



International Year of Statistics News

December 16, 2013

Announcing the International Prize in Statistics

As we come to the close of 2013, [the Statistics2013 Steering Committee](#) is pleased to announce an on-going venture to greatly increase media and public awareness of the growing importance of statistics to modern life and promote understanding of the myriad and diverse ways that statistical science is impacting the well-being of billions of people.

The five statistical societies that launched the International Year of Statistics have formed an organization called the International Prize in Statistics Foundation. The foundation will provide the framework that will ultimately lead to the annual presentation of a “Nobel-like” prize in statistical science, to be called the International Prize in Statistics. The award will recognize the major achievement of an individual or team in the field of statistics.

The primary objective of this major honor is to call public attention to the important role that statistics, data analysis, probability and understanding of uncertainty have played in the past and are playing today in the advancement of society, science, technology and human welfare with a decided focus on current developments. Another leading objective is to identify extremely penetrating and valuable insights and advancements in statistics that can help achieve the primary objective.

The International Prize in Statistics Foundation is seeking the financial commitment of individuals, businesses and organizations that would significantly advance the establishment of this new award and help to create an aura to match that of other prestigious scientific awards.

The initial members of the Foundation are Susan Ellenberg (appointed by the [American Statistical Association](#)), Xuming He ([International Statistical Institute](#)), Neils Keiding, ([International Biometric Society](#)), Richard Laux ([Royal Statistical Society](#)), David Madigan ([Institute of Mathematical Statistics](#)), and Ron Wasserstein (interim secretary of the foundation; Wasserstein is executive director of the ASA and a member of the Statistics2013 Steering Committee).

More details will follow early next year in the *News of The World of Statistics* (the successor to this newsletter) and on a website for the International Prize in Statistics that will be live in late January.

The World of Statistics is Coming Next Month

We are nearly through the final month of the fantastically successful International Year of Statistics (Statistics2013). Participants will agree it has been a tremendous yearlong celebration of all things statistics. Much has been accomplished over the past 11 ½ months and during the year and a half leading up to 2013.

For instance, an engaged network of more than 2,300 organizations—national and international professional statistical societies, colleges and universities, primary and secondary schools, businesses, government statistical agencies, and research institutes—representing 128 countries came together to promote statistics around the world. Hundreds of informative and insightful events worldwide—many attended by the public—were sponsored by Statistics2013 participating organizations. Media organizations the world over took notice of the International Year of Statistics ([see this example](#)) and shared the news with their audiences.

These and other successes are prime examples of why the organizers of Statistics2013 decided it was essential to continue beyond the end of this year the momentum generated by the global Statistics2013 movement.

To continue carrying the key messages of statistics to the world's population, the Statistics2013 Steering Committee has selected a new name for the movement.

That new name is: The World of Statistics!

The mission of The World of Statistics will be to further advance the goals of the Statistics2013 campaign. As a reminder, those objectives are:

- Increase public awareness of the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of society
- Nurture statistics as a profession, especially among young people
- Promote creativity and development in the sciences of probability and statistics

The “The World of Statistics” will come with a new website and related communications mediums.

By late January, the Statistics2013 website will become www.worldofstatistics.org. Remember to bookmark this new address in the “Favorites” in your web browser.

Key components of the Statistics2013 website will be carried over to The World of Statistics website. Among these will be the [Teacher Resources](#), [Statistics as a Career](#) and [What is Statistics?](#) sections and the popular [Activities Calendar](#), which lists hundreds of statistics-related events and meetings from around the world.

If your organization already has confirmed activities for 2014, 2015 or beyond, please send us information about these events so we can post these to the new [Activities Calendar](#) or send us this information as you finalize your events. Be sure to use the [Event Submission Form for the Activities Calendar](#) to submit information about your organization's event.

Additionally, the Twitter handle will change January 1 to @astatworld. Please take a few minutes to start following this new The World of Statistics Twitter account.

Finally, this newsletter will become The World of Statistics News. Beginning the first of the New Year, the newsletter will be published every three weeks and will be emailed to you and thousands of your colleagues worldwide. As you have done previously, please send us information about your organization's events and activities using the [Post-Event Information & Photo Submission Form](#) and we will publish your article in an upcoming issue of the *News of The World of Statistics*.

We—[the members of the Statistics2013 Steering Committee](#)—thank you for helping make the International Year of Statistics an unqualified success and urge your continued active participation in The World of Statistics.

Future of the Statistical Sciences Workshop Recorded Sessions Now Online!

Thanks to Wiley, the videos from the live stream broadcast of the Future of the Statistical Sciences Workshop [are now available here](#). Free registration with Statistics Views is required to view the sessions. If you are not registered, [please register here](#).

The Workshop, which gathered some of the top statisticians in the world, took place at the [Royal Statistical Society](#) headquarters office in London. The invitation-only event brought together statisticians, scientists from other fields who collaborate with statisticians, science writers and representatives of funding agencies.

Among the notable speakers were Susan Murphy of the University of Michigan; Bernard Silverman, chief scientific advisor to the United Kingdom Home Office; Andrew Gelman of Columbia University; and Steve Feinberg of Carnegie Mellon University. Presenters spoke on a variety of subjects—from health, dietary and environmental issues to the challenge of reproducibility to the portrayal of statistics in the media.

A major outcome of the workshop will be a paper—produced by a professional science writer—that will be targeted to worldwide funding agencies.

End-of-Year Participation Numbers Come into Focus

As we draw near to the end of 2013, we're getting a clearer picture of where the International Year of Statistics participating organization and country counts will end up. This week, Statistics2013 has 2,316 participating organizations from 128 different countries around the globe. You can view the current participant and country lists by going to the [Statistics2013 website](#).

There is still half a month to go in Statistics2013 and, as we mentioned in the previous article, the movement will continue into 2014 and beyond under the banner of The World of Statistics. There are many more groups that should participate in the International Year of Statistics and its successor.

So, please encourage other organizations, secondary schools, universities and businesses in your area to join this worldwide movement. It's easy for them to join. Simply tell representatives of these groups to go to www.statistics2013.org and click on the "Join Statistics2013" icon on the top right-hand side of the homepage to become an official International Year of Statistics participating organization.

Participating Organization: News & Events

Following is the latest news about events hosted by Statistics2013 participating organizations:

India—Bimal Roy, the director of the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in Delhi, recently had the rare occasion to attend a state dinner in honor of Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko while the royals were in India for a state visit. Roy received a special invitation from Pranab Mukherjee, president of India, to attend the December 2 event in the Great Central Hall of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the official residence of the president, in part because the Emperor had visited ISI and met Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanabis, ISI's founder, in November 1960. The event allowed Roy the opportunity to present ISI to various dignitaries, including India Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid, National Security Adviser Shiv Sankar Menon and other national political and science leaders. When introduced to Emperor Akihito, Roy asked if the Emperor was familiar with ISI. To which the Emperor responded, "Very much." During a reception following the introductions, Roy spoke with the Japanese counsel for the Promotion of Science about the history of ISI's interaction with Japan over the past 60 years. At the dinner, Roy was seated seventh from the right of the Emperor and Empress. "I came back with a mesmerized state of mind. When I grew up as a child/boy/youth I could never dream of such fortune!!," wrote Roy after the state dinner.



ISI Director Bimal Roy greets Japanese Emperor Akihito.

Spain—The "Week of Science" is organized annually in Catalonia in November. This year, one of the topics of the event was statistics. The Catalan Statistical Society (Societat Catalana d'Estadística) held an exposition of posters themed "Statistics Around Us" from November 15 to 24 in the Cloister of the

Institut d'Estadís Catalans in Barcelona. A dozen posters were exhibited focusing on different aspects of statistics, as well as common fallacies. At the Universitat de Vic on November 18, Professor Pere Puig delivered a talk titled "The Challenger Accident Could Have Been Avoided: A Walk through Statistics" to inaugurate the Week. The next day, Dr. Vladimir Zaiats delivered a talk titled "Universe, Statistics and Statistical Universes" at the Osona Astronomic Group (Agrupació Astronòmica d'Osona) in Barcelona. On December 11 and 12, as part of the [3rd International Workshop on Higher Education](http://www.uvic.cat) at the Universitat de Vic (www.uvic.cat), two workshop sessions were devoted to statistical applications. Talks by Professor Ron S. Kenett titled "On Information Quality and Industrial Statistics" and by Dr. Zaiats titled "Can We Trust Statistics?" were presented. On December 12, the workshop sessions included talks titled "EBI Metagenomics Resource-Leveraging InterPro to Understand Metagenome Function" given by Dr. Alex Mitchell, and "Genomic Profiling: Modelling Disease Risk from Multiple Genotypes" presented by Dr. M. Luz Calle.

México—Throughout the past year, Statistics2013 participating organizations in Mexico have been tireless supporters of the International Year of Statistics. In all, 76 organizations participated in Statistics2013, carrying out a multitude of activities in universities, schools, research centers, government agencies and private corporations. Among academic institutions, remarkable contributions were made by the National Autonomous University (UNAM), Technological Autonomous Institute of Mexico (ITAM), Metropolitan Autonomous University (UAM), and Center of Research in Mathematics (CIMAT). Among government agencies, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) jointly organized a Statistics2013 national launching event with UNAM, the Mexican Statistics Association (AME) and National Forum of Statistics in September in Aguascalientes.

Within the academic and scientific communities, CIMAT organized more than 30 scientific talks that were presented by leading researchers from the United States, England, Sweden, India, Denmark and Mexico. These talks added to the knowledge of both active researchers and graduate students. Seminars and workshops took place in pure and applied statistics; some were co-organized with institutions such as UNAM, UAM, ITAM, the Technological Institute of Monterrey, tech institutes of Aguascalientes and Celaya, and other universities, such as Aguascalientes University and the Antonio Narro Agrarian Autonomous University. Two events were relevant for the scientific events organized by CIMAT during this year: the "Second Workshop on Risk Analysis in Economy and Finance" (with the University of Guanajuato) and the "Workshop on Multivariate Analysis and Random Matrices."

On August 5, during the first Mathematical Congress of the Americas, Statistics2013 at CIMAT presented the open lecture "On Coincidences" by Persi Diaconis, which drew an audience of 1,500 students, researchers, journalists and the public in Guanajuato. Also, the Mexican Mathematical Society edited a special number of its newsletters for Statistics2013, which will be published soon.

Workshops, schools and courses also were presented to secondary school teachers, high-school students and micro-entrepreneurs. In April and May, CIMAT and AME held the first "Workshop on Statistics" for children in Guanajuato primary schools. This activity was posted on social media and reported in the media through the radio, newspapers and local television broadcasters.

A legacy beyond the academic world

Also during 2013, cultural activities were promoted, such as a data-visualization competition for plastic artists and statistics-related movies were screened and commented on by CIMAT researchers. A number of concerts featuring music by stochastic composers were performed, including a performance by one of the most famous groups in Mexico—the Chamber Orchestra of the National Institute of Fine Arts—at the Manuel M. Ponce Hall in the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. The Symphony Orchestra of Guanajuato University also debuted performances of stochastic compositions.

Researchers at CIMAT have written about statistics, its impact and its myths and realities that will remain available with other resources as [A Look at Statistics from the Viewpoint of Other Fields](#), a series of video interviews with professionals from various fields such as risk management, industrial production, trade and scientific research, in which a broad and diverse perspective of statistics and its applications is presented.

[CIMAT also promoted a number of articles about the impact of statistics throughout history](#), written by some of the most important names in statistics in Mexico. These articles were published by some of the most-read national newspapers.

Gathering statistics and Mexican traditions, students from CIMAT and the University of Guanajuato built an altar for the Day of the Dead in remembrance of Thomas Bayes, Ronald Fisher and Jacob Bernoulli.

The International Year of Statistics has brought to the statistics community several challenges and successes. For CIMAT, it has represented a way to enhance the relation between itself and other scientific groups and private and social organizations, and to establish new and important ventures with the society and its organizations. Strengthening these will deliver an opportunity to build the legacy of Statistics2013, now a permanent and global effort in The World of Statistics. [Meanwhile, the legacy of Statistics2013 in Mexico will remain for everybody to enjoy.](#)



A display for CIMAT's data-visualization competition for plastic artists.

Argentina—More than 150 statisticians, together with students in the statistics program at the University of Rosario School of Statistics, gathered November 23 to celebrate the International Year of Statistics and the 65th anniversary of the school's founding. The informal event helped increase public awareness of the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of society and nurture statistics as a profession, especially among young people. The meeting featured music, a brief history of statistics and socializing among statisticians from different ages and fields of expertise. In 1948, the University of Rosario became the first university-level institution in Latin America to start a statistics program for undergraduate students.



Guests gather for a group photo at the University of Rosario School of Statistics celebration of the International Year of Statistics and the 65th anniversary of the school's founding.

Poland—A scientific conference, titled “Modelling for Business”, organised by Students Science Association Business Analytics was held at the Warsaw School of Economics November 15. The aim of the conference was to exhibit the importance of using quantitative methods in business. To stress the significance of applied statistics for enterprises, both theoretical and practical aspects were presented. Speakers represented several universities from across Poland, including the Warsaw School of Economics, University of Economics in Katowice, Warsaw University of Life Sciences, and Warsaw University of Technology. The speakers were mostly students and research workers from these universities. There also was a representative of SAS Institute who presented a business view on the matter. Subjects of lectures included:

- Using simulation data in credit scoring
- Influence analysis of financial statements on logarithmic rate of return on Warsaw Stock Exchange using R
- Optimization of coding of variables in logistic regression
- Fraud detection with support of predictive models and social network analysis
- Scoring model monitoring
- Modelling loss given default using beta regression and logit function
- Mathematic modelling—how to create a new banking product?

More than 50 participants representing students and research workers from different universities in Warsaw attended the conference.



Two speakers make a point during the Warsaw School of Economics “Modelling for Business” event.

Canada—The year 2013—the International Year of Statistics—also marks the 100th anniversary of the first central statistics agency in Québec, the Bureau des Statistiques de Québec, which officially began operations November 11, 1913. The Québec government was the first in Canada to set up a statistical organization. In May 1914, the first *Annuaire statistique de Québec*, a 454-page book of statistical data on various aspects of Québec at that time, was published. The Institut de la Statistique du Québec, heir to this long tradition, celebrated this landmark anniversary November 20 with an employee and partners gathering at the Québec Parliament Building. Nicolas Marceau, ministre des finances et de l'Économie, tutelary minister for the Institut, was joined by Stéphane Mercier, director general, to toast 100 years of statistical heritage in Québec.



Institut de la Statistique du Québec employees and partners celebrate the Institut's centennial.

Turkey—The Statistics Club at Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara, led by Assistant Professor Zeynep Kalaylioglu, staged a one-day event on campus December 3 to mark the International Year of Statistics. The undergraduate students prepared posters explaining what type of problems are solved and what type of hypotheses are investigated through statistical analyses in other disciplines—from basic sciences to engineering. The targeted visitors for the event were undergraduate students in other university departments and many attended the event where the statistics students and faculty answered their questions. The Statistics Club will sponsor this event as an annual activity at METU.



The members of the Statistics Club at Middle East Technical University.

Bulgaria—A celebration of Statistics2013 was held November 26 in the Great Hall of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS). Organizers were the BAS Institute of Mathematics and Informatics (IMI), National Statistical Institute (NSI) jointly with the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics of Sofia University (St. Kliment Ohridski), and the Bulgarian Statistical Society. In 2013, many conferences, seminars, reports and other festive celebrations were organized worldwide to celebrate statistics. Throughout the year, the Bulgarian scientific and statistical community was actively involved and one of its final events is the celebration of Statistics2013 at BAS.

Damyan Damyanov, BAS vice president, and NSI President Reneta Indjova, PhD, opened the forum. Greetings were read by Corresponding Member Yulian Revalski, director of BAS IMI; Associate Professor Evgenia Velikova, dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics at Sofia University; Professor Petar Kenderov, president of the Union of Mathematicians; Sasha Bezuhanova, founder of the Bulgarian Centre for Women in Technology, and Doncho Barbalov, deputy mayor of Sofia. Scientific reports were presented by Professor Nikolay Yanev from BAS IMI; Arslan Ahmedov of the NSI; Associate Professor Maroussia Bozhkova, head of the Department of Probability, Operations Research and Statistics, Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics at Sofia University; and Ivan Balev also from NSI.

The meeting was attended by academicians and corresponding members, statisticians, academics and representatives from the business community. A musical greeting was played by students from the National School of Music “Lyubomir Pipkov.”



Bulgaria NSI President Reneta Indjova addresses the Statistics2013 celebration in Sofia.

Bulgaria—On November 25 students of XI and XII grades of 19 “Elin Pelin” Secondary School, “Technology entrepreneurship and business technological profile,” visited the National Statistical Institute (NSI). The event helped the students become acquainted with the practical side of statistics as a science and its wide application. Bogdan Bogdanov, Ph.D., head of the Households, Income and Expenditure Statistics Department, presented a lecture titled “Sample Statistical Survey on Income and Living Conditions of Households in Bulgaria—Graphical and Tabular Presentation of Information.” The lesson was part of the marketing and advertising curriculum in which not only collecting and processing data is important, but also analyzing and proper presentation of statistical data. The students were introduced to sample surveys of statistics and various types of surveys and estimations.



Grade 11 and 12 students learn sample design at NSI Bulgaria.

Puerto Rico—To celebrate Statistics2013, several institutions sponsored the [Puerto Rico Population Studies Conference](#) in Cayey. Gathering top scholars from the United States, Latin America and Puerto Rico, the event highlighted the importance of population statistics throughout the world and used statistics to examine the state and challenges of the Puerto Rican population. At the event, statisticians and demographers met and shared knowledge and their interests and presented their perspectives about the use of statistics for the study of the island's population. The activity also was used to announce that Puerto Rico would be calculating its first Human Development Index to better understand the reality of the island. Participating organizations were the Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics, University of Puerto Rico at Cayey, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, BRIC-UPR Cayey, University of Texas at San Antonio, and UPR Medical Sciences Campus Department of Demography.



Officials kick off the Puerto Rico Populations Studies Conference. Photo by Francisco Pesante.

Canada—On November 29, the University of Moncton, the country's largest French-language university, which is located near Quebec, held its last lecture in honor of the International Year of Statistics. Professor Jules de Tibeiro presented a talk focused on correspondence analysis using a Bayesian approach. The celebration program was officially closed after the presentation of Dr. Thu Pham-Gia of the university's Department of Mathematics and Statistics, who gave a summary of the activities carried out since last December, including the highly successful international conference titled "Statistics and Its Interactions With Other Disciplines," which was held in Ho Chi Minh City from June 5 through 7. Dr. Pham-Gia also talked about a potential international project called the International Network for the Advancement of Statistics and Allied Fields (INASAF).

Pakistan—On 22 November, a large number of statisticians and many patrons and supporters of statistics gathered at the Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences (ISOSS) House in Lahore, Pakistan to celebrate ISOSS's 25th anniversary. The Society was established in Lahore in 1988 as the First Islamic Countries Conference on Statistical Sciences (ICCS-1) to promote statistical science and its diverse applications in various sectors of life and societies in Islamic countries. Its membership is open to

statisticians of all orientation. Professor Munir Ahmad, the founding president of ISOSS, presented a brief background and history of ISOSS and its landmark contributions. He emphasized the need for the creation of provincial and local societies of statisticians in Pakistan to organize national conferences and promote other statistical activities.

Founding ISOSS Secretary General, Professor Akhlaq Ahmad, and two senior Pakistani statisticians, Professors Abdus Samad Hirai and Ahmad Zogo Memon, shared their experiences with their young successors. The Past President of ISOSS, Professor Shahjahan Khan of the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, was the event's chief guest. He highlighted recent ISOSS activities and the need for new ISOSS leadership with world-class achievement.

Emeritus Professor Javed Siddiqi of Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom and a former leader of the British Computer Society also spoke. ISOSS founding Vice President, Professor Muhammad Hanif Mian, also was present. Everyone thanked Mohammad Iftekhhar, ISOSS executive secretary, for his outstanding professionalism and contributions to the organization. A traditional Pakistani dinner was served at the end of the meeting.

The event also marked the celebration of the International Year of Statistics and the Mathematics of Planet Earth. Siddiqi and Khan also participated in the Kinnaird Multidisciplinary Research Conference held at Kinnaird Women College, Lahore from November 18 and 19 as part of the college's celebration of 100 years.

Participants were invited to the forthcoming 13th Islamic Countries Conference on Statistical Sciences (ICCS-13) to be held at Bogor Agricultural University (formerly IPB, Bogor) in Indonesia December 18 to 21, 2014. [Click here for more information about the conference.](#)



Former and current ISSOS leaders gather for the society's 25th anniversary celebration.

México—The Technological Autonomous Institute of Mexico (ITAM) celebrated the International Year of Statistics 2013 recently by running an all-day, wall-to wall-astrostatistics event. The event included

leading astrostatistician Dr. Jogesh Babu of Penn State University, Mexican National Academies member Dr. Tapen Sinha and 2001 Savage Award honoree Dr. Luis Enrique Nieto-Barajas, among others. ITAM is celebrating the International Year of Statistics by bringing together leading statisticians from around the globe and raising the visibility of statistics in Mexico.



Babu and Sinha pose for a photo at ITAM's recent Statistics2013 celebration.

México—On November 25 and 26, the Mathematics Research Center of Guanajuato (CIMAT) held a conference to commemorate Statistics2013. During the event, Gareth Roberts, a statistician from the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom, gave a lecture titled “The Bayesian Computational Revolutions” to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Bayes theorem. The next day, Allan Gut, a professor at Uppsala University in Sweden, delivered a lecture titled “Aspects on the Law of Large Numbers” that marked the 300th anniversary of the Saint Petersburg Paradox.



Allan Gut of Sweden's Uppsala University talks about the Saint Petersburg Paradox.

México—The Mathematics Research Center of Guanajuato (CIMAT) has posted on YouTube the nineteenth chapter of the video series [A Look at Statistics from the Viewpoint of Other Fields](#). The newest video features an interview with Octavio Nava Jaimes, director of the National Metrology Center of Mexico. These short documentaries, produced by CIMAT to celebrate the International Year of Statistics, include testimonies of scientists and professionals from various sectors who talk about the impact of statistics and the way they apply statistical techniques to solve different problems.

Sri Lanka—The Institute of Applied Statistics, Sri Lanka (IASSL) has conducted a National Olympiad competition for school students at two levels. The first—the Junior Statistics Olympiad—is for students up to age 16 years, while the Senior Statistics Olympiad is for students ages 17 through 19. The Olympiads were staged to help celebrate the International Year of Statistics.

Russia—The first international academic conference in the country—“Russia in the European and Global Information Space”—supported by the European Studies Institute was held April 26. Approximately 100 people participated, among them representatives from seven countries, four international organizations, two foreign institutes and more than 20 members of Russian universities and entities. The plenary meeting was held under the supervision of academic moderators: the Director of the European Studies Institute T.V. Shahikhina and Moscow State Institute of International Relations Professor of the Department of Accounting, Statistics and Audit Marina Simonova. International Statistical Institute (ISI) Director Ada van Krimpen presented certificates to newly elected ISI members, the Head of The Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States V.L. Sokolin, and Professor Simonova. Van Krimpen also presented a report titled “The ISI in the Global Information-Statistical Sphere” and V.L. Sokolin presented a report called “Modern Issues of Statistical Activities’ Improvement on the CIS Area”. Dr. B. Feldman, the head of Eurostat’s Methodology and Consumer Prices Monitoring Department offered the report titled “International Statistical Standards of Consumer Prices” while the European Central Bank Deputy Head of Financial Stability Estimation Department Dr. R. Martin presented the report titled “The Problems of Analyzing Information about International Financial Markets in the ECB Activity.” Four academic sessions were held. Those were as follows:

- Value of accounting-statistic information in conditions of economic globalization, Session Chair: Professor N.E. Grigoruk.
- Roundtable Discussion: "International experience teaching mathematical and econometric methods of analysis of statistical data. Challenges of the modern information environment," Session Chair: Assistant Professor L.A. Maslova.
- Information-analytical support to finance and credit institutions' activities in Russia and abroad, Session Chair: Professor G.S. Panova.
- Problems of Information Improvement of International Financial Markets, Session Chair: Dr. V.D. Milovidov.

After the conference a digest of academic reports was collected for publication. By the beginning of 2013, members of the Department of Statistics, Accounting and Audit have achieved certain international and academic results. The department head, Professor N.E. Grigoruk, is a member of Academic Council of the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States

(CISStat). For the last three years, the Department's accounting and statistics sections have improved their international and academic status. Candidate dissertations were passed by V.A. Onuchak, N.U. Grunina and U.M. Potanina. Doctorate dissertations were passed by Simonova and E.U. Voronova.

International—Each year, the International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS) sponsors a competition that awards prizes to young statisticians who author excellent papers on official statistics. Called the [Young Statisticians Prize, the annual IAOS international competition](#) encourages young statisticians—those under the age of 35—to take an active interest in official statistics. Young statisticians who work for national statistical organizations are encouraged to enter the competition by submitting their papers by the February 3 deadline. Up to three prizes will be awarded. IAOS is an international professional association promoting the understanding and development of official statistics. It actively has been contributing to this end since its founding in 1985.

Italy—In September, the Department of Statistical Sciences at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, together with the municipality of Milan, launched a contest titled “Statistics, Open Data and Society”, with the aim of making citizens more aware of the importance of statistics and the use of Open Data for a better society. Nunatac and Synergia, two dynamic, Milan-based companies both working in business intelligence and the public sector, financed three 1,000 euros prizes for the following categories: best product, best product (age below 30), and best product for social policy. There were no restrictions on the type of product that could be submitted (essay, paper, poster, video or app). The only condition was the product must contain a statistical analysis of the data available on the [Open Data web site](#) of the municipality of Milan. Twenty-one products were submitted—mostly from young researchers or students—on a variety of topics ranging from urban traffic to city immigration to poverty among youngsters. The prize ceremony was held December 13 in Milan with the participation of the town Councillor for Labor, Economic Development, University and Research, and the President of the Italian Statistical Society. [Click here for more information.](#)

United States—A recently introduced book will help lay people get statistically literate. The book [Dancing on the Tails of the Bell Curve](#) was created to inspire new statistics students, professionals who work with data, and others to learn and use statistics. It can supplement the technical books and websites professors assign in classrooms, through carefully selected readings by the founders of statistics and probability, contemporary statisticians, and well-known individuals in the arts, politics and science. The book provides readers role models who have experienced joy from their use of statistics and concrete examples of how statistics shape almost every decision in society that involves laws, medications, food supply, interest rates, educational programs, sporting events, mass media and entitlement programs, to name a few examples. “The book conveys the joy people experience from working with statistics and describes how statistics have influenced the nature and course of our society and world in important ways,” says Richard Altschuler, editor of the anthology. “Knowledge of statistics is almost certain to make anyone a better consumer, decision-maker in their business and personal life, citizen of society, fighter for personal and civil rights, and economic actor.”

National Statistical Organization: News & Events

Following is the latest news about upcoming and recently concluded events hosted by national statistical organizations (NSOs) participating in Statistics2013:

Qatar—The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics held a one-day forum on “Statistics and Development in Qatar—Data Availability Challenges” December 10 to celebrate Qatar’s Statistics Day and the International Year of Statistics. Approximately 300 senior officials from the public and private sectors, academia, research institutes and non-governmental organizations attended. Eminent experts from international, regional and national organizations, through their presentations, provided examples of good practices in official statistics, stressed the importance of adhering to the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, highlighted the need to modernize the statistical system, and prepared for the Post-2015 International Development Agenda. Officials from Qatar provided various examples of uses of statistical data for the formulation of sectorial strategies and the challenges they face in the implementation process and in the availability of relevant statistics or indicators. The forum helped in the identification of new areas where statistics are needed to meet the need of users at the national and international levels. The report of the forum, including the main recommendations, [will soon be posted on the ministry’s website](#).



A speaker addresses the Statistics and Development in Qatar forum.

United States—U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Commissioner Erica Groshen was interviewed last week on Federal News Radio about the International Year of Statistics, the recently conducted Symposium of the U.S. Statistical Agencies, the impact of statistics in policy-making and developments at BLS. Federal News Radio and FederalNewsRadio.com comprise the key source of breaking news, information and analysis for individuals responsible for carrying out and supporting the missions of U.S. federal agencies. [You can listen to the interview here](#).

United Arab Emirates—Statistics Centre-Abu Dhabi (SCAD) recently launched the largest statistics map in the world as part of its celebrations of the 42nd National Day and the International Year of Statistics.

The map reflected the great development that has taken place in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in the last half century. The map was displayed at the Abu Dhabi Corniche at the Marina Mall from December 1 to 7. SCAD said the map was statistical in orientation and offered a “very clear, accurate and encyclopedic image” of Abu Dhabi year by year and highlighted all sectors using statistics, figures, shapes, images and drawings from 1960 to 2010. An additional futuristic part of the map was dedicated to the Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030. This second map contained 25 statistics-indicators, each of which covered an important development sector, and contained five time series, with each of these occupying an area of 10 meters, divided into three parts, illustrated by images. It illustrated the most important and prominent developments during the past 10 years and featured selected quotes from the late Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan; the President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan; and General Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces. The event was accompanied by several other activities, such as the latest smart electronic statistical applications programs for adults and children and an exhibition of police cars over the years. A gallery of rare photos also was displayed.

New Zealand—Statistics New Zealand’s 2013 Census QuickStats about national highlights were released December 3. The results provide information about a variety of demographic, social and economic subjects at a national level showing how life in New Zealand has changed since 2006. You can find out about the following areas of New Zealand:

- population and dwellings
- age and sex
- cultural diversity
- education
- work
- income
- families and households
- home ownership
- phone and Internet access

A big hit on release day was Statistics New Zealand’s infographic: [New Zealand as a Village of 100 People](#). The infographic highlights key census data and celebrates the country’s people, place and story in pictures. Statistics New Zealand earned a lot of media coverage online, in social media, and local and national papers—many using images from the infographic.

RSS, ASA Launch Stats2013AtSchool Quiz on Statistics2013 Website

[The Statistics2013 website](#) has a new feature—called the Stats2013AtSchool Quiz—thanks to the [Royal Statistical Society](#) and the [American Statistical Association](#). Developed by the [Royal Statistical Society Centre for Statistical Education](#) in cooperation with Plymouth University, [Stats2013AtSchool](#) is a world statistics quiz for learners across the world.

The Stats2013AtSchool Quiz launched in September and currently:

- More than 60 countries have taken part
- more 70 participants (under 19 years of age) have scored full marks
- New Zealand is top of the leaderboard for this month, with 49 participants achieving full marks to date

RSS and ASA encourage your organization to promote this fun activity to teachers and school-aged learners in your country. We hope to build an international community of champions who will help develop [Stats2013AtSchool](#) by contributing additional questions and resources.

If you are interested in being a champion please register at [Stats2013AtSchool](#). To give the quiz a try, go to www.statistics2013.org and click on the Stats2013AtSchool quiz located at the bottom of the homepage.