

the Survey Statistician

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Enquiries for membership in the Association or change of address for current members should be addressed to: isimembership@cbs.nl

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Letter from the Editors

Dear colleagues and readers,

This issue of *The Survey Statistician* (TSS) features contributions from Partha Lahiri, the elected president of the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS), and Jenny Thompson, the appointed scientific secretary.

We are delighted to announce the winners of the 2026 Hukum Chandra Memorial Prize, which is awarded by the IASS. We also have news about the 33rd Morris Hansen Lecture. We are also pleased to announce that all back issues of TSS from 1978 onwards are now available to read on the [IASS website](#). This would not have been possible without the efforts of Eric Rancourt, former editor of TSS.

This issue contains several sections. In the *'Debate'* section, David Haziza and Roderick J. Little answer 'yes' and 'no', respectively, to the question *'Can machine learning effectively reduce potential nonresponse bias?'*. In the *'Ask the Experts'* section, Nikos Tzavidis, Luciano Perfetti Villa, and Vasilis Chasiotis focus on the use of geospatial data in small area estimation. In the *'New and Emerging Methods'* section, Shurong Lin and Aleksandra Slavković discuss data privacy in the artificial intelligence era and the implications for survey practice. The *'Early Career Survey Statistician'* section includes the paper *'High-Dimensional Variance Estimation for the Generalized Regression Estimator'* by Kalil Bouhadra and Mehdi Dagdoug. Changbao Wu reviews the book *'Statistics in Survey Sampling'* by Jae K. Kim. Finally, the country reports are provided.

This issue ends with the list of upcoming conferences and workshops, a list of articles published in other journals, and the list of new IASS members.

We would like to thank all the authors and contributors to this issue, and to express our gratitude to the TSS editors for their rigour and dedication: Gaia Bertarelli, Mehdi Dagdoug, Francesco Pantalone, Jenny Thompson, Ton de Waal, and Peter Wright.

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 July 2026 issue!

Alina Matei and Andrea Diniz da Silva,

TSS Editors

Letter from the President

Dear IASS Members,

In my previous letter, I shared our core long-term vision. Today, I want to dedicate this space to a theme that is vital to the sustained growth of our association: strategic collaboration. To expand our global footprint and deliver maximum value to survey statisticians in a broad sense, the IASS is actively seeking, establishing, and deepening partnerships with associations, national societies, and international working groups.

Our ongoing monthly webinar series serves as a prime testament to this outward-looking strategy. We have achieved remarkable success by organizing featured webinars jointly with the Survey Research Methods Section of the American Statistical Association (ASA-SRMS), the International Society for Bayesian Analysis (ISBA), and the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys, mandated by the United Nations Statistical Commission. These joint initiatives enrich our shared intellectual space, bringing diverse methodologies together under a unified, accessible umbrella.

A recent highlight of this collaborative approach was our partnership with the International Statistical Education Center (ISEC). Together, we conducted an exceptionally successful hybrid workshop titled *Practical SAE: Implementing Solutions Using Multiple Data Sources* at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Kolkata campus. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the instructors, as well as the ISEC and ISI PO staff, for their exceptional coordination. As detailed in the accompanying Scientific Secretary's report, this new initiative was a truly global success, drawing 41 participants from more than 20 countries across six continents.

Looking ahead, we are actively translating this momentum into a vibrant future calendar. We expect to partner with the Washington Statistical Society (WSS) and various regular conferences such as the Small Area Estimation (SAE) conference series and World Statistics Congress (WSC) Satellite meetings to offer specialized short courses of direct interest to our membership. Most excitingly, we are officially collaborating with the global SAE community to co-sponsor a WSC 2027 Satellite Conference in Hue, Vietnam, from June 21–25, 2027.

I am also delighted to reflect on the outstanding success of the recent IASS co-sponsored *Small Area Estimation, Survey and Data Science Conference (SAE 2026)*, held from June 15 to 19, 2026, at the University of Bucharest, Romania (further details can be found in the dedicated article featured in this issue). The event uniquely underscored the growing importance of data integration and model-based methods in contemporary official statistics. It is against the backdrop of this vibrant scientific gathering that I extend my warmest, heartfelt congratulations to Professor Isabel Molina for being honored with this year's prestigious SAE Award. Her achievements inspire us all and perfectly embody the standard of scientific excellence that the IASS strives to support.

On behalf of the entire IASS Executive Committee, it is my absolute pleasure to congratulate the joint winners of this year's prestigious Hukum Chandra Memorial Prize: Professor Sixia Chen (University of Oklahoma Health Sciences and U.S. Census Bureau) and Professor Yan Li (University of Maryland, College Park). Both awardees will showcase their research during our upcoming

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webinar series in October and November 2026. I highly encourage you to attend; please click [here](#) to view the IASS webinar schedule and related information.

The strength of the IASS lies within its members. As we look to expand our collaborative horizons, I warmly invite you to reach out to me directly at plahiri@umd.edu with any new ideas for promoting our mission, establishing new institutional ties, or introducing innovative topics to our scientific programs.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our community.

Warmest regards,
Partha Lahiri
IASS President 2025–2027

Report from the Scientific Secretary

The IASS Executive Committee is delighted to announce that Sixia Chen (University of Oklahoma Health Sciences, USA and U.S. Census Bureau) and Yan Li (University of Maryland, College Park, USA) have been jointly awarded the Hukum Chandra Memorial Prize. Dr. Chen is being recognized for contributions to robust methods for handling influential units and missing data in survey sampling, with a webinar presentation entitled “*Robust imputation procedures in the presence of influential survey data based on adaptive tuning constants.*” Professor Li is being recognized for contributions to survival analysis and health disparity decomposition using complex survey and observational data, with a webinar presentation entitled “*Correcting Bias from Covariate-Dependent Censoring in Survival Disparity Decomposition.*” The presentations will be delivered in the IASS webinar series in October and November 2026. As expected, the pool of nominees was exceptionally strong, and we thank the selection committee - Robert Clark, Alina Matei and Maria Giovanna Ranalli - for their careful consideration.

The IASS is serving the international statistical committee in a variety of ways, partnering with other organizations to extend our reach. At the invitation of Professor SP Mukherjee, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the [International Statistical Education Center \(ISEC\)](#), we conducted a hybrid IASS-ISEC workshop entitled “*Practical SAE: Implementing Solutions Using Multiple Data Sources*” from 18 May 2026 to 21 May 2026 held at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Kolkata (India) campus, co-taught by Partha Lahiri (University of Maryland) and Yuting Chen (Eastern Kentucky University). Forty-one participants represented six continents covering more than 20 countries: 18 onsite ISEC funded participants from 11 developing countries and 23 online participants paying 120 euros in registration fees. Other IASS EC contributions came from Ralf Münnich (inaugural session remarks), Haoyi Chen (capacity building discussion), and Gaia Bertarelli (Q&A sessions). Given the success of this workshop, we are pursuing a similar collaboration with the Washington Statistical Association (WSS), one of the largest chapters of the American Statistical Association. This would likely be an online workshop, and we are brainstorming with WSS officials on a suitable topic.

We have conducted six successful webinars since January:

- IASS Webinar 60: “*Survey Quality Frameworks and Quality Assessment*” presented by Julie de Jong in partnership with the Inter-secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys (ISWGHS) of the United Nations, 21 January 2026.
- IASS Webinar 61: “*Reducing Measurement and Sampling Biases in Non-probability Surveys*” presented by Aditi Sen in partnership with the American Statistical Association’s Section on Survey Research Methods, 27 February 2026.
- IASS Webinar 62: “*Seminal Ideas and Controversies in Statistics*” presented by Professor Roderick Little in partnership with the American Statistical Association’s Section on Survey Research Methods and International Society for Bayesian Analysis, 23 March 2026.
- IASS Webinar 63: “*How We Travel: Insights from Household Travel Surveys and Digital Twin Modeling*” presented by Dr. Cinzia Cirillo, Professor, the University of Maryland and Director, Center for Multimodal Mobility, 21 April 2026.
- IASS Webinar 64: “*A Practical Guide for NSOs on Addressing Nonresponse Bias in Social Surveys*” presented by Cilanne Boulet (Statistics Canada), Dr. Eric Lesage

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(INSEE), and Kenza Sallier (Statistics Canada) in partnership with the ISWGHS, 19 May 2026.

IASS Webinar 65: “*Data Collection - UN Handbook of Surveys of Households and Individuals Chapter Preview*” presented by Elizabeth J. Zechmeister (Vanderbilt University), Joost Kappelhof (Netherlands Institute for Social Research, and Michael Robbins (Arab Barometer) in partnership with the ISWGHS, 16 June 2026.

All webinars were well attended, with co-sponsorship generally increasing participation: 187 attendees at Webinar 60, 156 attendees at Webinar 61, 242 attendees at Webinar 62, 88 attendees at Webinar 63, 176 attendees at Webinar 64, and 92 attendees at Webinar 65. See our events page for updates in 2026.

The IASS provides no-cost co-sponsorships to conferences of interest to IASS members. Since January, these conferences include the [Survey Cost Workshop](#) in Washington, D.C. from 9-10 February 2026 and the [IASS–RSS–NLG International Conference 2026](#) in Nigeria on 10 March 2026. The IASS organized seven Invited Paper Sessions (IPS) and an Special IPS session at the [5th ISI Regional Statistics Conference](#) held in Valletta, Malta from 3-5 June 2026. We thank Gaia Bertarelli for representing the IASS on this conference’s organizing committee. The IASS and the International Association of Official Statistics (IAOS) co-sponsored the [Small Area Estimation Conference 2026](#) (SAE 2026) in Bucharest, Romania, from 15-19 June 2026; see the President’s report for more details.

Finally, a few miscellaneous items of interest. First, we hope that you enjoy this issue’s New and Emerging Methods paper entitled “*Data Privacy in the AI Era and Implications for Survey Practice*” by Shurong Lin and Aleksandra Slavković (both at the Pennsylvania State University, USA). This thought-provoking paper summarizes material presented at the 2025 Links Lecture conducted by the American Statistical Association. Second, look for an upcoming special issue of the *Revista Colombiana de Estadística* celebrating the 140th anniversary of the International Statistical Institute, developed in collaboration with the ISI Outreach Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean and the ISI Young Statisticians Committee, and formally endorsed by the ISI Executive Committee.

For timely updates and information from the IASS, visit us at [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#). 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. 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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