

Informing Policy, Inspiring Change: National Symposium on “How NSS Surveys Have Influenced Public Policy”

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The National Sample Survey (NSS), under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, is celebrating **75 years of dedicated service to the nation**, contributing significantly to evidence-based decision-making and shaping government policies. To mark this landmark occasion, the **National Statistics Office (NSO)**, MoSPI, is organising a **National Symposium on “How NSS Surveys Have Influenced Public Policy”** on **9th October 2025** at the **Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bengaluru**. The event is being held in collaboration with IIM Bengaluru, with participating institutes including Azim Premji University (APU), the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), and the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Bengaluru. The symposium will provide a platform to reflect upon the glorious legacy of the NSS and bring together Central Ministries/Departments, State Governments, international organisations, and institutions, etc to deliberate on the contributions of NSS in shaping public policy and to explore its future role in strengthening governance for a Viksit Bharat.

Since its inception in 1950, the **National Sample Survey (NSS)** has conducted large-scale household and enterprise surveys on a wide range of socio-economic subjects. These surveys form the backbone of India’s statistical system and are used extensively in policy formulation, planning, and programme evaluation, strategic decisions by international organizations, government agencies, industrialists, policymakers, academicians, researchers, think tanks, and various Ministries and Departments. Embracing technological and methodological reforms, including the e-SIGMA platform, NSS now delivers more timely and precise insights, with quarterly and monthly reports and district-level estimates, ensuring data that drives evidence-based decisions.

The Symposium will be **inaugurated by Dr. Saurabh Garg, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**. **Dr. Ashok Dalwai (Retd. IAS), Chairman, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC)**, will be the **Chief Guest** and will deliver the **Keynote Address**. The event will also be graced by **Ms. Geeta Singh Rathore, Director General, National Sample Survey (NSS)**, **Prof. Rishikesh T. Krishnan, former Director of IIM Bangalore (IIMB)** and **Prof. Gopal Naik, Chairperson of the Centre for Public Policy (CPP) at IIMB**.

The event will host approximately **200 participants**, comprising **researchers, academicians, economists, industrial associations and trade bodies, policymakers, representatives from international organisations, representatives from enterprises, as well as esteemed institutions from academia and the media**. Domain experts and members of the **National Statistical Commission (NSC), Steering Committee and other Expert Committees of NSS** will also be present. The inaugural session will be followed by **technical sessions, three panel discussions, and an open interaction** with participants.

The technical session of the Symposium, titled “Key New Initiatives that Transformed NSO,” will be presented by **Sh. Salil Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Additional Director General, Enterprise Survey Division, NSO, MoSPI**. It will highlight the major methodological and technological reforms in NSS surveys, including high frequency data, district-level estimates, and digital transformation.

The Symposium will feature three panel discussions. The first, “**NSS Data for Public Policy and Public Use**,” will include professors, researchers, data scientists, and policy experts and will discuss the role of NSS data in addressing public policy priorities and improving accessibility. The second, “**NSS Data for Research – Highlights and Challenges**,” will bring together senior NSS officers, subject experts, and academicians to

deliberate on the use of NSS data in research and methodological challenges.

The third panel discussion, **“Future Relevance of Unit-Level Data,”** will feature eminent will feature eminent experts including Prof. Pulak Ghosh, IIMB (Part-time member EAC-PM), Prof. Madhura Swaminathan (ISI Bangalore), Prof. Bharat Ramaswami (Ashoka University) and Dr. Surjit Bhalla (Former part-time member, EAC-PM). The panel will be moderated by Prof. Amit Basole (Azim Premji University)

Following the panel discussions, the floor will be opened for an **interactive session**, allowing participants to engage directly with speakers and panellists. The event will conclude with a **summary of reflections and key takeaways** from the day’s deliberations.

The Symposium will conclude with a summary of key reflections. The event marks a significant milestone in India’s statistical journey and reaffirms MoSPI’s commitment to evidence-based policymaking, fostering collaboration between data producers and users, and strengthening the statistical foundation for a **Viksit Bharat @2047**.

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