

# Opgave A NAW 5/5 nr. 1 maart 2004

Jaap Spies

March 2004

## The problem

### Introduction

For every integer  $n > 2$  prove that

$$\sum_{j=1}^{n-1} \left( \frac{1}{n-j} \sum_{k=j}^{n-1} \frac{1}{k} \right) < \frac{\pi^2}{6}$$

### Solution

Let

$$s_{n-1} = \sum_{j=1}^{n-1} \left( \frac{1}{n-j} \sum_{k=j}^{n-1} \frac{1}{k} \right) \quad (1)$$

We have  $s_1 = 1$ ,  $s_2 = 1\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $s_3 = \frac{49}{36} = \frac{5}{4} + \frac{1}{9}$  and  $s_4 = s_3 + \frac{1}{4^2}$ .  
We shall prove the following

#### Proposition

$$s_n = s_{n-1} + \frac{1}{n^2} \quad \text{for } n > 1 \quad (2)$$

From this proposition follows:

$$s_n = 1 + \frac{1}{2^2} + \frac{1}{3^2} + \dots + \frac{1}{n^2} = \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k^2} \quad (3)$$

And we are finished, because  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k^2} = \frac{\pi^2}{6}$ , we have  $s_{n-1} < s_n < \frac{\pi^2}{6}$ .  
*Note: this is true for  $n \geq 2$ .*

Now we prove the proposition.

Let  $A_{n-1} = (a_{ij}) = (\frac{1}{n-i} \cdot \frac{1}{j})$  with  $1 \leq i \leq j \leq n-1$  and  $B_n = (b_{ij}) = (\frac{1}{n+1-i} \cdot \frac{1}{j})$  with  $1 \leq i \leq j \leq n$ .

Then

$$s_{n-1} = \sum_{1 \leq i \leq j \leq n-1} a_{ij} \quad \text{and} \quad s_n = \sum_{1 \leq i \leq j \leq n} b_{ij}$$

Comparing  $a_{ij}$  with  $b_{ij}$  we see  $b_{ij} = a_{i-1,j}$  for  $2 \leq i \leq j \leq n-1$ .

So

$$s_n = s_{n-1} - \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} a_{ii} + \sum_{j=1}^n b_{1j} + \sum_{i=1}^n b_{in} - b_{nn}$$

We can write  $a_{ii} = \frac{1}{(n-i)i} = \frac{1}{n(n-i)} + \frac{1}{ni}$ , so

$$\sum_{i=1}^{n-1} a_{ii} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} \frac{1}{n-i} + \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} \frac{1}{i} = \frac{1}{n} H_{n-1} + \frac{1}{n} H_{n-1} = \frac{2}{n} H_{n-1}$$

where  $H_{n-1}$  is the  $(n-1)$ -th harmonic number.

Further we know

$$\sum_{j=1}^n b_{1j} = \sum_{i=1}^n b_{in} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k} = \frac{1}{n} H_n$$

Now

$$s_n = s_{n-1} - \frac{2}{n} H_{n-1} + \frac{1}{n} H_n + \frac{1}{n} H_n - \frac{1}{n^2}$$

and hence

$$s_n = s_{n-1} + \frac{2}{n} (H_n - H_{n-1}) - \frac{1}{n^2} = s_{n-1} + \frac{2}{n} \cdot \frac{1}{n} - \frac{1}{n^2}$$

This concludes the proof of the proposition

$$s_n = s_{n-1} + \frac{1}{n^2} \tag{4}$$