



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC FINANCE

Report on the 69th IIPF Annual Congress, Taormina, Italy

The 69th Annual IIPF Congress, jointly hosted by the Universities of Catania, Messina and Reggio Calabria, took place in **Taormina on August 22 – 25, 2013** and was attended by 385 delegates from around the world.

The theme of the **plenary sessions** was *The Role of the State in Growth and Development*. Plenary speakers were Pranab Bardhan (“State and Capital in Economic Development”), Robin Boadway (“Lessons on Fiscal Federalism from OECD Countries”), Ravi Kanbur (“Can a Country be a Recipient and a Donor of Aid?”), Michael Keen (“Informality and Public Finance”) and Daniel Treisman (“Economic Development, Leadership Change, and Democratization”) There was also a Panel Session, “Sustainable public finances: challenges ahead”, co-organized with GIZ.

The main body of the Congress consisted of **297 contributed papers** (out of 476 submissions), covering virtually all topics within public economics. To accommodate the large number of papers delivered, up to 13 parallel sessions in 7 working groups were necessary. In total, 86 sessions were organized. The papers are available on the conference-maker site of the 69th IIPF Congress. As usual, a selection of contributed papers and plenary presentations will appear in a special issue of *International Tax and Public Finance* in 2014.

The **Award Committee** for the Peggy and Richard Musgrave Prize and the IIPF Young Economists Awards 2013 consisted of Jorge Martinez-Vazquez (Scientific Co-ordinator), Alfons Weichenrieder (Vice-President of the IIPF) and Motohiro Sato (Hitotsubashi University). The Committee selected the paper “Divided We Reform? Evidence from US Welfare Policies“ by Andreas Bernecker, University of Mannheim, for the **Peggy and Richard Musgrave Prize**, and the papers (1) “Optimal Redistribution and Optimal Monitoring of Labor Effort” by Bas Jacobs, Erasmus University Rotterdam, and Floris Zoutman, Erasmus University Rotterdam and Tinbergen Institute; (2) “Information Trails, Tax Compliance and Development” by Pierre Bachas, University of California, Berkeley, and Anders Jensen, London School of Economics; and (3) “A Tale of Two Deficits: Public Budget Balance of Reserve Currency Countries” by Andreas Steiner, University of Osnabrück for the **IIPF Young Economists Awards 2013**.

For the **BMZ / GIZ Public Policy Awards**, the Award Committee composed by the scientific chairman Jorge Martinez-Vazquez, Alfons Weichenrieder (Vice-President of the IIPF), Motohiro Sato (Hitotsubashi University), and Matthias Witt (GIZ) selected two papers: (1) “Tax Enforcement Effects on Diesel Tax Evasion in Chile. Evidence from a Regression Discontinuity Design” by Claudia Martinez, Universidad de Chile, and Claudio Agostini, Universidad Adolfo Ibañez; and (2) “Unintended consequences of anti-corruption strategies: Public fiscal audits and deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon” by Marco Elías Cisneros Tersitsch, University of Bonn,

Jorge Hargrave, Boston Consulting Group Brazil, and Krisztina Kis-Katos, University of Freiburg.

On Thursday evening, the Welcome Reception was held at the “Villa Comunale” of Taormina. On Friday, the traditional congress excursion led the participants on a trip to the Etna volcano. On Saturday evening, the Conference Dinner was held in the roof of the Villa Diodoro Hotel where participants enjoyed the beautiful view of Taormina. The food, the music and the drinks contributed to turning these events into an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues and chat in an informal atmosphere, and to strengthen relations between IIPF members.

The **Local Organizing Committee** consisted of Pietro Navarra, University of Messina (Chair); Pasquale Catanoso, University Mediterranea of Reggio Calabria; Elena D’Agostino, University of Messina; Isidoro Mazza, University of Catania; Giacomo Pignataro, University of Catania; Giuseppe Sobbrino, University of Messina.

The **Scientific Committee** was chaired by Jorge Martinez-Vazquez (Georgia State University). Its members included Ehtisham Ahmad, London School of Economics; James Alm, Tulane University; Giorgio Brosio, University of Turin; Thiess Buettner, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg; Vidar Christiansen, University of Oslo; Bernard Dafflon, University of Fribourg; Lars Feld, University of Freiburg; Norman Gemmill, Victoria University of Wellington; Timothy Goodspeed, Hunter College, CUNY; Toshihiro Ihuri, University of Tokyo; Santiago Lago-Peñas, Universidade de Vigo; Lili Liu, World Bank; Miguel-Angel López-García, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; Gaetan Nicodeme, Université Libre de Bruxelles; Jukka Pirttila, University of Tampere; Govinda Rao, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, India; Benno Torgler, Queensland University of Technology; Rick van der Ploeg, Oxford University; Stanley Winer, Carleton University; and George Zodrow, Rice University.

We would like to thank the many **supporters** of the Congress: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Department of Economics, University of Messina, Fondazione Bonino Pulejo, Messina, Bank of Italy, World Bank. Finally, we would like to express our deep appreciation to the faculty, staff and student helpers who were instrumental to the success of the 69th IIPF Congress.

December 2013

Elena D’Agostino,
for the Local Organizing Committee

and

Jorge Martinez-Vazquez,
Chair, Scientific Committee