

Virtual Gender Lecture

“GENDER SMART FINANCING: OPPORTUNITIES FOR EUROPE”

21 April 2021, 12:30-13:30

Abstract

Studies show that gender-diverse teams produce better results. However, women remain underrepresented when it comes to investment, both as beneficiaries of investment and as decision-makers. In 2018, over 90% of capital raised by tech companies backed by European venture capital (VC) went to teams that did not have a single female founder.

This presentation is based on the paper “Gender Smart Financing. Investing In & With Women: Opportunities for Europe”. The objective of this paper was to collect various studies on the topic of gender in finance under the same umbrella to show the variety of data and different angles of the conversation. It discusses the reasons behind the gender investment gap, with a focus on the lack of female investors, and presents ideas and opportunities on how to tackle these challenges in Europe – in short: how to make finance gender-smart.

The presentation will look at how further understanding of the impacts gender smart financing brings to the economy will be instrumental to move this relatively unknown field of study forward to eventually harness the new insights for improving women’s presence in financial sectors. The existing studies show that women’s wealth is on the rise, and women tend to invest in more long-term and impactful projects. Investing in and with women is thus an opportunity that Europe could seize for more sustainable and inclusive growth, including through its new investment programme: InvestEU.

Biography of the speaker



Letizia Castellano is a policy officer at the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission, primarily working on the InvestEU Programme. She is a young addition to the gender conversation as she has completed her studies and joined the European Commission only two years ago.

She is the co-author of the paper “Gender Smart Financing. Investing In & With Women: Opportunities for Europe”. She has organised meetings with banks, investors, business angels, entrepreneurs, etc. on the topic of gender smart financing in the past two years, with the aim to insert this specific finance-focused angle into the broader discussion on gender and to collect best practices on how to improve the gender aspect in financial sectors.

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