THE STATA NEWS

Stata 8 is shipping

Stata 8 has been shipping since January 6th.

Stata is now faster (17 to 43% for ado programs) and easier to teach and learn, with menus and dialog boxes for virtually every Stata command.

Many of you have upgraded. If you have not, here are a few highlights of the new release.
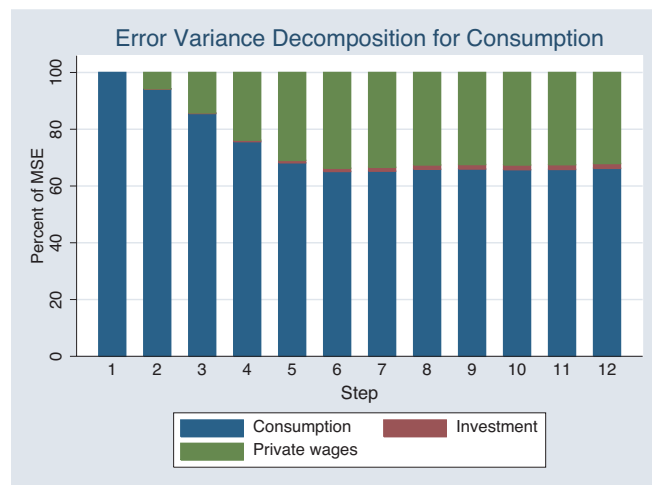
Survival methods

New shared frailties and smoothed hazards for both parametric models (e.g., Weibull, gamma, ...) and semiparametric Cox models. More.

Survey methods

New Heckman selection models, negative binomial models, and generalized negative binomial models. Automatic support for survey design in user-programmed maximum likelihood estimations. More.
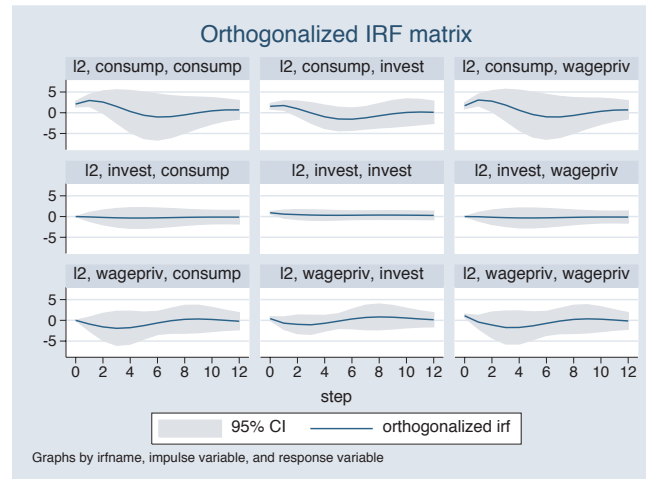
Time-series methods

New multivariate time-series analysis, including extensive support for vector autoregressions (VARs), structural vector autoregressions (SVARs), and their associated impulse–response functions (IRFs) and variance decompositions. More.

Error Variance Decomposition for Consumption

Orthogonalized IRF matrix

Graphs by irfname, impulse variable, and response variable

Panel data

New instrumental variables (IV) estimators for panel data, stochastic frontier models for panel data, and more.

More statistical methods

New MANOVA and MANCOVA. New Ward's method along with weighted-average, centroid and median linkage for cluster analysis. New stochastic frontier models with estimates of technical inefficiency. New simulation-based permutation tests. Much more.

Model analysis

New numerical methods to analyze your models, including nonlinear combinations of estimated parameters with asymptotic standard errors, confidence intervals, and covariances with other nonlinear combinations; and linear and nonlinear functions of predictions with standard errors and confidence intervals. These provide the answer to questions such as, what does my model imply for a particular sample of individuals?

Graphics

All new publication quality graphics with complete control of all characteristics of graphs.

GUI

New top-level menu items—**Data**, **Graphics**, and **Statistics**—that lead to dialog boxes for virtually every Stata command. Or, just type db *command* to launch the dialog box for *command*; for example, type db regress to launch the dialog box for linear regression. Browse a subject-organized help system to explore features, and launch a command's dialog boxes directly from its help file.

Data management

New support for ODBC. New missing values—up to 26 types.

There is much more. Point your web browser to

http://www.stata.com/stata8

to see more of what is new in Stata 8.

Order now

Place your order any way you like:

directly online   at http://www.stata.com/info/order/

by mail   use the enclosed upgrade order form

by phone   800-782-8272 (800-STATAPC) (USA)
                 800-248-8272   (Canada)
                 979-696-4600   (Worldwide)
                 979-696-4601   (FAX)

or by calling your local distributor.

Stata Users' Group meetings

9th annual UK Stata Users' Group meeting

The UK users' group has been meeting annually in London since 1992. This year the scientific organizers are Sophia Rabe-Hesketh, King's College London, and Stephen Jenkins, University of Essex, with the logistics organized by Timberlake Consultants, http://www.timberlake.co.uk, the distributors of Stata in the UK, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal.

The meeting is open to all interested. In past years, people have attended not only from Britain, Ireland, and other European countries, but also from the USA, Australia, and elsewhere. StataCorp will be represented. There will be the usual "wishes and grumbles" session at which you may air your thoughts to Stata developers. There will also be an optional informal meet at a London restaurant on Monday evening (at additional cost).

When: 19th and 20th May 2003

Where: Royal Statistical Society, London

Cost: £69.50 + VAT for both days
          £49.50 + VAT for one day only

        The cost includes lunch, coffee, and tea.

A detailed program is available on the Stata web site at

http://www.stata.com/support/meeting/9uk/programme.html

For further information on registration, please contact Timberlake Consultants at info@timberlake.co.uk.

Dublin Stata Users' Group meeting

The 1st Dublin Stata users' meeting will be held in Trinity College Dublin on the 22nd May 2003.

This is the first announcement and call for offers of presentations at the meeting. The program and (modest) cost of participation will be announced later.

The scientific organizers of the meeting are Ronan Conroy, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and Alan Kelly, Trinity College Dublin, with some logistical help from Timberlake Consultants.

The meeting is open to all—either existing users of Stata or those considering moving from an alternative statistical package. StataCorp developers will be presenting. We hope to arrange an informal get-together at a restaurant in the evening for those who are interested.

Offers of presentations are welcome. These need not be particularly technical in nature and may simply be illustrative of the kinds of problems that Stata is being used to tackle, particularly, talks are welcome on any aspect of Stata use, be it new statistics, data management, or data analysis. The latter could well be in the form of a tutorial or a case exercise in the use of Stata for classroom teaching.

Please email the scientific organizers with proposed talks before 7th April, or call sooner if you wish to discuss the suitability of a proposed talk.

As this is the first opportunity for Stata users in Ireland to meet locally to discuss and share their experience, we do hope that you will be willing to come and share your experience

Confirmation of the program, cost, and venue, and details of how to register will be circulated during the next few weeks.

Scientific organizers: Alan Kelly
                           phone: 01-6081387/2177
                           email: akelly@tcd.ie
                     Ronan Conroy
                           phone: 01-402 2431
                           email: rconroy@rcsi.ie

More info: Additional information can be found at
                http://www.stata.com/support/meeting/1dublin

Latest NetCourse™ schedule

The Stata NetCourses™ have been well-received by participants as is reflected in the following remarks:

- "I thought the material was excellent. I was also impressed by the opportunity the students had to ask questions and the efforts made by the Course Leaders to answer them regardless of how complicated the question."

- "I thought the NetCourse was superior because of the quality of the notes and the emphasis on intuition."

- "The NetCourses are simply great."

A NetCourse is a "lecture" posted to the NetCourse web site on Friday. After reading the lecture over the weekend or on Monday, participants can post questions and comments to the course discussion area. Course Leaders respond to the questions and comments on Tuesday and Thursday. The other participants are encouraged to amplify or otherwise respond to the questions or comments as well. The next lecture is then posted on Friday, and the process repeats. After the last lecture, discussion continues for a few additional weeks until the course concludes.

A brief summary of the upcoming NetCourses is listed below. For more details on how NetCourses work and for course syllabi, visit **http://www.stata.com/info/products/netcourse**.

An enrollment form for the upcoming NetCourses has been enclosed with the Stata News. You can also enroll on-line at **http://www.stata.com/info/products/netcourse/enrollment.html**.

NC-101. Introduction to Stata

NC-101 is designed to take smart, knowledgeable people and turn them into proficient interactive users of Stata. The course covers not just the obvious such as getting data into Stata, but also covers detailed techniques and tricks to make you a powerful Stata user. From web update features and match-merging to using `by` groups and explicit subscripting, many of Stata's key concepts are explored.

Introduction to Stata
Prerequisites
Stata 8
Dates offered
June 20 – August 1
Course Leaders
James Hassell, Allen McDowell, and Derek Wagner
Enrollment Deadlines
June 16
Price
$95

NC-151. Introduction to Stata programming

NC-151 is intended for all Stata users. Through a combination of lectures, example applications, and carefully chosen problems, the course addresses the full range of methods and techniques necessary to be most productive in the Stata environment. Beginning with effective ways to organize both simple and complicated analyses in Stata, NetCourse 151 then moves into programming elements that can be used to work more efficiently. Key programming topics include macro processing, program flow of control, using do-files, programming ado-files, Monte-Carlo simulations, and bootstrapped standard errors.

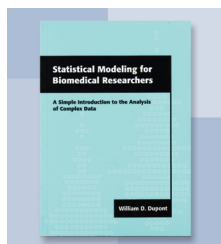| Introduction to Stata programming |
| :---: |
| **Prerequisites** |
| Stata 8; basic knowledge of using Stata interactively |
| **Dates offered** |
| June 20 – August 1 |
| **Course Leaders** |
| Allen McDowell and Kevin Crow |
| **Enrollment Deadlines** |
| June 16 |
| **Price** |
| $125 |

NC-152. Advanced Stata programming

The goal of NC-152 is to turn knowledgeable Stata programmers into Stata programming masters. It is assumed that you know what needs programming and to some extent how. Now, you want to add your own commands to Stata and learn to produce professional-level tools for use by you and others.

NC-152 teaches you how to create and debug new commands that are indistinguishable from the commands in Stata. You will learn how to parse both standard and nonstandard Stata syntax using the intuitive `syntax` command, how to manage and process saved results, how to process `by` groups, and more.

Advanced Stata programming
Prerequisites
Stata 8; NC-151 or equivalent knowledge
Date offered
June 13 – August 1
Course Leaders
Shannon Driver and Brian Poi
Enrollment Deadline
June 9
Price
$150

From the Stata Bookstore

Title: *Statistical Modeling for Biomedical Researchers*
Authors: William D. Dupont
Publisher: Cambridge University Press
Copyright: 2002
Pages: 386

Paperback
ISBN: 0-521-65578-1
Price: $44.75

Hardcover
ISBN: 0-521-82061-8
Price: $119.75

Statistical Modeling for Biomedical Researchers

Statistical Modeling for Biomedical Researchers: A Simple Introduction to the Analysis of Complex Data by William D. Dupont is ideal for a one-semester graduate course in biostatistics and epidemiology for students in the health sciences. It assumes only a basic knowledge of statistics, that obtained from the standard one-semester introductory statistics course. Stata is used extensively throughout the text and, in fact, the author makes a good point when stating that the existence of comprehensive statistical software (such as Stata) makes it possible to introduce computationally complex methods with little or no higher-level mathematics. As a result, the book focuses on concepts and model assumptions, rather than on the underlying mathematics.

One appealing feature of the text is that when Stata output is displayed, the most important elements of the output are highlighted and explained in the notes that follow the output. This helps the reader make real sense of the output by providing the appropriate focus for the problem at hand. The text is also replete with examples featuring real medical data.

A complete table of contents, as well as online ordering information, can be found at **http://www.stata-press.com/books/smbr.html**. You may also order using the enclosed bookstore order form.

Additions to the Stata Bookstore

We have added several books to the Stata Bookstore. Additional information–including the table of contents–on these books, as well as others, can be found in the Stata Bookstore at **http://www.stata.com/bookstore/**. You may order books from the web site or use the enclosed order form.

Title: *Applied Statistics for Software Managers*
Authors: Katrina D. Maxwell
Publisher: Prentice Hall PTR
Copyright: 2002
ISBN: 0-13-041789-0
Pages: 333; paperback
Price: $54.75

Title: *Introduction to Multiple Time Series Analysis*
Authors: Helmut Lütkepohl
Publisher: Springer
Copyright: 1993
ISBN: 0-540-56940-5
Pages: 545; paperback
Price: $69.75

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