

American Economic Association Committee on Statistics (AEASStat) Annual Report—2009

The current members of the Committee on Economic Statistics are Matthew Shapiro, University of Michigan (Chair); Katharine Abraham, University of Maryland; Robert Feenstra, University of California-Davis; Dennis Fixler, Bureau of Economic Analysis; David Johnson, Census Bureau; Barbara Fraumeni, University of Southern Maine; Jonathan Parker, Northwestern University; Charles Schultze, Brookings Institution; Jack Triplett. The committee met by teleconference in January and September 2009.

Katharine Abraham stepped down as chair of the Committee on Statistics early in 2009 in order to chair the newly-established American Economic Association Committee on Government Relations. The Committee on Statistics is exceedingly grateful for her thoughtful and effective leadership during her tenure as chair.

In January 2007, the Executive Committee voted to give the Committee standing authority to organize three sessions each year for inclusion on the program of the Association's annual meeting. At its April 2008 meeting, the Executive Committee voted to allow the Committee to designate one session each year for publication in the annual Papers and Proceedings volume. For the January 2010 meeting, the Committee circulated a call for papers on the measurement of intangibles, trade in services and other economic measurement topics. The following three sessions are included in the program of the January 2010 meeting: "Measuring Intangible Capital," "Measuring Labor and Wage Dynamics with Administrative Data," and "Measuring Cognition and Linking it to Economic Outcomes." Details of the sessions are given in the Table. The call for papers for the 2011 session solicits submissions related to the statistical issues arising from the financial crisis and potential changes in financial regulations, markets, and institutions in addition to any topics related to economic statistics.

The Committee also has undertaken the task of commissioning reviews of needs for data in particular subject matter areas. A group co-chaired by Robert Feenstra and Robert Lipsey is close to completing a draft report on data needs for research on international trade. It was discussed at this year's National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute meetings. The Committee is in the early stages of planning for a report on needs for data on the financial sector, with an emphasis on statistical considerations relating to regulatory reform.

To ensure that papers presented at the sessions on economic measurement organized by the Committee and the reports on data needs it commissions are readily accessible to interested persons, the Committee has developed a Committee website where these and other informational items are posted. The Committee website may be accessed through the main Association website. It has recently added a link to the Association of Public Data Users to facilitate those who might wish to be informed of and comment on changes in Federal data collection.

The Committee continues to monitor developments with regard to passage of legislation to facilitate the sharing of business information for statistical purposes, but there was little opportunity for constructive engagement on that topic during the calendar year.

The chairs of the Committee on Statistics and the newly-established Committee on Government Relations are endeavoring to collaborate where there is overlap in their areas of concern. The committees currently have two members in common. It would be advisable to continue to have some overlap in the committees' membership.

Submitted by
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