

## Lesson from Ukraine



From their vantage point in the EU and Nato, Czechs tend to think that an Eastern neighbor like Ukraine has nothing to offer them. True, Ukraine probably can't teach the Czechs much about [stable government](#), but in at least one way the Ukrainians have an edge. Although corruption there remains a big problem, the sale in 2005 of Kryvorizhstal steel company to Mittal is still held up internationally as a model of transparency. The sale took place on live television, with sealed starting bids that finished in an open auction and an unheard-of winning price of \$4.8bn. Instead of opening the bids on TV immediately after receiving them, Czech officials are more likely to accept the envelopes on Fri. afternoon and open them on Mon., leaving plenty of time to make sure the right bidder wins. Radio host [Jan Kraus](#) expressed the commonly held view on Fri. that 90% of all state contracts are rigged. This puts the Czechs more in the East than they're ready to admit.

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