

Mind the gap: New study examines pay and job rank among academic economists

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The pay gap between male and female economists at UK universities has not fallen for 20 years, a new study has revealed.

The number of women economists has changed dramatically over the

last two decades, with the number of female academics in the discipline increasing from less than one-in-six in 1996, to more than one-in-four in 2016.

However, in 2016 women held only 16 percent of the Economics Chairs in the UK. Unlike the STEM (Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines, with similarly low female participation rates, economics has attracted very little attention.

Analysis

New analysis of data obtained from more than 70 institutions across the UK reveals a [gender pay gap](#) of 15 percent amongst academic economists.

A small proportion of this gap can be explained by men being older and married but women are not found to be less qualified or less productive.

Professor Karen Mumford, from the University's Department of Economics and Related Studies, said: "We find little explanation of the gap from measures of individual productivity, although men (positively) and women (negatively) are rewarded very differently for having excellent teaching evaluations."

The total "unexplained" pay gap is substantial at 12.7 percent. Half of it is from lack of promotion and half of it is from male professors earning more than females, the study revealed.

Promotion

"In contrast to national gender pay gaps, and evidence from other disciplines, the pay gap amongst academic economists in the UK has not

fallen since the turn of the century," Professor Mumford added.

"The gap is substantial, and it is strongly influenced by the relative concentration of men amongst Professors where the unexplained gender pay differential is considerable."

"The study also reveals that men are 11 percent more likely than women to be promoted to Professor, and amongst Professors men earn 11 percent more than [women](#)."

Professor Mumford added: "Our results imply that universities need to reconsider the implementation of their equal pay policy in Economics Departments."

More information: Karen Mumford et al. Pay and Job Rank among Academic Economists in the UK: Is Gender Relevant?, *British Journal of Industrial Relations* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/bjir.12468](https://doi.org/10.1111/bjir.12468)

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