

**A Grade: Round 1***That Australia should implement a universal basic income*

A universal basic income (UBI) is a payment made by the government to all individuals regardless of their employment status, income or assets. This differs from the current Australian welfare system, where payments are normally based upon some sort of need (e.g. the aged pension, study allowances and parenting payments) and can be limited if you are employed or have access to a large amount of assets. Many UBI proposals are set at a level where the payment is supposed to allow an individual to meet all of their basic needs without additional income, but this isn't an essential feature of a UBI.

A UBI can either be in addition to many of the services that governments already provide (e.g. the public health and education systems) or it can be used to replace government services (e.g. people are now required to pay for health and education out of their UBI). This structure obviously impacts the amount that would need to be paid for people to meet their basic needs. Additionally, governments may still choose to make other welfare payments to people on top of a UBI (e.g. disability support payments).

While it would be expensive to implement a UBI, it's important to remember that the government already spends a large amount of revenue on the welfare system and providing various other services. Additionally, there are large amounts of both time and funds spent determining who qualifies for welfare payments and the amount they are eligible for. If a UBI replaced most of our welfare payments some of this cost may be reduced.

Affirmative teams in this debate may find it beneficial to spend some time thinking about how a UBI could work in Australia, and making sure that they carefully outline a model in the debate. Negative teams may find it useful to research the current welfare system, or other alternatives to a UBI.

**Some questions to consider:**

- Why might we want to implement a UBI in Australia?
- What would a UBI look like? Would it replace other government services?
- How would we pay for a UBI?
- Do people need a UBI? What if they already have employment?
- How has the economy changed in recent times? What changes are still occurring? Does this alter the case for a UBI?
- Is a UBI fair? Will people still want to work? Why?
- Should government payments be designed as a safety net, or a right?

**Some articles to consider:**

- <https://theconversation.com/universal-basic-income-the-dangerous-idea-of-2016-70395>
- <http://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/finland-begins-universal-basic-income-trial-as-the-world-watches/news-story/7ae91901c856ca697ed6b30e18cbba00>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-07-04/universal-basic-income-money-for-nothing/8676834>
- [https://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/rp1617/BasicIncome](https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1617/BasicIncome)