

## Tisková zpráva

### Press Release

### Communiqué de presse

# Opening of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation (2009)

Prague, 18 December 2008

**The European Year of Creativity and Innovation (2009) will be opened on Wednesday, 7 January 2009, in Prague. The European Year will be launched by an expert conference and opened with speeches by European Commissioners Ján Figel' and Janez Potočnik, as well as Czech Ministers Ondřej Liška and Václav Jehlička.**

The aim of the European Year 2009 is to promote creativity and innovation as key competencies of all individuals. The tradition of declaring a European Year dates back to 1983, and the EU often chooses the theme of the year, together with the Council of Europe. The year 2006 was declared the European Year of Workers' Mobility, 2007 the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All and 2008 the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The European Year, dedicated to a particular topic, aims at raising public awareness on concrete problems, spreading information on best practice, stimulating political discussions and supporting active citizenship.

Prominent personalities from the world of creativity and innovation who will take part in the launch conference held in the Senate of the Czech Republic at the beginning of January include Esko Tapani Aho, former Finnish Prime Minister and an Executive Vice President of Nokia, and Ernő Rubik, inventor and author of Rubik's Cube. The conference will be opened by Ján Figel', Commissioner responsible for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Janez Potočnik, Commissioner responsible for Science and Research, Ondřej Liška, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic and Václav Jehlička, Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic.

Accompanying activities held during the European Year will be funded mainly from the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–13). Under the logo of the European Year, EU Member States will organise information and promotional campaigns, events and initiatives at European, national, regional and local levels, which will convey key messages and spread information on best practice considered creative and innovative in Europe.

The European Year 2009 is connected to the Lisbon Strategy, thus falling within the framework of key priority areas of the Czech EU Presidency (A Competitive and Open Europe). The conference will host 150 guests, out of which 75 will be from abroad and 75 from the Czech Republic. The press meeting is planned for 12:30.

