



Catalogue no. 11-522-XIE

**Statistics Canada International Symposium
Series - Proceedings**

**Symposium 2004: Innovative
Methods for Surveying
Difficult-to-reach Populations**

2004



CLOSING REMARKS

Don Royce¹

Now that we have come to the end of a day of workshops plus two very full days of sessions, I have the very pleasant task of offering a few closing remarks and, more importantly, of recognizing the efforts of those who have contributed to the success of this year's Symposium. And it has clearly been a success.

As François Maranda noted in his Opening Remarks, this was our twenty-first International Methodology Symposium. For what we considered to be one of our "small" symposia, focusing on what might be seen as a somewhat specialized topic, there was certainly no shortage of participation. We had some 400 registrants in total. Altogether some 14 countries were represented, making it truly an international event. There were 11 invited and contributed sessions with close to 35 papers presented over the two days. Over twenty of these papers came from presenters from outside of Canada. The response to our three workshops on Wednesday was also extremely positive, with about 130 people registering.

Even though the topic was more specialized than in some of our previous symposia, the variety of the sessions in the Symposium this year makes it almost impossible for me to comment on favourite sessions. I am sure that we each have our own, and I am sure that you regret, as I do, that it was impossible to go to all the talks that we would have liked to. However I do want to single out the Keynote Address of Monroe Sirken, and the Waksberg Address by Norman Bradburn, as highlights of the two days that we all enjoyed. These two sessions alone would have made for a very satisfying conference. But there was so much more.

The theme of this year's Symposium was "Innovative Methods for Surveying Difficult-to Reach Populations". Having sat through two days of very stimulating sessions, and in the many informal discussions over coffee, I was struck by how important a topic this really has become. The need to provide statistical information about difficult-to-reach populations, in both the social and the business spheres, has never been stronger. I was also struck by the need for a comprehensive approach. Reaching difficult populations is not just a frame problem, or a sampling problem, or a questionnaire design problem or a data collection problem. It is an issue which needs a holistic approach.

I would now like to turn to my more important task, that of thanking all of those who contributed to the success of the Symposium. First, I would like to thank all of the presenters, discussants, organizers, chairs of the sessions and leaders of the workshops for the efforts they put into sharing their knowledge and experience with us. For those from Statistics Canada, I know that many of you contributed on top of your regular duties. You have our thanks.

Special thanks are extended to Marie Patry and Pierre Lavallée who agreed, at the very last minute, to replace the speakers who unfortunately were unable to attend.

For those of you from outside Statistics Canada, I would like to say how much we appreciate your willingness to respond to our invitation. Many of you have traveled a long way to be here with us this week. Thank you very much.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those in charge of providing the installations that made the Symposium run smoothly. The personnel at Hilton Lac Leamy, those in charge of audiovisual equipment and of simultaneous translation all deserve our thanks. Given the large number of contributors and the distinct accent of each speaker in an international meeting like this one, the interpreters deserve special appreciation.

¹ Don Royce, Director General, Methodology Branch, Statistics Canada, 17th Floor, R.H. Coats Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0T6 (Don.Royce@statcan.ca).

I would also like to recognize the work of a team of about 12 volunteers, essential to the success of the conference. They worked hard over the past weeks to make sure that the rest of us could relax and enjoy the Symposium. There are too many names for me to mention, or remember, so please know that we thank you all for a job well done.

Last, and most importantly, I want to thank the Organizing Committee, which has been hard at work on this event for over a year. It includes Harold Mantel, Claude Poirier, Julie Trépanier, Paul Hunsberger, Lynn Savage, Annette Everett, Mark Armstrong, Michel Beaulne, Denis Lemire, and Alain Lucas, under the leadership of Jean Dumais. Please join me in showing them our sincere appreciation for bringing us such an excellent Symposium.

As my final duty, I am pleased to announce the topic of our next Symposium, which will take place during the last week of October of 2005. The title will be "Methodological Challenges for Meeting Future Information Needs". The Organizing Committee will be chaired by Harold Mantel.

So this brings the conference to a close. I thank all of the participants, and to those of you from out of town, I wish you a safe journey home.