

# PhD Fellowship in Economics / Health Economics

*UCLouvain — Université catholique de Louvain*

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## Job Information

**Organisation / Company:** Université catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain)

**Department:** Center for Applied Public Economics (CAPE) — UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles / Institute of Economic and Social Research (IRES) — UCLouvain

**Research Field:** Public Economics / Health Economics

**Researcher Profile:** First Stage Researcher (R1)

**Position:** PhD Position

**Application Deadline:** 1<sup>st</sup> of June — 18:00 (Europe/Brussels)

**Country:** Belgium

**Type of Contract:** Temporary

**Job Status:** Full-time

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## Offer Description

We are seeking an outstanding and highly motivated **PhD candidate in Public Economics / Health Economics** for a **fully funded 4-year position** at UCLouvain (Belgium), within the interdisciplinary ARC project **LESS4MORE** (Leveraging Individual and Collective Engagement in Sufficiency Strategies for Mobility).

The PhD will be supervised by **Prof. Hélène Latzer** (IRIS-L, UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles) and **Prof. Sandy Tubeuf** (IRES/LIDAM, UCLouvain), and embedded in a dynamic, international research environment at the intersection of economics, health, sustainability, and public policy.

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## Project Overview

In the context of the ongoing climatic transition, personal mobility stands out as a particularly pressing challenge: it is the **only sector whose emissions have not decreased since 1990**, and one of the hardest to decarbonize, given its deep dependence on private car use and the role of individual choices and social norms in shaping travel behavior.

In this context, recent IPCC reports and prominent academic contributions are stressing the fact that the transition toward sustainable mobility should not rely on technological innovation alone. It requires a fundamental shift toward **sufficiency-based strategies**. **Sufficiency**, as a demand-side complement to technological solutions, starts from determining what level and type of mobility people need for their well-being — rather than taking existing demand as given — and seeks to align individual and collective mobility practices with those needs.

The **LESS4MORE** project brings together psychology, engineering, law, and economics to address a central question:

***How can sufficiency-oriented mobility policies achieve broad social acceptance, while ensuring that their economic, health, and welfare impacts are distributed equitably across society?***

The project aims to:

- develop **mobility sufficiency scenarios** that are both **legally grounded** — validated for regulatory and constitutional feasibility in collaboration with the law component of the project — and **empirically calibrated** on Belgian mobility and socioeconomic data,
- evaluate the **environmental, economic, social, and health impacts** of those mobility sufficiency measures,
- and translate findings into **robust, fair, and actionable policy recommendations** to foster mobility sufficiency

The sufficiency scenarios examined within the project will span a range of regulatory and fiscal instruments. They could include, for instance, low-emission zones restricting access for high-polluting vehicles in urban areas, road-pricing instruments such as distance-based charges, or fiscal incentives favoring cycling and public transport over private car use — each assessed for its legal feasibility, distributional consequences, and broader welfare effects.

Within this interdisciplinary framework, **economics plays a central role** in enabling the rigorous evaluation of the **welfare and health impacts** of sufficiency measures, as well as their **redistributive consequences** across population groups — thereby providing the empirical foundation for designing economically sustainable and socially equitable policies.

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## PhD Project

The PhD candidate will contribute to the **economics and health economics** component of LESS4MORE, focusing on two main objectives: **(i)** to evaluate the **welfare and health impacts** of sufficiency-oriented mobility scenarios — as legally validated by the law component of the project — with particular focus on their **distributional consequences** across population groups and their effects on health and social inequalities; and **(ii)** to assess the **economic sustainability** of these measures through a **comprehensive cost-benefit analysis** integrating healthcare, environmental, and welfare outcomes. The candidate will also interact with stakeholders and policymakers to refine and test these insights and ultimately contribute to their translation into Belgian policy frameworks through structured dialogues (e.g., Chatham House–style approaches).

The candidate will directly leverage the outputs and infrastructure of the **Beamm platform** (Belgian Arithmetic Microsimulation Model, <https://beamm.brussels/>), an open-access tax-benefit microsimulation model developed by the Center for Applied Public Economics

(CAPE, UCLouvain) which provides microsimulation-based projections of mobility and fiscal scenarios enriched with socioeconomic, health, and behavioural data.

More specifically, the project adopts a **multi-method integrative approach**, combining:

- large-scale **data collection and harmonization** — matching mobility surveys, administrative health, healthcare, socioeconomic, and pollution datasets using state-of-the-art record linkage and statistical matching techniques,
- **microsimulation** of fiscal and mobility policies, relying on the **Beamm tax-benefit microsimulation model**,
- **nonparametric inequality analysis** — comparing welfare and health outcome distributions across population subgroups using stochastic dominance and distributional testing methods,
- **cost-benefit analysis** with equity-sensitive welfare weights, integrating healthcare, environment, and mobility outcomes over a multi-year horizon.

A central objective is to uncover how the **distributional and health impacts** of sufficiency measures vary across population groups — including the identification of segments that may be disproportionately or unfairly burdened, such as low-income car-dependent households — and to design **accompanying measures** (revenue recycling, targeted compensations) that simultaneously enhance equity and broad social acceptability.

A distinctive feature of the project is its capacity to integrate, within the microeconomic simulation framework, outputs from three complementary disciplines:

- **legally validated sufficiency scenarios** from the **law component** (policy design, regulatory feasibility, and institutional pathways),
- **behavioural response estimates** from the **psychology component** (public acceptance, modal elasticities, and reactions to different policy designs and framing choices),
- **emission and pollution projections** from the **engineering component** (energy system modelling of mobility scenarios and their environmental consequences).

This integrated approach enables a comprehensive, policy-relevant economic evaluation that goes well beyond standard economic modelling, grounded in realistic behavioural, legal, and environmental assumptions.

The candidate will collaborate closely with an interdisciplinary team including:

- **Francesco Contino** (engineering, UCLouvain/IMMC),
- **Alexandre Heeren** (psychological sciences, UCLouvain/IPSY),
- **Hélène Latzer** (public economics, UCLouvain Saint-Louis/IRIS-L),
- **Céline Romainville** (constitutional law, UCLouvain/JURI),
- **Sandy Tubeuf** (health economics and public health, UCLouvain/IRSS-LIDAM).

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## Profile

We are looking for a candidate who combines **intellectual curiosity, methodological rigour**, and a strong interest in societal challenges.

Requirements:

- a Master's degree in **economics, public economics, health economics, environmental economics, econometrics**, or a closely related field;
- strong interest in **health economics, environmental economics, public policy evaluation**, and/or social inequalities;
- solid training in **quantitative methods** (econometrics, microeconomics, applied statistics);
- programming skills (**R, Stata, or Python**) are essential; experience with microsimulation models, distributional analysis, or cost-benefit analysis is a strong asset;
- prior experience (at least at the level of an internship or Master's thesis) in **empirical economic research**;
- additional training in **applied econometrics, causal inference, health econometrics**, or microeconometrics is a strong plus;
- strong motivation (and ideally experience) for **interdisciplinary research**;
- good knowledge of the **Belgian institutional or fiscal context**, or strong willingness to develop it;
- a good command of **English**; knowledge of French and/or Dutch is an asset.

Candidates with strong analytical skills and a clear interest in linking economic analysis to real-world policy design and societal impact are particularly encouraged to apply.

Applicants should also provide **three letters of recommendation**, including at least two from individuals who have supervised their academic work (e.g., thesis supervisors, research mentors).

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## Working Environment

The PhD candidate will join a **highly interdisciplinary and collaborative team**, working alongside other PhD students and postdoctoral researchers across multiple disciplines.

The candidate will be **dually embedded** in two complementary research environments. First, they will join the **Beamm research team at CAPE** (Center for Applied Public Economics, UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles) — a dynamic, multidisciplinary group of approximately 25 researchers (economists, statisticians, data scientists, fiscal law specialists, health economists) working in close collaboration on the Beamm microsimulation platform and on questions of public policy evaluation.

Second, the candidate will be an active member of the **LESS4MORE interdisciplinary research team**, composed of researchers in engineering, law, psychology, and economics. This team operates within the **Louvain4Sufficiency UCLouvain** platform, which connects academic research with societal actors working on sufficiency-oriented transitions. All project supervisors are actively involved in this initiative, offering a unique environment at the interface of science, policy, and societal transformation.

The project also includes an interdisciplinary postdoctoral researcher (energy systems), working in close coordination with the research team to ensure coherence and active integration of interdisciplinary insights throughout the project.

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## Practical Information

**Starting date:** 1 October 2026

**Interview date:** Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026 (TBC)

**Application deadline:** 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2026

### Benefits:

- **Fully funded 4-year PhD position** (UCLouvain doctoral fellowship salary scale).
  - Access to a high-level interdisciplinary research environment.
  - Strong connections with policy stakeholders and societal actors.
  - Opportunity to contribute to high-impact research on sustainability, health, and public economics.
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## How to Apply

Applications should include a **CV**, a **cover letter**, **academic transcripts**, three letters of recommendation (at least two from thesis supervisors or research mentors), and — if available — a sample of scientific writing.

Please send all documents in a single PDF to [helene.latzer@uclouvain.be](mailto:helene.latzer@uclouvain.be) and [sandy.tubeuf@uclouvain.be](mailto:sandy.tubeuf@uclouvain.be) with the subject: "**Application ECON — PhD LESS4MORE**".

The selection process will be conducted in two stages: a pre-selection based on the application file (academic excellence, research experience, methodological skills, motivation, fit with the project), followed by interviews (online or in person) in the second half of June 2026 (tentatively on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 2026). The final decision will be communicated in early July 2026.

### For more information or questions, please contact:

- **Prof. H el ene Latzer:** [helene.latzer@uclouvain.be](mailto:helene.latzer@uclouvain.be)
  - **Prof. Sandy Tubeuf:** [sandy.tubeuf@uclouvain.be](mailto:sandy.tubeuf@uclouvain.be)
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