

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

RENEWED SOCIAL AGENDA: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TAKES A CLOSER LOOK

This Tuesday, the European Parliament organised a first debate around the Renewed Social Agenda adopted by the European Commission at the beginning of July. The package of 18 legislative and non-legislative initiatives around employment, social protection, health, migration and integration, and anti-discrimination was presented by Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Commissioner Vladimir Spidla. Members of the European Parliament were divided in their reactions. In globally assessing the package, Harlem Desir, the Socialist Group's vice-president for social questions said that "*the social package is too little too late in the face of the precariousness and inequalities produced by the economic crisis that is hitting employees and numerous European citizens daily*". He also mentioned the insufficient response in view of the working poor. His homologue Gabi Zimmer from the GUE/NGL Group criticised a lack of progress concerning collective bargaining and social rights, and a vagueness as regards actions announced. [Read more...](#)

FRENCH EU PRESIDENCY PROGRAMME OF ACTION IN EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICIES

Read the programme of action of the French Presidency in the domains of employment and social policy (in section 4) in [English](#), [French](#), [German](#).

With the Renewed Social Agenda being the overarching element, the programme is shaped around three axes: 1) flexicurity, mobility of the labour force, protection of workers rights including combating illegal labour practices, 2) solidarity (demographic change and intergenerational solidarity, social services of general interest, active inclusion) and 3) gender equality and the fight against discriminations.

The work programme builds on a report drafted by Bernard Brunhes on the future of social Europe after 2010. Read the report in [English](#), [French](#), [German](#).

The work programme was presented at the informal meeting of ministers for labour, employment, social affairs, health and consumer protection on 10 and 11 July in Chantilly. Conny Reuter, SOLIDAR Secretary General, was present and in his capacity as President of the Social Platform contributed to the debate, together with other representatives of the Social Platform and its French members. Read the Social Platform contribution in [English](#) and [French](#).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

SOLIDAR MISSION: IMPORTANT FIRST STEP TOWARDS SOLIDAR STRATEGY IN MIDDLE EAST

This week the Chair of the SOLIDAR International Cooperation Committee Sergio Bassoli from member organisation Progetto Sviluppo, Secretary General Conny Reuter, and International Cooperation Coordinator Andrea Maksimovic went on a mission to Israel and Palestine.

During the three-day visit, the delegation had 16 meetings with key civil society and institutional actors, including NGOs, trade unions, labour support organisations, peace movement representatives and the European Commission.

The wide scope of the organisations that were met provides fertile ground for conceiving how SOLIDAR and its members can act together to enhance and support the important project and political work going on in the region.

Read daily reports of the mission on the [news section of the SOLIDAR website](#) and see more photos next week in SOLIDAR's online gallery.

NEGOTIATIONS ON AID REFORM STALL AS SOUTHERN GOVERNMENTS ARE BLOCKED BY DONORS

The CONCORD network, of which SOLIDAR is a member, has written a statement on the High Level Summit on Aid Effectiveness which took place in Accra, Ghana from 2-4 September.

"3 September - Negotiations over donor promises to reform aid are seeing Southern government's proposals blocked in closed door meetings to agree a forward looking agenda for action on aid effectiveness promises.

Over 1000 representatives from governments of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and developing countries have gathered in Accra, Ghana, to report on their progress and agree a plan of action, but on day three of the conference, talks have stalled as the US, Japan and the World Bank block agreements on timetables for action". [Read more...](#)

EDUCATION

The European Civic Forum, being held in La Rochelle, France from 4-6 September and supported by the European Commission and the French EU Presidency, is gathering together over 850 European associative actors for discussion on key issues such as mobility, dialogue and participation. The event aims to develop a more active and participative citizenship. Jean-Marc Roirant, President of the European Civic Forum and Chair of the SOLIDAR Board, stated, *"We aim for this event to reinforce the necessity of a civic and popular ownership of Europe. The debates during the event are mainly focused around the role and place of associations and NGOs in European civil dialogue which is essential in order to bring back a meaning to our engagement in Europe and to give citizens a renewed 'appetite' for Europe".*

Conny Reuter, speaking as President of the Social Platform, said in his speech at the opening ceremony that *"associations are vital as they give citizens a voice. One of European social NGOs biggest concerns at the moment is the social dimension of European policies and how to encourage citizens' to engage in the future of Europe".*

MEMBERS' NEWS

SOLIDAR member, **Solidarité Socialiste**, the SEDIF-ULB and the Belgian International Opinion Court pressure group for Colombia invites you to a conference/debate on the theme «Colombia. Behind the smoke curtain. History of State Terrorism». Location: Room 2213 Bât. H - Campus Solbosch. Université Libre de Bruxelles. 1050 Bruxelles. Date: Thursday 18 September, 19.00

Read the **Self employed women's association (SEWA)**, India partner in the SOLIDAR project the Global Network, [newsletter](#)

Read SOLIDAR Belgian member, **Pour la Solidarité**'s, [list of upcoming events](#)

3	Decent Work Recruitment Day, EP, Brussels
4-6	European Civic Forum - mobility, dialogue, participation: towards an active European citizenship", La Rochelle, France
12-13	Global Network meeting, Brussels
15	SOLIDAR Final Jobs Jobs Jobs/Decent Work Conference, Brussels
16	SOLIDAR Round Tables 'Chinese investments in Africa and Latin America: What Challenges for the Decent Work Agenda?', EP, Brussels
19-21	SOLIDAR delegation at European Social Forum, Malmö, Sweden

22-23	SOLIDAR and SOLIDAR Baltic Conference on Decent Work, Riga
2	FIC/SOLIDAR Seminar on flexicurity & labour market inclusion, Copenhagen
3	SOLIDAR Social Affairs Committee, Copenhagen
7	World Day For Decent Work - Call to Action handover, Brussels and International
8-9	Social Platform Annual Conference "Civil Dialogue - How can we shape the Europe we want?", Brussels
15	SOLIDAR Silver Rose Awards 2008 and 60 Years Anniversary, Brussels
15-16	Round Table on the Fight against poverty and social exclusion, Marseille
17	Conference on promoting social terms in public procurement contracts, Paris
28-29	Forum on Social Services of General Interest, Paris
30-2	Volonteurope 2008, Genoa, Italy
21-22	European Conference on Social Economy "Building Europe with Social Economy players, Strasbourg
24-25	European Forum on Demography, Brussels
27-30	Salon de l'Education, Paris