

A basic income: a basis for the future

Is it necessary for our society to allow anyone to fall through the social safety net? Our productivity is constantly increasing but we no longer notice the fact. Owing to our system of paid work accompanied by the imposition of high taxes and other levies, labour is becoming too expensive for companies, so they are streamlining their operations and moving jobs abroad. However, the unemployed also receive an income, which is financed by taxes, levies and non-wage contributions. Everyone loses out, and personal incomes and basic benefits are going down all the time.

This could be changed by introducing an unconditional basic income based on the amalgamation of existing social transfer systems. This would enable individuals to engage in activities as free citizens without worrying about their livelihood and, at the same time, to do work they find sensible and rewarding. They would do work of their own choice for one other, and do so in social security and dignity. Automation would be a blessing, since the elimination of jobs that can also be done by programmable machines and robots would not lead to new unemployment. Rather, the basic income would create freedom of action: it would be possible to finance many community and cultural tasks, and many new initiatives would be launched. Many people would rediscover the sense and importance of their work, for no one would be prevented from working to supplement their unconditional basic income. The difference would be that they would no longer be forced to work.

A transparent tax system could support the unconditional basic income, which would be paid to all citizens. The basis would be the gradual restructuring of the tax system to place the emphasis on consumption taxes. The advantages of this would be that anyone who consumes less will pay less tax, while anyone who consumes more will pay more tax and at a higher rate. Citizens would no longer have to fill in a tax return, because taxes would be paid where items are consumed. Taxation would be competition-neutral.

Germany would become stronger as a business location because capital would be attracted into the country and domestic employment would be safeguarded.

Some of the 720 billion euros spent on social security in Germany could be saved as a result of eliminating the bureaucratic apparatus needed to distribute it. However, the most important benefit would be the creation of an efficient community for all citizens in which there would no longer be any losers but free and self-determined individuals who no longer regard work as a burden but as an opportunity.

The unconditional basic income will change Germany for the better.
Will you think about this with us?

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