

During the first week of July 2019, I had the privilege to attend the Latin American Summer School on Operations Research (ELAVIO) in Lleida, Spain. There, I could share with around 60 young researchers, mostly from Latin America, but also from other parts of the world. I am currently following a doctoral program at KU Leuven, in Belgium, but I am from Chile and I plan to go back there to develop my career after my PhD. Therefore, an instance to reconnect with the people in Latin America that is and will work in the same field as me is very meaningful. And it is much better if this instance involves such a great experience as it was the ELAVIO 2019.

During the school, we had the opportunity to attend several lectures given by researchers from Latin America, Spain and Portugal. The topics included methodological aspects, such as column generation techniques, support vector machines or robust optimization. On the other hand, other lectures showed experiences in the region of applications of Operations Research in different fields, such as in agriculture, supply chain management, sports scheduling, among many others. Additionally, there were two poster sessions in which we were able to share our current work with each other. It was a great opportunity to receive questions and comments which are very helpful for future research. It is also very interesting to see the many different topics that are being studied by our future colleagues and to learn more about it.

Of course, the summer school is not only about study and work. It is a wonderful chance of meeting new people that are working in the same field as you and to meet old friends from abroad. I had the opportunity of attending a previous version of ELAVIO in the year 2017, which was held in Argentina, while I was studying a master in Chile. It was very nice to meet again with some people that I meet there. The school organized several instances to relax and have a better connection with each other. These included two guided tours to beautiful places in Lleida. We had the chance of visiting a medieval castle with a very rich history and the beautiful Seu Vella, or old cathedral, which dominates this city and is its most emblematic monument. Additionally, the last night a dinner and party was organized, in which we had a lot of fun.

In conclusion, the ELAVIO 2019 in Lleida was a wonderful experience in which I learn a lot, I got to know amazing people and I could share my work in a relaxed atmosphere with other young researchers in my field. I am sure I will meet again many of them during my career in Operations Research and hopefully we will also be able to collaborate with each other. I want to sincerely thank to the team that made a great job in organizing this school and to IFORS, ALIO and EURO for the grant that I received. I hope that these summer schools continue to be organized for a long time and that many more young researchers have the opportunity to attend and live the great experience that I lived.

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