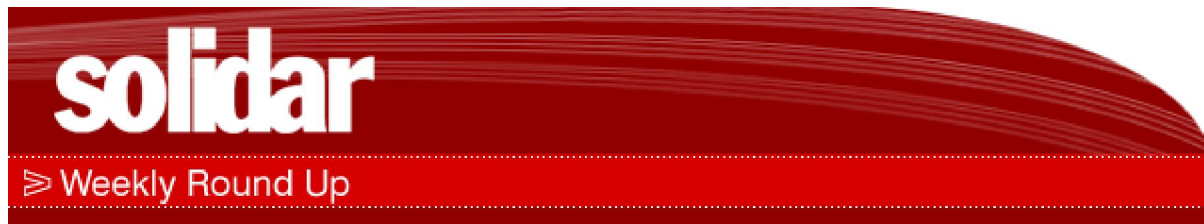


SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 13-04-2012

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QUALITY OF WORK AND EMPLOYMENT IN HEALTH AND CARE SECTOR

For SOLIDAR and other social service providers, the social services sector presents a huge employment and job potential. Employment in the sector grew much faster than in other sectors of the economy and it has important economic weight (generating around 5% of the EU 27's total economic output), with the social economy representing about 12% of the workforce in Europe.

Why is this sector still growing? Demographic change in Europe means an increasing need for health care and social services. But there are some recognised challenges to increasing the number of employees in the sector, namely an ageing workforce and the low attractiveness of the sector. Moreover, employment is often informal, not secure or part of social dialogue. The workforce is mainly female and often migrant women fill the gap of the lacking workforce.

On the European level, an EU employment strategy should be developed that seeks to seize the potentials of the sector, dedicates European funds to back this up and ensures the appropriate legal, political and financial environment so that social services can fulfill their mission. And under the following conditions: that it recognises the special characteristics of the services, the clients and the providers; integrates the education and training needs in the New Skills for New Jobs flagship of Europe 2020; and makes budget choices allowing for investment in education and training.

Additionally, Members States should support the improvement of working conditions in the sector by ratifying and implementing the ILO Convention 189 on "Decent work for domestic workers". This would be a way to create jobs and reply to Europe's growing social needs.

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON EU SOCIAL SECURITY COORDINATION

On 30 March, the European Commission issued a [policy communication](#) to clarify the social security rights of people migrating into and out of the EU. The aim is to ensure a better protection of workers' rights, in particular acquired state pension rights. Non-EU nationals make up around 4% of the workforce in Member States. Yet, the SOLIDAR network often sees a fragmented approach to existing social security coordination in the EU meaning that the portability of rights and benefits of migrant workers when moving to another country or to their country of origin are not guaranteed. [Read more.](#)

EP REPORT ON PUBLIC PROCUREMENT SOON TO BE ISSUED

Last week, the Social Services Europe Network - of which SOLIDAR is a co-founder - issued a [position paper](#) on the Commission's proposal for a directive on public procurement. The document contains some suggestions to guarantee that the best possible conditions for the provision of high quality social services are integrated in the new directive.

The European Parliament is currently working on a parliamentary report on the Commission's proposal. Against this background, the Network for Sustainability in Public Procurement - of which SOLIDAR is a member - sent a proposal for amendments to the rapporteur, MEP Marc Tarabella (S&D). As affirmed yesterday during his speech at a seminar on Public Procurement, Tarabella appears to be in favour of the Network's suggestion to reinforce social and environmental considerations in the directive as well as being aware of the importance to provide the best possible conditions for the provision of social services of general interest.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

WHY SOCIAL PROTECTION SHOULD BE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF EU'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY

On Wednesday (11 April), SOLIDAR and the European Working Group on Social Protection and Decent Work in Development Cooperation organised a Round Table on "Protecting People, Transforming Lives: Why social protection should be an essential part of EU's development cooperation strategy" at the European Parliament in Brussels. This Round Table came at a timely moment for CSOs to reiterate [their messages](#) as the EU is currently drafting a Communication on the topic to be ready by the end of the year.

During the meeting, around 40 people from the EU and NGO communities working on development cooperation discussed the role that social protection plays in fighting poverty and inequality. Conny Reuter, Secretary General of SOLIDAR, highlighted the importance of inclusive and universal social protection systems to realise economic and social rights for all and build a development cooperation agenda which aims to promote social justice. Ricardo Cortés Lastra MEP, who hosted the event, emphasized that European values should guide a values-based development cooperation policy. A full event report will be released shortly.

ENLARGEMENT

IPA II: MORE INVESTMENT NEEDED IN DECENT WORK, QUALITY EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

On Wednesday, SOLIDAR issued a series of recommendations to feed into a Public Hearing organised by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs on the future financing of enlargement, initiated by Kristian Vigenin (MEP).

The recommendations were based on the network's two year programme in the Western Balkans focusing on promoting decent and quality employment and strengthening a community-based approach to social inclusion. In addition to a consultation that was launched by SOLIDAR amongst social partners, think tanks, civil society organisations and community-based groups in the Western Balkans last month. Read the [full set of recommendations](#).

NEWS FROM THE NETWORK

Watch **Solidar Suisse's** [video](#) for a decent world cup 2014 in Brazil. Together with their Brazilian partner, they have launched a viral campaign on the web which is spreading fast!

Solidarité Laïque is organising an [event](#) "Regards Croisés Pour Les Droits De L'enfant" on Friday 29 June 2012 from 9am-7pm at the Auditorium de l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris.

Read this special **ACPP** [newsletter](#) supporting the General Strike on 29 March in Spain.

Watch [two TV ads](#) launched by our Italian member **Auser** to raise awareness on its work with elderly people.

Find out about a [campaign](#) by our Austrian member **Volkshilfe**: "Armut made in Austria", dedicated to Volkshilfe's work for the poor in Austria.

Go to the website of our German member **Arbeiterwohlfahrt (AWO)** to learn about this year's

[collection of postal stamps](#) called "Wahre Werte". The campaign will directly support AWO's welfare projects.

PARTNERS NEWS

European Youth Forum have released a [European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships](#) which identifies basic quality principles to ensure that internships and apprenticeships become a valuable and quality experience across Europe and beyond.

ETUI will have its monthly Forum on "The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class" on Friday, 27 April 2012, from 13h15 to 14h45. [Register](#).

ENAR issued a [press release](#) on "Belgian far-right anti-immigrant website reminds of Gestapo practices - Is this the Europe we want for our children?" reacting to the launch of this website on 10 April by Belgian far right party Vlaams Belang.

The **ILO** have launched a [video contest](#) on Decent Work for Young People addressing young adults from 18 to 29 years and their problems with finding a job and poor working conditions.

AGENDA

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| April | 11 | SOLIDAR Round Table: Why Social Protection Should be an Essential Part of EU Development Cooperation Strategy, EP, Brussels. |
| | 25 | Round Table: The Search for Decent Work: Low Wage Sectors and Migrant Workers, EP, Brussels - register |
| May | 11 | SOLIDAR Board, Brussels |
| | 22-24 | Global Network Global Conference, Rio |

SOLIDAR is a European network of 56 NGOs active in over 90 countries working to advance social justice in Europe and worldwide. SOLIDAR voices the concerns of its member organisations to the EU and international institutions across the policy sectors social affairs, international cooperation and lifelong learning. For more info <http://www.solidar.org/>

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