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Globalizing the Challenge

Contribution to GTI Forum [Universal Basic Income: Has the Time Come?](#)

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Although the idea of a basic income is often discussed on the national level, we should envision it as a global instrument that will eventually benefit each and every citizen on the planet. The proposal for a basic income is linked to the idea that everyone has a stake in global commons and a right to share the fruits of civilization. A global basic income thus has a strong symbolic dimension, promoting the idea of the equality of all people and global citizenship.

Jo Leinen and I briefly touched on this topic in our 2018 book *A World Parliament: Governance and Democracy in the 21st Century*. We argued that a global basic income provides an answer to the question of what the money raised by global taxes (like a carbon tax, a global wealth tax, or financial transaction tax) could be used for. A global basic income is perhaps the most sensible use for the bulk of global tax revenue, another portion of which should be used to sustain independent funding of global institutions.

The stability of any such revenue source is a key question. Revenues from a carbon tax, for example, should phase out over time as a transition to a non-carbon economy proceeds. Such income is best used to support this transition and won't be available in the long run to fund basic income schemes.

In any case, a democratic world parliament should set the framework for practical implementation, should be the highest budgetary authority, and should exercise democratic control. The practical arrangements might involve several different models, all operating within common global guidelines, to suit differing local conditions. In the developed countries, for

example, where there are functioning tax and social welfare systems, it might make sense to implement the basic income in the form of a negative income tax. In other countries, it might be better to pay it out in full, with the minimum of bureaucracy.

About the Author



Andreas Bummel is co-founder and global coordinator of the Campaign for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, which advocates democratic representation of the world's citizens at the UN and the institutions of global governance. The campaign has been endorsed by 1,500 sitting and former lawmakers from over 100 countries. He has been a council member of the World Federalist Movement–Institute for Global Policy, a fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science, and an honorary member of the Society for Threatened Peoples. He is co-author of such books as *A World Parliament: Governance and Democracy in the 21st Century* and *A United Nations Parliamentary Assembly: A Policy Review of Democracy Without Borders*.

About the Publication

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