



20 years strong!

We touched base with some of our past Management Committee & Secretariat members - here's what they had to say about the last 20 years and what the future holds...



"Social Europe is probably better in some ways but in many ways we seem to be devaluing social development in Europe for economic growth. There is a greater awareness of the need for basic social protection but often it remains that – basic.

"Social Platform has kept talking and advocating throughout all the negative and policy changes and that, I think, means the debate is alive and well. Social Platform has also built on the experience of members and I think has been able to share reality."

Heather Roy, Management Committee member 2009-13, President 2013-15



"I am afraid that social Europe seems more like words than reality now, rather than what seemed to be the position 20 years ago. We do have important commitments on paper and these were hard won by social NGOs and others with a concern for social Europe, but as a colleague said, 'you can't eat paper.'

"I believe the situation would be even worse without the actions of people and organisations committed to the achievement of fundamental rights for all, including economic social and cultural rights. Social Platform has played a part in that struggle."

Fintan Farrell, President 2007



"The expression 'social Europe' in itself is incorrect. Europe is an economic construction, with a social dimension. There is, for instance, no exclusive social competence in the Treaties!

"This social dimension has regressed, despite a deceptive discourse. We talk more about the social dimension, but the declared social ambitions are contradictory to the economic and political neoliberal choices made by the Council and the Commission. Hence, we had the failure of the Lisbon Strategy, and the foreseen failure of Europe 2020, at least for its social dimension."

Michel Mercadié, Management Committee member 2009-15



"My happiest memory of my time in office is definitely the moment when the EU started to use the term "Social services of general interest" – a term created and argued for by a working group of Social Platform that I had the honour to chair.

"This switch in language triggered quite a different and much more positive dialogue that peaked in the remark of a high positioned representative of the Commission: 'Be courageous in this matter and do forcefully defend your concerns and objectives!'"

Dirk Jarré, Management Committee member 2007-11



"At EU level the main evolution in the past 20 years was for me the EU legal framework to fight discrimination. On many other fronts there has been either a stagnation (e.g. no maternity leave directive) or even a regression.

"I enjoyed the work with colleagues and members. It was fascinating to see how a topic approached from so many perspectives (more than 40 members!) became increasingly richer and nuanced. Of course, it was often a real headache to consolidate all these perspectives, but definitely worth the effort. A real intellectual and human joy!"

Roshan Di Pippo, Director 2007-10

