**Introductory Remarks: First Webinar on Tourism Statistics**

7:00 am -10:00 am, September 24 2025, New York time

Good [morning/afternoon/evening], everyone.

On behalf of the UN Network of Economic Statisticians, it’s my great pleasure to welcome you to today’s webinar on Tourism **Statistics:** **Tools and Techniques for Data-Driven Decisions**

My name is Andre Loranger**,** I am the Chief Statistician of Canada and the co-chair of the Network.

We are delighted to have participants from around the world, including national statistical offices, tourism authorities, international organizations, researchers, and private sector partners.

Tourism is much more than leisure—it is one of the world’s most dynamic and impactful sectors. As highlighted in the 2025 SDG Report, tourism is a significant source of employment, accounting for 5.6 per cent of global employment between 2015 and 2023, based on data reported by 89 countries. It also represents a major share of GDP for many countries (e.g. in many Caribbean islands more than 50%), and is a vital source of foreign exchange earnings. Millions of businesses worldwide are thriving thanks to tourism, a fact no better illustrated than by my own country Canada, where over 265,000 business, in 5,000 communities[[1]](#footnote-1) were sustained by tourism. It also plays a crucial role in fostering cultural understanding, supporting regional development, and promoting the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

In recent years, tourism has faced extraordinary disruptions—from global health crises to climate-related events—but it has also demonstrated incredible resilience. As the sector rebuilds and reimagines itself, the need for accurate, timely, and forward-looking tourism statistics has never been more critical. Tourism statistics help decision makers understand and address labor challenges in the industry, the digital disruption, the impact of overtourism, as well as changing traveler preferences.

This webinar is designed to offer a global perspective on the importance of tourism information, particularly from the users’ point of view and some of the innovative solutions that have been employed to measure new trends in tourism. We’ll highlight how data informs policy, investment, innovation, and sustainability across a range of tourism-related sectors.

We’ll explore new and emerging data sources, advances in compilation methods that improve accuracy and timeliness and the measurement of new trends.

We are privileged to have with us today a distinguished group of experts who will guide us through these critical issues. I encourage you to engage fully in the discussions and make the most of the knowledge being shared.

Before we begin, just a few quick housekeeping notes:

* The session is being recorded and will be shared after the webinar.
* You can ask questions either by raising your hand or type them into the Chat.
* If you experience technical issues, please use the chat and a member of our team will assist you.

Thank you for being here—and for your commitment to strengthening the role of data in shaping a more sustainable, inclusive, and innovative tourism sector.

I would now like to hand it over to Mariane Bien-Aimé who is the Assistant Director of the Centre for Special Business Projects at Statistics Canada, where she leads initiatives related to special surveys and tourism statistics. She is an economist with master’s degrees in public affairs and business administration. Throughout her career, she has focused on producing timely and relevant economic statistics for Canadians. Mariane also has significant experience working on a broad range of business-related topics such as residential and non-residential investment; softwood lumber and minerals and metals production statistics.

1. Source: [Destination Canada](https://www.destinationcanada.com/en-ca/news/growth-all-round-for-tourism-sector-global-dollars-local-impact) and [Statistics Canada](https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/start) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)