

GTAP activities 2005-2006
Tinbergen Institute (Joe Francois)

This is a brief report on GTAP-related activities since those reported at the last board meeting. It is not exhaustive, but does highlight main points related to publication and training.

1. CEPR course: A course for post-doctoral researchers in CEPR-administered RTNs (research and training networks) was given by the Tinbergen Institute. This four-day course was on economic modeling in GAMS, including both econometric applications and the GTAP model. The goal of the GTAP module was to attempt to teach the GTAP-in-GAMS suite for use by CEPR post-docs working on trade and development issues. This in turn provided a good opportunity to evaluate the GTAP-in-GAMS packages as a tool for CGE beginners. The results, to be honest, were mixed.
2. An EU-sponsored course: Another course on GAMS-based modeling will be given, under an EU program, to East European economists this summer. This will provide an opportunity to get the relevant teams (in Ukraine, Belarus, etc) focused on developing GTAP-type datasets.
3. Model development: A medium term plan is to develop a different set of model code for teaching, building on the course experience in (1) and (2) and on what has now become a very useful set of data extraction tools for GEMPACKtoGAMS file conversion, developed by Tom Rutherford and Mark Horridge. One observation from the experience with the CEPR course is that, when teaching use of the GTAP data to a GAMS audience, VIEWHAR is a dominant tool, even for *.GDX tools. It proved quite useful, and the addition of *.GDX features makes the GTAP data much more accessible to GAMS-based users. Mark Horridge should be commended for this.
4. PhD students: Hugo Rojas-Romagosa finished his PhD in 2005, and went back to the Costa Rican Central Bank, where he used GTAP to support CAFTA negotiations. Since January 2006, he is now working for the CPB in the Hague. This includes the WORLDSCAN model and related FDI projects.
5. Services data: With World Bank and Dutch funding, we have started on the naïve and simple task of mapping/concording available FDI, trade, and foreign affiliate transactions (FATS) data on services in to a data. These will be made publicly available as each stage is completed (with a GNU-type license). Help would be greatly appreciated. Help that locks us into proprietary/limited access models for data distribution is not really wanted though, as the goal of the project is public access data. See <http://www.intereconomics.com/services>.
6. GTAP tech paper: A draft technical paper on quantifying adjustment costs in the GTAP model is now being circulated for comment.
7. Publications: I have had several publications in 2005-2006 using GTAP data, including papers in *Economic Policy*, the *World Bank Economic Review*, and *World Development*.

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