



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 3 June 2009**

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**SOC 384**

**NOTE**

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

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**Subject : Information from the Czech Presidency on the  
“Conference on Social Services”  
(Prague, 22-23 April 2009)  
(Any other business item)**

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Delegations will find attached a note from the Presidency.

## **Information from the Presidency**

### **Conference on Social Services**

The Presidency conference on “Social Services – A Tool for Mobilising the Workforce and Strengthening Social Cohesion” took place in Prague on 22 - 23 April 2009.

The goal of the conference was to discuss the importance of social services as a means of active social inclusion of people who are threatened by social exclusion and excluded from the labour market. At the same time, social services represent an important source of employment opportunities.

The conference stressed that social services play a crucial role in our societies. The conference noted that, due to demographic and social changes, the demand for these services has been growing. Speakers in the discussion underlined that the social services sector represents a major field of employment in the EU and contributes significantly to job creation. The conference stressed that, in order to tackle multiple disadvantages, social services should be tailored to the individual needs of clients.

The important role of public administration in ensuring the quality, accessibility and sustainability of social services was underlined. The conference also suggested that investment in social services, especially during the current financial and economic crisis, pays off and can strengthen the growth potential and social cohesion in the EU.

Based on the discussions during the conference, the Presidency prepared draft Council conclusions on “Social services as a tool for active inclusion, strengthening social cohesion and an area for job opportunities”.