



The Urban Caribbean: Transition to the New Global Economy

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The Urban Caribbean studies urbanization in five countries—Costa Rica, Haiti, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica—during the 1980s and 1990s when the region's economy shifted from one heavily dependent on imports to one directed more to producing exports. This shift caused producers and entrepreneurs to rely more on microenterprises, thus challenging the informal economy networks of the central cities. Sociologist Alejandro Portes and the other contributors use rich, in-depth data to examine both qualitative and quantitative changes in these five countries. Their research method allows them to make generalizations applicable to all five economies while retaining the concreteness of the similarities and differences that make each country unique.

"This volume is an incentive to other collaborative efforts to chart the paths taken by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean as they seek to accommodate to the new global political and economic context....The message of the volume is a convincing one. Because of similarities in the trends affecting countries of the region and policy debates, each country can benefit from the experiences of the others. However, the differences in political structure and in the nature of citizenship mean that social and economic policy debates must take into account the national context."—from the Foreword, by Bryan Roberts, University of Texas-Austin

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