

# Kaj Thomsson – Curriculum Vitae

Maastricht University  
PO Box 616  
6200 MD, Maastricht, Netherlands

School of Business and Economics  
Phone: +31 43 388 34 42  
E-mail: [k.thomsson@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:k.thomsson@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

---

## Current Main Position:

Director of Bachelor Programmes - School of Business and Economics, Maastricht University  
Associate Professor of Economics - Department of Macro, International and Labor Economics

## Primary Teaching and Research Interests

Political Economy  
Development Economics / Emerging Markets  
Economic History  
Applied Game Theory

## Education

Ph.D. Economics, Yale University, 2009  
M.Phil. Economics, Yale University, 2006  
M.Sc. Industrial Engineering and Management (Industriell Ekonomi), Kungl. Tekniska Högskolan, 2003  
B.A. Economics, Stockholm University, 2002  
Studies in Telecommunication Theory, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

## Teaching Experience

Courses Taught as Primary Instructor:

Economics and Society in Contemporary Latin America (BSc course) Maastricht University  
Institutions, Politics and Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies (BSc course), Maastricht U  
Socio-Economic Development in Emerging Markets (MSc course), Maastricht University  
Culture, Society and Politics in Latin America (BSc course), Maastricht University  
Political Economy (PhD course), Maastricht University / United Nations University (UNU-MERIT)  
Management and Organization of Latin American Enterprises (BSc course), Maastricht University  
Development Economics (BSc course), Maastricht University  
Globalisation Debate (BSc course), Maastricht University  
Business in the Global Political Environment (BSc course), The Wharton School, Univ. of Pennsylvania  
Strategic Firm Behaviour and Competition Policy (MSc course), Maastricht University  
Political Economy (MSc course), Maastricht University  
Information, Justice and the Political Process (BSc course), Maastricht University  
Intermediate Microeconomics (BSc course), Maastricht University  
International Competitiveness and Antitrust Policy (MSc course), Maastricht University  
Internet Economics (MSc course), Maastricht University

Courses Taught as Teaching Assistant:

Game Theory - Teaching Assistant, Yale University [Team member for the Yale Online Course Initiative]  
Mathematical Game Theory - Teaching Assistant, Yale University  
Introduction to Microeconomics – Teaching Assistant, Stockholm University

## Supervision of PhD theses:

Biniam Bedasso; *The Arc of Institutional Change in the Long Shadow of Elites* (2013)  
Luciana Cingolani; *Bureaucracies for Development: Oxymoron or Reality?* (2014)  
Tobias Broich; *New Actors in the Global Economy: Chinese Development Finance in Africa* (2017)  
Rose Camille Vincent; *Essays in Public Economics: Multi-Layer Tax Structure* (2020)  
Bart Kleine Deters; *A Quantitative Approach to the Right to Education* (2021)  
Dina Kamal; (External) PhD student at Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (ongoing)  
Stefanie Cipriano Roost; PhD student at Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (ongoing)  
Gulzhan Kyzy; PhD student at Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (ongoing)

## Honors and Awards

Winner, Educator of the Year Award, School of Business and Economics, Maastricht U, 2016  
Finalist, Educator of the Year Award, School of Business and Economics, Maastricht U, 2011, 2014  
Finalist, Wynand Wijnen Education Prize, Maastricht University, 2015  
Marie Curie International Incoming Fellowship (European Commission), 2010  
Dr. Marcus Wallenberg Foundation Grant, 2008  
Tom Hedelius Foundation Grant, 2006  
University Fellowship, Yale University, 2003-2006  
Cowles Foundation Prize, Yale University, 2005  
Economic Growth Center Prize, Yale University, 2003  
Fulbright Award, 2003-2004 (declined grant)  
School of Industrial Management Award, Royal Institute of Technology, 2003  
(as only person with a perfect grade point average in program/class of 120 students)  
University Award for Perfect GPA (5.0), Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden, 2001, 2002  
Sergeant of the Year & Soldier of the Year All Categories, Fårösunds Marinbrigad

## Broader Work Experience

Programme Leader / Coordinator, Emerging Markets Bachelor, Maastricht University 2015-2022  
Development Team Member, Global Studies Bachelor, Maastricht University 2020-2022  
Development Team Member, York-Maastricht Research Initiative [Ongoing]  
Programme Management Team Member, MSc Economics and Strategy in Emerging Markets [Ongoing]  
Developed/Co-Lead, Job Market Training Programme for PhD Students, Maastricht U / SBE, 2013-2023  
Editorial Board Member, Journal of Development Perspectives (recently founded journal) [Ongoing]  
Development Team Member, York-Maastricht Sustainability Master, 2019-2020  
Founding Member of US Country Team, Maastricht University [Ongoing / On hold]  
Member, South East Asia Region Team, Maastricht University, 2016-2020  
Member, Brazil Country Team, Maastricht University, 2014-2015  
Visiting Scholar/Instructor, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Spring Semester 2013  
Affiliated Researcher, The Research Institute of Industrial Economics, Sweden. 2007 - 2012  
Research Assistant for Professor Giuseppe Moscarini, Yale University, June 2005 – Dec 2005  
[Project: Labor Market Mobility in the US]  
Research Assistant for Professor Nathaniel Keohane, Yale University, June 2004 – Sep 2004  
[Project: Estimating the Value of Clear Air]  
Economic Analyst, The Research Institute of Retail Trade (HUI), Sweden, June 2002 – Sep 2003  
Trainee Engineer, Nippon Ericsson, Japan, June 1999 – July 1999  
Artillery Teacher and Field Instructor, Göteborgs Marinbrigad, Sweden  
Military Service, Fårösunds Marinbrigad, Sweden (Final Rank: Sergeant)

## Supervision of master's theses:

Talin Holtermann: *An empirical evaluation of the European Leniency Program*  
Catalin Teodorescu: *Compatibility Choice in an Open Source Environment*  
Georgi Deyanov: *Why do Societies Fail to Adopt Efficient Policies*  
Tobias Broich: *State Capacity and Economic Performance*  
Nina Stephan: *Political Budget Cycles in Europe*  
Laura Ioana Bidea: *Colonialism, Trust and Institutional Development in Africa*  
Daan de Koning: *Partisanship and Political Business Cycles*  
Nathalie Wiersma: *The pass-through of petrol prices into output prices*  
Guy Puylaert: *Why good revolutions lead to bad economies*  
Linda de Jongh: *Modernization Hypothesis Revisited*  
Imke Verbeek: *Aid for Free Press*  
Elias Sobotka: *A Political Economy Analysis of Harmful Voter Manipulation*  
Anne Lina Tholen: *Electoral Cycles in Fiscal Policy, Maastricht University*  
Morten Normann: *Midterm Loss in a Unitary State*  
Sara Munaretto: *E-Government in Developing Countries*  
Silvia Biancorosso: *The European Debt Crisis and the Rise of Populist Parties*

Daniel Waters: *China's Growing Influence in Sub-Saharan Academia*  
Alina Buscher: *Does Investment in Public Goods Reduce Internal Conflict?*  
Francesco Poletto Cortese: *Corruption and Multidimensional Poverty*  
Felix Rösner: *An Empirical Study on Institutional Quality and Environmental Policy*  
Hang Vu: *The Development of Chinese-Operated Special Economic Zones in Africa*  
George Sturzenbecher: *Socio-economic technology effects of socialist industrialization on innovation*  
Stefanie Roost: *The determinants of populist voting in the 2018 Brazilian election*  
Francesco Poletto Cortese: *Corruption and Multidimensional Poverty*  
Louis de Muysen: *Foreign Aid Effectiveness in the Education Sector*  
Julius Hoffman: *Foreign Aid and State Capacity in Developing Countries*  
Alexandra Bassermann: *A game-theoretic analysis of the US' troop withdrawal from Afghanistan*

### **Journal Articles and Book Chapters**

“[The Political Economy of Private Sector Development in Emerging Markets](#)”, chapter in *Private Sector Development in an Emerging World*, De Gruyter, Dec 4, 2023.

[Holding on? Ethnic divisions, political institutions and the duration of economic declines](#)”, with Richard Bluhm. *Journal of Development Economics*, Volume 144, May 2020.

“[Small-World Conservatives and Rigid Liberals: Attitudes towards Sharing in Self-Proclaimed Left and Right](#)”, with Alexander Vostroknutov. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, Volume 135, March 2017, pages 181-192.

“[The Political Economy of Sovereign Debt: Global Finance and Electoral Cycles](#)”, with Stephen Kaplan. *Journal of Politics*, Volume 79, Issue 2, April 2017.

“[Minding Weber More than Ever? The Impacts of State Capacity and Bureaucratic Autonomy on Development Goals](#)”, with Luciana Cingolani and Denis de Crombrughe. *World Development*, Volume 72, August 2015, Pages 191–207.

“[Occupational and Job Mobility in the US](#)”, with Giuseppe Moscarini, *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, Volume 109, Issue 4, Page 807-836, March 2008.

### **Completed Working Papers**

“[Public and Private Welfare State Institutions - A Formal Theory of American Exceptionalism](#),” IFN Working Paper No. 822.

“[Bargaining Over a New Welfare State: A Model of the Regional Distribution of New Deal Funds](#),” with Alessandro Bonatti, IFN Working Paper No. 713.

“[Legislative Vetoes and Economic Reform – Theory and Evidence from the History of American Labor Regulation](#)”

“[Brazil Above Everything, God Above Everyone: The Drivers of the Populist Vote in the 2018 Brazilian Elections](#)”, with Stefanie Roost.

“[Affective Polarization and Election Expectations – Evidence from the 2020 US Presidential Election](#)”, with Maxim Doiron, Alexander Vostroknutov and Elias Tsakas.

“Precolonial Centralization and State Capacity in Africa” with Tobias Broich and Eddy Szirmai. United Nations University UNU-MERIT Working Paper 2015-025.

“Foreign Aid and Bureaucratic Quality in Africa”, with Tobias Broich and Eddy Szirmai.

“China’s entry into the foreign aid game and its implications for donor-recipient relationships – A game theoretical approach”, with Tobias Broich.

“Historical path dependence in fiscal institutions: Explaining the level of tax (de)centralization”, with Rose Camille Vincent.

### **Ongoing (Non-Completed) Research Projects**

“Interest Group Politics and Governance in Latin America”, with Carlos Scartascini and Mariano Tommasi.

“Global Investors and Domestic Politics in Developing Countries”, with Stephen Kaplan.

“Belief Formation and Political Polarization in American Elections”, with Alexander Vostroknutov and Elias Tsakas.

“Measuring and Understanding the Sources of State Fragility”, with Gulzhan Kyzy, Zina Nimeh and Gary Milante.

### **Research Reports/Other Writings**

[Editorial Letter](#), for Special Issue on Political Economy, with Biniam Bedasso, *Journal of Development Perspectives*, Vol. 2 (1-2), pages 1-2, 2018.

[Book Review of Integrating Varieties of Capitalism and Welfare State Research: A Unified Typology of Capitalisms](#) by Martin Schroeder, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 120 (1), 2014.

“Karriär i Handeln – En Dynamisk Studie av Handelns Arbetsmarknad,” with Fredrik Bergström, *Research Report S75*, The Research Institute of Retail Trade (HUI), Stockholm, 2002.

”Income Mobility in Sweden: A Study on Immigrants and Native Swedes,” with Andre Lippman, *Research Report S72*, The Research Institute of Retail Trade (HUI), Stockholm, 2002.

“Integrating Bluetooth Access in Wireless LANs,” with Mats Arvedsson and Magnus Edlund, KTH, Stockholm, 2002. [Written for Swedish wireless product developer Possio AB’s white paper series]

### **Conference Presentations and Invited Talks**

Society for Institutional and Organizational Economics (SIOE) Conference, Frankfurt, Sep 2023

Brazilian Association for International Education (FAUBAI) Conference, Belo Horizonte, April 2023

Power and Politics – Perspectives on Taxation and State Building in Africa Conference, Bergen, Sep 2022

MSM Academic Conference: Private Sector Development in Emerging Economies, Maastricht, Nov 2021

KVS New Paper Sessions, The Hague, June 2021

Society for Institutional and Organizational Economics (SIOE) Conference, Stockholm, June 2019

University of Texas, Dallas, April 2019

American Political Science Association Conference, Washington, DC, Aug 2018

Universidad the Los Andes, Colombia, Department Seminar, June 2017

Society for Institutional and Organizational Economics (SIOE) Conference, New York, June 2017

Association of Public Economic Theory Conference, Rio de Janeiro, July 2016

Voting, Power and Decision-Making, Netherlands Institute for Advances Studies, Leiden, May 2016  
Varieties of Capitalism in Emerging Markets Conference, Budapest, Nov 2015  
European Historical Economics Society, Pisa, Sep 2015  
Political Economy of International Organizations Conference, Berlin, Feb 2015  
Netherlands Economist Day, October 2014  
University of Namur, Economics Department Seminar, May 2014  
Workshop on Global Climate Cooperation, University of St Gallen, July 2013  
Dial Conference, Paris, June 2013  
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Applied Microeconomics Seminar, April 2013  
Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, University of Milan, June 2012  
International Political Economy Society, November 2012  
Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, MIT Boston, June 2012  
European Political Science Association Meeting, June 2012  
Mannheim University, Political Economy of Reform Group, Dec 2011  
European Historical Economics Society, August 2011  
Leitner Political Economy Seminar, Yale University, February 2011  
IMT Lucca, November 2010  
American Political Science Association, Washington DC, September 2010  
Journées Louis-André Gérard-Varet, Marseille, June 2010  
Oxford University, Economic History Seminar, May 2010  
Research Institute of Industrial Economics (IFN), Stockholm, March 2010  
Max Planck Institute for the Study of Common Goods, Bonn, Nov 2009  
Inter-American Development Bank, March 2009  
Stockholm School of Economics – Institute for Transition Economics, March 2009  
Colby College, Department of Economics, Feb 2009  
University of Virginia, Department of Economics, Feb 2009  
Oberlin College, Department of Economics, Feb 2009  
University of Toronto, Department of Economics, Feb 2009  
Institute for International Economic Studies, Stockholm University, Jan 2009  
Uppsala University, Department of Economics, Jan 2009  
University of Copenhagen, Department of Economics, Jan 2009  
Maastricht University, Department of Economics, January 2009  
Five-College Faculty Seminar in Economics, Amherst, MA, Oct 2008  
Comparative Political Economy Workshop, Yale University, May 2008  
Institute for International Economic Studies, Stockholm University, Dec 2007  
Leitner Political Economy Seminar, Yale University, October 2007  
Economic History Association Meeting, Austin, TX, Sep 2007  
Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 2007  
Leitner Political Economy Seminar, Yale University, September 2006  
Stockholm Mobility Roundtable Conference, Stockholm, May 2003  
Scandinavian Ad Hoc Systems Workshop, Stockholm, May 2003