

**FOR DEBATE AND GUIDANCE**

SIXTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Strengthening information sharing
and research capacity**

1. Research, whether in preparation for a specific meeting or action programme or more generally, and in the dissemination of this information, has always been a central function of the sectoral activities programme. These areas of work are expected to increase and diversify in the future as part of enhanced new directions for sectoral activities. Concrete examples of information sharing and the potential application of research efforts are set out below.

The “One-stop window – A portal web site”

2. As already reported to the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues¹ in November 2001, the aim of SECTOR’s One-Stop Window (OSW – available at www.ilo.org/sector) is to provide a single point of contact from which constituents can access information, advice, and services from different units within the Organization. This function has always been one of the major responsibilities of the Sectoral Activities Programme.
3. Presently, the OSW keeps constituents informed of forthcoming sectoral meetings and ongoing action programmes. A dropdown menu provides easy access to all economic and social sectors, to cross-sectoral themes (violence and stress in the workplace, HIV/AIDS, Export Processing Zones (EPZ), etc.) and to recent publications. There is also a capability of providing constituents with discussion forums should they wish to make use of them, i.e. in the context of experts preparing to adopt a code of practice at an upcoming meeting. A “What’s new” section allows constituents to be kept informed on the latest developments related to all sectors. Most recently, sectors mentioned include shipping: ports; fisheries; inland waterways (progress with ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention, seafarers’ identity documents and the proposed fishing Convention); education (HIV/AIDS workplace policies, World Teachers’ Day and CEART); transport (HIV/AIDS guidelines); textiles: clothing; leather; footwear (MFA meeting outcomes); and the sectoral meetings schedule. The web site also exists in French and Spanish, and efforts are made to maintain updates in all three languages.

¹ GB.282/STM/1/1.

SECTORSource – A unique database

4. In an attempt to increase the ability of specialists to improve the quality of statistical information and the ease with which this data could be accessed, SECTOR – in response to a number of resolutions of tripartite meetings – has initiated, on a pilot basis, the development of a statistical database. Its development to date has been facilitated through the use of savings generated by holding shorter sectoral meetings in the transport equipment² and mechanical and electrical engineering industries³ and with contributions from the textiles, clothing and footwear⁴ and the food, beverage and tobacco sectors.⁵
5. SECTORSource has been designed as a unique online database – to be accessed through SECTOR's OSW. It will have interactive capabilities to access and display labour market and other data from a variety of sources, covering a range of data categories. The database draws information from several major primary disseminators. No adjustments will be made, other than in the way it is organized and uniformly displayed. The uniqueness of the SECTORSource approach lies in its ability to retrieve data instantly from several databases (without having to visit each site individually), to focus on individual industries in specific economic sectors in a uniform and consistent manner.
6. This document and an oral presentation with a demonstration at the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues will provide a description of the data included in the SECTORSource data retrieval and display system. An additional paper⁶ will provide the reader with information about the sources from which data has been drawn for inclusion in SECTORSource, and some details regarding the coverage and definitions of the data from each source.
7. For the moment the SECTORSource database is only available to selected users who have been testing it. It is hoped soon to convert it to an Oracle format to be accessible to ILO staff on the Intranet and to interested constituents who could be issued a password. As much of the data from other databases remains the proprietary knowledge of these organizations, negotiations will be needed to secure their authorization to release the information to a wider public.

SECTOR database on EPZs and the InFocus Initiative on EPZs

8. Another example of the use of the OSW is the database on EPZs which groups various documents together and maintains information on the number of zones and employment levels in them. Another function of the EPZ database is to provide links to other sites and

² Tripartite Meeting on the Employment, Social Dialogue, Rights at Work and Industrial Relations in Transport Equipment Manufacturing (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

³ Tripartite Meeting on the Production of Electronic Components for the IT Industries: Changing Labour Force Requirements in a Global Economy (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

⁴ Tripartite Meeting on Promoting Fair Globalization in Textiles and Clothing in a Post-MFA Environment (Geneva, ILO, 24–26 October 2005).

⁵ Tripartite Meeting on the Impact of Global Food Chains on Employment (Geneva, ILO, 24–27 September 2007).

⁶ R. Doggett: *SECTORSource: Database description*, Working Paper No. 247 (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

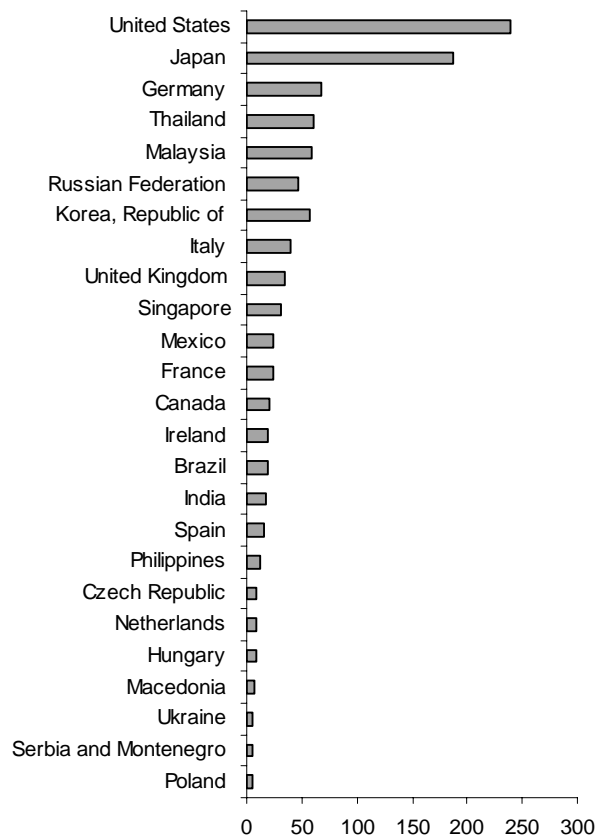
easy reference to Committee on Freedom of Association cases. The database can be accessed directly (www.ilo.org/epz) or through the OSW. The database has been widely quoted and is a major source of information on EPZs. It is expected that the database can contribute to the knowledge base needed to develop the InFocus Initiative contained in the current programme and budget.

Geneva, 25 January 2007.

Submitted for debate and guidance.

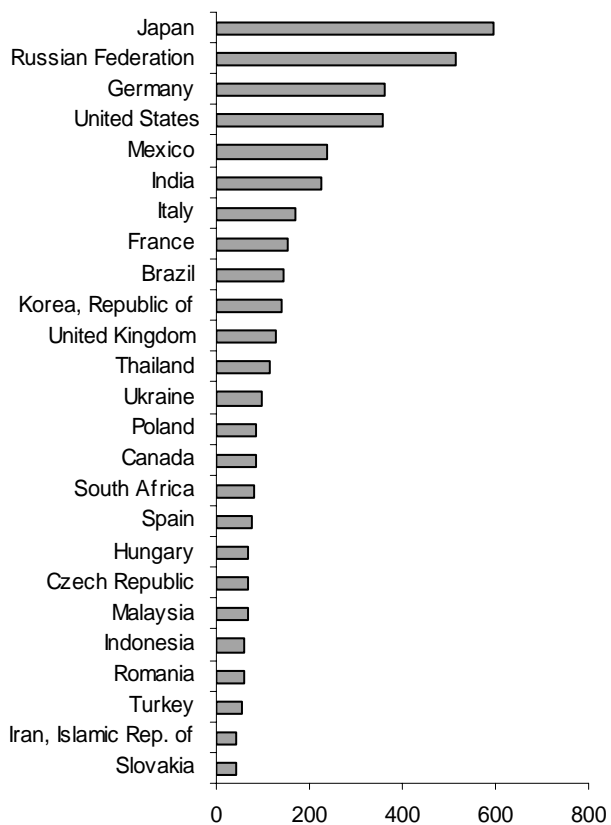
Appendix. Examples of figures which can be created using SECTORSOURCE

Figure 1.4a. Employment in ISIC 30: Office, accounting and computing machinery manufacturing (top 25 countries, thousands)



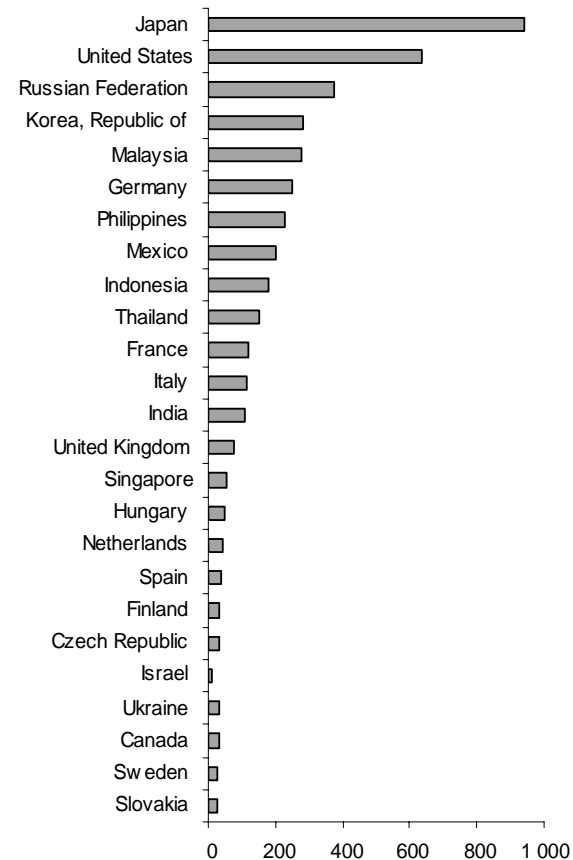
Source: ILO SECTORSOURCE database.

Figure 1.4b. Employment in ISIC 31: Electrical machinery and apparatus manufacturing (top 25 countries, thousands)



Source: ILO SECTORSOURCE database.

Figure 1.4c. Employment in ISIC 32: Radio, TV, communication equipment and apparatus (top 25 countries, thousands)



Source: ILO SECTORSOURCE database.