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**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME OF INTERNATIONAL
STATISTICAL WORK FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN,
JUNE 2001-JUNE 2003**

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BACKGROUND

1. The establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC as a subsidiary body of ECLAC has been an especially significant milestone in the work to advance statistical policies and activities in the region.
2. All of the member countries of ECLAC are members of the Conference, and ECLAC acts as the Secretariat, providing support and follow-up on the decisions adopted at the meetings of the Conference, as well as at those of its Executive Committee. The agreements reached at the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC are binding in nature. This means that they are commitments that the countries agree to implement in accordance with the agreed terms and deadlines.
3. In this context, and in accordance with the terms of reference provided by Resolution 2000/7 of 25 July 2000, in which the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations approved the proposal for its establishment, the Conference, at its first meeting held from 9 to 11 May 2001, approved the programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is to be implemented from June 2001 to June 2003. It was also established that the programme would be subject to regular reviews which would allow any biases that might occur in the course of implementation to be corrected in a timely manner.
4. The programme of international statistical work thus represents the first formal commitment of the governments of the states, in their capacity as members of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. The programme is designed to strengthen the statistical capacity of the region in an orderly manner and in accordance with previously agreed objectives. For this, work priorities were established and flexible institutional forms were chosen in order to optimise the use of the governments' capacities.
5. The programme takes into account the special characteristics of the process of regional statistical development in the current global context. It is thus consistent with the framework of actions and recommendations adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in relation to the latest progress in methodologies, preparation of manuals, meetings of expert groups and plans for new initiatives for international statistical work. It also refers to a set of initiatives aiming to strengthen the capacity for generating official statistical data, which includes Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, the cooperation agreements between the European Union and various countries in the region and the programmes for data dissemination and the quality of statistical information initiated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

INTRODUCTION

6. In compliance with the provisions of the resolution establishing the Conference, and the agreements adopted at its first meeting, the Secretariat of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC will submit to its Executive Committee for consideration the present six-month report on progress in implementing the programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2001-June 2003.
7. This report contains the conclusions reached in the follow-up to the commitments made, which was carried out through a joint effort of governments, regional and international organizations and the ECLAC secretariat. In this connection, the Conference made a request to the Executive Secretary of ECLAC for the report on the activities of the programme of work to include a summary of progress in the planned activities, in order to follow up on progress in this work more closely.
8. The present report covers the period from June to December 2001. It follows the same structure as the above programme of work and each of the subprogrammes: adaptation and production of basic statistics within the framework of a regional strategy for the implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA); environmental statistics and statistics on science, technology and innovation; statistics and indicators on social variables and well-being; and dissemination of statistical information.

Subprogramme 1: Adaptation and production of basic statistics within the framework of a regional strategy for the implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA)

Element 1.1: Providing access to technical documentation for those responsible for 1993 SNA in its annual, quarterly and regional versions, and for producers of basic statistics in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean

9. During the period under consideration, ECLAC has continued to distribute the available technical documentation, in both Spanish and English, to the countries of the region. In particular, requests from national statistical offices and central banks were dealt with, and documents were distributed in both printed and electronic form. ECLAC is also continuing to disseminate the Spanish version of 1993 SNA, via the Internet and as a compact disc.
10. The translation into Spanish of the manual *Construire les comptes de la Nation* has been completed, using cooperation funds from the Government of France. The document was prepared with technical support from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of France, and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of that country and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT). Initially, ECLAC will distribute the manual in electronic form, but will also make efforts to obtain additional funds to finance its printing and reproduction.
11. At the end of 2001, IMF completed the Spanish version and began distribution of the manual on quarterly national accounts.

12. ECLAC is continuing to distribute, through its Internet web site, the Spanish version of the publication SNA News and Notes, with translation assistance from the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information (INEGI) of Mexico. In addition, agreements were made with the United Nations Statistics Division to provide access to the Spanish version of the newsletter on classifications (<http://www.eclac.cl/deype/publicaciones/>).

Element 1.2: Follow-up and support of the 1993 SNA implementation process and of efforts to improve the production of basic statistics

13. In relation to the process of implementing 1993 SNA, ECLAC, using the information collected in 2000, prepared the document "Progress in implementing the system of national accounts 1993 (1993 SNA) in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2001", which was sent to the national statistical offices and the central banks in the region.
14. ECLAC also prepared the final version of the document "Los sistemas estadísticos como base para la implementación del SCN 1993", which evaluates the current organization and production of basic statistics for the development of national accounts. The document was produced on the basis of an extensive questionnaire, and the replies received by the end of November 2000. Although a special effort was made to receive as many replies as possible, only 13 countries replied to the questionnaire. In 2002 it will again be requested that replies be timely, in order to have a more complete picture.
15. The work on updating the Directory of National Accounts Experts in the Latin American and Caribbean Countries has been continued, and the Directory may be consulted at the ECLAC web site (<http://www.eclac.cl/deype/enlaces/>).

Element 1.3: Sharing of experience and training of national accounts experts and producers of basic statistics related to 1993 SNA

16. At the request of the governments of Ecuador and Panama, ECLAC has provided assistance in selecting experts to collaborate in the implementation of 1993 SNA. It is continuing the administration of the technical cooperation project on improving the national accounting system and the compilation of basic statistics in Panama (PAN/93/002).
17. ECLAC, in conjunction with the Central Bank of Chile and with the collaboration and participation of the United Nations Statistics Division, organized at its headquarters in Santiago, Chile, from 12 to 15 November 2001, a regional seminar on the uses of national accounts, where 18 countries of the region were represented. The agenda of the meeting included items relating to analysis of the areas describing the goods and services accounts and institutional sector accounts, and consideration of both annual and quarterly reviews of the accounts.
18. In relation to the regional seminar on incorporating the classifications and definitions recommended by the System of National accounts 1993, ECLAC suggested to the National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Bolivia that the scope of the seminar be restricted to the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) and the Central Product Classification, and that the seminar be held in June 2002. This was because of changes being

introduced in both classifications, which would result in a 2002 edition and also to make it possible to analyse the plans for the 2007 review of the ISIC.

19. The regional seminar on economic censuses and the preparation of directories of firms and other establishments, including the use and implementation of the 2002 version of the classification of economic activities, was also postponed until September 2002, in a joint agreement between ECLAC and the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) of Peru.
20. The Centre for Latin American Monetary Studies (CEMLA), with the support of various countries and international organizations, organized a training programme which includes four courses in the following areas: national accounts, external debt statistics, balance of payments methodology (fifth edition of the IMF manual) and monetary and financial statistics. These activities were carried out in accordance with the schedule disseminated.
21. The European Training Centre for Economic Statisticians of Developing Countries (CESD) of Madrid, and the National Statistical Office (INE) of Spain carried out the training activities programmed by the General Assembly of the CESD in Madrid for the year 2001. These included seminars and courses in Spain, as well as in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru. In order to complete the schedule of activities initially included in the current programme of international statistical work, a draft of the programme for the year 2002, based on the preferences of the beneficiary countries, will be presented to the meeting of the Executive Committee.
22. The seminar on methodologies for construction statistics which will be organized by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia, and originally planned for August 2001, could not take place on the date planned owing to scheduling and financial problems. DANE has proposed 14-16 August 2002 as the new date for this event.

Element 1.4: Improvement, extension and harmonization of the production of basic statistics, and macrostatistical prices and schemes

23. ECLAC has begun the dissemination, through its Internet site, of the reports of the meetings of the Group of CPI Experts of the Mercosur countries, Bolivia and Chile. The same site contains a methodological document on the pilot test of the harmonized CPI, which was prepared by the group at the end of the first stage of the harmonization project.
24. ECLAC, with the collaboration of the World Tourism Organization and the State Secretariat of Commerce and Tourism and the National Statistical Office of Spain, held the first Latin American workshop on key issues in tourism satellite accounts at its headquarters in Santiago, Chile, from 2 to 4 October 2001. Nineteen countries of the region were represented at this workshop, and its main conclusion related to the need for greater coordination between the official organizations involved in the preparation of the tourism satellite account. The report, with the conclusions and recommendations from the workshop, can be found on the ECLAC web site.
25. The National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Guatemala has begun consultations with its Central American peers and Panama for the harmonization of their statistical methodology.

26. In the framework of the statistical cooperation project between the European Union and Mercosur, the activities scheduled for the ten working groups on methodological harmonization were carried out, including the training modules.
27. In November and December 2001, a memorandum of understanding was signed between EUROSTAT and ECLAC with a view to increasing the coordination of statistical activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, by establishing channels for cooperation between the two parties and facilitating mutual participation in the activities of the working groups, conferences and seminars carried out by each. Each institution was to assume the costs of its own participation in those activities.
28. The project on harmonization of consumer price indices in the countries of Mercosur, Chile and Bolivia, concluded its first phase in August 2001. The reports of the meetings held and the methodological document that describes the results of the pilot test of the harmonized IPC can be consulted on the ECLAC web site. The next stages of the harmonization project will take place in accordance with the statistical cooperation agreements between the European Union, and Mercosur and Chile. The harmonized IPCs were calculated on the basis of the 1999 average and monthly series were produced for the period 1997-2001, at the level of the classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP). As part of this project, a glossary of IPC terms was prepared, and also a list of items for a common basket, and a comparison of the countries' original baskets.
29. The Statistical Office of the General Secretariat of the Andean Community reports that the member countries, in the framework of the Community Statistics Programme for 2000-2004, which has its legislative base in decision 488, implemented the activities scheduled for 2001 and defined its programme of Community statistics meetings for 2002 and its community work plan for 2002, which includes activities that are more extensive and more substantial than those included in the plan for 2001. The activities carried out in 2001 include the meetings of the Andean Statistics Committee and the activities carried out in the areas of: (a) foreign trade, where the results obtained made it possible for the Commission of the Andean Community to approve decision 511 on "Development of statistics on foreign merchandise trade of the Andean Community and its members" and resolution 579 on the "Regulation for collection and transmission of results on intra- and extra-community trade"; (b) censuses and social statistics; (c) the informal sector; (d) national annual and quarterly accounts; and (e) production statistics. Assistance was received from French cooperation funds, EUROSTAT and the INE of Spain.
30. During the regional seminar on the uses of national accounts, held from 12 to 15 November 2001, one session was devoted to reviewing with each country concerned the schedule of commitments relating to the regional harmonization of quarterly accounts. In general, the countries reported their compliance with the schedule, and confirmed their willingness to continue with it. The representative of Guatemala reported that it had not been possible for his institution to comply with the proposed programme and referred to the need for advisory services, especially for the improvement of basic statistics, as well as the participation of personnel in workshops and courses designed to improve the professional level of the experts. The representative of Cost Rica announced that the delivery dates originally scheduled for the information on institutional sector accounts would be changed. The new dates would be available in May 2002.

Element 1.5: International technical cooperation

31. ECLAC has continued to coordinate implementation of the project PAN/93/002 on improving the national accounting system and the compilation of basic statistics. In that connection, various tasks have been carried out in accordance with the programme of activities for the final stage of the project, which will be concluded in May 2002.
32. ECLAC participated in the seminar-workshop on the 2002 economic census, organized by the Statistics and Census Office of Panama in October 2001. On that occasion ECLAC clearly demonstrated its support for the activities to enhance the production of basic statistics in the region. As new methods were applied for data collection, it would be possible to update and implement the new recommendations on national accounts, in particular 1993 SNA.
33. At the beginning of November, ECLAC led a mission to Cuba with the participation of the United Nations Development Programme in order to become acquainted with and evaluate the statistics that would allow an appropriate calculation of the human development index (HDI), for its inclusion in the Human Development Report, which is published annually. During the mission it was confirmed that the National Statistical Office of Cuba has the necessary statistical data for the UNDP, with the assistance of the World Bank, to calculate the HDI of the country, which will be evaluated jointly with the Government of Cuba before its inclusion in the 2002 publication.
34. ECLAC continued to provide technical assistance to the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador in applying the classifications for foreign merchandise trade statistics. In this connection, a mission of El Salvador officials came to Santiago, and was provided with the computing system developed by ECLAC, as well as training for its use.
35. The United Nations Statistics Division continued to collaborate with the Central American Monetary Council (CAMC), providing support for the central banks in establishing links between the national accounts and financial programming. It also continued to provide assistance to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank for the development in this region of simplified national accounts for small economies.
36. ECLAC, with financing from the Netherlands, is implementing project NET/00/81 on support for developing trade in the Caribbean, one of the fundamental components being the creation of a foreign trade statistics database at the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. This project is expected to facilitate a comprehensive review of the capacity of the statistical offices of the Caribbean countries concerned, for producing foreign trade data in accordance with the Harmonized System and the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Revision 3. To date, a group of experts has met to consider the results of the assessment of trade statistics production in the Caribbean region, which will provide a basis for developing the foreign trade database. A preliminary study has also been completed on the expansion of trade between CARICOM and the Netherlands Antilles.

Subprogramme 2: Environmental statistics and statistics on science, technology and innovation

Element 2.1: Status report on environmental statistics and statistics on science, technology and innovation

37. ECLAC and INEGI of Mexico have begun a joint process of evaluating the integration and publication of environmental statistics in the region, with the dissemination of a brief questionnaire requesting information on concepts, definitions, sources and coverage of the information collected and published.
38. In 2000 and 2001, the INEI of Peru, together with the National Council of Science and Technology (CONCYTEC) of that country, made progress in producing data on science and technology, through exercises carried out in firms, households and public administration. On the basis of this experience, INEI will continue working on a proposal to evaluate the production of regional statistics and indicators.

Element 2.2: Transfer of international experience, training and technical cooperation

Environment

39. The workshop on environmental statistics was organized by Belize, Chile, Mexico, Puerto Rico and ECLAC from 10-12 December 2001, and 20 representatives from 14 countries participated. The ECLAC Environment and Human Settlements Division also collaborated in the workshop, and offered its assistance in organizing a joint meeting in the near future with representatives of the environment ministers of the region. Using cooperation funds from the Government of France, using cooperation funds from the Government of France, It was clear from the countries' presentations that the majority have made a great effort to improve the quality and timeliness of their environmental statistics. The final report of this workshop is available on the ECLAC web site.
40. ECLAC has begun work on the directory of organizations, agencies, institutions and national experts working with environmental issues. In July 2001 it sent to the countries of the region a questionnaire requesting the names of the relevant institutions and persons from each country. By December, replies had been received from 17 countries; a draft version of the directory was presented to the workshop participants, who were asked to offer comments and updated information.
41. Work continued on translating and disseminating, via the ECLAC web site, the newsletter on environmental statistics (envstats) published by the United Nations Statistics Division.

Science and technology

42. At the nineteenth meeting of the Conference of Iberoamerican Authorities on Informatics (CAIBI), held in Santo Domingo in September 2001, it was agreed to continue with the project to develop basic statistics and indicators for information technology and to entrust the delegation of Mexico, through the INEGI, with the consolidation and comparative analysis of the development of

information and communication technologies and of electronic government (e-government) in the member countries. In the CAIBI resolutions, the possibility was considered of re-designing the current web site of the Conference as a portal or observatory for the development of electronic government, indicators of information and communication technology and other issues relating to the information society. The countries also reported on their progress in introducing e-government.

Subprogramme 3: Statistics and indicators on social variables and well-being

Element 3.1: Improvement of household surveys

Regional workshops of the MECOVI programme

43. In the context of the programme to improve surveys on living conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean (MECOVI), implemented by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank and ECLAC, regional workshops for discussion and analysis took place.
44. ECLAC, in its capacity as the organization responsible for coordinating and implementing these activities, organized the two regional workshops and, as on previous occasions, took on the task of preparing the work programmes and assisting with the preparation of the technical documents that provided background material for the main issues under discussion.
45. The seventh and eighth workshops were co-sponsored by the INEGI of Mexico and the National Statistical and Census Institute (INDEC) of Argentina, respectively, which provided the regional locations for that purpose.
46. The seventh workshop was held from 30 May to 1 June 2001, at the headquarters of INEGI in Aguascalientes, Mexico. The aim was to draw attention to the importance of using the national statistical and geographical information systems as a hub for regulating and providing conceptual and methodological coherence to the generation of statistical information, by means of surveys, in the framework of an integrated system of household surveys. The eighth workshop took place at the headquarters of INDEC in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 28 to 30 November 2001, and the past, present and future of the MECOVI programme was analysed. The overall aim of the workshop was to encourage the exchange of experiences among the member countries of the MECOVI programme, in order to share the achievements and analyze the shortcomings observed at the national and regional level in programme implementation, as well as its contribution to strengthening the national statistical information systems. In particular, its technical and institutional contributions to the regular programmes of household surveys were evaluated, especially the surveys designed to measure and provide follow-up on the living standards and conditions of individuals.

Data bank of the MECOVI Programme

47. In order to carry out the work on standardizing, normalizing and documenting the databases on the household surveys carried out by Latin American and Caribbean countries, ECLAC produced at the end of 2001 a compact disc containing 14 databases. As on previous occasions, in addition to the microdata relating to each survey, the disc contains a reading format, the size of records, the field

descriptions, the dictionary of variables, the admissible ranges, the format of the questionnaire used for data collection, the variables developed by ECLAC and the figures published by the countries. Full compliance was thus achieved with the relevant collaboration agreement between the IDB and ECLAC.

Regional training

48. With regard to training courses, the first subregional training course of the MECOVI programme oriented to the English-speaking Caribbean countries took place. The course, on the analysis of censuses and surveys for the development of social policies and strategies for poverty reduction in the Caribbean, was organized in cooperation with OECS and the World Bank, in Santa Lucia, from 14 to 25 May 2001.
49. In addition, and also with the assistance of the IDB, the fifth and sixth courses were held on the design, implementation and analysis of household surveys of living conditions. The fifth, in collaboration with INDEC of Argentina, took place from 16 April to 4 May 2001. The sixth had the support of INEGI of Mexico and took place from 3 to 21 September 2001, in Aguascalientes, Mexico. In 2002 two new courses will take place, the first from 8 to 26 April in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the second in September in Aguascalientes, Mexico.

Technical assistance

50. During the period under consideration, there were technical assistance missions to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Element 3.2: Use of information generated by the household surveys and cooperation activities

51. ECLAC has continued to update its household survey data bank, which is essentially for carrying out studies and constructing economic and social indicators in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. It is very important for this activity to have the support of the national statistical offices in order to ensure timely access to the documentation and databases of the surveys conducted in recent years.
52. In September 2001, the 2000-2001 edition of the *Social Panorama of Latin America* was published. This edition contained, *inter alia*, a report on the achievements and challenges of the fight against poverty in the region, with particular emphasis on the situation of 17 countries in the region over the period 1997-2000, their development over the 1990s, the profile of poor households, and also future scenarios for the fight against poverty. It also covered the characteristics and trends in income distribution and the dynamics of employment and unemployment in Latin America.
53. The INE of Bolivia was the host and collaborator in the organization of the workshop on gender statistics and indicators to measure the incidence of and trends in violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in La Paz from 21 to 23 November 2001. This workshop was sponsored by ECLAC, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Population Fund, the Government of Italy and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. At the workshop, the

conceptual aspects of violence against women were discussed, and also the gender indicators approach, and the national experiences of the countries. A proposal was presented by ECLAC concerning an initiative to measure the incidence of violence by means of the household surveys and encourage greater coordination within the countries, which would allow ordering of the administrative records and enhance their use as a source of statistical information. This workshop was coordinated in such a way as to comply with the mandates of both the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

54. In view of the lack of social data sets in many Caribbean countries, ECLAC, through its subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, obtained funds from the Government of the Netherlands for implementing the project for developing social statistics databases and a methodological approach to the social vulnerability index for small island developing States. The aim of the project is to develop a social statistics database in order to support the countries in the follow-up and evaluation of social vulnerability in the small and open economies of the Caribbean. At present, the participating countries are: Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. Institutions such as UNICEF, CARICOM, the Caribbean Tourism Organization, and PAHO/WHO also participated. CARICOM and the University of the West Indies have agreed to be responsible for receipt and maintenance of the data.
55. In parallel, with funds provided by UNDP, the ECLAC subregional headquarters in Port-of-Spain is carrying out two other projects: the first is the result of the relations established between the UNDP and the Government of Belize in preparation of the human development reports, and consists of preparing a National Human Development Agenda with a long-term vision and with clearly-stated objectives, goals and follow-up indicators. The second is aimed at strengthening administrative records in Haiti, through a plan of action and a national strategy for the consolidation, reform and modernization of the civil records system.

Element 3.3: Implementation of population and housing censuses

56. In May, taking advantage of the meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, the Population Division - Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) of ECLAC organized a seminar for the exchange of experiences among those countries that had already carried out their census and those who had scheduled it for the following years. ECLAC also participated in August in the United Nations Symposium on Global Review of the 2000 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, presenting a document on the experience of the Latin American countries which emphasized the new substantive and technological approaches.
57. From mid-2001, CELADE has been implementing a project financed by IDB to promote the dissemination and utilization of the population censuses of the 2000 round, in which six countries are participating. One of the components of the project is related to the creation of census databases and computer tools designed to facilitate census processing and analysis, whereas the second component includes the census evaluation and updating of the population projections, as well as the creation of a set of indicators comparable among the countries at the first administrative political level. During this period work began with Costa Rica and Panama and contacts were made with other countries, including Belize. Support is also being provided, with resources from the Government of the Netherlands, for the Caribbean countries in processing the 2000 and 2001

censuses. For more effective assistance, the head of the Data Processing Unit of CELADE was temporarily assigned to the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean.

58. With a view to encouraging the use of sociodemographic data, especially census data from the 2000 census round, CELADE made available to the countries, via its web page and free of charge, the fourth generation of its system for the retrieval of census data for small areas by microcomputer (REDATAM). This recent version contains several new options for disseminating data with different modes of security. It also allows the user to develop applications to obtain predefined indicators in tabular, graphic and map form. REDATAM now also offers the possibility of processing databases on line, through the Intranet and Internet. It is also recovering, with assistance from the University of Minnesota and financed by the National Science Foundation of the United States, the census data bank which contains the population censuses of almost all the Latin American countries since the 1960s. Thanks to this project, various censuses from the 1960s and 1970s, which were no longer available in the countries, have been recovered.
59. During the period under consideration, updating of the project Investigation of International Migration in Latin America (IMILA) has continued, with the addition of data on births abroad from the censuses for Honduras 1988, Belize 1980 and 1990, Mexico 2000 and Panama 2000. Useful information has also been obtained relating to the most recent censuses in Canada and the United States.
60. As for population estimates and projections, advisory services have been provided to Peru (national population, urban/rural, by department, economically active population) and contacts have been made for advising Costa Rica and Panama on the national projection based on the 2000 censuses.
61. Lastly, ECLAC has collaborated in the seminars organized by the United Nations Population Division on the future fertility of countries with high demographic levels, and the United States Census Bureau on the expected development of fertility in that country.

Element 3.4: Project on statistical cooperation between the European Union and the MERCOSUR countries

62. As mentioned above, channels have been established for coordination between EUROSTAT and ECLAC, so that when possible, it will continue to participate in the working groups established with a view to moving towards the harmonization of social indicators in the region.

Element 3.5: Regional and national training activities

63. In August 2001, INEGI of Mexico organized the eleventh international workshop on poverty: definitions, concepts and measurement methodologies, which took place at its facilities in Aguascalientes. Twenty-four representatives of three countries participated. During the course the main issues covered were: welfare, equity and poverty; methodological approaches to poverty measurement; evaluation of information sources; and indicators and tools for social assessment. ECLAC provided the instructors and prepared the teaching materials for the course.

Element 3.6: Participation in working and study groups on issues of regional interest

64. The Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE) organized, with assistance from ECLAC, the fourth meeting of the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics, established by the United Nations Statistical Commission. The meeting took place at IBGE headquarters in Rio de Janeiro, from 15 to 17 October 2001, and considered the following issues; information requirements for the design and follow-up of policies to reduce poverty; methodological progress in poverty measurement; absolute poverty lines and measurements of household income; new approaches to multidimensional poverty; and international policies for poverty reduction. Twenty-two representatives of 15 countries from different regions of the world participated, as well as eight officials from five international organizations. The methodological contributions of this and previous meetings are available on the web site of IBGE of Brazil (<http://www.ibge.gov.br/poverty>).

Subprogramme 4: Dissemination of statistical information

Element 4.1: Use of the Internet environment for information and data dissemination via static and dynamic web pages

65. ECLAC continued with the updating and dissemination of the regional short-term economic indicators database. The updating is now monthly rather than quarterly; the printed edition however is still issued on a quarterly basis. In order to ensure the best possible updating, the web sites of the national statistical offices are consulted on a daily basis.
66. ECLAC has made a space available on its Internet server to create a site for the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. The work carried out is of a technical nature: programming, hypertext, programming languages and design. As for the content, proposals were received from Peru and Mexico, but no significant progress has been recorded.
67. The INE of Spain and CESD of Madrid organized a seminar on techniques for electronic data dissemination in June 2001, as part of their training programme.