

President's Message – April 2016

Dear members,

I am writing this month's message from Marrakech, where the ISI Executive Committee (ISI EC) came to meet with the hosts and organisers of the 61st ISI World Statistics Congress which will take place here from 16-21 July 2017. We were greeted with the legendary Moroccan hospitality, and were able to discuss the preparations for the ISI2017 with a competent, motivated and well organised team, led by Belkacem Abdous, who directs the Statistics Directorate of HCP Morocco.



Over 220 Invited Paper Session (IPS) proposals were received and are now being assessed by the Scientific Programme Committee, who will gather here in a month's time to deliberate on the bulk of the IPS programme. Submission for Special Topic Session (STS) proposals is ongoing and will close on 15 August. Don't leave your submission to the last minute.

We visited the first class venue where the Congress will take place, within walking distance of many hotels and restaurants, in a lovely area of Marrakech. We were presented with the plans for the rich social and touristic programmes that will be offered during the Congress, and can assure you that Marrakech will be a delightful and unforgettable experience to all the participants and their accompanying persons. The stage is set for yet another unmissable WSC.



ISI EC meeting with the organisers of the 61st ISI WSC in Marrakech

The ISI EC also held one of our regular meetings, to review the progress of the ISI's activities and to work on the development of the Strategic Plan for 2016-2019. We started to review the

results of the survey which we conducted with you, the members, and which is providing invaluable input into our planning process. Let me use this opportunity to thank you for your input and for taking the time to participate. We received 396 responses from the members at large, in addition to those of the Council and ISI EC members. The survey processing is still ongoing, but preliminary results and analysis is already helping to shape the development of our strategy. More on this over the coming months.



ISI EC meeting in Marrakech

We held in February our first virtual meeting with the full Council of the ISI, to discuss our proposed approach to carry out the strategic planning exercise. The meeting was very successful in getting the Council's input in a timely manner, and we will continue with this approach, which enables more frequent and focused engagement of the Council on the running of ISI.

We have just held in Yaoundé, Cameroun, from 6-8 April, another very successful ISI Workshop on Leadership and Management, entitled "Building a Strong Community of Innovative and Forward Looking Leaders in Official Statistics", co-funded by the World Bank and the African Development Bank. Participation of Director-Generals of the African francophone countries' national statistics institutes was excellent, and we are grateful to the Cameroun National Institute of Statistics for the hosting and hospitality that we all received in Yaoundé.

Finally, it is with great pleasure that I inform you that we have completed and signed memorandums of understanding with the **International Biometrics Society (IBS)** and the **Federation of European National Statistical Societies (FenStatS)**. These will enable more systematic and continued cooperation with these partner organizations in developing joint activities for the benefits of our members and society at large.

As you will have seen in our news items, the International Prize in Statistics has been launched, and nominations are now being sought for this prestigious award, jointly offered by the ISI, the American Statistical Association (ASA), the International Biometric Society (IBS), the Royal Statistical Society (RSS), and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS). The award will be

presented for the first time during the ISI2017, here in Marrakech! Yet another reason to start planning your participation to witness history being made in our field.

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