

The background is a watercolor wash with a color gradient from blue on the left to red on the right, and yellow at the bottom. Overlaid on this is a white graphic of three stylized human figures holding hands in a circle. Each figure has a simple, rounded body and a small white oval for a head. The figures are positioned in the upper half of the page.

Annual Report 2005

social**platform**



I. Editorial - Letter from the Director and President

Is the European Union heading in the right direction? Events in 2005 certainly caused many to doubt this. The rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in referenda in both France and the Netherlands shocked those who had assumed its safe passage and ratification across the Union. This result seemed to awaken EU leaders to the democratic crisis in the EU, and in response they called for a period of reflection. The second half of the year saw the issue of the Treaty slip off the political map, however, with barely a whisper of what should happen now. Meanwhile the EU Institutions pushed ahead with the controversial Services Directive to liberalise services, as well as the re-invention the Lisbon Strategy as a restrictive plan to boost growth and jobs, which ignores broader social cohesion objectives.



Anne-Sophie Parent
President



Simon Wilson
Director

It would seem that EU leaders really believe that a narrow economic focus will solve the democratic crisis. We believe they are mistaken. Throughout 2005, and now into 2006, we argue that democratic renewal and social justice must go hand in hand for the EU to regain credibility and to improve the lives of European citizens.

The Social Platform is a huge alliance of citizens' groups and non-profit service providers, and we are proud to present this record of our collective efforts in 2005 to shape a European Union based upon the values of participatory democracy and social justice. We hope that this annual report demonstrates how we try to achieve these goals as well as our work to promote civil dialogue, raise awareness amongst civil society, provide expert input to EU policy debates, and of course to provide a voice for the hundreds of thousands of NGOs who together make up the members of the Social Platform. We are an NGO platform- it is our members who shape our campaigning strategies and political decisions. Our Working Groups and Working Parties allow members to share information, and use communications tools like our internal newsletter and members' section of our web site to stay in close contact.

NGOs stimulate democratic renewal by providing a channel for citizens to engage in dialogue with policy-makers. The Social Platform is an important bridge between our members who are working to improve social rights across Europe, and the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council. Getting our message across to policy-makers is very important, and this year we wrote Open Letters, issued media releases, and used our newsletter, "Social Voices", and our web site to make the voice of social NGOs heard across Europe. In 2005, we met regularly with the European Commission to discuss the impact of EU policies. We met the President of the Commission and also

held regular meetings with specialised units in the Commission. We presented our views to the President of the European Council, Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker in the first half of 2005. Throughout the year, we met and exchanged ideas with Members of the European Parliament on topics such as the Services Directive, social protection, fundamental rights, and the European Year of Equal Opportunities.

We believe that creating this kind of on-going dialogue with politicians and policy-makers will help bring about a European Union which is more in touch with its citizens, and is more focused on improving their lives. But a better dialogue will not convince us that the EU is on the right track as long as the policies of the Union remain focused on an out-dated version of economic liberalism. That's why social NGOs continue to press for policies which support social cohesion. We campaigned strongly in 2005 for the European social model and against the inclusion of social and health services in the Services Directive. Our role was not only to share expertise from NGOs active at grass-roots level, but also to raise awareness about these issues amongst NGOs and by campaigning together for a better Europe.

Neither of our battles to promote a strong European social model and to protect quality social services is yet won, but thanks to the activities of social NGOs across the European Union we have built up huge support for an EU agenda based upon social cohesion, solidarity, and social justice. It's the least that the citizens of Europe deserve, and we will keep fighting for these values in 2006.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is "Parent" and the second is "Wilson".

Annual Report - 2005

I. Editorial - Letter from the Director and President	3
II. Statement of Values	5
III. Our work in 2005	6
1. The Making of Social Europe	6
The Ups and Downs of the Constitutional Treaty	8
2. Strengthening the European Union's Social Policies	9
Integration of Migrants	11
3. Social Services and the Services Directive	12
Services Directive - Campaigning	13
4. Promoting Equality and Non-discrimination in Europe	14
5. Helping everyone enjoy their fundamental rights	16
Annual Conference: Building Social Policies on Fundamental Rights	18
IV. How we work	20
(a) Structures and Secretariat	20
(b) Working Groups and Parties	22
(c) Strengthening links between NGOs and European Institutions	22
Network Building Visit to Romania, November 2005	23
V. Our Members	25
VI. Financials	30

II. Statement of Values

The Platform of European Social NGOs (the Social Platform) is the alliance of representative European federations and networks of non-governmental organisations active in the social sector. The Social Platform promotes social justice and participatory democracy by voicing the concerns of its member organisations.

OUR VALUES

The Social Platform and its members are committed to the advancement of the principles of equality, solidarity, non discrimination and the promotion and respect of fundamental rights for all, within Europe and in particular the European Union.

OUR OBJECTIVES

We base our common actions upon the following objectives:

- The eradication of poverty and the elimination of social exclusion
- The elimination of discrimination in all its forms and the promotion of equality for all
- Equality between women and men in all areas of life
- The promotion of participatory democracy
- The engagement of social NGOs in an enhanced structured civil dialogue at EU level
- The involvement of people experiencing or at risk of poverty, exclusion and discrimination in decision-making processes affecting them.

The Social Platform:

- seeks to advance the interests of our members through advocacy of common positions, and through providing opportunities for our members to advance their own work at EU level by engaging with European policy-makers.
- disseminates information and promotes understanding of EU policies of concern to social NGOs.
- builds solidarity, co-operation and expertise through the exchange of knowledge and experience amongst social NGOs.

The Social Platform, through its democratic structure, aims at the full participation of members in transparency and respect for their diversity. We are committed to promoting gender parity and diversity representation in the structures of the Social Platform.

The Social Platform seeks to bring added value to the work of its members.

Whilst the actions of the Social Platform are focused upon the European level, we support the development of these values at the global level.

1. The Making of Social Europe

“Unless European growth strategies are designed to support society’s vulnerable groups, we will never achieve our European vision”

-- Social Platform Resolution for the Spring Summit, March 2005

Overview:

What kind of Europe do we want? The Social Platform believes that the European Union should be a force for social change and social justice. All of the EU’s activities should help achieve ambitious social and sustainable development objectives, not just the development of internal market freedoms and economic growth. The debate about the EU’s future should be re-balanced to reflect this approach.

In 2005, the European Union took stock of progress towards the ‘Lisbon Strategy’ goals in order to set a new direction for the Strategy, grappled with the controversial Services Directive, and suffered the shock of a major defeat for

the Constitutional Treaty in two national referenda. In this difficult political context, we campaigned to make social issues and goals prominent on the European agenda and to convince policy makers that social considerations cannot simply be tacked onto policies as an afterthought .

This was important during the review of the Lisbon Strategy, for example, where it is clear that the impact on social justice of policies for economic growth is often not even evaluated or taken into account. Our members work with people in vulnerable situations across Europe and have seen that failing to build social objectives and social responsibility into economic policies at the very start comes at a high cost.



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Highlights:

Campaigning for a balanced Lisbon Strategy

The Lisbon Strategy has become a political reference point for the European Union. The Strategy, which set ambitious goals for the 10 years starting in 2000, was reviewed in 2005, and we campaigned to maintain the social goals established at the beginning of the Strategy, rather than a narrowed focus on "Jobs and Growth". In February the Social Platform met with the President of the European Council, Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker to outline our views, and had another opportunity to make known the position of social NGOs in a direct meeting with Commission President, José Manuel Barroso.

Ahead of the Spring Summit in March, the annual meeting of Member State leaders on the Lisbon Strategy, we published a resolution entitled: "From strategy to tragedy: Social NGOs call on political leaders to reject the Barroso approach to Lisbon and reaffirm the European model of Society." We also developed a campaign plan for NGOs to influence the Spring Summit and worked with European and national organisations on actions including Save Our Social (SOS) Europe, an on-line petition, which gathered signatures of 700 organisations from around Europe.

To highlight the consensus amongst many civil society actors on these issues, we worked with the European Trade Union Confederation and the European Environmental Bureau to issue a joint statement for the Spring Summit. This action contributed to the ongoing partnership between the Social Platform

and ETUC and EEB in the 'Spring Group', which continued to meet over the course of 2005 to plan a joint conference for early 2006.

Following the EU's adoption of a new 'growth and jobs' orientation for the Strategy, we continued to express our concerns about this approach including during formal and informal meetings.



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EU Budget

Debates on the European Union's budget are always charged and difficult, and this year was no exception. The debates over how much Member States would contribute to the EU budget started under the Luxembourg Presidency and only finished at the end of the UK Presidency in December. Despite the huge figures under discussion, a very small fraction of the budget actually goes towards achieving social goals. Together with NGO partners we campaigned that the allocation of the EU's 2007 - 2013 budget should reflect EU social goals such as social inclusion, equality and non-discrimination, as well as for NGOs to be included as partners in spending the structural and cohesion funds.



Social Platform meets Commission President, José Manuel Barroso

The Ups and Downs of the Constitutional Treaty

Few people at the beginning of 2005 would have expected that two founding Member States of the European Union would reject the Constitutional Treaty in referenda. Since the Dutch and French votes in the summer, the EU has halted the constitutional process to take time to reflect on what to do next. The Social Platform felt that the referenda quelled the momentum of the Treaty, which holds potential to better protect and promote social justice and fundamental rights in the European Union.

In first half of 2005, as Member States were preparing for referenda, we organised a seminar and wrote papers to help social NGOs at European level and in all Member States to understand the impact of the Constitutional Treaty on their areas of interest and work.

The seminar concentrated on the social dimension of the Treaty, democracy and governance, fundamental rights, equality and non-discrimination, citizenship issues and services of general interest. Members discussed whether the Constitution represents a step forward in some sectors. We also debated how to share relevant information with the NGO community throughout Europe and reflected on whether social NGOs and the Social Platform should engage directly in debates on ratification.



The Civil Society Contact Group meets European Commissioner Wallström

“The training seminar helped me draw a strategy for my organisation regarding the Constitutional Treaty and the ratification process.”

-- Geert De Cock, AGE - who participated in our Seminar on the Constitution

The rejection of the Constitutional Treaty meant a change of tack for many people working on ‘European’ issues. We saw that this was an ideal time for policy makers in Member States and in European institutions to pay more attention to developing dialogue on Europe and engaging more actively with civil society.

In October 2005, the Civil Society Contact Group organised a conference on “The Future of Europe” for over 100 delegates from European and national organisations. European Commissioner Wallström joined us to debate the

direction of Europe and in particular how to deal with difficult issues like the democratic deficit and lack of engagement in “European” issues by citizens across the continent.

There is still work to be done. 2006 might see attempts to revive the debate on the Treaty. We are ready to continue to argue that fundamental rights, democracy, equality and non-discrimination, and citizenship issues be at the heart of the debate.



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2. Strengthening the European Union's Social Policies

“Reforms are required to deal with major challenges such as demographic change, and the shifting social needs which social NGOs are confronted with in their daily work. But reform must not mean abandoning the fundamental values and principles which are so important for a modern and cohesive society.”

-- Social Platform Open Letter to Head of State and Government, October 2005

Overview:

Issues such as social protection systems and the fight against poverty and exclusion fall within the remit of national governments. However the EU is increasingly playing a role in setting common objectives, coordinating exchange of experience and highlighting key challenges and solutions in these areas. In 2005, the Social Platform continued to support social NGOs to be present in these debates, and input to formal and informal policy processes such as this year's evaluation of the 'open method of coordination' on social inclusion and social protection.

The future of the European social model was a hot issue this year especially thanks to a UK Presidency-led debate, and a Commission Green Paper which started a discussion on how to deal with the impacts of demographic change. We often criticised the tone of these debates. We emphasised that cost-cutting in social protection systems should not reduce the protection they provide from poverty and exclusion, for example. The needs of vulnerable groups must be reflected in social reforms discussed and promoted at EU level, which must also support broader solidarity and social cohesion objectives.

The accession of the 10 new Member States to the EU in 2004 means that members have increasingly brought the perspectives of social NGOs from these countries into our discussions this year. A networking visit to Romania in November 2005 also gave our members an opportunity to learn more about the social situation in an accession country (see more on page 23).

Highlights:

Campaigning to improve the Open Method of Coordination for social inclusion, pensions and health and long-term care

The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) was established by the European Union in 2001 as a means for Member States to learn from each others' policies in the areas of social inclusion, pensions and health and long-term care. Many members of the Social Platform have been involved in these processes, and in 2005, the EU set out to assess what can be learned from the first years of the process and where improvements can be made. Our Social Policy Working Group was an important forum for members to discuss their own experiences on a

number of occasions, and we developed a common contribution to the evaluation of the OMC in July 2005. We also used our website and a Process Tracker to share information and keep members up to date with deadlines. In October 2005, we successfully campaigned with members at the European Round Table Conference on Poverty and Social Exclusion. We called for improvements to the process to provide a genuine impetus to national governments to strengthen their policies on social inclusion, pensions and health.



Social Platform at European Roundtable conference on Poverty and Social Exclusion.

European social model

In October 2005, the UK Presidency held a special summit of EU leaders to discuss the future of social models in Europe - in particular how to organise social protection systems and labour markets. During this sudden buzz on the European Social Model, we sent an Open Letter to EU governments pointing out that all 25 countries share common social values which make up a 'European social model'. These common values, such as fundamental rights, must not be abandoned as social systems are reformed to deal with new challenges. We also participated in a stakeholders' meeting hosted by the UK Presidency

prior to the summit, where we called for a strong commitment to social justice and equality. Based on this work, the Social Platform decided to adopt the future of the European social model as the core theme of our activities for 2006.

Understanding the impact of demographic change

The potential implications of demographic changes in the European Union have been debated for a number of years. This year, the European Commission published a Green Paper entitled: "Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations". Members exchanged information and views during Social Policy Working Group meetings and via the website. We organised a seminar in November 2005 to learn more about how the financing of social protection systems could be affected by demographic change, and invited expert speakers to answer some of our questions.

Minimum income - more than just activation policies

In 2004, the European Commission announced that it would publish a Communication on Minimum Income schemes, which help prevent people falling into poverty. In anticipation of this publication we wanted to understand how minimum income (social assistance) benefits work in different Member States, and share experience about the impact 'activation' policies and reforms to social protection systems have had on vulnerable groups. In July, we invited expert speakers to contribute to a capacity building seminar during which members shared experience on these issues. We continued to call on

the Commission to publish its delayed Communication (which finally came out in February 2006).

Keeping track: Process Trackers

NGOs face an avalanche of paper from the EU on a daily basis. Part of our job is to make it possible for our members to identify when and how to contribute to these relevant EU processes so the voice of NGOs is included in pertinent policy debates. We developed a new tool in 2005 to organise information and help members anticipate important campaigning moments in relevant legislative and policy processes. Members can track developments, contribute information and views, look up contact details and see at a glance up-coming events, by visiting Process Trackers on our web site for:

- The Lisbon Strategy
- The Open Method of Coordination on social protection and social inclusion
- The Minimum Income Communication
- The Services Directive
- Social Services of General Interest
- The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All
- The Fundamental Rights Agency for the EU.

Integration of Migrants

Ensuring that migrants to Europe are able to integrate into their new host societies is increasingly becoming a European issue - both in the political and social sense. For many of our members, the integration of migrants is of particular concern because many migrants face discrimination, exclusion from the labour market and are at risk of poverty. Our members have valuable experience on these issues which can inform policy-makers. By sharing our knowledge and understanding of the problems faced by migrants, we can help to ensure that solutions are found that respect migrants' fundamental rights and promote their inclusion into society.

The European Union has stepped up its action on migration and integration in recent years and has published Communications on issues ranging from managing economic migration, to reception standards, to proposals on integration of third-country nationals.

Our Working Party on the Social Rights of Migrants meets to exchange information and experience. The Secretariat supported the Working Party and all members by writing a number of briefings on EU publications in 2005:

- Summary of the Commission proposal for a Directive on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, September 2005.
- Summary and analysis of the Commission Communication "A Common Agenda for Integration. Framework for Integration of Third-Country nationals in the European Union", September 2005.
- Summary of Commission Green Paper on an EU approach to managing Economic Migration, January 2005

As in other policy areas, these briefings help members to discuss how European Union proposals and decisions might affect their organisations, and in this case, their work with migrants.

In addition to working with our own members, the Working Party also worked with other actors: PICUM

(Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants), Eurocities, ERLAI (European Regional and Local Authorities on Asylum and Immigration), the European Platform for Migrant Workers' Rights and the European Trade Union Confederation. Meeting with these organisations helped the Working Party to understand different perspectives on the integration issue. In a political climate where integration issues are often controversial, it is important to learn from the experience of different groups.

We are members of the European Policy Centre/King Badouin Foundation Steering Group on Multicultural Europe. This project explores the evolution of migration policies at EU level and what action should be taken at EU level to promote the integration of migrants. The economic, social, cultural and political implications of improving integration are analysed, including the rights and responsibilities of immigrants and attitudes towards immigrants, as well as how to foster the positive values of cultural pluralism and a multi-ethnic Europe.

© European Women's lobby





3. Social Services and the Services Directive

“The services directive is a prime example of how any semblance of balance [between economic and social goals] is being swept away in the rush for competitiveness”

-- Social Platform Position Paper on the Services Directive, February 2005



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Overview:

The Social Platform believes that EU policies and legislation must support - rather than hinder - high quality social services in Europe which are accessible for all. We have worked hard in 2005 to inform decision-makers about what is at stake for social services when it comes to EU internal market and competition legislation. We want the EU to develop sound policies based on an understanding of their impact on social services, and on users of all types of services.

In particular, our campaign on social services gathered momentum in 2005 towards the European Parliament’s vote on the controversial Services Directive in February 2006. We continue, in parallel, to contribute to preparations for the Commission’s Communication on social and health services of general interest, which was originally due to be published in June 2005.

Our popular Working Party on Social Services has again been the main forum for discussion of the implications of the Services Directive and the development of our political strategies and actions. The shared understanding built in this Working Party allows us to present strong and unified views from the groups of social services providers and service users represented in the Social Platform.

Highlights:

Commission Communication on social services: Contributing our experience

A Social Platform delegation actively participated in a European Commission seminar in April, designed to prepare the Commission’s Communication on social and health service of general interest. Our Working Party on Social Services, which met regularly during the year, clarified political priorities on this topic and collaborated with other groups including the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the European Public Services Union (EPSU) and experts.

Developing our views by sharing experience

The Social Services Working Party played an essential role in bringing together our members, including service providers and service users, to discuss social services. Based on work carried out over previous years, in 2005 discussions began on what sort of legal framework might be necessary at EU level in order to help guarantee high quality social services in Europe, a debate to be continued in 2006. Members also continued to exchange experience and learn from each other’s activities.



Seminar at the European Parliament on social services and Services directive

Services Directive - Campaigning

"A directive which tries to treat mobile phone contracts in the same way as the relationship between a carer and an elderly person is clearly on the wrong track.. and the Commission did not even bother to undertake an assessment of the social impacts!"

"Keep Services Social: urgent action needed on the services directive!" cried a position paper adopted by members in February 2005, in which the Social Platform called for the draft Services Directive to be revised to take social considerations into account, including by exempting social services. The controversial proposal aiming to liberalise the market in services in Europe, published in 2004 by Commissioner Bolkestein, covered a huge range of services including social and health services - and yet completely failed to take into account the specific nature of these services.

As discussions heated up we organised in April 2005 a **seminar in the European Parliament** in collaboration with the Greens/EFA political group. During the seminar social NGOs explained to Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) how social services function in different European Union countries and therefore why the Services Directive would have a negative impact on social services across Europe. The seminar was well attended and made MEPs from various political groups aware of the concerns of social service providers and users.

We also produced an explanatory paper in March 2005 on **"The Services Directive, Services of General Interest and Social Services"** which we used throughout the year to help policy makers understand why the stakes were so high for social services, and for social quality in all services. The

paper outlined the specific nature of social services compared to other services - for example, the often vulnerable position of their users - and why particular articles of the Directive were problematic.

Throughout 2005, members of the Social Platform met in the Social Services Working Party to agree political strategies. The concern generated by the Directive was reflected in a significant **mobilisation of members' organisations** not only at European level but also at the national and local level, to raise concerns with their MEPs and national governments.

The papers and collective political approach developed in the Social Platform helped support members' activities. **Letters to MEPs** at important moments leading up to the vote in early 2006 were sent by the Social Platform, and were also adapted by members to use in national campaigns. The **Process Tracker** also helped members to keep up to date with the EU Institutions' and the Platform's activities on the issue, and helped them to contribute their experience and knowledge to the policy debate.

We now know that our campaigning paid off, as the European Parliament voted in February 2006 to exclude social services from the Directive. As negotiations continue we and our members will carry on pushing for an EU which supports the development of high quality social services which are accessible for all, and does not subordinate the need for social well-being to the goal of completing the internal market.

4. Promoting Equality and Non-discrimination in Europe

“It is not enough to simply have implemented the Employment Directive; it is essential that it is used as a platform to drive through an anti-discrimination agenda which will transform the cultural and policy framework and create a genuine society for all.”

-- Anne-Sophie Parent, President of the Social Platform

Overview:

The European Union’s anti-discrimination legislation on employment and race has set an important precedent for all areas of discrimination. We believe that full and rapid implementation of these directives is vital to eradicate discrimination in Europe and worked with our members to exchange experience on the transposition of the directives. The Social Platform is an active campaigner for new EU legislation to ‘level up’ protection against discrimination on all grounds under Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union and thus more effectively combat discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Our Working Group on Fundamental Rights and Anti-Discrimination is a forum for exchange and led several seminars over the course of the year to build expertise. We also worked with other organisations, including the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) to develop a common strategy on non-discrimination.

Highlights:

Developing expertise - capacity building seminars

2005 was an important year for members to develop knowledge about different themes in the field of anti-discrimination. We organised two seminars to which we invited expert speakers and members to discuss multiple discrimination and equality mainstreaming. We realised that these concepts are complex and though often raised at European level, we needed to understand how members use such approaches in their own work.

Working with Roma Civil Society

In December, we brought members together with experts from the Open Society Institute, the European Roma Information Office (ERIO, a member of the Social Platform) and the European Commission to discuss how we can better work with Roma civil society organisations in combating discrimination across Europe. Members were able to discuss how to develop stronger relations with Roma civil society organisations, in different countries, as well as on different grounds of discrimination.



European Year for Equal Opportunities for All - Campaign

As part of our information work to keep members aware of European Commission activities on anti-discrimination issues, we engaged in a campaign on the proposal to designate 2007 as the European Year for Equal Opportunities for All. Drawing from members' experience, particularly EDF and EASPD, during the European Year of People with Disabilities (2003), we provided useful input to the Member of the European Parliament responding to the Commission's proposal. We drafted a list of necessary elements to make sure the Year has a lasting impact, for example, actions and activities should be delegated to the national level and civil society organisations must be involved throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation process. Thanks to cooperation amongst members and the Secretariat, the Parliament's report, and the final compromise proposal agreed by the Council and Commission, reflected many of our suggestions.

Gender Equality

With the help of the European Women's Lobby, the Working Group on Fundamental Rights and Anti-Discrimination, monitored progress on the transposition of the 'gender directive' (2002/73/EC) and followed the development of a 'Road Map on Gender Equality' and the proposed establishment of a Gender Institute for the European Union.



5. Helping everyone enjoy their fundamental rights

“The future Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union must have the strength and the independence to take on the European institutions; there is a clear gap in Europe: no one is monitoring whether the EU’s policies comply with its own Charter of Fundamental Rights.”

-- Christine Loudes, Vice-Chair of the Fundamental Rights and Anti-Discrimination Working Group

Overview:

Promotion and protection of fundamental rights in the European Union must be central all EU policies. The Social Platform believes in taking a rights-based approach to our work and we campaign for the EU institutions to live up to their responsibilities in the Treaty and other fundamental rights instruments in the Union. Our activities on fundamental rights ranged from some technical work to understand the potential of the European Commission’s Impact Assessments to a conference for over 200 delegates on taking a rights-based approach in work on social policies.

Respect and promotion of fundamental rights is a cross-cutting issue for the Social Platform. The Working Group on Fundamental Rights and Anti-Discrimination is an important forum for exchanging information and this year the Working Group started building a campaign around the proposed Fundamental Rights Agency for the European Union.

Highlights:

Fundamental Rights Agency

In late 2004 the European Council decided to expand the mandate of the current European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia to become a Fundamental Rights Agency for the European Union. Many Social Platform members were involved in consultations on the topic and in the spring of 2005, we organised a seminar for the future Agency. When the Commission published its proposed regulation on the Agency, we brought members together to respond to key gaps in the Commission’s proposal. The Fundamental Rights and Non-Discrimination Working Group drafted a manifesto entitled: “Basic Benchmarks for an Effective Fundamental Rights Agency for the European Union”. We also started a campaign to push for an Agency that will be independent, respect internationally recognised principles of pluralism, and have the power to tackle the European institutions and Member States if they are failing to respect fundamental rights. This campaign includes working with the European Parliament and the Permanent Representations of several Member States, as well as the Austrian Presidency.



Keeping the Commission Accountable on Fundamental Rights

The European Union has a duty to ensure that its draft and final legislation and policies respect the rights laid out in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. In the spring of 2005, we organised a seminar with the help of Olivier de Schutter, chair of the Independent Network of Experts on fundamental rights in the EU. We considered how the Social Platform could build on the European Commission's communication on the "Compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights" and its obligation to carry out an Impact Assessment of the potential social impact, including fundamental rights, of each policy and piece of legislation.

The European Parliament, a key ally in the fight for more respect for fundamental rights

In early 2005, Anne-Sophie Parent, President of the Social Platform, spoke at the European Parliament about promoting EU fundamental rights policy, particularly in light of the draft Constitutional Treaty. Emphasising that words need to be translated into deeds, she called on the Parliament to play an active role in making rights a reality in all Member States of the European Union.

Annual Conference: Building Social Policies on Fundamental Rights

In 2005, we held our annual conference on the theme: Building Social Policies on Fundamental Rights. We invited members to reflect on what it means to take a rights-based approach in their work. All Social Platform members support respect and promotion of fundamental rights; taking a rights-based approach to our work, however, might have important implications.

We took a different approach to the conference this year, and asked our members to organise a series of seminars. Members worked with at least one other member, invited guest speakers, and tackled a specific right or discussed the rights-based approach from the perspective of a particular vulnerable group. Members poured energy and enthusiasm into the seminars, and all seven were very successful making for a very dynamic conference overall.

Seminars:

- **Rights of Undocumented Migrations**
Organised by: Caritas and PICUM
- **Minimum Income: A fundamental right in the EU**
Organised by: European Anti-Poverty Network, AGE - European Older People's Platform, European Network of the Unemployed and European Federation of Unpaid Parents and Carers at Home
- **The right to housing assistance: What does it mean?**
Organised by: European Liaison Committee for Social Housing and European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless
- **Towards rights-based social policies for persons with complex dependency needs disability**
Organised by: Autism Europe, Inclusion Europe, European Disability Forum
- **Empowering migrant women living in Europe**
Organised by: Solidar and European Women's Lobby
- **The right to health and the right to access to healthcare**
Organised by: European Public Health Alliance
- **Education - a fundamental right for everybody?**
Organised by: Eurochild, European Association of Service Providers for People with Disabilities, ATD 4th World, European Association for the Education of Adults



President Anne-Sophie Parent with Ursula Haubner, Austrian Social Affairs Minister and Odile Quintin, Director General of DG Education and Culture.



We also called on experts to guide our plenary discussions. Gilda Farrell from the Council of Europe challenged conference participants - representatives from social NGOs, policy-makers, academics, and others - to think about whether a new kind of ethics is needed today. With so much public and European policy energy directed at improving economic growth and creating jobs, can we really expect building social policies on fundamental rights will be enough?



Professor Olivier de Schutter (Chair of the Network of Independent Experts on Fundamental Rights) and Professor Padraic Kenna (Chair of FEANTSA's expert group on the Right to Housing) encouraged participants think about the array of tools and international agreements applicable to European Union countries to take policy-makers to task. For example, do EU policies and programmes comply with the EU's own Charter of Fundamental Rights?



We also had the opportunity to question Commission officials and the Austrian Minister for Social Affairs about their commitment to fundamental rights. Participants enjoyed the new the format and welcomed the challenging content of the conference. At a time when Europe seems to be pushing social issues and social rights to the side in favour of economic principles and growth, it is important to reflect on how these two aspects can work together.

IV. How we work

(a) Structures and Secretariat

Secretariat

The Social Platform's Secretariat is based in Brussels and is staffed by seven people. The team supports members by providing information, organising meetings and seminars, and executes the annual work programme under supervision of the Director.

Director:

Simon Wilson

Press and Information Officer:

Daniela Vincenti Mitchener

Policy Officer:

Roshan Maes Di Puppò

Policy Officer:

Kathleen Spencer Chapman

Policy Officer:

Samara Jones

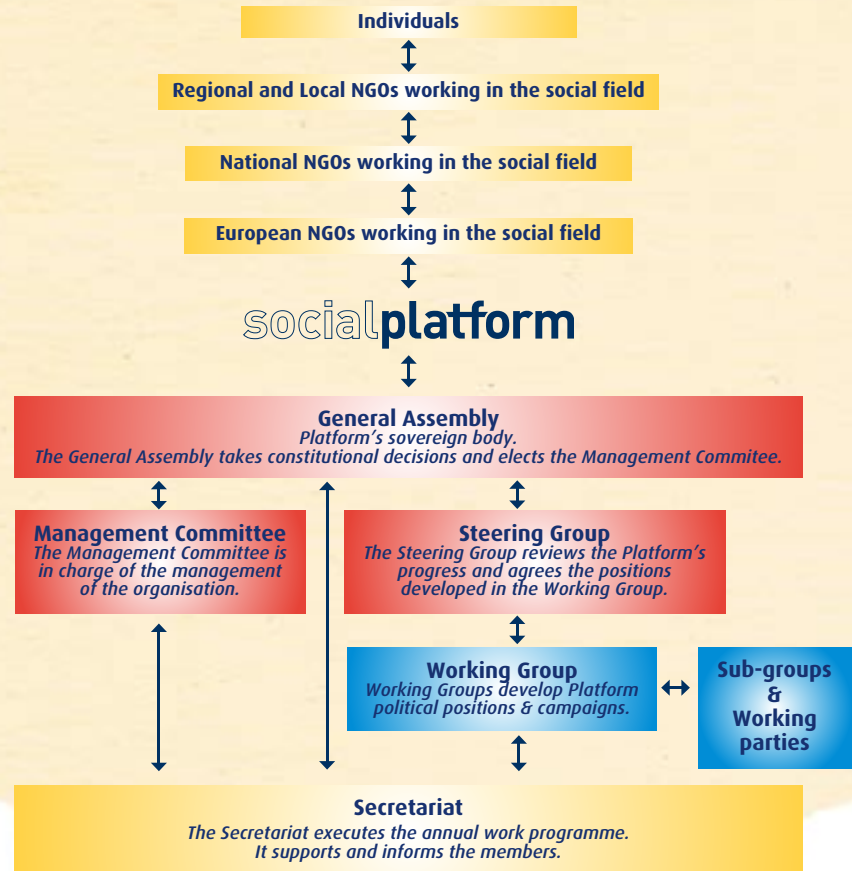
Office Manager & Finance Officer:

Marie-Paule Bockstal

Administrator:

Pearly Raynal

How the Platform is run by its Members



Social Platform Secretariat

General Assembly

The General Assembly is usually convened once a year to take constitutional decisions, including the approval of applications for membership, and elections for the Management Committee (President, other officers, etc.).

Management Committee

Executive officers are elected by the General Assembly for a term of two years and meet regularly in the Management Committee to provide political leadership, ensure the good running of the Platform and oversee the implementation of the annual work programme.

Steering Group

The Steering Group guides the Platform's political decisions. All members are invited to attend the four meetings of the Steering Group throughout the year and use these opportunities to discuss progress in implementing the annual work programme. The Steering Group approves policy positions after a full consultation process has been undertaken across the membership.

Membership Accreditation Committee

The five members of the Membership Accreditation Committee meet several times a year to evaluate applications for membership before putting recommendations to the General Assembly.

Management Committee 2005-2007:



President:

Anne-Sophie Parent,
The European Older People's Platform (AGE)



Vice President:

Giampiero Alhadeff,
Solidar



Vice President:

Fintan Farrell,
European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)



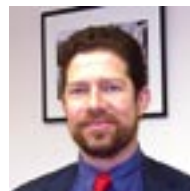
Treasurer:

Claire Roumet,
European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (Cecodhas)



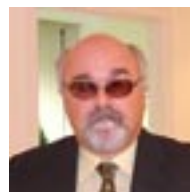
Mary McPhail,

European Women's Lobby (EWL)



Patrick De Bucquois,

Caritas-Europa



Yannis Vardakastanis,

European Disability Forum (EDF)

(b) Working Groups and Parties

Our working groups bring together member organisations to discuss and exchange views on specific subjects. Membership of the working groups is open to all members and they usually meet five times each year. The Secretariat works with members to identify issues and themes to be discussed, and the working groups provide an opportunity for members to share information from their networks. The groups draft policy papers with the support of the Secretariat that take all members' views into account. Working groups are also a venue to debate issues in depth, as well as monitor developments in particular policy areas.

Social Policy Working Group

- focuses on sharing experience and shaping ideas for policy papers on a wide range of issues, from social inclusion, minimum income, the Lisbon Strategy, demographic change, etc.

Fundamental Rights and Non-Discrimination Working Group

- concentrates on exchanging information about anti-discrimination policies in the EU, equality issues, and fundamental rights.

Working Party on Social Services

- discusses the role of social services and organised an important seminar in the European Parliament on the Services Directive in 2005.

Working Party on the Social Rights of Migrants

- monitors developments on migration and integration issues and works with other organisations

interested in integration of migrants including the European Policy Centre/ King Baudouin Foundation Steering Group on Multicultural Europe.



President Anne-Sophie Parent and European Commissioner Vladimir Špidla

(c) Strengthening links between NGOs and European Institutions

We work with our members to develop structured civil dialogue with actors on the European policy stage. This dialogue takes different forms and ranges from ad hoc meetings, to participation in conferences and regular meetings.



Social Platform General Assembly



Meeting with Polish Minister Rafal Baniak, Under Secretary of state for Social policy.

Network Building Visit to Romania, November 2005

“The visit was very beneficial for both sides - European Networks and Romanian NGOs. The latter felt that it was extremely important for them to be supported by Platform members. The visit was not only an opportunity to make contacts with European Networks and share information, but also an opportunity to get to know each other, among Romanian NGOs.”

-- Roxana Radulescu - European Public Health Alliance

As the EU enlarges, the Social Platform's members are expanding their networks in the new Member States and accession countries. Our members have been busy making new contacts among national NGOs, learning about the role of civil society in the new Member States, and some have supported the development of national NGO platforms, with the goal of gradually bringing NGOs into EU networks.

Since 2002, the Social Platform has been assisting our members by organising study/networking visits to accession countries (most of which are now new Member States). Countries visited so far are: Poland (Dec 2002), Czech Republic (Sep 2003), Cyprus (June 2004), Hungary (July 2004), Latvia (Nov 2004) and now Romania (Nov 2005). The Secretariat has worked closely with members to determine which countries to visit and to set the programmes.

In November 2005, 11 members took part in a two-day visit to Romania. We organised a number of meetings to help members develop contacts among national NGOs. The programme included presentations from Romanian NGOs about the national social situation, as well as civil society organisations. We also saw that there is still much to be done to improve the

coordination and cooperation between NGOs within Romania. The Romanian NGOs who attended the meeting appreciated learning about NGOs working across the European Union, as well as the opportunity to get to know other Romanian organisations as these kinds of meetings are rare.

Our members found it particularly useful to hear from Romanian social NGOs about the role of civil society in policy-making. Different NGOs have had different experience, with some successfully building both public support and advocacy skills, while others feel they need to build capacity in order to have an impact. The issue of funding was also raised, as Romanian organisations will be eligible for different kinds of funding once they join the EU.

Our members came away from the visit with a better understanding of the situation in Romania, as well as with both new and more developed contacts amongst Romanian organisations. The Romanian NGOs quizzed our members on how EU networks operate and could now see how becoming members of various pan-European organisations might help their own work.

These days, much of our communication is by E-mail or telephone. However, visits like these prove that we can understand the real issues and concerns more quickly when we meet people face to face and visit local organisations.

“For EWL the most positive point was to have the opportunity to have a bilateral meeting with women's organisations, as this might lead to the forming of a national coordination in Romania.”

-- Cécile Gréboval - European Women's Lobby

Highlights of Social Platform meetings and events in 2005

- February
- > Meeting with the President of the European Council, Luxembourg Prime Minister Claude Juncker to discuss our worry that the European Commission's Communications on Jobs and Growth indicates a move away from the EU's commitment to social cohesion.
 - > Bi-annual meeting with the European Commission including a meeting with new Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Vladimir Špidla.
 - > Seminar "The European Constitution: What's in it for Social NGOs?"
 - > Participation in the Act4europe conference "NGO Space for Debate: ratifying the Constitution and developing participatory democracy".
- March
- > Meeting with Commission President José Manuel Barroso to talk about the new approach to the Lisbon Strategy.
- April
- > Meeting with the Bureau of the Social Protection Committee and the Director-General of European Commission Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities about the impact of the mid-term review of the Social Agenda.
 - > Social Platform seminar organised by the Green Group in the European Parliament entitled "Social Services, Quality in Services and the Services Directive".
- June
- > Seminar "How to address the issue of multiple discrimination".
 - > Seminar "Tools to promote fundamental rights at EU level: what about mainstreaming and impact assessment?".
- July
- > Seminar "Understanding Minimum Income: a tool to combat poverty and social exclusion".
 - > Participation in the Troika meeting of the EU Employment and Social Policy Ministers in Belfast.
- September
- > Meeting with Polish Minister Rafal Baniak, Under Secretary of state for Social policy.
- October
- > Participation at the Stakeholder Forum ahead of the Hampton Court Informal Summit on the Social Model.
 - > European Conference on "Building social policies on fundamental rights".
 - > Participation in the EU Poverty Round Table conference in Glasgow.
- November
- > Bi-annual meeting with the European Commission.
 - > Seminar "Demographic change and the financial sustainability of social protection systems".
- December
- > Seminar "Working with Roma Civil Society".

V. Our Members

PLATFORM FULL MEMBERS

AGE

AGE - the European Older People's Platform is a European network of organisations of people aged 50+ and directly represents over 25 million older people in Europe. AGE aims to voice and promote the interests of the 150 million inhabitants aged 50+ in the European Union and to raise awareness of the issues that concern them most.

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www.age-platform.org
Anne-Sophie Parent
Director

ATD Fourth World International Movement

ATD Fourth World is an international non-governmental organisation dedicated to overcoming extreme poverty. Its goal is to explore all possibilities of partnership with families living in chronic poverty and to encourage more private citizens and public officials to join this effort.

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www.atd-fourthworld.org
Marc Bringer
Member of the Delegation to the EU

Autism Europe

Autism-Europe is a European association whose main objective is to advance the rights of people with autism and their families and help improve their lives. Autism-Europe coordinates the efforts of national and regional associations of parents of children with autism in 30 European countries. Autism-Europe plays a key role in disseminating information to raise awareness on autism.

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Donata Vivanti
President

Caritas Europa

Caritas Europa is one of the seven regions of Caritas Internationalis, the worldwide confederation of 162 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations. Caritas Europa is the umbrella organisation of 48 Caritas member organisations, working in 44 European countries. It focuses its activities on policy issues related to poverty, social inequality, migration and asylum within all countries of Europe. Furthermore Caritas Europe works on issues of emergency humanitarian assistance, international development and peace throughout the world. With regard to all these issues, the organisation develops policies for political advocacy and lobbying at European level as well as at national level.

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Marius Wanders
Secretary General

Combined European bureau for Social Development (CEBSD)

The CEBSD is a non-governmental European umbrella organisation which brings together a variety of partners from a dozen countries both inside and outside of the European Union. CEBSD members actively promote social and community development. The emphasis is on people working together - collective action which is anti-discriminatory and which seeks to bring about individual and social change.

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www.cebsd.org
Gerard Hautekeur, *Chairperson*
Margo Gorman, *Coordinator*

Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE)

The Confederation of Family Organisations in the EU is the link between EU institutions and organisations representing families at national level. COFACE recommends a genuine European family policy, i.e. a policy that takes into account the family dimension of the economic, social, cultural and educational policies implemented at European level.

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William Lay
Director

Eurochild

Eurochild is a network of NGOs concerned with the welfare and rights of children and young people across Europe. Eurochild aims to raise the profile of the welfare and rights of children and young people with the European institutions and to promote high quality practice throughout Europe.

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Jana Hainsworth *Secretary General*

Eurodiaconia

Eurodiaconia is a federation of churches, non-statutory welfare organisations and NGOs in Europe operating at national and international level. It fosters networks between the diaconal and social work of institutions and church communities and co-operates with civil society partners.

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Heidi Martinussen *Secretary General*

Euronet

Euronet, the European children's Network, is a coalition of networks and organisations campaigning for the interests and rights of children. They share a common concern that children as a group are 'invisible' within the European Union and that the EU develops legislation, policy, and programmes without taking sufficient or, in many cases, any account of children's rights or interests.

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Mieke Schuurman *Co-ordinator*

European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN)

EAPN is an independent coalition of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and groups involved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the Member States of the European Union.

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Fintan Farrell

Director

European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

The EAEA is a European non-profit association with more than 100 member organisations from 40 countries working in the field of adult learning and representing more than 50 million learners Europe-wide. The EAEA promotes the social inclusion aspects of the Lisbon Strategy; it promotes adult learning and the widening of access and participation in formal and non-formal adult education for all, particularly for groups currently under-represented.

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Ellinor Haase

General Secretary

European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)

The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) promotes the equalisation of opportunities for people with disabilities through effective and high quality service systems in Europe. EASPD represents more than 7000 service provider organisations across Europe and across disability. EASPD aims at: Accessibility of society, Availability of services, Affordability of support and Adaptability of support systems.

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Luk Zelderloo

Secretary General

European Blind Union (EBU)

The European Blind Union is a non-governmental and non profit-making European organization founded in 1984. EBU aims to protect and promote the interests of blind and partially-sighted people in its 44 member countries. It is recognised and supported by the European Union as the leading European-level NGO for people with a visual impairment, and is affiliated to the European Disability Forum.

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www.euroblind.org

Mokrane Boussaid, *Director*

Desmond Kenny *c/o National Council for the Blind of Ireland*

European Confederation of Workers' Co-operatives, Social Co-operatives and Participative Enterprises (CECOP)

CECOP is an international non-profit association representing small and medium-sized worker-controlled enterprises across 42 member countries of the Council of Europe. CECOP's core objectives are the representation of the interests of workers' co-operatives, social co-operatives and enterprises, workers participation and employee ownership towards the European Union institutions, the promotion of co-operative economic and social development in the European region, the creation of partnership and networks, and the transfer of information and know-how.

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Bruno Roelants

Secretary General

European Council for Non Profit Organisations (CEDAG)

CEDAG is a network of non profit organisations from across the EU member states. The network was established in 1989 in order to provide a voice for the non-profit sector at European level on issues which are common to all the non-profit organisations.

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Anne David, *President*

Nolan Quigley, *Vice-President*

European Disability Forum (EDF)

EDF is a European umbrella organisation of disabled people representing the interests of 50 million people with disabilities in Europe, including all impairment groups. The aim of EDF is to promote disabled people's human rights and equal opportunities and to combat discrimination and social exclusion in all EU policies in accordance with the principle of mainstreaming and a social model of disability.

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Carlotta Besozzi

Director

European Federation of National Organisations Working with Homeless (FEANTSA)

Founded in 1989, FEANTSA brings together over 100 organisations working with the homeless across Europe. The aim of FEANTSA is to encourage policy-makers to respond to the problems of homelessness and to contribute to the strengthening of policies addressing homelessness in Europe through transnational exchanges and research.

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Freek Spinnewijn

Director

European Federation of the Elderly (EURAG)

EURAG is a non-profit and non-religious European umbrella organisation for age organizations, independent of political parties and has its seat in Luxembourg. It was founded in 1962 as the "European Federation for the Self-Help of the Elderly" and the General Secretariat is based in Graz, Austria. EURAG represents older people's interests and cooperates with international organisations (the European Union, the Council of Europe, the World Health Organisation and the United Nations); national governments and other NGOs. Currently, EURAG has 138 member organisations in 32 European countries.

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Gerhard Teissl, *Director*

Gertraud Dayé, *International Relations*

European Federation of Unpaid Parents and Carers at Home (FEFAP)

FEFAP represents and defends the interests of any parent choosing, having chosen, or wishing to choose as their priority the care and education of their children, their elderly or disabled relatives.

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Marielle Helleputte

Secretary General

European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (CECODHAS)

CECODHAS, the European Liaison Committee for Social Housing, is a non-profit making organisation which was formed in 1998. Its key objective is to promote the work of social housing organisations in the EU through co-ordination and mutual support of the member organisations and campaigning for the right to a decent home for all Europeans.

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Claire Roumet

Secretary General

European Network Against Racism (ENAR)

ENAR is a coalition of about 500 European NGOs. The goal of ENAR is to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals. ENAR is working to link local, national, regional and European initiatives to combat racism. It is also working to influence policies and policy making processes at both national and European level.

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Pascale Charhon

Director

European Network of the Unemployed (ENU)

ENU was initially founded in 1982 and officially launched in Glasgow 1987 as the first Western European Network of the Unemployed. ENU supports all efforts to achieve full employment and at the same time to improve the material, physical and mental well-being of the unemployed. ENU, its national member-organisations and allies work through lobbying the national legislative processes, by organising demonstrations and protests and through the media. ENU pays special attention to the National Action Plans on Employment and Inclusion.

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Karl Kunnas

President

European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

The objective of the European Public Health Alliance is to protect and promote the public health interests of all people living in Europe. EPHAs' priority commitment is to provide a range of information and support service to its member organisations, as well as timely and relevant information and analysis to subscribers, the general public, EU officials and Members of the European Parliament.

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Lara Garrido-Herrero

Secretary General

European Round Table of Charitable Social Welfare Associations (ETWelfare)

ETWelfare's objective is to promote the role of charitable social welfare associations in European social policy and to campaign for social rights, in particular, the right for everyone, even the most disadvantaged, to enjoy quality social services. ETWelfare deals with the consideration for the particular characteristics of social services. ETWelfare's members are national platforms for social non-profit-organisations who work with social policy advocacy and offer social services.

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Ariane Rodert

Manager

European Social Action Network (ESAN)

ESAN was created in 1991 by social development and social action organisations in the European Union. It aims to develop cooperation between non-profit organisations working in the social field and to encourage a coherent European social policy based on the respect of human rights, solidarity and justice.

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Anthony Paulissen,

Programme Director

Liliane Cocozza,

Vice-President

European Women's Lobby (EWL)

The European Women's Lobby brings together women's NGOs from 25 European Union and accession countries, as well as from 17 European-wide and international organisations. Our mission is to work together to achieve equality between women and men, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, to ensure respect for women's human rights and to eradicate violence against women.

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Secretary General

European Youth Forum (YFJ)

The European Youth Forum works to empower young people to participate actively in the shaping of Europe and the societies in which they live, and in improving the living conditions of young people as European citizens in today's world. Representation, internal democracy, independence, openness and inclusion are among the main principles for the functioning of the European Youth Forum and its member organisations.

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Diogo Pinto
Secretary General

Federazione ACLI Internazionali (FAI)

The Christian Associations of Italian Workers (ACLI), founded in 1944, is a democratic and non-profit organisation, constituted by citizens, whose aim is the protection of workers, women, young people and the weakest groups, in order to safeguard human rights and promote the creation of a civil, social and political citizenship. ACLI has 19 offices, 10 in European Union countries.

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Luca Jahier
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Inclusion Europe (The European Association of Societies of Persons

with Intellectual Disability and their Families)

Inclusion Europe was formally established as a non-governmental, non-profit making organisation in May 1988 and is committed to advancing the human rights and defending the interests of people with intellectual disability and their families in Europe.

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Geert Freyhoff
Director

International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)

The International Council on Social Welfare, founded in 1928, is a non-governmental organisation, operating throughout the world for the cause of social welfare, social justice and social development. ICSW actively supports the work of UN agencies and has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

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Hans van Ewijk
Regional President

Mental Health Europe (MHE)

Mental Health Europe is a European non-governmental organisation committed to the promotion of positive mental health, prevention of mental distress and protection of human rights for users and ex-users of mental health services, their families and carers.

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Mary Van Dievel
Director

Quaker Council for European Affairs

QCEA was founded in 1979 to promote the values of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in a European political context. QCEA has work programmes in the fields of peace, economic justice, and human rights.

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Liz Scurfield
Joint Representative

Red Cross/EU Office

The Red Cross/EU Office was created in 1983 as a consortium of the National Red Cross Societies of the EU Member States and the Secretariat of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

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Daniela Adorna
Programme Officer

Save the Children Europe Group

Save the Children Europe Group is a network of Save the Children organisations working in eight European Union (EU) states and four non-EU states. Its members fight for children's rights, working with and for children in their own countries and abroad. Save the Children Europe Group's aim is to help further children's rights in Europe and elsewhere by promoting children's rights and interests in European policy making, funding and programmes in the fields of social policy, development, asylum/migration, violence and sexual exploitation as well as poverty.

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Olivia Lind Haldorsson
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Solidar

Solidar is an independent European alliance of non-governmental organisations involved in social care, development, humanitarian aid and life-long learning, who have links with the trade unions and social democratic parties.

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Giampiero Alhadeff
Secretary General

The European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA-Europe)

ILGA-Europe is the European region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association. We are a non-governmental umbrella organisation representing our members, principally organisations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people at European level. We work for human rights and equality for LGBT people in Europe through advocacy work and lobbying such major European organisations as the European Union, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

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Patricia Prendiville
Executive Director

The European Volunteer Centre (CEV)

The European Volunteer Centre is a European umbrella association of 38 national, regional and local volunteer centres and volunteer development agencies that together represent thousands of volunteer organisations, associations and other voluntary and community groups across Europe. CEV and its member organisations work together to support and promote voluntary activity.

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Markus Held
Director

Workability Europe

Workability Europe was the first regional group to be formed by the European members of Workability International. It is the largest employer body representing providers of work and employment services to people with disabilities in Europe. Today its 31 member organisations are located in 19 countries and provide work programmes for over 1,000 000 disabled people.

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Martin Ohridski
Public Affairs Officer

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Association des Femmes de l'Europe Méridionale (AFEM)

The Association of Southern European Women (AFEM - Association des femmes de l'Europe méridionale) regroups female associations and women from five Southern European countries (Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal). In that geographic area, AFEM supports the building of a Europe based upon an effective equality between women and men, able to innovate, and respecting culture diversity.

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Vice-President

International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPF EN)

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) is the strongest global voice safeguarding sexual and reproductive health and rights for people everywhere. Today, as these important choices and freedoms are seriously threatened, we are needed more than ever. The IPPF European Network is one of IPPF's six regions. With 40 member associations in as many countries, IPPF European Network increases support for and access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights throughout Europe and Central Asia.

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Regional Director

European Roma Information Office (ERIO)

The European Roma Information Office (ERIO) was founded in 2003 with the aim to establish and maintain a Romani presence in Brussels. ERIO aims to contribute to the political and public discussions surrounding Roma by providing factual and in-depth information in order to counteract discrimination and exclusion which the Romani communities have been suffering from for centuries and to contribute to their equal representation and participation in political decision-making.

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Ivan Ivanov
Executive Director

VI. Financials

During 2005 the Social Platform was funded by a grant from the European Commission to support its running costs. Other funding comes from membership fees, from other contributions from members, and from funding for specific projects.

The accounts were audited by Toelen, Cats, Morlie & Co, registered auditors.


Balance Sheet (in EURO)

ASSETS	2005	2004
1. Fixed assets	21,443.46	15,322.64
2. Current assets:		
European Commission	158,825.74	143,594.55
Advance payments	0	10,719.38
Other debtors	10,373.68	3,345.41
3. Bank assets	54,171.90	36,511.37
4. Deferred charges	2,048.88	4,527.33
5. Accrued income	263.18	1,579.90
Total assets	247,126.84	215,600.58
LIABILITIES	2005	2004
1. Reserves	0	0
2. Short term liabilities:		
Suppliers	94,553.20	93,285.75
Projects liabilities	71,030.00	32,175.20
Projects debts	0	0
3. Social debts	38,213.38	37,609.15
4. Accrued charge	42,054.74	52,530.48
5. Deferred income	1,311.52	0
6. Surplus/loss	0	0
Total liabilities	247,162.84	215600.58

Global Income (in EURO)

INCOME	2005	2004
European Commission grant	622,575.45	696,594.55
Funds for specific projects	73,371.92	49,237.92
Membership eligible fees	31,226.00	23,500.00
Membership non-eligible fees	5,513.48	13,904.43
Membership Contact Group	16,704.99	0
Other income	38,822.63	38,646.32
Expert fees	14,979.80	9,690.00
Total income	803,194.27	831,573.22
EXPENDITURE		
Staff	401,183.30	423,851.02
Travel and accommodation	70,101.99	114,774.83
Services	150,655.06	155,023.66
Administration	127,491.57	103,255.12
Specific projects except staff	52,037.51	20,764.16
Non-eligible	1,724.84	13,904.43
Total expenditure	803,194.27	831,573.22





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