

**ARE SCOTTISH BASIC INCOME  
PILOTS POSSIBLE?**

# **An overview of the Scottish Basic Income pilot feasibility study**

22nd July 2020

**Basic ———  
——— Income  
Conversation**

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020

For several years Scotland has led the debate around basic income in the UK. The Scottish basic income pilot feasibility study is the most detailed research on piloting a UK basic income that has ever been done.

It was born out of public interest and driven forward by the local authorities in Glasgow, Edinburgh, North Ayrshire and Fife. Scottish Government funded the work supporting the commitments made by the local authorities to investigate the potential of basic income.

The report has recommended pilots as the next step, but it has also shown that there are political barriers that need to be overcome before this next step can be taken. It states that support from all levels of government is required to deliver their pilot model that tests the core elements of a basic income and ensures no one loses out on income because they have participated in the pilots.

In Scotland there is established and growing support for the pilots from the public, local government and Scottish Government. The First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has now repeatedly voiced her backing for basic income saying, "My position on that has gone from having a keen interest in exploring it to what I now describe as active support for it."

But, without the cooperation of the DWP, HMRC and central government participants may stop being eligible for other benefits and supports they depend upon during the pilot. This puts them at risk and goes against the "no detriment" principle put at the centre of the feasibility study. All levels of government and these key institutions must work together to implement the changes required to deliver a basic income pilot safely.

These challenges apply to implementing a national basic income in Scotland and a basic income in other areas of the UK. The Scottish feasibility study shows us where the basic income movement must focus its efforts: we need a broad coalition of support that demands progress towards a basic income starting with the removal of the political barriers.

The feasibility study focuses on a basic income that addresses poverty. They modelled the impacts of a basic income and it showed large reductions in poverty. But the study also shows that a pilot is required to draw robust conclusions on the impact of a basic income on poverty and that a national basic income is the only way uncover exactly how a basic income would reduce poverty in the long term.

Basic income has the potential to change the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the UK, lifting people out of poverty and creating opportunity for all. The Scottish feasibility study has produced ground-breaking, world leading new insight into piloting this transformative policy.

This briefing was produced by the Basic Income Conversation to give insight into the content of the Scottish feasibility study report and implications for the wider basic income movement in the UK. It is not intended to replace reading the report (which we encourage you to do!) but to make it more

accessible to people who are less familiar with basic income or who have less time to read the full report.

The Scottish feasibility study was intended to provide a neutral, evidence-based assessment of the feasibility of piloting basic income in Scotland. There are many nuances to this work and the Basic Income Conversation's interpretation of the content of the report, in particular its application to campaigning work, may not represent the stance of the feasibility study group. However, our intention has been to represent the content of the report in brief. You can find all the feasibility study steering group's work to date and contact details on their website, [www.basicincome.scot](http://www.basicincome.scot).

# Overview of the Scottish Basic Income Pilot Feasibility Study

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## An in depth look at basic income

*Summary of Section 1: Introduction to Citizen's Basic Income (CBI), Section 2: Background to the Project, Section 3: Research and Evidence Overview and Section 4: Rationale for Piloting and Approach to Assessing Feasibility*

### What is Basic Income?

The definition proposed by the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) is widely accepted and the one used throughout the feasibility study. It says a basic income is a:

“periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement

Periodic: Paid at regular intervals (for example every month or fortnight), not as a one-off grant.

Cash Payment: Paid as an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing recipients to decide how to use it. It is not paid in kind or using vouchers.

Unconditional: Paid without a requirement to work or to demonstrate willingness to work.

Individual: Paid on an individual basis – and not, for instance, to households.

Universal: Paid to all, without means test.”

The feasibility study used the widely accepted definition of basic income and committed to designing an experiment that tested the principles of basic income and all 5 fundamental characteristics.

This is significant because many past basic income experiments have not taken this approach. Often, they have had conditions on the basic income payments, usually related to work. Attention was paid to ensuring the basic income pilots designed here were truly unconditional to fill this gap in the evidence.

### What is the Scottish Basic Income Pilot Feasibility Study?

The feasibility study was a two-year project funded by Scottish Government that explored the potential role of a basic income in reducing poverty and tackling inequalities. The work was led by a

steering group of representatives from the local authorities driving this work, Glasgow, Edinburgh, North Ayrshire and Fife, Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland and the Improvement Service.

The approach taken to assessing a basic income's impact on poverty and inequalities was to focus on pilots. So, the group worked on outlining all the relevant factors to doing a pilot: ethics, legislation, affordability and the practicalities of implementation.

The final report published in June 2020 included:

- An in depth look at basic income
  - Background of the feasibility study
  - How basic income is defined, its history and common arguments for and against
  - Why pilots?
  - An overview of evidence from basic income experiments
  - Evidence on people's perceptions of basic income
- Basic income pilot models, providing their answers for the questions:
  - How do you pilot basic income?
  - How much would the basic income be?
  - Who would get it?
  - How would it be paid?
- Details on how the pilots should be analysed
- Assessment of the feasibility of a pilot based on their feasibility framework criteria
  - Political
    - Strategic
    - Institutional
    - Psychological
    - Behavioural
  - Evaluation
  - Financial
- Projections of the impact of a full Scottish basic income
- Conclusions and recommendations

This included two pieces of commissioned research:

[Exploring the social security implications of a basic income pilot](#) by the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland to understand how participating in a pilot might change people's entitlement to other social security.

[Economic modelling of the potential distributional and macroeconomic implications of a national roll out of basic income](#) led by the Fraser of Allander Institute at the University of Strathclyde with the Institute for Public Policy Research and Manchester Metropolitan University. Economic modelling uses information we have about the current system to predict how certain changes to the system might impact the economy and other things like household income. This modelling looked at 2 different types of national basic income and 1 amended Universal Credit system to predict positive

and negative impacts and assess which route was the most effective to meet the desired outcomes (reducing poverty and inequality) with the least negative impacts.

## Why a feasibility study?

Basic income is a significantly different approach to social security and pilots of this kind are not common practice in policy making. The feasibility study set out to systematically consider the wide range of issues related to piloting this policy in order to recommend the best course of action. It was possible that the feasibility study would have recommended against pilots based on the evidence.

The study was also designed to assess how a pilot would be implemented and how complex this would be in the current system. Many basic income experiments have been compromised because of unforeseen challenges, this feasibility study has highlighted these potential hurdles.

Fundamentally this project was to produce evidence that could be considered by government, primarily local and Scottish Government, so political decisions could be made about basic income.

## History of basic income

Basic income can be traced back as far as Ancient Greece, Sir Thomas More's novel Utopia in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and more recently to the growing global movement. This movement has been triggered by growing inequality, precarious work and changes in technology.

Despite this interest there has never been a full basic income (a universal basic income that is enough to live on) implemented anywhere in the world. Rather we hear reports from some of the basic income pilots from around the world. There have never been comprehensive results published or tests of a basic income in the UK or a comparable welfare state.

The idea of basic income is growing in popularity but there is not one model (amount paid, how it is funded, how it interacts with other benefits/tax/income etc) that has been settled on. This means that there is a lot of variation in what people are calling for when they say basic income.

## Common arguments for and against basic income

The study summarised these as:

<b>Arguments for basic income</b>	<b>Arguments against basic income</b>
Promotes social justice and equality Reduces income variability, poverty & income inequality	Encourages labour market withdrawal Promotes state dependency Unaffordable

Increases liberty	Requires raising tax levels to an untenable level
Removes work disincentives	Diverts funds from those most in need
Reduces complexity of social security system	Provides justification for removing other social programmes
Facilitates time for caring, education, volunteering, arts, etc.	
Increases entrepreneurship	
Reduces job insecurity and in-work poverty	
Mitigates job loss due to automation	

It also noted that there is little contemporary evidence for basic income reducing employment and that a Scottish pilot would help assess this in context.

## Why pilots?

The feasibility study began with a look at existing evidence on basic income to decide whether a Scottish pilot was useful or necessary. It found that a Scottish pilot is desirable because it could:

- Increase understanding of community level effects
- Assess impacts of a basic income that has all the core characteristics
- Encourage political debate about whether basic income does or does not work
- Test design and implementation features
- Predict unintentional consequences
- Look at how a basic income would function in Scotland specifically and facilitate evidence based policy making

While modelling can predict some of the effects of a basic income more cheaply than a pilot it cannot produce reliable evidence on many factors. Behavioural effect, labour market effects and community level effects cannot be accurately predicted because the evidence fed into the model is not sufficient. Therefore pilots would add substantially to the evidence and inform the decision on whether a national basic income should be implemented.

## An overview of evidence from past basic income experiments

There are no full basic incomes that can be analysed and there are no interventions that fulfil all the criteria of a basic income. But there are interventions that can be used to assess the impacts of a basic income in Scotland. The most relevant evidence is taken from interventions and studies of unconditional transfers of cash to individuals and households in upper middle- and high-income countries. These are similar enough to a Scottish basic income that we can assume there will be similarities in the impacts.

Of the studies highlighted as relevant [by this scoping review](#) there were a number of insights:

Impact	Evidence
Paid work	<p>There were mostly small impacts on men leaving the labour market and larger impacts on women with young children.</p> <p>When there were larger reductions it tended to be redirected to other productive activities.</p> <p>The impacts differed across studies which could be due to context or study design.</p>
Education	<p>Some studies found reductions in adolescent employment in favour of staying in education.</p> <p>Some found significant improvement in educational outcomes for younger and more disadvantaged children, while others found no impact.</p>
Health and wellbeing	<p>Some studies reported reductions in psychological distress and improved child mental health.</p> <p>Some reported improved birth weight and reduced childhood obesity.</p> <p>Some showed a large reduction in hospital admissions where others showed no change.</p> <p>There was an increase in accidental death soon after payments are made in the two interventions paid in lump sums (this also occurs when salaries are paid).</p> <p>These impacts were less consistent across studies, again perhaps because of study measurements and design.</p>
Social outcomes	<p>There are small positive effects on a range of social outcomes shown.</p>



	<p>Some studies showed improved parent child and parental relationships.</p> <p>Others a reduction in criminal behaviour.</p> <p>There was no impact on marital dissolution (this disproved previous analyses of the same interventions).</p>
Spill over effects (impacts on individuals and communities not directly receiving the basic income)	<p>There is evidence that suggests spill over effects might have important impacts that strengthen over time.</p> <p>Increased spending led to increased labour demand.</p> <p>Positive mental health impacts grew over time.</p> <p>Improved mental health effects were exhibited by the whole community when only 30% were receiving the basic income.</p>

There are a number of contemporary pilots that are underway, in planning or recently completed:

- Finland
  - Analysis indicated a positive impact on well-being, self-confidence and marginally on securing paid employment.
  - This experiment was one of many designed to assess possible futures for Finnish social security.
  - The payment was made to 2000 unemployed people.
  - Although media coverage suggested the experiment was cancelled and a failure the Finnish experiment was successful in its aims and ran for the full period intended.
  - More on the final results [here](#).
- Barcelona, Spain
- Gyeonggi Province, South Korea
- Ontario, Canada
  - The Canadian experiment is more accurately described as a Negative Income Tax model, where the income is decreased based on additional earnings to ensure a base level of income.
  - There is no plan for any analysis of these results.
  - It is relevant to the Scottish work because it:
    - Set out to investigate the impact of basic income on poverty.
    - It used 3 different sites including a semi-saturation site (every household that earned below a certain income in a geographic area was eligible).

- Saturation sites allow us to gather evidence on the community level effects
- Gives us insight into the effects of political feasibility and influence.
  - The commitment to this pilot was made by the Ontario Liberal party in March 2016. In June 2018, after only 11 months of the 3-year planned pilot, it was cancelled due to a change in government.
- Oakland, California, USA
- Kenya
- Brazil
- Uganda
- Netherlands
- Germany
- Stockton, California, USA

[An international learning report](#) was also produced to take relevant insight from the process of implementation of previous pilots. This indicated the key factors included:

- Context and framing
- Connecting constituencies of support e.g. local and central government
- Political events and cycles
- Design
- Conditionality
- Measurement of impact
- Clear communication and public relations

## Evidence on people's perceptions of basic income

Overall people seem to support a basic income. But this is not uniform, young people and unemployed people are more supportive of the policy and people are most supportive of a basic income funded through increasing taxes for the wealthiest.

For people surveyed, common reasoning for supporting a basic income are fairness, security, transparency and reduced anxiety. The arguments against included concerns over targeting, affordability, work incentives and inflation.

## Basic Income Pilot Models

*Summary of Section 5 Proposed Pilot Models*

### How do you pilot basic income?

A basic income is paid universally and without conditions, a pilot involves a defined group and specific conditions set up to generate evidence. These factors need to be carefully balanced when designing a basic income pilot to ensure the basic income retains its principles and the experiment is scientifically robust.

The other challenge is designing a Scottish pilot that functions alongside the existing social security system. One that minimises the risk of leaving low income and vulnerable groups with less income as a result of participating in the pilot. It must also navigate complexities of the shared responsibility for social security between Scottish and central governments.

So the design of a pilot must deliver a basic income in a way that represents the impact a national basic income would have and that safe guards the participants. The pilot must also consider a “control group”, collecting information about a group of people that are not receiving a basic income. A control group allows you to check that the impacts you’ve measured are a result of the basic income and not other factors.

The feasibility study carefully considered these numerous factors and has recommended the best course of action:

Factor	Recommendation
Who will be involved?	<b>A “saturation model”</b> means that everyone within a geographic area receives a basic income. This tests a universal basic income as it is going to everyone and will provide evidence on the community level effects, the things that happen as a result of everyone in a place getting a basic income and interacting with each other.
How much will the basic income be?	<b>Two payment levels</b> have been proposed. This requires two different locations, or saturation sites. A high level tests the impact on poverty and a low level that tests the impact of an unconditional payment.
Where should the pilot be held?	<b>In a community similar to Scotland overall</b> rather than testing locations with specific characteristics like rural and urban areas or affluent and deprived areas. Doing multiple pilots in locations with different characteristics would significantly increase the costs of the pilots and the data produced would not be robust. Therefore, the increased expense would not be justified.
How many people should be involved?	<b>A minimum of 2500 people</b> is suggested as the minimum size of pilot that would test for community level results. Although the size should be related to the type of basic income tested. For example a higher level of payment will have bigger impacts on people’s lives so can be tested on a smaller group of people.

How long should the pilot be?	<b>Three years with a one year preparatory period.</b> Three years is long enough for community level effects to appear. A year long preparation period allows for safeguarding of participants and time to design the evaluation process. Rushed lead in periods have caused problems for previous pilots.
How should the basic income be paid?	<b>Direct transfer to existing account</b> with additional considerations for people who don't have bank accounts. It is important that the method of payment does not impact the behaviour of participants. For example if it is paid through an app some participants may not trust the app and might behave differently to if it had been paid into their bank.
Should the amount paid be different for different people?	<b>Only based on age.</b> Children are paid less than adults and pension aged adults are paid more than working age adults to replace the state pension. There are other variables based on age for the lower level of basic income that align it with existing social security. This is to ensure the pilot data can be compared to the control group of people not receiving a basic income. The low level of payment aims to assess how a basic income compares to existing benefits with conditions, and so the two must be carefully compared.
Should the basic income replace benefits associated with housing, disability, work capability and childcare?	<b>No, these benefits should be retained alongside the basic income.</b> This means that the basic income payment levels are not intended to cover these costs for people receiving these other benefits, they would continue to claim them in addition to their basic income. It does also mean that they will still be subject this the conditionality related to these benefits.
Should a basic income be taxed?	<b>Yes.</b> Paying for a national basic income through taxation provides more opportunity for the policy to address poverty and inequality. A pilot should test this and therefore the basic income paid should interact with the tax system and count as taxable income. Earnings above the personal tax allowance, including basic income, would be taxed. This would provide data on the behavioural, social and economic impacts of basic income.

The study notes that the specific numbers quoted in the report may vary based on how the pilot is approached and how

## High level basic income pilot

The high level of basic income is set at the Joseph Rountree Foundation's Minimum Income Standard. This is the amount of income required to pay for "items that members of the public think UK households need to be able to afford in order to meet material needs such as food, clothing and shelter, as well as to have the opportunities and choices required to participate in society."

This pilot tests the impact of guaranteeing everyone in a community this level of income. It assesses how this impacts poverty.

The amount paid is:

Age range	Payment rate (per week)	Basis for rate
0 to 15 years	£120.48 (payment to main carer / parent)	Based on rate for a primary school-aged child
16 years to pension age	£213.59	2018 MIS rate for a single working age adult
Pension age	£195.90	2018 MIS rate for a single pensioner

This would be paid to 2500 people for the 3-year period of the experiment.

## Low level basic income pilot

The low level of basic income broadly reflects the rate of out of work benefits for different age groups. This pilot tests the effect of an unconditional income with no change in the level of income. The rates vary more with age so the data on people receiving the basic income can be compared to people on the existing benefits.

The amount paid is:

Age Range	Payment Rate (per week)	Basis for CBI Rate
0 to 15 years	£84.54 (payment to main carer / parent)	Rate of child tax credit family rate and first child rate

		(£63.84) plus Child Benefit eldest child rate (£20.70)
16 to 19 years	£84.54	Reflecting rate of 16-19 year olds who are still in approved education: Rate of child tax credit family rate & 1st child rate (£63.84) plus Child Benefit eldest child rate (£20.70)
20 to 24 years	£57.90	Rate of jobseeker's personal allowance for a single person aged 16-24 years
25 years to pension age	£73.10	Rate of jobseeker's personal allowance for a single person aged 25+ years
Pension age	£168.60	Rate equivalent to new state pension

This would be paid to 14,600 people for the 3-year period of the experiment.

## Interaction with social security

In order to ensure participants in the pilot, particularly low income and vulnerable groups, are not financially worse off as a result of the pilot the feasibility study makes some recommendations on the interaction with social security and tax systems.

These include:

- Retaining housing, disability, work capability and childcare benefits alongside the basic income
- Not counting basic income as income for these retained, means-tested benefits
- Ensuring any participants can continue to claim the benefits, premiums and additions that push their normal earnings over the levels of basic income paid

A number of benefits would be suspended and replaced with the unconditional basic income:

- Income Support (Personal Allowance)
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (Personal Allowance)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (Personal allowance)

- Child Tax Credit (Family Element plus Child Element)
- State Pension
- Child Benefit
- Carer’s Allowance (Basic Rate and Scottish Supplement)
- Universal Credit: Standard allowance for Single person
- Universal Credit: First child / subsequent child payments

## Evaluating the basic income pilots

*Summary of Section 6: Evaluability Assessment and Section 7: Policy Pilot Governance and Research Ethics*

The evaluation of a pilot is where the impacts of a basic income are really understood. Although it must be noted that even the conclusions drawn from pilots might not reflect the impacts of a full basic income rolled out universally and permanently. Absence of intended results may be down to the way the pilot was run rather than the basic income itself, impacts may take longer to emerge than the duration of the pilot.

### Theory of change

A theory of change helps assess which impacts you can measure in the 3-year timescale of a pilot. A theory of change links the activity, in this case a basic income, with a series of effects (outcomes) that lead to the final change you want to see (impact), in this case alleviating poverty and inequality. Different effects operate on different timescales and so can be used to decide what to measure during a pilot.

The theory of change for basic income proposed for the feasibility study is:

<b>Short term outcomes (2-3 years/pilot period)</b>	<b>Intermediate outcomes (if national basic income rolled out)</b>	<b>Longer term outcomes (if national basic income rolled out)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced income insecurity</li> <li>• Increased income</li> <li>• Decreased use of emergency support</li> <li>• Reduced debt</li> <li>• Reduced poverty, including child poverty</li> <li>• Increased opportunities to make life choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained reduction in levels of destitution</li> <li>• Reduction in absolute and relative poverty rates, including child poverty</li> <li>• Improved educational attainment</li> <li>• Increased sense of community “control over destiny”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced income inequality</li> <li>• Reduction in educational attainment gap</li> <li>• Improved population health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Reduction in population level crime rates</li> <li>• More efficient/simpler social security system:</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Improved experience of social security services – reduced stigma</li> <li>• Reduced barriers to labour market participation</li> <li>• Increased uptake of opportunities for acquiring training, skills, qualifications</li> <li>• Improved labour market participation (in fair work)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in proportion of population choosing informal caring roles</li> <li>• Improved social connectedness</li> <li>• Reduction in local crime rates (including domestic violence)</li> <li>• Welfare policy informed by learning/evidence of basic income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduction in social security administration costs</li> <li>• Contribution to inclusive/economic growth</li> </ul>
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This theory of change is one of the key, ground-breaking aspects of the feasibility study that can be used to design basic income pilots anywhere in the world. It can also be improved using evidence from further research, pilots and basic income policies. Honing this theory of change was one of the recommendations made by the study.

## What do we want to find out?

The more outcomes you try to measure the more complex the pilot becomes. For this reason, the feasibility study has chosen primary and secondary outcomes from the theory of change:

- Primary outcomes: poverty, child poverty, unemployment
- Secondary outcomes: community level social and economic effects, improved health and well-being and improved experience of the social security system

## How do we measure this?

As the pilots have not been confirmed, the feasibility study provides an approach to evaluation that can be adapted when things like budget and scale have been confirmed.

The recommendations include:

Factor	Recommendation
How should the pilot areas and control groups be selected?	A framework of inclusion criteria (population size, representative of Scotland as a whole, areas that have community connections)



	between residents, random/diverse selection of residents) should be used to select both pilot areas and control groups.
How should the evaluation be performed?	A number of data sources should be used to assess the effects (outcomes) and the causes of these effects (process evaluation). This should include analysis of data already collected by the tax and benefit system and a specially designed survey.
Who should be asked to take part in the evaluation?	Everyone participating in the pilot and everyone in the control group should be asked to complete the evaluation. Oversampling (selecting bigger groups than the minimum sample size) should be used to account for people who leave the study and those who don't respond to the surveys.
What if people enter or leave the pilot area?	People leaving and entering the area and children born in the study area should be included in the pilot. Care must be taken that the availability of basic income does not impact people's decision making on moving area or taking on employment.
How do we assess community level effects?	Further work should be carried out to better understand community level effects and how they occur. This is to define the size of the community required and the outcomes to be measured when it is agreed a pilot should go ahead and more details are known.

## Ethical Considerations

The study has highlighted a number of core ethical recommendations related to the pilot and evaluation:

- Participants, particularly those who are vulnerable and/or on low incomes, should not experience detriment (financial or otherwise) compared to individuals not involved in the study.
- Appropriate consent must be given for participating in the pilot and evaluation.

- A transition strategy should be developed for before, during and after the pilots to manage risks.
- Legal advice should be sought to ensure the plan for selecting and excluding areas for the pilot and asking people to participate in the pilot is fair.
- The Research Ethics Committee should approve the evaluation.
- Data collected should be collected and protected lawfully.
- The pilot model should be assessed using the Integrated Impact Assessment process.

## Is a Scottish pilot feasible?

### *Summary of Section 8: Feasibility Assessment*

The study used a feasibility matrix to make their assessment:

Type of feasibility	What does this mean?	Is it feasible?
Political	Is there a political appetite for the policy? It has been broken down into strategic, institutional, psychological and behavioural.	<b>Maybe</b> - There are political barriers to these pilots. These are largely institutional so it is possible that with more strategic engagement they could be overcome.
Strategic	This refers to the coalition of support required to secure a basic income. From politicians, political parties, civil society, trade unions etc.	<b>Maybe</b> - There is a coalition of support but only time will tell if this is sufficient to overcome the (largely institutional) barriers to a basic income.
Institutional	Which institutions need to support the implementation of pilots? Will they?	<b>No</b> - HMRC, the DWP and central government need to collaborate with Scottish Government and local government to deliver these pilots. There is currently no commitment to do so.
Psychological	Is this policy accepted or supported by the public?	<b>Maybe</b> - There is net approval of basic income. But the study recommends communicating and assessing the acceptance for the support for the specific pilot models prior to their implementation.

Behavioural	Does the existing evidence suggest basic income will lead to the desired outcomes (alleviating poverty and inequality)?	<b>Yes</b> - The existing evidence indicates that a basic income can impact on a variety of outcomes. It is possible that it would lead to the desired outcomes but more evidence, from a Scottish pilot, is required.
Financial	How much will the pilots cost? Is this affordable?	<b>Yes</b> - The net cost of delivering the two pilots outlined above is £186.4 million. This figure would change if the pilot models were amended. The decision on budget being allocated to the pilots will be made based on the political context.
Evaluation	Can pilots be designed and evaluated?	<b>Yes</b> - As shown above pilots models and an evaluation process have been designed. These pilots are deemed a desirable next step.
Ethical	Is it ethical to deliver a basic income pilot?	<b>Yes</b> - Recommendations have been made that outline how to deliver a basic income experiment ethically.

## Institutional barriers

There are substantial institutional barriers to delivering a Scottish basic income pilot that need to be overcome through primary legislation and regulation changes. The challenges can be summarised as:

- Delivering the basic income – all options for delivery require substantial negotiation and commitment from UK, Scottish and local government to ensure no negative consequences result for participants
- Benefit interactions – to reduce conditionality as much as possible some benefits must be suspended. This requires legislative changes, risk of financial detriment to participants and technical barriers to be overcome.
- Tax interaction – to learn about the full impacts of a basic income funded through income tax and to clawback some of the costs of the pilot the basic income would need to be taxed. Clarity around how this process would function and whether it would leave some participants at a financial detriment needs to be sought from HMRC.

# Implications of the Scottish feasibility study

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The report has been received well in Scotland. There has been cross-party support for the recommendation of pilots from local government and Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs). The First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has voiced her support for basic income. Scottish MPs have pressed ministers in parliament for a response on whether there will be constructive engagement with the recommendations for a pilot.

Thousands of people around Scotland and the UK have signed this pledge in support of Scottish pilots. Tens of thousands of people submitted their testimonies on how a basic income would improve their lives to the DWP Select Committee on the future of work.

But there has been little response from central government, the DWP or HMRC.

## Building a robust coalition of political support

It is clear that the next stage for the basic income movement is to build this robust coalition of political support. There are an increasing number of activists and local groups working towards a basic income supported by us, the UBI Lab Network, Basic Income UK and Citizen's Basic Income Network Scotland.

The Coronavirus crisis has piqued support, both popular and political, and it feels as though we're closer than we have ever been to a basic income. But there is still work to be done.

We must press our elected representatives to ensure they are playing their part in pushing us towards a basic income. This feasibility study has laid out the barriers we must overcome. It has made explicit the importance of this collaborative, strategic approach. It has highlighted the significance of good communication between different levels of government during political cycles.

Wherever you are in the UK this study has shown you the route to a basic income. If these barriers are removed for a Scottish pilot they are removed for other pilots around the UK and for the roll out of a universal basic income.

## What can I do right now?

There are several easy actions you can take immediately:

- Sign the [pledge of support](#) for a Scottish experiment
- [Register for our event](#) on Monday 27 July at 6pm on Basic Income Pilots to learn more
- Write to your representatives:
  - Councillor – ask them to file a motion in support of basic income in your local authority
  - MSP – ask them to join the [Cross Party Group on Basic Income in Scottish Parliament](#)
  - MP – ask the to sign this [Early Day Motion](#)
- [Donate to the Basic Income Conversation](#) so we can continue our work facilitating this next stage