

Statistical Institute of BELIZE

1902 Constitution Drive
Belmopan, Belize C.A.



GDP

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

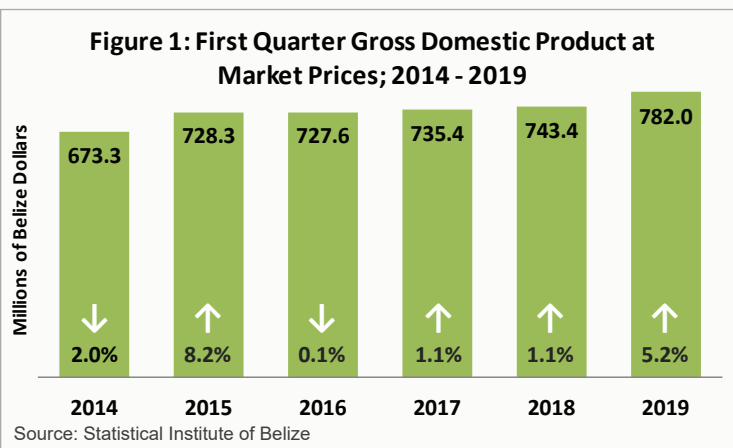
1ST QUARTER 2019

ECONOMY GROWS
5.2%

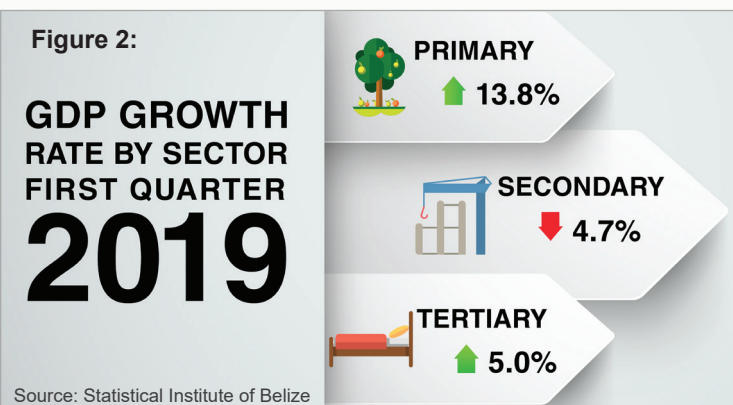
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ECONOMY GROWS 5.2% IN FIRST QUARTER 2019: PRIMARY AND TERTIARY ACTIVITIES UP, SECONDARY ACTIVITIES DOWN

For the first three months of 2019, the level of economic activity for the country of Belize increased by 5.2 percent when compared to the same period of 2018. Preliminary estimates by the Statistical Institute of Belize indicated that the value of goods and services produced during the first quarter of this year was \$782 million, up \$38.6 million from \$743.4 million produced during the same quarter of 2018 (see Figure 1).

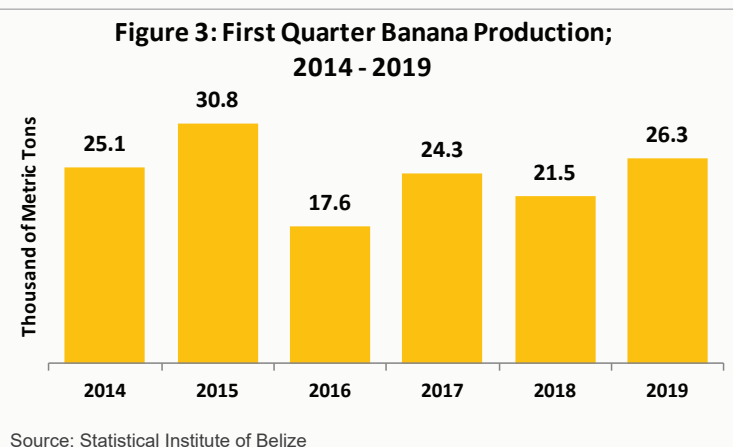


The primary and tertiary sectors both experienced notable growth during the first quarter of 2019, with primary activities increasing by 13.8 percent, due largely to higher sugarcane, banana, and livestock production, and tertiary activities rising by 5 percent, as a result of growth in tourism and wholesale and retail trade. The secondary sector, on the other hand, contracted by 4.7 percent (see Figure 2), as electricity generation and construction activities declined during the quarter.



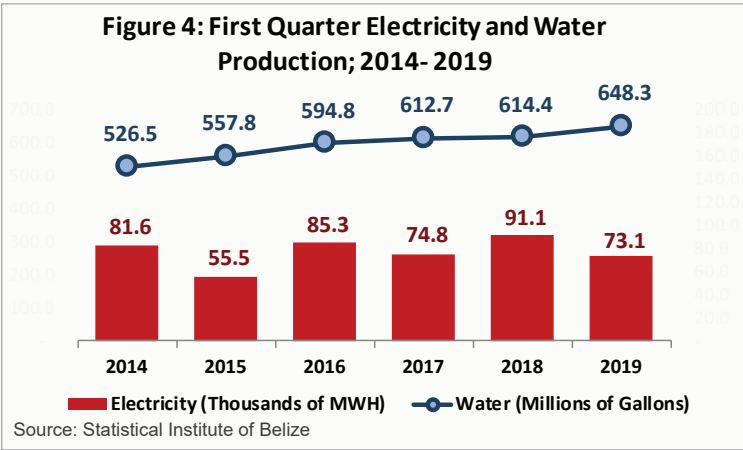
PRIMARY ACTIVITIES: The primary sector experienced the largest rate of growth, at 13.8 percent, when compared to the first quarter of 2018. Sugarcane deliveries rose by 16.4 percent, from 653.9 thousand metric tons to 760.8 thousand metric tons, while banana production expanded by 22.5 percent, from 21.5 thousand metric tons to 26.3 thousand metric tons. The boost in production for both of these major crops was attributed to favourable weather conditions during the period (see Figure 3).

Livestock production also contributed positively to the growth in the primary sector for the first quarter, with cattle production increasing by 8.7 percent and pig production rising by 11.3 percent. Nonetheless, the increase in cattle and pig production was somewhat dampened by a 1.1 percent reduction in poultry production, resulting



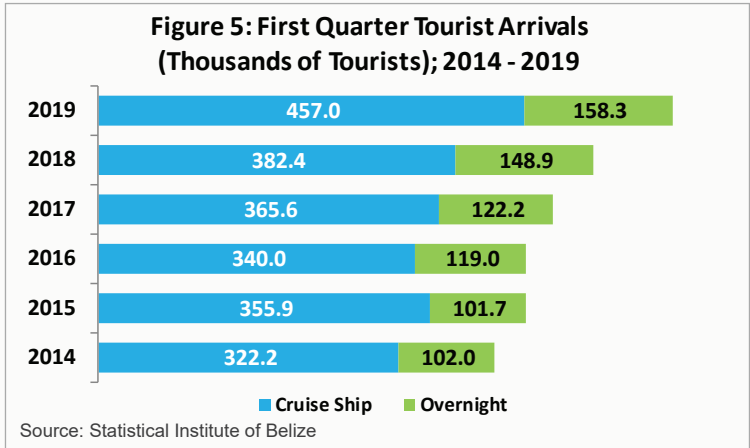
in an overall growth rate of 1.8 percent for the livestock industry. Marine exports rose by 34 percent, largely due to a 69 percent increase in sales of shrimp, coupled with a 57.5 percent increase in exports of conch and a 5.9 percent increase in lobster meat exports. Conversely, citrus production dropped by 6.3 percent when compared to the first quarter of 2018, with orange fruit deliveries down, due to a late start to the production period and a shortage of workers in the industry.

SECONDARY ACTIVITIES: The secondary sector, which accounts for almost one fifth of the country's economic activity, declined by 4.7 percent during the first quarter of 2019 when compared to same period of 2018. Production in the 'Electricity & Water' subsector declined by 16.1 percent, the result of an almost 20 percent decline in electricity generation, due to insufficient rainfall in the Vaca reserve area (see Figure 4). This decline was only partly offset by a 5.5 percent increase in water generation, due to growth in market demand.



'Construction' activities experienced a decline of 2.9 percent when compared to the first quarter of 2018, as reflected in a drop in loans for construction, while crude petroleum extraction decreased by 17.2 percent, as reservoirs continue to be depleted. The 'Manufacturing and Mining' sector, on the other hand, grew by 3.1 percent during the first quarter of this year, mainly due to a 4.4 percent increase in beer production and a 2.9 percent increase in soft drink production. Sugar production also contributed positively to the performance of the manufacturing sector, with production of this commodity up by 17.8 percent, from 71.7 thousand metric tons in the first quarter of 2018 to 84.5 thousand metric tons in the first quarter of 2019, due to the improved quality of sugarcane harvested.

TERTIARY ACTIVITIES: The services sector, which accounts for more than half of the country's total economy, grew by 5 percent during the first quarter of 2019, when compared to the same period of 2018. The 'Hotels and Restaurants' subsector grew by 6.8 percent, due primarily to a 6.3 percent increase in overnight visitors for the period, from just under 148 thousand persons in the first three months of 2018 to more than 158 thousand persons in the same period of this year. The number of visitors from Canada rose by 10.3 percent, while the number of European tourists was up 5 percent and visitors originating from the United States of America increased by 4.9 percent. Cruise visitors also grew by a substantial 19.5 percent, from 382 thousand persons to 457 thousand persons, with the addition of 11 more cruise ship calls during the quarter (see Figure 5).



'Wholesale and Retail Trade' recorded an increase of 9.9 percent during the period, as evidenced by an expansion in merchandise imports, while 'Government Services' rose by 1.2 percent compared to the first quarter of last year. The 'Transport, Storage and Communication' sector grew by 4 percent, due primarily to an increase in freight.