



Minutes of the IASC General Assembly Meeting

Friday, October 6, 2023

15:00 – 17:00 CEST (e.g., Berlin, Germany)

[6:00-8:00 Pacific Time (e.g., Los Angeles), 9:00-11:00 Eastern Time (e.g., New York), and 22:00-0:00 JST (e.g., Tokyo)]

Virtual Meeting using GoToMeeting

- There were 43 attendees
- Technical Support: Olivia Van Dijck-Timbol, ISI Communications Officer
- The meeting started at 15:00 CEST
- The meeting ended at 15:45 CEST

1. Opening [Christophe Croux]

Christophe Croux welcomes all the attendees at the General Assembly.

He reminds everyone that IASC is one of the 5 or 6 associations of the ISI. It is good for the visibility of IASC to be linked to ISI as ISI has close links to the World Bank, the OECD, and different statistical agencies.

Then, Christophe Croux explains that the executive committee had a meeting on Monday, October 2, 2023. Each EC member will give an overview of the activities they organized for the benefit of the members of the association. All attendees are welcome to ask questions or submit suggestions if they wish.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda has been sent out to all IASC members, and the attendees approve it.

3. IASC Activity Report

a. General [Christophe Croux]

Christophe Croux explains that the activities of IASC consist of the organization of the DSSV conference each year, as well as many other activities organized by the regional sections. Moreover, the activities include the management of a scientific journal, JDSSV, as well as a collaboration with another scientific journal, CSDA.

b. Treasurer's Report [Christophe Croux]

Christophe Croux presents the accounts of IASC. The incomes have been globally stable over the last few years. These are mostly coming from the membership fees (regular and institutional members). There is also an annual sponsorship from Elsevier.

As far as the expenses are concerned, they are quite stable also. Some retribution to Elsevier is done for the subscription to CSDA. There are also costs linked to the sponsoring of some activities (e.g., the Data Analysis Competition and the organization of the President lecture at the WSC). Finally, it is reminded that IASC participates in the administrative costs of the ISI.

Globally, the balance of the expenses/incomes is usually close to 0 (except during the Covid years when the expenses were lower). Finally, Christophe Croux explains that IASC also has some financial reserves managed by the ISI, which yields equity interest over time.

c. Membership Report [Christophe Croux]

Christophe Croux mentions that the number of members is around 400, and this number has been quite stable for some years. He insists that IASC needs members for its visibility, but many scientific societies struggle to keep their members. He encourages the attendees to pay their membership dues.

Christophe Croux also reminds the attendees that one cannot become a member of a specific regional section. Still, one is considered a member of these sections by means of their geographical region.

d. European Regional Section (ERS) [Maria Brigida Ferraro]

Christophe Croux gives the floor to Maria Brigida Ferraro, who is the chairperson of ERS.

The main activity of ERS is Compstat, which is usually organized every two years. However, the calendar of the previous editions was perturbed by COVID-19, and therefore, three conferences happened in three consecutive years: in Bologna in 2022, in London in 2023, and in Giessen in 2024.

As far as the 2023 edition is concerned, there were 300 participants (hybrid format), and about 60 sessions were organized. The three keynote speakers were Kalliopi Mylona (King's College London, UK), David Hendry (University of Oxford, UK), and Ana Colubi (University of Giessen, Germany). Moreover, two tutorials took place: the first one on "Dynamic models for multiple quantiles" given by Alessandra Luati (University of Bologna, Italy) and the second one on "Bayesian variable selection for survival data: theory, methods, software and applications" taught by Javier Rubio (UCL, UK).

Another activity of the European Regional Section was the HiTEc Spring Course on Complex Data in Econometrics and Statistics, which was sponsored by ERS as well as by HiTEc COST Action and Frederick University. The course attracted about 25 participants in Cyprus in April 2023. The lecturers were Karel Hron (Palacky University, Czech Republic), Dan Vilenchik (Ben-Gurion University, Israel), Peter Winker (University of Giessen, Germany), David Suda (University of Malta, Malta), and Vladimir Batagelj (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia).

Maria Brigida Ferraro also outlines some future activities for 2024: Compstat in Giessen in August 2024, as well as a spring/summer course on Functional and Compositional Data, and closes her presentation with thanks to President Christophe Croux for his support.

Christophe Croux thanks Maria Brigida Ferraro for the report and congratulates the section for its activities.

e. Latin-American Regional Section (LARS) [Javier Trejos]

LARS has 56 members coming from 10 countries. The chairperson is Javier Trejos, who first outlines the new Board of Directors elected recently. Then, he summarizes the main features of the VII conference LACSC 2023 (60 participants, four plenary speakers, two short courses) and mentions that the General Assembly of LARS took place during the meeting.

Javier Trejos also announces the organization of several webinars. In November, Luis Barboza (U. Costa Rica) will give a talk on “Spatio-temporal Downscaling Emulator for Regional Climate Models,” while Agustín Gómez (U. Costa Rica) will talk about “IA Applications in Statistics Teaching.” Two other webinars, given by Maikol Solís (U. Costa Rica) and Holger Cevallos (ESPOL, Ecuador), should also take place by the end of the year, but the content is not fixed yet.

He concludes by mentioning that the next Latin American Conference on Statistical Computing (LACSC 2024) will be jointly organized on July 15-19, 2024, in Costa Rica with the Congress of the International Federation of Classification Societies (IFCS).

f. Asian Regional Section (ARS) [Ray-Bing Chen]

Ray-Bing Chen presents the activities of the section. Ray-Bing Chen starts with some information about the Interim conference, which was organized on the theme “The Interplay between Statistical Computing and AI.” It took place on 12-13 December 2022. A meeting of the Board of Directors was organized at the same time.

In December 2023, the 12th conference of ARS will be organized in Australia, while the next interim conference will take place in Taiwan in December 2024. Ray-Bing Chen also explains that ARS organized IPS Sessions at the WSC in Ottawa, and some members of ARS joined DSSV 2023 or Compstat 2023.

Christophe Croux thanks Ray-Bing Chen for the report and congratulates the section for its activities.

g. African Members Group [Christophe Croux]

Christophe Croux reminds the audience that there is not yet a regional section for Africa, but when the group becomes more mature, it might be promoted to a regional section. In order to reach that goal, the group needs to grow stronger and get more members.

Monday, Adenomon (chairperson of the group) could not attend the General Assembly, but Christophe Croux outlined the main activities: a conference in December 2022 and webinars on a regular basis. It is interesting to stress that these webinars attract many participants from all over Africa.

Christophe Croux is really satisfied with the activities of the group, especially when taking into account the fact that the infrastructures in Africa are not always optimal for the organization of scientific events.

h. Data Analysis Competition: outlook on 2024/2025 [Zdenek Hlavka]

Zdenek Hlavka invites the attendees to consult the IASC website to get all the available information about the Data Analysis Competition.

He reminds everyone that the objectives of the competition are to support active early career statisticians, to advertise membership in IASC, and to promote IASC during WSC.

The 2021 edition of the DAC had been perturbed by the covid pandemic (only six teams had registered; the award certificates were “electronic,” and the attendance to WSC was virtual), but the 2023 edition of the DAC went smoothly and attracted 13 teams (totaling 38 members) from 9 countries on four continents). The awards consisted of diplomas handed out during the award ceremony at WSC or during the DSSV meeting in Antwerp. These awards were accompanied by some travel grants (2500 EUR) and free one-year IASC memberships (15 times).

Christophe Croux thanks Zdenek Hlavka for his report and for the organization of the Data Analysis Competition.

i. WSC 2023 [Christophe Croux]

The conference was a success, and Christophe Croux explains that the IASC President Lecture was given by Karen Kafadar (University of Virginia, USA) on “Statistical Computing in 2023: The Critical Role of Robust Statistical Methods for Big Data”. The lecture was much appreciated by the audience.

Christophe Croux encourages the attendees to submit IPS proposals next time (in The Hague) as the acceptance rate is quite high, and it is nice for IASC to be well represented at the WSC.

j. DSSV 2023 Conference & Outlook on DSSV 2024 Conference [Christophe Croux]

Christophe Croux explains that the DSSV conference is an activity specifically organized by IASC (it is not organized by a regional section). This year, it was organized jointly with the European Conference on Data Analysis in July in Antwerp. The conference was very nice, with high-level presentations and it attracted about 200 participants. Next year (29 July – 1 August 2024), it will take place in the States, while it will be in South Africa the year after (7-9 July 2025).

k. JDSSV [Stefan Van Aelst]

Stefan Van Aelst explains that the Journal of Data Science, Statistics, and Visualisation has been existing for three years. In 2022, there were seven issues, six regular and a special one on Covid. In 2023, there were two published issues up to now. An additional one should be finalized soon, and maybe a special issue on the DSSV conference will be added.

Stefan Van Aelst explains that the publication strategy is under revision in order to increase the attractiveness of the journal. The objective is to improve the submission process. For that, it was first decided to extend the editorial board, and now, a large number of review editors (about 50) will be selected.

Christophe Croux reminds the audience that JDSSV is an open-access journal without any page charges.

A member of the audience wishes to know whether one could volunteer in order to become a review editor. Stefan Van Aelst answers positively and suggests that all interested attendees send an email with a CV to him or Patrick Groenen.

After all these presentations, Christophe Croux invites the attendees to share comments or ask questions on the reports that were presented. No remark nor question is put forward.

4. Other business

Nihil.

5. Closing

Christophe Croux thanked the persons who attended the GA. At the end of his term as President, he wishes to thank the Past-President Juergen Symanzik, and the scientific secretary, Gentiane Haesbroeck, for their help during his term. He wishes the best to the new Executive Committee and invites the new President, Chun-houh Chen, to close the meeting.

Chun-houh Chen thanked Christophe Croux and the EC members and extended his thanks to all the attendees.

The meeting is concluded at 15h45.