

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON TOURISM STATISTICS

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

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Agenda item 7 - Overview of 1993 Recommendations

Statement by
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Dear Colleagues,

I would like to say few words about *Recommendations for Tourism Statistics* and concentrate a little more on how I see the revision process.

1. *Recommendations for Tourism Statistics* were adopted more than 13 years ago. They served well international statistical community and were incorporated in national methodologies of tourism statistics worldwide and in practical guidance on compilation of relevant data. However, a lot has changed since 1993 – in terms of more clear articulation of various user needs, conceptual developments in the related to tourism statistics areas and in country practices in data compilation. All this makes the revision of the existing recommendations necessary.
2. Current *Recommendations* deal mostly with the basic concepts, which is good, but more conceptual clarity is needed. For instance, we have to make sure the revised text incorporates, to the extent possible, relevant revisions already made in TSA, reflects changes approved in the ongoing revision process of SNA/BOP, international activity/product classifications and in Statistics of International Trade in Services.
3. While making a decision on whether to endorse certain concepts or recommendations we, I think, should put them first to certain tests such as on being operational and not creating significant additional reporting burden. These all is necessary to ensure uniform implementation and, as a result, maximum possible cross-country comparability.
4. Recommendations should be clearly linked to the user needs. Therefore, a more detailed review of such needs would be a good idea – needs of various user

groups such policy makers in governments, market and efficiency researchers in tourism industry, civil society in general. We have to make sure that the revised recommendations on tourism statistics will serve them all in the most adequate way.

5. Current *Recommendations* do not provide much practical guidance. In UNSD view this is an area where more work has to be done. The revised Recommendations should provide policy guidance on practical matters including on data sources and data compilation methods. Obviously, we have to keep in mind that always there is a border line between what can go into a document which supposed to be adopted by the UN Statistical Commission and what can be elaborated in the follow-up technical publications – such as compilers guides and technical reports. Yet, to better assist future work of tourism statisticians and to ensure better data comparability we feel that policy guidance on a number of practical matters should be incorporated in the international recommendations on tourism statistics as it is being done in other areas of statistics.
6. As many national agencies are involved in compilation of the basic tourism statistics guidance on institutional arrangements between the involved governmental agencies is needed;
7. Compiled data has to be made available to users in a fast, convenient way and be accompanied by the adequate metadata to assist data users in making their decisions regarding how to interpret the data. UNSD thinks that we need to have in the revised Recommendations guidelines on data dissemination policies;
8. Basic tourism statistics is used for development of analytical applications most notably - internationally adopted conceptual framework for measurement of economic impact of tourism – tourism satellite account. It would be useful to outline the relationships between basic tourism statistics and macroeconomic aggregates used in TSA in a separate section of the revised publication. The same is true with regard to indicators of social and environmental impacts of tourism.

Dear colleagues, as we go through the specific agenda items and discuss specific issues let us be inquisitive as well as constructive and ready to reach if not a consensus then a solid majority views on as many issues as possible.