

An international audit of the systematic misclassification and underrepresentation of women aged 45–64 in market-based and AI systems.

An international comparative audit in five countries.



One fact that makes this conversation worthwhile

In 2025, Nature published a study showing that age and gender are distorted in online media and language models not by chance, but systematically.

In an experiment involving resumes, ChatGPT assumed that women were younger and less experienced, while it rated older men as better candidates. (Nature)

Nature has identified a pattern. Womafreesm measures its impact on women aged 45–64 in marketing, recruitment and AI systems.



Where does the next research step begin:

Nature has established a solid evidence base. However, three key questions remain unresolved when it comes to practical application in recruitment, marketing and AI auditing.

1. Women aged 45–54 and 55–64 require a separate analysis

These are different career, economic, and social positions. The focus on age obscures the point at which a woman begins to lose visibility, authority, and market value.

2. Marketing remains undermeasured

It is brands that decide on a daily basis who to consider a valuable audience, who to target, who to sell to, and who to ignore.

3. The actual hiring process remains confidential

Public job postings are just for show. The real selection process is revealed in client requests, candidate lists, shortlists, and final decisions.

Womafreesm bridges that gap.



What we do:

We are conducting an international comparative audit of how market-based and AI systems constantly undervalue the relevance, authority, and value of women aged 45–64.

Five countries:

Germany, Poland, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Three decision-making points:

marketing, hiring, AI systems.

Two age groups:

45–54 and 55–64.

Three dimensions:

visibility,
attribution of authority and competence,
assessment of relevance and value.

A pattern is considered significant only if it appears in at least three independent data sources.



Why is this kind of research difficult to conduct?

The issue of age and gender bias has been discussed for a long time. But to truly address it, three things are needed simultaneously.

1. Access to the private recruitment layer.

Not just public job postings, but the actual logic behind the selection process: client expectations, candidate shortlists, and agency decisions.

2. Comparable cross-country design.

Without comparing countries, it is impossible to distinguish local cultural characteristics from systemic patterns.

3. A combination of three circuits in a single study.

Marketing, recruitment, and AI are typically studied separately. Here, they are brought together under a single framework.

It is precisely this combination that makes the study valuable: it measures not an isolated symptom, but a recurring systemic mechanism.



What has already been prepared:

The research doesn't start from scratch

In November 2025, conceptual preparation for the study began: the central research question was formulated, the target age group (45–64) was specified, the key areas of analysis were identified, and the study's connection to the Womafreesm Evidence Data program was established.

As of January 2026, the study has entered its active phase.

The recruitment module is no longer just an idea; it is now in the operational launch phase.

At this point, the key components for the launch have already been prepared:

- the research topic has been established,
- five countries have been identified,
- three areas of analysis have been selected,
- age groups 45–54 and 55–64 have been defined,
- a questionnaire for recruitment agencies has been prepared,
- a team has been assembled to work with agencies,
- negotiations are underway with recruitment agencies,
- the framework for an AI audit has been prepared,
- and work has begun on structured prompts and data collection protocols.



Six research modules

Main modules

1. Audit of AI System Responses

A structured experiment on leading generative models across three domains and five countries.

2. Marketing Content Analysis

Systematic coding of advertisements, landing pages, visual materials, and brand messages.

3. Data from recruitment agencies

A structured survey examining how customer expectations and actual selection criteria influence women aged 45–64.

Optional modules

4. Analysis of Professional Status

How women aged 45–64 are portrayed in public professional materials.

5. A Comparative Analysis of Linguistic and Visual Patterns

Which words, images, and hidden triggers reduce authority and relevance.

6. Expert interviews

Conducted 30–40 interviews to validate and add context to the findings.



What the world will get:

This study isn't just about producing a report for the sake of it. Every finding is intended to be put into practice.

1. Comparative Research Report

across five countries, three domains, and two age groups (45–54 and 55–64).

2. Set of measurable audit indicators

to assess the visibility, credibility, and relevance of women aged 45–64.

3. The first version of the practical audit framework

for brands, employers, recruitment agencies, and AI teams.

4. Public Briefing Note

for donors, the media, and strategic partners.

5. Recommendations

for corporate partners, recruitment agencies, foundations, universities, and institutional players.



Why now:

The regulatory environment is already moving toward auditability, risk documentation, transparency, and human oversight in AI systems.

European Union

The AI Act classifies AI systems used for recruitment, application screening, and candidate assessment as high-risk.
(artificialintelligenceact.eu)

United Kingdom

In a March 2026 publication, the ICO reported that in 2024 it had audited several providers and developers of AI-powered recruitment tools and issued nearly 300 recommendations on compliance. The ICO also emphasizes the need for transparency toward candidates, the right to challenge a decision, and the right to request a human review. (ico.org.uk)

The United States and the International AI Governance Framework

The NIST AI Risk Management Framework and Generative AI Profile establish an approach to managing the risks of generative AI, including reliability, transparency, and risk assessment.
(NIST)

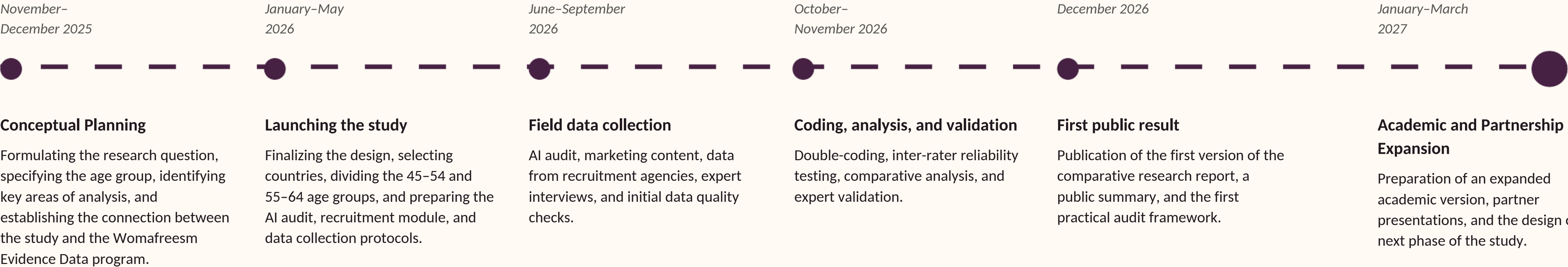
In this context, Womafreesm is not creating an academic artifact, but rather a practical auditing tool.



Research Roadmap

Official title of the study:

International Audit of Systematic Misclassification and Underrepresentation of Women Aged 45–64 in Market and AI Systems.





What exactly does the budget fund?

1. Methodology

Research design, protocols, sampling framework, coding and validation guidelines.

2. Data collection

AI audit, marketing content, recruitment module, expert interviews.

3. Quality of evidence

Double-coding, inter-rater reliability testing, cross-national analysis.

4. Data Protection and Legal Framework

Anonymity, GDPR and UK GDPR review, agency agreements, data retention policy.

5. Publication and Application

Final report, public summary, practical audit framework, materials for donors and partners.

6. Operational Control

Time management, reporting, financial tracking, and progress monitoring.



What does it mean to support this research?

This study shifts the discussion of age- and gender-based bias from opinion to measurement.

For the academic community

this is a new comparative framework that integrates marketing, recruitment, and AI systems.

For women aged 45–64

this is the transformation of their experiences from individual stories into a measurable systemic pattern.

For the market

this is a practical auditing tool for a time when the baseline requirements for AI, fairness, and transparency are stricter than ever.

For donors and partners

this is an early-stage entry into the evidence infrastructure.

By supporting this research, a donor is not merely supporting a single report, but rather the emergence of a new category of evidence-based work.



Context and Continuation

This study is part of the **Womafreesm Evidence Data** program.

The program was created to measure how modern systems describe, evaluate, and distribute the value of women at different stages of the life cycle.

The current audit of women aged 45–64 is the program's first major international study and a preparatory step toward its flagship product:

Women's Life-Cycle Economy Index

The WLCE Index will measure the losses incurred by the economy, healthcare, the labor market, and institutions when systems are designed without taking the female life cycle into account.

The current audit establishes the first layer of evidence: how women aged 45–64 become less visible, less influential, and less relevant in markets, hiring, and AI systems.



Who is behind the study?

The World Organization of Women Nations Womafreesm

US 501(c)(3) Public Charity

Womafreesm creates an international infrastructure for women's influence through three key areas:

Evidence Data

Research, data, indices, and audits of systemic biases.

Legal Rapid Response

Legal pathways, case studies, procedures, and institutional escalation.

Infrastructure

International coordination, partnerships, hubs, participation standards, and reporting.



Next step

If this approach aligns with you, please let us know if you'd be interested in participating.

Founder of Womafreesm

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