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EDITORIAL

Denise Lievesley

President of the International Statistical Institute (ISI)

I am honoured to be asked, in my capacity as incoming President of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), to write an editorial for the Bulletin of the Spanish Statistical and Operational Research Society.

Every President has to ensure that all aspects of the ISI's very broad remit continue to be actively fulfilled but will of course also wish to highlight areas which particularly concern them. Among the aspirations of my presidency are to consider the serious crisis in several countries in recruiting new members to our profession and to raise the profile of the ISI's activities in relation to statistics in developing countries. These themes are not unrelated as both the developed and developing worlds are afflicted by a shortage of statisticians, and developed countries reduce their recruitment problems by attracting statisticians from poorer countries thereby exacerbating the shortages in those parts of the world.

Increasing the numbers of trained statisticians will require greater collaboration between the ISI

and national statistical societies to address the problems of recruitment and retention. Training for entry into the profession and continuing professional development are vital for practising statisticians and professional societies should provide a forum for sharing information to improve the quality and accessibility of both.

We are justifiably proud of the important work being carried out by statisticians across so many diverse fields. To continue as a vibrant discipline, we must excite young people by showing them the significant contributions made by statistics to major public issues. Making it easier for younger statisticians to participate in professional activities will pay great dividends. I was very fortunate to give an invited paper in my early thirties at an ISI conference and I have never lost the enthusiasm for our subject engendered at that meeting. And the professional friendships made there have remained important to me throughout my career.

At the heart of the recruitment problem is young people's poor proficiency in mathematics which still