

## **Joint 2nd Workshop of the Turkish and Israeli Operations Research Societies**

Following the success of the first Israeli-Turkish workshop in Operations Research (WITOR1), which took place in Istanbul in September 2009, the two OR societies of Turkey (ORST) and Israel (ORSIS) held their second workshop (WITOR2) on October 27-28, 2013 on the Tel Aviv University campus. WITOR2 was conducted in cooperation with the Turkish Israeli Business Council and was funded by generous contributions from ORSIS, Recanati Business School at Tel Aviv University, The Technion, Hebrew University, Bar Ilan University and Ben Gurion University. Additional funding was received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Netafim Company. Nineteen colleagues from Turkey and about twenty five Israelis attended the workshop.

Unlike the first workshop, the second was planned as a dual workshop hosting both research tracks and Industrial/Governmental tracks. Its main purpose was to exchange research ideas and share experiences in applying OR to solving real problems, and to strengthen professional connections between members of the academics and practitioners communities.

The research track focused on theoretical modeling in OR as well as on novel applications of algorithms to specific OR problems and consisted of six research sessions: Game Theory, Humanitarian Supply Chain, Optimization, Transportation, Scheduling and Inventory. Each session was organized by two co-chairs, one from Turkey and the other from Israel and contained four papers - two delivered by our Turkish colleagues, two by Israelis.

The Industrial and Governmental track focused on applications of OR in industrial and governmental settings and highlighted new research challenges to advance the understanding and dealing of practical issues. The two industrial tracks were scheduled at the end of each day and were open to the public. The first industrial track was devoted to the healthcare area and its main theme was how to use data and analytics to improve hospital and primary health care. Officials from Kupat Holim Clalit and Asuta hostitals gave their perspectives from the Israeli side; the general manager of LIV hospitals, one of the largest private hospital chains in Turkey, gave the Turkish perspective. The industrial track in the second day was on Aviation and its main theme was on the impact of the open skies policy on Israel, in which representatives from the airline industry and the aviation authority held a panel to debate the issue.

On the social front, we offered a trip to Jerusalem to the Turkish participants of WITOR2. Even though this required staying an extra night in Israel, almost all the Turkish guests selected to take the tour, which took place on October 29<sup>th</sup>. The highlight of the Jerusalem tour was the visit to the Temple Mount and the visit to the El Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock mosques. In the evening, the Turkish guests were invited to attend a reception in honor of the Turkish Republic Day, which was organized by the Turkish Embassy in Israel.

So all in all, we had a very successful workshop, both scientifically and socially. The feedback we received from our Turkish guests about the workshop were very enthusiastic, many even claimed that the visit to Israel changed their perspective about Israel and that they now appreciate the Israeli position much better. If we were able to achieve this, this is our reward.

See everybody at WITOR3!

