

Item 20 “Designing a strategic alliance between NTA and NSO in compilation of tourism statistics and its analytical applications”

Observation from WTO: One of the findings of the past Iguazu Conference “The TSA: Understanding tourism and designing strategies” was on the relevance of promoting a strategic alliance between NTAs and CSOs. As recorded in the document prepared by UNWTO, setting up a TSA is a great opportunity to develop a strategic alliance at the national level between the CSO and the NTA, which could generate important mutual benefits.

On the one hand, in the majority of countries, the CSOs are in charge of compiling the National Accounts, of which the TSA is a satellite. This circumstance, and the obvious fact that the development of the TSA should be linked to the development of the national system of statistics, would by themselves explain the central role that belongs to the CSOs. Furthermore, the preparation of the TSA requires the use of techniques such as sampling, the design of general surveys, and specific applications to households and productive units in order to develop tourism statistics from the perspectives of both demand and supply.

On the other hand, the NTA provides the CSO with greater insight and focus regarding the economic impact of the movement of persons for tourism purposes over the borders and within the economic territory.

This strategic alliance should lead to the development and continuity of the official statistics necessary for both the TSA project and the design of strategies on the part of the NTA.

In order to develop credible strategies, the NTAs need rigorous measurements of the expenditure by visitors (either associated with international arrivals or tourism movements of residents within the economic territory) as well as of the activities of industries that cater to them (value of output, value added, employment, prices, etc.).

The objective of including this issue as item 20 of the Agenda is to have the opportunity to discuss about it and to present some national experiences (with their own findings, potentials, challenges, difficulties, etc.) and not just have a declaration of principles.

Argentina is in a process of calculation of the first TSA. The aim of the work was to develop a statistic system of tourism in Argentina, and to compile the basic information for these estimates.

The work of the Institutional Platform of TSA began in 2000, as an strategic alliance between NTA, the National Statistics Bureau, and the tourism private sector (CTA, Camara Argentina de Turismo). Argentina had, before, different statistical procedures with no harmonization of definitions and classifications, and lacked of time series.

The Interinstitutional Platform of the CST-A this constituted by:

a) National Tourism Administration (SECTUR): Governing organism of the tourist policies at national level.

b) National Bureau of Statistic and Census (INDEC): it has the direct responsibility in the methodological design, organization of the national statistics works, and surveys, and the production of other basic statistics. The INDEC also has the responsibility to coordinate the National Statistical System - SEN -, under the principle of normative centralization and executive decentralization. This means that the INDEC is responsible for the methodological and normative development for the production of official statistics, assuring the equivalence of the information originated in different sources. The National Statistical System is integrated by the statistical services of the national, provincial and municipal organisms. In each province a Direction of Statistic - DPE-, dependent of the

provincial government exists. These Directions coordinate the Provincial Statistical System, and they do the capture and processing of information in the provinces. This is consolidated by the INDEC or other national services for the obtaining of information at national level. The production of statistical information is done with different methods from data collection (administrative censuses, surveys, registries, etc.), that allow the construction of indicators in relation to different thematic areas.

c) National Migration office, Dirección Nacional de Migraciones (DNM): Its primary target is to promote the regularization of the migratory situation of the foreigners in the national territory, and to accomplish the migratory control of entrance and exit of the people and the permanence of foreign citizens. For the profit of his mission it works jointly with other law enforcement organisms (Gendarmeria, Prefectura Naval Argentina, National Aeronautical Police and the Department of INTERPOL of the Federal Police Argentina, that act the as of migratory auxiliary police).

d) Camara Argentina de Turismo (CAT): It is the private sector representation, whose main target is the private promotion, hierarchical structuring and development of the Tourism, for which it will group to the different sectors from the tourist activity.

With these institutions the SECTUR signed the agreement named: "Plan of Action for the Development of the TSA".

After this, a TSA technical commission is created. The president of this commission is Mr. Fernando Cerro, National Director of Cuentas Nacionales (INDEC), in charge of the elaboration of the GDP of Argentina. It is formed by the SECTUR Direction of Studies of Market and Statistics and the Area of Investigation CST, the National Direction of International Accounts (responsible for the elaboration of the Balance of Payments) and the National Direction of Statistics of the External Sector (responsible for the production of basic statistics for the elaboration of the BP), CAT and DNM.

The result of the Interinstitutional Platform was the accomplishment of a set of successful statistical procedures, that is also an important data source for the National Statistical System.

In January of 2004 two survey started, with the financing and technical support of the NTA:

- International Tourism Survey
- Hotel Occupation Survey

The International Tourism Survey, that is uninterrupted from year 2004, is made in seven important migratory positions of the country, in terms of tourist flows (two aerial ones, Ezeiza and Aeroparque Jorge Newbery Bs. As., one fluvial one, Port of Buenos Aires, and four terrestrial ones, Puerto Unzué, San Ignacio de Loyola, Systema Cristo Redentor and Tancredo Neves). It studies the visitors consumption and its opening by tourism characteristic products, the composition of the trip group, length of stay, points visited in the Argentina, organization of the trip, between the most important variables.

With the National Direction of Migraciones (DNM) a complementary act is signed in 2004, so as to use the information of international travellers, used for the expansion of the sample information of the International Tourism Survey.

The EOH it is a new experience in Argentina and demanded an important effort between the SECTUR, INDEC and the Tourism Private Cameras (CAT, FEHGRA and AHT), for the definition of the variables and hotel owners support of the survey. The EOH was made during the 2004 in 17 localities of the country (50% of total of accommodation rooms) extending the sample to a total of 39 localities in 2005. The profit was a regional and national statistical representativeness for the studied variables. Between the most important variables, EOH captures the occupation in hotel and similars, the stay of travelers, their origin (resident: provinces, nonresident: country of residence), and the prices of the services.

The Interinstitutional Platform of the CST in Argentina is a successful case of interinstitutional collaboration in national statistics, that allows to obtain the set of basic information for the implementation of the TSA with budgetary efficiency. The surveys that the SECTUR finances help to improve the basic statistics of the country. The EOH improves the statistics of services and the ETI the statistic of the Balance of Payments.

The joint work with the INDEC allows to integrate it to the National Statistical System.

Between the pending actions, it is necessary to incorporate the Universities to the interinstitutional Platform, with the aim to foment the academic research in the subject of economic impact of the tourism, and the discussion of TSA methodology.

At the same time, this joint work with regional statistics offices allows to study the methodologies of regional estimation of similar aggregates, and to measure in different regions and provinces the impact of the tourist activity in the economy, in a consistent way with regional accounts.