Tot he Council of EAPS

c/o Nico van Nimwegen

PO Box 11676

2502 AR The Hague

The Netherlands

Oslo, 24 August 2016

Dear Nico,

Please find attached the report of the jury for the 2016 Trailblazer Award for Demographic Analysis. The conclusion was unanimous. Annette will present the report at the 2016 EPC in Mainz.

Best regards,



Nico Keilman

Report of the jury for the 2016 Trailblazer Award for Demographic Analysis

The jury received three nominations. The nominees are as follows.

Vladimir Canudas-Romo was nominated because of his pioneering research on decomposing population averages and differences and his more recent pathbreaking research on mortality forecasting. The nomination was supported by Jim Vaupel, Anna Cabre, Gabriele Doblhammer, Alexis Prskawetz, Albert Esteve, Roland Rau, Jacques Vallin, Leo van Wissen, and Frans Willekens.

Tomas Sobotka was nominated because of his synoptic research on European fertility and, more recently, his pathbreaking analyses of interactions between fertility and migration. The nomination was supported by Jim Vaupel, Anna Cabre, Gabriele Doblhammer, Alexia Prskawetz, Albert Esteve, Jacques Vallin, Leo van Wissen, and Frans Willekens.

Emilio Zagheni was nominated because of his groundbreaking research on using big data for demographic analysis. The nomination was supported by Jim Vaupel, Gabriele Doblhammer, Alexia Prskawetz, Graziella Caselli, Roland Rau, Albert Esteve, Leo van Wissen, and Frans Willekens.

Because of a possible conflict of interest resulting from close working relations in the past and the present between Zagheni and jury member Francesco Billari, Francesco decided to step down from the jury. However, the remaining jury members reached full agreement, so that a decision by majority by the original jury would have resulted in the same conclusion.

All three nominees are strong candidates for the award, and have achieved much in our discipline. We found it difficult to select one of these.

After ample consideration we decided to give the 2016 Trailbazer Award for Demographic Analysis to Emilio Zagheni.

Emilio received a Laurea in Economics, Statistics and Social Sciences from Bocconi University in Milano, and two Masters and a Doctorate in Demography from the University of California, Berkeley. After two years as a Research Scientist at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock, he joined the City University of New York as an Assistant Professor, and the University of Washington, where he is now an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and the Data Science Institute.

As mentioned, Emilio was nominated in particular for his groundbreaking research on using big data for demographic analysis. He clearly qualifies as a trailblazer for his work, mostly on estimating migration flows using social media and other Internet breadcrumbs. For his work, as a demographer he earned the respect of data scientists opening a potential avenue for population scholars.

Not mentioned in the nomination however, Emilio has also been trailblazing for the creative use of time use data in mathematical population modeling first, and next in the study of intergenerational transfers and care giving.

Emilio has published in the top demography journals, as well as in top outlets in computer science, epidemiology, and statistics. He has been a theme convener for "Development and Environment" at the 2014 European Population Conference and is currently a co-chair of the IUSSP Panel on Big Data and Population Processes.

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Nico Keilman Annette Baudisch