

This month gender equality has been in the spotlight with the 100th edition of International Women's Day being celebrated on 8 March; the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action - vital in the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 3 on gender equality - taking place at the beginning of March; and the launch of an EU campaign on the gender pay gap on 3 March.

In Europe, the Lisbon Treaty's Article 13 provides a framework for the development of policies for non-discrimination based on gender however this does not change the fact that there is still a 17.4% pay gap in the EU. In recent years there has been little progress in reducing it, and more worrying still, in some Member States the gap is even widening.

In developing countries, progress has been made but until violence against women stops and women, especially migrant women, have more access to basic services and public health, gender equality cannot exist. These issues were debated in Cape Town on 7 March by Global Network partners.

The journey has started but there is still a long way to go.

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

## **SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

### **EU EMPLOYMENT POLICY - VIEW FROM SOCIAL NGOS**

With the new EU2020 Strategy, comes a new European Employment Strategy. How does this work? Two parallel processes are currently taking place. The European Commission will make a proposal, following the Spring Council on 25-26 March. And the European Parliament will make a report on Employment Guidelines to be voted in May or September. These feed into the process and the Commission proposal should be voted on at the June EU Summit. It is not yet clear if the national parliaments will be involved in the process for the subsidiarity check, implementing for the first time this new stipulation of the Lisbon Treaty in the fields of social, health and employment policies.

What does SOLIDAR want from the new strategy? SOLIDAR will advocate for having guidelines on 1) active inclusion/inclusive labour markets, 2) quality work and employment/decent work, 3) lifelong learning, 4) labour market access of people facing disadvantages and groups experiencing discriminations and 5) the reconciliation of professional, family and private life.

### **EUROPEAN MONETARY FUND: A NEW LENDER OF LAST RESORT?**

The idea behind the European Monetary Fund is to create a lender of last resort when governments are facing bankruptcy and with the aim of providing stability for the euro currency. In itself it is not a bad idea but the fact that Olli Rehn, the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, has emphasised that any financial aid from a European fund would be linked to "strict conditions" should send alarm bells ringing. [Read more...](#)

## **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

### **HAITI SOLIDARITY PARTY**

Last week, SOLIDAR in partnership with a dynamic group of young activists from the Socialist Youth of Spain (JSE) - and with the support of its members Solidarité Socialiste, the PES and S&D group - organised a fundraiser event in support of Haiti at the Café 'La Maison du Peuple' in Brussels. The Haiti Solidarity Party was a real success and attracted an impressive crowd of people from European NGOs, activists and the general public.

All funds raised through this event were donated to the SOLIDAR Haiti Solidarity Fund, which will be launched next Monday, 15 March. The fund will serve to support the ongoing relief and development activities of [SOLIDAR organisations in Haiti](#).

### **ENDORSEMENT OF THE GOLDSTONE REPORT BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

SOLIDAR welcomes the endorsement by the European Parliament of the UN's highly contested Goldstone report that condemns Israel in particular of war crimes during the bombardment of the Gaza strip in January 2009 and calls for the prosecution of Israeli officials in The Hague.

In a 335-to-287 vote splitting the house between left and right, MEPs backed a joint resolution calling on the EU's foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton and the Member States to demand an implementation of the report's recommendations. We now call on the EU and its Member States to implement its recommendations.

## A NEW DIRECTION FOR EUROPE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

A strong role for civil society and civil society organisations is a pre-requisite for the success - on local, national and regional level - of the EU enlargement process; to raise awareness amongst people on political developments, engage citizens in decision making processes and provide critical analysis on social and economic developments.

In order to support the work of the European Commission in engaging civil society in the enlargement process, SOLIDAR has developed - with the support of organisations from the Western Balkans - 5 key recommendations for the new European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy. Please read the briefing [here](#).

## MEMBERS

On 9 April a [conference](#) will be organised by **Humanitas** about human rights and poverty in Rotterdam.

Read the [key points](#) of **AWO** concerning Germany's health policy

Read the **ARCI** [Newsletter](#)

Read the **ACPP** [electronic bulletin](#)

Read the [newsletter](#) of **Pour La Solidarité**

For more up-to-date news, please take a look at our [Member's Area](#)

## PARTNERS

**CTUWS** published an [article](#) saying that workers are staging a sit-in at Egyptian Parliament over unpaid wages.

The **EESC** is hosting a conference organised by a grouping of organisations who signed a Manifesto for genuine EU civil dialogue on 'A structured civil dialogue for a citizen-friendly European Union' in Brussels on 22 March in Brussels. Consult the [programme](#) | Download the [registration form](#)

## JOBS

**SOLIDAR** is looking for a [Project Officer - Migration and Development](#).

**SOLIDAR** is also looking for an [intern](#) for our International Cooperation Department.

**ITUC** has a vacancy for a full-time position as [Senior Economist](#) in the ITUC head office, working in the Economic and Social Policy Department.

## AGENDA

15	Europeans for Financial Reform Conference, Brussels
24	Volunteurope and Humanitas Library Dialogue 'Effective consultation of citizens'

	in the EU', Amsterdam
26	Meeting of SOLIDAR Advisory Group on Quality Jobs and Decent Work, Brussels
14-15	EUCIS-LL Annual Conference and General Assembly, Barcelona
15	FIC Conference 'Faces of Poverty in Europe', Copenhagen
22	Social Platform General Assembly, Brussels
7-9	European Civic Days 'Towards a European Social Citizenship, Malaga
12	Annual General Assembly SOLIDAR, Brussels
12	DWIR Project Final Conference, Bucharest

SOLIDAR is a European network of 53 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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