

Gender Lab

The Newsletter of

AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality



Issue 38, May 2025

WELCOME

The AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality welcomes you to the thirty-eighth edition 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 edition, 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*
- [Francesco Maura](#), *Post-doctoral Researcher*
- [Kenza Ellass](#), *Post-doctoral Researcher*
- [Viola Salvestrini](#), *Post-doctoral Researcher*
- [Olivia Masi](#), *Post-doctoral Researcher*
- [Ximena Caló](#), *PhD Student*
- [Niccolò Baldesi](#), *Pre-Doc*
- [Bianca Meoli](#), *Pre-Doc*
- [Mohamed Horchani](#), *Pre-Doc*
- [Matilde Bontempo](#), *Research Assistant*

In addition to our core team, we collaborate with [external fellows](#) and welcome [visitors](#). This month we welcome [Margherita Agnoletto](#), PhD candidate in Economics at the University of Turin and Collegio Carlo Alberto, who will be joining us until August 2025.

We are also delighted to welcome our new MSc students joining the Lab for their curricular internships this month: **Gaia Quagliaroli** (MSc PPA), **Barbara Ogechi Okonkwo** (MSc PPA), **Ines Girace** (MSc PPA) and **Beatrice Morico** (BSc BIG). If you're a student interested in gaining hands-on experience at the Gender Lab, we encourage you to [contact us](#).

OUR RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Women's Empowerment

Gender diversity and teams' decision making – [Viola Salvestrini](#) with *M. Ronchi*

Key points:

- We study the effect of gender composition within teams in the judiciary.
- Team's gender composition matters for decision-making: all-women teams are more likely to convict, while all-men's teams are to make decisions.
- Team's gender composition matters for decision-quality: mixed gender panels are more likely to make good decisions compared to same-gender panels, with the effect driven by all-men teams performing poorly.
- Results are not driven by specific types of crimes or by other dimensions of diversity correlated with gender.
- Gender composition matters only in complex decision-making, suggesting that gender-based disparities emerge primarily when cases necessitate deeper analysis and nuanced consideration.

Viola Salvestrini, Post-doctoral Researcher the Lab, [presented](#) her work at invited seminars in LMU Munich and Regensburg University, at the Mend The Gap in Economic Opportunities Workshop in Rome, and at JEM25 in the University of Milan.

Politics

From Voters to Politicians: The Vanishing Gender Gap in Preferences – [Ximena Caló](#), [Paola Profeta](#) with *R. Puglisi, S. Scabrosetti*

Key points:

- In a representative democracy, the extent to which gender-specific policy preferences are transmitted through the stages of political selection is relevant for assessing the substantive quality of representation.
- Using cross-sectional data from the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS), we explore gender gaps in policy preferences among individuals, political candidates, and elected officials.
- We find that women consistently express more progressive preferences than men, but these gender gaps are narrower among candidates, and even less pronounced among elected officials.
- Among politicians, gender gaps are more pronounced in countries with higher levels of political gender equality and they persist on certain identity-linked issues such as same-sex rights.
- In particular, right-wing women in more inclusive contexts are less likely to align fully with the average positions of their parties, instead maintaining distinct policy profiles.

Ximena Caló, PhD Student at the Lab, [presented](#) her work at PoBI 2025 held at the Central European University.

Family

Women's Caring Penalty at Retirement in Europe – [Francesco Maura](#), [Paola Profeta](#)

Key points:

- As population ages, there is an increasing demand for caregiving services and household decide whether purchase these services or produce them.
- In the second case, one working member should retire or leave his/her job, in most cases a woman.
- We study the impact of retirement due to caregiving responsibilities on women's post-retirement earnings compare to regular retirement.
- The results show that the (negative) effect of retirement among those who retire because of caregiving duties is almost three times larger than the impact on regular retirees.

Francesco Maura, Post-doctoral Researcher the Lab, [presented](#) his work at the SHARE Online Seminar Series.

Education

Gender composition and university climate – [Paola Profeta](#), [Silvia Griselda](#), [Giulia Savio](#)

Key points:

- The university climate is an essential factor that influences students' academic outcomes and career trajectories.
- Traditional masculinity norms, particularly prevalent in male-dominated fields, can pose substantial barriers to success, especially for female students.
- This paper first measures students' adherence to masculinity norms, their anxiety levels, and their confidence in their academic performance relative to peers.
- Second, we explore how these factors correlate with and predict academic performance and future career aspirations.
- Finally, leveraging the random assignment of students into different class groups within the same course at an elite university, we examine how peer gender composition influences students' masculinity norms, anxiety levels, academic confidence, and exam performance.
- Our findings demonstrate that increased exposure to female peers reduces adherence to traditional masculinity norms and anxiety, while enhancing students' confidence and academic outcomes.

Paola Profeta, Director of the Lab, [presented](#) her work at the Workshop on Gender and Education in Collegio Carlo Alberto and at the Gender Talk Series in the EUI.

AT A GLANCE

- Paola Profeta [participated](#) at a panel discussing how organizations are responding to political and cultural backlash against diversity and inclusion policies, particularly in the wake of US policy shifts under the Trump administration at the Festival dei diritti umani.

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

NEWS & EVENTS

Mend the Gap in Economic Opportunities

On May 15–16, 2025, the Gender Lab co-organized a high-level workshop in Rome alongside the World Bank, the Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance (EIEF), and LABOUR: Review of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations.

The event, [Mend the Gap](#), brought together leading researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to discuss persistent gender disparities in labor force participation, entrepreneurship, and economic inclusion across Europe and Central Asia.

Through a series of evidence-based discussions, the workshop explored context-specific strategies to advance women's economic empowerment and promote inclusive growth in the region.

Meet with Us

In May, we were pleased to welcome [Sina Smid](#) from Uppsala University for an internal talk. Sina will be joining the Gender Lab as a Post-Doctoral Researcher in the Fall.

We are always happy to host our colleagues and foster insightful discussions.

Seminar Series

We host a [seminar series](#), typically on Tuesdays at 1pm CET. Our sessions are conducted in hybrid format, so feel free to join us in person at room 3-B3-SR01 or online!

In May we welcomed [Francesca Parodi](#) (University of Milan) who presented the paper "Child-related Transfers, Household Labor Supply, and Fertility".

We also welcomed [Jason Sockin](#) (Cornell University) who presented the paper "Dancing with The Stars: How Workers Respond to Politically-Charged Job Ads"

Soon we will be announcing our 2025-2025 Seminar Series. Stay tuned!

CONTACT US:

If you have any questions about our research or more information 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 X [@AXAGenderLab](#) and Bluesky [@axagenderlab.bsky.social](#).

Until next time,

The AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality

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