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Onderwerp: SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 18-06-2010

Ahead to the G20 summit in Toronto, last Thursday the European Council has taken position in favour of a system of levies and taxes on financial institutions to ensure a fair burden sharing of the crisis. SOLIDAR, together with a broad coalition of Trade Unions and NGOs, including Europeans for Financial Reform, has been advocating for the FTT of 0.05% since the launch of the campaign, we welcome these efforts made by EU leaders and expect that they will deliver on their commitments!

The Europe 2020 strategy and the integrated guidelines have been also agreed by the Council. However, SOLIDAR deplores the lowered ambitions on poverty reductions. The decision was made to replace the Social Protection Committee's proposal (one unifying 'at-risk-of-poverty' measurement) by a package of three alternative yardsticks (at-risk-of-poverty; material deprivation; jobless household). According to this compromise, EU Member States can now choose one of the three indicators to define poverty and their national target instead of having a clear common commitment.

Like other social NGO's SOLIDAR strongly advocated for the first indicator and we also agreed with indicator no 2, in case a compromise would be needed. However, we warn about indicator no 3, especially in this multiple choice approach, as it includes the risk of reorienting the emphasis on only reducing unemployment instead of actively combating poverty and social exclusion. This third indicator cannot be used to replace or sideline the first and second indicator!

The next step will be to give content to the flagship programmes of the Europe2020 strategy like the flagship on poverty.

It is time for social consolidation!

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

'EASING' GAZA BLOCKADE NOT ENOUGH

Since the deadly interception by Israeli naval commandos of a Gaza-bound aid flotilla on May 31, international pressure has mounted on Israel to lift its "closure" of the Gaza enclave, which imposes a collective punishment on 1,4 million Palestinians in clear violation of international law.

Last week, the Israel cabinet announced an "easing" of the blockade, allowing more of what it terms "civilian goods" to get in Gaza. This is certainly positive news for the people of Gaza. It should however not be pretext to relaxing pressure on Israel until the blockade is fully lifted.

Further, the EU Council, High Representative and EU Parliament have all called for a firm position and concrete steps to lift the Gaza blockade: a momentum on which to build for putting an end to Gaza's dangerous isolation and achieving tangible progress for peace in the region. [Read more...](#)

DECENT WORK AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This week, the European Parliament and the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) adopted two documents, acknowledging the importance of Decent Work in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On 14 June, the FAC adopted its [conclusions](#), which constitute the EU position on MDGs regarding the UN Summit in September. The conclusions refer to the key role decent employment, social protection and social partners' involvement in development play to achieve the MDGs.

On 15 June, the plenary session in Strasbourg adopted the parliamentary report by Michael Cashman MEP on ["Progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals:](#)

mid-term review in preparation of the UN high-level meeting in September 2010". The report calls upon the EU to maintain an integrated and comprehensive approach towards the MDGs, and identifies, among others, decent work as a priority to achieve the MDGs target. [Read more](#).

MIGRANT EMPLOYMENT IN TIMES OF CRISIS - 'LAST IN, FIRST OUT'

On 16 June, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) organised a seminar, where labour market experts from all EU member states, Croatia, Norway and Turkey discussed preliminary findings of an IOM study investigating the impact of migrants on employment and their labour market integration in the European Union for 2000-2009. The study will be used to provide expert analysis for the EU2020 Strategy and the employment initiatives. SOLIDAR welcomes the study as it highlights the vulnerable position of migrants in the EU labour market. [Read more about SOLIDAR's view](#).

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

FURTHER STEPS TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR QUALITY SOCIAL SERVICES IN EUROPE

Recently 8 European networks of providers of social services, amongst them SOLIDAR, prepared a [joint input](#) for the ongoing debate on the objectives and elements of a European framework to assess and guarantee the quality of social services, e.g. within the [Social Protection Committee \(SPC\)](#). [Read more about SOLIDAR's contributions](#).

The SPC recently issued a first draft for a [European Voluntary Quality Framework](#) to be discussed and endorsed by the end of 2010. Addressed to policy-makers and public authorities, it should serve as a reference, on a voluntary basis, for defining, assuring, evaluating and improving the quality of social services. Additionally, it should be compatible and complementary with existing quality approaches for specific services or fields already applied across Europe.

Overall, the document sets out a number of quality principles and operational criteria, which aim at developing a common understanding of social services' quality within the EU and contains elements for a methodology on quality tools.

[Read SOLIDAR in the European Voice](#)

MEMBERS

AWO has launched a [photo competition](#) to promote the objectives and goals of the European Year 2010 for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

AWO published an [article](#) 'Sparbeschlüsse verschärfen soziale Schieflage der Familienpolitik' on the increasing social imbalance as a result of austerity measures in Germany.

AWO is hosting several workshops during the upcoming National Focus Week in Berlin, 21-25 June, including round-trips for school classes, politicians and media.

ISCOS is organising an [event](#) 'Fighting poverty: decent work and participation' to discuss on decent work, integration, workers organisations and active citizenship on 29 June, Turin.

Pour La Solidarité: read the [Newsletter](#)

Read the ARCI [Newsletter](#)

PARTNERS

The S&D Group is organising a [seminar](#) 'Reacting to the crisis together: reflections from the labour movement and civil society' on 28 June in the European Parliament, Brussels.

CONCORD and others issued a [press release](#) 'EU missing international poverty goals, warn NGOs', following their [MDG stunt](#) last Thursday in Brussels.

ETUC published a [statement](#) on the 99th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC)

ETUC published another [statement](#) 'European Council: the ETUC warns against the austerity measures'

ITUC issued a [press release](#) 'The Global Trade Union Alliance to combat forced labour and

trafficking launches new report'. [Read the full report](#)

ITUC issued another [press release](#) 'Honduras: violence and human rights violations escalate'

Solidarité Socialiste is organising a [conference](#) 'Pressions sur les agricultures paysannes: regards croisés Nord-Sud' on 24 June, Ath (Belgium)

[Read the latest issue of CONCORD Flash](#)

[Read the Globetree Newsletter](#)

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