

METHODOLOGY: NOTES

.This document focuses mainly on Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Selective information on the USA and other countries, regions, and trade/economic groups is included in order to provide perspective.

.The commentaries are limited to assisting the reader in identifying and following statistical trends. No attempt is made to analyse the related substantive context (e.g. historical events, causality, implications, and the like).

.Commentaries generally address the most recent ten-year period for which data are available with a view to capturing the net changes over that period. Many of the tables, however, include additional information for earlier years. They also, of course, show fluctuations within the survey periods.

.In the interest of consistency over time, trade groups are treated as if they and their current memberships had existed unchanged through the survey periods.