

1st International Symposium “Infrastructure for Everyday Life, Social Well-being and New Metrics for Public Decision-Making”

University of Murcia
11–13 June 2026

1. Introduction

The University of Murcia, as the leading institution of the international network EuWIGeN (<https://euwigen.com>), composed of 11 European universities, is organising the **1st International Symposium “Infrastructure for Everyday Life, Social Well-being and New Metrics for Public Decision-Making”**, to be held in Murcia from 10 to 13 June 2026. The symposium is framed within the research project **PID2022-141305OB-I00 (2023)**, *Infrastructure for Everyday Life from a Feminist Well-being Economics Perspective*, funded under the **2022 Knowledge Generation Projects Programme (Type B Oriented Research)**.

This is an international and highly innovative initiative that places the EuWIGeN at the forefront of an emerging field: the analysis of infrastructure as a driver of well-being, productivity, wealth creation and social sustainability. At the same time, it contributes to the broader shift within economics towards the development of new indicators for measuring economic development.

At present, there is no systematic international approach that connects infrastructure, well-being and economics from an integrated perspective in which **social sustainability** is placed at the core of both analysis and policy design.

Furthermore, the international academic community, public institutions and international organisations such as the European Commission, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank and the United Nations are currently engaged in the search for new tools to measure economic development beyond traditional macroeconomic indicators.

This symposium positions EuWIGeN as a leading reference in the construction of these two new analytical frameworks.



2. Approach and Innovative Contributions

The main contributions of the research carried out within the European network EuWIGeN (<https://euwigen.com>) lie in linking public infrastructure policies with people's everyday lives, as well as in the development of a new macroeconomic indicator for measuring development.

Infrastructure represents one of the largest areas of public investment, characterised by its structural nature and long-term effects. However, it has traditionally been conceived as a technical and neutral policy domain, in which the social dimension has largely been overlooked. The approach developed in this project challenges this assumption and argues that its real impact depends on the specific conditions of the population.

Factors such as sex, income level, place of residence (urban/rural), age, care responsibilities, disability and migration status significantly determine access to, use of, and benefits derived from infrastructure, thereby shaping quality of life and well-being.

From this perspective, infrastructure is analysed as a **structural determinant of well-being, economic activity and social cohesion**, introducing the concept of **social sustainability**, understood as the capacity of these policies to sustain everyday life under conditions of accessibility, safety, autonomy and balanced time organisation.

This is an emerging approach at the international level, placing this initiative in a clearly pioneering position.

In this context, the concept of *infrastructure for everyday life*, coined in the Nordic countries in the early 1980s (Horelli and Vepsä, 1984), entails adopting a broad definition of infrastructure, encompassing both physical and social infrastructures, including:

- Educational facilities (particularly early childhood education centres)
- Health centres and hospitals
- Residential care facilities and day-care centres for dependent persons
- Infrastructure for people with disabilities
- Pavements, pedestrian areas and public lighting
- Parks and green areas
- Public transport
- Cultural and sports facilities
- Markets and shopping centres
- Industrial parks
- Telecommunications infrastructure



This approach enables the analysis of infrastructure not only as a support for production, but also as the foundation of quality of life. It constitutes the material basis for access to the labour market, care work, physical and mental health, education, social life and, ultimately, people's everyday well-being — that is, the very foundation of life itself.

Furthermore, the research conducted by the EuWIGeN network, within which this symposium is organised, incorporates a second key innovative element: the development of the **WIGI Index (Well-being and Infrastructure from a Gender Perspective Index)**. This index has been patented by the University of Murcia, validated by the international academic community, presented in numerous forums, and is currently being used by various international organisations.

It is an economic indicator grounded in a conceptual model developed by this research group, referred to as **CAandSWB** (Intellectual Property Registry, scientific work no. MU491-2016), which integrates:

- The **Capability Approach**, focused on what individuals are able to do and to be (Sen, 1980; Nussbaum, 2002)
- The **Subjective Well-being Approach**, based on individual perceptions of quality of life (Veenhoven, 1991, 1996; Upasana, 2010)

This combination allows for a more comprehensive measurement of well-being, overcoming the limitations of traditional macroeconomic indicators such as GDP or CPI, while remaining complementary to them.

By applying this indicator to any set of infrastructures—both basic and social—it becomes possible to identify which infrastructures have an impact on the well-being of women and men, which capabilities they enhance for each group, and what their differentiated subjective effects are, taking into account the socio-personal variables mentioned above. The higher the WIGI Index of a given infrastructure, and the greater the investment allocated to it, the higher the level of development achieved by the society under analysis. This approach allows conventional indicators such as GDP per capita or Gross Domestic Product to be set aside as primary measures of development.

The WIGI Index enables:

- Measurement of the real impact of infrastructure on everyday life
- Identification of inequalities in access and use
- Guidance for public investment decisions
- Improvement of policy efficiency

In this project, the WIGI Index is applied to infrastructure policies. However, as an indicator, it can also be extended to health, education, social, security and other policy domains, thus constituting a highly valuable and transformative tool for public policy design across the three



levels of government in Spain. This underscores the strong transfer potential and policy relevance of the research.

It therefore constitutes an **operational tool for public decision-making** in the field of public policy, while being fully transferable to other policy areas and capable of complementing existing systems of economic measurement.

3. Strategic Relevance of the Symposium

The symposium responds, on the one hand, to the generation of **social wealth**, understood not merely in monetary terms, but as the effective capacity of individuals to develop their lives under conditions of well-being. This is grounded in a new conception of infrastructure policy design, where infrastructure becomes a central element of **social sustainability**. On the other hand, it addresses one of the major current debates in international economic policy: the need to advance towards new indicators of well-being and development that complement or go beyond traditional metrics such as GDP or CPI.

In this context, the project underpinning the symposium is working on the development of alternative macroeconomic indicators capable of more accurately measuring:

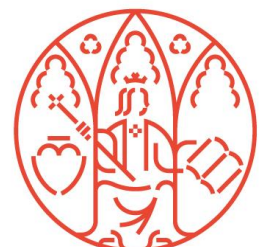
- The quality of life of the population
- The real efficiency of public infrastructure
- The impact of policies on everyday well-being
- The social sustainability of economic growth
- For EuWIGeN, this represents a clear strategic opportunity:
- To position itself within the international debate on new economic metrics
- To strengthen its profile as an innovative hub for evidence-based public policy
- To engage with international research and funding networks
- To contribute to the development of tools applicable to public governance

4. Objectives of the Symposium

The main objective of the symposium is to **transfer these approaches to the institutional sphere** and to open a space for dialogue between research and public policy.

Specific objectives:

- To highlight the role of infrastructure in well-being and economic activity
- To introduce the concept of social sustainability into public policy design
- To present the WIGI Index as an innovative measurement tool and advance its future development
- To foster debate on new well-being metrics
- To build national and international institutional and academic partnerships
- To promote participation in European projects



5. Target Audience

The symposium is aimed at:

- Universities and research centres
- Policy-makers and technical staff within public administrations
- Financial institutions and foundations
- Social and economic stakeholders

The symposium is therefore conceived as a space explicitly oriented towards the **transfer and practical application of knowledge and research to society**.

6. Contents and Implementation of the Symposium

The symposium will be structured over **two scientific days** (11–12 June 2026) and **one strategic day** (13 June 2026), combining:

- Keynote lectures by international experts
- Thematic panels on infrastructure and well-being
- Dialogue spaces between public administrations and academia
- Presentations of ongoing research, both by members of the research team and external researchers working in these fields
- The content will address, among other aspects:
- The impact of infrastructure on economic activity through its role in facilitating access to the labour market, physical and mental health, education, social relationships, leisure and, ultimately, quality of life
- The relationship between mobility, time-use organisation and productivity
- The role of public services in the efficiency of the economic system
- Citizens' perceptions of well-being and their measurement
- Safety and the use of public space

The implementation of the planned activities will follow a structured and sequential approach, combining presentation, debate, knowledge production and transfer.

In an initial phase, an **institutional reception** for participants will take place the day prior to the scientific sessions. This will provide contextualisation and foster early interaction between academic, institutional and social actors.

During the two scientific days, **morning sessions** will be devoted to keynote lectures delivered by internationally recognised experts in feminist well-being economics, urban planning, sociology and public policy. These interventions will establish the theoretical and conceptual framework of the symposium, addressing the role of infrastructure in capability development and well-being from a gender perspective.



Afternoon sessions will be dedicated to presentations of ongoing research by members of the EuWIGeN research team. These sessions will focus on sharing preliminary findings, subjecting them to critical discussion, contrasting empirical evidence and advancing the systematisation of the research line, while also expanding and strengthening the network.

The second day will conclude with a **closing and synthesis session**, summarising key findings, identifying future research directions and reinforcing the consolidation of EuWIGeN as an international cooperation platform.

The programme also includes a dedicated **open session for scientific paper presentations**, scheduled for Friday, allowing participation from external researchers, broadening the scope of the debate, incorporating new perspectives and reinforcing the interdisciplinary nature of the symposium.

Throughout all sessions, structured discussion spaces will be integrated, aimed at identifying practical implications and fostering dialogue between academia, public administrations and social stakeholders, with particular emphasis on the transfer of research results into public policy.

As a specific action, a **consortium working session** will be held among participating members to prepare a European research proposal under the HORIZON-NEB-2026-01-PARTICIPATION-03 call: *“Understanding inhabitants’ experiences of neighbourhoods to support their health and well-being”*. This session will focus on defining research lines, structuring the international consortium and identifying potential work packages.

Overall, the planned activities ensure a structured development of the symposium, combining knowledge generation, participation and transfer-oriented outcomes, in line with its scientific and applied objectives.

Programme

Wednesday, 10 June 2026

Reception of participants

Murcia City Council

Thursday, 11 June 2026

09:00–09:30

Registration of participants

09:30–10:30

“Human rights in everyday life: a framework to support well-being”

Prof. Dr Angela Rose O’Hagan, President of the Scottish Human Rights Commission, EuWIGeN

10:30–12:00

Architecture and Urban Planning



Prof. Dr Ana María Falú, architect, former President of UN Women

Prof. Dr Zaida Muxí Martínez, architect, UN Women, School of Architecture, Art and Design, Monterrey, EuWIGeN

12:00–12:30

Coffee break

12:30–13:30

Objective Well-being. *Gender capability gaps in public space: implications for urban infrastructure*

Prof. Dr Gulay Gunluk-Senesen, Economics, Istanbul University, Türkiye, EuWIGeN

15:30–19:30

Presentation of ongoing research (20 min presentation / 20 min discussion)

1. The effect of infrastructure on well-being through capabilities: a gender perspective
2. The role of infrastructure in gender-based violence: explanatory factors

17:00–17:30

Coffee break

3. Construction of an Index of Well-being and Infrastructure under a Gender Perspective
4. Well-being and Gender in Europe: A Proposal for Measuring Their Impact

Prof. Dr Gloria Alarcón-García, University of Murcia

Prof. Dr José Daniel Buendía Azorín, University of Murcia

Prof. Dr José Manuel Mayor Balsas, University of Murcia

Prof. Dr María Carmen García Centeno, USP CEU Madrid

Prof. Dr Laura de Pablos Escolar, Complutense University of Madrid

Prof. Dr María del Mar Sánchez de la Vega, University of Murcia

Friday, 12 June 2026

09:30–10:30

Objective Well-being. *Promoting well-being through a gender perspective on infrastructure*

Prof. Dr Tindara Addabbo, Economics, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Italy), EuWIGeN

10:30–11:30

Subjective Well-being. *The Subjective Well-being (SWB) approach*

Prof. Dr Beatriz Rodríguez Sánchez, Complutense University of Madrid

11:30–12:00 Coffee break

12:00–13:00

Time use and infrastructure. *Gender equality in time use: changes, resistances and continuities*

Prof. Dr Sara Moreno Colom, Autonomous University of Barcelona

13:00–14:00

Open session for scientific paper presentations

15:30–19:30

Presentation of ongoing research



1. *Placing Mobility in Context...* (multi-paper session)
2. Subjective well-being from a gender perspective and its explanatory factors

17:00–17:30

Coffee break

3. Rural Women on the Move: Gender and Transport Inequalities
4. What Makes Life Excellent? Urban Infrastructure, Leisure, and Subjective Well-being
5. Beyond Schools: Gendered Associations Between Urban Infrastructures and Subjective Educational Well-being
(Participating researchers from UMU, UPCT, UCM, USP CEU, UNL Monterrey and EuWIGeN)

19:30–20:00

Conclusions and future research lines of the EuWIGeN network

Saturday, 13 June 2026

09:00–14:00

Internal working session: preparation of the European project HORIZON-NEB-2026-01-PARTICIPATION-03

“Understanding inhabitants’ experiences of neighbourhoods to support their health and well-being”

7. Call for Papers

In order to further enrich this 1st International Symposium, a dedicated session for the presentation of research papers has been included. These contributions are expected to deepen and expand upon the themes addressed during the symposium.

However, submissions may also address any other topic related to public policy from a gender and equality perspective between women and men, provided they are based on research work.

The acceptance of papers will be subject to evaluation by the Scientific Committee, in accordance with the established timeline, and to prior registration for the symposium through the following platform: <https://casiopea.um.es/> (link to be available soon).

For paper submission, the following form must be completed and the following deadlines observed:

- Submission form > *Submit a paper*
- Deadline for submission of papers > **31 May 2026**
- Notification of acceptance > **7 June 2026**



8. Supporting Universities and Organisations

- Jaume I University, Fundación Isonomía (Spain)
- Miguel Hernández University of Elche, Gender Studies Research Centre (Spain)
- Polytechnic University of Cartagena, Equality Unit (Spain)
- Chair in Social Innovation, University of Murcia, (Spain)
- Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, Scotland, UK
- Polytechnic Institute of Porto, (Portugal)
- Tecnológico de Monterrey, (Mexico)
- Autonomous University of Nuevo León, (Mexico)
- Association of Men for Gender Equality (Spain)
- State Feminist Policy Forum Association, (Spain)
- Federation of Women’s Organisations of Lorca (Murcia)
- Lyceum Association, Science Region of Murcia (Murcia)
- Isadora Duncan Foundation, León

9. Contact

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