



Australian
National
University



The 1st Annual Workshop on the Economies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Organised by the Australian National University Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia)

Details

Wednesday 7 December 2022

In-person and Online

9.00am-5.30pm

Contact

Dr Anas Iqtait

E: anas.iqtait@anu.edu.au

MENA's economies command abundant human and natural resources, account for a large share of the world's energy exports, and vary substantially in political stability and living standards. COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine have worsened the global economic environment with the MENA economies facing volatile food and energy prices, a global slowdown, and tightening of financial conditions. The region's ability to navigate these economic challenges vary between the region's energy exporting and energy importing states.

Against this backdrop, this workshop attempts to understand how MENA economies have navigated recent challenges. In doing so, this workshop seeks to bring together recent and cutting-edge scholarship on the economies of MENA, prizing multidisciplinary research on studying the economies of the region including emerging economic challenges and opportunities. It aims to discuss how international actors, including Australia, engage with these trends.

This is a hybrid event with attendance options available in-person and online.

Website: <https://cais.cass.anu.edu.au/events/1st-annual-workshop-economies-middle-east-and-north-africa-mena-call-papers>

Registration (Free): <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/1st-annual-workshop-on-economies-of-mena-hybrid-in-person-zoom-tickets-444955873997>

Wednesday 7 December 2022

Location:

In Person

Room 2.56 (second floor), Research School of Social Sciences (RSSH) Building, 146 Ellery Cres, Acton, ACT, 2601 The Australian National University

Online Link

<https://anu.zoom.us/j/85963809571?pwd=YzlKbnNEYkVlcTM5SldNcE5abDRuZz09>

Meeting ID: 859 6380 9571

Password: 776710

Program: Wednesday 7 December 2022

9:00-9:15	Opening and Welcome	Professor Bronwyn Parry (Dean of the College of Arts and Social Sciences, University Lead for Social Impact) Professor Karima Laachir (Director of ANU Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (Middle East the Central Asia))
9:15-10:00	Arab Economics in Transition	Dr Khalid Abu-Ismael (Senior Economist at United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA))
10:00-10:15	Morning Tea	
10:15-12:15	Socioeconomics Innovation and Islamic Finance in Australia and MENA	Panel Chair and Moderator: Professor M. Ishaq Bhatti (S P Jain School of Global Management, Sydney & La Trobe University) Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Alaa Alabed (General Manager at Wethaq Capital Platform Company)• Dr Asad Ansari (Cofounder and Director at Amanah Islamic Finance)• Professor Mohamed Ariff (Head of the Department of Economics and Finance at the Sunway University Business School)• Mr Dean Gillespie (CEO of Islamic Bank Australia)• Dr Karman Kaur (S P Jain School of Global Management)• Mr Kevin Magee (Former Australian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia)• Professor Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri (Professor of Economics at Minhaj University Lahore)• Dr MHA. Ridhwan (Senior Deputy Director at Bank Indonesia Institute)
12:15-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-13:25	Islamic Banking and Australia	Law and regulation of Islamic banking and finance <i>Dr Maria Bhatti (Western Sydney University) & Asad Ansari (Amanah Islamic Finance)</i>

13:25-13:55	Financial and Trading Education in MENA	High-Frequency Trading Education for MENA Region: The case for enhancing analytical and intuitive skills <i>A/Prof Nicolas Hamelin, Prof M. Ishaq Bhatti, and Dr Karman Kaur (S P Jain School of Global Management)</i>
13:55-14:20	Sanctions and the Iranian Economy	Trade sanctions and informal employment in Iran <i>A/Prof Roberto Nisticò (University of Naples Federico II) & Dr Ali Moghaddasi Kelishomi (Loughborough University)</i>
14:20-14:30	Afternoon Tea	
14:30-15:25	Economic Change and digital technology	China's digital economy reaches out to the Middle East <i>Evan Freidin (Independent Scholar)</i> Turkey's economic interests in the Arab World <i>Khalid Al Bostanji (Australian National University)</i>
15:25-15:35	Afternoon Tea	
15:35-17:10	Innovation and Regulation in ESG and Islamic Finance	Digital innovation of Islamic finance: toward resilience and sustainable finance <i>Muhammad Fazlurrahman Syarif (Hamad bin Khalifa University)</i> ESG in Arab world: a safe haven or an investment luxury? Evidence from financial markets <i>Dr Musaab Mousa (International Business School)</i> The impact of financial development on shadow economy in MENA countries: does corruption matter? <i>A/Pof Houda Hafoudhi (Université de Gabes) & Dr Brahim Guizanib (University of Tunis)</i> The legacy of colonial education: evidence from Tunisia <i>Maleke Fourati (South Mediterranean University)</i>
17:10-17:30	Launch of MENA Economic Research Network <i>A research hub for economic researchers of MENA in Australia and Asia-Pacific based at ANU-CAIS</i>	Dr Anas Iqtait (Australian National University)

Speakers and Presenters

Dr Khalid Abu-Ismael (United Nations ESCWA)

Khalid Abu-Ismael is Senior Economist at United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). He leads ESCWA's projects on poverty, inequality and human development and is the author of more than 50 technical papers and UN flagship publications, including the 2022 World Development Challenges Report. From 2002 to 2012, he was the Poverty and Macroeconomic Policy Advisor at the United Nations Development Program Regional Offices for Arab States in Cairo and Beirut. In his country, Egypt, he also served with the Cabinet's Decision Support Center and Ministry of Public Enterprises. Khalid is a Policy Affiliate at the Middle East Economic Research Forum and a former Guest Lecturer at the Faculty of Economics of the Lebanese American University. He has a D. Phil. in Development Economics from the New School for Social Research in New York.

Professor M. Ishaq Bhatti (S P Jain School of Global Management, Sydney & La Trobe University)

M. Ishaq Bhatti is a Professor of Finance and Financial Data Analytics. He is the award-winning Academic who received various Research and Teaching awards, including ALTC 2010, Faculty and the University's teaching Awards 2009, 2013, and 2019. He is the author of more than 130 articles, eight books and a member of the editorial board of various journals. Major areas of research, scholarship and teaching are in Finance, Financial Econometrics, Business Statistics, Quantitative & Mathematical Economics, and Islamic Finance. He successfully supervised 27 students to higher degree completions, including 15 PhDs in the last ten years. Before joining SP Jain, Ishaq was a Professor of Finance and Financial Econometrics at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Mr Dean Gillespie (Islamic Bank Australia)

Dean is the CEO of Islamic Bank Australia and one of the driving forces around the creation of Australia's first Islamic bank. He has been leading the creation of Australia's first Islamic bank since 2018. Dean has previously been in charge of home loan distribution at Commonwealth Bank, and head of mortgages at Bankwest where he doubled the business' size within three years. He also ran the retail bank at CBA's Vietnam International Bank in Hanoi across 160 branches nationwide, where he built the bank's first mobile banking app.

Dr Asad Ansari (Amanah Islamic Finance)

Asad is a Melbourne based lawyer and finance professional with more than 20 years of experience as an adviser to some of the world's largest banks, investment and infrastructure funds in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. He is a leading Islamic finance advisor and has advised on more than \$1 billion of successfully implemented Australian Islamic finance transactions. He was a Director at Deloitte in their Financial Services and Investment group and served as a Special Counsel in the firm's legal practice, Deloitte Lawyers. He has held senior appointments with the Islamic bank, Kuwait Finance House and Australian top tier law firm, King and Wood Mallesons. He co-founded Amanah Islamic Finance, a home finance provider with committed finance of more than \$100 million which provides Islamic financial solutions across Australia.

Dr Alaa Alaabed (Wethaq Capital Platform)

Dr Alaa Alaabed is General Manager of Wethaq Capital Platform Company. Dr Alaa abed has earned her PhD in Islamic finance from INCEIF, Malaysia. She qualified as a Chartered Islamic Finance Professional (CIFP) in 2011. She worked with Wethaq group of companies; first advising Wethaq Capital Markets on core FinTech proposition and integrating qualitative research and

market insights into strategies and high-level initiatives before managing Wethaq Capital Platform Company's corporate and regulatory affairs in Saudi Arabia. Dr Alaa is part of the RFI Foundation's Emissary Steering Group; advocating ESG, sustainability and responsible finance and was also a Working Group Member at Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions(AAOIFI).

Associate Professor Nicolas Hamelin (S P Jain School of Global Management)

Dr Nicolas Hamelin is an Associate Professor of Marketing at S P Jain School of Global Management and the Director of SPJAIN neuroscience lab. Dr Hamelin holds a Ph.D. in Physics from Sussex University, UK (1993), an M.Sc. in Environmental Management from Ulster University as well as a Ph.D. in Business at the Royal Docks Business School, University of East London. Dr Nicolas's main research interests are in the fields of International Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, NeuroMarketing, Social Marketing and Environmental Management.

Professor Mohamed Ariff Syed Mohamed (Jeffrey Cheah Institute & Sunway University)

He holds the post of Distinguished Professor (Finance) and the Chair of Economics & Finance since 2017 at the private-foundation owned Sunway University (AACSB-accredited) which offers Lancaster University-validated degrees from United Kingdom. He retired after 21 years of teaching in Singapore, Australia, Ireland, Japan, and the USA. Ariff has worked full time at AACSB-accredited business schools (National University of Singapore; Monash University-Melbourne; Bond University; University Putra Malaysia) having held senior university administrative positions in all. His industry experience includes a divisional-director position in a public-listed firm Singtel and the central bank. He held three endowed chair professorships as a regular short-term visitor over 1997-2016 in two universities. During several years on leave from full-time employment, he worked as professor/senior fellow: Harvard (1994); Tokyo University (1989; 1991; 2008); UCD Dublin (1992; 2004), The University of Melbourne (1994/95) and University of Evansville (2005) USA. He teaches finance and accounting subjects including specialized ones.

Dr Karman Kaur (S P Jain School of Global Management)

Dr. Karman Kaur is an economics enthusiast, having done M.Sc in Economics and Environmental Sciences and completed her Ph.D. in Economics on the topic of Sustainability of Agriculture using Artificial Neural Networking Techniques, in 2021 from Delhi, India. She was working as an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Delhi since 2014 and served as head of the Business Economics society before joining as a Research Associate with SP Jain School of Global Management, Sydney. Her areas of research are- sustainability, energy analysis, economic modeling, game theory, neural networks, and data analysis. She is currently working on Behavioural Economics and Finance and exploring how bounded rationality influences decision-making.

Professor Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri (Minhaj University Lahore)

Professor Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri is Deputy Chairman of the Board of Governors of Minhaj University Lahore and Professor at the School of Economics and Finance at MUL. He is also a Senior Fellow with the University of Melbourne. He is the CEO Al-Mawakhat Microfinance company and Chairman Minhaj Halal Certification Pakistan. Professor Hussain Qadri is an author of 50 books, writer of dozens of research articles and a reputed international speaker. In September 2019, he was awarded "Global Islamic Finance Award" for his scholarly contributions in the field of Islamic Economics and Finance.

Mr Kevin Magee (Former Australian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia)

Kevin Magee is a Policy Fellow at the ANU Australian Centre for China in the World. He had a 34 year career in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade during which he was the Australian

Representative in Taipei, Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Deputy Head of Mission in Moscow. He also served as Consul-General in Guangzhou, First Secretary in Singapore, and Third Secretary in Beijing. At different times he was in charge of the areas of DFAT dealing with bilateral relations with Russia and with China. Kevin led the Taskforce that established the National Foundation for Australia China Relations and was the interim CEO of that organisation. He was a United Nations Disarmament Fellow based in Geneva and New York. Kevin holds B.A. (Hons) and LLB degrees from Monash University and was recognised by the university as a Monash University Distinguished Alumni in 2011. His main research interests are China-Russia Relations, Cross Taiwan Strait Relations, and the Australia-China Bilateral Relationship.

Dr MHA. Ridhwan (Bank Indonesia Institute)

Dr MHA Ridwan is Principal Economist and Senior Deputy Director at Bank Indonesia Institute. He is also the Co-Chair Advisory Board and Head of Management at Journal of Islamic Economic Monetary and Finance. He was awarded his PhD in Economics and Econometrics at VU University Amsterdam and Tinbergen Institute (2011).

Dr Maria Bhatti (Western Sydney University)

Dr Maria Bhatti is a Lecturer in the School of Law at Western Sydney University. She is currently researching domestic and comparative approaches to law and regulation of Islamic finance, and is the author of Islamic Law and International Commercial Arbitration.

Khalid Al Bostanji (Australian National University)

Khalid Al Bostanji is a graduate of the University of Queensland where, in 2017, he completed a Bachelor of Economics majoring in International Trade and Finance. He also completed a Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) from RMIT University in 2020 and is now a PhD candidate at the ANU Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies. Khalid's thesis is focused on Arab-Turkish relations and Turkey's use of soft and hard power within its foreign policy approach towards the Arab region.

Muhammad Fazlurrahman Syarif (Hamad bin Khalifa University, Qatar)

Muhammad Fazlurrahman Syarif is a PhD Candidate at Hamad bin Khalifa University, Qatar. He was awarded a scholarship to pursue MBA in Islamic Banking and Finance, Bangor University-United Kingdom. He started his career in Islamic Banking and Finance as a project manager in one of London's ethical finance start-ups. He is completing his PhD in Islamic Finance and Economy at Hamad bin Khalifa University in Qatar as a full scholarship awardee of Qatar Foundation.

Maleke Fourati (South Mediterranean University)

Maleke Fourati is an applied economist. She holds a PhD in Economics from University of New South Wales and a master's in Economics from Toulouse School of Economics. Her research interests draw mainly on Development Economics and Behavioral Economics. She also works on research related to Political Economy and Culture and Economics, with a focus on the Economics of Religion.

Evan Freidin (Independent Researcher)

Evan Freidin is an international relations scholar whose work focuses on China's foreign policy and digital economy. He has received a Masters of International Relations from the University of Melbourne. He has published extensively with various think tanks and policy institutes.

Dr Brahim Guizani (Université de Tunis)

Dr Brahim Guizani is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Tunis Business School, the Université de Tunis in Tunisia. Previously, he worked at the Université de Jendouba (Tunisia). He has also a professional experience at the central bank of Tunisia where he worked from 2002

to 2006 at the Department of Banking Supervision. Brahim holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Tohoku in Japan. His main research interests are: Monetary Policy, Bank Risks, Japanese Economics, International Trade and the economics of the MENA region. Brahim has spent a year (2021) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL, the USA as a Fulbright visiting scholar. He is also an associate researcher at the laboratory of Modeling and Statistical and Economic Analysis (L.R. MASE).

Dr Houda Haddoudhi (Université de Gabes)

Dr Houda Haddoudhi is an Associate Professor of Economics at the Université de Gabes in Tunisia. She worked previously at the Université de Nabeul in Tunisia. She holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Paris, Panthéon-Sorbonne. Her main research fields are Public Economics, Institutional Economics and Environmental Economics. With many other researchers she has several publications on the economics of the MENA region. Houda is an associate researcher at the laboratory of Modeling and Statistical and Economic Analysis (L.R. MASE).

Associate Professor Roberto Nisticò (University of Naples Federico II)

Roberto Nisticò is an Associate Professor of Economics at the Department of Economics and Statistics of the University of Naples Federico II (Italy). He is also affiliated with CSEF in Naples (Italy), IZA in Bonn (Germany), HEDG in York (United Kingdom) and HiCN in Berlin (Germany). He holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Essex (United Kingdom). Roberto's research focuses on Development Economics, Labor Economics and Political Economics. His work has appeared in leading economic journals such as Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Law, Economics and Organization, Demography, Journal of Comparative Economics, Public Policy, World Development, etc.

Important information

The event will commence at 9.00am sharp in Room 2.56 at the Research School of Social Sciences Building. Please arrive at least 15-20 minutes before the event commences to register and be seated. If you can no longer attend, we ask that you please let us know by emailing anas.iqtait@anu.edu.au or by cancelling your ticket.

Registration is required for this event. Please have your tickets ready upon entry, or your email confirmation. Photos may be taken throughout the duration of the event for promotional purposes in the future.

Getting to ANU

Accessible parking spaces are available around campus should you require them. Further information on transport and parking can be found [online](#).

Health and safety

To help keep everyone safe, please ensure that you are familiar with, and follow, the advice from ACT Health regarding COVID-19.

If you do not feel well, please refrain from attending this event. In the unlikely event of an emergency, call 000 and then ANU Security on 6125 3349.

Questions?

Contact Anas Iqtait at anas.iqtait@anu.edu.au if you have any questions about the event.