



## **United Nations Expert Group on Tourism Statistics**

Jointly organized by UNWTO and UNSD  
25 – 28 June 2007, New York, USA, at the UN Headquarters

### **Report of the meeting**

**Madrid, New York**

**September 2007**

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## **I. Purpose**

1. The purpose of the meeting was to review, amend and endorse the provisional draft of International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics (IRTS) which is to be submitted to the thirty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) for adoption (26-29 February 2008).
2. The Draft presented at the meeting is the outcome of different initiatives carried out by UNSD and UNWTO regarding the revision of the 1993 Recommendations on Tourism Statistics:
  - (i) an electronic forum in which a comprehensive set of proposals was presented for discussion was active from April to October 2006;
  - (ii) an International Workshop on Tourism Statistics was held in Madrid in July 2006. It was attended by 79 participants representing 33 countries and 7 international and regional organizations, with the purpose of collecting proposals, recommendations and suggestions to a first draft;
  - (iii) UNWTO Committee on Statistics and Macroeconomic Analysis of Tourism actively participated in the revision process and provided valuable inputs to a second draft in particular through a meeting held in Lisbon on March 26-28, 2007;
  - (iv) the Provisional Draft of IRTS was subject to worldwide consultation during the period May-June 2007.

## **II. Main conclusions**

3. The Group reviewed the draft and endorsed its submission to the thirty-ninth session of UNSC for adoption. Also, the Group discussed different editorial amendments to be included in each of the eight chapters as well as the addition of new paragraphs in order to clarify the present wording and make it more precise. UNSD and UNWTO were requested to take note of suggestions for the next revised draft.
4. The Group accepted UNSD's proposal to include a new chapter that will include international recommendations in several areas such as metadata, quality, dissemination, interagency cooperation, implementation programme and policy for future updates.
5. The Group agreed that several recommendations required further refinement and improvement prior to their inclusion in the draft which will be submitted to UNSC, while discussion of treatment of a number of practical data compilation issues should be moved to the follow-up Compilers Guide. In particular, the Group recommended that in final text of IRTS:
  - (i) user's needs should be more explicitly emphasized;
  - (ii) the rationale for excluding second homes used as vacation homes from the usual environment should be clearly described;

- (iii) more emphasis should be given to accommodation statistics as being an important statistical source for data collection on tourism flows; a proposed contribution to this item offered by Eurostat was welcomed;
  - (iv) should be clearly stated that each trip will be assigned only one main purpose; if, besides the activities associated with the main purpose, a visitor is engaged in other activities they should be considered as secondary;
  - (v) additional text should be included in paragraphs dealing with "education and training" and "health care" to describe more clearly either a subset of visitors or main purpose of the trip due to the importance of these flows in an increasing number of countries; the definition and classification of incentive trips (e.g., as "Personal" or "Business and Professional") needs further consultation;
  - (vi) trips with the main purpose "training", if it is a job requirement and fully paid by the employer, should be classified as "Business and Professional" and not as "Personal";
  - (vii) in the case of travel parties, it should be explicitly recognized that different methods could be used for assigning purposes to their members and discussion of the related measurement issues be deferred to the follow-up Compilers Guide;
  - (viii) should underline that, although included in tourism expenditure, acquisition of valuables and consumer durables during a trip should be separately identified to ensure reconciliation with Balance of Payments and National Accounts;
  - (ix) the chapter on economic classifications of products and productive activities related to tourism should be refocused and redrafted.
  - (x) chapter 7 should be reviewed to clearly specify the difference between single and multiple job holders engaged in the tourism industries as well as their treatment and count
6. The Group also agreed with the proposal to establish an Editorial Team consisting of the chairs of the different sessions of the Expert Group meeting as well as of UNSD and UNWTO. The team will be requested to express its agreement to the final Report and consulted on different editorial issues during the preparation of the final draft of IRTS to be submitted to UNSC.

### **III. Time schedule for the final revision process of the IRTS**

7. UNWTO is requested to prepare a document (to be circulated by mid July) with a proposed new drafting of those paragraphs where participants expressed disagreement as indicated in paragraph 5 of the present report except the revised chapters 5 and 7.

8. The revised Provisional Draft of IRTS should be posted on UNSD and UNWTO websites during the first week of September for the final phase of a world-wide consultation. UNSD and UNWTO will inform national statistical offices, tourism administrations and international/regional organizations about availability of the revised draft and ask for comments.
9. UNSD and UNWTO will incorporate country comments into the draft IRTS and make the amended draft (as well as original country comments) available to Editorial Team for review. The final version of the Provisional Draft endorsed by the Editorial Team will be submitted by UNSD and UNWTO to the thirty-ninth session of the UN Statistical Commission.

#### **IV. Other issues**

10. The Group discussed the first draft of the updated *The Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework* document and:
  - (i) expressed its support for the inclusion of different types of clarifications, including the updated presentation of the tables; and
  - (ii) agreed with the focus used for presenting IRTS references in order to make consistent both international standards.
10. A second draft of TSA: RMF will be prepared by UNWTO and posted on the UNWTO website by mid September.

**Annex 1. Agenda**

**The United Nations Expert Group on Tourism Statistics**

Jointly organized by UNSD and UNWTO Statistics Department

New York, 25-28 June 2007

**Provisional Agenda**

**25 June - Morning session (Chair: Vladimir Markhonko, UNSD)**

- 9:00 – 9:20      Registration
- 9:30 – 10:00    (1) Opening statement by UNSD Director  
                      (2) Administrative matters  
                      (3) Adoption of the agenda
- 10:00 – 10:30    (4) Activities leading to preparation of the provisional draft of International  
                          Recommendations on Tourism Statistics (IRTS) and expected outcomes of  
                          the EG meeting
- Joint UNWTO/UNSD presentation
- 10:30 – 10:50    *Coffee break*
- 10:50 – 12:30    (5) **Chapter 1. Development and needs of tourism statistics**
- Joint UNSD/UNWTO presentation  
General discussion
- 12:30 – 14:00    *Lunch*

**25 June - Afternoon session (Chair: Christopher Jackson, Statistics Canada)**

- 14:00 – 15:30    (6) **Chapter 2. The demand perspective: Basic concepts and definitions**
- Travel and Tourism
  - Definitions
- UNWTO presentation
- 15:30 – 15:50    *Coffee break*

15.50 – 17.00 (7) **Chapter 2 (continued)**

- Forms of tourism
- International and domestic visitors
- Measuring flows of visitors

UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

**26 June - Morning session (Chair: Antonio Massieu, UNWTO)**

09.00 – 10.30 (8) **Chapter 3. The demand perspective: characterization of visitor and tourism trips**

- Personal characteristics of the visitor
- Characteristics of tourism trips

UNWTO presentation

10.30 – 10.50 *Coffee break*

10.30 – 12.30 (9) **Chapter 3 (continued)**

- Measuring the characteristics of tourism trips and visitors

UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

12.30 – 14.00 *Lunch*

**26 June - Afternoon session (Chair: [pending])**

14.00 – 15.30 (10) **Chapter 4. The demand perspective: Tourism expenditure**

- Measuring the characteristics of tourism trips and visitors
- Coverage of tourism expenditure in terms of goods and services
- The when and where of tourism expenditure
- Categories of tourism expenditure
- Classification
- Measuring tourism expenditure

UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

15:30 – 15:50 *Coffee break*

15.50 – 17.00 **(11) Chapter 5. Economic classifications of products and productive activities for tourism**

- Tourism expenditure and the product dimension
- Tourism-specific products
- From tourism-specific products to tourism-characteristic products and activities
- Tourism-characteristic products and activities

Joint UNSD/UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

<b>27 June - Morning session (Chair: Tom Ylkanen, Finland, Finnish Tourism Board)</b>
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09.00 – 10.30 **(12) Chapter 6. The supply perspective: concepts and definitions**

- The establishment as the basic unit
- Classifications
- Characterization of tourism industries
- Selected tourism industries and their typical output
- Measuring the supply of services of tourism industries

Joint UNSD/UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

10.30 – 10.50 *Coffee break*

10.50 – 12.30 **(13) Chapter 7. Employment in the tourism industries**

- Concepts and definitions
- Employment as supply and demand of labour
- Classifications
- Measuring employment

ILO/UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

12:30 – 14:00 *Lunch*



**27 June - Afternoon session (Chair: Viviana Depino de Aviles, Argentina, INDEC)**

14.00 – 15.30 **(14) Chapter 8. Understanding tourism in its relationship with other macroeconomic frameworks**

- The TSA approach
- Tourism and Balance of Payments
- Measuring tourism at sub-national levels
- Tourism and sustainability

UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

15:30 – 15:50 *Coffee break*

15.00 – 17.00 **(15) Chapter 9. Supplementary topics (metadata, quality and dissemination)**

Joint UNSD/UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

**(16) Chapter 9. Supplementary topics (interagency cooperation, implementation programme and policy on future updates)**

Joint UNSD/UNWTO presentation  
General discussion

**28 June - Morning session (Chair: Lydia Mbonde, South Africa NTA)**

09.00 – 10.00 **(17) Update of *The Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework***

UNWTO presentation

10.00 – 10.30 *Coffee break*

10.30 – 12.30 **(18) Update of *The Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework* (continued)**

General discussion

13.00 – 14.00 *Lunch*

**28 June - Afternoon session (Chair: Scott Meis, UNWTO consultant)**

14.00 – 17.00 (19) Roundtable discussion on the EG conclusions

(20) Evaluation of the meeting

(21) Conclusion of the meeting

## Annex 2. List of participants



**UNITED NATIONS EXPERT GROUP ON TOURISM STATISTICS**  
Jointly organized by UN Statistics Division and  
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UN Headquarters, New York  
25-28 June 2007

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