

## News from the International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS)

April 2016

Dear IAOS members and supporters,

### Introduction

Welcome to the IAOS newsletter.

The IAOS recognises that official statistics can be challenging. Accordingly, I would like to begin by drawing your attention to the [Andreas V. Georgiou legal defense fund](#) – an initiative to help finance the legal defence costs of Andreas V. Georgiou, the former President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) from 2010-2015, who is facing long-running legal procedures. ISI and IAOS are actively supporting this initiative. I encourage you to contribute and share information about this initiative with other colleagues. (*More about the initiative can be found later in the newsletter.*)

Another important feature of this newsletter is highlighting the achievements of the Association in 2015, as set out in the latest [Annual Report](#). These achievements would not be possible without the efforts of the various Executive members, others who undertake key roles, and members and supporters.

Continuing on the successes of 2015, many activities will also be conducted in 2016. Judging is already underway for the 2016 YSP, the 2017 YSP will be launched in mid 2016, each quarter the SJIAOS will be published and of course we will close the year with the IAOS 2016 conference in Abu Dhabi. In addition, the Executive is working on the other initiatives set out in the strategic plan.

The newsletter contains a wide range of information of these items and other topics of interest to those involved in official statistics. On behalf of the IAOS Executive, I thank you for your support and encourage you to continue to participate in our Association activities. In particular, I would like to remind you that registration for the IAOS2016 conference in Abu Dhabi is now open.



## Key Dates for Members

### IAOS 16 Conference - reminder of closing dates for Contributed papers

Proposals for Contributed Papers close on 25 April 2016. See the [IAOS2016 website](#) for more information. Registration is now open.

### YSP 2017

The 2017 competition will be launched in mid July 2016.

### IAOS 18 Conference

The IAOS 18 conference will be held in Paris, from 3- 5 October, 2018.

## 2015 Annual Report

The [2015 Annual Report](#) is now on the IAOS website. The report provides an overview of the achievements of our organisation over 2015.

I particularly want to draw members' attention to the following significant achievements

### *Launch of the 2015-17 Strategic Plan*

The IAOS strategic plan (2015-2017) was officially launched on World Statistics Day (20/10/2015). The Strategic plan seeks to strengthen and promote the understanding and advancement of IAOS in the rapid daily statistical changes.

The implementation of the IAOS strategy, in collaboration with key partners in the global statistical community, will enable significant progress in the following areas:

1. To increase the relevancy of IAOS.
2. To increase the visibility of the IAOS at regional and international levels.
3. To invest in creating mutual beneficial Partnerships.
4. Institutionalize IAOS function

### *Investing in mutual beneficial partnerships,*

IAOS became one of the stakeholders of the UN led Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD). ( *There is more on the GPSDD later in the newsletter*).

### *YSP 2015 competition*

Once again, the IAOS held the annual competition for young official statisticians. The winning paper of the 2015 competition was presented at the 60<sup>th</sup> World Statistical Congress in Rio de

Janeiro. On behalf of the IAOS members, the Executive would like to once again congratulate the winners

- First prize: Andreas Mayer and Andrew Harwood (Australia), Big Data and Semantic Technology: A Future for Data Integration, Exploration and Visualization.
- Second Prize: Beata Nagy (Hungary), Targeted record swapping on grid-based statistics in Hungary.
- Third Prize: Svetlana Jesilevska (Latvia), Iterative method for the reducing the impact of outlying data points: ensuring data completeness.

The Executive would also like to thank all of the members of the judging committees, who give up their time to assess each of the entries.

### *SJIAOS*

As the Annual report notes, the Statistical Journal has continued to grow, both in quantity and quality. In 2015, the journal was nearly 700 pages in total. Four issues a year are now a permanent feature. The range and quality of papers in the Journal also continues to increase. Interviews with leaders in official statistics continue to be a feature of each quarterly issue. Special sections on topics such as local area data, Big Data, refugees have become a regular feature.

While the journal is open to all members of the IAOS, we have deliberately taken the step of increasing access to quality information about official statistics for all members of our community, by a range of open access articles. Each quarterly issue has a range of open access articles, and the June quarter issue continued with the tradition of being fully open to all.

The Journal is not without challenges. While the number and quality of submissions has increased, a few authors have sought other outlets/Journals because our Journal continues to be unranked, as yet. In light of this, we believe it is time to seek a formal ranking. That will be a goal for 2016/2017.

2016 will see another change. Current Editor in Chief Fritz Scheuren is retiring from the role. The incoming Editor in Chief Kirsten West, is no stranger to the Journal, having been the Interview Editor.

The Executive would like to particularly acknowledge the work of Dr Fritz Scheuren in leading many of these changes. The Executive would also like to acknowledge the contributors, the members of the Editorial Board, IOS Press (our publishers) and above all the readers of the



SJIAOS. Without your support, it would not have been possible to achieve these improvements. (*There is more on the latest issue of the SJIAOS later in this newsletter.*)

### **Conferences**

The Annual Report highlights the active conference programme led and sponsored by the Association. These include:

#### ***IAOS 2016 - Abu Dhabi, 6-8 December 2016.***

Over 2015, the Program Committee, chaired by Eric Rancourt (Canada) has actively worked to prepare the conference programme. The main theme of the conference “The Spirit of Official Statistics: Partnership and Continuous Innovation” will consist of four main sections (Strengthening the value of official statistics in the rapidly expanding information society, Partnerships in action for results, Rising to challenges ingenuity & Fundamental principles in practice). Sessions are being organized on partnerships; on the history of the IAOS; the power of official statistics; SDGs; management of respondents; statistics in the Gulf region; modernization of NSOs; innovative use of ICTs; success stories in relevance; efficiency and advocacy; and coordination of NSS among others. (*An update on IAOS 2016 can be found later in this newsletter.*)

#### **IAOS 18, Paris, 3-5 October, 2018**

The IAOS Executive is very pleased to announce that the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), has agreed to organize jointly with IAOS the 2018 Conference on its premises in Paris, France. (*See more below.*)

#### **60th ISI World Statistical Congress 2015, Rio de Janeiro**

The IAOS participation at the 60th ISI WSC 2015 in Rio included 18 Invited Paper Sessions, including 2 sponsored jointly with IASS. This was a significant increase from the 59th ISI WSC in Hong Kong, where 10 IPSs were sponsored by the IAOS.

In addition, several proposals submitted by IAOS members not accepted as an IPS, were taken up as Special Topic Sessions.

#### **61st ISI WSC Morocco 2017**

At the time of preparing the 2015 Annual Report, planning of the scientific program for the 61st ISI World Statistics Congress was well under way. The call for proposals was launched on October 2015 and closed in February 15th 2016. (*There is more on the WSC 2017 below.*)

## **SCORUS**

The IAOS annual report also highlights the activities of SCORUS (Standing Committee on Regional and Urban Statistics - a standing committee of the IAOS), This committee held its 2015 conference and participated in the WSC 2015. For more information on SCORUS - see <http://scorus.org/home/>

## **Other Activities outlined in the Annual Report**

Finally, the Annual Report also describes the various activities undertaken to improve communication with current and prospective members of the Association, including the launch of two new promotion videos, preparation of the new IAOS website (also discussed below), and the efforts to strengthen and institutionalise IAOS' working procedures and protocols.

Thanks again to all those who contributed to all of these activities over 2015 and now into 2016. We encourage all members to read the [Annual Report](#) and reflect on the achievements of the Association over 2015.

## **Initiative for supporting the former President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority**

The IAOS supports the [Andreas V. Georgiou legal defense fund](#) – an initiative for helping to finance the legal defence costs of Andreas V. Georgiou, the former President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) from 2010-2015 who is facing long-running legal procedures. He was accused in 2013 of high treason for inflating the 2009 government deficit and debt figures of Greece. During his 5-years term, he was in permanent conflict with regard to European quality standards like the Code of Practice and requirements from the government which led to the charges against him.

Until today, these accusations remain unproven and the [European](#) and international statistical community repeatedly proclaimed their support for Andreas V. Georgiou as he acted according to international statistical quality standards. In this regard Vijay Nair (former President of the ISI) and Stephen Penneck (Chair of the ISI Advisory Board on Ethics) [stated](#) in 2015 their “hope that justice will prevail in this case and that the threat of prosecution will finally be lifted from Mr Georgiou and his Managers”.



Some of the court cases against Andreas V. Georgiou and two of his former ELSTAT managers have been already dropped. But there are still cases open and the defence costs have to be paid by him personally without compensation by the Greek government or any other body. For the sake of independence of official statistics, IAOS calls upon the international statistical community for financial support to the [Andreas V. Georgiou legal defense fund](#).

## IAOS16 Conference - Abu Dhabi, 6 - 8 December 2016 8 6 Update

In March, the program committee met on the margin of the UN Statistical Commission in New York. There are over 15 invited paper sessions that are shaping up well and more than 30 proposals for contributed papers. The committee reviewed the sessions and agreed to keep the focus on the themes of the conference. It was also agreed to make a special effort to create a program that will have a variety of session formats (speakers only; with a discussant; in a panel format; more short presentations; etc) in order to maintain the interest of the participants over the 3 days of the event. Each day will have a keynote speaker.

As part of the program there will also be a course on how to make presentations on the day before the event and a course on how to write papers on the first day. As usual, there will be a session for presentations by the young statisticians prize winners and time for the IAOS General Assembly. Finally, note that the deadline for submitting contributed paper proposals has been extended to the end of April. The committee hopes to inform the authors of papers retained by the end of May and have a program by the end of June.

Contact Program Chair Eric Rancourt ([Eric.Rancourt@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:Eric.Rancourt@statcan.gc.ca)) for more information or check out the [IAOS2016 website](#).

## WSC 2017

Preparation of the World Statistics Congress 2017 scientific program is highly advanced. The number and name of the approved IAOS IPS proposals will be released after the meeting of the scientific committee scheduled for May 12-13<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Rolando Ocampo, the IAOS representative on the Scientific Committee advises that they are likely to be more proposals approved for WSC 2017 than even we had at the WSC at Rio.

Contact Rolando Ocampo for more information ([Rolando.Ocampo@inegi.org.mx](mailto:Rolando.Ocampo@inegi.org.mx))



## IAOS 18 conference

The Executive is pleased to announce that the IAOS 18 conference will be a joint event in conjunction with the OECD. The event will be held in Paris from 3-5 October, 2018.

This partnership offers IAOS the opportunity of liaising with one of the leading international organizations that is very much involved in the development of Official Statistics and provides a suitable encounter place for official statisticians, academics, experts and other professionals from the developing and developed worlds to engage together on the future of the field.

Details of the Programme will be determined by IAOS and OECD and announced in the coming months. If you have questions, please contact President-elect Mario Palma (mpalma@inegi.org.mx)

## SJIAOS - Update

The [March issue of the SJIAOS](#) is now available. The theme is *Disclosure Protection in a (Big) Data Dense World*. The March issue features papers on various aspects of the Big Data Revolution. Issues related to synthetic data are presented in several papers, including the open paper authored by Vilhuber, Abowd and Reiter, entitled: "Synthetic Establishment Microdata Around the World."

In keeping with the tradition, the issue contains an open access interview. This issue features our IAOS President Ola Awad, who is also the President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). Ms. Awad talks about the work that goes on at the PCBS and the unique challenges of collecting, producing and disseminating statistics.

The transition between editors of the SJIAOS is also well underway. Once again, the IAOS Executive would like to thank outgoing editor in chief Dr Fritz Scheuren for all his efforts on the Journal. As the 2015 Annual Report noted, the SJIAOS has grown extensively in quantity and quality under Fritz's leadership. He has worked with an ever increasing team of editors to enhance the range and quality of journal contributions, as well as implementing new innovations to expand the journal's readership. All the best in retirement from the SJIAOS.

We would also like to warmly welcome the new Editor in Chief, Dr Kirsten West. Kirsten is no stranger to the journal, having previously been the Interview Editor.



## YSP 2017 competition

The YSP 2017 competition will be launched around the end of July 2016. Information on the announcement and the technical guidelines will be posted onto website nearer the time.

Apart from attractive prizes, the winning paper will be presented at the World Statistics Congress in mid-July 2017.

Please encourage eligible young statisticians to make earlier preparations.

## Global Partnership on Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD)

In late 2015, the IAOS accepted an invitation to be one of the stakeholders in the GPSDD initiative. The following information about the GPSDD was released in mid 2015 and provides an overview of the objectives and functions.

The GPSDD seeks to convene and facilitate stakeholders across sectors, countries and regions worldwide to galvanize and sustain political commitments, align strategic priorities and norms, strengthen capacities, foster innovation and build trust in the booming data ecosystems of the 21st century. The GPSDD will help scale the impact of current efforts that have the potential to harness the data revolution by encouraging knowledge sharing and learning, mobilizing new and making better use of existing resources, and facilitating collaborations to address key barriers to accessing and using data to enable and measure progress on sustainable development. It aims to leverage and amplify work that no single stakeholder can achieve working alone.

The GPSDD will bring together the full range of producers and users who are critical to harnessing the data revolution for sustainable development.

The GPSDD will help:

- Promote new data principles and norms when needed and strengthen those that already exist.
- Incentivize statistics and data generation to fill key data gaps.
- Expand open data to increase the timeliness, interoperability, use and value of data that already exist.
- Advance increased data use to improve sustainable development outcomes.





If you are interested in knowing more about the GPSDD, contact Dr. Sanjeev Khagram at [skhagram@gmail.com](mailto:skhagram@gmail.com). IAOS members interested in supporting the IAOS involvement with the GPSDD, should contact Ms Ola Awad, IAOS President ([contactIAOS@gmail.com](mailto:contactIAOS@gmail.com)).

### **New IAOS Website**

Work is proceeding on our new website. The new website is based on the specifications of the CM (Content Management) Platform that ISI employed in their newly designed website.

This means it will be easier to find material and for us to keep members better informed.

As we transition between websites, there may be some disruption in service. Your patience is appreciated.

### **IAOS Executive Meeting in New York**

Executive members attending the UNSC meeting in New York in early March took the opportunity to hold a face to face Executive meeting.

The Executive reviewed progress with the strategic goals ( extract from the MOM), progress with the YSP16 competition, plans for the YSP17, progress with the IAOS16, IAOS18 conferences as well as the IAOS contributions to the WSC 2017. The Executive also discussed proposals to enhance publicity and promote the IAOS to university students.

The meeting was also attended by senior representatives of UNSD, OECD and INEGI.

Participants in the meeting are shown below.



**Back** (Left to Right) - Mario Palma (President-Elect, IAOS); Rolando Ocampo (WSC 17 representative), Paul Schreyer, (Deputy of Chief Statistician and Director of the Statistics Directorate of OECD) , Leslie Tang (Executive Member), Eric Rancourt (IAOS 16 Program Chair), Ronald Jansen (UNSD), Chief, Trade Statistics Branch, Adrian Franco, General Director for Governance, Crime & Justice Statistics for INEGI.

**Front** (Left to Right - Kirsten West (incoming Editor in Chief, SJIAOS), Sibylle von Oppeln (Executive Member), Ola Awad (IAOS President), Ada Van Krimpen (ISI Director)

**Apologies** Oliver Chinganya (Executive Member), Nancy McBeth (Executive Member), Teodora Brandmueller (SCORUS representative).

## Promotion and Publicity

The EXCO have been actively identifying options for further promotion and publicity. If you are keen to be involved in this aspect - contact Ola Awad, President, IAOS.

## Upcoming conferences of interest to members

**IAOS 16** - 6-8 December, 2016 Abu Dhabi, UAE, - contributed papers close 25 April 2016. Registration is now open. See <http://www.iaos2016.ae>



**NTTS** - New Techniques and Technologies for Statistics (NTTS) 2017 - Brussels 14-16 March 2017 - See <http://NTTS2017.eu>

**WSC 2017** - 16-21 July 2017, Marrakech, Morocco, see <http://www.isi2017.org/>

**IAOS 18** - 3-5 October, 2018, Paris, France

## Other Upcoming Events of Interest

### [69th Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques.](#)

The Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques has announced its programme for 2015. This is a teaching program of the Survey Research Center at the [Institute for Social Research](#), [University of Michigan](#), Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. The summer courses are select offerings from the [Michigan Program in Survey Methodology](#), and can be used to pursue a doctorate, master of science and a certificate in survey methodology.

### ***Invitation to share other items of interest to members.***

We welcome short items of interest to members of the IAOS, official statisticians, providers and users of official statistics for publication in this newsletter and/or on the IAOS website. Please send your contributions to [contactIAOS@gmail.com](mailto:contactIAOS@gmail.com) or [nancyemcbeth@gmail.com](mailto:nancyemcbeth@gmail.com).

Finally I really welcome any feedback and suggestions that you may have on matters relating to Official Statistics and the work of the IAOS in particular. I look forward to your continued interest and support in the IAOS activities and I look forward to seeing you in Abu Dhabi in December 2016.

Thank you again for your support

Ola Awad  
President IAOS



International Association For Official Statistics  
Abu Dhabi-2016



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