



Conceptual advances in measuring tourism at sub-national level

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The adaptation of the conceptual framework of the UN 2008 international standards on tourism statistics to sub-national levels should take into account the need for including the territory and tourism behaviour as specific topics. In many mature tourism destinations, a divide between tourism and land planning authorities has resulted in a significant issue in terms of sustainable development. The development of new concepts, definitions and insights that connect tourism with territory are part of the challenge to strengthen the credibility of tourism at the different geographical levels. Irrespective of the degree of maturity of a tourism destination, it seems evident that the connection between tourism and territory is an area in which official statisticians generally do not have much experience. However, it is nevertheless crucial for setting up a Regional Tourism Information System, and it supports tourism practitioners and different key stakeholders. It is especially so in those territories where tourism is, or potentially can be, relevant. Strictly speaking, tourism officials alone cannot develop a Regional Tourism Information System. Tourism officials require the cooperation of, at least, the statistical authorities and specialized private sector contributions. This is not merely an issue of the division of competences or of complementarities between the relevant entities; it also relates to the fact that each entity has its own legitimacy and credibility vis-a-vis third parties and, especially, the users of the information generated. In order to make the effort sustainable over time, measurement and analysis of tourism needs to pay special attention to the inevitable nexus between the different layers of territorial aggregation: between national and sub-national regions, and between regions and corresponding municipalities where tourism is relevant. The term 'relevance' at the regional level implies both the territorial scale under consideration as well as the number of establishments in the tourism industries and, consequently, also the number of associated jobs and the value added generated by them in relation to the economy in the corresponding territory. This session will look in the requirement of the design of a proper Regional Tourism Information System.

Keywords: Regional Tourism Information System, sub-national level measurement, sustainability, territories.