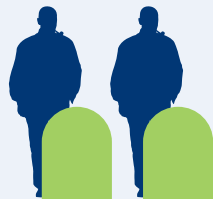


## Our top three achievements

- 1 **September 2009:** Platform adopts five proposals on how to strengthen the Open Method of Coordination on social protection and social inclusion
- 2 **October 2009:** Platform adopts a declaration to guarantee equality for all, together with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
- 3 **November 2009:** Platform makes recommendations for the future EU Commissioner on Fundamental Rights

## What's next on the agenda

- 1 **November 2009:** Platform publishes proposals to decision makers to reinforce civil dialogue
- 2 **November 2009:** Platform contributes to the public consultation on the Post-Lisbon Strategy
- 3 **December 2009:** Platform participates in the preparation of the ministerial meeting for employment and social affairs



### Did you know...

13,250 people since 1993 have died while trying to reach Europe. This is an average of two lives lost per day

Source: UNITED, 2009

José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, receives the Spring Alliance Manifesto. Social Platform is a founding member of the Spring Alliance, a broad campaign to bring about an EU that puts its people and the planet at the heart of its policymaking (July 2009)

Source: European Commission

# What's happened, what's coming up

2009

July

August

September

October

November

December

January

★ **Swedish Presidency starts**  
The six-month Swedish Presidency of the EU begins (July 1)

★ **Social Affairs Ministerial Council**  
Social Platform addresses the 27 EU Ministers of Employment and Social in Jönköping, Sweden, calling for reinforced solidarity in society and between Member States in times of crisis (July 8-9)

★ **Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council**  
Justice and Home Affairs Ministers discuss the five-year 'Stockholm programme' (July 15-17) What's this?

● **Platform hands Barroso the Spring Alliance Manifesto**  
A delegation of Spring Alliance members, including Social Platform, meets with President Barroso to presents its proposals for a Europe that puts people and planet first (July 22) What's this?

● **Platform publishes proposals on OMC**  
Platform releases five recommendations on how to improve the Open Method of Coordination (September 2) What's this?

★ **Guidelines for the next Commission released**  
President Barroso publishes the political guidelines for the new Commission (September 3) What's this?

● **Platform pushes for anti-discrimination law**  
A Social Platform delegation meets Nyamko Sabuni, Swedish Minister for Integration and Gender Equality, to make proposals on the anti-discrimination directive (September 3)

● **Platform study visit**  
Ahead of the Spanish presidency, Social Platform organises a visit to Spain to strengthen links between Spanish civil society and European NGO networks (September 7-8)

● **Platform helps prepare Spanish Presidency**  
Social Platform meets Celestino Corbacho, Spanish Minister of Labour and Immigration, to prepare the Spanish EU Presidency (September 8)

★ **Barroso re-appointed**  
The European Parliament re-appoints José Manuel Barroso as President of the Commission (September 16)

● **Spring Alliance High Level Conference**  
Spring Alliance members discuss the Manifesto with President Barroso and other key decision makers at a day-long event in Brussels (September 28) What's this?

● **Platform makes proposals on social OMC and Post-Lisbon Strategy**  
Addressing employment and social affairs MEPs in Brussels, Belgium, Social Platform makes recommendations on the social Open Method of Coordination and the Post-Lisbon Strategy (October 5) What's this?

● **Platform calls for poverty targets**  
Social Platform speaks at the 8th European Roundtable on poverty and social exclusion, insisting on the need for targets to eradicate poverty (October 15-16)

● **Platform makes proposals for new Commissioner position**  
Social Platform puts forward recommendations for an effective Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Civil Liberties (October 16)

★ **European Council**  
EU leaders meet to discuss how the new Treaty of Lisbon provisions will be implemented (October 29-30)

● **Equality Summit**  
Social Platform and trade unions present a common declaration on equality in the EU at the Summit in Stockholm, Sweden (November 16-17)

★ **Meeting of Social Affairs ministers**  
EU Social Affairs ministers discuss the impact of the crisis and the conclusions of the Post-Lisbon Strategy (November 30) What's this?

● **Platform study visit**  
Ahead of the Belgian presidency, Social Platform organises a visit to Belgium to strengthen links between Belgian civil society and European NGO networks (November 30-December 1)

★ **European Council**  
Heads of State decide on the sustainable development strategy of the EU (December 10-11)

★ **Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council**  
Justice and Home Affairs Ministers issue their conclusions on the five-year 'Stockholm programme' (December) What's this?

★ **Spanish Presidency starts**  
The six-month Spanish Presidency of the EU begins (January 1)

★ **European Year Against Poverty**  
Launch of the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion (January 1)

★ **Resolution on EU social rights**  
The European Parliament adopts a resolution on the protection of social rights in the EU (January 19)

What's this?

## Stockholm programme

The Stockholm Programme is to define the framework for EU police, criminal and civil law cooperation, asylum, migration and visa policy for the period 2010–2014. The programme was discussed at the informal ministerial meeting in Stockholm in July 2009, and will ultimately be adopted by EU Heads of State and Government at the Summit in December 2009.

## Spring Alliance

For the past four years, the EU has had a overarching strategy of "growth and jobs". As a result, EU policy has often put business competitiveness ahead of the welfare of the people of Europe and the sustainability of our planet. In 2009, a new vision for the EU will be adopted by its leaders. Therefore, the European Environmental Bureau, the European Trade Union Confederation and Social Platform have joined forces to form the Spring Alliance, a campaign to push for a new EU strategy that pursues simultaneously economic, environmental and social goals.

## Open Method of Coordination

The Open Method of Coordination provides a new framework for cooperation between the Member States, whose national policies can thus be directed towards certain common objectives. Under this intergovernmental method, the Member States are evaluated by one another (peer pressure), with the Commission's role being limited to surveillance.

Source: European Commission

## Anti-discrimination law

Every day, people in Europe are mistreated because of their disability, age, religion, belief or sexual orientation. Although this kind of discrimination is already prohibited in the workplace, the Commission proposed expanding the law to include all areas of life such as schools, shops and hospitals, and in April 2009 the European Parliament supported this view. If approved by Member States, this new law will enhance the protection of the victims of unfair treatment, no matter where the discrimination takes place.

## Post-Lisbon Strategy

The post-Lisbon Strategy is a generic term referring to the overarching strategy the EU will implement from 2010 to 2020. It will be signed in March 2010 by Heads of States of the EU, after a proposal by the European Commission. It is also known as the 'Europe 2020 agenda'.

# The five-minute interview

Linda Freimane, Co-Chair, ILGA-Europe



## Who are you?

I'm a lesbian and a lawyer, living in Riga, Latvia. I'm the Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe, (the European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association), and the Chairperson

of Mozaika, a Latvian NGO for LGBT people and their friends (and currently the only LGBT NGO in the country). I also work in corporate tourism and as a freelance business consultant.

## How and why did you get involved in the NGO movement?

The events of summer 2005, when the first attempt to organise a Pride march in Riga took place, were a turning point. Until then, I thought Latvia would slowly catch up with Western European countries on LGBT issues. When the march was finally allowed to go ahead it ended in disaster with the marchers being attacked; from then on homophobia exploded in the media and government circles. Some friends and I set up Mozaika several months after the march to fight for the rights of LGBT people in Latvia as well as to organise future Pride events, which put our issues on the agenda in a way that no seminar or conference could ever do.

## What's your biggest achievement?

Successfully organising the 2006 Pride march in Riga. Initially it was banned, but we went through two rounds of appeals and finally won the case in the Supreme Court. Although by then it was actually too late to hold the march, this victory led to real changes in legislation in Latvia. For example, NGOs no longer have to ask permission from authorities to hold a march – they just have to notify them in advance, which is an important distinction.

## What's your next battle?

To bring Eastern Europe up to speed with Western Europe in terms of LGBT rights. Working on partnership laws, as they now have in the Czech Republic and Slovenia, is an important component of this. At a European level, a key priority is putting in place the horizontal directive on non-discrimination.

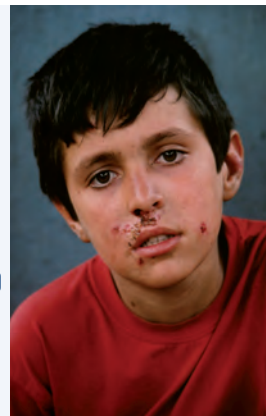
## Name one thing we could all do today to improve European society.

If you're an LGBT person: come out. I understand and appreciate people's fears, but this is essential for the visibility of our cause – without the numbers, decision makers will feel that LGBT rights are still a marginal issue. And if you're straight, let your tolerant views be known. Hearing from a friend or colleague that they believe in equal rights can have a tremendous effect on people that are in the closet, and can encourage them to come out.

A boy living in a railway station in Bucharest, Romania.

An estimated 6,000 children are homeless in the country (February 2009)

Source:  
Rudi Roels –  
flickr.com/  
rudiroels

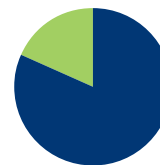


## Did you know...

1/3 of EU citizens have never used the web



Source: European Commission, 2009



18,3% of 15-24 year olds in the EU are currently unemployed

Source: Eurostat, 2009

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Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 42 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.

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