

Nordic Region (NR) and Baltic Group (GBa) Second Joint Conference of the Nordic Region and the Baltic Group in Tartu, Estonia, June 2009

The Nordic Region and Baltic Group are pleased to report the success of their second joint conference in Tartu, Estonia, 10 - 12 June 2009. The conference brought together 100 participants from 15 different countries. More than a third of the conference participants took part in the pre-conference course on causal inference given over two half-days by Stijn Vansteelandt (Ghent University, Belgium).

The invited programme included three distinguished keynote speakers: Nanny Wermuth, who highlighted the problem of indirect confounding in meta-analysis; Martyn Plummer, who gave an overview of recent issues related to Bayesian modeling and introduced the JAGS software, and Eric Renshaw, who took the audience into the fascinating world of environmental modeling.

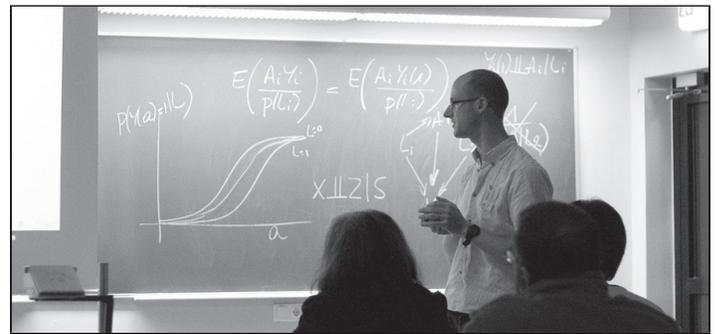
Four of the five invited sessions had the format of two speakers plus an invited discussant, the latter challenging the speakers and successfully provoking interesting discussions. In the session on causal inference in genetics we saw how a typical geneticist (a role well played by Danish statistician-bioinformatician Claus Ekstrom) could react on statisticians' (Stijn Vansteelandt and Carlo Berzuini) work on models involving only a couple of variables (while the geneticist has 50,000 genes in his dataset) and the statisticians' defense of work that still proved useful for practically-minded geneticists. In the invited session on demography and statistics, the "grand old lady" of Estonian statistics, Ene-Margit Tiit, explained how a population census in the present world is providing challenges for statisticians, and Juha Alho explained some problems gathering information on hard-to-reach populations. The talk of Ene-Margit Tiit and the discussion

by Esa Läärä also included an historical overview of statistics and demography in Tartu (not too many people know that the German demographer Wilhelm Lexis wrote his manuscripts on demography, including the well-known Lexis diagrams, during his professorship in Tartu). Similarly, the invited sessions on life-course epidemiology (speakers: Mervi Eerola, Sven Ove Samuelsen, Kristiina Rajaleid), bioinformatics (Daniel Gudbjartsson, Timo Koski, discussant: Jukka Corander) and spatial statistics (Geir Aamodt, Aki Vehtari, discussant: Jun Yu), gave excellent overviews of some recent developments in these fields.

The programme committee had hard time putting together the contributed programme, as the number of submitted abstracts exceeded our expectations. The 38 contributed oral presentations and 16 posters covered a wide range of topics in biometric research.

The social programme provided some excellent opportunities for informal conversation among participants while they enjoyed good food and music. As Estonia is famous for its choir-singing traditions, participants had a chance to enjoy a mini-concert by an excellent jazz-choir; the "HaleBopp Singers", during the conference dinner.

Some photographs of the conference are shown here:



Pre-conference course on causal inference (Stijn Vansteelandt)



Welcome reception

Third Joint Conference of the Nordic Region and the Baltic Group in Turku, Finland in June 2011

The cooperation between the Nordic Region and the Baltic Group proved to be really successful during this conference. We already are looking forward to the third joint conference, which will take place in Turku, Finland in June 2011.

Krista Fischer

Spanish Region (REsp)

XIIth Spanish Biometric Conference in Cádiz, Spain, September 2009

The XIIth Conference of the Spanish Region of the IBS was held in the University of Cádiz 23 - 25 September 2009. Cádiz is the oldest continuously-inhabited city in Spain; in more than 3000 years of history, many

Academia Sinica Institute of Statistical Science Regular Research Positions

The Institute of Statistical Science, Academia Sinica, is seeking outstanding candidates for regular research positions available in 2010, contingent upon administrative approval. Candidates will be considered in all areas of Statistics. Appointments will be considered at the level of assistant, associate or full research fellow, depending on qualifications and experience. Candidates should have a PhD in statistics or related fields. Application materials include (1) a current curriculum vitae, (2) three letters of recommendation, (3) representative publications and/or technical reports, (4) transcripts (for new PhD only), and additional supporting materials. Except for the letters of recommendation, electronic submissions are encouraged. Applications should be submitted to

Search Committee

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Applications should be completed by **December 31, 2009** for full consideration.

cultures have left an extraordinary historical heritage. In such a wonderful city, the warm weather made us forget that summer was over. The local Organizer Committee was led by Presidents David Almorza and Miguel Ángel Sordo, who, together with Secretary Alfonso Suárez and their team, are to be congratulated on the success of the conference, their excellent work, and their warm welcome to participants.

The conference brought together around 200 attendees from different regions of Spain and Latin American countries, presenting more than 100 works in 5 invited oral sessions, 5 symposium sessions, 16 parallel sessions and 1 poster session. In the opening session, the President of the Spanish Region, Alex Sánchez, gave an interesting overview of the topic "Statistics and bioinformatics in the post-genomic age". Juan Carlos Salermo addressed issues about how biometry can help genetic improvement, and Carles M. Cuadras talked about "Distance-based multivariate analysis". On the last day, Raul Macchiavelli presented "Modelling counting data in an ecology study under a complex design: an application of generalized linear mixed models". Purificación Galindo gave the last talk on "Finding the stable part of the dynamics in the species-environmental relationships: from CCA to STATICO". The parallel sessions included talks on ecology applications, epidemiology, Bayesian methods, genetic statistics, and quality of life issues, among many other topics. The award for the Young Researchers Competition was shared by Félix Caballero, for his talk on "Efficacy indexes in a triple classification", and Natalia Adell, for her talk on "Comparison of retinal images of lambs". The poster session included about 30 contributions. Manuel Muñoz Márquez coordinated a course on "R and R-commander" that was given during the conference.

An exciting and varied social program was planned. On the evening of 23 June we attended a welcome reception at the City Hall, followed by an interesting guided visit of Cádiz, where we could experience the lively activity of its streets and the richness of its history. A cold dinner was served in the Campus residence, close to the Cathedral. The conference dinner was held the evening of 24 June in Bodega San José, located in Puerto de Santa María, about 30 minutes from Cádiz. We had a wonderful time in the most agreeable and relaxed atmosphere. The meeting closed with a wine reception after the last talk. Some photographs from the conference are shown below:



Members of the Local Organizing and Scientific Committees



Opening session: From left to right, David Almorza Gomar, co-president of the Organizing Committee and vice-president for Student Affairs at the University of Cádiz; Alex Sánchez Pla, president of the Spanish Region of the IBS; Diego Sales Márquez, President of the University of Cádiz; Miguel Ángel Sordo Díaz, co-president of the Organizing Committee and head of the Statistics Department at University of Cádiz; and Francisca Fuentes Rodríguez, Dean of the Faculty of Labor Studies, site of the Conference.

Nuria Porta

Western North American Region (WNAR)

June 2009 WNAR/IMS Spring Meeting in Portland, Oregon

The 2009 Annual Meeting of the WNAR/IMS was held at Portland State University, Portland, OR from 14 - 17 June, with approximately 160 participants. The meeting began with a short course on generalized linear models by Charles McCulloch (University of California, San Francisco). Peter Diggle (Lancaster University) gave a stimulating presentation entitled, "Geostatistical inference under preferential sampling", for the WNAR Presidential Invited Address. David Madigan (Columbia University) gave an exciting presentation on "High dimensional Bayesian classifiers."

Excellent presentations were given by invited speakers: John Boscardin (University of California, San Francisco), Jack Lee (University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center), Jane Fridlyand (Genentech), and Karen Messer (University of California San Diego) in the session on statistical challenges in design and analysis of clinical trials; Mei-Ling Ting (University of Maryland), Lihui Zhao (Simon Fraser University), Ning Li (University of Florida), and Peter Gilbert (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center) in the session on analysis of event history data: new developments and applications; David Dahl (Texas A&M University), Chris Hans (Ohio State University), David van Dyk (University of California, Irvine), and Vale Johnson (University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center) in the session on applied Bayesian modeling; Geert Verbeke (I-Biostat), Jeremy Taylor (University of Michigan), Erming Li (Texas A&M University), and Roseanne McNamee (University of Manchester) in the session on joint modeling of longitudinal and survival data or GLM data; Andrada Ivanescu (East Carolina University), Debashis Paul (University of California, Davis), and Jeff Morris (University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center) in the session on new frontiers in functional data analysis; Scott Schmidler (Duke University), Ingo Ruczinski (Johns Hopkins University), and Mark Segal (University of California, San Francisco) in the session on statistical issues in protein folding; Caixia Li (University of California, San Francisco), Heping Zhang (Yale University), and Ilya Lipkovich (Eli Lilly) in the session on regression trees and their application; Dev Chakraborty (University of Pittsburgh), Kumar Rajan (Rush University), Andriy Bandos (University of Pittsburgh), and Liansheng Tang (George Mason University) in the session on statistical methods for diagnostic medical imaging data; Rob Tibshirani (Stanford University), Jinchi Lv (University of Southern California), and