

BIEN
BASIC INCOME EARTH NETWORK
NEWSFLASH 59 December 2009

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.

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

CONTENTS

Editorial: Call for Papers, BIEN Congress July 2010

1. Events

2. Glimpses of National Debates

3. Publications

4. New Links

5. About BIEN

Editorial: Call for papers for the next BIEN Congress, July 2010, São Paulo, Brazil

BIEN is preparing its next Congress, to be held on June 30, July 1st and 2nd, 2010, at the Faculty of Economics, Administration and Accounting of the University of São Paulo. A new website has been launched at www.bien2010brasil.com

The deadline for submission of papers and panel proposals is **February 25th 2010**. Acceptance of proposals will be communicated by **March 25th, 2010** at the latest. This confirmation of acceptance will be provided earlier to those who submit proposals earlier. These should be emailed to bien2010.callforpapers@gmail.com.

Details concerning registration for the conference and accommodation are available at the Congress website: www.bien2010brasil.com

1. EVENTS

PAST EVENTS

* **CHICAGO (US)**, 24-27 September 2009: American Monetary Institute Conference.

Richard Cook was a policy analyst for the U.S. government from 1970 until 2007, his career included service with the U.S. Civil Service Commission, the Food and Drug Administration, the Carter White House, NASA, and the U.S. Treasury Department. His presentation at the AMI conference focused on an overview of the monetary reform movement, including Social Credit and the National Dividend.

Conference website: <http://leconomistamascherato.blogspot.com/2009/08/ami-conference-sept-24-27-2009-in.html>

- From USBIG Newsletter Fall 2009

* **OTTAWA (CA)**, 1-2 October 2009: Basic Income Workshop

This workshop was organised by BIEN Canada. Featured speakers included Jurgen De Wispelaere, Senator Hugh Segal, MP Tony Martin, and Dr. Evelyn Forget. For more details on the program, see:

http://www.cpj.ca/files/docs/Ottawa_Workshop_program_Sept_28.pdf

* **SAO PAULO (BR)**, 23 October 2009: Conference by Karl Widerquist

On October 23, 2009, Karl Widerquist (co-chair of BIEN) gave a conference on basic income in the framework of Eduardo M. Suplicy's course on "Instrumentos de Política Econômica para a Construção de Uma Sociedade Civilizada e Justa" at the Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo. A video of Widerquist's conference is available at <http://atvong.ning.com/video/karl-widerquist-freedom-as>

* **ROME (IT)**, 3 November 2009: The necessity of a guaranteed income

On November 3, 2009, Sandro Gobetti, Giuseppe Bronzini, Corrado Del Bò, Alberto Guariso and Cristina Tajani from Bin Italia spoke at the "ComPa", the national forum of public administration in Italy. The theme of the debate was "the necessity of a guaranteed income".

The representative for the Regione Lazio (IT), who promoted the regional law on a guaranteed minimum income, was also among the participants.

For further information:

http://www.bin-italia.org/informa.php?ID_NEWS=140

* **PERUGIA (IT)**, 6 November 2009: Women and basic income

Participants in this meeting included Andrea Fumagalli and Cristina Morini from the Italian basic income network Bin Italia. As in the Lazio region, the local political actors in Umbria are advocating a regional law on a guaranteed minimum income. Topics such as the transformation of work, the working poor, and the role of women were also addressed. For further information: http://www.bin-italia.org/informa.php?ID_NEWS=141

* **BILBAO (ES)**, 19-21 November 2009: 9th Symposium of Red Renta Basica

The 9th Symposium of the Spanish basic income network Red Renta Basica was held in Bilbao, the Basque Country. It started in the evening of November 19th, with a video conference by Pablo Yanes (*Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México*). The following two days were mainly devoted to a discussion of three issues: Basic Income, Employment and Human Activity; Political Feasibility of Basic Income; Basic Income and Social Movements. Featured speakers included Daniel Raventós, Iratxe Arriola, Igor Mera, Yannick Vanderborght, José Luis Rey, José Antonio Noguera, Iñaki Uribarri, Luis Sanzo, Gorka Moreno, Montse Cervera, Florent Marcellesi, and Iñaki Carro.

PDF versions of the papers are available at <http://ixsimposiorb.com/cd/> (see also "Publications" below).

The symposium got press coverage in *Gara*. See the two following links

<http://www.gara.net/paperezkoa/20091121/167854/es/Buena/con/crecimiento/pero//buenisima/en/tiempos/de/crisis%C2%BB/>

<http://www.gara.net/paperezkoa/20091126/168834/es/Con/la/renta/basica/se/podrian/rechazar/los/empleos/indignos%C2%BB/>

* **ROME (IT)**, 20 November 2009: Guaranteed income as a European right

One day of debate organised by Bin Italia and other associations, in the framework of the "guaranteed income in Europe" appeal that was launched in May 2009, just before the European elections. The meeting also launched the idea of a "guaranteed income as a right for Europeans" within the framework of the 2010 European year against poverty. Euro-MP Jean Lambert (European Greens) took part in the meeting, as well as the representative for the Regione Lazio (IT), who promoted the regional law on a guaranteed minimum income.

The meeting programm: http://www.bin-italia.org/informa.php?ID_NEWS=142

* **NAPOLI (IT)**, 27-28 November 2009: Stakeholder's forum against poverty

The Italian basic income network Bin Italia took part in the *Stakeholder's Forum against poverty* which was organised by several associations, in cooperation with the Italian government and the European Commission, in preparation of the 2010 European year against poverty. Bin Italia, including its President Luca Santini, coordinated the session about basic

needs and guaranteed income on November 27th. Honorary co-president of BIEN Guy Standing gave a talk during one of the plenary sessions.

See: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/22357271/Programme-Fight-Against-Poverty-En>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

* **MONTREAL (CA)**, 15-16 April, 2010: Conference of USBIG and BIEN Canada

Under the title "Basic Income at a Time of Economic Upheaval: A Path to Justice and Stability?," USBIG and BIEN Canada will organize a joint conference which will be hosted by the Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal (CREUM) at the University of Montreal.

Prof. Guy Standing, of University of Bath, and Louise Haagh, of the University of York (UK), will give keynote addresses. Standing is a leading expert on basic income, economic development and the labor market. His presentation will be based on his new book, *Work after Globalisation: Building Occupational Citizenship*. Haagh is a world poverty, labour studies and social policy specialist working in the field of comparative labour market institutions, welfare regimes and the political economy of development.

The conference will also include a special roundtable with political experts and policy activists, including Senator Hugh Segal (Canada), Senator Art Eggleton (Canada), Sheila Regehr, Al Sheahan and Rob Rainer. A closing statement on the conference will be delivered by Senator Eduardo Suplicy (Brazil).

The conference will examine whether instituting an unconditional Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) as an economic floor, aimed at preventing those affected by the current economic upheavals from falling below what any modern democracy would consider a decent standard of living, constitutes a desirable and feasible option in Canada or the United States. The conference aims to compare the prospects and challenges faced by the BIG proposal in the context of both Canada and the US, two countries that share many similarities and yet are profoundly different in terms of their economic, social and political background.

The organisers invite panel presentations from academic scholars, practitioners and policy activists on a wide variety of topics dealing with the challenges of designing, promoting or instituting a BIG in the current economic climate in Canada or the US. Priority will be given to papers that explicitly discuss BIG in the context of either Canada or the US, or that compare the distinct prospects in both countries.

The *Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal* (CREUM—The Centre for Research in Ethics at the University of Montreal) will host the conference. The main language of the conference is English, but the organisers will try to accommodate French speakers as much as possible.

To submit a proposal, email a title and short abstract to bigmontreal2010@gmail.com by Friday 15 January 2010. The official call for papers and further information are posted on the BIGMontreal website at <http://bigmontreal.wordpress.com/>, which can also be reached by link from the USBIG website (www.usbig.net).

Admission is free. Everyone is welcome to attend, but pre-registration is required. Details

about registration and other aspects of the conference will be announced on the conference website. If you have any additional questions, please contact the conference organizer: Jurgen De Wispelaere at bigmontreal2010@gmail.com.

* **SAO PAULO (BR)**, 30 June & 1-2 July, 2010: 13th BIEN Congress

All details are now available at www.bien2010brasil.com See also the editorial above.

* **ATLANTA (US)**, 13-15 August 2010: The Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) Conference

The *Society for the Study of Social Problems* (SSSP), an organisation of applied sociologists/social scientists, will hold its annual conference in Atlanta (US) in 2010. It will take place on August 13-15, 2010, and will be held at the Sheraton Hotel located at 165 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, GA. One of the sessions is being organized by Michael A. Lewis of the Hunter College School of Social Work. The session is entitled "Contested Paths to Good Policy: Assets, Income, Jobs" and will focus on comparing and contrasting social policies intended to promote the right to work, the right to income, or asset development. Those interested in submitting an abstract should send it to michael.a.lewis@hunter.cuny.edu by January 10, 2010.

- From USBIG Newsletter Fall 2009.

2. GLIMPSES OF NATIONAL DEBATES

* **BRAZIL: Small town launches basic income legislation**

On November 12, 2009, Honorary President of BIEN and Brazilian Senator Eduardo Matarazzo Suplicy participated in the ceremony in the City Council of Santo Antonio do Pinhal (Brazil), where the Mayor José Augusto Guarnieri Pereira, 31, of the Worker's Party, sanctioned the first municipal law in Brazil (where there are 5,564 municipalities), that institutes a Citizen's Basic Income, a Municipal Fund to finance it, as well a Municipal Council that will follow every step towards its gradual implementation, until it benefits the whole population of 7,036 (2008) inhabitants. Santo Antonio do Pinhal is a municipality in the Mantiqueira Mountains, in the State of São Paulo. It has small and medium agricultural producers, 53 inns with 1.200 beds, 32 restaurants, several artesans. Half of the population lives in the urban area, the other half in the rural area. All nine members of the City Council voted "yes" in favor of the law, on October 29, 2009, with participation from representatives of all members of the population.

Article 1 of the law states that "With the purpose to turn Santo Antonio do Pinhal into a Municipality that harmonizes sustainable social and economic development with the application of justice principles, meaning the solidarity practice among all its inhabitants, and, above all, to grant a higher level of dignity to all its inhabitants, the Citizen's Basic Income of Santo Antonio do Pinhal –CBI is instituted, consisting in the rights of all registered residents or residents in the Municipality for at least 05 (five) years, regardless of their social and economic status, to receive a monetary benefit."

As stated in §2 of article 1, the implementation of the scheme shall be gradual: "The universality mentioned in this article shall be attained by stages, upon the criterion of the Conselho Municipal de Renda Básica de Cidadania – CMRBC, giving priority to the most needed segments of the population."

For further information, see the official website of the town:
<http://www.santoantoniopinhall.sp.gov.br/noticias.asp?materia=23>

*** CANADA: BIEN Canada website launched**

BIEN Canada's webmaster Jurgen De Wispelaere has just launched a new official website that will be added to and refined over time: <http://biencanada.wordpress.com>

*** LUXEMBOURG: First public event for basic income group**

On September 29th, 2009, the Luxembourg basic income group had its first public event. In the course of the exhibit "Colours of Money", the group invited interested participants to a discussion about basic income. The organisers themselves were surprised by the fact that there was quite a crowd in the room. As a warm up, the film "*Kulturimpuls Grundeinkommen*" from Daniel Häni and Enno Schmidt was shown. The lively discussion that followed allowed many participants to share their thoughts and opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of basic income for the tiny and open economy of Luxembourg. Probably one of the most interesting and challenging aspects of Luxembourg – from a basic income perspective – is the composition of its active population, since roughly a third of it lives in neighbour countries. The residency criterion that is the standard rule to grant a basic income might cause a huge uproar among cross-border commuters, and as such it should be applied carefully. For example it could be paid out in form of a complimentary regional currency. An alternative would be that a basic income implemented simultaneously in the neighbouring countries. On the other hand, this cross-border issue brought one of Luxembourg's strong points to the forefront: its highly international environment, and its ability to bring people from many different cultures together. The group got already in contact with initiatives from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland.

Prior to the discussion event and ever since the group managed to stay in the news, through radio interviews, press articles and a 15-minute TV magazine. On January 8th, 2010 a constituent meeting is planned where the final name and short- and medium-term goals will be discussed. Further information, including the links to all activities, is available at www.grondakommes.lu

*** MONGOLIA: First national basic income to be introduced?**

USBIG reports that the Mongolian government has taken the initial steps to create a basic income in the form of an Alaskan-style resource dividend. That would make it only the second regular basic income in the world and the first on a *national* level. This action has received very little attention in the international media, probably because Mongolia is a small and isolated country. However, the resource dividend has the potential to become extremely significant for Mongolians.

Bloomberg News reports that the Mongolian government has pledged to set up a "sovereign wealth fund" using mining royalties from new gold and copper mines, which are expected to begin generating large tax revenues within the next three to five years. The fund is expected to distribute part of its revenue as an annual income to every Mongolian. In an interview with Bloomberg News, Mongolian Finance Minister Sangajav Bayartsogt, said that the government studied examples like the Alaska Permanent Fund when drafting the proposal.

Although the government has not yet published estimates of how large the annual income might turn out to be, this program could eventually make a large impact on

Mongolians, because Mongolia is a small, poor country with a large amount of newly discovered resource wealth. During the elections this year, both parties discussed distributing as much as US\$1000 to each citizen. Although the government might not follow through with such a large grant, the size of the new mines brings this size of a dividend into the realm of possibility.

A \$1000 dividend might not seem terribly significant in comparison to the Alaska dividend, which was US\$1305 in 2009 and reached a high of US\$3269 in 2008. But the potential impact of the dividend has to be looked at in relation to how wealthy the citizens already are. According to *Bloomberg*, per capita income in Mongolia is only US\$1,680. According to the *Bureau of Business & Economic Research*, per capita income in Alaska is US\$44,039. That means, the average Alaskan is twenty-six times wealthier (at current exchange rates) than the average Mongolian. A dividend of only \$50 per year would have the same relative impact on the average Mongolian's budget as Alaska's \$1300 dividend has on the average Alaskan's budget. The impact of a dividend of \$500 or \$1000 could be astounding, but one should be cautious about expecting anything like this in the short run.

Even if the size of the dividend is uncertain, Eugene Tang of Bloomberg argues that there will be some dividend. The fund has been created, and the government has talked so much about distributing a dividend out of the fund that they can no longer afford the political cost of going back on their pledge to introduce it at some level.

For more information, see "Mongolia Fund to Manage \$30 Billion Mining Jackpot," by Bloomberg News, online at:

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=aWm8u8kb0R5E>

The Bloomberg reporter is: Eugene Tang <eugenetang@bloomberg.net>

*** NAMIBIA: Conclusion of the Basic Income Grant Pilot Project**

The Namibian Basic Income Grant Pilot Project has come to its conclusion, the BIG Coalition announced on December 8th, 2009. After two years of successful implementation, the last payout will take place in December 2009. According to the coalition, the results of the pilot project have proven the effectiveness of a BIG to fight poverty, foster social development and kick-start local economic development. The impact of the BIG was nothing short of spectacular: Poverty levels and child malnutrition declined dramatically, while school attendance and utilization of the local clinic improved. Likewise, economic activities increased significantly while crime levels dropped.

Based on the findings in Omitara the Coalition is convinced that a national BIG will benefit Namibians in all regions of the country. It is, the Coalition argues, both beneficial and affordable and its implementation is thus a question of political will. The drawings of the school children bear witness to the tangible changes in people's lives.

The BIG Coalition has noted with disappointment that despite the impressive results of the BIG (Basic Income Grant) pilot project in Otjivero-Omitara, the Namibian Government has not yet committed itself to the introduction of the country-wide BIG. The delay in the national implementation is hurting the poor in general and the residents of Otjivero-Omitara in particular.

The BIG Coalition decided that it could not stand by and let the residents slide back into the dehumanising levels of poverty that they experienced before the BIG was introduced two years ago. Thus, while demanding the implementation of the BIG nationwide, it will utilise a 'bridging allowance' to tie over the households for the time being. This is not a solution but merely a 'stop-gap measure' which cannot replace the BIG. The 'bridging-allowance' is limited to the participants of the pilot and limitations thereof both of the value of

support to the individual as well as to the community are acknowledged. The welfare of the country's citizens is the responsibility of the Government. During the next one to two years the Coalition expects the Government to introduce the BIG nationwide, which will make the bridging allowance superfluous.

The pilot project has gained worldwide publicity and is part of the global discussion on new approaches in development. In fact, Namibia has been put on the world map because of the people of Otjivero-Omitara. They have shown the world what can be done with very little money, but which is based on a human rights approach, a philosophy of equality and a theology of dignity.

Recently, the BBC reported directly from the BIG Pilot Project in Otjivero-Omitara. It was part of the BBC series "A dollar a day".

For further information: <http://www.bignam.org/>

For the BBC Documentary:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/documentaries/2009/11/091110_dollar_a_day_pt2.shtml

*** NEW ZEALAND: *Democrats for Social Credit* endorse a new Financial Plan**

The *Democrats for Social Credit*, a small political party in New Zealand, has endorsed a new plan for financial reform, which includes a basic income scheme called "Kiwi Income". During their annual conference in September 2009, DSC delegates approved a 7 point plan to reform the "inherently unstable" financial system. According to DSC's Press Release, "this is achieved by replacing toxic debt-based commercial bank credit with social credit. The issue of social credit will be the sole means of money coming into existence and continuing to exist – and will be issued in the public interest, to serve the common good". A new 'New Zealand Monetary Authority (NZMA)' will be established as the only institution with the power to create, issue, and cancel New Zealand's money. "Debt free money will be made available by NZMA to the New Zealand Government to fund "Kiwi Income" (KI), in the form of a national dividend to every resident New Zealander. NZMA will also be able to fund Health, Education and Environmental projects - in ways that decrease the call on family incomes."

For further information:

<http://www.democrats.org.nz/OurNews/MediaReleases/tabid/111/selectedmoduleid/545/ArticleID/337/reftab/36/Default.aspx>

*** NIGERIA: Federal government considers a regional oil dividend**

USBIG reports that, according to several sources, the Nigerian federal government is planning to introduce a local basic income in the Niger Delta region. The plan is supposed to distribute 10% of the country's oil revenue to the people of that region. The plan is at least partly a response to militant attacks on oil installations. Emmanuel Egbogah, the president's special adviser on oil, told the Financial Times, "every citizen will say: 'I own a part of this business.'" However, the BBC reports that the plan is likely to receive opposition from other regions, which will receive a smaller share of the benefits of the oil revenue if 10% of it goes to individuals in the Niger Delta region.

For more information see:

"Nigeria 'to give 10% of oil cash'" on BBC News (Oct 19):

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8315312.stm>

"Nigeria Offers 'Revolutionary' Oil Deal to Niger Delta Region" on Chariman King:

<http://www.charimanking.com/nigeria-offers-revolutionary-oil-deal-niger-delta-region->

[20091021/](#)

“Nigeria offers ‘revolutionary’ delta deal,” by Tom Burgis:

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6e85dd6a-bc04-11de-9426-00144feab49a.html>

*** UKRAINE: Towards the first affiliate network of BIEN in Eastern Europe?**

On September 16th, 2009, the first international symposium about Basic Income took place in Kyiv in Ukrainian and Russian. This event was made possible by a donation from Germany within the international “Week of Basic Income.” A wider debate is hoped for with the aim to found a Ukrainian/Eastern European network to serve as a regional affiliate of BIEN. There have been contacts made with universities and other organisations, that are interested in Basic Income and that have asked for lectures. The web-site <http://bod.in.ua> (in English, German, Ukrainian and Russian) contains texts of the speeches, which were held at the symposium, as well as further information about Basic Income – including reports about the discussion in some countries, which already has affiliates of BIEN. There are also videos on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/BODinUA>. These are the first sources within the former Soviet Union providing information about Basic Income in Slavic languages. Everybody is invited to support this network with articles, opinions, statements or other resources.

For further information, please contact: <joerg.drescher@iovalis.org>

*** UNITED STATES: Alaska Permanent Fund distributes a basic income of US\$1305**

USBIG reports that the Alaska Permanent Fund (APF) began distributing this year’s APF dividend on October 8, 2009. This year’s amount, US\$1305, is considerably less than last year’s bolstered dividend of US\$3200, but it is still a healthy size, thanks in part to the recovery of the stock market in the last six months. According to SIT News, 628,499 Alaskans will receive the dividend this year.

The fund from which dividends are drawn has recovered to more than US\$33 billion , after sinking to a low of US\$28 billion earlier this year. This amount is quite a bit less than the US\$40 billion high the fund reached last year, but it is a healthy amount when looked at from the perspective of the entire history of the fund. Despite the comeback of the fund’s investments, and despite a movement to a slightly more conservative investment strategy earlier this year, Alaskan lawmakers continue to question whether the investment strategy is conservative enough.

For stories on the permanent fund go to: <http://www.ktuu.com/Global/story.asp?S=11280950>

“Legislators skeptical of 'leading edge' model for asset allocation” by Pat Forgey of the

Juneau Empire: http://www.juneauempire.com/stories/092909/sta_498790071.shtml

For an article on how Alaskans will spend their dividends. See: “Annual dividend for

Alaskans will be \$1,305” Cordova Times: <http://www.thecordovatimes.com/news/show/7515>

“2009 Permanent Fund Dividend is \$1,305.00,”

http://www.sitnews.us/0909news/092409/092409_pfd.html

“State prepares to distribute dividend checks, by Pat Forgey of the Juneau Empire:

http://www.juneauempire.com/stories/092409/loc_496920032.shtml

“Increase in PFD recipients has officials guessing why,” by Elizabeth Bluemink for the

Alaska Daily News: <http://www.adn.com/news/government/story/950923.html>

3. PUBLICATIONS

ENGLISH

BURCZAK, Theodore (2009), ‘Why Austrian Socialism’, *The Review of Austrian Economics*, 22 (3), September 2009, pp.297-300.

This article is part of a symposium on Burczak’s book *Socialism After Hayek* (published in 2006 by The University of Michigan Press). The central thesis defended in this short paper is that socialist objectives can be achieved in a market context with the rule of law if market socialism were to take the form of competitive worker-owned and self-managed enterprises, supplemented by universally available welfare redistributions, which could include a basic income, universal capital grants, or education and health insurance vouchers.

KIRCHGÄSSNER, Gebhard (2009), ‘Critical Analysis of Some Well-Intended Proposals to Fight Unemployment’, *Analyse & Kritik* 31 (1), 2009, pp.25-48.

In this paper it is asked whether it is meaningful to state a ‘right to work’ as a basic human right to be written down in the constitution, for example, whether working time should generally be reduced, and whether those who do not have (or find) a job should get a guaranteed minimal income. The author argues that all three demands have to be rejected, at least in the radical form in which they are often stated. They cannot be realised at all or at least not without impairing other basic human rights. Finally, it is asked what can be retained from these (usually well-intended) demands.

Journal’s website : <http://www.analyse-und-kritik.net/>

KLUGMAN, Jeni (ed.) (2009), *Human Development Report 2009. Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development*, New York: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 217pp.

The 2009 edition of UNDP’s *Human Development Report* includes a short discussion of money transfers which will be of interest for basic income supporters in developing countries. According to the report, “for many people in remote rural areas of developing countries, the costs of receiving money remain high: recipients typically have to travel long distances to a regional or national capital to collect cash, or the cash has to be hand-delivered by an intermediary, who may take a sizeable margin. The rapid diffusion of cell-phone technology over the past decade has led to the development of innovative money transfer systems in several countries.”

Following a study by Tavneet Suri (MIT, *forthcoming*), the report refers to the example of Kenya, where “a leading cell-phone company, Safaricom, teamed up with donors to pilot a system that subsequently led to the launch in 2007 of M-PESA (meaning ‘Mobile-Cash’). Anyone with a cell-phone can deposit money in an account and send it to another cell-phone user, using M-PESA agents distributed across the country. A recent survey of users across Kenya found that, in just two years, M-PESA has expanded rapidly. It is now used by some 6 million people or 17 percent of the population—out of 26 percent who are cell-phone owners—and is supported by a network of more than 7,500 agents. Transfers can be made from the port city of Mombasa to Kisumu on the shores of Lake Victoria, or from Nairobi in the south to Marsabit in the north—both two-day bus trips—with the push of a few buttons and at a cost of less than a dollar. By mid-2008, the volume of money sent had reached some 8 percent of GDP, mostly in the form of a large number of relatively small transactions.

The report is available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/>

MOSS, Todd & YOUNG, Lauren (2009), 'Saving Ghana from Its Oil: The Case for Direct Cash Distribution', Washington DC, *Center for Global Development Working Paper*, issue 186, October 2009, available at <http://www.cgdev.org/>

Ghana can be considered a relative success story in Africa. The authors cite six variables—peace and stability, democracy and governance, control of corruption, macroeconomic management, poverty reduction, and signs of an emerging social contract—to suggest the country's admirable political and economic progress. The expected arrival of sizeable oil revenues beginning in 2011–13, however, threatens to undermine that progress. In fact, numerous studies have linked natural resources to negative outcomes such as conflict, authoritarianism, high corruption, economic instability, increased poverty, and the destruction of the social contract. The oil curse thus threatens the very outcomes that we consider signs of Ghana's success. This paper draws lessons from the experiences of Norway, Botswana, Alaska, Chad, and Nigeria to consider Ghana's policy options. One common characteristic of the successful models appears to be their ability to encourage an influential constituency with an interest in responsible resource management and the means to hold government accountable. The Alaska model in particular, which was designed explicitly to manufacture citizen oversight and contain oil-induced patronage, seems relevant to Ghana's current predicament. The authors propose a modified version of Alaska's dividend program. Direct cash distribution of oil revenues to citizens is a potentially powerful approach to protect and accelerate Ghana's political and economic gains, and a way to strengthen the country's social contract. They show why Ghana is an ideal country to take advantage of this option, and why the timing is fortuitous. The authors conclude by confronting some of the common objections to this approach and suggest that new technology such as biometric ID cards or private mobile phone networks could be utilized to implement the scheme.

- From USBIG Newsletter Fall 2009

OFFE, Claus (2009), 'Basic Income and the Labor Contract', *Analyse & Kritik* 31 (1), 2009, pp.25-48.

The paper starts by exploring the negative contingencies that are associated with the core institution of capitalist societies, the labour contract: unemployment, poverty, and denial of autonomy. It argues that these are the three conditions that basic income schemes can help prevent. Next, the three major normative arguments are discussed that are raised by opponents of basic income proposals: the idle should not be rewarded, the prosperous don't need it, and there are so many things waiting to be done in the world. After demonstrating that proponents of basic income stand in no way empty-handed when facing these objections, a third part considers basic income in functional terms: would its introduction help to resolve problems of social and economic order that are unlikely to be resolved in more conventional ways? This paper is an expanded version of what appeared under the same title in *Basic Income Studies* 3(1), April 2008.

Journal's website : <http://www.analyse-und-kritik.net/>

STANDING, Guy (2009), *Work after Globalization. Building Occupational Citizenship*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 384 pp. Hardback 978 1 84844 164 4 - 35% discount £58.47.

See the flyer at http://www.basicincome.org/bien/pdf/Standing_Flyer.pdf

or order via GuyStanding@standingnet.com

In this new book, Guy Standing has refined ideas he has been making since the inception of BIEN, seeing basic income as part of a progressive strategy to replace social democracy. The book emphasises that in a globalised society, tertiary work styles are becoming the norm, in which forms of work other than labour are taking up an increasing proportion of time. In that reality, conventional social security is woefully inappropriate. Globalisation, tertiary labour and labour flexibility policies have generated a new class, the global precariat, which is not just in short-term jobs but is living an existence without solid identity or a coherent sense of social solidarity. Unless its insecurities, needs and aspirations are addressed, the precariat will opt for political extremism. Yet, even since the financial crisis, chronic inequality is not being addressed. To combat this, and the growing amount of work-for-labour, a basic income is essential to give security to the precariat.

Standing argues that a feature of modern consumerism, with its squeeze on time, is a loss of leisure, as defined by public participation in society. He concludes that the only form of 'conditionality' that could be morally acceptable as a way of legitimising basic income is that people as citizens agree to vote and to participate in political activity in some way. In this, he differs from the view of Tony Atkinson, since the community labour that Atkinson advocates would have distortionary effects in the labour market. A basic income linked to participation in civil and political society would be a way of combating the political vacuum that is a true crisis in the making.

The book, "Work after Globalisation: Building occupational citizenship" can be purchased at a discount price via GuyStanding@standingnet.com.

See the flyer at http://www.basicincome.org/bien/pdf/Standing_Flyer.pdf

TOMLINSON, John (2009), 'The Northern Territory In(ter)vasion', *On Line Opinion. Australia's e-journal of social and political debate*, 14 October 2009, available at <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=9558>

This article looks at the Australian Federal Government's intervention into Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory which involves suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act, the quarantining of half of Aboriginal people's welfare payments for approved purposes and a school attendance requirement, and comparing that with the Namibian Basic Income Grant.

VAN DERBORGHT, Yannick & VAN PARIJS, Philippe (2009), 'Basic Income as a way of tackling poverty', *ENARgy, Newsletter of the European Network Against Racism*, November 2009, issue 30, pp.10-11. Available at <http://www.enar-eu.org/>

This issue of ENAR's Newsletter is entirely devoted to the *2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion*. In their short contribution, Vanderborght & Van Parijs give an overview of the reasons why basic income can be seen as an effective measure against poverty. In the last paragraph, they briefly argue in favour of a Euro-Dividend, which "might initially take the form of universal child benefits financed at the EU level".

YOUNG Margot & MULVALE, James P. (2009), 'Possibilities and Prospects: The Debate Over a Guaranteed Income', Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, *CCPA paper*, November 2009.

The idea of a guaranteed income has a long and respectable history in Canadian political and economic thought. Recently, in the face of both wide criticism of the Canadian income

security system and growing recognition of the unacceptability of current poverty rates, there has been a resurgence in calls for implementation of a Canadian guaranteed income. But the idea is a controversial one; progressive activists, academics, and politicians disagree about the desirability and the practicality of a guaranteed income. This report traces the history of guaranteed income proposals in Canada, reviews the arguments in favour and against, and suggests a number of other social welfare measures that should be central elements of any reform program, but that guaranteed income debates often ignore.

Available online at <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/possibilities-and-prospects>

FRENCH

DE BASQUIAT, Marc (2009), 'Rationalisation d'un système distributif complexe : la piste de l'allocation universelle', *Communication aux XXIXes Journées de l'Association d'Economie Sociale*, Créteil, 17-18 September 2009, available online at www.allocationuniverselle.com

In this paper French economist and BIEN Life-member Marc de Basquiat (GREQAM, *Université Paul Cézanne*) argues in favour of a €12,60/day basic income for all adults, funded by a 30% flat-rate tax.

Available at www.allocationuniverselle.com, author's address: marc@de-basquiat.com

FOUREL, Christophe (2009), 'André Gorz ou l'écologie politique comme dépassement du capitalisme', *Alternatives économiques*, 285, November 2009, pp.82-85.

In this short article, Fourel gives a few insights into the rich and stimulating work of André Gorz, a French philosopher and social theorist who died in 2007. As is stressed by the author, since 1997 Gorz was defending the introduction of a basic income as a logical consequence of technological change. Interestingly, the article includes a short interview with a prominent French sociologist, Robert Castel, a fierce critique of basic income proposals. Castel argues that Gorz was in favour of a *substantial* basic income, for instance at the level of the French minimum wage. This is, Castel believes, unrealistic. On the other hand, a partial basic income would amount to dismantle the welfare state. This is, Castel argues, undesirable.

Website: <http://www.alternatives-economiques.fr/>

VAN DER BORGHT, Yannick & VAN PARIJS, Philippe (2009), 'L'allocation universelle contre la pauvreté', *ENARgy, Lettre d'information du réseau européen contre le racisme*, November 2009, issue 30, pp.10-11. Available at <http://www.enar-eu.org/>

See "English" section above for an abstract.

TOURNADRE-PLANCQ, Jérôme (2009), '« Une cuillère en argent pour tout le monde ». L'Asset-based Welfare : diffusion, appropriations et usages d'une « nouvelle » théorie de l'État social', (A silver spoon for everyone". Asset-based welfare : The dissemination and appropriation of a "new" theory of the welfare State), *Revue française de science politique*, 59 (4), pp.633-653.

This article – published in France's most prominent political science journal – addresses the ongoing debate in the UK about the implementation of a public policy built on the theory of asset-based welfare. The core of this policy, the *Child Trust Fund*, is championed by its supporters as the best way to tackle inequalities of wealth. The debate over this new approach has brought to the fore an “American model” espoused by various asset-based welfare entrepreneurs, such as Bruce Ackerman & Anne Alstott (*The Stakeholder Society*, 1999), as well as Charles Murray. The article traces the dissemination and appropriation of that model, as well as the changing patterns of the center-left’s relationship to private ownership and the emergence of a “New Labourite welfare elite”.

Journal’s website: <http://www.afsp.msh-paris.fr/publi/rfsp/rfsp.html>

ITALIAN

Basic Income Network Italia (2009), *Reddito per tutti. Un'utopia concreta per l'era globale*, Roma: ManifestoLibri, November 2009, ISBN: 8872855861.

Details at http://www.manifestolibri.it/vedi_collana_indice.php?id=526

This book, entitled "*Basic Income for all: a real utopia for the global era*", is a collection of essays which includes papers by prominent figures of the Italian basic income debate, as well as by some of the most important supporters of basic income outside Italy (including Claus Offe, Guy Standing, Erik Olin Wright, Philippe Van Parijs, Philip Pettit, Daniel Raventos, and Carole Pateman). Several papers are available for the first time in Italian. The presentation by the publisher is unambiguous: in this volume, the authors argue for a "society based on the concepts of right to existence, freedom of choice, freedom to create, distribution of wealth, and equal dignity (...) An essential text to address, without preconceptions, the challenges of our time".

Basic Income Network Italy: <http://www.bin-italia.org/>

MURRA, Emanuele (2009), *Oltre il Condizionamento del Bisogno. Il Basic Income per una Società Giusta (Beyond Being Conditioned by Need. The Basic Income for a Just Society)*, Lecce: Università del Salento, Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione, Corso di Laurea Specialistica in Forme e Storia dei Saperi Filosofici. Supervisor prof. Mario Signore. 176pp.

A pdf version is available on the bin-italia web site :

<http://www.bin-italia.org/article.php?id=1456>

This thesis describes what basic income is and some political projects which it has inspired (ch. I); afterwards it compares the BI with four philosophical traditions and their idea of a just and fair society, looking at how BI can improve the ideal of social justice which each of them suggests (ch. II). In the third chapter the thesis looks at some specific situations within contemporary society and describes how the BI can improve them. This part finishes using the theory of Bauman about the new model of man, the modular man, showing, as Bauman himself suggests, how basic income could play a specific role in this new anthropology-model and the modular man society. At the end (ch. IV), the Habermas model of society and the phenomenological concept of the lifeworld are used, understanding basic income as a counter power that can help the lifeworld in its fight against the systemic colonization by market and bureaucracy.

PDF : <http://www.bin-italia.org/article.php?id=1456>

Author’s address : emanuelem81@gmail.com

MORENO MÁRQUEZ Gorka & BARRAGUÉ CALVO Borja (Eds.) (2009), *Renta Básica de Ciudadanía en tiempo de crisis*, Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, ISBN: 978-84-9860-049-0, PDF of the chapters are available online at <http://ixsimposiorb.com/cd/>

This CD-ROM is a collection of the papers presented during the 9th Symposium of the Spanish basic income network Red Renta Basica, which was held in Bilbao, the Basque Country in November 2009. It includes discussions of such themes as "Basic Income, Employment and Human Activity", "Political Feasibility of Basic Income", and "Basic Income and Social Movements". Among the authors are Iratxe Arriola, Borja Barragué, Iñaki Carro, Florent Marcellesi, Gorka Moreno, José Antonio Noguera, Rafael Pinilla, José Luis Rey, Luis Sanzo, Eguzki Urteaga, and Yannick Vanderborght.

Available at <http://ixsimposiorb.com/cd/>

4. NEW LINKS

*** Slavoj Žižek and basic income**

On October 29, 2009, the *New Statesman* (a British left-wing magazine) published an interview with Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek. In the interview, Žižek talks about the response to the financial crisis. "The only serious true serious proposal that we know about is, on the one hand this Krugman-Stiglitz leftist Keynesianism, and on the other this idea, popularised in Europe and Latin America, of basic income. I like it as an idea but I think it's too much of an ideological utopia. For structural reasons, it can't work. It's the last desperate attempt to make capitalism work for socialist ends. The guy who developed it, Robert [sic] Van Parijs, openly says that this is the only way to legitimise capitalism. Apart from these two, I don't see anything else."

Interview available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/2009/10/today-interview-capitalism>

*** Basic Income Featured on Canadian CBC Radio**

On October 18, 2009, excellent interviews were aired on "The Sunday Edition" on CBC Radio about poverty, guaranteed income, and the Dauphin Mincome experiment. The guests interviewed by host Michael Enright were Senator Hugh Segal, Ron Hikel (Executive Director of Mincome), and Dr. Evelyn Forget (University of Manitoba). The podcast is available at:

http://www.cbc.ca/thesundayedition/listen_stream.html#, click on October 18, 2009

See also: <http://westmanpreacher.blogspot.com/2009/10/common-sense-approach-to-poverty.html>

*** Cut the roots of poverty with a living wage**

Janice Harvey, president of the New Brunswick Green Party (CA), wrote a column for the *Telegraph-Journal* (Wednesday October 21st, 2009) in which she calls for a guaranteed income. She discusses the results of the Canadian negative income tax experiment conducted primarily in Dauphin, Manitoba in the 1970s. According to Harvey, researchers found that the

negative income tax improved community health and education indicators, and therefore reduced the cost of social programs. She concludes, “A guaranteed annual income, sometimes called a negative income tax, replaces all the piecemeal, ineffective measures now administered by provincial agencies It treats people with dignity and provides a basic level of well-being across the community without discrimination.”

The article is online at: <http://telegraphjournal.canadaeast.com/opinion/article/830851>

Janice Harvey's email address is: waweig@xplornet.ca

- From USBIG

*** Hong Kong students on the dangers of a negative income tax**

A short paper on the Negative income tax (published on Oct. 31, 2009) on a student blog on Hong Kong and Chinese politics. See:

<http://hongkongstudentsthinktank.blogspot.com/2009/10/dangers-of-negative-income-tax-nit.html>

*** Progressive step or recipe for disaster?**

This article by Julia Ley (November 1, 2009) in *The London Student* gives an overview of recent basic income movements in Europe:

<http://www.london-student.net/2009/11/01/progressive-step-or-recipe-for-disaster/>

*** An interview on basic income in Gara (Basque Country, Spain)**

In the framework of the IXth Symposium of the Spanish basic income network *Red Renta Basica*, which was held in Bilbao on November 19-21, 2009 (see 'Events' section above), Yannick Vanderborght (BIEN & Louvain University) was interviewed by Juanjo Basterra from the newspaper *Gara*. Available at:

<http://www.gara.net/paperezkoa/20091126/168834/es/Con/la/renta/basica/se/podrian/rechazar/los/empleos/indignos%C2%BB/>

5. ABOUT THE BASIC INCOME EARTH NETWORK

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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.

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.

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.

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