

CZECH VISION

crucial values our society should build its future on

*Dialog centrum, The Theatre Goose on a String and Masaryk university asked a hundred of Czech intellectuals to provide their opinions on the following question: **What is our hope today?** The survey was carried out within **The Daybreak in the Czech Republic (HAVEL CABINET)** project. **Ninety-two** of them gave their answers (the name list can be found below). To be honest, only seven replies were received at first but, finally, the project attracted attention. Nevertheless, Tomáš Mozga had to remind the people addressed over and over again, even eleven times in some cases.*

There is nothing easier but to think that affluence will last forever. It will not. The society in our republic has been slowly but dangerously approaching the critical point of values decay which could, consequently, lead to the decay of our society itself. In a number of branches of knowledge, the results our students achieve have been getting worse- especially in comparison with other countries. Within the European Union we also fall behind as far as the number of people with university degrees is concerned. The contact with the European as well as the world's intellectual elite has been disrupted. It is clear that our nation lacks spiritual values.

How to solve this?

We have to support learning of world languages in the whole population. It is necessary to pay **greater attention to modern history** during the second stage of primary education. Only the talented ones, the chosen ones should be allowed to teach. Only these teachers can expect that the generation they educate will be better than they are. **Critical thinking**, the ability to participate in dialogues and come up with satisfactory arguments has to be cultivated. Social respect towards rules needs to be increased. **No lies. No bribes. No thefts.** No gluttony. No envy. We have to be proud of our country. We have to learn how to show respect and **be grateful** for our existence again. We have to help the weak. We have to keep our word. **We have to be modest.** Straight. Fair. Polite. We have to be able to show esteem. We are a rather small country and that is why there is nothing more absurd than megalomania. **Strong personalities** are to take the leading roles in the nation, not those of low moral values. Disregard for others as well as disregard for the destiny of the whole is what opens the door for evil. Another thing is important too- **reading**. **Beauty** has to be omnipresent, and not only the visible one. A great and yet so far not mentioned value has to be **preserving memory** (based on love). What we need most today is **spirituality**. **It is necessary to find the ability to celebrate national holidays again.** The state has to make sure all shops are closed on Sundays and national holidays- first, we need to change our life styles, second, shop assistants, bakers and drivers of cars that bring luxury to us should also be allowed to take a day off. Often they are mothers and fathers that are missed in their families... And a **family is the essential value** for each society. A family that is strongly supported, a sign of prestige but also an institution charged with specific tasks. We need to **develop a new level of esteem, a new form of spirituality** that is able to really understand the hidden genius of life. **Freedom of thought and freedom of speech.** We have to assume **full responsibility for public affairs.** We have to refuse life that is easy but only at the expense of progeny.

We have to learn to live our lives as services. **We have to rejoice at the happiness of others.**

Last but not least, the Czech Republic has to face **the issue of the existence of God**, whether we like it or not. We hope that people no longer believe the ancient myth spread 20 years ago that our only and most important “god” is the economics, not even those who advocated it vehemently at that time.

It is necessary **to admit our failures.**

At the very end we suggest that **the European library should be built on the Czech land.**

“...what distinguishes a small country from a big one is not the size of territory, nor the number of inhabitants but the fact that for small nations their history and culture is nothing they can take for granted,” **Milan Kundera** wrote. We should start thinking about the library as about an institution that could change the relation of the whole Europe to Prague and the Czech Republic.

The 21st century will be a century of **the development of knowledge**. Our country is at the best way to become one of the most important centres of education in Europe.

How can we take our existence for granted? How can we take the existence of a living creature that is able to wonder for granted- on the contrary to the basic physical laws of the universe? And how can we take the actual existence of the universe for granted, the existence of the inconceivable collection of inconceivably weird events, objects, phenomena and relations?

Amazement at the fact that we cannot take anything our universe consists of for granted is the first step towards the question about the sense things have- why do all things exist, why do things exist at all? We do not know and we shall never know. It cannot be ruled out that all things exist just so that we stand in amazement. And we might be here only because there needs to be someone to stand in amazement. But these contemplations cannot solve any mysteries. We can ask immediately: why is it actually necessary that anybody stands in amazement?

The important thing is **not to give up.**

*Note: **Czech vision 2009** was compiled with the use of suggestions of 92 personalities. Suggestions were provided by: Madeleine Albright, Jan Benda, Stanislav Bernard, Jan Budař, Vojtěch Cíkrle, Václav Cílek, Václav Cvrček, Michal Dalecký, Jiří X. Doležal, Jan Duda, Milena Flodrová, Luděk Galuška, Libor Grubhoffer, Jiří Grygar, Lukáš Hadrava, Tomáš Halík, Eva M. Hejzlarová, Eva Herrmannová, Martin Hilský, Ivan Holoubek, Michal Horáček, Vít Hrdoušek, Jan Hron, Antonín Huvar, Karel Hviždala, Helena Illnerová, Martin Jahn, Jeroným Janíček, Kateřina Janků, Jakub Jareš, Eva Jiříčná, Pavel Jungwirth, Vladimír Just, Petr Kadlec, Tomáš Kára, Erazim Kohák, Rut Kolínská, Stanislav Komárek, Ladislava Košíková, Josef Kovalčuk, Zbyněk Král, Lumír Krejčí, Marta Kubišová, Petr Langer, Zdeněk Lukeš, Lukáš Evžen Martinec, Eva Matějková, Veronika Matějková, Ivo Mathé, Ivan Medek, Kateřina Melenová, Josef Michl, Petr Mikšíček, Meda Mládková, Vladimír Morávek, Luděk Niedermayer, Roman Onderka, Vlastimil Ondra, Petr Oslzlý, Teřana Ostapčuk, Miroslav Oščatka, Jiří Pavlica, Jan Payne, Markéta Pilátová, Josef Pleskot, Jiří Plocek, Petra Procházková, Martin C. Putna, Martin Reiner, Blanka Říhová, Jan Sokol, Olga Sommerová, Thomas Donaldson Sparling, Jana Stávková, David Storch, Jiří Stránský, Kateřina Šedá, Jiřina Šiklová, Marek Špalek, Jindřich Štreit, Hana Šůrová, Pavel Švanda, Rudolf Švaříček, Erik Tabery, Milan Uhde, Ludvík Vaculík, Vlastimil Veselý, Zbyněk Vybíral, Petr Zelenka, Ladislav Zeman, Jiří Zemánek, Miroslav Zikmund*

Many thanks to all of them.

PETR OSLZLÝ, VLADIMÍR MORÁVEK, VÁCLAV HAVEL, JACQUES RUPNIK, JIŘÍ GRUŠA, TOMÁŠ MOZGA