

# Media Advisory

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### 47 member States

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Italy  
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Malta  
Moldova  
Monaco  
Montenegro  
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Norway  
Poland  
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Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
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Spain  
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Switzerland  
"The former Yugoslav  
Republic of  
Macedonia"  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom

04.12.2009

## Adapting social services to the demands of a pluralist society

**Date:** 7-8 December 2009

**Location:** Room G 03, Agora Building, Strasbourg, France

**Organised by** the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the Province of Quebec

**Description:** Public institutions, especially in the field of personal services, interact with people from different linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds or for whom special treatment must be provided because of their particular situation.

Ensuring that access to rights and services is non-discriminatory and of the same quality for everybody is a daily task and a challenge faced by the public authorities in Europe.

In a changing Europe, public establishments very often lack capacities, competences and experience to respond to the growing demands for change coming from users.

The purpose of this conference is to discuss the social and operational challenges facing public institutions as a result of interaction with cultural diversity.

The conference is seeking to open up a European debate on the most appropriate mechanisms for the introduction of social services and structures which reflect the pluralism of society.

**Quote for the media:** "The growing demand on public services to cope with a great variety of needs and expectations is not a threat, but a chance to develop public institutions which can effectively respond to all citizens' needs." Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General, Council of Europe.

### Practical information:

- The conference will be opened by **Maud de Boer-Buquicchio**, Council of Europe Deputy Secretary General, **Yolande James**, Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities of Quebec Government and **Lenia Samuel**, Deputy Director General of Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission.
- The whole conference is open to the press.
- Journalists may request interviews with participants through the press officer below.

**For more information:** [Conference website](#) (see programme and background documents)

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.