

January 2012

11th Global Forum on Tourism Statistics

14 to 16 November 2012, Reykjavík, Iceland

CALL FOR PAPERS

Statistics Iceland, the Icelandic Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) are pleased to announce the **11th Global Forum on Tourism Statistics**, to be held from **14 to 16 November 2012** in **Reykjavík, Iceland**.

All the information related to the Forum is available at <http://11thtourismstatisticsforum.is/> and we encourage you to visit the website regularly.

The Global Forum on Tourism Statistics (formerly known as International Forum) has been providing since 1994 a unique platform for the regular exchange of views and experiences on developments in tourism statistics. Its aim is to discuss major technical issues concerning the establishment of harmonised tourism statistics in an environment that strengthens co-operation among governments, the private sector, researchers, academics, OECD and EU member and non-member countries and international organisations.

The next Forum will focus on the following themes: *i)* Seasonality in tourism; *ii)* Tourism statistics in the 21st century; *iii)* Use of tourism satellite accounts for business decisions and policy making; *iv)* Effects of external shocks (in particular the economic and financial turmoil) on tourism and tourism statistics; and *v)* Coherence and comparability of tourism statistics.

Detailed information is available in Annex 1 to this letter.

This letter is a CALL FOR PAPERS as the success of the Forum will largely depend on your contributions. Authors are requested to strictly follow the guidelines presented in Annex 2. The deadline to submit your **abstracts** is **30 April 2012**. The organising committee (OECD, EUROSTAT and the Icelandic organisers) will review the proposal in May 2012. The final programme of the Forum will be made available during summer, after the authors of the selected abstracts have been invited to submit their full papers. The deadline for submission of full papers is 30th September 2012. All the documentation (abstracts, papers and presentations) should be in English, which will be the unique working language during the Forum.

There is no participation fee. Travel and accommodation will be at the participant's expense. To allow participants to find optimal travel fare options, **registration** for the Forum will be open as of 1st February 2012 through the website <http://11thtourismstatisticsforum.is/>.

For logistics and practical information about Iceland and Reykjavík, you may contact:

- ✓ **Ms. Lára Pétursdóttir** or **Ms. Ingibjörg Hjálmsfríðardóttir**, Congress Reykjavik, tel: +354 585 3900, lara@congress.is or imma@congress.is

For information concerning the programme of the Forum, please contact:

- ✓ **Mrs. Sigríður Kristjánsdóttir**, tourism department, Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism, tel: +354 522 9462, sigrdur.olof.kristjansdottir@idn.stjr.is
- ✓ **Mrs. Hildur Kristjánsdóttir**, business statistics, Statistics Iceland, tel +354 528 1267, hildur.kristjansdottir@hagstofa.is
For more information, see <http://www.statice.is/Statistics/Tourism,-transport-and-informati>
- ✓ **Mr. Alain Dupeyras**, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development, OECD, tel: +33 1 45 24 91 45, alain.dupeyras@oecd.org
For more information, see www.oecd.org/cfe/tourism
- ✓ **Mr. Christophe Demunter**, tourism statistics section, European Commission (EUROSTAT), tel: +352 4301 36565, christophe.demunter@ec.europa.eu
For more information, see <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tourism>

Thank you for your co-operation and we look forward to welcoming you at the Forum in November.

Yours sincerely,

Katrín JÚLÍUSDÓTTIR

Minister of Tourism

Ólafur HJÁLMARSSON

Director-General of Statistics Iceland

Sergio ARZENI

Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship,
SMEs and Local Development, OECD

Walter RADERMACHER

Director-General Eurostat

Annex 1

Core themes of discussion for the Call for Papers

The 11th Global Forum on Tourism Statistics will focus on the five themes listed below. It will examine current and future developments relating to these themes and their relevance to government and business decision-making. The aim is to ensure that the conclusions drawn from the discussions lead to new improvements in tourism-related statistics and information, for example in terms of ease of use, comparability and availability.

Besides the five vertical themes listed below, a number of highly-relevant **cross-cutting horizontal topics** have been identified that can be touched upon in the different sessions:

- **Employment**
- **Sustainability and competitiveness**
- **Same-day visitors**
- **SMEs**

Abstracts/papers integrating some of the above horizontal topics are strongly encouraged.

THEME 1: SEASONALITY IN TOURISM

Combating seasonality and prolonging the tourism season are important pillars of a sustainable and competitive tourism sector. Seasonality has an effect on the sectors potential of creating more and better jobs and on infrastructure related needs such as accommodation capacity, public transport and traffic planning.

This session aims to provide empirical and methodological insights into how to measure the different dimensions of seasonality (visitors, expenditure, traffic, employment, etc). Furthermore emphasis is placed on the geography of seasonality and those niche tourism segments which offset seasonality: how can we measure regional seasonal disparities and scale the aforementioned dimensions, or how to monitor unconventional niche tourism?

Seasonality is dictated by weather, climate, the social scheduling of our society, accessibility or simply inertia through habit. The session also invites papers that focus on definitions and causality of seasonality. What are the problems associated with seasonality and which are the current trends? Is seasonality a burden or a welcome respite from a busy high season? How can seasonality possibly be mitigated?

Finally, this session can also go into methodological and conceptual issues related to seasonal adjustment in tourism statistics.

Keywords: seasonality, measurement, definitions, causality, geography, niche markets, seasonal adjustment.

THEME 2: TOURISM STATISTICS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Innovation in collecting and compiling tourism statistics is *the* way forward to match growing users with calls to reduce the burden on respondents and administrations.

On the one hand, recent technological changes and the digital revolution of the past decades have opened interesting prospects. The quasi ubiquitous connectivity of travellers through mobile phones, GPS antennas or wireless internet means these same travellers leave a digital trace that has an analytical potential for tourism statistics. The use of mobile positioning data and credit card data is slowly but steadily entering the standard information package on tourism and travel, while the use of GPS-based devices, web forms and automated data collection continues to replace traditional data collection and transmission techniques. The use of the internet as a data source via web scraping or analysis of trends on search engines or social networks is on the verge of a breakthrough.

On the other hand, tourism statisticians need to optimise the re-use of existing data from related domains to enrich the tourism analysis (e.g. to improve the coverage of SMEs) or to find synergies with other fields of statistics, for instance business registers, sectoral information from short-term or structural business statistics, security or tax data.

Any innovation should consider the obstacles and quality issues at stake. New approaches can reduce burden, improve timeliness or accuracy and even open new analytical possibilities, but technical and legal issues or quality-related risks (comparability, continuity, etc) can also jeopardise their feasibility or even their suitability.

Keywords: new technologies, mobile positioning, credit cards, gps, internet, social networks, direct electronic reporting, data linking, business registers, business statistics, timeliness, cost-efficiency.

THEME 3: HOW TO USE TOURISM STATISTICS AND TSA FOR BUSINESS DECISIONS AND POLICY MAKING

The aim of this session is to provide a global insight about the use of the UN-UNWTO-OECD-EUROSTAT *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework* (TSA:RMF) and to promote the development of a “common perspective” on the best ways to use the TSA.

The TSA is the main internationally recognised standard to measure tourism in the economy. An increasing number of countries are implementing the TSA. This tool has the potential to be used by a wide range of public and private stakeholders. Its benefits are extensive, and include: tourism sector identification; assessment of tourism’s contribution in the economy; quality benchmarking; and in addition, TSA extensions can provide information on indirect impacts, employment, and quarterly and regional data. Despite the many benefits, the TSA approach also has some well-known limitations from the user’s perspective, such as timeliness, the lack of a spatial dimension, and insufficient international comparability.

This session will take the perspective of policy, business and statistical users. It will present country and industry examples of TSA uses, showing TSA based economic and social analyses at international, national and regional levels. It will provide illustrations of how the TSA can guide decision-makers in their strategic choices, by supporting a better knowledge on tourism industry, infrastructure and labour market developments and a better understanding of inbound and domestic tourism. The session will also underline how TSA are used by statistical providers, for example to support the development of other satellite accounts.

Keywords: tourism satellite accounts, decision making, structure of the tourism sector, TSA users, domestic tourism, employment, limitations on TSA use, indicators beyond TSA.

THEME 4: EFFECTS OF EXTERNAL SHOCKS ON TOURISM AND ON TOURISM STATISTICS

Recently, the economic and financial turmoil has had a tremendous impact on tourism, and on tourism statistics. The behaviour and preferences of tourists across the world changed, temporarily, or for good. The individual tourist has discovered new destinations – often domestic destinations - and new, previously not used types of accommodation. From changing trends in demand and supply arises the need for new data or a new analytical framework.

This session will take a look at the effects of the economic crisis on the tourists and on the tourism sector but also on the impact on the system of tourism statistics, i.e. the need for an enhanced system of tourism statistics to overcome observed shortcomings or methodological weaknesses. Additionally, the session will focus on the need for statistical information on supply and demand responses to other - non-financial and non-economic - shocks such as environmental disasters, climate change, health risks, political upheavals, wars or policy shifts.

Keywords: economic crisis, disasters, social unrest, political unrest, external shocks, keeping tourism statistics user relevant.

THEME 5: COHERENCE AND COMPARABILITY OF TOURISM STATISTICS

Although all dimension of quality in statistics are equally relevant, this Forum will focus on the coherence and comparability. The European Statistical System's *Handbook for Quality Reports*¹ states that "the coherence of two or more statistical outputs refers to the degree to which the statistical processes by which they were generated used the same concepts - classifications, definitions, and target populations – and harmonised methods ; coherent statistical outputs have the potential to be validly combined and used jointly", while "comparability is a special case of coherence and refers to the case where the statistical outputs refer to the same data items and the aim of combining them is to make comparisons over time, or across regions, or across other domains".

As tourism statistics often combines data from a wide range of sources (household surveys, business surveys, administrative records, etc.), coherence and comparability are critical issues for their quality. This session will look at the international comparability, the progress made in implementing the revised standards IRTS 2008 and TSA:RMF 2008 across countries, as well as challenges for comparability moving forward, i.e., setting the agenda for the next round of revisions to standards. Besides the general aspects of coherence, papers can also discuss the internal coherence and comparability of different outputs within a system of tourism statistics, for instance the impact of the recall bias in visitor surveys or of underreporting and under coverage in accommodation statistics. A specific sub-topic for this session is the consistency between balance of payments statistics and tourism statistics, i.e. the harmonisation of methods and use of synergies in data sources for describing the different concepts of travel and tourism.

Keywords: coverage & scope of observation, recall bias, internal coherence, comparability over time, comparability across countries/regions, coherence between infra-annual and annual statistics, mirror statistics, travel item, balance of payments, coherence with sectoral business statistics, asymmetries.

CROSS-CUTTING HORIZONTAL TOPICS

Because of their general nature and potential links with each of the five themes, no specific theme will be dedicated to these topics. Authors are nevertheless encourages to – where relevant and suitable – include employment in tourism, sustainability and competitiveness, same-day visitors and SMEs in their analytical framework.

Besides data on physical tourism flows (number of visitors, number of nights spent) and monetary flows (tourism expenditure, debit and credit of an economy), the potential of creation jobs and the quality of **employment in the tourism sector** remains at a constant high.

In all phases of the business cycle, but especially in times of economic slowdown, the **sustainability and competitiveness of the tourism sector** is an essential concern for decision-makers in the industry and for policy makers.

The importance of **same-day visits** for the tourism sector can't be ignored. In the European countries where data is available, expenditure by same-day visitors accounts on average for more than half of domestic tourism expenditure.

The majority of businesses operating in the tourism sector are small or medium-sized, and the strategic importance of **SMEs** in tourism lies in their economic value and their substantial job-creation potential, but also in the stability and prosperity they can bring for local communities whilst safeguarding the local identity of destinations.

¹ See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-08-016/EN/KS-RA-08-016-EN.PDF

Annex 2

Guidelines for authors

The papers for the Forum should elaborate on the core themes mentioned in Annex 1 and can focus on research or on experience/application, or both.

The papers shall contain significant and original research results and/or experiences in utilising statistical information in tourism. Papers reporting and evaluating new methods, systems and models – especially where they employ realistic case analysis – and papers about the application of statistics for the tourism industry will be particularly welcome.

The papers will be evaluated according to standard criteria including: originality, innovation, relevance, technical depth, clarity and potential practical impact & usage, anticipated value of the reported results to users.

Suggested length for the papers: up to 5 000 words.

Submission Procedure for abstracts

Abstracts shall include:

- Author(s) contact details (organisation, job title, address, phone, email)
- Title of the proposed paper
- Session (theme) where the paper will be presented
- Paper abstract (400 words maximum), and if possible some keywords
- Short explanation of methodology, user value, application context

All documentation submitted by the authors shall be in English.

Abstracts shall be submitted via the portal <http://11thtourismstatisticsforum.is>.

Key dates

- **30 April 2012:** Deadline for the submission of the abstracts.
- **1 June 2012:** Notification to the authors whether the abstract has been selected and invitation to the selected authors to submit a full paper.
Dissemination of the provisional programme.
- **30 September 2012:** Deadline for submission of the full papers.
- **14-16 November 2012:** 11th Global Forum on Tourism Statistics.