

# the Survey Statistician

The Newsletter of the International Association of Survey Statisticians

No. 58

July 2008



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF SURVEY STATISTICIANS



*International Statistical Institute*

INTERNATIONALE  
ASSOCIATION  
DES STATISTICIENS  
D'ENQUETES



*Institut International de Statistique*



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*The Survey Statistician* is published twice a year in English and French by the International Association of Survey Statisticians and distributed to all its members. Information for membership in the Association or change of address for current members should be addressed to:

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# Letter from the President

We are pleased to announce that on February 2008 the National Statistics Institute of France (INSEE) has renewed the agreement to provide the IASS with support for its Secretariat in France for three years. This invaluable support from INSEE shall enable the continued smooth functioning of our secretariat, and provides the platform from which several services are offered to our membership. We gratefully acknowledge INSEE's contribution to furthering the goals of our association.

The IASS Secretariat has recently printed and distributed an updated directory of the IASS membership. If you are a member and have not received one, please get in touch with Claude Olivier (see e-mail address for the Secretariat above or on the IASS website) and update your contact details to enable us to send you a copy and to keep in touch.

IASS is currently busy preparing the programme of short courses to be offered before and after the ISI session in South Africa, in 2009. Please keep an eye to The Survey Statistician and the IASS website, where further details will be posted as the programme evolves. Steve Heeringa, our Scientific Secretary, will be coordinating this activity, in close liaison with the Local Hosts in South Africa.

Prof. Ray Chambers from Wollongong University has agreed to represent IASS on the restructured ISI Publications Committee, led by Karen Kafadar.

IASS webmaster Eric Rancourt has agreed to represent IASS in the ISI project team charged with redesigning the ISI website.

Cynthia Clark has agreed to chair the IASS nominations committee, which she is now actively forming.

Under the leadership of Don Royce, a committee of council members including Geoff Lee (Australia) and Sarah Nusser (US) has been formed to review the services provided to the membership. If you have any ideas or comments about this topic, please let them know (contact

addresses on the IASS website).

IASS is keen to welcome new members, both individual and institutional. The registration form for individual members can be found in our website (<http://isi.cbs.nl/iass/>). For organizations wishing to join, please contact our Executive Director, Michel Peronnet (see address above).

Preparations continue for the IPMs organised or co-sponsored by IASS during the 2009 meetings in Durban under the leadership of council member Leyla Mohadjer. The full list of topics for IPM sessions appeared in the September issue of ISI Newsletter, and is available from the ISI website at (<http://isi.cbs.nl/Nlet/NLet073.htm>). The ISI 2009 website is now up and running, <http://www.statssa.gov.za/isi2009/Index.aspx>, and the instructions, rules and guidelines for invited paper preparation are already available from the website.

We are keen to hear on proposals for other activities that we could sponsor or help organize as satellite to the ISI session in South Africa, as well as any others where you feel the IASS could have a positive involvement.

Best wishes,

Pedro Silva  
[pedronsilva@gmail.com](mailto:pedronsilva@gmail.com)

## IASS Program for the 57<sup>th</sup> ISI Session, Durban 2009

### Invited Program Meetings (IPMs)

The organizers of the IPM sessions continue their efforts in finalizing the list of speakers and discussants for their sessions during the 2009 meetings in Durban. The following table provides a current list of the IASS organized or co-sponsored sessions. Please note that the process of planning the IPM sessions for 2009 is ongoing and there have been some late updates to the status of the sessions that are not reflected in this table. The organizers' goal is to create a good balance in terms of covering various aspects of the main topic

within each session. In addition, they have tried to create sessions with speakers and discussants coming from a good geographic spread (including transition and developing countries) and have a good gender and age representation. In many cases sessions that are still open have received proposals for papers and discussants. However, these proposals are not accepted until it is confirmed that a better demographic (and topic) distribution can not be achieved.

IASS Invited Paper Meetings for the 57th ISI Session* Durban, South Africa			
Session number	Invited Paper Meeting Title	Organizer	Status
		Name, country, email	
IPM16	Comparing Poverty and Prices Across National Boundaries - the ICP Programmed and Poverty PPPs	Fred Vogel, <a href="mailto:fvogel@worldbank.org">fvogel@worldbank.org</a>	IASS to contribute one paper to this session
IPM27	Uncertainty in Statistical Matching	Mauro Scanu (Italy), ISTAT, <a href="mailto:scanu@istat.it">scanu@istat.it</a> Tomas Aluja-Banet (Spain) <a href="mailto:tomas.aluja@upc.edu">tomas.aluja@upc.edu</a>	IASS has contributed one paper to this session
IPM47	Designing and Conducting Surveys in Adverse Conditions (tentative title)	Michael Colledge (Australia) <a href="mailto:Michael.Colledge@gmail.com">Michael.Colledge@gmail.com</a>	Session has two confirmed papers
IPM48	Sampling and Estimation Issues in Health Statistics	Wilton Bussab, Brazil, <a href="mailto:bussab@fgvsp.br">bussab@fgvsp.br</a> or <a href="mailto:wilton.bussab@fgv.br">wilton.bussab@fgv.br</a>	Session being organized
IPM49	Measuring and Assessing Respondent Load	Richard Penny (New Zealand) <a href="mailto:richardpenny@stats.govt.nz">richardpenny@stats.govt.nz</a>	Session has two contributed papers
IPM50	New Developments in Monitoring and Controlling Field Data Collection Activities	Dina Neiger (Australia) <a href="mailto:dina.neiger@abs.gov.au">dina.neiger@abs.gov.au</a>	Session organized
IPM51	Recent Developments in Survey Methodology Research - Design and Estimation	Paul Smith (United Kingdom) <a href="mailto:paul.smith@ons.gov.uk">paul.smith@ons.gov.uk</a>	Session has two confirmed papers
IPM52	Outliers in Complex Sample Surveys	Julie Gershunskaya (United States) <a href="mailto:Gershunskaya.Julie@bls.gov">Gershunskaya.Julie@bls.gov</a> , and Partha Lahiri (United States) <a href="mailto:plahiri@survey.umd.edu">plahiri@survey.umd.edu</a>	Session organized
IPM53	Nonresponse Bias in Surveys	Jelke Bethlehem (Netherlands) <a href="mailto:jbtm@cbs.nl">jbtm@cbs.nl</a>	Session has three confirmed papers
IPM54	New Developments in Modeling and Analysis of Survey Data	Jay Breidt (United States) <a href="mailto:jbreidt@stat.colostate.edu">jbreidt@stat.colostate.edu</a>	Session has three confirmed papers
IPM55	New Methodologies in Sampling Rare and Elusive Populations	Sanghamitra Pal (India) <a href="mailto:mitra_pal@yahoo.com">mitra_pal@yahoo.com</a>	Session organized
IPM56	Modeling Economic Data to Produce Small Area Estimation	Mike Hidioglou (Canada) <a href="mailto:Mike.Hidioglou@statcan.ca">Mike.Hidioglou@statcan.ca</a>	Session organized

IASS Invited Paper Meetings for the 57th ISI Session*			
Durban, South Africa			
Session number	Invited Paper Meeting Title	Organizer	Status
		Name, country, email	
IPM57	Integrated Household Surveys - Design, Implementation, and Estimation	Denise Silva (United Kingdom and Brazil) <a href="mailto:Denise.Silva@ons.gsi.gov.uk">Denise.Silva@ons.gsi.gov.uk</a>	Session organized
IPM58	Issues In Price Index Methodology and Measurement	Sylvie Gauthier (Canada) <a href="mailto:Sylvie.Gauthier@statcan.ca">Sylvie.Gauthier@statcan.ca</a>	Session organized
IPM59	Dissemination of Survey Results to Public	Tommy Wright (United States) <a href="mailto:twright@census.gov">twright@census.gov</a>	Session organized
IPM60	What Role, If Any, Should Weights Play in the Analysis of Survey Data	Phil Kott (United States) <a href="mailto:phil_kott@nass.usda.gov">phil_kott@nass.usda.gov</a>	Session organized
IPM67	Models of Modern Data and Metadata Systems	Steven Keuning (Germany) <a href="mailto:steven.keuning@ecb.int">steven.keuning@ecb.int</a>	IASS has contributed one paper to this session
IPM97	Estimating Demographic Statistics With Flawed Vital Registration Systems	Carla AbouZahr WHO <a href="mailto:abouzahr@who.int">abouzahr@who.int</a>	IASS has contributed one paper to this session

### Update of 2009 IASS Short Course Program

IASS is busy finalizing the program of short courses to be offered before and after the 2009 ISI session in Durban, South Africa. In response to a call for proposals published in the January 2008 issue of the Survey Statistician, IASS members have submitted several proposals for new short course offerings. The IASS executive is reviewing five new proposals along with eight traditional short courses topics such as sampling, variance estimation, editing and imputation and survey quality that have been presented in association with past biennial meetings of the ISI. Special emphasis will be placed on short courses that IASS members from African countries feel are needed and would most benefit from attending. We have consulted with Statistics South Africa and the local organizers, seeking their advice on the choice of course topics. We expect to finalize the 2009 short course program by 1 August 2008 and will post details on the course offerings, course times and locations and registration details on the IASS website. Members who are planning their travel itinerary for the 2009 ISI meetings in Durban should

note that in order to control the costs of the short course venues, a majority of the courses are likely to be held in South

African government training facilities in Pretoria. Since many international attendees to the 2009 Durban meetings will be connecting through the nearby Johannesburg airport, we do not expect that offering the short courses in Pretoria before and after the official ISI meeting dates will pose an unrealistic burden on those of us who will participate in the short course offerings. Please keep an eye to the IASS website, where further details will be posted as the program evolves. Steve Heeringa, IASS Scientific Secretary, will be coordinating this activity, in close liaison with the Local Hosts in South Africa. If at any time you have questions or concerns about the 2009 IASS short courses, please do not hesitate to contact Steve directly at [sheering@isr.umich.edu](mailto:sheering@isr.umich.edu).

Steve Heeringa, June 19, 2008



## IASS local representatives – our presence closer to you

The IASS has a well established network of **Local Representatives** who are the relays of the Council in their country. Their activity is co-ordinated by one of the Vice-Presidents (i.e. currently by this author) and backed by the IASS Secretariat who provides them with the needed documents and materials: lists of addresses, IASS brochures, etc. (see below, duties of the IASS Secretariat, under “Membership database”, “Calls for dues”, “Cochran-Hansen prize”).

Below is a list of the Local Representatives' permanent tasks / roles.

- Advertise the IASS, its membership and activities to non-members.
- Contribute to recruitment of new individual and institutional members with a view to broadening and rejuvenating IASS membership.
- Help the Secretariat to update members' addresses in order to keep IASS membership database as current as possible.
- Collect the dues from members in their country and send a global cheque to IASS Office. This applies only to countries with non-convertible currency where the members cannot pay in Euros or US Dollars, or when bank overheads are too high. In such cases, the Local Representative will have to find a way for sending the money to IASS Secretariat – UNESCO bonds, bank orders in Euros or US\$ account. Fortunately, the number of such situations is currently small.
- Draft country reports for *The Survey Statistician* with news about survey-related activities taking place in the country. These shall be sent to John Kovar at [kovar@statcan.ca](mailto:kovar@statcan.ca) copying the author ( [Seppo.Laaksonen@Helsinki.Fi](mailto:Seppo.Laaksonen@Helsinki.Fi) ).

- Cochran-Hansen prize (for local representatives in developing and transition countries):

- assist the IASS in advertising the prize within local Universities and other survey taking institutions;
- personally and directly advertise the prize to young eligible statisticians.

Local representatives may also be contacted for other reasons including suggestions for nominations to the IASS council and committees. They can contribute to survey world in various other forms.

The co-ordinator of the local representatives is charged with maintaining and updating the list of these persons. This task is made harder since not all local representatives inform about their new contact addresses, and hence they cannot be contacted. Despite concerted efforts in recent months, there are still many countries where no local representatives are appointed or active. The table below includes all local representatives which have been successfully contacted until May 2008. Your help would be much appreciated to update and increase this list by:

- a) Providing your updated contact details, if your name is listed with status *unclear*;
- b) Letting me know if you do not intend to maintain this role, and offering suggestions of possible replacements (with their contact details);
- c) Proposing yourself to act in this role, if your country is missing from the list – just send me your full contact details.

Please feel free to contact me about these issues and any related matter. Look forward to keeping in touch with our local representatives.

Seppo Laaksonen  
Vice-president  
Email: [Seppo.Laaksonen@Helsinki.Fi](mailto:Seppo.Laaksonen@Helsinki.Fi)

**List of the IASS country representatives by 15 May, 2008**

<b>Country (Region)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Status</b>
Algeria	M. Nacer-Eddine Hammouda	Active
Australia	Mr. Paul Sutcliffe	Active
Brazil	Dr. Marcel de Toledo Vieira	Active
Canada	Mr. John Kovar	Active
Cuba	Mr. Luis Carlos Silva	Active
Estonia	Dr. Imbi Traat	Active
Finland	Mr. Paavo Väisänen	Active
Germany	Prof. Ralf Münnich	Active
Guinée	Mme Fatoumata Danfaca	Active
Israel	Luisa Kadun Burck	Active
Korea	Dr. Inho Park	Active
Latvia	Dr. Janis Lapins	Active
Lithuania	Dr. Danute Krapavickaite	Active
Madagascar	Mme Julia Rachel Ravelosoa	Active
Netherlands	Mr. Jos de Ree	Active
New Zealand	Mr. John Créquer	Active
Norway	Mr. Øyvin Kleven	Active
Philippines	Mr. Gervacio G. Selda, Jr.	Active
Poland	Dr. Tomasz Zadło	Active
Spain	Ms. Dolores Lorca	Active
Spain (Basque	Mrs. Cristina Prado Valle	Active
Sweden	Dr. Peter Lundquist	Active
Tanzania	Mr. Michael P. Sindato	Active
Turkey	Prof. Oztas Ayhan	Active
United Kingdom	Prof. Peter Lynn	Active
United States	Dr. Howard Hogan	Active
Argentina	Mme Alicia Masautis	Unclear
Belgium	Dr. (Mr.) Camille Vanderhoeft	Unclear
China	Mr. Huang Langhui	Unclear
Czech Republic	Mr. Vaclav Cermak	Unclear
Denmark	Mr. Peter Linde	Unclear
France	M. Benoît Riandey	Unclear
Hungary	Mr. Gergely Fraller	Unclear
Italy	Prof. Claudio Quintano	Unclear
Mauritania	M. Sidna Ould N'Dah	Unclear
Mexico	Mr. Miguel Cervera	Unclear
Portugal	Mr. Paulo Jorge Gomes	Unclear
Switzerland	Mr. Philippe Eichenberger	Unclear

# Country Reports

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## Algeria

Naccer-eddine Hammouda

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Algeria is getting ready for its fifth population and housing census (**recensement général de la population et de l'habitat** (RGPH)) in April 2008. Symbolically, this operation will be launched on its national science day (April 16). This year, for the first time, questions have been included about international migration. There are no methodological innovations, but a community survey will be carried out at the same time as the RGPH. The plan is to switch to a quinquennial census cycle, which means that the next one would be in 2013.

**Cooperation with international institutions** has increased since 2000. Several surveys have been carried out in this connection: the MICS2 in 2000, the family health survey in 2002, the LSMS survey in 2005, the MICS 3 in 2006, the national survey on violence against women in 2006, the national survey on the socio-economic integration of women in 2005, two surveys on child labour in 2003 and 2004, and two surveys on the investment climate in 2002 and 2007.

It is certain that the national statistics system has benefited from this cooperation. However, it serves as a reminder of several factors, such as the pre-eminence of the objective of international comparability and the multiplicity of objectives, which can have a negative impact on the readability and/or reliability of results.

One example is estimating the infant mortality rate (this observation also applies to maternal mortality). What is the margin of error for the estimators obtained through the survey of

households on relatively small samples (between 5,000 and 30,000 households)? Whereas, on the other hand, we have administrative statistics, but imperfect ones. In this case, what would be the optimal sampling strategy for measuring the phenomenon in question? Would it be more opportune for vital statistics services to estimate the coverage rates for births and deaths? When certain rare phenomena appear in some areas and not others, would it not be best to use survey plans that can better measure the phenomenon where it appears? For such cases, would it not be time to develop sub-national surveys, even in a context of international cooperation?

For additional information, please contact  
Nacer-eddine Hammouda  
[nacereddine.hammouda@ensae.org](mailto:nacereddine.hammouda@ensae.org)

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## Canada

John Kovar

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A key component of the Paperwork Burden Reduction Initiative in Canada is the **Survey of Regulatory Compliance Cost** project which was first carried out in 2006 to measure time spent and costs incurred in 2005 by small- and medium-sized businesses to meet key regulatory requirements that are the responsibility of various levels of government.

The project was actually two related surveys. The first survey targeted businesses who reported on the time and cost associated with their own efforts and with those of their employees to comply with government regulations. They also reported on costs incurred through hiring external service providers to comply on their behalf. The



second survey targeted the service providers in order to accurately break down the time spent in completing various regulatory requirements, on accounting activities, and by provision of financial advice on behalf of business clients. This survey is to be repeated every three years and preparations are underway for the 2008/2009 survey. The 2005 reference year survey estimated that costs to companies of complying with key government information obligations, including mandatory surveys, amounted to \$1.53 billion. Of these expenditures, 61% or \$943 million bought services of external service providers such as accountants, income tax specialists and payroll service providers. Contact Steve Matthews at [steve.matthews@statcan.ca](mailto:steve.matthews@statcan.ca) for more information.

In 2006, Statistics Canada conducted for the first time in ten years a **survey on environmental practices in households**. The 2006 Households and the Environment Survey (HES), conducted as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey, produced data on household environmental practices and behaviours, including water consumption and conservation, energy consumption and home heating, use of gasoline-powered equipment, use of pesticides and fertilizers, recycling, composting and waste disposal, air and water quality, and transportation decisions. The initial results were released to the public in November 2006. A complete survey report was published in July 2007.

With the success of the 2006 survey, the following year we conducted the 2007 Households and the Environment Survey, this time as a supplement to the Canadian Community Health Survey. A supplement on home energy consumption was added to the 2007 HES to collect data on the amount of electricity, natural gas, oil and other combustibles used in Canadian homes, as well as on the associated costs. Data collection took place from October 2007 to February 2008, with approximately 22,000 respondents for the main survey and 10,000 respondents for the supplement. Preliminary results will be released in the fall of 2008. For more information please contact [Yves.Belanger@statcan.ca](mailto:Yves.Belanger@statcan.ca)

The **Monthly Survey of Food Services and Drinking Places** is conducted to provide monthly estimates on the value of sales and the number of locations for restaurants, caterers, and drinking places, by province and territory and by industry at the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) four-digit level.

This survey is the outcome of a recent complete redesign of the Monthly Restaurants, Caterers and Taverns Survey. Among the elements justifying such a redesign are: the desire to increase the population coverage to include non-employer businesses; to use a more efficient institution of collection agreements with several large restaurant chains; and the potential for a greater use of tax data.

The new sample design consists of two components: first, in domains with a large number of units, tax data is predominantly used. More specifically, for simple structured businesses, tax data from the previous month are adjusted to the current month through a ratio adjustment approach which addresses the timeliness issue of tax data. As for complex structured businesses, a traditional stratified survey design was put in place. The second component of the new sample design consists of domains with a smaller number of units for which a ratio adjusted tax data approach would not be as efficient. Instead, a traditional stratified design is used for these domains. Chains with collection agreements were incorporated into these two components as part of specific take-all strata. On top of the sampling design, edit and imputation strategies were improved to better take advantage of tax data. Finally, backcasting was applied to past published series in order to connect with the new survey estimates and reflect the change in population coverage and other impacts of the redesign.

Results from the redesigned survey were first published in February 2008 for the November 2007 reference month. The incorporation of collection agreements and the greater use of tax data resulted in a considerable reduction in response burden; this is directly reflected in that units affected by these improvements now contribute approximately 80% of the overall monthly estimate of sales. For more

information, please contact François Brisebois, Chief Methodologist, Business Survey Methods Division, Statistics Canada, at [francois.brisebois@statcan.ca](mailto:francois.brisebois@statcan.ca).

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**Germany**  
Ralf Münnich

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On January 1st 2008, a new **Priority Programme on Survey Methodology** (PPSM) was started in Germany. The PPSM is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) for six years. Within the first funding period, in addition to the core of the PPSM nine projects will be supported. The PPSM focuses on two basic topics: improving survey methodology in Germany and setting up a PhD programme. It is coordinated at the University of Bremen. The steering committee consists of Uwe Engel, University of Bremen, Gert G. Wagner, GSOEP/DIW Berlin, and Rainer Schnell, University of Constance.

The PPSM aims at advancing the survey design in such a way that it masters better than before relevant sources of, for instance, nonresponse and measurement error. In addition to that it accepts the challenges of conducting survey research which arise from the need of keeping pace with social change and technological progress. While social change is likely to change the basis of survey cooperation, progress creates options which are widely used in practice even if relevant basic research is still a rare commodity. A prime example is the widespread implementation of "Online Access Panels" by which research institutes react to the technical options of the Internet. Therefore one of the major objectives of the PPSM is the generation of an Access Panel to study self-selection as well as mode and response effects. Further challenges add, for instance an increasing loss of the standard access for telephone surveys by the trend to be accessible exclusively by mobile phones.

Correspondingly, all large fields of survey methodology appear on the agenda, survey non-response, survey measurement, survey mode, survey statistics, variance estimation, and the research questions located therein and in their areas of intersection. For a detailed description of the programme and the

projects of the 1st funding period, the interested reader may visit the PPSM web site at <http://www.survey-methodology.de> or contact Uwe Engel at [uengel@empas.uni-bremen.de](mailto:uengel@empas.uni-bremen.de).

In 2011, Germany will participate at the next **European Census round**. This will be the first Census after the reunification. The last full population census was held in West Germany in 1987 and in East Germany in 1981. The **Census 2011 in Germany** will be performed as a register-based Census for the first time in Germany. As data source, the population register will be consulted. In order to correct for possible over- and undercounts in the population register an additional sample of approximately 7 – 9% will be drawn. This sample will also provide information on additional variables such as employment and education. Additionally, detailed questionnaires will be sent to approximately 17.5 million property owners of the country's buildings and dwellings in order to improve the coverage of the Census.

The new type of Census in Germany facilitates the needs for research on sampling designs and estimation strategies to gain efficient estimates on small area level. The new system, tested by large scale surveys in the years 2001 to 2003 (Census test), will be further developed by the research teams from University of Trier (Ralf Münnich) and GESIS-ZUMA (Siegfried Gabler). The aim of the research for the German Census is to develop a methodology which allows to gain accurate estimates of population figures and additional variables on a regional and global level as well as on contextual subgroups. The methodology to be considered will comprise classical as well as small area estimation methods and will also cover dual system techniques.

For more information on the German Census 2011 please contact Stefan Schweinert-Albinus at [stefan.schweinert@destatis.de](mailto:stefan.schweinert@destatis.de) or visit the Census homepage at <http://www.zensus2011.de>. Further information on the Census sampling project can be obtained from Ralf Münnich at [muennich@uni-trier.de](mailto:muennich@uni-trier.de).

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**New Zealand**  
John Créquer

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In February 2007 Statistics New Zealand launched an experimental series based on **aggregated electronic card transactions**. These transactions arise from the payment for goods and services using credit, debit and charge cards where the card is present and telephone or internet transactions where the card is not present. The data are a census of electronic transactions in New Zealand. The series has been published as experimental to encourage feedback from users. The publication was made possible by the co-operation of the private companies involved in switching the transactions between the merchants, the purchaser and the banks. It is significant in that it is a use of secondary or administrative data from a private source. The monthly releases are available on our website <http://www.stats.govt.nz/products-and-services/info-releases/electronic-card-transactions-info-releases.htm>. For further information please contact Blair Cardno at [Blair.Cardno@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Blair.Cardno@stats.govt.nz)

In March 2008 a further release of **Business Demography statistics** was made. This release made use of the longitudinal business frame. Business surveys make extensive use of the business frame for selection and re-selection. A few years ago a longitudinal business frame was developed for use in linking employer and employee tax data together. The use of this longitudinal frame in business demography has increased the range of statistics available in line with international standards developed by Eurostat and the OECD. Further information is available on the website or please contact Mathew Page at [Mathew.Page@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Mathew.Page@stats.govt.nz)

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**Poland**  
Tomasz Zadło

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The **labour market and the social exclusion** situation in Malopolska region (one of the voivodships in Poland) were analyzed by the consortium of four partners: Cracow's University of Economics, Jagiellonian University, Regional Labour Office and

Regional Statistical Office in the project financed by the European Union (European Social Fund) in years 2005-2007. The main task of this project was to conduct a representative survey to obtain an overview of demographic, economic and social situation of inhabitants of this region (including their education perspectives, employment, inequality and poverty). Before the main survey a pretest and a pilot survey were organized. The main survey took place in the first quarter of 2007 and the primary sample unit was dwelling. A sample of household-representatives was interviewed face-to-face. The entire sampling frame (based on 2002 population census in Poland) was divided into 58 strata. Each stratum was divided into clusters from which two were drawn at random (of size not less than 1500 dwellings). From each of the sampled clusters 35 addresses were drawn at the next stage, and finally, person in a household was selected according to Kish's table. In total, 5180 addresses were selected with a response rate of 56.3%. The sampling procedure was supported by SPSS Complex Sample and the SPSS Data Entry was used to enter data from questionnaires. For more information, please contact the author of the survey description given above: Jolanta Perek-Bialas, [jolanta.perek-bialas@uj.edu.pl](mailto:jolanta.perek-bialas@uj.edu.pl) and see reports (in Polish) on the web page: [www.rynekpracy.msap.pl](http://www.rynekpracy.msap.pl)

In 2008 the following **new surveys** are to be conducted by the Polish Central Statistical Office:

- survey of companies with shares in foreign firm,
- survey concerning careers of people with PhD degree,
- survey of agriculture economic accounts,
- survey of prices of services providers,
- survey of prices of telecommunication equipment and devices,
- renewed survey of population flows due to employment,
- survey on household participation in recreation and sport activities,
- survey of foundations, associations and churches,
- preparation for the agricultural census in 2010.

XXVII **Multivariate Statistical Analysis Conference** will take place in Łódź on 3-5 November 2008. For details please contact the organizers at [msa@uni.lodz.pl](mailto:msa@uni.lodz.pl)

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**Vietnam**  
Nguyen Quoc Anh

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The 2005 **Vietnam Population and Aids Indicator Survey** (VPAIS) is a nation wide survey calling for a nationally representative sample of approximately 7200 women-completed, and 6500 men-completed interviews. The survey targets the respondents between the ages of 15 and 49. It is designed to provide information on their sexual behaviors, their use of contraception, their knowledge and their attitude towards HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. The survey estimates will be reported for the country as a whole, for urban and rural areas, and for 7 study domains.

The sampling frame used for VPAIS is the Population Change Survey sample (PCS) which was constructed from the 1999 Population and Housing Census (PHC). The

sample for VPAIS will be a stratified sample selected in two stages from the PCS. Stratification is achieved by separating every reporting domain into urban and rural areas. Therefore the 7 domains are stratified to 14 sampling strata. Samples will be selected independently in every stratum, by a two stage selection. Implicit stratifications will be achieved at each of the lower geographical administrative levels by sorting the sampling frame and by using a probability proportional to size selection at the first stage of sampling. Sampling probabilities will be calculated separately for each sampling stage and for each cluster.

Because of the non-proportional allocation of the sample to the seven reporting domains, sampling weights will be required for any analysis using VPAIS data to ensure the actual representativity of the sample at the national level. More details on the design can be obtained from Nguyen Quoc Anh, Director of Population Information Center, General Population Office, Ministry of Health at [cpfc@hn.vnn.vn](mailto:cpfc@hn.vnn.vn).

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- ◆ Please do not forget to renew your membership.
- ◆ The payment of dues and subscriptions must be made either in Euros or in U.S. dollars.

## Articles

### Simple random sampling – for benchmarking but not for use?

Leslie Kish developed the concept of design effect (DEFF), that is, the ratio of the true variance of a statistic (taking the complex sample design into account) to the variance of the statistic for a simple random sample (srs) with the same number of cases. In social surveys, this ratio often receives a value higher than one, since these surveys often make use of a multistage sampling design with clusters as primary sampling units. Naturally, DEFF depends on survey variables behind each statistic, too.

Looking at the DEFF formula srs would appear to be superior to any alternative design from the efficiency point of view and thus be recommendable. Naturally, srs is at least in face-to-face surveys far more costly than cluster-based multi-stage design and hence is rarely used. However, it is not hard to find srs designs in country-level surveys. My examples in this note are from the European Social Survey (ESS) that is an academically-driven set of social surveys designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behavior patterns of its diverse populations ([www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)).

More than 30 countries have participated in the ESS, which started in 2002. Nine countries, including all Nordic countries, have used srs at least in one round. All ESS designs have been reviewed by the so-called sampling expert panel in which I have been one of four members (see our report from round 1, Lynn et al. 2007). Some sampling

plans have been demanding to review but those based on srs have been easy for our group to approve of.

There are several requirements for the ESS sample designs. One concerns the sample size. Our criterion here has been that the effective sample size (sample size divided by DEFF) should be at least 1500 for standard countries. Naturally, the effective sample size will have to be predicted or anticipated at the sampling design phase, and there is no guarantee that the minimum requirement will be met completely for all statistics. Much depends also on unit nonresponse and how accurately the unit nonresponse rate is anticipated.

An interesting issue is what we should take into account when anticipating the effective sample size under each particular design. In the cases of non-srs designs there are always some design variables such as stratification, regional clusters and household or address sizes. Correspondingly, nonresponse and ineligibility will be taken into account in each such domain defined by design variables. In contrast, the inclusion probabilities are equal in srs countries although rates of nonresponse and ineligibility may vary within these countries. It follows that the effective sample size in srs countries is equal to the net sample size, that is, the DEFF is equal to one. Thus the requirement for the minimum effective sample size is easier to meet for srs countries.

Moreover, when the sampling file after the fieldwork has been constructed the sampling weights are to be calculated. In fact, these are calculated for respondents assuming that nonresponse and ineligibility are ignorable in each sampling design domain. It follows that missingness affects the weights in non-srs countries but not in srs countries where all the



design weights are equal. This has been awkward for ESS data users since the ESS data archive (micro files are freely available for everyone) includes only the design weights that are equal to one for srs countries (the weights are scaled so that their sum is equal to the net sample size). Fortunately, there are plans to construct and to include the nonresponse weights for the web too, but this operation seems to take more time than expected.

We have learned from the above that srs is an easy sampling technique but it is not good or even fair in cross-country surveys. It works if the sampling frame is up-to-date. But it does not take care on varying missingness rates in target population domains. The reality is that nonresponse and ineligibility vary in each country by, for example, gender, region, urbanization, education level and age group. Such variables are possible to include in the sampling frame in all srs countries but the sampling planners do not use these at the sampling design phase.

Of course, the exploitation of frame variables for sampling requires the sampling planner to anticipate missingness rates in appropriate domains. It is not necessary to exploit all such variables exhaustively. Stratification should at least be used since it is rather simple. It is commendable to be slightly conservative in the allocation of the sample to strata and not to anticipate differential missingness too fiercely. Even implicit stratification is better than no stratification since the sampling file in this case will automatically include this auxiliary variable. Consequently, the follow-up of the effective sample size will be more realistic and the design weights will not be equal, that is, the weights include simple nonresponse adjustments. More advanced nonresponse weights are naturally needed if and when more auxiliary variables are available (e.g, using the methodology presented in Laaksonen 2007).

The current strategy in srs countries is to create nonresponse weights using basically the same frame variables as those that could have been used at the survey design phase (e.g. Meuleman & Billiet 2007). This does not seem very rational. Why not exploit these data immediately? This would also be more fair

since the DEFF would be clearly above 1. In my calculations with the ESS round 3 data for Finland and Denmark the DEFF is often about 1.05-1.15. This means that if the current effective sample size is, for example, 1600, then the size under the 'factual' design would be around 1400-1530.

Simple random sampling is a nice method if all sample units can be reached and the desired data will be completely gathered with equal unit costs. This is not the case in real surveys. Business survey practitioners have not even considered srs, since they have so specific estimation targets that this method would lead to dramatic problems. However, srs is sometimes used in social surveys. I have even noticed that in some practitioners' opinion srs is an ideal sampling strategy. I disagree with this view. Srs should not be used in large-scale surveys, such as in cross-country surveys, at all. I understand that the method is easy in some countries and the results are not necessarily poor. But the same countries could design their survey far more nicely and with lower costs. This would require more innovativeness and pains, however.

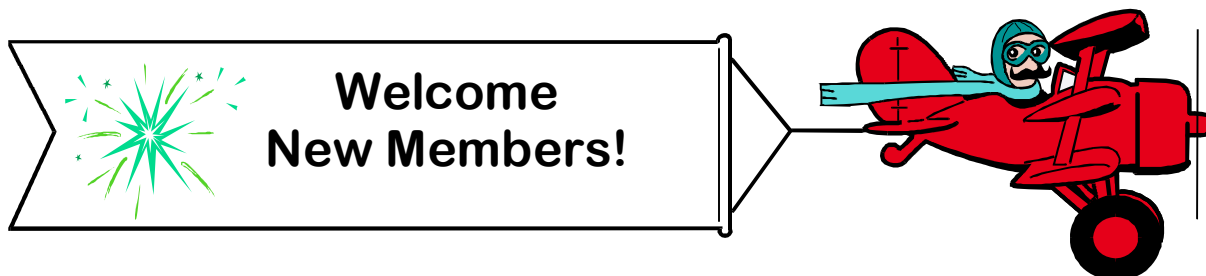
Comments either directly to me or to this newsletter are most welcome.

Seppo Laaksonen  
Seppo.Laaksonen@Helsinki.Fi

## References

- Laaksonen, S. (2007). Weighting for Two-Phase Surveyed Data. *Survey Methodology*, 33, 121-130.
- Lynn, P., S. Gabler, S. Häder, & S. Laaksonen (2007). Methods for Achieving Equivalence of Samples in Cross-National Surveys. *Journal of Official Statistics*, 27, 107-124.
- Meuleman, B. & J. Billiet (2007). Corrections for Nonresponse in the ESS Round 1: Weighting for Background Variables. A Simulation. ESS Working Paper.





*We are very pleased to welcome the following new members:*

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Brazil	Giuseppe A.	Antonaci
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USA	Carol J.	Blumberg
USA	Sadeq	Chowdhury
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Rwanda	Celestin	Ukozehasi
Senegal	Serigne Touba	Diasse
Slovenia	Mojca	Bavdaz

Dear New Member:

For questions or input regarding *The Survey Statistician*, please contact:

Dan Hedlin at [dan.hedlin@scb.se](mailto:dan.hedlin@scb.se)

or

Annica Isaksson at [anisa@ida.liu.se](mailto:anisa@ida.liu.se)



## Announcements

### **Cochran-Hansen Prize 2009**

#### **Competition for Young Survey Statisticians from Developing and Transitional Countries**

In celebration of its 25th anniversary, the International Association of Survey Statisticians established the Cochran-Hansen Prize to be awarded every two years to the best paper on survey research methods submitted by a young statistician from a developing or transitional country.

Participation in the competition for the Prize is open to nationals of developing or transitional countries who are living in such countries and who were born in 1967 or later.

Papers submitted must be unpublished original works. They may include materials from the participant's university thesis. They should be in either English or French. Papers for consideration should be submitted to the IASS Secretariat at the address below to arrive by December 29, 2008. Each submission should be accompanied by a cover letter that gives the participant's year of birth, nationality, and country of residence. The cover letter must also indicate if the work submitted is the result of a PhD thesis and, in the case of joint papers, the prize candidate must state clearly what his/her contribution to the paper is.

The papers submitted will be examined by the Cochran-Hansen Prize Committee appointed by the IASS. The decision of the Committee is final.

The winner of the Prize will be invited to present his/her paper at the 57th Session of the International Statistical Institute to be held in Durban, South Africa, August 16-22, 2009, and the name of the winner will be announced at the ISI General Assembly in Durban.

The author of the winning paper will receive the Cochran-Hansen Prize in the form of books and journal subscriptions to the value of about € 500, and will have reasonable travel and living expenses paid in order to present the paper at the ISI Session in Durban.

For further information, please contact:

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### **Measurement errors in surveys**

The Swedish Statistical Society and the Department of statistics at University of Stockholm are in the process of organising an ECAS course (European Courses in Advanced Statistics) on Measurement errors in surveys on 21-25 September 2009. Lecturers will be Paul Biemer, Mick Couper, Joop Hox and Edith de Leeuw. The venue will be Arild in southern Sweden. Further details to follow.

### **The 5th Conference Survey sampling in economic and social research**

In recent years a growing need is observed for statistical data, collected quickly and at low cost. This defines the role of the survey sampling and the importance of improving survey sampling procedures from theoretical and practical perspective. The conference gives an opportunity to present latest developments in this and related fields and to

exchange experience on practical applications of survey sampling.

### **Conference topics**

- Estimation of population parameters based on complex samples
- Statistical inference based on incomplete data
- Small area estimation
- Sample size and cost optimization in survey sampling
- Sampling designs
- Statistical inference using auxiliary information
- Model-based estimation
- Longitudinal surveys
- Practical applications of survey sampling

### **Invited speakers**

Malay Ghosh, University of Florida  
Nicholas T. Longford, Pompeu Fabra  
University in Barcelona  
Yves Tillé, University of Neuchâtel

8-10 September 2008, Katowice, POLAND

For further details, visit  
<http://web.ae.katowice.pl/metoda>

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<http://isi.cbs.nl/iass/index.htm>

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	<p><b>Association Internationale des Statisticiens d'Enquête (AISE)</b></p>

### Important Notices

A PDF file of the newsletter is available on the IASS web site. Currently, a few members prefer to be notified only when a new issue is posted, instead of receiving the hard copy. At this point we do not have a process in place to support this option. A process will be developed when an adequate number of members choose the above. Until that time, all members will continue to receive hard copies of the newsletter. Please send an e-mail to [sheering@isr.umich.edu](mailto:sheering@isr.umich.edu) if you would like to take advantage of this option.

Members are encouraged to view the IASS website (<http://isi.cbs.nl/iass/index.htm>) and provide comments or suggestions to Eric Rancourt: [eric.rancourt@statcan.ca](mailto:eric.rancourt@statcan.ca).

## In Other Journals



### SURVEY METHODOLOGY A Journal Published by Statistics Canada

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**Journal of Official Statistics**  
**An International Review Published**  
**by Statistics Sweden**

JOS is a scholarly quarterly that specializes in statistical methodology and applications. Survey methodology and other issues pertinent to the production of statistics at national offices and other statistical organizations are emphasized. All manuscripts are rigorously reviewed by independent referees and members of the Editorial Board.

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## **STATISTICS IN TRANSITION— new series**

### **Journal of the Polish Statistical Association**

First version of the journal known as Statistics in Transition was published twice a year in 1993-2006. The journal provided a forum for an exchange of ideas and experience in various fields of statistics, especially those relevant to economies undergoing transition from the communist to the market-based system.

Statistics in Transition – new series (SIT-ns), started in 2007, is an electronic journal of the Polish Statistical Association published by the Central Statistical Office of Poland.

SIT-ns is published three times a year (April, August, December). The journal is, to some extent, a continuation of the previous journal, relating to volume numbering and logo. However, SIT-ns is now adopting a policy of extending its field of interest to a broad area of application of statistical methods. Though the priority is given to analysis of the post-communist economies and other emerging markets, manuscripts concerned with application of statistical methods in different fields, teaching statistics, and understanding of statistics are now welcome. To achieve these aims, SIT-ns seeks to publish high-quality papers that describe development in the fields of interest.

[http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/45\\_2638\\_ENG\\_HTML.htm](http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/45_2638_ENG_HTML.htm)



## Survey Research Methods

### The official journal of The European Survey Research Association (ESRA)

This peer-reviewed journal aims to be a high quality scientific publication that will be of interest to researchers in all disciplines involved in the design, implementation and analysis of surveys. The journal will be published electronically with free and open access via the internet. We aim for a fast review and publication process. Please visit the web site where you can download the full articles from this issue and from all of the previous three issues:

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