# Preparation for the European Council meeting, 19-20 March 2009

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The Council:

- reviewed implementation of the European economic recovery plan approved by the European Council in December in response to the global financial crisis and economic slowdown;
- held an exchange of views on the financial aspects of proposals aimed at providing additional support, under the European economic recovery plan, to investments in the field of energy and infrastructure, including broadband internet and rural development.

At its spring meeting, on 19 and 20 March, the European Council will assess how well the recovery plan has been implemented.

As regards **additional investment in the field of energy**, a number of delegations raised concerns relating to the financing of projects and asked the Commission to review its proposal. The president of the Council indicated that views expressed will be taken into account when the General Affairs and External Relations Council discusses the issue on 23 February, with a view to reaching an agreement with the European Parliament and the Commission before the European Council meeting.

The Council also held an exchange of views on the main messages to be conveyed to the spring meeting of the European Council as regards **economic and financial affairs**, on the basis of an outline key issues paper produced by the presidency. It requested the Economic and Financial Committee to prepare the key issues paper for adoption at the Council's meeting on 10 March.

The presidency paper presents an outline of the main issues for consideration, setting out the following themes:

- 2009: a year of economic recession and uncertainties;
- financial markets: resuming stability and modernizing rules;
- real economy: facilitating swift and steady recovery;
- economic and monetary union: fostering success in turbulent times.