

Gender Lab

The Newsletter of

AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality



Issue 19, September 2023

WELCOME

The AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality welcomes you to the nineteenth issue of our monthly newsletter. At the Lab we aim to promote gender equality in the economic and social spheres through rigorous scientific methodologies. We carry out theoretical and empirical, high-quality research with a strong policy impact.

In this issue you will find highlights of the research and activities we carried out during the past month. Our research includes all areas of gender economics, gender policies, gender diversity management, education, family dynamics, culture, politics, and women's empowerment. You will also find updates about events and our team.

We are happy to connect with you, for which we have left our contact information at the end of the newsletter.

MEET THE TEAM!

- [Paola Profeta](#), Director
- [Caroline Coly](#), Post-doctoral Researcher
- [Francesco Maura](#), Post-doctoral Researcher
- [Kenza Ellass](#), Post-doctoral Researcher
- [Viola Salvestrini](#), Post-doctoral Researcher
- [Ximena Caló](#), PhD Student

We are pleased to welcome post-doctoral researchers [Kenza Ellass](#) and [Viola Salvestrini](#) to our team this month. Kenza will be defending her PhD in Labour and Gender Economics at the Aix-Marseille School of the Economics and Labour Chair of the Paris School of Economics in October. She is interested in applied labour, gender, and urban economics. Viola is also a PhD candidate at Queen Mary University of London, and is interested in applied microeconomics, with a focus on gender economics, personnel economics, and entrepreneurship.

The Lab also hosts MSc students for [curricular internships](#). This month we bid farewell to [Bianca Meoli](#) (MSc Student, PPA) who has been interning at the Lab since May, but we welcome [Rado Damianov](#) (MSc Student, PPA) and [Klara Lehmann](#) (MSc Student, Friedrich Schiller University Jena). Students interested in this opportunity are welcome to [contact us](#).

OUR RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Family, Labour and Fertility

Reducing the Gender Pay Gap: Can We Let Firms Take Action - Caroline Coly

Caroline, Post-doctoral Researcher at the Lab, presented her work at the EEA-ESEM 2023 conference in Barcelona and the Conference of the European Association of Labour Economics (EALE 2023) in Prague.

Abstract: State interventions to decrease the gender wage gap are often criticized for creating one-size-fits-all which may be inappropriate for the specific difficulties faced by each sector and firm. In this paper, I study a unique policy where French firms were mandated by law to negotiate agreements on gender equality with union representatives. I estimate the causal effect of the signature of such agreements on the wage gap and other measures of gender inequalities. Using a unique combination of administrative datasets, I exploit the staggered signature of agreements over the 2010-2013 period and find that the law had an effect on the signature of those agreements but did not alter the gender wage gap nor many other outcomes reflecting gender inequalities. The absence of gender-related changes can plausibly be explained by the lack of obligation of result in the law and by the weak oversight of agreements' content.

You can access the working paper [here](#).

The multiple dimensions of selection into employment - Kenza Ellass

Kenza, Post-doctoral Researcher at the Lab, presented her work at the Conference of the European Association of Labour Economists (EALE 2023) in Prague.

Abstract: A vast literature on gender wage gaps has examined the importance of selection into employment. However, most analyses have focused only on female labour force participation and gaps at the median. The Great Recession questions this approach both because of the major shift in male employment that it implied but also because women's decisions to participate seem to have been different along the distribution, particularly due to an "added worker effect". This paper uses the methodology proposed by Arellano and Bonhomme (2017) to estimate a quantile selection model over the period 2007-2018. Using a tax and benefit microsimulation model, I compute an instrument capturing the male selection induced by the crisis as well as female decisions: the potential out-of-work income. Since my instrument is crucially determined by the welfare state, I consider three countries with notably different benefit systems - the UK, France and Finland. My results imply different selection patterns across countries and a sizeable male selection in France and the UK. Correction for selection bias lowers the gender wage gap and, in most recent years, reveals an increasing shape of gender gap distribution with a substantial glass ceiling for the three countries.

You can access the working paper [here](#).

Women's Empowerment

Gender diversity and decision-making in teams - Viola Salvestrini (with M. Ronchi)

Viola, Post-doctoral Researcher at the Lab, presented her work at the EEA-ESEM 2023 conference in Barcelona.

Abstract: This paper investigates the effect of gender diversity in teams on their decision-making process and the quality of decisions. We focus on the Italian judicial system and assemble a novel database containing the universe of collegial ruling sentences from first, second, and last instance criminal courts in the district of Naples and Florence. Exploiting the quasi-random allocation of both judges and cases to judicial panels, in which ruling takes place collegially, we find that mixed-gender teams rule more leniently on similar offenses. The effect is driven by all-women panels ruling more severely, and it is non-linear in the number of women in the panel. Moreover, all-men teams take less to reach a decision, but they are also more likely to be perceived as wrong when ruling guilty - while we find no such effect for mixed-gender or all-women panels. Finally, we investigate whether gender diversity affects the quality of the final ruling as measured by the probability that the decision taken by the judicial panel is confirmed or overturned in subsequent courts, and find that mixed-gender teams are 5 percentage points more likely to take better decisions than gender-homogeneous teams.

Culture

It's a man's world: culture of abuse, #MeToo and worker flows - Caroline Coly (with C. Batut and S. Schneider-Stawczynski)

Caroline, Post-doctoral Researcher at the Lab, presented her work at the Women in Empirical Microeconomics Workshop in Chicago.

Abstract: Sexual harassment and sexist behaviors are pervasive issues in the workplace. Around 12% of women in France have been subjected to toxic behaviors at work in the last year, including sexist comments, moral, sexual or physical harassment, or violence. Such toxic behaviors can not only deter women from entering the labor market, but can also lead them to leave toxic workplaces at their own expense. This article is one of the first to examine the relationship between toxic behaviors and worker flows. We use the #MeToo movement as an exogenous shock to France's workplace norms regarding toxic behaviors. We combine survey data on reported toxic behaviors in firms with exhaustive administrative data to create a measure of toxic behaviors risk for all French establishments. We use a triple-difference strategy comparing female and male worker flows in high-risk versus low-risk firms before and after #MeToo. We find that #MeToo increased women's relative quit rates in higher-risk workplaces, while men's worker flows remained unaffected. This demonstrates the existence of a double penalty for women working in high-risk environments, as they are not only more frequently the victims of toxic behaviors, but are also forced to quit their jobs in order to avoid them.

You can access the working paper [here](#).

Policies

Gender gaps in the urban wage premium - Kenza Ellass (with C. García-Peñalosa and C. Schluter)

Kenza, Post-doctoral Researcher at the Lab, presented her work at the GRAPE 2023 - Gender Gaps Conference in Warsaw.

Abstract: In France, the gender wage gap for the 20% of the workforce living in the densest locations is 22% lower than that for those living in the bottom 20% of the density distribution, indicating that women benefit more from urban density than men. This paper explores the importance of geographical location for understanding the gender wage gap. Following the recent literature on economic geography that takes into account the endogeneity of location, we estimate the difference in the returns to urban density across genders. We build an exhaustive matched employer-employee panel database based on administrative data that allows us to follow almost all French workers during the period 2005-2019. Our results show that earnings increase with density for both men and women, with a significantly higher urban wage premium for women, which is about 55% larger than for men. We consider different mechanisms that may explain this pattern, such as the difference in returns to experience, access to childcare facilities and the structure of the local labour market. Our findings suggest that these factors explain all of the gender gap in earnings from living in denser areas.

You can access the working paper [here](#).

AT A GLANCE

- Paola Profeta was [interviewed](#) by *Corriere della Sera* on prospects for gender equality according to a novel UN Women report

You can check more on news and participations [here](#), and also [follow us](#) on Twitter.

NEWS & EVENTS

Seminar Series

We host a seminar series, typically on Tuesdays. This month we launched our 2023-2024 edition by welcoming Danila Serra from Texas A&M University who presented on "Gender and Leadership in Organizations: The Threat of Backlash." Danila showed us that women managers tend to get more backlash and are more reactive to such, tending to self-select out of leadership positions.

Our upcoming seminars include:

"He Said, She Said: Who Gets Believed When Spreading (Mis)information" - [Olga Shurchkov](#) (Wellesley College)

"Gender differences in the willingness to compete against a standard" - [Maria Cubel](#) (University of Bath)

"Parental Leave from the Firm's Perspective" - [Gozde Corekcioglu](#) (Ozyegin University)

Stay tuned for information on future events by regularly checking our [website](#).

CONTACT US:

If you have any questions about our research or if you would like to know more about the Lab and the team, please visit our website at <https://genderlab.unibocconi.eu/> or email us at genderlab@unibocconi.it. You can also follow us on Twitter [@AXAGenderLab](#).

Until next time,

The AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality

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