



UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME EUROPE

Don't let us down in the Corona-crisis! Over 125.000 Europeans demand Unconditional Basic Income

PRESS RELEASE

For millions across Europe, steps taken by the authorities to contain the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic mean the partial or total loss of their income. Only one instrument can immediately guarantee no one's economic security and existence is threatened: basic income. Within a week, over 125.000 European citizens have signed a petition by Unconditional Basic Income Europe (UBIE) calling on EU leaders to create a financial capacity to support the introduction of an Unconditional Basic Income as an urgent measure in all Member States.

Brussels, 30 March 2020 – Addressing the virus has required slowing down or stopping social and economic activities everywhere in Europe. For many businesses this means an immediate drop in income and the inability to pay their workforce and contractors. Parents need to reduce paid work time, or work from home due to the closure of all schools. Countless freelancers, as well as employees are losing their jobs, or part of their salaries. Many do not know how they are going to pay their bills. Millions of Europeans are at risk of falling through social safety nets and into poverty.

“The various relief measures enacted by EU governments are important and welcome, but none of them guarantees everyone in need is covered, and they all put an additional burden on already stressed public administrations,” points out Alessandra Bianchi, Vice-Chair of Unconditional Basic Income Europe. “Especially in times of crisis, we cannot afford gaps in safety nets and non-takeup due to administrative burdens and undignified bureaucratic procedures. On top of this, many EU governments cannot offer much to their citizens.”

Responding to this situation, the international network Unconditional Basic Income Europe working with WeMove.EU, launched a petition on 21 March, 2020. It calls on

European leaders and the ECB to immediately establish the financial capacity to support all EU countries in introducing an Unconditional Basic Income [1]. The system is easy, quick to introduce and requires minimum bureaucracy compared to other income support measures [2].

Within a week 125,000 citizens from all over Europe signed in support of this measure. .

“We need an immediate and coordinated European effort to ensure that all Member States can protect their economies and their citizens. If the European Union fails to act in direct solidarity with all its citizens in this situation, it will suffer severe and possibly irreparable damage to its legitimacy”, Bianchi warns.

After the restrictive measures are lifted, Unconditional Basic Income will also provide a stimulus to kickstart essential sectors of the economy, otherwise economic disparities and social imbalances evident during the Euro crisis will severely worsen in the next few months.

Since the last major crisis in 2008, the EU has pumped trillions of Euros into the failing financial sector without achieving any discernible impact on the real economy, and in fact deepening inequality. Now it is time to support the people directly.

The Petition “Emergency basic income for the EU - now!”

- <https://you.wemove.eu/campaigns/emergency-basic-income>

Notes

[1] An Unconditional Basic Income (UBI) is money provided to all members of a political community on an individual, periodic basis, without means tests or work requirements. Unlike many existing minimum income schemes in European countries, UBI is universal, individual, unconditional, and high enough to ensure an existence that preserves personal dignity and allows active participation in society.

[2] For example in Gyeonggi province in South Korea, the government introduced an ‘emergency basic income’ on cash cards issued to every resident and a detailed proposal on how to do this was submitted to the United States Congress by Rep. Rashida Tlaib.

- https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/biz/2020/03/602_286709.html
- <https://tlaib.house.gov/sites/tlaib.house.gov/files/Automatic%20Boost%20to%20Communities%20Act%20.pdf>

About Unconditional Basic Income Europe (UBIE)

UBIE was born out of the European Citizens’ Initiative for an Unconditional Basic Income in 2013/14, which gathered the support of over 300,000 EU citizens. It connects over 400 active members from more than 30 countries across the continent, and advocates for the

implementation of Basic Income in Europe and its recognition as a Universal Human Right.

<https://www.ubie.org/who-we-are/>

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