

## UBI – the Cornerstone of a New Social Deal

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### Abstract:

**Research Question (RQ):** How would it be best to introduce UBI (Universal Basic Income) in Slovenia and the EU?

**Purpose:** This article analyses the possibility of UBI introduction in Slovenia and the EU based on eighteen years of observation of the flourishing UBI ‘eco-system’ developed in Slovenia and in the EU that reached little to no success. The longstanding efforts for UBI implementation brought some disturbing and frustrating results in time of COVID. The academics, advocates, and experts will have to start a new circle of research on UBI implementation. In the 21st century, the UBI could prove to be the most important, basic, cornerstone of a New Social Deal consisting of three UTD pillars: a pillar of universal basic rights, a free market/trade pillar, and a pillar of democratic social institutions. UTD Social Deal could help Slovenia to secure its position as the core EU member state and could prevent the EU from disintegration in current emergency-over-emergency times. The aim of the paper is also to identify the obstacles and mistakes made within Slovenian UBI discourse in order not to repeat the history.

**Method:** Eighteen years of research with the participant observation method and international comparative analyses using the “circle of social innovation – circle of hope” as the analytical tool.

**Results:** The research proved that UBI is not possible to introduce in Slovenia or in the EU in the manner proposed 12 years ago. The approach has to be re-adjusted, and proposal updated.

**Organization:** The academics, advocates, and experts will have to start a new circle of research on UBI implementation hopefully learning from previous endeavours.

**Society:** The new concept of UTD could be the basis of a new social agreement that could prevent the disintegration of the EU.

**Originality:** The topic of UBI is still under researched in Slovenia and such in detail historical overview and comparison between the countries is of essential value to conduct further argued discussion about the mentioned topic.

**Limitations/Further research:** UBI would have a tremendous impact on the de-bureaucratization of the state. Therefore, the research on UBI is limited on every and each step of current state funding and should be therefore in the future conducted only within non-state research entities.

**Keywords:** UBI, UTD, three-pillar system, new social deal.

## 1 Introduction

The necessity to implement universal human, social, and ecological rights is spreading across the globe. The part of this discourse on universal human rights is the idea of Universal Basic Income (Wignaraja, 2020; UNDP, 2020; UNDP, 2022). Universal human rights do not harm social market system but make each social system more resilient. On the global level Universal Human Rights and UBI give the humankind the chance to pursue a life more sustainably - with giving individuals a chance to act more rational and socially desirable, not out of egoism and fear. The pillar of Universal basic rights or Universal Basic Items or lately Universal Basic Income could be a cornerstone of any sustainable society. This fact is, unfortunately, sometimes overlooked or misunderstood. Not so long ago in human history, it was self-evident that all people have equal rights for their share of clean air, clean water, fruits of sea, woods, and human labour, and that each human or living being is a valuable part of society or nature. This sense of natural (human) rights is diminishing through the time, although societies cannot survive or thrive without securing the basic rights. This is the reason that the old idea of UBI explored by humanists from the 16th century and later on (BIEN, 2022a) become a cornerstone of a New Social Deal in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the UBI could prove to be the most important, basic, cornerstone of a New Social Deal consisting of three UTD pillars: a pillar of universal basic rights, a free market/trade pillar, and a pillar of democratic social institutions. UTD Social Deal, with UBI as its cornerstone, could help Slovenia to secure its position as the core EU member state and could prevent the EU from disintegration in current emergency-over-emergency times. More and more people in the EU and in Slovenia believe that the UTD Social Deal is the necessary foundation of a new social contract if we want a future that will be better than the present. Regardless of the mentioned fact, politicians become aware of this fact - of the necessity of a New Social Deal - only on the eve of crises as in time of Covid as High-ranking speakers, discussions and the outlook outlined the need for a future “Social Deal” in Europe”, while discussion later on focused only on European Green Deal (EC, 2022). Something similar happened in Slovenia, at the beginning of the economic crisis, in 2009, when the future Minister of Finance talked about Universal Basic Income, and again during COVID times, when some temporary financial measures called “basic income” were introduced. Those measures were not a UBI as it was envisioned, contemplated, calculated and micro-simulated in the last 18 years of Slovenian UBI discourse. This unsatisfactory result was in a way a surprise for Slovenian UBI ‘eco-system’ since in the last 18 years Slovenia was the best in the EU regarding the development of UBI discourse and building UBI ‘eco-system’.

## 2 Theoretical framework

Definition and the design of Universal Basic Income (UBI) prevalent in Slovenia is a combination of different sources. According to Phillip Van Parijs’ an UBI is a universal, individual, regular payment, unconditional regarding means testing or work requirements, (a

small) income basis that can be built upon with other forms of income. (Cohen, Rogers, & Pribac, 2004). A Universal Basic Income is sometimes called a Citizen's Income, or a Citizen's Basic Income, or Basic Income (Slovenian: Univerzalni temeljni dohodek, Državlanski dohodek, Državlanski temeljni dohodek ali Temeljni dohodek) (BIEN, 2022b). The amount of UBI should be between 1/2 of Minimum Wage (MW) and 1/3 of Average Wage (Rus, 1990). "The legal profession studying UTD says that UTD is a sui generis legal concept that is independent of the beneficiary's social and economic position. It is important that it is not conditional on the creation of any social case and actual needs for social security." (Uradni list, 2019). Comparing arguments in favour and opposing UBI, we can find following considerations, presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Arguments in favour and opposing implementing UBI

<b>Arguments in favour of implementing UBI</b>	<b>Arguments opposing to implementing UBI</b>
UBI reduces poverty and income inequality, and improves physical and mental health (ProCon.org, 2021) → mentioned results in redistributing wealth	UBI takes money from the poor and gives it to everyone, increasing poverty and depriving the poor of much needed targeted support (ProCon.org, 2021) → reflecting in inequality
UBI leads to positive job growth and lower school dropout rates (ProCon.org, 2021)	UBI is too expensive (ProCon.org, 2021)
UBI guarantees income for non-working parents and caregivers, thus empowering important traditionally unpaid roles, especially for women (ProCon.org, 2021)	UBI removes the incentive to work, adversely affecting the economy and leading to a labour and skills shortage (ProCon.org, 2021)
UBI would enhance workers' bargaining power, ultimately strengthening the power of labour relative to capital, which would result in better working conditions and reimbursement for hard work as it was the goal of associated historical social policy debates, and in an improved work-life balance. It might also positively counter the misrepresentation of women's contributions in the current economic system, enable more cautious and ethical career choices, thus reducing the number of people employed in "bullshit jobs" — a goal that characterised debates historically associated with elements of UBI — and leading to more fulfilling work. UBI might even reconceptualise the fundamental meaning of work, leading away from work-for-income towards a more holistic understanding of contributing to society (Afscharian et al., 2022)	UBI or some of its elements by themselves would create a negative work incentive, and with this even worsening unemployment, resulting in a society in which nobody would continue to do hard but essential jobs. Working conditions would either be unaffected or even deteriorate: as employers know that workers can sustain a living anyway, they might pay lower wages and increase the number of part-time jobs. If wages actually rise, this will increase costs for producers, potentially driving companies out of business. More economically left-wing actors argue that UBI would distract from and reproduce the systemic challenges associated with capitalism and from organising workers, thus preventing actually meaningful liberation of workers (Afscharian et al., 2022)
Fighting technological unemployment, helping victims of domestic violence, supporting unpaid care workers, eliminating the need for social security (Penguin, 2023)	

The researchers are, as seen from the table 1, still not unified in the opinion of the usefulness of the implementation of the UBI. That is why, according to above mentioned arguments, different countries around the world piloted or are in a phase of piloting the UBI in their countries:

- **Alaska:** realized the idea of UTD in 1982 (at least partially), as it implemented "Alaska Permanent Fund", with which is the payment of so-called dividends to all residents, who live there at least for one year is paid. As it is stated: "At least twenty-five percent of all mineral lease rentals, royalties, royalty sale proceeds, federal mineral revenue sharing payments and bonuses received by the state shall be placed in a permanent fund, the principal of which shall be used only for those income producing investments specifically designated by law as eligible for permanent fund investments. All income from the permanent fund shall be deposited in the general fund unless otherwise provided by law." (APFC, 2022) Alaska is also the longest running experiment, where each of its citizens received "a portion of the state's oil and gas revenues (roughly \$1,000-2,000 per year) since 1982." (World population review, 2023)
- **Brazil:** "Bolsa Família is a welfare program passed in 2004 and implemented in stages, which gives roughly 26% of the population a monthly payment equivalent to just under 1/5 of minimum wage. Surveys indicate the money is spent on (in order of importance) food, school supplies, clothing, and shoes. A second, privately funded pilot project began in Quatinga Velho in 2008. It gives a very small stipend (roughly 5% of minimum salary), and has been cited as improving nutrition, living conditions, housing, and health, especially in children. Finally, the town Santo Antônio do Pinhal uses a legitimate UBI program that splits 6% of city tax revenue among all residents who have lived there for at least 5 years." (World population review, 2023)
- **Canada:** "An early pilot program that ran from 1974-1978 showed increased school attendance, decreased hospitalizations, and no change in unemployment rates. A more recent 2017 test program provided roughly 4,000 people with monthly stipend equivalent to roughly \$17,000 CAD (about \$13,000 USD) for singles and \$24,000 CAN for couples. Program was planned to run three years but was ended early following the post-election transfer of governmental power from one political party to another. No results have been released." (World population review, 2023)
- **Finland:** between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2018, two thousand randomly selected unemployed Finns (aged between 25 and 28) received 560 euros per month. The main purpose of the experiment was to determine whether cash social assistance can be replaced with the more modern idea of UTD and how the introduction of the measure affects the level of unemployment. Based on the results of the experiment, we can conclude two things: a) unemployment did not decrease significantly and b) basic income recipients were happier, with fewer stress symptoms and fewer health challenges after the end of the experiment. (Uradni list, 2019). Trial program gave 2,000 unemployed adults a monthly grant. Parliament declined to fund it past 2018. (World population review, 2023)

- **Kenya:** “Test program gives monthly grants of approx. 1/4-1/2 average income. Scheduled to run until 2030.” (World population review, 2023)
- **India:** “Trials lasting 12 and 18 months tested effect of a UBI program amounting to 20-30% of a normal low income on a total of 6,000 people. Findings showed decrease in illness, improved school attendance and financial stability, and higher employment, with no corresponding increase in alcohol consumption.” (World population review, 2023)
- **Iran:** “Under "subsidy reform plan," government issued small monthly grant to roughly 90% of the population. Plan was never implemented as originally intended and was eventually scrapped. As of 2021, a number of economists had begun to call for the plan's reinstatement.” (World population review, 2023)
- **Namibia:** in year 2008/2009, which noted positive impacts of introduction of UBI, like significantly reduced child malnutrition, increased school attendance and it also allowed citizens to involve into more productive economic activities. Following parts of the world, which followed with mentioned activities (Uradni list, 2019) On mentioned the World population review (2023) adds that the mentioned pilot was executed as a pilot program in two villages and paid roughly 8% of average income, which resulted in significantly reduced child malnutrition, increased school attendance, boosted community income and decreased theft.
- **South Africa:** “Issued small grants to citizens of working age who had no other governmental support.” (World population review, 2023)
- **South Korea:** “Issues quarterly "allowance" to citizens of Gyeonggi province aged 24 or older; can only be used in local businesses.” (World population review, 2023)
- **United Kingdom:** “Pilot program in Wales (U.K.) will give young people over the age of 18 £1,600 (\$2,175 USD) per month for up to two years, then compare their financial, physical, and emotional health to those who do not receive the stipend.” (World population review, 2023)
- **United States of America:** “2020 Presidential Candidates Andrew Yang campaigned with a universal basic income plan called the Freedom Dividend. The Freedom Dividend responds to the increasing automation that will inevitably take away one in three jobs from American workers over the next decade. Yang’s plan would distribute a \$1,000 "partial dividend" to each American adult every month (\$12,000 per year)—enough to help, but not so much that it would encourage recipients to stop working. Several states have tried small-scale basic income programs in the past, including Alaska, North Carolina, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and California” (World population review, 2023)

Other countries, like: Bulgaria, China, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine etc. only discussed the possibility of piloting of implementing UBI in their countries, but until the writing of this article, none of the countries implemented it so far. As we could see from above mentioned states pilot findings is that UBI has an excellent potential to be furtherly developed.

We should also keep in mind that “many of UBI goals could be achieved through changes to the existing social security system and addressing the underlying causes of insecurity in the labour and housing markets. Universal Basic Income (UBI) could be designed to “reduce poverty, improve income security and boost well-being, but could be expensive and challenging to introduce” (JRF, 2021).

Figure 1 shows the basic principles of UBI & the Slovenian U3BI proposal, prepared by Korošec in year 2010. According to mentioned UBI proposal the Universal Basic Income should be a monthly payment in cash and/or vouchers delivered individually to all members of political/social group that share financial means or other existentially necessary items, unconditionally (without means test or work requirement), uniform (as equally for adult and children). Slovenian proposal (Korošec, 2010) is since the beginning quite unique since including uniformity as a 'third U' category within UBI definition, hence sometimes written as 'U3BI'. Dr. Annie Miller only at BIEN 2022 congress started to push for 'improvement' of BIEN's UBI definition in that direction, e. g. direction of uniformity. Most UBI proposals in the world have different amounts for adults and children, sometimes even differentiated children according to age or some other conditions, similar to the old/current conditional and targeted systems.

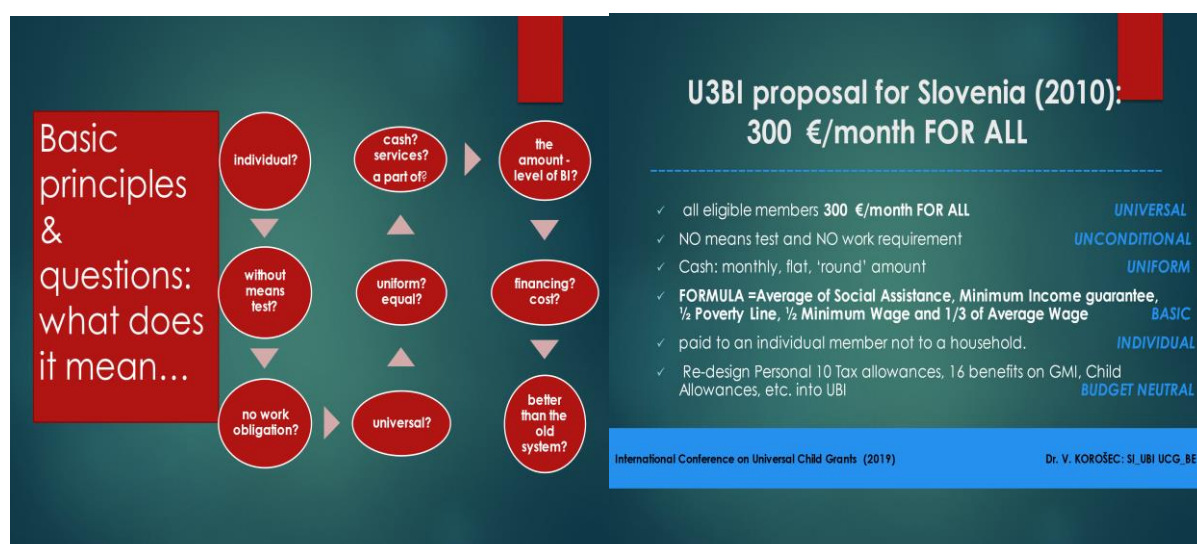


Figure 1. The basic principles of UBI & the Slovenian U3BI proposal.

The amount of UBI should be between 1/2 of Minimum Wage (MW) and 1/3 of Average Wage and higher than the current Social Assistance. The whole UBI cost should not be higher than the costs of the current system, and the most deprived as well the majority of people should be better off than in current system. Eligibility to receive the Slovenian UBI comes with citizenship which belong to those being born in Slovenia or to one who are eligible for citizenship (that is all with ten years of residency, five of which should be continuous) (Korošec, 2010).

**UTD: Three pillar Universal – Trade – Democratic (UTD) social system embodies an idea of UBI within the first, universal pillar.** Figure 2 shows the ‘UTD three-pillar social system’ which was presented at the conference organised by former president of RS, Borut Pahor (Korošec, 2015) as well at some international conferences, e. g. (Korošec, 2019b). In the book Principles of Political Economy, John Stuart Mill (1849) wrote: "In distribution (distribution) the existence minimum is first determined for each member of the community, able to work or not. The rest of the production is divided in shares between three elements: labour, capital and talent". Bertrand Russell (1918) said: "A certain small sum, sufficient for subsistence, should be provided to all, whether they work or not, and a larger income should belong to those who are willing to do what society recognizes as useful." A basic income does not deter anyone from gainful activity. But on the other hand, it promotes individual freedom and leaves untouched the positive aspects of market capitalism” (BIEN, 2022b).



Figure 2. UBI as a cornerstone of a three-pillar UTD New Social Deal.

In order to address mentioned concerns, we identified following research questions:

RQ1: How would it be best to introduce UBI (Universal Basic Income) in Slovenia and in the EU?

RQ2: What can we learn from previous mistakes?

### 3 Method

Research with the participant observation method is a result of surprising turn of events. An author of this article, an expert by profession and the job position with time become a part of UBI 'academic group', a part and leader of UBI activists, a part of political sphere and 'the self-appointed' historian of the UBI movement in Slovenia (Korošec, 2014, Korošec, 2021b).

Theoretical model of the research is presented in the diagram called "The circle of social innovation – Circle of Hope," the case of UBI (Figure 3). The development of 'UBI' movement will be therefore presented through 4 corners: 1) work of academics, 2) work of activists and civil initiatives, 3) politics and 4) experts.

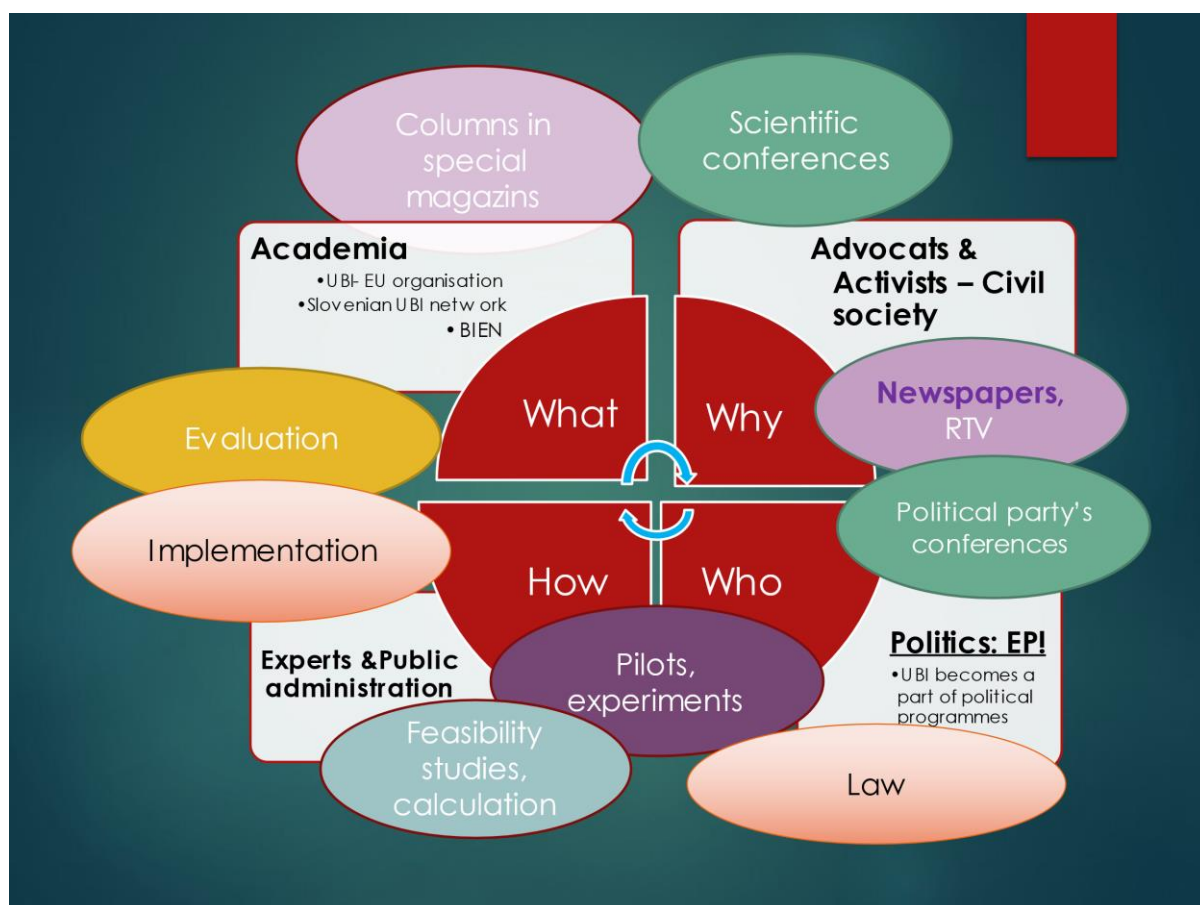


Figure 3. Diagram: Circle of Social Innovation - Circle of Hope, Case of UBI.

**1<sup>st</sup> corner: The collective work of academics on UBI idea in 21<sup>st</sup> century in Slovenia is summarised in three books of essays:**

- (Cohen, Rogers, & Pribac, 2004). Thread on UBI in Mladina weekly (search term 'državlanski dohodek', 'temeljni dohodek', 'UTD'). Some of them included in (Korošec, 2017).
- (Pribac, & Korošec, 2011). UTD v Sloveniji: premisleki, stališča, dokumenti



- (Dragoš, 2019). Enostavna ideja: univerzalni temeljni dohodek. Fakulteta za socialno delo. n.d.).

The contributions of four selected ‘researchers/academics’ (dr. Igor Pribac, dr. Tanja RENER, dr. Srečo Dragoš, dr. Valerija Korošec) was analysed upon their personal bibliography (IZUM n.d.) from 2004 to 2023. The key search terms were ‘Univerzalni temeljni dohodek’ (Eng. Universal Basic Income, UBI), ‘Temeljni dohodek’ (Basic Income) and two abbreviations: ‘UBI’ and ‘UTD. It is necessary to have in mind that abbreviation ‘UTD’ is used for the Universal Basic Income as well for Universal -Trade -Democratic system in Slovenian language.

Academics, advocates and activists in Slovenia worked side by side at three international conferences on UBI with eminent guests: dr. Phillip Van Parijs, dr. Guy Standing, Klaus Sombor, dr. Jože Mencinger, dr. etc. Two of them were organised by Sebastijan Pikel, Institute Novum in Ljubljana in 2012 (Repovž, 2012) and in 2017 (Lexpera, 2017). One international conference was organised in 2015 by Slovenian and Austrian network in Maribor (Metropolitan 2015). Slovenia in 2012 became a member of BIEN. Korošec is one of the representatives of Slovenia and actively participated at four BIEN’s congresses (BIEN 2022c): 2012 in Munich, (Korošec, 2019a) in Hyderabad, India; (Korošec, 2021b) in Glasgow and 2022 in Brisbane (BIEN, 2022c). Korošec was a guest contributor at BIEN news: (KOROŠEC, V. 2016), (Korošec, 2021a) or a ‘news’ (Coelho, 2019), (McFarland, 2017). She is was invited to share an experience in UBI implementation process in Croatia (Sinčić 2020) and in Korea (BIKN, 2022) as a part of international panel (case of Korea): Moderator. Sarath DAVALA (Chairperson of BIEN) with panellists:

- Guy STANDING: Co-founder of BIEN and Research Professor at SOAS University of London, UK
- Philippe Van PARIJS: Co-founder of BIEN and Chair Hoover d’éthique économique et sociale at Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium
- Annie MILLER: Co-founder of BIEN and Co-founder/Chair of Citizen’s Basic Income Trust, Scotland
- Karl WIDERQUIST: Professor of Philosophy at University of Georgetown – Qatar, USA
- Valerija KOROŠEC: Representative of Slovenia at BIEN, Co-founder of UBIE
- Ali Mutlu KÖYLÜOĞLU: Co-founder of Citizen’s Basic Income Research Development Culture and Dissemination Society, Co-founder of Worldwide Meetings of UBI Advocates and UBI Networks, Türkiye
- Hyosang AHN: Chairperson of BIKN: Basic Income Korean Network, Vice President of Institute for Political and Economic Alternatives, Korea
- Junho OH: Presidential Candidate of Basic Income Party of Korea, Korea.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> corner: Selected UBI civil initiatives and activity:**

- Sekcija UTD za promocijo UTD, Zofijini (Zofijini ljubimci n.d.)
- The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is an important instrument of participatory democracy in the EU, allowing one million citizens residing in one quarter of the Member States to invite the Commission to submit a proposal for a legal act to implement the EU Treaties (EP n.d.). The 1<sup>st</sup> European Civil initiative on Universal Basic Initiative "Exploring a pathway towards emancipatory welfare conditions in the EU was held between 14th January 2013 and 14th of January 2014." The 2<sup>nd</sup> European Civil initiative on Universal Basic Initiative »Start Unconditional Basic Incomes (UBI) throughout the EU« was held from 25th of September 2020 until the 25<sup>th</sup> of Jun 2022 – because of COVID-19 it was extended twice, first for 6 months and later on for three months.
- Predlagam.vladi.si (RS 2009). Slovenia introduced something similar to ECI under the name »predlagam.vladi.si« on the 23rd of July 2009 onward. Citizen proposal is eligible for an official answer if there is more pro than contra votes, and if that present at least 3% of active users.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> corner: The UBI idea discussion at the highest political level:**

- Sklepi, sprejeti na podlagi posveta z naslovom Univerzalni temeljni dohodek v Sloveniji - utopija ali realna možnost? (Državni svet 2011). (Eng. Conclusions adopted on the basis of the consultation entitled Universal basic income in Slovenia - utopia or real possibility? (National Council, 2011).
- Tristebni pristop k pokojninski reformi in k reformi drugih javnih storitev – posvet pri predsedniku RS "Slovenija 2030" (KOROŠEC, V. 2015). (Eng. Three-pillar approach to the pension reform and to the reform of other public services - consultation with the President of the Republic of Slovenia "Slovenija 2030")
- 55th emergency meeting (June 15, 2017) - Decision adopted at the meeting of the Committee for Work, Family, Social Affairs and the Disabled regarding the possibility of introducing UTD in the Republic of Slovenia as a response to contemporary social challenges. (DZ RS 2017).

## **4<sup>th</sup> corner: The work of UBI experts and public servants:**

- UBI proposal for Slovenija – why and how (Korošec, 2010).
- UBI Proposal for Slovenia - microsimulation (Korošec, 2010)
- Tristebni pristop k pokojninski reformi in k reformi drugih javnih storitev – posvet pri predsedniku RS "Slovenija 2030" (Korošec, 2015).
- UBI microsimulation for Universal Child Benefit in Belgium following Slovenian approach (Korošec, 2019a).

- **During COVID-19 three measures were introduced in Slovenia that had some features of the Universal Basic Income, two of them called 'Basic Income' (see Figure 4).**

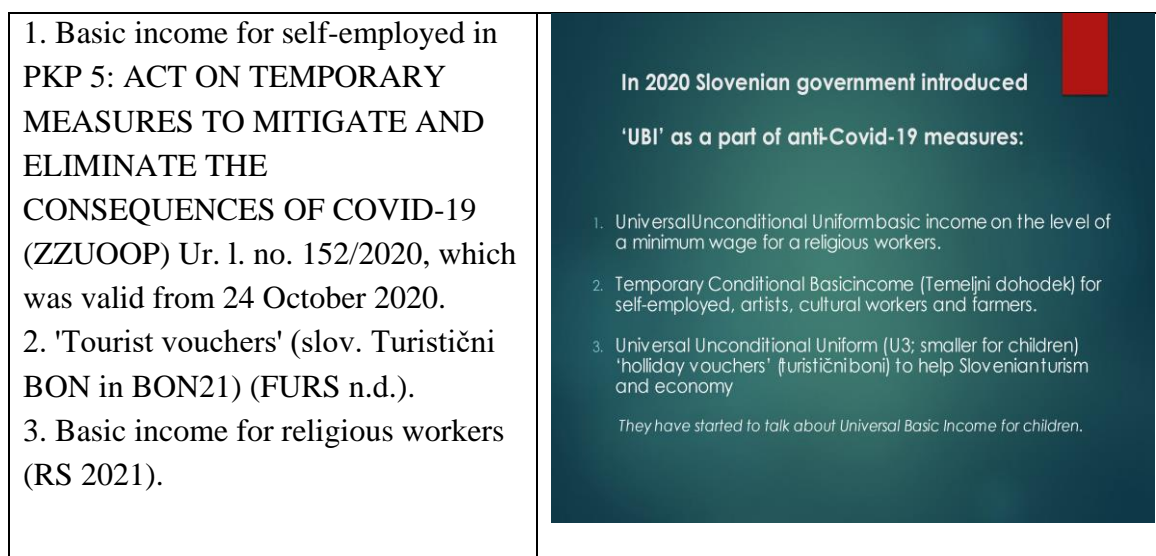


Figure 4. UBI as a part of 'COVID-19 time' measures in 2020.

## 4 Results

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> corner of UBI social innovation circle, work of academics and activists show in the Figure 5 that four selected pro-UBI academics were very active in UBI discourse (2004-2023), although differently through years, with highest frequency in 2012 when the 2<sup>nd</sup> book of essays was published. 217 authors listed in the archive of the UTD Promotion Section from (2009 – 2022) also show varying frequency by year, the highest in 2013, when the 1<sup>st</sup> ECI UBI was held and in time of Slovenian “people uprising (Slovenian: »ljudska vstaja«) and followed by resignation of 10<sup>th</sup> Slovenian government, which was led by the right wing politician Janez Janša (Figure 75). Those results were an important part of the success of the next stage withing the 2<sup>nd</sup> corner of social innovation: civil initiatives.

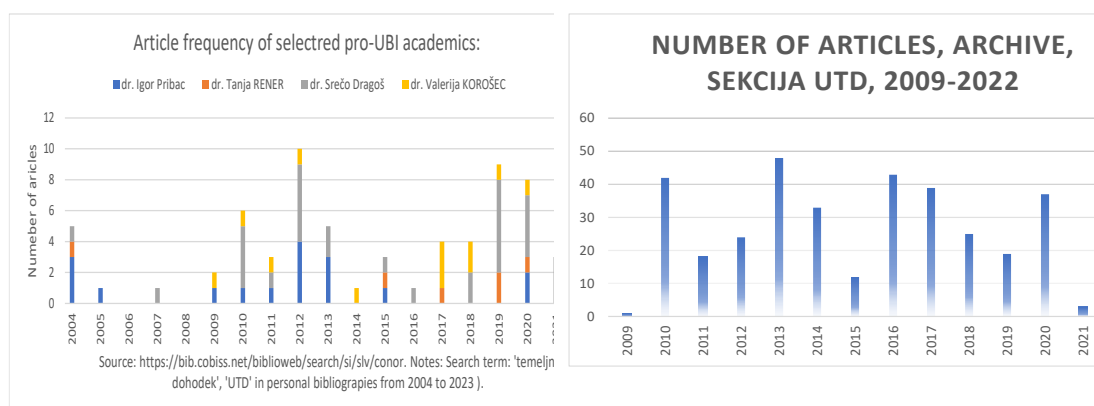


Figure 5. UBI articles by academics (left) and by activists at UBI Slovenian network (right)

Both ECI for Universal Basic Income are among 47 ECI that did not reach the target (EP 2023). They were not successful in reaching 1 million signatures. However, Slovenia was the second best in both attempts regarding the percentage of quota. According to the percentage of inhabitants Slovenia was both times the most successful in EU, what is visible in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2. Figure of Results, 1<sup>st</sup> ECI UBI, 2013-2014

	Code	State	Today	Total	Quotum	% of Quotum	Target	% of Target	Web	Paper	Inhabitants	% of Inh.
1	BG	Bulgaria	0	32.006	13.500	237.1%	23.499	136.2%	30.006	2.000	7.261.000	0.440%
2	SI	Slovenia	0	9.255	6.000	154.3%	10.444	88.6%	9.255	0	2.062.000	0.450%
3	HR	Croatia	0	12.194	9.000	135.5%	15.666	77.8%	12.193	1	4.258.000	0.290%
4	BE	Belgium	0	19.010	16.500	115.2%	28.721	66.2%	19.008	2	11.162.000	0.170%
5	EE	Estonia	0	4.884	4.500	108.5%	7.833	62.4%	4.862	22	1.283.000	0.380%
6	NL	Netherlands	0	20.337	19.500	104.3%	33.943	59.9%	20.337	0	16.795.000	0.120%
7	HU	Hungary	0	14.514	16.500	88.0%	28.721	50.5%	14.513	1	9.894.000	0.150%
8	FR	France	0	37.415	55.500	67.4%	96.606	38.7%	37.413	2	63.820.000	0.060%
9	SK	Slovakia	0	6.352	9.750	65.2%	16.971	37.4%	6.351	1	5.413.000	0.120%
10	SE	Sweden	0	9.601	15.000	64.0%	26.110	36.8%	9.601	0	9.595.000	0.100%
11	ES	Spain	0	25.420	40.500	62.8%	70.496	36.1%	23.419	2.001	46.958.000	0.050%
12	AT	Austria	0	8.408	14.250	59.0%	24.804	33.9%	8.055	353	8.477.000	0.100%
13	DE	Germany	0	40.542	74.250	54.6%	129.243	31.4%	37.765	2.777	80.640.000	0.050%
14	ALL	28 of Europe	0	285.042	574.500	49.6%	1.000.003	28.5%	276.914	8.128	504.685.000	0.060%
15	PT	Portugal	0	6.871	16.500	41.6%	28.721	23.9%	6.869	2	10.609.000	0.060%
16	DK	Denmark	0	3.200	9.750	32.8%	16.971	18.9%	2.817	383	5.612.000	0.060%
17	CZ	Czech Republic	0	4.572	16.500	27.7%	28.721	15.9%	4.126	446	10.519.000	0.040%
18	UK	United Kingdom	0	10.111	54.750	18.5%	95.300	10.6%	10.109	2	64.231.000	0.020%
19	EL	Greece	0	2.869	16.500	17.4%	28.721	10.0%	2.868	1	10.758.000	0.030%
20	FI	Finland	0	1.622	9.750	16.6%	16.971	9.6%	1.504	118	5.436.000	0.030%
21	RO	Romania	0	4.082	24.750	16.5%	43.081	9.5%	4.078	4	19.858.000	0.020%
22	LU	Luxembourg	0	630	4.500	14.0%	7.833	8.0%	629	1	542.000	0.120%
23	IE	Ireland	0	1.170	9.000	13.0%	15.666	7.5%	1.170	0	4.662.000	0.030%
24	PL	Poland	0	4.765	38.250	12.5%	66.580	7.2%	4.760	5	38.548.000	0.010%
25	IT	Italy	0	4.531	54.750	8.3%	95.300	4.8%	4.525	6	59.789.000	0.010%
26	MT	Malta	0	194	4.500	4.3%	7.833	2.5%	194	0	419.000	0.050%
27	CY	Cyprus	0	112	4.500	2.5%	7.833	1.4%	112	0	1.117.000	0.010%
28	LT	Lithuania	0	221	9.000	2.5%	15.666	1.4%	221	0	2.956.000	0.010%
29	LV	Latvia	0	154	6.750	2.3%	11.749	1.3%	154	0	2.011.000	0.010%

Table 3. Results of 2<sup>nd</sup> ECI UBI, 2020-2022

	Code	State	Today	Signed	threshold	% of Tres	Target	% of Targ	Need	ToGo	Web	Paper	Inhabitants	% of Inha
1	SI	Slovenia	0	6.776	5.640	120,14%	4.681	144,75%	461.357	461.357	6.776	0	2.095.861	0,32%
2	EE	Estonia	0	2.952	4.935	59,82%	2.968	99,45%	293.889	293.889	2.952	0	1.328.976	0,22%
3	LV	Latvia	0	4.152	5.640	73,62%	4.261	97,44%	109	109	4.152	0	1.907.675	0,22%
4	ES	Spain	2	72.569	41.595	174,47%	105.717	68,64%	10.499.092	10.499.090	72.569	0	47.329.981	0,15%
5	IT	Italy	0	62.007	53.580	115,73%	134.563	46,08%	13.394.281	13.394.281	62.007	0	60.244.639	0,10%
6	GR	Greece	0	10.147	14.805	68,54%	23.921	42,42%	2.381.988	2.381.988	10.147	0	10.709.739	0,09%
7	HU	Hungary	0	8.576	14.805	57,93%	21.821	39,30%	2.173.553	2.173.553	8.576	0	9.769.526	0,09%
8	DE	Germany	0	70.417	67.680	104,04%	185.762	37,91%	1.787.201	1.787.201	70.417	0	83.166.711	0,08%
9	BG	Bulgaria	0	5.375	11.985	44,85%	15.527	34,62%	1.547.313	1.547.313	5.375	0	6.951.482	0,08%
10	ALL	27 of Europe	2	296.365	497.025	59,63%	78.414.524	29,64%	703.635	703.633	296.365	0	447.706.209	0,00%
11	NL	Netherlands	0	10.623	20.445	51,96%	38.882	27,32%	3.877.548	3.877.548	10.623	0	17.407.585	0,06%
12	FI	Finland	0	2.805	9.870	28,42%	12.341	22,73%	1.231.328	1.231.328	2.805	0	5.525.292	0,05%
13	PT	Portugal	0	4.459	14.805	30,12%	22.997	19,39%	2.295.243	2.295.243	4.459	0	10.295.909	0,04%
14	AT	Austria	0	3.817	13.395	28,50%	19.881	19,20%	1.984.331	1.984.331	3.817	0	8.901.064	0,04%
15	IE	Ireland	0	2.100	9.165	22,91%	11.087	18,94%	1.106.627	1.106.627	2.100	0	4.963.839	0,04%
16	MT	Malta	0	205	4.230	4,85%	1.149	17,84%	114.728	114.728	205	0	514.564	0,04%
17	SE	Sweden	0	3.897	14.805	26,32%	23.068	16,89%	2.302.881	2.302.881	3.897	0	10.327.589	0,04%
18	LU	Luxembourg	0	218	4.230	5,15%	1.398	15,59%	139.630	139.630	218	0	626.108	0,03%
19	HR	Croatia	0	1.234	8.460	14,59%	9.064	13,61%	905.201	905.201	1.234	0	4.058.165	0,03%
20	CY	Cyprus	0	238	4.230	5,63%	1.983	12,00%	198.107	198.107	238	0	888.005	0,03%
21	LT	Lithuania	0	678	7.755	8,74%	6.241	10,86%	61.731	61.731	678	0	2.794.090	0,02%
22	DK	Denmark	0	1.290	9.870	13,07%	13.006	9,92%	1.299.287	1.299.287	1.290	0	5.822.763	0,02%
23	FR	France	0	13.532	55.695	24,30%	149.872	9,03%	14.973.712	14.973.712	13.532	0	67.098.824	0,02%
24	BE	Belgium	0	2.188	14.805	14,78%	25.798	8,48%	2.577.604	2.577.604	2.188	0	11.549.888	0,02%
25	RO	Romania	0	2.538	23.265	10,91%	43.149	5,88%	428.950	428.950	2.538	0	19.317.984	0,01%
26	SK	Slovakia	0	630	9.870	6,38%	12.191	5,17%	1.218.445	1.218.445	630	0	5.457.873	0,01%
27	CZ	Czech Republic	0	719	14.805	4,86%	23.886	3,01%	2.387.887	2.387.887	719	0	10.693.939	0,01%
28	PL	Poland	0	2.223	36.660	6,06%	84.784	2,62%	8.476.136	8.476.136	2.223	0	37.958.138	0,01%

The Table 4 below shows that on the government portal ‘my proposal to the government’ (RS 2009) there were 24 different UBI proposal (12 of them received an official reply) in the last thirteen years. The last twelve were proposed in the last two years, with 4 official replays. The biggest support of 124 signatures received the proposal »Študija potencialne uvedbe UTD« in 2015, with an official answer form UMAR. One answered Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Finance and 8 times the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MDDSZ), six proposals, between 19.10. 2017 and 20.09.2022 were answered all at ones, on the 17.11.2021, in a ‘copy – paste manner’.

Table 4. UBI proposals on the platform ‘my proposal to the government’, 2009-2023

			Objavljen odgovor	Institucija			Predlog poslan
1		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			3 3 4	<a href="#">Osnovni državljanski dohodek</a>	25.05.2011
2	11	Objavljen odgovor	12.12.201	MDDSZ	10 2 20	<a href="#">Univerzalni temeljni dohodek</a>	14.10.2011
3		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			14 3 10	<a href="#">univerzalni dohodek</a>	17.04.2012
5		Objavljen odgovor	29.06.2012	MF	18 4 6	<a href="#">Uvedba UTD-ja na korporativnem nivoju</a>	21.05.2012
6		Objavljen odgovor	21.10.2015	UMAR	17 3 18	<a href="#">Univerzalni nacionalni dohodek</a>	11.07.2012
7	1	Objavljen odgovor	16.01.2015	UMAR	124 12 49	<a href="#">Študija potencialne uvedbe UTD</a>	16.01.2015
8	2	Objavljen odgovor	17.11.2021	MDDSZ	27 6 13	<a href="#">univerzalni temeljni dohodek za vsakega državljana Republike Slovenije</a>	10.05.2016
9	3	Objavljen odgovor	17.11.2021	MDDSZ	38 15 54	<a href="#">UTD univerzalni temeljni dohodek</a>	19.10.2017
10	4	Objavljen odgovor	17.11.2021	MDDSZ	14 12 58	<a href="#">Univerzalni temeljni dohodek - predlogi z izračuni, tabelami in grafi</a>	09.11.2017
11	5	Objavljen odgovor	17.11.2021	MDDSZ	22 13 25	<a href="#">UTD univerzalni temeljni dohodek - nova vlada, maj poskusi s testnim projektom</a>	31.12.2018
12		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			5 10 27	<a href="#">temeljni dohodek kot v Italiji</a>	25.01.2019
13		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			14 14 20	<a href="#">Univerzalna temeljna štipendija za vse dijake in študente kot predhodnica za kasnejši UTD</a>	08.01.2020
14	6	Objavljen odgovor	17.11.2021	MDDSZ	48 16 26	<a href="#">Zdaj je čas za UTD</a>	15.06.2020
15	7	Na glasovanju zavrnjen			15 13 5	<a href="#">Mesečni temeljni prihodek</a>	24.09.2020
16	9	Objavljen odgovor	15.12.2020	MGRT	21 3 2	<a href="#">Pošteni pogoji za UTD za s.p.</a>	16.10.2020
17		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			23 4 6	<a href="#">UTD za invalidne trajno nezaposljive osebe</a>	15.12.2020
18		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			5 13 4	<a href="#">Mesečni temeljni prihodek</a>	13.12.2020
19		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			11 5 4	<a href="#">temeljni dohodek za s.p. in davčni dolg</a>	04.01.2021
20		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			26 22 14	<a href="#">Univerzalni temeljni dohodek v višini minimalne plače</a>	25.01.2021
21		Na glasovanju zavrnjen			7 3 3	<a href="#">Sprememba pogojev 2021 - temeljni dohodek</a>	06.04.2021
22	10	Objavljen odgovor	17.11.2021	MDDSZ	91 30 67	<a href="#">Univerzalni temeljni dohodek - UTD</a>	05.10.2021
23	11	Objavljen odgovor	10.11.2022	MDDSZ	30 12 11	<a href="#">Univerzalni otroški dodatek</a>	20.09.2022
24		Razprava poteka do: 05.01.2023			10 10 11	<a href="#">predsednica je za UTD, na potezi vlada, da pripravi predpis o UTD</a>	20.12.2022

This paper presents some evidence that in developed countries, a universal, unconditional, and uniform basic income (U3BI) **budget neutral** approach is more effective than a means-tested, conditional, and targeted benefit system in addressing child poverty. Below on the Figure 6, the microsimulation's results of U3BI Child Grant for Belgium following the Slovenian approach can be seen.

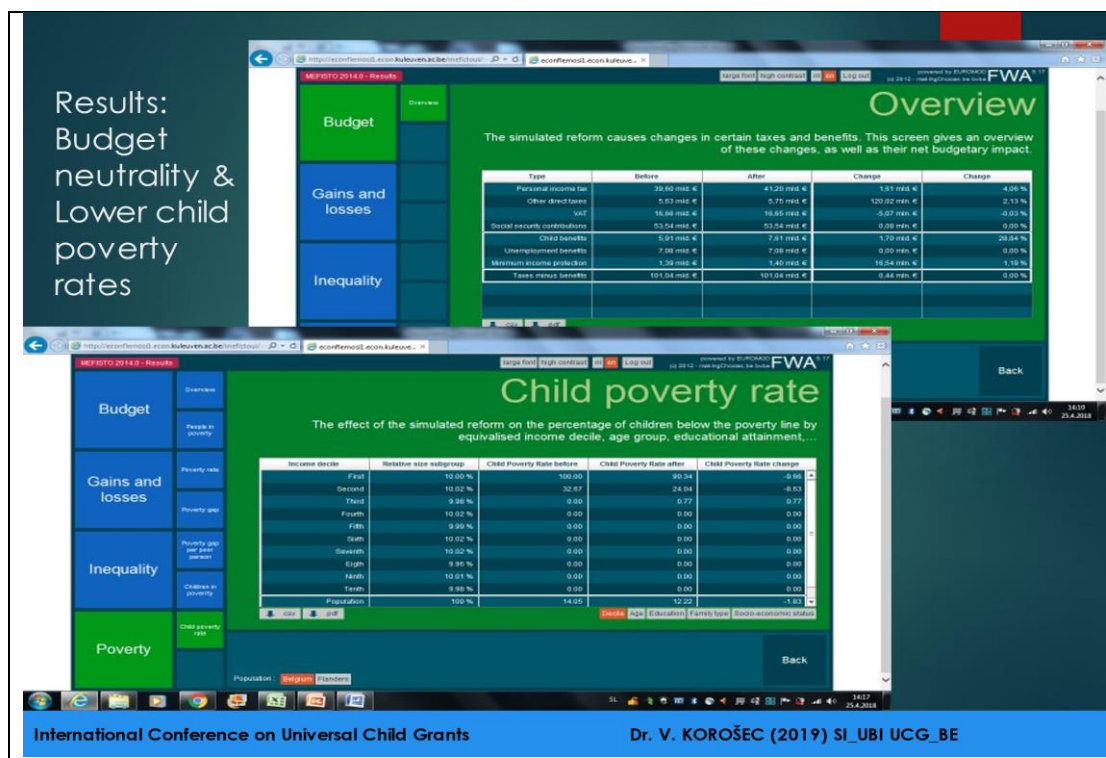


Figure 6. Microsimulation's results of U3BI Child Grant for Belgium following the Slovenian approach

## 5 Discussion

In the last 18 years Slovenia was by all facts the shining star of the European UBI discourse. It fulfilled all four corners of the Social Innovation Circle so perfectly that it was hard to imagine what else or better should Slovenia do it. Not only by the results but also by the way how and how fast Slovenia obtained the signatures in the 1<sup>st</sup> and especially the 2<sup>nd</sup> ECI UBI seemed to prove this impression. However, at the end of 2020 the story of success changed a lot.

At the beginning 2nd ECI UBI Slovenia was something special: it reached ECI national quota after only two months. At the beginning all of the old Slovenian UBI 'eco-system' helped to get as much signatures as possible. After Slovenia reached the national quota the whole momentum in Slovenia was gone, since in other EU countries more than 18 months nothing happened, when Spain finally reached the national quota as well. However, by then the hope to reach 1 million was gone and so was the motivation in Slovenia. During this time Slovenia also endured a big social shock, not only because of Covid, but also because of the change of the Slovenian government (the 14<sup>th</sup> government, which was led by the right-wing politician Janez Janša from Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 to the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2022, was replaced, when the 15<sup>th</sup> government, led by centre to centre left political party dr. Robert Golob came to power).

The 14<sup>th</sup> Slovenian government adopted three measures that had some characteristics of UBI Proposal (2010), two of them named as 'basic income'. **However, none of them applied any of the UBI Basic Principles as presented in Figure 1.** Those COVID 'basic income' measures were very complicated as evident on number of accounting portals (RS5KA 2021, Minimax 2020, Malnar Molek, 2020, DATA 2021, Cvetka n.d. etc., on the site of FURS about voucher (FURS n.d.)). The easiest of them was one aimed to religious servants (MMC, 2021). In the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic shock when people needed easy understandable and easy delivered existential help, those measure were failure. This fiasco had different results, some immediate and some postponed. First, the number of UBI activists ceased because of their disappointment. Second, the number of UBI proposals on the portal "my proposal to the government" rose. The UBI proposals from 2020 to 2023 represent more than 50% of UBI proposals, gathered from the 2009 on (*Figure 7*). Those numbers show that in the time of COVID a UBI was needed and desired (RS, 2009) more than ever, but the old ways obviously did not work, it was obvious that UBI discourse in Slovenia needed some re-adjustments. Third, postponed results of anti-covid measures (including measures three 'UBI like measures) can be observed in domain of huge inflation and the lack of labour force in Slovenia. This happens when UBI is not introduced in the best possible way.

It has to be stated that that none of 3 above mentioned 'UBI like measures' (or any under measure under 14<sup>th</sup> Slovenian government) was introduced based on calculation and micro-simulation of consequences regarding financial, social inequality, poverty, inflation, activity, unemployment levels. For instance, no Slovenian experts of UBI was ever included in preparing those measures. The proposals of UBI at the portal 'My proposal to government' did not get an

official response as well. There is the most intriguing question who were the experts and public servants that designed those measures? What were the connections between the corners of Social Innovation Circle (academics, people, politics, and experts) during COVID-19?

Could be people in Slovenia optimistic that any other government, except the 14<sup>th</sup> Slovenian government, would implement UBI better and differently, for instance by applying the whole circle of UBI Social Innovation circle? We could hope so, but with only little optimism. There are some other pessimistic facts: even before 14<sup>th</sup> Slovenian government, none of the conference or public consultation that hosted the most eminent guests within UBI discourse contributed nothing to the UBI discourse in Slovenian political sphere or to the public administration's way of preparing social policy adjustment in domain of basic income measures. The third and fourth corner of the Social Innovation Circle in Slovenia seemed to be 'in praxis' completely 'untouched' with the activities in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> corner. There is a question for the further research: where the 'public servants' hijacked by politicians, or did they voluntarily ceased to exist as professionals who work for the public good to become only the 'servants' of politicians who do not work in the best interest for all?

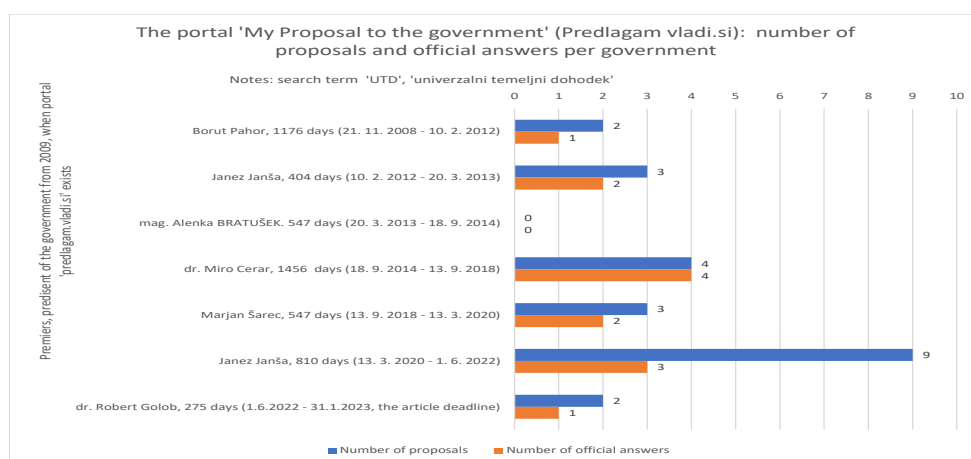


Figure 7. UBI proposals on the portal 'my proposal to the government' & Slovenian governments

However, it has to be said that this Figure 7 might be too dark due to the limitations of this research. The selection was necessary due to a huge number of articles, a huge number of participants in Slovenian UBI discourse, a number of events of different kind. The Figure is therefore partial. The future research should be therefore broader and deeper in all of its facets. For instance, at the 1<sup>st</sup> corner of UBI social innovation, the scope of data gathering among academics in Slovenia should be widened to include all academics that wrote about Universal Basic Income, about a New social Deal and three pillar social structure. Additionally, it should explore the selected pro-UBI academics bibliography in depth, beyond the 'search terms' in the title of the paper. Some of academics stated to the authors, that they brought the idea of UBI to the audience under different title in order not to be 'blocked' or 'ostracized' in advance. Then, there are some other 'pro-UBI' academics, especially younger generations, out-spring, of first generation of 'UBI academics': Nina Šoštarč, Sebastijan Pikel, mag. Jasmina Jerant, dr. Daniel



Popovič from dr. Igor Pribac (Faculty of Arts), mag. Ana Jagodic from dr. Tanja Renner and dr. Urban Boljka from dr. Zinka Kolarič, both (Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana) that the authors got to know personally. Also, for instance: only in 2022 only at the Faculty of Social Sciences three dissertations on UBI were published (FDV, 2023). Their work should be disseminated and scrutinised beyond Academy, in all the rest corners of the Social Innovation Circle.

Within the 2<sup>nd</sup> corner all UBI civil initiatives should be analysed in way how to become more successful in the future – since none of them was in the way they anticipated. European UBI networks and the Slovenian influence within them should be explored. The Slovenian UBI network (Sekcija UTD) should be ‘archived’ properly, and its influence upon the political parties should be explored in detail. This is the part which was intentionally not included in this paper as it deserves separated research, within the 3<sup>rd</sup> social innovation corner. And last, but not least: there is a special challenge with the 4<sup>th</sup> corner of UBI social innovation circle: the experts and public servants, especially in Slovenia. UBI would have a tremendous impact on the de-bureaucratization of the state and the EU. Unfortunately, it seems that the research of UBI implementation in Slovenija within public administration was limited on every and each step due the current state (systemic corruption) of state bureaucracy and research funding system, both aiming to preserve status quo. The biggest challenge of UBI implementation in Slovenia therefor is that the cause of the challenge holds the key to the solution. The state bureaucrats will not voluntarily hand over the key to the bigger individual freedom. The only solution we could envisage in Slovenia would be the research carried out in non-state funded research entities and membership entities as trade unions, chambers, cooperatives, local communities etc. who are strong enough to conduct a research and implement the results by themselves. It seems necessary to make the proposals, calculations without the state, making the state less important and a smaller obstacle in searching for a New Social Deal. Additional solution on the EU level would be, to make it work that all 4 corners of social innovation perform according to their prerequisites and their strong points (see Figure 7). Like in Slovenia at the beginning of their UBI story: using the criticism of the current state of affairs and ideas for the better future written by academics - to transform the expectations of the people – which to be organised within political entities into political programmes and - finally finding practical solutions with experts as presented in the It would be interesting to write the “What-if” history of UBI Story in Slovenia – reversing all the missed opportunities in opposite directions.



Figure 8. Building a new paradigm through persistent and permanent social innovation.

## 6 Conclusion

Academics, experts, civil initiatives in Slovenia or on the level of UBI, were yet not successful in proposing UBI. Selected facts and data, gathered through eighteen years of observation of the flourishing UBI 'eco-system' developed in Slovenia and in the EU, show that UBI is not possible to introduce in Slovenia or in the EU in the same manner proposed 12 years ago. The idea of basic income seems to have less and less support among the civil society, although the need for the social safety net build according to the basic income principles is expressed more and more. As well the urge to preserve other Universal Basic Services (Health, Education, Pension system). Therefore, the approach and proposals within UBI discourse have to be re-adjusted and updated. The academic researchers, advocates, civil society, politics, professionals, experts, and civil servants will have to start with the new circle of research on universal basic rights implementation. Unfortunately, society and the environment will have to endure a huge hardship, harder than through Covid, to develop and implement a new Social Deal that would be good enough to secure this civilisation to survive.

The new emergencies are likely to shatter EU. It is very likely that "working age" people will be ever more at the centre of the crises. Automatization in different shapes replacing more and more people will have ever more devastating effect on the societies, especially "work-centric", competitive and taxonomic societies. Losing their focal point – work at the labour market - can turn those societies into chaos and anarchy. However, there is a possibility of a new social paradigm. A new social deal. A new or additional concepts of UBI as Universal Basic Items and Universal Basic Services could play a cornerstone of a new, three pillar UTD Social Deal, that could prevent Slovenia turning into anarchy and the EU from disintegration.

As the topic of UBI is still under researched in Slovenia and such in detail historical overview and comparison between the countries is of essential value to conduct further argued discussion about the mentioned topic, while also limited on every and each step of current state funding,

we urge the researchers that the future research is conducted only within non-state research entities.

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## **Povzetek:**

### **UTD – temelj novega socialnega dogovora**

**Raziskovalno vprašanje (RV):** Kako bi bilo najbolje uvesti UTD (univerzalni temeljni dohodek) v Sloveniji in EU?

**Namen:** Ta članek analizira možnost uvedbe UTD v Sloveniji in EU na podlagi osemnajstletnega opazovanja cvetočega »ekosistema« UTD, razvitega v Sloveniji in EU, ki je dosegel malo ali nič uspeha. Še huje, dolgoletna prizadevanja za implementacijo UTD so prinesla nekaj motečih in frustrirajočih rezultatov v času COVID-a. Akademiki, zagovorniki in strokovnjaki bodo morali začeti nov krog raziskovanja implementacije UTD. V 21. stoletju se bi lahko UTD izkazal za najpomembnejši, osnovni, temeljni kamen novega socialnega dogovora, ki ga sestavljajo trije stebri UTD: steber univerzalnih osnovnih pravic, steber prostega trga/trgovine in steber demokratičnih družbenih institucij. Socialni dogovor UTD bi Sloveniji lahko pomagal pri utrjevanju položaja jedrne države članice EU in preprečil razpad EU v trenutnih izrednih razmerah. Cilj prispevka je tudi identificirati ovire in napake, ki so bile storjene v slovenskem diskurzu UTD, da se zgodovina ne bi ponovila.

**Metoda:** Osemnajst let raziskovanja z metodo participativnega opazovanja in mednarodnimi primerjalnimi analizami z uporabo »kroga družbenih inovacij – kroga upanja« kot analitičnega orodja.

**Rezultati:** Raziskava je pokazala, da UTD ne v Sloveniji ne v EU ni mogoče uvesti na način, kot je bil predlagan pred 12 leti. Pristop in predlog je treba posodobiti.

**Organizacija:** Raziskovalci, zagovorniki in strokovnjaki bodo morali začeti nov krog raziskav implementacije UTD.

**Družba:** Nov koncept UTD bi lahko bil temelj novega socialnega dogovora, ki bi lahko preprečil razpad EU.

**Originalnost:** Tematika UTD je v Sloveniji še vedno slabo raziskana in tako podroben zgodovinski pregled in primerjava med državama je bistvenega pomena za nadaljnjo argumentirano razpravo o omenjeni temi.

**Omejitve / nadaljnje raziskovanje:** UTD bi imel izjemen vpliv na debirokratizacijo države. V zadnjih 12 letih se je pokazalo, da državna birokracija omejuje in sabotira raziskovanje, kot tudi implementacijo ideje UTD. V prihodnje bi se zato tovrstne raziskave morale izvajati le v okviru neodvisnih raziskovalnih subjektov, ki jih država ne nadzoruje preko financiranja njihove dejavnosti.

**Ključne besede:** univerzalni temeljni dohodek (UTD), tritebrni univerzalni-tržno-demokratični sistem, nov socialni dogovor.

