

Is the “new” always “new”? Theoretical framework problems of new political parties’ research: The Czech Republic experience¹

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Abstract: *New political parties can be essential holders of party systems’ change. A lot of scholars underline this reality. In fact, it is often not enough only to establish a new political subject. There is a significant relationship between a new party emergence and the subsequent electoral success, which is often an overlooked research dimension. This article intends to focus on the most important features narrowly connected with new political parties’ study approaches. There is no concurrence on what a new political party exactly is. It is possible to find a whole range of high-quality based articles exploring newness in a current or recent state of knowledge. Despite it, this research still has several substantial doubts about this question. Examples of Czech political parties that have been successful in the first-order elections (FOE) and where the problematic aspects of their declared novelty can be traced will be compared here. The evidence of complexity pertaining to this phenomenon is obvious: every political party is new in the moment of its formation in reality, but on the other hand not every political party is new regarding an appropriate theoretical concept. This empirical base shows that declared novelty can be rather more a tool of broader communication and image strategy than a real indisputable party attribute.*

Keywords: *Political Parties, New Political Parties, Newness, Electoral Success, Czech Republic, Party System*

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Introduction

Research on new political parties is a stable part of broader research into political parties. In general, both political parties and party systems are dynamic entities that change over time. New political parties are one – yet not the only one – of the causes of the transformation of party systems.

In the case of these newcomers, due to their electoral success, they can enter the field already occupied by established party formations, thus redrawing the ratios of the national competition. However, sometimes we can see that their role in the party system is marginal. The emergence of new political parties is also often framed in connection with relevant theoretical overlaps towards anti-establishment appeals, anti-party appeals, or populism. Still, there is uncertainty about the precise definition of new actors as well as about how to measure the novelty empirically.

This article is divided into a total of six chapters. The first part of the text seeks to provide a brief outline of the development of analytical concepts and the approach to studying new political parties, complemented by a theoretical debate over the main pitfalls of such an analysis. Despite the methodological issues, the main development trends of the Czech party system from the 1990s to the present are outlined, with an emphasis on the post-2010 development. A significant part of the text is a comparison of parties that could be considered as new from a legislative point of view, concepts of political science no longer, though. The last chapter focuses on a certain summary of the main empirical findings, which are put into context with the relevant theoretical framework.

The primary objective of this text is to provide a comprehensive insight into the issue of the analysis of new party actors in the Czech Republic. The task is to point out the problematic questions of theoretical, but especially the empirical analysis of what is the *new political party* and how to classify these subjects. This case study focuses on the Czech Republic as one of the Central European political party systems, which has undergone significant changes in recent years.

Theoretical aspects of the new political parties' research

The research of new political parties began to be more important in the second half of the 20th century.² Some contributions have become essential for the further development and formation of these concepts, some even crucial (e.g. Kemp 1975; Berrington 1985; Bürklin 1985; Harmel 1985; Harmel – Robertson

2 Its significance is in the 1980s, but relevant texts appeared at least a decade earlier. For a more detailed insight into the current state of knowledge see Šárovec 2016 or 2019a. On wider aspects of the developmental tendencies of parties and party systems cf. e.g. with Luther – Müller-Rommel 2009; Karvonen 2010; Garzia – Marschall 2014; Lachapelle – Maarek 2015; Kosowska-Gąstoł 2017; Morlino – Berg-Schlosser – Badie 2017; Pospíšilová 2017; Sobolewska-Myślik – Kosowska-Gąstoł – Borowiec 2017; Zaslove – Wolinetz, 2017; Emanuele 2018 or Enroth – Hagevi 2018.

1985; Rochon 1985; Harmel – Svåsand 1997; Willey 1998; Hug 2001; Lucardie 2000; Sikk 2005 and 2012; Tavits 2006 and 2008; Selb – Pituctin 2010; Barnea – Rahat 2011; Bolleyer 2012; van Biezen – Rashkova 2014; Beyens – Deschouwer – Lucardie 2016; Engler 2016; Bolleyer – Bytze 2017 and others). Nevertheless, it is true that this is a subset of the broader anchored research of political parties.

It is not only the emergence but also the decline of political parties that is crucial for the development of the party system. However, these are two completely different processes that are subject to a different logic and need to be thoroughly distinguished in this context (see Hug 2000, Bolleyer 2013 or Bakke – Sitter 2015). In particular, it is fundamental that when talking about new political parties and approaches to their analysis, party novelty is an umbrella concept, rather than a variation on a separate party family (Litton 2015: 713). Over time, studies devoted to relevant foreign concepts or studies aimed at developing a self-directed theoretical or empirical basis began to be promoted so that they were able not only to enrich the state of knowledge but also to be a competitive complement to other varieties of theoretical overlaps that put their place in reaction to the empirical reality.

There are essential comparative studies mapping development especially in Western democracies and case studies focusing on particular cases of specific and often successful new political parties; however, there are contributions formulating their own analytical frameworks and theoretical approaches as well (e.g. Mesežnikov – Gyárfášová – Bútorová 2013; Bolin 2014; Arter 2016; Hanley – Sikk 2016; Kosowska-Gąstoł – Sobolewska-Myślik 2017; Krašovec 2017; Marmola 2017; Emanuele – Chiaramonte 2018; Hynčica – Šárovec 2018; Novotný – Šárovec 2018a and 2018 b or Passarelli – Tuorto 2018). The outcomes of the past few years have so far summarised the fact that the new political parties' agenda has its place in the current research.

In general, however, despite a varied range of approaches from different authors, there is no clear agreement on how to define the new political party. Similarly, there is no clear consensus on how this proclaimed novelty can be measured and whether it is rather a difficult conceptually and empirically comprehensible phenomenon (for example Hug 1996, 2000 and 2001; Lucardie 2000; Barnea – Rahat 2011; Hanley 2011; Hino 2012; Sikk 2012; Charvát – Just 2016; Šárovec 2016 and 2019a). Similarly, the theory is oriented both toward the dimension of the political party as a separate entity, as well as on the overall transformation of the party system into a nation-wide dimension, often with appropriate empirical overlaps.

Even in the case of approaches oriented exclusively toward the Czech Republic, it is necessary to reflect a certain delay over the outputs of foreign authors and their contributions from the second half of the 20th century. Even in the outputs which are analysing the Czech Republic, this issue has begun to be gradually promoted (e.g. Hanley 2008, 2011 and 2012; Žuborová 2015; Havlík –

Voda 2016 and 2018; Just – Charvát 2016; Hloušek – Kopeček 2017; Stauber 2017 or Šárovec 2018) on the one hand, in response to the findings of foreign authors. But on the other hand in an adequate response to the transformation of the party system, especially in connection with the success of new political entities that were able to break the existing party cartel (more in Sikk 2005: 397–399).

Theoretical and practical problem(s) of analysis

Although the analysis of the new political parties’ emergence and rise is relatively complex, it faces some theoretical and methodological problems (Hug 2000; Barnea – Rahat 2011 or Šárovec 2019a). One of them is ambiguity in defining the term a new political party. It makes an analysis of the newness as a dichotomous variable much more difficult (more in Barnea – Rahat 2011: 308–311).

In principle, the three main definition approaches can be compared (see Šárovec 2016). These are in part similar and partly different. These approaches are shown and compared in Table 1.

Table 1: New political parties’ definitions

Author(s)	Definition
Simon Hug	New party as a <i>“genuinely new organization that appoints, for the first time, candidates at a general election to the system’s representative assembly.”</i>
Allan Sikk	<i>“(…) they can be defined as parties that are not successors to any previous parliamentary parties, have a novel name and structure, and do not have any important figures from past democratic politics among their major members.”</i>
Shlomit Barnea, Gideon Rahat	<i>“We define a new party as a party that has a new label and that no more than half of its top candidates (top of candidate list or safe districts) originate from a single former party.”</i>

Sources: Hug (2001: 14–15); Sikk (2005: 399) and Barnea – Rahat (2011: 311)

Although Simon Hug and Shlomit Barnea with Gideon Rahat are talking about *new political parties* in their definitions, Allan Sikk introduces a category of *genuinely new political parties*.³ As a result of a comparison of these three approaches, each definition emphasises the different functional criteria that the new entities make up. This makes an analysis of the new political parties much more difficult. On the other hand, this situation reflects the reality typical of the broader and superior research of political parties, as there is a wide variety of approaches to how to accurately characterise the term *political party*. It should

3 All these definitions represent an analytical approach based on newness as a dichotomous variable. The text understands these definitions as every author’s specification of the term a ‘new political party’. It means that the text is not focusing on the differences between a *new political party* and a *genuinely new political party*.

be noted that narrowly-defined research of *new political parties* must naturally suffer from this methodological deficiency as well.

Another issue is the continuity or discontinuity of a particular political subject. It has particular importance in the use of comparative indicators for party systems. However, this dichotomy is also valuable for assessing the novelty, for example, in the cases of splits or mergers in analysing the evolution of the party system as a whole (Birch 2003; Sikk 2005; Bartolini – Mair 2007 and Šárovec 2019a). What is quite fundamental then is the often neglected need to distinguish the process of the political party establishment and its further potential success (see Hug 2000). For the party to be successful, it must first be established. But this step *a priori* does not automatically lead to the electoral success.

In this respect, Paul Lucardie defines several factors directly connected with the success of the new political party. He speaks about “(1) *its political project, which should address problems considered urgent by substantial sections of the electorate*; (2) *its resources: members, money, management and mass media exposure*; and (3) *the political opportunity structure: positions of other relevant parties as well as institutional, socio-economic and cultural conditions*.” (Lucardie 2000: 175). At least from today’s point of view, it is possible to question the phenomenon of members. So-called *memberless party* is a concept of party without formal membership.

Emphasis is placed on such processes as maximizing the centralization of internal decision-making, promoting party unity and enhancing electoral effectiveness (Mazzoleni – Voerman 2017).⁴ This means that today a new political party needs more voters than its members for its potential electoral success. At the same time, on the other hand, it means that, in the event of difficulties⁵, it may be members, sympathizers and volunteers who can help the party to a certain extent (for example Bakke – Sitter 2015 or Cirhan – Stauber 2018).

Methodological questions

This comparative case study utilising qualitative and interpretative approaches is another of the contributions reflecting the effort to undertake the current phenomenon of systematic analysis orderly.

The text analytically moves in the Czech party system, pointing to the specifics of its changes in the context of the successes of the new political parties. The year 2010 is often referred to as an „electoral or political earthquake“ due to the result of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the

4 They are discussing two no-member parties: *the Freedom Party* in the Netherlands and *the Lega dei Ticinesi* in Switzerland.

5 It means, for example, a situation where the party is in danger of not defending its mandates. Another problem could be a lack of funds.

Czech Republic, and is quite crucial (Hanley 2011 or Charvát – Just 2016).⁶ The article sets a goal in the first place to point out the transformation of the party system in the context of the newcomers after the elections of 2010, 2013 and 2017. And, in a direct line, to demonstrate the conflict between the traditional/established/old parties and the new ones.

The analysis works with *novelty* as a dichotomous variable and demonstrates – on the example of the development of the actors considered to be new – the problem of grasping not only the notion of a new political party but also the complexity of the relations between individual actors within the inter-party competition. The question itself remains what exactly constitutes the novelty of a political party. All the more so, what constitutes the novelty of the political party under the conditions of the Czech party system and the relevant institutional constraints. Novelty as a variable can be analysed as a dynamic or dichotomous element. This analysis refers rather to the latter approach to point to more or less visible differences between the new parties. In doing so, it shall take into account, in particular, the context of the origin and further development of the political party concerned.

There are two main research questions. The text seeks to find an answer to the pitfalls of analysing new political parties within the Czech party system when considering novelty as a dichotomous variable. In addition, it is also looking for a solution to the question of how the appeals of novelty differ amongst the analysed political parties. It is intended to bring further insight into the systematic analysis of new political parties not only in the Czech Republic but also in Central Europe with the potential for additional comparative approaches.

Czech party system in terms of its changes

The development of the Czech party system from the early 1990s to the present is described in some expert texts, both in a more complex view of the analysis (e.g. Kunc 2000; Fiala – Strmiska 2001; Pšejka 2005; Deegan-Krause 2006; Szczerbiak – Hanley 2006; Hanley 2008; Bureš et al. 2012; Balík – Hloušek 2016 or Havlík, Voda 2016), or taking into account specific cases, phenomena or theoretical and practical overlaps deemed necessary by the authors (e.g. Voda – Pink 2015; Brunclík – Kubát 2016; Just – Charvát 2016; Perottino 2016; Cabada 2017; Hloušek – Kopeček 2017; Stauber 2017 or Kopeček et al. 2018).

Under traditional approaches (Kunc 2000: 182–226 and Charvát – Just 2016: 35–50), there are two important stages in the development of the party system. There is defined the *re/construction* phase in the years of 1989/1990–1996,

6 The Czech Republic's Chamber of Deputies as a lower chamber of the Parliament (the higher one is the Senate) has 4-year term, 200 seats, 5 % threshold.

when historical parties (e.g. SZ, ODA, ODS)⁷ are created and established as a core of the Czech party system. The second one is a subsequent *stabilization* in 1998–2006, when ODS, ČSSD, KSČM, KDU-ČSL, US and SZ⁸ were important parties within the system. There are discussions among scholars whether it was a turbulent stage or not. There were important breaking points in this era, such as failure of coalition government, the first Czech technocratic cabinet or existence of the Opposition Agreement.⁹

From a further point of view, it is possible to determine the year of 2010 as a significant turning point, often referred to as an electoral or political earthquake (Hanley 2011; Charvát 2014 or Žúborová 2015). The Czech party system was relatively stable until then, but sometimes the concept of *fragile* or *temporary stability* is mentioned (e.g. Linek – Lyons 2013; Charvát 2014 or Deegan-Krause – Haughton 2015).

For the breakthrough stage after 2010, TOP 09 and VV¹⁰ as two new political parties were significantly successful. These two new political parties thus entered the current battle of the hegemons, ČSSD and ODS, which culminated especially between 2006–2010. With the success of a total of five political parties, it was a significant transformation of the nature of political competition into the dimension of the FOE. As Table 2 shows, all the entities, including the two new ones, achieved a score of more than 10% of votes.

7 SZ – Green Party (*Strana zelených*), ODA – Civic Democratic Alliance (*Občanská demokratická aliance*), ODS – Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*).

8 ČSSD – Czech Social Democratic Party (*Česká strana sociálně demokratická*), KSČM – Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (*Komunistická Strana Čech a Moravy*), KDU-ČSL – Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (*Křesťanská a demokratická unie – Československá strana lidová*), US – Freedom Union (*Unie svobody*), SZ – Green Party (*Strana zelených*).

9 Jiří Kunc speaks in more detail about the re/construction of the party system in 1992–1996, 1996–1998 and the situation after the 1998 elections (Kunc 2000: 182–226). In addition, Jakub Charvát offers a more structured view when he speaks of the stages of (1) the first phase of the renaissance of party-political pluralism 1989–1990, (2) the second phase of the renaissance of party-political pluralism 1990–1991, (3) the crystallization of the party-political system 1991–1992, (4) the structure of the party-political system 1992–1996, (5) the balancing of forces and the difficulty of seeking stability 1996–1998, (6) efforts to reconfigure the party-political system 1998–2002 and (7) the stabilization of the party system 2002–2010 (Bureš et al. 2012: 238–347). The issue of the development of the Czech party system before 2010 is not discussed here in more detail because there are quite a lot of other fine and relevant sources. Stanislav Balík and Vít Hloušek talk about three crucial phases: (1) 1992 – 1996/1998 as a phase of extreme and polarized pluralism with functional multipolar logic, (2) 1996/1998 – 2010/2013 as a period of limited pluralism, (3) 2010–2013 as an extreme and polarized pluralism with multipolar logic (Balík, Hloušek 2016: 114).

10 TOP 09 – name derived from *Tradice Odpovědnost Prosperita*, meaning *Tradition Responsibility Prosperity*, VV – Public Affairs (*Věci veřejné*).

Table 2: Elections to the Chamber of Deputies 2010 results

	Votes (in %)	Votes (total)	Mandates (from 200)
ČSSD (social democrats)	22.08	1 155 267	56
ODS (conservative-liberal)	20.22	1 057 792	53
TOP 09 (conservative-liberal)	16.70	873 833	41
KSČM (communist)	11.27	589 765	26
VV (populist, entrepreneurial, direct democracy)	10.88	569 127	24

Source: CZSO 2010

Early elections to the Chamber of Deputies 2013 could be called as a continuation of the electoral earthquake.¹¹ As Table 3 shows, two new political parties – ANO and Dawn – were successful. ANO, even at its premiere attendance, took the second place behind the winning ČSSD. At the same time, TOP 09 kept its position in the Chamber of Deputies. On the contrary, the role of VV was significantly weakened. The number of parties increased from five to seven.

Table 3: Elections to the Chamber of Deputies 2013 results

	Votes (in %)	Votes (total)	Mandates (from 200)
ČSSD (social democrats)	20.45	1 016 829	50
ANO (populist, entrepreneurial, anti-establishment)	18.65	927 240	47
KSČM (communist)	14.91	741 044	33
TOP 09 (conservative-liberal)	11.99	596 357	26
ODS (conservative-liberal)	7.72	384 174	16
Dawn (right-wing populist, direct democracy, entrepreneurial)	6.88	342 339	14
KDU-ČSL (Christian-democratic)	6.78	336 970	14

Source: CZSO 2013

11 The reason for the early elections was the dissolution of the lower house of the Parliament. It happened in the wake of the fall of the government of Petr Nečas /ODS/ (more in Havlík et al. 2014).

From the voter shifts perspective, several specifics were significant. New parties ANO and Dawn did not yet exist in 2010, so it is clear that they had to get voters from other sources. In the case of ANO, it was especially from ODS, TOP 09 and VV, i.e. from the parties of the middle-right part of the political spectrum. The smaller group was then recruited from small parties and of non-voters. The most prominent group for Dawn was former voters of VV, to a lesser extent the voters of other parties and non-voters. Dawn was able to integrate both the right-wing and left-wing voters and to address both former ČSSD voters and former ODS voters (KohoVolit.eu 2013).

Elections to the Chamber of Deputies 2017 have confirmed the fact that new actors can successfully break into the nationwide policy dimension. Looking at Table 4, it is clear that other new players – SPD and PP¹² – were also successful in the FOE arena, and for the first time as a separate entity – STAN.¹³ The representatives of a total of nine political subjects were sitting in the Chamber of Deputies for the first time, which is two more parties than in the previous elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 2013. Thus, the situation of the highest degree of party fragmentation in the history of the Czech Republic has occurred.

Table 4: Elections to the Chamber of Deputies 2017 results

	Votes (in %)	Votes (total)	Mandates (from 200)
ANO (populist, entrepreneurial, anti-establishment)	29.64	1 500 113	78
ODS (conservative-liberal)	11.32	572 962	25
Pirates (direct democracy, copyright, transparency)	10.79	546 393	22
SPD (right-wing populist, direct democracy, entrepreneurial)	10.64	538 574	22
KSČM (communist)	7.76	393 100	15
ČSSD (social democrats)	7.27	368 347	15
KDU-ČSL (Christian-democratic)	5.80	293 643	10
TOP 09 (conservative-liberal)	5.31	268 811	7
STAN (local politics, liberal conservatism)	5.18	262 157	6

Source: CZSO 2017

12 SPD – Freedom and Direct Democracy – Tomio Okamura (*Svoboda a přímá demokracie – Tomio Okamura*) – do not confuse with the German SPD party. PP – Czech Pirate Party (*Česká pirátská strana*).

13 STAN – Mayors and Independents (*Starostové a nezávislí*).

The elections of 2017 also brought crucial voter shifts. ANO gained a significant part of the votes on the left, drawing away more than one-third of ČSSD votes, integrating former KSČM voters and, to a similar extent, the votes of the non-voters. Small gains were recorded in the transfer of votes from Dawn, ODS, KDU-ČSL and non-parliamentary parties. SPD is seen as the successor to Dawn¹⁴, and thus it can be said that its voters have been integrating from the ranks of the former non-voters and, to the same extent, from the former KSČM voters, fewer than former ČSSD, ANO and non-parliamentary parties. As far as PP is concerned, they have won over 400,000 new votes, almost as many as ANO. Like ODS, a large number of voters were gained from TOP 09, many voters were won from a group of former non-voters, as well as other parties, especially the Greens. To a lesser extent, former ODS and ANO voters were won. STAN mainly scored because of votes from former non-voters, but also from the votes of former TOP 09 voters with whom the entity formed a joint candidate list. To a lesser extent, the voters were also gained from ANO (Hlidacipes.org 2017).

The new political parties in the FOE dimension were able to fulfil not only the necessity to generate and mobilise resources to maintain their functioning but they also gained electoral support to compete with the established or existing political parties within the party system as a whole. However, from the point of view of theoretical and empirical research of new political parties, it is essential to focus on the question of whether or not all political parties can be considered new and to find a justification why it is so.

New and „new“ parties

Given the entities mentioned above that first appeared in the Chamber of Deputies and can, therefore, be described as new parties in the Chamber of Deputies, attention will be focused on TOP 09, Public Affairs (VV), ANO 2011 (ANO), Dawn of Direct Democracy (Dawn), Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD), Czech Pirate Party (PP) and STAN.¹⁵ Specific subjects are Liberal Democracy (LIDEM), Political movement PRO 2016 (PRO2016) and Moravian and Silesian Pirate Party (MS Piráti).¹⁶

In the case of the success of these political formations, the designation as new political parties has often appeared. Not in all cases, however, it would be possible to agree with this indication without reservation. As noted in the

14 See the next part of the text.

15 These cases should be brought into context with the approach of Lubomír Kopeček and Petra Svačinová (2017: 134–135), who distinguish three generations of Czech political parties: the first generation is represented by KDU-ČSL and KSČM for their long history of continuity, the second generation are ČSSD and ODS as important parties in the 90's and new entrepreneurial and anti-establishment parties ANO and Dawn can be described as the third generation. TOP 09 party is classified as a specific case between the second and third generations.

16 Other parts of the text will explain what their specificity is.

introductory sections of this text, the theoretical anchorage of this issue itself brings many difficulties, as is the case with a comparative insight into individual empirical cases.

In the context of the development of the possible discontinuity or continuity of the Czech party system, it is necessary to distinguish whether the political formations in question are entities that are entirely new, or whether they are the continuing parties from the era of previous party or political systems (see Bureš et al. 2012: 234). In the case of the entities that have been created as genuinely new within the development stages of the Czech party system after 1993, it is necessary to focus on the fact whether the existence of these entities was preceded by any previous activity, which resulted in their separate establishment.

Table 5 compares the aforementioned political parties with a total of six indicators, which will make it possible to further analyse the problematic aspects of the novelty of these entities: it is (a) the year of their establishment; (b) the year of their first participation in the FOE; (c) the years of their participation in the Chamber of Deputies; (d) the years of their participation in government; (e) a form of registration¹⁷ and (f) activity.

Table 5: New political parties after the “electoral earthquake” from 2010 to 2017

Party	Founded	1 st FOE	In Chamber of Deputies	In government	P/M	Active
VV	2002 ¹⁸	2010	2010	2010–2012 ¹⁹	P	not
STAN	2009 ²⁰	2010 ²¹	2010 ²² , 2013 ²³ , 2017	2010–2013 ²⁴	M	yes
PP	2009	2010	2017	never	P	yes

(continue)

17 It means if the subject is registered as a *party* or a *movement*. In fact, this is only a formal thing. See below.

18 The origins lie in 2001, but formally the party was created in 2002 as a local political party in Prague 1 (Spáček 2013: 129; Havlík – Hloušek 2014: 556; Šárovce 2016: 20).

19 Subsequently, there was an internal split and the creation of the LIDEM party (see Spáček 2013: 142; Havlík – Hloušek 2014: 564–565 and the next part of the text).

20 There were Independent Mayors for the Region (NSK), founded on 19 August 2004, operating mainly in the Zlín Region. The STAN movement was formed by the transformation of this entity on 24 February 2009 and began to operate nationwide (MVCR.cz 2019; Psp.cz 2019).

21 STAN cooperated with TOP 09. Both parties began to work together in 2009, when the TOP 09 party was established, which provided a joint candidate list for parliamentary elections with the support of STAN. Candidates of both groups were also on one candidate list for parliamentary elections in 2013 (TOP09.cz 2017). For the elections of 2017 both subjects were running for mandates separately.

22 With TOP 09 (more in Spáček 2013: 135–138).

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

Party	Founded	1 st FOE	In Chamber of Deputies	In government	P/M	Active
TOP 09	2009	2010	2010, 2013, 2017	2010–2013	P	yes
ANO	2012	2013	2013, 2017	2013–2017, 2017–present	M	yes
LIDEM	2012	never ²⁵	2012 ²⁶	2012–2013	P	not
Dawn	2013	2013	2013	never	M	not
SPD	2015	2017	2017	never	M	yes
PRO2016	2016	never	never	never	M	yes
MS Piráti	2018	never	never	never	P	yes

Source: own elaboration

Individual political entities are ranked according to the year of their creation. It is evident that, although the subjects were talking about their novelty, it is necessary to underline the fact that they were *new subjects in the Chamber of Deputies* when they entered the lower chamber of the Parliament. In practice, it means that VV and STAN had to wait eight and six years²⁷ for their first participation in the FOE since their formal founding. Also, they were equally successful.²⁸ In this respect, it is particularly difficult for the political party, especially from a financial and organisational point of view, to survive this period. The advantage of both VV and STAN was that both were local subjects that did not initially participate in the FOE dimension nor did they participate in this election contest.²⁹

From this point of view, it is possible to compare VV and PP. The Pirates had to wait for a total of eight years since their establishment, not for their premiere participation in the FOE, but their premiere earnings of the Chamber of Deputies mandate. Even in this case, such a situation creates intense pressure

25 LIDEM never participated in the election. On April 13, 2014, the subject was renamed to VIZE 2014, from 11 June 2015, the party was called the Order of the Nation, and since 24 January 2017, it has been called the Order of the Nation – Patriotic Union (MVCR.cz 2019). The party has undergone both program and personal transformation.

26 The founder was a group of politicians from VV for which they were originally elected to the Chamber of Deputies but did not agree with the internal development. The party originated with the departure of Karolína Peake and part of other politicians from VV. Their disagreement with the politics justified the separation VV advocated against its coalition partners. VV later left the coalition government and went into opposition, LIDEM remained part of the government coalition with ODS and TOP 09 (Lidovsky.cz 2012).

27 There can be also said, that it was only one year (because of transformation in 2009).

28 STAN because of cooperation with TOP 09.

29 Changes have occurred during their existence. For both subjects, there has been a shift from local entities to a nation-wide party.

on the party's background. However, the Pirates traditionally build on a strong volunteer base that does not put such high demands on the financial aspects of the operation of a political party as an organisation (see Šárovec 2019 b). Another similarity with VV lies in their only participation in the Chamber of Deputies so far, although unlike VV it was not governmental. The Pirates can still expand their involvement in the future, while VV no longer can.

At first glance, a coherent group, at least for a relatively short period since its founding into the FOE, is TOP 09, ANO, Dawn and SPD. All these entities, after their establishment, waited for a premiere attendance for a maximum of two years. From a political marketing view, their advantage was that the so-called introducing campaign could very loosely establish a strong campaign before the important elections to the Chamber of Deputies. The advantage of TOP 09 and SPD was that they formally formed as two new entities. They are split-off parties – TOP 09 was established thanks to the departure of several important representatives of KDU-ČSL, including the former party chairman and MP Miroslav Kalousek.³⁰ SPD was again a new project of the former founder and chairman of Dawn, entrepreneur Tomio Okamura (comp. Spáč 2013 and Šárovec 2016). Similarly, in the case of PRO2016, this is a subject separated from ANO. The motivation for this step was the dissatisfaction of members with the current leadership and direction of the movement (Šárovec 2017).

TOP 09, SPD, PRO2016 and MS Pirates can best be compared with the LIDEM subject, which can also be regarded as „new from split“ parties. However, if TOP 09 and SPD were emerging as new parties outside the government, LIDEM was the product of the internal division of VV in their participation in the coalition with ODS and TOP 09 between 2010–2013. In 2012, after a protracted government crisis, there was tension within the party, which led to the departure of the then deputy prime minister, VV vice-chairman and VV MP Karolína Peake (comp. Spáč 2013 and Havlík – Hloušek 2014). It led to the establishment of a new LIDEM platform, under which several MPs elected for VV were transferred.³¹ PRO2016, though, emerged as a breakaway government party, but it stood out of top politics. MS Pirates also appeared as a protest against PP policy, but just like PRO2016 it is a completely marginal party (Šárovec 2019 b).

On the other hand, the existence of ANO and Dawn would be problematic within the dimension of analysing the novelty of these subjects. These entities also emerged as formally new. In the case of Dawn, however, it was a personal motivation of Tomio Okamura, who as a former senator and entrepreneur was famous in the media.³² ANO was created in connection with the initiative „Ac-

30 Miroslav Kalousek was a chairman of KDU-ČSL from 2003 to 2006.

31 This explains the potential ambiguity of Table 6, which, in the case of LIDEM, points to the absence of this party in the election, which may not make sense at first glance.

32 He was also an eliminated candidate from the first direct presidential election in the Czech Republic in 2013.

tion of Dissatisfied Citizens“ initiated by entrepreneur Andrej Babiš in autumn 2011 (Kopeček 2016; Cířhan – Kopecký 2017; Hájek 2017; Brunnerová 2018; Buřtíková – Guasti 2018; Šárovec 2018 or Havlík 2019).³³

The comparison, as in the previous chapter, shows that VV, STAN, PP, TOP 09, ANO, LIDEM, Dawn and SPD were represented at least once in the Chamber of Deputies.³⁴ The highest number of involvement in the Chamber of Deputies was reached by TOP 09 and STAN. Every time since its establishment and its premiere participation in the government ANO was successful. VV, LIDEM and Dawn were able to appear during only one election period. PP and SPD may theoretically increase their participation in the next election, just like all other still active parties.

Indeed, the activity of the subjects is also one of the monitored indicators. Of the analysed cases, a total of three parties are no longer active today. In fact, after the split-off the LIDEM entity, VVs were quite personally and organizationally unstable, and they were no longer candidates for election to the Chamber of Deputies in 2013. In 2015, the party turned into a club, and *de facto* disappeared. The LIDEM party underwent a significant change in 2014 as it was renamed to VIZE 2014 and one year later it was further transformed into the Order of the Nation.^{35,36} Currently, the national conservative movement is called the Order of the Nation – Patriotic Union (MVCR.cz 2019). The whole project has been so much changed programmatically and personally, and from today's point of view, it is a different party. Therefore, the original LIDEM party is considered to be a non-existing subject.

Similarly, the Dawn of Direct Democracy can be characterized. The former chairman and founder Tomio Okamura and the second most important figure, Radim Fiala, left it and founded the new Freedom and Direct Democracy movement. The original Dawn remained on its foundations, but in 2015 there was a significant modification of the whole entity – it changed its name to Dawn-National Coalition and began to focus more on national and anti-immigration themes. At the end of 2017, the party voted to transform into a club. It also happened in 2018, and the party became formally extinct (MVCR.cz 2019). Although

33 At least in the case of ANO, it is possible to talk about moving from a potential new party to a new political party as defined by Simon Hug (2000: 14–15). The ANO 2011 movement itself, although formally registered as a political movement in 2012, refers to this original ideological beginning.

34 It was after participation in the FOE for all entities except LIDEM.

35 For the party, it meant changing the form from a political party to a movement, changing the name to the Order of the Nation and, above all, changing the political path of the original party from a liberal right-centred approach to the direction of conservative nationalism (MVCR.cz 2019).

36 In May 2016, the movement gained parliamentary representation when Karel Fiedler, elected in 2013 to the Chamber of Deputies for Dawn, announced the transition to the Order of the Nation and the subsequent departure from the MP's club of Dawn. Chairman Josef Zickler said that his movement is also seeking to get other MPs. Karel Fiedler then left the movement again (Tyden.cz 2016).

the other five entities have undergone dynamic development, they still exist as more or less coherent components of the Czech party system.

Apart from the participation of the parties in the Chamber of Deputies, it is also essential to focus on their involvement in the government. Interestingly, the STAN movement was in government due to its co-operation with TOP 09. The LIDEM party was even a governmental entity without first taking part in the election, which is paradoxical in the free and democratic competition of political parties. Probably the most successful new party is ANO, which ranked second in its first FOE and was an important part of the coalition government alongside ČSSD and KDU-ČSL in 2013–2017. During its second participation in the FOE, it even won with great difficulty and assembled a minority government with ČSSD after complicated negotiations.³⁷

One more crucial aspect is to be mentioned. It is the registration format of the entities. At first glance, this is not a very important thing, but it is a significant element in the Czech conditions for the image and self-identity of the subjects in question. Act No. 424/1991 Coll. on association in political parties and political movements explicitly speaks about parties and movements, but does not directly define what is meant by these notions. It implies that formally a new political subject can be registered as a party or as a movement, but, from a legislative point of view, they are both subject to identical rules.³⁸ The movement, however, is seen as a less institutionalised form of a political party from a social sciences point of view, which was mainly used by ANO and Dawn and/or SPD in the past for their marketing image. These subjects have thus tried to emphasise their role as a broadly anti-establishment oriented alternative to traditional and established political subjects (Šárovec 2018; comp. Svačinová 2016 or Naxera 2018).³⁹ On the other hand, it should be noted that the form of registration as a movement is also used by STAN; however, it is not using similar appeals as the two subjects mentioned above.⁴⁰

As illustrated in Table 6, it can be said from the cross-sectional view of the participation and success of the analysed entities that most of the parties did not participate in the elections earlier than in 2010⁴¹.

37 However, this government is tolerated by KSČM on the basis of the signed agreement, which is the first time in the history of the independent Czech Republic (see Kscm.cz 2018).

38 Even taking into account this fact, the text perceives the concepts of the party and the movement as synonymous.

39 In their appeals, elements of anti-party sentiment appeared.

40 It is rather interesting to relate this level of analysis to its former collaboration with TOP 09, which, on the contrary, uses the form of registration as a political party.

41 The table highlights the highest electoral results that the analysed parties have reached in their history.

Table 6: Analysed new political parties' electoral performance 2002–2017 (results in %)⁴²

	2002	2006	2010	2013	2017
VV	not participated	not participated	10.88	not participated	not participated
STAN	not established	not established ⁴³	<i>with TOP 09</i>	<i>with TOP 09</i>	5.18
PP	not established	not established	0.80	2.66	10.79
TOP 09	not established	not established	16.70	11.99	5.31
ANO	not established	not established	not established	18.65	29.64
LIDEM	not established	not established	not established	not participated	not participated ⁴⁴
Dawn	not established	not established	not established	6.88	not participated
SPD	not established	not established	not established	not established	10.64
PRO2016	not established	not established	not established	not established	not participated
MS Piráti	not established	not established	not established	not established	not established

Source: CZSO 2002, 2006, 2010, 2013 and 2017

The year 2010 shows the visible success of TOP 09 and VV, but the very low electoral gain of PP. In 2013, when TOP 09 continued, ANO and Dawn came, but PP again failed to get more than five percent. In 2017, TOP 09 even exceeded this limit for the third time, but only very tightly, which showed its lowest election gain ever. On the contrary, for the first time, STAN achieved its success. In the same election, ANO achieved its best electoral gain. Similarly, SPD reached the best result within its first electoral appearance. PP became one of the most successful pirate parties at all, thanks to a gain similar to that of SPD.⁴⁵ The other small new parties PRO2016 and MS Pirates were insignificant compared to other players.

⁴² The table highlights the highest electoral results that the analysed parties have reached in their history.

⁴³ There were Independent Mayors for the Region (NSK), founded on 19 August 2004, operating mainly in the Zlín Region. The STAN movement was formed by the transformation of this entity on 24 February 2009 and began to operate nationwide (MVCR.cz 2019; Psp.cz 2019).

⁴⁴ As explained above, LIDEM significantly changed and it did not exist in 2017 in its original form. Party of the Nation – The Patriotic Union took part in the election and received 0.17% of votes (CZSO 2017).

⁴⁵ For more on this topic see e.g. Hartleb 2013; Jääsari – Hildén 2015; Zulianello 2018 or Šárovec 2019 b.

What is the newness of the Czech political parties like?

The background to the research on new political parties coincides with the fact that novelty is often not apparent either conceptually or empirically. Usually, there are many other associated phenomena such as beginnings, other affiliated appeals, and extra-parliamentary status (see Hanley 2011: 132; Šárovec 2016). It is the conclusion that is repeatedly confirmed in the analysis of the new parties that have been successful since 2010, as well as split-off formations.

At the same time, each political party is new at the moment of its creation (i.e. from a formal and legislative point of view), but not every political party is new in terms of its organization, programmatic, personal background or brand (comp. Kim – Solt 2017) (from the point of view of political science, or, more broadly, social sciences). It is the subject of many authors (for all see Sikk 2005: 397; Barnea – Rahat 2011; Šárovec 2016 and 2018).

A fundamental, unresolved and, in essence, an unsolvable matter is the mismatch within the definition of how to understand a new political party. In the case of newcomers within the Czech party system, it is possible to reliably identify the circumstances of the emergence of these new parties. However, the individual dimensions of further development are undergoing gradual dynamic development, which of course also affects the novelty of these parties. Table 7 summarises the circumstances of the emergence of the subjects compared in this article.

Table 7: New parties in terms of their ‘newness’

Party	Main characteristics of the emergence
VV	A transformation from the formerly new local political party into a party with a nationwide scope
STAN	The emergence by transformation from an existing new local entity Independent Mayors for the Region (NSK)
PP	A new political party based on Pirate Party Sweden’s roots, or the case of The Pirate Bay
TOP 09	Split-off from KDU-ČSL in response to the tension within the party
ANO	Established following the previous initiative of the founder and chairman Andrej Babiš
LIDEM	Split-off from VV in response to the tension within the party
Dawn	Established following the previous initiative of the founder and chairman Tomio Okamura
SPD	Split-off from Dawn in response to the tension within the party
PRO2016	Split-off from ANO in response to a disagreement over the party’s policy
MS Piráti	Split-off from PP in response to a disagreement over the party’s policy

Source: own elaboration

Each of these parties was, at the time of its creation, a new party within the Czech party system. The parties successful in FOE were then new parties to the Chamber of Deputies at the time of their breakthrough. Other partial characteristics analysing the circumstances of the emergence of these parties, their possible predecessors or followers, however, do not lead to uncontested conclusions.

If the analysis returns to the original theoretical anchorage and the definition of novelty as a dichotomous variable, then it is clear that the specific delimitation of given empirical cases in some characteristics may correspond more, while in some others less. However, empirical reality is much more complex than a strict and technical definition of what the new political party is or is not. Thus, the approach to the analysis of novelty in a dichotomic sense appears to be inappropriate for analysing the appeals of the new political parties within the Czech party system.⁴⁶

As can be seen from the comparison, although each of the entities had to formally comply with the legal conditions and be based on a more in-depth analysis, it turns out that pure novelty is questionable in these subjects in some moments. A widespread phenomenon is the transformation of the original project, or the phenomenon of the excluded entities, which to a different extent adopts the personal, organisational, ideological, marketing or financial aspects of the original parties.

At the same time, it is clear that the guarantee of success is *a priori* not just the founding of the party itself, but also the success of the electoral process. A specific problem is a need for resources (cf. Roberts 2018). In the case of split-off formations that also take over part of the background of the original party, it can be said that there is a more significant advantage compared to the parties that do not have this benefit and are created „on a greenfield site“ without the possibility of such external support or know-how.

Conclusion

The critical issue of the analysis is the fragmentation of individual approaches to analysing the novelty of political parties. To a certain extent, research into the „newcomers“ makes it difficult. Additionally, it is also possible to show on the empirical case of the Czech party system that more efficient methods of analysis can be chosen.

Nevertheless, it would be unwise to make the novelty as a dichotomous variable entirely refused. However, the practice in the Czech case shows that it is clear that the same party would meet one definition criterion of novelty, but

⁴⁶ Compare to the approach of Beata Kosowska-Gąstoł and Katarzyna Sobolewska-Myślik (2019) in this issue of the journal, which analyses new political parties in the Polish party system through the lens of novelty as a dynamic variable.

not another one. Therefore, it is advisable to focus on the individual empirical nuances of the investigated subjects with the aim of pointing out and comparing them with other newcomers. Only through this it will be possible to debate these aptitudes of novelty by empirical reality and the inclusion of particular specifics. When analysing new political parties, it is also necessary to take into account the conditions and historical specifics of each region under study. In terms of the distinction between real and declared novelty, an essential element of self-identity is constructed through political marketing or targeted anti-establishment or anti-party appeals. History and practice still prove that the first success is not a guarantee of stabilisation of the party within the system, nor a guarantee of its further successful institutionalisation.

In a systematic analysis, case studies or comparative studies of qualitative and quantitative nature need to be continued in the future. The new political parties are still a current phenomenon within party systems. And no matter what the variations will be for genuinely new parties, new parties or pseudo-new parties, these new actors will always be a significant empirical object for further exploration.

List of abbreviations

ANO – ANO 2011 (name derived from *Akce nespokojených občanů*, meaning *Action of Dissatisfied Citizens*)

ČSSD – Czech Social Democratic Party (*Česká strana sociálně demokratická*)

Dawn – Dawn of Direct Democracy (*Úsvit přímé demokracie*)

FOE – first-order elections

KDU-ČSL – Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (*Křesťanská a demokratická unie – Československá strana lidová*)

KSČM – Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (*Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy*)

LIDEM – Liberal Democracy (*Liberální demokracie*)

MS Pirāti – Moravian and Silesian Pirate Party (*Moravská a Slezská pirátská strana*)

ODA – Civic Democratic Alliance (*Občanská demokratická aliance*)

ODS – Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*)

PP – Czech Pirate Party (*Česká pirátská strana*)

PRO2016 – Political movement PRO 2016 (*Politické hnutí PRO 2016*)

SPD – Freedom and Direct Democracy – Tomio Okamura (*Svoboda a přímá demokracie – Tomio Okamura*)

STAN – Mayors and Independents (*Starostové a nezávislí*)

SZ – Green Party (*Strana zelených*)

TOP 09 – TOP 09 (name derived from *Tradice Odpovědnost Prosperita*, meaning *Tradition Responsibility Prosperity*)

US – Freedom Union (*Unie svobody*)

VV – Public Affairs (*Věci veřejné*)

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