

BASIC INCOME – RADICAL UTOPIA OR PRACTICAL SOLUTION?

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Overview

- Social policy landscape
- Key developments
- Impact of economic crisis of 2008
- Rights – focus on work, income & participation
- Basic Income – A better pathway
- Populist objections to Basic Income



Social policy landscape

- Different approaches
- Emerging trends
- Two viewpoints
 - Neo-liberal logic dismantling the welfare state.
 - Reforms being introduced that modernise welfare to adjust to 21st century realities.

Key developments (1)

- Citizenship seen as vital concept underpinning welfare
- Evolution of rights;
 - Civil
 - Political
 - Social
 - (Ecological?)
- Two factors: Interdependence & Social Dialogue



Key developments (2)

- Welfare state is being remoulded and transformed from the post-war understanding and emphasis now on approaches such as:
 - Social investment
 - Enabling state
 - Active welfare state
- Some of these are reducing welfare benefits and others are not



Key developments (3)

- Paradigm shift with new ways of
 - Understanding
 - Designing, and
 - Providingwelfare.
- Changing objectives
- Changing instruments

Economic crisis of 2008

- Contraction of European economies
- Market failure interpreted as a problem of overstretched states.
- Consolidation, adjustment, fiscal supervision
- Impact included:
 - Reduced incomes
 - Increased poverty & social exclusion
 - Increased unemployment
- EU 2020 Strategy not resourced to be a counterweight to the austerity measures

New paradigm needed

- Based on the Common Good
- Interdependence of human rights and the common good
- Sustainability and the Common Good
- Interdependence of economic, social and environmental sustainability

Seven Basic Rights - for all

- Work
- Income
- Participation
- Education
- Health
- Housing/Accommodation
- Cultural Respect

The Right to Work

- Meaning of work
- Personal development
- Social dimension of work
- Development of society and the world
- Provision of goods and services

Right to Income

- Adequate income is a birthright
- The connection between work, income and the necessities for a dignified life has been distorted by
 - Industrialisation,
 - urbanisation and
 - globalisation

Right to Participation

- Participation and work
- Participation and disagreement
- 7 Principles to guide a just process of decision-making.
- Information, resources and skills needed to participate.
- All should be enabled to participate in articulation of a vision for the future.

Universal Basic Income

- Definition of Basic Income (BI)
- Objectives of BI
- Drivers of BI



Populist Objections to BI

- BI would encourage idleness
- BI promotes the end of work
- BI system is not affordable
- BI would mean a large increase in tax
- BI won't work in the EU

Populist Objections to BI (2)

- BI would come with the abolition of the welfare state.
- BI doesn't solve the inequality issue
- Everyone should 'earn' their living
- BI reduces the value of work to 'mere' income
- BI is an inefficient use of public resources.

Radical Utopia or Practical Solution?

- Current approach is failing to deliver.
- A Universal Basic Income – capacity to be the cornerstone of a new paradigm

Conclusion

Both

- A radical step towards a desirable future
- A practical solution to several major challenges facing society today.



Thank you

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