

ABSTRACTS

Volume 25 No. 1 March 2000

The Impact of Demographic Change on Pension Scheme Financing in the Caribbean

by Alwyn Jordan and Adrian Carter

The paper utilizes a simple social security projection model to analyse the implications of population aging on financing social security pensions in the long-term. Four Caribbean nations are examined namely Barbados, St. Lucia, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and indications are that without significant reforms to existing social security programs, a substantial increase in social security tax rates to finance pensioners will be required. A number of reform strategies are therefore investigated which could enhance the sustainability of the nations' social security programmes.

Pages: 1-19

Keywords: Demographic projections, social security, retirement, fertility rates.

Growth and Convergence in the Caribbean

by Adrian Carter and Kevin Greenidge

In the light of the proposed establishment of a monetary union among CARICOM member countries in the year 2000, this paper assesses the degree of economic convergence of these countries utilizing a stochastic Solow growth model. The paper investigates the speed of convergence in per capita output of the individual economies to their country-specific steady-state growth rate and attempts to draw implications therefrom. The study reveals that a union between the OECS and Barbados may be sustainable.

Pages: 20-38

Keywords: CARICOM, monetary union, economic convergence, stochastic solow growth model, labour and capital.

International Competitiveness and Public Policy in the Caribbean

by Alvin G. Wint

Policy-makers, academics and the public within the Caribbean region have joined with their counterparts around the world in emphasizing the importance of international competitiveness. In the midst of the overwhelming consensus about its importance, however, there has been little in the way of close examination of the concept and the manner through which public policy nurtures or impedes international competitiveness. It is these matters, that are addressed in this paper, in the context of the experiences of several Caribbean countries. Here the author questions the link between export activity and national prosperity.

Pages: 39-57

Keywords: Export competitiveness, comparative advantage, GDP ratio, productivity.

The Economic Development of the OECS in the Emerging International Economic Order

by Clive Y. Thomas

The author outlines important changes occurring in the international economy noting the twin processes of liberalisation and globalisation. The central argument is that Caribbean small state competitiveness can only be enhanced through regional cooperation. This must coincide with restructuring of productive systems, economic policy-making and the enhancement of the rights, obligations and duties of citizenship.

Pages: 58-77

Keywords: Globalisation, capacity, competitiveness, safety net provisions, liberalisation.

Volume 25 No. 2 June 2000

Geography & the Integration Movement in the Anglophone Caribbean

by Clifford E. Griffin

This essay seeks to provide a fuller understanding and explanation of integrative and disintegrative tendencies in the Anglophone Caribbean. The lessons here are of importance for other regions as the goals of this paper include one, an attempt to explain theoretically the basis for the existence of self-determination agendas; two, to show how geography, exploitation, neglect and historical memory contribute to the emergence of self-determination movements; and three, to argue from a policy perspective that these self-determination agendas must become integral parts of the policy discourse if a region is to achieve its proposed level of integration.

Pages: 1-30

Keywords: secession, integration, geographical contiguity, fragmentation, nationalism, "nation-ness".

Education and Caribbean Development in Global Economy

by Winston Griffith

This article looks at education in the Caribbean and tries to determine its relevance to the needs of the region. It finds that the quantity of education declines at higher levels of schooling and that, given trends in the global economy, the quality of education is inappropriate. It argues for changes in the curricula at all levels to help improve the competitiveness of regional economies and prevent their marginalisation in the global economy.

Pages: 31-52

Keywords: curriculum, human resource, economic transformation, skilled/unskilled education.

Factors Impacting on the Success of Distance Education Students of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies

by Louis Whittington and Marguerita R. Alleyne

The purpose of this study is to investigate a set of variables which may predict achievement and persistence among distance-learning students; to determine whether traditional and nontraditional students differ in achievement and persistence; and which subset of the variables can discriminate between traditional and nontraditional students.

Results of the study indicated that (a) the set of variables of programme rating, audio visual media, hi-tech media, and age predict achievement; (b) the set of variables of audio visual media, education, income, field of study, and age predict persistence; (c) the variables of locus of control, marital status, income, and education can be used to group the students into traditional and nontraditional categories; and (d) there was no significant difference in the persistence or achievement between traditional and nontraditional students.

Pages : 53-75

Keywords: distance-learning data, variable of achievement, locus of control.

Volume 25 No. 3 September 2000

Forestry Policies in the Caribbean: Getting Beyond the Rhetoric

by Merilio Morell, Rory Fraser and Kenneth King

Irrespective of their cover in the Caribbean, forests contribute very little, directly, to the economy. However, reviews by FAO of forestry policies, indicate that stakeholders across the region consider their forests very important for the economic and environmental well-being of their societies. The major forestry problem throughout the region is the ability to analyse, formulate and implement policies. The root of the problem can be traced to the lack of public administration and policy analysis training of forestry professionals and the limited involvement of the larger society in the forest policy process. A three-prong strategy, to remedy this situation, is proposed.

Pages: 1- 20

Key Words: FAO, forestry policy, Caribbean.

Telecommunications Reform in the OECS

by Wendell A Samuel and Patricia Welsh-Haynes

This paper examines the possible impact of the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector in the OECS on the delivery of such services in the sub-region. Issues related to the appropriate regulatory framework and the conflicts that may arise, market structure, efficiency, economic impact and future developments are discussed. The study views telecommunications as the core of a whole range of axial services. In addition, it provides the link between a second group of services with tourism as its core. The implications and necessary policy action of such an approach to the development of services is also addressed.

Pages: 21-55

Keywords: Trade liberalisation; telecommunications services; regulatory framework.

Cricket: A Viable Industry

by Peter Adrien

Although an estimate of its contribution to GDP has been affected by the lack of data, cricket has been an important contributor to economic activity in the Caribbean and OECS countries. The cricket industry has been also affected by the paucity of research on its social and economic impact, the invisible nature of the tourism industry to which it is linked, the effects of natural disasters, the limited budgetary allocations to the social and recreational sectors and the relative under-development of the sporting institutions in the region.

This paper presents cricket as a viable industry, and discusses its contributions to economic activity, foreign exchange generation and tourism earnings. It discusses its linkages with the construction, telecommunications and transports sectors, and articulates some policy issues with respect to the competitiveness of the cricketing sector.

Pages: 56-79

Key Words: Cricket, sports, tourism, competitiveness, economic growth, international trade, foreign exchange.

Volume 25 No. 4 December 2000

Windward Islands Bananas in the Global Economy

by Jay R. Mandle

That the Windward Islands banana industry is in crisis is beyond dispute. The purpose of this paper is to examine the context in which that crisis has emerged and to point to ways it might be overcome. The industry has been caught up in the changes produced by the international integration of markets - globalization. Adjusting to this new economic environment will be as difficult and painful as it is necessary. Nevertheless, successfully adapting to the requisites of the globalized economy could represent an important step toward Caribbean economic development.

The paper is organized in five sections. In the first I discuss the background and structure of the banana industry in the Windward Islands. Second, I outline the content of the banana marketing regime that was introduced in Europe in 1993. In the third section I review the responses of multinational corporations to that marketing system. The fourth section reports on the rulings by the World Trade Organization (WTO) that invalidated the European system of importing bananas. Finally, I discuss the response by the Windwards' industry to those rulings and the future of the industry.

Pages : 1-25

Keywords: Tariff protection and quotas, preferences, metropolitan countries, globalization, dispute resolution, WTO/GATT.

Restructuring and the Loss of Preferences: Labour Challenges for the Caribbean Banana Industry

by David Nii Addy

The Caribbean is faced with the need to develop a strategic response to the massive economic challenges associated with the global restructuring. This is clearly reflected in the special importance accorded to the discussions surrounding the expiry of the Lomé IV Convention and the required transformation to higher levels of international competition, reciprocal trade arrangements and compatibility with the World Trade Organization (WTO). Most importantly, however, the combined impact of globalization and heightened trade liberalization threaten to put an effective end to the historical trading preferences that have shaped the political economy of the independent Caribbean.

The aim of this paper is to draw a picture of the current situation and to indicate possible labour-related effects of the crisis. To this effect, the paper first explores the background of the current restructuring process by highlighting the continuing importance of the banana industry to the region. It, then, summarizes the available information as to the recent changes and its likely impact on the employment and social situation in the countries under consideration.

Finally, it presents an overview of strategic policy options in an attempt to support calls for diversification of the affected economies and to improve productivity of the industry that together would help cushion the negative impact of the restructuring of the banana sector.

Pages: 26-51

Keywords: Agricultural protocols, quota tariffs, preferences, labour market, competitiveness.

Towards a Cultural Sector of Economic Development in the Eastern Caribbean

by Howard A. Fergus

This article argues for a cultural-economic sector in the development profile of the Eastern Caribbean. It defines culture broadly to blur the boundaries between economic, aesthetic and environmental endowments. It is contended that given the economic problems faced by these countries, the search for alternative development strategies should officially include traffic in cultural products. These have potential for diversification, foreign exchange generation and sustainable development. The paper concludes, however, that while the uniqueness of the culture positions the territories to share in the rich cultural global market, commodification can degrade these very assets and imperil their saleability and sustainability.

Pages: 52-73

Keywords: Culture, environment, economic development, cultural products, sustainability.