

Country experience: Australia (Chapter 14)

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14.213. In Australia, passenger transportation services are obtained from the quarterly survey of international trade in services (SITS) of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), with estimates for freight debits derived from the ABS international merchandise trade statistics. Survey responses for passenger transport are adjusted to ensure that only international services are captured, as described below.

14.214. The SITS requests non-resident providers of passenger transport services to report revenue earned from the sale of international tickets within Australia. Survey responses could therefore include tickets sold to both resident and non-resident travellers, and regardless of whether the transactions involve transport between Australia and the rest of the world or within Australia as part of an international journey. Data from the international visitors survey conducted by Tourism Research Australia and ABS overseas arrivals and departures data are used to estimate the value of international tickets sold within Australia to non-residents on non-resident airlines, and that value is deducted from the survey total for passenger transport debits. Similarly, estimates are made for the value of international tickets sold within Australia to non-residents on resident airlines, and that value is added to the survey total for passenger transport credits. It should be noted that the survey requests the same information from resident providers of passenger transport services for the sale of international tickets abroad. However, no adjustment is currently made to account for purchases by Australian residents abroad.

14.215. The value of services provided to non-residents by Australian carriers in Australia, when sold abroad as part of an international ticket (on-carriage), is collected from the carriers and allocated to travel. Services provided on purely domestic travel in Australia by non-residents, whether pre-purchased abroad or while in Australia, are also included in travel. No classification adjustments are made for non-resident earnings from residents for internal flights abroad; all earnings from sales in Australia for on-carriage in a foreign country and for pre-purchased domestic travel in a foreign country are included indistinguishably in transportation debits. Cruise fares are excluded from passenger services and included in travel, although sea passenger services sold in Australia and provided to residents travelling from one country to another and any resident sea passenger earnings are included in transportation.

Travel

14.216. The concept of *travel*, as used in MSITS 2010, is closely related to the concept of *tourism*. Thus, it is advised that trade in services compilers understand the conceptual framework of tourism statistics, including the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA). Detailed descriptions are available in two United Nations publications, *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics (IRTS) 2008* and *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework (TSA:RMF) 2008*, and in the *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide*.

14.217. In addition to the aggregate measure of travel exports (credits) and imports (debits), BPM6 and EBOPS 2010 recommend the compilation of further breakdowns of travel. Such breakdowns can be used not only to better assess the scope of travel activities and to gauge their possible impact in terms of economic activity, but also to ensure consistency between data on travel compiled in accordance with MSITS 2010 and other related statistics, such as tourism statistics, the TSA or the supply and use table.

14.218. Some of the aforementioned requirements, such as the mandatory split between business and personal travel and the breakdown of personal travel into health-related, education-related and other motives, are not new compared with the previous editions of MSITS and BPM. Other breakdowns, such as the alternative presentation of travel according to the types of goods and services, are new challenges for the BOP compilation. To meet those requirements, compilers should draw on the advantages of the increased proximity with agents directly involved in external operations and on the availability of more detailed information. Table 14.5 shows complementary data sources that can be used to compile different breakdowns.

Table 14.5
Travel breakdown: data sources (example)

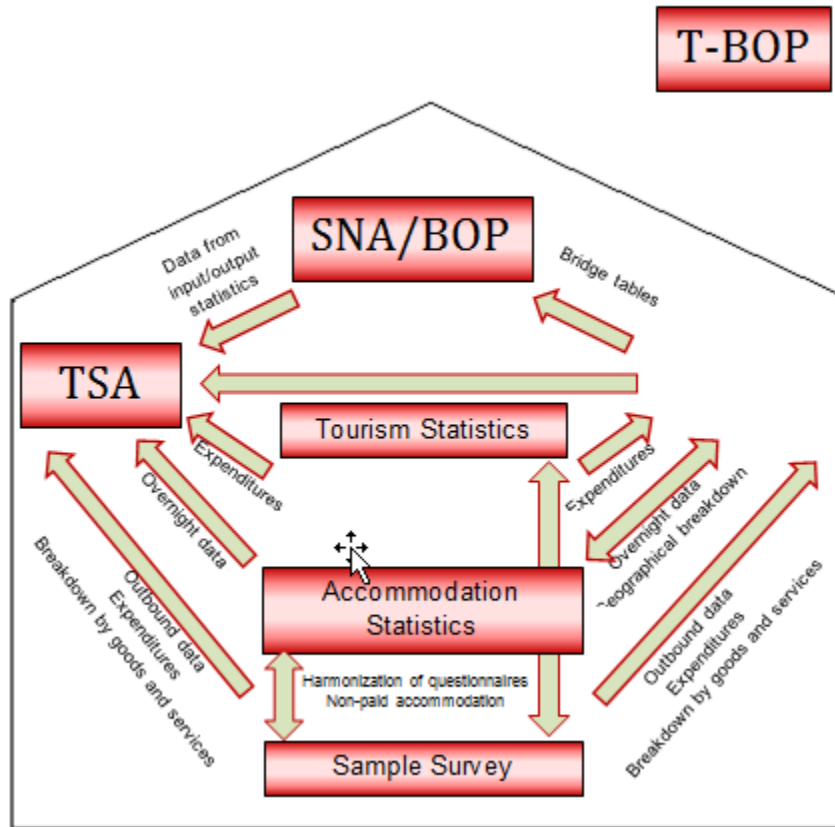
| Breakdown | Data sources |
|--|---|
| Travel purpose: business/personal | Payment card database |
| | Direct reporting: travel agencies and tour operators, visitor and household surveys |
| Personal purposes: health-related, education-related, other | Survey, administrative data |
| Group of travellers: border, seasonal and other short-term workers | Mirror statistics |
| | Survey |
| | Payment card database |
| Types of goods and services | Direct reporting: travel agencies and tour operators |
| | Survey |

14.219. When defining the specific level of detail for each breakdown, other specifications should be considered to achieve an integrated and consistent framework that provides all details required by other statistical domains, such as the TSA, national accounts and the harmonized index of consumer prices. A needs assessment is essential for understanding how the available data sources can deliver the level of detail required. For that purpose, cooperation between different statistical authorities appears crucial for reducing compilation costs, as well as for integrating diverse statistical systems and conceptual frameworks.

14.220. In particular, compilers who are responsible for estimating receipts and expenses for travel could work closely with the ministry of tourism or similar governmental agencies. Likewise, thorough discussions should take place between the compilers of trade in services statistics and the ministry of tourism when international passenger surveys and other surveys are conducted or outsourced. Such discussions would contribute to the consistency of the primary data used for the compilation of trade in services and tourism statistics, including the TSA.

14.221. The interconnected sources can be seen as rooms on different floors of a house (see figure 14.1, which is based on the experience of Austria), where the SNA serves as the rooftop, sending inputs down to the TSA and receiving input from the travel item of the balance of payments (T-BOP). The basic tourism statistics, accommodation statistics and the sample survey are major inputs for compiling the TSA and T-BOP compound statistics. The basic statistics should be harmonized conceptually and the outcomes should be reconciled where they describe the same thing.

Figure 14.1 Integrated aspects of tourism and travel statistics



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