



Focusing on border surveys:
an overview of good international practices

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I. Purposes of survey and interagency cooperation

Border surveys are needed for:

Tourism statistics (inbound, outbound, internal tourism)

Forecasting of tourism flows and expenditure

Transport planning

International migration statistics

Balance of payments

Tourism Satellite Account

I. Purposes of survey and interagency cooperation

Interagency cooperation is indispensable!

To obtain optimal survey design and to get results needed for various agencies and within available budget

To get a clear view on the division of labor including on:

survey design

conduct of interviews and facilitation of field work

data entry/processing

publication of results

advocacy

To agree on costs sharing as properly designed border surveys are expensive to set up and run.

I. Purposes of survey and interagency cooperation

Some examples of national practices

Australia:

The International Visitor Survey (IVS) represents the most comprehensive source of information on international visitors to Australia. It has been operating since the early 1970s and is jointly funded by the Australian, state and territory Governments under the guidance of the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism (ASCOT).

The survey design and management is the responsibility of the National Survey Section in Tourism Research Australia (TRA). The section works closely with the consultants, key stakeholders and industry to ensure high data quality.

II Survey preparation and field work

Determining survey population

Target population - all inbound and outbound visitors.

Actual coverage may differ from the survey target population due to various reasons (difficult to reach areas, low travelers flow, cost...)

Use of administrative sources to estimate total target population of visitors.
... provided by Immigration and border police; review and adjustments (interagency cooperation)

Development of estimation techniques

The estimates for cross-border visits on rail and scheduled bus services is difficult for all countries. Visitors using private cars is a special problem. Obtained estimates may be not reliable rather frequently. That might not be published. If published users need to be warned..

II Survey preparation and field work

Determining survey population

UK - Survey covers all main air, sea and tunnel ports and routes. May not cover passengers travelling at night. Not covered are routes too small in volume or too expensive to be covered. Same with respect to small local airports.

Australia - Survey is conducted in the departure lounges of the eight major international airports: Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Cairns, Perth, Adelaide, Darwin and the Gold Coast. Samples 40,000 departing, short-term international travelers aged 15 years and over who have been visiting the country are taken.

Usually there is an age constraint – persons 15 years old and above.

II Survey preparation and field work

Budgeting

Border surveys are costly (e.g., remuneration of staff conducting interviews, cost of equipment etc.)

Equipment - the survey might be conducted by Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI)

It is necessary to decide on acceptable level of reliability of future results (standard error of the survey and its associated confidence interval).

Preparation of training materials and training of interviewers

A trade-off between quality and costs always exists: it has to be discussed in advance and decision has to be taken; it should be reflected in metadata.

II Survey preparation and field work

Questionnaires

Number of questions (from several dozens to a hundred)

Should be clearly formulated (anticipate possible replies)

Multi-language questionnaires.

Turkey - fourteen languages: English , German, French, Arabic, Japanese ,Russian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Hebrew, Persian and Turkish.

II Survey preparation and field work

Questionnaires

Australia

The IVS contains around 100 questions supported including such sections as:

- Usual place of residence
- Repeat visitation
- Group tours
- Travel party
- Sources for obtaining information about Australia
- Purpose of visit and places visited
- Transportation and accommodation
- Activities
- Expenditure
- Demographics.

II Survey preparation and field work Identification of residency

EU Questionnaires

1. What is the nationality of your passport?
 - 1 (country conducting interview)
 - 2 Foreign
- 2a. In which country or countries have you been living for the past 12 months (apart from holidays and short trips abroad)?
Country(s) _____
- If more than one country, ask 2b; if one country, code below
- 2b. In which country are you living now?

II Survey preparation and field work

Sample design

Designing the survey is very technical; experienced staff is needed with knowledge on sampling techniques, imputation and grossing up methods (interagency cooperation)

The sample is always stratified to ensure that it is representative by major variables (by country of destination, mode of travel, visitor characteristics ...);

Cost of interviewing is an important factor to consider while taking the final decision.

II Survey preparation and field work

A number of important decisions has to be taken such as:

Sampling step (interval) (e.g., every 50th passenger is asked)

Moment when interview may start (passenger crosses a predetermined line - (e.g., enters the waiting area)

Departing passengers are sampled at a higher rate than arriving.

II. Survey preparation and field work

All interviews are conducted on a **voluntary** and **anonymous** basis.

Number of interviews Determined at the survey design stage. In many EO countries this number is less than 0.5% of all visitors (considered sufficient to obtain reliable estimates of all needed variables)

The overall response rate is about 70 – 80 %.

III. Processing survey results, publication and follow up work

Data processing

Data validation

Establishing of a database

Analysis of the obtained responses and their correction

Imputations

Weighting of responses

Calculation of aggregated data

III. Processing survey results, publication and follow up work

Seasonal adjustment

It is a good practice to compile seasonally adjusted tourism data. Such data allow more meaningful comparisons to be made between months and quarters of the year and help to identify underlying trends. Statistical techniques of such compilation are based on various software (e.g., 'X11ARIMA' US Census Bureau).

Constant prices

Some countries compile tourism expenditures on various categories of goods and services in terms of constant prices. Relevant retail price indices are used for this purpose.

III. Processing survey results, publication and follow up work

Data publication

Some monthly data are sufficiently reliable and might be published – press-release

More detailed data are on a quarterly basis – quarterly bulletins

Detailed annual national estimates are created by combining the four quarters of the year – tourism statistic yearbooks

Tourism statistics should be on the websites; access to the tourism databases and ensuring confidentiality (agreement on dissemination of any individual data is needed)

Publication of metadata

III. Processing survey results, publication and follow up work

Other follow up work

Analysis of the gained experience and plans for future improvements in the organization and methodology of surveys

Advocacy with respect to work done and obtained results – coordinated actions of all involved agencies, use of mass-media, engaging representatives of tourism industry.

Thank you for your attention!

