

GENERAL
LC/CAR/G.758
12 November 2003
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**CARIBTRADE
TRADE STATISTICS DATABASE
USER MANUAL**



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Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the Directors of Statistics and Trade Statisticians of the participating countries. They provided initial guidance to the project team at the stage of identifying the files that would deliver the data that was needed to achieve the objectives of the database. A debt of gratitude is owed to them for their provision of the data that formed the input into the creation of the databases and their suggestions for the improvement of the outputs of the database.

Thanks are due to the project's Consultant, Mr. Joe Babooram, who used his knowledge of trade systems and statistics and his expertise in the creation of databases to prepare the high quality normalized databases that have for many years been the wish of many constructors of trade statistics databases for the Caribbean.

The Project team at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean worked flawlessly as a team to promote and contribute to the design features of the database. The team imparted knowledge and in turn benefited from its interaction with the trade personnel at three workshops/seminars conducted to showcase the database and receive recommendations for its improvement. Assisting the Project Leader, Mr. Lancelot Busby, were Esteban Perez, Helen Mc.Bain and Nicole Hunt. Their efforts are hereby acknowledged.

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is pleased to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Mr. Serge Poulard of CELADE who wrote the R+ G4 software and with some help tweaked the system into faster processing. Mr. Poulard's knowledge of the software assisted the Project Leader to achieve the features of the database as envisaged by the Project Leader. This interaction was the source of much intellectual stimulation. Mr. Poulard has been assisted by the CELADE team in Santiago, Chile in the technical backstopping of the issues identified. Special thanks are due to Mr. Dirk Jaspers of CELADE, who graciously made available the services of Mr. Poulard for the exercise.

Miss Shameeda Mohammed, Systems Analyst of the Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago, contributed significantly in the updating of the database to bring online late submissions of data and to assist in the adjustments that have been made after the beta testing of the database. Associated with our thanks to Miss Mohammed are registrations of thanks to the Director of Statistics of the Central Statistical Office in Port of Spain, Mr. Peter Pariag, who agreed to render technical assistance in making available Miss Mohammed's services. Mr. Pariag was among the first people to see the database and lend his moral support to the paradigm.

A final acknowledgement of thanks is reserved for The Kingdom of the Netherlands for its confidence that the Project Team would deliver a quality product and give it the satisfaction of having sponsored a worthwhile project.



Chapter 1

Introduction to CARIBTRADE

Welcome to **CARIBTRADE**, the Merchandise Trade and Transportation Database prepared by ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. The database was inspired by the need to provide to a wide variety of users rapid answers to their queries on Trade Statistics of the Caribbean countries. **CARIBTRADE** is user-friendly and comprehensive in its capabilities. Generous funding by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has made this product possible. ECLAC hereby registers its gratitude for the opportunity presented to it through the funding. Apart from answering queries on direction of trade, the database provides analysis of the trade data in a relatively novel manner of addressing strategic options, given a country's recent trade performance. To do this it presents the capability of examining the trade through different lenses. Indicators seek to make the trade analyst aware of recent trends in trade and in the performance of items traded, while providing for the shaping of policies based on observed trends and patterns of trade against the changes taking place in the external environment.

This database has drawn on the data provided by the several Caribbean countries, which have used different nomenclatures and coding schemes to prepare and process their trade data. The data have been normalized to make them as comparable as possible. Its location on the Internet is ECLAC's contribution to more widespread access to critical data that has in the past not been as generally available as the present offering. It is a contribution to the provision of data that can assist trade negotiators, researchers and the business community to make informed decisions.

Access to the database has been designed at two levels. The first level of access accommodates the queries of a wide variety of users and is provided up to the third digit of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Rev. 3 and up to the second digit of the Harmonised System (HS) classification. Another level of access is accorded to a limited number of personnel at national level. The Chief Statisticians of the contributing countries will have access to their data at the most disaggregated level of data supplied. Researchers wishing the use of data at a lower level of disaggregation than 3 digits may contact the Chief Statisticians of the countries for that level of data. A list of Chief Statisticians is presented on the web page for easy contact.

The countries whose data are included in the present database are the following: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.



Chapter 2

CARIBTRADE – Design Considerations

CARIBTRADE has been designed to provide on-line remote access to a database of trade statistics to serve a variety of users while observing the wish of the Chief Statisticians to reserve publication at the item level for their offices.

2-1 The Utility of CARIBTRADE

The on-line feature of the database is an important feature of the move towards the modernization of statistical and information services in the Caribbean. It allows the remote user the ability to query the database at any time, effectively extending the hours of contact with the Statistical Office. The user can interact with the data and refine the query to obtain the most accurate answers being sought – all without the intervention of a staff member of the Statistical Office.

2-2 Who are the users of CARIBTRADE?

There are 3 main categories of user.

The **first** category is the general user who may want a quick idea of magnitudes (volume and value) involved in the international trade with the countries. This category includes students looking for data to complete research assignments.

The **second** category of user includes investors who wish to assess the feasibility of entry into a new market or commencement of production of a given item. In this case, the user would be interested in conducting market research.

The **third** category of user would be the trade personnel who are involved in the analysis of trade in the subregion, such as ECLAC. Also included in this group are personnel and organizations involved in negotiations with other countries or within rounds of trade negotiations such as within the World Trade Organization (WTO) or other trade agreements being discussed or already in place. The data requirements of this category would at times be of a disaggregated nature. Included in this category would be personnel from the Chambers of Commerce, the Ministries of Trade, the Universities in the subregion and elsewhere and the Regional Negotiating Bodies.

The database design has accommodated the analysis of a number of trading blocs of interest to researchers. This element of pre-planning removes the difficulty of the researcher having to identify the countries in a given trading bloc every time that analysis is made involving that bloc. This category of user would be interested in examining the



dynamism and competitiveness of imports and exports traded. Market share considerations and the changing nature of the relative importance of one item as compared with another would feature among the prime areas of interest of the negotiators. These interests are served in the database by an analysis module that utilizes some of the indicators presented in two specialist software packages prepared by ECLAC but applied in this case for the first time to Caribbean data.

2-3 Access to data at the item level

Researchers may gain access to the data at the item level, but this is not automatic. They must contact the Chief Statistician of each of the countries for this permission. The Chief Statistician would then be able to conduct the query or arrange for it to be done and then transmit the results to the researcher. E-mail hyperlinks for contact with the Chief Statisticians have been designed and are presented on the website.

2-4 Justification for the use of the REDATAM engine

In order to deliver dynamically created query results on the worldwide web a fast database engine is required. REDATAM has been used to process population and housing censuses in countries with large populations. The designers of the database chose that software on that basis after verifying its speed in handling queries on a sample trade dataset. The processing speed of the search engine derives from the storage of compressed data of large datasets. In **CARIBTRADE**, close to 20 million records are stored for quick query and retrieval on the worldwide web. It would be difficult to identify another piece of software affordable to the small Caribbean countries that would deliver a comparable performance without the assistance of a programmer.

2-5 Hierarchical processing

The structure of REDATAM is hierarchical. This caters for the storage and analysis of data based on two or more levels in a manner that is more efficient than most other tabulation programmes. The application of the software to **CARIBTRADE** provides a match between the design of the software and the trade data which is hierarchical and which is searched at varying levels of disaggregation. In this database the general user (public access) can query the database at the 1, 2 and 3-digit levels of the SITC and the 2-digit level of the HS.

The application of **REDATAM** to the trade databases produced in **CARIBTRADE** provides an efficient solution to the need to produce a genuine online query facility and not a table recall facility in which tables are stored and merely recalled by the user. In this database the remote user builds the required table every time that a query is made.



2-6 The design of the query result

The query result is presented on an html page. This page may be printed and discarded or it can be saved and placed into a folder of query results and catalogued according to the query. This is one solution to the retrieval and subsequent query answer process, but is not entirely satisfactory as it is static and will not change in accordance with corrections or updates made to data in the database. Moreover it requires the establishment of a query recognition capability and a cataloguing of query results. This attempt to conserve on processing time may well end in the expenditure of more time inefficiently spent.

A more elegant solution would be to take advantage of the speed of the REDATAM engine and process the query every time a query is made. This “just-in-time” design feature is in keeping with the minimization of inventories of static files in a folder waiting to be summoned.

2-7 Country groupings

In order to facilitate analysis, a number of country groupings are included in the database. They form the basis on which the researcher may choose to build other country groupings to service his or her research requirement. The groupings are found on the query page and are reflected in the query result page where the grouping of countries is presented at the head of the table that carries the query result. The query differentiates country groups as against countries in the group. The latter query will yield information for each of the countries that form the group whereas the query on country group will yield a total of all of the countries that form the group.

2-8 Data quality

A number of reasons may be adduced to explain the imperfect nature of the trade data. More intense supervision at the point of collection of the trade statistics would go a long way towards securing quality data that would ensure that adequate description of each product is made available. Incomplete commodity descriptions would result in discrepancies in totals at each level of the trade number hierarchy. Countries have been made aware of the need to improve the quality of the data. Grossly incomplete item numbers have had to be dropped. These, however, accounted for less than .031 percent of the total value of trade recorded.



Chapter 3

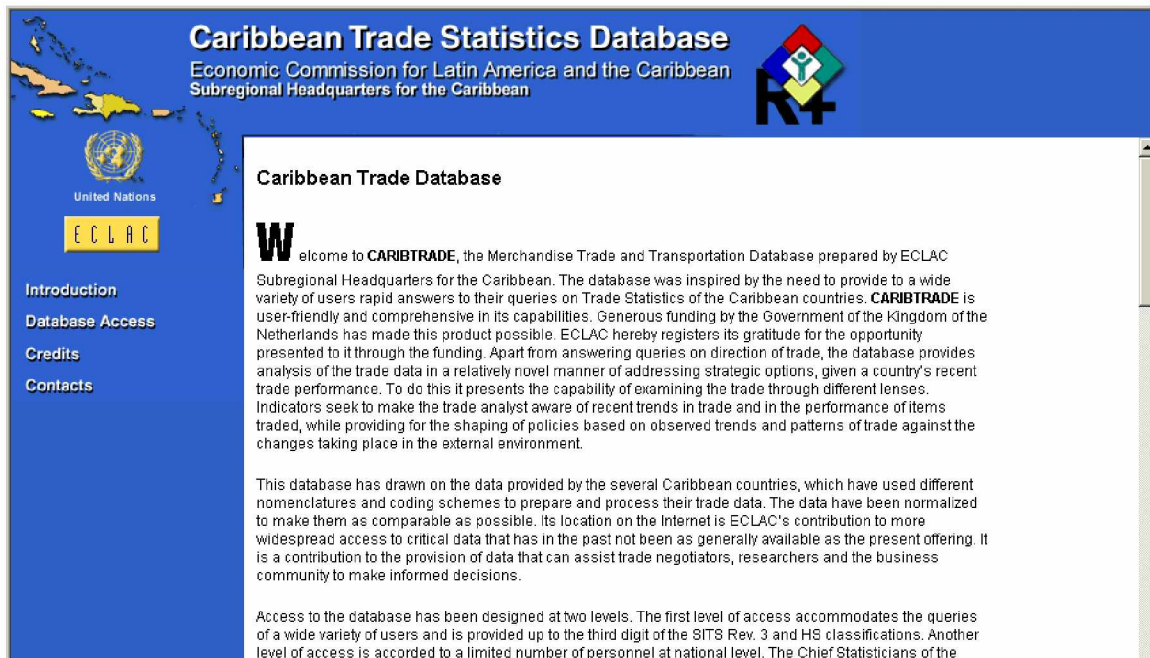
Working with CARIBTRADE

3-1 Accessing CARIBTRADE

Use your Internet browser and go to:

<http://caritrade>

The page that appears looks like this:



This is in fact the page that introduces the user to the database. It is the Introduction. If you look to the left of the page, you will see the word “Introduction” on the stub. To go further into the database, click on

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_2803

