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České předsednictví
Evropské unie

Czech Presidency
of the European Union

Présidence tchèque
de l'Union européenne

2009

Press release

8 January 2009

Czech Presidency Priorities - Department of Employment and Social Affairs

I. Workers' Mobility in the EU Labour Market

Restrictions on the free movement of workers constitute a major barrier to the development of the internal market, hampering full use of the real potential of the EU Member States and the EU as a whole. Consequently, the primary objective of the Czech Presidency will be to emphasise the benefits, for the EU's competitiveness, of full liberalisation of the movement of workers within the EU and the simplification and increase of professional and geographic mobility of workers in the labour market. The European Commission agreed in its report with the Czech Republic's initiative, joined by seven new EU member states, according to which the transitional arrangements on the free movement of workers are unjustified. In line with this objective, the Presidency will propose the Council conclusions on the Commission report on the impact of free movement of workers in the context of the EU enlargement. The Presidency will seek to finalise the modernisation of legislation on the coordination of migrant workers' social security. The Presidency will also focus on measures that will lead to the suppression of undeclared work and that will raise awareness of the possibilities and advantages of mobility within the EU, and it will put emphasis on sharing examples of good practices in removing other barriers, such as language barriers. In the context of the preparations for the Spring 2009 European Council, the Presidency will draw attention to the adverse impacts of existing transitional measures on the free movement of workers.



II. Increasing Employment and Labour Market Flexibility through General Flexicurity Principles

Making full use of workforce potential and making the EU's labour market more flexible are among the key tools to increase the EU's competitiveness. Therefore, the Presidency will focus on the practical implementation of the *Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs* and of the general principles of flexicurity, putting special emphasis on increasing labour market flexibility; on flexible employment relationships and social services, based on the principle of 'making work pay'; on strengthening motivation for an active approach to reintegration into the labour market; and on enhancing the quality of human resources through the training of adults. At the same time, it will highlight the prevention of social protection abuse. In the light of these priorities, the Presidency will prepare the conclusions of the Council on the *Commission Communication on New Skills for New Jobs*, and the conclusions of the Council on flexicurity, with special emphasis on an integrated approach in times of economic crisis. The Presidency will seek a compromise with the European Parliament in a conciliation procedure on the *Working Time Directive*. During the debate on the *Lisbon Strategy* after 2010, the Presidency will also address the issues of modernising labour law.

III. Horizontal Support for Families within EU Policies

As part of the European debate on the promotion of employment and reconciliation of working, personal and family lives, the Presidency will focus on the issue of parental childcare and its relation to employment policy and stress the importance of home childcare as a fully fledged alternative to a professional career, an alternative that deserves both respect and support from the state and society. It will put emphasis on respect for the autonomy and freedom of choice for families, on the qualitative aspect of care services, the socio-cultural environment and the historical experience of Member States. These issues will constitute the theme of a Presidency conference and the informal meeting of Ministers for Family Policy. At the informal meeting, the Presidency will, in light of the above, propose opening a debate on a possible review of the *Barcelona objectives* in the field of pre-school childcare services. The Presidency will also continue discussing legislative proposals of the European Commission aimed at the reconciliation of work, personal and family life.

IV. Social Services as a Tool for Active Social Inclusion of the Most Disadvantaged Persons and as an Employment Opportunity

The Presidency will focus on services as a tool for preventing social exclusion and for active inclusion of the most vulnerable persons and, at the same time, as an area of growing employment opportunities (given the demographic trends in the EU) and will pay attention to the process of strengthening the networks of such services provided in a natural social environment. The Presidency will address the



issue of the availability of social services in terms of location, financing and type. In the context of an active inclusion policy, the Presidency will support the combination of policies in the areas of labour market integration, workforce mobility, motivation to find a job, support for an adequate income and high-quality, accessible and efficient social services. The Presidency will organise a conference to discuss social inclusion issues and will propose the adoption of the Council conclusions. Attention will also be paid to the improvement of quality, availability and financing of long-term care, protection of the dignity and rights of persons dependent on care, and support for an active, healthy ageing and ageing well.

List of Presidency Events of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic

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| | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Title | Informal EPSCO |
| Venue | Luhačovice |
| Date | 22 – 24 January 2009 |

2 + 3

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|--------------|---|
| Title | Informal Meeting of Ministers for Family Affairs |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 4 - 5 February 2009 |
| Title | Ministerial Conference: ‘Parental Childcare and the Employment Policy’ |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 5 – 6 February 2009 |

4

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| Title | Ministerial Conference: ‘Strengthening EU Competitiveness – Potential of Migrants on the Labour Market’ |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 26 – 27 February 2009 |

5

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|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Title | Meeting of MISEP Experts |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 5 – 6 March 2009 |

6 + 7

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| Title | Ministerial Conference: ‘Flexicurity – At the Times of the Economic Crisis’ |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 25 - 26 March 2009 |
| Title | Informal Meeting of the Employment Committee (EMCO) |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 26 - 27 March 2009 |

8

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| Title | Meeting of Technical Working Group of the European Social Fund Committee |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 2 - 3 April 2009 |

**9 + 10**

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|--------------|---|
| Title | Ministerial Conference: 'Social Services – Instrument for the mobilization of the Work Force and for the strengthening of the social cohesion' |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 22 - 23 April 2009 |
| Title | Informal Meeting of the Social Protection Committee (SPC) |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 24 April 2009 |

11

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| Title | Conference: 'Safety and Health at Work in 21 Century – European Way (Better Regulation and/or Good Practice)' |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 27 April 2009 |

12

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|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Title | Meeting of MISSOC Experts |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 14 – 15 May 2009 |

13

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| Title | 8th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion |
| Venue | Brussels |
| Date | 15 - 16 May 2009 |

14

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| Title | Meeting of the Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors (SLIC) |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 28 -29 May 2009 |

15

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| Title | Working Meeting of EURES System Managers' |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 4 – 5 June 2009 |

16

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| Title | Meeting of the Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 11 – 12 June 2009 |

17+18 + 19

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| Title | Meeting of the working group of assistants of the Heads of Public Employment Services (HoPES) |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 24 June 2009 |
| Title | Meeting of the Heads of Public Employment Services (HoPES) |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 25 – 26 June 2009 |
| Title | Meeting of High Level Group for EURES Strategy |
| Venue | Prague |
| Date | 25 June 2009 |



Other Events with Support of MoLSA

1

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|----------------------|---|
| Title | International European Conference on Social Economics and Business |
| Organized by: | Union of the Czech and Moravian Production Co-operatives |
| Venue | Prague – to be confirmed |
| Date | 16 - 18 April 2009 |

2

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|----------------------|---|
| Title | 17th European Conference on Social Services |
| Organized by: | European Social Network |
| Venue | Prague – to be confirmed |
| Date | 22 – 24 June 2009 |

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