

## **José Luis Escrivá: Address at the presentation of the 20th King of Spain Prize in Economics**

Address by Mr José Luis Escrivá, Governor of the Bank of Spain, at the presentation of the 20th King of Spain Prize in Economics, Madrid, 17 March 2025.

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Good afternoon.

Firstly, I would like to thank Your Majesty for being present at today's King of Spain Prize in Economics award ceremony and for gracing this institution with your attendance once again.

The King of Spain Prize in Economics was established in 1986 by the Fundación José Celma Prieto. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the foundation's president, Javier Celma, for continuing the generous patronage his father began.

For this twentieth edition of the award, it has been my honour to preside the prize jury, made up by Álvaro Rodríguez Bereijo as vice-president, José Ramón Álvarez Rendueles, José Luis Feito Higuera, Julio Segura, Carmen Reinhart and Carmen Herrero Blanco.

Following its deliberations on 29 October last year, the panel resolved to award the King of Spain Prize in Economics to Roberto Serrano for his brilliant academic and research trajectory, reflected in the quantity and quality of his publications. The prize winner is also an example of personal merit and dedication to the community as an economist.

Roberto Serrano was born in Madrid in 1964 and holds a degree in Economics from the Complutense University of Madrid, where he started his teaching career as an assistant lecturer. He was subsequently awarded a Fundación Ramón Areces Fellowship and a Fulbright Fellowship, which enabled him to pursue his M.A. and PhD studies at Harvard University. He completed his PhD there in 1992 under the direction of professors Mas-Colell, Maskin (2007 Nobel Prize in Economics) and Green. Serrano became a professor of economics at Brown University in 1997, when he was only 33 years old, and is currently the Harrison S. Kravis Professor at Brown University.

Professor Serrano defines himself as an economic theorist. Economic theory works with abstract and mathematical models to shed light on the functioning and behaviour of the economy. And within economic theory, Serrano has specialised in microeconomics, which focuses on the behaviour of individuals and firms as economic agents. Microeconomics is often overshadowed by macroeconomics, which deals with large aggregates and dominates economic news. This is why microeconomists often receive less attention and recognition. This prize rightfully acknowledges the centrality (which I believe is growing) of microeconomics in economic science. As the availability of microdata and the computational capacity for processing them has grown, not only has

it become necessary to develop new empirical instruments to analyse them, but also new microeconomic conceptual models to understand the logic and fundamentals of the results obtained.

In the realm of microeconomics, professor Serrano is recognised globally as a leading authority in game theory, which studies strategic decisions made by individuals or "players" in situations where each participant's outcome depends on the decisions of others.

Among his numerous research contributions are his studies on the non-cooperative aspects of cooperative game theory and his work on designing mechanisms that steer players' behaviour towards achieving the best outcome for everyone involved, even without mutual cooperation. He also made a significant contribution to risk measurement by developing a risk index in 2008 in collaboration with Nobel laureate Robert Aumann.

Roberto Serrano has published over 80 papers on economics, game theory, operational research and applied mathematics in high-impact academic journals. Ten of these articles have appeared in some of the most prestigious economics journals.

Roberto's primary concern is improving our understanding of economic reality, thereby fostering societal development. His aim is to better comprehend market mechanisms and economic agents' incentives in order to help design policies that increase social well-being.

Teaching and sharing knowledge are also integral to his work. He has authored two textbooks, on intermediate microeconomics and welfare economics, which are widely used in universities around the world. As a professor, he has won high praise from his students and has received several awards for his excellence in teaching.

He was included in "The Best 300 Professors", a guidebook published by The Princeton Review for "finding teachers with the power to change your life". In it, the 300 highest-rated professors are selected from 60 different academic fields based on interviews with millions of undergraduate students in the United States.

Roberto was elected a Fellow of the Econometric Society in 2013 and a Fellow of the Game Theory Society in 2017. Among his editorial work, his role as editor-in-chief of Economic Letters between 2011 and 2017 is noteworthy.

Roberto Serrano has achieved all this after overcoming great challenges, as he was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa when he was a teenager, which made him progressively lose his sight until he became completely blind. Thanks to his determination and the support of his father, Carlos, he was able to finish his university studies with excellent grades. Indeed, the tribute paid to Carlos Serrano by the Complutense University in 2005, with the attendance of his son, was entirely fitting. Fourteen years later, Roberto himself was awarded the title of doctor honoris causa by his alma mater, as a testament to his exceptional merit and personal dedication to the good of the community.

Your Majesty, thanking you once again for your presence at this ceremony, it only remains for me, with your permission, to ask the prize winner to step up to receive the 20th King of Spain Prize in Economics.