

## Business, management

### RR 99/196 International Marketing Data and Statistics 1999 (23rd edition)

**Euromonitor**

**London**

**1998**

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### RR 99/197 European Marketing Data and Statistics 1999 (34th edition)

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We last looked at these titles a year ago (*RR* 98/122) and as usual found very much in their favour. Their collection and presentation of a mass of international data is a model for information work, fashionably as a supposedly new idea but really our task always: finding relevant data or information, compiling it consistently and intelligibly, and presenting it clearly so as to allow for cross-checking or comparison. That is the answer to information overload: finding the right amount of the right information for each user at the right time. Ranganathan spelled it out for us many years ago. These, and other similar publications from this publisher and from many others, exemplify the principle on a successful commercial scale.

Successful they obviously are: no title reaches its 23rd or 34th edition if it is not hitting its target market or fulfilling its purchasers' requirements. These two titles must by now be bywords in most marketing and commercial reference collections; and "if it ain't broke, don't fix it", so that these two latest editions are much as before, except that both have been "considerably expanded". This expansion seems to be mainly within the data itself where 1997 is taken as the reporting year but with a considerable number of long-term trend tables stretching back to 1977 where data are available; this is especially valuable for analysing socio-economic trends.

So, once more we are presented with complete data for every country in: (the Europe volume) the EU, EFTA, Eastern Europe, and Other Europe (Cyprus, Gibraltar, Malta, Monaco, Turkey); and (the International volume) North America, South America, the Caribbean, Central America, Central Asia, Southern Asia, Japan, ASEAN/NIC, East and South-East Asia, Australasia, the Pacific, the Middle East, North Africa, West Africa, East and Central Africa, and Southern Africa. The data begin with demographic trends and forecasts; there are some inevitable data reporting gaps here, so if, for example, it is the divorce rate in Papua New Guinea which interests you, then you are out of luck. These are followed by economic indicators, then banking and finance and external trade, labour force indicators, industrial resources and output, energy resources and output, defence, environmental data, consumer expenditure patterns, and retailing and retail distribution. These in turn lead on to advertising and media patterns, consumer market sizes, consumer prices and costs, housing and household facilities, health and living standards, literacy and education, and finally the specific sectors of communications, automobiles, transport, travel and tourism, cultural indicators, and income and earnings. More than 500 statistical tables thus tell you all you are likely to need to know about the world in this context.

Each volume opens with a useful guide to the use of the handbook, a directory of official organisations country-by-country (complete with ever increasing numbers of Websites) and a thirteen-point textual analysis of each country. Each volume is completed by a rather general index, although this presents no great problem since the clarity and regularity of the contents and their organisation, with a detailed contents page, serve well enough to find the wealth of data included.

This is all deceptively simple, but the clarity of the layout and comprehensiveness of the coverage mask an enormous amount of work and expertise in compiling and presenting this data in a standardised format. The cost of trying to compile it otherwise would be prohibitive, even on a local or restricted scale, so the value of this work easily justifies its price to any business, economic or general statistical collection.

**Stuart James**

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