

Director's Message – January 2020

I would like to start my message by wishing you a happy and healthy New Year. 2020 will be a rich year in terms of celebrating historic events.

The year will be marked by ISI's celebration of its 135th anniversary. In June 1885, *L'Institut International de Statistique* was created in London during the Golden Jubilee Meeting of the Statistical Society of London. We celebrate the anniversary with a series of contributions by Jean-Louis Bodin, former ISI President, former IAOS President and a well-known and respected long-time member of our society. In his first contribution included in the January news, Jean-Louis describes the fascinating story of the creation of the ISI. More articles will follow during the year. For those who are interested to learn about the ISI's history in more detail, I recommend the book [*A History of the International Statistical Institute 1885-1960*](#), by J.W. Nixon.



ISI has a special [Committee on the History of Statistics](#), chaired by Vice-President Peter Guttorp. Often, the ongoing ISI activities and new initiatives take a lot of our time and we do not always take the time to reflect on our history, but we are grateful to Peter and his Committee for their active role and work dedicated to the history of ISI and statistics in general.

This year we will also commemorate another important historic event, the 100th anniversary of the International Statistical Commission installed in Geneva in October 1920 by the League of Nations (SDN) . This International Statistical Commission was in some way the ancestor of the UN Statistical Division and the ISI played an important role in its establishment.

In 2020, we will also celebrate Florence Nightingale's 200th birthday. A working group chaired by Jessica Utts including participants from all over the world and from several societies is working on ideas for this celebration. The celebration will be tailored towards the role of women in Statistics and Data Science.

The ISI's history is the fundament for the variety of activities today which is reflected in our mission statement 'to lead, support and promote the understanding, development and good practice of statistics worldwide, by providing the core global network for statistics'. Although it is good to reflect on our history, it is important to work continuously on keeping our organization in good shape, which is only possible with the help of our members, both individual (Elected and Regular) and organizational. I call on all of you to help ISI attract more members and am asking you to recruit at least five new members this year!

Thank you for your support and cheers to the 135th anniversary of the ISI!

Ada van Krimpen
ISI Director