



BIOGRAPHY

Jan Zahradil was born in Prague on March 20, 1963. He graduated from the University of Chemistry and Technology, specializing in water and environmental technologies. Following graduation, he performed research in water management.

In 1992 he was elected to the Federal Parliament of Czechoslovakia, representing the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), of which he was a founding member. After the split of Czechoslovakia, he became foreign and political affairs adviser to the PM of the Czech Republic. At the Office of the Government, he headed the European Integration Department.

In 1998, Zahradil became a Member of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, where he served as the co-chairman of the Joint Parliamentary EU – Czech Republic Committee, which supervised the Czech accession to the EU. Due to his specialization, he represented the Czech Republic in the 2002 Convention on the Future of the European Union. Later, he was appointed as the PM's sherpa for the Lisbon Treaty negotiations, in which he played an integral role.

Zahradil was subsequently elected to the EP in 2004 as the leader of the ODS list and was re-elected twice. He is the founding member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR), which he led in 2011 as the first Czech to ever lead a political group at the European Parliament. The Group has since become the third largest group in the Parliament. Since 2009, he is also the President of the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE), the fastest growing political movement in Europe.

In the EP, Zahradil specializes in international trade issues, serving as the INTA Committee Vice-Chairman. Moreover, he was appointed as the standing rapporteur for the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement. He is also active in promoting EU – Asia relations, founding and chairing the EU-Vietnam Parliamentary Friendship Group, in addition to traveling extensively throughout Asia to build new partnerships.

Since a young age Zahradil has been a great fan of rock music, occasionally even writing reviews to music magazines. As a Czech patriot, he is a great beer fan, and he especially loves products of Czech microbreweries. Zahradil is married, with a daughter and a son, and they have also welcomed a new addition into the family - a dog. He lives in Prague where he was born and raised, but enjoys spending his holidays in Northern Bohemia.