

What we got wrong in 2008



To err is human, but to admit mistakes is less so. One of our biggest mistakes last year, we admit, was to underestimate Mirek Topolánek's loyalty to Václav Klaus as president. Although we thought from an early stage that Klaus had a 70% chance of winning reelection ([click here](#)), we still figured there was a 25% chance that Topolánek was secretly planning to maneuver a victory for a third candidate (not Jan Švejnar, whom we gave only a 5% chance). However, Topolánek remained true to Klaus and even now, in the face of attacks by Klaus, expresses no regrets. This is admirable, and Topolánek is doing it again with regard to Finance Minister Miroslav Kalousek. To some, Kalousek might represent gangster capitalism, to others he's a KDU-ČSL heretic, but to Topolánek he remains the person for whom he's prepared to walk across hot coals - or sink his own coalition government - to defend.



Celebrating  years of freedom in 2009 and wishing you an  cellent new year.