

the Survey Statistician

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Letter from the Editors

Dear colleagues and readers,

We wish you a happy new year!

In this issue of *The Survey Statistician* (TSS), we bring you the latest news from the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS). This includes updates from the newly elected president, Partha Lahiri, and the appointed scientific secretary, Jenny Thompson. We also reveal the winner of the 2026 Waksberg Award.

TSS is privileged to publish papers by accomplished researchers and practitioners from around the world, as well as by young researchers. We are launching a new section called 'Debate'. In it, Changbao Wu and Li-Chun Zhang answer 'yes' and 'no', respectively, to the question, 'Are non-probability samples the future of surveys?'. In the 'Ask the Experts' section, Anne-Sophie Charest and Jörg Drechsler review differential privacy and its application to survey data. In the 'New and Emerging Methods' section, Sergio D. Martinez, Brady T. West and Rebecca R. Andridge discuss measures of non-ignorable selection bias for non-probability samples. Section 'Early Career Survey Statistician' features two articles: 'Modeling complex survey data: a case study of international health surveillance surveys' by Timothy Raxworthy, Yajuan Si and Grace Chung, and 'Variance component estimation under a general area-level model' by Yuting Chen and Hanqing Li. Sylvia Harmening reviews the book 'Robust Small Area Estimation: Methods, Theory, Applications, and Open Problems' by J. Jiang and J. S. Rao. The 'Software Review' section is dedicated to an R package for optimal allocation and sample selection; the authors of this paper are Giulio Barcaroli, Ilaria Bombelli, Andrea Fasulo, Alessio Guandalini and Marco D. Terribili.

Country reports, a list of upcoming conferences and workshops, a list of articles published in other journals and other news about the IASS are also presented.

This issue of TSS marks a change in the editorial board, and we would like to thank the outgoing editors: Danutė Krapavickaitė, Annamaria Bianchi and Veronica Ballerini. We would particularly like to thank Danutė Krapavickaitė for her invaluable work as Editor-in-Chief of TSS in recent years. We would also like to welcome the new editors and express our gratitude to the current TSS editors for their rigour and dedication: Gaia Bertarelli, Mehdi Dagdoug, Francesco Pantalone, Jenny Thompson, Ton de Waal and Peter Wright. Finally, we would like to thank all the authors and contributors to this issue.

To help keeping TSS interesting, please share your knowledge and experience by presenting interesting topics and providing overviews of different areas of survey statistics and new ideas.

We hope you enjoy reading the January 2026 issue!

Alina Matei and Andrea Diniz da Silva

TSS Editors

Letter from the President

Dear Members,

Following a productive and inspiring 65th World Statistics Congress in The Hague, I am deeply honored to begin my term as President of the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS) for 2025–2027.

Stepping into this role, I am reminded of the immense dedication required to keep our global community vibrant. I want to personally thank our outgoing President, Natalie Shlomo. Her leadership and mentorship have been invaluable to me as President-Elect (2023-2025), and she leaves the Association with a clear and ambitious path forward. My thanks also go to our departing Vice-presidents Eric Rancourt, Jiraphan Suntornchost, Andres Gutierrez, and Annamaria Bianchi, as well as the ISI Executive Council and Permanent Office. Their tireless work behind the scenes is the reason our initiatives continue to thrive. Please refer to the Scientific Secretary's report for a list of our predecessors' recent accomplishments.

I am delighted to work alongside our newly approved Executive Committee: Ralf Münnich (President-Elect), and our Vice Presidents Gaia Bertarelli (Italy), Robert Clark (Australia), Haoyi Chen (China), and Katherine Jenny Thompson (USA). Together, we represent a diverse range of perspectives that will guide our strategy through 2027.

We are at a crossroads where traditional survey methods are meeting new data frontiers, and the IASS must be the home for that transition. To that end, we will continue to champion excellence through our flagship awards: the Hukum Chandra Prize (2026) and the Cochran-Hansen Prize (2027). These awards are more than just accolades; they are our way of ensuring that the next generation of survey statisticians, particularly from developing regions, has a seat at the global table.

Our Monthly Webinar Series will remain a cornerstone of our value to you. We are designing these sessions to be more than just lectures. We want them to be a space for:

- Discovery: Exploring frontier research in survey design and data integration.
- Problem Solving: Discussing the 'messy' real-world challenges faced by National Statistical Offices.
- Practice: Providing hands-on training for the tools and software used daily.

Maintaining our financial health is a priority, and because membership fees currently do not support financial conference sponsorships, we are exploring a new seed partnership model. By funding specific deliverables, like short courses, in exchange for a share of the proceeds, we can continue to support 2026 conferences in a way that is sustainable for the Association. We also remain committed to providing no-cost co-sponsorships for mission-aligned events worldwide.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly at plahiri@umd.edu. I look forward to working with all of you to make the next two years a period of growth and innovation for the IASS.

With best wishes,

Partha Lahiri

IASS President 2025–2027

Report from the Scientific Secretary

Happy new year!

As the new scientific secretary of the IASS, I'll begin by thanking my predecessor Annamaria Bianchi (Italy) for her excellent work. This report primarily lists the efforts and achievements of the previous Executive Committee (EC), along with a few updates from the new EC, which has been meeting monthly since October 2025.

The new EC's first order of business was to discuss our communication. While we appreciate the timeliness of a monthly newsletter, it can be time-consuming to prepare and risks redundancy with the Scientific Secretary report in the January and July *The Survey Statistician* (TSS). Henceforth, these two reports serve as quarterly newsletters, with separate newsletters issued in April and in October. For timely updates and information, visit us at LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter (@iass_isi). To advertise events, seminars, or job opportunities through IASS social media, email gaia.bertarelli@unive.it with 'IASS Social Media Post' in the subject line.

The IASS made several contributions to the 65th World Statistics Congress (WSC), held at The Hague from 5-9 October 2025. For details – and pictures – see the IASS October 2025 newsletter. Besides contributing to the WSC, the IASS provided financial support for three workshops: the workshop in honour of Professor Yves Tillé on the occasion of his retirement, Neuchâtel, Switzerland from 25-26 June 2025, the Baltic-Nordic-Ukrainian Network (BNU) Workshop in Vilnius, Lithuania from 25-29 August 2025 and the European Network for Better Establishment Statistics, 9th, biennial European Establishment Statistics Workshop (EESW25) in Rome, Italy from 5-7 November 2025. The IASS sponsored four invited talks the Fourth Workshop on Methodologies for Official Statistics in Rome, Italy from 1-2 December: 'On adversarial risk analysis in official statistics' by F. Ruggeri (Italy), the keynote address; 'Statistical Inference for a finite population mean with machine learning-based imputation for missing survey data' by D. Haziza (Canada) and M. Dagdoug (Canada); 'A contamination model for multivariate zero-inflated data' by D. Di Cecco (Italy), D. Filipponi (Italy) and I. Guarnera (Italy); and 'Small area estimation via spatio-temporal M-quantile modeling' by N. Salvati (Italy), F. Schirripa Spagnolo (Italy), M. Bugallo (Spain) and D. Morales (Spain).

As said in the President's report, the IASS is unable to offer financial funding for workshops or conferences in 2026 but continues to offer no-cost co-sponsorships to conferences of interest to IASS members. These conferences include the Survey Cost Conference to be held in Washington, D.C., on February 9-10, 2026, the 5th ISI Regional Statistics Conference (RSC) in Valletta, Malta, from 3-5 June 2026, and the Small Area Estimation Conference 2026 (SAE 2026) will be held in Bucharest, Romania, from 15-19 June 2026.

We have conducted five successful webinars since July 2025: 'Debiased calibration estimation using generalized entropy under selection bias' by Jae Kwang Kim (U.S.A.), 'Targeted designs to address survey nonresponse' by Peter Lynn (U.K.), 'Sampling for business surveys at Statistics Canada' (2025 Waksberg Award Lecture) by M. A. Hidioglou (Canada), 'R-indicators for assessing representativeness for survey and non-survey data' by Natalie Shlomo (U.K.), and 'Some history of the use of models in survey sampling' by Richard Valliant (U.S.A.). See our events page for updates in 2026. Expect to see a variety of topics ranging from theoretical to operational and presenters from developed and from emerging nations.

There are three open calls that should be of interest to the IASS membership:

1. Guest editors Maria Rosaria Ferrante and Natalie Shlomo seek contributions to a Special Issue of *Survey Methodology* on the theme 'Shaping the future of survey statistics in the data-driven era'. The deadline for submission is 31 January 2026. Submit manuscripts through

Letters and reports

<https://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/surveymeth> and indicate in the cover letter that the submission is for the special issue.

2. Nominations are open for the 2027 Waksberg Award. This annual invited paper series honors the late Joseph Waksberg with a paper that reviews the development and current state of an important topic in the field of survey statistics and methodology. The recipient receives an honorarium and gives the 2027 Waksberg Invited Address. The paper will be published in an upcoming issue of *Survey Methodology* targeted for December 2027. Send nominations of individual candidates by 15 February 2026 to Paul Smith (**P.A.Smith@soton.ac.uk**). Nominations should include a CV and a letter of nomination and will remain active for 5 years.
3. Applications are open for the Hukum Chandra Memorial Prize. This prize is awarded by the IASS to a mid-career researcher. The recipient will receive an honorarium of 500 Euros and will be invited to present a special webinar with discussion in the IASS Webinar Series in October 2026. Nominations should include an extended abstract (maximum five pages) on the proposed webinar content, comprising original published or unpublished work. Each submission must also be accompanied by a short CV (max two pages). Send applications to Robert Clark (**robert.clark@anu.edu.au**) by 23:59 GMT on 22 May 2026.

Lastly, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the IASS in this formal capacity. Please feel free to contact me with suggestions for monographs (preferably open access), special issues or edited books on topics of interest to IASS membership.

Jenny Thompson

IASS Scientific Secretary 2025-2027

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