

ANNEX

Definition of Unconditional Basic Income

Unconditional Basic Income (UBI) shall not replace the welfare state but rather complete and transform the same from a compensatory into an emancipatory welfare state.

Unconditional Basic Income is defined by the following four criteria:

Universal: UBI is paid to all, without means test. It is not subject to income, savings or property limits. Every person, irrespective of age, descent, citizenship, place of residence, profession etc. will be entitled to receive this allocation. Thus, we claim a EU-wide, guaranteed, unconditional basic income.

Individual: Everyone – every woman, every man, every child – has the right to UBI on an individual basis as this is the only way to ensure privacy and to prevent control over other individuals. UBI will be independent of marital status, cohabitation or household configuration, or of the income or property of other household - or family members. This enables individuals to make their own decisions.

Unconditional: As a human and legal right UBI shall not depend on any preconditions, whether an obligation to take paid employment, to demonstrate willingness-to-work, to be involved in community service, or to behave according to any gender roles.

High enough: The amount should provide for a decent standard of living, which meets society's social and cultural standards in the country concerned. It should prevent material poverty and provide the opportunity to participate in society. This means that the net amount of UBI should be at least above the at-risk-of-poverty level according to EU standards, which corresponds to 60% of the so-called national median net equivalent income. In countries where the majority has low incomes, and therefore median income is low, an alternative benchmark (e.g. a basket of goods and services) should be used to determine the amount of the basic income, to guarantee a life in dignity, material security and full participation in society.

An UBI is a central measure to reach the goals of human dignity, freedom and equality deployed in central documents of the European Union:

Treaty on European Union (TEU)

Article 2

„The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights

of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail."

UBI as defined by its four criteria realizes all of the values listed above. It provides material security and full participation in society without conditions combined with equality of all individuals.

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Article 1

Human dignity

"Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected."

The dignity of the individual must include the opportunity to live freely and responsibly in society. UBI grants freedom and responsibility to each individual by removing existential and administrative constraints as well as exclusion from social life.

UBI helps citizens identify with the European Union and ensures their political rights. It supports the realisation of fundamental rights. "The dignity of the human person is not only a fundamental right in itself but constitutes the real basis of fundamental rights." (Official explanation of article 1 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union).

An UBI for all people would be a strong signal that the EU takes the right to "a decent existence" seriously.

Article 5

Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

"2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour."

According to the International Labour Organisation, forced or compulsory labour "means all work or service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily." (ILO, Forced Labour Convention, 1930, No. 29). In many current minimum income schemes and social welfare systems, benefits can be withdrawn under certain conditions. UBI abolishes such practice that forces beneficiaries of conditional welfare (workfare) assistance to take up work they would have rejected otherwise.

Article 6

Right to liberty and security

“Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person.”

UBI supports the free choice of personal life-styles, the arrangement of one’s social relations and whether to engage in social and economic cooperation. With this freedom responsibility for the well-being of others should arise. Together with the protection provided by the current social welfare systems, an UBI is the best guarantee of financial security during times of illness and unemployment.

Article 15

Freedom to choose an occupation and right to engage in work

“1. Everyone has the right to engage in work and to pursue a freely chosen or accepted occupation.”

UBI makes it easier to pursue a freely chosen or at least acceptable occupation. Under many current welfare systems, the need for material goods and services in order to survive together with various administrative constraints restricts one’s freedom to choose an occupation and forces one to accept unsuitable paid work.

Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)

Article 5

„The Union may take initiatives to ensure coordination of Member States’ social policies.”

Social policies of the Member States can be coordinated to prevent lowering social standards. The common measure for all would be the introduction of an UBI corresponding to the four defined criteria. The responsibility for adapting UBI to the existing national social systems lies within the Member States’ jurisdiction.

There are existing many studies showing different ways of introducing (steps) and of financing UBI. We do not suggest any specific one in this ECI.