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Post-Work Society & Unconditional Basic Income. An introduction.

Post-Work society is contrary to the idea that modern life is solely driven by the assumption that employment should be part of it.¹

Looking at current debates in economies, several things are about the future of work driven by artificial intelligence (AI). Where will we end up? No workers, or only a few? Or is AI only a bubble?

We need to make up our minds how the future will look like once we reached the peak of AI and once the shape seems to be almost final. Assuming that this will happen in the future, it is worth to think about so called post-work societies and its side effects. Is AI a driver for post-

¹ Cf. Hester & Stronge (2025). Post-Work: What It Is, Why It Matters. Bloomsbury Academic.

work society and is a post-work society the precursor for an unconditional basic income (UBI)?

UBI can be defined as an (universal) unconditional and regular/periodic transfer of cash to individuals without work requirements or means testing.²

Taking these elements as a baseline, it is possible to find the path to economic security for individuals. UBI could preserve individual autonomy in time allocation. And even more importantly: providing a potential solution when a mass loss of income could be caused by mass unemployment.³

The question is about the value of UBI and its impact in a post-work society.

- 1) UBI decouples income and employment: Income is given by scheme not by employment which might anyway come through further automation and robotics in the near future.
- 2) UBI as necessity in a „workless“ world: Once machines and robots will do their work, what will happen to people without jobs? They still need to live and the basis serves UBI.
- 3) UBI on a global scale: Assuming that AI will affect all economic areas over time. It is correct to observe UBI as a global topic rather than in domestic boundaries.

² Cf. Hasdell (2020). What We Know About Universal Basic Income: A Cross-Synthesis of Reviews. Stanford Basic Income Lab.

³ Cf. Dehouche (2025). Post-Labor Economics: A Systematic Review. doi:10.20944/preprints202504.0444.v2

Post-work society and UBI intersect questions in numerous areas such as AI, social topics, economic stability etc.⁴ But is UBI the suitable solution as a counter measure to fast technological change caused by AI?⁵

Therefore, UBI is not a set-in-stone conclusion for our future (due to the difficulty of predicting the future). However, it is worth thinking about. What will our lives be like in a post-work society, and how can we ensure monetary stability when it is no longer in our hands, but in the hands of technology? And what about blue-collar work? It seems somehow unrealistic at the moment to imagine that an unconditional payment and AI could easily replace the entire landscape of jobs.

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⁴ Cf. Dehouche (2025). Post-Labor Economics: A Systematic Review. doi:10.20944/preprints202504.0444.v2; cf. Hester & Stronge (2025). Post-Work: What It Is, Why It Matters. Bloomsbury Academic;

⁵ Cf. D'Alessandro, Distefano et al. (2025). Exploring policy responses to labour-saving technologies: An assessment of basic income, job guarantee, and working time reduction. *Journal of Policy Modeling* 47 (2025), 49–63.