



**COMMITTEE ON STATISTICS
AND TOURISM SATELLITE ACCOUNT**
Fourteenth meeting
UNWTO Headquarters, Madrid, Spain

Tuesday, 14 January 2014, 10.00 – 17.00
Wednesday, 15 January 2014, 9.00 – 12.00

MINUTES (final)

Tuesday, 14 January

A) Opening session

Item 1. Opening by the Secretary General

Director of Statistics and TSA (STSA), Oliver Herrmann, welcomed

Speech by the Secretary General, Taleb Rifai

Speech by the Executive Director, Márcio Favilla

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda

STSA Director introduced the agenda, and the Committee adopted it.

Item 3. Election of new Chair and Vice-chairs

STSA Director thanked Brazil for its Chairmanship so far. He presented the candidatures of Spain, for Chair, and Georgia, for Vice-chair.

The **Chair (Spain)** and **Vice-chair (Georgia)** were elected by acclamation and UNWTO representatives congratulated them.

B) For discussion

Item 4. IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide

The **Chair** thanked all those present for the hard work put into the Compilation Guide document, and explained that the document incorporates all the comments received in the last consultation through the online forum and other channels.

The Chair expressed the view that the text of the Compilation Guide is adequate enough for submission to the UN Statistical Commission, clarifying that UNWTO still needed to finish the work of fine-tuning the document (verifying internal references, completing some of the annexes, formatting and editing).

The Chair gave a brief overview of the UN Statistical Commission, stating that it was very important for all Members to understand the procedure that the Compilation Guide was going through.

The Chair explained that the UN Statistical Commission is the highest decision making body for international statistical activities and it meets annually. The last time that tourism was on the agenda was 2011, as a so-called “Item for information”. The last time that tourism appeared as a so-called “Item for discussion and decision” was in 2008, when the International Recommendations were submitted.

The Chair explained that the Compilation Guide (CG) is envisaged to be a “living document”, in the sense that updates and additions can be made over time in a separate electronic version (even though the text presented to the Statistical Commission will remain as presented).

The UN Statistics Division (**UNSD**) representative, Karoly Kovacs, added more information regarding the UN Statistical Commission. UNSD explained that the CG would be presented as a “background document” and part of the implementation plan that UNSD and UNWTO are jointly presenting in their report to the Commission. This report will be represented as part of the agenda’s “Items for information”, as opposed to “Items for discussion and decision”.

Chair opened the floor for comments and questions on the official procedures planned for the CG. The questions that arose were clarified by the Chair, UNSD and the Director of STSA.

STSA Director briefly explained the results of the world-wide consultation of the Compilation Guide and the changes made to the Compilation Guide since the last Committee meeting (1-2 July 2013). 39 contributions were received and 201 text changes, covering all chapters. Most contributions focused on Chapters 2, 3 and 7 while Chapter 8 (Supplementary and cross-cutting issues) and section D of Chapter 1 (Governance aspects in a System of Tourism Statistics) barely had any comments.

STSA Director mentioned that UNWTO intends to further expand the Compilation Guide as a “living document” in an extended electronic version to accommodate more information and updates over time (e.g. package tours).

UNSD highlighted again that once the UN Statistical Commission adopts the Compilation Guide text, it cannot be changed. There can be an electronic version that incorporates changes but the core text (as approved by the Commission) remains.

INRouTe mentioned the complexity of drafting a CG. Inevitably, countries will want to clarify and incorporate their implementation experiences as much as possible. Also, the UNWTO technical assistance experiences will need to feed into the CG (thought would need to be given on how to standardize this input).

A number of countries/organizations made some specific remarks:

- CG should clarify the IRTS 2008, however at some future point also elements of the IRTS 2008 itself need to be reviewed but not in the current CG (**UNWTO expert Marion Libreros, India**)
- To include definitions of decent work, green jobs, informal employment (unpaid workers, owners, volunteers, interns), and gender in light of the Post-2015 agenda (**Mexico**)

- Concerning the inclusion of country examples in an electronic version, there is the need to classify examples (ex. Developing countries don't have the same situation as developed countries) (**Mexico**)
- Share experience in implementing tourism information systems based on IRTS 2008 (**CTO**)
- Clarify the links between the Manual on International Trade in Services and the IRTS 2008 CG (**Saudi Arabia**)

STSA Director explained that there will be some future revisions of the IRTS 2008 but not within the framework of drafting the CG. However, UNWTO will have to take note of these items. The first concern for UNWTO still is on how to implement and provide guidance regarding IRTS 2008.

UNWTO expert Igor Chernyshev presented his work on the employment Chapter (7) of the CG. He also presented the complementary work on the *Technical Guide on Best Practices on Measuring Employment in the Tourism Industries*. He explained that the CG Chapter is conceived to describe both quantitative and qualitative aspects, from both the perspectives of labor and of tourism statistics (which is different from the National Accounts perspective). He mentioned that the new resolutions on labor force statistics were now completely consistent with the SNA 2008, and that this was incorporated in the CG Chapter 7.

Italy pointed out that it is also important to have short term (monthly and quarterly) data because of tourism seasonality. The Committee had probably spoken about seasonality in terms of demand but it is also important to consider seasonality on employment.

STSA Director said that seasonality is important and a good point for future extensions.

UNSD presented its work on CG Chapter 8 (Supplementary and cross-cutting issues), which dealt with the topics of metadata, quality management, dissemination. UNSD also responded to the question by Saudi Arabia by giving an overview of the *MSITS Compilers' Guide* and explaining that one big service component is travel, which has a lot to do with tourism. UNSD explained that the MSITS Compilers' Guide aims to complement the SNA 2008.

STSA Director mentioned that the *IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide* will run through the UNWTO Executive Council and General Assembly and will be made available to all Committee participants via the online forum.

In relation to quality assurance, **Mexico** raised the issue of the need to carefully consider the difference between the consistency in time series versus the accuracy of the data. He related this to the example of the need to review the IPCC guidelines in this sense and that it could be a good opportunity to consider this issue in Chapter 8.

The **STSA Director** said that Mexico's suggestion on consistency versus accuracy would be taken into account in the quality discussion of the CG.

Upon the request from the **Chair**, the **STSA Director** summarized the discussion, emphasizing that there will be a core CG (endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission) and further future developments on specific topics of the CG that will lead to an extended, electronic version of the CG.

The **Chair** concluded that a consensus had been reached, determining that the Committee agreed that **the Compilation Guide text is adequate enough and approved it to be submitted to the UN Statistical Commission.**

Item 5. Monitoring of IRTS 2008 Implementation

The **STSA Director** briefed the Committee on this initiative. He explained that there was an increasing need to monitor countries' implementation of the IRTS 2008. UNWTO regularly prepares country fact sheets (with information from the *Compendium of Tourism Statistics* and *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics*, but no rankings!) for distribution in Regional Commission meetings, Executive Council and General Assembly.

The STSA Director welcomed the opinions and suggestions from participants.

Eurostat explained its different levels of compliance monitoring. Besides formal and day-to-day monitoring, users of data can play an important role too: the absence of data for a country (whereas other countries' data is available) will often raise questions by users at national level and usually has a positive impact on compliance. In terms of meeting user needs, Eurostat pointed out that the focus on physical flows and lack of monetary data is perceived as an important gap by users. There is a need to move towards more monetary data, also with a view towards TSA. Eurostat informed the participants on a recent paper using business statistics to make an economic analysis of the tourism industries (copies were available in the meeting room).

Egypt agreed that ranking is not a very good tool but it can serve to motivate countries to work hard. She explained that at the World Economic Forum, many countries were unhappy with their position. She also mentioned that it would be useful to extend UNWTO's mapping exercise to other indicators.

UNWTO expert Marion Libreros added that how countries collect data, which type of data they collect, and whether it is in accordance with the international recommendations, is of higher interest than just coverage.

UNWTO expert Igor Chernyshev added that monitoring of the IRTS implementation also needs to look at the methodology used by countries. He argued that, now with the Compilation Guide, is a good opportunity to revisit employment and encourage countries to implement the recommendations.

The **Executive Director (MF)** added that we can draw from the experience with individual countries with regard to statistical assistance and capacity building workshops. UNWTO needs to find new ways to go about implementation and assisting Member States.

The **Philippines** was given the floor to convey the conclusions from the **Technical Advisory Board (TAB)** meeting held the day before. The TAB is looking into how to support and some proposals had been:

- (1) Consideration on the need to continue, through an online forum, the development of certain issues pertinent to the CG. It was discussed this could be done according to topics and the sharing of best practices to allow the CG to continue to evolve. Particularly, Table 8 and 9 of the TSA were raised as topics to be discussed in the near future.

- (2) Implementation of the IRTS 2008. The possibility to identify a core set of indicators that all countries should try to implement was discussed, as was the need to a monitoring tool to ensure that in the future we have more reliable and comparable data.

The TAB also suggests the setting up of small groups to look into topics and encourages statistical development as a means to help improve and support management in tourism and policy makers.

India inquired about the possibility to share country experiences and/or new studies and insights in the area of tourism statistics through UNWTO.

STSA Director assented that electronic distribution via UNWTO is the way to go to share information and UNWTO STSA will look into the details of how to act as “information hub”.

Item 6. Follow up to UNWTO General Assembly

- Technical Committees: competitiveness and sustainability

STSA Director introduced the topic and informed participants that the first meeting of these committees had taken place in Dec. 2013 and their impact on the Committee of Statistics and TSA was to be seen once they began operating.

The **Executive Director** added that the two committees have been revamped and their mandates clarified and drafted, inspired by the Committee on Statistics and TSA. He said this reinforces the idea that UNWTO should have an increasing normative role. These committees will work predominantly online and meet every 2 years.

He went on to say that, in this context, there had been meetings with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). At ISO they work with committees and they have one committee on tourism in which they are looking at so-called “tourism products/segments” (sun-and-sand tourism, etc.) and their definitions. He said that this Committee should participate in those discussions.

No further discussion.

- UNWTO Seminar on employment in tourism

The **STSA Director** summarized this UNWTO event. He said that the seminar, held in Malaga in Nov. 2013, had attracted 60 participants including officials from ministries, NTAs, academia, and national and international statistical organizations. The seminar participants discussed different national practices and shared experiences in measuring employment in tourism. A full documentation is available on the [UNWTO' web page](#).

No further discussion.

- Sub-national measurement of tourism and INRouTe

INRouTe presented its activities and related initiatives. INRouTe went on to say that, following up on the Executive Director’s call for more normative work, all papers presented at INRouTe international conferences would obtain some kind of “light” consensus on the issues raised.

3 documents are:

1. [Meetings industry](#)
2. [Tourism observatories](#)
3. [Visitors behavior measurement and deconstruction of tourism destination demand](#)

In addition, INRouTe would be working this year on the following topics:

1. *Instruments for measuring tourism's economic contribution and impact, and the regional TSA.* Because of the abuse of the term TSA, it is crucial to properly define “regional TSA”—as is the case for properly defining many other related terms and concepts. In this sense, INRouTe insisted that it is important to define what the user needs are: it may or may not be a TSA, it may or may not involve statistical data or modeled data. This is especially relevant at the regional level.
2. *The need for a governance approach for setting up a Regional Tourism Information System.*

South Africa asked about the relation between INRouTe and UNWTO, and whether this could be conveyed more clearly to Member States in order to facilitate their participation in INRouTe.

UNWTO will provide more information about the institutional relationship between UNWTO and INRouTe [see e-mail communication of 7 March 2014].

Mexico stressed the importance of supporting the initiative to generate sub - national indicators, which is where policies can be directly applied. Particularly in the case of Mexico, several states require statistical information such as the Tourism Satellite Account. The National Statistical and Geographic Information (SNIEG by its Spanish acronym), particularly within the 'Specialized Technical Committee on Economic Statistics of Tourism Sector ', is driving work together with the states to meet their information needs and promote the use of methodologies scientifically supported.

Wednesday, 15 January

- Workshop in Nara, Japan: update and discussion

STSA Director presented this initiative and the themes for the upcoming workshop were: domestic tourism, the setting up of TSA from the governance point of view, and (environmental) sustainability.

The workshop will be held back-to-back with the OECD-Eurostat Global Forum on Tourism Statistics, under the umbrella of “Nara Tourism Statistics Week” (17-21 November 2014).

The **OECD** explained the focus of the OECD-Eurostat Forum, which will be regional tourism. Specifically, the following themes will be discussed:

1. Measurement and economic analysis of regional tourism
2. Analysis of demand side behaviour and consumption
3. Using big data for tourism statistics
4. Utilzing tourism statistics for business and policy analysis

Japan described the location and structure of “Nara Statistics Week”, welcoming all to participate. He also said that the call for papers for the Forum was now open.

Mexico proposed to work on a functional classifier for tourism activities related to the environment or at least a classification of environmental activities.

- ISI World Statistics Congress 2015: UNWTO participation

The **STSA Director** explained what this initiative consisted of, namely to hold a tourism event at the ISI Congress in the run-up to the next UNWTO International Conference, where one of the themes could be sustainability.

It was highlighted that the conference should deal with main topics relevant in the overall statistical field and apply them to tourism.

Mexico proposed to exploit the working format of ISI observed in the "59th ISI World Statistics Congress" held at Hong Kong in 2013, through the main topics developed at the meeting and its relationship to tourism.

- UNWTO Conference on Tourism Statistics: update

The **STSA Director** went over the progress in organizing UNWTO's next major International Conference on Tourism Statistics. He said that a steering committee had been set up to design an agenda. The dates and location are still pending, but it is expected to take place towards the end of 2015.

The **Executive Director** highlighted the importance of this event: it is an opportunity to advance the knowledge on tourism statistics. UNWTO conferences take place when we need to advance on topics—this is what happened in the past with, for example, employment and TSA. Environmental issues and domestic tourism are two topics that need to be advanced, and there may be some other topics that the Committee believes should be tackled.

UNWTO underlined that all suggestions from the Committee regarding agenda items, location to host this event etc. are most welcome.

The following discussion highlighted some possible themes:

- Effectiveness and efficiency of tourism policies
- Domestic tourism
- Quality of statistics: tourism stakeholders and how to make tourism data more accessible and useful to them
- TSA and beyond: economic models, economic impact of tourism in terms of the indirect and induced effects
- Sustainability in its 3 dimensions: economic, social and environmental, including climate change and sub-national level.
- New technologies for tourism statistics: GIS, "big data"

The **STSA Director** said that participants should feel free to provide any further comments and suggestions for the upcoming International Conference by e-mail.

The **Chair** informed participants that the deadline for receiving comments by e-mail is February 15, and that participants would receive a reminder of this by e-mail from the UNWTO Secretariat.

Item 7. UNWTO data access: survey of user needs

The **STSA Director** explained that UNWTO provides data through the ELibrary. UNWTO would like to find out how suitable the current tools of the ELibrary are, i.e. what type of users are looking for which data, what their data needs are, how often they access data, for what purposes, and through what kind of interface.

UNWTO would like to run a short user survey amongst “data users” and “non-users/potential users” of the elibrary. This would be a one-off exercise and participants of the committee will be invited to act as a pre-test group before launching the survey to a bigger group of users.

UNWTO invites participants to report on experiences from similar exercises at national level.

C) For information

Item 8. Round table & presentations for information

- Israel presented on tourism attractions as a venue for future of the Committee

Ms. Esther Sultan, from the Ministry of Tourism, presented the experimental work they carried out with the National Statistical Office on new ways to collect data from tourism attractions.

- Mozambique presented on their experimental TSA

Mr. Saide Dade, Director of National Accounts, presented the work on an experimental Tourism Satellite Account of Mozambique that the National Statistical Institute carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism.

- Saudia Arabia presented on their experimental TSA

Mr. Munthir Al-Ansari, Director of the Tourism Information and Research Center MAS, presented the recent developments on domestic tourism, specifically on the issue of multiple visits in one trip. Their concern was that, when considering domestic tourism, the (number of) visits to some destinations other than the main destination is underestimated and not well understood.

He explained the methodology of the domestic tourism survey, in which respondents are asked about all the destinations visited on a trip, and showed some preliminary results.

- Egypt on recent TSA developments

Ms. Adla Ragab, Economic Advisor to the Minister of Tourism, presented an overview of current situation in Egypt and the ongoing work on TSA.

The main challenges they are coping with relate to technical (calendar vs. fiscal year; non-resident Egyptians' expenditure; share of urban/land transport), institutional (getting stakeholders on board and approval by decision makers; the credibility of published figures), and financial issues (they convinced the private sector to help finance statistics and TSA, also NGO cooperation).

- Junta de Andalucía

The floor was given to the representative from the **Junta de Andalucía** who presented a new project they are carrying out on sustainability indicators. It consists of 7 areas, with 39 key issues and a total of 300 indicators. Their aim is to provide an easy to use tool for policy and also for planning and monitoring. They have set up a theoretical model and are now working on producing the indicators (they have about 80% done).

D) Closing

Item 9. Statement by the Chair

The **Chair** thanked all participants and took some time to reflect upon some of the main issues raised in this Committee session.

The **Director of STSA** summarized the conclusions of the Committee meeting. These were:

- the adoption by the Committee of the *IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide* as a major step forward,
- the implementation of the international recommendations as our next challenge (as requested by the UN Statistical Commission and the UNWTO General Assembly). This includes:
 - the Compilation Guide,
 - the extended and continuously updated *electronic* version of the Compilation Guide,
 - technical assistance, and
 - monitoring of the implementation by countries.
- Some of the key thematic areas that UNWTO and this Committee will focus on include: employment, the sub-national perspective, and exploring the sustainability approach.

The **STSA Director** thanked all participants, as well as the new Chair (Spain) and vice-Chair (Georgia). He announced that the next session will take place in 2015 in January and thanked all Members for their work.