

UBI - Basics

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UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

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1. What is an emancipatory UBI?

The UBI (Unconditional Basic Income) is a sum of money paid regularly, unconditionally and universally to all individuals, high enough to ensure their material existence and participation in society. The UBI must have an amount above the relative poverty line of the country in order to eradicate income poverty and minimise income and social inequality in a sustainable way in the country concerned. This level of the basic income is to be checked regularly with suitable reference budgets (basket of goods and services, etc.) with regard to the actual securing of sufficient income to ensure current material existence and participation in society and adjusted upwards if necessary. Only if UBI meets all these criteria can the UBI unfold its emancipatory power and ensures a decent life for all. An emancipatory UBI is also organised and controlled democratically.

a) We consider the UBI as a human right regardless of whether people "do" something or not. The emancipatory point is: Every human being has the same social rights everywhere, just as well the UBI as a human right worldwide.

b) The UBI is a step towards an emancipatory social / welfare system. The UBI does not replace public and social infrastructure and services (education, health, energy, public transport, etc.). On the contrary, the UBI goes hand in hand with the expansion and democratisation of unconditionally and universally, i. e. cost-free accessible public and social infrastructure and services. The UBI does

not replace public social insurance, but makes it poverty-proof and universal. The emancipatory point is: The welfare system guarantees for everyone a life in dignity and social security.

c) The UBI strengthens the power of workers and their organisations because it strengthens the bargaining position. The emancipatory point is: Workers can say no and change the bad working conditions.

d) The UBI strengthens the power of women because it provides an independent income and social security for them. The emancipatory point is: Women can change and improve their life situation and conditions.

e) The UBI is a step towards a society in which people are free and able to live and work in cooperation with others, for example in solidarity-based and sustainable communities and economies. The emancipatory point is: UBI enable people to build a democratical and ecological society and production.

Summary: An UBI is a part of societal regulations which promotes emancipation for everyone, i.e. which promotes the self-determination and controlling of the own life and working conditions.

2. UBI - Redistributive effect from the rich to the poor and middle class and significant reduction of social and income inequality

Redistribution is necessary because in the current economic situation and in the financial system, the gap between the rich and the middle class / poor is widening unless countervailing framework conditions are created. The rich will not become poor through the UBI, but the large gap will be significantly reduced. Poverty and precarity would be eliminated, social and income inequality minimised.

3. UBI - Decoupling gainful employment and individual livelihoods

By decoupling gainful employment and individual livelihood, workers / employees have the opportunity to reduce their paid working hours / labour time in order to have more time for their families, social networks, education and interests as well as their political engagement.

By decoupling gainful employment and individual livelihood through UBI, new forms of self-organisation and cooperative production can be implemented, which are necessary for the development of ecological and social sustainability.

4. UBI - Recognition, social status and self-esteem independent of gainful employment

Childcare and care for elder, disabled and sick persons, housework and self-performed repairs and maintenances, voluntary social work, shaping social relationships and civil society engagement for ecological and social goals, if unpaid, are considered non-value-added (GDP) under current conditions. Without these unpaid works, the social and economic system would collapse. A rethink in the valuation of any work / activity done – whether paid or unpaid – is necessary. The UBI offers the opportunity to carry out unpaid activities of one's own choice in a secure material existence.

UBI promotes recognition, social status and self-esteem independent of gainful employment. We need a change from a working society to a multi-activity, a human- and knowledge-based society, also with enough time for leisure and for a stress-free, healthy life.

5. UBI - Empowerment of Women

UBI is one of the important tools to reach gender equality. It ensures every woman material independence from her husband or partner, empowers and enables her to live and act in a self-determined and more equal way.

Besides the UBI, equal pay für equal work for all genders in gainful employment must be achieved.

6. UBI - Promotion of democracy

The UBI provides and opens the way for participation in the democratic social and political life of a country.

The UBI forms the economic basis for every person to be able to act in a self-responsible and self-determined way, therefore helps to reduce disenchantment with politics and enables people to participate actively.

7. UBI - Building a better world

An UBI is a part of the socio-ecological transformation process with the aim of creating a "good life" for all. It promotes the democratic participation of everyone, the reduction of working hours, the engagement in solidarity economies, i.e. the push back of alienated labour and consumerism. Because of the UBI no one need to be afraid of the necessary changes on the way to a society that is in harmony with nature, its protection and preservation.