

## **Simposio meets AEE: the transition to the rotating model**

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Commemorative session on the 50th anniversary of SAEe

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## Introduction

- I was asked to discuss the SAEe's transition after its 25th edition, when a rotating model among Spanish universities was adopted, and the AEE's role in this change.
- I was also asked to provide some data. I will show some figures from the Simposio around the transition, for which I warmly thank Joan Llull and his colleagues.
- Thank you to the organizers, Judit Panadès, Libertad González, and Lola Collado.
- We are on the UAB campus, and I would also like to acknowledge the economists based here, from which many of the public goods that transformed our profession and we celebrate today first emerged.
  - Especially, the Simposio, the job market, and the AEE.

# I. The transition to the rotating model

## Origins

- The AEE was created to ensure the continuity of *Revista Española de Economía (REE)*, which would successively become *Spanish Economic Review (SER)* and later *SERIEs*, after the merger with *Investigaciones Económicas*.
  - The sponsor of *REE* at the Treasury had lost interest in the journal due to its focus on mathematical economics and econometrics.
- Like living organisms, associations tend to expand once they are created. As a result, the AEE soon began to consider activities beyond providing support to its journal.
- AEE's officers recognized that the new association needed an annual congress.
- They also believed the *Simposio*, which was a successful annual congress and the originator of a job market for new PhDs, was a natural target for the AEE to inherit.
- Moreover, the *Simposio* had seen its ups and downs, and there was a growing sentiment among its patrons that it was time to adopt a new model involving others.

## A stumbling block

- The difficulty was a mismatch. The *Simposio* encompassed a broader range of economists in Spain than *REE* and therefore also than the original AEE.
- The *Simposio* had broader cross-disciplinary scope in economics, greater network diversity and greater methodological variety compared to *REE*.
- To draw a wild parallel, *REE* was like an Econometric Society journal, while the *Simposio* was more like the ASSA meetings.
- For example, the *Simposio* of 2000, the last under the old system, featured plenary lectures sponsored by Spain's main economics journals at the time: *REE*, *Revista de Economía Aplicada*, and *Investigaciones Económicas*.

## Agreement for a rotating Simposio

- Negotiations between representatives of UAB/IAE and AEE led to an agreement under which the *Simposio* began to rotate but did not immediately become the AEE congress.
- Instead, it was placed under a steering committee (*Junta Rectora del Simposio*), initially composed of representatives of the three journals and the Bellaterra groups.
- The *Junta Rectora* was responsible for ensuring continuity by appointing program chairs and selecting annual venues.
- Its initial members were appointed by the journals for fixed terms; after that, the committee renewed itself by co-option, with members serving in a personal capacity.
- In this way, the journals influenced the new *Simposio*, while allowing the steering committee to evolve into an autonomous body rather than a confederation of journals.

## Agreement (continued)

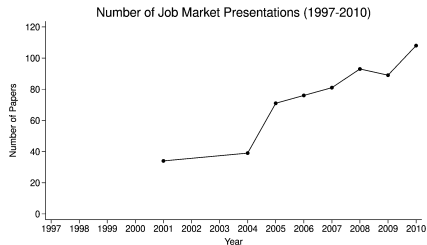
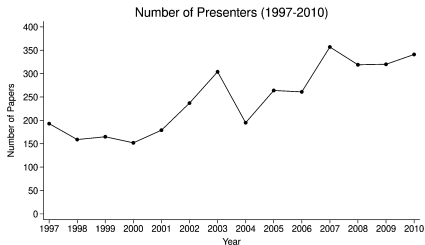
- Joan María Esteban and Carmen Herrero played a prominent role in the negotiations.
- Joan María chaired the last *Simposio* of the old system and advocated for preserving the *Simposio*'s broad base. Carmen, as president in 2000 –and Alfonso Novales in 1999–, promoted the idea that the AEE should have its own congress.
- The agreement was reached in March 2001 and the first rotating *Simposio* took place in December of the same year at the University of Alicante, being a great success.
- Also important were the roles of Carmen as local organizer of the *Simposio* in Alicante, Enrique Sentana as program chair, and Juanjo Dolado as president in 2001.
- In 2009, with Antonio Cabrales as president, the transition was considered complete and the AEE directly took over the continuity of the *Simposio*.

## II. The Simposio's job market

- From the outset, the AEE was particularly interested in taking on the responsibility for the organization of the job market.
- The minutes of the 2002 AEE Executive Committee meeting, with Joan María Esteban as president, reiterated the central role of the job market for the AEE:
  - "It is the unanimous opinion of those present that the Association's primary objective is to encourage institutions to hire PhDs through the job market and to promote the completion of theses oriented toward students' participation in the market."
- The job market associated with the *Simposio* and the AEE was *the great success* of the marriage between the two during the 2000s.
- It had a substantial impact on the internationalization of economic research in Spain and on raising its scientific standards.
- An evidence of the success of the AEE job market is that in 2006, with Enrique Sentana as president, the EEA requested the transfer of the AEE job market software for use in its own online job market.

### III. The Simposios around the transition to the rotating model: A comparative

Figure 1: The growth of the *Simposio* and the job market around the transition



Note: In 2005, an agreement was reached for the EEA to manage the JM platform, which is why there is a noticeable increase in JM sessions.

Figure 2: Internationalization around the transition: presenters from foreign institutions

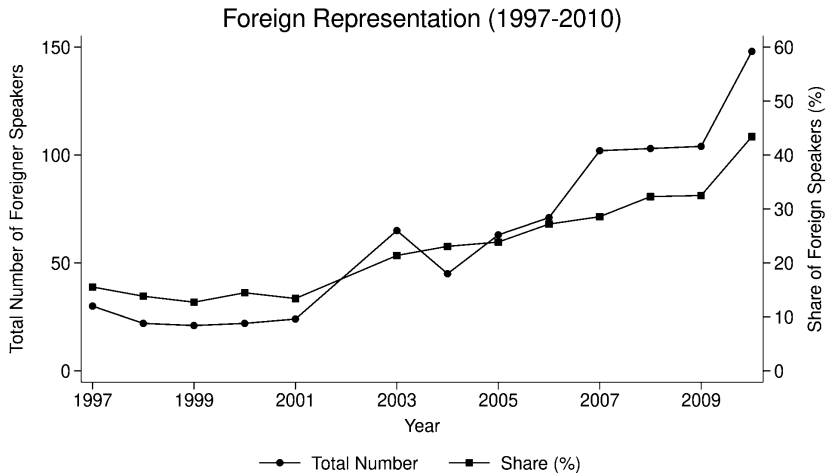


Figure 3: Fraction of articles with titles in English 1997-2010

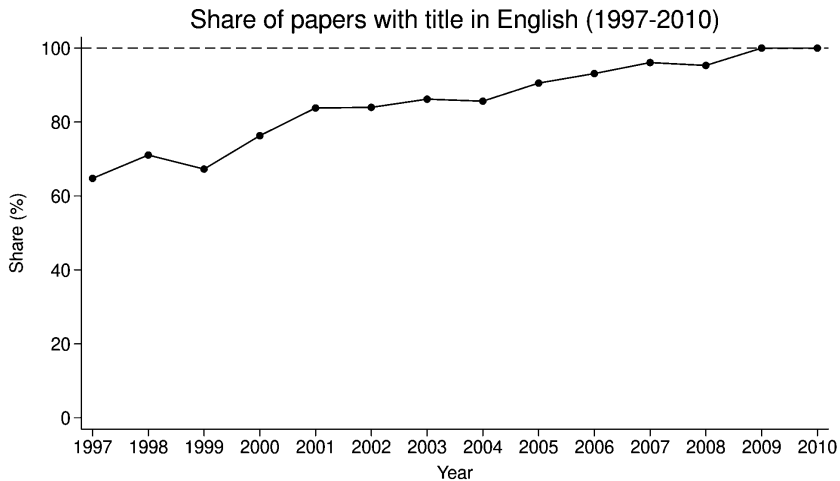


Figure 4: Proportion of presenters from institutions outside Catalonia 1997-2010

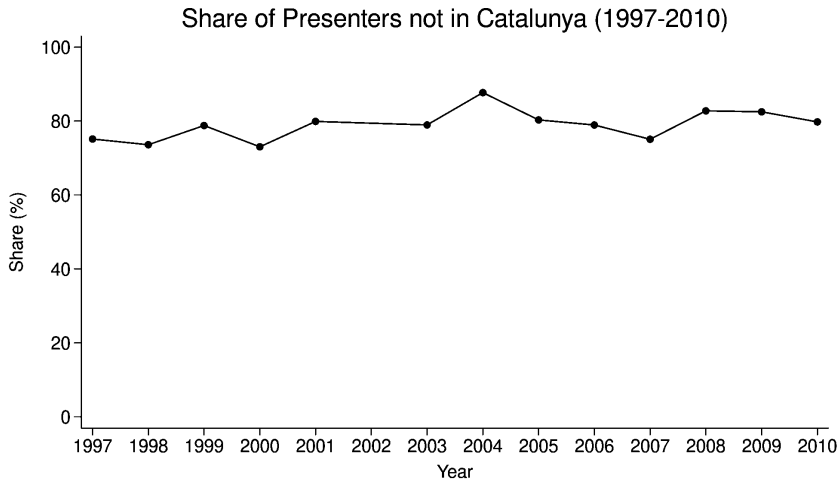
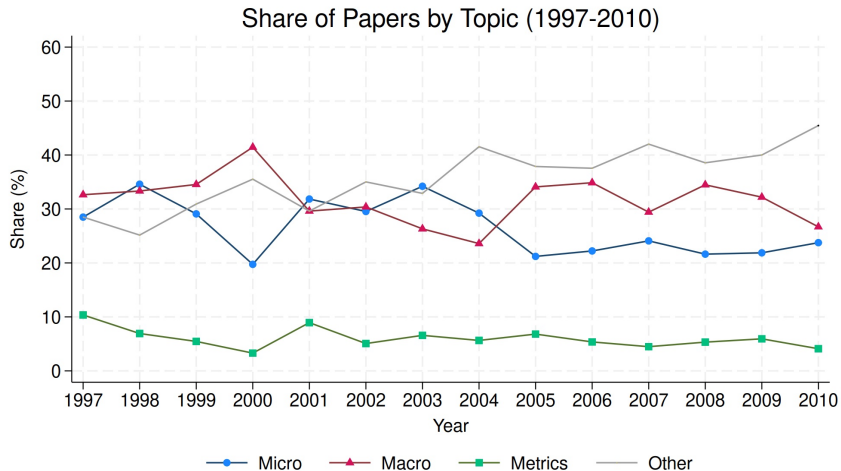


Figure 5: Share of papers by topic 1997-2010



Note: 'Micro' include micro theory, behavioral & experimental, and IO. 'Other' includes labor, public, development, economic history, and other applied.

## Final remarks: territorial matters

- The transfer of the AEE job-market to the EEA was the first of a significant collaboration with the EEA and the Royal Economic Society around the job market.
- This is beyond my remit, but gives me an excuse to comment on territorial matters.
- The AEE values territorial inclusiveness, but this must be balanced carefully: excellence concentrates in a few institutions and cities, and inclusiveness should not come at the cost of the AEE's commitment to excellence.
- The first *Simposio* of 1976 was a collaboration between the UAB and the Hispano-French Association for Technical and Scientific Cooperation.
- Territories are like artichokes, with multiple layers that overlap. The major economic associations learned to collaborate to seek productive synergies; for example, the EEA and the ES in Europe.
- A challenge for the AEE going forward is to pursue collaborations with neighboring organizations with similar goals. Why not, for example, a one-off joint *Simposio* with the *Portuguese Economic Journal* conference in Lisbon?

Thank you, happy 50th anniversary, and long life to the *Simposio!*