

# Ester SIGILLO'

European University Institute  
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies  
Via Boccaccio, 121 | 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole  
Tel: (+39)-055-4685-336  
Email: [ester.sigillo@eui.eu](mailto:ester.sigillo@eui.eu)  
Webpage: <https://me.eui.eu/ester-sigillo/>

## CURRENT POSITION

9/2019 - Present  
**Max Weber Fellow**  
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies  
European University Institute, Florence

9/2018 - Present  
**Faculty member at Georgetown University** (Florence Campus)

## EDUCATION

5/2018  
**PhD in Political Science**  
Scuola Normale Superiore (SNS) - Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Florence

- Supervisor: Donatella della Porta (SNS)
- Members of the Jury  
Professor Benoit Challand (New School for Social Research)  
Professor Alia Gana (Paris1)  
Professor Philippe C. Schmitter (European University Institute)
- *Cum Laude and recommendation for publication*

2012-2013  
**Master in EU International Relations and Diplomacy studies**, College of Europe, Bruges

2009-2011  
**Master in International Relations and European Studies**  
Department of Political Science, University of Florence

- Grade: 110/110 *Cum Laude*

2004-2008  
**Bachelor Degree in International Studies**  
Department of Political Science, University of Florence

## FORMER RESEARCH POSITIONS

7/2018 - 8/2019  
**Postdoctoral Research Fellow** [ERC project TARICA, Changements politiques et socio institutionnels en Afrique du Nord. Confrontation des modèles et diversité des trajectoires](#), IRMC Tunis.

6/2018 - 7/2018  
**Project Fellow** [Islamist Activism in the post Arab uprising era in Egypt and Tunisia](#), American University in Cairo.

9/2015 - 12/2017

**Visiting Research Fellow**, IRMC Tunis.

6/2016 - 6/2017

**Research assistant**, [OTMA \(Observatoire des Transformations dans le Monde Arabe\)](#), IRD Tunis.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### *Instructor*

9/2018 – Present

Georgetown University

[Governance of the European Union](#)

[Comparative Political Systems in the Mediterranean World](#)

2/2019 (45 hours)

[Formazione di Esperti in Processi transnazionali euro-mediterranei per l'internazionalizzazione e per la cooperazione Italia-Tunisia \(FEP-IT\)](#)

Università per gli Stranieri di Perugia

### *Guest lecturer*

2020

[Ennahdha et les associations islamiques en Tunisie: révéndiquer l'islam politique avec d'autres moyens?](#), Paris 1.

2020

[Refugees and displacements in the Arab World](#), BA Lecture

Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

2020

[Understanding Political Change in Tunisia through the history of state-society relations](#), seminar held at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

2019

[Islam Politico, Radicalizzazione e Jihad. Il caso della Tunisia](#), University of Florence.

2018

[The EU and its institutions](#), Stanford University, Florence.

2017

[Tunisia alla prova della democrazia: storia di un fragile compromesso](#), University of Florence.

2016

[Les 'autres' Tunisies cinq ans après la revolution](#), EHESS, Paris.

### *Teaching Assistant* 2017

*International Relations*, BA Programme

University of Florence

- PUBLICATIONS Sigillò, E. (2020), *Shifting from Party Politics to Civil Society: Political Islam and hybrid trajectories of Tunisian Islamic activism in Tunisia*, MWP Working Paper, Red Series, European University Institute, May.
- Gana, A., & Sigillò, E. (2019). *Les mobilisations contre le rapport sur les libertés individuelles et l'égalité (COLIBE): Vers une spécialisation du parti Ennahdha dans l'action partisane?.* *L'Année du Maghreb*, (21), 377-383.
- Blanc, Théo, & Sigillò, Ester. (2019). *Beyond the 'Islamists vs. Secularists' cleavage: the rise of new challengers after the 2019 Tunisian elections*, *Policy Brief*, European University Institute.
- Sigillò, E. (2019), « The EU's response to Arab Uprisings: a shifted paradigm? », in Chiriatti, A. & Sigillò E. (eds.), *Rethinking Euro-Mediterranean cooperation : new approaches for research and education*, Perugia Stranieri University Press
- Sigillò, E. (2019), « Il falso mito della stabilità tunisina », in *Dalle Libie all'Algeria, affari nostri*, LIMES, n.6/2019
- Sigillò, E. (2019), *Conducting immersive fieldwork on Tunisian Islamic Activism : Methodological and ethical challenges*, online article, Security Praxis, online <https://securitypraxis.eu/immersive-fieldwork-tunisia/>
- Sigillò, E. (2019), *Going professional. The evolution of Islamic charities in post-authoritarian Tunisia*, AUC Press, online: <https://manshurat.org/sub-archive/4494/node/64358>
- Merone F., Sigillò E. & De Facci, (2018) *Nahda and Tunisian Islamic activism*, in (eds.) Akbarzadeh S. and Dara Conduit, « *New Opposition in the Middle East* », Palgrave MacMillan
- Sigillò, E. & De Facci, D. (2018) «L'économie sociale et solidaire : une nouvelle économie morale pour la Tunisie post-2011 ? La construction de l'«alternative» à Médenine», *L'Année du Maghreb* (18) 2018-I
- Dell'Aguzzo, L. & Sigillò, E. (2017). *Political legitimacy and variations in state-religion relations in Tunisia.* *The Journal of North African Studies*, 1-25. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629387.2017.134084>
- Sigillò, E., (2017). *Beyond the myth of the Tunisian exception: the open-ended tale of a fragile democratization*, in Dell'Aguzzo L. & Diodato E. (eds.), *The 'state' of pivot states in south-eastern Mediterranean: Turkey, Egypt, Israel, and Tunisia after the Arab Spring*, Perugia Stranieri University Press
- Sigillò, E. (2016). *Tunisia's evolving Islamic charitable sector and its model of social mobilization*, in *Informal networks and political transitions in the MENA and the Southeast Asia*, online article, Middle East Institute Washington, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/tunisias-evolving-islamic-charitable-sector-and-its-model-social-mobilization>

## CONFERENCES

- Paper Presented and discussed (selected) 3-5 October 2019  
International Congress of the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO), Hamburg. Paper presented: Sigillò, E. and Munteanu A. : «Ennahdha's concept of civil state and party: the ambiguities of the separation between religion and politics».
- 12-14 September 2019  
SISP Conference, University of Salento. Paper presented : From 'security' to securitization: Islamic charities' repression and the politicization of counter-terrorism measures in Tunisia. Panel discussed: « Relazioni euro-mediterranee : tra passato e nuove prospettive ». Panel chaired by Silvio Labbate.
- 3-5 July 2019  
GIS Moyen Orient et Mondes Musulmanes, Paris 1-Panthéon-Sorbonne  
Paper presented : Sigillò E. and Gana A. « Les mobilisations contre le rapport sur les libertés individuelles et l'égalité (COLIBE ) : une illustration de la pluralisation des discours et des modes d'action du parti Ennahdha en Tunisie? ».
- 6 May 2019  
Workshop : « Fieldwork research challenged », Middle East Directions Programme. European University Institute, Florence. Paper presented : « Studying Islamist Movements in Post-authoritarian Tunisia : Constraints, Methodological challenges and ethical concerns ».
- 16-20 July 2018  
WOCMES, Sevilla. Paper presented : « Mobilizing *for* or *through* development? Dynamics of Islamic activism in post-authoritarian Tunisia ».
- 11-12 December 2017  
Workshop: « Enquêter sur la bienfaisance. Approches comparatives des pratiques du bien », MMSH d'Aix en Provence. Paper presented : “Agir pour le développement ou s'engager par le développement ? Analyse des trajectoires du secteur caritatif dans la Tunisie post-autoritaire”.
- 27-28 April 2017  
International workshop “Social Movements and Contentious Politics in the Arab world since 2011 in a Global Perspective: Diffusion, Practices, Organizations and Political Dimensions », Paris Dauphine. Paper presented: “From 'contention' to 'engagement'? Analysis of the institutionalization of Islamic charities in post-revolutionary Tunisia”.
- 17-20 November 2016  
MESA annual meeting, Boston. Paper presented: “The evolution of Islamic charities in post-revolutionary Tunisia”.
- 12-14 October 2016  
International workshop “How Economics Matter? Year 5 of the Revolutions, a social and economic lens”. Under the framework of the ERC programme WAFAW, IFPO Beirut. Paper presented: “L'action associative pour le développement en Tunisie: Des modèles économiques alternatifs? Les cas de Médenine”.
- 7-10 April 2016  
MPSA General Conference, Chicago. Paper presented: “State-Society Relations and

Democracy: a comparative analysis of Tunisia and Egypt”.

26-29 August 2015

ECPR General Conference, Montreal. Paper presented: “Challenges to Normative Power Europe in the Mediterranean Impact on Arab civil societies and the role of Islamic donors”.

*Scientific  
coordinator*

2019/2020

Muslim World Working Group, European University Institute, Florence

*Panel Chair*

2019

Rethinking the Process of Normalization of Islamist Parties in Light of the Models of ‘Civil State’ and ‘Islamic Secularism’, panel held at the 26th International Congress of the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO), Hamburg

REVIEWER IN  
SCIENTIFIC  
JOURNALS

- Journal of European Integration (ISSN 0703 -6337)
- International Journal of Voluntary and Non-profit Organizations (ISSN: 1573-7888)
- British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (ISSN: 14693542, 13530194)
- Journal of North African Studies (ISSN: 13629387)

OTHER  
PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCES

2/2012 - 8/2012

**Project Manager Assistant/Research Assistant - European Schoolnet (EUN)**, Brussels  
Provided support to the research team for the development of reports on education systems in the world; networking and coordination with schools participating in EUN school pilots.

9/2011 - 1/2012

**Project Manager Assistant - Euronet Consulting EEIG**, Brussels

Provided assistance for project management and business development department for the implementation of European Commission Development Programmes in the MENA region. Main tasks included elaborating projects and tender proposals (and methodologies); developing of partner network; preparation of financial technical offers; mission logistics management; writing reports.

4/2009 – 10/2009

**Assistant of UNESCO Florence Director - UNESCO Club**, Florence

Organisation and ran national and international cultural events. Worked closely with internal and external partners to maintain strong volunteer and donor relations and to provide excellent event experience before, during and after the event.

4/2007 – 6/2007

**MEP Assistant – European Parliament**, Strasbourg and Brussels

Carried out desk researches related to the MEP political activities on EU’s foreign policies.

LANGUAGES	<p><b>Italian</b> mother tongue</p> <p><b>English</b> proficient user (C1) – certified studying and working experience</p> <p><b>French</b> proficient user (C1) – studying and working experience</p> <p><b>Arabic</b> intermediate user (B1) – certified studying experience</p>
IT SKILLS	<p>STATA (basic)</p> <p>NVivo (Mac and Windows advanced)</p> <p>Prezi (advanced)</p> <p>MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint (advanced)</p>
RESEARCH & METHOD SCHOOLS	<p>6/2016 <i>Technical language course</i> “La langue Arabe dans le sciences sociales”, IRMC, Tunis.</p> <p>9/2015 <i>Electoral analysis in the Arab World</i> “Approches et méthodes de l’analyse électorale en contexte post-autoritaire”, IRMC, Tunis.</p> <p>7/2015 <i>Process-tracing Methodology II</i> ECPR Summer School in Methods and Techniques; University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.</p> <p>2/2015 <i>Designing and Conducting Field Research</i> ECPR Winter School in Methods and Techniques ; University of Bamberg, Germany.</p> <p>6/2014 <i>The European Union Neighborhood Policy. Between Continuity and Change</i> College of Europe, Natolin, Poland.</p> <p>7/2011 <i>Université Libre de la Méditerranée,</i> Institut de Recherche et d'Etudes Méditerranée Moyen-Orient (IREMMO), University of Saida, Lebanon.</p>
FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS	<p>2019-2020 Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellowship, European University Institute, Florence.</p> <p>2014-2018 Full PhD Scholarship, Scuola Normale Superiore, Florence.</p> <p>2012-2013 One-year scholarship granted by the Italian Ministry of foreign affairs to attend the Master Programme at the College of Europe, Bruges (Belgium).</p> <p>2011 Scholarship granted by the <i>Institut de Recherche et d'Etudes Méditerranée Moyen-Orient</i> (IREMMO) to attend the summer school in Saida (Lebanon).</p>