

# Willem Sas

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## Employment

2017 - Early Career Fellow (Assistant Professor), Economics Division, University of Stirling

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## Affiliations

2019 - CESifo Affiliate, LMU Munich

2018 - Research Fellow, Centre on Constitutional Change, University of Edinburgh

2017 - Research Fellow, Department of Economics, KU Leuven

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## Fields of Interest

Research: Public Economics, Political Economy, Behavioural Economics, Applied Micro Theory

Teaching: Microeconomics, Public Economics, Political Economy

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## Education

2011 - 2016 Ph.D. in Economics, Department of Economics, KU Leuven

*Thesis title:* 'Efficient federalism: Taking taxation to another level of government.'

*Committee:* André Decoster & Stef Proost (advisors), Susana Peralta, Albert Solé-Ollé & Joep Konings

2009 - 2011 M.Phil. in Economics, KU Leuven

2007 - 2008 Partial B.A. in Philosophy, Université Toulouse-Jean Jaurès

2005 - 2007 M.Sc. in Business Engineering, KU Leuven

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## Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

"Starting From Scratch: A New Approach to Subnational Public Finance" (with [David Bell](#) and John Houston), forthcoming in *Regional Studies* (IF 3.3).

"Networked Innovation and Coalition Formation: The Effect of Group-Based Social Preferences" (with Tom Dedeurwaerdere and [Paolo Melindi-Ghidi](#)), *Economics of Innovation and New Technology*, 27 (7): 577-593 (2018; IF 1.6).

"Can Fiscal Equalisation Mitigate Tax Competition? Ad Valorem and Residence-Based Taxation in a Federation", *International Tax and Public Finance*, 24 (5): 817-853 (2017; IF 1).

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## Work in Progress

"Does the Winner Take It All? Redistributive Policies and Political Extremism" (with [Amedeo Piolatto](#) and [Gianmarco Daniele](#)) (*submitted*).

"Wind of Change? Experimental Survey Evidence on the COVID-19 Shock and Socio-Political Attitudes in Europe" (with [Gianmarco Daniele](#), [Andrea Martinangeli](#), [Francesco Passarelli](#) and [Lisa Windsteiger](#)).

"Devolving the Productivity Puzzle: Tax Autonomy and Political Incentives" (*submitted*).

"Institutions in the Fast Lane: Strike Petitions and the Electoral Cycle in Mexico" (with [Hector Gutiérrez-Rufrancos](#)).

"No Taxation Without Decentralisation? Tax Autonomy and Vertical Yardstick Competition" (with [Susana Peralta](#)).

"Who Cares? Attitudes Towards Redistribution and Fiscal Austerity" (with [Sarah Brown](#), [Alberto Montagnoli](#) and [Mirko Moro](#)).

"The Unbearable Complexity of Being: On the Rise of Polarised Political Preferences" (with [Gianmarco Daniele](#), [Andrea Martinangeli](#), [Francesco Passarelli](#) and [Lisa Windsteiger](#)).

“Do Politicians Discriminate Against Scientists? Theory and Experimental Evidence on Information Sharing” (with [Ekkehard Köhler](#)).

“Who Sent You? Strategic Voting, Transfers and Bailouts in a Federation” (with [Amedeo Piolatto](#) and [Gianmarco Daniele](#)).

“The Role of Fiscal Interest in Local Policy: Evidence from a Tax Base Reform” (with [Sander Ramboer](#)).

“Invest-As-You-Go: Public Health Investment, Long-Term Care & Welfare” (with [Paolo Melindi-Ghidi](#)).

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### *Visiting Positions & Short Visits*

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2020	Max Planck Institute for Tax Law and Public Finance (February).
2019	Nova School of Business and Economics; Universidade Nova de Lisboa (June/Oct).
2019	Center for Economic Studies; LMU (April).
2019	Department of Economics; Bocconi University (Feb/Mar/May/Sep/Dec).
2018	Department of Economics; UAB Barcelona (July-August).
2018	Department of Economics; University of California, Irvine (April-June).
2016/2017	Institut d’Economia de Barcelona; University of Barcelona (July).
2016	ZEW; University of Mannheim (April).
2015	Nova School of Business and Economics; Universidade Nova de Lisboa (September).
2015	Institut d’Economia de Barcelona; University of Barcelona (March-June).

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### *Conferences & Seminars*

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2020	Max Planck Institute for Tax Law and Public Finance (Munich, invited), KU Leuven (Leuven, invited).
2019	LMU (Munich, invited); Walter Eucken Institute (Freiburg, invited); LAGV (Aix-en-Provence); APET (Strasbourg), IIPF (Glasgow), EP@B Workshop ULB (Brussels).
2018	UQAM (Montreal, invited), Bruneck Workshop on Political Economy (Bruneck), IIPF (Tampere); ERSA (Cork); University of California, Irvine (invited)
2017	AEA (Chicago); IIPF (Tokyo)
2016	SAEe (Bilbao); IIPF (Lake Tahoe); LAGV (Aix-en-Provence); ZEW (Mannheim); Max Planck Institute for Tax Law and Public Finance (Munich, invited); Walter Eucken Institute (Freiburg, invited)
2015	IIPF (Dublin); ERSA (Lisbon); IWH (Halle); Walter Eucken Institute (Freiburg)
2014	IIPF (Lugano); APET (Seattle)
2013	LAGV (Aix-en-Provence); AFSE (Aix-en-Provence); APET (Lisbon); IIPF (Taormina); ERSA (Palermo); IWH (Halle)

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### *Past Employment*

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2017	Postdoctoral researcher, Department of Economics, KU Leuven (November-August).
2010 - 2016	Research assistant, Department of Economics, KU Leuven. Research on federalism, state reform, and regional finance with prof. André Decoster.
2009 - 2010	Research assistant, Center for Economics and Ethics, KU Leuven. Research on Corporate Social Responsibility in SME’s with prof. Luc Van Liedekerke.
2008 - 2009	Researcher in the ‘Co-creative entrepreneurship’ project. Financed by Cocom group and directed by prof. Luk Bouckaert, KU Leuven.

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### *Awards & Research Grants*

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2016	Flemish government, “Fiscal transfers in Belgium” project (co-PI, €80.000).
2015	“Maatschappijprijs Humane Wetenschappen” (KU Leuven impact award for ex-ante evaluation of election programs in run-up to Belgian elections of 2014: “Rekening14”).
2012	Flemish government, “Steunpunt Fiscaliteit en Begroting”.
2011	Belgian Science Policy (BELSPO), “BELDEBT” project.

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## Teaching Experience

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### Courses at University of Stirling:

- 2018 - Advanced Microeconomics, undergrad course (instructor)  
2017 - Economic Policy, undergrad course (instructor)

### Courses at KU Leuven:

- 2016 Principles of Economics for Scientists, undergrad MOOC (co-developer)  
2013 - 2017 Public Economics & Macroeconomics, undergrad course (TA)  
2015 Public Finance, MSc course (co-instructor)  
2012 - 2017 Dissertation tutor for the undergrad & graduate programs in Economics

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### Other

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- Refereeing Canadian Journal of Economics, Journal of Public Economic Theory, International Tax and Public Finance, FinanzArchiv.
- Projects 'Comparative Fiscal Federalism: Lessons to be learned for the EU', co-PI.
- Service IMF mission to Belgium (2013, 2015), the TAIEX Workshop on EU fiscal acquis and governance (2016), Evidence in policy workshop (Scottish government, 2018), [Constitution Reform Group](#) (ongoing).
- Memberships American Economic Association, International Institute of Public Finance, European Regional Science Association.
- Computing Stata, LaTeX, Mathematica, EUROMOD.
- Languages Dutch (native), English (fluent), French (fluent), German, Portuguese.

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### In the Press (Op-Eds, Interviews, Blogs)

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- 'Covid-19 and socio-political attitudes in Europe: In competence we trust', VoxEU (CEPR Policy Portal), 1/10/2020.
- 'Gezondheidszorg hervormen? Betrek experts én zorgsector erbij.' De Standaard, 31/7/2020.
- 'Veiligheidsraad zet het best eerst gemeenten in lockdown in plaats van hele land.' De Tijd, 28/07/2020.
- 'Waarom niet enkel de staatsstructuur de Belgische corona-aanpak hindert.' Interview for VRT, 30/05/2020.
- 'The rise of extreme politics in a federation', VoxEU (CEPR Policy Portal), 7/05/2020.
- 'Zuid-Europa in de steek laten komt als een boemerang terug.' De Tijd, 31/03/2020.
- 'Waar blijft het echte cijferwerk, N-VA?' De Standaard, 14/01/2020.
- 'Het geld is niet op.' Interview in Knack, 1/01/2020.
- 'Confederalisme is onze Brexit.' De Tijd, 18/12/2019.
- 'Meten wat we weten.' De Morgen, 09/07/2019.
- 'Geen confederalisme, maar een volwassener federalisme.' De Standaard, 04/06/2019.
- 'Onafhankelijkheid maakt niet onafhankelijk.' De Tijd, 12/10/2017.
- 'De droom van Bourgeois is bedrog.' De Standaard, 11/7/2017.
- 'Waarom verhoogt de Federal Reserve haar interestvoet?' Television interview for 'De Afspraak', Canvas, 16/12/2015.
- 'Bust and boom: krijgen studenten de juiste vakken economie?' Television interview for 'De Afspraak', Canvas, 26/9/2015.
- 'De Europese Centrale Bank kan de economie aanzwengelen met een beperkt monetair basisinkomen.' De Tijd, 9/4/2015.
- 'Geen lusten zonder lasten.' De Standaard, 3/4/2015.
- 'Het Verenigd Koninkrijk 2.0.' De Tijd, 22/9/2014.
- 'De Zweedse coalitie kan een stap zijn naar een meer volwassen federalisme.' De Tijd, 23/7/2014.
- 'Met de overgeheveldde bevoegdheden kan Vlaanderen nu echt in actie komen.' De Tijd, 8/7/2014.
- 'Een federale kieskring is cruciaal voor België.' Apache, 3/7/2014, e-pub.
- 'Paul De Grauwe had toch gelijk.' De Morgen, 16/1/2014.

'Confederaal is verre van ideaal.' De Standaard, 5/11/2013.  
'Lijk uit de kast? Waar?' De Standaard, 19/1/2012.  
'Geen lijk uit de kast met de nieuwe financieringswet.' De Redactie, 19/1/2020, e-pub.  
'Waarom het akkoord over de financieringswet een goed akkoord is.' De Morgen, 26/9/2011.

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## Other Publications

### Articles in peer-reviewed journals (in Dutch)

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2015). 'Het nut van dotaties in gelaagde staatsvormen: een vergelijking van vereveningsmechanismen.' (*The aim of federal grants: a cross-country analysis of equalisation mechanisms*). Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Sociale Zekerheid, 57 (3), 561-595.

### Articles in peer-reviewed academic books

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2012). 'Feiten en cijfers over de nieuwe financieringswet' (*Facts and figures on Belgium's new financing law*). In Popelier P., Sinardet D., Velaers J., Cantillon B. (Eds.), 'België, quo vadis?', Chapt. 10, Intersentia, 311-340.

### Articles in other academic journals

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2015). 'De economische theorie van het federalisme: was de 6de staats hervorming een schot in de roos?' (*Fiscal federalism: The Belgian 6th Institutional Reform as a bull's-eye?*). Tijdschrift voor Bank- en Financieuzen (2), 151-157.

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2014). 'De 6de staats hervorming goedgekeurd. Is er nog een 7de staats hervorming nodig?' (*The sixth Belgian state reform: do we need a seventh?*). Samenleving en Politiek, 21(2), 30-41.

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2012). 'De nieuwe financieringswet: anders en beter?' (*The new Belgian financing law: different and better?*). Samenleving en Politiek, 19(1), 12-22.

Sas, W., and Liedekerke, L. V. (2009). 'Driving forces behind CSR in a SME context: Internally driven CSR.' European Business Ethics Network, Athens.

### Policy papers

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2017). 'Interregionale financiële stromen in België van 2000 tot 2020.' (*Interregional fiscal flows in Belgium from 2000 until 2020*). Department of Economics, KU Leuven.

Decoster, A., De Swert, K., Sas, W., Spiritus, K., van der Wielen, W., Vanheukelom, T., Vanleenhove, P. (2014). 'Rekening 14 - Een vergelijking tussen de partijprogramma's.' Eindrapport, CES, VRT, De Tijd, De Standaard.

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2013). 'De herziening van de financieringswet: over het hoe, het waarom en het resultaat.' Leuvense Economische Standpunten, LES 2013/139, Leuven (Belgium): KU Leuven CES.

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2013). 'De nieuwe bijzondere financieringswet van de 6de staats hervorming: werden de beloften ingelost?' FLEMOSI discussion paper 28, Leuven (Belgium): Flemsi project CES.

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2012). 'De nieuwe financieringswet: anders, maar ook beter?' Leuvense Economische Standpunten, LES 2012/137, Leuven (Belgium): KU Leuven CES.

Decoster, A. and Sas, W. (2011). 'De bijzondere financieringswet voor dummies.' FLEMOSI discussion paper 4, Leuven (Belgium): Flemsi project CES.

Van Liedekerke, L. and Sas, W. (2008). 'MVO en KMO, de rol van pioniers.' In 'Pioniers in Maatschappelijk Verantwoord Ondernemen', UNIZO, 9-35.

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## References

### André Decoster

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