Letter from MEEA President

As I reflect on MEEA's activities and progress for this last year (2015), I cannot help but feel very positive and optimistic. On many fronts, MEEA has progressed very nicely as an organization and has achieved many strategic goals. First, we are on a much solid financial ground than we have ever been. With the superior work of our treasurer (Professor Edward Sayre), we achieve some sort of financial stability that enabled MEEA to assist in bringing in distinguished scholars and well-known policy makers to our ASSA/MEEA annual conference. Last year, MEEA/AEA joint panel brought together: Ahmed Galal (Executive Director of ERF (Economic Research Forum, and former Minister of Finance in Egypt); Stephen G. Cecchetti (former economic adviser and head of the monetary and economic department at the BIS, in Switzerland); along with Shanta Devarajan (the Chief Economist of the World Bank’s Middle East and North Africa Region). Needless to say that these joint panels has brought a lot of notoriety and visibility to our organization.

(Continued on page 2)

CALL FOR PAPERS

MEEA SESSIONS AT THE 91ST WESTERN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, PORTLAND, OREGON, USA: JUNE 29TH-JULY 3RD 2016

In conjunction with the Western Economic Association, the MEEA will be holding several sessions at the WEAI conference in Portland, Oregon. MEEA sessions at this conference have been lively and growing in presence over the years. To submit an abstract, please contact the session organizers: Shawkat Hammoudeh (hammousm@drexel.edu), Jeffrey Nugent (nugent@dornsife.usc.edu), or Rahel Schomaker (r.schomaker@cbs.de). MEEA members may register for this conference at the same rate as current WEAI members. For more information about this conference, please visit http://www.weai.org/AC2016b.

INFORMATION FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO MEETINGS

All joint MEEA/ASSA sessions will take place at the Hilton Union Square. The post-ASSA sessions will be held at the University of San Francisco in the Lone Mountain Building, rooms 357, 358, 363, and 365. The address is 2800 Turk Blvd.
In terms of building capacity, MEEA was able to assist many young ME scholars last year in both our annual US conference and our international conference as well that was held in Tunis. Over 25 thousand dollars in terms of travel grants were provided to our young scholars from all over the region through our partnership with our sister organization ERF (Economic Research Forum). Still, we are planning for more next year (2016). It is important to mention here that the deserving and sometimes deprived ME students list has just gotten much longer in the past couple of years due to the conflict and war-torn conditions in many more countries of the region.

Thanks to our colleagues Hadi Esfahani and Ward Sayre, we are about to get our tax-exempt status as an international organization residing in the US. Thus, I think we should be prepared in 2016, to use this great new tool to raise fund and solidify our financial position. I assume discussion on how we may use this tool, and for what purposes, should start among the new board members who will be holding offices after this 2015 election.

I believe we have done a very good job in the last three years in terms of cooperating and coordinating with other likeminded international associations. ERF, Western Economic Association, MESA, and the ESCWA among others.

In addition, we scheduled a round table for this year, 2015, MESA convention in Denver, Colorado. Our veteran board members (Edward Sayre, Hadi Esfahani, and our own Karen Pfeifer will discuss a report on the Middle Class in the MENA region, prepared by a team from the ESCWA (Economic and Social Committee for Western Asia).

We have done a lot of work this past year, and I would like to thank all the board members and my colleagues on the Executive board since this is an election year.

For our 15th annual international conference (23-25 March 2016), I would like to welcome you to Doha, Qatar. Moreover, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our partner there. The DI (Doha Institute for Graduate Studies) and SPADE (School of Public Policy and Development Economics), who have provided every reason for us to believe that this upcoming conference will be one of a kind.

I am always proud of my association to MEEA and my work on her behalf. I would like to thank all the members who have made the association what it is today. Without your support and backing, we would have not been where we are now. Salute to all and season's greetings.
Topics in Middle Eastern and North African Economies
Volume 17, Numbers 1-2, May 2015

Guest Editors for Issue Number 1

Fatma Dogruel, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

Rahel Schomaker, German University of Administrative Sciences, Speyer, Germany

“The Impact of Standards on Egyptian Trade” Hoda El-Enbaby, Economic Research Forum, Cairo, Egypt, Rana Hendy, Economic Research Forum, Cairo, Egypt, Chahir Zaki, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt

“Bringing a New Perspective on Co-Movements of Stock Markets in Emerging Economies Through Causality and Wavelet Analysis” Emel Baydan, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey, Sadullah Çelik, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

“Environmental Risks and Policy Decisions in Tunisia” Natalie Hilmi, Centre scientifique de Monaco, Monaco, Ilhsen Ketata, Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, Alain Safa, Université de Nice-Sophia-Antipolis, Nice, France

“Sensitivity of Turkish Income Distributions to Choice of Equivalence Scale” Sinem Sefil, Istanbul Commerce University, Istanbul, Turkey

“Sustainable Tourism in Some MENA Countries” Natalie Hilmi, Centre scientifique de Monaco, Monaco, Nicolas Peridy, Université de Toulon, Toulon, France, Alain Safa, Université de Nice-Sophia-Antipolis, Nice, France, Brice Teisserenc, Centre Scientifique de Monaco, Monaco

“The Determinants of Broadband Access and Usage in Turkey: Do Regions Matter?” Bülent Anil, Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, Turkey, Emin Köksal, Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, Turkey

“Self Employment And Unemployment In Turkey” Fatma Dogruel, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey, Yasemin Ozerkek, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

Editor for Issue Number 2

E. Mine Cinar, Loyola University, Chicago, IL, USA

“Determinants of Foreign Direct Investment To Turkey” Cem Payaslioglu, Eastern Mediterranean University, Northern Cyprus, Burcak Polat, Eastern Mediterranean University, Northern Cyprus

“Taking Into Account Sustainable Development for MENA Countries” Natalie Hilmi, Centre scientifique de Monaco, Monaco, Nicolas Peridy, Université de Toulon, Toulon, France, Alain SAFA, Université de Nice-Sophia-Antipolis, Nice, France, Messaoud Zemouri, Université de Batna, Batna, Algeria

“The Effectiveness of Kill-Capture Tools and Tactics in the Post-9/11 Era” Jesse Paul Lehrke, German Research Institute for Public Administration, Speyer Germany, Rahel Schomaker, Cologne Business School/German Research Institute for Public Administration Speyer, Germany

“Why Do Women Prefer Part-Time Employment In Turkey?” Burcu Duzgun Oncel, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey, Bilge Eris Dereli, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

“Does Public Employment Reduce Unemployment?” Alberto Behar, IMF, Middle East and Central Asian department, Junghwan Mok, Bank of Korea, Seoul, South Korea

“Shattered Health for Women: How Gender Roles Affect Health Socio-Economic Status Nexus Over Life Cycle?” Burcu Duzgun Oncel, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

“Historical Perspectives on Trade and Risk on the Silk Road, Middle East and China” Mine Cinar, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA, Katherine Geusz, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA, Joseph Johnson, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA

“Measuring Trade Advantages of the Qualifying Industrial Zones Program of Jordan and Egypt Offered by the United States for Having Signed Peace Treaties with Israel” Austin Carter, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA, Yun Gong, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA, Jeffrey B. Nugent, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA

“The Determinants of Youth Unemployment in Qatar” Nada Abdelqader Benmansour, Fikra Research & Policy, Doha, Qatar, Samantha Constant, Fikra Research & Policy, Doha, Qatar, Edward Sayre, University of Southern Mississippi and Fikra Research & Policy, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, USA
### MEEA Newsletter Vol. 24 No. 1

#### Middle East Economic Association Meeting

in conjunction with the Allied Social Science Association

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<th>Sunday, January 3rd</th>
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<tr>
<td>MEEA Board Meeting</td>
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<td>Hilton Union Square, Union Square 9</td>
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<td>6:00pm (invitation only)</td>
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#### Monday, January 4th

8:00am, Hilton Union Square, Yosemite C

**MEEA Poster Session: Comparative and Country Sessions in MENA**

**Presiding:**
- Edward Sayre

**Presentations:**
- **Sara Elezaby** — Does Financial Repression Help Reduce the Budget Deficit? Evidence from Egypt
- **Samar Mahmoud Mohamed Abdelmeged** — Competition Policies and MSMEs Growth in Developing Countries: Incentives or Barriers?
- **Karen Pfeifer** — Investment Policies and Processes as Means to Restore Economic Vitality in Egypt and Tunisia
- **Reham Rizk Kamel, Fida Karam, and Chahir Zaki** — Growth, Development and Conflicts: Evidence from the MENA region
- **Alaa Al-Tulaibawi** — Analysis of Fruit Price Dumping in the Iraqi Market, 2002-2010
- **Kamel Si Mohammed, Abderrezak Benhabib, and Samir Maliki** — Foreign Exchange Market And Contagion Using Dynamic Garch Multivariate Conditional Correlation
- **A.H. Barnett, Michael Malcom, and Hugo Toledo** — Shooting the Goose that Lays the Golden Egg: The Case of UAE Employment Policy
- **Noha Emara and I-Ming Chiu** — Economic Growth & Governance: A Panel Study on MENA Countries
- **Nazire Nergiz Dincer, Ayca Tekin Koru, and Pinar Yasar** — Does the FTA with the Third Party Harm Disadvantaged Incumbents of the Customs Union? The Case of
- **Ines Trojette** — Determinants of Conditional Convergence of the MENA Region towards the EURO Zone: The Institutional
- **Mesbah Fathy Sharaf** — The Causal Relationship between Inflation and Inflation Uncertainty in Egypt: Evidence from

**GARCH-M**

- **Javed Younas, Subhayu Bandyopadhyay, Todd Sandler** — Effects of Terrorism on Trade: General Equilibrium and Institutional Considerations
- **Ayse Aynin Bayar** — The Decomposition of Regional Income Inequalities of Turkey

12:30pm, Hilton Union Square, Plaza A

**MEEA/AEA Panel: Violent Conflicts and Economic Development in the Middle East: Is there a way out?**

**Moderator:** **HASSAN Y. ALY**

**Presentations:**
- **Hadi Salehi Esfahani** — Social Order, Violence, and Socio Economic Change in the Middle East
- **Ibrahim El Badawi** — The Arab Spring: Much Violence, Little Democracy
- **Tarek Moussoud** — Overall Distinguishing Factors Contributing to the Violent Conflict in the Middle East

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<th>Tuesday, January 5th</th>
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<tr>
<td>MEEA Business Meeting</td>
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<td>Hilton Union Square, Powell A &amp; B</td>
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<td>6:00pm</td>
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8:00am, Hilton Union Square, Union Square 18

**Economic Development in the MENA Region**
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<th>Session 1: Unemployment and Wages (Lone Mountain 363)</th>
<th>Session 3: Labor Supply, Demand, and Household Behaviors (Lone Mountain 357)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presiding:</strong> Aysit Tansel</td>
<td><strong>Presiding:</strong> Mohamed Benbousize</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S. Elf Filiz</strong>—The Effect of UI Generosity on UI Benefit Duration and Unemployment Behavior: Evidence from Turkey</td>
<td><strong>Ahmed Faye Abdelgouad</strong>—Exporting and Workforce Skill Intensity in the Egyptian Manufacturing Sector: Empirical Evidence Using World Bank Firm-Level Data for Egypt</td>
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<td><strong>Bilge Eris Dereli</strong>—Determinants of Job Finding and Separation Rates: Evidence from Turkey</td>
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<td><strong>Rachid Adouane and Merazga Aissa</strong>—The effects of agricultural policy on the environment in MENA countries. Case of Algeria</td>
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<td><strong>Aysit Tansel, Basak Dalgic, Aytekin Guven</strong>—Wage Inequality and Wage Mobility in Turkey</td>
<td><strong>Yadollah Dadgar</strong>—A Missing Chain in Public Sector Economics: Performance of Public Sector in MENA Countries</td>
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<td><strong>Session 2: Energy, Innovation and Environmental Economics (Lone Mountain 365)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Abderrezak Benhabib</strong>—The Key Determinants of Innovation in the Algerian SMEs</td>
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<td><strong>Presiding:</strong> Nathalie Hilmi</td>
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<td><strong>Ahmed Smahi and Amel Hamhami</strong>—Technological cost efficiency analysis and respect of environmental standards: The case of the Algerian cement sector</td>
<td><strong>Ariel Belasen and Ali M. Kutan</strong>—Housing Boom and Economic Activity: The Case of MENA countries</td>
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<td><strong>Rachid Adouane and Merazga Aissa</strong>—The effects of agricultural policy on the environment in MENA countries. Case of Algeria</td>
<td><strong>Umut Unal and Isil Erol</strong>—Construction Industry and Economic Growth in Turkey</td>
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<td><strong>Yadollah Dadgar</strong>—A Missing Chain in Public Sector Economics: Performance of Public Sector in MENA Countries</td>
<td><strong>Shereef Ellaboudy</strong>—The political economy of the Chinese Silk road and its effect on MENA</td>
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<td><strong>Abderrezak Benhabib, Wafa Berreched, and Benabou Senouci</strong>—The Key Determinants of Innovation in the Algerian SMEs</td>
<td><strong>Mehmet Serkan Tosun</strong>—Political Economy of Decentralization in the Arab Countries</td>
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**POST-ASSA CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

Wednesday, January 6th
9:00am-10:30am

**Session 1: Unemployment and Wages (Lone Mountain 363)**

**Presiding:** Aysit Tansel

**S. Elf Filiz**—The Effect of UI Generosity on UI Benefit Duration and Unemployment Behavior: Evidence from Turkey

**Bilge Eris Dereli**—Determinants of Job Finding and Separation Rates: Evidence from Turkey

**Sezgin Polat and Mustafa Ulus**—Hours worked, wages and productivity in Turkey

**Aysit Tansel, Basak Dalgic, Aytekin Guven**—Wage Inequality and Wage Mobility in Turkey

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**Presiding:** Abderrezak Benhabib

**Ahmed Smahi and Amel Hamhami**—Technological cost efficiency analysis and respect of environmental standards: The case of the Algerian cement sector

**Rachid Adouane and Merazga Aissa**—The effects of agricultural policy on the environment in MENA countries. Case of Algeria

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**Abderrezak Benhabib, Wafa Berreched, and Benabou Senouci**—The Key Determinants of Innovation in the Algerian SMEs

**Session 3: Labor Supply, Demand, and Household Behaviors (Lone Mountain 357)**

**Presiding:** Mohamed Benbousize

**Ahmed Faye Abdelgouad**—Exporting and Workforce Skill Intensity in the Egyptian Manufacturing Sector: Empirical Evidence Using World Bank Firm-Level Data for Egypt

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**Rachid Adouane and Merazga Aissa**—The effects of agricultural policy on the environment in MENA countries. Case of Algeria

**Yadollah Dadgar**—A Missing Chain in Public Sector Economics: Performance of Public Sector in MENA Countries

**Abderrezak Benhabib, Wafa Berreched, and Benabou Senouci**—The Key Determinants of Innovation in the Algerian SMEs
Middle East Economic Association  
Post-ASSA Conference Sessions at the University of San Francisco

10:45am-12:15pm

Session 5: Economic Development from Different Perspectives (Lone Mountain 363)

Presiding: Ali A. Soliman

Nil Otter and Rahel Schomaker—Family-owned Enterprises and Development in the Gulf
A.Suut Dogruel and Fatma Dogruel—Structural Change and Productivity in Turkey
Shireen AlAzzawi—Economic and Social Mobility in Egypt during reform and revolution
Yilmaz Kilicaslan and Gul Guney—ICT Use and Firm Productivity: An analysis on Turkish Manufacturing and Service Sector
Bounoua Chaib and Merad Boudia Hind—Change in transition countries: the case of Algerian firms

Session 6: Economic Development from Different Perspectives (Lone Mountain 365)

Presiding: Ali M. Kutan

Sinem Sefl—Functional Income Distribution Costs of Financial Crisis in Turkey
Seza Danisoglu, Nuray Guner, and Hande Ayaydin Haciomeroglu—To Roll or Not To Roll? Default and Liquidity Risks and Their Effect on Debt Overhang
Riza Demirer and Mehmet Balciar—Market regimes, safe havens and dynamic hedging strategies for emerging markets: A comparison of real and financial assets
Busra Agcayazi and Ali M. Kutan—IMF programs and private financial and real sector performance: Further evidence from Turkey

Session 7: Conflict, corruption, and Migration in the MENA region (Lone Mountain 357)

Presiding: Marcus Maktanner

Khusrau Gaibulloev and Jawed Youna—Conflicts, Terrorism and International Financial Flows
Maryam Naghsh Nejad—Children of Afghan migrants in Iran
Bulent Anil and Aysenur Acar—How does childhood poverty affect future outcomes of children?
Marcus Maktanner and Maureen Wilson—Wasta - Myth or Reality? An Empirical Approach

Session 8: Monetary Policy, Central Banking, and the Supply of Money and Credit (Lone Mountain 358)

Presiding: Erhan Aslanoglu

Volkan Ulke and Hakan Berument—Asymmetric Effects of Monetary Policy on Economic Performance: Empirical Evidence from Turkey
Ahmed Kamaly and Samah Shetta—Estimating Egyptian Monetary Rule
Erhan Aslanoglu and Pinar Deniz—Decomposing the Determinants of Interest Rates in Turkey and Selected Emerging Markets Implementing Inflation Targeting Policies
Mesmer Balcilar and Nezahat Dogan—When do the GCC stock markets offer diversification benefits? Novel evidence from a nonparametric causality in quantiles test

1:15pm-2:45pm

Session 9: Financial Markets (Lone Mountain 363)

Presiding: Ahmed Kamaly

Kenan Tata, Oral Erdogan, and Burhan Can Karahasan—Distributional Dynamics of Financial Capital in Turkey
Atsui Ohara—GCC Sovereign wealth funds on Asia Equity Markets
Laurent Weill and Florian Leon—Islamic Banking Development and Access to Credit
Orhan Torul and Ceyhun Elgin—Marginal Cost of Public Funds under the Presence of Informality

Session 10: Public Sector and Natural Resources (Lone Mountain 365)

Presiding: Yadollah Dadgar

Zemouri Messaoud and Zitouni Ammar—The contribution of natural gas to the post-oil in Algeria
Esin Cakan, Sercan Demiralay, Veyssel Ulusoy—Oil Prices and Firm Returns in Emerging Markets
Hicham Benamirou Che—Evolution of Algeria Natural Gas Exports to Europe
Ahmed Youssouf Amtane, Fares Boubakour, and Housssem Mounifouk—Challenges and Opportunities to Reduce Waste and Limit the Phenomenon of Fuel Smuggling in Algeria While Protecting the Poor Based on Reforming Fossil-Fuel Subsidies

Session 11: Human Capital and Education 1 (Lone Mountain 357)

Presiding: Jeffrey B. Nugent

Ayse Aylin Bayar and Bengi Yanik Ilhan—Determinants of Household Education Expenditures: Do Poor Spend Less on Education?
Samer Kherfi—Female schooling and child quality in MENA
Burcu Duzgun—Does Lower Socio-Economic Status Make You Sick? Two-
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<tr>
<th>Session 12: E-Commerce, Trade and Household Behaviors (Lone Mountain 358)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Emin Koksal and Bulent Anil—The Determinants of Business to Consumer e-Commerce in Turkey</td>
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<td>Berna Dogan and Hasan Tekgue—Determinants of Household Food Security in Turkey</td>
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<td>Benbraika Abdelouahab and Rahal Ali—Households’ spending on education in Algeria: comparative analysis of the results of two studies</td>
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<td>Messaoud Zemmouri, Abdennacer Moussi, and Latifa Borni—The impact of employees empowerment on improving the social performance of hospitals in Algeria</td>
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3:00pm-4:30pm

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<th>Session 13: Exchange Rates and Trade Issues (Lone Mountain 3563)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Presiding: Mahmut Tekce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burcak Muge Vural—Determinants of Turkish Real Effective Exchange Rates</td>
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<td>Mohamed Sayed Abed—Testing the Twin Deficit Hypothesis Under Fiscal Dominance in Egypt During the Period 1974-2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ibrahim Elbadawi, Khalid Sekkat, and Chahir Zakı—Does Exchange Rate Undervaluation Matter for Exports and Trade Margins: Evidence from Firm-Level Data in Four Arab countries.</td>
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Session 14: Human Capital and Education 2 (Lone Mountain 365)

Presiding: Karen Pfeifer

Sirma Demir Seker, Seyit Mumin Cilasun, Nazıre Nerci Dincer, and Ayca Tekin Koru—The Relationship between Adult Education and Poverty Alleviation in Turkey

Francesco Pastore and Federica Rocci—The Determinants of Business to Consumer e-Commerce in Turkey

Berna Dogan and Hasan Tekguc—Determinants of Household Food Security in Turkey

Benbraika Abdelouahab and Rahal Ali—Households’ spending on education in Algeria: comparative analysis of the results of two studies

Messaoud Zemmouri, Abdennacer Moussi, and Latifa Borni—The impact of employees empowerment on improving the social performance of hospitals in Algeria

4:30pm-6:00pm

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<td>Presiding: Wassim Shahin</td>
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<td>Huseyin Ozturk, Ahmet Faruk Aysan, and Mustafa Dili—Bank Lending Channel in Turkey: Evidence from Islamic and Conventional Banks</td>
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<td>Huseyin Ozturk, Ahmet Faruk Aysan, and Mustafa Dili—Macropudential Policies and Depositor Discipline</td>
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<td>Wassim Shahin—Does Quantitative Easing Benefit the MENA Region? A Transmission Mechanism Approach</td>
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Session 16: Employment, Migration, Government, and Growth (Lone Mountain 358)

Presiding: Hadi Salchi Esfahani


Burhan Can Karahasan—Perception of Government Quality in Turkey: A Regional Perspective

Seyed Reza Yousefi, Adolfo Barajas, and Ralph Chami—The Finance and Growth Nexus Re-examined: Do All Countries Benefit Equally?

Hanan Nazier and Racha Ramadan Mohamed—Women’s Participation in Labor Market in Egypt: Constraints and Opportunities

Session 17: Monetary and Financial Policies 2 (Lone Mountain 363)

Presiding: Mine Cinar

Ayse Ertrugul—An analysis on inflationary effects of fiscal policy: Evidence from a VARX model

Abderrezak Benhabib, Kamel Si Mohammed, and Samir Maliki—The Main Determinants Of Inflation In Algeria: An ARDI. Model

Sahar Mohamed Abdel-Haleim, Mohamed Hassan, and Lobna M. Abdel-Latif—Monetary-Fiscal Policy Interaction: An Empirical Analysis in Egypt

Session 18: Asset Markets and Stock Markets (Lone Mountain 365)

Presiding: Shawkat Hammoudah

Ahmed Baghli and Mohamed Benbouziane—The Evolving Efficiency of MENA Stock Markets, Evidence from the Hurst Exponent
MEEA in Social Media, by Mahdi Majbouri

The idea to create a presence for MEEA in the online social media was initiated by our president, Professor Hassan Aly, and the MEEA board. I had the privilege to be chosen to write a proposal to the board and be in charge of moving the initiative forward.

There are several reasons for why MEEA needs to be present in social media. First, as a powerful and multidimensional mode of communication, social media can be used to inform our members about programs and ideas that are beneficial to our members professionally. These include research grants, fellowships, and training workshops, to name a few. It is also one reason why you should “Like” our Facebook page!

Second, emails are not the best way of communication. People usually consider opening and reading email as a necessary daily chore, but they love to check their social media news feed. It is more pleasant and more effective if our members hear from MEEA on the social media – another reason to “Like” our Facebook page!

Third, social media can be used to connect members with each other and with the board of directors. For instance, a LinkedIn group provides a venue in which members can ask questions, create discussion boards, and communicate with each other and with the MEEA board of directors. They can ask technical questions from the community, look for potential co-authors, or share their ideas and suggestions to improve MEEA on the discussion boards. In summary, the online LinkedIn group can be used to build a close-knit community which guarantees the success of this institution in long-run.

Fourth, to remain a vibrant community of scholars, we need to continuously engage in creating awareness and interest among the social scientists who work on the region and are not a member of our association – awareness about MEEA, its objectives, conferences, and programs. Social media have reduced the cost of doing so and is also very popular among the youth, graduate students and early-career scholars, a base that we always have to continuously tap in for membership.

In order to implement this initiative, I, first, looked for best practices and devised a plan accordingly. Based on the plan, first, the Wikipedia page for the association was created. If you google “Middle East Economic Association,” it is the second entry in the search results after the MEEA website. Following that, the MEEA page on Facebook was set up that I am sure you will now “Like” on Facebook, if you have not done so already. By “liking” it you can see our announcements on your Facebook newsfeed. Currently, MEEA group page on LinkedIn has been created and members are going to be invited to join the group. This group will be a powerful vehicle for communication within our association.

I am excited about our plans in the coming year. Our presence in the social media is going to increase substantially next year: our Facebook page will be updated continuously and our LinkedIn group will becomes active. Please always feel free to contact me with any suggestions, ideas, or comments. I look forward to seeing you on Facebook and, soon enough, LinkedIn.
The MENA Youth Policy Research Center hosted the 14th International Conference of Middle East Economic Association (MEEA) 2015 at Hammamet, Tunisia. This conference has been sponsored by Silatech and IDRC. The conference included also two round tables focusing on “How to improve the quality of research for young researchers” for the first round table (organized by MYPRC, Silatech and IDRC) and “how to conduct reforms in Tunisia” for the second (organized by Cercle des économistes Tunisiens).

The first plenary session included opening remarks and welcomes from Hassan Aly, and Fatma Dogruel, Paul Dyer, and Nizar Jouini as well as a paper presentation by Hadi Esfahani titled “Women’s Economic Participation and Inclusive Growth.”

During the second plenary session, three interesting presentations were chaired by Mustapha Nabli. Bob Rijkers from the World Bank presented how Ben Ali family companies use their power for not paying tax duties. Then, Taoufik Rajhi from the African Development Bank presented debt sustainability in the case of Tunisia and highlights different factors making the Tunisian debt unsustainable. Finally Mine Cinar presented case studies from Mediterranean countries and identifies important factors to start a new business. All these presentations were commented by Mustapha Nabli and the attendees.

During the last session Nizar Jouini opened the floor by thanking all the team of MYPRC, MEEA and the donors. Then Mr Hadi Esfahani made his speech by underlying the importance of publishing for young researchers. He invited all MEEA networking to submit to Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance. Mr Esfahani suggested that he will pay more attention to interesting papers from the region. Finally Hassan Aly, the president of MEEA made his speech and has encouraged young researchers to publish in the international level. He emphasized the importance of English language as precondition for young researcher to publish. Moreover, Mr Aly enumerated many factors that help young researchers to choose the journal, to review very quickly their papers… etc.

The conference also organized several round table discussions. The first was organized on how to improve quality of research for young researchers. It brought together practitioners from the Tunisian administration and international organization (Silatech and IDRC) and young researchers. A second round table was organized by the “Cercle des économistes Tunisiens” chaired by Taoufik Rajhi, the president of the Cercle. The discussion during this session was very dynamic dealing with the hot topic of conducting reforms in Tunisia.

In total, there were 135 papers submitted to the conference, from which 58 were accepted and presented. A total of 100 participants joined the discussions for what turned out to be a very productive conference that will hopefully generate many new collaborations, ideas, and scholarly publications.

-prepared by Nizar Jouini
ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEEA PRESENTS TWO EVENTS AT MESA IN 2015

As an organization affiliated with MESA, MEEA presented two events at the Middle East Studies Association annual meetings in Denver, Colorado, November 21-24, 2015. The first event was a panel entitled “Inclusive Growth in the Post Arab Spring Middle East.” The panel included papers and discussion by Hadi Esfahani, Jennifer Olmsted, Karen Pfeifer, Edward Sayre, and Bassam Yousif. The second event was a Roundtable titled “MENA Middle Class Report: Analysis and Critique.” The Roundtable featured a presentation by Dr. Aljaz Juncic, representing the research team at ESCWA that produced the book-length report in The Arab Middle Class: A Force for Change?. Commentary and discussion was provided by Hassan Aly, Hadi Esfahani, Karen Pfeifer and Edward Sayre. This is the first year that MEEA has hosted two separate events, another positive step in stimulating deeper dialogue between economists and other specialists in the Middle East on key issues we commonly face in this region.

prepared by Karen Pfeifer

IBN KHALDUN PRIZE

Submissions for the Ibn Khaldun Prize for the best paper on one or more Middle Eastern countries by a junior economist (no more than five years since receiving Ph.D.) should be sent electronically to Professor Jeffrey B. Nugent at nugent@usc.edu. The entries will be evaluated by a three-person committee. Please visit http://meeaweb.org/honors.htm for further details.

Membership

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Middle East Economic Association, please fill out this form and return it to the Treasurer. The membership fee is $25 for faculty and other professionals, $20 for students, and $10 for all members residing in the MENA region. Payments can now be made via check or credit card. Be sure to include credit card number and expiration date if paying by credit card.

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The Middle East Economic Association, a non-profit international organization, was formed in 1978 and is affiliated with the American Economic Association and the Middle East Studies Association. The main objective of MEEA is to foster scholarship and to establish lines of communication among specialists interested in the Political Economy of the Middle East. Web: www.meeweb.org.

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