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.

Welcomed Pierre Baussand

as Acting Director, replacing

maternity leave (Jun 1)

Roshan Di Puppo who went on

proposals for

Published proposals to end poverty and social exclusion in the EU, together with European Year NGO coalition (Jan 19)

> Participated at inaugural conference of European Year Against Poverty in Madrid (Jan 22)

Wrote to EP's EMPL committee, calling fo it to vote in favour of maternity leave with full salary (Jan 25)

Wrote to Commission to request a public consultation on civil dialogue (Jan 27)

state with proposals to improve the Europe 202 strategy, specifically on social priorities, poverty, employment and civil dialogue (Feb 9)

Wrote to EU heads of

Organised seminar on Care policies for its members with Fiona Williams, author o a UN paper on the topic (Feb 11)

Met Commissioner Andor to push for a stronger social dimension to the Europe 2020 strategy (Mar 1)



Held briefing on employment and the European Employment

ublished booklet with 14 proposals on now to establish an effective dialogue between the EU and

Alliance (Mar 2)

Held training for members on first aid

proposals to strengthen the Europe 2020 strategy together with Spring

Met Isabelle Durant, EP

Vice President, to present

at work, with the Red Cross (Mar 4)

Wrote to President Barroso and commissioners with proposals to strengthen the Europe 2020 integrated quidelines (Apr 19)



Held General Assembly in Brussels, with Catherine Day, Secretary-General of the Commission, debating the Europe 2020 strategy



Welcomed Valentina Caimi and Annica Ryngbeck as Policy Ifficers (May 2, 17)



Met President Van Rompuy, together with its Spring Alliance partners, to put forward its view on the Europe 2020 strategy and the integrated guidelines (May 11

Participated in

(May 27)

Commission working

group on discrimination

in financial services

Met EP's EMPL committee to restate its proposals on the Europe 2020 strategy (Jun 1)



Organized briefing with Jeremy Kendall, author of The Handbook of European third sector policy, to present his findings on the CSO policy process (Jun 2)

Wrote to President Met Nikiforos Van Rompuy and Diamandouros, EU heads of state European to reiterate its Ombudsman, to present its the Europe 2020 position on strategy (Jun 10) civil dialogue

WG MAC

Met Morten Kiaerum.

Fundamental Rights

Agency, to outline its

Director of the

Addressed informal EPSC0 counci in Brussels with proposals

to address the crisis with effective social policies (Jul 7-9)

Spoke at a Presidency conference in Brussels on the Europe 2020 strategy, presenting proposals for an effective European Platform Against Poverty (Sep 14)



Met Belgian Presidency Organised study visit to Budapest on the anti-discrimination to strengthen links between local directive to discuss access CSOs and EU networks: 55 people to housing (Oct 15) attend from 41 CSOs (Sep 15-16)

Wrote to MEPs, calling for them Wrote to Council, calling for it to support the EP's report on the maternity leave directive (Nov 3) to vote for a maternity leave directive with 24 weeks of full salary and strong legal protection against dismissal (Oct 5,7)

Wrote to President Barroso with

the Spring Alliance, asking him

to ensure that the EU budgets

for the coming years prioritise

inclusive societies and quality

jobs (Oct 14)

October

Spoke at opening of the 9th

Roundtable on Poverty,

on the implementation

of the active inclusion

recommendation and

the development of the

Poverty (Oct 18-19)

European Platform Against

Organised its annual conference on Care to develop a common foundation to improve Care policies; 130 people from EU institutions, national and EU-level CSOs attended (Nov 4-5)

Met Belgian Vice

Milquet to discuss

Prime Minister

progress on the

maternity leave

directive (Nov 18)

issue 7 of Engage (Nov 11)

Published

Spoke at EP conference on the future

Spoke at opening of the Fourth Equality Summit in Brussels, restating why the EU needs an anti-discrimination law consistent with the race equality directive (Nov 14-16)

Wrote to Spanish **EU Presidency** with proposals for a strong antidiscrimination directive (Jan 28)

Held screening of social documentary (Jan 28)

Met EU employment and social affairs ministers in Barcelona to put forward its view on the Europe 2020 and European Employment strategies (Jan 2)



Published issue 5 of Engage (Feb 16)

WG WG MC



committee, calling for it to vote in favour of 24week maternity leave with full salary and strong legal protection against dismissal (Feb 19) March

Held presentation on a project to Spoke at a hearing of EP's EMPL set up a common committee on the role of minimum database of EU income to combat poverty (Mar 17)

contacts between members (Mar 16)

> Wrote to Council asking it to commit to reduce poverty by 25% by the end of the decade

Wrote to EP's FEMM (Mar 22)

Welcomed

Bartek Lech as Policv Officer (Mar 23)

Organised meeting between its members and Xavier Prats-Monné (Director, Commission) to discuss the European Employment Strategy (Mar 30)

Velcomed Catriona Williams as its Vice President, replacing Mvria Vassiliadou



Welcomed European Forum for Muslim Women as its 43rd member (Apr 22)

Published Annual Report

Met Spanish Equality minister Wrote to Bibiano Aido Fundamental

to discuss Rights Agency with progress on anti proposals to ensure discrimination compliance with law (May 11) fundamental rights on governance issues (May 19)

Published issue 6 of Engage (May 25)

Held bi-annual meeting with Vice President Reding and Commissioner Andor discussing the Europe 2020 strategy and fundamental rights



Wrote to President Barroso with proposals for an effective European Platform Against Poverty (Jun 22



social services

(Jun 24)

proposals on governance of the FRA (Jun 23) European

Integration Forum's annual meeting, outlining proposals on migration and integration policies (Jun 24-25)

Organised meeting for members with Proinsias De Rossa, EP rapporteur on the future of social services (Jun 28)

Marched alongside trade unions

Wrote to President Barroso, calling

for member states to halt expulsions

of Roma people (Sep 28)

at the ETUC protest in Brussels against EU austerity plans, calling on decision makers to analyze the social consequences and prioritize quality employment (Sep 29)



Organised briefing or SGI and the Lisbon Treaty with Stephane Rodrigues, legal expert of the Belgian Presidency (Nov 18)

> Participated in "Human Ring" protest at the EP to urge governments for a more sustainable and equitable response to the crisis (Nov 19

Organised study visit to Riga to strengthen links between local CSOs and EU networks; 70 people attend from 53 CSOs (Nov 24-25)

Barnier to restate

its proposals from

the Third Forum on

SSGI (Nov 19)



Met MEPs from five political groups to discuss the EU budgets for the coming years, the future of SSGI and the Europe 2020 strategy (Dec 1)

> Organised a meeting to discuss contact database project with members (Dec 1)

of social services, emphasising social expenditure as an investment (Dec 9)

Met Belgian Presidency to assess

progress made on the antidiscrimination directive (Dec 9)

Met Commissioner

Addressed

and inclusive EU

economy (Dec 13

December Council as part of the Spring Alliance, calling for the next EU budget to create a smart, sustainable,

contribution to EF rapporteur on the future of social services, calling for them to use the specificities of SSGI when amending existing rules (Dec 15)

Sent written

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.

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

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.

Conny Reuter, President

Pierre Baussand, Acting Director

PNBaussard.

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:



T: +32 2 511 37 14 • **E:** platform@socialplatform.org **A:** Square de Meeûs 18, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium **W:** www.socialplatform.org

Social Platform acknowledges the financial support of the European Commission. This publication reflects the author's views. The Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in this publication.

All photographs by Social Platform, except Jan 28 (Spanish presidency) and Nov 19 (European Parliament). Published in March 2011

