

Communications for the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada January 24, 2007

Tourism Definition:

In 2000, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Statistical Commission defined tourism as:

The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited¹.

Canadian Travel Survey:

Prior to 2005, in the Canadian Travel Survey (CTS), the WTO conceptual definition was operationalized as follows. A trip was defined as travel to a Canadian destination at least 80 km one-way from home for any reason except: travel to and from work or school (i.e. commuting); one-way travel involving a change of residence; travel of operating crew members of buses, airplanes, boats, etc.; travel in ambulance to a hospital or clinic; trips that did not originate in Canada; and trips longer than one year. A trip may involve one person travelling alone or several persons from the same household travelling together. Persons from different households travelling together are defined as taking different trips.

In 2001, Statistics Canada and the other² sponsors of the Canadian Travel Survey reached the conclusion that the survey needed to be redesigned. While it was recognized that this would create a break in the data series, the redesign hoped to solve a number of problems. Timeliness problems existed as data were sometimes published several months after the reference period. The sample size and distribution of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) reflected the stable, high-volume labour force phenomenon rather than the volatile, rather low-volume of tourism. The survey content did not address a number of areas ranging from national accounts to marketing. Across Canada there was no widely accepted definition of domestic travel and it was felt that the existing definition did not fully comply with the WTO guidelines.

¹ United Nations and World Tourism Organization, "Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework", 2001

² The Travel Survey of Residents of Canada is financed by members of a partnership consisting of Statistics Canada, the Canadian Tourism Commission, ten provincial organizations/departments, Canada Heritage and Parks Canada.

Travel Survey of Residents of Canada:

The new Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (TSRC) continues to be sponsored by Statistics Canada, the Canadian Tourism Commission, the provincial governments and two federal organizations. It measures the size of domestic tourism in Canada from the demand side. The objectives of the survey are to provide information about the volume of trips and expenditures for Canadian residents by trip origin, destination, duration, accommodation, reason, mode of travel, etc.; to provide information on travel incidence and to provide the socio-demographic profile of travellers and non-travellers. Estimates allow quarterly analysis at the national, provincial and tourism region level (with varying degrees of precision) on:

- total volume of same-day and overnight trips taken by the residents of Canada with Canadian destinations,
- same-day or overnight visits in Canada,
- main purpose/key activities on trip,
- trip spending made on same-day and overnight trips taken by Canadians in total and by category of expenditure,
- mode of transportation (main/other) used on the trip,
- person-visits, household-visits, spending in total and by expense category for each location visited in Canada,
- person-nights and household-nights spent in each location visited by type of accommodation,
- use of travel packages and associated spending and use of motor coach/other guided tours,
- source of payment (household, government, private employer) for the trip,
- demographics of adults that took/did not take trips,
- travel party composition.

TSRC data are used to produce analytical reports outlining:

- the performance and characteristics of the domestic travel market,
- the economic importance of Canada's domestic travel,
- the outlook of travel by Canadian residents in Canada.

Concepts and Definitions:

Four criteria are used to operationally determine if a trip is in scope for TSRC. Trips must have *originated* in Canada; have *ended* during the reference month; be less than 365 days/nights duration; and be outside of the respondent's "usual" environment.

In effect in-scope trips include:

- all trips for purposes of pleasure, vacation or holiday and all trips for visiting friends or relatives,
- all business and work related trips, *except* routine travel which is a regular part of the job. Examples of this are travel by members of the crews of airlines, trains, ships, etc., travel by truck drivers, regular commuting to work, travel to conduct routine sales or service calls, and travel for military and diplomatic reasons, and
- all trips for other reasons *except* regular household or grocery shopping, moving (or helping someone move) to a new residence (or school), commuting to school, regular medical or dental appointments or check-ups, regular attendance at religious observances/services, attendance at funerals and trips for various regular chores such as picking up someone at the arena.

Comparison between CTS and TSRC:

There are six main differences between the CTS and the TSRC.

- In the CTS, the target population consisted of Canadian residents who were 15 years of age and older. Since many of these youth were not able to respond effectively to the survey, the minimum age was raised to 18 years of age and older in TSRC.
- In the CTS, all overnight trips were captured regardless of the distance between home and the destination; only same-day trips to a destination of 80 km or more from home were captured, except Ontario where same-day trips of 40 km or more were captured. However, in the CTS data releases, only trips of 80 km and over were included in Statistics Canada's official estimates. The new survey introduces the concept of "out-of-town" as a proxy for usual environment. Only out-of-town overnight trips are captured, regardless of distance and only out-of-town same-day trips of at least 40 km from home are captured.
- The new survey does a better job of filtering in tourism trips and filtering out routine trips and the definition of what constitutes a tourism trip is now closer to that of the World Tourism Organization.

- TSRC has a detailed question on the main reason for the trip which did not exist in CTS.
- In TSRC, proxy interviews are also permitted if the respondent does not speak one of the official languages or is ill or is absent for the duration of the collection period. However, the reasons for allowing proxy interviews are slightly more restrictive in TSRC than they were in CTS.
- In TSRC, the scope of traveller characteristics was increased.

For more detailed information on differences between TSRC and CTS see “ Details on the conceptual differences between TSRC and CTS”.

The new Travel Survey of Residents of Canada will remain on the Labour Force Survey platform after rejecting alternative options such as random digit dialling (RDD). This means that the TSRC is run using one or more subsamples of households that are in the Labour Force Survey. The Labour Force Survey is a monthly household survey of about 54,000 households that provides official estimates of employment and unemployment in Canada with a 90% response rate. Of these responding households, the TSRC has a slightly lower response rate of 80% with a travel incidence rate of about 30%.

The Labour Force Survey sample of individuals is representative of the civilian, non-institutionalized population, 15 years of age or older in Canada’s ten provinces. Some people are specifically excluded from the TSRC coverage. These include residents of the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, people living on Native Reserves, full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces and inmates of institutions. Each month, this survey collects employment data for the week with the 15th of the month, during the week after the 15th of the month. Since the Labour Force Survey samples all households in Canada, it is used as a platform to run other household surveys, including TSRC.

Only households that respond to the Labour Force Survey are used for TSRC. After the labour force questions have been asked, within a selected household, one person 18 years of age or older is randomly selected to respond to TSRC. If this person is available, the interviewer will ask him/her the TSRC questions. If this person is not at home or not available at the time of the LFS data collection, an interviewer will call back later during the data collection period.

Preliminary data for 2005 from the new TSRC will be released in two waves. The travel volume data (incidence, person-visits and nights) will be published first, followed by trip expenditures, planned for the summer of 2007.