Paula Cesana

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Fields

Primary: Labor Economics, Macroeconomics

Secondary: Economic Growth and Development

Education

Ph.D., Economics, Queen Mary University of London	2025
MRes., Economics, Queen Mary University of London, *Distinction*	2020
M.Sc., Economics, University of Buenos Aires	2019
B.Sc., Economics, University of Buenos Aires, *Magna Cum Laude*	2015

Fellowships & Awards

MRes. and PhD. Scholarship, Queen Mary University of London	2019
Grant for Short Duration Research Stays Abroad, University of Buenos Aires	2018
UBACyT Graduate Student Research Scholarship	2015
8th Annual Prize for Economic Research "Dr. Raúl Prebisch", Central Bank of Argentina	2015

Teaching

Teaching Assistant, Queen Mary University of London

Macroeconomics for Policy, Economics Master's Apprenticeship	2025
Microeconomics II, B.Sc.	2025
Principles of Economics, B.Sc.	2023-2024
Econometrics I, B.Sc.	2023
Economics of Technology and Innovation, B.Sc.	2022-2023
Development Economics, B.Sc.	2022
Macroeconomics I, B.Sc.	2021
Economics of Social Issues, B.Sc.	2020-2021

Teaching Assistant, University of Buenos Aires

Macroeconomics and Economic Policy, B.Sc.	2015-2018

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Xavier Mateos-Planas, Queen Mary University of London	2023-2024
Research Assistant, Sang Toon (Tim) Lee, Queen Mary University of London	2021-2022
Research Assistant, Centre for Studies on Population, Employment and Development (CEPED), University of Buenos Aires	2015-2018

Employment

Consultant, International Labour Organization, ILO Office for Argentina	2018

Job Market Paper

"Intergenerational Mobility in the Presence of Informal Labor Markets"

Abstract: This paper studies intergenerational mobility in the context of Chile, an economy with a significant informal labor market. Using longitudinal data, I document two key empirical facts. First, labor informality is associated with higher income uncertainty. Second, the share of time individuals spend in informal employment is correlated with parental background, suggesting a positive association in labor informality across generations. Moreover, I show most of this association can be explained by substantial intergenerational persistence in education and occupations. I then propose and estimate a model of human capital investment and occupation choice under uncertainty to

quantitatively assess the role of the income uncertainty channel in intergenerational mobility, namely, persistence in education and occupations, and in labor informality. In the model, higher income uncertainty reduces parental investment in children's human capital, limiting access to higher-skilled occupations,which are also less affected by informality. I show that reducing parental income risk in informal employment increases the share of educated individuals and enhances upward mobility. These findings underscore how labor informality can shape future labor market outcomes and perpetuate barriers to intergenerational mobility.

Working Papers

"Task-Biased Technology Adoption Across Countries" with Giacomo Carlini

Abstract: This paper explores how differences in the adoption of task-biased technologies contribute to GDP gaps across countries. We introduce a novel, country-specific measure of task intensity to quantify the relative importance of tasks within occupations, which can be readily applied in quantitative analysis. Using this measure, we show that as GDP increases, the share of routine work declines while cognitive work increases. Moreover, differences in task content within occupations explain more than half of the cross-country differences in routine work. We then develop a production framework where technology is task-specific, and occupations are aggregates of tasks, with which we rationalize both optimal task and occupational demands. We use this model to quantitatively assess the differences in task-biased technology adoption across countries and its implications for GDP gaps. Our main counterfactual exercise shows that closing the dispersion in task productivity adoption reduces the average GDP gap relative to the United States by around 25%.

Papers in Progress

"Education, Skills, and Occupational Mismatch" with Xavier Cuadras-Morató and Xavier Mateos-Planas

"Job Polarization and Occupational Mobility: Insights from Panel Data and Task Measures"

Seminars and Conferences

Naples School of Economics 4th PhD and Post-Doctoral Workshop (2025); 40th Conference of the Italian Association of Labour Economics (2025); Macroeconomics Internal Seminar, Queen Mary University of London (2024, 2022)

Academic Service

Conference organization: 5th QMUL PhD Workshop in Economics and Finance (2023)

Training

Tinbergen Institute Summer School "Productivity, Trade and Growth" (2022)

Software skills

R, Stata, Matlab

Languages

English (fluent), Spanish (native), Italian (advanced)

References

Sang Yoon (Tim) Lee
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Queen Mary University of London
Professor of Economics
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Senior Lecturer in Economics
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