Basic Income on the agenda: the Catalan experience

Monica Clua Losada
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Abstract.

The idea of Basic Income as a citizenship right has shifted from an academic discussion to a possible policy choice in many countries around the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In Catalonia, the evolution of the proposal has been remarkable since the year 2001. A law proposal was presented to the Catalan Parliament in 2002 and several studies regarding its financial viability have been produced. This paper assesses the forces that have made it possible for the proposal to reach the political agenda in Catalonia. It does so by placing its emphasis upon the political process, as the determinant for its success in agenda setting. The paper builds a framework of analysis by presenting four factors, which have been decisive in the process. The variables assessed are: the role of intellectuals, the role of trade unions, welfare reform and institutions and finally, political context as contingency. The analysis presented in this study reinforces the importance of international comparison, welfare reform theory and empirical research. Basic Income’s success in reaching the political agenda appears to depend less on solid normative foundations than on the political process itself.
Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Basic Income and political agendas around the world.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do models of welfare have an effect on welfare reform processes? Evidence from Catalonia and Spain.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The political process: from an intellectual idea to public debate.</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Conclusion. Basic Income on the agenda: possibilities and constraints.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix. Fieldwork data and summary of interview transcripts. 96

Bibliography. 109

List of tables:

1.1. Typology 9
1.2. RRB’s research strategy 12
1.3. Development of BI as a policy proposal 18
2.1. Brazil’s BI political typology 26
2.2. South Africa’s BI political typology 31
2.3. Alaska’s BI political typology 35
2.4. Scandinavia’s BI political typology 38
3.1. Changes in welfare policy design in Spain between 1997 and 2000 44
3.2. Temporary employment (as % of total employment) 54
4.1. Timeline 66
4.2. Catalonia’s BI political typology 89
Chapter 1. Introduction.

Basic Income\(^1\)(BI) reached the political agenda in 2002 in the Catalan Parliament. The law proposal presented by two left-wing parties, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) and Iniciativa per Catalunya-Els Verds (ICV) was short-lived. After an interesting parliamentary debate, the law proposal was disregarded. However, it brought Basic Income into the political agenda and it created the basis for further parliamentary action. In 2003, a left-wing coalition government won the Catalan election and included Basic Income in their governmental manifesto (known as Acord del Tinell). In 2005, a group of Catalan MPs brought the proposal to the Spanish Congress. This time with a labour government in power (PSOE), the Congress agreed to set up a working commission to study the proposal in more depth. This paper aims to analyse the political process that has allowed Basic Income to reach the political agenda in Catalonia.

To do so, this paper will scrutinise the actions of the Catalan/Spanish Basic Income Network (henceforth, RRB), as the main proponents and the players behind most of the developments regarding

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\(^1\) Basic Income is defined by the RRB in the same way as BIEN defines it: “A basic income is an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement. It is a form of minimum income guarantee that differs from those that now exist in various European countries in three important ways: a) it is being paid to individuals rather than households; b) it is paid irrespective of any income from other sources, and c) it is paid without requiring the performance of any work or the willingness to accept a job if offered.” (quoted as a footnote in Arcarons, et al., 2004: 25)
the introduction of a BI. The paper is particularly concerned with the political process, specifically in a crucial relationship that occurs in that process: the dynamics between institutions (as the rules of the game) and organisations (as those who play the game). Before specifying how the paper will be organised, I will present the framework of analysis that I will be using.

**Setting the scene. A framework for analysis.**

Basic Income, as an idea, has been around for a while. The breakthrough into the academic debate is considered by the literature to be the publication of a series of articles in 1986-7 in the academic journal *Theory and Society*. The debate that originated from that collection of articles has been a lively and ongoing discussion. In this paper I shall stay clear from that debate which, although it is highly relevant for the prospects of Basic Income it has little relation to the political dynamics explored here.

According to Roebroek and Hogenboom (1990, mentioned in Raventós, 1999: footnote, 20), “depending upon the degree of development and maturity of the BI proposal, four big groups can be created in Europe: 1) Denmark, Ireland, Great Britain and the Netherlands; 2) Belgium, Germany, France, Austria and Italy; 3) Norway, Sweden and Finland; 4) Portugal, Greece and Spain. The development and social
Basic Income on the agenda: the Catalan experience.
Monica Clua Losada

interest of the proposal decreases from 1) to 4). This classification developed in 1990 is hardly useful for the current BI debate, as this paper will demonstrate.

So far, research and scholarly activities regarding BI have focused on the philosophical and financial aspects of the proposal. Politically, little research has been done regarding BI. Scattered works, articles and mainly conference papers deal with the political feasibility of a BI. In contrast, in this paper I will scrutinise the conditions, often timidly outlined in the literature, for BI to become an alternative, and public, view to other forms of welfare reform. Four variable, and interconnected, explanations will be explored in a systematic manner.

Firstly, the role of intellectuals in developing, and advocating, BI will be assessed. Intellectuals have played a crucial role in different moments in history legitimising and providing arguments towards different social, political and economic alternatives. Recently, however, the role of intellectuals has become blurred. Yet, BI has attracted many academics and scholars and it has brought them into a classic understanding of intellectuals in processes of change. Intellectuals interested in BI are combining research and academia with an advocacy role in order to advance BI. I will test whether this advocacy role is sufficiently consistent to place them into a traditional view of intellectuals as agents of change, and/or whether their role has remained too elitist to achieve change.

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2 Own translation
Although little research regarding political conditions in order for BI to reach the political agenda has been done, it has been widely accepted that the biggest difficulties facing BI are of a political nature (for example, see Pinilla, 2005). This is where intellectuals have become crucial. Pinilla offers a solution to the problem of political feasibility. In his view, what is needed is *evidence-based policy* (Ibid.). This type of policy-making (or rather policy influencing) is defined as the combination of scientific tools with procedures of democratic participation in order to systematically seek strong policies (Ibid.). Evidence from Catalonia points to that direction. As chapter four of this paper will demonstrate, the role of intellectuals has been crucial in following Pinilla’s “word of advice”. Particularly, evidence-based policy is not aimed at overcoming ideologies, rather to aid institutional evolution (Pinilla, 2005: 13).

Secondly, the role of trade unions will be examined. A considerable amount of literature has been recently developed to analyse the role of trade unions regarding BI. In Catalonia their role has been ambivalent. Often supporting the idea through some of their leaders, often disengaging from the idea showing a kind of misunderstanding. This misunderstanding of the idea is not unique to the Catalan case. In fact, Jordan, *et al.* (2000) found it to be prevalent within certain Irish political parties regarding their attitude towards BI.

Trade unions are of particular importance when analysing welfare and labour policy in the Spanish state since the transition to democracy. Gallego, *et al.* (2003) identify three periods regarding their role in Spanish
policymaking. Firstly, there is the period from the late Francoist regime to the Moncloa Agreements. At this initial stage the unions manage to gain importance in income policies, particularly in terms of salaries. The second period runs from 1978 until 1984 where union dynamics change. Their objective has shifted towards becoming the social spokespersons and their actions are designed accordingly. Their attitude moves away from conflict and into negotiation with business organisations and eventually the government. There is even an acceptance of “wage moderation” which brings workers a decreased purchasing power. By 1985-86 this strategy has been exhausted and conflict returns with several general strikes (1985, 1988, 1992, 1994). From 1996, and partly due to a change from a social-democrat (PSOE) to a Christian conservative (PP) government, confrontation gives way to a new union strategy. Gallego, et al., describes it as “the articulation of negotiated mobilisation always based upon concrete contextual bases and this becomes the predominant style in union involvement in public policy.” (2003: 68)

Thirdly, I hypothesise that there is an anti-path dependency dynamic in Spanish welfare policy. Path-dependency theories have become embedded in the study of welfare policy and the development of different analyses of welfare arrangements. It is not the scope of this paper to enter into a rather interesting debate on the matter. Path-dependency points towards an almost predicted future, which will not change. However, as Pinilla (2005) reminds us “institutions are human creations and, as such,

3 Own translation
they can be modified at will in order to direct a process of change\textsuperscript{4} (2005: 7). This is quite an important point. Furthermore, the development of the Spanish welfare state and of Catalan social policy have proved to be highly anti-path dependent, as the third chapter of this paper will show.

Following from that, the fourth space of analysis will consider the political context including the role of institutions. The historical development of political institutions has had a particular effect in Spanish and Catalan politics, which in regards to BI, a similar pattern can be found in Brazil and South Africa. The politics of democratisation, together with the role trade unions have, and still play in policy-making has had a lasting impact upon political culture. The following table summarises the typology presented in this paper in order to analyse the political process behind the BI proposal.

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\textsuperscript{4} Own translation
**Table 1.1. Typology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Why is it important?</th>
<th>How does it affect the formulation of the proposal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>BI has traditionally been an active part of academic and philosophical debates</td>
<td>Academics can provide consistent research and simulations to back up the proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of trade unions</td>
<td>Trade unions are increasingly becoming actors in welfare reform</td>
<td>Trade unions have the internal capacity for policy design. There is a “professionalisation” of unions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-path dependency</td>
<td>Welfare reform has been often explained in terms of path dependency (e.g. Esping Andersen). BI appears to counteract this argument</td>
<td>The specificity of political and welfare institutions will determine the discourse of the BI proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context and institutions as contingency</td>
<td>The political climate will determine the receptivity towards BI proposals. Individuals or groups can make a difference in this sphere, as well as the specificity of circumstances.</td>
<td>BI proposals will be tailored and legitimised according to the particular context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

If we accept that politics is about power, an analysis of the political context must distil the intricate power relationship that exists within the particular units of analysis. In the case of agenda-setting that is quite a crucial matter. Castells (2000) sheds some particularly relevant light on this, “the new structure of power is dominated by a network geometry, in
which power relationships are always specific to a given configuration of actors and institutions.” (Ibid. 378). It is this configuration of actors and institutions, of players and game rules that this paper aims to explore.

So far, political parties as shapers of welfare policy have barely been mentioned. Gallego, et al., propose the following hypothesis regarding the role of political parties in determining public policy: “several circumstances make us gamble towards a hypothesis of low party incidence in the decisional content of government.⁵" (2003: 67). Although unable to generalise for other aspects of the policy process, the experience with BI in Catalonia certainly points towards that hypothesis, as the chapters to come will demonstrate.

To examine these four interconnected spheres, I will organise this paper in the following way. In this first introductory chapter, I am defining the chapters to come and providing a framework for analysis. The second chapter will provide an international contextualisation of Basic Income in the political agenda. The third chapter will provide a political, social, economic and historical background of the welfare state in the Spanish State, with particular reference to Catalonia. The final two chapters will provide the findings of my primary research regarding Basic Income agenda setting in Catalonia.

⁵ Own translation
Research aims and methodology

This paper uses a comparative approach to analyse social policy agenda setting. Specifically, basic income is used due to its international support and the linking it makes between a philosophical idea and a concrete policy proposal. The exploratory analysis presented here starts from an international comparison to support the sphere framework presented earlier. The four spheres become evident when examining international experiences, as the second chapter will demonstrate.

Welfare state research methodologies have been traditionally marked by two aspects. Firstly, path dependency analyses following from Esping Andersen’s theorisation of the three world’s of welfare, have clearly left their toll in further analysis of welfare policy, even within Basic Income academics. Secondly, most studies regarding welfare reform have a basic underlying assumption. In the era of welfare state retrenchment it is the government in power who initiates welfare reform. Little has been done to define welfare agenda policy setting by groups outside government, or even outside the political arena.

The Spanish Basic Income Network presented a framework for research in their first Symposium, celebrated in 2001. This framework was elaborated by several academics under the coordination of Rafael Pinilla. It included scholars such as Rubén Lo Vuolo, José Antonio Noguera and Daniel Raventós, amongst others. Although this paper is independent from any research strategy planned by the RRB it does fulfil some of the points
highlighted by their research strategy. The points outlined by the RRB’s research strategy, which this paper has a contribution to make, are highlighted in the following table.

Table 1.2. RRB’s research strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RRB’s research strategy</th>
<th>Score given by the RRB</th>
<th>Contribution from this paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BI and welfare state institutions. Comparison with traditional systems and how BI would fit within them.</td>
<td>3.27 (it seems important to follow this line of research)</td>
<td>• Chapter three. Analysis of Spanish and Catalan welfare and labour policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Point four of the typology. Anti-path dependency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BI and group power structure within a political system and a territorial organisation.</td>
<td>2.36 (it appears interesting to research in such direction)</td>
<td>• Chapter 3 and 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Group power dynamics as offered by my typology of BI proposals within the political process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative analyses of BI experiences (e.g. Alaska)</td>
<td>2.82 (it appears interesting to research in such direction)</td>
<td>• Second chapter. International comparative experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies of political viability in a given institutional context.</td>
<td>2.73 (it appears interesting to research in such direction)</td>
<td>• Although this paper is concerned with the political process rather than the political viability of the proposal, the analysis of such political process is situated within a particular institutional context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration from Pinilla, et al. (2001)
This research framework does provide me with a loose guideline to follow throughout this paper. The argument presented in this paper is that ethical and financial arguments regarding BI, although important, will not bring about a BI transformation. The under-researched political process is what matters here.

**Chapter 2. Basic Income and political agendas around the world**

This chapter will provide an international comparative perspective in order to help me spell out what can be expected for Catalonia. To start with, I shall situate the issue of BI in a global perspective. BI has gathered momentum in recent years, as it is starting to appear in political agendas across the globe. In order to understand, and be able to draw parallels and conclusions for Catalonia, I will provide an exploratory analysis of four cases. There are many more others that I could have picked, but there are specific issues in each case that makes them particularly interesting when compared to the Catalan case. These cases, and their apparent random characteristics, exemplify that developments in terms of welfare state reform, or even basic income, could go either way regardless of their characteristics. Yet, something has made them worth considering in terms of their achievements. This something, I believe, is the political process. And they all provide valuable variables and lessons.

The cases examined will be Brazil, South Africa, Alaska and Scandinavia. The Scandinavian case provides me with a perfect case in
order to prove that path-dependency might not be as determinant as it has been assumed in the literature. The reason why this international comparison is important is two-fold. On the one hand, by assessing international developments and their variables, the Catalan case can be situated in perspective. In all four cases (five, if we include Catalonia) developments could go either way, as far as proposals reaching the political agenda, yet BI did appear in some but not in others. The point is that it is the political process that matters. The cases will be analysed against the four factors presented in the typology: the role of intellectuals, the role of trade unions, welfare policy processes and path dependency and the political context.

Chapter 3. Do models of welfare have an effect on welfare reform processes? Evidence from Catalonia and Spain.

This third chapter will provide some theoretical background to the BI proposal in Catalonia. The four factors offered as having a role to play in the introduction of BI into the political agenda are going to be assessed in relation to welfare policy reform assumptions throughout the literature. Many BI proponents are leading academics in areas of social policy. This expertise has aided them in building up the justification for the introduction of BI in modern societies. However, welfare policy reform as an academic sub-discipline has been left behind within the BI literature. This chapter explores the possibilities that welfare reform theory and research can
provide as well as the opportunities for analysis that developments towards BI are creating for policy processes theory.

The chapter will deal with welfare reform with a particular focus in Spain and Catalonia. Therefore, an analysis of welfare state configuration will be provided. The Spanish welfare state is a characteristic mix of Esping Andersen's continental regime and Ferrera and Rhodes' southern European model. As a welfare state, it must be understood beyond the post-war Keynesian model due to its historical and political development. Southern European welfare states, and in this case, the Spanish welfare state is often seen in the literature as a backward familialistic proto-welfare state. Contrary to this, Guillén and Matsaganis (2000) argue “If anything, the problem with welfare arrangements in Southern Europe is not that they are 'behind' as a whole, but that they suffer from imbalances, giving rise to inequities and insufficiencies.” (2000: 121)

However, Noguera (2001) sees the whole debate on welfare models in quite a pragmatic way, and succinctly emphasises “the real fact is that every welfare state is based upon some combination of beveridgian and bismarckian programs, that is, of contributory income-maintenance schemes and non-contributory means-tested ones.” (2001: 5). This chapter will untangle these debates and reinforce the typology offered in this first chapter as a useful tool to understand BI agenda-setting in Catalonia.
Chapter 4. The political process: from an intellectual idea to public debate.

This fourth chapter will unmask some of the preconditions assumed throughout the literature. BI appears as the logical step towards alleviating poverty in an age where the welfare state is becoming increasingly incapable to do so. Welfare state model and labour market fragmentation, although good justifying factors, might not be the factors that allow BI proposals to come to the fore; they make an economic and social case but not a political one.

I will investigate the political process that has allowed the idea of a Basic Income move from being an intellectual initiative to be part of the public debate. In this chapter, my main sources will be composed of primary data. I will analyse official documents from the Catalan Parliament and the Spanish Congress, as well as press coverage, political party and trade union documents and manifestos. In addition, I will include in this section my findings from my semi-structured interviews of MPs, trade union officials and members of the Basic Income Earth Network in Catalonia. In particular, this chapter aims at identifying the role of agency in this specific issue, in other words, how have the relevant agents contributed to the process? To do so, I aim to understand the interactions between BI proponents, political parties that have adopted the idea and trade unions.
According to Dr. Noguera, vice-president of the Spanish Basic Income Network (RRB), “the more continental the regime is, the more strong the link between welfare rights and the labour market, the higher the public reproduction of previous income inequalities, and the deeper the worker’s internationalization of a contributory and meritocratic philosophy, the more difficulties we will find for the transition to BI.” (2001: 6). Although, this may well be the case in Spain, as we are yet to see the full difficulties in the transition to a BI, so far, the actual proposition has been more successful in arriving at the highest levels of decision-making than in many other countries where the structures of their welfare state seem more conducive for such reform. It is in this area where the typology presented in this paper can shed some light.

This chapter will demonstrate how BI has reached the political agenda, by analysing the factors that have made possible the rapid development of BI as a possible policy choice. The chapter will test the applicability of the factors proposed in the typology in order to further our understanding of agenda-setting in the context of BI proposals. The following table sketches the development of BI as a policy proposal in Catalonia.
Table 1.3. Development of BI as a policy proposal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ten examples that show BI has reached the public arena in Catalonia (and Spain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) the largest union in Catalonia and Spain, has made a proposal, that although it differs from the standard BI definition, it does seek to universalise certain social benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Some Catalan MPs (for example, Carme Porta, of Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, a pro-independence leftist and republican party with 23 MPs, and José Luís López Bulla, of the already mentioned ICV-EuiA), presented in May 2002, a Basic Income Bill for all citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The 2001 summer school of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) winner of the 2004 elections to the Spanish Parliament, was entirely devoted to BI, and one of the Economic Policy heads, Jordi Sevilla, has advocated this measure several times (although the details do vary from the BIEN definition).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Basque union Ezker Sindikalaren Konbergentzia (ESK) gives unconditional support to BI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The 16th Congress of the Communist Party of Spain, at the end of February 2002 approved a resolution in defence of BI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Department of Justice, Employment and Social Security of the Basque Government co-organised with the RRB in December 2002, the 2nd Symposium on BI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The General Workers Union (Unión General de Trabajadores, UGT) held in Zaragoza a cycle of conferences throughout spring 2003 on topics that “could be a good starting point for revitalising the left ideologically”. Basic Income was the subject of one of the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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6 Jordi Sevilla is currently (2006) member of the Spanish Cabinet, as Minister of Public Administration.
conferences.

- At the end of 2003, the Department of Social Welfare of Barcelona City Council, helped to organise the 3rd Symposium on BI.

- In point 5.5 of the programme of the present Catalan government elected in 2003, states as a priority: “To redefine the Minimum Income of Insertion so that it becomes a basic income of citizenship, and to study the different proposals for its progressive set up.”


Chapter 5. Basic income on the agenda: possibilities and constraints.

This chapter will directly follow the findings from the previous chapter, and will be the concluding chapter of this paper. I will analyse the possibilities of Basic Income in Catalonia in relationship with the findings from interviews and the previous international comparison provided. It is in this chapter where I will be formulating my conclusions for the Catalan BI debate. The aim of this paper is not to offer a general framework that will work in every setting or with any policy proposal. It is a specific framework of analysis, based upon specific observations of limited events. Nevertheless, I hope that the conclusions will be useful in order to undertake further research and analysis.
Chapter. 2. Basic Incomes and political agendas around the world.

This chapter will provide an international comparative perspective in order to help me spell out what can be expected for Catalonia. To start with, I shall situate the issue of Basic Income in a global perspective. Basic Income has gathered momentum in recent years around the globe, not just within academic circles. In order to understand, and be able to draw parallels and conclusions for Catalonia, I will provide an exploratory analysis of the following four cases: Brazil, South Africa, Alaska and Scandinavia. There are many others that I could have picked, but there are specific issues in each case that makes them particularly interesting when compared to the Catalan case.

These cases, and their apparent random characteristics, exemplify that developments in terms of welfare state reform, or even BI, could go either way regardless of their characteristics, depending on the political processes, as specified in the previous chapter. The first three cases represent three stages crucial in terms of political viability: agenda setting (South Africa), legislation (Brazil) and implementation (Alaska). Scandinavia, on the contrary is analysed as a case where BI has barely left the arena of intellectual debate.

Yet, something has made them worth considering in terms of their achievements. This something, I believe, is the political process. All the cases presented in this chapter provide something interesting in the four dimensions of the typology offered by this paper. The cases will be
assessed against their contribution towards the following four points. Firstly, the role intellectuals have played in the proposition of BI. Secondly, the role trade unions have performed. Thirdly, I will assess whether their welfare path has been one of path dependency, or if on the contrary, they have presented strong anti-path dependency attributes. Finally, the political context and institutions will also be assessed in relation to the BI proposal.

**Brazil**

Firstly, I will analyse the Brazilian experience. Brazil is one of the most unequal countries in the world in regards to income inequality, yet one of the richest in Latin America. As Denes (2003) emphasises “although Brazil boasted the world’s eighth largest economy according to GDP in 1999 it also has one of the most unequal income distributions in the world.” (2003: 137) There are two issues about Brazil that I shall be focusing on. On the one hand, the *Bolsa Escola* (school grants) given to poor families in order to help access to education within poor communities. The school grants were initially a local initiative, nationalised by President Cardoso (1995-2002). Although they lack universality and they are conditional, what is interesting about them is the interaction between local and social policy. On the other hand, I will explore the role of the PT (Worker’s Party) in creating a Zero Hunger country in Brazil. Particularly, I will analyse Senator Suplicy’s proposal for a Basic Income in Brazil, with a particular emphasis on the role of interaction between local, state and federal levels.
The Bolsa Escola started as a regional programme in Brasilia in 1991 (Denes, 2003: 141) and was nationalised by Cardoso six years later. The programme did maintain a decentralised character in many aspects. For example, eligibility was accorded to “municipalities belonging to micro-regions with a Human Development Index less than or equal to 0.500 were eligible for participation.” (Ibid. 141). Furthermore, responsibilities were distributed horizontally and vertically at the same time as civic participation was encouraged (Ibid.). This developed into an interesting centre-periphery relationship “by changing, rather than lessening, the role of the central government this new dynamic creates a three-way relationship between the local and state governments and civil society, allowing each party to regulate as well as reinforce one another’s role.” (Ibid.)

The Bolsa Escola, as with any other social policy programme, suffered the danger of its political and economic sustainability “given the region’s tendency for cyclical patterns of economic growth and radical policy shifts during changes in government.” (Denes, 2003: 144). However, and following Denes, decentralisation has proven crucial in guaranteeing the stability of the program. Denes advises “by developing a multi-level and institutional approach, however, the Brazilian government has made good use of its institutions and legislature to bolster the sustainability of Bolsa Escola.” (2003: 144). The Bolsa Escola was then integrated under Lula’s government with four other key subsidies, named the Bolsa Familia (Family Stipend).
In 1991 Senator Eduardo Suplicy presented a law draft to the Brazilian Senate proposing the introduction of a guaranteed minimum income via the implementation of a negative income tax (NIT) (Suplicy, 2002a). However, it was not until 1995 when Brazil started experimenting with Minimum income schemes (Ozanira da Silva e Silva, 2004: 1). Furthermore, BI was approved by the Brazilian legislature as law in December 2003 and sanctioned by President Lula in January 2004 (Van Parijs, 2004).

The Brazilian Worker's Party (PT) and particularly its leader, current Brazilian President, Lula, have developed a far-reaching programme that aims at converting Brazil into a Zero Hunger zone in the world. Although a hugely ambitious programme and with at least the existence of strong political will, it does stand in contradiction with the idea of a Basic Income for all Brazilians. As Suplicy (2002b) points out the Zero Hunger programme clearly defends employment as the cornerstone of schemes aimed at reducing poverty levels. It has been part of the polemic linked to this programme, as many argue "social policy should focus on income distribution and the creation of opportunities for the poor rather than on monetary transfers and food aid." (Riethof, 2004: 42).

The new law approved by President Lula was received with great hope with many BI proponents across the globe. But as the BIEN Newsflash n. 25 of January 2004 comments when reporting the issue "After ceremonially signing the law, Lula paid homage to the determination of his old comrade [referring to Senator Suplicy], whom he described as
the inexhaustible Don Quixote of minimum income, while warning that there was no magical solution to Brazil's problems and that the new law would only be introduced gradually.” However, this gradualism remains to be seen in order to be able to assess the real possibilities of BI in Brazil.

The role of trade unions in Brazil must be understood within its own political context. According to Haagh (2006) “the more constructive (if still fragmented) engagement of Brazilian unions in policy was also modelled on a stable and even system dating back to the Estado Nôvo of state funding for unions.” (Ibid. 345).

Brazilian trade unions, as is the case with South Africa’s and Catalonia’s unions, have had their history critically marked by their respective authoritarian regimes and democratic transitions. Riethof finds that “the union militancy of the early 1970s resulted in a movement of more autonomous labor unions, unions whose shop-floor action worked toward a transformation of the industrial relations system that in turn was translated into political opposition to the military regime.” (2004: 32). Furthermore, “the movement emphasized autonomy from the state and a rejection of corporatist unionism. New unionists rejected the role of unions as transmission belts for state policies and opened the way for a more political role, in addition to the representation of member's interests.” (Ibid.)

What is crucial here is the union’s self-perception and ultimately their raison d’etre. In Brazil, unions are characterised by “the broadening of union demands to include social development issues in general and
strong relationships with other social movements and organizations that emerged from the opposition to the military regime. These features strongly influenced the CUT’s conception of class, and as a result it tends to interpret the interests of its members as connected with broader issues such as citizenship rights, democratization, and economic development.” (Riethof, 2004: 38)

To put Brazil into perspective, let me place its characteristics within the typology offered by this paper. Firstly, the role of intellectuals has been particularly strong, not in terms of a collective association of intellectuals but of the highly active advocacy of Senator Suplicy. The role of trade unions has been unknown, and further research could be done in that direction. A guess would be that unions might be interested in the proposal, yet unprepared to offer its full support. Thirdly, Brazil has combined elements of path dependency with anti-path dependency characteristics. Finally, the political context has been crucial in the development of more universal forms of welfare. The following table offers a summary of findings for the Brazilian case:

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7 Central Única dos Trabalhadores (Unified Workers’ Central Organization)
Table 2.1. Brazil’s BI political typology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>ROLE PLAYED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>Strong- highly personalised in Suplicy’s figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of trade unions</td>
<td>Unknown. An estimate might be that unions are interested, yet unprepared to offer full support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare path</td>
<td>Brazil has shown a degree of anti-path dependency with programs such as the <em>Bolsa Escola</em>, together with a certain degree of path dependency regarding the emphasis placed upon work in initiatives such as the “Zero Hunger”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context</td>
<td>Decentralisation has proven successful for the experimentation of several policy ideas. The PT’s electoral success has allowed Suplicy to place BI high on the agenda. Its implementation and the political will to carry it out is yet to be seen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

**South Africa**

Secondly, and linking with the previous analysis, I will explore South Africa’s Basic Income proposals and their popularity. When thinking of South Africa and Basic Income the most important variable to be considered is the role of South Africa’s trade unions (COSATU). South Africa proves an interesting case for the Catalan situation. Firstly, the political party in power (the ANC) would probably benefit from advocating a Basic Income, however, they remain ambiguous about it (Matisonn and
Seekings, 2002). Secondly, COSATU represent a model of social unionism, very much in the way of a social movement. Catalonia’s trade unions belong very much to this tradition of unionism, rather than the more trade-orientated unions of other countries.

South Africa, as Brazil, has a highly unequal distribution of income. It has a Gini coefficient of 0.65, with Brazil having 0.61 (Castells 2000: 124). “Between 36 and 53 percent of South Africans are estimated to live below the poverty line. Poverty is overwhelmingly concentrated in the African and coloured population: 95 percent of the poor are African, and 65 percent of Africans are poor, compared with 33 percent of the coloured population, 2.5 of Asians and 0.7 percent of whites.” (Ibid. Data from South Africa’s Government, 1996).

South Africa is particularly interesting in terms of the position of COSATU and Basic Income. COSATU are the key members of the BI coalition in South Africa. Both Guy Standing (2004) and more recently Vanderborght (2006) have paid attention to the cruciality of trade union support regarding the introduction of a BI. Vanderborght analyses the role of Belgian trade unions in the wider welfare reform debate, particularly emphasising BI, and the conclusion is that “union officials insist, paid work remains the crucial precondition for social recognition and self-esteem.” (2006: 11). According to Vanderborght “in a country with such a high union density, the political feasibility of BI might well be very low, to say the least.” (Ibid.). Standing therefore sees that unions must reorientate
themselves by broadening “their appeal to citizenship rights and be champions of egalitarianism.” (2004: 608).

It is within this framework, of union resilience towards basic income proposals that the South African case needs to be situated. Its exceptionality holds many invaluable lessons. Makino (2003) clearly spells out that COSATU members do not need a BI for their survival, they are not the poorest in South African society and they hold jobs in the formal sector. According to Makino, COSATU members would benefit indirectly by a BI scheme “by reducing their burden of supporting the unemployed and poor within their households or through remittances to other households.” (2003: 25). Matisonn and Seekings (2002) have expanded on Makino’s point. For Matisonn and Seekings COSATU’s stance has “a clear rational base in self-interest.” (Ibid. 21). To put it bluntly “trade unions clearly support the socialization of welfare because they prefer the burden of supporting the poor to be shouldered by taxpayers rather than by their own members.” (Ibid. 23).

However, Nattrass and Seekings (2002) have expanded on the above point by actually looking at trade union involvement in a bi-dimensional way “the trade union movement champions progressive reforms for both historical and economic reasons (historical in that the unions were prominent in the struggle against apartheid, economic in that union members are major contributors to a private welfare system of remittances that parallels the public welfare system).” (Ibid.). This is an interesting point, the division between union interests (from a historic-
strategic point of view) and union-members interests from a rational choice perspective.

The issue of union involvement in the BI proposal has attracted much attention regarding South Africa. Are Matisonn and Seekings (2002), Vanderborght (2006), and even Standing (2004) wise when they offer their analysis as a matter of union self-interest? Or are we witnessing an easy rational choice argument in their part? Could it be that union elites have seen BI not in terms of self-interest for its members, but rather in terms of what it can do for society? Maybe South African unions see themselves not just as organisations serving their members, but also as actual actors of social change?

Let me explore this a bit further. The involvement of unions in policy-making depends on a lot more than simply a rational choice argument. Haagh (2006), reflecting upon Marshall’s concept of ‘secondary industrial citizenship’, concludes “eventually, the right to ‘a minimal standard of civilised living’ had to be assessed in terms of its national applicability through parliament and the political process. Unions survived, but where they attained a constructive engagement with states this was typically in circumstances where they developed a national and unified structure and ceased to be temporary and exclusive outfits reacting to sectional interests or immediate crisis.” (Ibid. 344). Haagh’s insight is of particular relevance for the role COSATU is playing regarding BI in South Africa.
However, the main issue in South Africa appears to be a matter of political will. According to Gathiram and Hemson (2002) “development in South Africa remains largely apolitical, separated from the poor and grassroots and ideologically conservative” (2002: 217). This, however, shares space with a strong union movement, which might just be the missing piece for pursuing BI further. “Whatever the relative merits of the argument, substantial labour-market reform is not on the agenda in South Africa because of institutional and political power of the trade union movement.” (Nattrass and Seekings, 2002).

And yet, the future is blurred, “the support base of the BIG\(^8\) Coalition is a mixed blessing. It is in significant part due to the high-profile support from trade unions that the BIG issue has been kept alive. But the trade unions are fiercely opposed to any broadening of the tax burden that affects their members, turning them from net beneficiaries into net losers from redistribution. It is likely that the BIG will end up trapped between trade union opposition to broadening the tax base and Department of Finance opposition to deepening the existing tax base.” (Nattrass and Seekings, 2002).

To sum up, South Africa has enriched the debate regarding union involvement in BI agenda setting and advocacy. Whether it is a matter of self-interest or a view of unions as actors of social change, union involvement in BI still requires further research. Furthermore, in the South African case, the BI proposal breaks with previous welfare arrangements,

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\(^8\) Basic Income Guarantee (term particularly used in South Africa and in the U.S.)
Basic Income on the agenda: the Catalan experience.
Monica Clua Losada

not just in technical terms, but also in terms of its origins in South Africa. Traditionally, “in South Africa, the poor did not have the vote until long after redistributive social policies were put in place. South Africa is a case of, primarily, redistribution from above.” (Seekings, 2004: 10).

This redistribution from above is further reinforced by a centralisation of power. According to Seekings (2004), “the importance of the centralisation of power was evident in recent debates on welfare reform, focused on the proposed introduction of a universal, non-contributory ‘basic income grant’. The recommendation by an official commission of inquiry that a basic income grant be introduced was supported widely within the ANC, but the top ANC leadership suppressed serious debate and kept the issue off the real policy agenda.” (Ibid. 14).

Finally, the following table offers a view of the South African situation in regard to the BI political typology developed in this paper.

Table 2.2. South Africa’s BI political typology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>ROLE PLAYED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>Unknown- intellectuals have not been particularly vocal in the South African process. The Taylor Commission could be considered a mixture of intellectual with technocratic characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of trade unions</td>
<td>Strong. CO9SATU has been the primary advocate of BI in South Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare path</td>
<td>South Africa has been a path follower mainly. However, it does have a history of fairly redistributive policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context</td>
<td>Centralisation is proving to be the most difficult obstacle in providing the ground to place BI on the agenda.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.
Alaska:

Thirdly, Alaska has had a form of basic income for over twenty years. The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) pays out a sum of money to every Alaskan citizen once a year, just before Christmas. The PFD is a savings account specifically formulated to transform petroleum profits into sustainable economic support. Goldsmith (2002) has extensively researched the PFD, and particularly the relationship between the PFD and politicians. Although the Alaskan case is very singular and therefore conclusions about it cannot simply be taken as global generalisations, it has a value in that it is a working experiment in BI.

The Alaskan PFD was implemented in 1982. The idea behind the PFD was to provide a sustainable future for Alaskans with the revenues from oil production. Alaska, in this sense, is quite a unique case. The Alaskan PFD pays all of Alaskans residents (provided they have been living in Alaska for a year, and with the intention to remain in the state) with a sum of money every year. All Alaskans who fulfil these two criteria obtain the cheque, regardless of income, age or ethnic background. The cheques arrive to about ninety-five percent of the Alaskan population (Goldsmith, 2002: 6) and they account for up to 10 percent of some families’ annual incomes (Goldsmith, 2001: 5). This situation was made possible due to the fact that oil was found in state owned land as opposed to privately owned land (Brown and Thomas, 1994).

The idea behind the PFD was to provide Alaska with a renewable source of income protected from the volatility of oil markets. Oil is a highly
insecure commodity as well as a finite one. Alaskan politicians would much rather have the opportunity to spend the available funds in projects, which could increase their popularity, than in handing it out to citizens (Goldsmith, 2001; 2002) (Brown and Thomas, 1994). However, discussion regarding other uses with the PFD is almost silenced by the electoral unpopularity it could cause. This is exemplified by a reluctance to study the effects that the PFD might have on people. Goldsmith (2002) identifies two reasons behind this reluctance. On the one hand, the PFD is seen “as a distribution of income from assets owned by individual citizens rather than as an appropriation of government.” (Ibid: 9). Therefore, spending patterns should be regarded as a private matter. On the other hand, by studying the effects of the PFD on Alaskan residents, politicians are scared it might give the appearance that they could be considering a change of some sort. (Ibid.).

Therefore, there have been no consistent or extensive studies regarding the two most crucial issues regarding the distribution of a basic income, the effects on the labour market and the effects on income distribution patterns. In terms of labour market, average real wages have been falling in Alaska, around 10 percent in the past ten years (Ibid. 10). However, this is a global trend rather than a specifically located issue. Goldsmith, however, does consider the possibility that “the apparent higher incomes from the dividend are being partially offset by lower real wage rates.” (Ibid. 11). However, this is far from asserting that lower real wage rates have been caused by the existence of a PFD rather than by
global macroeconomic factors. On the contrary, there appears to be a stronger relationship between the PFD and income distribution among Alaskans. In the last ten years the income of the poorest fifth in Alaska rose by 28 percent as opposed to the 7 per cent increase achieved by the richest fifth. (Ibid.). This stands in contrast with the general trend in the US, where the richest fifth increased their income by 26 per cent and the poorest by 12 (Ibid.).

Overall, the Alaskan PFD could have many valuable lessons, yet they have remained poorly researched. It stands in sharp contrast with the probably over-researched negative income tax experiments in the US and Canada between 1968 and 1980 (Widequirst, 2005). These experiments did receive much attention regarding their direct labour market effects, however, as Widerquist maintains “it would be very easy to spin on the results in either direction.” (Ibid. 68). This is mainly because the selective and temporary character of the participants, which, of course, creates a whole new set of added variables. More research, and also more scholarly debate is needed regarding the Alaskan PFD before far-reaching conclusions can be made.

However, the usefulness of the Alaskan PFD for political analysis is limited. It offers little to the untangling of dynamics in the political process due to its technical character. The PFD is highly conditioned upon a specific historical context rather than a dynamic political process. The following table provides a summary of the Alaskan PFD in relation to the four factors analysed in this paper.
Table 2.3. Alaska’s BI political typology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>ROLE PLAYED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>Minimal- The creation of the PFD was more to do with the will of a political elite than intellectual pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of trade unions</td>
<td>Unknown. No indication has been found regarding union involvement in the PFD scheme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare path</td>
<td>The PFD moves beyond path dependency theories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context</td>
<td>Strong- The PFD is an example of a particular context being able to overcome any other factors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

**Scandinavia:**

Finally, I will briefly present the context of BI in Scandinavian countries. In Scandinavia, BI has received very mixed feelings. As Scandinavian countries are often presented as models of welfare state, the reception of BI under these circumstances can be valuable, especially against common misconceptions regarding welfare state type and possibilities for BI. Scandinavian societies have traditionally been at the forefront of state welfare. They have provided a Northern model of welfare, which is far more comprehensive than any other type of welfare state. The Nordic welfare states were characterised by their emphasis on full employment and extensive social security programmes. However, Scandinavian states also have to transform their welfare provision.
Different alternatives are available in current debates, which ones are they taking seriously?

Denmark is currently presented in the literature as the paradise of ‘flexicurity’ (Auer, 2000). ‘Flexicurity’ means the development of a dynamic and flexible labour market providing a considerable amount of security to its workers. Flexicurity differs from flexibility in the sense that flexibility is becoming more and more associated with a fragmentation of the labour market (Standing, 1997). Up until 1994-95, Denmark had an unemployment benefit system very similar to a basic income system (Christensen and Loftager, 2000: 258). However, as part of Denmark’s welfare state renewal, contemporary developments have increasingly helped Denmark choose the path towards a ‘workfare’ model of welfare state.

The Danish ‘workfare’ state is moving further away from a basic income system (Ibid. 265). There has been a shift from universality to selection and ‘activation’ policies (Ibid.). In other words, ‘activation’ policies mean that everyone should enter the formal labour market (Ibid. 260), regardless of other circumstances such as disability. In Denmark, Basic Income was debated during the 1990s. The debate was kept at the margins. Groups affected by income insecurity promoted BI, as well as certain people from the trade unions and, interestingly, employer’s organisations (Ibid 262).

Andersson (2000: 235) considers that the idea of basic income is more likely to take hold in a particular kind of society. For Andersson, a
society which has a combination of solidaristic and individualistic values is more likely to lean towards the thought of an income security guaranteed by the state. It is in this sense that Scandinavian attitudes towards basic income could be understood (Ibid.). If taking Finland and Sweden as examples it is possible to see how Andersson has developed such conclusion. Sweden has little support and debate regarding basic income. The hegemonic party, the Social Democrats are opposed to BI (as they are in Finland). However, the Swedish Social Democrats enjoy a privileged position in regards to their close ties with unions and their constant electoral majorities (Ibid.) On the contrary, in Finland political power is more dispersed amongst different political options.

These differences between Finland and Sweden can be understood in terms of national culture. “In Sweden it is necessary to be part of and receive moral support from a group. (…). In Finland leadership styles are more individualistic.” (Andersson, 2000: 234-235). The Scandinavian example is important when considering BI and policy change. If BI is seen as having possibilities in situations with a strong welfare discourse, the Scandinavian cases defy the argument. Sweden, Finland and Denmark differ in their views and interest towards basic income; however, it remains an idea rather than a possible policy choice. The following table places the Scandinavian debate within the typology offered.
Table 2.4. Scandinavia’s BI political typology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>ROLE PLAYED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>Academia has shown an interest in the BI intellectual debate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of trade unions</td>
<td>Weak. Trade unions have been followers of more traditional views of welfare, such as full employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare path</td>
<td>Scandinavian countries’ path dependency would point towards a BI as the next logical step due to its universalistic values. This has not happened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context</td>
<td>The strength of Social-Democratic parties and a traditional view of welfare have proven difficult to open up to new ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

**Comparative analysis:**

This international exploration of BI as an idea in political agendas brings two conclusions: on the one hand, it appears that Basic Income is not related to previous levels of welfare provision or to labour market conditions. However, welfare provision is part and parcel of the Basic Income idea and most of the proposals that have reached the political agenda, Brazil and South Africa in particular are gradual proposals. In other words, they do not expect to have a Basic Income by tomorrow, rather they are working towards defining a path which will bring them to a
Basic Income. These four cases present some interesting conclusions as it can be seen in the following summary:\(^9\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>Alaska</th>
<th>Scandinavia</th>
<th>Catalonia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of trade unions</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare path-dependency</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Not related</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context (contingent factors)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Income (stage)</td>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>Political agenda</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
<td>Academic debate</td>
<td>Parliamentary debate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

On the other hand, the role of political tradition, historical momentum and social actors appear to be decisive. BI has made it onto the political agenda in Brazil and South Africa, it has not in Scandinavian countries, it has been put into practice in Alaska. What these three scenarios have in common is that their situation can be mainly attributed to a particular historical and political moment where social actors have responded with the idea of a BI. Ethical, financial or previous welfare arrangements have proven less decisive than particular situations in particular moments with certain social and/or intellectual actors prepared to present their proposal.

\(^9\) I have added Catalonia into the summary so that the international comparison can be put into the specific context of this paper.
Chapter 3. Do models of welfare have an effect on welfare reform processes? Evidence from Catalonia and Spain.

This chapter aims to pursue further the framework proposed in the introductory chapter of this paper. The four factors\textsuperscript{10} offered as having a role to play in the introduction of BI into the political agenda are going to be assessed in relation to welfare policy reform assumptions throughout the literature. Many BI proponents are leading academics in areas of social policy. This expertise has aided them in building up the justification for the introduction of BI in modern societies. However, welfare policy reform as an academic sub-discipline has been left behind within the BI literature. In the following paragraphs I will explore the possibilities that welfare reform theory and research can provide as well as the opportunities for analysis that developments towards BI are creating for policy processes theory.

Welfare reform is a fluid process. Too often scholars concentrate on reform initiated by the state, and particularly in the last few years the focus has been on welfare state retrenchment. Little has been done, in general, regarding popular advocacy that has successfully concluded with policy reform, or at least with agenda setting. Agenda setting has been developed further in the US as a field of study; however, it tends to place its weight and interest in powerful groups (lobbies) such as businesses.

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\textsuperscript{10} The four factors proposed in this paper as having an impact in the political process of BI agenda-setting are: 1) the role of intellectuals, 2) the role of trade unions, 3) Anti-path dependency, or as this chapter will propose, path-shift, and 4) political context and institutions.
Here, rather, the interest groups considered are intellectuals and unions in terms of their capacity for agenda setting.

In order to analyse welfare reform processes and, in particular, whether specific models of welfare have an effect on that process I will provide evidence from Spain and Catalonia. This chapter is organised as follows: firstly, I will provide an overview of welfare reform perspectives with an analytical focus on the political context of such reform processes. Secondly, an exploration of the concept of path dependency will be provided, placing emphasis upon the problems that such a deterministic approach poses. Thirdly, as evidence-based policy-making has been the method of choice by the RRB, as the first chapter of this paper has already discussed, this method will be further considered within the context of welfare reform. Finally, an overview of Spanish and Catalan social policy will be offered, with a particular focus on decentralisation and the experience of minimum income programmes in Catalonia.

**The Political Context and Welfare reform:**

Martin (1997) introduces the framework of welfare reform analysis by pointing out “comparative work on the welfare state and social welfare systems principally relies on a comparison of statistical, socio-demographic, economic and financial indicators and on the production of typologies. (…). There is often disagreement between those who focus on the role of the state and its bureaucratic apparatus (the top-down model)
(e.g. Evans, Rueschmeyer and Skocpol 1985) and those who believe that social welfare measures are somehow won by workers or by segments of civil society (the bottom-up model).” (Martin, 1997: 24). Although, this two simplified ways of looking at welfare reform are the norm across the literature, I believe we must understand welfare reform as a contextual combination of both. BI, however, in Catalonia, should be analysed, at this stage, within the second framework described by Martin. This second framework, however, should be enlarged to include intellectuals and unions as actors within civil society.

It is with precaution that one must undertake comparative analyses of welfare reform. Martin stresses that “depending on the historical period being analysed, an identical type of political choice and protection system in two countries can lead to a substantial difference in another period. The usefulness of comparing social welfare systems may lie in comprehending first the evolutions, the break-ups and the confrontations of philosophies that form the basis of these evolutions, and second, the paradigms that go beyond national specificities and geographical differences between systems, but that are continuously fashioning and re-fashioning them.” (Martin, 1997: 37). This is where the importance of the concept of “political context” introduced in this paper lies. A political context understood as a dynamic combination between institutions and historical circumstances that may act as contingency in specific situations. In a way it is a contextual view of the role of agency.
In Moreno’s view “the autonomy of the political parties and the role of ideology remain highly influential in shaping welfare outcomes. Relevant policy actors, in addition to political parties and local national governments, are also the powerful social partners with their interests in national economic competitiveness, in labour costs and business regulation. These groups have usually aimed, first and foremost, to maintain their particular privileges disregarding society’s ‘general interest’. (2006: 11). It is in this line that pressure occurs towards welfare reform “to a considerable extent Mediterranean institutional ‘patchiness’ is the outcome of the lobbying by a panoply of elites and organised interests.” (Ibid. 12)

This institutional ‘patchiness’ described by Moreno can be observed in Spanish social-policy making. However, some period characteristics can be found. Gallego et al. (2003) have identified four distinguished periods in policy elaboration in the Spanish State from the transition to democracy. The table below offers an analytical overview of these four periods. It is interesting to see the evolution towards a dynamic combination of reactive and anticipative reaction to problems, in governmental and non-formalised inter-party arenas of interaction. The Catalan BI law proposal in 2002 represents an example of policy design within a non-formalised inter-party arena, as chapter four will explore.
Table 3.1. Changes in policy design in Spain between 1977 and 2000:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Reaction to problems</th>
<th>Type of dominant relationship</th>
<th>Degree of institutional permeability</th>
<th>Distribution of resources</th>
<th>Dominant scenarios of interaction</th>
<th>Network of actors’ structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977-1982</td>
<td>Reactive</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Assimetric</td>
<td>Parliamentary arena</td>
<td>Pluralist, semi-open and fluid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1996</td>
<td>Anticipative reactive</td>
<td>Conflictive</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Limited assimetry</td>
<td>Government arenas and non-formalised inter-party arenas</td>
<td>Closed neolitist with stable specified openings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gallego et al., 2003: 65 (Own translation)

Welfare reform in corporatist Conservative Welfare States has been heavily marked by the role of institutions. In Swank’s view (2002) “configurations of national political and welfare state institutions have

\[\text{Source: Gallego et al., 2003: 65 (Own translation)}\]
played large roles in shaping the welfare state impacts of the economic and political pressures generated by internationalization. Welfare state structures of the social insurance model, social corporatist interest representation, and inclusive electoral institutions have all been systematically important for social welfare policy reform: each of these institutional dimensions have promoted representation, political capacities, and supportive norms and values for pro-welfare state interests, and, in turn, blunted neoliberal reform. The structure of decision-making authority has also mattered, but in complex ways that reflect the multiple linkages between institutional structures, political power, and policy change.” (Swank, 2002: 217)

Swank (2002) provides a refreshing approach to welfare policy change. And one which, probably unintentionally is quite apt to analyse BI proposals. Swank’s basic argument emphasises “the importance of class-based actors and the relative distribution of political capacities across them as central features of welfare state politics.” (2002: 283). In his view, democratic institutions matter as they can facilitate mobilisation, ultimately those institutions will determine the rules of the game “in the long term, [democratic institutions] fundamentally shape political capacities and cultural contexts that determine the balance of political power, policies and programs for the national state, and economic and social outcomes of state action.” (Ibid: 284). By focusing on institutions and taking careful consideration of class-based actors with power to influence welfare reform, BI proponents can further the advancement of the proposal.
Is welfare reform intrinsically path dependent?

Cox (2001) provides an interesting reasoning against path dependency, that can be useful in order to understand the evolution of BI as a policy proposal. In his view, what we are witnessing is a process of “path shaping” (a concept he borrows from Jacob Torfing). Cox is analysing the different experiences of Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany in effecting the policy process, although the three countries share several institutional characteristics. His argument is that “much of the difference is explained by a factor that often gets overlooked, namely, the social construction of the need to reform.” (2001: 464).

Path shaping as opposed to path dependency is rather more adequate to understand the evolution of BI in political agendas. Primarily, because path shaping places a crucial role in human agency, whilst path dependency places its emphasis upon institutions. Cox maintains “path dependency works only when it is accompanied by a conception of the role of human agency. Jacob Torfing adds a theory of agency to institutionalism by stressing the importance of path-shaping behaviour engaged in actors who seek to overcome institutional and circumstancial obstacles. Path shaping serves as a cause for policy reform when actors change the conceptual discourse in an area of a policy, establishing new grounds for evaluating the legitimacy of policy proposals. The new social construction makes it easier to change institutions in order to
accommodate the policy reforms. Therefore, ideas, expressed as new concepts for legitimating policies, function as independent causes of reform.” (2001: 474).

If ideas are important, then those who create and justify those ideas are actors to consider. Cox’s analysis of Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany points towards an interesting idea “together, the three cases demonstrate that welfare reform is more a struggle over the identity of a society than over the size of the public budget. Reform proposals that do not invoke an accepted idea of legitimacy stand little chance of success, while a sense of legitimacy can facilitate truly dramatic change.” (Ibid. 498). Legitimacy then acquires a role in the political process.

**Evidence-based policy making:**

As outlined in the first chapter, the RRB takes evidence-based policy making very seriously for BI proposals. However, “The drive towards uniformity in policy is also to some extent a function of ‘evidence-based’ policy-making and the use of the experiences from some programmes to justify system-wide interventions of a particular type. While it is, of course, good to have some evidence about the capacities of particular reforms to produce benefits, there are also important political and methodological issues about building on what is often a very narrow foundation of empirical results. Knowing that a particular programme has been effective in one set of circumstances is important, but does not
answer questions about the generality of the results or the possibly contingent nature of the success.” (Guy Peters, 2003: 422). This, I believe causes one of the main obstacles faced by BI proponents, which maybe evidence-based policy-making is not quite fully qualified to overcome.

By December 2003, the RRB was celebrating its third Symposium in Barcelona. The main conclusion from that event was that Basic Income was not far from becoming a reality in a “not too distant future” (Boso and Larrinaga, 2004). This Symposium also offered a turning point in the evolution of the proposal. The debate was entering a new solid ground with many experimental studies offering empirical findings regarding the financial implications of implementation (Ibid.)

The cornerstone study in Catalonia, which is a perfect example of evidence-based policy-making is the research carried out in Catalonia during 2003 by four scholars: Arcarons, Boso, Noguera and Raventós, published in 2004. The study, of a high scholarly quality, presents a viable proposal of BI for Catalonia. It uses real data from the 2001 government fiscal census (IRPF), to simulate eight possible BI scenarios. It uses a sample of 210,000 fiscal individual records. In short, it makes the case that BI is financially possible.

Crucially, however, it is the one of the few studies that has offered a consistent approach to the study of political viability regarding Basic Income. They acknowledge the gap in the literature regarding these matters (Arcarons, et al. 2004: 154-155). They offer a plausible explanation for this lack of research. There are no real cases to analyse
and therefore comparative analysis is made almost impossible. For a consistent comparative approach, you need cases where BI has been applied and cases where BI has not. This would allow you to make casual inferences (Ibid.). To an extent, this is the aim of this paper, rather than using real cases of implementation, using real cases of BI reaching the political agenda.

This feeds directly into one of the main problems the BI proposal faces in terms of becoming a real policy. “The view of reform as experiment is, of course, a rather extreme conception of the process of policy change, and one that is difficult to ‘sell’ politically.” (Guy Peters, 2003: 424). This is one of the major difficulties that BI faces, as there is little evidence available from any other “real” situation. Particularly, if we consider Alaska as quite an exceptional case, in the sense that it would be difficult to replicate in other contexts. During my interview with Daniel Raventós, President of the RRB, in July 06, he expressed his concern over this particular issue:

“The BI proposal needs a braveness, which I don’t currently see in the political parties. If you allow me the comparison, occurs something similar with euthanasia. The question politicians ask is: is there any experience? And the same happened with the euthanasia debate, nobody here was brave enough… until Holland legislated about it… It’s contradictory, because on the one hand, they see it as a brilliant proposal and the left, within its virtues has not been having many brilliant ideas in the last few years… but on
the other hand… On the one hand they think don’t let anybody takeover before we do, because it’s such a great idea, but on the other, we don’t want to be too public about it because what if then it turns out not too be a good electoral measure.”

*The Spanish welfare state and the Southern model:*

This section presents an exploration of current welfare arrangements in Spain and Catalonia. The aim is simple, to situate it within the issues discussed above and provide the necessary contextual background needed to fully understand the findings of my research in the next chapter. The Spanish welfare state has been analysed within the framework of a Mediterranean/ Southern European welfare model. Whether trying to model-in welfare policy is a useful approach for analysis, remains uncertain, particularly if we take into consideration the issues explored above.

Rhodes (1997) continues to view Southern European welfare states as heavily path dependent and sees reform sceptically. In his own words: “The impact of external pressure will clearly depend on how chronic the ‘southern syndrome’ is in each of these countries and on their existing and potential capacity for reform.” (Rhodes, 1997: 15). It is in his pessimistic view that much hope should not be held for these countries' welfare systems: “None of this means that the basic features of the ‘southern syndrome’ will disappear overnight. Administrative structures will remain
fragmented and colonized by vested interests, high rates of poverty and unemployment will persist in many regions of the south and the reform of health systems, social security and pensions will be slow, falling well behind expectations in most cases. Tax evasion and benefit fraud will remain a major problem, and one dependent as much on reform of social attitudes as on an essential reform of state administrations. Clientelism is ingrained in the politics of these countries and is difficult to eradicate, especially when they agents of change –the political parties- remain dependent on client groups for support.” (Ibid. 20)

However, as Martin succinctly points out “it is sometimes more useful to talk about models of regulation that are common to various countries during certain periods, and about discrepancies that can occur at other times. Typologies have less to do with geographical discrepancies than with temporal discrepancies.” (1997: 32) Public health care provision in Spain provides an example of discrepancy between selectivity and universality, demonstrating that characteristics attributed to different welfare models can live alongside each other in real polities. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that health care, which is the only near universal provision in the Spanish welfare state is not a right based on citizenship (Guillén and Matsaganis 2000), even though 99.8 per cent of the population is entitled to receive public health care (Ibid). “At present, only 200,000 citizens with earnings within the highest income bracket remain out of public coverage.” (Ibid: 130). For Ferrera (2005: 5) this represents a significantly rare instance of “path shift”. Yet, Spanish welfare policy does
remain firmly ingrained in selectivity and the contributory principle, as the following example demonstrates.

The Toledo Pact signed in April 1995 by the two main trade unions (CCOO and UGT), the then socialist government (PSOE), the main business organisation (CEOE) and all political parties with parliamentary representation in the Spanish Congress reinforces the separation between contributory pension schemes and non-contributory ones. The agreement included fiscal matters; in particular “universal health and social services and means-tested social assistance were to be fully financed through general taxation, while a reserve fund was also created within the contributory regime to strengthen its future viability.” (Ferrera, 2005: 17).

The agreement developed in Toledo reinforced union involvement in social policy-making, as outlined in the first chapter. Trade unions have become powerful actors in the policy-making process, in social and labour matters, in Spain. For BI proponents this is something that needs to be considered more thoroughly. As Pinilla mentions “it is evident that in the last decades, trade unions have been accepting timid advances towards flexibilisation in exchange for limited returns in specific circumstances. Basic Income could be a much general return and much more transparent.\(^\text{12}\)" (footnote, 2001: 154-155)

\(^\text{12}\) Own translation
Labour market fragmentation and unemployment:

Labour precariousness and unemployment have been the two main justifications used by BI proponents in Catalonia in order to “sell” BI politically. Therefore, I will provide here a brief exploration of the most striking characteristics of the Spanish labour market. The Spanish labour market is also institutionally linked to Southern European labour markets where there is a “pronounced insider-outsider cleavage” (Ferrera, 2005: 5). Furthermore, Ferrera (2005: 5) considers that Southern European labour markets are segmented “into three juxtaposed sectors, (…) : (1) the “regular”; (2) the “irregular’ or “peripheral”; and (3) the “underground” sectors.” (Ibid). The importance of this segmentation lies in its intensity as Ferrera continues to say, “the size and distinctiveness of the latter two sectors and the ensuing degree of polarisation between guaranteed and non-guaranteed workers have seen no parallel elsewhere in Europe.” (Ibid.).

Temporality is high in the Spanish labour market, particularly amongst young people. García Serrano et al. (1999:38) believe that it demonstrates a kind of intergenerational pact, between young people and older people. And they link it to a reduction in birth rates, due to young people being unable to move out of the parental home (Ibid.). Although temporary agencies were not allowed to operate until the December 1993 Labour Reform Act (Cousins, 1999: 107) there appears to be a direct

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13 The ‘underground economy’ in Spain is estimated between 20-25% of the GDP (Moreno, 2006: 6, footnote)
relationship between their appearance and the rising levels of temporality, especially amongst young people, as the following table demonstrates:

Table 3.2. Temporary employment (as % of total employment):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Recio (1999: 146)

Although temporality has risen across all age groups (more than doubled in many age groups), little appears to have been done to counteract the negative effects it can have. In terms of policy Rosetti (2003) identifies three types of labour policy in Spain. Firstly, there are policies focused on labour market (de)regulation. Secondly, there are certain public policies destined to guarantee income, usually named passive policies. And finally, there are active labour market policies with the aim to increase and maintain employment (2003: 124). In this line of thought, Rosetti identifies a missing point in labour policy; there is no consideration given to social policy. The development of labour policy has been divorced from social-policy making (Ibid. 129). BI could provide such missing link by relaxing the level of coercion associated with both the labour market and current labour policy.
Recio (1999) with his analysis of labour market segmentation in the Spanish State points out a further danger, which could be directly linked to this fragmentation. According to Recio, labour market individualisation and erosion of social rights is having a considerable impact upon the system of labour relations. Why does this matter? Recio argues that they are important because “this type of dynamic does not just create social differentiation mechanisms, it also generates subjective processes which make it more difficult to develop a collective conscience capable of generating forces ready to counteract growing inequalities and precariousness.” (Recio, 1999: 147)

Labour market fragmentation, in the case of Spain, is leading to a situation where growing precariousness is being translated into further exclusion in social policy transfers. Noguera points out that “exclusions in the labour market, (...) have a clear relationship with gender and age, and one can expect to this to reflect upon the contributory system: in 1998, for example, only 32 per cent of contributory retirement pensions were paid to women, whilst this proportion rose to 85 per cent if we consider non contributory pensions, the amount of which is much lower” (Noguera, 2003: 4)

Labour market participation also has a crucial impact upon a fiscal reform such as the one BI is proposing to undertake. The Spanish black economy is extensive, and the levels of formal employment are low. Women do have a crucial role to play in this. Drawing from research in

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14 Own translation
15 Own translation
Ireland, Jordan, et al. (2000) point out that “In Ireland, it will be necessary –if present phenomenal rates of economic growth are to be sustained –to continue to draw married women into the labour market. Hence the debates between the traditional view of the home-based wife and mother, and the continued demand for women workers in the economy, are likely to intensify. Some authors have argued that the decline in housewife roles (and rise in female employment) are the keys to future jobs growth, since each 100 new employments for married women creates a further 15 in paid child care and domestic work to sustain them (Esping-Andersen, 1999). Hence a culture shift in Catholic societies like Ireland becomes a necessary condition for the widening tax base and steady incomes growth that can support the rest of Ireland’s tax-benefit reform programme.” (Ibid. 30-31).

**Decentralisation:**

Decentralisation matters. It matters particularly in terms of welfare reform and most importantly in terms of scope, limitations and opportunities. Moreno argues, in this line, “the territorial form of the state greatly affects welfare provision and institutional responsibilities. As a result of within-state variations, often reflected in different party systems, channels of elite representation and elite articulation, decentralization has become a major embedding factor in contemporary political life in Europe. In some countries they are affecting the very ‘core’ of traditional social
policies.” (2006: 14). Moreno considers Spain to be one of those countries, alongside Italy, and presents the reform of the health system, from a selective contributory system to a nearly universal one as an example of how decentralisation is providing a crucial shift in path dependency.

However, not all views of decentralisation are so optimistic. Swank (2002) argues that “the creation of federalism in Belgium, quasi-federal institutions in Britain, and extensive devolution of policy-making power to regions throughout much of the developed democratic world may well fragment and otherwise weaken national welfare state coalitions in the long run. To the extent that decentralization refocuses collective actors on inter- or intraregional distributive conflicts, intensifies social divisions within national pro-welfare organizations, and creates a more tenuous fiscal foundation for systems of social protection, the welfare state will be weakened.” (2002: 287)

In a similar line, Guy Peters also offers a somehow critical view of decentralisation, “there is always a certain amount of ‘fuzziness’ when conceptualising the policy process in these systems, knowing that except in the most extreme cases, there is some level of joint responsibility for policy, and also some joint commitment towards making programmes work. This fuzziness reflects, as already noted, the difficult nature of making and implementing policies, as well as the need to match better policies with political and economic conditions.” (Guy Peters, 2003: 427). However, as the minimum income programmes demonstrate, and also healthcare reform in the Spanish state, decentralisation has facilitated the
pursuing of policies that otherwise might have been either too risky or too expensive to pursue. Furthermore, decentralisation in Spain has provoked a domino effect\textsuperscript{16} in policy, with one community developing a new policy or programme and the others following.

\textit{Minimum income programmes:}

“There are four basic income benefit groups:

1. social security minimum pension supplement (\textit{Complementos de mínimos de pensiones de la Seguridad Social});
2. social assistance pensions and non-contributory social security pensions for the elderly and the disabled (\textit{Pensiones Asistenciales} and \textit{Pensiones No Contributivas});
3. social assistance benefits for the unemployed (\textit{Subsidio asistencial por desempleo});
4. minimum income for social integration programmes (\textit{Ingresos mínimos de inserción} or ‘salario social’).” (Laparra and Aguilar, 1997: 98)

It is this fourth type of minimum income programme that this section will concentrate on. The reason behind this is two-fold. On the one hand, these programmes represent a decentralised social policy. On the other

\textsuperscript{16} For example the Basque Country was the first to introduce a Minimum Income programme, the rest of the Autonomous communities then, followed.
hand, they are often seen as a foundation stone towards a basic income, in a similar way to the *Bolsa Escola* programme in Brazil.

There were 7000 RMI claimants in Catalonia in 1993 and 46.6 per cent of them took part in employment oriented actions (Laparra and Aguilar, 1997: 105). The low percentage (below 50%) of claimants being involved in “workfare” is not due to RMI being an anti-workfare policy, but rather due to power struggles between the decentralised autonomic government and the central Spanish government. Coordination between the two is rare (Ibid: 106); in 1993 this was crucial in explaining the divorce, as labour policy was fully in the hands of the central government (Ibid).

However, the minimum income scheme in Catalonia is below the average in the Spanish State. In Catalonia the RMI for 1 person is 64.7 of the poverty level, whilst the average for the Spanish State RMI is 72 (Noguera and Usabart, 2003: 194). For households with more individuals the difference is slightly less but it remains lower (Ibid.). For the whole of the state however, minimum income schemes are a less popular policy choice than in the rest of the EU. In Spain RMI accounted for 6.3% of the total income assistance in 1993, compared with a EU average of 66.5% in 1997 (Ayala, 2000 quoted in Noguera and Ubasart, 2003: 190).

Sanzo (2001) understands minimum income schemes based upon the French RMI to introduce two dimensions to current social policy practice. On the one hand, there is an economic dimension, based around the traditional aim of guaranteeing a certain level of income to a
determined sector of the population. On the other hand, there is a social dimension, which integrates issues of social exclusion and labour market activation. (Ibid. 1)

Politically, the minimum income scheme in Catalonia outlines two characteristics of the Catalan social policy-making system. Firstly, it was strongly influenced by both the French and the Basque schemes. Secondly, it was the outcome of union negotiation and a strong role played by the third sector (Noguera and Ubasart, 2003: 201) (organisations such as Caritas). Furthermore, although it has been a well defined policy, the Catalan government has lacked willingness and it has not assigned resources to extend and improve the scheme (Ibid. 198).

**Guaranteed Minimum Income:**

A new proposal has been develop to overcome some of the difficulties and challenges that current minimum income schemes have been unable to face. Although this new proposal has many supporters who do not support the idea of a BI, many BI supporters see it as paving the way towards a BI. IC-V\(^\text{17}\), for example, in its public assembly celebrated in 2003 explicitly points towards a BI as the future to aspire to via the development of a Guaranteed Minimum Income together with a Basic Universal pension for all of those over 65 years old (RRB Flash,

\[^{17}\text{Iniciativa per Catalunya-Els Verds (A Socialist-Green coalition, partner in the Catalan coalition government from 2003 to its recent break-up in Spring (2006) }\]
Basic Income on the agenda: the Catalan experience.
Monica Clua Losada

March 2003). The two main trade unions (UGT and CCOO) have also advocated for a Guaranteed Minimum Income.

The proposals made by the two unions have been thoroughly worked and developed (see CCOO “Proposta de Renda Garantida de Ciutadania”) and the Papers from the 12th Congress of UGT in Catalonia where it explicitly says “the public management of social services to guarantee social needs as a universal right”. It goes a little further than CCOO’s proposal, as CCOO’s idea is still ingrained within the family unit. For UGT “the right to social services must be considered individually.” However, when providing information on the programme it goes back to using the terms family unit and individual interchangeably. The proposal of a Guaranteed Minimum Income has also reached the political agenda. However, it shows a less consistent philosophical justification (it does not aim to do so) than the BI proposal does in Catalonia.

Conclusion: trend follower or path dependent?

The development of the Spanish welfare state has become linked to general macroeconomic international, particularly European, opinion policy practices on social policy. For instance, Guillén and Álvarez (2001) point out that “activation policies have come to gain importance vis-à-vis unemployment subsidies, but this constitutes a general trend, which is probably due to the fact that all European economies face a severe problem of unemployment.” (2001: 126). To sum up, Spanish social policy
in the last twenty years has been deeply impacted by two differentiated trends. On the one hand, there has been convergence with EU public policy, which has benefited certain aspects of a welfare state that never developed in the post-war period. On the other hand, there has been a dynamic of restructuring according to the predominant neoliberal paradigm. However, in stark contrast with economic policy, “the Spanish welfare regime today cannot be placed within orthodox neoliberal paradigms.” (Gallego et al., 2003: 69-70). Instead, one cannot find a unique welfare paradigm, several layers of universality; contributory factors and underdevelopment share the space of Spanish welfare policy.

Path dependency is increasingly more difficult to sustain as a theory. Cox (1998) reminds us that “path dependency is a ‘big bang’ theory of causality. It postulates that the twenty-year-old profile of a country’s welfare state explains how that country responds to new policy issues in the 1990s. Two decades of reform have fundamentally changed this profile in many countries.” (1998: 13-14). The recent history of the Spanish welfare state demonstrates that much of the current welfare arrangements have been developed in the 1980s and 1990s rather than in the 1940s and 1950s as in much of Europe. Path dependency then, for the Spanish State, cannot explain the mixing of policies that has occurred in the past twenty-years. It has rather been a matter of the configuration of forces within specific political contexts. In other words, political processes

18 Own translation
can explain more comprehensively the dynamics behind welfare reform than a strict path dependency approach can.
Chapter 4. The political process: from an intellectual idea to public debate.

Noguera pessimistically reflected in the year 2000 that “although the proposal is slowly spreading in some circles, it can be said that supporters of BI in Spain are few, and that they are dispersed and lacking a defined strategy and an organized framework to defend collectively the idea (2000: 20). His reflection ends by pointing out that “prospects for BI in Spain are not very optimistic in the short and mid term. A lot of pedagogy and political action has to be done in many fields of academic and social life in order to make BI a seriously considered idea within the political agenda and the social movements.” (Ibid.). Fortunately, two years later the situation was quite different. The Catalan Parliament was the first Parliament in the world to debate Basic Income as a citizenship right without any further conditions (Porta, 2002).

This chapter, in a sense, is ‘le fond de l’âme’ of this paper. Its importance lies in that it provides empirical evidence for the typology developed in the previous chapters. The evolution of BI as a proposal in Catalonia is used as the case study to do so. The chapter will explore in detail the evolution of the proposal within the context of the political process. The second part of the chapter will provide an analysis of the findings from the primary research undertaken in Catalonia in June-July 2006. Finally, it will situate the findings within the four factors determining BI agenda-setting proposed by this study.
**Evolution of the proposal in Catalonia:**

From 1999 the BI proposal in Catalonia has become a matter to be discussed and studied within political parties, trade unions and civil society organisations. Much of this discussion was sparked off by Raventós’ book “El derecho a la existencia” [The right to exist], published in 1999, which created a considerable degree of media attention.

Raventós summarises this evolution in the following way: “In the Kingdom of Spain, the proposal of Basic Income has gone beyond discussion in small circles to become, in a few years, part of a wide social debate. Some have said that while the Kingdom of Spain took longer to enter the debate than other European countries, it is also the place where it has extended most quickly. After the end of 1999, when the concept was familiar to only a few dozen people, it rapidly spread to become known to tens of thousands. The social debate may be “wide” because it involves unions, political parties, social movements and citizens concerned about the weakest and most excluded circles of society, but it is not yet extended enough.” (Raventós, 2004)
Table 4.1. Timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Zona Abierta, a magazine, publishes a double issue (46/47) on BI, which was partly the translation of Theory and Society</td>
<td>It didn’t have much influence, apart from some marginal academic debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>A seminar on BI was held over several days in Barcelona</td>
<td>Little media repercussion, but according to Raventós “symbolically this marked the end of the bad times” (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Publication of “El derecho a la existencia”</td>
<td>Arises a considerable amount of media attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>ERC’s parliamentary group debates BI by inviting some experts</td>
<td>Political parties start showing an interest in the proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Law proposal presented to the Catalan Parliament</td>
<td>BI is officially on the political agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-January</td>
<td>IC-V organises a meeting to reflect upon BI</td>
<td>Political parties feel the need to promote debate on the issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>The RRB is recognised as an official section of BIEN in its IX Congress celebrated in Geneva.</td>
<td>The efforts of BI proponents are recognised internationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2003</td>
<td>The RRB is accepted as a member of the UNESCO/UNITWIN, as a university network.</td>
<td>International and intellectual recognition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2003</td>
<td>PSC organises a meeting to discuss BI</td>
<td>Political parties feel the need to promote debate on the issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2003</td>
<td>The RRB becomes a member of the Solidarity Economy Network (Xarxa d’Economia Solidària.)</td>
<td>The efforts of BI proponents are recognised internationally and transversally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Acord del Tinell</td>
<td>BI is in the agenda of a governing group of political parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2004</td>
<td>BI is discussed in the XI meeting of Public Economy in Barcelona</td>
<td>BI is entering other academic and professional debates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2004</td>
<td>Anna Simó, Catalan minister for Welfare and Family in the Catalan government agrees to study the viability of a BI (El País, 20/09/04)</td>
<td>BI is becoming a possible policy alternative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2004</td>
<td>Meeting in the Catalan Parliament between members of the RRB and three Catalan ministers and four other influential top civil servants.</td>
<td>As above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2005</td>
<td>ERC presents a law proposal to the Spanish Congress</td>
<td>The creation of a study commission was granted to assess the economic viability of the proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2005</td>
<td>V Symposium celebrated in Valencia</td>
<td>Debate on political viability. It concluded that the future of BI depends mainly on political will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td>Three MPs in the Spanish Congress requested the creation of the study commission approved in January 05.</td>
<td>The tripartite government in Catalonia has been broken, which is not good news for the creation of such commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2006</td>
<td>Referendum for a new Catalan Statute (to replace the 1979 legal text)</td>
<td>Bad news for BI, article 24.3 promotes a guaranteed minimum income, as opposed to the BI promoted two years ago by the incoming government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Own elaboration from Arcarons, et al. (2004); RRBFLASH, several issues; Raventós (2004); El País, 20/09/04;
Expertise and precedence:

As it has been extensively explored in the previous chapter, there is an inclination towards seeking expertise and precedence in policy reform. The history of BI as a policy alternative in Catalonia has not been an exception. According to Moreno (2006) “the interplay between bureaucrats and political representatives in the processes of decision-making often reflects a bias towards ‘expertise’ criteria.” (2006: 12). Due to a lack of precedence, Basic Income advocates have opted towards the use of their expertise in order to advance the proposal. This fact, following Moreno, has so far aided in their suggestions.

From the first Symposium (in June 2001) there have been voices calling for a certain degree of gradualism in the walk towards a BI, as Casassas (2001) points out. In a way, this can be understood as aiming to overcome the issue of precedence. In addition, and following on from the format of the Symposium three central areas have been identified. Firstly, there is the social, economic and political environment in which BI is being proposed. Secondly, there is the conceptualisation and normative foundation of the proposal and finally, in which ways it could be implemented. So let me assess how the proposal has been advanced in these areas.

There could be the possibility that BI appeared as a proposal in the right place at the right time. There is a widespread feeling amongst trade unions (such as UGT and CCOO) and organisations working against
social exclusion (such as Caritas) that there is a crucial piece missing in the jigsaw of social policy. A unitary policy, which is defined around an explicit set of objectives that will end the current selectivity of the Minimum Income schemes. It appears that somewhere along those broad lines trade unions and social organisations converge with basic income advocates. (Casassas, 2001)

BI in Catalonia is currently very much of a chimera, due to the existing fiscal arrangement between Catalonia and Spain. However, not all is lost. The Catalan government can initiate legislation that can bring steps in the direction of “preparing the ground” (Arcarons, et al. 2004: 92-93). An illustration of this could be the recently approved law of measures for personal, family and work conciliation approved by the Catalan Parliament on the 26th of June 2006. What is important about this piece of legislation is the following statement:

“On the other hand, with this law we are propelling a change in outlook which can allow us to advance from the concept of conciliation to that of reorganisation of personal, family and work life. In this line, the Plan of action and development of women policies in Catalonia 2005-2007 promotes the revaluation and social recognition of reproductive labour and of care and the revaluation of personal and family life (…)” (Official Bulletin of the Catalan Parliament, n. 358/2006: 3)

This recognition, in a piece of legislation, of reproductive work, and care, as being valued types of work is crucial for the future possibilities of
BI. It directly follows up from the three-way distinction presented in the law proposal for BI in 2002, where the legal text emphasises: “These three types of work mentioned, paid work in the market, domestic, looking after others and voluntary, are necessary activities for the functioning of our society and confirmation is increasingly impregnating our social fabric.” (Official Bulletin of the Catalan Parliament, n. 263/2002: 52)

The Catalan debate has been fluid and heterogeneous. Although Raventós, current President of the RRB, has been the most public face in advocating BI, he has not been by far the only one. This has created a network of intellectuals who have been quite active in developing arguments and advocating for BI. The debate, however, has been developed according to two basic lines: philosophical arguments and financial viability. The main justification used has been that BI can be an effective measure against the exclusion provoked by long-term unemployment (Raventós, 1999: 18)

However, one of the major arguments used in Catalonia against BI is an argument regarding the “right to work” on the one hand, and the idea that “full employment” still is an objective worth pursuing in order to establish a welfare society. Full employment is considered by many as almost impossibility to realise under the current economic climate (was it ever possible?). However, maybe full employment should not be quite the issue, as Castells indicates, “the main labor issue in the Information Age is not the end of work but the condition of workers.” (Castells, 2000: 153)
BI has several implications for its implementation strategy. Pinilla (2002a) particularly focuses on the issue of fiscal reform, as it would go hand in hand with BI legislation. In relationship to this fiscal reform, Pinilla identifies three difficulties. Firstly, there is a huge diversity in terms of household size. A large family might find themselves comparatively a lot better off than a smaller size family if an individual income was to be distributed. Secondly, in the case of Spain, and for that matter also the EU (see Pinilla 2002b for a EU case), there are different needs, and different levels of prices, depending on the autonomous community those individuals live in. Thirdly, within a European context such fiscal reform would be quite substantial. (Pinilla, 2002a)

BI advocates in Catalonia are quite supportive of gradual measures towards a BI to overcome some of the difficulties. Noguera (2003) views this gradualist strategy as an ally in terms of the political feasibility of the proposal. There is a reason why such gradualist strategy might aid BI politically. “The change that a BI implies would be so important that a certain transition period is needed for the proposal to take root in the political and administrative structures, as well as in the consciousness of the population and the political and union class, in a way that it would make the changes irreversible; during this transition period, citizens could chose the legislation that they would find more convenient, whether BI or existing legislation.” (Ibid. 13)

\footnote{Own translation}
Gradualism has become almost an unavoidable necessity for BI advocates in Catalonia. Catalonia currently lacks the necessary fiscal autonomy for a BI scheme to be implemented. There are two proposals being developed, which are seen as stepping-stones towards a BI. The first one is a guaranteed minimum income, which would replace the current minimum income schemes and it would be implemented by law as a citizenship and social right (Boso and Larrinaga, 2006). The second idea would be a direct family transfer to families with children aged 0 to 16 (Ibid.).

Gradualism is not just a Catalan characteristic. But it has become the preferred strategy. It is seen by BI advocates as the ideal strategy for implementation, following Vanderborght’s model of implementation through the back door. According to Arcarons, et al. “the channels towards a Basic Income through the back door would start off from existing social transfers, utilising the “little portions of BI” already existing within the system, so that reforms can be, slowly, introduced in a way that without realising the step towards a “pure” BI would just mean a technical or administrative reform. These channels could facilitate, not just in terms of social acceptance, but also in terms of argumentation, as it could be defended from already existing legislation.”20 (2004: 85)

20 Own translation
Basic Income and the Political Process:

It is worth mentioning at this stage a piece of research developed by the Citizen’s Income Study Group in 2000 in the UK carried out by Jordan, et al. To this day it is the closest work to developing a political typology of Basic Income reform. Therefore, it is worth mentioning some of its findings and their relevance for this chapter. Firstly, Jordan, et al., identify three aspects of tax-benefit reform, the political process, the public finance process and the implementation stage (2000: 7). Regarding the political process they understand it as encompassing new ideas being “brought forward and old ones challenged” (Ibid.). In this regard, this paper has aimed to disentangle the dynamics within this process.

Secondly, Jordan, et al. (2000) foresee New Labour’s emphasis upon workfare measures will eventually develop into a Basic Income system in the next fifteen to twenty-years (Ibid. 8-9). Although I am abstaining from making futuristic predictions in this paper, it is interesting to note that their prediction is based upon the belief that “there has been a change in political culture that cuts across party lines, and reflects a breakdown in the old moral and political consensus around the role of the benefits system in the economy and society.” (Ibid. 8)

Thirdly, Jordan, et al.’s (2000) study is a comparative study of the UK and Ireland. One of the biggest differences between the two countries regarding welfare reform has been Ireland’s strategy of negotiation and consensus regarding social policy matters (Ibid. 19). This aspect of
political culture can find parallels in the Spanish State, particularly in the early 80s and late 90s. Furthermore, Jordan’s interviews of political elites brought some interesting issues to the fore, many of them similar to the matters I found myself discussing with my interviewees in Catalonia. Jordan, *et al.* (2000) found that “It is worth noting that all these critics of the government programme, from the moral stance of egalitarianism and distributive justice, were supporters of the Basic Income principle –but as a means of preserving the old values of the welfare state not as a radical innovation. Also, all felt very far from a position of influence on policy on this, either in their parties or in the legislature.” (Ibid. 24). To a certain degree, my interviewees could also be placed within these two parameters.

Regarding Ireland, there is a point, which finds its correlation in Catalonia when analysing the role CCOO has played within the Basic Income debate. Jordan, *et al.* (2000) point out how “a further irony in Ireland is that the former Democratic Left, which was originally the prime sponsor of the BI principle, now expresses some scepticism about it. This is because, as part of the coalition government of 1995-7, it found alternative approaches to welfare reform more attractive.” (Ibid. 29)

Jordan, *et al.*’s (2000) research still brings a further point to consider “it is important that these opponents of BI tend to be *political insiders*, who are going places in their parties, and linked into important policy networks and communities. This means that they are in strong positions to discredit the BI approach, and keep it off the policy agenda,
using their acknowledged expertise and insider status. Others defer to them; MPs who support BI see themselves as (and are) *outsiders* in the policy process. This implies that—if the CIT is to argue for the step-by-step reform process—the first steps must be consistent with the technical means and the policy goals supported by this group.” (Ibid. 34). In Catalonia, the situation is slightly more complex, since many BI supporters are both *insiders* and *outsiders* within the policy-making process. I shall demonstrate that in the following section.

**BI in the Catalan policy-making process:**

Carme Porta and José Luís López Bulla presented a law proposal to the Catalan Parliament, which consisted of the proposition of a basic income to be paid to all residents, unconditionally, and to be set at the official poverty line, on the 18th February of 2002. José Luís López Bulla, Member of the Catalan Parliament at the time of the proposal for IC-V, presented in 2001 his view on how the proposal would be received by the Parliament:

“What is going to the future of the parliamentary debate? I want to explain things with sobriety and realism. ERC and us (to be more concrete, Carme Porta and myself) will arrive one of these days and say “how are you doin’, we are here” in the protocol office, put a stamp here and this will go in the agenda, and we will wait for about two months. When the debate starts in the Catalan Parliament, the law proposal will
not be debated, the proposed text will not be discussed: what will be discussed is the administrative side of the proposal, in other words, if the Catalan Parliament will accept receiving such administrative task to be considered. And then it will last an hour: the proprietors, we will leave, as it is called in parliamentary language, we will defend the law with wit and depth, however the alliance between dandruff and hair gel (CiU and PP) will vote against it. That will be all, if I have ever seen you before, I do not remember, see you, good bye\textsuperscript{21}." (Transcription made by González Bailón, 2001)

Such a sarcastic view of the future was sadly very close to what actually happened in Parliament. However, López Bulla points out that there were other, even more, valuable reasons behind the proposal. Firstly, it has allowed an internal debate within their respective political parties. Being a law proposal gives the matter a degree of importance, aiding political debate. Secondly, the debate has spilled over onto unions and certain members of the Socialist party (PSOE)\textsuperscript{22}. In a way these two direct consequences from the law proposal have been crucial in upgrading the status of Basic Income from an academic proposal to a pragmatic and (possibly) realistic one.

The law was voted against by Convergencia i Unió (CiU) and the PP, PSC-PSOE abstained from voting (Boso and Larrinaga, 2004).

\textsuperscript{21} Own translation
\textsuperscript{22} From the transcription made by González Bailón, 2001
**Acord del Tinell:**

The election of a left-wing government in Catalonia after more than twenty years of a Christian-centre government brought much hope to many people. BI proponents were some of them. Article 5.5 of the governmental pact between the three left-wing parties explicitly advocates for a BI. The RRB expressed the following in their February 2004 newsflash “whatever opinion each one of us might have regarding the real future of BI, we think that there are reasons to view things with a higher degree of optimism than with previous governments.” (RRBFLASH)

**Empirical findings:**

Five interviews were conducted in Barcelona between the 26th of June and the 3rd of July\(^2\). The interviews lasted forty-five minutes to an hour each and were semi-structured. They were all recorded with the consent of the interviewees and all participants agreed to have their identities disclosed and associated with this research, if necessary. All interviewees were initially contacted via e-mail, with a summary of the research aims. The interviews’ objectives were to understand their perceptions of BI agenda-setting in Catalonia and help me analyse the dynamics of the political process being analysed. The recordings have been thoroughly analysed and an analytical summary of the findings will

\(^2\) Further details of the fieldwork conducted can be found on the appendix.
be provided in this section\textsuperscript{24}. Furthermore, this subsection aims to understand the role players have had in the shaping of the process.

**ERC:**

Carme Porta is the public voice of Basic Income within ERC. Porta is an MP for the Catalan Parliament, and with IC-V presented the BI law proposal to the Catalan Parliament in 2002. In the third Symposium, Porta admitted that ERC had not fully subscribed the idea of a Basic Income (Boso and Larrinaga, 2004), an issue still standing when I interviewed her in early July 2006. Porta considers that political agenda matters, and as both an MP and a member of the RRB, she argues that “BI has to be in the political agenda, and the way to be in the political agenda is to make it visible, we have done so here, we’ve worked on it seriously, we’ve entered an internal debate and even though, right now, well it’s not a good moment, because everything is stopped, what is evident is that it must be on the horizon, and we are all clear on that in the Xarxa (RRB).”

She sees two basic challenged facing BI at the moment. The first one is regarding the reception the proposal has received so far: “the fact that BI didn’t receive an outright attack against it, it has made it normal. And sometimes being normalised can be a death sentence.” The second challenge is more to do with planning and capability: “what is happening, I think, is that we are now in phase B, it’s on the agenda, it has been talked

\textsuperscript{24} Full transcriptions are available upon request, from the author.
about, the debate is there, now we are in phase B which is about how we develop the proposal, in this transition, then I think this has lost visibility, the visibility of that first proposal (...) The great challenge now is not to lose this horizon in this transition, and how we make this transition, it’s the usual of socialism and communism, strategy and tactics, and of course, we must do the tactics so that we don’t lose the strategy. The strategy is clear and now we need to know where we are advancing to and the challenge lies there, in that path."

Porta finds the congregation of academia and politics interesting; she strongly believes Parliament should open ways for social movements and academics as an exercise of deepening democracy. She views herself as this kind of link, due to her previous involvement, particularly in the feminist movement.

**ICV:**

There are three public names linked to BI within ICV. Firstly there is López Bulla, who presented the law proposal in 2002 together with Porta. Secondly, Dolors Comas who has taken over the issue within the parliamentary group since López Bulla was not re-elected in 2003. Thirdly, Ricard Gomà, who is a councillor for Barcelona City Council. Sadly, although contact was established with Dolors Comas the interview could not take place due to a family emergency on the part of the MP.
Ricard Gomà participated in the third symposium. On that occasion Gomà reflected upon the process his party went through regarding the proposal. There were two years of internal debate regarding Basic Income, before the party supported the proposal. The party organised an open assembly in February 2002 where the issue to discuss was the party manifesto for the forthcoming elections. The most voted manifesto was the one that included BI as a fundamental piece in the construction of a Catalan welfare state (Boso and Larrinaga, 2004)

**PSC-CpC:**

No response was received from the invitations sent to members of the PSC for an interview with myself. Therefore, the findings here are based upon already published sources. Antoni Comín who spoke on behalf of the PSC in the third Symposium explained how the 2002 law proposal made his party realise that they had not debated this proposal enough (Boso and Larrinaga, 2004). From that, the party initiated an internal debate, which developed into a specifically designed meeting in the spring of 2003 where the party debated BI exclusively. From that BI received a mention within the party’s manifesto, although quite a generic one (Ibid.).
**CCOO:**

I interviewed on the 28th of June 2006 the person responsible for integration policies of CCOO, Cristina Faciaben. CCOO supported the idea of a BI in 2001-2002. CCOO have now developed a proposal for a Guaranteed Minimum Income, which differs normatively from BI in the sense that is conditional upon other income. However, Faciaben made a specific reason for this change in policy preference: “as a concept, as an ideology, here at the union almost everyone can share it, because it's the maximum that citizenship can be. The maximum a state can do for its citizens. However, this can be clearly unsustainable, there could be abuses, and interests... it could fire inflation, because everyone could afford an extra expenditure, which not everyone can afford now, and then prices rise... but, anyway, let the economists deal with that.”

She accepted that the idea of BI on the horizon was something CCOO would not oppose per se. Furthermore, the interview was used to go into depth on the role of unions in policy-making, particularly regarding social policy. Faciaben made the following interesting reflection:

“There has been a conceptual change, unions in the first instance, we were the representatives of the workers, especially of employed workers, something which we have often been criticised for, and they are partly right... salaried workers, paying national insurance contributions, the classic salaried worker, what happens is that with time it has derived into being built as unions... I'm referring to class-based unions; well then, this has derived in us becoming not just
workers’ representatives, but also socio-political and economic agents as well, why? Well, because in this country there hasn’t been a development of service users organisations, for example… then, we have built ourselves as representatives of all, with the exception of employers… Why? Well, because the worker is also a service-user of the health services, a service user of education, a service user of social services, with housing needs… We also deal with traditional union matters, of course. But in terms of pure welfare state, we represent the service users.”

**UGT:**

The trade union UGT was contacted by e-mail and by letter, their reply arrived on the 19th of July and it was a kind apology for having missed the opportunity to be interviewed. The communication contained many of their official documents regarding Minimum Income schemes and proposals, including proposals regarding pensions.

**Caritas:**

Caritas is a Catholic organisation that works against social exclusion. It has an essentially assistencialist character. However, over the years they have become more like an NGO and have influenced policy. As Noguera and Ubasart point out ‘in Catalonia trade unions share influence with organisations of the third sector.” (2003: 202). In terms of
social policy, Caritas is one of the most influential organisations in the third sector.

I interviewed two members of Caritas. Anna Jolonch and Àngels Cardona. They were both aware of the developments regarding Basic Income in Catalonia but they were not responsible for this area in their organisation. The person responsible for BI matters was unavailable during my stay. There were some advantages to this situation, rather than talking to a BI “expert” I could gauge perception within an organisation. The interview did highlight some interesting issues for my analysis.

Firstly, both interviewees agreed that BI is not just an anti-poverty measure, but rather a new way of organising society, placing crucial weight in the transformative power of BI. Going straight into the point, they emphasise “we see a BI as a way of breaking the link between social rights and work.” Secondly, they place BI as part of the thought behind many of the social policies of the past few years, “with different names, within different issues, since minimum income schemes appeared, the idea of a Basic Income is there.”

Most importantly, however, is the analysis they made of the political process. Here, certain distrust was made evident. Both women considered that the inclusion of BI in the governmental “Acord del Tinell” was a huge success, although they were aware that it was just in the agenda and not developed into a specific policy. One of the ladies, with the explicit agreement of the other one, presented the following reflection: “I see it as a bit of a shop window, it appears that there is a public who likes the idea
and they have put it there for us to have a look at it, I don’t know if it has been thoroughly thought through and worked on as if it was going to be a real policy.” The situation, however, appears to have reached a certain impasse as “there has been an anti-climax within the last couple of years. On seeing that the three-party Catalan government has placed BI into their governmental agenda we have lowered efforts, lost momentum. BI has stayed in that agenda, but not moved any further.” This idea of BI having been placed like a handbag in a window shop was shared to a certain extent by other interviewees.

Furthermore, there was an interesting point, which appeared after I asked about the ideological dynamism that BI might have, due to its capacity to being argued from different points of view in the ideological and philosophical spectrum. Quite an interesting thought came out of their answers: “Wherever you situate Basic Income, in itself, it’s just a tool, but you need to situate it, locate it within an ideology. In a way, because we are in Catalonia, we all assume that this idea will stay within the left. We would see that as the left placing the focus in equity questions, within social parameters in a higher measure than economic measurements.” This in turn asks the question: Would support be withdrawn from the idea if it became part of a more conservative or liberal view of society? To these two members of Caritas the distinction lies in the emphasis.

The issue of the relationship between BI and ideology is not just a concern shared by Caritas. De Francisco (2001) maintained a debate with Domènech (2001) precisely about this issue. Domènech defends the
characteristic of BI as an ideologically friendly proposal, as he sees this feature as reinforcing the idea. De Francisco, however, is more cautious about it. Their debate is centred on the ecumenical characteristics of BI as a proposal. De Francisco appears to share the concerns of the two Caritas interviewees.

The support given to the idea by the two Caritas members interviewed is placed more upon ideological grounds than economic ones. Although issues to do with financial viability were mentioned, certain doubts and questions were also presented. Particularly, work was still seen as an important part of life and particularly of social exclusion. The lack of social services and social rights was believed to have to take precedence over BI.

**RRB:**

The RRB (Basic Income Network) has been the driving force of BI in Catalonia and Spain. I interviewed the President of the association and one of the two vice-presidents, Daniel Raventós and J. A. Noguera, respectively. Daniel Raventós, an economist from the University of Barcelona, has been a fierce and constant advocate of BI. Currently, he has been presiding the RRB since its foundation and has probably been its most public face, with several interviews in some of the major newspapers in the Spanish State. I interviewed him on the 3rd of July in Barcelona. The issues discussed were political agenda, ecumenism of the
Basic Income on the agenda: the Catalan experience.
Monica Clua Losada

proposal, in other words, its ideological plurality, and his experience of the process.

For Raventós, the role that the political context has played has been considerable. For example, the fact that the Socialist party in Spain was in opposition until 2004 it made them more receptive towards new proposals, which helped the advancement of the proposal. However, the proposal has remained “highly personal”, the MPs presenting it did not receive a lot of support from their parties, rather it was the Xarxa (RRB) who took the initiative. However, parties have evolved with the conception and he reflects that “ten years ago I would have been more pessimistic, BI does not appear as a strange thing anymore.”

The question of plurality was considered by Raventós: “we don’t need to exaggerate, I mean, within Basic Income, politically, you can find extreme left-wing people, moderate left-wingers and centre-righters, at the most, of course you will never find extreme right-wingers in favour of a BI, neither those with xenophobic attitudes and so on, even if it’s only by definition.” Going further, Raventós also considers the Catalan contribution to the international academic debate in terms of pluralism:

“The friendliness that BI can arise within the left is much broader than within the right, let’s not kid ourselves, I mean politically…

Another matter is that academically… then you can find supporters of various liberal theories of justice, more or less on the left, as a way of saying in political language, and then, which, this would be the Catalan contribution, with all my humility, but a Catalan
contribution to republicanism. In other words, the republican democratic justification, I think is a contribution from three or four authors, which I think is timidly extending, but there is three or four authors who are working the republican justification."

In the interview it became clear that Raventós had reflected upon the role political parties have played in the proposal and introduced the following crucial distinction: “there is a difference between politicians firmly supporting the proposal and their parties, which have other priorities, reasonable or not.” The priorities are often based upon issues, which have captivated the parties; every proposal has peaks which incentivise the debate. The issue at stake, however, is that BI “is a politically conflictive proposal, because some will lose and some will gain, and I don’t just mean it economically.”

The interview with J. A. Noguera provided some interesting insights into the RRB. However, I first asked a clear-cut question “why Catalonia?” his answer was quite simple “because here is where the majority of the RRB members are”. It is self-explanatory. Three of the five Symposia celebrated by the RRB to date\textsuperscript{25} have been organised in Barcelona, the X Congress of BIEN was also celebrated in Barcelona.

I want to bring back a hypothesis outlined in the first chapter, offered by Gallego, \textit{et al.} (2003). The proposition is that there is “low party incidence in the decisional content of government.” However, in Catalonia,

\textsuperscript{25} The next Symposium will be dedicated to political issues and celebrated in November 06 in Galicia
as Noguera emphasised during the interview: “to be fair I think political parties have had a more important role than the unions in this matter, mainly because some members of the RRB are also members of political parties.” However, Noguera does value the role of unions and analyses it from a perspective of agency rather than self-interest: “the RRB we are quite happy with the role of Catalan trade unions (...) we have been quite lucky to have such open-minded unions which are quite aware that their social base is changing and that they need to change (...) Both in CCOO and UGT have a lucid leadership which makes a lucid analysis of their role in society, of how its changing, how their role its changing, etc..., and that they have to join in with innovative proposal such as BI.”

Furthermore, Noguera’s view of agenda setting in the Catalan context is that the way the proposal is presented matters for its future success: “a lesson from my experience in Catalonia, which others might not share, but from my experience... a lesson to be learnt is that you must watch out carefully the political side of the proposal, because it’s a proposal which can be easily disregarded by a politician (...) Politician’s agendas are busy, and it’s based upon image, a lot of marketing and everything that does not immediately catch their eye is disregarded. (...). Anyhow we must achieve the attractiveness of the proposal, because if we can’t make it attractive for politicians we will never make it attractive for citizens.”
Conclusion: Catalonia’s framework.

This chapter has provided the empirical evidence to support the framework proposed by this paper. The four factors, analysed in the table below, provides evidence for the typology developed in the previous chapters. The evolution of BI as a proposal in Catalonia has been used as the case study to do so. The chapter has explored in detail the evolution of the proposal within the context of the political process. The second part has provided an analysis of the findings from the primary research undertaken in Catalonia in June-July 2006.

Table 4.2. Catalonia’s BI political typology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>ROLE PLAYED</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of intellectuals</td>
<td>Strong, dynamic and heterogeneous. Although Raventós has been the most public face, there are many other intellectuals involved in the proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of trade unions</td>
<td>Strong, in the sense that although there have been misunderstandings, and changes of mind, Catalan unions have been interested in the issue and have worked hard debating it. Both unions don’t see BI as a problem; rather have some reservations about it. However, they will be crucial for the implementation of the proposal due to their expertise in affecting policy reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare path</td>
<td>Catalonia, due to decentralisation, has been accustomed to many instances of “path shift”. A clear advantage for the future of BI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political context</td>
<td>The political context has played a crucial role. The proposal was first introduced when the left was in opposition, and more open to ideas to revitalise their programmes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.
Conclusion. Basic Income on the agenda: possibilities and constraints.

Catalonia has been at the forefront of placing BI into the political agenda in a short period of time, and creating a considerable debate amongst political parties and civil society. There are clear names, faces and groups associated with the proposal. It offers a carefully-thought case of political advocacy, Casassas (2001) gives the following simple recipe: “A generous amount of political will, on the one hand, with scientific rigour, on the other, appear to be the crucial ingredients to place the proposal of a Basic Income in the political agenda.”

To a certain, if not considerable extent, these two ingredients have been found in Catalonia as this paper has shown. At the same time, the situation has lost the momentum it gained between 2002-2005 where BI started to appear more or less imminent. The purpose of this paper, by analysing and reflecting on the actions that made the momentum possible, it also aims to provide background to reinforce that momentum.

There are two main issues, which I believe are worth highlighting. This paper has demonstrated that more effort needs to be placed upon the thorough study not just of political viability but also of political processes, particularly on matters of social policy. Furthermore, specificities and agents matter. In other words, institutions and players geographically situated do have an impact. This means that more research needs to

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26 Own translation
develop to fully untangle the dynamics between games and their players. To do such analysis, however, a one-size-fits-all approach, such as the one offered by path dependency and welfare regimes, is ill fitted. There are many games with many different players around the world, if we consider the role of agency to be important; we need to be able to account for such differences in a theoretical and rigorously analytical manner.

As Raventós clearly stated in a Conference in Istanbul “Basic Income both in Catalonia and Spain has overcome an important stage: that of the normative or ethical justification.” (2004). In a way, what is radical about the Catalan case is that proponents are quite clear about their objectives regarding BI. Rather than advocating BI from a simple efficiency argument, the argumentation is strongly held upon a transformative aim. Noguera (2003) clearly expresses that “a BI should imply the alteration of the current income distribution, and of the redistributory systems of the state; otherwise, there is no sense in fighting for its implementation” (Ibid. 6)

Evidence-based policy making is so far proving successful in the Catalan BI case. However, it is also providing an easy excuse to avoid having to develop political studies, due to the inexistence of “real” cases. Policy learning is a crucial feature of the political process. Studies regarding the implementation of other controversial policies could also help further develop a typology. The typology I offered here is modest; it refers to agenda-setting, rather than to implementation.
I can foresee a danger or a difficulty. BI has some influential supporters behind it. However, it has become highly personalised, rather than being an idea widely supported within organisations, few individuals with positions of power support the idea. Unless these individuals are capable of channelling both down and horizontally the idea, its fate is heavily reliant upon these individual’s political success and continued support. BI, as an idea, also needs to be democratised.

The study presented in this paper does not wish to aim any higher, as most of the conclusions presented here have too many dependent variables and lack the tools necessary for a consistent analytical approach. But what this paper does aim to do is rather to open a door which has been left mostly closed for too long. Political processes do matter, and they particularly matter for transformative action.

The issue of alliance building needs to be placed as a higher priority, as Purdy reminds us “Strategic lessons can also be learned from the era of Keynesian social democracy. No government could embark on the transition to Basic Income without the kind of broad popular alliance and cross-party consensus which made it possible to reconstruct the state in the 1940s.” (Purdy, 1994: 47)

If political parties are proving difficult to bring on board, more effort should be placed in bringing unions into the BI side. Maybe the problem is that studies regarding union support have concentrated too much on unions as organisations with high levels of self-interest (e.g. Standing, Vanderborght) (see the analysis of the situation in South Africa, chapter
two). Learning from other policy experiences in contexts where unions have successfully acted as political and social actors could provide a great starting point into developing case studies of possible implementation.

At least in Catalonia, all the evidence presented here points towards receptive union movements with structures capable of initiating advocacy and pursuing successful reform processes. The capability is there, however, it needs further discussion, integration and research. Furthermore, the involvement of other sectors of society has to be considered.

Although the widespread involvement of social movements has not been a strong focus by the Xarxa (RRB), many of its members do have it mind under a view that “the future of a BI will also depend upon the organisation and cohesion of certain groups within the population around the proposal (although it is not necessary in a first instance): many youngsters, unemployed, housewives, poor pensioners, or even self-employed workers or the middle classes could be potential “support banks”."

Particularly in the interview with Caritas members they readily pointed out that the involvement of the Fundació Jaume Bofill has proven to be crucial in developing a partnership between academia and sectors of civil society. According to the two Caritas members interviewed, “it has created a space for discussion and debate, aiding in the link between academia and civil society.” (27th June 2006).

27 Own translation
Social involvement, however, has not been a priority for the RRB. Raventós (1999) argues the following: “the broad social base of a proposal does not imply necessarily that it will be achieved. (…). However, it is true that in order to make BI socially accepted, the proposal has to at least to overcome one obstacle: to provide good normative arguments. With wide social acceptance, success is not guaranteed, but without it, its failure is ensured28 (1999: 23).

Purdy (1994) argues in favour of the importance of social involvement for the future of BI “Is Basic Income morally justifiable? Would it be economically viable? And would it be politically feasible? (…) In practice these three questions are interrelated, and that the transition to a ‘Basic Income Democracy’ is unlikely to succeed, or even begin, without the support of a broad social and political alliance.” (1994: 31). It appears that the first two questions have been thoroughly researched and argued in Catalonia. The latter question, however, remains lost in under-researched predictions.

In conclusion, BI as a policy proposal has undertaken a crucial journey in Catalonia. It is a journey, which has demonstrated the importance that political processes have for ideas. Ethical and financial justifications, although necessary, often overshadow the importance of politics. This paper by offering an international analytical comparison with an exploration of welfare reform theories and using Catalonia as a case study, has developed a framework which considers the following four

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28 Own translation
factors to be crucial for the political process that BI has gone, and needs to go, through: the role of intellectuals, the role of unions, welfare path-dependency, or path-shift and the political context.

Further research is needed regarding this, a more deep analysis of the four factors with empirical research undertaken in other international cases, could further the applicability of this typology. BI advocates need to take the political process in a holistic way, not just in terms of specific viability. Their voice counts, and it is being welcomed by social and political actors as my empirical findings demonstrate, “it is increasingly accepted that basic income advocates have something valuable to contribute to the debate on welfare reform and employment regulation.” (Wispelare and Stirton, 2004: 266)
**Appendix. Fieldwork data and summary of interview transcripts.**

(Complete transcripts available upon request)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Person interviewed</th>
<th>Date of first contact</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERC</td>
<td>Carme Porta (MP, Catalan Parliament)</td>
<td>30/05/06</td>
<td>03/07/06</td>
<td>Catalan Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICV</td>
<td>Dolors Comas</td>
<td>30/05/06</td>
<td>03/07/06</td>
<td>Interview cancelled due to family emergency</td>
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<td>UGT</td>
<td>Received information from Eva Pino (institutional area)</td>
<td>02/06/06</td>
<td>Received information 19/07/06</td>
<td>N/A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCOO</td>
<td>Cristina Faciaben (responsible for social integration policy)</td>
<td>01/06/06</td>
<td>28/06/06</td>
<td>CCOO headquarters, Via Laietana, 16, Barcelona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas</td>
<td>Anna Jolonch and Angels Cardona (Occupational area)</td>
<td>06/06/06</td>
<td>27/06/06</td>
<td>Caritas, Via Laietana , 5, Barcelona</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
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<td>01/06/06</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>RRB</td>
<td>Daniel Raventos (President)</td>
<td>30/05/06</td>
<td>03/06/06</td>
<td>Barcelona city centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRB</td>
<td>José Antonio Noguera (Vice-President)</td>
<td>26/05/06</td>
<td>26/06/06</td>
<td>Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona (UAB)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I believe that the first step is to put it on the table, make it visible. (...) In itself the proposal was a revulsion, I believe in the BI proposal, at the political level I believe in it, but I could believe in it, more or less and I could discuss some aspects (...), but in any case it is a stimulant in terms of the conceptualisation of social measures, and even from a more economical way, not just from the perspective of a cohesive society, it is presented as a broad social proposal.

It was revulsion and really in the parliamentary debate you can find this revulsion

I will tell you something, at a personal level, I think that the entrance of the tripartite, or the left-wing Catalan Parliament, even though, the Acord del Tinell there was, well not the proposal of BI, but there was a path for advancing in such direction, there have been some advances. However, I think that it has been a break, because too many things had to be put in motion, many changes at once, and not everyone agreed with everything. I think, going further, that we should have been braver with this issue of BI and put the basics.

When the Catalanist left-wing government arrives there are some basics, the proposal of BI as such is not there, but there are the basics, for example the minimum income, to advance towards BI criteria.
• BI has to be in the political agenda, and the way to be in the political agenda is to make it visible, we have done so here, we’ve worked on it seriously, we’ve entered an internal debate and even though, right now, well it’s not a good moment, because everything is stopped, what is evident is that it must be on the horizon, and we are all clear on that in the Xarxa (RRB).

• What is happening, I think, is that we are now in phase B, it’s on the agenda, it has been talked about, the debate is there, now we are in phase B which is about how we develop the proposal, in this transition, then I think this has lost visibility, the visibility of that first proposal (...) The great challenge now is not to lose this horizon in this transition, and how we make this transition, it’s the usual of socialism and communism, strategy and tactics, and of course, we must do the tactics so that we don’t lose the strategy. The strategy is clear and now we need to know where we are advancing to and the challenge lies there, in that path.

• Because it’s basically an academic work, and it must be really well explained, it has stopped us a bit, I think.

• If we forget the origin of the idea it might be that the final content is not the same.

• The academic world has converged with a radical side of the political world.
• It is a challenge for the left, because it’s a different conceptualisation of society. Being a revolutionary proposal it is also a pragmatic one.

• BI does not doubt the right to work, but to have the right to work you should also have the right not to work, and the right to work must be the right to work with dignity, to be able to choose.

• Re., ERC's internal debate: We are always in between urgent and important matters, however, possibly it’s one of the issues that has created more debate.

• The fact that BI didn’t receive an outright attack against it, it has made it normal. And sometimes being normalised can be a death sentence.

**CCOO- Cristina Faciaben. Transcript summary. 28th June 2006.**

• There was an extensive debate between BI and Guaranteed Minimum Income, after much deliberation the latter won.

• As a concept, as an ideology, here at the union almost everyone can share it, because it’s the maximum that citizenship can be. The maximum a state can do for its citizens. However, this can be clearly unsustainable, there could be abuses, and interests… it could fire inflation, because everyone could afford an extra expenditure, which not everyone can afford now, and then prices rise… but, anyway, let’s the economists deal with that.
• Much of the working class could maybe not understand why someone who doesn’t work gets paid… For a salaried person, BI would, at its best, improve their purchasing power, not their quality of life.

• The positive thing is that the debate BI is generating is making many issues come to the fore, collateral issues. Then with the excuse of BI we are capable of discuss in depth issues that maybe would otherwise pass… with this debate, we are boiling the water.

• We can work with the idea of a future BI, provided we start from a Guaranteed Minimum Income.

• Re: Union involvement in policy-making:

There has been a conceptual change, unions in the first instance, we were the representatives of the workers, especially of employed workers, something which we have often been criticised for, and they are partly right… salaried workers, paying national insurance contributions, the classic salaried worker, what happens is that with time it has derived into being built as unions… I’m referring to class-based unions; well then, this has derived in us becoming not just workers’ representatives, but also socio-political and economic agents as well, why? Well, because in this country there hasn’t been a development of service users organisations, for example... then, we have built ourselves as representatives of all, with the exception of employers...
Why? Well, because the worker is also a service-user of the health services, a service user of education, a service user of social services, with housing needs… We also deal with traditional union matters, of course. But in terms of pure welfare state, we represent the service users.


• “Basic Income, not just as a tool, but rather as a different way of organising society.”
• “The issue of Basic Income initiates confusion, in addition, many other economists that prefer to think in terms of full employment.”
• Regarding the Fundació Jaume Bofill: “it has created a space for discussion and debate, aiding in the link between academia and civil society”.
• “With different names, within different issues, since minimum income schemes appeared, the idea of a Basic Income is there.”
• “To consider that it was part of the “Acord del Tinell”, for us it was considered a success, although we knew it was just in the agenda, no yet developed.”
• “I see it as a bit of a shop window, it appears that there is a public who likes the idea and they have put it there for us to have a look at
it, I don’t know if it has been thoroughly thought and worked on as if it was going to be a real policy.”

• “We think it’s interesting that is also entering the agendas of social movements such as ATTAC).”

• “We see a BI as way of breaking the link between social rights and work.”

• “Freedom for whom, though? Particularly when referring to women freedom can be dubious, to what extent can we choose?”

• “We need to understand society from a collective rather than an individual point of view.

• “There are some previous issues to a Basic Income, social rights, social services… There are some pending matters which are crucial.’

• In Catalonia, we all assume that this idea will stay within the left. We would see that as the left placing the focus in equity questions, within social parameters in a higher measure than economic measurements.”

• “Wherever you situate Basic Income, in itself it’s just a tool, but you need to situate it, locate it within an ideology. In a way, because we are in Catalonia, we all assume that this idea will stay within the left. We would see that as the left placing the focus in equity questions, within social parameters in a higher measure than economic measurements.”
• “There has been an anti-climax within the last couple of years. On seeing that the three-party Catalan government has placed BI into their governmental agenda we have lowered efforts, lost momentum. BI has stayed in that agenda. “

• “Up until now we have come close to seeing what a BI could mean, now we need to move towards discussing the pluses and minuses in a much more realistic way.”

RRB- Daniel Raventós. Transcript summary. 3rd July 06.

• Some elites within the Socialist Party in Spain become interested in the proposal when the PP was the governing party, and they were in opposition.

• 1999-2001- the proposal advances in Catalonia

• Acord del Tinell- it makes a conceptual differentiation

• It is a highly personal proposal –Carme Porta and López Bulla working together.

• Their parties did not show a lot of support.

• The Network (Xarxa) took the initiative; we were behind the law proposal.

• An advantage of the proposal is that these two political parties united and worked together thanks to the BI proposal.

• The Network (Xarxa) members have personal friendships in political parties.
• Re: Plurality: We don’t need to exaggerate, I mean, within Basic Income, politically, you can find extreme left-wing people, moderate left-wingers and centre-righters, at the most, of course you will never find extreme right-wingers in favour of a BI, neither those with xenophobic attitudes and so on, even if it’s only by definition

• The friendliness that BI can arise within the left is much broader than within the right, let’s not kid ourselves, I mean politically… Another matter is that academically…, then you can find supporters of various liberal theories of justice, more or less on the left, as a way of saying in political language, and then, which, this would be the Catalan contribution, with all my humility, but a Catalan contribution to republicanism. In other words, the republican democratic justification, I think is a contribution from three or four authors, which I think is timidly extending, but it’s 3 or 4 authors who are working the republican justification.

• Ecumenism- in the sense of plurality

• The BI, to be meaningful, has to be placed at least at the level of the poverty line, or many of its virtues will go to pot.

• Basic Income apparently, in its innocent form, that everyone gets an allocation, can make everyone, or almost everyone agree on it, because basic income, precisely because it’s a proposal which would increase, amongst others, the negotiating power of workers, some authors have evidenced that the richest sectors of society, in
reality the ones who “cut the cod”, they are panicking that such proposal could ever be put in practice.

• In June 2005, Expansion devotes 7 pages to BI, which illustrates such phobia.

• Raventós goes on to explain an anecdote about a conversation with a member of the major Catalan business organisation. The member of “Foment” explained that he couldn’t see a problem with BI per se, rather the problem would be the power of negotiation it would give to workers

• My experience with BI is that it is a proposal, which apparently touches on little issues, however, the social consequences would be much bigger and those who are aware of such consequences are precisely its detractors.

• It is a politically conflictive proposal, because some will lose and some will gain, and I don’t just mean it economically.

• Regarding Political Parties: Ten years ago I would have been more pessimistic, BI does not appear as a strange thing anymore.

• The BI proposal needs a braveness, which I don’t currently see in the political parties. If you allow me the comparison, occurs something similar with euthanasia. The question politicians ask is: is there any experience? And the same happened with the euthanasia debate, nobody here was brave enough… until Holland legislated about it… It’s contradictory, because on the one hand, they see it as a brilliant proposal and the left, within its virtues has
not been having many brilliant ideas in the last few years... But on the other hand... On the one hand they think don’t let anybody takeover before we do, because it’s such a great idea, but on the other, we don’t want to be too public about it because what if then it turns out not too be a good electoral measure.

• There is a difference between politicians firmly supporting the proposal and their parties, which have other priorities, reasonable or not.

• I don’t see it necessarily in a pessimistic way, but I don’t see BI in the next 4 days, but the debate does have its peak moments, for whichever reason, issues which captivate the imagination momentarily,

• Re: Trade unions- ESK (Basque union) is a collective member of the Network (Xarxa). However, the vision of the unions is very traditional.

• Re: Elitism- The elitism of the proposal is practically inevitable.

• Political parties could have a role to play in incentivising social debate.

• ATTAC are very interested in the proposal in Catalonia and Madrid.

• What is needed? A collective group of people interested in the proposal, with a certain degree of intellectual prestige, argumentative coherence. Certain authors, I would prefer if they didn’t defend RB

• The RRB combines academy with further afield.
There was a political moment in which the left political parties where trying to open up to social organisations, they were trying to generate a programme with innovative policies, etc. and this coincided with the Basic Income Network having its base in Barcelona, having been founded in Barcelona, and having its principal driving forces here.

We had contacts, even personal friendships with political parties, trade unions, etc… and therefore the contact was easy and fluid.

The RRB we are quite happy with the role of Catalan trade unions (...) we have been quite lucky to have such open-minded unions which are quite aware that their social base is changing and that they need to change (...) Both in CCOO and UGT have a lucid leadership which makes a lucid analysis of their role in society, of how its changing, how their role its changing, etc…, and that they have to join in with innovative proposal such as BI.

To be fair, I think political parties have had a more important role than the unions in this matter, mainly because some members of the RRB are also members of political parties.

The truth is I’m quite sceptical that one day there will be a social movement for BI.

It might be good that for the moment we don’t enter the discussion of public opinion, that is because the proposal is easily manipulated
and an easy target for demagogy, it’s easy to present it as a craze, and I wouldn’t want to be a politician defending something such as BI in an electoral campaign.

- We must work much harder as a pressure group, we should work with the idea of applying not a BI, but measures in the direction of a BI, such as what was mentioned in the Acord del Tinell.

- It is a success that it is in the political agenda, another matter is whether it will be a real policy, but I would say the model has been top-down, and I don’t think it could have worked any other way in the current climate.

- A lesson from my experience in Catalonia, which others might not share, but from my experience… a lesson to be learnt is that you must watch out carefully the political side of the proposal, because it’s a proposal which can be easily disregarded by a politician (…) Politician’s agendas are busy, and it’s based upon image, a lot of marketing and everything that does not immediately catch their eye is disregarded. (…). Anyhow we must achieve the attractiveness of the proposal, because if we can’t make it attractive for politicians we will never make it attractive for citizens.
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