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Advancing social justice in Europe and worldwide

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SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 06-12-2013

Editorial by Conny Reuter

Madiba - Our Hero

It is with great sadness that we hear about the passing of the father of the nation of South Africa.

Many of us have been inspired by Nelson Mandela's struggle for justice, equality, and dignity in South Africa. He impressed us all with how he ensured a peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy, how he united a nation and how, throughout all this, he consistently maintained his integrity as a humble and committed leader. Nelson Mandela will remain engrained in the memory of mankind for many years to come, taking up his place with our other heroes of the last century, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

This is a man who has inspired others through his own actions, risking his own life to stand up for the values that he believed in and for the world that he dreamed of. His legacy will remain a guiding light and commitment for us, even in the darkest time, showing that the aspiration to freedom and democracy is stronger than any physical repression can be. We send solidarity greetings to our partners from LRS in South Africa, and invite everyone to sign the [book of condolences](#) on the Nelson Mandela's Centre of Memory.

We here at SOLIDAR will stay committed to the values that this awe-inspiring man represented to us, he will continue to provide us with inspiration and strength to continue our fight for social justice all round the world!

Long live Nelson Mandela!

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

Social Affairs

REFIT - Fit for More Europe?

At the beginning of October, the European Commission published [REFIT](#) (Regulatory Fitness and Performance: Results and Next Steps) which aims to systematically review EU legislation to ensure that "aims are being met in the most efficient and effective way, to detect regulatory burdens and to identify opportunities for simplification." This publication is yet another step in a process aimed at the deregulation of Europe, and more to the point, the deregulation of the social aquis on social policy and workers' health and safety. [Read more...](#)

Employment Committee: Reinforce Employment and Social Aspects in Annual Growth Survey 2014

On Thursday (5 December), the European Parliament's Employment and Social Affairs committee discussed a draft report providing specific recommendations on employment and social policies for the year to come, an integral part of the Parliament's contribution to the European Semester process. Many MEPs have criticised the European Commission for their proposals which consistently focus on fiscal consolidation despite rising unemployment and divergences between Member States (see [EP press release](#) reacting to Annual Growth Survey 2014 launch). [Read more...](#)

Fair Mobility and Protection for Posted Workers in Europe

In 2012 the European Commission issued its proposal on the [enforcement of the Posting of Workers Directive](#) to resolve problems with existing rules on workers' protection, fair competition, monitoring and compliance. The enforcement directive is currently under discussion by the Council of Ministers since the [adoption of the European Parliament's Employment and Social Affairs Committee's report](#) in June 2013, opposed by Socialists and Left as it failed to ensure the better protection of posted workers and to guarantee the fundamental right to collective bargaining. [Read more....](#)

Improving Social Service Delivery in South East Europe

On 30 November, SOS Telephone for Women and Children Victims of Violence – Podgorica (SOS Podgorica) organised an inaugural event for the National Network of Civil Society Organisations that provide social services in Montenegro. One of the main goals that SOS Podgorica and other project partners (ASB, SOLIDAR, EDC, LIR, OGI, CLARD) want to achieve is a greater commitment and capacity of civil society organisation networks in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Croatia to give citizens a voice and influence public sector reform processes through analysis, monitoring and advocacy. Besides that, the intention is to strengthen the capacities of CSOs and improve overall service delivery to citizens. [Read more....](#)

International Cooperation

SOLIDAR Campaign on Freedom of Association at CEMEA Film Festival

This week SOLIDAR presented its [global policy campaign on Freedom of Association](#) to promote freedom of peaceful assembly and association and support the construction of just and democratic societies worldwide at SOLIDAR French member [CEMEA's Education Film Festival](#) in Evreux (France). At the event, Pakistani Director, Ammar Aziz, will present his documentary on the life and everyday struggle of home-based women bangle-makers (see "[Daughters of a lesser God](#)") and dialogue with CEMEA activists. [Read more...](#)

New Law Could Endanger Fundamental Rights of Spanish Citizens

On 29 November, the Spanish Government passed a draft bill on the Protection of Civic Security. If this bill is passed and implemented, SOLIDAR – on the initiative of Spanish member, Movimiento por la Paz-MPDL – fears that this new law could endanger the fulfillment of some fundamental rights of Spanish citizens. As Conny Reuter, SOLIDAR Secretary General said: "This legislation reminds us of the worst times in Spain under Franco's dictatorship and urgently needs to be rejected".

For SOLIDAR, any legislative initiative that has an impact on civil society must be discussed and agreed with civil society actors. Read the [full statement](#) and about SOLIDAR's [global policy initiative on freedom of association](#).

Lifelong Learning

Erasmus+ Fully Operational

The Council of the European Union, on 3 December, formally adopted the regulation founding the new EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sports, [Erasmus+](#), that succeeds the former Lifelong Learning Programme. SOLIDAR particularly welcomes the fact that Erasmus+ will try to establish closer links between formal education and non-formal and

informal learning, and therefore may strengthen and support the recognition of learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning. [Read more...](#)

Members' News

Spain

Read **La Liga Espanola por la Educacion**'s latest [publications](#) on adolescence.

Belgium

Read **FOS**' [news](#) for December.

Read **Pour la Solidarité**'s [news](#).

Italy

Read **ISCOS**'s [news bulletin](#) on labour issues in China.

International

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

UK

Join **Banana Link** at this year's [Latin America 2013 and Fiesta Latina](#) on 7 December in London.

War on Want's [ebay shop](#) is ready for Christmas orders.

European

The **Foundation of European Progressive Studies** has launched its [second edition of Queries](#) with an exclusive contribution by Michelle Bachelet.

Partners News

Read **WAC MAAN**'s [press release](#) on "Arab women cry out for work but the government just talks".

Join the **PES in the Committee of the Regions**' [lunchtime debate](#) on "Fortress Europe: No way in? The EU in urgent need of a migration policy" on 11 December 2013, Committee of the Regions.

Read the **Progressive Economy**'s [newsletter](#).

Mental Health Europe has launched a [short documentary](#) on getting young people with mental health problems into employment.

Read the **ETUC**'s [news](#).

Agenda

12-13 December: European Year for Citizens 2013 closing conference, Vilnius (Lithuania)
16-17 December: SOLIDAR Social Economy Conference, Vienna

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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