

Business Case for use of AI for official statistics – from communication perspectives

This business case was prepared by the Communication Task team under the Capabilities and Communication Group and is submitted to the HLG-MOS for their approval.

Type of Activity			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extension of existing activity
Proposed Modernisation Group(s) for Activity			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Applying Data Science and Modern Methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blue Skies Thinking
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Capabilities and Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting Standards
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Other:</i>		
Purpose			
<p>The capabilities of AI have taken a significant leap forward in the last few years with the advance of Generative AI, a new type of AI system. The release of ChatGPT, which is based on Generative AI, in 2022 has taken the world by surprise and awestruck many people with its capability to write reports, analysis, poems, novels and create images and video that are not only indistinguishable from those made by human but even surpassing them.</p> <p>While statistical organisations have been already using AI for their works (e.g., data editing, text classification, imagery analysis, nowcasting)¹, the emergence of Generative AI has heightened implications for communication and dissemination.</p> <p>Firstly, the services developed based on these Generative AI models such as ChatGPT are easily accessible by non-data scientists. Given that quite some part of daily works of communication experts is around creating content, Generative AI can enhance their productivity and efficiency. Also, the natural-language based interface powered by AI can greatly improve user-friendliness of dissemination and user relation platform. On the other hand, Generative AI is still relatively new and there are concerns around data privacy, reliability of information, potentially negative public perception around statistical organisations using Generative AI for its work. Lastly, but not least, the Generative AI services may change the way people find information on the web which has significant impacts on how statistical organisations disseminate their products.</p> <p>According to the survey conducted by OECD for the UNECE Expert Meeting on Dissemination and Communication of Statistics 2023², 23% of respondents reported using Generative AI for their communication work and 50% indicated their intent to use it. Nevertheless, concerns about reliability and data privacy remain high (83% and 77% moderately/extremely concerned), highlighting the need for guidance on the general knowledge about how to use Generative AI and its ethical use (71% and 64% respectively).</p> <p>Based on these, the activity has three purposes – to explore</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) how to use AI to boost the productivity of communication experts; 			

¹ <https://unece.org/statistics/publications/machine-learning-official-statistics>

² <https://unece.org/statistics/events/DissComm2023>

- 2) How to communicate that statistical organisations are using AI so that they can maintain trust in official statistics;
- 3) How AI affects the information landscape with Generative AI-based services becoming more and more prominent source of information and knowledge, and how statistical organisations should communicate their data and services.

Description of the activity and deliverable(s)

The Generative AI is an emerging technology and, similar to the early days of social media, many organisations are just starting to explore the potential of the generative AI. Given this stage, the activity will first focus on gathering practices and sharing experiences including implications (e.g., legal aspects) within the communication experts. Then the activity will develop a short document with an analysis of initial lessons learned and recommendations for the community.

Alternatives considered

None

How does it relate to the HLG-MOS vision and other activities under the Group or HLG-MOS?

Generative AI is an emerging technology that could change the way statistical organisations work in a transformative way, thus the activity is highly in line with the vision of HLG-MOS. Coordination with the HLG-MOS project team on Generative AI will be critical to ensure synergies (e.g., data scientists/methodologist perspectives vs. communication expert perspective) and avoid duplication of efforts. The activity also has a close connection with CapComm Ethics (e.g., “ethical” use of new technology and communicating it to public).

Proposed start and end dates

Start: January 2024

End: December 2024