



1. Introduction: How Popular is Basic Income?
2. Popular Support for the Ideal-Typical Basic Income
3. Popular Support for Differently Designed Varieties of Basic Income
4. Reasons for Supporting or Opposing Basic Income
5. Conclusion: Implications for the Political Feasibility of Basic Income

# The Popularity of Basic Income

Evidence from the Polls

Tijs Laenen

# What is basic income?

Who is “all”?

At what level?

Should it be equal for all?

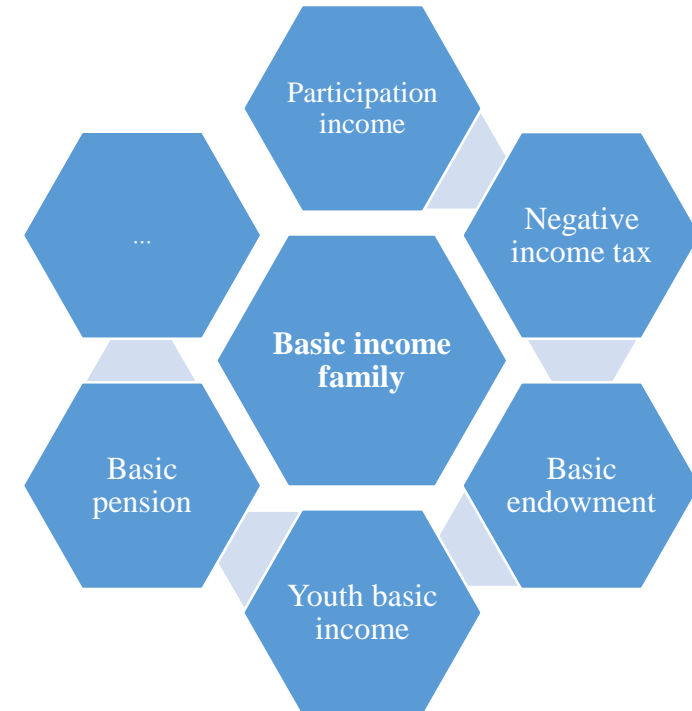
“A **Basic Income** is a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement.”

(Basic Income Earth Network, 2023)

How should it be financed?

How will it fit within the existing system?

What about the ‘cousins’ of basic income?



# How public opinion about basic income was measured

1989, 1994	International Social Survey Program (ISSP) – Social Inequality modules I & II	AU, AT, BG, CA, CZ, CH, DE (East), DE (West), IT, HU, NL, NZ, PH, PL, RU, SE, SI, UK, US	2
1995	Tisser Solidarity Survey	NL	2, 4
2000	Factorial survey experiment by Liebig & Mau (2004)	DE	3
2001	Eurobarometer 56.1	AT, BE, DE (East), DE (West), DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, IE, IT, LU, NO, PT, UK	
2001	Opinion on Social Welfare Survey (reported in Le Clairche, 2004)	FR	2
2002	Gallup of Finland and TEMO Sweden (reported in Andersson & Kangas, 2002)	FI, SE	2, 3
2003	Ipsos MMI (reported in Bay & Pedersen, 2006)	NO	2, 3
2009	Questionnaire Survey on the Community Life and Welfare (reported in Takamatsu & Tachibanaki, 2014)	JP	2, 3
2015, 2017	Dalia Research	DE, FR, ES, IT, UK, PL (other countries N < 1000)	2, 4
2016	Conjoint experiment by Stadelmann-Steffen & Dermont (2020)	CH, FI	3
2017	IPSOS Mori (reported in Chrisp et al., 2020)	UK	2, 3, 4
2016/17	European Social Survey (ESS), Round 8	AT, BE, CH, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IL, IS, IT, LT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RU, SI, SE, UK	2
2017	IPSOS	BE, CA, DE, ES, FR, IT, MX, PL, SE, UK, US	2, 4
2017, 2018	German Socioeconomic Panel (SOEP) (reported in Adriaans et al., 2019)	DE	2
2018	Survey within the Finnish basic income experiment	FI	4
2019	Survey experiment by Jordan et al. (2022)	US	4
2018, 2020	Populus	UK	2, 3, 4
2019	Survey on European Dreams for the Future of Europe	BE, CZ, DE, ES, FR, GR, HU, IT, NL, PL, PT, SE, RO, UK	2
2019	Conjoint experiment by Rincon (2021)	ES, FI	3
2019/20	Belgian National Elections Study (BNES)	BE	2
2020	Gallup Panel	US	2
2020	Pew Research Centre	US	2
2020	Survey by Richards & Steiger (2020)	US	4
2020	Survey by Nettle et al. (2021)	UK, US	2
2020	Youngov	DE, ES, FR, IT, PL, PT	3, 4
2021	Basic Income in Belgium (BABEL) Survey	BE	3, 4
2021	Basic Income in the Netherlands (BIN) Survey	NL	3
2021	Public Perception Survey on Basic Income	KR	4
2021	Survey experiment by Yeung (2022)	US	4
2021	Survey experiment by Thomas et al. (2022)	US	4

## Traditional surveys

‘Some countries are currently talking about introducing a basic income scheme. In a moment, I will ask you whether you are against or in favour of this scheme. First, I will give you some more details. A basic income scheme would include all of the following: (1) The government pays everyone a monthly income to cover essential living costs, (2) It replaces many other social benefits, (3) The purpose is to guarantee everyone a minimum standard of living, (4) Everyone receives the same amount regardless of whether or not they are working, (5) People also keep the money they earn from work or other sources, (6) This scheme is paid for by taxes. Overall, would you be against or in favour of having this scheme in [country]?’

European Social Survey (2016)

## Survey experiments

Dimensions	Levels	Wording
<b>Amount</b>	500	<i>The Belgian government provides a monthly income of 500€.</i>
	1000	<i>The Belgian government provides a monthly income of 1000€.</i>
	1500	<i>The Belgian government provides a monthly income of 1500€.</i>
<b>Universality</b>	Everyone, also newcomers	<i>That amount is paid to all adult residents in Belgium, including newcomers migrants.</i>
	Residency requirement	<i>That amount is paid to all adults living in Belgium, on the condition that they been in the country for a few years.</i>
	Nationality requirement	<i>That amount is paid to all adults living in Belgium, on the condition that they have the Belgian nationality.</i>
<b>Conditionality</b>	Fully unconditional	<i>People who are not working are not obliged to search for a paid job.</i>
	Caring/volunteering required	<i>People who are not working are obliged to do voluntary work or to take up caring responsibilities.</i>
<b>Integration</b>	All benefits replaced	<i>The basic income replaces all existing social benefits.</i>
	Several benefits replaced	<i>The basic income replaces some existing social benefits, such as child allowances and sickness benefits.</i>
	Replaces but supplements	<i>The basic income replaces some existing social benefits but provides top-ups for people with additional needs or costs (e.g. people with children or disabled people).</i>
	No benefits replaced	<i>The basic income replaces no existing social benefits.</i>
<b>Financing</b>	Climate tax	<i>The basic income is paid for by income taxes and social security contributions, which stay as they are. Potential additional costs are covered by a new climate tax on CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.</i>
	Capital tax	<i>The basic income is paid for by taxes and social security contributions, which stay as they are. Potential additional costs are covered by a new tax on capital.</i>
	Tax increase	<i>The basic income is paid for by income taxes and social security contributions, which will increase in the future.</i>
	Budget neutral (only in BIN)	<i>The basic income is paid for by taxes and social security contributions, which stay as they are.</i>

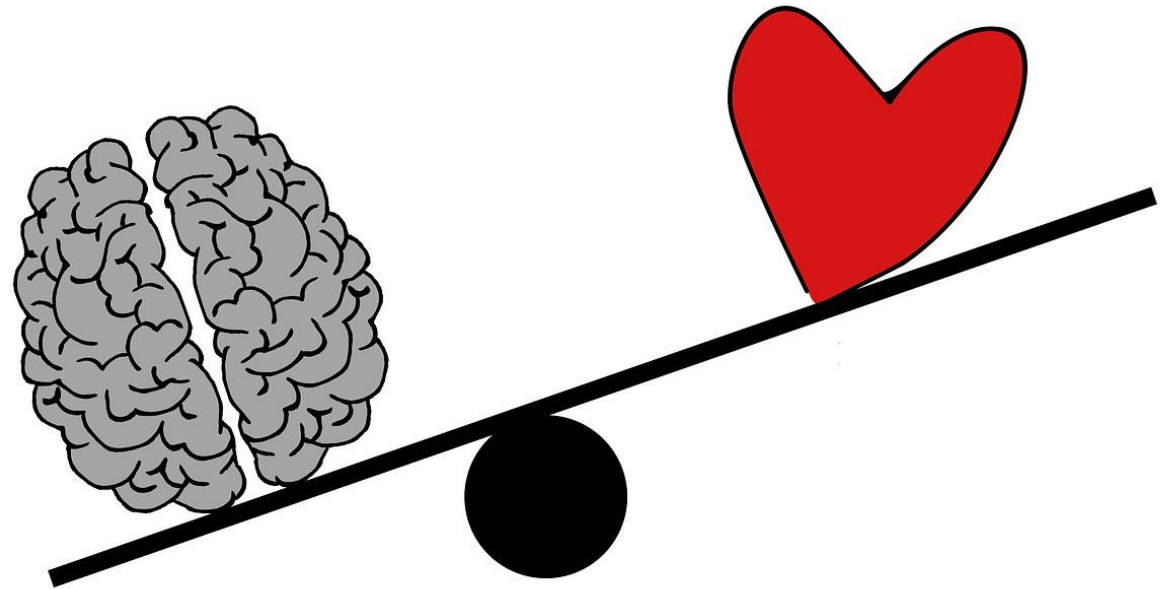
Basic Income in Belgium Survey (2021)



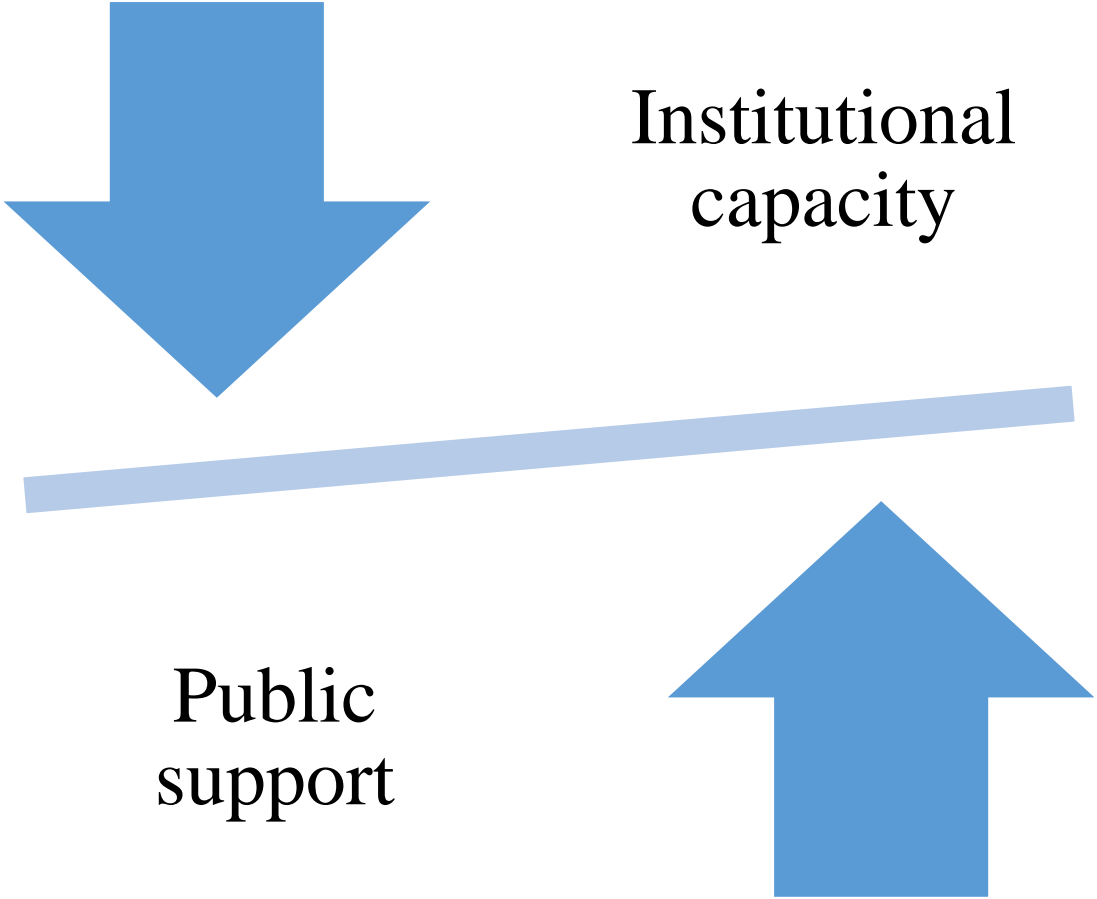
INEQUALITY.  
INSECURITY.  
DEBT. STRESS.  
PRECARITY.  
AUTOMATION.  
POPULISM.  
EXTINCTION.

FROM THE AUTHOR OF *THE PRECARIAT*  
**Guy Standing**  
**BATTLING**  
**EIGHT GIANTS**  
*Basic Income Now*

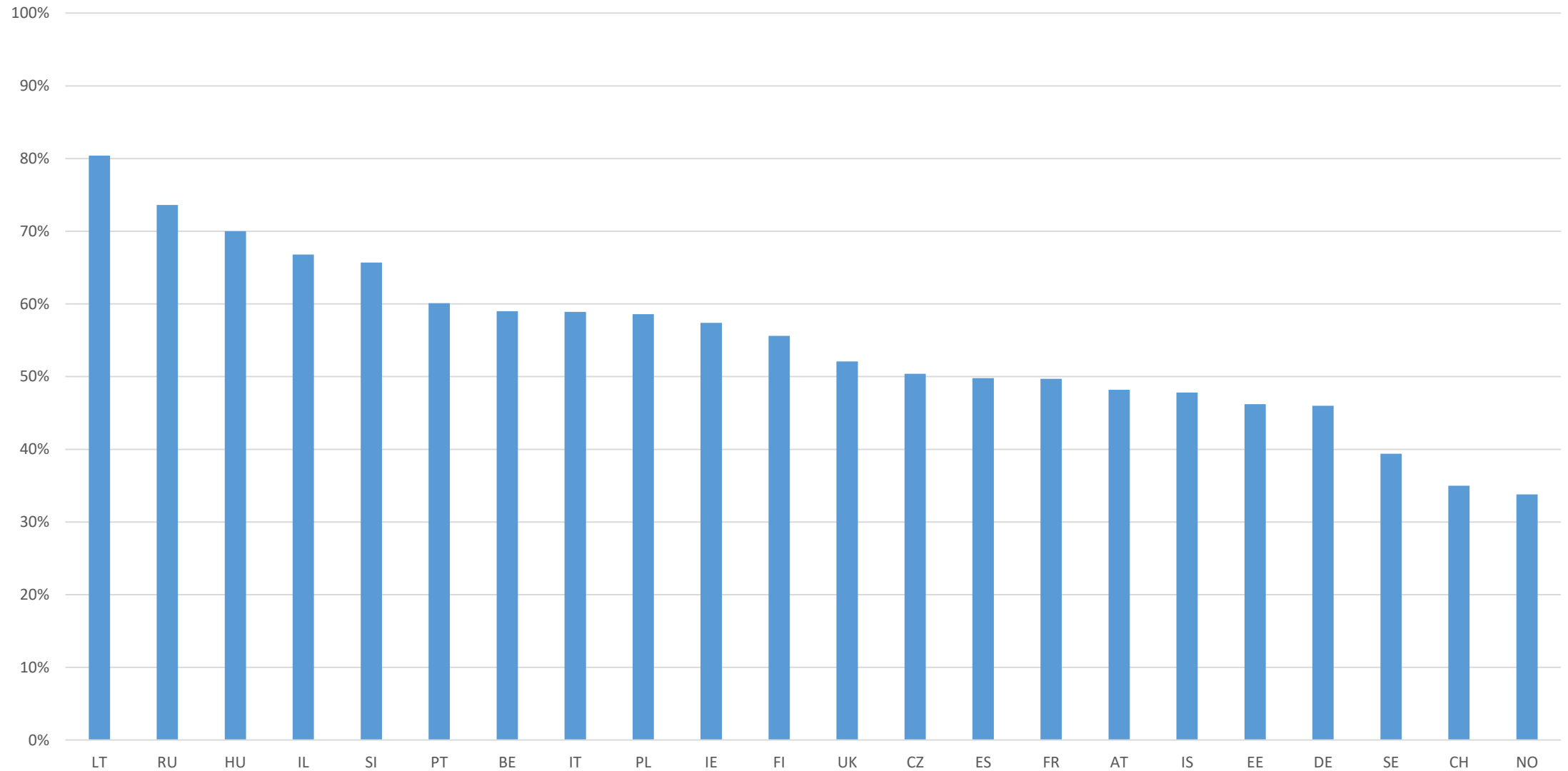
**Demand-capacity  
conflicts**



# Demand-capacity conflict #1



# Support for basic income in Europe



Source: European Social Survey (2016)



# Demand-capacity conflict #2

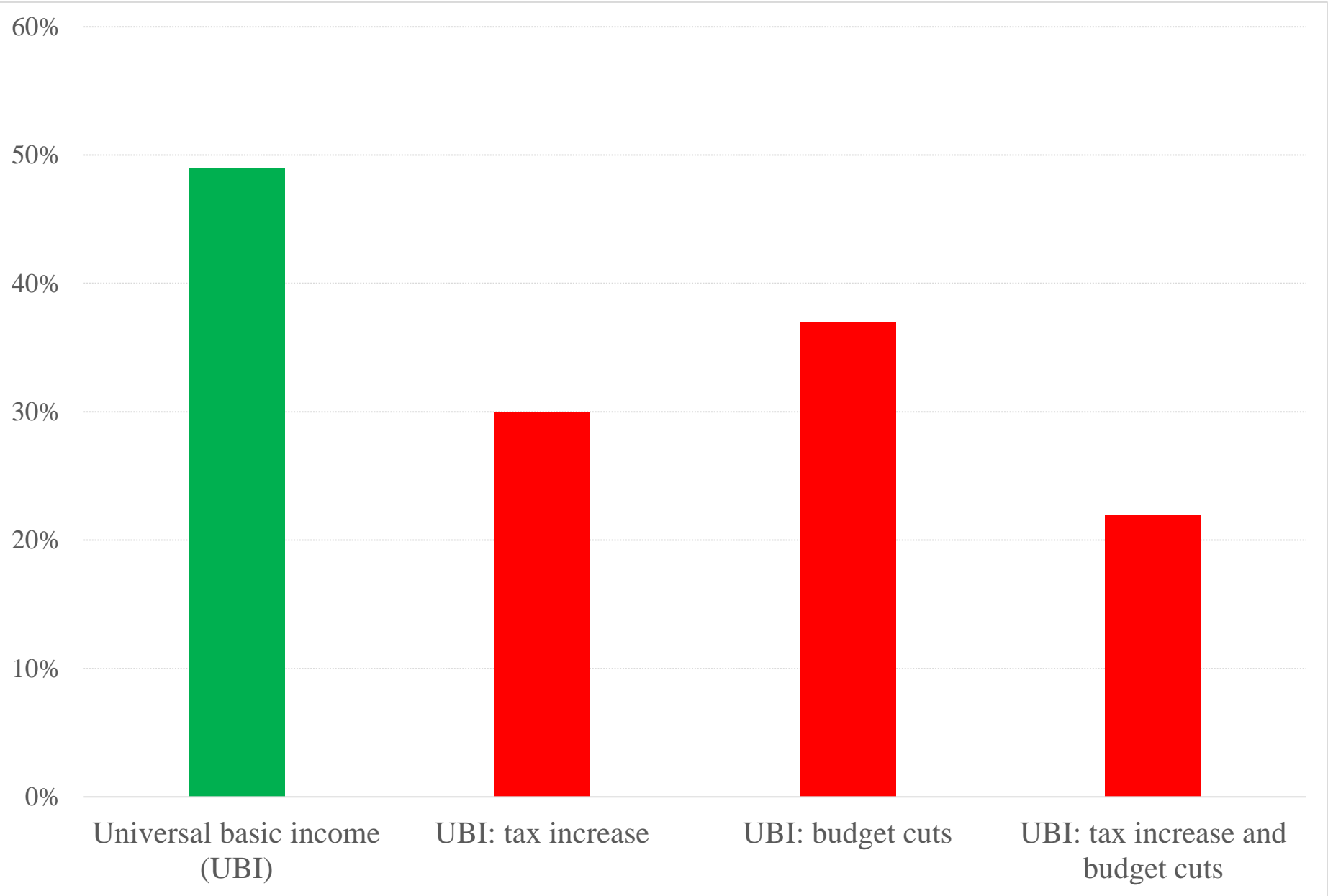
Basic income?

**Yes!**



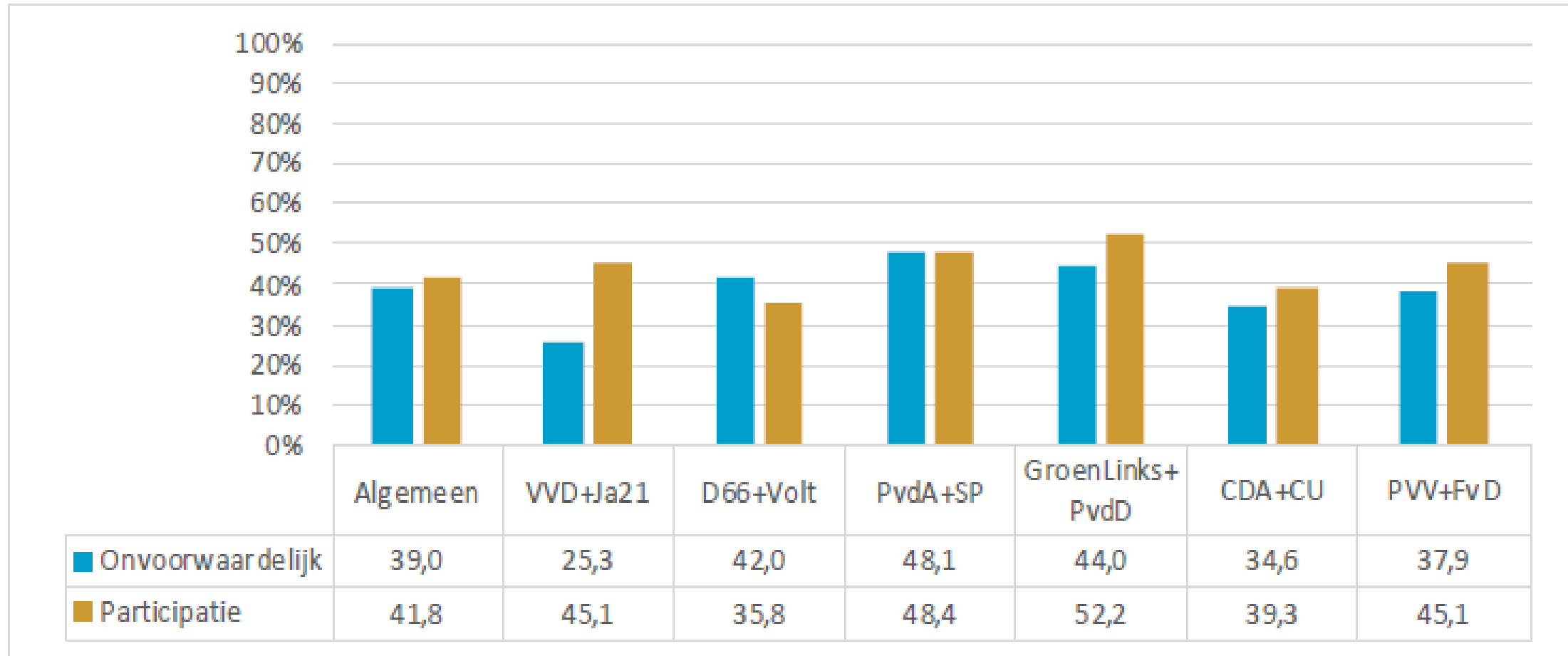
Taxes and/or  
cutbacks?

**Preferably not!**



Source: IPSOS Mori UK (2017)

# Demand-capacity conflict #3



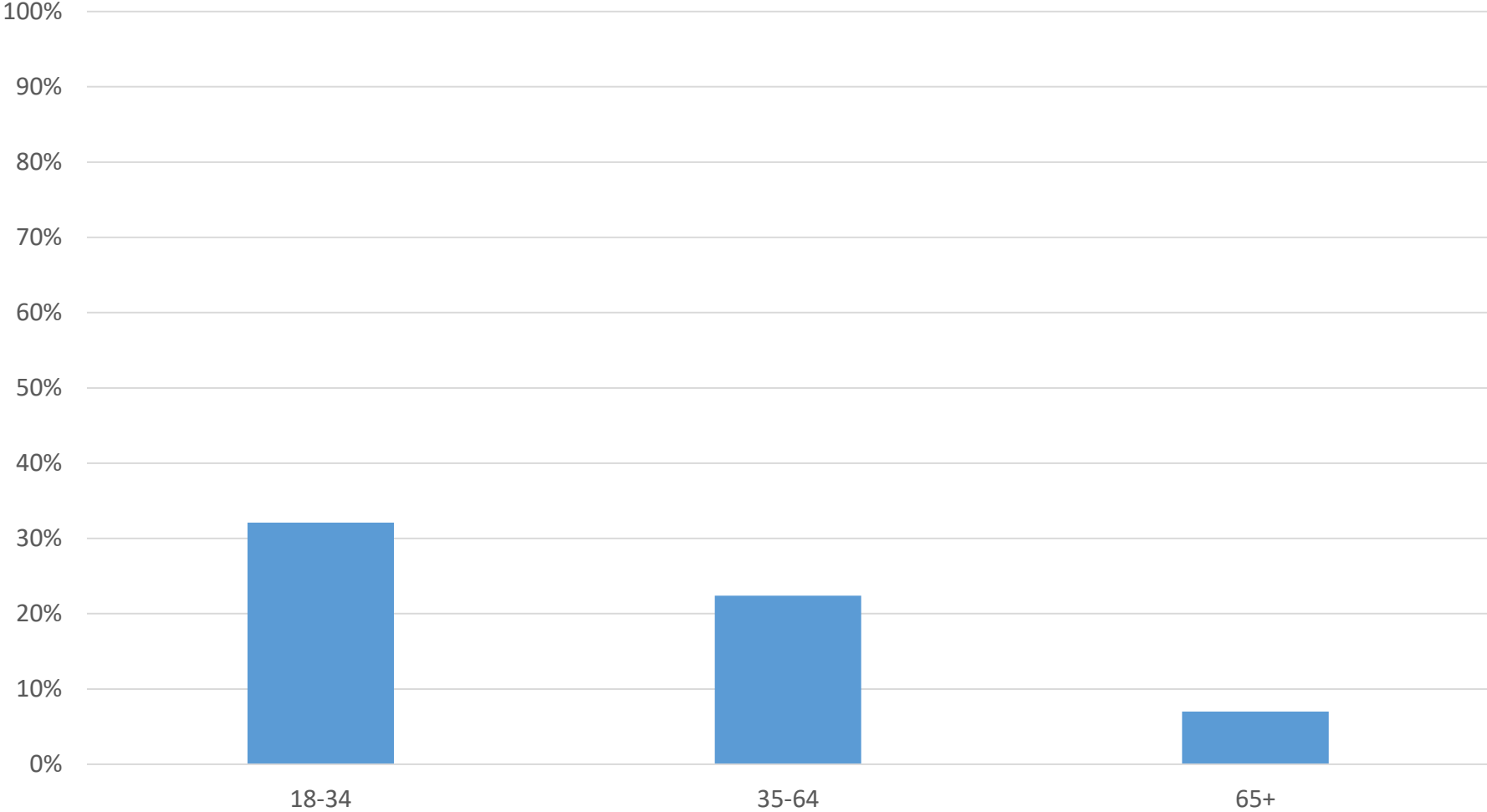
*Figuur 3. Steun voor een basisinkomen dat verschilt in conditionaliteit, per politiek electoraat (in %)*

Source: Basic Income in the Netherlands Survey (2021)

# **Age politics**



# Perceived personal gain from a basic income scheme



Source: Populus UK (2018)



# Age politics









# Research agenda

