

Submission to the Low Pay Commission Consultation Process 2018

Name (Optional)

Are you (Please tick)

Employee

Employer

Other

Are you impacted by increases in the Minimum Wage?

Yes

No

Here is a radical idea; Universal Basic Income.

Everyone living in Ireland over the age of 18 receiving €1500 each month.

Either retaining Child Benefit, or having a lower rate for the under 18s.

There are very few completed experiments world wide, some more (with some of them in Europe) currently going on.

Studies have shown that a large percentage, depending on the specific study between 75% and 85% of people would continue working. Furthermore, a lot of the money being paid out initially would funnel back into the economy with a rather quick turnaround.

What do we need to do to make it work?

1. The main thing we would need is legislation that prohibits the basic income to be used when calculating loans and mortgages. That is not to say people can't use that money to save up and put it towards a deposit.
2. Adjust the tax-bands accordingly.

What would it do for individuals and for society?

1. People are not being priced out of higher education. There are still tuition fees, living expenses, books, etc. even without college fees. Equally, it enables people to add to their initial education by enrolling in courses to learn about new technologies or developments in their line of work.
2. Farmers have a constant cashflow, and as a result will be able to pay for maintaining machinery to high standards.
3. It will go a long way in the fight against poverty and homelessness. It may not pay for an apartment in a city centre, but in the suburbs it will. How many people would not have lost their home if they had had a UBI and could have kept up with their mortgage payments? How many people cannot apply for jobs outside their area because they can't afford the bus or rent a car to attend an interview?
4. People (and it is mostly women) are less likely having to choose between being working parent or stay at home parent when there are children, because the basic income already provides the means to pay for childcare, and therefore the earning will not be eaten up by childcare costs.
5. People will spend the money, with a lot of it being spent locally / in Ireland. UBI will make it possible for a family to go out for dinner a few times a month. It will pay for a weekend B&B somewhere in Ireland a few times a year, rather than saving up all year solely for that one trip abroad. People will buy locally rather than buying the cheapest of the cheap of the Internet, supporting local business, and they will be able to pay that bit extra for getting fresh food from farms directly.
6. People will be able to get their cars serviced when it's scheduled, not waiting for something to fail, or the NCT is due, thereby making our roads safer.
7. Having a stable base income will encourage people to try themselves in opening businesses. It will enable them to bridge the first few months when the revenue streams will need to be developed, and if it fails, they are not being left with nothing.
8. Loansharks are being given a hard time. Even low income earners will be able to put aside something for when the washing machine suddenly needs replacing.
9. Drugdealers will find it harder to recruit people willing to run deliveries for them.
10. Drug users will at least not have to steal from others to fund their habit.

If the fight against poverty, the fight against homelessness, and the fight for equality are more than lip-service, then that is the way to go, and the only way.

At the beginning of the recession someone in government had the bright idea that lower wages would mean more jobs. Then we found out what everyone knew already, lower wages only meant the same amount of people getting less money. In fact, it dropped so far that for some people it became no longer economical to stay in employment.