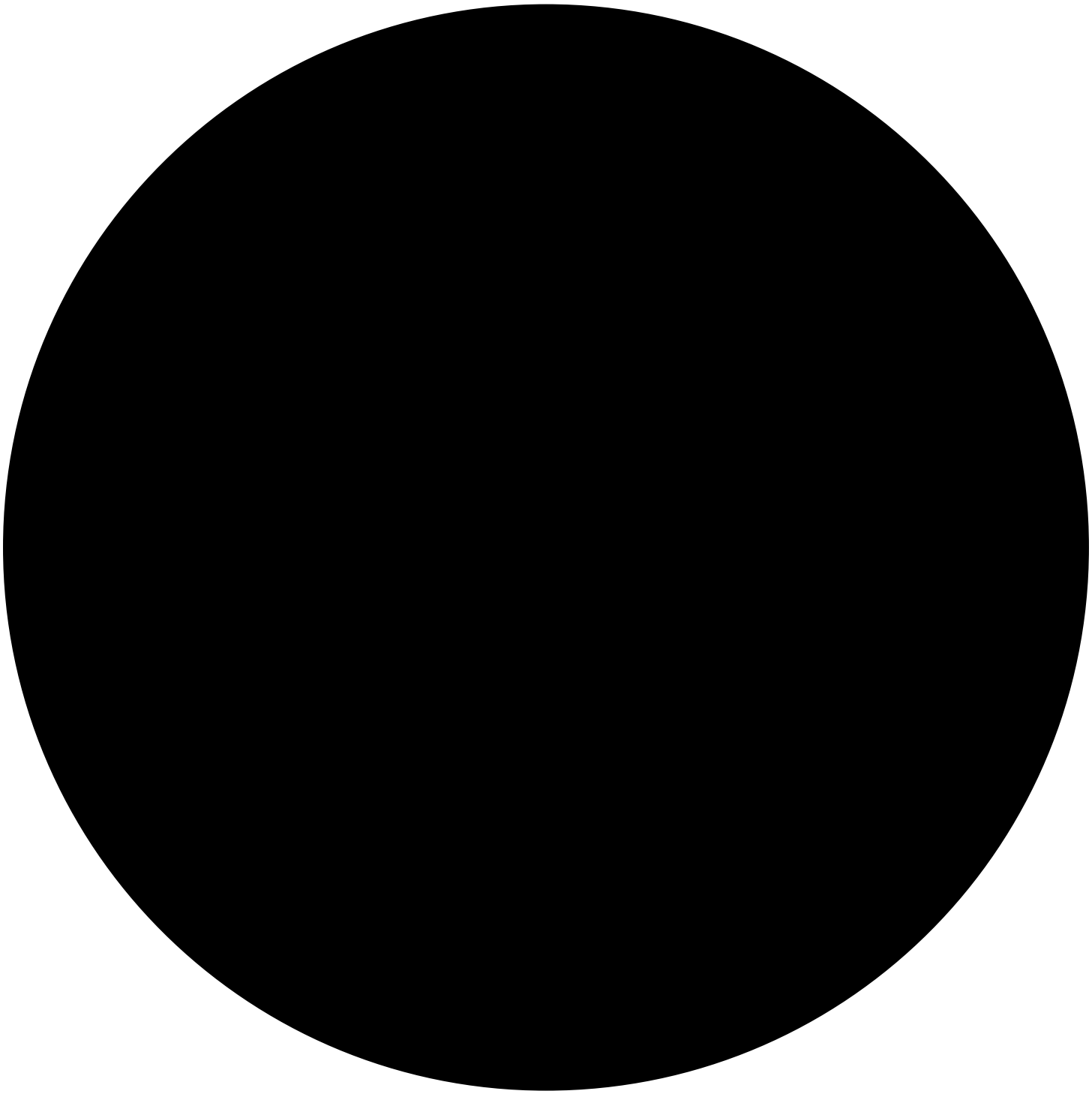
THE UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME, UNDER REVIEW

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The Universal Basic Income (UBI) has gone from being a utopian idea to being at the center of the debate, and this coming year, in 2017, Canada is going to take the step of putting it into practice in the biggest pilot program so far, and see if it is a viable way to eradicate poverty. The experiment will take place in the province of Ontario, as reported by *The Toronto Star* and *The Independent*. The regional government will detail the plan in April after public consultation, but the base proposal drawn up by former Conservative Senator Harry Segall guarantees a monthly income of 1,320 Canadian

dollars – about €945 in exchange – to all citizens. The income will be received by all citizens between the ages of 18 and 65 who do not reach a minimum income – around 15,800 euros net per year –, whether they are working or not. People with functional diversity will receive an additional 360 euros per month; however, the income will replace unemployment and dependency benefits.

There are voices that see in the proposal a path towards social justice and the eradication of poverty, and other voices that see a cheaper and less bureaucratic alternative to the welfare state – or even a Trojan horse against it. Through the program, which will last three years, it is expected to answer some of the burning questions about the Universal Basic Income, for which the results in health and education, food security, birth rates, family reconciliation, the employment status, hours worked and income earned, or the inclusion and participation of citizens.

Actually, it's not the first time UBI will be experienced in Canada. Between 1974 and 1979, in the town of Dauphin in the province of Manitoba, the the Mincome program, with which the government distributed monthly checks to all citizens unconditionally. The program was dismantled in 1979, but later it was possible to verify that in those five years employment remained stable, hospitalization times were reduced, and school dropouts decreased.

Anyway, and back to the present, Ontario is not the only place UBI is going to be put into practice. Also in Canada, the small province of Prince Edward Island has approved a similar program. Finland plans to pay a salary of 800 euros< /a> to all its citizens, on a trial basis, and in the Netherlands will be tested with 250 residents of Utrecht. In addition, a UBI program in Fife Scottish council.

At a time when the future of the labor market is uncertain,

when automation and the fourth revolution may end up replacing a large number of jobs – according to Oxford, 1.3m jobs to be automated in UK by 2030 – many eyes are on UBI as a solution.

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