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Onderwerp: SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 29-10-2010

IS THIS A EUROPE OF CITIZENS OR CONSUMERS?

The [Single Market Act](#) was put forward by the Commission the day before the European Summit (28 October). On the one hand, we can see that there is an attempt to incorporate conclusions from the [Monti report on the future of the Single Market](#) and to introduce a wider vision of the Single Market to reconcile European public opinion with the expectations of what Europe can do for them. As the Single Market Act invites "each of its partners for these stages of dialogue", civil society is ready to study intensively the 50 proposals in terms of their feasibility and their potential social impact.

However on the other hand, we do see a problem with the results of the Council meeting yesterday: asking for a modification of the Treaty to put financial pressure on Member States to respect the criteria of the Stability and Growth Pact is opening Pandora's box. Instead of the EU simply resolving the key issue by investing in the European social model and automatic stabilisers (which have shown to be effective in times of crisis). What we see in both cases is that Europe needs to learn that it must provide services and put the social needs of its citizens before market rules!

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

SOCIAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL ADOPTS WEAK EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES

Last week (21 October), the Council for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Protection (EPSCO) adopted [Guidelines for Employment policies](#) for Member States for the next 5 years. The Commission issued their first proposal in April 2010, and this was only approved by the Parliament in September 2010 with a large number of amendments. SOLIDAR has found that not only has the Council watered down the proposals of the Parliament but also demoted the Commission's already weak proposal. [Read more...](#)

IMPORTANT EU-LEVEL INSTRUMENT MISSING IN EP REPORT ON MINIMUM INCOME

Last week (20 October), the EP adopted a report on the [role of minimum income in combating poverty and promoting an inclusive society in Europe](#) (available in [all EU languages](#)), drafted by Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL, PT). It calls for the introduction of a minimum income system in all EU member states in an effort to fight poverty. SOLIDAR welcomes that the report was voted in and the content of the report in general but deplores the fact that an amendment calling for a European framework directive on a minimum income did not get the plenary majority. [Read more.](#)

3rd FORUM ON SSGI CALLS FOR DEFENCE OF QUALITY SERVICES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

SOLIDAR was actively involved in the 3rd Forum on Social Services of General Interest (SSGI) held in Brussels on 26-27 October 2010. Building on outcomes from five workshops, two dealing with quality and three with legal questions, 15 recommendations were adopted by the participants and put forward in a plenary session. [Read more...](#)

SOCIAL PARTNERS ROLE IN FIGHT AGAINST IN-WORK POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Last week (20 October) [SOLIDAR contributed](#) to a conference organised by the Observatoire Social Européen (OSE) and the Belgian Presidency of the EU on the potential and limitations for employers and trade unions to contribute more efficiently to the reduction of poverty in European societies. [Read more.](#)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE OF WESTERN SAHARA

About 2 weeks ago, thousands of Saharawi people (people from the Western Sahara) left their homes to set up camp fifteen kilometres from the territory's capital El Aaiún in protest against

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