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IASE, 1993-95

As the term of the first IASE executive committee draws to a close, its chairperson David Moore reviews the progress to date and throws down a number of challenges for the future.

The ISI has long played a leading role in statistical education, formalised with the establishment of the Education Committee in 1948. The 1991 Cairo session of ISI approved the establishment of a new section, the International Association for Statistical Education, to continue the work of the Education Committee and to provide a professional association for all statisticians interested in education and training. An interim executive committee headed by David Vere-Jones got IASE off the ground, and the first elected executive committee took office at the Florence ISI session in 1993. As the term of that committee comes to an end, a brief review of IASE's accomplishments and prospects is in order.

IASE wears, so to speak, two hats. It is a professional society, but also has inherited the ISI education program of direct involvement in projects and in the support of institutes such as ISEC in Calcutta. Both are important. We find it easier to function as a professional society, a fact reflected in both IASE's current activities and in a realistic appraisal of its future prospects.

A Society for Statistical Education

The growth in importance of statistical education is indisputable. The movement to make statistical topics a main strand in school curricula around the world is itself a major change. In some nations (including the US) a strong movement to reform university teaching has caught the attention of many statisticians. Training of both statistical staff and of other professionals, such as economists and engineers, remains important. IASE hopes to serve as the primary professional society for those with a strong interest in statistical education. This includes both those who conduct research on teaching and learning and those who develop materials and teach at all levels from schools to specialist training.

IASE is successfully functioning as a professional society. It has attracted more than 300 members, to whom it provides the usual means of professional interchange: meetings, journals, and newsletters. The ICOTS (International Conferences on Teaching Statistics) meetings in particular are notable as a venue for discussing statistical education with people of the most varied backgrounds. ICOTS-5 will take place in Singapore in June, 1998. IASE continues to sponsor Roundtable Conferences on specific topics as satellites to the quadrennial ICME meetings. The next Roundtable will meet in Granada in July, 1996. We have also added other meetings

to these continuing series. The First IASE Scientific Meeting in Perugia, as a satellite to ISI Florence in 1993, was a success due to the leadership of Lina Brunelli and Giuseppe Cicchitelli. An Arabic-language satellite meeting to ICOTS-4 in Marrakech was held in Cairo, thanks to the sponsorship of Egyptian government agencies and the work of Abdelmegid Farrag. In 1996, IASE will join with IASC to co-sponsor a meeting on computational statistics and statistical education at the University of Tartu in Estonia.

IASE members receive ISI publications as well as the IASE occasional newsletter, the IASE Review. These include the *International Statistical Review*, ISI's flagship journal. As part of an attempt to make the Review a journal of broad interest to statisticians, each ISI section has been given responsibility for papers in its area. In the case of IASE, the first fruit of this policy is a special part issue on statistical education published in April, 1995. That issue contains four papers on statistical education, including David Vere-Jones' review of ISI education work prior to the founding of IASE. I hope that IASE members will call the attention of their colleagues to the advantages of membership in a society devoted to statistical education.

Because of its international focus, IASE takes particular interest in the state of statistical education in developing nations and in the transition countries of Eastern Europe. Support for participation in our international meetings by educators from these countries is a major item in the IASE budget. We hope that there will be many participants from South and East Asia at ICOTS-5 in Singapore. Finding creative ways to help developing nations on a very limited budget is a major challenge for IASE.

Direct Activity - More Difficult Ground

The ISI once carried training responsibilities now held by agencies of the United Nations, especially UNESCO. UNESCO continues to fund the Calcutta training institute through grants to ISI, and has also supported participation in IASE activities by persons from developing and transition countries. UNESCO is now changing from general-purpose support to contracts in support of specific projects that serve its goals. I agree that this is wise from UNESCO's perspective. However, the change in policy is disadvantageous to IASE. Organisations of professionals are not well placed to carry out projects under contract. We will also be forced to rely more heavily on dues income from members in developed countries to support, for example, travel to ICOTS from developing countries. I suspect that most members are happy to see their dues devoted to this purpose, but would be reluctant to pay a substantial increase.

It is easy to imagine direct project activity of international value. One such is the now-dormant project to provide video resources for training entry-level statistical staff in developing nations, for which Ken Bryson did much initial work. Despite considerable effort, ISI was unable to obtain funds to continue this project. As David Vere-Jones remarks, this failure illustrates both "the fickleness of international aid funding" and the difficulties faced by organisations like ISI and IASE that must rely on a widely dispersed membership of busy professionals. The direct needs of most IASE members are probably served by IASE's role as a professional association. We must ask ourselves how we can realistically face our other responsibilities more actively.

Questions for the Future

IASE has devoted its formative period to establishing itself as a credible professional society. The next executive committee, headed by Anne Hawkins as president and composed of other officers elected by members in the election just concluded, faces a number of challenges. Statistical education is of concern to many, but the primary concern of few. Can IASE increase its membership and expand its activities when it is not the primary professional society of most of its members? Can we find imaginative ways to be genuinely helpful to statistical education in developing nations when we lack large resources? Ought we to seek funding for projects that strengthen international statistical education, and if so, who will supply the imagination to conceive such projects and the time and energy needed to complete them? I am unsure of the answers to these questions. I am, however, certain of the importance of statistical education and training, and of the usefulness of an association that has this as its focus, uniting people across national boundaries and disciplinary specialities.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New IASE Executive Committee.

The following people will take office in August 1995:

President: Anne Hawkins (UK)

President-elect: Maria Gabriella Ottaviani (Italy)

Vice-presidents: Manfred Borovcnik (Austria)

Abdelmegid Farag (Egypt)

Brian Phillips (Australia)

Richard Scheaffer (USA)

Reduced Membership Costs for Institutions in Developing and Transition countries, with additional savings on IASE publications. Please take every opportunity to bring this innovation to the attention of personnel from institutions that might be eligible. *Further details from ISI Permanent Office.*

12-14 July 1995, RSS95 - Royal Statistical Society Theme Conference Communicating Statistics, Telford, Shropshire, UK. Programme objectives are to improve the effectiveness of teachers of statistics, to improve the effectiveness of communication of statistics, and to raise the profile of statistics as a subject and profession. RSS95 Conference Secretary, Computing & Information Technology, University of Wolverhampton, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SB, UK [Tel: +(0)1902-322209, Fax: +(0)1902-322680, rss@scitsc.wlv.ac.uk] The conference will be preceded by three one-day short courses on statistical education 10-11 July.

21-29 August 1995, 50th Session of the International Statistical Institute, Beijing. Statistical Education sessions include: The Relative Roles of Universities and Employers in Training Professional Statisticians; Net-working Innovations and Resources - the Internet as Toolbox; Teaching Statistics in Asia; Teaching Statistics in Geographical Courses - Links with GIS

(Geographical Information Systems); Statistics at School Level; Training Statistical Staff and Continuing Education in Developing Countries; Statistical Literacy in Educational Programmes; Statistics Service Courses at Higher Education level. Contact; Executive Secretariat of the 50th ISI Session, c/o State Statistical Bureau, No.38 Yuetan Nanjie, Sanlihe, Beijing 100826, Republic of China [Tel +86-1-38-10965/10051 Fax +86-1-3810035; E-mail: wangjl@bepc2.ihep.ac.cn]

23-25 August 1995, International Statistical Integration, Beijing. 3-day workshop for senior statisticians from Asian developing countries, sponsored by the Asian Development Bank. Details from the ISI Permanent Office in Voorburg.

2-8 June 1996 (provisional dates) Computational Statistics and Statistical Education, University of Tartu, Estonia, co-sponsored by IASE, IASC and the Estonian Statistical Society. Rolf Biehler, Universität Bielefeld, Institut für Didaktik der Mathematik (IDM), Postfach 100131, D-33501

Bielefeld, Germany [Tel: +49 521-106 5058/5060, Fax: + 49 521-106 2991, rolf.biehler@post.uni-bielefeld.de]

14-21 July 1996, Statistical Education Sessions at ICME-8, Seville, Spain. Details of the sessions devoted to statistical education at the 8th International Congress on Mathematical Education; Brian Phillips, School of Mathematical Sciences, Swinburne University of Technology, PO Box 218 Hawthorn, 3122, Australia [brp@swin.oz.au, Tel: +61-3-214-8288, Fax: +61-3-819-0821]

23-26 July 1996, IASE Round-table Research into the Role of Technology in Teaching and Learning Statistics, Granada, Spain. Contact Joan Garfield, General College, University of Minnesota, 140 Appleby Hall, 128 Pleasant St S E, Minneapolis, MN 55455 [jbjg@vx.cis.umn.edu].

June 1998, ICOTS-5. Singapore will be the venue for the next International Conference on Teaching Statistics.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SURVEY STATISTICIANS

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Executive Director: Mr. Alain Charraud, C/O DARES - pièce 1210, Ministère du Travail, 1 place Fontenoy, 75007 Paris, France. Téléphone: 40-56-4105; FAX: 40-56-7342.

THE SURVEY STATISTICIAN

The association is delighted to announce that Mike Brick has accepted the post of editor of *The Survey Statistician*. Future announcements, inquiries, and other correspondence concerning *The Survey Statistician* should be addressed to:

Mike Brick

Westat, 1650 Research Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20850, USA.

RESULTS OF 1995 ELECTION OF IASS OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

President Elect: N. Chinnappa (Canada)

Vice Presidents: M. Kantorowitz (Israel)

C. Skinner (UK)

Scientific Secretary: F. Scheuren (USA)

Council Members: D. Kasprzyk (USA); J. Kordos (Poland); S. Linacre (Australia); H. Lindstrom (Sweden); J.N.K. Rao (Canada); T. Taguchi (Japan).

Congratulations to all!

IASS PROGRAMME OF SHORT COURSES, BEIJING, 1995

IASS is sponsoring the following programme of three short courses, to be held at The People's University, Beijing, immediately preceding the ISI Session.

- A. **Workshop on Survey Sampling in Developing Countries;** 18-19 August, 1995, presented by:

Graham Kalton (Westat Inc., Rockville, MD, USA)

Colm O'Muircheartaigh (London School of Economics, UK)

- B. **Workshop on Establishment/Enterprise Surveys in Developing and Transition Countries;** 20-21 August, 1995, presented by:

Brenda Cox (Mathematica Policy Research Inc., Princeton, NJ, USA)

Michael Colledge (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Belconnen, Australia)

K.P. Srinath (Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Canada)

- C. **Variance Estimation in Complex Surveys;** 20-21 August, 1995, presented by:

Wayne Fuller (Iowa State University, Ames, IA, USA)

Kirk Wolter (NORC, Chicago, USA)

F. Jay Breidt (Iowa State University, Ames, IA, USA)

All courses will be presented in English. It will be possible to attend either a single course or else course A followed by either course B or course C. Further information may be obtained from:

Professor Chris Skinner, Scientific Secretary, IASS Department of Social Statistics, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ, UK
e-mail: cjs@soton.ac.uk
fax: 44 1703 593846

EUROPEAN MEETING ON "DEMOGRAPHY, STATISTICS AND PRIVACY", Paris, 23-24 October 1995

This meeting is organized by the "Institut National des Etudes Démographiques" (INED), Eurostat and the IASS.

In Europe, statistical activity is subject to different legal regulations that are country specific. In 1994, new European legislation defines a common law for the exchange of personal data while protecting the privacy of such data. At this meeting, we will compare different demographic traditions, using censuses in some countries, and registers in others. Access to databases are free in some countries and constrained in some others. Will the creation of the European Community lead to homogeneous conditions in producing statistics? (October 23). The