

Preface

The Department of Statistics of the Athens University of Economics and Business decided to ask for an external review of its programs and activities. The aim of this evaluation was to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the Department and its overall standing in the international scientific community.

Quality assessment is not widely practiced in Greek Higher Education and when it takes place, wherever it does, it is on a voluntary basis. Other Departments or Universities that have decided to have their programs assessed used mostly national assessment teams. The Review Team of the Statistics Department, consisting entirely of well-established and experienced distinguished scientists from abroad, made it possible to have an assessment indicative of the standing of the Department in the international scene. The members of the review team appointed, have a vast experience in teaching and research with extensive publication records and a previous involvement in evaluation procedures in different countries.

The Chairman of the team, Professor **C. R. Rao**, is considered one of the most important figures in Statistics in our century. He has been awarded 24 honorary degrees. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society, UK and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, USA. He is also an honorary member of the International Statistical Institute, an honorary life member of the Biometric Society and has been the Director of the Indian Statistical Institute. He has received many prizes, distinctions and awards. More than 20 International Conferences have been organized to honour him and many important statistical results bear his name. He has been a member of the review team of the Department of Statistics of the University of Harvard for many years. *AMSTAT NEWS* (#286, April 2001) wrote: *C.R.Rao is internationally acknowledged as one of the pioneers who laid the foundation of modern statistics, as well as one of the world's top five statisticians with multifaceted distinctions as a mathematician, researcher, scientist and teacher. His pioneering contributions to mathematics and statistical theory and applications have become part of graduate and postgraduate courses in statistics, econometrics, electrical engineering, and many other disciplines at most universities throughout the world.*

Professor **J. Teugels** has served as President of the Bernoulli Society for Probability and Mathematical Statistics. He is the editor of the journal of *Applied Stochastic Models in Business and Industry* published by Wiley, an associate editor of many other statistical journals and a member of the editorial board of the Wiley Series in Probability and Mathematical Statistics. He has held visiting positions in many Universities. He has been a Professor of the Department of Mathematics of the Catholic University of Leuven since 1967 and was its Chairman in the periods 1968-1977 and 1985-1991. He has acted as an external examiner in different countries.

W. Urfer is a Professor of the Department of Statistics at the University of Dortmund, one of the two existing Department of Statistics in Germany. He is an associate editor of the journal *Environmental and Ecological Statistics* and co-author of the *Encyclopedia of Environmetrics* (with A.H. El-Shaarawi), published in 2001 by Wiley. He was member of the review team (with R. Curnow and B.J.T. Morgan) that reviewed the Department of Biostatistics of the Rothamsted Experimental Station in England in 1997.

Professor **P. Florides** has worked for 40 years in the Mathematics Department Trinity College, University of Dublin. In 1995, he was the Chairman of the review team for Greece in the pilot project of the European Union to assess higher education in the member countries. He was also a member of the preparatory committee for the establishment of the University of Cyprus, and the chairman of the selection committee for the appointment of the first members of staff of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University.

It is hoped that the report that follows provides a comprehensive and clear picture of the structure and the activities of the Department of Statistics of the Athens University of Economics and Business.

Professor J. Panaretos
Chairman of the Department of Statistics
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