

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



socialplatform

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS





WELCOME

strength in numbers

Welcome to Social Platform's "Annual Report 2014", a look back at the highlights and successes of a huge year of change in the European Union.

From May to December change was abound across a number of the European institutions we work with. Following the European elections in May a new European Parliament opened its doors for its five year mandate, followed by a new European Commission in November headed by President Jean-Claude Juncker. The transition was complete in December when Donald Tusk took office as President of the European Council.

The effect of this wave of new faces has been two-fold. On the one hand, the Commission's mantra of jobs and growth lacks any focus on social issues, instead highlighting the economy as the sole priority. Despite statements made by then-President-elect Juncker, achieving a social "triple A" rating appears to have dropped off the Commission's priority list altogether. On the other hand, the turnover of Members of the European Parliament – 52.73% of whom are newly-elected – has brought innovative ideas and renewed drive that we hope will act as a breath of fresh air to social issues. The expression "when one door closes, another door opens" has never been truer.

As well as meetings with high-level representatives of the EU institutions, including Commissioners Marianne Thyssen and Cecilia Malmström and numerous MEPs, 2014 was also the year that we broke new ground by being invited to attend the Informal EPSCO (Employment, Social Policy, Health and



Consumer Affairs) council meetings on equal footing with social partners and member states for the very first time. We took this opportunity to directly address European employment and social affairs ministers to put forward our views on a common EU Unemployment Benefit Scheme and maximising the potential of the social economy.

Our success in communicating our positions to decision-makers and citizens alike highlights the effectiveness of our Platform and demonstrates that we gain strength in numbers. Despite the numerous views our 48 members represent, we are united by a common cause: a social Europe that serves the people. With this in mind, we wish to thank our members and their national members for their undying support, our friends in the European institutions who share our aspirations, and the people of Europe for continuing to set our agenda for us. 2014 was a year of transitions, trials and tribulations, but it is yet another rung on our ladder towards a better Europe for all.

Thank you for taking the time to read our "Annual Report 2014".

Heather Roy & Pierre Baussand
President & Director of Social Platform

ABOUT

social platform

annual report 2014

Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. We campaign to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives. Our work is centred around our six strategic orientation objectives 2014-2020: people-centred services, socio-economic justice, equality for all, quality employment, social protection and civil dialogue.

Members

2014 saw three new organisations join Social Platform, bringing our membership to 48:



Social enterprises are on board! The European Network of Social Integration Enterprises – ENSIE aims to contribute to sustainable development through different actions such as creating links between the job market and the social integration of disadvantaged risk-groups by improving their employment opportunities and productivity, and promoting the economic viability and the innovation of social enterprises and the integration and reinforcement of their role in the general economic landscape.



Parents want a more inclusive Europe! EPA has been the only EU-level organisation representing parents as a stakeholder group since its foundation in 1985. EPA has a nearly full coverage of Europe as it has members, national parents' associations from 26 EU member countries and from some non-EU countries as well. EPA's core activities are based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child giving parents sole rights, duties and responsibilities for the well-being and raising of their children, supporting the children in exercising their rights as well as demanding countries to provide the necessary support for this.



Leave no one behind! The European Organisation for Rare Diseases - EURORDIS is a non-governmental patient-driven alliance of patient organisations and individuals active in the field of rare diseases, dedicated to improving the quality of life of all people living with rare diseases in Europe. Its mission is to build a strong pan-European community of patient organisations and people living with rare diseases, to be their voice at the European level, and - directly or indirectly - to fight against the impact of rare diseases on their lives.

For a full list of members please see the back-inside cover.

TIMELINE

First year of the implementation of our new Strategic Orientation (2014-2020).

We present to the Commission and Parliament our nine principles for meaningful social innovation at our event in the Parliament. Social innovation must ensure the well-being of people and bring added social value.

Building on our work on financial inclusion, the European Parliament and the Council adopt a directive ensuring basic bank accounts for all - anyone legally residing in the EU now has the right to open a basic payment account, and this right cannot be denied on the grounds of nationality or place of residence.



socialplatform

New Social Platform logo launched to reflect our Strategic Orientation.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

JUNE

New EU rules on public procurement and concession contracts approved by the European Parliament reflect many positions taken by our members, such as encouraging the use of quality criteria and social considerations when designing bids.

The EPSCO council meeting takes on board our concerns and messages regarding the Europe 2020 strategy and the social challenges facing the EU, and concludes that *"policies should focus on making sure that improving the social situation across the Union becomes a widely shared priority."*

The manifesto of the Spring Alliance – of which we are a founding member along with trade unions and development and environmental organisations – is launched at an event in the European Economic and Social Committee. We presented to political groups of the Parliament key recommendations to be pushed towards the next Commission.

We asked all member states to put in place adequate minimum income schemes that are accessible for all people that need them at the informal EPSCO council meeting in Greece gathering European ministers of employment and social affairs.

The European Parliament adopts a resolution on the mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy, taking on board a number of our recommendations making clear that employment and social considerations should be put on a par with macroeconomic ones.

The European Citizens' Summit, which we co-organised, gathers hundreds of participants to discuss with MEPs an alternative vision for Europe beyond its growth obsession.

First NGO to meet with Marianne Thyssen, the newly-appointed European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility.

In line with our proposals, ministers of employment and social affairs at the EPSCO council meeting stress the need for "better coordination and balance between economic and fiscal policies so as to achieve sufficient growth, jobs and social cohesion".

Widely represented at the European Commission's poverty convention (EPAP), with participation in the opening panel with Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, a workshop on financial inclusion and a joint side-event on public procurement.

Our conference in Riga, Latvia, brings together EU and Latvian social NGOs to present their social priorities to the Minister responsible for employment and social affairs of the upcoming Latvian EU Presidency.

JULY

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

Presented our position on an EU Unemployment Benefit Scheme and the importance of the social economy at the informal EPSCO council meetings of employment and environmental ministers, on equal footing for the first time with member states.

Questions from Social Platform on the social dimension of economic, trade, migration, justice, internal market, employment and social affairs policies are raised by MEPs at the European Parliament hearings with European Commissioners-designate, following our innovative social media campaign.

Appointed as one of the nine members of the Fundamental Rights Agency's advisory panel, to support the Director in the organisation and coordination of the Fundamental Rights Platform gathering a network of 400+ civil society organisations.

Selected for the European Commission's structured dialogue group of experts on European Structural & Investment Funds to support the work of the Commission in ensuring a social dimension in the development of policies on cohesion and rural development.

Our joint European Parliament event on how to maximise the impact of the EU's social clause in all EU policies brings together MEPs, civil society, social economy actors and trade unions.

Among the first NGOs to meet with Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner responsible for Trade, to discuss the impact of trade agreements on social, health and education services.

YEAR OF CHANGE

strength in numbers

2014 was a year of transition for the EU. A new European Parliament was elected in May, and approved the new college of European Commissioners following a round of hearings. Our innovative social media campaign reached out to MEPs on committees related to our policy areas to encourage them to raise our concerns during the Commissioner hearings on a wide range of topics including civil dialogue, minimum wage, migrants' rights, public services, the Europe 2020 strategy and policies to help the development of social enterprises. Consequently, nine of our questions were put to Commissioners Dombrovskis, Katainen, Malmström, Moscovici and Thyssen, and Commissioners Timmermans, Jourová and Avramopoulos addressed our concerns during their interventions.

We saw the European Parliament vote in line with a number of our positions, including:

- A Directive on access to **basic bank accounts**: not having access to a bank account directly impacts an individual's inclusion in society as they may not be able to sign a contract of employment, rent accommodation or receive social protection benefits. The EU's Directive is a first step in the fight against financial exclusion and discrimination.
- A Resolution on the **employment and social aspects of the Europe 2020 strategy**: the resolution criticises the trend favoured by the European Commission and member states of focusing on economic growth and side-lining social priorities. We hope to see a shift in attitude among EU and national decision-makers, with a strong commitment to finding an urgent solution for the millions of people living in poverty across the EU.

Task Forces

Our ten Task Forces provided members with a platform to discuss, debate and develop common positions. In 2014 we published the following nine position papers as a result of the hard work of the Task Forces, which will form the foundations of our advocacy actions towards decision-makers:

- Spring Alliance manifesto: A better Europe now
- Employment - how to make labour markets inclusive
- Mid-term review of Europe 2020
- EU directive on adequate minimum income
- Maximising the potential of social economy and social enterprises
- Rebalancing economic and social stabilisation in the EU: towards a common Unemployment Benefit Scheme?
- Financing of social services
- EU internal strategy to promote human rights
- Minimum wage

NUMBER CRUNCH

social platform

annual report 2014

2,296
Facebook fans
On Facebook we reached 91% more people in second half of 2014 compared to first half

1,507
Twitter followers



Website visits grew by 13% to
54,214



9 position papers adopted

15.5% growth in MailChimp subscription list



16 training & capacity building sessions held for members and staff

9 questions raised by MEPs during EP hearings with Commissioners-designate



2 new members of staff,

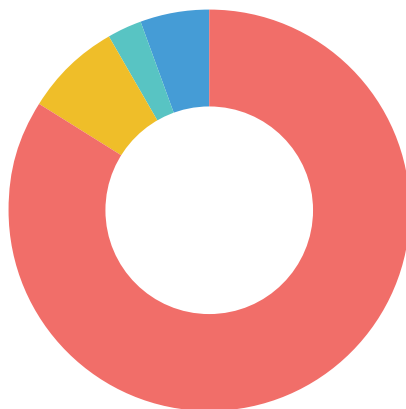


1 new member of the Management Committee

MONEY

Total Income

712,487.01 €



EC core budget

598,785.41 €

Members' eligible fees

54,813.00 €

Members' non-eligible fees

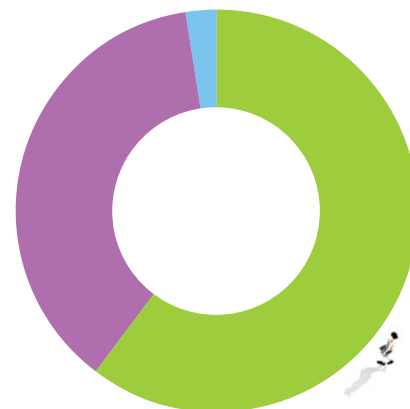
20,439.25 €

Other sources

38,449.35 €

Total Expenditure

701,318.09 €



Staff costs

423,915.35 €

Other expenditures

260,320.37 €

Non-eligible expenditures

17,082.37 €

TEAM

strength in numbers

Management Committee



President – Heather Roy

Vice-Presidents – Rodolfo Cattani, Maciej Kucharczyk

Treasurer – Michel Mercadié

Ordinary Members – Jana Hainsworth, Barbara Helfferich, Brigitte Triems

Secretariat



Director – Pierre Baussand

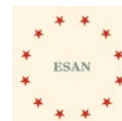
Policy & Advocacy Advisers – Valentina Caimi, Annica Ryngbeck

Policy & Advocacy Officer – Herlinde Vanhooydonck

Administrative & Financial Officer – Ilias Papageorgiou

Communications & Media Officer – Helen Joseph

MEMBERS





socialplatform

Square de Meeûs 18,
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium
+32 2 511 37 14
platform@socialplatform.org
www.socialplatform.org



/socialplatform



@social_platform



[www.flickr.com/photos/
socialplatform](http://www.flickr.com/photos/socialplatform)



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.

Published in April 2015

Printed on 100% recycled, chlorine-free paper using vegetable ink. Design: www.beelzepub.com