



## Visible Women: Gender | Data | Social Europe

### FEMETRICS LAB

#### Call for contributions and funded conference participation in Florence, Italy

30 August 2024

[FEMETRICS](#) is a project funded under the European University Institute's [Widening Europe](#) Programme. It addresses gender data gaps by assessing official statistics providers, highlighting the non-economic aspect of gender-data availability, capturing the broader wellbeing of women and girls, and analysing policy and legal frameworks. It combines policy analysis with data science and focuses on intra- and inter-generational equity by analysing the state of affairs of sex-/gender-disaggregated data and pathways to such data at EU level and in the 15 EU member states targeted by the EUI *Widening Europe* Programme<sup>1</sup>. The project is led by Jaromír Harmáček<sup>2</sup>, Bogna Pietlinska<sup>3</sup> and Gaby Umbach<sup>4</sup>.

#### Rationale

Data are the oxygen of evidence-informed policy-making. By virtue of the different functions they perform, they “have become instruments of collective political action”<sup>5</sup>, without which contemporary politics are unthinkable.

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<sup>1</sup> Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Development and Environmental Studies Palacky University Olomouc.

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor, Institute for Applied Social Studies, University of Warsaw.

<sup>4</sup> Part-time Professor and Director, Research Area 'Knowledge, Governance, Transformations', Global Governance Programme, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

<sup>5</sup> Umbach, Gaby (2022): Statistical and Data Literacy in Policy-Making, Special Stream on 'Statistical and Data Literacy in Policy-making' of the Statistical Journal of the International Association of Official Statistics (SJIAOS), 38(2), p. 445-452, p. 445.

In light of the exponential growth in the use and influence of data, and the ecosystem of data sources, understanding and analysing data and statistics have become essential challenges for both policy-making and academia. To understand the quality of, and gaps in, data at the foundations of policy design is therefore a future-oriented skill and task, essential to democratic accountability.

Flawed data, data inequalities<sup>6</sup> and distorted data analysis breed policy interventions set to fail, with real world implications. Few areas reflect the interlinkages between the data knowledge base of political interventions and democratic policy outcomes<sup>7</sup> as much as social policy, for which a reliable factual basis is indispensable to targeting regulation.

It has been well documented that gender bias in data, i.e., data where men are the norm, fail to adequately reflect women's lived experiences<sup>8</sup>. In 2022, UN Women estimated that it would take 22 years to close the gender data gap to adequately assess the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and concluded that no one country had all the necessary sex-/gender-disaggregated data (GDD) available<sup>9</sup>.

Data accessibility is crucial to facilitate social policy analysis and design. Improving data pathways facilitates access to GDD across different levels of political and governance systems. Analysing data pathways to GDD assesses existing institutions, processes, networks, and initiatives of data collection, curation, and use to inform policy-making on women's wellbeing and gender equality in social policy. The optimisation of existing data collection patterns and management is as much of interest here as are the quality of data used to assess women's well-being, the structure and governance of data, the contribution of data communities, open data infrastructure, and data sharing by policy-making bodies for the public good. The analysis of data pathways creates common knowledge of European and country-specific practice.

The present FEMETRICS call for contributions focuses on gender-data related deep dives into social policy research. These can have the form of data analysis, reports, explorative academic reflections, research papers, or proposals for upcoming research on the topics of FEMETRICS. Thematically, they focus on

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<sup>6</sup> Fisher, A., Streinz, T. (2022). Confronting data inequality. *Columbia Journal of International Law* 60, 829–955.

<sup>7</sup> See De Luca, S. (2022). Data revolution e democrazia: un rapporto problematico. *Storia del pensiero politico*, pp. 431–448. <https://doi.org/10.4479/106361>.

<sup>8</sup> See Criado Perez, C. (2019). *Invisible women: Exposing data bias in a world designed for men*. Random House, and D'Ignazio, C., & Klein, L. F. (2020). *Data feminism*. MIT press.

<sup>9</sup> UN Women (2022). It will take 22 years to close SDG gender data gaps. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/feature-story/2022/09/it-will-take-22-years-to-close-sdg-gender-data-gaps>.

intra- and inter-generational equity by inviting research on the impact of sex-/gender-disaggregated data and pathways to such data in the field of EU social policy to harness research and analyses to improve existing approaches, policies, and institutions. Proposed contributions shall focus on the quality of data used to assess women's well-being, the structure and governance of data, open access to data, and data sharing by policy-making bodies for the public good. Proposed contributions can combine policy and/or social science analysis with data science, and can use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods.

### Application guidelines

Statistical data collection most commonly applies a disaggregation by biological sex (i.e., a binary definition of sex). However, gender-disaggregated data (i.e., reflecting social identities) play an important role in framing social policies. Submissions can focus either on sex-disaggregated or on gender-disaggregated data and/or apply a comparative perspective to both types of data to allow for a broad perspective on the subject area. The project does not apply any type of judgement whatsoever on a broader definition of gender, and it does not advocate for any limitations in defining gender. Rather, it acknowledges that GDD provide deeper insights into a broad range of social and gender-related realities.

Following the geographical focus of the EUI's *Widening Europe* Programme, the FEMETRICS call for contributions targets the following 15 EU member states: **Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.**

Early-stage Researchers<sup>10</sup> (ESR) are invited to submit proposals. The applicant (i.e., the author submitting the contribution to the present call) must be a citizen of one of the above 15 targeted EUI *Widening Europe* Programme countries to be eligible to apply. They may be resident outside their own country, but inside Europe.

We welcome applications with research already conducted, as well as concrete proposals from researchers interested in the topic and committed to developing their research focus in the area.

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<sup>10</sup> The submitting author, i.e., the author submitting the proposal to this call and applying for participation in the FEMETRICS Lab at the EUI in Florence, must be an Early-Stage Researcher (ESR), citizen of one of the above-listed targeted EU member states of the EUI *Widening Europe* Programme, and resident in Europe. ESR can range from the start of their PhD, up to 3 years following the completion of their PhD. Co-authors can be of any level of experience.

The proposals shall focus on gender data and social policy with a preferred focus on one of the following strands, or a combination thereof:

- 1) GDD in the social policy sphere, including but not limited to the a) impact of (missing) GDD on policy design and human wellbeing, and b) social data analysis under a GDD lens;
- 2) Data pathways to GDD in the social policy sphere.

Authors, in their existing or proposed research, are invited to assess existing institutions, processes, networks, and data collection patterns to identify best practices and relevant GDD gaps in the above-mentioned fifteen countries. These fifteen countries shall also feature as case studies for proposed contributions (either individually or in a comparative perspective). Case studies from other countries are also welcome.

Contributions can be prepared by a single author or a group of authors. The submitting author must be from one of the above-listed EU member states of the EUI *Widening Europe* Programme and resident within Europe.

The final conference will take the form of a FEMETRICS Lab, designed to share, and challenge ideas and findings, and build proposals that draw on and compare experiences of EUI *Widening Europe* Programme countries' researchers living in Eastern and Western Europe. The lab will culminate in two outputs: (1) Concrete recommendations for improving the gender data infrastructure in the selected countries and beyond, and (2) identification of key future research areas in the field.

The submitting author (i.e., an ESR) of the selected contribution will be invited to participate in person in the FEMETRICS Lab. FEMETRICS will cover travel and accommodation costs for the participation of submitting authors. Other authors of both selected and non-selected contributions are invited to participate online.

The best final contributions will be invited for publication in a special journal issue on gender disaggregated data and data pathways. The journal will be in the field of gender and social policy (such as the European Journal of Politics and Gender).

## Key dates

- **15 September 2024:** Deadline for submitting proposals (up to 5-pages).
- **20 September 2024:** Successful candidates are notified. They will receive a research input paper from FEMETRICS, including the state of

the art on the two strands, as a common analytical reference point for discussion and the finalisation of their contributions to the conference.

- Selected submitting authors will be invited to participate in the final conference.
- Co-authors and interested non-selected authors will be invited to participate in the final conference online.
- **11-12 November 2024:** Final FEMETRICS Lab at the EUI in Florence (participation of the submitting author – an ESR – from each of the 15 EUI *Widening Europe* programme member states and online option for co-authors and interested non-selected authors).
- **December 2024:** Preparation of journal special issue and reflections on future collaboration.

Contribution proposals should be submitted in a **single email addressed to both** Part-time Prof Dr Gaby Umbach ([gaby.umbach@eui.eu](mailto:gaby.umbach@eui.eu)) and Mira Tiwari ([miramanini.tiwari@eui.eu](mailto:miramanini.tiwari@eui.eu)) with the subject line '**FEMETRICS Proposal**'.

In case of questions related to this call, please contact Part-time Prof Dr Gaby Umbach and Mira Tiwari at the European University Institute's Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.