

Preface

This book comprises a selection of the papers presented at the Third Italian Conference on Survey Methodology, *ITACOSM 2013*, held in Milan in June 2013 (<http://www.statistica.unimib.it/itacosm13/>).

ITACOSM is the bi-annual international meeting of S^2G , the Survey Sampling Group of the Italian Statistical Society. It is intended as a forum for scientific discussion on developments in the theory and application of survey sampling methodologies for the human and natural sciences.

The volume gathers 14 contributions that address a wide range of sampling methods and techniques central to international statistical research. Three invited papers by keynote speakers at the conference open the book, offering state-of-the-art reviews of some hot topics in sampling theory: calibration for nonresponse treatment (P. S. Kott), quantile regression methods for small area estimation (M. Pratesi) and estimation from multiple frame surveys (A.C. Singh). Eleven research papers follow, carefully selected from both invited and contributed sessions of the conference and listed in alphabetical order by author. The contents of these papers range across mainstream topics in both sampling theory and applications. Theoretical contributions consider inference from complex samples, randomized response techniques, bootstrap methods, weighting, modeling, imputation and effective use of auxiliary information; applications cover a varied collection of subjects in official household surveys, Bayesian networks for measurement error, auditing, mixed-mode surveys, business and economic surveys, agricultural data and geostatistics.

The book is intended to serve as a “hot topics reference” for survey sampling researchers, professionals and practitioners in a wide array of application fields. It brings to a close a project that, had I known in advance, I would probably not have committed myself to! As president of S^2G , I first took charge of the organization of *ITACOSM 2013* at University of Milan-Bicocca in April 2011, with a tiny budget and no experience. Afterwards, it is something of which I am enormously glad, proud and grateful. My sincere gratitude is due to many people: to all who supported me in the organization of *ITACOSM 2013*, particularly Federica Nicolussi and Paola Chiodini; to all the authors, speakers and attendants; to my co-editors Maria

Giovanna Ranalli and Pier Luigi Conti, who did a great job in the difficult task of selecting from among the many submitted manuscripts; and to the anonymous referees.

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