

# **Tourism Statistics: Challenges and Good Practices**

**Regional Workshop for the CIS countries**

## **Data collection and processing for accommodation statistics**

**Item 6**

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# Accommodation statistics - preliminaries



## IRTS 2008 (para 2.70-2.77; measurement of domestic tourism):

- no international borders (Shengen), the observation of the flows of domestic tourism requires the use of different statistical procedures;
- accommodation statistics are an important statistical source of information on domestic and inbound visitors;
- Measurement challenges nonetheless arise in terms of separating out visitors from other travelers, and domestic from inbound visitors;
- number of nights spent is the variable measured, good indicator of the magnitude of travel within the country as it not only reflects the visit itself but also the length of stay;
- accommodation statistics are often based on a census operation covering establishments providing paid accommodation, though very often using a threshold in terms of a specified number of bed places or of bedrooms.

# Accommodation statistics - preliminaries



## IRTS 2008 (para 2.70-2.77; measurement of domestic tourism):

- unpaid accommodation (i.e. stays with friends and relatives, trips to owner-occupied vacation homes) is excluded;
- provide important short-term indicators for the evaluation of domestic and inbound overnight travel, as they are generally available quickly;
- collected on a census basis, it is possible to obtain data for a deeper regional breakdown;
- connecting data about the localities where the accommodation establishments are located, which can often be derived from existing registers without additional workload for the respondents,
- Enriching the information directly collected with additional information about, i.e. the type of localities where travel takes place.

# Accommodation for visitors



## IRTS 2008, para 6.24-6.26:

- Short-term accommodation services are provided, either
  - ✓ on a commercial (market) basis, that is as a paid service, though the price might be subsidized or
  - ✓ on a non-commercial (non-market) basis, either as a service provided without charge by family or friends or on own account (owner occupied vacation homes). Time share properties also fall under the latter category but are treated differently.
- Data collection on accommodation services from the supply side offers the opportunity to cross-classify with information on the types of destinations where the accommodation establishments are located.
- These may be characterized by classes based on population size, geographic characteristics (seaside, mountains, etc.) or other characteristics, such as spa resorts, places of historical interest, native accommodation.

# Accommodation for visitors



## IRTS 2008, para 6.26 and 6.27:

- The linking of this information on type of locality with the results of data collection on accommodation services offers an interesting approach to more in-depth analysis of different market segments on the basis of the data collected within the survey.
- This information can mostly be obtained directly from existing registers.
- Creating internationally comparable categories has proven to be difficult because there is no agreement on common relevant discriminant characteristics because of the great diversity of services provided that are also associated with differences in economic development and factor costs (mainly labour costs) among countries.
- In addition, the terminology used for groups of establishments providing similar accommodation services often differ across countries and languages and even within countries.

## Accommodation for visitors



### IRTS 2008, para 6.28 and 6.29:

- Countries are encouraged to make their own groupings for national or regional application. The groupings should provide a relevant segmentation of the broad categories of productive activities shown in ISIC,
- Accommodation is sometimes marketed as an implicit package in which other services, such as food serving services, recreation services, spa, use of swimming pools, fitness centers, etc., are also provided and are not separately invoiced.
- It might be relevant for countries to take these different accommodation “packages” into account in their national classification of establishments and of products, as the differences have an impact both on the prices charged and on the amounts spent by visitors on other goods and services (provided as a package in the former case, to be purchased separately otherwise).

# Accommodation for visitors



## IRTS 2008, para 6.31 and 6.32:

- There is already a long tradition of using non-monetary indicators collected from the supply side to monitor the capacities and use of the accommodation establishments;
- It is an important source of information not only for the accommodation industry but also for tourism policy, administration and promotion.
- In a more detailed regional breakdown, the data of the accommodation statistics are most frequently the only source of information on tourism flows.
- The number of arrivals and nights spent are the most used indicators. Of these two, nights spent are more appropriate
  - ✓ to reflect the performance of the accommodation industry and the impact of the tourists stay for the place visited,
  - ✓ as this indicator takes into account the full effect of the duration of the stay.

# Accommodation for visitors



## IRTS 2008, para 6.34:

- The following variables are most frequently used to describe the accommodation capacities:
  - ✓ average length of stay (dividing the number of nights spent by the number of arrivals)
  - ✓ Months operating in the year
  - ✓ Number of rooms or accommodation units (gross, net) (the net indicator takes into consideration the fact that rooms might not always be available for guest accommodation)
  - ✓ Number of bed places (gross, net) (the net indicator takes into consideration the fact that bed places might not always be available for guest accommodation)
  - ✓ Occupancy rates (gross, net) by rooms or accommodation units (an indicator to be associated with revenue per room)
  - ✓ Occupancy rates (gross, net) by bed places (an indicator to be associated with flows of visitors)
  - ✓ Revenue per available room



# Accommodation statistics: Advantages/disadvantages



## Advantages:

- survey directly at the tourist accommodation, at the reception;
- mainly census based, including commercial accommodation;
- based on administrative data (i.e. policy registration);
- date related inbound and domestic tourism;
- nights spent and arrivals by country of origin (residence) in paid tourist accommodation;
- easy to implement in small regions.

## Disadvantages:

- same-day visitors are not considered;
- free tourist accommodation is not considered (VFR, vacation homes);
- socio-demographic information is hardly available or other tourism related information (i.e. expenditure, purpose);
- double counting of arrivals (round trips);
- participation/cooperation of accommodation owners is necessary;
- data on private paid accommodation is hardly available.

# Accommodation statistics - the case of Austria

