

# BIEN

## BASIC INCOME EARTH NETWORK

### NewsFlash Volume 28, no. 82, March 2015

[www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org)

*This is the newsletter of the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN), which was founded in 1986 as the Basic Income European Network and expanded to become an Earth-wide Network in 2004. It serves as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income. It fosters informed discussion on this topic throughout the world.*

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<http://binews.org/>

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## 1. News

### INTERNATIONAL: 2014 BIS Essay Prize

The 2014 Basic Income Studies Best Essay Prize is awarded to Toru Yamamori. The paper is entitled 'A Feminist Way to Basic Income:

Claimants Unions and Women's Liberation Movements in Britain

1968-1987'. The paper shed light on a forgotten struggle of working class women in claimants unions that articulated a feminist rationale for an unconditional basic income and succeeded to pass the resolution which asked the whole British Women's Liberation movement to endorse the demand, at the National Women's Liberation

conferences. The paper is based on an oral historical research conducted over 13 years.

The author said that he thanks to interviewees who gave him enormous support both practically and emotionally, and this prize is, he believes, awarded collectively to their admirable struggle, not individually to the nominal author.

The shorter version of the paper is published in the latest volume of Basic Income Studies (2014; 9(1-2); pp.1-24).

For the detail of the prize, see:

<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/bis>

### FINLAND: 65% of Parliamentary Candidates Favor Basic Income

[Stanislas Jourdan with contribution from Johanna Perkiö]

A vast majority of candidates running the next parliamentary elections in Finland said they agree with the principle of the basic income, reveals national media.

As the general elections are approaching, the idea of basic income just breached an unprecedented milestone in Finland, with nearly 65.5% of all parliamentary candidates publicly supporting the policy.

The report released by national media YLE is based on direct answers from candidates collected through an online platform launched. 1,642 running candidates participated – for a total of nearly 2,000. Among other questions, candidates were asked if they agree with the following statement: “Finland should implement a basic income scheme that would replace the current minimum level of social security.”

Without surprise, the Greens candidates are the most favorable to the policy (99%), followed by the Left Alliance candidates (95%) and the Center (83%). Significant support is also found among the nationalist party ‘True Finns’ (57%) and the Swedish People’s Party (53%).

Altogether, political parties committed to basic income could virtually represent between 40 and 60% of the votes – theoretically enough to form a government.

On the other side, opponents to basic income are the Social Democratic Party (80% of their candidates), the Conservative Party (67%) and the Christian Democrats (57%).

A wave of new political support for basic income have emerged last autumn when the opposition leader proposed to experiment basic income with pilots projects. According to a recent opinion poll, 70% of Finns endorsing basic income.

The next parliamentary elections in Finland will take place on April 19th. It seems the opportunity for introducing basic income pilots in Finland – and Europe – have never been so close.

## FINLAND: Finnish Green Party updates its basic income policy ahead of parliamentary elections

[Stanislas Jourdan]

Ahead of the next general elections in April, the Green Party of Finland has reiterated its support for a basic income policy and updated its model.

Last Saturday, the board of the Green league (Finnish Green Party) presented its political platform for the next general elections, which included a proposal for a basic income in Finland.

In line with the current level of social security systems in Finland, the party has estimated the level of basic income at 560€ for all adults. It would replace most of the existing minimum social benefits such as the unemployment benefit and the minimum parental allowance. The party, who supports basic income for a long time already, has updated its model and has made the details available [on its website](#).

The program was adopted last Sunday at the Party's general meeting.

Towards a national unity for basic income?

Basic income is becoming a uniting topic in Finland. A recent [public opinion poll](#) conducted by e2, the think tank of the Finnish Centre Party and the market research company Taloustutkimus. The survey concluded that 79% of Finns support a basic income policy if it “guarantees minimum subsistence, reduces bureaucracy and encourages work and entrepreneurship”. 1268 people replied the poll. The support was highest among young age groups and pensioners. Voters of the Green Party and the Left Alliance are also the most strong supporters for basic income. The lowest support for the policy is found among the Christian Democrat party and the farmers.

During the [national citizens' initiative for basic income](#) in 2013, another opinion poll showed that 54% of the Finns supported basic income. This could confirm a positive evolution of the public support for basic income, however the question was formulated in a different way, which may explain the difference.

The Green League of Finland is the fifth political force in Finland, with around 8% of voters set to back the party, according to recent electoral polls. The centrist party of Finland, which is also in favor of basic income pilots, currently leads the electoral polls with 25.4% of votes intentions. It has won a lot of public support recently.

Last september, the leader of the Centre party has [pushed the idea of basic income pilots](#) in several municipalities. The proposal was immediately backed by the Greens,

the Left Alliance and even by some conservatives such as Alexander Stubb, prime minister and leader of the National Coalition Party (conservatives).

The parliamentary elections will take place on April 19th.

### FRANCE: Renowed author and basic income supporter Bernard Maris among Charlie Hebdo victims

[André Coelho]

[Bernard Maris](#) was killed at Charlie Hebdo, earlier on 7th January this year. Besides a recognized author of several books on economics and social affairs and regular presence on French television and radio, Bernard was a defender of the basic income, having published recently over it on Charlie Hebdo (on December 2013, with the title "Why is the basic income a necessity of the post-capitalist society").

His death motivated Christian Noyer, the governer of the Bank of France, to pay him tribute, by saying: "Barnard Maris was a man with a noble heart, cultured, with great tolerance. We will greatly miss him". Magazines [Info 3](#) (Germany) and [The Independent](#) have reported his murder, highlighting his life achievements and both referring to his support to the basic income concept.

Bernard wrote recurrently on economics, globalization and, while an euro supporter at first, came to be an euro skeptic, mainly due to its flawed monetary union design. On basic income, he believed its importance lay in separating work from income, which might constitute the spark that will destroy capitalism.

More information at:

Language: German

Jens Heisterkamp, "[Defender of basic income among murder victims \[Grundeinkommens - vordenker Bernard Maris unter den mordopfern\]](#)<http://www.esquerda.net/dossier/rendimento-basico-incondicional-2/33969>", *Info 3*, 15 January 2015

Pierre Perrone, "[Bernard Maris: radical economist and Charlie Hebdo columnist who was murdered in the attack on the magazine](#)", *The Independent*, 15 January 2015

### HUNGARY: Green-Left Party declares its support for basic income

[Stanislas Jourdan]

Green-Left party in Hungary proposes the introduction of a basic income to which all Hungarian citizens would be entitled.

On February 15th, the party Párbeszéd Magyarországért (“Dialogue for Hungary”) announced in a press conference that it would push for the implementation of a basic income in the country.

The [announcement](#) followed a vote of the party congress where 90% of the members voted in favour of the policy.

Under the proposal, children would receive about 80 euro per month, adults 160 euro and young mothers 240 euro. The party promised to come forward with more detailed calculations in support of their proposal’s feasibility in the upcoming months.

The poverty line in Hungary is estimated around 200 euro for a single adult, 830 euro for a family of two parents with two children.

### **A promise for a “liveable Hungary”**

According to co-chair Tímea Szabó, who represents the party in the Hungarian parliament, the country is “terribly ill”, with suffering and lack of perspectives spreading like cancer through society. In this situation, the basic income is also a promise for a “liveable Hungary”, which would also produce positive economic effects, i.e. encourage investments and create jobs by strengthening demand.

Co-chair of the party Gergely Karácsony stressed that such a model would lead to a substantial transformation of existing benefits, thereby reducing bureaucracy and improving existential security for all citizens. He explained that all citizens would be eligible for the basic income, however it would not mean higher income for better off classes, as it would come with scrapping the current flat tax on incomes in favour of a progressive model.

The party announcement provoked a new wave of awareness in Hungarian media, including a [long feature about basic income](#) on the website of the national weekly HVG. Last year, a [detailed study on basic income](#) (pdf) published by an hungarian independent think tank came out in favor of basic income and seem to have inspired Dialogue for Hungary.

The other green party in Hungary (Lehet Más a Politika, LMP) is also in principle supportive of basic income and the Socialist Party also promoted it briefly during its campaign for the national elections in 2014. However, Dialogue for Hungary is the first Hungarian party with representation in parliament that officially throws itself behind the idea of basic income. The party currently have one seat in national parliament and one seat at the European Parliament.

### **First step: a minimum income in Budapest**

While the party is in great minority at national level, it plans to put word into action through the city of Budapest, whose 14th district is mayored by the party’s co-chair Karácsony. His administration is about to introduce a means tested minimum income model that would ensure that all citizens within the district facing hardship receive at least 85 euro per month – which is 10 euro above the standard social benefit level in Hungary.

With this move, the Hungarian Left-Green Party is joining many of its sister green parties across the world who support basic income, including France, [Finland](#), the UK, the [United States](#).

#### JAPAN: Party that endorses BIG has a new political platform

[Toru Yamamori]

Greens Japan (Japanese Green party) endorsed BIG from its beginning in 2012. On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014, A new political organization 'E-Future Association [*e-mirai-no-kai*]' was launched in Kyoto. This organisation is a loose umbrella entity for coming local election in Kyoto 2015 by the Green Japan, the Kyoto *Seikatsusha* Network, and citizens who do not belong to any political organization. 'E', part of their name, means two things: first the sound means 'good' in Japanese, and second it connotes their intention to facilitate 'online-activism.' They call this umbrella entity 'platform' and explains this 'platform' strategy was learnt from experiences of early stage of Green Party in Germany.

On 8<sup>th</sup> November, 'E-Future Association' had a launching event, where Yoshiko Kada, former governor of Shiga prefecture gave a talk, and two candidates for local elections were announced.

Uiko Hasegawa, the co-president of Green Party Japan, is also the co-president of this association Her interview on Basic Income by the *BI News* team will be translated to this site shortly.

The setting up of the platform is covered by Japanese News Paper:

Language: Japanese. "e-mirai-no-kai launched for the local election in Kyoto" [政治団体「e 未来の会」立ち上げ 京都で統一選候補推薦へ] *Kyoto Shimbun News*, October 31st, 2014.

<http://www.kyoto-np.co.jp/politics/article/20141031000169>

The launching event is covered by Japanese News Paper:

Language: Japanese. "e-mirai-no-kai's launching event in Kyoto"[左京で推薦 e 未来の会が結成集会]

*Kyoto Shimbun News*, November 8th 2014.

<http://www.kyoto-np.co.jp/top/article/20141108000142>

The English site of Greens Japan:

<http://greens.gr.jp/world/english/>

## PORTUGAL: Basic Income public discussions on the rise in Portugal

[André Coelho]

On the 7th of February, [Francisco Louçã](#), a long time left-wing public figure in Portuguese politics, wrote an article named "[How to pull the PS policial party to something civic \[De como puxar o PS para qualquer coisa de cívico\]](#)". This extensive article deals with many political aspects and analysis, but at a certain point cuts a clear criticism on the fact that the political party LIVRE has inserted (a reference to) [Basic Income on its draft political program](#) for the upcoming elections. The arguments being that LIVRE has not detailed a way to finance Basic Income, and that this unconditional income should not be given to rich people, since they clearly do not need it.

This first article was extensively commented on the website where it was published, the Público newspaper blog "Tudo Menos Economia [Everything But Economy]", where Francisco Louçã regularly writes. Comments came from Basic Income supporters (like Roberto Merrill, António Dores and Dario Ferreira from the [Basic Income activist group in Portugal](#)) and many others, arguing on moral terms and supplying some numbers which might cover Basic Income expenses for the Portuguese social reality, rejecting the idea that it might not be fundable.

The original critic by Francisco Louçã and this first round of discussions around Basic Income encouraged [André Barata](#), a LIVRE militant to compose an answer to Louçã's arguments. As a long time Basic Income defender and political activist, he framed Basic Income as a human right, alongside Education and Health, and so justified it as a guarantee for all citizens, independently of their present income. As for the necessary funding calculations, he argued that first a new idea has to stand on its own, then its defenders must think of ways to inspire public policy and then, finally, financing calculations must be performed.

Inspired by the flood of comments on his first article and André Barata's response, Francisco Louçã published a second article titled [Basic Income: how, how much and for whom \["Rendimento Básico Incondicional": como, quanto e para quem\]](#), where he laments having been judged by Basic Income defenders but reinforces his opinion that financial practicability must be performed now, so that the Basic Income can gain, from his point of view, concrete credibility for action and not degenerate into an utopian illusion. He also reinforces his standpoint that it is fundamentally unacceptable to give a Basic Income to the wealthy, as well as to the poor, since he argues these are not the same and thus should not be treated equally. As for the financing effort itself, he further argues that the Basic Income bill would still be enormous, something around an extra 50 000 million €/year, which means an increase of 2.4 times the present taxation burden on work, although he concedes that other sources of income maybe at the State's disposal (e.g.: taxation on fortunes, resource and pollution taxes, further curbing tax evasion). He concludes that it would be better to maintain the current system, albeit getting better at collecting taxes.

This second article generated a new flood of comments. The Basic Income public discussions in Portugal have finally started.



More information at:

André Coelho, "[Portugal: Social movements and political party together for basic income](#)", *BI News*, February 2 2015

Language: Portuguese

Francisco Louçã, "[How to pull the PS policial party to something civic \[De como puxar o PS para qualquer coisa de cívico\]](#)<http://www.esquerda.net/opiniao/de-como-puxar-o-ps-para-qualquer-coisa-de-civico/35721>", *Tudo Menos Economia* (blog), February 6 2015

Language: Portuguese

André Barata, "[An income for everyone - answer to Francisco Louçã's arguments \[Um rendimento para todos - resposta aos argumentos de Francisco Louçã\]](#)", *O Irrevogável* (blog), March 5 2015

Language: Portuguese

Francisco Louçã, "[Basic Income: how, how much and for whom \[\"Rendimento Básico Incondicional\": como, quanto e para quem\]](#)<http://www.esquerda.net/opiniao/de-como-puxar-o-ps-para-qualquer-coisa-de-civico/35721>", *Tudo Menos Economia* (blog), March 2 2015

## SPAIN: "Hot" discussions around Basic Income at the moment in Spain

[André Coelho]

Ever since the Spanish political party Podemos has introduced Basic Income in its political program for the European Parliament elections, in May 2014, the discussions around this issue have risen to unprecedented heights, turning it into a "hot" topic in the Spanish political-economic public debate. One of its main defenders, Dr. [Daniel Raventós](#), has even said that "[the place on Earth where the debate around Basic Income is most advanced is here \[in Spain\]](#)".

Although a much debated topic at the moment, the issue has been of interest for many years, although mainly among academia circles. More recently, it was re-ignited by the publication of a [financial model for the Basic Income implementation in Catalonia](#), which served as a basis for a [nationwide study](#) of the kind (in Spain).

This has spurred the interest of more generalist media, and [radio](#) and [television](#) interviews followed, during 2014 and up until now. Daniel Raventós has been the leading figure in these communication efforts, but others have supported the (Basic Income) cause, in close connection to Daniel, as Jordi Arcarons and Lluís Torrens.

Since May 2014, a series of articles published by Daniel Raventós's Sin Permisso magazine have spurred [discussions](#), which definitely contribute to the widening reaching of the Basic Income concept in Spanish society. Ongoing experiences like [Podemos](#) may have temporarily retreated from Basic Income, due to persistent notions



as Full Employment, but the underlying interest still exists, while there are other political organizations which are defending it at the moment, such as [Equo](#), [Pirata](#), Bildu (coalition of parties in the Basque Country), [Esquerra Republicana](#) and the ICV ([Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds](#)).

More information at:

Language: Spanish

J. Arcarons, D. Raventós, Ll. Torrens, "[A financing model for the Basic Income technically feasible and not redundant politically \[Un modelo de financiación de la Renta Básica técnicamente factible y políticamente no inerte\]](#)", *Sin Permisso*, December 1 2013

Language: Spanish

[Interview with Daniel Raventós, Radio Euskadi "Mas que palabras"](#), *Radio Eusaki*, January 2 2014

Language: Spanish

Daniel Raventós, "[Candidacy to the European Parliament and Basic Income \[Candidaturas al parlamento europeo y renta básica\]](#)", *Sin Permisso*, May 18 2014

Maciej Szlinder, "[Basic Income in the Spotlight in Spain: Interview with Daniel Raventós](#)", *Praktyka Teoretyczna*, October 30 2014.

Language: Spanish

"[Summary of a discussion on Basic Income \(BI\) and Full Employment \(FE\), between Uduardo Garzón and Jordi Arcarons, Daniel Raventós and Lluís Torrens team \[Resumen de una discusión sobre renta básica \(RB\) y trabajo garantizado \(TG\) entre Eduardo Garzón y el equipo formado por Jordi Arcarons, Daniel Raventós y Lluís Torrens\]](#)", *La mala política Blog*, November 23 2014

Language: Spanish

Jordi Arcarons, Antoni Domènech, Daniel Raventós, Lluís Torrens, "[A basic income finance model for all Spanish Kingdom: yes, it can be done and is rational \[Un modelo de financiación de la Renta Básica para el conjunto del Reino de España: sí, se puede y es racional\]](#)", *Sinpermisso*, December 7 2014

Language: Spanish

Daniel Raventós, "[Three present day debates about Basic Income and...is it a right of left wing proposal? \[Tres debates actuales sobre la Renta Básica y... ¿es una propuesta de derechas o de izquierdas?\]](#)" *Sin Permisso*, January 11 2015

Language: Catalan

["Parlem de la renda bàsica amb l'economista Daniel Raventós \(UB\)"](#), Live on Televisió 3 Channel, January 23 2015

Language: Spanish

Siscu Baiges, "[Interview with Daniel Raventós: "All parties are interested in the Basic Income, until they reach the government" \[Entrevista a Daniel Raventós: "Todos los partidos están interesados en la Renta Básica hasta que llegan al Gobierno"\]](#)", eldiario.es, February 7 2015

Language: Spanish

Several authors, "[3rd monograph on Basic Income 2014-2015 \[III Monográfico Renta Básica 2014-2015\]](#)", *Sin Permisso*, February 2015

SPAIN: How is the situation evolving in the Basque Country, Spain, concerning Basic Income?

[André Coelho]

In Spain, the basic income concept has recently been brought back into the spotlight by Podemos political party. Although meanwhile basic income has been taken out from [Podemos economy orientation project](#) (replaced by other social economic measures), other Spanish social and political organizations have cuddled the concept, particularly in Basque Counties such as Gipuzkoa and Euskadi.

In Gipuzkoa, the party EH Bildu defends the basic income implementation, on the basis of a thorough [economic study](#) conducted, among others, by [Daniel Raventós](#), which concludes that 75% of the regional population would benefit from the measure, whilst the 10% richest citizens would finance most of it. In Euskadi, the party Equo Euskadi has also written the basic income in its electoral program, for which has also relied on Raventós study to backup its defense.

Just past week, a symposium on basic income has been organized by the municipal house of representatives in Gipuzkoa where yet again the basic income implementation simulation cited above was at the center. One of the delegates, Ander Rodríguez, which heads the social policy group in Gipuzkoa parliament, besides defending basic income as a concept and economic innovation, has suggested it could be implemented in a progressive way, though not immediately.

Despite the results presented in the referred study and the interest picked up by local politicians and parties, other parties and government representatives are still against it, accusing the basic income scheme of being utopian, unconditional (as seen from a negative perspective) and unfair for allegedly transferring money from workers to others that just choose not to work. In fact, recently approved legislation in the region actually hardens conditionality for accessing social inclusion transfers, plus limiting its validity for two years. However, at the same time, such [social programs](#) are widening the number of people covered, plus increasing spending.

More information at:

Language: Spanish

Natalia González de Uriarte, "[Basic income for all citizens: reality or utopia? \[La renta básica universal para todos los ciudadanos, ¿realidad o utopía?\]](#)", eldiarionorte.es, October 2014

Language: Spanish

EHBildu, "[Each Gipuzkoa inhabitant could be receiving an yearly 7.902 € basic income, covered by a single income tax \[Cada Gipuzkoano podría una renta básica de 7.902 € con un tipo único de IRPF\]](#)", Euskal Herria Bildu online magazine, February 1 2015

Language: Spanish

S. López, "[The Basque government hardens the conditions to access conditional basic income, plus limiting its duration for two years \[El Gobierno Vasco endurece los requisitos de la renta básica y limita su cobro a dos años\]](#)", Noticias de Gipuzkoa, November 2014 (?)

Language: Spanish

Vincent Navarro and Juan Torres López, "[An economy project for the people \[Un proyecto económico para la gente\]](#)", Podemos, November 2014

PORTUGAL: Portuguese citizen movements and political party join together to contest the upcoming elections and insert basic income in their draft political program

[André Coelho]

A few days after the party Syriza won the elections in Greece, political movements and parties are stirring in other southern European countries, like Portugal. [LIVRE](#), a recently founded party within the Portuguese political arena, has joined efforts with three other political citizen movements, Forum Manifesto, MIC Porto and Renovação Comunista, and organized a large convention that was held on Saturday, 31st of January 2015.

This group of openly Left leaning organizations has innovated in some ways comparing to status quo Portuguese politics, among which by introducing citizen's (any citizen) right to vote on the organization principles, its strategy, coordination board, and by introducing Basic Income in its majority approved [campaign policy measures](#). After this exercise of democratic citizenship, this draft political program will be detailed further and defended in the upcoming general elections in Portugal (October 2015).

LIVRE and its partners together in this citizen's movement named [Tempo de Avançar](#) (Time to Move On), will therefore bring forth to a wider public exposure and

discussion the Basic Income concept, still widely unknown and underrated in Portugal.

More information at:

Language: Portuguese

São José Almeida, "[Tempo de Avançar approves political orientation \[Tempo de Avançar aprova orientação política\]](#)", *Público*, 31 January 2015

Language: Portuguese

Sofia Rodrigues, "[Tempo de Avançar places debt renegotiation on the agenda \[Tempo de Avançar põe renegociação da dívida na agenda\]](#)", *Público*, 31 January 2015

Language: Portuguese

Tempo de Avançar Coordination Group and Citizen's deliberation, "[Political draft for a Citizen's Candidacy \[Linhas programáticas da candidatura cidadã\]](#)", Tempo de Avançar Website

UNITED KINGDOM: Green Party England and Wales launches election campaign, manifesto to include Basic Income

The Green Party England and Wales launched its election campaign yesterday with leader Natalie Bennett [confirming in a radio interview](#) that Basic Income, also known as Citizen's Income, would be included in the manifesto, to be launched closer to the election. The manifesto, she said, would include a fully costed Basic Income proposal.

There had been some confusion about whether or not Basic Income would be included in the manifesto when at least two news sources, [the Telegraph](#) and [the New Statesman](#) misreported Green party MP Caroline Lucas as stating that the policy would not be in the manifesto. She actually said that it would not be in the manifesto as something to be introduced after the next election, scheduled for May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Ms Bennett re-affirmed these comments in her interview, saying that the policy was not something the party intended to introduce overnight “or even within the term of the next Parliament”, instead saying “It's something we want to consult on, offer over time”.

The next UK election is expected to be very close, with minor parties such as the Scottish National Party, the Green parties and others possibly holding the balance of power, putting them in a strong position to influence government policy.

The surge in support for the Green parties in the UK reflects the [increasing support](#) Basic Income is receiving in the political sphere recently, with the most popular party in the polls in countries such as Finland, the Netherlands and Spain supporting Basic Income.

If you would like to support the Green Party's election campaign you can visit their website <http://greenparty.org.uk/>

For more information, see:

BBC News, "[Election 2015: Green leader Bennett launches campaign](#)", *BBC News*, 24 February 2015

Liam Upton, "[Basic Income makes unprecedented political progress](#)", *Basic Income News*, 15 December 2014

## 2. Events

### BROOKLYN, NY: Report from the meeting to create a political movement for basic income

Thirty-one people signed the attendance sheet at the first meeting of group of people attempting to start a political movement for basic income in the United States. Several more people attended without signing, and others followed and contributed to the meeting online. The meeting took place from 6:30 to 9:30pm at the Commons Brooklyn on February 26, 2015, at the close of the Fourteenth North American Basic Income Guarantee (NABIG) Congress. The meeting began with all participants discussing their background and the history that brought them to the basic income movement. The group then split into several small groups, each discussing a different issue. Participants reassembled to bring their discussion to the whole group and to make some decisions.

The group chose not to name a leader or a leadership committee. It did not even pick a name for the new organization at this point. Instead, it created several committees and asked them to perform certain tasks. The group created the following committees:

1. One committee will be in charge of legally chartering two groups. The U.S. Basic Income Guarantee (USBIG) Network, which has existed since 1999 without an official legal charter, will become a U.S. nonprofit organization—a so-called 501(c)(3). This means that it will be able to accept tax-deductible donations, but it will not be able to do overtly political work. The second organization (yet to be named) will be chartered as a social welfare organization or a lobbying group with a 501(c)(4) tax designation. This means that it will be able to do overtly political work, but donations to it will not be tax-deductible. The following members have so far joined the committee to charter the two organizations:

CONTACT PERSON: Steven Shafarman <sshafarman@gmail.com>

Ian Ash Schlakman <ian@civsys.it>

Jason Burke Murphy <murphyjason@elms.edu>  
Mark Witham <mwitham@basicincomeproject.org>  
Eri Noguchi <en16@columbia.edu>  
Dan O'Sullivan <danosully@gmail.com>

2. A committee was created to organize the next meeting of the unnamed political group. The USBIG Network meets once a year at the NABIG Congress (which alternates each year between the U.S. and Canada), but the political group will meet more often. The committee hopes to organize the next meeting within 3 to 6 months. The committees within the unnamed political group will probably meet earlier via the internet. The following members volunteered to organize the next meeting of the unnamed group:

CONTACT PERSON: Mark Witham <mwitham@basicincomeproject.org>  
Jude Thomas <composerjude@gmail.com>  
Diane Pagen <dianepagen@yahoo.com>  
Ann Withorn <withorn.ann@gmail.com>  
Dorothy Howard <dorohoward@gmail.com>

3. The content creation committee is in charge of research, news reporting, social media presence, and media relations.

CONTACT PERSON: Jason Burke Murphy  
<jason.burke.murphy@gmail.com>  
Contact for people interested in the NewsFlash and BI News: Karl Widerquist  
<Karl@Widerquist.com>  
Contact for people interested in improving the Basic Income articles on  
Wikipedia: Dorothy Howard <dorohoward@gmail.com>  
Scott Santens <scott@scottsantens.com>

4. The regional network committee will work on establishing local chapters of the group in cities and towns across the United States. The contact person for this committee is:

Kristine Osbakken <krissosbakken@gmail.com>

5. Liane Gaile <liane.gale@gmail.com> and Ann Withorn  
<withorn.ann@gmail.com> agreed to be the contact people for the for working  
groups on women & Basic Income, basic income & the new economy, and basic  
income as an anti-poverty policy.

The organizers of this new group without a name put out a nationwide call to anyone who wants to get involved. If people would like to join one of the existing committees or propose a new committee, please email the relevant committee contacts and volunteer. If you don't know which committee to contact, the two groups have two general contact people:

**Contacts:**

The unnamed political group: Jason Burke Murphy  
<jason.burke.murphy@gmail.com>  
The USBIG Network coordinator: Michael Howard  
<michael\_howard@umit.maine.edu>

Long Island City, NY, NY: Preconference Public Discussion, "New Possibilities for the Basic Income Movement," Thursday, February 26, 6:30-9pm

The Fourteenth Annual North American Basic Income Guarantee Congress will kick off on Thursday, February 26 with a free and open public discussion on "New Possibilities for the Basic Income Movement." Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

The event program is:

Welcome: **Steven Shafarman**, the USBIG Network  
**Frances Fox Piven**, the City University of New York  
**Marshall Brain**, entrepreneur and author of *How Stuff Works*  
**Alanna Hartzok**, the Earth Rights institute, 2014 Democratic Nominee for Congress  
**Mary Bricker Jenkins, Willie Baptist, Sylvia Orduno, & Marian Kramer**,  
representing the National Welfare Rights Union  
Moderator: **Mimi Abramowitz**, Hunter College

Time: 6:30pm-9pm

Location: Long Island City Art Center/LICAM

44-02 23rd St., Studio 205

Long Island City, NY 11101

Directions: Take M, E, or 7 to Court Square (Queens, one stop from Midtown Manhattan) and walk along 23rd Street (under the elevated train overhead) until you reach the LIC Art Center, 44-02 23rd St., between 44th Ave and 44th Rd. Look for Caffeina Cafe at base of building. Then go to Studio 105.

According to [the directions on Google Maps](#), the entire trip from Midtown, including the train ride and the walk, takes 8 minutes.

MANKATO, Minnesota, US: BIG Talk, March 19, 2015.

[Toru Yamamori]

Jurgen De Wispelaere, McGill University, "Basic Income: From Justice to Legitimacy" Time and Date: Thursday, March 19, 2015, 5:00-6:30PM,

Venue: Morris Hall 102, Department of Philosophy, Minnesota State University Mankato.

For the organiser's homepage, see:

<https://www.ecet.mnsu.edu/philosophy/>

United Kingdom: Cambridge Students Discuss BIG

[Toru Yamamori]



On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015, Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU) Women's Campaign hosted 'Feminist Fightback workshop on Anti-capitalist Feminism and Basic Income.' Three women from 'Feminist Fightback' collective introduced history of the idea and current campaigns on basic income, and also their own anti-capitalist feminist struggle. Around 30 people turned up and had good discussions.

For CSUS Women's Campaign, see:

<http://www.womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk>

For Feminist Fightback collective, see:

<http://www.feministfightback.org.uk>

## NEW YORK, NY: The Fourteenth Annual North America Basic Income Guarantee Congress

[André Coelho]

There is a community of Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) supporters in the United States. To prove it, a small crowd of enthusiast and concerned citizens have got together in New York, the past weekend, to discuss BIG on the [Fourteenth Annual North America Basic Income Guarantee Congress](#).

The event started on Thursday, the 26th of February, with a preconference public discussion at the Long Island City Art Center, followed by almost three days of a fulltime schedule conference, featuring 43 speakers and an audience of a similar size. These speakers formed a wide international panel of academics, city officials, government servants, union representatives, social movement activists, authors and even bank officials, not only from the USA, but also from Ireland, Brazil, Canada, Australia and Germany.

The live audience plus all those following the sessions online, through live streaming, listened to and actively participated in the discussion of a variety of subjects directly or indirectly related to BIG. The latter ranged from robotics and its influence on human society, to dealing with poverty, welfare programs, income distribution, BIG economical and social implications, labor transformations and also tax politics, human rights, social emancipation and involvement. Other important issues were addressed, like the failure of social assistance programs in the USA, corruption at charities, job precariousness, and clues were highlighted as to how to introduce BIG into mainstream discourse and political discussions.

All along participants were encouraged to express their motivations, ideas and suggestions, in a thinking together kind of general environment, which culminated at an activist meeting at The Commons Brooklyn, moderated by [Karl Widerquist](#) and [Steven Shafarman](#). At this meeting, held on the evening of March 1st, other activists like [Scott Santens](#), [Mark Witham](#), Jason Burke Murphy, [Michael Bohmeyer](#) and [Mary Bricker-Jenkins](#) were present, among other 24 who signed up for this encounter,

which had the intent of starting a political movement for Basic Income in the United States. Although not named yet, this political movement is already working in BIG economy and social policy, establishing local BIG chapters, content creation (news and research media) and legally formalizing itself into two groups (a U.S. non-profit and a social welfare organization).

More information at:

Karl Widerquist, "[Brooklyn, NY: Report from the meeting to create a political movement for basic income](#)", *Basic Income News*, March 4 2015

"[NABIG sessions](#)", *Basic Income Project*, March 2 2015

"[BIGS Commons](#)", *Basic Income Project*, March 2 2015

TORONTO, Canada: The Precariat Charter: In Conversation with Professor Guy

Standing, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.

[Toru Yamamori]

Professor Guy Standing, the author of Precariat Charter, and Doug Saunders Globe and Mail international affairs columnist will discuss BIG, the precariat, and a new form of progressive politics.

Please see for the detail:

<http://spurfestival.ca/toronto/events/precariat-charter-in-conversation-with-professor-guy-standing/>

TOKYO, Japan: Thinking About Basic Income, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2015.

Tomoyuki Taira, former MP who has been vocal for anti-nuclear power plants, has recently started to advocate a basic income. He will organize an event where he will give a lecture on the concept on 10<sup>th</sup> March at Shimokitazawa, Tokyo. The language used would be Japanese. For the detail of the event see:

<http://t-taira.net/blog/2015/02/310191.html> (in Japanese)

UNITED KINGDOM: Cambridge Students Discuss BIG

[Toru Yamamori]

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of the idea and current campaigns on basic income, and also their own anti-capitalist feminist struggle. Around 30 people turned up and had good discussions.

For CSUS Women's Campaign, see:

<http://www.womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk>

For Feminist Fightback collective, see:

<http://www.feministfightback.org.uk>

### 3. BI Literature

André Barata and Roberto Merrill, "Pre-distribution: a new political agenda for the Left [Pré-distribuição: uma nova agenda política para a esquerda]"

[André Coelho]

The authors distinguish two kinds of pre-distribution: the weak and the strong. The weak has been applied in several countries around the world, through minimum wages, labor protection legislation or labor force training programs. The strong is equated to the unconditional basic income, which the authors argue having a much deeper beneficial effect on social justice and wealth distribution.

André Barata and Roberto Merrill, "[Pre-distribution: a new political agenda for the Left \[Pré-distribuição: uma nova agenda política para a esquerda\]](#)", *Le Monde diplomatique* (portuguese edition), November 6 2014

Angela Cummine, "A citizen's income and wealth fund for the UK: Lessons from Alaska"

Angela Cummine charts the growth and impact of Alaska's Permanent Fund and dividend – a unique combination of publicly owned wealth fund and basic citizen's income – as these ideas continue to intrude on British political debates about equality, poverty, wealth and investment.

IPPR explains itself as 'the UK's leading progressive thinktank'.

Angela Cummine, "[A Citizen's income and wealth fund for the UK: Lesons from Alaska](#)", 4 February 2015, *IPPR*.

De Correspondent, "Money for nothing: the utopian ideal?"

Basic income was given to 13 homeless individuals by a faith organization: results are shown here.

De Correspondent, "Money for nothing: the utopian ideal?" Positive News, February 25, 2015.

Dani Rodrik, "From welfare state to innovation state"

Dani Rodrik reminds us, in this article, that robots and machines doing the work need not lead to high unemployment, especially if working hours were reduced. Technological advancements do have the potential to generate social challenges, since the labor market is deeply affected. However, traditionally privately owned technologies could also be public owned, and hence these profits from public funded technologies could return to ordinary citizens as a "social innovation" dividend, a kind of basic income.

Dani Rodrik, "[From welfare state to innovation state](#)", *Social Europe*, January 15 2015

Dylan Kerrigan, "A new politics of distribution"

This article discusses rethinking the labour market and imagining a new politics of distribution: the Basic Income Grant (BIG) for Trinidad & Tobago.

Dylan Kerrigan, "[A new politics of distribution](#)" *Trinidad & Tobago Guardian Online*. March 1, 2015.

Guy Standing, "Basic income pilots: a better option than QE"

Guy Standing describes, in the present article, the European Central Bank (ECB) as undemocratic, pushing countries to step back on social policies, ramping up insecurity and precariousness and generally representing the financial sector. He suggests directing a small 1% part of the recently deployed Quantitative Easing (QE) scheme to lower income regions, in the form of a basic income, on a pilot basis, suggesting payment for 12 or 24 months. Main benefits include reduced pressure to emigrate, boost aggregate demand and help reduce inequality.

Guy Standing, "[Basic income pilots: a better option than QE](#)", *Social Europe*, February 9 2015

John Sutter, "The argument for a basic income"

SUMMARY: This author writes an opinion piece about the need for the United States to consider a basic income scheme. He cites the town of Cherokee, North Carolina where residents receive a basic income from the local casino as an example of the potential for this idea to work in the United States, and as evidence of the positive impact of the basic income on the individuals living there.

John Sutter, "[The argument for a basic income](#)" CNN. March 1, 2015.

Paul Buchheit, "The corporate debt to society: 10 000 \$USD per household, per year"

In this article, the author calls for a wider version of the [Alaska Permanent Fund](#), one that could be applied to the United States as a whole. This form of Basic Income, the author argues, could come from corporate profit, since, all things considered, corporations owe the vast majority of their wealth to public funds. Being so, it is only fair that this money, accounted for as much as 10 000 \$USD per household, per year, returns to the public, supporting the people who provide most of the labor and resources.

Paul Buchheit, "[The corporate debt to society: 10 000 \\$USD per household, per year](#)", *Nation of Change*, February 23 2015

Paul Mason, "Paying everyone a basic income would kill of low-paid menial jobs"

[André Coelho]

Regarding the recent British Green Party attempt to promote a basic income of £3744 a year, the article briefly puts forward the motivations and purpose of the basic income. In rough numbers it outlines a financial outset to pay for it in contemporary Britain, arguing that it is feasible in the short to medium term, plus disrupting what Andre Gorz has called "the utopia based on work".

Paul Mason, "[Paying everyone a basic income would kill of low-paid menial jobs](#)", *The Guardian*, February 1 2015

Paulo Querido, "Basic income is getting closer to the political agenda [Já faltou mais para levar o rendimento básico incondicional à agenda política]"

[André Coelho]

The basic income has been gaining support among the technological elite, particularly in the United States. In order to keep economies growing, right wing think tanks are giving attention to the concept. The basic income concept is marching towards the political agenda.

Language: Portuguese

Paulo Querido, "[Basic income is getting closer to the political agenda \[Já faltou mais para levar o rendimento básico incondicional à agenda política\]](#)", *Mudanças # 14*, January 15 2015

Pete Higgins, "Why Universal Basic Income is a Better Alternative to the Welfare State."

[Toru Yamamori]

Pete Higgins is an independent candidate for Stoke on Trent South, a UK parliament constituency where currently represented a Labour MP. He initiated an online petition for a basic income as well. In his post, he displays reasons for BIG such as a failure of the current welfare state, etc, which can be found elsewhere in BI literature. What is unique in his proposal is that he argues that only maximum two children in the same family could get 'Child UBI.' According to him this restriction should be made in order to "encourage people to make responsible financial decisions during family planning and help control unsustainable population growth."

Pete Higgins, "[Why Universal Basic Income is a Better Alternative to the Welfare State.](#)" *Pete Higgins - independent candidate for Stoke on Trent South*, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Roberto Merrill, "Basic income as a new human right? From exploitation to pre-distribution [O rendimento básico incondicional como um novo direito humano? Da exploração à pré-distribuição]"

[André Coelho]

The author deconstructs and refutes a common argument against basic income: "the exploitation objection" (those receiving a basic income but not contributing to society). Among other justifications, the most convincing one, according to the author, is that basic income is a pre-distribution of wealth belonging to all, regardless of their individual contributions.

Language: Portuguese

Roberto Merrill, "[Basic income as a new human right? From exploitation to pre-distribution \[O rendimento básico incondicional como um novo direito humano? Da exploração à pré-distribuição\]](#)" *Esquerda.net*, September 3 2014

Scott Santens, "Universal basic income as the social vaccine of the 21st century"

The article compares the savings gathered in eradicating smallpox, with the introduction of a basic income, arguing that the same prevention logic applies as to eradicating poverty. It is strongly supported on registered costs and financial estimates, but also refers non monetary benefits from prevention, both on the physical smallpox disease and the modern poverty pandemic.

Scott Santens, "[Universal basic income as the social vaccine of the 21st century](#)", *Medium*, February 5 2015

Scott Santens, "Guess what happened when Liberia tested a pilot program of cash transfers to the extreme poor in Bomi"

Scott Santens reports on a recently completed basic income pilot in Liberia. Results closely follow other cash transfer programs, as money expenditure goes mainly to food, followed by school, housing, health, savings and clothing. Still according to the referred pilot study, one third of the recipients started businesses of their own, and the sharing of money and food grew. It seems clear that Basic Income works.

Scott Santens, "[Guess what happened when Liberia tested a pilot program of cash transfers to the extreme poor in Bomi](#)", *Scott Santens Blog*, February 23 2015

Scott Santens, "What I've observed since 2013 in the discussion about a basic income guarantee: How a BIG could be closer than we think"

In light of the NABIG Congress in New York this week, the author publishes a retrospective look at the trends and growth in the basic income movement over time.



Scott Santens, "[What I've observed since 2013 in the discussion about a basic income guarantee: How a BIG could be closer than we think](http://www.scottsantens.com)" [www.scottsantens.com](http://www.scottsantens.com). February 26, 2015.

Tim Worstall, "India's Basic Income, Or, Let's Abolish Food Stamps And Make Everyone Richer"

The author argues that giving things to people is not as valuable as giving them money. This he learned from a new book, called Basic Income. A chance to exercise freedom in choosing what and when to buy, instead of being micro-managed by far away bureaucrats handing out food stamps or housing vouchers.

Tim Worstall, "[India's Basic Income, Or, Let's Abolish Food Stamps And Make Everyone Richer](#)", *Forbes*, January 28 2015

Tomas Hirst, "The Greek government is calling for a radical new 'basic income' welfare policy"

SUMMARY: This article discusses a welfare policy proposed by the Greek government that would create a basic income for people between the ages of 50-65 during periods of joblessness. The proposed policy was included as an option in a letter sent by the country's Finance Minister to the European Commission. The article then discusses the concept of basic income more generally and the basic income initiatives that have occurred in other countries.

Tomas Hirst, "[The Greek government is calling for a radical new 'basic income' welfare policy](#)" *Business Insider*. February 24, 2015

Toru Yamamori, "Why Basic Income Now? Limitations of the Japanese Welfare State"

Yahoo Japan, a Japanese online news site features Basic Income. In the first article written by Toru Yamamori, he explains failure of the Japanese Social Security systems. The article also contains information on Guy Standing talk on Basic Income at the International Sociology Association in Yokohama.

Toru Yamamori, "[Why Basic Income Now? Limitations of the Japanese Welfare State](#)," Yahoo Japan News, July 11, 2014.

Yves Smith, "The failure of past Basic Income Guarantee, the Speenhamland System"

[André Coelho]

The article aims at criticizing Basic Income Guarantee (BIG), while praising a Jobs Guarantee (JG) system. However, it is relevant that some of the reader's comments provide counter arguments supporting BIG, exposing frailties of the JG system.

Yves Smith, "[The failure of past Basic Income Guarantee, the Speenhamland System](#)" (and following discussion), *Naked Capitalism*, January 15 2015

## **4. Audio-Video**

VIDEO: Sessions from the Fourteenth North American Basic Income Guarantee

Congress

Video from most of the sessions at the Fourteenth North American Guarantee Congress has been posted online by [the Basic Income Project](#). A few sessions or parts of sessions were lost to technical glitches, but the video captured most of the four-day conference.

The program of the conference is online at the USBIG website, and the videos are online at [the Basic Income Project's Archives](#).

VIDEO: Albert Wanger, "A BIG idea, a bot idea - how smart policy will advance

tech"

[André Coelho]

Albert Wanger, "A BIG idea, a bot idea - how smart policy will advance tech", TEDx New York, YouTube, January 15 2015

VIDEO: Marius Imerslund, "Globalization Conference: cash payment as aid

[Globaliseringskonferansen: Kontantutbetaling som bistand]"

[André Coelho]

This is the video from the biannual conference held by the Norwegian Social Forum (Norwegian branch of the World Social Forum), composed by BIEN Norway and 65 other member organizations. Guy Standing, Ståle Wig (University of Oslo), Hilde Opoku (Green Party in Norway) and Eve Kløve (NORAD) were some of the speakers at the event.

Marius Imerslund, "[Globalization Conference: cash payment as aid](#) [\[Globaliseringskonferansen: Kontantutbetaling som bistand\]](#)", *Great Hall at Oslo Congress Center*, YouTube, 31 October 2014 - Part 1/2

Marius Imerslund, "[Globalization Conference: cash payment as aid](#) [\[Globaliseringskonferansen: Kontantutbetaling som bistand\]](#)", *Great Hall at Oslo Congress Center*, YouTube, 31 October 2014 - Part 2/2

## **5. About the Basic Income Earth Network and its NewsFlash**

### **BIEN NewsFlash:**

Editor: Karl Widerquist

The BIEN NewsFlash is the newsletter of the Basic Income Earth Network. It is mailed electronically every two months to over 2,000 subscribers throughout the world. If you would like to be added or removed from the subscription list, please go to: <http://www.basicincome.org/bien/subscribe.php>.

BIEN's news website is [BInews.org](http://binews.org). It includes many of the articles from the NewsFlash, daily news on basic income, book reviews, opinion, and more.

Items for inclusion or review in future NewsFlashes and BI News please contact BIEN's News Editor, Karl Widerquist <[Karl@widerquist.com](mailto:Karl@widerquist.com)>

Or go to the following page on the BI News website: <http://binews.org/contribute.php>

### **BIEN**

#### **Co-chairs:**

Louise Haagh [louise.haagh@york.ac.uk](mailto:louise.haagh@york.ac.uk), University of York, the United Kingdom  
Karl Widerquist [Karl@Widerquist.com](mailto:Karl@Widerquist.com), Georgetown University, SFS-Qatar

Further details about **BIEN's Executive Committee and International Board** as well as further information about the **Recognised National Networks** can be found on our website [www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org)

### **MEMBERSHIP**

All life members of the Basic Income European Network, many of whom were non-Europeans, have automatically become life members of the Basic Income Earth Network. To join them, just send your name and address (postal and electronic) to Secretary of BIEN <biensecretary@gmail.com>, and transfer EUR 100 to BIEN's account 001 2204356 10 at FORTIS BANK (IBAN: BE41 0012 2043 5610), 10 Rond-Point Schuman, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium. An acknowledgement will be sent upon receipt.

BIEN Life-members can become "B(I)ENEFACTORS" by giving another 100 Euros or more to the Network. The funds collected will facilitate the participation of promising BI advocates coming from developing countries or from disadvantaged groups.

For a list of members and B(I)Enefactors go to [www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org).

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