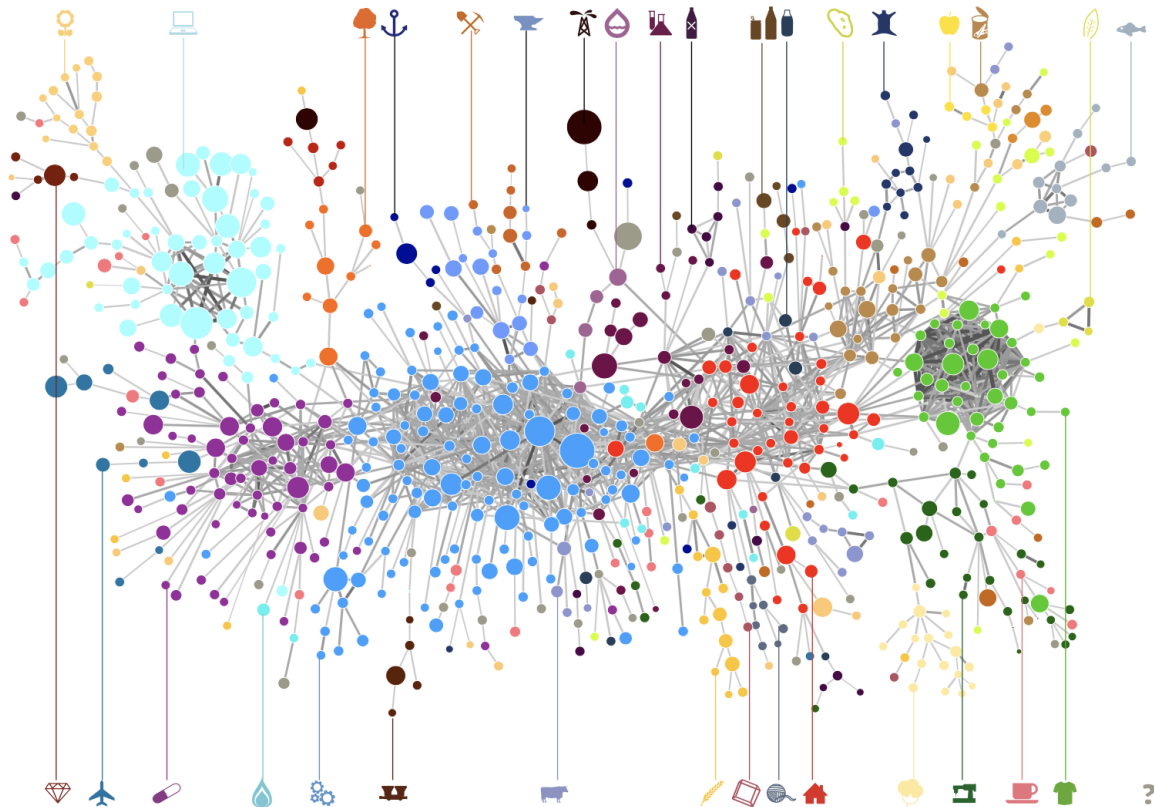




<https://atlas.cid.harvard.edu/>

Optimal Industry Development Strategy Using Economic and Product Complexity

[South Africa]

—

The Economic Complexity Lab - Columbia University

Alexandra Garcia, Kelly Mi, Margarita Demkina, Allison Lin, Helena Yang, Jane Zhang, Daniel Xu, Ryo Shibata, Haoxian Chen, Davepriyan Gunaratnam, Rohan Macherla, Ajit Akole, Shomik Ghose, Alex Wei-Liang Ku, Sannidhya Modi, Xilin Wang

Optimal Industry Development Strategy for South Africa

0. Executive Summary

In this report, we aim to uncover the economic path South Africa went through during the period from 2013 to 2022. Specifically, we dive into the topic through a macroeconomic overview of South Africa from the perspective of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Economic Complexity Index (ECI), which reflect countries' production capability and production structure, respectively. We find that during the period of our interest, South Africa demonstrated a low level of economic growth with an average annual GDP growth rate of 3.39% between 2013 and 2018 and 1.42% between 2019 and 2022, with decreased economic complexity compared to other major emerging economies.

The mixed progress during the period, we believe, can be partially explained through the analysis of the economic and product complexity structure of South Africa on the industry group level, as well as the stagnant macro and microeconomic strategies. The product classification system we adopt allows us to measure the realized industry development for various industry groups and to observe that South Africa regressed industries during the period while its emerging counterparts and economies around the globe also adopted complex and progressive paths with variable degrees of success.

Based on our analysis of the opportunity gain and sensitivity analysis of major industry groups, South Africa could further its gains by prioritizing Weapons, Precious Stones, and Raw Manufacturing in 2018. Four years later, in 2022, its focus should shift to the High Tech and Energy Drilling and Mining industries, which are also one of the more developed industries at the time. We further note that South Africa has a heavily mismatched development strategy that indicates a low level (compared to other emerging countries) of structural optimality on the complexity level, having an adjusted R-square of around -1.7% in 2018 and a much higher score of -0.4% in 2022, demonstrating a shift in development. Since a significant positive correlation exists between GDP growth and the structural optimality index of an economy as we define and calculate, South Africa indeed has a suboptimal growth experience as compared with fast-growing economies both on a regional scale and on a global scale and has the potential to further its economic gains through industrial structure optimization as suggested in the paper.

The four years between 2019 and 2022 showed a significant improvement in South Africa's economic growth, boosting its position on the global scale. Its GDP recovered to above the pre-pandemic levels, and it saw a significant boost in the ECI, particularly compared to its peer countries. Its current strategy still has the viable potential upside to increase its performance and optimize its structure further.

1. Report Overview

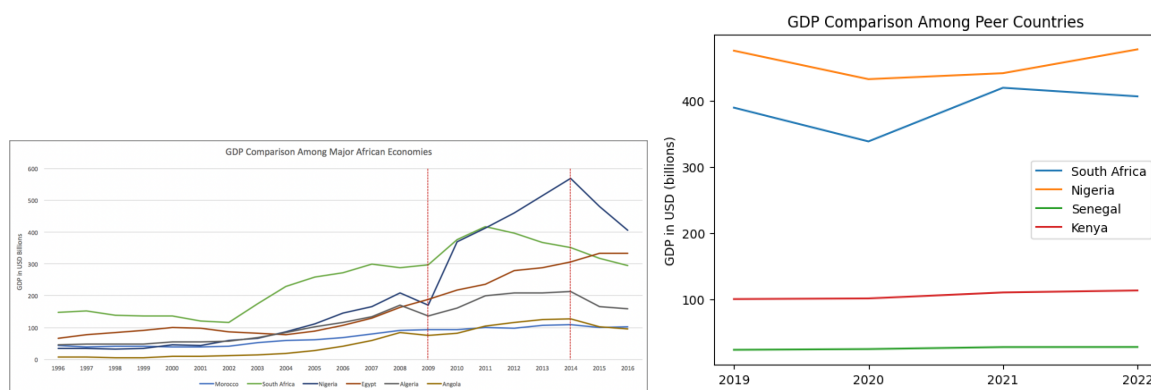
In this report, we aim to uncover the economic path South Africa went through during the period from 2019 to 2022, before and after the COVID pandemic, compared to its performance from 2013 to 2018, before and after the COVID pandemic. Specifically, we dive into the topic through a macroeconomic overview of South Africa from the perspective of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Economic Complexity Index (ECI), which reflect countries' production capability and production structure, respectively. We then analyze the industrial framework and changes of South Africa during the period based on quantitative measures such as the Product Complexity Index (PCI) and Product Family Complexity Index (PfCI), followed by a detailed analysis of how such changes have matched with development strategies as quantitatively measured by opportunity gains on an industry-level. We conclude our report with macro-level results and predictions of South Africa, as deduced from regression models we have established on a global scale, which take into account countries' stances in their product space.

2. Macroeconomic Results

2.1 GDP Ranking and Changes

Figure 1a illustrates the time-series GDP results for South Africa and two of its peer countries (Nigeria and Senegal) from 2013 to 2018. Similar to the other countries, South Africa displayed an eventual upward trend over the period; however, its growth was less consistent than both Kenya and Senegal's growth. South Africa's average annual GDP growth rate (1.42%) is in the middle, as it is greater than Nigeria's rate (0.3%) but less than Senegal's rate (4.4%).

Figure 1b shows the GDP levels for South Africa and its peer countries (Nigeria, Senegal, and Kenya) from 2019 to 2022. Similar to the other countries, South Africa displayed a drop in GDP from 2019 to 2020 because of the pandemic, with all GDPs rebounding in 2022. Over these four years, South Africa's average annual GDP growth rate (1.94%) is in the middle, as it is greater than Nigeria's rate (0.3%) but less than Senegal's (4.4%) and Kenya's rates (3.16%). It is notable that the GDP levels in Senegal and Kenya almost evened out after 2018.



Figures 1a and 1b. GDP Comparison Among Peer Countries (left: 2013-2018; right: 2019-2022)

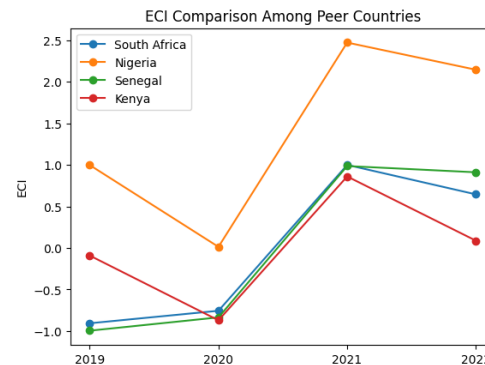
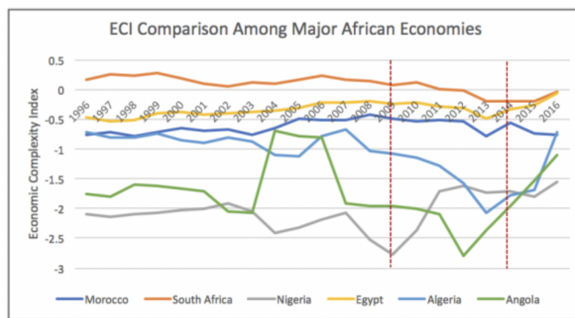
2.2 ECI Ranking and Changes

The Economic Complexity Index (ECI), as defined by Ricardo Hausmann and Cesar Hidalgo in 2009 to explain the knowledge accumulated in a country's population, is illustrated in Figures 2a and 2b.

As shown, South Africa exhibits a mild decrease in terms of production capability from 2013 to 2018. South Africa is in a weak position in ECI terms, as its ECI change of 171.16% is greater than Nigeria's (115.09%), but less than both Senegal (191.47%) and Kenya (195.65%).

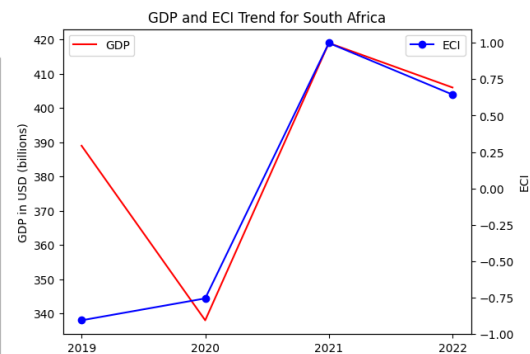
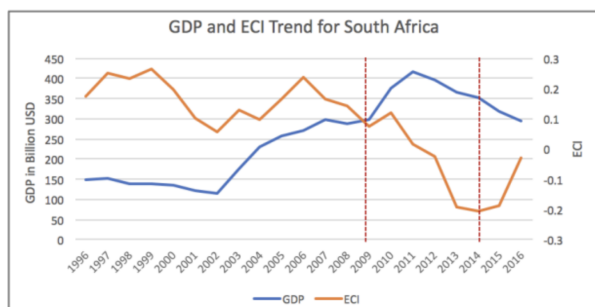
The comparable countries maintain a small change in ECI level between 2019 and 2020, with a sharp change between 2020 and 2022. South Africa exhibits a large increase in production capability in 2022 to levels not seen prior, with extensive microeconomic stimulus packages being one of the reasons. South Africa has seen a 171.16% increase in its ECI, which is

greater than Nigeria's (115.09%), but less than both Senegal (191.47%) and Kenya (195.65%).



Figures 2a and 2b. ECI Comparison Among Peer Countries (left: 2013-2018; right: 2019-2022)

Figures 3a and 3b offer a further comparison of GDP Growth and ECI over the time span from 2013 to 2022 for South Africa. Similar to the GDP drop and further increase from 2013 to 2018, the GDP growth during the period from 2019 to 2022 is accompanied by a similarly volatile increase in ECI. The results show that the economic growth experienced by South Africa during the period from 2013 to 2018 is only partially consistent with the predictions by ECI and that South Africa made weak progress towards effectively developing a competitive product space that helps to accumulate complicated knowledge and technology. For the period 2019 to 2022, the ECI followed GDP trends, which can be interpreted as advancements in production. In order to provide a more concrete answer to why this has happened, we will dive into an analysis of South Africa's production structure and its product space designs in the next few sections.



Figures 3a and 3b. GDP Growth and ECI for South Africa (left: 2013-2018; right: 2019-2022)

3. Production Analysis

3.1 Product Categorization

Our main data source in this research is the UN Comtrade Website (<https://comtrade.un.org>), which provides us with valuable information on countries' export values on an annual basis, including highly specific export data for more than 5000 categories of products. In order to have a holistic vision of the product space of a country, however, a level of categorization is required. Products in our data source are labeled from 010000-999999, with the first two digits representing a general category to which the product belongs. Based on the 99 categories extracted from the label, we further group the products into the 18 most widely-accepted industries, as summarized in Table 1.

Note that the High-complexity Products industry group is not a distinct industry but rather an aggregated industry that encompasses the most complicated products from the most technologically-advanced industries (as measured by PCI). This industry serves as an indicator for us to quantitatively evaluate how well a country has performed in developing cutting-edge technologies and closing its technological gap with advanced economies, which has become a topic of wide concern today. Indeed, when we rank the 18 categories based on PfCI (an equivalent concept of PCI as calculated based on the 18 categorized product groups), the High-complexity Products industry has the highest PfCI among all industry groups.

Category	Description
Animals and By-products	All kinds of meat, livestock and related by-products
Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	All kinds of plants, edible vegetables and fruits
Food and Preparations	Edible preparations, raw cooking materials and appliances
Clothing and Accessories	All kinds of fabrics, filament, clothing and accessories
Textiles	All kinds of textile articles and related products
Wood Products	Book, paper and other elementary products related to wood
Metals	Mining of all sorts of raw Metals
Refined and Processed Stones	Refined or processed stone products such as pearl and ceramics
Energy Drilling and Mining	Mining industry for energy, minerals, stone materials, etc.
Daily Instruments	Basic daily instruments such as sport requisites, timing and measuring tools
Raw Manufacturing	Basic products made from plastic, rubber, leather, etc.
Chemical Manufacturing	Advanced chemical products and pharmaceutical products
Chemicals	Raw chemical materials and by-products
Machinery and Construction	Machinery and mechanical appliances, including electrical equipment
Transportation	Vehicles and locomotives including aircraft, ship, railway, etc.
Weapons	Explosives, arms and ammunition
Services and Utilities	Financial, business, legal, communication, travel Services and Utilities, etc.
High-complexity Products	Agglomeration of advanced products with highest PCIs

Table 1. Categorization of Products

We further observe a positive correlation between the GDP and the export of High-complexity Products. A higher adjusted R-square exists between GDP and High-complexity Products exports, indicating that more successful economies, as measured by GDP, tend to be those that are capable of producing and exporting High-complexity Products as we define them. Tables 2a and 2b show the OLS results in a universe of 107 and 21 typical countries respectively.

	High-complexity Products	Food and Preparations	Animals and By-products
Adj. R-squared	0.075	0.006	0.002
F-statistic	9.556	1.638	1.175
No. Observations	107	107	107

Table 2a. OLS Regression Results of GDP against Percentage Volume of Exports

	High-complexity Products	Food and Preparations	Animals and By-products
Adj. R-squared	0.149	0.003	-0.012
F-statistic	4.510	1.059	0.7542
No. Observations	21	21	21

Table 2b. OLS Regression Results of GDP against Volume of Percentage Exports

3.2 Realized Industry Development

Based on the aforementioned product categorization, we aim to capture South Africa's realized industry production strategy between 2013 and 2022 on a complexity level. In Hausmann and Hidalgo (2009), distance is defined to be a measure of how far a country is from a certain product, not in its product space. We extend this concept to all product groups and quantify how technically equipped a country is to develop the corresponding product groups. In other words, the shorter the distance between a country and a product group, the more capable a country is of developing products within that group. Defining this net distance change as the Realized Industry Development (RID), our export data allow us to calculate and compare the RID of South Africa and the 18 product groups in 2022 and 2018 through the difference, where a positive RID indicates a shortening of the distance (i.e., advancement of the industry), and a negative RID indicates the reverse. It is notable that the number of industries with positive RID has decreased to 0 by 2022.

	Category	RID
13	Weapons	-0.15176
14	Daily Instruments	-0.12008
0	Animals and By-products	-0.11875
6	Raw Manufacturing	-0.10744
1	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	-0.10165
2	Food and Preparations	-0.09986
10	Metals	-0.09742
9	Textile	-0.09098
5	Chemical Manufacturing	-0.08767
12	Transportation	-0.08662
16	High-complexity Products	-0.08182
3	Energy Drilling and Mining	-0.07465
8	Clothing and Accessories	-0.07277
17	Services and Utilities	-0.07244
11	Machinery and Construction	-0.05624
4	Chemicals	-0.05315
15	Precious Stones	-0.02882
7	Wood Products	-0.00991

Table 3. Realized Industry Development (RID) of South Africa

3.3 Regional and Global Comparison

Tables 4a-4b below summarize how the production strategy adopted by South Africa compares with selected leading economies in the world across different years, as measured in RID. Leading economies such as France, the UK, and Germany gave a considerable level of attention to more advanced product groups such as High-Complexity Products and Food and Preparations in 2018 and Services and Utilities and Precious Stones in 2022.

Ranking	France	the UK	Germany
1	High-complexity Products	Services and Utilities	High-complexity Products
2	Chemical Manufacturing	Weapons	Transportation
3	Daily Instruments	Raw Manufacturing	Wood Products
4	Animals and By-products	Precious Stones	Metals
5	Food and Preparations	Animals and By-products	Food and Preparations

Table 4a. RID Comparison across Leading Economies (2018)

Ranking	France	the UK	Germany
1	Services and Utilities	Precious Stones	Daily Instruments
2	Precious Stones	High-complexity Products	Transportation
3	High-complexity Products	Services and Utilities	Chemicals
4	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	Chemical Manufacturing
5	Machinery and Construction	Wood Products	Clothing and Accessories

Table 4b. RID Comparison across Leading Economies (2022)

Tables 4c-4d further examine South Africa 's development strategy against those of emerging economies on a global scale. Reasonably, emerging economies such as China, South Korea, and Singapore have devoted the majority of their efforts to intermediate industry groups, showing drastic shifts in strategies over the course of four years.

Ranking	China	South Korea	Singapore
1	High-complexity Products	Transportation	Transportation
2	Transportation	Textile	High-complexity Products
3	Machinery and Construction	High-complexity Products	Precious Stones
4	Energy Drilling and Mining	Chemical Manufacturing	Daily Instruments
5	Daily Instruments	Machinery and Construction	Services and Utilities

Table 4c. RID Comparison across Emerging Economies (2018)

Ranking	China	South Korea	Singapore
1	Chemicals	Chemicals	Weapons
2	Daily Instruments	Daily Instruments	Energy Drilling and Mining
3	Transportation	Transportation	Transportation
4	Raw Manufacturing	Textile	Machinery and Construction
5	Weapons	Raw Manufacturing	High-complexity Products

Table 4d. RID Comparison across Emerging Economies (2022)

4. Product Space Design

4.1 Suggested Development Vector

As outlined above, distance gives us an idea of how far each new product is from a country's current mix of exports. As defined in Hausmann and Hidalgo (2009), distance is "the weighted proportion of products connected to goods p that country c is not exporting, i.e., $MCP = 0$." Based on this definition, the distance between a country and any product that the country is currently exporting (i.e., the country is a significant exporter of the product as compared to the global average) is zero. Similarly, opportunity gain quantifies the contribution of a new product in terms of opening up the doors to more and more complex products. Intuitively, a product that a country is currently exporting (i.e., $MCP = 1$) has an opportunity gain of zero. An unreasonable investment in a certain product p would lead to a relative decrement in the export of more profitable products and therefore lead to a negative opportunity gain of product p . The opportunity gain is not the only estimator of a country's level of economic development. However, among countries with comparable economic strength, those having higher ECI, or in other words, more reasonable economic structures are often in better shape.

	South Africa	Kenya	Senegal
1	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining
2	Machinery and Construction	Precious Stones	Precious Stones
3	Precious Stones	Weapons	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
4	High-complexity Products	Textile	Animals and By-products
5	Services and Utilities	Chemicals	Food and Preparations
6	Weapons	Daily Instruments	Chemical Manufacturing
7	Transportation	Animals and By-products	Raw Manufacturing
8	Daily Instruments	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Wood Products
9	Chemical Manufacturing	Food and Preparations	Clothing and Accessories
10	Chemicals	Chemical Manufacturing	Textile
11	Animals and By-products	Raw Manufacturing	Metals
12	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Wood Products	Machinery and Construction
13	Food and Preparations	Clothing and Accessories	Daily Instruments
14	Raw Manufacturing	Metals	High-complexity Products
15	Wood Products	Transportation	Weapons
16	Clothing and Accessories	Services and Utilities	Chemicals
17	Textile	Machinery and Construction	Services and Utilities
18	Metals	High-complexity Products	Transportation
ECI	-0.157783672	0.45830144	1.179705915

Table 5a. Opportunity Gain Ranking on a Comparable Scale (2013)

Ranking	South Africa	Egypt	Morocco
1	Clothing and Accessory	Animal and By-product	High-tech
2	Service	High-tech	Machinery
3	High-tech	Machinery	Daily Instrument
4	Daily Instrument	Daily Instrument	Transportation
5	Machinery	Transportation	Textile
6	Textile	Weapon	Chemical Manufacturing
7	Chemical Manufacturing	Chemicals	Raw Manufacturing
8	Raw Manufacturing	Raw Manufacturing	Weapon
9	Animal and By-product	Vegetable, Fruit and Plant	Wood Product
10	Transportation	Food and Preparation	Precious Stone
11	Weapon	Mineral and Stone	Metal
12	Chemicals	Chemical Manufacturing	Food and Preparation
13	Vegetable, Fruit and Plant	Wood Product	Mineral and Stone
14	Food and Preparation	Clothing and Accessory	Clothing and Accessory
15	Mineral and Stone	Textile	Service
16	Wood Product	Metal	Animal and By-product
17	Metal	Precious Stone	Chemicals
18	Precious Stone	Service	Vegetable, Fruit and Plant
ECI	0.074	-0.246	-0.495

Table 5b. Opportunity Gain Ranking on a Comparable Scale (2018)

	South Africa	Kenya	Senegal
1	Chemical Manufacturing	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining
2	Raw Manufacturing	Clothing and Accesssories	Precious Stones
3	Wood Products	Precious Stones	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
4	Machinery and Construction	Textile	Animals and By-products
5	Transportation	Wood Products	Food and Preparations
6	Weapons	Animals and By-products	Chemical Manufacturing
7	Daily Instruments	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Raw Manufacturing
8	High-complexity Products	Food and Preparations	Wood Products
9	Textile	Chemical Manufacturing	Clothing and Accessories
10	Clothing and Accessories	Raw Manufacturing	Textile
11	Precious Stones	Weapons	Metals
12	Energy Drilling and Mining	High-complexity Products	Machinery and Construction
13	Animals and By-products	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments
14	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	High-complexity Products
15	Metals	Metals	Weapons
16	Food and Preparations	Transportation	Chemicals
17	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Daily Instruments	Services and Utilities
18	Chemicals	Chemicals	Transportation

Table 5c. Opportunity Gain Ranking on a Comparable Scale (2022)

We define the ranking of opportunity gain for a country c , as the Suggested Development Vector (SDV) of c . Tables 5a-5c summarize how the SDV of South Africa compares with a selected group of comparable and leading economies in the world, with the industry groups ranked in decreasing order of significance.

Dark blue indicates positive opportunity gains, light blue indicates zero opportunity gains, and white indicates negative opportunity gains. The result shows that leading countries barely have any industries with positive opportunity gain. In other words, those countries are already in the most stable and efficient economic structure. Without the necessity of economic transition, those countries merely need to maintain a steady and balanced economic development. In contrast, developing countries have nearly half of industries with positive opportunity gain and share common interests in Animals and By Products and Energy Drilling and mining industries. It can be concluded that South Africa shares the characteristics of developing countries, with a balanced economic structure that leans towards emerging-level industries.

Ranking	Thailand	Italy	Spain	United Arab Emirates
1	Animals and By-products	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	High-complexity Products
2	Food and Preparations	Precious Stones	Precious Stones	Transportation
3	Chemicals	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Weapons	Machinery and Construction
4	Raw Manufacturing	Animals and By-products	Textile	Daily Instruments
5	Textile	Food and Preparations	Chemicals	Chemicals
6	Machinery and Construction	Chemical Manufacturing	Daily Instruments	Weapons
7	Transportation	Raw Manufacturing	Animals and By-products	Textile
8	High-complexity Products	Wood Products	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Chemical Manufacturing
9	Energy Drilling and Mining	Clothing and Accessories	Food and Preparations	Raw Manufacturing
10	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Textile	Chemical Manufacturing	Energy Drilling and Mining
11	Precious Stones	Metals	Raw Manufacturing	Precious Stones
12	Weapons	Machinery and Construction	Wood Products	Services and Utilities
13	Clothing and Accessories	Daily Instruments	Clothing and Accessories	Metals
14	Services and Utilities	High-complexity Products	Metals	Clothing and Accessories
15	Wood Products	Weapons	Transportation	Wood Products
16	Metals	Chemicals	Services and Utilities	Animals and By-products
17	Chemical Manufacturing	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
18	Daily Instruments	Transportation	High-complexity Products	Food and Preparations
ECI	1.68914409	1.179705915	0.45830144	-0.734459148

Table 6. SDV of Other Sample Countries (2019)

4.2 Budgeted Industry Development Strategy and Interpretation

The optimal budgeted industry development strategy aims to solve the most efficient allocations under the budgeted constraint of different situations of heuristic total export growth. In order to obtain such an allocation portfolio, we formulate an optimization problem as the following:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{Max}_{x \in \mathbf{R}^{|P|}} \left(\frac{k(x) - \langle k(x) \rangle_C}{stdev(k(x))} \right) \\
 & \text{Subject to} \\
 & \sum_{p \in P} x_p \leq B \\
 & x \succeq 0
 \end{aligned}$$

where $k(x)$ is the second largest eigenvector of $M_{CC'}$, after adding x to the original export vector, C is the country that we are interested in, P is the product space, B is the heuristic budget.

If we can solve this problem, then we can know what the largest ECI to which a country can improve. Accordingly, the optimal solution x^* that we obtain here is exactly our optimal allocation. However, the biggest problem is that the objective function is not convex. Therefore, we cannot apply the classical tools for convex optimization to this problem. In order to solve this problem, our idea is to use a greedy algorithm. The way that we apply the greedy algorithm is that firstly we separate the total budget into k equal parts, and then for the first equal part we try to search for the product that can optimize our objective function by iterating through each $p \in P$. After we find the optimal product p for this equal part, we add the amount back to the export value of this product p and update the ECI for this country. If we observe that ECI does not change after iterating all the products, then we can add up one more equal part to invest. Until we find there is an ECI increment, we add the amount now to that product. The equal rest parts can be done in the same way.

By definition, a greedy algorithm is a kind of local search algorithm that is possible to run into a local minimum. Therefore, for local search algorithms, one typical way to keep it away from the local minimum is to enhance the vision of the algorithm by looking more steps forward. In our setting, whenever we obtain an increment of ECI, we mark down the required amount of export growth. Simultaneously, we continue searching for the next ECI increment point, compare the ratios of these two possibilities and pick the largest one. The ratio is defined as the following:

$$Ratio(p) = \frac{ECI_p - ECI_0}{||x_p - x_0||_1}$$

where ECI_p is just the ECI of the country after adding some amount of export increment to product p , which is exactly the amount that is able to make ECI change. Also, we can express it in the way of $||x_p - x_0||_1$.

In this way, we can obtain a further sighted greedy algorithm. Also, the number of parts that we would like to separate the budget into also matters. In order to solve this problem, we added a stabilizer on top of the enhanced greedy algorithm by running the algorithm for different numbers of parts and selecting the portfolio with the largest ECI increment and most complex economic structure.

Besides, it is quite common that there is a surplus in the budget. To deal with the surplus, we just add it to the product which needs the least amount of dollars to make $M_{cp} = 1$ (i.e., the smallest amount of required export increase).

Economic Panel

As stated above, the enhanced greedy algorithm is developed mainly for solving the optimal allocation strategy. In order to visualize this allocation, an economic panel is created, consisting of a pie chart, a line chart and a table. First, a pie chart is used to show the percentage of each product in the optimal portfolio. The number located in the center of the circle denotes the heuristic growth of total export, which is also our budget. Each category in the chart has a determined percentage of the allocated budget. The lines below the pie charts show how the ECI changes during the searching process of the greedy algorithm. Even though sometimes an increase of the export by 15% or 20% does not seem reasonable to developed countries, yet it can also give a sense of how a country should develop in the long term. Eventually, the graph in the end is just for numerical explanation for the pie charts.

Interpretation

For the purpose of a clear explanation of the line charts, we label all the products in Table 7. Please refer to this table when trying to understand the investment trajectories in the line charts.

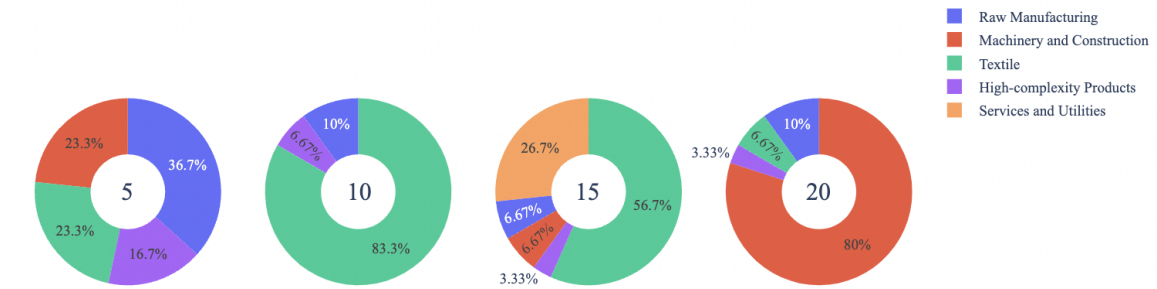
Label	Product Names
1	Animal and By-products
2	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
3	Food and Preparations
4	Energy Drilling and Mining
5	Chemicals
6	Chemical Manufacturing
7	Raw Manufacturing
8	Wood Products
9	Clothing and Accessories
10	Textile
11	Metals
12	Machinery and Construction
13	Transportation
14	Weapons
15	Daily Instruments
16	Precious Stones
17	High-complexity Products
18	Services and Utilities

Table 7. Products Labeling

Figures 4a-4c show an economic panel for South Africa in 2013, 2018, and 2022. We can see that for different percentages of heuristic total export growth, the ECIs of South Africa actually have different increments.

For 2013, in the case of 5 percent export growth, Raw Manufacturing is one of the main components. With a budget of 10 percent export growth, Textile accounts for most of the portfolio. Meanwhile, for 15 and 20 percent export growth scenarios, Textile and Machinery and Construction account for most of the portfolio. A more detailed numerical representation of the portfolio is shown in Table 8a.

South Africa ECI Growth Optimization Result



South Africa ECI Increment

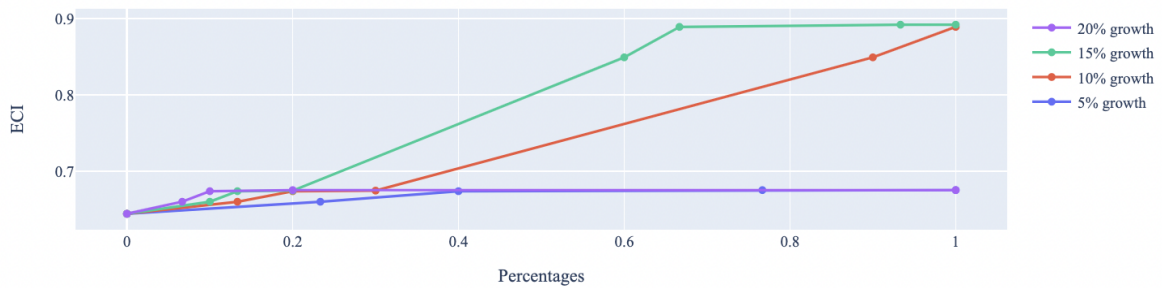


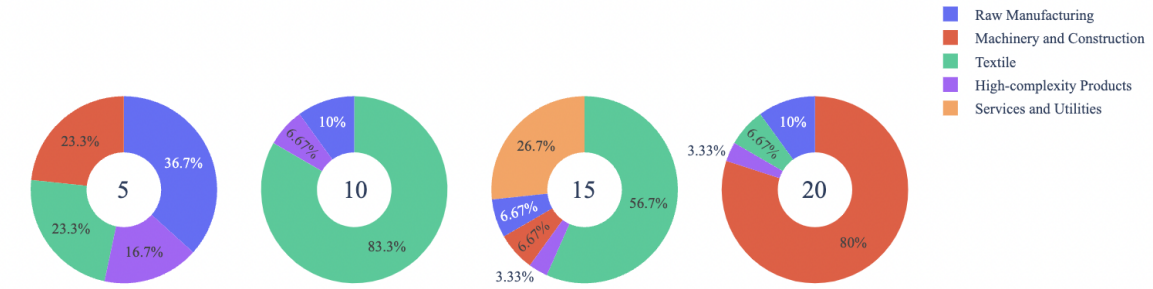
Figure 4a. Greedy-Based ECI Improvement Results of South Africa with Different Budgets (2013)

South Africa (2013)				
Original ECI	0.36			
Heuristic Export Growth	5%	10%	15%	20%
Services and Utilities	0	0	58581939363	0
High Complexity Products	1038089922	0	0	26934224994
Textile	1.6609E+10	4.0121E+10	14645484841	33667781243
Machinery and Construction	0	0	0	20200668746
Raw Manufacturing	2076179843	7294685936	9763656560	1023949012
Increased ECI	1.1419E+10	6.2005E+10	63463767643	16833890621
South Africa (2013)				

Table 8a. Portfolio of South Africa (2013)

For further suggestions on South Africa 's development in the future, we also offer the optimization result based on its export data in 2018. Below is the economic panel for South Africa in 2018. A more detailed numerical representation of the portfolio is shown in Table 8b.

South Africa ECI Growth Optimization Result



South Africa ECI Increment

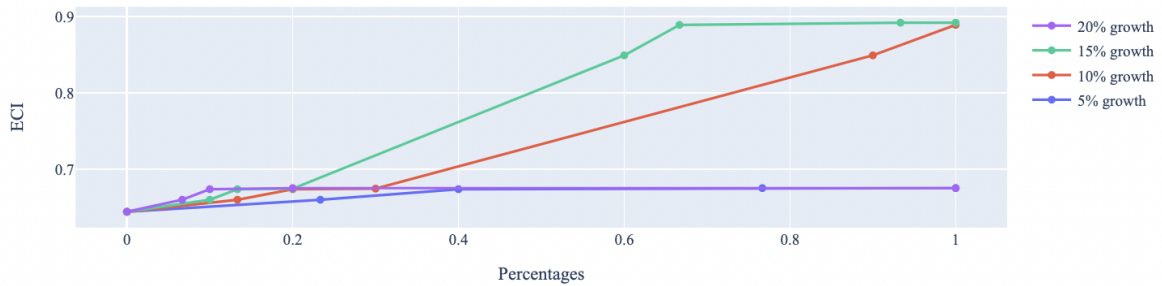


Figure 4b. Greedy-Based ECI Improvement Results of South Africa with Different Budgets (2018)

South Africa (2018)				
Original ECI	0.36			
Heuristic Export Growth	5%	10%	15%	20%
Services and Utilities	0	0	58581939363	0
High Complexity Products	1038089922	0	0	26934224994
Textile	1.6609E+10	4.0121E+10	14645484841	33667781243
Machinery and Construction	0	0	0	20200668746
Raw Manufacturing	2076179843	7294685936	9763656560	1023949012
Increased ECI	1.1419E+10	6.2005E+10	63463767643	16833890621
South Africa (2018)				

Table 8b. Portfolio of South Africa (2018)

To compare with the performance in 2013 and 2018, we also re-examine suggested strategies for 2022. For 2022, a 5 percent increase in export would emphasize Services and Utilities, followed by High Complexity Products, Textile, Machinery and Construction, and Raw Manufacturing for 10, 15, and 20 percent export growth respectively. These strategies go in line with the suggested trajectories based on ECI. A more detailed numerical representation of the portfolio for South Africa is shown in Table 8c.



Figure 4c. Greedy-Based ECI Improvement Results of South Africa with Different Budgets (2022)

South Africa (2022)				
Original ECI	0.36			
Heuristic Export Growth	5%	10%	15%	20%
Services and Utilities	0	0	58581939363	0
High Complexity Products	1038089922	0	0	26934224994
Textile	1.6609E+10	4.0121E+10	14645484841	33667781243
Machinery and Construction	0	0	0	20200668746
Raw Manufacturing	2076179843	7294685936	9763656560	1023949012
Increased ECI	1.1419E+10	6.2005E+10	63463767643	16833890621
South Africa (2022)				

Table 8c. Portfolio of South Africa (2022)

4.3 Sensitivity Analysis and Contingency Strategy

In the following section, our broad aim is to understand how sensitive South Africa is to changes in export in various industries. While the Economic Complexity Index has been shown to contain valuable information about the economic strength/capacity of a country, little has been said as to the stability of the measure itself. We seek to uncover the main drivers of stability under a country's ECI score and better understand longer-term projections for ECI growth. Additionally, gaining an intuition on the industries that are bolstering an

economy and the industries that offer the greatest return per unit of investment is best done through visualization of industry-specific sensitivity. To this end, we have developed two categories of sensitivity analysis.

ECI Sensitivity Graph

First, in order to assess the effect particular industries have on each respective country, we developed ECI Sensitivity graphs (Figure 5). We use the shocking methodology to increment or decrement an industry's export level by a certain percentage and recalculate the ECI, all else being equal. While freezing the export dynamics of the rest of the world and enacting an instantaneous shock in export for a particular industry and country may not reflect real-life dynamics, what it does offer us is an understanding of a country's level of dependency on an industry in the context of ECI. The shocking is done in small percentage increments in order to smooth out the resulting curve. Additionally, a recurring theme one will see is that for most industries, a breaking point occurs where the ECI either jumps upwards or downwards, creating a hockey stick shape rather than a linear trend. While the inflection point may not be accurate in the context of real life, comparing the various inflection points across industries can give us valuable insight.

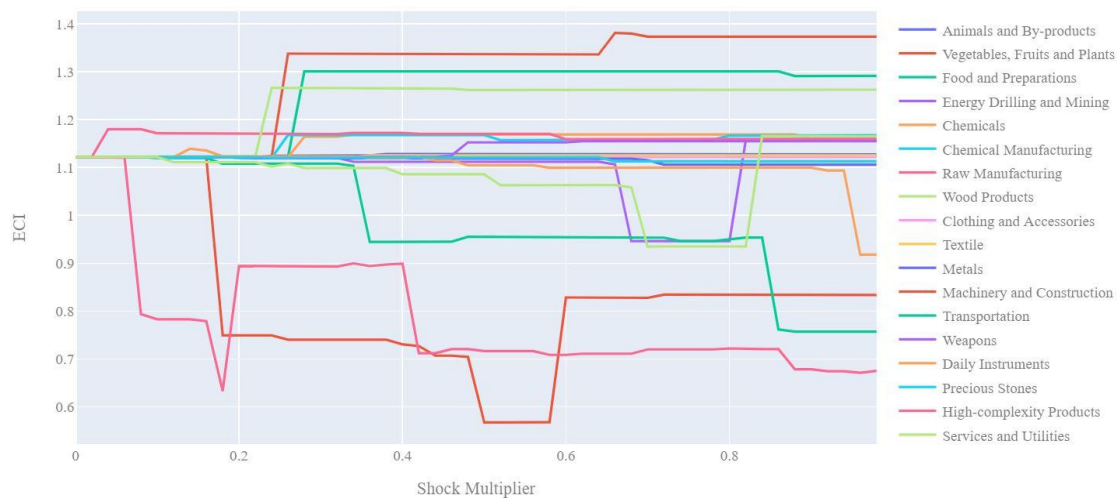


Figure 5. Sample ECI Sensitivity Graph (2018)

The graphs are formulated as follows. There are six ECI Sensitivity graphs, two for each of the following years: 2022, 2018, and 2013. The first chart, Incremental ECI Sensitivity, shows positive shocking in which export numbers are shocked upwards per industry. The X-axis is in terms of percentage shock per current dollar value of export. The Y-axis is the recalculated ECI level post-shocking. The second chart, Decremental ECI Sensitivity, follows the same format except the X-axis represents negative shock. In other words, exports for each industry are decremented, and the ECI is accordingly recomputed.

SDV Sensitivity

Secondly, we analyze the sensitivity of the SDV to changes in export levels. The goal is to understand how export level changes for a particular industry can affect the marginal opportunity gain for other industries. We will be using specifically High Complexity Products and Food and Preparations as our base industries. We will be increasing or decreasing the absolute export level in both of these industries and observing the effects on the SDV.

When the opportunity gain of an industry is negative, the SDV sensitivity approximates how an over-development of the industry jeopardizes the economic structure of a country. When the opportunity gain of the industry is zero, the SDV sensitivity determines whether the further development of the industry shapes the country with a better economic structure and predicts how the SDV would change accordingly. Specifically, as we reduce the export of such an industry to 25% - 50% of its original value, a few other industries originally with negative opportunity gain could likely become profitable.

Similar to the ECI sensitivity graphs above, we will be shocking the export of High Complexity Products and Food and Preparations in small percentage increments. A new SDV, represented by a new column in the charts, is recorded only when a certain level of shock changes the structure of the SDV. In effect, we are incrementing or decrementing export levels of two industries until the marginal opportunity gain of any industry changes in category (positive, negative, or neutral). Below is an example of an SDV Sensitivity chart with Positive Shocking. Industries with positive marginal opportunity gain are colored blue, neutral is colored white, and negative is colored red.

	0.0%	10.0%	30.0%	50.0%	80.0%	100.0%	120.0%
0	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Chemicals	Chemicals	Chemicals	Machinery and Construction
1	Daily Instruments	Daily Instruments	Daily Instruments	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Chemicals
2	Weapons	Weapons	Weapons	Textile	Textile	Textile	Daily Instruments
3	Transportation	Transportation	Transportation	Weapons	Daily Instruments	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities
4	Machinery and Construction	Machinery and Construction	Machinery and Construction	Transportation	High-complexity Products	Transportation	Transportation
5	Metals	Metals	High-complexity Products	Machinery and Construction	Transportation	Chemical Manufacturing	Textile
6	High-complexity Products	High-complexity Products	Chemicals	High-complexity Products	Machinery and Construction	Weapons	Chemical Manufacturing
7	Chemicals	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Chemical Manufacturing	High-complexity Products	Weapons
8	Services and Utilities	Chemicals	Textile	Chemical Manufacturing	Weapons	Machinery and Construction	High-complexity Products
9	Textile	Textile	Chemical Manufacturing	Precious Stones	Clothing and Accessories	Clothing and Accessories	Clothing and Accessories
10	Chemical Manufacturing	Chemical Manufacturing	Precious Stones	Clothing and Accessories	Precious Stones	Precious Stones	Raw Manufacturing
11	Precious Stones	Precious Stones	Clothing and Accessories	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Raw Manufacturing	Raw Manufacturing	Precious Stones
12	Clothing and Accessories	Clothing and Accessories	Raw Manufacturing	Raw Manufacturing	Wood Products	Metals	Wood Products
13	Raw Manufacturing	Raw Manufacturing	Metals	Metals	Metals	Wood Products	Metals
14	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	Wood Products	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining
15	Wood Products	Wood Products	Wood Products	Energy Drilling and Mining	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products
16	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Food and Preparations	Food and Preparations
17	Food and Preparations	Food and Preparations	Food and Preparations	Food and Preparations	Food and Preparations	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
ECI	2.261503667	2.520234671	3.08896214	3.452901685	4.299466299	4.439916975	5.069638102

Table 9. Sample Incremental SDV Sensitivity for High-Complexity Products (2018)

Contingency Plan

The Contingency Plan aims to present a set of solutions with respect to upheavals in different industries. Instead of compensating for the declining production directly, the best strategy is to develop those incipiently profitable industries. In this manner, we can derive a contingency strategy for countries to deal with possible abrupt declines of crucial industries. In some cases, the SDV remains unchanged even when a zero-opportunity-gain industry declines to 20% in terms of export. We can then conclude the industry is not indispensable to the

country. As a clarification, the three consecutive N/As mean that the country doesn't even need to respond to a collapse in the industry. Countries tend to have distinct solutions to the ups and downs of the same industry. To create the contingency strategy table, we decrease the export level for each industry in the country's current production space by 60% respectively. The three highest-ranking industries in the new SDV are then returned.

Product Names	0	1	2
Animal and By-products	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Food and Preparations	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Energy Drilling and Mining	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Chemicals	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Chemical Manufacturing	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Raw Manufacturing	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Wood Products	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Clothing and Accessories	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Textile	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Metals	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Machinery and Constructions	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Transportation	Services and Utilities	Raw Manufacturing	Daily Instruments
Weapons	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Transportation
Daily Instruments	Services and Utilities	Weapons	Transportation
Precious Stones	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Daily Instruments	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons
Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Weapons	Transportation

Table 10. Sample Contingency Strategy (2018)

4.3 Sensitivity Analysis Results and Interpretation

We examine South Africa 's ECI Decremental and Incremental Sensitivity Charts for 2022. An increase in Energy Drilling and Mining will lead to the highest change in ECI, followed by Chemical Manufacturing, and Animal and By-products. The strong sensitivity effect of manipulating the Energy Drilling and Mining category remains consistent with previous years. For the negative shock cases, Weapons, Precious Stones, and Raw Manufacturing become most impactful, remaining consistent with the previous years]. The rest of the industries do not appear to have the same level of sensitivity.

South Africa (Postive Shocking)

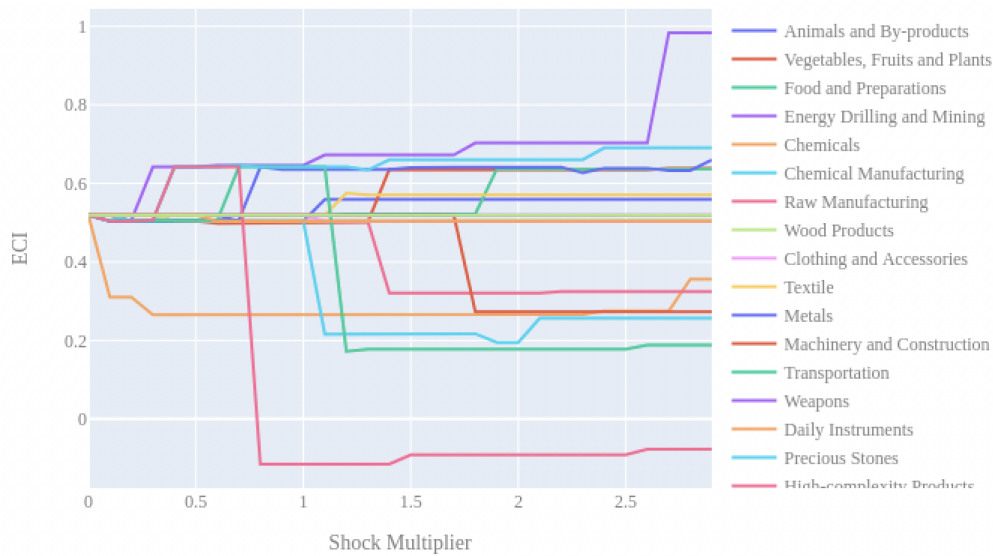


Figure 6a. Incremental ECI Sensitivity for South Africa (2022)

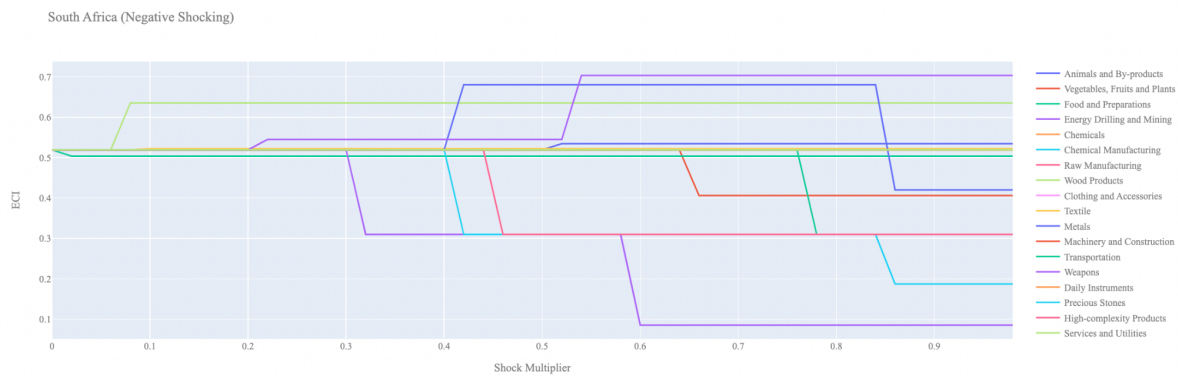


Figure 6b. Decremental ECI Sensitivity for South Africa (2022)

Below is South Africa 's 2018 ECI Sensitivity Charts. First, in the positive chart, we notice immediately that increases in Energy Drilling and Mining, Chemical Manufacturing, and Animal and By-products lead to an uptrend of ECI. Energy Drilling and Mining and Chemical Manufacturing seem to give the most immediate increase in ECI for only a 20-30% increase in export magnitude.

Next, we consider South Africa 's 2018 Negative Shock chart. We see that South Africa is sensitive to changes in export levels in Weapons, Precious Stones, and Raw Manufacturing as well as Daily Instruments and Food and Preparations. Interestingly, South Africa is highly insensitive to changes in most other industries suggesting that South Africa has a good blend of industries that complement each other and are able to compensate for reductions in other industries.

South Africa (Postive Shocking)

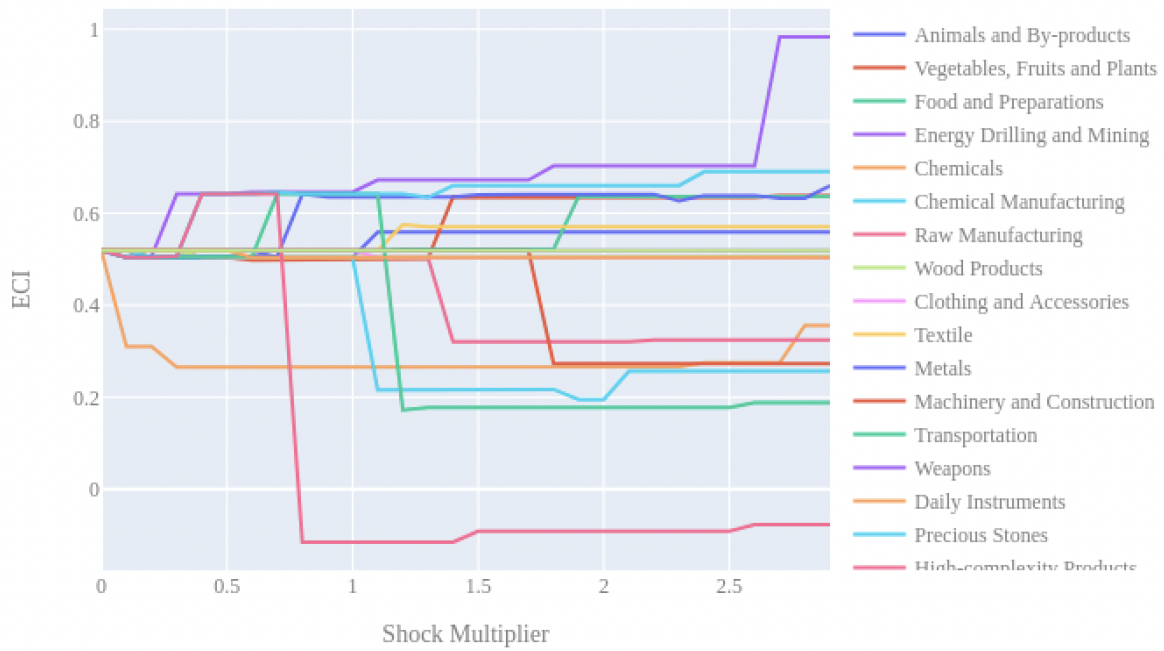


Figure 7a. Incremental ECI Sensitivity for South Africa (2018)

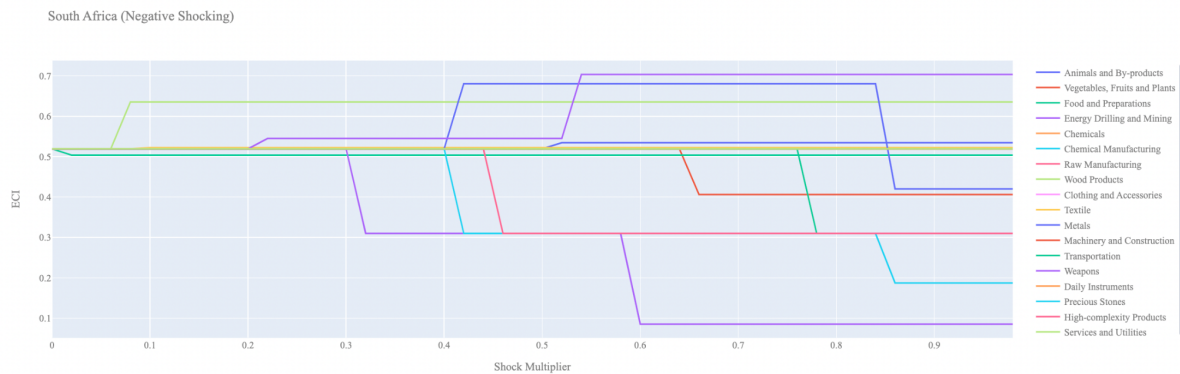


Figure 7b. Decremental ECI Sensitivity for South Africa (2018)

Next, we consider the 2013 ECI Sensitivity graphs (Figures 8a and 8b). We see that in the positive shocking case, the landscape of ECI sensitivity has not altered significantly over the three-year period. Weapons, Precious Stones, and Raw Manufacturing as well as Daily Instruments and Food and Preparations lead to an uptrend in ECI. However, we see that in 2018 South Africa seems to be highly sensitive to increases in Energy Drilling and Mining.

In the 2013 negative shocking case, we see that again South Africa is very sensitive to drawbacks in Weapons, Precious Stones, and Raw Manufacturing as well as Daily Instruments and Food and Preparations. Again, we see that South Africa is highly insensitive to drawdowns in the majority of its industries. However, unlike the 2018 case, we see quite a

bit of sensitivity to Energy Drilling and Mining.

South Africa (Postive Shocking)

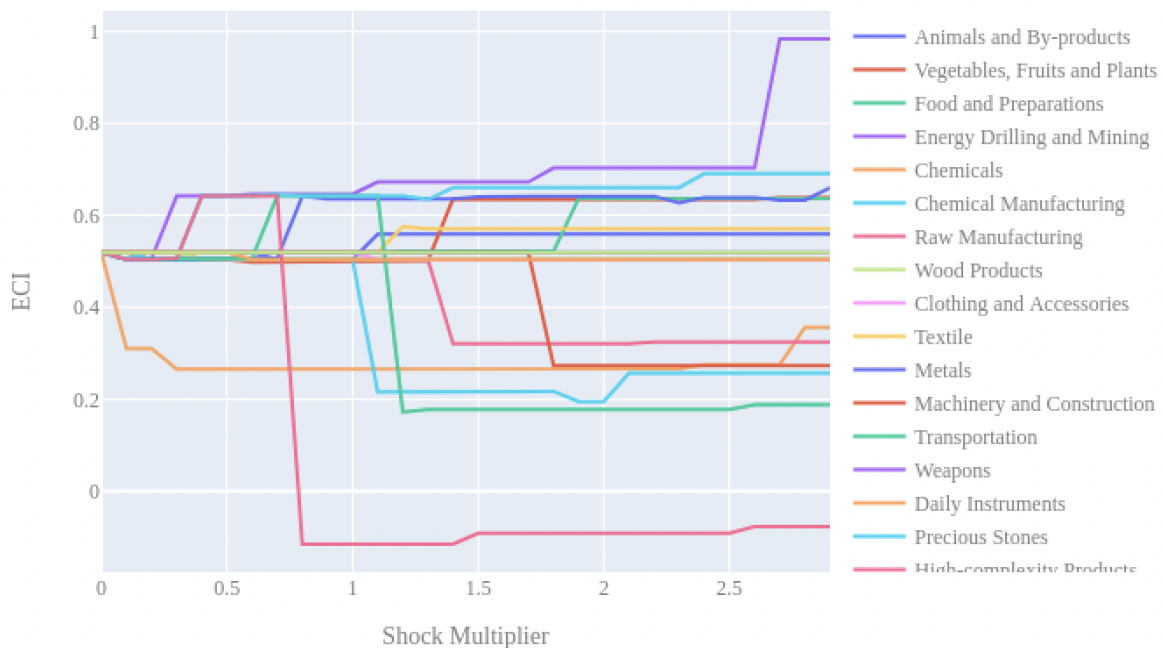


Figure 8a. Incremental ECI Sensitivity for South Africa (2013)

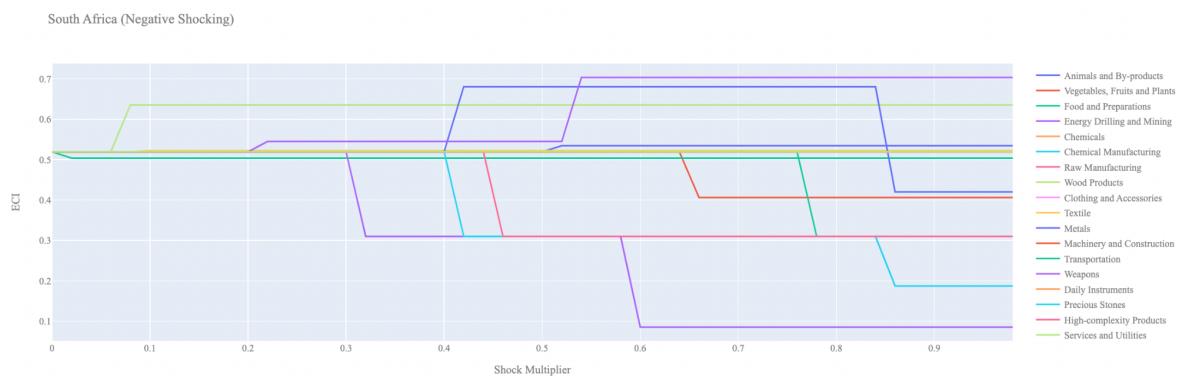


Figure 8b. Decremental ECI Sensitivity for South Africa (2013)

Below we see the SDV sensitivity charts for High Complexity Products. We see that fairly small increases in export of High Complexity Products makes room for other industries to shift into positive opportunity gain territory. A 50% increase in export leads to 10 new industries that offer positive opportunity gain, some of which include Chemicals, Services and Utilities, Daily Instruments, Textile, and Transportation.

Considering the Negative SDV sensitivity chart we observe that as exports of High Complexity products decrease, industries that were worth investing in begin to shift to the neutral opportunity gain region. At the extreme case we see that Services and Utilities and Machinery become the best industries to pursue after a major decrease in High Complexity products.

	0.0%	10.0%	50.0%	70.0%	120.0%	140.0%	170.0%
0	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Machinery and Construction	Daily Instruments	Raw Manufacturing
1	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals	Machinery and Construction	Services and Utilities	Daily Instruments	Raw Manufacturing	Wood Products
2	Chemicals	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals	Chemicals	Raw Manufacturing	Machinery and Construction	Metals
3	High-complexity Products	Daily Instruments	Daily Instruments	Daily Instruments	Chemicals	Wood Products	Daily Instruments
4	Daily Instruments	Weapons	Weapons	Weapons	Wood Products	Chemicals	Chemical Manufacturing
5	Weapons	Wood Products	Transportation	Transportation	Services and Utilities	Chemical Manufacturing	Chemicals
6	Precious Stones	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Textile	Raw Manufacturing	Metals	Metals	Machinery and Construction
7	Textile	Food and Preparations	Precious Stones	Textile	Weapons	Weapons	Food and Preparations
8	Chemical Manufacturing	Chemical Manufacturing	Wood Products	Wood Products	Textile	Services and Utilities	Weapons
9	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Raw Manufacturing	Energy Drilling and Mining	Precious Stones	Transportation	Textile	Energy Drilling and Mining
10	Food and Preparations	Clothing and Accessories	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Energy Drilling and Mining	Precious Stones	Precious Stones	Precious Stones
11	Clothing and Accessories	High-complexity Products	Food and Preparations	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Energy Drilling and Mining	Transportation	Textile
12	Raw Manufacturing	Metals	Clothing and Accessories	Food and Preparations	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Energy Drilling and Mining	Services and Utilities
13	Wood Products	Transportation	Chemical Manufacturing	Clothing and Accessories	Food and Preparations	Food and Preparations	Transportation
14	Metals	Animals and By-products	Raw Manufacturing	Chemical Manufacturing	Clothing and Accessories	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
15	Transportation	Precious Stones	High-complexity Products	High-complexity Products	Chemical Manufacturing	Clothing and Accessories	Clothing and Accessories
16	Animals and By-products	Textile	Metals	Metals	High-complexity Products	High-complexity Products	High-complexity Products
17	Energy Drilling and Mining	Energy Drilling and Mining	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products	Animals and By-products
ECI	0.26764099	0.726129864	0.386799998	0.34710768	0.467567912	0.354660837	0.675243702

Table 11. South Africa 's SDV Sensitivities for High Complexity Products(2018)

	-0.0%	-34.0%	-52.0%
0	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities
1	Machinery and Construction	Machinery and Construction	Machinery and Construction
2	Chemicals	Chemicals	Chemicals
3	High-complexity Products	Daily Instruments	Daily Instruments
4	Daily Instruments	High-complexity Products	Weapons
5	Weapons	Weapons	High-complexity Products
6	Precious Stones	Precious Stones	Precious Stones
7	Textile	Textile	Energy Drilling and Mining
8	Chemical Manufacturing	Energy Drilling and Mining	Raw Manufacturing
9	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Food and Preparations	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants
10	Food and Preparations	Chemical Manufacturing	Chemical Manufacturing
11	Clothing and Accessories	Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Clothing and Accessories
12	Raw Manufacturing	Clothing and Accessories	Wood Products
13	Wood Products	Raw Manufacturing	Textile
14	Metals	Wood Products	Metals
15	Transportation	Metals	Transportation
16	Animals and By-products	Transportation	Animals and By-products
17	Energy Drilling and Mining	Animals and By-products	Food and Preparations
ECI	0.26764099	0.396216531	0.375882176

Table 12. South Africa 's SDV Sensitivities for Food and Preparations(2018)

4.4 Contingency Strategy

Decreasing export of each industry in South Africa 's current production space by 60% respectively, we derive the contingency strategy shown below.

Product Names	0	1	2
Animal and By-products	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Vegetables, Fruits and Plants	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Food and Preparations	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Energy Drilling and Mining	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Chemicals	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Chemical Manufacturing	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Raw Manufacturing	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Wood Products	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Clothing and Accessories	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Textile	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Metals	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Machinery and Construction	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Transportation	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Weapons	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Daily Instruments	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Precious Stones	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals

High-complexity Products	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals
Services and Utilities	Services and Utilities	Machinery and Construction	Chemicals

Table 13. South Africa 's Contingency Strategy (2018)

5. Macro-level Predictions

5.1 Structural Optimality Index

ECI sensitivity described in the section before has proven to be a significant factor in deciding the economic outcomes of countries. In order to quantitatively evaluate how effective our development strategies are and how deviations from the suggested developmental path will lead to suboptimal growth results, we define the measure – Structural Optimality Index (SOI) – on a country level as the Adjusted R-Square obtained from regressing the country’s realized industry development over the suggested development strategy. Both strategies are quantified in nature, with the realized development represented by increasing export in every major industry group and the suggested development strategy represented by the opportunity gains of developing the corresponding industry groups as calculated in previous sections. The adjusted R-square from the regression thus provides us with a quantified measure of how the development path adopted by the country has fitted with/differed from calculations on a complexity level.

After obtaining this measure for all countries in our database, we further regress countries’ five-year economic growth, which is defined as the percent increase in GDP (USD), over their SOI. Figure 9 illustrates the regression output, which shows a strong positive correlation between countries’ SOI and their five-year GDP growth, significant at the 0.7% level and achieving an adjusted R^2 of -0.4%. In other words, the more a country develops, as suggested by calculations on a complexity level, the better economic outcomes it achieves.

Table 14: OLS Regression Results	
Dep. Variable: GDP	F-Statistic: 0.6524
R ² : 0.007	Prob (F-Stat): 0.421
Adj R ² : -0.004	No. Observations: 100

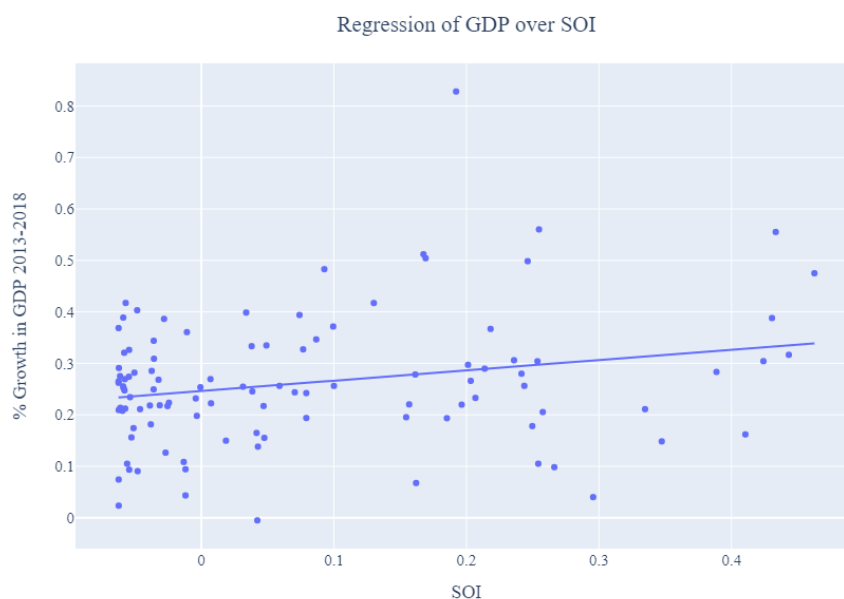


Figure 9. Regression of Five-Year GDP Growth over SOI (2013-2018)

5.2 SOI of South Africa and Its Implications

During the first examined period, South Africa, for instance, has a low level of structural optimality as compared with its developed peers. As the regression in Figure 10a suggests (the red curve represents export increase and the blue curve stands for opportunity gain of the corresponding industry), South Africa demonstrates a low level of correlation with the suggested developmental path, having an adjusted R-square of around -0.004.

South Africa ranks in the lowest quartile among all countries in terms of SOI and has made a slow rate of economic progress among its emerging peers from 2013 to 2018 with a 5-year GDP growth rate of 3.39%, which is consistent with the regression result in Figure 4b. This is in direct contrast to emerging economies such as Kenya, where there is a high SOI of around 4.67% and corresponding GDP growth of 8.98% from 2013 to 2018, making it one of the fastest developing economies during the period.

Specifically, South Africa's slow economic progress from 2013 to 2018 can be at least partially explained by a development strategy that demonstrates a considerable but not perfect level of matches with our suggested developmental path. In specific, South Africa invested heavily in the precious stones industry, while it should have focused more on industry groups such as high-tech.

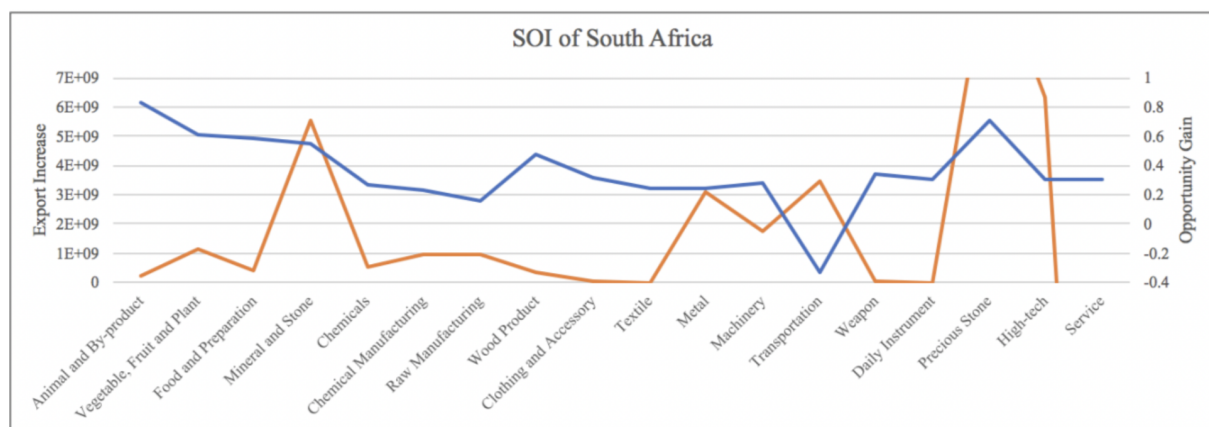


Figure 10a. SOI of South Africa (2013-2018)

For the 2019-2022 years, South Africa has a strong presence in the High Tech and Precious Stone industries, but they seem to be overdeveloped when considering their lower opportunity gain relative to RID. It also could consider Food and Preparation and Mineral and Stone to improve its growth. South Africa has seen a decline in GDP over those three industries. South Africa also ranked among the lowest quartiles among all countries in terms of SOI.

Lower than before, its adjusted R-squared value of -0.004 indicates a low correlation between the GDP growth and the implemented development path. Progress is slow on a global scale during this period, but South Africa demonstrates a low ability to adjust to negative economic shocks by improving SOI and increasing GDP growth than it did between 2013 and 2018.

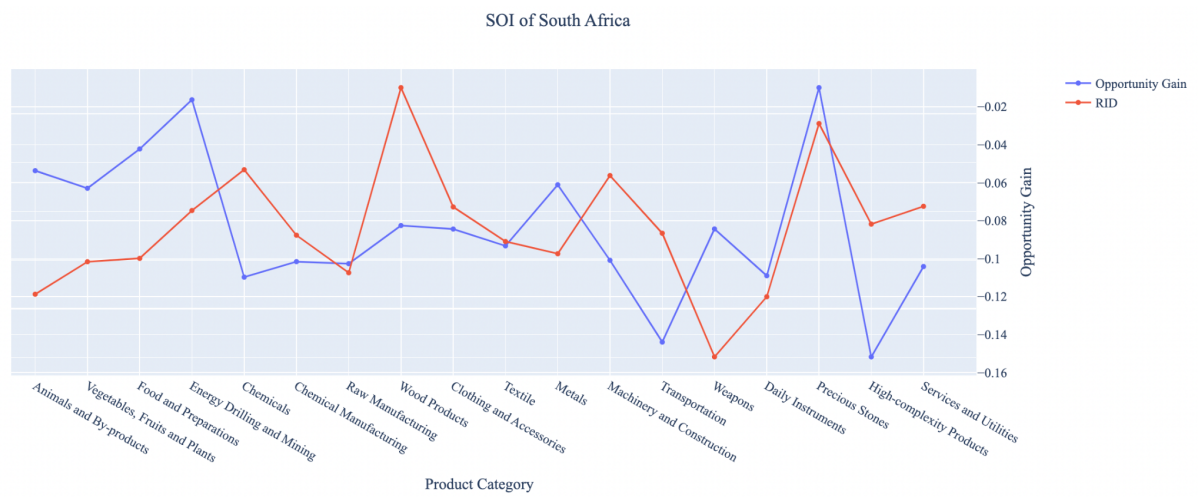


Figure 10b. SOI of South Africa (2019-2022)

6. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, South Africa has demonstrated a low level of economic growth in terms of annual GDP increase during the period from 2013 to 2018, concurrent with an increase in economic complexity as compared with major developed economies. For 2019-2022, the growth in GDP has increased alongside a small boost in ECI, slightly less than its comparable countries and higher than some of the leading economies in the world.

We believe that the mixed progress during the first period can be partially explained through the analysis of the economic and product complexity structure of South Africa on the industry group level. The product classification system we adopt allows us to measure the realized industry development for various industry groups and to observe that South Africa regressed in developing most of its industries during the period, while its developed counterparts and emerging economies around the globe adopted much more complex and progressive paths.

Based on our analysis of the opportunity gain and sensitivity analysis of major industry groups for 2013-2018, South Africa can further its gains by prioritizing Weapons, Precious Stones, and Raw Manufacturing. We further note that South Africa has a heavily mismatched development strategy that indicates a low level (compared to other emerging countries) of structural optimality on the complexity level, having an adjusted R-square of around -0.4%. Since a negative exists between five-year GDP growth and the structural optimality index of an economy as we define and calculate, South Africa indeed has a suboptimal growth experience as compared with fast-growing economies both on a regional scale and on a global scale and has the potential to further its economic gains through industrial structure optimization as suggested in the paper.

During the second examined period from 2019 to 2022, South Africa performed much weaker than before and compared to other countries, particularly Kenya. We infer that during the COVID-19 period, South Africa focused on developing lower complexity industries, in line with lower demand for these industries given the global economic downturn. We also note that South Africa has increased its investment in the sectors identified earlier, leading to a strong boost from Wood Products and Machinery and Construction industries, leaving some room for strategic improvement. It did invest in the industries which contributed the most to its advancements, such as Wood Products and Machinery and Construction industries. The ECI suggests that greater growth could have been achieved through High Tech and Energy Drilling and Mining industries. The surprising growth also increased the adjusted R-squared value to -0.001 in 2022 from -0.004 in 2018, demonstrating the pursued strategies contributed to the GDP. With the revised focus, South Africa has further potential to advance its economic growth to maintain its position among other countries to continue its post-pandemic recovery.

References

- Hausmann, R., Hidalgo, C., Bustos, S., Coscia, M., Chung, S., Jimenez, J., Simoes, A. and Yildirim, M. (2007). *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*. [online] Atlas.cid.harvard.edu. Available at: <http://atlas.cid.harvard.edu/>.
- Balassa, B., “The Purchasing Power Parity Doctrine - A Reappraisal,” *Journal of Political Economy* **72**, 584-596 (1964).
- Feenstra, R.; Lipsey, R.; Deng, H.; Ma, A. & Mo, H. “World Trade Flows: 1962-2000” NBER working paper 11040. National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge MA (2005).
- United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database (<http://comtrade.un.org/db/>), accessed in August 2019.
- The World Economic Forum, “The global competitiveness report,” (various years).
- Barro, R. & Lee, J-W. “A New Data Set of Educational Attainment in the World, 1950-2010,” NBER Working Paper No. 1590 (2010).
- Kaufmann, D. & Kraay, A. “Governance Indicators: Where Are We, Where Should We Be Going?” Policy Research Working Paper 4370. Washington, DC: World Bank (2008).
- Hanushek, E.A. & Woessmann, L. “The Role of Cognitive Skills in Economic Development,” *Journal of Economic Literature* **46**(3), 607- 668 (2008).