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Basic Income: A brief history of the idea

Abstract

A Basic Income is ‘a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement’ (Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN)). It is always that: but within that definition there has been a significant number of variants during the past two centuries—in relation to how often, how much, to whom, and so on. This paper will explore those variants and the reasons for them, both historically and in the context of today’s lively global debate.

The paper will also discuss those tax and benefits policies that are sometimes regarded as variants of Basic Income but in fact are not, and will briefly outline their histories, their relevance to the history of ideas of Basic Income, and their relationship to the current debate.

Introduction

In relation to this paper, I shall take as the working definition of Basic Income the definition published by the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN): ‘A Basic Income is a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement’ (Basic Income Earth Network, 2022). This definition is the closest that we can get to a consensus on what ‘Basic Income’ means: but as we shall see, it permits a wide diversity of interpretation, and it is by no means uncontroversial. It is important to notice that BIEN’s definition contains no mention of the level at which a Basic Income would be paid, nor what ‘all’ might mean, nor how often ‘periodic’ might imply (Torry, 2017b; 2021a: 2–6).

Words are sometimes added to ‘Basic Income’. The project to which this paper contributes employs the term ‘Unconditional Basic Income’, and a Basic Income is often described as a ‘Universal Basic Income’. Although ‘universal’ does not imply ‘unconditional’ (because an income can be universal but conditional), ‘unconditional’ does imply ‘universal’ (Torry, 2017a; 2021a: 12); and because our working definition defines a Basic Income as ‘unconditional’, it is unnecessary to add either ‘unconditional’ or ‘universal’ to ‘Basic Income’. This paper will therefore employ the term ‘Basic Income’.

Now will follow not a history of the Basic Income debate (a comprehensive account of which can be found in *Basic Income: A history* (Torry, 2021a)), but rather a brief and necessarily incomplete history of the term ‘Basic Income’ and of its interpretation.

A brief history of ‘Basic Income’ and its interpretation

The early debate

First of all, some ground-clearing. Some of those credited with discussing a Basic Income probably never did so. During the sixteenth century, Thomas More speculated about a community in which there would be no money, not one in which equal amounts of money would be given to everyone (More [1516] 1995: 241, 247; Torry, 2021a:27–28); and during the nineteenth century Charles Fourier probably intended a Minimum Income Guarantee (a level of income below which a household is not permitted to fall, which implies a means-tested benefit) rather than a Basic Income, although John Stuart Mill might have interpreted him as suggesting a Basic Income or something similar (Torry, 2021a: 51–53, 58–60).

Thomas Paine is often credited with being the first to propose a Basic Income at the end of the eighteenth century (he suggested a single capital sum for each young adult, and an annual

sum for everyone over the age of fifty), but we probably ought to count Thomas Spence as the true inventor of Basic Income, as his proposal for an unconditional quarterly income for every adult was probably as universal, unconditional and frequent a payment as would have been administratively feasible at that time, and it would clearly have been a ‘periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement’ (Torry, 2021a: 33–43).

During the nineteenth century Spence’s proposal was discussed in the UK, the USA, and Belgium; and then during the early years of the twentieth century what we should probably count as the first fully worked out and financially feasible Basic Income scheme was published by the State Bonus League in the UK (Torry, 2021a: 67–75). Most importantly, the scheme contained a genuine Basic Income, which the State Bonus League called a ‘State Bonus’:

- a) Every individual, all the time, should receive from a central fund some small allowance in money which would be just sufficient to maintain life and liberty if all else failed.
- b) That as everyone is to get a share from this central fund, so everyone who has any income at all should contribute a share each in proportion to his capacity. ... (Milner and Milner, 1918: 7)

The payment would have been weekly, for ‘every man, every woman, and every child’, and ‘sufficient to maintain life and liberty’ (Milner and Milner, 1918: 7), which the Milners calculated as five shillings (£0.25) per week, which translates to £15 per week today (Bank of England, 2022).

The modern debate in the UK

It is in the UK, and subsequently in the rest of Europe, that genuine Basic Incomes have been most discussed during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The UK’s unconditional Child Benefit, which began as Family Allowance after the Second World War, is an unconditional income for children paid to their main carer at the same amount every week for every family with the same number of children (although not at the same amount for every child) (Torry, 2021a: 82–83, 129–30). In 1943, Juliet Rhys Williams proposed something very close to a Basic Income as an alternative to William Beveridge’s proposals for social insurance and means-tested benefits published in 1942. The proposal was for an equal and regular payment to every adult, but of slightly different amounts for men and women (21 shillings and 19 shillings respectively: £1.05 and £0.95, translating as £49 and £45 in 2020 (Bank of England, 2022)), and conditional on accepting any employment offered (Beveridge, 1942; Rhys Williams, 1943: 139, 144–46, 163–64). James Meade’s ‘social dividend’ was a proposal for a genuine Basic Income, as it would have been paid to ‘the members of the community’, and although his 1935 proposal did not stipulate either the amount or the frequency of the payment (Meade [1935] 2016: 33, 53), he later wrote approvingly of Juliet Rhys Williams’ scheme that it would have provided ‘every man, woman and child’ with ‘his or her basic minimum’ (Meade, 1948: 43). In 1982, Juliet Rhys Williams’ son Brandon submitted to a parliamentary committee a detailed and costed Basic Income scheme. Some elements of the scheme, such as the ‘householder’ allowance, did not fit the definition of a Basic Income, but most elements did, and the adult Basic Income, to be paid at £17 per week, would have translated to £61 per week in 2020 (Bank of England, 2022; House of Commons Treasury and Civil Service Committee Sub-Committee, 1982: 426).

In 1984, the Basic Income Research Group (now the Citizen’s Basic Income Trust) was founded, and since then it has promoted debate on Basic Income and published detailed Basic

Income schemes (Torry, 2021a: 82–95, 131–37). An early definition of Basic Income included the words ‘an independent income sufficient to meet basic living costs’ (Parker, 1985), but by 1988 ‘sufficient to meet basic living costs’ had disappeared (Basic Income Research Group, 1988) because Hermione (Mimi) Parker, the editor of the *Bulletin*, had found that what she called a ‘Full Basic Income’, ‘defined in terms of adequacy rather than bare subsistence, is not feasible and probably never will be. But a partial BI is feasible’ (Parker, 1988: 7). Parker still hoped that it would be possible to establish a Partial Basic Income that could cover all basic needs apart from housing, so although a continuing means-tested housing benefit would still be required, other means-tested benefits might have been dispensable. However, research conducted in 2012 and 2014 showed that it would be impossible to implement a Basic Income scheme in the UK that could be funded from within the current tax and benefits system (the most likely funding option in the short to medium term) and that would at the same time be able to abolish any existing means-tested benefits without tipping large numbers of low-income households into poverty (Torry, 2019: 4–9). In the interests of transparency, infeasible schemes were still published, and were stated to be infeasible, but in 2016, during a debate in parliament, a government minister employed research results on a Basic Income scheme that had been stated to be infeasible to suggest that Basic Income was infeasible (Torry, 2019: 13), which of course they did not. Publication of research on infeasible schemes promptly ceased. The research had shown that a Basic Income at a level anywhere close to published Minimum Income Standards would be impossible to implement, meaning that means-tested benefits would have to be left in place and recalculated to take account of a household’s Basic Incomes and any changes to net earned income resulting from changes to the tax system to pay for the Basic Incomes (Torry, 2020b). We still see the publication of Basic Income schemes that contain Basic Incomes that would provide sufficient to live on, but none have been published that would not impose substantial losses on far too many low-income households. Some of those schemes come with research results that show that such losses would not occur, but they also come with funding gaps, the meeting of which would impact household disposable incomes, rendering the research results erroneous and misleading (Torry, 2021b).

We can conclude that in relation to the Basic Income debate in the UK during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, ‘Basic Income’ has generally conformed to BIEN’s definition, although with minor departures on occasion; that regular, usually weekly, payments to every adult have been assumed; and that although it was initially assumed that Basic Incomes would be paid at ‘adequacy level’, that assumption soon gave way to one that assumed that a Basic Income along with a continuing means-tested housing benefit could achieve ‘subsistence level’, and subsequently to an understanding that existing means-tested benefits would have to be maintained and recalculated because a Basic Income at anything like ‘subsistence level’ would be impossible to implement. A clear decision had finally been arrived at that an unconditional payment at below subsistence level counted as a Basic Income, as the BIEN definition in fact implies.

The modern debate in continental Europe and beyond

For forty years, Philippe Van Parijs has been central to the European debate. In 1986, he convened the conference at which the Basic Income European Network (BIEN) was founded, was at the heart of BIEN’s activities for the following twenty years, and has written seminal books on the subject. Van Parijs’ ‘terminological note’ in the proceedings of the 1986 conference contains no discussion of the level at which a Basic Income would be paid (Van Parijs, 1988); in an article written in 1986, Robert van der Veen and Van Parijs ‘suppose’ that a ‘universal grant’ might be payable that would satisfy ‘fundamental needs’ (van der Veen and Van Parijs [1986] 2006: 13); and in 1995 Van Parijs was clear that the unconditional

income should be paid ‘at the highest sustainable level, subject to the protection of everyone’s formal freedom’ (Van Parijs, 1995: 31). While a Basic Income at subsistence level, somehow defined, was clearly hoped for, there was no suggestion that an income could not be called an ‘unconditional grant’ or ‘Basic Income’ if it was not at that level.

The continental European Basic Income debate that began in Belgium, France, Italy, and the Netherlands, soon spread to other countries, with peaks and troughs in different countries at different times during that period (Torry, 2021: 160–96). While there has always been a consistent understanding that a Basic Income is a regular payment made to every individual, there has been continuing diversity of understanding as to the level at which an income should be paid in order to count as a Basic Income: a diversity that extended to the rest of the world as the debate globalised from the 1990s onwards (Torry, 2021: 197–254). A survey of organisations affiliated to BIEN found that

- some affiliated organisations did not mention the issue, suggesting that the amount to be paid is not integral to the definition;
- some said that a democratic process would be used to decide the amount;
- one mentioned a particular amount (South Africa);
- and some offered a description of the kind of life that the Basic Income would be expected to fund (‘subsistence’, ‘dignity’, ‘participation’, ‘poverty line’) in relation to the national context, but without specifying the relevant level of Basic Income (Torry, 2017b).

Given this diversity, and the considerable problem that any definition of ‘subsistence’, ‘dignity’, ‘participation’, ‘poverty line’, and so on, is bound to be contentious, the only conclusion to reach is that an unconditional income of any level should be counted as a Basic Income.

Mechanisms with some similarities to a Basic Income

What we might call mechanisms with some characteristics similar to those of a Basic Income have been discussed in a variety of places during the past two centuries. Particularly significant have been experiments, proposals, and discussions in the United States and Canada, for two reasons: first of all, the lively and diverse nature of the discussions and experiments that have taken place; and secondly, the fact that almost none of it has been about Basic Income understood as ‘a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement’. Sometimes the term ‘Basic Income’ has been used, but often for something entirely different: for instance, a short-lived experiment in Ontario employed the term ‘Basic Income’ to describe a household-based and income-tested benefit (Ontario, no date). The vast majority of the proposals discussed and tested in the US and Canada have been Minimum Income Guarantees: levels of household income below which households have not been allowed to fall (Torry, 2021a: 96–121).

A Minimum Income Guarantee is levels of household income, determined by household structure, that households are enabled to reach by the payment of income-tested benefits. Multiple experiments have taken place across the USA and Canada during the past fifty years, and some are ongoing. While a Minimum Income Guarantee is radically different from a Basic Income, the common characteristic of an increase in income security means that it is possible to argue that results from the experiments can legitimately be used to argue for a Basic Income (Forget, 2011; Torry, 2021: 96–121; Widerquist, 2019: 308–316). This is clearly legitimate, but only if a caveat is always added that only an experiment with a genuine Basic Income would be able to offer robust predictions for the effects of a Basic Income.

A Participation Income, first proposed by Tony Atkinson in 1992, is an income for each individual conditional on at least one of a series of ‘participation’ conditions being met. People who were retired, studying full-time, sick, disabled, or caring for others, would have been exempt from meeting any other conditions, but everyone else would have had to be in employment, self-employment, looking for employment, or undertaking approved voluntary work. The outcome of implementing such a benefit would of course be widespread, complex and intrusive administration, and research has shown that all of that effort would have excluded only one per cent of the population from receiving the Participation Income (Atkinson, 1993: 10; 1996: 69; Torry, 2016: 134–38; 2021: 136–39). No government would ever dream of implementing it.

A Negative Income Tax, proposed by Milton Friedman, and a popular idea on the right of the political spectrum, would pay to individuals earning below a tax threshold an income proportional to the amount that their income fell below the threshold. Because a Negative Income Tax can deliver the same relationship between earned and net income as a Basic Income, the two have sometimes been confused with each other. They should not be. The administration of a Negative Income Tax would be extremely complicated because in most developed economies income tax is administered by employers on behalf of the government, which means that employers would have to administer the Negative Income Tax as well. Anyone changing jobs, experiencing periods of unemployment, being self-employed, earning from self-employment as well as employment, or having two jobs, would face significant administrative burdens, as would their employer(s). Genuine Tax Credits (not the means-tested benefits sometimes called ‘Tax Credits’) are the same as a Negative Income Tax, except that the payment at zero earned income is specified rather than the tax threshold. Some mechanisms, such as the US Earned Income Tax Credit, are similar to Tax Credits, except that they are paid annually and according to a complex formula (Torry, 2021: 12–24, 101–104, 109–110).

All of the above—Minimum Income Guarantee, Participation Income, Negative Income Tax, and Tax Credits—have been improperly aligned with Basic Income at one time or another. Experiments and research about them have been assumed to deliver results directly relevant to Basic Income, and sometimes vice versa (Atkinson, 2015: 297; Citizen’s Income Trust, 2015); and they have sometimes been assumed to be the same as Basic Income, which they are not (Ontario, no date). A contributing problem is the employment of the terminology ‘Basic Income Guarantee’ in the United States. This combination of words generally means a category of instruments that includes Minimum Income Guarantee, Negative Income Tax, and Basic Income (Widerquist, 2018). This enables experiments in all of those to be Basic Income Guarantee experiments, which in turn leads too easily to the assumption that results obtained from experiments in one of them must be directly relevant to another member of the category, which they are not.

The lesson to draw from this discussion is that clear definitions are essential to rational debate and to the legitimate application of research results. A Basic Income is an unconditional income for every individual, and so paid to every individual and not on the basis of household structure. It is not means-tested—that is, it does not fall if the individual has other income or wealth; and it is not work-tested, or tested in any other way. The only conditionality permitted is that of the age of the recipient. So a short working definition might be that a Basic Income is the payment of the same amount of money, every week or every month, unconditionally, to every individual of the same age. This means that none of a Minimum Income Guarantee, Participation Income, Negative Income Tax, or Tax Credit, is a Basic Income. They are *alternatives* to Basic Income, and not variants of it. By variants of Basic Income, we mean genuine Basic Incomes of different amounts, with payments of

different frequencies, and perhaps with different boundaries around the communities of individuals to which they are paid.

Questions about the definition of Basic Income

One mechanism that fits BIEN's definition of a Basic Income like a glove is the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend: an annual dividend based on the profits of a permanent fund into which oil royalties are paid. The payment is made annually to every individual who has been an Alaskan citizen for more than a year, and it varies each year with the profits of the fund (Torry, 2021: 118–19). The problem is that the dividend behaves very differently from an income constituted by an equal amount of money every week or every month; and it is the Alaska dividend, among other policy instruments, that raised the question as to whether a number of generally assumed characteristics of a Basic Income should be added to the definition.

BIEN publishes the following list of expected characteristics:

1. Periodic—It is paid at regular intervals (for example every month), not as a one-off grant.
2. Cash payment—It is paid in an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing those who receive it to decide what they spend it on. It is not, therefore, paid either in kind (such as food or services) or in vouchers dedicated to a specific use.
3. Individual—It is paid on an individual basis—and not, for instance, to households.
4. Universal—It is paid to all, without means test.
5. Unconditional—It is paid without a requirement to work or to demonstrate willingness-to-work. (Basic Income Earth Network, 2022)

This list of clarifications coheres with what we have discovered about the history of the ways in which 'Basic Income' has been understood. It assumes that the payment will be regular: once a week, or once a month (following an earlier period during which quarterly payments would have been the only feasible way of making payments to everyone); that the payments would be made to 'all', while leaving open precisely what that might mean; and that the payment would be unconditional (although it is not clear why 'without means test' is included under 'universal' rather than under 'unconditional'). The individuality of the payment is emphasised, as is the assumption that the payment will be in cash rather than in vouchers, goods, or services. Crucially, and quite properly, there is no mention of the level at which a Basic Income would be paid.

However, discussion has not ceased. Controversy continues as to whether an unconditional income that is not at 'subsistence' level, somehow defined, should be called a Basic Income; gaps have been identified in the BIEN definition and its five clarifications; and the ways in which governments manage their financial relationships with their citizens has raised new questions about precisely what counts as a Basic Income.

More recent discussions

In 2019, in response to discussion among its members as to whether changes were required to its published definition of Basic Income, BIEN's General Assembly—its Annual General Meeting—established a working group, the 'Clarification of Basic Income Definition' (CBID) group. An invitation was offered to members of BIEN to join the group, the group convened, and meetings have been held, including open forums to which all members of BIEN have been invited. A number of proposals have been discussed, among which are that the word 'uniform' should be added to the definition of a Basic Income to make it clear that payment should not vary from week to week or month to month, apart from an annual uprating; and that a Basic Income should be 'non-seizeable': that is, no court or agency

should be able to seize someone's Basic Income for the payment of fines, civil penalties, or any other purpose.

Both of these proposals clearly relate to the definition of a Basic Income. One proposal that has been discussed, and that had been debated at previous General Assemblies, is that a Basic Income should be regarded as a human right. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights grants to an individual a right to a 'standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and of his family' (United Nations General Assembly, 1949): but that does not grant a right to an unconditional income. Articles 22 and 23 grant rights to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, and to social security, with the social security mechanism undefined. Under conditions of full employment, the rights granted by articles 22 and 23 should be sufficient to ensure a 'standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and of his family': but it can now be argued that we can no longer assume full employment—hence the suggestion that Basic Income itself should now be regarded as a human right (Torry, 2020a: 257–61). This is an important debate, but if a Basic Income were to be regarded as a human right, then it would not affect the definition of a Basic Income. Whether a Basic Income should be regarded as a human right is a debate that needs to happen, but it is not a debate about the definition of Basic Income.

The Clarification of the Basic Income Definition group has of course discussed whether the definition of Basic Income should include a statement of the level at which it should be paid. As the title of a paper prepared for the 2021 BIEN congress asks: 'Is a penny a month a Basic Income?' (Yamamori, 2021). Yamamori finds, as we have, that earlier in the modern debate it was assumed that a Basic Income would be paid at a level somehow related to human need, but that now a greater diversity of assumptions has emerged. The paper offers a significant number of examples to make that point. Yamamori is of course correct to suggest that a penny a week paid unconditionally to every individual would constitute a Basic Income according to BIEN's definition, and that there would be few people who would want to describe it as a Basic Income; and also that there would be few who would want to see a Basic Income funded by a method that made poor households poorer overall. The increasing engagement of microsimulation researchers with the Basic Income debate will enable Basic Income schemes to be tested for their effects on the net disposable incomes of households, and will thus make it possible to avoid schemes that would impose losses on low-income households: but the involvement of microsimulation research will also continue to make it crystal clear that at least in the short to medium term there is no possibility of any country implementing a Basic Income that would be sufficient for everybody's basic needs, let alone sufficient to provide a decent life in society as public opinion might define that. However, it remains true that Yamamori is clearly correct to suggest that we ought not regard a penny a week as a Basic Income. This debate will continue.

A further complex issue raised during the preparation of papers for BIEN's 2021 Congress relates to the ways in which some countries, and particularly France and Canada, manage the relationship between the government's revenue collection function and individual citizens (Madden, 2021). The question is this: If the payment of a Basic Income is combined with other payments, perhaps of other state benefits or of earned income, and perhaps with such deductions as income tax instalments, and a net figure is paid into the individual's bank account either by the government or by an employer, then has a Basic Income been paid? This can clearly be argued both ways. No separate payment of an unconditional income has been made, but as long as everyone receives the same Basic Income from the government, a universal and unconditional income has been paid. This is another debate that will no doubt continue.

One question that has perhaps not received as much attention as it might have done is this: Precisely what is meant by ‘to all’, or ‘every individual’. An assumption is normally made that a Basic Income would be paid to everyone living in a particular country, or perhaps to everyone living in a state in a federal country, such as India or the United States, with the one exception being the proposal for a Eurodividend, to be paid to every citizen in the European Union, or perhaps in the Eurozone (Torry, 2021: 256–57). At any one time there will be people with a variety of different statuses living within the borders of a country, and it is not clear that every one of them should necessarily receive a Basic Income. For instance, after how long should a visitor be regarded as a resident? It is not insignificant that only those Alaskan citizens who have been resident in Alaska for at least a year are entitled to the annual dividend. In relation to the United Kingdom, a working group convened in 2017 summarised its conclusions as follows:

Anyone living in the UK with the right to do so indefinitely, and refugees with a defined number of years of legal residence, would receive ... Basic Incomes if they would be defined as resident in the UK by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs, and they have been resident in the UK for a minimum residency period. A national of another country which had implemented a ... Basic Income would be entitled to receive an individual ... Basic Income on arrival in the UK if their country gave the same right to UK nationals. (Citizen’s Basic Income Trust, 2018)

Difficult questions relate to whether asylum seekers with undetermined status should receive Basic Incomes, and to whether prisoners should retain their Basic Incomes. Clearly these are not questions to which any universal answer can be given, because the polity of each country is different, so different responses to those questions might be expected. This suggests that the question as to precisely what ‘to all’ and ‘every individual’ might mean can properly be regarded as one for each individual country to discuss rather than being a matter for the global Basic Income debate.

However, all of the other matters for debate discussed in this paper *are* matters for global debate, so that debate must continue.

Conclusion

Debate about the history of the definition of Basic Income, and about how that definition should now be clarified, will of course continue, as it should. The global Basic Income debate is now an important social fact, and it is right and proper that the terminology at its heart should be a focus for continuing widespread discussion. What is absolutely essential for the rationality of the debate is that there should be consensus as to the definitions of significant terminology, that everyone should adhere to them, and that if anyone uses terms that diverge from the consensus then they should make clear that that is what they are doing. Clarity is essential. But this requirement for agreement and clarity should never be an excuse for stifling discussion of those matters that constitute legitimate variants of Basic Income. It is also right and proper that BIEN’s members should from time to time debate BIEN’s published definition of Basic Income, and also any clarifications published by BIEN.

For what it’s worth, here is one individual member’s attempt at a modification of BIEN’s published clarifications. I have aimed to make as few changes as possible, and at the same time to address the matters raised in this paper. Needless to say, this attempt should not be regarded as the opinion of anyone other than the author.

A Basic Income is a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement.

Here are ten characteristics of Basic Income

1. Periodic—It is paid at regular intervals (for example once a week or once a month).
2. Cash payment—It is paid in an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing those who receive it to decide what they spend it on. It is not, therefore, paid either in kind (such as food or services) or in vouchers dedicated to a specific use.
3. Individual—It is paid on an individual basis—and not, for instance, to households, or on the basis of household structure.
4. Substantial—The Basic Income should be paid at a level that provides a significant secure income platform, but not necessarily at subsistence level somehow defined.
5. Universal—The Basic Income is paid to all legal residents within the national or regional boundaries within which the Basic Income is implemented.
6. Unconditional—The Basic Income is paid without a requirement to work or to demonstrate willingness-to-work. It is paid without an income test, without a means test, and without any other condition being applied, except that different age groups might receive different amounts.
7. Uniform—The Basic Income is paid at the same rate, every week or every month, to everyone of the same age. The amount for each age group might be updated once a year.
8. Non-seizeable—no court or government or other agency should be able to claim the whole or part of any individual's Basic Income for the payment of fines, for the settling of civil claims, or for any other reason.
9. Funding method—A variety of methods for funding a Basic Income might be feasible. The definition of feasible should always include the avoidance of household disposable income losses for low-income households.
10. Administration of the payment—payment will normally be as a separate amount received weekly or monthly into a bank account or in cash. If the Basic Income is paid along with other benefit or earned income, or along with an individual's payment of income tax, so that a net figure is paid into the individual's bank account, then as long as the Basic Income is listed separately on the payment advice, at least the stated amount of the Basic Income is actually paid each week or each month, and there are no breaks in the regular receipt of at least that amount, then a Basic Income has been paid.

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