



AUDIO: BBC World Service episode “Universal Basic Income: Has its Time Come?”

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On November 19, 2016, the BBC podcast *In the Balance* aired an episode called “Universal Basic Income: Has its Time Come?”

Special guests included Michael Faye (cofounder of [GiveDirectly](#), the non-profit launching a [basic income experiment in Kenya](#)), Louise Haagh (Reader of Politics at the University of York and Co-Chair of BIEN), Michael Tanner (Senior Fellow of the CATO Institute), and Ian Gough (Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics).

During the approximately 25 minute episode, host Ed Butler questioned the guests on the many common concerns surrounding basic income, from its affordability to its political feasibility to charges of causing inflation and disincentivizing work. The guests also debated what types of programs and services a basic income would replace, as well as the question of whether and when cash transfers are more effective than transfers in-kind. Another topic to emerge was the role of pilot studies, with Faye defending the relevance of GiveDirectly’s studies in Kenya to the developed world and Haagh raising the point that, while useful, pilot studies are not needed to *justify* basic income, which she sees as motivated by the need to eliminate dysfunction in the current welfare system and make the disbursement of support “more humane”.

Faye, Haagh, and Tanner spoke generally favorably about basic income, although their precise reasons for supporting such a policy varied. Gough, meanwhile, maintained that the idea is impracticable, with any basic income scheme being either insufficient or unaffordable.

Listen to the full episode [here](#).