

STATISTICS IN TRANSITION new series, Summer 2015
Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 323-324



In Memoriam
Gunnar Kulldorff
06.12.1927 – 25.06.2015

Gunnar Kulldorff, an influential scientist and leading person in several scientific and professional organizations, passed away on 25 June 2015 in Umeå, Sweden. Gunnar was born in 1927 in Malmö, Sweden. He studied at Lund University and defended his PhD thesis on “Estimation from Grouped and Partially Grouped Samples” in 1961 at the same university. He worked as Lecturer of Statistics at Lund University until 1965. Then he moved to Umeå where he lived the rest of his life. Gunnar became Professor in the newly established Umeå University, first in Statistics and later in Mathematical Statistics. He served as the first Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and further, the Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences. Throughout his career he was a highly appreciated teacher, researcher, leader and colleague.

Gunnar considered professional communication, exchange of scientific knowledge, cooperation and consolidation to be of great importance. The international dimension of science was a leading principle for him. As a member, often leader of professional organizations, he worked actively to strengthen this principle in the field of Statistical Science. He served as President of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) in 1989-1991. He was President of the Swedish Statistical Association and board member of the ISI, American Statistical Association and Bernoulli Society. He was elected as honorary member of the Finnish Statistical Society and the Estonian Statistical Society. In 2006 Gunnar was awarded a degree of Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Vilnius. He was an elected member of the ISI since 1968.

Gunnar was a great visionary. In the position of President of the ISI he travelled in Asia, Africa and Latin America to promote activities in Statistical Science. However, he devoted much of his energy to the countries not so far from his homeland. His major mission was to spread statistical culture, professional

education and scientific cooperation in the newly independent Baltic Countries and further, in Ukraine and Belarus. His activity created a vital network of survey statisticians that has now been functioning more than 20 years. Gunnar was the founder and long-term chair of the network, today called the Baltic-Nordic-Ukrainian Network on Survey Statistics. Since 1997, annual Workshops or Summer Schools on Survey Statistics have been organized in the Baltic countries, Ukraine and Belarus. A major effort has been the establishment of the series of regular international conferences. The latest, the Fourth Baltic-Nordic Conference on Survey Statistics, was held in Helsinki in August this year. There were participants from 15 countries (also several from Poland), indicating the strong international nature of the network activities. An article by Gunnar Kulldorff entitled "Statistical Science is International – And Survey Statistics is Cool and Hot", published in the Lithuanian Journal of Statistics in 2014, presents Gunnar's personal summary in one key area of his international activities.

Risto Lehtonen, University of Helsinki

Imbi Traat, University of Tartu