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Modeling a Five-Tier Income Hierarchy in a Post-Labor Economy (2060)

Introduction

By the year 2060, advances in artificial intelligence and robotics are assumed to have **fully displaced the majority of traditional human labor** – a shift projected to **"fully materialize between 2040–2060"** as global automation replaces human workers [1]. In this post-labor future, incomes can no longer rely primarily on wages from human jobs. Instead, households must derive livelihoods from a **five-tier income hierarchy** of new and existing sources. These five sources are: **(1) Universal Basic Income (UBI)** funded by taxing wealth and AI/robotics profits, **(2) Public Wealth Fund Dividends** paid from collectively-owned investment funds, **(3) Collectively-Owned Private Assets** (e.g. cooperatives, DAOs, credit unions, REITs) that distribute profits to members, **(4) Personally Accumulated Assets** (individual ownership of real estate, stocks, bonds), and **(5) Residual Wages** from the shrinking niches of human work that remain valuable for trust, authenticity, or liability reasons. This report develops a comprehensive model of household income in 2060 based on these five sources, including forecasts of their relative contributions, examples of current precedents, and scenario analysis of the scale required for each mechanism to **maintain income parity** in a largely automated economy.

Today's income distribution is heavily skewed toward wages. As of the early 2020s, roughly **60% of U.S. personal income comes from labor earnings**, about **20% from capital/property income**, and about **20% from government transfers** [2] [3]. For example, in 2022 the average American received ~$40,500 from work, ~$12,900 from investments, and ~$11,500 from government transfer payments [2]. Over the past half-century, the share of income coming from government transfers (e.g. Social Security, unemployment insurance) has **doubled**, from ~8.2% in 1970 to ~17.6% in 2022 [3], indicating a long-run trend toward more non-wage income [3]. However, wages still account for the bulk of income for most working-age households today.

By 2060, we anticipate a radical re-balancing of these income sources. In a scenario where the five new pillars each contribute roughly equal shares, the composition of the average household's income might be on the order of **UBI ~20%, public fund dividends ~20%, co-op/collective asset income ~20%, personal asset income ~20%, and wages ~20%**. This is a dramatic shift from today's ~60% wages. The transition would be driven by AI-induced productivity gains alongside deliberate policy choices to redistribute the new wealth generated by automation. The goal of this five-tier model is to ensure broad-based **economic agency at the household level** – i.e. families have multiple independent income streams, providing resilience and equitable access to the fruits of an automated economy. Below, we detail each of the five income sources, their 2060 projected role, current real-world examples that foreshadow their feasibility, and the scale of change required to achieve an income-parity post-labor economy.

Current Income Structure vs. Post-Labor Outlook

Table 1 summarizes the **current (2020s) vs. future (2060)** breakdown of household income by source, illustrating the shift from wage dominance to a diversified five-tier mix:

Income Source	~2020 Share of Income	~2060 Share of Income (Target)
Wages & Salaries	~60% [2]	~20% (Residual human work)
Government Transfers (net)	~20% [2]	~0% (Replaced by UBI & dividends)
Universal Basic Income	~0% (pilot programs only)	~20% (UBI from all levels)
Public Wealth Fund Dividends	~0% (minimal, e.g. Alaska)	~20% (national/local funds)
Collective/Co-op Asset Income	~1–2% (small co-op sector)	~20% (widespread co-ownership)
Personal Investment Income	~20% [2]	~20% (broad individual assets)

Table 1: Approximate household income composition in the 2020s vs. a modeled scenario for 2060. In 2020, about 60% of income came from labor wages, ~20% from capital/property (personal investments), and ~20% from transfers [2]. By 2060, wages shrink to ~20%, while new streams (UBI, public dividends, and collective assets) each grow to ~20%, alongside personal investments ~20%. Traditional transfers (e.g. pensions, welfare) are assumed to be largely supplanted by UBI and social dividends.

This scenario is just one illustrative equilibrium – in practice each component could be higher or lower. For instance, if **UBI** were set more generously, it might contribute >20% of income, reducing the needed shares from other categories. Alternatively, if public wealth funds cannot grow sufficiently, a larger burden might fall on **personal asset ownership** or vice versa. The key insight is that by 2060 **labor earnings no longer dominate**: the majority of household purchasing power comes from **ownership and redistribution mechanisms rather than jobs**. In the following sections, we explore each of the five pillars in depth, including baseline examples today and the path to scaling them for 2060.

1. Universal Basic Income (UBI) – Foundational Redistribution

Universal Basic Income refers to a uniform cash payment distributed regularly to all individuals, regardless of employment, to provide a basic floor of income. In a post-labor economy, UBI serves as a *foundational redistribution mechanism*, ensuring everyone benefits from AI/robot productivity gains. Rather than "helicopter money," the envisioned UBI in 2060 is funded by **taxing the immense wealth and income generated by automation**, essentially recycling a portion of AI's economic dividends back to the people. Possible funding sources include:

- **Automation/Robot Taxes and AI Profits** – Taxes on companies that replace human workers with AI. Even tech leaders like Bill Gates have proposed a robot tax to slow automation and fund retraining or UBI [4]. One analysis suggests a significant public revenue share of AI profits (e.g. 33%) could dramatically improve funding for UBI [5].

- **Wealth Taxes and Capital Gains** – A levy on high net worth and large capital incomes, capturing some of the automation windfall from owners. Advocates argue targeting the top 1% (through land value taxes, resource rents, financial transaction taxes, etc.) could sustainably bankroll a UBI [4].
- **Consumption Taxes (VAT)** – A broad-based value-added tax on goods/services, as trial-modeled in some studies. For example, one study found a *modest 1.5% increase in VAT could fund a budget-neutral UBI* at a minimal level [6], though a substantial UBI would require more revenue.
- **Carbon Dividends or Common Resource Fees** – Charging for use of common resources (carbon taxes, spectrum fees, mineral royalties) and redistributing the proceeds equally (similar to Alaska's oil dividend model, discussed below).

By 2060, UBI could provide on the order of **15–20% of the average household's income** in our scenario. If *average per-capita income* in 2060 is, say, \$75,000 (inflation-adjusted), then UBI might deliver around \$15,000 per person annually (as a mix of federal, state, and local basic incomes). For a household of 2–3 adults, that's on the order of \$30k–\$45k total UBI – a substantial base income floor. This scale is ambitious but within reason if AI-driven productivity dramatically increases GDP by 2060. Research supports the plausibility: a recent economic modeling study found that if AI systems become just **5–6 times more productive** than today's technology, the resulting *AI capital profits could sustainably finance a UBI equal to ~11% of GDP* (roughly a few thousand dollars per person), **even if no new jobs are created** [5]. With policy tweaks like higher profit taxation (e.g. raising public revenue capture from 15% to 33%), the required AI capability threshold to fund such a UBI drops by half [7]. In short, **a robust UBI is economically achievable** in a mature AI economy, but it hinges on capturing a significant share of AI's gains for public benefit.

Current Examples & Experiments: While no country has implemented a full UBI for all citizens, numerous **pilots and partial basic incomes** have laid groundwork:

- The **Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD)** is often cited as "the closest thing to a UBI" in the U.S. Each Alaska resident has, since 1982, received an annual check from a state oil revenue fund. Payouts typically range from \$1,000–\$2,000 per person per year (in 2021 it was \$1,114 per person, or \$4,456 for a family of four) [8]. This is funded by investing a share of oil royalties into a sovereign wealth fund. While small, Alaska's PFD demonstrates a political model of universal, unconditional payments and enjoys broad public support as a **"citizen's dividend"**. It is **not** enough to live on, but it shows that **universal payments are feasible and popular** when backed by communal resource wealth.
- **UBI Pilot Programs** have been run in cities and countries around the world. For example, the **Stockton, CA SEED experiment (2019–2020)** gave \$500/month to 125 randomly selected residents [9]. Results showed recipients had reduced financial stress and improved well-being, using the funds mostly for basic needs. Similarly, Finland's 2017–2018 basic income trial provided ~€560/month to unemployed individuals, resulting in higher self-reported well-being (though no major effect on employment). As of 2023, over **38 UBI pilots** have been conducted across Europe, North America, and Asia [10], generally finding **positive impacts on poverty, health, and happiness** with minimal work disincentive [11].
- Some communities effectively have a basic income through **tribal or local revenue sharing**. One notable case: the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina distributes casino profits as biannual cash to all tribal members. A longitudinal study found this **unconditional cash transfer led to improved mental health and educational outcomes for children** in those families [12]. This illustrates how **common asset revenue (in this case, gaming revenue) can be pooled and paid out universally** to community members, akin to a local UBI.

- The concept of **"universal basic dividend"** is emerging, where fees on using common goods (environment, data, etc.) fund citizen payments. Earth4All, for instance, proposes a Universal Basic Dividend in which **"those who exploit common resources pay a fee into a Citizen's Fund, paid out to citizens as a dividend"** [13] – effectively monetizing the commons for public benefit. This idea aligns with making tech and environmental rents a source of income for all.

Challenges and Gaps: Funding a meaningful UBI at national scale remains the biggest hurdle. A UBI that meets basic needs would cost **trillions of dollars annually in the U.S.**, potentially **double all current federal transfer spending** [14]. Such magnitude demands **new revenue streams** or reallocation of budgets. Critics argue a flat payment cannot replace targeted programs for specific needs [14], and some worry that solely relying on UBI could be regressive if it crowds out other social services [14]. These concerns mean that by 2060, a UBI would likely *complement*, not entirely replace, other social support (for example, healthcare or disability support might remain separate). Additionally, political acceptance of large wealth taxes or robot taxes is uncertain; powerful interests may resist. However, the post-labor scenario presumes that by 2040–2060 the need for income support is so apparent (with jobs vanishing) that broad coalitions favor UBI. Policies like **land value taxes and resource rents** – considered efficient because they tax unearned income – might gain traction as they do not distort productivity [4]. By steadily phasing in UBI (perhaps starting with modest dividends that grow as automation expands), society can adjust and refine its funding approach over decades. In summary, UBI in 2060 could be the **bedrock of household income**, ensuring no one is left penniless in the post-work era, but it requires substantial economic shifts: high tax revenue from AI/robots, or public ownership stakes in automation, to fund perhaps ~20% of GDP in annual payments.

2. Public Wealth Fund Dividends – Social Ownership of Capital

The second tier consists of **Public Wealth Fund Dividends** – payments to citizens from collectively-owned investment funds at the municipal, state, federal, or even global level. The concept is to **socialize a portion of national wealth** by having public entities own income-generating assets (like stocks, bonds, real estate, natural resources) and then **pay out the returns to all citizens as dividends**. This differs from UBI in that it's *tied to asset returns* (like a shareholder dividend) rather than tax-and-transfer, but in practice the two can overlap. Public wealth funds create a mechanism for **broadly sharing the profits of capital and technological progress**.

Existing Examples: The most famous example is again the **Alaska Permanent Fund (APF)**, a sovereign wealth fund established in 1976 using oil revenues. The APF invests at least 25% of the state's mineral royalties into a diversified portfolio, which grew to **over \$64 billion by 2021** [8]. Each year, a portion of the fund's earnings are paid to every Alaska resident (the Permanent Fund Dividend). As noted, this amounted to about \$1,000–\$2,000 per person per year (e.g. \$1,114 in 2021) [8]. While modest, Alaska's fund demonstrates how **collectively owned assets can provide a long-term income stream** for citizens **without eroding the principal** (the fund is constitutionally protected). Notably, by 2017 the APF's principal was ~\$60 billion – **roughly 113% of Alaska's state GDP** [15]. For perspective, a *comparable national fund for the entire U.S.* would have to be on the order of \$22–\$25 **trillion** (over 100% of U.S. GDP) [15] to achieve a similar per-capita stake. This hints at the scale required: extremely large funds would be needed to pay substantial national dividends.

Internationally, **Norway's Government Pension Fund Global** (often just called the Norwegian Oil Fund) is even larger – over \$1.3 trillion in assets – funded by North Sea oil profits. This fund (owned by the

Norwegian public) is **~280% of Norway's GDP** and generates enormous investment income [15]. Norway uses the fund's earnings to finance government services (rather than direct citizen checks), but it effectively boosts public budgets by ~3–4% of GDP annually. If it were paid as a dividend to citizens, it would be several thousand dollars each. Other countries and regions have smaller sovereign or public funds (for example, **Singapore's Temasek and GIC funds**, or **the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority** in the UAE, or **state permanent school funds** in places like Texas). These illustrate the viability of investing collectively on behalf of citizens.

Social Wealth Fund Proposals: Economists and policy thinkers have floated plans for **national social wealth funds** in the U.S. to systematically create citizen-owned capital. One proposal by the People's Policy Project outlines an **"American Solidarity Fund"** where the federal government would gradually acquire assets and issue every American one share of the fund [16]. **Citizens could not sell their share, but would receive a** universal basic dividend **from the fund's investment income each year** [17]**. Over time, as the fund accumulates stocks, real estate, and other assets, the dividend could grow. The proposal envisions funding this accumulation via measures like: redirecting certain taxes or revenues into the fund, broadening the Social Security trust fund into equities, or even directly issuing debt to buy assets (essentially socializing part of the economy's capital stock). The key idea is to** democratically share in the returns to capital**, which are expected to rise as AI/robots take over production. Without such mechanisms, those returns would accrue only to private owners, exacerbating inequality.

By 2060, public wealth funds at multiple levels (city, state, federal, perhaps even a **global climate fund** or **data dividend fund**) could together contribute ~20% of household income. For example, **municipal wealth funds** might own local infrastructure or land and pay residents a dividend; **state funds** (like Alaska's) could expand to other resource-rich states (imagine an oil dividend in Texas or a tech dividend in California); and a **national fund** could be built up through broad taxes or fractional equity ownership of companies. If these funds collectively paid, say, \$15,000 per person annually (to use the earlier scenario), that's akin to each American holding a large index fund on the economy. Achieving that would require *enormous* asset accumulation: assuming a safe withdrawal rate of ~4% (to not deplete principal), paying \$15k/year means having ~$375k in assets per person in the fund. For ~330 million Americans, that's on the order of \$120 **trillion** in assets – roughly five times current U.S. GDP. This suggests that **maintaining income parity via public funds means society must aggressively save and invest** a chunk of the automation dividends over the coming decades. It could be done through, for instance, dedicating a **portion of AI companies' equity to a public fund**, or heavily taxing high incomes/wealth and investing those proceeds. Notably, if automation leads to *vastly higher output* (some optimistic scenarios see AI dramatically boosting GDP by 2060), then the absolute size of the pie is bigger and a public fund capturing even a modest slice could reach these trillions.

Feasibility & Gaps: The Alaska model shows **public funds can be politically durable** – Alaskans across the spectrum support their dividend. However, scaling this nationally faces challenges: politically, proposals to **"socialize" ownership** or significantly tax wealth face resistance. Economically, accumulating a multi-trillion fund requires either running government surpluses (rare in the US historically) or **converting private assets to public** (which raises ideological opposition). Some strategies could bridge this gap: for example, implementing a **financial transaction tax or a tiny wealth tax whose proceeds exclusively go into a social wealth fund**. If started soon, even small annual contributions can grow significantly by 2060 thanks to compound returns. For instance, investing just 2% of GDP per year (about \$500 billion today) into a public fund, with a 5% real return, would result in a fund on the order of tens of trillions by 2060. Another gap is deciding **payout rules** – too high a payout could exhaust the fund, too low and it doesn't meet needs.

Common practice (as in Alaska and Norway) is a conservative rule (e.g. pay out ~4% of the fund's average value). Finally, governance of such funds must be insulated from corruption and short-term politics. But models exist (independent investment boards, as Alaska and Norway use). In summary, public wealth funds represent **society taking an ownership stake in the automated economy** so that *everyone* gets a slice of the profits. By 2060, this could be a major income pillar if we begin accumulating assets now.

3. Collectively-Owned Private Assets – Cooperatives, DAOs, and Community Wealth

The third tier comprises income from **collectively-owned private assets**, meaning enterprises or investments that are owned and governed by groups of individuals (workers, consumers, community members) rather than traditional corporate shareholders. These include **cooperatives** (worker co-ops, consumer co-ops, producer co-ops), **credit unions** (member-owned banks), **mutual companies**, **REITs** and community land trusts, and emerging blockchain-based **Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs)** that manage assets collectively. In a post-labor economy, collectively-owned entities could flourish as a way for people to **jointly own and benefit from capital** even outside of government programs.

Current Landscape: The cooperative sector today, while a minority of the economy, is significant. In the United States there are **over 29,000 cooperatives operating across all industries** [18] – from agriculture and finance to retail and utilities. These co-ops are **owned by 1 in 3 Americans** (over 350 million memberships, as many people belong to multiple co-ops) [18]. U.S. cooperatives **generate about 2 million jobs, $652 billion in annual revenue, and hold $3 trillion in assets** [19]. Notable examples include large farmer co-ops like CHS Inc. (a Fortune 100 company), retail co-ops like REI (which shares profits with its customer-members via annual patronage dividends), utility co-ops (rural electric co-ops serve 42 million Americans [20]), and **credit unions**. Over **92 million Americans use credit unions** for banking [21] – these institutions are non-profit and return earnings to members via better rates or dividends. While the **typical dividend or refund from a co-op today is modest** (e.g. a member-owner of a grocery co-op might get a patronage refund of a few hundred dollars if the co-op is profitable), the prevalence shows the **infrastructure for collective ownership exists**.

Worker cooperatives – businesses owned and governed by their employees – are a smaller subset but demonstrate how labor can also be owner. The **Mondragón Corporation** in Spain is a flagship example globally: it's a federation of ~100 worker co-ops (from manufacturing to banking) that together employ **over 80,000 people** [22]. Mondragón's worker-owners share in the profits and participate in decision-making democratically [23]. The success of Mondragón (one of Spain's largest enterprises) over decades proves that **large-scale democratic ownership is viable** and can be competitive. In Mondragón, **profits are distributed to the worker-members** or reinvested, rather than to external shareholders [23]. Likewise, in the U.S., employee ownership via ESOPs (Employee Stock Ownership Plans) is somewhat common, though not usually full co-ops. **Platform cooperatives** are a nascent idea where gig economy or online platform workers collectively create alternatives to, say, Uber or Airbnb so that value flows to providers instead of a central corporate owner.

Beyond traditional co-ops, **DAOs** have emerged in the cryptocurrency/blockchain space as a new form of collective ownership. DAOs are internet-native organizations where token holders vote on governance and collectively own the treasury. Though early, some DAOs have accumulated significant assets – by 2024, the total assets under management by DAOs exploded to **nearly $30 billion** (from just ~$0.5B in 2021) [24]. For

example, certain DeFi (decentralized finance) protocol DAOs hold large treasuries and distribute fees to token holders. There are DAOs for collectively owning art, real estate, or other investments [25]. While still experimental (and not without governance challenges), they hint at future models for collective asset income that are borderless and automated (the DAO code can automatically split profits among members).

2060 Vision: In a mature post-labor economy, collectively-owned enterprises could expand greatly, providing on the order of **20% of household income**. This implies a **much larger cooperative sector** and more widespread membership in collective investment vehicles. Several mechanisms could drive this growth:

- **Worker/Producer Ownership of Automated Firms:** As traditional companies automate, workers (or the public) might take ownership stakes. For instance, a factory run mostly by robots could be organized as a cooperative where the *human supervisors and community* own the robots, rather than a distant shareholder. This way, even if few people work there, the **profits are shared** by many. **New models of collective, democratic ownership** are actively being discussed to ensure the benefits of automation are widely shared [26].
- **Community and Municipal Ownership:** Cities could establish cooperatively owned enterprises (e.g. a city-owned Amazon-equivalent where residents get dividends) or invest in housing via REIT-like structures that pay residents rent dividends. Community land trusts might own significant housing stock by 2060, removing land from speculative markets and allowing residents to collectively benefit from rising land values.
- **Finance and Banking Co-ops:** By 2060, credit unions and public banks might handle a larger share of financial services, returning interest to members. Public or cooperative banks (like Germany's Sparkassen or the Bank of North Dakota in the U.S.) could channel credit to community-owned projects and then rebate profits to citizens or account holders.
- **Platforms and Data Cooperatives:** Many foresee that data (the oil of the digital economy) could be owned collectively. Data cooperatives might aggregate individuals' data and negotiate profit-sharing with AI firms. Likewise, gig workers might form cooperatives to own the platforms they work on.
- **Mutual Insurance and Social Care Co-ops:** As employment fades, benefits like insurance might be provided by member-owned mutual companies, where any surplus is paid out to members or used to reduce premiums.

If collectively-owned assets contribute ~20% of income by 2060, that could mean, for example, a typical person might receive a few hundred dollars a month in co-op dividends or patronage refunds (from various memberships), plus indirect benefits (like paying lower fees and rates because they use member-owned services). It also means **many more people will be co-owners of enterprises**. This requires an uptick in entrepreneurship in cooperative forms and supportive policy (e.g. favorable tax treatment for co-ops, access to capital, and education in cooperative business). Some countries like Italy (with the Marcora Law) already support worker buyouts to cooperatives. If such policies spread, by 2060 converting businesses to employee or community ownership when owners retire (instead of selling to another corporation) could be common.

Example: Greater Cooperative Penetration. Consider the **electric utility sector** – today, ~42% of U.S. electricity distribution is already by rural electric cooperatives [20]. By 2060, imagine **renewable energy co-ops** in every city where residents collectively invest in solar farms and receive monthly dividend checks or bill credits from the surplus power sold. Similarly, **housing cooperatives** (co-op apartments) could become more widespread, effectively letting residents build equity and reduce housing costs rather than enriching

landlords. Each such development boosts the share of income people receive not as wages, but as **owners sharing a surplus**.

Gaps and Considerations: Currently, collectively-owned firms often struggle to access capital and scale up. They also tend to be concentrated in certain sectors (agriculture, finance, utilities). To reach 20% of income by 2060, co-ops and DAOs must break into the high-growth tech and manufacturing sectors that will dominate the automated economy. This could be facilitated by **public policy**: for instance, governments could mandate **co-determination** (worker representation and shareholding in corporations) or even require that a fraction of every AI company's shares be held by a workers' trust or community fund (a form of collective ownership). Another challenge is ensuring these collective entities are well-run – the **governance** of co-ops and DAOs can be complex (e.g. DAOs have faced issues with voter participation and security [27]). Education in democratic management and new tools for decentralized governance will be crucial. On the upside, cooperatives tend to keep wealth local and have *mission-driven motives*, which may help address the sense of purpose and inclusion in a post-work society. People deriving some income from, say, their local arts co-op or a cooperative brewery they co-own, may feel more connected than receiving only a government check. Overall, collectively-owned assets in 2060 provide a **meso-level** between personal wealth and state programs: they empower groups of people to **pool resources and share rewards**, reinforcing social bonds and economic inclusion.

4. Personally Accumulated Assets – Individual Wealth and Investments

Despite the new collective and public mechanisms, **personal wealth accumulation** will remain an important pillar of income in 2060. This includes **private ownership of real estate, stocks, bonds, businesses, and other assets by individuals** or families, and the income derived from them (such as rental income, dividends, interest, capital gains). In many ways, this pillar is "unchanged from present-day personal investment structures" – it's the classic capitalist model of individuals saving and investing for themselves. However, what must change by 2060 is the **breadth and distribution** of personal asset ownership. Currently, the distribution of personal wealth (and thus investment income) is extremely unequal – which is problematic if labor income fades, because *those without assets would have no income*. Thus, to maintain broad income parity in a post-labor world, *far more people must own substantial assets* by 2060, or benefit from mechanisms that give them asset-like stakes (such as the public and collective funds described above).

Today's Baseline: At present, personal investment income (interest, dividends, rents) accounts for about 20% of total income [2], but it is concentrated among the wealthy. Wealth inequality is stark: the **top 1% of U.S. families own about 40% of national wealth**, while the **bottom third of families own effectively 0% (no net wealth at all)** [28] [29]. Millionaire households (roughly the top few percent) own ~80% of all wealth [30]. This means the **returns on capital today mostly flow to a narrow slice of society**. As an example, about 53% of American families own stocks (often indirectly via retirement accounts), but the richest 10% own over 90% of the total stock market value [31] [32]. Similarly, home ownership (the main asset for the middle class) is around 65% of households, but many younger and lower-income people have no property. If this persists into the post-labor era, the divide between those living off assets and those with nothing would be extreme.

Broadening Asset Ownership: To have personal assets contribute ~20% of income for *typical households* in 2060, asset ownership must broaden. Several policy ideas and social trends could facilitate this:

- **"Baby Bonds" or Stakeholder Grants:** One proposal is for the government to endow each child at birth with a trust account (scaled to family wealth/need) that grows over time. By adulthood, everyone would have a starter capital sum. For example, analysts note the *bottom 50% of Americans hold only 1% of wealth* [33] – baby bonds aim to change that by giving capital to those born with none. Washington D.C. and states like Connecticut have initiated baby bond programs recently. By 2060, if such programs are expanded, a whole generation could reach adulthood with, say, tens of thousands of dollars in assets to invest (education, home, business).
- **Universal Retirement/Investment Accounts:** Building on systems like 401(k)s, there could be portable, government-seeded savings accounts for all citizens (sometimes called "Universal 401k" or sovereign wealth accounts for individuals). These might be funded by a small fraction of UBI or other transfers being automatically invested in index funds for the person's future. Over decades, even low-income individuals accumulate a nest egg.
- **Employee Ownership and Stock Distribution:** As mentioned under co-ops, even within conventional firms there could be more employee stock ownership or profit-sharing. If each worker gradually acquires shares of the AI-driven company they work for (or stock options as part of compensation), they build personal capital. Some countries (like Sweden in the past with Meidner Plan concepts) have explored requiring companies to issue new stock to worker funds annually, slowly socializing ownership. By 2060, such schemes could result in *every* worker owning a slice of the capital stock.
- **Housing Equity for Renters:** New models like shared equity housing or rent-to-own programs could ensure more people build housing wealth. If automation makes housing construction cheaper, home ownership might become more affordable, raising the asset ownership rate.
- **Financial Inclusion & Literacy:** Continued expansion of access to financial markets (e.g. through zero-commission trading apps, robo-advisors) enables more people to invest small amounts. However, without regulation and education this can be risky (meme-stock manias, etc.), so by 2060 one hopes a more stable system for inclusive investing exists.

In our 2060 scenario, personal assets still contribute ~20% of incomes on average – roughly the same share as today *in aggregate*, but **far more evenly spread** across the population. Ideally, even someone without a formal job by 2060 might have income from **multiple small personal assets**: for instance, they might own a fractional share of an AI startup through crowdfunding, rent out their solar rooftop's energy production, and receive interest from their share in a community loan fund. These are modest individually, but collectively provide a stream of income. Meanwhile, those who were affluent in the old system will of course continue to invest – there will still be rich entrepreneurs and investors in 2060. But a combination of progressive taxation and wider ownership means the gap is tempered.

Maintaining Parity: If each household needs, say, \$20,000/year from personal investments (to make 20% of a \$100k income), what principal is needed? Assuming a 5% annual return, that implies \$400k in assets per household on average. Currently, the *median* U.S. household net worth is around \$120k, and much lower for non-homeowners. Reaching an average of \$400k (in today's dollars) per household by 2060 is challenging but not impossible, especially if asset prices rise over time. Much of this accumulation would happen through the life cycle (e.g. people saving in middle age). The **risk**, however, is that without labor income, people might eat into their capital for living expenses, making it hard to accumulate. That's why UBI and public dividends are crucial complements – they cover basics so that individuals can *save and invest some money rather than spend it all*. Furthermore, if **wealth concentration is not addressed, "wealth**

begets wealth" dynamics will continue, amplifying inequality [34]. The wealthy can save and invest more, growing their share, while those with less fall further behind [34]. Policies like inheritance taxes or even periodic capital redistributions might be considered by 2060 to counteract this, ensuring each generation can start with a more level asset base.

In summary, the personal asset pillar in 2060 means **each citizen is, to some extent, their own investor/capitalist**. This is empowering – it provides direct agency (one can choose how to invest one's savings) – but it also carries the risk to individuals of market fluctuations and the need for financial savvy. The other pillars (public and collective) help cushion those risks by providing guaranteed or pooled income. Personal asset income will likely remain somewhat unequal (some will always make better investments or have more valuable assets), but if everyone has *at least some* stake, it can significantly augment the average household's resources beyond what wages (or UBI alone) could do.

5. Residual Wages – Human Work in the Age of Automation

Even in a highly automated 2060 economy, **some human work remains economically preferable or culturally desired**. The fifth tier of income comes from **residual wages** earned in jobs that for one reason or another are not fully replaced by AI/robots. While the **vast majority of 20th-century jobs are automated by 2060**, these remaining niches are important both for income and for societal function. We anticipate that by 2060, wages might contribute only ~20% of total income (down from ~60% today), but they could still be a meaningful supplement, especially for those who choose to work in these areas or possess skills machines can't easily replicate. In fact, because labor is scarce in a post-labor world, these human-intensive jobs might command **wage premiums**, and doing such work could be partly a matter of passion or prestige (since basic needs are covered by other income).

Categories of Residual Jobs: What kinds of work are still done by humans in 2060? Likely candidates include:

- **Jobs Requiring Complex Human Interaction, Emotional Intelligence, or Creativity:** For example, **therapists, social workers, or teachers** might still be preferred in person for their human empathy, even if AI can assist. **Creative arts, entertainment, and craftsmanship** could remain human domains – people may value the authenticity of human-made art, music, writing, or artisan goods (in fact, human-made products might become luxury items precisely because AI can churn out perfect replicas cheaply).
- **High-Trust Roles and Accountability:** Some roles might legally or culturally require a human at the helm to take responsibility for outcomes. For instance, **senior management or political leadership** might still involve humans for accountability, even if AI advises them. Jobs in **ethics, law, and arbitration** might favor human judgment for legitimacy. A source on future work trends notes that **"high accountability roles" and "meaningful professions" with complex human relationships are expected to remain safe from automation** [35]. This could include judges, doctors making final calls in treatment (patients might demand a human in the loop), or corporate executives who provide a human face and liability.
- **Skilled Trades and On-Site Physical Work in Unstructured Environments:** AI-driven robots will handle a lot, but certain **physical tasks in dynamic environments** (e.g. repairing old houses, plumbing in complex buildings, wilderness search and rescue) might still need humans if general-purpose robots are not dexterous enough or if it's cheaper to have a person do niche jobs occasionally than to build a robot for it. Tradespeople like electricians or carpenters have been cited

as relatively safe from near-term automation due to the variability of their work settings [36]. By 2060, robots may do much, but it's plausible some *"handyman" type jobs persist.

- **Personal Services and Care:** Many people may simply *prefer* a human touch in caregiving, childcare, hospitality, or beauty services (hairdressers, personal trainers). A robot might be able to do it, but the social experience of a human service provider could be a luxury people seek out. For example, elder care might still involve human caregivers for emotional companionship, even if robots handle physical tasks.
- **Supervision, Training, and Exception Handling:** Humans may work as **overseers of AI systems** – e.g. AI safety engineers, or people who monitor fleets of robots and step in when something odd happens. This might be more of a role than a full job (one person could supervise many AI processes), but it's a function where human judgment backstops automation.
- **New Human-Centered Jobs:** Entirely new categories could emerge that we can't fully predict – perhaps roles in guiding AI "morality", in designing virtual experiences, or spiritual/cultural roles that become more prominent as work per se isn't required.

Because these jobs are fewer, not everyone will have or need a traditional job. Those who do work might do so **part-time or intermittently**, since other income covers basics. For instance, someone might pursue art commissions for a few months (earning some wages) and then take time off living on UBI and dividends. The societal expectation that everyone must hold a 40-hour job would fade. Work could become more of a **choice or a passion-driven endeavor**, which arguably improves quality of life.

Income from Wages in 2060: Though only ~20% of total income, wage income might be distributed unevenly – e.g. a minority of people working could be earning significant salaries (especially if these jobs are highly valued). If the average contribution is 20%, it might mean perhaps 20% of people earn 100% of an average wage (while 80% earn little to none from wages), or that most adults earn a small amount from side gigs. It's hard to know. A plausible scenario: maybe half the population still engages in some paid work (including creative freelancing, gig tasks, etc.), but fewer do so full-time. Those in highly skilled residual jobs (say, a top human lawyer or a famous artist) could still earn much more than average – so wage inequality might persist but would matter less for overall income inequality because even those without jobs have other incomes.

It's important to note that even if jobs remain, they may require **augmented skills** – humans working with AI tools. Education and training will focus on what humans do best: creativity, critical thinking, interpersonal skills. AIs will handle routine tasks, so human workers will occupy roles that complement AI (the "centaur" model of human-AI teams).

Finally, **cultural and psychological factors** mean work won't vanish entirely. Humans derive meaning from work, so society in 2060 might actually **create jobs for social reasons** (for example, expanded public service jobs in environmental restoration, or caretaking, even if not strictly needed for productivity). These could be supported by policy (a job guarantee for those who want to contribute, albeit this overlaps with UBI debates). However, since the question's premise is a *post-labor economy*, we assume relatively few need to do these jobs out of necessity – they do it by choice or because humans still outperform AI in that niche.

Trust and Authenticity Premium: We should highlight that in some sectors, there may be an **"authentic human premium."** For example, a hand-painted portrait by a human artist might fetch far higher price than a perfect AI-generated image, precisely because it is human-made. Similarly, a business might advertise "human customer service representatives" as a luxury feature. This means residual human labor

could be highly rewarded in certain contexts (almost like art or craft). One report on AI's future suggests *"jobs that will remain safe include skilled physical labor, high accountability roles, meaningful professions, and complex relationship jobs"* [35] – essentially those where human authenticity or responsibility is valued and owners of AI capital thrive while routine knowledge work is at risk [35].

In summary, **wages in 2060 are a smaller, but not extinct, part of the picture**. Society will likely still have *some* employment, and that labor income can provide additional spending power or allow people to attain higher living standards than the baseline. However, unlike today, one's livelihood in 2060 *will not depend on securing a job* – the other four income sources cover the foundation. Residual jobs are the "icing on the cake" both economically and in terms of personal fulfillment.

Economic Modeling and Scenario Analysis (2020→2060)

Maintaining overall income levels and equality as we shift from wages to these new pillars is a daunting task. Here we present a **scenario analysis** to illustrate the magnitude of changes required and how the five sources can balance each other.

Transition of Income Shares: From 2020 to 2060, the composition of income must gradually invert. Historical data shows labor's share of income has already been on a long decline (though slowly) [37]. We assume this decline accelerates as AI substitution ramps up. By *2040*, when automation has eliminated the majority of jobs, wages might drop to ~30–40% of income, with UBI and public dividends emerging to take up the slack. By *2060*, wages hit ~20%. Correspondingly, **government transfers morph into UBI** and grow from ~20% to ~40% (UBI + public fund dividends combined). Capital income (personal + co-op) rises from ~20% to ~40%. In effect, the non-labor share of income expands from 40% today to 80% by 2060, as shown earlier.

For a more concrete sense, consider **per capita income in dollars** (in 2025 dollars for consistency). In 2022, per capita personal income was around \$65k [2]. Let's assume growth such that by 2060 it's \$75k (roughly a 15% real increase, which is conservative). Under our five-way split, each source provides \$15k of that. Now compare:

- **2022 (avg per person):** Wages \$40.5k; Transfers \$11.5k; Investments \$12.9k [2].
- **2060 (avg per person scenario):** UBI \$15k; Public Fund \$15k; Co-op/Collective \$15k; Personal Investments \$15k; Wages \$15k.

This shows the heavy lifting to be done by UBI and public funds – together \$30k vs only \$11.5k in transfers now. That is nearly triple the current per-capita transfer income. Similarly, collective + personal capital yields \$30k vs \$12.9k now – more than double, but attainable if wealth is distributed more broadly and co-ops proliferate. Wages dropping from \$40k to \$15k might seem like a loss, but in theory the \$25k difference is fully compensated by the \$45k increase in other income in this scenario. Thus, *income parity* (or better) is maintained: \$75k in 2060 vs \$65k in 2022. In practice, GDP per capita could be much higher by 2060 if AI drives growth, allowing an even larger absolute pie to share; here we chose modest numbers to emphasize distribution.

Funding and Investment Requirements: To deliver those amounts, each mechanism must scale up massively:

- **UBI Funding:** \$15k per person nationwide equals roughly \$5 **trillion** annual expenditure (for ~340 million population) – about **5% of 2060 GDP** in this scenario. By comparison, all U.S. federal spending today is ~25% of GDP; so this is a heavy but not inconceivable fraction (much of it could replace Social Security, unemployment, etc.). To fund \$5T, the tax structure would need to shift significantly. Potentially, a combination of a wealth tax (even a modest % on multi-millionaires), a financial transaction tax, and a carbon/automation tax could raise a few trillion. It might also draw on efficiency gains – if AI vastly increases productivity, a **broad consumption tax** could tap the larger output (e.g. a VAT of 20% on an economy double today's size raises double the revenue). The political choice is to harness those gains for UBI rather than let them accrue only to corporate profits.
- **Public Wealth Fund Size:** To reliably pay \$15k per person (about \$5T total) via investment returns, public funds collectively likely need on the order of \$100–\$120 **trillion** in assets (assuming a 4–5% payout). Achieving this by 2060 might involve decades of aggressive investment. For example, if from 2030 onward the government invested \$1T per year into funds, growing at 5%, by 2060 it could reach that scale (simplistically, \$1T for 30 years compounded ~ \$66T plus reinvested returns). The *American Solidarity Fund* idea suggests using equity stakes and other measures to build a large portfolio [17]. Additionally, state and local funds add to this – some states like **New Mexico, Texas, and others have permanent trusts** (often for education) that could be expanded [38]. We may also consider a **global fund**: if climate change mitigation leads to global carbon pricing, a portion of that revenue could feed a global citizens' dividend. Even a few trillion globally distributed would supplement national efforts.
- **Co-op Sector Growth:** Today's co-ops at \$652B revenue would need to expand perhaps tenfold or more. If co-ops/mutuals handled, say, 20–25% of GDP by 2060 (compared to a few percent now), that might produce the desired 20% of income in aggregate profits to members. Some of this could happen via **conversion of existing businesses**: as baby boomer owners retire, instead of selling to private equity, they could sell to employees or community co-op formations (with policy support). **Mondragón's example of 80k worker-owners** could be replicated in new industries – perhaps we'll see a "Silicon Valley Coop" of AI researchers, or gig drivers forming cooperatives in major cities capturing the markets Uber and Lyft once held. The rise of **DAO-managed assets (projected $40B+ in the early 2020s)** [39] might accelerate if blockchain infrastructure matures, enabling global cooperative investment at scale (imagine a DAO that owns thousands of rental properties worldwide and streams rental income to token holders). For cooperatives to thrive, legal frameworks (like easier incorporation, favorable tax treatment) and financing (co-op banks, government loans) are needed. By 2060, one could envision co-ops even in capital-intensive sectors: e.g., **AI research co-ops** where scientists collectively own the algorithms they create.
- **Personal Wealth Accumulation:** On average, households will need to accumulate several times more assets than the current median. This is partly organically handled as the economy grows and if more people invest. But bridging the gap for the asset-poor requires deliberate policy. **Baby Bonds** proposals, if enacted in the 2020s, will mature by 2060, giving those young adults capital to invest [33]. Likewise, continuing contributions to retirement accounts (which currently hold trillions) will mean many mid-century retirees have sizable nest eggs (though Social Security might be replaced by UBI in our scenario, people will still want extra). One analysis by the Tax Foundation shows the average labor share historically ~70% with capital ~30% [40]; if we invert that, individuals must *own* much of the economy. Encouraging middle-class saving is key: possibly through **matched savings programs**, **financial literacy**, and ensuring wages (whatever remain) and UBI are high enough that

people can invest rather than live hand-to-mouth. Crucially, avoiding high inflation or erosion of savings matters – stable macro policy would encourage holding assets.

- **Residual Labor Market:** To sustain even 20% from wages, the jobs that remain should be decently paid. If only low-paid service jobs remain, wages might fall below 20%. However, if those residual jobs are in fields like tech oversight, specialized crafts, etc., they could be well-compensated. Another factor is **bargaining power** – with few people *needing* to work, those who do have leverage to demand better pay/conditions (since the threat of unemployment is less dire when you have UBI). This could elevate wages in remaining jobs (e.g., care workers might finally get higher pay because society values them and they won't do it unless wages justify it, given they could survive on UBI alone). So ironically, automation could improve the pay of the jobs it doesn't eliminate, because labor supply shrinks.

Scenario Variations: We should consider that the equal 20% each scenario is idealized. If, for example, **UBI falls short (say political will only allows 10% of income from UBI)**, then either people's total incomes fall or another source must compensate. One could imagine a scenario where **personal assets and co-op dividends play a bigger role (say 25% each)** to compensate for a smaller UBI. But that might be harder on those who lack personal assets. Conversely, perhaps politics swings strongly pro-UBI and it ends up providing 30% of income, allowing even those with minimal personal wealth to do fine. In that case, maybe residual wages could be less than 20%. **Multiple equilibria** are possible: the five pillars can trade off to reach 100%. The important point is **no single pillar can likely shoulder the whole load**. For instance, 100% UBI is theoretically possible but would be enormously expensive and might disincentivize any work; 100% personal assets would mean a dystopia for those who start with nothing. The five-tier approach hedges these risks by diversifying income sources.

Maintaining Parity: A key goal is that **post-labor incomes meet or exceed what a labor-based economy would have provided**. If automation doubles or triples productivity by 2060, there is a huge pie to share – potentially enabling *higher* living standards for all without work. But if distribution mechanisms fail, we risk a scenario where a small elite of AI-owners capture the gains and the rest subsist on bare minimum UBI, a recipe for social unrest. Our model shows how large each mechanism must be to avoid that: **aggressive public investment, widespread cooperative ownership, and proactive wealth distribution** are needed.

To summarize the required shifts quantitatively: government transfers (including UBI/dividends) need to roughly **double as a share of income (from ~20% to ~40%)**, private capital income needs to **double (from ~20% to ~40%)** and be democratized, and wage income will likely **shrink to one-third** of its current share. The **next 2–3 decades (2020–2050)** are critical for making these investments and institutional changes while AI technology races ahead [41]. Early adopters of policies like UBI and collective ownership will set the stage for smoother transitions [41]. The timeline is tight – as one analysis warned, *"the window for making choices about cooperative ownership models and transition policies is closing rapidly"* [42] given the pace of AI. Waiting until 2040 when mass unemployment hits could be too late to build up the funds and co-ops needed.

Conclusion

By 2060, the United States could have an economy where **household prosperity no longer hinges on having a traditional job**. Instead, a **portfolio of income streams** – UBI, public dividends, cooperative payouts, personal investments, and selective wages – sustains each family. This five-tier income hierarchy offers resilience: if one source falters (say market returns are low in a given year), others still provide

support. It also offers a measure of **economic justice**: everyone gets a base (UBI + public dividend), everyone can benefit from **capital ownership either directly or indirectly**, and those who *do* work get rewarded without carrying the entire burden of earning their livelihood.

Reaching this vision requires bold action and forward-thinking policies starting now. We need to **tax and redistribute a significant portion of the wealth generated by AI** so it finances UBI and social funds [7] [4]. We need to **create and grow public wealth funds** at all levels, potentially accumulating assets on the scale of hundreds of percent of GDP [15], so that by 2060 citizens can live off the returns. We need to **foster cooperative and broad-based ownership** models so that communities and workers have stakes in the automated economy, as demonstrated by models from Alaska to Mondragón [23] [8]. And we must **empower individuals to build personal wealth** – through inclusive finance, perhaps baby bonds, and ensuring that the gains from automation (lower costs, higher UBI) actually allow people to save and invest rather than just scraping by.

The challenges are non-trivial: political opposition, the inertia of existing economic structures, and the technical management of such systems (e.g., investing trillions wisely in a public fund) are all serious issues. But the alternative – a post-labor society where only a minority own all robots and everyone else depends on their charity – is both unstable and unethical. Already, the trend of rising transfer income [3] and debates over UBI and wealth funds show society is grappling with how to handle automation. As AI continues to advance, these ideas move from theory to necessity.

In conclusion, the five-tier income model for 2060 provides a **comprehensive framework for shared prosperity in the absence of traditional work**. It leverages both the **strength of public institutions** (UBI and social funds) and the **dynamism of private/cooperative enterprise** (co-ops and personal wealth) to ensure that *no one is left behind when the robots do the work*. If successfully implemented, an average household in 2060 might receive a monthly UBI check, a quarterly dividend from the National Social Fund, patronage refunds from their co-op grocery and credit union, returns from their personal investments – and maybe a paycheck from a part-time job they enjoy. Their total real income could be as high or higher than a 2020 household's, but achieved with far less labor. Humans would be materially secure, free to pursue work or leisure by choice, and **stakeholders in the nation's wealth** rather than wage-serfs. Achieving this outcome demands visionary policy and gradual adaptation starting now, in order to build the institutions that can carry the economic load once carried by labor. The pieces of the solution are already visible today – from Alaska's dividend to the co-op movement to UBI trials – and with sustained effort, they can be scaled to form the pillars of the post-labor economy of 2060.

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