Issam Abdo Ahmad

Applied Economist | Permanent Resident of Canada

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SUMMARY

Applied economist with an MSc in Applied Financial Economics from HEC Montréal and an MA in Applied Economics from Lebanese American University. As Acting Senior Director at CEDEC, I lead research on Quebec's labour markets, regional economic disparities, and community economic development. My experience spans econometrics, forecasting, and program evaluation, including analysis of Statistics Canada data using Python and Stata. I have coauthored two articles published in Q1 journals.

EDUCATION

M.Sc. in Applied Financial Economics, HEC Montreal, Canada **Sep 2021 – Jan 2024**

- Thesis: *Perception of Canadian Parents about Their Children's Physical Health During COVID-19: a Machine Learning Approach.*
  - Integrated machine learning techniques such as Decision Trees and Gini Impurity in Python with Generalized Ordered Logit in Stata on Statistics Canada data (24,000+ observations) to develop predictive models for socioeconomic predictors of parental health concerns

M.A. in Applied Economics, Lebanese American University, Lebanon **Sep 2019 – Jun 2021**

- Thesis: *Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Mental Health During COVID-19: Evidence from Canada. (Published).*
  - Applied Ordered Logit Modelling in Stata with odds ratio interpretation to identify demographic and geographic predictors of mental health disparities in Canada.

B.Sc. in Economics, Lebanese American University, Lebanon **Sep 2015 – Dec 2018**

- Graduated with Distinction with a full tuition scholarship | Founded and led the Economics Club.

EXPERIENCE

Acting Senior Director, Analytics and Strategic Integration, CEDEC, Canada **May 2026 – Present**

- Lead CEDEC's applied economic research on labour markets, regional disparities, and community economic development. Set analytical priorities and oversee research quality across staff and external research partners.
- Developed criteria to assess and sequence 10 priority opportunities in CEDEC's 2026 to 2028 economic development roadmap, weighing strategic importance, implementation readiness, funding potential, and scalability.
- Served as principal contributor to the evaluation of McGill's fourth SEED cohort. Analyzed survey responses from 21 participants to assess employment, education, and entrepreneurship outcomes, and prepared the report for executive review.
- Reviewed commissioned research on Quebec's professional artisan market and AI adoption in agriculture.
- Helped refine the design of a study on income and labour market disparities affecting Quebec's English-speaking communities, including the scope of expert review of methods, findings, and recommendations.

- Authored a briefing on entrepreneurship among English speakers in Quebec using Statistics Canada data and an inventory of business support programs. Identified evidence gaps and recommended priorities for further data collection.
- Led recruitment for a Labour Market Researcher role, screening 88 applications and overseeing structured interviews, candidate presentations, and hiring recommendations.

Economic Research Analyst, CEDEC, Canada **Nov 2025 – Apr 2026**

- Conducted socio-economic and labour market analysis using regional, provincial, national, and international datasets (Statistics Canada, ISQ, OECD) to support evidence-based economic development initiatives.
- Built, maintained, and enhanced regional indicator databases covering demographics, labour markets, and community-level outcomes across Québec, with a focus on English-speaking communities.
- Analyzed macro- and micro-level datasets to identify structural economic trends, disparities, risks, and opportunities informing labour market and community development strategies.
- Contributed to survey design, primary data collection, and data preparation, including cleaning and structuring datasets for analytical and impact-evaluation work.
- Translated complex findings into decision-oriented briefs, regional economic profiles, and presentation materials for technical and non-technical stakeholders.
- Collaborated with internal teams, researchers, and external partners to validate insights, contextualize results, and strengthen policy and program relevance.

Business Strategy Intern, Canadian General Food Inc., Canada **Aug 2023 – May 2025**

- Contributed to a 7% improvement in operational efficiency through cost-benefit analysis and strategic financial planning.
- Conducted advanced market research and consumer trend analysis using econometrics and statistical techniques.
- Automated reporting processes using Python and Stata leading to a 15% improvement in analytics efficiency.
- Developed financial forecasting models and program evaluation metrics to assess investment strategies.
- Presented strategic recommendations to senior leadership, thus linking economic modeling to policy decisions.

Freelance Economics and Finance Tutor, SuperProf, Canada **Nov 2022 – Present**

- Ranked #1 among 500+ Canadian Economics tutors based on consistent 5-star reviews across multiple semesters.
- Helped students raise their grades from borderline passing to B level and above through personalized, data-driven lesson plans.
- Simplified complex economic and financial models linking them to real-world applications in business strategy.
- Developed exceptional communication skills by translating technical material into accessible concepts.

Research Assistant, Lebanese American University, Lebanon **Sep 2019 – Jun 2021**

- Co-authored 2 peer-reviewed publications in top-tier economics and health policy journals using advanced Stata-based econometric analysis.
- Applied sophisticated statistical methods, including Ordered Logit, Panel Data Analysis, and Machine Learning, to large national datasets.
- Conducted comprehensive policy evaluation frameworks (cost-benefit analysis, program evaluation metrics) for health and education policies.

- Presented research findings from economic research at international conferences to policy and academic audiences.
- Organized policy roundtables to support academic outreach between faculty and public policy officials.

Summer Intern – BLOM Bank s.a.l., Beirut, Lebanon **Jun 2017 – Jul 2017**

- Gained comprehensive exposure to banking operations, customer service protocols, and financial regulatory compliance.
- Ensured 100% compliance with FATCA regulations by systematically verifying account adherence to international reporting standards.
- Developed attention to detail in compliance tasks while strengthening analytical and problem-solving capabilities.

RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

Publications:

- Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Mental Health during COVID-19: Evidence from Canada (with Ali Fakih and Mohammad Hammoud), *Social Science & Medicine*, 337, 116298, 2023.
- Does the Legal Form Matter for Firm Performance in the MENA Region? (with Ali Fakih), *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, 93(1), 205-227, 2022.

Policy Work: *Economy of Jordan* (with Ali Fakih), *The Middle East and North Africa* (Routledge), 2021.

Journal Reviewer: SAGE Open, Public Health in Practice, Global Economics Science.

CERTIFICATIONS

Financial Analysis of Organizations, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Jan 2024

Python and Statistics for Financial Analysis, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Jul 2023

Applied Micro-Econometrics and Public Policy Evaluation, Economic Research Forum Apr 2021

SKILLS

- **Programming & Analytics:** Python, Stata, Excel, Power BI, Data Visualization, Data Mining.
- **Statistical & Quantitative Methods:** Econometrics, Machine Learning, Time Series Analysis, Forecasting, Statistical Inference, Financial & Economic Modelling, Predictive Analytics.
- **Research, Policy & Strategy:** Policy Evaluation, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Program Evaluation, Scenario Analysis, Literature Review, Stakeholder Engagement, Business Intelligence, Performance Metrics Analysis.

LANGUAGES

Arabic (Native), English (Fluent), French (Intermediate – B2, actively improving towards C1 proficiency).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Permanent Peace Movement (Sep 2012 - Jun 2015):** Engaged in conflict resolution, facilitating workshops for 50 youth and interviewing Lebanese Civil War witnesses and ex-fighters, fostering dialogue and community resilience.

- **MMKN (Feb 2016 - May 2016)**: Provided targeted math tutoring to 30 Grade 9 public school students, preparing them for national exams and fostering equitable education access.
- **Unite Lebanon Youth Project (Jul 2016 - Sep 2016):** Provided counselling sessions to high school students on university majors and assisted the accountant with daily NGO administrative and accounting tasks.
- **Lebanese American University – Office of International Services (Apr 2017 - Apr 2017):** Assisted in organizing the Second International Education Week, supporting logistics and coordination to enhance global student engagement at the Lebanese American University.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- **Business Strategy Internship Award** - Mitacs (2023) - Selected for five four-month units of the Business Strategy Internship program, supporting applied economic research and strategic business analysis in collaboration with industry partners – 75,000 CAD total funding.
- **Doctoral Fellowship** - HEC Montréal (2021) - Awarded full funding to pursue a PhD in Administration (Applied Economics) in recognition of academic excellence and research potential - 159,193 CAD.
- **Young Researcher Award** - Lebanese American University (2021) - Selected through a competitive university-wide process for exceptional research skills and recognized for a peer-reviewed publication in an indexed journal and its presentation at a prestigious international conference - 500 USD
- **Graduate Research Scholarship** - Lebanese American University (2019) - Full tuition waiver and a monthly stipend awarded for academic excellence and research potential - 27,000 USD
- **Tuition Scholarship** - Unite Lebanon Youth Project (2015) - Awarded a partial tuition waiver for academic and social excellence - 25,000 USD
- **Work-Study Scholarship** - Lebanese American University (2015) - Awarded a 50% tuition waiver for academic merit and extracurricular achievement - 30,000 USD

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Active Pursuits:

- Regular participation in strength training, hiking, biking, basketball, swimming, and running.

Intellectual Interests:

- Following economic policy debates and financial market analysis.
- Exploring emerging technologies, including cryptocurrency and fintech innovations.
- Analyzing geopolitical developments and their economic implications.