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Sport as a medicine for health and health inequalities

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Biography

Willem Ids Jan de Boer was born on 17 May 1977 in Dokkum (Friesland). During his first years Willem lived in Metslawier, but when he was five his parents moved to Kollum. During his youth, he played football, tennis and chess with great fanaticism, but limited talent. At the Lauwers College high school in Buitenpost, he developed an interest in economics and socio-economic inequalities. In 1995, Willem started studying econometrics at the University of Groningen. Student life was a 'good life' and it brought many life lessons, in the Groningen night life, at society Fax of the Hendrik de Cock students association and during a three-month period travelling and volunteering in South Asia. For his master thesis, Willem worked at The Conference Board in New York to study the business cycle of Thailand. After graduating in 2001, Willem moved to London to work as an economic researcher at the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR). In 2003, he started working as an econometrician at the Nyenrode Forum for Economic Research (NYFER) in Breukelen. After NYFER was dissolved in 2004, he worked as a researcher of healthcare costs at Vektis in Zeist. In 2008, Willem switched from research to public policy by working as a policy officer in the field of innovation and regional economics at the Ministry of Economic Affairs in The Hague. Willem returned to research in 2010, working as a sports economist and teacher at the *Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen* (HAN University of Applied Sciences). At the HAN Academy for Sports and Exercise Studies, he conducts research into, among other things, the economic and social importance of sport and exercise, economic aspects of sport and the impact of sporting events. From 2016 to 2022, Willem has been able to work part-time on his PhD thesis, which covers several of the themes described above. During that time, he published a photobook called 'Soviet Spheres' (Mauritsheech Publishers) with Justin Kroesen, which portrays the everyday life in former Soviet states. Willem currently lives in Nijmegen with his life partner Mirte Slump and their sons Tobias (2009) and Mads (2011). He now practices cycling, basketball and chess with limited fanaticism and even less talent, but with much pleasure.

