

Dear friends and colleagues,

[COSME](#) is a committee of the [Spanish Economic Association](#), founded in 2006 to monitor and promote the situation of women in the profession. Women make up a large fraction of PhD students in Economics in Spain (more than 40% of new PhD's since 2000), but only 16% of all full professors. The reasons for this “leaky pipeline”, which is not specific to Spain (or Economics, for that matter), are not well understood. Data from other countries also point to the existence of a gender wage gap in the profession. A [recent study](#) found that women academics at the London School of Economics earn significantly less than men of the same age, length of service and research productivity, and in the same department, and they are promoted more slowly (after 15 years at the LSE, more than twice as many men become full professors).

Some think these numbers are just down to informed individual choices. Others attribute them to institutional discrimination or gender-specific barriers or constraints. It's proven hard to prove or disprove these hypotheses. One that I think we are able to discard is the adage that “it's just a matter of time”. As [our own report](#) from last year reads, *“The share of women among Full Professors is systematically lower than the share of women among Associate Professors seven years earlier (or among new Ph.D. graduates fourteen years earlier). (...) The degree of feminization of the higher echelon of the academic career has not experienced practically any progress in the last fifteen years, despite continuous growth in the number of women joining academia”*

I firmly believe this issue is worthy of attention by all of us, and that is the reason why I joined COSME five years ago and I accepted to chair it this year.

The committee undertakes a number of activities, including the organization of an annual [Gender Economics workshop](#), which will hold its 10th edition in 2017 (sponsored by [Fundación Ramón Areces](#)). We also sponsor a number of sessions at the [Simposio de Análisis Económico](#), the annual conference of the Spanish Economic Association, and we have been offering childcare services during the conference. From 2008 to 2014, we also organized plenary sessions at the Simposio (the “[COSME conference](#)”) by renowned (women) economists. Finally, we distribute a newsletter every December since 2013. We are always open to your suggestions regarding additional activities.

This is all possible thanks to the time and dedication of our [executive board](#). I will take this opportunity to thank all previous COSME chairs, [Laura Hospido](#), [Sara de la Rica](#) and [Carmen Herrero](#), for their excellent work during the past few years. Thanks also to our outgoing board member, [Caterina Calsamiglia](#). And let me welcome [Matilde Machado](#) as our next chair for 2017, and [Virginia Sánchez](#) as vice-chair.

In our fourth newsletter you will find, among other things, an invited article by [Sara de la Rica](#) about gender gaps in the Spanish labor market, an interview with [Carmen Herrero](#) (Universidad de Alicante), and a report by [Raquel Carrasco](#) y [Javier Ruiz-Castillo](#) on the gender gap in productivity among top performers.

Please, feel free to [contact us](#) with your ideas or suggestions for additional activities. Also, let us know if you would like to be more involved with the committee. Everyone is welcome!

Enjoy reading,

Libertad González
COSME Chair 2016
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