



Centre d'Etude et de Recherche en Economie,  
Gestion, Modélisation et Informatique Appliquée

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## “ Martinique’s informal sector”

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## **Martinique's Informal Sector**

In 2008, Martinique's informal sector accounted for 12,400 individuals, 9.9% of the Martinique's total employment. Youth, retirees, men, women, the unemployed, inactives, those already employed in the formal sector, and many more make up the diverse informal sector population. Informal sector participation rates, however, have been declining in recent years; in 2002, the informal sector represented 13.2% of Martinique's total employment (a decline of 3.3%).

## **The Informal Sector at a Glance**

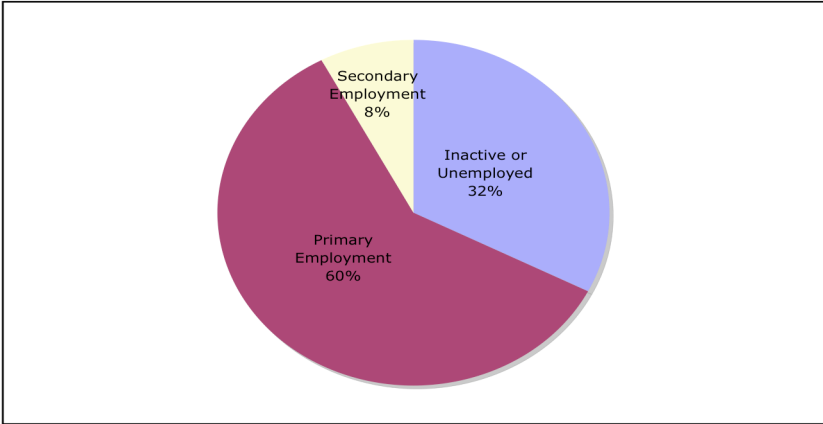
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**Employed, unemployed, inactive: The informal sector caters to all**

The informal sector, due to its casual nature, allows those involved to adjust their participation to meet to their needs. 60% of those employed in Martinique’s informal sector, and 2.5% of the Martiniquais population at large, consider their primary employment and, therefore, their main source of income, to be within the informal sector. However, for the 8% of the population who are primarily employed in the formal sector and engage in informal work on the side, the informal sector allows them to earn additional (and undeclared) income. Finally, the informal sector serves as an important resource for the unemployed and inactive populations in Martinique, which together represent 32% of informal sector population. Faced with an unemployment rate of 22%, working informally helps individuals and families increase their incomes without having to pay higher taxes.

**Informal Sector According to Type of Involvement (2008)**

Units: %



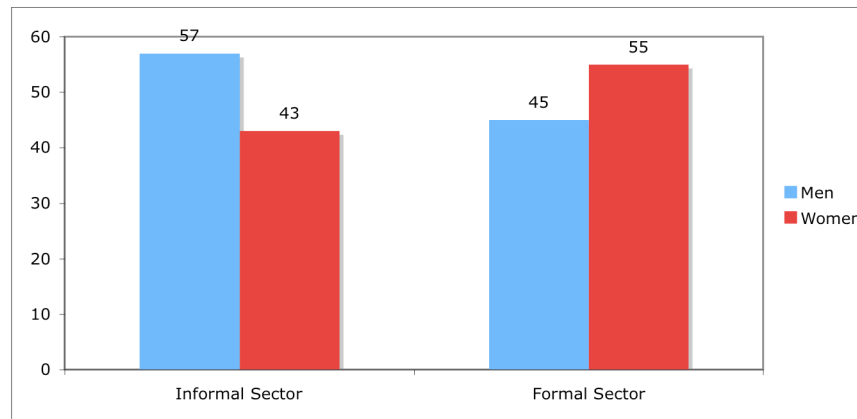
Field: Martinique, Population age 15 and older  
Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

**A male-dominated sector**

Roughly 5% of Martiniquais men versus 3% of Martiniquais women make up the informal sector. Within the informal sector, men represent 57% of those involved versus 43% women. In contrast, women (55%) are more present than men (45%) in the formal sector. This is likely related to the increased number of women in the labor force, as there is now greater competition for limited employment opportunities. As women have become more present in the work world, the working population (which used to be primarily male) has had to look elsewhere for work, possibly explaining the greater representation of men in the informal sector.

Nearly three-fifths of the informal sector is male  
**Informal and Formal Sector Populations According to Sex (2008)**

Units: %



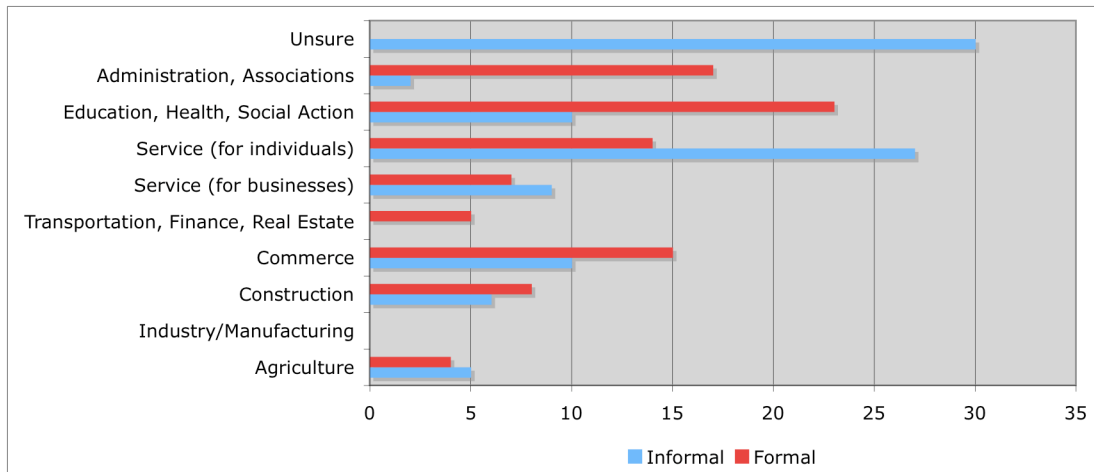
Field: Martinique, Household population, age>15  
 Source: Enquête Emploi DOM 2008

Another explanation for the high concentration of men in the informal sector is that sectors with the highest rates of informal activity tend to be traditionally male-dominated, hence, contributing to the disproportionate gender representation in the formal and informal sectors. For instance, handyman and landscape work—common informal sector jobs—employ more males than females. Finding informal work is, thus, easier for males since it is geared more toward traditionally male activities than traditionally female activities.

Informal sector activity is most highly concentrated in the service industry. Together, services performed for individuals and businesses represent 36% of the informal sector versus only 21% of the formal sector. No respondents claimed to work informally in the industry/manufacturing and transport/finance/real estate sectors despite the fact that these sectors represent 6,5% and 5%, respectively, of formal sector employment. Interestingly, 30% of those involved in the informal sector are unsure of how to classify their informal activity, perhaps suggesting that it cannot be categorized into a single category. Again, this reinforces the feasibility of performing a wide range of work within the informal sector. For instance, a handyman may mow the lawn one day, repair an electrical problem the next, and build a garage the following week. Because this individual can be considered a yardman, an electrician, or a construction worker, placement in a single sector is not possible.

Contrary to what one might expect, public institutions employ a small number of informal workers. Together, national/local government associations and public hospitals employ 13% of the Martiniquais informal sector. Most common, however, are businesses/enterprises with undeclared employees; just under three-fifths of informal workers are employed by businesses/enterprises.

Strong concentration of informal work in the service industry  
**Formal and Informal Sector Populations According to Sector of Activity**  
 Units: %

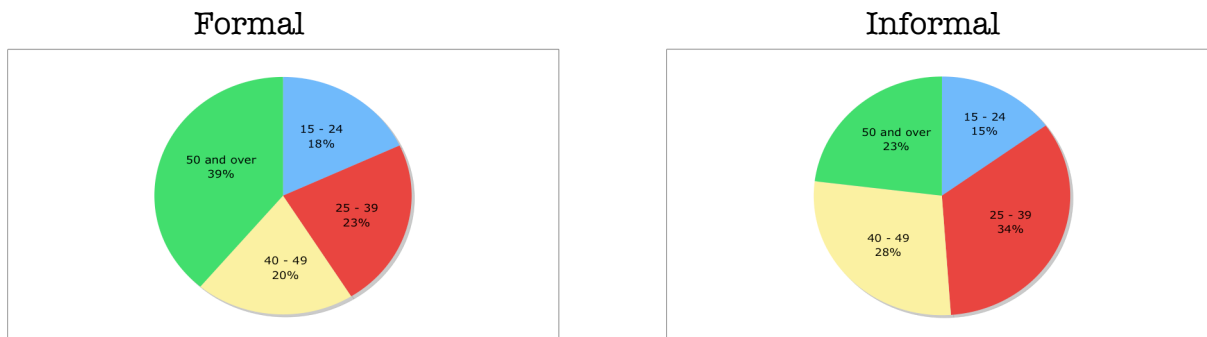


Field: Martinique, Population age 15 and older  
 Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

**Mostly middle-aged adults**

At 34%, adults between the ages of 25 and 39 make up the largest portion of the informal sector. In contrast, they represent a little less than a fourth (23%) of the formal sector population. By the age of 50, there is a significant drop in informal sector involvement. While adults aged 50 and older represent the largest portion of the formal sector (39%), this age group accounts for only 23% of the informal sector. The elevated participation of middle-aged adults in the informal sector corresponds to the high unemployment rate of 22% for Martiniquais between the ages of 25 and 49. Unemployment drops to 11.6% for adults aged 50-64.

An Older Formal Sector, a Middle-Aged Informal Sector  
**Formal and Informal Sector Populations According to Age (2008)**  
 Units: %

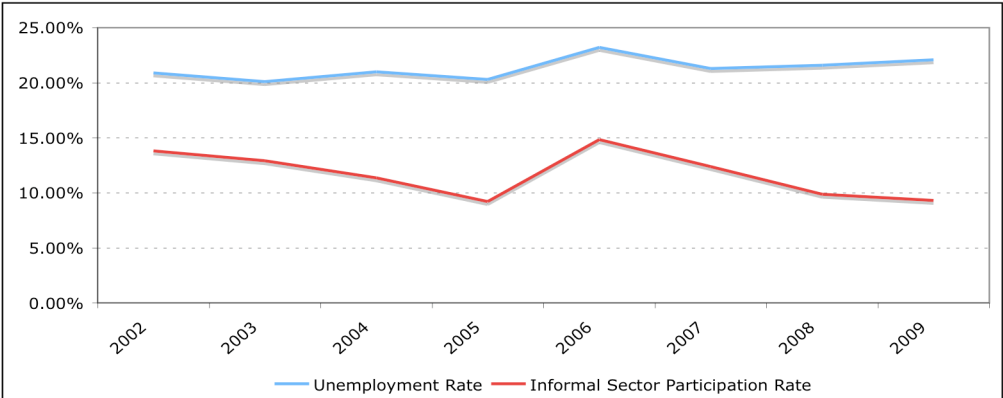


Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
 Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

Participation in the informal sector is positively correlated to the island’s unemployment rate. As work becomes more difficult to find and layoffs become more frequent, informal sector participation increases. The relationship has been less positively related in recent years as the informal sector participation rate dropped by 3.1% between 2007 and 2009 despite the slight increase in the unemployment rate (8% between 2007 and 2009).

**Informal Sector Participation According to the Martiniquais Unemployment Rate**

Units: %



Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
 Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2002-2009

**Most have formal sector work experience**

Martinique’s informal sector consists of those with and without professional work experience; yet, the majority of the informal sector population has experience working in the formal sector. Just over two-thirds of the informal sector population (68%) not currently employed in the formal sector has previously held at least one job in the formal sector for a minimum of six months. One-third of those working in the informal sector do not have experience working in the formal sector. Additionally, excluding the unemployed and inactive populations, 4% of Martiniquais consider themselves to be employed full-time in the informal sector while 10% consider their informal activities to be part-time.

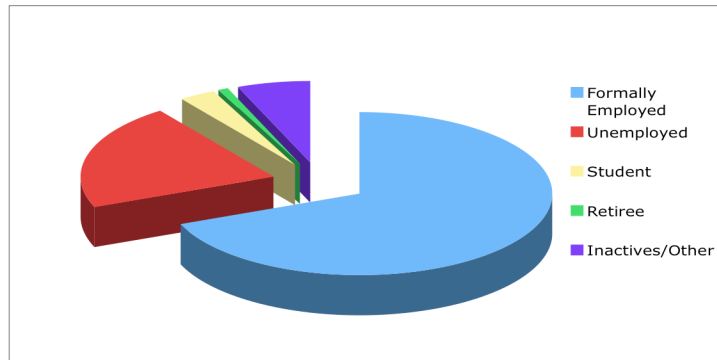
More than two-thirds (69%) of those in the informal sector are already employed within the formal sector and engage in informal activities on the side as a means of earning extra income. The unemployed make up 21% of the informal sector while students and retirees account for a mere 4%. Inactives/others represent 6%.

In addition to having experience working in the formal sector, almost 10% of the informal sector population has worked outside of Martinique for at least six months (6% of the formal sector). Given the difficulty of finding formal sector employment, the difference in experience working abroad may suggest that Martiniquais immigrants (who have likely worked abroad) have to rely on informal work until they can find formal sector employment.

More than two-thirds of those in the informal sector are formally employed

**Informal Sector According to BIT Status**

Units: %



Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older

Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

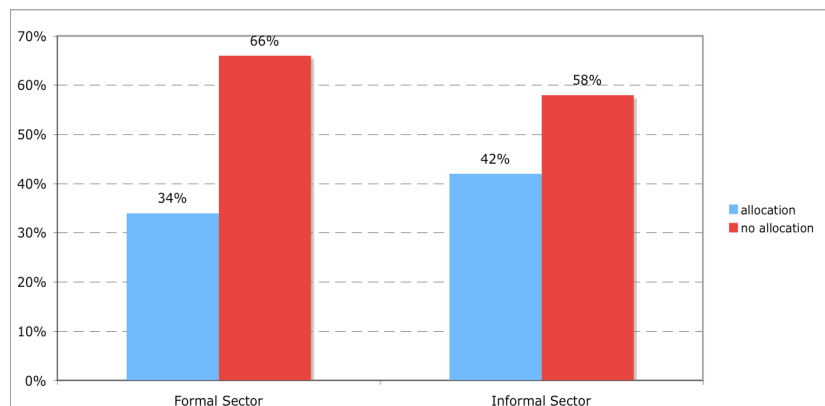
**More beneficiaries of government allocations**

Those in the informal sector receive more government aid than those in the formal sector. Compared to 34% of those in the formal sector, 42% of the informal sector receives some type of government allocation (e.g. Revenu Minimum d’Insertion, Revenu de Solidarité, Couverture Maladie Universelle, etc.). The disparity between the two sectors has two possible causes. First, by definition, informal sector work goes undeclared and, therefore, allows its participants to claim a low income that renders them eligible for more financial aid. Second, informal work typically generates a lower income than work in the formal sector, hence, creating a need for government aid. Still, the majority of the informal sector population (58%) does not receive government allocations, which is likely related to the large percentage of the informal sector population that is also employed within the formal sector.



## The Informal and Formal Sectors According to the Reception of Government Allocations

Units: %



Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older

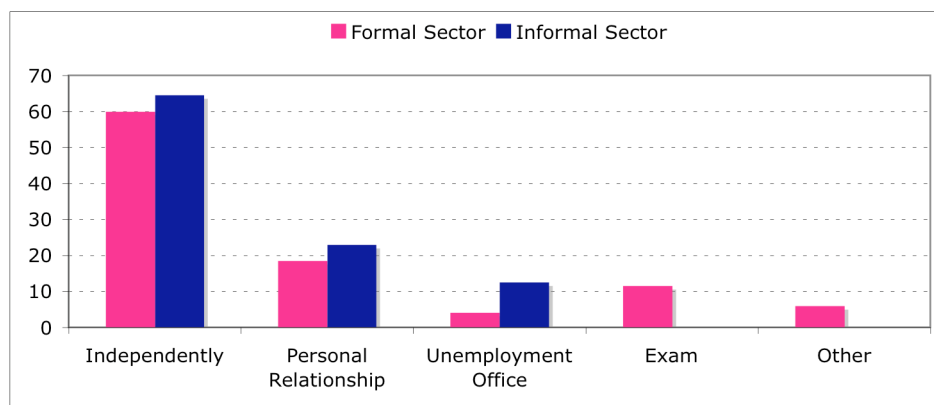
Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

### An individual affair

7% of Martiniquais households have at least one person employed in the informal sector. However, 90% of these households have only one member employed involved in the informal sector. This suggests that numerous members of a single household do not generally engage in informal activity together. Similarly, single-person households are over-represented in informal activities, constituting 21% of the informal sector versus 18% of the formal sector. Couples without children represent 15% of the formal sector while only 4% of the informal sector, likely related to the decreased need for additional income with combined salaries and without the cost of children. In contrast, couples with children are the most likely to participate in the informal sector (37%).

In addition to the individualistic nature of the informal sector, the majority of informal workers (64.5%) found their work independently in 2008 (60% in the formal sector). Contrary to what one might expect, 12.5% percent of informal workers found their work through an unemployment office versus only 4.1% of the formal sector population. 11.5% of the formal sector received their current job after having passed an exam, a path to employment nonexistent in the formal sector.

Three-fifths of informal sector found their work independently  
**Formal and Informal Sectors According to Means of Finding Employment**



Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
 Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

**A slightly more educated informal sector**

Contrary to common belief, the informal sector population is slightly more educated than the formal sector population (38% of the informal sector holds no diploma versus 40% of the formal sector). In terms of higher education, 28% of the informal sector holds their Baccalaureat degree versus 23% of the formal sector. This differentiates Martinique from its Antillais counter-part, Guadeloupe, where 62% (39% of formal sector) of non-declared workers do not hold a diploma. This difference highlights that informal work in Martinique is not simply the consequence of a lack of credentials/education. Instead, a desire to work for oneself is widespread and serves as a possible motivation for participation in the informal sector.

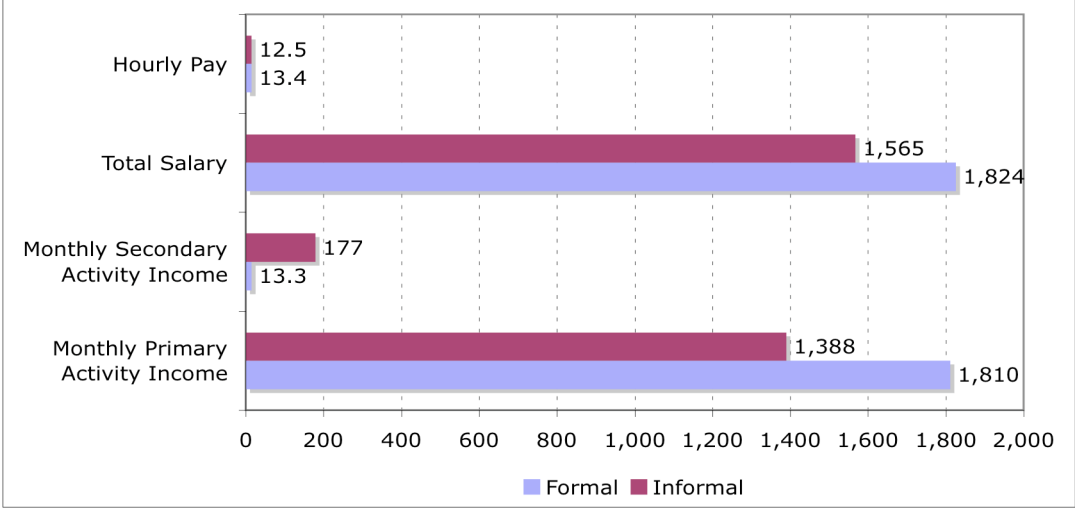
In addition to being the slightly more educated sector, holding a driver's license is more common for individuals in the informal sector (76%) than for those in the formal sector (70.2%), suggesting the greater importance of mobility in informal sector jobs.

**Lower wages in informal sector**

The formal sector population earns, on average, more than those working in the informal sector. Those with primary employment within the formal sector earn an average of 422 euros more than those who are primarily employed in the informal sector. In contrast, informal sector workers take in 177 euros per month in secondary activities as opposed to only 13.30 euros for those in the formal sector. The combination of the two incomes is such that formal sector workers earn an average of 259 euros more per month in total salary than those

employed in the informal sector. When this total is broken down to an average hourly wage, informal sector workers are paid 12.50 euros versus 13.40 euros in the formal sector.

Informal work is less lucrative  
**Average Wages in the Formal and Informal Sectors**  
 Units: Euros



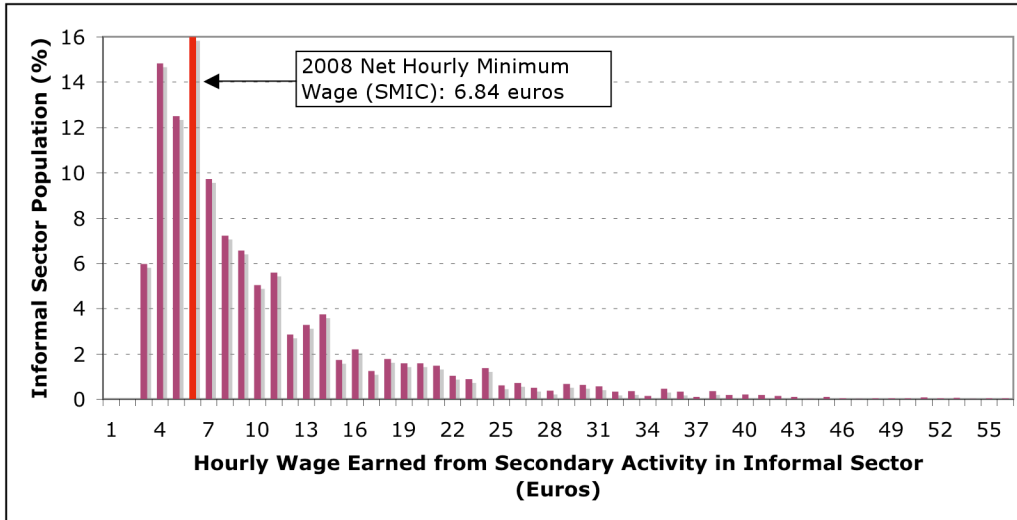
Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
 Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

While there is a wide range of hourly wages earned from secondary activities in the informal sector, half of the population involved earns 10 euros or less per hour. In addition, 21% earn between six and seven euros an hour, roughly equal to the net hourly minimum wage (SMIC) of 6.84 euros (in 2008). Thus, while many depend on income earned informally, informal sector remuneration often does not surpass the minimum hourly wage allowed in the formal sector. It is important to consider that unlike those working in the informal sector, formal sector workers are provided with certain benefits required by the state: social security, retirement, work accident insurance, etc. The absence of such benefits renders work in the informal sector less lucrative and riskier both for the present and the future.

Half of those with secondary activity in the informal sector earn less than 10 euros per hour

**Informal Sector Population According to Hourly Wage Earned from Informal Sector Secondary Activity**

Units: %



Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

**Strong mobility Between the Formal and Informal Sectors**

There is a much heavier flow of individuals transitioning out of the informal sector and into the formal sector than vice versa. 36.8% of those involved in the informal sector in 2007 only worked in the formal sector in 2008 (33% continued working in the informal sector). This is significantly more than the 3.3% of those who began working in the informal sector in 2008 after having only worked in the formal sector in 2007.

Of those who found themselves unemployed in 2007, 4.5% took on informal work in 2008 (compared with 15.6% took on formal work). Therefore, movement between the two sectors is not even; more workers are transitioning into formal sector work than informal sector work. This further supports the data suggesting that the Martiniquais informal sector is diminishing in size.

Mobility Between Formal and Informal Sectors table 1  
**The Flow of Martiniquais Workers Between 2007 and 2008**

2007	2008				Total
	Working in Formal Sector Only	Working in Informal Sector	Unemployed	Not in the Labor Market	
Working in Formal Sector Only	87.1%	3.3%	3.6%	6%	100%
Working in Informal Sector	36.8%	33%	13.6%	16.6%	100%
Unemployed	15.6%	4.5%	50.4%	29.5%	100%
Not in the Labor Market	4.8%	2%	7.1%	86.2%	100%

Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2007-2008

The following table provides an alternative way of analyzing the flow of workers between the formal and informal sectors in Martinique. In 2008, the informal sector was composed of 29.5% of workers who, in 2007, were only employed in the formal sector, 11.5% of people who were registered as unemployed, and 23.2% were not in the labor market. The remaining 35.8% worked in the informal sector both years. This perspective reveals the temporary nature of work in the informal sector. Only slightly more than one-third of the 2008 informal sector population engaged in informal activity in 2007. In contrast, 85.2% of those only employed within the formal sector in 2007 remained so in 2008, highlighting the greater stability of formal sector work.

Mobility Between Formal and Informal Sectors table 2  
**Origin of 2008 Martiniquais Workers**

2007	2008			
	Working in Formal Sector Only	Working in Informal Sector	Unemployed	Not in the Labor Market
Working in Formal Sector Only	85.2%	29.5%	12.6%	4.6%
Working in Informal Sector	4.3%	35.8%	5.7%	1.5%
Unemployed	4.3%	11.5%	49.3%	6.4%
Not in the Labor Market	6.2%	23.2%	32.3%	87.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2007-2008

The large flow of workers into and out of the informal sector shows that work mobility is more common within this sector. In fact, 45% of informal sector workers would accept a more interesting job abroad while only 16% of those employed in the formal sector would do so. This suggests that informal workers are less attached to their work than those working in the formal sector.

## **Annex 1**

### **Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment, endorsed by the Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (November- December 2003)**

The Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS),

Acknowledging that the relevance of informal employment varies among countries, and that a decision to develop statistics on it is therefore determined by national circumstances and priorities,

Noting that the term 'informal economy' is used by the ILO as including the informal sector as well as informal employment, and that as a supplement to the System of National Accounts 1993 an international conceptual framework for measurement of the non-observed economy already exists, which distinguishes the informal sector from underground production, illegal production, and household production for own final use,

Recalling the existing international standards on statistics of employment in the informal sector contained in the Resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the Fifteenth ICLS (January 1993),

Noting the recommendation made by the Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group), during its Fifth Meeting, that the definition and measurement of employment in the informal sector need to be complemented with a definition and measurement of informal employment,

Emphasizing the importance of consistency and coherence in relating the enterprise-based concept of employment in the informal sector to a broader, job-based concept of informal employment,

Considering the methodological work, which the International Labour Office and a number of countries have already undertaken in this area,

Supporting the request, which was made by the International Labour Conference in paragraph 37(n) of the Resolution concerning decent work and the informal economy adopted during its 90<sup>th</sup> Session (2002), that the International Labour Office should assist countries in the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics on the informal economy,

Recognizing that the considerable diversity of informal employment situations poses limits to the extent to which statistics on informal employment can be harmonized across countries,

Realizing the usefulness of international guidelines in assisting countries in the development of national definitions of informal employment, and in enhancing the international comparability of the resulting statistics to the extent possible,

Endorses the following guidelines, which complement the Resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector of the Fifteenth ICLS, and encourages countries to test the conceptual framework on which they are based.

**1.** The concept of informal sector refers to production units as observation units, while the concept of informal employment refers to jobs as observation units. Employment is defined in the sense of paragraph 9 of the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth ICLS.

**2.** *Informal sector enterprises and employment in the informal sector* are defined according to the Resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the Fifteenth ICLS. For the purpose of statistics on informal employment, paragraph 19 of the Resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the Fifteenth ICLS should be applied to exclude households employing paid domestic workers from informal sector enterprises, and to treat them separately as part of a category named 'households'.

**3.** (A) *Informal employment* comprises the total number of informal jobs as defined in subparagraphs (2) to (5) below, whether carried out in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or households, during a given reference period.

(B) As shown in the attached matrix, informal employment includes the following types of jobs:

- (i) own-account workers employed in their own informal sector enterprises (cell 3);
- (ii) employers employed in their own informal sector enterprises (cell 4);
- (iii) contributing family workers, irrespective of whether they work in formal or informal sector enterprises (cells 1 and 5);
- (iv) members of informal producers' cooperatives (cell 8);
- (v) employees holding informal jobs (as defined in subparagraph (5) below) in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or as paid domestic workers employed by households (cells 2, 6 and 10);
- (vi) own-account workers engaged in the production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household (cell 9), if considered employed according to paragraph 9 (6) of the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth ICLS.

(C) Own-account workers, employers, members of producers' cooperatives, contributing family workers, and employees are defined in accordance with the latest version of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE).

(D) Producers' cooperatives are considered informal, if they are not formally established as legal entities and also meet the other criteria of informal sector enterprises specified in the Resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the Fifteenth ICLS.

(E) Employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is, in law or in practice, not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave, etc.). The reasons may be the following: non-declaration of the jobs or the employees; casual jobs or jobs of a limited short duration; jobs with hours of work or wages below a specified threshold (e.g. for social security contributions); employment by unincorporated enterprises or by persons in households; jobs where the employee's place of work is outside the premises of the employer's enterprise (e.g. outworkers without employment contract); or jobs, for which labour regulations are not applied, not enforced, or not complied with for any other reason. The operational criteria for defining informal jobs of employees are to be determined in accordance with national circumstances and data availability.

(F) For purposes of analysis and policy-making, it may be useful to disaggregate the different types of informal jobs listed in paragraph 3 (2) above, especially those held by employees. Such a typology and definitions should be developed as part of further work on classifications by status in employment at the international and national levels.



4. Where they exist, employees holding formal jobs in informal sector enterprises (cell 7 of the attached matrix) should be excluded from informal employment.

5. *Informal employment outside the informal sector* comprises the following types of jobs:

- (i) employees holding informal jobs (as defined in paragraph 3 (5) above) in formal sector enterprises (cell 2) or as paid domestic workers employed by households (cell 10);
- (ii) contributing family workers working in formal sector enterprises (cell 1);
- (iii) own-account workers engaged in the production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household (cell 9), if considered employed according to paragraph 9 (6) of the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth ICLS.

6. Countries, which do not have statistics on employment in the informal sector, or for which a classification of employment by type of production unit is not relevant, may develop statistics on informal employment, if desired, in specifying appropriate definitions of informal jobs of own-account workers, employers and members of producers' cooperatives. Alternatively, they may limit the measurement of informal employment to employee jobs.

7. Countries, which exclude agricultural activities from the scope of their informal sector statistics, should develop suitable definitions of informal jobs in agriculture, especially with respect to jobs held by own-account workers, employers and members of producers' cooperatives.

### **Conceptual Framework: Informal Employment**

Production units by type	Jobs by status in employment								
	Own-account workers		Employers		Contributing family workers	Employees		Members of producers' cooperatives	
	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal
Formal sector enterprises					1	2			
Informal sector enterprises <sup>(a)</sup>	3		4		5	6	7	8	
Households <sup>(b)</sup>	9					10			

(a) As defined by the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (excluding households employing paid domestic workers).

(b) Households producing goods exclusively for their own final use and households employing paid domestic workers.

Note: Cells shaded in dark grey refer to jobs, which, by definition, do not exist in the type of production unit in question. Cells shaded in light grey refer to formal jobs. Un-shaded cells represent the various types of informal jobs.

**Informal employment:**

Cells 1 to 6 and 8 to 10.

**Employment in the informal sector:**

Cells 3 to 8.

**Informal employment outside the informal sector:**

Cells 1, 2, 9 and 10.

The Breakdown of Martinique's Informal Sector

**Martinique's Informal Sector According to Hussman's Grid (2002)**

Production Units by Type	Jobs by Status of Employment						
	Own Account Workers		Employers		Contributing Family Members	Employees	
	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Informal	Formal
Formal Sector Enterprises					1. & 5. 15.1%	2. & 6. 23.1%	
Informal Sector Enterprises	3. 29.1%		4. 0%			7. 4%	
Households	9. Unattainable via Enquête Emploi Martinique				***	10. 13.2%	

**\* The remaining 15% of the Martiniquais informal sector population is comprised of inactive and unemployed persons who engage in informal sector work but for which there is not sufficient information to place them in a specific cell.**

**\*\* The column "Members of Producers' Cooperatives" was deleted since the Enquête emploi Martinique does not currently detect this type of informal activity. Therefore, cell 8 is missing in the above chart.**

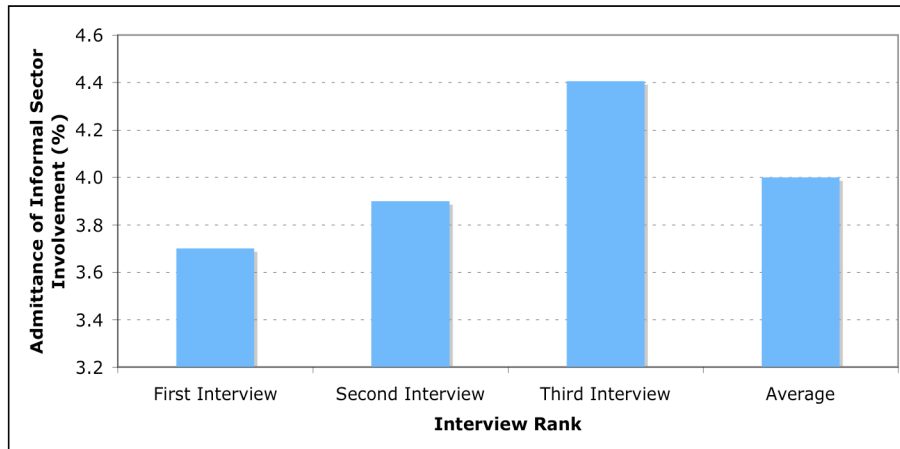
## Annex 2

### Trust influences informal sector admittance rates

Each household is interviewed three years in a row by the same interviewer. Willingness to admit to informal sector participation increased with each year: 3.7% of households claimed involvement in the informal sector during the first interview versus 4.4% during the third interview. This suggests that as the interviewees become more comfortable with and more trusting of the interviewer they are more likely to admit to informal sector activity. When the difference in the rates of admittance are taken into account, it is predicted that the informal sector in Martinique is underestimated by at least 19%, pushing total involvement in the informal sector to 29% of the working population.

#### Admittance to Informal Sector Involvement According to Interview Rank

Units: %



Field: Martinique, population age 15 and older  
Source: Enquête Emploi Martinique 2008

## Annex 3

### Data Collected on the Martiniquais Informal Sector: INSEE Martinique's Employment Survey

INSEE Martinique, located in Fort-de-France, is responsible for administering the annual employment survey. INSEE states in the Introduction to the survey documentation "Fichiers individus et ménages" that its main goal is to accurately assess employment and unemployment conditions in Martinique according to the standards set by the ILO (International labor organisation). Accordingly, the survey aims to add to employment data collected in metropolitan France, better understand employment in the DOMs as it pertains to the specificities of the active population, and gather more information about employment sectors that are not covered by administrative sources (e.g. unsalaried workers, informal employment, etc.). In order to do so, INSEE surveys individuals, between the ages of 15 and 75, from 5,200 households for three consecutive years<sup>1</sup>. Households are chosen so that they are representative of the population at large. In total, 9,000 to 10,000 people are interviewed each year. The first interview is conducted at the interviewee's household while the following two are conducted via telephone. The survey is composed of thirteen modules, each of which contains questions about a specific aspect of the interviewee's state of employment/unemployment.

- The section of the survey concerning "occasional employment" was adjusted to refer to **activity within the last month** rather than within the previous 7 days (as is used in the Metropolitan France).
- Only individuals between the **ages of 15 and 75** are accounted for in the survey.
- **In cases where multiple professions are held, the interviewee chooses which is to be considered the primary profession, secondary, etc.** Should they hesitate, the profession to which the most time is dedicated shall be considered primary. If they occupy equal amounts of time, the primary profession should be considered that which provides the highest remuneration.
- **Employment** shall be defined as exercising a profession that is remunerated by an employer.

In accordance with the above definitions, unincorporated household enterprises producing goods and services for its own final use are not considered as part of the informal sector. In other words, enterprises must produce goods and/or services intended for purchase outside of the household. Additionally, familial workers that work nine or fewer hours of non-remunerated work per week shall not be considered as taking part in the informal sector. Accordingly, I have modified Hussmanns's grid to reflect its presence in the Martiniquais economy. Also included in this cell are unremunerated domestic workers that work nine or fewer hours per week<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Each year one third of the population sample is cycled out while others are brought in to replace them. This staggering allows for more stable data collection.

<sup>2</sup> Unremunerated domestic workers that work more than nine hours per week are included in cell 10 as informal domestic employees.

## Bibliography

7th Meeting of the Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group) New Delhi, 2 - 4 February 2004

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