Agenda item 4.1

Flows of inbound and outbound visitors: An introduction to a group discussion

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Content

I. International travelers included considered as visitors

II. Clarifications on selected categories of travelers

III. Estimation of total number of international visitors
Part I - International travelers considered as visitors:

Non-residents (foreign citizens, who are non-residents of the visited country as well as citizens who are non-residents)

Visiting country
1. For any purpose except for being employed by the resident unit of the visited country;
2. For less than one year;
3. Leaving the usual environment (some parts of another country may be a part of the usual environment).

Reasons why certain international visitors are excluded from visitors:

a) being in an employer-employee relationship (border, seasonal and other short-term workers);

b) Are within their usual environment;

c) Are residents of the extraterritorial enclaves that are part of the territory of the country they represent - diplomats, consular staff, military personnel of foreign Governments (other than locally engaged staff) as well as accompanying or joining dependents;

d) Are nomads and refugees. For nomads, by convention, all places they visit are part of their usual environment so that beyond the difficulty in certain cases of determining their country of residence, they are not visitors. For refugees or displaced persons with no place of usual residence, their place of stay is considered to be their usual environment, so they are not visitors either.

e) A special mention needs to be made regarding individuals who are changing their country of residence: they should not be included in tourism.
Part II. Clarifications on selected categories of travelers

Nationals residing abroad (non-residents)

Because immigration authorities are often not interested in collecting information on this group of non-residents entering the country, some countries exclude those presenting a national passport or a national identification card from the obligation of filing entry/departure cards. So administrative data might not be sufficient for the identification of such visitors.

However, these persons are non-residents with respect to the country of reference and should be included in the scope of non-resident travelers. If relevant, the subset of visitors among these travelers could be shown separately for analytical purposes.
Part II. Clarifications on selected categories of travelers

**Transit passengers.** In principle, only those persons making a stop and entering the legal and economic territory should be considered as visitors and their purpose of trip should be transit.

**Crews on public mode of transport,** either regular or irregular, should be considered as within their usual environment and thus excluded from visitors. **Crews on private mode of transport (corporate jet, yacht, etc.) are considered as visitors.**

**Cruise ship passengers and yachters.** Because of the required consistency of the notions of residence and economic territory with those used in the national accounts and balance of payments, their treatment in tourism statistics will depend upon the application of these concepts to the cruise ship on which they arrive and leave.

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**Frequent border-crossers.**

For countries having a land border and where, for a variety of reasons, including family visits, work opportunities, shopping on own account, or for business, etc., there is an important movement of persons over the border, the measurement and qualification of these flows in terms of tourism activity might present theoretical and practical difficulties.

*IMTS 2008 recommends that the concept of usual environment be used and applied in a coordinated way with the country sharing the border. This implies coordination in the use of distance and frequency criteria to ensure better data comparability.*

In practice difficulties might derive from the fact that the population living on the border is often exempted from filing entry/departure cards or they pass through border crossings without interacting with customs officials or immigration authorities. As a consequence, the follow-up of these movements is often poor and might lead to misclassifications – sample surveys are needed to obtain more information.

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Part II. Clarifications on selected categories of travelers

**Students.**
Those taking short-term courses (less than one year) are visitors
Those taking long-term courses (one year or more) should be considered within their usual environment in their place of study and be excluded from visitors.

*If administrative data generated by immigration authorities cannot be used to identify the actual situation of foreign students, in particular when they have only a renewable one-year visa, another source of information will be required.*

Additionally, counts might be made more difficult owing to the fact that students might interrupt their stay with short-term visits either in their country of origin or elsewhere *while their place of study continues to be part of their usual environment.*

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**Patients.**

In tourism statistics, those staying one year or more should be considered as within their usual environment. Those staying for *less than one year on the other hand should be treated as visitors.* The identification of such cases should be developed with the help of immigration authorities.

In the balance of payments and national accounts, these travelers are considered as residents of their country of origin irrespective of their length of stay in the place where they are receiving their medical treatment.

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Part II. Clarifications on selected categories of travelers

Business and professional visitors.

Identifying business and professional visitors separately from other travelers coming for work purposes, who are to be considered as non-visitors, usually requires the collection of more information than can be obtained through entry/departure cards.

*Persons being in a explicit or implicit employer-employee relationship with the resident unit should be excluded.*  
*Persons who provide/sell their services independently (e.g., individual entrepreneurs) should be included.*

An explicit employer-employee relationship will usually be coupled with the requirement of a specific visa, whereas an implicit relationship might be more difficult to identify.

Sample survey based of a carefully developed questionnaire might be used to obtain necessary information.

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Part III -Estimation of total number of international visitors

IMRT 2008 recommends, as far as possible, to combine different data sources.

When the measurement of inbound travel can be undertaken at the border, it is recommended that such administrative means of control as entry/departure cards, customs declarations, passport control records.

Other sources of data are data compiled by transportation companies on passengers in international operations and automatic traffic recordings (and estimation of number of passengers) and the subsequent calculation of visitors share.

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Part III - Estimation of total number of international visitors

In the case of countries where the administrative controls at the borders have disappeared and where surveys of travelers at the border cannot be implemented, it is recommended that surveys of travelers at places of accommodation be used in parallel with other sources (for example, surveys at popular tourism sites or other destinations).

An estimate of a total number of visitors might be calculated using estimates of a total number of travelers and the share of visitors (based on sample surveys).

Estimates should be used to improve coverage. However, there is no special document on the good practices in making such estimates. Countries should develop their own estimation procedures taking into account available data sources, experience in other areas of statistics and experience of other countries.

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Thank you very much for your attention!