



FEDERAL POPULAR INITIATIVE « For an Unconditional Basic Income »

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Basic Income: the best answer to social problems

After we sent an information dossier about basic income to congressmen and congresswomen, who will gather today in a commission, the Socialist party (SP) suggested to National Council's Social Security Committee (SGK-N) a "general income insurance" (AEV) as a counter project to the initiative «for an unconditional basic income». According to SP, while UBI initiative raises an actual point and asks good questions, it suggests an answer that might trigger a loss of social achievements. We're glad to learn that SP pays so much attention to the Initiative, yet we'd like to point out that this fear has no case: basic income is a major social progress and it might perfectly integrate with the existing system. It just establishes a fundamental right for everybody to get enough high an income to live a decent life.

Why is a basic income necessary today? Until the end of the 20th century, implementing the constitutional principle of granting a decent existence for everybody meant granting everybody a job paid enough well to live. Today, in accordance with SP, we notice that ever increasing productivity and the economic crisis end up generating, even in Switzerland, an ever increasing number of insufficient paid jobs and an ever increasing number of people excluded by the job's market, whose figure is well higher than plain unemployment statistics show. So it's necessary to introduce a new method of redistributing wealth to grant everybody enough means to survive.

Why a basic income, instead of an AEV? Because, despite AEV fairly generalizes the principle of taking systematically care of people excluded by paid work, it features the same mechanisms of the current system: no economic incentives to get a paid work, and the humiliating stigma of control. Basic Income, on the other hand, realizes each one's right to existence, with no need to fulfill any condition and have a paid work. Consequently, it eradicates poverty and its "trail" of stigma with no administrative burden; improves working conditions; help professional entrance and self-entrepreneurship; fills the goal of a minimum wage and gives a worth to all the unpaid work, mostly done by women.

The SP fears of dismantling social achievements have no basis. All parliamentary forces actually agree on the need for a more effective social security. If this wasn't the case, dismantling would already have taken place. Current pressures against some sectors of our social system can be seen as an indicator that this is no longer able to fulfill its goal in the current context of highly increasing needs. Basic income, simplifying an already too much complex system, could both satisfy the partisans of a social protection that acts in accordance to the principles of dignity and those who want to rationalize unproductive expenses.

Whether it's Unconditional Basic Income or General Income Insurance (AEV), BIEN-Switzerland is happy to notice that his dossier, sent to the Parliament, helped the conversation about the urgent answers to give to the precarious making of a growing part of our population. We're all at the disposal of SP and all those parts who are concerned by the need to improve our social system, in order to give them all the necessary elements to help their considerations and decisions.

Unconditional Basic Income is a major reform of the social system that redistributes a part of the social wealth to us all as a monthly grant, individual and high enough to allow a decent life. The figure must be high enough to fund our fundamental needs: food, clothes and shelter, health insurance and participation to the social life. In most cases, it's not an additional income but replaces and securitizes this indispensable part of the income. As an indication, we suggest a monthly grant of CHF 2'500.- for adults and CHF 625.-, namely a fourth, for kids.

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basicincome.ch : detailed infos on our website