

 | OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO GROWTH |  
October 9 – 10, 2013



In October 2013 the Institute held the Aspen Annual Conference “Overcoming Barriers to Growth”. Our flagship event, attended by more than four hundred participants, was organized in cooperation with PRK Partners, attorneys at law.

The second day revolved around the future of the transatlantic marketplace, focusing on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and the US. The keynote speech was delivered by the European Commissioner Karel De Gucht. In his Prague speech, mentioned globally by numerous media including the [New York Times](#), he called for a new Regulatory Cooperation Council that would bring together the most important EU and US regulatory agencies.



The second day sessions also hosted Matt Blunt, President of American Automotive Policy Council, Jan Kohout, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Ivan Hodač, Founder and Member of the Board of the Aspen Institute Prague and Peter Stračár, CEO of General Electric Central & Eastern Europe.

The first part of the event commemorated twenty years of an independent Czech Republic, recalling personal as well as collective successes and failures. The panel hosted a number of renowned Czech personalities, such as Gabriel Eichler, Michaela Bakala, Zbyněk Frolík, Petr Pithart, Libuše Šmuclerová, Michal Horáček and Martin Doktor.

You can watch all four panel discussions from the 2013 Annual Conference in our [video gallery](#) or look at the photos from both venues in our [photo gallery](#).

The first conference day concluded with the Aspen Annual Dinner for partners, supporters and Friends of the Aspen Institute Prague in the Lobkowitz Palace at Prague Castle. Ambassador Michael Žantovský, President of the Aspen Institute Prague, introduced three distinguished guest speakers for the evening: Jiří Rusnok, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Elliot Gerson, Executive Vice-President of the Aspen Institute and Marek Procházka, Partner at PRK Partners, attorneys at law.



**| TRANSFORMING CITIES: TOWARDS SMART FORMS OF GOVERNANCE |** September 17, 2013

*The Aspen Institute Prague organized a panel discussion on how to use citizens' growing participation for improving quality of governance and of city life. The public event was held as part of the 17th annual Forum 2000 Conference in Prague.*



Given the increased contribution which creative and cultural endeavors are making to economies, and the widespread use of digital technologies, local initiatives and projects can garner stronger public support, and in turn influence political activity. Educated, socially active and financially secured citizens – traditionally concentrated in large cities – engage more actively in the public life of their environs. The focal question of the debate was how to create a positive environment to foster interdisciplinary dialogue between the different interest groups involved in urban transformation.

The kind participation of Eva Jiříčná, architect, Pablo Otaola, urban planner, Tomáš Hudeček, Lord Mayor of Prague and Jiří Devát, CEO of Cisco Czech Republic attracted over two hundred guests and secured a lively debate, which can be watched on [YouTube](#).



**| CROWDFUNDING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP |** November 21, 2013

This public debate, organized jointly with Respekt weekly magazine, addressed crowdfunding, capital ventures and business angels as potential sources of funding for start-ups. Aleš Burger of crowdfunding platform Hithit, Martina Jakl of SwissCzech Technology Transfer, Martin Hanzlík of ATRET Consulting and Martin Strnad, lawyer at Havel, Holásek & Partners – discussed the practical, economic and legal aspects of alternative ways of funding innovative business ideas. The debate was organized within the framework of [Global Entrepreneurship Week](#). See the whole event in our [video gallery](#).



 | NEW PUBLICATIONS |  
Aspen Review Central Europe 3/2013

“What drives the Union, and why is it moving at all?” asks Luuk van Middelaar, Dutch historian, political philosopher and a member of Herman Van Rompuy’s cabinet in the opening article of the latest [Aspen Review Central Europe](#). Released in October 2013, the quarterly takes up the future prospects of Europe as its cover story.

The new issue includes articles about Germany after the elections, political developments in the Ukraine and



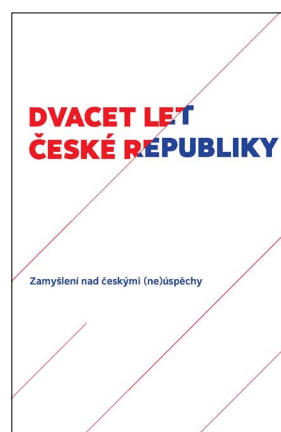
an interview with Sir James Mancham on global citizenship and the rise of China. The Economy section offers e.g. a selection of texts on Hungarian oil and gas strategy, Czech-Polish relations, and the impact of the austerity measures in Lithuania. The Culture section introduces, among others, the reviews of Umberto Eco’s *Prague Cemetery* and Jiří Suk’s *Politics as the Theater of the Absurd: Václav Havel 1975 – 1989*.

If you are interested in buying the Aspen Review Central Europe, place your order at [review@aspeninstitute.cz](mailto:review@aspeninstitute.cz).

 | TWENTY YEARS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC |  
A reflection on Czech successes and failures

Twenty years of the Czech Republic’s independence marked a fitting occasion to examine inspirational examples, as well as the hurdles obstructing further development. Our booklet offers interviews with thirty-four Czech personalities from various professions and a brief summary of the collective success of Czech society over the past two decades.

Karel Janeček, Jana Zielinski, Eduard Kučera, Jan Pirk,



Helena Třeštíková and many others answered five questions about the most decisive moments in their lives, obstacles they had to overcome and their views on society’s successes and setbacks. The booklet’s second part invites the reader to look at the past twenty years from a rather positive perspective, offering a selection of joint achievements, brought together by former journalist Tomáš Němeček.

The publication (Czech language only), is available in an [on-line reader](#) and can also be downloaded as a [pdf](#).

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