



**Policy Conference (Hybrid)**  
**THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN TUNISIA**

October 31, 2022

11:30-18:30 (GMT+1)

Registration Link [here](#)

**CONTEXT**

Tunisia is considered among the countries with the most comprehensive social protection system in the MENA region, with its large contributory and non-contributory schemes. Tunisia has historically been a leader in the region in social protection for women, labor protections, and more recently pluralistic democracy. However more than 44% of the working population were still outside the social protection systems in 2019 and there remain entrenched geographic inequalities between the coast and the interior, as well as ill-targeted social spending.

Moreover, the health crisis of COVID-19 has exposed the current limitations of the social protection system despite the government deployment since the beginning of the crisis of eight urgent measures (2 contributory and 6 non-contributory) to mitigate the socio-economic and health impacts of the crisis.

With the adoption of the new constitution of 2014 Tunisia had embarked on reforms to better extend the coverage of programs especially to categories not yet covered and, more specifically, to active people in the informal economy. The country must also account for the challenges faced by the social protection system such as the performance and the targeting quality of non-contributory programs, inequality of access to care services, the problem of financial imbalance of funds and the exclusion of some vulnerable categories from the social protection system.

As part of the project "Reimagining Social Protection in Jordan and Tunisia" two national consultations were organized in January and September 2021, and in January 2022, around the social protection system in Tunisia. These events brought together social protection experts, academics and civil society actors to discuss the different schemes and programs, the limitations of this system especially in the face of the health crisis, identify key challenges and suggest practical recommendations.

This conference is intended as an opportunity for dialogue between the various actors of civil society, policy makers, politicians and experts, to disseminate and discuss the policy recommendations and the key messages of six papers on the system of social protection in Tunisia.

## OBJECTIVES

The conference will be an opportunity for experts, civil society representatives and policy makers to:

1. Exchange on the outputs of the different papers on the current state of social protection system in Tunisia
2. Discuss the main challenges of the current social protection system in general and more specifically regarding health insurance and outcomes, social protection extension strategies for informal workers, minimum and living wages, health insurance, and targeting cash assistance
3. Discuss the role of civil society in promoting social protection reforms based on a comparative analysis between Tunisia and Jordan.
4. Discuss the main policy recommendations
5. Determine the main priorities in terms of reforms for a more inclusive social protection system in Tunisia.

## DIALOGUE ORGANIZATION

This conference will center on providing space for various stakeholders to discuss policy implications of research findings. Six thematic sessions will take place in which the policy implications of each paper within this series will be presented and discussed by a panel of experts. Panel discussion will be followed by open discussion:

- Presentation of Policy Findings – 15 minutes per paper.
- Discussants – 5 minutes.
- Open discussion – 10 minutes.

## AGENDA

### Policy Conference (Hybrid)

### THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN TUNISIA

October 31, 2022

11:30-18:30 (GMT+1)

Registration Link [here](#)

11:30 – 12:00	Registration and coffee for in Person attendants in Tunis –LAICO Hotel (Salambo meeting room) Registration online by virtual attendants	
12:00 – 12:15	<b>Welcome Remarks, Framing of the Workshop and Objectives</b>  Ibrahim Elbadawi; <i>Economic Research Forum</i> Mohamed Ali Marouani; <i>IRD, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and ERF</i> Asma Ben Hassen, <i>Tunisia Inclusive Labor Institute TILI</i>	
12:15 – 12:45	<b>Session 1: Landscape of Social Protection in Tunisia</b> Imane Helmy, Mohamed Amara, and Khaled Nasri  <b>Chair:</b> Mouna Ben Othman, <i>Tunisian organization of social cohesion</i> <b>Discussant:</b> Nidhal Ben Cheikh, <i>consultant, social protection specialist</i> <b>Open Discussion</b>	
		
12:45 – 01:15	<b>Session 2: Health Insurance and Health Outcomes in Tunisia</b> Mohamed Ali Marouani, Nidhal Ben Cheikh, and Phuong Minh Le  <b>Chair:</b> Asma Ben Hassen, <i>Tunisia Inclusive Labor Institute TILI</i> <b>Discussant:</b> Ines Ayadi, <i>Professor of health economics, Sfax University</i> <b>Open Discussion</b>	
		
01:15 – 01:30	Coffee Break	



01:30 – 02:00	<p><b>Session 3: Extending Social Protection to Informal Workers in Tunisia</b> Najat El Mekaoui, Yeganeh Foufouheshfar, Asma Ben Hassen, Jacob Emont, and Nidhal Ben Cheikh</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Abdeljelil Bedoui, <i>Director of Studies, FTDES</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Imen Mouaddeb, <i>CRES</i></p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>	
02:00 – 02:30	<p><b>Session 4: Cash Assistance Targeting Those in Poverty in Tunisia</b> Imane Helmy, Mohamed Amara, and Khaled Nasri</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Mahmoud Ben Romdhane, <i>President of the Tunisian Academy of Sciences and Arts and former Minister of Social Affairs</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Mehdi Ben Braham, <i>Professor University of Tunis</i></p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>	
02:30 – 3:30	Lunch	
03:30 – 04:00	<p><b>Session 5: Minimum and Living Wages in Jordan and Tunisia</b> Caroline Krafft and Cyrine Hannafi</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Samir Ghazouani, <i>Business School of Tunis (ESCT), Manouba and ERF</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Abdelrahmen El Lahga, <i>Professor University of Tunis, and ERF</i></p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>	
04:30 – 05:00	<p><b>Session 6: The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Social Protection Reforms in Tunisia and Jordan</b> Ahmed Awad, Courtney Geary, Asma Ben Hassen, and Arbia Saleh</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Mongi Boughzala, <i>University of Tunis El Manar and ERF</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Mouna Ben Othman, <i>Tunisian organization of social cohesion</i></p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>	
05:00 – 05:15	Coffee Break	



05:15 – 06:15	<p><b>Session 7: Policy Roundtable</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Mohamed Ali Marouani, <i>IRD, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and ERF</i></p> <p><b>Panelists:</b> Abdeljelil Bedoui, <i>Director of Studies, FTDES</i> Mahmoud Ben Romdhane, <i>President of the Tunisian Academy of Sciences and Arts</i> Ines Ayadi, <i>Professor of health economics, Sfax University</i> Mehdi Ben Braham, <i>Professor University of Tunis</i> Aziz Ben Ghachem, <i>Senior social protection specialist at the World Bank Tunisia country office</i></p>
06:15 – 06:30	<p><b>Closing Remarks:</b></p> <p>Mohamed Ali Marouani, <i>IRD, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and ERF</i> Ibrahim Elbadawi, <i>ERF</i></p>