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Professor Emeritus of International Economics at the University of Copenhagen, he also worked for the Danish government, Harvard's Development Advisory Service (in Malaysia), and the OECD in Paris. Former adviser to the Governor of Denmark's Nationalbank, Chair of the Danish Economic Council and member of various expert groups on European monetary and financial integration - the subject area of most of his research and publications.

Mr Thygesen was an independent member of the Delors Committee which prepared the outline of Economic and Monetary Union in Europe in 1988-9, a member of the committee advising the government of Sweden on an exit from the crisis of the early 1990s, a member of the Group of Independent Experts evaluating IMF surveillance following the Asian crisis, and he chaired the Economic and Development Review Committee of the OECD which evaluates the economic performance and policies of member states 2000-8. He is a Founder Member of the European Shadow Financial Regulatory Committee. He studied at the Universities of Copenhagen, where he obtained a PhD, and Harvard.