Universal Basic Income and the Principle of Equality

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“(…) most basic income proposals appear to want to replace, in whole or in part, either the existing contributory social insurance schemes, or the noncontributory, social assistance measures for the poorer groups in society, or both”

(P. Alston, Universal Basic Income as a Social Rights-Based Antidote to Growing Economic Insecurity, [in:] K.G. Young (ed.), The Future of Economic and Social Rights, Cambridge 2019, pp. 391-392)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Programs cancelled</th>
<th>Basic income amount per person per year</th>
<th>Starting poverty count (000s)</th>
<th>Ending poverty count (000s)</th>
<th>Change in poverty count (000s)</th>
<th>Starting poverty rate</th>
<th>Ending poverty rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BI/EITC</td>
<td>$2,655</td>
<td>4,206</td>
<td>5,992</td>
<td>1,787</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BI/EITC and Social Assistance</td>
<td>$3,102</td>
<td>4,206</td>
<td>6,131</td>
<td>1,925</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BI/EITC, Social Assistance and Employment Insurance</td>
<td>$3,565</td>
<td>4,206</td>
<td>6,152</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principle of Equality

“(i) the right to recognition of the equal worth and equal dignity of each human being;
(ii) the right to equality before the law;
(iii) the right to equal protection and benefit of the law;
(iv) the right to be treated with the same respect and consideration as all others;
(v) the right to participate on an equal basis with others in any area of economic, social, political, cultural or civil life”

Equals should be treated equally and unequals unequally.
Universal Basic Income vs. Utopian Basic Income

**TABLE 6** Universal $1,000 transfer on top of existing programs (Scenario 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Starting poverty count (000)</th>
<th>Ending poverty count (000)</th>
<th>Change in poverty count (000)</th>
<th>Starting poverty rate</th>
<th>Ending poverty rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children Under 18</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>-206</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (18 to 64)</td>
<td>2,695</td>
<td>2,277</td>
<td>-418</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors (65+)</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>-90</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>4,206</td>
<td>3,492</td>
<td>-713</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total expenses for the social program “500+” in 2023 is 40.2 bln PLN.

The Polish budget for 2023 is 693.4 bln PLN.

The budget deficit is 92 bln PLN.

1 PLN ~ 0.24 USD
“The time has come to imagine new utopias, to build them up from solid foundations and to begin cautiously experimenting. (...) Basic income: It’s an idea whose time has come”.

(R. Bregman, Utopia for Realists. The Case for a Universal Basic Income, Open Borders, and a 15-hour Workweek, Amsterdam 2016)

Thank you for your attention!

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