

# Gender Lab

The Newsletter of

AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality



Issue 48, April 2026

## WELCOME

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The AXA Research Lab on Gender Equality welcomes you to the forty-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!

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- [Paola Profeta](#), *Director*
- [Francesco Maura](#), *Post-doctoral Researcher*
- [Sina Smid](#), *Post-doctoral Researcher*
- [Ximena Caló](#), *PhD Student*
- [Mohamed Horchani](#), *PhD Student*
- [Matilde Bontempo](#), *Pre-Doc*
- [Edoardo Epifori](#), *Pre-Doc*
- [Miriam Orlando](#), *Research Assistant*

In addition to our core team, we collaborate with [external fellows](#) and welcome [visitors](#). This month we are happy to host [Maya Aidlin-Perlman](#), Development Economics Research Assistant at Yale's Department of Economics. Maya will visit the Gender Lab until the end of June 2026.

We also host students for their [curricular internships](#). This month: [Niklas Reinecke](#) (MSc PPA), [Anna Stanghellini](#) (MSc ESS), [Hanna Hollos](#) (BA, Central European University), and [Irina Alexeeva](#) (MSc PPA). If you're a student interested in gaining hands-on

experience at the Gender Lab, we encourage you to [contact us](#).

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## OUR RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

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### ***Family, Labour and Fertility***

#### **Retirement and Household Financial Headship: Evidence from England – [Francesco Maura](#)**

Key points:

- Retirement reduces personal income and may shift the balance of bargaining power between partners in elderly couples.
- Using data from the English Longitudinal Survey of Ageing, I show that male partners are significantly less likely to be the household financial respondent once they retire, while no significant change for “who has the final say” over major financial decisions.
- Overall, results suggest a decline of men’s control in everyday financial matters, but no significant reallocation of bargaining power for formal financial choices.

The paper was recently published in *Economics Letters*. You can read the full version [here](#).

#### **Survival and Financial Literacy in Investment Decisions Later in Life – [Francesco Maura](#) co-authored with Chiara Dal Bianco, Francesca Parodi, Guglielmo Weber**

Key points:

- Financial resilience in old age is a pressing concern in rapidly aging societies.
- This paper examines how subjective life expectancy shapes saving behavior and financial market participation among older adults, and how these effects are mediated by financial knowledge.
- We empirically show that discrepancies between subjective and objective survival probabilities influence both savings and stock market participation, and that these misperceptions are correlated with cognitive ability.
- We develop a structural life-cycle model to evaluate the impact of policy interventions.
- We find that survival literacy policies – which inform individuals about their true survival probabilities – encourage greater wealth accumulation and reduce exposure to longevity risk.
- In contrast, financial literacy interventions – aimed at lowering participation costs in financial markets – promote investment in risky assets, but disproportionately benefit wealthier households.

Francesco, Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Lab, recently presented his work at the Workshop on the Economics of Ageing held at the Universitat de Barcelona and at Bocconi’s Do.Re.Mee Seminar.

### ***Politics***

#### **The Political Aftershocks of Natural Disasters: Gender Penalties After Crisis – [Ximena Caló](#)**

Key points:

- Do natural disasters systematically disadvantage female politicians? I study this question using Chile’s 2010 earthquake and the country’s open-list proportional representation system for municipal councils, in which voters choose among co-partisans on the same list.
- Using a candidate-level panel of Chilean municipal elections (2004–2021) and a triple-differences design exploiting variation in disaster severity, I find that women candidates in high-exposure communes experienced a decline in within-list vote share relative to male candidates. The penalty appeared in the first post-earthquake election and persisted over the following decade.
- The penalty extends to challengers with no governing record and is not explained by differential campaign financing.
- I additionally document a substantial supply-side withdrawal: the share of female candidates in high-exposure communes fell as women disproportionately exited candidacy after crisis.
- A positive economic shock – the mid-2000s copper boom – produced no comparable gender gap, consistent with crisis-specific stereotype activation rather than symmetric performance-based accountability.
- Climate-related disasters may therefore constitute an underappreciated barrier to gender parity in elected office.

Ximena, PhD Student at the Lab, recently presented her work at the 83rd Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference held in Chicago.

## AT A GLANCE

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- Paola Profeta was [interviewed](#) by *IO Donna* on women's economic independence, noting that perceived financial autonomy still diverges from reality.
- Paola Profeta was [interviewed](#) by *La Stampa* on Italy's transposition of the EU Pay Transparency Directive, arguing that a national law is a key lever to reduce the gender pay gap and that transparency must extend to variable pay and role allocation, not only fixed salaries.

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

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## NEWS & EVENTS

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### 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!

Our upcoming seminars include:

- May 5th: "Gender Differences in Job Finding After Unemployment" – [Fabrizio Colella](#) (Università della Svizzera italiana)

### Joint Webinar Series with World Bank ECA Gender Innovation Lab

As part of our growing collaboration between the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Gender Innovation Lab (ECA GIL), we run webinar series bringing together researchers and policymakers to discuss cutting-edge evidence on gender equality and labor markets. The series aims to strengthen dialogue between frontier research and policy practice, with a focus on how rigorous evidence can inform operational and policy decisions in Europe and Central Asia and beyond.

The joint webinar series takes place monthly and online only. The format of each session will include 30 minutes of research presentation, 15 minutes of policy discussion by a World Bank Task Team Leader, and 15 minutes of Q&A.

This month we held the following seminar:

- April 22nd: "Firm-Level Gender Wage Gaps" – Speaker: [Marco Palladino](#) (Banque de France & Sciences Po)

Our upcoming seminars include:

- May 27th: "Women's STEM Enrollment in Uzbekistan" – Speaker: [Dilnovoz Abdurazzakova](#) (Central European University)

## 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](mailto: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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