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Could AI unintentionally discriminate in healthcare?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly shaping healthcare decisions, from disease screening to treatment recommendations. But what happens when the data behind these systems reflect existing social inequalities? Answering this question and addressing related challenges is the mission of the AEQUITAS project.

AEQUITAS brings together researchers, civil society organizations, and healthcare experts from across Europe to examine gender and racial bias in biomedical AI systems and explore how these risks can be addressed through rights-based governance and regulatory safeguards.

While biomedical AI offers significant opportunities for diagnosis, screening and treatment, these systems are trained on historical data that may reflect existing gender and racial inequalities.

AEQUITAS focuses on three areas where AI applications are rapidly expanding: **cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, depression.**

By analysing bias risks in biomedical AI and building the capacity and awareness of healthcare professionals and civil society to identify and respond to inequities, our work helps ensure that innovation in healthcare advances alongside equality, transparency, and fundamental rights.

Learn more

From research to real-world impact



The Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD, Bulgaria) leads the research and policy analysis, bringing in its experience in the intersection of AI governance, equality, and fundamental rights. An interdisciplinary team, comprising organisations from 8 countries, supports capacity-building and the development of practical safeguards for the responsible use of AI in healthcare.

By addressing gender and racial bias, AEQUITAS contributes to ensuring that innovation in healthcare advances in line with European values and fundamental rights.

The project also brings together healthcare professionals, technical experts, and rights organizations to co-create practical tools for monitoring and evaluating AI systems.

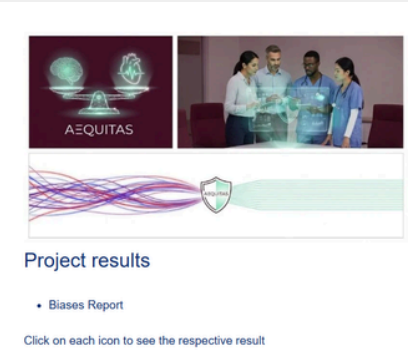
"Through AEQUITAS, we aim to move beyond awareness-raising and contribute to operational solutions, most notably the development of an AI Regulatory Model that can be practically applied by hospitals and CSOs when engaging with biomedical AI technologies."

Dr. Alexander Gerganov, Director of the Sociological Program at CSD

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First look at our research





Did you know that women with cardiovascular diseases are less likely to receive diagnostic tests, medicines, or referrals to specialists than men? AI systems trained on existing medical data can reproduce these inequalities – this is one of the findings highlighted in the new AEQUITAS Bias Report.

Our first research report explores how gender and racial bias can emerge throughout the lifecycle of biomedical AI systems and what this means for equality, non-discrimination, and the right to healthcare.
Focusing on the three areas – cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, depression – the report provides the foundation for developing tools that help healthcare institutions and civil society organizations identify and address bias in medical AI systems.

Read the full report

What's coming next?

Take a sneak peek at what the AEQUITAS partnership is working on in the months ahead. As the project moves forward, we will be developing practical tools, engaging healthcare professionals, and turning research findings into real-world solutions. Follow along to see what's next!

Building the AEQUITAS Database

an interactive database bringing together information on gender and racial biases in biomedical AI. Designed for healthcare professionals and civil society organisations, it will help users better understand how bias appears in AI systems and support efforts to identify and address.

Developing the AI Regulatory Model

a practical AI Regulatory Model grounded in the principles of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The goal is to provide healthcare professionals and civil society organisations with guidance on how biomedical AI can be used fairly, transparently, and without discrimination.

Training Healthcare Professionals

training workshops for healthcare professionals across Europe, focusing on bias in biomedical AI, ethical considerations, and the practical use of the project's database and regulatory model in everyday healthcare settings.



Stay connected

Curious about how AI is shaping healthcare and fundamental rights? Stay informed and don't miss AEQUITAS activities, research publications and upcoming events – follow us on social media!

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