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solidarity is peoples' power
towards an international campaign
of solidarity to the Greek people



"I've been engaged with issues of external debt for 35 years, and I can tell you that never in the past did I see a national economy shrinking to such a degree and for such a long time span... such a big shrinkage cannot possibly continue for long in any democratic society".

Charles Dalara, representative of IIF (International Finance Institute) interview to the National Service of the «Voice of America», 7.12.2012

"Four years after the onset of the great crisis shaking the western economies, one of the most important special economists in the planet, Olivier Blanchard, manager of the research section of IMF, released a study, in which he admits that the IMF, and with it all the European leaders, the economic ministers of the Commission and the European Central Bank, made a serious mistake to their calculations. They underestimated the catastrophic consequences of the austerity policies they imposed to the extremely indebted countries".

Arnaud Bouillin & Laurent Neumann, magazine MARIANNE, 18.01.2013

Dear friends,

when the very representatives of lenders to Greece, both of the private sector (i.e. of the international banking system) and of the IMF, admit the unprecedented social disaster and the huge danger for democracy entailed by the successive and wrong "shock therapies" to Greece, every further description of the social and humanitarian crisis which is also sharpened at a very speedy pace in our country would seem needless.

Nevertheless, the reason we address you and the international public opinion is to give you information from our viewpoint, that is of those resisting the social winters of the memoranda. To inform not only for the magnitude of the disaster, but for the various activities of social solidarity developed by the Greek people, as an integral part of the struggle for the overthrow of austerity policies and of the emergency regime imposed by the Troika and the successive governments of the last few years.

The above mentioned **have transformed our country into a space of unprecedented social experimentation, followed by an effort to gradually spread it to the rest of the EU** (at least) **countries** in order to overcome their systemic crisis. A space of experimentation that introduces inside the

EU, policies applied, up to now, by the rich North and the capitalist metropolis to the poor South and the peripheries of the world.

We feel that the experiment and the struggles of the Greek people, as of every other, are nothing but a part of our common struggle against the social Armageddon and the barbarity of the austerity packages promoted everywhere, for the working people, the youth, the pensioners, the women, the small businesses and the low middle class, the peasants, the immigrants. We perceive solidarity and mutual-assistance amongst us as a necessary condition for every people to be able, at least, to stand on its feet. On its feet in order to stand up fighting the causes and against the consequences of the crisis, to resist the dissolution of the social state and the plunder of the labour and political rights won with struggles during the whole past century and more.

At the same time as the movement tries to safeguard the means for survival, **the solidarity movement tries to build another future, another alternative proposal for all society.** The development of new forms of peoples' self organisation, through structures of social solidarity springing everywhere at the most different fields, build the potential of another paradigm, not

only as to the exit from the crisis in favour of the peoples, but also in favour of another type of organising, through a deep radical democratic social transformation. We consider that sharing this experience is an equally important side and contribution to our common struggles.

The size of the offensive inflicted on us is huge, thus, to paraphrase one of the central slogans of the solidarity movement in our country, "we cannot leave any people alone in their fight

against the crisis". Informing you therefore for the tragic social reality of the memoranda and for the situation and the movement for social solidarity to Greece, **we address every social, tradeunion, political collective and organization, every group, even a company of friends or an individual citizen, asking your participation and activism for the development of an international campaign of Solidarity to Greece**, through the support of specific actions.

4 years of memoranda - 4 years of social dissolution, or, how can a European country be turned into a third world country

The landscape of the social disaster that has taken place in our country in the course of the last few years, as a result of successive austerity measures and of the dissolution of every remaining features of a welfare state, is rightly described by many, as third worldly.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment in our country has risen to nightmare levels, **corresponding only to historical periods that followed huge national or war disaster**. According to official data¹, concealing though a big part of reality, unemployment was almost trippled between 2009 – 2012. In 2009 the percentage of registered unemployment was 9,5%, in 2010 was 12,5%, in 2011 increased to 17,7% and in October of 2012 rocketed to 26,8%. Registered unemployed rose from 18,9% in September of 2011 to 26% in September of 2012, the percentage of increase being 38%, while the number reached **1.295.203** persons. In the course of one year 356.495 people lost their jobs, while 60.000 businesses closed due to the crisis². It is calculated that every month 30.000 people lose their jobs. From the total of the



1. See "Income and living conditions of Households Research" (on the basis of incomes of 2010), ΕΛΣΤΑΤ, November 2012, here http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-livingcond/content/LivingConditionsInGreece_1112.pdf and "Social aspects of the Greek Drama and the struggle for a way out", 14.01.2013, in http://international.koel.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=178:social-aspects-of-the-greek-drama-and-the-struggle-for-a-way-out-1412013&catid=17:against-imf-eu&Itemid=13

2. Savvas Robolis, "Time for internal regroupment: The mistakes of the Troika and the conditions for the necessary development", Newspaper Ta Néa, 26-4-2012.

unemployed, only about 200.000 receive a meagre unemployment benefit (between 180 – 468 €) for a period of 5 to 12 months, depending on the case. According to a research of the Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants (ΓΣΕΒΕΕ) «almost 40% of the households have at least one unemployed person in the family»³. IMF foresees that unemployment will increase in Greece more, but despite that it demands the dismissal of another 27.000 of the public servants in 2013⁴.

YOUTH – LONG TERM UNEMPLOYMENT – EMIGRATION

Youth is the greatest victim of the crisis and of recession. Unemployment of young people up to 25 years old, is at 56,4%, figuring now in the first position of the EU, while women's unemployment ranges to 30,1%. According to a report of the EU, in the period 2008- 2011 the danger for poverty and social exclusion for the youth increased in Greece by 6%-7%, the highest percentages in the EU, along with Spain, that suffer mass youth unemployment too⁵.

With the **long term unemployment** (above 12 months) to range to 80% in Greece, according to the same research, many young unemployed but also young employed people find it sensible to seek work out of the country. A research of ADECCO⁶ shows that 49% of those asked, of whom 30% unemployed for more than 2 years, does proactively seek work abroad, while 3% have already accepted a proposal. At the same time, more than half of those questioned (53%) stated that they have decided to leave Greece as soon as they find employment in another country. The research imprints the strength of the tendency of the young people, that is of the most energetic productive portion of the country, to emigrate out of Greece as an immediate result of the recession caused by the application of the memoranda.



AXING OF SALARIES & PENSIONS

Sky high unemployment percentages, are complemented with **sharp decrease in salaries and pensions**. Since 2010 and up until today, wages and pensions have fallen between 35-50%,

3. ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research «Income – Households spending» 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280

4. Data from the Report of the IMF as published in "Progress – but with many questionmarks- sees the IMF for Greece", 18 Jan. 2013, <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231231218>

5. Data from the report of the European Commission for employment and social developments in Europe, as published in "The biggest victims: Unemployment and poverty are the price the young in Europe pay for the crisis", in.gr, Brussels, 08 Jan. 2013, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231229586>

6. Data from a research of Adecco, "Company providing services of labour force" (sic.), as published in "Unemployment sends the young abroad: Almost half of the Greeks in productive age seek employment abroad", in.gr, <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231227353>.

while “93,1% of households has suffered income decrease in the course of the crisis” with the average of decrease of family income to be 38% in relation with 2009⁷. Between 2008-2011⁸ real wages shrunk in Greece by 12%, while the average available income of the households decreased in nominal terms by 13%. According to an annual report of OECD for 2011, the wages marked a record of fall of 25,3% in Greece, which is the greatest decrease amongst the 34 countries-members of OECD⁹.

Additionally, since 2012, according to memorandum II, the basic monthly wage (gross) decreased by an additional 22%, from 751€ to 586 for those over 25 years old, while for those under 25 it declined by 32%, going from 751€ to 511€, that is the net wages fell to 427€¹⁰, with the real fall of salaries in 2012 to be calculated to 30%. Thus, with the hour remuneration to fall to 2,7€, formally the wages turned back in the levels of 2005, while the real purchasing power of the average wages receded in the levels of 2003 and of the lower wage fell to the level of the 1970's.



Pensioners demonstrate against pension-cut, 2009.

DISOLUTION OF WORKERS RIGHTS AND OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY

Moreover, the abolition of collective agreements brought about a violent flexibility of employment conditions and almost **the dissolution of every institutional frame for the protection of labor rights**, bringing the speedy increase of employers' arbitrariness and violations, such as the non payment of wages to employees and non payment of the contributions to the social security funds. According to data from Work Inspection Service, (January 2013)¹¹, the number of employees remaining unpaid for periods 2-5 months has reached half million. The Commission of Trade Union Freedom of the International Labour Organisation, in a paper it published on work relations in Greece, states that “the changes in labor relations represent an overt violation of the fundamental principles and rights protected by International Labour Conventions 87 (protection of trade union freedom) and 98 (protection of free collective bargaining and collective agreements).”¹²

Moreover, the memoranda governments are spending the deposits of the Social Insurance Funds at the servicing of the lending agreements, which has resulted

7. ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research «Income – Households spending” 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280

8. Data from the report of the European Commission for employment and social developments in Europe, as published in “The biggest victims: Unemployment and poverty are the price the young in Europe pay for the crisis”, in.gr, Brussels, 08 Jan. 2013, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231229586> Note that steep cuts in salaries and pensions started applying since 2011.

9. OECD, “Dive of incomes, rise of taxes in Greece”, Newspaper, Τα Νέα, 26-4-2012.

10. Christina Kopsini, “The way lower wages are formed”, Newspaper Καθημερινή, 21 November 2012, στο http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_economy_2_21/11/2012_502352 and <http://www.tax-profit.gr/forologika-popular/235-Τα-Αποτελέσματα-των-νέων-αλλαγών-στις-εργασιακές-σχέσεις.html>

11. Data from labour Inspection Service, as given in research of Mega TV, 11 January 2013, <http://www.megatv.com/megagegonota/article.asp?catid=27369&subid=2&pubid=30317641>

12. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---elconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_193260.pdf



Strikers at the METRO train depot during the recent 8 days strike by the transport unions which ended with a court injunction, 2013.

in the **levelling of the social security system and of the pensions** in Greece.

Social Security Funds were obliged to buy, with their deposits, the bonds of Greek State, and to subsequently participate in the haircut of the bonds (PSI February 2012), with a resulting loss of 53% in nominal value, and over 70% in real value. From the foreseen 700-800 mil. euro the Social Security Funds would gain as annual revenues from interest and yields, after the PSI they will earn as low as 120-160 mil. euros. This renders the viability of the Social Security Funds as well as their ability for payment of pensions doubtful, and leads to even bigger increase of insurance contributions of the employees at the time when the contribution of the employers falls or even is abolished. This is already obvious on the successive changes in the system of social security, with the shrinking or the abolition of many insurance rights, **the increase of the pension age** even more, initially to 65 for men and women, and since 1.1.2013 to the age of 67, the lowering of pensions and the limiting or abolition of social benefits. Between 2010-2012, there have been cuts in pensions with a total lowering that reaches up to 40% for some of the pension categories¹³, while from 1.1.2013 a further decrease in pensions is foreseen, for pensions above 1000€, by a percentage of 5 - 20% (dependent on the scale)¹⁴.

TAX-PLUNDER

The result of commitment for the payment of loans and interests, is **the increase of direct and indirect taxes** and the continuous and multifaced **tax plunder** of the popular incomes – increase of VAT up to 27%, imposition of a “solidarity tax” (sic) to public servants and free entrepreneurs, extra tax for all real estate property (including houses)”, etc., while on the contrary the already low taxation of distributed profits for companies being 25% in 2009 has fallen gradually to 20%, and as from January of 2013 it is falling even more, to reach 10%. Thus, the waged and pensioners paid in 2011 the 55,5% of the direct taxes, a sum of 7,1 bil. euro, while the companies paid only 28,1%, that is 3,6 bil. euro. According to General Confederation of Labour: “Tax burden of wage-earners and pensioners in Greece increased again in 2011 and reached 35,6% of their gross incomes, when in the rest member-states of the EU the average receded to the 31,7%”¹⁵. The same is maintained in the report of OECD for 2011, underlying that a four member family paid 37,8% of its income in 2011 for serving taxes and social security contributions, a sum 12% higher than the average of the countries-members of the Organisation¹⁶. Thus, “49% of the popula-

13. Leonidas Stergiou «Decreases of 40% to pensions after the cuts” Newspaper Καθημερινή, 4-03-2012, http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_economy_1_04/03/2012_474630

14. Newspaper Τα Νέα, “Decrease of 5-20% to pensions over 1000 euro as from Jan. 1st 2013”, 17-12-2012, <http://www.tanea.gr/oikonomia/article/?aid=4776110>

15. ΓΣΕΕ, Press Release – Provocative broadening of tax injustices against wages and pensions. 5.12.2012, <http://www.gsee.gr/news/print.php?id=1967>

16. OECD, “Dive of incomes, rise of taxes in Greece”, Newspaper, Τα Νέα, 26-4-2012.

tion states that they cannot meet their tax obligations"¹⁷.

Despite these, new tax measures are imposed in 2013 for servicing the commitments to the Troika for the collection of an additional 2,5 bil. euro. A sum that will certainly be increased, since there is a fall of 7% in the state income in relation to the target the Troika and the government had set for January of 2013, and there is a 16% fall in relation to January 2012¹⁸.

Note that the only increased state income come from deductions (increased taxation) from wages and pensions, but there was a noteworthy fall of 15% in the state income from VAT, due to the collapse of consumption of heating petrol and the non payment of VAT by the entrepreneurs¹⁹.

RISING COST OF LIFE – HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT ELECTRICITY

While one would expect that a 5year recession would lead to a prices fall, on the contrary, **the increases in prices of basic products and social goods** are continuing. While the vice minister for Development announced jubilliant, that the prices in foodstuff and drinks went down by 0,54% in 2012, the General Indicator of Consumer Prices registered an increase of 0,8%²⁰, while the IMF estimates inflation of 0,5% for 2012, 1,2% for 2013 and 0,4% in 2014²¹. A characteristic example is the increase in the price of electricity. Since July 2008 the price has increased 15 times, with the total increase surpassing 44%. More concretely, after the imposition of memoranda (2010) and in the framework of the lending agreements, power price increased in January 2011 by 13,7%, January 2012 by 9,2% and January 2013 by 8,8%, while the liberalization of the electricity price is foreseen as from July of 2013. Moreover, VAT on power consumption from 9% in March of 2010 rose to 13% in January of 2011²². Also, in the course of 2012 and according to data of the Ministry of Development, "increases in the sector of electricity, heating petrol and solid fuel reached 27,1%²³, while a new 10% increase in the price of electricity was imposed (without calculating the burden from change of scale and use, which brings it up to 23%) in January 2013. These tragic price hijacking, combined with the special tax on real

No PAY protest
outside the
parliament,
2011



17. ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research «Income – Households spending» 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280

18. in.gr, «A hole» of 305 mil. euro in the budget revenue in January», 07.02.2013, <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231234178>

19. *ibid.*

20. in.gr, «Out of calculations...», 07.02.2013, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231234159>

21. Data from the Report of the IMF as published in "Progress – but with many questionmarks- sees the IMF for Greece", 18 Jan. 2013, <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231231218>

22. "Permanent Scandal: 17 increases DEH has imposed" http://24wro.blogspot.com/2011/04/17_04.html#ixzz2IEZKP7B

23. in.gr, «Out of calculations...», 07.02.2013, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231234159>



The public power company's trade union at a general strike, 2011.

estate property, which is included in the electricity bills, make "40% of households to be overdue to their other obligations to the state and the banks, while 50% does not have adequate income for covering the obligations (electricity, water, energy, loans)"²⁴. According to mr. Arth. Zervos, president and managing director of DEH (State Electricity Company) in 2011 DEH proceeded to more than 400.000 arrangements, while for 2012

the number of arrangements is estimated to surpass 700.000²⁵. At the same time, DEH interrupts power to 30.000 households every month due to overdue electricity bills, with many of those remain unpaid (and without electricity) for long time.

PAUPERRIZATION

The dramatic increase in poverty, to a level that makes Greece a champion of poverty in Europe, is no surprise. In 2005, under the poverty line (i.e. under the 60% of the national average of available income) was 21% of the population, or 2.088.701 persons²⁶. In 2010, this percentage, according to ELSTAT²⁷, rose to 21,4% or 2.341.000 persons, that is it increased by barely 0,4%. In 2011, according to Eurostat²⁸, it was the 22,9% of people living under the poverty line, that is it increased by 1,5%. Therefore, in one only memorandum year, (2010–2011) the pace of increase of poverty quadrupled. And this is despite the lowering of the calculated poverty line, due to its calculation on the basis of the average of available income. That is, when the last is falling²⁹ the poverty line falls also, presenting thus as "non poor", households unable in fact to cover their basic needs. "Essentially, we are in front of the establishment of an economic

situation for most households, which leads us to the "economy-society of ½", pushing to the margins and to the limits for survival the other half of the population"³⁰. According to Eurostat data for 2011, the percentage of the Greek population which is unable to cover the basic goods and needs for survival rose to 15,2% as against 8,8%



24. ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research «Income – Households spending” 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280

25. “They find it hard to pay: Over 700.000 arrangements DEH made for overdue bills in 2012”. in.gr, 07-01-2013, in <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=12312292>

26. Research Eurostat 2009, as published in “Steady above 20% is poverty in Greece», Newspaper Κυριακήτικη Ελευθεροτυπία, 31.05.2009

27. “Steep aggravation of standard of living and increase of poverty since 2010: Shocking data from ΕΛΣΤΑΤ”, in.gr, 02-11-2012, in <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231220484>

28. Research Eurostat 2012, as published in “The threat of social exclusion: In the margins of poverty 3,4 million Greeks”, in.gr, 03 Dec. 2012, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231224846>

29. The average decrease of family income moved to 38% between 2009-2012 (See. “Drop of Wages - Pensions”) and brought very significant decrease of the available income on which the poverty line is calculated.

30. ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research: “Income-Household spending”, 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280

in the EU while, according to a research of ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, this percentage rose to 20% in 2012. Living near the poverty line in 2008 was 28,1% of the population, while in 2011 it rose to 31%, with poverty threatening 3.403.000 persons³¹, and with a tendency to increase to 3.900.000 at the end of 2012, according to the annual report of the General Confederation of Labour³². In comparison, the corresponding percentage for the EU of 27 was 16,4% in 2010.

RECESSION

All the above led to the dramatic fall of internal demand between 2010-2012, in a percentage of about 25%, returning to the levels of 2000, while it is calculated that the “purchasing power of Greeks has fallen by 50%”³³, data testifying to the shrinking of Greek economy due to the memoranda and the austerity policies. During the period 2009-2012, GDP fell in total by 25%, while a further decrease of 8% is expected for 2012, and a moreover 4,2% for 2013³⁴. Recession has led to the increase of the real divergence of the Greek economy from the average of EU, annihilating the progress made in the course of the years 1995-2007. More specifically, in 2009, per capita GDP in Greece corresponded to the 92% of the Community average, while in two years only, until 2011, it fell by ten units, to the 82%. Between 2009-2010 the average monthly expense of the households marked a dive of 9,3% (in real prices, taking into account inflation)³⁵, while according to the research of ΓΣΕΒΕΕ during the recession «70 % of those questioned stated that they have cut backs even in foodstuff items, 80% in transport, 92% in clothing and 83,2% in the heating of the household. Almost 90% of the population has made cuts to whatever is related to expenses of “entertainment and handling of free time” (restaurants, cafeterias, cinema, travelling, bakeries). Even more, 42,5% of households stated that they buy products of a lesser quality»³⁶.

Unemployed and Precarious workers union demonstrate in Heraklion-Crete, 2011.



31. Research Eurostat 2012, as published in “The threat of social exclusion: In the margins of poverty 3,4 million Greeks”, in.gr, 03 Dec. 2012, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231224846>

32. INE - ΓΣΕΕ, Greek Economy and Employment, Annual Report, 2012, <http://www.inegsee.gr/sitefiles/studies/EKTHESH%2014.pdf>

33. in.gr, “Out of calculations...”, 07.02.2013, <http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231234159>

34. Data from the Report of the IMF as published in “Progress – but with many questionmarks- sees the IMF for Greece”, 18 Jan. 2013, <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231231218>. Also, the IMF calculates in the same report the total cumulative decrease of GDP to 19,5%.

35. “Steep aggravation of standard of living and increase of poverty since 2010: Shocking data from ΕΛΣΤΑΤ”, in.gr, 02-11-2012, in <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231220484>

36. IME ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research: “Income – Household spending”, 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280

COLLAPSE OF PUBLIC HEALTH CARE



Health Sector
Unions
demonstrate
against hospital
closures and
public health
services axing.

The huge unemployment, the spreading of poverty, the radical cuts of the expenses for the health services and the imposition of fee for accessing, have created conditions of a collapse of the system of public health care. According to the data of Doctors without Borders³⁷, covering up to 2011, the funding of public hospitals was cut by 40%, while in the same period the demand for hospital care increased by 24%! At the same time that the economic downgrading increases the number of citizens using the Public Health System, **the long term unemployment entails the exclusion for accessing the public health services** for hundreds of thousands of people. Moreover, since 2011, the ticket for entering the public health services increased from 1 euro to 5 euros, without exemptions of social groups, while from 2013 a ticket of 25 euros will be demanded for entry in a public hospital.

UNDERMINED HEALTH CONDITIONS

Cuts have led to radical decrease of the staff and to the undermining of the technical infrastructure of the health units. Some peripheral public hospitals and health units closed down, positions of doctors and nurses remain empty and as a result the sections under-function, while there is a lack of medicines which pushes even to re-sterilisation of gauze bandages, for re-use. Even worse, recently there have been shortages of food for the hospitalised patients, forcing some hospitals to reduce the quantity of the meals. All the above are the consequence of the compensation policies (regarding the memoranda cuts) of the “cheaper solutions”, which do not take into account the painful cost for the health of the citizens and provide as a “reward” **the undermining of quality and sufficiency of the health services** to a dangerous degree, as stressed by the representatives of the international health organisations.

According to Mark Sprenger, director of the European Centre for Prevention and Control of Diseases (ECDC), “there are fewer now doctors and nurses to care for more patients with hospitals not disposing cash for supplies, **dangers are emerging even on issues of basic hygiene**”. The percentage of hospital infections increased in Greece, with as high as 2.800 deaths in a single year, which was commented to Reuters by the representative of WHO in the EE Roberto Bartolini, who stressed that “cuts in resources and personnel render very difficult the control of infections and of hygiene rules”. Moreover, according to a statement of R. Papadopoulou, representing the Doctors Without Borders³⁸ in the Guardian, in the period January-October of 2011, the incidents of HIV infection for users of vein narcotics increased by 1250%, which is attributed to the drastic limitation of programmes for

37. Doctors Without Borders: AIDS, malaria and TB reap, 16-03-2012, in <http://www.pheme.gr/article.aspx?id=3284#.T20AoCUXRvw.facebook>

38. Doctors Without Borders: AIDS, malaria and TB reap, 16-03-2012, in <http://www.pheme.gr/article.aspx?id=3284#.T20AoCUXRvw.facebook>



free syringes. Also there is an exaltation of the incidents of malaria in the Southern Greece, for the first time in 40 years, while there is a steep increase of TB in groups of economic migrants.

CHILDREN'S POVERTY

Children are also one of the most vulnerable categories of the population struck by the crisis. In 2009, based on Eurostat, 439.000 children (up to 17) were living under the poverty line in Greece, i.e. the percentage of **children's poverty** was 23%, while for the total of Europe was 20,5%. The percentage of children living in poverty conditions increased in 2010 to 23,7%, according to the research of ELSTAT and is 2,3 units higher than the corresponding percentage of the general population³⁹. According to UNICEF, between 2009-2012 the living conditions and the spread of poverty concerning children, have steeply worsened. Two examples of the tragic conditions of tens of thousands of children:

a. That 37,1% of the children living under the poverty line, live in households stating **unable to provide adequate heating**, and

b. the incidents of **pupils collapsing from undernutrition**, symptoms of conditions of absolute poverty, led many schools to offering free small meals.

Last December, the Ministry of Education announced the safeguarding of funds from European programmes for the battle against poverty (sic) concerning the offer of milk and fruit free of charge, for 250.000 children in schools where such phenomena may often be encountered.

The consequence of all the above, according to a study of European Professors for the World Bank, is: «For the first time after 1950 there is a registered **increase of infantile mortality in our country!** Since 2008, when Greece entered a condition of economic recession, infantile mortality rose to 3,8 (by 1.000 children up to one year of age) as compared with 2,7 that was before the crisis»⁴⁰. This fact, as stressed, "pushes down also the life expectancy for the whole population of the country, which is expected to be reduced by two to three years", while they underline that this "is not connected so much with health care as with the living standard of Greeks, which are hit violently during the last four years"⁴¹.

SCHOOLS AND HOUSES WITHOUT HEATING

Since 2010, the year the data of the before mentioned researches about poverty, the **inability to safeguard heating** has been transformed to a major social problem. Already in 2010, the percentage of the population that stated economic

39. UNICEF, "The condition of children in Greece, 2012", Greek National Committee Unicef, March 2012, in <http://www.unicef.gr/news/2012/n120403.php> and "Steep aggravation of standard of living and increase of poverty since 2010: Shocking data from ΕΛΣΤΑΤ", in.gr, 02-11-2012, in <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231220484>

40. Fydanidou Elena, «Children, the first victims of the crisis" Newspaper To Βήμα, 18.11.2012, <http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=484475>

41. ibid.



inability for adequate heating was as high as 18,7%⁴². The continuous increases led to the **overdoubling of heating petrol prices** since 2009, due to increase of taxation directed for the payment of loans, resulting to hundreds of thousands of households, apart from those

living under the poverty line, to be unable to cover the heating expenses. In 2009, the average price per liter was 0,57 euro, in 2010 was 0,71 euro, 2011 increased to 0,91 euro, while in 2012 it reached 1,37 euro. The consumption of petrol

fell in the course of one year, from the end of 2011 until Dec. 2012, by 75%, annulling all forecasts for the increase of revenues from the equation of the taxation of heating petrol with that of car petrol, and showing the failure and the impasse of the policies followed⁴³. Moreover, the turn of the citizens to other sources of energy and heating, among which wood, resulted to the intense re-appearance of the smog cloud in many cities of Greece, and the increase of thoughtless and uncontrolled woodcut **with catastrophic environmental consequences**.

The most serious consequence of the rises in petrol prices, is the threat for **schools to remain without heating**, when municipalities in mountain areas state that they are unable to cover the existing needs with the funds provided. Even though they have fixed the thermostats in lower temperature, they ring the warning bell for 3.500 schools that may be forced to close due to inability to cover the cost of their heating. This tragic condition and the protests of thousand of citizens in mountaineous municipalities of Northern Greece, forced, on this matter also the Ministry of Education to announce (beginning of January) the provision of 60 more millions of euros for school heating. This is a sum that can cover partially the problem, if one thinks that since the beginning of the year, the ministry has provided 80 million euros for school heating, which were consumed in almost three months of mild cold, while the two colder months of the year, February and March, are ahead.

THE DANGER FOR SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION OF SOCIAL COHESION

In Greece, the structures of social services and of the welfare state never reached the European standards of welfare state. They always remained weak and problem-



atic, even before the introduction of neoliberalism (beginning of 1990s) or of the barbarous austerity programmes and of the memoranda. This rendered other forms of social bonds in our country, e.g. the family, a complementary but stable and socially grounded safety and solidarity net, representing a serious barrier to phenomena of deprivation and social exclusion, especially for the poorer sectors of the popula-

42. "Steep aggravation of standard of living and increase of poverty since 2010: Shocking data from ΕΛΣΤΑΤ", in.gr, 02-11-2012, in <http://news.in.gr/economy/article/?aid=1231220484>

43. See also "Tax-planner" and "Rising Cost of Life – Households without power" (pp. 6-7).

tion. In the present circumstances, the combination of the dissolution of any public social services that had remained and the mass and violent pauperisation (unemployment – tax-robbery) of a large part of the population, deducts from the families the possibilities to play this role. This fact sharpens the preceding **disarray of the social cohesion**, with a characteristic example the speedy increase of the number of homeless, who have surpassed the 20.000 (data concern 2011). More than half of the homeless live in Athens and Piraeus, where in the two years 2009-2011 their number has increased by 25%⁴⁴.

IMMIGRANTS – RACISM

The second equally important sample of the rupture of social cohesion, concerns the even more negative environment against the immigrants and the refugees. An environment of violent marginalisation, assuming various forms, from the ban in the use of the very few legal rights (e.g. applying for asylum) and the open repression and xenophobia from the side of the Greek state and the governments (police pogroms and arrests on the basis of their looks, detention camps with very poor conditions of habitation)⁴⁵, up to open racist attacks and murders of fascist gangs with the tolerance, if not cover up, of police and of the judicial authorities. The fact that the systematic registration of violent racist attacks, from the services of human rights of the UN and of Greece, started as late as the last year, is one more indication for the exaltation of the phenomenon. According to this record collection, between October 2011 and December 2012, more than 200 racist attacks were carried out⁴⁶. The research does not state how many of those were mortal, but in the course of the last 3 months 5 murders of immigrants have taken place. The sharpening of the crisis, the hardening of violence (economic and repressive) to the people and the divisive policies for those hit by the crisis, as well as the non punishment of the perpetrators of those attacks and the favourable treatment they enjoy from the Media, create a fertile environment for the slip of the popular rage towards racism and the reinforcement of social barbarity and fascism.

Picture from the "Xenios Zeus" police anti-migrants' "cleansing" operation, summer 2011.



44. M. Kontoroussis, "Steep Increase of Homeless in Greece in a course of Two Years", 29.03.2012, http://news247.gr/eidiseis/ragdaia_aukshsh_twn_astegwn_sthn_ellada_mesa_se_duo_xronia.1712500.html

45. As the Human Rights Watch states, in the sweeping operations «Xenios Dias», 50000 immigrants were arrested, and only 3.700 were kept, due to the lack of papers or other petty-delinquencies. We remind, also, that Greece has repeatedly been convicted in international human rights courts for the inhuman conditions of the immigrants in police stations and concentration camps and thus the majority of the Eurozone countries do not apply the Dublin 2 convention, stoppin to "re-push" migrants without papers in Greece, when this is the country of entry in the EU.

46. See. http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/News/2013/130201Greece_en.asp

4 years of resistance and solidarity: None will be alone in the crisis!



«From being a gentleman, from having my own shop, my own business, I reached the point of going to Agios Sostis Church's soup kitchens. I had gone mad, my psychology had sunk to the bottom... Now I offer to the others, but also to myself, this gives me pleasure, keeps me alive. Everybody contributes from the little they have. We are at the end, but from this end we try to help each other. Here we are all one family, the Club's premises has become my second home».

Mr. Tassos, volunteer
in the Solidarity Club of Neos Kosmos⁴⁷

During the 4 years of memorandum plunder, the Greek people resisted, rejecting to become the guinea pig of the “shock therapies”, belying proactively the plans and the expectations of the economic and political elites in Greece and internationally. From Crete up to Evros and from Rhodes up to Florina, thousands of people, men and women, young and aged, natives and migrants, of different political persuasions and ideological beliefs, but people persuaded that the memoranda policies must be overthrown they have created, along with moments of social eruptions and struggle, a mass movement of resistance and solidarity, by shouting and by practicing the slogan “**None will be alone in the crisis**”.

Starting with the people's assemblies of the squares and the neighbourhoods committees of the NO PAY movement, in the period 2009-2011 there was already a mass movement that resisted the road tolls and the increase in the tickets of public transport. After the mass occupation of the squares, in the summer of 2011, the first expression of the solidarity movement, which strengthened its rooting in the neighbourhoods, was the resistance to the extraordinary additional tax on housing property, and the organising of the rejection of its payment. This action of civil disobedience, which found allies in many left wing and progressive mayors, was developed in parallel with the blossoming of a whole galaxy of networks and structures of practical solidarity. Also the 10month strike of the Hellenic Steels (Chalyvourgia) workers and the huge movement of solidarity it rosed, represented one more important instant, giving a great impetus for the diffusion of the spirit and of the practices of solidarity all over the country.

The solidarity movement is now comprised of hundreds of self-organised collectives and initiatives, which carry out a varied activity in a series of fields. By trying initially to respond to the most sharp needs for survival and to the need for collective or-



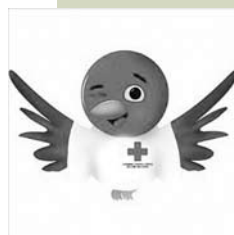
47. M. Gasparakis, “We are here to give hope”, Newspaper Αυγή, 21.10.2012, <http://www.avgi.gr/ArticleActionshow.action?articleID=722263>

organisation and starting from a specified field (e.g. health, food, education etc.), they gradually function as a social transformer and they extend their activities to other sectors. The main basis of these projects and ground for their activity is the neighbourhood and fundamental form of their function is the open assembly, of both those who organise, and those to whom this structure is addressed. The element of participation and self-organisation of these very people who have the need, is one of the main political aims of the solidarity work. It is by no accident that an important number of those active through these structures, are unemployed men and women, people who were found out of work (pensioners, pauperised small businessmen and lower middle-class) or workers in precarious labor relations. An informal network has been emerged among the various solidarity structures, defined either by geographical area of their enterprises, or by sector of activity (e.g. network of medical facilities), for the increase of their efficiency. A more recent development is the initiative of trade union agencies to develop their own solidarity structures for their members. This encounter of the solidarity movement with the trade unions, even if belated, can give another perspective and dynamic to the movement and to the outcome of social and political struggles in Greece. Below we give certain examples from the most basic sectors and practices of social solidarity.

SOCIAL CLINICS – PHARMACIES

In the sector of health there are **social clinics and pharmacies** that serve mainly the uninsured and unemployed people. Their function is supported exclusively by the volunteer work and donations of the simple people, usually only in kind. Some (very few and left-wing) municipalities also supported them by way of offering premises. A picture of the degree of mobilisation of the people can be drawn by the data of the Metropolitan Clinic of Ellinikon-Argyroupoli, in which there were 60 volunteers active in the first months of its function (spring of 2012) while now there are 150. All decisions of the social clinics are taken in their general assemblies, with the equal participation of all, the medical specialised personnel and the unskilled volunteers, while there is effort to involve their patients, too.

A network of social clinics-pharmacies is already developed, trying to give immediate and practical solutions to phenomena of lack of medicins, vaccines etc. through the collection and reuse of drugs not needed by the initial users. Data from three social clinics from the south up to the north of the country, register in fact the increasing size of the need for medical and pharmaceutical treatment. The Social Clinic of Rethymnon (Crete) served 780 persons in 2008-9, 1.100 in 2010 and 1.580 in 2011. The Metropolitan Clinic of Ellinikon (south-east Athens area) since its inception in February 2012 until August, served 1.200 incidents while between September 2012 and November, it served 1800. Correspondingly, the Social Clinic of Thessaloniki, between November 2011 and November 2012, had a total of 6.000 visits.



Ενώπιον σε ένα σύστημα
που εξοβελίζει τη ζωή
Στηρίζουμε!



εκδήλωση - συζήτηση για
το υπό καταδρόση δημόσιο Σύστημα Υγείας
&
το Κοινωνικό Ιατρείο Αλληλεγγύης
τη δημιουργία τη δράση, τους στόχους του
κιν/γράφος "Αλέξανδρος", Εθν. Δρόμος 1
Κυριακή 12/02/12, στις 11:00 π.μ.

Posters of the
Solidarity Clinic
of Piraeus and
of the Social Clinic
of Salonica
(bottom)



Social soup kitchen from the collective "the other man".

Collection of food donations outside a super market from the "solidarity's train" (Athens)



SOCIAL KITCHENS – FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In the area of food, a series of initiatives and practices have been developed. Along the **collective kitchens**, with actions for the unemployed, homeless but also solidarity cooking for workers' on strike, movements for the **collection and distribution of foodstuff have developed**, for households that cannot meet their needs for survival. In every case, the target is the participation and activation of the those very people who have the problem, the break of social isolation and individualisation of the problem, against despair, personal interest, social fragmentation that feeds fascist tendencies, for the strengthening of social cohesion and of the community spirit in every neighbourhood. Some examples of such interventions are the Solidarity Network of Vyronas (Athens) which, in a period of half a year –it started July-August 2012– reached the point of supplying food to 240 families twice a month. The whole effort started from 4-5 persons, while now there are 30 persons active participating in its assembly. Also, the Solidarity Club of Neos Kosmos, one of the poor neighbourhoods of Athens, started gratis solidarity classes (for pupils) in September of 2011, to continue one year later with a social kitchen initially for 10 persons. Today (February 2013) it cooks for 45 people every day and provides 36 households with one bag of foodstuff twice a month. Another interesting example is the Participatory Table of Solidarity and Emancipation organised in Kavala (Northern Greece). The Participatory Table started in Christmas 2011. From the Easter of 2012 it functions every Friday evening and since last October has added a launch three times a week. Invited are all those in need, or who can contribute in any way (food, plates, tablecloths, participation in setting, cleaning etc.). Usually the foodstuff is guaranteed from donations, while the dinner is followed by music or talk of the table companions, so as to avoid being a mere charity but an act of socialisation and entertainment, too. The Participatory Table until now has covered the needs of 200 persons and as from the 10 persons who started organising it, now the base number of volunteers is 40, and they prepare the move to the provision of everyday lunch.

Solidarity4all
Network in
Trikala – without
Middlemen
initiative.

WITHOUT MIDDLEMEN MOVEMENT – SOCIAL GROCERY SHOPS

An important contribution to the cover of eating needs and against rising prices, is the so called "**potato movement**", or, the "**movement without middlemen**". Its practice is based in connecting directly the producers of agricultural produce with the consumers of the urban areas. The bypassing of mediators of the commercial circuits and of the supermarkets, gives the possibility to the producers to give their goods in better prices than those they would get from the merchants or the super-market and to the consumers to buy fresh products in prices much lower than those of the mar-



ket. The “potato movement” (as it was named after the first product distributed in this way, potatoes) represented a very successful practice which is now widely spread with hundreds of initiatives all over the country. The movement also emphasises the enhancement of local production and for the local needs, posing in practice the demand of food sovereignty and of a decentralised agricultural development. It emerged only one year ago, and it came at a moment when the pro-memoranda forces were threatening the people with food crisis in case people put in danger the bailout, causing a GRexit. This movement proved in practice their lies of the possibility of food starvation, by allowing agricultural product stocked in warehouses due to the unwillingness of the market-circuits to buy it, to appear and being distributed. Moreover it manifested practically another way for a collective response to the question of food distribution, and also represents a proposal for a participatory socialised economic restructuring. It resulted in the development of networks of producers-consumers, and it enhanced more permanent forms of direct disposition of goods through the **social grocery shops** or through **self-managed collective urban farms**. According to the research of ΓΣΕΒΕΕ “22% of households state that they were supplied basic goods through the “without middlemen” networks and 6% through social grocery-shops”⁴⁸. A small example for the popularity and the collective effort for organising distribution without mediators, is the Resistance and Solidarity Movement of Galatsi (Athens) which started in October of 2012 and has organised 4 distributions up to now. In the first on, they distributed goods worth 30.000 euros, to 650 households, while now they distribute goods worth about 50.000 euros responding to the needs of 1.250 households. There is a relevant increase in the number of participants. The effort started from a nucleus of 15 persons, in the first distribution 50 persons from the “benefitted” citizens were registered as volunteers. The collective consisting now by more than 140 members.



“Solidarity turns necessity into power”.
Immigrants’ Forum of Crete

FREE SHARING - SOCIAL ECONOMY

Parallel to these projects of alternative social economy, there is a series of others – some of them initiated in the pre-crisis period – which developed more during the last period. One such practice is the **free share bazaars**, which usually take place occasionally in squares with only few permanent structures. Other examples are the **local alternative money initiatives** and the **time-sharing groups**, as practices of direct and moneyless exchange of services. Before the crisis there were 2-3 “Time Sharring Banks” functioning as closed structures within their mother groups. After the memoranda, we have about 12, which follow diverse organising models. The most distinguishable difference from the former ones, is that the collectives that started them considered



48. ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, Research: “Income – Households spending”, 07.02.2013, http://www.gsevee.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=249:2013-02-07-09-33-09&catid=56:meletes&Itemid=280



Solidarity NYE (2012) party outside the gates of the Hellenic Chalivourgia factory in support of thr months' long strike of the steelworkers.

Poster of the recuperated and refunctioning under workers control factory of the "Industrial Metal Co" (2012).



them as a tool of organisation and resistance against the crisis, integrating them in the development of solidarity structures in the neighbourhoods, defending public spaces etc. Side by side to those, there is a series of **co-operatives**, from coffee shops and taverns, courier delivery companies and computer repair-shops to bookshops and agricultural co-operatives of unemployed women. These actual paradigms have contributed immensely to spreading the idea and the practices of socialised and self-managed forms of employment and solidarity economy. Up to November of 2012, 93 social enterprises have submitted their papers to register in the record of Ministry

of Labour all over the country, half of them in Athens. In the last 2 years, there is a development of social enterprises, not in the framework of simple co-operatives as they were in the previous years, but in the frame of work collectives as an answer to unemployment. An important difference is that the legal and formal elements may have the characteristics of a small-business, as provided by the institutional framework, but in essence they differ in practice in two respects. One is the form of organisation and management through a general assembly. The second is that through this model they propose a solidarity economy on the basis of building anti-structures and challenging the existing way of organising production, commerce, connecting it with the enhancement of the local economy. Finally, in February 12, the opening of the first self-managed factory took place, re-appropriated by its workers, the BIO.MET (Industrial Mettaeleutical) in Thessaloniki, formerly daughter company of Philkeram-Johnson.

SOCIAL EVENING CLASSES

Initiatives taken by unionised and unemployed teachers, by Associations of pupils' parents, and by volunteer students, have set up **solidarity lessons and social evening classes** for educational support of children coming from families that cannot afford the high fees of private auxilliary schools. Many of the social evening classes are organised through the common assembly of teachers, parents and pupils, while they stress that they don't aim at a substitution of the ailing public education, but at confronting the inequalities of an educational system that is shrinking and is dissolving under the policies of austerity, which sharpen class distinctions and compromises the opportunities for the children of the lower classes. The Solidarity School of Nikaia, one of the poor-



est working class municipalities of Piraeus, was created in this framework in March of 2012. There was an initiative of a group of teachers, which contacted the Local Union of Associations of Pupils' Parents, which embraced this project. In the first school year 50 children enrolled. In September it started with 25 teachers, 100 children that went up to 120 –and now there is a waiting list– and 25 volunteers for secretarial support etc., positions covered in rotation by the parents of the participating children.

ALTERNATIVE CULTURAL CLUBS

The development of dozens of **places and alternative social spaces** from autonomous citizens' initiatives, social movements and left wing and radical groups, that started more than a decade back, has created an informal network, which functioned as the hotbed for many of the ideas and practices mentioned above. Such spaces represent a new political culture of self-organisation. It embraces activities ranging from political to cultural. It connects various groups, initiatives, citizens committees etc., who use them as meeting spaces for their collective organisation and rooting in every neighbourhood. One of the most interesting projects is the Social Music Conservatory, an effort of music teachers, that started through a call in the twitter in February of 2012, for free lessons of music. Last year it functioned with 80 pupils in three different places – areas, while this year it spread to 5 spaces with 120 pupils, chosen from 1.000 children that applied, due to the lack of adequate teachers and spaces. In the Social Music Conservatory there are more than 50 teachers of music and about 30 volunteers for secretariat support, while teachers, pupils and parent participate in its assemblies. Three music groups of various music genres have been formed and facilitate solidarity music events in support of other solidarity initiatives.

LEGAL SUPPORT TEAMS

While the crisis loots the incomes and the properties of working class people and the lower petty-bourgeoisie, it strips them also of their rights, and as a result the people cannot defend themselves against this constant attack. **Groups of lawyers** have been formed, in several of the social clubs, in order to assist the ordinary citizen by providing free legal advice and support to workers who are unpaid or their labor rights and contracts are scraped, to people who cannot cope with their debt and mortgages, and against house evictions. In one month alone, accordingly to the experience of the legal support team of "Solidarity for All", the most common questions were around labor issues, pensions, immigrant-asylum justice, police arbitrariness and state repression, overdue payments to the income tax service and the electricity company (due to the ex-



Social Music Conservatory



Poster for a fundraising event for the "Solidarity Network of the 6th section of Athens – Mirmigi (ant)"

traordinary house taxation) and overindebted households (35% of the questions), while 25% were questions of workers proceeding to pension system.

IMMIGRANTS' SUPPORT

The experience of organising support **structures for immigrants** entering Greece through the offer of legal aid, basic health provision, Greek language classes etc., was to a great extent the prelude for the spread of the experience and know-how that produced solidarity work to be used to the ailing Greek people. Several of the structures made for the service of immigrants and refugees serve now a large number of Greek inhabitants. On the other side, all the structures of the social solidarity movement are open to any person in need of them, regardless religion, skin complexion, race or sexual orientation. The free character and the principle of equity

in the offer of solidarity, ventures the creation of a common space of meeting, of socialisation and of struggle of all those hit by the crisis, against the manipulating policies for the fragmentation of the poor that promotes social barbarism. The structures of immigrants' support continue their function, as part of the larger solidarity movement, intensifying their struggle against racism, countering the development of fascism.

Migrants' Open School of Piraeus.



For us, this broad and multifaced solidarity movement is not only about relief, but about the way to build another world, out of the rules of profit and the market. Against the destruction (even of the remnants) of the welfare state and of social cohesion, we reply with the creation of new solidarity structures, we build social relations of a new type, new neighbourhoods, new public spaces, the moulds of a generalised social change.

For us, solidarity is a political struggle, is the bonds of participation to our common struggles and not the philanthropic offer of those that have to those who have not. Is the self-activity and the organisation of all those in need, in order to stand in their feet and demand all that belongs to them.

For us, solidarity, people's self-organisation and the struggle for the political and social overthrow of the regimes and the system that produce such dire social conditions are three mutually-complementary pillars of our resistance and the roots for building a world beyond capitalism.

Solidarity for All

In this framework “Solidarity for All” was developed as a collective, seeking:

To **facilitate** the communication between all networks and structures of practical solidarity, as well as the exchange of experiences and “know-how” among them. “Solidarity for All” is an open collective, addressing everyone who is inspired by the triptych solidarity – resistance – self organisation. It does not seek either to express or to represent all this galaxy of projects, but it wishes to become a knot in a national level, that facilitates a common public space for meeting and communication of the networks and of the structures of practical solidarity.

To make, through our webpage www.solidarity-4all.gr, known and directly **accessible** and visible this extensive world of solidarity, to all the people and to every person who need it, everywhere in the country, through the information provided according to geographical location and fields of activity.

To **assist and serve** all the existing projects in any possible way (provision of materials and people, economic support, mutual cover of needs e.t.c.), as well as to assist to the sharing of existing experience and know-how in order to encourage and promote the creation of new ones, in geographical areas or thematic areas not covered.

To **disseminate** to all those hit by the crisis and the consequences of the memoranda aggression, the political concept that we must take our lives in our hands. That we cannot, but we also do not want substitute for the falling “welfare state”, but on the contrary, by giving our battle for the survival of a people and of a society, we demand everyones right to access to the rights and services belonging to all. For a life with dignity, we build unity of working and unemployed people, of nationals and migrants, of doctors and patients, of teachers and pupils, and through the solidarity we prove that we can live better and can create a more just and humane world.

To organise **solidarity campaigns of a national level**, in close communication with the local solidarity structures. One example is the current campaign “one bottle of olive-oil for every unemployed”, that asks olive-oil producers to supply any quantity they wish in barrels at the olive-mills, which will subsequently be processed through our own means and will go to the solidarity networks for distribution to households hit by unemployment and poverty in the urban centres.

To **promote the international campaign for Solidarity to the Greek People**, in a political and financial level, through mobilisations, international action days, economic support, support in medicines and foodstuff, horizontal connection of organisations or groups from abroad with structures and solidatiry networks in Greece.

“Solidarity for All” has the ambition to become one more pebble in the struggle for a life without austerity memoranda, poverty, exploitation, fascism and racism, striving to create the conditions for a radical policy for the overthrowing of the current regime and for social transformation.



Poster of the “Solidarity for All” initiative: A bottle of olive-oil for each unemployed”

International Solidarity Campaign to Greece

Despite the mass mobilisation of a society struggling to deter the generalisation and the stabilisation of the humanitarian crisis, the sharpness of the social destruction taking place in our country needs to develop an international campaign of solidarity. It would be wrong if such a campaign was limited at the level of covering only material needs, bypassing the need for the development of common political struggles. If Greece represents the “guinea pig” and the laboratory of testing the “future” policies for the rest of the EU countries and of the developed North/West hit by the crisis, the political value of any assistance and the sharing of our experiences of the people’s resistance is urgent. Moreover we have the duty to enforce it in order to prepare and organise a common front for deterring and reversing the neoliberal policies afloat. The call for an International Solidarity Campaign to Greece, poses this double task.

Initiatives of Political Solidarity

The speedy development of social solidarity structures from the people themselves, as the offspring of the anti-Troika battles of the three previous years against the economic, social, political bankruptcy and a corrupted system, has opened the suspicion of another future, which frightens the pro-Troika and pro-austerity forces. The continuing effort, by those in power, to impose an “emergency” regime, aims at smashing the readiness of Greek society to organise its resistance, by suppressing the infrastructure of this people’s mass movement. During the last months, a series of harassments and attacks against solidarity structures and social venues (like the neighborhood run Kypseli Municipal Market and the recuperated by actors Theatre Empros – Athens, the TEM alternative money network in Volos, the social centre Istos in Haidari, squats in Athens, Thessaloniki and Xanthi but also the attempted ban of the widespread “without middlemen” practices in Thessaloniki and Athens) have taken place by institutional and para-state agencies, under the pretext of tax-control and/or police invasions and fascist attacks. The most recent example is the disturbance of the Doctors of the World in Perama (the poorest area in the greater area of Athens), by 70 neonazis of the Golden Dawn, because they offer a non race-based solidarity, in one of the poorest neighbourhoods of the country.

In parallel, a series of workers strikes and mobilisations of professional sectors and peasants, who resist the application of Memorandum II, are proclaimed illegal by the courts (contrary to the provisions of the Constitution). The deflection of democracy by the “parliamentarian” junta of the Memorandum, attempts to impose an atmosphere of terror and promotes the “policy of tension”, in order to justify the violent intervention of the repression forces and the governance through presidential decrees. At the same time, the same national and international organisations that have thrown Greece into poverty and have brought it in front of a humanitarian crisis, they fund the development of an industry for exploitation of misery and of need. With funds, accumulated through heavy taxation of the Greek people itself, they set up new rackets of corruption and of clientellism, that take the form of official – state solidarity structures, disseminating leftovers and thus complementing full the transformation of Greece to a “third world country proper”.

The urgent need of replying on this new and harder round of social conflict places on the centre the political dimension of our struggle. The need for an inclu-

sive character of resistances for the deterrence of divisive tactics, represents now an integral part of the solidarity movement. For this reason, we would like to underline the extraordinary usefulness of the constant publicising on an international level, of the real causes of the economic crisis in Greece, of the social consequences, as also of the multifarious struggles of the Greek people for unbounding from the catastrophic austerity policies of the memoranda. We believe that the polymorphous and staunch resistance shown by the Greek people has not become known enough. While the governing policies have transformed the Greek people to a guinea-pig, this very people puts itself willingly to a multiform and arduous experimentation, in order to forge its own way out. Despite the hardening of the regime of the financial dictatorship, Greece continues to be the weakest link that could subvert the plans and the anti-people policies of the ruling classes in a European and international level. The development of an international current of solidarity, aiming at the overthrow of the “emergency regime” in Greece, would represent an invaluable assistance to our common struggle. The slogan: **“They want to make Greece an example of an austerity future – Let’s make Greece an example of a future without them”** could unite the level of solidarity with the political struggle for toppling the regime, opening up another future for the peoples.

Beyond the need for the dissemination of information and press communication, which must intensify, a series of other actions are necessary:

- Concerts, film shows, and any kind of cultural events for solidarity and information
- Motions of solidarity to strikes or repression of strikes in Greece, and of protest to Greek embassies and international organisations
- Common days of international mobilisation and solidarity to Greece.
- The creation of a network between the solidarity initiatives. A first chance – date, that we could use for it, is the **meeting of the Alter Summit in Athens, in June 7-8-9.**

“Solidarity for All” is willing to assist to any of those events should you choose to organise.

Actions of Direct Solidarity – Material Assistance

Some of the practical ways in which one can **participate to the international solidarity campaign to Greece**, that “Solidarity for All” has started, are the following:

A. At the present phase we believe that the best way would be the **fundraising of financial assistance** for concrete projects and solidarity structures, active in very rundown areas of the country. “Solidarity for All” is in direct and constant contact with, and supports materially, all the grassroot groups of social solidarity in the country, after their demand. It is easy to understand that the economic resources at our disposal do not suffice to cover the ever increasing needs. The safeguarding of a just allocation of funding is a guiding principle for us. In the case you wish to contribute to the international solidarity campaign by supporting projects of social solidarity, we propose that you communicate with “Solidarity for All” in order to co-formulate the final beneficiaries of your solidarity. **The bank account you can deposit your donations IBAN GR5901 10040000004048343562 BIC ETHNGR AA**

B. On the issue of food, social solidarity structures have started to face difficulties in collecting the necessary foodstuff, since there is a steep increase of those asking for assistance. We should note that the structures dealing with food, collect

their provisions mainly through public interventions in the super markets, calling the people to offer small-quantities of foodstuff, which are subsequently distributed in registered vulnerable households of their areas. We have made also a **national call for the support of the structures for food distribution**, by addressing a central appeal for the collection and distribution directly in the structures. Thus fundraising aiming to cover the expenses of **packaged food products for Greece**, could be a significant help to our struggling people.

C. There is a national but also **international campaign in process, for safeguarding supply of vaccines and medicines** to the Social Clinics. According to their experience, there is a great problem in the children's vaccination since many parents, having lost their social security rights, cannot afford the cost. There are also thousands of pensioners and patients with serious and chronic diseases, who cannot cope with the rising cost of medical treatment, and the lack of medical support from the public health care system. One can participate in the campaign with donations for the purchase of such medicines in Greece. We can provide you a **list with the necessary vaccines and medicines**, which was comprised with the consultation and collaboration of social clinics and pharmacies of the country with hospital doctors.

D. A second focus of our **international campaign is the collection of children's food and baby milk**. According to school teachers and doctors of the social clinics, the economic difficulty has led to the emergence of phenomena of malnutrition in babies and many children of school age. The quantities that will be collected will be distributed to households through the local solidarity structures and social clinics, which are already concentrating to the battle for the elimination of scarcity of children's food. In this campaign also you can assist by raising funds and contributions concentrating a campaign to this end. If you want to assist with the collection and dispatch of goods we kindly request that this be done through ethically correct companies.

As the situation in which we live during the last few years in Greece is really unprecedented, we proceed step by step by asking. And we believe that this is the best way we should proceed, all together, inside and outside of Greece, trying to make the most out of every chance to strengthen our bonds. It may be that some times we may seem inefficient or "little". But we can assure you that only a people with plenty of dignity and power can give such a struggle. And it gives this struggle by any means necessary, with a smile and passion, receiving strength from an historical tradition of struggles. The needs are massive, the forms to participate plenty. We invite you to communicate with us and to experiment and join in forging together a path towards our common future.

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