B.5. Measuring outbound tourism expenditure

4.72. As mentioned in connection with the measurement of visitor flows (Chapter III), outbound tourism expenditure can be measured at or near the border as outbound visitors return from their trip or, as in the case of domestic tourism expenditure, through the use of household type surveys.

4.73. Under certain conditions, the measurements of a country’s outbound tourism expenditure obtained through a household type survey can be used directly or as an input for the measurement of inbound tourism expenditure in the countries visited. When used as such an input, the measurements from the survey are known as mirror statistics (see chapt. III, sect. C.2.2.4).

Box IV.8

Compilation of information about expenditures: example of Austria

In Austria, sample surveys of the country’s population have proved to be the most efficient means of gathering information on domestic and outbound tourism expenditures. Every quarter, a representative sample of Austria’s population are questioned about their travel behaviour with the help of computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI).

In the questionnaire, travel expenses include “all expenses related to the trip”. During the interview, it is clearly stated that goods and services, bought in the name of the traveller and made available without compensation (e.g., as a gift or an invitation to a dinner, say), should also be included. During the interview, it is mentioned that imaginary rent for free accommodation should not be included.

The advantage of CATI is that the spoken text can be standardized and better monitoring of the interviews is therefore possible. Supervisors, interviewer training, pretests and interviewing instructions ensure the quality of the interviews. Plausibility checks are integrated so as to prevent typos and outliers.

Warnings, for example, are programmed to pop up during the interview if the stated expenses are below specified expenditure minimums. This gives the interviewers the opportunity restate that expenditures made on behalf of the respondent must be included. These consistency checks ensure that typos and outliers are identified during the recording phase and corrected (if necessary) immediately.

Source: Statistics Austria.