

BIEN - Basic Income Earth Network

NEWSFLASH 53 September 2008

www.basicincome.org

The Basic Income Earth Network was founded in 1986 as the Basic Income European Network. It expanded its scope from Europe to the Earth in 2004. It serves as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income, and fosters informed discussion on this topic throughout the world.

The present NewsFlash has been prepared with the help of *Paul Nollen, Margit Appel, Simon Birnbaum, David Casassas, Thérèse Davio, Claudia & Dirk Haarmann, James Mulvale, Jose Noguera, Malcolm Torry, Karl Widerquist, Pablo Yanes, and Almaz Zelleke.*

This NewsFlash can be downloaded as a PDF document on our website www.basicincome.org

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1. EVENTS

* **GERMANY-AUSTRIA-SWITZERLAND**, 15-21 September 2008: Basic Income Week

The first “International Basic Income Week” (see NewsFlash 52) turned out to be a successful tool to gain publicity all over Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Initiated by the Basic Income Networks of these three countries together with the ATTAC groups, the “Basic Income Week” mobilized new organisations, initiatives and people, that had not been involved in the basic income discussion so actively before. In Austria, these included organisations in the field of development cooperation, art and culture, as well as representatives of the green party and the liberal party. More than twenty events took place and the “International Basic Income Week” ended with a conference-day in Vienna, named “on the way to Berlin”, where the 3rd Basic Income-Congress will take place 24th to 26th October, 2008.

See www.grundeinkommen.at

* **BERLIN (DE)**, 24 – 26 October 2008: Third German Basic Income Congress

“On the Way to Basic Income – Unconditional and Viable” (“Auf dem Weg zum Grundeinkommen - bedingungslos und existenzsichernd”). Under this title, the Berlin Congress will discuss a wide range of approaches to basic income, from philosophical concepts to practical policy proposals. Current congress plans are published on the German Basic Income Network's website www.grundeinkommen.de. Presently, the schedule offers more than ten main events such as lectures and panel discussions as well as 36 workshops to be held in two blocks of two hours each.

For further information: <http://www.grundeinkommen.de>

* **BUENOS AIRES (AR)**, 6-7 November 2008: Conference on Basic income

A Basic Income Ibero-American Conference, organized by the *Red Argentina de Ingreso Ciudadano* (Redaic), will take place November 6th and 7th at the Centro Cultural de la Cooperación, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The participation of numerous experts from Spain and Latin America is expected. Discussion will focus on the following issues: BI and tax reforms, BI vs employment programs, BI vs conditioned cash transfer programs, BI and democracy, BI and the local level, BI and social movements. More information at www.ingresociudadano.org.

* **MADRID (ES)**, 27-28 November 2008: VIII Symposium of Red Renta Basica

The 8th Symposium of the Red Renta Basica (the Spanish Basic Income Network) will take place in Madrid on 27th and 28th November, within the framework of the 4th Seminar about Contemporary Visions of Human Rights organised by the Institute of Human Rights of *Universidad Carlos III* and the *Universidad P. Comillas* of Madrid. The conference will be held at University Pontificia Comillas (at the AULA Magna of the School of Engineers, ICAI) in the city centre (Alberto Aguilera Street, 25). Among others, the participants in the Symposium are Elías Díaz, Professor of Philosophy of Law at Universidad Autónoma of Madrid, Guy Mundlak, Professor of Labour Law of Tel Aviv University, Pedro Cabrera, Professor of Sociology of Universidad P. Comillas, Hugo Omar Seleme, Professor of Philosophy of Law of Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina, Javier Alonso, Professor of Tax Law of Universidad P. Comillas, and members of the Spanish Network including David Casassas, Daniel Raventós, Luis Sanzo, Rafael Pinilla and Xavier Fontcuberta. The

Symposium is organised around the topics of the Social State, the crisis of labour, Minimum Insertion Incomes, the reciprocity principle, human rights and ways to finance basic income. For further information: José Luis Rey jlrey@der.upcomillas.es.

* **NEW YORK (US)**, 27 February – 1 March 2009: The Eighth Congress of the U.S. Basic Income Guarantee Network

The Eighth Congress of the *U.S. Basic Income Guarantee* (USBIG) Network provides a forum for considering alternative frameworks for addressing poverty. It brings together academics, students, activists, policy analysts, and others interested in exploring the merits of the basic income proposal. The conference will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the *Eastern Economic Association* (EEA). Attendees at the USBIG conference are welcome to attend any of the EEA's events.

Featured speakers invited so far include academics and politicians from both left and right. Conservative Canadian Senator Hugh Segal has been a supporter of the basic income guarantee for the last three decades. He is currently leading a renewed campaign for basic income in Canada. Tony Martin is Member of the Canadian House of Commons for the left-of-center *New Democratic Party* (NDP). Brazilian Senator Eduardo Suplicy is a third-term Senator representing the state of Sao Paulo in the Brazilian Federal Senate and one of the founding members of Brazil's ruling Workers' Party. Steve Pressman, of Monmouth University, is an economist with interests in poverty, public finance, and macroeconomics. He is co-editor of *The Ethics and Economics of the Basic Income Guarantee* and author of *Fifty Major Economists*. Brian Steensland, of Indiana University, is a sociologist and author of *The Failed Welfare Revolution*. Pablo Yanes is the head of the Mexican affiliate of the *Basic Income Earth Network*. USBIG hopes to be confirming these and other speakers soon.

Scholars, activists, and others are invited to propose papers and organize panel discussions on basic income or topics related to the distribution of wealth and income. All points of view are welcome, and proposals from any discipline are welcome. Anyone interested in making a presenting or organizing a panel should submit either an abstract of their presentation or a panel proposal to the chair of the organizing committee: Karl Widerquist: Karl@Widerquist.com

Please include the following information with your abstract and/or panel proposal:

1. Name
2. Affiliation
3. Address
4. City, State, Zip, and Country
5. Telephone, FAX
6. Email Address
7. Paper or Presentation Title
8. Abstract of 50-150 words

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS is October 31, 2008

Proposals for panel discussions should include a title, topic, and description of the panel and the information above for each participant. If the participants are not presenting formal papers, the title of the paper and abstract may be omitted. Panels with formal paper presentations should be limited to four presentations, although discussions without formal papers can include more. Papers presented at the conference will be eligible for the Basic Income Studies Best Essay Award.

2. GLIMPSES OF NATIONAL DEBATES

* CANADA: Green Party leader advocates Guaranteed Livable Income

During an election campaign stop in Ottawa on Sept. 8, 2008, Green Party leader Elizabeth May highlighted both the need to eliminate poverty in Canada and promote local food. "Poverty and hunger are priorities for Greens, but the Green Party will not simply strive to reduce the poverty rates in Canada," said Ms. May. "We want to wipe poverty out for good. Most Canadians find it unacceptable that in a wealthy country like Canada, 15 percent of Canadian children still endure the hardships associated with inadequate income. No child should be faced with inadequate nutrition or go to bed hungry. (...) To eliminate poverty and hunger, the Green Party would look at introducing a Guaranteed Livable Income for Canadians. As a regular annual payment, negotiation with the provinces could allow Guaranteed Livable Income supplements to be set regionally. Setting the payment at a level adequate for subsistence will still encourage additional income generation."

Press release available at <http://www.greenparty.ca/en/releases/08.09.2008>

* MEXICO: Permanent radio show on basic income

Starting Thursday October 23th, 2008 at 8:30am (14:30 GMT) the Mexican affiliate of BIEN will have a radio show dedicated to promoting, analyzing and spreading the basic income proposal. The show will be on the air every Thursday and will be live on www.radiociudadana.imer.gob.mx ('Radio Ciudadana' section). The show will be hosted by Pablo Yanes and Karen Makieze, members of the Mexican affiliate and will include guests and permanent correspondants. A cordial invitation is extended to all of those who wish to participate in the programme to get in contact through www.icu.org.mx.

For further information: Pablo Yanes <pyanes2007@gmail.com>

* NAMIBIA: Basic income pilot project has positive impact on community

In January 2008, a Basic Income Grant (BIG) pilot project began in the Otjivero-Omitara area 100 kilometres east of Windhoek in Namibia. All residents below the age of 60 years receive a Basic Income Grant of N\$100 per person per month, without any conditions being attached. The grant is being given to every person registered as living there in July 2007, whatever their social and economic status. This BIG pilot project is designed and implemented by the Namibian Basic Income Grant Coalition (established in 2004) and is the first universal cash-transfer pilot project in the world. The BIG Coalition has just published its first assessment report on the project, which compares the results of a baseline study and a panel survey after the first six months of implementation. Further details in the "Publications" section of this BIEN NewsFlash 53.

In brief, according to the report the initial results of this pilot project are very encouraging and by far exceed the expectations of the BIG Coalition. The local community has embraced the pilot project and is engaged in efforts to make it work well. As commented by one of the community's residents: "*Generally, the BIG has brought life to our place. Everyone can afford food and one does not see any more people coming to beg for food as in the past. What I can say is that people have gained their human dignity and have become responsible.*" (Jonas Damaseb, June 2008)

Bishop Dr. Z. Kameeta, speaking at the report launch on October 2nd, said: "*We, as a Nation, cannot wait to address poverty head on. We cannot wait to implement a universal*

Basic Income Grant nation wide. This is a challenge for the whole country."

For further info, see below in "Publications", see also: www.bignam.org
An article on the report has been published by "The Namibian" (October 3, 2008):
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200810030605.html>

* SPAIN: Two articles in *El País* defend basic income

The idea of basic income seems to be gaining ground among leftist intellectuals in Spain; two articles during 2008 in the main Spanish newspaper, *El País*, mention the proposal as one of the key ideas for future Left thinking and practice.

Josep Ramoneda, a well-known political analyst and director of Barcelona's Centre of Contemporary Culture (CCCB), in "¿Hay una vía a la izquierda?" ["Is There a Way to the Left?"] (*El País*, 20 June 2008, page 39) says that "the Right wants to give more power to the already powerful and more money to the rich. That opens a wide field for action in the Left: the defence of the welfare state, civil rights, privacy, and basic income" (...). Since "the ideal is full individual autonomy" and "the Left cannot abandon the idea of social justice", Ramoneda concludes that "in this horizon, the right to a guaranteed social minimum, a basic income, seems the last defence for the idea of equality to still make sense".

Joan Subirats, Professor of Political Science at the UAB and director of the prestigious IGOP (*Institute of Government and Public Policy*), in "¿La fiesta del 'precariado'?" ["The party of the precarious people?"] (*El País*, 1 May 2008, Catalan edition, page 2) takes the German term *Prekariat*, coined in a report of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, to refer to the situation of uncertainty and insecurity of growing numbers of workers. In the context of growing labour contract temporality and insecurity, Subirats says that, since this condition seems to be becoming a structural feature of our society, "it will be necessary to look for new political responses to this new structural fact. It is more and more difficult to value the labour of many people who undertake jobs with a strong non-material content, and the definition of productivity itself gets more complicated. For this reason, the idea of a basic income should be strengthened, as a minimum guarantee able to recover the idea that the new productivity depends more on cooperation than on hierarchy and competition".

El País: <http://www.elpais.com/>

3. PUBLICATIONS

* DUTCH

VAN LANCKER, Wim (2008), 'Quid pro quo? Het basisinkomen en de plicht tot wederkerigheid' ['Basic income and the obligation of reciprocity], *Ethiek & Maatschappij*, 11 (1), pp. 22-35, <http://ethiek-maatschappij.academiapress.be/>

Wim Van Lancker (University of Antwerp, Belgium) tries to show that a basic income does not violate the principle of reciprocity, i.e. the alleged duty to answer a gift with another gift. He uses four different arguments, two "pragmatic" and two "normative" ones, to build up a line of defense against this accusation. The first "pragmatic" argument has to do with the importance of work and activity in contemporary societies. Van Lancker argues that given this fact the probability that a great number of people would stop working if a basic income were to be introduced is very low. The second "pragmatic" argument is related to the huge inequalities in capitalist societies. Even if one would agree with the idea that work incentives

are required because reciprocity is crucial, justice remains the first virtue of institutions. According to Van Lancker, priority should then be given to justice-promoting reforms, even if they are detrimental to the work ethic. Finally, the two "normative" arguments are connected with the work of Philippe Van Parijs. According to the first one, we are all the owners of the earth's natural resources, and we deserve an equal share of these resources under the form of an unconditional basic income. According to Van Lancker's second "normative" argument, basic income can also be seen as a just compensation for the jobless, since jobs can be considered as being "scarce goods".

Author's website: http://works.bepress.com/wim_van_lancker/

Publisher's website: <http://ethiek-maatschappij.academiapress.be/>

***ENGLISH**

CHRISTENSEN, Eric (2008), *The Heretical Political Discourse. A Discourse Analysis of the Danish Debate on Basic Income*, Aalborg: Aalborg University Press, 164p., ISBN 978-87-7307-936-2, <http://forlag.hum.aau.dk/>

Eric Christensen is Associate Professor at the Department of Economics, Politics and Public Administration of Aalborg University in Denmark. For many years he has been involved in the European discussion on basic income. According to Christensen, in the beginning of the 1990s, Denmark was developing along a true "basic income path". At that time the hegemonic discourse based on economic growth was facing a crisis. Its legitimacy was contested by the public opinion, and because of the unemployment crisis, basic income had been put on the agenda by new political networks and minority groups. However, at the same time a new labour market policy called "activation" was introduced, and slowly, at the rhetorical level, the question of basic income was excluded. In public political debates and within the political parties, the "workfare" discourse was becoming increasingly prominent, and basic income came to be considered a *heretical political discourse* and was made a target of negative political stereotyping.

In this anthology about the basic income debate in Denmark, Christensen proposes a discourse analysis of Denmark's development from a universal welfare state to a workfare state. With its analysis of metaphors, narratives and key concepts in the debate, it unveils how the basic income discourse ended up being both heretical and excluded. Lastly, it provides a global ecological argument for a basic income and discusses the conditions for bringing back the basic income question on the political agenda.

Author's address: erikchri@socsci.aau.dk

Publisher's website: <http://forlag.hum.aau.dk/>

HAARMAN, Claudia & al. (2008), *Towards a Basic Income Grant for All*, Basic Income Grant Pilot Project Assessment Report, September 2008, ISBN: 978-99916-842-3-9

In January 2008, a Basic Income Grant (BIG) pilot project began in the Otjivero-Omitara area 100 kilometres east of Windhoek. All residents below the age of 60 years receive a Basic Income Grant of N\$100 per person per month, without any conditions being attached. The grant is being given to every person registered as living there in July 2007, whatever their social and economic status. This BIG pilot project is designed and implemented by the Namibian Basic Income Grant Coalition (established in 2004) and is the first universal cash-

transfer pilot project in the world. The BIG Coalition regards this project as the first step towards a BIG for all. Funds to start the pilot project were raised through voluntary contributions from supporters of the idea from all sections of Namibia's society, and by support from people, churches, organisations and donors in other countries. The BIG pilot project will run for a period of 24 months up to December 2009.

The effects of the BIG pilot project are being evaluated on an ongoing basis. Four complementary methods are being used. First, a *baseline survey* was conducted in November 2007. Second, a *panel survey* is being conducted every six months, the first being in July 2008. Third, information is being gathered from *key informants* in the area. Fourth, a series of detailed *case studies* of individuals living in Otjivero-Omitara is being carried out. This reports compares the results of the baseline study and panel data after the first six months of implementation.

Key findings include the following:

- * The community itself responded to the introduction of the BIG by establishing its own 18-member committee to mobilize the community and advise residents on how they could improve their lives with the money. This suggests that the introduction of a BIG can effectively assist with community mobilisation and empowerment.

- * Since the introduction of the BIG child malnutrition in the settlement has dropped remarkably. Using a WHO measurement technique, the data shows that children's weight-for-age has improved significantly in just six months from 42% of underweight children to only 17%.

- * Since the introduction of the BIG, the majority of people have been able to increase their work both for pay, profit or family gain as well as self-employment. This finding is contrary to critics' claims that the BIG would lead to laziness and dependency.

- * Income has risen in the community since the introduction of the BIG by more than the amount of the grants. There is strong evidence that more people are now able to engage in more productive activities and that the BIG fosters local economic growth and development. Several small enterprises started in Otjivero, making use of the BIG money being spent in the community.

- * More than double the number of parents paid school fees and the parents prioritized the buying of school uniforms. More children are now attending school and the stronger financial situation has enabled the school to improve teaching material for the pupils (eg. buying paper and toner). The school principal reported that drop-out rates at her school were 30-40% before the introduction of the BIG. By July 2008, these rates were reduced to a mere 5%.

- * The BIG supports and strengthens Government's efforts to provide ARV treatment to people suffering from HIV/AIDS by enabling them to access governments services and afford nutrition.

- * The residents have been using the settlement's health clinic much more since the introduction of the BIG. Residents now pay the N\$4 payment for each visit and the income of the clinic has increased fivefold.

- * The criticism that the grants are apparently leading to more alcoholism is not supported by evidence from the community. On the contrary, the introduction of the BIG has induced the community to set up a committee that is trying to curb alcoholism and that has worked with local shebeen owners not to sell alcohol on the day of the pay-out of the grants.

- * The introduction of the Basic Income Grant has helped young women recipients to take charge of their economic affairs. Several cases document that young women have been freed from having to engage in transactional sex.

- * Economic and poverty-related crime (illegal hunting, theft and trespassing) has fallen by

over 20%.

* The BIG has helped to achieve progress towards all eight Millenium Development Goals.

In brief, the initial results of this pilot project are very encouraging and by far exceed the expectations of the BIG Coalition. This is the first impact evaluation after six months of implementation and the reports to follow in the next 1-1/2 years will further elaborate and describe these developments. The research of the Basic Income Grant Pilot Project is designed and carried out jointly by the Desk for Social Development (DfSD) and the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) on behalf of the BIG Coalition. The authors of this report are Claudia Haarmann, Dirk Haarmann, Herbert Jauch, Hilma Shindondola-Mote, Nicoli Nattrass, Michael Samson and Guy Standing.

For further information: web@bignam.org. Coalition web page: www.bignam.org

LABEAGA, José M., OLIVER, X. & SPADARO, A. (2008), “Discrete choice models of labour supply, behavioural microsimulation and the Spanish tax reforms”, *Journal of Economic Inequality*, 6 (3), pp. 247-273.

This article explores the potential of behavioural microsimulation models as powerful tools for evaluation of public policies which affect tax and benefit systems. In the context of an evaluation of recent Spanish income tax reforms, the article studies the effects of a basic income-flat tax scheme (among others) on efficiency and household and social welfare. The microsimulation model takes labour supply explicitly into account. The results show that the proposed basic income scheme would only have a minor impact on economic efficiency and labour market supply, but, by contrast, would significantly improve social welfare. According to the authors, “the main contribution of this paper consists of highlighting the potential of a Basic Income Flat Tax scheme as an institutional redistribution mechanism which can both reduce inequality and increase social welfare in Spain. Its feasibility depends on the associated efficiency costs (in terms of reductions in labour supply) it may produce, although the results of our econometric estimations indicate that such costs are minor”.

UNITED NATIONS (2008), *World Economic and Social Survey: Overcoming Economic Insecurity*, New York: United Nations (Department of Economic and Social Affairs), 202 pp., available at:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2008files/wess08/wess2008.pdf>

According to the 2008 World Economic and Social Survey of the United Nations, economic insecurity arises from the exposure of individuals, communities and countries to adverse events, and from their inability to cope with and recover from the downside losses. The risk and threats vary from community to community; in advanced countries, they have been associated with a significant rise in inequality, a hollowing out of middle-class lifestyles and reduced welfare protection. Elsewhere, economic shocks and premature deindustrialization have raised fears of an insufficiency of the formal sector jobs needed to accommodate an expanding urban population. In still other places, food insecurity has given rise to political discontent and increased levels of personal insecurity.

These local concerns have been compounded by new global threats. Unregulated financial markets and international capital flows are currently threatening economic livelihoods across the world economy. Climate change imposes the threat of greater local environmental damage and increasingly destructive natural disasters.

The attention brought to the presence of these heightened economic risks and compounded threats has often been met with the response that the forces behind them are autonomous and irresistible, and beyond our collective political control. The Survey offers a different perspective. What is needed, according to the report, is a strong "social contract" to help secure the spaces within which individuals, households and communities could pursue their day-to-day activities with a reasonable degree of predictability and stability, and with due regard for the aims and interests of others. This will require a more integrated and pragmatic approach to economic and social policy, one tailored to local threats and challenges, as well as more space for implementing counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies and greater international support for broader social protection schemes.

In this context, the report discusses the idea of a basic income. In a special section strangely entitled "Into the wild: the case for a basic minimum income" (probably referring to Sean Penn's movie "*Into the Wild*" (2007), based on the true story of Christopher McCandless, a young man who died in Alaska's wilderness in August 1992), the report briefly refers to the basic income discussion in Europe and other countries, including Brazil. It argues that the "best known example of an operational basic income scheme is the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend" (see pp.177-178).

The report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2008files/wess08/wess2008.pdf>

VANDERBORGHT, Yannick (2008), 'Social Justice Through Universal Benefits', *Revista de Estudos Universitarios* (Universidade de Sorocaba, Brazil), 34 (1), juin 2008, pp.71-84.

Since the late 1990s, the reform of income transfer programmes has become a hot topic in several developing countries. Among the proposals being debated, the idea of giving all citizens the right to an unconditional and universal basic income has attracted renewed attention. This introductory paper briefly tackles some of the main questions raised by this idea: would the introduction of such a basic income represent an improvement in terms of economic security for countries like Brazil? Would it be superior to existing targeted schemes? How should it be implemented? Even if basic income is not to be seen as magic bullet against all social problems, it is argued that it can be considered as a crucial component of any coherent strategy designed to foster social justice in developing countries.

* FRENCH

SPECIAL ISSUE of *Les Périphériques vous parlent*, "Hommage à André Gorz", issue 24, 2008.

Available online at <http://www.lesperipheriques.org/>

Les Périphériques vous parlent is a group of left-wing thinkers and activists which has been active in France since the early 1990s. In a special issue of its magazine, *Les Périphériques* pay a tribute to one of their main sources of inspiration, journalist André Gorz, who died in 2007. Gorz was a prominent advocate of basic income (see BIEN NewsFlash 47). A special section of this issue is devoted to a discussion on "social income" ("Le revenu social: sortir de la société salariale") between Yovan Gilles (*Périphériques*), Marie-Louise Duboin (from the magazine "*La Grande Relève*"), Jean Zin (a green advocate of basic income) and Christophe Fourel (Director of the "*Agence nouvelle des solidarités actives*").

See: http://www.lesperipheriques.org/article.php3?id_article=539

Université populaire et citoyenne à Roubaix (2008), 'Du RMI à l'allocation universelle. Conférence-débat avec Yannick Vanderborght', *Cahiers UPC*, issue 12, 20p. Available online at <http://www.upc-roubaix.org/Cahier-12>

In the aftermath of a conference by Yannick Vanderborght (University of Louvain and Facultés Saint-Louis in Belgium), held in March 2007 in Roubaix (an industrial city in the North of France), the "People and Citizen's University" has published a special issue of its magazine which is entirely devoted to a discussion of basic income and minimum income schemes in the French context. It includes a summary of the conference and seminar, written by Vincent Boutry, as well as interviews of local activists. It is available online at <http://www.upc-roubaix.org/Cahier-12>

For further information: vincent.boutry@yahoo.fr

* SPANISH

CABRILLO, Francisco (2008), "La utopía de la renta básica" ["The Utopia of Basic Income"], *Revista de Libros*, nº 133 (January), pp. 35-36.

In this article, a Spanish mainstream neo-liberal economist reviews very critically one recent book on basic income published in Spain (*La Renta Básica como nuevo derecho ciudadano*, edited by Gerardo Pisarello and Antonio del Cabo, Madrid, Trotta, 2006). The main objections the article makes against basic income are well-known in the literature: that it would have an unacceptable economic cost, only attainable by a fiscal revolution against all present trends in fiscal policy; that it would damage labour incentives and, therefore, generate social anger against "parasites"; and that its defenders supposedly assume that the number of jobs of an economy is a given parameter, instead of a variable, so full employment may be a perfectly possible (and more efficient and just) alternative to basic income.

NOGUERA, José A. (2007). "Capitalismo y justicia: los términos de la cuestión" ["Capitalism and justice: the terms of the question"], *Sistema. Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, nº 200, pp. 87-106.

Journal's website:

<http://www.fundacionsistema.com/Pubs/Article.aspx?id=6037>

This article reviews the discussion on the injustice of capitalism in contemporary normative theory, and makes specific reference to basic income as one of the measures that may cope with that injustice. The article starts by proposing a definition of 'capitalism' based on four conditions, and by specifying the role of justice as a criterion for choice among economic systems. Secondly, a distinction is made between an 'injustice *in* capitalism' and an 'injustice *of* capitalism', in order to assess to what extent the overcoming of capitalism would be necessary or not in order to fight that injustice. Five candidates are considered as cases of 'injustice of capitalism': exploitation, domination-despotic power, distributive injustice, lack of real freedom, and motivational injustice. Different proposals designed to fight those candidates are reviewed, and basic income is assessed as a very promising one among others, but it is noted that it does not necessarily involve the overcoming of capitalism; that is to say that maybe a great part (if not most) of the injustice of capitalism may be tackled by other features or institutions of the social system, without abolishing capitalism itself. The only possible exception would be an (unjust) distribution of productive assets, which is not directly affected by basic income.

NOGUERA, José A. (2008). “Seguridad de la cuna a la tumba. La Renta Básica como renovación del Estado del bienestar” [“Security from cradle to grave: basic income as renewal of the welfare state”], *Estudios de Política y Sociedad*, vol. 1, n° 1 (New period, January-April 2008), http://www.epolicaysociedad.buap.mx/nueva1_1.htm

This journal, edited by Mexican political scientists at the Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, has started a new period, the first issue of which includes this article as part of a dossier on basic income. The issue also includes articles by Miguel Carbonell (“El derecho a la Renta Básica. Una perspectiva constitucional”), Pedro Aguirre (“Ingreso básico garantizado. Hipótesis para México y una nota sobre Brasil”) and Andrés Lajous (“3 teorías y 3 ejemplos para proponer un Ingreso Ciudadano Universal en México”). Noguera’s article presents and defends the proposal of basic income as the best answer to present social problems such as labour market insecurity, changes in family structures, and the crisis of traditional welfare schemes, now that selective and focalized policies and keynesian full-employment models have proved to be quite ineffective.

SALVAT, Pablo (2008), ‘Fundamento ético para un ingreso mínimo garantizado’, *Mensaje* (Santiago, Chile), March-April 2008, pp.51-53, <http://www.mensaje.cl/>

A short introductory article on basic income in which Pablo Salvat (University Padre Hurtado, Chile) argues in favour of the right to a “decent existence”, independently from any work requirement. According to the author, basic income should be included in the ongoing discussion on welfare state reform in Chile.

Journal’s website: <http://www.mensaje.cl/>

Author’s address: psalvat@uahurtado.cl

4. NEW LINKS

*** BASIC INCOME IN SWITZERLAND**

The introduction of a basic income for all will become a hot political topic over the next decade, social ethics specialist Hans Ruh tells swissinfo.

http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/front/Ethicist_puts_the_case_for_basic_income.html?siteSect=105&sid=9705049&rss=true&ty=st

Also available in French and German, see www.swissinfo.ch

*** UK'S CITIZEN'S INCOME TRUST**

The Citizen’s Income Trust has published an A3 poster: on one side is an introduction to Citizen’s Income and details of a particular fully costed scheme, and on the other a history of social welfare in the UK from 1900 to the present day. See the poster as a pdf at <http://www.citizensincome.org/filelibrary/Archived%20Publications/Student%20leaflet%20May%202008.pdf> or email info@citizensincome.org with requests for printed copies.

The poster/leaflet will be particularly useful to students and teachers, and also to anyone interested in the history of tax and benefits in the UK and Citizen’s Income as an important reform option.

5. ABOUT THE BASIC INCOME EARTH NETWORK

Co-chairs:

Ingrid VAN NIEKERK ivanniekerk@epri.org.za, Economic Policy Research Institute, Cape

Town, South Africa

Karl WIDERQUIST Karl@Widerquist.com, University of Reading, United Kingdom

Further details about BIEN's Executive Committee and International Board can be found on our website www.basicincome.org, as well as further information about the Recognised National Networks.

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 David Casassas david.casassas@uab.cat, Secretary of BIEN, 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.

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