

Van: SOLIDAR <abigail.goundry@solidar.org>
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Editorial by Conny Reuter

Big Brother is Watching

On Wednesday, the European Parliament decided to suspend the SWIFT data exchange agreement with the US as a reaction to the scandal whereby the National Security Agency (NSA) was supervising all kinds of communications in the EU. Secret services from the US and the UK feel free to supervise private communication and data exchange under the pretext of preventing terrorist attacks. The British secret service has even monitored national Belgian telephone company, Belgacom, and could through this control communication within the EU institutions. Is privacy no longer an indispensable element of democracy? It is a fundamental human right! [Read more...](#)

International Cooperation

Freedom of Association, Decent Work and Social Justice: Preconditions for Sustainable Development

SOLIDAR welcomes the [opinion](#) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on the European Commission Communication which seeks to improve the EU's support to countries undergoing major political, social and economic reforms – so-called transition countries. This opinion states that in order to achieve sustainable development, support for democracy, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, civic education, non-formal and informal learning and social justice is essential.

The opinion, presented by Andris Gobiņš (EESC Group III, Latvia), underlines that support to neighbouring countries should not be perceived as a gain for only a selected few. Visible improvements are needed in fields such as public and social services, decent work and quality employment, gender equality, support for socially and economically vulnerable and indigenous peoples, etc. in order to foster change. This was one of the recommendations suggested by SOLIDAR through

the [CONCORD working group on Enlargement, Pre-Accession and Neighbourhood](#). [Read more...](#)

Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy

Today and tomorrow (25-26 October), SOLIDAR is participating in the [Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy](#) in Poland. This conference aims to promote democracy and support democratic transformations in European neighbourhood countries. This year's edition focuses on transitional justice, the reconstruction of civil society and education for democracy as well as the role of women in societies in transition. SOLIDAR will highlight the need to ensure freedom of association and peaceful assembly as [cornerstones of democratic systems](#). [Read more...](#)

Trade Union Action to Promote Migrant Rights in the Mediterranean Region

This week, on 21-22 October, at the International Training Center of the ILO, Italian SOLIDAR member CGIL co-organised together with the UGTT (Tunisia), a two day discussion on the role of trade unions in protecting migrant rights in the Mediterranean area. In the presence of representatives from ILO-ACTRAV (Bureau for Workers' Activities), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), the European Commission, the ETUC and SOLIDAR, numerous delegations of trade unions from Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region agreed to foster cooperation and to create a network to promote, defend, protect and give a voice to those hundreds of migrant workers that everyday leave their countries to look for a decent work for a decent life elsewhere (read the [seminar conclusions](#)).

Lifelong Learning

Fighting Youth Unemployment and Precarious Work

Last week, SOLIDAR brought together 15 young trade unionists at a conference in the European Parliament, hosted by MEP Emer Costello and attended by MEPs Emily Turunen, Elisabeth Schroedter and Marije Cornelissen, Vice-President of the Committee of Regions, Mercedes Bresso, as well as representatives from Eurofound and the European Youth Forum.

Based on discussions in the conference, SOLIDAR recommends that European policy initiatives - such as the Youth Employment Package that includes the Youth Guarantee - are strengthened to ensure that all young people are offered a job, apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education. And these initiatives must be based on decent work and quality employment. At the meeting a briefing paper was also launched by young trade unionists entitled: "[Decent work and quality jobs for young people – a collation of articles on the employment situation and working conditions of young people](#)". [Read what young trade unionists were highlighting...](#)

Raising Awareness on Rights at Work

[Youth Job Patrol](#), a project carried out by [Fagligt Internationalt Center](#) (FIC), [Ideas Institute](#), [CGIL FILCAMS](#) and SOLIDAR, has worked to raise awareness amongst young people on their rights at work and to promote that they to get more actively involved in demanding decent working conditions in their jobs. The mission of the Youth Job Patrol is to conduct visits to companies and to inform young workers and their employers of their labour market rights.

Check out the [Youth Job Patrol](#) website and the publication bringing together good practices to raise awareness on rights at

work: [Decent working conditions: raising awareness among young people – a collation of good practices](#). [Read more...](#)

Social Affairs

Social Services Europe Launches Manifesto for European Elections

Social Services Europe - bringing together nine Europe-wide networks of not-for-profit providers of social and health care services including SOLIDAR - has launched its [Manifesto for the European Parliament elections 2014](#). The Manifesto brings forward 10 recommendations to put social and health care services at the heart of a stronger social Europe.

With this Manifesto, we call on prospective members of the European Parliament to commit to support the provision of social and health care services, in particular the not for profit social and healthcare services sectors, in the following ways if elected to the European Parliament. We believe that every person in the European Union is entitled to high quality, accessible, sustainable and affordable social and health care as and when they are needed and invite the European Parliament to work with us to make that a reality.

Members News

Norway

NPA invites you to a [seminar](#) on the privatisation of natural resources “Agua, Energía y Alimentos no son Mercancías” being held in Bilbao on 29-31 October.

Denmark

Join **AOF**'s [EU country conference](#) on the questions: Does right-wing nationalism pose a real threat to democracy and peace in Europe? Is it on the rise? And what can the EU (and others) do to go up against right-wing nationalism? Join on 5 November in Copenhagen.

Switzerland

[Help Solidar Suisse](#) in saying "no" to a free trade agreement with China within the word "human rights" appearing in it.

Italy

Read **Auser**'s latest [news](#).

Partners News

Global Network Peruvian member **PLADES** and IESI have launched a [report](#) on Decent Work in Peru in 2012.

Egyptian partner **CTUWS** [writes](#) about reasons to refuse the New Protest Law.

Read the **European Trade Union Confederation**'s [media release](#) on "Tripartite Social Summit: concrete changes to save Europe now".

The **European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning** (EUCIS-LLL), in partnership with the UEF/Learning for Well-Being and InterRail, is launching an **image contest** entitled "Picture the Future of Learning - Unlocking each and everyone's unique potential".

The International Institute for Labour Studies, Delegation for European and International Affairs, France and **ILO Office for the European Union and the Benelux** are organising an **event** on the Social Dimensions of Free Trade Agreements on 7 November 2013.

View the **talk show** that **S&D MEPs and PES Members in the Committee of the Regions** have recorded on the EU Structural Funds, the Budget and the Youth Employment Guarantee initiative.

Read the new **European Policy Centre** (EPC) **publication**: "People dying at the EU's external borders: Can the Summit find the right answer?"

The **European Youth Forum and ETUC** are **organising** a Youth Employment Conference and High Level Panel Debate on Quality Jobs in Paris on 12 November 2013.

The **European Network of Political Foundations** (ENoP) invites you to its **public conference** "Policy Coherence for Development: Making political choices!" on 12 November.

Social Platform is **recruiting** an expert on tax justice and climate change.

Agenda

13-14 November: SOLIDAR International Cooperation Forum, Brussels (**register - for members only**)

15 November: SOLIDAR Field Visit on social and professional integration in Morocco, followed by national seminar on EU policy monitoring and cooperation, Marrakech, Morocco.

SOLIDAR is a European network of 60 NGOs 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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