

**Personal Statement**  
**Candidate for BIEN Secretary**

2021 BIEN Congress

Dear BIEN members,

I joined the basic income community not long ago and come with a United Nations background working in international development and policy analysis. I returned to university to explore a different approach to development and peacebuilding focusing on the applicability of basic income in countries coming out of war. I am currently in the PhD programme at the University of Vienna researching the potential of basic income for social cohesion in such societies. Originally from Syria and witness to the cycle of unending violence in the wider Middle East, I am keen to see post-conflict reconstruction done differently.

Over the past year, I have had the privilege to work closely with the BIEN Team building and advancing a strategic partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The aim of this collaboration is to share BIEN's expertise with UNDP who has taken on basic income as a policy to address inequalities globally. From BIEN's perspective, this collaboration can advance basic income related initiatives around the world. For the last three years, I have led the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)'s interest in exploring basic income's potential as a supplement to UNIDO's technical assistance to vulnerable communities in Iraq. With experience in and knowledge of the Middle East, and given the region's structural inequalities, I see particular value in advancing BIEN's engagement in this region.

It would be an honor to support BIEN as an organization leading the conversation on this transformational policy tool. I would like to do my part and if elected, will fulfill the tasks related to the position of Secretary to the best of my ability. For this, I intend to continue the smooth execution of General Assembly meetings by informing BIEN members of the proceedings ahead of time and ensuring a smooth flow of elections. Similarly, I intend to support the Executive Committee in facilitating its meetings and other tasks as needed. I will also serve as focal point for correspondence and in consultation with the Treasurer, keep an up-to-date register of BIEN members.

At 37 years, it would be a privilege to join BIEN's Executive Committee at this key juncture. Since COVID-19, basic income as a policy tool gained extensive global attention, which affords BIEN significant clout in gearing the conversation towards a more just society. To this, I would be most keen to contribute.

Thank you.

Diana Bashur

University of Vienna, Austria  
[bashurd20@univie.ac.at](mailto:bashurd20@univie.ac.at)  
July 2021