

ILAN STRAUSS

<http://www.ilan-strauss.org/>

ilan.strauss@airfinity.com

Macroeconomist with expertise in panel econometrics, data analysis, investment flows, and macroeconomic surveillance. Eye for policy implications and clear non-technical write-ups. Experience producing and managing flagship publications for the *African Development Bank* (AfDB), UNCTAD's *World Investment Report*, and the *International Labour Organization* (ILO). Currently a Senior Research Associate at the *University of Johannesburg* and a contributing researcher to *Columbia University's* Columbia Centre on Sustainable Investment (CCSI). I taught macroeconomics at the *Jones Graduate School of Business, Rice University* and *New York University*. Presently a consultant on COVID-19 economic impacts for the ILO, UNIDO, AfDB, and Airfinity.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics, *The New School for Social Research*, New York 2014 - 2020 (awarded May)

- Columbia University Coursework: Bayesian Statistics, Macroeconomics, Dynamical Systems

My Ph.D applied Bayesian panel econometrics to large publicly listed firm-level datasets, exploring trends in fixed capital investment rates among advanced and developing economies. It was published with Oxford University's *Institute for New Economic Thinking* (INET) and *Oxford Martin School*, currently under peer review with *The Review of Financial Studies* and *World Development*.

MSc, International Development Economics (First Class), *SOAS, University of London* 2010 - 2011

BSc (with Honours), Economics and History, *University of Cape Town* 2005 - 2007

WORK EXPERIENCE

Currently **Senior Research Associate** in **industrial development** at the *University of Johannesburg*.

- **Research Fellow**, 04/2020 [forthcoming]. UCL (London) - Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose

'Digital rents in the modern economy' research project. Theory and research lead working with Mariana Maz-zucato. Combine big data scraped from the web with a theoretical framework to detail digital rents (excessive profits) made by technology companies. Policy implications. Big data analysis in R.

- **Macroeconomist on COVID-19** (02/2021 - Present). Airfinity (London).

Macroeconomic modeller linking healthcare data and outcomes to macroeconomic data and outcomes; explaining differences between (and within) countries, regions, and continents. Index construction. Predictive modelling. Methods: Bayesian ANOVA & PCA, Bayesian LASSO, Multilevel panel modelling, case studies.

- **Economics Consultant**, 01/2015 - Present.

COVID-19 Impact Country Expert (10/2020 - Present). African Development Bank (AfDB).

(i) South African country expert to assess impact of COVID-19 on manufacturing sector for joint AfDB-UNIDO study. Implement and analyze survey results. Provide policy recommendations on the basis of impact assessment.
(ii) COVID-19 impact assessment on The Gambia, including debt sustainability analysis (DSA) using IMF-World Bank DSA model, custom built VAR model, and Bayesian time-series forecasting techniques.

COVID-19 Project and Technical Lead (05/2020 - Present). International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Head of modelling, macroeconomic surveillance, project write-up and researchers to produce 2020 estimates of the impact of COVID-19 on employment in South Africa (SA) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, using an augmented input-output model for SA, and using a Bayesian multilevel econometric panel model for SADC countries. Use of high-frequency Google Mobility, financial data, commodity price data,

and annual macroeconomic surveillance data to provide qualitative employment risk assessments for countries.

Chief Macroeconomic Consultant (08/2019 - 04/2020). African Union Commission and ILO.

Lead author and research manager for a 100 page macroeconomic policy guide for Africa's finance ministers to advance employment and structural transformation within the balance of payments constraints (Mundell-Fleming).

National Minimum Wage Steering Committee (05/2015 - 2016). University of the Witwatersrand.

Macroeconomic modeller and advisor, research published with ILO [here](#). Passing of the first ever national minimum wage for South Africa (01 January 2019).

Lead Author (06/2016 - 10/2016). Johns Hopkins University and Emerge85.

Produce a 100 page history of global economic development: 'The Rise of 'the Rest'? Global Development in the Past, Present, and Future', [Final report here](#).

Expert Consultant (06/2015 - 09/2015). ILO, Multinational Enterprises Unit.

Write background paper on FDI and MNEs in Africa, for ILO conference on the Tripartite Declaration in Addis Ababa, 30 November-3 December 2015, [Final report here](#).

Consultant (01/2013 - 06/2013). United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Produce benchmark definitions on creative sectors for UN and analyse their ability to generate employment in South Africa. Presented findings to expert committee in Addis Abba in 2014.

- **Expert Consultant, UNCTAD (United Nations - Geneva), World Investment Report** 12/2013 - 08/2018

Lead author of Africa trends section of the World Investment Report and contributed to the Global Investment Monitor. Currently serve as an advisor and external reviewer. Monitor and analyse various types of FDI data from official and unofficial sources and use it to provide a narrative on developments in Africa's inward and outward FDI, including forecasts, by country, region, and continent.

- **Lecturer in Macroeconomics**, 01/2016 - Present.

- Course lead (1/2019 - 09/2020), *Jones Graduate School of Business, Rice University* (Houston, Texas), @MBA program. Manage and help design syllabus, assignments, live lectures, and other teachers. Stopped due to time zone differences.

- Adjunct Lecturer (06/2015 - 12/2019), *New York University* (New York), Division of Applied Undergraduate Studies (DAUC).

- **Research Economist, African Development Bank (AfDB)** (Tunisia) 06/2013 - 06/2014

Helped lead and direct internal and external teams which wrote the 200 page African Development Report, a flagship publication of the AfDB involving 11 months of expert meetings, research, editing, & macroeconomic analysis and forecasting. Lead author of key chapters on trade, FDI, value chains, regional integration, and policy recommendations. Provide regional and country-level macroeconomic policy analysis and advisory services.

- **Faculty Member, University of the Witwatersrand** (South Africa) 01/2012 - 12/2012

Lecture econometrics to honours student in development economics. Write policy inputs for government and for European Union funded project on the financial sector called FESSUD. Manage researchers.

- **Chief of Staff to Director, Equal Education** (South Africa) 01/2010 - 6/2010

Manage projects, HR hiring, strategy, speech writing, and campaign coordination for one of the largest non-profits in South Africa. Key Outputs: Marches of 20,000+ people, research presented to Minister of Basic Education, national campaigns across several provinces.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

I love to cook, write letters to the Financial Times, and enjoy the outdoors. I have travelled to over 45 countries and lived on several continents.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

with Jangho Yang, ‘Corporate Secular Stagnation: Empirical Evidence on the Advanced Economy Investment Slowdown’, *Review of Financial Studies* [Under Review].

with Jangho Yang, ‘Slowing Investment Rates in Developing Economies: Evidence from a Bayesian hierarchical model’, *World Development* [Under Review].

with Patieene Passoni and Gilad Isaacs, ‘Modelling a COVID-19 Shock to Final Demand: Estimates on the Impact on Employment using Augmented Input-Output Tables with Application to South Africa’, *the International Labour Review (ILR)* [Accepted].

with Gilad Isaacs and Josh Rosenberg, ‘The Effect of Shocks to GDP on Employment in SADC Member States during the COVID-19 Pandemic using a Bayesian Hierarchical Model’, *African Development Review* [Accepted].

with Josh Rosenberg and Gilad Isaacs, ‘How Has Covid-19 Impacted Labour Markets in SADC Member States? Evidence from combining novel high-frequency data and other sources’, *African Development Review* [Accepted].

Strauss, I. ‘Understanding South Africa’s Current Account Deficit: The role of foreign direct investment income’, *Transnational Corporations* (UNCTAD), Volume 23, Number 2, 2017.

Strauss, Ilan and Charaf-Eddine, Naym. ‘Ten Commandments of Applied Regional Integration Analysis: The African Case’, *African Development Review*, Special Edition, Volume 26, Issue S1, pages 7–20, November 2014.

Strauss, I. ‘Manufacturing and the National Development Plan: Which way forward?’, *Social Dynamics: A Journal of African studies*, 2013, 39:1, 119–129.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Strauss, I. ‘2019 Trends in FDI Flows and Policy’, in Lisa Sachs and Lise Johnson (eds). *Yearbook on International Investment Law and Policy 2019*. Oxford University Press. February 2021 [forthcoming].

Strauss, I. ‘Explaining Global Trends in FDI in 2015 and Beyond’, in Lisa Sachs and Lise Johnson (eds). *Yearbook on International Investment Law and Policy 2015-2016*. Oxford University Press. November 2017.

Strauss, I. ‘Teacher Absentee Rates: Setting the Record Straight’, in Joshua Maserow(ed). *Taking Equal Education into the Classroom*. Equal Education. 2016.

PEER-REVIEWED WORKING PAPERS AND POLICY BRIEFS

Strauss, I., et al. ‘The impacts from a COVID-19 shock to South Africa’s economy and labour market’, *ILO Rapid Country Assessment: South Africa*, August 2020. International Labour Office.

‘Corporate Secular Stagnation: Empirical Evidence on the Advanced Economy Investment Slowdown’, with Jangho Yang, *Oxford Martin School Working Paper*, December 2019.

Strauss, I., Isaacs, G., and Capaldo, J. ‘The Impact of Minimum Wage Increases on the South African Economy in the Global Policy Model’, *ILO Research Paper No. 20*, October 2017. International Labour Office.

Strauss, I. and Mavroedi, V. ‘How India can Benefit from FDI: lessons from China’, *Columbia FDI Perspectives*, No. 194 February 27, 2017. Columbia University.

Strauss, I. ‘Understanding South Africa’s Current Account Deficit: the role of FDI income’, *Africa Economic Brief*, Volume 6, Issue 4, 2015, African Development Bank.

Krüger, R., and Strauss, I. ‘Africa Rising Out of Itself: the growth of intra-African FDI’, *Columbia FDI Perspectives*, N.139, January 19 2015, Columbia University.

BUSINESS PAPER OP-EDS

Strauss, I. ‘An expat’s guide to Williamsburg, Brooklyn’. *Financial Times, Property Listings*. 10 May 2020.

Strauss, I. ‘Current accounts: it’s not as simple as “wine for cloth” anymore’. *Financial Times, Letter to the Editor*. August 27 2018.

Strauss, I. ‘How a minimum wage can help South Africa’. *Fin 24*. 02 August 2016.

Strauss, I. ‘Subsidies won’t make a dent’. *Mail & Guardian Business Section*. 07 June 2013.

Strauss, I. ‘ “Beggar-my-neighbour” wage policies a race to the bottom’. *Business Day*. 12 February 2013.

Strauss, I. ‘ “Cheap labour” fiction will hobble plan’s effectiveness’. *Business Day*. 23 January 2013

CONFERENCE PAPERS

Strauss, I., Johnson, L., Toledano, P., James, S. ‘Background Paper on Investment Incentives: The good, the bad and the ugly: Assessing the costs, benefits and options for policy reform’. *Draft Conference Paper*. Columbia University and the IFC. 2014

Molinari, A., Strauss, I., and J. De Angelis. ‘South-South cooperation between Latin America and Africa Analysis with trade and FDI indicators’. *Flacso-ISA Joint International Conference*, July 23rd-25th 2014, Buenos Aires.

Strauss, I and Charaf-Eddine, N. ‘The 10 Rules of Regional Integration’, *African Economic Conference* hosted by the AfDB, UNDP, and UNECA. October 28-30 2013, Johannesburg.

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