

**A JOINT EFFORT OF MERCOSUR
COUNTRIES – BOLIVIA AND CHILE
DURING THE 2000 ROUND OF
POPULATION CENSUSES**

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MERCOSUR - BOLIVIA - CHILE



ACUERDO ENTRE LA REPUBLICA DE CHILE Y LA REPUBLICA ARGENTINA PARA PRECISAR EL RECORRIDO DEL LIMITE DESDE EL MONTE FITZ ROY HASTA EL CERRO DAUDET. (SEÑALADA 1, LE DE SEÑALADA DE 1995).

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MERCOSUR COUNTRIES

- Since **1991** the Statistical Institutes of the MERCOSUR countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay) have initiated joint efforts in defining a **working methodology to make the Statistical Systems of MERCOSUR compatible**
- The initiative became official as result of the Meeting of Statistical Directors held in Montevideo (Uruguay) on December 14-15, 1992, and came to include Bolivia and Chile after both countries became associate members of the Agreement.

STARTING & PURPOSES

- **During 1997**, Argentina in its planning of its Population and Housing Censuses, convened the countries of the MERCOSUR, and later Bolivia and Chile, to have a joint view of the Population and Housing Censuses to be executed, with the exception of Uruguay, in or around 2000.
- **The purpose** of this initiative was to reinforce the National Statistical Systems, formalizing common surveys and generating homogeneous information on population characteristics, homes and households.
- **In 1997**, the first group of meetings took place, with the objective of studying possible census issues that could be subject to harmonization, starting with wording questions in the most similar manner possible.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

- Since 1997, the Project has received the **support of INE Presidents and Directors**, plus the financial assistance of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (**UNFPA**), the United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (**JICA**), the International Organization for Migrations (**OIM**); and, in phase 2000 thru 2004, from the Inter-American Development Bank (**IDB**). Also, the Project has received specific technical support from **INSEE**, France, the **U.S. Census Bureau and Statistics Canada**

PROJECT'S PHASES

1. From 1997 to 2000

- **Eight(8) workshops** were held to study demographic variables of populations and households that could be subject to harmonization, considering the common interests of each country.
- From the experience of the Census of Uruguay, the Project analysed the applicability of optical character reconnaissance (**OCR**). This technical innovation was later applied to the processing of the censuses in **Brazil (2000), Argentina (2001) and Chile (2002)**. Paraguay and Bolivia were exposed to this experience, but, due to their own reasons, they shifted to manual processing of their censuses.

PROJECT'S PHASES

1. From 2000 to date

- **Four (4)** workshops were held in which progress was made in terms of methodology developments (**Basic Tables, Basic and Specific Social Indicators**) in the observance and follow up of census processes, particularly in Argentina (2001) and Chile and Paraguay (2002).
- A working group developed a **Micro Data Multidimensional Base**, representative up to the second level of the political-administrative division of each country. Also, a web page (www.censomercosul.org) was developed by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (**IBGE**).
- During 2003, **an evaluation of the censuses was completed**, and its results were analysed in a 2004 workshop, where **new methodologies for census surveys to be applied in the census round of 2010** were also put under consideration, based on the experiences of France, Spain, the U.S.A. and Canada

PROJECT ORGANIZATION

- The Project has a unique organization. It emerged from the needs of INE's professionals and technicians. At the beginning, the Project had little formal structure and no defined leadership, relying instead on enthusiasm and the strong support of the INE Directors.
- As soon as subjects were identified, **six (6)** working groups were created by professionals specializing in each subject: (1) **Planning, Supervision and Control**; (2) **Conceptual and Thematic**; (3) **Nomenclatures**; (4) **Training**; (5) **Technological Aspects**; and, (6) **Diffusion and Dissemination**.

Seminars and Workshops

- Topics were discussed under the modality of seminars or workshops lasting 3 to 4 days. Two workshops were held regularly each year in different countries. By the end of 2004, 14 workshops had been held, addressing the following topics:
- **Housing** :(Private, collecting data)
- **Home and Family** (Arg.Chi.Par.Uru. & Brasil)
- **Population:** (Sex, Age)
- **Migration:** (permanent residence, residence 5 years ago, place of birth and date of entrance into the country)
- **Education:** (school attendance, level of studies and degree attained)
- **Economic Activity** : (activity, condition, occupation, industry branch and educational level).
- **Nomenclatures:** (Classification of Economic Activities for Demographic Surveys in MERCOSUR (CAES-MERCOSUR))

PROJECT RESULTS

- The original and unusual modality of organization
- Common thematic contents: census approved variables
- A common nomenclature for classification
- Two joint pilot tests
- Methodological documents
- Common basic tables
- Design of a Common Data Base
- Design of a web page

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

- During the last workshop held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Project focused on an **evaluation of the entire process**, and special attention was given to the achievement of harmonization and homologation.
- Also, **applicability of new technologies** was discussed, such as optical character reconnaissance, as well as outsourcing experiences of census processes, such as the printing of questionnaires, publicity, operative activities and data processing.
- Another important issue discussed in this workshop was related to the **new Round of Censuses 2010**, including topics such as new technologies to be applied, e.g., the use of handheld; new issues related to the introduction or discarding of pertinent and non-pertinent questions in the questionnaire.
- Paying attention to **new approaches and alternative methods to survey census information** from experiences in the U.S.A., France, Spain, and Peru, Colombia and Uruguay in Latin America.

FINAL REMARKS

- The working groups were highly motivated, exchanging ideas, learning one from another, and transmitting and receiving experiences in a working environment with a high sense of unity and friendship, overcoming the language barrier of Spanish and Portuguese in a variant language known by all of us as *portuñol*.
- This project, has allowed a mutual understanding between technical personnel from INE's working in the field of statistical population, allowing us to know who is who and in which areas the expertise of each group rests.
- This project is considered the first stage of a joint effort towards the integration of census statistics in the Sub-Region, hoping to become an example for other Sub-Regions in the Americas, looking forward to the Round of Censuses for the year 2010.