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THE LATIN AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHIC  
CENTRE (CELADE). A SUMMARY  
EVALUATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
AND SHORTCOMINGS

(PAPER PRESENTED TO THE INTERREGIONAL  
WORKSHOP ON PROGRAMMES OF TRAINING IN

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CENTRO LATINOAMERICANO DE DEMOGRAFIA

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1. Introduction. CELADE was founded in August 1957 as a result of Resolution 571-XIX adopted in May 1955 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, requesting the Secretary General to explore possibilities of establishing in the underdeveloped regions of the world centres for the study of population problems and the training of personnel in techniques of demographic analysis. An agreement was signed between the United Nations and the Government of Chile, in which the objectives to be accomplished by the Centre were outlined as follows:

- a) the organization of courses on techniques of demographic analysis with the purpose of training students from the Latin American countries and promoting the establishment of similar courses in those countries;
- b) the initiation of studies on demographic problems utilizing the already existing sources or conducting field projects, and
- c) the provision of consulting services on demographic problems to Latin American governments or their organizations.

2. Up to April 1966, CELADE operated as a United Nations Technical Assistance project, receiving also the financial support of the Population Council and in the latter part of this first period, of the Ford Foundation. Since May 1966 and extending through April 1971, the Centre has received the support of the United Nations Development Programme (Special Fund). This support opened the way for the establishment in San José, Costa Rica, of a Sub-Centre to serve the five Central American countries and Panamá.

Eleven countries of the region including, of course, the host countries of the Centre and Sub-Centre (Chile and Costa Rica) have backed the project pledging cash and in kind contributions towards its operation.

3. CELADE is also receiving financial support from the Agency for International Development (AID) of the United States and, for specific research projects, that of the Population Council. The Inter American Development Bank (IDB) has awarded CELADE a small grant earmarked to finance three fellowships annually.

4. Fellowships for CELADE have been primarily financed by the United Nations under the Regular and Expanded Technical Assistance Programmes. More recently, besides the sources already mentioned some fellowships have been financed by the Organization of American States, the World Health Organization and one by a national institution.



5. The Training Programme. Training activities were started at the Headquarters of the Centre in April 1958. Those of the Sub-Centre will begin in the second half of 1967 and will initially be of the nature of in-service training in research. During 1968, courses in Elementary Demography will be organized in various countries of the sub-region. The details given below regarding the programme refer, therefore, to those been carried out by the Centre in Santiago.

6. As the author has pointed out before <sup>1/</sup>, in organizing a teaching programme, due consideration should be given to the purposes and objectives to be accomplished, the students to whom it will be addressed, the teaching staff and financial resources that will be available, the experience accumulated in the past in the transmission of knowledge in the discipline to which the programme refers, and the general academic environment in which it will be taught. CELADE's training programme has been determined, in great measure, by the specific nature of most of these factors as they were perceived when the programme was developed. As these factors have modified through time, so have the Centre's training programme evolved, in search of adaptation to the changing conditions. The basic approach of providing training at three different levels (Basic, Advanced and Specialization) has remained unchanged, though, since 1962.

7. The Basic Course. This course has a 10 months duration and is divided by a recess of two weeks in two periods called semestres, of 21 weeks each.

Depending on the formative importance assigned to them, the subjects covered in the Basic Course are classified as substantive, auxiliary and complementary. They are distributed in the two semestres as follows:

First semestre.

Substantive subjects

101 Nature, Sources and Data of Demography

102 Mortality I

103 Mortality Tables

104 Fertility, Reproduction and Nuptiality I

111 Geographical Distribution and Population Trends

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<sup>1/</sup> Miró, Carmen A., "Principles and Practices of Teaching and Training in the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE)", Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly, Vol. XLII, No. 2, April 1964, Part II, pages 215-229.



Auxiliary subjects

105 Numerical Calculus

106 Statistics

Complementary subjects

109 World Demographic Situation and Population Trends

Second semestre.

Substantive subjects

110 Theoretical Populations I

112 Evaluation and adjustment of demographic data

113 Population estimates and projections

114 Economically Active Population

Auxiliary subjects

107 Sampling I

108 Matrix Analysis I

Complementary subjects

115 Interdependence of economic and demographic variables

116 Social aspects of demographic growth and change

117 Population theories and policies

During the second semestre students are also expected to participate in seminars in which CELADE research projects are discussed and to prepare an individual research report. Those receiving a favourable recommendation by the examiners are published by the Centre as part of series C.

8. The Advanced Course. This followed only by students selected among those which have shown special dedication and ability in the Basic Course. It has a 12 months duration, in which periods of lectures are alternated with periods during which students apply themselves exclusively to the execution of research projects, of which they are expected to prepare three during the year. The 12 months period is distributed as follows:

January - Revision of the research project submitted at the end of the  
Basic Course

February-March - Lectures

- 201 Theoretical populations II (substantive)
- 202 Matrix Analysis II (auxiliary)
- 203 Methodology of scientific research (complementary)
- 204 Population and Social Change (complementary)

April-May-Research activities

June-July-Lectures

- 205 Mortality II (substantive)
- 206 Techniques of Social Research (substantive)
- 207 Sampling II (auxiliary)
- 208 Elements of Genetics (complementary)

August-September-Research

October-November-Lectures

- 209 Fertility, Reproduction and Nuptiality II (substantive)
- 210 Seminar of Population Policies (substantive)
- 211 Population and economic development (complementary)

December- Round up of activities and preparation of final report.

9. The Specialization Course. Only students having completed the Basic and Advanced Courses are admitted to this programme. At this level the student does not really follow any formal academic studies. He is incorporated as a junior member of the staff and he is assigned duties in connection with teaching and research, in accordance to the needs of the Centre and taking into consideration the specific abilities of the fellow.

10. Other training facilities. CELADE has also offered possibilities for in-service training in demographic research for medium rank personnel who has not followed any previous course at the Centre, but who has a background and are engaged in activities related to population studies.

11. The number of students from the different countries who have undergone training at the different levels is shown in Annex 1.

12. Evaluation of the training programme. The major lines along which CELADE's training programme was to be organized were laid down in the first meeting of its Advisory Board held in November 1957. In August 1962, this Board reviewed the programme again and was of the general opinion that it was adequate to the purpose it was expected to accomplish. The Basic Course programme had been somewhat criticized for being everwrought, but the Board was of the opinion that it needed only minor adjustments which will contribute to a better coordination among the different subjects being covered. The adjustments suggested in that occasion can be summarized as follows:

a) simplify in the Basic Course the treatment of some of the topics in mathematics and theoretical models transferring them, with the necessary amplifications, to the Advanced Course;

b) give greater emphasis to the study of social aspects related to demographic growth;

c) pay more attention to the study of demographic theories and policies, particularly as they relate to economic and social development;

d) include in the programme a course on methods of social research and the study of physiological and biological aspects of fertility and mortality.

In the course of the last three years, most of these adjustments have been made.

The programme of the Centre came again under public discussion at the Fortieth Annual Conference of the Milbank Memorial Fund in September, 1963. The general remarks made during the examination of the subject were in general, favourable to the approach taken. One of the comments suggested that more attention should be given to the treatment of sampling as it applies to demography. CELADE has tended to move in this direction.





During the year 1964, two highly qualified American demographers, one of them acting as consultant for the Special Fund in connection with the support this institution was contemplating to grant CELADE, expressed in writing their views regarding the training programme of the Centre, stressing the fact that the quality of instruction, both in scope and presentation, taken overall, was equal to the best of the United States' graduate schools and much superior to most.

The favourable consideration that CELADE's training programme has received in various occasions and from different circles has in no way led to complacency. On the contrary, practically every year the programme is critically evaluated by the teaching staff, taking into consideration the experience of the previous year and the new developments both in the general field of demography as a scientific discipline, as well as in what relates to the population taken as a changing variable influenced by social and economic factors. It was during the year 1966 that a more significant revision was made which has implied changes in the 1967 courses and which are reflected in the brief description set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 above.

13. The main difficulties which have arisen in connection with the implementation of the training programme have been those related to the somewhat inadequate background with which most of the fellows arrive at the Centre. While CELADE has persistently sought to receive only university graduates, it cannot entirely disregard the fact that the general stage of development of the region it serves as well as the still unsatisfactory recognition demography receives as a scientific discipline, makes it somewhat difficult to apply this rule rigorously. As can be seen in Annex 2, of the 138 students admitted for the first time either to the Basic Course or as research fellows, only one third were holding at the time a university degree. More than 47 per cent had undergone academic training for more than three years. Of course, it should be pointed out that many in this latter group have completed their academic studies, but have not complied with the requisites leading to a degree. In general, the fellows lack an adequate knowledge of the basic mathematics needed for some of the substantive courses; even when they are trained in economics or sociology, many of them seem to be quite unaware of the modern treatment of these disciplines. Their ability to conduct individual research and to utilize successfully the methods of scientific inquiry is rather limited.

In the face of these limitations, the philosophy adopted by CELADE has been that of retaining the high standards set initially as desirable, allowing to continue in the course and receive final approval, only those students who can successfully undergo the several evaluations and tests to which they are submitted at different stages of the course. This probably explains why of the 133 students admitted to the Basic Course in the years 1958-1966, only 74 per cent have approved it (see Annex 3). The rest has either finished the course without having approved it (15 per cent) or has been discontinued somewhere along the course (11 per cent). In the positive side, it should be pointed out that 10 per cent of the total admitted complete the course "with merit". It is mainly among this latter group that the third year fellows have eventually been recruited.

Up to now, almost all fellows taking the Advanced Course have completed it successfully. After the revisions introduced in the 1967 programme the requisites for approval of the second year have become more rigorous. This could eventually lead in the future to some failures on the part of the students.

From the list of 96 titles published up to May 1967 by CELADE under Series C, which presents the reports of research conducted by students, it can be concluded that in large measure those fellows approving the different courses overcome in a satisfactory manner one of the limitations that plague most of them when initially admitted to the Centre: the inability to conduct research and present systematically their findings.

While requisites for admittance have become more and more rigorous through time (for example, besides the regular United Nations fellowship questionnaire and medical examination with which any candidate has to comply, candidates for CELADE have to undergo a psychological test to determine their capacity to embark in intellectual work and in studies of the nature of those conducted in the Centre), it is CELADE's feeling that there is room for improvement in this regard. Therefore, explorations are being started in order to determine the feasibility of utilizing the services of former CELADE fellows in the different countries to help in the recruitment of candidates by making them responsible of conducting on the spot certain predetermined tests prior to the selection of any candidate.

14. Utilization of CELADE former fellows in national and international activities. The fact that all fellows attending CELADE have to be submitted for admittance with the backing of an official institution (see Annex 4) is to some extent a guarantee that their services will be used upon returning to their countries. Their ability to participate successfully in activities related to demography and population studies can also serve to evaluate the training received.

Unless frequent inquiries are made, it is difficult to keep track of the activities of the former CELADE fellows. The Centre has been careful in establishing follow-up procedures to keep in touch with the most active ones and advise them by correspondence or by visits from members of the staff to the respective countries. The following is an incomplete summary account of some of the evidence tending to confirm the fact that the training received at CELADE is being applied by many former students:

- a) demographic analysis units with the participation of CELADE fellows have been established within statistical or planning offices in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. At least forty professionals trained at the Centre are involved in these activities.
- b) more than twenty students are associated with Latin American Universities;
- c) five collaborate very actively in the only existing national centre in the region devoted to the specialized training of demography and economics: that established several years ago by the Colegio de México;
- d) five are participating as associate professors and researchers in CELADE and four more work in the same institution as research assistants;
- e) thirteen are working with international organizations and private foundations;
- f) five are working and/or studying in universities outside the region.

In summary, more than two thirds of all students ever admitted to CELADE are actively working in the field of demography and population studies.



15. Collaborative training arrangements with programmes in other disciplines. CELADE has collaborated very actively in courses addressed at economists, planners in education, health, housing, physicians, etc. The fact that Santiago, Chile, is the site of many international activities in the field of training for various disciplines, has afforded CELADE an excellent opportunity for organizing short courses specially intended at familiarizing professionals of different fields with the demographic situation of Latin America and the repercussions of this situation to the general development of the region and to their specific fields of interest. During 1965-66 the main groups covered have been: physicians engaged in family planning activities; health officers; education specialists; sociologists; social workers and nurses; engineers and architects and housing planners. In the last two years, CELADE has come through this means in contact with more than 300 professionals of different disciplines who have received basic information on population as it relates to action and planning programmes.

16. Special mention should be made of the four months course on Health and Population Dynamics organized jointly by the School of Public Health of the University of Chile and CELADE under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization. This course is intended for professors of preventive medicine, biostatistics, epidemiology, etc. in Schools of Medicine and Public Health. The summary content of the training programme listed below, gives a clear indication of the objectives sought and the very decisive role played by CELADE in its planning, development and execution:

- a) History of world population trends, present situation and perspectives, with special reference to Latin America.
- b) Methods of biostatistical, demographic and epidemiological analysis,
- c) Sources of basic data in health and population.
- d) Health, economic and social development and interrelation with population trends.
- e) Heredity, genetics and demography.
- f) Population trends and maternal-child health.

- g) Family planning and fertility regulation.
- h) The methodology of scientific inquiry in health and demography.
- i) Population theories and policies.
- k) Discussion seminars of selected topics.

During 1966, the course was co-directed by a member of CELADE's staff and a former fellow now teaching at the School of Public Health of the University of Chile.

17. Promotion of activities at the national level. The ultimate objective in the development of CELADE's training activities should be that of creating the conditions which would make possible the transfer of most of these responsibilities to national institutions in the region. Progress in this direction has been slow but some positive developments can be mentioned. In 1964, the Colegio de México established a Centre for Studies in Demography and Economics where a two year course leading to a Master's degree is given. As stated earlier in this paper, five former CELADE fellows collaborate with the Mexican Centre. In addition, CELADE has provided technical assistance in the manner of teaching staff sent from Santiago. Four professors have spent periods of approximately six weeks each in different occasions at the Colegio de Mexico.

University affiliated centres for population studies have already been established in Colombia, Guatemala and Puerto Rico. Plans are under way to develop one in Brazil. Due to the already existing integration of the Central American Universities, it is to be expected that the Sub-Centre recently opened by CELADE in San José, Costa Rica, will in the future turn out to be a multi-national institution with the support of the countries of that sub-region.

18. Relation of training to research. It is quite obvious that not all students attending the Centre will become professional demographers. Some of them will never work in demography; some will work as technicians with a certain degree of ability to apply the analytical resources of formal demography; some will work primarily in a related field, applying to it the analytical techniques of demography. In spite of the above, the training programme is, in general, geared to the objective of producing a highly qualified professional when and if the student undergoes training at the three levels already described. To develop the ability of the student for analytical work, independent research,

teaching and technical assistance responsibilities, it is indispensable to make him proficient in the use of the fundamental tools of scientific inquiry and demographic research. For accomplishing this, CELADE has adopted the following methods:

- a) require the student to prepare several pieces of research during his stay at the Centre. The titles included in the List of Publications under Series C typify the result of this endeavour;
- b) participation of the student in seminars and technical meetings where different phases and findings of the research projects of the Centre are discussed;
- c) integration of the student into a research team conducting a given project, assigning him specific responsibilities within it. This involves in some instances field work;
- d) assignment of certain students as teaching associates to senior personnel;
- e) responsabilize the student for certain portions of the training programme. This has been done primarily with the fellows in the Specialization Course (third year) and has frequently involved them in lectures for interdisciplinary groups.

The above has implied the participation of the students in a whole gamut of research activities, since the Centre's programme is rather ample. A description of CELADE's research programme is outside the scope of this paper, but just to give an idea of its content, the main topics covered during 1965-66 and expected to be included in the 1967 programme are listed below:

A. Field Surveys

- a) urban fertility
- b) rural fertility
- c) experimental demographic survey
- d) immigration into metropolitan areas
- e) induced abortion surveys



- B. Bibliographical and secondary source research
- a) comparative analysis of Latin American population census data based on sample decks of punched cards from the last census
  - b) evaluation and adjustment of basic demographic data
  - c) life tables for countries, regions and cities
  - d) sex and age population projections
  - e) nuptiality tables
  - f) studies of internal migration and urbanization
  - g) studies of economically active population, including construction of working life tables
  - h) estimates and projections of needs in education, housing, etc., derived from the projections in d)
  - i) theoretical models for fertility, mortality and population projections studies
  - j) studies in historical demography.
- C. Preparation of documents for substantive seminars and technical meetings.

19. Technical Assistance as an instrument for training. The technical assistance rendered by CELADE to different countries of the region is related to the programme of field studies, to the work already under way in several countries in connection with the execution of programmes of demographic analysis of special relevance to economic and social planning and to the development of national institutions for training in demography. In performing their missions, consultants sent by CELADE to the countries associate very closely with former fellows of the Centre, giving them advice and supervision which is continued later on by correspondence. In this way, their professional training is strengthened and continues to diversify. These technical assistance activities have been utilized for furthering the training not only of those fellows who are back in their countries, but also have proved to be very useful to involve those undergoing training, in research dealing directly with their own countries and with some of the analytical problems with which they would be confronted upon their return. Actually, they have been acting as counterparts in CELADE for their colleagues in their countries.

20. Limiting factors in the development of CELADE's training, research and technical assistance activities. If one single factor would have to be selected as constituting the most important obstacle to the normal development of the activities which CELADE is expected to perform, that would be the continued uncertainty as to its future financial support. Upon signature of the Plan of Operation of the United Nations Development Programme project for assistance to CELADE, this obstacle would be removed for the next four years.

The Plan provides for the recruitment in 1967 of 14 professionals to serve, 10 in Santiago and 4 in San José. Besides this, the Centre and Sub-Centre will have this year the collaboration of 3 associate experts from the Netherlands. With funds granted by the Agency for International Development, 5 more professionals can be added to the staff and the Ford Foundation has provided for two years the services of a senior researcher. That is to say, that when completed, the total professional staff in the two centres would amount to 23. As of today they are 14. Recruitment is usually slow but, in general, CELADE has managed to attract well qualified candidates for the posts that have become vacant. It has not been equally successful in attracting candidates from all regions of the world. A greater contribution from European demographers is much wanted. The lack of proficiency in Spanish is a limiting factor when recruiting professional staff, especially if it is expected to engage in teaching. This can to some extent be overcome if the expert is willing to stay for periods extending beyond one year, when he can embark in studying the language.

The lack of homogeneity in the level at which academic studies are developed in the different universities of the region, poses a considerable problem in the evaluation of the candidates for entrance into the Centre and Sub-Centre and creates difficulties in the smooth operation of the training programme. New methods of selection are being studied in order to overcome this limitation.

One measure that could contribute to raise the level of students entering CELADE, would be that of granting them an academic degree issued by the University of Chile or the University of Costa Rica, with which the Centre and Sub-Centre are associated. The proposal is being studied at

present by the Department of Economics of the University of Chile, to which CELADE is attached. A preliminary decision has been reached which would open the way for the issuance of advanced degrees to those fellows attending CELADE for two or three years who already hold an undergraduate diploma, and complying with requisites which at present are being studied.

As for the training programme itself, more supervised reading, more discussion seminars and technical meetings and a closer supervision of the student's work seem very necessary. The enlargement of the staff should open the way for these much desired modifications.



Annex 1

BY LEVEL OF TRAINING RECEIVED AT CELADE, BY COUNTRIES, 1958-1966

	ADVANCED COURSE (2ND YEAR)									SPECIALIZATION COURSE (THIRD YEAR)				RESEARCH FELLOW			
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	TOTAL	1963	1964	1965	TOTAL	1961	1963	1966	TOTAL
9		1	2	2	2	2	2	1	12	2	1	1	4				
3		1	1						2								
7				1					1								
1				1					1						1		1
4				1					1					1			1
18	2	1	1		1				5		2	1	3				
0		1							1								
4							1		1								
2			1						1								
2				1					1								
5																	
9							1	1	2							2	2
1																	
5		1		1			1		3		1		1				
5					1		1		2								
12							1	1	2								
3																	
3																	
4								2	2								
6	1						2	1	4								
33	3	5	5	7	4	9	3	5	41	2	4	2	8	1	1	4	6

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## Annex 2

## ACADEMIC LEVEL OF THE FELLOWS BY COUNTRIES, 1958-66

Academic level	Argentina	Bolivia	Brazil	Colombia	Costa Rica	Chile	Dominican Republic	El Salvador	Ecuador	Guatemala	Haiti	Honduras	Mexico	Nicaragua	Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Puerto Rico	Uruguay	Venezuela	Total
With university degree	7	-	3	2	-	5	2	-	1	2	1	2	5	-	-	4	3	2	1	6	46
With more than 3 years of university training	7	1	-	8	5	9	-	4	9	-	1	3	4	1	2	-	6	1	2	-	63
With specialization courses	4	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2	1	2	-	1	-	16
With less than 3 years of university training	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	7
Without academic training	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
No information available	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total fellows by country	19	3	7	12	5	18	3	4	10	4	2	5	10	1	5	5	12	3	4	6	138





## Annex 3

## FINAL EVALUATION OF THE STUDENTS ADMITTED TO THE BASIC COURSE

Country	Approval with merit			Approval			Not approved			Discontinued			Total admitted		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Argentina	5	4	1	13	7	6	-	-	-	1	-	1	19	11	8
Bolivia	-	-	-	2	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	3	3	-
Brazil	-	-	-	6	5	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	7	6	1
Colombia	-	-	-	4	3	1	5	4	1	2	2	-	11	9	2
Costa Rica	1	1	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	1	3
Chile	2	1	1	10	7	3	3	2	1	3	2	1	18	12	6
Dominican Rep.	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	3	2	1
El Salvador	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	4	4	-
Ecuador	1	1	-	6	3	3	1	-	1	2	2	-	10	6	4
Guatemala	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Haiti	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-
Honduras	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	1	1	1	-	1	5	3	2
Mexico	1	1	-	7	7	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	9	9	-
Nicaragua	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Panama	1	1	-	4	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	2
Paraguay	-	-	-	3	3	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	5	3	2
Peru	-	-	-	9	5	4	1	1	-	2	2	-	12	8	4
Puerto Rico	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	1
Uruguay	1	1	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	3
Venezuela	1	1	-	4	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	6	5	1
Total	13	11	2	85	57	28	20	15	5	15	9	6	133	92	41





## Annex 4

## FELLOWS BY SPONSORING INSTITUTION, 1958-66

Sponsoring institution	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	Total
Institutions in charge of collecting and/or analyzing demographic data	7	6	6	9	7	10	1	9	10	65
Universities	4	1	3	7	6	1	2	4	6	34
Economic and social planning or action institutions	1	5	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	24
Others	-	3	-	-	2	1	2	4	3	15
Total	12	15	11	18	18	15	8	19	22	138

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