

Elisa Macchi

PHD CANDIDATE IN ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF ZÜRICH

✉ elisa.macchi@econ.uzh.ch 🌐 elisamacchi.github.io ☎ +41 76 322 69 26

Mailing Address: Ho5 Schönberggasse 1 - 8001 Zürich, CH

PLACEMENT DIRECTOR

Hans-Joachim Voth, Professor of Economics, University of Zürich.

voth@econ.uzh.ch

REFERENCES

David Yanagizawa-Drott, Professor of Economics, University of Zürich.

david.yanagizawa-drott@econ.uzh.ch

Lorenzo Casaburi, Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Zürich.

lorenzo.casaburi@econ.uzh.ch

Education

1 Aug '15 -

PH.D. in Economics, UZH Zürich (expected completion: June 2021)

Jul '15

M. PHIL. in Economics (LMEC), Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna

Jul '13

B.A. in Economics and Business, Università degli Studi di Milano - Bicocca

Visiting Positions

Sep '18 - Jul '19

VISITING FELLOW Economics Department, Harvard University (sponsor: Prof. Dr. Benjamin Enke)

Feb '13

ERASMUS SEMESTER Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

Job-Market Paper

"Worth your weight: experimental evidence on the benefits of obesity in low-income countries."

Do visible wealth signals have instrumental benefits in low-information settings? I tackle this question experimentally by investigating the wealth signaling power and the instrumental economic benefits of obesity in the urban area of Kampala, Uganda. In low-resource contexts obesity is akin to a status good. Using photo-morphed pictures of real Kampala residents, I show that obesity is perceived as a strong and reliable wealth signal. To test for benefits, I cooperate with 124 small financial institutions in Kampala. In an incentivized field experiment I show that obese borrowers have easier access to credit, because loan officers exploit obesity as a wealth signal. Going from normal weight to obese improves access to credit as much as increasing one's income by 60 percent. I pinpoint the mechanism by showing that reducing asymmetric information reduces the obesity premium by 70 percent. Although loan officers appear to engage in statistical discrimination, I provide suggestive evidence that most loan officers hold biased beliefs about the income distribution by body mass. A final experiment shows that the benefits of obesity are commonly known, but generally overestimated. I discuss implication for anti-discrimination and obesity prevention policies.

Other Research

"Pressure to Employ, Productivity and Technology Adoption ", with B. Caprettini (UZH). [ongoing]

"The mental health of graduate students and professors: evidence from European Economics departments", with P. Barreira (Harvard) and C. Sievert (Harvard). [ongoing]

"A unified global analysis of the obesity and socio-economic status correlation." [draft coming soon]

"EU transfers and Euroscepticism: can't buy me love?", with A. Borin and M. Mancini [forthcoming, Economic Policy].

Grants & Honors

July '20	<i>Diligentia Stiftung Research Grant</i> , with D. Yanagizawa-Drott (USD 39'500)
July '21	<i>Swiss Re Fund for Development Economic - Top-up grant</i> (USD 10'800)
Dec '19	<i>GRC Travel Grant</i> (USD 2'800)
Sep '19	<i>Swiss Re Fund for Development Economics</i> (USD 27'000, maximum amount)
May '19	<i>Director's Grant Zurich GSE</i> (USD 5'400, maximum amount)
Nov '18	<i>SNSF Doc. Mobility scholarship</i>
Mar '17	<i>B. Stringher scholarship (particolarmente meritevole)</i> • Banca D'Italia
Mar '15	PhD scholarship • University of Zürich
Jan '14	Unicredit <i>Ad Honorem</i> • Unicredit S.p.a.
Sep '14	LMEC top-four-students scholarship • Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna
2010-'12	Merit-based scholarships • Università degli Studi di Milano - Bicocca

Conferences & seminar presentations

2020	<i>DEVPEC</i> , Stanford (virtual); <i>Essen Health Conference</i> (virtual); <i>Early Career Behavioral Economics Conference</i> , BRIQ; <i>Internal Applied Microeconomics Seminar</i> , University of Zürich.
2019	<i>Development Economics Lunch</i> , Harvard; <i>Internal Applied Microeconomics Seminar</i> , University of Zürich; <i>Development Economics Lunch</i> , Harvard; <i>Political Economy and Culture Workshop</i> , Harvard; <i>Project Design seminar</i> , University of Zürich.
2018	<i>Political Economy Seminar</i> , Government department, Harvard; Accepted for poster presentation at <i>SSDEV</i> ; <i>Internal Applied Microeconomics Seminar</i> , University of Zürich.
2017	<i>European Trade Study Group (ETSG)</i> , European University Institute and University of Florence; <i>Internal Applied Microeconomics Seminar</i> , University of Zürich.

Teaching Experience

Spring '18	<i>T.A., Econometrics for Policy Analysts</i> (M.A.), University of Zürich
Fall '17	<i>T.A., Labor Economics</i> (M.A.), University of Zürich
Spring '17	<i>T.A., Intermediate Econometrics</i> (B.A.), University of Zürich

Relevant Employment History and Professional Activities

Jan '18	PhD Member of hiring committee for 2 positions in "Economics of Child and Youth Development / with a focus on breastfeeding." Economics department, University of Zürich.
Jan '17- Jan '19	Research Assistant for Fabrizio Zilibotti, SNSF Project " <i>Inequality, cultural transmission, and human capital accumulation</i> "
Jun '17- Sep '17	Ph.D. Intern, DG Economics, Statistics and Research, Bank of Italy

Personal skills

IT

Stata • R • Python • \LaTeX • OTree • HTML (beginner)

LANGUAGES

Italian (native) • English (fluent) • Spanish (fluent) • German (advanced)