

USER GUIDE

WHAT IS THE *INTERNATIONAL HISTORICAL STATISTICS*?

The *International Historical Statistics (IHS)* series is a unique collection of statistics covering a wide range of socio-economic topics. It is a collection of data sets taken from hundreds of disparate primary sources, including both official national and international abstracts – back to 1750. The new online edition provides updated statistics to 2010 – covering 260 years.

The collection is a truly interdisciplinary resource; it will be of interest to academics, researchers and students in sociology, politics, history, economics, business, environment, international relations, geography and statistical studies and related professional services alike.

International Historical Statistics has enjoyed a long and prestigious life as a print product, first published in 1983 under the editorial leadership of Dr Brian Mitchell; it has been updated several times in print, most recently in 2005. In recent years we have had many enquiries from librarians about an online version; we decided it was time for a new edition and started work on the best way to make these vast data sets available digitally.

GETTING STARTED

Before you start using the data here is a note from the original editor Dr Brian Mitchell on the pitfalls for the unwary user of statistics...

Historical Statistics are now recognised, as never before, as a major raw material of much economic history, especially of that concerned with economic growth and development. In response to this, national collections of historical statistics began to make their appearance from the late 1940s onwards. Towards the end of the 1960s, it seemed that the time was ripe for gathering together the main statistical series for all major countries of the world, and a beginning was made with those in Europe, for which there was more material available than for most others. This was followed by the first edition of the *International Historical Statistics* series. Revised and updated editions were published in 1993, 1998 and 2005. The objective of these books has been to provide researchers and students alike with a wide range of statistical data without the difficulty of identifying sources, of obtaining access to them, and the often considerable labour of extracting the figures from many different places and, one hopes, ensuring that sometimes variously defined figures are transformed until they form a comparable series.

In all these continent-wide compilations, the sources relied on have been, for the most part, official national and international abstracts, rather than detailed publications.

How to use the data sets?

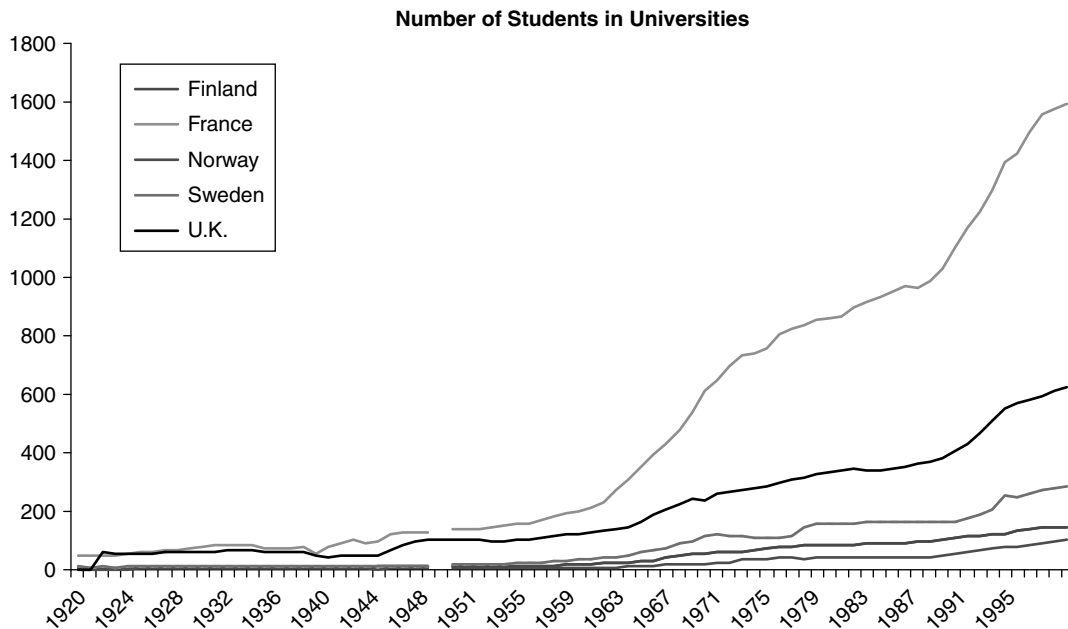
The online version follows the same format and running order as the original print editions, the three volumes are set as follows: Africa, Asia, Oceania; The Americas and finally Europe.

It is possible to **browse** the entire *International Historical Statistics* collection via the expandable chapter links; this allows you to find the specific data you require on different regions without leaving the product page. For example you can browse for data across the geographical regions by using the expanding chapter so that you can find the specific table you require. Alternatively you can **search** for key terms that you are interested in, such as 'student numbers' and this will return a list of tables across the entire collection which includes this phrase. It is also possible to enter the name of a country, such as Eritrea and this will return a list of tables in which this country is mentioned.

We have made each table available to **download** as an ePDF and Excel spread sheet.

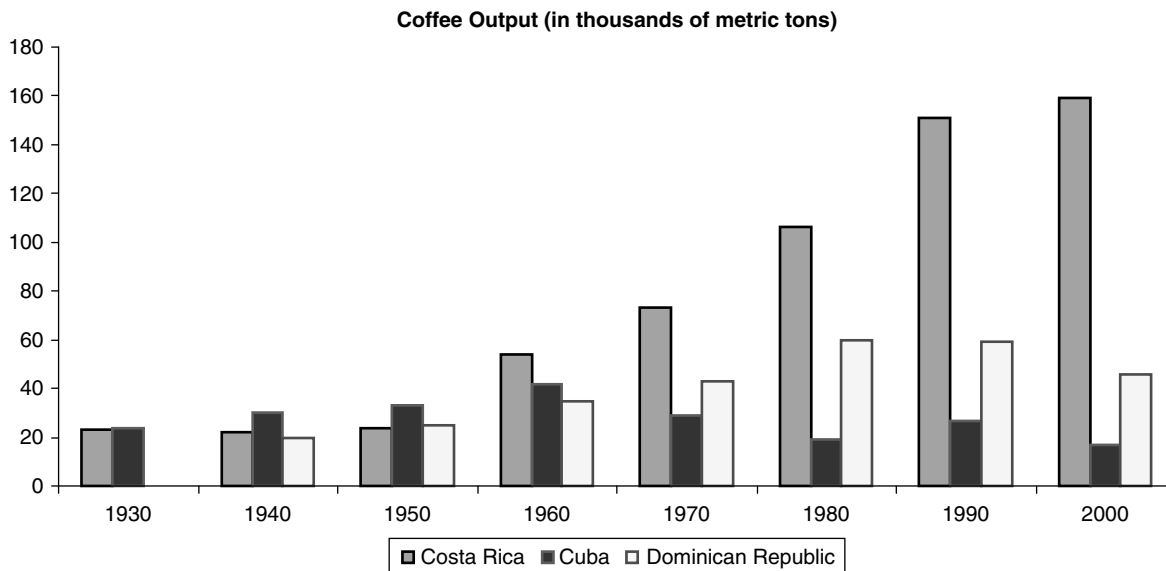
Using the data has been made easy as every table is available to download in Excel. Excel is the most commonly used format for tables and is compatible with a wide range of econometric tools used by researchers and students alike. Excel also allows the user to edit the tables and create and present bespoke data sets and charts specific to your own research needs, taken from the vast amount of data available in the *International Historical Statistics* collection. Users must take care when editing these tables as once they have been altered Palgrave Macmillan can no longer guarantee their accuracy. It is also wise to pay close attention to the footnotes and source notes when editing as the accuracy of these could be affected by editing.

Below are some examples of the types of charts we made using the *International Historical Statistics*, together with some context, to show how easy it is to download and produce the data.



An illustration of how the number of students in Universities in selected European countries since the 1920s. Demonstrates that France saw a dramatic growth in the number of students attending universities, Higher Education was provided free of charge by the state, in 1968 new reforms* divided some old institutions into several new ones, it is possible that this restructuring meant an explosion in the number of HE institutions.

* *The Statesman's Yearbook; France, Social Institutions, Education*



An illustration of how Cuba's exporting dropped off in 1960, when the US trade embargo* began, allowing Costa Rica to flourish. Perhaps this together with the growth of coffee shops in the 70s and 80s would explain the sharp rise in coffee output.

* *The Statesman's Yearbook; Cuba, Key Historical Events*

There have been many people involved in the creation of the *International Historical Statistics* online edition, the publishing service team at MPS who worked tirelessly to convert the 3,500 files from the last edition into the 490 consolidated tables we have today. The Palgrave Digital team who guided the project through the development work. But special thanks must go to the editorial team responsible for the updating and checking of all the tables, their painstaking work to source reliable statistics and ensure that the footnotes were correct was greatly appreciated. Xiao Xiao Liu spent months researching and collecting statistics to be included in the new edition. Daniel Smith was responsible for checking every footnote, creating new footnotes and checking every table.