

The OECD Enlargement: The Role of Statistics

By Enrico Giovannini, Chief Statistician, OECD

At the 2006 meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial level, Ministers welcomed the Council resolution on a new governance structure for the Organisation and agreed on the necessity to expand the OECD's global reach and policy impact through an enlarged membership and enhanced engagement with important non-OECD economies. Ministers also invited the Secretary-General to develop new ideas and be proactive in approaching non-member economies with a view to making the OECD a permanent hub for dialogue on global economic issues for member and non-member economies.

Responding to this request, in 2007 the Secretary-General noted that the OECD must increase the resonance of the rigorous analysis and peer learning methodology, which are the hallmarks of the OECD, to contribute more directly to the design and implementation of good policies. The "pursuit of relevance" also requires an extra effort to communicate key findings on important policy issues to the general public. Therefore:

- *The OECD must be more open:* This involves new ways of working and a new vision for the OECD. At a time when national governments are losing the monopoly of policy decisions, the OECD needs to reach out to society as a whole. The OECD needs to become more sensitive to diversity, more open to different ideas and cultures, more pro-active and flexible in addressing new global challenges, and more able to understand the many different paths that lead to growth and development.
- *The OECD must be more representative:* The OECD's analysis and policy advice has helped shape the social and economic thinking of the world. With many new and large economies emerging in the globalisation process, new challenges arise. The OECD's platform needs to be more inclusive, bringing new players into the global economy and new policy issues in the OECD agenda. This will strengthen the OECD capacity to find common responses to these global challenges.
- *The OECD must be more supportive of the reform efforts:* The OECD has to be more proactive and systematically support its member countries with the political economy of reform. The Organisation needs to move beyond proposing best practices, to helping countries put them into operation. Thus, it must be prepared to explain the implications of inaction or delay, as well as provide options for helping to create the political momentum necessary to reform successfully. Support for reform also includes creating awareness of what other countries are doing in the relevant policy areas and how they make their public administration more efficient. The OECD can make a major contribution in that direction and is increasingly asked to do so. It is a new, bolder, but perhaps more useful way of serving member countries and it involves broadening the range of interlocutors in each country.

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OECD launches Broadband Portal

The OECD broadband portal provides access to a range of broadband-related statistics gathered by the OECD.

For more information and direct access, visit:
<http://www.oecd.org/sti/ict/broadband>

The OECD must be better connected: The OECD will continue to strengthen its dialogue with a widening circle of interlocutors to help countries better deal with the challenges posed by globalisation. No institution alone can supply all the answers. The OECD will reach out to other international organisations to ensure that they complement each other. The OECD needs to create partnerships to make the most out of globalisation.

In full coherence with the mandate to become a hub for discussion of global issues, in 2007 the OECD Council at Ministerial level agreed on a strategy for the enlargement of the OECD, as well as on the enhanced engagement of key non-members. In particular, the Council decided to open discussions with Chile, Estonia, Israel, the Russian Federation and Slovenia and invited the Secretary-General to set out the terms, conditions and process for the accession of each of these countries to the OECD for subsequent consideration and adoption by Council.

In order to allow Council to take an informed decision on whether to invite the selected countries to accede to the OECD Convention and therefore become members, each country will be requested to position itself vis-à-vis all the legal substantive instruments adopted within the OECD framework prior to its joining the Organisation. The accession process will also include the examination of the country's general economic policies as well as its policies in a certain number of other key areas in which there are few or no OECD legal instruments. The aim is to ensure that there is coherence between these policies and those in place in OECD member countries.

The OECD strategy for enlargement correctly included the statistical area in the first "wave" of evaluations, recognising the fundamental role played by high-quality statistical institutions and data for the functioning of a modern society.

Over the next biennium 2008-09 a lot of work will be done to assess the characteristics of the five candidates' national statistical systems and the Committee on Statistics (CSTAT) will be called to provide an overall assessment of the results. In particular, as one of the basic obligations of membership expressed in Article 3 a) of the Convention is to "furnish the Organisation with the information necessary for the accomplishment of its tasks" (including short-term, structural and other analytical statistics and their associated methodological information needed by the Organisation for adequate policy analysis and surveillance), the Committee on Statistics will:

- Examine the legal and institutional framework for statistics in the candidate countries and their conformity with the principles applied in OECD countries.
- Assess the quality of the data available in the candidate countries and their comparability with data available in OECD member countries.
- Ensure the candidate countries' integration in the Organisation's reporting and information systems upon accession.

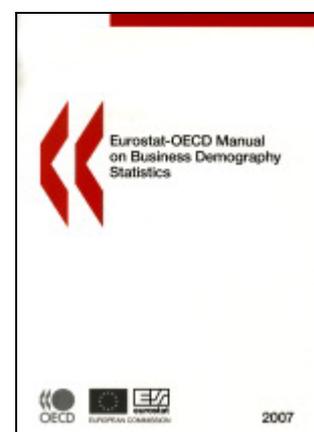
Particular attention will be paid to economic and tax statistics, social and environmental statistics, foreign direct investment statistics, data on science, technology and innovation.

To maximise the effectiveness and the efficiency of this process, the activities have to be carried out building a spirit of partnership with candidate countries, to ensure the interaction and the mutual understanding. Moreover, co-operation with other international organisations will be fundamental, as a lot of information about the statistics in candidate countries is already available (for example,

Chile (2004), Israel (2006) and the Russian Federation (2004) data dissemination standards have been analysed by the International Monetary Fund, while Eurostat has carried out an evaluation of all EU countries' statistical systems using the Code of Practice). Therefore, it is fundamental that, in performing its tasks, the OECD works:

- In close co-operation and co-ordination with other international/supranational organisations that have carried out similar exercises in the recent past.
- In close consultation with OECD countries and organisations that provide technical assistance to the candidate countries.
- Following a well-structured framework.

The approach and statistical coverage of the evaluations will be determined by CSTAT in the coming months. This growing interaction between the OECD and the rest of the world is a historical opportunity to raise the profile of statistics vis-à-vis policy makers in accession countries and to foster the implementation of international statistical standards.



www.oecd.org/std/industry-services/businessdemographymanual

Newly Released Tables on International Trade in Services

By William Cave

OECD Statistics Directorate

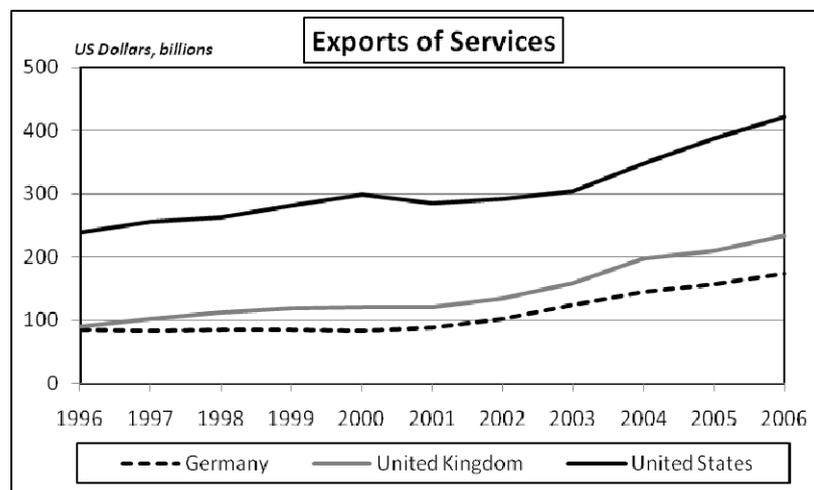
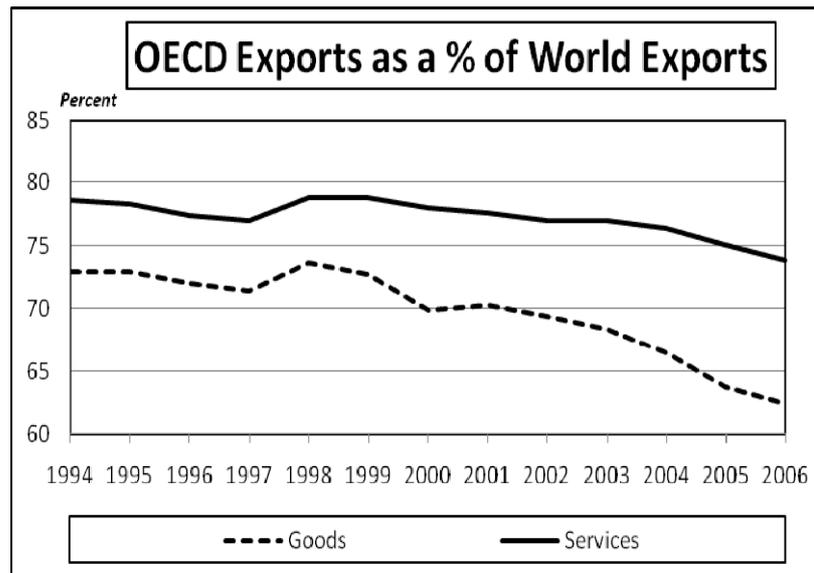
In late 2007 the monthly OECD Main Economic Indicators (MEI) publication introduced quarterly tables presenting the evolution of 'International Trade in Services' for all 30 OECD member countries, the Euro area, the OECD total, the Major Seven total, and five large non-member economies (Brazil, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, and South Africa) that have quarterly data.

The international trade in services data can be accessed in the following links to the OECD.Stat Extracts data extraction web tool:

- [International Trade in Services – Balance](#)
- [International Trade in Services – Exports](#)
- [International Trade in Services – Imports](#)

International trade in services can be defined broadly as service transactions between residents and non-residents of an economy. It is a concept that is set out in the IMF Balance of Payments Manual 5th edition (BPM5) and the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (2002). The main components of international trade in services in the balance of payments are *transportation, travel, communication services, construction services, insurance, financial services, computer and information services, royalties and license fees, other business services, personal cultural and recreational services, and government n.i.e.*

International trade in services is not a pure services grouping as certain goods transactions, for practical reasons, are included that are not measured by Customs procedures when goods physically cross the Customs frontier. Two examples are goods bought by travellers abroad (included in *travel*), and goods



bought and sold by merchants that do not enter the reporting country, which are recorded net as a *merchandise service* (i.e. sale price minus purchase price).

Just as for trade in goods, service sales of residents to non-residents are described as exports and services purchases are imports.

It is broadly true that measuring services trade is more difficult than measuring goods trade. The intangibility of services makes some of them both hard to identify and describe. Methods of measurement vary from country to country and may include a mix of banks' international transaction reporting systems, business surveys, household and travel surveys, trade association information and administrative data sources.

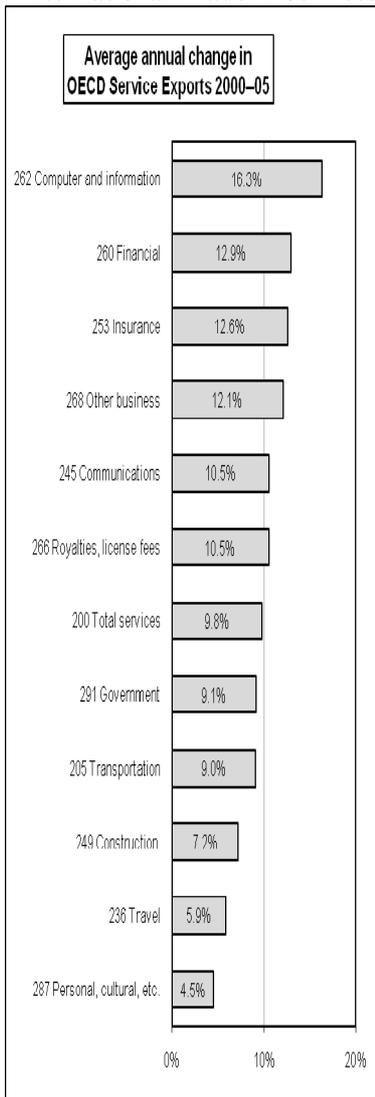
Services are inherently less tradable than goods. Once provided, services are simultaneously consumed and so cannot be resold. In addition for many services, for example hotel services, a physical co-location of supplier and customer is necessary at the time of provision. With total exports of goods and services of the 30 OECD member countries in 2006 amounting to 9.6 trillion US Dollars and imports totaling 10.1 trillion US Dollars, services accounted for just 22% of these exports and 19% of imports.

Although rather small compared to goods trade in absolute terms, services trade is relatively important for the OECD group of member countries, which together are net exporters of services. OECD services exports accounted for 74% of world service exports total in

Top 5 Exporting Countries in 2006						
	Goods <i>USD billion</i>		Services <i>USD billion</i>		Goods and Services <i>USD billion</i>	
1	Germany	1129	United States	423	United States	1446
2	United States	1023	United Kingdom	234	Germany	1303
3	China	970	Germany	174	China	1062
4	Japan	615	France	118	Japan	730
5	France	483	Japan	114	United Kingdom	684

Source: OECD MEI and IMF BOPS

Fastest growing components of International Trade in Services



Source: OECD Statistics on International Trade in Services, 2007, Vol. 1.

2006 compared with 62% in the corresponding case of goods.

Who were the world's biggest exporters of services in comparison to goods in 2006? The United States is the largest services exporter with almost twice the level of exports of the United Kingdom – in second

place. Germany is the largest goods exporter, and in the last five years has seen an annual average growth in its export of goods of 14.9 percent in current Dollars. When both the exports of goods and services are combined, the United States retakes the first place with a total of 1.45 US Dollars trillion of exports of goods and services to the rest of the world.

Which types of services are driving growth in international trade in services? Among OECD member countries, exports of computer and information services, financial and insurance services, communications and other business services grew faster than the 2000-05 annual average.

For more detailed information [International Trade in Services: Volumes I and II](#).

The new Principal European Economic Indicators web page Rosa Ruggeri-Cannata, Eurostat

Introduction

According to the mission of Euro-indicators and the objectives of the 2007 Eurostat statistical programme, 2007 was dedicated to activities aiming to enhance the visibility of the Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs). The main action was the publication of a new webpage showing the latest evolution of PEEIs for the euro area and the European Union.

Since 16 October 2007 the Euro-indicators special topic of the Eurostat website has been renamed: "Euro-indicators /PEEIs" and has a bright new homepage bringing together in one single place a set of the most relevant and timely short-term economic indicators for the euro area and the European Union. This webpage provides policy makers, analysts, academics, the media, and the public with essential information for decision making, economic analysis and research. The webpage is directly accessible either through Eurostat home page or directly at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/euroindicators> and is updated daily.

This short note introduces the main characteristics and the work behind the new "Selected PEEIs" webpage.

Background

The publication of the webpage is the last step in a long process. In 2002 the reference document for the Principal European Economic Indicators was published: "Towards improved methodologies for Eurozone statistics and indicators", (COM/2002/661); this document establishes the framework, the list of PEEIs, defines the scope and the essence of the indicators and outlines the main shape to be followed in the development of PEEIs.

Moreover in 2003 the "Joint Report of the Council and Commission on Eurozone statistics and indicators" called for the development of a set of Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs) needed for monetary and economic analysis and available with timeliness and quality

that matches worldwide standards. PEEIs have become progressively a natural reference in the European Statistical System (ESS): a set of key short-term indicators needed for monetary and economic analysis satisfying timeliness and quality requirements.

The increased use and reference to PEEIs pointed to the need of giving them better visibility outside the ESS for the public at large. Furthermore, despite the fact that PEEIs were set up for "internal" ESS purposes (achieving progress for these selected short-term indicators), they constitute a set of key indicators that gives a picture at a glance of the European economy. In September 2006 Eurostat, in order to satisfy this need, set up an internal Task Force which recommended the development of a PEEIs webpage as main action to improve their visibility.

Selected PEEIs

The list of indicators to be featured in the webpage was drafted by the internal task force, and was endorsed by Commissioner Almunia. The set of indicators is selected from the PEEIs list originally defined by the European Commission and complemented, in order to give a wider picture of the economic situation, by the following indicators:

- Balance of payments current account (source: European Central Bank (ECB) and Eurostat).
- 3 month interest rate, long-term government bond yields, and Euro-dollar exchange rate (source: ECB).
- Economic sentiment indicator (source: Business and Consumer Surveys from Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN)).

The PEEIs webpage currently includes twenty-two key indicators, mostly available on a monthly and

quarterly basis. The new webpage has a user-friendly dynamic structure consisting of two tables, selectable by a click, presenting the indicators set for the euro area and the European Union respectively. Besides data, the webpage also contains additional related information such as the dates of the latest and next Eurostat data releases, explanations of indicators and metadata (in the Special Data Dissemination Standard format).

Final call for abstracts

European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (EAERE)

16th Annual Conference

25-28 June 2008

School of Business,
Economics and Law,
Göteborg University
Gothenburg, Sweden

For further information,
visit:

<http://www.eaere2008.org/>

By clicking on the last release date, users will access, whenever available, the most recent news release related to the chosen indicator. In addition, the webpage offers for each indicator a direct link to the corresponding Euro-indicators table, via the TGM (Table Maps and Graphs) interface, which also contains data for the individual Member States, EEA and other non-EU countries. The user will be redirected to other sites if needed, e.g. if looking for the last release of the Economic Sentiment Indicators, the site of the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs

will open. The preparatory work was demanding, with a number of horizontal Eurostat production units involved.

Further development

Concerning future activities, the content of the PEEIs webpage will be periodically reviewed in order to incorporate further indicators complementing the existing list of Principal European Economic Indicators as soon as they are available. For example, the new import price index could be added to the list in 2008.

Moreover, the dynamicity of the page will be further enhanced: indicators names will be linked to harmonised short-descriptions in the next months and new links will be added towards PEEIs quality profiles as soon as available. Finally, reflection has started on the possibility of better exploiting synergies with related work such as the key indicators of DG ECFIN.

Conclusions

The PEEIs webpage is an attempt in restructuring the presentation of statistical information in order to come closer to user needs, in particular meeting the request for finding together synthetic information not by statistical theme but looking at a particular point of view such as the economic outlook.

The first feedback by users has been very encouraging; the page has been presented and strongly welcomed by a number of Eurostat committees and moreover DG ECFIN, the ECB and several EU Member States have expressed their appreciation. The page has been recognised as being a milestone in Eurostat's endeavour to become the reference source for the main short-term economic indicators for the euro area and the European Union.

Suggestions and comments on the new webpage are more than welcome to: Rosa.Ruggeri-Cannata@ec.europa.eu

Newly released Quarterly National Accounts datasets for non-member economies

Alena Brin, OECD Statistics Directorate

Now available in ‘[OECD.Stat Extracts](#)’ are four new datasets containing quarterly national accounts data for Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, and South Africa – commonly referred to as the BRIICS. The Short-Term Economic Statistics division of the OECD Statistics Directorate is currently the only OECD division collecting and publishing national accounts data for these non-member economies.

Quarterly national accounts (QNA) constitute a system of integrated quarterly time series coordinated through an accounting framework. QNA adopt the same principles, definitions, and structure as the annual national accounts (ANA). In principle, QNA cover the entire sequence of accounts and balance sheets in the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA); in practice, the constraints of data availability, time, and resources mean that QNA are usually less complete than ANA. The aim of the new datasets publicly available is to include the same core set of indicators for each non-member economy. However, the data availability varies for each country, i.e. time series length, type of unit, and industrial breakdown. Thus, the time series are generally not as long, are less reliable and more prone to breaks due to changes in methodology over time than the long established series that exist for most OECD member countries.

- Brazil’s QNA are produced by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE) and were revised in March 2007 to further meet international recommendations and 1993 SNA standards. Data include GDP by the expenditure approach and by the production approach. GDP in

volume are in indices rebased by the OECD to 2000=100, and with reference year 2000. From the data provided one can see that in Brazil, Agriculture was only 4.4% of GDP in current prices in 2006, but Services, however, represented 55.5% of GDP in the same year.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Second Conference on Micro Evidence on Innovation and Development

**Beijing, China,
21-23 April 2008**

**Center for Applied Statistics,
Renmin University, Beijing
UNU-MERIT,
United Nations University and
University of Maastricht**

The aim of the conference is to bring together researchers from around the world to discuss the importance and the different dimensions of innovation in relation with economic growth and development. Contributions based on micro data from firm or household surveys, case studies and cross country comparative analyses are particularly wanted.

In this second Conference, a particular emphasis will be put on innovation in China and other BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, South Africa) countries. Contributions on other countries, in particular developing countries, are also welcome.

Many countries have conducted micro surveys on innovation for a number of years. It would be interesting to confront what has been learned from these surveys, and from case studies, to guide innovation policy.

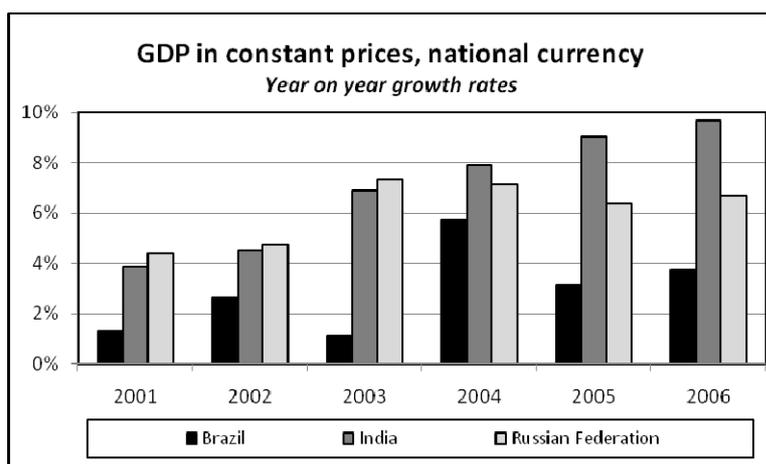
For more information:

<http://www.merit.unu.edu/MEIDE/>

- All national accounts data collected for China are in current prices from the National Bureau of Statistics of China. GDP by expenditure are available annually, and GDP by production are available quarterly but only as cumulative data. When converting China’s GDP in current prices to USD dollars, the value for 2006 is 2.6 trillion USD, which is more than double the GDP of any other BRIICS economy represented in these new datasets.

- India’s QNA include GDP by expenditure and production approaches in both current and 1999-2000 constant prices. Data are compiled by the Government of India’s ‘Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation’ as rupees in crore (ten million units) for the fiscal quarter (i.e. the first fiscal quarter is equal to the second calendar quarter), and are converted in OECD.Stat Extracts to billions of rupees for the corresponding calendar quarter. One of the more interesting aspects of India’s economy is the growing share of services as a percentage of GDP. Agriculture decreased from being 21.9% of GDP in current prices in 2000 to 16.1% of GDP in current prices in 2006, and services increased from 45.8% of GDP in current prices in 2000 to 49.7% of GDP in current prices in 2006.

- QNA for Indonesia are collected from Bank Indonesia’s website. GDP by expenditure and production approaches are available in current prices and 2000 constant prices. The Asian financial crisis in late 1990’s can clearly be seen in Indonesia’s national accounts data. In 1998 there was a large fall in GDP in constant prices to 1308.8 trillion rupiah after recording 1506.6 trillion rupiah in the 1997 year. Due to the reforms introduced after the crisis, Indonesia has slowly recovered with GDP in



constant prices being 1846.7 trillion rupiah in 2006.

- The Russian Federal State Statistics Service disseminates QNA as GDP by expenditure and by production approaches. GDP by expenditure indices prior to 2003 were linked to the new chain-linked indices beginning in 2003, and then rebased by OECD to 2000. GDP by production chain-linked volume indices beginning in 2003 do not have previous data available with the same industrial breakdown, so rebasing to 2000 was not possible. As with the other BRIICS economies, services are a large part of GDP for Russia, equalling 48.1% of GDP in current prices in the third quarter of 2007.
- South African QNA are collected in current prices and 2000 constant prices by the expenditure and production approaches. The data collected by the OECD are disseminated by the South African Reserve Bank. Increasing steadily is the percentage of imports of goods and services to GDP in current prices – from 27.8% of GDP in current prices in the third quarter 1998, to 35.4% of GDP in current prices in the third quarter 2007.

The four datasets are located under the theme “Non-member Economies – National Accounts” in the OECD.Stat Extracts web tool.

- The dataset [GDP: expenditure approach in constant prices](#) contains national accounts time series for Brazil, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Data for Brazil and the Russian Federation are in indices, while data for the remainder of the countries are in national currency. All data in national currency are at quarterly levels, except for seasonally-adjusted data for South Africa which are at annual levels.
- The dataset [GDP: expenditure approach in current prices](#) contains national accounts time series for Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Only annual data are available for China for this dataset. Quarterly data for the other five countries are at quarterly levels, except for seasonally-adjusted data for South Africa which are expressed at annual levels.
- The dataset [GDP: production approach in constant prices](#) contains national accounts time series for Brazil, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Data for Brazil and the Russian Federation are in indices, while data for the remainder of the countries are in national currency. Indices for the Russian Federation begin in 2003 and also have 2003 as the base year. All data in national

currency are at quarterly levels, except for seasonally-adjusted data for South Africa which are at annual levels. The countries have somewhat different industrial classifications thus overlap is limited for the industrial breakdowns that are presented.

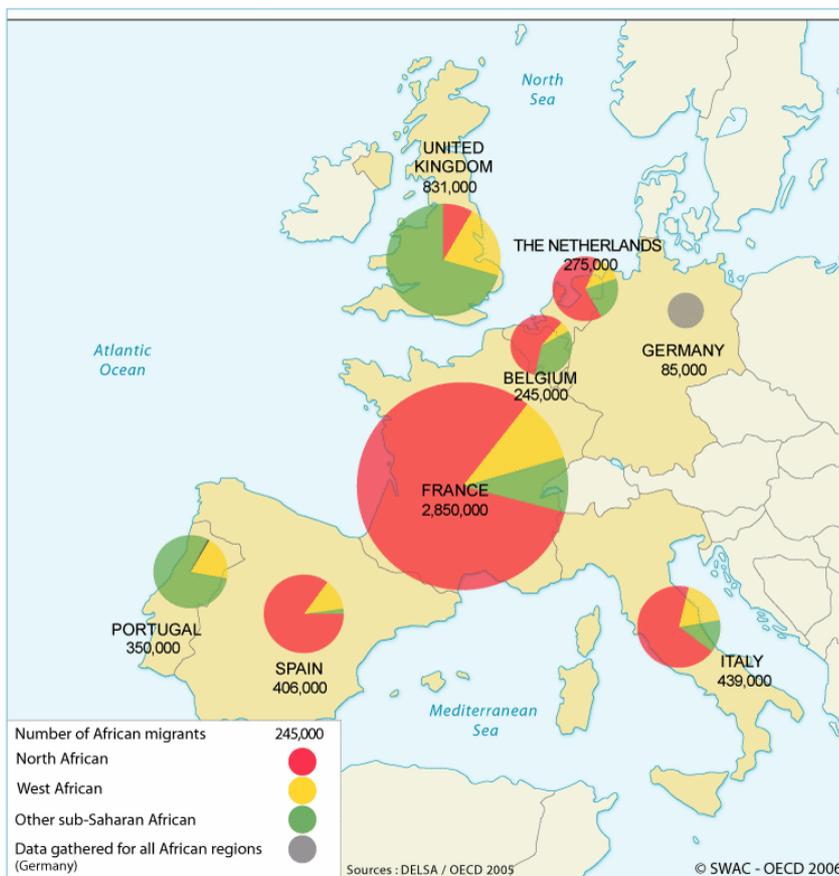
- The dataset [GDP: production approach in current prices](#) contains national accounts time series for Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Quarterly data for China are cumulative. Quarterly data for the other five countries are at quarterly levels, except for seasonally-adjusted data for South Africa which are at annual levels. The countries have somewhat different industrial classifications thus overlap is limited for the industrial breakdowns that are presented.

For further information on these datasets, please contact alena.brin@oecd.org

The International Statistical Literacy Competition of the IASE/ISLP

Juana Sanchez, International Statistical Literacy Project of IASE

The first International Statistical Literacy Competition of the International Association for Statistics Education (IASE) opened registration in September 2007 and will close on 28 February 2008 in the Northern Hemisphere (but later in the Southern Hemisphere, where summer break is from December to March). Students 10-18 years old at the time of registration will be able to participate under different categories, according to their level of statistical literacy. Participation is free and training materials are free and posted online for anyone to use or mailed to the teachers where necessary. To participate, a teacher



Most South African students did the Census@School during 2001 and will do it again in 2011.

There are now also programs like Math4Stats that are training teachers in Statistics; the Program ISIBALO, meant to reach all South Africans to increase awareness of and train in statistical literacy (which has adopted the final of the competition as one of their programs); and finally, children will play a prominent role in the ISI meeting in Durban, as we would not want the children of the world to miss such an event. Again, we expect sponsors to cover transportation costs for teachers and students to attend the final event.

Winners in all phases of the competition, as well as all participants, will be recognized with certificates and awards donated from sponsors. The winner in the final will receive a scholarship from Statistics South Africa. Second and third winners will also receive prizes. In all events, there will be activities promoting statistical literacy, such as inspiring presentations by statisticians working in different environments and fun activities with data and chance not tied up to the competition.

As many school teachers in non-English speaking countries do not speak English, and to increase participation, the ISLP is trying to offer the competition in as many languages as possible. One of our goals is to promote and encourage national resources in statistical literacy in each country, so the materials for training will be in the country's language and from that country. The ISLP will add or start whatever is necessary. In some countries where the Internet is not very prevalent, the ISLP will mail the training materials.

Questions in the competition will involve the whole data cycle in one way or another and at different levels: questions, data collection, graphical and numerical description,

must register and represent their students. If a student finishes school before the final event in 2009, the student can participate in a higher category for students in this situation.

If a university teacher works with students in a school and wants to register those students on behalf of their teacher, that is possible, but the university teacher must register the school name and all the information on the school. Registration forms and information can be found in the web site of the competition: <http://www.stat.auckland.ac.nz/~iase/islp/competition>

The logo of the competition is a globe showing all the countries in the world next to a colourful pie chart.

There will be three phases. Phase 1 will take place in the school attended by the students. Teachers will receive a question and will be asked to distribute it to their participating students to do in a set time. The teacher then will return

the students' answers back to the ISLP for grading. The student with the best answer will be chosen as the winner for that school. In phase 2, winners from each school will compete at a gathering that will be arranged in collaboration with our local contacts. Usually, this meeting will take place during a national conference for teachers or similar events. We expect sponsors to cover the costs of travel for the students and the teachers to attend such event. A national winner will arise from such competition. The two first phases of the competition will take place in a country if there is more than one school participating.

The winners from each participating country will travel to Durban, South Africa, on August 2009, for the final competition. Durban was chosen as the location and place of the final because the 57th International Statistical Institute's meeting is hosted there and Statistics South Africa will be hosting the final. South Africa has been devoted for several years to increase the statistical literacy of its population.



informal or formal inference, prediction, and conclusion. Students will also be expected to be familiar with basic official summary statistics and graphs of their countries, as interpretation and criticism of media reports arising from such numbers and graphs like those in the map of Europe (source: OECD) shown above and other statistical graphs, will be an integral part of the final questions.

Having three phases of competition at such an international event and with many different countries and school year zones, we will be quite flexible in the way it is conducted, at least this first time, to maximize participation and learn the optimal way of conducting the second competition in 2011. The success of the events depends to a large extent on the collaborations from the countries participating. Individuals in some countries have volunteered to coordinate the event in their regions. Their names will be appearing gradually in the competition web page. Where that is not the case, the ISLP will put more efforts to help the event take place.

This international competition has a precedent in the pilot one conducted in Northern Portugal in August 2007, before the ISI 56 meeting. For information on that event, visit <http://www.stat.auckland.ac.nz/~iase/islp/game>

Both photographs show teams participating in the pilot competition. The ability to work together in a team while solving questions in a competitive environment is a strong learning trait that can be directly applied to the work place with employers valuing the ability to work in a multicultural team.

With the International competition, the IASE/ISLP hopes to contribute to the promotion of statistical literacy resources of countries while increasing statistical literacy in children and adults. We also hope to encourage more teachers to pursue statistical literacy for their students in school.



The Information Age demands the teaching and learning of new skills in data management, information processing and problem solving. There is a growing need for statistically literate citizens able to interpret, analyze and challenge statistical claims. The IASE/ISLP competition is one small step towards a more statistically literate society for all.

At the moment of submission of this article, the 17 countries already enrolled in the competition, ranked from top to bottom by number of registered teachers are: South Africa (over 100 teachers), Portugal, Italy, China, Brazil, Argentina, New Zealand, Spain, Mexico, Chile, United States, Colombia, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Nigeria and Russia.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Juana Sanchez, Director of the ISLP at: jsanchez@stat.ucla.edu.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Launch of OECD.stat

On 4th December 2007, the OECD announced the launch of a new service for accessing OECD Statistics called OECD.Stat. Following five years of behind-the-scenes work to combine OECD databases into a single system, OECD.Stat will enable users to search for and extract data from across OECD's many databases for the first time.

OECD is embarking on a programme of rolling releases that will see three new dissemination services with a multitude of new features. OECD.Stat is the first and was launched as a beta version, as part of SourceOECD, at Online Information in London.

OECD.Stat offers three key features:

- **Discovery:** users can search for complex statistical data across OECD databases with one click access to the datasets themselves from the search results.
- **Mix and Merge:** for the first time, users can extract data from across all 50 databases in one enquiry. New functions enable users to gather and assemble data from various datasets in unique and customizable tables.
- **Metadata:** Improved metadata down to the level of each datapoint means that users can understand the origins of each statistic and the overall context, aiding comprehension.

Enrico Giovannini, OECD's Chief Statistician said: "The gathering of reliable and intelligent information is at the core of good politics, and societies are changing quickly, so statistics must continuously evolve to reflect the world in which we live. The challenge for the statistical tools that we are delivering today, and will deliver tomorrow, is not only to make statistics easier to find and understand, but also to enable us to build a foundation to present information that is yet to come."

"The launch of OECD.Stat in SourceOECD, OECD's iLibrary, is the first step in an extensive project to enhance OECD's publishing services for users." said Toby Green, Head of OECD Publishing. "Over the coming twelve months we'll be launching a number of major improvements to our online services covering both our statistical and analytical publications, OECD.Stat is just the start."

OECD.Stat is available at:
www.SourceOECD.org/database/OECDStat

OECD Composite Leading Indicators signal a downswing in all major OECD economies

The latest composite leading indicators (CLIs) suggest that a moderate slowdown in economic activity lies ahead in the OECD area. November 2007 data indicate a slowdown in all major seven economies except the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom where only a downturn is observed. The latest data for major OECD non-member economies point to continued steady expansion in China and Brazil, improved performance in Russia but a weakening outlook for India.

The full press release and data files can be accessed at:
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/40/39882545.pdf>

Announcing OECD Forum 2008

Climate Change, Growth, Stability

3-4 June 2008, OECD Conference Centre, Paris

The OECD Forum is a "multi-stakeholder summit" which brings together business and labour leaders, civil society personalities, government ministers and leaders of international organisations to discuss the hottest issues on the international agenda. It takes place in conjunction with the annual OECD ministerial summit.

The country chairing the ministerial meeting reports to ministers on the Forum discussions. In 2008, France's Economy, Finance and Employment Minister, Christine Lagarde, will chair the OECD ministerial summit.

Forum speakers are usually at the level of Minister or CEO. Forum 2007 attracted approximately 1600 participants from 100 countries, including 150 journalists.

Key issues for OECD Forum 2008:

**Climate Change
Growth
Stability**

For more information,
visit: www.oecdforum.org

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

All OECD publications can be ordered on line at:
www.oecd.org/bookshop

▲Aid for Trade at a Glance 2007: 1st Global Review

The value of monitoring aid for trade lies in creating incentives, through enhanced transparency, scrutiny and dialogue, to provide 'more and better' aid for trade. It is about sharing information, learning from successes as well as failures, and applying policies and approaches that are proven to deliver results. This first report takes stock of trends and developments in aid flows between 2002-2005 that are most closely related to aid for trade as defined by the WTO Task Force and subsequently endorsed by the WTO General Council.

Further information is available at:
http://www.oecd.org/document/46/0,3343,en_2649_37413_39619566_1_1_1_37413,00.html

▲OECD Regions at a Glance, 2007 edition

Just 10% of regions accounted for more than half of total employment creation in most OECD countries between 1998 and 2003. This means that national growth tends to be driven by the dynamism of a small number of regions. Policy makers need sound statistical information on the source of regional competitiveness, but such information is not always available. Sub-national data are limited and regional indicators are difficult to compare between countries. OECD Regions at a Glance aims to fill this gap by analysing and comparing major territorial patterns and regional trends across OECD countries. It assesses the impact of regions on national growth. It identifies unused resources that can be mobilised to improve regional competitiveness.

Further information is available at:
http://www.oecd.org/document/47/0,3343,en_2649_33735_35340271_1_1_1_1,00.html

▲Benefits and Wages 2007, OECD Indicators

Launched in 1998, the latest edition of this series (formerly entitled Benefit Systems and Work Incentives) provides detailed descriptions of all cash benefits available to those in and out of work as well as the taxes they are liable to pay across OECD countries. A special chapter also compares childcare costs across countries and the financial work incentives faced by parents of young children. Using the OECD tax-benefit models, total household incomes and their components are calculated for a range of family types and employment situations. The results are used to examine financial incentives to work, either part-time or full-time, as well as the extent to which social benefits prevent income poverty for those without a job.

▲Central Government Debt: Statistical Yearbook 1997-2006, 2007 edition

This volume provides quantitative information on central government debt instruments for the 30 OECD member countries to meet the analytical requirements of users such as policy makers, debt management experts and market analysts. Statistics are presented according to a comprehensive standard framework to allow cross-country comparison. Country notes provide information on debt issuance in each country as well as on the institutional and regulatory framework governing debt management policy and selling techniques.

OUT SOON

▲National Accounts of OECD Countries: Volume IV, General Government Accounts, 1995-2006, 2007 Edition

The 2007 edition of National Accounts of OECD Countries: General Government Accounts is an annual publication, dedicated to government finance which is based on the System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA 1993). It includes tables showing government aggregates and balances for the production, income and financial accounts as well as detailed tax and social contribution receipts and a breakdown of expenditure of general government by function, according to the harmonized international classification, COFOG. The publication covers 29 of the 30 OECD countries.

▲Taxing Wages 2006/2007

Taxing Wages provides unique information on income tax paid by workers and social security contributions levied on employees and their employers in OECD countries. In addition, this annual publication specifies family benefits paid as cash transfers. Amounts of taxes and benefits are detailed program by program, for eight household types which differ by income level and household composition. Results reported include the marginal and effective tax burden for one- and two-earner families, and total labour costs of employers.

▲Tourism in OECD Countries 2008, Trends and Policies

This is the first edition of a biennial publication which analyses best practice in OECD and selected non member economies. It surveys a number of initiatives taken by governments and businesses in the tourism field. The report opens with an overview of the key issues and challenges in tourism policy. The second chapter reviews two important aspects of tourism policy in more detail: the impact of global value chains on small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in tourism; and the role of services trade liberalisation in tourism development. The third chapter presents detailed profiles on organisation, budgets, policies, programmes and statistics in tourism for 32 countries.

Forthcoming OECD Meetings

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

2008	
28-29 February	Meeting Energy Efficiency Goals: Enhancing Compliance, Monitoring and Evaluation, International Energy Agency (IEA), Paris, France (http://www.iea.org/Textbase/work/workshopdetail.asp?WS_ID=349)
10-11 March	Working Party on Indicators on Educational Systems (INES), Directorate for Education (EDU), Paris, France
25-27 March	Workshop on International Investment Statistics (WIIS), Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs (DAF), Paris, France
29-30 April	Working Party on Indicators for the Information Society (WPIIS), Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry (STI), Paris, France

Other Statistics Meetings

2008	
4-8 February	Workshop on the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses: International standards, contemporary technologies and regional cooperation, Noumea, New Caledonia
26-29 February	39th Session of the UN Statistical Commission, New York, United States (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission_current_session.htm)
3-5 March 2008	Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics, Geneva, Switzerland (http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2008.03_migration.htm)
5-6 March 2008	Fifth meeting of the Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development, Lisbon, Portugal (http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2008.03_sust-dev.htm)

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