The EU’s Growing Support for Basic Income

Measuring the change in European support for basic income from April 2016 to March 2017
Key Takeaways

31% want basic income immediately, while 48% would wait until after a successful experiment.

68% would vote for basic income, a 4 percentage point increase since last year.

63% of Europeans are aware of basic income. This is an increase of 5 percentage points from last year.

52% of people think basic income would help alleviate financial insecurity and 42% think it would create more equality of opportunity.

Support for basic income is highest in Italy at 75%. Most increased growth is in the UK, where support grew by 7 percentage points in the last year.

52% think basic income might encourage people to stop working. But 37% say a basic income would not affect their work choices and 8% say they would work less.
63% of Europeans are familiar with basic income

“How familiar are you with the concept known as basic income?”

- I understand it fully: 24%
- I know something about it: 39%
- I have heard just a little about it: 25%
- I have never heard about it: 13%

Change in awareness of basic income since April 2016: +5
“A basic income is an income unconditionally paid by the government to every individual regardless of whether they work and irrespective of any other sources of income. It replaces other social security payments and is high enough to cover all basic needs (food, housing etc.).”
68% of Europeans would vote for basic income

“If there would be a referendum on introducing basic income today, how would you vote?”

- 68% Would vote for
- 24% Would vote against
- 9% Would not vote

% Change since April 2016:
- 4
- 0
- 3
31% want to adopt basic income immediately

“At what point do you think your country should introduce basic income?”

- As soon as possible: 31%
- After successful experiments in my country: 32%
- After successful experiments in other countries: 16%
- Not anytime in the near future: 13%
- Never: 8%
Support is highest in Italy, most growth in UK

“If there would be a referendum on introducing basic income today, how would you vote?”

% Change since April 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>+7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>+2</td>
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</tbody>
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Hopes: reducing financial anxiety, equality

“Which of the following arguments FOR basic income do you find convincing?”

- It reduces anxiety about financing basic needs: 52% (+12)
- It creates more equality of opportunity: 42% (+11)
- It encourages financial independence and self-responsibility: 32% (+9)
- It increases appreciation for household work and volunteering: 29% (+8)
- It increases solidarity, because it is funded by everyone: 26% (+5)
- It reduces bureaucracy and administrative expenses: 21% (+5)
- None of these options: 16% (-6)

% Change since April 2016
Fears: abandoning work, foreigners taking advantage

“Which of the following arguments AGAINST the basic income do you find convincing?”

- It might encourage people to stop working: 52% (52% +9 %)
- Foreigners might come to my country and take advantage of the benefit: 39% (39% +5 %)
- Only the people who need it most should get something from the state: 34% (34% +2 %)
- It is impossible to finance: 34% (34% +2 %)
- It increases dependence on the state: 29% (29% +5 %)
- It is against the principle of linking merit and reward: 23% (23% +2 %)
- None of these options: 12% (-3 %)
Basic income’s effect on workers

“What could be the most likely effect of basic income on your work choices? I would… “

- A basic income would not affect my work choices: 37% (+3)
- Spend more time with my family: 17% (+2)
- None of these options: 12% (-1)
- Work less: 8% (+1)
- Do more volunteering work: 7% (+0)
- Gain additional skills: 7% (-3)
- Look for a different job: 5% (+2)
- Work as a freelancer: 4% (-1)
- Stop working: 3% (+1)
We asked 11,021 respondents across 28 EU member states what they think of universal basic income via mobile phones, tablets and computers. The results were collected in March 2017. Respondents are ages 14–65. Calculated for a sample of this size and the design effect, the margin of error is at +/-1.1%.

About the Survey

Ask Europe Your Questions

Contact niklas@daliaresearch.com to learn more about asking your own questions to Europe in one of Dalia’s quarterly surveys.