

What
social platform
did in 2010

2010 saw Social Platform confront four major challenges:

1. Responding to the social consequences of the economic crisis

With 116 million people socially excluded and austerity measures in place across the EU, we alerted national ministers at the informal EPSCO councils, MEPs and Commission officials of the realities on the ground as reported by our members: increasing over-indebtedness, reduced access to public services and housing, and social protection systems under threat.

To counterbalance these effects, we made several proposals such as to design and implement budget consolidation in line with Article 9 of the Lisbon Treaty, and ensure the adequacy of minimum income schemes.

2. Strengthening the social dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy

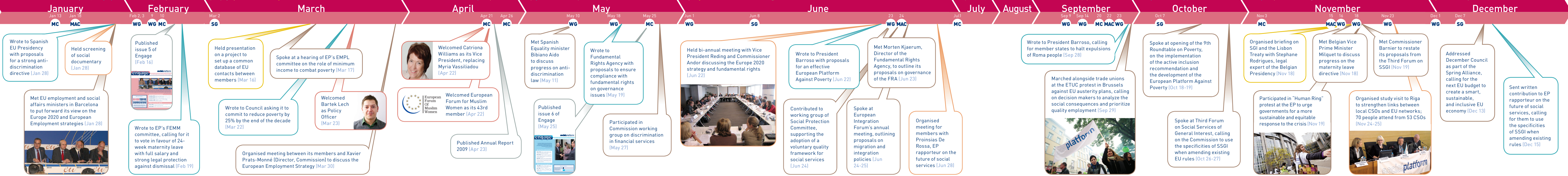
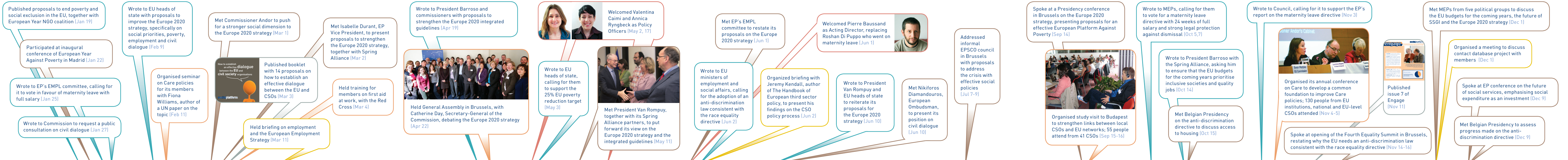
In February we launched a campaign calling on the EU and member states to make eradicating poverty and social exclusion an explicit objective of the new Europe 2020 strategy, among other proposals. The campaign led us to meet with key figures from all EU institutions: President Van Rompuy, Commissioner Andor, Commission Secretary-General Catherine Day, and EP Vice President Isabelle Durant. Our efforts paid off: in June, for the first time, heads of state agreed to make poverty reduction one of the five EU targets and adopted an integrated guideline dedicated to the objective.

We then focused our campaign on implementation, making five concrete proposals to President Barroso for an effective European Platform Against Poverty. In October, together with our Spring Alliance partners, we asked decision makers to fund actions for an inclusive society and quality jobs in the EU budgets for the coming years.

3. Advancing EU laws for the protection of people

We fought for a better maternity leave directive, with 24 weeks of fully paid leave and strong legal protection against dismissal. Despite opposition from the Commission and the Council, in October the EP courageously voted for it, supporting most of our proposals. We also pushed hard for the Council to adopt an anti-discrimination law in goods and services, meeting the Spanish and Belgian equality ministers to provide our expertise and make our case.

Unfortunately, both of these proposals are currently being deferred by the Council – so the battle goes on.



4. Improving care policies and ensuring the quality of social services

Continuing our work on demographic and social change, in November we held our annual conference on Care, bringing together experts and decision makers from all EU institutions to establish a common foundation for Care policies that respect the rights of individuals, guarantee access to services and promote social inclusion. This was a vital step towards developing a set of proposals for improved Care policies, which we'll publish in 2011.



We also continued working on social services of general interest (SSGI). We participated in the Third Forum on SSGI and several other events, calling on the Commission to use the specificities of SSGI when amending existing rules.

In 2011 we'll continue our engagement to ensure that the EU's social policy priorities are suitably funded in its budgets. We'll be keeping a close eye on how the Europe 2020 strategy is implemented – particularly the poverty, employment and education targets – and move forward with our campaigns on the maternity leave and equality laws. We'll also focus on ensuring that the inclusive objective of the Europe 2020 strategy is reflected when the Single Market Act is adopted.

We'd like to thank our friends and partners for a year of solid collaboration which brought tangible results. We look forward to building on that work to make the EU more social and fairer for all.

Yours,

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is on the left and the second is on the right.

Conny Reuter, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "PWBaussand".

Pierre Baussand, Acting Director

Social Platform's management committee (Dirk Jarré, Heather Roy, Conny Reuter, Patrick De Bucquois, Catriona Williams, Michel Mercadié) with Pierre Baussand, Director)

Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 43 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.

Contact:

socialplatform

T: +32 2 511 37 14 • **E:** platform@socialplatform.org

A: Square de Meeûs 18, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium

W: www.socialplatform.org

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