

# Elisa Macchi

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## REFERENCES

David Yanagizawa-Drott, Professor of Economics, University of Zürich.  
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Lorenzo Casaburi, Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Zürich.  
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Hans-Joachim Voth, Professor of Economics, University of Zürich. (*Placement Director*)  
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## 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

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## 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

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## Job-Market Paper

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

When wealth information is scarce, as in developing countries, wealth signals may serve an economic function. I provide novel experimental evidence on the economic benefits of wealth signals in developing countries, by investigating the wealth-signaling value, and access-to-credit benefits of obesity in the urban area of Kampala, Uganda. In low-resource settings, obesity is akin to a status good. Using manipulated portraits (thinner/fatter) of real Kampala residents, I first show that obesity is perceived as a reliable wealth signal. Then, cooperating with 124 small financial institutions, I test for economic benefits in a real-stakes field experiment involving employed loan officers. I show that obese borrowers have easier access to credit: going from normal weight to obese is equivalent to increasing one's income by 60 percent. I pinpoint the mechanism by showing that reducing asymmetric information between borrowers and lenders reduces the obesity premium by two-thirds. Looking at the credit provision consequences, I provide evidence that many loan officers hold inaccurate beliefs about the income distribution by body mass among borrowers. Gauging into health effects, I show that obesity benefits are commonly known, and largely

overestimated. I discuss implication for anti-discrimination and obesity prevention policies.

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## Other Research

"*Pressure to employ, productivity and technology adoption: experimental evidence from rural Uganda*", 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]

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

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## Grants & Honors

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|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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             |

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## Conferences & seminar presentations

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| 2020 | NEUDC*, Dartmouth (virtual); <i>BREAD/CEPR/STICERD/TCD</i> (virtual); <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.                                                                                                            |

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## Teaching Experience

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

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## 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 "*Inequality, cultural transmission, and human capital accumulation*"
- Jun '17 - Sep '17 Ph.D. Intern, DG Economics, Statistics and Research, Bank of Italy
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## Personal skills

### IT

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

### LANGUAGES

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