

5. ESTUDIOS MONOGRÁFICOS Y OPINIONES SOBRE LA PROFESIÓN

EUROPEAN WORKING GROUP ON SMALL AREA ESTIMATION

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1. Introduction

Small Area Estimation (SAE) techniques are becoming a matter of great interest for a variety of European people, including statisticians, researchers and other experts of universities, national statistical institutes, research institutes, governmental bodies, local authorities and private enterprises dealing with research methodology, empirical research and statistics production for regional areas and other population subgroups.

In the European framework there exist an increasing interest on the methodologies and applications of the small area inference techniques. The need to coordinate research efforts and interchange experiences all around Europe were some of the reasons why in the SAE 2007 conference (3-5 September 2007, Pisa – Italy) it was decided to create the European Working Group on Small Area Estimation (EWORSAE).

The purpose of EWORSAE is to build and maintain a network of researchers and statisticians in the particular field of SAE. The working group is open to any people worldwide working in SAE. Their main activities are the organization of SAE conferences, workshops, courses and the preparation of common project proposals. The working group may be also the focus of internal mobility within EWORSAE.

2. Activities

The main activities are considered by EWORSAE are listed below.

2.1. SAE Conferences

SAE conferences are aimed to provide a platform for discussion and exchange of ideas about current developments in small area estimation and with applications to different fields of statistics production and research. The conferences address, in a

good balance,

(i) theoretical and methodological developments in small area estimation and related fields, and

(ii) practical applications of small area estimation methods, including their potential uses in various research areas and European official statistics.

First SAE conference (SAE2005) was organized by the University of Jyväskylä, Statistics Finland and the EURAREA Consortium. Second SAE (SAE2007) conference is organized by the University of Pisa, the IASS and the Regione Toscana. The need to regulate and promote the continuity of SAE conferences requires the creation of EWORSAE.

2.2. Workshops

The workshops' aim is bringing together researchers, statisticians and practitioners in the field of SAE. They will foster exchange of ideas and collaboration among people working in the development of SAE methodology and people interested in its applications. The workshops are concerned with the use of model-based and model assisted methods, the development of software, the problems arising from surveys with complex sampling designs, the collaboration between the Statistical Offices and the Universities, and so on.

2.3. Mobility

The mobility of researchers from EWORSAE and the preparation of common project proposals are basic tools to enforce the European collaboration between researchers and statisticians of different countries.

2.4. Courses

Concerning Courses on Small Area Estimation (COSAE) and related topics, the basic idea is carry out simultaneously two activities (midday for each activity): First one is that young (approximately between 25 and 35 years of age) researchers all

having an unpublished paper on small area estimation, can meet for about one week, present their material, discuss it with others and with a handful of specially invited senior experts in the field, and finally prepare a paper to be considered for inclusion in an international journal. Second one is that young researchers assist to a course given by the invited senior experts. Disregarding the senior experts, no one else can participate more than once in his or her lifetime. Participation in a COSAE should be regarded as a considerable honour. In other words, the main objective of a COSAE is to give a limited number of carefully selected representatives of the next generation a unique opportunity for establishing a personal network and for addressing an international audience and thus to create new research groups around the topic chosen.

3. Organization

EWORSAE is organized in a flexible way accordingly with the decisions of its members, which are people working in European institutions. Nevertheless EWORSAE needs some basic structure. So it was created a First Council of EWORSAE in SAE2007 conference, which still needs to be comple-

ted. The first Council is chaired by Domingo Morales (University Miguel Hernández de Elche, Spain)

The First Council of EWORSAE consists of one president, one secretary and several ordinary members. Members of the council are elected with the following requirements: (1) at least 5 European countries, (2) at least two members from Statistical Offices, (3) no more than two people from the same country. Members of this Council shall be elected for a full period between SAE2007 and SAE2009 conferences. Main task of this council will be to establish the basic organization for EWORSAE.

4. Membership to EWORSAE and fees

To become a member of EWORSAE it is necessary to apply for it to the secretary of the First Council of EWORSAE. An application form will be soon uploaded to the web site of EWORSAE. The following information should be required: (1) Postal address, (2) E-mail, (3) Fax, (4) Telephone. More information about this point will be delivered as soon as web page be finished.

EWORSAE is not a statistical society and no membership fees should be required.