

Analysis of federal party platforms on basic income 2021



- Basic income was prominently featured among the resolutions debated on at the liberal policy convention, and although this was not the first time the liberals voted for basic income as a priority this is the first time a resolution was sponsored by the Senior Liberals' Commission Caucus.
- Canada's first bill on basic income was sponsored by liberal MP Julie Dzerowicz, who is calling for a [National Strategy for a Guaranteed Basic Income Act](#). Check out Basic Income Canada Network's analysis of Bill C-273 [here](#).
- Basic income was not mentioned in the last federal budget. Instead, the Liberals proposed several short-term measures for improving income support.
- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said "jobs and growth came first and foremost" when asked why a UBI was not included as part of Canada's economic recovery by Ryan Jespersen host of [Real Talk](#) on April 20, 2021 (time mark 5:14).
- Canada's building blocks towards a basic income, the child benefit and the guaranteed income supplement for seniors have been credited for reducing poverty for those populations, and this is due in part because of positive changes made by the Liberals.

Summary of the platform regarding income support

- Make the Canada Caregiver Credit refundable, allowing caregivers to receive up to \$1,250 per year.
- Increase Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors.
- Permanently extend the EI sickness benefits from 15 to 26 weeks, coming into effect in summer 2022.
- Introduce a new EI benefit for self-employed Canadians.
- A stronger and more inclusive EI system that addresses gaps made obvious during COVID-19.
- Establish a new EI Career Insurance Benefit.

On balancing the budget: "Given the evolving natures of the pandemic," the liberals have included a \$15 billion provision for potential deviations over the next two and a half years.

The liberals are the only federal party to include a fiscal and costing plan. Link to [platform](#).

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- Although we know conservative advocates for basic income exist, the Conservative Party has never formally endorsed a basic income.
- Regarding Bill C-273 a **National Strategy for a Guaranteed Basic Income Act**, during the [second reading](#) in June 2021 conservative MP. Raquel Dancho gave several reasons to reject the bill, including cost, the **B.C basic income report**, and the opioid crisis.
- [The Conservative party's platform](#) has been published as a recovery plan for Canada and can be summed up in three points 1) Jobs 2) tax credits and 3) business loans.

Summary of the platform regarding income support

- The Party has acknowledged that many gig workers were excluded from benefits during the worst of the pandemic and are proposing that if elected they would require companies who operate within the gig economy to make contributions to portable Employees Savings Accounts.
- Preference for tax credits and loans to businesses rather than cash transfers to people.
- Establish a Canada Seniors Care benefit, paying \$200 per month per household to any Canadian who is living with and taking care of a parent over the age of 70.
- Double the Canada Workers Benefit.
- Double the disability supplement from \$713 to \$1,500.
- A super EI program that temporarily provides more generous benefits. An increase to EI sickness benefits from 15 to 52 weeks for those suffering from a serious illness.

On balancing the budget: Promises to balance the budget within 10 years with no cost projections. Link to [platform](#).

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- “We’ll get to work right away building towards a [guaranteed livable income for all Canadians.](#)”
- Vow to immediately lift every senior and person with a disability out of poverty and build from there.
- Promise EI reforms no less than \$2,000 per month.
- Higher rates for parental leave.

On balancing the budget: Promise to manage debt and deficits responsibly, borrowing when required to rebuild and defend the services that Canadians and their families rely on, and moving to balance when it is prudent to do so. Link to [platform](#).



- “Instead of plugging holes one-by-one, the solution is to create a comprehensive benefit: Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI).”
- The Green party is the only federal party promising to implement a basic income.
- The platform describes Canada’s income support approach as “piecemeal” while declaring that poverty is expensive.

The platform also contains some specifics on the design of the basic income program

- Benefit levels will adhere to the Market Basket Measure (MBM). The MBM monthly threshold in Calgary for a single person is \$2,014.
- The program will enable the provinces to “reduce spending” on social assistance, suggesting that these funds will be reallocated to help fund the basic income.
- The basic income will complement existing public services.
- The basic income will be targeted, meaning people will be able to maintain a partial benefit if they are employed. Benefits will gradually decrease as employment income increases.

There is no mention of balancing the budget in the green party platform. Link to [platform](#).