

Media Advisory

Directorate of Communication

Ref: MA070a09

Tel. +33 (0)3 88 41 25 60

Fax +33 (0)3 88 41 39 11

Internet: www.coe.int

e-mail: pressunit@coe.int



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Strasbourg, 08.06.2009

Council of Europe conference asks "why many Europeans limit the size of their families?"

Date: 16-17 June 2009

Location: Vienna (Austria)

Organised by the Council of Europe and the Austrian Ministry for Economy, Family and Youth

Description: Evidence shows that people in Europe wishing to have children postpone, limit or fail to fulfil this wish because of unfavourable social, economic or other factors. Ministers responsible for family affairs from Council of Europe member states will take part in a major conference – *Public Policies Supporting the Wish to Have Children: Societal, Economic and Personal Factors* – to examine the best policies to help people wanting to have children.

The ministers will also assess results of a comprehensive Council of Europe questionnaire, which collected data on family policy and provides country-by-country comparative analysis and statistics for 40 European countries, from Latvia and Spain to Turkey and Switzerland.

The conference, to be opened by Federal President of Austria Heinz Fischer and Council of Europe Deputy Secretary General Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, will include two working sessions: *Why many Europeans have fewer children than they actually want: societal and economic factors* and *Family-friendly policies: measures for an optimal framework*.

The gathering marks the 50th anniversary of this type of ministerial conference, which was held for the first time in 1959, also in Vienna. The last conference was held in Lisbon in May 2006. The Council of Europe has a strong record in promoting effective family policies, based on the principle of human rights, and particularly on children's rights and gender equality.

Practical information:

- **A press conference is scheduled for 10.30 am on Tuesday 16 June** at the Austria Centre Vienna, Am Hubertusdamm 6, A-1220 Wien 22.
- Conference conclusions will be presented at 12.00 on Wednesday 17 June.
- Interview requests with participants should go through the press officer mentioned below.

More information: [Council of Europe family policy and conference website](#) (including conference programme, reference documents and reports on family policy in Europe).

Press contact: Panos Kakaviatos, Directorate of Communication

Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 26 38, Mobile +33 (0)6 65 09 16 07, panos.kakaviatos@coe.int

To receive our press releases by e-mail, contact: Council.of.Europe.Press@coe.int

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