

ELISA GIANNONE

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Office Contact Information

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Employment

Junior Researcher, Centre de Recerca en Economia Internacional, Spring 2022 - Present
Adjunct Professor, Universitat Pompeu Fabra and Affiliated Professor, BSE, 2022 to present
Research Economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Fall 2021
Assistant Professor of Economics, Pennsylvania State University, Fall 2018 - Spring 2022
IES Research Fellow, Princeton University, Fall 2017 - Summer 2018

Affiliations

Data Fellow, Administrative Data Accelerator, Penn State University, 6/2018-
Research Affiliate, Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR); 12/2020 -

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, The University of Chicago, 2011-2017
Master of Research, Economics, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2011
Laurea Triennale, Economics and Social Sciences, Università Bocconi, 2008

Teaching and Research Fields

Primary fields: Macroeconomics, Spatial Economics
Secondary fields: Economic Growth, Development Economics, International Trade

Research Experience and Other Employment

Summer, 2019	Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Research Fellow
Summer, 2016	Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Research Fellow
Summer, 2014	World Bank, Short Term Consultant
Winter, 2013	Research Assistant for Professor Ralph Ossa
Fall 2010 - Spring 2011	Research Assistant for Professor Luigi Pascali

Publications

“JUE Insights: The Geography of Pandemic Containment” (with Nuno Paixao, Xinle Pang), *Journal of Urban Economics*

This paper models the impact of interconnectedness on pandemic outcomes, showing that interconnectedness increased COVID-19 deaths significantly and that localized containment policies are more effective than national ones.

Working Papers

“Skill-Biased Technical Change and Regional Convergence”, revise and resubmit at *Journal of Political Economy*

In the last century, the US witnessed the great reversal of regional convergence: between 1940 and 1980, the wage gap between poorer and richer US cities shrank at an annual rate of 1.4% this change was driven solely by highly skilled workers. Based on this evidence, I build a dynamic spatial equilibrium model with regional convergence and divergence forces. The model highlights the role of technology: convergence forces enter through spatial technology diffusion and divergence forces through a national Skill-Biased Technical Change shock interacted with local knowledge spillovers. Three main results from the quantification exercise arise: i) spatial technology diffusion is consistent with the patterns of regional convergence between 1940 and 1980 and the interaction between local knowledge spillover and a national Skill-Biased Technical Change shock explains 50% secular decline in US migration since 1980; iii) at the national level, if technology were not skill-biased, there would be less aggregate inequality but also less growth nowadays.

“Unpacking Moving” (with Qi Li, Nuno Paixao, Xinle Pang), rejected and resubmitted at *Review of Economic Studies*

We argue that incomplete markets and income risk explain a large fraction of moving rates, especially for low-wealth individuals. We reach this conclusion by developing a quantitative dynamic spatial equilibrium model with endogenous wealth accumulated through liquid and illiquid assets (homeownership) under income risk and incomplete markets. Given the rich individual and spatial heterogeneity, our model is well-suited to compare people- to place-based policies aimed at reducing inequality. Do moving vouchers (people-based) or reduction in housing regulations (place-based) enhance welfare relatively more for the poor? Moving vouchers only marginally increase the welfare of eligible households, and those who receive the vouchers tend to move to locations with lower house prices and wages. In contrast, lower housing regulations in Vancouver can substantially decrease the welfare gap between the rich and poor nationwide. As this policy increases housing affordability in more productive cities, it reduces the incentive for low-wealth families to move precautionarily to low housing costs locations. Lower housing costs increases the insurance value of high-income cities and allows for higher wealth accumulation through homeownership for poorer households.

“Unequal Global Convergence” (with Shoumitro Chatterjee, Luca Looser, Tatjana Kleineberg and Kan Kuno)

We revisit a classical question: what is the role of structural transformation in determining regional convergence? To do so, we construct a novel global dataset of regional GDPs and granular sectoral employment for more than 1500 regions and more than 90 countries, which starts in 1980 and covers a large range of income spectrum. We document three main

facts. First, regional convergence within countries decreases over time around the globe and stalls in the most recent decade despite residual spatial inequality. Second, this decline in regional convergence is associated with structural transformation toward high-skill services. Third, high-skill service employment exhibits a higher regional concentration than other sectors, including other services, manufacturing, or agriculture. Through the lens of a spatial equilibrium model which embeds the standard drivers of structural change, we find a reinforcing interplay between structural change and spatial development. As an economy transforms toward high-skill services, regional convergence declines due to agglomeration effects in the high-skill service sector. Agglomeration effects increase economic growth which further accelerates structural change toward services and, in turn, widens unequal regional dynamics.

“Living in a Ghost Town: The Geography of Aging and Depopulation” (with Yuhei Miyauchi, Nuno Paixao, Xinle Pang and Yuta Suzuki), in preparation for *Journal of Monetary Economics, CRNY series*

We develop a dynamic life-cycle spatial general equilibrium model to study how aging and outmigration generate self-reinforcing regional decline. Using detailed municipality-level data from Japan, we show that forward-looking individuals sort spatially in response to demographic dynamics, local amenities, and fiscal policy. We identify a novel feedback mechanism: as local cohorts shrink, birthplace attachment and amenity value erode, accelerating depopulation and increasing public service costs per capita. These pressures require substantial interregional transfers, raising income taxes and amplifying equity-efficiency trade-offs. We evaluate age- and location-targeted migration subsidies and quantify their effects on spatial allocation, public service sustainability, and welfare. Our findings highlight a dynamic redistribution-efficiency tension faced by governments in aging societies.

“Consumption Segregation” (with Corina Boar), revise & resubmit at *Journal of International Economics*

Using novel longitudinal and highly granular data, we provide the first national-level analysis of spatial differences in consumption. We introduce “consumption segregation” as a new dimension of residential segregation to describe a facet of residential separation characterized by differences in what people buy and own across different geographies. We document that consumption segregation is substantial but has declined modestly since 2000, and exhibits large regional variation. Although most consumption segregation occurs within demographic groups, it correlates strongly with income segregation. We argue that this link reflects limited ability to smooth consumption across income groups under incomplete markets.

“The Local Moving Channel: Learning from An Oil Crisis” (with Nuno Paixão and Xinle Pang)

We study the “local moving channel,” defined as the spatial reallocation *across* neighborhood *within* the same labor market as a response to a negative labor market shock. Using granular longitudinal data that track addresses of almost all Canadian population, we find a surprisingly large moving response *within* labor markets to a negative local labor market shock proxied by a decline in global oil prices. We find an especially large response for the young, the renters and the low-ability-to-borrow. Movers are also more likely to

move to locations with lower house prices. Consistent with the literature, we don't find a significant moving response to different labor markets. We argue that accounting for "local moving" is paramount to understanding spatial reallocation response to labor market shocks. Through the lens of a dynamic life-cycle model embedded with location within and across cities choices, together with wealth, we quantify how much of the "local moving channel" attenuates welfare losses from negative local shocks and test how the persistence of the shock alters the results. Large gains would accrue if locked-in homeowners could move.

"The Intergenerational Consequences of a Temporary Shock" (with Chanont Banternghansa and Luca Looser)

We investigate the long-term intergenerational consequences of a transitory, sector-specific economic shock in Thailand. We focus on its impact on permanent sectoral reallocation that induced permanent structural transformation across generations. Leveraging the European Union's ban on black tiger shrimp imports and highly granular panel household-level data from the Townsend Thai Project, we find that the temporary negative demand shock induces a selective out-migration from the sector, with the least efficiently allocated and financially constrained individuals permanently exiting the sector. Importantly, the shock also catalyzes improved educational outcomes for the younger generation within the displaced households. Building on these empirical findings, our ongoing research develops a novel dynamic model of sectoral reallocation that incorporates borrowing constraints and human capital accumulation, tailored to developing country contexts. Our results suggest that during periods of depressed demand, governmental interventions focused on incentivizing youth education could yield significant positive long-term gains through structural transformation.

"Team Size and Performance: Experimental Evidence from India" (with Giorgia Barboni and Ayah Bohsali)

[Project financed by Warwick and IWWAGE]

What are the gains of team size for performance? Does new technology diffuse faster in larger groups? To answer these questions and solve the endogenous sorting bias, we run the first randomized controlled trial where 1,582 Indian women were randomly assigned to 206 groups of different size and encouraged to engage in a production process. We find smaller teams to perform better than larger teams and that technology diffuses non-linearly with team size. By measuring bilateral communication within teams and conducting network analysis across team members, we find that smaller teams are more centralized than medium and larger. Our findings can be explained by smaller teams organizing the production process more efficiently, for example, by assigning tasks to group members and being more likely to reach a consensus on production decisions. To estimate the welfare effects of the intervention, we are currently building a model with a heterogeneous group size. Size affects coordination costs as well as the impact of new technologies.

"Breaking the Network: Income and Welfare in Self-Help Groups" (with Giorgia Barboni)

[Project financed by Warwick and IWWAGE]

We investigate the welfare and productivity consequences of an abrupt cessation of social interactions. Building on a simple theoretical framework in which social ties influence welfare through both production and non-market utility channels, we derive testable pre-

dictions about how disruptions to these ties affect monetary and non-monetary outcomes. Empirically, we exploit three waves of original survey data collected from women in 133 Indian Self-Help Groups, together with a novel identification strategy that isolates sudden breaks in interaction frequency. Our results indicate that regular social engagement significantly enhances both income and overall well-being. By contrast, an unanticipated halt in these interactions precipitates marked declines in self-reported productivity and mental health—effects that are most pronounced for individuals with the strongest initial ties. Intriguingly, while tighter networks mitigate the loss in income, they exacerbate the drop in psychological well-being. A direct comparison (“horse-race”) further reveals that reductions in productivity track more closely with deteriorations in mental health than with income shortfalls.

Permanent Working Papers

“Mobility Barriers, Spillover and the IT sector in the West Bank” (with Chiara Fratto)

[project financed by PEDL-CEPR exploratory grant]

Despite the popular view that, with the advent of digital technologies, the world has become flat, geography still plays a key role in the economy. COVID-19 has brought even more awareness of this. This paper studies the impact of security measures that have reduced the mobility of people and goods on the industrial composition of the West Bank economy, and, in particular, on the development of the information and communications technology sector. The paper identifies different channels through which changes in market access due to the introduction of mobility restrictions can differentially affect industries. A newly designed survey instrument is used to identify and disentangle these mechanisms separately. This novel data set contains information on more than 500 establishments that are representative of different sectors of the economy, including information and communications technology, manufacturing, and retail trade. The analysis finds that the mobility restrictions involved a reallocation of resources toward the information and communications technology sector, as the industry was relatively less affected by the restrictions. Yet, the key role of the input-output linkages, strong dependence on local clients and suppliers, and deep interconnectedness of the information and communications technology sector with other domestic industries severely limit the extent to which the sector can benefit from the reduction in opportunity cost. An industrial strategy focusing on the harmonious development of the entire economy is advised, rather than targeting a specific industry in isolation from the rest.

Conferences and Presentations

2025-2026	Vienna, St. Louis FED, Cambridge, World Bank, Rochester*, Workshop on Structural Transformation and Macroeconomic Dynamics*, SED*, UAB*
2024-2025	Tilburg, Workshop on “Firms and Cities” at HEC-Paris, Zurich, CEPR Annual Macro and Growth Conference, Manchester - Conference in Honour of W. Arthur Lewis, Yale, Junior Quantitative Spatial Workshop (Science Po), UC3M, UBologna, Bank of Canada, UToronto Rotman, RFBerlin Workshop on the Economics of Aging, Firms, Labor Markets, and Development Workshop, SED Copenhagen, NBER SI Economic Growth
2023-2024	PSE Macro Day, Barcelona Workshop on Regional and Urban Economics (Keynote speaker), EIEF, EUI, Oxford, CEPR Macro and Growth Meeting at CEMFI, SED Barcelona, CREI Faculty Lunch, Tübingen
2022-2023	Harvard/MIT, CREI, University of Barcelona, Bocconi, Nottingham, University of Toronto, LSE Trade, LSE Macro, Warwick, BSE Summer Forum (Migration), AMSE-BdF (Marseille), Salento Macro Meeting
2021-2022	FRB, OIGI Conference - Minneapolis FED, Richmond FED, Southern Economic Association, Dartmouth Mini Conference, University of Washington, CRED Workshop, Toulouse, Science Po, Transpyrenean Macro Workshop (Skiminar), UC Irvine, Migration and the Macroeconomy at Bocconi, NY FED, CREI, Barcelona Summer Forum, SED (Madison), NBER Urban
2020-2021	CMU/UPitt, Yale (International Trade), Michigan, Philadelphia FED, Fifth Annual Conference on International Economics (Dallas FED), Richmond Fed, Fordham, San Francisco Fed, Royal Holloway (London), CURE, AEA, CREI, Dartmouth, NYU-Stern, Boston University, Yale (Macro), NYU-Abu Dabi, Pizzanomics (EIEF), SED (Minneapolis)
2019-2020	Aarhus, Macro-Development Mini Conference (St. Louis Fed), UVA, Richmond FED, UEA Philadelphia, Columbia Urban Mini-Conference, NYU, SEA-Florida, Notre Dame, Princeton, Warwick, EUI, International Trade and Macro Virtual Seminar, Penn State Brown Bag
2018-2019	Minneapolis FED Cities’ Conference, Boston University, Penn State, CURE - Philadelphia FED (discussant), AEA - Atlanta (discussant), Symposium on “The Future of Work” (NYU), Berkeley, Dynamic Trade Workshop (FRB-discussant), HULM (Santa Barbara), UCSD, Workshop on Structural Change and Macroeconomics (Sardinia), Women in Macro (UChicago-discussant), Minneapolis FED
2017-2018	Queen’s, Maryland, NYU Trade Jamboree, Cornell/Penn State Macro Conference, Princeton, CEPR - EBRD London, Barcelona GSE Summer Form, SED Mexico City, NBER SI (Urban), Stanford SITE
2016-2017	Minnesota Junior Scholar Conference; Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago; Applications Workshop, University of Chicago; The Chicago Workshop on International Economics (CWIE), UIUC, FSU, St. Louis FED, Toronto Rotman, Princeton, Georgetown, UVA-Darden, NYU, Penn State, IIES, Rochester, USC-Marshall, USC, UCLA, SOLE meeting, NBER Macroeconomics across Space and Time (Philadelphia FED), SED-Edinburgh

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2015-2016 Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago (x2), Econometric Society World Congress, Philadelphia, Marco Fanno Alumni 1st Conference, Milan, SERC Annual Conference, LSE Geography; Capital Theory Working Group (x2), University of Chicago, Applied Macroeconomics Working Group, University of Chicago

2014-2015 International Trade Working Group (x2), University of Chicago; Frontier of Urban Economics, Columbia University; Graduate Student Conference, Washington University in Saint Louis; Graduate Student Conference, Purdue University; Applied Macroeconomics Working Group, University of Chicago

**scheduled*

Honors, Scholarships and Fellowships

2025-2029	Spanish Ministry of Science and Inn. Grant PID2024-157284NA-I00
2026-2030	Ramon y Cajal Grant
2025-2027	STEG Large Grant
2022-2025	Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca (AGAUR) Grant
2022-2023	BSE Seed Grant
2019-2020	Social Data Award, Penn State University
2016-2017	The George J. Stigler Economics Fellowship, University of Chicago
2015-2016	Exploratory Special Grant, PEDL-CEPR
2014-2016	Travel and Data Fund, University of Chicago
2013-2016	Social Science Department Scholarship, University of Chicago
2011-2013	Scholarship for graduate studies, Marco Fanno Association
2009-2011	Scholarship for Graduate Studies, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Teaching Experience

Spring 2023 - 2025	Topics in Macroeconomics, UPF, 2nd Year PhD
Fall 2022 - 2024	Macroeconomics, UPF, 1st Year PhD
Fall 2020 - 2022	Macroeconomics, Penn State, 2nd Year PhD
Spring 2019	Urban Economics, Penn State, Undergraduate
Fall 2018-2020	Migration and Development, Penn State, Undergraduate
Fall 2013 - Winter 2016	International Commercial Policy, Chicago Booth, Teaching Assistant for Professor Ralph Ossa
Fall 2015 - Winter 2016	Introduction to Macroeconomics, University of Chicago, Teaching Assistant for Professor Allen Sanderson
Spring, 2014	Elements of Macroeconomics, University of Chicago, Lecturer
Fall, 2013	International Trade, PhD class, Teaching Assistant for Professors Ralph Ossa and Kerem Cosar
Spring, 2013	Elements of Macroeconomics, University of Chicago, Teaching Assistant for Seyed Ali Madani zadeh

Professional Activities

Refereeing: *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, *American Economic Journal: Applied*, *American Economic Review*, *American Economic Review: Insights*, *Econometrica*, *Economic Journal*, *Economics Letters*, *International Economic Review*, *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, *Journal of International Economics*, *Journal of Political Economics*, *Journal of Political Economics: Macroeconomics*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Urban Economics*, *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Review of Economic Dynamics*, *Review of Economic Studies*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*

Seminar Organization: Macro Seminar at CREI-UPF, Macro Seminar at Penn State, International Lunch at CREI and UPF

Conference Organization: UEA Local Organizer Barcelona Meeting (2026), Special issue of the *Journal of International Economics on Spatial Dynamics* - Yale(2025), SED Committee

(2024), UEA committee (2023-2025), BSE Summer Forum in Macro Development (2025), BSE Summer Forum in Trade, Growth and Geography (2023-2025), European Economic Association (2022-2024), CEBRA session in International Trade and Macro (2022).

Advising

Duarte Gonçalves, current at UPF

Alessandro Pallucci, current at UPF

Simone Zanella, current at UPF

Luca Looser, current at UPF

Ayah Bohsali, current at UPF

Nathan Jones, current at UPF

Marko Irisarri, University of Manchester

Pin Sun, former at Penn State, Assistant Professor at Renmin University of China (RUC)

Xinle Pang, former at Penn State, Assistant Professor at SUNY, Buffalo

Other Information:

Born: 11/22/1986

Citizenship: Italian

Children: One born in May 2023

Languages: Italian (native), English, Spanish, Catalan and Portuguese (fluent)