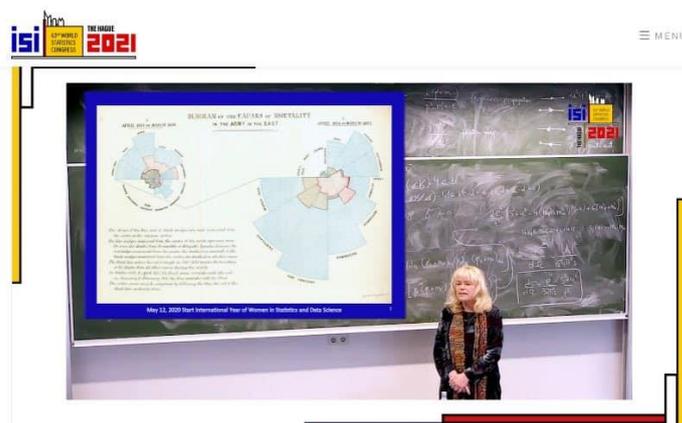


Director's Message – May 2020

It is incredible how fast our world is changing and how fast we find ways of dealing with the new situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. When I say 'our world' I mean the relatively safe world of the statistical community. Most of us are working in a safe environment at home and aren't faced with the challenges of those who work in 'critical fields' such as the health sector, safety, food supply etc. Nonetheless, our profession has proven to be vital in this time of uncertainty. Statistical data and models are indispensable in determining which measures are effective and can save lives.



One of the first persons to recognise this was Florence Nightingale – not only the lady with the lamp, but also the lady with the data. She found that by using and analysing data, effective measures could be put in place and save lives. We celebrated the 200th anniversary of her birth on 12 May, which was also the day the ISI launched the International Year of Women in Statistics and Data Science (IYWSDS). This festive event was planned to be held in the premises of Statistics Netherlands, but due to the Covid-19 measures it held online. The celebration included a number of talks dedicated to Florence Nightingale, the IYWSDS, and the 63rd ISI WSC in 2021. Jacqueline Meulman, Professor of Applied Statistics at Leiden University, provided an interesting insight into the life and work of Florence Nightingale. Jessica Utts, Chair of the working group on IYWSDS, talked about the activities planned for the year. Their presentations as well as those of the other presenters can be watched at the [ISI WSC 2021 website](#). The IYWSDS will include many interesting events and we invite all statistical organisations and societies to take part.



Jacqueline Meulman, Professor of Applied Statistics at Leiden University, presenting her talk on Florence Nightingale

Another interesting virtual event was the webinar 'Covid-19 from statistical point of view' organised by the ISI Young Statisticians Committee (ISI-YS). Under the leadership of ISI-YS Chair Mara Sherlin D Talento, the webinar took place on Sunday 9 May, with the Chief Statistician of Indonesia as the main speaker. It was a successful event with 1,541 YouTube

and Zoom registered participants, and 25 panellists. Isn't it remarkable that so many participants have taken part in the webinar? It shows how flexible we are in adapting to the 'new now'.



Participants of the webinar "COVID-19: from a statistical point of view"

The 'new now' might be extended over a long period of time and, as ISI President John Bailer mentioned in his May message, it will have an effect on our future events including the WSC in 2021 planned to be held in the Netherlands. We are therefore rethinking the concept of the congress and after having overcome the initial state of shock, we have come up with some ideas in support of a (partly) hybrid or virtual event that can bring a lot of good things with it too. The technology for hosting events is developing at a tremendous speed and we can expect some spectacular features in this field. Not everything will work out as planned (we have learned our lessons with IT), but we will be amazed at what the technology can offer us in terms of better and more exciting experiences.

Finally I wish you and your loved ones good health. Take care.

Ada van Krimpen
ISI Director

Stay tuned with the ISI, follow us on

