Projects involving members of The Knowledge Space

Listed in alphabetical order

Applied Data Science for Social Research (ADSSR) Working Group

The ADSSR Working Group, founded by Igor Tkalec and now led by Raffaele Ventura, is hosted at Knowledge, Governance, Transformations. It involves seminars, demonstrations, and exchanges among social science researchers on how to best harness computational developments and modelling techniques to better understand social phenomena and contribute relevant policy solutions. The topics include data mining, machine learning techniques, quantitative text analysis, ethical concerns around big data, data visualisation and storytelling, and evidence-informed policy-making.

Funding Entity: Global Governance Programme, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute

Collaborators: Raffaele Ventura, Igor Tkalec, Gaby Umbach

At a Glance: Economic indicators and trade with the EU series

Monthly infographics comparing the economic indicators of a country, or cluster of countries, and their trade with the EU. Produced as a collaboration between GlobalStat, under Knowledge, Governance, Transformations, and the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS).

Collaborators: Raffaele Ventura, Gaby Umbach, Igor Tkalec

Collaboration with the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)

A longstanding partnership between GlobalStat and the EPRS, since 2015, offering tailored publications and a gateway to statistical data for Members of European Parliament, their staff, and the staff of EP Committees. GlobalStat and EPRS work together to provide statistical information on the EU and its global partners through the joint publication series At a Glance and Living in the EU, involving targeted infographics and research dossiers. GlobalStat is embedded as the 'Statistics Warehouse' in EPRS's intranet, serving as the EPRS' main in-house statistics platform.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Raffaele Ventura, Mira Tiwari, Igor Tkalec

Cooperation with the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) on the UN Regional Coordinator Offices (RCO) Learning Path

In 2021, GlobalStat contributed to the UN Regional Coordinator Offices Learning Path of the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), developing an online training module on 'Data-driven Evidence-informed Policy-making for Sustainable Development'. The module focuses on issues of data use in evidence-informed policy-making and is designed as a two-hour online learning module, which targets data literacy of actors involved in RCO policy preparation, support and advice. It aims to sensitise them to the key challenges of the use of statistics and data in evidence-informed politics. Upon invitation and formal application, GlobalStat was also added to the UNSSC's official 'Roster of Instructors for the delivery of training and learning activities on Data, Monitoring and Evaluation topics'.

Funding entity: United Nations System Staff College

Data for Policy

Gaby Umbach advises Area 3: Policy & Literacy for Data, of the Data for Policy community. The area focuses on "understanding and managing the intricate relationships between data subjects, data controllers, and stakeholders, and on encouraging policymakers to reconsider the balance of power in data governance".

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach

Expert Knowledge and Authority in Transformative Times (EKATT)

EKATT is one of the EUI's seven interdisciplinary research clusters, and is led by Gaby Umbach and Mira Tiwari at Knowledge, Governance, Transformations. The cluster was formerly *The Crisis of Expert Knowledge and Authority*, pertinent at the time for the challenges around science and expertise faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2024 the cluster formally turned away from the focus on crises, broadening to the complexities of, and approaches to, knowledge, expertise, and evidence across ongoing issues. The members and discussions are consistently interdisciplinary, including, but not limited to, law, economics, sociology, statistics, digital policy, international relations, anthropology, history, and medicine.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Mira Tiwari

Dataset on the Political Economy of Measuring State Capacity and Governance

A cross-sectional dataset mapping the governance level and locations of production and funding of a wide range of governance measures. The tool offers a valuable resource for several target groups such as civil society actors seeking to participate in related governance processes; policy-makers engaged in development processes and governance reforms; and academics involved in governance and development studies.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Debora Valentina Malito, Neha Bhuta

European Strategy and Policy and Analysis System (ESPAS): Horizon Scanning

Horizon scanning, comprising signs of the new, sense-making, and meaning-making, as part of the European Commission's Knowledge for Policy work.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach

FEMETRICS – Visible Women: Gender, Data, Social Europe

FEMETRICS analysed institutionalisation and mandate for, the availability of, and the data pathways to, sex- and/or gender-disaggregated data (S/GDD).

The first part traced the legal mandates for such data at the global and EU levels. The availability analysis investigated and mapped the extent and nature of at the UN (SDG) and EU levels, in collaboration with the Social Progress Imperative. The study examined the EU's Social Progress Index (SPI) and Regional Competitiveness Index (RCI), two of the principal sustainable development indices in the region. The third strand, concerning the pathways to obtaining such data, involved a survey of national statistical offices in EU member states to analyse the institutional understandings, provisions, and practices for S/GDD. This was accompanied by a case study of interview with statistical actors in Poland.

The FEMETRICS Lab in 2024 saw presentations and workshops with global experts from UN Women and the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, and experts and early-stage researchers from EUI Widening Europe countries, sharing best practices and insights on S/GDD in their domains and contexts.

Funding Entity: EUI Widening

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Petra Krylova, Jaromir Harmacek, Bogna Kietlinska, Mira Tiwari, Raffaele Ventura, Carmen Ramirez Folch, Laura Rahm, Costanza Hermanin, Laura de Dominicis, Ginette Azcona

GlobalStat

At the beginning of GlobalStat's development in 2011, open access to data and data for politics were in their infancy. It was launched in 2015 with a starting grant by the Portuguese Fundação Francisco Manual dos Santos (FFMS), and took up the need for publicly available information on developments in a globalised world. Accounting for the multidimensional character of globalisation, sustainability and human development, it presents data on a wide range of topics and from a broad range of international statistical resources. Focusing on the economic, environmental, political, social, societal and cultural performance of nations, GlobalStat supports a 'beyond GDP perspective' on globalisation and aims at informing about the way human beings live, the freedoms they enjoy and the limitations they face. GlobalStat is currently funded by the EUI's Global Governance Programme and external funding.

Funding Entities: Global Governance Programme,Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute; Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos (Initial Founding Financier).

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Raffaele Ventura, Igor Tkalec

Human-environmental interactions in condition of scarcity: managing renewable natural resources

As a conclusion and continuation of Raffaele Ventura's PhD research project, research activities are conducted on the topic of natural resource governance in conditions of scarcity with a regional focus on the Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa. Initially focusing on research related to rivers and water resources, the current and future efforts in this area aim to expand to other resources, including forests and fisheries.

Collaborators: Raffaele Ventura

Institute for European Politics (IEP), Berlin

Conducting research, fora, and trainings on European and foreign policy. Gaby Umbach holds the positions of Academic Coordinator and Workshop Chair of the strategy group on the future of German EU policies.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach

Living in the EU series

Infographics and insights on targeted EU policy areas, with information on the indicators themselves and current EU data. A collaboration between GlobalStat, under Knowledge, Governance, Transformations, and the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS).

Collaborators: Raffaele Ventura, Gaby Umbach, Igor Tkalec

Measuring Governance to achieve Sustainable Development: Promises and Challenges (2021)

Debora Valentina Malito, Gaby Umbach, Antonio Savoia, and David Hulme In: Walter Leal Filho, A.M. Azul, Luciana Brandli, Pinar G. Özuyar and Tony Wall, Tony (Eds.). *Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions,* Springer, pp. 1-8. [peer-reviewed]

On the political economy and geopolitics of indices for sustainable development

Complementing the editorial work on the Elgar Companion on Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals, Mira Tiwari and Gaby Umbach developed a novel dataset on indices of sustainable development. The dataset covers indices that have narrative power, covering more than one country, goal, and published in more than one year. It details the nature and composition of the indices, and moreover two essential strands that are hitherto not analysed in existing comparisons: the political economy and geopolitics of the indices' funders and producers, and the indices' data quality in terms of accessibility, comprehensibility, and applicability. It thus offers users a critical, and practical, understanding of who currently shapes the sustainable development measurement narrative, and the extent to which relevant data are indeed useable by those actors they intend to serve.

Funding Entity: Global Governance Programme, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute

Collaborators: Mira Tiwari, Gaby Umbach

On the Political Economy of Measuring State Capacity and Governance: Mapping Transnational Approaches and their Production

Given the relevance of good governance for both the academic and policy debate of the Post-2030 Development Agenda, the project took the problematic state of measuring governance and state capacity as its starting point. It mapped the political economy of governance and state capacity measures by systematically analysing who rates state capacity and governance where, how, what for, and funded by whom, including how governance and state capacity are defined. The output provides insight on relevant aspects of contextualisation, and potential issues of translation into and adaptation within different political systems. The interdisciplinary project was conducted by political scientists from the EUI's Global Governance Programme (Gaby Umbach, Debora Malito) together with economists of the Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre (ESID) from the University of Manchester (David Hulme, Antonio Savoia). It received funding from ESID.

Funding Entities: Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre (ESID)

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Debora Valentina Malito

The Elgar Companion to Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Elgar Companion to the SDGs was commissioned by Edward Elgar publishers and is co-edited by Gaby Umbach and Igor Tkalec, with Mira Tiwari. It is part of the Elgar Companions to the SDGs series. The Companion's 35 chapters are divided into five parts: I. The politics and ethics of measuring progress towards the SDGs, II. The institutionalisation of data and indicators for the SDGs, III. Data quality and sources, IV. Skills for measuring the SDGs, and V. Goal-specific insights from each of the SDGs. Together with the diverse authorship, which prioritises Majority World and female contributors, and includes both academic and practitioner input, the result is a rich and comprehensive volume offering both critical and constructive learnings around the 2025 Comprehensive Review and towards a post-SDGs landscape.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Igor Tkalec, Mira Tiwari

The *Consiglio dei Giovani* (Youth Council) of Siena

A multi-year initiative to challenge paternalistic grant-making and governance structures in Siena, Italy. The initiative began with a year and a half of focus groups and surveys, leading to the election of the city's first youth council in autumn 2024. Mira Tiwari is part of the Council's founding governance. She leads the Council's research (best practices and the development of a case study), manages the strategy of the Council with the FMPS and Generazione T, and is responsible for the youth representation and coordination of the Council with governance and civic entities in the province.

Funding Entity: Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena

Collaborator: Mira Tiwari

The Palgrave Handbook on Indicators in Global Governance (2018)
Co-edited by Debora Valentina Malito, Nehal Bhuta, and Gaby Umbach. Palgrave Macmillan. [peer-reviewed]

TRIGGER

The TRIGGER project, comprising a consortium of 14 partners, was coordinated by Andrea Renda at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS). It aimed to generate knowledge on the EU's actorness, effectiveness, and influence in global governance. The contribution of GlobalStat focused on the development of different datasets related to global governance, on the analysis of trends in global governance, on the role of the EU in global governance, and on the development of global and EU governance in four different policy areas. Gaby Umbach developed the TRIGGER AGGREGATOR website, an Atlas of Global Governance Regulation and Europe's Actorness. The Aggregator charts the histories of governance practices and the EU's role in several domains.

Funding Entity: EU Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme, Grant Agreement number 822735

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach

WE BE: States of WEllBEing and the Measurement of Healthy Lives

WE BE investigates how wellbeing is currently measured and analysed and, funded by and contributing to the EUI Widening Europe, focuses on concepts, practices, and policies of wellbeing in four targeted case studies from *Widening* contexts (Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, and Hungary) to understand more localised, historically relevant, approaches to healthy societies.

This is compared with a dataset of global wellbeing measures and a systematic review of wellbeing literature, including network analyses of the actors involved, allowing similar comparisons to be undertaken in other regional contexts.

Funding Entity: EUI Widening

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Petra Krylova, Jaromir Harmacek, Bogna Kietlinska, Mira Tiwari, Raffaele Ventura, Attila Bartha

WE BE Global

Following the success of the call for expressions of interest, WE BE has expanded and continued into WE BE Global, with a research network of researchers from more than 20 countries across 5 continents working on context- and domain-specific case studies. They will subsequently collaborate on comparative analytical papers.

Collaborators: Gaby Umbach, Mira Tiwari, Raffaele Ventura, Attila Bartha