C. Inbound tourism

3.23. As previously mentioned, IRTS 2008 focuses on tourism statistics as they relate to other conceptual frameworks, such as Balance of Payments and National Accounts. The present section, will focus on tourism as an internationally traded service. The issues entailed in measuring it as such are appropriately covered in the compilation guides for *BPM6* and the *Manual on Statistics in International Trade in Services*.

3.24. The measurement of inbound tourism has its peculiar challenges. For example, where and when should the data be collected? Clearly, while some data relating to the *visitor* can be collected upon his or her arrival in the country, very little data can be collected on the *visit*, as this has not yet occurred. Similarly, attempting to collect the data during the visitor's trip will be unsatisfactory since that trip will not have been completed. The solution is then to collect the data when the visitor departs from the country. Most countries have a relatively small number of immigration/border posts through which visitors enter and depart and these serve as useful survey points.

3.25. Inbound tourism statistics are usually collected in two phases, reflecting the structuring of data collection at border posts. Phase one involves the use of the administrative data collected by the border protection authorities. Those data identify all travellers, both visitors and nonvisitors, although in some countries, highfrequency border crossers, e.g., those crossing on a daily basis for work purposes, may not be recorded. Usually, a limited amount of data is collected. What is collected is required for security, rather than tourism, purposes, hence the data do not provide all that is required by tourism bodies. However, border protection authorities are increasingly working with NTAs to include more information in the data collected (e.g., on the arrival and departure cards) that is purely for tourism purposes. This is the result of the fact that border agencies are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of tourism to their economy.

3.26. It will be useful for the data collected in this phase to include such information as country of residence, main purpose of trip and mode of transport used, which will be especially useful in phase two. This phase is essential inasmuch as not all of the data required for tourism purposes can be collected in phase one. In phase two, which usually involves a sample survey of visitors as they depart the country, such data can be collected as visitors' demographics activities engaged in while in the country, places visited and how much spent while in the country. In the design of such a survey, the data retrieved from phase one can be very useful in providing a basis for stratifying the sample and making it more efficient and representative.

3.27. This twophase approach reflects some of the complexities involved in the collection of goodquality inbound tourism statistics. In this regard, is determining at what stage of the visit and at what location the data should be collected remains an important issue.

3.28. Besides NTAs and NSOs, central banks, which are usually in charge of compiling and providing balanceofpayments data, might also be interested in participating in decisions concerning the frequency with which international tourism flows and expenditure by inbound and outbound visitors are measured; and they could be valuable partners in the development of tourism statistics.

In this section: