

# The Statistics Newsletter

for the extended OECD Statistical Network

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## Indicators for Sustainable Development

By Anne Harrison, OECD

Three years ago in response to a report by a high level advisory group, ministers of the OECD countries agreed that **sustainable development** should be a concern which permeated much if not all of the Organisation's policy analysis. In connection with the meeting of Ministers in May of this year, a report entitled "Policies to Enhance Sustainable Development" was presented and a companion and longer volume, "Sustainable Development: Critical Issues" has just been issued.

Sustainable development is understood by the OECD to cover three areas of concern: the economic area, the environmental area and the social area. In all of these threats to sustainability mean that the potential welfare of future generations may be put at risk by activities undertaken presently. Indicators of sustainable development must therefore address issues in all three areas and the interaction between them.

Many organisations, both national and international, have drawn up lists of indicators. Many of these lists contain in excess of one hundred separate indicators and thus may be comprehensive and comprehensible but without giving a simple bird's-eye view of the overall position. A number of agencies, often non-governmental or academic, have tried instead to produce a single index which can show at a glance whether a country is behaving sustainably or not. Several problems arise with this approach. Not all the issues concerned can be measured in similar units – indeed some such as environmental amenity or security from civil commotion may not be easily measurable at all. Thus the selection of a set of indicators and the process of aggregation necessarily involves some subjectivity which means that different composite indicators give different results and none has as yet emerged as the incontestably "right" one.

Chapter 3 of "Sustainable development: critical issues" addresses the measurement issues involved and contains an annex with charts of some relevant series. The series are available as time series for OECD Member countries. However, it is recognised that these are early days and over the next year further work will be undertaken to develop this list to determine a small set of indicators relevant to policy analysis and that are also likely to be available for most if not all OECD member countries in the near future. The intention is to attempt to devise a framework within which the tradeoff between various sustainable development goals can be examined.

### Coming in September 2001 - Statistics Brief

OECD is launching a new series of short statistical publications, called **Statistics Brief**. A part of the OECD's new statistics communication and dissemination policy, each issue of Statistics Brief (initially quarterly) will focus on one statistical theme, recent development or new output. Intended for policy makers, NSOs, civil society and universities, the first issue will deal with **Indicators for Sustainable Development**. Readers wishing to receive this free publication should email: [std.statbrief@oecd.org](mailto:std.statbrief@oecd.org)

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## ***Environment and Natural Resource Statistics to Monitor and Manage Ecologically Sustainable Development in Australia***

*By Bob Harrison, Australian Bureau of Statistics<sup>1</sup>*

### *Introduction*

The National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development commits all Australian governments to the following three core objectives:

- to enhance individual and community well-being and welfare by following a path of economic development that safeguards the welfare of future generations;
- to provide for equity within and between generations; and
- to protect biological diversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life-support.

This article is structured according to those core objectives and its main emphasis is the activity of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It describes the range of statistics being developed and compiled in Australia which cover natural resources and ecosystems. **Where possible it also seeks to put this statistical activity in a policy context.** It is beyond the scope of the article to describe the full range of economic, social and environmental statistics which are being compiled in Australia to address all ESD issues.

*“To enhance individual and community well-being and welfare”*

Air quality is monitored by State governments as is water quality and some aspects of waste generation (through mechanisms such as the National Pollutant Inventory and various solid waste and recycling statistical collections). Many jurisdictions in Australia produce State of the Environment reports. The ABS produces very few environmental statistics relevant to this area.

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<sup>1</sup> *N.B. This paper reflects the views of the author and not necessarily those of the ABS or any other government agency.*

*“ by following a path ... that safeguards the welfare of future generations”*

This is an area where I believe national statistical agencies have a major role to play by monitoring natural resource use and management. Australia produces an annual national balance sheet in physical and financial terms, has produced supply and use accounts for minerals, energy, greenhouse gases, water and fish and is moving to produce accounts for agriculture, land and timber. In Australia, a major role for governments in natural resource management is seen by some as being to improve resource use through a better system of institutional arrangements and property rights. The range of instruments available to governments to achieve this objective include:

- property right solutions (eg tradeable permits for water);
- the provision of information;
- economic instruments (eg subsidies, taxes and quantity based instruments such as quotas for renewable energy);
- suasive measures and direct regulation.

The natural resource accounts are used to assess depletion and degradation of resources and the potential economic impacts of any intended policy measure, both direct and indirect. In some cases possible social impacts can also be assessed (eg the likely employment impact and the consequences for regional economies). Over time these natural resource accounts will also be used in policy program evaluation (such as the extent to which new policy measures are making water use and the agriculture industry more sustainable).

Other statistics that the ABS produces include: agricultural management practices that have environmental implications; government, business and household expenditures on environment protection and natural resource management; resource saving/waste reducing measures being undertaken by businesses and households; eco-efficiency indicators; the extent to which businesses have environment management plans (together with sources of information or barriers to improved environmental performance). There is also growing pressure for the ABS to conduct a survey of the

“environment” industry ie. those businesses providing goods and services which improve environmental performance.

An area that the ABS would like to move into is to directly collect information about rights and trades in water, salinity, emissions, etc and information that supports studies of economic efficiency (ie. the extent to which externalities and full economic costs are being borne by businesses).

*“to provide for equity within and between generations”*

There are locational equity issues here to do with the quality of the environment which different parts of the population live in or have access to. ABS population statistics can be used in conjunction with environmental data to make an assessment of this type of intra generational equity. Measures of “soft” sustainability and depletion can also be derived from the national balance sheet.

*“to protect biological diversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life-support”*

The main policy issues here are to do with protection and conservation of ecosystems, land health and climate change. The ABS’s agricultural census is used to partly shed light on all three issues and our energy and greenhouse gas accounts are used for policy development in relation to the third issue.

For more information see the environment theme under [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) or contact [bob.harrison@abs.gov.au](mailto:bob.harrison@abs.gov.au) for an electronic copy of the main features from the various ABS publications covering resource accounts, household surveys and environment protection expenditure.

***Contributions for the September Newsletter are invited by 11 September 2001***

*As a guide:*

*Article length 400 words maximum*

*News in brief 150 words maximum*

*Recent Publications 100 words maximum*

***Please send contributions, comments or questions to***

***STD.STATNEWS@oecd.org***

## ***The OECD Round Table On Sustainable Development: Moving Towards A Consensus On Measures Of Sustainability***

*By Vangelis Vitalis, Chief Adviser, OECD Round Table on Sustainable Development*

The OECD Round Table on Sustainable Development which is chaired by the Rt. Hon Simon Upton is designed to assist the work of the OECD and other inter-governmental organisations in addressing the cross-cutting economic, environmental and social issues that are commonly grouped under the heading of 'sustainable development'<sup>2</sup>

The Round Table has tailored a programme of meetings for the period ahead which is designed to meet the needs of its members. Of particular interest to the statistical community may be the proposed meeting (in December this year) about measures of sustainability.

By way of background, the Chair has been discussing the issue of which indicators of sustainability to use at an international level with key Ministers. From these discussions it is clear that there is considerable value in such indicators, but what is less clear is the form these should take.

There is, for instance, considerable interest in an indicator that is based on national data sources, but can be aggregated upwards into a single overall figure. Ideally, an indicator would also be able to provide information about the impact of resource use regardless of the location of recorded economic activity. A per-capita, rather than country-based approach therefore has a certain appeal. There is also support for the development of indicators that *inform* us about the pressure of human claims on the bio-physical environment and concomitantly *indicate* whether such

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<sup>2</sup> All OECD ministers now have the right to attend any meeting of the Round Table that is of interest to them. The role and composition of the Round Table is detailed at [www.oecd.org/subject/sustdev/RoundTable.htm](http://www.oecd.org/subject/sustdev/RoundTable.htm)

pressures place us at risk of crossing thresholds beyond which lie very significant economic, social and environmental costs. The extent to which the establishment of an indicator set which possesses some or all of the characteristics outlined above is possible will be the focus of the proposed December 2001 meeting of the Round Table.

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## ***System of Environmental and Economic Accounting SEEA 2000***

*By Anne Harrison, OECD*

In 1993, the United Nations Statistical Office issued an interim draft of a handbook on a system of integrated economic and environmental accounts (SEEA). In the years since then, considerable experience on compiling environmental accounts has been accumulated and in 1998 it was decided to prepare an updated version, due for publication originally in 2000, hence its acronym SEEA 2000.

The work of drafting the new version fell to members of the London group on environmental accounting. In May of this year, the group, augmented by a number of participants from developing countries and other international agencies met at Statistics Netherlands to discuss the draft. A final draft will be ready at the end of July and submitted to a small group of heads of statistical offices who will decide whether it can go forward for publication in early 2002.

Further details about the meeting in May will appear in the next edition of "SNA News and Notes" which can be found at <http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd/sna/index.htm>

The draft of the complete manual is available at <http://www4.statcan.ca/citygrp/london/london.htm> under the heading "drafts for public review". This site presently contains the version of the draft discussed in Statistics Netherlands but will be updated to the end July version as soon as possible thereafter.

## ***CAESAR: Better Indicators for a Different Agriculture***

*By Andreas Lindner, OECD*

Few sectors have undergone such profound changes as agriculture. Rapidly changing structures, new technologies, the relationship with the environment, rural space and social concerns - all put considerable stress on the statistical systems in place to provide the required information. But they also present a unique opportunity for agricultural statistics to evolve to better respond to new questions and to inform policy making. More, better and different high quality indicators are needed.

In this context, the second World Conference on Agricultural and Environmental Statistical Applications in Rome, CAESAR, which took place on 5-7 June, made a major contribution to assessing where we stand and to outlining possible avenues for further development and study.

This conference was hosted by ISTAT and the Italian Ministry of Agriculture and organised together with the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Agricultural Statistics (IWG.AGRI), which co-ordinates and organises statistical seminars on agriculture amongst OECD, Eurostat, FAO and UN/ECE. Over two years these institutions as well as the ISI and USDA/NASS (the host of the first World Conference in Washington) worked together to ensure a well-balanced scientific programme and to attract the best known speakers.

CAESAR proved to be a big success. Over 400 participants from 70 countries attended the conference and no less than 130 papers were submitted, many of very high quality.

*Some CAESAR programme issues and items*

The central theme of CAESAR was how to find statistical solutions to the political and economic pressures and questions that a changing agriculture is facing in the new millennium. Three dimensions were identified: the changing role of agriculture, the importance of quality for agricultural

statistics, and the important role new technologies play for (agricultural) statistics.

The Conference was preceded by a Satellite meeting, organised jointly by ISTAT and the IWG.AGRI, in which the specific concerns in agricultural statistics of candidate and transition countries were addressed. In particular for the IWG.AGRI this was an opportunity to take stock of past and present actions undertaken and to devise a strategy for the future.

After the high level opening ceremony and plenary session, the conference was organised in parallel sessions.

The session "Evolution of the role of agriculture in developed economies" was organised and chaired by OECD. An analysis of data requirements showed that a constantly evolving policy agenda required new data and analytical tools. Agriculture is increasingly influenced by other sectors and non-agricultural policies, requiring more synergies between agricultural and other statistics as well as new institutional frameworks, including civil society. Strong support was given for reviewing the statistical systems in place, in particular the choices of basic units to better capture social and economic characteristics of farming activities. A call was made to facilitate international comparisons by taking the same "real" institutional unit.

OECD also organised and chaired the plenary session "Technological impact on data management". A comprehensive overview was given on the respective corporate IT approaches to realise data warehouses with an integrated information system management. The importance of high quality public statistics was stressed. The key role of international organisations was underlined in ensuring the international comparability of data (e.g. for international agreements) and in developing new indicators.

*What were the main outcomes?*

*A) Substance:*

CAESAR contributed to a better understanding of the indicators needed to capture the complex nature of agriculture and its relationship with the

environment, the rural space and quality of life.

It is hoped that CAESAR has created some momentum, which could lead to:

- Defining bilateral and multilateral research projects which integrate different sources and dimensions (economic, social, environmental, etc.);
- developing common definitions and classifications (international initiative would be needed);
- a better understanding and study of the specific needs of developed, developing and transition countries;
- improving and strengthening the co-operation between users and producers of data, and amongst national and international agencies;
- promoting the idea that agriculture is not just x % of GDP, but has a much greater importance including the social, rural and environmental dimension;
- promoting more integrated information systems and technologies and to develop new and pertinent high-quality indicators;
- improving the visibility of agricultural statistics by explaining its role for present and future choices and decisions.

*B) Process:*

- The Scientific programme committee will assess later this year the results of CAESAR and formulate concrete proposals. The publication of proceedings on CD-ROM is planned.
- There was unanimous support for continuing the organisation of world conferences with IWG.AGRI Seminars in between.
- Argentina will host the 3rd World Conference on agricultural statistics in 2004. Host country plus CAESAR organising committee will constitute the Scientific Programme Committee.

For further information on the conference and a full list of topics and papers, see:

[http://www.istat.it/caesar/caesar2/sc\\_program.htm](http://www.istat.it/caesar/caesar2/sc_program.htm)

## ***Human Resource Information Database in the Western Australian State Public Sector***

*By Nicci Whitehouse, Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet, WA State Government*

The Western Australian State Public Sector has a workforce of over 100,000 employees. Keeping track of the nature of that workforce with a view to better on going management was the intention behind the development of the Human Resource Minimum Obligatory Information Requirement (HR MOIR) database in 1996.

### *The Data Collection*

The HR MOIR database consist of three (3) distinct data sets:

- *anonymous employee records*, 26 fields of data for each unit record, collected 6 monthly;
- *staffing levels information*, Full Time Equivalent data – collected quarterly;
- *aggregated annual report*, data aggregated by agencies and supplied at end of each financial year.

Data files are submitted by public sector organisations in a pre-defined format and entered into a Microsoft SQL server database. Analysis is undertaken using Hummingbird's BI/Query, SPSS, Access and Excel software.

The data elements are fully defined in order to achieve consistency of interpretation across all organisations. The make up of the data sets and the data definitions were developed in consultation with state government organisations in 1996. The definitions are just now being reviewed for the purposes of further development to reflect the success of the data collection to date and the needs of the Western Australian government for strategic human resource management information.

The data is validated via various feedback procedures. The database coordinators have also developed a spreadsheet that allows organisations to do a desktop analysis of the data for the purposes of identifying inaccuracies prior to submission to the database.

### Use of the Data

Information from the HR MOIR database is used to provide:

- Summary information about strategic and “whole of government” aspects of human resource management;
- Information necessary for strategic, coordination and management functions;
- Management information that enables assessment of important human resource management activities.

The ‘flagship’ publication of the data is the annual “Profile of the Western Australian State Government Workforce”. In 2001, this publication has been supported with the development of a web down-loadable Comparative Analysis Tool (HR MOIR CAT) which allows state government agencies to undertake their own comparative analysis (including automatically generated graphs) against a range of demographic and management variables.

### Recent HR MOIR Data Analysis

The HR MOIR system has also provided the backdrop for a number of exploratory research papers on emerging management issues for the state public sector. Recent papers include:

#### Discussion Paper Series on the Ageing Workforce:

- The Ageing Workforce
- Succession Management
- Phased Retirement

#### Discussion Paper Series on Workforce Beyond 2000...

- Strategic People Planning
- Retirement Intentions

#### Discussion paper on the Changing Face of the Western Australian Public Sector: New Century, New Workforce.

#### Discussion Paper on Absenteeism: “Absent friends, Understanding sickness Absence in the Western Australian Public Sector”.

Further information and all of the above publications, analysis tools and HR MOIR Data can be viewed at: [www.mpc.wa.gov.au](http://www.mpc.wa.gov.au) (See publications)

## Employment and Unemployment Statistics in China

By Kil-Hyo Ahn OECD

After the implementation of the Reform and Opening policy in China, the role of the labour market and related statistics has become more important. As structural reforms have intensified during the 10th Five-Year Plan, unemployment has been rising. There are two sources for quarterly employment indicators of China; the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS).

The total number of employed persons in urban areas (quarterly data) is estimated by the NBS based on the Urban Labour Force Survey. This survey obtains its sample from the Survey of Population Change taking households as a unit. The sample size is about 250,000 households in the urban areas.

The number of registered unemployed persons in urban areas (quarterly data) is provided by the MLSS. The registered unemployed persons in the urban area refer to the persons who are registered as permanent residents in the urban areas engaged in non-agricultural activities, aged within the range of working age, capable of working, unemployed but desirous to be employed and have been registered at the local employment services agencies to apply for a job.

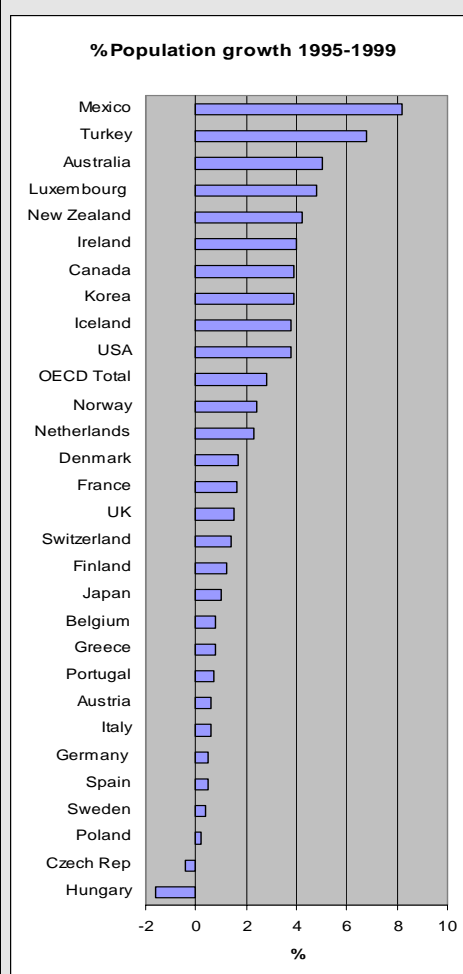
The official rate of unemployment is the registered urban unemployment rate provided by the MLSS. This refers to the ratio of the number of the registered unemployed persons to the sum of employed persons and registered unemployed persons. However, this figure does not include workers (‘xiagang’), who have lost their job but keep a legal link to their enterprises and receives a small fraction of their salary and benefits. Nor does it include the laid-off workers in the re-employment centres.

For more information:

<http://www.stats.gov.cn/yearbook/>

## Statistics to Note OECD Population Growth

In 1999 the total population of the 29 OECD Member countries (Slovak Republic became the 30<sup>th</sup> member of OECD in December 2000) was 1.11 billion, an increase of 2.8% over the population in 1995. The fastest population growth in this period was found in Mexico 8.2%, Turkey 6.8% and Australia 5%. However the population of Hungary declined 1.6% in this period, Czech Republic declined by 0.4% and Poland grew by 0.2%.



Source: “OECD Labour Force Statistics 1979-1999”

## News in Brief

### Redesigned OECD Leading Indicator webpage

The OECD has recently redesigned its leading indicator webpage to provide more detailed information about this important economic indicator for OECD Member countries.

The OECD composite leading indicator (CLI) is a tool to help users predict future turning points in the economic activity of each Member country or group of countries. The Organisation currently compiles CLIs for 22 Member countries, and for seven country groupings such as the G7 (Major seven) countries and the Euro zone. The OECD has published CLIs since 1981, though the indicators are available from the beginning of 1960s for most countries.

OECD CLIs are aggregated time series and have been compiled using a modified version of the method developed by the US National Bureau of Economic Research. Total industrial production (IIP) is used as a proxy measure (or reference series) for GDP, as historical turning points of IIP have coincided with those of the entire economies for most of the OECD countries for which the CLI is compiled. The CLI itself is comprised a set of component series selected from a wide range of key short-term economic indicators to ensure that the indicators will still be suitable when changes in economic structures occur in future.

The redesigned CLI webpage contains information on the component series and turning points for each country. The webpage also provides details on the latest developments for OECD leading indicators, such as information about the current CLI revision programme and the development of leading indicators for additional OECD Member countries. A glossary explains key CLI terminology and concepts. Finally, the webpage provides a portal to papers containing detailed descriptions of the OECD CLI methodology and a number of background papers on this subject that have been presented at various meetings.

The address for the OECD CLI webpage is <http://www.oecd.org/std/li1.htm>.

### New OECD Web Site

The OECD is about to launch a new version of its web site. The structure of the site has been improved in order to make OECD information more accessible to users and, in particular, users of statistics. The new web site will be available at [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org) on the 23rd July 2001. Your feedback will be appreciated at [stat.contact@oecd.org](mailto:stat.contact@oecd.org)

More details will be available in a future issue of the Statistics Newsletter.

## Selected Recent OECD Publications

### □ Main Economic Indicators – More detailed balance of payments statistics

For many years the OECD has published balance of payments statistics for all Member countries in its monthly publication *Main Economic Indicators* (MEI). The eight series published comprised: current account balance; balance on goods; balance on services; balance on income; balance on current transfers; capital and financial account balance; change in reserve assets; and net errors and omissions. These series were published in both the paper and CD-ROM editions of MEI.

Commencing with the July MEI edition, the number of balance of payments series published for 29 of the 30 OECD Member countries, and for the Euro area, was expanded significantly to around 30 series. In addition to the balance series published previously, the OECD now also publishes credit and debits and considerably more detail for the financial account.

The expanded series are presented on the basis of the IMF's Balance of Payments Manual, Fifth edition (BPM5), which is the current international standard for balance of payments data. Data are collected directly by the OECD from Member country central banks and national statistical institutes. The time series length for the BPM5 data varies by country, though almost all extend from the early 1990s – 14 countries before 1990.

The expanded balance of payments series are **only** published in the MEI CD-ROM. They are also made available to Member country government agencies via the OLISnet system. The MEI paper publication will continue to publish the main summary series as previously.

### □ OECD Health Data 2001

OECD Health Data 2001 is an international comparison of 30 countries and was released in the week of June 25. This tenth anniversary edition of OECD's comprehensive information tool on health care systems covers a wide range of indicators on health status, health care resources and their use, expenditure and financing, non-medical determinants of health, and the economic and demographic environment of health care systems.

The database comprises some 1200 variables, with many data series updated up until 1998/1999. *OECD Health Data* provides a unique way to access data and meta-data. There exist several thousand pre-defined indicators and different ways of presenting the data to answer a broad range of policy questions. New tools to enhance the user-friendliness have been added, such as the representation of three-dimensional tables.

More detailed information, sample screens, and selected tables can be found under <http://www.oecd.org/els/health/>. A network installation will soon be available for all OECD staff, with direct access from the Intranet.

Contact point: [sante.contact@oecd.org](mailto:sante.contact@oecd.org)

## □ Services: Statistics on Value Added and Employment (2001 Edition)

The service sector has grown in importance in all OECD countries over the past two decades and includes some of the most dynamic activities (such as IT, telecommunications and business services). Yet, this sector is in many ways less well measured and understood than other sectors. This publication provides economists and researchers with a unique source of comparative data on trends in this sector. It includes annual national accounts statistics on output (gross value added) and employment in service activities for all OECD countries. Data are shown at the finest level of activity detail available to OECD from national sources. This publication is designed to provide analysts with series containing information on trends in the sector and to help statisticians improve the comparability of these statistics

## □ Quarterly National Accounts – Volume 2001 Issue 1

The OECD's Quarterly National Accounts spans the last 14 years and contains a selection of the accounts most widely used for economic analysis: GDP by type of expenditure and by kind of activity, gross fixed capital formation by sector and by type of goods, and private final consumption by type of expenditure and by object are all shown at both current and constant prices. Financing of capital formation and GDP by cost structure at current prices are also provided. The data cover 23 OECD countries, and totals are provided for the following groups: OECD, OECD-Europe, the European Union, the Euro zone and the Major 7 (G7).

Also available on CD ROM and on line. The CD-ROM edition provides a more comprehensive data set. All statistical series cover several decades and some of them even start from 1955. The database is in user-friendly software Beyond 20/20TM for Windows TM that allows the user to extract data and build customised tools for analysis such as graphs and tables. The database is also available online at [www.sourceoecd.org](http://www.sourceoecd.org).

## □ OECD in Figures – 2001 Edition

The 2001 edition of OECD in Figures contains key data on OECD countries, ranging from economic growth and employment to education and transport. There are comparable tables on the environment, science and institutional investment. For added perspective, OECD in Figures includes a selection of graphs, giving snapshots on a range of subjects, from sustainable development and technology to unemployment, taxation and development aid. OECD in Figures is an original, no-fuss, pocket data book. It is a primary statistical source. And as with all OECD data, it is compiled and checked by our experts, so that decision-makers in government, business, civil society and research know they can rely on it.

Thanks to the web edition, OECD in Figures is now more than ever the public gateway to one of the richest and most respected economic, financial, social and environmental databases around.

## □ Quarterly National Accounts in the Baltic States – Sources and Methods of Estimation

This is probably the first comprehensive description of the data sources and the methods used to compile estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) on a quarterly basis in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. The information is presented both in summary table form for comparison across countries, and in country-specific chapters. Throughout the publication, particular attention is paid to the methods used to take account of the "non-observed" economy, and estimates of the various non-observed elements are included.

The publication can be down-loaded directly from <http://www.oecd.org/std/DNM/index.htm> or obtained from the OECD bookshop.

## □ Education at a Glance

In June 2001, the latest edition of OECD's *Education at a Glance* was published. The publication provides 31 indicators on the performance of education systems, including many important features of the operation, evolution and impact of education, from early childhood through formal education to learning and training throughout life.

This year's edition brings the comparative review of education systems to the end of the 1990s so that, for the first time, the OECD education indicators now cover a complete decade; facilitating examination of trends in the provision and outcomes of education during the 1990s. New indicators in this year's edition cover: the contribution of education to changes in economic growth; trends in public and private payments for education as well as public subsidies for education and their beneficiaries; participation in skill improvement among the employed population; the incentive structures governments offer to attract and retain qualified teachers; the use of ICT in education; trends in student achievement; and inequality in literacy skills among the adult population. In addition to all OECD Member countries, 18 non-OECD countries have contributed to this edition, extending the coverage of some of the indicators to more than two-thirds of the world population.

For policy-makers in many OECD countries, international comparisons of learning outcomes have become a particularly important tool for assessing the performance of education systems and the adequacy of their students' preparation for participation in life and work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In response to growing demand for international comparisons of educational outcomes, the OECD has launched the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA represents a new commitment by the governments of OECD countries to monitoring the outcomes of education systems in terms of student achievement regularly within an internationally agreed framework. Results from the PISA 2000 assessment of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy will become available in December 2001 and will fill one of the most important remaining information gaps in the OECD education indicators. PISA results will be incorporated in *Education at a Glance* from the 2002 edition onwards.

The data underlying the OECD education indicators are accessible via the Internet:

<http://www.oecd.org/els/education/ei/index.htm>

## □ OECD Territorial Outlook 2001

Territorial development is the newest policy field in the OECD. It responds to the two most important trends of the 1990s, globalisation and sustainability, by helping all the territories within countries – their cities and regions – to enhance and exploit their assets and endowments. Working within an increasingly decentralised governance, the public and private sectors as well as civil society are concerned to prepare territories for the future. This requires a clear understanding of the challenges they are facing and a bold imagination to conceive of the opportunities they might enjoy.

## □ Sustainable Development – Critical Issues

How can we meet the needs of today without diminishing the capacity of future generations to meet theirs? This is the central question posed by **sustainable development**. OECD countries committed themselves to sustainable development at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, yet - almost ten years later - progress accomplished remains partial and uneven. Drawing on analysis carried forward in response to a mandate from OECD Ministers in 1998, this report stresses the urgency to address some of the most pressing challenges for sustainable development. It reviews the conceptual foundations of sustainable development, its measurement, and the institutional reforms needed to make it operational. It then discusses how international trade and investment, as well as development co-operation, can contribute to sustainable development on a global basis, and reviews the experience of OECD countries in using market-based, regulatory and technology policies to reach sustainability goals in a cost-effective way.

The report also provides an in-depth analysis of policies designed to address key threats to sustainability in the areas of climate change and natural resource management, as well as of those that respond to sustainability concerns at the sectoral and sub-national level. The common thrust of the report is that substantial opportunities exist to make economic growth, environmental protection, and social development mutually reinforcing.

## □ OECD Employment Outlook – June 2001

Reducing the incidence and persistence of poverty is a goal shared by all OECD countries. But this requires careful analysis of its causes and co-ordination between policies to promote social welfare and policies designed to promote employment. This is the principal message of the latest edition of the OECD's annual Employment Outlook, which documents patterns and causes of poverty in 14 developed countries.

## □ International Direct Investment Statistics Yearbook 2000

Driven by technological change, global competition and the ongoing liberalisation of markets, international direct investment plays a key role in the process of global economic integration. Reliable and up-to-date statistics are essential for a meaningful interpretation of investment trends for the purpose of policy analysis and decision. Internationally comparable

data makes it possible to measure the degree of economic integration and competitiveness of markets. This volume contains a complete series of international direct investment statistics in a standardised format combining sectoral and geographical breakdowns for flow and stock data for all OECD countries. Technical notes explain the methodology of data collection used in each country. Also available on CD-ROM and on line.

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## ***On Line Access Developments***

### ***FedStats: Creating the U.S. National Statistical Knowledge Network for the 21st Century***

*By Marshall DeBerry (MDB@ojp.usdoj.gov) and Valerie Gregg (vgregg@nsf.gov)*

The United States Federal statistical system is decentralized, with individual agencies having statutory responsibility and authority for statistical activities. Hence, it is difficult for the general public, and even frequent data users such as social science researchers, to know about and to access the entire wealth of information produced by the Federal statistical system.

To address these organizational barriers to accessing Federal data, the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, under the leadership of the Chief Statistician of the United States, Katherine K. Wallman, launched FedStats in May 1997. This interagency web site (<http://www.fedstats.gov>) now serves as the Internet gateway to the full range of official statistical information available to the public from more than 100 U.S. Federal agencies. FedStats provides a centralized set of links to the Internet sites and the subject-matter data that individual agencies maintain and update. The site's primary objective is to help users find the information they need without having to know and understand in advance how the decentralized U.S. Federal statistical system is organized or which agency or agencies may produce the data they are seeking.

Since its inception, FedStats has logged more than 5 million user sessions and has garnered enthusiastic public support, averaging 170,000 user sessions and more than 400,000 page views each month. The site has been well received by such media as The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, the Associated Press wire service, Federal Computer Week, ABCNews.com, Lycos, and USA TODAY Online. In June 2001, Yahoo Internet Life Magazine named FedStats one of the fifty most useful sites on the Internet for the third time.

The Interagency Council on Statistical Policy's Task Force on One-Stop Shopping for Federal Statistics continues to upgrade and expand FedStats' coverage of Federal statistical sources.

Search capabilities have been enhanced by indexing nearly all the agency web sites. The task force has added sections on FedStats' policies on privacy and on accessibility to the site for persons with disabilities, developed a Kids Page to provide links to statistical agencies' Kids pages, provided sophisticated users with a set of Data Access Tools, and launched MapStats to facilitate searching for the range of Federal data available

for a given U.S. geographic area (States, counties, Congressional Districts, and Federal judicial districts). During 2001, the task force will continue to respond to user requests for a broader scope of subjects, more detailed data on those subjects, and easier overall access to the data as well as begin work to create an innovative section to increase the statistical literacy of site visitors and develop the ability to customize user searches.

Meanwhile, the Federal statistical community is exploring new technologies and undertaking research in collaboration with the National Science Foundation's Digital Government Research Program (for more information on the research see <http://www.diggov.org>) to achieve a much broader vision for the future. New technologies and methods being developed as a result of more than a dozen research grants will one day help FedStats become the U.S. National Statistical Knowledge Network for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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## ***Forthcoming OECD Statistics Meetings***

*N.B. Unless otherwise indicated attendance at OECD meetings and Working Parties is by invitation only*

### **3-5 September**

Workshop on Quarterly National Accounts for Countries of South and East Europe, Paris, *Division for Non-Members, Statistics Directorate (STD)*

### **17-22 September**

Workshop on National Accounts. Joint National Bureau of Statistics-OECD, Chengdu (China), *Division for Non-Members, Statistics Directorate (STD)*

### **4-5 October**

PARIS 21 – Annual Consortium Meeting, Paris, *Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD)*

### **8-10 October**

OECD Workshop on Waste Prevention: Toward Performance Indicators organised jointly by the Working Group on Waste Prevention and Recycling (WGWPR) and the WGEIO, OECD, Paris *Environment Directorate (ENV)*

### **9-12 October**

Meeting of National Accounts Experts, *Statistics Directorate (STD)*

### **17-19 October**

Meeting on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe. Joint OECD-ECE-Eurostat- FAO, Geneva *Statistics Directorate (STD)*

### **17-19 October**

Working Group on Environmental Information and Outlooks (WGEIO), OECD, Paris *Environment Directorate (ENV)*

### **22-23-24 October**

Network B Meeting, Indicators of Education Systems (INES), Prague, *Directorate for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs (ELS)*

### **25-26 October**

Network A Meeting, INES, Budapest, *Directorate for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs (ELS)*

### **25-26 October**

Statistical Working Party of the Tourism Committee, Paris, *Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry (STI)*

## ***Other International Statistical Meetings***

### **22-29 August**

The 53rd Session of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) is to take place in Seoul, Korea. For more information visit <http://www.nso.go.kr/isi2001>



## Database of the Month

### World Energy Balances

The IEA world energy balances database provides annual historical energy balances for 30 OECD countries covering the years 1960 to 1999, and for more than 100 non-OECD countries from 1971 to 1999.

An analysis of energy problems requires a comprehensive presentation of basic statistics in original units such as tonnes of coal and kilowatt hours of electricity. This type of presentation is available in *Basic Energy Statistics*, the sister version of this database. The usefulness of such basic data can be considerably improved by expressing them in a common unit suitable for uses such as estimation of total energy supply, forecasting and the study of substitution and conservation. The energy balance is a presentation of the supply and demand data for all fuels in a manner which shows the main fuels together but separately distinguished and expressed in a common energy unit. Both of these characteristics allow the easy comparison of the contribution each fuel makes to the economy and their interrelationships through the conversion of one fuel into another.

#### Database Structure

**Countries:** All OECD countries, as well as the following regions: OECD total, OECD North America, OECD Pacific, OECD Europe, IEA and the European Union. Non-OECD countries and regions, including developing countries, Central and Eastern European countries and the former USSR.

**Products:** Coal, crude oil, petroleum products, gas, nuclear, hydro, geothermal/solar/etc., combustible renewables and waste, electricity and heat.

**Flows:** Total primary energy supply (TPES) is made up of production, imports, exports, international marine bunkers and stock changes. There is a breakdown of the transformation sector detailing the amounts of each product used to convert from one form of energy to another. Total final consumption (TFC) is divided into four major categories, each broken down in further detail; industry sector, transport sector, other sectors (which includes agriculture, commercial and public services and residential consumption) and non-energy use. Electricity and heat generated from each product is also detailed.

#### Data sources and information

The energy balances database is expressed in thousand tonnes of oil equivalent (toe), derived directly from the data in original units contained in the energy statistics database using IEA/OECD methodology. The data covering OECD countries and UN-ECE countries are based on information provided in five annual IEA/OECD/UN-ECE/Eurostat questionnaires: "Oil", "Natural Gas", "Solid Fuels and Manufactured Gases", "Renewables and Wastes" and "Electricity and Heat".

The energy balances of non-OECD countries have been prepared in close collaboration with other international organisations including the Asian-Pacific Energy Research Centre (APERC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the *Organización Latinoamericana De Energia* (OLADE), the Statistical Office of the United Nations and the World Energy Council. It complements the very extensive work of the United Nations in the field of world energy statistics. The Secretariat has made considerable use of the United Nations' World Energy Supplies data base. However, for most of the large and medium energy consumers, the data have been obtained directly from the non-OECD countries.

### **Accessing the data**

The database is made available using the Beyond 20/20 browser software. In conjunction with the publications *Energy Balances of OECD Countries 1998-1999* and *Energy Balances of Non-OECD Countries 1998-1999*, the data are available on two CD-ROMs allowing users to purchase data tables for OECD and non-OECD countries together or separately. Included on both CD-ROMs are tables providing balances as published in the printed version, detailed balances with a complete product and flow breakdown, the conversion factors which are used to calculate the energy balances and the economic indicators which appear in the respective publications.

Data are also available through the IEA on-line data service (<http://data.iea.org>) either by an annual subscription or on a pay-per view basis.

Hardware recommended requirements  
IBM compatible equipped with a CD-ROM drive  
Hard disk: 120 MB free space  
32 MB of Ram  
Windows 95,98,NT

### **Contacting us**

We welcome any comments, feedback and questions you may have.

For data related comments and questions, please contact:

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