

**Summary of the Concept for the Communication and Presentation of  
the Czech Republic's Presidency of the Council of the EU**

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Office of the Government of the Czech Republic  
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In the first half of 2009, the Czech Republic will preside over the Council of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as the “Council”) as the second European Union Member State to do so, of those that have acceded to the EU since 1 May 2004. For the Czech Republic, its Presidency poses a challenge of extraordinary extent and significance, and the manner in which it copes with this task will influence the country’s image long after its Presidency of the Council of the EU (hereinafter referred to as the “Czech Presidency”). The Concept for the Communication and Presentation of the Czech Republic’s Presidency of the Council of the EU (hereinafter referred to as the “Concept”) therefore emphasises communication activities with respect to the public and media at home and abroad, and on the manner of presenting the Czech Presidency.

The purpose of the Concept is to define communication principles and instruments for a comprehensible and clear communication of information to the Czech and European public and the media, concerning the preparation for and course of the Czech Presidency. The Concept is focused on defining the **principles and goals of communication** prior to and during the Czech Presidency, the **target groups** on whom the communication and the presentation of the Czech Republic will focus, and the **communication instruments**.

During its Presidency, the Czech Republic will preside over the European Council, the formal and informal sessions of the Council of the EU in various formations, and other, lower-level, meetings, and will represent the EU at a number of top-level international meetings. Aside from working meetings, it will act as the organiser of accompanying cultural, promotional, and social events for delegates, journalists, and the public. The EU Council Presidency also represents a significant opportunity for the Czech Republic to present itself and make itself more visible in terms of culture, economic matters and tourism. A number of activities will also be organised by various non-governmental sector entities or representatives of the Czech Republic’s regions.

For these reasons, the communication and presentation of the Czech Presidency must be carefully coordinated with the various entities participating in the preparation and the subsequent organisation of the Czech Presidency, primarily between the Section for the Czech Republic’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union, of the Department of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “DPMEA”), the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the “MFA”), the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU in Brussels (hereinafter referred to as “PRB”), individual Czech government ministries (hereinafter referred to as “ministries”) and other entities. Furthermore, it is necessary to use the most appropriate instruments for communicating with specific target groups.

In order to ensure better coordination of the communication activities, a so-called Round Table for Communication was set up in July 2007, the goal of which is to integrate the press secretaries of the various ministries, the office of the PRB press secretary, and other employees authorised by the ministries to communicate with respect to the Presidency, into the preparatory process for the communication and presentation activities related to the Czech Presidency. The Round Table for Communication will be convened and chaired by the DPMEA Section on an *ad hoc* basis.

# 1 Principles of the Communication

As the presidency country, the Czech Republic will represent and speak on behalf of the entire European Union, not only on its own behalf. Media presentations and positions will be focused on the international public and media in the EU Member States and worldwide, as well as on the Czech audience. It is thus necessary to ensure that the Czech Republic acts as a neutral, intermediary entity. Emphasis must be put on proactive communication, not only with respect to the media but also to other target groups.

During the Czech Presidency, mutual communication links must be ensured, free of needless formal burdens. The aim is to transmit information quickly and to obtain flexible feedback. Another important task of the communication is to ensure that the Czech Presidency would speak with “one voice”, and not only abroad. The goals, tasks and topics of the Czech Presidency should in no case become the subject of an internal political struggle which would weaken the performance of the Czech Presidency. Conversely, it will be required to find a sensitive political consensus within the Czech Republic, in order for the Czech Presidency to succeed, and to maintain a positive image among the public domestically and abroad.

An information flow must be ensured between the DPMEA as the central coordinator, the MFA, and the embassies and missions answering to it (hereinafter referred to as “embassies”), namely the PRB, and the relevant ministries, creating thereby a functional information system about the course and results of meetings on various levels. The workers involved in the communication of the Czech Presidency must, during its course, share the required documents and information, in order to ensure better coordination and effectiveness.

The communication and presentation of the Czech Presidency will be based on principles that will contribute to creating a positive *image* of the Czech Presidency at home and abroad alike.

The fundamental principles shall include:

- **Openness and availability** – maximal openness and user-friendliness of information, easy availability of information (even in other language versions), comprehensible organisation and concentration of information in one place, easy access to people (contact information, including photos, a “*Who’s Who*” publication for the Czech Presidency);
- **An active approach** – proactive communication, responsible entities will take the first steps towards the target groups;
- **Consistency** – uniformity and harmonisation of positions, especially with respect to the media;
- **Reliability** of the information provided;
- **Timeliness** – flexibility and speed of information provision;
- **Relevance and effectiveness** – preventing duplication and excessive information;
- **Dialogue** – two-way communication, willingness to listen to partners, making use of feedback.

## 2 Goals of the Communication

The communication of the Czech Presidency will be based, to a large degree, on the priorities and goals set by the Czech Republic as the presiding country, and will have to ensure the fast and effective dissemination of comprehensive, consistent, and relevant information about the current events in all areas of Union activity, and about the results of the meetings of the Council's panels.

The objectives of communication can therefore be divided into informing about the preparation and contents of the Czech Presidency prior to assuming the Presidency, and informing about the course of the Czech Presidency in the first half of 2009. Another communication objective will be to link the Czech Republic's name with the main aims of its Presidency (increased competitiveness of the EU, completion of the single market), in order to ensure that the outcome of the Czech Presidency would contribute to increasing the Czech Republic's international prestige and enhance its good name in the EU and internationally, and to evoke interest in European topics among the Czech public. Conversely, inefficient communication during the Czech Presidency may lead to an adverse impact on the country's prestige.

The objective of informing about the preparations of the Presidency is to introduce the Czech Presidency to the Czech public as a unique opportunity to make the country more visible in the EU and internationally, and as an initiative of national significance. The Czech Presidency also provides an exceptional opportunity for bringing the European Union closer to Czech citizens. It is therefore necessary to keep individual target groups informed about the preparations for the Czech Presidency, including the institutional, personnel, and financial arrangements, and to realistically point to the expected benefits and legitimate costs related to the preparation and the course of the Czech Presidency in the first half of 2009.

The provision of information about the course of the Czech Presidency will be closely coordinated among the responsible ministries and other entities, and will provide timely, reliable and relevant information, serving as a resource for individual target groups, and above all the media, but also for the employees of state administration, including the Czech diplomatic service.

The key goal of communication during the Czech Presidency will be to inform about the programme, course, and conclusions of each meeting of the most senior political representatives and ministers, working groups, conferences, and other events connected to the Czech Presidency, in line with the established communication principles.

The main communication objectives will include informing the public and media at home and abroad about the priorities of the Czech Presidency and the positions of the Czech Republic with respect to important topics discussed within the European Union. The foundation has already been laid by the document "The Basis of the Priorities of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council in the First Half of 2009", which was approved by the Committee for the EU on the governmental level on 28 February 2007, the aim of which was to initiate a discussion on topics that could become the priorities of the Czech Presidency. The document also set out the basic priority areas of the Czech Presidency, which will be amended and supplemented in the course of events.

The main programme area includes the spheres of competitiveness, the four EU internal market liberties, and liberal trade policy. Other important topics will include: Sustainable and Safe Energy; Budget Revision and Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy; Transatlantic Relations, the West Balkans and Eastern Europe; Institutional Reform; Election of the Commission Chairman and the High Representative for CFSP; and Further Development of the Area of Freedom, Security, and Justice.

Should major international events arise, the presiding country formulates foreign-policy positions. These concern the EU's foreign policy and common security policy. Their formulation and communication on behalf of the presiding country is the responsibility of the MFA.

The communication and presentation of the Czech Presidency will be linked with objective and balanced information about general European topics, such as the system of the functioning of the EU, its transparent and democratic nature, and the future and security of Europe. This communication will be conducted in line with the document "The Concept for Information on European Affairs and a Proposal of the Government's Communication Priorities" for 2007 and the subsequent years, in which due attention will be paid to the theme of the Czech Presidency.

An integral part of the communication and presentation of the Czech Presidency will be the creation of a positive *image* of the Czech Republic, which will be supported by a number of accompanying cultural and social events abroad during the Czech Presidency. The aim of the accompanying cultural and social events will be to present the Czech Republic as a country that:

- Historically belongs among the culturally and historically developed parts of Europe, and honours the principles of democracy, the rule of law, the market economy, and human rights protection;
- Is developed, competitive, and safe;
- Has great knowledge, human, and innovative potential, due to its educational system and long-standing industrial tradition, but also due to the people's sense of humour, healthy detachment, and ability to laugh at themselves;
- Is modern, dynamic, innovative, and not afraid of change;
- Is a trustworthy and reliable partner in international relations, not hesitating to get involved in the protection of human rights or international security;
- Offers other countries its experience with the building of a free society and with economic transformation, in making a transition from a communist totalitarian regime to democracy;
- Is proud of its cultural, natural, and historical heritage, including sites listed on the UNESCO list of natural and cultural heritage;
- Protects its environment and makes an active contribution to the resolution of global problems of environmental protection;
- Is a country in the heart of Europe.

## 3 Communication Instruments

### 3.1 Motto

The expression “Europe without Barriers” was chosen as the motto of the Presidency, as it is clear, succinct, easy to remember, and symbolises the priorities of the Czech Presidency.

From the Czech Republic’s point of view, the EU’s internal barriers include the transitional periods for the free movement of workers or the free movement of services. Concerning the external aspect of the Union, the barriers include, above all, the liberalisation of EU trade with third countries. The motto of the Czech Presidency should penetrate all of the activities of the Czech Republic as the presidency country. The motto must be treated sensitively when translating to other languages<sup>1</sup>, so that other language versions would not be incomprehensible in terms of language or misleading as to their meaning.

### 3.2 Web Presentation

Prior to the start of the Czech Presidency, the main sources of information will include the Euroskop.cz portal, the website of the Office of the Czech Government, the PRB website, the MFA website and the websites of the embassies, as well as the websites of individual ministries, if relevant. After the Czech Presidency commences, the key role of the main information instrument will transfer to the official website of the Czech Presidency [www.eu2009.cz](http://www.eu2009.cz), where all relevant information concerning the topics and operations of the Czech Republic during its Presidency will be placed centrally.

Prior to the commencement of the Czech Presidency, information concerning the Czech Presidency will be provided simultaneously on the Internet portals listed below, while ensuring overall consistency and coordination in informing the public, professionals, media representatives, and other entities. The objectives and contents of the individual Internet portals will supplement each other, depending on the target groups for which they are designed, and on their primary purpose.

The Internet communication instruments mediating information about the EU, and which will pay more detailed attention to the Czech Presidency, include:

#### 1) The Official Website of the Presidency - [www.eu2009.cz](http://www.eu2009.cz)

The official website of the Czech Presidency will present the Czech Presidency in the first half of 2009, both in the Czech Republic and abroad. The official website will be one of the key communication tools. The main objective of the official website will be to provide fast and relevant information about current developments and organisational matters during the Czech Presidency.

The full version of the website will be launched on 1 January 2009. In line with European Union practice, a limited version of the website will be launched at the end of 2008, in order

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<sup>1</sup> The English version will be: “Europe without **Barriers**“, i.e., not “Europe without **borders**“, the French “Europe sans barrières“, and the German “Europa ohne **Barrieren**“.

to enable on-line accreditation of journalists for Czech Presidency events with sufficient lead time.

The official website will focus on the following **target groups**: the media, professionals concerned with the area, employees of the state administrations of all EU Member States as well as of third countries, and the general public.

The main objectives include:

- Provide fast and current information about the current working programme of the EU Council, joint statements, speeches, events organised by the Czech Presidency, and other matters;
- Provide a basic information service about European policies;
- Providing all media services during the Czech Presidency (press releases, statements, photo/video/audio material, a calendar of press conferences, information about accompanying events, interactive searches, etc.);
- Enable the on-line accreditation of journalists;
- Provide links from the Czech Presidency website to the websites of the individual ministries and other relevant Internet portals of Czech state authorities and EU institutions;
- Enable the sending of an e-mail *newsletter* about the Czech Presidency;
- Provide basic information about the status of the Presidency, priorities, system of rotation, etc.;
- Present the Czech Republic as the presidency country.

## **2) The Internet Portal – [www.euroskop.cz](http://www.euroskop.cz)**

Euroskop.cz provides information concerning the EU and our country's membership in it. A special section has been set up focusing on the Czech Presidency, [www.euroskop.cz/predsednictvi](http://www.euroskop.cz/predsednictvi), which is continuously updated and primarily directed to the general public. Information about the Czech Presidency is provided in comprehensible terms and supplemented with a number of explanatory notes. The portal is also able to respond quickly to currently discussed topics. It offers a "Calendar of Events", which is one of the most frequently visited sections of the portal. This portal will serve as the centre for information about the planned events of the Czech Presidency, prior to the launch of the official Czech Presidency website.

The Euroskop.cz portal is a communication instrument that will be used for the Czech Presidency, in line with the document "The Concept for Information on European Affairs and a Proposal of the Government's Communication Priorities", for 2007 and subsequent years.

## **3) The Website of the Office of the Czech Government – <http://eu.vlada.cz>**

The contents of this website are already intended for the general public and professionals interested in the area, as well as media representatives looking for official information, seeking to find out more about the organisational structure and the work of the individual DPMEA departments directly involved in preparing the Czech Presidency. Some of the information is available in English.

This website does not strive to be an exhaustive source of information concerning the Czech Presidency, but rather, attempts to offer visitors comprehensive, complex, and official information about the organisational structure, course of the preparation of the Czech Presidency, and official events and their results. Furthermore, it contains information about

the activities of the Czech Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, government documents, priorities, and contacts.

#### **4) The Website of the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU in Brussels – [www.czechrep.be](http://www.czechrep.be)**

The PRB website is designated for those members of the general public who are interested in EU affairs, and its goal is to provide information about the work of the PRB, i.e., the work of diplomats, the events held, etc. Visitors will find here regular information pertaining to Union institutions, the Czech representatives to them, and the Czech community living in Brussels. The section called “The Czech EU 2009 Presidency” presents current information from Brussels and reflects on the overall status of the preparations for the Czech Presidency.

#### **5) Websites of Individual Ministries**

Each ministry presents current information concerning EU matters and the upcoming Czech Presidency on its website, or the websites administered by it<sup>2</sup>. These sites provide detailed information about individual policies and topics, for the general public, as well as media representatives and those professionals interested in obtaining further background materials on the area.

The main source of information for the Czech and foreign public during the Czech Presidency will be the official website of the Czech EU Council Presidency.

### **3.3 A Uniform Visual Style**

One of the important communication instruments during the Presidency will be the uniform visual style of the Czech Presidency, the foundation of which will constitute its logo and logotype. The uniform visual style will present the Czech Presidency and accompany all of the activities related thereto.

In choosing a logo and logotype, emphasis will be put on their connection to the Czech Republic, this country’s membership in the European Union, as well as on attributes such as originality, comprehensibility, elegance, modernity, and wit. The mark and the logotype of the Czech Presidency will be chosen in a public competition. The entries will be evaluated by an evaluation committee comprised of members with relevant expertise and representatives of the institution calling the competition.

The uniform visual style will be used for all instruments promoting and presenting the Czech Presidency, including all of the relevant activities of partner entities, over which will be extended the auspices of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic for European Affairs. The competition for obtaining a uniform visual style and its realisation will be the responsibility of DPMEA.

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<sup>2</sup> Examples of such Internet sources, of a ministry or state authority, include the Public Administration Portal <http://portal.gov.cz>, administered by the Ministry of the Interior; the official website of the Czech Republic [www.czech.cz](http://www.czech.cz), operated by the MFA; and the website of the Czech Statistical Office <http://www.czso.cz>. These websites play a key role in informing various target groups about specific topics related to the Czech Presidency.



## 3.4 Promotional and Presentational Instruments

### 1) Promotional Items and Gifts

Promotional items and protocol gifts (hereinafter referred to as “gifts”), serving as supplementary instruments for the presentation of the Czech Presidency, will be distributed in the Czech Republic, in Brussels, at embassies, and at meetings of international organisations. All promotional items and gifts will be aligned with the uniform visual style of the Czech Presidency.

It is recommended that promotional items and gifts would be chosen bearing in mind the idea of presenting the Czech Republic as a modern and innovative country, yet one with a rich cultural heritage. Furthermore, the gifts should also satisfy the criterion of being practical. Promotional items and gifts will include a special edition of typically Czech products, fashion accessories, practical items, office supplies, commemorative items (e.g., commemorative coins, postage stamps, seals), and others.

The types of promotional items and gifts will be discussed in detail with experts and with the various ministries, through the Round Table for Communication.

### 2) Decoration of the Presidency Premises

During the Czech Presidency, a uniform visual style will be required for the decoration of the Council buildings in Brussels and Luxembourg, and of the PRB premises in Brussels. Conference facilities in Prague and in the regions will also be decorated during informal ministerial Councils and other meetings held in the Czech Republic.

### 3) Printed Matter

For the purpose of the Czech Presidency, a number of publications in various language mutations<sup>3</sup> will be published, the purpose of which is to promote the Czech Presidency and to present the Czech Republic abroad.

According to its purpose, printed matter can be divided into two types:

- For informational purposes – calendar of the Presidency; the “*Who’s Who*” of the Czech Presidency, and “*Who’s Who*” at the PRB; the programme of the Presidency, including its priorities; brochures concerning the organisational and logistical aspects and accompanying events of the Presidency; a regularly published *newsletter*<sup>4</sup> offering current information about the course of the Czech Presidency; information bulletins for specific target groups, information fliers for delegations, journalists, and the general public, etc.
- For presentation purposes – factual publications with basic information about the Czech Republic, CD and DVD media, flash disks, etc.

### 4) Media and PR Activities

The media and PR activities of the Czech Presidency will be conducted in line with the principles of communication and with the aim of making the Czech Presidency and the Czech

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<sup>3</sup> Usually, presidency countries provide printed matter in the following mutations: the national language; English, French, and German; and their combinations.

<sup>4</sup> The publication of a newsletter will be ensured by the DPMEA, in cooperation with the editorial staff of the official website of the Czech Presidency.

Republic as visible as possible. The specific media and PR activities of the Presidency will be the subject of consultation at the Round Table for Communication.

### **5) Accompanying and PR Events**

Accompanying and PR events, as supplementary instruments for the communication and presentation of the Czech Presidency, offer an opportunity to present the Czech Presidency and the Czech Republic abroad more effectively.

In terms of communication, the cultural and PR events that are traditionally held at the start and end of the Presidency will play an important role. The opening and closing events are held both in the capital of the presiding country and in Brussels. These events may, to a certain extent, have an impact on the overall impression left by the Presidency. For the above-stated reasons, careful consideration must be given as to what cultural and PR events will be organised during the Czech Presidency.

Given the above, it would be desirable for the opening and closing events in Prague and Brussels to be linked by a certain internal logic, i.e., that they would be organised on the basis of a set concept. In planning the opening and closing events, for example, the contrast between winter (at the start of the Czech Presidency) and summer (at the end of the Czech Presidency) might be used. The opening events could be dignified, serious, exclusive, and held indoors; whereas, the closing events could be diverse, free, inclusive, and held in the open air.

As a part of the accompanying and PR events, support will also be given to the activities of other entities that will be held under the umbrella of the Czech Presidency. Auspices will be extended to selected events, and support and assistance provided for their organisation, based on the outcome of a grant procedure.

### **6) Important Anniversaries and Key Events during the Czech Presidency**

Two key events will take place during the Czech Presidency: an election to the European Parliament and the end of the term of the European Commission. The end of the European Parliament's term will suspend the functioning of the institution for several months, and at the same time an election campaign for the European Parliament will take place.

During the Czech Presidency, several other important events and anniversaries will occur, such as the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of the single currency, the euro; the fifth anniversary of EU expansion, by the inclusion of Central and East European countries (1 May); celebration of the Day of Europe (9 May); and the thirtieth anniversary of direct elections into the European Parliament.

An important event of 2009 will be the European Year, the motif of which will be announced during the Portuguese EU Council Presidency (2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2007), and the European Capitals of Culture project (in 2009, they will be Linz and Vilnius).

## **3.5 Integrated Information System**

The government's integrated information system will continue to fulfil the purpose of the Concept for Information on European Affairs and the Government's Communication

Priorities with respect to the EU, approved every year by the government. The information system, which is based on the principle of mutually interconnected primary communication instruments, will provide information to the general public about European matters and about Czech membership in the EU.

The integrated information system is built on three communication instruments:

- The Eurocentres – 13 regional information points where information about any part of the European agenda may be obtained;
- The Eurofon 800 200 200 – a toll-free information line, primarily satisfying inquiries concerning various aspects of Czech EU membership;
- Euroskop.cz – the official Internet source of information about the EU. During the Czech Presidency, a link from Euroskop.cz to the official website of the Czech Presidency, [www.eu2009.cz](http://www.eu2009.cz), will be ensured, as that will be the primary information tool of the Czech Presidency.

The specific possibilities of using the integrated information system for communicating about and presenting the Czech Presidency are described in the document “The Concept for Information on European Affairs and a Proposal of the Government’s Communication Priorities”. The 2008 concept, which will fully reflect the new strategy and goals of informing about European matters, will be submitted by 30 November 2007.

### **3.6 Analyses and Survey**

For the purposes of state administration, prior to and during the Czech Presidency, the DPMEA will arrange for the regular monitoring and analysis of domestic and foreign media, and will evaluate the analysis and information available about the activities of these media (including information provided by embassies), which will focus on the positive and negative reception of the Czech Presidency domestically and abroad. The DPMEA will also analyse any available public opinion polls related to the Czech Presidency, and will also build on the existing surveys focused on the general informedness of Czech citizens about European affairs.

## **4 Target Groups**

The primarily target groups, on whom the communication and presentation of the Czech Presidency will focus, are the media and people with a professional interest in EU matters, as the mediators of information and providers of feedback. The secondary target group will be the general public. Information activities outside of the Czech Republic will be ensured by Czech embassies abroad, primarily the PRB, and the Czech Presidency website.

Communication activities must provide timely and high-quality information to a broad range of target groups. The form and contents of the information messages will be adapted to satisfy that requirement. The appropriate, targeted, and most effective form of communication will be chosen, depending on the contents of a communication and the type of the target group.

Communication with target groups will be coordinated by the DPMEA Section, in cooperation with the PRB and the MFA, which coordinates individual embassies, and each of the ministries concerned.

## **4.1 Media**

The media, through their reporting, will participate to a significant extent in creating the image of the Czech Presidency in the eyes of the Czech and foreign publics, and will have an impact on the overall evaluation of the success of the Czech Presidency. For those reasons, communication with the media will play a key role during the preparations and the Czech Presidency.

Communication will be directed at the members of the Czech media (Czech journalists in the Czech Republic and in Brussels), as well as at the representatives of the foreign media accredited in Brussels, and foreign correspondents in the Czech Republic. Communication activities will focus on print and electronic media (including audio-visual) and on media of every sort of reach – world-wide, European, accredited in Brussels, national, and regional.

### **1) Foreign and Czech Media in Brussels and Elsewhere**

In this group, it will be necessary to initiate close cooperation with the representatives of the key media accredited in Brussels, achieving thereby the maximal multiplier effect in the dissemination of information.<sup>5</sup> The foreign journalistic community accredited in Brussels comprises several mutually influencing groups.

In order to adhere to the principles of communication, communication with the media in Brussels will focus on the representatives of the domestic and foreign media present there. These representatives, so-called EU correspondents, focus on individual EU policies and are the carriers and distributors of this information.

During the Czech Presidency, it will be necessary to provide relevant, precise, and fast information to international press agencies, such as REUTERS, AFP, AP-Dow Jones, and Bloomberg, and to Internet portals, such as CNN.com, BBC News on-line, or WSJ.com. These media are among the most influential disseminators of information, and their outputs often influence or supplement the provision of information on the national level.

There are also correspondents of key Czech media accredited in Brussels, who participate to a large degree in creating the image of the Czech Presidency, and their output is often accepted by other media in the country.<sup>6</sup>

Communication with the representatives of Czech and foreign media accredited in Brussels will be the responsibility of the PRB. The experience of previous presidencies shows that foreign media accredited in Brussels turn directly to the press secretary of the PRB. That is why fast and close cooperation is essential between the PRB, the DPMEA, and the various ministries in the Czech Republic, which will respect the coordinating role of the PRB in communicating with this media community.

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<sup>5</sup> There are over 1,000 journalists accredited in Brussels, of whom approximately 400 attend the daily noon European Commission press conference.

<sup>6</sup> Czech media with their correspondents in Brussels include the audio-visual media (Czech TV and Czech Radio), the press agency (ČTK), and print dailies (MF Dnes, Lidové noviny, and Hospodářské noviny).

Similarly, the principles of communication will be adhered to with respect to foreign media in other countries (through embassies/MFA, or directly through individual ministries coordinated by the MFA/PRB).

## **2) Foreign correspondents and Czech media in the Czech Republic**

The media based in the Czech Republic, both Czech and foreign, represent a significant journalistic community. Communication will focus primarily on key media with high viewer ratings and readership – audiovisual (e.g., Czech TV, TV Nova, TV Prima), print (daily and weekly periodicals), and electronic media (Internet servers, such as ihned.cz, aktualne.cz, idnes.cz, etc.). Furthermore, communication will cover key foreign media in the Czech Republic (e.g., AP, DPA, Reuters, BBC, Bloomberg).

In order to simplify and target media communication precisely, a network will be created of contact journalists in key media, who focus directly on EU matters. As part of communication activities, it will be necessary to provide the journalists with regular, relevant, clear, and precise background materials in the shortest timeframe possible. During the Czech Presidency, the provision of neutral information is expected, as well as positions representing the opinion of the EU as a whole.

During the Czech Presidency, working conditions will need to be established for accredited journalists, including adequate premises, technical facilities, and overall service in a so-called press centre.

The main communication goals will include, above all, the proactive provision of information and an active approach with respect to the media. The communication instruments that will be used during preparations and the course of the Czech Presidency can be divided into the following categories:

- **Regular informal meetings with media representatives** focused primarily on journalists-reporters, journalists covering economic and foreign topics, and journalists specialising in European issues. The meetings with journalists could be attended, alternately, by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic for European Affairs and his deputies. The regular meetings will take the form of breakfasts, briefings, etc. The goal is for the journalists to get to become better acquainted with the representatives of the DPMEA and other political representatives, and to have the opportunity to put questions to them on the given topic “face to face”. The PRB press secretary will focus on journalists accredited with the EU in Brussels (foreign and Czech) and will prepare similar activities there;
- **Formal meetings with media representatives** – press conferences and receptions;
- **Press releases and press notices** – these will be issued regularly, in association with the relevant ministries;
- **Media topics and publications** – active offering to the media of background documents and articles concerning specific topics, prior to and during the Czech Presidency;
- **Trips for journalists** – during the Czech Presidency, several trips to Prague will be organised for important foreign journalists accredited in Brussels;<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The first trip of foreign journalists will take place at the start of the Presidency in January 2009. The number of the journalists to be invited is estimated at around 60. The trip’s agenda will include meetings with the Czech Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance,

- **The official website of the Czech Presidency** – comprehensive information and service (accreditation, calendar of events, newsletter, etc.).

## 4.2 Concerned Professionals

The term concerned professionals means the identified multipliers of information in relation to each professional or interest group, requiring specific communication tools. Given the priorities of the Czech Presidency and the overall communication concept, the following groups have been identified: representatives of academia, non-governmental non-profit organisations, regional self-governance, employees of EU institutions, and last, but not least, the business sector. Given the breadth of their interests, communication will need to be targeted primarily on various professional societies and associations, chambers, and other umbrella organisations.

To achieve the intended plans, the following communication instruments will be used: the network of regional Eurocentres (primarily in organising various debates, conferences, and discussions), the Euroskop.cz portal (providing specific information from the field), press output containing the relevant information for the concerned professionals, potentially a grant system, and direct cooperation with selected experts.

In communicating with concerned professionals, heightened attention will be paid to the business sector, for which specific communication tools will be selected. The representatives of this sector include, above all, large, small, and medium-sized companies, the representations of supranational corporations in the Czech Republic, business unions, and other umbrella organisations of the individual segments of industry and services.

The aim of communication will be to approach private entities, initiate cooperation with them, provide them with topical and relevant information about the developments in the EU in the relevant business sector, and obtain their feedback.

Prior to the Presidency, representatives of the business, academic, and non-profit sectors have been involved in the process of formulating the priorities and defining the contents of the Czech Presidency, through a consultation scheme coordinated by the DPMEA – this includes their involvement in the work of the inter-ministerial expert groups concerned with the further elaboration of the main political priorities, and as part of the Working Team for the EU Council of the Economic and Social Agreement (RHSD). Another platform for involving the private sector should be the contemplated expert task forces, which are to be informal advisory bodies for discussions about the priorities of the Czech Presidency. The members of these consulting teams, focused on individual priority areas, may, if interested, address the general public and serve as effective communication multipliers.

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Minister of the Interior, higher state officials from various ministries, representatives of regional self-governing bodies, private sector representatives. The trip will be supplemented with a cultural programme. The trip should be linked with the trip of the European Commission to the Czech Republic (January 2009). Another trip will be the visit of Czech (and perhaps even Slovak) journalists accredited in Brussels to Prague, which is planned for December 2008. The third group will include other trips of foreign journalists to the Czech Republic, focusing on specific issues, which will be organised in association with the ministries involved.

During the Czech Presidency, the representatives of the business sector will be invited to debates, conferences, and workshops on current European topics, with the intention of drawing them into public discourse and providing them with current information. The tools designed for communicating with the business sector include the above-mentioned public debates, conferences, and workshops with the representatives of the sector. The DPMEA will also initiate the publication in specialised periodicals of articles on current topics authored by the ministries.

### **4.3 General Public**

This group includes the citizens of the Czech Republic in general, as well as students of secondary schools and institutions of higher education, employees, pensioners, etc. To a limited degree, communication will focus on the foreign general public, primarily through the official website of the Czech Presidency and through foreign media.

The main goals of communication include the greater informedness and awareness of the domestic public about EU matters in general, and about the Czech Presidency in particular, especially concerning the preparation, course, and priorities of the Czech Presidency, and the Czech Republic's positions on important topics of European integration. Information about the priorities of the Czech Presidency will be provided in line with the document "The Basis of the Priorities of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council in the First Half of 2009" and its updated versions.

Communication will be provided through the existing communication instruments (the network of regional Eurocentres, the toll-free information line Eurofon 800 200 200, and the Euroskop.cz Internet portal). The public will be kept informed through the integrated information system, and other tools, concerning the contents of the Czech Presidency and its institutional, personnel, and financial arrangements.

In the preparatory stage of informing about the Czech Presidency (before the end of 2007), the Euroskop.cz portal has already been expanded and a section on the Czech Presidency has been added ([www.euroskop.cz/predsednictvi](http://www.euroskop.cz/predsednictvi)) and it was linked to the relevant pages of the government portal <http://eu.vlada.cz>.

Other communication tools will include seminars, discussion meetings, and conferences on issues concerning the Czech Presidency. Furthermore, support will be provided to activities (competitions, workshops, exhibitions) that focus, for example, on students of the highest grades of secondary schools and in institutions of higher education.

As part of the preparatory and warm up stage of the communication of the Czech Presidency, the provision of information to the general public will focus on two basic areas – informing about the significance and general principles of the Presidency, the rotation system of the Member States in carrying it out, as well as the preparations of the Czech state administration for carrying out the Presidency in the first half of 2009. The public will also be informed about the goals of the Czech Republic in the EU, and about what the Czech Republic will strive for during its Presidency.

The communication priorities of the government, except for the Czech Presidency, and the specific activities of the integrated information system, will be elaborated on and provided in

line with the document “The Concept for Information on European Affairs and a Proposal of the Government’s Communication Priorities” and its annual revisions.

During the so-called “hot stage” of the communication of the Presidency (beginning of 2009), other, supplementary communication instruments will be used – the official website of the Presidency, fliers, brochures, information sheets, bulletins presenting basic and current information about the course of the Czech Presidency, as well as media activities serving to enhance the communication of important European topics, and primarily of the Czech Presidency.

## **4.4 EU Institutions**

The key to our success as the presidency country lies in ensuring close relations and intensive communication between the ministries and the European Union institutions and bodies, both prior to and during the Czech Presidency. During the Czech Presidency, the DPMEA, MFA, and ministries will, aside from attending to everyday press matters, provide information about important presentations and the participation of the highest representatives of the Czech Republic at the meetings of EU institutions and bodies.

In these matters, it will be necessary to communicate with the press section of each institution and body, and to act in cooperation with the PRB press office. There will also be secondary communication with the employees of EU institutions and bodies, in terms of the interior decoration of their main buildings in Brussels and Luxembourg, and the distribution of the printed materials and promotional items of the Czech Presidency.

### **1) The Council of the European Union**

The key partner for preparing and implementing the Czech Presidency is the Council’s General Secretariat. On the basis of experience from previous presidencies, [we know that] problem-free communication with the Council required a consistent flow of information, as well as flexible communication among the ministries of the presiding country and the Council, based on mutual trust.

Of the highest importance will be the cooperation of the press secretaries of the PRB, DPMEA, and the individual ministries, who will provide official information about the plans and results of the Council’s meetings during the Czech Presidency, on the one hand, and the council’s press officers and the press secretary of the Office of the Secretary General and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, on the other.

Council press officers do not hold regular briefings or provide “on the record” information, but prepare press releases prior to Council meetings, as well as their agendas, the background materials for the Czech Presidency briefings prior to Council meetings, and press releases after Council meetings. In addition, they publish the decisions of the Council, including the results of public votes.

### ***The EU Council Working Group on Information and Transparency***

The Working Group on Information and Transparency is concerned with the communication strategies of the individual Member States, with respect to the EU, in terms of access to documents and the transparency of the EU. On the basis of the definition of the priorities and goals of the Czech Republic during its Presidency, the DPMEA, in association with the office of the PRB press secretary and the Council, will prepare a framework programme of the



group's meetings for the half-year of the Czech Presidency, including its communication priorities. At the first meeting of the working group held after the start of the Czech Presidency, the official website of the Czech Presidency, its applications and possibilities, will be presented to the group's members.

## **2) The European Council**

The European Council, comprising the heads of state or government of the EU Member States, will convene twice during the Czech Presidency (March and June 2009), in Brussels<sup>8</sup>. Its task will be to determine the direction in which the European Union should develop. The European Council provides the necessary stimuli to the Union for its development, and sets out the general political direction of that development, and the principles and the general direction of common foreign and security policy, including matters related to defence. It also decides about the common strategies which the Union carries out in areas in which the Member States have important shared interests. After each of its meetings, it presents a report to the European Parliament. The conclusions of European Council meetings are public.

## **3) The European Parliament**

*The Chair of the European Council* (Prime Minister of the Czech Republic) presents the agenda of the Czech Presidency at the beginning of the Presidency (January 2009), delivers a speech about the progress achieved at the end of the Czech Presidency, and speaks in the European Parliament, delivering information about the agenda and goals of both of the European Council meetings, prior to their being held (March and June 2009).

*The Chair of the GAERC* is present at all plenary and mini-plenary sessions of the European Parliament on the date set for answering questions, or any other inquiries concerning the given agenda. He also speaks on selected issues on the basis of the Council's initiative, or on the basis of the request of the conference of the chairmen of the European Parliament. He can also attend all formal European Parliament sessions held on the occasion of official visits, arrange bilateral meetings with visiting delegations, and participate in plenary debates on issues of key importance for the agenda of the Czech Presidency. He also participates in discussions and exchanges of opinions in the Foreign Committee, the Human Rights Committee, and other selected committees (approximately two meetings during the Czech Presidency).

*Sectoral ministers* participate in the relevant meetings of parliamentary committees. In practice, the attendance of ministers is expected in at least two committee meetings during the Czech Presidency, at the outset and during the Presidency, which include presentations, debates with committee members, and meeting with the press. Ministers also attend discussions on important points concerning their particular portfolio at the plenary meetings of the European Parliament, or in the conciliation procedure in the EP.

## **4) The European Commission**

In connection with the preparation of the detailed agenda of the Czech Presidency, the relevant ministers will meet with the related Commissioner. Each commissioner has his/her own office of the press secretary. In January 2009, at the start of the Czech Presidency, the EU Commissioners will visit the Czech Republic.

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<sup>8</sup> There is also a possibility of an informal meeting of the European Council, which is usually held in the presidency country. Such a meeting took place, for example, during the German Presidency on 24-25 March 2007 in Berlin, on the occasion of the celebrations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Rome Treaties and the Berlin Declaration.

#### **5) The European Court of Auditors**

During its Presidency, the Czech Republic will invite the European Court of Auditors to present the Ecofin Annual Report.

#### **6) The European Economic and Social Committee**

At the start of the Czech Presidency, the designated minister will present the Czech Republic's priorities. A hearing of ministers on major topics will also take place at the committee's meeting.

#### **7) The Committee of the Regions**

During the Czech Presidency, the designated minister will attend a selected meeting of the Committee of the Regions.

#### **8) Other Bodies**

Aside from courtesy visits and ceremonial speeches, the Czech Republic has no formal obligations with respect to any other European Union bodies (the European Investment Bank, European Investment Fund, European Central Bank, European Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance, European Ombudsman, European Data Protection Supervisor, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, and the European Personnel Selection Office).

Several Internet sources, the list of which constitutes a part of Appendix A, can be used for watching broadcasts of the public meetings, sessions, and press conferences of EU institutions, and for searching the archives and the audio-visual library.

### **4.5 Member States, Third Countries, International Organisations**

Communication with these target groups will be provided for by the MFA and other ministries into whose field of competence the relevant topic may fall. A partner in the communication will be the existing information infrastructure of the MFA, primarily consisting of the network of Czech embassies, Czech Centres, and other entities.

The DPMEA will be responsible for the contents of the background documents used in the presentation of the Czech Presidency abroad, and will provide Czech embassies with advertising items, printed matter, and other materials for the promotion and presentation of the Czech Presidency in a uniform visual style.

Communication with foreign embassies in the Czech Republic, primarily those of all 26 European Union Member States, as well as with the Representation of the European Commission and the Information Office of the European Parliament in the Czech Republic, will be the responsibility of the DPMEA in cooperation with the MFA.

The Czech Republic, as the country presiding over the EU Council, will represent the EU internationally. It will do so in cooperation with the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Commission. In cooperation with other EU Member States, the Czech Republic will formulate positions and statements on current topics and present them on behalf of the EU, in international organisations and at major international

conferences. The Czech Republic will, in the capacity of the EU Council presidency country, present the positions of the EU in international organisations such as the UN and the OSCE.

## **5 Coordination of the Communication**

The so-called Round Table for Communication (hereinafter referred to as the “Round Table”) was set up in July 2007 for coordinating the media output of the individual ministries, as a platform for communication between the Communication Department of the Section for Presidency of the DPMEA, the press or communication departments of the individual ministries<sup>9</sup>, the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, the Office of the President of the Czech Republic, and the Office of the PRB Press Secretary. As required, the representatives of institutions responsible for promoting the Czech Republic (e.g., Czech Centres, the CzechInvest, Czech Trade, and CzechTourism agencies), will be invited to the Round Table.

The Round Table will convene as required, and its organisation and chairing will be the responsibility of the Communication Department of the Section for the Presidency of DPMEA. The members of the Round Table will be in regular contact through electronic communication. Between the meetings of the Round Table, the Communication Department of the Section for the Presidency of the DPMEA will hold coordination video and telephone conferences, which will make communication, especially with the PRB, more efficient.

The technical details of the preparation of the accompanying cultural events at the outset and conclusion of the Czech Presidency will be the subject of consultation in a working subgroup of the Central Organisation Group (COG) for the coordination of the preparation and arrangements of the accompanying cultural and social events. The important results of the Round Table or the COG working sub-group will be presented to the Committee for the EU, on the working or governmental level. The Round Table as well as the COG working sub-group will be used for crisis communication, should any unexpected incidents occur in the EU.

The Czech Presidency cannot be solely a matter of State Administration. Other entities from the public, private, and civil sector will be involved in it. The Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic for European Affairs or his deputies will extend their auspices over selected projects, the uniform visual style of the Czech Presidency will be lent to those projects, and they will also be included in the official calendar of events.

Cooperation will also take place with other external entities, especially in terms of the services and products required for the purposes of the Czech Presidency, concerning its organisational, logistical, and media arrangements.

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<sup>9</sup> As part of the preparation of the Czech Presidency, the PRB will organise training for ministry press secretaries in Brussels. Furthermore, training will be organised in Prague for the press secretaries of Czech embassies in EU Member States. Emphasis will be put on the high-quality and intensive language training of ministry press officers, especially in the English and French languages.

## 6 Preliminary Time-Schedule

There will be four basic stages in the communications of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council: the preparatory stage (running until the end of 2007), the so-called “warm-up stage” (January – December 2008), the so-called “hot stage” (during the Presidency, i.e., January – June 2009), and the follow-up stage (July – December 2009).

## 7 Appendices

### 7.1 Sources of Information for Communication with EU Institutions

Internet resources that will be used for watching broadcasts from meetings, sessions, and press conferences in EU institutions, and for archive and audio-visual library searches, as part of communicating with EU institutions:

- **Europe by Satellite** – a project of the European Commission, offering live broadcasts from press conferences and meetings: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm>
- **The European Commission Press Room** – a virtual press centre, offering press releases, background materials, etc. from the regular noon European Commission press conferences: [http://europa.eu/press\\_room/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/press_room/index_en.htm)
- **The European Parliament** – the weekly programme is available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/expert/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/expert/default_en.htm);  
Live broadcast:  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/public/freetext\\_page\\_direct/20061120FTX00012-2101/default\\_cs.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/public/freetext_page_direct/20061120FTX00012-2101/default_cs.htm)
- **The EU Council** – the EU Council audiovisual service:  
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.asp?id=341&lang=en&mode=g>