

# BIEN

## BASIC INCOME EARTH NETWORK

### NewsFlash Volume 27, no. 76, September-October 2014

[www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org)

*This is the newsletter of the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN), which was founded in 1986 as the Basic Income European Network and expanded to become an Earth-wide Network in 2004. It serves as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income. It fosters informed discussion on this topic throughout the world.*

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## 1. Editorial: BIEN Announces An “Ask Me Anything” series of internet events on International Basic Income Week is coming up on September 15-21

BIEN will organize a series of Internet events on the [Seventh Annual International Basic Income Week](#), September 15-21, 2014. Each event will be an “[Ask Me Anything](#)” (also known as AMA or sometimes as “As Us Anything”). In these events, an expert in a given topic promises to be available for a given amount of time to type answers to questions submitted from anyone around the world. The AMAs will appear on Reddit, which calls itself, “The Front Page of the Internet.” Reddit is one of the world’s most popular websites, last year receiving 731 million unique visitors and 56 billion page views.

For the 7 days of Basic Income Week, BIEN, together with the [Basic Income community on Reddit](#), plan to promote an expansive series of AMAs including participants from around the world, in various languages, and on various different topics related to basic income.

Reddit is a website where people can post discussion or link to texts. Users can vote and comment on all content. It is divided into about 500,000 different communities (called “subreddits”) of varying sizes and topics. Each subreddit is a continuing discussion, going 24 hours a days, with people posting and responding. The Basic Income subreddit has recently experience enormous growth, rising from 50 users last summer to over 15,000 today, and now raking 1,626<sup>th</sup> out of over 5,400 active subreddits.

AMAs are hosted on a subreddit called IAMA, one of the most popular of Reddit’s subreddits with over 5.9 million subscribers. The popularity of the AMA lies in its anything goes nature. It’s like having an interview with thousands of people; any question can be asked and candor is greatly valued. A successful AMA can be read by hundreds of thousands of people and draw thousands of comments.

BIEN will schedule at least one AMA per day, perhaps several a day, throughout Basic Income Week, starting September 15 and concluding September 21. Some of these will take place in the IAMA subreddit and BasicIncome subreddit, but most will take place in some of the many other subreddits available, based on location like (perhaps Ireland, Europe, Korea, etc.), or focus of interviewee (perhaps Economics, politics, Psychology, etc.) or by language (perhaps French, German, Japanese, etc.). More Information will be released soon.

Participants include:

- Karl Widerquist, co-chair of BIEN, Associate Professor at SFS-Qatar, Georgetown University, editor of *Basic Income News*, and author of *A Theory of Freedom as the Power to Say No*
- Peter Barnes, author of *Who Owns the Sky?*, *Capitalism 3.0*, and *With Liberty and Dividends for all*
- Barb Jacobson, Stanislas Jourdin, and Enno Schmidt, of Universal Basic Income Europe and leaders of people’s initiatives that raise a total of more than 400,000 signatures for basic income in 2013-2014
- Mike Howard, editor of Basic Income Studies, coordinator of USBIG, and a socialist philosopher at the University of Maine-Orono, with expertise on the Alaska dividend & the cap-and-dividend approach to global warming
- Ann Withorn, of the University of Massachusetts-Boston and USBIG and Shawn Cassiman, of USBIG
- Jeff Smith, of the Geonomy Society
- Jason Murphy, philosopher at Elms College and Gaura Rader, philosopher at Ohio University and of the Socratic Dialogues,
- Pablo Yannes, of Red Mexicana Ingreso Ciudadano Universal (BIEN’s affiliate in Mexico)
- Juon Kim Télémaque Masson of Basic Income Generation
- Mike Munger, Libertarian economist at Duke University
- Toru Yamamori, of Doshisha University and BIEN-Japan
- Hysong Ahn, of the Basic Income Korean Network
- Popho Eun Sil Bark-Yi, Yonsei University and Basic Income Korean Network (BIKN)

- Louise Haag, co-chair of BIEN and Reader in politics and the University of York (UK) and Anja Askeland, Secretary of BIEN and member of BIEN-Norway
- Adriaan Planken, of UBIE-the Netherlands
- Mark Walker, of New Mexico State University, and James Hughes, of the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, Oxford University
- Marshall Brain, founder of HowStuffWorks.com, entrepreneur, and author
- Ed Dolan, author of *Economics of Public Policy*
- Charles M.A. Clark, of St. John's University
- Michael Bohmeyer, entrepreneur and founder of "My basic income"

The Basic Income Subreddit is online at: <http://www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/>

Information about the growth of the BI Subreddit is online at: <http://redditmetrics.com/r/BasicIncome>

The IAMA subreddit is online at: <http://www.reddit.com/r/IAMA>

More information about the AMA series will be announced soon.

## 2. News about Basic Income from around the world

UNITED STATES: Alaska's small basic income likely to double this year.

The Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD), Alaska's small yearly Basic Income, is likely to double this year over last year's value. The dividend is paid every fall from the returns to the Alaska Permanent Fund (APF), a pool of financial assets accumulated from savings from the state's oil revenue. The formula for converting returns into dividends is complex. It depends on the average returns over the previous five years and the number of Alaskan residents who apply for it. The exact figure will be released soon, and direct deposits will be delivered by early October.

Mike Burns, the executive director of Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation, was quoted by the Alaska Dispatch saying, "I think the punchline is that the dividend is going to be right about doubling from last year." The reason for the big increase in the dividend this year has to do with the five-year average used to calculate dividends. The enormous downturn of the 2008-2009 fiscal year have finally dropped out of the calculation. Since then the APF has had a very good run, rising to a total value of \$53 billion—an all time record—and its assets returned more than 15% for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Last year's value was \$900. So, a doubling would put it the PFD the neighborhood of \$1,800 per person or \$7,200 for a family of four. *The Alaska Dispatch* estimates the number will be \$1,930.49, "give or take \$100." This would put the dividend near it's all-time high of \$2069, paid in 2008, at the height of the market bubble. Even the record-high amount was far below the livable income that most Basic Income supporters want to see. Yet some of the affects supporters hope to see from a larger dividend are present in Alaska. It has increase economic

equality and reduced poverty, and employers have complained that workers are more likely to quit when they receive the dividend.

The APF and PFD are enormously popular in Alaska, but they are not immune to attack. Several years ago the state voted to give the notional dividends that prisoners would have received had they been allowed to apply for the dividend to the prison system. Just this year the state voted to reduce taxes on oil companies, which will ultimately mean less money going into the APF, and therefore, small dividends in the future.

For more information see:

Daniel Gross, "[Alaska Is a Petrol State: But it doesn't act like one.](#)" *Slate*, August 28, 2014

Alex DeMarban and Sean Doogan, "[Estimated at \\$1,930, Alaska PFD big but no record.](#)" *The Alaska Dispatch*, August 27, 2014

Dermot Cole, "[Permanent Fund principal, not oil royalties, drives most of its growth.](#)" *The Alaska Dispatch*, August 15, 2014

Trilbe Wynne, "[Alaska Permanent Fund tops \\$50 billion mark, returns 15.5% for year.](#)" *Pensions and Investments*, August 11, 2014

Associated Press, "[Alaska Permanent Fund tops \\$50B threshold.](#)" *Fairbanks News-Miner*, August 8, 2014

Sean Doogan, "[Size of 2014 PFD checks may double from 2013's \\$900.](#)" *The Alaska Dispatch*, July 30, 2014.

KTVA, "[This year's PFD checks could double the 2013 amount.](#)" *KTVA-TV*, July 30, 2014

#### UNITED STATES: Prominent economist, Ed Dolan, turns attention to BIG

Economists have written about the Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) in one form or another at least since Friedrich Hayek endorsed the idea in 1944. Many leading economists were active in the Guaranteed Income movement in the United States in the 1960s and 70s. They have been a less visible face of the idea in its recent resurgence. That could be changing. This year, one prominent Economist, Ed Dolan, has made BIG a major focus of his writing.

Dolan earned a doctorate in economics from Yale University. He taught at Dartmouth College, the University of Chicago, George Mason University and Gettysburg College. From 1990 to 2001, he taught in Moscow, Russia, where he and his wife founded the American Institute of Business and Economics. Since 2001, he has taught economics in several European countries, including an on-going appointment as visiting professor at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga. His books include *Introduction to Economics*; *Money, Banking, and Monetary Policy*; *The Foundations of Modern Austrian Economics*; and *Economics of Public Policy*.

He has written at least six articles on BIG since January, covering many different aspects of the issue including affordability, political viability, and ideology. His most recent effort, a two-part article on the affordability of BIG, sparked an interesting [discussion within the](#)

[economic community of Reddit](#), with more than 400 contributions. Dolan will take part in BIEN's [AMA series on Basic Income Week, September 15-21](#).

He's articles on BIG since January are:

Ed Dolan, "[The Economic Case for a Universal Basic Income](#)", *EconoMonitor*, January 3, 2014.

Ed Dolan, "[Could We Afford a Universal Basic Income](#)", *Economonitor*, January 13, 2014

Ed Dolan, "[A Universal Basic Income: Conservative, Progressive, and Libertarian Perspectives](#)," *Economonitor*, January 27, 2014.

Ed Dolan, "[Universal Basic Income: An Idea Whose Time Has Come](#)", *Real Clear Markets*, 6 August 2014

Ed Dolan, "[A Universal Basic Income and Work Incentives. Part 1: Theory](#)", *Economonitor*, August 18, 2014

Ed Dolan, "[A Universal Basic Income and Work Incentives. Part2: Evidence](#)", *Economonitor*, August 25, 2014

## CHINA: Basic Income Scheme in Sanya Faces Termination

[Josh Martin]

A minor unconditional basic income scheme has been taking place in Sanya, China, for five years now and has flown very much under the radar. The income is given once every six months and is equivalent to about a month's worth of minimum wage labor. It compares financially rather well with the Alaskan Permanent Fund in the USA. However, after five years the Hainan Provincial government issued a directive to Sanya to establish conditionality on these welfare payments. Sanya is now faced with a difficult situation where its citizens largely support the basic income, but their provincial government has ordered its termination.

For more on Sanya, read the following article:

Nicole Tin, "[Should Sanya city obey directives and stop its unconditional basic income?](#)" *Citizen-Ownership Democracy*, 10 July 2014.

## GERMANY: Michael Bohmeyer Starts Crowdfunding Organization to Finance Individual

### Basic Incomes

[Josh Martin]

Martin Bohmeyer, a 29-year-old web developer in Germany, has been living on a self-imposed basic income for the past half of a year. He crowdfunded this basic income and after seeing its effects firsthand, Bohmeyer is now crowdfunding even more to finance other peoples' basic incomes. His initiative, "Mein Grundeinkommen" has already raised enough for almost two full basic incomes of €12,000 per year. Bohmeyer encourages his website visitors to submit their information to possibly be one of the winners of a basic income. The winners are to be chosen at random, but this project has generated responses from people saying what they would do with a basic income.

For more information, read the following links:

[“Should we all get €12,000 a year?”](#) *The Local*, 25 July 2014.

[Mein Grundeinkommen home page](#)

#### UNITED KINGDOM: BIG Political Party Is Recruiting Parliamentary Candidates for 2015

[Josh Martin]

In a post on their website, the BIG Political Party of the United Kingdom calls on its followers to consider standing in the UK General Election in 2015. In the post they write the following:

“If you want to stand as a BIG Party Candidate, you will need.

1. A £500 deposit (returnable if you get at least 5% of the vote)
2. Approximately £600 to print this Election Pamphlet, which will then be mailed out, free of charge, to every household in your constituency, explaining to them why they should vote for you.
3. Ten constituency residents, who are on the electoral roll, to nominate you to stand. These people only need to sign your nomination papers, they do not have to vote for you in the actual election.”

To read the full post, click on the following link:

[“Do you want to be an MP? Unconditional Basic Income Guarantee Party is recruiting Parliamentary Candidates for UK General Election 2015”](#), *The BIG Political Party*, 6 August 2014.

#### UNITED KINGDOM: Green Party to Make Basic Income a Central Position in Manifesto

[Josh Martin]

Green party leader Natalie Bennett, in an interview with *BuzzFeed*, declared that support for a universal basic income will be among the party’s major positions in their manifesto for the 2015 election. Current polls have the Greens receiving six percent of the vote in 2015, up from 0.9 percent in 2010.

To read the post on *BuzzFeed*, click on the following link:

Jon Stone, [“Green Party To Give "Universal Income" A Front-Row Seat In Its Manifesto”](#), *BuzzFeed*, 8 August 2014.

## UNITED KINGDOM: Scottish Green Party Endorses Basic Income

[Josh Martin]

In a recent publication the Scottish Green Party stated its plan for a basic income (called a citizen's income in their writing) for Scotland if they vote for independence in the upcoming referendum. With the slogan of "Green Yes", the Scottish Greens agree with the UK Greens on supporting a basic income. In the eight-page publication, the Scottish Greens discuss why a citizen's income is the right way forward by highlighting the flaws of the current system and the benefits a citizen's income would bring to Scotland.

The document also outlines their initial plan for a citizen's income in Scotland: £50 a week for children and young people under sixteen, £100 a week for 16-18 year olds and working-age adults, and £150 a week for pensioners, totaling just under £1 billion to implement. They then go on to discuss funding options for such a policy. In sum the Scottish Greens call upon voters to vote yes to independence in hopes that they could then implement this policy.

To read the publication, follow the links below:

Scottish Green Party, "[Citizen's Income](#)", *Green Yes briefing note*, 10 August 2014.

["Greens Publish Citizen's Income Plan for Fairer Scotland"](#), *Scottish Green Party*, 10 August 2014.

## UNITED STATES: Cato Unbound's Series Sparks Basic Income Debate Among Libertarians

[Josh Martin]

Over the past two weeks *Cato Unbound* hosted a debate titled "The Basic Income and the Welfare State", which contained four articles. First, Zwolinski outlined a pragmatic libertarian case for a basic income that served as the lead article to which the other three authors would respond. The following three articles from Manzi, Huemer, and Frank dug into different arguments for and against a basic income from a libertarian perspective. Each author offered their take on the basic income and sparked many responses throughout the web on the topic of libertarians and the basic income.

To read the four posts, click on the link below to the *Cato Unbound* page:

[Cato Unbound's website](#)

To read some responses to these posts, click on the following links:

Elizabeth Nolan Brown, "[Libertarians Debate Basic Income Guarantee](#)", *Reason*, 4 August 2014.

Mike Konczal, "[The Pragmatic Libertarian Case for a Basic Income Doesn't Add Up](#)", *Next New Deal*, 8 August 2014.

Jesse Walker, "[Making the Welfare State Less Intrusive](#)", *Reason*, 5 August 2014.

Fitsnews, "[The Notorious \(Basic Income Guarantee\)](#)", *Fitsnews*, 4 August 2014.

### SWITZERLAND: Government reacts negatively to UBI proposal

The Swiss Federal Council has released its evaluation of the popular initiative for an unconditional basic income (UBI), which received enough signatures last fall to trigger a nationwide referendum on it. The Federal Council evaluates all people's initiatives in Switzerland making one of three recommendations: it could accept, reject, or no recommendation. The council chose to reject the initiative. The initiative will still take place sometime in 2016, the rejection means simply that the council recommends that citizens vote no on the proposal.

Enno Schmidt & Daniel Straub, the two main organizers of the people's initiative said, "This is nothing special. We expected this." The function of a people's initiative is to bypass the government and go directly to the people even against the ruling government's wishes.

The Federal Council also release a statement justifying its rejection of the initiative. The statement alleged many shortcomings of UBI, including: many low-paid jobs would probably disappear or be transferred abroad, Women would be forced back into the housework and care work. Taxes would rise considerably to finance the basic income and further weaken the incentive to work. The amount of the UBI proposed is too large and cannot be financed. It contradicts the principle of subsidiarity. The statement also defended the existing social system in Switzerland. The Federal Council agreed with the founders of the initiative that each person has to be able to live a life in dignity but argued that Switzerland achieves that goal with its existing system.

Schmidt & Straub's reaction to the statement was mixed, "The *tone* of the message is fair, no nasty insinuations and no polemic." But, according to Schmidt & Straub, the *substance* of statement implied that Switzerland would perish if this initiative were accepted by the people.

Philippe Van Parijs, of the Basic Income Earth Network said that this statement was an opportunity for Basic Income supporters "to point out the misunderstandings [in the statement] and to work out realistic scenarios in terms of amount and funding."

For more information in German see:

Enno Schmidt & Daniel Straub, "[Botschaft des Bundesrates über das bedingungslose Grundeinkommen](#), [[Report of the Federal Council on the unconditional Grundeinkommen](#)]," *Volksinitiative Grundeinkommen*, August 2014.

*News.Admin.ch*, "[Bundesrat lehnt die Volksinitiative 'Für ein bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen'](#) [[Bundesrat rejects the popular initiative 'for an unconditional basic income'](#)]," *News.Admin.ch*, 27, 08, 2014.

Didier Burkhalter, "[Botschaft zur Volksinitiative «Für ein bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen»](#) [[Message Regarding the People's Initiative 'for an unconditional basic income'](#)]," *the Swiss Federal Council*, 2014.

*Aargauer Zeitung*, “[Bundesrat lehnt Initiative für bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen ab](#) [[Bundesrat rejects initiative for unconditional basic income](#)].” *Aargauer Zeitung*, 27, 08, 2014

For more information in French see:

Ludwig Gärtner, “[Conseil fédéral suisse : Le Conseil fédéral rejette l’initiative populaire ‘Pour un revenu de base inconditionnel,’](#) [Swiss Federal Council, the Federal Council rejects the popular initiative ‘For an unconditional basic income’]” *Zonebourse*, 27/08/2014

#### MACAU: Government Distributes Temporary Basic Income.

Macau, the former Portuguese possession, now a semi-autonomous region of China, is in the process of distributing a temporary Basic Income of more than \$1000 to all residents. According to a government press release dated 1 July, 2014, “In order to share the fruits of economic development with the general public, the Macao SAR government had announced the Wealth Partaking Scheme 2014’, under which, local permanent residents would receive 9,000 patacas [US \$1,127.46], whereas non-permanent residents 5,400 patacas [US \$676.48].” At \$1,127, this year’s effective Basic Income in Macau larger than last year’s Alaska Dividend (\$900).

Macau has distributed temporary Basic Income’s each year for the last four years. In 2011, permanent residents received 4,000 patacas [US \$501—at August 2014 exchange rates] at the beginning of the year, and a further supplement of 3,000 patacas [US \$376] in August. In 2012, permanent residents received \$7,000 patacas [US \$877] all at once. In 2013, permanent residents received 8,000 patacas [US \$1,002]. Non-permanent residents received proportionately smaller figures this year. Thus, permanent residents of Macao for the last four years have received a total of \$3883 since 2011. This amount is clearly not enough to live on in an expensive place such as Macao (it cannot be a full basic income, only partial), but it is a significant figure for Macao residents at the low end of the income distribution.

This scheme is a Basic Income in the sense that it distributes an income unconditionally, on an individual basis to all citizens (at least all resident citizens), but it is not a Basic Income in the sense that it is not distributed on a regular basis. The government has now set the precedent that the Wealth Partaking Scheme will be in effect every year, but each year it has been created with one-time legislation without a promise of renewal. The amount, timing, and existence of the redistribution have to be renegotiated each year. People cannot count on it. Yet, it is something that is already close to a Basic Income and that could develop into a Basic Income in the future.

For more information about the Wealth partaking scheme, see the government websites from the last four years:

2014: [http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2014/default\\_e.html](http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2014/default_e.html)

2013: [http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2013/default\\_e.html](http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2013/default_e.html)

2012: [http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2012/default\\_e.html](http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2012/default_e.html)

2011, supplement: [http://www.ap.gov.mo/2011/default\\_e.html](http://www.ap.gov.mo/2011/default_e.html)

2011: [http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2011/index\\_e.html](http://www.planocp.gov.mo/2011/index_e.html)

See also the following articles and commentaries from Macao newspapers:

*Macau Daily Times*, "[Cash handout starts in July.](#)" *Macau Daily Times*, 01/07/2014  
*Business Daily Editorial Board*, "[Smoke and mirrors.](#)" *Business Daily* [Macao], 2014

### GERMANY: Someone will win a basic income for a year

Michael Bohmeyer, a 29 year old IT professional and basic income activist raises money for a project named [Mein Grundeinkommen](#) (my basic income) via crowdfunding, where people can win a basic income of 1.000 Euro per month payed for one year. Within only 22 days almost 500 people donated 12.000 Euro for the first winner to be drawn soon. Bohmeyer wants to find out how the winners will use the money and how it may make a difference in their life. The project has attracted a lot of attention in German media.

For more information (in German) see: [Mein Grundeinkommen](#)

For an interview in English with Michael Bohmeyer see:

Chris Köver, "[A German Guy Wants to Give You a Bunch of Money for Nothing.](#)" *Vice*, Aug 14 2014.

### UNITED STATES: Congressman Introduces a Climate Change Bill Involving a small Basic Income

[Craig Axford]

[Congressman Chris Van Hollen](#), (D) Maryland, recently introduced the [Healthy Climate and Family Security Act of 2014](#). If passed, this legislation would guarantee every American a small Basic Income using revenues from the sale of carbon permits. According to [Bloomberg Businessweek](#), these permits would be auctioned off to carbon emitting industries in the same manner the US government currently auctions off permits for the emission of sulfur dioxide. The permitting system for sulfur dioxide was instituted in 1990 in response to the increasing impact of acid rain. It is widely credited with dramatic reductions in the release of that pollutant since.

Because revenues from the sale of permits under the *Healthy Climate and Family Security Act* would be evenly distributed to every American, this legislation links a basic income to the struggle against global warming in ways past anti-pollution efforts have not. According to [Climateandprosperity.org](#) American families stand to receive a dividend regardless of income. "With an initial auction price of \$10/ton of CO<sub>2</sub>, a median family of four would receive about \$640/year and pay about \$380 as a result of higher fossil fuel prices, receiving a net benefit of about \$260/year." The organization projects this payment will grow over time as permits increase in value. [Climateandprosperity.org](#) also reports a substantial number of environmental organizations have already endorsed the proposal. According to the organization's statement of support for the legislation 32 groups from around the United States have so far endorsed the bill. This potentially provides an opportunity for basic income advocates to expand support for the BIG concept as well.

For additional information regarding the *Healthy Climate and Family Security Act of 2014* please visit one or more of the following websites:

Peter Coy, [“Is This How to Sell Americans on Fighting Global Warming?”](#), *Bloomberg Businessweek*, July 30, 2014

Congressman Chris Van Hollen, [“Van Hollen Introduces the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act of 2014”](#), *Press Releases*, July 30, 2014

Rep. Chris Van Hollen, [“Protecting Our Climate and the Middle Class”](#), *The Huffington Post*, July 30, 2014

Climate and Prosperity, [“Climate and Consumer Groups Support the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act”](#), *Climateandprosperity.org*, July 30, 2014

#### UKRAINE: Governor of an eastern province proposes a kind of BIG

[Joerg Drescher]

According to an article of Interfax-Ukraine dated to 14th July 2014, Ihor Kolomoyskyi, a Ukrainian business magnate and the current Governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast in Eastern Ukraine, suggests to punish people who support separatism and terrorism in Ukraine by seizing their assets and to create a special fund out of them. The stakeholders of this fund should be those who are currently fighting at the "Anti-Terroristic-Operation" (ATO), as well as relatives of killed soldiers.

The respective article does not say exactly, if the stakeholders receive a dividend, but if, it can be compared to the Alaska Permanent Fund. However, the beneficiaries would not be all citizens of Ukraine and to become a beneficiary would not be unconditional (either you need to be a member of the ATO, or to be a relative of a killed soldier).

Source in Russian:

Interfax-Ukraine [Ukrainian news agency], [“Коломойский считает необходимым провести национализацию ряда активов Ахметова и Фирташа](#) [Kolomoyskyi sees it as necessary to nationalise some assets of Akhmetov and Firtash],” *Interfax-Ukraine*, 14th July 2014.

#### EUROPE: Francophone activists launch a newspaper on basic income

Hoping to raise awareness on basic income and reach new people, the activists from France, Belgium and Switzerland have decided to work together on a project aiming at launching a newspaper called *L'inconditionnel*, (*The Unconditional*).

Initiated by Stanislas Jourdan & Barbara Garbarczyk, the project will evolve as a joint-venture between BIEN affiliates in [France](#), [Belgium](#) and [Switzerland](#). The project coordinators aim at printing more than 50,000 issues and will distribute them for free at all events planned during the [Basic Income Week](#) (September 15-21) in the three countries.

In order to finance the printings, they have started a crowdfunding campaign. “We would need at least 5,000 euros to print 25,000 newspapers of 12 pages. Ideally, we want 12,000€ in order to print more than 50,000 newspapers, 20 pages each. Our objective is definitely ambitious, said Stanislas Jourdan, but we are sure that basic income supporters will understand the impact this project could have for all of us. The more money we have, the more we can print issues, the more people we will reach.”

Organizers have asked people to support the project by participating to [the crowdfunding campaign](#).

The newspaper will include articles, interviews, and graphics explaining how to finance basic income. “The point of the newspaper is to gather the best of what people need to know. Instead of flooding people with links on basic income, we hope this newspaper will provide all the essential informations to understand the idea and its consequences.” explained Barbara Garbarczyk.

“For now, we are working on a single publication newspaper,” Stanislas Jourdan said, “but of course further editions will be envisaged if the first issue is a success.”

For more information on the project, see the newspaper’s website: [L'inconditionnel - journal sur le revenu de base](#).

#### NAMIBIA: Basic Income Program Returns to Otjivero.

[Jenna van Draanen]

A basic income pilot project, originally implemented in 2008, has just been re started. The project in the Otjivero-Omitara settlement of the Steinhausen Constituency in Namibia had been providing all residents living in the settlement since 2007 with \$100 per person per month, without any conditions attached. The initial pilot program stopped in June 2013, when the funds provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia were depleted.

Now, with funding from the Waldensian Church, basic income payments of \$100 per person per month have been re-instated for residents of the settlement. Three rounds of monthly payments have already been released this year, and the program is expected to have enough funding to continue until April 2015.

For more information on the return of the program, see:

The Namibian, “[BIG resumes at Otjivero](#)”. *The Namibian*, July 17, 2014.

Rev. Wilfred Diergaardt “[Press Release](#)” *BIG Coalition Namibia*, July 15, 2014

#### CYPRUS: Significant step toward a Basic Income Guarantee

The national parliament of Cyprus has introduced a policy with a name that translates as “guaranteed minimum income” or “minimum guaranteed income.” The name sounds like a Basic Income Guarantee (BIG). It is not, but it appears to be a significant step in that direction. The law was enacted 10 July 2014, and the first recipients started signing up on 14

July 2014. According to *the Cyprus Daily*, the law provides a minimum income of 480 Euros for Cypriot citizen, “irrespective of whether they are unemployed, pensioners or self-employed. ... For every additional family member over 14, including the wife or husband, 50% of the initial amount of €480 (240) will be added to the benefit. For members under 14, an additional 30% (€144) will be added.” According to *Cyprus Mail*, the government arrived at those amounts using figures including the average cost of rent in Cyprus, cost of living and entertainment and others.

The guarantee is means tested—making it closer to the Negative Income Tax than to the Basic Income form of BIG. Income must be “less than the real needs of the household,” and wealth must be less than \$100,000 Euros for each member of the household. The new guaranteed minimum replace most existence state benefits in Cyprus. When the government proposed the idea of a “guaranteed minimum income” last year, the prime minister said it would come with a work expectation. Available reports so far make no mention of whether the final version included work requirements or how strict they are. However, the combination of benefits, the effort to meet basic needs through cash benefits, and the ability to keep them whether employed or not is a significant step in the direction of a true basic income guarantee, a step that few if any Western industrialized nations have yet taken.

For more information on the new law see:

*InCyprus*, “[Guaranteed minimum income approved.](#)” *The Cypress Daily: InCyprus.com*, 11 July 2014

*Cyprus Mail*, “[Large family benefits not to be impacted by GMI.](#)” *Cyprus Mail*, July 22, 2014

*Cyprus Mail*, “[Our View: Public sector cuts could finance better welfare system.](#)” *Cyprus Mail*, July 22, 2014

INTERNATIONAL: Article in Support of Unconditional Basic Income Makes Medium’s

Top 100

Scott Santens' article, "[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?](#)" published on *Medium* in June achieved the distinction in July of making the [Medium Top 100](#) - a collection of the most-read of all stories each month.

Medium is a social journalism platform created by co-founders of Twitter, Evan Williams and Biz Stone. Its monthly list is ranked by what they call [TTR \(total time reading\)](#) – a metric devised to measure quality of reader engagement. The TTR for this particular article in support of basic income, ranked it at number 26 for the month of June.

Scott Santens, "[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?](#)" *Medium*, 2 June 2014.

Pete Davies, “[Medium’s metric that matters: Total Time Reading](#)” *Medium*, 21 November 2013.

QUEBEC, CANADA: Minister of Employment for the provincial government reiterates his support for basic income

In a an interview with the daily newspaper *Le Devoir* (30 June 2014), François Blais - who was appointed Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity after the April 2014 General Election in Quebec - cautiously reiterates his support for basic income. As BIEN was holding its international conference in Montreal, Blais stressed the fact that a thorough reform of Quebec's social model would be most welcome, provided it would include the introduction of a "guaranteed minimum income" for all. Blais also insisted on the fact that this was not an official statement of the Quebec's government, but rather his own position on this issue. In 2001, Blais had published an introductory book on basic income in French, which was translated into English in 2002: "[Ending Poverty. A Basic Income for all Canadians](#)" (Lorimer Publishing).

The interview can be found [here](#) (in French).

### 3. Events

THE NETHERLANDS: Basic Income Week Events, September 15-21, 2014

Unconditional Basic Income can become the basis for "Building Social Cohesion in Europe". This is the motto of this year's International Basic Income Week, which is scheduled to run from September 15–21, 2014. BI Weeks activities in the Netherlands include, a viewing Enno Schmidt's Basic Income Film, organizing a Parking Day for the UBI, debates, book presentations, workshops, etc. Swiss activist/filmmaker Enno Schmidt's film, "[Basic Income a Cultural Impulse](#)" will be performed in several theaters (select subtitles of your choice).

Some well-known speakers will give presentations:

- Historian/Journalist Rutger Bregman, author of "[Why-we-should-give-free-money-to-everyone.](#)"
- Economist/rapper Joeri Oltheten AKA Parao, known from the song "[The Good Life.](#)"
- Jolanda Verburg, female blogger/politician for the Dutch Greens
- Willem Gieling, vice-chairman Dutch Basic Income Network

Events will take place cities including Tilburg, Amsterdam, Breda, Namen (B), Zoetermeer, Assen, Leeuwarden, Borger.

For more information see:

Dutch website: <http://week-van-het-basisinkomen.nl>

English website: <http://basicincomeweek.org>

BROOKLYN, NY: Building a Broader Climate Movement: Universal Basic Income and the Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy, Sep. 11, 2014

The [NYC Climate Convergence](#) will host a conference entitled, “Building a Broader Climate Movement: Universal Basic Income and the Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy,” at 7:00pm, Thursday, September 11, 2014, in [The Commons Brooklyn](#), 388 Atlantic Ave, Brooklyn, New York 11217.

This is a free build-up event for the NYC Climate Convergence ([www.convergeforclimate.org](http://www.convergeforclimate.org)), a series of events and actions that will take place 9/19-9/21. See the website for registration and details.

Since the economic collapse of 2007-2008, calls for a universal basic income (or "Social Security for All") have resurfaced in major outlets for the first time since the 1970s. While many of the voices calling for a UBI have come from outside established social movement groups, the UBI has tremendous potential to link the disparate movements of the left. It also may present a way of beginning to address perhaps the most urgent problem of our time-- climate change.

Speakers:

Alyssa Battistoni is PhD student in political science at Yale University and an editor at Jacobin magazine.

Benjamin Kunkel is a founding editor of n+1 magazine and the author of Utopia or Bust. His play Buzz will be staged this fall in Brooklyn.

Michael Lewis is a social worker and sociologist on the faculty of the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College. He's interested in quantitative methods, public policy, and poverty and is the co-author of Economics for Social Workers and co-editor of The Ethics and Economics of the Basic Income Guarantee. Other articles he's written have appeared in a number of peer-review journals.

Time & Date: 7:00pm, Thursday, September 11, 2014

Location: [The Commons Brooklyn](#)

388 Atlantic Ave, Brooklyn, New York 11217

Host: [NYC Climate Convergence](#)

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/283099725223819/>

NEW YORK: The 14<sup>th</sup> North American Basic Income Guarantee Congress, Feb. 26 – Mar. 1, 2015

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual North American Basic Income Guarantee (NABIG) Congress will be held in conjunction with the Eastern Economic Association in New York, NY, Thursday, February 26 – Sunday, March 1, 2015. The call for participants will be released soon. The deadline for participant submissions is October 31, 2015. The NABIG Congress is a joint meeting of the U.S. Basic Income Guarantee (USBIG) Network and the Basic Income Canada Network

(BICN). It takes place each year, rotating between the United States and Canada. Features Speakers include [Peter Barnes](#): entrepreneur, environmental activist, and author of a half-dozen books, including, *Who Owns the Sky?*, *Capitalism 3.0*, and *With Liberty and Dividends for All*.

Essential information:

- Conference dates: Thursday, February 26 – Sunday, March 1, 2015
- The deadline for participant submissions: October 31, 2014f
- Location: New York, NY
- Organizing committee: Karl Widerquist <[Karl@Widerquist.com](mailto:Karl@Widerquist.com)> (organizer), Ann Withorn <[withorn.ann@gmail.com](mailto:withorn.ann@gmail.com)>, Shawn Cassiman <[scassiman1@udayton.edu](mailto:scassiman1@udayton.edu)>, and a BICN representative to be named later.

#### ATHENS, GREECE: UBI: A Vision of the future

UBI: A Vision of the future, Athens Summit: Turning crises into an opportunity with the adoption of an Unconditional Basic Income in Europe.

The organizers invite to you participate in the event organized by UBIE (Unconditional Basic Income Europe) for a day of discussion, production of ideas and planning for the future of emancipation in Europe and beyond, on Friday, September 26, 2pm-9pm, at the Melina Mercouri Cultural Center, Iraklidon 66 and Thessaloniki street, Athens.

#### Program

14:00 - 16:00 Food for all. Social Kitchen.  
16:00 - 18:00 Workshops.  
18:00 - 18:20 Coffee break.  
18:20 - 18:30 Short introduction by the Greek UBI team.  
18:30 - 19:00 Main Speaker. (Guy Standing)  
19:00 - 20:00 Panel discussion.  
20:00 - 21:00 Discussion with audience.

To participate, please send an email to [info@basicincome.gr](mailto:info@basicincome.gr) with the subject UBIE Registration, with your name. For more information go to [the event website](#).

#### INTERNATIONAL: BIEN announces list of speakers for its “Ask Me Anything” series of internet interviews on Reddit.com, September 15-21, 2014

The Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) has announced the list of speakers for its “[Ask Me Anything](#)” (AMA) series of internet interviews, which will take place on the Reddit website. The interviews will be text only and open to everyone. Anyone in the world can type in a question. The AMA series will take place during the [Seventh Annual International Basic Income Week](#), September 15-21, 2014.

Reddit is one of the world's most popular websites, last year receiving 731 million unique visitors and 56 billion page views. The [Basic Income community on Reddit](#) has recently experience enormous growth, rising from 50 users last summer to over 16,000 today

Participants in BIEN's AMA series include:

- Karl Widerquist, co-chair of BIEN, Associate Professor at SFS-Qatar, Georgetown University, editor of *Basic Income News*, and author of *A Theory of Freedom as the Power to Say No*
- Peter Barnes, author of *Who Owns the Sky?*, *Capitalism 3.0*, and *With Liberty and Dividends for all*
- Barb Jacobson, Stanislas Jourdin, and Enno Schmidt, of Universal Basic Income Europe and leaders of people's initiatives that raise a total of more than 400,000 signatures for basic income in 2013-2014
- Mike Howard, editor of Basic Income Studies, coordinator of USBIG, and a socialist philosopher at the University of Maine-Orono, with expertise on the Alaska dividend & the cap-and-dividend approach to global warming
- Ann Withorn, of the University of Massachusetts-Boston and USBIG and Shawn Cassiman, of USBIG
- Jeff Smith, of the Geonomy Society
- Jason Murphy, philosopher at Elms College and Gaura Rader, philosopher at Ohio University and of the Socratic Diablogues,
- Pablo Yannes, of Red Mexicana Ingreso Ciudadano Universal (BIEN's affiliate in Mexico)
- Juon Kim Télémaque Masson of Basic Income Generation
- Mike Munger, Libertarian economist at Duke University
- Toru Yamamori, of Doshisha University and BIEN-Japan
- Hysong Ahn, of the Basic Income Korean Netowrk
- Louise Haag, co-chair of BIEN and Reader in politics and the University of York (UK) and Anja Askeland, Secretary of BIEN and member of BIEN-Norway
- Adriaan Planken, of UBIE-the Netherlands
- Mark Walker, of New Mexico State Univesity, and James Hughes, of the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, Oxford University
- Marshall Brain, founder of HowStuffWorks.com, entrepreneur, and author
- Ed Dolan, author of *Economics of Public Policy*
- Charles M.A. Clark, of St. John's University
- Michael Bohmeyer, entrepreneur and founder of "My basic income"

The Basic Income Subreddit is online at: <http://www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/>

Information about the grown of the BI Subreddit is online at:  
<http://redditmetrics.com/r/BasicIncome>

The IAMA subreddit is online at: <http://www.reddit.com/r/IAMA>

More information about the AMA series will be announced soon.

## BERLIN: 10th anniversary of Netzwerk Grundeinkommen

On September 13, the German Netzwerk Grundeinkommen celebrates its 10th anniversary with a big [party](#) in the [Mauersegler](#) beer garden and club in Berlin from 1 pm to 3 am. Everyone is invited to come. There will be songs, poems, talks, street theater, a fantastic live band and DJ music.

## LEIPZIG, GERMANY: Basic income to be discussed at degrowth conference

Basic income will be a major topic at the 4th [International Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity](#) from September 2 to 6 in the German city of Leipzig. Activists from Netzwerk Grundeinkommen and from other basic income groups will give several talks, workshops and plenary contributions.

## AUSTRIA: Austrian Programme for the 7th International Basic Income Week

B.I.E.N. Austria recently published the Austrian programme folder with more than 12 events for the Basic Income Week, September 15–21, 2014. On 9 September, 2014, updated versions will be published.

English version: [http://www.pro-grundeinkommen.at/WdGE2014/Flyer\\_WdGE2014en.pdf](http://www.pro-grundeinkommen.at/WdGE2014/Flyer_WdGE2014en.pdf)

German version: [http://www.pro-grundeinkommen.at/WdGE2014/Flyer\\_WdGE2014.pdf](http://www.pro-grundeinkommen.at/WdGE2014/Flyer_WdGE2014.pdf)

Events on Google-Maps: <http://pro-grundeinkommen.at/WdGE2014>

## **4. BI Literature**

Peter Barnes, “Why you have the right to a \$5K dividend from Uncle Sam.”

SUMMARY: Oil tax revenue funds Alaska’s Permanent Fund, which distributes dividends equally to state residents. Peter Barnes wants a nationwide dividend system (or basic income) based on shared assets like our atmosphere.

Peter Barnes, “[Why you have the right to a \\$5K dividend from Uncle Sam.](#)” *PBS Newshour*, August 27, 2014

Herb Kutchins, “Righting capitalism with dividends.”

SUMMARY: This article is positive book review of Peter Barnes’s *With Liberty and Dividends for All*, which proposes a substantial Basic Income, financed mostly by environmental taxes and taxes on common assets.

Herb Kutchins, “[Righting capitalism with dividends.](#)” *Point Reyes Light*, 08/21/2014

Aaron Smith & Janna Anderson, "AI, Robotics, and the Future of Jobs"

[Craig Axford]

Experts responding to a [Pew Research survey](#) were nearly evenly split on the question of whether or not robots and digital agents would displace a significant number of workers between now and 2025, creating huge knock on effects for the economy as a whole in the process. According to the [Pew Report's](#) key findings, "Half of these experts (48%) envision a future in which robots and digital agents have displaced significant numbers of both blue- and white-collar workers—with many expressing concern that this will lead to vast increases in income inequality, masses of people who are effectively unemployable, and breakdowns in the social order." Stowe Boyd, lead researcher with Gigaom Research, argued "The central question of 2025 will be: What are people for in a world that does not need their labor, and where only a minority are needed to guide the 'bot-based economy?"

Aaron Smith & Janna Anderson, "[AI, Robotics, and the Future of Jobs](#)", *Pew Research Internet Project*, August 6, 2014

Benjamin Shingler, "Money for nothing: Mincome experiment could pay dividends 40 years on"

[Craig Axford]

Residents of Dauphin, Manitoba who benefited from Canada's experiment with a basic income guarantee look back upon it fondly. Research conducted four decades after the so-called "Mincome" experiment found the project resulted in a significant decline in hospital visits without producing a reduction in labor market participation.

Benjamin Shingler, "[Money for nothing: Mincome experiment could pay dividends 40 years on](#)", *Aljazeera America*, August 26, 2014

Ed Dolan, "A Universal Basic Income and Work Incentives"

[Craig Axford]

In this two part series Ed Dolan takes a look at the impact a basic income guarantee would likely have upon the incentive to work. In part 1 Dolan considers the theory behind an income guarantee and its impact on work. In his second post he considers some of the available evidence.

Ed Dolan, "[A Universal Basic Income and Work Incentives. Part 1: Theory](#)", *Economonitor*, August 18, 2014

Ed Dolan, "[A Universal Basic Income and Work Incentives. Part2: Evidence](#)", *Economonitor*, August 25, 2014

Elliot Sperber, “The Alienable, the Inalienable, and an Actually Democratic Society”

[Craig Axford]

Presented on July 27, 2014, at the 15th International Congress of the Basic Income Earth Network, this paper considers the tension within democratic societies between inalienable rights that can't be sold and the sale of alienable commodities upon which the economies of modern capitalist societies depend.

Elliot Sperber, ["The Alienable, the Inalienable, and an actually Democratic Society"](#), *Heathwood Press*, July 27, 2014

Gabrielle Goodrow, “There is Enough! Stopping the Cycle of Ignorance with LIG”

[Craig Axford]

The notion that there is not enough to go around is a common theme these days. However, this author argues there is plenty to go around and a living income guarantee is possible.

Gabrielle Goodrow, ["There is Enough! Stopping the Cycle of Ignorance with LIG"](#), *Living Income Guaranteed*, May 28, 2014

Jaxpagan, “Your Services Are No Longer Required - The Coming "Great Idleness.”

SUMMARY: This article argues that there will come a day when most human labor is outmoded, replaced by machines. The author the argues, “And what do we do on that day - or rather, on the daisy-chain of days, months and years that Great Shedding will likely fall across? There are a lot of bad options, but maybe at least a few good ones. I’m personally a fan of the UBI – Universal Basic Income – in which the government drops all unemployment and other social safety net programs, including Social Security, in favor of a baseline, lifetime income (say, just above poverty level) for every American citizen. You want to work anyway? Great. Your work income is icing on the cake. The UBI is yours whether your other income is seven figures or none.”

Jaxpagan, [“Your Services Are No Longer Required - The Coming "Great Idleness.”](#) *the Daily Kos*, Aug 12, 2014

Larry Elliot, “Would a citizen’s income be better than our benefits system?”

[Josh Martin]

In this opinion piece Elliot discusses the complexity of the United Kingdom’s benefits system as well as the confusing state of the economy and labor market. Elliot claims that one possible way to cut through the complexity and confusion is to reform the benefits system into a basic income.

Larry Elliot, "[Would a citizen's income be better than our benefits system?](#)", *The Guardian*, 10 August 2014.

Mike Konczal, "The Pragmatic Libertarian Case for a Basic Income Doesn't Add Up"

[Josh Martin]

Konczal vehemently disagrees with Zwolinski's post from *Cato Unbound* that made a pragmatic libertarian case for a basic income. In the original post, Zwolinski points out the number of different welfare programs and the size of its bureaucracy as a reason to switch to the simpler basic income, but Konczal counters this by showing that seven programs account for most of welfare and that the average administrative cost is around five percent for each program. Thus, Konczal claims that a push for a basic income needs to be built on a sturdier argument than the libertarian one.

Mike Konczal, "[The Pragmatic Libertarian Case for a Basic Income Doesn't Add Up](#)", *Next New Deal*, 8 August 2014.

Jesse Spafford, "Reconciling Basic Income and Immigration"

[Josh Martin]

Spafford tackles a largely untouched question in basic income studies: How will a basic income change immigration patterns? Spafford believes that a basic income will lead to a significant influx of new immigrants and thus the country will likely have to implement tougher immigration laws. Looking at Europe, those countries with large welfare states often have significant anti-immigrant sentiment. This is an issue for pro-immigration supporters of a basic income, but Spafford proposes one way to remedy the two policies: a Graduated Basic Income (GBI). Under a GBI, an immigrant's basic income would start out at zero in their first year and slowly increase each year until they eventually reach the level of the maximum basic income. This GBI might deter some of the increased immigration, but still feels unfair to immigrants, so Spafford proposes using the GBI on every citizen starting at 18 years old. Under this policy all citizens at 18 years old will see their basic incomes increase from nothing to the maximum amount in a set number of years.

Jesse Spafford, "[Reconciling Basic Income and Immigration](#)", *Metamorphoses and Deformations*, 8 December 2013

Gaura Rader, "Basic Income vs. Negative Income Tax: Why supporters of basic income should be in favor of a negative income tax"

[Josh Martin]

In Rader's latest post on the basic income, he discusses the two policies broadly referred to as basic income guarantees: the universal basic income (UBI) and the negative income tax (NIT). Rader admits to preferring a UBI, but in this post calls on UBI supporters to also support an NIT because of its political viability among other reasons. Rader then raises the main arguments and drawbacks of both policies.

Gaura Rader, "[Basic Income vs. Negative Income Tax: Why supporters of basic income should be in favor of a negative income tax](#)", *Socratic Diablogs*, 6 August 2014.

Jim Manzi, "When the Basic Income Guarantee Meets the Political Process"

[Josh Martin]

Manzi responds to Zwolinski's original post at *Cato Unbound* by attacking the basic income guarantee (BIG) using the randomized experiments from 1968 to 1980 as evidence that a BIG would reduce work hours. Manzi goes on to claim that the best way out of poverty is through work and thus welfare policies that have work requirements are the best way to address welfare. Manzi then turns towards Zwolinski's idealism. Zwolinski argued for a constitutional amendment that would implement a BIG for each citizen, but Manzi thinks Zwolinski is too optimistic about passing the BIG into law. The democratic process contains many behind-the-scenes changes to bills, so passing a pure BIG seems far-fetched to Manzi.

Jim Manzi, "[When the Basic Income Guarantee Meets the Political Process](#)", *Cato Unbound*, 8 August 2014.

Robert Frank, "Let's Try a Basic Income and Public Work"

[Josh Martin]

Frank voices a few objections to Zwolinski's original post on the basic income at *Cato Unbound*. Frank agrees that a basic income would be preferable to the current system, but he fears that a basic income that raises a family out of poverty would never be politically sustainable. Hardworking taxpayers might soon hear about others who live off of their basic incomes and create animosity between the two groups. However, Frank does not write off a basic income entirely. Instead, he advocates a basic income that is not a livable amount paired with public work opportunities at sub-minimum wage levels. This would make poverty effectively a choice in his eyes, since everybody could find work that would raise them above the poverty line.

Robert Frank, "[Let's Try a Basic Income and Public Work](#)", *Cato Unbound*, 11 August 2014.

Gaura Rader, "Basic Income and The Role of the Market in Society"

[Josh Martin]

In this post Rader discusses the effects a basic income would have on society's relationship with the market. While people are oppressed by the market more today than at any other point during history, Rader believes a basic income would allow people to choose when to participate in the market, instead of being forced into the market like they are now.

Gaura Rader, "[Basic Income and The Role of the Market in Society](#)", *The Socratic Diablogs*, 28 July 2014.

Matt Zwolinski, "The Pragmatic Libertarian Case for a Basic Income Guarantee"

[Josh Martin]

Zwolinski's excellent article acts as the lead essay for a special month-long debate hosted by *Cato Unbound* on "The Basic Income and the Welfare State". Written from the pragmatic libertarian perspective, Zwolinski outlines the current libertarian objections to the welfare state—largely its complexity and extensive bureaucracy—and argues that a basic income guarantee would be much more desirable for libertarians than the status quo. To solidify his argument he highlights four main benefits of a basic income guarantee: it would have less bureaucracy, be cheaper to implement, see less rent-seeking behavior, and be less paternalistic in nature than the current system. Zwolinski ends his essay by admitting that a perfect libertarian utopia will never happen, but a basic income guarantee could help nudge society in its direction.

Matt Zwolinski, "[The Pragmatic Libertarian Case for a Basic Income Guarantee](#)", *Cato Unbound*, 4 August 2014.

Elizabeth Nolan Brown, "Libertarians Debate Basic Income Guarantee"

[Josh Martin]

In this post Brown highlights the month-long debate that has just begun at *Cato Unbound* titled "The Basic Income and the Welfare State". Brown then discusses the first article, which was written by Matt Zwolinski and looks forward to the upcoming articles from other academics at *Cato Unbound*.

Elizabeth Nolan Brown, "[Libertarians Debate Basic Income Guarantee](#)", *Reason*, 4 August 2014.

Christian Siegwart Petersen, "Money for nothing? Arguments for basic income, universal pensions and universal child benefits in Norway"

Abstract:

“Basic income is a radical idea which has gained more attention in many countries in recent years, as traditional welfare states are having trouble solving the problems they were created to solve. Basic income promises to solve many of these problems in an effective and simple way. The purpose of this thesis is to study basic income in a way which can supplement the existing literature, and make it relevant in a Norwegian perspective. Hopefully this can contribute towards placing basic income on the political agenda and in the public debate. A large amount of literature is written on basic income, but by comparing the arguments used to promote a basic income with empirical data from previously implemented social policy in Norway, I hope to contribute towards an area which is not well covered.

To do this I identify the arguments used to promote a basic income, and compare them to the arguments used to promote other universal social policy in Norway at the time they were introduced. The empirical cases of the universal child benefit and the universal old age pension in Norway has been chosen, because they resemble a basic income in many ways. The study is of a qualitative nature, and the method of document analysis is used to conduct the study. The data material for basic income is mainly scholarly literature. The data materials used for the analysis of the child benefit scheme and the old age pension are government documents, mainly preparatory work for new laws, legal propositions put forward in parliament, white papers, and transcripts of debates in parliament.

This study finds that there are many similarities between the three social policies studied in this thesis. Most clearly the arguments are similar in two areas: arguments related to economic and administrative considerations, and arguments related to poverty and social justice. The main differences are related to arguments related to freedom and justice, and arguments related to feminist, green and post-productive considerations.”

Christian Siegwart Petersen, “[Money for nothing? Arguments for basic income, universal pensions and universal child benefits in Norway](#)”, *University of Bergen*, 2 June 2014.

Jesse Walker, “Making the Welfare State Less Intrusive”

[Josh Martin]

Walker’s post is in response to the *Cato Unbound* debate on the basic income which was kicked off by Zwolinski’s lead essay on the libertarian argument for the basic income. Walker adds to the discussion with two well-informed points. First, while Zwolinski hopes for a basic income that can replace the welfare state, Walker finds that improbable and instead argues for reform to *cashify* multiple programs into one cash benefit. Instead of housing, food, and health assistance, Walker suggests combining them into one assistance cash benefit. Second, Walker calls on basic income debates to remember to include discussions on natural resource based dividends like the Alaska Permanent Fund. Walker believes these programs to be an excellent real-world example of a basic income, even though it is rarely seen as a welfare program.

Jesse Walker, “[Making the Welfare State Less Intrusive](#)”, *Reason*, 5 August 2014.

Fitsnews, “The Notorious (Basic Income Guarantee)”

[Josh Martin]

Fitsnews decided to write on the basic income as a response to the debate started by Zwolinski at *Cato Unbound* on the basic income. Fitsnews provides a basic introduction to the negative income tax and provides some humor by noticing that the basic income guarantee has the same abbreviation as the infamous Notorious B.I.G.

Fitsnews, “[The Notorious \(Basic Income Guarantee\)](#)”, *Fitsnews*, 4 August 2014.

David Evans, “Do the Poor Waste Transfers on Booze and Cigarettes? No”

[Josh Martin]

In this blog Evans tackles the age-old assumption that giving cash to the poor would result in an uptick in alcohol and tobacco consumption. Evans cites 19 studies and comes to the conclusion that cash transfer programs (both conditional and unconditional) do not lead to significant increases in alcohol and tobacco consumption.

David Evans, “[Do the Poor Waste Transfers on Booze and Cigarettes? No](#)”, *The World Bank*, 27 May 2014.

Michael Huemer, “Is a Basic Income Permissible?”

[Josh Martin]

Huemer provides the first response to Zwolinski’s lead essay in the *Cato Unbound* debate on the basic income. Coming from an anarchist-libertarian perspective, Huemer’s main arguments against a basic income are against governments in general. His line of thought is the following:

- 1) A basic income guarantee is permissible only if the state has political authority.
- 2) No one has political authority.
- 3) Therefore, a basic income guarantee is impermissible.

Huemer then entrenches himself deeper within this anarchist philosophy by arguing that the government cannot assume a continuity of obligations from their new taxpayers to, in fact, pay taxes. Thus, a government cannot impose a basic income upon its citizens since they have not consented to be governed. Lastly, Huemer discusses the argument that a basic income would promote individual freedom. Huemer claims that imposing a basic income would instead infringe on some freedoms to give freedom to others, which he believes is against the one true libertarian philosophy where every freedom must be protected, even if infringing on one freedom might provide much more freedom as a consequence. All in all,

Huemer's response comes from an uncompromising libertarian view of the welfare state, where the only possible form of the welfare state is a nonexistent one.

Michael Huemer, "[Is a Basic Income Permissible?](#)", *Cato Unbound*, 6 August 2014.

Ed Dolan, "Universal Basic Income: An Idea Whose Time Has Come"

[Josh Martin]

Dolan's post focuses on Representative Paul Ryan's recently proposed welfare reform, which would consolidate many individual welfare programs into one grouped "Opportunity Grant" for each applicable citizen. While Ryan should be praised for trying to cut back on the bureaucracy in welfare, Dolan believes that Ryan's biggest error was continuing to impose work requirements on each beneficiary, thus maintaining the work disincentives associated with moving from benefits into work. Dolan believes that Ryan's plan should have gone further in allowing states to implement a universal basic income if they choose.

Ed Dolan, "[Universal Basic Income: An Idea Whose Time Has Come](#)", *Real Clear Markets*, 6 August 2014

Noah Gordon, "The Conservative Case for a Guaranteed Basic Income"

[Josh Martin]

Gordon provides a wonderful, in-depth introduction to the universal basic income from a conservative perspective. He provides real world examples of basic incomes, academics that have supported it, and possible funding options. He also discusses current conservative welfare ideas from Marco Rubio and Paul Ryan that seem to be a step on the way to a radical simplification of welfare.

Noah Gordon, "[The Conservative Case for a Guaranteed Basic Income](#)", *The Atlantic*, 6 August 2014

N. Christian Brown, "Morning Feature – Paul Ryan's Poverty Bait-and-Switch, Part III:

Asking the Right Questions (Non-Cynical Saturday)"

[Josh Martin]

In this blog post, Brown goes over Paul Ryan's plan for poverty and, after pointing out a few flaws in his plan, brainstorms possible solutions for poverty today. This leads Brown to a discussion on a basic income in which he cites two recent articles on the subject written by Gobry and Yglesias.

N. Christian Brown, "[Morning Feature – Paul Ryan’s Poverty Bait-and-Switch, Part III: Asking the Right Questions \(Non-Cynical Saturday\)](#)", *Blogistan Polytechnic Institute*, 2 August 2014.

Jamie Klinger, "The other side of Basic Income: Basic Jobs"

[Josh Martin]

Klinger attended the BIEN Congress in Montreal this summer, and the presentations dedicated to the effects a basic income would have on jobs especially caught the eye. Because most people working low-pay jobs are often only working them because they need the money, a basic income would allow people to only work jobs that are meaningful to their life. Klinger claims a basic income will promote a healthier work/life balance for everyone in society, resulting in a transition to an economy of care.

Jamie Klinger, "[The other side of Basic Income: Basic Jobs](#)", *Joatu*, 28 July 2014.

Pascal-Emmanuel Gobry, "Progressives' hot new poverty-fighting idea has just one basic problem: Science"

[Josh Martin]

Gobry, a self-identified right-winger, used to support a basic income like many other conservatives have in the past; now, he doesn't. Gobry understands the allure of the basic income, but in this critique of the basic income, Gobry uses an analysis from Jim Manzi of a set of randomized field trials from the 60's to the 90's in the USA and Canada to "prove" that the basic income fails. Science is on his side, he claims. To him, the only welfare policies that successfully place people into work are the policies with work requirements.

Pascal-Emmanuel Gobry, "[Progressives' hot new poverty-fighting idea has just one basic problem: Science](#)", *The Week*, 21 July 2014.

John Aziz "The progressive case for ending the minimum wage"

[Josh Martin]

In this article Aziz discusses Germany's recent legislation to introduce a minimum wage far higher than the USA's current minimum wage. Aziz notes that many on the left have used Germany's success as an example of what Washington should be trying to pass in America. However, Aziz believes that an increased minimum wage is a 20<sup>th</sup> century solution to a 21<sup>st</sup> century problem. With ever-increasing automation of jobs through advances in robotics, a time will come when robots replace many low-wage jobs, thus leaving many workers unemployed. This is why Aziz believes a basic income is the correct route out of this issue. A higher minimum wage will not help those in low-pay jobs when robots continue to replace

them. Instead, a basic income should be introduced to ensure the well-being of the newly displaced workers.

John Aziz “[The progressive case for ending the minimum wage](#)”, *The Week*, 14 July 2014

Karl Widerquist, “A People's Endowment.”

ABSTRACT: This chapter discusses the possibility of the government using common assets to set up an endowment that will generate revenue for the people. It argues that in addition to generating a lot of money, this strategy will provide a much better mechanism for managing the environment for the good of current and future generations.

Karl Widerquist. "[A People's Endowment](#)." A discussion paper in Selected Works of Karl Widerquist. BEPRESS, 2014.

Paul Lafargue (Author), Bernard Marszalek (Editor), *The Right to Be Lazy: Essays by Paul Lafargue*.

SUMMARY: According to the publisher’s abstract, “At once a masterpiece of critical theory and rip-roaring radical humor, this is one of the most spirited attacks on the notion of the "work ethic" ever to be published. Featuring a revised edition of the original English translation by Charles Hope Kerr, this collection also includes four of Paul Lafargue's lesser-known critiques (including the ‘Catechism for Investors’), as well as a biographical sketch by longtime Wobbly organizer Fred Thompson and a new introduction. ... Paul Lafargue (1842?–1911) was a Cuban-born socialist revolutionary.” In 1880 Paul Lafargue, the author of the popular essay "The Right to be Lazy," characterized the love of work "a strange delusion" that acts as an excuse to denigrate proposals to separate income from jobs. A new anti-authoritarian and pleasurable culture awaits to be born, but the bosses everywhere (including in the heads of too many proletarian leaders) wish to abort it. The exact institutions that would separate income from jobs are clearly not spelled out in Lafargue's, and so it is impossible to say the extent to which he is a forerunner of the basic income movement, but certainly the idea of the right to be lazy and the desire to separate income from work move in that direction.

Paul Lafargue (Author), Bernard Marszalek (Editor), [The Right to Be Lazy: Essays by Paul Lafargue](#). AK Press, 2011

Bernard Marszalek, “Why Labor Day Needs Retooling.”

SUMMARY: This article connects its arguments about labor with basic income, concluding, “[I]f the ultimate goal is liberation from poverty, that will only occur when we abandon the delusional quest for full employment for a system where income is separated from work.” Bernard Marszalek, editor of *The Right to be Lazy* (AK PRESS), can be reached at [info@righttobelazy.com](mailto:info@righttobelazy.com). He was a member of a worker cooperative for seventeen years.

Bernard Marszalek, "[Laborless Day: Why Labor Day Needs Retooling.](#)" *CounterPunch*, Weekend Edition August 29-31, 2014

David Atkins, "Basic universal income gets even more traction – from both sides of the aisle"

[Toby Rane]

David Atkins, "[Basic universal income gets even more traction – from both sides of the aisle](#)", *Washington Monthly*, 26 July 2014

Tom Clark, "When it comes to our welfare system, we've lost the plot"

[Toby Rane]

The author discusses the history and current state of various safety net programs in Britain, as well as possible improvements and solutions, such as the "citizen's income" proposed by the organization Compass.

Tom Clark, "[When it comes to our welfare system, we've lost the plot](#)", *The Guardian*, 27 July 2014

John Danaher, "Should we have a right not to work?"

[Toby Rane]

SUMMARY: Danaher explores Andrew Levine's argument regarding the right not to work, addressing potential objections as well as the impact of automation and other technological advancements. Whether there exists a right not to work is an important issue in the basic income debate.

John Danaher, "[Should we have a right not to work?](#)", *Institute for Ethics & Emerging Technologies*, 20 July 2014

Thought Infection, "Lay-Offs Should be Good News"

[Toby Rane]

SUMMARY: The author argues, layoffs are required for companies to efficiently respond to market conditions, but are seen as bad news due to income being contingent on working. Providing a basic income would ameliorate the difficulties laid-off workers suffer while allowing greater efficiency.

ThoughtInfected, "[Lay-Offs Should be Good News](#)", *Thought Infection*, 20 July 2014

Mark Blyth and Eric Lonergan, “Print Less but Transfer More: Why Central Banks Should Give Money Directly to the People.”

Without using any familiar terms for Basic Income Guarantee, this article argues for a temporary BIG as a response to the Great Recession (or recessions generally). The U.S. Federal Reserve usually tries to stimulate the economy during recessions through monetary policies (such as reducing interest rates or increasing the money supply). These policies favor large financial institutions and according to authors, Mark Blyth and Eric Lonergan, “stimulating the economy in this way is expensive and inefficient, and can create dangerous bubbles -- in real estate, for example -- and encourage companies and households to take on dangerous levels of debt.” Instead, the authors argue that the government should simply give cash unconditionally to citizens. They argue, “In the short term, such cash transfers could jump-start the economy. Over the long term, they could reduce dependence on the banking system for growth and reverse the trend of rising inequality. The transfers wouldn’t cause damaging inflation, and few doubt that they would work. The only real question is why no government has tried them.”

Blyth and Lonergan suggest building up a sovereign wealth fund (SWF) capable of paying dividends, much like the Alaska Dividend, funded by its SWF. They claim, “The Bank of England, the European Central Bank, and the Federal Reserve already own assets in excess of 20 percent of their countries’ GDPs, so there is no reason why they could not invest those assets in global equities on behalf of their citizens.” They even suggest that government could take advantage of current near zero interest rates to spend another 20 percent of GDP buying equities, which would be likely to return 100 percent in 15 years. It is uncertain then whether the fund would pay dividends regularly or distribute them only during recessions. In either case, this plan would be a significant step toward a BIG.

Mark Blyth and Eric Lonergan, “[Print Less but Transfer More: Why Central Banks Should Give Money Directly to the People.](#)” *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2014 Issue.

John Danaher, “Blog series: Philosophy and the Basic Income.”

John Danaher, a lecturer at the National University of Ireland, Galway and a regular blogger at *Philosophical Disquisitions*, has written a series of blogs about basic income. The series contains nine articles so far, post from December 23, 2013 to July 18, 2014. According to the author’s summary, “I’ve written a number of posts about the ethics and justice of the basic income grant. I thought it might be useful to provide an index to all of them in this post. Most of these posts look at whether an unconditional basic income grant can be justified from a particular theoretical perspective, e.g. feminism, libertarianism, liberal egalitarianism, and republicanism. One of them asks whether there should be a right not to work.” Items in the series include:

- [Libertarianism and the Basic Income \(Part One\)](#)
- [Libertarianism and the Basic Income \(Part Two\)](#)
- [Libertarianism and the Basic Income \(Part Three\)](#)

- [Pettit on Republicanism and the Basic Income](#)
- [Parasitic Surfers and the Unconditional Basic Income](#)
- [Widerquist on Freedom and the Basic Income](#)
- [Feminism and the Basic Income \(Part One\)](#)
- [Feminism and the Basic Income \(Part Two\)](#)
- [Should we have a right not to work?](#)

John Danaher holds a PhD from University College Cork (Ireland) and is currently a lecturer in law at the National University of Ireland, Galway. His research interests range broadly from philosophy of religion to legal theory, with particular interests in human enhancement and neuroethics.

John Danaher, “[Blog series: Philosophy and the Basic Income.](#)” *Philosophical Disquisitions*, July 18, 2014 [December 23, 2013 – July 17, 2014]

Toni Pickard, “Thinking BIG about welfare, inequality.”

Toni Pickard, “[Thinking BIG about welfare, inequality.](#)” *Ottawa Citizen*, August 15, 2014

Thierry Crouzet, “Pourquoi défendre le revenu de base? [Why defend basic income?]

[Jenna van Draanen]

In this opinion piece, the author lays out an argument for basic income on the grounds of needing to democratize the economy, protect human rights, and allow freedom. The article argues that we need to decentralize the creation of money to avoid having a privileged group of bankers controlling society.

Language: French

Thierry Crouzet, “[Pourquoi défendre le revenu de base? \[Why defend basic income?\]](#)” Blog at tcrouzet.com, July 16, 2014.

Paul Krugman, “Libertarian Fantasies.”

In this article, Noble-prize-winning economist Paul Krugman criticizes a plan for a Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) put forward by libertarians. He does not say outright whether he believes BIG is a good or bad idea in itself. He says instead that a libertarian plan to eliminate costly, inefficient welfare bureaucracy and save enough money to provide a sizeable basic income guarantee for everyone. With reference to [Mike Konczal](#), Krugman argues that there isn’t enough inefficiency to fund such a large initiative. Krugman writes, “Actually, the cost of bureaucracy is in general vastly overestimated.” According to Krugman, “The great bulk of welfare-state spending comes from a handful of major programs, and these programs are fairly efficient, with low administrative costs.”

That's the extent of the analysis. Krugman criticizes only this one plan for BIG. He doesn't say anything good or bad about BIG overall or about whether it would be worth paying more taxes to create a BIG. By criticizing one plan for BIG and saying nothing good about any other plans, the overall implication is negative, but that is only an implication, and it may or may not be intended.

Paul Krugman, "[Libertarian Fantasies](#)." *The New York Times, Opinion Pages: The Conscience of a Liberal*, August 9, 2014

Dylan Matthews, "A guaranteed income for every American would eliminate poverty — and it wouldn't destroy the economy"

Dylan Matthews, "[A guaranteed income for every American would eliminate poverty — and it wouldn't destroy the economy](#)", *Vox*, 05 August 2014

David J. Cord, "Is Finland ready for a basic income?"

David J. Cord, "[Is Finland ready for a basic income?](#)", *Helsinki Times*, 17 July 2014

Dylan Matthews, "Giving everyone a basic income would work for the same reasons Social Security does"

[Craig Axford]

This post argues the wonderful thing about Social Security is that it targets a specific problem, senior poverty, and it gives seniors cash directly to fight it. A basic income guarantee would, according to the author, function largely the same way.

Dylan Matthews, "[Giving everyone a basic income would work for the same reasons Social Security does](#)", *Vox*, July 30, 2014

Jeremy Scheff, "Basic income vs. basic job"

[Craig Axford]

The question of whether a person would be better off with a basic job or a basic income is explored in this post.

Jeremy Scheff, "[Basic income vs. basic job](#)", *dumbmatter.com*, November 13, 2013

Paul Hiebert, “Universal Basic Income: Something We Can All Agree On?”

[Craig Axford]

“The left can agree because basic income provides economic security for all Americans. The right can get behind it because it’s a form of economic security that doesn’t interfere with market forces as much as other forms of social security, such as raising the minimum wage.”

Paul Hiebert, [“Universal Basic Income: Something We Can All Agree on?”](#), *Pacific Standard: The Science of Society*, July 31, 2014

Mickael B. Hoelman and Sugeng Bahagijo, “Arguing for Indonesian basic income”

[Craig Axford]

Indonesia’s aged and disabled populations are among its most vulnerable. A basic income guarantee covering the roughly 15% of Indonesia’s population that fall within these categories would significantly reduce inequality and improve quality of life.

Mickael B. Hoelman and Sugeng Bahagijo, [“Arguing for Indonesian basic income”](#), *The Jakarta Post*, July 22, 2014

Thomas Wells, “The Robot Economy and the Crisis of Capitalism: Why We Need Universal Basic Income.”

[Jenna van Draanen]

Thomas Wells, [“The Robot Economy and the Crisis of Capitalism: Why We Need Universal Basic Income.”](#) *Religion & Ethics*, ABC, July 17, 2014.

John Danaher, “Feminism and the Basic Income (Part One)”

[Jenna van Draanen]

This piece discusses feminist perspectives both for and against basic income as well as examines the possible effects of basic income for women. The author brings up potential effects such as: changing women’s labor market participation, the amount of money women (and mothers) receive, flexibility in work choice, re-valuation of unpaid work, positive psychological effects, bargaining power, loss of non-pecuniary advantages of paid labor, depreciation of women’s human capital, and increased systematic discrimination against women. The article then describes four feminist arguments in favor of BI and two feminist arguments against BI and concludes that there is no single feminist position on this debate.

John Danaher, [“Feminism and the Basic Income \(Part One\)”](#). *Philosophical Disquisitions*, Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, July 17, 2014.

Siraj Ravel, "A Cryptocurrency for a Global Basic Income"

[Jenna van Draanen]

Siraj Ravel, "[A Cryptocurrency for a Global Basic Income](#)" *Svbtl.* July 14, 2014.

Harry Shutt, "The Case for a Basic Income"

[Jenna van Draanen]

Harry Shutt, "[The Case for a Basic Income.](#)" *Blog at Wordpress.com* Articles, March 2013.

John Danaher, "Should we have a right not to work?"

[Toby Rane]

SUMMARY: Danaher explores Andrew Levine's argument regarding the right not to work, addressing potential objections as well as the impact of automation and other technological advancements. Whether there exists a right not to work is an important issue in the basic income debate.

John Danaher, "[Should we have a right not to work?](#)", *Institute for Ethics & Emerging Technologies*, 20 July 2014

Thought Infection, "Lay-Offs Should be Good News"

[Toby Rane]

SUMMARY: The author argues, layoffs are required for companies to efficiently respond to market conditions, but are seen as bad news due to income being contingent on working. Providing a basic income would ameliorate the difficulties laid-off workers suffer while allowing greater efficiency.

ThoughtInfected, "[Lay-Offs Should be Good News,](#)" *Thought Infection*, 20 July 2014

Nanna Kildal, "Hvorfor snakker vi ikke om borgerlønn? [Why dont we talk about Citizen Wage?]."

SUMMARY: This article argues for a citizens' wages to all income without any obligation, saying such a scheme would go a long way in fighting poverty, and asking why are there no

politicians who talk about it. The author presents the idea in general, and asks whether we can afford it, writing about poverty traps and about the moral issue of reciprocity. She concludes; this will be a tremendous help for those who find themselves in the labor market's external borders, at the intersection of work and social security.

Nanna Kildal, "[Hvorfor snakker vi ikke om borgerlønn? \[Why dont we talk about Citizen Wage?\]](#)." *NRK Ytring*, 12 July 14.

Scott Santens, “解決本世紀經濟問題的根本方法：每人每月發三萬台幣？[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?]”

Scott Santens' article, "[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?](#)" originally published on *Medium* has now been translated into Chinese and posted onto *BuzzOrange* – a news and media aggregation site akin to a Taiwanese BuzzFeed or The Huffington Post – by site contributor, “Ann”.

The Chinese language version can be read [here](#).

Scott Santens, "[解決本世紀經濟問題的根本方法：每人每月發三萬台幣？\[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?\]](#)" *BuzzOrange*, 25 June 2014.

Universal Basic Income Europe, “A Brief History of Basic Income Ideas”

[Josh Martin]

Universal Basic Income Europe (UBIE) provides an extensive overview of basic income ideas throughout history. Beginning with Thomas More in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, UBIE methodically and chronologically adds entries all the way into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Universal Basic Income Europe, “[A Brief History of Basic Income Ideas](#)”, *UBIE.org*, 2014.

The Philosopher’s Beard, “The looming crisis of Capitalism: Why we need Universal Basic Income”

INTRODUCTION: “The material prosperity that capitalism has wrought is the product of technology as well as markets (and social norms and state institutions). Markets enhance the *efficiency* of allocation of resources, such as human labour, between competing projects, while technological innovations enhance the *productivity* of our use of those resources, the ability to produce more with less. As Keynes prophesied in his famous essay, [Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren](#) (1930), the seemingly relentless trend of rising productivity promises to finally end the ‘economic problem’: the struggle to overcome scarcity that has characterised the human condition since our beginning. Finally, we can turn as a society to considering what our enormous wealth can do for us, rather than what we must

do to get it. Yet this is not a time for complacency. Unless we intervene, the same economic system that has produced this astonishing prosperity will return us to the Dickensian world of winners and losers that characterised the beginning of capitalism, or worse. The problem is this, how will ordinary people earn a claim on the material prosperity of the capitalist economy if that economy doesn't need our labour anymore?"

The Philosopher's Beard, "[The looming crisis of Capitalism: Why we need Universal Basic Income](#)", *The Philosopher's Beard*, 30 May 2014.

Thom Hartmann, "What West Virginia can learn from Sarah Palin"

[Josh Martin]

In this post, Hartmann discusses the alarming inequality in West Virginia as well as the extreme poverty many families face in the coal-reliant state. Hartmann acknowledges coal's importance to the state by suggesting implementing a program similar to the Alaska Permanent Fund, which distributes a dividend funded by taxes on its oil reserves to each citizen of Alaska every year in the form of an unconditional cash transfer, making it a form of a universal basic income. As Alaskans benefit from their state's massive oil reserves, Hartmann thinks West Virginians should benefit from its coal business.

Thom Hartmann, "[What West Virginia can learn from Sarah Palin](#)", *Thom Hartmann Program*, 7 July 2014.

Tom McKay, "The Most Radical Idea For a Minimum Wage Hike Yet Is Being Floated in Canada"

[Josh Martin]

McKay's article is an informed reaction to the news that the Basic Income Canada Network has proposed a \$20,000 minimum income for all Canadians. McKay clarifies the differences between the minimum wage debates and this minimum income plan and then continues to cover some of the history of minimum income policies throughout the world.

Tom McKay, "[The Most Radical Idea For a Minimum Wage Hike Yet Is Being Floated in Canada](#)", *Mic*, 30 June 2014.

Jamie Warren, "Guaranteed income program worth a look in this province"

[Josh Martin]

Warren's opinion piece urges his readers to consider the benefits of a guaranteed income policy in his province of Canada. He cites some of the major arguments for a basic income and discusses the Mincome project in Manitoba in the 1970s.

Jamie Warren, "[Guaranteed income program worth a look in this province](#)", *The Western Star*, 10 July 2014.

David Richard Wheeler, "Interview: Basic income heroes: Karl Widerquist edition"

[Josh Martin]

In this interview, Wheeler asks Karl Widerquist, co-chair of the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN), a few questions related to the current landscape of basic income policies throughout the world. Widerquist provides a summary of the BIEN International Congress in Montreal in late June and also answers questions on technological unemployment and basic income projects throughout the world.

Wheeler lives in Lexington, Kentucky, where he is a journalism professor and student newspaper adviser at Asbury University. He is also a freelance writer for *CNN* and *The Atlantic*.

David Richard Wheeler, "[Interview: Basic income heroes: Karl Widerquist edition](#)", *From The Mixed-Up Files of Professor David R. Wheeler*, July 13, 2014.

## 5. Audio-video

VIDEO: David Wood, "Robots, unemployment, and basic income"

[Craig Axford]

An interesting discussion of automation's implications for the economy. Among the questions explored is "What scope is there for a 'Basic Income Guarantee' to address the needs of everyone who will struggle to find work in the new age of smarter robots?" Panelists included in the discussion: writers James Hughes, Martin Ford, Gary Marchant, and Marshall Brain.

David Wood, "[Robots, unemployment, and basic income](#)", *Youtube*, May 11, 2014

VIDEO: Federico Pistono, "What if everybody got free cash? Myths and facts about

Unconditional Basic Income"

[Craig Axford]

In his keynote speech at the 2014 Future of Work Summit, Federico Pistono explores the myth and reality behind an unconditional basic income guarantee.

Federico Pistono, "[What if everybody got free cash? Myths and facts about Unconditional Basic Income](#)", *Youtube*, August 21, 2014

AUDIO: Robin Young and Jeremy Hobson, “What Will Robots Mean For Jobs?”

SUMMARY: Robin Young and Jeremy Hobson (of National Public Radio’s *Here & Now* program discuss the possibility robots replacing many of the jobs in the American labor market with Derek Thompson of *The Atlantic*. Toward the end, discussing policy responses, the guest suggests providing something like a basic income, under the name of “guaranteed monthly annuity.”

Robin Young and Jeremy Hobson, “[What Will Robots Mean For Jobs?](#)” *New & Now*, National Pubic Radio, August 7, 2014

VIDEO: UBIE Conference: National Representatives Speak Out

VIDEO: [UBIE Conference: Situation of the movement for basic income across Europe](#), *You Tube*, posted July 7 2014.

AUDIO: Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?

Scott Santens' article, "[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?](#)" originally published on *Medium* has now been made available [in audio form](#) through the free newsreader app *Umano*, where popular articles are submitted to be read aloud by professional narrators. The article has been narrated by [Larry Rice, of Seattle's KOMO News](#) and has duration of 16 minutes and 32 seconds. It has so far been listened to over 1300 times.

Scott Santens, "[Why Should We Support the Idea of an Unconditional Basic Income?](#)" *Umano*, June 2014. Read by Larry Rice.

VIDEO: Josh Martin, "A Basic Answer to Welfare: The Universal Basic Income"

In this TED-style talk at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, Josh Martin '14 of Decorah, Iowa, discusses the current failures of the U.S. welfare state, showing why the system needs significant reform. This leads Martin to suggest the universal basic income as a more than capable alternative. He covers some of the major arguments for the basic income and shares the results of basic income schemes in Namibia, India, and Alaska. Further, he highlights the ideological flexibility of the policy in that politicians from all ideological backgrounds can find reasons to support a basic income.

Lastly, he proposes his own plan for an American basic income. Rolling together the money the U.S. spends on means-tested programs (excluding Medicare and Medicaid), child tax credits, and Social Security, the U.S. could have around \$2 trillion to spend on a basic income. This budget could afford a program where all citizens 0-17 receive \$2,000 per year, those 18-24 receive \$4,000 per year, those 25-64 receive \$6,000 per year, and those 65 and up receive \$14,000 per year, effectively replacing Social Security. This plan only costs \$1.87 trillion and thus would save the U.S. \$130 billion by converting to this basic income plan.

Martin will attend the London School of Economics and Political Science this fall for a Masters degree in Social Policy. You can email him at [joshedwardmartin@gmail.com](mailto:joshedwardmartin@gmail.com).

Josh Martin, "[A Basic Answer to Welfare: The Universal Basic Income](#)", *STOTalks*, 3 May 2014.

## 6. About the Basic Income Earth Network and its NewsFlash

### **BIEN NewsFlash:**

Editor: Karl Widerquist

The BIEN NewsFlash is the newsletter of the Basic Income Earth Network. It is mailed electronically every two months to over 2,000 subscribers throughout the world. If you would like to be added or removed from the subscription list, please go to:

<http://www.basicincome.org/bien/subscribe.php>.

BIEN's news website is [BINews.org](http://binews.org). It includes many of the articles from the NewsFlash, daily news on basic income, book reviews, opinion, and more.

Items for inclusion or review in future NewsFlashes and BI News please contact BIEN's News Editor, Karl Widerquist <[Karl@widerquist.com](mailto:Karl@widerquist.com)>

Or go to the following page on the BI News website: <http://binews.org/contribute.php>

Thanks for help with this issue to Cindy L'Hirondelle, Guy Standing, Steve Shafarman, Michael Howard, and others.

### **BIEN**

#### **Co-chairs:**

Louise Haagh [louise.haagh@york.ac.uk](mailto:louise.haagh@york.ac.uk), University of York, the United Kingdom

Karl Widerquist [Karl@Widerquist.com](mailto:Karl@Widerquist.com), Georgetown University, SFS-Qatar

Further details about **BIEN's Executive Committee and International Board** as well as further information about the **Recognised National Networks** can be found on our website [www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org)

### **MEMBERSHIP**

All life members of the Basic Income European Network, many of whom were non-Europeans, have automatically become life members of the Basic Income Earth Network. To join them, just send your name and address (postal and electronic) to Secretary of BIEN <[biensecretary@gmail.com](mailto:biensecretary@gmail.com)>, and transfer EUR 100 to BIEN's account 001 2204356 10 at FORTIS BANK (IBAN: BE41 0012 2043 5610), 10 Rond-Point Schuman, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium. An acknowledgement will be sent upon receipt.

BIEN Life-members can become "B(I)ENEFACTORS" by giving another 100 Euros or more to the Network. The funds collected will facilitate the participation of promising BI advocates coming from developing countries or from disadvantaged groups.

For a list of members and B(I)Enefactors go to [www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org).

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