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EP 2009 Vote: Beyond the Sugar Cubes

The forthcoming vote for European Parliament will be the first truly European election in the history of the European Union. It's the first time citizens of the entire geographical territory of the continent will participate. The Iron Curtain, torn down politically 20 years ago, this year will disappear also generationally. On this election a new type of voters will take part – a generation born and raised after '89, in a Europe of freedom. Young people – in the West and in the East, for whom the cold war is just history – a story concerning the times before their birth.

It's both a challenge and a historical chance, that these elections will be held in the time of a EU presidency under a country from the former Eastern block. The Czechs in their typical national humor style plan to "Make it sweet for Europe", referring to the Czech origin of the sugar cube. By paradox, the several possible meanings of this expression depict in a proper way the different challenges, that Europe is about to face in the next few months.

The idiom "To make it sweet" in Czech has also a different connotation – to make hard time. Exactly in these days of global economic crisis the European decision-making institutions are having a hard time. The new-members of EU are facing the rough reality, that besides the sweetness of prosperity, they have to share the common difficulties. The future European Parliament will inherit the unsolved and long-lasting discussion about the extent of the integration within the union.

The new MEPs will have to face the prejudices of their compatriots, who fear their national sovereignty and cultural identity may disappear in a European super-state like a sugar cube dissolving in the morning coffee of a Brussels bureaucrat. On the new MEP's determination, commitment and ability to convince depend the future of a new, truly united Europe.