

Initiative for a European Regional Section of IASS

During the European Conference on Quality and Methodology in Official Statistics (Q2004) in Mainz an informal meeting was organised on 24 May 2004 to discuss an initiative for creating a European Regional Section of the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS).

The meeting was attended by nearly 100 participants, mostly from Europe but also from overseas. It was chaired by the president of IASS, Luigi Biggeri. The meeting was initiated by a group of people that felt that the collaboration of European survey statisticians should be enhanced. In particular the idea of a series of conferences on survey methodology was welcomed. Also a better networking of survey statisticians to raise awareness about survey statistics in European institutions, in particular the research programmes of the EU seems to be necessary. The creation of a European Regional Section of IASS would lend continuity to these activities and at the same time allow the connection with the international community of survey statisticians and, through the ISI, the statisticians in general.

A group of 12 volunteers met at the same conference to organise the work towards the creation of a European Regional Section of IASS. The volunteers are Pascal Ardilly (INSEE, France), Jelke Bethlehem (Statistics Netherlands), Siegfried Gabler (Centre for Survey Research and Methodology, Germany), Beat Hulliger (Swiss Federal Statistical Office), Thomas Körner (Federal Statistical Office Germany), Seppo Laaksonen (Statistics Finland), Ralf Münnich (University of Tübingen, Germany), Frank Nolan (Office for National Statistics, UK), Susanne Rässler (Institute of Employment Research, Germany), Marina Signore (ISTAT, Italy) and Chris Skinner (University of Southampton, UK). Five tasks (internal organisation and communication, external communication, conferences, objectives and activity plan, statutes and finances) were defined and distributed among the members of the working group. A European Conference on Quality and Survey Methodology in May 2006 in UK could be the first event of the new European Regional Section of IASS.

The working group will inform about its activities on the web-site www.surveystatistics.net. Interested persons may contact Ralf Münnich (ralf.muennich@uni-tuebingen.de) or Beat Hulliger (beat.hulliger@bfs.admin.ch). Any suggestions are warmly welcome.

The IASS was founded in 1973 as a section of the International Statistical Institute (ISI; <http://www.cbs.nl/isi/>). It aims to promote the study and development of the theory and practice of sample surveys and censuses. It also aims to increase the interest in surveys and censuses among statisticians, among governments and the public in the different countries of the world. Further information about the IASS can be found on the web-site <http://www.cbs.nl/isi/iass/index.htm> or from the scientific secretary of IASS, Marina Signore (signore@istat.it). If you are not yet a member of IASS you are warmly invited to become a member. Membership of IASS is not subject to conditions like with ISI. Application forms can be found on the web-site of the IASS.

28 June 2004