Alexandre Malenfant

PROPONENTS OR OPPONENTS?

The Ontarian and Finnish Unions' Representatives' Understanding of Basic Income

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ABSTRACT

The labour markets are changing. The economic and social signs of these changes are already present in many countries: the rising level of poverty and societal inequalities, the flexibilisation of the labour market, and the inefficiency of the income security systems. In response to these new challenges, the governments of Ontario (Canada) and Finland decided to experiment with a new kind of social security: the basic income. By securing the availability to a sum of money sufficient to cover the basic needs of all citizens in a given national or provincial territory, the basic income aims to protect those that suffers from the labour market changes. It also aims to improve the recipients' health, increase participation in education and work, and reduce stigmatization.

Following the introduction of these experiments, varied political actors voiced their opinions and positions about the concept of basic income and the form of the experiments. Amongst those political actors, some Ontarian and Finnish unions had their voices heard through the media. However, few unions talked about the reasons which made them develop their positions. In the scientific literature on basic income, the study of the unions' understanding and positioning on basic income is similarly lacking. In an effort to add to this scientific literature on the unions and basic income, the research puzzle of this master's thesis starts with an inquiry about the way Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives understand and position themselves on the policy idea of basic income. The thesis's research question is: *how do Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' understands the policy idea of basic income?*

To answer this research question, the study consisted of ten interviews with unions' representatives in Ontario and Finland. The qualitative data was analyzed through a constructivist thematic analysis based on the concepts of *problem definitions* and *policy solution*, as conceptualized by Jal Mehta. The findings of the thesis demonstrated that the Ontarian representatives were in favour of raising the rates of social assistance so that poverty would be diminished. For them, this could be achieved through a basic income, but they expect that it would be too low to affect most precarious workers. To tackle the issue of precariousness, the representatives named many alternatives or additional policies to basic income and argued that these policies should not be negated or traded-off if a basic income is implemented. In Finland, the unions' representatives thought that without activation measures, an unconditional basic income would decrease work willingness. They also thought that the unemployed and precarious workers should have access to a simpler unemployment benefits system, which could increase work activation. For the representatives, it is unclear if a basic income could include conditions of work activation, and at the same time simplify the income security system.

To conclude, the findings show that the unions' understanding and positioning on the implementation of a basic income are not simply one of advocating or opposing policy ideas proposed by their governments. Instead, policy ideas are reinterpreted by the unions' representatives who formulate their own problem definitions and policy solutions. In Ontario and Finland, the basic income was still at a stage of experimentation and the potential forms and minute details of a basic income policy had never been decidedly set. This left the unions' representatives with expectations, suspicions and demands regarding basic income. To convince the unions about the *viability* of basic income, the governments would have to satisfy the unions' demands.

Keywords: *basic income, unions, policy ideas, problem definitions, policy solution, income security system, labour market, industrial relations, Ontario, Finland*

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Due to the economic difficulties faced by workers and citizens in rapidly changing labour markets, the policy idea of basic income has enjoyed an upsurge of interest amongst the public and policymakers. More recently, many policy actors have advocated for a basic income. Amongst those policy actors were renowned international institutions (e.g. World Economic Forum, OECD, World Bank), private corporations (e.g. Y-Combinator), influential individuals (e.g. Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Richard Branson). Even though the policy is now presented as new and innovative, it has in fact been theorized and discussed for quite some time. Since its theoretical inception at the end of the 18th century, basic income experiments have taken place in countries such as Canada, Finland, the U.S., India, Namibia and Uganda. However, few actual policies have taken forms resembling a "pure" basic income. Nevertheless, from the data gathered in these experiments and other similar policies, some economists and social scientists now argue that a basic income might provide a secure and stable floor for those with low-income and those in flexible and precarious employment. It is argued that a basic income policy could have positive effects on the health of the recipients, incentivize them to take entrepreneurial risks and could reduce the stigma for the claimants of income security benefits.

In the academia, this resurgence of basic income as a potential policy solution has been accompanied by growing interest on the study of the policy idea. However, most scholars have not paid much attention to the ways certain labour market institutions, such as the unions or employers, understands the concept and policy of basic income in their own contexts. In an effort to add to this lacking scientific literature, the research puzzle of this master's thesis starts with an inquiry about the way unions understands the policy idea of basic income in both Ontario and Finland. By choosing to focus the research on Ontario and Finland, the intention of this master's thesis was to conduct a temporally relevant study. In both contexts, experiments on basic income were launched in 2017. These experiments gathered the media and academic attention all around the world. However, in August 2018, the newly elected conservative government cancelled the Ontarian basic income experiment.

To study the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' understanding of basic income, this thesis intends to go further than simply ask them about their views on the experiments. Instead, the thesis will uncover how the representatives understand the problems they face in their own contexts (*problem definitions)*, how the representatives conceive of the potential efficacy of a basic income at solving those problems (*policy solution*), and if they would want a basic income to be implemented in their respective contexts (*political outlook*). To uncover such meaning, I interviewed four unions' representatives in Ontario and one in Canada. In Finland, five representatives were interviewed. During these interviews, the representatives talked about various subjects related to the basic income

debates: poverty and inequality, the changing labour market, the institutional contexts, the expected impacts of basic income, the involvement of the unions on basic income, and many other subjects.

These interviews provided some data to answer the main research question of this thesis: *how do Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' understands the policy idea of basic income?* Given the socioeconomic and institutional differences in Ontario and Finland, the basic assumption of this thesis was that the Ontarian and Finish representatives would conceive of basic income in different ways based on their understanding of their own contexts (*problem definitions)*, and that this would impact their conception of a potential basic income (*policy solution* and *political outlook).* In turn, the ways in which the unions' representatives' understands basic income would have concrete impacts on the policymaking process. Some unions' may advocate or approve of a basic income, while some others may oppose the policy more directly. This would impact the *political viability* of basic income.

Regarding the structure of the thesis, the study is constituted of six chapters (Ch.2 – 8). In Chapter 2, I will present an overview of the phenomenon studied: the study of policy ideas. I will first present the theoretical framework used to study policy ideas. In this theoretical framework, I will describe how Jal Mehta (2011) understand policy ideas as an interaction between political actors' *problem definitions* and *policy solutions.* During the data analysis, Mehta's concepts will serve to organize and analyze the empirical data. Then, I will explain how the Ontarian and Finnish governments used the *problem definitions* and *policy solutions* in their justifications for the basic income experiments, which opened the door for other policy actors to join the debates, such as the unions. By the end of this chapter, I will define how I adapted the theoretical framework from Frege and Kelly (2003) union's strategic choices to inform the interview questions and this thesis's conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 will serve to define the policy of basic income. First, there will be a description of the history of basic income, how it was first conceptualized and where it has taken roots internationally. Then, there will be an overview of basic income's eight fundamental dimensions and the different forms it could take while still being considered a basic income. After this description, there will be an overview of the basic income experiment that took place in Ontario and the one currently undergoing in Finland. I will describe the main differences in forms and aims between them. The last section of the Chapter 3 will focus on previous theoretical and empirical literature on the unions and basic income. The findings in this literature will later be compared to the ones gathered in this thesis.

Chapter 4 will provide a factual background to the several aspects of the welfare states and the industrial relations contexts between Ontario and Finland. Even though undertaking a complete description of both of these aspects is too large of a task for the scope of this thesis, the information selected has served to orient the questions used in the interviews and to analyze the data gathered

from the interviews. In this chapter, there will be a focus on: socioeconomic and institutional changes, the different types of welfare regimes, the different structures in the income security systems, the different types of labour relations, the unionization rates and the different unions' structures.

Chapter 5 will discuss how the theoretical and conceptual approach used in this thesis has served to define the study. I begin by explaining how the research puzzle has been defined by the aims and the main research question of this thesis. Then, I will describe the method through which the empirical data has been collected. In this thesis, the data was collected based on a selection of elite key informants (*unions' representatives*) through the process of ten semi-structured qualitative interviews. Following this explanation, I will present the ways in which the data was analyzed. The research started from a social constructivist approach based on the relation between *problem definitions* and *policy solution*. Then, the interview data was organized into an analytical framework and subsequently analyzed through a thematic analysis. In that chapter, there will be an explanation on how the themes were constructed. In this study, the themes were constructed based on the readings of scientific literature on policy ideas, as well as literature on the unions and basic income.

Chapter 6 constitutes the empirical section of this thesis. This chapter will describe the ten main themes which were formed through the thematic analysis of this thesis's empirical data. In this chapter, I will first present the representatives' understanding of the most prominent socioeconomic and institutional problems in their respective contexts (*problem definitions)*. Then, I will demonstrate that the representatives have different expectations about the form a basic income could in their respective contexts. I will show that the representatives fear that a basic income could represent a trade-off for other policies or public investments. I will then analyze the expected different types of impacts on the recipient's work willingness, on institutions (collective bargaining / bureaucracy) and look at the ways the representatives think of the financing of basic income (*policy solution)*. Finally, I will present the positions taken by the unions on the implementation of a basic income in their respective contexts and their expected future involvement with the policy (*political outlook)*.

Chapter 7 presents the comparative analysis of the empirical data. At first, I will provide the readers with a summary table of the data, which will highlight the main differences and similarity in answers between the unions' representatives in Ontario and Finland. I will then provide a written summary of these findings, as well as a comparison between the findings made in this study and those of the empirical literature. Then, I further analyze the ways the representatives perceive the viability of basic income through Peter A. Hall's (1989) concepts of *policy, administrative* and *political viability*. Finally, chapter 8 will provide some concluding remarks on what has been learned throughout this thesis. I will also define the drawbacks of the thesis and provide some orientation for future studies.

CHAPTER 2 – FRAMEWORK TO STUDY POLICY IDEAS

This thesis deals with basic income as a policy idea. In this chapter, I will first present an overview of what constitutes policy ideas. Secondly, I will present the theoretical framework used to understand policy ideas in this thesis. I will first describe how Jal Mehta view policy ideas through *problem definitions* and *policy solution*. Then, I will argue that the Ontarian and Finnish governments used the *problem definitions* and *policy solution* in their own justifications for the basic income experiments, which opened the door for other policy actors, such as the unions, to join the debates. Finally, I will describe my adaptation of Frege and Kelly union's strategic choices framework to inform this thesis' conceptual framework and the interview questions.

2.1 – ON THE STUDY OF POLICY IDEAS

The concept of policy ideas, and ideas more generally, is defined as the "claims about descriptions of the world, causal relationships, or the normative legitimacy of certain actions" (Parsons 2002: 48). Recent literature on the studies of policy ideas has been centred around the research of *how* ideas can impact institutions and their strategic choices. This literature has been mostly developed under the theoretical umbrella of the "three new institutionalism": rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism (Schmidt 2008). In order, the three new institutionalism understand the changes in social policy through rational actions within the political institutions (Rational Choice), through the structure and longstanding practices of those institutions (Historical) or through the norms and the culture of agents within the institutions (Sociological). The main weakness of these new forms of institutionalism is that they view institutions as fixed, and not able to change their perspectives and their actions rapidly. In the rational choice institutionalism, the institutions are viewed through a set of fixed preferences, which guides their rational calculus of beneficial or counterproductive actions. In historical institutionalism, the institutions are seen as following a certain historical path in the choices that they make and are in some respects predestined for a certain set of actions. In cultural institutionalism, the institutions are seen through cultural norms and rules, which implies that these norms and rules are rarely broken but adapted to changes in the policy environment. In contrast to these new types of institutionalism, which are meant to look at the continuity of certain practices, scholars focused on ideas have been interested in understanding changes or shifts in the way that policy actors conceive and understand certain policy ideas.

To complement the three institutionalism, Vivien A. Schmidt (2015) argues that there is a need for a fourth type of institutionalism, the discursive institutionalism. In her own word, Schmidt describes discursive institutionalism as the "umbrella concept for approaches that concern themselves with the

substantive content of ideas and the interactive processes of discourse in institutional context" (Schmidt 2015: 1). For Schmidt, policies and policy debates contains two types of ideas: cognitive and normative. The cognitive ideas are centred around "what is and what to do" about a policy in a specific context, while the normative ideas indicate "what is good or bad about what is, and what ought to be done" (Schmidt 2008: 306). In discursive institutionalism, policy actors may not be necessarily rational or self-interested in the utilitarian-oriented sense of the term. Instead, they can be influenced by their own understanding of the contexts in which they are situated, their different set of values, or their different prioritization of problems and solutions.

In this thesis, my objectives are to understand *how* policy ideas on basic income are understood by a specific type of policy actors, the unions and their representatives. Therefore, while this thesis can be situated under the large theoretical umbrella of discursive institutionalism, my study interests are primarily based on the "substantive content" of policy ideas, rather than on the "interactive processes of discourse" (Schmidt 2008: 304). At the moment, unfortunately, the Ontarian and Finnish unions have been relatively quiet in their discourses on their perspectives on basic income. Such a study of the "interactive processes of discourse" would be impossible due to the lack of data on the discourses of the unions on basic income. Due to this lack of data on the discourses of the unions on basic income, it will be necessary to obtain more data on the understanding of basic income, and its specific meaning, from the perspective of the unions' representatives themselves through semi-structured qualitative interviews. This means that, in the context of this thesis, I will be primarily interested in understanding how the unions' representatives subjectively perceive their socioeconomic and institutional contexts, and how these contexts impact their views of a potential basic income, rather than focusing on how the objective contexts affect the representatives' perceptions of basic income.

2.2 – PROBLEM DEFINITIONS AND POLICY SOLUTION

In this thesis, the policy ideas on basic income are studied through the theoretical framework of Jal Mehta (2011). To Mehta, policy ideas mainly take the forms of *problem definitions* and *policy solutions*. In his framework, Mehta adapts the studies of Peter A. Hall (1989) in arguing that the policy ideas have three main dimensions: *cognitive, normative* and *functional*. In order, the cognitive level of ideas is interested in defining the problems, or what is and what to do. The normative level complements the cognitive level by arguing for the fairness of a policy, or what is good or bad and what has to be done. Those two levels are then connected to the functional level. In the functional level, a solution to the problems is formulated and may change the way that an institution acts. Therefore, for Mehta, there is a relation of causality in how new problems are fought against with new ideas, which in turn might enable changes in how institutions act. Mehta (2011) defines *problem*

definitions as a particular understanding of a complex reality. In that sense, problem definitions are seen as social construction, and not objective facts. It is the groups or the individuals that construct such problems through their interactions, or through their own cognition (Mehta 2011: 6).

For Metha, problem definition has its theoretical roots in the social construction of social problems school (Blumer 1971, Spector and Kitsuse 1977). In that school of thought, the central interest is on how problem areas that are "conditions", meaning that they are usually simply seen as a fact of social life, can become "public problems" worthy of the government's attention (Mehta 2011: 17). The change of character of a problem definition from "conditions" to "public problems" usually take the forms of rhetorical: (1). *naming*, (2). *blaming*, and (3). *claiming* (Felstiner, Abel and Sarat 1980-81, in Mehta 2011). The *naming* of a problem is to take a phenomenon, such as "homelessness", and label it either as a problem of "housing shortage" or "lack of individual initiative". According to Mehta, the many ways to conceive of the problem of homelessness reflects the fact that problem definitions is a fluid process where certain aspects of a given situation are highlighted, while others are minimized or ignored (Mehta 2011: 15). In *naming* the problems, not all policy actors will define a socioeconomic problem in the same way. This is why most of the political argumentation in policymaking is disputed at the level of problem definition since the two positions would seem to be irreconcilable as they align into two different policy solution directions. Secondly, *blaming* serves to identify the causal agents, in that case either the government itself or opportunistic owners. In a related text on problem definitions, Deborah A. Stone (1989) argued that there can be two types of actions *(unguided/purposeful)* and consequences *(intended/unintended)* in political causal stories. For Stone, those blaming a causal agent usually argues if the agents knew what would result of his actions, or not. Thirdly, *claiming* refers to the person who should take responsibility and take actions for the current state of the defined problems, in that case it could be the government, or some interested person or groups. Some may deny a problem's existence by a counter-claim, which "rejects claims of causal responsibility or shift the emphasis to other causes or remedy" (Mehta 2011: 17).

According to Mehta, *problem definitions* needs to be analytically differentiated from the processes of *policy solution*. Even though the two are interrelated, in that problem definition influences the policy solutions, policy actors may be interested in a myriad of different policy solution to solve the defined problems. In his explanation of *policy solution*, Mehta argues that policies are evaluated based on their *viability* at solving defined problems, but also in being administratively and politically realistic. To asses of the viability of a policy, Mehta points to Peter A. Hall's (1989) concepts of *policy viability*, *administrative viability* and *political viability*. For the implementation of a policy, the substantive content of the idea, or its expected efficacy at solving a problem (*policy viability*), is not enough for a policy to be adopted or even to warrant its advocacy. This is because a policy's feasibility and costs

are often included in policy debates (*administrative viability).* Comparatively to debates in problem definition, debates over policy ideas are more concrete and centred around cost issues, or trade-off for certain policies, and the feasibility of the policy in the socioeconomic and institutional context. Additionally, the policy ideas are debated politically by different interests' groups, who may have varying levels of desire to see the policy implemented (*political viability).* The political viability of a policy may mean that the strongest interest groups want it to be implemented, or it could mean that the policy idea is so enticing that it might win over other ideas from opposed interests groups, but this occurs in rare occasions. Finally, a third way in which an idea might be politically viable is by convincing opposed interests' groups to change their perspectives (Mehta 2011: 8).

In this thesis, I will focus on both the *problem definitions* and the *policy solution* that will be conveyed by the unions' representatives. Regarding the definition of the problems, I will ask the unions' representatives about the current socioeconomic and institutional problems that they find most prevalent in their society. Since not all representatives will have the same understanding of those problems, I will select and analyze the problems that were similarly conceptualized across the unions' representatives of the same province/country through the concepts of *naming, blaming and claiming.* Regarding the policy solution, I will focus my attention on analyzing the *policy, administrative and political viability* of a basic income in the specific contexts of Ontario and Finland, by asking the unions' representatives if the policy in itself would resolve the defined problems, if it could be implemented in their specific contexts and if the debates on basic income, and their own cognitive and normative understanding of the policy, lead them to advocate or oppose the implementation of a basic income in their province/country. By the end of the thesis, I will come back to the *viability* concepts and establish which interactions took place between *problem definitions* and *policy solution*.

2.2 – POLICY WINDOW FOR BASIC INCOME & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In his theoretical framework, Mehta also refers to the work of John Kingdon's (1984) on the three multi-stream approaches. In this approach, Kingdon's question is: "What makes an idea's time come?". His answer is that three streams must be actively intertwined for a policy idea to be genuinely debated and/or implemented: *the problem stream*, the *policy stream* and the *political stream.* While the problem stream and the policy stream are fairly similar to Mehta's processes of problem definitions and policy solutions, the political stream requires that the political viability of a policy is being promoted by strong policy entrepreneurs, which can be the government or interests' groups. When this happens, there can be the *opening of a policy window.* From then, policy entrepreneurs can "step into these windows by linking favored solutions to current problems" (Mehta 2011: 10). Following the opening of the policy window, for a policy idea to succeed, it must "fit within the

prevailing political winds, have an energetic, well-connected and (ideally) powerful person or group pushing it, and it must be perceived as a viable solution to an existing problem" (Mehta 2011: 10).

In the scientific literature, De Wispelaere and al. (2018) argued that the main narrative around basic income experiments is that they created such a window of opportunity. During the preparation of the basic income experiments, both the Ontarian and Finnish governments defined the socioeconomic and institutional problems (*problem definitions)* which could potentially be solved by the implementation of a basic income (*policy solutions)*. These processes are reflected in their writing of a policy paper on basic income, which defined the aims of the experiments. Following the identification of a certain set of problems, both governments proposed the implementation of a basic income experiment to better assess if it would lead to the desired outcomes. Therefore, both the Ontarian and the Finnish governments took an active part in the problem stream and the policy stream. On the Finnish experiment, De Wispelaere and al. argued that the dominant narrative around the experiment was that Finnish Prime Minister, Juha Siplilä, played the role of policy entrepreneur by establishing links between the problem, policy and the political streams (De Wispelaere 2018: 17).

However, De Wispelaere and al. thought that this narrative falsely represented the actual chances of a basic income to be implemented in the Finnish context. For the scholars, there is a marked difference between "major shifts towards policy implementation" and simply a "commitment to gather and evaluate evidence through an experiment" (De Wispelaere 2018: 18). To them, the experiments constitutes an increase in policy attention, but not the actual opening of a policy window. This is the perspective adopted in this thesis. In reformulating the argument, I consider the situations in both Ontario and Finland to represent a "partial" opening of a policy window. While the recent experiments may not lead to actual implementation, they did enhance the political credibility of a basic income This is represented by the fact that many external institutions, such as the unions, felt the need to start debates internally and to voice their understanding and positions on basic income through the media.

According to Rasmussen et al., the policy design phase, or in this case the policy experimentation phase, is the "reference point from which actors are provided legitimate openings for exploiting tensions and contradictions between competing framing of the policy problem" (Rasmussen 2017: 309). In Ontario and Finland, one of the interest groups which showed interests towards the experiments were the unions. In Ontario, two unions (CUPE, OPSEU) published a policy document on their views on the current socioeconomic and institutional context, the concept of basic income and its current form in the experiment. In Finland, some unions made their voices heard through articles in written newspapers, and two unions published very brief policy documents on their understanding of basic income. Even though these unions did provide information on their positions

and understanding of basic income in the media, some of the other smaller trade unions did not participate in those public discussions. In an effort to enhance the understanding of the unions' and their representatives' *problem definitions* and *policy solution* in regard to basic income, this thesis intends to bring to light the voices of other unions which had only been involved in internal debates, and therefore could not be heard in the academic or public circles. In this thesis, I consider that the unions' representatives understand the policy idea of basic income in their respective socioeconomic and institutional contexts in responses to the "partial" opening of a policy window, which has been opened by the government's experimentation with a potential *policy solution:* the basic income.

Frege and Kelly's Unions' Strategic Choices

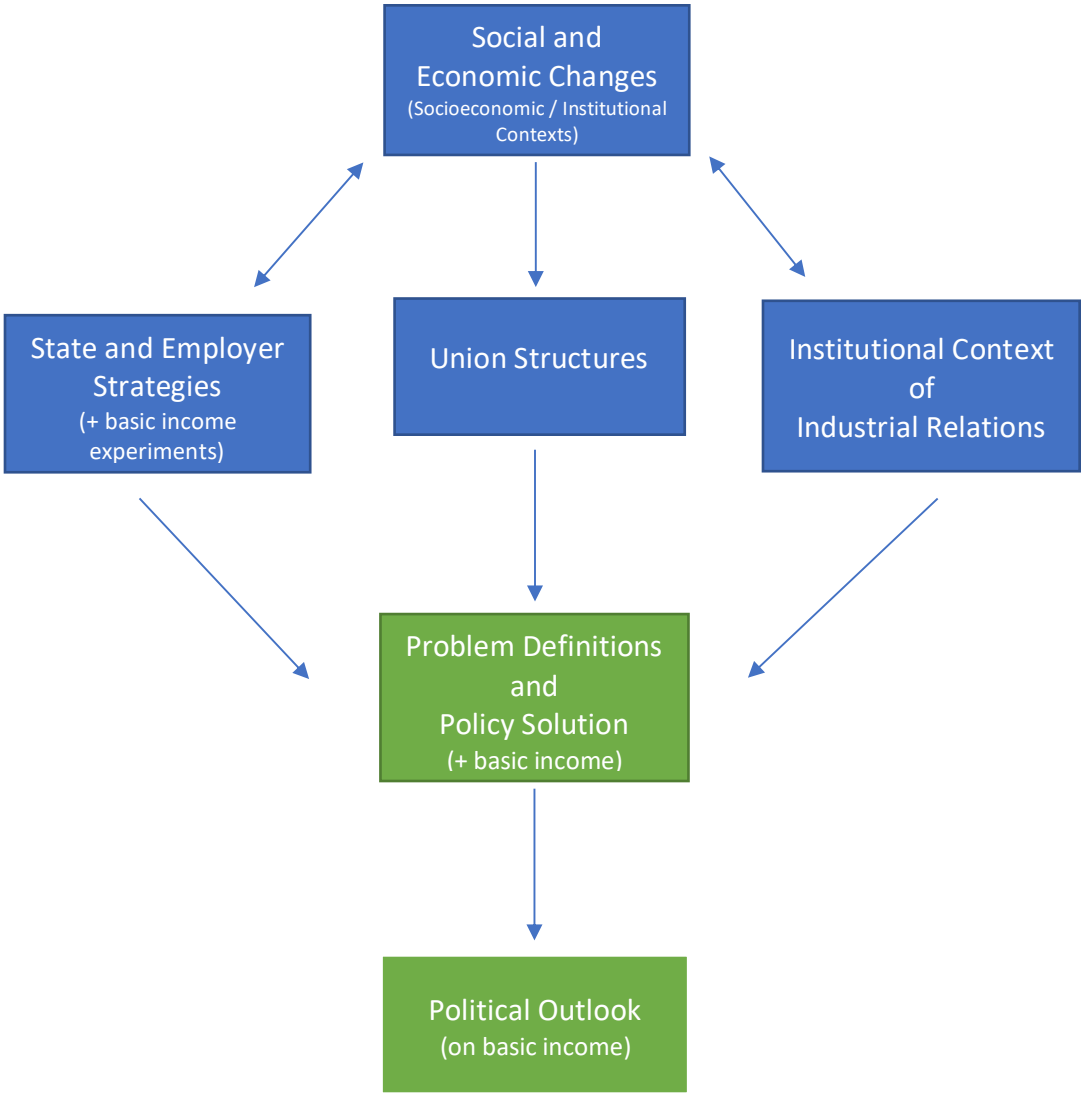
To provide a conceptual framework that would best represents the aims of this thesis, I decided to include an adaptation of the union's strategic choice framework of Frege and Kelly (2003). In their work, the researchers pointed to several key dimensions of trade unionism which may influence the unions' actions and choices. In their framework, Frege and Kelly identifies four independent variables: (1). *Social and Economic Change,* (2). *State and Employers Strategies,* (3). *Union Structures,* (4). *Institutional Context of Industrial Relations.* These variables are considered independent because they are seen as both objective constraints and incentives that "impinge on union strategy" (Frege and Kelly 2003: 19). In combination, these dimensions are sufficiently encompassing and abstract to fit the whole range of *problem definitions* that can arise in the qualitative interviews into one or the other categories. Therefore, the dimensions served as the general basis for the interview questions. In the literature review, especially in chapter 3, there will be a conscious effort to provide an objective and factual, but limited, description of each of these variables since the unions' representatives' will construct some of their interview answers based on their understanding of these independent variables. While I am mostly interested in understanding how unions perceives their own contexts, I still thought it was important for me to have some background information about the contexts in which the unions operate. This will help me to enhance the data analysis.

Then, there is one process variable: (5). *Framing Processes.* For Frege and Kelly, the framing processes are: "the ways in which unionists perceive and think about changes in their external context as threat or opportunities" (Frege and Kelly 2003: 14). While this definition fits well with the objectives of this thesis, the scholars then argue that there is a need to understand the "identity" of the unions through the examination of their "repertoires of contention", which draws from familiar ideas about union actions. At this point, I need to contrast my own thesis objectives from that of studying the framing processes. According to Mehta (2011), the process of *problem definitions* is different than the one of framing. While *problem definitions* similarly emphasize some elements of a problem, and neglect some others, the process of framing mostly focuses on the way pre-existing ideas are used

to convince others about one's position (Mehta 2011: 16). In other words, while framing entails clear links between the ways problems and solutions are framed, the process of *problem definitions* may lead to a vast array of policy solutions. In this thesis, since my intentions are to study how the unions' representatives' respond to a policy proposal, rather than propose one themselves, I will also be interested in finding out what other policies they would prefer or would add to a basic income. Therefore, I will adapt Frege and Kelly's framework by replacing framing process to *problem definitions* and *policy solutions*, which better reflect responses to proposed policies.

Finally, there is the dependent variable: (6). *Union Strategic Choices*. In this thesis, I will briefly look at the positions and actions taken by the representatives in regard to basic income. However, due to the small involvement of most unions on basic income, this dimension will not be prioritized in the analysis. Also, since it would have been unadvised to assume that all unions reached strategic choices on basic income, I renamed the section to a more nuanced title: "Political Outlook".

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework



CHAPTER 3 - BASIC INCOME

In this chapter, I will provide a general overview of what constitutes the policy idea of basic income. First, I will provide a description of the history of basic income, on how it was first conceptualized and where it has taken roots internationally. Secondly, in a more theoretical perspective, I will provide an overview of basic income's eight fundamental dimensions and the different forms it could take while still being considered a basic income. The fundamental dimensions will be used later on in the data analysis to provide a more theoretical understanding of the ways in which the unions' representatives' conceive of basic income. Thirdly, there will be an overview of the basic income experiment that took place in Ontario and the one currently undergoing in Finland. I will describe the main differences in forms and aims between them. The last section of this chapter will be focused on previous theoretical and empirical literature on the unions and basic income.

3.1 – BRIEF HISTORICAL REVIEW OF BASIC INCOME

The policy idea of basic income was first conceptualized by Thomas Paine, an English-born American political activist, theorist and philosopher (Paine 1797). In his pamphlet "Agrarian Justice", Paine argued for a universal one-time benefit of fifteen pounds at the age of twenty-one years old and a subsequent basic income of ten pounds per year. His idea originated from the inequality that he found in his society of Great Britain. He considered the rentier economy, especially in agriculture, as an unjust ownership of the land. He argued that this ownership only benefited the owners and that there was a need for a form of Social Dividend. For Thomas Paine, the concept of ownership was not to be condemned in its entirety, but he thought that the benefits from ownership needed to be balanced. Other political authors of that time were also fond of the idea, such as Thomas Spence, Herbert Spencer and Bertrand Russel (Raventós 2007: 14). However, after that introductory period, the idea of basic income had not succeeded in taking hold in the political arenas. In the 1930s and 1940s, the idea was only briefly discussed in the U.K. Ultimately, the basic income came back as a legitimate policy idea in political debates. This resurgence happened mostly in the United States and Canada.

In the 1960s, the debate on basic income re-emerged through its endorsement by renowned American economist Milton Friedman (1962). Friedman was interested in the idea of a Negative Income Tax and thought that most of the welfare benefits could be replaced by such a policy. During the 1960s to the 1980s, there were experiments on the Negative Income Tax model in the United States and Canada. The experiments in the U.S. started with a great deal of optimism. However, the popular spread of an erroneous statistics, which showed that divorce rates were increasing under a Negative Income Tax model, gave rise to the suspicion of political actors and led to the demise of the idea in

the U.S. In 1974, in Canada, the federal government launched a basic income experiment in the city of Dauphin, Manitoba. Regrettably, the optimism for the experiment quickly fanned as the Canadian economy was going through a difficult period and the funding of the experiment was considerably reduced. The initial intention of the experiment was to collect and analyze the data on social and economic behaviour. However, due to the cuts in the funding, the data was archived and has only recently been analyzed by researcher Evelyn Forget. Dr. Forget (2011) found positive impacts of basic income on the health of the participants and school participation for children.

According to Jurgen De Wispelaere (2015: 28), after this initial introduction of the policy idea, there has been three different waves of discussions on basic income. The first wave took place in the 1980s in the United States and in Western Europe. This resurgence came from a criticism of the welfare state arrangements. The proponents of basic income questioned the focus on employment as a condition to receive unemployment benefits and social assistance. However, no actual experimentation or implementation of a basic income took place during that period. The second wave happened in the late 1990s in Africa and Latin-America. Following a recommendation for an experiment on basic income in 2002, the Namibian government implemented its experiment in 2008-2009. In Latin-America, in 2004, Brazil introduced a policy (*Bolsa Familia)* that has certain characteristics similar to a basic income. While the policy is intended to support a family's income that falls below a certain poverty line, the policy is conditional on children attending school. Therefore, it is closer to a conditional minimum income policy than a full or partial basic income. The third wave of the debates started in Europe after the financial crisis of 2008. In the face of austerity policy measures, basic income started to play a role in social movement's demands to their governments. Social movements and community organizations have been talking increasingly talking about the potential for basic income. Nowadays, the idea is increasingly discussed in the public due to its endorsement by certain international institutions (World Economic Forum, OECD, World Bank), CEO's (Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Richard Branson) and some national governments.

At the moment, there are no actual income security systems that are considered to be a "pure" universal basic income. However, there are policies that have similar forms to basic income, such as the Citizens' Dividend in Alaska and the Iranian subsidy reform plan (De Wispelaere 2015: 28). There has also been experiments on basic income in Ontario (Canada), the United States, Finland and the city of Barcelona (Spain). The forms and even the institutions responsible for the experiments vary. In Finland and Ontario, it is the government (national/provincial) that proceeds with the experiments. In both Spain and the United States, the experiments are taking place at a municipal level. In Spain, the experiments take place in Barcelona, while in the United States, it takes place in the city of Stockton, California. Additionally, still in the U.S., the private incubator Y-Combinator intends to

give a basic income to some residents of the city of Oakland. At the moment of writing this thesis, there are also talks of experimenting basic income in Scotland, in Italy, and in British Columbia (Canada). To summarize, basic income has never been as popular and discussed as it is right now.

3.2 – DIMENSIONS AND FORMS OF BASIC INCOME

To provide a general understanding of the concept of Basic Income, it is important to highlight that the concept of basic income has been defined in many different ways. Depending on the scholars or the organizations which defines the concept of basic income, some specific policy proposals may be considered as a "basic income", while other may constitutes other forms of policy such as a guaranteed minimum income. Some authors, such as Daniel Raventós (2007), considers that there should be no conditions on work activation for a policy to be considered as a basic income. In his words, Raventós defines basic income as: "an income paid by the state to each full member or accredited resident of a society, regardless of whether he or she wishes to engage in paid employment, or is rich or poor or, in other words, independently of any other sources of income that person might have, and irrespective of cohabitation arrangements in the domestic sphere" (Raventós 2007: 8).

Similarly, some organizations that are closely connected to the basic income debates, such as the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN), also provides definitions that resembles the one from Raventós, but highlights certain specific aspects. The Basic Income Earth Network considers that there are five main characteristics to basic income: 1. It has to be paid regularly, and not in a single lump-sum payment; 2. It has to be paid in cash, rather than food or grants; 3. It has to be directed to the individual, rather than the family; 4. It has to be paid to all without means-testing; 5. It has to be paid without a requirement to work or to demonstrate willingness-to-work (Basicincome.org).

In this thesis, I consider the concept of basic income to be more encompassing than the definition offered by both Raventós and BIEN. In an effort to use a definition sufficiently encompassing to enable the comparison of the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' understanding of basic income, I will use the definition of basic income proposed by Jurgen De Wispelaere (2015). For the scholar, basic income constitutes a cash-transferred guaranteed income that is non-withdrawable, meaning that no eligible individual can fall under the defined income floor. It is also non-contingent, meaning that the income is guaranteed by right and unrelated to the personal background of the individual (e.g. household or family composition, age, and gender) (De Wispelaere 2015: 15). To further define the way in which the concept of basic income is conceptualized in this thesis, I now turn to De Wispelaere's definition of the eight fundamental dimensions of basic income. These dimensions represent the malleability of the concept of basic income.

The Dimensions of Basic Income

In his recent doctoral dissertation, Jurgen De Wispelaere (2015) defines the eight fundamental dimensions of a basic income policy through the concepts of: universality, individuality, conditionality, uniformity, timing, modality, generosity and financing. By looking at the ways a basic income could vary amongst these dimensions, it will be demonstrated that the basic income is a very malleable policy idea which could take different forms.

The first dimension, the universality of basic income, refers to the extent of the population covered (De Wispelaere 2015: 50). In general, universal policies covers a wider extent of the population, while more selective policies are intended to only be directed at a subset of the population. For De Wispelaere, universalism and selectivity are mutually exclusive. However, he cautions against confusing the concepts of selectivity and targeting. In contrast to selectivity, there can be targeting within universalism. For example, in a universal basic income, the policy could be targeted and more generous to those with a lower income, while the income of the high-income recipients would be taxed at a much higher rate. During the Ontarian and Finnish basic income experiments, the policy is selective since many people are excluded from receiving the benefits. For example, in the Ontarian and Finnish experiments, younger citizens under 18 (Ontario) and 25 (Finland) are not included in the experiments. Senior citizens of 64+ (Ontario) and 58+ (Finland) are also excluded. Also, while in Finland every citizen that receive unemployment benefits are included in the target group to be then randomly selected, in Ontario the location of the recipients was pre-selected. The recipients in the Ontarian experiment had to be under a certain income level and had to be resident of one of the selected areas. It is only after those two criteria were met that the recipients were randomly selected.

The second dimension, the individuality of basic income, refers to the "unit" at which the policy is directed (De Wispelaere 2015: 51). In most cases, this unit is formed of either the individuals or the households. In the debates that surrounds the policy of basic income, some of its most prominent advocates argues that a basic income should be given to individuals, rather than households (e.g. Van Parijs, 2004). However, as De Wispelaere argues, for reasons of "goodness-of fit" with more traditional ways of administering welfare policies, some other advocates are willing to push the issue aside and recommend targeting the basic income to households. In the experiments in Ontario and Finland, benefits that were already granted to households, rather than to individuals, will be kept by the recipients of the basic income. For example, in both Ontario and Finland, the child benefits will be kept by the basic income recipients. This may result in some problems for the analysis of the experiments since it will be difficult to separate and attribute some positive and/or negative effects entirely to the basic income experiment, or as a result of the interaction between the basic income and the other income benefits program.

The third dimension is the conditionality of basic income. While basic income is generally considered as an unconditional benefit, it could also include certain conditionalities that would be soft enough not to break the policy's focus on inclusiveness. For example, certain proposals such as the proposal of a Participation Income of Tony Atkinson (1996) include requirements such as care work, volunteering, or activation measures such as training or education activities as a condition to receive the basic income (De Wispelaere 2015: 52). The conditions could be *strict* or *weak*, depending on the amount of discretion that welfare workers would possess in assessing the recipients' completion of the requirements. The conditions could also be *narrow* or *broad*. Narrow conditions could be similar to the Earned Income Tax Credit (U.S.), w*hich* only applies to those in employment. More broad conditions could be similar to the Participation Income, which a broader range of conditional activities, and therefore includes more potential recipients. In the Ontarian and Finnish experiments, the basic income benefits are given unconditionally. However, this does not mean that the non-conditionality would be kept if the policy would be implemented. There are concerns that the non-conditionality of basic income would be a disincentive for the unemployed to find employment.

The fourth dimension is the uniformity of basic income. Even if a basic income would be given to individuals, it could take on certain specific characteristics for children and elderly people, which would render the policy not completely uniform. The children might receive a lesser amount of money since their needs are mostly covered by their parents. The parents might still receive certain benefits, such as child and family benefits, which could potentially be integrated into a basic income. Most logically, the managing of a basic income for children or legally incompetent adults would be given to a legal guardian. In a second point, the regional variation in the cost of living may impact the amount given through a basic income. The average amount needed for food and shelter can vary drastically between regions. A basic income which would not take into account the regional variation in income might be opposed by those with higher living costs (De Wispelaere 2015: 54).

The fifth dimension is the timing of basic income. The timing and frequency of the delivery of the income would vary depending on the model of basic income. A basic income could be provided as a regular income stream delivered weekly, monthly or yearly (De Wispelaere 2015: 55). There are other ways in which the timing of the delivery of a basic income could vary, but these constitutes specific proposals which were not used in the Ontarian and Finnish experiments. For example, a basic income could also be given out as a one-off payment (Basic Capital), meaning that recipients could borrow from future income if they can prove the usefulness of such borrowing (e.g. entrepreneurial decisions, medical emergencies). This diverges with the way De Wispelaere defines basic income, but it does provide a good example of the malleability of the concept of basic income.

The sixth dimension is the modality of the income delivery. Most basic income proposals rely primarily on cash transfers (De Wispelaere 2015: 56-57). The most common ways to think about the delivery of a basic income would be through by postal cheques, direct deposit in a debit card or as refundable tax credit. Additionally, some private in-kind measures, such as with education vouchers, might be considered as additional parts of a basic income. In the Ontario experiment, the basic income was delivered either through direct deposit, mailed cheques or via a community agency, and only when the first two options were not possible (Segal 2016: 48). In the Finnish experiment, the Social Insurance Institution (KELA) uses similar delivery method as those used in Ontario.

The seventh dimension is the generosity of basic income. In some proposal, the basic income level is fixed at subsistence level, while in some others it exceeds or fall short of the subsistence level. This level of generosity is often linked with the design of the policy. A partial basic income complemented by other types of cash or in-kind policies would lead to a lower amount given through basic income, than if the basic income would be intended to replace most of the other income security schemes. For example, some right leaning welfare state critics such as Milton Friedman (1962) and Charles Murray (2006) proposed to design a basic income of this kind. They promoted its use as a "single universal program of social support" (De Wispelaere 2015: 58). In such a policy, the amount given through the basic income would need to be larger to cover the recipients' needs. Additionally, such as basic income would be prone to rapid changes in the level of benefits. While it is uncommon for governments to make cuts or investments in the entirety of public programs that constitutes their income security system at the same time, it could be easier to do so under a single universal program based on income benefits. On the left-leaning side of the political spectrum, social democrats and socialists-leaning political actors opposes this form of basic income and prefer it to be complemented by other forms of assistance, such as child and family benefits, and a large public service sector.

The eighth and final dimension of basic income is its financing. The form that the financing could take would depend on the specific policy proposal. The most "classic" forms of financing would be through redirecting income security spending or through increasing income taxation. By redirecting spending on social programs to a basic income, governments could look at achieving budget neutrality. In that sense, a basic income does not necessarily mean that there would be investment in the income security systems, but it could simply mean that the system would be reformed to a basic income. In contrast, a basic income could also be financed through an equal increase in taxation for all citizens, or taxes could be collected through increasing consumer and corporate taxes, resources and wealth taxes, or increased progressive taxation. Basic income could also be financed through novel ideas on taxation, such as carbon taxes, Tobin taxes on capital speculation, or cap-and-dividend (cap-and-trade with an earmarked dividend component) (De Wispelaere 2015: 59).

The Different Forms of Basic Income

In many countries, different forms of basic income have been proposed either by scholars, governments or social and community organizations. To give a brief overview of these forms, I will now define some of the main forms of basic income. At first, in a full-scale basic income every citizen of a given country would be recipients of a basic income. The full-scale basic income could replace most of the other forms of income security programs, but some programs might be kept as separate from the full basic income. The amount of the full basic income would be comparatively larger than under a partial basic income as it would be intended to cover basic food and shelter needs for everyone. At the moment, there is no policy or experimentation of a full-scale basic income and it seems to be a long way from potential implementation. However, in the short to medium term, the idea of a partial basic income is more relevant to practical discussions of the implementation of basic income. The partial basic income would replace only part of the social security system benefits. In most proposals, it would keep intact the earnings-related unemployment benefits, and the living and housing allowances. In regard to this thesis, the Finnish experiment on basic income is based on a partial basic income. Simulations have shown that the Finnish government would need to give a total of EUR 1000 (per month) to reach the level needed for a full-scale basic income, while the current partial basic income experiment gives out EUR 560 to each recipient (KELA 2017).

In another form of basic income, the Social Dividend, the recipients have the right to a share of the state revenues. This share could come from the collective ownership of natural resources (Perkiö 2014: 7). Currently, there is one such policy in Alaska (U.S.): The Alaska Permanent Fund. The fund has been operative since 1982. It consists of a publicly owned investment portfolio. The portfolio is funded through the state's oil revenue. For each year since its launch, all Alaskan resident have received an equal share of the returns from the fund. The dividend is an individual grant of $1600 USD (2018) given to all men, women and children who meet residency requirements (pfd.alaska.gov)

The Participation Income or the Citizens' Pay are other forms of basic income. In these forms of basic income, the benefits would be conditional on the claimants' completion of a certain sets of activities. For example, these policies could require that claimants participate in training or educational measures, such as is the case with current activation labour market policies (ALMPs). However, in contrast to the ALMPs, the activation would not always have to be necessarily based on the return of the claimants to the labour market. For example, under a Participation Income or the Citizens' Pay, receiving the benefits could be conditional on their participation in activities that are beneficial to the society, such as working in social or community organizations, doing care work or by giving proof of participation in the household's activities (Perkiö 2016: 6). Even though these policies may not be as strict as current ALMPs on activation measures, they might still require work activation.

The Negative Income Tax (NIT) is the last form described in this overview. In a Negative Income Tax, those who are under a certain level of income would not pay taxes and would receive money from the governments until they reach a predetermined income threshold. Once the recipients' income exceeds this threshold, they would start to pay a certain percentage of taxes on every dollars/euro earned that exceeds the income threshold. In a NIT, only the low-income citizens are targeted to benefit from the policy (Ylikahri 2007: 15). At the moment, the discussion on the Negative Income Tax has been most prevalent in North America. In contrast, for the Europe-based basic income Earth Network (BIEN), the Negative Income Tax is considered to be related, but separated from what they define as a basic income. In regard to this thesis, the Ontarian experiment is in the form of a Negative Income Tax. The recipients received up to: $16,989 per year for a single person, less 50% of any earned income; and $24,027 per year for a couple, less 50% of any earned income (ONTARIO.CA).

Interestingly, from this explanation of the forms that a basic income could take, we can see that the experiments in Ontario and in Finland do not use the same forms of basic income. However, governments and institutions in both province/country uses the term basic income to define their experiment. The fact that the experiments are dissimilar could have an impact on the unions' representatives' understanding and expectations about the forms that a basic income could take if it was implemented in their respective contexts.

3.3 – BASIC INCOME EXPERIMENTS: ONTARIO & FINLAND

During most of the writing of this thesis, there were basic income experiments undergoing in both Ontario (Canada) and Finland. These experiments were of different forms and they were aimed at providing insights on different types of results. In August 2018, the newly elected Conservative Party of Ontario decided to cancel the basic income experiment. This will affect the amount of data gathered for the scientific analysis of the results of the experiment. For the purpose of this thesis, it is necessary to mention to the reader that the qualitative interviews with the unions' representatives were done prior to the cancellation of the Ontarian experiment. Therefore, the form of the Ontarian experiment may have shaped the unions' representatives' views of basic income in a different way back then than it would now that the experiment has been cancelled. This description will be of importance for the data analysis since the unions sometimes refers to the forms taken by the experiments to inform their understanding of the meaning of basic income in their respective contexts. Before delving into the details of the basic income experiments in both places, I will now insert in Table 1 a summary of the main aspects of the experiments in Ontario and Finland. To have a general understanding of the experiments, it is important to consider their variation on three key aspects: the models of basic income, the target population and the objectives of the experiments (ONTARIO.CA & Kangas 2016).

Table 1. Basic Income Experiments in Ontario and Finland

	Ontario	Finland
Models of Basic Income	- Negative Income Tax (Top-up to 75% of LIM, less 50% of earned income)	- Partial Basic Income (560 € per month, tax-free)
Recipients	- 2,000 people in 3 areas (and 2,000 in control group) (Hamilton, Thunder Bay, Lindsay) - Low-income earners: -34,000 for single (Benefits: $16,989 max.), -48,000 for couples (Benefits: $24,027 max.). - Age: 18 to 64	- 2,000 people all across Finland - Basic unemployment benefit recipients (Before: 697 € per month, non-tax-free at 20% or higher) - Age: 25 to 58
Objectives of the Experiments	- Gain knowledge of basic income impacts on: Labour market and work behavior (incentives, disincentives), health, education, food security, mobility and housing, and on net economic and community outcomes	- Gain knowledge of basic income impacts on: Labour market and work behavior (incentives, disincentives), employment relationships, the income levels and the use of social security benefits.

The Ontario Basic Income Pilot

Regarding the implementation of the experiment in Ontario, the pilot began in June 2017 and participants are enrolled in the cities of: (1) Hamilton, Brantford and Brant County; (2) Thunder Bay, along with the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge and Neebing, and the Townships of Shuniah, Conmee, O'Connor and Gillies; (3) Lindsay. These cities, municipalities and townships were selected for their representativeness of the Ontario's population. Some are mid-sized community as well as urban, rural and urban/rural mixed areas. The participants were aged between 18 to 64 years old. Seniors of 65+ years old are excluded from the pilot as they already received income benefits through the federal and provincial benefits for seniors. The participants needed to be full-time residents of their regions and have stayed there for the past 12 months or longer. The participants selected were living on low-income (under $34,000 per year for singles or under $48,000 per year for couples). Those accepted into the pilot was assigned to either the experimental group (4,000 people receiving the basic income payment) or the control group (2,000 eligible for, but not receiving, the basic income payment). The selected participants in both of those groups received random mailings as an invitation to take part in the experiment, and the participation was voluntary for all (ONTARIO.CA).

During the pilot, recipients of OW and ODSP needed to withdraw their benefits from those programs, but those on ODSP still received their Ontario Drug Benefit and dental benefits. Also, participants

that received child benefits, such as the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) and the Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) continued to be eligible to receive them during the basic income pilot. However, those who received the federal Canada Pension Plan (CPP) or the earnings-based unemployment benefits, the federal Employment Insurance (EI), had their monthly basic income payment reduced dollar for dollar. On the form of the basic income pilot, the basic income was modelled as a Negative Income Tax from which participants were topped-up to 75% of the Low-Income Measure (LIM) regardless of their status. The basic income pilot ensured that participants received up to: $16,989 per year for a single person, less 50% of any earned income; and $24,027 per year for a couple, less 50% of any earned income. People with disability also received at least an additional $500 per month on top of the basic income (ONTARIO.CA). The main objective of the basic income pilot was to see if replacing the Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) with a basic income would be beneficial to recipients on a multitude of aspects, such as: labour market and work behaviours, health, education, food security, mobility and housing, and on net economic and community outcomes (Segal 2016: 5). To enhance the diversity of data sets, Senator Hugh Segal, who was in charge of defining the main lines of the experiment, mentioned that the experiment would not aim at replicating the ones done in other countries, such as Finland (Segal 2016: 5). The pilot was expected to run for 3 years but came to a conclusion in its first year of implementation.

The Finnish Basic Income Experiment

The Finnish basic income experiment started in January 2017. It will last until the end of 2018 but will not be extended afterwards. At its inception, a consortium of different organizations was convoked to work on the preliminary orientations of the projects. Part of the consortium were: the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA), the VATT Institute for Economic Research, many Finnish universities, the National Fund for Research and Development (SITRA), and some other organizations (Healy 2016: 59). In the end, the research department at KELA was given the task to construct and implement the experiment. Ethically, the experiment was constructed in a way that would not weaken or improve the income of the recipients in an unreasonable manner (Kangas 2016: 14). Additionally, KELA did not intend to conduct extended monitoring of the recipients since it could affect their privacy and behaviour. Similar to the Ontarian experiment, the Finnish experiment is not a duplicate of other basic income experiments (Kangas 2016: 4).

On the main features of the experiment, the amount of the partial basic income is 560 euros per month. The basic income is deducted from basic unemployment (Labour Market Subsidy and Basic Unemployment Benefits), as well as sickness and parental benefits. This means that those who are unemployed and stays unemployed during the experiment should not see major changes in their income, while those gaining employment should see a substantial increase of their income. In total,

2,000 individuals are taking part in the experiment. The selection of participants was randomized and compulsory. The recipients were picked from the whole group of basic unemployment benefit receivers (175 000 persons). They are individuals between the age of 25 and 58 who have received or would still be receiving Labour Market Subsidy or the Basic Unemployment Benefit starting from November 2016. They are mainly citizens with long unemployment history or no work history. By targeting the benefits to the unemployed, the objectives of the experiment are to analyze the effect on work disincentives, the labour market behaviour, employment relationships, the income levels and the use of social security benefits. For De Wispelaere and al. (2018), this reflects the "dominant narrative" about work activation in Finland. To the scholars, other perspectives used to promote the case for a basic income (e.g. health benefits, reducing stigma,) are left aside in the political debates. Additionally, the experiment will also look at the basic income effects on the unemployment benefit bureaucracy. Under the current unemployment benefits system, the recipients have to bring personal information to KELA every four weeks (e.g. pay checks, application forms and other clarifications) and they have to apply for sickness or parental benefits. Basic Income could reduce this bureaucracy.

3.4 – THE UNIONS AND BASIC INCOME

Theoretical Literature on Unions and Basic Income

At the moment, the only theoretical literature that specifically tackle the issue of basic income and the unions are a small commentary paper written (Standing 2004) and a more detailed article on the history of unions' responses to basic income and the theoretical expectations of their responses written (Vanderborght 2006). To briefly summarize the findings of these articles, it is possible to see that the theoretical expectations of unions' responses to basic income are still ambiguous. In his article, Vanderborght divides the unions' arguments to be for or against basic income into four different perspectives on: (1). *Collective Bargaining and Individual Bargaining Power,* (2). *The End of Wage Labor,* (3). *Job Sharing and Flexibility*, and the (4). *End of Exploitation*. Vanderborght found that the unions are divided on those four issues and that their approval or rejection of basic income mainly comes from their understanding of the impacts of basic income on these aspects.

The first argument used by the unions was that the collective and individual bargaining power could be affected by the implementation of a basic income. On the positive side of this argument, Vanderborght (2006:5) argues that if the level of the basic income is sufficiently high, it could be used as a source of funding for strike purpose. Since the unionized employees would have a stable income, the unions could demand higher contributions to the strike fund. This would increase the workers' relative power within the firm or branch. Also, even if strike funds are not a part of the unions' typical sets of actions, basic income could significantly decrease the economic burden of

going on specific single strikes. One of the difficult aspects of going on strike for workers is that they may last for a long period of time. With a basic income, the workers would still have an income safety net when strike funds have all been used up. In addition to the strike fund argument, basic income could provide the workers with an exit option from poorly paid or unsatisfactory employment. The existence of an income floor outside of the labour market, without any sort of means-testing or work requirements, may provide the workers with the ability to negotiate for higher wages.

This argument was also made by Guy Standing (2004). The scholar argued that a basic income could actually have positives impacts on worker's salary. It could result in salary raises, especially at the bottom end of the labour market (Standing 2004: 615). However, as Vanderborght notes, and as Birnbaum and De Wispelaere (2016) also argued, the exit option argument might become a "mirage" for workers. The argument is that the workers most in need of escaping employers' domination at work may be the least able to use basic income as an exit-option (Birnbaum 2016: 67). The workers with low jobs-related skills would still not be able to move to jobs necessitating high-level skills. Therefore, they would have to move to other forms of low-skill jobs in which the employers hold the stronger bargaining power position. To them, while basic income may prove to give an exit-option to those with the most unacceptable employment conditions, it is a stretch to assume that it would empower all vulnerable workers. Also, the exit option may benefit high-skill workers the most, as they hold a stronger bargaining power against the employers due to their valuable skills. Therefore, basic income could potentially accentuate the disparity of income between low-skill workers and high-skill workers (Birnbaum 2016: 67). From these arguments, we can see that the theorized unions' arguments on the impact of basic income on bargaining has been contentious amongst scholars.

The second argument expected from the unions is their conception of basic income as a potential end to wage labour. On the negative side, Vanderborght (2006: 6) argues that basic income could facilitate self-employment, which would reduce the influence and potential for actions of unions. In addition to the potential increase in self-employment, a high-level basic income might encourage people to get involved in unpaid informal and care activities, and therefore reduce or eliminate their working hours. This could negate the centrality of paid work, and work ethic, which is at the centre of the unions' identity. A high-level basic income could also encourage the idleness and dependency of people who would not want to work or participate in community or care activities. Therefore, according to the theoretical literature, the impact of basic income on work behaviour would be central to the unions' understanding of basic income, as it would directly affect their own role.

The counter-argument is that basic income would not negatively affect the working behaviour of recipients. In his commentary paper, Guy Standing (2004) argues that: "the vast majority of people

want to work and better themselves; it is an insult to think they would be satisfied with a modest basic income" (Standing 2004: 614). However, Standing does not argue on the potential effect of a high-level basic income on work behaviour. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that the level of basic income is linked to its expected outcomes. For the unions that consider the possibility of a high-level basic income as very remote, and therefore are concerned with modest-level basic income, they may agree with Standing's argument and think that it might not excessively affect work willingness.

The third argument is on the impact of basic income on job sharing and flexibility. On the positive side, Vanderborght (2006:7) argues that basic income might make it easier for workers to take part-time jobs or sabbatical leave. This would enable countries to lower their unemployment rate through the "sharing" of jobs amongst citizens. In this scenario, workers could see the benefit of reduced working hours on their health condition, stress levels and actual productivity while at work. This vision of "good work" has been endorsed by major trade unions in Europe. However, on the negative side, unions may be concerned that rather than choosing to work part-time or reduce their work hours, the workers might be imposed such conditions by their employers. According to Vanderborght this could lead to basic income being a "costly state-subsidized shock absorber, softening the harmful effects of an increasingly flexible labour market for the most vulnerable part of the working class through a higher taxation of gross wages of the middle-class" (Vanderborght 2006: 7).

The fourth argument made by Vanderborght (2006: 8) is that basic income could mean the end of exploitation. In this philosophical perspective, the capitalist societies have reached the stage of "weak abundance" and basic income would simply help to redistribute this abundance according to the rights and needs of the citizens. In that perspective, basic income would help reduce the wealth inequality. On the negative side, Vanderborght argues that the unions might be against basic income as it would mean the exploitation from the low-income citizens towards the middle-class workers. In this perspective, those who choose to work would be taxed at a very high rate, which would increasingly benefit those who choose not to work (Vanderborght 2006: 8). According to Guy Standing (2004), unions might see basic income as undermining the "reciprocity principle", meaning that only those that makes a quantifiable contribution to society deserves to be financially supported. Being himself opposed to this argument, Standing argues that the principle is arbitrary because it has never been applied to the rich or those who inherited wealth (Standing 2004: 614).

Empirical Literature on Unions and Basic Income

Similar to the theoretical literature, there are not many empirical studies on unions' understanding and responses to basic income. There is only one actual scientific research that focused specifically on this subject, the master's thesis of Sabine Wernerus (2004) on the positions of Belgium and Quebec

unions on universal basic income. In this thesis, the unions interviewed were specifically asked about universal basic income. Wernerus' main hypothesis was that the more favourable reception to the concept of a universal basic income in Quebec, in comparison to Belgium, was due to cultural differences. She argued that those differences were based on different perceptions on social policy, work ethic, reciprocity, justice and equity (Wernerus 2004: 7). She also argued that the unions understanding of basic income was linked to the type of welfare states in which these positions were taken and the role of the unions in the industrial relations. In her study, Wernerus found that Belgian unions had not been very preoccupied with the concept of basic income and they did not develop an official policy position on the issue. In Quebec, the largest confederation union, the Conseil Central de la Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN), had already published a report on basic income prior to the thesis. The report detailed the positive and negative aspects of basic income without committing to any specific position on their advocacy or opposition to the policy idea.

To summarize Wernerus' findings, she found four reasons for the Belgian unions to oppose the implementation of a basic income. The Belgian unions were: (1). *Against the non-conditionality of Universal basic income*, (2). *Thought that the financing would be unrealistic* (3). *Thought that there was no major work crisis in the labour market*, and (4). *Thought that work activation was necessary, otherwise it creates disincentives to work*. In Québec, unions had opposite views on all of these aspects. They mainly thought that: (1). *They were not entirely against the concept of a non-conditional basic income*, (2). *Basic income would not necessarily lead to a decrease in work willingness*, and (3). *There is a crisis in work in the labour market* (Wernerus 2004: 58) The thesis' author then compiled her data into an analytical framework, which defined unions' positions into three categories: 1. *Objectives of basic income*, 2. *Principles of basic income*, 3. *Implementation of Universal basic income.* She found that while unions in both Belgium and Quebec were in favour of the objectives promoted by universal basic income, the Belgian unions were against its principles and implementation. Furthermore, while Quebec unions were in favour of its objectives and principles, they were against its implementation. The unions defended this position by saying that the current political climate was not optimal for the introduction of such a policy.

Moving to the second study on the empirical findings on the unions and basic income, in his scientific paper, Yannick Vanderborght (2006) wrote about the positions of the Dutch Union of Food Workers (Voedingsbond) on basic income. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the basic income was high on public agenda in the Netherlands and political parties from across the political spectrum debated the idea. In the 1990s, the Union of Food Workers published leaflets and policy documents arguing for the implementation of a basic income. However, the main union confederation in which they belonged, the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (FNV), was strongly against basic income. Additionally,

the proposal did not appeal to the members of the Union of Food Workers. Therefore, the debates were influenced by a "top-down" approach, in which well-educated staff members decided on this approval of basic income. As one leader of the Union of Food Workers stated: "it proved difficult to mobilise members on such an abstract and long-term objective as BI" (Vanderborght 2006: 14). However, by 2005, the leader of the FNV confederation argued that the idea would have to be thought about again, due to current and future changes in the labour market.

In his article, Vanderborght (2006) mentions that unions in other countries also showed interests and positive attitudes towards the concept of basic income, such as in Spain (Basque, Catalonia), South Africa and Italy. It is noteworthy to mention that the positive attitudes of the Italian unions on basic income might be overstated. In a study on temporary agency workers in Italy, Niccolo Durazzi (2015) found that trade unions were willing to include temporary workers in their demands for better labour legislation, but they were against a universal income support system. Durazzi explains that the Italian unions' identity was based on the notion of the workers, rather than the citizens. According to Durazzi, unions bargained for the inclusion of atypical workers into permanent employment. On the other hand, the unions were reluctant to favour a universal basic income because it could legitimize atypical work and make it a stable form of work (Durazzi 2015: 34).

Regarding the positions of unions in Ontario and in Finland on basic income, I did not find any scientific analysis of the positions of Ontarian unions understanding of basic income. On the positions of the unions in Finland, Johanna Perkiö (2012) found that unions were mostly hostile to basic income in the 1990s and still are to this day. In this study, Perkiö analyzed the discourses not only of unions, but also of politicians and journalistic reporters. She found that while some politicians and journalists were open to the policy idea of basic income, all trade unionists were suspicious of basic income's power to increase employment rates, were worried about its effects on the lowest salaries and collective bargaining system by institutionalizing atypical employment, and also that a basic income would be too low and that it would have negative consequences on the poor. The unions instead proposed to invest public funds in activation measures to create full-time jobs (Perkiö 2012: 13).

Regarding the unions' representatives' understanding of basic income, as an analytical framework for her research, Perkiö used the framing method for data analysis and coded the actors to the debates responses under three main frames: 1. *Work and Activity*, 2. *Poverty and Social Exclusion*, 3. *Past vs. Present*. One of the most interesting aspects of the framed discourse used by Perkiö is that they can be read like a story. The actor who sees "Work and Activity" in a certain way, sees "Poverty and Social Exclusion" in a certain causally linked way, and so on. In this thesis, I took notice of the way Perkiö's results were presented in a form which created a sense of "storytelling". I also intend to provide such a "story" through the use of the concepts of *problem definitions* and *policy solution*.

CHAPTER 4 –THE CONTEXTS: SOCIOECONOMIC & INSTITUTIONAL

In this chapter, I will provide a factual background to the several aspects of the welfare states and the industrial relations contexts between Ontario and Finland. At first, I will describe how and why the Ontarian and Finnish governments focused on two socioeconomic changes in their advocacy for the implementation of the basic income experiments. These two socioeconomic changes are: (1). *The level of poverty and inequality*, (2). *The flexibilisation of the labour markets and the resulting precariousness of workers*. Secondly, I will present the types of welfare states and income security systems in Canada, in Ontario and in Finland. In this section, I will give a brief historical overview of the changes that happened in the welfare state and the income security systems, as well as an approximation of the causal link that led both the current Ontarian and Finnish government to implement basic income experiments. Then, I will describe the income security systems that are temporarily replaced by a basic income for the participants of the Ontarian and Finnish experiments. Finally, I will present the industrial relations and the unions' structures of Ontario and Finland. I will give a historical overview on labour legislation and on the negotiation process of collective bargaining between the unions, the governments and the employers. Then, I will describe the most important labour legislations and the unions' structures in Ontario and Finland. In both places, the unions are differently organized, and this affects their relation to the policy-making processes (e.g. on basic income), and their internal decision-making processes on public policies.

4.1 – THE SOCIOECONOMIC CHANGES

The Level of Poverty and Inequality

In the debates on basic income, the issue of poverty is often discussed. When comparing both the Ontarian and Finnish policy documents on the implementation of the basic income experiments, it is possible to see that Ontarian provincial government was strongly concerned with the issue of poverty, while in Finland the Social Insurance Institution (KELA) was tasked to examine the effect of a basic income on the poverty level. In the discussion paper on the Ontario's experiment, Senator Hugh Segal (2016), who was tasked by the provincial government to present a policy document on basic income, stated that the main purpose of the experiment is to see if basic income could replace parts of the income security system specifically to tackle poverty (Segal 2016: 5). In the document's chapter on "Why Poverty Matters (Ch. B)", the Senator gives many reasons as to why poverty should become one of the main concern of the provincial government. Amongst some of the arguments made by Segal, he mentions that the social assistance system "continues to operate outside the realm of comprehensive government action" and that the rates in the social assistance system have been too "meagre and unstable, and has not led to systemic help across communities" (Segal 2016: 14). In his

harsh criticism of the social assistance system, Segal argued that "it is hard to conclude that the income support that is now available for those living in poverty is adequate in any meaningful way, despite recent improvements introduced by the province" (Segal 2016: 14).

The harsh depiction regarding the rises of the poverty level is reflected in several factual statistics on the poverty level (ICP 2007, Maxwell 2009, Osberg 2011, Poverty Reduction Strategy 2017). When compared to other Canadian provinces, Ontario fares very badly in their effort to decrease poverty. For example, between 1981 and 2010, Ontario had the second-highest increase in poverty in the country at 3.7% (Osberg 2011: 40). In 2017, the poverty level stood at 13.9% of people below the LIM-50 (Poverty Reduction Strategy 2017). Amongst those that faces the most increases in the level of poverty, six groups of individuals are more likely to be below the line of poverty: (1). *High school dropouts,* (2). *Recent immigrants,* (3). *Lone parents (mostly mothers),* (4). *Disabled,* (5). *Individuals aged between 45 and 64 who are living alone ("unattached"),* (6). *Aboriginals* (ICP 2007: 30). Additionally, child poverty and regional family poverty are also quite high. Between 1981 and 2009, the percentage of Ontarian children living below the low-income measure increased from 11.4% to 14.6% (Common Front 2012: 24). In the regions, the decline of the forest industry resulted in higher economic insecurity for communities in Northern Ontario. There is also a shortage of human services (child care, food banks, housing and transport) in rural and remote areas (Maxwell 2009: 5).

On income inequality, Ontario has the second highest level of income inequality in Canada (Common Front 2012: 8). A report from Sheila Block (2017) shows that, from 2000 to 2015, the top half of Ontario families took home 81% of all earnings, leaving only 19% for the bottom half. This share of earning for families in the bottom half fell from 22% (2000-02) to 19% (2013-15). This income shifted from the bottom half to the top half of the income distribution, with the top half's share rising from 78% (2000-02) to 81% (2013-15) (Block 2017: 5). For the Ontario Common Front, which is a coalition of community groups and unions, the tax cuts have "mainly benefitted the wealthy and corporations, and have not resulted in increasing business investment" (Common Front 2012: 9).

In comparison to the poverty level in Ontario, Finland fares much better. As an example of these differences, Ontario and Finland do not use the same statistical formulae to define poverty. In Ontario, the main tool to calculate poverty is the LIM-50, which is based on households with an income below 50% of national median. In Finland, the poverty line is based on households with a net income below 60% of the national median income. Even then, Finland has a much lower percentage of citizens living in poverty. Based on the Finnish poverty line instated at 60% of the national median income, the Finnish poverty rates stood at 12.7% (EAPN 2017: 5). Still, the issue of poverty was given some attention and the researchers at KELA wanted to test the efficacy of basic income at reducing both

the level of poverty, as well as income inequality (KELA 2016: 9). From microsimulations, they expect that the partial basic income being experiment with would be the most efficient at reducing the level of poverty and inequality in Finland (Kangas 2016: 56). This expectation has been one of the reasons why the partial basic income was used as the model for the basic income experiment.

In Finland, the poverty rates are smaller than in Ontario for all at-risk income groups. The rates are also lower than the OECD average. According to the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), the causes of poverty are similar to those mentioned for Ontario. The EAPN argues that poverty is mostly due to: (1). *Long-term unemployment,* (2). *Disadvantages inherited from generation to generation,* (3). *Single Parenthood or living alone,* (4). *Long-term illness or disability,* (5). *Drugs and mental health* problems (EAPN 2017: 8). Even though the level of poverty is much lower than in Ontario, it has fluctuated in increases and decreases in the last 20-30 years. In statistical terms, the number of people with an income below 60% of the national median average has increased from 10.7% (mid-80s) to 15.6% (late-2000s) (Mikkonen 2013: 26). However, the poverty level decreased until 2015, when it reached a low point of 634,000 people with low-income. The poverty level has now reverted back to around 12.7%. Even though it is still at a low-level, the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) expected that the poverty level would re-start its increases in 2017 (EAPN 2017: 5).

Regarding inequality in Finland, the level of income inequality in Finland has always been relatively low in comparison to other OECD countries. In the 1980s, Finland was the OECD country with the lowest amount of income inequality (Atkinson and al. 1995). However, the level of inequality rose sharply in the 1990s. According to the Government Institute for Economic Research of Finland (VATT), reforms in the taxation system were in large part responsible for this increase in inequality, especially the tax reform of 1993. Comparing the impact of taxation on post-tax income share, we see that the post-tax income share (disposable income share) of the top one percent was 77% of its pre-tax (gross income) share in 1987. By the 2000s, this figure reached a peak of 95%, but was reduced to 91% (2006) (Riihelä 2009: 31). Today, income inequality is still decreasing. Finland is now ranked as the fifth country with the lowest income inequality in the world (OECD 2016).

Labour Market Flexibilisation and Precariousness

A second socioeconomic change which was argued by the Ontarian and Finnish governments to have motivated their experiments on basic income was on labour market flexibilisation and the increases in precarious work. In the discussion paper on the Ontario's experiment, Senator Hugh Segal (2016) argued that a basic income could provide incentives for those on social assistance to find work. In addition to receiving the basic income, participants are also allowed to keep a higher share of their earned income. The recipients are expected to take advantage of this opportunity to add to their

income by working (Segal 2016: 42). For Segal, it is the social assistance benefits that should be extended and made more flexible, so that those already on social assistance could receive a higher share of the benefits. However, based on factual observations, the issue of precariousness in Ontario is not only limited to those on social assistance. According to the Changing Workplace Review, about 30-32% of workers in Ontario are precarious. About half of them are in standard employment or voluntary part-time jobs and are not social assistance claimants (Ministry of Labour 2017: 45).

In Finland, according to basic income research team in Finland (KELA), the low-income individuals and households are entirely represented by six groups. These six groups are composed of: (1). *Labour Market Outsiders (long-term unemployed, chronically ill, or on social assistance),* (2). *Unemployed less than 1 year,* (3). *Self-employed with low income,* (4). *Part-time or fixed-term employment,* (5). *Other small-scale entrepreneurs,* (6). *Other small income groups.* While most of the low-income earners in Finland are labour market outsider (43%), the researcher at KELA found that non-standard work (part-time, temporary and self-employment) represents about 20% of those with low-income in Finland (Kangas 2016: 16). Other results which are closer to the methods employed to calculate the percentage of precarity in Ontario, and based on Statistics Finland's Quality of Work Life Surveys, found that the proportion of low-income precarious workers were of 13% in 2013 (Lehto 2014).

To understand the rises in precarious employment, it is important to highlight that not all jobs in non-standard work are precarious. Some workers in non-standard work are highly paid and have good work conditions. They might also have accepted the employment voluntarily, rather than involuntarily. On the other hand, some are in standard or full-time permanent work and are living precariously due to low wages and lack of medical benefits or pension plan. Therefore, the uses of the concepts of labour market flexibility (process) and precariousness (outcomes) are better suited to explain labour market changes and outcomes. The two concepts have often been used in the scientific literature on basic income. It is argued that if a basic income was close to be universal, then it could provide stability to the workers by securing them a monthly income that would not be impacted by the changes in their working life situations. On labour market flexibility, Guy Standing (2011: 31) argue that the labour market is now more flexible in four different ways: (1). *Numerical Flexibility,* (2). *Functional Flexibility,* (3). *Occupational Dismantling,* (4). *Wage System Flexibility.*

(1). The first of those processes, numerical flexibility, is defined as the relaxation of regulation on permanent contract and the facilitation for employers to dismiss workers. Numerical flexibility includes the rises in temporary and part-time workers (Standing 2011). In Ontario and Finland, the shift from well-paid, blue-collar manufacturing employment to low-paid service employment impacted workers. In Ontario, from 1976 to 2015, the share of manufacturing employment fell from

23.3% to 10.8%, while the share of service employment increased from 64.5% to 79.8%. According to the Ontario Changing Workplace Review, the displaced workers: "often wind up in low-wage, non-union jobs in personal services" (Ministry of Labour 2017: 33). In Finland, due to the strong technology sector industries, the shift was not as strong as in the other Nordic countries. Nevertheless, the employment protection legislation (EPL) was liberalized. The probability of being an involuntary part-timer in services is 4.4% to 5.3% higher than in manufacturing jobs (Haataja 2011: 45).

(2). The second process, functional flexibility is the increase of shift in tasks, in positions in a company or shifts from workplaces. It also includes the trend towards self-employment (Standing 2011). In Ontario, it was found that some of the growth in self-employment is due to deliberate misclassification of self-employed workers, so that employers can avoid being liable for "mandatory deductions and contributions to public pensions, employment insurance and workers compensation schemes" (Ministry of Labour 2017: 52). In Finland, the law considers the employee to be the weaker party in an employment relationship. However, the quasi self-employed, which are employed by only one clients, are considered equal to the employer. Therefore, they can not profit from the collective bargaining, and union representation, and have weaker social security protection (Kautonen 2009: 7).

(3). The third process, occupational dismantling, is the dismantling of the self-regulating profession and crafts. These systems of occupations used to control the pace and intensity of work, set standards of efficiency and quality, and codes of conduct (Standing 2011). In Ontario, the precarious workers are often subjected to unpredictable working hours, which results in uncertainty, anxiety and stress (Ministry of Labour 2017: 16). In Finland, a report by Statistics Finland showed that 28% of Finnish workers experienced a high degree of strain related to time pressure at work (Eurofound 2015: 2).

(4). The fourth process, the wage system flexibility, is the loss of income, rights and benefits (e.g. state insurance benefits, paid holidays, sick pay, training and employment security) (Standing 2011). In Ontario, in 2011, fewer than one-quarter of workers in non-standard employment had medical insurance (23%), dental coverage (22.8%), life or disability insurance (17.5%) and employer pension plan (16.6%) (Ministry of Labour 2017: 46). In Finland, temporary and part-time workers have fewer opportunities for training and career prospects than full-time employees (Kauhanen 2015: 12).

In the Finnish basic income experiment, only those who receives the non-earnings unemployment benefits can be participants. However, this does not mean that an implemented basic income could not target those with precarious employment. Also, the impacts on those that will find jobs will be evaluated. Therefore, there will certainly be recipients of basic income that will find precarious employment during the time of the experiment. In Ontario, the participants were selected based on their level of income. Therefore, there is a greater possibility that all low-income groups have been represented, even at the start of the Ontarian basic income experiment.

4.2 – THE WELFARE STATES AND INCOME SECURITY SYSTEMS

The Canadian Welfare State

In trying to understand the Ontarian welfare state, it is important to first look at the national welfare state (Canada). When debating about basic income in the Canadian and Ontarian context, the distinction between the national and provincial welfare states is even more important since the earning-based Employment Insurance (EI) is administered at the federal level, and the social assistance programs (OW, ODSP) are administered at the provincial level. While the Ontarian basic income experiment is only concerned with the social assistance programs, a national basic income could also impact the Employment Insurance benefits. More generally, the provinces are largely financed by the national government and changes in the Canadian welfare state are sure to have a strong impact on the way provinces runs their governments.

In the worlds of welfare state literature, Canada is considered as a liberal welfare state alongside other English-speaking country such as the U.S., Britain and Australia. The countries forming the liberal regimes are known for their weaker rights of social citizenship, the low-level of decommodification of the welfare state, tax systems that are less efficient at tackling income inequality, income security benefits with a poor relief orientation, preferences for private provision and a labour market that does not have effective corporatist mechanism or full employment guarantee (Castles 2012: 633). In comparison to other countries of the liberal regime, and especially compared to the U.S., the Canadian welfare state is relatively encompassing in its level of public services and benefits (Hirschl 2011: 453). For example, all Canadian provinces are legally obliged, by federal legislation, to provide a universal and publicly funded healthcare to their citizens. Canadian seniors are eligible for the federal Old Age Security (OAS) pension, which has been effective at keeping seniors out of poverty (Segal 2016: 19). The Universal Child Care Benefit (CCB), which subsidized the cost of childcare and daycare, is financed by the federal government (children.gov.on.ca). The Canadian federal government also provides funding to the unemployment benefits (EI) and provincial social assistance.

Historically, most of the Canadian social programs, and what can be considered as the Canadian welfare state, emerged in the post-war years. In its inception, the federal government had control over most fiscal resources, but there was still a high degree of cost-sharing arrangements and cooperation between the federal government and the provinces. From the 1960s until the 1990s, the federal government lost its fiscal predominance and the provinces were increasingly responsible for the administration of their own social programs. However, the funding of social programs from the federal government did impact the efficiency of those provincially run programs. According to Carlo Fanelli (2013), a scholar from Carleton University in Toronto, the current relative generosity of the

Canadian welfare state is due to its large investments from the 1940s to the 1970s. He argues that the election of Brian Mulroney of the federal Conservative Party in 1984 constitutes a political landmark for the shift of the federal government from Keynesian economics to neoliberalism. After the 1984 election, there was an indexation of the pensions, the unemployment insurance became financed only by employers and employees, family allowances were removed, and workfare was implemented. To Fanelli, this suggests the political turn from a collectivist ethos to individualism (Fanelli 2013: 105).

During the 1990s, the federal cuts in social programs and privatization of state assets continued with capped transfer payments to the province and the sell-off of many federal companies (Canadair, Air Canada and Petro-Canada). For McBride and Shields, the federal budget of 1995 marks "the point where erosion of social programs ended, and demolition seriously began" (McBride and Shields 1997: 81, in Fanelli 201). The budget included a massive devolution of economic responsibility from the federal government to the provinces. In the 2000s and 2010s, austerity budgets were implemented by both prime ministers Paul Martin (2003-2006), from the Liberal Party of Canada, and Stephen Harper (2006-2015), from the Conservative Party of Canada. Under the current Liberal Party government of Justin Trudeau (2015-…), the funding of certain social programs has increased. For example, in the budget of 2018, the government intends to facilitate employment for women, invest in childcare, and plan to invest $5 billion for indigenous communities (budget.gc.ca). At this time, it would be difficult to assess the impact on the poverty levels in Ontario, but I argue here that these investments represent a parallel with the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Liberal Party of Ontario.

The Ontarian Welfare State

The welfare state of Ontario followed a similar path to the federal welfare state. From the 1940s to the 1980s, the province was gradually transformed from a mostly agrarian economy to an economy focused on manufacture and services in the south, and on the extraction of natural resources in the north (Fanelli 2013: 108). From the 1940s onwards, and similarly to the federal government, there were large investments in the welfare state. However, the increases in spending on social programs in Ontario went on for a longer period than in the federal government. From 1975 to 1981, Ontario faced an economic recession and progress on poverty reduction was halted. To counteract the impacts of the economic recession, the social assistance rates were raised. By 1986, it was found by the Metro Toronto Social Planning Council that the benefit levels had been sufficiently raised and had "largely recovered the ground lost to inflation" (Maxwell 2009: 6).

Following the 1985 election, the coalition formed of the Liberal and New-Democratic Party invested in youth training, education, healthcare, northern developments and increase personal and corporate taxes. According to Fanelli, this election represented the last time that an Ontario government used

Keynesian rhetoric and economics in its policy-making (Fanelli 2013: 108). In the 1991 election, the New-Democratic Party (NDP) was elected with a majority. Their election coincided with a strong economic recession that took place throughout the 1990s. This reduced the room of maneuvering for the NDP, which is known for their cooperation with unions and their concerns with workers wellbeing. During its mandate, the NDP implemented labour market activation policies similar to the "workfare" activation policies of Bill Clinton in the U.S. The NDP became increasingly unpopular, as it alienated its constituencies by enacting policies that contradicted with their stated values.

Then, the election of Mike Harris from the Conservative Party of Ontario in 1995 was followed by distinctly neoliberal reforms. There were tax cuts and welfare programs were cut and privatized. The government had its focus on job creation, on leaner government and on a zero-deficit approach to budgeting (Maxwell 2009: 15). More specifically, the government downloaded provincial services to the municipal service providers, froze the minimum wage at $6.85 for eight years, cut social spending to social service agencies and some government's ministries, cut provincial funding for public transit, and cancelled the JobsOntario training program (Maxwell 2009: 15). The Harris government also enacted cuts, and reformed, the social assistance program. In 1995, the Conservative Party cut the rates for social assistance by 21.6%. In 2000, they replaced General Welfare and Family Benefits by Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) (Maxwell 2009: 11).

The Harris government was re-elected in 1999 and stayed in office until 2003. In the election of 2003, Ontario elected a new governing party for a third time in twelve years. The Liberal Party of Ontario was elected and its leader, Dalton McGuinty, took office. In its first years, the Liberal government improved the rates of social assistance and the minimum wage. However, those changes were minimal and there were little substantive changes to the poverty rate (Maxwell 2009: 4). In her report from 2004, the Honourable Deb Matthews found that the social assistance programs were too complex and that activation measures only prepared for low-paying and part-time jobs. Following the report publication, the Liberal government decided to establish a Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction. The cabinet was chaired by the Honourable Deb Matthews and a poverty reduction strategy was released in 2008: "Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy" (Maxwell 2009: 4).

In the report, the government committed to the specific target of reducing child poverty in Ontario by 25% in five years (Maxwell 2009). In terms of budgets, $300 million were invested in poverty reduction. As much as $240 million of this investment was specifically targeted to the Ontario Child Benefit program. In the election of 2012, the Liberal Party was elected once again, and Kathleen Wynne took office in place of McGuinty. Following the election, the government increased funding in social assistance and planned the raise of the minimum wage from 11.40$ in 2016 to 15.00$ in

2019. In the meantime, the government released the 2012 budget defined by austerity cuts in spending in public housing, education, health care and softened corporate taxes (Common Front 2012: 43).

The Poverty Reduction Strategy was updated in a 2014 report: "Realizing our Potential: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy". In the 2017 annual report, the government proudly assessed their success in reaching a 24.4% reduction in child poverty in the period of 2012 to 2015 (Poverty Reduction Strategy 2017). Overall, the rates of social assistance were raised during the last 12 of 13 years in Ontario (Poverty Reduction Strategy 2016). Importantly for this thesis, the report mentions that the Ontario basic income pilot is a "significant piece of research to complement important elements of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy" and that the government is piloting the experiment to "test whether a basic income can better support vulnerable workers, improve health and education outcomes for people with low incomes, and help ensure that everyone shares in Ontario's economic growth" (Poverty Reduction Strategy 2016). The statements reveal that the experiment was part of the government's potential strategies to deal with poverty and other socioeconomic changes.

The Structure of the Income Security System in Canada and Ontario

As it was mentioned in chapter 3, the Ontario basic income pilot will affect certain income security benefits. During the pilot, recipients of Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) will need to withdraw their benefits from those programs, but those on ODSP will still be able to receive the additional Ontario Drug Benefit and the Dental coverage. Also, participants who receive child benefits, such as the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) and the Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) will continue to be eligible to receive them during the basic income experiment. Those who receive the federal Canada Pension Plan (CPP) or the earnings-based unemployment benefits, the federal Employment Insurance (EI), will have their monthly basic income payment reduced dollar for dollar (Ontario.ca). Therefore, during the pilot, those receiving EI and CPP will only be slightly affected by the basic income benefits. In an actual basic income policy, the EI and the CPP may be impacted differently than under the experiment. For example, a basic income could be implemented nationally, or in combination with legislative changes in the EI and the CPP.

On the structure of the Employment Insurance (EI), the employers and employees' contribution to the fund are the same and they are quite small in comparison to other OECD countries. On eligibility, the worker has to work between 420 and 700 hours during a qualifying period of 52 weeks, depending on the regional unemployment rate. For example, if the unemployment rate is between 0% and 6% in a region, a worker would have to work the full 700 hours to receive the benefit. If the unemployment rate is of 13%, he would only have to work the minimal 420 hours to be eligible. This system is internationally unique and considered to be one of the most complex way of calculating

unemployment benefits. After being acknowledged as a beneficiary, the worker has to wait for a period of two weeks before receiving the first employment insurance (EI) cheque. The benefit duration is 14 to 45 weeks (3 to 11 months), depending on the work history of the worker and the local unemployment rate in his region. The maximum of benefit is of 1,820$. If a person works while receiving regular benefits and have served the waiting period, that person will be able to keep 50 cents of your EI benefits for every dollar earned (CANADA.CA & Van Audenrode 2005).

On the structure of social assistance in Ontario, Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) are both provincially managed, means-tested programs. To be eligible to receive the Ontario Works Benefits, the claimants must provide personal information on: family size, income, assets and housing costs. If the claimant is deemed to be eligible by the Ontario Works Staff, he then must conclude a "Participation Agreement", which states his plan to find work and/or improve skills by participating in training or in education. The maximum benefit rates are of $721 per month for a single person and $1,118 for couples. The applicants who have a job and are earning an income must make sure that this income is less than what they receive in OW. In the first three months of employment, the earned income is clawed back at 100%. However, the first 200$ earned is protected from this clawback. After this period, the clawback is reduced at 50%. Before 2013, the asset limit in Ontario Works was one month's benefits plus 500$ of exceeding assets. With changes in the legislation in 2013 and 2017, this limit has now been increased to $10,000 for an individual and $15,000 for couples. Also, primary residences, primary vehicle values at less than 10,000$, locked-in registered retirement savings plan (RRSPs), and prepaid funerals are excluded from the calculation. The delivery of the benefit is done through municipal governments, district services boards and First Nations (MCSS.gov.on.ca). The OW is said to be a temporary measure, but about one-third of applicants receives it for two years and about 13% receives it for more than 5 years (Béland 2015).

For the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), the claimants must be in financial need and meet the program's definition of a person with a disability. To meet these criteria, the claimants must have: substantial mental or physical impairment reducing the ability to work, care for himself, or take part in the community life (mcss.gov.on.ca). The claimants must provide information on: households' housing costs, income and value of assets belonging to the members of the household. The maximum benefit rates are of $631 for a single person, $917 for couples, and $1,259 if the individual and the spouse are both on ODSP. The recipients who have family dependent under or over 18 years old will receive additional benefits. The assets limits are of 40,000$ for singles, 50,000$ for couples, and an additional 500$ for each eligible dependent. Principal residences, primary vehicles, locked-in RRSPs and trust funds less than 100,000$ are excluded when determining the limit, but bank accounts and cashable RRSPs are included. On the earned income, 50% of the total earned income must be less

than the ODSP benefit. The delivery of the service is done provincially. In 2015, OW and ODPS covered 450,000 individuals in Ontario and 700,000 including family members (ODSP.info)

For the child benefits, the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) is calculated as follow: (1). $6,400 per year for each eligible child under the age of six; and (2). $5,400 per year for each eligible child aged 6 to 17. The amount is reduced based on the family income. If a family earns between $30,000 and $65,000 in net income, the amount of the CCB benefit is reduced by 7% (1 child), 13.5% (2 children), 19% (3 children), 23% (4 children or more). Earnings of more than 65,000$ in net income will reduce the benefits. In the Ontario Child Benefit (OCB), the benefits also varies based on the income of the family. The income lines are ($21,037, $25,000 and $30,000). A family earning $21,037 receive $114.83 per month for 1 child. A family earning $30,000 only receive $55.08. As with the CCB, the amount of benefits varies depending on the number of children (Children.gov.on.ca and Canada.ca).

The Finnish Welfare State

On the potential implementation of a basic income, the Finnish governments and welfare state do not have the same constraints as those of Ontario. In comparison to Ontario, the Finnish government is less limited in the type of basic income it could introduce. This is due to the fact that the national Finnish government could singlehandedly implement a basic income which could impact both earnings-related unemployment benefits and the non-earnings unemployment benefits. This makes it more difficult to foresight the forms that a basic income could take in Finland. While the basic income experiment is mainly targeted at the unemployed, the government is not structurally constrained on the potential implementation of a larger, or universal, basic income.

Regarding the Finnish welfare state, it has often been considered as one of the most generous and encompassing in the world. It currently ranks second on the amount of public social spending with more than 30.8% of GDP, compared to 17.2% for Canada (OECD 2016). According to the worlds of welfare state literature, Finland belongs to the social-democratic welfare state regime alongside the other Nordic countries. The social-democratic welfare states are known for their encompassing income redistribution and free or strongly subsidized public service provision. The values and commitments of the social-democratic welfare states revolves around this universalistic provision of services to all citizens (Castles 2012: 588). Historically, the national Finnish government has been involved in many aspects of the economic development of the country; from the management of social risks to the corporatists' bargains between economic actors (Vartiainen 2011: 34). The firsts welfare state programmes were implemented in the 1930s (pension plan) and 1940s (disability aid). However, the modern system of social and unemployment benefits only truly emerged in the 1950s.

From an historical point of view, from the 1950s to the 1980s, the country transitioned from a rural society into an urbanized society centered around wage-work (Kettunen 2001: 3). While in the 1950s, the Finnish social expenditures constituted about 7% of the country's GDP, in the 1980s this level had risen to 24% of the GDP (Solsten 1988). During the 1950s and 1960s, many social programs were either introduced or reformed, such as: the national pension plan (1957, 1960), the unemployment fund (1959, 1960, and 1972), the construction of hospitals and the establishment of the system of health insurance (1963 to the early 1970s), housing allowances (1960s). These expenditures were mostly covered by the state and the employers, less than 10% of the expenditures were paid by the employees. Until the mid-1970s, the employers had a higher share of social outlays than in the other Nordic countries (Solsten 1988).

During the 1980s, the economic growth of Finland was rapid, and the level of unemployment was low. While the 1980s was a relatively calm economic and political period for Finland, the economic recession of the 1990s was felt harshly and the unemployment level rose rapidly. Between 1990 and 1994, the level of unemployment quintupled and reached more than half a million in a country of five million. The unemployment rate remained high for about a decade and finally fell below the European average in 2005 (Luhtakallio 2012: 114). During and after the economic crisis, the Finnish labour market faced structural changes. The traditional manufacturing sector saw its number of workers decreases, while the service sector saw an increase in workers. In manufacturing, the electronics and communication industry saw large growth-rate, while other sectors declined (Böckerman 2005: 3).

Throughout the 1990s until today, changes in the labour market and the economy resulted in a shift of focus from the government towards services privatization, earning-based benefits and means-tested public supply. This change of focus has been accompanied by a devolution of responsibility from the central government to municipalities. However, while the welfare state is currently being reformed, it still provides a high-quality level of public services. The public support for the welfare state remains high, even if there was a small decrease from 85% in 2000 to 81% in 2005 (Vartiainen 2011: 47).

Regarding the Finnish basic income experiment, the experiment can be seen as being partly motivated by the EU's Europe 2020 strategy. In its 2017 report on the Europe 2020, the Finnish Ministry of Finance wrote under the section on "Poverty Reduction Target", that the experiment was meant to: "explore how social security could be changed to incentivize work and to correspond better to changes in working life. A further goal is to simplify the benefits system" (Ministry of Finance 2017: 33). In that perspective, Oskari Nokso-Koivisto and Tuuli Kaskinen, from Experimental Finland (Kokeileva Suomi), mentions that one of the key project for the government is to introduce an experimental culture which would better inform political decisions (Nokso-Koivisto 2016: 3).

The Structure of the Income Security System in Finland

On the history of the Finnish social security system, the first labour market legislation that was passed in Finland was the "Act on the Protection of Industrial Workers" (1889). Following this legislation, a national pension plan (1937), as well as the Child Care Allowance Act (1948), were introduced (Kettunen 2001: 236). The benefits were meagre and only targeted at a small part of the population. By the start of the 1950s, only 20% of the Finnish population were members of an unemployment fund. At that time, the type of unemployment was seasonal. More than 200,000 workers were working both in wage labour and in their own farms (Luhtakallio et al. 2012: 110). In the 1960s, the Leftists parties and the unions supported a universal unemployment insurance program, while the employers, the conservatives and the social democratic party supported a program targeted to those with continuous employment. The law on employment of 1960 was a compromise between these two options. From then on, the unemployment benefits system became a combination of fund membership-based part, related to the level of previously earned income, and a basic coverage of long-term unemployed and social assistance (Luhtakallio 2012: 111). Legislatively, the dualistic core of the act remained even though new unemployment security laws were passed in 1984, 1993, 1997 and the current Unemployment Security Act was implemented in 2002 (ILO.org).

Since then, the earnings-related fund has been administered by the unions, such as in the "Ghent system". The basic unemployment benefits and the social assistance were administered by the municipalities and are now administered by the state through the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA). Through time, it has been found that the non-contributory type of unemployment benefit has become more dualistic. There has been an increase in means-test and its access has become restricted to more claimants (De Wispelaere 2018: 8). In 1995, approximately 75% of the unemployed were receiving earnings-related benefits or basic unemployment benefits. In contrast, in 2016, there were 167,000 on the earnings-related benefits, 38,000 people receiving the basic unemployment benefit, and as much as 204,5000 receiving the labour market subsidy (De Wispelaere 2018: 8).

On the structure of the Finnish unemployment security system, the system can be divided into two main groups. (1) The first group consist of employment-based benefits securing income. In that group, there are benefits such as: earnings-related pensions, earnings-related benefits and rehabilitation allowances, earnings-related maternity, paternity and parental allowances. It also includes the earnings-related unemployment allowance (KELA 2015: 10). The purpose of that first group of benefits is to maintain, at a reasonable level, the former standard of living in case of an accident, unemployment, illness or retirement. While the Finnish basic income experiment strictly targets the unemployed recipients of the second group, I will still describe the Earnings-Related Unemployment Allowance since it is administered by the trade unions and may play a role in their answers on basic

income. (2) In the second group of income security, the benefits are based on people residing in Finland. This second group includes benefits such as national and guarantee pensions, minimum sickness allowances, housing benefit, minimum maternity/paternity and parental allowances and social assistance. Most relevant to this thesis, it also includes (a) the Basic Unemployment Allowances; and (b) the Labour Market Subsidy. In the Finnish basic income experiment, all of the basic income recipients were recipients of the (a). Basic Unemployment Allowances, or (b). Labour Market Subsidy recipients. Also, since January 2017, all benefits that belongs to the second group have been delivered by the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA 2015: 10).

(1). The Earnings-Related Unemployment Allowance is intended to those who meet the work requirement of having worked at least 26 weeks during the preceding 28 months (KELA 2015: 16). It is administered by the trade unions. The allowance is paid for 400 days, if the person has worked for less than three years or if the person rejects without significant reason an employment promotion measures during the first 250 days of unemployment. In other cases, the allowance can be paid up to 500 days. The earnings-related unemployment allowance consists of a basic part and an earnings-related part. The basic part is equal to the €32.40 per day (+ child benefits) of basic unemployment allowance or labour market subsidy. The earnings-related part is 45% of the difference between daily wages and the basic part. If the monthly pay is higher than the income limit (3,078.00 euros in 2018), the earnings-related component is 20 per cent of the exceeding amount. The benefit can be increased if a person has a sufficient work history or participates in work activation measures (tyj.fi). As of 2015, the funding was done by the state (41.7%), employers (42.5%) and employees (10.4%) and by membership fees of trade unions and unemployment funds (5.4%). In 2012, the total expenditure of all unemployment benefits was €3.5 billion, of which 59.9% went to earnings-related benefit (tyj.fi).

Another way of receiving earnings-related unemployment benefit is through the enrollment into the independent General Unemployment Fund (YTK). This independent fund was created in 1992. It grew rapidly in size during the 1990s and became the largest single unemployment fund in Finland during the 2000s. In 2002, the YTK fund had over 200,000 members (Komsi 2010: 6). According to the YTK website, there are now more than 400,000 Finnish workers, or about 17% of the workforce, who are members of YTK (YTK.FI). Its emergence is one of the reasons for the decline in union membership, since non-members now have the possibility to be covered through an unemployment fund without joining a union. In his own master's thesis, Vesa-Matti Komsi mentions that YTK has "undermined the linkage between unions and unemployment insurance" (Komsi 2010: 6).

(2). Regarding the Basic Unemployment Security, to qualify for Basic Unemployment Allowance the claimants has to register with KELA (KELA 2015: 13). The benefit is targeted at those who are

unemployed, not insured with an unemployment fund, who do not meet the requirement of having been working for at least 26 weeks during the two years preceding unemployment or who have already received earnings-related unemployment for the maximum period of 500 days. People who are in this situation are eligible for (a) Basic Unemployment Allowance or (b) Labour Market Subsidy. Additionally, in 2017 the Unemployment Security Act was amended and an "activation model" was implemented. Under this new legislation, to receive the full amount of unemployment benefit, the claimants have met certain requirements. In a monitored period of 65 days, the claimants need to have been in salaried employment for at least 18 hours or have earned an income of at least EUR 241 from self-employment, or having participated in five days of employment-promoting services or some other employment-promoting activity arranged by the TE Services (KELA.FI).

(a). The Basic Unemployment Allowance amounts to €32.40 per day, or about €697 per month (KELA.FI). It can be supplemented if children are residing in the household. Also, an additional €4.74 per day may be granted to those who meet certain work or training requirements. Gaining an incidental or part-time earnings during the unemployment period will reduce the benefits. A basic unemployment allowance beneficiary who gains more than €300 per month or €279 in four weeks will see is allowance decreased by 50 cents per euro.

(b). The Labour Market Subsidy is intended for the basic or earnings-related unemployment allowance recipients who exceeded the 500-day period of time or those who do not meet work requirements. The full amount of Labour Market Subsidy is equal to the amount of basic unemployment allowance. It can be supplemented if there are children in the household or for supplementary allowance and compensation for expenses. The subsidy is partially means-tested. The capital income of the unemployed person and, for those of under 25 their parents' incomes, may reduce the amount. However, means-testing is not applied during employment promotion measures. Incidental or part-time earnings are adjusted similarly to the Basic Unemployment Allowance. Additionally, social assistance is available for those who still can't provide for themselves and their families (KELA 2015: 55)

4.3 – THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND UNION STRUCTURES

Industrial Relations in Canada and Ontario

In Canada, each province has its own employment-related statutes. However, even if the legislations are different between the provinces, they still share some common features. The main shared feature of Canadian unions is that all of the Canadian provinces have labour laws that follows the Wagner Act. First introduced in the U.S. in 1935, the Wagner Act model is built on the principles of

majoritarianism and exclusivity, the local bargaining units and on the processes of certification and decertification (Ministry of Labour 2017: 45). A second shared feature between the provinces labour relations is that all unions' shares a similar organizational structure. The unions all act under a constitution that regulates officers and elections, the conduct of negotiations and strikes, local officers and their duties, and penalties for certain conduct (Gannon 2015: 52). Those common features in legislations and unions organizational structure create a convergence of interests for Canadian unions. In their text, Kumar and Murray argues that the Canadian unions have their current interests centred around four key areas: (1). *Protection of current wages and benefits,* (2). *Role in the workplace changes, consultation and training,* (3). *Limiting the effects of workplace flexibility,* and (4). *Promoting gender equality, family and working-time issues* (Kumar 2002, in Gunderson 2009: 99).

To briefly cover the history of the legislations on labour in Ontario, the first act along the lines of the Wagner Act was the Collective Bargaining Act of 1943. This act was rapidly replaced by the federal Wartime Labour Relations Regulations in 1944, which was in turn replaced by the provincial Labour Relations Act in 1950. The Labour Relations Act was further amended throughout the 60s, 70s and 80s, but the core of the act remained similar. The first major changes to the Labour Relations Act happened in 1993, when the New-Democratic Party introduced a series of progressive amendments. According to Andrew Jackson and Paul Baldwin (2005) of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the unions' leaders and the research staff in Ontario were "intimately involved in the policy process" under the NDP government and relations between the government and the unions were described as "near-corporatist in terms of devolving policy responsibility from government to business and labour" (Jackson 2005: 24). As it was previously mentioned, the NDP mandate (1991-1993) had not been entirely positive for the position of the workers with the introduction of "workfare" policies. However, it has to be stated that the relations and communications between the union's leadership and the government were strong. This involvement of trade unions on labour legislation and social policy was soon ended by the election of the Conservative Party in 1995. Most of the progressive amendments made by the NDP to the Labour Relations Act were repealed by the Conservative Party.

Since then, reforms to the act (1998, 2000, and 2005) negatively affected the capacity of unions to efficiently organize themselves. However, according to Derek Fudge and John Brewin (2006) of the national union NUPGE, the 2005's amendment was minor in comparison to the previous amendments. It seemed to them that the "severity of the legislative attack" on workers and unions had passed its peak (Fudge 2006: 57). The recent changes from the Ontario Liberal Party seems to be proving them right. In May 2017, the final report of the Changing Workplaces Review was released to the public. The report was initiated by the Ministry of Labour and included some unions as participants in its redaction, such as the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL). The report made several

reform recommendations on three main laws on labour in Ontario: (1). The Employment Standards Act, (2). The Labour Relations Act, and (3). The Occupational Health and Safety Act. Following the publication of the report, the Ontario Liberal Party government implemented Bill 148. The Bill reflects the government's acceptance of many of the recommended changes. However, not all of the recommendations were implemented. The Bill 148 left aside some important recommendations made in the report, such as reforming the modification and consolidation of bargaining units and of tighter compliance with the Employer Standards Act (Goldblatt 2017: 1).

Regarding industrial relations in Ontario, the unionization rates are the second-lowest in Canada. These rates declined from 29.9% (1997) to 26.8% (2015). In the public sector, the unionization percentage increased from 69.7% (1997) to 70.7% (2015). However, the decline has been much more pronounced in the private sector, from 19.2% (1997) to 14.3% (2015) (Ministry of Labour 2017: 38). The drop in private sector unions' density is concerning since as much as 78% of all employment in Ontario are in the private sector. According to the Workplace Review, one of the main reasons for this drop in unionization comes from the losses of jobs in the manufacturing industry. Other potential reasons for this decline include: greater employer resistance to unions, change in labour legislation, failure to modernize the unions and from the Wagner Act model of labour relations itself. Some in the academic community argues that the Wagner Act model is incapable of correctly organizing, conduct bargaining and administering a collective agreement due to its large numbers of small employers (87% of workplaces had fewer than 20 employees in 2015) (Ministry of Labour 2017: 39).

Union Structures in Ontario

On the structure of the unions in Ontario, there are public sector and private sector unions in Ontario. Those unions are included in the same model of labour movement, which is composed of: (1). *The local unions,* (2). *The regional and national unions,* (3). *The labour councils,* (4). *The international unions,* (5). *The provincial federation of labour,* (6). *The national federation of labour.*

(1). The local unions are created when workers on one or more work sites form a union. A local can contain all the workers from different workplaces, or workers who are in the same field of work; it can also contain all the workers of a workplace even if their field of work is different. The functions of the local union are to: deal with workplace problems and grievances, collective bargaining and coordinating the political or social activity. To do the collective bargaining, the local union receives information and advice from regional and national unions, but the local union are still the ones signing the collective agreements and therefore have a significant role in the industrial relations in Canada.

(2). The regional and national unions are more commonly known as the "parent unions". Their role is to provide advice to local unions involved in collective bargaining, educate the members of the union and representing the membership on labour councils, provincial labour federations, or national labour federations. In Ontario, there are two regional unions: the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE, Ontario), the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU). Those regional unions are linked to national unions: the CUPE (Ontario) is linked to CUPE (Canada), while OPSEU is linked to the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE). Then, one of the other largest national union is UNIFOR (Auto Workers and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers), which operates nationally and does not have affiliated regional division of the union.

(3). On labour councils, the labour councils are based on districts (e.g. Toronto & York Region, Windsor & District). Their role is to provide support for the local unions in case of strike, works towards broader social goals such as child care, education, public health care and social services. In Ontario, according to the website of the Ontario Federation of Labour, there are 37 labour councils.

(4). On international unions, while in 1969 more than 65% of all Canadian workers were linked to an international union, this number has decreased to 28.5% of workers in 2006. Their role is similar to the role of the regional and national unions. In Ontario, there is approximately 30 affiliated international unions. The largest international union in Canada in terms of members is the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) with about a quarter of a million of unionized workers.

(5). On the provincial federation of labour, the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) is the only federation in Ontario. The regional unions CUPE (Ontario) and OPSEU are members of the OFL. Its main role is to deal with issues affecting the labour legislation by pressure and lobbying on the provincial and regional governments. It also coordinates the activities of their members unions through communication, education, and research.

(6). On the national federation of labour, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is the only national federation that is linked with Ontario's unions. Only in the province of Québec is there other national federation of labour. The CLC is made up of 90 affiliated national and international unions. It includes all of the unions previously named as part of the Canadian Labour Movement in Ontario. It organizes conventions every three years. During this convention, there are discussions on a broad range of policy issues such as: economic policy, regional development, health care, legislations, human's rights, and other such issues (McQuarrie 2015).

Industrial Relations in Finland

The Finnish industrial relations dates back to the 19th century (Böckerman 2005: 4). The first national trade union, the printers' union, was established in 1896. Then in 1907, both the employers and the employees established their central organizations. The Civil War in 1918 interrupted the unionization practices and the strained relations between the workers and the employers did not relax before the Second World War. In 1940, the unions were formally recognized by the employers. In 1946, the main legislation on Finnish labour, the Collective Agreements Act, was passed. This legislation is still in place as of today, even though it has been amended throughout the years. From the 1940s to the late 1960s, the collective agreement negotiations were conducted at the local level by the trade union. This system of negotiations led to pay competition between the trade unions and created high inflation. In turn, this resulted in a devaluation of the currency. To avoid those negative economic cycles, a broader bargaining system was introduced (Eurofound 2013: 12). In 1968, the labour relations became more firmly entrenched when the first centralized income policy agreement was negotiated between the "social partners" (the unions, the employers and the government).

The 1968 agreement initiated a series of tripartite agreement called "Comprehensive Income Policy Agreements" (Komsi 2010: 12). These agreements marked the beginning of labour market corporatism. The tripartite agreements were intended to cover a wide range of issues, such as: pay raises, taxation, pensions, unemployment benefits and housing costs (eurofound.europa.eu). The agreements were centralized, and their content applies to almost all unionized workers. They were not considered governmental legislation, since they were voluntary agreements between the social partners. They were most commonly valid for about one to two years. Throughout the 1970s to the 2000s, the tripartite agreements were the common form of negotiations between the social partners. For Juho Saari, professor in social and healthcare policy at the University of Tampere, these agreements reflected the Finnish "culture of consensus" (Alaja 2011: 153).

The primacy of centralized agreements came to an end in 2007. The Finnish employers, the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), decided to withdraw from central-level collective bargaining. EK announced that "sectoral, company and even individual-level bargaining will be the negotiation models of the future" (Eurofound.europa.eu). Their justification for this withdrawal was that they wanted more flexibility in negotiations so that the bargaining would better take into account the specific industries' and companies' needs (Jokinen 2017: 95). Following the withdrawal, the industry-level bargaining became predominant in 2009-10. The resulting agreements led to considerable pay increases in some sectors (e.g. +8% and 9% increases in salaries for workers in the chemicals and metalworking sectors). Because of the pay increases and the bad economic conditions in 2011, the employers decided to reintroduce tripartite negotiations between the social partners.

The negotiations resulted in a new form of agreements. Instead of being called "TUPOs" (national income agreement), the agreements were now called "Framework Agreement". These agreements were not as encompassing as the "TUPOs" and they were only applied to industries that had already existing collective agreements. The 2011 agreement resulted in a small increase in wages for all unionized workers and also dealt some working conditions issues. Its main objective was to set guidelines for future negotiations at the industry-level (Jokinen 2017: 90). The following centralized agreement, the "Pact for Employment and Growth", was signed in 2013 and extended in 2015. It also provided small pay increases and dealt with other economic and bureaucratic issues, such as changes in social insurance contributions from the social partners and the rules of the unemployment benefit.

In 2016, the social partners signed the "Social Agreement", also known as the "Competitiveness Pact". The negotiations that led to this agreement were difficult and the government warned the unions that they could face fiscal consolidation if they did not reach an agreement. In March 2016, the social partners did reach an agreement and they established a framework on limits to wage increases for export industries sectors. The 2016 agreement also gave rise to a new wave of sectoral-level collective bargaining (Jokinen 2017: 95). Finally, in 2017, the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) decided to terminate all of its remaining 22 confederation level national agreement (SAK.FI). This marks the beginning of a new era of industry-level collective bargaining, which took 10 years to take hold. However, this does not affect the tripartite negotiations between the social partners on policy issues. To briefly resume, the collective bargaining process in Finland has become increasingly decentralized. Even though the level of unionized workers remains relatively high, it is difficult to predict the effect of this decentralization in the coming years (Jokinen 2017: 98)

Currently in Finland, the rate of unionization stands at 64.6% in 2016 (OECD). In total, this means that more than 2.2 million Finnish citizens are unionised and about 90-95% of them are covered by collective bargaining. These numbers represent a very high rate of unionization in international standards. From the 1960s to the 1990s, the number of unionized workers increased almost uninterruptedly. However, recently the unions' membership numbers experienced a slight decline. The unionization rates of men fell from 62.1% (2009) to 59% (2013), and the women rates fell from 72.5% (2009) to 69.9% (2013). The unionization decline led researcher Esa Jokinen (2017) to argue that there might be further changes in Finnish industrial relations. She argued that while: "no radical changes can be reported as yet, but these may occur in the future. (…) the rather dramatic central-level contradictions may lead to an increased social and ideological polarization of the population" (Jokinen 2017: 98). For Jokinen, despite the signing of some partial central agreements, the power of the workers and the confederation unions vis-à-vis the employers is declining (Jokinen 2017: 99).

Union Structures in Finland

On the structure of the Finnish unions, the unions are occupation or sector-based and they are divided into three categories: (1). *The local unions,* (2). *The national federations of member local unions (trade unions),* (3). *The national labour confederations*.

(1). On the local unions, all unionized workers belong to a union branch/local. The branch may include members of a large workplace or does include workers in smaller workplaces from a same geographical location. These local unions elect a union representative who is authorized to represent the affairs of the employees at the workplace.

(2). On the national federations of member local unions, there are about 80 trade unions in Finland and as much as 70 of those trade unions belongs to one of the three confederations. The trade unions have locally elected representatives who conclude collective agreement with the employer on the behalf of the workers. These collective agreements deal with minimum pay rates and other terms of employment. The trade unions provide advice, guidance, training, activities and benefits to their members. They also administer the sectoral unemployment funds (SAK.FI).

(3). On the national labour confederations, there are three confederations in Finland: SAK, STTK and AKAVA. As explained, their role on collective bargaining changed quite drastically in recent time. Even though the labour confederation still engages in negotiations on public policies and social reforms at the national level, they are not in charge of the negotiations on collective bargaining and for the pay rises of workers anymore. Instead, their negotiations now focus on terms and conditions of employment and other aspects of the working life. They are also engaged in representing the point of view of the employees and in harmonizing the objectives of their affiliated unions. The confederations do not have individual members, but employees belong to the confederation indirectly through their own trade unions. Currently, there are 18 trade unions affiliated with SAK, 17 with STTK and 35 with AKAVA. Approximately one million workers belong to a trade union affiliated with SAK, 640,000 with STTK and 450,000 with AKAVA. These unions all represent workers from different fields of employment. The member fees for all three confederations of unions are around 1-2 per cent of wages and salaries but can be lower for AKAVA members. These fees are tax deductible and are collected by the employers (Böckerman 2005: 13).

4.4 – COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

Throughout this chapter, I have provided the reader with an overview of the socioeconomic changes, the developments in the welfare states and income security systems, and the industrial relations and unions structures of Ontario and Finland. Since those sections were relatively thorough and filled with information, I summarized them in Table 2. This helps to quickly visualize the differences.

Table 2. Comparative Summary Table on Socioeconomic and Institutional Contexts

	Ontario	Finland
Welfare State Regimes	Liberal	Social-Democratic
Socioeconomic Statistics	Social Expenditure (expected for 2019): 17.2% of GDP (TD 2018) Poverty level: 13.9% in 2017 (*LIM-50: 50% of national median income*) Precarious Workers in 2017: 30-32% *(Definition: half in non-standard employment, half in full-time low wages, excludes unemployment)*	Social Expenditure (2016): 30.8% of GDP (OECD 2016) Poverty level: 12.7% in 2017 *(Below 60% national median income)* Precarious Workers in 2013: 13% - 20% *(Definition: non-standard employment, full-time low wage, excludes unemployment. Wage earners who regularly work more than 10 hours a week)*
Structure of the Income Security System	(1) Earnings-Related Unemployment Benefits *(Employment Insurance (EI): Run by Federal gov.)* (2) Social Assistance *(Run by the provinces)* (a) Ontario Works (OW) (b) Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) *(+child benefits, drug benefits, pension, etc.)*	(1) Employment-Based Benefits (a) Earnings-Related Unemployment Benefits (*Run by trade unions*) (b) Independent Unemployment Fund (2) Basic Unemployment Security *(Run by KELA, Finnish Social Insurance)* (a) Basic Unemployment Allowance (b) The Labour Market Subsidy *(+additional social assistance, child benefits, pension, etc.)*
Types of Labour Relations	<u>Wagner Model:</u> Mostly local bargaining agreements.	<u>1968- 2017</u>: Tripartite agreements on collective bargaining <u>2017 - …:</u> Sectoral and local collective bargaining agreements. Confederations still involved in tripartite policymaking.
Unionization Rates	2015: 26.8%	2016: 64.6%
Unions' Structures	(1) The Local Unions (2) The Regional and National Unions (3) The Labour Councils (4) The International Unions (5) The Provincial Federation of Labour (6) The National Federation of Labour	(1) The Local Branches/Unions (2) The National Federations of Member Local Unions (*Trade unions, Sector-based*) (3) The National Labour Confederations

CHAPTER 5 – Comparing Policy Ideas

In the previous three previous chapters, I have discussed the theoretical and conceptual frameworks informing the construction of this study, the previous scientific literature on the concept of basic income and provided an overview of the context in which the basic income is discussed by the unions' representatives in Ontario and Finland. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how the theoretical and conceptual approach used in this thesis has served to define the study. I begin by explaining how the research puzzle has been defined by the aims and the main research question of this thesis. Then, I describe the method in which the data collection has been performed for this thesis. In this case, the data was collected based on a selection of unions' representatives key informants and the process of semi-structured qualitative interviews. Following this explanation, I present the ways in which the data was analyzed: social constructivism, abductive reasoning, thematic analysis, and the analysis of the findings through theoretical and empirical scientific literature on the unions and basic income.

5.1 – THE RESEARCH PUZZLE

In this thesis, my objective was to provide new and scientifically valid information about the ways in which unions' representatives' subjectively understand the policy idea of basic income. This examination is relevant for scholars interested in basic income since the literature on this issue is currently very scarce. In case of the implementation of a basic income, the unions would be important policy actors and could impact the viability of basic income. They would be involved in policymaking that could lead to its implementation, either through direct involvement in its implementation or through their advocacy or opposition to the policy in the public sphere. Therefore, to gain additional knowledge on the unions' understanding of basic income, I asked the following research question*: how do Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' understands the policy idea of basic income?*

This comparison was undertaken from a social constructivist approach, meaning that the actors' understanding, and beliefs of what reality is shapes the ways in which the institution (*unions*) can act (Alho 2015: 60). The comparison between the representatives' answers was particularly interesting because of the large differences between their socioeconomic and institutional contexts. I expected that the unions' representatives' understanding of basic income would reflect these contextual differences and that the ways in which they understood the main socioeconomic and institutional *problems* would be reflected in how they understood the *viability* of the proposed policy *solution* at solving those defined problems and their *outlook* and future actions on basic income. I also wanted to compare the findings made in this study to previous empirical and theoretical studies on the unions and basic income. By undertaking this comparison, I wanted to provide additional data to the previous empirical findings and to provide insights on the validity of certain theoretical expectations.

5.2 – DATA GATHERING: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

Qualitative Interviews: Case & Respondents Selection

On the case selection, the choice of interviewing unions' representatives in Ontario and Finland was based on the "most different" case selection methods (Seawright 2008: 11). This type of case selection method had also been used in the only previous scientific research on the subject, the master's thesis of Sabine Wernerus (2004). Regarding this current thesis, both Ontario and Finland have large differences in their institutional contexts (welfare states, income security systems, labour legislations, collective bargaining and the structure of the unions). Also, both basic income experiments are dissimilar in their forms. These differences were an intriguing starting point for the study since the preliminary readings of unions' responses to basic income, which were based on policy documents and journalistic articles, seemed to indicate a similar opposition to the policy idea in spite of their large institutional differences. By selecting two widely different country and province, my intention was to explore how these differences mattered when the unions' representatives were asked about their understanding of the same specific policy idea of basic income. Additionally, the choice of country was influenced by a desire to conduct a temporally relevant study. Many scholars are interested in learning more about the experiments and the concept of basic income, even if the basic income experiment in Ontario has recently been cancelled. The findings from this thesis will certainly provide relevant insights to the scientific community interested in the policy idea of basic income.

Regarding the formation of the *analytical unit*, my approach is influenced by the Giddensian double hermeneutics, which is concerned with understanding the national frameworks of meanings and narrative that are constituted and reconstructed by elites or key informants (Giddens 1976, in Kuisma 2017: 435). Therefore, I do not intend to compare each union interviewed with one another or between similar types of unions. For example, I do not intend to compare the responses to basic income of public sector unions in Ontario, or other specific types of unions, with those of Finland. Previous research on unions have shown that such an undertaking necessitates a strong similarity between the specific unions of different countries, which is not the case here (e.g. Hyman 2001). Instead, the analytical focus will be on comparing the unions' responses to basic income in the more general provincial/national labour movement contexts of Ontario and Finland. To gain the required wider perspective on the labour movements, I decided to interview relatively similar types of unions in both Ontario and Finland. The unions selected can be classified under the following types: (1). *Confederation Unions,* (2). *Public Sector Unions,* (3). *Private Sector Unions,* (4). *Industrial Sector Unions*. Therefore, even though the comparison is based on the "most different" method, the selection of similar types of unions provide a credible way to consider the provincial/national labour movements as the analytical unit through which the findings will be compared.

Table 3. Types of Unions Interviewed

	Ontario	Finland
Confederation Unions	CLC (Canada)	SAK STTK
Public Sector Unions	OPSEU CUPE (Ontario)	YKA (*Social Science Professionals*)
Private Sector Unions	UFCW (*International union, Food and Commercial Sector*)	PAM (*Service Sector*)
Industrial Sector Unions	UNIFOR (*large industrial sectors*)	Industrial Union

In this thesis, the data was collected through semi-structured qualitative interviews with elite key informants (*unions' representatives*). In the key informants' selection method, the informants are selected due to their prior knowledge of the subject on which the interview will be centered. This knowledge may be based on their "special social positions, experience, participation in a program or professional expertise" (Kumar 1989: 8). In this study, all of the unions' representatives (in all 10; from Finland 5 and from Ontario 4, from Canada 1) that were interviewed were full-time officials who were either official spokesperson on the issue of basic income or were regarded as an authoritative union representative on the issue, for example by being economists or member of the research staff at the union. Interviewees were invited to take part in the interviews through my own selection of staff member in key positions on social policy in the unions' website. Others were recommended to me by other unions' representatives in the manner of snowball sample (Flick 2002: 54). A list of the unions interviewed is inserted in "Annexe 1" (p.109).

Qualitative Interviews: Interview Process and Data

All of the ten interviews with the unions representatives happened between the months of January to April 2018. The interviews ranged from 50 minutes to 2 hours and 30 minutes, with an average of approximately 1h30-1h45 minutes per interview. Five interviews were done face-to-face (SAK, CUPE (Ont.), OPSEU, CLC, UNIFOR), and five interviews were done through Skype (Industrial Union, UFCW, STTK, PAM, YKA). During all face-to-face interviews, the location of the interview was done in either the professional office of the interviewee or in my own professional office. It is noteworthy that eight unions and their representatives declined to be interviewed. Their reasons ranged from: (1). *Wanting to wait for the current basic income experiments to be over before making comments,* (2). *Not very implicated in the debates on basic income and referred me to a confederation union,* or (3). *Too busy with unions' activities to partake in the study*.

Regarding the type of interviewing, I used the semi-structured theme interviews as the main form of data gathering. In the scientific literature, semi-structured interviews are described as being a structured form of data collection based on a certain amount of theoretical or methodological foundation (Blandford 2013: 2). To start the interviews, I presented myself and explained the aims of the thesis. By doing so, I let the unions representatives know that their interviews would serve to expand the embryonic knowledge on unions and basic income. Then, I moved on to the bulk of the interview questions, which were influenced by prior readings of the literature on the basic income and the unions, as well as on the welfare states and the industrial relations in both Ontario and Finland.

During the interview, the questions were not strictly followed, and the interviewees answered some of my questions in advance. Even though the questions specifically related to basic income were concentrated at the end of the questionnaire, the interviewees talked about basic income right from the start and all throughout the interview. In this way, interviews often felt more like conversations. Also, during some interviews, the interviewees brought up aspects which I had not previously thought about, and their answers were reflected in the subsequent interviews' questions. For example, the question on the unions' views about Poverty and Inequality was only added after I realized that the issue was talked about during all of the first couple of interviews with Ontarian representatives. This illustrates the notion and impacts of reflexivity on the interview process. The interview plan is presented in "Appendix 2" (p.116).

On the issue of reflexivity, it is important to mention that all of the interviews were done in English, even those with the Finnish unions' representatives. While the answers received from the Finnish representatives were quite complete and well explained, it is impossible to know if these answers could have been even better explained in their own language. I would argue here that the long duration of the interviews permitted to take pauses during the interview to clarify certain point that may have been misunderstood. Therefore, it did not seem that the difference in native language played a determinant role in the unions' answers and in my subsequent transcription of these answers.

Following the completion of all the interviews, I started to code and analyze the findings. From then, I found out that there were certain interview points which were not talked about by some of the unions representatives. Therefore, I sent an additional e-mail requesting some new information from the representatives. However, these additional questions were sent during the summer and few of those contacted answered back to me. In the data analysis, all the selected extracts were gathered from the original interviews and only one extracts was selected from the subsequent e-mails (YKA representative, p.72). However, the rest of these additional answers helped me have a better overall understanding of the meaning of basic income for the unions' representatives.

5.3 – DATA ANALYSIS

In this thesis, the qualitative data was analyzed through a social constructivist approach (Alho 2015). In a social constructivist perspective, it is argued that it is impossible for researchers to gain an objective knowledge about the social world. Instead, researchers should look to gather and analyze an actors' *understandings* about the meaning of a certain phenomenon (Alho 2015: 60). It is this *understanding* from the actors that shapes the ways in which the institutions can act. For example, the policy actors interviewed in this study, the unions' representatives, may think that other policy actors are responsible for a certain situation (e.g. the governments' actions lead to rising levels of poverty). Even though this understanding may not actually be true, or at least only partially true, the *understanding* of the issue may have tangible impacts by shaping the unions' actions or strategies, which in turn shapes the world around them. Since my intentions are to uncover how the unions' representatives construct their reality, the constructivist approach was suitable for the data analysis.

Additionally, from the social constructivist perspective, the economic and social contexts play a role in shaping an actor's *understanding* of a phenomenon. In this study, since both the Ontarian and Finnish contexts are widely different, the unions' representatives are expected to conceive of certain concepts and issues (e.g. precariousness, bureaucracy, etc.) in culturally bound and differentiating ways. Through the data analysis, this study's objective will be to show how and why these understandings differs between the Ontarian and Finnish representatives. For example, in some cases, the difference in the representatives' understanding of an issue may be due to the union' structure and the involvement of the union on that issue, which can reflect the place of the unions' in the political spectrum. In other cases, their understanding may be more related to overarching changes in the efficacy and aims of the welfare states, and their understanding of the links between these changes and the basic income. In those two examples, the institutional and socioeconomic contexts play a role in shaping the actor's understanding of specific concepts and issues.

Similarly, the researcher's and the interviewees' can arrive to different understanding of a specific issue. This means that the researcher has to remain open to many different types and forms of social understanding. Therefore, after going through the process of socially interacting in the interviews and doing the coding process, the researcher should not revert back to essentialism and produce a report on the objective realness of the findings. The researcher's objectives are not to present how the representatives' truly understands basic income, but to aptly define the ways in which the qualitative data was collected, organized and analyzed, as well as how the findings were presented (Burr 1995). Therefore, in this chapter, my intentions are to reflexively present the ways in which I constructed my own understanding and analysis of the unions' representatives understanding of basic income.

Abductive Reasoning and Thematic Analysis

This thesis' analysis method includes both abductive reasoning and thematic analysis. The method of thematic analysis is mostly applied to uncover and interpret the meaning of qualitative data, such as texts or interviews. One of its the advantages is that it provides researchers with theoretical freedom, which is reflected in my use of abductive reasoning (Braun & Clarke 2006). In this study, the use of abductive reasoning was deemed consistent with my previous readings on policy ideas, on the theoretical and empirical literature on basic income and on the context in which the unions are involved in policymaking. Those readings influenced my research questions and the data analysis.

To briefly define abductive reasoning, it consists of a continuous interaction between theory building and analyzing the data throughout the research (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). The approach mixes both deductive reasoning, which is built around the process of forming hypotheses from the theory and testing it through the data (top-bottom), and inductive reasoning, which intends to build new theories strictly based on the collected data (bottom-top). In contrast, in abductive reasoning, the theory is built from the observation of a "surprising facts" or "puzzles", rather than through the testing of an already established theories. According to Dmitry Yagodin, the logic behind abductive reasoning is to create a functional mapping of the "range of possible hypothetical explanations and the making of inferences concerning the most probable hypothesis" (Yagodin 2014: 120). In an exploratory manner, the objective of a research which uses abductive reasoning is to "develop recommendations or a kind of a road map for subsequent research" (Vasyukov 2003: 186, in Yagodin 2014).

According to Charles S. Pierce, abductive reasoning follows this pattern:" (1). The surprising fact, C, is observed; (2). But if A were true, C would be a matter of course, (3.) Hence, there is reason to suspect that A is true." (Peirce 1955:151). Coming back to thematic analysis, my own finding of the "surprising fact" was done in the **first phase of thematic analysis, which involves "familiarizing yourself with the data" and the "transcription of the verbal data**" (Braun & Clarke 2006: 17). Through my initial readings of the literature on basic income, and especially of Wernerus' thesis (2004), as well my initial familiarization with the interview data, I realized that there were links between the ways the unions' representatives understood socioeconomic problems and the potential impact of basic income on these problems. These links were "surprising" since they seemed to influence most of the arguments used by the representatives for their views on basic income. This led me to search for a theoretical framework which would facilitate the study of policy ideas, problems and solutions in a social constructivist perspective. By using Mehta's (2011) theoretical framework, I could now provide a theoretical justification for the methods chosen to analyze the interview data, which is to construct a thematic analysis based on the scientific literature on policy ideas and *problem definitions* and *policy solution,* as well as with the literature on the unions and the basic income.

Having in mind that the thesis' data analysis is based on a social constructivist perspective and abductive reasoning, the uses of thematic analysis was intended to bring to light a certain *understanding* of the policy idea of basic income from the unions' representatives perspective, which would be interpreted through the lens of my own previous readings and research with the scientific literature on policy ideas, on basic income and on the Ontarian and Finnish contexts. By using thematic analysis to organize and analyze the interview data, my intentions were not to present how unions' representatives "truly" or "objectively" understand the policy idea of basic income. Instead, my intentions were to generate organizing categories (*problem definitions, policy solution* and *political outlook)* and themes that have a strong basis in the scientific literature on policy ideas and on basic income, while at the same time being abstract and encompassing enough to show how the different contexts influences the unions' representatives understanding of basic income.

According to Pertti Alasuutari (2011), there are two interrelated phases of qualitative data analysis: (1). *Simplifying the Observations*, and (2). *Solving the Mystery*. In the first phase of simplifying the observations, the first step involves the selection of the most relevant empirical observations. To simplify the observations, I constructed an analytical framework based on Mehta's (2011) theoretical framework on the study of policy ideas. In this thesis, the analytical framework constructed includes the analytical category of: *problem definitions, policy solution* and *political outlook.* Through these categories, my intentions were to construct a framework that would simplify the information given by the representatives on their understanding of: (1). *Social and Economic Changes*, (2). *State and Employers Strategies (including the policy idea of basic income)*, (3). *Union Structures*, (4). *Institutional Context of Industrial Relations*. These four variables where included in this thesis' conceptual framework and the representatives based most of their answers in the interviews on their understanding of some issues included in those variables. The framework is presented in Table 4:

Table 4. The Analytical Framework

	Ontario (Can.)	**Finland**
Problem Definitions (Socioeconomic and Institutional Problems and/or Changes)		
Policy Solution (Basic Income Forms, BI Impacts on Recipients and Institutions, BI Financing)		
Political Outlook (Positions and Future Involvement on Basic Income)		

After having constructed the analytical framework and familiarized myself with the data, I moved on to **the second phase of "Generating Initial Codes"** (Braun & Clarke 2006: 19). This phase represents the coding of the data in its "most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998: 63). In that phase, I separated and coded the excerpts which were considered as *problems*, *solution* or *outlook*. Most of the excerpts that were simply descriptive were deemed irrelevant to the analysis. For example, I had no intention to code excerpts in which the representatives explained the *objective* functioning of the income security systems. Since the thesis' point of departure is the study of the unions' representatives *subjective understanding* of basic income, I intended to only code excerpts where representatives talked about their understanding of the constraints or opportunities present in, for example, the social security systems. In other words, I was looking for the unions' representatives takes or opinions on an issue, not a description of the modality of the income security systems.

In **third phase of "Searching for Themes"**, I looked at the quality of the codes and excerpts and their links to the thesis' conceptual framework and research question. In thematic analysis, the coded excerpts need to be "illustrative of the analytic points the researcher makes about the data, and should be used to illustrate/support an analysis that goes beyond their specific content" (Braun & Clarke 2006: 25). To provide a generalization of the understanding of *problems definitions*, *policy solution* and *political outlook* amongst the representatives in a given national/provincial context, I actively selected excerpts which showed a good depth of explanation, repetition, or consensus about certain issues. My intentions were to generate themes sufficiently abstract to represent the answers from both Ontarian and Finnish representatives, while still maintaining the ability to uncover their contextualized and culturally-bound understanding of the policy idea of basic income.

Regarding the analytical category of *problem definitions*, in order to "solve the mystery" (Alasuutari 2011) about how the unions' representatives conceives of socioeconomic problems in their contexts, I generated themes sufficiently abstract to represent the answers from both Ontarian and Finnish representatives. In doing so, I intended to facilitate their subsequent comparison in the *problem definitions* by showing the differences in the representatives' understanding of the conceptual framework's variables: specific socioeconomic changes (e.g. poverty, precariousness), unions' structures (dealing with precariousness), policies/state strategies (e.g. criticism of the government, activation measures), institutions (e.g. bureaucracy). To analyze the understanding of these *problems* from the unions' representatives, I used the conceptual notions of *naming, blaming and claiming* found in Mehta's (2011) theoretical framework on policy actor's understanding of *problem definitions*. Through these concepts, the analysis intended to answer the following the sub-research questions: (1.) *What are the different problems?* (2). *Who is to blame?* (3). *What should be done?*

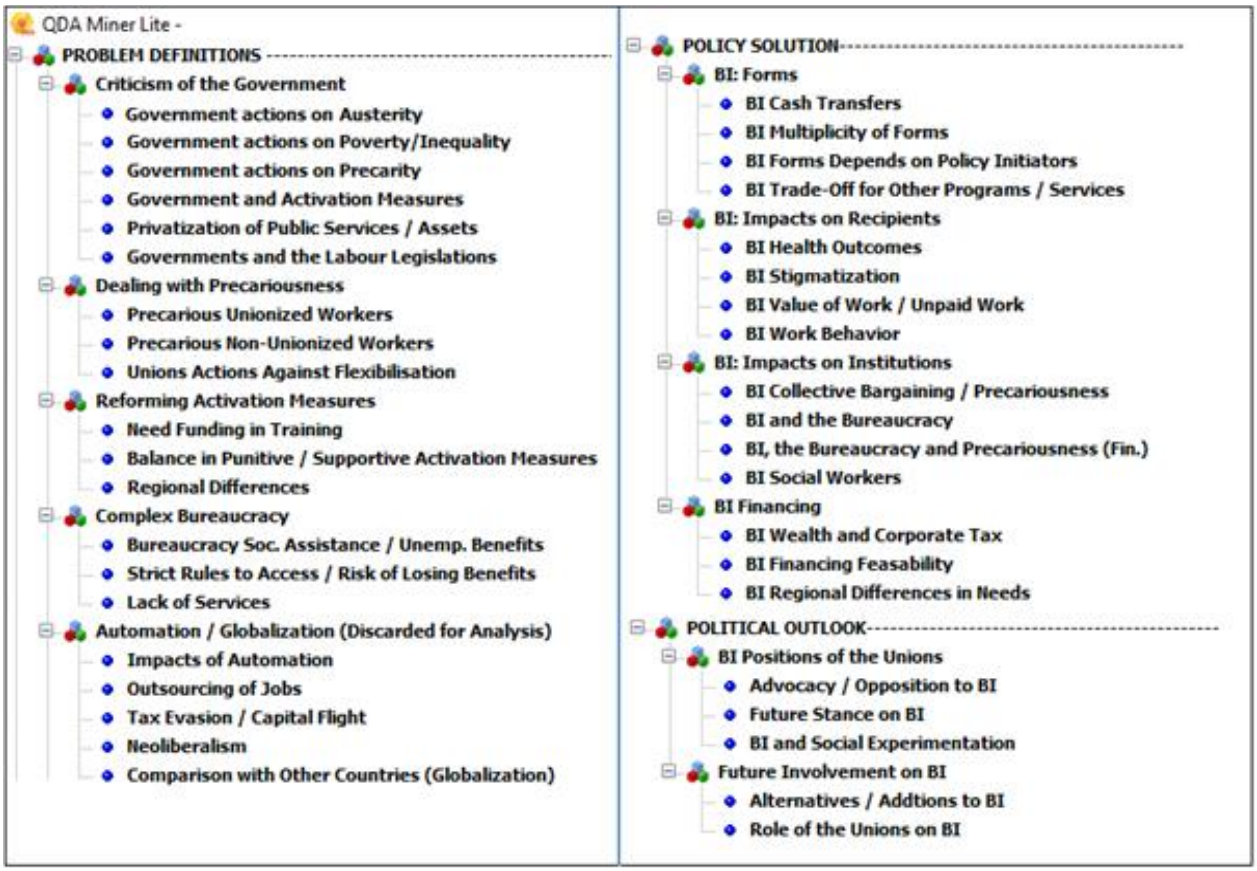
For the analytical category of *policy solution* and *political outlook,* I also generated themes sufficiently abstract and encompassing to represent the answers from both Ontarian and Finnish representatives. The themes generated were directly related to the potential impacts of basic income on the defined problems. These themes were intended to provide information on the expected *policy*, *administrative* and *political viability* of basic income (Hall 1989). Additionally, in *policy solution*, I generated themes which had already been discussed in the theoretical and empirical literature on the unions and basic income. Even though this scientific literature is very scarce, there are some studies which looked at the arguments used by unions' representatives to either support or oppose the concept and potential implementation of basic income. Some of the findings in those studies (e.g. impact on recipients, impact on bargaining, type of financing of basic income) were used to construct the *policy solution* themes of this thesis. In this thesis, Wernerus' (2004) and Vanderborght's (2006) findings on the unions' understanding of basic income were used to construct the *policy solution* themes.

By constructing themes which are similar to those found in the scientific literature, I intend to undertake a comparison which will indicate if unions with a similar welfare state and industrial relations features (Ontario/Québec vs. Belgium/Finland) have a similar understanding of basic income. This comparison will provide a stronger empirical ground for further studies on the unions' *understanding* of basic income, especially for the study of "most-similar" cases. Secondly, the arguments of the representatives will be contrasted to theoretical assumptions made in certain scientific papers. In doing so, I want to understand if those theoretical claims can be generalized to all unions' understanding of a basic income, or if these claims are only valid when contextualized.

In the **fourth phase of "Reviewing the Themes"**, Braun & Clarke (2006: 20) argued that there are two levels of reviewing and refining themes: (1). *Reviewing all the collated extracts for each theme, and consider whether they form a coherent pattern*, and (2). *Consider the validity of the "thematic map" and its relation to the data set as a whole*. At this stage, some themes collapsed into each other. For example, the theme of "Criticism of the Government" was initially divided in many different types of problems. In trying to solve this issue, I realized that most of these codes had in common that the uses of the concept of *blaming* (Mehta 2011), which was not present in all of the other themes. This justified the creation of the theme of "Criticism of the Government". Then, the thematic map was modified by discarding the themes of "Automation" and "Globalization". The answers from the representatives in these themes were too diverse and not always related to talks on basic income.

To exemplify the coding of the qualitative data, I will insert in Figure 2 a screenshot of the organizing categories, themes and codes as they were organized in the data analysis software:

Figure 2. Screenshot of the QDA MINER Coding Frame



The **fifth phase of "Defining and Naming Themes"** begins when the thematic map appears satisfactory (Braun & Clarke 2006: 23). In that stage, the objective is to further define and refine the themes that will be presented in the analysis. The intention is to define the "story" of what the themes are about. I will now present the themes and identify the sub-themes used in the data analysis:

Problem Definitions (Chapter 6.1)

- ***Criticism of the Government:*** This theme relates to the different "public" problems initiated or increased through the actions of the governments. In other words, it focusses on the *blaming* of the government for certain issues (Mehta 2011). In Ontario, the problems of poverty and inequality were mostly discussed, while in Finland the main problem was on activation measures.
- ***Dealing with Precariousness:*** This theme refers to the *naming* of precariousness. In other words, who is precarious and what entails precariousness. Also, actions taken by the union, *claiming*, to counter the rises in precarious employment on unionized and/or non-unionized workers (Mehta 2011). The level of precariousness was perceived as more problematic in Ontario, than in Finland.

- ***Reforming Activation Measures:*** This theme refers to the *naming* and *claiming*, or demands, about better activation measures (Mehta 2011). It asks the question of what types of activation measures reform would be best? This theme looks at activation measures impacts on both the unemployed and the precariously employed. While Finnish representatives considers necessary to enact reforms, the Ontarians' *blame* the government as these measures leads to precarious jobs.
- ***Complex Bureaucracy:*** This theme refers to the *naming* of the complex access and retention of income security benefits and the lack of services which leads to the recipients' difficulty to understand the income security systems, and the *claiming* for simpler systems (Mehta 2011).

Policy Solution (Chapter 6.2)

- ***Basic Income: Forms:*** This theme reflects the malleability of the basic income concept and uncertainty about its potential forms if implemented. It looks at the fears of a potential substitution of certain policies for a basic income. It includes two sub-themes which clearly demonstrate this issue: (1). BI Trade-Off for Other Programs/Services, (2). BI Forms depends on Policy Initiators.
- ***Basic Income: Impacts on Recipients:*** This theme is centred around one sub-theme: (1). BI Work Behaviour. It looks at the main arguments used by the representatives on if basic income would increase, lower or maintain work willingness. Comparison with theoretical/empirical literature.
- ***Basic Income: Impacts on Institutions:*** This theme deals with BI potential impacts on institutions, such as the unions themselves and the power of workers through collective bargaining, and through the bureaucracy of the income security systems. It includes two sub-themes: (1). BI Collective Bargaining / Precariousness, and (2). BI and the Bureaucracy (and Precariousness, Fin.). Comparison with the theoretical literature.
- ***Basic Income: Financing:*** This theme deals with the potential ways and the political/economic feasibility of financing a Basic income. It is strongly linked to the concept of *administrative viability* (Hall 1989). It is also analyzed with the dimensions of "financing" (De Wispelaere 2015).

Political Outlook (Chapter 6.3)

- ***Basic Income: Positions of the Unions:*** This theme refers to the unions' positions on basic income. The data will be mostly descriptive as it serves to reflect in less than two sentences the culmination, or not, of the *problem definitions* and *policy solutions* into a specific position.
- ***Basic Income: Future Involvement:*** This theme refers to the planned actions from the unions on basic income. It asks what is the unions role in basic income debates? Both themes in *political outlook*¸ will later serve as basis for analyzing basic income *political viability* (Hall 1989).

The **sixth and final phase of "Producing the Report"** begins when the themes are fully formed. It involves the final analysis and the writing of the report. Through the report, the researcher needs to tell the complicated story that represents its qualitative data in a way that can convince the reader of the quality and validity of the analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006: 23). In this study, I will first present the socioeconomic and institutional problems defined by the unions' representatives. Then, I will present findings which will show if the representatives think that basic income offers an adequate response to the defined problems. Finally, I will show how the representatives plan on being involved in further research, debates or actions regarding basic income. This will tell the "story" of the findings.

CHAPTER 6 - The Unions' Representatives' Understanding of Basic Income

In this chapter, I will present findings from the interviews that I conducted with ten unions representatives in both Ontario and Finland with regards to their understanding of the policy idea of basic income. Following my theoretical and conceptual framework presented in chapter 2, I will first present the representatives' understanding of the most prominent socioeconomic and institutional problems in their respective contexts (*problem definitions)*. This will serve as a starting ground to understand the ways in which the representatives themselves conceives of their contexts and how these contexts relate to their views on the basic income. Then, I will demonstrate that the representatives have different expectations about the form a basic income could take in their respective contexts and that it could have different types of impacts on the recipient's work willingness, on institutions (collective bargaining / bureaucracy), and that its financing could be done through different methods (*policy solution)*. Finally, I will present the positions taken by the unions on the implementation of a basic income in their respective contexts and their expected future involvement with the policy of basic income (*political outlook)*. During this chapter, I will compare the representatives' answers to empirical and theoretical literature on the unions and basic income.

6.1 – PROBLEM DEFINITIONS

In this section on the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' *problem definitions*, there will be an overview of how the representatives conceive and focus on certain socioeconomic and institutional problems in their specific provincial or national contexts. I will demonstrate that the unions' representatives' defined these problems in different ways, which reflect their own understanding of the social and economic changes happening in their own contexts, the state and employer strategies that tends to solve or escalate those problems, the structure and actions taken by the unions, as well as the institutional context of industrial relations in which the problems occur. The defined problems will be analyzed through the concepts of *naming, blaming and claiming* found in Mehta's theoretical framework (Mehta 2011). By using these concepts, I will be better able to analyze and clearly convey the arguments made by the representatives during the qualitative interviews. The defined problems will also be compared to those voiced by the Belgian and Quebec's unions in the empirical literature on the unions and basic income. By comparing the arguments made by the Ontarian and Finnish representatives to previous scientific literature, I will provide a stronger empirical ground for further studies on the unions' problem definitions related to basic income. Finally, the problem definitions will help us understand which socioeconomic and institutional problems basic income should be aimed at solving. This will provide a first step towards the understanding of the forms that a basic income could take in the specific provincial or national contexts for the unions' representatives.

6.1.1 – Criticism of the Government (Theme 1)

In the first theme, both the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives expressed their criticism of some of the actions taken by their governments. However, the representatives focused their criticism on different issues. In the Ontarian context, all of the representatives mentioned that they were displeased with the rises of poverty and inequality, and the role of the provincial and federal governments in mitigating or aggravating those problems. For the representatives, poverty and inequality affect people in different ways. Several concrete examples of the effect of poverty were *named* by the representatives, such as the increases in food insecurity, homelessness, the hollowing out of the middle class and the collective negative impact on the society. While all representatives *named* the consequences of poverty differently, they all did attribute at least part of the *blame* for its increases to the provincial and national governments. The representatives *claimed* that the government could start to tackle poverty and inequality by: (1.) *Increasing the funding of public services*, (2). *Making it easier to join a union by enacting new labour laws*.

> ***OPSEU:*** *I definitely think that there is a crisis in poverty now. There's definitely more that I can see. Being on the frontline with the applications that come in. I think the government needs to do more in regard to funding more basic programs, or public service programs and on public transit, housing, and child care. (…) I think they're slowly starting to recognize that poverty is real here.*
>
> ***UFCW:*** *Responsible legislators in political parties have realized that they have to do something. That there is a gap between the hollowing out of the middle class and the people with tremendous wealth. (…) They don't have the courage to put forward real labour law reform which should make it easier for workers to join the union, which would go a long way to solve the problems.*

By analyzing the excerpts through Stone's (1989:285) concepts of *unguided/purposeful* actions and *intended/unintended* consequences, we see that the unions' representatives from Ontario thought that the provincial government had not tried hard enough and that their policies were insufficient to mitigate these issues. While some mentioned that the Liberal provincial government, under Premier Kathleen Wynne, did *purposefully* act to decrease the level of poverty by investing in income security programs, the representatives thought the government only did *intend* to solve parts of the problem, but not its whole. This criticism echoes the ones made by Senator Hugh Segal (2016) in his discussion paper on the basic income pilot. In that paper, Segal argued that despite recent improvement, the amount of income support was inadequate for those in poverty. Additionally, the Ontarian government themselves argued that the basic income experiment had the objective of being an important complement to some elements of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy and ensure that people get a share of Ontario's economic growth (Poverty Reduction Strategy 2016). In that sense, both the governments and the unions were aware of the problems linked to poverty and inequality. They all mentioned being actively looking for a solution. However, the Ontarian unions' thought that the government was to *blame* for this situation, which led to a certain mistrust of their intentions.

In a similar way, for the representative at CUPE, there is an unequal balance between the rights of the citizens and the responsibility of the state. For the representative, the cutbacks made by the federal governments in welfare programs were partly, but even more directly and purposefully, responsible for the increases in poverty and inequality levels. It has to be mentioned that the representative at CUPE also extended this criticism to the provincial government later in his interview.

> **CUPE:** *Canada is much closer to the US than it is to Finland or Sweden or Denmark. In that sense, it has never been the right mix of individual and state responsibility, but over the past forty years there has been a general tendency to retrench the welfare state everywhere. Even so, people points to Sweden, they will recognize that it's not what it was in the 70s. There have been cuts, an erosion of the universality. The tendency has been the same in Canada, but since we started from a more limited position, the role of the state in providing has diminished in a way that I would argue exacerbate the problem of poverty and depravation and inequality across the board.*

In comparing the answers given by the Ontarian representatives to the empirical literature on the unions and basic income, we see that the Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec (FTQ) was also opposed to the idea that poor people should be reponsibilized for their economic situations. The FTQ argued that the increases in unemployment was due to the lack of work, which resulted in poverty. They argued that the provincial government had the responsibility to provide sufficient economic means to those living in poverty. In a similar way to the extract from CUPE's representative, the FTQ argued that there was an unbalanced share of responsibility for an individual' wellbeing between the individuals and the state (Wernerus 2004: 49). This reflects the similar contexts and welfare state (Canada) in which both Ontario and Québec are provinces. In Canada, the provincial income security systems are based on benefits with a poor relief orientation (Castles 2012: 633). Therefore, the representatives' focus and understanding of the issues of poverty and inequality should play a role in all potential provincial implementation of a basic income. However, it needs mention that the role of the state in the increases of poverty and inequality is only part of a broader understanding of their causes amongst the representatives. Other factors, such as globalization, automation or the employer's actions were discussed, but did not reach as strong of a consensus.

In Finland, the unions' representatives *blamed* the national government for one of their most recent legislation (amendment of the Unemployment Security Act, 2017) which increased the punitive activation labour market measures. For the representatives, the balance between the responsibility of the state to provide for its citizens' well-being shifted towards individual responsibilities with the legislation. According to the representatives, due to the government's *purposeful* legislative choices, the consequences faced by the individuals were also *intended* by the government (Stone 1989).

> ***PAM:*** *Some economist says the activation model impact is that the unemployed invited to a job centre are shouted at that they are lazy, "why don't you get a job". It has the same impact, it's a punishment. Unions say that it's actually the government trying to save money by cutting benefits.*

> ***SAK:*** *That last change in the unemployment benefit that's going in the wrong direction. That's one thing we are very, very opposed to. It's only on the individual. "If you do not find work, we're going to cut your employment benefits". (…) In the new regulation, the responsibility from the citizen it's very, very strong. The individual can't do anything about it. If there's no work, you can't have a job.*

In comparison to the Finnish basic income experiment, both the recent legislative changes in activation measures and the experiment are interested in monitoring the results on work willingness (Kangas 2016). However, these policies are diametrically opposed on their focus on income support or punishment to increase work willingness. While the Finnish representatives are against the increase in punitive activation measures, some favour a "balance" between the activation measures rather simply giving an unconditional benefit. This is the case for the representative at YKA who *named* the problem with activation measures as one of "balance" and *blamed* the government for this situation.

> ***YKA:*** *Under this government era, there's a very powerful unbalance between the activation measures and the support the people get to be active. (…) Activation measures are not bad if they are balanced with the support and services people need to be active and they have the reasonable possibilities to fulfill their potential in this system, but if we just increase negative incentives and activation measures without supporting them at the same time, the balance is unfair.*

Comparing these answers to the unions and basic income literature, Belgian unions representatives were similarly in favour of a balance on negative and supportive activation measures. For the Belgian representatives, the "responsibilities were as much on the side of the claimants, as they are on the side of the institutions in charge of their work reinsertion" (Wernerus 2004: 47). The similarity in answers from the Finnish and Belgian unions may be due to the similar structure of their industrial relations systems, which is based on the Ghent system and high-level of unionization, and because of similar activation measures policies. In comparison with the Belgian unions, we see from the scientific literature that both Finland and Belgium operate similar types of activation measures. These measures are intended to facilitate employment by enacting "changes (financial incentives) that encourages claimants to work (FI) or provide incentive for employers to hire the unemployed (BE)" (Van Gerven 2009: 65). For the Finnish representatives, the focus on *blaming* the government for the state of the activation measures was conditioned by the fact that the amendment of the Unemployment Security Act only had only just been implemented and was still temporally very relevant. Also, it was *named* as a problem since it contradicts the usual encouragement to work through financial incentives.

In a comparative perspective, the centrality of the issues of poverty and inequality in Ontario was reflected by the policy documents on the Ontarian experiment and by the general focus on poor-relief income security benefits. These concerns impacted the Ontarian unions' representatives' *problem definitions* in that they were skeptical about the real intentions of the governments to solve the poverty and inequality problems. In Finland, the recent punitive activation measures were seen as a shift from public responsibility to the individuals, which forced the unemployed back into the labour market.

6.1.2 – Dealing with Precariousness (Theme 2)

In the second theme, it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' have different understanding of the impacts of work precariousness on the workers. In Ontario, in a similar fashion to their definition of poverty, the representatives saw the problems with precariousness as multifaceted. All of the representatives defined the issue in a different way, but the core of the issue remained centred around the involuntary part-time, temporary and the self-employed workers. Amongst the ways in which the problem and the consequences of precariousness was *named*, the representatives mentioned that it had led to downward pressures in wages and work conditions, increased work time adjustment and the flexibilisation of certain unionized work sectors such as social work, the schools' system and the hospitals. For the Ontarian representatives, while the issue of precariousness is greater for non-unionized workers, it now also includes the unionized workers.

> ***CUPE:*** *We have a significant number of part-time, casual and precariously employed members. Social Service workers, in the social service sector, face a significant amount of precarity. About 30% of the workers in the education sector are part-time employees, we have seen a growth in casualization in schools over the past decade or so. (…) The hospital sector has seen the rise of part-time precarious workers, so basically across the board. We are facing some of the same problems that the labour market as a whole is experiencing.*
>
> ***OPSEU:*** *We have more precarious work than what we had before. We have members that actually hold two different contracts because they're part-time and can't live off on one contract. (…) The EI (*employment insurance) is based on their earnings. So, they probably don't' have enough to live off with unemployment. I can see them having to go to Ontario Works or another safety net to actually get benefits. They might not have enough hours to qualify for EI.*

Additionally, one of the representatives mentioned that the problem now reaches sectors of work that require a high-level of skills, such as the advanced manufacturing sector. Most of the employees in these high-skills sectors are unionized. Therefore, we can assess from these excerpts that precariousness is concerning for the Ontarian unions representatives, and that it might be expanding.

> ***UNIFOR:*** *We found, as research have been done in different industries, that precarious work is reaching out its tentacles into all sorts of other sectors. It might have been at one time just the service industry for example, but you can look at heavy manufacturing, advanced manufacturing and see a lot of people are precarious.*

This relaxation in the regulation on permanent contracts is defined through the concept of "numerical flexibility" (Standing 2011: 31). The argument is that there is currently a general relaxation in the governmental regulations on permanent contracts. In the Ontarian Workplace Review (2017), the most commonly argued reason for this relaxation is that deindustrialization that made it easier for employers to dismiss workers from their blue-collar manufacturing employment to lower-paid, non-unionized and less protected type of employment. In the Workplace Review, other reasons were

defined as greater employer resistance to unions, change in labour legislation, failure to modernize the unions and the inefficacy of the Wagner model to cover workers in small unions (Ministry of Labour 2017: 38). Therefore, in the scientific literature, there is an interplay between the responsibility of the state and employers for the rise in precariousness.

In the interviews, most of these reasons were discussed by the Ontarian representatives. However, rather than *blaming* others for this situation, the representatives were mainly concerned with the *claiming* of their own share of responsibility. According to Kumar and Murray, this reflects the third main area of Canadian unions' actions, which it to limit the effects of workplace flexibility (Gunderson 2009: 99). For the Ontarian representatives, some of the most important reasons for the rises in precarity were due to the misclassification of workers in their work contracts and the decline in the amount of full-time jobs. Therefore, the actions taken by the unions have been to: (1). *Push for full-time employment*, and (2). *Increase the monitoring of work misclassification through legislation*.

> ***UFCW:*** *Our effort has been to expand the number of full-time positions and make sure that employers are not taking liberty in hiring three part-timers instead of just hiring full-timers or hiring part-timer and giving them full-hour to classify them as part-timer.*
>
> ***CUPE:*** *We try to negotiate language that, or collective agreement language, that would convert part-time or temporary position into permanent jobs. Collective bargaining is one way, but we also participated actively in the changing workplaces review and were supportive of the fight for 15 and fairness (15$ minimum wage) to look for legislative changes that would give greater protection for precariously employed workers.*

In these excerpts, we can see that the representative at UFCW did *blame* the employers for the rises of work misclassification. However, both the representatives at UFCW and CUPE were mostly concerned about their own tackling of work misclassification than on blaming either the employers or the provincial or national governments. I argue here that the focus on the unions' own effort to tackle the problem of precariousness is due to the institutional fact that most precarious workers falls in a grey area between the provincial social assistance, and the federal unemployment benefits. As hinted by the OPSEU's representative, there are two ways in which precarious workers could be included in income security programs, either through facilitating their access to the social assistance benefits or lowering the threshold on work-time and income to access the federal employment insurance (EI). The structure of the industrial relations in Canada push the EI issues to the federally based unions, such as NUPGE or CUPE (Can.). Therefore, since precariousness can be discussed in two different political level, it becomes more difficult to pinpoint or *blame* any specific institutions.

In Finland, there was also a consensus amongst all of the representatives interviewed that the issue of precariousness has been acknowledged. However, while these issues seemed to be growing in importance for the representatives, there was no consensus about its current impacts on workers. All

of the Finnish representatives *named* that the most pressing issue concerning the work precariousness was about the income protection of self-employed workers. For the representative at PAM, the problem was still "marginal". For that representative, the rather strict legislation against work misclassification was considered as one of the reasons why most precarious workers were covered at an adequate level. However, it was *claimed* that this issue should be investigated sooner than later.

> ***PAM:*** *The platform economy/jobs, the self-employed, it's still quite marginal in Finland. Maybe because of strict legislation or because we are so up in the north and big companies are not as interested, like in the retail sector. I think labour unions quite widely think it is future problems, these challenges should be taken in consideration now and not in the future because it may be too late.*

Other representatives thought that the self-employed don't have a good unemployment fee as they fall in-between the earning-related and non-earnings benefits. They *claimed* for a reform.

> ***STTK:*** *I think that we have quite a good system compared to many countries because employers are willing to finance the unemployment and pension fund. We have these problems with self-employed who don't have a good unemployment fee or income (…). Now we have this preparation for the whole social security reform and we want to make it simpler*
>
> ***YKA:*** *There's a hole between two different unemployment security systems, but there is a policy process going on that's aiming at people being able to insure themselves both as entrepreneurs, no matter what type of company you have either self-employed or whether you hire people to work for you as well, so you would be able to insure yourself as an entrepreneur.*

Even though the understanding of the level of the problem with precariousness varied between the representatives, there was an understanding that these problems may increase in the future and that the *social partners should and will be involved in the upcoming social security reform aimed at adapting the system to future work norms*. In contrast to Ontario, the Finnish industrial relations structure enables the unions to have a more direct communication with the national government, through the tripartite bargaining on policy issues (Komsi 2010: 12). Therefore, the representatives envision to tackle the issue of work precariousness through a reform of the unemployment benefit to make it more inclusive, especially for the self-employed workers. Overall, the representatives seemed to have positive expectations that the social security reform would provide self-employed workers with a greater level of income security. Therefore, while the self-employed workers are not sufficiently covered at the moment, this situation may not be as problematic in the future.

In a comparative perspective, we can see that the different structure of the industrial relations between Ontario and Finland impacts their actions to deal with precariousness. In Ontario, the unions claim that they need to be more active, or "combative", against employers that take advantages of holes between social assistance and employment insurance. They also want to pressure the governments in adopting fair labour legislation. In contrast, the Finnish unions intends to rectify those holes by cooperating with the government and the employers in the upcoming social security reform.

6.1.3 – Reforming Activation Measures (Theme 3)

In the third theme, it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' have different ideas about the types of reform needed for activation measures. In Ontario, most but not all of the unions' representatives did talk about the need to reform the activation measures system. In the Ontarian social assistance system, the claimants of the benefits need to sign a "Participation Agreement" meant for them to find employment. To facilitate their search for work, the unemployed are also be provided with training opportunities (MCSS.gov.on.ca). For the Ontarian unions' representatives, these training measures do not always lead to stable and well-paid jobs. In some case they can even decrease an individual's wellbeing. Therefore, the representatives *blamed* the government's efforts as counterproductive since their goals is to increase the level of employment, even through low-paid and precarious jobs. They *named* two problems with activation measures: (1). *They are badly designed and provide training of low quality*, (2). *They lead to precarious work*.

> ***UNIFOR:*** *We have lots of programs and we spend a lot of money, but the design is not great. If I think about the programs that assist people in finding jobs, employees of that system are focused on checking off boxes. You get funded based on provided training, not providing relevant training or training that can get you a job, but whatever training available.(…) There's lots of jobs that people move into from being unemployed that actually decreases their wellbeing overall. If our systems are designed for a labour market where any job is better than no job, we will fail a lot of people.*
>
> ***OPSEU:*** *The actual policy of the government used to be full-time employment, and they have moved away from that. Any job creation even if its precarious work, the government sees that as a job, but it might not lift people out of poverty. On training, there are programs out there because we have the ministry of advanced education skill development which do apprenticeship and second-career funding, but it's not enough for everyone.*

The Ontarian representatives have an understanding of the activation measures similar to the concept of "workfare". In the scientific literature, the concept of workfare has been defined as "a responsible way for government to influence recipients' morality; they should be shaped into competent or functioning citizens by blaming themselves for their poverty and accepting 'employment as duty'" (Pennisi & Baker Collins 2017). According to the representatives, while the recipients are responsibilized, the government itself does not consider their responsibility to provide good and stable jobs to those participating in activation measures. In comparison to the scientific literature, it is interesting to see that the representatives' statements reflect the studied outcomes of activation measures for the recipients. In Ontario, Lightman (2007) found that around 20 to 50% of the recipients who left the social assistance system (OW) returned to social assistance due to the low quality of the jobs they got. Additionally, as much as 10 to 20% of Ontario Works recipients are "repeat returners or cyclers" (Lightman *et al.* 2007: 37). Therefore, the representatives argued that activation measures participate in the increase of work precariousness. This may explain why adding conditions to receiving social assistance, or basic income, was not understood as a *solution* for the representatives.

In Finland, the discussions on activation measures were central to their *problem definitions*. As previously explained, the Finnish representatives did not think that the activation measures system is badly designed. Instead, one of the term used by the representatives was the need for a "balance" between the negative activation measures and the supportive activation measures. The most recent amendment of the Unemployment Security Act is seen by the representatives as increasing the unbalanced situation. In defining this problem, the representatives *named* one main issue with the activation measures: *the lack of financial resources in training and activation services*.

> ***SAK:*** *What we would want is more activation measures, what we mean with activation measures, is that the actual person would contact the unemployed. They make a plan on how to find a job, what to do if you don't find a job, if you don't have the education, or if you need rehabilitation they would help you with that. There are simply not enough people in the office, in the employment offices, to contact the unemployed. We think there should be more.*
>
> ***STTK:*** *We should have a lot more resources to help people to find a job and not increased sanctions or punishment. That's the trends at the moment in Finland, we are discussing activation labour market measures. The question is whether it should be done by increasing punishment or helping actually people to find a job with better services. In STTK, we see that we should have more resources to help people to find jobs and make better services all over Finland.*

The Finnish representatives approached the debates on income security reform through the concept of "conditionality" (De Wispelaere 2015: 52). To all of the Finnish representatives interviewed, the access to the unemployment benefit system should be conditional on participation in training or by actively trying to find employment. However, to demand that claimants respect those conditions, the representatives argued that there must be a fair chance for them to partake in these activation activities. That is why the representatives *claimed* for the government to increase investment in the services offered to the unemployment benefits claimants. Additionally, some representatives argued that the requirements included in the punitive activation measures are more difficult to attain for those in regional areas. This represents an additional argument for the investment in supportive measures.

> ***STTK:*** *We have problems with equality in Finland. We don't have services and jobs all over Finland. And still the punishments and obligations are the same for everybody all over Finland. We should have more resources for services so that everybody would have a guarantee to have the services and help to find a job. But now we have like obligations, but they don't get services all over Finland. It's a very unbalanced situation.*

In a comparative perspective, the discussions about reforming the activation measures was much more prominent in Finland. In Ontario, the supportive activation measures were seen as "workfare" policies which participate in the increase of work precariousness. The inefficient activation measures reinforced this socioeconomic problem by creating more precarious and low-paid jobs. In Finland, the representatives argued for an increased public investment in activation measures support and services. In Finland, the concept of conditionality was not as problematic as for the Ontarian unions.

6.1.4 – Complex Bureaucracy (Theme 4)

In the third theme, it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' have a relatively similar understanding of the problems with the bureaucracy of the income security systems, but they *claim* for different changes. In the Ontarian context, the representatives *named* three problems with the bureaucracy of the social assistance benefit: (1). *Complex maneuvering and lack of services,* (2). *Risk of losing benefits if the gained income from work is too high,* and (3). *Difficult access to EI.* For the representatives, the claimants of social assistance are left to themselves to find out which benefits they are entitled to. In that sense, the representatives argued that the provincial government sees the maneuvering the social assistance system as the responsibility of the claimants, not theirs. Also, once the claimants receive their benefits, they are still at risk of losing parts of the benefits (e.g. clawback on earned-income, health and disability benefits) when they gain employment.

> ***CLC:*** *They don't tell you what you're entitled to, or how to get the most out of a program. You have to know what the program is and demand for certain services. If you need medication and they have a program that subsidizes it, they don't ask you about it, you have to know and apply.*
>
> ***UNIFOR:*** *There are so many barriers that comes with that system when you're moving from employment to unemployment, to social assistance and back again. You would potentially lose dental care, pharma care, health care, if you gain employment. That causes legitimate reasons to not try to work if your job isn't going to provide for your life the way other system does.*

Related to "Dealing with Precariousness" (Theme 2), the representatives *claimed* that the provincial government could facilitate the retention of social assistance benefits by letting the recipients keep a higher share of earned-income through lowering the clawback. Currently, the earned-income is clawed back at 100% for the first three months in social assistance. Afterwards, it is reduced at 50% (MCSS.gov.on.ca). Lowering the clawback would make the system more seamless for the claimants but would be quite costly for the provincial government. Therefore, for the representatives, solving the problem of the complex maneuvering of the social assistance system is a matter of investment and governmental responsibilities, rather than simply one of re-designing the system. Still, this lowering of the clawback would only benefit those that are already receiving social assistance. Further provincial and federal legislation would be needed to benefit all the remaining precarious workers.

> ***CUPE:*** *The social assistance system in Ontario clawback earned income at a rate that makes it more difficult for people to get by. Some rules could be reformed, it would give people greater access to earning an income and still keeping their social assistance payment without having it clawed back, but other changes would be necessary for part-time workers, casuals, temporary agency workers, like changes in the employment standards act and labour relations act.*
>
> ***UNIFOR:*** *The employment insurance system (*EI) is inadequate in that not everyone who pays into it can access it. Given the increase in temporary work, part-time and all sorts of precarious situations, people are paying into a system that they are unable to access.*

The call for inclusion was similarly echoed in the scientific literature on the unions and basic income. The FTQ (Québec) argued that the social security systems needed to be adapted to include those with precarious work status (Wernerus 2004: 53). Similar to the province of Quebec, Ontario operates in-between a federally managed employment insurance system and a provincially managed social assistance system. This means that both the social assistance (Ont.) and the employment insurance (Can.) would need to be reformed to give a better access to a secure income for all precarious workers.

In Finland, the unions representatives *named* similar problems with the unemployment benefit system: (1). *Complex maneuvering and lack of services,* (2). *Risk of losing benefits if the gained income, or work time, is too high.* At first, the Finnish representatives *claimed* that the unemployment benefit system needs to be made simpler for those who would want to find employment or retain their benefits, in an effort to incentivize them to take on work. For the representatives, the delays to receive the unemployment benefit should be shorter. Additionally, the clawback of earned-income should not be as strict, and the overall maneuvering of the system should be simplified to incentives to work. In contrast to the Ontarian context, the Finnish representatives were more inclined to simply *claim* for the re-design of the system, rather than to advocate for massive governmental investment.

> ***Industrial Union:*** *It's a bit old and it was created in the mid-80s. We need to fix it somehow. It's difficult if you just take a short job for a few days. You have to explain to the cashier at the unemployment office how much you earned. They will say how much you get without any work. If you work you'll get a bit less, but you earn a bit more altogether. But, you have to wait for the tickets and if you work 2-3 days, then you will get your unemployment money later.*

> ***YKA:*** *There are requirements that you can't work for more than 80% of full time, because after that you're going to lose your unemployment benefit. (…) The system needs to be more understandable because sometimes the influence for people to work when they are partly on a benefit, is not in fact about economic incentives, but it's a bureaucratically difficult situation. They don't understand what they can and can't do so they are afraid to do anything. Making the current system more understandable, simpler. It could also make it easier for people to take part-time jobs or start a small company. Lowering bureaucratic difficulty incentivize people to be active.*

Also, still in contrast with the Ontarian context, for the Finnish representatives, the *naming* of the problem of the complexity of the unemployment benefit system was targeted to the inefficient "modality" of the payment of the benefit to those able to work but unemployed, and those with precarious employment. There were few non-problematized mentions of the other benefits.

> ***SAK:*** *If you get too sick you get the benefits, if you have a kid you get the benefits. Those are all linked to the fact that you cannot work at that time. That's how it's all build upon. Something happens in your life and you get support for that. When that situation is over you go back to work.*

In a comparative perspective, the Ontarian representatives made *claims* for more personal services to manoeuvre the social assistance system, to keeping additional health and disability benefits once one finds employment, and to lower the clawback of earned income. In Finland, the representatives also made *claims* for a simpler system, mainly to incentivize unemployed people to take on a job.

6.2 – POLICY SOLUTION

In this section on the *policy solution* of basic income, there will be an overview on the representatives understanding of the policy idea of basic income in their respective contexts. I will demonstrate that the representatives have different expectations about the form a basic income could take and that they would not want it to be a trade-off for other public programs or services. Then, I will show that the Ontarian and Finnish representatives had different expectations of its impacts on recipient's work willingness, on institutions (collective bargaining / bureaucracy), and that basic income could be financed through different methods. Throughout this analysis, the understanding of basic income will be compared to empirical and theoretical literature on the unions and basic income (Wernerus, Vanderborght, Standing, De Wispelaere). From this comparison, I will demonstrate that Québec's unions understanding of basic income is similar to Ontario, while Belgian unions are closer to the Finnish unions. This reflects the similar unions' structure and contexts in which they operate. I will also compare the representatives' answers to theoretical claims on the expected unions' positions on basic income and I will demonstrate that most claims are contexts specific and not generalizable.

6.2.1 – Basic Income: Forms (Theme 5)

The fifth theme is on the expected forms that a basic income *(policy solution)* could take in the Ontarian and Finnish contexts. The data will be analyzed through two sub-themes: (1). *Basic Income: Trade-Off for Other Programs/Services*, (2). *Basic Income: Forms depends on Policy Initiators*.

Basic Income: Trade-off for Other Public Programs / Services:

In this sub-theme, it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish representatives fears that the implementation of a basic income would be done through replacing investment in other public programs or services. In the Ontarian context, all of the representatives interviewed were in agreement that basic income is not a single well-defined policy, but that it represents a multifold set of aims and policy forms. For all representatives, the implementation of a basic income could mean many different things depending on its form. It could be either very beneficial for the recipients, or it could even lead to the marketization of the welfare state. By using the Ontarian basic income experiment as a starting point for discussing the forms that a basic income could take in Ontario, two representatives argued that basic income should be a supplement to the social assistance rates, and not a trade-off for de-funding other public programs or services. For the representative in the second extract, since basic income is thought about in technical terms of "efficiency" by the policymakers, this means that it is at risk of becoming a cost-saving initiative, rather than a supplemental income. This could lead the government to replace investment in public programs (e.g. health, education, etc.) by a basic income.

UNIFOR: *I think the way we have seen Ontario design a system (*in the experiment) … Should the level of income be higher? Yes. Should more people have access to it in different ways? Yes. However, they have designed it to measures what happens when the BI is a supplement and not a trade-off, and that's really important. Really important!*

CUPE: *It's technical in orientation. It's about picking and figuring out what the level of poverty is, what the measure will be LIM or cut-off, deciding the proportion, who the policy issue will be targeted at, how it will be rolled out. (…) I think the social justice elements of it become important rhetorically, but because it's been developed in the context of a neoliberalized state it is about delivering programs in an efficient manner and perhaps even guiding towards more market-oriented strategies for dealing with the provision of public services as opposed to direct provision of public services. It's really is consistent with a marketization of the state redistributive policies.*

In the scientific literature on basic income, the concept of "*rate of substitution*" refers to the number of programs that could be cut in order to pay for a basic income (De Wispelaere 2015: 60). This rate of substitution would depend in part on the size of basic income and the political commitments from the governments towards the already existing programs. From the excerpts, it is still unclear to the Ontarian representatives if a basic income would be an income supplement or would replace existing public programs. Referring back to "Criticism of the Government" (Theme 1), the rises of the level of poverty and inequality, and the waves of austerity in the public programs and services have led the Ontarian unions to be, if not opposed, at least suspicious of political commitments from the provincial government. These suspicions are one of the reasons why the unions are interested in monitoring the experiment and expressing their concerns about potential trade-offs. These suspicions were also part of the Québec unions' arguments in the scientific literature on the unions and basic income. The Québec's unions were reluctant to advocate for a basic income because of the negative "balance of power" of the unions, in contrast to the employers and the governments. They thought that a North American basic income could potentially diminish their political power, and they preferred to advocate for the increases in funding of the current income security system (Wernerus 2004: 58).

In contrast, at the federally based CLC, the representative argued that forecasting the potential forms that a basic income could take only serves to diminish the quality of the political discussions. To this representative, implementing a basic income does not necessarily mean that there would be cuts in other public programs or services. Instead of being viewed as something with potential negative impacts, it is viewed as a possibility for an effective reform of social assistance. Therefore, not all of the representatives committed to a specific prognosis on the forms a basic income could take in order to inform their understanding of the policy. One of them left the door open for a best-case scenario.

CLC: *I think the more valid position is that if we wanted to fund social assistance, if we wanted to get rid of the stigma in social assistance, we can do that. We could move towards something that's like a BI intent. Without cutting in other areas. This is why it can be a really difficult discussion to have because BI means many things. There's no one plan and once you start talking about it people have in their heads already their own worst-case or best-case scenario. So, it becomes very difficult to sort out what the real issues are I think.*

In Finland, all of the representatives were also in agreement that basic income is not a single well-defined policy, but a multifold set of aims and policy forms. Even if the Finnish representatives had different views about what a basic income could mean, they all agreed that a basic income should not be implemented without a certain set of conditionalities. To them, a basic income should not leave the recipients to themselves, but it should be accompanied with supportive activation measures. For some of the representatives, there is a correlation between the implementation of a basic income and the risk that it could lead the government to replacing these activation measures with an increase in cash transfers through the form of a basic income. At the same time, if a basic income was implemented, the representatives do not believe that punitive activation measures should be taken out of the equation. There needs to be a balance between the punitive and supportive activation measures.

> ***STTK:*** *I am concerned about how it would support people to take a job if everybody had a right to a UBI. Our employment rate is still too low in Finland. We should have this type of social security reform that encourages people to take a job so that it wouldn't be easier to take this kind of UBI.*

> ***YKA:*** *I think that to cover the costs of basic income through taxation we need to have clear incentives to work - be they soft or strict. I am mostly in favor of soft incentives in social security, but for economic reasons I think that a general duty to seek and accept work, with consideration to an individual's situation of course, might be a necessity. (*The representatives made sure to mention that this was her point of view, not a specific position from her union).*

Then, talking through the concept of the "universality" of basic income, the representative at SAK argued that a basic income would most probably lead to the folding of the health, pension or parental benefits into a basic income (De Wispelaere 2015: 50). While a basic income could be potentially available to everyone, the representative at SAK thought that the unemployment benefits should differentiate between work activation and additional income protection for those that cannot work.

> ***SAK:*** *We do have those means-test in the social security. If you're sick you get the sickness benefits, if your too old you get pension, if you're at home taking care of your kids you get parental benefits. What we think the whole idea of basic income is that it would replace most, or all, of the other social security benefits. And it would be universal, UBI. (…) That's' the idea that we come from, that the Finnish Social security is build upon work. You work, that's the thing that you aim for, but if something happens you get the benefits.*

Regarding the conditionality of a basic income, the representatives favoured *broad* conditions, rather than *narrow* conditions. In a basic income, broad conditionality results in policies which includes a larger subset of the population (De Wispelaere 2015: 52). In the Finnish context, such a policy could take the form of a Participation Income (Atkinson 1996) or the Universal Credit (U.K.). In both of these policies, the benefit is potentially available to everyone. However, claimants have to participate in training or educational measures as a condition to the provision of an income security benefit. For the representatives, if a basic income was implemented, it should include *broad* conditions through a mix of both punitive and supportive activation measures, as well as leave supplemental benefits intact.

Basic Income: Forms depends on Policy Initiators:

This sub-theme reflects the suspicion from some unions' representatives about their government's intentions to solve socioeconomic and institutional problems. In both Ontario and Finland, some representatives mentioned that their understanding and positions on basic income would be impacted by who would propose to implement the policy. In Ontario, the representative from CUPE was suspicious about the intentions of the provincial Liberal government of Kathleen Wynne. He mentioned that in another context, the proposal for a basic income may have been seen with optimism. However, this could not be said in the Ontarian context.

> ***CUPE:*** *In New-Brunswick, it wouldn't have been quite the same. It wouldn't have had a government we were in opposition to that would propose basic income, it could come forward as a measure to challenge the existing government rather than being challenged by the existing government. I think who's in government and who's proposing the policy makes a huge difference. Because, part of the debate in Ontario was that or centred around the fact that we have a government that has up until very recently been very focused on austerity and balancing the budget and essentially rolling back the size of the social welfare state.*

The same argument was found in the scientific literature. In Québec, the unions were afraid that a provincial Liberal government would implement a basic income in a way that would not represents the true aims of the concept of basic income and may not benefit the recipients (Wernerus 2004: 58). In comparison with the example of New-Brunswick, we see that in Canada, there are differences in the level of trust between the unions and their provincial government.

In Finland, the representative from Industrial Union based a lot of his argumentation on the fact that he could not reconcile the policy idea of basic income with its policy initiators, a right-wing government. In a way similar to the argument expressed by the representative at SAK, the representative at Industrial Union thought that the "generosity" of the basic income could potentially be lower than the current amount given through the unemployment benefits and other related health benefits (De Wispelaere 2015: 58). However, this argument differed from the other representatives, and even from SAK, who thought that basic income would be more expensive than the current system.

> ***Industrial Union:*** *For the BI test in Finland, we now have right-wing government. Usually the right-wing say that "we would not like to pay benefits for everyone". We are afraid that the next step is that they say "OK, we have a proof now that people can survive with 690 euros (*560 euros), or something like that in a month". Nowadays, most of the unemployed, or sick or something, they get much more.*

In a comparative perspective, the Ontarian representatives think that implementing a basic income should not be a trade-off for de-funding other public programs and services. In Finland, the representatives are afraid that basic income would decrease the funding of supportive activation measures and would not be means-tested. Additionally, in both Ontario and Finland, some unions were very suspicious about the governments themselves for their policy proposal of a basic income.

6.2.2– Basic Income: Impacts on Recipients (*Work Behaviour)* (Theme 6)

In the sixth theme, it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' have a very different understanding of the potential impacts of a basic income on work willingness. In the Ontarian context, all of the representatives interviewed were in agreement that basic income would not diminish recipients' willingness to find work. However, they had different explanations on why there would be no decrease in work willingness under a basic income. The representatives gave three main reasons for expecting that there would be no negative impacts on recipients' work willingness: (1). *There is already a lack of work in the labour market*, (2). *A basic income would be rather small in scope*, (3). *People don't like social assistance stigma and strive for work.*

In the first extract, the representative at CUPE argued that there are simply not enough opportunities to work. The representative links the current high unemployment rates with the lack of work opportunities, and not with a lack of willingness to work. In that case, basic income would only compensate for the consequences from this lack of opportunities and would not prevent recipients from gaining an employment because, in a lot of cases, these jobs do not exist in the first place. This argument provides a partial answer on why the activation measures were not discussed as a necessary complement to basic income since they may not lead to work or would lead to precarious work. His second argument was that basic income would be too low to decrease work willingness.

> ***CUPE:*** *What discourages people from getting paid employment is the lack of decent work out there. That's a bigger disincentive to work. Everybody works, even when they are not paid for a good portion of what they do. That's a disincentive. The unemployment rate has declined since 2008 to a certain degree, but even that 5.5% a lot of people out there who are looking for work who can't find it. (…) Considering where most proponents peg BI at, in the Ontario case 75% of the LIM, you are not buying more with that basic income level. If you want access to more, especially as the size of the social welfare state gets reduced, people are going to need additional income on top of the BI.*

In the second extract, the representative at UFCW also argued that, in the Ontarian context, a basic income would be too low to justify staying at home and not work. The expected low-level of a basic income would only cover for the basic needs of people and the recipients would certainly want to get an extra-income to afford things that would not be covered under basic income. Additionally, the representative believes that most people strive for work and don't want to be unemployed.

> ***UFCW:*** *I think people will have to find work because whatever type of basic income package won't be enough to live off. Especially if you're living in a major urban centre in Canada, where Canadian increasingly live. I think even if they had all the money they needed, if for one believe that work is something most people hunger for, it may have an impact on the types of work that they are willing to do, but I don't think it will make them stay at home and lie in the couch.*

In the third extract, the representative at OPSEU goes even further than saying that people generally strive for work. The representative argued that basic income could actually increase work willingness by raising recipients' self-confidence and help them make better life choices. The representative

thinks that the current social assistance recipients' situations are so bad, and they lack so much income, that it prevents them from wanting to get a job.

> ***OPSEU:*** *If anything, it might help them find better employment or employment because they would feel better about themselves. Their choices could change, their appearance would be better. I don't think they're going to say, "oh I don't have to work because I have enough money to live off of". (…) People don't want to be on social assistance. They don't like the stigma.*

From these excerpts, we can see that the representatives do not expect that a high-level basic income could be implemented. As mentioned by the CUPE's representative, most of the political discussion on basic income revolves around it being even lower than the low-income measure (LIM-50). Additionally, the basic income experiment itself took the form of a negative income tax. In such a policy, work willingness is always encouraged since the recipients can combine both their own "primary" income and the negative income tax, enhancing their total income. The fact that the representatives did not found necessary to discuss the potential implementation of a high-level basic income may be due the socioeconomic context of Ontario and Canada. To compare with the empirical literature on the unions and basic income, it was found that the unions' representatives in Québec also thought that a basic income would not decrease the willingness to work of the recipients (Wernerus 2004: 37). All of the arguments made by the Ontarian representatives were similarly used by the unions representatives in Québec. The first argument was made by representatives at the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN). The representative argued that due to changes in the labour market, it is now impossible to seek full-employment as a societal project. Therefore, people still need to be integrated into the society from other means than through work itself.

For the second argument, another representative at the CSN argued that a very-high basic income might lead to a decrease in work willingness, but that a basic income would never be very-high in the context of the province of Québec. Therefore, there would "always" be incentives to work (Wernerus 2004: 37). This argument is here reflected by the extract from the representative at CUPE and UFCW. The representatives argued that it would be very unlikely for a basic income to be very generous in the Ontarian context. The representative at UFCW went even further by arguing that even if the amount was very-high, people would still strive for work. However, recipients may seek better work opportunities. The third argument against a decrease in work willingness was made by a representative at the Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ). The CSQ representative argued that people will always strive for work and that work is something that is valued in the society (Wernerus 2004: 37). This is reflected by the extract from the representatives at UFCW and OPSEU. The overall similarities between the representatives' answers from both provinces is striking and points towards a contextualized understanding of basic income in which the socioeconomic context is similarly perceived, and the policy idea is expected to take a specific form and be pegged at a specific amount.

In reflection of the theoretical literature, the argument made by the representative at UFCW provides an empirical perspective on arguments previously theorized in the scientific literature. In this literature, one theoretical argument was that unions may think that a very-high basic income would encourage people to reduce or eliminate their work hours. The argument was that such a basic income would be seen by the unions as leading to idleness and dependency (Vanderborght 2006: 6). In a contrasting argument, it was also argued that the unions might be opposed to the implementation of a basic income for the same reasons, but that this position would be based on a false understanding of the value of work because, according to Guy Standing: "the vast majority of people want to work and better themselves; it is an insult to think they would be satisfied with a modest basic income" (Standing 2004: 614). For the UFCW representative, even if a high-level basic income was implemented, people would still strive for work. Therefore, this view was closer to the understanding of the value of work, rather than to an utilitarian-oriented theorization on work incentives.

In the Finnish context, there was a stronger tendency to expect that basic income would make recipients more passive than they are under the current unemployment benefits model. However, not all representatives shared the same concerns and one representative argued that there would not be negative impacts on work behaviour. There were three main answers to the question on work willingness: (1). *Basic income would make people passive,* (2). *Universal basic income would make high-income workers more passive* (3). *There would be no negative impacts on work behaviour*.

In the first three extracts, we see that the majority of the Finnish representatives were concerned about the impacts of the basic income on work willingness. To them, basic income would not increase the recipients' willingness to work, get an education or pay their pensions. In the second and third extract, and in relation to what was already found in Theme 5 "BI Trade-off for Other Public Programs / Services", we see that the representatives think that a basic income would need to be accompanied by activation measures. Otherwise, recipients would be more passive if they received a basic income.

> ***SAK:*** *One of the thing that our current pension system is relied upon is that people work. If you get that 560 euros and you don't work, you can't pay any pension for that. I would still say that if you get 560 euros, people wouldn't be studying, they would be just hanging around, they wouldn't be paying any pensions so when they get old they wouldn't have any pension.*
>
> ***Industrial Union:*** *For some people they could be more passive when they get the money, but still I think it's better to try to push people to work than just give it without asking anything. It would be more passive (*if there was a BI).*
>
> ***STTK:*** *It depends on how high the level would be and what would be the influences, if you take a job what influences would there be on taxation. It depends on the model. I see that it wouldn't encourage so much to take a job. Our welfare system needs to have that kind of social security reform that encourages people to take a job.*

In contrast to the first three extracts, the representative from YKA had two arguments. The first argument was that the women on maternity leave could extend their leave if given a basic income. The second argument was that the high-income earners might decide to decrease their hours of work, but that it would not affect low-income earners. This argument relates to the theoretical literature where it was hypothesized that unions' may fear that a basic income would encourage people to get involved in unpaid care activities, which would reduce their participation in work (Vanderborght 2006: 6). Additionally, and similar to Ontario, the representative at YKA expected that an implemented basic income would be too low to decrease work willingness of low-income earners.

> ***YKA:*** *The worries are the gender equality issue (*women staying longer on parental leave) and then that the well-off, well-paid professionals would choose to work a little less because people value free time. (…) it would diminish our state resources to fund not just UBI, but other forms of social security. Those are my biggest concerns. I'm not personally that worried about the moral decay of people, that they would not work because it would, for fiscal reasons, be low-enough so that people wouldn't be able to live very comfortably with a UBI.*

Still in contrast to the first three extracts, the representative from PAM thought that there would be a balance between those that would work more and those that would work less.

> ***PAM:*** *Some people it will encourage them to work less and some people it will encourage them to work more. I think there could even be a kind of balance on that.*

From these excerpts, we can see that most of the Finnish representatives are concerned with the impact of a basic income on work willingness. Similarly, in the empirical literature, the same concerns were found for the Belgian unions. For the Centrale générale des syndicats libéraux de Belgique (CGSLB) and the Confédération des syndicats chrétiens (CSC), the introduction of a basic income would be "inadmissible" in Europe where the main goal is to increase the numbers of workers and decrease the level of unemployment (Wernerus 2004: 33). Based on the previous comparison between the similar activation measures in both Finland and Belgium (chapter 3), it can be theorized that the unions' representatives in countries where activation measures are based on financial incentives to increase work willingness, rather than on punishment, would be more concerned about the impact of a basic income on work willingness. The ideological basis of supportive activation measures is that high unemployment levels can be actively fought against, rather than to simply protect against its consequences. For some unions, a basic income could be seen as going against this logic.

In a comparative perspective, there is a considerable contrast in the answers on the expected work behaviour of basic income recipients between the Ontarian and Finnish representatives. In Ontario, all of the representatives expect that basic income would not reduce work willingness since the level of basic income is expected to be too low. In Finland, four out of five representatives expect that work willingness would be negatively affected by a basic income. In contrast to supportive activation measures, a basic income would be a passive way to protect against the changes in the labour market.

6.2.3– Basic Income: Impacts on Institutions (Theme 7)

The seventh theme is on the expected impacts that a basic income *(policy solution)* could have on institutions (collective bargaining and the bureaucracy) in the Ontarian and Finnish contexts. The data will be analyzed through two sub-themes: (1). *Basic Income and Collective Bargaining / Precariousness*, (2). *Basic Income, the Bureaucracy (and Precariousness).*

Basic Income and Collective Bargaining / Precariousness:

In this sub-theme, it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish representatives are similarly unsure about the impacts of basic income on collective bargaining. In the Ontarian context, there was no consensus amongst the unions representatives about the potential impacts of basic income on the collective bargaining process. Some of the representatives thought that a basic income may not have a significant impact on raising workers' powers to make demands to the employers or the government. For the representative at CUPE, the Ontario basic income experiment was used as an example of why a potential basic income would mainly impact social assistance recipients, and not precarious workers. For this representative, a basic income similar to the one in the Ontarian experiment would not provide better salaries, nor conditions, to the precarious workers.

> ***CUPE:*** *The model that they are using in Ontario is essentially a targeted BI for people who are already qualified for social assistance. It's not a universal BI that everybody would be able to access. So, the pilot they have in Ontario won't provide most workers with either an unlimited strike fund that can sustain on the picket line to get better deal from their employer. It won't give most workers the ability to opt out of the labour market and subsist on that modest income without selling their labour power.*

Similarly, the representative at UNIFOR argued that an Ontarian basic income would mainly target those that are earning less than the basic income. However, for this representative, if the basic income was "framed" differently, it could provide most workers with better salaries and conditions.

> ***UNIFOR:*** *BI has the potential to give people the power to say: "I'm not working for that crappy wage". That's really important, but it's not the way unions frame it, it's not the way corporations frame it, and it's not the way government frame it. It's always framed as a way to support people who are earning less than the BI. The BI would lift them up, and potentially people could be more entrepreneurial and creative for a short period of time. Of course, the BI has to be high enough to support people to do that, but if it was framed in a different way and if organizations and unions decided to say "nobody's working for less than this" than it has the potential to be viewed as a bargaining chip. I don't actually see that happening, but I do think that it's possible.*

In a more optimistic perspective, the representative at the CLC argued that a basic income could provide the precarious workers with an opening to leave in jobs with poor conditions. By lessening the fear of getting fired, a basic income would also provide an incentive for workers to join unions. This could positively impact the power of the unions vis-à-vis the employers and the government.

However, similar to the other representatives, the CLC's representative mentioned that a low-level basic income may not have a significant positive impact on the bargaining process.

> ***CLC:*** *Some people view BI as a subsidy for low-wage workers, but I also view it as power for those workers to leave jobs that are crappy. I think it would help to improve bargaining power for workers. I have talked to many people who have been in terrible jobs, and they are afraid to organize in unions because they fear they could get fired. (…) (*but) there may be conditions where its too low for it to be a real safety, so you still can't leave. I would obviously want that the cheque for BI gives people more power. We should understand which of those will have which effect, so we can push for the kind that gives workers more bargaining power.*

From these excerpts, we can see that the Ontarian representatives are aware that the form and the amount given through a basic income would result in different impacts on collective bargaining. The unions' representatives' focus on the potential forms and amount were similarly discussed in the theoretical literature. In this literature, it was argued that a high-level basic income may be seen by the unions as a source for funding strike purpose (Vanderborght 2006: 5). The argument was that such a basic income could provide the workers with an exit option from poorly paid or unsatisfactory employment. The existence of an income floor outside of the labour market, without any sort of means-testing or work requirements, was also argued to provide the workers with the ability to negotiate for higher wages (Vanderborght 2006: 5). By comparing the excerpts to these arguments, we see that in the first two extracts, the representatives of CUPE and UNIFOR did not believe that the implementation of a high-level basic income is a possibility in the Ontarian context. Therefore, the arguments made in the theoretical literature would most probably not apply if a basic income was implemented in Ontario. However, both the representatives at UNIFOR and the CLC mentioned that if such a high-level basic income would be implemented, these arguments may prove to be right. Therefore, depending on the model of basic income implemented, there would be large differences in the impact of a basic income on collective bargaining. Similarly, in comparison to the empirical literature, it was found that Québec's unions were also suspicious of any improvement in collective bargaining. However, Québec's unions were even more assertive in their pessimism than the Ontarian representatives. They argued that a basic income might lead to a decrease in minimum wages and that employers would be strongly opposed to its implementation (Wernerus 2004: 39).

In Finland, there was also no consensus amongst the representatives about the potential impacts of basic income on the collective bargaining process. Similar to the answer given by the Ontarian representatives, depending on the model of basic income implemented, there would be different impacts on the collective bargaining process. For PAM's representative, a low-level basic income would push people to accept any type of jobs, even precarious employment. However, a high-level basic income would increase workers' powers to leave and would provide them with more options to ask for better salaries and work conditions.

> ***PAM:*** *There's different kinds of BI, it could be that low that it could encourage to take any kind of jobs. It's a totally different idea of BI. It's very hard to say… Because there is no one model. If it's high enough, it could lead to that kind of impact that would encourage companies to pay higher salaries and care for the working conditions, give people the chance to leave if things aren't good.*

For the representative at STTK, implementing a basic income would provide a subsidy for low-wage workers and force them to accept lower wages from their employers. From that point of view, basic income would represent a direct transfer of public capital to the employers.

> ***STTK:*** *I think that, this is my opinion, that there would be kind of threats that if we would have that kind of UBI it might put pressure to put wages down. I think it could have some kind of influence. (…) If we would have the BI it would have an influence at least partly for companies to put wages down and replace parts of the salary with a BI. It would be like a support to companies.*

Similar to the Ontarian representatives, the Finnish representatives do not have a consensual understanding of the impact of basic income on collective bargaining. The representative at PAM's agrees with the theoretical argument that a high-level basic income might lead to the gain of an exit option, better salaries and better conditions (Vanderborght 2004: 615). However, in that same extract, the representative also provided a counterpoint to this argument by arguing that the opposite could also be true. This counterpoint is also theorized in the scientific literature which is based on the argument that a low-level basic income would encourage workers to take any kind of jobs. In this argument, when low-wage workers leave their employment, they usually get employed in other low-wage types of jobs. Therefore, a low-level basic income would not break this cycle if it was not accompanied by investment in supportive activation measures, such as education or training (Birnbaum 2016: 67). In that same vein, the representative at STTK argued that it might even lead to the employer's lowering the employees' wages. This argument is similar to the one made by the Belgian unions in the empirical literature. The Belgian unions similarly thought that a basic income would lessen the possibility to make gains in wage negotiations (Wernerus 2004: 39).

Basic Income, the Bureaucracy (and Precariousness):

In Ontario, the discussions on basic income impacts on the bureaucracy of the social assistance system revolved around the place of social workers within that system. For the representative at OPSEU, which is the union in charge of representing the social workers, the relation between the social workers and their clients goes further than simply giving them the means to have a stable and higher income. If basic income was implemented, it should include social workers, not substitute them.

> ***OPSEU:*** *It could be done with BI, you could still have the role of the human touch in service that people will still need, like in guidance. You can't take all that away from them, because all of a sudden, they would be afraid to call. A lot of what we see in ODSP side, is that they see you as their person to help them and as a support network. Now if you move that away they would be afraid. They could be mentally disabled, many have a fear of talking to people but over the years they build a contact relationship with you and they trust you. It could be built into a basic income.*

Similarly, as previously argued (Theme 4-5), the Ontarian representatives do not think that looking for an "efficient" cost-saving way to deliver income security to those on social assistance should come at the cost of de-funding other programs and services. While the representatives do want the social assistance system to become easier to manoeuvre, they are more interested in reaching this objective by increasing the public spending in the welfare state, or through reforming the design and criteria to access the social assistance and/or the employment insurance benefits. If the implementation of basic income meant that social workers would be fired, it would actually increase social problems.

> ***UNIFOR:*** *There's always the possibility that a government could implement a BI and say we're firing all these social workers. But they would be really, really in the wrong if they did that. We need to be constantly reminding them of what the better way is. Some unions potentially mine, would approach a response to BI that it would eliminate jobs. If we are not reminding politicians that that's not an option, then they might do it.* (…) T*o reduce poverty through BI, or at least reducing its depth, does not eliminate the need for people to be assisted through overcoming addiction, finding housing, mental health support, kids being kicked out of their families.*

In Finland, as seen in the *problem definition* of "Complex Bureaucracy (Theme 4)", the representatives think that reforming the unemployment services would facilitate the activation of the unemployed and ease the access to the unemployment benefits for the precarious workers. The Finnish representatives think that those issues should be looked at, and potentially solved, through the upcoming social security reform. To them, "a version of one kind" of basic income could be implemented in order to solve these issues. However, these issues could also be solved through reforming the current unemployment benefit system. Therefore, the representatives are favourable to one of the aims of the basic income, which is to simplify the bureaucracy in the unemployment benefit, but they are unsure if this will be achieved through a basic income, or from another reform.

> ***STTK:*** *We had several models of BI from political parties. If we are starting this social security reform in the next parliament season, we might have quite a simpler system. But is it going to be called BI? I don't think that it will be called BI, but it might be. Could be a version of one kind of BI*

> ***YKA:*** *There are two paths you could go. There are some problems with part-time and self-employed workers. I think the current policy process is going the way in which we try to make the current system more flexible, easier for people to combine different kind of life situations and ways of working, have them be part of a social security system that provide safety for individuals' situations. The other way would be to scratch everything, start over and go along one sort of a UBI. I think the current policy processes are going into the same direction but take different routes.*

In a comparative perspective, the representatives of Ontario and Finland are unsure about the impacts of basic income on collective bargaining. Depending on the model, it could either improve or decrease bargaining, salaries and work conditions. On the complexity of bureaucracy in income security benefits, the Ontarian representatives think that social workers should not be replaced by the introduction of a basic income. The recipients would still have needs that can't simply be met with more money. In Finland, the representatives like the fact that one of the aims of basic income is to help simplify the unemployment benefits system. However, other policy ideas are also considered.

6.2.4 – Financing Basic Income (Theme 8)

In the eight theme it will be shown that the Ontarian and Finnish unions representatives think that there are many ways to finance a basic income and that some of these financing methods would be more interesting to them than others. In the Ontarian context, all of the representatives were in agreement that at least some forms of basic income could be financed by the government. In the theoretical literature, we see that the forms of taxation proposed by the representatives are considered "classics", rather than novel form of taxation such as carbon taxes or consumption taxes (De Wispelaere 2015: 59) For the representatives, there are three main ways in which a basic income could be financed: (1) *Through raising taxes*, (2) *Cutting public expenditures and re-channelling the money*, (3) *Through increasing the deficit for a certain period of time*. For the representative at CUPE, the financing would preferably be done by raising taxes on corporations and high-income earners.

> ***CUPE:*** *Taxes (*would) have to go up and preferably those would be taxes on corporate profits and high-income earners or there has to be cuts to expenditures somewhere else. Or the government runs a deficit, but even that there's a limit to how far down the road you can go running that kind of deficit year over year, at some point something will need to be done. (…) How the increased costs on the government are dealt with is significant to whether unions or any other progressives would get on board with that.*

In combination to what was already mentioned in "BI Collective Bargaining / Precariousness (Theme 7)", the representatives do not think that a Universal basic income could be implemented in Ontario. It is expected that a basic income would mainly target those on social assistance, and only secondarily impact those in low-paid precarious employment. Therefore, the amount given through the basic income is expected to be targeted and low enough to be realistically financeable. For the representative at UNIFOR, even if a basic income which would impact the precarious workers could be financeable, it does not mean that it would be politically feasible.

> ***UNIFOR:*** *If we're talking about providing $20,000 to every individual, I don't think we'd ever get to the place where that would be politically possible. If we're talking about moving from social assistance system to a BI system where there is supplement for people who are working and not making that level of income and increasing income towards people who are not working and receiving social assistance. We would have to raise taxes in order to do it. I do think it's economically feasible, I don't know if it's politically feasible. I think all of these things that we've been talking about in term of what the government does are all choices that government makes, period.*

The expected type of financing of basic income is a crucial component for the Ontarian representatives understanding of basic income. While the representatives do not have many concerns with basic income as a theoretical concept and on its potential effects, they are very concerned about how it would be financed. As argued in "BI Trade-off for other Public Programs / Services (Theme 5)", and from the extract from CUPE's representative, the representatives are against the implementation of a basic income that would intend to reach budget neutrality by cutting other public programs and services. For them, this would counteract the beneficial impacts of basic income.

In the Finnish context, the representatives also thought that a basic income could realistically be financed, but most were concerned about the ways it would be financed and its costs. For the Finnish representatives, there are three main ways in which a basic income could be financed: (1) *Through raising taxes*, (2) *Cutting on supportive activation measures and re-channelling that money to a basic income*, (3) *Cutting the unemployment benefits and reducing government spending*. In the first extract, PAM's representative argued that financing a basic income should come through raising taxes from high-income earners. However, for this representative, progressive taxes risks to antagonize the middle and high-income earners who could feel exploited by the low-income earners, as they would be too highly taxed. The argument that it is the "idle" that would exploit the "industrious" was also theorized in the scientific literature (Vanderborght 2006: 8). This would make the financing of a basic income harder to sell politically to these groups of voters and lower its chance of implementation.

> ***PAM:*** *People who are well-paid and pay taxes, they would have to pay more taxes. Of course, the system makes it work for you, but if they feel that they are financing a system and that they will not benefit from it, it's hard to motivate them to take part. Of course, it's a problem in the system we have now. I think that we can solve the issues. People who have money should pay more.*

In contrast to the Ontarian context, the other Finnish representatives held much more pessimistic expectations about the potential costs of a basic income. For them, financing a basic income would be too expensive. As previously argued in "BI Trade-off for other Public Programs / Services (Theme 5)", the Finnish representatives are against the implementation of a basic income that would intend to reach budget neutrality by cutting in supportive activation measures or through folding the amounts given in the sickness or parental benefits into a basic income (De Wispelaere 2015: 59). Additionally, while most of the representatives argued that a basic income would actually increase public spending, the representative at Industrial Union though that the government would simply cut overall spending.

> ***SAK:*** *It's a lot of money to pay, whatever the basic income level is. 560 euros in the experiment, that's a lot of money if you give it to everybody. There's no way that to put services on top of that, services are very expensive. We think that we would have services that push people towards jobs.*
>
> ***Industrial Union:*** *If you will create the BI it would show on the state budget. The budget of the state is such a large sum of money that there is no extra new money. They will just re-organize the old money from one place to another. They will rather save money than pay more. (…) I think they will cut unemployment benefits and other benefits and they will pay you less than before.*

In a comparative perspective, for some Ontarian and Finnish representatives, raising taxes on high-income earners and on corporations would be the best way to finance a basic income. However, there are fears that the financing might come from cuts in public programs and services. For all representatives, it is unclear how their government would intend to finance a potential basic income. This means that the representatives would be more open to support certain forms of financing, but not others. Also, while a universal basic income was left undiscussed in Ontario, the Finnish representatives thought it would be unrealistic to expect that it could be financed in Finland.

6.3 – POLITICAL OUTLOOK

In this section on the unions representatives' political outlook on basic income, there will be a brief overview of how the representatives: (1). *Position themselves on basic income*, and (2). *Plan to be involved in the near future*. From this perspective, we will see how the representatives and their unions plan to move ahead on the policy of basic income. In this section, the points made by the representatives will simply be presented, and not analyzed through a comparison with the scientific literature, since the positions and involvement are specific to the contexts and the unions themselves.

6.3.1 – Basic Income: The Union's Positions (Theme 9)

The ninth theme will present the Ontarian and Finnish unions representatives' official and non-official positions on basic income. In the Ontarian context, and excluding the CLC who cannot present an official position in a provincial context due to their unions' structure, we can see that two of the unions reached an official position, while the two other unions were still in the process of discussing the issue internally. For the unions who did reach an official position, the representative at OSPEU thought that the basic income experiment was a step in the right direction, but that it is still too limited in scope. For the second union, the representative at CUPE thought that an increase in cash transfers is a necessity. However, the representative was against the model of cash transfers that is the basic income, which could marketize public services (Theme 5).

> **Official position (OSPEU)**. *We support the sense of BI to move people out of poverty. It's a step in the right direction, it doesn't obviously go far enough, and more could happen now. Not only that, they are only targeting 3 communities compared to the whole province (*in the BI experiment)*

> **Official position (CUPE).** *Despite the position on basic income there is still a recognition that more money in people's pocket will help. It's not going to be a strategy to eliminate poverty, but let's at least reverse those draconian cuts from the past. And social assistance payments really have frozen for years beyond the progressive conservative government and after that, have failed to keep up with inflation. At this point, you need a 58% increase in social assistance payment just to get back to that level, that insufficient level, that was modified in 1995. CUPE Ontario has taken a position on improving transfers to people in poverty, but not through the basic income model.*

For those who did not reach an official position, the representative at UNIFOR points to the need to develop more knowledge internally before reaching a position, while the representative at UFCW thinks that basic income should be accompanied by legislation facilitating the unionization.

> **Non-official position (UNIFOR).** *Individually I have participated in a lot of conversations to gather information and provide input and sort of develop some kind of knowledge that eventually will explode into institutional knowledge, but it hasn't made it there yet*

> **Non-official position (UFCW)** *Basic income is an interesting idea. It's worth exploring, but it's not a panacea for poverty. I don't think it's as powerful a mechanism as joining the union.*

In the Finnish context, two unions reached an official position, while three unions were still in the process of internal discussions. Similar to the Ontarian context, some unions left the door open for the implementation of a basic income, while one union was more clearly against the policy. For the unions who did reach an official position, the representative at SAK made clear that basic income was not a solution to resolve the socioeconomic and institutional problems. The main arguments were that work incentives would be diminished and that it would be difficult to finance. For the second union with an official position, the representative at YKA argued that there was no need for its union to reach an official position on basic income. In YKA, the position reached was on the necessary conditions for *any* reform to the social security benefits to be successful, such as paying attention to work incentives and reducing the complexity of the bureaucracy (Themes 6-7).

> **Official position (SAK).** *SAK thoughts, or my thought on basic income, is that in theory it sounds good and the experiment is interesting and it's going to be fun to see what the results are. But we still think that it's going to be too expensive. If you put it at 560 euros or 1000 euros, there still has to be a lot of other benefits that you would have on top of that.*

> **Official position (YKA).** *It's not about whether we are against or for UBI, it's more about the different aspects we want to draw attention to, what kinds of things we want considered when reforming social benefits either for UBI or other social benefit reforms, so it's not just about BI.*

For the representative at STTK, there was no official position on basic income but there were doubts about of seeing it be implemented. At Industrial Union and PAM, the representatives are in the internal discussion stage and did not want to reach a position, for the moment.

> **Non-official position (STTK).** *We don't have a statement for basic income. But it's very difficult to think of financing it and how to take a job for instance.*

> **Non-official position (Industrial Union).** *We should see first the report on BI, then it's easier to be critical on some parts. Now we are just saying that we don't know why they (*the government) are doing this and we are afraid that this could end without giving something better for the people*

> **Non-official position (PAM).** *We don't have an opinion on if we are part of those who want, or don't want basic income. We want to hear both sides of the argument, then, we'll decide.*

In comparative perspective, in both Ontario and Finland, only two unions (CUPE and SAK) were opposed to the implementation of basic income in their respective contexts. In Ontario, with more than 258,000 members, CUPE represents the largest public-sector union. In Finland, with more than one million members, SAK represents the largest confederation union. Their opposition could make its implementation more difficult, especially in Finland where confederation unions are part of the tripartite negotiations on public policies. The other unions with an official position (OPSEU and YKA), only positioned themselves on the experiment and the upcoming Finnish social security reform. They both left the door open for the implementation of a basic income which would satisfy their expectations, such as raising the rates of social assistance and/or unemployment benefits and reforming the bureaucracy of those benefits. For the others, debates are still at the internal stage.

6.3.2 – Basic Income: The Unions' Future Involvement (Theme 10)

The tenth theme will present the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' future involvement on the policy of basic income in their respective contexts. In both context, referring back to the scientific literature, the unions' involvement with the policy idea of basic income had never been such a "hot item" on the agenda. The unions were and are still mainly concerned with their usual day-to-day activities, collective bargaining and policymaking or debates on already existing policies (Vanderborght 2006: 8). However, due to the implementation of the basic income experiments in Ontario and Finland, the policy idea of basic income does not seem as remote as it once had been. This led the certain representatives to present their expected involvement with the policy.

In the Ontarian context, during and after the basic income experiment, the representatives mentioned that they would be involved in certain actions regarding basic income, such as: (1) *Reminding the public and politicians about the unions' demands on basic income,* (2). *Being involved in the changing role of the social workers,* (3). *Continued advocacy for public programs.* For the representative at UNIFOR, it is important to remind the public and the government that the experiment might be a success because it is a supplement and not a trade-off. The monitoring of the experiment may be due to the fact that under the Wagner model, the unions do not have as much of a formal role on the policymaking process than in Finland. Therefore, they have to influence the policy process through publicly advocating or opposing the implementation of a certain form of policy.

> ***UNIFOR:*** *It's up to civil society and unions to be constantly reminding the public. If the BI pilot and it is implemented, we'll have to constantly remind the public and government and policymakers that it was a success because it was a supplement and not a trade-off.*

In the second extract, the OPSEU's representative mentioned that the role and tasks of social workers could be modified under a basic income. Even now, under the current "modernization" of the field, the role of the social workers is reconsidered. Given that those roles may change in the future, the representative plan to develop a position on what they would want social workers to become. For this union, the basic income experiment meant that the need to further discuss the future of social workers.

> ***OPSEU:*** *if they decided to give everyone a flat rate do they need the worker? If they need the worker what is that going to look like? What we have been told is that the workers would be kind of more social worker, so helping the clients along their path. (…) Not every social worker has these social work background and ability to interact with people. So, we're looking at other ministries that they might transfer to. We have been quite proactive with the government on the changes to social assistance. It's been modernized right now because we have board meetings bimonthly in regard to the modernization. Things are changing.*

In the third extract, the CUPE's representative thought that its union's role and actions would still be similar to what it is now, even if a basic income similar to the one in the experiment was implemented. Basic income would not represent an all-encompassing policy that would resolve all social ills. There would still be a need to advocate for improvement in other social programs.

> ***CUPE:*** *It would not change the way we bargain or what we bargain for. It would not change our political actions. We would still advocate for improvement in health, education, public housing, transportation, etc. I don't think that the Ontario model would change how we operate.*

In the Finnish context, all of the representatives were in agreement that the unemployment benefits system needs, and will, be reformed in the near future. For the representatives at the confederation unions (SAK, STTK), they expect that they would be involved in future discussions on the basic income with the government and the employers. Due to their opposition to the basic income, SAK has not considered the policy as a legitimate option for the upcoming social security reform. However, they would gladly partake in tripartite discussion if the government wanted to move forward with the idea. At STTK, the representative mentioned that they do consider basic income as a potential reform.

> ***SAK:*** *Since it's only an experiment we haven't been that concerned with it. But if the government actually wanted to implement this, for sure we would want to be a part of it. We would be highly concerned if we weren't.*
>
> ***STTK:*** *We are discussing how to start the preparation of a whole social security reform, which will also include the discussion on basic income and we are willing to take part in this conversation. (…) We are willing to be in those discussions and also if they become legislation, we will also be in tripartite negotiations.*

In the second extract, the representative at YKA mentioned that one of the key social security reform will be the upcoming implementation of an income register for Finnish citizens. The representative expects that any large reform on social security would have to be done after 2020, when the income register will be fully implemented. Whether or not a form of basic income is implemented will be a result of the discussions during the social security reform.

> ***YKA:*** *At the beginning of 2019, they are going to have a real time income register for all Finns. All your wages will go there and be visible, your taxation can be real time and we can control for people earnings in a real-time way and benefits are going to be in this system in 2020. (…) Most of the legislation concerning social security is now under reform because of the register, because we have to bring all the laws to a place where we can use the register as much as possible to execute the social security reform. I really hope that this will already bring some of the benefits that are connected to the idea of UBI. I think the income register can already bring a lot of those benefits in the current system, and then we can decide if there are some more steps that we want to make to make it even more simple and automated.*

In comparative perspective, the Ontarian representatives expect to advocate for their demands on basic income and to continue their advocacy for investments in other public programs, even if a basic income is implemented. The only unions who mentioned having contacts with the provincial government on the issue of basic income was OPSEU. They are in contact with the government due to changes in the role of social workers, which they represent. In contrast, the Finnish unions expect to have closer contacts with their national government during the upcoming social security reform. In those political discussions, the basic income will be considered alongside other policy measures, and the unions expect that the choice of policy measures will be facilitated by the income registry.

CHAPTER 7 – Perspectives on the Viability of Basic Income

In this chapter, I will provide a comparison of the findings presented in the data analysis. This comparison will provide answers to the main research question: *how do Ontarian and Finnish unions representatives understands the policy idea of basic income?* To present this study's major findings, I will first provide the readers with a summary table (Table 5) and a brief explanation of the results. By summarizing the findings, I intend to show the main differences and similarities in answers between the unions' representatives in Ontario and Finland. I will also come back to the comparison between the findings of this study to the theoretical and empirical literature. Secondly, I will combine and interpret the findings through Hall's concepts on the viability of policy ideas: *policy viability*, *administrative viability*, and *political viability* (Hall 1989). I will demonstrate that the ways in which the representatives define socioeconomic and institutional problems (*problem definitions)* truly impacts their views on basic income as a potential solution to the problems (*policy solution / political outlook)*. I will also show that the government's and unions' understanding of basic income differs.

Table 5. Analytical Framework (Ontario / Finland Comparison)

	Ontario (Can.)	**Finland**
Problem Definitions	- Focus on poverty/inequality. Criticize the governments (provincial/national) for not tackling these issues. - Increase in precarious workers amongst members. Actions= Push for full-time jobs, monitoring. The activation measures lead to precarious employment. - Social Assistance: Inadequate benefits, complex bureaucracy, strict clawback and risk of losing benefits.	- Criticize the government for recent punitive activation measures against the unemployed. - Precarious workers are either marginal, or will be taken care off through the social security reform - Unemployment benefits: too many punitive activation measures, complex bureaucracy, lack of services for the unemployed, strict clawback
Policy Solution **(of basic income)**	- BI has different meanings and forms. Could mean the marketization of public services or raising social assistance rates. Which government proposes a basic income matters, some mistrust the Liberal government. - No expected negative effects of BI on work willingness, possible positive reinforcement. - Unclear potential impacts on collective bargaining, BI would mostly target low-income,not precarious workers - Role of social workers would change for the better or for the worst under a BI, need to monitor gov. actions. - Would favour a BI that raises tax on corporations and high-income earners, not cuts or trade-offs.	- BI is seen as a potential trade-off for activation measures. Need soft + strict incentives. - The majority of the unions expects negative effects of BI on work willingness. Not all expect these effects on the same groups (low-income vs. high-income) - Unclear potential impacts on collective bargaining - Likes that BI aim to simplify unemployment benefit bureaucracy. BI looked at in social security reform - BI hard to finance. Could be financed through tax raises on the wealthy, but difficult to implement. Would not want a trade-off for supportive activation measures or cuts to unemployment benefits.
Political Outlook **(on basic income)**	- Different official and non-official positions on basic income and its potential implementation. - Will be involved in reminding and advocating the public and government about what a BI should be (no trade-off for public services, positive reform of social workers role). Studying impact on social workers.	- Different official and non-official positions on basic income and its potential implementation. - Will prepare for both the upcoming social security reform and the new income register system, in which BI will be discussed. Will be in reform discussions with the gov. and the employers. (tripartite nego).

To summarize and contrast these findings, it is important to note that the Ontarian and Finnish representatives focused on different problems. In Ontario, the representatives were in favour of reducing poverty by raising the rates of social assistance. They thought that this could be achieved through a basic income, but they fear that the policy would result in investment trade-offs from public programs and services to a basic income. They also expect that basic income would be too low to affect most precarious workers. To tackle precariousness, the representatives named many needed alternatives or additional policies to basic income. In the near future, they expect to monitor the development of basic income and have their demands heard. In contrast, the Finnish representatives argued that there is a need to keep a balance between supportive and punitive activation measures by investing in supportive measures. The representatives thought that without such measures, an unconditional basic income would decrease work willingness. The representatives also thought that the unemployed and precarious workers should have access to a simpler unemployment benefits system, which could increase work activation. For the representatives, it is unclear if a basic income could include conditions of work activation, and at the same time simplify the unemployment system.

By comparing these results to the empirical literature, I have demonstrated that the answers from the Ontarian representatives were similar to those obtained from Québec's representatives (Wernerus 2004). I have found three main shared similarities between the Ontarian and Québec representatives: (1). *Suspicion of the forms a basic income could take in a neoliberalized context*, (2). *No expectations that basic income would decrease work willingness*, and (3). *Uncertainty about potential improvement on collective bargaining from a basic income*. These arguments were aligned due to the similarities in the contexts between Ontario and Québec. Both the Ontarian and Québec unions come from the same liberal welfare state of Canada (Castles 2012), they both share the same model of industrial relations (*Wagner model*) and they share the same concerns about the high level of poverty.

In Finland, I have found two shared similarities between the Finnish and Belgian representatives: (1). *Basic income would reduce work willingness and need for activation measures*, (2). *Suspicion about potential improvement on collective bargaining*. These arguments were also aligned due to certain similarities in the contexts of Finland and Belgium. The unions of both countries operate under a similar industrial relation system (*Ghent system*), they both have high rates of unionization, and they have similar concerns about unemployment and work activation. Therefore, the comparison of the empirical data indicates that dissimilar *problem definitions* lead to a different understanding of basic income, but similar contexts leads to a similar definition of the *problems* to be solved. In turn, this lead the representatives to a similar understanding of basic income. This conclusion also reflects theoretical literature arguments which were focused on the expected level of basic income. The representatives' *problem definitions*, the institutional contexts and the forms of the experiments all shaped their expectations about the level of a potential basic income.

Perspectives on the Viability of Basic Income

To further compare the findings from the data analysis, I will now provide an exploratory attempt at discussing and comparing the *policy viability, administrative viability* and *political viability* of the basic income from the point of view of the Ontarian and Finnish unions representatives (Hall 1989). In this section, I will highlight parallels made in the *problem definitions, policy solution* and *political outlook* by the uses of Hall's *viability* concepts. For the implementation of a policy, the substantive content of the idea, or its expected efficacy at solving a problem (*policy viability*), is not enough for a policy to be adopted or even to warrant its advocacy. This is because a policy's feasibility and costs are often included in policy debates (*administrative viability)*. Additionally, the policy ideas are debated politically by different interests' groups, who may have varying levels of desire to see the policy implemented (*political viability)*. The political viability sometimes means that the strongest interest groups wants it to be implemented and can act on this intention. At other times, it can be that a policy idea might be viable if it can convince opposed groups to change their perspectives.

By exploring the analyzed data through these concepts, I will demonstrate that the ways in which the unions' representatives conceives of basic income differs on some aspects from the ways the Ontarian and Finnish governments conceives of basic income. Even though the unions and their governments shared some similarities in their understanding of the *problems* to be solved, they disagree on the methods that should be used to *solve* the problems. In turn, these differences in the understanding of the potential efficacy of basic income leads to the lowering of its *political viability* and chances of being implemented. However, most unions do not decidedly oppose the implementation of basic income. Certain conditions would need to be met for the unions to support a basic income policy.

Policy Viability (Ontario)

In this section, I will look at the Ontarian and Finnish unions expectations about the efficacy of a basic income policy (*policy solution)* to solve the defined socioeconomic and institutional problems (*problem definitions)*. At first, in Ontario, there was a strong focus on the issue of poverty from the Senator Hugh Segal's (2016) policy paper on the basic income experiment. This focus was reflected by the similar focus on poverty from the unions' representatives and their link with the basic income debates. In his policy paper, Senator Hugh Segal argues that the government's investment in social assistance has been meagre and unstable. This argument was shared by the unions' representatives. They argued that to fight the rising level of poverty, the social assistance system needs to be reformed and the rates of the benefits should be raised. This issue was related to the potential implementation of a basic income. For example, in Theme 5, the representative at UNIFOR argued that the level of benefits in the social assistance system should be higher and that more people should have access to it.

For that representative, a basic income should aim at achieving those objectives. In Theme 9, CUPE's representative argued that "more money in people's pocket will help" and that it is important to reverse the draconian cuts from the past in social assistance. However, while Senator Hugh Segal argues that the Ontarian government deserves credit for implementing a basic income as a way to fight poverty, the unions' representatives define differently the problem with poverty. For the representatives, part of the problem with poverty and inequality stems from the government inaction at preventing the issue. Therefore, they remain suspicious about the true intentions of the government.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the Ontarian unions' representatives are not against raising the rates of the social assistance benefits. The representatives also do not think that raising these rates through a basic income would result in lower work incentives for the recipients. This argument was similar to the one made by Senator Hugh Segal (2016) in his policy document on the basic income. Segal argued that a basic income would provide "incentives for individuals whose incomes are currently below the poverty line to join or remain in the workforce" (Segal 2016: 48). For Senator Segal, it is the lowering of the clawback of social assistance that would help to keep the recipients active. In Theme 6, for the Ontarian unions' representatives, in addition to the lowering of the clawback rates, the basic income is expected not to have negative effect on work willingness due to: (1). *A lack of work in the labour market,* (2). *Basic income would be rather small in scope,* (3). *People don't like social assistance stigma and strive for work*. Therefore, while Segal and the unions' representatives come to the same conclusion on work willingness, they approach the issue from different angles. While Senator Hugh Segal is preoccupied with rational economic incentives, the unions' representatives think that the lack of employment opportunities and poverty issues are so deep that a basic income could never be so high to decrease work willingness. Consequently, basic income would help those on social assistance.

However, in Theme 7, the representatives at UNIFOR and CUPE argued that if a basic income was implemented in Ontario, then it would be mainly targeted at those in poverty or with very low income, and not at those with precarious employment. This would be in line with the actual form of the Ontarian basic income experiment, which is not meant to be universal since it only targets those under the poverty line. While this focus on poverty reduction is important for the unions' representatives, they still are very much concerned with limiting the effect of work flexibilisation since it is one of the main areas of Canadian unions' actions (Kumar 2002, in Gunderson 2009: 99). In Theme 2, all of the Ontarian representatives argued that the problem of precariousness at work was now reaching their own members. To prevent the increase in precarity, the unions have pushed for the full-time jobs and for monitoring work misclassification. For them, the fact that a basic income is expected to only target parts of the precarious workers is underwhelming. They would like for an income security policy to also take into account those that are precariously working, but not on social assistance.

Regarding the precarious workers and the income security schemes, as argued in Theme 2, the fact that the precarious workers fall in a "grey area" between the provincial social assistance and the federal unemployment benefits means that there are two ways in which the precarious workers could receive a more stable income from the income security schemes, either through facilitating the access to social assistance or lowering the threshold on work-time and income to access the federally-managed employment insurance. For the representatives, if a basic income was implemented provincially, without the federal government's involvement, then it would certainly only benefit those on social assistance. In Theme 4, the representative at CUPE argued that lowering the clawback of the social assistance would benefit social assistance recipients, but that provincial and federal legislative changes would also be needed to benefit all precarious workers, not just those with very low-income. Coming back to Theme 7, for the representatives at CUPE and UNIFOR, the fact that the basic income experiment is mainly targeted at those already in social assistance shows that there are few reasons to expect that a basic income would sufficiently benefit the precarious workers if implemented provincially. For these representatives, the experiment doesn't do enough for the precarious workers, and they expect that it would be the same if the policy was implemented. This data also shows that the representatives utilize the level of the basic income in the experiment to conceive of the meaning of basic income and orient their expectations on the *viability* of the policy.

Overall, the Ontarian representatives are in favour of raising the rates of the social assistance benefits, which could potentially be achieved by the implementation of a basic income. In that perspective, the provincial government, Senator Hugh Segal and the unions' representatives all claim to share a similar desire to increase social assistance benefits. However, the unions' representatives share some doubts about the government's sincerity in its claims to reduce poverty levels. Additionally, to the representatives, implementing a basic income would have a small impact on the precarious workers income security. To the representatives, the ways in which the governments define the problem (*problem definition)* that led to the experimentation of basic income should include more than just a focus on reducing poverty. The representatives named many alternatives and/or additions to a basic income which would profit both low-income citizens and precarious workers: (1). *Gov. should put forward labour law reform encouraging unionization*, (2). *Gov. should provide better quality of supportive activation measures,* (3). *Gov. should provide more services to manoeuvre social assistance benefits and reform the role of social workers,* (4.) *Gov. should not trade-off public services for implementing a basic income,* (5.) *The unions will still advocate for investment in public services (health, education, housing, transport, etc.)*. For the Ontarian unions' representatives, if basic income was implemented as a way to replace the government's investment and involvement on these issues, then the basic income would not be considered *viable* for the unions representatives since its effects may be perceived as actually detrimental to the Ontarian's well-being.

Policy Viability (Finland)

In Finland, all of the unions' representatives, the national government and KELA consider the activation of the unemployed to be necessary. However, they differ on their preferred method to reach this objective. The strongest criticism towards the national government was on the recent implementation of punitive activation measures for the unemployed. To the Finnish representatives, there is an unbalance between punitive activation measures and supportive activation measures. In Theme 1, the representatives at YKA argued that the *problem definition* is that there should be support and services for the unemployed and that the government's recent legislation goes against this idea by punishing the claimants who can't or won't find work. The issue came back in Theme 3, the representatives at SAK and STTK argued that there should be services in education, rehabilitation (training) and more people into the unemployment offices. For the representative at STTK, there should also be a better quality in services for the unemployed in the regional areas.

In Theme 5, we can see that the same representatives who were concerned about the lack of supportive activation measures are also concerned about their potential trade-off for a more "passive" basic income. According to KELA's report on the basic income experiment, the partial basic income model used in the experiment should be low-enough to maintain supportive activation measures (Kangas 2016: 55). However, the report could not guarantee that such measures would be kept if basic income was truly implemented. Therefore, for the Finnish representatives, both the current increase in punitive activation measures and the basic income are going against the logic behind their preferred *policy solution,* which is to give financial incentives and services to the unemployed to help them find work (Van Gerven 2009: 65). To the representatives at STTK, SAK and YKA, if a basic income was implemented, it would have to take into account the differences in life situations of the recipients and would need to be accompanied by both soft and strict incentives to work. Therefore, while the governments and the unions' representatives both focused on activation measures, the way in which they *defined the problem* and their *proposed solution* is very dissimilar.

Along the same line of thought, for the Finnish representatives, a basic income should not be unconditional. To them, an unconditional income policy would result in a decrease of work willingness. This is exemplified in the Theme 6 when the representatives at SAK, Industrial Union and STTK all argued that recipients would work less if they received a basic income. In contrast, for the representative at YKA, low-income workers would not reduce their work hours, but high-income workers might reduce them if they would receive a basic income. In all of these cases, the impact of basic income on work incentives worries the unions representatives. If a basic income policy was to be considered as *viable* by the unions representatives, it would have to be accompanied by a clear increase not just in supportive activation measures, but also in punitive activation measures.

In a second point, all unions' representatives, the government and KELA are interested in findings ways to simplify the income security system. In KELA's report on the basic income experiment, the argument promoted was that: "merging together the existing basic social security benefits would have the advantage of reducing the delays arising from moving from one benefit to another and it would also mean fewer gaps and uncertainties connected with the coordination between work and social security" (Kangas 2016: 36). Similarly, in Theme 2, the Finnish representatives of STTK, YKA and PAM argued that there are concerns about the self-employed and platform workers, as they are not always covered in the current unemployment benefits scheme. In Theme 4, the representatives at Industrial Union and YKA argued that it is difficult for those with changing life situations to always notify the unemployment benefit office about these changes, which delays the reception of the benefits. The claimants of the benefits are also sometimes unaware about the functioning of the unemployment benefits. This representative also argued that the unemployed benefit should be made more "flexible" and not be entirely revoked once workers reach a certain number of work hours. This would also provide incentives for the unemployed and the precarious workers to increase their working hours. In this case, all of the policy actors involved in the debates on basic income *defined* similarly the problem with the complex bureaucracy of the income security system.

However, while the representatives agree that a basic income should intend to reduce the bureaucratic complexity of the income security system, they are not sure which form a basic income could take in Finland. For the representative at YKA, a more flexible and simpler system could be done either through reforming the current unemployment benefits system or by introducing a basic income. At the level of *policy viability*, most of the Finnish unions do consider that it might solve the problem of the complex bureaucracy in the unemployment benefits. However, as argued previously, the Finnish representatives would want a basic income to incorporate activation measures for the unemployed to receive the benefits, which would require resources through monitoring. Therefore, the representatives appreciate the aim of a basic income to make the unemployment benefits system more flexible and less bureaucratic, but they are unsure and often suspicious about the capacity for a basic income to integrate both work conditionalities and reduce the bureaucratic complexities. The representatives expect that these questions will be answered in the upcoming social security reform.

Administrative Viability (Ontario)

In this section, I will look at the Ontarian and Finnish unions representatives' expectations of the costs and administration of a basic income. In Ontario, in Theme 8, the representative from CUPE summarized the ways in which a basic income could be financed by the provincial government: (1). *Through raising taxes*, (2). *Cutting public expenditures and re-channelling the money*, (3). *Through increasing the deficit for a certain period of time*. Out of these financing methods, the

representatives were advocating for raising the tax rates of those with high-income or the corporations. However, throughout the interviews, the Ontarian representatives were more interested in discussing the potential drawbacks in financing a basic income, than on preferable ways to finance it. This is reflected in Theme 5, when the representatives from UNIFOR and CUPE both argued that introducing a basic income should not be done as a "trade-off" or as a way to more "efficiently" deliver programs by lowering the services, and therefore the costs, of those public programs.

Additionally, In Theme 7, the representative at OPSEU and UNIFOR argued that reducing the level poverty by raising the rates of social assistance, through a basic income, would not eliminate the need for social workers. For the representatives, the recipients that requires support to overcome addiction or have mental health support should receive this support through public services, not only through increasing cash transfers. In Theme 10, the representative from OPSEU mentioned that they were already looking at ways to reform the role of the social workers in the social assistance system and that hopefully the social workers can be transferred to other ministries, rather than simply fired.

These concerns were voiced due to the fact that the Ontarian government expressed their interest in finding if a basic income could result in public cost-savings. In Senator Hugh Segal's (2016) policy document, it is argued that a potential basic income could result in cost-savings for the government since it would: "encompass the actual cost of the delivery of Basic Income payments, the economies in terms of Ontario Works and ODSP payments, the ensuing financial cost/savings associated with the simplification in the administration of social assistance, and the reduction of monitoring and policing components" (Segal 2016: 43). Since the details regarding the simplification of the administration of social assistance and the reduction of monitoring were never specifically addressed in the government's policy documents, the unions' representatives were concerned that the government could implement a basic income that would not necessarily lead to a simpler and more efficient bureaucratic social assistance system, but in cuts in beneficial programs and services. Overall, the Ontarian representatives think that to be *administratively viable*, a basic income should not lead to cuts in other public programs, nor should it lead to firing social workers. Otherwise, trade-offs of public services for a basic income would not be expected to benefit the Ontarians.

Administrative Viability (Finland)

In Finland, the representatives were skeptical that a basic income could be financed. In Theme 8, for the representative at PAM, argued that the best way to finance a basic income would be to increase taxes for the high-income earners. However, even if this was seen as the best way to finance a basic income, the representative at PAM was aware that high-income earners might feel exploited by those receiving a basic income and not working, which may lead to the high-income earners being very

opposed to a basic income. For SAK, there would simply be no possibility of financing both a basic income, the supportive activation measure and not folding other health benefits into a basic income. In Theme 5 and 6, most Finnish representatives also see that the potential trade-off of activation measures for a basic income might decrease work incentives, which could lower state revenues.

In KELA's report on the basic income experiment, the institution commented on one of the policy idea that could interest the Finnish unions' representatives: the participation income. For the researchers at KELA, when commenting on the form of basic income used for the experiment, the participation income was deemed to require a too "extensive administrative apparatus" for the experiment. To the researcher, testing a participation income would have required "administration, services tailored to each individual's needs and resources for managing the scheme" (KELA 2016: 43). In the case of the implementation of a participation income, similar financial constraints would be applicable. Therefore, based on the unions' representatives understanding of the difficult financing of a basic income, and their desire for the basic income to be conditional on work willingness and reduce the bureaucracy, it can be expected that the unions' approval for this kind of basic income policy would be based on increase in financial investment in the income security system. This means that the forms of basic income which would most interest the majority of the Finnish representatives would be difficult to implement since it's *administrative viability* rest on rather large governmental investments. Through the interviews, the representatives saw the difficulty in financing such a basic income and tended to prefer advocating for the re-design of the current income security system.

Political Viability (Ontario)

In this section, I will look at the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives' advocacy, opposition or standby regarding the implementation of a basic income. In Ontario, most of the Ontarian representatives shared reservations about the implementation of a basic income in Ontario. In Theme 9, the representatives at CUPE argued that raising the rates of social assistance is an important task, but that it should be done through another model than the basic income. At UFCW, the representative argued that basic income is not a panacea against poverty and that joining the unions is a stronger mechanism to fight poverty than getting a basic income. In a more positive light, the representatives at OPSEU argued that the basic income experiment doesn't go far enough, but that they still support the sense to move people out of poverty.

When looking at Theme 10, we see that the representatives' intentions are to monitor the government's actions on basic income and the reform of the role of the social workers. They also intend to continue their advocacy for the investment in public programs and services. These intended actions demonstrate that the Ontarian unions are not natural allies in the advocacy for basic income.

They are more concerned about monitoring the experiment results and the government actions on the policy, and role of social workers, than to advocate for basic income implementation themselves.

Combined with their previously mentioned suspicion about the *policy viability* and *administrative viability* of a basic income, it is fair to argue that the Ontarian unions would not facilitate the implementation of a basic income but would question its potential forms and aims. This could complicate basic income's *political viability* since the Ontarian unions are political actors, with a political voice in the media, the public and in some cases in policymaking. Even though the Ontarian unions are not as close to their provincial and national governments than those of Finland, they still can influence policymaking on basic income. To gain a political ally in the advocacy for basic income, the Ontarian provincial government would have to listen to the unions' demands on basic income. Otherwise, the unions may prefer to monitor and challenge the government on its policy proposals.

Political Viability (Finland)

In Finland, the *political viability* of a basic income policy would largely depend on its approval by the confederation unions (SAK, STTK). Since these confederation unions are the ones involved in tripartite discussions on policy issues with the government and the employers, their approval of a basic income would facilitate its implementation. However, the representatives at SAK and STTK were quite concerned about the impacts of a basic income on work willingness and on the potential ways to finance a basic income. While the representative at SAK was more categorical about their refusal to endorse a basic income policy, the representative at STTK still left the door open for the implementation of "a version of one kind" of basic income through the social security reform.

In Theme 9, the other representatives were more passive in the position that they have taken on basic income. They either wanted to wait for the experiment to be over before commenting (Industrial Union), wanted to hear both sides of the arguments (PAM), or were mostly interested in all talks about social security reform (YKA). For the representatives at PAM and YKA, the basic income is an interesting policy idea that will be looked at alongside other policy ideas during the social security reform. For the representative at Industrial Union, the financing and the possible trade-offs for investment in other income security benefits makes it less likely for them to support a basic income.

Similar to the Ontarian unions' representatives, the Finnish representatives have some suspicion about the *policy viability* and the *administrative viability* of a basic income in Finland. Therefore, since none of these Finnish unions has stated their approval or advocacy for a basic income, it should be expected that the unions would not facilitate its *political viability* in Finland. Some unions may remain neutral or make demands regarding basic income, while other unions might oppose it more directly.

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSION

In Ontario and Finland, policy actors are rising up to the challenge of finding solutions to the socioeconomic problems of poverty, inequality and precariousness. For the Ontarian and Finnish governments, part of these problems could be addressed through a reform of the income security schemes. In that sense, these governments decided to conduct a social policy experiment on a new type of income security: the basic income. By doing so, they created an opening for other policy actors to shape and convey their own understanding of the policy idea of basic income. In both Ontario and Finland, some unions stepped into the public arena and had their voices heard regarding their views on basic income. Other unions took notice of the experiments and started internal discussions. In all of these cases, a specific understanding of what constitutes a basic income was being formed by the unions and their representatives. In this thesis, my intentions were to bring those voices forward and analyze the meaning of what was being told to me about the policy idea of basic income.

The aim of this master's thesis was to provide answers to the study of *how do Ontarian and Finnish unions representatives understands the policy idea of basic income?* To answer this research question, I conducted ten semi-structured interviews with unions' representatives in Ontario and Finland and looked at their views on their socioeconomic and institutional contexts and problems in those contexts (*problem definitions)*, as well as on the expected efficacy of basic income at solving these problems (*policy solution)* and on the unions' future actions on basic income (*political outlook)* (Mehta 2011). Through comparing two countries with a relatively dissimilar welfare state history, as well as different economic and institutional contexts, it was shown that the unions representatives do conceive and focus on different socioeconomic and institutional problems. In turn, the ways in which they define the main problems, do impact how they understand the meaning of basic income as a policy tool to solve these problems.

By analyzing the findings through the lens of *policy*, *administrative* and *political viability* (Hall 1989), I demonstrated that the Ontarian representatives were in favour of raising the rates of the social assistance benefits to decrease the level of poverty in Ontario. To them, a basic income which would raise the rates of social assistance would be welcomed. However, the representatives expect that the increases in those rates through a basic income would be too low to affect most precarious workers. To prevent the continuing increases in precarious work, the representatives named many alternatives or additional policies to basic income and mentioned that these policies should not be negated or traded-off for the implementation of a basic income. On the *administrative viability* of basic income, the Ontarian representatives argued that financing a basic income should be made through raising taxes on the high-income earners and corporations, but again they feared that basic income could

represent a trade-off for lowering the costs and services included in social assistance. Finally, I demonstrated that the Ontarian unions do not constitute natural advocates for a basic income, which would make its implementation more difficult due to the lowering of its *political viability*.

To contrast, in Finland, the unions representatives voiced their opposition to the recent increase in punitive activation measures for the unemployed. They argued for a more "balanced" situation between punitive and supportive activation measures by increasing public investment in services to the unemployed and in training and educational measures. Otherwise, for the representatives, a basic income with no conditions attached would render the recipients more passive and should not be implemented as a trade-off to investment in activation measures. In the meantime, the representatives thought that the unemployment benefits system should become easier to manoeuvre, which would increase work activation. For the representatives, while the aim of simplifying the access to the unemployment benefits is interesting, it remains unclear if a basic income could simultaneously include conditions of work activation and make the system simpler. The demand for the complementarity between these two aspects would complicate the *administrative viability* of basic income. Additionally, the representatives expect that the cost of basic income would be too high. This would render its implementation problematic and risk that activation measures would be traded-off for a basic income. Finally, I demonstrated that the Finnish confederation unions (SAK, STTK) fear that a basic income would render people passive and would be too expensive. Being the unions most involved in the tripartite discussion, this decreases the *political viability* of a basic income in Finland.

What does this tell us about the policy idea of basic income? It tells us that the understanding and positioning on the implementation of a basic income are not simply one of advocating or opposing policy ideas. Instead, the policy ideas are reinterpreted by specific political actors who formulate their own complex problem definitions and policy solutions. For both the Ontarian and Finnish contexts, we saw that the governments' views on the problem definitions and policy solution, such as with the basic income experiment, are not always shared by other political actors. In contrast, most of the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives shared suspicions about some of the anticipated beneficial impacts of basic income as described in the experiments' policy papers (Segal 2016, Kangas 2016). They also felt that the policy idea promoted by the governments is not always fully transparent, such as with the representatives' understanding of potential trade-offs for a basic income.

Comparatively, the Ontarian and Finnish unions' representatives had differing views on basic income due to multifold reasons: their focus on certain socioeconomic and institutional problems, their relations with their own government, their views on the experiments and expectations if it was implemented, and their demands for additional or preferred policies. In both Ontario and Finland, all

of the representatives were suspicious about some of the forms that a basic income could take if implemented. Despite all of this, most of unions' representatives interviewed mentioned that their positioning on basic income, and that of their unions', is not definitive. The representatives left the door open for "one version of one kind" of basic income to be potentially implemented.

However, is it realistic to believe that the governments and the unions could see eye-to-eye on the implementation of a basic income? The findings from this thesis' and the scientific literature on the unions and basic income indicates that it has been difficult, in all studied contexts, to convince the unions about the legitimacy of implementing a basic income. While in abstract, the concept of basic income is interesting to the unions, it is the minute details that make them suspicious about its potential forms. In the literature, De Wispelaere argued that: "turning our gaze away from the general idea of a BI and onto its policy detail shines a bright light on the deep ideological tensions inherent in different BI models" (De Wispelaere 2016: 5). Since the policy idea of basic income is still at a stage of experimentation, the minute details of a basic income have not yet been set. This leaves the unions' representatives with expectations, suspicions and demands. Therefore, for the governments to gain a political ally on the advocacy of basic income, and enhance its *political viability*, they would have to devise a basic income which would take into consideration the demands of the unions.

To conclude, in assessing the drawbacks of this thesis, I can say that there are limits to the generalization of the findings. First, the number of interviews was limited to ten. While most of the representatives interviewed were from large and influential unions, some of the major unions could not be interviewed. Secondly, the timing of the study may have influenced the unions' representatives interview answers, especially for Ontarian unions. During the interviews, both experiments were still taking place and the representatives gave their understanding of basic income at that particular time. Now that the Ontarian experiment has been cancelled, the unions' may see the implementation of a basic income as a more remote possibility than before. Thirdly, the thesis' theoretical framework purposefully left aside questions of the unions' structure and the unions' involvement in policymaking on basic income. Even though these subjects are very relevant to the study of the unions and basic income, they only concerned this study when viewed as opportunities or constraints through the lens of *problem definitions* and *policy solution* (Mehta 2011). Future researches on the unions and basic income would gain to start from a more practical focus on policymaking and the basic income. These researches may also gain from focusing on most-similar contexts. In this thesis', the comparison with previous empirical findings showed that unions from similar contexts have a similar understanding of basic income. Therefore, we may expect that generalizable aspects of the unions' understanding of basic income could be found in most-similar cases, while not being generalizable to different contexts.

CHAPTER 9 – REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1

LIST OF UNIONS INTERVIEWED IN ONTARIO:

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC, Can.):

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is the largest National Federation of Labour in Canada. It brings together dozens of national and international unions, provincial and territorial federations of labour and community-based councils to represent 3.3 million workers. The CLC defines its actions under three categories: Advocacy, Education, Research and Analysis. For more than 50 years, the CLC has been involved in research and policy leadership on issues such as wages, workplace health and safety, pensions and retirement security, social and economic justice and equality, access to public healthcare and childcare. Regarding the structure, a convention is organized every three years. During that convention, the rank-and-file union members debate issues and adopt policies that set the CLC's agenda. They also elect the CLC leadership by secret ballot: The President, the Secretary-Treasurer and two Executive Vice-Presidents (http://canadianlabour.ca/about-clc/what-we-do).

The CLC itself is a federal confederation, or an umbrella organization, of Canadian unions. Its central institutional activities are informing and trying to build consensus on labour market issues amongst affiliated unions, informing the general public about where the Canadian labour movement stand on those issues, and lobbying the federal government and the federal organization of employers on specific policies and regulations. Being a federal institution, the CLC cannot supersede the jurisdiction of their provincial affiliates when it comes to provincial public policy making. In the case of the Ontario basic income experiment, the CLC had not been involved in discussions or support of any kind to the provincial unions in the making of their policy responses to the provincial government's experiment. However, given that the basic income started to become more of a "federal issue" about a year ago, the CLC decided to organize meetings amongst its affiliates to develop its own position. Since the CLC is a consensus-based organization, and because there was no consensus amongst the affiliates, the CLC decided not to take an official position on basic income. From this example, we can see that the influence of provincial-division unions on the CLC might be greater when it comes to basic income. Since the positions on basic income from provincial-division unions informs the positions of their parent-unions at the national-division (ex: CUPE (Ont.) and CUPE (Can.), or OPSEU and NUPGE), and because the CLC has to obtain the consensus of those federal-division unions, it then becomes clear that the CLC position on basic income would have to take into account the position from provincial-division unions, even in the case of a federally implemented basic income.

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE, Ont.):

The Canadian Union of Public Employees of Ontario (CUPE, Ont.) is the political wing of CUPE (Canada), which is Canada's largest union. CUPE (Canada) was founded in 1963. In Ontario, there are more than 258,000 members and over 700 CUPE locals across the province. The CUPE (Ontario) members are working in 5 main sectors: Health Care, Municipal, School Board, Social Services and the University. CUPE (Ontario) works on legislative, policy and political change on issues that affects public services, equality and healthy communities. They have led campaigns to fight privatization, forced mergers, cutbacks and restructuring. On the structure of CUPE (Ontario), the delegates are selected at a convention by member locals. During the convention, members democratically decide on political actions. (www.cupe.on.ca/about-us/about-cupe-ontario and www.cupe.ca/ontario).

In CUPE, the provincial and federal division works in close proximity on issues pertaining to research and public policy making. The research branch of CUPE is situated at the national-division and each provincial-division is assigned researchers. In Ontario, there are seven researchers assigned to support the locals and CUPE (Ont.). Regarding CUPE's position on basic income, the focus of the government on delivering services in a "more effective and self-sufficient way" was deemed concerning. Therefore, CUPE (Ont.) decided to organize meetings amongst staff members and the leadership to develop an official position on the Ontario basic income experiment, and also on its hypothetical implementation. The union formulated its position in two instances: once when the experiment was introduced in the 2016 budget, and another time when Hugh Segal's policy paper was released. After the formulation of their response to the Ontario experiment, CUPE (Ont.) had a debate on basic income amongst members at its annual convention of 2017. According to the representative, participants in the debates were pondering if it was more progressive to support or to oppose the implementation of basic income. The official position taken by CUPE (Ont.), who are opposed to the implementation of basic income in Ontario, was maintained after the debate. However, there may be more openness to the idea of basic income in other provincial-division of CUPE. Also, the representative mentioned that the national-division of CUPE has not intervened, and would not intervene in provincial debates, experiments or implementation of basic income.

Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU):

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) was founded in 1991 under the name "Civil Service Association of Ontario". It subsequently changed its name to its current appellation in 1975. OPSEU represents workers of the Ontario government, inside community colleges, for the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), in the health care and in community services inside the broader public service (BPS). There are approximately 155,000 OPSEU members across Ontario. OPSEU's locals are linked into 20 different "sectors" and "divisions" based on the similarity of the employers.

Those sectors and divisions are intended to: help local prepare for demand-setting and co-ordinating objectives, decide on collective bargaining priorities, campaign on policy issues and develop internal organizing policy to bring unions rights to more workers in the sector. (https://opseu.org/information/members-owners-manual)

In the case of the opinion paper on the basic income experiment, since the broader public sector was also involved, the discussions also included the chair of the division and additional staff members from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Subsequently, OPSEU also met with members of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) and some legal clinics with expertise on disability issues. Also, on policies that impact the social assistance programs, the government and the OPS usually negotiate with each other since the public sector social workers are members of the OPS. Therefore, in the case of basic income experiment in Ontario, there were discussions between OPSEU's representatives and the government itself. During the interview, the representative was presenting the OPSEU's official position on the Ontario basic income experiment and hypothetical implementation.

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW):

The United Food and Commercial Workers is a trade union representing approximately 1.3 million workers in the United States and in Canada. Its foundation dates back to 1899. In its Canadian branch, the UFCW is affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The UFCW has more than 250,000 members in Canada. While the specific number of workers in Ontario is not documented, they can be found in 8 different locals. The UFCW members principally work in every sector of the food industry from the field, to the processor, to the warehouse, to the store, to the dinner table. However, the UFCW also has members in other fields such as: retail, healthcare, hospitality, security, financial services, non-food manufacturing and many other industries. The mission statement of the UFCW is to: "share the commitment to achieve a just workplace through collective bargaining, inclusiveness, and compassion for the broader community" (http://www.ufcw.ca/)

The representative mentioned that UFCW is mostly focused on bargaining for better labour legislation with the government, such as in the recent case of Bill 148 in Ontario. In the case of basic income in Ontario, the discussions at UFCW were "internal", but "not at the top of their list". Since the internal discussions on basic income at UFCW have only recently begun, the UFCW do not have an official position on the subject. However, they are interested in continuing internal discussions.

UNIFOR:

The Union for Canada (UNIFOR) is a general trade union, with a strong industrial sector, which was founded in 2013 as a merger of the Canadian Auto Workers and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers unions. UNIFOR currently has approximately 315,000 members across Canada and 158,000 in Ontario. The largest sector in UNIFOR is the manufacturing sector (29%), with its leading employer the automobile sector (13%). There are also UNIFOR members in the services, communications, resources and transportation sectors. Its mission statement is to bring: "a modern approach to unionism: adopting new tools, involving and engaging our members, and always looking for new ways to develop the role and approach of our union to meet the demands of the 21st century". In January 2018, UNIFOR left the CLC to become independent (http://www.unifor.org/en/about-unifor)

Having only been formed five years ago, UNIFOR's aims and practices are still developing. As a central mandate, the union has given itself the "expressed purpose" of doing something different. They therefore consider themselves as quite "open" to new ideas and debates, such as the one on basic income. In the case of basic income in Ontario, there were not a lot of institutional focus and no formal discussion between the staff and the leadership on basic income. Therefore, UNIFOR does not have an official position on basic income in Ontario. However, the representative mentioned being personally involved in a lot of discussions concerning basic income on behalf of UNIFOR and was also tasked to: "gather information and provide input and sort of develop some kind of knowledge that eventually will explode into institutional knowledge, but it hasn't made it there yet" (UNIFOR).

LIST OF UNIONS INTERVIEWED IN FINLAND:

The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK):

The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) was founded in 1969, following the merging of SKDL, TPSL, and the Finnish Trade Union Federation. Currently, there is approximately one million members in SAK and its 22 affiliated unions. They are employed mostly in the industry sector, such as the lumberjacks, woodworkers, shop assistants, bakers, restaurant staff and cleaners. The main values of SAK, as stated on their official website, are "human dignity at work, equality before the law and defending the weaker party". They state that SAK's mission is to "improve the welfare, living standards and democratic participation of employees and to promote a fair and equitable society" (www.sak.fi/en/sak/values-and-mission)

In terms of the institutional role of SAK, as a confederation union, their central activity is lobbying the government and negotiating with the employers on issues concerning the social security and welfare state system. They are involved in legislation that pertains to the unemployment benefit, pensions, sickness and parental leaves, and so on. In 2017, the role of the confederation unions changed when the employer organization (EK) decided to decentralize the collective bargaining. According to the representative, SAK is still "finding its places" in face of those new changes, but the representative expects that the role of the unions will still be "huge" in the future. In the case of basic income in Finland, SAK had been involved in the past and is still involved in discussions and media publications about their views on basic income. The representative mentioned that SAK had not been very concerned with the subject of basic income as they do not see the future with such a policy. The representative mentioned that, in any case, the union would be involved in the hypothetical implementation of basic income. During the interview, the representative was presenting SAK's official position on basic income.

The Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK):

The Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK) was founded in 1946. In 1992, the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees (TVK) went bankrupt and its 400,000 members joined the STTK. Currently, there are about 640,000 workers in STTK and its 18 affiliated unions. Their members work mostly in clerical and technical jobs, such as nurses, administrators and supervisors, police force officers, bankers and public servants, and the likes. It is the second-largest unions' confederation of Finland. The STTK main objectives are to contribute to the development of a diverse and sustainable business structure across Finland so that Finns will still be able to work in the future (www.sttk.fi/en/mika-sttk/lahellasi-ympari-suomen)

In terms of the institutional role of STTK, as a confederation union, and similarly to SAK, their central activity is lobbying the government and negotiating with the employers on issues concerning the social security and welfare state system. The representative mentioned that they also have the role of coordinating the collective bargaining done at the sectoral/company-level by sharing information to the member unions. Similar to SAK, the recent changes on the form of collective bargaining affected their activities and STTK is still having discussions on "who should do, and how should, negotiations with the employers". The representatives believe that STTK bargaining power is still "very strong". In the case of basic income in Finland, the representative mentioned that basic income had been talked about in the past, but that the interest has largely increased in the last two years. To the representative, this interest coincides with the resurgence of the interest on the overall reform of the social security system. Because STTK is involved in research concerning this overall social security reform, they are de facto also looking at basic income as a possibility. They are involved in discussions on basic

income with their member unions in the STTK office, but also with social security experts in member unions. Currently, STTK do not have an official position on basic income.

Service Union United (PAM):

The Service Union United (PAM) was founded in 2000. The union is affiliated with the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK). It is a member of two global umbrella organizations for service sector unions, the UNI and IUF. PAM members work in the private sector in: retail trade, property services, security services as well as tourism, restaurant and leisure services. PAM has 226,384 members, which are located in 159 local branches. About 76 per cent of the members in PAM are women. PAM mission statement is to promote "democracy, justice, equality and social security both nationally and internationally (www.pam.fi/en/about-pam.html).

In the case of basic income in Finland, the representative mentioned that basic income had been part of political talks for the last twenty years and that the moment to try an experiment was well chosen because of all the changes happening in the Finnish society. The representative mentioned that PAM interests on basic income slightly predated the recent experiment. Before the experiment, one of their economists published a memo in which he argued about the positives and negatives aspects of basic income models presented by Finnish political parties/organizations (Left-Alliance Party, Green Party and Libera Think-Tank). The chairman of PAM took part in that discussion. The intention behind the memo was to show that PAM was open-minded to the idea of basic income. For the representative, this open-mindedness is due to the young age of their members. At the moment, PAM does not have an official position on basic income, but they are interested in hearing "both sides of the argument".

Social Science Professionals (YKA):

The Union of Social Science Professionals (YKA) is a trade union for employees, graduates and students in public or private sector, or NGOs. The union is affiliated with the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (AKAVA). Members of YKA usually possess a university degree in political or social science, administration, humanities or pedagogics. Membership is continually rising and is now upwards of 12,000 members. About 40 per cent of the union's members are employed by the state and universities, 20 per cent by municipalities and 40 per cent by companies and organizations in the private sector (www.yhteiskunta-ala.fi/en).

On social policy, according to the representative, because YKA's members are well-versed in political and policy discussions, they have a very active membership who demands an active participation in the political discussion from their union. In the case of basic income in Finland, the internal debates started when the legislation for the Finnish basic income experiment was already in

place, but before the experiment itself started. Also, the discussions continued throughout the experiment's beginning in 2017. The discussions and debates took place at multiple stages. First, there was a poll sent to the members asking about their views on Universal basic income. Then, a participatory process with specialists at the union's office, with the union's board and the student union. Finally, there was a general assembly in which designated members voted to make decisions on behalf of the whole membership. In the end, YKA published on its website a policy paper about their policy recommendations for any types of income reforms, including a UBI. The policy paper does not take a firm stance for or against basic income, but it points towards certain aspects of basic income that would be either beneficial or detrimental to the union and the Finnish society. The paper is considered as their official position.

Industrial Union:

The Finnish Industrial Union (Industrial Union) was founded in 2017 with the merger of three industrial unions: the Industrial Union TEAM, the Metal Workers' Union and the Woodworkers' Union. Industrial Union currently has 226,000 members. The union represents workers in the metal industry, chemical industry, wood product industry, the car sector, and other sectors. The 33 collective agreements negotiated by the former unions were transferred to the Industrial Union and are still valid. There are 715 local chapters, meaning that those local chapters are small in sizes (www.teollisuusliitto.fi/en/2017/11/welcome-industrial-union).

The representative expects that if a position was taken on basic income it would have to go through their economists and researchers' analysis, then through meetings with special committees, and finally would have to be approved by the union's board. The representative also mentioned that those types of discussions are usually made in cooperation with SAK, their confederation union. At the moment, Industrial Union is at the stage of internal discussion on basic income and do not have an official position.

APPENDIX 2

Interview Plan:

Introduction:

Present myself and let the respondent present him/herself

Present my motivation and the purpose to know about trade unions positions

Explain the ethical aspects of the interview (anonymity, my contact information, the method of collecting data, how the data will be archived, and voluntary nature of participation)

Verbal consent to the interview

Expected time of the interview: 1h00 to 2h00. / 20 questions in total

Background questions:

The interviewee job title and responsibilities

Time in the organizations

Assessment of how much the union is concerned by the issue of basic income

The interview questions:

Section 1: The Union

1) Briefly, how would you describe your own union? What characteristics would describe it best?
2) Who is involved in research/discussions on policies, such as the basic income, in your union *(e.g. groups or individuals experts)*? How are those research/discussions done?
3) Is your position on policy influenced by other union organizations or how do you influence other level of unions *(e.g. does the confederation influence the regional/national/sectoral union, or the other way around)*?
4) What is the current state of your membership? What actions and practices are you taking on this issue?
5) What are your thoughts on the system of Collective Bargaining in your country/province?
    a) Has the process changed recently (ex: through legislation or practices)?
    b) Do you think that the implementation of basic income could have effects on the collective bargaining process (e.g. would the form of it change, or how would the workers' situation change)?

Section 2: The State and Employers

6) How has the relation between unions, the government(s) and the employers evolved in the last 20-30 years?
7) Briefly, in your country/province how is the balance of responsibility for citizens' well-being divided between the state and the individuals? Do you think it is optimal or not, and why?
8) What are the positive and/or negative aspects of Social Security System (*Unemployment Insurance and Benefits, and Social Assistance*) in your country/province?
    a) Are the different types of workers (*e.g. part-time workers, temporary agency workers, self-employed*) sufficiently covered through unemployment benefits or social assistance?
9) What are the positive and/or negative aspects of activation measures (ALMP) in your country/province?

Section 3: Social and Economic Changes

10) What are the main social and economic changes that are happening in your country/province? How do they affect your union?
11) Have you seen changes in the labour market in your country/province in the last 20-30 years? Do you expect additional changes in the near future?
12) How do labour market changes that are considered international, such as globalization and automation, affect or will affect the labour market and your union?
13) What are your thoughts on poverty and inequality in your country/province?

Section 4: The basic income (Concept and Experiment)

14) What are your thoughts on the basic income? (General thoughts, what is the most important aspects of it to your union)
15) How would the situation of the welfare recipients change under a basic income?
16) Do you think that a basic income would discourage from work or not?
17) Do you think that financing a basic income is economically feasible?
18) How would the role of trade unions change under a basic income scheme?
19) What do you think about the basic income experiment in your country?
20) How did the current discussion on basic income started in your country/province?

CHAPTER 10 – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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