

EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

On Wednesday the European Commission proposed a 200 billion Euro 'recovery plan', urging Member States to spend billions to kick-start Europe's flagging economies. [Read SOLIDAR's assessment on the initial details of the plan published by the Commission on 29 October.](#)

The 'recovery plan' does not represent a major shift from prevailing paradigms as all major proposals have been phrased in line with the Lisbon Strategy, with an explicit attempt to include them under currently existing policy frameworks. For example measures related to employment are framed with references to the flexicurity and active inclusion agendas, highlighting the need to put particular emphasis on measures to promote employability, lifelong learning and rapid reintegration into the labour market.

The final version of the 'plan', however, places a stronger emphasis on "the most vulnerable". The Commission package calls for measures to lessen the impact of the crisis on those more vulnerable groups. This is in line with a proposal from the Social Platform which highlighted the need to place a greater focus on the social consequences of the crisis. Conny Reuter, SOLIDAR Secretary General commented, *"SOLIDAR welcomes the action plan as an attempt to a more coordinated response to the financial crisis and its social consequences, but we regret that the plan does not mention the role of civil dialogue in fostering social inclusion and active inclusion processes. We also regret that there is no explicit mention on refocusing investment in social infrastructures or the need to fight financial exclusion."* [Read about the specific measures put forwards...](#)

[Read the recovery plan](#) / [Link to letter of Social Platform](#)

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

BUILDING EUROPE WITH SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS

Social economy organisations met last week in Strasbourg in the context of a French EU Council Presidency conference in order to put forward the central role that they play in the social, economic and territorial development of territories across Europe. How to best guarantee recognition - at both European and national level - for a different model of economic activity which continuously associates the general interest, economic performance and democratic operation, as a rule based on membership, was also discussed. The social economy family is made up of four members: cooperatives, mutual societies, associations and foundations, all sharing the vision of a locally-rooted economy for the people. [Read more about the conference...](#)

[Summary information on SOLIDAR's contribution](#) / [See SOLIDAR's presentation](#) / [Analysis of decision of DG Competition on AWO SANO case](#) / [Read the draft own-initiative report of social economy in English](#), French and [German](#) / CIRIEC Study on the Social Economy in the EU prepared for the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in [English](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Italian](#) and [Spanish](#)

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

On 25 November, the second Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development took place in Paris, where a [Multi-annual Cooperation Programme for 2009 - 2011 was adopted](#). SOLIDAR wishes to remind those involved in this Euro-African dialogue on migration to place the dignity of all migrants and their access to fundamental rights at the forefront of discussions and to ensure that origin and transit countries benefit as much from migration flows as destination countries.

A citizen's summit organised in advance of this Ministerial Conference, and which was attended by SOLIDAR in October, sent [recommendations](#) resulting from this summit to the Ministers. [Read about other developments in the field of migration...](#)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

POLITICIANS GATHER IN DOHA FOR UN DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CONFERENCE

The United Nations Financing for Development (FfD) conference in Doha will begin on Saturday, 29 November and continue through to Tuesday, 2 December. Officials will meet to discuss aid, debt, tax and other policies which can help or hinder development, as well as a discussion of problems with development finance structures and institutions. Governments will review progress on their commitments at the 2002 Monterrey summit, and discuss new challenges. Governments are expected to agree on an outcome document that outlines their commitments, but negotiations are proving tough, and SOLIDAR fears that the document will be weak as many use the excuse of the financial crisis to backtrack on commitments.

Together with members of the Decent Work, Decent Life Alliance, we are calling upon governments gathered at the FfD Follow-Up Conference to enact a bold and sweeping agenda to ensure that people from developing countries are extended the solidarity they need to work themselves out of poverty and inequality. [Read about SOLIDAR's participation in the Civil Society Forum...](#)

ACP-EU ASSEMBLY DEBATE EPAs

Negotiations on the EU's economic partnership agreement with the Pacific region took centre stage at the 16th session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, from 24-28 November 2008. The ACP-EU Assembly debated economic partnership agreements (EPAs) with the Pacific, where, provisional agreements have been signed by only two of the region's 14 countries: Fiji (on sugar) and Papua (on tuna), prompted by the erosion of trade preferences.

Pacific region negotiators want EPAs to focus on trade in goods, fisheries, development and dispute settlement, but are against including services or intellectual property at this time, despite the European Commission's insistence. The Cariforum EPA rapporteur David Martin (PES, UK) stated *"The European Parliament must give its formal agreement (assent) to the CARIFORUM EPA for it to have legal effect... we shall only give our assent if we believe the EPA serves development goals. We will therefore require, before we vote next March, assurances that the foreseen review clause is genuine and properly financed. If we find that EPAs are failing to tackle poverty, it must allow for the comprehensive renegotiation of the agreement."*

SOLIDAR, together with our partners in the Global Network-Africa, have been highly critical of the EPA negotiating process and will keep working to ensure that the European Commission changes its demands towards ACP countries. We welcome this commitment from the European Parliament to hold the Commission accountable.

IT'S ALWAYS A CRISIS FOR WORKERS' WAGES.

In the Global Wage Report 2008/09, the International Labor Organisation warns that the global economic crisis is expected to lead to cuts in the wages of millions of workers worldwide in the coming year with a rise in the number of working poor living on less than USD2 per day.

The report also shows that these cuts in wages follow a decade in which wages failed to advance together with economic growth: *"while inflation was low and the global economy grew at a 4.0% annual rate between 2001 and 2007, growth in wages lagged behind, increasing by less than 2% in half of the world's countries"*, the report says. [Read the report's suggestions...](#)

[Read the Global Wage Report 2008/2009](#)

PROTEST EU PARTNERSHIP PLANS FOR WESTERN SAHARA

This campaign calls on the European Union to exclude the Western Sahara from Moroccan-EU partnership; advocating the exclusion of Western Sahara from the Advanced Status talks and the ensuing agreement. [For more information and to sign the petition](#)

TRADE UNIONS JOIN WORLD DEMANDS FOR AMBITIOUS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

A week before the launch of international climate negotiations in Poznan, Poland, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), in a new groundbreaking policy statement, has clearly reaffirmed its commitment towards reaching a socially-fair and climate-engaged agreement by the end of 2009. [Read the statement](#)

EDUCATION

EUCIS-LLL - PUBLIC HEARING & OPEN STEERING COMMITTEE, 18 DECEMBER 2008

A public hearing entitled «Access, equity and diversity in lifelong learning: how to successfully integrate populations of migration background in Europe?» will be organised on 18 December in Brussels from 9.30-12.30.

You are also invited to participate in the open steering committee meeting organised in the afternoon (14.30-17.30) to discuss important issues for the future development of the platform. [Read the programme](#) and [to register](#)

MEMBERS NEWS

Farzad Kamangar, the Iranian Kurdish teacher and social worker whose death sentence was based on "absolutely zero evidence" according to his lawyer, could be hanged. **ISCOD** is writing to the Iranian Supreme Leader to ask for the execution to be halted and would very much appreciate you to take similar action. [More information](#) and a [model letter](#). SOLIDAR has used the model letter to support this call.

Solidarite Laique has distributed a [media release](#) on their staff member who was kidnapped in Afghanistan on 3 November.

ASB Germany has distributed a [press release](#) on ASB's engagement in the fight against AIDS in Africa and Central America.

PARTNERS NEWS

SOLIDAR's partner in the Global Network, **FOCO**, issued a release on 25 November, International Day to eradicate violence against women, calling for the total eradication of all types of discrimination and violence against women in order to build equitable, democratic and inclusive societies.

SOLIDAR's partner in the Global Network, **CTUWS**, is appealing for solidarity for employees of the Real Estate Taxes Authority who have established a union. [Read letter.](#)

The **Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)** is organising a two-day [Conference](#) on The Future European Policy on Immigration, Borders and Asylum: Giving a Voice to Civil Society. This event will take place on 9 - 10 December 2008 at CEPS.

27-30	Salon de l'Education, Paris
27-2	Financing for Development conference, Doha
8	SOLIDAR ECHO Partners Meeting, Brussels
9-10	ECHO Annual Conference
9-10	Social Platform Annual Conference "Civil Dialogue - How can we shape the Europe we want?", Brussels
15-17	Balkan Network Seminar: Enhancing the European Perspective, Montenegro

SOLIDAR is a European network of 47 NGOs and labour movement organisations. SOLIDAR promotes equality, solidarity and social justice in the fields of social affairs, international cooperation and education. SOLIDAR's Weekly Round Up provides you with the latest information and news from SOLIDAR and our members.

If you have any comments or wish to have further information on any of the articles featured in the Weekly Round Up, please do not hesitate to contact [SOLIDAR's Communications Officer](#)