



Rue Hector Blondiau, 22 7070 Mignault (Belgium)

**EUROPE**

Tél. FR. : Brasseur J.P. 0499 35 85 72

FR, EN : Roussel Pascal 0473 97 49 67

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

FR,EN,IT : Marilena Di Stasi 0486 501 83 64



**“Liberate work by removing its tax burden and financesocial security by taxing the consumption of goodswhich most often are produced by machine.”**

# **ELECTRONIC VIVANT- EUROPE**

**N° 45 (June-July 2007)**

**Summary: 1.What is vivant?**

**2. Passing a law on citizen’s income in brazil**

## **1.WHAT IS VIVANT?**

### **A. VIVANT is more liberal than the liberals**

Within the Vivant system, the individual is free to set up in business, and thereby become the creator of his or her future without having to pay too much attention to the harsh law of a market that lends only to the rich.

Vivant is more liberal than the liberals because within its system every citizen is recognized to have socio-economic value (social capital) and is a source of inspiration for the creation of our future (ability to act in the economy; public consultations; referenda).

### **B. VIVANT is more socialist than the socialists**

In the name of justice and social protection, socialism promotes a society in which people receive benefits but are not allowed to work (unemployment trap). Vivant, on the other hand, guarantees the individual's purchasing power through the Basic Income, which is paid without any conditions to each family member, and which is not subject to tax.

By allowing people to earn income in addition to the Basic Income, Vivant extends to all the freedom to work (and promotes growth).

### **C. VIVANT stands for a social Europe**

The VIVANT-EUROPE movement indicates that it is at the European level that work must be freed from taxes and charges and that social security must be financed out of a consumption tax levied only on those products that are mainly made by machine.

Consumption tax must be harmonized throughout the European Union to avoid tax competition between member countries.

Vivant is thus in favour of economic management at the European level, implying a basic Constitution which facilitates the adoption of measures for the COMMON GOOD.

### **D. VIVANT stands for an ecology that respects the human environment and the planet**

Vivant's Basic Income has major ecological consequences :

"A Basic Income is the concrete expression of our respect for one another. It is a logical consequence of the right to live. This respect for each other's lives is only one aspect of the respect for life in general. By "subsidizing" free time, a Basic Income might enable people to "slow down", to take more care of each other and of the planet.

"Vivant takes an integrally environmental view of society. It is a view that does not stop at nature conservation, but goes much further – for in virtue of the fact that humans exist, they cannot leave nature alone. If you fence off an area of nature in the interests of conservation, you are already interfering in nature. The fence would not exist if humans were not there. By their mere presence, humans are changing nature continuously. Non-intervention is impossible. But this human intervention in nature, the cultivation of nature, does not have to come down to exploiting or plundering nature.

"Vivant's central environmental principle is that a "green", or ecological, natural environment is strictly impossible unless our social fabric develops according to environmental principles. By showing greater respect for each other, people gain greater respect for nature. As long as society stakes people against each other, as long as we do not unconditionally accept people's right to a decent life [and to the Basic Income], society will never develop a respect for nature." (Extract from VIVANT's Manifesto)

### **E. VIVANT stands for a properly managed globalization**

What our politicians have failed to take into consideration is that our social model, being financed at the expense of work, cannot survive in the context of global free trade.

The globalization issue was at the origin of the birth of Vivant. In the face of uncontrolled capitalism, Vivant proposes a modified free market such as Europe has seen since the introduction of social security after the war.

Socially, Vivant wishes to maintain the principle of what already exists in Europe.

However, Vivant has remarked that the social security and tax systems as we know them today are no longer structured so as to enable them to resist the negative effects of globalization.

Present wealth redistribution mechanisms in Europe, which are mainly based on the taxation of work, are no measure for the uncontrolled forces of international capitalism. In the context of free trade and capitalist principles (maximization of profits), existing legislative provisions result in migration of businesses. They also encourage mobile individuals (those who create the greatest value added) to move away so as to pay less tax. This has been helped by the low cost of long-distance telecommunications, for "teleworking" by internet and telephone can be more advantageous from low-tax countries.

This is one of the reasons why Vivant was set up and also why Vivant **remains absolutely necessary** even though the present \*(Belgian?) government has already adopted several measures in line with the Vivant programme.

\*note du traducteur: pour des lecteurs internationaux, s'agit-il de spécifier belge, ou bien de dire "some governments have" (certains gouvernements ont ...)?

For developing countries, Vivant is in favour of experimenting, at the level of local subsistence, with forms of Basic Income.

For example, introducing a Basic Income in **Third World** countries could be the best thing for rich countries to spend their development assistance budgets on. Just 1% of Belgian Gross Domestic Product would finance a Basic Income of 40 euros per month for every Nicaraguan citizen. In Nicaragua, a country with about 2.5 million people where basic produce is cheaper than in our country, those 40 euros are the equivalent of 250 euros here. The resultant increased purchasing power creates a local market, and the Basic Income thus brings to its recipients greater autonomy and room for taking their own initiatives.

**The next step** would be for the recipient country to put a consumption tax on manufactured goods for progressively financing the Basic Income and rendering external assistance no longer necessary.

## **2. PASSING A LAW ON CITIZEN'S INCOME IN BRAZIL**

**Eduardo MATARAZZO SUPLICY (2004)**

Workers' Party Senator for São Paulo  
Ph.D. Economics from Michigan State University  
Economics Professor at São Paulo School  
of Business Administration

### **EXTRACTS OF THE CONFERENCE ( JUNE 2004)**

*So in December 2001, after my mandate as senator had been renewed for another eight years, I decided to put forward a new **Bill to introduce a citizen's income in Brazil from 2005**. Today I am absolutely convinced that the unconditional basic income is the common sense way of eradicating poverty, of building a more just society and of securing real freedom for everyone. **It is the common sense way of doing so in the same way as the common sense way of going out of one's house is by the door**. That is precisely what Guy Standing affirmed at the International Conference on Basic Income held in the Brazilian Senate in 1998. 520 years before Jesus Christ, Confucius wrote in the Book of Questions and Answers: "Has one ever seen a person go out of his house except by the door?"*

***The good news I bring you today is that the Bill in question was adopted by the Senate in 2002, unanimously. It has also been adopted by the Chamber of Deputies, and thereby by the whole Congress of Brazil.***

*On 8 January 2004, the President of the Republic, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva gave it the Presidential Assent in the course of a ceremony attended by numerous personalities, including Professor Philippe Van Parijs. Brazil is thus the first country in which the national Congress has enacted a law introducing a Citizen's Income. (3)*

*In December 2003 I took part in the Congress of the South African Coalition for a Basic Income. I told the participants that it was very encouraging to learn that in South Africa 27 different organisations (trade unions, churches, youth movements, children's movements, aids sufferers, the aged, human rights activists, etc.), with a total membership of over **12 million people**, had formed a coalition to fight for **the introduction of a basic income in that country**, where many of the problems were similar to our own.*

*South Africa and Brazil are both already industrialised yet still developing countries, marked by serious problems of poverty, crime and violence. But both countries also possess extraordinary natural and human resources which can help them solve these problems. Most importantly, however, both countries are ruled by democratically elected governments, and this gives rise to great hope, the hope of seeing hunger and absolute poverty eradicated, and also the hope of economic growth, available jobs and a much more just society.*

***South Africa and Brazil are therefore pursuing the same goal: to build a just and civilised society. We know that in order to get there the interests of the community are as important as those of the individual. We must foster the ethical and democratic principles of truth, solidarity, brotherhood and freedom. These values are rooted in the histories of all the peoples of the world. They are at the foundations of all religions: Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the many others.***

(...)

*Last October (2003), President Lula decided to announce that four family grant programmes would be unified, rationalised and given new impetus. Under the programme any family with income of less than 50 reals per month per person (about 13 euros) receives an allowance of 50 reals per month, increased by 15, 30 or 45 per cent if the family has one, two or three or more children respectively. Such families have to demonstrate that their children under 6 years of age are monitored for nutrition and have all the inoculations recommended by the Health Ministry; children from 7 to 15 years must attend school; while the adults in the family must follow literacy courses or vocational training courses.*

***The 4 programmes thus unified are: 1) the minimum income programme associated with education, called education grants; 2) the minimum income programme associated with health, called food grants; 3) the gas grant; and 4) the food card associated with the Zero Hunger Programme. The first three were introduced by the previous government, Fernando Henrique Cardoso's; the last, in February 2003, by the present government. The experience of 8 months of the unified Programme persuaded the present government that it would be better to allow beneficiaries of the family grant to spend the money in their own way, without restriction.***

*This is a step in the right direction. 4 million families at present benefit from the family grant programme, which has been made available in its first phase in the poorest regions in Brazil. It is forecast that **11.4 million families will benefit from the Programme by 2006; that is, 50 million inhabitants, or more than a quarter of the 178 million Brazilians.** Ana Fonseca, the Programme's*

*Executive Secretary, recently declared that the Family Grant Programme was the beginning of the citizen's income.*

*I have suggested to President Lula that the Programme should be continuously monitored to see if it has the effect of allowing people to avoid the poverty trap and the unemployment trap. **The unification of the programme can be regarded as a step towards the citizen's income**, defined as an income, modest yet sufficient for every person's subsistence, paid by the country to all its citizens, regardless of their origin, age, sex, race, economic situation, or family status.*

*Does that mean that we shall also pay this citizen's income to the very rich? Yes, we shall. But these people will of course contribute more than the others to the Programme and provide it with funding. What are the advantages of such a system? First, it eliminates the administrative work and costs of checking on the actual income of the beneficiaries. Second, it eliminates the shame, the stigma, of having to declare that one has insufficient income. But it's the third point that's most important: it makes a tremendous difference to everyone to know that they can count on having a fixed income for the next 12 months and even permanently.*

*The Bill adopted by the national Congress provides that the citizen's income will be introduced gradually from 2005 beginning with those who have most need of it. The executive will determine the level of the income and the rhythm of its extension until everyone is included. **The application of the Programme will therefore depend on the evolution of the national economy of Brazil and the availability of funds.***

(...)

*The citizen's income will have an enormous impact on **the liberty of each individual**. Philippe Van Parijs demonstrated this brilliantly in his book, *Real Freedom for All: what (if anything) can justify capitalism?*(5) which appeared in 1995. The citizen's income is also a tool compatible with the objectives defined by Amartya Sen in his book, published in French in 2000, *A New Economic Model: development, justice, freedom* (6) He maintains that development is real only insofar as it gives each member of society **a greater freedom of choice**. The citizen's income will permit certain people to escape from the humiliations of prostitution, drug trafficking or working conditions close to slavery. Such people will henceforth be able to live in dignity.*