

9th UK Stata User Group Meeting

19-20 May 2003

London

Scientific organisation

Stephen P. Jenkins (University of Essex)

Sophia Rabe-Hesketh (Institute of Psychiatry)

Logistical organisation

Timberlake Consultants

There were 18 presentations at this lively and interesting meeting, attended by some 45 participants. This year's meeting was distinctive because of the record number of presentations from users with an economics background (8 out of 18), and because of the international nature of the audience. For example, there were participants from Budapest (Hungary), Essen (Germany), Oslo (Norway), and Luxembourg, in addition to three StataCorp staff (Bill Gould, Bobby Gutierrez and, making his first UKSUG appearance, Chinh Nguyen). Over half the presenters were not born in the UK.

WISHES AND GRUMBLES

including StataCorp responses where these were other than 'no' or acknowledged.

[as transcribed by SPJ and SR-H, and in the order in which they were expressed]

Documentation for version 8 is under-developed, e.g. dialogues and graphics

Agreed, and some improvements likely to be released on the web

How fixed are Stata's internal limits?

It varies, depending on component and sometimes limited by OS.

Discussion ensued about the length of a characteristic in particular. StataCorp will look into increasing max length to that of a macro.

How do you certify dialogues?

Physically, with real people!

Extend dialogues for estimation commands so that can specify variables as categorical, and maybe have a button to say which are thus, and what the reference category is.

Improvements to -xi- please, e.g. along lines of -xi2-, -desmat-

StataCorp are thinking about this, but currently unclear about best way forward

How can I plot 100,000 data points faster?

Stata 8 renders points to screen faster than Stata 7; slowness is in overhead. Was there a bug? Questioner was asked to send in example.

Could there be ado-counterparts to all internal commands?

Do-file editor: extend functionality by allowing e.g. right mouse click to run selections of code

Will the pre-8 -window- be maintained even with the new -dlg-s?
Yes

Any support for incorporating a graphic into buttons in a dlg box, e.g. logo?
Haven't thought about it

Term 'cross-section timeseries' unknown outside econometrics - could more general term such as longitudinal/panel data be used?
Have thought about it - likely.

Ability to estimate ML models with non-linear constraints.
Has been thought about, but a long way off

-ml- : is it possible to speed up, shifting stuff from ado files to internal code
Possible, once the code has settled down. Future developments likely related to improvements in the matrix language

Syntax highlighting in the do-file editor and for smcl

Improve ability to paste from smcl to other things

Include graphs in smcl log-file

Why is smcl the default log file setting? (Some dislike this.)
For version 9, might make log 'default type' set-able

What is the rationale in the new GUI for Variables and Review windows to be floating?
Some discussion ensued.

Option to exponentiate coefficients in -cloglog- and -xtcloglog- models

Could there please be a -dlogit- command analogous to -dprobit- (-mfx-, especially with -se- option is too slow)?
Maybe, if not too difficult.

Could Stata remember most recently used directories to ease switching back and forth?
Possibly, e.g. similar to a pushdir/popdir feature (as in Unix)

Improved treatment of quotation marks in interface with SQL

Any plan to have Stata act as an ODBC source?

Would like ability to save estimation results to disk (an -estimates save- counterpart to -estimates store-).
Maybe, but NB one couldn't save e(sample) and ensure backward compatibility.

Would be good to be able to save a matrix to disk, with all colnames, coleq names etc. (like a simpler version of -estimates save-).

Such a command is already used internally by StataCorp.

Some discussion of problems of exporting and importing data that used decimal commas.

Attention was drawn to the new “g” format.

Stata Technical Support: suggestion to send ‘notification message’ to users who had been given advice on major issues that subsequently needs to be modified. (e.g. if problems arising with a particular OS are later resolved.)

Will look into it.

<end>