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The Urban Lab of Europe !

The B-MINCOME Project Journal N°2: Money for whom?

Project led by the City of Barcelona

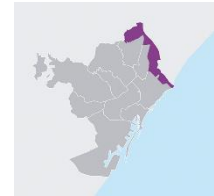


**URBAN
POVERTY**



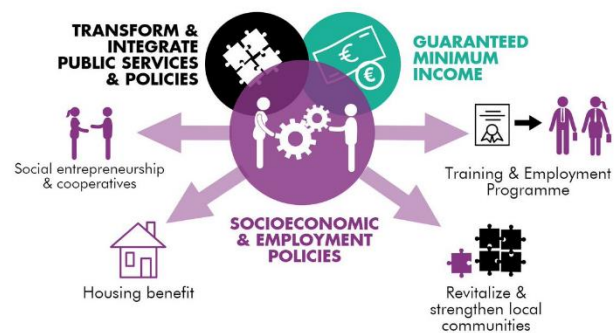
The B-MINCOME project

B-MINCOME is a pilot project to test Guaranteed Minimum Income as a measure for combating poverty and inequality. Initiated by the Municipality of Barcelona consists of testing the efficiency and effectiveness of combining economic support in the form of municipal inclusion support (SMI) together with four active social policies benefitting inhabitants located in the eastern part of Barcelona along the river area of Besos, known as Eix Besòs. The project targets the neighbourhoods of: Ciutat Meridiana, Vallbona, Torre Baró, Roquetes, Trinitat Nova, Trinitat Vella, Baró de Viver, Bon Pastor, Verneda - La Pau and Besòs-Maresme.



This is project that aims to directly invest in people while seeking to improve their immediate surroundings, their neighbourhoods and districts. For that reason it combines economic support with four types of active social and workplace inclusion policies: training and employment, social economy, help in renting out rooms and fostering community participation. These are all jointly designed and implemented in collaboration with the various project partners and the area's social fabric.

B-MINCOME: A pilot study of guaranteed minimum income in Barcelona



Partners:

- Ajuntament de Barcelona – Public Administration (project leader)
- The Young Foundation – NGO
- IVALUA – Catalan Institute of Evaluation of Public Policies – Public administration
- IGOP. Institute of Governance and Public Policies – Research centre of the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia Ambientals (ICTA) (UAB)
- Polytechnic University of Catalonia, Data Management Group (DAMA) – University BarcelonaTech
- NOVACT International institution for Non-violent action – NGO

Collaborating public bodies under the direction of the Municipality's Area of Social Rights:

- Municipal Institute of Social Services (IMSS)
- Barcelona Activa
- Department of Cooperative, Social and Solidarity Economy and Consumer Services
- Barcelona Education Consortium
- Barcelona Municipal Housing Trust
- Districts of Nou Barris, Sant Andreu and Sant Martí

The Advisory Council for Inclusive Municipal Support advises on BMINCOME project. It is made up of representatives from Barcelona City Council and from the institutional, scientific and social arena of the Municipal Council for Social Welfare as well as invited individuals.



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1. Executive summary

The second Journal reports on the advancements of B-MINCOME until February 2018 and focuses on the challenge of B-MINCOME information, communication and selection process of beneficiaries. This process took place over a period of circa six months, involving the B-Mincome Team of the Municipality of Barcelona, IVALUA and other local stakeholders. The deployment of information and communication strategies have been variegated and designed to reach at best all potential participants, and described in the present document. Key data, according to the Municipality of Barcelona interviewed in February 2018, are 3.397 B-MINCOME information letters sent to potential beneficiaries, and circa 400 micro-informative sessions held in civic centres in the Eix Besos. In December the SMI has been paid to 620 household.

This journal is not an accurate evaluation of the procedures but rather an informative account, which helps to shade lights on this phase of the Pilot for other cities willing to engage in a similar project.

The journal will be published in May when the active policies of B-Mincome would be up and running, and the Local B-Mincome currency would be ready to be launched.

Further research will be needed to assess, how participants perceived this initial communication and selection phase also in face of the participation to the active policies. The Young Foundation is conducting ethnographic research with beneficiaries in selected target areas to respond to these questions. Future journals will be dedicated to this aspect.

2. Is Barcelona a mere BI pilot?

Amidst a heated debate about the effects and effectiveness of basic income as a means for poverty reduction in Europe, Barcelona is stepping quickly ahead in the implementation of its pilot: B-MINCOME.

Barcelona started to provide its SMI (Inclusion Municipal support) monetary support to beneficiaries within the B-MINCOME in November 2017; in Finland, “the most ground breaking universal basic income trial” (LINK) started in January the same year. Both of these two trials are supposed to last for two years. In Italy the populist Movement 5 stelle, scooped up the most votes in March 2018 election, promised its voters a guaranteed minimum income. Scotland in December 2017 announced a trial, while a model in the UK known as Universal Basic Opportunity Fund (UBOF) is under discussion.

In their features, these models of Universal basic income (UBI) have little in common beyond being tests towards the idea of equalising citizens’ opportunities by giving them a certain amount of cash. This amount is meticulously calculated according to context dependent indicators. Generally these trials are models of a guaranteed rather than a universal, unconditional and lifelong cash payment to individuals regarding their age, status and income.

Even the one considered the most ground-breaking, namely the Finnish pilot, is not a universal basic income to citizens but a cash payment to unemployed aged between 15 and 58 for a sample of 2000 people.

Interestingly, this model heralded as exemplar in Europe (although unique also for its national scale) has been studied also as reference to the Barcelona B-MINCOME pilot.

Most relevant differences are the scales (Finnish is national and B-MINCOME is municipal), the proportion of the welfare aids (in Scandinavian societies usually larger than the South Europe), and the political orientation of government.

The Finnish one is a national trial supported by three centre-right parties (Centre Party, National Coalition Party, and Blue Reform) under the incumbent government of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä. Instead, the Barcelona trial is municipal and it is supported by one of the most progressive political parties in Europe, the leftist coalition in power of Barcelona en comú.

The Finnish trial is meant to “incentivise people to take up work” counteracting post economic crisis unemployment surge, by offering a cash transfer with no strings attached, namely without obligation to seek or accept a job. Beneficiaries of the trial are not trapped in the welfare system (Finland’s complex social security system offers more than 40 different means-tested benefits) but the amount of support is not consistently more generous than regular unemployment benefit. This trial may not be as revolutionary or progressive as it may seem at first sight, since it may deceptively and simply be a test to modernise the existing social support system to reduce public bureaucratic costs. Opinions are however split about this case, whose potential flaws are already highlighted in the limit of trialling only one typology of target group, namely the unemployed, in the risks of not relating this experiment on how pension schemes and taxation would be applied, and the risks of disincentivising job seekers potentially subject to higher marginal tax rate.

Although some of these critics can be moved into other UBI trials, the Spanish experiment of

Barcelona has a much larger scope than its European sister case in Finland and possibly than all the other trials of UBI under discussion so far. What makes it different is the political stand behind the Barcelona case, which implies that the comprehension of the B-MINCOME must go beyond the technicalities used to describe Europe-wide models and trials of UBI. The point I want to make here is that B-MINCOME is not a mere implementation of a UBI variation. Instead it is a progressive experiment meant to test different ways of producing societal and economic values and wealth beyond the mainstream market. As told in the first UIA journal the structure of B-MINCOME allows, together with the cash payment, to test a range of active policies incentivising training, sharing and creation of cooperative economies, mutual support, public participation at neighbourhood level and, last but not least, the creation of a local currency.

The fact that B-MINCOME cannot be comprehended only under the lenses of a UBI variation became clear to me in my round of interviews and visit to Barcelona in February 2018. During a meeting in one of the target neighbourhoods of B-MINCOME, in one of the municipal social centres, I met Virginia an experienced social worker who interviewed a beneficiary for the policy n.2 on creation of solidarity neighbourhood base economies. Maria (fictitious name of the beneficiary) is a

single mother of two, one at elementary school and one in his twenties looking for a job. Maria a precarious worker who maintains her family with occasional jobs. She has no time for herself and a load of pressure to keep up with everything at home. Virginia explained that the idea of creating a solidarity economy was not based on wages, or mainstream jobs but on mutual help, on sharing time, ideas and talents. “What would you like to do in your working life if you had a minimum amount of money allowing you to maintain your family?”

What struck me in this interview was that it was not a typical encounter with a social worker in which a new job or a pre-confectioned training for unemployed people was offered together with the cash transfer. Both the social worker and the beneficiary were working on imagining another way of working, a fairer way of working with social cooperatives in this case, that mattered both to the individual and his/her peers. I thought that the efforts of providing grounds for nourishing the “imagination” towards a fair economy, fair way of working for oneself and the community was one powerful message of this pilot. Indeed the B-MINCOME project is not about cash transfer, it is a new model to address poverty and social exclusion, testing different tools to overcome the perversion of dependency and passivity of beneficiaries, is a key ingredient of the Barcelona approach.

3. B-MINCOME update

3.1. Achievements early 2018

The previous journal covered the implementation of B-MINCOME until September 2017, while this current journal covers the 6 months phase until February 2018.

State of the art in February 2018 sees already the families receiving the SMI, the information session for the four active policies already started. Below a summary of activities

undertaken under the guidance of the municipality from the period of September 2017 – February 2018. (Table: 1)

Time	Action	Description
09.2017	<i>Distribution of information letters to potential candidates and informative session with the households</i>	<i>3.397 letters sent to potential beneficiaries; circa 400 informative session</i>
10.2017	<i>submission of the application forms and digitalisation of the data</i>	<i>during the digitalisation debugging of the original listing due to interoperability</i>
11.2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (started end of October) first round of survey 2. online publication of admitted to the pilot 3. informative sessions c/o neighbourhood centres 4. drawing lots for subdivision of participants into the 4 modality groups and final publication of the shortlisted participants 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey to 1,980 households, control group (and sample extension) 2. 1,527 applications received met the eligibility requirements 3. The sessions have been held in the centres of Roquetes, Ciutat meridiana, Torre Baró, Trinitat Nova i Vallbona, i planificades a Sant Andreu 4. Selection 1,000 households and treatment into the 4 modality groups (conditioned, unconditional, limited and unlimited)
12.2017	<i>Starting of the SMI payment</i>	<i>Cash transfer to 620 households</i>
1-2.2018	<i>Starting the thematic session for the active Policies</i>	<i>Sessions are held at social centers and individual interviews are conducted by BMINCOME partners to individual beneficiaries of the Young foundation</i>

Table 1: Sep.17-Feb.18 Summary of undertaken activities of BMINCOME

3.2. Who is doing what?

Under the coordination of the Area of Social Rights of the Barcelona municipality each of the project partners (Young foundation, Ivalua, Novact, IGOP and the two universities) are fulfilling their commitments.

Some of the partners' work is desk bounded such as the development of the App for the social currency by DAMA-UPC research group of the Polytechnic University of Catalonia, or the definition of a model of analysis of the policy Community participation by the UAB. For others it is a continuous learning through definition of schemes, analysis, revisions and adjustments as for Ivalua closely working with the Municipality, advising, monitoring and co-designing all the selection process and the matching of B-MINCOME participants to the actives policies. Other actors such as the Young Foundation and

the UAB are conducting field work, respectively interviewing inhabitants in the Eix Besos areas and mapping out existing local formal and informal resources.

These actors work autonomously under the direction of the Area of Social Rights of Municipality who can count on a fairly small working group of individuals sitting in the main office building in Carrer de València in the centre of Barcelona.

The official partners meet once circa every two months in a steering group meeting to update each other on the their progress. This was the state of the art as for End of February beginning of March 2018.

The Young Foundation, after a process of recruitment and training of social mediators to

perform ethnographic fieldwork, has started the process of assessing how participants experience and engage in B-MINCOME in three neighbourhoods Ciutat Meridiana, Bon Pastor and Besos Maresme. The scope is to provide contextual understanding of how people and communities affected by poverty in Eix Besos experience and narrativise it on a daily basis; to understand how participants engage with B-MINCOME and how, if at all, it affects their experiences and narratives of poverty; and to understand how non-participants engage with B-MINCOME and what perceptions, narratives and experiences they have in relation to it. In particular, this survey will provide precious insights on how people perceive also the different features of the pilot, as for instance the dimension of conditionality/non-conditionality of the GMI. So far the team has interviewed circa 90 residents with informal meetings, talks in the homeplace of beneficiaries to gather information about their lives in their neighbourhoods, and their idea of B-MINCOME and expectations.

IVALUA has collaborated with the City Council in drawing design of the different types of SMI with the objective of guaranteeing the program's evaluation from the outset of the pilot. Ivalua is following all the selection procedures and evaluation closely working with the public administration. Ivalua's role will be reported in the following chapter about the selection procedures. The complete results of the impact and economic evaluation will be obtained by the end of 2019.

Autonomous University Barcelona (UAB) works on two different aspects of the pilot: the analysis and measurement of the project's impact on the beneficiaries (IGOP research centre) and the participatory and ethnographic research of co-creation of solutions.

Under the guidance of prof. Ismael Blanco, the IGOP is focusing first on the drafting of a model of analysis and evaluation of one of the four active policies namely the "policy of community participation", second on a mapping of community of formal and informal actions, projects, initiatives and resources in the neighbourhoods targeted by B-MINCOME. The model serves as matrix to observe the changes that B-MINCOME triggers at individual, community and institutional level. After this phase, field work will be launched.

The institute of environmental science and technology (ICTA) – UAB is currently studying the impact on the happiness of people and households. In order to assess the impact of the SMI they have carried out a first survey in over 1000 households of the Besós, some who will receive the SMI and others that do not. Their work will focus on understanding subjective well-being, happiness, and how this improves in relation to guaranteed income. In the survey they have included a standard question used in a good part of the literature of happiness: "Making a general balance of your life, what satisfaction do you have with your current life?" The answers to this question are numerical and vary from zero, which means total dissatisfaction, to ten, which corresponds to the complete satisfaction with life. Other aspects will be taken into account in the analysis such as age, sex, civil and labour status (as well as recent changes in both), state of physical and mental health, educational achievement, income and change of income, emotional stability, social capital / trust, community relationships (sharing), entrepreneurship, consumption and community / policy participation practices. The ultimate goal is to assess whether the condition of happiness has been impacted by B-MINCOME project or for other reasons.

During 2017 Novact worked on the project defining the social currency, which will be active from May 2018. Novact works on key elements to define the monetary, legal, technological, participation, governance, communication and evaluation of the B-MINCOME citizen currency. Based on digital technology, the idea is to promote proximity commerce and to initially serve to pay 25% of the Municipal Inclusion Support (SMI) to the 1,000 families of 10 districts of the Besòs axis of Barcelona.

The citizen currency is being developed from Novact with the involvement of municipal departments (Social Rights, Social and Solidarity Economy, Consumer Affairs, Commerce ...), the Directions of Services to the People of the Districts, and in collaboration with the associations of merchants and the social entities

of the neighbourhoods¹.

The DAMA-UPC research group of Polytechnic University of Catalonia is in the process of developing a system consisting of a Web App and a Mobile App for Social Services, and a Mobile App for B-MINCOME beneficiaries. The B-MINCOME Beneficiaries will be able to manage the social currency provided by the City Council, to answer surveys between other Social Services, to communicate with the beneficiaries, to be informed by course, events and activities.

The concept is that B-MINCOME tests these new features that will remain for the future use of Barcelona Municipality and as example for other EU cities.

¹ A special focus will be dedicated to the social currency in the life time of UIA pilot, when the currency is actually distributed in the target areas.

4. Information and communication challenge

Faithful to its intentions and promises the B-MINCOME project has completed the first phase of selection of beneficiaries: namely the 2000 households participating in the pilot, 1000 have

been assigned to a control group, while the other circa 1000 have been assigned to specific treatment groups into four active policies.

4.1. Informing local stakeholders

The B-MINCOME team of the Municipality has deployed different forms to communicate both with beneficiaries as well as with institutionalised and organised local stakeholders.

First, **the Municipality of Barcelona started the information procedures of B-MINCOME in late summer 2017, holding a series of public events** in social centres in the Besos area, dedicated to social operators active locally. This served the purpose to share information and to equip social mediators and operators with the right knowledge about the B-MINCOME Pilot project.

Second, **all the potential beneficiaries have been informed via mail:** every household received a postal mail with information leaflets and the forms to be filled out to become potential beneficiaries of the pilot (Image 1).

“The first week of September we sent 3477 letters to all identified households which potentially had all the requisites to participate and in addition, we also sent 930 letters to those households that still met the conditions but their income was little above the threshold established by the project” Bru Llain Escandell, of the B-MINCOME team of the Municipality of

Barcelona. “We are interested in these 930 households because even though they seem to be better off, their income situation is not stable, and it could be getting worse in the first period of the project and as such become potential participants”.

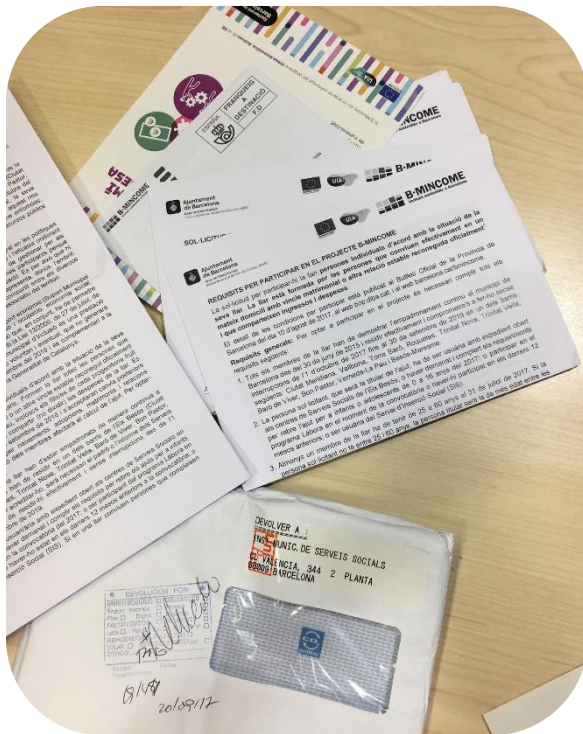


Image 1: Package received by B-MINCOME households

The package of information to be read was quite substantial. In my interview with the B-MINCOME team in the Municipality, I asked if they would expect all the potential beneficiaries to be diligent readers of their postal mail and how they would be sure the information was received.” Indeed, this has been a delicate phase but in order to make sure that all the pre-selected (potential) participants were on the same page, the face to face sessions held in the social centres in the target areas, the collaboration with contracted parties and the intense involvement of the municipality team of B-MINCOME”.

Third, during the first three weeks of September, circa 400 face-to-face informative “micro-sessions” have been held in civic centres to inform the participants of B-MINCOME of

circa one hour². According to an internal turnover calendar, among around six people from the Municipality, plus a variable number of ad hoc contracted people as social workers³, who would welcome the participants and explain all the possible details regarding the information contained in the letters. The purpose of these sessions is to explain the project individually and to accompany the beneficiary in filling the application.

In the letters the family was given a day, time and place, to attend the sessions. This made the process quite elaborate, because the letters are “personalised”: every letter contains ad hoc information for each family. In terms of organisation it meant that social workers, workers of the Municipality and participants would meet in different places, sometime simultaneously meeting up to eight groups of families to explain the B-MINCOME project⁴. Moreover, the 930 letters, sent to additional families, did not have a place, time and day of meeting, but general information about the project, and a Call centre number (set up by the municipality) to address the request to join an informative session.

Let’s imagine that this architecture, planned to the very last details would not work, e.g. some people cannot attend in the time agreed, the letter did not reach the person on time, or the letter has been for whatever reason ignored.

Therefore, **the municipality used a fourth form of communication via direct phone calls**. All the families meeting the basic criteria to apply received a phone call- This to guarantee that all the household were well informed and able to attend the planned information session assigned. According to the municipality these calls would not be perceived as invasive, since all the families selected for the pilot are already in contact with the social services department of the municipality. 92.87% of households that

confirmed attendance after being called, attended the sessions. In conclusion, the choice of the municipality in this case was to manage all the information centrally. Communication went through phone via the municipality's call-centre of to provide ad hoc information about the pilot and via direct calls to families through a contracted third party to make sure that all the potential households would be informed about the meeting date, time and place of the informative session and actual face to face meetings in the Civic Centres.

Fifth, **beside the information sessions to beneficiaries, another level of communication with local authorities at neighbourhood level has been sought** during the phase of the selection procedure from 6-9 November: the B-MINCOME team of the Municipality joined six neighbourhoods of Nou Barris council sessions (Roquetas, Ciutat, Meridiana, Torre, Barò, Trinitat Nova i Valbona). Held as well in the Civic

centre, these Neighbourhood Council sessions are meant to deal with a number of different administrative matters at local level, concerning the life in the respective neighbourhoods.

² The micro- sessions have been scheduled from 11:00 to 14:00 and from 15:00 to 20:00 hours between 7 and 21 September in the Districts of Nou Barris, Sant Andreu and Sant Martí. The micro-sessions in groups of 8 households (2 members are recommended for each household). It would take 15-20 minutes of exposure and 15 circa for questions. Once the session has finished, attendees will have the opportunity to submit the completed and signed application form. If they do not consider it appropriate, they may still send the form through the envelope with postage (which they will previously have received together with the invitation letter and the application form). The deadline for submitting the request is September 22.

³ Four people from the Oficina de Prestaciones de Barcelona, and twelve people from a service enterprise called Ritawanda.

⁴ If the household cannot attend their assigned session they will have to call the Telephone of Social Services of the City council or by sending an email to info-bmincome@bcn.cat with the name and surname of the recipient of the letter and a contact telephone number to see other possibilities of sessions to attend or to ask questions. From this central Social Services telephone, the calls will be diverted to the 2/3 associated cell phones for each point of attention of the district (2 points per district). The operator of the central telephone will ask the person who calls the address in his letter and, once identified, will make the detour to the point of attention that corresponds to that address. Info of the Municipality of Barcelona.

4.2. Where people meet to know about B-MINCOME

In the area of Besos, the neighbourhoods are equipped with different socially oriented facilities which reinforce the communities bondages and interconnections. In the Besos neighbourhoods the inhabitants can count on the Social Services Centre (CSS) where information and assistance about the resources, benefits and services is provided in accordance with the Social Services Law.



Image 2: Civic Centre Besos

These Social Services centres are places in the neighbourhoods where welfare recipients, such as those joining B-MINCOME, habitually get information about institutional social services. For the Pilot these areas have not been selected as crucial as to avoid saturation of local Social Service Centres (SCC) activities. Instead, B-MINCOME devises the Civic centres as meeting places for information provision. The 400 informative sessions were held here because the Civic Centres are neuralgic hubs of social life in the neighbourhoods. These Civic Centres are public facilities of the City Council of Barcelona where all kinds of cultural and social activities are developed, such as courses and workshops, music, theatre, dance, exhibitions, among others. These centres stand out for their multidisciplinary work of culture and connections with the territory and the sociocultural activities of the district.

In these civic centres B-MINCOME informative sessions are held in groups of families as those held in September or individually as those for the Active policies of B-MINCOME beneficiaries.



Image 3: Murals at the exit of the Metro station in the neighbourhood Baro de Viver

These centres are places that many other European cities would dream of. I have visited two of those in Besos area: one with the researchers of the Young Foundation in the neighbourhood of El Besos y Maresme (Image 2) and one in Baro de Viver with social workers of the Cooperative la Fabric@ assigned to the Active Policy Social entrepreneurship and cooperative (Image 4).



Images 4 and 5: Civic Centre Baro de Viver

These Civic centres (Images 4-5) are open welcoming large glass-facades buildings located in the peripheral areas of Barcelona. These residential areas are dotted by new housing and dilapidated buildings, as if renewal projects have been developed according to single lots rather than an entire urban area. Looking like contemporary art centres, these spaces offering a number of activities from school children to elderly, linked to local libraries, labs and other creative activities.

Besos inhabitants can count on other forms of social centres called Casal (Images 6-7), meeting places self-organised and self-managed by inhabitants.

The Casals de Barri, are apparently not involved directly in the B-MINCOME, but since these centres welcome local inhabitants and citizens-led initiatives the Young Foundation has selected these as meeting places for the ethnographic research of B-MINCOME.

Sergio Sanchez and Noemi Ayguasenos are two researchers working for the Young Foundation. This context is an open and familiar place for the inhabitant; a place where it could be easier to have exchanges also about the project.

Casals de Barri Besos a self-organised place for kids and families to learn basic computer skills, organise intercultural events, provide information about jobs and training, engage in mutual support and food exchange.





Image 6 and 7: Casal de Barri Besòs

Indeed these places are crucial for the beneficiaries in order to get basic information, exchange and get acquainted informally about the BMINCOME project: in February a public showing invited the inhabitants to the show of the documentary “Free lunch society” by Christian Tod about Universal Income.

4.3. Who applied for the Pilot and who did not

According to the data registered through the SCC, 5221 households in the B-MINCOME area meet the eligibility criteria⁵.

Among them 2177 joined one of the 400 informative sessions. During the sessions, participants could actually be helped out to go through the 15-20 pages of the information letters received at home and potentially fill the forms to consent the participation to the Pilot.

Between 22 September and 9 October 2017, participants had the possibility to send their participation forms to the Municipality of Barcelona. Indeed some families did not submit their forms during the information sessions but sent them later on. In fact, 2177 households joined the information sessions but eventually 2339 submitted their applications⁶. This means that possibly word of mouth among families might have worked, beyond the information sessions. However there are no data at this stage to find out how and why people decide to apply, nor why 307 (5.88%) of the homes that

attended the call, said that they are not interested in the program.

As well, there are no statistics available at this stage about the typology of applicants (data which could be available in the future). One criterion among the many for joining the pilot (see UIA Journal 1) of the pilot is that every person registered in the target area for at least two years could benefit from the Pilot. This includes also homeless people, who are by law registered in the SCC administrations. They receive postal communication at the SCC but at the time of the February interview there were no confirmed data on whether these people in the extreme form of poverty have actually accessed the pilot or not. More information about the typology of applicants and how they perceived the participation to the pilot might result from future analysis.

⁵ Interview to the Municipality end February 2018

⁶ 93, 66% of household assisting the micro sessions submitted their candidature.

5. Selection procedure and SMI calculation

5.1. The selection procedure

In October, from the received 2339 applications, 1527 met the eligibility requirements.

The procedure to select the households of the target population that will receive the SMI has a **randomness component**.

The participants will be randomly selected 1,000 households, from among the 1,527 applications meeting the eligibility criteria to participate (being residents of the Besòs axis, having a rent below the minimum to guarantee and have a

member between 25 and 60 years). This type of design guarantees that the comparison of the results of the 1,000 finalists participating and controlling households, allow valid estimation of the impact in receiving this benefit. According to IVALUA, (in charge of evaluating the efficiency of the different types of benefits through an economic evaluation analysis) this methodology that have a demand superior to the offer, is one of the most recommended to carry out evaluations of social programs unfortunately, very little used in this context and as such making the B-MINCOME innovative both in the design of the program itself, and in its assessment.

The procedure of selection is far from being straight forward, but has been carefully planned in every detail to avoid misunderstandings and minimising the chances of errors. In practice, the 9 October was the deadline for application of potential beneficiaries. From the 27 September (before the submission deadline) to the 25 October all the received data have been digitalised. From the 23 October to 26 November the Municipality conducted the first of the three foreseen project surveys. The survey happened over during a period of three weeks by phone with those who submitted the eligible practices, before the random selection of the 1000 Pilot finalists. The survey had the purpose to verify that the applicants were well informed and aware of the BMINCOME pilot, making sure that there would be clarity for all considered eligible (but not yet selected) before the drawing lots.

The challenge for the phone survey has been language: “There are people speaking Urdu, Bulgarian, Czech and other languages and we asked for simultaneous translation and mediators. However, we did not use a lot this support since we then favoured face-to-face encounters with the 1000 selected. The issues

encountered on the phone are not so evident in face-to-face meetings” (Municipality team B-MINCOME interview 2018).

The sessions on the phone and face-to-face are held in Castilian, but indeed there are cases in which even face to face meeting would not help. Considering that the area of Besos is among the most multi-ethnic in Barcelona, language might become an issue for the comprehension of the complexity of the whole project and for the implementation of the active policies. The B-MINCOME Municipality team is confident that this is not a major issue, considering that there are few of such cases which can be dealt with ad-hoc mediation support⁷.

All the potential beneficiaries of the B-MINCOME project have been informed via SMS and via the B-MINCOME online portal the shortlisted families (those meeting and not meeting the necessary criteria for participation).

The 20 November there has been the draw for the final selection of the beneficiaries. In the application forms, applicants were allowed to express their preference for one of the four active policies but the selection for assignation is purely random. Exception made for the case of the active policy number 3 “Housing Benefit” were potential applicants have to declare to be homeowner in the application form.

“Likely all those who declared to be homeowners, have been assigned to policy number 3” (B-MINCOME Municipality team interview 2018). Although Barcelona has a high percentage of homeownership (see Journal 1), there might a low number of people in the Besos area able to join this specific active policy⁸, even below the number of expected beneficiaries. “Homeowner and welfare recipient usually live in small apartments, and if they own a bigger one they rarely dispose of a free room which is usually rented to a cousin or

a close family member, or simply illegally sublet and the municipality has no data about it.” (B-MINCOME Municipality team interview 2018). There is no obligation to join in, therefore if a selected beneficiary of any action is not willing to take part he/she can freely leave the pilot⁹.

Finally, the amount of selected household resulting from the November 17 in the three districts of Non Barris, Sant Andreu, Sant Marti, sees Nour Barris with 46,10% of selected participants (the majority located in the neighbourhood Ciutat Meridiana), Sant Andreu 22,90% (the neighbourhood of Trinitat Vella has the majority of participants); Sant Marti 31% (with the neighbourhood Besos Maresme 22,2%).

Key figures:

- 3.397 letters to potential beneficiaries sent to potential participants
- By December 2017 the cash transfer reached 620 households

⁷ At the end of February 2018 data on this aspect are no yet available.

⁸ They must be owners of their flats, and to have (at least) a room of 10 m to rent. The cash to arrange the flats/rooms will not be taken into account to calculate the SMI.

⁹ Special focus on active policies will be covered in future editions of the journals.

5.2. Calculation of the SMI in B-MINCOME

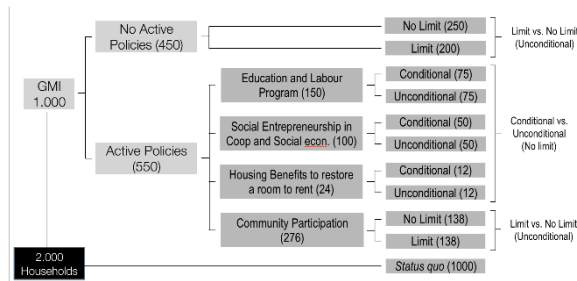
On 20 December 2017 the first SMI in the B-MINCOME project was paid. Before the actual reception of the monetary support all beneficiaries are asked to sign the voluntary acceptance of B-MINCOME participation such as the conditions of provision of the aid, both the economic benefit and the active policies assigned. They must accept the eventual collection of 25% of the aid in citizen currency; participate in the activities and obligations of the program to monitor the impact; sign a commitment to participate in the assessment of the effects of the project¹⁰; and sign the consent to monitor the activities to do anonymous evaluation studies while participating in the program.

The SMI in accordance with Law 13/2006, of July 27, on social benefits of an economic nature of Catalonia, is an “emergency social economic benefit, complementary and compatible with other social benefits, limited to the duration of the Pilot. It is paid monthly according to the household economic and composition. The amount is the difference between the

household maintenance costs and the sum of all household incomes (revised every three months to verify if the income conditions have been changed). The amount of the SMI will be 100 € (minimum) and 1.676 € (maximum, the double of the poverty line in Catalonia)¹¹.

Members	Income	Costs of housing needs	
		Basic needs	Housing needs
Father / Mother	900 €	402,6 €	260 € Monthly housing costs = house rent + community costs
Father / Mother	0 €	148 €	110 €
Son / daughter (till 16 y.o)	0 €	148 €	40 €
Son / daughter (till 16 y.o)	0 €	148 €	40 €
Total	900 €	846,6 €	450 € 700 €
		846,6 € (basic needs)	
		+ 450 € (minimum value of housing needs)	
		= 1.296,6 €	
		1.296,6 € (overall costs of housing needs)	
Total SMI	- 900 € (overall household income)	= 400 € per month	

The SMI granted to the short-listed 1,000 households will adopt different modalities that will combine conditioned, unconditional, limitation (with limit) and no limitation (without limit).



- Conditioned: the receipt of aid is conditional upon mandatory participation in one of the four active inclusion policies.
- Unconditional: the perception of the aid is not conditioned to the obligatory participation in any of the active inclusion policies.
- Limited (with a limit): the variation in the computable income of the household will entail the modification in the same amount of the aid.
- Not limited (no limit): the income that is generated by the household will only partially reduce the aid¹².

6. Conclusions

The B-MINCOME pilot is an overarching project that tests the SMI through active and passive policies combining conditional and unconditional, limited and unlimited approach. One important challenge for this Pilot is to respond, clarify and explain all the aspects scopes, procedures and conditions of the B-MINCOME project to beneficiaries. This journal mostly covered the information, communication and selection procedures over six months from September 2017 to February 2018.

Since September 2017 almost 400 individualised letters to inform about B-MINCOME have been sent, and 400 micro-informative sessions have

¹⁰ The follow-up involves answering a questionnaire (at the beginning, during and at the end of the project) and an indirect and non-invasive follow-up through the databases of the public administrations under current legislation

¹¹ Source: Municipality of Barcelona – Explicación Y Funcionamiento Del Proyecto B-Mincome:

“The calculation of the limit is the sum of the basic and housing needs, according to the following quantities:

a) The calculation of the basic needs (without housing), including those of the basic supplies (energy and water), is carried out in the following way:

- € 402.6 per month for the first adult person in the household.
- € 148 per month for the second adult.
- € 148 per month for each member from 14 to 17 years old, and for each member under 13 years of age.

b) The calculation of housing needs is carried out as follows:

1. The amount covered is the minimum value between the real monthly expense of the main house (of the last 12 months, adding rent, mortgage payment, community expenses and IBI) and an objective indicator of monthly housing expenditure based on the number of household members, according to the following amounts:

- € 260 per month for an adult that lives alone.
- € 110 per month for the second member.
- € 40 per month for each additional member.

2. If there are other households in the same domicile, there will be a proportional distribution of expenses and each member of the household will be assigned the amounts described in the preceding paragraph.

3. Out-of-control or other type of housing can be performed to contrast the real number of registered persons or effective members of the household.”

¹² The new aid will be calculated with the following formula: [Basic limit of the household minus the income at the beginning of the program (average 6 last months), minus 25% of the monthly income that exceeds the start of the program up to € 250; or less 35% of those who exceed the start of the program in more than € 250].

been held, devoting a substantial investment of energies and commitment of municipal staff and social operators. On one side, this phase allowed to reach individually all beneficiaries, helping participants to familiarise with the project and overcome potential language barriers, considering that the population Eix Besos is among the most multi-ethnic of Barcelona. On the other side, it neared the staff of the municipality to the potential beneficiaries of the projects; in the interview in February 2018 a member of the Municipality said: “meeting the people helped us to know the personal stories, and living conditions of welfare recipients: it

pushed us out of the offices to know what happens in neighbourhoods". This informative operation were conducted in the S the civic centre, the cultural and social gathering of the Municipality. In October, circa 2400 application have been submitted and among those received 1,527 applications met the eligibility requirements. The drawing lot established the final selection of the beneficiaries who started to receive the SMI in December and joined the first sessions of Active policies.

At the same time, all other partners are proceeding with their working packages, while in May the local currency will be launched. The interviews with the researchers of the Young Foundation in February 2018, not reported in this journal, provides a different view on the communication and selection process from the beneficiaries side. A special future issue will be dedicated to this aspect once the Young Foundation has completed the survey of the beneficiaries.



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