

COSME

Committee on the situation
of women in economics

Newsletter 2020: Letter from Irma Clots-Figueras, 2020 COSME President

Dear friends of COSME,

I am delighted to introduce you to the 8th edition of our newsletter. We are living strange times, the pandemic has affected, and continues to impact lives and livelihoods across the world, and it has also affected our usual activities. You will have noticed that last year we had to cancel the Gender Workshop due to COVID restrictions and in fact we had to cancel all our activities. You will have also noticed that this newsletter is published a bit later than usual.



I am happy to announce, however, that the **XIII Gender Economics Workshop** will take place in May 27-28, this time with an online format. Our invited speakers will be **Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes** (UC Merced) and **Andrea Ichino** (European University Institute), we are looking forward to their presentations. You can follow [this link](#) for more details about the workshop's format and the programme. As is already a tradition in the workshop, we will have high-quality presentations and excellent discussants, and we are also looking forward to learning from their research and the very insightful discussions that will follow. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the presenters and discussants who kindly agreed to postpone their presentations to this year.

This is a different newsletter to those we had in previous years, this time we have decided to focus on the topic of **COVID-19 and Gender**, and we have asked some economists working on these topics for their contributions. Each of them has written a short article, summarizing their study and their findings. It is for us a great honor to be able explain their very interesting studies in this newsletter.

Monica Costa Dias talks about a study which finds that in England the employment and hours of paid work fell dramatically during the lockdown period for both mothers and fathers, but the drops were substantially larger for mothers, reinforcing pre-existing inequalities. They also find that mothers' time doing paid work was interrupted over 50% more often during lockdown than fathers', a gap that did not exist before the pandemic.

Libertad Gonzalez discusses a study which finds that in Spain the pandemic led to employment losses for both men and women, most of which were covered by furloughs. The shock affected low-educated workers differentially, but they find no evidence of a significant gender gap in the effect of the crisis on employment, unlike in other countries. However, the gender gap in total hours worked (paid and unpaid) increased.

Climent Quintana-Domeque reports findings from a survey they conducted in the UK in June 2020, where they document how gender gaps in time allocation changed between the pre-pandemic period and during the pandemic period. They also find that women were more concerned than men with getting and spreading the virus. Moreover, women's perceived virus prevalence and lethality were also higher, while they also perceived the economic situation to be more negative.

Finally, **Michele Tertilt** explains how the COVID-19 recession has affected women more than men. They find that a pandemic recession has sizeable repercussions for gender inequality. In the short and medium term, a pandemic recession erodes women's position in the labor market which leads to a widening of the gender wage gap during a pandemic recession and in its immediate aftermath. Also, during the crisis the drop in women's employment reduces families' ability to self-insure against earnings losses.

I hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter and learning from these studies and their very interesting findings. There are many more studies analysing the effects of Covid-19 on gender outcomes, we do not have the space to cover them all in a newsletter, and there are hopefully many more to come. I expect these contributions to also inspire future research on such an important topic.

I would like to finish this newsletter by thanking those who put this newsletter together: José Ignacio Conde-Ruiz and Pedro Mira, and I would also like to thank the Chairs of the Scientific Committee of the Gender Economics Workshop: Cecilia García Peñalosa and Carolina Villegas-Sánchez for the fantastic job they are doing in organizing it. I would also like to thank our Vice-Chair, Lidia Farré, and all the members of the COSME Executive Board: Raquel Carrasco, J. Ignacio Conde-Ruiz, Cecilia Garcia-Peñalosa, Xulia González

Cerdeira, Joan Llull, Pedro Mira, Judit Vall-Castelló and Carolina Villegas-Sánchez for all their help, their energy and contributions.

Sincerely,

Irma Clots-Figueras

2020 COSME Chair