

# Ben Zaranko

(Academic CV last updated February 2026)

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[Google Scholar](#)

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## Employment and Affiliations

Nov 2024 –	Institute for Fiscal Studies, Associate Director
Jan 2022 – Nov 2024	Institute for Fiscal Studies, Senior Research Economist
May 2018 –	Imperial College Business School, Visiting Researcher
Jul 2017 – Dec 2021	Institute for Fiscal Studies, Research Economist
Aug 2016 – May 2017	Willis Towers Watson, Consultant

## Education

2018 – 2020	MSc Economics (Distinction), University College London
2013 – 2016	BA Economics & Management (1 <sup>st</sup> class), University of Oxford

## Other Professional Experience

Co-editor of Institute for Fiscal Studies Green Budget (2021 – 2023, 2025)

Columnist at The Observer (September 2025 – present)

## Published and Forthcoming Academic Papers

“Fiscal policy and the justice system” (with Magdalena Dominguez and Joe Tomlinson), *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law* (forthcoming)

“Nurse shortages and patient outcomes” (with Elaine Kelly and Carol Propper), *Journal of Health Economics*, Vol. 105, January 2026

“Future challenges for health and social care provision in the UK” (with Max Warner), invited contribution to *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol. 41(1), June 2025

“Nurse staffing and inpatient mortality in the English NHS” (with Natalie Sanford, Elaine Kelly, Anne Marie Rafferty, James Bird, Luca Mercuri, Janice Sigsworth, Mary Wells and Carol Propper), *BMJ Quality & Safety*, September 2022

“Long-term care spending and hospital use among the older population in England” (with Rowena Crawford and George Stoye), *Journal of Health Economics*, Vol. 78, July 2021

“Educational inequalities in hospital use among older adults in England, 2004–2015” (with George Stoye, Martin Shipley, Martin McKee and Eric Brunner), *The Milbank Quarterly*, October 2020

“The wider impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the NHS” (with Carol Propper and George Stoye), invited contribution to *Fiscal Studies*, Vol. 41(2), June 2020

## Working Papers

“Off to the shops? Outside job opportunities and care worker labour supply” (with Max Warner), *IFS Working Paper WP25/61*, December 2025

“How accurate are self-reported diagnoses? Comparing self-reported health events in the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing with administrative hospital records” (with George Stoye), *IFS Working Paper W/P20/13*, May 2020

### **Academic Works in Progress**

“How redistributive is the English National Health Service?” (with Eric French, Jeremy McCauley and George Stoye)

“Local labour market conditions and care worker labour supply” (with Olly Harvey-Rich, Carol Propper, George Stoye and Max Warner)

### **Selected Other Publications (for full list, see <https://ifs.org.uk/people/ben-zaranko>)**

“From fiscal rules to fiscal traffic lights: rethinking the UK fiscal framework”, Institute for Fiscal Studies, February 2026

“Productivity in the Crown Court” (with Magdalena Dominguez), Institute for Fiscal Studies, June 2025

“The relationship between NHS waiting lists and health-related benefit claims” (with Max Warner), Institute for Fiscal Studies, May 2025

“Justice spending in England and Wales” (with Magdalena Dominguez), Institute for Fiscal Studies, February 2025

“Options for the 2024 Spending Review and beyond” (with Bee Boileau and Max Warner), in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Kate Ogden (eds.) *IFS Green Budget*, October 2024

“Adult social care: what next?” (with Antonella Bancalari), in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Kate Ogden (eds.) *IFS Green Budget*, October 2024

“A note of caution on fiscal technocracy”, Institute for Fiscal Studies and *The Times*, May 2024

“Public investment: what you need to know”, Institute for Fiscal Studies, April 2024

“Constraints and trade-offs for the next government” (with Carl Emmerson, Christine Farquharson and Paul Johnson), Institute for Fiscal Studies, January 2024

“Public sector net worth as a fiscal target”, in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Ben Zaranko (eds.) *IFS Green Budget*, October 2023

“Implications of the NHS Workforce Plan” (with Max Warner), in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Ben Zaranko (eds.) *IFS Green Budget*, August 2023

“NHS funding, resources and treatment volumes” (with Max Warner), Institute for Fiscal Studies Report, December 2022

“Public spending, pay and pensions” (with Bee Boileau and Laurence O’Brien), in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Ben Zaranko (eds.) *IFS Green Budget*, October 2022

“Spending Review 2021: plans, promises and predicaments”, in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Ben Zaranko (eds.) *IFS Green Budget*, October 2021

“Pressures on the NHS” (with Max Warner), in Carl Emmerson, Paul Johnson and Ben Zaranko (eds.) IFS Green Budget, September 2021

“Levelling up: where and how?” (with Alex Davenport), in Carl Emmerson, Christine Farquharson and Paul Johnson (eds.) IFS Green Budget, October 2020

“Spending Review 2020: COVID-19, Brexit and beyond”, in Carl Emmerson, Christine Farquharson and Paul Johnson (eds.) IFS Green Budget, October 2020

“The planning and control of UK public expenditure, 1993–2015” (with Rowena Crawford and Paul Johnson), IFS Report R147, July 2018

### **Interactive online tools**

[‘Be the Chancellor’](#) – an IFS tool allowing the user to change spending plans, set tax policies, adjust economic assumptions, and see the impact on borrowing, debt and adherence to the fiscal rules.

[‘Where and how does the government spend its money?’](#) – allows the user to explore the regional distribution of public expenditure.

[‘What could happen to NHS waiting lists in England?’](#) – allows the user to explore future scenarios for hospital waiting lists. An earlier version won the 2022 Harding Prize for Trustworthy Communication.

### **Policy Presentations and Media**

I have given oral evidence to the Health and Social Care Commons Select Committee, the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee, the House of Lords Public Services Committee, the NHS Pay Review Body, and the Doctors and Dentists Pay Review Body. I have discussed my research on radio and TV in more than 200 broadcast interviews; my work has been covered in all major UK newspapers; I appear regularly on the IFS podcast (all episodes can be found [here](#)); I write a regular column for [the Observer](#); and have written for various other national publications (The Times, The Sun, Prospect).

### **Grants and Awards**

2025	IFS Green Budget 2025, Barclays (£125,000, Co-I); IFS Green Budget 2026 – 2029, Nuffield Foundation (£476,311, Co-I)
2024	“Understanding the determinants of productivity and retention in the health and social care workforce”, ESRC New Investigator Grant (£294,086, PI); “Alternatives to bright-line fiscal rules”, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (£59,585, PI)
2023	The 2022 Harding Prize for Trustworthy Communication (with George Stoye and Max Warner), for interactive NHS waiting list calculator
2021	IFS Green Budget 2022 – 2025, Nuffield Foundation (£458,824, Co-I)

### **Academic Presentations and Seminars (including scheduled)**

2025	University of Sheffield
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2023	American Economic Association and Allied Social Science Associations meeting (AEA/ASSA); Institute for Fiscal Studies; Erasmus University Rotterdam
2022	Essen Health Conference; Royal Economic Society (RES) Annual Conference; European Health Economics Association Conference (EUHEA)
2020	Institute for Fiscal Studies; British and Irish Longitudinal Studies of Ageing (BILS) meeting
2019	European Economic Association (EEA) Annual Congress
2018	RES Annual Conference; Health Economists' Study Group

### **Refereeing and Teaching Activities**

Refereeing	<i>Journal of Political Economy, Labour Economics, Health Economics, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, International Tax and Public Finance, Fiscal Studies, The BMJ, JAMA Network Open, Health Policy</i>
Lecturer	Guest Lecturer, UCL MSc Economics, Health Economics elective, 2024 – present. I gave annual ‘Public Economics Lecture’ (health care and social insurance) to undergraduate students at the University of Oxford, University of Cambridge and IFS, 2018 – 2023.