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STATISTICS CENTRE

Press Release

The Statistics Centre – Abu Dhabi: Big Data highly impact statistical work

Abu Dhabi, 30 October 2021: The Statistical Training Institute (STI) of the Statistics Centre - Abu Dhabi (SCAD) recently held a virtual seminar titled 'The Data Revolution and Big Data in Official Statistics', as part of the Abu Dhabi Data Dialogue series, organised by the STI. Representatives from Abu Dhabi government entities and statistical centres at the state level participated in the seminar, which was presented by international experts in statistics, data and artificial intelligence (AI) – aiming to raise government employees' awareness of the importance and impact of the latter on life aspects in contemporary society, especially on the economic and social aspects.

The seminar deliberated the 'Big Data' revolution in official statistics and its future around the world, and the prerequisites for starting big data projects, both from the perspective of national statistical offices and data producers. This is considered a vital topic, especially with the Abu Dhabi government's tendency to benefit from big data and AI in decision-making for the benefit of society.

Dominik Rozkrut, President of Statistics Poland, was a speaker at the virtual session and shed light on the latest developments in big data at the United Nations and the European Union. He also discussed the impact of global data revolution, as it reduces the cost and burden in official statistical operations, while expediting analysis and completion.

Dominik Rozkrut said: "Big data is the future of official statistics and the core of decision-making, and there is no alternative to that because big data and AI offer the most modern, accurate and reliable information that is available in a timely manner. This trend requires joining efforts of the scientific community and researchers with statisticians, who demonstrate the methodologies, frameworks, quality and accuracy of data, and whom efforts are needed to devise new methodologies and frameworks to link the different systems of big data – given the change of the statistical system worldwide. Statisticians are responsible to support the society by being creative in statistical work, so as the society must support statisticians by adhering to laws, regulations and facilitating access to information."



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On the Polish experience, Dominik Rozkrut said: "The challenge we faced was that we were ordered to count agricultural crops from space within three years only, and we succeeded in that, and now we can determine everything about agricultural crops from space for every 10 square meters." He stressed that they "did not imagine the extent and size of the extrapolation that is found in big data," noting that "in one of the livestock projects that I went through, the automatic milking machine was connected to 600 sensors per udder," wondering: "Is it possible to imagine the amount of information that can be obtained in all economic and social sectors by relying on sensors?"

Dominik Rozkrut answered a question about the maritime transportation when he said: "By recognising the ship's engine model, fuel and speed, algorithms can determine the weight of the ship's cargo and the nature of its mission and whether it is legal or not. The internal transportation system can also be stimulated through all means to transport the cargo in the fastest and cheapest ways. Algorithms can also determine the volume of emissions and pollution, and many other data, and devise future plans for the transportation sector based on these real-time data."

Expert Yacoub Nuseibeh from SCAD also participated in the virtual session, and reviewed SCAD's recently-launched Insights and Foresights Platform, a leading product in the region, where statistical data and big data are used to provide real-time analyses and future visions.

Yacoub Nuseibeh said: "The Insights and Foresights Platform is one of the successful projects in statistics and big data. There are many projects that rely on big data and AI, but they provide their information from one angle or one sector, while this platform is unique as it is a central point where data, statistics and big data meet, to be processed via AI algorithms, to extract real-time analyses and future insights."

Nuseibeh added: "The platform uses around 3,000 indicators to produce about 300 new interactive indicators, including consumer spending, employment rates, consumer prices, and real estate market data, in addition to the platform's ability to conduct simulation scenarios." Nuseibeh noted that the platform integrated various sources of data to come up with new, highly-accurate indicators tailored to Abu Dhabi, relying on SCAD's data as a reference, because data quality is key to success in this field.



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Nuseibeh mentioned that exchanging experiences worldwide in the field of big data and statistics is one of the objectives of SCAD's seminars. Therefore, international parties are keen to participate in SCAD's STI activities.

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About Statistics Centre – Abu Dhabi (SCAD)

Statistics Centre – Abu Dhabi (SCAD) was established in 2008 in accordance with Law No. (7), to develop and organise statistical work in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in particular and the United Arab Emirates in general. SCAD's purpose is to produce statistical information that is consistent with the Emirate's orientation towards sustainable development and strategic plans under the supervision and with full support of the Executive Council of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Being the official statistical data collection agency in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the centre assumes the functions of preparing the statistical plans and programmes that serve the emirate's wider development programmes, conducting statistical surveys across the emirate. SCAD is also responsible for the collection, classification, storage, analysis and dissemination of official statistics and the release of the results of social, demographic, economic, environmental and cultural surveys.

The activities of the centre encompass all areas relating to social conditions in accordance with relevant international standards and ethics, such as independence, professionalism, impartiality, objectivity, confidentiality, cost effectiveness and quality of statistics.

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