



## CHAPTER 8

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# Czech Republic

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### COUNTRY OVERVIEW

The Czech Republic is a bicameral parliamentary republic established in 1993 after the division of Czechoslovakia. After forty-one years of communism, a peaceful transition process called Velvet Revolution led to the commencement of a democratic regime in 1989 (Soukeník et al. 2017). The main driving force in the process of democratisation was the Civic Forum (OF). The first free elections in Czechoslovakia were held in 1990 and OF won at the polls. However, shortly after the elections, OF disintegrated and early elections were held in 1992. In these elections, the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the main successor of OF and a determining political force of the transformation and during the 1990s, won with a third of the vote. Because of lasting disputes between the Czechs and Slovaks, the political representation which emerged from the elections agreed to split the federation into the Czech and Slovak Republics on 1 January 1993. The Federal Assembly ceased to exist, and the Czech National Council transformed into the Chamber of Deputies. Today, the Czech Republic is divided into fourteen constituencies by a proportional

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97

representative electoral system using the d'Hondt method of four-year terms with a five per cent threshold for a party. In the case of a coalition, the threshold is ten, fifteen, and twenty per cent respectively for coalitions consisting of two, three, or more parties (Šedo 2007, 34–36). The second chamber, the Senate, was not established until 1996.

The first elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 1996 confirmed the position of ODS, but its competitor on the left-wing the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) matched its support. For almost two decades, the Czech party system was characterised by relative stability provided by the presence of these two strong political parties; two weaker actors, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) and the Christian and Democrat Union (KDU-ČSL); and the presence of new entities in the Chamber of Deputies after each election. Newcomers usually had voter support barely big enough to enter the parliament, but they often played the role of pivotal coalition partners. The 2010 elections changed this situation, with two new parties TOP 09 and Public Affairs (VV) winning larger support and, therefore, playing an important role. However, the early election in 2013 represented an even greater political earthquake: The winner, ČSSD, received less than two per cent more votes than new party ANO; both parties together with KDU-ČSL formed a government. Not long after the elections, ANO became the party with the highest support in polls, and its leader, Andrej Babiš, became the most popular politician in the Czech Republic. The last elections in 2017 represented a record number of parties in the two-hundred-member Chamber of Deputies with nine parties crossing the legal threshold, including newcomers the Czech Pirate Party (Pirates) and the far-right populists Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD).

Since 1999, the Czech Republic has been part of NATO and a member of the European Union since 2004.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

For a long time, the rules of election campaigns in the Czech Republic were defined vaguely and often without clear boundaries. The main rules were defined between 1991 and 1995 and were not reformed for many years. The biggest change came in 2017 when an amendment to the Electoral Law (Act no. 247/1995 Coll.) came into force. Above all, the campaign became time-limited, spending limits were set for political

parties (90 million CZK or approx. 3.5 million EUR for elections to the Chamber of Deputies) as well as donors (3 million CZK annually or approx. 117,000 EUR), and some new obligations were additionally introduced. At the same time, an amendment to the law on association in political parties and political movements (Act no. 424/1991 Coll.) established the Office for the Oversight of Financing of Political Parties and Movements (ÚDHPSH), responsible for controlling the parties. However, the powers it possesses are limited and the sanctions it can impose are rather mild.

According to the new law, the election campaign begins on the day of the election announcement and ends on the day the overall result is announced. A novel part of the legislation obligated campaign materials to be labelled with information as to its producer and funder, which was implemented to reduce that time-honoured practice of negative and defamatory anonymous advertisements. Since 2017, political parties running for office must prepare a transparent account exclusively for campaign funding. Additionally, for the first time, a natural or legal person was allowed to register as a ‘third party’ and independently conduct a campaign in favour of a certain contestant or against them (Eibl and Gregor 2019).

Political parties are entitled to a total of fourteen hours of broadcasting time on Český rozhlas (Czech Radio) as well as on Česká televize (Czech Television). The time is equally divided among all running parties and is available to them between sixteen days and forty-eight hours before the election. Similarly, municipal mayors may reserve areas for election posters sixteen days before the election. Spots cannot be broadcast on private radio and television channels, nor can the parties buy extra time on public service media.

Political parties in the Czech Republic are richly funded by the state. If the party exceeds 1.5% of votes in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies, it receives 100 CZK (approx. 4 EUR) per vote. If it exceeds 3%, it receives another 6 million CZK (235,000 EUR) annually (plus 200,000 CZK for each extra 0.1% up to 5% or 10 million CZK, approx. 390,000 EUR). In case the party has candidates elected as MPs, its treasury will improve by 900,000 CZK (35,000 EUR) annually for each mandate.

There is a moratorium on the publication of surveys and polls beginning three days before the election which remains in place until the closure of polling stations.

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF CAMPAIGNS

Although until 1993 it was Czechoslovakia, not the Czech Republic, it is necessary to mention two elections held in 1990 and 1992. The first because foreign political consultants played an important role in the campaigns, the latter because of the political representation elected in 1992 ruled the Czech Republic until the 1996 elections.

The elections in 1990 were won by OF in a landslide, followed by the Communists and HSD-SMS, a Moravian and Silesian regional movement. The main topic of the elections was the country's further direction; in other words, how to end the communist era. Thus, the elections were more of a plebiscite about the transition to democracy than a fight over political ideologies and manifestos. 'Standard' political issues came on the stage in the elections two years later. OF's slogan was: 'The parties are for party-members, Civic Forum is for everyone.'<sup>1</sup> Politicians had no experience with campaigning after decades of communism, so foreign political consultants were hired. Václav Havel, the main figure of the Velvet Revolution, the face of OF, and the president of Czechoslovakia, was advised by the Sawyer Miller Group from the US. The main communication tool used in the campaigns were leaflets, posters, and meetings. Most of the posters didn't have a unified graphic layout and lacked unifying elements; however, a frequent motif was the return to Europe and the Czechoslovak tricolour (white, red, and blue). At meetings with voters, OF candidates often presented themselves as Václav Havel's running mates, despite the fact that Havel was not running for office.<sup>2</sup> Other political party campaigns were rather unprofessional. KDU-ČSL presented the motto 'You vote for evil if you don't vote' alluding to the loyalty of Communist voters. The rest of the parties also ran campaigns focused mainly against the Communists.

The 1992 elections brought a change in the key political actor as well as a focus on political issues. After the break-up of OF, ODS, led by Václav Klaus, was established, and economic reforms became the main topic of

<sup>1</sup>The slogan referred to the general unpopularity of political parties among citizens because of four decades of one-party rule via the Communist Party.

<sup>2</sup>For example, at his meetings, Václav Klaus (the future prime minister and president of the Czech Republic) was accompanied by a car with a loudspeaker proclaiming, 'If you vote for Klaus, you vote for Havel as well.' Klaus became the surprise of the elections when he gained—thanks to an intensive personal campaign with over one hundred voter meetings, sometimes with up to a hundred thousand people in attendance—the most preference votes.

the elections. Klaus took advantage of knowledge acquired two years before and led an intensive canvassing campaign. Although ODS did not win a majority, they were able to attract every third voter and received significantly more than the Left Bloc (14% of votes), which was composed mainly of the Communists and smaller left-wing parties. It was unacceptable for any governmental to cooperate with the Left Bloc (which was true of the Communist Party as well until 2017), so the election results ensured the comfortable formation of a government coalition of KDU-ČSL and the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA), garnering 6.3% and 5.9% respectively. Overall six parties were represented with 5–7% of votes in these elections.

The first elections to the Czech Republic's Chamber of Deputies, held in 1996, were in the spirit of defending the economic reforms of the ruling parties. The elections were won by ODS and followed by ČSSD, led by Miloš Zeman. The Communist Party, KDU-ČSL, the far-right Republican Party (SPR-RSČ) and ODA also had candidates elected. The slogan of ODS was 'We proved that we can do it', which emphasised the position of the Czech Republic as a country where the transformation from the communist regime was smooth and one of the most successful in the Eastern Bloc. While Klaus, as prime minister, was not able to perform a fully-fledged contact campaign, his challenger Zeman was able to focus one hundred per cent on the campaign. Zeman's spectacular campaign tour across the country was conducted on a bus called Zemák. This element of the campaign, which was imported from Poland and Germany, was new to Czech voters and unrivalled. While we can follow a politician's private life like a soap opera on social media today, the headline grabber in 1996 was Zemák. ČSSD were able to unite the non-communist left, which was reflected in a growth of voter support. Zeman was able to attract their attention not only through his bus but by sharp statements and soundbites to the detriment of the government and ODS. In contrast to the 1990 elections, these elections were characterised by campaigns prepared only by the parties themselves or domestic consultants.

In 1998, an early election took place after the fall of the government, caused mainly by ODS funding scandals. Due to the brief preparation period, the campaigns did not bring any extraordinary or new elements. The main topic of the elections were the ODS scandals, highlighted especially by ČSSD. The Social Democrats continued the campaign style they presented in 1996. The environment affected the ODS strategy, which framed Klaus as a martyr and conceived the campaign as a mobilisation

against the growing left. The word ‘mobilisation’ was even the main slogan of their campaign. However, this goal failed and ČSSD won the election with 32.3 per cent of the votes followed by ODS with 27.4 per cent. Three more parties were elected to the Chamber of Deputies: KSČM, KDU-ČSL, and the Union of Freedom (US), a new party formed by former ODS members; each party receive approx. ten per cent of the votes.

The elections in 2002 were influenced by a non-standard government arrangement from previous years, the so-called ‘Opposition Agreement’ (Kopeček 2015). No government majority rose out of the election, and in the end, the two rivals, ČSSD and ODS, agreed to cooperate. However, it was not a regular coalition government, but a ČSSD minority government supported by the opposition ODS on fundamental issues. Therefore, it was inconceivable for both parties to attack each other as they had before in the 2002 campaigns. The Social Democrats had undergone a personnel change and were being newly led by Vladimír Špidla, who was the polar opposite of Miloš Zeman—a modest, quiet, and inconspicuous introvert. Thus, the ČSSD campaign emphasised issues over personalities, and in the case of politicians, it highlighted regional candidates over the party leader. The Civic Democrats continued to be led by Václav Klaus, which meant it was harder to hide from the past scandals and Opposition Agreement. The drab ODS campaign and party was now grappling with how to handle it. Thus, many candidates conducted an individual campaign visually unconnected to the party line. Some smaller parties<sup>3</sup> merged into the coalition hoping they would be perceived as a major challenger to ČSSD. In the end, the coalition ended in fourth with 14.3%—even KSČM got more votes with 18.5%. For the Communists, this was their best result in the history of the modern Czech Republic. ČSSD won the election with 30.2%, followed by ODS with 24.5% of votes (volby.cz 2002).

The campaigns in 2006 are considered to have been groundbreaking as they were conducted with a considerable degree of professionalisation (Matušková 2006). The campaigns focused more than ever before on manifestos and issues. Compared to previous elections, there was also a clear polarisation of campaigns. This was supported by the media as well, because in many cases, they invited only Mirek Topolánek, who had replaced Václav Klaus as a leader of ODS, and Jiří Paroubek, leader of ČSSD, to the election debates. Foreign political consultants also returned

<sup>3</sup> KDU-ČSL and US-DEU, which arose from a merger of the Union of Freedom and the Democratic Union.

to the Czech Republic. Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) worked on the ČSSD campaign; they identified the main topics of the campaign, formulated slogans, and set the dynamics of the campaign. The backbone of the campaign consisted of opinion polls.<sup>4</sup> The campaign's motto was 'Confidence and Prosperity', and although the overall campaigns were focused on issues, ČSSD's main effort was to embrace the elections as a duel between two probably future premiers—Paroubek being more popular than Topolánek. In addition to this level, the Social Democrats relied on negative advertising, trying to break the position of the Civic Democrats as the immovable favourite of the election. This was supported by posters and billboards with the slogan 'ODS Minus', which referred to the official campaign of the Civic Democrats, 'ODS Plus'. For Paroubek, polls had become content—not only did he use them to formulate the strategy and tactics of the campaign but they also served him as an argument per se in television debates. The ČSSD campaign was centralised, interconnected, visually well prepared, and unified.

The central motto of ODS was 'On the blue path together' accompanied by a tourist trail pointing to the right. Another distinctive element of their campaign were spots directed by the famous Czech director Filip Renč. The spots were conceived as great adventurous movie stories. Clearly, ODS had significantly changed its image and approach to campaigns. It began to analyse voters and examine their demands as well (Matušková 2006). At the end of the campaign, anti-communism played an important role as well as the atmosphere within the society—with the help of the media, there was a feeling that it was crucial to vote. This was reflected in the high turnout, which reached almost 65% (volby.cz 2006). As the supposed winner of the election, ODS succeeded in winning the historically best result of 35.4% of votes, followed by the ČSSD with 32.3%. The Social Democrats had undergone a dramatic development between 2002 and 2006, when its preferences had fallen to 10%. Thus, a gain of almost a third of the votes was a great success for the party.

Even the Communists carried out a more professional campaign, offering two types of billboards: A black and white version introduced the problem, and a colourful version presented the solution. However, this did not prevent KSČM from falling to their usual level of 12.8% of the vote after their success in 2002. Other parties elected to the Chamber of

<sup>4</sup> Among other things, they prompted the main colour of the party to change from yellow to orange.

Deputies were KDU-ČSL—the coalition from the 2002 elections had disintegrated—and the Green Party (SZ).

The 2010 elections were affected by the fall of Mirek Topolánek's government in March 2009. Early elections were to be held in May 2009; however, these were postponed to autumn 2009.<sup>5</sup> Even this date was later cancelled due to the unconstitutional process of proclamation and the unwillingness of ČSSD to make elections happen in another way. Thus, the political parties found themselves conducting involuntary permanent campaigns for almost two years,<sup>6</sup> which resulted in voters and politician fatigue as well as enormous financial costs. Another significant factor influencing the elections was the emergence of a new political party TOP 09, where many members and supporters of KDU-ČSL had moved, and an increase in the national significance of what had until recently only been a Prague local party Public Affairs (VV). TOP 09 presented itself as a centre-right party profiling on economic issues, responsible governance, and halting the country's debt, while VV presented populist subjects with an accent on the revocability of politicians, the passing of general referendum legislation, and a commitment to the end of the 'political dinosaurs', which was their label for the politicians of the time.

In these elections, the Social Democrats also cooperated with PSB; however, this time the agency helped them set the strategy of the campaign at the beginning of 2010—the campaign itself was coordinated by the party. The idiosyncratic nature of Paroubek, who boycotted some media for a short period in the spring of 2010, affected the dynamics of the campaign. The television debates, strongly Paroubek's domain in the 2006 elections, were problematic for him in 2010 when Petr Nečas, Topolánek's successor as a leader of ODS, stood against him. Nečas was labelled 'Mr Clean' in the media, referring to the fact that he was polite and there were no scandals associated with him. This prevented Paroubek from personal attacks and the offensive style of leading debates he was used to with Topolánek. Both parties attacked each other through specialised micro-webpages: 'Blue Disease' attacking ODS, and 'Paroubek Against You' attacking ČSSD. The Civic Democrats' campaign, especially its visuals, was strongly inspired by the British Conservatives. Their main campaign slogans were 'Solving instead of frightening, offered by the

<sup>5</sup> During this period, political advisor from the US Arthur J. Finkelstein cooperated with ODS.

<sup>6</sup> Elections to the regional councils were held in October 2008, so the parties had started campaigning several months before.



party for various areas such as justice, life, the prevention of debt, and so on, and ‘Hope for responsible politics’. For the first time, some parties also systematically communicated on Facebook and other social media. TOP 09 was more proficient at this. Neither ČSSD, with 22.1% of the vote count, nor ODS with 20.2% had been able to fully respond to the economic crisis in Greece and the fear that a similar situation could happen in the Czech Republic. The new parties were able to take advantage of the situation; TOP 09 got 16.7% and VV received 10.9% of the votes. Traditionally, Communists (11.3%) were also represented in the Chamber of Deputies ([volby.cz](http://volby.cz) 2010).

### RECENT TRENDS

Early elections in 2013 were called because of a political crisis caused by police intervention at the Office of the Government due to suspicion the head of this office and Prime Minister Nečas’ future-wife, Jana Nagyová, had influenced the intelligence service. The event resulted in the resignation of the government. The lack of time, the unpreparedness of most of the political parties, and the magnificent rise of the political party ANO, led by the second richest man in the country, Andrej Babiš, were indisputable in the campaign and the election results: the elections were won by ČSSD with 20.5%; however, ANO placed second with 18.7% of the votes. The unpreparedness of the parties was reflected in the absence of strong socio-economic issues that had dominated the elections until then; the campaigns were instead led by calls to end the government coalitions of established parties (Havlík 2014). This was emphasised especially by ANO. Babiš’s political party had unlimited funds and so its campaign had been running since the spring to raise awareness among citizens. As it turned out, this meant a huge advantage when the early elections were called; whereas others had not even started to plan the campaign, ANO had already bought billboards and media. The only thing it had to do was to adjust its slogans to the changed situation. Another advantage was that Babiš owned an approx. thirty per cent share of the media market in the country. A similar narrative to ANO also unfolded for Tomio Okamura’s party, Dawn, adding the accent on direct democracy.

Social media, especially Facebook and YouTube, have become an integral part of all party campaigns. Starting in the 2006 election (especially spots by ODS) and 2010 (by TOP 09), the main boom was in the 2013 when parties started to produce spots for the purpose of being shared on

the Internet. Similarly, populism, which appeared in 2010 with VV, experienced a massive boom in 2013: Opposition to the establishment and fighting corruption as an all-encompassing theme were aspects which attracted voters to ANO and Dawn. Established parties lost in the election; the biggest losses were suffered by ODS and TOP 09—and, paradoxically, even ČSSD, which was in opposition at that time—because of the unpopular government coalition. On the contrary, KDU-ČSL returned to the Chamber of Deputies and the Communists were able to obtain larger support with 14.9 per cent of votes (volby.cz 2013).

Prior to the 2017 elections, several political parties (ODS, ČSSD, TOP 09) innovated their visual style, modernised their logos, and so indicated the beginning of a ‘new era’. These parties tried to convince the public (and party members) that they had changed and drew an imaginary line between the past and the future. Moreover, the election took place under the new legislation described above. Another new situation was also the strength and position of political parties in the campaigns. The biggest rivals in this election were the coalition partners ČSSD and ANO, not the strongest representatives of the ruling coalition and opposition as it had been in previous decades. However, this fight was anything but even. During their four-year cooperation as a government, ANO gradually increased its voters support, whereas ČSSD’s backing trended in the opposite direction. And so, the situation on the Czech political scene seemed to be ‘all against one, and one against all’, where the one was ANO. This was not the only aspect distinguishing ANO from the others. The 2013–2017 period was characterised by a permanent campaign led by ANO setting the agenda for all parties—some of the issues were by design, others by circumstance (the prosecution of Andrej Babiš because of EU fund money fraud, controversial avoidance of the taxation of bonds, and his billions of crowns worth of business in biofuels, all which were tied to Babiš).

Professional social media communication, permanent face-to-face campaigning, and the cooperation of Babiš’s media with his political ambitions were all aspects symptomatic of the period. Professionalisation, personalisation, as well as populist appeals have reached a new level in the Czech Republic. The lithium case<sup>7</sup> was an example of Babiš’s team’s

<sup>7</sup>An affair connected to the lithium mining memorandum. A so-called alternative media outlet Aeronet framed it as a way of bringing profit to ČSSD. Several political parties (ANO, KSČM, and SPD, a new extreme right-wing populist party founded by Tomio Okamura) incorporated the issue into their campaigns and called it ‘daylight robbery’. Lithium dominated not only the political parties’ communication but also their media discourse.

ability to set and control the agenda, and it had a last-minute impact on the campaigns and probably the election results as well. Although not long after the election, the media discovered it was disinformation, the election had already taken place. The results brought nine parties to the Chamber of Deputies. ANO was able to attract almost 30% of the votes, ODS over 11%, newcomers the Pirates and SPD both over 10%, and another five parties (the Communists, ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, TOP 09, and the centrist party STAN, running together with TOP 09 in 2013) received 5–8% of votes.

## CONCLUSION

For two decades, the Czech Republic has been one of the post-communist countries with the most stable party system. However, the last decade has been characterised by a redrawing of the Czech political party map. These shifts also brought new impulses to the political marketing of the country. Many major shifts and changes (social media; permanent campaigning; populism; interconnections among political, economic, and media power; etc.) were associated with new political parties. There is a strong tradition of face-to-face campaigning in the Czech Republic, especially election meetings which have been happening since the early 1990s. On the other hand, door-to-door has not caught on as a regular campaign technique in the country—yet. Despite the massive advent of communication on the Internet and social media, all relevant parties use outdoor advertisements and, of these, mainly billboards (see Table 8.1). Alongside new political entities in the party system, campaigns are being more and more built on personalities, not manifestos. Andrej Babiš (ANO) has been the determining figure of Czech politics for the last five years, and much of the communication of ANO as well as other parties relates to his person. It is a question of how the investigation of his cases will turn out, whether and how it will affect his political career. The unknown is who would replace Babiš—established political parties hardly win their voters back, and ANO does not seem able to generate another leader. This potential situation may provide room for further political newcomers.

**Table 8.1** Evolution of Campaigning in the Czech Republic

<i>Year of election</i>	<i>Electoral system</i>	<i>Basic campaign characteristics</i>	<i>Campaign focus</i>		<i>Main campaign topics</i>		<i>Presence of external advisors</i>	
			<i>Issues</i>	<i>Candidates</i>			<i>Foreign</i>	<i>Domestic</i>
1990 <sup>a</sup>	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5%.	The most visible was OF, other parties rather drab; all against Communists.	Yes	No	Transformation from communism—elections perceived as a referendum on communism.	Yes	No	
1992 <sup>a</sup>	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 7%, 9%, or 11% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	Premodern campaigns, strong position of ODS with vision (dominated campaigns), other parties had significantly smaller support.	Yes	Yes	Socio-economic cleavage, how to deal with necessary reforms.	No	No	
1996	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 7%, 9%, or 11% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	ČSSD grew to the position of the main rival of ODS; sound bites of Zeman (ČSSD) vs. emphasis on politics (ODS).	Yes	Yes	Criticism vs. defence of economic reforms.	No	Yes	

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

<i>Year of election</i>	<i>Electoral system</i>	<i>Basic campaign characteristics</i>	<i>Campaign focus</i>		<i>Main campaign topics</i>		<i>Presence of external advisors</i>
			<i>Issues</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Foreign</i>	<i>Domestic</i>	
1998	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 7%, 9%, or 11% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	Early elections—parties did not have enough time. Campaigns almost the same as in 1996.	Yes	Yes	Scandals of ODS (dubious financing of the party)—personalised in Klaus, criticism of economical reforms.	No	Yes
2002	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 10%, 15% or 20% for coalition of two, three, four and more parties respectively.	Two main rivals were able to form a coalition, strongest support to Communists since 1989, stronger emphasis on meetings with voters face-to-face.	Yes	No	Dissatisfaction with two main parties after their cooperation.	No	Yes
2006	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 10%, 15%, or 20% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	Professionalisation, foreign consultants, emphasis on TV spots (ODS), rise of negativity.	Yes	Yes	New leaders of ČSSD and ODS, ČSSD integrated again after crisis.	Yes	Yes

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

Year of election	Electoral system	Basic campaign characteristics	Campaign focus		Main campaign topics		Presence of external advisors	
			Issues	Candidates	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic
2010	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 10%, 15%, or 20% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	Emergence on new parties, decrease of support for two main parties, permanent campaign (many elections and changing dates of parliamentary election) and, therefore, giant campaign costs and tired voters, populism on the rise.	Yes	Yes	Economic crisis and risk of the 'Greece way'—bankruptcy of the country.	Yes	Yes	
2013	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 10%, 15%, or 20% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	Professional marketing of ANO, celebrities running for offices, another populist party, third-party campaign (reconstruction of the state).	Yes	No	Early election, anti-establishment and anti-corruption appeal, crisis of right-wing parties.	Yes	Yes	
2017	200 seats from party lists. Threshold of 5% for party, 10%, 15%, or 20% for coalition of two, three, and four or more parties respectively.	Babiš (ANO) accused of money fraud—prosecuted, therefore, all campaigns were focused on him; new parties (Pirates and far-right populists)	No	Yes	The main competitors were coalition partners, fragmented opposition.	Yes	Yes	

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

<i>Year of election</i>	<i>Type of communication (ads and media)</i>	<i>Types of campaign activities</i>	<i>Use of polling and research techniques?</i>	<i>Campaign spending limits</i>	<i>Free airtime on public media</i>	<i>Possibility to buy airtime</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1990 <sup>a</sup>	Posters, leaflets.	Canvassing, rallies, spots on Czechoslovakian TV and Czechoslovakian radio (public).	No	No	Yes	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
1992 <sup>a</sup>	Posters, leaflets, billboards, advertisement in the press.	Canvassing, rallies, spots on Czechoslovakian TV and Czechoslovakian radio (public).	No	No	Yes	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
1996	Mainly billboards, posters, leaflets, advertisement in the press.	Canvassing, rallies, bus tour (Zeman—ČSSD), spots on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public).	No	No	14 hours for spots on Česká televize and Czech Radio, plus several debates.	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
1998	Mainly billboards, posters, leaflets, advertisement in the press.	Canvassing, rallies, bus tour (Zeman—ČSSD), spots on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public).	No	No	Yes (the same rules as previous elections)	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
2002	Mainly billboards, posters, leaflets, advertisement in the press.	Canvassing, rallies, concerts, on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public).	Not really	No	Yes (the same rules as previous elections)	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

<i>Year of election</i>	<i>Type of communication (ads and media)</i>	<i>Types of campaign activities</i>	<i>Use of polling and research techniques?</i>	<i>Campaign spending limits</i>	<i>Free airtime on public media</i>	<i>Possibility to buy airtime</i>	<i>Notes</i>
2006	Mainly billboards, posters, leaflets, advertisement in the press, and web pages.	Canvassing, rallies, concerts, on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public).	Yes (mainly ČSSD)	No	Yes (the same rules as previous elections)	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
2010	Mainly billboards, leaflets, advertisement in the press, web pages, and social media.	Canvassing, rallies, concerts, spots on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public) as well as on YouTube.	Yes	No	Yes (the same rules as previous elections)	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
2013	Billboards, leaflets, advertisement in the press, and social media.	Canvassing, rallies, spots on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public service) as well as on YouTube.	Yes	No	Yes (the same rules as previous elections)	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	
2017	Partly billboards, leaflets, advertisement in the press, and social media.	Canvassing, rallies, spots on Česká televize and Czech Radio (public service) as well as on YouTube.	Yes	Yes (90 million CZK)	Yes (the same rules as previous elections)	No for TV or radio. Yes for the press.	

<sup>a</sup>Elections were in Czechoslovakia, not the Czech Republic yet. The information here reflect elections and campaigns to the Czech National Council which represents the predecessor of the Chamber of Deputies, the lower chamber of the Parliament of the Czech Republic



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