

LIS (Cross-National Data Center in Luxembourg) recruits a new Director

LIS Overview

LIS — formerly known as the Luxembourg Income Study — is a cross-national data archive and research center, based in Luxembourg. Since its founding in 1983, LIS' core work has been to acquire, harmonise, and otherwise add value to household survey data, primarily from advanced countries and, recently, several emerging and developing countries, and to make these high-quality resources available to researchers around the world.

Over the last three decades, LIS and its data holdings have grown enormously. The data are currently organised into two databases. The longstanding Luxembourg Income Study (*LIS*) Database, which is focused on unit-record data about income and related variables, includes over 400 datasets from more than 50 high- and middle- income countries, spanning the years 1968 to 2018. The smaller and newer Luxembourg Wealth Study (*LWS*) Database contains unit-record data on households' financial assets and debt. It now includes 60 wealth datasets from 18 countries and covers the period 1995 to 2018.

To protect the confidentiality of the microdata, the *LIS* and *LWS* data can be accessed only by registered users, via a remote-execution system known as *LISSEY*. In addition to data production and provision, LIS offers a wide range of services and products, including user support, teaching packages, training workshops, a Working Papers series, Visiting Scholar programs, a pre- and post-doctoral scholars program, an annual summer training workshop, and an annual research conference. LIS also provides research resources such as its well-known *Key Figures* (harmonised summary indicators for multiple countries and years), an online table-maker and a newly released web-based interactive tool that permits visualising income and wealth distribution indicators, by countries, periods, and socioeconomic characteristics of the population (*DART*). As of this year, LIS also publishes an annual report presenting updated key cross-country distributional indicators, as well as focused analyses based on its databases. These resources are available to all visitors to the *LIS* website.

LIS Leadership History

LIS was founded by a group of US and European scholars, led by American sociologist Lee Rainwater and Luxembourgish psychologist Gaston Schaber. Economist Timothy Smeeding served as first Director. LIS was originally established as a division of CEPS/INSTEAD (today LISER), a research

lisdatacenter.org

François Bourguignon, *President*
Daniele Checchi, *Secretary General*

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institute located in Luxembourg. In 2002, LIS separated from CEPS and became an independent non-profit institution, incorporated in Luxembourg, with Smeeding serving as Director and Rainwater as Research Director.

In 2005, Rainwater retired as LIS Research Director, and was succeeded by Markus Jäntti, an economist based in Sweden. In 2006, Smeeding retired as LIS Director and was succeeded by Janet Gornick, a political economist and sociologist based in the United States.

When Gornick became LIS Director, she continued the practice of establishing a satellite office within her own institution, the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), as had been done by her predecessor. This satellite office is also known as the “United States LIS Office”; as of 2016, this office is embedded in a larger entity known as the Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality. LIS’ core work is based in Luxembourg, whereas satellite offices are venues for locally-oriented teaching, research, public event programming, and fundraising.

In December 2014, after 10 years of service, Markus Jäntti stepped down as LIS Research Director. Janet Gornick continued to serve as overall Director of LIS until 2016, when she assumed directorship of the newly created Stone Center, home to the LIS US satellite office, and Daniele Checchi was appointed as LIS Director.

Daniele Checchi's term as LIS Director expires in the summer 2021. The LIS leadership is grateful for his many contributions during his five years as LIS Director and is sorry to see him depart; he is leaving in order to take up new commitments with the Italian Social Security Agency.

Over the recent years, LIS has added a number of affiliated scholars to its senior ranks who present LIS-related scholarship at national and international meetings, and assist in raising LIS’ visibility and attracting financial sponsors. They presently include Louis Chauvel and Conchita d'Ambrosio at the University of Luxembourg, Janet Gornick, Branko Milanovic and Paul Krugman at CUNY, Frank Cowell at the London School of Economics, Markus Jäntti at Stockholm University, and Daniele Checchi at the University of Milan.

LIS Budget

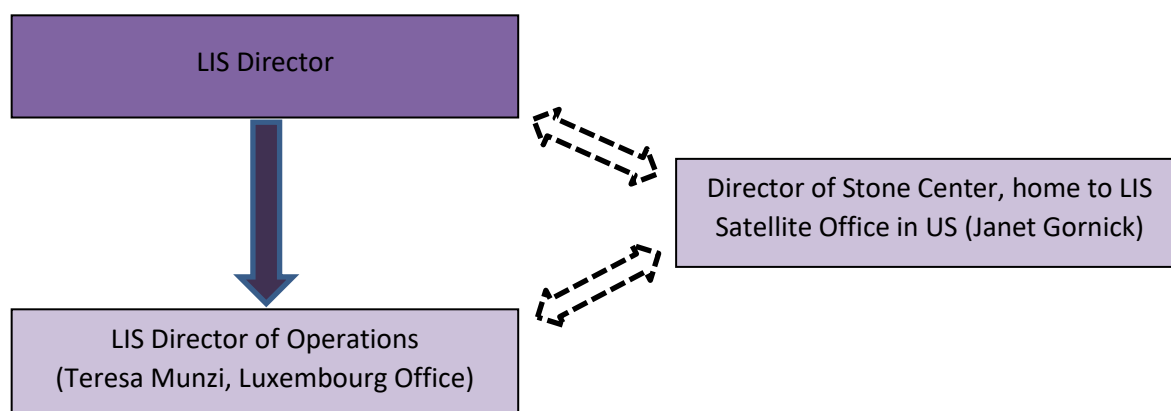
At around one million euros annually, LIS core funding comes from several participating countries' research funding agencies, research institutions, or statistical authorities with direct interest in household survey data; some high-profile supranational institutions also contribute funding. A large portion of LIS’ funding comes from the Luxembourg Ministry of Higher Education and Research, and from two of the country funders: the US National Science Foundation and the UK Economic and Social Research Council. In exchange for financial contributions from countries and organizations, all researchers in those countries and institutions can access *LIS* at no cost. All students, regardless of their home setting, can also access *LIS* at no cost.

This core funding mainly finances the LIS staff in Luxembourg; that staff comprises around 10 persons overall, including data experts, researchers, IT-personnel, and administrative staff.

Research projects outside the LIS' core activities are financed separately, mainly through external grants.

Management Structure of LIS

The management of LIS presently relies on three key senior positions according to the following diagram:



LIS envisions that other satellite offices may be created in the future. The opening of a new satellite office in UK is under discussion. Its status will be the same as that of the US satellite office.

The management of LIS is supervised by a Board and an Executive Committee that meet once a year. The current president is François Bourguignon who succeeded Anthony B. Atkinson in 2017.

LIS Director Position

The LIS Director position offers a senior scholar, with visibility in the research community, the opportunity to lead a dynamic, high-visibility, widely-respected, and ever-evolving institution. Following in the steps of Daniele Checchi and other LIS Directors before him, the new Director will have the chance to guide and shape LIS over a period of several years.

Key functions of the position include: overseeing the work of LIS staff in LIS core activities, exploring and promoting promising expansions of these activities, enhancing LIS' visibility among the general public (e.g., policy makers, media), deepening links with the international social science research community, monitoring the financial equilibrium of the institution, and contributing to fundraising efforts.

The LIS Director position will require a substantial time commitment but it is not intended to be a full-time job. While the Director will receive an annual competitive stipend from LIS based on time committed to the task (see below) and LIS-related travel and lodging costs will be covered in full, the LIS Director is expected to have primary full-time employment in – and receive the majority of her/his salary from – another institution.

The LIS Director will be expected to spend between 4 and 5 days a month on LIS-related tasks, with a substantial part of that time in the Luxembourg LIS Office, ideally around 2 days a month on average over the year, in a way that may depend on the location and the schedule of the Director in his/her primary institution.

Profile of LIS Director (see details in Annex below)

- A researcher with at least 10 years of experience and international academic visibility, preferably located in Europe
- Substantial experience using large national household survey datasets and possibly using LIS data
- Experience in production of statistical indicators based on large household surveys
- Relevant project and research team management experience
- A record of raising financial and other support for projects
- Fluency in English (written and spoken) plus, possibly, French or German

Application for Position and Timeline of Selection Process

Applicants should send their CV, a letter of motivation, and the name of three referees, to François Bourguignon (at search@lisdatacenter.org) who heads the recruitment committee. Additional information on the position may be obtained from members of the search committee, from the LIS Director of Operations, or from the current Director.

Deadline for application: 30 November 2020.

Interviews of short-listed candidates will take place virtually during January 2021.

Final decision to be reached by the search committee some time during February 2021.

The elected candidate is expected to be in post by July 2021.

Search committee:

Serge Allegrezza, STATEC Luxembourg

François Bourguignon, Paris School of Economics

Frank Cowell, London School of Economics

Janet Gornick, Stone Center at City University of New York

Ingrid Woolard, Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Annex: Detailed LIS Director Job Description

1. Responsibility for establishing LIS objectives and goals

In collaboration with the President of the LIS Board, the LIS Executive Committee, and the members of the governing bodies of LIS

2. Responsibility for leading and managing LIS

Leading the management of LIS and the Luxembourg office in close collaboration with the Director of Operations and coordinating with the US satellite office at the CUNY Graduate Center, particularly on issues involving LIS' funding, LIS' image, and LIS sponsored activities in the US.

3. Oversight of the work of the LIS staff as they carry out LIS core activities and responsibilities (in collaboration with the Director of Operations) including:

- acquiring datasets for LIS' databases and setting data production priorities
- attracting and serving data users, i.e., promoting LIS in academic communities including non-university research institutions (e.g., think tanks, national public agencies)
- hiring and managing LIS staff
- monitoring the maintenance and improvements of the remote-execution system
- managing the LIS budget and resources

4. Responsibility for LIS research, teaching, and training activities, including:

- conducting and disseminating her/his own program of LIS-based research
- managing the production of the annual report
- designing and holding international and local workshops and conferences
- administering LIS research awards, and its Visiting Scholar and pre- and post-doctoral programs

5. Responsibility for building and maintaining relations with:

- LIS international stakeholders, i.e., data providers, funders, and board members
- LIS partners and sponsors in Luxembourg

6. Responsibility for fundraising, working closely with the coordinators of the satellite offices and the Director of Operations (e.g., on country and institutional contributions), including:

- raising and maintaining financial and other support for LIS operating costs and special projects from contributing countries, supranational organisations, and other public and private sponsors