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Verzonden: vrijdag 21 september 2012 12:24
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Onderwerp: SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 21-09-2012



Advancing social justice in Europe and worldwide

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SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 21-09-2012

Editorial: Freedom of speech or provocation?

By Conny Reuter, Secretary General

Today, we will no doubt again witness violent demonstrations in Islamic countries against Western States. It is astonishing how in our globalised world, a video which was dismissed when launched because of its stupid content and technical amateurism, has become so highly politicised. Progressives face a conflict: should we defend the freedom of speech or respect religious feelings? Is there a right to making satirical jokes or is it an offence to laugh at religion? [Read more...](#)

FIRENZE 10+10: GETTING READY TO JOIN FORCES FOR ANOTHER EUROPE

From 14-16 September, the preparatory meeting to define the programme of [Florence 10+10](#) took place in Milan. Representatives from European networks and trade unions – including SOLIDAR - joined the meeting and highlighted the huge number of initiatives and actions taking place in Europe to fight against the dramatic effects of the crisis on social and workers rights, reject the EU austerity policy, the fiscal pact and the attack on the European Social Model. [Read more...](#)

ENLARGEMENT

ENLARGEMENT: SOCIAL DIMENSION BACK ON THE EU AGENDA

Last Thursday (13 September), Maria Eleni Koppa MEP's report on "Enlargement: policies, criteria and the EU's strategic interests" was almost unanimously adopted in the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs. SOLIDAR and members of the [Decent Work Balkan Network](#) (DWBK) welcome the adoption which includes many [recommendations](#) put forward earlier this year to promote active inclusion, social cohesion, decent work and quality employment in the Western Balkans region. [Read more....](#)

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

MODERNISATION OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RULES: EP MOVES TOWARDS COMPROMISE AMENDMENTS

On Monday (17 September), the European Parliament's Internal Market (IMCO) committee carried out a [first review of amendments](#) presented on the European Commission's proposal for a directive on public procurement. Some of the points raised by networks in which SOLIDAR is actively working were taken up, including the Network for Sustainable Development in Public Procurement's [position](#) on the strategic use of procurement rules to mainstream sustainability considerations as well as [amendments](#) proposed by the Social Platform on the need to make quality a mandatory element when awarding social services. The vote on these compromise amendments in IMCO is foreseen for 29 November. [Read more...](#)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SUGGESTS CONCRETE SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

On Tuesday, the committee on employment and social affairs (EMPL) in the European Parliament adopted Heinz Becker MEP's (EPP) own-initiative report on the EU social business initiative. From the definition to concrete support measures, the report includes many suggestions that SOLIDAR had suggested in the development of the report. Social enterprises are actors of the social economy and will as such receive important attention in the future funding period of the EU Structural

Funds as well as through the new EU programme for social change and innovation (EPSCI). [Read More...](#)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

TRADE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN PAKISTAN: WHAT WILL COME FIRST?

On 13 September the European Parliament adopted its position for the adoption of an EU Regulation introducing emergency trade preferences for Pakistan. With the aim of supporting the country's recovery after the 2010 floods, the regulation will accord time-limited trade preference to Pakistan (i.e. a reduction of duties on key imports). [Read more...](#)

WHO IS PAYING FOR CRISIS? EUROPEAN AUSTERITY MEASURES AND IMPACT ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

On 12 September, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) published its [Trade and Development Report 2012](#), offering a review of recent trends in the global economy and the links between income distribution, growth and development. The report marks the structural reform policies being designed in Europe as destabilising and states that they are "all too often coded language for labour market liberalisation including wage cuts, a weakening of collective bargaining and greater wage differentiation". [Read more...](#)

MIGRATION

POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT REPORT: RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

On Tuesday (18 September), the European Parliament's development committee (DEVE) adopted a report on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), a commitment by the European Union to uphold development cooperation principles in its non-development policies. SOLIDAR, working with [CONCORD](#), successfully advocated for the adopted report to strongly reiterate the need of a human rights based approach to migration and development, as well as it including a thorough analysis of the development related push factors for migration, including unemployment and poverty.

EDUCATION

ERASMUS FOR ALL

On 19 September, the European Parliament's Culture and Education Committee held a presentation on the EP draft report by Doris Pack MEP on the "Erasmus for All" proposal for the 2014-2020 funding programme. Doris Pack kept in her report the three types of actions proposed by the European Commission: learning mobility, cooperation, and policy reform; however the activities, as well as a separate chapter on youth have been added. The report calls for a balance between the simplification of the upcoming programme and clarity on its content, while adding the minimum allocations per sector. [Read more...](#)

EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2012

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has recently published its new edition of [Education at a Glance](#). The report presents indicators bridging education, economy and social mobility by presenting the current situation in OECD countries and others in regards to the state of educational structures, its finances, and trends. [Read more...](#)

NETWORK NEWS

Belgian member **FOS** invites you to join in with [Sing for the Climate](#) taking place in 180 places around Belgium this weekend.

Belgian member **Solidarité Socialiste** will be attending the Russell Tribunal on Palestine taking place in New York from 5-8 October. They will be blogging in French in real time on their [website](#).

Spanish member **La Liga de la Educacion** are presenting a [new study](#) on “Adolescentes de hoy: Aspiraciones y modelos” on 4 October in Madrid.

Italian member **Auser** invites you to the [VI National Volunteering Conference](#) in L'Aquila taking place from 5-7 October.

Read Italian member **Arci**'s [latest news](#)

The **Foundation for European Progressive Studies** (FEPS) is looking for the new members of the [FEPS Young Academics Network](#) (YAN)

Spanish member **Solidaridad Internacional** is looking for [Humanitarian volunteers](#)

PARTNERS NEWS

Egyptian partner **Center for Trade Union and Workers services** (CTUWS) issued a [press release](#) on “Back to security confrontations in facing strikes and arresting labor leaders”

Listen to **ODYSSEIA**, the new [audio magazine](#) launched by the Radio 1812 team on international migration issues.

AGENDA

7 October: World Day for Decent Work

16-18 October: SOLIDAR International Cooperation Forum

17 October (10.30-12.30): Round Table- Protecting Domestic Workers Rights: What is the Role of the EU?, European Parliament

17 October (13.30-16.00): Round Table – Mobilising for Freedom of Association: Human Rights Defenders Tell Their Stories European Parliament

18-19 October: Global Network Steering Group

SOLIDAR is a European network of 59 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: www.solidar.org

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