

# ISLP Newsletter

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## OECD Seminar on Innovative Approaches to Turning Statistics into Knowledge

It was held at the Berns Auditorium, Stockholm on May 26-27, 2008 and sponsored by OECD and Statistics Sweden.



This was a most refreshing event, with a wide array of presentations on new ways to visualize

official Statistics and most insightful comments about the difference between dissemination, information and knowledge. Enrico Giovannini, Chief Statistician and Director of the Statistics Division of the OECD, and also ISLP advisory board member, put it very clearly: "Putting figures out is not enough. The International Classification of Economic Activity does not include Statistics as an activity. Rather, Statistics is a service, measured by how much it increases the value (knowledge) of the consumer." Hans Rosling, of Gapminder, reiterated the above by saying that without making the information go from the eyes to the brain (a 6 cm trip, it was said), there is no knowledge gain. He and



others also made a plea for the free access to all government data and to NSOs playing the role of intermediaries between the numbers and the private sector that uses them. Check some resources from this conference at the end of this newsletter. All the talks will soon be posted by the OECD at ([www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum/statknowledge](http://www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum/statknowledge)) There were some very nice stories solved with statistics among the talks. Look forward to seeing them to share.

## South Africa Young Trail-Blazers in the development of Maths and Stats-Partners of Statistics South Africa

### ISIBALO-4

Victor Sebothoma developed a student volunteer program currently holding 18 students, assisted by ISIBALO-4 a subprogram of the ISIBALO Capacity Program. They go out into the nearby village schools every Saturday morning to give learners extra lessons in Mathematics and Statistics. Currently they are teaching over 500 learners. Statistics South Africa provides transport and teaching resources to the young teachers.



It is anticipated that Victor and the other student teachers will attend the 57th Session of the International Statistics Institute to be held in Durban in August 2009. They will assist in facilitating some of the Mathematics and Statistics activities for learners that will take place at the ISIBalo Activity Centre



at the ISI 2009 and will also assist Dr. Juana Sanchez to moderate the International Statistical Literacy Project Competition examination at the ISI in 2009.

Contributed by Dr. Miranda Mafafo, ISIBALO manager. For the full story, visit the South Africa page of resources at the ISLP web site <http://www.stat.auckland.ac.nz/~iase/islp/sa>

### ISIBALO-3



In South Africa, 29th May 2008 was acknowledged nationally as a day to "Take a Girl Child to Work". The ISIBalo Capacity Building Programme has as one of

its subprogrammes ISIBalo-3: Maths, Stats and the Girl Child, that seeks to develop and create opportunities for girl-children in mathematics and statistics in line with UNESCO initiatives and the vision of ISI's 1st woman President, Professor Denise Lievesley.

In this context, through ISIBalo-3, Statistics South Africa hosted 15 girl children on Friday, 30 May 2008. They were received by Mr Lehohla, the Statistician-General, at 10h30 who briefly addressed them before they got involved in a number of activities lined up for the day.

## 1st International Statistical Literacy Competition of the ISLP

As you know, the 1st International Statistical Literacy Competition of the ISLP for school students 10-18 years old is well under way, with thousands of students in several parts of the world involved, many of them from South Africa. Phase 1 started,



with Finland, Italy, Spain, Colombia, Chile, Portugal, France, Brasil, Mozambique, United States and South African having received the different

questions. Some countries in South America, involving a few students will complete the competition in October 2008. We had 5 categories (10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 16-17 and 18 years old), and therefore, 5 different exams, and 6 languages (Finnish, Italian, Portuguese, French, English and Spanish). The exams are long, 90 minutes exams, 6 or 7 pages each, sent to all the teachers by email and photocopied by the teachers, delivered in their classrooms and mailed back for grading. It took quite some resources to translate the questions into Italian and Finnish, with some people hired (Sari in Chicago, USA and Melisa, from Los Angeles) and ISLP board members Reija Helenius and Gabriella Ottaviani and Paola Guiache checking that the translations were properly done. The Portuguese translations were done by ISLP board member Maria Manuel da Silva Nascimento and the French one by Jean Claude Girard. These members of the ISLP board and the hired translators have been helping with the correspondence with the teachers, too. We have been very busy these past months, but we are happy that this slow process has allowed technology-anxious teachers and schools with not much computer power to enroll their students and has allowed a bigger participation.



During June, July and August the exams will be graded and the students and teachers will receive their certificates and gifts. The Finnish students and teachers already got some educational gifts from Statistics Finland, thanks to Reija, seen in the photo.

Phase 2, the national competition to choose the national winners, will be conducted during the first quarter of 2009.

## New Resources in the ISLP web pages

- **Sweden:** The [Factlab](#) (the English version is the Beta 1). Widely used at schools to help students with the visualization of official statistics, in projects with real data, where the students can see the data themselves. Allows learners to see the Metadata (the Where, How, Who, When, and how not to mix apples and oranges).
- **Netherlands:** [Mappingworlds](#) where the size of countries on the maps depends on their importance in the variable you are looking at. For instance, lead production... You can also find out which



countries in the world have most IKEA stores, among other things.

- **Spain:** Vasque country's page for kids (in Spanish and vasque). [EUSTAT](#)
- **USA:** [Texas Instruments' Data Analysis Activities](#)

Nice classroom activities for those without computers.

- **ISLP:** [Activities to train for the International Statistical Literacy Competition](#) /Phase 1. They can be used as exercises at different levels of school and introductory Statistics College classes. You should check also the pages in other languages (Portuguese, Spanish, Finnish) [Periodic quizzes on statistical literacy concepts](#)
- **OECD:** [Factbook Quiz](#) On the same page, you can see the OECD Factbook using Gapminder graphs (the bubbles and the dynamics). If you teach, your students will love them. If you just like to look at the graphs, you will have fun and learn a lot, too. See also the [OECD Statistics Newsletter](#)
- **Africa:** Statistics and Development are making history in Africa. To stay up to date with what is going on in Statistical Literacy in Africa at a large scale, read the [African Statistical Newsletter](#)
- **Portugal:** where a [Department of Education](#) took charge of providing very nice Statistics activities to complement the Portuguese Curriculum.

Check also the country pages and all the other resource pages for additional items that have been added within the last 6 months. And, of course, feel free to add your new resources after contacting us. For any questions, e-mail [jsanchez@stat.ucla.edu](mailto:jsanchez@stat.ucla.edu)

### In the next issue of this newsletter:

- The program of ISLP at the next ASA meeting and ELEE meeting
- Publications of the ISLP
- Update on the ISLP competition
- Best Cooperative Project Award