**International Association for Official Statistics**

**2024 General Assembly Meeting**

Thursday, 16May 2024, 8:00 – 9:00 am (CDT)

Format: Hybrid meeting

Attendees – Approximately 20 members attended in person, and 15 attended on-line

Apologies: Gary Dunnet

**Introduction:**

Dominik Rozkrut, IAOS President, welcomed participants to the IAOS General Assembly (GA). He greeted the previous IAOS Presidents present in Mexico: Jean-Louis Bodin, Mario Palma, Stephen Penneck and Misha Belkindas. He reminded attendees that the time was limited to one hour and cannot be exceeded, since the regular IAOS sessions start at 9:00.

1. **Minutes of 2023 General Assembly: for agreement**

Minutes of the 2023 General Assembly (Ottawa) prepared by Lilia Saetova were agreed with no comments or objections.

1. **IAOS Annual Report 2023-2024: for agreement**

Dominik reviewed key issues from the annual report.

He started with reminding the IAOS objectives i.e.:

* promoting the understanding and advancement of official statistics and related subjects, and fundamental principles of official statistics (FPOS),
* fostering the development of effective and efficient official statistical services, particularly in developing countries, through international contacts among individuals and organizations, including users of official statistics as well as research institutions.

In addition, he highlighted the IAOS key role in contributing to efforts at establishing and maintaining a new global consensus on data (data governance, new data ecosystem etc.).

He briefly described the key activities that have been taking place since 2023 General Assembly:

* Organised in conjunction with ISI and INEGI, the IAOS-ISI Conference “*Improving Decision-Making for All,* “happening in Mexico,
* Organised a UN Statistical Commission side event “*THE FPOS AND BEYOND. How today’s megatrends will reshape official statistics. Integrating foresight into official statistics*”,
* Continued progress of the Krakow Group works,
* Established the Friends of Official Statistics (FOS) group, in conjunction with UNSD,
* Published 3 issues of the SJIAOS, and associated discussions on the Discussion Platform,
* Run the 2024 YSP competition,
* Approved a Code of Conduct for EXCO members and drafted an updated set of statutes,
* Conducted 3 meetings of the new EXCO (with a fourth to be held in Mexico).

Dominik also mentioned SCORUS preparation for its 2024 conference, and IAOS preparations for both the IAOS 2026 conference and the 2025 WSC.

In terms of membershipDominikadvised thatas at mid-March 2024, there were 662 individual members compared with 635 at the end of 2023, with noticeable increases in the number of individual members from organisations which also have organisational membership. Membership from developing countries has also increased. There has been a small decline in membership among non-retired members from developed countries (down about 7 % between 2021 and 2023) is noticeable, however there has been an increase among retired members from developed countries, suggesting that these members retain interest in the Association, even after retirement.

Dominik stressed that one of the challenges of the EXCO and the wider association is to ensure we are relevant for all parts of the Official Statistical community.

Talking about the financial report Dominik informed that the operating income for the 2023 year was EUR 36,562; while expenses totalled EUR 55,344. Fortunately, the contribution from the ISI investment portfolio contributed a further EUR 12, 492, meaning that the IAOS balance of funds was EUR 150,080, which is a decrease of 4.0 % compared to 2021.

Key reasons were that in 2023 IAOS involved in two major international conferences (the delayed 2020 conference in Zambia, as well as the 2023 WSC).

In addition, the winners of Young Statistician Prize competitions from 2019 -2021, whose attendance at conferences had been delayed due to the pandemic, were again able to travel.

Additional cost pressures have also arisen from increases in ISI cost recovery, necessary for the operations of the IAOS.

Sponsorship for the Zambia conference offset some of the additional travel costs, but did not cover all the costs.

At the same time, membership income has not increased in the same way as in previous years. This is partly due to changes in the mix of members, with more members from developing countries and declines in membership from non-retired members in developed countries.

Dominik emphasized that in the next year, IAOS will need to review its membership fees, given the ongoing cost pressures.

At the end of his speech he reminded everyone that the full version of the report is available on the IAOS website.

Dominik opened the floor for a discussion. The issue raised was a need to increase membership level.

Dominik wished to campaign more for new memberships, targeting also at central banks and private companies. He mentioned that the membership has to be associated with some benefits and we need to offer something for the one who’s paying.

Denise Silva, ISI Vice-President, mentioned ISI plans to establish the Task Force for increasing membership as all associations have been facing the same problem. Conchita Kleijweg, ISI Director, confirmed that it would be beneficial for all associations under ISI umbrella to make it together as it would look a bit strange if everyone was doing it separately. The same applies to communication campaign, it was emphasized that it should not be the IAOS only who starts its own battle for increasing the visibility but it would be beneficial for all associations to make it together.

Conchita strongly supported that “common approach”.

1. **Draft updated IAOS Statutes - Nancy McBeth**

Nancy gave members an update since the 2023 General Assembly on the IAOS statutes and associated Code of Conduct (which has been endorsed during the ExCo meeting on 27 March 2024.). The Code of Conduct is the set of guidelines setting out how IAOS Executive members (ExCo) should behave as IAOS officers.

The Statutes set up a legal framework of how the IAOS operates. The last update of the Statutes was done in 2013.

Nancy explained that the two drivers of creation the Code of conducts and updating the statutes were:

1. Implementation of the new Dutch legislation (MSLE Act) has meant that all Dutch based legal entities need to review their legal arrangements, specifically those related to governance and management
2. Changes in IAOS working procedures since the 2013 Revision, including establishment of sub-groups such as the Krakow Group and Friends of Official Statistics, changes in processes, evolutions in the composition of the EXCO membership and use of technology – e.g. for meetings, and SJIAOS activities.

The proposed major changes of the Statutes are:

* New statute setting out the relationship between the ISI and the IAOS  (Statute 5)
* New statute covering the establishment, reporting and dissolution of sub-groups (Statute 9)
* Changes to statutes related to membership of the IAOS, to simplify and standardize the different types of IAOS members (individual and institutions/organizations)
* Changes to the statutes related to the Executive Committee (EXCO) in light of the MSLE and the implementation of the Code of Conduct, along with evolution in the composition of the EXCO
* Changes to the statutes related to the General Assembly, giving the General Assembly held during non-WSC years the power to change statutes
* Introduction of a standard definitions of key terms.

Statutes have now been updated and are available for IAOS members feedback - the deadline for submitting comments is 31 July 2024.

To provide feedback members are asked to use either the IAOS Communities platform (<https://communities.isi-web.org/update-iaos-statutes-2024>) or email Nancy McBeth at nancyemcbeth@gmail.com. Copies of the latest version of the Statutes ( *“IAOS Statutes Proposed only April 2024”* and *“IAOS Statutes Proposed and Current Apr 2024 v6” – which shows* changes from the 2013 version of the statutes*)* are on the Communities page and the IAOS website.

The consolidated feedback will be available on the Communities page in August 2024. In early 2025, the statutes will be formally presented to members and a formal voting process online will take place. The formal document shall be presented to the 2025 IAOS General Assembly.

Nancy informed that the ISI statutes will also be going through a process of updating in time for ratification at the ISI General Assembly in The Hague in 2025. This might have implications for IAOS statutes. It will require close cooperation between the group revising the ISI statutes and those who are working on the IAOS statutes. Conchita added that the ISI statutes do need to be updated, the last update was done in 2011. She expressed the hope that this change will not impact IAOS statutes.

Dominik thanked Nancy for her huge commitment and for all the work done on both the Statutes and the Code.

Mario Palma expressed his appreciation for Nancy’s work on the Statutes. He admitted that an update was necessary.

1. **Statistical Journal of the IAOS (SJIAOS) – Pietro Gennari**

Pietro gave an update on the SJIAOS, reminding attendees that the SJIAOS is the flagship journal of the IAOS. Its main aim is to support the IAOS mission by publishing articles that promote the understanding and advancement of official statistics and that foster the development of effective and efficient official statistical services on a global basis.

Additional objectives are: promoting the debate on emerging strategic topics in official statistics, promoting methodological advancements in official statistics and promoting the use of the Journal as reference for official statisticians around the world & for non-experts (statistical literacy).

Pietro reported that in 2023 there were 4 regular issues published (Volume 39) with 1016 pages of content, 78 articles (excluding editorials and discussion platforms) and 225 authors involved. Open access was granted to 38 articles meaning that 49% was accessible free of charge. Out of 127 articles submitted, 35 were rejected/withdrawn (28%). This proves the high quality of articles.

Next, Pietro covered the content of the Journal. He described in detail all SJIAOS issues published in 2023 and first half of 2024. Furthermore, he provided information on the SJIAOS discussion platform.

He noted that after a steep increase in the number of article views up to 2022 (almost tripled from 2020 to 2022) there has been a decrease in 2023. The main reasons were: transition period due to the handover of the Editor in Chief role, no Special Issue (funded by International Organizations) published, significant reduction in the number of articles published (mainly those voluntarily submitted) and significant reduction in the proportion of Open Access articles.

Pietro briefly described the content of the upcoming issues (Volume 40, Issues 2-4; Volume 41, Issues 1-4).

Pietro concluded by summarizing the main Initiatives in the last 9 months. They were:

* New Cover of the Journal,
* Changes in the Editorial Board (18 new Editors),
* Organization of regular meetings with the Emphasis Editors,
* Changes to the manuscripts’ review process: new letters’ templates and deadlines for Emphasis Editors and Reviewers,
* Adoption of the International Classification of Statistical Activities to classify articles and Reviewers,
* Strengthened communication (social media, newsletters) and outreach,
* Newsletter dispatched to all Heads of NSOs and International Organizations,
* Active scouting for Special Issues and for funding of Open Access articles,
* Proposal for a new business model of the Journal: Open access for users; Costs covered by Institutional membership fees.

Nurain Adeboye Olawale asked about additional paper copies of the Journal which could be forwarded to the stakeholders, including Academia representatives. Pietro responded that there was a tendency to move all the content to online libraries and increasing the number of paper copies will probably not be possible and it results in increasing the costs as well.

1. **Young Statisticians Prize**

Dominik mentioned briefly that there will be a special session dedicated to the 2022 and 2023 YSP winners later in the day and invited everyone to participate. The results of 2024 edition will be announced soon. He added that all information about the competition is included in the annual report. He expressed his regrets that this point cannot be discussed in detail, due to time allocated for the GA meeting ending.

**Meeting closed at 9 am.**

Note due to lack of time, it was not possible to discuss either **future IAOS Conference plans or Other Business.**

Prepared by Ewa Bandurska, Assistant to IAOS President