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Advancing social justice in Europe and worldwide

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SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 09-11-2012

Editorial: Reducing the EU budget - a progressive policy?

by Conny Reuter Secretary General

The next EU summit on 22 November will have to decide on the future EU-budget. In these times of horse trading and unexpected coalitions, such as in the UK, we hear claims that reducing the EU budget would be pro-European. Hic!

As progressives we understand that in times of crisis and austerity it is hard to “sell” to citizens the idea of an increase in the EU budget – even one which is only 1% of GDP. Around 40% of this budget is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy, which only benefits agro-industry, not small farmers, an industry that does not provide sustainable agriculture and healthy products. But will the heads of state in those countries which have a strong farmer/agro-industry lobby dare to reduce this excessive part of the EU budget?

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German Chancellor Angela Merkel visits European Parliament

On 7 November European Parliament President Martin Schulz with the conference of presidents welcomed Chancellor Angela Merkel at the European Parliament and highlighted the importance of working across dividing lines.

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Social Affairs

Slow-Motion Progress: Negotiations on Next ESF Programming Period

During the latest meeting of the European Parliament (EP) Employment and Social Affairs Committee, an update was given about the ongoing negotiations with the Council on the European Commission proposal for a European Social Fund (ESF) Regulation. Although three meetings have already taken place, negotiations are making slow progress.

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European Commission releases new worrying Labour Market Statistics

The number of unemployed people in the EU rose sharply in September, hitting a new high of 25.75 million. The number of unemployed people kept rising for the last 18 months in a row, up by 3.1 million. The Euro area has been hit the worst, leaving hiring activity depressed overall. The Commission found the outlook for the coming months to be bleak and pessimism is again gaining new ground among EU consumers and employers about future developments.

Visit the Commission [website](#) for more information.

International Cooperation

Florence 10+10: together for social justice

Ten years after European social movements and networks met in Florence to give birth to the first European Social Forum, the next session of the Forum is taking place in Florence, from 8-11 November ([Florence 10+10/Joining forces for another Europe](#)). The meeting aims to give a joint response to the crisis and the policies driven by the EU institutions and the ECB and address the creation of alliances for a long term strategy that will enable the building of a social Europe, the European citizen's Europe.

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Amman Conference on Building Partnerships for Social and Economic Development in the Middle East and North Africa

On 13 and 14 November a [conference](#) hosted by the Global Progressive Forum, the Global Network and SOLIDAR will take place in Amman, Jordan. In 2012 many Arab countries saw the biggest popular uprisings experienced in decades, the root causes being the lack of equitable distribution of wealth and social justice, which lead to exacerbated poverty, unemployment, inequality, and exclusion. This has been the result of a long-term deficit in democratic governance, essential freedoms and social dialogue. Still, the Arab world is experiencing severe clashes and civil war in Syria and other places as UNWRA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, highlights in its [latest statement](#).

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Education

SOLIDAR Education and Lifelong Learning Forum

Promoting inclusive learning societies and recognition and validation of learning outcomes are the main themes of the Education and Lifelong Learning Forum organised by SOLIDAR on 27 – 29 November in Brussels. As part of this process, we would like to invite you to participate on 28 November in the [round table](#) Building Learning Societies: recognition and validation of learning outcomes of social work and volunteering co-organised by SOLIDAR and CEMEA. During this event education and training practitioners, social service providers, representatives of EU Institutions and researchers will discuss ways to recognise and validate learning outcomes of social work and volunteering, and how recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes can be better integrated into policy strategies on national and European levels.

Network News

Italian member **ARCI**'s [newsletter](#).

Italian member **Auser**'s latest [information](#).

EUCIS-LLL has some [information](#) on the LLL-Week.

French member Fondation Leolagrange has [news](#).

Belgian Member **Pour la Solidarité** wants to invite you an [event](#) on 29 November in Paris.

Solidarité Suisse wants you sign the following [petition](#).

Partners News

Coface's [newsletter](#).

ETUC has a [press release](#) for you.

Have a look at the **HelpAge** [newsletter](#).

Read the **ILO Brussels** [newsletter](#).

Friends of Europe wants to invite you to a [conference](#) 13 November in Brussels.

PES Group in the Committee of the Regions wants to invite you to an [event](#) on 21 November in Brussels.

PICUM [bulletin](#) is out.

VOICE [statement](#) on EU humanitarian aid budget 2013.

Agenda

13/14 November Seminar: Middle East and North Africa – Building Partnerships for Social and Economic Development in Amman, Jordan

22-25 November Salon de l' Education in Paris, France

26-27 November: 4th Western Balkan Civil Society Forum in Zagreb, Croatia

26-28 November: Lifelong Learning Week in Brussels, Belgium

27 November: SOLIDAR-Eurofound Conference in Brussels, Belgium

28 November: SOLIDAR-CEMEA Round Table in Brussels, Belgium

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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