

What  
social platform  
did in 2008

2008 at Social Platform can be summed up in five phrases: anti-discrimination, renewed social agenda, global economic crisis, quality services and improved communication.

One of the core objectives of the Platform is achieving equal rights for all in Europe. To this end, since 2005 we've been pushing for the EU to expand its **anti-discrimination law** beyond ethnic origin, and beyond the employment sector. We were therefore delighted to see the European Commission adopt in July 2008 a proposal for a new directive for equal treatment in access to services on the basis of age, sexual orientation, disability and religion. Even if the directive still has to be unanimously adopted by 27 Member States before it can come into force, a major battle in the fight for equality was won.

Summer 2008 also saw the EU announce its **"social package"**, a broad set of policy initiatives covering areas like employment, education, health and economic affairs. We called for this package to be transformed into a Social Progress Pact – a new contract between people and governments to incorporate social concerns into all EU policies. The idea generated significant buzz – it's now regularly discussed by Ministers and EU officials, and is already featuring prominently among the manifestos for the European elections in 2009.

The **global economic crisis** that hit Europe at the end of 2008 made our drive for a Social Progress Pact even more vital. We submitted an extensive contribution to the EU recovery plan, offering concrete proposals to help decision makers enforce stronger market regulation, ensure the fair redistribution of wealth in Europe, and support those most in need.

In the same contribution we made the case that **quality social and health services** are strategically important to helping the EU contend with the economic crisis, demonstrating how investment in these services would allow them to play the essential role of promoting social cohesion while simultaneously creating jobs. To further release some of the untapped potential of this sector, we developed a set of principles that decision makers and service providers can apply to establish quality services. This document, "Nine Principles", has already become a reference work that is used in the field to improve services delivery.

Lastly, we made considerable changes in 2008 to **improve** the Platform's **communication**, enabling it to speak and think more clearly. Our new quarterly publication 'ENGAGE', launched at the end of 2008, illustrates the fresh approach that we've now implemented across all areas of our work – from policy papers and publications to hiring practices and our internal work programme: concise information, minimal jargon, understandable messages.

Today, in the middle of the economic crisis, Europe is facing significant social challenges. Drawing on the hard work and extensive grassroots expertise of its members from all corners of civil society, Social Platform is now better positioned than ever to help EU decision makers develop policies that promote solidarity and improve people's lives.



Yours,

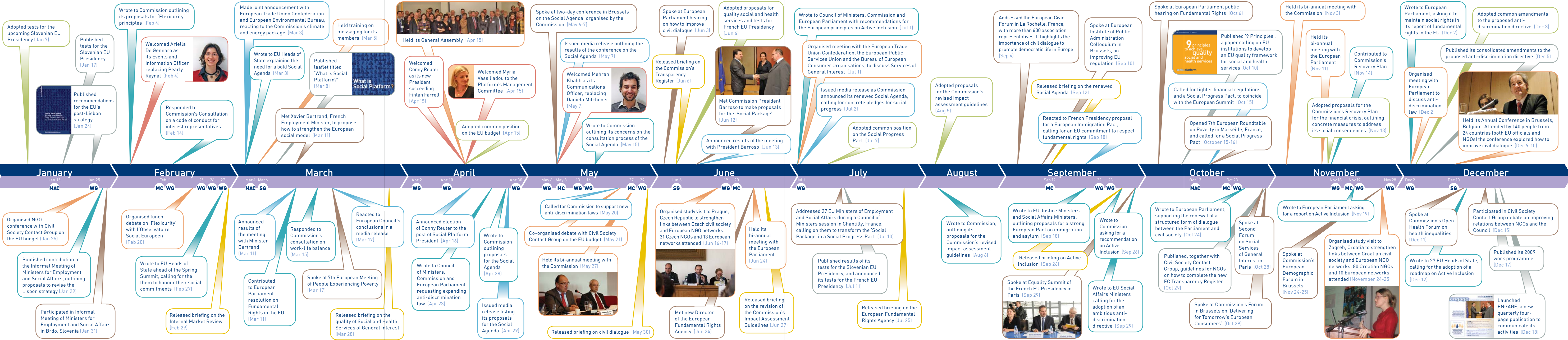
Conny Reuter, President

Roshan Di Puppo, Director

KEY

- Media announcement
- Publication
- Recommendations to decision makers
- Event organised by the Platform
- External event (attended by the Platform)
- Internal briefing (for Platform members)
- Common position
- People announcement

- MC Management Committee
- SG Steering Group
- WG Working Group
- MAC Membership Accreditation Committee



January February March April May June July August September October November December

**January**  
 Jan 15: MAC  
 Jan 25: WG  
 Organised NGO conference with Civil Society Contact Group on the EU budget (Jan 25)  
 Published contribution to the Informal Meeting of Ministers for Employment and Social Affairs, outlining proposals to revise the Lisbon strategy (Jan 29)  
 Participated in Informal Meeting of Ministers for Employment and Social Affairs in Brdo, Slovenia (Jan 31)

**February**  
 Feb 11: MC WG  
 Feb 25: WG WG WG  
 Organised lunch debate on 'Flexicurity' with L'Observatoire Social Européen (Feb 20)  
 Wrote to EU Heads of State ahead of the Spring Summit, calling for the them to honour their social commitments (Feb 27)  
 Released briefing on the Internal Market Review (Feb 29)

**March**  
 Mar 4: MAC SG  
 Mar 6: SG  
 Announced results of the meeting with Minister Bertrand (Mar 11)  
 Contributed to European Parliament resolution on Fundamental Rights in the EU (Mar 11)  
 Spoke at 7th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty (Mar 17)  
 Released briefing on the quality of Social and Health Services of General Interest (Mar 28)  
 Reacted to European Council's conclusions in a media release (Mar 17)  
 Responded to Commission's consultation on work-life balance (Mar 15)

**April**  
 Apr 2: WG  
 Apr 10: WG  
 Apr 30: WG  
 Announced election of Conny Reuter to the post of Social Platform President (Apr 16)  
 Wrote to Council of Ministers, Commission and European Parliament requesting expanding anti-discrimination law (Apr 23)  
 Issued media release listing its proposals for the Social Agenda (Apr 29)  
 Wrote to Commission outlining proposals for the Social Agenda (Apr 28)  
 Held its General Assembly (Apr 15)  
 Welcomed Conny Reuter as its new President, succeeding Fintan Farrell (Apr 15)  
 Welcomed Myria Vassiliadou to the Platform's Management Committee (Apr 15)  
 Adopted common position on the EU budget (Apr 15)

**May**  
 May 6: WG MC  
 May 8: WG WG  
 May 13: MC  
 May 14: WG WG  
 May 20: WG  
 May 27: MC WG  
 May 29: WG  
 Called for Commission to support new anti-discrimination laws (May 20)  
 Co-organised debate with Civil Society Contact Group on the EU budget (May 21)  
 Held its bi-annual meeting with the Commission (May 27)  
 Released briefing on civil dialogue (May 30)

**June**  
 Jun 6: SG  
 Jun 19: WG MC  
 Jun 20: MC  
 Organised study visit to Prague, Czech Republic to strengthen links between Czech civil society and European NGO networks. 31 Czech NGOs and 13 European networks attended (Jun 16-17)  
 Held its bi-annual meeting with the European Parliament (Jun 24)  
 Released briefing on the revision of the Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines (Jun 27)  
 Met new Director of the European Fundamental Rights Agency (Jun 24)  
 Spoke at two-day conference in Brussels on the Social Agenda, organised by the Commission (May 6-7)  
 Issued media release outlining the results of the conference on the Social Agenda (May 7)  
 Welcomed Mehran Khalili as its Communications Officer, replacing Daniela Mitchener (May 7)  
 Wrote to Commission outlining its concerns on the consultation process of the Social Agenda (May 15)  
 Released briefing on the Commission's Transparency Register (Jun 6)  
 Spoke at European Parliament hearing on how to improve civil dialogue (Jun 3)  
 Adopted proposals for quality social and health services and tests for French EU Presidency (Jun 6)  
 Met Commission President Barroso to make proposals for the 'Social Package' (Jun 12)  
 Announced results of the meeting with President Barroso (Jun 13)

**July**  
 Jul 1: WG  
 Addressed 27 EU Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs during a Council of Ministers session in Chantilly, France, calling on them to transform the 'Social Package' in a Social Progress Pact (Jul 10)  
 Published results of its tests for the Slovenian EU Presidency, and announced its tests for the French EU Presidency (Jul 11)  
 Released briefing on the European Fundamental Rights Agency (Jul 25)

**August**  
 Wrote to Commission, outlining its proposals for the Commission's revised impact assessment guidelines (Aug 6)

**September**  
 Sep 12: MC  
 Sep 22: WG WG  
 Sep 23: WG  
 Wrote to EU Justice Ministers and Social Affairs Ministers, outlining proposals for a strong European Pact on immigration and asylum (Sep 18)  
 Released briefing on Active Inclusion (Sep 26)  
 Spoke at Equality Summit of the French EU Presidency in Paris (Sep 29)  
 Wrote to EU Social Affairs Ministers calling for the adoption of an ambitious anti-discrimination directive (Sep 29)

**October**  
 Oct 13: MAC  
 Oct 23: MC WG  
 Wrote to European Parliament, supporting the renewal of a structured form of dialogue between the Parliament and civil society (Oct 24)  
 Published, together with Civil Society Contact Group, guidelines for NGOs on how to complete the new EC Transparency Register (Oct 29)  
 Spoke at Commission's Forum in Brussels on 'Delivering for Tomorrow's European Consumers' (Oct 29)  
 Spoke at Second Forum on Social Services of General Interest in Paris (Oct 28)

**November**  
 Nov 18: WG MC WG  
 Nov 19: MC WG  
 Nov 28: WG  
 Wrote to European Parliament asking for a report on Active Inclusion (Nov 19)  
 Organised study visit to Zagreb, Croatia to strengthen links between Croatian civil society and European NGO networks. 80 Croatian NGOs and 10 European networks attended (November 24-25)  
 Spoke at Commission's European Demographic Forum in Brussels (Nov 24-25)

**December**  
 Dec 2: WG  
 Dec 10: SG  
 Spoke at Commission's Open Health Forum on health inequalities (Dec 11)  
 Wrote to 27 EU Heads of State, calling for the adoption of a roadmap on Active Inclusion (Dec 12)  
 Participated in Civil Society Contact Group debate on improving relations between NGOs and the Council (Dec 15)  
 Published its 2009 work programme (Dec 17)  
 Held its Annual Conference in Brussels, Belgium. Attended by 140 people from 24 countries (both EU officials and NGOs) the conference explored how to improve civil dialogue (Dec 9-10)  
 Organised meeting with European Parliament to discuss anti-discrimination law (Dec 2)  
 Wrote to European Parliament, asking it to maintain social rights in its report of fundamental rights in the EU (Dec 2)  
 Adopted common amendments to the proposed anti-discrimination directive (Dec 3)  
 Published its consolidated amendments to the proposed anti-discrimination directive (Dec 5)  
 Adopted proposals for the Commission's Recovery Plan for the financial crisis, outlining concrete measures to address its social consequences (Nov 13)  
 Held its bi-annual meeting with the Commission (Nov 3)  
 Held its bi-annual meeting with the European Parliament (Nov 11)  
 Contributed to Commission's Recovery Plan (Nov 14)  
 Called for tighter financial regulations and a Social Progress Pact, to coincide with the European Summit (Oct 15)  
 Opened 7th European Roundtable on Poverty in Marseille, France, and called for a Social Progress Pact (October 15-16)  
 Spoke at European Parliament public hearing on Fundamental Rights (Oct 6)  
 Published '9 Principles', a paper calling on EU institutions to develop an EU quality framework for social and health services (Oct 10)  
 Addressed the European Civic Forum in La Rochelle, France, with more than 600 association representatives. It highlights the importance of civil dialogue to promote democratic life in Europe (Sep 4)  
 Spoke at European Institute of Public Administration Colloquium in Brussels, on improving EU regulation (Sep 10)  
 Reacted to French Presidency proposal for a European Immigration Pact, calling for an EU commitment to respect fundamental rights (Sep 18)  
 Released briefing on the renewed Social Agenda (Sep 12)  
 Adopted proposals for the Commission's revised impact assessment guidelines (Aug 5)  
 Issued media release as Commission announced its renewed Social Agenda, calling for concrete pledges for social progress (Jul 2)  
 Organised meeting with the European Trade Union Confederation, the European Public Services Union and the Bureau of European Consumer Organisations, to discuss Services of General Interest (Jul 1)  
 Wrote to Council of Ministers, Commission and European Parliament with recommendations for the European principles on Active Inclusion (Jul 1)  
 Adopted common position on the Social Progress Pact (Jul 7)



Launched ENGAGE, a new quarterly four-page publication to communicate its activities (Dec 18)

Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 40 pan-European networks of NGOs, Social Platform campaigns to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives.

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