

香港統計學會

Hong Kong Statistical Society

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The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong
<http://www.hkss.org.hk>

Bulletin

Volume 35 No.1

March 2013

Editor's Foreword

2013 is the International Year of Statistics and the 59th World Statistics Congress will be held in Hong Kong on August 25-30. As one of the main participating organisations, our Society is going to organise a series of activities to promote the importance of statistics to the general public.

In this issue, we start with our President's Forum and an interview report with Professor LAM Kin. There is an article introducing the 2013 International Year of Statistics and how our Society will celebrate this important event. This issue also includes an article about the new data dissemination service of the 2011 Population Census contributed by the Census and Statistics Department, and a report on the

Statistics Creative-Writing Competition. In the last column, a brief summary of the outing of our Society on 19 January 2013 is reported together with some photos.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciations to all contributors to this Bulletin and wish that all our members and supporters prosperous and have more breakthroughs during the Statistics2013.

Dr PENG Heng

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President's Forum

Professor K.W. NG

First of all, I would like to thank all members for your support to the Society in the last year. The year of 2012 marked the 35th anniversary of the Hong Kong Statistical Society. In celebration of this occasion we have organised two activities -- the public lecture organised jointly with the Census and Statistics Department and the Education Bureau on 3 December 2012 and the outing to the Hong Kong Geopark on 19 January 2013. Both activities were well attended and appraised by the participants.

The 2012/13 Statistics Creative-Writing Competition (SCC) and Statistical Project Competition (SPC) are well underway. I am grateful for the leadership of Dr Philip YU and Ms Anny CHEUNG and the hard work of the two Organising Committees.

Dr Philip YU, the former Vice President, has represented our Society to attend the International Statistical Institute Conference on Expertise Builds Capacity held in South Korea during 14-15 November 2012. Serving as a discussant in the session on "Role of National Statistical Societies in Statistical Capacity Building", he shared with participants the contributions of the Hong Kong Statistical Society to the community through conducting examinations and organising statistical competitions and public activities in nurturing statistical professionals and promoting statistical literacy.



Dr Philip YU has represented the Hong Kong Statistical Society to attend the International Statistical Institute Conference on Expertise Builds Capacity held in South Korea during 14-15 November 2012.

The year of 2013 is, I would like to say, the most exciting single year for the Hong Kong statistical community because of three international events: (a) It is designated as the International Year of Statistics (also called Statistics2013), (b) the 59th World Statistics Congress (WSC) in Hong Kong on August 25-30, and (c) the 9th International Chinese Statistical Association Conference (ICSA) on December 20-23 (<http://icsa.org/>) at the Hong Kong Baptist University.

Our Society has already signed up as a participating organisation in the Statistics2013. Dr PENG Heng, the Programme Secretary of Hong Kong Statistical Society and the editor of this Bulletin, has written an article to introduce about the background of Statistics2013 and our Society's participation. He also gives more information in the article about the 9th ICSA Conference.

The 59th WSC will be hosted jointly by the International Statistical Institute and the Census and Statistics Department on behalf of the HKSAR Government. It will take place in the Hong Kong Conference and Exhibition Centre on August 25-30. The 59th WSC has a fresh theme of "Youth" and the Theme Day is scheduled on August 28. The Society plans to hold a series of activities on that day, including the prize presentation ceremony of the SPC and SCC and a talk to promote statistical literacy among the youth. In support of the 59th WSC, the Society has launched a programme to sponsor Examination Associates to attend the Congress. This programme is overseen by a Sponsorship Committee chaired by Mr H. W.

FUNG. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Mr FUNG and members of the Committee for their hard work. Besides, the Society will also participate in the tertiary students sponsorship programme coordinated by the Local Organising Committee of the 59th WSC and set up a booth in the trade exhibition to be held alongside the WSC to introduce to the participants about our Society. With my multiple duties as the Society's President, Vice-Chairperson of the Local Organising Committee, Chairperson of the Local Programme Committee, and Member of the Scientific Programme Committee of the 59th WSC, I am very lucky and honored in having this life-time opportunity to encourage highly your participation in this event. More details can be found at its website as follows: <http://www.isi2013.hk/en/index.php>.



It is my great pleasure to introduce to members the interesting report of the Society's interview with Professor LAM Kin. He was the Society's President for the 1985-86 Session and is also an Honorary Member of the Hong Kong Statistical Society. Professor LAM has retired as Professor Emeritus of the Hong Kong Baptist University and is now helping the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science at HKU as Honorary Professor. The interview shares his experiences and insights in mathematics, statistics and financial management science.

Last but not least, our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled to be held on 11 April 2013 at the Immigration Officers Mess, 20/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai. I look forward to seeing you in the AGM and your continuous support of the Society in 2013.



Look forward to seeing you!

An Interview with Professor LAM Kin

Mr Matthew WONG and Miss Jessie CHOI
Census and Statistics Department

Professor LAM Kin is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Finance and Decision Sciences of the Hong Kong Baptist University. After 15 years of service at the University and having been the Chair Professor and Head of Department from 1995 to 2008, he retired in 2009. Professor LAM is active in the local financial community and has served on many high-level boards and committees in the Government and major financial institutes.



On 13 December 2012, we met Professor LAM in his office. He shared with us experience and career roadmap of his statistical profession.

WONG:

Professor LAM, after obtaining your Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics (University of Hong Kong) in 1967 and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Mathematics (University of Wisconsin) in 1972, what inspired you to start your career in academic research at the Department of Statistics in the University of Hong Kong, and later became a renowned professor in this field of research?

LAM:

I chose to start my career in the University of Hong Kong because I obtained my first degree from this University and I found that I was very much emotionally attached to the dynamic culture of which I wished to be a part. When I first joined the University in 1972, I did not know what I would be doing in the future, but I trusted that the University would provide room for me to achieve what I wanted to achieve. This was later proven to be correct! Although my undergraduate degree and postgraduate degree were all about Pure Mathematics, I always wanted to work on something that was more applied and something that could be utilised in the real world. Driven by my belief that one should follow one's own interest, I was attracted to Statistics in which quantification

plays an essential role in the understanding of real world phenomena. I believed that Statistics could bring together my interest in application in numbers with my acumen in numbers.

WONG:

What motivated you to turn your research focus from “probability and statistics” since early 1970s to “application of statistics in finance” since late 1980s, and later assumed the position of the Head of Department of Finance and Decision Sciences in the Hong Kong Baptist University in 1995?

LAM:

There are two main reasons why I turned my research focus to the field of research in application of statistics in finance in 1980s. First, unlike many other fields, data concerning the financial market are very readily available and the data are reliable. I found it intriguing to do research on how to apply these data effectively to gain understanding into the financial market. Second, Hong Kong had started to develop rapidly as an international financial centre since 1980s, and then shortly became the second most important financial centre in the Asia-Pacific region, after Tokyo. I felt good to do research on and contribute to this important area.



At the beginning of my research in finance in 1980s, I was deeply inspired by a paper in the Journal of Finance titled “Does the Market Overreact?” (Bondt and Thaler, 1985). In this

paper, De Bondt and Thaler introduced market overreaction, which implies that investors did not always make rational decisions. More specifically, investors overreacted to both unexpected and extreme good news and bad news, which pushes up or down stock prices above or below prices justified by information. De Bondt and Thaler showed empirically the contrarian strategy in the stock market (i.e. one bought losers and sold winners based on their returns over a horizon of three to five years would usually win in subsequent holding periods of three to five years). Their finding not only provided insight on securities selection for market practitioners, but also challenged the mainstream classical assumption of strict rationality on the part of investors under the Efficient Market Hypothesis, and opened a completely new field of research in finance at that time. My earlier works in this direction consisted of several papers on the overreaction in the Index futures market in Hong Kong. These works serve to confirm that overreaction not only exists in the cash market but also in the more sophisticated futures market as well.

Overreaction phenomenon in the financial market could be explained by the finding in psychology reported by Tversky and Kahneman (1974) that people tended to make predictions using behavioral heuristic known as representativeness rather than Bayes’ rule. On the other hand, investors are also conservative in that they tend to stick to old beliefs. When they apply these conservative heuristic to make financial decisions, the market will under-react. That is why Jagadeesh and Titman (1993) found that buying winners and selling losers

can be a winning strategy when winners and losers are evaluated in a shorter time horizon such as half to one year. The co-existence of long-run-over-reaction and short-run-under-reaction in the financial market is really intriguing. In one of my recent papers (Lam, Liu and Wong, 2010), we built a pseudo-Bayesian model to explain why they co-exist in the financial market.

CHOI:

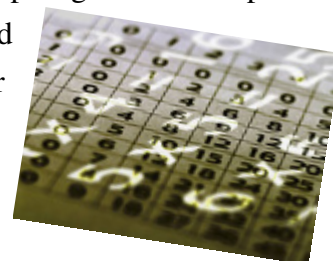
During your research journey, did you come across any challenges and how did you overcome them?

LAM:

Yes, certainly! It was a big challenge to me when I started my career in academic research in Statistics in 1970s. I studied Pure Mathematics for both my Bachelor and PhD degrees and I had never learnt anything related to probability and statistics before. Thus, I had to start everything right from the beginning! To overcome this hurdle, I started endlessly reading research papers and books in Statistics, engaging in self-learning and attending seminars and courses. I felt honorable to have the chance to attend the summer program in survey sampling methods taught by Professor Leslie KISH in the University of Michigan. I was much inspired by this summer program, not only on the statistical knowledge, but also on the interactions and in-depth discussions with Professor KISH who is well known to be an expert in the field of survey samplings. It is



also worthwhile to mention that my background of Pure Mathematics provided me with a solid foundation to build up my knowledge in Statistics. In sum, the journey of turning from Pure Mathematics to Statistics was challenging yet inspiring. I developed my interests in Applied Mathematics which later motivated me to focus my research work in finance.



CHOI:

Working in the field of statistics and finance for some 40 years, what is the most memorable moment that you would like to share with the readers?

LAM:

Throughout my research work over the past 40 years, there are countless memorable moments. If I have to choose the most memorable one, it would be the precious time that I spent with my post-graduate students. Many of them are now high-caliber figures in various sectors of the society and are always fully engaged in their work. I am glad that they still visit me quite often and we hold group gatherings from time to time, in particular during festive occasions.

WONG:

Professor LAM, you have developed algorithms to trade index futures in Hong Kong on the basis of overreaction hypothesis, and have used your own money to test the algorithms and trade on the futures market of Hong Kong. Could you share it more with the

readers and give some investment tips to them?

LAM:

I am of the opinion that teachers in finance should participate in the financial market through real trading to gain first-hand experience in how the financial market works. Of course, one should not let these activities affect one's normal work and excessive investment has to be avoided. Among all things, risk management is of paramount importance.

The financial market changes very fast and there is no strategy that works all time. A paper titled "Intraday price reversals for index futures in the United States and Hong Kong" jointly written by Alexander Kwok-Wah FUNG, Debby M.Y. MOK and me was published in the Journal of Banking and Finance in 2000. The data in this study included daily opening and closing prices, and intraday tick-by-tick prices of the Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500 Futures from 1 September 1993 to 25 June 1996 and those of the Hang Seng Index (HSI) Futures in Hong Kong from 18 March 1993 to 30 December 1996.

We observed intraday price reversals following large price changes at the opening of the S&P 500 Futures market and the HSI Futures market. We noted that such price reversals could be exploited to give rise to profitable opportunities after transaction costs, even though these might not be very significant. The maximum gain in

this study was 0.093% per day, or about 26% per year (with 250 trading days) for the HSI Futures market. This study showed that investor overreaction might be a universal phenomenon and irrational investor behavior like overreaction might also exist among groups of sophisticated investors.

Although this was proven to be a profitably technical trading strategy using empirical data during 1993-1996, whether this strategy could still be workable during catastrophic events remains to be examined by readers. In a recent article in my newspaper column, I did some recalculation and found that the same strategy fails to make profit several years after the paper was published.

WONG:

Acting on Professor LAM's research and recommendation, the Hong Kong Futures Exchange (HKFE) adopted the Exponentially Weighted Moving Average (EWMA) methodology to set margin for the index futures market in Hong Kong. As the originator of that system, could you share with the readers some experience of the research project?

LAM:

I am quite pleased with my works in this direction. On the one hand, the margin setting methodology has been adopted by the exchange and has since been used to set margins in the futures market. With a rigorously set margin, the index futures market was able to function smoothly during the 1998 Asian Financial Crises and survived the Financial Tsunami in 2008. On the other hand, the methodology is



based on theoretical considerations and is worthy of publications in academic journals. My research in this direction ended up with several publications in finance journals with co-authors including Dr Philip YU and Dr S.Y. SIN. It is really nice to do some work having importance both in theory and in practice.

The margin system is the first line of defense against the default risk of a clearinghouse of a futures exchange. From the perspectives of a clearinghouse, the major concern is to have a prudential system to control the default exposure. Once the level of prudence is set, the next concern will be the opportunity cost of the investors, because high opportunity cost discourages people from hedging futures, and thus defeats the purpose of a futures market.

My research project focuses on a method of setting margins in a futures market that can control both the coverage probability as well as imposing the least cost to investors. When margin is set too low, we do not have enough coverage. When margin is set too high, investors suffer. An analogy to this is the Type I and Type II errors in statistical hypothesis testing. Noting this similarity, I was able to do some optimality analysis in the financial market. Motivated by the Neyman-Pearson Lemma, I proposed a method to compare between two margin setting methodologies. We first aligned the two methodologies so that they offer the same coverage to the exchange and then we compare which one is the cheaper to investors. Using this approach, the EWMA, which places emphasis on recent observations, works better

compared to putting equal weights on historical observations. Also, we find that implied volatility has served as a very efficient volatility forecast and can serve as good input for margin calculations. In the past, the use of implied volatility in margin design had been greatly ignored. The use of implied volatility had an advantage of minimising the number of changes in margin required by a clearing house.

WONG:

Besides taking leading roles in academic research (such as conducting research in statistics and finance) and professional services (such as being a former director of the Hong Kong Futures Clearing Corporation, a subsidiary of the HKFE), you have also devoted a significant amount of time to promote statistical literacy (such as being a consultant for the first Statistical Project Competition for secondary school students, a co-author of a book entitled 概率萬花筒, and a columnist in 信報- 數裡見真章). What inspired you to embark on these promotion activities, amidst your very busy schedule?



LAM:

I believe the higher the level of statistical literacy, the more prospective high-caliber students will enter this field to contribute to the society in the future. After I retired, I started to write a 數裡見真章 column in 信報. Although writing a weekly column takes up a lot of my time, I hope I can keep it on-going for a while.

CHOI:

In your points of view, what will be the future development of the fields of statistics and finance?

LAM:

With the continuous advancement of information technology, the field of statistics and finance will certainly undergo a big change and in fact, the change starts already!

In recent years, researchers start using “big data” (datasets of extraordinarily size) to do data mining. For instance, they perform different kinds of analysis (e.g. correlation analysis) on “big data” obtained from search engine or social network. In the past when you only had a calculator on hand, it was totally an impossible mission! But now, being equipped with computers with ever stronger processing power and larger storage capacity, it certainly provides researchers with a way of accomplishing the tasks.



Turning to finance, with the completion of the Next Generation Data Centre (NGDC) in Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate by the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEx) in the fourth quarter of 2012, the field of finance has entered into a new era.



The NGDC provides hosting services to clients which enable them to perform a wider range of trading strategies through low latency connection to the HKEx markets. Low latency connection allows minimal delay between an input being processed and an output being delivered. This is particularly important when trading in the capital market is made using algorithms such that market updates can be processed and orders can be turned around within milliseconds.

CHOI:

After being fully devoted to research work for so many years, do you have any retirement plans when you now retire?

LAM:

After my retirement, apart from being a columnist at the Hong Kong Economic Journal, I now come back to my home University, the University of Hong Kong, to be an Honorary Professor. Occasionally, I teach some postgraduate courses. I must say I enjoy teaching very much, as in doing so, we can pass our invaluable knowledge to our next generations. At my leisure time, I spend more time on playing tennis and bridge on which I was too busy in the past to spare time. I even hope that I can participate in some bridge

competitions later. Lastly, I enjoy travelling around the world. For example, this year, I have been to Dunhuang (敦煌) and Tibet.

WONG:

We know that your students benefitted a lot from your teaching. As the last question of today's interview, could you offer some advice to our readers?

LAM:

To me, I believe that the most important thing is to follow your interests, do what you are interested in and “respect your work, enjoy your work” (敬業、樂業). Furthermore, one always needs to be mindful of the professional ethics and have an upright character. These are also what I always told and shared with my Master and PhD students.

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Thank you very much, Professor LAM, for sparing your valuable time for this interview.

13 December 2012

2013: International Year of Statistics

The Editor

This year is the International Year of Statistics, or Statistics2013. The word “statistics” has multiple meanings. In the book *A Career in Statistics: Beyond the Numbers* by Gerald Hahn and Necip Doganaksoy, statistics is defined as:

- ✚ the science of learning from (or making sense out of) data;
- ✚ the science of uncertainty;
- ✚ the theory and methods of extracting information from observational data for solving real-world problems;
- ✚ the quintessential interdisciplinary science; and
- ✚ the art of telling a story with [numerical] data.

Regardless of which definition of “statistics” one uses, it affects many aspects of our daily life in a profound way. For examples, weather forecast, emergency preparedness, assessment of disease risks, evaluation of your credits, pricing insurance policies, quality control and many other all rely on statistics. Government, many organisations and companies also rely on statistics to make decision and design policies and they produce statistics themselves through survey, census and other form of recording tracking.

To celebrate the importance of statistics, the International Year of Statistics is sponsored by the American Statistical Association, Institute of Mathematical Statistics, International Biometric Society, International Statistical Institute (and the Bernoulli Society), and the Royal Statistical Society. The primary objectives of the founding organisations are:

- ✚ to increase public awareness of the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of society;
- ✚ to nurture statistics as a profession, especially among young people; and
- ✚ to promote creativity and development in the sciences of probability and statistics.

Centered around these objectives the participating organisations will plan seminars, media outreach, and other educational and promotional activities in their home countries throughout 2013. Through those activities, the campaign of Statistics2013 wishes to promote the importance of statistics to the scientific community, business and government data users, the media, policymakers, employers, secondary school and college students, and



millions of people like you. As a result, we hope all around the world people will gain a greater appreciation for the myriad ways statistics improves the quality of your life and greatly advances our global society. For detailed activities list, you are invited to explore the Statistic2013 website at <http://www.statistics2013.org/>.

In Hong Kong, there are two important conferences organised by the International Statistical Institute and the International Chinese Statistical Association during the second half of 2013. The first conference is the 59th World Statistics Congress (WSC). It will be held in Hong Kong during 25-30 August 2013. The conference will take place at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), which is a magnificent, multi-purpose venue located right in the heart of Hong Kong on the Victoria Harbour.



This conference will provide a platform for the international statistical community to share and present the latest knowledge and innovations in statistics. Featuring the unique theme “Youth”, a series of sessions will be organised on the “Theme Day” of the 59th WSC to address, from various statistical perspectives, topics surrounding the “Youth”. The Hong Kong Statistical Society (HKSS) is also a proud co-sponsor of this important event. The second conference is the 9th ICSA

International Conference. It will be held at the Hong Kong Baptist University from 20-23 December 2013. This conference provides a chance for Chinese statisticians from all around the world to communicate and mingle. It also aims to foster cooperative efforts among educational, research, industrial, and governmental personnel in statistical activities. This conference is also sponsored by the HKSS. Besides sponsoring two Hong Kong based international conferences, HKSS is also going to organise a talk featuring the Statistics2013 on the “Theme Day” of the 59th WSC to promote statistical literacy to the youth.

As the flagship statistical organisation in Hong Kong, the HKSS has signed up as a participating organisation for the Statistics2013. The aim of HKSS is to promote the development of statistics by providing a medium for advancing knowledge and enhancing appreciation of the theory and application of statistics. This aim is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Statistics2013. The Statistics2013 will provide us a unique chance and platform to connect with other statistical organisations around the world, and in particular, broaden the perspectives of young statisticians in Hong Kong. For example, in the 59th WSC in Hong Kong, HKSS has launched a sponsorship programme to support young participants. To nurture statistics as a profession among young people, HKSS also organises annually the Statistical Project Competition and the Statistical Creative-Writing Competition for



secondary schools students.

In the end, we like to thank the many HKSS members for their valuable contributions and support to the Statistics2013. The list includes, but not limited to: Mrs Lily OU-YANG and Professor Kai-wang NG, Chairpersons of the Local Organising Committee and the Local Programme Committee of 2013 WSC, Professor Lixing ZHU, one of chairs of 9th ICSA International Conference, Ms CHEUNG Kit-Man, the chairperson of the Organising Committee for 2012/13 Statistical Project Competition for secondary school students and Dr Philip YU Leung-Ho, the chairman of the Organising Committee for Statistics Creative-Writing Competition for secondary school students.



2011 Population Census - Interactive Data Dissemination Service

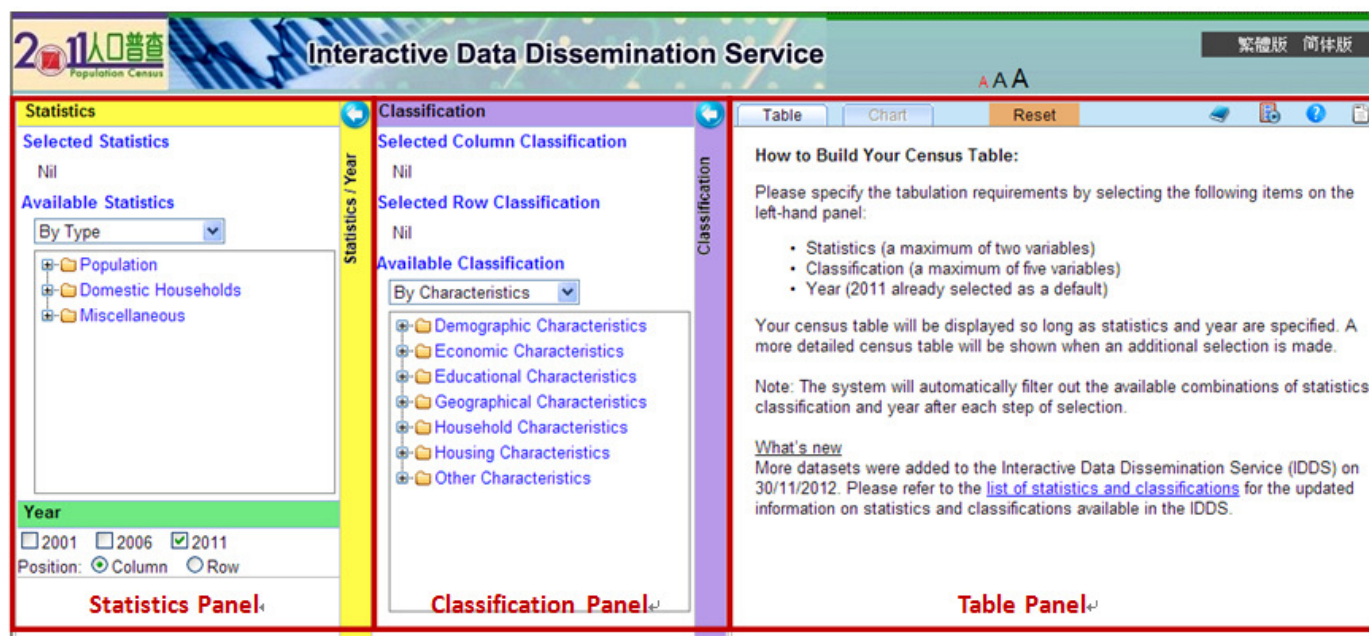
Mr T. S. TSANG and Mr Eric CHAN
Census and Statistics Department

Introduction

The 2011 Population Census (11C) was conducted by the Census and Statistics Department from June to August 2011 and results of the 11C have been released in phases since February 2012. In September 2012, a re-designed Interactive Data Dissemination Service (IDDS) was launched to cater for the need of advanced data users for detailed 11C statistics. Simply speaking, the IDDS is an online system to enable data users to produce tabulations according to their own data requirements. Its salient features are introduced in this article.

Enhanced user interface

One of the major enhancements of the new IDDS is on the design of the user interface. The homepage of the IDDS consists of three parts, namely Statistics Panel, Classification Panel and Table Panel. Statistics Panel and Classification Panel are the areas for data users to view all the available variables (statistics, reference years and classifications) for tabulation and make selection whereas Table Panel is the area for data users to view the output statistical table.

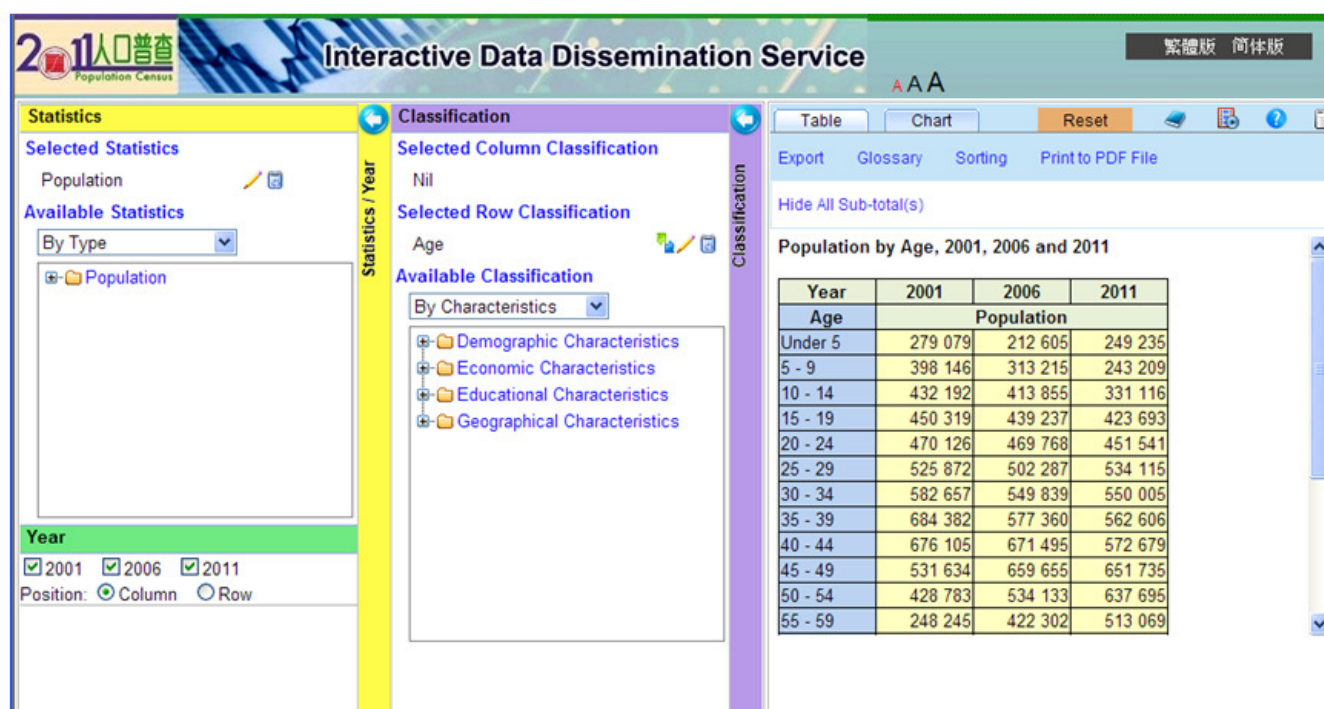


▲ Homepage of the IDDS

Enriched data coverage

For data confidentiality reason, only macro-data incorporating summarised statistics are stored in the IDDS. As the statistical table is produced by retrieving data from the macro-data files direct, the system response time can be significantly reduced. With a new feature of breaking down a giant cross-tabulation into various macro-data files for data input, the coverage of the new IDDS has an extended data coverage and allows data users to produce statistical tables in accordance with their own specifications up to 5 dimensions (i.e. classifications) on 2 types of statistical measures (i.e. statistics).

In addition to the 11C results, relevant results of the 2006 Population By-census (06BC) and the 2001 Population Census (01C) are also included in the IDDS. Figures for the three different reference years concerned can be presented in one statistical table for comparison.



▲ Comparison of results of the 2011 Population Census with the corresponding results of the 2001 Population Census and the 2006 Population By-census.

More user-friendly in table building

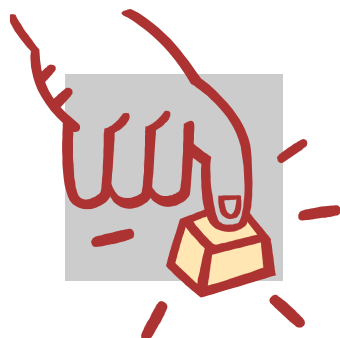
The new IDDS offers a new user experience in table building. Data users are now able to select statistics, reference years and classifications in any order instead of a step-by-step approach in the old IDDS designed for the 2006 Population By-census. After each step of selection, the IDDS automatically filters out the available combinations of statistics, reference years and classifications for further selection. In addition, they are no longer required to specify the classification scheme for each newly-added classification. The system automatically provides the most detailed classification scheme as the default option. Still, customisation functions such as change of classification scheme and filtering of selected classification items are supported.

In the old IDDS, if there was one classification with a detailed classification scheme specified (e.g. single age groups for the age dimension), many of the other dimensions would become not available for further selection although some of them could be cross-tabulated with the former when a less detailed classification (e.g. broad age group) was selected. The enhanced IDDS is designed to cater for this situation. Users are now allowed to add up to 5 dimensions so long as this combination of dimensions is feasible and the system will handle the classification hierarchy automatically by using a less detailed classification for some of the existing dimensions.



- ▲ The IDDS can be accessed through the “Build Your Census Tables” webpage of the 11C website ([http:// www.census2011.gov.hk/en/build-your-census-tables.html](http://www.census2011.gov.hk/en/build-your-census-tables.html)).

Thanks to the above enhancements in system design, the new IDDS is able to display the updated statistical table immediately after each step of selection. The interactive feature is greatly enhanced by this view-as-you-click approach where data users can view the table content and interact with the system to make further selection concurrently.



Census results at your finger-tips

The new IDDS has marked a breakthrough for the general public's access of interactive official statistics via the Internet with a simple and user-friendly interface accessible anywhere and anytime for free.

You are most welcome to visit the IDDS to produce your own 11C tables. You are recommended to refer to the "List of Statistics and Classifications" available on the 11C website for details about the data coverage in the IDDS.

Establishment of the Statistics Creative-Writing Competition

Dr Philip L.H. YU

Chairman of Organising Committee of the Competition

Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science, The University of Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Statistical Society (HKSS) has committed to promote statistical literacy in the community. The Statistics Project Competition (SPC) for Secondary School Students has been an annual flagship event of the Society since 1986/87. It aims to encourage students to understand the local community through the analysis of statistical data on social and economic affairs.

In view of the importance of the proper use of statistical concepts in various aspects, the HKSS and Education Bureau jointly organised the first Statistics Creative-Writing Competition (SCC) for Secondary School Students in 2009. Unlike the SPC which focuses on statistical analysis of social and economic data, the SCC aims at encouraging students to creatively express in words the daily application of statistical concepts or put statistical concepts into a story in a scientific and objective manner.

In the first two rounds of the competition, many submissions were mainly related to the use of probability or the misuse of statistics. To encourage more submissions on other statistical concepts, the organising committee of the SCC

decided to set a theme topic each year and introduced the best thematic writing prize, named as “Department of Statistics & Actuarial Science, The University of Hong Kong Prize for the Best Thematic Writing”, in the 2011/12 round. The themes set so far are “Correlation” and “Outlier”.



Photo of Dr C.W. KWAN who introduced the theme topic ‘Outlier’ in the briefing session of the SCC in 2012/13

An adjudication panel, which was led by Dr CHEUNG Ka-chun and comprised colleagues from mathematical education section of the

Education Bureau, statistics lecturers from universities and professional statisticians, was set up for the Competition. Having undergone stringent scrutiny by the adjudicators, outstanding entries were selected for receiving the awards finally.



*Photo of winning teams, the officiating guests and the organising committee in the SCC in 2011/12:
(Front row from right to left) Dr Philip L.H. YU, Mr S.K. NG and Ms Annie Y.W. CHAN*

In line with the development of mathematics education in Hong Kong, and providing teachers with more references, booklets of winning entries in the SCC had been edited. To enhance the overall quality of the booklets, the booklets also included several invited articles written by university professors, school teachers and statisticians from the Census and Statistics Department. We believe that through reading a series of interesting articles and creative stories in the booklet, many students are able to gain much knowledge of statistics and recognised how important the proper use of statistical concepts is in analysing problems. The booklets are issued for free

distribution to secondary schools and are available in HKSS website for free download.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the members of the organising committee, the adjudicators, and the authors of the invited articles in all rounds of the SCC for their help and support. Their strenuous efforts have undoubtedly contributed to enhancing students' statistical literacy and raising their interest in statistics. I would also like to thank the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of the University of Hong Kong for sponsoring the prizes in the Competition.



*Photo of officiating guests and the organising committee in the SCC in 2009:
(From left to right) Dr K.C. CHEUNG; Dr Philip L.H. YU; Dr K.W. CHEUNG; Professor W.K. LI; Mr H.W. FUNG, JP; Mr Leslie W.K. TANG*

News Section

Social Activity

A one-day tour to the Hong Kong Geopark was organised by the Society on 19 January 2013. The activity received very good responses from members of the Society. All participants enjoyed a very relaxing and educative sunny day at the Ma Shi Chau Nature Trail and Tai Po Geoheritage Centre where they could appreciate the beauty of the natural landscape and different geological features. Some snapshots of the day are given here to highlight this enjoyable social activity.



Participants are enjoying a relaxing barbeque.



A group photo of the participants who fully enjoy this meaningful social activity.