



SOLE Prize for Contributions to Data & Measurement 2023 Recipient

Susan Houseman is the 2023 recipient of the Society of Labor Economists' prize for Contributions to Data and Measurement. Susan Houseman is Vice-President and Director of Research at the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. She is also a member of the National Bureau of Economic Research Conference on Research on Income and Wealth, chairs the Technical Advisory Committee of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), co-directs the Labor Statistics Program at the IZA Institute of Labor Economics, and has chaired the Business and Economics Statistics section of the American Statistical Association.

Susan is a labor economist whose research focuses on temporary and contract employment arrangements, domestic outsourcing, offshoring, manufacturing, and measurement issues in economic statistics. She has a particular interest in promoting our understanding and measurement of various types of non-standard employment, such as part-time employment, temporary employment, flexible staffing arrangements, and temporary help agency employment. Another critically important interest is her research on the measurement of and the impact of outsourcing and offshoring on productivity and the labor market.

As the long serving chair (since 2012) of the BLS Technical Advisory Committee, she has worked closely with BLS leadership to promote an ongoing constructive dialogue between BLS and technical experts on the challenges that BLS and the other statistical agencies face in keeping up with an ever changing economy. Serving in this capacity is one example of her playing a leadership role in promoting the assessment and improvements in the data infrastructure tracking the US economy.

As another example, she chaired the National Academy of Sciences study on Contingent and Alternative Work Arrangements that was commissioned by the BLS. The consensus report published in 2020 provides critical guidance for the updates to the Contingent Worker Supplement Survey conducted by the BLS. The report highlights the difficult measurement challenges of capturing alternative work arrangements that don't fit neatly into questions asked about employment activity on traditional household surveys.

Following up on that work, she has developed new survey evidence on independent contracting in collaborative work with Katharine Abraham, Brad Hershbein, and Beth Truesdale. This new survey evidence is interesting in its own right but this team also developed the survey and evidence to provide guidance to BLS (and the other statistical agencies) on how to overcome the measurement challenges for the measurement of alternative forms of self-employment and independent contractors in particular.

Her influential book *"Measuring Globalization: Better Trade Statistics for Better Policy"* (co-edited with Michael Mandel) published in 2015 focuses on critical issues on prices, output, and

productivity measurement in the context of the impact of increasing globalization and outsourcing. The analysis in this book highlights that these measurement issues have potentially important implications for the analysis of the impact of globalization and outsourcing for the labor market.

Awarding Susan Houseman the 2023 SOLE Prize for Contributions to Data & Measurement is a fitting recognition of her many contributions to improving the nation's economic statistics.

2023 SOLE Prize Nominating Committee

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