



PORTO SOCIAL FORUM 2023

Excellencies,

The past two years have been marked by events that have had a major impact on the European project.

In early 2022, at a time when the implementation of national Recovery and Resilience Plans was beginning to promote economic recovery after the pandemic shock, the shadow of war fell again on the European continent.

At the time of writing, we are still far from being able to evaluate all the effects of the war of aggression in Ukraine, particularly on the weakest communities in our societies.

Given this context, the Portuguese government, with the support of the European Commission, decided to mark the two-year anniversary of the Porto Social Summit by organizing the Porto Social Forum 2023.

And to drive this two-year anniversary, the Porto Social Forum will place a strong focus on skills. The European Year of Skills allow us to demonstrate that lifelong learning, including upskilling and reskilling to meet the demands of today's and tomorrow's jobs, is central to all our policies.

Strong skills policies can create more employment, a more agile integration in society and increase the EU's competitiveness.

While the criminal invasion of Ukraine by Russia has strengthened the bonds of solidarity between the countries of the EU, it also compels us to find answers to the strategic debate around Europe's influence in the world.

In particular, it calls on us to use the EU social model as a geopolitical lever, not only in the context of enlargement but also, more broadly, in the EU action in the world.

And these answers must be found while keeping in mind the global competitive environment and the challenges that this brings for the EU's labour market.



PORTO SOCIAL FORUM 2023

We must guarantee that, two years after the Porto Social Summit, the Porto Social Commitment is still alive and so is the will to maintain the spirit that created it.

That is why we invite you to be present on 27 May at the **Porto Social Forum**.

Together, we will keep bringing the principles of the Pillar of Social Rights to life.

Best Regards,

Minister of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security

Secretary of State for European Affairs



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