

BASIC INCOME

Newsletter of the Basic Income European Network

N°2 July 1988

*Second International Conference on
Basic Income
22, 23, 24 September 1988*

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WELCOME

Dear all,

You just received the second issue of the BIEN–Newsletter. It contains some news on recent developments of the debate in several European countries and a short list of publications which might be of interest for anyone involved in the basic income–debate.

This issue also contains a more elaborated description of what our second international conference will be about, practical information about the organisation of the conference for those who will attend it and an inscription form. We would like you to return this inscription form as soon as possible ; it will make our work easier.

An important question which will be raised at the Antwerp–conference is how BIEN will fare afterwards. We would like anyone, who has any thoughts or proposals about how BIEN should be organised, financed, etc., to write us about it (even, or especially, if not attending the conference) or to step forward before or at the conference if more help than just thinking seems feasible.

As far as the newsletter is concerned, we already can announce that, after the conference, it will definitely continue and on a more regular basis. So keep on sending us any news about basic incomes you can get hold of.

Walter Van Trier
International Secretary

NEWS FROM SOMEWHERE

BELGIUM

During a public debate organized in Louvain-la-Neuve by the Friends of the Earth (17 November 1987), René Grosjean, former chief of cabinet of the Employment Minister, mentioned that, after calculations performed by the Belgian Planning Bureau, the cabinet had worked out the following proposal : to give each school leaver a basic income of BEF 8.000 monthly for a period of 3 years after her/his leaving school, without means test nor willingness-to-work requirement, and whether or not (s)he lives with her/his parents, enters an apprenticeship, gets a job, etc. It was reckoned that this would cost the Treasury about BEF 40 billion, while the current system (of so-called "waiting allowances", low unemployment benefits for the young, residual child benefits, etc.) costs about BEF 36 billions for the same category. Due to the Government's resignation, the proposal has not (yet ?) passed into law.

(Cabinet du Ministre de l'Emploi et du Travail, Rue Belliard, B-1040 Bruxelles).

The Law Faculty of the Université Catholique de Louvain organized a one-day conference on legal aspects of the introduction of a basic income (« L'allocation sociale universelle : vers un droit nouveau ? ») on Friday 6 May 1988. The papers presented at the conference have been prepared by a group of last-year law students under supervision of Professor P. Orianne. They are available from the address below.

(Centre du Droit de la Gestion et de l'Economie Publiques, Collège Thomas More, Place Montesquieu 2, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium).

IRELAND

The Irish Green Alliance devoted half of its two-yearly Convention (Kilkenny, 17-18 October 1987) to the issue of basic income, with Philippe Van Parijs, from Belgium, as a guest speaker. The Irish debate has been further fed, recently, by the publication of Raymond Crotty's *Ireland in Crisis. A study in capitalist colonial development* (Dingle : Brandon, 2nd ed. 1987), which advocates the introduction of a substantive basic income financed by the land taxation.

(The Green Alliance, 5A Upper Fownes Street, Dublin, Republic of Ireland).

In May, the Irish Party Fine Gael issued a document signed by its leader Alan Dukes, in which it adopted the idea of a basic income as a mean towards unifying the taxation and social welfare systems.

FRANCE

On 5 and 6 March 1988, « Partage » called a General Assembly of Unemployment and Work, attended by some 1.300 persons. Different forms of guaranteed incomes were at the heart of the discussion. Subsequently, the themes came on the political agenda during the presidential and national elections. Some of the interventions, made at the General Assembly and a view of the present French debate can be found in the recent issues of « Partage » (n° 43, n° 44, n° 45).

(Maison–Partage, Rue des Entrepôts 44, F-93400 Saint-Ouen, France).

FINLAND

The National Union of Finnish Students started a project aimed at clarifying the concept of basic incomes and its concrete implications. More information from : Ilpo Lathinen, secretary for Student Welfare of the National Union of Finnish Students, Mannerheimintie 5 C 4 krs, SF-00100 Helsinki 10, Finland.

PUBLICATIONS

Y. Bresson, Ph. Guilhaume, *Le participat*, Editions Chotard et associés.

In this small book, the theoretical economist Yoland Bresson (author of *L'Après-Salariat*) and the more practically minded Philippe Guilhaume, economic adviser to Jacques Chaban-Delmas (leading member of the RPR and chairman of the French Assemblée Nationale) argue for basic income as the only way out of a dual society.

Réseaux n° 34 (hiver 1987) (Jeannine Macaire, Boulevard des Rocs 98, F-86000 Poitiers, France).

This special issue of this non-commercial journal contains a substantial article in favour of basic income by Yves Bot, who headed some time ago a working party set up by the Social Commission of the French Bishops, which came up with the recommendation that a guaranteed basic income should be introduced in France in the form of an (initially low) basic income.

Inge Rowhani (ed.), *Basislohn / Existenzsicherung : Garantiertes Grundeinkommen für alle ?* (Forschungsberichte aus Sozial- und Arbeitsmarktpolitik n° 16). Wien, 1987.

This book, edited by the Women's Section of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, contains thirteen articles on the coupling of work and income and basic income. Amongst the contributors are : André Gorz, Georg Vobruba, Michael Opielka, Herwig Büchele, Lieselotte Wohlgennant.

(Address : Inge Rowhani, Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, Stübenring 1, A-1010 Wien, Austria).

Boris Frankel, *The Post-Industrial Utopians*, London, Polity Press, 1987.

This book discusses the work of four so-called post-industrial theorists : André Gorz, Rudolf Bahro, Alvin Tofler and Barry Jones. The author reviews the similarities and differences between those four writers on four different topics : the path of economic reconstruction (integration or autarky ?), the alternatives of bureaucratic welfare states, north-south relations (eco-pacifism or post-industrial militarism), redefining public and private spheres. A fifth chapter discusses problems of political strategy, before the conclusion tries to give a comprehensive alternative related to the topics discussed. The chapter on welfare policy contains a lengthy discussion of the idea of uncoupling income and work.

Capital and class, number 34 (Spring 1988)

The issue of the journal, edited by the Conference of Socialist Economists (25 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL) contains, alongside articles on the crash of 87 and flexibility, a piece by Ann Gray (a freelance researcher on local economic development and training), titled « Resisting economic conscription » (pp. 119–147). In it she argues the case for basic income, presenting it as the only strategy at hand to counter the present emphasis on “welfare”.

John Keane, *Democracy and Civil Society*, London, Verso Books, 1988.

This book examines the theme of democracy and assesses the dangers now facing democratic institutions throughout Europe. Its scope extends from such topics as sovereignty, revolution, ideology, invisible state power and neo-conservatism. The third chapter centers on problems of work and full employment, and discusses at length the work of André Gorz.

John Keane (ed.), *Civil Society and the State*, London, Verso Books, 1988.

Joseph Huber, *Die Regenbogensgesellschaft* (The Rainbow Society), Frankfurt am Main, Fisher Verlag, 1988.

This book tries to present a comprehensive program for an ecological social policy. It shows the differences between the “old” and the “new” social questions and the reasons why this transformation took place. The third part discusses the key problems of a future social policy (relations between Market and State, economic growth, public finance, international cooperation, ...). Part of it is on distribution policy with basic income as one element of this.

Critical Social Policy (Editor : Norman Ginsburg, 208 Tressilian Road, Brockley, London SE4 1XY).

This journal, launched in 1981, provides a forum to develop an understanding of welfare from socialist, feminist, anti-racist and radical perspectives. In n° 18, n° 21 and n° 22, it features a discussion between John Keane, John Owens and Mike Rustin on the importance of full employment for a socialist strategy today, triggered off by the former’s article « The full employment illusion ».

BIRG-Bulletin n° 7

This seventh issue of the bulletin, edited by the British Basic Income Research Group, contains several reports presented by members of BIRG’s Research Panel at the Report-Back Conference in 1987. It also contains articles on BI and disability. It is available from the BIRG or BIEN Secretary.

ARCHIVES

Several National Archives try to keep up with the material published on basic incomes in

their country. A regularly updated overview of the books or articles available, can be ordered

For the **Netherlands** : R.J. VAN DER VEEN, Economisch-Seminarium FSW
Herengracht 528
NL-1017 CC AMSTERDAM

For **Belgium** : Collectif Charles Fourier, p/a Philippe VAN PARIJS, ECOS
Place Montesquieu 3
B-1348 LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE

Walter VAN TRIER, Working Group on Labour Economics,
SESO, UFSIA,
Prinsstraat 13
B-2000 ANTWERPEN

For **France** : Marie-Louise DUBOIN, 88, Bd. Carnot
F-78110 LE VÉSINET

For **Germany** : Michael OPIELKA, Wiederschall
D-5202 HENNEF 41

People wishing to contribute to the production of a complete bibliography on basic incomes or willing to collect and keep up with the relevant material in other countries are kindly invited to contact the international secretary of BIEN.