

Minutes of a meeting of the Basic Income Earth Network General Assembly held at the BIEN Congress in Lisbon, Portugal

Part I: Monday 25th September 2017, 18:00

1. The chair, Louise Haagh, described the proposed move of BIEN's registration from Belgium to the United Kingdom, took questions, and invited members to arrange a time to meet her if they required further discussion.
2. The proposals for changes to membership fees and changes to the voting procedure for Executive Committee members were discussed.
3. Representatives of the four countries bidding to host the 2019 BIEN Congress spoke about their proposals.
4. A discussion on fundraising took place.

Part II: Wednesday 27th September 2017, 17:30

1. Present: 36 members and several observers
2. Opening of GA and welcome: The Chair, Louise Haagh, opened the meeting, and welcomed members and other attendees.
3. Roll call and confirmation of membership: Members' names were checked and ballot papers were given to members.
4. Approval of the rule-keeper: Michael Howard was appointed.
5. Approval of the agenda: The agenda was approved. Members agreed to take items requiring single transferable vote before the Chair's report.
6. Approval of the minutes of the 2016 GA: The minutes were approved.
7. Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda: There were none.
8. Executive Committee decision to change BIEN's status from an International Non-profit-making Association registered in Belgium to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in the United Kingdom:
 - a) The Chair proposed that the meeting should ratify the Executive Committee's decision to change BIEN's status from an International Non-profit-making Association registered in Belgium to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in the United Kingdom; that it should establish a committee consisting of Louise Haagh, Malcolm Torry and one or two more volunteers to work on a set of internal rules to accompany the new constitution and to bring proposed rules to the 2018 General Assembly; and that the paper on internal rules accompanying the agenda should provide the basis for those internal rules. Philippe van Parijs confirmed that he would be willing to assist the committee. Voting was 29 for, 0 against, 1 abstention.
 - b) The Chair proposed that the meeting should appoint Annie Miller, Jay Ginn, Jake Eliot and Mark Wadsworth (all trustees of the Citizen's Basic Income Trust) as additional trustees for the Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and that it should appoint Mark Wadsworth as BIEN's treasurer (Andrea Fumagalli having stood down). Voting was 31 for, 0 against, and 0 abstentions.
9. Future elections for Executive Committee members: The meeting was asked to choose one of the following three options (by single transferable vote):
 - a) Multiple electronic ballots for the different officers and the different EC positions. (cost \$200 x number of ballots, so approx. \$1,800)
 - b) Voting at the GA by secret ballot for the different officers and postholders, i.e., not voting by electronic or postal ballot

- c) Allowing postal ballots alongside a secret ballot at the GA for the different officers and postholders.

(Agenda note: In the case of options 1 or 3, no candidate can stand for more than one post, and nominations will have to be received by one month before the GA. In the case of option 2 the GA could decide that nominations would need to be received by one month before the GA.)

Voting results were as follows: First preference votes: a) 11, b) 9, c) 12. b) was therefore eliminated. Once second preference votes had been transferred from option b), results were as follows: a) 13, c) 18. The decision is for a postal ballot alongside a secret ballot at the GA for different officers and postholders.

An additional resolution was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Troy Henderson: that candidates must be nominated at least one month in advance of Executive Committee elections and candidates' details placed on the GA website. Voting was 27 for, 3 against, and 1 abstention.

10. Venues for the 2019 congress: The meeting voted by single transferable vote on whether the 2019 congress should be in Australia, India, the United Kingdom, or the United States of America. Voting results were as follows: First preference votes: Australia, 3; India, 22; United Kingdom, 3; United States, 3; 1 abstention. The decision is for the 2019 congress to be held in India.
11. Reports: The Chair's report, the Treasurer's report, the Outreach report, and the News report, were all received.
12. A proposal to amend the requirements for affiliation: The paper was discussed and agreed. Voting was 31 for, 0 against, 1 abstention.
13. Requests for affiliation received: from Iceland, Malawi, and World Basic Income. All three requests were agreed: voting was 28 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions.
14. A proposal to change BIEN policy towards donations and membership fees: The paper was discussed. Voting on the different proposals was as follows: a) that the donation for BIEN factors should rise from 200€ to 400€ per annum: 20 for, 0 against, 4 abstentions; b) Following amendment of the proposal to enable non-members to be regular donors: that a new status of regular donor should be created: 23 for, 0 against, 1 abstention; c) That the life membership fee should rise from 100€ to 200€: 9 for, 11 against, 4 abstentions; d) that a yearly membership should be created with a sliding scale of annual fees: 18 for, 5 against, 1 abstention. All of the proposals were therefore agreed, apart from the proposed increase in the life membership fee.
15. Any other business:
16. A resolution was proposed by Ali Kōylüoğlu and seconded by Andrea Fumagalli: that the following should be added to the definition of Basic Income on BIEN's website: 'In accordance with The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25, paragraph 1, which says: "(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." Basic Income is a human right.'
- An amendment was proposed by Malcolm Torry and seconded by Reimund Acker: That the following should be added at the end of the resolution: 'This resolution is not intended to change BIEN's definition of Basic Income'. This was agreed nem con, with 2 abstentions.
- The meeting agreed that the resolution as amended should be tabled: voting was 24 for, 0 against, 1 abstention.
17. A question was received: Would it be possible to provide childcare facilities at BIEN congresses? The chair responded that she had raised this with the LOC and that Jurgen de Wispeleare on behalf of the Finland LOC had confirmed that this is something that the LOC will work towards.
18. The Chair thanked members for attending, thanked the congress organisers, and closed the meeting at 19:50.