

## Dr Amer K Hirmis – Practitioner Economist and Planner

### Education:

- Al Hikma (American)  
University of Baghdad - **BSc**  
Business Administration  
(Majors: Economics,  
Accounting & Management)  
(Rank: First Quarter) 1971
- Manchester University – **PhD**  
in Town & Country Planning  
(1979)
- Bristol Polytechnic – **BA**  
(Hons) in Town & Country  
Planning (1987)



### Professional accreditations:

- Academician – elected in 2003 by the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences (in recognition of work on regional economics - regional productivity and competitiveness in the UK)
- FRSA – Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (in recognition of work on 'London World City')
- Society of Business Economists (UK)
- MRTPI (Corporate Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute)
- Member of the Institute Directors (MIoD) - UK

### Employment & Experience (in reverse chronological order):

1. 2011-Present – Principal – Capital Business Strategies ([www.cbstrategies.co.uk](http://www.cbstrategies.co.uk)). Some of the projects mentioned below are summarised on this website. CBS Ltd. is a consulting firm of which the main services are strategic & master planning, **economic analysis & policy advice (including economic and demographic forecasting)**, financial feasibility studies for major investment projects, and strategic land-use planning.
  - Over the past three years CBS Ltd. undertook projects including a 350 housing units residential complex in Dammam, a major market and financial feasibility study for the Financial Academy at King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD) in Riyadh, and also for the office towers of both Tadawul and Capital Market Authority (both towers now under construction at KAFD), taking account of planning policies in Riyadh.

2. 2009-2011, Senior **Economic Development Planning Advisor** to the Ministry of Planning – Iraq, on behalf of DANIDA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Denmark).

- Amer directed a major project – *An Outline Spatial Strategy for Iraq*, liaising with the Minister of Planning (MoP) and his deputy. Amer led a *26-strong multidisciplinary team* from Denmark, UK and Iraq, comprising town planners, transport planners, geographers, sociologists, economists, environmental planners and architects. The project, effectively, provided an outline *Regional Plan for each of the 18 provinces* in Iraq.

This major project involved spatial, sectoral planning issues, as well as 2010-2030 national and regional settlement strategy, *involving urban-rural distribution of population, economic activities, infrastructure and services*. Due regard was given to *environmental sustainability* and growth potential of individual sectors, as well as designing a regional housing strategy for Iraq.

In terms of capacity building, Amer also **established an Economic Forecasting Team within the MoP** and contribution to the production of the National Development Plan 2010-2014.

3. 2002-2009, **Director and Head of Middle East Consulting & Research at DTZ** (an international real estate, planning and economics advisory services provider), 2000-2009. During this time, Amer supervised the following major national and regional projects:

- *Market and financial feasibility study for the KAFD in Riyadh*, as part of masterplanning the site. KAFD is currently (2012) under construction.
- Masterplanning Bahrain (in conjunction with, inter alia, SOM's multi-disciplinary team). This involved in-depth **economic, demographic and sectoral analysis**, and *2030 forecasts, in the national, regional and global context. Devising a housing strategy, industrial strategy and health and educational strategies were part of this work, in the urban-rural population distribution context.*
- *Reviewing and development of the Planning System* in Bahrain for the Ministry of Municipalities (This project involved examining planning

policy making, plan design, legal planning framework, implementation mechanisms and institutional changes. This project also involved *international comparative planning systems* – e.g. Singapore, Ireland, UK and The Netherlands).

- A study on *productivity improvement* in Bahrain (for Tamkeen).
4. 1998-2003 Part-time **lecturer at the world-rennounced Bartlett School of Planning (University College London) the subject of 'Evaluating Urban Regeneration Projects' at post-graduate level.**
  5. 2000-2002, **Economic Advisor** to the South West Regional Development Agency.
    - Main tasks were *business competitiveness* improvements, including deploying *planning tools* and policies and devising regional strategy for the South West of England,
    - *Reviewing* proposed strategic *land-use planning policies at regional, county and local levels especially in relation to employment growth, business competitiveness and housing provision.*
  6. 1995-2000, **Director of Londonomics** Ltd.
    - Produced and supervised numerous land-use planning studies relating to *town centres, regeneration* projects and providing advice to local authorities on *housing, employment and competitiveness* of London.
  7. 2000-2002, **Chief Economist** and Head of Policy & Research (Director) at the London Chamber of Commerce & Industry
    - Apart from managing an 11-strong team of professional economists, statisticians and policy analysts, one of the main tasks was providing the business case for *Terminal 5 at Heathrow airport Public Inquiry*, for which the planning permission was granted. The Chamber's submission to the Inquiry was made on behalf of the London business community.
  8. 1987-2000, **Principal Planner / Economist** at the London Planning Advisory Committee
    - Participating in the production of *London Structure Plan (1990) and its review (1992)*, and working with Central Government to produce *Planning Guidance* for London. **Responsibility** was mainly on **providing economic advice** to underpin strategic (and local) policy formulation and implementation.
    - Initiated and led a major study on 'London World City' (comparing its competitiveness with four other global cities, New York, Paris, Tokyo

*and Berlin) and setting out major strategic planning policies for London (1992).*

Amer is **fluent in both English and Arabic** [written and verbal]  
Amer has also **published** a book entitled '**How London Works**', and many papers in the fields of urban & regional planning and economics.

### **Examples of consultancy reports and published articles**

Amer has undertaken assignments in market studies, labour and property markets analysis, competitiveness, strategic land-use and transport planning, sector strategy development, assessment of trends and prospects of cities/regions and measurement of town centre performance. The list below provides *examples* of consultancy reports produced since 1995, reports produced for my employers and articles/book reviews prepared on request from journals or authors.

- **Employment, Property and Enterprise Strategy for White City – London.** Undertaken during **March-August 2005**, this assignment provided an analysis of the individual sectors in the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, West London in the regional and national context, to inform investment decision of a major private sector consortium for a mixed-used development on a 16 acre site.
- Amer also devised an **Action Plan for LSC (Local Skills Council) London Central** for workforce development in the construction industry in London, which was published and is being launched at London Construction conference on 27 October 2004.
- Amer managed a major assignment for **Think London** on the **economic impacts of foreign direct investment (FDI) in London**, which was launched at the London First Centre's 10th Anniversary event on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004.

### **Further examples of consultancy work:**

- **Strategic Framework for West London** - *West London Business/West London Alliance* (2004)
- **Towards an Economic Development Strategy** – *London Borough of Ealing* (2003)

- **Wembley Redevelopment Programme** - *London Borough of Brent* (2003)
- **Impacts of Changing Work Practices on Industrial Land Demand** - *South West of England Regional Assembly* (2003)
- **London's competitiveness compared with Selected European and UK regions** - *London Skills Council* –(2003)
- **Economic Forecasts for London and the South East Region of England - Train Operating Companies** – (1999-2004)

## **SELECTED REPORTS PREPARED FOR OWN EMPLOYERS**

(Either sole author or contributor)

1. Strategic Land-Use Planning Guidance for the South East Region - SERPLAN (1993)
2. Advice on Strategic Land-Use Planning Guidance for London (1994)
3. London Economy Report (1995)

## **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS (INCLUDING REVIEW ARTICLES)**

(In reverse chronological order)

1. Hirmis A and L Budd, 2006, *Conceptual Framework for Regional Competitiveness* (in R Martin et al, eds. *Regional Competitiveness*, Routledge)
2. Hirmis A, 2006, *The South West Region Economy – Potential for Faster Economic Growth* (in Irene H et al, Eds. *The Rise of the English Regions* - Routledge)
3. Hirmis A, 2002, *UK Regional Competitiveness* (in *Regions*, the RSA Journal - August)
4. Hirmis A, 2002, *Regional Productivity in the UK* (in *Regions*, the RSA Journal - September)
5. *How London Works* (April 2002, a book published by Kogan Page Publishing)
6. *The London Manufacturing Sector* (in Millar R, ed., 1998, *London as an International Business Centre*, Kogan Page - London)
7. *A small matter of manufacturing* (Planning Week - 1996)
8. *The components of success: taking London's economy into the 21st century* (Public Policy Review -1993)

## **RESEARCH AND TOPICS OF INTEREST**

- Strategic urban & regional economic development and planning;
- Economic impact of new investment;
- Economics of cities and regions;
- City / regional competitiveness;
- Capacity building;
- Industrialisation, unemployment reduction and poverty alleviation in developing countries;
- Clusters and sustainable economic development.

## COMPUTING

Familiar with Word for Windows, Microsoft Excel for Windows and Power Point. I use the Internet regularly.

## REFERENCES

(Please **do not** approach my professional references, below, without my prior consent. References from **DANIDA, Minister of Municipalities** in Bahrain and **Deputy Minister of Planning** – Iraq would be provided on request)

### **Professor Chris Balch**

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### **Dr Leslie Budd**

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