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Bachelor thesis

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**Unconditional Basic Income - new utopia/dystopia of
modernity**

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Statutory declaration:

I declare that I have developed and written the enclosed Bachelor Thesis completely by myself and have not used sources or means without declaration in the text. Any thoughts from others or literal quotations are clearly marked. The Bachelor Thesis was not used in the same or in a similar version to achieve an academic grading.

Prague, 07.05.2020

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ABSTRACT

There is an ample amount of proposed solutions for the global challenges of our time. In this context, *unconditional basic income* is discussed as one possible solution. This bachelor thesis addresses the question of how this concept is reflected and presented specifically in Czech media and public discourse. Using data from a content analysis of the Czech media and a survey on a representative sample of the Czech population, it creates a map that displays the specifics of each discourse and shows the points of their contact. Results indicate that the high share of arguments about UBI which are frequently discussed in the Czech media finds a way to the public discourse, although some dissimilarities occur. In general, the topic itself seems to be peripheral in both discourses as in most of the analyzed articles it is briefly mentioned in the context of another topic, and the majority of the Czech population has never heard about the UBI concept. Among those who report contact with the topic in the Czech media, the meeting happened on the Internet or on TV. In addition, Czech society is sharply divided in its attitudes toward implementing UBI in the Czech context. Half of the population shows strong or moderate support for the concept, whilst another half is against its introduction.

KEYWORDS

Unconditional basic income, implementation, positive effects of UBI, negative effects of UBI, the Czech Republic

ABSTRAKT

Je představeno velké množství návrhů, jejichž cílem je čelit globálním výzvám naší doby. V kontextu těchto výzev je *nepodmíněný základní příjem* považován za jedno z možných řešení. Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá otázkou, jak je tento koncept reflektován a prezentován v českých médiích a ve veřejném diskurzu. Pomocí dat získaných z obsahové analýzy českých médií a výzkumu, uskutečněnému na reprezentativním vzorku české populace, si tato práce klade za cíl vytvořit mapu, na které budou zobrazena specifika každého diskurzu a ukázána místa jejich kontaktu. Výsledky naznačují, že vysoký podíl argumentů o NZP, o nichž se v českých médiích často diskutuje, se odráží také i ve veřejném diskurzu. Přesto se vyskytují i některé odlišnosti. Obecně se toto téma jeví jako periferní v obou diskurzech. Ve většině analyzovaných článků je o NZP stručně zmíněno v kontextu jiného tématu, navíc většina Čechů říká, že o konceptu NZP nikdy neslyšela. Mezi těmi, kdo se setkali s tématem v českých médiích, největší počet setkání s argumenty byl zaznamenán na internetu nebo v televizi. Kromě toho je třeba zmínit, že česká společnost je silně polarizovaná ve svých postojích k implementaci NZP v českém kontextu. Jinými slovy, polovina české populace vykazuje silnou nebo mírnou podporu konceptu, zatímco druhá polovina je proti jejímu zavedení.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Nepodmíněný základní příjem, implementace, pozitivní efekty NZP, negativní efekty NZP, Česká republika

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1. Preamble: Modernity as a time of challenges

Ongoing social changes that reach the core of the established social structure evoke vivid debates on new policies and measures that could be considered as an adequate response to the transformations. Noteworthy is that this transformation simultaneously covers a wide palette of the society's dimensions such as labor, demographical, social, ethical and many other areas. In order to understand the language that actors use when discussing the issue outlined above, it should be explicitly clarified what is meant here by "transformation(s)" and what treatments do currently compose the public discourse.

Diving deeper into the topic of "society metamorphosis", some modern authors (Beck, 1999; Diamond & Lodge 2014; Thewissen & Rueda, 2019) accentuate the consequences of a wide incorporation of **new technologies** into daily life of individuals as well as their embedment in social structures and processes. Undoubtedly, the extended implementation of AI and robotic technologies, digitalization and automation accompanied by a trend toward globalization, population ageing process, growing inequality etc. cause considerable changes in labour markets, which is resulting in the disappearance and creation of work positions (Zwolinski, 2017; Ford, 2017; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2011). In addition, addressing the issue of labour market transformations, Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari (2019) writes about the emergence of a new social group – the "useless class" (Harari, 2019). This class unites "people who are not just unemployed, but unemployable" (Harari, 8.5.2017), meaning that their skills and qualification are not adequate to current society's needs and requirements anymore. Those people are not able to catch up and outperform smart robots and algorithms.

Another concern relates to the individualized, performance-based society where "transformation of external causes into individual guilt, of systematic problem into personal failure" takes place (Beck, 1986, p.150; as cited in Mau, 2015, p. 19). The implicit risk embedded in that change is that **rising inequalities** (Morgan, 2016; Kristal & Cohen, 2017; Piketty, 2013; Raventós, 2007) would no longer be seen as a problem of large social groups but rather considered as an individual failure. Taking personal responsibility for one's life-course risks is one of the major pillars of this society. Furthermore, **this shift from the collective solidarity and profitability idea towards more self-oriented approach** could reshape the borders of inequality tolerance (Mau, 2015). As Mau (2015) points out, together with a critique of inequality, its greater acceptance, the passive tolerance, extending "consent

to inequality” become more common. Such an alteration in turn triggers a discussion on the sustainability and future development of existing welfare states coupled with redefinition the eligible beneficiaries (Svallfors, 2012; Gough, 2010).

Nevertheless, the tendency of increasing tolerance towards inequality should not be overestimated. ESS survey *The future of welfare* (2016) in which the respondents were asked to express their (dis)agreement on the statement “larger differences in income are acceptable to reward talents and efforts” explicitly shows the decrease in the level of acceptance of inequalities over the period 2008 – 2016. Indeed, this trend appears across all country clusters under analysis.

In the light of above-mentioned empirical findings, special attention needs to be paid to a **precarization phenomenon** (Standing, 2011; Koukiadaki & Katsaroumpas, 2017). The notion refers to the new atypical forms of employment (e.g. freelance, crowdworking) which substitute standard models for the alternative employer-employee relationships that are mostly instable and insecure (Prosser, 2016). British economist G. Standing stresses that it seems like the precarization trend is “in principle desirable that more people at all ages move in and out of the labour force, take temporary jobs, combine several income-earning activities, and in the process do not conform to the simple three-stage model of life and work made the norm of industrial society, going straight from school or college into thirty or forty years of employment and then sharply shuffling off the stage into retirement” (Standing, 2002, p. 42).

Precarization seems to be an ambiguous phenomenon of our time. On the one hand, some academics speak of this issue rather in terms of flexibilization phenomenon (Lupton, 2016; Walwei, 1997). More concretely, they hold the belief that increasing flexibilization might bring new opportunities to people for whom an entry into traditional employment forms is problematic for certain reasons (Lupton, 2016; Walwei, 1997). There is an argument that workers' interests and needs are heterogeneous by their nature which means they cannot be fulfilled by just one broadly accepted form of employment (Walwei, 1997). In addition, flexibilization creates such working time models that enable adaption and smooth incorporation to the individual life stages and person's needs (Dietrich, 2015).

However, one should not overlook the negative impacts of the flexibilization which place an individual in a precarious position on the labour market. What other social scientists highlight: coupled with feelings of anxiety, frustration and dissatisfaction, conditions of permanent uncertainty cause the atmosphere of meaningless life and deprivation (Keller, 2011; Paugam, 2008). Individuals are not able to confirm their professional identity - that plays a

significant role – anymore. Indeed, they are deprived of the possibility of career growth (Keller, 2011). They are thus forced to confront the increasing risks of social insecurity that negatively affects individuals, and their families. Furthermore, once the work continuation is interrupted, a worker is excluded from receiving state social support which is guaranteed in case of regular full-time employment.

As a certain threat for existing workforces, the trend for a **declining power of unions**, which might lead to workers' disempowering, skyrocket wage inequality and growing number of precarious employments, appears in a discourse (Kristal & Cohen, 2017). In a similar vein, British economist Guy Standing highlights in his speech at BIEN Congress (2002) that in globalizing world, where social as well as economic insecurities coupled with different sorts of inequalities such as income, wealth and the opportunities ones are directing upward, giant economic actors are constantly aiming to make labor markets and employment relations as flexible as possible, whilst unions are gradually losing their bargaining power.

Describing the potential impacts of risks coming with above-mentioned changes, researchers Patrick Diamond and Guy Lodge (2014) emphasize **a need for reconstructing existing social welfare systems**, claiming that “structural changes in labour markets, demography, and the circumstances of family life create new pressures that traditional social protection systems are usually poorly equipped to handle. There are new “clusters” of social disadvantages as the global economy attenuates polarization in labour markets between the “work-rich” and “work-poor”, alongside new inequalities in nominal wages and living standards.” (Diamond & Lodge 2014, p.43).

This bachelor thesis takes a closer look at one of the welfare proposals which represents the potential way to carry out this “reconstruction.”

2. Introduction

Nowadays societies are searching for reliable answers to the numerous challenges that we are exposed to. It should be noted that the notion “challenge” serves as an umbrella term for such a diverse palette of social phenomena as transformations on labour markets caused by introduction of the new advanced technologies, precarization of employments, growing inequalities, demographic changes, etc. It is important to mention that the spectrum of the proposed solutions is wide and includes options such as *Global resources dividend* (Pogge, 2001), *Negative income tax* (Friedman, 1962), *Euro-Dividend* (Van Parijs & Vanderborght, 2001), *Participation income* (Atkinson, 1996), etc.

This bachelor thesis focuses on another potential answer that is introduced in the current discussions, namely the concept of *Universal Basic Income (UBI)*. Yet, it is not a modern invention, basic income is still dealing with the numerous fundamental questions with regard to its settings and ways of implementation.

Although ongoing discussions on UBI issue offer a variety of definitions, the following description proposed by Spanish BI advocate Daniel Raventós seems to be comprehensive enough for the purposes of this work: “Basic Income is an income paid by the state to each full member or accredited resident of a society, regardless of whether he or she wishes to engage in paid employment, or is rich or poor or, in other words, independently of any other sources of income that person might have, and irrespective of cohabitation arrangements in the domestic sphere” (Raventós, 2007, p.8).

When it comes to the particular questions that make up the core of the debates and seem to be the most puzzling when one thinks of its incorporation in society’s structures, the following ones presented in the article *Basic Income and the Labor Contract* by sociologist Claus Offe should be mentioned (Offe, 2009, p.50):

- “Should a basic income **cover the needs of subsistence or be just as high as 'feasible'**?”
- Should it apply **to all citizens or (at least initially) be targeted to those most threatened** by poverty or those performing caring and parental activities?
- Should it be **permanent for all recipients from childhood to old age or should it start with a time** account of, say, ten years per life?

- Should it **be strictly liberated from any notion of exchanging some useful activity for income or should it, again at least initially, be tied to some form of active participation of recipients?**
- Should the access to and level of income be **tied to currently prevailing labor market situations or should it be made independent of those?**

Interestingly, almost the same questions are raised by other authors as well, for instance in articles such as *The many faces of universal basic income* by Jurgen De Wispelaere and Lindsay Stirton (2004) and *Exploring universal basic income* by Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov (2020). Indeed, the former article overviews the main dimensions or faces of basic income concept such as universality (a share of population provided with the benefit), individuality (recipient unit – individual or household), conditionality (criteria of eligibility for receiving a basic grant), uniformity (an extent of equality in a distributed payment), frequency and duration (provision intervals and time limitations), modality (forms of basic benefit – basic services or cash provision) and, as the last one, adequacy (an ability to satisfy recipients’ needs not only in absolute term but also in a relative one, i.e. taking into account the lifestyle specifics and standards in particular society) (De Wispelaere & Stirton, 2004). In fact, each dimension could affect the final shape of a proposed policy and lead to a different set of outcomes. Finding a balanced solution that would minimize negative externalities and produce mostly desirable effects is a challenge that requires further scientific investigations and dialogs among actors at different society’s levels.

One could notice that hitherto even basic mutual agreement on UBI concept is missing. Instead of the coherent policy proposal we are exposed to a mosaic which consists of different pieces (De Wispelaere & Stirton, 2004). On the one hand, the lack of the consent on fundamental UBI model complicates the research in this area. On the other, it challenges one’s creativity and opens room for finding the equilibrium point where the best from existing proposals merges.

An apparent gap in coverage of UBI topic in the Czech Republic - that could be explained by relative “novelty” of this theme for the Czech discourse and no pilot project plans - as well as a need for a systematic presentation of the concept justify the relevance of conducting further research and following analysis. This bachelor thesis attempts to partially fill the gaps outlined above by researching the Czech media discourse and its reflection in public opinion. To be more specific, it answers the question, **how is the UBI concept reflected and presented in Czech media and public discourses?**

Given the complexity of the aforementioned research question, the formulation of related sub-questions is required for giving a comprehensive answer. To analyze the public reflection of UBI in relation to the Czech media discourse, it is necessary to get a precise picture of the coverage of the UBI discussion in the Czech media first. This is done using the following inquiries within the content analysis framework:

- which opinions and arguments do appear in the Czech media discourse as the most and the least frequent ones?
- how do the arguments relate to each other? Are there signs of joint appearance present in the discourse?
- who speaks about UBI in the Czech media and what attitudes do individual groups of actors hold towards this concept?
- how often does UBI appear as the main topic of an article in the media?

With the knowledge gained by analyzing UBI discourse in the Czech media, the public discourse toward UBI is studied and compared to the media discourse. This is done by using two main research questions:

- which messages about UBI from the Czech media platforms find their way to the public opinion?
- to what extent does the general public support the implementation of UBI in the Czech context?

With regard to the structure of the thesis, it consists of 3 main parts. In the first, theoretical part I make an overview of ongoing discussions on the UBI topic both in Czech and foreign contexts. In the literature search phase it was observed that some arguments in favour and against the policy tackle a certain limited set of issues, yet they do it from different perspectives. I apply the term “dimension” for this set of issues and use it to structure the literature overview section. More concretely, the following dimensions were defined: *economic, social, ethical, political, and private life dimension*. At the end of the theoretical part the list with arguments derived from academic literature is presented and further is used for the empirical investigations.

Within an empirical part I describe the main findings from the content analysis of the Czech media as well as from the research that was conducted on the representative sample in the Czech population in order to answer above-mentioned research questions. To sum up the results I present the visualization (map) of both discourses about unconditional basic transfer.

In the final part I summarize the most important findings and make suggestions for further research in this area.

3. Theoretical part

The following theoretical section summarizes the main arguments that are pronounced with regard to the introduction of UBI by the members of the academic community. It is important to mention that some arguments are accompanied with the findings from several world UBI pilot experiments which enables us to get more detailed insight into the topic of interest.

3.1 Overview of UBI discussion

3.1.1 Economic dimension

With regard to the labor market realm, the question of one's willingness to work after UBI introduction is broadly discussed (Standing, 2002; Jokipalo, 2019; Offe, 2009; Lowrey, 2018). A strong concern that basic transfer might destructively affect social reciprocity principle leading to the decrease in labor supply, to idleness and to lower work discipline appears in the discourse (Tcherneva, 2007).

Addressing the fear of the decreasing work motivation and effectivity, the author Veera Jokipalo makes mention of lottery winners. Referring to Marx and Peeters study, she draws a conclusion that income from non-gainful activity could barely downturn one's willingness to maintain current working relationships (Jokipalo, 2019). Some other authors report similar findings (Arvey, Harpaz & Liao, 2004; Kaplan, 1987; Hedenus, 2009). In particular, Jokipalo points out that job is capable to provide non-monetary, yet also important benefits such as social status, social connections or feeling of doing something meaningful (Jokipalo, 2019). Further, she employs psychological explanation to support above-stated argument, stressing the fact that individual's intention to participate in labour activities is strongly connected with the anticipation of future welfare that comes with a paid work. Hereby, a person's hope for potential benefits (either material or non-monetary) will prevent him/her from giving up on gainful employment even in case of implemented UBI transfers (Jokipalo, 2019).

Thinking of probable effects of UBI implementation, Jokipalo makes a comparison with a *Gift exchange behavior* model. The key hypothesis is grounded in the belief that employers are willing to offer above-average reward to employees, reciprocally expecting greater efforts in their work performance and assuming their motivation would maintain because of the

beneficial working relations. Similarly, it is more likely that the employees who enjoy higher wages would exert work in a more efficient way, hoping to get more than a standard reward. In sum, the author assumes that the mixture of these psychological factors might affect one's decision to enter/ step out of labor market.

Applying this model to universal transfers such as UBI, Jokipalo stresses the ambiguous nature of potential consequences. In compliance with the first assumption employers might expect that the increase in wages would become less valuable and desirable for employees once they are provided with the non-income benefit. In that case hirers might decide to pay higher salary if the productivity continues to rise. On the other hand, the employers' decision could be completely the opposite, i.e. they might decide to pay less as workers already have an additional source for covering their needs paid by the state. Indeed, both scenarios could be justified. In addition, Jokipalo suggests "not engaging in paid work or other activities that benefit society would then leave people with a nagging sense of indebtedness that they resolve by engaging in paid work" (Jokipalo, 2019, p.4).

She ran a laboratory experiment examining a basic income impact on labor market behavior to test *Gift exchange behavior*, namely increase/decrease of wages and effort/productivity rate. Overall, the experiment shows that UBI implementation does not result in lower labor participation. In contrast, researcher gives supportive evidence for a boost in effort of employees who are provided with unconditional benefit. Hence, she concludes that UBI might be seen as a tool for increasing work productivity. Furthermore, the experiment provides empirical support for the assumption that size of salary offers surges with both conditional and unconditional treatments. Moreover, the larger growth can be observed in case of basic income benefit (Jokipalo, 2019).

Even the experiment results indicate rather positive impact of basic income on labor supply, one could barely generalize the findings because of the limitations in experiment design. The author reports only 76 student participants of the Autonomous University of Barcelona that made, all in all, 279 observations of employer-employee interaction (Jokipalo, 2019). Moreover, the experiment lacks a diversity of social groups that is natural for the real society context. Likewise, the limited duration makes the interpretation of the results problematic. In particular, the experiment cannot reveal whether the loss of gratitude happens in time, which could further translate into lower willingness to work effectively.

Considering the issue of work motivation, sociologist Claus Offe (2009, p.61) asserts that UBI leads to so-called "humanization of work". In his opinion, UBI aims at increasing an

intrinsic motivation as it gives opportunities to enter the working relationships as an active actor, “master of the own fate” who can choose the most suitable type of work, conditions, etc. (Offe, 2009, p.58). He assumes that “labor productivity is likely to increase because of the substantially 'voluntary', economically uncoerced nature of workers' participation in contractual employment [...]” (Offe, 2009, p.73). The notion that a bright pallet of factors contributes to the general satisfaction with work was proven in other studies as well (Hewlett, 2009; Pink, 2017).

It should be noted that the outlined above assumptions find some support in empirical reality. Some researchers report almost no changes in labor supply among people who receive any kind of permanent unconditional transfers (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018). Nevertheless, in some countries that have incorporated a certain type of unconditional payments (e.g. Iran, Alaska, etc.) there is an empirically supported evidence that such cash benefits have the potential for slight increase in market participation, especially among social groups such as poorer women and self-employed (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018).

At the same time, a certain reduction in working hours was observed. Researchers emphasize that rather than loss of motivation to work, a shift in priorities takes place (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018; Forget, 2011; Lowrey, 2018). In particular, parental or caring responsibilities, for example staying longer with newborns, alongside with higher educational aspirations, meaning spending more years studying, came to the fore (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018; Forget, 2011; Lowrey, 2018). Moreover, economist C.K. Jackson provides evidence for a positive association between time spent in education process and the macroeconomic outcomes, i.e. “large numbers of people remaining in education is associated with higher economic growth” (Jackson, 2015; as cited in Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018, p.64).

In addition, the preliminary results from Finnish pilot experiment provide a reliable estimate of UBI effect on labour market participation among UBI recipients during the first year of the project. On the whole, the data shows that there are no significant differences between tested and control group in finding jobs. Nevertheless, it should be also noted that UBI receivers were more confident about getting the opportunity to find a job than people from the control group. They also believe that “with the basic income, it would make more sense financially to accept a job offer and would be easier to start a business” (Kangas, Jauhiainen, Simanainen & Ylikännö, 2019, p. 30).

Looking at the labor supply issue from a macroeconomic perspective some researchers assume that UBI could strengthen purchasing power and lift the demand for goods among lower class individuals that in turn would trigger a growth in demand for labor forces and increase in wages (Jokipalo, 2019; Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018; Haushofer & Shapiro, 2018). It is then likely that such a circumstance would cause a positive response on the labor supply side, leading to a higher employment level. Yet, there is a risk that the growth in production will not automatically translate into the higher labor demand rate as the need for larger number of workers might be at least partly fulfilled by integrating robots and AI algorithms in working processes (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2011).

Yet, on the opponents' side another fear occurs, namely, in order to return UBI beneficiaries who voluntarily decided to drop out the labor market, the employers would have to offer higher wages. On the one hand, it is not a negative effect itself. On the other, one should take into account that those hirers are likely to increase prices for goods and services that they produce or provide since they would need to cover increasing labor expenditure (Tcherneva, 2007). As a consequence, it might undermine the purchasing power, and result in a call for revision of disbursed payment. Once the provided cash transfer undergoes upward changes, new wave of drop-out effect could be expected. From that point the whole cycle starts again, then UBI seems to be simply meaningless (Tcherneva, 2007).

Further, the economists who oppose the introduction of the basic income argue that it could decelerate the economic growth as well as to decrease economic production, and, as a consequence, employment rate (Nooteboom, 1987). Responding to this critical argument, the researcher Bart Nooteboom emphasizes that UBI would rather stimulate a development of small business and medium-sized enterprises and open room for innovation that would result in economic growth. Moreover, he sees UBI as a tool to address the problem of unfair economic competition (Nooteboom, 1987). What is more, findings from the pilot experiment in Kenya support the latter argument showing that unconditional payment encouraged people to create jobs themselves, starting own businesses (Bregman, 2016). Similar results occurred in Iranian experiment with basic cash payment (Lowrey, 2018).

In a broader economic perspective, there is also the concern about not fulfilling the full employment agenda's aims. This concern is discussed in detail in the article of German sociologist Claus Offe (2009). Specifically, in this article he focuses on EU's objectives with regard to the full employment. He argues that the established agenda strengthened by "productivist public philosophy" creates a greater pressure on an individual who is forced to

meet demands for “mobility” and “flexibility” (Offe, 2009, p.53). In addition, with a higher toleration towards insecure precarious job individuals have almost no choice to reject the offered job, although it does not meet their interests and level of qualification. Offe stresses that in such highly competitive environment involuntary part-time employments remain common (Offe, 2009). In his point of view, basic income provides a unique opportunity to create the social group within “institutionally provided space” that brings together people who for longer or shorter period of time decided to spend their lives without being involved in labour market relations (Offe, 2009, p.54). What he demands is “freedom instead of full employment”, where freedom is at least partly associated with UBI (Offe, 2009, p.58).

Discussing the similar issue, Gibson, Hearty and Craig (2018) suggest that UBI would enable individuals to react flexibly to life changes without giving up work. To certain extent the basic income guarantee is seen as an emancipation tool, as saying “no” towards meaningless, involuntary, coercive jobs (Widerquist et al, 2013; Kangas, Jauhiainen, Simanainen & Ylikännö, 2019; Raventós, 2007; Lowrey, 2018). Following in one’s step, the academic Tony Fitzpatrick (1999a) adopts the position that basic income could be capable to empower workers providing them an opportunity to exit from the working relationship or even not enter them at all. Consequently, it would make employees’ voices louder within the market and, in general, increase workers’ bargaining power (Raventós, 2007). Developing the latter argument, economist D. Raventós points out that UBI would indirectly force employers to improve working conditions in unattractive and dull employments because it is expected that with UBI people would not have a necessity to accept any job just to ensure the means of subsistence (Raventós, 2007). What is more, it is expected that with these changes the role of workers would be redefined: they would be treated “as an investment for business, not just as a cost for them” (Lowrey, 2018, p.52). There is the hope that companies would see their employees as a capital, and for this capital they should “compete to win workers over” (Lowrey, 2018, p.53).

The next concern that should be mentioned is expensiveness of the proposed welfare policy (Davala, Standing, Mehta & Jhabvala, 2015; Raventós, 2007). Reflecting on the possible financial challenges, the author of the book *Utopia for realists* Rutger Bregman (2016) points out that poverty and homelessness could cost much more than disbursing people with “free money”. In his book he describes the experiment with 13 homeless individuals which was run in London (May 2009). As Bregman writes, the street life of those people was literally costly for the state because of related police and court spending as well as social service expenditure.

Within the experiment those people were provided with an unconditional transfer, and they were not expected to do anything in exchange. As a result, after 1,5 years of the experiment the original £400,000 (per year) expenditure dropped considerably at £50,000 a year level (which already includes social workers' salaries) that indicates indirect positive effect of unconditional money on state budget (Bregman, 2016).

3.1.2 Ethical dimension

The basic income proposal is discussed through the prism of an ethical dimension as it is not solely an economic concept. It has rather a multidimensional nature. The discussion represented in this dimension reflects moral justification of “free money” and tackles the issue of individual freedom, mutual respect, social solidarity, social justice as well as self-esteem.

Looking at the roots of UBI in the past, German sociologist Offe (2009) presents the idea of American political activist and philosopher Thomas Paine (1737-1809). Offe points out the Paine's attitude which is based on the idea that “the earth is a common property of the human race”(see the similar idea in Widerquist, 2013). Moreover, the following maxim seems to be of great importance for understanding of Paine's proposal: “the condition of every person born under conditions of civilization “ought no to be worse of than if he had been born before that period” (398) presumably as nobody can be held responsible for his time of birth” (Offe, 2009, p.68). With such a statement Paine justified the rule for landowners that sets a so-called “ground-rent” on behalf of community. This measure had to ensure that “every man, as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor” (Offe, 2009, p.68). From the social justice perspective this rent can be seen as a predecessor of currently proposed basic income.

Noteworthy, nowadays Paine's argument can be extended to a new dimension – the digital world where numerous amounts of our data are gathered by business giants in order to maximize their profit. Then the question arises: is not it a right of individuals to have a “return” from the use of their personal data? Some political actors have already articulated the idea that any model of unconditional payment might serve as a compensation for wealth that is built on data about us but at the same time, we do not own even a part of this capital. More specifically, this proposal was expressed by the Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang, by the founder and chair of the nonprofit RadicalxChange Foundation Glen Weyl, by the governor of California Gavin Newsom, and by the senior United States Senator from Virginia Mark Warner (Clifford, 17.10. 2019).

Further, in the same line with Paine's idea of "accidental circumstances" UBI advocator Philipp Van Parijs (2007) speaks of other factors that appear as a result of some independent circumstances (e.g. citizenship, gender, beauty, family background, etc.). He believes that such the "undeserved gifts" to a large extent affect one's life course. In this context the distribution of "free money" is considered to be an embodiment of fairness as everyone would be given "at least a limited share of these undeserved gifts" (Van Parijs, 2007, p. 52). Taken together, the author sees UBI as a tool to compensate uneven allocation of highly demanded and desirable qualities, thus ensuring that everyone can enjoy the outcomes that they could bring.

Nevertheless, it is important to stress that the fairness facet of UBI issue is ambivalent. The doubt with regard to its fairness is expressed in opinion that basic transfer does not meet the reciprocity principle which assumes exchange relationship or, put it in other words, someone is got paid only for labor in return (Standing, 2002). The key message of opponents is: it is not fair on those who contribute to its funding (Lipietz, 1992; as cited in Fitzpatrick, 1999b). Here again, the question of re-shaping or extending the work concept borders comes to the fore (Štěch, 2007). In particular, British economist G. Standing argues that care should be acknowledged as a work and, consequently, protected and paid (Standing, 2002). Going further, the economist makes a proposal for an extension of tax credits "by attaching a value of non-income earning activities" (Standing, 2002, p.37). As an example, he gives information on the caregiver credit in the USA and the long-term care insurance in Germany (Standing, 2002).

The next argument which can be found in the discourse deals with the problem of stigmatizing nature of existing means-tested benefits (Simpson, Mason & Godwin, 2017; Raventós, 2007). In this context, researcher B. Barry (2001) argues that universal transfer could replace humiliating, demoralizing cash grants that stigmatize its recipients, who are treated rather as passive objects. Addressing the similar issue, sociologist Claus Offe (2009) assumes that UBI has a potential to turn the narrative in a way that the receivers would be seen as active actors instead.

When justifying the introduction of UBI, its supporter Philipp Van Parijs argues that it gives "everyone as much real freedom as possible" (Van Parijs, 1987, p.272). He asserts that although members of our society are not formally restricted in running their lives according their own beliefs and ideas, including the choice of employment, consumption patterns, etc., de facto they often do not have resources to live in a way they wish. It is important to mention that Van Parijs does not reduce the purpose of UBI to solely providing people with material sources that enable them to increase consumption or perform better-paid work. He looks at the positive

effect of UBI from a wider perspective, saying that it would give people real freedom in experiencing activities they wish to integrate to their lives, for example “in mountain climbing, in bringing up one’s kids, in non-mercenary love-making, in practicing transcendental meditation, or in reading poetry to a flock of geese” (Van Parijs, 1987, p.272). Taken together, he speaks of activities which usually are not recognized as a work in strictly economical terms.

The last argument in this dimension refers to a mention about basic income as a mechanism for ensuring basic security for everyone. By some authors it is simply seen as a right in societies which claim freedom to be a pillar principle (Standing, 2002; Bregman 2016). It is considered as a tool to establish decent existence “without having to lift a finger” (Bregman, 2016, p. 61).

3.1.3 Social dimension

In light of rising inequalities and deepening poverty, UBI proposal attracts attention of diverse range of social groups (e.g. feminists, left-wing parties, environmentalists, etc.) which are concerned about the consequences of these phenomena.

Tackling the above-mentioned problems, Claus Offe (2009) emphasizes the capability of UBI to assist modern capitalist economics in dealing with increasing inequalities and issues caused by structural changes. In a similar vein, Spanish economist Daniel Raventós (2007) comments on UBI potential to address the issue of widening inequality and poverty. For him the former problem belongs to a broader dimension, namely he looks at inequality as a lack of freedom. Introducing the UBI concept, the author highlights that it could help changing the existing constellation, which he describes as follows: “the lack of freedom of so many people, the increasingly compelling need for working populations to ask permission of the rich every day in order to continue subsisting in conditions dictated by their masters, only aggravates inequality” (Raventós, 2007, p.20).

With regard to the poverty concern it should be added that UBI ability to alleviate poverty was tested empirically, e.g. during Manitoba basic annual income experiment (Simpson, Mason & Godwin, 2017). Other empirical experiment in Iran shows that UBI has contributed to reducing poverty and inequality (Lowrey, 2018). Yet, journalist Lowrey questions the ability of UBI to lift low-income families above poverty line. Moreover, she expresses the concern that UBI could rather surge poverty and inequality if the introduction of UBI went along with the elimination of existing social welfare programs (Lowrey, 2018).

In addition, Czech historian Václav Tomek (2007) also questions the potential of UBI to mitigate inequalities, showing another side of the issue. More concretely, he assumes that from socio-economic perspective basic payment would simply maintain the status quo, lifting people up from the poverty in absolute terms only but not in relative, i.e. compared to their fellow citizens who are placed at different stages of income ladder. He concludes that with UBI implementation nothing would change dramatically (Tomek, 2007). The following citation presents his point of view in detail: “The whole society therefore remains in the same mutual relations, respectively disproportions between its individual members. It merely alleviates, say, the zero or low niveau of existing poverty - by shifting it economically to the level of basic income, thus enabling the poorest a little easier survival and expanding their opportunities” (Tomek, 2007, p.135).

A further issue is closely connected with the above-discussed argument. In most cases current welfare systems are based on the multiple social protection programs that are targeted at pre-defined vulnerable social groups such as children, long-term unemployed, elderly people, individuals with disabilities, migrants, etc. (Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov, 2020). Their main aim is to meet the diverse needs of those people, thus, resolving a wide range of issues at societal level, namely poverty reduction, income inequalities, family protection, providing equality of opportunities and many others. Indeed, according to the World Bank Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity (ASPIRE) database, there is “an average of 21.4 social assistance programs per country”, including some countries where their number reaches 143, 54, and 37 programs (Chile, Burkina Faso, and Pakistan, respectively) (Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov, 2020, p.46).

In contrast to such a fragmented set of social assistance programs, basic transfer by definition – in case of full grant provision – supposes to integrate all above-mentioned groups and create a single category of beneficiaries (Offe, 2009). However, one question arises here, namely, would such a transfer be capable to address the needs of such different social groups effectively as it is not sensitive to individual situations? The answer to this question is ambivalent by its nature. While the proponent of the concept P. Van Parijs is strongly convinced that UBI “would provide all people with material resources that they need to fulfill their goals” (Van Parijs, 2007, p. 31), UBI opposers V. Tomek and O. Štěch criticize such the approach (Tomek, 2007; Štěch, 2007). For instance, Tomek (2007, p. 131) asserts that concept that implies the uniform payment for all works on the misleading assumption that everyone has “the same goals and the same opportunity to realize them”. To clarify the above-stated, an individual

who was fired or a person who got sick would likely have different needs and priorities compared to those who enjoy well-paid secure employment and do not suffer from serious health problems. In Tomek's opinion, UBI rather maintains basic inequality of opportunities: for some people it would be the only income that they have at the certain moment, whereas for others it would serve as a supplement which they "would not even notice" (Tomek, 2007, p.132).

The next poignant question on the debate table of UBI supporters and adversaries is the relation between universal transfer and mobility, in particular migration flows. The essential question is: how can UBI affect migration dynamic? Where does the distinctive line between all of us who is entitled to receive the free cash payment lay? Or should this line exist at all?

Looking at the issue through human rights or ethical prism one could claim that being universal this payment should be delivered to all people in place regardless their residence status. In other words, everyone is eligible for it as UBI supposes no conditions (Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov, 2020; Standing, 2002; Dore, 2002).

However, some antagonists express their fear of welfare migration, both within a country, meaning from poorer regions to the more affluent ones as well as from developing countries to the developed, economically better performing ones. In order to examine the impact of social assistance programs on internal and external migration researchers, S. Adhikari and U. Gentilini divided them into three main categories: "(1) social assistance that implicitly deters migration, centering on place-based programs; (2) social assistance that implicitly facilitates migration by relaxing liquidity constraints and reducing transaction costs; and (3) social assistance that is explicitly conditioned on spatial mobility" (Adhikari & Gentilini, 2018; as cited in Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov, 2020, p.41). The findings indicate that, overall, the effect of such programs corresponds with initially set implicit and explicit objectives. Although the social assistance programs do not stipulate one's decision to move, they seem to be a part of a broader decision-making process in respect of migration (Adhikari & Gentilini, 2018). Authors believe that awareness of the influence of an assistance program on migration, thinking of its specific design, type alongside with aims could install a social protection system that would meet local migration agenda priorities (Adhikari & Gentilini, 2018).

Another dimension of the "welfare migration" question tackles the problem of xenophobia and racism. In the book *Give people money* the author articulates the concern that universal benefit could increase xenophobic sentiments (Lowrey, 2018). To support the argument, Lowrey gives an example of Norwegian poll on UBI topic where the results show

that a third of Norwegians had changed their attitude toward proposed policy once it was re-designed to provide non-citizens with such an income (Lowrey, 2018).

Next, the bureaucracy reduction argument is presented. Some authors see the basic income as a mechanism for shrinking the abundant bureaucracies related to state benefit provision and their over costed administration (Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov, 2020; Barry, 2001; Offe, 2009). In this context researchers from Finland Kangas, Jauhiainen, Simanainen and Ylikännö (2019) note that bureaucracy spending related to the social assistance programs should decrease with UBI as it does not set any entitlement criteria for recipients as well as it reduces costly exchange of information between provider of social benefits and receivers. Interestingly, the participants of UBI experimental project in Finland are convinced that basic payment could diminish bureaucracy associated with accepting job offer process (Kangas, Jauhiainen, Simanainen and Ylikännö, 2019).

Some other UBI effects are worth of mentioning. Based on the number of empirical studies some proponents claim that in a long-term perspective basic income transfers could have a strong positive effect on one's education attainment, namely tackling the issues of educational continuity and attendance rate (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018). Evidence shows that young people who were provided with such a benefit for a longer period of time stay longer in education system and display fewer criminal acts and drug abuse (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018). In addition, these effects might bring a number of positive outcomes over long-time perspective. For instance, among such the higher future income, better health condition that in turn leads to reduction in health services taken, higher cognitive abilities and lower mortality rate (Gibson, Hearty & Craig, 2018)

Equally important to note that the basic transfer to everyone is discussed from the ecological perspective, in particular as a measure to mitigate overconsumption and other negative effects which are fueled by the economic growth. The supportive attitude toward such a policy among ecologists and Greens is tightly connected with the assumption that BI could make part-time and low-paid employments more attractive and gainful alongside with making people free of the necessity to work full-time (Fitzpatrick, 1999b). It would also provide them with an option to participate less in gainful employment and engage more in other activities (Fitzpatrick, 1999b; Van Parijs, 1987). It is then likely that such a constellation would slow the economic growth down and could contribute to achieving environmental protection goals. On the other hand, it cannot be guaranteed that people would shift their attention to more environmentally friendly activities (Fitzpatrick, 1999b).

3.1.4 Private life dimension

It is considered that time is one of the most valuable assets that one could own. With regard to the time domain the following issue occurs: the quality of free time activities differs between money-rich (employed) and time-rich (unemployed) (Offe, 2009). This dissimilarity could affect the level of perceived welfare. Moreover, another time feature – accumulability – seems to be in direct interaction with basic income. Since UBI could compensate the time one spends performing work as well as enable a more satisfactory use of time, apparent money vs. time competition might be fading away (Offe, 2009).

It should be noted that UBI appears also in discussions on decreasing working time and rising lifetime issue. In fact, time spent on gainful activities makes up just a small share of our total lifespan. What is more, during this relatively short period resources for the secure existence for the rest of the individual's life ought to be earned (Offe, 2009). In this respect, sociologist Offe (2009) claims that we need to have such an income that provides us with financial security during the period of active participation in the gainful activities alongside for the time when we will step out institutional working relations. He added that UBI could be such an income.

In line with the above-mentioned argument, researcher V. Jokipalo highlights that the concept of leisure time is relative, and in reality varies from individual to individual as some dedicate it to unpaid activities such as family care or domestic work, whereas others enjoy “actual” leisure. In that case, through reducing working hours UBI might bring an opportunity to spend the time in the way which is the most beneficial for an individual as it could release time for participation in the non-gainful activities (Jokipalo, 2019).

The American journalist Annie Lowrey makes her contribution to the polemic saying that UBI would give families the opportunities to spend more time together. She continues her argument with a claim that this money transfer would provide more room for activities like volunteering, performing art, etc. (Lowrey, 2018). Justifying the UBI introduction, she adds that although its implementation could lead to decrease in economic indicators (e.g. GDP), it is not automatically negative outcome itself. We do not need to rely solely on these numbers. Explaining her point of view, she states that these measurements simply “fail to capture the fullness of human life” (Lowrey, 2018, p.67).

Within the private life dimension other empirically proved outcomes can be discussed. In particular, according to Gibson, Hearty and Craig (2018) long-term basic cash transfers induce improvements in child mental health. Indeed, the following seems to be valid: the longest the exposure to the cash benefit, the more apparent the positive effects on child's mental

health. All in all, this betterment is explained by positive changes in relationship between parents.

Furthermore, pilot experiments that were run around the world (e.g. Kenya, India, etc.) provide empirical evidence on positive impacts of UBI transfers in such areas like nutrition, health and medical services, schooling (Haushofer & Shapiro, 2018; Davala, Standing, Mehta, & Jhabvala, 2015). In particular, the researchers who evaluated the trial project in Kenya report higher level of food security (including reduction in hunger), improvements in psychological health, more assets holding among recipients compared to the group of non-recipients (Haushofer & Shapiro, 2018).

In line with above-mentioned empirical findings the results of Finnish experiment witness for general increase in well-being among those who were provided with unconditional transfer. For instance, the participants report fewer problems with health, less stress and better concentration ability (Kangas, Jauhiainen, Simanainen & Ylikännö, 2019).

3.1.5 Political dimension

Although support for UBI spreads across a wide political spectrum, i.e. from conservatives through libertarians to progressives (Gentilini, Grosh, Rigolini & Yemtsov, 2020), it remains a highly debatable and ambivalent topic even within the actors who share similar political and ideological preferences.

Thinking of potential impacts of UBI introduction on state-individual relationship, Czech philosopher and politician Miroslav Bednář (2007a) asserts that an intention to level incomes of different social groups – as it considered by an UBI advocate Philipp Van Parijs – would likely turn to a one-way dependency of recipients on the state administrative apparatus. He emphasises that any money redistribution passes through the hands of state bureaucracies that legitimately grant the beneficiaries and control the distributive process itself. Thus, it eliminates political or civic freedom of individuals and limits their right to act freely (Bednář, 2007a).

Furthermore, developing the freedom restriction argument Bednář (2007a) points out that proposed UBI policy places citizens in the category of needy and dependent on central distribution individuals that establishes so-called “controlled freedom”. Then he concludes that means-tested benefits which are limited to people in need only are more respectful towards one’s dignity and realization of freedom.

Outlined above standpoint meets a critique from the side of Czech academics Marek Hrubec and Martin Brabec. They argue that in case of UBI transfer the risk of system misuse – both from recipients’ and officials’ side – decreases as it would not test whether a particular individual fulfill the criteria for a certain type of a benefit or not. This income is paid to everyone that naturally eliminates the category of “selected needy citizens”. What is more, in their opinion, unconditional basic payment leads to destigmatization of supported receivers as they are not asked to prove the need for a welfare provision. In that sense such a transfer treats recipient with a higher respect to his/her dignity (Van Parijs, Hrubec & Brabec, 2007).

It is important to add that in his further contribution to the UBI polemic Miroslav Bednář (2007b) stresses that the elimination of the “needy citizens” group de facto does not happen as after the introduction of UBI all citizens drop to this category. Then, the problem of freedom restriction becomes shared among all inhabitants in the country, put differently, it is not limited to selected group of benefit recipients anymore. He warns that this redistribution mechanism might substantially confine one’s self-sufficiency, autonomy, and civic freedom. The latter argument is supported and further developed by Czech historian Václav Tomek. He notes that UBI might potentially lessen unemployment and poverty as well as fulfill the requirements of feminist activists and Greens, but it would be achieved at cost of higher dependency on market and state machineries (Tomek, 2007). The comfort created by basic income could relieve individual responsibility for own decisions that, in fact, relativizes the concept of freedom itself (Tomek, 2007).

3.2 Summary: What can be taken from the academic discourse?

Based on the overview of the academic literature a list of arguments for empirical part is created. The following arguments¹ will be individually studied within the framework of the Czech media and public discourse analyses:

Code	Short argument	Full argument
P1	tool against poverty, homelessness, inequalities	an effective tool in the fight against poverty, homelessness, rising inequalities
P2	less spending on police, social services, healthcare system	reduces state spending on police / fight against crime, social services, healthcare system (indirect effect of the intervention)
P3	reducing the risk of unemployment caused by robotization	a solution that could help to prevent future risks caused by robotization / automation, ensuring a smooth transition to a new economic order
P4	destigmatization of recipients of the social benefits	can replace inefficient social assistance programs that undermine human dignity, stigmatize recipients
P5	more time for hobbies, personal development, family care, education	provides more time for hobbies, personal development, family care, education and making art. It has a potential to make people happier and more satisfied with their lives, it is seen as a way to real freedom (realization of opportunities, free decision-making)
P6	more time for civic activities in the field of environmental protection	frees up time for civic activities in the field of environmental protection, affects spreading the non-consuming approach to life and leads to more responsible environment-wise lifestyle
P7	economic growth trigger	releases more money for savings, investments and entrepreneurship (due to less fear of economic failure), increases motivation to work that, in turn, triggers an economic growth, ensures better allocation of economic resources and, finally, results in increasing the purchasing power in population (economic stimulation)
P8	greater existential security (financial cushion), rejection of work	provides greater existential security (financial cushion), an option of rejecting work that does not meet one's interests and level of qualification

¹ P1 – P11 stress the positive effects of UBI; N12 – N21 stress the negative effects of UBI

P9	stress reduction and health improvement	it would help to reduce stress and improve the physical and mental health of the individual
P10	greater employees' bargaining power, better working conditions	creates pressure on employers in order to improve working conditions in unattractive occupations, strengthens employees' bargaining power
P11	bureaucracy reduction	reduces state bureaucracies
N12	expensive measure, funding issues	it is an expensive measure, a problem with funding might occur
N13	lower work motivation, idleness	leads to decrease in work motivation, idleness, and lower work discipline
N14	lower individuals' autonomy and self-sufficiency	limits individuals' autonomy and self-sufficiency and reinforces their dependency on state/ state institutions making the state more powerful
N15	higher financial dependency on the state	challenges sustainability and security due to a number of political factors (e.g. cabinet reshuffle); creates financial dependency on the state
N16	insensitive to individual needs, vulnerable social groups	there is a risk that it would not sufficiently protect some vulnerable groups of the population (e.g. pensioners, disabled persons, single parents, etc.) as it is insensitive to individual needs
N17	maintain inequalities	it would unlikely decrease inequalities, rather would create greater or maintain the status quo
N18	negative impact on economy	it might lead to worsening the state economic situation and weaken the competitiveness of individual economies on the global market
N19	unfair redistribution of money	it is unfair redistribution of money
N20	increase in "welfare migration"	it has a potential to increase the share of "welfare migration", especially from developing to developed country that might create a pressure on the existing welfare systems in receiving countries
N21	indifferent to economic cycles	UBI does not take into account the cyclical nature of the economic system and budget deviations

4. Empirical part

4.1 *Content analysis of the Czech media discourse*

4.1.1 *Methodology description*

A quantitative content analysis was chosen as the method for creating a map of the Czech media discourse. According to D. Riffe, S. Lacy and F.G. Fico (2008, p.23) this research technique serves as “the **systematic assignment of communication content** to categories according to rules and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods.” What is also important, being “sensitive” to the words the content analysis enables a researcher to uncover not only manifest messages articulated by media participants, but also latent ones, that makes reading “between the line” possible.

Moreover, a considerable advantage of this method is an opportunity to get “access to communicators who may be unwilling or unable to be examined directly” (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2008, p.38). Likewise, it might provide a valuable insight into the emotional relation of speakers to the concept of interest. Such features are important in context of this bachelor thesis as it would not be possible to reach all relevant actors and examine their attitudes to the topic in a direct way.

It should be noted that no other coders, besides the author of the work, were involved in the text coding process which makes it difficult to measure the reliability of the performed analysis.

Overall, this research tool allows an accurate and complex description of the media content that meets one of the set aims of this paper, namely, creating a map of the Czech media discourse.

4.1.2 *Data and variables*

Data for the analysis were collected through *Anopress* online database which monitors the content of main media platforms in the Czech Republic and Slovakia on a daily basis. It includes such platforms as national daily press, TV and radio, regional media, magazines, Internet, webmonitoring, and social media.

In the framework of this thesis the range of analyzed media platforms was limited to national daily press, regional media platforms, magazines and Internet, which were monitored from 1.1.2018 until 31.12.2018. Further, webmonitoring was also added to the analysis being monitored in the period from 1.1.2019 to 31.1.2020.

Regarding the search technique, the articles with label *Unconditional basic income* only were searched and later studied. Texts that contained information about income but spoke of that from other than UBI perspective, i.e. were irrelevant with respect to the topic of interest, were excluded from the search. In total, 150 articles were chosen and subjected to the analysis.

As outlined in the introduction, the UBI concept appears under the different “faces” and, in turn, is called by different names. For instance, the overview of academic literature shows that it can be named as Citizen's dividend, Universal basic income, Guaranteed income, Universal dividend, Stake holding grants, etc. Such a diversity makes coverage of the whole UBI media discussion even within one country complicated, which could lead to incomplete presentation of information.

As a next step, a codebook and a corresponding code matrix with variables of interest were created using Excel. It is important to note that a logically consistent part of a text related to the UBI (e.g. sentence or paragraph) was chosen as a content unit. The article itself is considered to be a context unit of analysis. Moreover, the design of coding tools outlined above are structured as follows:

- identification information such as index article number, type of media platform (see the list above), media title, article title, links and date
- arguments in favour and against UBI

Altogether, 21 arguments that are listed in the last chapter of the theoretical part are included in the analysis. The number of positive and negative statements about the concept is balanced and contains 11 arguments in favour and 10 against. Each appearance of the argument in the article was coded according to the tonality expressed by an author. In particular, the following categories were employed as tonality indicators: author supports the argument (agree - 1); author does not support the argument, questions it (disagree - 2); author's attitude is neutral, ambivalent, not explicitly articulated (neutral - 3). 0 was used to show the absence of the argument.

- actors

For the analysis purposes a list with pre-selected actors was created. Such the list includes the following speaker groups:

- civic society representatives (NGO, social movement members, activists, volunteers) (1)
- economists (2)
- other members of academic community (scholars, teachers, etc.) (3)
- politicians (4)
- citizens and participants of UBI (or similar) pilot projects (5)
- business elite, UBI experiment sponsors (6)
- union representatives (7)
- others, not specified (8)

It is important to add that actors' attitude towards the topic of interest was studied using such categories as positive (1), neutral / ambiguous (2), negative (3).

Speaker's country of origin was taken into consideration as well. Binary differentiation – Czech (1) or foreigner (2) – was employed here.

- geographical context

For defining the geographical context is decisive whether the article focuses on UBI in the Czech environment (2), discusses abroad context (3), combines both geographical areas (4) or introduces the topic regardless the environment (here general reflection - 1).

- origin of the article

Within this variable appearance of two categories is studied, namely it is investigated whether the article was written by editors of the medium where it was published (1) or it comes from any external actors (e.g. politician, scientist, social activist, etc.). The latter case is coded as 2.

- media type

Two main types were distinguished – broadsheet media (1) and tabloid (2). To define a type a classification of the Czech media elaborated by Czech NGO Institution of Independent Journalism was used.

- references to UBI experiments and relevant studies

The mentions about the world pilot projects, design and implementation proposals as well as literature references make up the above-named variable. The occurrence is marked with 1, while the absence of any mentions is indicated by 2. For references itself no code was used; relevant information was written in a free format.

- article focus

Under this variable it was examined whether UBI appears as a main topic of the article (1) or is shown as a peripheral one (0).

- funding options

Such a variable is represented by a list of pre-defined funding proposals that was created based on discussions in an academic circle.

- Not mentioned (0)
- Robot tax (1)
- Higher individual and corporate tax (2)
- Ecotax (green tax) (3)
- EU foundations (4)
- Reduction of existing social benefits (5)
- Bureaucracy reduction (6)
- Higher VAT (7)

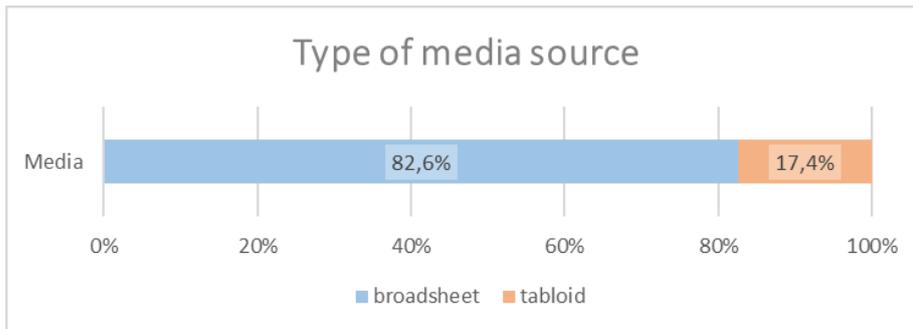
- other notes relevant to the topic

4.1.3 Main findings

Sample characteristics

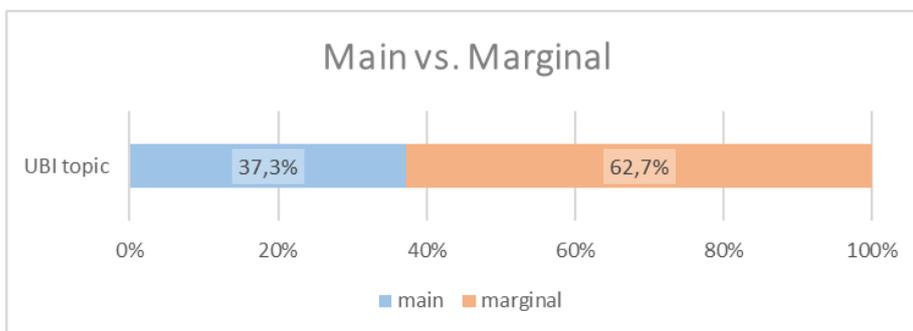
In order to better understand the media environment in which the articles under analysis are placed, main sample characteristics were examined.

Regarding to the type of media in which the different aspects of UBI concept are discussed, the **prevalent share in the sample belongs to broadsheet ones (82,6%)**, while tabloid media draw up less than one fifth of the cases (17,4%).



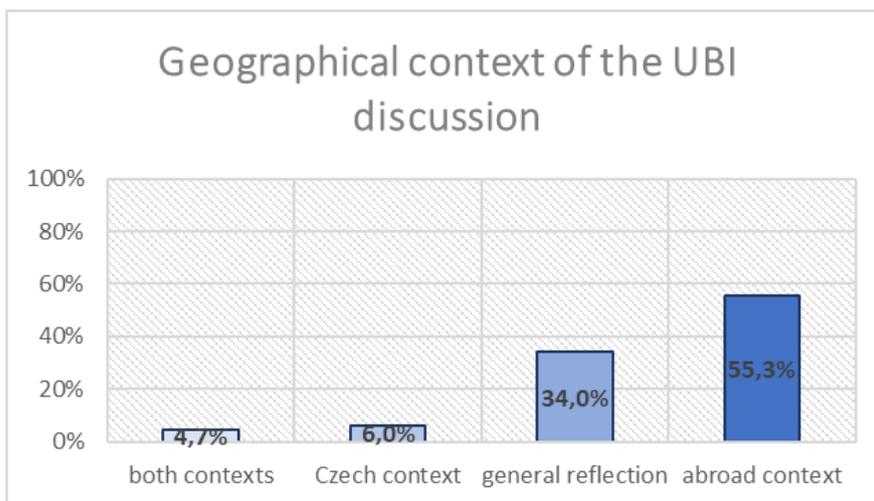
Graph 1. Type of media source.

Data also indicates that **UBI is not a main topic of the majority of analyzed articles.** It takes the center stage in slightly over than one third of the cases (37,3%), whereas in other articles it is considered to be rather a marginal topic (Graph 2).



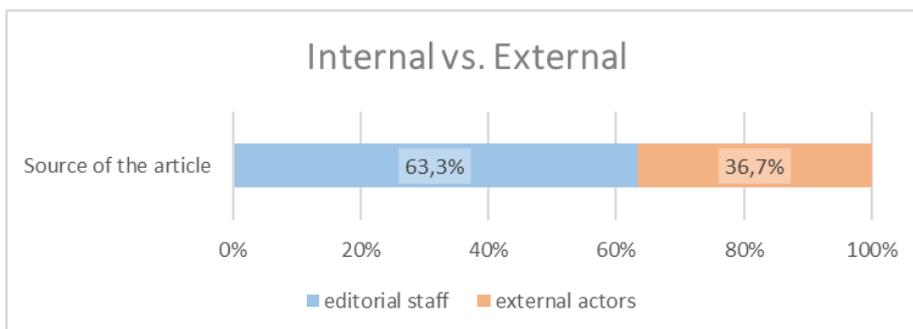
Graph 2. Article focus.

When it comes to the geographical context of the articles one can see that **more than a half of them describes the UBI problematic in relation to the foreign context (55,3%),** whereas the share of the articles which address the UBI issue in the Czech Republic is almost ten times less (6%). A large number of articles looks at the topic from a broad reflexive perspective rather than accentuating a specific geographical context. Such a kind includes general reflections on UBI design, sustainability of the concept, practical concerns about the implementation and justification aspect (34%). Only few articles (4,7%) anchor the topic both in Czech and foreign context.



Graph 3. Geographical context.

The majority of articles comes directly from editorial staff which presents the topic using variety of formats such as news, interviews with different actors, essays, etc. (63,3%). The rest is written by external actors (36,7%).



Graph 4. Origin of the article.

Analysis of the arguments

The data collected within the content analysis bring important results with regard to the frequency of occurrence of the arguments that were found in the academic literature. It should be stressed that the arguments presented below are judgment free, meaning they do not express authors' tonality.

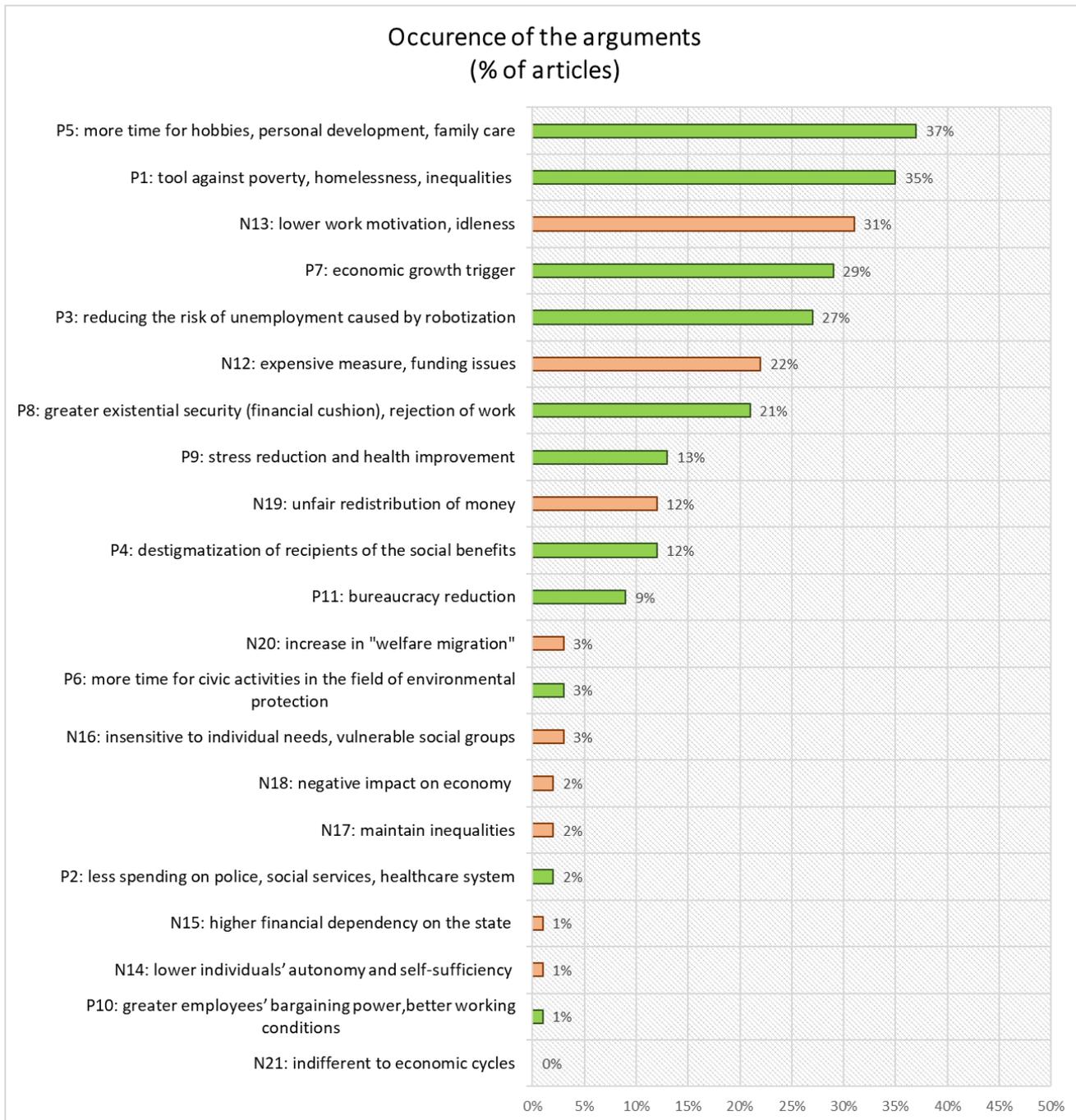
All in all, **7 statements could be classified as frequently appearing**. As shown in the graph 5, the idea that people could enjoy more free time, spending it on education, family care, own hobbies, etc. once they would be provided with basic income comes to the fore of the current discussions in media. It occurs as a topic under interest slightly more than in the third

of analyzed articles (37%, 56 articles). Moreover, UBI is often discussed as a policy aiming at reducing social phenomena such as poverty and homelessness alongside with mitigating different kinds of inequalities (35%, 53 articles). The question about work productivity, and in general a will to participate in a gainful activity after UBI implementation seems to be under the magnifying glass of different media platforms (31%, 46 articles). The argument tackling the issue of UBI impacts on economic sphere follows being prominent in roughly the third of the cases (29%, 44 articles). In addition, just over a quarter of the Czech media content reflects the issue of job loss risks that could occur due to accelerating digitalization, robotization and development of sophisticated AI algorithms (27%, 41 articles). There is a concern about the cost and sources of funding that need to be found in order to realize proposed social policy (22%, 33 articles). Equally important seems to be the topic dealing with a security issue, namely the assumption that UBI could serve as a “financial cushion” (21%, 32 articles). In a broader sense, the latter argument also includes the option to refuse job that for certain either personal or objective reasons does not suit to one’s interests and expectations.

It is important to mention that other arguments that despite being frequently discussed in the Czech media discourse take rather the middle position, those that here display 10%-20% of occurrence. Those are: impacts on one’s physical and mental health (13%, 19 articles), redistribution of material sources in the society – fairness aspect (12%, 18 articles) and solving the stigmatization issue among current social benefit recipients (12%, 18 articles).

Additionally, there is a set of the arguments that hitherto did not enter the media discourse at fullest and make up a rather marginal share of it: feasibility of shrinking bureaucratic apparatus (9%, 13 articles); concern about increasing migration flows, in particular in the direction from less economically affluent countries to the richest ones (3%, 5 articles); greater public involvement in the projects which set environmental protection and spreading a sustainable way of living as their goals (3%, 5 articles); assumed indifference of universal payment to the most vulnerable social groups that need more comprehensive support from the state (3%, 4 articles); fear of negative impacts on the economy, including lower competitiveness both at local and global level (2%, 3 articles); the assumption that UBI would not eliminate inequalities, would likely maintain the same level or even create some new ones (2%, 3 articles); basic income would indirectly decrease the state expenditure on police, social workers, medical staff through less crimes committed or better health that would translate into a less often usage of medical services (2%, 3 articles); such an unconditional transfer would establish stronger financial dependency on the state (1%, 2 articles) and could result in loss of autonomy

and self-sufficiency among recipients (1%, 1 article); UBI could latently force employers to improve conditions in unattractive working positions and increase employee's bargaining power (1%, 1 article). It should be noted that argument speaking of the insensitivity of UBI to cyclic economic nature was removed from the further analysis as no empirical evidence was found in the discourse (0%, 0 article).



Graph 5. Occurrence of the arguments in the Czech media discourse.

As an illustration some citations of the arguments that appeared the most often in the analyzed articles are presented below:

“The Italian populist government has approved its two major election promises - unconditional basic income for poor Italians who look for a job and decreasing the age of retirement.” (P1)

“Standing [an economist], however, did not include in his analysis currently much-discussed robotization of work, which is another reason to seriously consider introducing unconditional basic income. This measure would provide enough time to search for meaningful work (not just gainful employment) that matches the individual's qualifications and skills, which could, in turn, ultimately be beneficial for the society as a whole.” (P3) & (P8)

“Thanks to the unconditional basic income, they [people] may have time to do what they wanted to do all their lives - creating art, caring for loved ones, and so on.” (P5)

“Many people will realize that this is in fact a reasonable step that leads to a more efficient functioning of the economy. It is an economy with a better allocation of resources, some economists would say. This is one of the main reasons why I support this idea.” (P7)

“The main problem is that unconditional income would either be very expensive for public finances or ridiculously low that would drop the socially weak [groups] into poverty.” (N12)

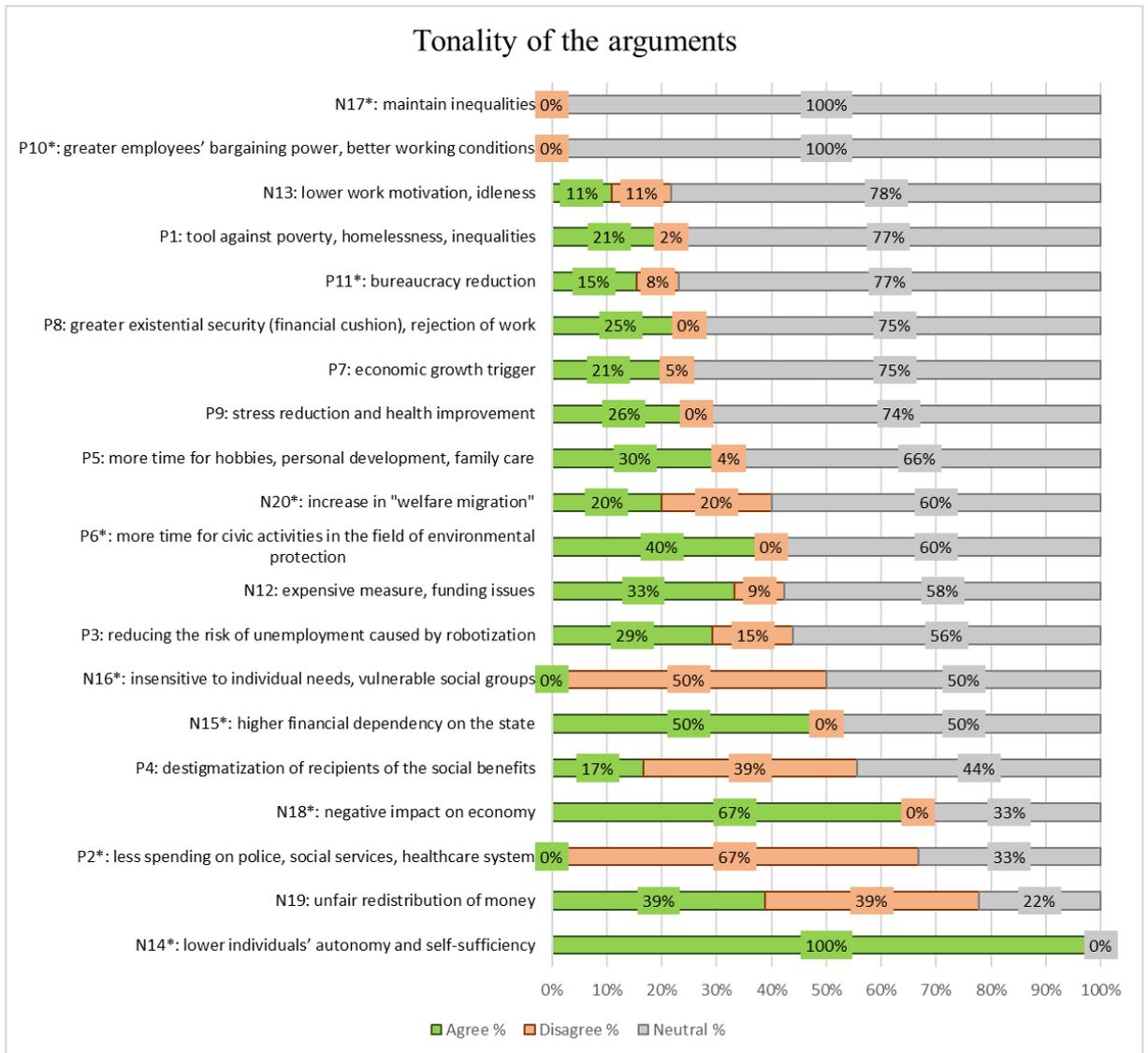
“It is good on the system that it is simple. One can dismiss an army of officials who can no longer bully citizens. However, it has one crucial defect. It demotivates from work.” (N13)

As the next step, the tonality of the individual arguments from the author's perspective was examined. The calculation was run within occurred cases only (code 1), excluding all that were not present in individual articles (code 0). Thereby, the share of occurrence of each statement from the previous graph was taken as 100% in order to ensure comparability of the arguments.

Taking a closer look at the presented bar chart 6, one can notice that the majority of the arguments have neutral tonality. This finding indicates that **Czech authors do not yet have a strong opinion on particular aspects of UBI problematic** and tend to provide rather factual information, avoiding explicit expression of personal standpoint. Indeed, just a minority of the arguments exhibits a strongly pronounced point of view. For instance, the claim about a destigmatizing effect of UBI (P4) meets relatively high disagreement, even though neutral position is still held by a greater number of the Czech authors. The argument about the fairness or unfairness of money redistribution appears as a poignant question, with neither strong

agreement nor disagreement on it. In fact, in almost 40% of the cases the authors agree that it is not fair to give people money “for nothing”, at the same time the same proportion (40%) tends to disagree with the statement saying that UBI is a way towards fairer money redistribution.

In addition, some arguments (e.g. N16, N15, N18, P2, N14) display relatively strong the author’s attitude, nevertheless their meaning should not be overestimated as those statements have extremely low occurrence that might cause some differences from the real situation. Analyzing the arguments with the highest occurrence rate (here P1, P3, P5, P7, P8, N12, N13), the larger proportion is placed at the dominantly neutral/ambiguous pole (over 70%). However, several of the mentioned arguments still indicate relatively high “agree” segment (P3, P5, N12). Namely, approximately one third of the Czech authors (29%) concur that UBI could be an effective policy in terms of decreasing the unemployment originated from automation trend, whereas twice less of them do not believe in that (15%). Furthermore, 3 out of 10 authors (30%) assume that basic income could free up the time that might be subsequently used for such activities as education, family care, engagement in art, etc. All in all, they believe UBI could make individuals happier and more satisfied with their lives. In contrast, only 4% of the authors would not agree on that. The high agreement happens when one thinks of the funding issue. A third of the authors (33%) considers UBI as a high-priced measure and expects problems with funding, while just 1 of 10 authors (9%) does not see funding as an obstacle.



Graph 6. Tonality of the individual arguments.²

In order to investigate the relationship among individual arguments in terms of their joint occurrence in the articles a correlation analysis was conducted. It is important to note that only arguments with over 10% of occurrence were included in the analysis as a low appearance rate might lead to deceiving results showing high correlation with most of the other statements.

² Symbol (*) indicates low occurrence of the argument in the articles (less than 10%, i.e. less than 15 articles).

The total percentage score might add up to 101% after the rounding (see Graph 6). The same is valid for further graphs in this thesis.

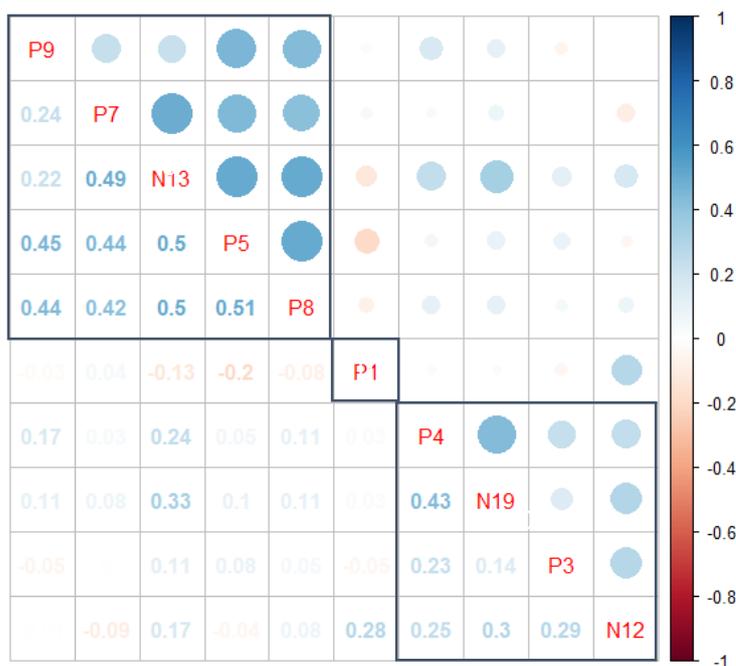
To make the orientation in correlation matrix easier the output is visualized through correlation plot.

The graph 7 provides empirical support for the assumption that there are arguments which are likely to appear together. In total, two main clusters can be identified. One can see that **the arguments P5, P7, P8, P9, N13 are brought to one cluster as well as P3, P4, N12, N19 make up a single cluster**. Said differently, the arguments referring to more free time for hobbies, family care, education, etc. (P5); the economic stimulation as a result of more money for savings, investments and entrepreneurship (P7); financial cushion (P8) and better health condition (P9) are accompanied by argument about the fear from decreasing work participation and idleness (N13). It is necessary to mention that all correlation coefficients are significant at 0,01 level (2-tailed). Moreover, they exhibit a moderate to strong positive relationship (0,22 – 0,51). More concretely, the strongest association is present between the P7 ~ N13, P5 ~ N13, P8 ~ N13 alongside with P5 ~ P8 (0,5).

Regarding the second cluster (P3, P4, N12, N19), one interesting finding can be observed here. In particular, at the same proportion it unites positive and negative claims about UBI. Put it differently, arguments speaking of the destigmatization of the recipients (P4) and protection against unemployment (P3) go hand in hand with funding concerns (N12) as well as with debate about UBI fairness (N19). Noteworthy to mention that the within argument correlation in this cluster is weaker than in the first group of arguments. Although it appears at the interval from weak (0,14) to moderate strong (0,43), the high values occur exclusively, solely in case of P4 ~ N19. It needs to be said that all correlation coefficients, excepting P3 ~ N19, are significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed).

In addition, in case of the poverty and inequality reduction argument (P1) only P1 ~ P5 (0,05 level) and P1 ~ N12 (0,01 level) coefficients seem to be significant. To be more specific, the poverty argument is negatively correlated with the increase of free time argument, whereas the positive relationship happens when it comes to the funding concern.

Overall, as positive and negative statements are likely to appear together within the same article, it supports the previous finding, namely, that **the Czech media discourse has a rather neutral and descriptive nature, with no prevailing opinion**.



Graph 7³. Joint appearance of the arguments.

Analysis of actors

The analysis of the Czech media discourse would be incomplete without knowing the characteristics of actors who create and develop the UBI discussion. In particular, the following questions take the central stage: *Who are those actors who speak about the UBI? Which of them are the most and the least represented in the Czech media? Which attitudes towards proposed policy do they hold? How does proportion of Czech and foreign speakers look like?*

Overall, based on statistic results one can draw the conclusion that hitherto **UBI topic remains a domain of political actors** (e.g. rulers, members of political parties, state organ representatives, policymakers, etc.), making up one third of the cases (32,9%). As an illustration, this topic is broadly discussed by Italian party The Five Star Movement; the candidate for American presidential election 2020 Andrew Yang who made UBI as a symbol of his political campaign; the concept appeared in the Czech Pirate Party and Labour party (Great Britain) programs. Moreover, **media space is taken by business elite coupled with UBI experiment sponsors** (18,3%) that are **closely followed by economists** (16,6%). To less

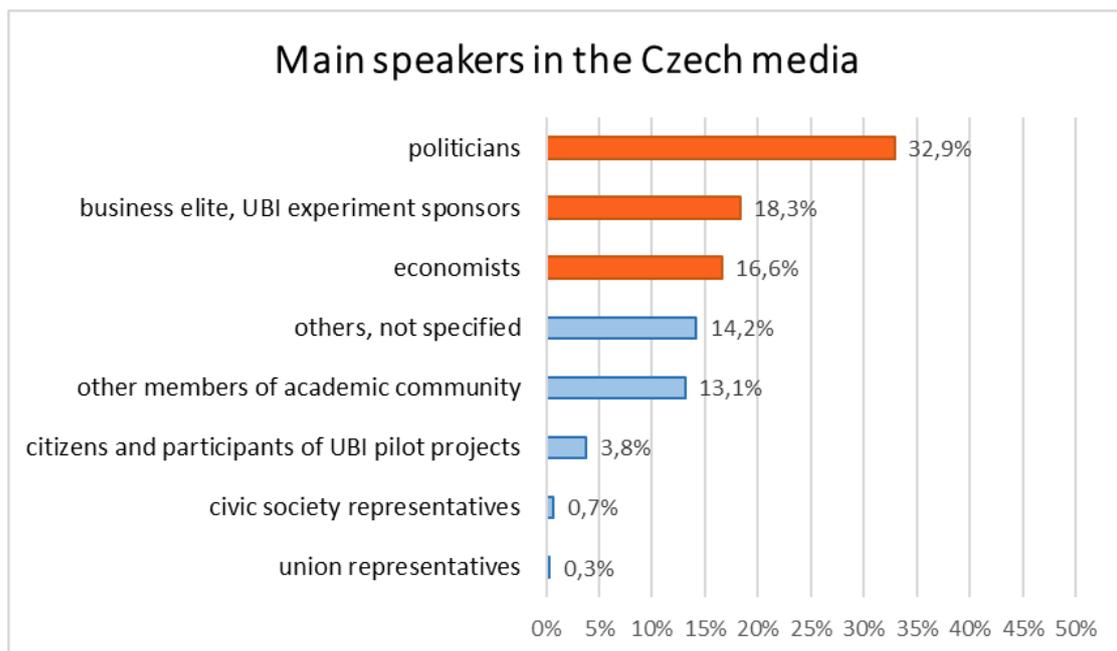
³ The graph 7 displays a correlation matrix among the more prevalent arguments and orders them by a means of hierarchical cluster analysis.

extent the voices of members of academic circles are present in the discourse composing, all in all, 13,1%.

Other actors such as civic society activists, citizens and participants of UBI experiments around the world, and union representatives so far seem to be out of the discourse as their presence is just marginal (0,7%; 3,8%; 0,3%, respectively).

There is also an aggregated group of actors that should not be omitted. It unites, for instance, journalists, artists, writers, etc. or actors that were not specified in the article. Taken together, it draws up 14,2% of cases.

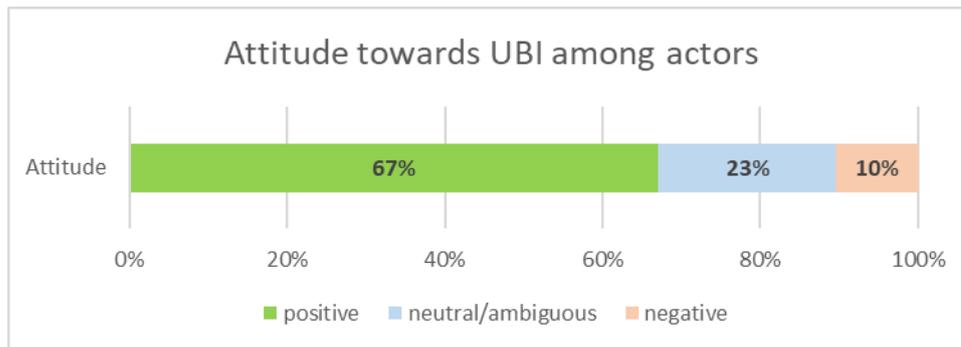
To sum up, one can identify several actors - political and business actors alongside with economists - who seem to dominate in the Czech discourse in terms of the frequency of their appearance, whilst other groups of speakers such as citizens and experiment participants as well as civic society and union representatives are underrepresented.



Graph 8. Representation of the speakers in the Czech media. N = 289.

It was revealed that **majority of the analyzed articles mention one actor who speaks about UBI** (65,3% of cases). Two actors in one article appear considerably less often (17,3%). Three actors occur in less than 10% of all articles (7,3%). Four and more actors appear rather exclusively (less than in 2,7% of articles). Interestingly, the maximum number of speakers per article reaches 14 (0,7% or 1 article only).

Regarding actors' attitudes toward universal basic transfer that is shown in the articles, it was found that **the support for UBI prevails being expressed by slightly more than two thirds of the actors (67,1%)**. Furthermore, marginally over than one fifth (22,5%) does not form any strong opinion, taking a rather neutral or ambiguous standpoint. Remarkably, pure negative view on UBI seems to be a minority in the Czech discourse. More specific, one out of ten actor (10,4%) accentuates potential negative effects of basic payment.



Graph 9. Actors' attitude toward UBI (in general). N = 289.

In the next step, an association between actor and their inclination to a certain attitude is tested with a Chi-square test. It is important to stress that speakers with a low representation rate such as civic society and union representatives as well as citizens together with UBI project participants were excluded from the analysis as the contingency table was not filled enough; 45,8% of cells had expected count less than 5 and the minimum expected count is 0,1. After the removal the table meets all established criteria, i.e. no more than 20% of cells have the expected value less than 5 and the minimum expected count is 3,87. In addition, the Chi-square test statistics are significant, and the association coefficient indicate a moderately strong to strong association (Cramer's $V = 0,370$; Contingency coefficient = 0,463).

As table below illustrates, economists and people united under the 8th category less often express a supportive attitude towards UBI than it would be expected, even though, on average 4 out of 10 economists (37,5%) see UBI in a positive light. In contrast, their relation is more often neutral or in case of economists significantly more often negative. When it comes to other actor groups, it is necessary to say that politicians alongside with businessmen are more often inclined to the positive pole of the spectrum, while at the same time holding less often neutral and in case of business elite negative attitudes. Members of the academic community less frequently report negative attitude than was expected if the null hypothesis was valid.

Overall, when comparing all groups, one can notice that positive attitude is mostly held by politicians (38,5%) and business elite (26,7%) and is the least it is common among

economists (9,6%). At the same time, the latter group (31,7%) together with the 8th category (36,7%) are highly represented in neutral segment. Within the negative attitude economists (39,3%) together with politicians (46,4%) make up a majority.

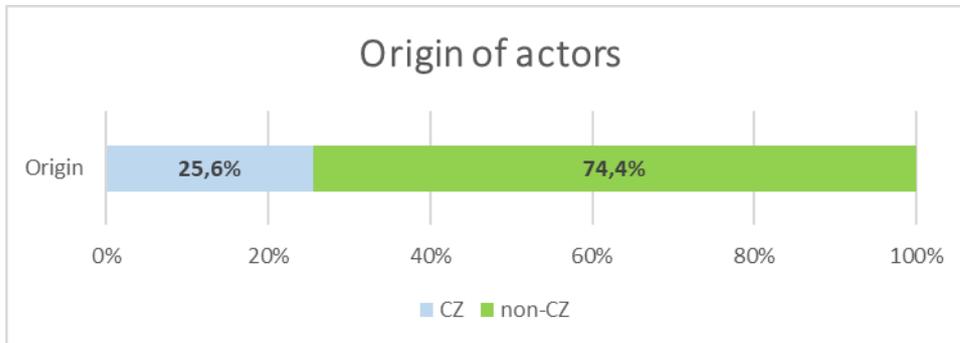
It is assumed that the extremely high share of positive attitude among politicians and businessmen could be explained by presence of several frequently mentioned actors in the discourse who are strongly in favour of UBI (e.g. Italian party The Five Star Movement, Elon Musk, Andrew Yang, Mark Zuckerberg, philanthropists from Silicon Valley, etc.).

Speaker * Attitude Crosstabulation

			Attitude			Total
			Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Speaker	economists	Count	18	19	11	48
		Expected Count	32,6	10,5	4,9	48,0
		% within Speaker	37,5%	39,6%	22,9%	100,0%
		% within Attitude	9,6%	31,7%	39,3%	17,5%
		Adjusted Residual	-5,0	3,3	3,2	
	academics	Count	31	7	0	38
		Expected Count	25,8	8,3	3,9	38,0
		% within Speaker	81,6%	18,4%	0,0%	100,0%
		% within Attitude	16,6%	11,7%	0,0%	13,8%
		Adjusted Residual	1,9	-5	-2,2	
	politicians	Count	72	10	13	95
		Expected Count	64,6	20,7	9,7	95,0
		% within Speaker	75,8%	10,5%	13,7%	100,0%
		% within Attitude	38,5%	16,7%	46,4%	34,5%
		Adjusted Residual	2,0	-3,3	1,4	
	businessmen	Count	50	2	1	53
		Expected Count	36,0	11,6	5,4	53,0
		% within Speaker	94,3%	3,8%	1,9%	100,0%
		% within Attitude	26,7%	3,3%	3,6%	19,3%
		Adjusted Residual	4,6	-3,5	-2,2	
	other actors	Count	16	22	3	41
		Expected Count	27,9	8,9	4,2	41,0
		% within Speaker	39,0%	53,7%	7,3%	100,0%
		% within Attitude	8,6%	36,7%	10,7%	14,9%
		Adjusted Residual	-4,3	5,4	-,7	
Total	Count	187	60	28	275	

Table 1. Association between actors and their attitude toward UBI. N = 275.

Another characteristic which was viewed within the analysis is the actor's country of origin. Data shows that **the vast majority of UBI speakers come from a non-Czech environment (74,4%)**, whereas Czech actors are apparently underrepresented, being visible in one quarter of all cases (25,6%).



Graph 10. Speakers' origin. $N = 285$.

The association between country of origin and attitude held is investigated as following.

Conducted statistics indicates that the Pearson Chi-square test is significant, which means that there is an association between the analyzed variables, and all required criteria are met: 0 cells (0,0%) have an expected count of less than 5 and the minimum expected count is 7,68. Furthermore, all employed coefficients witness for a moderate strong relation (Cramer's $V = 0,388$; Contingency coefficient = 0,362).

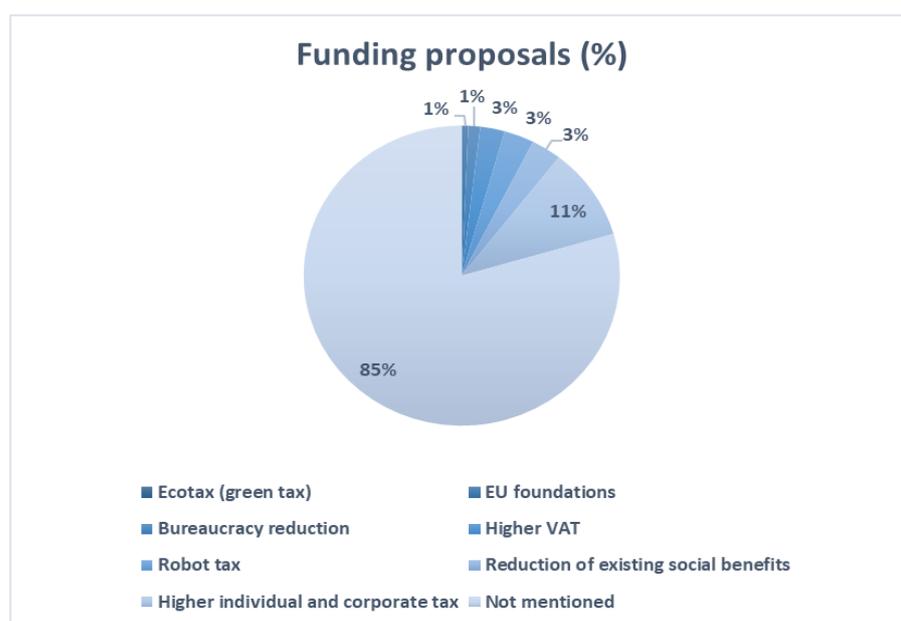
			Attitude			Total
			Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Country	CZ	Count	27	28	18	73
		Expected Count	48,9	16,4	7,7	73,0
		% within Country	37,0%	38,4%	24,7%	100,0%
		Adjusted Residual	-6,3	3,8	4,6	
non-CZ	non-CZ	Count	164	36	12	212
		Expected Count	142,1	47,6	22,3	212,0
		% within Country	77,4%	17,0%	5,7%	100,0%
		Adjusted Residual	6,3	-3,8	-4,6	
Total	Total	Count	191	64	30	285
		Expected Count	191,0	64,0	30,0	285,0
		% within Country	67,0%	22,5%	10,5%	100,0%

Table 2. Association between country of speaker's origin and attitude held. $N = 285$.

Several important conclusions can be derived from Table 2. **In particular, a strong dissimilarity in attitude between Czech and foreign speakers is prominent.** The Czech actors are less likely to be in favour of the concept, whilst foreigners display a positive attitude more often than it was expected. Contrary, Czech speakers are overrepresented at neutral and negative poles, whereas the opposite holds true in case of non-Czech actors. When one looks at the distribution within groups, one can see that it is more or less balanced – with slight prevalence of positive and neutral attitude – among Czech actors, whereas it is highly skewed to the positive evaluation in the foreign-speaker group.

Further relevant characteristics

Empirical evidence shows that the discussion on funding options is almost left out of the UBI discourse. The graph 11 gives information on the most and the least frequently appearing funding alternatives. One can notice that **the vast majority of the articles does not tackle the funding issue at all**, and only 15% do mention some proposals. **Among the options that are discussed in the articles, the increase of individual and corporate taxes seems to be the most frequently mentioned**, appearing in 1 out of 10 cases (11%). Robot tax, reduction of existing social assistance programs alongside with increasing the VAT rate follow (each 3%). Reduction of expenditure on bureaucratic administration as well as using money from different EU foundations occur exclusively, in 1% of the articles, whereas financing UBI from so-called *Green Tax* is not mentioned at all.



Graph 11. UBI funding options.

Noteworthy is that **the substantial number of articles contains references to pilot UBI experiments or topic-relevant studies (68,7%)**. In general, all references can be divided into 5 main groups, namely: experiments, discussions on UBI implementation, literature that operates with the concept, proposals by political actors and concepts similar to UBI that were already implemented in some countries. References that could not be matched with any of the above-listed categories were labeled as *Other*.

Taking focus on the Czech Republic, one can see that UBI in the Czech Pirate Party’s program as well as support for the concept by former minister of finance V. Tlustý’s are placed in the political section. Overall, Czech media cover the diverse range of UBI mentions.

<i>Type of references</i>	<i>Examples from articles</i>
Experiments	Finland, Canada (Ontario, Mincome), the Netherlands (Utrecht), Kenya, Stockton, Experiment preparation in Oakland, Uganda, India, Brazil (Bolsa Familia)
Discussions	California, the Netherlands, Spain, San Francisco, Germany, European Commission, Scotland
Literature (books, articles, etc.)	Y.N. Harari “21 Lessons for the 21st century”, R. Bregman “Utopia for realists”
Political proposals	Switzerland (referendum), Italy (The Five Star Movement), Presidential election 2020 in USA (UBI proposal from candidate Andrew Yang), M. L. King 1967, Czech Pirate Party’s program, V. Tlustý in the Czech Republic, support in Greece, President Nixon in USA, Labour party in Great Britain
Implemented UBI variations	Alaska, China (Macao), Temporary UBI in Iran, France (revenu minimum d’insertion (RMI) a revenu de solidarité active (RSA)), Stipend for students in Denmark
Other	BIEN platform, Speenhamland system (England, Wales), Y. Maezawa’s social experiment (Japanese billionaire), J.S. Mill’s similar proposal, M. Friedman proposal – Negative income tax

Table 3. Categories of the UBI references.

4.2 Representative online survey

4.2.1 Methodology description

The next stage of empirical research is dedicated to the penetration of individual media messages about UBI (debates, arguments, actors' opinions, etc.) into the public realm. In particular, using the questions derived from the content analysis it is investigated *How are the individual arguments from the media discourse mirrored into the attitudes of the general public?* In addition, the overall attitude towards the UBI concept in the Czech population is studied.

To answer the research question outlined above the questionnaire with all in all 8 thematic questions was designed. Designing the questionnaire and following data collection were realized in close cooperation with research agency NMS Market Research (Prague). The data were collected online using the Czech National Panel, which is a joint project of NMS Market Research, Nielsen Admosphere and STEM / MARK research companies. It was realized in the first half of February 2020 (week 3.2 – 9.2 2020). Overall, sample includes 1001 valid cases and is representative with regard to the Czech population.

4.2.2 Data and variables

Regarding the composition of the questionnaire and the corresponding database, one can distinguish 3 main question sections:

- general knowledge and level of support for UBI
- media mirroring
- sociodemographic characteristics

General knowledge and level of support for UBI

The first section unites questions about general contact with the concept of interest. To assess the prior contact with UBI respondents were asked to answer the question: *“Have you ever heard about Unconditional basic income concept (UBI)?”* They could choose from the following options: yes, I know what it is (1); yes, but I do not know what it is (2); no (3). This question is designed as a filter, i.e. the respondents who show the contact and knowledge of the concept only were then asked to describe UBI in own words. In particular, the open question was formulated as *“Please describe in your own words what the Unconditional basic income*

is? *What could it bring, who would be its recipients, etc.?*” Respondents who choose (2) and (3) options skipped the above-mentioned open question.

Next question that addresses the UBI support issue was designed by analogy with ESS (round 8) question that tackles the same problem (ESS, 2016). The respondents were given a set of UBI features and further asked: *“To what extent do you personally support or do not support the implementation of UBI in the Czech Republic if it functions according to the criteria listed below?”* The UBI concept includes the following characteristics:

- “The government pays everyone a monthly income to cover essential living costs”, regardless of whether a person works or not.
- “People also keep the money they earn from work.”
- “It replaces many other social benefits” that are currently provided under existing social assistance programs.
- “The purpose is to guarantee everyone a minimum standard of living.”
- “This scheme is paid for by taxes.”

The responses were given using 4-item scale with such options as “strongly support”, “rather support”, “rather against”, “strongly against”.

Media mirroring

The following section *Media mirroring* includes the questions that investigate the nature of media and public interrelation with regard to the UBI issue. As first, survey participants were asked to recall of a media platform where the contact with the analyzed concept happened: *“Have you noticed a UBI discussion in any of the media outlined below?”*. The respondents could give multiple responses choosing from a pre-determined list of options:

- Internet (1)
- TV (2)
- Press (regional, daily, magazines, etc.) (3)
- Radio (4)
- I have noticed UBI discussion in the media, but I do not remember where (5)
- I did not notice any discussions (6)

The last two responses (5) and (6) were set as exclusive. Moreover, respondents who have not experienced any UBI discussions in the Czech media skipped the following question about meeting with individual arguments in the media discourse.

Further, the survey takers who displayed the contact with UBI in media were asked to define: *“Which arguments from the list below have you personally noticed [in the Czech media], regardless of whether or not you agree with them?”* The decision was made to split the set of arguments into 2 contentwisely similar questions as there was a risk of decreasing motivation among the respondents to continue the survey while assessing each statement. “I have noticed” (1) and “I have not noticed” (2) responses were used.

The first list contains such arguments:

- P1: it is a tool in the fight against poverty, homelessness, rising inequalities
- N12: it is an expensive measure, a problem with funding might occur
- N13: could cause decrease in work motivation
- P3: could help to prevent future risks caused by robotization / automation
- N15: could create higher financial dependency on the state
- P4: could destigmatize current recipients of state social benefit programs
- N16: it would not sufficiently protect some vulnerable groups of the population (e.g. pensioners, disabled persons, single parents, etc.) as it is insensitive toward individual needs
- P5: could free up time for hobbies, personal development, family care, education, etc.
- N17: it would not mitigate inequality, but rather create a greater one

The second set is drawn up by:

- P6: it would free up time for civic activities and participation in public life
- P8: it could relieve people of existential risks (serves as a financial cushion)
- N19: it is an unfair redistribution of money
- N20: it could intensify migration flows, especially from developing countries to developed ones
- P9: it would help to reduce stress and improve the physical and mental health of the individual
- N21: it does not take into account the cyclical nature of the economic system
- P10: it would strengthen employees' bargaining power

- P11: it would lead to a reduction in state bureaucracy
- P7: it would make it easier for people to set up their own business

It should be mentioned, some arguments (P2, N14, N18) were removed from the question in order to shorten a list of arguments and, again, to avoid a loss of motivation to continue the survey among the respondents. It is necessary to stress that their content partly overlaps other arguments with much higher appearance in the media discourse. In addition, after consultation with researchers from NMS Market Research agency, some other statements were slightly modified: P6 argument was complemented by a general civic participation component, losing its focus on environment protection activities, and P7 was limited to entrepreneurship only. In total, 18 in favour and against arguments were included.

Next, the Liker scale with the same pre-defined list of arguments was employed to study respondents' personal relation to the concept. Namely, they were asked: *“To what extent do you consider the following arguments in favour and against UBI convincing?”* The respondents were given the following response options: “definitely convincing”, “rather convincing”, “rather not convincing”, “definitely not convincing”. The question was intended for all respondents regardless their previous knowledge / contact with the concept under study.

Sociodemographic characteristics

Finally, sociodemographic variables were examined: gender, age as well as age groups (18-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64), educational level (primary school, vocational training, high school, college / university), household composition (singles, 2 members, 3 members, 4 and more members), net household income (up to 20.000 czk, 20.000 – 40.000 czk, 40.000 more czk), place of residence (up to 1.999 inhabitants, 2.000 – 19.999, 20.000 – 99.999, more than 100.000 inhabitants) and region (all 14 regions were included).

4.2.3 Hypotheses

Some studies (Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Rehm, 2005) that focus on revealing the determinants of welfare support provide empirical evidence for the assertion that economically and socially vulnerable groups, including low income households, women, younger people, workers in disadvantaged occupations etc., are more often hold a supportive attitude toward redistributive welfare policies. When it comes to the interconnection of support for welfare programs and level of education, one can assume that people with a lower education attainment would be also more in favour of welfare state support compared to higher educated individuals.

Indeed, people with a lower educational level are to a greater extent exposed to the risk of occupational unemployment as “the risk of occupational unemployment, [...], negatively correlates with education” (Rehm, 2005, p.14).

The following hypothesis about support for UBI as welfare benefit can be derived from above-mentioned empirical findings:

H₁: women are more in favour of UBI implementation in the Czech Republic than their male counterparts.

H₂: individuals with lower education attained are those who more often express support for UBI implementation in the Czech Republic compared to people with higher educational level (e.g. college / university).

H₃: people living in lower-income households more often report supportive attitude toward UBI implementation in the Czech context than individuals from more affluent households.

As the arguments P1, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, N12, N13, N19 appear in the Czech media discourse the most often (in more than 10% of the cases) it is expected that:

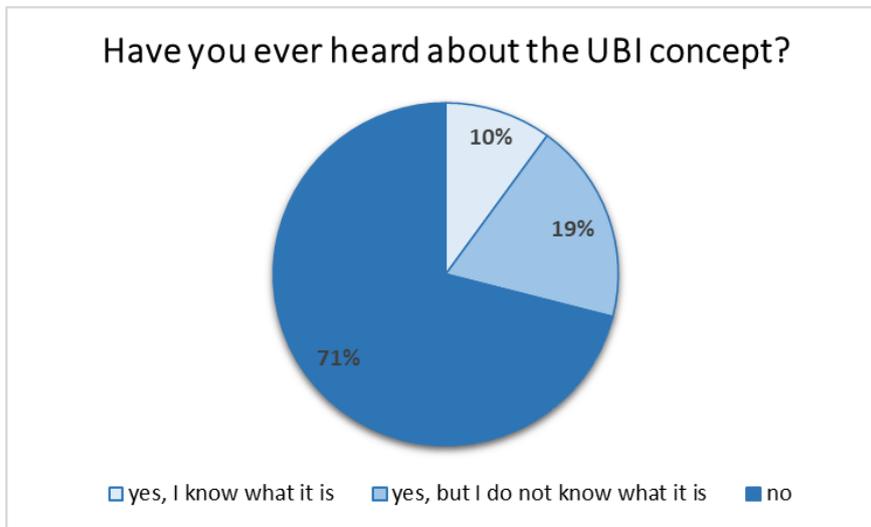
H₄: the arguments marked as P1, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, N12, N13, N19 will be the most frequently reported by those who have noticed the current media discussions in the Czech media.

4.2.4 Main findings

Regarding the main characteristics of the respondents participated in the survey, sample includes 50,5% of men and 49,5% of women, the average age is 42 years which belongs to the 4th age category (the largest in the sample), most of the interviewed are high school diploma holders (36,2%), one third graduated from vocational training program (33,7%), almost one fourth of the respondents are university graduates (23%) and 7,2% graduated from primary school. As for household structure, sample contains 12,6% singles, one third of two-member (32,9%) and one fifth of three-member (21,3%) households. Four and more members make up 31,2% of the cases. There are also 2% of missing values in the database.

First, the prior contact with UBI was examined. Data provide empirical evidence for the fact that **the majority of the Czech population has never heard about the universal basic income concept**. In particular, above two-thirds of interviewed respondents are not familiar with the concept at all (71%). One fifth of them (19%) reports they did hear about UBI before,

but they cannot describe what exactly makes it up. Only 1 out of 10 (10%) has already experienced the concept, meaning they heard of UBI and know its main principles.



Graph 12. Prior contact with the UBI topic. $N = 1001$.

In the next step, the respondents who confirmed the knowledge of the concept were asked for a broader explanation. Namely, they were offered to describe the concept in own words and give an answer to the questions *What does it bring, who would be the recipients, etc.?* Interestingly, 7 out of 10 (76%) respondents correctly described the main UBI principles.

As an illustration of the responses that were given, some of them are presented below:

“regular monthly income from the state without any conditions for each person, while abolishing various social benefits, pensions, etc. It brings simplification of the social system (it is paid equally to all), there is no need for so many officials to decide on benefits, etc.”

“it would be granted for everyone as a basic income which does not want anything from anyone. It would not be necessary to endeavor to obtain it, and whoever wants more, could work.”

“everyone, even if they are unemployed, will be entitled to a certain amount of money.”

“income from work.”

“it is for everyone, payout of a certain amount [of money] to ensure a decent life and cover basic needs without having to meet any conditions. Who thinks it is enough, does not have to do anything, for whom it is not, can earn without losing eligibility for this income.”

“benefit from the state for inactive people. It is good for personal development or the opportunity to do what does not support me.”

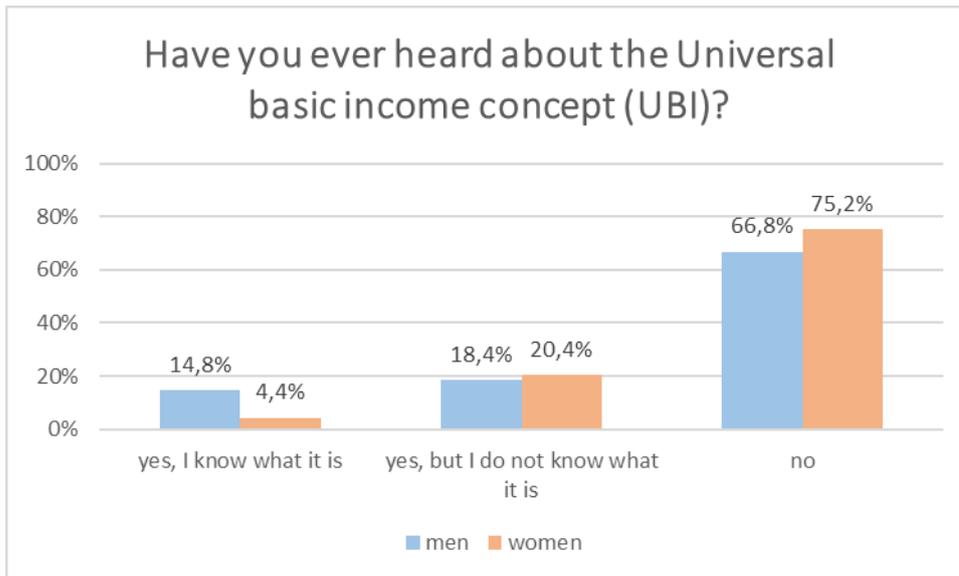
“the income which I get even if I do not work”

The data shows that there is a difference in prior contact with the concept of interest between sexes. Indeed, the difference happens within the “yes, I know what it is” and “no” categories, where **men more often tend to report they have already heard about the UBI**, whereas women display less contact with it, i.e. they have heard and know about UBI less than was expected. At the same time, they are those who are more often not familiar with idea of UBI at all which is indicated by the positive, higher than +1,96 adjusted residual in the “no” answer column. In contrast, men less often report no contact with UBI.

Sex * Have you ever heard about the Universal basic income concept (UBI)?						
			Have you ever heard about the Universal basic income concept (UBI)?			Total
			Yes, I know what it is	Yes, but I do not know what it is	No	
Sex	men	Count	75	93	338	506
		Expected Count	49,0	98,1	358,9	506,0
		% within Sex	14,8%	18,4%	66,8%	100,0%
		Adjusted Residual	5,5	-,8	-2,9	
Sex	women	Count	22	101	372	495
		Expected Count	48,0	95,9	351,1	495,0
		% within Sex	4,4%	20,4%	75,2%	100,0%
		Adjusted Residual	-5,5	,8	2,9	
Total	Count	97	194	710	1001	
	Expected Count	97,0	194,0	710,0	1001,0	
	% within Sex	9,7%	19,4%	70,9%	100,0%	

Table 4. Association between gender and prior contact with UBI concept. N = 1001.

The chart 13 provides a visualization of the above-described differences.



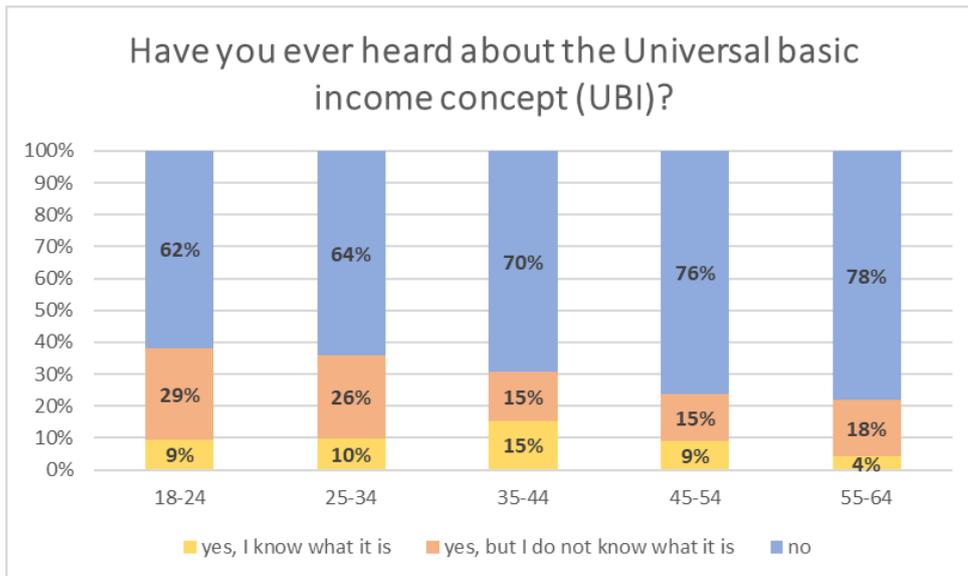
Graph 13. Association between gender and prior contact with UBI concept. $N = 1001$.

When it comes to the association between age group and having been in touch with UBI, it seems that **the UBI topic has a higher penetration among younger generations, although particular knowledge about the concept remains rather on the background** (based on adjusted residual analysis). At the same time, young people are those who less often claim they have never heard about the concept. They are aware of the proposal per se but it does not translate into higher familiarization with it.

In contrast, **mid-aged people more often than was expected report the knowledge of the concept** (indicated by adjusted residual). Compared to other cohorts they are to a greater extent equipped with a knowledge of UBI (% of those who have heard and know the concept in each category: 15% mid-aged respondents vs. 9% among youngsters; 10% 25-34 years old; 9% age group 45-54; 4% 55-64 years old).

In general, **people at older age**, namely age group 55-64 years old, **exhibit weaker contact with the concept under analysis**, and at the same time there are more individuals who have never heard about basic income than expected.

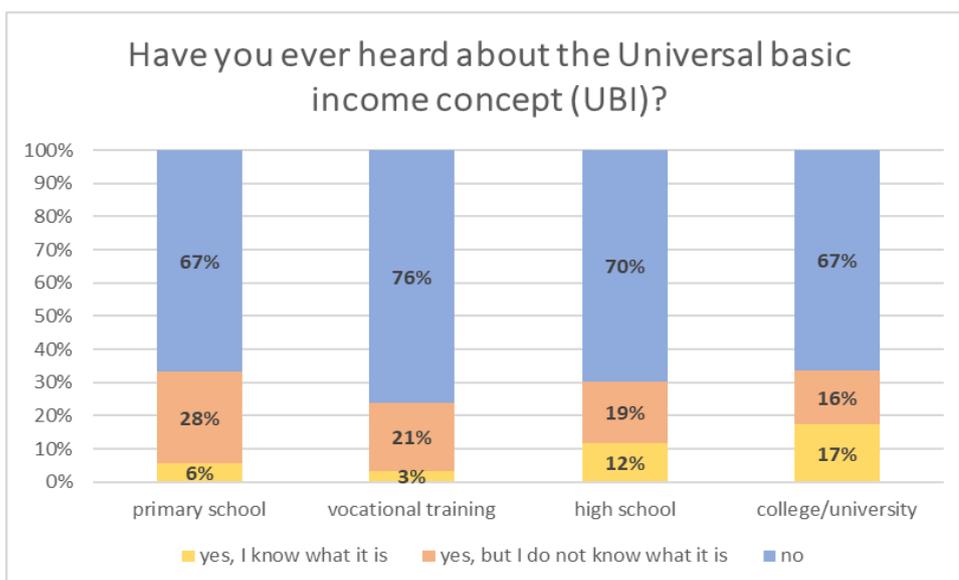
Generally, Gamma coefficient (at value 0,184) indicates weak association between contact with a concept and age. Worth mentioning is the trend: with increasing age the number of people who have never heard about UBI is also rising, starting from 62% in the youngest group and surging up to 78% in the oldest one. Put it differently, **the older the person, the less likely he/she has heard about the universal basic transfer.**



Graph 14. Association between age and prior contact with UBI concept. $N = 1001$.

With regard to the achieved educational level, **people with vocational certificate are those who declare lower awareness of the studied concept and more often say that they did not hear about it before** (according to the adjusted residual values). **The opposite is true for individuals who hold university diploma.** In particular, they claim more often they have already heard about UBI and what is more, they think they can describe its main principle.

In addition, negative Gamma coefficient (-0,138) signifies a weak relation which could be interpreted as follows: **the higher the level of educational attainment, the more awareness of UBI is exhibited.**



Graph 15. Association between level of education and prior contact with UBI concept. $N = 1001$.

When examining the relationship between **regional and topical penetration to the public discourse**, one can notice that statistics **show no association**, meaning that there are no significant differences in what region person lives and his/her knowing of the concept.

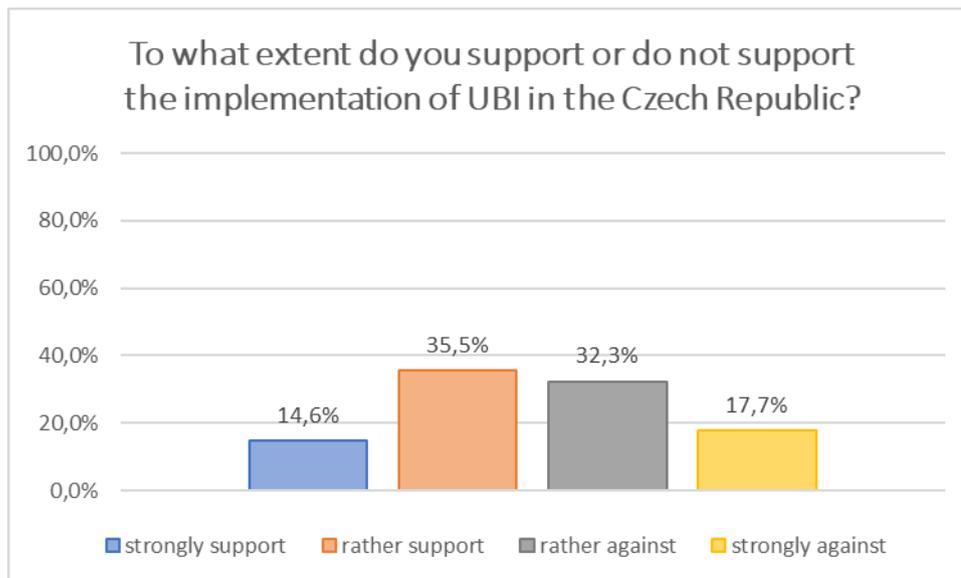
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	35,037 ^a	26	,111
Likelihood Ratio	35,472	26	,102
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,852	1	,174
N of Valid Cases	1001		

a. 4 cells (9,5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3,00.

Then, the issue of UBI support was addressed. It is important to mention that the respondents were provided with a short description of the main principles of UBI, which could influence their answer. Presented characteristics can be found in the section 4.2.2. *Data and variables* of this thesis.

Overall, regarding the level of UBI support in the Czech population one can notice that the collected data almost replicates the distribution of answers from ESS 2016 where information on the same topic was gathered. Diving deeper into the data, it is obvious that **there is no strong opinion on UBI yet**, which could be partly explained by the rather neutral – as was proven in the previous chapter – nature of UBI discussion in the Czech media (also without showing a strong attitude). The half of the Czech population seems to be in favour (14,6 % strongly support + 35,5% rather support), whereas another half expresses dislike towards the basic payment for all (17,7% strongly against + 32,3% rather against). To compare, the ESS round 8 (2016) data presents the following response distribution: 13,7% - strongly in favour; 38,5% - in favour; 29,2% - against; 18,6% - strongly against.

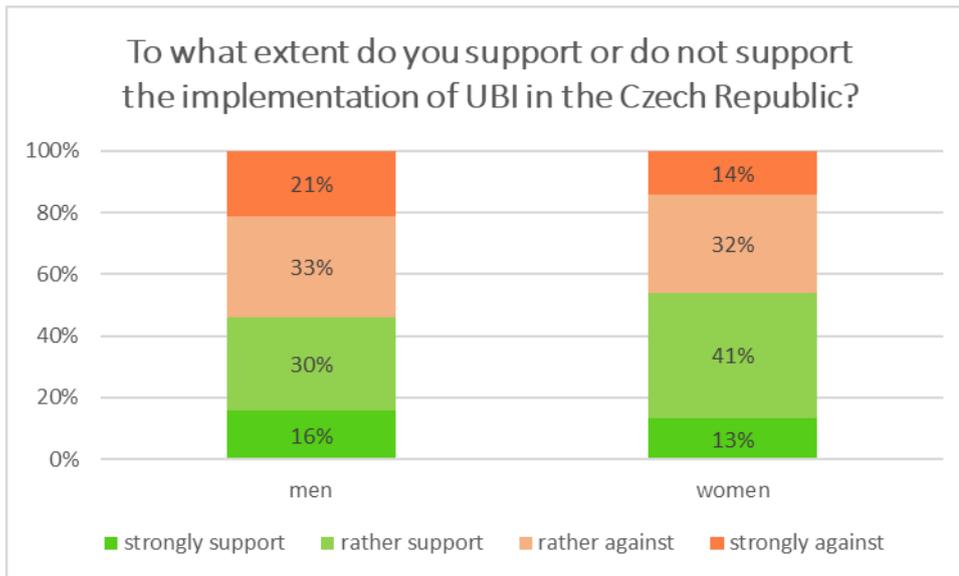


Graph 16. General level of support for UBI concept. $N = 1001$.

Further stage, the extent of support for UBI in relation to different sociodemographic characteristics was examined.

As a first step, the gender – support relation was subjected to the analysis. As was hypothesized, **men exhibit less support for universal basic payment, being more often strongly against of it and at once they are less inclined to choose the answer “rather support”** (based on adjusted residual analysis results). In compliance with empirical evidence women are more supportive when it comes to implementing of basic payment to everyone as it was hypothesized (hypothesis H_1). Although their support is rather moderate, which is expressed through the higher occurrence of the “rather support” answer, they display a less strong aversion towards the concept compared to their male counterparts. Focusing on extreme opinions only – “strongly support” and “strongly against” – one might notice that males more often tend to be against the implementation (21%) than support it (16%), whereas this relation is balanced in case of females (14%, 13%, respectively).

In addition, both coefficients – Cramer’s V and Contingency coefficient – similarly display weak association (0,126; 0,125, respectively).



Graph 17. Association between gender and level of support for UBI concept. $N = 1001$.

As the next phase, the test for age group and level of support relation was carried out. Remarkably, Chi-square test results show **no association between supportiveness and different age categories** as p-value makes up 0,484 which means that null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

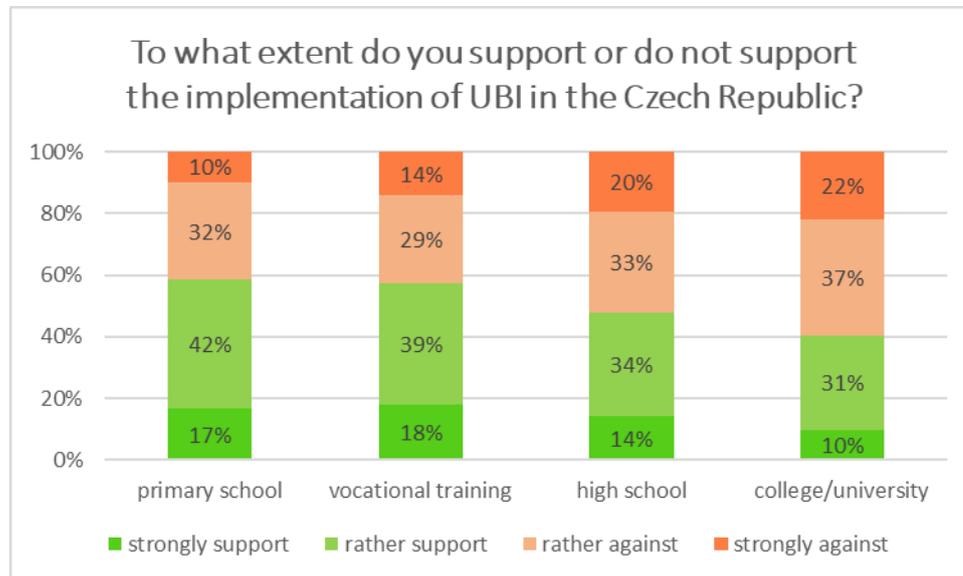
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11,535 ^a	12	,484
Likelihood Ratio	12,226	12	,428
Linear-by-Linear Association	,886	1	,346
N of Valid Cases	1001		

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14,15.

The data provides evidence of a weak relation between educational attainment and UBI supportiveness. Looking in detail at this association, **people with vocational training are more often strongly in favour of UBI than it was expected, whilst individuals with tertiary education report less support**. The situation turns around in case of strong aversion, i.e. the former educational group less often choose the extreme dislike option, and the latter does.

Looking at the strength of the relationship between educational level and support for the concept, one can observe the weak positive association (Gamma 0,172), meaning that **the**

higher the person is on the educational ladder, the less support for a UBI policy he/she expresses. Hereby, university graduates are those who are the least in favour of implementing UBI in the Czech Republic, which is in line with the hypothesis H₂.



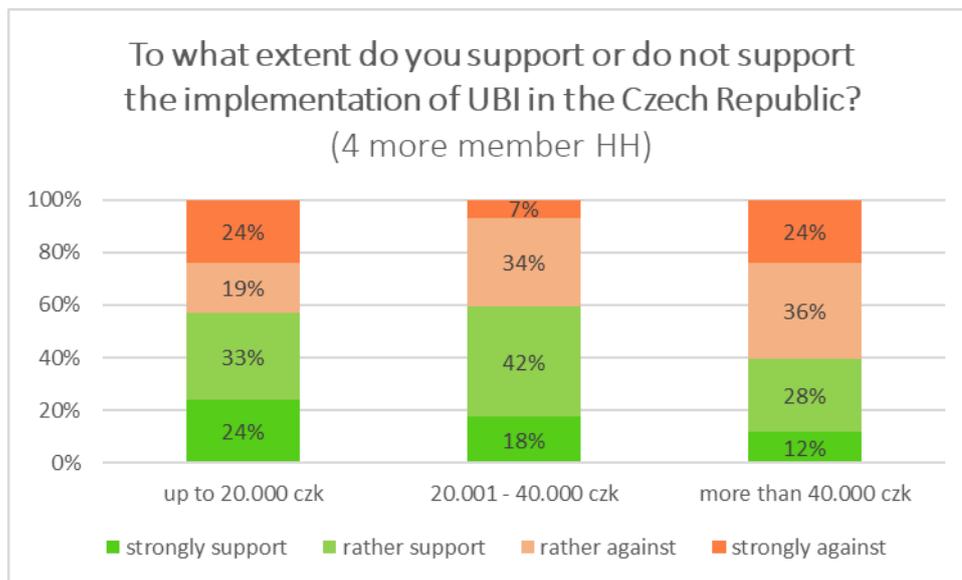
Graph 18. Association between level of education and level of support for UBI concept. $N = 1001$.

To test the association between income group and level of support for UBI the dataset was split into 4 categories according to the variable *Household size*. Then, the association was studied separately for each household unit. Missing values (coded as 99) were excluded from analysis in order to ensure a sufficient filling of the contingency table. The division was made as income is a relative category and should be related to the number of people who share a certain amount of money. For instance, a single who earns 20.000 Czech crowns has higher relative income than a four-member family with the same 20.000 crowns of income. Thus, to make the comparison objective, it should be conducted within income groups in each household type.

Overall, the analysis of the **relation between income and level of UBI support** in one, two, three and four more person households leads to the conclusion that such a relationship **exists in case of four or more members household only**. Data reveals that such households that have an income in the interval between 20.000 – 40.000 Czech crowns less often than expected hold a strong negative attitude towards UBI implementation and at the same time more often express moderate support (“rather support” option). In contrast, people who live in a high-income household with 4 and more members exhibit more aversion to the concept and less than expected tend to express moderate support for it (“rather support”).

Taking a closer look at the answer distribution, one can see that a **higher aversion towards the UBI payment is common among more affluent households with four more persons** (60% in total – “rather against” and “strongly against”). At the same time, **households with a lower income report higher support of basic transfer**: 57% in the least affluent families and 60% in the middle category compared to the 40% in the high-income houses.

The Gamma coefficient (0,278) displays modest positive relationship between above-named variables, indicating **the higher income a family has at its disposal, the less supportive for UBI it is**.



Graph 19. Association between income and level of support for UBI concept in 4 more member households. $N = 313$.

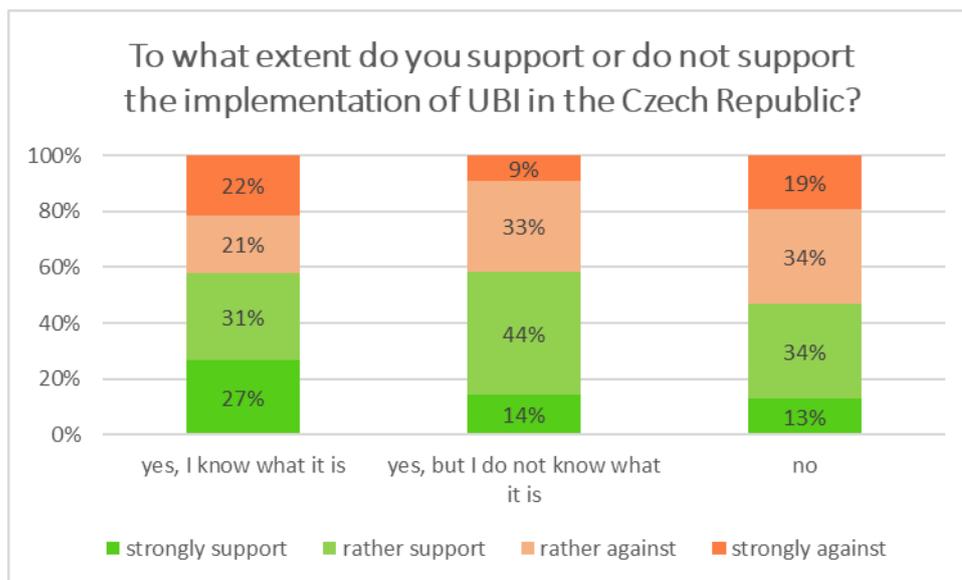
Overall, this finding partly proves the hypothesis H_3 as income affects the extent of support for implementing UBI in four-more member households only, whereas other types of households (singles, 2 persons, 3 persons) do not exhibit any differences in a support level.

Interesting results occur when studying the association between level of UBI support and prior knowledge of the concept. **Among those who report contact with the concept** (i.e. they heard about it and know the main principles) **there is a tendency to support UBI implementation to a greater extent compared to people who have just heard about it but cannot recall its content, and especially to those who are not familiar with UBI idea at all**. In addition, an analysis of adjusted residuals proves that people who are strongly in favour of the basic payment declare more often that they have heard about UBI and less - than it was expected - that they are not familiar with the concept, whereas respondents with modest

aversion to the concept less frequent show the touch with UBI. Likewise, UBI adversaries more often did not have any prior contact. Based on the statistics one could draw a conclusion that more relevant information about universal basic income policy and explanation of its essence could result in a larger support for basic income in Czech population. The aversive attitude towards the policy can be at least partly interpreted as a lack of deeper knowledge and contact with the concept.

At the same time, the above-described association cannot be seen as a causal. It is equally likely that people, who are more interested in the UBI concept or who support it, are those who more often search for information about it, and then report its higher knowledge and prior contact.

For better understanding the outlined above relation, more advanced data analysis methods should be applied. Such the analysis is out of the scope of this work, nevertheless it can be conducted within future research.



Graph 20. Association between prior contact with UBI and level of support for the concept. $N = 1001$.

In similar vein as in case with place of living and prior contact with the concept the data implies **no association between region and one's support for UBI policy.**

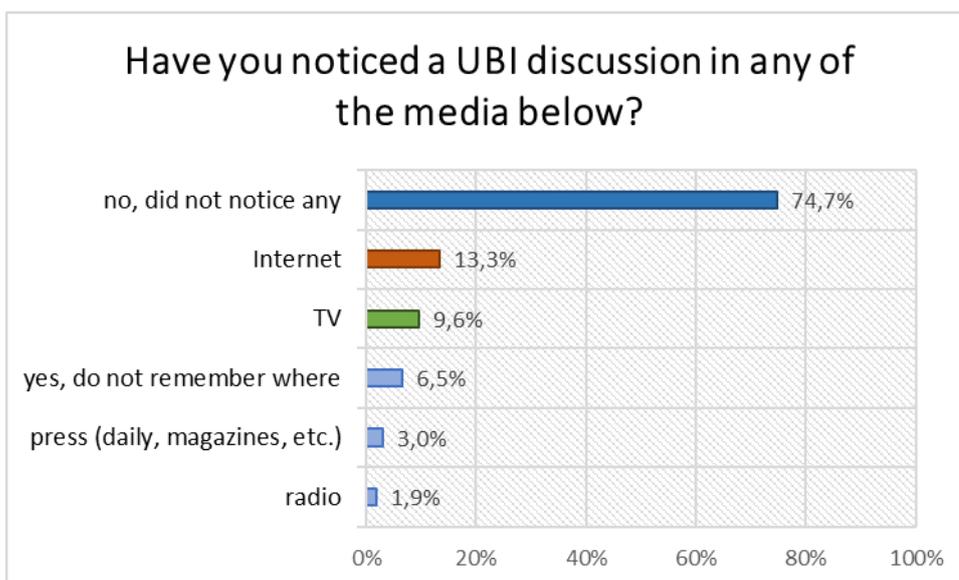
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	39,947 ^a	39	,428
Likelihood Ratio	40,279	39	,413
Linear-by-Linear Association	2,224	1	,136
N of Valid Cases	1001		

a. 1 cells (1,8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4,52.

The next phase of the survey focuses on the interrelation between the media and the public toward UBI issue. In particular, the penetration of individual media messages to the public is examined in the following section.

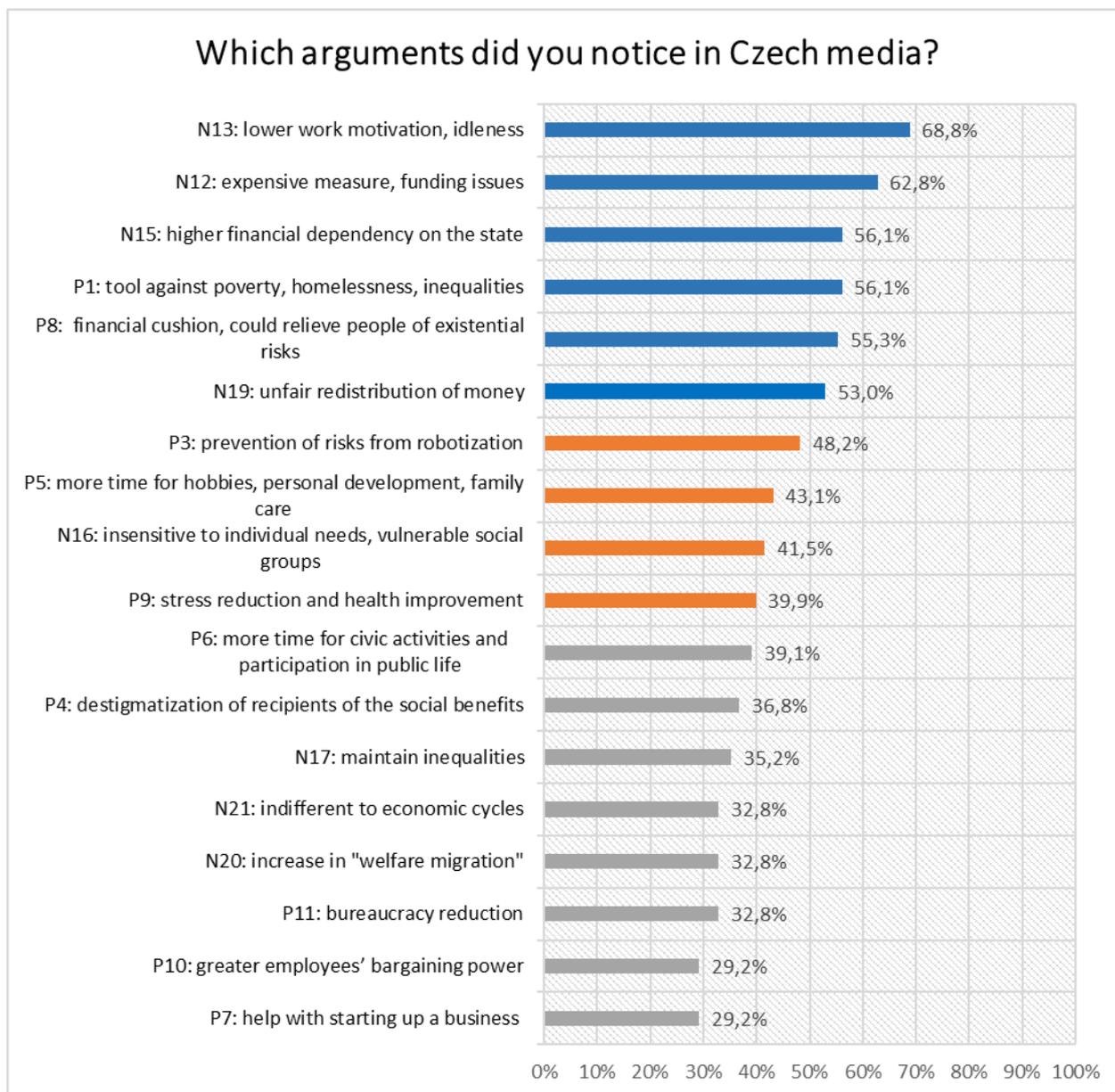
As it was discovered within the content analysis, 6 out of 10 articles (63%) include UBI discussion as a rather marginal mention. Noteworthy, collected data supports the assumption that **UBI topic is also marginal among Czech general public**. Three out of four of respondents (74,7%) report that they did not notice the discussion about basic income in any media platforms. Taking a closer look at individual medium one finds **most of the information about UBI was seen on the Internet** (13,3%), closely **followed by TV** (9,6%). Much less reported were the printed media, including regional, daily press and magazines, (3%) as well as radio (1,9%). There is also a group of respondents who have noticed the discussion but are struggling to recall particular media platform (6,5%).



Graph 21. Contact with UBI discussion on selected media platforms. N = 1001.

As the following step, the respondents were asked to answer the question, *which arguments from the pre-prepared list did they notice in different media*, regardless of whether they personally agree or disagree with them. Each argument was assessed separately with 1 indicated as “notice” and 2 as “did not notice”. It is important to mention that only respondents who reported they noticed the discussion around UBI in media were included in the analysis (N = 253).

In general, it seems that from the diverse media **discourse the following arguments have a higher penetration to the public**: leads to decrease in work motivation, idleness and lower work discipline (N13 - 68,8%); it is an expensive measure, a problem with funding might occur (N12 - 62,8%); it is an effective tool in the fight against poverty, homelessness, rising inequalities (P1 - 56,1%); it creates financial dependency on the state (N15 - 56,1%); it provides greater existential security, it serves as a financial cushion (P8 - 55,3%); it is unfair redistribution of money (N19 - 53%). Further arguments are often mentioned as well: a solution that could help to prevent future risks caused by robotization / automation, ensuring a smooth transition to a new economic order (P3 - 48,2%); UBI provides more time for hobbies, personal development, family care, education and making art. It has a potential to make people happier and more satisfied with their lives, it is seen as a way to real freedom (realization of opportunities, free decision-making) (P5 - 43,1%); there is a risk that it would not sufficiently protect some vulnerable groups of the population (e.g. pensioners, disabled persons, single parents, etc.) as it is insensitive to individual needs (N16 - 41,5%); it would help to reduce stress and improve the physical and mental health of the individual (P9 - 39,9%).



Graph 22. Meeting with arguments on different media platforms. $N = 253$.⁴

An important insight derived from the analysis is that the **overall extent of media penetration seems to be high as 8 of 10 top arguments from the media are not only present in both discourses – public and media – but hold the leading position compared to other statements** (N13, N12, P1, P8, N19, P3, P5, P9). This finding to a great extent empirically supports the hypothesis H₄.

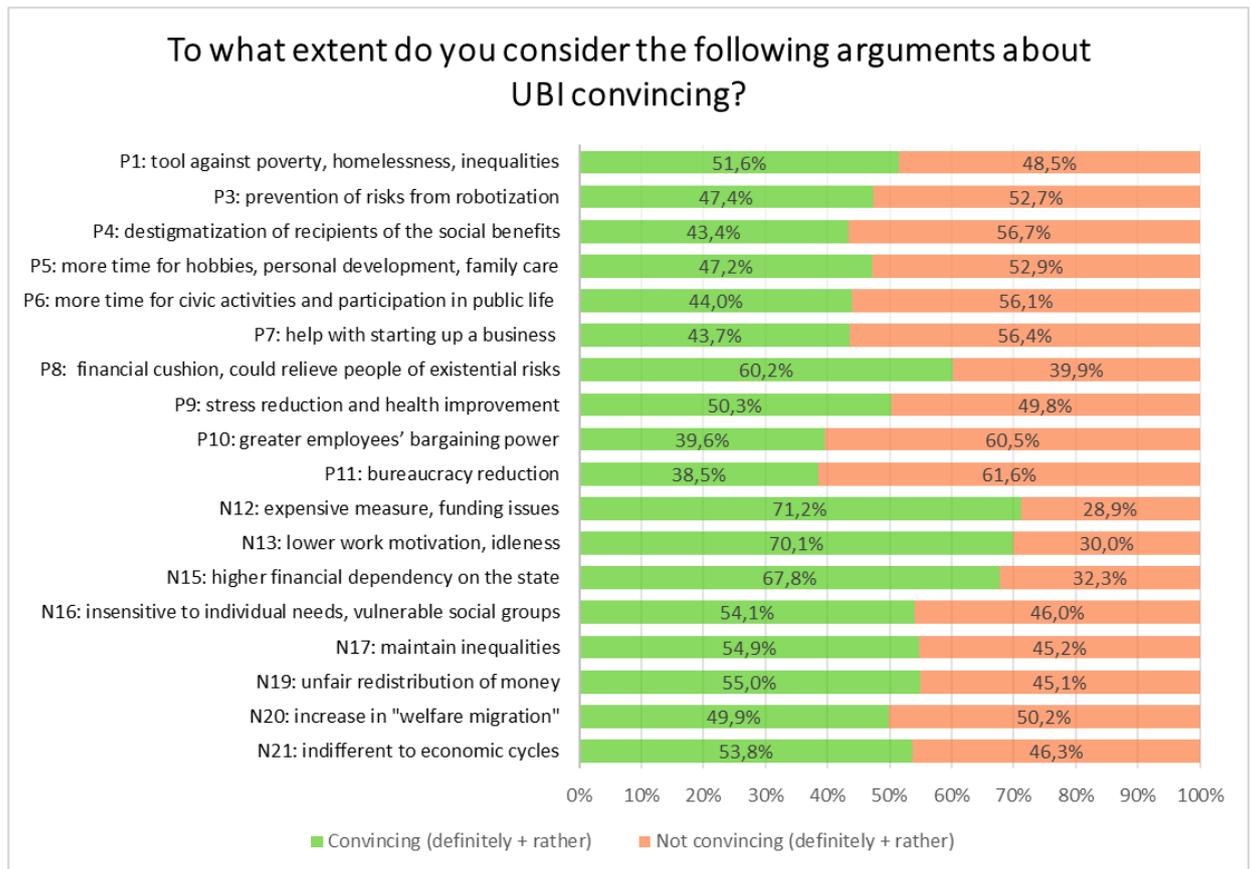
⁴ Blue and orange colors indicate the arguments with more than 40% of occurrence among those who met the topic in media ($N = 253$) or more than 10% from the whole sample ($N = 1001$).

Interestingly, some arguments that appear in the media discourse rather exclusively are mentioned very often by the respondents. For instance, concern about the financial dependency on the state (N15 – 56,1%) coupled with a fear from insufficient protection of some vulnerable groups of the population (e.g. pensioners, disabled persons, single parents, etc.) (N16 – 41,5%) have high recall rate among interviewed persons, although their occurrence in Czech media is minor. In contrast, the arguments about the potential positive impacts on economy, namely stimulation for enterprise activity (P7 – 29,2%) alongside with replacing existing inefficient social assistance programs that undermine human dignity and stigmatize recipients (P4 – 36,8%) did not reach the public to such a high extent as they attracted the attention of the media. One possible explanation for a lower appearance of economical argument (P7) is that some aspects of original statement were omitted as was described above. That could, in turn, change its perception among respondents. Thereby, it is recommended to use the original version of this argument when further research will be conducting. As meeting with the arguments is studied on more diverse range of media platforms that were not analyzed within the content analysis (e.g. additionally TV, radio, etc.) one can assume that the difference in frequency of appearance of arguments P4, N15, N16 might occur because of their higher representation on those platforms. Nevertheless, it should be subjected to further analysis in order to be proved or rejected. Moreover, it cannot be guaranteed that the respondents would not under- or overestimate some arguments.

The previous question does not capture personal attitude of respondents towards individual arguments. In order to get more complete picture of the public discourse, the respondents were next asked to assess to what extent they personally find each statement convincing. Responses were given on a scale with “definitely convincing”, “rather convincing”, “rather not convincing” and “definitely not convincing” options. It is important to add that for examining the conviction level data was pooled again, i.e. both people who have noticed UBI discussion in media and those who did not were interviewed (N = 1001).

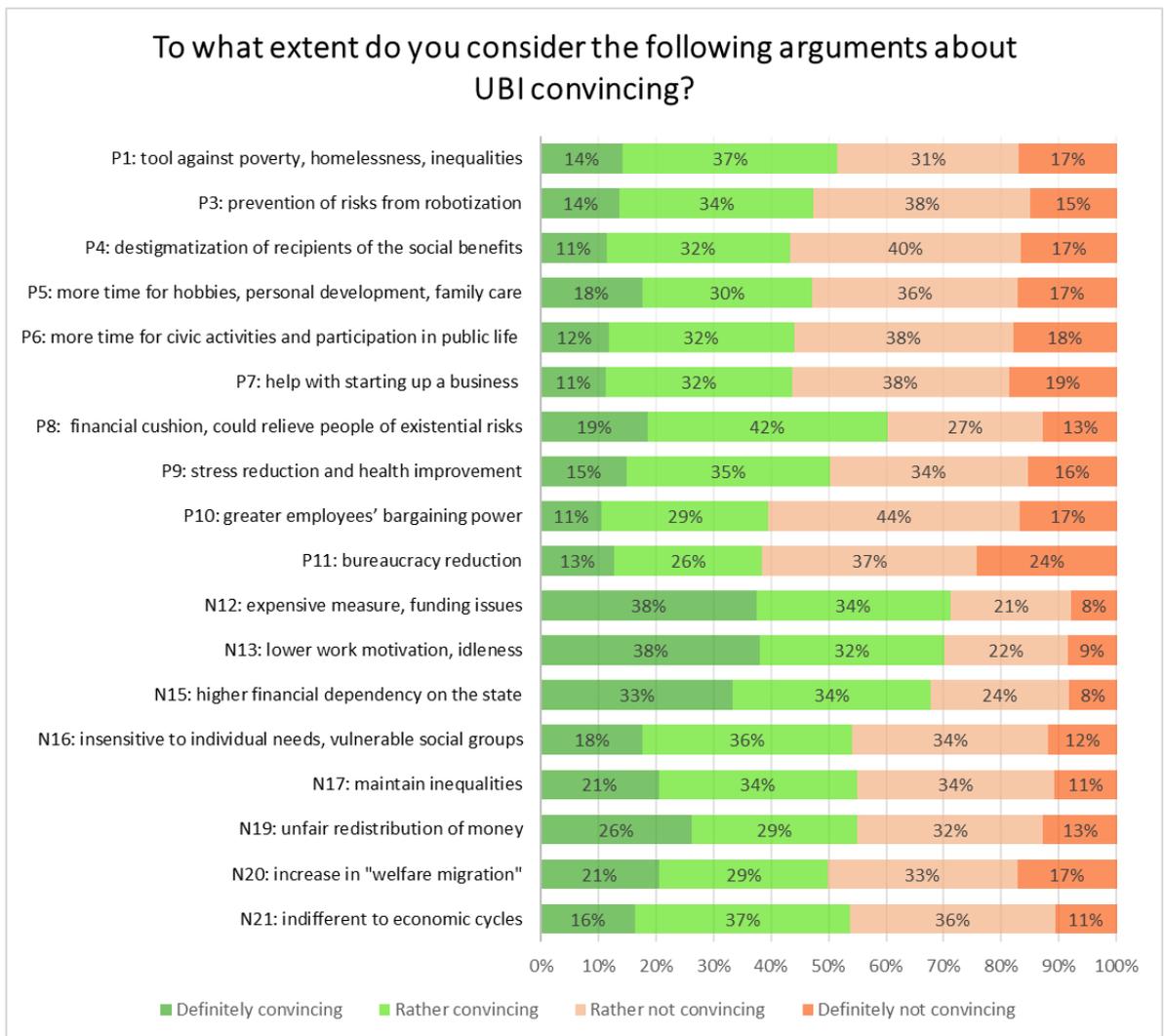
Detailed analysis revealed an interesting finding, namely that **the arguments which focus on the negative UBI effects seem to be more convincing for the majority of the Czech population**. To provide an illustration for this observation, it needs to be mentioned that concerns about extremely high costs to fund the basic transfer (71,2%), decreasing work motivation (70,1%), and fear from higher dependency on state financial support (67,8%) are the most convincing arguments for the Czech respondents.

Contrary, Czech people tend to be suspicious towards arguments illustrating potential positive consequences of UBI implementation. The substantial subset of the Czech population doubts the ability of UBI to reduce state bureaucratic apparatus (61,6%) as well as its potential to strengthen employees' bargaining power (60,5%). In addition, they do not believe that universal basic payment could destigmatize current recipients of state social support (56,7%) or serve as a trigger to set up an own business (56,4%).



Graph 23. Conviction of individual arguments (definitely + rather). N = 1001.

The detailed answer distribution confirms the finding outlined above. Here again, arguments against UBI are more often reported as strongly convincing compared to arguments that depict positive impacts of UBI on public and individual sphere.

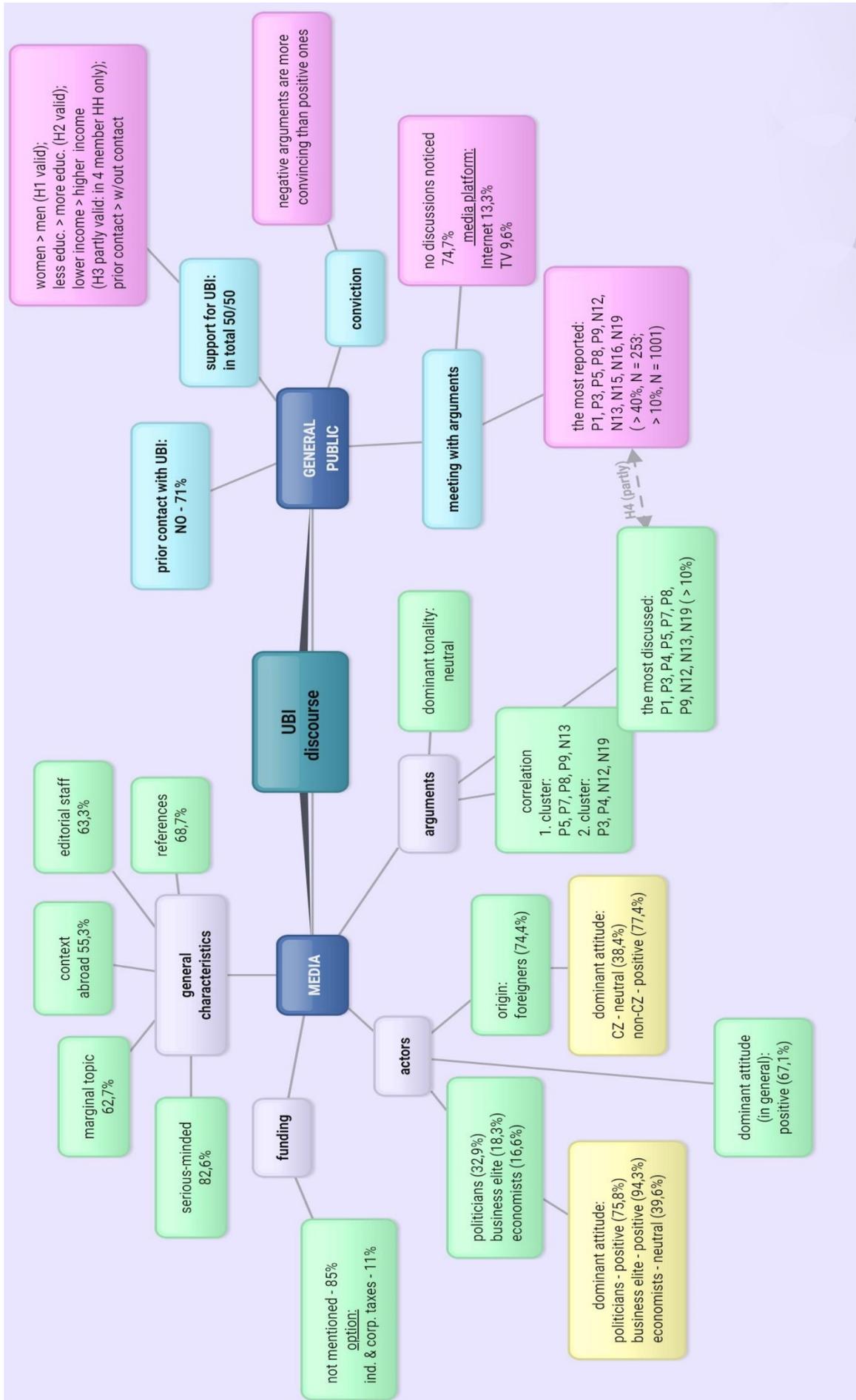


Graph 24. Conviction of individual arguments. N = 1001.

4.3 Summary: UBI discourse map

The table 5 summarizes the main empirical findings that were described above using concept mapping visualization technic.

Table 5. UBI discourse in the Czech Republic (*discourse map*)



5. Conclusion

It is important to note that the BI concept rather than being represented by a single model serves as an umbrella term for a subset of proposals which involve a regular money disbursement paid by state to its legal residents, regardless their employment and family status (Raventós, 2007). The unique feature of the proposed policy is that its introduction would mean a fundamental society change which would touch different dimensions (e.g. economic, social, political, ethical, individual, etc.). To bring deeper insight into the potential outcomes of UBI institution, each aspect of such a complex topic should be studied on its own merit.

This bachelor thesis aimed at mapping the Czech media and public discourses regarding the basic income proposal which appears in a diverse range of the present-day discussions both abroad and in the Czech Republic.

The main question that was examined within the work is **how the UBI concept is presented and reflected in both above-mentioned discourses and what the points of their contact are.**

To answer the research question, an overview of the arguments of UBI supporters and opponents which occur in the academic literature was made. The overview clearly uncovers the ambiguous essence of the studied concept. In combination with the findings from the world pilot experiments it gives information on the potential impacts of implementing UBI in different types of society. It is necessary to say that the arguments derived from the studied literature served as a pillar for the own empirical investigations.

The empirical part consists of two sub-researches – the content analysis of the Czech media discourse and the representative survey in the Czech population (N = 1001).

The main findings indicate that when covering the topic of interest the Czech media more often address aspects such as the capability of UBI to alleviate poverty and inequalities (P1), to be a tool to reduce undesirable effects of automation in labour markets (e.g. mass unemployment) (P3), to serve as an alternative to existing means-tested programs that are seen by some researchers as stigmatizing (Barry, 2001; Offe, 2009; Raventós, 2007; Simpson, Mason & Godwin, 2017) (P4). Furthermore, the media tackle arguments like giving people more time for non-paid activities such as family care, volunteering, making art, etc. (P5), positive effects of unconditional money on health (P9), ensuring more secure existence and some economical aspects (economic growth, increased number of own businesses, higher

investments, etc.) (P8 and P7, respectively). Finally, it sheds light on the following issues: the costs of the policy (N12), fear of the decreasing work motivation and idleness as well as concerns about the fairness of disbursed money (N13 and N19, respectively).

In addition, it was revealed that some arguments exhibit joint appearance in the articles under analysis. To be more specific, the expectations that UBI would give people more time for different kinds of non-gainful activities (e.g. family care, volunteering, education, etc.), would lead to better health conditions, could boost economic growth through new investments and support for entrepreneurship, could serve as a financial cushion for different social groups coupled with fear from decreasing work motivation are likely to be mentioned within the same article. Moreover, the arguments that consider UBI as a measure against unemployment accelerated by automation, as a chance to destigmatize current recipients of welfare benefits alongside with concerns about the high costs of UBI and its fairness often appear together.

It is important to note that a majority of the arguments in the selected sample are commented upon by the Czech authors in a neutral way, without neither strongly pronounced positive nor negative attitudes.

The main actors who speak of UBI are politicians, businessmen and economists who usually are of a foreign origin. Regarding their attitudes toward the policy, the discrepancy between the Czech and foreign actors occurs, namely the speakers from the Czech Republic are rather moderate in their opinion and more often show neutral attitude, whereas the actors from other countries tend to accentuate positive sides of UBI more frequently.

Overall, the average article about UBI in the selected media sample can be described as follows: it is published in the broadsheet media and comes directly from an editorial staff, it includes UBI as a peripheral topic but often contains references to the pilot experiments or topic-relevant studies. Moreover, it reflects abroad discussions rather than the Czech ones and does not tackle the UBI financing options.

Some arguments serve as a bridge between the public and media discourses. In particular, poverty and inequality reduction (P1), anti-unemployment measure (P3), more free time (P5), higher existential security (P8), health improvements (P9), expensiveness (N12) and work motivation (N13) concerns as well as unfair distribution of money (N19) arguments are shared between both discourses. Nevertheless, not all frequent media arguments reach the general public discourse. The reverse also holds true. For instance, the arguments about positive effect of UBI on economy (P7) or its destigmatization effect (P4), which often appear in the

Czech media, seem to be underrepresented in the public discourse. At the same time, the arguments which stress higher dependency of individuals on the state after the introduction of UBI (N15) and insensitivity of this measure to vulnerable social groups (e.g. single parents, unemployed, people with disabilities, etc.) (N16) are marginal in the media discourse, although they often occur in the public one. The described discrepancy might be caused by some changes in wording of individual statements that were made for the survey purpose (e.g. P7 argument). In addition, the range of media platforms that were included in the analysis is limited that could lead to the loss of the information about the appearance of the arguments in the Czech media. Above-mentioned limitations indicate the need for further research which would provide dis/confirming evidence for the outlined above assumptions.

In general, the data show a weak contact with the UBI topic in the Czech population as only a minority has heard about it before and even less people reported its knowledge. Among those who noticed the UBI discussion in the media, in most of the cases the contact happened on the Internet or on TV.

When it comes to the level of support for the implementation of UBI among Czechs once they are introduced to the concept, the society is highly polarized as half of the population is in favour of the concept, whereas another half does not support the implementation. In addition, it is more likely that a person who exhibits support for the policy is a less educated woman who lives in a four or more-member household with rather a lower income. It needs to be added that these findings provide support for the hypotheses which are described in the empirical part of this thesis: H₁ (women exhibit more support for UBI than men), H₂ (less educated are more in favour of implementing UBI than other educational groups), H₃ (low-income households hold more supportive attitude toward UBI than high-income households) is confirmed partly.

The further analysis reveals that in general Czechs are inclined to doubt the positive impacts which UBI can bring, being more convinced of the negative scenario of its implementation (e.g. it would cost too much, it might decrease work motivation or create higher financial dependency on the state).

In the end, to create a full picture of the media discourse and investigate the correspondence between media representation of UBI and general public opinion, further research that will include the multidimensional data analysis should be conducted to test the association between a prior contact and level of support for the concept. Namely, it can be investigated whether the support for the concept is increasing once individuals are provided

with more information on UBI, or more frequent mention about the prior contact with the UBI topic among those who report high support comes from higher interest and own search for the information on UBI, thus greater exposure to the discussions would not translate in a higher level of support.

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