

KATHERINA THOMAS

Policy Analyst | OECD

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ABOUT ME

I work at the intersection of research and policy to tackle inequalities in education and child development. With a PhD in Economics and experience managing international projects, I focus on applying quantitative methods to real-world challenges. Currently, I am collaboratively designing a randomized evaluation of an AI-based tutoring platform for math students in primary schools, coordinating with national teams, and preparing a pilot in Poland. Previously, I have coordinated the planning and rollout of a large-scale parenting intervention in Ghana, developed impact evaluations, and supported teams across countries through training, clear communication, and hands-on collaboration. I value practical problem-solving, straightforward communication, and building trust in international partnerships.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- OECD | Junior Policy Analyst *since 04/2025*
 - **Collaboratively designing a randomized controlled trial** to evaluate an AI-based tutoring system for mathematics in primary schools, and supporting the development and deployment of the learning application.
 - **Coordinating with participating countries**, including support of the recruitment of national teams, preparing guidance materials, and responding to queries.
 - **Preparing and delivering of training for national teams and schools.**
 - **Ensuring the successful implementation** of the learning platform across all countries.
 - **Leading the design, implementation, and analysis of a pilot evaluation** in Poland
 - **Supervising** a junior analyst.
 - **Drafting presentations** for the PISA and CERI Governing Boards
 - **Contributing to other RDI projects** (Research, Development and Innovation).
 - Assisting with administrative tasks, including contract preparation.

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA | POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER *09/2023-03/2025*

- **Managing the implementation of a context-relevant parenting intervention** involving 2,300 families in Ghana: coordination and development of theory of change, two pilot studies, survey questionnaires, survey experiment, pre-analysis plans, power calculations, data cleaning and analysis, impact evaluation and monitoring implementation process.
- **Supervising fieldwork in Ghana**, actively encouraging practitioner feedback, coordinating with the research team, improving survey design and addressing practical challenges.
- **Stepping up to lead the project** during principal investigators' maternity leaves, ensuring smooth project continuation and alignment with strategic objectives.
- **Mentoring a master student and supervising research assistant team** in executing data analyses tailored to project needs.
- **Leading and restructuring team meetings**, fostering a collaborative environment, and facilitating interactions between partners and researchers, enhancing process efficiency.
- **Executing research on education and child development:**
 - Development of innovative lab-in-the-field experiment to inform design of parenting training programs, including co-authoring of successful grant proposal.
 - Engagement with potential collaborators resulting in research project investigating the foundations of skill formation and estimating long-term effects of pre-school education.
- **Drafting papers, presenting results at international conferences** (two papers submitted)

BARCELONA SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS | PHD RESEARCHER 09/2019-06/2023

- **Thesis on reducing inequalities in child development through policies:**
 - Quantitative data analysis: data visualization and cleaning, structural modeling, panel data estimation, impact evaluation and policy simulations.
 - Deepening expertise in child development, education, parenting and nutrition.
 - Coordinated collaborative research projects; supported four additional projects as Research Assistant, quickly integrating and delivering on data analysis tasks.
- **Guiding and teaching graduate students** as Teaching Assistant.
- **Coordinating research group meetings**, improving time management and structure.
- **Disseminating research findings** by presenting at international conferences.

THE WORLD BANK | SHORT-TERM CONSULTANT, RESEARCH DEPARTMENT 07/2021-06/2022

- **Data sourcing, analysis and visualization** for two research projects on the impact of cash transfers on nutrition choices and food prices across Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

THE ECONOMIC JOURNAL | ASSISTANT TO DATA EDITOR 01/2020-12/2021

- **Assuring quality of conditionally accepted articles** by performing replication checks.

BASF SE | WORKING STUDENT, TRADE AND BANK RISK MANAGEMENT 08/2016-08/2018

- **Developing country risk evaluation concept**, analysis of global financial sector developments, preparation of presentations for senior management.

GERMAN FEDERAL FOREIGN OFFICE IN COLOMBO (SRI LANKA) | INTERN 07/2017-09/2017

- **Drafting economic and political reports**, attending of diplomatic meetings.

MISEREOR | INTERN 02/2016-04/2016

- **Drafting of policy briefs**, analysis of pastoralism-focused development programs.

EDUCATION

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona School of Economics 2019-2023
PhD in Economic Analysis

University of Minnesota (Visiting student, Spring 2022)

Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Università Ca'Foscari Venezia, Universität Bielefeld 2017-2019

Joint Master in Models & Methods of Quantitative Economics

Universität Bayreuth 2013-2017
Bachelor in Economics

University of New South Wales (Exchange student, Fall 2015)

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Co-Principal Investigator, Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (~ EUR 116.000) 2024

4-year FPI Grant, Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation 2020-2023

QEM Consortium scholarship, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne 2017-2019

SKILLS

Languages: German (native), English (fluent), French (proficient), Spanish (advanced), Polish (basic)

Software: STATA, LaTeX, MS Office (all proficient), Python (intermediate), R, Git (both basic)

VOLUNTEERING

CorrelAid - Data4Good, Project coordination team 03/2024-03/2025

Connecting volunteers to NPOs: identifying organizational needs, managing expectations, drafting application calls, selecting suitable volunteers and organizing project kick-off meetings.

Econisers, Co-founder and Co-organizer 07/2020-09/2022

Initiating and organizing webinar series for PhD candidates on research and career advice.

Fundació Gavina 11/2019-07/2022

Providing childcare for NGO in Barcelona supporting disadvantaged children.

Ferrando Children's Home 06/2018-07/2018

Supervising children and designing and teaching English classes in Mysore, India.