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Advancing social justice in Europe and worldwide

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SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 20-12-2013



Building for Social Justice and Change in 2014

Over the last year, the consequences of the crisis that plagued us in 2012 continued. We are now seeing 120 million people living in or at risk of poverty in Europe, 26 million people unemployed – with youth unemployment rising to more than 50% in Greece and Spain - and a similar number of people who cannot live from the income they earn. In addition, the natural catastrophe in the Philippines reminded us of our weakness against the forces of nature, and highlighted again the dreadful consequences that man-made climate change can wreak. Recent developments like yesterday's police raid on the offices of our Egyptian partner ECESR confirm that the overall SOLIDAR focus on the promotion of Human Rights and Freedom of Association is the right one and will be kept up in 2014.

Witnessing the lack of social justice, increasing inequalities, social exclusion and poverty, encourages us to continue working for real policy change - demanded by people living inside and outside of Europe - policy change that promotes a more social Europe and more global justice.

SOLIDAR will continue in 2014 to work on promote social progress, learning societies, social protection and freedom of association. These are the building blocks for a stronger social Europe that will be able to better respond to the concerns, needs and expectations of the people living inside and outside Europe. We urge all progressive forces to continue to build up a real civil society at EU level and strong partnerships and alliances between the trade union movement and progressive political parties to realise this change that we so desperately need to happen.

In May 2014, the European elections "of all risks" taking place provide an opportunity to mobilise for real change. Associations, NGOs, CSOs and the networks that connect them can build the bridge between the European institutional level and European citizens and can mobilise the people living in Europe to take action, go and vote for progressive change!

In the SOLIDAR Secretariat we are proud working with and for our members and partners and we will continue doing so in the New Year.

Hoping you can enjoy the Christmas break!
Season's greetings and a progressive new year!

International

SOLIDAR condemns violation of the freedom of association of our Egyptian partner ECESR

In the night of 18 December, the Egyptian police raided the headquarters of the [Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights](#) (ECESR), kidnapping a photographer and two volunteers - their location remains unknown. In addition the contents of the center were looted and computers and documents seized. SOLIDAR, a European network of 60 organisations, strongly condemns this violation, supports the Arab Network for Development (ANND) in their call for solidarity and urges the European Commission and European External Action Service to take immediate action.

Freedom of association and peaceful assembly are the fundamental cornerstones of democratic systems, are important demands the Egyptian people came to the streets for and are key to ensuring economic, social and cultural rights such as the right to decent work and social protection. SOLIDAR will be closely working with the ECESR, our partner in the Social Justice in the Middle East and North Africa network, to monitor the situation and to resolve this matter. [Read more...](#)

Read the statements of our partners [ECESR](#) and [ANND](#).

Social Affairs

Closing event of the European Year 2013: Towards a democratic and more inclusive European Citizenship

Last week, the closing conference of the European Year of Citizens took place in Vilnius. The event gathering over 300 people highlighted the work realized by the [Alliance](#) of 62 European networks and more than 4000 individual organisations to promote the idea of a more open, inclusive and participative Europe. SOLIDAR has been actively contributing and Secretary General Conny Reuter addressed to the plenary on behalf of the Alliance on the value of civil dialogue.

The recommendations prepared by the [European Year of Citizens Alliance](#) and to which SOLIDAR contributed to a great extent – were handed over by the Alliance Chair Jean-Marc Roissant to Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, who committed to take them into consideration in the preparation of the final report for this European Year published by the European Commission. [Read more...](#)

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