


SHOULD A UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME BE PART OF THE NEW ZEALAND POLITICAL PROJECT?

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Overview


- Basic Income: An Overview
 - Evaluating the Arguments for and Against a Universal Basic Income
 - Universal Basic Income through a 'Care, Community, Creativity' Lens
 - Lessons Learned from Existing Pilots
 - The Case for a Pilot
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Basic Income: An Overview


- A definition (and a qualification)
- Appeal to both Left and Right
- Past Universal Basic Income projects




The Arguments for a Universal Basic Income

- A way to address insecurity in work
 - Removes stigma for those on a benefit
 - Boosts power for those in dependent relationships, allowing exit from those relationships
 - Recognises work that is currently unpaid (for example, domestic work)
 - Provides freedom for the pursuit of meaningful projects
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The Arguments Against a Universal Basic Income

- Is a Universal Basic Income affordable?
 - A Universal Basic Income might be a way to dismantle the welfare state 'by the back-door'
 - Could a Universal Basic Income result in unmanageable population increases?
 - Will a Universal Basic Income lead to idleness or a loss in productivity?
 - Is a Universal Basic Income fair?
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Assessing a Universal Basic Income through a Progressive Lens

- Care: provides recognition for domestic care, may open up space for more caring relationships
 - Community: may help to build further solidarity, or could maintain existing individualism
 - Creativity: greater time for creative projects
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The Pilots


- Finland
 - Ontario, Canada
 - Utrecht, Netherlands
 - Kenya (GiveDirectly)
 - Y Combinator – Oakland, California
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Why a New Zealand Pilot is Defensible

- Greater evidence
- Helps to kickstart discussion
- Costs and constitutional challenges manageable



Objections to a Pilot

- Imposed on communities?
 - Measurements difficult
 - Using struggling people as policy guinea pigs?
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Design Choices for a Viable Universal Basic Income Pilot in NZ

- Nationwide or local?
- Partnership between local government and national government, or national government-led?
- Size and length of pilot?
- Level of income (and tax details)?
- Opt-in?
- Only beneficiaries or low-income people?
- What is measured?
- Involvement of non-governmental organisations or iwi?
- How much time is left for planning?

Further Questions

- Are we still committed to universalism in services?
 - Does our welfare system need an overhaul?
 - How important is work in our vision of the good society?
 - Will our politicians be brave enough to debate this idea in the election?
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