

THE ECONOMETRIC SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORTS, 2006  
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

1. THE SOCIETY

IT HAS BEEN A GREAT PRIVILEGE to be President in 2006. The Econometric Society is an international association that promotes research in economics using quantitative approaches, both theoretical and empirical. From its birth in 1930 with just 173 members, it now has a world-wide membership in excess of 5,000 organized in six regions: Australasia, Europe and Other Areas, the Far East, Latin America, North America, and South and Southeast Asia. The Society's web site, <http://www.econometricsociety.org/>, contains detailed information about its history, structure, and operations, as well as instructions on how to join.

One very encouraging aspect of the Society over recent years has been the growth in student membership. In 2005 this stood at 1,222, up from 648 five years previously. Regular membership also showed an important growth with the numbers up from 3,091 to 4,282 over a similar period. The attractive pricing policy pursued by the Society and the increase in online access to *Econometrica* have helped with this. But it also reflects the vibrancy of the Society and the continued attraction of economic research founded on rigorous analysis and careful empirical study.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Tom Sargent, Lars Hansen, Torsten Persson and Rafael Repullo for their help over the past year. I wish to congratulate Roger Myerson on joining the officers as Second Vice-President.

2. ORGANIZATION

This year has been the first full year for the new organization of the society in which Rafael Repullo has been Executive Vice-President assisted by Claire Sashi as General Manager at the NYU office. On behalf of the Society, I want to acknowledge the enormous effort they have both put into making the new organizational arrangements a huge success. They make the Society run very smoothly, and working with them has made the job of being President a real pleasure. Rafael has been instrumental in many new innovations at the Society. He has completely updated the Aide Memoire, which provides the key guidelines for the running of the Society. This is available online. He has helped enormously in providing support to all the regional standing committees and has been a key force behind the establishment of a series of new plenary lectures at the regional meetings and funded by the Society.

Several important activities of the Econometric Society have become electronic. Ariel Rubinstein was at the forefront of these developments during his period as President, and I would like to thank Claire Sashi and Ariel for their help in making these run smoothly. In particular, I would like to point to the discussion forum, which hosted the discussion among members of whether the society should start new journals; also the Fellows elections, which took place electronically for the first time this year. The low number of Fellows elected has resulted in a close examination by the Executive Committee on ways to improve the procedures. However, this should not distract from the attractiveness of the new electronic voting mechanism.

### 3. *ECONOMETRICA* AND THE MONOGRAPH SERIES

The journal *Econometrica* is one of the key products of the Society. It is clear that *Econometrica* has continued to publish very high-quality papers and remains one of the top 5 journals in economics. I want to thank Eddie Dekel for the marvelous way he has edited the journal and I am delighted that Stephen Morris has agreed to serve as Editor starting July 1, 2007. In addition to Stephen becoming the Editor, two other changes are planned: Daron Acemoglu and Wolfgang Pesendorfer will be joining as Co-Editors. Daron is joining us in July 2007 and Wolfgang will be joining us the following summer. Wolfgang will be replacing David Levine, whose (extended) term ends then. David has been exceptionally valuable to the journal and I would like to thank him for all his work at *Econometrica*.

The Monographs Series continues to be actively edited by Andrew Chesher and Matthew Jackson, and I would like to thank them for their hard work in seeking out and editing manuscripts for the series. This year saw the publication of the 2005 World Congress volumes in the series and all monographs will soon be free online to members.

### 4. NEW JOURNALS

At the August 2005 meeting of the Executive Council, a committee chaired by David Levine recommended that we initiate a discussion about whether the Society should publish additional journals and, if so, how to define those new journals. The Executive Council looked upon the recommendation favorably and voted to initiate an online discussion among Fellows and members that began in early 2006. A discussion forum was set up and many members contributed to a lively debate. A subcommittee comprising myself, Torsten Persson, and Lars Hansen was asked to prepare a recommendation. This recommendation will be taken to the Executive Committee meeting in Budapest this August.

### 5. THE REGIONAL MEETINGS

During the year I attended meetings in all six regions, and have been impressed by the level of commitment to the Society and by the level of excitement for the research it champions. The meetings were:

- North American Winter Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts, January 6–8, 2006
- North American Summer Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 22–25, 2006
- Australasian Meeting, Alice Springs, Australia, July 5–7, 2006
- Far Eastern Meeting, Beijing, China, July 10–12, 2006
- European Summer Meeting, Vienna, Austria, August 24–28, 2006
- Latin American Meeting, Mexico City, Mexico, November 2–4, 2006
- European Winter Meeting, Torino, Italy, November 10–11, 2006
- South and Southeast Asia Meeting, Chennai, India, December 18–20, 2006

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the local organizers and the chairs of the scientific committees for their excellent work. On behalf of the Society, let me also express my gratitude to the regional standing committees for their dedication and creativity.

The quality of presentations and the seriousness with which both theoretical and empirical questions were discussed at the various meetings was heartening. It shows the continuing importance played by the Econometric Society in providing a forum for the development of new economic and econometric ideas. The success of the Far East meetings and the growing membership there have led to those meetings moving to an annual frequency. As another example of vibrancy, the Latin American meetings have very successfully joined forces with the Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association (LACEA) to run parallel meetings, drawing on the very best research in economics in Latin America. The interaction between rigorous analysis and practical policy questions in both of these regions is likely to be one of the key drivers of new research over the coming years.

As noted above, in comparison with the 2,000 figures, the membership of the Society jumped by a total of 77 percent. Among regions, this was distributed in the following manner: 98 percent increase in Australasia, 104 percent in Europe and Other Areas, 78 percent in the Far East, 107 percent in Latin America, 54 percent in North America, and 181 percent in South and Southeast Asia.

The Society provides the following financial support to the regions. First, it provides grants to each region of \$5,000 per year for activities involving “young economists.” Second, it funds a Jacob Marschak Lecture each year other than World Congress years at a regional meeting held outside Europe and North America. Third, it provides up to \$4,000 to support a named lecture at every regional meeting outside Europe and North America that has no Marschak Lecture. Finally, it covers the travel and accommodation expenses of the President giving his/her Presidential Address at regional meetings, unless such funding is provided by the local organizers.

## 6. NOMINATING COMMITTEES

The Econometric Society has three nominating committees: for Fellows, for Officers and for Council members. I want to acknowledge the members of the committees for 2006 and thank them all for their work.

FELLOWS COMMITTEE: Harald Uhlig, Chair; Susan Athey; Orazio Attanasio; Ricardo Caballero; Narayana Kocherlakota; Benny Moldovanu; Jeffrey M. Wooldridge.

OFFICERS COMMITTEE: Eric Maskin, Chair; Richard Blundell; Lars Hansen; Guy Laroque; Torsten Persson; Ariel Rubinstein; Thomas Sargent.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE: Thomas Sargent, Chair; Aloisio Araujo; Abhijit Banerjee; Mathias Dewatripont; Fumio Hayashi; James Heckman; Christopher Pissarides.

## 7. A FINAL WORD

It has been enormous pleasure being President over the past year. With Lars Hansen, Torsten Persson, and Roger Myerson now heading up the Society, it couldn't be in a better position for the future.

*Richard Blundell*  
PRESIDENT IN 2006