

Abstract

The master's thesis *Universal basic income as a political concept and unfulfilled social reality* puts focus on the concept of universalism in social policy and the possibilities of introducing its elements in the Czech Republic. The global discussion of the philosophy of social support and the popularised idea of unconditional financial transfers from the state to all citizens are thus translated into the Czech environment. The goal is to evaluate the instances hitherto applied at home and abroad, consider the perks and shortcomings of universal income, set the discussion within the contemporary Czech social framework, and assess whether it is realistic to implement reforms of this kind. The first chapter describes universal income as a concept, the second evaluates the history of universalism in the Czech Republic, the third provides an overview of the current Czech social system, and the fourth ponders possible avenues of implementing universalist reforms. The thesis aims to verify two hypotheses: the first one is to determine to which extent previous forms of universalism in the Czech environment proved to be successful; the second deals with the possibility and merits of introducing further blanket instruments in 2020. In both cases, the research puts emphasis on cash transfers to the citizenry. Apart from secondary research, the methods used are public policy theories, especially the three streams theory and actor-centered institutionalism. The thesis results in the assessment of the approach to the child benefit policy to date, and the evaluation of suggested alternative applications of universalism in the Czech Republic based on a multi-criteria analysis, both of which will serve to verify the formulated hypotheses. The added value shall lie in the possibility of utilising the outcomes by experts and elected officials in the social policy sphere when deciding about ideal models of financial support by the state to the citizens.