CONCEPT NOTE

AI and Official Statistics

Associated event of the tenth session of the Committee on Statistics

Statistics Division
4 December 2026 (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. UTC+7)
Conference Room 1, United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok

Background

Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping how official statistics are produced, disseminated and used, presenting national statistical offices with both an opportunity to modernise their statistical systems and a responsibility to safeguard the trust, quality and integrity on which official statistics depend.

This event will explore two complementary dimensions of this transformation:

- How AI can be used responsibly within the statistical production process, with appropriate governance, ethical safeguards, transparency and human oversight; and
- How national statistical offices can prepare their data, metadata, and standards for an AI-driven world, ensuring that official statistics remain discoverable, machine-readable, correctly interpreted and recognised as authoritative sources as users increasingly access information through AI-powered tools and agents.

It is organised in the context of the DASH Team's work on Artificial Intelligence for Official Statistics, a regional group convened by ESCAP to support national statistical systems across Asia and the Pacific as they explore and adopt AI. The team's activities include documenting regional experiences and lessons learned, convening peer-learning events such as the Asia-Pacific Stats Café series, and developing practical guidance on AI adoption for official

statistics. Building on this foundation, the event is designed to be practical, interactive, and forward-looking, drawing on participants' collective expertise and experiences.

The event is being held alongside the meeting of the UN Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, offering a unique opportunity to bring together statistical and geospatial perspectives on the opportunities and challenges posed by artificial intelligence.

Participation

The event is open to all participants of the Asia-Pacific Statistics Week. Registration information is provided at the end of this concept note

Agenda

Time	Agenda
9:00–9:15	**OPENING SESSION** Welcome by Statistics Division, ESCAP Opening remarks by Ms. Lin Yang, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCAP
9:15–10:30	**SESSION 1 – Responsible AI for Statistical Production: Putting AI to Work** This session examines how National Statistical Offices can harness artificial intelligence across the statistical production process while safeguarding the trust, quality, transparency and integrity that underpin official statistics. • Intro polls: anonymous online polling to set the scene. Moderated by Ms. Rachael Beaven, Director, Statistics Division, ESCAP. • Interactive Table Debate: Participants discuss a series of practical dilemmas facing national statistical offices. Moderated by Mr. Gary Dunnet, Chief Methodologist, Statistics New Zealand.
10:30–10:45	**Break**
10:45–11:50	**SESSION 2 – Getting Your Data Ready for AI** This session explores what it means for official statistics to be “AI-ready” and how national statistical offices can maintain their role as authoritative sources of official data in an increasingly AI-driven world. • Presentation: What it means for data to be AI-ready. Presented by Mr. Arman Bidarbakht Nia, Head, Statistical Data Management Unit, Statistics Division, ESCAP. • Group discussion: Participants will move to the station representing the issue that most limits their organization’s AI readiness. At each station, participants will:

Time	Agenda
	○ Identify key barriers ○ Agree on two to three practical regional actions to address them; ○ Indicate their willingness to contribute to future collaboration on the topic.
11:50–12:00	**CLOSING SESSION** Closing reflections by Ms. Rachael Beaven, Director, Statistics Division, ESCAP

Registration

Participants are kindly requested to register on Indico at https://indico.un.org/event/1023597/ or via the QR code.

For information, please contact Mr. Dayyan Shayani, Statistics Division, at **Dayyan.Shayani@un.org**.

Event website: https://www.unescap.org/events/2026/cst10-associated-event-ai-and-official-statistics

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