D.1. International classifications

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7.39. The term “occupation” refers to the kind of work done during a given reference period by the person employed (or the kind of work done previously if unemployed). Information on occupation provides a description of a person’s job. In the present context, a job is defined as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person, including for an employer or in self-employment.

7.40. Jobs are classified by occupation (with respect to the type of work performed, or to be performed). This may be a past job, for persons who are unemployed, a present job, for employed persons; or a future job, for jobseekers. It is therefore important to determine whether the classification by occupation is carried out with respect to one job only or for a number of jobs. Consequently, it is important that the questionnaire specify for which job the information is to be collected the main job or the secondary job and whether this refers to the past or the future. “Main job” is often defined as the one with the longest hours usually worked during the reference period and the one for which detailed information is collected in respect of industry and occupation.

7.41. The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) provides a system for classifying and aggregating occupational information obtained by means of statistical censuses and surveys, as well as from administrative records.

7.42. ISCO-08 is a four-level hierarchically structured classification which allows all jobs in the world to be classified into 436 unit groups. These groups form the most detailed level of the classification structure and are aggregated into 130 minor groups, 43 submajor groups and 10 major groups, based on the similarity of the skill level and skill specialization required.

7.43. It should be emphasized that ISCO-08, may serve as a model but is not intended to replace any existing national classification of occupations, as the occupational classification of individual countries should fully reflect both the structure of the national labour market and relevant special national information needs.

7.44. ISCO-08 seeks to facilitate international communication about occupations by providing statisticians with a framework for making internationally comparable occupational data available, and by allowing international occupational data to be produced in a form that can be useful for research as well as for specific decisionmaking and actionoriented activities, such as those connected with international migration or job placement.

7.45. Among the key characteristics used in the retrieval and organization of labourmarket information are the occupational characteristics of both employees and jobs. It should be noted that so far, a list of tourism characteristic occupations based on ISCO-08 has not been developed.

Box VII.10

International Standard Classification of Occupations: “job”

In the context of International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), a job is defined as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person, including for an employer or in self-employment.

Through the application of this definition a job in a tourism industry could be defined as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person in an establishment that carries out a tourism characteristic activity as its principal activity.

Source: International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).

7.46. At a minimum, it is useful to collect and compile data about tourism characteristic occupations for the following reasons:

(a) There is a need to know the nature and type of jobs to be found in industries that cater to the needs of visitors and to monitor change over time;

(b) Tourism authorities and policymakers need to examine labour demand and supply in terms of occupations, skills and training requirements.

7.47. As a preliminary starting point, in this regards, Statistics Canada and the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council use an approach which is designed to identify tourism characteristic occupations.[2]

7.48. A tourism characteristic occupation is one in which employment would be significantly affected as a direct result of an absence of tourism and that satisfies each of the following four criteria:

(a) The occupation should be found within tourism industries;

(b) The occupation should involve direct contact with visitors or the supervision or management of job holders in direct contact with visitors;

(c) The tourism industries should account for a significant share of all jobs in that occupation;

(d) The occupation should make up a significant share of all jobs in the tourism industries.
As mentioned in paragraph 7.45, an agreed definition of “tourism characteristic occupation” has not yet been established. Hence, the approach just described, albeit provisional, is still useful.

[1] Two dimensions of the skill concept are used: skill level, which is a function of the range and complexity of the tasks involved, where the complexity of tasks has priority over the range; and skill specialization, which reflects type of knowledge applied, tools and equipment used, materials worked on, or with, and nature of the goods and services produced. While a national occupational classification may use references to the national educational system to define an appropriate number of skill level categories, ISCO-08 uses the UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997 to define four broad categories of skill level.


7.49. The purpose of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is to provide an integrated and consistent statistical framework for the collection and reporting of internationally comparable education statistics. The coverage of ISCED 1997 extends to all organized and sustained learning opportunities for children, youth and adults, including those with special educational needs, irrespective of the institutions or organizations providing them or the form in which they are delivered.

7.50. ISCED is a multipurpose system, designed for education, policy analysis and decisionmaking, whatever the structure of the national education systems and whatever the stage of economic development of a country. It can be utilized for statistics on many different aspects of education such as pupil enrolment, human or financial resources invested in education and educational attainment of the population. The basic concept and definitions of ISCED have therefore been designed to be universally valid and invariant with respect to the particular circumstances of a national education system. However, it is necessary for a general system to include definitions and instructions that cover the full range of education systems.

7.51. For instance, an employed person, when answering a question on highest completed level of general education at school, will base his or her response on the national classification system. Since education systems differ across countries, there is no unambiguous definition of general school education. Therefore, so that the goal of providing internationally comparable data can be achieved, as a first step, countries should use their own classification system and in a second step, where possible, a correspondence should be made with the internationally accepted International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1997).

7.52. ISCED 1997 identifies the following seven levels of education:

Level 0 - Preprimary education (provides a bridge between the home and a school-based atmosphere)
Level 1 - Primary education or first stage of basic education (offers a sound basic education in reading, writing and mathematics along with an elementary understanding of other subjects)
Level 2 - Lower secondary or second stage of basic education (completes the provision of basic education which began at ISCED 1)
Level 3 - (Upper) secondary education (begins at the end of fulltime compulsory education)
Level 4 - Postsecondary nontertiary education (captures programmes that straddle the boundary between uppersecondary and postsecondary education)
Level 5 - First stage of tertiary education (consists of tertiary programmes having an educational content more advanced than that offered at levels 3 and 4)
Level 6 - Second stage of tertiary education, leading to an advanced research qualification (reserved for tertiary programmes that lead to the award of an advanced research qualification)

7.53. The case study provided in Box VII.11 describes the relationship between jobs held and education requirements in tourism industries.

Box VII.11

Education levels: example of Canada

As often noted in the literature on tourism employment, many jobs in tourism are associated with relatively low skill and education requirements. This generalization is supported by data for Canada on persons working in tourism industries. The data showed that most tourism workers in Canada have relatively low education levels compared with Canadian workers in general. Only about 1 in 10 tourism workers (12.3 percent) hold a university certificate or degree compared with 22.3 percent of persons employed in the overall workforce. Further, 23.3 percent of tourism workers have no certificate, diploma or degree compared with 14.5 percent in Canada’s overall workforce.

However, at the industry group level within the tourism sector in Canada, the generalization about low education levels of tourism workers is not sustained. Indeed, the data on the demography of the workers in Canada’s tourism industries reveal considerable variability in the education levels of workers across tourism industry groups. Thus, in both the recreation and entertainment industry and travel services industry groups, the share of tourism workers with a university certificate or degree (22.7 percent) is approximately the same as that found in the overall Canada’s workforce. On the other hand, the share of workers in the food and beverages, accommodation, and transportation industry groups with a university certificate or degree (7.2 percent, 11.8 percent, and 11.9 percent) are much lower than those of persons employed in the overall workforce. Similarly, the share of workers in the food and beverage, and accommodation industry groups with no certificate, diploma or degree (31.9 percent and 20.6 percent) are much higher than those of person employed in the overall workforce.

7.54. Status in employment (paid employment versus selfemployment) was already briefly introduced in paragraph 7.20 above. Additional information on status in employment and on the classifications groups and use of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93)[1].

7.55. It should be noted again that for operational purpose, both IRTS 2008 and TSA: RMF 2008 recommend the use of only two groups of ICSE-93, namely, employees and the selfemployed. The rationale is that, except for employees, other ICSE-93 groups are not easily comparable across countries. Because of these differences, the only distinction made in both IRTS 2008 and TSA: RMF 2008 is between (paid) employees and selfemployed persons (employers and other nonemployees) (see also Box VII.9 for a country example).

7.56. However, this does not preclude countries from presenting data on persons employed in tourism industries classified by any other ICSE group(s) (see Table VII.2).

7.57. It is recommended that employed persons be classified to status in employment according to the following rules:

(a) A person with only one classifiable job during the reference period should be classified to the status in employment group of that job;

(b) A person with two or more jobs during the reference period should be classified to the status in employment group of the job at which he or she has usually worked the longest hours during the reference period.

7.58. The classification is based on the type of employment contract. The primary unit for this variable is a job. The main similarity criterion used to construct the classification is whether or not the remuneration received depends totally on the (potential for) profits from the sales of the goods and services that are produced by the economic unit in which the job is located. If it does, then this is considered to be a selfemployment job, and if it does not, i.e., if some of the remuneration is independent of the (potential for) profits, then this is considered to be a paid employment job.

7.59. Pursuant to paragraph 7.58, paid employment jobs may be defined as those jobs where the incumbents hold explicit (written or oral) employment contracts which give them a basic remuneration, which is not directly dependent upon the revenue of the enterprise for which they work. Persons in these jobs are typically remunerated by wages and salaries, but may be paid by commission from sales, by piece rates, bonuses or inkind payments.

7.60. Selfemployment jobs are those jobs where the remuneration is directly dependent upon the profits (or the potential for profits) derived from the goods or services produced (where own consumption is considered to be part of the profits). The incumbents make the operational decisions affecting the enterprises, or delegate such decisions while retaining responsibility (in this context, “enterprise” includes oneperson operations).

7.61. Box VII.12 presents the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93), setting out the groups of which it consists:
International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93)

The International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93) comprises the following groups:

1. **Employees**, who hold the type of jobs defined as “paid employment”. There is an agreement, which can be either formal or informal, between an enterprise and a person, whereby the person works for the enterprise in return for remuneration in cash or in kind - among whom countries may need to be able to distinguish “employees with stable contracts” (including “regular employees”).

2. **Employers**, who hold self-employment jobs (i.e., whose remuneration depends directly on the (expectation of) profits derived from the goods and services produced) and engage one or more person to work for them as “employees”, on a continuous basis.

3. **Ownaccount workers**, who hold self-employment jobs and do not engage “employees” on a continuous basis;

4. **Members of producers’ cooperatives**, who hold self-employment jobs in a cooperative producing goods and services, where the members take part on an equal footing in making major decisions concerning the cooperative.

5. **Contributing family workers**, who hold self-employment jobs in an establishment operated by a related person, and have too limited a degree of involvement in its operation to be considered partners.

6. **Workers not classifiable by status**, for whom insufficient relevant information is available, and/or who cannot be included in any of the preceding categories.

Source: International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93).

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