

Preface

Each issue of our Journal presents an interview of a person who has achieved recognition in his or her country as a leader in the field. Our regional editor for South America, Dr. Denise Silva, graciously agreed to be our featured interviewee for the September issue. It is not a coincidence that the Silva interview coincided with the World Statistics Congress (WSC) just held in Brazil this July.



Dr. Silva is a principal researcher in the National School of Statistical Sciences in the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). In the interview, Dr. Silva reflects on her career with the IBGE as well as her time abroad. Her career includes several years in the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) as well as lecturing for the University of Southampton.

The IBGE has been in existence for 75 years. It coordinates the Brazilian National Statistics with more than 10,000 employees. The Institute has also been a pioneer in teaching statistics since 1953. The IBGE along with the federal Brazilian government, the government of the Rio de Janeiro State, and the mayor of Rio sponsored the 60th WSC of the International Statistical Institute (ISI).

The IAOS held its general assembly meeting during the Congress. As usual, it also had a major presence on the program. For example, our outgoing IAOS President, Shigeru Kawasaki, organized an invited session entitled, “Toward Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information.” Among many other sessions,

there was also an IAOS Journal session that focused on indigenous populations around the world. Its title was “Measuring Indigenous Populations across Nations: Challenges for Methodological Alignment.” Expect a meta-analysis submission from that session in an upcoming issue of the Journal.

In this issue, we introduce a new feature-open to all readers of the Journal. We recognize that there are topics or endeavors that go beyond an individual or a particular country. We have chosen Statistics without Borders (SwB) as a pilot for a new series of conversations. Created in 2008, SwB provides pro bono statistical assistance to organizations worldwide. SwB volunteers have published articles in our Journal in previous issues and we hope they will continue to do so in the future.



The SwB conversation is with the current chair of that outreach group, Cathy Furlong. Ms. Furlong sat down with Katherine Condon, our future interview editor, and Kirsten West to talk about the history of her group, how it developed, the reasons for its development and growth and some of the projects SwB volunteers have worked on, and including her own experiences as a volunteer. Similar conversations will appear in future issues when we deem them of special interest. We want your input here. We are always open to suggestions from you for topics that might have a wide international appeal.

Worldwide Refugee Crisis. You may not have noticed but in recent years each issue of the Journal has had a theme, something we wanted to call particular attention to. In this issue we focus on statistics re-

garding the worldwide refugee crisis. This September issue features an open paper by Capps and several co-authors. That paper focuses on the integration of refugees in the United States. The US has long been the major permanent resettlement country for refugees, although this may be changing now with European countries taking on a larger role as conflicts continue in Africa and the Middle East.

In addition to the Capps refugee paper in this issue there is also a related discussion of a paper from the March issue on Syria and Iraq. That original paper was by Price and Ball and we asked Ola Awad to comment. Her comment and a short rejoinder by the authors come next in this issue. Ola Awad is from Palestine and the incoming president of the IAOS.

UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. In this issue we continue to publish country reactions to the formal UN adoption in 2013 of the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. This was begun in March with a paper by Steve Pierson, comparing the Fundamental Principles with selected similar codes elsewhere. The practice of official statistics, guided by principles, is illustrated by two papers from two different countries. Here you will find comments and interpretations from Michalopolou (Greece) and Ljones (Norway). Look for still more in future issues. In December there will be comments from Germany and Surinam.

Modernizing Population Censuses. Next are three papers originally presented at the New Techniques and Technologies Statistics (NTTS) 2015 March conference in Belgium. The session was organized by the Editor-in Chief. It was entitled “odernizing Censuses Worldwide.”

The paper by Lars Thygesen restates the innovative alternative that he and his team made in Denmark to what was then the conventional approach everywhere to population censuses.

In the second paper, John Dunne presents the administrative infrastructure changes needed in Ireland to move in spirit towards an Irish version of what was done in Denmark.

The third paper by Christine Bycroft tells us about the implementations and modifications she and her team have made in New Zealand to the basic idea, again adapting it to country specific conditions.

Curbstoning and Handling Other Nonsampling Errors. We also continue our focus on data quality and in particular on fabrication of data. Falsification (also known as curbstoning) and similar malpractices in data collections are important sources of non-sampling er-

rors in surveys. In this issue, we have three papers on this topic:

The first paper (from the US) “Curbstoning and Beyond: Confronting Data Fabrication in Survey Research,” is a synthesis of presentations given by the authors (Koczela, Furlong, McCarthy and Mushtaq) at an event sponsored by the Washington Statistical Society on this topic.

The second paper (from Germany) is by Winker, Kruse, Menold and Landrock. It looks at influences of interviewers’ characteristics and payment schemes on data quality.

Finally, Kennickell describes how editing might serve as a key instrument of identification and remediation of survey errors. His paper evaluates different approaches to selective editing, using various combinations of fully edited and unedited data from the 2010 Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF).

Remaining Papers. Again, as is our practice, each issue in 2015 is quite packed with other good papers on a wide variety of topics:

- There is a further NTTS paper by Karlberg and co-authors that looks at the challenges associated with producing more and more statistics at an increasing pace, while still maintaining high quality. They offer a toolbox to handle the methodological challenges of an integrated system of surveys.
- There is yet another NTTS paper by Migacz. It describes how the Central Statistical Office of Poland (CSO) has made great progress in the field of geographic information systems. In recent years, the CSO launched the Geostatistics Portal, which allows statistical data geovisualization on choropleth and diagram maps. The Portal also serves detailed population grid maps. CSO constantly works on improvements to the Portal in order to bring statistical data closer to the people and authorities and make governance easier on all administrative levels.
- The Big Data theme from the June issue of the Journal is continued here. The development of Big Data and the ability to work with Big Data sets are challenges in the production of official statistics. The paper by Kitchin provides a synoptic overview of these issues in detail, mapping out the various pros and cons of Big Data for producing official statistics. It examines the work to date by National Statistical Institutions in formulating a strategic and operational response to Big Data, and makes suggestions with respect to on-going

change management needed to address the use of Big Data for official statistics.

- The September issue concludes with a SwB paper by Dashen and Suchowski, entitled “A Guide to Social Media Emergency Management Analytics: Understanding Its Place through Typhoon Haiyan Tweets.”

This editorial was in large part the product of the incoming Editor-in-Chief Dr. Kirsten West from Denmark. I was at the WSC in Rio recruiting papers for future issues, so stay tuned.

Fritz Scheuren
Editor in Chief