

Report from the Clarification of the Basic Income Definition working group

The Origin:

The working group was established at the General Assembly 2019. According to the GA Remit:

The Chair and Vice chair have asked that a working group should be set up, of which Toru Yamamori and Annie Miller will be leading members, and which other BIEN members will be able to join, to discuss draft wording of a new page or pages on the BIEN website to provide clarification on the definition of Basic Income, the wording to be amended and authorised by the Executive Committee before publication. The Executive Committee thanks Annie for her initiative to set up this working group.

Background of the Remit: Recent history on discussion about the definition of Basic Income within BIEN:

2014: A proposal to change the description of basic income was submitted to the GA in Montreal 2014, but because of time pressure the proposal was tabled.

2016: For the GA in Seoul 2016, in addition to the above motion (proposed by 5 regional affiliates and 17 members), another motion was proposed by Louise Haagh. Both concerned the issue of adequacy. During this Congress, the EC decided to have a workshop to discuss this important issue. The workshop was chaired by Toru Yamamori. After a long debate, both sides finally agreed on a compromise proposal which was proposed for the General Assembly by Yamamori and seconded by Gabriele Schmidt. The main part of the first motion (about including adequacy characteristics in the definition) was excluded from the definition and its clarification, but a note on adequacy was to be written and inserted after the definition on the same page on the BIEN website.

The amended motions (one for the definition and its clarification, and the other for a note on adequacy) were passed and the definition and its clarification and note appeared on the website from October 2016 for a while. (This note on adequacy – which was approved by GA – was removed sometime afterwards.)

2017: At the GA in Lisbon, supported by 72 signatures collected from members during the Congress, Ali Mutlu Köylüoğlu raised his voice about adding further characteristics relating to the definition.

2019: For the GA in Hyderabad, Annie Miller submitted a motion, seconded by Ali Mutlu Köylüoğlu, asking to clarify the definition. The chair and vice chair asked Annie to withdraw the motion and lead a working group to discuss the issue with Toru Yamamori. The above REMIT was passed by GA.

The activities of the CBID group before the 2021 Glasgow conference:

Following the REMIT, Ali Mutlu Köylüoğlu, Annie Miller, Toru Yamamori, and Telemaque Masson-

Recipon gathered online, and after many discussions, decided to put forward a proposal for an open forum for discussing matters on clarification of the definition at the Brisbane Congress 2020. Due to the subsequent cancellation of the conference, the open forum was postponed to the Glasgow BIEN Congress 2021. Meanwhile, we have been meeting regularly, interviewed several BIEN members, and attempted to create a baseline for future exchange, alongside the procedure issue.

Topics discussed are:

- Uniformity and Basic Income
- The Non-seizable (Non-foreclosurable) character of Basic Income
- Relationship between Basic Income and Human Rights
- Relationship between Basic Income and Negative Income Tax
- Reflections and remaining issues from the 2016 definition working group

The activities of the CBID group since the 2021 Glasgow conference:

The group has continued to operate — working towards the organization of a series of open forums, three of which were held during the annual conference in August 2021. The 4rd open forum was held in October 2021, the 5th — in April 2022, and the 6th — in June 2022. The group submitted requests, and have been granted approval, to hold two forums at the BIEN conference in Brisbane.

The existence of these forums has facilitated both rigorous academic discussions and provided an avenue for open communication among BIEN members who would like to express their opinion on the matter. And the group agrees on the need for more discussions and research.