

Annual Report of the Executive Director on IARIW Activities, August 1, 2018-July 31, 2019

This report provides an overview of the activities of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (IARIW) from August 1, 2018 to July 31, 2019. The three main activities in 2018-2019 were:

- in partnership with Statistics Denmark, the holding of the 35th IARIW General Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, August 20-24, 2018;
- in partnership with the National Research University Higher School of Economics, the organization of a special conference entitled “Experiences and Challenges in Measuring Income and Wealth in CIS Countries and Eastern Europe” in Moscow, Russia, September 17-18, 2019; and
- in partnership with the World Bank, the preparation of a special conference entitled “New Approaches to Defining and Measuring Poverty in a Growing World” in Washington, DC November 7-8, 2019.

Financial Report

In 2018, the IARIW recorded a net income loss of \$248, 227 (all figures are in US dollars). There was an operating loss of \$122,499, based on expenses of \$322,979 and operating revenues of \$200,481. Operating costs were higher than in 2017 because of the expenses related to the General Conference in Copenhagen, an expensive city.

The operating loss was offset somewhat by investment income of \$58,152 and worsened by unrealized market losses of \$183,881 due to a sharp downturn in the financial market in December 2018. Most of these unrealized losses had been regained by mid-2019.

Net assets of the Association on December 31, 2018 were \$1,267,326, down 16.7 per cent from \$1,421,401 on December 31, 2017.

Once approved by the Council, the audited financial report for 2018 will be posted on the website at <http://www.iariw.org/Fin-2018.pdf>.

With no General Conference expenses in 2019 and the rebound in financial markets, a significant surplus is projected.

Membership

On July 31, 2019, the IARIW had a total of 412 members, down 5.5 per cent from 436 on July 31, 2018. Such a decline is normal in the year after the General Conference as many persons who join for the General Conference do not renew.

Of the total membership, 287 were individual members (including 21 student members and 9 gratis members) and 125 were persons nominated by an institutional member as part of the institutional membership. All members in good standing are listed in the on-line members directory posted at <http://www.iariw.org/memlist.php>.

In January 2018 the IARIW reduced the annual individual membership fee from \$75 US to \$40 US for those who do not wish to receive a hard copy of the *Review of Income and Wealth*. Two thirds of renewing and new members chose this option. The lower membership fee appears to have had no positive effect on membership, suggesting the decision to join the Association or renew membership is not sensitive to the level of the membership fee in the \$40-75 US range.

The IARIW currently has 41 organizations which are institutional members (mostly central statistical agencies, but also some central banks and international organizations). These members play a very important role in ensuring the financial sustainability of the Association. A list of the institutional members is posted at <http://www.iariw.org/member.php> and published on the inside back cover of the *Review of Income and Wealth*.

35th IARIW General Conference

The major activity of the Association is the General Conferences held every second year. These conferences bring together leading researchers from across the world to present frontier research in the income and wealth area. The conferences are organized by the national statistical office of the host country. In 2018, Statistics Denmark hosted the 35th General Conference in Copenhagen from August 20-24.

Two changes were implemented at this General Conference. First, the conference saw the reduction in its length from five full to four full days. Instead of the Sunday evening to Friday schedule, the conference started Monday evening. The full day excursion on Wednesday was reduced to one half day, with Wednesday morning devoted to a plenary session.

The second change was dropping dinners for delegates from the registration package, except for the farewell dinner. Delegates made their own dinner arrangements.

The overall reaction to the reduction in the length of the conference appeared positive and Council decided that the 2020 General Conference in Oslo would also be only four full days in length. The reaction to the absence of communal dinners for delegates was mixed.

The conference attracted around 280 delegates in 36 regular sessions and two poster sessions. A total of 108 papers were presented in regular sessions and 19 papers in the poster sessions. The final conference program is posted at <http://www.iariw.org/c2018copenhagen.php>.

The 2018 General Conference continued the tradition established at the General Conference in Slovenia in 2008 of offering training sessions for the professional development of the membership. Immediately preceding the conference, two training sessions of two days in length were offered. One session was on national accounts, with Francois Lequiller, formerly at the OECD. This session

attracted a record 28 participants. The second session was on non- and semi-parametric methods, with Grazia Pittau and Robert Zelli from the University of Rome and attracted 12 participants.

The financial assistance program for paper givers, first introduced at the 2006 General Conference, continued for the 2018 General Conference. A total of 25 persons received financial assistance to participate in the event. The amount of financial assistance provided was around \$54,000 US.

The 2018 General Conference saw a record number of individuals from statistical offices in very low income countries awarded bursaries to attend the General Conference. These bursaries covered the registration package, air fare and accommodation. The bursary holders were Vincent Fred Ssenono from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Ousmane Maimouna Ali Boulhassane from the National Statistical Office of Niger, Jeremias Albino Guambe from the National Statistical Office of Mozambique, David Thiang from the National Bureau of Statistics of South Sudan, and Hashim Sheikh Abdinoor from the National Statistics Office of Somalia.

2020 General Conference

Statistics Norway will host the 36th IARIW General Conference in Oslo, Norway August 24-28. Council decided to move to a four-day conference for this conference after the positive experience with four days in Copenhagen. However, dinners will again be included in the conference package on an optional basis.

Special Conferences

The IARIW organizes special or regional conferences in non-General Conference years. In 2019, this tradition continued, with preparations for two special conferences to be held in the fall of 2019.

The IARIW partnered with the National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE) on the organization of a conference entitled “Experiences and Challenges in Measuring Income and Wealth in CIS Countries and Eastern Europe” took place at HSE in Moscow September 17-18, 2019. Ilya Voskoboynikov from HSE and Marshall Reinsdorf from the IMF chaired the program committee. The program had 36 papers in plenary and parallel sessions, a keynote speaker (Branko Milanovic from City University of New York) and a closing panel. The program is posted at <http://iariw.org/c2019moscow.php>. Selected papers from the conference will be published in a special issue of the *Review of Income and Wealth*.

The IARIW also partnered with the World Bank on the preparation of a conference entitled “New Approaches to Defining and Measuring Poverty in a Growing World” to take place in Washington, DC November 7-8, 2019. The program committee is co-chaired by Dean Joliffe from the World Bank. The preliminary program has 32 papers in plenary and parallel sessions, a poster session with 17 papers, a keynote speaker (Martin Ravillon, formerly Chief Economist at the World Bank) and a closing panel. The preliminary program is posted at <http://www.iariw.org/c2019washington.php>. Selected papers from the conference will be published in a special issue of the *Review of Income and Wealth*.

IARIW Session at the World Statistics Congress

The International Statistical Institute (ISI) is a long established international association that brings together statisticians from around the world. Its most important activity is the organization of the World Statistics Congress, every two years. Given the common interests of the ISI and the IARIW in measurement issues, the IARIW Council felt greater collaboration between the two organizations is desirable. In 2018-19, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was established between the two organizations. As part of this MOU, the IARIW organizes a session every two years at the WSC.

Following on the organization of a session on the measurement of well-being at the 59th World Statistics Congress in Hong Kong in 2013, a session on international perspectives on income inequality at the 60th World Statistics Congress in Rio De Janeiro in 2015, and a session on human capital measurement at the 61st World Statistics Congress in Marrakesh, Morocco in 2017, the IARIW organized a session on past experiences and future challenges in the system of national accounts at the 62nd World Statistics Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia August 18-23, 2019. Past IARIW President Albert Braakmann from the Federal Statistical Office of Germany was the session organizer. The program, with links to the papers, is found at <http://iariw.org/c2019kualalumpur.php>. A symposium based on the papers is planned to appear in the *Review of Income and Wealth*.

Renewal of IARIW Council

The biennial electronic election for four positions on the IARIW Council for the 2018-2022 period was held from June 15, 2018 to August 15, 2018, with five candidates running for the four openings. The results were announced at the members meeting at the 2018 General Conference. The new Council members are Charles Yuji Horioka (Asia Growth Centre), Robert Inklaar (University of Groningen), Sabrina Pabilonia (US Bureau of Labor Statistics), Catherine van Rompaey (Statistics Canada).

Three co-opted Council members were appointed for 2018-2020: Ann Lisbet Brathaug (Statistics Norway), Ilya Voskoboynikov (Higher School of Economics, Moscow) and Dean Joliffe (World Bank). These individuals serve as the local organizers for future IARIW conferences.

Out-going members were Prasada Rao (University of Queensland), Alice Nakamura (University of Alberta), Marcel Timmer (University of Groningen), Kirsten Wismer (Statistics Denmark), Taehyoung Cho (Bank of Korea), and Deb Kusum Das (University of Delhi, India).

At the members meeting on August 24, 2019 Marshall Reinsdorf from the IMF assumed the position of IARIW President of the Association for the 2018-2020 period, replacing Albert Braakmann from the Federal Statistical Office of Germany. Kevin Fox from the University of New South Wales) was appointed Treasurer and designated President-Elect.

Council extended the contract for the IARIW secretariat with the Ottawa-based Centre for the Study of Living Standards for an additional five year period, from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024.

Review of Income and Wealth

The *Review of Income and Wealth*, the leading international journal in the income and wealth field and the flagship publication of the Association, is distributed to all members either electronically or in hard copy format as part of the membership benefits. The editors are Conchita d'Ambrosio from the University of Luxembourg and Prasada Rao from the University of Queensland.

The annual report of the editors covering the period from August 1, 2018 to July 31, 2019, will be posted on the IARIW website at <http://www.iariw.org/EditorialReport2019.pdf>.

The highlights of the report include the following:

- Number of submissions, excluding supplementary issues, during the reporting year declined to 288 from 303.
- The impact factor recorded an increase in 2018-2019 to 1.206 from 1.211 in 2017-2018.

Council reappointed the Conchita d'Ambrosio and Prasada Rao Editors of the *Review of Income and Wealth* for an additional five year term, from August 1, 2019 to July 31, 2024.

Acknowledgements

A large number of persons and institutions have contributed to the successful operation of the IARIW in the 12 month period from August 1, 2018 to July 31, 2019. I would like to particularly thank the following persons for their contributions to this success: IARIW institutional members whose support ensures the financial sustainability of the organization; the IARIW Council for its strong support of all activities; Marshall Reinsdorf for leadership as IARIW President; Kirsten Wismer and colleagues for local organization of the 35th IARIW General Conference in Copenhagen ; Conchita D'Ambrosio and Prasada Rao for editing the *Review of Income and Wealth*; the Wiley staff for the production of the *Review of Income and Wealth*; Frouin Group for auditing services; and CSLS staff, especially Cristina Blanco Iglesias, Sebastian Tansil and Inez Hillel for assistance with administrative matters.

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Ottawa, Canada
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