PhD POSITION IN ECONOMICS

Preferences, financing and long-term care reforms

Project ARBOR – Allocative and Resource-Based Orientations for long-term care Reforms

LIRAES – Université Paris Cité | LIEPP – Sciences Po | Chaire AgingUP!

Discipline: Economics (health economics / public economics / applied microeconomics)

Host institutions: LIRAES, Université Paris Cité and LIEPP, Sciences Po (Paris, France)

Supervision: Dr Jonathan Sicsic (associate professor, LIRAES, Université Paris Cité) and Dr Anaïs Cheneau (post-doctoral researcher, Chaire AgingUP!)

Contract: Full-time PhD contract, 36 months

Start date: October or November 2026

Location: Paris, France

Application deadline: August 25th, 2026

Interview dates (planned): end of August

Research environment

The successful candidate will be hosted jointly by two leading research centers in Paris. LIRAES (*Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire de Recherche Appliquée en Économie de la Santé*), at Université Paris Cité, conducts applied research in economics and health economics, including the economics of ageing and the evaluation of health and social-care policies. Within LIRAES, the AgingUP! Chair brings together health economists working on the economic consequences of ageing, the effectiveness of old-age policies and the organization of care provision.

LIEPP (Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire d'Évaluation des Politiques Publiques), at Sciences Po, is an interdisciplinary centre dedicated to the evaluation of public policies, with recognised expertise in the political economy of social protection, taxation and redistributive justice. The doctoral researcher will benefit from the complementary strengths and resources of both centers.

The PhD is embedded in the **ARBOR consortium** and is supported by a **fully funded ANR project**[1] combining academic partners with the public administrations in charge of long-term care in France including CNSA (the National Solidarity Fund for Autonomy) and HCAAM (the High Council for the Future of Health Insurance). It offers a rare opportunity to conduct research at the interface of academic rigour and real-world policy design. The doctoral researcher will also interact with senior researchers from Université Paris 1 Sorbonne Economics Department.

The ARBOR project

[1] See the dedicated French National Research Agency (ANR) website for more information on the funding scheme: https://anr.fr/fr/actus/details/news/science-avec-et-pour-la-societe-22-laureats-pour-co-construire-les-politiques-publiques-par-lexpe/

Population ageing, the rising prevalence of chronic disease and tightening budget constraints confront France with a double imperative: meeting rapidly growing long-term care (LTC) needs while making difficult allocation choices under constrained public resources. Decisions about coverage levels, targeting of beneficiaries, out-of-pocket costs and the respective roles of taxation, social and private insurance are becoming both more frequent and more contested. Yet policymakers lack operational tools to assess the social desirability of alternative financing and allocation scenarios.

ARBOR addresses this gap by measuring citizens' collective preferences over the financing and organisation of long-term care under an explicit budget constraint. The project relies on Participatory Value Evaluation (PVE), an online preference-elicitation method in which respondents compose a "portfolio" of policy measures subject to one or more resource constraints, thereby making trade-offs between competing priorities explicit. To our knowledge, this is the first application of PVE and, more broadly, of a stated-preference survey with an explicit budget constraint, to long-term care financing in France.

The project pursues five structuring research questions:

- How should solidarity be organised between means-testing (targeting on resources) and needs-testing (targeting on care needs), and what eligibility criteria (age, need, isolation) are legitimate?
- What level of generosity and which basket of services (basic, intermediate, premium) should be socialised?
- What role should public and private funders play, and which instruments (taxes, social contributions, out-of-pocket payments, private insurance, wealth or inheritance) are acceptable and with what degree of contributiveness?
- How do public financing rules shape private behaviour (saving, insurance take-up, wealth mobilisation and transfers), and which thresholds may trigger 'spend-down' adjustments?
- Which trade-offs do citizens accept between long-term care and other public spending (education, health, environment)?

The empirical core is an online survey of a representative sample of about 3,000 respondents in France, with an oversample of the populations most concerned by LTC policies (people aged 60+ and informal carers). Choices are linked to a consequence engine grounded in administrative data and microsimulation (notably the open-source Autonomix-KAPPA model developed by the IPP) and analysed within a random-utility framework (multiple discrete–continuous choice models).

The team and consortium

The consortium is structured around three complementary pillars, ensuring that the project spans the whole chain from scenario co-construction to the measurement of citizens' preferences and their translation into policy options.

Pillar 1 — Methodological design and quantitative analysis

Anaïs Cheneau, Thomas Rapp, Jonathan Sicsic (Chaire AgingUP!, LIRAES – Université Paris Cité; LIEPP – Sciences Po) **and the recruited doctoral researcher**. This team brings expertise in policy evaluation, health economics and preference-elicitation methods (DCE/PVE), together with collaborations with TU Delft and Erasmus Rotterdam, pioneers in applying PVE to health. It leads the scientific coordination, scenario development, PVE platform design, experimental design and econometric analysis.

Pillar 2 — Distributive justice and social-policy financing

Elvire Guillaud (LIEPP – Sciences Po; Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne) contributes expertise on the financing of social protection, redistributive justice, taxation and contributiveness, and leads the normative framing of scenarios and the integration of equity and perceived-fairness dimensions.

Pillar 3 — Institutional co-construction and policy transfer

CNSA and HCAAM (Florence Thibault, Romain Sibille, Marianne Tenand, Catherine Pollak) provide the institutional anchoring essential to the project's operational relevance, co-defining and validating the tested scenarios and supporting the dissemination and uptake of results by decision-makers.

An extended scientific committee supports key milestones, drawing on the AgingUP! Chair advisory board (including Francesca Colombo, OECD; Joan Costa-Font, LSE; David Grabowski and Anupam B. Jena, Harvard) and targeted members such as Niek Mouter (TU Delft), Sander Boxebeld (Erasmus Univerisity) and Delphine Roy (IPP).

Doctoral supervision

The PhD will be co-supervised by Dr Jonathan Sicsic (LIRAES, Université Paris Cité), associate professor of economics with habilitation and scientific coordinator of ARBOR, and Dr Anaïs Cheneau (post-doctoral researcher, Chaire AgingUP!), working on preferences and long-term care. The doctoral researcher will be integrated into an active, interdisciplinary team and involved across the project: normative framing, scenario co-construction, the microsimulation-based consequence engine, PVE platform development and testing, data collection, econometric modelling and dissemination (scientific articles, policy briefs and a workshop at Sciences Po). He / she will be expected to carry out the project and connect with all consortium members and partners of the project.

Candidate profile and requirements

Essential

- A Master's degree (or equivalent) in economics, with a strong background in applied microeconomics, health economics or public economics, completed by the start date.
- Solid training in econometrics and quantitative methods; an interest in discrete-choice / stated-preference methods is an asset.

- Proficiency in at least one statistical software package (R, Stata, Python or equivalent).
- Fluency in English, the working language for publications; a good command of French (B2 level or more), needed for survey design and interaction with French administrations.
- The ability to work both independently and within a multidisciplinary team involving academic and institutional partners.

Desirable

- Prior exposure to survey design, choice experiments, microsimulation or the economics of ageing / long-term care.
- An interest in the political economy of social protection, distributive justice and public-policy evaluation.
- Experience with data visualization or the design of interactive survey instruments.

What we offer

- A fully funded, full-time doctoral contract of 36 months, remunerated according to the French doctoral-contract salary scale in force (*gross monthly salary to be confirmed during interviews*).
- A stimulating research environment across leading centers (LIRAES / Université Paris Cité, LIEPP / Sciences Po, Université Paris 1) and the AgingUP! Chair.
- Close involvement with public administrations (CNSA, HCAAM) and an international scientific network.
- Funding for conferences, training and research activities, with co-supervision ensuring regular scientific guidance.

How to apply

Applications should be submitted as a single PDF file including:

- A cover letter stating motivation and research interests (max. 2 pages).
- A detailed CV.
- Academic transcripts (Master's and, if available, Bachelor's).
- A writing sample (e.g. Master's thesis or research paper), if available.
- The names and contact details of two academic referees.

Deadline: August 25th, 2026

Applications and informal enquiries to: jonathan.sicsic@u-pariscite.fr

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview.

Université Paris Cité and Sciences Po are equal-opportunity employers and welcome applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

For more information on our activities, please visit the Chaire AgingUP! website: https://agingup.u-paris.fr