

COLONY OF MAURITIUS

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

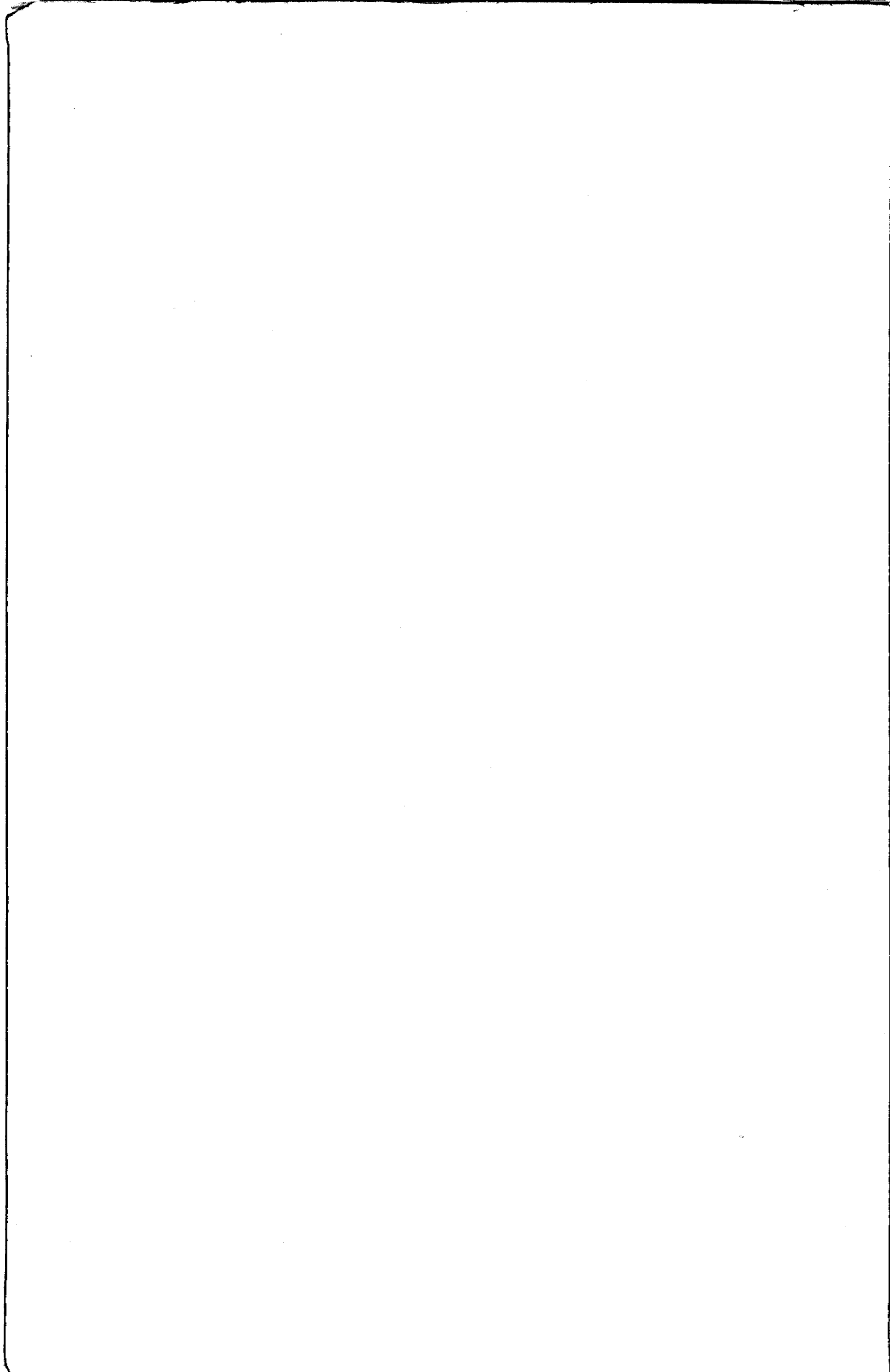
Central Statistical Office

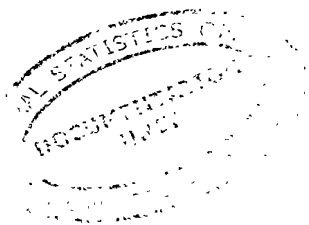
for the year 1961



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No. 4 of 1962





ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR 1961

REC'D
CENTRAL STATISTICAL
OFFICE MAURITIUS
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1. FUNCTIONS

In July, 1945, a Statistical Bureau was created in consequence of a recommendation made by the Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances which occurred in the North of Mauritius in 1943.

The original functions assigned to this Bureau were to collect and compile accurate information as to wages of labour, the number and type of employment in various industries, the level of prices and the computation of cost of living indices. The Bureau was also assigned the task of supervising and coordinating the statistical data collected in various Government Departments. These functions of the Bureau were gradually extended to involve the periodical statistical survey of every branch of economic activity in the island: agricultural, industrial, financial and commercial. It also keeps under review the demographic, vital, health, educational and other social statistics of the life of the Colony. In July, 1948, the original Statistical Bureau became the Central Statistical Office.

The information collected, tabulated and analysed by the Central Statistical Office had hitherto been presented in an annual handbook. The publication of the Yearbook was discontinued in 1961 and in its stead was substituted, as from March 1961, a Quarterly Digest of Statistics the aim of which is to provide information more quickly to users of Statistics.

The office draws up complete annual tables of the Balance of Payments of the Colony, of Capital Formation aggregates, of National Income and National Accounts.

In addition, the Central Statistical Office has also to prepare a large number of statistical reports for submission to the Colonial Office and to the various agencies of the United Nations Organisation. It has to reply to a great number of enquiries from abroad, in addition to those from local organisations, institutions and individuals. When time and opportunity offer, it also carries out research on the statistical material collected by the Department.

2. STAFF

The strength of the staff as at the end of the year consisted of:

- The Director of Statistics
- The Assistant Director
- The Statistician
- Two Assistant Statisticians
- An Office Superintendent
- Ten Compilers
- A Hollerith Supervisor
- A Hollerith Operator
- A Typist-Stenographer
- Four Punch & Verifier Operators

3. QUARTERLY DIGEST OF STATISTICS

The first Quarterly Digest of Statistics - Vol. 1 No. 1 of 1961 - was published in July. The digests relating to the second and third quarters of 1961 were issued in October and December respectively.

4. CONSUMERS' PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

Monthly surveys of the current retail prices of a large number of articles of common consumption were continued. The indices of these prices relative to pre-war were worked out for 72 articles of food and beverages, 40 articles of clothing and textiles and 43 articles of household necessity, including fuel.

5. CONSUMERS' PRICE INDEX

This index (otherwise called "the cost of living index") was computed each month for six different categories of consumers. These monthly indices were regularly published in the Government Gazette.

6. STATISTICAL RETURNS FOR THE COLONIAL OFFICE

Several monthly and quarterly returns of demographic, vital, industrial production and trade statistics were regularly furnished to the Statistical Department of the Colonial Office.

The sections on Mauritius in the Digest of Colonial Statistics published by the Colonial Office are also periodically revised.

7. STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION

Extensive questionnaires from the United Nations Organisation and its agencies, dealing with demographic and vital data and statistics of cultivation, production, livestock, foodstuffs, external trade, etc., for Mauritius and its Dependencies were answered.

Since January 1951, monthly statistical tables (covering various subjects) have been furnished for incorporation into the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the United Nations Organisation.

8. STATISTICS OF THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

As in previous years, the Central Statistical Office undertook the compilation of complete data relating to cultivation, production and manufacture in the sugar industry. Tabular statements on the crop results were circulated to the Director of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture, the Central Board and the Agricultural Bank. In addition, with the kind assistance of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, a satisfactorily large sample of data relating to small plantations was analysed.

Bi-annual statements of employment and wages for artisans and skilled personnel in the sugar industry were collected, compiled and analysed.

9. TRADE STATISTICS

Complete statistics of imports and exports on the basis of the Standard International Trade Classification continued to be compiled in the office in collaboration with the Customs Authorities. Since 1953 a publication embodying complete trade accounts has been produced by the Customs and Excise Department.

10. NATIONAL INCOME AND NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

During the year under review the National Income and National Accounts estimates for 1959 and 1960 were computed and issued for official information.

11. BALANCE OF PAYMENTS OF THE COLONY

Tables of the Balance of Payments for the year 1960 were computed as in previous years and this work, which necessitated analyses of the records of the Treasury and the Post Office, and the compilation of returns from private banks and commercial agencies, was completed in June.

12. CAPITAL FORMATION ESTIMATES

Tabular statements of Capital Formation and Consumption in the colony during the year 1960 were compiled and issued as previously at the request of the Secretary of State. Provisional tables were forwarded to the Secretary of State at the end of April and the final tables at the end of July.

13. SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Mauritius Family Budget Enquiry

The International Labour Office had offered to send an expert to Mauritius to carry out a sample survey of consumers' expenditure. Following on the acceptance of that offer by Government, the I.L.O. commissioned Mr. Wolf Scott, B.Sc (Econ.), Senior Research Officer at the Centre for Urban Studies, University College, London to undertake a Family Budget Enquiry. Mr. Scott arrived in the Colony on the 15th of February, 1961.

He spent the first few months on laborious preliminary work: - the study of local conditions, the setting up of a proper sample frame, the selection of suitable personnel, the training of interviewers, the drafting of the questionnaire, the pilot survey etc.

The Family Budget Enquiry proper started in June and is planned to spread over one complete calendar year so as to take account of seasonal variations in buying. About 1,000 households have been selected according to a carefully worked out mathematical formula which ensures that each type of household, by community, household size, age group, locality etc. is represented in the same proportion as in the population. Each household will be interviewed twice, once in the crop, and once in the inter-crop season so as to make possible the study of changes in the pattern of expenditure and employment. Approximately 40 of the selected families are being interviewed each week. They are asked to provide details of all items of their expenditure for that particular week and of their expenditure on clothing, household equipment and medical services for a further two weeks. Information is also being collected on age, education and occupations of household members, housing conditions, sources of income and on unemployment.

The information collected is first coded, and then transferred to punched cards which are processed on the Hollerith equipment. From the results obtained, new consumer Price Indices will be computed.

14. MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES

During the year the office took over the statistics of the Labour Department and dealt with a large number of enquiries of a private nature from individuals and institutions both local and abroad.

15. HOLLERITH PUNCHED CARD EQUIPMENT

In addition to the work of the Central Statistical Office, the Hollerith equipment is at present used to compile and tabulate:

- (i) trade statistics of which monthly, quarterly and annual accounts are produced;
- (ii) statistics of the Health Department;

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- (iii) statistics of the Income Tax Department;
- (iv) statistics of crime;
- (v) complete monthly and annual statements of vital statistics for the Civil Status Office;
- (vi) certain statistics of the Posts & Telegraphs Department;
- (vii) Crown Agents monthly statements of Revenue and Expenditure for the Accountant General's Department;
- (viii) statistics of employment and wages of artisans in sugar factories.

The equipment was also put to use in making special tabulations for the Mauritius Family Budget Enquiry.

16. PUBLICATIONS OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

The following list of all publications issued by the Central Statistical Office since its foundation is inserted here for reference: -

<u>Title of Publications</u>	<u>Date of Issue</u>
Quarterly Digest of Statistics	Quarterly since March 1961
Year Book of Statistics [❖]	Annually from 1946 to 1959
Mauritius Life Table (1944-1946)	September, 1947
Mauritius Life Table (1951-1953)	December, 1954
National Income & National Accounts of Mauritius 1948-1954 ⁺	November, 1955
Gross & Net Capital Formation in Mauritius 1948-1954	March, 1956
Natality and Fertility in Mauritius 1825-1955	June, 1956
Highlights of Mauritian Economy 1946-1956	January-February 1957 (Revue Agricole et Sucriere de l'Ile Maurice)
Gross & Net Capital Formation in Mauritius 1948-1956 (revised version)	December, 1957

[❖] publication discontinued - last issue 1959

⁺ computed annually since 1954

L. Honoré
Director of Statistics