

# Siwar Khelifa

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## CURRENT POSITION

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**Teaching and research fellow**, Saint Etienne School of Economics    Sep. 2022 - August 2023  
**Postdoctoral research fellow**, University of Neuchâtel    *Starting in Sep. 2023*

## EDUCATION

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- 2018–2022    PhD in Economics, **University of Lyon 2**  
Thesis: Three Essays on Development Economics  
Advisors: Sylvis Démurger and Béatrice Rey Fournier  
PhD Committee: Rémi Bazillier, David Crainich, Terry Sicular
- 2017–2018    Master 2 in Policies and Economic Analysis, with honors.  
**University of Lyon 2**  
Dissertation: Internal migration in China: Extension of the standard saving model  
Advisor: Béatrice Rey-Fournier
- 2016–2017    Master 1 in Policies and Economic Analysis, with highest honors.  
**University of Lyon 2**  
Dissertation: Impact of the one-child policy on girls' education in China  
Advisor: Sylvie Démurger
- 2013–2016    Bachelor in Management and Finance, with highest honors.  
**IHEC Sousse (Tunisia)**  
Erasmus Mundus Scholarship: 1 year at **University of Lyon 2**

## RESEARCH FIELDS

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Development Economics, Economics of Human Capital Development, Migration Economics

## WORKING PAPERS

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**The Two Control Zones: Early life exposure to air pollution and long-term cognitive ability in China (Submitted to *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*), with Jie He**

*Abstract:* This paper examines the overall long-term effects of the Two Control Zones policy, through which the Chinese government imposed stringent air pollution regulations, on children's human capital development. Estimates show that exposure to this policy, during the year of birth, is associated, 15 years later, with an increased probability to obtain better standardized test scores and thus to join a higher quality high school and an increased probability to join an academic high school. These results provide an additional evidence in favor of environmental policies as promising inputs for human capital formation. The beneficial effects are found to be accentuated among girls and children born to fathers with low education levels, suggesting that environmental regulations may help reducing some of the educational disparities, in a developing country context. Projecting forward, results also suggest better future higher education and labor market outcomes. The findings are robust to various alternative hypotheses and specifications

### **Risks and optimal migration duration: The role of higher order risk attitudes**

*Abstract:* This paper analyzes the determinants of optimal migration duration focusing on increases in earnings and children's human capital risks. A theoretical model is built to show that migrants with left-behind children face a trade-off between avoiding non-monetary costs from leaving their children behind, and increasing their future wealth in the home country through the accumulated host country's specific skills. Following increases in risk that imply changes in different moments of their home and host countries' earnings' (child's human capital stock) distribution, this model shows that whether migrants re-optimize their migration plans, in a way that would decrease the "pain" associated with the additional risk, may depend on whether they hold certain types of risk preferences, in addition to risk aversion. It also shows that parental preferences involving cross-effects between children's human capital and earnings can have an additional impact in determining the relationship between increases in risks and the optimal migration duration of parents.

### **Rural-urban migration as a risk coping strategy: The role of income differentials, with Sylvie Démurger and Béatrice Rey.**

*Abstract:* This paper investigates how rural-urban income differentials interact with the risk-coping motive in order to shape the migration behavior of households. Using a model of migration behavior under agricultural income risk, our theoretical results suggest that income differentials remain crucial in determining the migration decision, but, differently from their traditional definition, they are now additionally determined by the agricultural income risk the household is facing. Using rainfall variability as a measure of the aggregate income risk, empirical findings on Chinese farm households indicate that, expected income differentials is one of the mechanisms determining whether weather variability translates into migration. Particularly, we find that the incidence of migration as a risk-coping mechanism is lower for households with a negative expected urban to rural income difference. Moreover, we find that, in a world where these households care about income and the human capital of their children, their marginal utility of income increases as the educational performance of their children deteriorates, implying that, when migration is used as a risk-coping strategy, households with lower educational performance of children may be more likely to send a parent for migration. This result also suggests that the best specification of the utility function to consider for these households is the non-separability between the household's earnings and their children's human capital.

## **ONGOING PROJECTS**

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**Mass migration and natives' infant health: evidence from Syrian refugee inflows to Turkey**

**Migration duration and higher order risk preferences: lab in the field experiment, with Julie Rosaz**

## **RESEARCH VISITS**

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FEBRUARY-JULY 2021

SHERBROOKE UNIVERSITY, ECOLE DE GESTION (ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT),  
CANADA.

Host professor: Jie He

## CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

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- 2023 **International Conference on Development Economics, AFEDEV**, Paris, France (*upcoming*)  
**13th Conference of the French Experimental Economic Association (ASFEE)**, Montpellier, France  
**IRENE seminar**, Institute of Economic Research, Neuchâtel, Switzerland  
**Pop-Up seminar**, GATE LSE, Lyon, France  
**Beers seminar**, GATE LSE, Lyon, France
- 2022 **European Association of Labor Economists (EALE) Conference**, University of Padova, Italy  
**The 35th Annual Conference of the European Society for Population Economics**, University of Calabria, Italy  
**The 70th Congress of the French Economic Association (AFSE)**, Dijon, France  
**38èmes Journées de Microéconomie Appliquée**, Rennes, France (accepted for presentation)
- 2021 **Asian and Australasian Society of Labour Economics Conference**, Beijing, China, (online)  
**22nd IWH-CIREQ-GW Macroeconometric Workshop: Environmental Macroeconomics**, Halle Institute for Economic Research, Germany, Centre interuniversitaire de recherche en économie quantitative (CIREQ), Canada, and George Washington University – The Center for Economic Research (GW), US, (online)  
**GATE PhD seminar**, GATE, France  
**The 3rd International Conference on Globalization and Development**, University of Göttingen, Germany, (online)  
**The 20th Journées Louis-André Gérard-Varet (LAGV)**, Aix-Marseille School of Economics (AMSE), France, (online)  
**The 69th Congress of the French Economic Association (AFSE)**, University of Lille, France, (online)  
**37èmes Journées de Microéconomie Appliquée**, Annecy, France, (online)
- 2020 **EDSEG Doctoral Workshop**, University of Lyon 2, France, (online)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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- 2022–PRESENT **Lecturer**, Saint Etienne School of Economics  
Economics of natural resources (Undergraduate), Econometrics (Graduate), Econometrics (Undergraduate)  
**Lecturer**, Télécom Saint-Etienne  
Macroeconomics (engineering-school students)  
**Teaching Assistant**, Saint Etienne School of Economics  
Data analysis (Graduate), Macroeconomics (Undergraduate)
- 2022–PRESENT **Co-organiser of the EALE facebook page**
- 2021–2022 **Teaching Assistant**, University of Lyon 2  
Macroeconomics (Undergraduate), Mathematics (Undergraduate), Introduction to Macroeconomics (Undergraduate), Panel Data (Graduate, online), Microeconomics (Undergraduate)
- 2021–2022 **Co-organiser of the PhD seminar**, GATE
- 2020–2021 **Teaching Assistant**, University of Lyon 2  
Macroeconomics (Undergraduate, online)
- 2019–2020 **Teaching Assistant**, University of Lyon 2  
Microeconomics (Undergraduate)
- 2019–2020 **Elected PhD representative**, Board of the Research Lab, GATE

## SUMMER/WINTER SCHOOLS

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- JULY 2021 Summer school Randomized Control Trial (RCTs) in Development Economics: Design and Data Analysis, *Barcelona Graduate School of Economics, Spain* (online).
- FEBRUARY 2020 Winter school Causal mediation analysis and machine learning, *Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER), Luxembourg*.

## GRANTS

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- 2020 Scholarship supporting my mobility to Sherbrooke university (Canada), funded by IDEXLYON, University of Lyon
- 2020 Scholarship supporting my attendance to the Winter school “Causal mediation analysis and machine learning”, funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (InGRID)
- 2018–2021 Doctoral scholarship, funded by University of Lyon 2
- 2015–2016 Erasmus Mundus scholarship, funded by the European Commission (Pierre and Marie Curie University)

## SKILLS

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- PROGRAMMING Stata, R, Gretl, Python (beginner), LaTeX.
- LANGUAGES English (*fluent*), French (*fluent*).