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Onderwerp: **SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 15-10-2010**

POVERTY VS ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

Discussions are currently taking place on two issues, both part of the integrated guidelines of the Europe 2020 Strategy: the first is the expected Europe 2020 flagship programme "European Platform Against Poverty" which social NGOs hope to be more than just a relaunch of the social open method of coordination but a real step ahead in the eradication of poverty (with firm commitments by member states and the set up of structures to drive the process). The second is plans to move ahead with a reform in the bloc's economic governance - due to take place at the next Council meeting on 28 October - for which the European Commission stipulates a "vigorous application of the stability and growth pact" (Guideline 1 of Europe2020).

What will the consequences be of this "vigorous application" when Member States' deficit and debt rates are fixed like a religion and the sanctions for those countries not respecting the rates are to include for example blocking access to structural funds? We see the consequences as a reduction in public spending and a reduction in social budgets by Member States so that they can achieve those fixed formal objectives. With poverty levels rising as a result of the crisis, focus should not only be on national reform programmes, but also on responsible budgeting and priority setting which will enable governments to meet the social needs of their people and to create inclusive societies!

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ADOPTION OF SPC VOLUNTARY QUALITY FRAMEWORK ON SOCIAL SERVICES

Last week the [Social Protection Committee \(SPC\)](#) adopted a [Voluntary Quality Framework on social services](#), which aims to be a reference for defining, assuring, improving and evaluating the quality of social services in the EU. This framework should help policy-makers and public authorities to develop specific tools for the measurement and evaluation of the quality of social services, and should also improve cross-border comparability in case of trans-border provision of social services.

Although SOLIDAR welcomes this Framework in general, we deplore that there is no separate section on framework requirements for quality (such as sufficient financing, qualified staff, cooperation and partnership in delivering services on the ground) and that only a few elements on decent working conditions are dealt with. However, there is a reference made to the [Commission's Recommendation on active inclusion](#) which we welcome. [Read more.](#)

SOLIDAR SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

On 11-12 October, SOLIDAR organised a Social Affairs Committee (SAC) in Copenhagen. SOLIDAR members gathered together to address the critical situation of young people in the labour market, with a special focus on long-term unemployment, precariousness, skills shortages and social exclusion. They debated the role which civil society organisations should play to enhance youth employability through supporting youth at risk by providing (education and) training programmes and promoting self-employment.

For further information please refer to the [European Parliament Report](#) on promoting youth access to the labour market and the [OECD paper](#) on rising youth unemployment during the crisis.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

DECENT WORK: A VALID AGENDA DURING AND AFTER THE CRISIS

The Belgian Presidency organised this week in Brussels the International Forum on Decent Work. The two day initiative was the opportunity to highlight that:

The decent work agenda has been useful during the crisis: several governments adopted

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