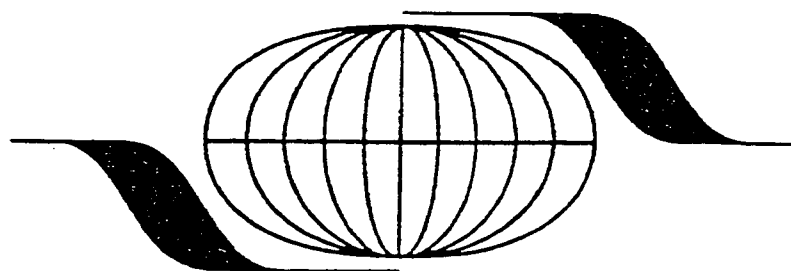


# CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS FOR TOURISM STATISTICS

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World Tourism Organization

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## Foreword

1. The present manual is part of a series of international standards that have been issued by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) for providing guidance to national and local government statistical offices and the private industry in the implementation of WTO/UN Recommendations on Tourism Statistics that were issued from the Ottawa International Conference on Travel and Tourism Statistics (June 1991) and approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 1993.
2. This manual was produced by the WTO Statistics and Market Research Department, primarily through the work of a consultant, Mr. Erik den Hoedt, Head of Integration and Presentation, Sociocultural Statistics, Statistics Netherlands, who did all the original drafting. He was also responsible for subsequent redrafting undertaken to reflect comments received from compilers of national tourism statistics and the participants at the various meetings of the Steering Committee established by WTO in 1991 to carry out a concrete work program for the implementation of the Recommendations of the Ottawa Conference.
3. In addition, this manual incorporates the conclusions that were reached by the group of experts during their meetings at WTO Headquarters in Madrid in March and September 1994. The members of the group were: Mr. Stan Fleetwood, Assistant Director, Transport and Tourism Statistics, Australian Bureau of Statistics; Dr. Douglas Frechtling, Associate Professor of Tourism Studies, the George Washington University (United States); Mr. Erik den Hoedt, Head of Integration and Presentation, Sociocultural Statistics, Statistics Netherlands; Ms Ruth Meier, Senior Associate Expert, Tourism Statistics, Federal Statistical Office (Switzerland); Mr. Alan Pisarski, International Transportation and Tourism Consultant (United States), and Dr. G. Raveendran, Deputy Director General, Department of Tourism (India).
4. The WTO benefitted also from the contributions and comments made by the participants at the meetings of EUROSTAT/EFTA and OECD Working Groups on Tourism Statistics in 1992 and 1993. The editing of the present manual and its harmonization with the other WTO manuals\* was done by Dr. Douglas Frechtling, Associate Professor of Tourism Studies, the George Washington University. The supervision and coordination of the production of this manual was done by Mr. Enzo Paci, Chief of Statistics and Market Research at WTO, assisted by Miss Rosa Songel.

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\* *Collection of Tourism Expenditure Statistics: A Technical Manual, Collection of Domestic Tourism Statistics: A Technical Manual, and Collection and Compilation of Tourism Statistics: A Technical Manual.*

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 The Need for Tourism Statistics Standards

5. Since 1968, when the United Nations Statistical Commission endorsed definitions for international tourism, the development of statistical concepts and frameworks for tourism has not kept pace with the changes in nature and significance of tourism world wide and its potential for future growth. Moreover, the traditional measures of tourism have not kept pace with the increasing economic interdependence of all countries and the reduction of political and economic barriers between them.

6. Meanwhile the requirements for tourism statistics have expanded enormously. Not only do the National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) of each country have requirements for specialized tourism data needs, but the same holds true for many interest groups, such as industries, industry associations, local communities and academia. These interest groups have specialized needs for data relating to a wide variety of issues like market analysis, marketing effectiveness, industrial investment, human resource development, policy analysis and issue-oriented advocacy. There is a need to measure tourism both at a destination and enroute, as well as the generation of tourism in areas of origin (i.e., the propensity and frequency, or intensity, of traveling for all purposes by resident populations).

7. Some countries and industries have already established a wide and diverse range of tourism data sources, with varying concepts and definitions to meet these needs, while other countries have not yet developed significant statistical systems for tourism. Therefore, the development of a common language for tourism statistics is, in this environment, indispensable to the work of government statistical offices and the private sector.

### 1.2 International Development of Tourism Definitions

8. The first step towards the development of international definitions on tourism was taken in 1937 by the Council of the League of Nations, which recommended a definition of "international tourist" for statistical purposes. This was slightly amended by the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO) at a meeting held in Dublin in 1950. Finally, in 1953, the United Nations Statistical Commission established the concept of "international visitor".

9. The United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism (Rome, 1963) recommended a definition of the terms "visitor", "tourist" and "excursionist" proposed by IUOTO. These definitions were subsequently examined by a United Nations expert group on international travel statistics in 1967 and endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1968.

## 2 CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS FOR TOURISM STATISTICS

10. In June 1991, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the Government of Canada organized an International Conference on Travel and Tourism Statistics in Ottawa, which brought together representatives of National Tourism Administrations, the tourism industry, National Statistical Offices and international and regional organizations to consider the development of reliable tourism statistics. The Conference adopted a set of resolutions that defined the statistical needs of the industry for analysis, market research, industry performance and tourism forecasts. This comprised recommendations relating to concepts, definitions and classifications covering the basic tourism unit, tourism demand, tourism supply and tourism expenditure.

### 1.3 Follow-up to the Ottawa Conference

11. Following the Ottawa Conference, the WTO established a Steering Committee composed of representatives of governments, international organizations and the tourism industry, to carry out a concrete work program for the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference.

12. At its 27th Session, held in New York in February-March 1993, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted a report prepared by the WTO under the guidance of the Steering Committee, which contained recommendations relating to tourism statistical standards and the work program for the implementation of those standards. The recommendations of the report were based on the resolutions of the Ottawa Conference, and also took into account earlier international work on tourism statistics, particularly the provisional guidelines on statistics of international tourism as approved by the Statistical Commission at its 19th Session, held in November 1976. Use was also made of the guidelines on tourism statistics prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), IUOTO, the United Nations and subsequently by WTO.

13. The development of the set of definitions and classifications included in the report also reflected the work carried out by other international and regional organizations, in particular:

- A. The recommendations on international migrations published by the United Nations in 1980, as well as the fourth edition of the Balance of Payments Manual published by the International Monetary Fund in 1977 and the Revised System of National Accounts of the United Nations (1990);
- B. The cooperation between the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations regional commissions, as well as other regional and supranational organizations, viz. the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Statistical Division of the European Communities (EUROSTAT), the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO);



- C. The activities, experience and practices of both developed and developing countries concerning the mobility and characteristics of their residents traveling within the country and abroad.
14. Within the adopted work program, one item required the WTO to:
- Develop a series of technical manuals and guidelines to assist countries in implementing the recommendations on concepts, definitions and classifications for tourism statistics.
15. Pursuant to this resolution, WTO has developed the following five technical manuals:

*Collection and Compilation of Tourism Statistics: A Technical Manual*  
*Concepts, Definitions and Classifications for Tourism Statistics: A Technical Manual.*

*Collection of Tourism Expenditure Statistics: A Technical Manual*  
*Collection of Domestic Tourism Statistics: A Technical Manual*  
*Tourism and the Balance of Payments: A Technical Manual*

#### 1.4 Purpose of the Manuals

16. The manuals are designed as a series of complementary publications, each focusing specifically on an important aspect of tourism statistics. They are aimed at assisting countries at different levels of development of their tourism statistics.
17. At the most basic level they provide guidelines on what statistics should be collected and how they might be collected. At the more developed level they provide guidelines on some complex definition issues. At all levels they provide and facilitate the adoption and implementation of, the common international standards for definitions and classifications which apply to tourism statistics.

#### 4 CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS FOR TOURISM STATISTICS

##### 1.5 Structure of the Manual

18. There is a strong and pressing need for the development of a common language for tourism statistics.
19. The propose of this manual is to establish the “vocabulary and grammar” of such a language by presenting a framework of interrelated concepts, definitions and classifications .
20. However, to ensure that this language is actually spoken, this manual seeks to:
  - Be practically-oriented and take into account that infrastructure, resources and the need for data on tourism vary over the world and among sectors;
  - Aim at standardizing reporting, compilation, analyses and presentation by various countries, developed and developing alike;
  - Be self-contained and of use to national governments, local administrations and the tourism industry;
  - Be integrated with the concepts, definitions and classifications in related areas such as demography, transportation, business, international migration balance of payments, and national accounts to the maximum extent possible.
21. This manual elaborates directly on the *Recommendations on Tourism Statistics* adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in its twenty-seventy session, February 22–March 3, 1993.
22. These recommendations were adapted from the resolutions of the International Conference on Travel and Tourism Statistics (Ottawa, Canada, June 24–28, 1991) which was organized by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in close cooperation with the Government of Canada.

23. The recommended concepts, definitions and classifications form the heart of this manual. There is wide international consensus on them. The purpose of this manual is to clarify and put them in a context in such a way that they are *operational*, that is, fit for practical application.

24. This document consists of four chapters and ten appendices. In Chapter 2, the actual terms, definitions and classifications are presented, with references to detailed discussions of them later in the manual. This chapter is designed as a quick reference for the individual who wishes his/her tourism statistics to conform to an international consensus.

25. In Chapter 3, the main concepts and definitions with respect to tourism are presented and discussed. Special attention is given to the concepts of international tourism, domestic tourism, and same-day visits.

26. Chapter 4 starts with a brief inventory of the key characteristics of tourism. Variables and classifications are presented and explained against this background.

27. A set of appendices completes this manual. The appendices contain additional classifications, the draft Standard International Classification of Tourism Categories (SICTA), guidelines for dealing with specific categories of travelers in tourism, statistics, descriptive tables to illustrate the use of the recommended classification, and a bibliography for further reference.

28. Although this manual can be seen as a stand-alone WTO document on concepts, definitions and classifications for tourism statistics, it actually fits closely with the other WTO manuals in this series, especially *Collection and Presentation of Tourism Statistics: A Technical Manual*. This latter offers countries practical guidelines conducting tourism surveys and other data collection.

29. WTO is the Organization responsible for standardizing tourism statistics at the world level. Other organizations are also active in the development of standards. In this case, for example, of the OECD which provides guidelines for economic accounts on tourism and Eurostat which promotes harmonized data collection on tourism in the European Union and EFTA countries. WTO closely collaborates with these organizations.

## Chapter 2: Definitions and Classifications Glossary

30. The following glossary gives the main definitions and descriptions discussed in this manual in their most fundamental forms. The discussion of the underlying concepts for each term can be found in the sections noted in the brackets. The first number in the bracket identifies the chapter, while the second indicates the actual section. The Table of Contents provides a guide to the location of each section indicated.

**Accommodation:** see **tourist accommodation**.

**Activities of visitors** refers to the actual behavior of persons on a tourism trip (Section 4.4 and Appendix D).

**Age of a visitor** refers to the individual's number of completed years of life.(4.3.3) It is recommended that at a minimum, data on age should be gathered separately for the following groups:

1. 0–14 years
2. 15–24 years
3. 25–44 years
4. 45–64 years
5. 65 years and over

**Destination** is a significant place visited on a trip. It may be defined as the farthest point away from home visited (**distance destination**), the place where the most amount of time was spent (**main destination**), or place the visitor thinks of as the primary place visited (**motivating destination**). (4.6)

**Domestic tourism** comprises the activities of residents of a given country or other area traveling to and staying in places inside that country or other area but outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (3.2.1, 3.4). Note that the term, "domestic", used in this tourism context differs from its use in the System of National Accounts (SNA) context. "Domestic" in the tourism context retains its original marketing connotation, that is, it refers to residents traveling within their own area or country. In the SNA context, it refers to activities and expenditures of both residents and non-residents traveling within the reference region or country, that is, both domestic and inbound tourism.

**Domestic tourism expenditure** is defined as the expenditure incurred as a direct result of resident visitors traveling within their country of residence. It includes spending while enroute and at the places visited as well as advance outlays necessary for the preparation and undertaking of the trip and travel-related outlays made in the place of residence when returning from a trip. (4.9.5) See also **tourism expenditure**.

**Domestic visitor.** See visitor.

**Duration of trip** refers to the time spent during a visit measured from the standpoint of the generating country or place (3.2.2, 4.5.2). **Duration of stay** refers to the time spent during a visit measured from the standpoint of the receiving country or place (3.2.2, 4.5.2). **Travel-time** refers to the time traveled on a trip, adding the journey traveling to the **distance destination** and returning to the stays in each place visited (4.5.2).

On **same-day visits** data could be presented separately for the following major and minor groups:

1. Less than three hours (optional)
  - 1.1. Less than two hours
  - 1.2. 2 hours
2. 3 to 5 hours
  - 2.1. 3 hours
  - 2.2. 4 hours
  - 2.3. 5 hours
3. 6 to 8 hours
  - 3.1. 6 hours
  - 3.2. 7 hours
  - 3.3. 8 hours
4. 9 to 11 hours
5. 12 hours or more

For **overnight visits**, data on duration of visit should be presented for the following (major) groups separately:

1. 1 to 3 nights
  - 1.1. One night
  - 1.2. 2–3 nights
2. 4 to 7 nights
3. 8 to 28 nights
  - 3.1. 8 to 14 nights
  - 3.2. 15 to 21 nights
  - 3.2. 22 to 28 nights

4. 29 to 91 nights
  - 4.1. 29 to 42 nights
  - 4.2. 43 to 56 nights
  - 4.3. 57 to 70 nights
  - 4.4. 71 to 91 nights
5. 92 to 365 nights
  - 5.1. 92 to 182 nights
  - 5.2. 183 to 365 nights

**Economic activity status** of a visitor refers to the main daily engagements of this person from an economic perspective.(4.3.5) Data should be presented separately for the following classes:

1. Economically active
  - 1.1 Employed
  - 1.2 Unemployed
2. Not economically active
  - 1.1 Students
  - 1.2 Homemakers
  - 1.3 Income recipients
  - 1.4 Others

**Education level** refers to the most advanced level which a person has completed in an educational system (4.3.4). Data should be presented separately for the following groups:

1. No education or pre-primary education
2. First level or primary education
3. Second level - first stage or lower secondary education
4. Second level - second stage or upper secondary education
5. Third level or higher education

**Household Income.** This manual does not include a classification of household income levels. The appropriate groupings for such a classification will vary from country to country. However, in Section 4.3.7 guidelines are presented for classifying income level.

**Inbound tourism** comprises the activities of non-resident visitors in a given area that is outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (3.2.1, 3.4.2).

**Internal tourism** is the sum of domestic tourism and inbound tourism (3.2.1, 3.4.2).

**International tourism** comprises inbound tourism and outbound tourism (3.2.1).