

These are turbulent days in Brussels. Who is going to be the new EU President? Whilst the chances of Tony Blair seem to be decreasing, new names such as Herman Van Rompuy, Jan Peter Balkenende and John Bruton are emerging. Similarly, for the EU foreign minister many names are circulating on the Brussels grapevine. One breakthrough, however, was achieved on Thursday; EU Member States accepted a treaty-saving deal and Czech President Václav Klaus has indicated he is 'satisfied'. It seems that the Lisbon Treaty will finally enter into force. But the price is high: an opt-out on the Charter of Fundamental Rights. A provision desperately needed in times of crisis.

This 'names-lottery' has almost overshadowed the need to agree on concrete measures that turn around the global crisis. For that reason, SOLIDAR actively supports the Regulate Global Finance Now campaign. The global economic crisis is felt deeper and deeper in our lives, threatening jobs, savings, pensions and social services everywhere. Currently, 82 million people in Europe are living below the poverty line. It's time for people in Europe to speak out and demand that the fundamental causes of the crisis be addressed. Join us for better regulation and [sign the new call to action](#).

On Monday a draft version of the [EU budget review](#) was 'leaked' to the press. The draft outlined that the EU's future budget should be geared towards growth and jobs, climate change and global Europe. Despite these noble goals, the budget review raises many questions and seems to lack any initiatives that deal with the economic and financial reforms necessary to put Europe on the right track. Together with its members, allies and partners, SOLIDAR will follow the discussion around the new EU Budget closely.

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

## **SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF THE EU FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Every three years the European Commission reviews the financial rules for the programmes funded by the budget of the European Union (EU). For that reason DG Budget has launched a public consultation and will present its proposals in mid-2010. SOLIDAR thinks this consultation is of vital importance for civil society organisations, as some of the rules will greatly affect the quality of projects and programs. If you have any suggestions for the European Commission to improve its funding rules, please [respond](#) to the consultation.

### **IMAGES AND PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION ACROSS EUROPE**

2010 has been declared the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. An alliance of more than 30 European-level networks - with SOLIDAR being strongly involved - is currently preparing a number of joint activities under the two European Focus weeks in May and October 2010. We are also working on common messages and demands concerning the political legacy that should be ensured after this year, i.e. clear commitments and targets to reduce poverty and the number of women, men and children not fully deprived of full participation in the economic, social, political and cultural life of our societies. Our NGO alliance will soon launch our own website.

Yesterday a conference was held in Brussels which focused on the challenge of how to communicate on poverty and social exclusion in order to raise awareness and obtain political commitments from decision makers in order to eradicate poverty. Politicians, administrators, journalists and NGO representatives reflected on how different facets of poverty and social exclusion are currently portrayed in the media. Lack of attention to the systemic causes and deep analysis of the problems as well as the use of stereotypes and clichés were mentioned as some of the main factors responsible for a distorted image of poverty in the media. One recommendation in order to prevent improper or misleading media coverage during the European Year 2010 was to guarantee the active participation of people having experienced poverty and social exclusion themselves in communicating their daily experiences and developing policy solutions. The results of the Eurobarometer survey on perceptions of and attitudes to poverty and social exclusion were presented and the official website of the European Year 2010 run by the European Commission was launched.

## **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

### **EUROPEAN COUNCIL IS TO DECIDE ON CLIMATE FINANCE THIS WEEK**

The EU environment ministers who managed on the 21st October in Luxemburg to adopt unanimous conclusions on all points of the EU negotiating mandate for the COP15 global conference, have left the thorny issue of funding for climate mitigation and adaptation and what to do about national quota surpluses to the European Council meeting, which took place on the 29th and 30th of October in Brussels.

A draft conclusion from this week's EU summit estimates that the total public contribution from industrialized countries

to the developing world for climate adaptation and mitigation should be between 22 and 50 billion euros, to be provided by the year 2020. But the document does not contain any specifics either on the total EU contribution, or the contributions of individual member countries. According to an analysis by AFP, the EU is divided into three camps: "Those who are willing to commit to funding led by Britain, a wait and see bloc headed by Germany, and eastern European nations with Poland at their head who want to help 'based on their means'." The European Trade Union Confederation has published a [letter](#) to the heads of State and governments ahead of the meeting setting out its proposals.

## **SOLIDAR ADDRESSES CODEV ON QUESTION OF POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND THE WHOLE OF UNION APPROACH**

As a part of a CONCORD delegation, on Monday the 26th of October SOLIDAR briefed the members of the development committee of the EU Council of Ministers (CODEV) on our concerns regarding the attempts by some member states to introduce the so-called "Whole of Union" approach in the upcoming text of the General Affairs and External Relations Council conclusions. This concept, which first appeared in the G8 discussions on the suggestion of Italy as the "Whole of Country" approach seeks to count private financial flows to developing countries, which do not have poverty eradication as their primary goal, as a part of the assessment of aid financing.

This approach was then taken up by the European Commission under the name of ODA+ and "Whole of Union" in its [Communication](#) on Policy Coherence which SOLIDAR strongly [reacted](#) to. SOLIDAR warned the Member States of opening a Pandora's box by allowing financial flows which are not accountable to governments, transparent, predictable and which may have negative effects on development to be allowed to count as Overseas Development Assistance. SOLIDAR also objected to narrowing down the focus of PCD (which is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty) and leaving out issues such as the effects of European trade, decent work and taxation policies, all of which need greater, not lesser scrutiny. SOLIDAR urges members to write to their Ministers to ensure that the GEARC conclusions reflect these concerns.

## **EDUCATION**

### **CHALLENGES FOR THE EDUCATION OF MIGRANTS**

Last year, SOLIDAR [contributed](#) to the public consultation that followed the adoption by the European Commission of the Green Paper "[Migration and Mobility: challenges and opportunity for EU education systems](#)" which focused on how education policies could better address the challenges posed by immigration and internal EU mobility flows. On the 20th of October, a conference was held to report on the [outcome](#) of this public consultation.

The main challenge is how to deal with the alarming trend of migrant children underachieving at school when compared with children born in the countries in question, all of which has serious consequences for the integration of migrants. Contributors agreed that this disconcerting disparity is largely attributable to socio-economic disadvantages and that in order to tackle the challenge, schools have to adapt to individuals' needs, reaching out to children as well as their parents. Moreover, stakeholders agreed that the role of the European Union is to facilitate the exchange of good practices as well as increase the financial and technical support to existing programmes.

## **MEMBERS NEWS**

[Read](#) about the latest publications and upcoming activities from Pour la Solidarité.

In the framework of the Together for Social Europe project, La Ligue de l'enseignement organises in cooperation with l'UNALG an event on disability and the European social model. [Read the programme](#) and [see the other upcoming national events](#).

## **AGENDA**

4	SOLIDAR Round Table: Investing in people: the Importance of Social Infrastructures, Brussels
12-13	2nd meeting European Integration Forum, Brussels
17	SOLIDAR conference: Whose responsibility? Decent work and multinational supply chains, Brussels
18-19	SOLIDAR conference: The jobs trade off: the impact of Global Europe on decent

	work, European Parliament, Brussels
22-24	Baltic Sea Conference, Bornholm (Denmark)
2	SOLIDAR Round Table: social/active inclusion and decent work in Europe, Brussels
3	SOLIDAR Social Affairs Committee, Brussels
9-10	Global Network Europe Seminar in Belgrade
12	SOLIDAR Silver Rose Award Ceremony 10th Anniversary, European Parliament