to Some Summary Data— 2005—2010*
- *CARICOM's Trade in Services: 2006—2010*

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