

Andrea Atencio-De-Leon

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign , IL	May 2023
M.Sc. in Economics, Universidad del Rosario , Bogotá, Colombia	Oct 2013
B.Sc. in Economics, Universidad del Rosario , Bogotá, Colombia	Oct 2012
B.Sc. in Finance and International Trade, Universidad del Rosario , Bogotá, Colombia	June 2012

RESEARCH FIELDS

Primary Fields: Development Macroeconomics; Labor Macroeconomics

Secondary Fields: Firm Dynamics; Structural Transformation; Applied Microeconometrics; Inequality and Gender

RESEARCH

Publications and Working Papers

Does Turnover Inhibit Specialization? Evidence from a Skill Survey in Peru, with Munseob Lee and Claudia Macaluso. *American Economic Review: Insights*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 56–70, March 2025

We design and field a novel firm-level job-skill survey in Peru to measure task specialization and compare it to the United States. Peruvian jobs exhibit significantly more uniform skill profiles, despite similar matching frictions and recruiting technologies. We develop an O-ring-style model in which uncertainty about worker availability reduces firms' incentives to specialize, generating endogenous demand for generalist workers and linking labor turnover risk to lower productivity through reduced task specialization.

Job Dynamics with Staffed Labor, with Claudia Macaluso and Chen Yeh

Using U.S. manufacturing administrative microdata, we show that staffing is a pervasive and increasingly important margin of plant-level adjustment to demand shocks. We develop an accounting framework to measure staffed job creation and destruction. Incorporating staffed job flows—omitted from official statistics—accounts for 37 percent of the post-2006 decline in aggregate job reallocation. The results indicate a compositional shift in labor market dynamism and productivity adjustment rather than a pure contraction.

Contracting Out Worker Reallocation

Using CPS microdata and a decomposition of worker reallocation rates, this paper shows that the rise of staffed workers materially biases measured labor market fluidity. Staffed workers exhibit higher client-level reallocation but longer tenure at the employer-of-record, implying omitted flows in official statistics. Correcting for this channel accounts for over one-fifth of the post-1990s decline in measured worker reallocation, reshaping interpretations of aggregate labor market dynamism.

The Economics of the Gender Wage Gap in Armenia, with Lourdes Rodriguez Chamussy and Nistha Sinha. World Bank WPS 8409

Applying reweighted recentered influence function (RIF) decompositions across the wage distribution, this paper quantifies the relative contribution of composition and wage-structure effects. Results show that the wage-structure (unexplained) component dominates at the middle and upper percentiles, while composition effects matter more at the bottom, indicating heterogeneous sources of inequality along the earnings distribution.

Gender Gap in Pay in the Russian Federation: Twenty years later still a concern, with Josefina Posadas. World Bank WPS 7407

Using reweighted recentered influence function (RIF) decompositions on Russian wage microdata (1996–2011), this paper quantifies composition and wage-structure contributions to the gender pay gap across the earnings distribution. Observable characteristics explain disparities at lower percentiles, while wage-structure effects dominate at the top. Counterfactual estimates indicate that equalizing returns to education would largely eliminate or reverse the gap at higher earnings levels, implying that skill accumulation is central at the bottom of the distribution, whereas glass-ceiling distortions constrain outcomes at the top.

Work in Progress

Heterogeneity in Post-secondary Human Capital Formation, with Darwin Cortés and Julieth Santamaria.

Global Gender Wage Gaps along the Wage Distribution and the Legal and Social Environment, with Kathleen Beegle and Josefina Posadas.

Policy Pieces and Press

Unlocking Growth in Cameroon: Easing Financial Sector Constraints and Closing Infrastructure Gaps, with SIP team. IMF Selected Issues Paper accompanying the 2025 Cameroon Article IV Consultation, forthcoming.

The Role of Official Development Assistance in Cameroon. Annex II in Cameroon: Eighth Review Under the Extended Credit Facility Arrangement, IMF Country Report No. 2025/222, August 2025, pp. 37–40.

The 4th Financing for Development Conference— Contribution of the IMF to the International Financing for Development Agenda, with Paper team. IMF Board Paper, June 2025.

Understanding the Lack of Skill Specialization in Peru's Labor Market, with Munseob Lee and Claudia Macaluso. VoxDev, July 2024.

Heterogeneity in Human Capital Formation: Tertiary Education in Colombia, with Darwin Cortés & Juan Miguel Gallego. Foco Económico, in Spanish, December 2021.

EMPLOYMENT

International Monetary Fund, African Department – Cameroon team
Economist EP

Feb 2025 – Present

- Covered real and monetary sectors for an Article IV consultation and program review, redesigning real-sector projection methodologies to ensure consistency with fiscal and external dynamics and anchoring monetary aggregates to macro fundamentals and cross-sector assumptions, strengthening macro-financial linkages within the macro-framework.
- Assumed financial sector coverage following the departure of the MCM economist, strengthening coordination with the regional team to secure bank-level data and improve the information base for financial sector analysis.
- Led the Selected Issues Paper *Unlocking Growth in Cameroon* under compressed deadlines, independently defining the research agenda, assembling multi-source datasets, and deriving policy recommendations adopted in the Policy Note.
- Led mission meetings with authorities, private-sector firms, and financial institutions, translating technical analysis into structured policy dialogue.

International Monetary Fund, Strategy, Policy, and Review
Economist EP

Sep 2023 – Feb 2025

- Served as SPR economist for CEMAC during a breach of Net Foreign Assets (NFA) regional assurances, leading FX and reserve analysis; designed and implemented a template for regional target-setting; constructed daily NFA estimates from central bank balance-sheet data and institutionalized an NFA monitoring framework for ongoing surveillance.
- Co-authored the IMF Board paper for the 2025 Financing for Development Conference, leading analytical work and drafting on capacity development, including coordinating cross-department messaging to ensure institutional alignment under compressed timelines.
- Produced and regularly updated the SDG “State of Play” brief for Management, soliciting cross-department inputs and streamlining them into a concise set of policy priorities.
- Co-organized the Low-Income Countries Seminar Series, including a session that achieved record attendance (150).

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Economics Department, IL, USA
Research Assistant

Aug 2018 – Aug 2022

- Contributed to research published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, implementing quasi-experimental methods to study (i) long-run effects of manufacturing plant openings on local development and intergenerational earnings mobility, and (ii) firm-level output and wage responses to product demand shocks.
- Contributed to research published in the *American Economic Review*, conducting large-scale econometric analyses using vacancy-level microdata to examine local labor demand concentration and market power.

- Developed a longitudinal occupational crosswalk linking multiple classification systems over time, enabling consistent analysis of occupational dynamics, labor reallocation, and productivity dynamics for research published in the *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*.

The World Bank, Social Protection & Labor EAP, Washington, DC, USA
Consultant

Mar 2013 – May 2020¹

- Designed and implemented econometric analyses examining (i) the evolution of the gender wage gap across development stages and the earnings distribution, and (ii) the role of services in large-scale job creation.
- Constructed and harmonized a cross-country dataset covering more than 500 household surveys, enabling comparative analysis across economies.
- Contributed to the design and programming of *ADEPT 2.0 Gender*², a World Bank analytical tool for gender diagnostics.

National Planning Department, Vice Presidency for Sectors, Bogota, Colombia
Public Policy Advisor

Oct 2014 – Jul 2016

- Advised the National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) on the technical design of public policies across sectors, integrating measurable implementation targets.
- Played a central role in redesigning the CONPES³ preparation process by developing standardized drafting guidelines and indicator frameworks for results-based monitoring.
- Designed and coded an early “traffic light” system to track policy implementation by ministry, later institutionalized as the SisCONPES monitoring platform.
- Served as technical advisor for the regional pillar of Colombia’s National Development Plan (2014–2018)⁴, contributing to regional consultations and ensuring macro-consistency and alignment across region-specific development strategies.

Inter-American Development Bank, Vice Presidency for Sectors and Knowledge, Washington, DC, USA
Research Assistant

Jun 2014 – Nov 2014

- Contributed to cross-country research on female labor supply and childcare in Latin America and the Caribbean, assembling and harmonizing large household survey datasets.
- Conducted econometric analyses to estimate determinants of childcare use and labor market participation.

Universidad del Rosario, Economics Department, Bogotá, Colombia
Junior Researcher

Sep 2011 – Feb 2013

- Implemented econometric analyses evaluating the effects of educational conditional cash transfer programs on non-education outcomes using original microdata.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Economics Department, IL, USA
Teaching Assistant

Aug 2019 – Dec 2019

- Intermediate Microeconomics, Undergraduate

Universidad del Rosario, Economics Department, Bogotá, Colombia
Adjunct Professor

Jul 2016 – Jul 2017

- Mathematical Economics, Undergraduate, Spring 2017
- Microeconomics I, Undergraduate, Fall 2016 – Spring 2017
- Macroeconomics I, Undergraduate, Fall 2016

Lecturer

Jun 2014 – Jun 2016

- Microeconomics I, Microeconomics III, Undergraduate

¹ Mar 2013 – May 2014; Feb 2017 – May 2017; May 2018 – Aug 2018; Jul 2019 – Aug 2019; Jan 2020 – May 2020.

² ADEPT Gender is a tool developed to automate and standardize the production of analytical reports.

³ The CONPES is the highest national planning authority on all matters related to the economic and social development of the country [Colombia]. The council consists of the president and his ministers (DNP, 2015).

⁴ Formal and legal instrument that establishes the objectives and goals of the government, allowing the subsequent evaluation of their management. This document also provides the strategic guidelines for the public policies that will be implemented during the term of the government (DNP, 2015).

SELECTED AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

Paul W. Boltz Fellowship, University of Illinois	May 2022
Robert Willis Harbeson Memorial Dissertation Fellowship, University of Illinois	May 2021
Morris and Sally Kleiner Labor Economics Prize, University of Illinois	May 2019
Fellowship, University of Illinois	Aug 2017
M.Sc. Excellence award (first in class), Universidad del Rosario	Oct 2013
Best Finance Undergraduate at the national level, Colombian Ministry of Education	2012
Full-tuition Grant for Undergraduate Studies, Universidad del Rosario	2007 – 2012

SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS

Referee, *Oxford Economic Papers*.

Member, Outsourcing Research Network, 2020 – present.

Coordinator, Research Group in Economics for Undergraduates, Universidad del Rosario, 2012 – 2013.

OTHER

Technical Skills: Stata; LaTeX; large administrative microdata; cross-country survey harmonization; macro-framework modeling; policy evaluation techniques.

Languages: Spanish (native), English (fluent), French (intermediate)

Citizenship: Colombian