
BIEN The Basic Income European Network

BIEN was founded in 1986 and aims to serve as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income, and to foster informed discussion on this topic throughout Europe.

Link to BIEN Online at <http://www.basicincome.org>

E-mail: bien@etes.ucl.ac.be

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BIEN's *NewsFlash* contains up-to-date information on recent events and publications related to BIEN or basic income more generally. The *NewsFlash* is mailed electronically every two months to over 800 subscribers throughout Europe and beyond, and simultaneously made available for consultation or download at [BIEN Online](#). Requests for [free subscription](#) or [items for inclusion or review](#) in future *NewsFlashes* are to be sent to BIEN's secretariat: Philippe Van Parijs, 17 rue de Pavie, 1000 Brussels, Belgium, E-mail: bien@etes.ucl.ac.be.

This *NewsFlash* has been prepared with the help of Sally Lerner, Yannick Vanderborght and Karl Widerquist.

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1. EDITORIAL

Yes, BIEN survived its 9th congress! Even more than its predecessors, this congress has meant a new start. An opportunity for generating new research, for bringing in new people, for involving new organisations, for discovering new developments, for imagining new initiatives.

In this special issue of our *NewsFlash*, you will find a brief subjective account of what happened in Geneva, a list of the over 100 papers presented (most of them downloadable from our web site), and the minutes of BIEN's ninth General Assembly meeting. One of the many things this meeting did is elect a new committee. The latter now includes a new member in charge of the relation between BIEN and the basic income movement worldwide (Ingrid van Niekerk, from Capetown, South Africa), the manager of our imminent new web site (Jurgen de Wispelaere, London School of Economics) and the chairman of Spain's Basic Income Network, Daniel Raventos, on behalf of the organising committee of our next congress. The latter is scheduled to take place in Barcelona on 23-25 September 2004. We hope that it will be as splendidly organised as this one was and already look forward to seeing many of you there.

Owing to the space to be given to the Geneva conference in this issue, all items not directly related to it had to be postponed to our next issue, due in November.

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee

2. NINTH BIEN CONGRESS IN GENEVA: A SUBJECTIVE ACCOUNT

So many things happen, and so quickly, and so simultaneously, at a meeting like this, that no overall account could be given. Those interested are invited to consult BIEN*Online* at <http://www.basicincome.org> for some of the press coverage of the congress and above all for a full version of most of the papers briefly presented and discussed at the parallel sessions, as well as that of the plenary addresses by Anthony Atkinson, Edouard Dommen, Ron Dore, Scott Goldsmith, Raymond Plant, Guy Standing, Eduardo Suplicy and Philippe Van Parijs. The list of all papers (whether available or not) features below, in alphabetical order of authors. Other active participants, who did not present a formal paper, included the Finnish green party leader and former minister Osmo Soiniavaara, the high-tech businessman Roland Duchâtelet, founder of Belgium's basic-income-focused party "Vivant", and Bath University Professor Ian Gough, editor of the *Journal of European Social Policy*.

BIEN IN THE CANTON OF GENEVA

The Congress proper was preceded by an interesting afternoon session (in French) focused on Switzerland, and in particular on the canton of Geneva. Thus, we heard that an attempt was made, under the impulsion of the canton's former minister of social affairs Guy-Olivier Segond (from the radical party), to introduce a means-tested but very comprehensive and quite generous guaranteed minimum income ("revenu minimum de réinsertion"). A majority of 57% supported it in the Canton's parliamentary assembly in 2000, but to the dismay of many, it was defeated in May 2002 by a 59% majority in a referendum for which 35% of the electors turned up. Might there be a tension between moves towards a basic income and direct democracy?

Far more modestly, the canton's current minister of social affairs, Pierre-François Unger (from the christian-democratic party), indicated in his speech to the congress, that he intends to abolish shortly the "assistance debt", i.e. what amounts as a supertax on the (expectedly very low) earnings of former welfare recipients, through which they are meant to gradually repay the benefits they have received.

This aspect of Geneva's current welfare legislation would seem to make even the post-1996 United States look comparatively soft on the poor. Yet, we learned from Edouard Dommen's entertaining theological contribution to the first plenary session of the congress proper that it could not be traced back in any straightforward way to the core ideas of Geneva's influential master-thinker Calvin: the grace of salvation is given gratuitously by God to those he freely chooses, it cannot be earned through one's deeds.

BACK DOOR VERSUS FRONT GATE

More than ever, however, most of the action was in the many parallel sessions, where an unprecedented (nearly) 100 papers, positive or normative, highly technical or more generally accessible, were presented and (when lucky) discussed. Some of the sessions were fairly heterogeneous, while others were more focused, such as the extremely interesting session on South Africa.

If one general impression emerges from the more forward-looking presentations at the congress, it is the contrast between a soft-spoken back-door approach in Europe, and a more upbeat front-gate approach in such countries as South Africa and Brazil, where a lot has been happening lately. The back-door approach was presented and analysed, among others, by Tony Atkinson in his clarifying plenary presentation on the British case, by Yannick Vanderborght in his in-depth case study on Belgium and the Netherlands, and by Sean Healy and Brigid Reynolds in their vivid description of what is going on in Ireland, including the recent breakthrough achieved with the publication of the government's green paper (<http://www.cori.ie/justice/index.htm>), the first major official publication on basic income since the 1985 report of the Dutch Scientific Council for Governmental Policy. Even in this last case, basic income seems to be coming nearer through the actual or planned introduction, increase and generalisation of refundable tax credits, which gradually shrinks to very little the part of the cost of introducing a (modest) genuine basic income that could not be covered by restructuring existing tax exemptions and relabelling the bottom part of existing benefits.

By contrast, the route impressively followed by South Africa's Basic Income Grant campaign is far less tortuous: 100 rands or 10 euros per month for every South African. Several front actors in this campaign and several academics involved in fine-tuning the proposal were actively present at the congress. As one of them provocatively put it: BIEN may well be as wrong about basic income being far more feasible in the Europe than in Africa as Marx was about socialism being more feasible in England than in Russia. *Qui sera verra!*

For the time being, this possibility certainly gained some plausibility from the fact that the first prime minister (currently in office) to address a congress of BIEN was from Africa. In his speech at the opening plenary session, Mozambique's Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi stated that "the BIEN project, particularly the component that seeks to ensure a minimum income to guarantee school attendance, represents an innovative perspective which should be integrated into the national poverty reduction strategy" (see <http://allafrica.com/stories/200209130186.html>). The Brazilian means-tested and school-attendance-tested family guaranteed income to which the prime minister refers is of course quite remote from the unconditional individual basic income proposed in South Africa. But along with South Africa's existing means-tested but non-contributive and individual basic pension scheme, it is arguably an important realistic step forward, well worth thinking about and experimenting.

BIEN AT ILO

These discussions illustrate the way in which being hosted by the International Labour Organisation provided BIEN with an opportunity, and indeed an obligation, to think on a wider scale. This dimension has been present ever since Brazilian Senator Eduardo Suplicy started attending BIEN's congresses in 1994 - as he memorably did this time again, even succeeding in getting the audience to join him and sing "How many times must the cannon balls fly...". But it had never been as ubiquitous as it had been this time, forcing BIEN's General Assembly (see minutes below) to think again about what its relationship should be to Europe and to the world.

Certainly BIEN will never be quite the same again after this memorable visit it paid to the ILO. Nor will, perhaps, the ILO be quite the same again after this visit it received from BIEN. Many prominent members of its staff attended large parts of the congress. Among them its Director General Juan Somavia, whose welcome speech went far beyond polite generalities. "Yes", he told the congress participants, "the moment may be near when your ideas will become commonsense." We are not quite there yet, and there is still a lot of work to be done, but with this sort of endorsement from this sort of person in this sort of place, the road ahead suddenly looks less steep.

Philippe Van Parijs

3. PAPERS PRESENTED AT BIEN'S GENEVA CONGRESS

All papers marked with by  are available for downloading in pdf format at *BIENOnline*.

Aho, Simo University of Tampere, Finland (with Ilkka Virjo)

 *More selectivity in unemployment compensation in Finland: Has it led to activation or increased poverty?*

Andersson, Jan-Otto Abo Akademi, Finland (with Olli Kangas)

 *Popular support for basic income in Sweden and Finland*

Archer, Sean University of Cape Town, South Africa

 *Social and economic rights in the South African Constitution: The role of a basic income*

Atkinson, Anthony Nuffield College, University of Oxford, UK

 *How basic income is moving up the policy agenda: News from the future*

Ballas, Dimitris University of Leeds, UK

A spatial micro-simulation approach to the impact assessment of basic income policies

Balsan, Didier Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité, France
(with Claude Gamel & Josiane Vero)

 *L'incidence de l'allocation universelle sur la propension à travailler*

Basso, Leonardo Mackenzie Presbyterian University, Sao Paulo, Brazil

 *Meritorious Currency: A currency against famine*

Basso, Leonardo Mackenzie Presbyterian University, Sao Paulo, Brazil
(with Marcelo Silva & Fernando de Pinho)

Tobin Tax, minimum income and the eradication of famine in Brazil

Bhorat, Haroon University of Cape Town, South Africa

 *A universal income grant for South Africa: An empirical assessment*

Bienefeld, Manfred Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

 *An economic model based on 'fear and insecurity'*

Blueme, Markus Catholic Social Academy of Austria
(with Lieselotte Wohlgenannt)

 *Autriche: vers un minimum inter-institutionnel*

Bradbury, Farel The Resource Use Institute, Royal Tunbridge Wells, UK

 *Basic income and the advanced economy*

Bruto da Costa, Alfredo Portuguese Catholic University, Lisbon, Portugal

 *Minimum guaranteed income and basic income in Portugal*

Busilacchi, Gianluca University of Ancona, Italy

Activation minimum income and basic income: history of a comparison of two ideas

Cantillon, Bea University of Antwerp, Belgium (with Karel Van den Bosch)

 *Welfare State protection, labour markets and poverty: lessons from cross-country comparisons*

Carsten, Ullrich University of Mannheim, Germany

 *Prospects of popular support for basic income*

Casassas, David University of Barcelona, Spain (with Daniel Raventos)

 *Republicanism and basic income: The articulation of the public sphere from the repoliticization of the private sphere*

Chetvernina, Tatyana Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia
(with Liana Lakunina)

Endless insecurity? The reality of Russia

Christensen, Eric Aalborg University, Denmark

 *Feminist arguments in favour of welfare and basic income in Denmark*

Costantin, Paulo Dutra Mackenzie University, Sao Paulo, Brazil

 *The positive externality of basic income in a capitalist economy*

Cruz-Saco, Maria Connecticut College, US

 *A basic income policy for Peru: Can it work?*

D'Addio, Anna Cristina Aarhus University, Denmark

 *Assessing unemployment traps in Belgium using panel data sample selection models*

Dasgupta, Sukti International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland
Care Work: The quest for security

Deacon, Bob National Research Centre for Health & Social Welfare, Finland

 *Tracking the global social policy discourse: From safety nets to universalism*

de Pinho, Fernando Mackenzie University, Sao Paulo, Brazil
(with Silva Marcelo & Leonardo Basso)
Tobin Tax, minimum income and the eradication of famine in Brazil

Dommen, Edouard Geneva International Academic Network, Switzerland

 *Geneva connections: Calvin, Rousseau and basic income*

Dore, Ron London School of Economics, UK

 *The Liberal's Dilemma: Immigration, social solidarity and basic income*

Dubouchet, Julien University of Geneva, Switzerland

 *De la dette au droit: principes et évolutions de la sécurité sociale en Suisse*

Dyer, Alan Northeastern University, Boston, US

 *Social credit as economic modernism: Seven theses*

Euzeby, Chantal Université Pierre Mendès, Grenoble, France
Feasibility and limitations of a minimum income for pensioners

Farvaque, Nicolas Institutions et Dynamiques Historiques de l'Economie, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, France (with Robert Salais)

 *Implementing allowances for young people in France: Enhancing capabilities or increasing selectivity*

Fernandez, José Iglesias Catalonia, Spain

 *Strong versus weak models of basic income in Catalonia - Spain*

Frankman, Myron McGill University, Montreal, Canada

 *A planet-wide citizen's income. Espousal and estimates*

Füllsack, Manfred University of Vienna, Austria

 *Work and social differentiation. And how it gives reason to a basic income*

Fumagalli, Andrea University of Pavia, Italy

 *Bio-economics, labour flexibility and cognitive work: Why not basic income?*

Funciello, Theresa Social Agenda, Inc.

 *Getting on a path to just distribution: The Caregiver Credit Campaign*

Gamel, Claude University of Aix-Marseille, France
(with Didier Balsan & Josiane Vero)

 *L'Incidence de l'allocation universelle sur la propension à travailler*

Ghai, Dharam Former Director, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
Pursuing Basic Income Security in Africa

Goldsmith, Scott University of Alaska, US

 *The Alaska Permanent Fund: A basic income in action*

Handler, Joel University of California at Los Angeles, US

 *Social citizenship and Workfare in the USA and Western Europe. From status to contract*

Harvey, Philip Rutgers University, US

 *The Right to Work: Taking economic rights seriously*

Healy, Sean CORI Justice Commission, Dublin, Ireland
(with Brigid Reynolds)

 *From poverty relief to universal entitlement: Social welfare and basic income in Ireland*

Hernandez, Diego University of Andes, Colombia

 *Selectivity in social policy in Colombia during the 1990s*

Hoskins, Dalmer Secretary-General, International Social Security Assoc.
Resurrecting universalism in social security

Howard, Michael University of Maine, US

 *Liberal and Marxist justifications for basic income*

Hrdina, Jeanne Association World Peace Day, Geneva, Switzerland
Universal basic livelihood is essential for world peace

Kangas, Olli Turku University, Finland (with Jan-Otto Andersson)

 *Popular support for basic income in Sweden and Finland*

Kallmann, Karel Black Sash, South Africa

Mobilising a Coalition for Basic Income in South Africa

Kildal, Nanna University of Bergen, Norway (with Stein Kuhnle)

 *The principle of universalism: Tracing a key concept in the Scandanavian welfare model*

Kratke, Michael University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Basic Income, Commons and Commodities: The Public Domain Revisited

Kuhnle, Stein University of Bergen, Norway (with Nanna Kildal)

 *The principle of universalism: Tracing a key concept in the Scandanavian welfare model*

Kunnemann Rolf Foodfirst Information Action Network, Germany

 *Basic income: A state's obligation under the human right to food*

Lakunina, Liana Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia
(with Tatyana Chetvernina)

Endless insecurity? The reality of Russia

Laurent, Thierry University of Paris - Evry, France

Incitations et transitions sur le marché du travail: une analyse dynamique des trappes à inactivité

Lavinas, Lena International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland

The bolsa escola in Brazilian cities

Le Clainche, Christine Groupe de recherche sur le risque, l'information et la décision, France

 *Les préférences pour la redistribution: Une analyse du profil des individus favorables à l'allocation universelle*

le Roux, Pieter University of Western Cape, South Africa
The benefits of a basic income in South Africa

Liebeg, Stefan Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany (with Steffen Mau)

 *A legitimate guaranteed minimum income*

Loftager, Jorn Aarhus University, Denmark

 *Deliberative democracy and the legitimacy of basic income*

Lord, Clive West Yorkshire, England, UK

 *The mutual interdependence of a citizen's income and ecological sustainability*

Lo Vuolo, Ruben Centro de Investigacion Economica y de Prospectiva, Buenos Aires, Argentina

 *The basic income debate in the context of a systemic crisis: The case of Argentina*

Manning, Lowell New Zealand Democratic Party Inc., New Zealand

 *Basic income and economic transformation in New Zealand*

Marx, Ive University of Antwerp, Belgium

 *Mass joblessness, the Bismarckian model and the limits to gradual adaptation in Belgium*

Matisonn, Heidi University of Cape Town, South Africa
(with Jeremy Seekings)

 *Welfare in Wonderland? The politics of the basic income grant in South Africa*

Matsaganis, Manos University of Crete, Greece

 *The rise and fall of selectivity a la Grecque*

Mau, Steffen Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany (with Stefan Liebeg)

 *A legitimate guaranteed minimum income*

Meireis, Torsten Theological Faculty, University of Munster, Germany

 *"Calling": A Christian argument for a basic income*

Mon, Jean-Pierre Groupe de Recherches sur l'Economie Distributive, France

 *Pour une conditionnalité transitoire*

Moreira, Amilcar University of Bath, UK

Individual moral dignity and the guarantee of a minimum income

Morley-Fletcher, Edwin University of Rome, Italy

 *Alternative models of credit cards*

Noguera, Jose Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain
(with Daniel Raventos)

 *Basic income, social polarisation and the Right to Work*

November, Andras University of Geneva & BIEN-Suisse, Switzerland

 *Le revenu minimum social à Genève: douze ans de débats politiques*

Oberson, Bertrand University of Fribourg, Switzerland

 *Les mesures d'insertion sociale dans le canton de Fribourg*

Offe, Claus Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

Citizenship Rights: Why Basic Income Security is Fundamental

Opielka, Michael University of Jena, Germany

 *A Care-worker Allowance for Germany*

Ostner, Ilona Georg-August University, Göttingen, Germany

Targeted universalism?

Ozanira da Silva e Silva, Maria University of Maranhão, Brazil

 *Minimal income programmes directed at infantile work eradication and to school inclusion in Brazil*

Pinilla, Rafael Ministry of Public Affairs, Valencia, Spain

A diversified basic income for federal states and multinational communities

Pioch, Roswitha Max Planck Institute, Cologne, Germany

 *Migration, citizenship and welfare reform in Europe: Overcoming Labour Market Segregation*

Plant, Raymond University of London, UK

 *Can there be a Right to Basic Income?*

Ramji, Vidya University of Bergen, Norway

 *Income security and hidden care issues: Female care workers emigrating from Kerala (India) to the Middle East*

Raventos, Daniel University of Barcelona, Spain (with David Casassas)

 *Republicanism and basic income: The articulation of the public sphere from the repoliticization of the private sphere*

Raventos, Daniel University of Barcelona, Spain (with Jose Noguera)

 *Basic income, social polarisation and the Right to Work*

Reynolds, Brigid CORI Justice Commission, Dublin, Ireland
(with Sean Healy)

 *From poverty relief to universal entitlement: Social welfare and basic income in Ireland*

Saith, Ashwani Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

Reflections on income security in development policy

Salais, Robert Institutions et Dynamiques Historiques de l'Economie, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, France
(with Nicolas Farvaque)

 *Implementing allowances for young people in France: Enhancing capabilities or increasing selectivity*

Salvatore, Ingrid University of Salerno, Italy

A Philosophical Justification for Basic Income as Social Justice

Samson, Michael Economic Policy Research Institute, Cape Town, South Africa
(with Ingrid van Niekerk)

 *The macro-economic implications of poverty-reducing transfers*

Santibanez, Claudio Ministry of Finance, Chile

Equality, human rights and social minima: An unconditional universal basic income proposal for Chile

Sanzo-Gonzalez, Luis Departement of Justice, Employment and Social Security, Spain

 *Allocation universelle et garantie de ressources au Pays Basque*

Schade, Günter Haar, Germany

The Great Delusion about a remedy for unemployment

Schmitter, Philippe European University Institute, Florence, Italy

A modest proposal for extending social citizenship in the EU

Schwarzenbach, Sibyl City University of New York, US

 *The limits of production: Justifying guaranteed basic income*

Shafarman, Steven Citizen Policies Institute, Washington DC, US

 *Mobilising for basic income*

Seekings, Jeremy University of Cape Town, South Africa
(with Heidi Matisonn)

 *Welfare in Wonderland? The politics of the basic income grant in South Africa*

Sheahan, Allen US

 *Does everyone have a Right to a Basic Income?*

Silva, Marcelo Mackenzie Presbyterian University, Sao Paulo, Brazil
(with Leonardo Basso & Fernando de Pinho)

Tobin Tax, minimum income and the eradication of famine in Brazil

Silver, Hilary Brown University, Providence, US

Social insecurity and basic income

Sobhan, Rehman Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh

 *Income security through asset distribution*

Stadler, Sabine Vienna, Austria

 *Assessing selectivity, including Workfare, in Austria*

Standing, Guy International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland

 *The South African Solidarity Grant*

Standing, Guy International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland

 *About Time: Basic security through income and capital*

Stock, Rosamund London School of Economics, UK

 *The psychological rationale for basic income*

Strengmann-Kuhn, Wolfgang University of Frankfurt, Germany

 *Working Poor in Europe: A partial basic income for workers?*

Suplicy, Eduardo Senator of Sao Paulo, Brazil

 *Legitimising basic income in developing countries: Brazil*

Thorel, Jean-Pierre Economic and Social Council, Geneva, Switzerland

 *Une allocation universelle pour la Suisse*

Tons, Katrin University of Munster, Germany

Incremental disenfranchisement in German welfare policy

Van den Bosch, Karel University of Antwerp, Belgium (with Bea Cantillon)

 *Welfare State protection, labour markets and poverty: lessons from cross-country comparisons*

Vanderborght, Yannick Chaire Hoover, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

 *Basic income in Belgium and the Netherlands: Implementation through the back door?*

Van Niekerk, Ingrid Economic Policy Research Institute, Cape Town, South Africa (with Michael Samson)

 *The macro-economic implications of poverty-reducing transfers*

Van Parijs, Philippe Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium

 *Does basic income make sense as a worldwide project?*

Van Trier, Walter University of Antwerp, Belgium

The conversion of Andre Gorz

Vero, Josiane Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications, France (with Didier Balsan & Claude Gamel)

 *L'Incidence de l'allocation universelle sur la propension à travailler*

Vielle, Pascale University of Louvain, Belgium (with Pierre Walthery)

 *Emploi flexible et protection sociale : Pistes et esquisses de réconciliation*

Virjo, Iikka University of Tampere, Finland (with Simo Aho)

 *More selectivity in unemployment compensation in Finland: Has it led to activation or increased poverty?*

Walthery, Pierre University of Louvain, Belgium (with Pascale Vielle)

 *Emploi flexible et protection sociale : Pistes et esquisses de réconciliation*

Watts, Martin The University of New South Wales, Australia

 *A system of basic income versus the job guarantee*

Widerquist, Karl University of Oxford, UK & USBIG

 *A failure to communicate: The labor market findings of the NIT experiments and their effects on policy and public opinion*

Wigley, Simon Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

 *Basic income and the means to self-govern*

Wohlgemant, Lieselotte Catholic Social Academy of Austria (with Markus Bluemel)

 *Autriche: vers un minimum inter-institutionnel*

Zelenev, Sergei United Nations Secretariat, New York, US

 *Social protection imperatives in post-Socialist Russia*

Zelleke, Almaz The New School University, New York, US

 *Radical pluralism: A liberal defence of unconditionality*

Zoyem, Jean-Paul INSEE, Paris, France

 *Inégalités hommes-femmes et la place des enfants dans la protection sociale*

4. MINUTES OF THE 9TH MEETING OF BIEN'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ACCOUNTS (by Alexander de Roo, Treasurer)

Total expenses in 2000-2002:

- EUR 4947,62 (out of which 2.482,64 for the *Newsletter* and 2.003,03 as a one-off compensation for the use of the Louvain University web server), compared to
- EUR 5.377,63 in 1998-2000

Total revenues in 2000-2002:

- EUR 7.084,52 (EUR 6.695,03 from subscriptions, EUR 389,49 from interests), compared to
- EUR 7.161,83 in 1998-2000

Current reserve:

- EUR 9.812,40, compared to
- EUR 7,675,50 in Sept. 2000.

Future expenses on the newsletter will decrease as a result of having abandoned the hard-copy version produced in collaboration with Citizen's Income, while more will need to be invested into the running of an effective web site.

Accounts are approved. BIEN members can ask for details from the Treasurer (aderoo@europarl.eu.int) or the Secretary (vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be).

NEWSFLASH – Currently, about 900 people receive the NewsFlash. It seems best to keep sending the flash as an e-mail message, while make it immediately downloadable in Pdf/Word format from the web site. It is crucial that members of the network should keep sending material in any language to Philippe Van Parijs (vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be), preferably with a short summary in English.

BIEN ONLINE – Jürgen De Wispelaere has been working hard on it, and it is about to be launched. A special issue of the NewsFlash will be sent through the network as soon as it is ready. The new site will be far more attractive and user-friendly than the present one, but to keep it as up-to-date as possible feedback and suggestions for improvement from the users is very welcome. Please send comments or suggestions to j.de-wispelaere@lse.ac.uk.

MEMBERSHIP – There are at the moment 120 life members (compared to 58 two years ago) and 40 regular members (most of them people who paid a joint fee at the Berlin conference). The Treasurer, seconded by the Secretary, proposes to drop the two-year regular membership and keep life membership only, because of the administrative simplicity of the formula and the fact that it has proved an effective way of raising a sufficient amount of resources.

It is objected that, as the only right membership confers is the right to vote at BIEN's General Assembly, this amounts to imposing a heavy poll tax, which seems to jar with a basic income philosophy. Various suggestions are made to overcome this difficulty:

- voting rights to everyone on the e-mailing list
- sponsorship by benefactors who pay for other people's life memberships
- means-testing
- voting rights for members of national networks officially recognised by BIEN

As each raises some difficulties, it is decided that the Executive Committee will consult members (if possible through the web site) and make a proposal, at the latest at the next G.A. meeting, in accordance with BIEN's statutes.

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL NETWORKS – Two candidates have applied for official recognition:

- The Spanish national network, *Red Renta Basica*, president: Dani Raventos
- The Swiss national network, *BIEN Switzerland*, president: Andras November

Networks presented by José Antonio Noguera and Edward Dommen, respectively. Given the proximity of their objectives to BIEN's ("to serve as a link between individuals and groups

committed to or interested in basic income, and to foster informed discussion on this topic throughout Europe”), and in particular their “oecumenical” character, both networks are officially recognised.

PUBLICATION PLANS FOR THE CONFERENCE – Given the sheer volume of the papers, no general conference proceedings are considered. But the conference has attracted many excellent contributions, for which various possibilities of joint publication appear to exist, including with a grant from the Rockefeller foundation. Guy Standing, conference organiser will take action shortly.

NEXT CONFERENCE – Two possibilities are being envisaged:

- Dublin (organisers: *BIEN Ireland*)
- Barcelona (organizers: *Red Renta Básica*)

Having heard of the Barcelona proposal and its advantages, Sean Healy, after consultation with the other Irish members present, decides to withdraw the offer to organise the BIEN conference in 2004, but would like it to be kept as a serious option for the next opportunity.

The *Red Renta Básica* proposes to organise the 2004 BIEN conference within the framework of a massive two-month event organised in August-September 2004 by the municipality of Barcelona, with the support of UNESCO and other national and international organisations, the *Forum of Cultures*. A new building is now under construction for the event, near Barcelona’s beach, and funding would be available for various purposes, including contribution to the travelling expenses of participants from less developed countries. A slot was offered to the *Red Renta Básica* for Thursday-Saturday 23-25 September 2004, which it proposes to use for BIEN’s 10th Congress. The three Barcelona universities and various local organisations that have shown interest in basic income could be involved.

BIEN’s General Assembly considers the proposal extremely promising and accepts it, subject of course to suitable meeting rooms, inexpensive accommodation, etc. being available (which seems unproblematic). It emphasises the importance of involving, as far as possible, all the local groups actively interested in basic income. It is aware that there is some controversy about the *Forum of Cultures* initiative, *inter alia* as regards the building complex prepared for it, and asks the conference organising committee to keep BIEN’s Committee informed about this controversy.

A WORLDWIDE BASIC INCOME NETWORK? – The idea of transforming BIEN into a *Basic Income Earth Network* or a *Basic Income for Everyone Network* is being briefly discussed. There is general agreement that the links with discussions in other parts of the world, far more conspicuous at this congress than at any of its predecessors, must be nurtured and developed. But there appears to be no agreement about whether BIEN (with 3/4 of its members from Europe, 1/6 from North America and 1/12 from the remaining 90% of the planet) should be turned into a worldwide network. How best to organise on a world scale will be one of the issues on which the next Committee will organise consultation and make proposals six months in advance of the next meeting of the GA.

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2002-2004

Re-elected members:

- Ilona OSTNER (Universität Göttingen), *Co-Chairperson*
- Guy STANDING (International Labour Office), *Co-Chairperson*
- Claus OFFE (Humboldt Universität Berlin), *Research Coordinator*
- Alexander DE ROO (European Parliament), *Treasurer*
- Philippe VAN PARIJS (Université catholique de Louvain), *Secretary and NewFlash Editor*

Newly elected members:

- Jurgen DE WISPELAERE (London School of Economics), *Web Manager*
- Ingrid VAN NIEKERK (Economic Policy Research Institute, Cape Town, South Africa), *Overseas Officer*, in charge of investigating the best way of coordinating on a world scale
- Daniel RAVENTOS (Universidad de Barcelona) or another member of the board of the Red Renta Básica becomes *BIEN 2004 Conference Organiser*.

VARIA – A message from Yoland Bresson, president of the Association pour l’Instauration d’un Revenu d’Existence (AIRE) and life member of BIEN is read to the assembly. It calls for moving on from academic discussion to lobbying on a world scale, by becoming “les chevaliers du BIEN”.

5. MORE ABOUT BIEN

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- Prof. Philippe Van Parijs (vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be), secretary
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- Jurgen De Wispelaere (j.de-wispelaere@lse.ac.uk), BIENOnline web manager
- Ingrid Van Niekerk (ivanniekerk@epri.org.za), overseas officer
- Dr. Daniel Raventos (ravento@eco.ub.es), 2004 conference organiser

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Link to <http://www.basicincome.org/> to find out how to become a Life Member of BIEN

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