

## **INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON TOURISM STATISTICS**

Jointly organized by UN Statistics Division and UNWTO Department of Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism

UNWTO Headquarters, Madrid, Spain  
17-20 July 2006

### **Agenda item 5 – Organization of the workshop and expected outcomes**

Statement by  
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Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to join other distinguished speakers in welcoming you to the International Workshop on Tourism Statistics. I am very much impressed by the interest expressed by so many national tourism administrations, national statistical offices, other national agencies and international organizations in improving international recommendations on tourism statistics. I would like to make the following remarks:

1. The revision of Recommendations is supported by the UN Statistical Commission and the draft revised recommendations will be submitted for its adoption. The Commission members are national statistical offices and UNSD in its capacity of the Secretariat of the Commission has to ensure that countries are properly consulted of the future draft. In the case of tourism statistics this implies consultations with both national statistical offices and national tourism administrations as well as data users.
2. Countries should be given an opportunity to clearly express their views on any aspect of the revision process including the process, conceptual framework, practical matters of data compilation.
3. In this context UNSD supports the electronic forum created by the UNWTO and I would encourage those countries, which didn't do it yet, to register and provide their comments. Also, I would suggest that you contact your colleagues in other countries and encourage them to do the same.
4. This workshop, from the UNSD perspective, is one of the key events in preparation of the revised recommendations. Both UNWTO and UNSD made a special effort to bring in one room representatives from NSOs and

- NTAs in expectation of creating an opportunity for an enlightening discussion on various substantive issues as well as on how to make further progress in strengthening institutional arrangements underpinning tourism statistics.
5. We also invited a number of international and regional organizations active in compilation or use of tourism statistics to provide us with their perspective on the revision process and be available to answer questions from country representatives.
  6. The main expected outcome of the workshop is a set of conclusions of the workshop which might include assessment of the revision process, proposals on the contents of the future publication as well as on treatment of specific issues. Such conclusions will be used by UNWTO and UNSD to calibrate further the revision process and to formulate the draft revised recommendations. Those conclusions, together with other inputs, will provide a basis for creating a draft revised Recommendations which has to be prepared relatively early in 2007, circulated to countries and considered in mid 2007 by the Expert Group mentioned by the UNSD Director in his opening statement.
  7. We hope also that the workshop will assist tourism statisticians employed in various agencies to better know each other and more actively communicate bilaterally or multilaterally in future.
  8. UNSD sees this current revision of international recommendations on tourism statistics as part and parcel of promoting an integrated approach towards national statistical systems – approach which (1) recognizes a range of needs in statistics from policy makers in governments to analysts in business community to variety of concerned organizations active in assessing economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism and (2) attempts to meet those needs using the harmonized concepts and data compilation methods in order to achieve maximum efficiency and minimize reporting burden. This implies that we have to take into account work done in connection with TSA, SNA, BOP and SITS revision processes, as well as already approved revisions of activity and product classifications. One of the outcomes of the workshop can be a more clear understanding of how this can be achieved.
  9. This explains why the workshop agenda is loaded with discussion of user needs, conceptual frameworks, data sources and data compilation methods, institutional arrangements and also provides an opportunity to talk about how to revise tourism statistics so that it will be better suitable for measuring economic significance of tourism (TSA) as well as for assessing its social and environmental impacts.

Thank you and I wish us all intense and fruitful discussions.