

2024-29
A VISION
FOR
SOCIAL
EUROPE




OUR VISION

Europe needs a **renewed commitment to social progress**, where everyone's social rights are recognised and vindicated. This requires prioritising social policy and putting people first, where initiatives that champion eradicating poverty, promoting progress and building inclusive societies are top of the policy agenda.

Social policy is too often an afterthought to industrial, climate and digital initiatives, where the needs of people are forgotten, and as a result people are left behind. In Europe 1 in 5 people are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, close to 10% of households are living in energy poverty, rising to 20% for the lowest income groups and 17% of households are in financial distress. Unsurprisingly 80% of Europeans want further measures to reduce income inequalities and **tackling poverty and social exclusion is the top concern of voters** ahead of the June 2024 elections.

Clearly the **current policy approach is not delivering**. Social exclusion is structural, and policies must go beyond jobs and skills. Europe is experiencing record levels of employment but poverty and inequalities are not reducing.

Social Platform is calling for people to be at the heart of policy-making to guarantee social progress for the 2024-2029 mandate. This can be achieved by ambitiously delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights, champion adequate social protection systems, including introducing a framework directive on adequate minimum income schemes, prioritising social investments within the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework, delivering a Just Transition and recognising the added value of civil society in policy making.

A photograph of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark jacket, kissing a young child on the cheek. The child is smiling and wearing a grey shirt. The image is set against a light blue circular background.

**Put people at the heart of
policy-making to guarantee
social progress for the
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OUR ASKS

Social Platform has 5 over-arching policy demands for the 2024-2029 mandate.

- 1. European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR):** Commit to the continued delivery of the EPSR, that by 2030 at least 15m people, including 5m children, are lifted out of poverty, 60% of adults engage in training every year and 78% of the population is in quality employment.

To ensure Europe works towards a more inclusive society, Social Platform calls for:

- A European Commissioner responsible for Social Rights
- A European Commissioner responsible for Equality
- A European Commissioner responsible for the Just Transition
- A European Commissioner responsible for the Social Economy.
- A Vice-President of the European Commission specifically responsible for Civil Dialogue

The European Parliament plays an incredibly important role in driving ambitious social policy to achieve the EPSR targets. Social Platform supports the call for Intergroups to strengthen the voice of MEPs on the following topics:

- Just Transition
- Fight Against Poverty
- Social Economy
- Anti-Racism & Diversity
- Solidarity Between Generations
- LGBTI
- Disability



OUR ASKS

The European Commission, European Parliament & European Council must commit to the 2025 revision of the EPSR Action plan and use this opportunity to re-affirm a joint commitment to meeting headline targets, and must:

- Identify new binding legislation to be adopted in the coming years, as soft policy measures have proved ineffective to address social inequalities.
- Review, and where necessary adapt new, thematic strategies that promote a union of equality including the Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, the EU Roma Strategic Framework, the Gender Equality Strategy, LGBTIQ Equality Strategy and the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness. The links between the Union of Equality and the EPSR & European Semester should be strengthened to avoid gaps that risk leaving people behind.
- Mainstream and promote the role of social economy actors, including not-for-profit social service providers, as key stakeholders in achieving the ESPR targets through the Social Economy Action Plan and propose a new Action Plan for Social Services.

2. **Minimum Income:** Currently, no minimum income scheme in Europe has reached the poverty line, and up to 50% of people don't access the benefits they are entitled to. To achieve a Social Europe, we must strengthen our social protection systems.

Social Platform calls for a Framework Directive on Adequate Minimum Income to ensure that Member States make the necessary improvements to the adequacy, accessibility and active inclusion of their schemes.

3. **Multiannual-Financial Framework (MFF):** The next MFF must be aligned to the EPSR to ensure the funds are used to promote social progress. The proposed EU Fiscal Rules will limit future social investments and therefore the MFF must be bolstered to promote much needed social investments in the years ahead.

Social Platform calls for a successor to the Recovery & Resilience Facility. A central fiscal capacity to i) facilitate social investments, ii) strengthen the social dimension within the green and digital transitions and iii) support Member States implement Country Specific Recommendations identified within the European Semester.

OUR ASKS

4. **Just Transition:** In the face of climate change the European Green Deal (EGD) is critical to the survival of the planet, and ensuring a safe place to live for future generations. But the current EGD is expected to raise energy and house prices by 20% and food prices by 15% by 2030. Both the design and delivery of the Just Transition Fund and Social Climate Fund are insufficient to guarantee a just transition.

Social Platform calls for a renewed approach to the Just Transition, including a social impact assessment, to ensure the social dimension is at the heart of the next phase of the EGD via a well-resourced and structured Social Climate Fund

5. **Civil Dialogue:** With civic space shrinking at multiple levels and civil dialogue remains too often an ad-hoc process, Social Platform calls for:

- A Civil Society Strategy to promote an open, safe and accessible environment for civil society, better protect activists and defenders, and increase funding for civil society actors.
- A Civil Dialogue Interinstitutional Agreement to create harmonised approaches across European Institutions and Member States, for structured, regular and meaningful engagement of Civil Society in policy-making.





Social Platform is the largest leading EU network of civil society organisations working on social issues, collectively uniting tens of thousands of organisations and hundreds of millions of people in Europe representing, among others, children, women, migrants, families, social economy actors including not-for-profit social service providers, Roma, people with disabilities, carers, youth, and the people that provide invaluable services to and work with these groups.

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