Background

In accordance with <u>GA Resolution 71/313</u>, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) will conduct a Comprehensive Review of the global indicator framework in 2024 with the aim to submit its proposed revisions, replacements, additions and deletions to the 56^{th} session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2025 for its consideration.

Types of proposal

Proposals will fall into one of these four groups:

- A. **Replacements**: a proposal to replace an existing indicator for an SDG target with a different indicator; will be considered if the existing indicator does not map well to the target or does not track the target well.
- B. **Revisions/adjustments**: a proposal to revise or adjust an existing indicator for an SDG target; will be considered if the current indicator does not map well to the target or does not track the target well.
- C. Additions: a proposal to add an additional indicator for an SDG target; may be considered only in exceptional cases when a crucial aspect of a target is not being monitored by the current indicator(s) or to address a critical or emerging new issue that is not monitored by the existing indicators.
- D. **Deletions**: a proposal to delete an existing indicator for an SDG target; may be considered when a tier II indicator has not been able to submit any data to the global SDG monitoring or is proven to be challenging for countries to implement. A proposal to delete an indicator will not be considered if it is the only indicator monitoring the corresponding target.

Guideline/checklist

To help prepare the proposal, below are some guiding principles and helpful and/or required information. The IAEG-SDGs will <u>not</u> be able to properly review and consider submissions without the required information.

- The review aims to maintain the same number of indicators currently in the framework to not alter significantly the original framework, which is already being implemented in most countries and to not increase the reporting burden on national statistical systems.
- A proposed indicator must have an agreed methodology (tier III indicator proposals will not be considered) and data available for at least 40% of countries and of the population across the different regions where the indicator is relevant and be suitable for global monitoring.
- The addition of a sub-indicator within an existing indicator is discouraged as it adds to the reporting burden.
- Each submission proposal must include:
 - o Background and rationale for the indicator proposal
 - o Information on how and when the methodology has become an international standard and who is the governing body that approves it (except for proposals to only delete an indicator)
 - o Link to available data and/or link to where data can be located (except for proposals to delete an indicator)
 - Completed metadata template (except for proposals to only delete an indicator). The metadata of proposed revisions/adjustments must be submitted with the track changes.
- Except for proposals to delete an indicator, it is highly recommended to consult the appropriate custodian agency(ies) prior to submitting the proposal to use their indicator.

For more information on the 2025 Comprehensive Review process, please refer to the following webpage.

ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE. PLEASE SUBMIT THE COMPLETED FORMS AT:

bit.ly/2025 review BY 30 APRIL 2024

If you encounter issues with the online form, please contact the IAEG-SDGs Secretariat (statistics@un.org).

To be completed by and submitted to the Secretariat for the IAEG-SDGs review during the 2025 Comprehensive Review. All fields are required unless otherwise indicated; incomplete forms will not be considered. *Please use one submission form per proposal. If you have more than one proposal, please submit one form for each proposal.*

Submitter information							
Please enter information abou	t the focal	point of this submission.					
Full Name: Click or t		ap here to enter text.					
Agency/organization name:	World To	urism Organization (UN Tourism)					
Email address:		ap here to enter text.					
		•					
Please list other contacts and c	other ageni	cies/organizations (if any) associated wit	h this submission below.				
Full Name		Agency/organization name:	Email address:				
Click or tap here to enter text.		ILO	Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.		CARICOM	Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.		Austria and Spain (Chairs of the UN	Click or tap here to enter text.				
		Tourism Committee on Statistics);					
		Saudi Arabia (Vice Chair of the UN					
		Tourism Committee on Statistics)					
		Type of proposal					
L. This is a proposal for a(n): (p	olease seled	ct only one):					
☐ REPLACEMENT : to r	replace an	existing indicator for an SDG target with	a different indicator.				
☐ REVISION/ADJUSTM	IENT : to re	vise or adjust an existing indicator for an	SDG target.				
☑ ADDITION: to add a	n addition	al indicator for an SDG target.					
☐ DELETION : to delet	e an existir	g indicator for an SDG target.					
2. Please enter the SDG Target	this propo	sal is for (please enter the SDG target nu	mber. For example, 11.c):				
Target 8.9: By 2030, devise a local culture and products	nd implem	ent policies to promote sustainable tour	rism that creates jobs and promotes				
local culture and products							
Ba. For " REPLACEMENT " or " D	ELETION " p	roposals, please enter the indicator nam	ne <u>and</u> number you are proposing to				
eplace or delete:							
Click or tap here to enter tex	t.						
Bb. For " ADDITION " proposals,	, please ent	er the name of the indicator you are pro	pposing to add:				
Indicator 8.9.2 Employed per	sons in the	tourism industries					
	23113 111 1110						

3c. For "REVISION/ADJUSTMENT" proposals, please enter the existing indicator name <u>and</u> number you are proposing to revise/adjust:

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Overview of proposal

4. Background and rationale for the proposal (please provide a summary of the rationale for the proposal)

This proposal for adding the indicator "Employed persons in the tourism industries" is made for the following reasons:

1. It covers a crucial aspect of the SDG target 8.9 currently not monitored

Currently, SDG target 8.9 ("by 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products") is only monitored by the SDG indicator 8.9.1: "Tourism Direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate".

The internationally agreed definition of sustainable tourism defines it as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts [...] It is a continuous process and requires constant monitoring of impacts". This definition—as well as the Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission that contains this definition—acknowledges that sustainable tourism is a multi-faceted concept, and that therefore a single indicator is insufficient to monitor the different economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable tourism. The Framework lays out some indicators for monitoring the economic, social and environmental aspects of tourism respectively, including "Employed persons in the tourism industries" as a meaningful and realistic indicator for monitoring the social sustainability of tourism.

The current SDG indicator 8.9.1 focuses on the economic dimension of tourism's sustainability and mainly the Target's aspect on the "promotion (sustainable) tourism". This means, however, that a critical aspect of the target—"tourism that creates jobs"—is currently not covered by an indicator.

In addition, while the 2030 SDG agenda puts people at its centre with Goal 8 on Decent work and explicitly mentions employment in tourism in the SDG target 8.9, these crucial aspects are currently not monitored by any SDG indicator.

The proposed indicator "Employed persons in the tourism industries" will fill this visible gap. The proposed indicator is statistically solid and based on internationally agreed methodology. A majority of countries worldwide are already producing data on this indicator, with international reporting mechanisms already in place at UN Tourism and ILO.

Moreover, it can not be generalized that the evolution of tourism employment is correlated with the evolution of tourism direct GDP—as demonstrated by countries' data. Indeed, in important tourism destinations, these indicators behave quite differently over time, supplying valuable complementary information.

2. It addresses a critical policy issue that has become increasingly prominent in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, employment in tourism emerged as a critical issue in societies around the world. The drop in tourism put millions of people out of work, hindering the sector's contribution to sustainable development and to leaving no one behind. Like never before, employment was recognized as the principal mechanism whereby tourism sustains livelihoods and distributes welfare in developing and developed countries/areas alike.

Tourism is an engine of both economic and social development, impacting a range of industries and their value chains, and fostering job creation and entrepreneurship. Tourism is labour-intensive and offers employment opportunities for persons entering the labour market for the first time or who have difficulties finding employment elsewhere. It provides opportunities for lower-skilled workers, disadvantaged groups, unemployed youth and the long-term unemployed, as well as women with family responsibilities and others who can only take part-time jobs.

It is through employment that tourism can drive positive social change in communities, acting as a tool for social cohesion, providing income opportunities in remote or rural areas, and mobilizing income for cultural heritage protection and environmental conservation.

Given the increased recognition in the post-COVID-19 world of tourism's pivotal socio-economic role, adding an indicator on "Employed persons in the tourism industries" is of high policy relevance.

3. It responds to the requests of the United Nations (UN) Statistical Commission

The UN Statistical Commission adopted a series of decisions over the past years that have led up to this proposal.

At its fifty-first session held from 3 to 6 March **2020**, the Comission:

- "Agreed to and adopted the proposed major changes and minor refinements put forward in the 2020 comprehensive review, while noting concerns regarding specific indicators and recognized that the work on Sustainable Development Goal indicators is in progress, and asked the Group to continue its annual refinement, research and methodological work to improve the global indicator framework, including addressing important policy issues, such as sustainable tourism and climate change"; (Decision 51/101(d))

At its fifty-second session held from 1 to 5 March 2021, the Commission:

- "Encouraged the Group to continue to implement and refine indicators, and requested the Group to work with relevant custodian agencies to develop and test a methodology for indicators on sustainable tourism, in preparation for submission at the 2025 comprehensive review, as this indicator is of particular importance to the least developed countries, landlocked least developed countries and small island developing States" (Decision 52/101(e));

At its fifty-third session held from 1 to 4 March 2022, the Commission:

- "Noted that the CARICOM countries expressed concern that indicator 8.9.2 [employment in the tourism industries] was deleted as a result of the 2020 comprehensive review" (Decision 53/102(p));
- "Requested the IAEG-SDGs to work in close coordination with the custodian agency [UN Tourism] on a proposal for indicators on sustainable tourism to better monitor target 8.9" (Decision 53/102(q));
- "Approved the proposed work programme of the [IAEG-SDG] Group and requested the inclusion of the work on sustainable tourism" (Decision 53/102(r)).

At its fifty-fourth session, held from 28 February to 3 March 2023, the Commission:

- "Welcomed the establishment of a task team on sustainable tourism to develop a detailed proposal for better monitoring of target 8.9 to be ready for submission to the 2025 comprehensive review, taking into account and leveraging the work being done by other groups working in this domain and existing statistical infrastructure in countries" (Decision 54/101(m));

At its fifty-fifth session, held from 27 February to 1 March 2024, the Commission:

- "Expressed its appreciation for the progress made by the working groups on geospatial information and the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange and the task team on sustainable tourism" (Decision 55/103(f));

At the same time, the Commission, already in its forty-eighth session from 7 to 10 March 2017:

- "Supported the development of the statistical framework for measuring sustainable tourism by the working group of experts on measuring sustainable tourism of the World Tourism Organization, which will include the development of indicators for sustainable tourism, measurement at the subnational level and pilot projects, and noted the interest of a number of countries in participating in these pilot projects"; (Decision 48/115(b))

And, at its fifty-fifth session, held from 27 February to 1 March 2024, the Commission (Decision 55/115):

- "Endorsed the statistical framework for measuring the sustainability of tourism;
- "Welcomed the further development of the programme of work on measuring the sustainability of tourism, including an implementation programme [..], and requested UN Tourism to undertake further capacity-building activities to ensure that countries are able to report on the indicators for the sustainability of tourism"

4. Extensive research and development in collaboration with ILO to define an optimal indicator

Extensive research and development work has taken place over the past years, through UN established intergovernmental processes, to develop the Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism, which

was endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission at its fifty-fifth session from 27 February to 1 March 2024. This new internationally agreed standard provides the main concepts, definitions, aggregates and data organization structures for measuring the key economic, social and environmental aspects of tourism.

Based on this conceptual framework, and through narrow collaboration and data research with ILO, a tourism employment indicator was selected that optimizes the criteria of (i) agreed methodology and conceptual rigour, (ii) policy relevance and alignment to the Target and Goal, and (iii) data availability.

This proposed indicator—"Employed persons in the tourism industries"— builds on the work of the IAEG-SDG Task Team on sustainable tourism. It also draws on the expertise of the wider tourism statistics community that discussed the matter in several dedicated expert meetings and during the UN Tourism Committee on Statistics, and builds on three decades of tourism statistics and measurement expertise.

5. Please indicate how and when the methodology has become an international standard and who is the governing body that approves it (except for proposals to only delete an indicator).

The proposed indicator "Employed persons in the tourism industries" is rooted in the <u>Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism</u> that has been endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission at its fifty-fifth session held from 27 February to 1 March 2024 (<u>decision 55/115 (b)</u>), and following the adoption of the Framework by the UN Tourism General Assembly held from 16 to 20 October 2023 (<u>resolution A/RES/756(XXV)</u>).

The Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism was developed with the support from the UN Statistical Commission and provides an integrated framework to guide the production of data on the economic, social and environmental sustainability of tourism at the global, national, and subnational levels. It supports efforts to produce data that is more comparable, integrated, and credible to better guide decisions and policy concerning sustainable tourism, including the SDGs. The development of the Statistical Framework builds on and is consistent with other well-established statistical frameworks such as the <u>International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008</u>, the <u>Tourism Statistics 2008</u>, the <u>Tourism Statistics 2008</u>.

6. Link(s) to available data and/or to where data can be located to demonstrate the 40% coverage threshold (except for proposals to only delete an indicator)

UN Tourism Statistics Database – Persons employed in the tourism industries: https://pre-webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2024-04/unwto-employment-data_01.xlsx

ILO Tourism Sector Employment dataset: https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/?table_filter=OUR ILO Employment by economic activity – ISIC level 2:

https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer52/?lang=en&id=EMP TEMP SEX STE EC2 NB A

UN Tourism and ILO are collaborating to integrate, and make the most of, the relevant information compiled from countries by both entities. The ILO Tourism Sector Employment dataset (at ISIC level 4) is used to fill data gaps in the UN Tourism Statistics Database for "Employed persons in the tourism industries". Should this data not be available, country data from the ILO Employment by economic activity – ISIC level 2 dataset is re-organized and adjusted to comply with the definition of tourism industries (at ISIC 4 level). These country adjusted data values are pending consultation and validation by national statistical authorities, and have therefore not been published yet. UN Tourism will finalize the dataset, including country consultation, in the course of 2024.

The following link shows the data available for the proposed indicator: 153-8.9.2.xlsx.

7. In case the current data coverage is below 50%, is there a plan for how the data coverage will be expanded? Please elaborate on it (except for proposals to only delete an indicator).

In line with the above, data availability for the proposed indicator is over 70% (for number of countries) and over 90% (for population). UN Tourism, in collaboration with ILO, is committed to further enhancing the coverage through capacity development and other activities as part of the implementation strategy of the Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism. This will include the sharing of best practices, the development of a compilation guide, and the delivery of national and regional capacity-building initiatives through training and workshops. In addition, UN Tourism plans to put sustained effort into liaising with countries to improve response rate and data coverage on tourism employment by, among other things, more closely accompanying their reporting efforts and upscaling the engagement of labour statisticians (in addition to the usual tourism statistics contact points).

8. Conclusion/other comments (please enter any other information about the proposal):

The proposed indicator "Employed persons in the tourism industries" responds to the overall intent of Target 8.9 to "promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs" and corresponding Goal 8 on economic growth and decent work. By complementing existing indicator 8.9.1 on tourism direct GDP, the proposed employment indicator provides policymakers with a richer understanding of progress on Target 8.9 and of tourism' role in achieving the SDGs.

The proposed indicator is highly relevant to policy and responds to an emerging policy issue, one that is especially critical to developing countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The COVID-19 pandemic amplified the realization that tourism—through its income (indicator 8.9.1) and employment (proposed indicator 8.9.2) generation—sustains livelihoods, wellbeing, and conservation efforts worldwide. Tourism is often vital for sustainable development in remote, rural and natural places, and offers employment opportunities for diverse groups of people. Despite tourism being one of the largest economic sectors globally, and especially meaningful to SIDS and developing countries, there are currently only 2 indicators related to tourism in the SDG Global Indicator Framework and this proposed indicator will bring that number to only 3 indicators—thus not significantly altering the total number of indicators in the framework.

The proposed indicator reflects extensive research and development through intergovernmental processes and in collaboration with ILO, to define an indicator that optimizes the criteria of: (i) agreed methodology and conceptual rigour (it is based on the UN endorsed Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism), (ii) high policy relevance and responds to issues emerged with respect to the Target and Goal that are currently unmet in the indicator framework, and (iii) data availability in countries (with existing reporting mechanisms by ILO and UN Tourism), thus avoiding additional reporting burden for countries. Consequently, the proposed indicator "Employed person in the tourism industries" classifies as Tier I.

- 9. Metadata file (except for proposals to only delete an indicator).
- ☑ I/We have attached the appropriate metadata file to this proposal.
- 10. Acknowledgement.
- ☑ I/We have read and understand the information regarding the guiding principles, criteria and requirements for the 2025 Comprehensive Review proposals listed above.