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## Press Release - For Immediate Release

### European Social NGOs devise ten key principles for a fair and just "flexicurity"

Ahead of the extraordinary social summit on flexicurity taking place in Lahti tomorrow, the Social Platform adopted a set of 10 common principles as essential elements of any employment and social protection reforms.

***"The word flexicurity is on every mouth, but no real debate and clear structured consultation has taken place despite the mandate given to the Commission, jointly with Member States and social partners," said Anne-Sophie Parent, president of the Social Platform. "All voices need to be heard, that's why the Social Platform came out with its own principles in order to argue for reforms which support social goals, rather than undermining them,"*** added Parent.

European Social NGOs have always been in favour of a multidimensional approach to fighting unemployment and promoting social cohesion. Flexicurity, by combining "flexibility" with a strong security dimension including social protection, lifelong learning, activation policies and full workers' rights could help to make the case for a more integrated approach to employment and social policies, writes the Social Platform in its principles – but there is a concern that the current interpretation of 'flexicurity' is far too unbalanced.

Equality between women and men, equality for all, solidarity, social justice and respect of fundamental rights constitute the distinctive fabric of European societies and need to be reaffirmed within the flexicurity approach. **The social infrastructures that underpin these values - such as empowering social protection systems, affordable, accessible and high quality social services including care services for all dependents, transport, housing, education and health services, adequate benefits and pension systems - are essential elements to generate the security indispensable for more flexibility,** underlines the Social Platform.

***"Social NGOs are not against reform as such, but reform should not erode fundamentally important workers' rights, especially for those vulnerable groups of society. We need synergies between the core aspects (labour market***

**flexibility and security). We need to combine contractual arrangements, active labour market policies, credible lifelong learning systems and modern social security systems ,”** added Parent.

Job creation in Europe requires more than adjusting existing labour legislation. It is about investing in local communities and innovative sectors, including the social economy, and supporting partnership-based local economic development, education and training. It is about fighting prejudices and discrimination in the labour market, encouraging “entrepreneurship” and empowering people at all life stages to participate in economic life, writes the Social Platform in its principles document addressed to the heads of State and Government.

Social NGOs also note that any new model needs to be democratically negotiated. **“Let’s not forget what happened in France with the ‘first employment contract’. If Europe wants to bridge the democratic gap, reforms need to be done with the people not without the people. Europeans should be given the opportunity to participate individually and collectively in the definition of patterns of flexibility,”** said Parent. **“Unfortunately, the decision of the Commission to postpone the publication of the Green Paper on Labour law under pressure from the employers’ federation UNICE is not a good starting point,”** Parent ended.

To download the 10 key principles devised by the Social Platform, please [click here](#)

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*The Platform of European Social NGOs (the Social Platform) is the alliance of representative European federations and networks of non-governmental organisations active in the social sector, promoting social justice and participatory democracy by voicing the concerns of its member organisations. The Social Platform and its members are committed to the advancement of the principles of equality, solidarity, non discrimination and the promotion and respect of fundamental rights for all, within Europe and in particular the European Union.*