
BIEN The Basic Income European Network

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

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

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NewsFlash N°5

SEPTEMBER 2000

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

This *NewsFlash* has been prepared with the help Kathrin Bauer, Manfred Füllsack and Jeroen Knijff.

CONTENTS

1. Editorial
 2. BIEN's 8th Congress
 3. Publications
 - Dutch
 - English
 - English & German
 - French
 - German
 - Spanish
 4. National networks
 5. More about BIEN
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1. EDITORIAL

Not one place is left in the historical room that will host this week in Berlin the plenary sessions of BIEN's 8th Congress. We apologise to those whose registration had to be turned down as a result. But we are delighted at the prospect of meeting so many of you very soon.

As if to prove that the debate on basic income is more alive than ever, the holding of our 8th Congress coincides with the publication of four new major collective volumes on basic income, with the participation of many of the Congress speakers:

- Edited by Loek Groot (Amsterdam) and Robert van der Veen (Warwick), *Basic Income on the Agenda* (Amsterdam University Press) contains seventeen chapters by contributors from several European countries, including two government ministers currently in power, with a focus on policy objectives and political chances.
- Edited by Angelika Krebs (Frankfurt), a special issue of the bilingual journal *Analyse und Kritik* gathers seven critical contributions by young philosophers and economists from several European countries on the possibility of providing an ethical justification of basic income in terms of "real freedom for all" (<http://www.analysekritik.uni-duesseldorf.de>).
- Edited by Manfred Füllsack (Vienna), a special issue of the *Zeitschrift für Gemeinwirtschaft* gathers new contributions by eleven German and Austrian authors, including some of the best-known participants in the German-language debate (<http://www.voewq.at/zqw/news.html>).
- Edited by Joshua Cohen (MIT) and Joel Rogers (Wisconsin), the *Boston Review* devotes the Forum part of its October 2000 issue to *Delivering Basic Incomes*, with contributions by fifteen

prominent authors, most of them North-American, including a Nobel laureate (<http://bostonreview.mit.edu>).

All four publications are presented more fully below. They should all be available at the Congress, which promises to be once more an instructive and heartening opportunity for people from many countries to share their observations and their arguments, their thoughts and their hopes.

We greatly look forward to it.

The (new) Executive Committee

2. BIEN'S 8TH CONGRESS (BERLIN 2000)

PAPERS ON THE WEB

As papers reach the organisers, they are being made available on BIEN's web site (<http://www.etes.ucl.ac.be/BIEN/bien.html>). The paper presenters who have not yet done so are invited to e-mail their paper urgently (in Word attachment) to Yannick Vanderborght (vanderborght@etes.ucl.ac.be) and to Kathrin Bauer (BIEN@rz.hu-berlin.de).

PUBLICATIONS ON THE SPOT

Participants are encouraged to bring along any relevant books, papers or leaflets to be sold or distributed free of charge at the Congress.

LAST MINUTE REGISTRATIONS

The maximum number of participants has been reached for a while. However, in case you still want to register, contact urgently the Berlin secretariat to check some late minute cancellation might have freed a place:

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The Registration Form can be downloaded at <http://www.etes.ucl.ac.be/BIEN/bien.html>

FINAL PROGRAMME

Unless something unexpected occurs, the programme of the Congress will be as follows.

FRIDAY, October 6, 2000

9:00 a.m. -13:00 a.m., Social Science Research Centre Berlin, Reichpietschufer 50, D-10785 Berlin

PLENARY SESSIONS

Welcome addresses by Friedrich Neidhardt (WZB), Guy Standing (BIEN), Claus Offe (Organizer), Ralf Fücks (Boell-Stiftung) and Ute Klammer (Boeckler-Stiftung)

Keynote presentations by Bruce Ackerman (Yale), Roger Godino (Paris), Ingrid Robeyns (Cambridge), Wolf-Dieter Just (Mülheim/ Ruhr) and Eduardo Suplicy (Sao Paulo)

2:30 p.m.-6.30 p.m., Social Science Research Centre Berlin, Reichpietschufer 50, D-10785 Berlin

PARALLEL SESSIONS

- Working Group I-IV (provision list of papers in *BIEN News Flash* n°3)
 - I "Legitimizing non-market work"
 - II "Life time flexibility and income security"
 - III "Citizenship rights, responsibility, and paternalism"

IV "Basic Income and Social Cohesion in an integrating Europe"

7:30 p.m. onwards, Rotes Rathaus, Berlin-Mitte, D-10117 Berlin

RECEPTION offered by the Berlin Government

SATURDAY, October 7, 2000

9:00 a.m. 13.00 a.m., Social Science Research Center Berlin, Reichpietschufer 50, D-10785 Berlin

PARALLEL SESSIONS

- Working Group I-IV (provisional list of papers in *BIEN News Flash n°3*)

2:30 p.m.-6.30 p.m., Social Science Research Center Berlin, Reichpietschufer 50, D-10785 Berlin

PLENARY SESSIONS

- Politicians' Panel with
 - Andrea Fischer MP, Minister for Health, Germany
 - Christian Koeck, Chairperson, Liberales Forum, Austria
 - Lord Raymond Plant, UK
 - Michel Rocard MEP, former Prime Minister, France
 - Osmo Soiniavaara, Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Finland
- Concluding Plenary Session :
 - Reports by the Chairs of the Working Groups (Prof. Ilona Ostner, Dr Guy Standing, Alexander de Roo MEP, and Prof. Philippe Van Parijs, members of BIEN's Executive Committee)
 - Comments by the audience
 - Conclusion by Prof. Claus Offe, Chairman of the Organising Committee

7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Social Science Research Center Berlin, Reichpietschufer 50, D-10785 Berlin

BIEN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

9:00 p.m. onwards, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Hackesche Höfe, Rosentahler Strasse 40/41, Berlin

PARTY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

As usual, BIEN's General Assembly will have to decide on the time and place of BIEN's next Congress and elect its new Executive Committee. To save time at our short meeting, proposals and nominations can be (but need not be) made in advance, by being sent to BIEN's secretary (vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be). The relevant articles of BIEN's statutes are reproduced below.

- **"3. General Assembly:** BIEN's General Assembly is its sovereign body. It comprises all BIEN's individual members and no one else. It meets on the occasion of BIEN's regular international conference. It elects the Executive Committee, decides which organizations are to be represented on the International Board, approves the accounts, determines the membership fee, modifies the statutes on the basis of proposals sent to members at least one month in advance, and considers any other matter submitted to it by the Executive Committee. All decisions are taken under the simple majority rule. No proxy votes are allowed."
- **"4. Executive Committee:** BIEN's Executive Committee consists of not less than five and not more than seven members, who between them hold the following offices: conference organizer, chairman, secretary, treasurer, fund raiser, newsletter editor. The members are elected individually to these offices and in the order above, by the General Assembly, for a period extending to the latter's next meeting. The Executive Committee can co-opt other people for specific tasks, but without voting rights. It meets at least once a year at the Secretary's initiative. Within the limits set by the decisions of the General Assembly, it takes any action it judges useful to the pursuit of BIEN's purposes."

- **"5. International Board:** BIEN's International Board consists of the the Executive Committee and of representatives from a number of relevant organizations whose list is determined by the General Assembly. It meets at the Executive Committee's initiative to take decisions within the competence of the General Assembly that cannot wait until the latter's next meeting."

3. PUBLICATIONS

DUTCH

HET IDEALE EIGENBELANG. *Blad voor wereldburgers*, Varik (NL): Stichting UNO Inkomen (Noordwal 27, 5211 'sHertogenbosch, NL, uno-inkomen@gmx.net) 7(1), Spring 2000, 36p. and 7(2), zomer 2000, 36p.

The tireless followers of artist Pieter Kooistra develop his argument in favour of a worldwide basic income and related ideas. Here again, especially in a sequence of two articles by René Heeskens on "Why a worldwide basic income", in a reprint of a newspaper article by the Flemish TV journalist Dirk Barrez on "Ten Frank a Day for everyone", and in a comment on Loek Groot's doctoral thesis on "basic income and unemployment".

ENGLISH

BRITTAN, Samuel, "Stumbling towards a good idea", *Financial Times* 16 August 2000.

Written by Sir Samuel Brittan, the Financial Times assistant editor and long-term advocate of basic income, this is a predictably very sympathetic reaction to the Citizen's Income Study Centre's important research report "Stumbling Towards a basic Income. The prospects for tax-benefit integration" (by Bill Jordan, Phil Agulnik, Duncan Burbidge and Stuart Duffin, London, April 2000, citizens-income@lse.ac.uk, see *BIEN NewsFlash* n°3, May 2000). The headline runs: "Despite New Labour's insistence on the merits of paid work, its welfare reforms could lead to a basic income for all". Brittan follows the report in showing how an increase in the basic tax allowance up to the level of social assistance could lead to the introduction of a labour market participation income and next to a broader participation income. Some snags would remain, and the best way of avoiding them "might then be to go the whole hog to an unconditional Basic Income, which would not by then be all that much more expensive. The gain in preserving the good intentions and genuine altruism of a leftwing administration without all the nanny state attributes would be immense."

CHRISTENSEN, Erik. "Citizen's Income as a Heretical Political Discourse: The Danish Debate about Basic Income", in *Inclusion and Exclusion: Unemployment and Non-Standard Employment in Europe* (Jens Lind & Iver Hornemann Møller eds.), Aldershot (UK): Ashgate, 1999, 13-34.

Basic income first erupted into Denmark's political discourse through the major impact of *Oprør fra midten* (København: Gyldendal, 1978, English translation: *Revolt from the Centre*, London: Marion Boyars, 1981) by the physicist Niels Meyer, the philosopher Villy Sørensen and the politician Kristen Helveg Petersen. Ever since, it has come and gone, with different connotations and degrees of marginality. "A further new discourse around the idea, so pitched as to bring together support from among socialists, liberals, feminists and 'greens' is still awaiting its realisation. History seems to show that the idea has a vitality which allows it to re-appear in new shape, even after it has been forgotten for a time."

CITIZEN'S INCOME NEWSLETTER n°2, London, Summer 2000, 16p. (citizens-income@lse.ac.uk, www.citizensincome.org)

From an opening article by a Member of the Scottish parliament from Scottish National Party to various reports from Sweden, Spain or South Africa, several book reviews and a few other short pieces, the new-styled CI newsletter offers a lively picture of the the debate on and around basic income at home and abroad.

COHEN, Joshua and ROGERS, Joel eds., *Delivering Basic Incomes*, special issue of the *Boston Review* 25 (5), October-November 2000 (<http://bostonreview.mit.edu>).

This is probably the most substantial published debate on basic income in the US since the early seventies. It is published in the MIT-based bimonthly political-literary magazine *Boston Review* and will be republished in the Spring of 2001 in the form of a book published by Beacon Press in its "New Democracy Forum" series under the title *What's Wrong with a Free Lunch?* In the lead piece, Philippe Van Parijs (University of Louvain) sketches the case for basic income in today's North-American

context. It is followed by fifteen comments by leading intellectuals, most of them from the US. The overall tone of the responses is surprisingly (and unrepresentatively) sympathetic. Thus the LSE economist Ronald Dore ("Dignity and Deprivation") and the Nobel laureate in economics Herbert A. Simon ("Universal Basic Income and the Flat Tax") provide neat formulations of a justification of an unconditional basic income as a fair distribution of what we owe to the luck of our circumstances. The Yale University professor of tax law Anne Alstott ("Good for Women") emphasises the many ways in which a basic income would be particularly favourable to women. Katherine Mcfate ("A Debate We Need"), of the Rockefeller Foundation, argues that a debate on basic income in the US should get off the ground and that the discussion of family policy provides a promising point of departure. Gar Alperovitz ("On Liberty"), president of the Washington-based Center for economic and security alternatives, argues that it would contribute to the citizens' economic independence which a democracy requires. The Cambridge University historian of economic thought Emma Rothschild ("Security and Laissez-Faire") reminds the readers of the efficiency arguments for economic security to be found in Condorcet and Adam Smith, but also urges them to take the international dimension into account. Fred Block ("Why Pay Bill Gates?"), professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, argues for the negative income tax variant of basic income on the ground that it is less costly. Bill Galston, Elizabeth Anderson and Brian Barry, professors of political philosophy at the Universities of Maryland, of Michigan and Columbia, respectively, all have misgivings about a philosophical justification of an unconditional basic income in terms of justice as real freedom for all. But whereas Galston ("What about reciprocity?") holds that social justice is better served by a package of more conditional measures, Anderson ("Freedom and Responsibility") is sensitive to the stigma associated with more targeted programmes and seems to acknowledge the legitimacy of a case resting on equal property rights, as in Alaska's dividend programme, and Barry ("Universal Basic Income and the Work Ethic") develops a forceful pragmatic case in favour of an unconditional basic income, with a participation income as a possibly unavoidable intermediate step. This is also the opinion of Robert Goodin ("Something for Nothing?"), professor of political philosophy at the Australian National University, who argues that the flux of today's careers and life patterns makes an undifferentiated income guarantee the only workable alternative to a highly discretionary and arbitrary assistance system. In a similar spirit, Claus Offe ("Pathways from Here"), professor of social theory at Humboldt University in Berlin, sketches various strategies through which basic income could be gradually approximated. In very different styles, the Georgetown University Professor of Law Peter Edelman ("The Bigger Picture") and the leader of the low-income people's association ACORN, Wade Rathke ("Falling in Love Again"), both express scepticism as to whether the fight for such an ambitious objective is worth while, given the energy it would divert from the pursuit of more achievable goals. The most hostile piece is by Columbia University economist Ned Phelps ("Subsidize Wages"). He notes that "most of western Europe has already gone a long way toward providing universal - that is, unconditional - benefits to its citizens" and takes his hat off for what he describes as "the strongest imaginable case for going the rest of the way with a universal basic income". But in the name of what he takes to be "America's collective project", he argues that this is not the way the U.S. must go. For massive subsidies focused on low-paid full time work are a far more effective way of enabling everyone to gain "a sense of contributing something to the country's collective project, which is business". The collection closes with a brief response by Philippe Van Parijs.

GORZ, André, *Reclaiming Work*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2000. (Author's address: F-10130 VOSNON, France.)

The book's basic theme, familiar to André Gorz's readers, is that we must "dare to want an exodus from the work society". Its central impulse stems from the indignant observation that our society needs less and less paid work but keeps nurturing the belief that every person needs paid work for her/his well-being and dignity. True, people need a sufficient and stable income. They also need to act and be appreciated by others. Capitalism's trick is to merge these two things by making jobs the paramount means for obtaining both income and recognition, and to use this merger in order to secure people's submission to capital. An unconditional basic income provides a way out, but only if it is sufficient to live on. Chapter 4 of this English translation of Gorz's *Misères du présent, richesse du possible* (Paris: Galilée, 1997) evidences how much André Gorz travelled since his earlier firm opposition to an unconditional basic income (see his contribution to *Arguing for Basic Income*, P. Van Parijs ed., London, Verso, 1992), while remaining loyal to his fundamental commitments.

GROOT, Loek & VAN DER VEEN, Robert (eds.) *Basic Income on the Agenda: Policy Objectives and Political Chances*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. September 2000, Dfl 70,- 280pp.

Persisting unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, labour market, flexibility, job insecurity and higher wage inequality, changing patterns of work and family life are among the factors that exert pressure on welfare states in Europe. After a short preface by Finland's Minister of Social Affairs and long-time BIEN member Osmo Soiniavaara and a substantial introduction by the volume editors and organisers of BIEN's 1998 Congress Loek Groot (University of Amsterdam) and Robert van der Veen (Warwick University), part I explores the potential of an unconditional basic income as a way of fighting unemployment without reducing poverty. The contrast between basic income and more employment-focused subsidies is at the focus of the chapters by Paul de Beer, economist at the Dutch Social Planning Bureau and initiator of the basic income discussion within the Dutch social-democratic party PvdA ("In Search of the Double-edged Sword"), by Philippe Van Parijs, professor at the

University of Louvain, and his research assistants Claudio Salinas and Laurence Jacquet ("Basic Income and its Cognates"), by Frank Vandembroucke, Belgium's federal Minister for social affairs, and his collaborator Tom van Puyenbroeck ("Activation and the Burden of Working"), by Joachim Mitschke, professor of public finance at the University of Frankfurt ("Arguing for a Negative Income Tax in Germany"), by Anton Hemerijk, joint author of the recent report on income security for the Portuguese presidency of the European Union ("Prospects for Basic Income in an Age of Inactivity?") and by Ingrid Robeyns, economist at the University of Cambridge ("Hush Money or Emancipation Fee? A Gender Analysis of Basic Income"). The European dimension is at the core of the chapters by Steve Quilley, sociologist at University College Dublin ("European Basic Income or the Race to the Bottom") and Fritz Scharpf, director of Cologne's Max Planck Institute ("Basic Income and Social Europe"), whose striking critical reflections at BIEN's 1998 Amsterdam Congress is here followed by a comment by Philippe Van Parijs ("Basic Income at the Heart of Social Europe? Reply to Fritz Scharpf"). Part II turns to the political chances of basic income in various European countries. Loek Groot and Robert-Jan van der Veen (the editors of the volume) present some "clues and leads in the policy debate on basic income in the Netherlands", while Erik Christensen and Jörn Loftager take the readers through "the ups and downs of basic income in Denmark". Jan-Otto Andersson (professor at Åbo University, in Eastern Finland) asks "why Basic Income thrills the Finns, but not the Swedes". Sean Healy and Brigid Reynolds, the members of the Justice commission of the Conference of Religious of Ireland who have stimulated the Irish debate more than anyone else explain how "basic income is being put on the political agenda in Ireland". Stefan Lessenich (University of Göttingen) despondently surveys "the debate on social policy reform in Germany". Chantal Euzéby (University of Grenoble) sketches "the reforms that the minimum income provision needs in France". Finally, Yannick Vanderborght describes "the VIVANT Experiment", i.e. the fate of the single-issue party that campaigned for a generous VAT-funded basic income and got 2% of the vote at Belgium's 1999 election.

HUBER, Joseph & ROBERTSON, James. *Creating New Money. A Monetary Reform for the Information Age*. London: New Economics Foundation (www.neweconomics.org, info@neweconomics.org.uk), 2000, 92p., £ 7.95, ISBN 1 899407 29 4. (Authors' addresses: Institut für Soziologie, Martin-Luther-Universität, D-06099 Halle, huber@soziologie.uni-halle.de, The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, OX10 9NU, England, robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk.)

The fruit of collaboration between a German academic and a British economic writer, this book argues for one reform: the reappropriation by governments of the right of seigniorage now possessed by private banks. About 95% of new money currently issued takes the form of loans made by private banks to their customers. Huber and Robertson want to make this illegal. The creation of new money, both cash and non-cash, should be the exclusive prerogative of the Central Bank. The latter should determine how much it creates in the light of the objectives chosen for the country's monetary policy, and credit the new money to the government, who will then put it into circulation by spending it. What on? The government of the day should decide. This would however be a natural source of funding - through "distribution" rather than "redistribution" - of a modest and fluctuating basic income, as explained by Huber in his earlier, more technical book (*Vollgeld*, Berlin, 1998) but not taken up in this more shorter and more accessible presentation of the reform proposal.

SCHMITTER, Philippe. "The scope of citizenship in a democratized European Union: From Economic to Political to Social and Cultural?", abridged as Chapter 3 of Ph. Schmitter, *How to Democratize the European Union ... and Why Bother?* Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000; forthcoming (expanded) in the European Journal for Social Policy. (Author's address: European University Institute, Department of Political and Social Sciences, CP 2330, I - 50100 FIRENZE, schmitte@datacomm.iue.it)

Among a number of proposals, some modest, others less so, that may help enhance the legitimacy of the European Union in its citizens' eyes, Professor Philippe Schmitter, professor of political science at the European University Institute (Florence), puts forward the idea of a Euro-stipendium. "An Euro-stipendium would consist of the monthly payment of a stipulated amount of Euros to all citizens or permanent residents living within the EU whose total earnings correspond to less than one-third of the average income of everyone living within the EU." Schmitter is aware of some of the drawbacks of mean-tested schemes. "It is not even too far-fetched to imagine", he therefore hopes, "that this means-tested welfare policy could eventually be converted into a universalistic one that would provide a minimal basic income to everyone, regardless of his or her earned income." It is interesting to quote at length the two reasons why this renowned European Union specialist believes the Euro-stipendium to be an idea whose time has come: "One predictable effect of a single European currency and interest rate will be increasing regional disparities within member countries. The present policy of structural/regional funds is much too rigid to cope with such an eventuality - especially if the increased inequalities at the margin are not concentrated in areas already designed for such funds. The Euro-stipendium would both ensure that all those dramatically and negatively affected would be protected and it is not tied to any fixed territorial criterion. Those who slipped into extreme poverty as an indirect and unintended consequence of monetary unification would be protected no matter where they lived and no matter whether others in their vicinity were similarly affected. Moreover, the compensation would be automatic and not necessitate the (time-consuming, costly and politically contingent) intervention of price-setting committees or project designers. But the major appeal stems

from the anticipated impact of Eastern Enlargement. Everyone recognises that the existing EU welfare policies of agricultural subsidies and regional grants cannot simply be extended eastwards without very substantial and politically discriminatory modifications."

VAN DER LINDEN, Bruno. "Fighting unemployment without worsening poverty : Basic income versus reductions of social security contributions", in Wiemer Salverda, Claudio Lucifora and Brian Nolan (eds.) *Policy Measures for Low-Wage Employment in Europe*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, 2000, pp 93-120. ISBN: 1 84064 410 9. (Author's address: IRES, 3 Place Montesquieu, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, vanderlinden@ires.ucl.ac.be)

In this technical article, the labour economist and new chairman of Louvain University's economic research institute Bruno Van der Linden analyses a reduction of social security contributions and the introduction of a basic income (or, equivalently, of a negative income tax) in a dynamic general equilibrium framework with imperfect competition on the labour market (the so-called 'wage-setting/price-setting' model, with workers possessing either all the same skills, or two levels of skills). It turns out that both policies have a favourable long-run effect on the unemployment rate if they are appropriately designed, and that they can constitute Pareto improvements, i.e. make at least some better off without making anyone worse off.

WHITE, Stuart. Review Article: Social Rights and the Social Contract - Political Theory and the New Welfare Politics", in *Britisch Journal for Political Science* 30, 2000, 507-32. (Author's address: Jesus College, Oxford, sgwhite@MIT.EDU)

One major theme in contemporary debates about the welfare state throughout Europe is that "access to welfare benefits is one side of a contract between citizen and community which has as its reverse side various responsibilities that the individual citizen is obliged to meet". In this well-documented and well-structured article, Stuart White, fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, where he teaches political philosophy, investigates the normative underpinnings of this welfare contractualism. The last section is entitled "Basic income: an alternative to welfare contractualism?" He first summarises the principled justification of the basic income proposal to be found in Van Parijs's *Real Freedom for All* (OUP, 1995), but remains unpersuaded: "It is, I think, by no means clear that [a citizen surfer's] claim on society's supply of job assets carries the same moral weight as the claim made by an individual who wishes to make a productive contribution, or indeed any moral weight at all." However, White does find the idea of basic income attractive because it is likely to have a number of desirable effects from the standpoint of the normatively appropriate standpoint of "fair reciprocity", such as a reduction of the pressure to accept unpleasant jobs or the provision of an income to those who perform unpaid care work. True, some other measures could conceivably have the same effects without violating reciprocity. But in White's view, this defense of basic income is "promising", and it "can be made even stronger" if we "complement the original basic income proposal so as to speak directly to the concern of fair reciprocity, for example by adding some broad participation condition (as proposed by A.B. Atkinson), or by combining it with a compulsory civic service (as proposed by André Gorz or Ronald Dore), or by imposing a time-limit on the enjoyment of a basic income: "moderated basic income proposals of this kind may have a useful contribution to make to the creation of a form of economic citizenship that satisfies the demands of fair reciprocity".

ENGLISH & GERMAN

KREBS, Angelika (ed.). *Basic Income? A Symposium on Van Parijs*, special issue of *Analyse & Kritik* (www.analysekritik.uni-duesseldorf.de) 22 (2), 2000, pp.153-269.

A rich collection of theoretical essays on the normative justification of an unconditional basic income coordinated by Frankfurt philosopher Angelika Krebs (krebs@em.uni-frankfurt.de), with special reference to the systematic justification sketched in Philippe Van Parijs's "Why Surfers Should Be Fed" (in *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 1991) and systematically worked out in his *Real Freedom for All* (Oxford University Press, 1995; paperback 1997). The three German contributors - Krebs herself in a piece entitled "Why mothers should be fed", Heiner Michel (also at Frankfurt's philosophy department, heiner.michel@em.uni-frankfurt.de) in his "critique of Van Parijs's economicism" and Ulrich Steinvoth (of Hamburg University's philosophy department, ulstein@philosophie.uni-hamburg.de) in his discussion of basic income and unemployment - are particularly concerned about basic income's inability to secure a right to social recognition through work. Søren Midtgaard (a political scientist at Aarhus University in Denmark, midtgaard@ps.au.dk) in his article on "ambition-sensitivity and unconditional basic income" and Richard Sturn and Rudi Dujmovits (both economists at the University of Graz in Austria rudolf.dujmovits@kfuni-graz.ac.at) in a long and sophisticated treatment of "basic income in complex worlds", focus instead on the key role given to market equilibrium prices in the conception of justice expounded in *Real Freedom for All*. Finally, in his "Sharing Job Resources", Jürgen De Wispelaere (a research student in political science at the London School of Economics, J.De-Wispelaere@lse.ac.uk) challenges Van Parijs's assimilation of the value of jobs to the endowments to be shared fairly among all citizens. The next issue of *Analyse & Kritik*

(23/1, 2001) will contain a further contribution by Ingrid Robeyns, a research student in economics at the University of Cambridge, on "Basic income and women" and an extensive reply by Philippe Van Parijs ("Real Freedom, the Market and the Family"), already available on the journal's web site. The contributions by Krebs, Michel and Steinvorth are in German, all the others in English.

FRENCH

BELORGEY, Jean-Michel & FOUQUET, Annie. "Quelle garantie de revenu aux personnes les plus défavorisées?", in *Problèmes économiques* 2679, 3 September 2000, 28-30.

This is a pretty confused extract of the report on minimum income guarantees directed by former socialist MP Jean-Michel Belorgey on behalf of the Commissariat général du Plan (18 rue de Martignac, F-75700 Paris, www.plan.gouv.fr). For example, it states a contrast between universal basic income (or uniform benefit) and negative income tax (or degressive benefit) in terms of their underlying philosophies: one gives no special value to work, while the other values it strongly. Might the authors of the report never have looked at a graph showing the formal equivalence between basic income and negative income tax? They also wonder what sense it makes to grant a basic income to people whose income level is so high that their marginal utility gain from this income is practically zero. Might it never have crossed their minds that the advocates of a basic income do realise that it needs financing?

BERTELOOT, Bernard. *Un Capital. De l'Etat redistributeur à l'Etat prêteur*. Pithiviers (FR): JAS Edition, 2000, 186p., 126 FF, ISBN 2-91-1090-01-2. (Author's address: 4 Les Hauts de Grisy, F-78860 St Nom La Bretèche, France.

Active in the French banking sector, Bernard Berteloot advocates in this book the introduction of a basic capital grant for all, which he calls "Avance sur Héritage". On reaching the age of 28, every resident would be given by the State a sum of about 40.000 Euros as an advance payment of the inheritance to be received later. Those who do not inherit anything or inherit less than this amount return only part of this amount or nothing at all. Those who had already inherited or been given something before the age of 28 have their grant cut by 50% of the amounts thus received. The gross cost of this measure would be about 2.2% of France's GNP. Berteloot reckons that, once the system is in place for a sufficient length of time (say, 50 years), about 75% of the capital grant (assumed constant in real terms) could be funded by the refunding of the advance payment. This measure would distribute the nation's patrimony more fairly among all its joint owners, and make it available to all earlier in life. This "liberal-socialist" alternative to social democracy (distinct from, but close in spirit to the one advocated in Bruce Ackerman and Anne Alstott's *Stakeholders' Society*, Yale U.P., 1999) raises a wide range of objections, some of which are discussed in the final chapter.

BLAIS, François. "Loisir, travail et réciprocité. Une justification 'rawlsienne' de l'allocation universelle est-elle possible?", in *Loisir et société* (Montréal) 22 (2), automne 1999, 337-353. (Author's address: Francois.Blais@pol.ulaval.ca)

Rawls's theory of justice has been used to justify a universal basic income. But this can only be done, according to Laval University political theorist François Blais, if one neglects the importance he attaches to reciprocity. Once this is taken into account, a Rawlsian should rather lean towards employment subsidies or at least a participation income, i.e. a basic income conditional upon some form of social contribution.

LAURENT, Thierry & L'HORTY, Yannick. "Réforme du RMI et incitations à l'emploi: une mise en perspective, paper presented at the conference "*Working Poor* en France", Université d'Evry (France): Centre d'étude des politiques économiques, May 2000, 30p. (Authors' address: EPEE, 4 Bd Mitterand, F-91025 Evry, laurent@eco.univ-evry.fr; lhorty@eco.univ-evry.fr)

If there is a case for modifying France's guaranteed minimum income scheme (RMI) in the direction of a negative income tax (as in Roger Godino's proposal of an "allocation compensatoire de revenu"), the authors argue, it must be in terms of distributive justice rather than in terms of work incentives. For if the aim is to improve work incentives for the beneficiaries of the minimum income, temporary combinations of benefits with earnings are just as effective and far cheaper (and hence less detrimental to work incentives higher up). For either these beneficiaries are short-sighted (rationally or not) and then all that matters is their short-term net income, in terms of which temporary measures can do at least as well; or beneficiaries are far-sighted and then they will bear in mind that accepting a job, even for a net pay no higher than their benefits, improves significantly their long-term prospects. Because of an imperfect credit market, unbearable short-term duress may of course deter them from taking this course of action, but precisely a temporary combination of benefits and low earnings can bridge them over. In comparison the permanent subsidies to low-paid workers involved in NIT-type measures look like huge windfall benefits to people who do not need them to work. Their much larger net cost - which is no less, they point out in their last footnote, that that of the corresponding

universal basic income - may still be justified, but it must be by its greater contribution to the reduction of income inequalities.

OSTNER, Ilona. "Minima sociaux et incitation à l'emploi en Europe: convergence des objectifs, divergence des moyens", in *Lien social et politiques*, RIAC (Montréal) n° 42, automne 1999, 13-23. (Author's address: lostner@qwdq.de)

An overview of European welfare state reform by BIEN's co-chair and Göttingen professor Ilona Ostner, originally published in German (see below).

GERMAN

EICHLER, Daniel. *Armut, Gerechtigkeit und soziale Grundsicherung. Die Entwicklung und normative Rechtfertigung eines armutsvermeidenden und gerechten Sozialsicherungsmodells in Anlehnung an die Theorie des Unbedingten Grundeinkommens*. Frankfurt: Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität, Institut für Philosophie, M.A. Abschlussarbeit (Dir.: Prof. Axel Honneth), Januar 2000, 158p. (Address: "Daniel Eichler" zungenbrecher@freenet.de)

A well-informed and sophisticated discussion of the normative foundations of an unconditional basic income submitted as an MA thesis at Frankfurt's philosophy department.

FUELLSACK, Manfred (ed.). *Garantiertes Grundeinkommen?*, special double issue of *Zeitschrift für Gemeinwirtschaft* (<http://www.voewg.at/zgw/news.html>) 38 (3-4), ATS 250,- / Euro 18,17. Editor's address: Gruentorgasse 31/12, A-1090 Vienna/Austria manfred.fuellsack@univie.ac.at

Largely based on a conference organised in Vienna in May 2000, this special issue of an independent Vienna-based economic journal consists of three parts. The first one gathers recent pieces by three of the people who most contributed to lunching the debate on basic income in Austria and Germany in the 1980s: Lieselotte Wohlgenannt (a now retired research fellow at the Katholische Sozialakademie, Vienna) on "basic income and social development", Georg Vobruba (Austrian, but now professor at the University of Leipzig in former East Germany) on "the basic income discussion on the background of the twofold crisis of waged labour" and Michael Opielka (a former parliamentary assistant for the Bundestag's Green group and now professor of social policy in Iena) on "Basic income politics. Pragmatic steps of an evolutionary reform". Part 2 collects three contributions by three social philosophers at the University of Vienna: Karl Reitter (who organised the conference from which this issue originates) writes on "social identity, social integration and the guaranteed basic income" and Manfred Fuellsack (the editor of the issue) on "social rejections and their possible alleviation through a guaranteed basic income", while Gabriele Grün (a student) makes some "remarks on the discussion of a universal basic income". The final part is entitled "Realpolitik". It consists in descriptive pieces by Bruno Kaltenborn (economic and political consultant in Bonn) comparing minimum income systems in the member states of the European Union, and by Christoph Parak (collaborator of the public sector organisation VOEWG) on the EU's social policy; and in more programmatic pieces by Karl Öllinger (member of Parliament and spokesman for the Green party) on "basic security and basic income: no easy solution" and Volker Kier (former member of Parliament) on "basic security as a right" and the proposals of the Liberales Forum, the left-liberal party (no longer represented in Parliament because it fell under the 5% threshold) which has been arguing for a basic income for some years. The issue closes with a bibliography on the subject and some book reviews.

MITSCHE, Joachim. *Beschäftigungs- und Sozialpolitik im Niedriglohnsektor. Empfehlungen an die FDP-Landtagsfraktion Rheinland-Pfalz*. February 2000, 48p. (Author's address: Bergstrasse 32, D-66130 Saarbrücken-Güdingen, Germany.)

Written at the request of the liberal parliamentary group of the Land of Rhineland-Westphalia, this report is a systematic comparison of the costs and effects of three proposals under discussion in the Land, all aimed at improving the employment prospects of less skilled workers. One of them, favoured by Mitschke, is described as a "reduced variant of a citizen's income (Bürgergeld)". It consists in a refundable earnings tax credit gradually phased out as earnings increase, combined with a gradual phasing out of social assistance as earnings increase (at 50% of each Euro earned).

MITSCHE, Joachim. *Wirkungen und Finanzbedarf eines negativsteuorientierten Grundsicherungsmodells für die Republik Österreich*. April 2000, 47p. (Author's address: Bergstrasse 32, D-66130 Saarbrücken-Güdingen, Germany.)

In this report, Professor Mitschke, who teaches public finance at the university of Frankfurt and has been playing a major role in the German discussion on basic income and negative income tax ideas, offers an in-depth costing of an individual basic income (Grundeinkommen) of about 650 Euros per month for all adult Austrian residents (about 100 Euros for children under 15, and 200 between 15 and

19), as recently proposed by a group of experts. To reduce the net cost, he proposes to reduce the amount for adults and broaden the tax base, while sticking to household-insensitive amounts and to effective rates of taxation on the lowest earnings of no more than 50%. This report is based on a longer piece by the same author also devoted to the Austrian case (*Grundsicherungsmodelle - Ziele, Gestaltung und Wirkungen. Eine fundamentalanalyse mit besonderem Bezug auf die Steuer- und Sozialordnung sowie den Arbeitsmarkt der Republik Österreichs*, April 2000, 211 pp.)

OSTNER, Ilona. "Soziale Mindestsicherungen und Beschäftigungsförderung in Europa - Konvergenz der Ziele, Divergenz der Lösungen", in Hilmar Schneider (ed), *Europas Zukunft als Sozialstaat. Herausforderungen der Integration*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000, 67-83 (with a comment by Rüdiger Pohl, 84-86. (Author's address: iostner@gwdg.de)

An overview, by BIEN co-chair and Göttingen University professor of social policy Ilona Ostner, of European social policy reform as a complex interplay of decommodification and recommodification.

SPANISH

CUADERNOS RENTA BASICA n°2, 2000, 40p. (Published by Eco-Concern, Mare de Deu del Pilar 15, Barcelona 08003, ecoconcern@troc.es)

This second issue of the beautifully produced journal of the Spanish basic income network AREBA (Asociación Renta Basica, joseiglesias@wanadoo.es; www.rentabasica.net) contains a glimpse of the discussion around the idea in Basque country (by Tomas Etxabe) and in the province of León (by the energetic Ramiro Pinto Canon), a reflection on the relevance of Canada's old age pension system by Jose Iglesias Fernandez, two more theoretical pieces based on recent doctorates in economics at the University of Barcelona (by Daniel Raventos on "the rational criteria of all social projects" and by Mario Eduardo Firmenich on labour market failures and "non-labour rents") and a note by Roberto Trepal, Loli Pablo and Ibert Moncayo on how a basic income could be handed out within families.

RAVENTOS, Daniel, "Es posible dar un salario a todo el mundo", in *El Pais* (Economía/ Trabajo), n°1553, 3 August 2000.

Published in Spain's top daily newspaper El Pais, this is a substantive interview with Daniel Raventos on the occasion of BIEN's 2000 Berlin Congress. Raventos is professor of economics at the University of Barcelona and author of the first introductory monograph on basic income in Spanish under the title *The Right to Existence* (El derecho a la existencia. La propuesta del Subsidio Universal Garantizado. Barcelona: Ariel, 1999). Interview: <http://www.elpais.es/p/d/20000803/economia/raventos.htm>; interviewee's address: ravento@eco.ub.es.

4. NATIONAL NETWORKS

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OTHER RELEVANT WEBSITES

- <http://www.apfc.org>: The official site of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation. Among much other information, it features the annual amounts of the universal and unconditional dividend paid to each Alaskan resident since 1982: nearly 2000 US dollars in 2000, compared to less than 400 at the start.
- <http://www.humano.va.com/ademetrio>: Run by Daniel Raventos, professor of economics at the University of Barcelona, this site gives wide information on publications and events relevant to basic income, especially in Spanish and in Catalan. It has an associated electronic list: <http://www.rediris.es/list/info/rentabasica.html>. Contact address: ravento@eco.ub.es
- <http://www3.sympatico.ca/tim.rourke/bi.html>: Run by Tim Rourke, a quick seminar on what Basic Income is all about so that people can then get up from the computer screen and go and do something about it." Contact address: tim.rourke@sympatico.ca

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