Basic Income and Unequal Longevity

Basic Income Studies

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Abstract: Universal basic income proposes providing instalments of constant magnitude to all. One problem with a stable basic income across life is that it seems unfair to shorter-lived persons, who are worst-off due to premature death and receive less over their whole lives. Basic capital solves this problem by providing a one-off grant to the young, but I argue that it mistreats long-lived persons, as it does not guarantee their real freedom across life. There is a dilemma between these proposals regarding their respective unfairness to the short- and long-lived. The solution I propose is a net basic income of decreasing magnitude until a specific age, after which the income is constant. This solution is compatible with constant income benefits across life, and it offers a fair answer to the problem of unequal longevity, a widely neglected but essential challenge in debates about basic income.

Keywords: basic income, longevity, distributive justice, egalitarianism

1. Introduction

Universal basic income (UBI) proposes providing a monthly cash grant to all community members (Bidadanure, 2019). The monthly instalments would be of constant magnitude throughout life, which means that younger and older persons receive the same amount each month. When people of all ages receive the same amount, those who live longer collect more monthly payments than those who die younger (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 46). Under a UBI, short- and long-lived persons receive unequal amounts of unconditional income over their lives as a whole. Thus, the fact that not all of us live equally long challenges the egalitarian nature of UBI: either basic income is constant, but the long-lived receive more of it, or short- and long-lived collect the same payments over their life, in which case net income instalments can no longer be constant.

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In this article, I am interested in how unequal longevity bears on arguments in favour of a constant basic income across life. If people lived equally long, *any* distribution of basic income across life would be compatible with lifetime equality between persons. UBI could privilege the old, the young, or neither, without inequality in the total income that each receives in life. Such basic income would redistribute income across different life stages, but not between separate lives. Unfortunately, we do not all live lives of equal length. For instance, of all the deaths in Europe from 2015 to 2020, the percentage between the ages of 15 and 65 was 21% (UN, 2019, p. 17). Even those who live long are increasingly far from living equally long as longevity heterogeneity is increasing among the elderly (Permanyer & Scholl, 2019). With unequal longevity, defenders of basic income face the problem of choosing between spreading income *equally* across life stages and between different lives (e.g. Lazenby, 2011). It appears they cannot choose both.

The article proceeds as follows. In Section 2, I argue that basic income is unfair for the short-lived from a 'leximin' standpoint. I also claim that a basic capital that gives a one-off grant to the young provides a solution for this injustice against the short-lived. However, in Section 3, I argue that basic capital is unfair to the long-lived. Section 4 summarizes the dilemma between the claims of the short- and long-lived, which leads to contradictory views about the distribution of unconditional income across life from the standpoint of egalitarian justice. Section 5 defends a solution to this dilemma, a payment of non-constant magnitude, where benefits can be constant as long as contributions to the unconditional income increase with age, until a certain age. Section 6 concludes.

2. Basic Income and the Problem of the Short-Lived

How does unequal longevity bear on reasons to implement a constant basic income across life? I focus on one fundamental egalitarian reason in favour of basic income. The idea is 'leximin', according to which we should adopt policies that make the lifetime worst-off people better off than they would otherwise be under another regime (e.g. Daniels, 1988, p. 501; Van Parijs, 2002). I shall assume that basic income is justified as a policy that maximizes the lifetime real freedom of the worst-off (see Van Parijs, 1995). The question is, what does the fact that some live longer than others imply for the unconditional income that, I assume, a leximin distribution of real freedom requires. From this standpoint, longevity inequality seems to count against a constant basic income across life. For instance, consider what Van Parijs (1995) says:

> “If the basic income takes the form of regular instalments of constant magnitude (…) those living to an older age get a larger total basic income than those dying earlier, and the distribution seems therefore bound to violate the leximin criterion” (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 46).

Basic income appears to protect those who are disadvantaged in life due to having a low income for each year they live, but not the ones who are worse-off in life because they die prematurely. The short-lived fare worse concerning one of the most precious resources of life, life itself; and yet they receive a lower lifetime income than those who live longer (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 46). There is a violation of the leximin criterion *if* it is possible for a different distribution to reduce inequality between the short and long-lived, and it is. For instance, a one-off grant to the young distributes lifetime income equally regardless of longevity differences, and it surely maximizes the prospects of the short-lived in accordance to the leximin criterion.

Can proponents of the leximin criterion avoid this conclusion against basic income? One possible approach is to deny that the short-lived belong to the worst-off. For example, suppose we adopt the Rawlsian ‘primary goods’ metric to identify the worst-off. For Rawls, the worst-off are those who have the least of ‘primary goods’, which he understands to be goods that “persons need as free and equal citizens (…) over a complete life” (Rawls, 1971, xiii). Primary goods include income and wealth, as well as other goods, but not longevity or life itself. If primary goods exclude longevity, and only primary goods identify the worst-off, the reduced longevity of the short-lived seems to not generate a claim of justice on their behalf.

One may consider including longevity in the index of primary goods. However, our purposes do not require modifying the index to which Rawls appeals. In other words, the short-lived may count as the worst-off even if longevity is not in the index. Primary goods are, according to Rawls, goods that people need to have *over their whole lives*, including income and wealth. While the long-lived do need more income and wealth than the short-lived over their lives, as they need to finance themselves for longer, a short life also reduces the freedom to pursue most reasonable conceptions of the good life. The lesser the lifetime income and wealth the short-lived have, the lower their lifetime freedom compared to those who live longer. Considering lifetime income and wealth generates concern for two groups: the resource-poor, who have little in life because they have little per year they live, *and* the longevity-poor, who have little in life because they die early. The index of primary goods has, as it stands, the theoretical resources to include the short-lived among the worst-off.

Perhaps one agrees that the worst-off include the short-lived, but believes that targeted benefits could do better than the basic income in compensating for a short life.[2] Targeted policies could be plausible if it were possible to identify and then target their beneficiaries. The problem with such solutions is that we generally do not know in advance who the short-lived will be. Once we know who they are, once they die that is, compensation is no longer possible as they are already dead (see Fleurbaey, Leroux, & Ponthiere, 2014). As Fleurbaey et al. (2014) note, the short-lived can neither be identified *ex-ante* nor can they be compensated *ex-post*. Identifying the short-lived is not feasible, which means that targeted policies are not superior to other redistributive policies, like basic income, in this respect.

It is possible to compensate the short-lived without identifying them *ex-ante* nor compensating them *ex-post*. The best strategy for these purposes seems to be that which encourages consumption of goods early in the lifecycle (Fleurbaey et al., 2014). A world where the young consume all goods early in life, and leave none to the elderly, is a world of full equality between the short- and the long-lived. In our case, it is a world where a one-off grant is given to the young, ensuring that each gets an equal unconditional income regardless of how long one lives. I shall consider such 'basic capital' policies in the next section. I argue that proponents of the leximin criterion should not necessarily support basic capital, instead of basic income, because, as basic income is unfair to the short-lived, basic capital is unfair to the long-lived.

3. Basic Capital and the Problem of the Long-Lived

The problem that a constant basic income across life raises for the short-lived invites us to consider basic capital. This proposal consists of a one-off instalment bestowed at the age of majority. Basic capital has received far less attention than basic income, but it preserves the egalitarian credentials of unconditional income policies without inequality between the short- and the long-lived. A good example of such policy is the proposal made by Bruce Ackerman and Anne Alstott (1999) to give an unconditional sum of $80,000 to anyone who reaches majority. What reasons, if any, can leximin egalitarians provide to prefer a basic income to such policies?

[2] Some people might believe that no such benefits can compensate the short-lived. However, since Nagel (1970), the standard approach to death's badness is comparativist: the badness of death compares to the welfare level one would have if one had not died. Hence, death is bad for us partly because it precludes us from having various goods we would have had if we had not died. If basic income is a good, it makes premature death less bad if it does not preclude people from having equal access to lifetime basic income. See Luper (2021). Following McMahan (2002, p.165–85), I do neither assume that the comparatitivist approach is all that matters for a death to be bad, nor that the approach holds equally for of all ages, especially regarding the very young. But, importantly, it does mean that, ceteris paribus, a death is less bad the later the age at which it happens.

3.1. Personal Identity

A radical defence of basic income can say that basic capital fails to give each person an *equal* unconditional income. Basic capital is only egalitarian if we assume that people preserve their identity over time such that they remain the *same* person throughout life. The assumption that people are unified beings throughout life is common, but may be unwarranted (e.g. Parfit, 1984). If people are indeed distinct persons throughout life, a distribution that gives to the young *but not* the old is unequal. The elderly could claim that, even though their earlier selves received an unconditional income, what has been given to their younger selves has not been given to them because they are no longer the same person (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 47).

The 'changing persons' view about personal identity is controversial, but it surely has had more influence on fiscal schemes than the 'unified persons' view. Most fiscal schemes distribute burdens based on single-year income or consumption, rather than on a lifetime basis (Zelenak, 2008).[3] It would therefore be unwarranted to discard the 'changing persons' view on the grounds that it is impractical. In fact, it may often be easier to implement than the 'unified' view. Still, the 'changing persons' view provides an inadequate defence of basic income. To see its counterintuitive implications, consider the following states of affairs (see also Van Parijs, 1995, pp. 47–48):

World 1	Period 1	Period 2
Me	100	100
You	50	50

Table 1. Lifetime inequality with time-specific inequality

World 2	Period 1	Period 2
Me	100	50
You	50	100

Table 2. Lifetime equality with time-specific inequality

In W1 (Table 1), I always receive twice the unconditional income you receive. In W2 (Table 2), I receive double your income in the first period, and you receive double mine in the second. Suppose that, due to being different people across different periods, we ought to receive the same per period but that this possibility is not available to us. If we need to choose between W1 and W2, W2 is surely better from the point of view of equality (on this, see Holtug & Lippert-Rasmussen, 2007). W1 is worse because it benefits the *same* biological life in every period. *If* we are different persons in each period, each world then consists of four people, two of whom are *equally* disadvantaged in either world. Equality between persons under the 'changing persons' view

[3] This is less true of fiscal entitlements, since at least a big part of these are old-age pension schemes that reflect people's lifetime earnings.

appears to be indifferent between W1 and W2. Since the periodic inequality is the *same* in either world, so is the inequality between persons if we see persons as existing for only one period. Intuitively, egalitarian justice cannot require indifference between benefitting the same and different lives. In order to avoid indifference, one needs to attach persons to their life.

Generally, the 'changing persons' view does not sit easily with the idea – to which many would subscribe – that people can decide their future or be held responsible for their past. First, it is unclear that people can be held responsible for their past choices under the 'changing persons' view. One could always claim that the results of one's projects and choices were not of their own volition, but instead projects and conceptions imposed by one's earlier self (who is a different person). If that is the case, what reason does one have to respect the things that people should have the freedom to do, many of which take a lifetime to pursue? Second, it is hard to see why people ought to have the freedom to make decisions affecting their future, for under a 'changing persons' view, that amounts to the freedom to decide how another person should live, which is impermissible on liberal grounds. The 'changing persons' view does not fit the intuitive idea that people should be free to decide about their future as well as be responsible for their past.

3.2. Prudence

Perhaps a more natural concern about basic capital is that it allows earlier and younger selves to be imprudent, or even to exploit, the fortunes of their later and older selves. Basic capital policies purporting to give a one-off grant at the age of majority may allow the young to squander their one-off grant completely, and leave their older selves in destitution (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 47). Since people are unlike Benjamin Button, i.e. are young *before* they are old, young selves are first-comers who may appropriate everything and leave their older selves with little if anything. Older selves, who rely on inheritance from their young selves, could therefore receive *zero* unconditional income benefits.

According to Van Parijs, if we care about people's real freedom *at all times*, we ought to assume that, 'in their right minds', people should want to protect real freedom at older age against the weakness of will at young age, and do so *homogeneously* throughout life (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 47). It is plausible to think of prudence as requiring a roughly uniform distribution across life (e.g. Daniels, 1988). What seems implausible is to suppose that such a uniform distribution guarantees real freedom at all times. Consider the case of *sufficiently long lifespans*:

Jane receives a one-off grant of $80.000 when 20, and she spreads her grant uniformly across life, dividing the grant by the number of years she expects to live. If 40 years ≈ 333,(3); if 80 years ≈ 83.(3). And so on.

Long-lived persons are more vulnerable to 'imprudence' because they go through a higher number of younger selves in life. They need to show greater restraint to protect their freedom, whereas the short-lived can enjoy greater discretion. But *despite* their prudence, people like Jane lack enough unconditional income per year if they live a sufficiently long life. In fact, Jane does not need to be long-lived, it suffices that she *expects* to live a long life. The longer she expects to live, the more negligible the instalment will be. There is a point at which basic capital no longer guarantees that sufficiently long-lived persons have enough real freedom for every year they live, and the problem arises regardless of how prudent they are. No 'prudent' allocation of resources throughout life guarantees Jane's real freedom across life. Prudence is not a sufficient diagnosis of what is wrong with basic capital.

Basic capital does not ensure that those who are (or expect to be) long-lived can provide for their basic needs. This leads to an additional problem for basic capital. The problem is that there is a risk that basic capital only provides *pro-forma* compensation to the short-lived. The short-lived would resist receiving compensation once they are uncertain as to whether they have enough if they live long. This problem is important in a world where longevity is uncertain, as it may negatively affect people's 'take-up' rate of early benefits.

3.3. Basic Freedoms

It may seem strange to invoke basic freedoms, or basic needs, as the reason for 'leximin' egalitarians to prefer basic income to a basic capital. For the definition of basic income is not, as such, connected to the notion of basic needs – it may either fall short or exceed what is necessary to a decent, or adequate, existence (Van Parijs, 1995, p. 35). Nonetheless, there are reasons to believe that everyone should be paid a universal basic income *at a level sufficient for subsistence* (e.g. Van Parijs, 2000). In what follows, I shall refer to basic needs as what people require at a given point in time to be free to either survive or succeed at that time (e.g. Axelsen & Nielsen, 2015). Alternatively, this could be described as a 'basic freedom requirement' (hereinafter 'BFR') – that all should be guaranteed a basic bundle of freedom and autonomy, including guaranteed subsistence, training, and protection from subordination (Fleurbaey, 2008, p. 275). The purpose here is not to provide an exhaustive description of the idea of basic freedom, which can be described in many ways. The upshot is that there is a threshold of resources below which one cannot be said to be free at a given point in time– the BFR level. The higher the BFR, the greater the extent to which basic capital fails to *secure* sufficient freedom across life, no matter how prudent one is.[4]

If basic needs are needs that people must satisfy to achieve a basic level of freedom at a given time, the fact that longer-lived persons go through more 'points in time' entails that they have more basic needs to satisfy over their whole lives. *Ceteris paribus*, we can say that longer-lived persons inevitably need, over the life course, to consume more water and pay more bills, for example. Unlike basic income, basic capital does not accommodate for the long-lived's greater lifetime basic needs; it treats the short-and long-lived *as if* they were equally free with equal lifetime resources. But there is at least one case in which equal lifetime resources do not contribute to equalizing freedom. An unconditional income policy that *never* secures BFR does not guarantee that one is ever free, and hence, it fails to promote equal lifetime freedom. Consider:

Jane and Stuart receive a basic grant of \$80.000 when they turn 20 years old. Jane outlives Stuart: Stuart dies with 50 whereas Jane lives to 100. Stuart may spend \$2.667 per year, whereas Jane can only spend \$1.000. BFR is 2.000/year.

This society guarantees that Jane and Stuart receive equal unconditional incomes. The basic grant maximizes the level of Stuart's lifetime freedom, but at the expense of not guaranteeing that Jane is ever free, since Jane can always be below BFR. From our 'leximin' standpoint, Jane is now the least advantaged because the basic capital does not ever guarantee that she has *positive* real freedom to survive or succeed if she lives long enough. But if the basic capital guarantees positive freedom *at no time* once one passes the age of majority, it fails to secure a significant degree of lifetime freedom to Jane. Bluntly put, it is compatible with Jane never being free for any year she lives, and hence, with her being unfree over her life as a whole. Thus, as per our leximin reasons to compensate the short-lived, we swung all the way to a situation in which the long-lived are now due compensation.

In general, this point tells us that the short-lived are only entitled to compensation above the BFR. Our 'leximin' reasons to compensate Stuart relied on the assumption that Stuart was less free

[4] It suffices my purposes to say that basic capital does not 'guarantee' enough real freedom. Whether or not it also 'forces' sufficiently long-lived persons to be below the threshold is unlikely, for unconditional income policies intend to be floors on which people can stand, but above which they can always earn extra income. If some people are denied extra income, say because they have been forced out of the labour market, it does follow that basic capital *forces* insufficient freedom on such individuals.

than Jane, which requires that Jane lives a free life. But basic capital does not guarantee that Jane lives a free life. This establishes a connection between the claims of the short- and of the long-lived: our 'leximin' reasons to compensate the short-lived require that the long-lived are generally free per year they live, that they are able to satisfy the BFR level across life. Compensating the short-lived, as through a basic capital, only becomes a concern of egalitarian justice once the basic needs of the long-lived are generally covered all across their lives. One key implication is that only affluent societies whose highest sustainable basic income exceeds the BFR have an obligation of egalitarian justice to compensate the short-lived.

This view could be described as a form of sufficiency-constrained egalitarianism, according to which the pursuit of lifetime equality should not *generally* place people below a threshold at a given point in time (see Bou-Habib, 2011; Gosseries, 2003, 2011). I emphasise the word 'generally' because there is an important distinction to be made. The distinction is between those who never accept insufficiency and those who accept insufficiency provided that it improves a person's life. The first view is vulnerable to counterintuitive implications. Consider the following example (similar to Schmidt, 2017, p. 1433). Imagine that Jane has to choose between a) 70 years of freedom and good health with a year of insufficient freedom and b) always having enough freedom but dying 30 years earlier. Intuitively, Jane should choose a), because its lifetime benefits clearly outweigh the year of insufficiency. If 'leximin' egalitarians never accept insufficiency, justice requires Jane to choose b). But a commitment to avoiding sufficiency and opting for b) will make her life worse than it would otherwise be if she had chosen a). I use the word 'generally' because sufficiency at all times generally makes one's life go better, but there are cases (as Jane's) in which it may not. Only then there are 'leximin' reasons to accept insufficiency.

Nevertheless, cases like Jane's do not undermine our claim. The claim put forward is that basic capital does not guarantee the amount of freedom necessary to conclude that Jane is free over her life as a whole. This is not to say that sufficiency always increases lifetime freedom or is always good for one's life. In those rare cases in which it is not, lifetime 'leximin' egalitarians must accept insufficiency.

4. The Dilemma

A constant basic income across life fails to maximize the lifetime freedom of the ones who are poor in longevity. Basic capital maximizes the lifetime freedom of the longevity poor, but it does so by failing to guarantee that long-lived persons can avoid resource-poverty. These contrasting views about the distribution of basic income across life bring us to a dilemma. The dilemma is that equality of lifetime resources between the short- and long-lived is incompatible with a higher share of lifetime resources necessary for longer-lived persons to cover their greater basic needs. Either a basic income compensates for unequal longevity through a basic capital, which does not generally guarantee *enough* freedom across life, or it distributes a basic income that generally guarantees such basic freedoms, but which increases longevity inequality. The problem is not specific to debates about basic income. In general, the more rights and resources are shifted into old age to protect the poor's long lives, the greater the inequality between the short- and the longlived (Gosseries, 2019, p. 48).

One exit from this dilemma is to suggest that one extreme is worse than the other. For instance, the unfairness that basic capital commits against the long-lived may be greater than that which basic income commits against the short-lived. In the next section, I suggest that the least unfair option sits on *neither* extreme – basic capital *nor* basic income. A hybrid strategy can achieve the best balance between the claims of the poor in longevity, who stand to benefit from a basic capital, and the poor in resources that would otherwise benefit from a constant basic income across life.

5. Solving the Dilemma

The dilemma is difficult, but the solution I propose is simple: have regular instalments of *decreasing* magnitude until a certain age, say 60 years old, and a constant basic income afterwards at the BFR level. A similar solution could be to have a basic capital at the beginning of people's adult lives together with a second instalment at the age of retirement (Carter, 2013).

Until a certain age, there is compensation for premature death, which equalizes as much as possible the lifetime resources of the short- and the long-lived. It benefits the short-lived to a maximum extent because pursuing more equality through a basic income that is generally below BFR would undermine our reasons to compensate the short-lived. Compensating the short-lived can be done either through a one-off grant to the young, or a regular instalment of decreasing 10 M. Sá Valente magnitude. Either suffices to compensate the short-lived. A regular decreasing instalment is better at avoiding problems of imprudence, whereas a one-off grant maximizes the compensation for those who die at the earliest ages. I prefer *decreasing* regular instalments because they reflect the badness of premature death across life, which is decreasing with age after the age of majority.[5]

There is an age at which our reasons to benefit people shift,[6] and the instalments of decreasing magnitude smoothly dissolve into a constant basic income until the end of life. The level must be set at the BFR level. Setting it *above* BFR would fail to equalize as much as possible the lifetime resources of the short- and long-lived. Setting it *below* BFR fails to generally guarantee a free life to the sufficiently long-lived, which undermines our reasons to compensate the short-lived. To be sure, the sufficiency level (BFR) can go beyond standard basic needs, and understand sufficient freedom as the freedom to succeed in one's pursuit of one's conception of the good life, whatever it may be.

The solution I propose abides by the intuition of basic capital while at the same time ensuring that people generally have enough real freedom regardless of how long they live. It therefore avoids the problems of imprudence discussed earlier. It protects the real freedom of older selves by preventing that earlier selves squander their unconditional income completely. This way of compensating the short-lived does not open the door to imprudence. Even if it allows persons to allocate more at some life stages than others, it is not clear that prudence requires persons to smoothen their income across life completely. Protecting long lives from insufficiency also provides *real* – not just *formal* - compensation to the short-lived compared to a pure basic capital. Under a pure basic capital, the short-lived who are uncertain about their longevity would still fear taking up benefits early in life such that they might place their older selves in destitution if they live long enough. Since my proposal guarantees old-age security, it would produce no such fears. The short-lived need not fear, neither using the early grant nor living too long.

The lifetime distribution of benefits that I propose is *net* of contributions, which means that it already accounts for charges that contribute to paying for the unconditional income. This means there are *two* paths to achieve any lifetime distribution of income. One is to adjust fiscal entitlements, not fiscal obligations. In our case, it means that contributions to paying the unconditional income do not change with age, what changes is the 'constancy' element through which benefits spread across life – one would have to accept decreasing benefits until a certain age and constant afterwards. Fortunately for those who resist giving people unequal amounts of basic

[5] See footnote 2.
[6] I borrow the idea from the 'shift thesis' by Shields (2016), according to which our reasons to benefit people above a certain threshold change. In this case, the threshold is set in terms of age.

income, a second strategy is possible. The reason why the wealthy and the non-wealthy receive equal basic incomes is none other than that the first group will have to contribute much more than the latter. In most UBI proposals, even though the rich would get UBI, an important part of it would be taxed back (Bidadanure, 2019). Similarly, one could avoid inequality of benefits at different ages by requiring that people's contributions increase as they age until a certain age. That these are two equally viable ways of achieving the lifetime distribution of basic income tells us that one does not have to give up on the idea of basic income as regular instalments of constant magnitude in order to compensate the short-lived, provided that unconditional income is properly financed.

A plausible solution to the problem of unequal longevity is a net basic income of non-constant magnitude, consisting in either decreasing benefits or increasing contributions, provided there is an age after which they remain constant. Both stimulate income early in life and protect the longer-lived against the risk of lacking enough freedom across life. The solution offers a fair answer to the problem of unequal longevity, a widely neglected but essential challenge in debates about basic income.

6. Conclusion

Let me emphasize some of the assumptions I made, which could change my conclusion. Maybe the most obvious assumption was to take longevity inequalities for granted and ignore the possibility of taking an active step to reduce these inequalities, especially where the differences are starkest, as they are between socioeconomic groups (e.g. Neumayer & Plümper, 2016). However, I doubt that they can be erased. A future where people die at the same age is as yet too far to conceive. It should also be said that I have only considered *one* argument in favour of basic income, the 'leximin' view. Indeed, other justifications of basic income could lead to a different conclusion.

Most importantly, I assumed that normative worries about the distribution of basic income across life are independent from the distribution of other social benefits. Obviously, welfare state policies could replace the necessity of basic income to adjust to certain problems it faces. For instance, one could also compensate the short-lived through a right to retirement pensions early in life. Alternatively, the welfare state can protect persons under a basic capital through an adequate old-age pension system that protects every person against the risk of old-age poverty. Indeed, old-age pensions are standardly justified as providing insurance against the risk that individuals outlive their savings and of old-age poverty if they live long (e.g. Barr & Diamond, 2006, p. 16). Since welfare state tend to account more for resource poverty than for longevity poverty, the need for basic income to adjust to the problem of unequal longevity is greater. We often fail to benefit the short-lived because they become invisible once we know who they are. It remains easier to remember those who get old than those who die trying.

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