

BASIC INCOME EARTH NETWORK
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

Munich, 16 September 2012

MINUTES

Executive Committee Members present: Co-chairs Ingrid Van Niekerk and Karl Widerquist, Secretary David Casassas, Treasurer Almaz Zelleke, Newsflash Editor Yannick Vanderborght, Regional Coordinator James Mulvale. Executive Committee Members not present: Regional Coordinators Louise Haagh, Pablo Yanes, Andrea Fumigalli, BIEN Congress 2012 Organizer Dorothee Schulte-Basta.

Michael Howard proposed as rule keeper. Motion to approve, and seconded.
Meeting chaired by Karl Widerquist.

1. Financial Report Presented by Almaz Zelleke.

Financial situation in June 2010 € 17.172,43

Revenue June 2010-September 2012:

* 15 New Life-members: +€ 1.500,00
* 4 New Bienefactors: +€ 1.038,05

+€ 2.538,05

Expenses June 2010-September 2012:

* Fee for organization of BIEN archives, Nov. 2010 -€ 247,50
* Contribution to Basic Income Studies, Nov. 2010 -€ 1.200,00
* Domain Name Renewal, March 2012 -€ 129,17
* Travel expenses for May 2012 EC Meeting, Toronto -€ 230,00
* Conference call expenses for June 2012 EC Phone Meeting -€ 114,00
* Travel expenses for sponsored Sept. 2012 congress attendance -€ 500,00

-€ 2.420,67

Bank Balance (interest – bank charges): +€ 225,00

Financial situation in September 2012: € 17.514,81

* Sight Account: € 2.721,94
* Savings Account: € 14.792,87

Increase of € 342,38 over June 2010

Motion to approve the report, and seconded.

Eduardo Suplicy gave Dirk Haarman 1000 euros that he collected at the congress for the Namibian basic income pilot.

2. *Basic Income Studies* Report presented by James Mulvale. *BIS* now co-edited by James Mulvale and Louise Haagh. New publisher is De Gruyter. Upcoming issues will be published soon. *BIS* will be available online, but he is not sure if it will be available for free. If you need information about encouraging your library to subscribe, let him know. A prize essay from this congress will be published in *BIS*. Other presenters should consider submitting them to the journal for publication. Ingrid Van Niekerk suggested that papers on the conference theme could be published in a book, and Karl Widerquist noted that Palgrave Macmillan's basic income series would be happy to consider a conference volume. James Mulvale was asked if *BIS* will be requesting further funding from BIEN? He said he and Louise Haagh would need to discuss that.

Motion to approve the report, and seconded.

3. BIEN Newsflash/BINews Report presented by Karl Widerquist and Website Manager Joerg Drescher. Karl Widerquist asked for people and national affiliates to get involved in sending news for the Newsflash and writing for BINews. He also said volunteers are needed to translate items.

Philippe Van Parijs noted that BIEN made the conscious decision at the founding that the network would function in English. In its European incarnation, British members took the lead in the newsletter, minutes, etc. Now, as a global network, American members are taking the lead. We have to be sensitive to not having a bias toward English-speaking news being disseminated in other languages, but also have it the other way around. Karl Widerquist noted that the Spanish and the Italians have been very good about writing about their activities in English. Yannick Vanderborght noted that the Germans have a very active national network, but have not written much for the newsletter/BINews.

Karl Widerquist noted that Joerg Drescher has worked very hard on BINews, and thanked him.

Joerg Drescher said that BINews is published on his own webserver. Articles are published in English are also available in French or German through a link. He wants to publish an opinion piece once a week, with a picture and biography of the author. About 150 people look at the website per day. The newsletter is sent to 1500 people. BIEN has a twitter feed, a facebook account, and a YouTube account. Ingrid Van Niekerk noted that we should ask the LOC to use these accounts during the next congress.

Karl Widerquist asked national affiliates to send both English and original language versions of their news to the Newsflash Editor, and asked for volunteers to serve as point persons for each of the languages we want our news to appear in.

Motion to approve the report, and seconded.

4. European Citizens' Initiative The Basic Income Initiative was rejected because social security programs are not within the competence of the European Commission. Those who were working on this initiative agreed on a text to take again to the European Commission, with one month for members to review, and after two months will try again for registration, and then will try for one million signatures.

5. Recognition of National Affiliates There are currently 17 national affiliates; 4 groups representing Slovenia, Finland, Hungary, and Belgium have approached the Executive Committee about approval.

Slovenia: No Slovenian representative is present at the General Assembly; Karl Widerquist read from their application. Philippe Van Parijs noted that the Slovenian President has come out in support of basic income on his blog, and there has been lots of activity. He said the most important Slovenian intellectual, Slavoj Žižek, is against it, but that's not a reason to oppose the recognition of a national network.

Motion to approve Slovenia's application for recognition as a national affiliate, and seconded.

Finland: Johanna Perkio and Jukka Peltokoski spoke on behalf of Finland's application. The network was founded 1½ years ago. It has a mailing list of 200. It has a website and a facebook group. It holds regular meetings 2 or 3 times a year. It has elected a steering committee, including Perkio, Peltokoski and two others. They plan regular meetings plus campaigning materials to promote basic income in public discussion. They need 50,000 to sign a petition in order to create an initiative for parliamentary discussion. There has been media coverage, and youth and left groups have supported it. Their membership is diverse. Finland would be interested in hosting the 2016 BIEN congress.

David Casassas noted that International Advisory Board member Jurgen De Wispelaere knows the network and has traveled to Finland. He confirms the high quality of the academic work taking place on BI in Finland and very much supports their application.

Motion to approve Finland's application for recognition as a national affiliate, and seconded.

Belgium: Aline Goethals and Pierre-Yves Ryckaert spoke on behalf of Belgium's application. They held their first general assembly in Brussels, with 60 attendees. They are a pluralistic group, named in the three languages used in the country. They hold regular meetings. Representatives of the network participated in the European Citizens' Initiative on basic income. They have a website (in 4 languages), have participated in a tv show, and have a facebook group. The network has 52 members, and 118 subscribers to the newsletter, which is written in French and Dutch (they want it to be in German as well). Elections are forthcoming, and a charter is being worked on by a group open to all members.

Yannick Vanderborght noted that he and Philippe Van Parijs attended their general assembly, and are convinced that they meet all the requirements for recognition.

Motion to approve Belgium's application for recognition as a national affiliate, and seconded.

Hungary: Erik Gregor Szabo spoke on behalf of Hungary's application. He wrote a paper for the congress called "Basic Income in Hungary." He said that activity in Hungary is at the beginning of the process, with some meetings, some appearances on the radio, and some presentations.

Philippe Van Parijs noted that these activities are very encouraging, but we need more information. We need to be sure that there is ecumenical and pluralistic membership.

No vote was taken on Hungary's application

6. Executive Committee Elections Chaired by Philippe Van Parijs.

Karl Widerquist elected Co-chair and Newsflash Editor.

Ingrid Van Niekerk elected Co-chair.

Almaz Zelleke elected Secretary-Treasurer.

Yannick Vanderborght elected Chair of Regional Coordination.

Louise Haagh elected Regional Coordinator.

Pablo Yanes elected Regional Coordinator.

James Mulvale elected Regional Coordinator.

Toru Yamamori elected Regional Coordinator.

Election of Chair of the International Advisory Board Chaired by Karl Widerquist.

Philippe Van Parijs elected Chair of the International Advisory Board.

Almaz Zelleke proposed a motion to thank David Casassas for his ten years of service on the Executive Committee Board on his retirement, and to recognize Andrea Fumagalli for his voluntary, non-voting service on the board as Regional Coordinator.

Motion seconded, and approved.

7. Discussion of Sliding Scale for BIEN Membership Consensus in favor of a sliding scale or installment plan, and also in favor of lower bank transfer fees through a paypal account, which could also help other donations. The treasurer is asked to investigate and report back.

8. 2014 Congress venue Kelly Ernst, President of BIEN Canada, indicated their interest in hosting the Congress, but does not yet have a formal proposal. Karl Widerquist noted the history of US-Canadian conference cooperation, and expressed his confidence in BIEN Canada's ability to host a successful congress if they apply to do so. Since there is

no application to host the next BIEN Congress in 2014, motion proposed to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to make the decision.

Motion seconded, and approved.

9. Other Business Discussion of the LOC's decision to host another more open, less academically oriented basic income conference at the same time as the Congress, in Munich. That conference was funded with pay-what-you-like fees. Ingrid Van Niekerk indicated that the EC was not informed, and that future congresses should be open enough that this does not happen. Kelly Ernst noted that at the last North American BIG Congress in Canada they had two levels of fees, some free events, and after-meetings to get non-academics involved. He assured the GA that there would not be separate conferences if Canada hosted the next Congress.

Eduardo Suplicy suggested that the next Congress invite Dilma Rousseff to speak. Since speaker invitations are the responsibility of the LOC, this does not require discussion by the GA.

Meeting adjourned. Minutes submitted by Almaz Zelleke.