

ALAITZ AYARZA

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Assistant Professor of Economics, University of the Basque Country (EHU)	2024-
Postdoctoral Research Scholar (EHU)	2023-24

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Primary: Applied Microeconomics
Secondary: Labor Economics, Gender Economics, Education Economics, Migration Economics

EDUCATION

European University Institute (Florence) PhD in Economics	2017 - 2023
Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium) Master Research in Economics	2016-2017
Universitat Pompeu Fabra and Barcelona Graduate School of Economics Master's in Economics and Finance	2015-2016
University of the Basque Country (Spain) Bachelor's in Economics	2011-2015
Visiting Student KU Leuven University (Belgium)	2015

WORKING PAPERS

1. Determinants of Migration Choices: The Role of Beliefs about Career and Non-Career Outcomes

Using original survey data on subjective expectations, I study how highly educated young adults from lagging regions evaluate no migration, short-term migration, and long-term migration. First, I show that individuals anticipate sharp trade-offs: long-term migration delivers the highest career gains but large non-career losses, while no migration offers strong non-career advantages but weak career prospects. I then embed these expectations in a life-cycle utility model and perform counterfactual exercises. Results show that differences in expected non-career outcomes have larger effects on intended migration paths. Expected career improvements in the home region upon return are not perceived to be large enough to meaningfully influence the choice of short-term migration. Finally, I use the estimated preferences to assess policies that encourage short-term migration by guaranteeing better career prospects after return. These policies have stronger effects on those planning long-term migration than on those planning no migration. Matching these effects with cash transfers requires large payments and produces lower welfare among switchers. A follow-up survey four years later validates the expectations data by showing that expectations strongly predict realized

migration choices and outcomes.

2. Gender Gaps Among Scholars in Economics: An Analysis Across Cohorts (joint with N. Iriberry) - *Revise & Resubmit at the International Economic Review*

We study the evolution of gender gaps, both in terms of representation and research output, among cohorts of scholars in economics over the past 9 decades (1933–2019) using a sample of economists who have published at least once in any of the 36 high-impact journals (Card et al, 2022). With respect to representation, there has been a clear increase in the female share among scholars, but we find evidence of both vertical segregation based on prominence and horizontal segregation based on research fields. With respect to gender gaps in output, women publish fewer articles than men do, and more concerningly, the negative gender gap has shown no sign of convergence since the 1940s, although there is substantial heterogeneity in the type of publication. The negative gender gap in publications is significantly reduced when we control for the length of authors' active academic careers, as women's careers tend to be shorter.

WORK IN PROGRESS

1. Affirmative Action and Efficiency: Evidence from the Spanish Cinema Industry (joint with N. Iriberry and O. Quesada)

Women remain under-represented in key roles across film production, a sector in Spain that relies heavily on competitive public grant calls through which producers seek funding for their projects. This paper examines an Affirmative Action (AA) policy introduced in 2016 that awards additional points to productions with greater female representation. Using a regression discontinuity design, we plan to estimate the causal effect of this policy. Our first objective is to study how the policy affects women's representation overall and across the departments involved in film production. Our second and more important objective is to evaluate the policy's efficiency implications. To do so, we will assess its impact on box-office performance, reviews on major movie-review platforms, and participation and success in national and international film festivals.

PUBLICATIONS

1. E-learning Engagement Gap During School Closures: Differences by Academic Performance (joint with J. Amer-Mestre and M.C. Lopes) *Applied Economics*, 2024, 56(3)

We study the impact of COVID-19 school closures on differences in online learning usage by regional academic performance. Using data from Google Trends in Italy, we find that during the first lockdown, regions with a previously lower academic performance increased their searches for e-learning tools more than higher-performing regions. Analysing school administrative and survey data before the pandemic, we find that both teachers and students in lower performing regions were using no less e-learning tools than higher performing ones. These two findings suggest that the COVID-19 shock widened the e-learning usage gap between academically lower and higher-performing regions. Exploiting the regional variation in school closure mandates during the 2020–2021 academic year, we report that the patterns detected after the first lockdown were no longer present. Regions with different previous academic performance had the same response in terms of online learning usage when faced with stricter school closures.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, University of the Basque Country

Labor Economics, <i>MSc</i>	2025,2026
Dynamic Macroeconomics, <i>BSc</i>	2025,2026
Intermediate Macroeconomics, <i>BSc</i>	2025,2026

Teaching Assistant, European University Institute

Topics in Microeconometrics, <i>PhD</i> , <i>TA to Thomas Crossley</i>	2021
Panel Data for Banking Sector Analysts, <i>FBF Course</i> , <i>TA to Jeffrey Wooldridge</i>	2020, 21

INVITED TALKS & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2025: JKU Linz, EUI Alumni Conferece **2024:** 2nd HUMANS LACEA Seminar (World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, Washington DC), CUNEF Universidad, XVI Labour Economics Meeting (Barcelona), EEA-ESEM (Rotterdam), CERGE-EI, SAEe (Palma de Mallorca) **2023:** SOLE (Philadelphia), BSE Summer Forum (Barcelona), 7th Workshop on Subjective Expectations (Bocconi University), 2nd Workshop on Migration and Family Economics (IÉSEG School of Management, Paris), EEA-ESEM (Barcelona), EALE (Prague) **2022:** SAEe (Valencia), EUI Alumni Workshop

GRANTS & AWARDS

EUI- Early-Stage Researcher Competitive Grant	2021
EUI 4th-Year-Grant	2021
EUI- Early-Stage Researcher Competitive Grant	2020
Salvador de Madariaga Scholarship (Spanish Ministry)	2017-20

ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK & CERTIFICATES

Minicourse on Subjective Expectations for PhD students, by A. Delavande, P. Giustinelli, C. F. Manski, C. Roth and B. Zafar (Bocconi University)	2023
"Teacher Training Certificate" awarded by the EUI	2019
"Gender Economics-Labor Economics Summer School" by L. González (Barcelona GSE)	2018

LANGUAGES

English (fluent), Spanish (native), Basque (native)

REFERENCES

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