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Latin America: Evolution Of Per Capita Gross Domestic Product, 1981-1986 (s/s)

by John Neagle

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For Latin America as a whole, growth in per capita gross domestic product last year reached a six-year high at 1.2%. However, the cumulative results of the 1981-1986 period show a per capita GDP decline of 7.6%. According to preliminary estimates by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in 1986 Mexico and Bolivia tied for first place in per capita GDP decline at -6.3%. At the other extreme, Peru was in the lead with a 5.9% increase in per capita GDP, closely followed by Brazil at 5.7%. In the 1981-1986 period, Bolivia experienced the largest decline in per capita GDP, i.e., a negative 27.3%. Next in line in terms of negative per capita growth are Venezuela with a -21.9%, and Guatemala, -20.7%. At the other extreme, Cuban per capital GDP (social product) increased 38.6%, followed by Brazil at 4.0%. The table below summarizes annual per capita GDP growth rates for 1981 through 1986, and cumulative variation by country for the six-year period. Latin America: Evolution of Per Capita Gross Domestic Product, 1981-1986

| Country | Annual growth rates | Cumulative variation | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------|------|------|------|-----------|
| | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1981-1986 |
| Latin America | -1.9 | -3.7 | -4.7 | 0.9 | 0.4 | | |
| 1.2 - 7.6 America (exc. Cuba) | | | | | | | |
| Argentina | -8.2 | -7.8 | 1.4 | 0.6 | -5.9 | 3.9 | -15.5 |
| Barbados | -2.7 | -5.9 | -0.4 | 2.4 | -0.6 | | |
| Bolivia | -2.3 | -5.4 | -9.0 | -3.5 | -4.4 | -6.3 | -27.3 |
| Brazil | -4.2 | -0.8 | -4.8 | 2.6 | 5.9 | 5.7 | 4.0 |
| Chile | 3.5 | -14.5 | -2.2 | 4.3 | 0.7 | | |
| Colombia | 0.1 | -1.1 | -0.3 | 1.4 | 0.4 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| Costa Rica | -5.0 | -9.7 | 0.0 | 5.1 | -1.7 | 0.4 | -11.0 |
| Cuba (a) | 15.3 | | | | | | |
| Ecuador | 0.8 | -1.8 | -4.0 | 1.5 | 1.4 | -1.2 | -3.3 |
| El Salvador | -9.6 | -6.5 | -0.2 | 0.5 | 0.1 | -1.8 | -16.7 |
| Guatemala | -1.8 | -6.1 | -5.4 | -2.8 | -3.7 | -2.8 | -20.7 |
| Guyana | -2.6 | -12.6 | -12.0 | 3.9 | -0.1 | | |
| Haiti | -4.4 | -5.2 | -1.1 | -1.4 | | | |
| Honduras | -2.4 | -4.9 | -3.9 | -0.3 | -1.8 | -1.2 | -13.8 |
| Jamaica | 1.1 | -1.5 | -0.2 | -1.4 | -6.7 | | |
| Mexico | 5.4 | | | | | | |
| Nicaragua | 2.0 | -4.4 | 1.3 | -4.8 | -5.9 | -3.1 | -14.1 |
| Panama | 1.7 | 2.7 | -2.2 | -2.5 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 1.3 |
| Paraguay | 5.3 | -4.0 | -6.0 | 0.0 | 0.9 | -1.9 | -6.0 |
| Peru | 1.3 | -2.5 | -14.2 | 1.2 | -1.0 | 5.9 | -10.1 |
| Dominican Republic | 1.5 | -1.1 | 1.9 | -1.9 | | | |
| Trinidad and Tobago | -0.8 | -0.5 | -10.6 | -7.6 | -4.2 | | |
| Uruguay | 0.9 | -10.3 | -7.0 | -3.2 | -0.2 | | |
| Venezuela | -3.9 | -4.1 | -8.2 | -3.7 | -3.2 | -1.0 | -21.9 |

(a) Refers to social product Source: Table 3, p. 14, "Preliminary Overview of the Latin American Economy 1986, CEPAL No. 438/439, December 1986. Population figures are taken from CELADE estimates published in BOLETIN DEMOGRAFICO Vol. XIX, No. 38, July 1986. 1986 figures are preliminary and subject to revision.

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