

PAPERS

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**FROM THE IDEA OF
A BASIC INCOME TO THE
POLITICAL MOVEMENT
IN EUROPE
DEVELOPMENT AND QUESTIONS**

From the Idea of a basic income to the political movement in Europe – development and questions

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1. Short history of the idea of a basic income¹ in Europe and the US

Since the 18th century the idea of a basic income has been discussed by many well-known personalities in Europe, first among them Thomas Paine and Thomas Spence. Starting point of their ideas was the then existing poverty of members of their society which would not have existed in what they considered the natural state of man. This natural state would then provide sufficient natural means of living to everybody to secure their existence. Therefore, privatising natural means owned by everybody in combination with a division of labour would inevitably have made it impossible to guarantee the securing of livelihood through natural means for the individual. Consequently both Paine and Spence tried to restore the natural state of man – regarding the securing of livelihood of every human being – on a higher historical level.

In 1796, *Thomas Paine* proposed in his “Agrarian Justice” to pay a one-off, unconditionally granted amount of money to everybody turning 21 and to additionally pay a basic pension to every male and female citizen, beginning at their 50th birthday. Both should be financed by a tax on inherited and private property. *Thomas Spence*, on the other hand, in the same year asked for the expropriation of property and immovable of the gentry in favour of municipal property in his essay “The Rights of Infants”. This former private and now common property could then be leased to members of the community. The lease itself should again be used in favour of all members of the community, providing municipal infrastructure and an equal amount of money paid to every individual member of the community. The idea of a regular basic income, paid unconditionally to every member of a community was born. Spence combined his idea with the democratisation of access to natural goods. In a kind of participatory budgeting, all municipal expenditure was collectively decided on. Women were supposed to be politically equal members of the community, as for Spence they were of immanent importance to the economic, social and political revolution.

¹ This short history of the idea of a basic income inevitably has to leave many protagonists and their ideas unmentioned. This text does and cannot claim to cover all historical aspects. An extensive account of the idea of a basic income including a discussion of upcoming problems can be found in Blaschke 2010a, an additional lecture should then be van Parijs/Vanderborght 2005.

Financing public infrastructure and basic income through a capital transfer tax on real estates and property (Paine) or through lease on public property (Spence) was justified by Paine and Spence by the argument that nature and thereby all natural goods including property are originally owned by man. Those who used these common goods privately should therefore pay off all owners with part of the public natural riches.

Within the 19th century, the basic income became part of the socialist outlines of *Charles Fourier* and his student *Victor Considérant*. They pleaded for a society based on free cooperation, free love and an “appealing” gainful employment. Both proposed a basic income to guarantee individual and political freedom of all members of society. Economic cooperation and social relationships in general should be based on the possibility for all individuals to gain economic independence and voluntary cooperation. Gainful employment should become more attractive and also more productive by a democratisation of the working world and by abolition of compulsory labour division. This should guarantee the general fundability of a basic income. *Considérant* explicitly argued that without a basic income social and political freedom of the individual could never be reached. A change of social relations not facilitating individual freedom from existential fear and the freedom of self-determinedly chosen social participation would therefore miss a major aim based on human rights.

In the 20th century *Juliet Rhys-Williams* and *Milton Friedman* proposed a capital transfer similar to a basic income. Although both stood for different concepts – Rhys-Williams asked for a social dividend during World War II, while about twenty years later Friedman demanded a negative income tax² – both concepts still followed the same intention: the transfer should bring about certain effects on the labour market and thereby enforce labour market policy.

Juliet Rhys-Williams aimed on the unemployed no longer preferring to stay unemployed simply because even a minor employment would mean the loss of their unemployment benefits. She therefore proposed a social contract guaranteeing

² A social dividend is paid in a set amount to each individual. The concept of a negative income tax offsets the basic income against the individual income tax.

social providing for all citizens. This included a transfer paid independently from all other income and use of all public infrastructures free of charge. Total income of the citizens would add up from the contracted transfer and their own income (additive). Nevertheless, every person capable of gainful employment would be obliged to take on or to keep any reasonable employment fulfilling certain minimum (wage) standards. Also, the transfer should not be paid to those on strike. Even though the transfer was not only aimed on those in need but on all citizens (and therefore should be paid without a means test) the concept was not a basic income as it held the conditions described above.

Milton Friedman on the other hand propagated an extremely low negative income tax that intentionally left a gap between the amount needed for securing livelihood and social minimum participation, the so-called poverty gap. He also intended to abolish social agreements such as minimum wages, set wage agreements, public housing, pension schemes etc. Using his poverty gap concept, the declared opponent of state intervention to the economy tried to subsidise low wages. This should create a supposedly free labour market, the freedom being the possibility to offer work force on a low market value. The actual effect of the poverty gap, which is the difference between the paid amount and the actual need to secure livelihood and social participation, nevertheless is the enforcement of employment. In conclusion, Friedman's concept cannot be called an unconditional basic income (UBI) but at best a partial basic income (PBI)³.

At the same time, different positions were held in the United States by *Martin Luther King* and *Erich Fromm*. Martin Luther King demanded a sufficient basic income actually abolishing poverty. He held the point that a low transfer would only reinforce poverty. Just as Erich Fromm he assumed a high-productive affluent society making fair and equal distribution of societal riches only a political problem. Erich Fromm saw a sufficient basic income as primary right of every individual, independent of the

³ An unconditional basic income (UBI) is such an income that is guaranteed to every person without a social means test and without asking for commitment to work or another service in return and which is sufficient in its amount to secure livelihood and social participation. A partial basic income (PBI) is not sufficiently high to secure livelihood and/or allow social participation. A PBI therefore highly necessitate other forms of means tested income or forced employment as it is too low and so cannot be called unconditional. (cf. Blaschke 2011d: appendix and footnote #17)

“usefulness” of this individual for society. Fromm developed his basic income idea using as well religious and ethical arguments. His concept was embedded within an emancipatory, democratic- socialist perspective: Man (and woman...) should again be able to live and work “productively”, to free themselves from alienated work and consumption.

2. The idea of a basic income becomes the political call of a wide, but politically differently coined movement in Germany

First calls for a basic income in Germany were made in 1982 by the independent unemployed initiatives. They refused forced employment and demanded a basic income, the so-called *Existenzgeld*⁴, securing both livelihood and participation which they wanted to use to live an independent life and to work self-organised. Their definition of poverty includes several forms of individual and social work. They criticised the incapacitation and the existential enforcement created by gainful employment as well as state intervention in education and cultural life. Instead, they asked for self-organised education and culture, political activities free from material fear for livelihood and self-organised material production in solidary economies. The fight for the livelihood benefit was and still is accompanied by additional claims: minimum wages and reduction of working hours, use of public infrastructures free of charge, gender equality in the distribution of gainful employment and reproduction as well as the acquisition of production conditions and means of production. Although the unemployed initiatives (independent from state, church, welfare organisations and labour unions) acted against the background of rising mass unemployment in Germany, their political agenda reaches much wider than only to the topic of unemployment and aims to be a society-changing concept.

Within the 1980s numerous books on the basic income were published in Germany. Eco-liberals, green alternatives as well as academics discussed the basic income from different perspectives. Poverty reduction, ecology, overcoming the industrial society, escaping the state making up people’s minds for them, liberty and gender equality were their topics. This on the one hand related to the realisation that neither

⁴ The “Existenzgeld” (livelihood benefit) is a special form of the unconditional basic income.

labour market nor social security systems focussed on gainful employment and, deducted from the labour market, could guarantee the security of livelihood (especially not in regard to mass unemployment). On the other hand, the upcoming ecological crisis of the industrial society including environmental pollution and the shortage of natural resources enforced the discussion. They also criticised the exploitation of the so-called Third World, of nature and of women. The industrial-capitalistic economy, as well as the paternalistic welfare-oriented social policy connected to it, both were refused in discussion. Some demanded individual access to and control of means of production to use them individually or in collective-solidary subsistence economies. Industrial mass production should become decentralised in favour of ecologic production, reproductive occupation should be acknowledged as equally valuable. The exploitation of the so-called Third World should be stopped; their production had to be oriented on their very own interests and living conditions instead of on those of rich countries. Connected with these policy issues was the call for a basic income which was considered to be a material security system creating independence from ecology-damaging gainful employment and paternalistic, repressive social policy.

This so-called “socio-ecologic” approach can be distinguished from neo-liberal basic income concepts such as Milton Friedman’s and left-Keynesian positions such as economic growth, increase of demand and redistribution of work. (cf.

Opielka/Vobruba 1986) It includes the idea that the right of income should be connected with a right to work whereas the enforcement of gainful employment should be abolished. The basic income then would be a lubricant to a comprehensive redistribution of work. Moreover, this approach pleads for an ecological redesign of society and comprehensive gender equality on all societal levels. The right of a basic income here is a crucial part of an extensive reform of social security systems oriented on gainful employment and should be combined with the right of individual means of production. Criticism included socially and corporately connected power blocs (employers’ associations, labour unions) which dominated society and socio-political endeavours. A basic income should break up the power of these blocs by reinforcing decentralised production and pluralistic interest groups outside from the traditional blocs. The political agenda therefore was called “Liberation from wrong work”. (cf. Schmid 1984) Furthermore, a separate debate mediated between solidary

as well as cooperative economy and basic income. This was especially discussed within the independent unemployed initiatives and among green alternatives. Self-organised collective production and basic income indeed are well able to complement each other, especially regarding ideas such as those of Charles Fourier and Victor Considérant.

While during the 1980s the labour unions discussed a conditional and means-tested minimum income scheme which should finally make the insufficient social security systems free from poverty, the social democrats' chancellor candidate Oskar Lafontaine and the party fraction of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) in the German Bundestag started to discuss a wider definition of work in the early 1990s. The status of political as well as care and family occupation should be increased in value compared to gainful employment. Considerations led to a relatively wide concept of a minimum income scheme decoupled from gainful employment, but did not include a concept of a basic income. This was only proposed by *Christoph Spehr* in his price-winning Rosa-Luxemburg essay "More Equal than Others" in 2003. He pleaded for democratic (economic) cooperation with a basic income scheme to enable its individual liberty in this cooperation. (cf. Spehr 2003)

Following the German reunion, the debate of a basic income in Germany first was only held among academics, in independent unemployed initiatives, in anthroposophic and Christian groups. Even the huge livelihood benefit congress of 1999 (cf. Krebs/Rein 2000), organised by the German FeIS⁵ initiative, brought quite a few ideas to think about but failed to achieve a breakthrough in society.

A new momentum was reached with the argumentation for a basic income by social philosopher *André Gorz* in his essay "Work between Misery and Utopia" published in 2002 in German. Gorz linked real developments in the working world such as subjectivism, delimitation and precarity of labour with a general criticism of gainful employment. From there he concluded in the necessity of a basic income for everybody, of a right of self-determined change of work places and forms of

⁵ FeIS: Für eine linke Strömung (For a left Trend).

occupation (gainful employment, social occupation, education etc.) and of free disposal of room and infrastructure for free and joint occupation. His declared aim was a development from our labour society to a free cultural society. Probably most fascinating in his argumentation is its claim of the existence of emancipatory possibilities of political reinforcement of a cultural society already in the currently real economy, thereby showing the existence of opportunities to finally break up the hegemony of capitalist economy.

In the early 21st century, the alleged victory of neo-liberal strategies of activation and full employment combined with the announcement of the so-called Hartz-laws by the governing coalition of Social Democrats and Greens under Gerhard Schröder and Joseph Fischer also stirred intellectual and political resistance - and a revival of the idea of a basic income. Since then, the idea has spread all over Germany with breath-taking speed and is now fully established in public discussions. There is no day that passes without a public event or discussion at some place or the other. Neither political parties nor the media or social welfare organisations can avoid dealing with the topic. Even the chancellor is constantly confronted with the topic at her regular “future dialogues”.

In December 2003 the initiative “Freedom instead of Full Employment” published their theses on a basic income. They criticised the constant fixation on full employment as anachronistic and linked to unsocial consequences. Instead, academics in the initiative demanded a basic income and thereby greater freedom for the citizens. The group, which is mainly represented by Sascha Liebermann, keeps a liberal approach oriented at the basic rights catalogue. Poster campaigns and advertisements helped to create broad public attention.

On 9 July 2004, the day when the Bundesrat (the German states’ chamber in parliament) agreed to the Hartz-IV law, the German Network Basic Income was founded. This had been planned by university professor Michael Opielka, unemployment activists Wolfram Otto and Ronald Blaschke, the vice chairwoman of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), Katja Kipping, and the chairwoman of the Catholic Workers Movement Germany, Birgit Zenker. They also functioned as the

network's first speakers. The network was founded by about fifty academics, politicians from Greens and left parties as well as by activists from social movements. Today, about eight years on, the network counts 3.500 individual members as well as 100 member organisations and initiatives, an academic committee, a "Friends of the Network" organisation and a network council.

The German Network Basic Income is itself member of the international organization *Basic Income Earth Network* (BIEN)⁶ founded in 1986. Its self-declared task is to reinforce a discourse on the basic income and its introduction beyond the borders of political parties or (religious) views of life. A basic income should fulfil four criteria: an amount securing livelihood and participation, an individually guaranteed legal claim, absence of social means tests, absence of enforcement of gainful employment or any other service in return. Therefore it is a clearly unconditional basic income (UBI). Nevertheless the network does not specify on a certain basic income model. The general meeting in December 2008 voted to include the following into the preamble of the network's statute: "The basic income shall help to abolish poverty and social plights, to widen the individual sphere of freedom and to sustainably increase individual development chances and the social and cultural conditions within society." Next to numerous actions, seminars and international symposia the three international basic income congresses held in German (Vienna 2005, Basel 2007, Berlin 2008) in cooperation with the Swiss and Austrian Basic Income Networks and the three countries' Attac- organisations should be highlighted. Similarly, the annual International Basic Income Week which started in 2008 has to be mentioned. It takes place in the 38th calendar week and includes numerous and various events and public discussions. On the event of the 60th anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration in December 2008 the network, in cooperation with developmental, environmental, social welfare and women's rights organisations, has also published a Declaration on Securing Unconditional Participation in which the basic income took a major part. In October 2010 the network invited members of the national parliament and the state parliaments to hold a first parliamentary evening. In 2010 and 2011 lobbyism in the European Parliament was successfully conducted concerning the report on the role of minimum income in combating poverty and promoting an

⁶ BIEN was founded as Basic Income European Network and has by now started to act globally.

inclusive society in Europe, where passages concerning the basic income could be introduced into the parliament's resolution. In 2011 preparations for the initiation of a European petition on a basic income started, and in September 2012 the network held the 14th BIEN congress near Munich.

The network uses different levels of linking its members. This includes regional meetings of local basic income initiatives, the Round Table Basic Income Germany (see below) as well as European and global networks. Vital for the network are the activities of its members and member organisations, of the working groups and the council and only therefore can it organise post card events, campaigns and scientific congresses. Because of all that it's the internationally and nationally widest linked German organisation for a basic income – an organisation between movement and network, for action, politics and academic research.

Shortly after the founding of the network, the *German Federal Youth Association (DBJR)* issued its cornerstones of a basic income (a UBI model) on 4th December 2004. The DBJR is a network of 65 state- and countrywide working youth organisations. Today various youth organisations such as the *Young Friends of Nature*, the *Federal Youth Organisation of the Worker's Welfare Organisation (AWO)* and the *Green Youth* demand a basic income. The *Association of the German Catholic Youth (BDKJ)* pleads for a transfer similar to the basic income which includes a compulsory low-level bureaucratic proof of a certain amount of occupation. The *Left Youth [solid]* as well as the *Young Social Democrats (Jusos)* lead a broad discussion on the basic income.

Attac Germany in 2003 voted on the thematic emphasis of "sufficient for all" which focusses on the fact that every person possesses the right to participate in social life and riches. The working group in charge, the *Attac-AG Genug für alle* concluded that this right has to be realised by a minimum wage and an unconditional basic income. At the Attac council meeting in Hamburg in October 2004 the proposal only shortly missed the required consensus with only slightly more than ten per cent votes against it. Since then the working group argues for a basic income within Attac Germany. Next to the reasoning for a basic income regarding human rights, they focus on criticizing the taking into public ownership through gainful employment

within capitalism. The basic income is especially discussed as part of services of general interest and within the context of global social rights and a post-growth-society, as shown amongst others at the growth-critical congress in Berlin in May 2011.

In 2005, the then managing director of the chemist's chain dm, *Götz W. Werner*, geared towards the media when he publicly announced his view on the unconditional basic income. Following Rudolf Steiner's idea of the social threefold and the anthroposophic conception of humanity, he argues for the abolishment of all taxes and contributions in favour of an increased VAT which he calls consumption tax. Werner solitary asks for a substitutive basic income which replaces that part of the wages equalling the amount paid as basic income. The same approach is also represented by Susanne Wiest, whose basic income petition to the federal parliament was signed by more than 50.000 supporters early in 2009 but has only now been discussed in parliament.⁷ The date for the final discussion at the petition committee and at the parliamentary plenum has not yet been announced. This approach to the basic income is also surrounded by the "Krönungswelle" (crowning wave), a citizens' initiative raising public attention through various events, and the "Omnibus for Direct Democracy", a non-profit research and development enterprise attempting to implement a three folded plebiscite.

The *Catholic Workers Movement Germany e.V. (KAB)* in 2007 also voted to promote a basic income. The KAB draws the vision of an occupational society that equally values different social and individual occupations. In connection with a basic income they ask for a minimum wage, reduction of working hours and improvement and use of infrastructure and general services free of charge, in areas such as education. The KAB's resolutions are realised in a campaign to Europe-wide start a discussion on the basic income.

It has to be constituted that in all *political parties* currently represented in the federal parliament (excluding the Liberals, FDP) the discussion of a basic income is firmly

⁷ Many supporters of Wiest's petition do in no respect support Götz Werner's approach to the basic income but rather wanted to publicly show their general support of the idea of a basic income.

implemented. There are different proposals of individual politicians as well as initiatives. Especially mentioned should be Katja Kipping (*Left Party*) and Wolfgang Strengmann-Kuhn and Robert Zion (both *Green Party*) who argue for a basic income both within their parties and in public. For the Green Party, a Green Network Basic Income is actively working and discusses partial and unconditional basic income concepts. Within the Left Party, the Basic Income Working Group succeeded to implement the unconditional basic income in the party's agenda as an option that needs to be further discussed. They developed a concept of an emancipatory basic income. Within the *Social Democrats (SPD)* the discussion of the basic income gets going, especially reinforced by the local constituency of Rhein-Erft. Special attention was reached by the discussion within the party's association, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. (cf. Wagner 2009 and Lessenich 2009) Within the *Christian Democrats (CDU)*, the former state prime minister of Thuringia, Dieter Althaus, holds the point of a citizens' benefit (a partial basic income). The CDU also initiated a committee supposed to discuss the citizens' benefit but has by now been dismissed again without a final report. In December 2011 the *Pirates' Party* included the call for a basic income according to the four criteria of the German Network Basic Income into their election agenda for the upcoming federal elections in 2013, as well as a political strategy to reach the implementation of the basic income. Nevertheless, the pirates also discuss partial basic income concepts and therefore concepts that do not secure livelihood and participation. The *Violets* party already implemented the basic income in their agenda quite some time ago.⁸

In January 2012 a basis initiative of union activists published the call for a union's dialogue on the unconditional basic income and on a new definition of labour. The initiative aims on establishing the basic income in the unions' agenda within a context of a civil insurance, a legal minimum wage and the reduction of working hours. Preceding the initiative were claims of many basic organisations of the service workers' union ver.di to discuss the idea within the union and to develop their own basic income concept. At the federal ver.di congress in 2011 four state

⁸ For a full account of basic income approaches mentioned in this paper, see the chart presenting German basic income concepts and models in Blaschke 2011c and here updated: <https://www.grundeinkommen.de/services/english-page>

organisations, a federal faculty, two state faculties, two districts and the union's youth organisation placed motions and in that way fought for an intense discussion of the basic income and for the development of a union concept – at the 2007 congress there had only been four different motions. A motion initiated by the union's federal unemployed committee in cooperation with the staff of the federal council blocked the motions for a basic income. The motion, accepted by a majority, states: "Ver.di refuses the civil benefit, the negative income tax, the children's minimum benefit, the unconditional basic income or other neo-liberal generalizing schemes and concepts of combined wages." The unions' dialogue initiative is also directed at the ignorance of the leading group of the metal workers' union IG-Metall against the claim for a basic income issued by many union members: the idea of a basic income was a main issue in the union's 2009 member campaign "together for good living", but has in no way been acknowledged by the leading board. Academic debates close to the unions however show that there is a serious dispute about the basic income, so at the forum "new labour policy" in 2008, but also proposals aiming at a basic income as can be found in publications of the Hans Böckler association.

Within the *Protestant and Catholic Church*, voices in favour of the basic income become louder. Both theological and ethical reasons are discussed, involving especially deacons, Protestant parish priests currently teaching and theologians at universities. Within the Catholic Church, a new interpretation of the Catholic social doctrine in favour of a basic income is discussed. The Catholic Workers' Movement Germany as one of the most important protagonists has already been mentioned. The 2nd ecumenical Church congress 2010 in Munich and the Protestant Church Congress 2011 in Dresden both made the basic income a main topic of discussion. Groups within the Protestant Church also supported and still support the local basic income project in Namibia, both non-materially and with financial means.

Within the social welfare organisations, the general will to discuss the idea of a basic income as one socio-political alternative on the way to more freedom, equality and solidarity can be found. Nevertheless these debates are often confronted with manifest prejudices, lack of knowledge and misunderstandings regarding different basic income approaches.

Many of the organisations and groups mentioned so far also are part of the Round Table Germany network. At the round table, protagonists and organisations acting on a federal level are brought together, all of them supporting the concept of an unconditional basic income according to the network's four criteria. Meetings offer exchange, discussion and coordination of joint events and are organised by the German Basic Income Network.

The basic income is also widely discussed within the academic world. Many German academics, among them an accountable number of members of the academic committee of the network, consider different aspects of the basic income and supervise academic papers on the topic. The number of academic publications on the basic income within the last years has constantly risen.

Width and variety of approaches to the basic income in Germany are considerably high, as is the number of actual ideas regarding conceptual realisations.

prospect:

Within the following years, firstly political reasoning for, approaches to and conceptual suggestions regarding a basic income in Germany will increase in number and differentiate in quality.

Secondly, different political forces and parties will develop agenda and policy approaches in an increasing degree, thereby considering the basic income as universal transfer for all humans and securing different forms of living and occupation while still differing in their political intention. It should be expected to see a wider range of neo-liberal and emancipatory approaches, which seems even more important as the lacking discussion about the difference between the two conceptual approaches had its share in the victory of the neo-liberal minimum benefit scheme of Hartz IV.

Thirdly, a further differentiation within the German basic income movement is to be expected along the line of combining the basic income with other, also generally social projects for a free, democratic and ecologic society. Differentiation within the movement will also show at the question of possible conditions and speed of the introduction of a basic income.

3. The European Basic Income Movement⁹

In the past, there have been various academic and political activities regarding a basic income in Europe in different countries, such as in Germany, Belgium or Great Britain. Nevertheless these activities were only weakly linked. This changed only in 1986.

From September 4th to 6th, supporters of a basic income from different European countries met in the Belgic town of Louvain-la-Neuve and concluding their meeting founded the *Basic Income European Network (BIEN)*. BIEN defines a basic income as an income that is granted to everybody on an individual basis without any means test or an obligation to work. It is a form of guaranteed minimum income differing from currently in European countries existing basic or minimum benefit schemes in three major points: It is paid to individuals rather than to private households, it is paid independently from any other income and without an obligation to work or to any other service in return. This threefold definition of BIEN also differs from the definition including four criteria (UBI) as it is promoted by the German or Austrian Network Basic Income. The BIEN definition also includes partial basic income concepts (PBI) not securing livelihood and participation. A transfer not providing the sufficient amount of money to fulfil these aims cannot be attributed with those emancipatory effects connected to a basic income as a transfer securing livelihood and participation (UBI).¹⁰ Under certain circumstances and depending on the chosen concept a transfer not securing livelihood and participation might even have anti-emancipatory effects.

BIEN has by now spread all over the world. In 2004 it was renamed *Basic Income Earth Network*. Since 1998 it has been publishing circulars, and every two years an international basic income congress is held. BIEN is used as connection between individuals and groups promoting basic income models. It involves academics, students, social policy practitioners and people being active in political, social and

⁹ The following outline of the development of the European Basic Income Movement does not intend to be comprehensive. The author would appreciate any supplementing comments.

¹⁰ For a detailed account of different terms and definitions see Blaschke 2011d:appendix and footnote #3.

religious organisations whose academic background and political motivation differ widely. Currently BIEN consists of 17 national member organisations in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Still, while there are more initiatives and groups promoting a basic income in Europe and all over the world, their political orientations and intentions differ according to the political background of the protagonists as well as to the economic, social, cultural and legal situation in the respective countries.

Next to BIEN, the *International Round Table Basic Income (with German as official meeting language)* has been established in Europe. It involves German speaking organisations and networks from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, southern Tyrol and Luxemburg which all are arguing for a basic income in their countries. The round table prepares international events such as the “European Citizens’ Initiative Basic Income” (UBI) and the International Basic Income Week. Here the international basic income congresses in Vienna 2005, Basel 2007 and Berlin 2008 should be highlighted, as well as the international symposia in Herzogenrath 2009 and Vienna 2011. It should also be mentioned that due to successful lobbying of the round table important passages on the basic income were included in the European parliament’s resolution on minimum income in 2010 (cf. Blaschke 2011d: 6).

In *Austria*, the beginning of the basic income movement is closely connected to Lieselotte Wohlgenannt and Herwig Büchele who have edited two publications providing fundamental arguments in favour of a basic income (cf. Büchele /Wohlgenannt 1985, Wohlgenannt/Büchele 1990). The basic income, in Austria also defined according to the four criteria of the German Network Basic Income, had been intensely discussed within the Catholic Social Academy Austria (ksoe) since the mid-1980s. The then social minister and union activist Alfred Dallinger (Social Democratic Party Austria) positively took up the topic of a basic income in an expert hearing and following public discussions. Supporters of a basic income could also be found within the Austrian people’s party. Nevertheless, the debate flattened after Dallinger’s death in 1989.

Interest in basic benefit schemes and basic income models rose again only end of the 1990s, probably stirred by the noticeable social changes caused by neo-liberal policies and a rising awareness of poverty and discrimination within rich societies. In 2002, the “Network Basic Income and Social Solidarity” was founded following an initiative of the ksoe. It is now a member organisation of BIEN and held several academic conferences in Austria as well as, supported by the German and Swiss networks, the first Basic Income Congress in German language in Vienna 2005 which was documented in the conference publication “Basic Income – be occupied in Freedom”. The Austrian network organises symposia, discussion circles and events promoting the basic income and actively lobbies for the idea. In 2006, the Austrian Round Table was founded, including representatives of the Austrian Communist Party and the social movements (Attac, Network Basic Income and Social Cohesion, KAB, FIAN, Unemployed Initiative etc.) as well as many interested individual members. It intends to connect individuals, organisations and initiatives promoting a basic income and to plan and organise joint events, while a main emphasis is set on the preparation of the annual International Basic Income Week.

Attac Austria has resolved the unconditional basic income as political claim. Within the academic and cultural scene in Austria, a consent to the basic income is widely spread and often promoted at events. The Austrian Communist Party demands an unconditional basic income for all people to whom Austria is the centre of their existence.¹¹ There are numerous supporters of a basic income among members of the Green Party. Within the last years, most discussions about the basic income have been brought up against the background of the implementation of a means tested minimum benefit scheme in Austria very similar to the basic benefit for the unemployed (Hartz IV) in Germany.

Sociologists, economists, philosophers, lawyers and many others founded the Basic Income Network *Italy* in 2008 to support the idea of the introduction of a basic income. The Network Basic Income South Tyrol as a regional group supports the

¹¹ Concerning the basic income debate within the Austrian Communist Party, see Klaus 2010.

Italian network and is closely connected to the Green former member of the European parliament, Sepp Kusstatscher.

Within the Italian debate the analysis of the production change of the last decades played a major role. Prominent conditions and forms of production generally subsumed as post-Fordism were a starting point to think about and discuss new forms of existential guarantees connected to citizenship. The narrow leeway of the increasingly precarious securing of livelihood through gainful employment was questioned. Still, the basic income is as well discussed as part of the universal access to public goods, while it should secure an appropriate level of livelihood and the opportunity of participation and self-governance. Due to the locally and regionally widely differing system of basic and minimum benefit schemes in Italy and the special hardships for the poor caused by the economic and social crises, a minimum benefit scheme and a basic income are currently both fought for. Civic protagonists represent a variety of backgrounds, and so do their concrete political intentions regarding basic or minimum benefit schemes and the basic income. Intended concepts and used definitions have only caused confusion among most of those involved, making it nearly impossible to distinguish between means tested or otherwise conditional transfers on the one side and unconditional transfers on the other side. (cf. Kusstatscher 2010)

In *Spain*, the network “Red Renta Básica” was founded by a number of basic income activists in 2001 who had in the previous years promoted a basic income and had looked into various aspects of the idea. The network aims on promoting and spreading the idea of a basic income as well as on academic research on the topic, on the implementation of a basic income and on enforcing a public debate about a possible realisation of a basic income in Spain and its autonomous communities. The basic income is designed as modest yet sufficient income to secure necessary basic needs. In addition to Red Renta Básica there is also the network “Renta Básica de los Iguales” – “basic income of the equals” – connected to the Spanish social movement BALADRE, a movement against unemployment, poverty, discrimination and precarity. They fight for a “strong” livelihood benefit: The basic income of the equals actually intends to secure livelihood and social participation (UBI) and, opposing bourgeois basic income concepts, is seen as a means to change society.

Intellectual leader of the movement is Jose Iglésias Fernández who connects the basic income concept with elements of participation. Part of the basic income budget is supposed to be spend on public goods, infrastructure and services. Regarding the distribution of the existing capital, all citizens have equal rights to participate in the distribution debate and the following decision process. Special value is also attributed to the implementation of a basic income through a social movement acting in a bottom-up process. (cf. Alex 2004, Fernández 2010)

In *Switzerland* the basic income debate had its highlights in the early 1980s and mid-1990s especially in academic circles, but also reaching into politics. Thus, in 1999 the Green Party included the proposal in their party agenda. In 2001, BIEN Switzerland was founded. Being an organisation sitting in Genève, BIEN Switzerland considers itself a Swiss basic income network and pleads for a new approach in social policy. It intends to study and promote the idea of a basic income and to enforce its realisation in Switzerland. Beyond the financial dimension of a basic income, BIEN Switzerland pays special attention to alternative forms of the production of goods and services which from a conventional point of view are not sufficiently profitable at the moment but relate to actual needs and could well be developed under the conditions of a basic income. According to BIEN Switzerland the basic income needs to guarantee a minimum life standard. Concepts discussed in Switzerland are designed to just reach the Swiss poverty risk threshold but may also be well below this amount (PBI). The Alternative Left Party, founded in May 2010, combines left alternative forces outside of the Social Democratic Party and the Green party and argues for a basic income similarly to the newly founded Pirates' Party. The Christian coined Swiss labour union Syna argues for a basic income that is considered to be a chance to renegotiate the value of labour and to enable workers to take on a meaningful occupation without compulsion. Within the Social Democratic Party the basic income is discussed controversially although a "basic income free of gainful employment" had been implemented in the party's agenda in 2010. Hardly any more impact can be assigned to Attac Basel and its surroundings although they organised the 2nd basic income congress in German language in Basel in 2007. In 2006, the Basel "Initiative Basic Income" started to promote the concept publicly using different events and activities. Founders Daniel Häni and Enno Schmidt mainly followed the approach of Götz

Werner. In addition to a strong use of traditional media, the initiative is also well represented in different social media. Together with the Zurich agency for a basic income they carried out the biggest Swiss basic income event in March 2011. In April 2012 they initiated the collection of signatures for a basic income referendum requiring the collection of at least 100.000 signatures within 18 month to actually conduct the referendum. They ask for the amendment of the Swiss federal constitution to introduce a basic income enabling the population to lead a human life and to participate in public life. The actual amount of the transfer payment and the funding then are supposed to be regulated in a federal law. By now only a few referenda were successful. To be accepted, the referendum requires a double majority of the majority of all valid votes and at the same time the majority of valid votes in a majority of cantons. The referendum is by now not supported by a political party, but is supported without reservations by BIEN Switzerland which also sent one of its council members into the initiative's committee. Nevertheless, the referendum is criticised for its unspecified claims regarding the basic income. Critics include the ThinkNet, a think tank network close to the unions aiming on exchange on mid- and long term development in economic, social and labour policy. ThinkNet supports the general idea of the referendum but holds the point that only the concrete conceptual outline and realisation of a basic income decide on it being part of a more solidary and just world – or a social welfare trap. ThinkNet's protagonists have developed criteria for an emancipatory basic income already included in many left basic income models. The basic income has to be sufficiently high and combined with a top- down redistribution. Currently existing social welfare benefits must still be granted and might not be privatised. An effort should be made to achieve good gainful employment (by minimum wages and maintenance of industrial health and safety standards), and social responsibility for a good public infrastructure needs to complete the basic income. ThinkNet pleads for an introduction using a step-by-step expansion of a time off gainful employment for everybody which provides securing of livelihood similar to a basic income and therefore is very similar to the idea of an unconditional basic time of the Institute of Economy and Social Science of the union-close German Hans Böckler association.

Yet, there are more than the above mentioned national basic income networks in Europe, also being members of the Basic Income Earth Network.

As early as in 1984 the Basic Income Research Group, later renamed Citizen's Income Trust, was founded in the *United Kingdom*. This had been preceded by a number of intellectuals and academics who had argued for a basic income or similar transfer payments from various assumptions and entered their views into the political debate (Bertrand Russell, Mabel and Dennis Milner, George D. H. Dole, James Meade, Juliet Engeline Rhys Williams et al.).

In 2000, a network for a so-called citizen's wage was founded in *Denmark*. Already in 1978 Danish intellectuals had proposed a basic income as "citizen's wage", a democratic and ecological society and economy and a fair distribution of income in the bestseller "Revolt from the centre".

In the *Netherlands*, the Vereniging Basisinkomen was founded in 1991 as association of basic income supporters. In 1975, the social medic J.P.Kuiper of the university of Amsterdam had argued for the decoupling of gainful employment and income, while he also pleaded for an obligatory social service. In 1977 the small Radical Party was the first European political party represented in parliament to take up the universal basic income to their election agenda. The claim for a basic income was then supported by the Dutch grocery union. In 1985 the academic council for government policy of the Netherlands recommended the introduction of a partial basic income. Basic income debates have also included debates on the humanisation of labour and on a sustainable and human society. The topic was also present in the ecological movement. The Green Party promoted the idea in their election agenda in the late 1990s. A research conducted by the central planning office estimated possible costs of different basic income models in 2006, although critics remarked that these were based on wrong assumptions. Currently, debates focus on a step-by-step introduction for instance by gradually abolishing conditions for the payment of basic benefits, by expanding existing forms of the negative income tax or by releasing stock shares for everybody.

In 1995, BIEN *Ireland* was founded. The Irish government published a basic income green book in 2002 which showed that more than 70% of Irish households whose income was just at the poverty risk threshold would have received a higher income including the basic income, and that 40% of the individuals receiving an income below the poverty risk threshold would have been relieved from income poverty. According to the green book's calculations this would not have required additional financial means compared to current social welfare expenditures. BIEN Ireland critically watches the government's conclusions and has set up several principles that have to be fulfilled by a basic income: It needs to be at the disposal of every individual and must be paid in a sufficiently high amount to enable a human life. It must not be connected to any conditions such as need or obligation to work. The system must be designed to guarantee equality and justice, which also applies to funding. Not only should it be economic, but also efficient in terms of fighting poverty. It should be easy to understand and to manage, and it needs to support the individual freedom to independently decide about one's own life.

Various initiatives and movements actively promote a basic income even in European countries without a national BIEN network.

Considerably varying, but until now only weakly linked are the numerous (partial) basic income activists in *France*. These especially involve academics, but also some politicians who have developed, publicly discussed and politically lanced concepts and political strategies for different basic income systems. (cf. Otto 2009) Social movements and union activists still hesitate to take up the idea, show only guarded interest or even completely refuse to discuss. Nevertheless there have been recent efforts to increase the promotion of a basic income in different regions and groups, this also including attempts to network with other activists.

The basic income debate in France goes back to a long tradition as the distributionists surrounding Jacques Duboin started to consider new forms of distribution such as a basic income as early as in the 1930s when they faced an increased productivity and a surplus of material goods. Allain Caillé, André Gorz, Jean-Marc Ferry and others initiated new, fundamental socio-philosophic debates in the 1990s on which the social movements still live today.

In *Finland*, a basic income network was founded in 2011. It intends to become a member of the Basic Income Earth Network and offers a joint platform to political groups that have so far been acting separately. Due to its campaigns there have been quite a few recent discussions about the basic income which also have been reported about by the media. The basic income discussion again has a long tradition in Finland, taking up the Scandinavian conception of welfare which already includes the securing of livelihood and participation. Economist Jan-Otto Andersson, a supporter of the Left Alliance, proposed a partial basic income in 1988 which could be stocked up by a citizen's work payment for socially meaningful occupation. In 1999 the partial basic income became a major topic in election campaigning. The mid-right Centre Party in their 1999 election agenda proposed a partial basic income included in a comprehensive labour reform. Social Democrats and other left-wing politicians protested against this call, while the Greens supported it. This links to prominent supporters of a partial basic income among members of the Green party reasoning for a partial basic income already in the 1990s. In 2007 the proposal of a partial basic income of the Green Culture Organisation was discussed and also turned into that year's election campaign basis. On the other hand, employers' associations disapprove of the idea. Nevertheless, debates have been issued also within social democratic circles, unions and their associations, all trying to prove the inability to fund a partial basic income. These and other counter arguments resemble still unproven claims currently issued by German social democrats and union leaders. Following their reasoning, consequences of a basic income would be a deregulation of the labour market, wage reductions, funding problems for other socially necessary expenditures, an ideology of self-responsibility etc. Nevertheless, even among Social Democrats and union activists supporters of a basic income can be found. The Left Alliance – similar to the Green party – has included the basic income into their party's agenda. The Left Forum, the Left Alliance's think tank, has published and discussed several contributions within the last years, all of them arguing in favour of a strong unconditional, but against a partial basic income. Only recently, some conservative politicians have entered the debate and revealed their support of a basic income. Currently left academics conduct a wide research on the feasibility of basic income models, opportunities of the basic income for the social welfare state and on possible economic effects. Since 2000, the Finish Anti-Precarity Movement shows a positive

appreciation of the basic income, reasoning that it would also facilitate social occupation not rewarded as gainful employment and that it would greatly contribute to the fight against compulsory precarious occupation. It is also discussed as part of a production model based on public collective goods.¹²

The by now presented outline of groups, organisations, networks and parties in the European countries does not depict the European political basic income movement as a whole. Beyond the picture drawn above there are groups and organisations promoting a basic income in many countries already mentioned as well as in countries that had to be unmentioned so far. Moreover, in many European countries a variety of regional and local basic income initiatives exist that are member of national groups, organisations and networks or are linked to those or the European networks on different levels.

It has to be stressed that the political orientation of the European basic income movement in principle – as it can be said for many other political movements – is neither clear nor uniform. Not only do we find very different actual argumentations and approaches, but also more than different concepts regarding social changes intended by a basic income and other political concepts connected with it. Generally different approaches can be distinguished that either intend the introduction of a basic income following a specific model or that combine the introduction of a basic income with further political approaches to social changes, i.e. that consider the basic income one building block towards a solidary society providing more individual freedom. Often different political intentions connected to a basic income exist within one group, one initiative or national network, or even within one political party. The following chapter will have a closer look at two opposing approaches to reasoning and concept of a basic income which resemble two poles, with many more different approaches moving along the line between them.

¹² On the situation in Finland see Holm 2010.

4. Market liberal and emancipatory approaches to reasoning for and design of a basic income

Reasoning for and approaches to basic income concepts typically can be divided into market liberal and emancipatory approaches.¹³ Typically implies that actual approaches might show similarities in some points but still follow fundamentally different political intentions. This division is oriented on two opposing protagonists of unconditional transfers in the 20th century - Milton Friedman, a market liberal academic, and Erich Fromm, a democratic humanist and socialist. (cf. Blaschke 2010a: 225 ff., 250 ff.) It also follows a distinction already made in 1986 by Michael Opielka and Georg Vobruba, both basic income protagonists of the first day: They distinguish positions on the future of labour and social welfare state regarding the right of a guaranteed income as “neoliberal” or “socio-ecological”. (cf. Opielka/Vobruba 1986: 6)

The following chapters will outline the answers to chosen fundamental social questions given by both of the opposing approaches. These questions often follow the thematic emphases of different social movements: labour and occupation, social welfare state and radical democratisation of society and economy, public goods, infrastructure and services, redistribution, gender equality, reduction in the use of natural resources and global social rights. All explanations intend to on the one hand show incompatibilities of certain basic income approaches with the intentions of social movements, on the other hand they try to reveal intersections of the basic income movement and other social movements as these intersections promote political alliances.

4.1 Occupation, welfare state and radical democratisation of society and economy

The market liberal approach of reasoning for and designing of a basic income intends to use a basic income or a similar transfer to make people more flexibly usable for

¹³ Similar typical distinctions are possible for approaches to basic and minimum benefit schemes, working hour concepts, the expansion of infrastructure and services or for political attempts to reduce the use of natural resources.

the labour market (referring to gainful employment). The unconditional transfer, most often connected to the reduction or the refusal of work- and social rights connected minimum standards such as protection against wrongful dismissal, minimum or set wages and livelihood securing social insurance systems, is supposed to offer a small opportunity of securing livelihood – or at least survival. The amount of the intended transfer payment lies well below the poverty risk threshold according to European standards (which for Germany currently ranges from 940€ to more than 1.000€ net¹⁴ a month) or other regulations determining the sufficient amount of a transfer payment securing livelihood and participation. These partial basic incomes therefore do not fulfil the criteria of securing livelihood and participation as e.g. the German Network Basic Income or the Austrian Network Basic Income demand. Many hopes linked to a basic income regarding an increase of freedom for the people such as the right to refuse insufficient working conditions or to gain democratic participation in economy and society thus have to be considered futile when tried to achieve through a partial basic income.

The intention of such a low transfer is to expand or even create low wage sectors on the labour market. Transfer thereby functions to subsidise low wage enterprises and market sectors through taxes. Gainful employment is supposed to become cheaper in order to be extended – a traditional commodification strategy.¹⁵

The low transfer here is used as “springboard” into the labour market as well as economic appeal to gainful employment. This reveals a lot about the conception of man and the ethical and political norms of the market liberal approach. What counts is only the labour made available to the market. Still, opposing often phrased market liberal principles state interventions are not limited, but expanded according to the springboard idea. A similar logic is applied to the enforcement of gainful employment. Partial basic incomes replace social administrative mechanisms of force, e.g. sanctions such as the reduction of benefits in minimum benefit schemes. Yet, the springboard in the end turns into a whip lashing people into gainful employment while threatening with fear of the loss of securing livelihood. The model of a transfer free of

¹⁴ The net amount here being after taxes and excluding social or welfare contributions.

¹⁵ Commodification here means to turn something into a market good or to expand the quality of being a good.

bureaucracy yet not securing livelihood or participation thus is a subtle form of commodification opposing the emancipatory intention of a basic income.

Emancipatory approaches, on the other hand, consider the basic income a means of enabling people to a higher degree of self-determination regarding their life and work time, their life planning and their participation in different forms of social occupation, this explicitly including both genders. A liberal argumentation for a basic income counts on a sufficiently high and thus a basic income securing livelihood and participation (UBI). This concept firstly facilitates the ability to refuse gainful employment and insufficient work conditions, it secondly supports a self-governed combination of different forms of participation and occupation as part of the individual life¹⁶ and of every-day-life, and it thirdly enables an economically secured democratic participation in all public questions including economic aspects inside and outside of enterprises. Especially the latter follows the concept of a democratic social welfare state describing the unconditional securing of livelihood and participation as fundamental to strengthen its citizens in their looking after their democratic rights. This depends on the fact that only those can participate equally in public democratic processes who are materially secure and not accounted to as citizens of second class because they have been forced to reveal themselves as poor or have been subject to negative discrimination and stigmatisation due to means testing transfer systems. Only respective acknowledgements of sufficient unconditional livelihood and participation rights comprehensively realise citizen rights. Means testing minimum benefit schemes on the other hand put citizen rights in danger of being weakened or levered out.¹⁷

Regarding the democratic economy it needs to be stated that only those enterprises – both privately and collectively led – can self-confidently stand for their positions that are not threatened by an insecure existence. This implies that even solidary

¹⁶ Cf. different approaches in Baier/Biesecker 2012.

¹⁷ There are partial basic income concepts trying to stock up low transfer payments with means tested social provisions if needed, e.g. by paying for the costs of living. But by paying the – in terms of securing livelihood necessary – stock up they reproduce many of the already mentioned insufficiencies and human rights violating consequences of means testing transfer systems (such as hidden poverty, dividing society, discriminating and stigmatising bureaucracy). For more information on human and basic rights oriented criticism of means testing transfer systems see Blaschke 2010a: 32 ff.

economies only achieve free and solidary cooperation through a basic income as the compulsion to cooperate and to accept majority decisions due to fear of existence lapses. Moreover, democracies which despite an existing production surplus are forced by entrepreneurs and stake holders to proceed with economically and ecologically senseless and socially harmful production simply because of the argument of work places can only be considered pathetic. They are just as susceptible to blackmail as are individuals. A basic income therefore is an important instrument of the emancipation of the democracy of economy and of the empowerment of the citizens, also regarding decisions on whether or not and if, how and what is produced.

All these questions of democracy and freedom are faded out in market liberal concepts. A democracy of free citizens in society and economy is not desired. Instead it is intended to reach a “free” market still reducing citizens to participants of the (labour) market. This supports a “democracy” following the dictate of the capitalist economy, and refuses an economy democratically regulated by free citizens.

Intentions of democratization on the other hand are features of emancipatory basic income approaches which direct towards the abolition of a bureaucratic, decision taking, and patriarchal state but not towards the abolition of social standards. Despite, they phrase political claims for improved social standards in gainful employment, reduction of working hours, expansion of participation opportunities and enhancement of civic infrastructure. This approach in Germany is discussed in connection with the debate on the democratic social welfare state which aims on the abolition of paternalistic commodification strategies. It also intends to promote a liberal democracy enabling everybody to participate in public and economic affairs free from any social fears.

4.2 Public goods, infrastructure and services

Market liberal approaches for transfers similar to a basic income discuss public goods¹⁸, infrastructure and services either as some kind of random topic, not at all or according to their logic of commodification and privatisation. The latter intends to leave access to and organisation of medical, energy and water provision, education, culture, mobility and knowledge subject to the free market. This leaves all those empty handed who – because of the low transfer payments – cannot or not completely afford access to or participation in these goods. Even an unconditional basic income would soon be used up and lose its effect if third level education became more expensive, if public transport, energy and water supply and cultural institutions were to raise their prices.

The approach of an emancipatory basic income, closely connected to the concept of a democratic social welfare state, rather considers a non-monetary unconditional securing of livelihood and political and cultural participation as important – realised through universal access to public goods and services free of charge or with only low fees. The emancipatory approach also takes into account that public goods, infrastructure and services do not only need to be taken out of the market's, but also out of the paternalistic state's right of disposal as the state demands certain ways of behaviour that might even be forced into existence by intentionally caused fear of existence and social selection. Proposals reach from a general democratic participation to various forms of self-determined design and use of public goods, infrastructures and services, all made in connection with the implementation of a basic income. The most consequent form of de-commodification and libertarian design of the public sector can be found in the approach of self-organised and market-distantly achieved universally accessible public goods, infrastructure and services. (cf. Blaschke 2010a: 59 ff.)

The connection between basic income and public, common goods on the one hand involves the fact that both human living and human productivity are based on natural

¹⁸ Public, common goods include goods such as water, energy, mobility, public space, woods, education, cultural goods, knowledge, means of production etc.

and cultural goods owned by all man to an equal extent. The basic income – similar to public infrastructure and services – redistributes parts of the productive use of natural goods through some people or groups to all. Secondly, the connection is also obvious regarding that the use of public goods, infrastructure and services in principle is free from any means test. Moreover, users are in principle not asked for any service in return as condition for using the goods. This principle comes fully into effect when using these goods and services is free of charge. Thirdly, a basic income reinforces those occupations preserving, developing and facilitating a democratic design of public, common goods. By that, these goods are withdrawn from the market's – and the state's – right of disposal. They thus remain subject to democratic common disposal and free accessibility, including questions such as civic occupation, solidary economies, free cooperation and peer economies beyond gainful employment. Fourthly, there is a close connection between basic income and public goods in the public good of “public, freely accessible space” offering the space to develop and live new forms of sociality, economy, culture and education. These are spaces where individual and collective autonomous occupations and new forms of sociality, social relations and social cohesion can unfold. In addition to a traditional reduction of working hours, a basic income thus secures materially the accessibility and expansion of freely disposable time to engage in public spaces. (cf. Gorz 2000: 112 ff).

Concluding this chapter it needs to be emphasised that a sufficiently high unconditional basic income as well as universal accessibility of public goods, infrastructure and services are well fundable – given the prerequisite of the acquisition by society (i.e. the re-acquisition of privatised and state dominated goods and their being subject to common democratic disposal) and of redistribution.

4.3 Redistribution

Market liberal reasoning for a basic income and basic income approaches argue for low costs of the basic income, some even point out savings in the state budget. Intention (and consequence) of that are a low transfer payment (PBI), the reduction of social welfare services beyond this transfer as well as the privatisation of public

goods, infrastructure and services. Thus these market liberal approaches reinforce the redistribution of income and property in a bottom-up process, i.e. higher income and property levels are (even more) relieved from tax expenditures. Consequently this influences how funding concepts for these approaches are designed.

On the other hand, representatives of an emancipatory basic income approach argue that the inequality of income and property has increased noticeably. Frankly speaking, higher income and property levels participate more and more in the collective riches, whereas middle and lower levels participate even less. Aiming at the realisation of unconditional participation opportunities for everybody through a basic income and at universally accessible public goods, infrastructure and services yet inevitably necessitates a reverse redistribution – rather than following a bottom - up process redistribution needs to be directed top-down. Only then can participation opportunities for everybody be funded. Such a turn of direction thus could be easily achieved democratically as the vast majority of the population would profit from it. Moreover: The realisation of an unconditional securing of livelihood and participation would in the long term save society from disease-caused costs and increasing expenditures for security measures due to the enormous inequalities in income. (cf. Wilkinson/Pickett 2009) Therefore a basic income redistributing in a top-down process could be partly refunded by its very own effects.¹⁹

Many questions regarding the funding of the basic income obviously have to be asked against the background of the current economic and financial crisis which will not be the last or the worst. Certainly, without a strict policy of regulation of the financial markets or, to reach even further, a policy withdrawing capital from the financial market, basic income and the social welfare state will always be at risk. The basic income itself could yet be part of such a regulatory policy. A redistributing basic income would then be the basis of its own and the stability of a democratic social welfare state. The often asked question of funding and therefore also the question of redistribution could as well be answered as that: Where there is a will, there is a way. And where there is no will, there are reasons. Opponents of the emancipatory and

¹⁹ Many of these arguments could, slightly changed, also be applied to the inequality of the countries in the north and south of the world.

thus redistributing basic income only point out reasons against the redistribution. A will to redistribute cannot be found.

Some supporters of the emancipatory approach go even further. Within a developing society of occupation and culture, necessary occupations can also be fulfilled beyond the current forms of market and financial transfer. The needs of securing livelihood and participation thus could be satisfied beyond these forms of market and financial transfer. This option then is connected to the question of how market and financial transfer redistribution in the long term could remain the primary form of redistribution regarding the realisation of unconditional securing of livelihood and participation. Yet these discussions, taking place within the groups supporting an emancipatory approach, reach well beyond the concept of a basic income.

4.4 Gender equality

"The woman freed from man yet in today's society depends on capitalists, from a house slave she turns into a slave of wages."

Clara Zetkin

All over the world, women are discriminated against in various dimensions and to different extents. Most often emphasised are questions of gender equal distribution of necessary family and household work, unequal access to status within gainful employment and civic occupation, lower wages and fewer acknowledgements despite equal achievements on the labour market, unfair access to education, leading positions in politics and economy or to social welfare services etc. Manifest political and cultural reasons as well as traditional, patriarchal mechanisms of power had their share on that. That is one part.

Yet, these disadvantages for women also exist in market dominated societies strongly involving women into market processes (e.g. through gainful employment). This involvement on the one hand holds emancipatory chances and possibilities for women such as an independent securing of livelihood, social acknowledgement and individual development. On the other hand fundamental problems of market oriented societies are simply reinforced: especially within the service sector, women – just as

men – become subject to the exploitation of work forces. The development of skills and abilities also of women are now steered towards a market conform direction. Moreover, although market (and state) partly relieves women from private work, e.g. using the service sector, at the same time the expansion of this market area mainly involving women destroys life-world providing mechanisms not dominated by market or state. Again, in market and capital dominated societies the well-meant expansion of public services as an area of gainful employment also becomes prey of a profit oriented market, clearly visible in areas such as care, education and medical provision. Not only are women (as were men before) stronger involved in the market's logic, but those gainful employments mainly taken up by women now are subject to market and profit principles, causing heavily problematic consequences especially for “customers” and those who due to a lack of income and property cannot reach the customers' status.

So we have to deal with an extremely contradictory process. On the one hand there is the aim of the emancipation of women regarding gainful employment, individual securing of livelihood and social acknowledgement. On the other hand there are women's involvement into market's logic and government of the capital, the general expansion of market labour and thus the destruction of life-world providing mechanisms and of social connections.

A sufficiently high basic income now offers women the opportunities connected to unconditional material securing of livelihood and participation for everybody: Unreasonable demands in partnerships and at the labour market can now be refused. There is a partial decoupling of the securing of livelihood and the enforcement of selling one's work force which also brings about a partial emancipation from the market's logic. Access to education, academic world, politics and civic occupation are materially eased also for women. These advantages of a basic income for women can come into effect when the basic income is accompanied by equal wages for both men and women and when universal access to collective goods, public infrastructure and services etc. is granted. Supporters of an emancipatory basic income thus do not claim that the basic income alone can overcome gender inequality.

Going even further, the already mentioned controversy brings up other political and cultural questions: How can the logic of profit and market (a truly “male” logic) within gainful employment and its consequences be radically fought back so that in production as well as in consumption the questions of satisfaction of needs, of individual development of skills and of abilities and at the same time the question of the preservation of natural resources (cf. the following chapter) can be focused? Moreover, how can life-world providing mechanisms outside of the market (and the state) be preserved, enforced and designed in a gender-equal way? These questions are mainly set and answered to by women, so in the four-in-one approach (Frigga Haug), the concept of provisional occupation (Network Provisional Economising) and in the concept of self- and subsistence occupation (Ivan Illich). These concepts, opposing the “male” (labour) market’s logic, put “the livelihood of man and nature into the centre of attention and demand a new quality of gainful employment for this new rationality” (Baier/Biesecker 2012: 214) – obviously a completely “female” rationality confronting the logic of exploitation with that of reproduction.

Market liberal approaches ignore the given politically and culturally caused injustices between the genders – people are reduced to be participants of the market as long as these approaches are gender neutral. As the free market (and all included goods, infrastructure and services) also necessitates certain logics of service and rationality as well as accessibility of work force, women are either discriminated against within the market or are enforcedly involved in the “male” market’s logic. Partial basic incomes and a lack of universally accessible public goods, infrastructure and services reinforce social discrimination and selection as well as unprotected precarious involvement of women into the market’s logic. Both need to be considered anti-emancipatory. Emancipatory on the other hand then means overcoming selection and discrimination of women as well as overcoming the dominance of the market and the government of capital, of gainful employment and thus overcoming the logic of the exploitation of man and nature.

4.5 Reduction in use of natural resources

Closely connected to the discussion of a basic income the question of how to accomplish a reduction in use of natural resources is raised.

Firstly: Fossil resources, which are used for production and consumption, are limited. Moreover, non-fossil energy resources can also only be made usable by a high stake of natural and energy resources. Recovery of natural resources by recycling is limited by the declining amount of substances remaining to be recycled (increase of entropy). Similarly, an efficiency rise in using natural resources does not promise to save resources as a quantitative rise in production and consumption threatens to make up for all efficiency successes (rebound effect).

Secondly: Using natural resources often is connected to the pollution and destruction of the environment.

Thirdly: The exploitation of natural resources is often linked to the claim or destruction of habitats and livelihood of the poorest in poor countries. Ecological damage and its consequences (climate change) also mainly effect the poorest. It is certain that without a radical decline in using natural resources both in production and consumption there will be further ecologic, economic and social crises waiting just around the corner – an increase in impoverishment, of violent conflicts about scarcer natural resources, strengthened migration movements, epidemic spreads of diseases...

The reason for this critical development is economic growth – of the industry, but also of services including even social and welfare services. This is due to an economy unaligned to either public interest (ecumenical) or responsibility towards the nature (ecology), therefore following only the logic of market and gainful employment and keeping to principles of competition and profit. (cf. Blaschke 2011b, Blaschke 2012) In market liberal approaches for a basic income the topics of ecology and use of natural resources are only scarcely reflected on. In the end, these questions are answered to very negatively: Precarity of the social conditions is enforced by partial basic incomes and a reduction in social welfare structures and thus undermines the ability of self-governing in the working world to resist non-ecological production as well as the development of a free democracy that could be able to direct the

economy's orientation. This is completed by market liberal growth critics answering the social question by advising that everybody needs to tighten their ecological belts independent from their different (social) girth. (cf. Miegel 2010)

In emancipatory basic income concepts on the other side ecological and social issues have been present for some time and were discussed not only by the eco-liberals in the 1980s. Currently, in political debates it is often pointed out that unconditional participation rights, the right of a fully intact ecological environment and of access to natural resources for all as well as a way of production, consumption and living using less natural resources cannot be discussed separately – as could be seen in the de-growth movement or at Attac's growth critical congress in Berlin in May 2011. These debates on post growth societies explicitly refer to the basic income (cf. Postwachstumskongress Barcelona 2010; Netzwerkrat des Netzwerk Grundeinkommen 2011).

The following text now outlines a threefold of arguments for the connection between a post growth society (i.e. a society reproducing itself using considerably less natural resources) and unconditionally securing of livelihood and participation by a sufficiently high basic income.

Argument 1: Only when all members of society possess the right of free participation in all questions regarding social production and consumption²⁰ can “de-bedded” ecology again be sustainably embedded in society. This includes the abolition of the currently dominant principle of transforming natural and human resources into wares as well as the principle of competition and profit. Democratic processes can show productive and consumption needs not dictated by the principle of competition and profit.

To go even further, the next thesis of this argument is that without free democratic decision taking for everybody a sustainable, stable democratic society is not possible. A free democracy on the other hand is only then possible when people are no longer susceptible to social and material blackmail, are no longer stigmatised or

²⁰ As space is limited, detailed forms of participation and their implementation in institutional processes cannot be discussed in full.

discriminated against. The unconditional basic income enables the abolition of social and material blackmail, stigmatization and discrimination – basic or minimum benefit schemes do not achieve this. They conserve or even worsen the split in society and enforce the reduction of social welfare structures as this can be easier realised against the background of artificially raised social envy and a structural majority of those not receiving any transfer payments. Another feature of a sustainable democracy is the lack of susceptibility of the society to arguments of work place blackmailing that in the end play around with people's fear to lose their social security. The argument of the secure work place is supposed to raise agreement to an increase in production and a further economic growth, and it is even supposed to justify ways of production which are harmful to society and environment and dump natural resources. This susceptibility of individuals and of the democracy as a whole can be abolished or at least minimised by a basic income.

Argument 2: Free democratic decision on social production and consumption aims needs to be completed by free democratic cooperation within production including those directly involved in and those affected by production (i.e. the right of participation of those living in the surrounding area of production sites as well as that of consumers deciding on the actual production). Thus aims and ways of production are oriented at the actual needs and interests of the people. Democratic cooperative and solidary forms of immediate production moreover also need to be set up in a free economic cooperation. Therefore everybody would be free in their decision on participating in the concrete economic process and can place their participation under the reservation of their consent. A free cooperation exists when regulations of access and occupation as well as the rules constituting the cooperation can be renegotiated at any time: "In a free cooperation everybody involved is free to opt out of the cooperation, i.e. to leave the cooperation. They are free to limit their participation or to put them under conditions to thereby influence the regulations. Free cooperation requires the ability of all participants to actually conduct this form of participation." (cf. Spehr 2003: 48) The basic income also needs to be considered a necessary condition of any free (economic) cooperation. Immediate democratic cooperation without securing individual freedom soon can turn into a forced cooperation under the majority's dictate.

The opposite of a cooperative, solidary and needs oriented economy is the economy of competition and profit, the capitalist economy. It is inevitably driven by the attempt to turn money into even more money, thereby using material products or products with a symbolically increased value only as vehicle. (cf. Gorz 2009: 116) The capitalist economy also strongly depends on the “production of consumptive needs” (through education, advertising, symbolic value etc.) and on the enforcement of various forms of obsolescence (i.e. artificially driven material and immaterial drain of products and services). Democratic processes, and even more those in free and solidary cooperation, instead are oriented on a saving of work, on durable and long-living products rather than an artificially widened production or the production of consumptive needs.

Argument 3: Individual conditions of consumption are part of the conditions of production and power. Individual material consumption and increase of consumption are caused by various factors: satisfaction of needs, gaining and securing of social status, compensation of unsatisfied needs following alienated work and social conditions, a compensation of a lack of purpose in life due to unfulfilling and unappealing occupation, stress reduction, a compensation of precarity... Material consumption and increase of consumption therefore need to be seen as necessary and at the same time harmful to production. A democratic and solidary society providing a sufficiently high unconditional basic income and at the same time providing a free cooperative economy will inevitably lead to minimised individual consumption: as free cooperative production is democratic and needs oriented, as precarity and alienated work are driven back by a free democracy providing basic income, as material status attribution is reduced in favour of acknowledging the individuals according to their participation in the democratic process, in education and according to their artistic talents, and as basic income enables true choice of fulfilling and appealing (economic) occupation. On the other hand, simple appeals to the people to restrict individual consumption are relatively limited in their effect and might even be harmful. They are harmful because they simply ignore structural reasons of the senseless and resource-dumping production and consumption. Or in other words: rather than to condemn “wrong” needs we need do democratically debate on contents and form of production and therefore indirectly also about

consumption. (cf. Rätz et al. 2011) Attac activists believe that “the necessary farewell to current ways of living (as e.g. the odd annual holiday trips on plane etc.) will only be accepted when it is fought for in a democratic process, when this fight is fair and respects the social basic and freedom rights of all people”. (Attac-Vorbereitungsgruppe Postwachstumskongress 2011)

Opposing market liberal approaches to basic income and growth criticism, emancipatory approaches follow the idea that “those who demand that everybody tighten their ecological belts first needs to guarantee equal girths” (Methmann 2007: 189). Thus a redistribution of material resources through a basic income is called for. But does this not lead to growth as it strengthens the consumptive power of the lower and medium income levels? Actually, the opposite happens. What the poor receive through redistribution is taken from the rich, i.e. from their consumptive power. Moreover, it also minimises the ability of the rich to accumulate capital to further increase their profits from production. Yet, capital for profit-oriented investments is one of the main driving forces of growth and of the speeding economic consumption processes detrimental to natural resources. The minimising effect on the use of resources is even intensified when the basic income is (also) combined with taxes steering the use of natural resources (bringing up the topic of an eco-bonus and an ecological basic income). A generally minimising effect on the use of resources can be concluded from the above mentioned options connected to a basic income based and thus free democracy in society and economy: an increase in freedom, an enforcement of democratisation processes, solidarity and alternative, non-consumptive forms of living and budgeting.

Democratisation of society, international relations and economy and minimising the use of resources also include fighting back and abolishing the ruthless exploitation and privatisation of natural resources in the poor and the poorest countries of the world which causes the destruction of the livelihood of the natives and because of the poverty of their citizens makes these countries susceptible to economic and political blackmail. This leads to the last aspect to be considered here – global social rights.

4.6 Global Social Rights

Globalisation means cultural, political, economic, ecologic and social globalisation processes. These are to be seen partly positive, but also partly negative. A negative evaluation of globalization can be assumed from the fact that globalisation as a whole did not lead to an improved situation of humanity and nature on all continents, but to an increase of global conflicts, of hunger, ruthless exploitation of man and nature as well as to destruction of the livelihood of great parts of the population – thereby completely opposing the requirements of human rights. One of the conclusions of anti-globalisation organisations is that carrying through human rights cannot be a mere appeal to the states anymore but needs to be achieved by concrete acquisition by the people. So this is about fighting for social conditions which guarantee individual freedom and social security for all humans in all countries as well as sustainable political, economic and ecologic development in all countries around the world. This implies the abolition of economic-imperialistic forms of rule, as they show in free trade agreements and other economic treaties, in dependencies on financial markets and international currency and loan funds; and it implies the necessary democratisation of international cooperation and of the states themselves. Rich countries which for centuries have exploited their colonies and forced them into wars now are obliged to make reparations – e.g. as a support of basic income schemes in poorer countries.²¹ Possibly this could also imply payments from rich to poor countries so that the latter are no longer forced to exploit natural resources and to destroy their citizens' livelihood to be able to survive in economic terms. (cf. Blaschke 2010b) All of this could have a positive effect on the development of democracies in these countries and on the development of sustainable solidary and ecologic economies.

A fundamental aspect of the acquisition of human rights as global social rights can be found in the rights of healthy nutrition, social security, sufficient medical treatment

²¹ Rolf Künemann, director for human rights at the nongovernmental organisation FIAN, in one of his essays presented a calculation for the funding of conditional cash transfers in poor countries involving rich countries. (cf. Künemann 2007) Such a calculation would easily be possible for basic income schemes. Künemann also uses a human rights argumentation for unconditional social cash transfers as basic income scheme in developing countries.

and housing, the rights of access to education, culture and political participation – these constituting unconditional livelihood and participation rights for all humans. All of them can be realised either as monetary transfer in form of an unconditional basic income or as non-monetary benefits in form of universally accessible public goods, infrastructure or services at all places inhabited by humans, independent from nationality or citizenship.

Due to these aspects the latest publications (cf. the contributions in Allex/Rein 2012) plead for more productive arguments on the transnational aspect of basic income concepts and discuss pragmatic political intermediate stages for the introduction of the basic income while explicitly paying attention to the freedom of movement and the dimension of migration policy. Hagen Kopp from the “nobody is illegal” network, who also is member of the Initiative Global Social Rights (cf. the initiative’s website and Klautke/Oehrlein 2008), emphasises that the freedom of movement also includes the right of migrants to move or settle worldwide. This would not only question national borders and social migration selections, but also every nation-state protectionist policy concept trying to enhance advantages only for Europe or the richer north. Even more, it would question all concepts aiming at an increased exploitation of poorer countries and their natural resources and on the destruction of their population’s livelihood as this would consequently lead to an increased migration due to economic, social and ecologic reasons. Kopp then criticizes basic income concepts which do not (want to) guarantee that every individual possesses the same rights as everybody else where ever they live, even on transfer payments such as a basic income. The concepts in question link the transfer with certain conditions, such as citizenship or a so-called legal residence. Instead, Kopp proposes how potential migration conflicts connected with unconditional transfer concepts could be solved, hereby including the above mentioned policies. (cf. Kopp 2012)

The actual orientation on acquisition of a basic income as global social right is generally unacceptable for market liberals. Even better social standards in poor countries are only accepted as long as this secures a market. Democratically controlled local and national economies are not desired. Migration is supposed to

account for the flexibility of economically useful human resources for the (inter-) national labour market and needs to be steered in this direction.

Several basic income activists have their problems to recognise the basic income as global social right. The recognition of the global freedom of movement, yet unproblematic in terms of capital, trade, or academic research, is viewed more than sceptically when it comes to humans. This ignores the fact that the key to answering legitimate critical questions (e.g. regarding feared migration movements) lies in the acquisition, i.e. the achieved global social rights themselves. When freedom of movement as global human right was connected with a basic income which every person was entitled to just as all citizens in their home country were, then migration would no longer be enforced by economic and social plights as it is so often today. Against this background the question of freedom of movement could be addressed much more relaxed again. A basic income debate that takes global social rights seriously can by no means insist on the realisation of participation rights only as monetary transfer or restricted to only one country. A basic income movement aware of the universal human rights aspect of its own approach needs to oblige to the national and global implementation of a basic income and all other unconditional participation rights. This does not mean an obligation forcing sovereign countries to give up their own decisions, but actually is meant as invitation to take up the fight for a basic income and to combine it with the fight for redistribution to poorer countries, for a global democratic order and for global social rights.

5. The European Basic Income Movement – Questions

Within the next years the following questions should be expected to be further discussed within the European basic income movement:

1. Which of the so-called basic income concepts really guarantee an increase of freedom and self-determination, an increased participation for all humans – men and women – and an increase of solidarity within society? Which of the so-called basic income concepts cannot achieve this?

2. Does the basic income have to be understood as only one building block of the emancipatory and transforming redesign of society abolishing the reasons of the economic, social and ecological crisis – the redesign also including redistribution of material resources and the democratic, gender-equal and ecologic creation of society and economy? Or is the basic income simply to be seen as a concept of repairing currently existing critical social conditions?

3. Will the basic income movement be able to hold its ground as a single-issue-movement or do economic and financial crises, environmental crisis and rising scarcity of resources force the basic income movement to ally with other movements – and therefore necessitate winning them over for its side?

4. What are the European basic income movement's, what are the national basic income movements' views on global social rights and on participation rights in general?

5. How can a wide-spread support of the people be reached, how can sceptical and currently disapproving institutions be won over for a basic income, how can a (step-by-step) democratic introduction of a basic income be reinforced globally, continentally and nationally? Which steps therefore seem to be promising, and which are not?

The author: Ronald Blaschke is co-founder of the German Basic Income Network. He has published on the topics of poverty, basic income and post-growth society.

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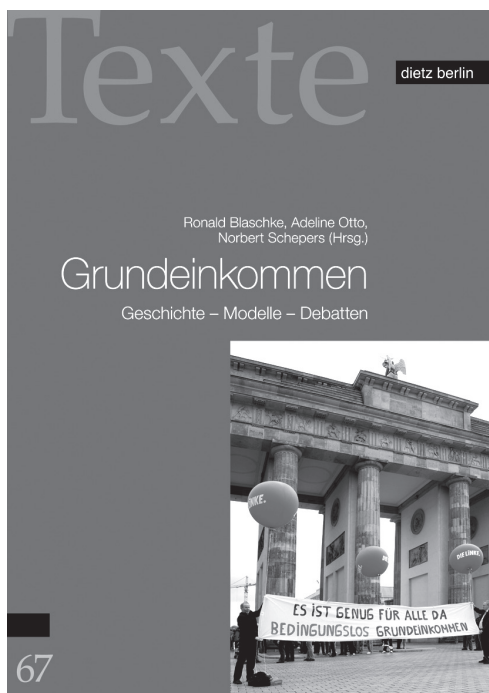
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GRUNDEINKOMMEN

GESCHICHTE – MODELLE – DEBATTEN



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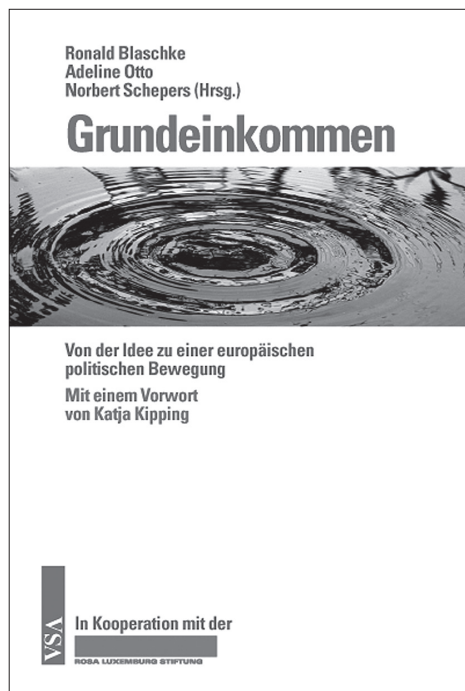
Die Idee des Grundeinkommens hat eine lange Geschichte hinter sich gebracht und eine spannende Geschichte vor sich. In Deutschland, in Europa und im globalen Kontext nimmt die Debatte um das Grundeinkommen an Fahrt auf – auch vorangetrieben von Linken. Dieser Band nähert sich auf unterschiedliche Art und Weise dem Thema Grundeinkommen – auf einer eher prinzipiellen und grundsätzlichen und auf einer eher konkrete Ansätze und Modelle diskutierenden Ebene. ■ Im ersten Teil des Buches stellt Ronald Blaschke die vielgesichtige Geschichte der Idee des Grundeinkommens anhand ausgewählter ProtagonistInnen und deren Grundeinkommensansätze dar. Dadurch werden unterschiedliche politische Traditionslinien erkennbar. ■ Katja Kipping zeigt im zweiten Teil in einem Essay, dass es sich beim Grundeinkommen um ein Bürgerrecht handelt, das allen zu gewähren ist. ■ Im dritten Teil stellt Ronald Blaschke aktuelle Vorschläge von PolitikerInnen, WissenschaftlerInnen, Verbänden, Initiativen und Einzelpersonen in Deutschland vergleichend vor, die in Richtung des Ausbaus steuerfinanzierter Sozialtransfers zielen. Ein gesondertes Kapitel beschäftigt sich mit der Frage, wie sich der Bestimmung einer Transferhöhe genähert werden kann, die die Existenz sichern und Teilhabe ermöglichen soll. ■ Im vierten Teil des Buches werden linke Ansprüche an ein Grundeinkommen diskutiert und entwickelt. ■ Adeline Otto fasst verschiedene Zugänge der Grundeinkommensdebatte in Europa aus einer linken Perspektive zusammen. Von ihr wurden mehrere AutorInnen aus Europa für eigene Beiträge zum Thema gewonnen und einige dieser Beiträge auch ins Deutsche übertragen. Die Beiträge stammen von José Iglesias Fernández (Spanien), von Ruurik Holm (Finnland), von Melina Klaus (Österreich) und von Sepp Kusstatscher (Italien).

Ronald Blaschke, Adeline Otto, Norbert Schepers (Hrsg.)

GRUNDEINKOMMEN

VON DER IDEE ZU EINER EUROPÄISCHEN POLITISCHEN BEWEGUNG

Mit einem Vorwort von Katja Kipping



In Kooperation mit der Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung
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VSA: Verlag, September 2012

»All jene, die für ein Grundeinkommen in Europa streiten, wissen um die doppelte Gegenwehr: sowohl um die Denkblockaden im eigenen politischen Lager als auch um den Widerstand der Herrschenden. Letztere haben guten Grund, dem Grundeinkommen Steine in den Weg zu legen. Würde es doch die Kräfteverhältnisse zu Gunsten all jener verändern, die ihre Arbeitskraft als Ware zum Verkauf anbieten müssen. An der Basis der Gewerkschaften haben dies schon viele erkannt und bringen sich deswegen zum Beispiel beim Gewerkschafterdialog Grundeinkommen ein... Letztlich geht es um nicht weniger als darum: Mit einem Grundeinkommen die Verhältnisse zum Tanzen zu bringen – in Europa und weltweit.«

Aus dem Vorwort von Katja Kipping

Aus dem Inhalt:

- Grundeinkommen: Was ist das?
- Von der Idee zur politischen Bewegung in Europa
- Bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen und Krise
- Akteure und Konzepte in Frankreich
- Die Grundeinkommensdiskussion in Finnland
- Das Grundeinkommen in Entschlüssen des Europäischen Parlaments
- Die Europäische Bürgerinitiative Grundeinkommen
- Anhang: Aktuelle Ansätze und Modelle von Grundsicherungen und Grundeinkommen in Deutschland – eine Vergleichende Darstellung

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