

PERSPECTIVES FOR SOCIAL EUROPE FACING THE CRISIS

With the crisis, governments across Europe are concerned with implementing short- and mid-term measures to stabilise the economy and to maintain jobs (or at least minimise job losses). Social NGOs and trade unions fear that we are going to lose out of sight any policies aiming to create quality and decent jobs. At the same time the sustainability of our social protection systems seem also at risk. How do we fund tax reductions, often suggested as a panacea these days, while raising the necessary social expenditure to address the negative consequences of the crisis?

In response to these questions, the Global Progressive Forum event, taking place in the European Parliament in Brussels on 2-3 April, will gather together over 1000 leaders from all continents representing progressive civil society organisations, political parties and trade unions to debate and come up with alternative solutions to the crisis, as well as a long-term strategy for a fresh approach to the current neo-liberal and conservative policies. SOLIDAR is involved in the preparation of the event and we invite all SOLIDAR members and other civil society organisations to take part in the making of this agenda for a New Global Deal!

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

BASE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE ON DECENT WORK

With the Working Time Directive being debated by the European Council and the European Parliament today, SOLIDAR sent out a [statement](#) reiterating its full support of the European Parliament's pro-decent work stance, voted for at the Plenary session on 15 December 2008.

"Amidst the economic crisis, protecting quality jobs, creating more and better jobs, guaranteeing social rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue are imperative for a sustainable future of Europe; the Working Time Directive should not become an obstacle to that" underlines Conny Reuter, Secretary General of SOLIDAR.

SPRING ALLIANCE AND WSF FOLLOW-UP

Following SOLIDAR's participation in the launch event of the 2009 Spring Alliance campaign organised by the Social Platform, European Environmental Bureau and the European Trade Union Confederation on 29-30 January ([more info](#)), SOLIDAR members are invited to get involved in the follow-up Working Groups. The aim of the follow-up Working Groups is to develop suggestions to be included in a manifesto to be presented to the newly elected European Parliament and European Commission in June. [Read more.](#)

SOLIDAR also participated in the first preparatory meeting between trade unions and social movements. A follow-up to the European and World Social Forums, the aim of this group is to organise an annual meeting before the Spring European Council (usually dealing with social issues) to find common positions on European social policy issues. A first conference has been pencilled in for June 2009.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

NEW SOLIDAR WESTERN BALKANS NEWSLETTER

This week, SOLIDAR issued the first edition of its quarterly electronic [Western Balkans Newsletter](#). The newsletter includes examples of activities carried out by the SOLIDAR network in the region, where we have been active for more than 10 years working for equitable and sustainable development. If you would like to receive this newsletter, contact [Abigail](#).

IN TIME OF CRISIS, A DAY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE!

The first World Day of Social Justice, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly last November, will be observed today, Friday 20 February 2009. Participating governments have made a commitment to

create a framework for action to promote social justice at national, regional and international levels. They recognise that economic growth should promote equity and social justice and that "a society for all" must be based on social justice and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

For SOLIDAR, in times of crisis, social justice should be at the core of the necessary reform of the financial system as well as a more democratic and responsible international governance system. As a member of the [Decent Work Decent Life Campaign](#), SOLIDAR believes that Decent Work is a key strategy to redistribute wealth and ensure social justice for all. Read the [ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization](#)

EDUCATION

EUCIS-LLL ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The European Platform for Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL), of which SOLIDAR is a member, is holding its Annual General Assembly in Brussels on 19 March 2009. This day is very important for the platform and its members and will be organised in two different phases: in the morning a meeting of stakeholders working in education and training and the EUCIS General Assembly in the afternoon.

Programme for morning [EN](#) | [FR](#) & afternoon [EN](#) | [FR](#) + [contact](#)

CIVIL SOCIETY DAY

Civil Society Day will be taking place on 14 April 2009. Bringing together all the Civil Society families, this day will be the high point for CSOs. More information will follow in the next weeks.

MEMBERS NEWS

Read the latest funding update, meeting report from the Decent Work Alliance and SOLIDAR Report on Flexicurity... in the [Members Area](#). Don't have a password? Contact [Abigail](#)

The Cluster Munition Coalition, of which **Norwegian People's Aid** is a member, has written an [open letter](#) to the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaska urging Sri Lanka to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Belgian member **Solidarité Socialiste** is organising two events: "[Les politiques de développement en Amérique latine et Caraïbes](#)" and an evening debate on "[Crise alimentaire, crise financière, quel impact sur les femmes du Sud?](#)"

Pour la Solidarité is organising two events: "Midi de la solidarité: Laïcité en Belgique et en Europe, quel enjeux?" and "Conférences au Salon Batibouw 2009 - Construction et Rénovation Durables". More info [on their website](#)

PARTNERS NEWS

SOLIDAR Global Network partner in Egypt, **CTUWS**, has released a [press release](#) on a CTUWS activist being persecuted in Qenah

The **Development Policy Forum** (DPF) is organising on Tuesday, 3 March, a debate entitled "[Saving the MDGs from global recession](#)"

CONCORD, the European Confederation for Relief and Development, of which SOLIDAR is a member, is seeking a [Policy Coherence for Development \(PCD\) Officer](#)

12-13	Conference "Quality and Safety Policy for Patients", Prague
16-18	Conference: Social Rights, Active Citizenship and Governance in the EU, Brussels
17-18	SOLIDAR Board meeting

19	EUCIS-LLL Annual General Assembly, Brussels
25-26	Conference: Flexicurity - Lifelong Learning and Social Protection Components, Prague
2	G20 meeting, London
2-3	Global Progressive Forum event, Brussels
14	Civil Society Day, Brussels
16-18	Conference: Social Economy, Prague
22-23	Conference: Social Services - a tool to Mobilise Workforce and Reinforce Social Cohesion, Prague
29	SOLIDAR-FEPS conference: 'Together for a Social Europe'

SOLIDAR is a European network of 50 NGOs and labour movement organisations. Working in cooperation with progressive civil society and trade unions, 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 the SOLIDAR Network. 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](#)

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