

Dep d'interrogations traversant  
la société européenne, de  
Moscou à Lisbonne, de Rome  
à Stockholm. Certaines de  
ces interrogations ont déjà  
des réponses : oui, c'est  
possible ~~de~~ de donner une  
place exclus la place qui est  
la leur ; oui, c'est possible  
d'éliminer le chômage.

Mais à une condition : si nous  
changelions radicalement  
nos concepts de travail et  
que nous ayons la détermination  
et le courage de faire plus  
avec moins. A vous de  
parcourir les nouveaux sentiers,  
d'étudier et d'expérimenter



Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

## Social Protection

Finally, on the fourth theme, there is also a broad understanding that our social protection systems must be made more employment friendly. As we saw clearly from Mr de Jovenel's presentation all Member States need to address these issues now, anticipating the challenges that lie ahead in the next century. Our shared reflections on the subject will be crucial in building a strong and cohesive Union. I am very pleased, therefore, that the Social Affairs Council, yesterday, also gave a warm welcome to my initiative to set up a framework of discussion on the future of our social protection systems in the Union.

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The challenges we face in Europe, as nations, as regions and localities, and as individuals, are formidable. Yet, this Forum gives me confidence for the future. The energy, talent and commitment which you represent constitutes an enormous asset.

So, this first Forum has certainly been a great success. Over 2000 people have participated. It has exceeded the expectations I had in mind when I launched the idea in my White Paper on Social Policy. It has proved an excellent example of bringing to life the civil dialogue at European level.

You have participated very actively in the discussions. We have listened carefully. The richness and breadth of your contributions has been carefully recorded by my services. I shall personally present the results of the Forum to the Commission.



C'est en 89, le mur de Berlin est tombé  
d'un seul côté; de l'autre côté, il est  
encore là. Qu'est-ce que je veux dire?

~~Quand~~ D'abord, par cette chose si simple : ~~à tous~~  
les jeunes <sup>d'aujourd'hui</sup> comprennent mieux les  
gén. précédentes : la solidarité, la justice,  
le partage, le droit aux libertés  
& double du droit à la santé, à l'édu-  
cation, au logement, au travail. ~~C'est~~  
~~pourquoi nous affirmons qu'il n'y~~  
~~aura pas d'Europe sans un pilier~~  
~~social. De même que Berlusconi~~ de vision  
ont été capables de construire une  
Europe économique. En s'élargissant  
cette Europe ~~exigence~~ va faire l'accom-  
plissement de deux formes différentes  
de réponse aux droits humains.  
Vous qui êtes là, vous qui venez  
de ces expériences, vous devez  
être les ouvriers d'une Europe  
à un pilier social fort. Je vous  
le dis : on ne questionne sociales  
sont désormais au cœur des défis  
de ce continent ou la construction  
européenne n'aura pas lieu.

One of the positive outcomes of this meeting is the beginning of a mutual understanding about our respective roles, responsibilities and capacities in developing a strong civil dialogue, involving fully NGOs. On the one hand, I am committed to finding new ways to work together. On the other hand, NGOs must re-examine their role, structures, objectives and capacities, in order to engage fully in new ways of working together.

To help this process, I am happy to respond positively to the proposal made by Mr Stephen Hughes in his opening address on behalf of the European Parliament.

Speaking on behalf of one arm of the budgetary authority, Mr. Hughes generously offered support for an initiative from the Commission to provide support for NGOs to engage actively in deliberations on the subject of the future of European social policy.

This could usefully involve the compilation of a comparative report about the role and place of NGOs in civil society in the different Member States. We shall carefully examine how to take these ideas forward in collaboration with the European Parliament.

#### Comite de Sages

I am also arranging for the wide distribution of the report of the Comité des Sages in all Member States.

I encourage you to take the initiative to arrange for further discussion of this report and its recommendations at home and to bring them to the attention of as many as possible.

¶ Nous découvrirons ainsi le  
le modèle ~~ce~~ civil et social  
européen. Non seulement  
pour résoudre nos propres problè-  
mes. Mais pour découvrir  
notre identité commune.  
Et pour pouvoir ainsi former  
notre contribution spécifique  
dans la formulation et la  
mise-en-œuvre de paradigmes  
nouveaux pour le monde.

Tout cela permettra ~~de~~  
de construire un présent où  
tout homme et toute femme  
aient une vie digne d'être  
écue.



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In addition, I will examine the messages and suggestions that have emerged during the Forum to see precisely which action points we can build into the Social Policy Action Programme over the next period.

I am sure, equally, that all the other Community Institutions will also give careful attention to your conclusions.

### Next Steps

How, then, shall we move forward from this Forum?

Let me confirm at once that I intend to convene a second European Social Policy Forum after the end of the IGC. This will enable everyone concerned to take stock at that time in the light of the precise results of the IGC, and to build on them.

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In the meantime, each and everyone of us here has the responsibility in our different organisations to spell out clearly the central priority to be given to employment and social policy so as to secure the strengthening of the social dimension in the IGC conclusions.

Much depends on you to carry the torch. You have the responsibility to make your view points known to your own authorities, whether at national, regional or local level.

You and we must focus our energies on this effort.

des solutions radicalement  
villes. Avec vous, nous pourrions  
devenir en mesure de dessiner  
des sociétés où, au lieu d'un  
matérialisme écrasé, des solutions  
spirituelles, véritablement chrétiennes,  
jaillissent et ~~dessinent une continuité~~  
~~au~~ ~~et~~ au cœur de nos efforts  
pour expérimenter de nouveau.



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And I shall carry that message to the Round Table with the Social Partners in April and to the Social Affairs Council.

I am especially pleased too that the Social Affairs Council yesterday welcomed the Commission's recent Communication which seeks to focus the Structural Funds, notably the European Social Fund for which I am personally responsible, on underpinning the re-employment strategy and active labour market policies set out at Essen and then in Madrid by the Heads of State and Government.

In this Forum, I wish to stress particularly the decisive importance the Commission attaches to the role of the Monitoring Committees in the Member States. We need to see a much more dynamic involvement of NGOs and the Social partners in these committees in the formulation and monitoring of action supported by European Union structural funds.

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### Equal Opportunities

This brings me to the third theme of equal opportunities.

Equal opportunities is about giving everyone a real possibility to make their special contribution to society, drawing on all their potential, and, at the same time, insuring that they benefit fully from economic and social prosperity.

The practical elimination of all barriers - and of any form of discrimination - to the full participation of all citizens in economic and social life must be a central priority objective for us all.