

GAZTEBI PROJECT

Does an Unconditional Basic Income
allow young people to face their life
project in more favourable
conditions?

2021/2022

eman ta zabal zazu



UPV EHU

Content

Work team

3

Theoretical framework

5

The project

22

Action I. Videos and workshops

25

Action II. Meetings with social and institutional actors

29

Action III. Questionnaire to UPV/EHU students

32

Results

36

Conclusions

46

Bibliography

50

1
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1

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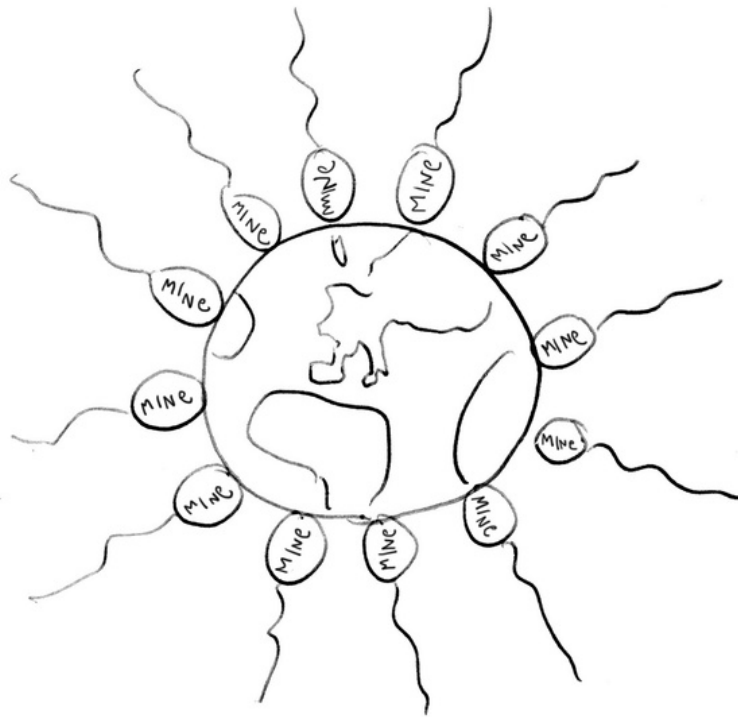
Illustration designer: Ane Zaldibar

2

**Theoretical
framework**

2.1

An introduction to Unconditional Basic Income



the ORIGIN of poverty

Unconditional basic income (UBI) is defined as an *"income paid by the state, as a right of citizenship, to every full member or resident of society even if they do not want to work for pay, regardless of whether they are rich or poor [...]. In short: a basic income is an unconditional public monetary allocation to the entire population"* (Basic Income Network, 2021).

Although it has a very diverse background and the concept of UBI, explained in different terms and forms, but with the same background, dates back to the Renaissance, it will be during the last two centuries when different economists, sociologists, philosophers and politicians have been sophisticating and studying the proposal in detail, managing to introduce it into the social and political agenda in the twentieth century.

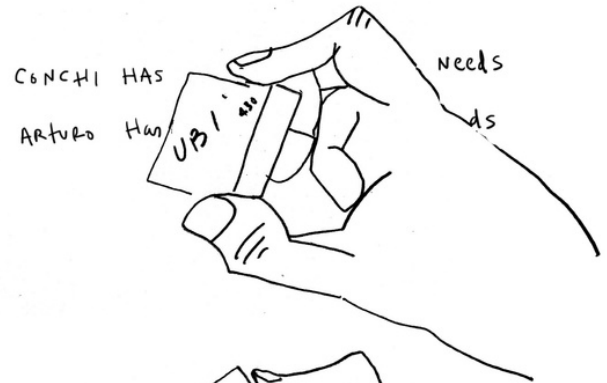
The most notable acceleration in terms of available information on the UBI, however, will occur from 2016 onwards. One of the reasons for this is, in part, the various pilot projects being carried out in geographies and economies as diverse as Kenya, Namibia, India, Canada, the United States, Finland, the Netherlands, France, Scotland and Spain.

Special mention should be made of the year 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, where it has become clear that the social protection systems of our democracies have not been sufficient to provide an adequate response to this crisis, and public support for UBI as a tool that would make a solution possible has increased (Nettle et al., 2021).

Over the last few years, there have also been many positions taken by relevant personalities and organisations in favour of UBI: From Antonio Guterres himself, Secretary General of the United Nations, in his speech to the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2018, to the election programme with which the current President of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, ran for the PSOE primaries in 2017, or the resolution 2197 adopted in 2018 by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe - which, among others, the current Minister of Education of the Basque Government voted in favour of -, to Pope Francis who, in 2020, stated in "Dreaming Together. The road to a better future" that it is time to explore concepts such as the UBI, and on 16 October 2021, in his address to the IV Meeting of Popular Movements, he proposed it as a new concrete and necessary measure.

Finally, we cannot forget that we are starting from the need to advance in the analysis of a UBI, as a feasible measure to achieve the fulfilment of some of the recognised rights that are currently not fully guaranteed.

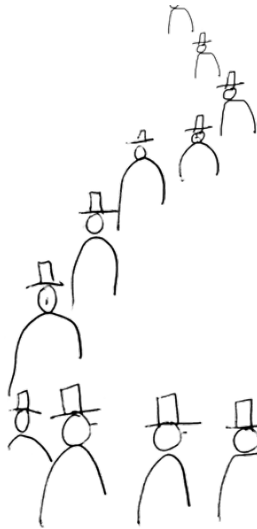
CONCHI HAS more than she needs
 ARTURO HAS less than he needs



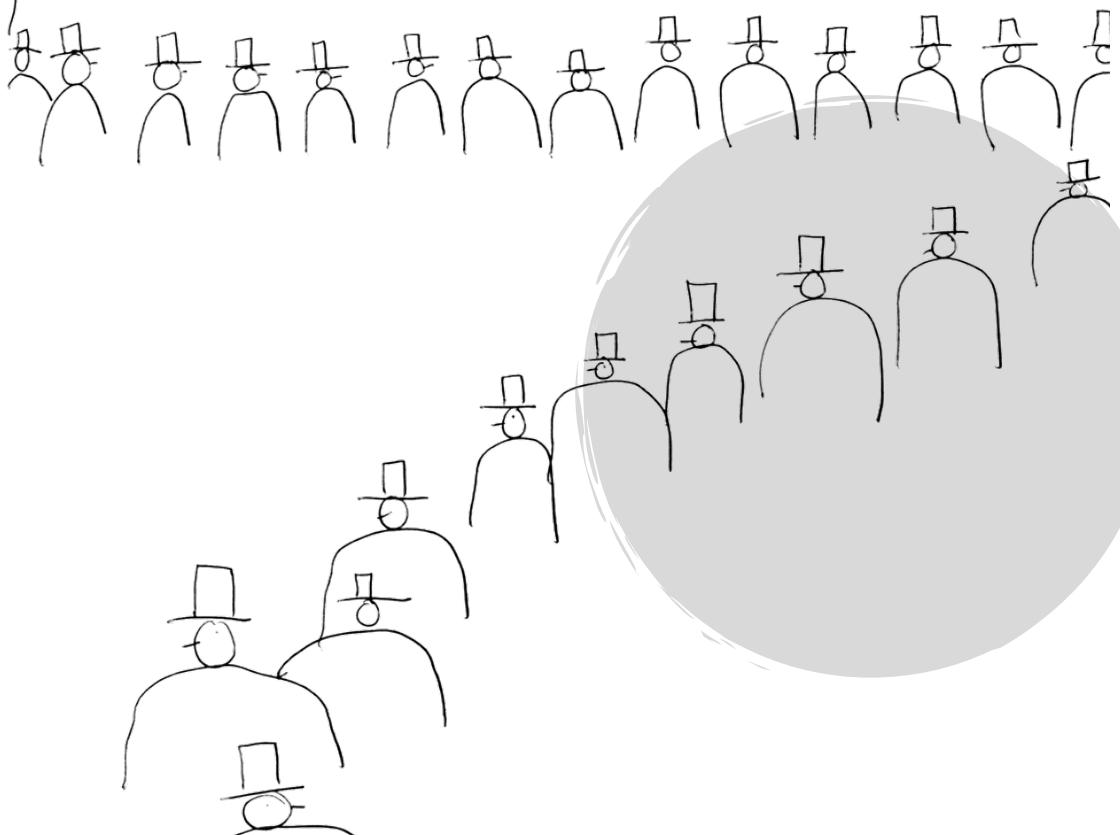
CONCHI HAS
 ARTURO HAS

Ander paying rent
for the house he lives in,
which belongs to
Mam-Lo.

Mam-Lo paying taxes
on the Land on the house
he rents to Ander,
which belongs to all
of us.



Landowners lining up
to pay rent for the Land
to its owner, humanity.

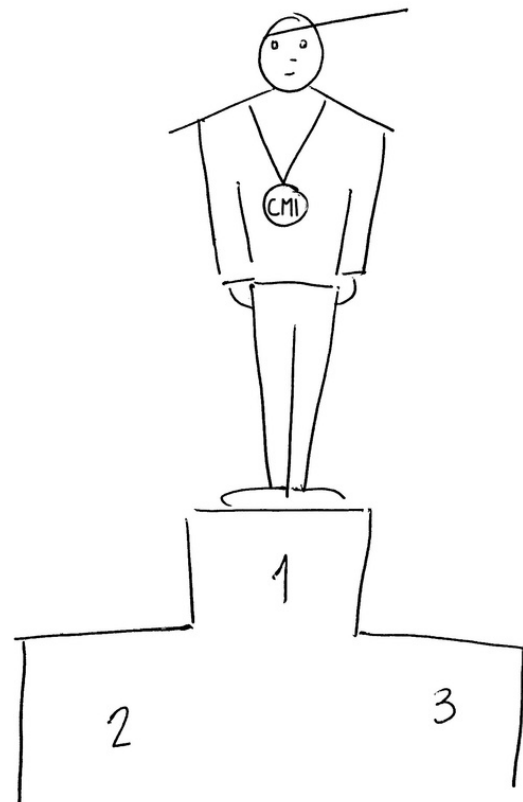


2.2

Basic income in the face of the limitations of conditional minimum incomes

The conditional minimum income or income guarantee programmes are economic assistance benefits whose purpose is to provide everyone with the minimum necessary to be able to live in dignity. As they are welfare benefits, they all share the characteristic of being granted to the beneficiary as long as he/she has proven that he/she has insufficient income or assets to qualify for the conditional minimum income or income guarantee programme (Cohen and Friedman, 1972). In other words, they are economic benefits conditional on a certain situation of need established ex ante (means-tested), the logic of which is none other than to offer ex post assistance to people who find themselves in this situation of need and can prove to the public administration that they are "deserving" of receiving it.

THE BEST POOR PERSON



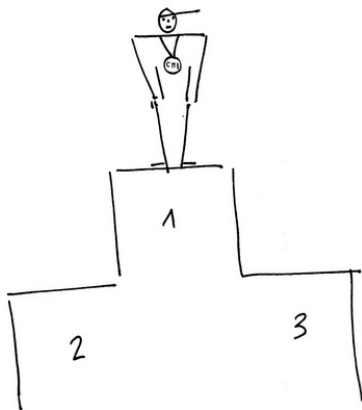
Now you clean the podium please.

The main objective of conditional cash benefits since their creation has been, and still is, to eliminate or reduce poverty (Immervoll, 2010). However, due to the low degree of fulfilment of this objective, the academic debate on the effectiveness of conditional cash benefits has been abundant.

Effectiveness of conditional minimum incomes

Sainsbury and Morissens (2002) published a study on the effectiveness of conditional cash benefits in Europe in the mid-1990s, which showed that conditional cash benefits per se were insufficient to achieve a large reduction in poverty in the mid-1990s in Europe, with country poverty rate reductions ranging from 0.2% in Italy to 8.5% in the UK.

The Best poor person II



Subsequent research, such as that carried out by Bahle, Pfeifer and Wendt (2010), found that, in 2006, many European countries still maintained the amounts of their conditional cash benefits below the poverty threshold, which makes it impossible for families receiving these benefits to rise above it. The adequacy of benefit amounts, measured through the adequacy ratio, determines the level at which the benefit provides people with sufficient resources to ensure an adequate standard of living to lead a life that is compatible with human dignity and to take an active part in society (Frazer and Marlier, 2016; European Commission, 2010).

In 2019, of the OECD countries, only the Netherlands (60), Denmark (60) and Japan (62) achieved an adequacy rate equal to or above 60% of national median income - including housing benefits. And for two adults with two children, Denmark only (67).

These data show that at present most conditional minimum income schemes, including housing benefits, are not sufficient to allow beneficiaries to overcome poverty and guarantee them a standard of living compatible with human dignity. But what are the main limitations of conditional minimum income schemes?



Limitations of conditional minimum income schemes

Conditional minimum income schemes have five major limitations that have been extensively analysed over the years. They are briefly summarised below:

1

Budgetary constraints:

One of the main problems of conditional cash benefits, especially conditional minimum income schemes, is their budgetary constraints and instability. In general, these programmes cover a very small percentage of the population because of the small amount of resources budgeted for the total number of people who could be potential beneficiaries. In addition to this, it must be taken into account that the budget allocated to these programmes is not fixed, so that the different institutional structures may reduce or increase the budget allocated to them.

2

Coverage errors:

1. Conditional subsidies do not provide full coverage of all eligible citizens (Santens, 2020). This is what we call the non-take-up rate (Bollain, 2021), defined as the rate of people who do not receive the conditional benefits to which they are entitled (Matsaganis, Levy, and Flevotomou, 2010). Although the non-take-up rate of conditional minimum income programmes varies considerably across countries, it is always highly significant.

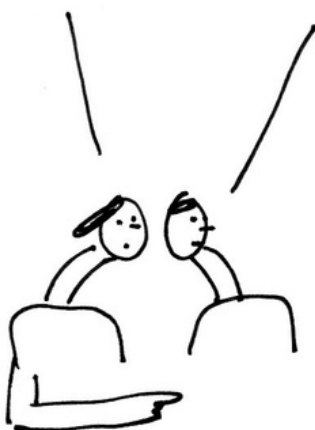
3

Stigmatisation of beneficiaries:

1. One of the main reasons why the rate of access to conditional cash benefits is significantly reduced is the stigma associated with them. Two forms of stigma are observed: integrity stigma and treatment stigma. Integrity stigma is based on concerns about the possibility of negative stereotyping associated with conditional cash benefits, which affects the self-image of the potential beneficiary. Treatment stigma, on the other hand, is based on how other people view and act towards beneficiaries who, once stigmatised, are labelled as responsible for their fate.

Look how
stopped Jose
is ...

yes ... it's
because of
the medal ...



4

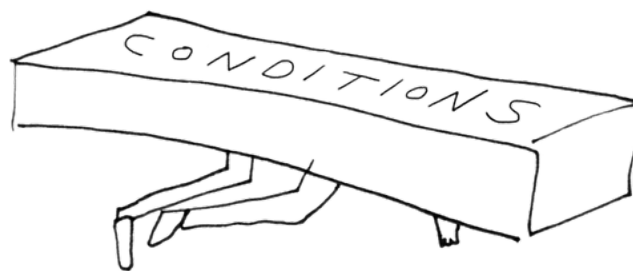
Administrative costs:

The targeting of benefits to the most vulnerable sectors of society, i.e. the fact that benefits are conditional, means that there are de facto significant administrative costs (Benfield, 2007). Such administrative costs lead to a reduction in the amount of resources allocated to poverty alleviation. Conditional benefit programmes, such as conditional minimum income schemes, require staff and skills as well as time and money to be properly implemented and monitored (Santens, 2020).

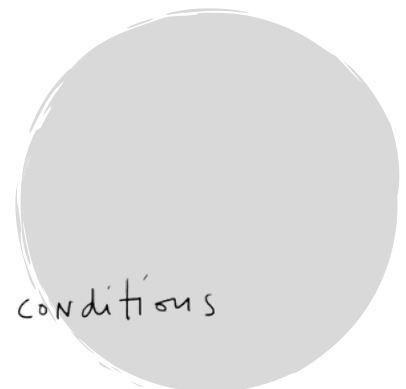
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Poverty trap:

Conditional minimum income schemes are conditional benefits that are generally not cumulative. They are benefits that at most complement a possible income that the family unit may have up to a threshold set by the programme in question -which, logically, varies depending on the programme/country-. This non-cumulative nature takes the form of a reduction in the amount of the benefit in line with the amount of income available to the family unit (Bollain, 2017). The impossibility of receiving two incomes at the same time and/or of exceeding a certain level of income, due to the express incompatibility of the conditional minimum income programme in question, leads to the poverty trap. The poverty trap is defined as "the penalty involved in the beneficiary of a conditional benefit accepting paid work" (Raventós, 2000), the penalty being the reduced amount of the conditional benefit.



Jose crushed by the conditions



Behaviour of basic income in the face of conditional minimum income constraints

The UBI is the alternative to conditional minimum income programmes that is attracting the most interest. It is an unconditional tool that should not present budgetary constraints as long as the model is competently designed. Although the financing of the UBI involves a large commitment of resources, it is important to be aware that transfers and expenditure should not be equated. The transfers that are made are reallocations of purchasing power from the wealthier minority to the social majority that is not strictly wealthy. Wealth is not diminished but distributed. Furthermore, to the extent that they replace conditional minimum income schemes, the state reduces its own apparatus in favour of increasing the power of each person in society.

Regarding coverage errors, we must take into account that UBI would cover the whole citizenry and, therefore, the non-acceptance rate is estimated to be close to 0 %, unlike in the case of conditional cash benefits (Atkinson, 1996).

In this sense, it can be assumed that the principle of unconditionality of the UBI gives it an advantage over the coverage deficit associated with conditional minimum income schemes.

In line with Van Parijs (2006) and Van Parijs and Vanderborght (2017), there is nothing humiliating and stigmatising about granting an UBI to the entire population as a citizenship right. No person would feel "singled out" when receiving an UBI because its universality, as opposed to the targeting of conditional cash benefits, as it would allow citizenship not to be divided between those who give and those who receive.

Thus, the characteristics of an UBI would overcome almost completely the problems of stereotyping and stigmatisation so characteristic of conditional minimum income programmes, while at the same time helping to strengthen social solidarity by reinforcing the sense of belonging to the community and social cohesion (Standing, 2008).

The existence of high administration costs in conditional minimum income schemes compared to the total budget allocated is a crucial part of why several authors (Van Parijs, 2006; Raventós, 2007; Offe, 2005; Van Parijs and Vanderborght, 2017) claim that an UBI is more economically efficient than conditional minimum income schemes. It seems sensible to think that an UBI would save administrative costs, as it would greatly simplify the complexity of conditional minimum income schemes, making them more transparent and reducing the degree of control and monitoring.

UBI is a tool that perfectly circumvents the poverty trap so characteristic of conditional minimum income schemes. UBI is understood as a "floor" or "base" that is not incompatible with other sources of income, such as conditional minimum income schemes. Precisely because of the possibility of accumulating different incomes in addition to the benefit, and as long as these sources of income are not subject to taxation that can reach a marginal rate of 100%, this means that anyone in paid work will receive more income than a person receiving only the UBI.

Thus, while conditional minimum income schemes are criticised for their deterrent effect on paid work - especially for low-skilled workers - UBI, thanks to its accumulability, could in many cases be an incentive to seek and take up paid work. And certainly in a much freer way for the weaker party to the employment contract.

Therefore, we note that while conditional minimum income schemes provide an incomplete safety net, an UBI skillfully circumvents the limitations of such schemes thanks to the principles of universality, unconditionality and accumulability of incomes.

We have also found that there is a big difference in conception between conditional minimum income schemes - or conditional cash benefits in general - and UBI. This difference in conception between the two measures is expressed in terms of freedom. Conditional minimum income schemes help people once they have "failed" by providing ex post support to people in need, in exchange for compensation for the benefits received (usually through a process of labour integration). Mere ex post assistance leads irremediably to the loss of effective freedom for those who live on a wage and are forced to accept the status quo or to bow to forms that are particularly harmful to their interests in the political configuration of markets -and more specifically, the labour market- (Standing, 2017). In other words, UBI would also imply a certain political configuration of markets to the benefit of the wage-earning part of the labour contract.

2.3

Diagnosis of the situation of young people



The situation of young people develops and changes in line with the socio-economic changes taking place in society. Therefore, the youth cannot be understood without taking into account, at the very least, the economic and social frameworks that condition young people's trajectories. The existence of certain "social phenomena", which we will analyse below and which are characteristic of young people, are closely linked to the transformations taking place in society. It would not make much sense to try to understand young people as an aggregation of individuals, but as a diverse group within a society that conditions it.

The precariousness of the labour market is a fundamental factor when it comes to explaining the difficulties in emancipating young people's lives and the difficulties in carrying out autonomous life projects. As a result, there is a weakening of youth citizenship, which is being tackled through policies promoted by the Basque Government's Youth Department and which are mainly based on promoting the emancipation of young people. In order to travel the road towards emancipation, understood as the full integration of young people into society that allows them to build their own life projects autonomously, the Basque Government's Youth Department, in line with the new Basque Youth Law of 10 March 2022, proposes actions in the fields of education, housing, employment and social welfare.

The level of education of young people living in the Basque Autonomous Community is progressively increasing. In addition, we also see a lengthening of the educational and training period of the under-30 age group, which results in a reduction in the activity rate of the young population - the percentage of people who work or are in a position to work.

Hey! I found a job!
I start tomorrow! It's
part-time split-shift
zero hours working day



That it also
finishes tomorrow.

And what
does that mean?



Access to housing is one of the major problems at present. The great economic effort required to pay a mortgage or rent, due to the gap between housing prices and young people's salaries, means that, with an average salary, 55.1% of it will have to be used to pay the mortgage payment or 50.4% to pay rent - the majority agree that this should not exceed 30% - in 2019, according to the Basque Youth Observatory (2021). Likewise, one out of every three non-emancipated young people in the Basque Autonomous Community claims to be in need of housing. Thus, we can see how in the BAC the average age of emancipation of the Basque population is 30 years old - exactly 30.2 -, six years above the age that young people aged 18 to 34 consider ideal for emancipation (ibid.).

As far as employment is concerned, it is true that traditionally the indicator that has received most attention has been the unemployment rate. In this respect, the unemployment rate for young people in the BAC is 17.9%, 73.79% higher than the general unemployment rate. However, we can currently see that having a job is no longer a guarantee of a decent life. In fact, almost 13% of working people in Spain are poor. Precariousness in employment, the temporary and partial nature of employment contracts, or "flexible" and atypical employment figures (such as the false self-employed, the "eternal intern", etc.) are the general trend for young people in their process of insertion in the labour market. In the Basque Autonomous Community, 64.3% of young people have a temporary contract, and 32.4% have an unwanted partial contract (Labour Force Survey, 2021).

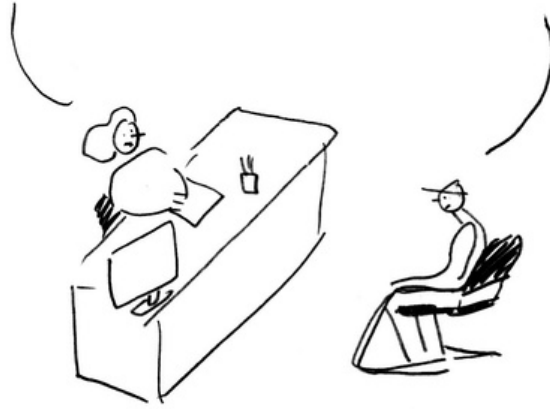
We already have the results of the analysis. You lack iron, work, desire, money, confidence and motivation.



Therefore, it is undeniable that when we talk about young people, education, housing or employment, we are talking, in short, about their social welfare in the broadest sense of the term. Moreover, in a context in which it seems inevitable to rethink the relationship between people's economic subsistence and having a job, more and more countries are trying to explore systems that guarantee the universal protection of people as opposed to policies inspired by assistentialism.

what is your specialty?

CONFIRMING



Welcome to the team

Thank you



2.4

Basic income: guaranteeing the present and the future for young people



Being young means finding your path in life. However, today's young people have great difficulty in looking beyond the immediate present, partly, as we noted in the previous section, because of the difficulty of accessing decent housing and the precariousness of the labour market. A regular income, which covers the basic needs of each young person, would make it possible to provide greater levels of effective freedom to one of the groups of people who are currently most punished by the system. Currently, 2.7 million young people between the ages of 16 and 34 are in a situation of social exclusion in Spain (FOESSA Foundation, 2022). However, although being young is a factor of social exclusion in itself, the starting point is not the same for all young people.

The perpetuation of baseline inequalities may become even more worrying in a future in which the activities performed by machines are expected to increase exponentially, while those performed by humans decrease. Robots are reaching all sectors of the economy and, while many millions of jobs globally will disappear, we are heading towards a labour market in which human capital will essentially be directed towards super-skilled jobs. In other words, employment will be increasingly scarce and concentrated in the hands of those who have been able to extend their education and training.



A regular income that covers basic needs would offer more time for young people (Belaustegi et al., 2016). In the case of unemployed students at the University of the Basque Country (Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea), 63.1% would use UBI to extend their educational and training period. Likewise, 40.7% of the sample surveyed stated that they would use the increased free time available as a result of having an UBI as a citizenship right for educational and training purposes, compared to 23.2% who would spend it on leisure, 12% on caring for people and the home, 7.3% on voluntary work and 5.7% on looking for a better job. It is also relevant to note that, beyond leisure time, 33.8% of the people surveyed would also spend the monetary amount of the UBI on educational and training purposes.

Likewise, UBI would also allow for greater freedom and bargaining power for the working class to accept or reject a job, because people would not be forced to accept jobs with poor working conditions or that do not suit their preferences because they need the wage income it provides in order to afford the payments (Rey Pérez, 2020). In fact, those who are most likely to see their balance of power improve are those who suffer the greatest precariousness in the labour market (Standing, 2011): women and young people (Vives et al., 2011). In Spain, according to the Spanish Tax Agency (2019), 36% of young people between 26 and 35 years of age who have one - or more than one - job earn below the Minimum Interprofessional Wage. Along the same lines, the survey on labour market insertion carried out by Lanbide (2020) on students graduating from the UPV/EHU in 2017 shows that, three years after graduation, 24.9% of students in full-time employment earn less than €1,200 per month, while 62.9% of students in part-time employment earn less than €900 per month. It is interesting to see how UBI could be a fundamental tool for increasing the bargaining power of young people in the labour market, who are currently forced to accept any kind of job no matter how terrible their working conditions may be.

3

THE PROJECT

3.1

General objectives

The GAZTEBI project was created with the aim of analysing and discussing the opportunities offered by UBI, as an economic and social policy, when it comes to providing financial security for young people, in order to guarantee both the satisfaction of their basic material needs and the advancement of a freer personal and collective development, beyond dependence on the labour market. Specifically, the following general and specific objectives have been pursued:

G.O.1. To analyse the vision that the institutions and social agents working in the area of Youth have about the UBI, studying the implications that this could have on the guidance of young people that is carried out from these spaces.

S.O.1. To find out the different perspectives and considerations that these public institutions and social agents hold regarding the implementation of an UBI.

S.O.2. To establish a process of collaboration and active work with these institutions and social organisations in order to reflect on the UBI proposal and its implications for young people.

G.O.2. To study the social attitudes that university students hold towards employment and their future prospects, as well as their perceptions of the opportunities that the implementation of an UBI could offer them in order to guarantee their financial security and advance in their life projects.

S.O.1. To study the construction of social representations about work among university students; as well as their attitudes towards the future of the labour market and the degree to which they maintain individualistic vs. structural discourses about unemployment and youth precariousness.

S.O.2. To analyse the degree of fatalism of university students when it comes to projecting themselves into the future, as well as to study their levels of (dis)trust in different social and institutional agents that are relevant in our society.

S.O.3. To examine the different attitudes, beliefs and emotions that university students generate in relation to the possibility of implementing an UBI; as well as their perceptions of the opportunities it would offer them when it comes to setting up their life projects.

G.O.3. To open a space for dissemination and discussion of the UBI proposal, in order to broaden the social knowledge about the characteristics and implications of this income scheme.

S.O.1. To offer wide access to the scientific knowledge generated around UBI through workshops, informative videos, vignettes, dissemination on social networks, etc.

S.O.2. To facilitate discussion and public debate about the opportunities that the implementation of an UBI could offer to young people, giving a central place to the experiences and considerations of young people themselves.

4

**Action I. Videos
and workshops**

4.1

Videos



With the aim of bringing knowledge and debate on the characteristics and implications of UBI closer to university youth, but also to society in general, six audiovisual clips were produced addressing different topics related to this income scheme (characteristics, labour market, SDGs, legal justification, social movements, and economic viability) and were subsequently used in UBI discussion workshops that were open to the general public.

Píldora	Resumen
"What is Unconditional Basic Income?"	This video describes the main characteristics of the Unconditional Basic Income and delves into the main axes that constitute this public monetary allocation to the entire population: unconditionality, universality and individuality.
"The Job Myth"	Can employment guarantee a decent life? This video exposes the main characteristics of our current labor market and introduces us to concepts such as working poverty, automation processes, as well as the distinction between employment and work. The Unconditional Basic Income is presented here as a formula to decouple our social protection system from the labor market.
"Unconditional Basic Income and SDG"	The Sustainable Development Goals are a tool to deal with our social, economic and environmental crisis. In this line, this video presents the reasons why the Unconditional Basic Income is an instrument to face the fulfillment of many of the Sustainable Development Goals described here.
"Human Rights and Basic Income"	This video briefly describes the main characteristics of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the agreements reached in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, and cites some of these articles with the aim of pointing out a fundamental right: the right of every person to enjoy a dignified life.
"UBI and social movements"	The progress of humanity is a conquest of different social movements, such as the labor, feminist, environmental movement, as well as LGBTI groups. In this video we will see the most relevant pronouncements that many of the social movements have made in favor of having an Unconditional Basic Income.
"How would an UBI be financed?"	The proliferation of pilot projects that have launched an Unconditional Basic Income in a totality of countries with very diverse characteristics, gives us answers when considering how to deal with the financing of a RBI. In this video we delve into how a Basic Income could provide answers to combat the ecological crisis, the instability of the labor market, as well as to face the care crisis.

4.2

Methodology

Online discussion workshops of 4 sessions were carried out, with the participation of between 10 and 15 people from the university environment, such as students and teaching staff, as well as other agents from the social sphere. The workshops were structured around 4 general topics for debate on UBI: 1) What is Basic Income? Advantages of UBI compared to the limits of conditional minimum income schemes; 2) Evolution of the labour market, social and solidarity economy and UBI: sharing employment, making work visible; 3) Basic Income in the framework of Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals and social movements; and 4) Basic Income, a proposal for the economic and social future: pilot projects and challenges of the 21st century.

The methodology consisted of watching between one and three videos per session, which dealt with the different issues raised, followed by a brief presentation on the topic to be addressed. Subsequently, the workshop participants were divided into small groups of 4-5 people in order to carry out an in-depth discussion on various issues and specific questions related to the general theme of the workshop. After the discussion, the group met again in plenary session to share the main reflections and conclusions that had emerged in each group, and to hold a final discussion to close the workshop.

4.3

Results

The first session focused on the UBI proposal, its concrete characteristics, and the philosophy behind it. On a general level, the participants saw in the UBI an opportunity to change the approach under which economic and social intervention policies are constructed, guaranteeing universal access to the conditions that guarantee a dignified life.

During the second session, participants discussed the role that the implementation of an UBI could play in the current evolution of the labour market, reflecting on the centrality of employment in the access to economic and social rights and its implications for the processes of automation, the meaning of work, and unpaid work. Globally, the urgency of guaranteeing a dignified life beyond a labour market that is proving incapable of fulfilling this objective emerged (which has become evident, for example, during the COVID-19 pandemic). In this sense, there was a shared vision of UBI as a useful tool not only to ensure financial security for all, but also to reduce working time and move towards more desirable, socially beneficial, and better working conditions.

The third session discussed UBI in the framework of Human Rights, Sustainable Development Goals, and social movements. The results showed that the implementation of an UBI could have positive consequences for different social movements (from feminism and anti-racism, to environmentalism and the cultural movement) and for progress towards the achievement of various SDGs.

Finally, the fourth and last session focused on the pilot projects that have been carried out globally to study the consequences that the implementation of an UBI could have. In this sense, a shared vision emerged of UBI as a useful tool to move towards a better society and to contribute to face social challenges such as the labour market crisis or the ecological crisis. Likewise, the opportunities that this economic and social policy proposal could offer to the new generations, who are particularly affected by job insecurity and uncertainty about the future, were particularly highlighted.



**Action II. Meetings
with social and
institutional agents**

5.1

The meetings

Ten group interviews were held with the following entities: the Bolunta Foundation, the Novia Salcedo Foundation, the Basque Youth Council -EGK-, Sareen Sarea, Confebask, Konfekoop, the Employment Directorate of the UPV/EHU, the Youth Directorate of the Basque Government, the LAB Trade Union, and the UGT Trade Union of the Basque Country. These meetings were scheduled during the construction phase of the questionnaire that would later be used in this study. Thus, these meetings had a double purpose: on the one hand, the sharing and validation of the questionnaire and, on the other hand, to learn about social agents' attitudes and beliefs towards UBI and the situation of young people.

5.2

Methodology

In order to investigate the content of the discourse of the social agents who participated in this study, the meetings held during the construction phase of the questionnaire were transcribed. Once the database was obtained, we worked with the IRAMUTEQ software, a tool that made it possible to carry out different quantitative discourse analyses, such as similarity analysis and multivariate analysis (hierarchical descending classification).

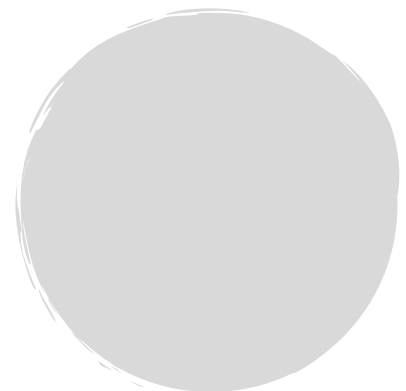
5.3

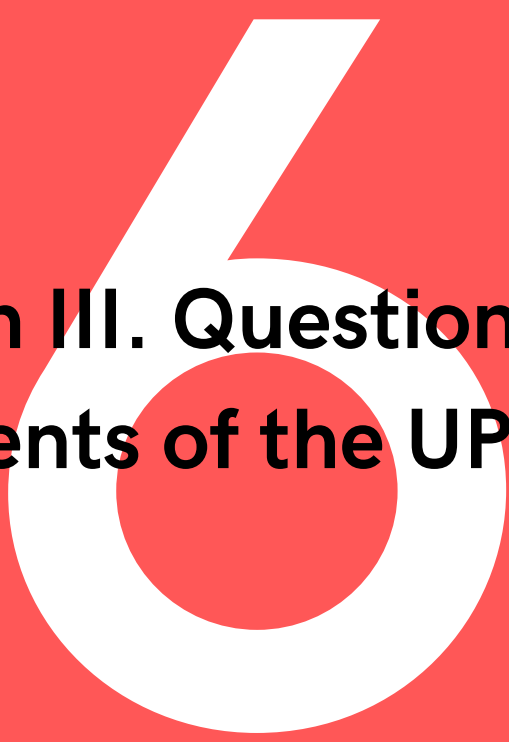
Results

The words uttered during the discussions (N=1784) showed that the term go (advance, do, create) was the most frequently used concept in the whole sample, followed by words such as see (perspective, perception, pose) and young. Along with these, positive terms such as good, interesting, help, important and negative terms such as problem and precariousness were used, as well as concepts that referred to the Unconditional Basic Income along with words such as project, and theme. In addition, social and institutional actors named words related to the labour market (market, employment, work/working, enterprise, cooperativism), and terms related to society, life, time and future. Finally, the agents named concepts related to university and studies (training, itinerary) of young people.

Subsequently, similarity analysis allowed us to identify the co-occurrences of words, giving information about their connections to help us identify the structure of the content of a textual corpus. Thus, the data revealed that the content of the corpus was organised around the semantic node composed mainly of the word to go, with the associated forms they go, we go, going, etc., all of them referring to concepts which are crossed by developments, progress and future.

Finally, on 2 March 2022, a new meeting was held with the social and institutional agents with the aim of sharing the provisional conclusions of the results obtained in the study.



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**Action III. Questionnaire to
students of the UPV/EHU**

6.1

The study

Following the meetings held with the various social and institutional agents, a questionnaire was drawn up for distribution among the students from the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). The answers obtained through this questionnaire have been analysed in order to study the social attitudes that university students have towards employment and their future prospects, as well as their perceptions about the opportunities that the implementation of an UBI could offer them to guarantee their financial security and advance in their life projects.

6.2

Methodology

Participants

A questionnaire was distributed to 709 students at the UPV/EHU, based on the criterion established by Bujang et al. (2017) of $n = 300$ as the minimum sample size for obtaining valid and reliable estimates of population parameters in non-experimental studies.

The average age of the sample was 21 years old. Of the participants, 66.8% were women (33.2% men), with an ideological orientation that was mainly left-wing (65.2%), although 17.2% identified themselves as centrist and 17.6% as centre-right. In terms of their social class, 51.4% of the respondents identify themselves as middle class, 34% as lower-middle class and 14.6% as upper-middle class.

Furthermore, it should be noted that 28.2% of the students said that they were employed at the same time as studying and 9.8% indicated that they had to combine their studies with caregiving tasks. As for the students' degree of participation in activities that are not exclusively educational, it is worth noting that 18.6% said they were involved in cultural activities (such as participating in a theatre group, making photographs or collaborating in a community radio station, among others), 10.3% were involved in some form of volunteering in an NGO or social organisation, and 7.9% were actively involved in some collective or social movement (such as a feminist collective, a gaztetxe -youth house-assembly, etc.).

Most of the participants belong to the Bizkaia campus (81.4%), although 13.1% study in Gipuzkoa and 5.5% in Araba. In terms of areas of knowledge, the majority of the sample is made up of students from Social Sciences, Arts, Humanities or Communication (84.6%), although 15.4% are students of degrees in Science, Architecture, Engineering, Health Sciences or other related disciplines. 36.2% answered the questionnaire in Basque, while 63.8% did so in Spanish.

Instrument and variables

A questionnaire was constructed that included the following variables:

1) "Attitudes towards employment and representations about work":

Free association of words of the stimulus "Work", Mistrust towards the work future ($\alpha = 0.66$), Attributions of youth unemployment ($\alpha = 0.61$), Legitimation of youth precariousness ($\alpha = 0.45$), Economic system justification (Jaume, Etchezahar and Cervone, 2012; $\alpha = 0.84$);

2) "Attitudes towards the future and social and institutional trust":

Fatalism (Díaz et al., 2014; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.62$), Social and institutional trust;

3) "Attitudes and beliefs about Unconditional Basic Income (UBI)":

Perceived knowledge, Global agreement, Attitudes towards UBI characteristics, Emotions (Positive emotions, $\alpha = 0.87$; Negative emotions, $\alpha = 0.85$), Perceived personal impact, Perceived social consequences, Pro-UBI political participation ($\alpha = 0.88$); and

4) "Socio-demographic variables":

Age, Gender identity, University studies, Current activities, Ideological positioning, Subjective social class, National identification (Basque vs. Spanish).

Procedure and data analysis

The participating students completed an individual, self-administered and anonymous questionnaire, provided online and which could be answered in both Basque and Spanish. All participants expressly consented to participate in the study, in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016. The research was approved by the Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (CEISH) of the UPV/EHU (M10/2021/230).

For the analysis of quantitative data, the IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 statistical package was used. Additionally, at the qualitative level, the IRAMUTEQ software was used for the analysis of social representations.

A large, white, stylized number '7' is centered on a solid red background. The number is composed of a horizontal top bar and a diagonal stem. The word 'Results' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font across the middle of the horizontal bar.

Results

7.1

Attitudes towards employment and representations about work

In order to understand the Social Representations about work among university students, the method of free word association was used, in which participants were asked to write down the first three words that came to mind when they thought of the stimulus "Work".

The data (N=655) showed that the term money was the most frequently used concept in the whole sample, as well as similar words such as salary, wage, remuneration, earning. In addition, procedural definitions of work such as work/worker, labour, hour/schedule, perform; followed by work ethic terms such as effort, important, worthy, responsibility, etc. were used. Likewise, work was conceptualised as obligatory, with words such as necessary, living/life, condition, need, require, always, obligation; and from negative definitions related to the difficulty of obtaining it and the precariousness of its conditions, as was the case of the words precarious, find, difficult/difficulty, exploitation, little, etc.

The data obtained also allowed for a top-down hierarchical ranking analysis that showed five general representations about work, each constituting approximately 20% of the discourse among the participants. The first of these revealed negative definitions of work, related to loss of rights and exploitation (precariousness, exploitation, bad, instability, poverty, etc.), and was more emergent among left-leaning students and those with a low Spanish national identity. The second representation was transversal to the whole sample and defined work in terms of the difficulty of getting a job (young, find, experience, difficult, opportunity, access, etc.). The third representation conceptualised work mainly around the acquisition of money (money, working, tiredness, earning, time, wanting, etc.) and was associated with students who identified to a high degree with a Spanish national identity. The fourth representation formulated work in terms of necessity as a form of subsistence (economy, necessary, obligation, society, life, survival, etc.), and proved to be more numerous among left-wing students. Finally, the fifth representation defined work in terms of effort and dedication (effort, responsibility, dedication, commitment, perseverance, sacrifice, reward, etc.) and was more prevalent among students with a high Spanish national identity and who are ideologically situated in the centre-right.

Beyond the representations about work, we also analysed students' beliefs and attitudes in relation to employment and their future access to the labour market. On a general level, the data showed that 72.6% of UPV/EHU students have a low level of trust in the labour market being able to offer them quality jobs in the future. Furthermore, 75.7% of the young people participating in this study attribute this lack of employment to structural reasons, such as the lack of interest of companies in guaranteeing youth employment or the lack of public policies dedicated to this end; while only 5% consider that youth unemployment is due to individual causes, such as a lack of effort or training on the part of young people. Similarly, 69.3% of university students disagree with the discourses that legitimise precarious youth employment as a logical and acceptable stage at the start of a career; and 74.7% are critical of the economic system's justification values, which attribute poverty to individual factors (such as laziness or lack of effort).

Specifically, left-wing, lower-middle class students, those with a lower Spanish national identity and those who are more involved in social movements, are the ones who show a greater distrust towards the future of employment. Likewise, it is this group who make more structural (and less individualistic) attributions about youth unemployment, rejecting to a greater extent the discourses that legitimise youth precariousness as a natural stage of life development, as well as the system justification values, such as meritocracy or the work ethic.

7.2

Attitudes towards the future and social and institutional trust

When examining young people's attitudes towards the future and their social and institutional trust, it has been observed that 80.1% of university students have a low fatalistic profile in relation to the future, being able to imagine alternatives to the current system and trusting in their capacity as young people to generate positive social change.

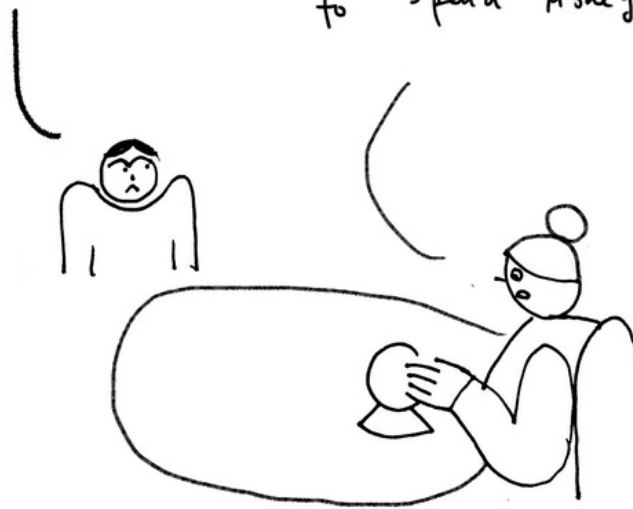


In relation to social and institutional trust, the data indicated that 69.9% of students highly trust social movements as a relevant social agent in society. In contrast, as many as 84.9% of students distrust political parties to a great extent, and 76.4% distrust the government. Other social agents such as companies also receive a negative evaluation: 60.9% of students distrust them. On the other hand, the democratic system receives a more ambiguous evaluation: 45.1% of students report distrust towards it, although 32.2% indicate high levels of trust.

Again, left-leaning, lower-middle class students with less Spanish national identification and who are more politically involved in social and political collectives are the ones who present a less fatalistic attitude towards the future and more confidence in their ability as young people to bring about positive social change. This group also has a higher level of trust in social movements (although they may distrust other agents such as political institutions or private companies). On the other hand, students from the right of the ideological spectrum, from a higher social class and with greater Spanish national identification, also show a high level of distrust towards political institutions, but this does not affect their evaluation of other social agents such as private companies.

And what about the future?

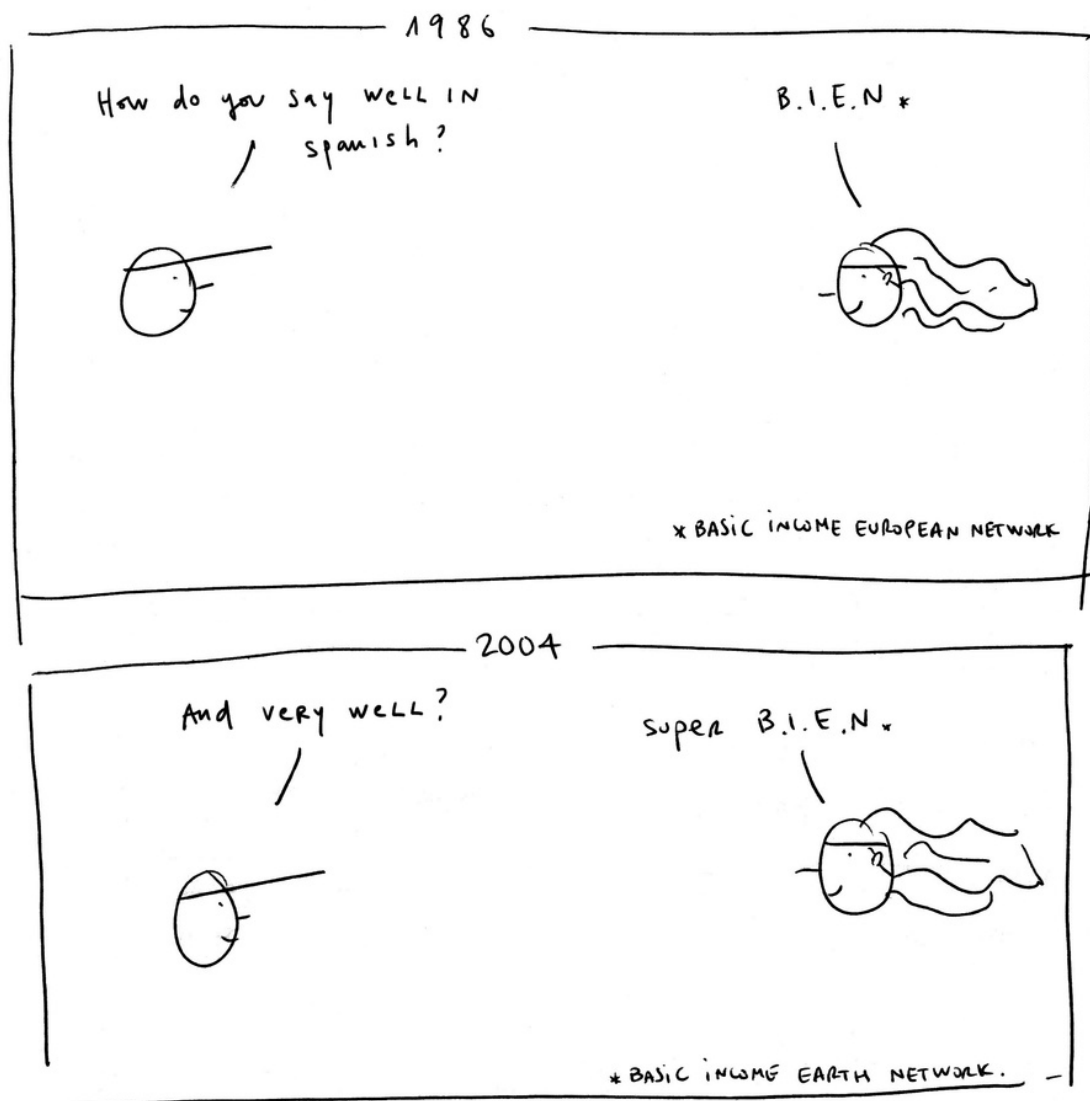
You will work to earn money
to spend money to earn money
to spend money to earn money
to spend money to earn money
to spend money to earn money
to spend money to earn money
to spend money to earn money



7.3

Attitudes and beliefs about unconditional basic income

The data showed that 67% of university students are in favour of the introduction of an UBI in the Basque Autonomous Community (compared with 13.2% who are against it, and 19.8% who neither agree nor disagree). Specifically, 78.4% of students agree with the individual (and not familistic) nature of basic income, 73.8% would agree that it should be financed through a progressive and redistributive tax reform, and 69% indicate that they are in favour of the universal nature of this measure. On the other hand, the unconditional nature of basic income generates more discussion among university students, with 47.4% in favour of it and 40.2% against it (and the remaining 12.4% showing a neutral attitude). In any case, the results of this study indicate that the possibility of implementing an UBI brings out positive emotions (of security, hope and joy) in 58% of university students, while only 12.2% report negative emotions (of fear, indignation or concern).



Regarding the impact that UBI could have on young people's lives, 51.10% of university students indicate that they would use this income to cover basic or essential expenses (such as rent; electricity, internet, etc. bills; or food expenses, among others). Furthermore, 36.20% of students say that they would save the UBI amount for the future, 29.70% say that they would invest it in their educational and training process, and another 29.10% refer to the possibilities of emancipation that the implementation of this income scheme would give them. In more structural terms, 81.2% of the students interviewed consider that UBI would improve the living conditions of young people. Furthermore, 70.2% believe that UBI would make it possible to undertake other jobs outside the labour market (such as care work or voluntary work), 59.5% believe that this income would lead to a fairer distribution of wealth, and 54.1% believe that it would help to eliminate precarious employment and labour exploitation, among other positive social consequences. On the other hand, 66.5% of students also agree that UBI could have a "call effect" and 44.8% believe that it could lead to a break with the ethical principle of linking "merit" and "reward"; although these consequences are not considered, in most cases, as something undesirable for our society. This generally positive assessment of the UBI proposal is in line with the high willingness of 51.1% of students to get involved in different forms of political participation in favour of the implementation of this income scheme.

Specifically, the statistical analyses carried out indicated that left-leaning students, of a lower social class, with less Spanish national identification and who are more involved in social movements, are again the ones who present more favourable attitudes, beliefs and emotions towards the UBI proposal; although, in this case, this group also includes students who work at the same time as they study at university. Finally, it should be noted that, although the data showed that ideological orientation and social class were the most relevant socio-demographic predictors of students' level of agreement towards UBI, these were outweighed by attitudes towards employment (system justification values and individualistic attributions about youth unemployment emerged as the two main obstacles to generating favourable attitudes towards UBI) and, especially, by emotions and beliefs in relation to the implementation of this income scheme (positive emotions, the belief that this measure would lead to a fairer distribution of wealth, as well as specific agreement with the proposal's characteristics of universality, unconditionality and individuality, explained overall agreement with UBI).



8

Conclusions

Unconditional Basic Income is the economic and social policy that is attracting most interest as an alternative to the conditional minimum income programmes we currently have, but also to the growing unemployment, exploitation and job insecurity that is flooding the labour market and deteriorating the living conditions of the social majority. In this sense, in a context where the future prospects of young people are marked by uncertainty, poverty and insecurity, various voices have suggested that the integration of an UBI within the system of benefits and social rights of the welfare state could offer a guarantee of present and future for young people: enabling the construction of freer, more secure and desired life projects.

Thus, GAZTEBI project was created with the aim of analysing and discussing the opportunities offered by UBI to provide financial security to young people, in order to guarantee the satisfaction of their most basic material needs, as well as to advance in a freer personal and collective development, beyond dependence on an unstable and precarious labour market. Following a series of discussion and debate workshops on the UBI proposal, it was observed that there was a need to delve deeper into young people's relationship with the labour market and their future prospects, as well as their perceptions of how the implementation of an UBI could impact on their life projects.

To this end, a sample of more than 700 students from the UPV/EHU answered a questionnaire (previously validated and contrasted with a series of public institutions and relevant social agents in the area of Youth) to find out the opinion of the university youth on these issues. The data from this study revealed that, on a general level, Basque university youth conceptualise work from five semantic fields: 1) the loss of rights and labour exploitation (especially emerging among left-wing students and those with a low degree of Spanish national identity); 2) the difficulty to get it (transversal conception across the whole sample); 3) money acquisition (more salient among students identifying to a high degree with Spanish national identity); 4) necessity and obligation as a form of subsistence (more emergent among left-wing students); and 5) effort and commitment (more salient among centre-right students and those with a high Spanish national identification).

Additionally, the responses to the questionnaire revealed a low level of trust among university students that the labour market would be able to offer them quality jobs in the future. At the same time, students are critical of discourses that hold young people themselves responsible for the high levels of unemployment, and that justify precariousness and poverty based on individualistic values such as meritocracy or the work ethic; although it is true that this criticism is more prevalent among young people from the left, from the lower-middle class, with less Spanish national identification and with a more active participation in social movements.

Similarly, despite the conditions of precariousness and uncertainty in which young people find themselves, the students participating in this study show a profile that is not fatalistic in relation to the future, but rather one of high confidence in their own capacity as young people to build alternatives to the current system. Furthermore, the students show a high level of trust in social movements, although their confidence in other social agents such as political institutions or private companies is quite low. In particular, it is once again left-leaning students, from lower social classes, with less Spanish national identification and who are more politically involved in social collectives, who have a less fatalistic attitude towards the future and greater trust in social movements.

Precisely, the perception of unemployment and job insecurity as a structural (and not individual) problem that young people face, along with this hopeful attitude towards the possibility of generating positive social changes, is what leads UPV/EHU students to consider UBI as a useful alternative for economic and social policy. A majority of students agree with the implementation of an UBI in the Basque Autonomous Community; although it is true that the unconditional nature of this scheme, despite being generally accepted, generates greater debate among university students. In general terms, students are excited about the possibility of implementing an UBI, considering that it would bring about a significant improvement in the living conditions of young people. Specifically, university students value UBI as the possibility of meeting their basic expenses, saving for the future, dedicating more time to their education and building an emancipated life project. This is why students also show a great willingness to get involved in different forms of political participation demanding the implementation of an UBI. Again, it should be noted that it is the left-leaning students, those from lower social classes, those with less Spanish national identification and who are more involved in social movements, but also those students who work while studying at university, who generally show more favourable attitudes, beliefs and emotions towards the UBI proposal.

In summary, the results of this research show a high appreciation of UBI among the university youth, as a policy proposal capable of improving their living conditions and enabling a freer and more dignified existence; pointing to the need to open spaces for debate and dissemination of this proposal in the public sphere, in which the opportunities and challenges of implementing a policy of this type in our society can be discussed in depth. In a context such as the current one, where the relationship between having a job and having access to the material conditions that make a dignified life possible is increasingly fragile, exploring systems that guarantee universal protection for everyone, as opposed to policies inspired by assistencialism, is becoming an imperative for governments and public administrations.

2022

what do you
want to be when
you grow up?

... A robot?



2055

what do you
want to be when
you grow up?

FREE



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