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**New facilities in PIPS 3.3.1**

PIPS version 3.3.1 has been modified to run in both Vista and Windows 7 environments. It also contains a facility to convert from ACCESS to SQL database. It also includes an improved imputation procedure, which, however, needs further improvement.

**Aggregation of regional indices**

From an estimation point of view there is one problem remaining in PIPS which has to do with the imputation of missing observations.

When calculating national estimates and regional (area) estimates, the regions do not yield the same result when aggregated to the national level. This has to do with the imputation procedures which at the national level uses the full sample while for each region only the sample for that region is used. Thus, there can be different estimates for the imputed observations depending on whether the full sample (national) or partial sample (regional) is used.

One way to fix this would be to set up a separate imputation module that only uses the full sample, and passes the data along to the aggregation modules for national and regional estimation. For countries that need area estimates one can set up separate DBs for each region and then copy the estimates for the regions to an Excel spread sheet to aggregate to the national level using the area estimates.

This is an issue that should be addressed in future PIPS development.

**The use of COICOP**

The product coding is based on COICOP-ICP, so that the products in the sample must be forced into this structure. A future improvement would be to modify the system so that the user can easily update the titles (not codes) that appear in the system. In the current system titles would have to be changed in two ACCESS DB tables: tblICPSPD and tblSPD.