

## THE CZECH PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Czech Presidency motto, covering both the actual and symbolic levels of the existing European integration process barriers, is “**Europe without Barriers**”.

Europe without internal economic, cultural and value barriers for citizens, businessmen and economic entities. Europe open to the world, however not defenceless towards illegal activities or attacks. This motto becomes up-to-date in the light of the current evolution, conclusions of November's G 20 summit, as well as conclusions of December's session of the European Council. Within the current efforts to stabilise the EU economies, it is particularly necessary to avoid any useless regulation and any increased protectionism level. The European Union must not resign from its strategic objectives at the price of short-term stabilisation measures.

It is only the economically strong and cohesive EU, without internal barriers and based on its values and roots, that will be able to solve complex global problems and its position in today's world. Therefore, the key topics of the Czech Presidency will be ***Economy, Energy Sector and European Union in the World.***

### CULTURE AND AUDIOVISION

#### Culture

Culture is one of the basic elements of the EU member states' identity. The Czech Presidency will focus on the fulfilment of the European Programme for Culture, adopted on 16 November 2007 through the Council's Resolution, and Work Plan for Culture for the Period between 2008 and 2010, approved by the Council in May 2008. We want to advocate the civil society's access to culture, particularly by supporting the cultural heritage, cultural tourism, cooperation with art education and greater mobility in the area of culture. In connection with the French Presidency, the Czech Presidency will focus on priorities in the digitisation of cultural content for the next period. On 26 May 2009, it will hold a conference in Prague to deal with the European Digital Library, national strategies of the member states and other successful digitisation projects within the European Union. As per the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009, the development and relation of creativity and culture will be discussed at a ministerial conference, designated as the Forum for Creative Europe, which will be held in Prague on 26 and 27 March 2009. The conference will primarily focus on the creative industry and economy, civil society's relation to creativity and implementation of cultural strategies. With the aim to promote and support wide public's access to the cultural heritage, as a source of EU basic values, the Czech Presidency will monitor the development of the project, titled “European Heritage”. Furthermore, we want to focus on informal discussions about a wide range of topics associated with the protection of cultural goods. The Czech Presidency also pays a special attention to the issue of works of art, confiscated

from the holocaust victims. On 26 to 30 June 2009, there will be an international conference in Prague, held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with other ministries, to deal with this issue. Last, but not least, we will prepare an informal meeting of CAC in Prague on 2 and 3 June 2009.

Within the Czech Presidency, there will also be a number of cultural events both in the Czech Republic and abroad. Their list will be published at the website of the Ministry of Culture ([www.mkcr.cz](http://www.mkcr.cz)) and official website of the Czech Presidency ([www.eu2009.cz](http://www.eu2009.cz)).

### **Audiovision**

One of the current tasks is the implementation of the new Directive on audiovisual medial services. The Czech Presidency is ready to continue the activities in order to ensure legal stability for the environment of newly developed methods of the dissemination of audiovisual content. On 18 to 20 March 2009, the Czech Presidency will organise a conference in Prague on the topic of audiovision and copyrights, designated as “On Responsibilities of Content Providers and Users“, focused on increasing the awareness of issues regarding legal offer of services, piracy and advertising. We consider the area of education as one of the significant tools to accomplish such objectives.