

Activities' Report (2015 – 2018)

At the general assembly in Bern in August, 24th 2015, held during the Swiss Statistics Meeting, the following committee was elected (in alphabetical order): L. Donzé (University of Fribourg), B. Hellriegel (University of Zürich), B. Hulliger (FHNW), N. Meinshausen (ETHZ), V. Panaretos (EPFL), A. Ruckstuhl (ZHAW), S. Sardy (University of Geneva), P. Voirin (HES-SO/Fribourg). L. Donzé was elected as president and as a delegate to the SSS committee too.

Traditionally, the General Assembly of the section holds every two years, during the Swiss Statistics Meeting. A delay of one year of this meeting (replaced by the Swiss Days of Official Statistics) has had as the consequence that the next assembly will be held three years after the last one. The following statement is, therefore, a three-years-based activities' report.

Committee

One significant difficulty we faced was to meet us (the committee) regularly. Each member of the committee has his agenda, full of a lot of administrative duties. Geographically far away located, it is not easy for everyone to attend the committee meetings. We communicate mostly by email, and on three occasions we were able to participate in a committee meeting.

In September 2015, we decided to send a letter to the National Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) concerning the representation of the Statistics field in the council. Indeed, we observe that, paradoxically, in a world submerged in information and data of all sorts, where the analysis and evaluation of these are a daily necessity, our scientific discipline is relegated to the background and should deserve better consideration. We wanted to make aware the council of this problem in noting that it seemed to us entirely appropriate that among the experts of the National Research Council, one representative of our discipline should be in the group. We did not receive any answer from the SNSF.

SSS Committee

Our involvement in the SSS Committee was first to participate in the regular meetings. We have done much work in editing (translation and content) the new website of the society, and especially the pages related to our section. On that subject, one could do more in the sense that one could benefit from the platform to publish our activities and events. The main points treated by the SSS Committee are related to the Swiss Statistics Meetings and Swiss Days of Official Statistics, and concern mainly budget and administrative subjects. The last Swiss Days were held respectively at the Microcity EPFL in Neuchâtel (2016) and the Ittingen Charterhouse in Warth (2018). Unfortunately, few of our section's members were present at these events.

Lambert Prize

The Lambert Prize Jury was elected during the last General Assembly of our section. The following persons compose it: Prof. Eva Cantoni (University of Geneva), Dr Michael Beer (Centralschweizerische Kraftwerke AG), Prof. Lutz Dümbgen (University of Bern), Prof. Beat

Hulliger (FHNW), Dr Matti Langel (Office cantonal de la statistique Genève). Prof. Eva Cantoni was elected president of the jury too. The Jury met on several occasions and found a young statistician to honour. The Lambert Prize 2018 will be given in August in Zurich during the Swiss Statistics Meeting.

MAP-Platform and SCNAT

As a delegate of the SSS, we represented the statistical community at the spring and fall MAP-Platform meetings. It was very stimulating to meet delegates from other Swiss associations. These meetings are mostly focused on budgets. Unfortunately, all is already upstream decided, and nothing could be discussed. We also represented the society at the General Assembly of the SCNAT. Albeit very interesting to see how vast the Swiss scientists' community is, these reunions are formal and very administrative.

Swiss Statistics Seminars

In 2016, no Swiss Statistics Seminars were organised. It was due mainly to a lack of coordination of our newly elected committee. B. Hellriegel helped to revive the seminars and thank the aid of Prof. Dr Lutz Duembgen from the University of Bern, and Prof. Dr Marloes Maathuis (ETHZ), we were able to offer a Seminar Session in Bern in May 2017. On this occasion, we had the pleasure to hear S. Engelke (EPFL), M. Templ (ZHAW) and D. Kozbur (University of Zurich). The next seminar will be held at the University of Bern, the 9th of November 2018.

Other Events

To stimulate and promote statistics, the SSS has floated in 2017 the idea of a "Pitch your Research" event. The aim was to popularise academics activities in the area of statistics and their applications in data science. Such an event was organised by FRI-SAM (Fribourg, Statistics and Applied Mathematics), a collaborative institution between the University and the School of Engineering and Architecture of Fribourg, at the University of Fribourg in October 2017. The speakers were L. Donzé, R. Berkachy, C. Hager Jörin, N. Sokhn and M. Huber.

Others workshops were also organised. We can, for example, mention a workshop on anonymisation in June 2017 at the Berner Fachhochschule (BFH) in collaboration with the Zurich School of Engineering (ZHAW). Finally, a meeting of "Statistics at Universities of Applied Sciences", which is organised by B. Hulliger and A. Ruckstuhl, took place every year in January in Olten. In 2018, the speakers were B. Hulliger, J. Zuber, M. Templ and S. Schilling.

Yours faithfully

L. Donzé

President of the section « Education and Research »
of the Swiss Statistical Society