

Annex

Declaration of the Third Social Action Sector: For a Strategy of Social inclusion 2011 – 2020.

The institutions of the Third Social Action Sector, represented on the NGO Platform of Social Action, the Spanish Volunteering Platform and the European Network for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Spanish state, meeting on 30 September and 1 October at the Third Social Action Sector Convention 2010:

WE HEREBY REPORT:

The infringement by the member states of the targets set in the Lisbon Strategy 2000-2010, and especially regarding the eradication of poverty.

WE NOTE:

That the present crisis has not only alarmingly increased the rates of unemployment, but that its main consequence has been to increase poverty in our country. This translates into worse conditions of life for many people who were already in a state of exclusion, and the appearance of social insecurity affecting new groups of population and leaving them in a state of vulnerability. Everything also seems to indicate that if serious measures are not taken urgently, this tendency will get worse.

That the more than fifteen years of high rates of economic growth that we have enjoyed in the country have not only failed to reduce both relative and severe poverty rates, but have also increased the inequalities between the richer and poorer segments of the population. The greatest recent period of economic bonanza in our country has therefore been wasted without correcting the structural problems that are at the root of exclusion or making a suitable social distribution of wealth.

That the measures that are currently being taken to climb out of the crisis, which are determined by control of the financial markets and cause a drastic reduction in social expenditure, not only clearly jeopardise the quality of life and well-being of many citizens, but also lead to a reduction in rights and more severe poverty and deprivation for people in a state of poverty, and are harmful to economic and financial recovery.

WE REMIND:

That inequality, poverty and social exclusion not only harm the quality of our democracy, but also cast doubt on the values and principles behind it, and therefore to have adequate social protection to guarantee all people's well-being and their dignity of life is an aspiration that cannot be cast aside for our society, but rather takes on yet more importance in times of crisis.

That it is the obligation of the public powers to effectively guarantee fundamental rights for all people. These rights include the right to a reasonable life, which requires sufficient income and services to be able to live adequately and protection to provide life expectancy and the capacity for free, independent decision-making.

That inequality has become the main characteristic of an unstable, globally unsustainable society. Economic development only makes sense if at the service of people's well-being; it is therefore essential to grow in a more equitable way, in search of the well-being that includes economic, political, social and environmental factors, in which priority is given not only on the level of the country's income but also on its distribution, and on the activity outside the market as well as non economic aspects such as education, health, democratic quality, security and environment.

That an society is economically unsustainable, democratically unfair and socially immoral in which inequalities are not only aggravated but many groups of people, including children and young people, do not have the essential resources to be able to have reasonable lives.

That the role of the Third Social Action Sector is fundamental for containing the most negative effects of the crisis on the more vulnerable groups. The Third Sector can also play an essential role both in maintaining and developing social cohesion and in a sustainable recovery, provided its potential and added value are used correctly.

WE CALL:

For a State Agreement on Social Inclusion to be reached in the coming decade, in which all of the administrations are committed and which actively involves the social players, and especially the Third Sector, thus strengthening its role in society. This State Agreement, which must be led by the Central Government, requires broad social and political consensus and must fundamentally seek another model of development in which the structural tendencies causing exclusion are inverted.

For Social Inclusion Plans to be developed within the European Union Strategy 2020 both on the national level and in the regions and local areas which exceed the Strategy's targets. These plans must be a substantial improvement over those developed in the past decade, so that they have clearer objectives, suitable resources, information systems and pertinent monitoring, as well as suitable involvement on the part of the social organisations.

For them to be made effective, guarantee and delve further into the social rights for all people, recognised both in the European Union Treaty and in the Spanish Constitution and statutes of autonomy. Therefore, an agreement for social inclusion is proposed on the highest level of the state and with the commitment of all administrations to develop the general right to inclusion and guarantee that all people have their basic needs covered and have the necessary support for promotion. This agreement must contain the minimal services or portfolio of services that the different administrations must define and guarantee as part of their competencies. This agreement implies the commitment to have inclusion plans in which specific measures, quantifiable objectives

and adequate resources are established, bearing in mind the needs and characteristics of each territory.

That within the framework of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion there should be a public commitment translating into the clear, determined will on the part of institutions to eradicate poverty in the next decade, at least in its extreme forms, and to achieve substantially lower inequalities, instability and vulnerability, making personal development and well-being a fundamental objective of the economic policies. This commitment must be translated into clear targets, sufficient budgets and suitable monitoring systems.

That the social budget percentage should be increased to 27%, so further funds will be needed following the constitutional principles of progressiveness and equality. This requires the elimination of the so-called frauds, especially by the least supportive, the privileged tax systems for high capitals and the rationalisation of expenditure based on social welfare criteria.

WE PROMISE:

To increase our efforts in working for a fairer society by defining the rights of the weakest, by reporting situations of injustice, discrimination and marginalization and solidly fighting to promote all people, and especially those who more largely suffer from exclusion.

To work closely with all public administrations and all economic and social players, taking an active part in the conception, performance, monitoring and assessment of inclusion policy, and providing all potential and assets of our entities and strengthening our role as a spokesperson and social player. We accept the joint responsibility in encouraging, monitoring and defending the measures that are the result of consensus with the Third Social Action Sector.

To work in conjunction and coordination both nationally and in the autonomic and local areas with the entities of the Third Social Action Sector, increasing our coordination and starting up the necessary processes for this collaboration to be close, coordinated and that it might strengthen each entity's work.

We are firmly convinced that in this way we will be able to improve our mission, for we move with the same values, we are involved in the same objectives and we can better develop our potential as a social player.