

Gunnar Modeen medal to Lars Thygesen

The Gunnar Modeen medal awarded every three years by the Finnish Statistical Society was this year granted to Lars Thygesen, Director of Sales and Marketing at Statistics Denmark. The medal was presented to Mr Thygesen in connection with the Nordic Statistical Meeting on 13 August 2010.

Lars Thygesen has been involved in developing a fully register-based population census, which was carried out for the first time in the world in Denmark in 1980. His input into the development of register-based methods has been groundbreaking for entire statistics production.

Thygesen has gained credit from international co-operation in the Nordic Countries, Europe, Near East, Africa and at the OECD Statistics Directorate, for example. Lars Thygesen has been working with statistics throughout his career, for over 40 years.

Gunnar Modeen (1895 - 1988) was highly influential in the field of statistics in Finland in the early 20th century. He contributed particularly to the development of population statistics and Finnish population policy over the 1930s and 1940s. He also developed statistics on dwellings and wages and salaries and the cost-of-living index.

Between 1920 and 1936 Gunnar Modeen worked at the Central Statistical Office of Finland and in 1936 he was appointed Head of the Social Research Office of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. In 1920 he was involved in the founding of the Finnish Statistical Society and also acted as its chair on a couple of occasions.

In 1988 a medal fund was set up in honour of Gunnar Modeen's memory. The regulations of the fund stipulate that the Gunnar Modeen medal is awarded to a distinguished Nordic statistician from the country arranging the Nordic Statistical Conference in the year in question. The Council of the Finnish Statistical Society selects the recipient of the medal and the medal is presented in connection with the Nordic Statistical Conference. The first medal was given in the Nordic Statistical Conference held in Finland in 1989.