INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Reliable Data and Comprehensive Analyses to Foster Evidence-Based Decision-Making

June 24-25, 2025

Context

In September 2024, economists based in Tunisia and abroad established the **Evidence Policy Impact Lab (EPI Lab)** at **South Mediterranean University (SMU)** in collaboration with the **Development** and **Societies Research Lab (DEVSOC)** of **Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne University** and the ***Institut de Recherche pour le Développement* (IRD).** EPI Lab's mission is to promote evidence-based policymaking through rigorous impact evaluations addressing economic, social, and environmental issues. The lab aims to connect researchers and practitioners, providing stakeholders with modern data science and policy analysis tools. EPI Lab's activities include monthly seminars, joint projects, and various conferences, workshops, and training programs in collaboration with partner organizations.

The Conference

The international conference will be the first event co-organized by the EPI Lab and the DEVSOC Research Lab at the South Mediterranean University in Tunisia. Leading international and national researchers will gather to discuss recent studies using available official data and cutting-edge impact evaluations methods, to support evidence-based policies in the country. The conference also aims to support and strengthen economic research capacities of participants of the Tunisia Data Literacy Program (TDLP) launched by the World Bank in 2024, in collaboration with Tunisia's National Institute of Statistics (INS) https://dataliteracy.github.io/tn24/ The program aims to improve the statistical and analytical capacities of government officials, media practitioners and academics, and to promote the timely use of available data and statistics to support evidence-based decision making.

The international conference will be the first event co-organized by the EPI Lab and the DEVSOC Research Lab at the South Mediterranean University in Tunisia. Leading international and national researchers will convene to discuss recent studies that utilize official data and cutting-edge impact evaluation methods to support evidence-based policymaking in the country.

The conference specifically aims to:

i)   Position Tunisia as a hub for **international empirical economic research**, particularly in impact evaluation.
ii)   Showcase the country's **rich administrative and survey data**, reflecting the Tunisia's long-term dedication to data collection.
iii) Promote **collaboration between local and international researchers**
iv)   Allow participants of the **Tunisia DLP Mentoring program** to engage with relevant studies and contribute to discussions.

The Tentative Agenda

The conference includes four types of sessions, offered both in hybrid and in person formats: keynote speeches by renowned scholars; presentations of ongoing work by researchers; discussions of new projects by TDLP mentoring participants and members of the EPI Lab; and a collaborative data session designed to advance the lab's objectives. The sessions will primarily focus on the impact of climate shocks, firms and innovation, exports and tax incentives, as well as education and labor markets.

DAY 1- 24 June 2025

08:00 – 09:00	Conference registration
09:00 – 09:30	Welcome and conference opening
9;30- -11:00	SESSION 1 - Exporting firms & Tax Incentives *What Do Market Access Subsidies Do? Experimental Evidence from Tunisia* - Giacomo De Giorgi (GSEM-University of Geneva) *Stronger Together? Female Export Consortia -* Florian Anselm Münch (London School of Economics) - **Amira Bouziri** (MSB, EPI Lab and L.R. MASE-ESSAI) and Fabian Scheifele (World Bank) *The Elusive Impact of Corporate Tax Incentives* – Giorgio Presidente (Bocconi University)
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 - 12:30	SESSION 2 – Firm's environment and performance *Did the Arab Spring Promote Competition? Evidence from Tunisia* - Bob Rijkers (World Bank) *Post-revolution social unrest and firms' performances* - Chaima Ben Abderrahmen (Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne University, DEVSOC and EPI Lab)

12:30 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00- 3:00	Keynote Speech: **Roberta Gatti,** Chief Economist MENA, World Bank
3:00 – 4:30	SESSION 3 – Firms and Innovation *E-commerce for Export: Experimental Evidence from Tunisia* - **Florian Anselm Münch** (London School of Economics), Kais Jomaa (Nova School of Economics and SMU, MSB), Amira Bouziri (MSB, EPI Lab and L.R. MASE-ESSAI), Teo Fripo (Humbolt University) and Fabian Scheifele (World Bank) *Promoting Innovative Startups: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Tunisia* - Massimiliano Cali (World Bank) *From Bytes to Business: Mobile Broadband, Firm Creations and Digital Divide in Tunisia* – Jean-Baptiste Guiffard (Telecom Paris) and **Mohamed Ali Marouani** (Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, DEVSOC EPI Lab and ERF)
4.30 - 5.00	Coffee Break
5 – 6	Future Research and Collaborations initiatives

DAY 2 - 25 June 2025

08:00 – 09:00	Conference Registration
09:00 – 10:00	Keynote Speaker - **Salvatore Di Falco** (Professor of Economics and Vice Dean for Research, University of Geneva)
10:00 – 11:00	SESSION 4 - Climate Change *Forced to migrate in a warming world: Labor migration responses to drought-induced shocks in Tunisia* – Federica Alfani (World Bank), **Esther Delesalle**, Phuong Le Minh and Mohamed Ali Marouani (Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, DEVSOC) *Weathering Wellbeing in Tunisia: medium- to long-term impacts of climate extremes on poverty and inequality* - **Federica Alfani** (World Bank)
11:00– 11:30	Coffee Break
12:00 – 13:00	SESSION 5 - Education and Labor Market *The General Equilibrium Effects of College Expansion in Developing Economies: Congestion Versus Composition* - **Mohamed Dhia Khalfallah** (University of Manheim) *The Colonial Legacy of Education: Evidence from Tunisia* - **Mhamed Ben Salah** (MSB), Cédric Chambru (Center for Economic Research on Governance, Inequality and Conflict, École Normale Supérieure de Lyon & CNRS France) and Maleke Fourati (MSB, University of French Polynesia, L.R. MASE ESSAI, and Economic Research Forum)
1:00-2:30	Lunch

2:30 – 4:00	Presentations of Tunisia Data Literacy Program participants
4:00 – 4:30	Concluding Session

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