



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 3 June 2009

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SOC 383

NOTE

from : The Presidency
to : COUNCIL (Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs)

**Subject : Information from the Czech Presidency on the Conference on the
“8th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty”
(Brussels, 15-16 May 2009)
(Any other business item)**

Delegations will find attached a note from the Presidency.

Information from the Presidency
8th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty
Brussels, 15-16 May 2009

The Czech EU Presidency with the support of the European Commission, the Belgian Government and the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN), organised the 8th European Meeting of people experiencing poverty in Brussels on 15-16 May 2009.

The title of this year's meeting was "Where we live, what we need" and addressed in particular the areas of housing, financial inclusion and basic services. 132 delegates from 28 countries, as well as 77 guests from National Ministries, EU Institutions, NGOs, academics, and Trade Unions and some 60 journalists took part in the meeting.

The aim of the meeting was to draw attention to the importance of where we live and of the accessibility of services that contribute to and maintain the good quality of our lives. The delegates to the Meeting stressed that the fight against poverty and social exclusion should be a major priority for the EU.

They also pointed out that in many cases the impact and responses to the economic crisis are putting unbearable pressure on people who were already suffering from the burden of poverty and social exclusion. Delegates largely discussed issues concerning financial inclusion, since too many families and individuals are falling into over-indebtedness.

The delegates asked the EU to be more active in helping as many people as possible to have access to decent and affordable housing. With regard to basic services, delegates focused their discussions mainly on access to energy, social services, efficient and affordable public transport, and information about their rights and responsibilities.
