

# ELENA PERRA

Department of Econometrics, Statistics and Applied Economics  
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## CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

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| University of Barcelona<br>Assistant professor | January 2026 - |
| UNU-MERIT Maastricht<br>Affiliated Researcher  | January 2022 - |

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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| University of Turin<br>Post-doctoral Research Fellow    | March 2023 - December 2025    |
| University of Florence<br>Post-doctoral Research Fellow | February 2022 - February 2023 |

## EDUCATION

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|---|----------------------------|
| University of Florence and University of Trento<br>PhD in Development Economics<br>Department of Economics and Management and School of Social Sciences<br><i>Thesis title:</i> "Empirical Essays on the Impact of Infrastructural Investments in Ethiopia"<br>2022-23 Andrea Vaona award for the best doctoral dissertation in Economics | September 2018 - July 2022 |
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| UNU-MERIT Maastricht<br>Visiting Period | October 2021 - January 2022 |
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| University of Passau<br>Erasmus + Programme<br>Evaluation of Development Policies, Rural Development, Health, Public Policy | April 2017 - September 2017 |
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| University of Florence<br>MSc in Economics and Development | December 2015 - April 2018<br>110/110 cum laude |
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| University of Florence<br>BA in Economics and Trade | September 2011 - October 2015 |
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## PUBLICATIONS

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**Perra, E. (2026).** "Road to Division: Ethnic Favouritism in the Provision of Road Infrastructure in Ethiopia". *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 2026, ISSN 0147-5967.

**Perra, E., Sanfilippo, M. and Sundaram, A. (2024)** "Roads, Competition, and the Informal Sector". *Journal of Development Economics*, 2024, 103339, ISSN 0304-3878.

## WORKING PAPERS

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Sanfilippo, M., Perra, E. and Sileci, L. (2026) "Oil Spills, Water Networks and Local Economic Development"

Hiluf Abay, Mehari, Tiberti, L. and Perra, E. (2026) "The Fertility Highway: How Road Investments Shape Childbearing in Ethiopia"

Martorano, B., Perra, E., Tiberti, M., (2023). "Beyond Data Gaps: Tracking Spatial Inequality in Africa via Nighttime Lights" MERIT Working Papers 2023-032, United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (MERIT) (Under Review)

Giovannetti, G. and Perra, E. (2020). "Syria in the Dark: Estimating the economic consequences of the civil war through satellite-derived night lights". DISEI Working Papers - Economics, Working Paper N.05/2019.

## POLICY PUBLICATIONS

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Perra, E., Sanfilippo, M., & Sundaram, A. (2024). "Road infrastructure boosts competition, which affects formal and informal sector firms differently." VoxDev.

Giovannetti, G., Bigi, V. and Perra, E. (2020) "Estimates of GDP loss using night-time light satellite imagery". In: "Compounding Crises: Will Covid-19 and Lower Oil Prices Lead to a New Development Paradigm in the Arab Region?". United Nations Development Programme.

Giovannetti, G., Bigi, V. and Perra, E. (2021) "The Impact of Covid-19 on Arab Countries: What can we 'See'?" United Nations Development Programme, RBAS WORKING PAPERS SERIES.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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Development Economics  
*University of Turin* January 2023 - June 2023

- Teaching Assistant

Political Economy of Development  
*University of Florence* January 2022 - June 2023

- Adjunct Lecturer

Sustainable Management for Local Development  
*University of Florence* October 2021

- Guest Lecturer

International Trade  
*University of Florence* September 2015 - April 2018

- Academic Tutor

Microeconomics  
*University of Florence* September 2015 - April 2018

- Academic Tutor

## WORK EXPERIENCE

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**University of Turin**

*Post-doctoral Research Fellow*

*March 2023 - December 2025*

- Postdoctoral researcher in the PNRR-funded GRINS program, developing subnational circular economy indicators and analyzing linkages with international trade and foreign direct investments.

**University of Florence**

*Post-doctoral Research Fellow*

*February 2022 - February 2023*

- Principal researcher on EUniWell project, analyzing and reporting the educational performance of the 8 partner universities in the consortium.

**European University Institute**

*Research Assistant*

*November 2022 - December 2022*

- Harmonizing and Geolocalizing DHS survey data covering all African countries, combining with geolocalized animal diseases information from FAO. Preparing a technical appendix for the project, and ensuring full replicability.

**World Bank**

*Consultant*

*February 2022 - June 2022*

- Analytical support to the LSMS-ISA program. Conducting empirical analysis based on remotely sensed nighttime light data to proxy for spatial inequality.

**European University Institute**

*Research Assistant*

*September 2020 - January 2021*

- Data processing and construction of market access indicators for the paper “Trade Liberalization, Roads and Firm Productivity” (Fiorini et al. (2021), Journal of Development Economics).

**United Nations Development Programme**

*External Consultant*

*April 2020 - December 2020*

- Report on the impact of COVID-19 on MENA countries.

**Euro-Mediterranean Network for Economic Studies (EMNES)**

*Research Fellow*

*June 2019 - Present*

- EMNES Annual Conference 2019 (presenter)
- Working Paper: “Syria in the Dark” (2020)

**EDI Economic Development Initiatives (UK)**

*Intern, Research Team*

*September 2017 - March 2018*

- Data Cleaning for Development Projects at the Household Level.
- Academic Literature Reviews on Issues of Data Quality.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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**Statistical Analysis**

R, STATA, Minitab, Python

**Mapping**

QGIS, ArcGIS, Google Earth Engine

**Software and Tools**

Quarto, Markdown, MS Office, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

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2022-23 Andrea Vaona Award for **the best doctoral dissertation in Economics**.

Winner, Associazione Villa Favard's Annual Prize for **the Most Original Dissertation, 2018**.

University of Florence - Productivity and Merit Scholarships 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.

## SUMMER SCHOOLS

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| FEEM (Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei)   | 7,8,14,15,22 Oct., 2021. |
| <i>Autumn School in Spatial Analysis and Policy Evaluation</i>  |                          |
| UEA (Urban Economic Association)  | 1-3, 2021 Sept., 2021.   |
| <i>PhD Student Workshop</i>   |                          |
| Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano   | 29-1 Sept., 2021.        |
| <i>XX Summer School in International and Development Economics "Investment Choices in Developing Economies"</i> |                          |
| IRVAPP  | 14-19 Dec., 2020         |
| <i>Advanced Methods For Impact Evaluation, "Survey sampling methods and applications"</i>                       |                          |
| University of Essex   | August 2019              |
| <i>52nd Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis. Courses in Quantitative Text Analysis.</i>         |                          |
| SITES   | June 2019                |
| <i>X Summer School in Development Economics</i>   |                          |

## CONFERENCES

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|---|--|
| NCDE 2025   | on June 17-18, Oslo, Norway.                                 |
| <i>Nordic Conference in Development Economics</i>   |  |
| CERDI   | on february 7, 2025, University of Clermont Auvergne, France |
| <i>Invited seminar</i>  |  |
| Collegio Carlo Alberto  | on December 12, 2024, Turin, Italy                           |
| <i>Postdoc/RTD Seminars</i>   |  |
| 2022-23 Andrea Vaona Award  | on September 18, 2023, Verona, Italy                         |
| <i>Award Reception Lecture</i>  |  |
| XXXV SIEP Conference 2023   | on September 14-15, 2023, Verona, Italy                      |
| NCDE 2023   | on June 13-15, Gothenburg, Sweden.                           |
| <i>Nordic Conference in Development Economics</i>   |  |
| Jobs and Development  | on December 14-15, 2022, Capetown, South Africa              |
| <i>World Bank, IZA, UNU-WIDER, and the Network on Jobs and Development</i>                                |  |
| UNU-Merit Internal Conference   | on September 29-30, 2022, Maastricht, Netherlands            |
| The Bank Al-Maghrib   | on June 23-24, 2022, Rabat, Morocco                          |
| <i>The International Monetary Fund "Transformational Recovery: Seizing Opportunities from the Crisis"</i> |  |

**EUDN** *on November 25-26, 2022, Wageningen, Netherlands*  
*PhD Workshop on Development Economics*

**15th North American Meeting of the Urban Economics Association** *on October 14-16, 2021*

**DevEconMeet 2021** *on October 1, 2021, University of Florence*

**SasCa PhD Conference in Economics 2021** *on September 16-17, 2021 Alghero, Italy*  
*University of Sassari and Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

**Urban Economic Association (UEA) PhD Student Workshop** *on September 1-3, online*  
*University of Sassari and Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

**EMNES Annual Conference** *on June 2019, Brussels, Belgium*  
*Towards a Regional Integration and Employment Driven Socio-Economic Model in the Mediterranean: A Comprehensive Policy Road map*

## LANGUAGES

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Italian - Mothertongue

English - Fluent

French - Fluent

## REFERENCES

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**Prof. Giorgia Giovannetti**

Professor of Economics  
Department of Economics and Management  
University of Florence  
Via delle Pandette, 32  
50127 Firenze (Italy)  
+39 055 2759601  
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**Prof. Marco Sanfilippo**

Professor of Economics  
Department of Economics and Statistics  
"Cognetti de Martiis"  
University of Turin, Room 15 3.D1  
Campus Einaudi, via Lungo Dora Siena 100  
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**Prof. Bruno Martorano**

Associate Professor of Economics  
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**Prof. Asha Sundaram**

Associate Professor of Economics  
Department of Economics  
University of Auckland  
12 Grafton Road 1010 Auckland (New Zealand)  
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**Prof. Luca Tiberti**

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Department of Economics and Management  
University of Florence  
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