

Václav Klaus

* June 19, 1941

Vaclav Klaus was born in the Vinohrady district of Prague on June 19, 1941. He spent his childhood and youth in the neighbourhood of Tylovo namesti square.

He obtained his university education at the University of Economics, Prague (majoring in the Foreign Trade Economics and graduating in 1963), and economics thus became his specialist field for his entire life. He took advantage of the relative liberalisation in the then Czechoslovakia in order to study in Italy (1966) and the USA (1969). As a research worker at the Institute of Economics of the Czech Academy of Sciences he completed his postgraduate scientific studies and in 1968 was awarded the title of app. PhD. in Economics.

In 1970 he was forced to abandon his research career for political reasons, and left to work at the Czechoslovak State Bank for many years. In 1987 he returned from the bank to his academic work at the Prognostic Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences at the end of 1987.

Immediately after the events of November 17, 1989 he entered politics, but did not lose contact with the world of economic science. He continued to lecture and publish occasionally, and in 1991 he was engaged as a lecturer at Charles University in the field of economics. In 1995 he was appointed professor for the field of finances at the University of Economics, Prague.

He embarked on his political career in December 1989, when he became Federal Minister of Finance. Later, in October 1991 he was appointed vice chairman of the government of the Czechoslovak Federal Republic. At the end of 1990 he became the chairman of the then strongest political entity - the Civic Forum. Following its demise in April 1991 he co-founded the Civic Democratic Party, of which he was chairman from its inception until December 2002. He won a parliamentary election with this party in June 1992 and became Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. In this role he shared in the "Velvet Divorce" of the Czechoslovak Federation and the foundation of an independent Czech Republic. In 1996 he successfully defended his post as Prime Minister in election to the Chamber of Deputies. Following the collapse of the governing coalition he tendered his resignation in November 1997. Following a forced general election in 1998 he became chairman of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech parliament for a four-year period.

On February 28, 2003 he was elected President of the Czech Republic.

Vaclav Klaus is married to the economist Livia Klausova and has two sons and five grandchildren. His son Vaclav is the headmaster of a private grammar school in Prague, and his son Jan works as a financial analyst.

For many years in his youth Vaclav Klaus was top sportsman, playing basketball and volleyball, and also enjoys skiing and playing tennis. In his free time he enjoys reading fictitious literature and listening to music, in particular jazz.

He has published over 20 books on general social, political and economic themes, and has been awarded a number of international prizes and honorary doctorates from universities all over the world.