

Proposal for the objectives of the European Regional Section of IASS (IASS-ERS) (10 January 2005)

1. Foster the collaboration and exchange of experiences among survey statisticians in Europe.

The scope of the members of IASS-ERS should range from academics to official statisticians and to statisticians working in the private economy. Survey statistics covers all activities in surveys (be it censuses or sample surveys). Exchange of information and experiences can take place by organising conferences, by keeping members informed about conferences covering topics in the area of survey research. The website will play a vital role. This the place to find contact information, to find papers on relevant topics, and to find descriptions of relevant research projects.

The members of IASS-ERS will mainly reside in Europe because the activities (in particular the conference and the courses) will take place in Europe. However the IASS-ERS activities will be open to all survey statisticians in the world and invite them to participate in all activities.

2. Organise a series of Conferences on Survey Statistics in Europe.

Ideally the IASS-ERS conference should be organised in years between ISI-meetings. Of course, IASS-ERS can also contribute to organising sessions at ISI-meetings. The IASS-ERS conference should possibly organised in collaboration with the Conference on Quality organised by the European Statistical System to create and profit from synergies. However the conference should not be confined to official statistics. And it should welcome both theoretical contribution and contributions about applications in practice. The conference should be accompanied by short courses, if possible.

3. Promote research in survey statistics and assist project proposals in particular to the Framework Programmes of the European Union.

A list of researchers working in the area of survey statistics should be maintained. Through the website, and also at conferences, IASS-ERS can bring researchers together who want to participate in international research projects and networks of excellence. Moreover, experienced researchers can help novices in the field to set up project proposals. The IASS-ERS can also feed EU-officials with information about topics that are relevant for future research.

4. Maintain an overview of courses on survey statistics in Europe and organise specific courses.

Training in survey statistics in Europe should be promoted to help young survey statisticians enter the profession and to help spread new methods and techniques in Europe.

5. Connect, collaborate and co-ordinate with national statistical institutes, European institutions, private economy, academia and organisations in the domain of survey statistics.

The whole range of survey statisticians should be addressed by IASS-ERS. This is necessary to overcome the fragmentation of statistics in general and of survey statistics in particular. All application areas should be invited to IASS-ERS. IASS-ERS is primarily an association of individuals who work in private or public organisations. IASS-ERS should help to knot ties across the different working areas.

IASS-ERS will closely collaborate with its mother organisation IASS. This will help to integrate the world-wide activities of IASS with the European activities and create synergies.

Co-ordination and collaboration should also be pursued with the European Association for Survey Research (in foundation) which is aimed at statisticians in social survey research but not connected with ISI or IASS.

6. Inform the members

The members of IASS-ERS should be informed regularly about interesting events, organisations, persons, and research in the domain of survey statistics. There is an important role for the website which will help to collect and disseminate the information. An electronic newsletter may be a mean of pushing information to the members and interested people. A mailing list should therefore be maintained. Discussion groups on specific topics of interest may be a useful mean to connect not only with statisticians in Europe but worldwide.

7. Collaborate with Survey Methodology and Journal of Official Statistics as scientific journals on survey statistics.

At the moment it does not seem fruitful to set up a new scientific journal on survey statistics. Survey Methodology by Statistics Canada and Journal of Official Statistics by Statistics Sweden cover the area well and also the Journals of the national statistical societies dedicate space to survey statistics (e.g. JRSS A).

8. Set up and maintain an electronic library of papers on survey statistics

An electronic library of applied, methodological, technical reports could be a service of IASS-ERS to the community of survey statisticians. However it is a long term goal and it will need resources to set up and maintain the library properly. It may be necessary to set up a project and look for external funding to go ahead.

Proposal for the objectives for the first year of IASS-ERS

- Formal election of the Board of Directors and the Officers of IASS-ERS and setting up internal communication and responsibilities.
- Awareness-campaign inside and outside IASS (e.g. contributing regularly to the ISI-Newsletter, setting up of a mailing list for an electronic IASS-ERS newsletter, developing a brochure that can be handed out at meetings). Present the IASS-ERS at conferences (ISI, EASR).
- Setting up and populating the website of IASS-ERS. A task force will be involved in defining structure and contents and rules. People should be assigned the task of maintaining the website.
- Organization of the IASS-ERS conference 2006. IASS-ERS will set up a programme committee and ensure the collaboration with the European Conference on Quality in Official Statistics.