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## **Conclusions of the presiding Member State reached in cooperation with Germany and Portugal**

1. Europe needs a better balance of flexibility and security (flexicurity) in order to successfully manage the challenges of the twenty-first century, such as demographic change and globalisation. We have a broad consensus on the need for comprehensive and balanced flexicurity approaches. Now, the important challenge is to implement them in practice.
2. The task of Member States is to incorporate the common principles of flexicurity into the National Reform Programmes in the upcoming period. Each Member State has its own comprehensive national flexicurity arrangement, taking into account its historical, social and economic characteristics. The main emphasis will be placed on the appropriate coordination of policies – particularly economic, employment, social and education policies – on the basis of which the best possible effects can be achieved.
3. The participation of social partners and other stakeholders in planning, adopting and implementing flexicurity measures is of essential importance, if flexicurity policies are aimed at modernising labour markets and strengthening social cohesion at the same time. Creating win-win situations is an important prerequisite for the success of flexicurity initiatives.
4. It is also essential to fully inform citizens about the flexicurity approach and the content of flexicurity strategies. This can help build up trust and support for national flexicurity initiatives and reforms in order to increase the public's confidence in the future. Joint initiatives at the European and national level can be of great help in this regard.
5. In seeking a balance between security and flexibility to make work more attractive, it is necessary (a) to improve the quality of work (good work) and to ensure fair pay and remuneration for everyone. It is also necessary (b) to develop satisfactory bridges and effective support for those unable to work, through social security systems.
6. It is vital to ensure effective investment in human resources for the purpose of sustainable development. Education and training systems which effectively respond to the needs of the labour market, lifelong learning and focused development of employees' skills should help to achieve this goal.
7. Flexibility and security are required throughout the life cycle – at every stage of life. In this context, intergenerational solidarity should be considered through all four components of flexicurity.
8. In developing comprehensive flexicurity arrangements, special measures for particular groups should be considered. Flexible labour market arrangements have a considerable impact on special groups, such as parents with children, migrants, the young, older workers and especially persons with disabilities. It is therefore vital to ensure we have a "Europe of equal opportunities for all". This should result in strengthening the fundamental rights of workers, stronger policies of social inclusion and effective strategies for active integration.
9. Gender equality should be pursued in all labour market segments and in labour legislation. The commitment to eliminate the gender pay gap should be reinforced in the context of the Lisbon Strategy.
10. Young people need an environment in which they will be able to develop their potential. To this end, it will be necessary to make their transition from the school

system to the labour market as easy as possible, and to foster greater career mobility while ensuring them good jobs, and, consequently, high-quality and secure employment. Young people should have a real choice to start a family if they wish to do so, and to find the right environment that supports such a decision – which means being able to reconcile professional, family and private life more easily.

11. Active ageing strategies should be brought in line with flexicurity measures. Older workers need to be encouraged to stay in the labour market longer. Lifelong learning should be developed and promoted, health and safety at work ensured, and workplaces adapted to the needs of individual target groups.
12. Responsibility for the practical application of the common principles of flexicurity depends on the Member States. At the European level, it is necessary to include the measures in the context of the Lisbon agenda and the processes aimed at enhancing the European Social Model. The exchange of good practices and mutual learning processes should be facilitated.
13. Flexicurity arrangements should aim at strengthening social cohesion. Europe, investing in people, is working for its future.