Annex 17. The demand perspective in tourism statistics: basic concepts and definitions

This annex reproduces some paragraphs of the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 (UNWTO, 2008) (identifying the paragraph numbering originally assigned to such concepts and definitions within the UNWTO IRTS 2008); and they have been extracted and brought here as all of them are considered relevant for setting the focus of the document.

- 1. Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon related to the movement of people to places outside their usual place of residence, pleasure being the usual motivation. (para 1.1 within IRTS2008)
- 2. The activities carried out by a visitor may or may not involve a market transaction, and may be different from or similar to those normally carried out in his/ her regular routine of life. If they are similar, their frequency or intensity is different when the person is travelling. These activities represent the actions and behaviours of people in preparation for and during a trip in their capacity as consumers. (para 1.2 within IRTS2008)
- 3. Tourism has an impact on the economy, the natural and built environment, the local population at the places visited and the visitors themselves. (para 1.3 within IRTS2008)
- 4. Owing to this range of impacts and the wide spectrum of stakeholders involved, there is a need for a holistic approach to tourism development, management and monitoring. This approach is supported by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in order to formulate and implement national and local tourism policies. (para 1.4 within IRTS2008)
- 5. Having more and reliable statistics is essential for policymakers to make effective decisions. Only with sufficient and adequate data that generate credible statistics is it possible to undertake different types of analysis of tourism. This is essential in order to evaluate the different aspects of tourism and to support and improve policy and decision-making. (para 1.5 within IRTS 2008).
- 6. 1.6. Tourism statistics are necessary for designing marketing strategies, strengthening inter-institutional relations, evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of management decisions and measuring tourism throughout the national economy. (para 1.6 within IRTS 2008).
- 7. International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 focuses on the activities carried out by visitors and on measuring them with both monetary and non-monetary indicators. Its purpose is to provide a common reference framework for countries to use in the compilation of tourism statistics. (para 1.7 within IRTS2008)
- 8. The main objective of IRTS 2008 is to present a system of definitions, concepts, classifications and indicators that are internally consistent and that facilitate the link to the conceptual frameworks of the Tourism Satellite Account national accounts, the balance of payments and labour statistics, among others. In addition, general guidance with respect to data sources and data compilation methods is also provided and will be complemented by a forthcoming compilation guide. (para 1.8 within IRTS2008)⁴⁸

⁴⁸UNWTO has recently published the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide

- 9. The present focus is on the economic perspective and from this perspective tourism is defined as the activities of persons, identified as visitors. A visitor is someone who is travelling under certain conditions, namely, for holiday, leisure and recreation, business, health, education or other purposes. (para 1.9 within IRTS2008)
- 10. Tourism comprises the activities of all these categories of visitors. This scope is much wider than the traditional perception of tourists, which includes only those travelling for leisure. (para 1.10 within IRTS2008)
- 11. The notion of activities encompasses all the actions of visitors in preparation for a trip or while on a trip. It is not restricted to what are often considered "typical" tourism activities, such as sightseeing, sunbathing, visiting sites, and practising or watching sports. Being a visitor is a transient situation; once the trip is over, the individual loses his/her condition of being a visitor. (para 1.11 within IRTS2008)
- 12. As a demand-side phenomenon, the economic contribution of tourism has to be approached from the activities of visitors and their impact on the acquisition of goods and services. However, it can also be viewed from the supply side, and tourism will then be understood as a set of productive activities that cater mainly to visitors or for which an important share of their main output is consumed by visitors. These two aspects, as well as employment in the tourism industries, will be considered in the present volume. (para 1.12 within IRTS2008)
- 13. Travel refers to the activity of travellers. A traveller is someone who moves between different geographic locations for any purpose and any duration. (para 2.4 within IRTS2008)
- 14. Those who undertake travel, be it domestic, inbound or outbound, will be called domestic, inbound or outbound travellers, respectively. (para 2.6 within IRTS2008)
- 15. A visitor is a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. These trips taken by visitors qualify as tourism trips. Tourism refers to the activity of visitors. (para 2.9 within IRTS2008)
- 16. A domestic, inbound or outbound traveller on a tourism trip is called a domestic, inbound or outbound visitor, respectively. (para 2.10 within IRTS2008)
- 17. Furthermore, the travel of domestic, inbound or outbound visitors is called domestic, inbound or outbound tourism, respectively. (para 2.11 within IRTS2008)
- 18. Tourism is therefore a subset of travel and visitors are a subset of travellers. These distinctions are crucial for the compilation of data on flows of travellers and visitors and for the credibility of tourism statistics. (para 2.12 within IRTS2008)
- 19. A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor) if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise. (para 2.13 within IRTS2008).