

Preface

The 23rd Biennial Seminar of the Austrian-Swiss Region (ROeS) of the International Biometric Society (IBS) took place in Graz from 25.9.–29.9.2005. 93 participants attended the seminar.

These seminars provide an excellent forum for the discussion and exchange of ideas in the various fields of biometry, including theoretical developments and applications. The main topics discussed at the 23rd seminar were:

- Proof of concept studies in drug development
- New developments in survival analysis
- Analysis of safety data in drug development
- Statistical methods in epidemiology
- Conditional versus marginal modelling
- Space-time models for environmental and epidemiological data

Since the last seminar, a special session devoted to Young Statisticians from Slovenia, Hungary, Italy and Austria was introduced in order to motivate young researchers and students to present their work. This successful session was held in parallel to a contributed paper session.

An all-time first for the ROeS was a pre-seminar course. This was held by José Pinheiro on Mixed-Effects Models and attended by 39 colleagues.

This Special Issue contains 7 papers on work presented at the seminar. The papers reflect well the different contributions made from theoretical to innovative applied work. Ch. Dargatz et al. presents a model for spatial spread of influenza in Germany. Annual maxima in hydrology are modelled by J. Hofrichter et al.. J. Pinheiro discusses covariance representation for linear and non-linear models. In the work of U. Römisch et al. regularized discriminant analysis is considered for determining the geographical origin of wines. H.-P. Stüger investigates a Bayesian approach to determine optimal sample sizes for monitoring systems, while A. Wienke et al. consider three correlated frailty models in the context of survival analysis. I. Baldi et al. discuss the Cox-Aalen model as a tool to deal with non-proportionality. I would like to thank all authors for the careful preparation of their manuscripts and all referees for their engaged and timely work.

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