

Letter from the chairs

Dear delegates,

We are thrilled to be your chairs during ToMUN2025 in the Economic and Social Council. It will be a wonderful journey to cooperate with you for the duration of the conference. We are sure that both us and you, the delegates, will leave the classrooms with broadened horizons and strengthened confidence. The assigned topics of our debates are not accidental - you will be discussing the big challenges of today and tomorrow. We can certainly assure you that you won't get bored while researching them. It will be highly important as only a deep understanding of the issues will make the debates efficient. After having done proper research, we kindly ask all of you to prepare your position papers on both topics. They will be essential for other delegates to understand the policies of your countries. It will also be a nice certificate of a job well done for us, chairs.

If you scroll down a bit, you will see the study guide made by us that ought to be only the very beginning of your research process. This might sound overwhelming, especially for non-experienced delegates, but we can assure you that you will easily catch the work flow as the topics are really interesting. If you have any questions during your preparation process, don't hesitate to ask us on ToMUN's discord server. We were once first-timers too and we also had no idea about how to prepare for the debates, make the position paper or how to even start doing research. That's why we will always be more than willing to help you make your delegate performance as good as possible.

See you guys at ToMUN!

PS Please note that due to time constraints (and our collective need for coffee breaks) we might unfortunately not be able to discuss the second topic (UBI).

Chair Timur Ozbayoglu
Deputy Chair Mieszko Matthews

Introduction

In a constantly changing world, with rapid technological advancements, widespread inequality, and economic disruptions, the **Universal Basic Income**, shortened to UBI, is a concept in which a government program would ensure that **every** (adult) citizen would receive a set **amount of money regularly** and **unconditionally**. In some definitions, this amount would be exempted from taxes. The main goal of this program would be to reduce poverty, whether at a city, county, state or even national level.

Under this program, a Fortune 500 CEO, a professor, a waiter, a stay-at-home parent, an unemployed person, or a college student studying for MUNs instead of their actual lessons (the better choice) would each receive a set amount of money monthly to act as a supplement to their income.



The concept of a Universal Basic Income stretches back centuries, with proposals to provide everyone with a regular unconditional payment emerging in the 16th century.

There are various proposals to fund such a program. One is getting the money by defunding other social programs that are implemented on a need basis and need greater bureaucratic involvement. Another is by raising taxes for all or the wealthiest people. Raising taxes for everyone would, in some cases, balance out the incoming money from UBI to a net 0 for most middle-or higher-class citizens. However, it would benefit lower-class people who generally don't pay such high taxes. The graph below summarizes this case.

The numbers used in this graph are fictional and just used to represent the numbers proportionally.



Example

A 2020 Democratic nominee for the United States, Andrew Yang, was a strong advocate for this program. His idea was to give each adult \$1000 per month; this would not be enough to live off on its own but would be a supplement to a low-wage or part-time job. The objectives being to reduce poverty, improve quality of life, allow more freedom in searching and switching jobs and promote innovation and creativity, to mention a few. This would amount to \$2.8 trillion each year (according to the nonprofit Tax Foundation). To cover this expense, budgets of other social programs, no longer in such great need, would be reduced, and taxes on carbon emissions as well as businesses would be increased. The program was also justified by the rise of artificial intelligence and how many jobs could be lost to *automation*. UBI was therefore, according to Andrew Yang's, vital to avoid damaging the US economy.



Roughly 1 in 8 people, or approximately 40 million people, live below the poverty line in the USA. A Universal Basic Income would decrease that number drastically.

Data from 2020



UBI would increase the economy from 12.56% to 13.10% or 2.5 trillion US dollars, by 2025.



The labour force would increase between 4.5 and 4.7 million people.

Data from 2020

This was not the first time a UBI proposal came into American politics; in 1970, a *negative income tax* was heavily discussed with large experiments across the United States, passing the House of Representatives before stalling in the Senate.



For further reading on “The Freedom Dividend”, the UBI proposed by Andrew Yang, follow this link : <https://2020.yang2020.com/policies/the-freedom-dividend/>

Other examples are also included in the named country's policies towards the end of the study guide.

Arguments

Here below are some examples of arguments commonly used to debate the viability of a UBI but they are not the only ones. Please find your own arguments tailored for your country as well.

In favor

- UBI possibly will reduce poverty and income inequality. With the extra money from UBI, the proportionate wealth gap would shorten.
- UBI could increase employment. Without the worry of needing to pay for commuting or the concern about losing the assistance when they do get a job because the UBI is not conditional on employment.
- UBI can increase welfare. Being able to afford everyday necessities and medication would diminish stress and increase the recipient's mental health as well as their physical health.
- UBI would theoretically cut government spending since budgets for other social safety programs would be reduced.
- UBI might promote education by contributing to the cost of college and lowering dropout rates. This would lead to a better-educated workforce.
- UBI may perhaps also be a great way to support ideas, as they could create and experiment with their own art without being worried if it's not commercially viable. In the same logic, it would encourage business start-ups, as entrepreneurs would take more risks with the guaranteed income.

Against

- UBI may possibly be too expensive. Giving money to everyone monthly is not only terribly costly but tricky to pay for.
- UBI could make citizens leave the country. If taxes are risen, specifically for the wealthiest people, they might leave the country to find a cheaper nation with lower taxes.
- UBI might incentivize people to work less. Money would be received without any effort and it could lead to less motivation to possess a job or to study.
- UBI could raise prices. The new influx of money into people's wallet could cause inflation and the extra money would no longer make a difference.
- UBI would maybe not be effective for certain people. These might include disabled people, large families, etc... If other welfare programs are cut, programs specifically tailored to their needs, the amount of money from the UBI would not be enough.
- UBI would give people more leverage. With it, unwanted but necessary jobs (fixing/cleaning sewers for example) would not be taken, as people with more money can demand better-paying jobs.

Give Directly

Give Directly is a non profit organisation giving cash to countries in Africa aswell as the US. Since 2009, it has provided more than \$900M to 1.7 million people. The NGO believes in people choosing their own fate with the received cash, unlike some traditional aid programs.

BIEN

The Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) is a network of UBI supporting activists conducting research and educating the general public about the benefits of a UBI.

GiveDirectly

Send money directly to the extreme poor.



Some organisations

There are numerous NGO's running UBI experiments and research around the globe. Researching these could be a good step to understand UBI further and get more statistics.

Here's a few :

UBIE

The Unconditional Basic Income Europe is an NGO composed of over 400 members from 25 different countries. They are advocating for UBI in the European Union's policy agenda.

Universal Income Project

The Universal Income Project is working to implement, in the United States, guranteed income to combat social injustice.

Dictio -nary



Unconditional

Without any conditions, with no exceptions.

Universal

Relating to all people in a particular group.

Regularly / Periodically

With a constant amount of time in between actions.

Wealth gap

Unequal distribution of assets among individuals in a society.

Income

Income is the money a person or household receives, usually on a regular basis, from work, investments, government support, or other sources.

Negative Income Tax

A system in which people below a certain pay level would receive money from taxes instead for paying for it.

Inflation

A general increase in prices over time and a fall in the purchasing value of money/a currency.

Welfare/Social safety program

A government initiative designed to give financial and other kinds of aid to individuals in need.

Employed

The state of working a paying job.

Welfare

The state of happiness, health, and fortune of an individual or group of people.

Supplement

A thing added to something to enhance or complete it.

Tax

A compulsory financial contribution imposed by a government on individuals or businesses to fund public services, infrastructure, and state functions.

Example countries

Finland

Finland was home to Europe's first government-backed UBI experiment. It lasted for 2 years (2017 and 2018) and paid 2000 random unemployed citizens a monthly amount of €560. It's important to note that since the participants had to be unemployed, it does not show the full picture of a UBI. There was no significant change (too small of an increase) in employment; however, there were notable improvements in mental health. The government of Finland decided to not prolong the experiment, due to employment not raising significantly but have not entirely dismissed the idea.

Switzerland

Switzerland had, in 2016, a referendum to implement an unconditional basic income. It was the first country in the world to vote on the matter. Estimates show that the money received would be 2500 Swiss francs (+/- \$3100) for adults as well as SFr625 for children monthly. Protests also happened in April of that year, with people dressed as robots, to address the problem of automation. However, the vote ended with about 77% of the Swiss population opposing the idea of a UBI and with no politicians advocating for it either. Critics mentioned a worry about an increase in immigration and laziness. "If you would offer every individual a Swiss amount of money, you would have billions of people who would try to move into Switzerland." said Luzi Stamm.

Kenya

Kenya is home, since 2011, to the world's largest and longest-term but private study to analyze the effects of UBI. While the government has not issued a direct statement on UBI, it is growing its social programs for the most unfortunate (orphans, people with disabilities, and the elderly). As a lower-middle-income country, the primary question is affordability.

Example countries

Singapore

Singapore's president, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, has publicly stated that "UBI is regressive." Tharman believes that UBI would disincentivize people to work and would require increasing taxes, not only for the wealthiest. He also thinks that "we need to stack the benefits in favor of the poor and the lower-middle-income group, not give them less." Overall, he believes the money should be spent on education and public services. Singapore's economy also relies on low-wage workers (such as migrant or international workers who are paid less than what a Singaporean would get for the same job). A UBI would disrupt that balance and the Singaporean economy.

United States

Under the Trump administration, government-assisted programs are not widely supported. President Trump has stated that they lead to people not working and therefore harm economic growth. To date, Donald Trump has not expressed an opinion on the matter but his policies would lead one to think that he would not support it. Moreover, David Sacks, Trump's chief policy advisor on artificial intelligence, openly stated in July 2025 that "The Left envisions a post-economic order in which people stop working and instead receive government benefits." and that it's "their fantasy; it's not going to happen."

Brazil

Brazil has, in 2004, signed in a "Citizen's Income" law, which guaranteed, for any Brazilian or foreigner residing in Brazil for more than 5 years, a monthly monetary benefit. The law was never actually implemented, mainly due to budget constraints. An emergency UBI was, however, conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic for the most vulnerable. Overall, Brazil is consolidating its welfare programs and is open to a UBI.

Conclusion

It is important to note that UBI can vary greatly from nation to nation. The amount given, the way that a country supports it financially and even the viability of such a program in said country. The latter is what you, as delegates, will discuss and debate about during this conference.

In short, UBI is a cash payment, from the government to it's citizens, done *periodically, universally, unconditionally*, and on an individual basis.

To aid you in understanding the topic, here are some questions you can ask yourself :

- How does your country define a UBI ?
- How to support a UBI financially?
- What would be the benefit of a UBI in your country ?
- What could be the cons of having a UBI in your country ?
- If other benefit programs are cut, how to support the most unfortunate people (big families, people with disabilities, ...)
- Would pensioners get a UBI on top of their pension ? Is that viable ?

To get you started, or to have another perspective on the topic, you can consult these various documents.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kl39KHS07Xc> : Universal Basic Income Explained – Free Money for Everybody? UBI | Kurzgesagt
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMGAt4EC77w> : An Honest Discussion About A Universal Basic Income | Economics Explained
- <https://www.transformingsociety.co.uk/2023/10/19/a-universal-basic-income-is-bad-for-social-justice/> : UBI is bad for social justice
- <https://www.givedirectly.org/ubi/> : Program that supports low-income families as well as conducting UBI studies across many different countries

Resources

Here are our sources we used to make this study guide. They can be great way to get started on research but they don't need to be the only ones. It's important to have a variety of sources when making your position paper.

PS : Sources already proposed on the previous page were also used but are written again below.

1 [Investopedia.com – Universal Basic Income Explained](#)

2 [Britannica.com – Universal Basic Income](#)

3 [ISideWith.com – Donald Trump's policy on UBI](#)

4 [Slashdot.org – Czar Sacks on UBI](#)

5 [Stanford.edu – What is UBI](#)

6 [Mit.edu – History of UBI](#)

7 [Mothership.sg – Tharman : "UBI is a bad idea"](#)

8 [Quora.com – Reason of Singapore's rejection of UBI](#)

9 [Scielo.br – A UBI for Brazil](#)