

BASIC INCOME 30
Newsletter of the Basic Income European Network

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AUTUMN 1998

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THIS ISSUE OF BASIC INCOME

was prepared with the help of Robert van der Veen, Guy Standing, Rosalind Stevens-Strohmann and all those who spontaneously sent relevant material.

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Please send the newsletter editor a copy of any relevant publication (by yourself or by others) you come across, with full references and, if possible, the author's address and a brief summary. Many thanks!

EDITORIAL

This Newsletter has two events to celebrate. The Amsterdam Congress was a great success, and thanks and congratulations are due to Robert van der Veen and his excellent team for making it intellectually stimulating, convivial and well-organised. And congratulations must go to our BIEN colleague, Eduardo Suplicy, who in early October was re-elected Senator of Sao Paulo, with over eight million votes. He has canvassed openly and vigorously for a guaranteed minimum income for Brazil.

Just before the Brazilian elections, Senator Suplicy and his colleagues invited me to speak on basic income in a two-day conference on *renda minima*, held in the Brazilian Senate, organised by several prominent organisations, in collaboration with the UNFPA, BIEN and IPEA. It was a memorable occasion. Governors, mayors of Brazilian cities, politicians from other Latin American countries and others participated in a highly publicised event. Senior government spokesmen not only came to the meeting but declared their support for the initiative, even rushing through a law to move in the direction of a guaranteed income. In over 40 Brazilian cities a form of guaranteed income has been introduced for women with young children. The experience has been most encouraging. Officials reported that it had helped to reduce child labour, had raised the self-esteem and economic activity of mothers, and had managed to provide transfers with minimal administrative cost. The experiments must not be defeated by those who would wish them to fail.

In Europe, we must be ready for the public debate to spark into life at any time during the next two years. Ever since I have had the privilege to be co-chairman of BIEN I have argued that once the insecurities and inequalities of the supply-side economic and social policies became clear, old-style social democrats (whatever their label) and old-style Christian Democrats and Conservatives would turn in the direction of paternalistic social policy. This is the current stage, in North America, Europe and in places like Australia and New Zealand. Only when the evidence has accumulated on the adverse effects of going in the direction of workfare, welfare-to-work and other directive or "active" schemes will moving in the other direction be legitimised. Many people are afraid of offering real freedom, and are afraid of providing ordinary people with genuine income security. Yet in the end, we believe that if you wish to see liberty, security and the pursuit of occupation in a society based on healthy work styles, a basic income would be an essential element. Members of BIEN have never believed that a basic income — or a partial basic income — would be a panacea. Many of us do believe that moving in that direction is a key component a strategy for achieving a more socially just society.

The BIEN Executive Committee was reconstituted at the conclusion of the Amsterdam Congress. Details are given elsewhere in this Newsletter. I would like to extend my personal thanks to Edwin Morley-Fletcher for working with us over the past decade, and look forward to working with Ilona as co-chairperson. Before the end of 1998, we expect to decide between Berlin and Geneva as the site of the next Congress. We intend that to be a major event, with a background technical report, as well as analytical papers from across the spectrum. We invite everybody interested in promoting distributive justice and economic security for all to join BIEN and work with us to tighten arguments, counter misinformation and explore alternative routes to a decent society in the early part of the twenty-first century.

Eduardo Suplicy said to me at the end of the Brazilian conference that BIEN should be renamed the Basic Income Earth Network. In a sense, he was correct, because our objective is for all societies, and we welcome members from all over the world. Fortunately, our acronym BIEN is flexible enough to cover our original name and his proposal, and if our roots are in Europe, the ideas and energy — and success — could come from everywhere. Let us hope that a growing number of public figures will find the courage and conviction to work with us over the next few years.

Guy Standing, co-chair of BIEN

BIEN's 7th CONGRESS (Amsterdam, 10-12 September 1998)

The 7th International Congress of the Basic Income European Network was held on 10-12 September 1998 in a marvellous 18th century building which used to house the central committee of the Dutch communist party before being taken over by the University of Amsterdam. The local organisation was expected to be first-rate, and so it was, under the committed and competent leadership of Robert van der Veen (University of Amsterdam), Paul de Beer (Social and Cultural Planning Bureau) and Loek Groot (University of Utrecht). As usual, the congress was also the occasion for a well attended General Assembly meeting, the minutes of which appear below.

The plenary sessions were focused on three themes: "Full Employment Without Poverty", "Sustainable Funding of a Basic Income" and "Basic Income and Social Europe". Michel Hansenne, the director general of ILO who is known to have been very sympathetic to moves towards a basic income and had gladly accepted to open the congress, was in the end prevented from attending.

The first guest speaker was therefore Professor Joachim Mitschke, the most prominent academic advocate of Bürgergeld (or a negative income tax) in Germany since the mid-seventies and often in the media lately as a result of Bürgergeld and other (less radical) forms of Kombilohn (or combinations of wages and benefits) being actively discussed by social organisations and political parties. The last plenary speaker was also from Germany, the internationally highly respected political scientist Fritz Scharpf, a sympathetic critic of an unconditional basic income. Although he believes Mitschke's Bürgergeld to be in principle better, his own choice for the immediate future is for across-the-board reductions in social security contributions, which he believes to be more realistic than a basic income, both for financial reasons (which he qualified significantly in the light of the discussions he had in Amsterdam) and because of the moral appeal of a work-related notion of solidarity (which he finds more relevant to the justification of national transfer systems than Paine-like appeals to a fair sharing of a common inheritance).

Between Mitschke and Scharpf, many other interesting contributions, including the traditional rush through gloomy or hopeful accounts of sharply contrasting national situations. Particularly striking was the upbeat presentation of the lively Irish debate by one of its main protagonists, Father Sean Healy of the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI). And so was — both during the country survey and in the course of the "Dutch day" (held on the Saturday, with a more local audience) — the impression conveyed by the ambivalent situation in the host country, the Netherlands. This is worth spelling out.

On the one hand, there is at the moment, compared to earlier peaks in 1985 or 1994, very little explicit interest in the discussion of "basisinkomen" on the part of the Dutch public — as witnessed for example by the organisers' failure to get the local media interested in the congress. On the other hand, as clearly explained at the "Dutch Day" by Agnes Jongerius, the spokesperson of the main Trade Union Federation (FNV) and by Francien Giskes, a member of parliament and tax reform expert for one of the parties currently in government (Democratie 66), the socialist-liberal coalition is planning, with Trade Union support, a tax reform that would practically amount to introducing a low unconditional basic income: income tax allowances will be abolished and replaced by an individual refundable tax credit granted to all except students at the level of about Dfl 300 (150 Euro or 200 US\$) per month, without "sollicitatieplicht" (i.e. not restricted to job holders or seekers). Given that Dutch students are all entitled to a non-means-tested grant and that the Netherlands already have a non-contributory and non-means-tested basic pension system, there is little difference in either net cost or expected effects between the pattern that should soon be in place in the Netherlands as a result of the planned reform, and a genuine, though very modest, universal and individual basic income at over twice the level of Alaska's dividend... But do not spread the news: by describing the impending reform as the introduction of a basic income, you might well jeopardise it. What matters, no doubt, is the thing, not the name.

In addition to the plenary sessions, a rich variety of papers were presented at nine thematic workshops. The organisers are thinking of publishing an edited selection of them as a book (co-ordinator: Robert J. van der Veen, vanderveen@pscw.uva.nl). For the time being, we provide below the list of all papers for which a written version exists, with authors and e-mail addresses. Providing some technical difficulties can be overcome, all the papers received on disk should become available shortly on BIEN's web site (<http://www.econ.ucl.ac.be/etes/bien/bien.html>).

1. Papers presented at the parallel workshops

A) UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME: FOUNDATIONS

Karl Widerquist (US) <widerquist@levy.org>

'Reciprocity and the guaranteed income', 25pp

John Cunliffe (UK) <John.Cunliffe@uce.ac.uk>, and Guido Erreyghers (B)

'Basic Endowments and Basic Income: Some Belgian Precursors', 16pp

Jurgen de Wispelaere (B) <J.De-Wispelaere@lse.ac.uk>

'Job Rights, Reciprocity, and the Constitutional Approach to Basic Income', 17pp

B) FULL EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT POVERTY: REQUIREMENTS AND STRATEGIES

Paul de Beer (NL) <p.de.beer@scp.nl>

'In search of the double-edged sword', 9pp

Anton Hemerijck (NL) <Hemerijck@BSK.FSW.EUR.NL>

'Prospects for Effective Social Citizenship in an Age of Structural Inactivity'

Philippe Van Parijs (B) <vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be> and Claudio Caesar Salinas (ARG)

'Basic income and its cognates. Puzzling equivalence and unheeded differences between alternative ways of addressing the "new social question"', 62pp

Maria Ozanira da Silva e Silva (BRA) <ozanira@fapema.br>

'The Minimum Income as a Policy for Increasing Child Education in Brazil', 12pp.

C) HOW CAN ONE GET BASIC INCOME ONTO THE POLITICAL AGENDA? (I)

Sean Healy <shealy@iol.ie>, and Brigid Reynolds (IRE)

'From Concept to Green Paper: Putting Basic Income on the Political Agenda'

Sally Lerner (CA) <lerner@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca>

'Fear of freedom: a barrier to putting BI on the political agenda', 10pp

Erwin Jerusalem (AU) <erwin.jerusalem@creditanstalt.co.at>

'Basic Income: How it was introduced to the political agenda in Austria', 9pp.

Jørn Loftager (DK) <loftager@ps.au.dk>

'Solidarity and Universality in the Danish Welfare State', 16 pp

D) BASIC INCOME IN A DISTRIBUTIVE PERSPECTIVE

Murat Borovali (UK) <mborovali@ibm.net>

'Self-Ownership, Private Property, and Unconditional Income: A Variation on the Georgist Theme', 15 pp.

Robert Schutz (US) <schutz@pacbell.net>

'More Basic Income', 23pp.

Marie-Louise Duboin (F) <grande.releve@wanadoo.fr>

'The Civic Contract: a first step to a distributive economy'

Jean Morier-Genoud (SWI) <info@neurom.ch>

'Toward a renovation of economic circulation and institutions', 6pp.

E) BASIC INCOME AND THE LABOUR MARKET

Charles M. A. Clark (US) <Cleiroch@aol.com>, and Catherine Kavanagh (IRE)

'Answering the Economic Questions and Objections to a Basic Income'

E. Chiappero, M. Serati <mserati@verdi.liuc.it>, and F.Silva (IT)

'Basic income: an insidious trap or a fruitful chance for the Italian labour market?'

Loek Groot <L.Groot@fss.uu.nl>, and Paul de Beer (NL) <p.de.beer@scp.nl>

'Why launch a basic income experiment?', 27pp

Ingrid Robeyns (B) <Ingrid.Robeyns@econ.kuleuven.ac.be>

'An emancipation fee or hush money? The advantages and disadvantages of a basic income for women's emancipation and well-being', 17pp

Isabelle Terraz <iterraz@ulb.ac.be>

'Redistributive Impact of a Basic Income: A Focus on Women's Situation'

F) HOW CAN ONE GET BASIC INCOME ONTO THE POLITICAL AGENDA? (II)

Gordon Hughes (UK) <G.H.Hughes@open.ac.uk>, and Adrian Little (UK)

'New Labour, Communitarianism and the Public Sphere in the UK', 24 pp.

Roswitha Pioch (GE) <pioch@sozio.uni-leipzig.de>

'The bottom line of the welfare state in Germany and the Netherlands'

Jan-Otto Andersson (SUO) <janderss@ra.abo.fi>

'The History of an Idea: Why did Basic Income Thrill the Finns, but not the Swedes?', 22 pp

Christopher Balfour (UK)

'Selling Basic Income to UK Conservatives', 7 pp.

Erik Christensen (DK) [fax: Dept of Politics University of Aalborg+45 98 15 53 46]

'An analysis of the Danish political debate on Citizen's Income in the period 1977-97', 22pp.

G) BASIC INCOME, JUSTICE AND WORK (Chair: Jan Otto Andersson)

Claude Gamel (FR) <gamel@romarin.univ-Aix.Fr>

'The use of employment rents for the financing of basic income', 13 pp

N.H.M. Roos (NL) <Nico.Roos@METAJUR.UNIMAAS.NL>

'Basic Income and the justice of taxation'

Michael Howard (US) <Michael_Howard@umit.maine.edu>

'Basic Income and Cooperatives', 22 pp.

H) COSTING ANALYSES OF BASIC INCOME

Lowell Manning (NZ) <manning@kapiti.co.nz>

'The Economic Effects of Introducing a Full Universal Basic Income into the New Zealand Economy'

David Chapman (UK) <chapman@democdesigndesignforum.demon.co.uk>

'Reforming the tax and benefit system to reduce unemployment', 19 pp.

Helmut Pelzer (GE) <helmut.pelzer@medizin.uni-ulm.de>

'Funding of an Unconditional Basic Income in Germany via a Modified Tax/Transfer System', 12 pp

Thomas Lunde (CA) <tomlunde@cmw.ca>

'The Family Basic Income Proposal', 13 pp

I) BASIC INCOME, GLOBE-WIDE

Tony Fitzpatrick (UK) <tony.fitzpatrick@luton.ac.uk>

'Into an Era of Post-Social Security: Globalisation and State Pluralism', 14 pp

Mary Lehmann (US) <mlehm@ibm.net>

'Opposing Globalization Could Justify Resource-Based Basic Income', 9 pp.

Jeffery Smith (US) <geonomist@juno.com>

'From Potlatch to Earthshare', 5 pp.

Philip Gortemaker (NL)

'Basic income, a matter of the heart', 2 pp.

2. Written versions of presentations at the plenary sessions

Joachim Mitschke (D)

'Pleading for a Negative Income Tax', 21pp.

Guy Standing (SWI) <GuyStanding@compuserve.com>

'Seeking Equality of Security in the Era of Globalisation', 9 pp.

Paul Metz (NL) <e5@TheOffice.net>

'De dochter van Karl Marx en Adam Smith', 1p text (in Dutch)

Zsuzsa Ferge (H) <fergesp@ludens.elte.hu>

'Basic Income for the Poorer Part of Europe?', 26 pp.

Steven Quilley (UK) <steve.quilley@man.ac.uk>

'Sustainable Funding of Basic Income: Environment, Citizenship & Community, and a Trajectory for Basic Income in Europe'

Fritz Scharpf (D) <scharpf@mpi-fg-koeln.mpg.de>

'Basic Income and Social Europe', 7 pp

Edwin Morley-Fletcher (IT) <m-fletcher@cnel.it>

'Opening Address', 7 pp.

3. Written versions of country surveys

The Netherlands: Loek Groot <l.groot@fss.uu.nl>

'Country Survey Basic Income The Netherlands: Out of the Picture, But Still on the (Hidden) Agenda?', 4 pp.

Germany: Stefan Lessenich <slessen@uni-goettingen.de>
'Country Survey: Germany', 5pp.
United Kingdom: Rosalind Stevens-Strohmann <Citizens-Income@lse.ac.uk>
'UK Country Survey: Report from the Citizen's Income trust', 5 pp text
Austria: Michael Striebel
'The basic income discussion. Country Survey; Austria', 5 pp text
Italy: F. Silva
'The Italian Debate on Basic Income', 8 pp.
Belgium: Koen Rademaekers
'Country survey with regard to the discussion on basic income in Belgium', 5 pp.
United States: Michael Howard <Michael_Howard@umit.maine.edu>
'Basic Income: A Report on the Non-Debate in the USA', 3 pp.

7TH MEETING OF BIEN'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The meeting was held on Friday 11 September 1998, 7:00 p.m., in the Felix Meritis Building, Keizersgracht, Amsterdam, and chaired by Edwin Morley-Fletcher and Guy Standing, co-chairmen of BIEN.

(1) Finance

Financial situation for 1996-98:

- Total expenditure: BF 96.961 (out of which 68.689 for the newsletter and 25.482 for the BIEN leaflet):
- Total revenues: BF 107.533 (BF 96.485 from subscriptions, up from 79.650 for 94-96; BF 11.048 from interests, down from 14.156 for 94-96)
- Current situation: BF 237.537 (compared to 225.695 in Sept. 1996)

Proposals (both approved):

- Fee maintained at the level of 25 Euro for 1998-2000 (100 Euro for institutions)
- Reimbursement of travelling expenses for committee members with an executive function for one meeting in between GA meetings

(2) Conference

• The 1998 Conference:

Many warm thanks to Robert van der Veen, Paul de Beer, Loek Groot, Saar Boerlage, Emiel Schäfer and the other people involved in the preparation and management of this year's conference, many thanks too to the Vereniging Basisinkomen and the University of Amsterdam for invaluable institutional support, and many thanks to the various sponsors, who made it possible to achieve the objective of self-financing, and even more: some money is left to fund the publication of the proceedings, if something promising takes shape (availability on BIEN's web site should be possible in any event).

- **Date of next conference:**

late September or early October 2000 (will depend on the place)

- **Place of next conference:**

Four possibilities are proposed and discussed, with the following preference order emerging at the end from hand raising round expressing first and second preferences:

1) Berlin (Germany is the EU country with largest population, has not hosted BIEN conference so far, Berlin will have become Germany's capital by then): Stefan Lessenich (in co-operation with Ilona Ostner) will contact Claus Offe (BIEN co-founding chairman and professor at Humboldt University) to investigate the practical possibility.

2) Geneva (seat of UN organisations, in particular ILO, and UN related NGOs, some local debate in connection with the Geneva canton's recent minimum income scheme, Switzerland has not yet hosted a BIEN congress so far): if the Berlin option does not work out, Guy Standing will investigate the possibility with the ILO's Director general elect.

3) Dublin (Ireland has not hosted a BIEN congress so far, but has had the most active political debate lately, the Dublin-based CORI has proved a very effective "core driver"): In case the previous two options don't work, Sean Healy (CORI), John Baker (University College and BIEN Ireland) and Kate Monnelly (Basic Income Guarantee Lobby) will be asked about the possibility of holding the congress in Dublin.

4) Rome (in 2000 will be the location of many events organised by the catholic church to celebrate the jubilee): may be an option despite BIEN's 3rd congress having been held in Florence (1990), as the Centro Nazionale Economia & Lavoro (of which Edwin Morley-Fletcher is a board member until the Spring of 2000) may be willing to sponsor it.

The Executive Committee is mandated to investigate these possibilities, bearing in mind the above preference order, and decide in the light of its assessment of pros and cons of the various options, as practical implications become known.

- **Funding:**

The principle remains that each conference should be self-financing, and hence that the local organisers should find ad hoc subsidies.

- **Format:**

Unavoidable uncomfortable trade off between length (and hence cost) of the conference, number of papers that can be presented (and hence voices that can be heard and often trips that can be funded) and number of parallel sessions (and hence frustration at not being able to attend them all). To improve communication during the conference, it would be useful to have a short didactic introduction on guaranteed income, basic income, NIT, etc. at the beginning (but can it avoid boredom?), or perhaps even a full day reserved for newcomers (but do they attend our conferences?).

- **Plenaries:**

May be better to be more selective about the countries appearing in the country survey as the time is too short to give an intelligible picture of the background institutional framework and political situation (but which should be left out?) or to commission more systematic comparisons between countries (but requires far more work and organisation). More space for action-oriented sessions, including panel sessions with politicians for and against. More sessions with intelligent challengers such as the one with Fritz Scharpf.

- **Papers:**

Would be useful to make all papers available on the web site before the conference (but would people still attend?).

- **Local impact:**

It may be useful to organise a press conference and systematically invite journalists (free of charge)

(3) Newsletter and web site

- **Newsletter:**

Currently, 172 people are sent a hard copy version of the newsletter, 257 an e-mail version in Word for Windows, which seems to be the most widely readable format. A word for Mac version can be fetched from the web site. A fair amount of material (books, articles, etc.) reaches the editor, but much does not (or long after publication). Please keep sending what you write or see, preferably with a short (10 lines) summary situating the authors in the national context.

- **Web site:**

About 120 people visit the web site every month. There is no doubt that the web site will become increasingly important for internal and external communication. More could and should be done to connect it to search engines, link it up to other relevant sites, make it more user-friendly, and also open it to new uses (make the Amsterdam congress papers and various other working papers available, host a discussion forum, host a regularly update account of relevant events in various countries, present a didactic introduction to basic income. This is only realistic, however, if someone with adequate technical competence and sufficient familiarity with basic income and BIEN could take on a new Executive Committee position of web site manager.

- **Collaboration with Citizen's Income:**

The Citizen's Income Bulletin will be replaced by a quarterly newsletter. As its nature (how much reviewing?), geographical coverage (how much on non-UK?) and medium (hard copy only?) become clear, the potential for co-operation with the BIEN newsletter will become clearer too. There is in any case no problem whatever about Citizen's income taking over whatever it wishes from the BIEN newsletter.

(4) Research network

The set of reports on citizenship-based elements in existing welfare states is on the way to completion under Ilona Ouster's direction. A new application for funding is being prepared on recent trends in social and labour-market policy and how they constitute steps away or towards the introduction of a basic income.

(5) Executive Committee

(a) Restructuring

In order to clarify what is expected from EC members and foster a wider distribution of the work load, two new executive functions are created (web site manager and recruitment officer), and a new status of "honorary member" is introduced. Honorary members are members who had an executive function in the past but no longer do so, while keeping an active interest in BIEN's activities. Like the representatives of the national networks, they are invited to all EC meetings and some advice, suggestions and feedback is expected from them, but neither the completion of a specific task nor regular attendance are expected from them.

(b) Elections

Ilona Ostner (Göttingen University) and Guy Standing (International Labour Office) will be co-chairpersons jointly in charge of research.

Alexander de Roo (European Parliament) becomes secretary (while keeping his treasury tasks)

Steven Quilley (University of Manchester) becomes recruitment officer

Philippe Van Parijs (University of Louvain) remains editor of the newsletter and also, for the time being, in charge of the web site, with the assistance of Claudio Salinas. Any BIEN member who may consider taking on fully the job of web site manager is invited to make him/herself known.

The conference organiser will be determined jointly with the location of the next congress.

The first four honorary members (subject to their acceptance) are

Walter Van Trier (secretary 1986-94, conference organiser 1986-88, and deputy secretary 1994-98)

Claus Offe (co-chair 1986-1988)

Edwin Morley-Fletcher (co-chair 1988-98, conference organiser 1988-90)

Robert van der Veen (conference organiser 1996-98)

(6) Varia

1. Leaflet: Comments on how to improve it are welcome (contact Guy Standing)

2. Publications: The funding of the conference has left a surplus that could be used to publish something like selective proceedings, providing a sufficiently coherent set of publishable papers emerges from the conference. Robert van der Veen will look into this possibility in the next few weeks.

3. Reinterpretation of BIEN's acronym (Basic Income EARTH Network): If this is being seriously proposed, we can discuss it at the next Assembly meeting (in 2000), bearing in mind that it may be better to set up a federation of regional networks. Sally Lerner is considering setting up a North American network.

PUBLICATIONS

DUTCH

HET IDEALE EIGENBELANG. Blad voor wereldburgers, Varik (NL): Stichting UNO Inkomen voor Alle Mensen (Waalbandijk 8, 4064 CB Varik), n°4 (2-3), Winter 1997, n°5(1), Spring 1998, and n° 5(2), Autumn 1998, 60, 44 and 40pp.

Pieter Kooistra, the Dutch artist and founder of the foundation "U.N.O. income for all people" died suddenly on the 5th of May 1998 at the age of 75, after a life of creation, but also of imaginative and tenacious militancy. The neatly produced quarterly journal published by the foundation carries on his task of advocating a bold plan for a United Nations sponsored Marshall Plan, whose centrepiece would be a basic income for every human being. Recent issues contain, among many other articles, a shortened translation of a paper by McGill University economist Myron Frankman ("Plant-Wide Citizen's Income: Antidote to Global Apartheid") and a plea for a basic income funded through environment use rights by Marc D. Davidson (from the Delft Centre for Energy Conservation).

(Foundation's address: c/o Stichting UNO Inkomen, as above, uno-inkomen@gmx.net)

ROBEYNS, Ingrid. Huisvrouwenloon of emancipatiepremie? Een positieve en normatieve genderanalyse van het basisinkomen, Leuven: Steunpunt Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Vorming (E. Van Evenstraat 2C, 3000 Leuven, wav@hiva-kuleuven.ac.be), juni 1998, 45p.

Trained in both economics (Leuven) and women's studies (Göttingen), Ingrid Robeyns is working on a PhD thesis in economics on positive and normative aspects of gender inequality. One by-product is this working paper entitled "Housewife's Wage or Emancipation premium?", probably the most thorough discussion thus far of the relation between basic income and gender inequality. One of her main conclusions is that it is of crucial importance, when evaluating basic income, not to take women as a homogeneous category: for those who have a well paid job, it would make no significant difference, for those who choose not to take a paid job even without a basic income, it would uncontroversially be a good thing, but for the intermediate category of women whose supply of paid work would be affected, a careful weighing of immediate and longer-term consequences is in order. Another of Robeyns' main conclusions is that basic income cannot be assessed, from women's point of view, irrespective of the pattern of labour market and social protection institutions into which it fits. For example, whether or not the design of work, school and child care institutions takes people who combine employment and care tasks as the standard rather than the marginal case matters greatly to the impact of basic income on the gender division of labour. And so do the regulations about child support, alimony, and pension rights in case of divorce. However, the fact that other institutions are not optimally designed in this respect "is not a sufficient reason to reject basic income on gender-egalitarian grounds", but it definitely calls for further empirical research.

(Author's address: KULeuven, Centrum voor economische studies (C.E.S.), Naamsestraat 69, B-3000 Leuven, ingrid.robeyns@econ.kuleuven.ac.be.)

ENGLISH

ALASKA HUMANITIES FORUM. 1997. Your Fund, your Choice, your Future. The Permanent Fund and Alaska's Future. Background Notes for Public Conversation. Anchorage (Alaska), 1997, 30 p.

Twenty years after its creation, Alaska feels the need to rethink the future of its Permanent fund and dividend scheme. There are many options: Leave it alone, Create separate funds for specific types of public expenditure, such as health or education, Create a dividend for local communities on top of the individual dividend, Invest in local business, Privatise the fund by distributing its shares to Alaskans). They are presented with their pros and cons, by way of preparation for a sequence of local forums to be held throughout Alaska in the course of 1998.

(Organisers' address: 421 West 1st Avenue Suite 210, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, USA, www.akhf.org.)

ALASKA PERMANENT FUND CORPORATION. 1997. The Early History of the Alaska Permanent Fund. Perspectives on the Origins of Alaska's Oil Savings Account, The Trustee Papers n°5, February 1997, 74p.

An informative account of how the idea of Alaska's unique universal dividend scheme emerged, and of how it evolved.

(Alaska Permanent Fund's address: PO Box 4-1000, Juneau, Alaska 99802, Fax 907-5862057, www.apfc.org.)

ATKINSON, Anthony B. 1998. "Whither Welfare?", in Oxford Today 10 (2), Hilary 1998, 10-12.

A short analysis of the crisis of the welfare state and how to tackle it, by the Warden of Nuffield College, published in the magazine sent free of charge to tens of thousands of Oxford graduates throughout the world. "What we need", Atkinson writes, "are new directions for welfare reform. One of the most interesting is that of a 'basic' or 'citizen's' income. [...] This is an old idea, advocated by the State Bonus League in 1918, and by G.D.H. Cole and James Meade in Oxford in the 1930s." Atkinson advocates it with two modifications. Firstly, it should not be viewed as complementary to social insurance. Secondly, "we have to ask why, despite the attention which citizen's income has been given, and despite finding supporters in all parties, the scheme has not risen to the top of the political agenda. In my judgement, a major reason for opposition to the idea lies in its lack of conditionality; there are concerns that it would lead to dependency. I believe, therefore, that the citizen's income should be conditional on participation. [...] The condition is not paid work; it is a wider definition of social contribution. The participation income would actively promote social inclusion."
(Author's address: The warden, Nuffield College, Oxford)

CITIZEN'S INCOME NEWSLETTER n°1, Autumn 1998.

After 25 rich issues in 13 years, the Citizen's Income Bulletin, meticulously edited by Hermione Parker, has been replaced by a somewhat less ambitious Citizen's Income Newsletter. No drop in the quality of presentation, but as the new title suggests, more focus on news items, including comments on political developments and short reviews of books and other publications in the UK and beyond.
(Citizen's Income Study Centre, St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, London WC2A 2EX, citizens-income@lse.ac.uk, <http://www.citizens-income.org.uk>)

FUTURE COMMISSION OF THE FRIEDRICH EBERT FOUNDATION. 1998. Economic Performance, Social Cohesion, Environmental Sustainability. Three Goals — One Path. Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf. (In der Raste 2, D-53129 Bonn), 36p.

An English summary of a substantial report by the Future Commission of the foundation linked to the German social-democratic party, advocating a negative income tax or an employment subsidy (see below, among the German-language publications, an account of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's full report).
(Address of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: Godesberger Allee 149, D-53170 Bonn)

GANS, Herbert J. The War Against the Poor. The Underclass and Antipoverty Policy, New York: Basic Books, [1996].

To tackle the increased scarcity of jobs, the final chapter of this book ("Joblessness and AntiPoverty Policy in the Twenty-first Century") recommends drastic work sharing, for example in the form of a 24-hour week, possibly with some exceptions in order to accommodate the incentive to acquire skills. Such a drastic working time reduction cannot avoid hardship for the low-paid without a loosening of the link between work and income, i.e. what in Europe is called a basic income. In the US context, this may be implemented through a universalisation of the Earned Income Tax Credit, to be taxed away for high income earners. This could be coupled with a community service, with some leeway for increasing or decreasing it, with a correlative increase or decrease in the basic income level.

GROOT, Loek F.M. & PEETERS, H.M.M. 1997. "A Model of Conditional and Unconditional Social Security in an Efficiency Wage Economy: the Economic Sustainability of a Basic Income", Journal of Post Keynesian Economics 19 (4), Summer 1997, 573-597.

The authors of this technical article propose a formal model of the labour market of a capitalist economy in which there are two different types of jobs and in which employers pay more than the market-clearing wage in order to increase their workers' productivity (workers work harder because they have more to lose if sacked). Taking a means-tested guaranteed minimum income as the baseline for comparison, the article shows "that a moderate basic income can be compatible with lower unemployment, higher GDP, higher real incomes for workers, lower income inequality between workers, but a lower real income for the (voluntarily) unemployed"

(First author's address: Faculteit der sociale wetenschappen, Heidelberglaan 1, NL 3584 CS Utrecht, L.Groot@fsw.ruu.nl)

HUWS, Ursula, Flexibility and Security: towards a new European Balance, London: Citizen's Income Study Centre (St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, LONDON WC2A 2EX, citizens-income@lse.ac.uk), Citizen's Income Trust Discussion Paper n°3, December 1997, 52 p., £5 + £2 postage world-wide, ISSN: 1462-0081.

How can working patterns be made more flexible while still guaranteeing a minimum standard of security for the European work force? How can the escalating costs of welfare be contained? How can the unemployed be eased back into the labour market without falling foul of the many benefit and poverty 'traps' which bedevil the current system? Prepared for the Citizen's Income Trust by Ursula Huws, Director of Analytica and Associate Fellow of the Institute for Employment Studies, this report addresses

these questions on the basis of a detailed comparison of four contrasting European welfare models (Sweden, Germany, Greece and the UK). It concludes that a fundamental reform is required if flexible employment is to become acceptable to the majority of the work force. Policy must be developed in such a way as to avoid social exclusion, insecurity, inequality and low pay. A "universal basic minimum income" could be part of it. Fully aware of the main arguments for and against it (pp. 44-45), the author believes its introduction at subsistence level would arguably eliminate the disadvantages of flexibility. But "it is of course highly unlikely that such a benefit could (or should) be introduced in one fell swoop. This is no reason, however, not to move towards such a system gradually, for example along the "transitional basic income" road explored by Parker and Sutherland (1995): a flat-rate grant of £80 (or 120 Euro) per month replacing an equivalent amount of income tax allowances for those in work and of means-tested benefits for those not in work (p.50). (Author's web site: <http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/analytica>.)

JUNEAU EMPIRE. 1997. Permanent Fund. Alaska Commemorates the 20th Anniversary of the First Deposit into the Permanent Fund. Juneau, Alaska, 25 February 1997, 14p.

A special publication of the Alaskan newspaper, the Juneau Empire, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Alaskan Fund, with many interviews, pictures, financial and historical accounts. (Address of the Juneau Empire: 3100 Channel Drive, Juneau, AK 99801, <http://juneauempire.com>.)

KILDAL, Nanna. 1998. "The Social Basic of Self-Respect: A Normative Discussion of Politics Against Unemployment", in Thesis Eleven (London: Sage) 54, August 1998, 63-77.

Faced with the problem of unemployment, there are two pure models European societies can choose: one based on a binding right to employment and one based on an unconditional basic income. In practice, they have experimented with mixed forms, with greater emphasis on guaranteeing work. In this article, the Norwegian sociologist Nanna Kildal examines the justifications given for these two models in their radical versions, with a special focus on the experience of self respect. She concludes that "the benefits traditionally associated with paid work function better in justifying a right to a basic income than a right to work".

(Author's address: SEFOS, Prof. Keyzers gt. 2, 5007 Bergen, Norway, nanna.kildal@sefos.uib.no)

MIDTGAARD, Søren Flinch. 1998. "On Van Parijs and the Welfare State", paper presented at the ECPR workshop "The Uncertain Future of the Welfare State in Europe", University of Warwick, April 1998, 29p.

An in-depth discussion of Philippe Van Parijs's ethical case for an unconditional basic income in Real Freedom for All (Oxford U.P. 1995, paperback 1997). This allegedly liberal case, Midtgaard argues, "is a veil hiding a more traditional Marxist-inspired social-democratic argument for the independence of workers from the market". An unconditional basic income is inconsistent with an important liberal commitment to a metric of opportunity costs, which Van Parijs misuses in his crucial argument for funding a basic income out of the value of employment rents. Alternative policies, such as tax breaks restricted to low-paid workers (as recently introduced in Denmark) address the same problem in a more genuinely liberal way.

(Author's address: Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Universitetsparken, DK-8000 Aarhus C, Denmark, midtgaard@ps.au.dk.)

OFFE, Claus. 1997. "Towards a New Equilibrium of Citizens' Rights and Economic Resources?", in Societal Cohesion and the Globalising Economy, Paris: OECD, 1997, 81-108. (Previously published as "Precariousness and the Labor Market. A Medium-Term Review of Alternative Policy Responses", Berlin: European Center for Comparative Government and Public Policy, Discussion Paper 16, December 1996, 46p.)

The steady increase in the proportion of adult citizens who enjoy only precarious access to jobs and means of subsistence has deep roots and far-reaching consequences. To address this problem, there are basically two strategies. One consists in trying to restore full employment, whether through subsidising low-wage employment, through increasing qualifications or through reducing the normal duration of working time. For different reasons, Claus Offe is sceptical about each of these three variants. He therefore advocates a second strategy: "rather than eliminating the causes of the deficient levels of market absorption of labor, it suggests to neutralise its consequences, precariousness and breakdown of social cohesion. The corresponding approach to the problems of precariousness are strategies advocating a basic income as an economic citizenship right." (p.29) Normative justifications for such a strategy can easily be found, he believes, in affluent but structurally job-scarce societies. Nonetheless, there are many objections, for example that there will be a political pressure to lower the level of this unconditionally guaranteed income. But first, its level could be made difficult to lower by the constitutional requirement of super-majorities, and secondly "the basic income could be designed in such a way that every citizen, regardless of his or her income, receives it, while only those who have opted out of gained employment are entitled to the net benefit and everyone else will undergo taxation at correspondingly increased rates"

(p. 31) Claus Offe's position has thus clearly shifted, at least at the level of what should be aimed for, from a negative income tax scheme (as defended in his earlier publications on the subject) to a genuinely unconditional basic income, without any means test. However, "this new approach to the distribution problem and the uncoupling of claims to income from the performance of marketable labor is not likely to be accepted and implemented any time soon." Offe therefore advocates "a much more gradualist and reversible approach", two variants of which he discusses: What could be termed (using Tony Atkinson's expression) the "participation income" strategy consists in gradually extending entitlement to benefits beyond involuntary unemployment to freely chosen unpaid but socially useful activity (parenting, training, etc.). On the other hand, the "sabbatical income" strategy consists in gradually increasing the number of years for which people can, before retirement age, stop doing paid work while being entitled to a modest income but without needing to do any other specified activity. Neither strategy needs to be exclusive of the other.

(Author's address: Humboldt-Universität, Philosophische Fakultät III, Unter den Linden 6, D – 10099 Berlin, coffe@rz.hu-Berlin.de)

PALMER, Jim ed. 1997. Alaska's Permanent Fund. Remarkable Success at Age 20... but what now?, special issue of The Juneau Report, Summer 1997, 36p.

Published by the BP Exploration External Affairs Department "to provide an overview of important issues and developments as they relate to Alaska and the petroleum industry", the Juneau Report devotes a full issue to the Permanent Fund and its dividend scheme, twenty years after its creation. The issue includes a detailed historical account: for example it narrates the hesitations of Governor Jay Hammond, the founder of the scheme: "At times in 1981 and 1982 he favored alternatives, like a distribution of Permanent Fund income to municipalities, or setting up annuities for individual Alaskans, or using it to pay for health insurance. What always brought him back to the dividend was his feeling that public resources belong to the people, that government only manages the resource. Individuals, not government, should decide how to use their own money, he felt." (p.34) The issue also contains a useful description of "what others have done". For example, Texas, New Mexico and Louisiana are using the dividends to fund aspects of their education system (pp. 9-10, 32-33). Finally, there is a substantive discussion about the future of the scheme. Recent opinion polls show that 54% of Alaskans are in favour of using the Fund's surplus to increase the dividend (at the cost of having to cut public expenditure or increase income taxation) rather than to close the fiscal gap (p.30). Former Governor Jay Hammond is even in favour of "imposing the highest income tax in the nation but enlarging the dividend to offset the tax for residents" (p.28). But not everyone agrees: former Governor Walter Hickel, for example, wants some of the revenues used for community infrastructure (from airports to bike trails). He suggests "a program, to be approved by voters, for community dividends, with personal citizen dividends held constant until the amount of the community dividend matches the personal dividend" (p.29). (Address of the Juneau Report: PO Box 196612, Anchorage AK 99519-6612, USA.)

PETERSEN, Hans-Georg. 1997. "Pros and Cons of a Negative Income Tax", in Reforming the Welfare State (Herbert Giersch ed.), Berlin: Springer, 1997, 53-82, followed by a comment by Lars Söderström, pp. 83-90.

The author, an emphatically neo-liberal German economist does not have much patience for egalitarian justice or for the creeping socialism that has infiltrated, he says, all political parties. But he finds the introduction of a negative income tax (NIT) in replacement of Germany's non-insurance benefits a good idea. Based on his own work (M. Hütter, M. Müller, H.G. Petersen & B. Schäfer, "Micro-simulations of alternative tax and transfer systems for the Federal Republic of Germany", in J.K. Burner & H.G. Petersen eds., *Simulation Models in Tax and Transfer Policy*, Frankfurt & New York: Campus, 1990, 539-570), he asserts that a NIT of the sort advocated by Joachim Mitschke would be cheaper than the current system: with a broader tax base, it could rely on a lower and flat rate of tax. (Forget about progressivity: "For God's sake, the rich, who at least finance housing and jobs for the majority of society, can easily avoid tax burdens by migrating.") Petersen clearly prefers the means-tested (NIT) version of a basic income to its non-means-tested or social-dividend (SD) variety, partly, it seems, because it avoids a "ridiculous pocket-to-pocket redistribution" shared by the SD variant and the current system (p. 71) and partly because, in the NIT version, the income base can admit of different definitions for the sake of negative and positive taxation: the "means" which determine the level of the NIT transfer must take the right to support payments by spouses and relatives into account. Instead, "the introduction of a nontested transfer program would destroy the important role of self-responsibility in the family" (58). In his comment, Swedish economist Lars Söderström expresses great scepticism about Petersen's position. He points out that the SD variant has the advantage over the NIT variant that it can rely on a single annual income assessment, while the NIT variant requires more frequent assessments to secure the subsistence of people with fluctuating incomes. Moreover, as NIT and SD are strictly equivalent (for appropriate choices of the exemption and guarantee levels) in terms of the income distribution they generate, their economic cost must be identical (despite the SD's appearance of far greater cost). On the basis of Swedish data,

Söderström shows that a household-differentiated SD at subsistence level would be far more expensive than the current system. Given the equivalence, this holds for NIT no less than for SD, and presumably for Germany no less than for Sweden. Rather than a universal NIT or SD, a selective SD for the long-term unemployed or the disabled (with taxation of their earnings at the standard rate) may be an excellent idea (see J. Jerger & A. Spermann, "Alternatives to subsidise low-wage employment: the case for a targeted negative income tax solution in Germany", Universität Freiburg, Working Paper, 1995).

RITCHIE, Ian & GILCHRIST, Les. "A Proposal for Inclusive Capitalism", in Pacific World (PIRM, PO Box 12125, Wellington, New Zealand, pirmoffice@clear.net.nz) 50, August 1998.
A plea for basic income by two active members of the New Zealand network UBINZ.
(First author's address: ian.ritchie@psa.org.nz)

ROBERTSON, James. 1998. Transforming Economic Life. A Millennial Challenge. Foxhole (Devon): Green Books, 80p., ISBN 1-870098-72-2.

"How can we reshape our economic system so that it will meet the needs of people and the Earth in the 21st century?". In this first "Briefing" of the Schumacher Society, the indefatigable James Robertson argues that "sharing the value of common resources" is a central part of the answer. Concretely, this means the combination of ecotax reform, a tax on land site-values and an age-related citizen's income (less for children, more for the elderly).

(Author's address: The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, Oxon OX10 9NU, UK, robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk.)

ROBERTSON, James. 1998. Beyond the Dependency Culture. People, Power and Responsibility in the 21st century. Twickenham (England): Adamantine Press, 220p.

James Robertson has been for many years one of Britain's most vocal and articulate advocate of radical reforms for a sustainable society. This volume collects some of his most influential short contributions, from 1977 to 1997. Two of them — "After Keynes and Thatcher: What Now?" (1993) and "A New Social Compact" (1996) — present the combination of a citizen's income and resource taxation which Robertson regards as a central component of what our next century needs.

(Author's address: The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, Oxon OX10 9NU, UK, robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk.)

ROUKENS de LANGE, Aart. 1998. "New Economics in the New South Africa: A Retrospective View from 2010", South African New Economics Network (SANE), July 1998, 12 p.

A charming scenario about how the problems of poverty and unemployment were solved in South Africa, thanks to a radical reform involving the introduction of a citizen's income paid in a special currency.

(Author's address: SANE network, ardl@iafrica.com)

FRENCH

AIRE, Lettre de liaison n°18, printemps 1998, 10 p.

A short lecture by Yoland Bresson and an example of the perversities of the RMI form the bulk of this short issue.

(Address: Ch. Bernard, Association pour l'instauration du revenu d'existence, 33 Avenue des Fauvettes, F-91440 Bures-sur-Yvette.)

LAMBERT, Jean-Paul. 1998. Le socialisme distributiste: Jacques Duboin. Paris: L'Harmattan, 192p., ISBN 2-7384-6470-X.

An enthusiastic and unconventional presentation of the thought of the French social thinker and interbellum politician Jacques Duboin (1878-1976), including a brief presentation of each of his many books and a selection of significant passages. Duboin was the founder of the Mouvement français sur l'abondance and the journal "La Grande relève des hommes par la machines", later edited by his daughter (and BIEN member) Marie-Louise Duboin. As from the mid-1930's he started advocating the "distributive economy", i.e. a basic income paid in a distinct currency and coupled with a compulsory social service.

An unusually critical preface by sociologist Alain Caillé opens the volume. Duboin's formulations and, to some extent, his posterity, bear striking resemblance with Major Douglas's writings and the Social Credit movement, but also with some of the arguments currently used in defence of basic income.

(Author's address: Les Salles, F-30570 Valleraugue, France.)

JARROSSON, Bruno & ZARKA, Michel. 1997. De la Défaite du travail à la conquête du choix. Paris: Dunod, 243 p., ISBN 2 10 003593 2.

In this brisk book, two management consultants challenge the central role given to work in our societies and argue for a largely deregulated market economy coupled with the introduction of an unconditional

basic income. In the context of permanent trends towards scarcer jobs and greater wage inequalities, they believe this package to be morally more acceptable than the US strategy of lower incomes for the poor, and economically more sensible than working time reduction and employment subsidies. To those who object that getting an income for nothing is unacceptable they reply that the basic income can be viewed as a rough compensation for pollution and other nuisances, but above all that the inheritance formed by the accumulation of physical capital and know how "is the collective good of all French people" (p.159). The authors' thinking on these issues is influenced by economist Yoland Bresson's advocacy of an "existence income" as a reflection of the productivity-based "value of time". But they are sceptical about his idea of funding it by money creation, "a Keynesian challenge the success of which is not proven" (p. 165). At a level of 1500 FF per person (of whatever age) and per month (1/7 of GDP per capita), about 40% of the funding would come from a matching drop in post-tax wages, 50% from a cut in benefits and subsidies and the rest from a reduction of administrative costs or a rise in the tax yield prompted by the reform.

JAVEAU, Claude, LAMBERT, Monique & LEMAIRE, Jacques eds. 1998. Excluant ... exclu. Bruxelles: Editions de l'ULB (La Pensée et les hommes n°38), 250p., ISSN 0774-2754.

This collective volume is based on the proceedings of a set of conferences organised in Brussels by the Centre européen de civisme. The focus was on the fight against exclusion in a European context, with contributions by Jérôme Vignon, Chantal Euzéby, Riccardo Petrella, Robert Castel and many others. The organisers were very keen that sufficient attention should be devoted to the idea of a citizen's income. The first of the two parts of the book ("L'évolution du travail salarié en Europe et l'allocation de citoyenneté) therefore includes two pleas for basic income, respectively by Philippe Van Parijs (Université catholique de Louvain) on "L'allocation universelle contre le chômage" (previously published in the Revue du MAUSS 1996) and by Jean-Marc Ferry (Université libre de Bruxelles) on "L'allocation universelle et l'idée d'un secteur quaternaire". These are followed by two critical comments, respectively by sociologist Alain Eraly (Université libre de Bruxelles, and chief of cabinet of a liberal minister in the Brussels regional government) and by Jacky Morael, federal secretary of the green party ECOLO. Eraly mainly scrutinises the empirical and normative assumptions made underlying Ferry's plea, while Morael explains why his party has opted for the redistribution of employment in the short term as a preparation for the introduction of a basic income in the longer term. One important consideration, on which he closes, is that a social protection secured by a basic income would leave out the Trade Unions and rely exclusively, and therefore dangerously, on the balance of political forces. The volume contains substantive English summaries of the various contributions.

(Editors' address: Monique Lambert, Centre européen du civisme, 17 Av. Franklin Roosevelt CP 108, 1050 Bruxelles.)

MARECHAL, Jean-Paul. Le Rationnel et le raisonnable. L'économie, l'emploi et l'environnement. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1997, 184 p., 95 FF, ISBN 2-86847-263-X.

According to economist Jean-Paul Maréchal, a reasonable economy, which takes appropriate account of environmental constraints must incorporate a reduced working time, the development of solidarity-oriented activities and a basic income. In a dense section (pp. 157-62), he summarises the arguments for basic income by Thomas Paine, René Passet, Philippe Van Parijs and Yoland Bresson, while in his conclusion he endorses a vision of the future of the welfare state which combines Bismarckian, Beveridgean and Painean ingredients (p. 179).

(Author's address: Université de Rennes 2, Département de science économique, F-35044 Rennes.)

GERMAN

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG, ZUKUNFTKOMMISSION. 1998. Wirtschaftliche Leistungsfähigkeit, sozialer Zusammenhalt, ökologische Nachhaltigkeit. Drei Ziele — ein Weg. Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf. (In der Raste 2, D-53129 Bonn), 416p. ISBN 3 - 8012-0269-0.

In October 1995, the educational and advisory foundation linked to the German social democratic party (SPD) set up a commission with the following brief: it should come up with concrete political options and proposals for an economically, socially and ecologically balanced path into the future, leaving behind well-trodden paths of thinking about societal reform and not feeling unduly restricted by apparent limits to political action. The commission consisted of four members of the Foundation and 14 academics, including Stephan Leibfried (Bremen), Joachim Mitschke (Frankfurt), Ilona Ostner (Göttingen) and Fritz Scharpf (Köln). Its proposals are rooted in the observation that the "German model", which performed remarkably in the past, is now facing fundamental problems. They are organised around four headings: (1) improving innovative capacity and strengthening human resources, (2) Improved employment opportunities for the low-skilled, (3) Change in the family and the employment crisis as a challenge to a policy of social integration, and (4) environmentally-compatible life-styles and forms of economic life. Under the second heading, the Commission "concluded that the best overall solution for ensuring a

subsistence-level income without harming job creation would be Joachim Mitschke's "Bürgergeld" (a kind of negative income tax). In addition to the current social assistance benefit, this would integrate a whole range of further, tax-funded and income-related benefits by making a single needs-related cash payment to the household unit. [...] From the perspective of employment policy, the main advantage of this system lies in the way in which a person's income from paid work is taken into account. Until now, tax-funded social benefits have either been cut in line with additional earnings or are only paid below a set income ceiling. Under the Bürgergeld model, a recipient's own income would only be "taxed" at a fixed rate (say 50%). At all stages, therefore, the incentive to enter employment and interest in career development would be maintained (assisted by a public and private-sector offer for further education and training). At the same time, labour costs to employers could be significantly reduced without employees' income falling below subsistence level. However, the political costs of such a change would be very high, as it would involve simultaneous changes in tax law, social legislation and collective wage agreements." For this reason, the Commission has also considered another proposal (defended in earlier writings, among others, by Fritz Scharpf) which it regards as easier to realise: a degressive tax-funded subsidy for jobs paid at hourly wages, say, between DM 10 and DM 18. "This proposal would be particularly simple to implement, if the public contribution took the form of a regressive reduction in the level of social security contributions paid by both the employer and the employee. [...] The reduction in the wage costs of simple work would be sufficiently large to make it profitable for companies to seek new markets for simple services and, thus, to create large numbers of additional jobs." (Address of the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung: Godesberger Allee 149, D-53170 Bonn)

PELZER, Helmut ed. 1998. Bürgergeld nach dem Ulmer Modell. An unconditional basic income. Neue Veröffentlichungen aus der 'Arbeitsgruppe Bürgergeld' an der Universität Ulm (Bürgergeld und Basic Income n°1). Ulm (Germany): RV-Verlag microedition, Reihe Wissenschaft, August 1998, 62p., ISBN 3-9806447-1-5.

Since 1994, a group of scholars from various faculties of the University of Ulm has been actively discussing the idea of a citizen's income (Bürgergeld) in the version worked out by Helmut Pelzer, a professor of chemistry and pharmacology at the University. This privately published set of essays gathers the main outputs of the group so far, including some pieces at least partly published elsewhere (and reviewed in this newsletter: see German publications for 1996 and 1997), a new analytical piece (by Winfried Bissels and Helmut Pelzer) on the profiles of marginal tax rates implied by the proposal, and Pelzer's presentation (in English) at BIEN's Amsterdam congress, which briefly summarises his proposal and arguments. One important distinctive feature of the Ulm proposal is that the unconditional basic income (administered either as a refundable tax credit or as a universal cash payment) is funded out of an ear-marked levy on the broadest possible income basis. (Editor's address: Prof. Dr. Helmut Pelzer, Beim Tannenhof 24, D-89079 Ulm, helmut.pelzer@medizin.uni-ulm.de)

SCHADE, Günter. 1997. Die Arbeitslosigkeit überwinden können wir nur mit einem solidarischen Sozialsystem. Haar (Germany): Günter Schade Verlag, Juli 1997, 49p., 9 DM, ISBN 3-9805858-1-6. As a solution to the lasting unemployment crisis, the author proposes, in this privately published pamphlet, a package of reforms that would foster the sharing of the remaining jobs. The core of it is formed by an unconditional basic income ("solidarisches Bürgergeld"). About 25% of the disposable income of private households would be devoted to it, which would correspond to about DM 600 per month for every adult. Much of it would be financed by an abolition of existing tax allowances. (Author's address: Fasanenweg 20, D-85540 Haar.)

RECENT ACADEMIC WORK ON BASIC INCOME

BELGIUM

FRANSSENS, Mikael. Le débat relatif à l'idée d'allocation universelle au sein du parti Ecolo (Dir.: Prof. P. Delwit), Université libre de Bruxelles: Faculté des sciences sociales, économiques et politiques, mémoire de licence en sciences politiques, septembre 1997, 119p. (Author's address: 104 Av. Parmentier, 1150 Bruxelles, Belgium)

BULGARIA

GANKOVA-IVANOVA, Zvetelina. Garantiertes Mindesteinkommen und Arbeitsmarkt in Bulgarien (dir.: Dr. Statty Stattev), doctoral dissertation in economics, Wirtschaftsuniversität Sofia, July 1996, 230p. (Author's address: Lehrstuhl für Sozialwissenschaften, H.-Dimitar-Str. 4, 5300 Gabrovo, Bulgaria)

SWITZERLAND

KÜTTEL, Rolf. Das Grundeinkommen als Kernelement des künftigen Gesellschaftsmodells (Dir. Prof. Volker Bornschiefer), Universität Zürich: Soziologisches Institut, Lizentiatsarbeit in der Soziologie, August 1997, 130p. (republished with an English-language preface, September 1998)
(Author's address: Meinr. Lienert-Strasse 15, CH-8003 Zürich, Switzerland, kuettel@soziologie.unizh.ch)

BASIC INCOME

is an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement.

THE BASIC INCOME EUROPEAN NETWORK (BIEN)

aims to serve as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income, and to foster informed discussion on this topic throughout Europe.

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is open to anyone who shares these objectives. To join, please follow the instructions at the end of this newsletter.

BIEN's SECRETARIAT

is now the responsibility of Alexander de Roo, European Parliament, Rue Belliard 97-113, B-1047 Brussels, Tel: 32-2-2843052, Fax: 32-2-2307837, E-mail: aderoo@europarl.eu.int).

BIEN's NEWSLETTER

appears three times per year. Its editor is Philippe Van Parijs (Chaire Hoover, 3 Place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Tel.: 32-10-473950, Fax: 32-10-473952, E-mail (preferred): vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be). Its internet version is sent free of charge to anyone who requests it by sending the message "subscribe BIEN" to bien@etes.ucl.ac.be. Hard copies can be mailed to any member of BIEN who so wishes.

BIEN's NEXT CONFERENCE

will be held in the Autumn of 2000. Berlin and Geneva are being considered as possible locations.

BIEN's WEB SITE

contains general information about basic income and BIEN, the latest newsletter, up-to-date information about the next conference and a comprehensive annotated inventory of relevant events and publications since 1986. Its address is :

<http://www.econ.ucl.ac.be/etes/bien/bien.html>

NATIONAL NETWORKS ON BASIC INCOME

CITIZENS' INCOME STUDY CENTRE (UNITED KINGDOM)

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VERENIGING BASISINKOMEN (NETHERLANDS)

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TO BECOME A MEMBER OF BIEN: NEW !

To serve its objectives, BIEN provides free access to its web site and e-mails its newsletter to both members and non-members. Nonetheless, membership remains vital as a means of enabling BIEN to carry out its work and building a support network across Europe and other parts of the world. Members can receive hard copies of the newsletter, are kept informed of relevant meetings, seminars and research projects and have voting rights at BIEN's General Assembly held every second year in conjunction with the Congress. A broad membership strengthens BIEN in its efforts to put basic income on academic and political agendas. It also provides much appreciated support to the unpaid activity of the Executive Committee and gives BIEN a firm basis for the funding of its modest running costs. A full statement of accounts is submitted to the General Assembly.

To become a member, there are henceforth three options:

- 1) Become an **ordinary member** for the next two-year period (1999-2000) by paying the equivalent of 25 Euro for individuals and 100 Euro for institutions.
- 2) Become a **life member** (individuals only), by paying the equivalent of 100 Euro. Your name will then appear in the newsletter (unless you express a wish to remain anonymous) as a public expression of your support, and — unless you withdraw — you will remain a member of BIEN indefinitely.
- 3) Become a **benefactor** (individuals or institutions), by paying a minimum of 200 Euro. Your name and benefactor status will then appear in the newsletter unless you express a wish to remain anonymous, and you will remain a member of BIEN indefinitely.

Those who have paid an ordinary membership fee since Summer 1998 can top it up to become life members or benefactors. In the event of BIEN dissolving, any remaining assets will be used to sponsor basic-income-related conferences or publications.

What you need to do:

1. mail or e-mail to Alexander DE ROO (European Parliament, Rue Belliard 97-113, B-1047 Brussels, aderoo@europarl.eu.int) the following information:
Surname, Name, Institution (if any), Full postal address, Phone, Fax, E-mail, Mode of payment, Preference for receiving the newsletter by e-mail or by post
2. PAY 25 Euro (ordinary members), 100 Euro (institutional and life members), 200 Euro or more (benefactors) or equivalent (£ 20, DM 50, FF 200, US \$ 35, etc.), preferably in cash in a well-sealed envelope to Alexander DE ROO, or into BIEN's bank account (001-2204356-10 at the CGER, Brussels). In all cases, an acknowledgement will be sent upon receipt.