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Challenging Trends within Slovak Party System in the Context of 2016 Elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic[1]

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Abstract: *The 2016 Elections to the National Council in Slovakia are considered a political earthquake. Social Democrats lost 34 out of 83 seats, the Euro sceptic party SaS almost doubled its representation, the nationalistic Slovak National Party returned to the Parliament with 15 seats and three „newcomers" entered the Parliament: the (neo) fascist Kotleba – ĽSNS, conservative We are Family (SME RODINA – Boris Kollár) and centrist #Network (#Sieť). Changes in composition raised questions about party system institutionalization and opened a debate about challenging trends within the Slovak party system including fragmentation, aggregation, high volatility, anti-systemness or alternation. Moreover, it again opened the issue of party newness and consolidation. This article deals with current trends in the context of the 2016 elections and tries to examine the current state of the Slovak Party system.*

Keywords: ***Party system, Slovakia, Institutionalization, Consolidation, 2016 Elections, Fragmentation***

1 This article has been created under the scheme of the grant VEGA 1/0339/17: comparing the dynamism of institutional consolidation of far-right wing parties and movements in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The author would like to thank Mgr. Jakub Bardovič, Ph.D., PhDr. Marek Hrušovský and Mgr. Michal Garaj, Ph.D. for various consultations on the topic, which has hopefully contributed to the quality of this text.

Introduction

Unlike western democracies, political regimes in Central and Eastern Europe experienced a unique transformation of its political institutions after the fall of Communism. While these countries slowly approached democratic consolidation, new political parties emerged and started to play important role within the political system. Yet this process was slightly different in each country due to the variety of factors involved in this complex process. This article may be considered a case study dealing with institutional consolidation of the Slovak party system with a special focus on challenging trends. Trends are observed from the time Slovakia gained its independence in 1993 to the 2016 parliamentary elections, which are considered a political earthquake due to the loss of incumbent parties and the entrance of new parties.

The main aim of this article is to reveal and analyse ongoing trends within the Slovak party system and put them in the context of the 2016 general elections to the National Council. There is a principal research question whether the elections of 2016 established a completely new, less predictable period in the Slovak party system or whether this denotes a shift back to an already known set within the party system. In order to answer this question it is necessary to find the answer on several partial questions related to party system fragmentation, aggregation, the effective number of political parties or consolidation in relation to party 'newness'. This is possible only by analysing indexes that help characterize the Slovak party system. To what extent is the Slovak party system fragmented? What is the level of aggregation and the effective number of parties? How 'new' are the new political parties and do they contribute to the destabilization of the party system? The response to these questions in the context of the 2016 elections helps us understand the state of the Slovak party system. The main claim of this article is that the Slovak party system became less predictable after the 2016 elections, while it continues in strengthening its institutionalization.

For the purposes of this analysis, the structure of the article has been set up as follows. The first chapter deals with the concept of party system institutionalization or consolidation. It introduces a theory about party system consolidation and identifies key variables usually measured in order to determine how institutionalized the party system is. The chapter also presents some challenges in measuring institutionalization of party systems. The second and third chapters are empirical in their nature. The second chapter calculates selected indexes (Rae's index of party system fragmentation, Laakso-Taagepera's index of effective number of parties, Mayer's index of aggregation and Pedersen's index of total volatility). The third chapter deals with the challenging trends by analysing other variables, including the number of new political parties and their share, the age of the political parties or personal consolidation of the institution.

Surprisingly, there are only a few authors dealing with Slovak party system-institutionalization or consolidation. The contribution by Radoslav Štefančík (2012) is very valuable as he deals with the 2012 elections in the context of party system institutionalization. Štefančík uses the criteria defined by Basedau, Stroh and Erdmann (2006) and discusses institutionalization in four dimensions: position of the parties within society, party autonomy, organizational level and coherence (Štefančík 2012: 251). As pointed out by Štefančík, the Slovak party system was insufficiently institutionalized and there were limits in all four dimensions (Štefančík 2012: 266). Similarly, an important study has been done by Jozef Stískala (2012) who focused on stability and calculated several indexes (using concepts by Sarah Birch, Maurice Pedersen, Richard Rose or Neil Munro) in relation to the 2010 and 2012 elections. He discovered that the elections of 2010 and 2012 were not turning points in the case of volatility but after 2012 there was an especially new liberal entity which changed the political arena (Stískala 2012: 238). Trends have also been observed within the party system.

Several trends were presented by Petr Just and Jakub Charvát (2018) who focused on the 2016 elections in the context of the concept of 'critical elections', as well as on the effective number of parties, voting volatility, and classification of political parties according to their life cycle (Just – Charvát 2018: 38). Both authors also refer to certain inconsistencies in existing literature about the dynamics of the Slovak party system. They point out that Jakub Šedo (2007: 132) considered the system as 'relatively unstable', while on the contrary Ladislav Cabada, Vít Hloušek and Petr Jurek (2013: 88) considered the system 'relatively highly stable'. Both authors also pointed out that after 2002 there was a change in cleavages and thus it is likely that the Slovak party system entered a new phase (Just – Charvát 2018: 38). Dušan Leška characterized the system as multi-party though with a dominant party, which succeeded in gaining the support of voters and benefit from the socio-economic cleavage that emerged after the definite fall of Mečiarism[2] (see Leška 2013: 85). Petr Just and Jakub Charvát conclude that in many aspects the 2016 elections were critical for the Slovak party system. This article develops other aspects important for analysing party systems and extends the perspective as Just and Charvát focused on within the Slovak party system from 2012 onwards. Moreover, it will be later shown that in some characteristics the 2016 elections shifted the Slovak party system back in time to 2002 without, however, positive expectations for the future.

2 Within the Slovak community of political scientists the term 'Mečiarism' is often criticized as a journalistic concept. The core of the argument is that –isms are linked to some official ideology which was absent during Mečiar's years in the office of Prime Minister.

Measuring institutionalization of the party system

There is extensive research in the political science dealing with the institutionalization as institutions are considered to be relevant actors for decades. A special sub-category of research dedicated to political institutions is one related to party systems or political parties. It is important to note that there are various concepts and approaches which make the study of political parties and party systems a real challenge. There are three key challenges:

First, the word 'institutionalization' is sometimes confused with 'consolidation'. In general, institutionalization refers to institutional establishment of a convention or norm, while consolidation may be described as a process of making a subject stronger, more solid or stable'. For example, as claimed by Alefe Abeje (2013: 316) '*institutionalization of a party system is indispensable for the success of democratic consolidation*'. However, party institutionalization does not constitute a sufficient condition for consolidation of democracy (Yardimci-Geyikçi 2015). Some political scientists talk about party system consolidation. For example, in his study of Central European party systems David M. Olsen (1998) talks about the beginning signs of consolidation of the party systems for which aggregate measures serve as an indicator, with special reference to effective number of parties (Olsen 1998: 463). Next to the 'institutionalization' or 'consolidation', there are other terms related to a party system. For example, Michal Klíma (1998) in relation to the Czech Republic observed several phases of transition from the single-party state system to a pluralist party system including 'anti-party sentiment and proliferation of Parties', he wrote also about 'emergence and crystallization', 'formation and consolidation' and 'stabilization' (Klíma 1998: 493). In other words, there are many terms with lack of clarity.

Second, while some researchers link institutionalization of the party system with political parties altogether (for example Michelle Kuenzi and Gina M. S. Lambright (2001), who deal with African countries or Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully (1995), who deal with Latin American parties) many researchers separate institutionalization of political parties from the institutionalization of the party system. This implies that there are two levels: the level of individual political parties and the level of the party system. The question is whether political parties with a low level of institutionalization may create an institutionalized system or the opposite: if the system may be institutionalized while some of the parties are not? It is logical to expect that a fragile political party with a low level of institutionalization is affecting the level of party system institutionalization.

Third, many researchers neglect the fact that a party system also operates within a certain environment (*polity*). Thus, there is a third level of political institution (or body) in which the party system operates: the parliament. The level of party system institutionalization directly affects the effectiveness and functions of the parliament, which has implications for the behaviour of the

parties. In other words, all three levels (party, party system and political institution) are linked and mutually dependent.

In this article, the term 'institutionalization' is understood similarly to the definition provided by Samuel Huntington who defined it as a *'process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability'* (Huntington 1968: 12). In this case, the value and stability of political parties is dealt with. The value of the political party may be defined by its power expressed by popular support, number of seats in the political body or simply just by its presence or existence. However, next to the measurable and empirical variables the value of the political parties may be influenced by personal attitudes and expectations. In other words, next to the institutionalist approach to measure power, there is also relevance of power understood through the constructivist perspective. Then there is the issue of stability. Again, the question is *what* stability? Is it stability of the party system as such, stability of its individual parts or stability of the political body in which the party system exists and operates? As all three levels are related and mutually dependent, it is worth it to focus on all three levels. Political institutions can rarely work without a stable party system[3] and a party system cannot work without stable parties. In other words, a stable party system is such a system in which parties remain present, they do not dramatically change their position towards other parties and there is predictability about their behaviour. This means that stability is linked to the value as a dramatic increase of the value by one or more parties may lead to change of party position towards other parties. This is for example when a bi-party system turns into a party system with the dominant party.

However, there are other important variables in measuring institutionalization understood as stability of Party configuration. instance Steffan I. Lindberg (2007) focuses on eight variables (Lindberg 2007: 223–225):

1. The number of parties in the legislature;
2. The number of new parties;
3. The share (%) of new parties;
4. The number of parties voted out;
5. The share (%) of parties voted out;
6. The share (%) of seats in the legislature occupied by the largest party;
7. The share (%) of seats in the legislature held by the runner-up;
8. Legislative seat volatility.

From the above set of variables it is evident that party value and stability is the subject of permanent change, which is formally demonstrated and reflected during elections. Another important question is *how much change* means the

3 Yet there are exceptions in history where stability of the political institutions was managed due to personal continuity of deputies and members of the government (e.g. Italy).

de-institutionalization of the party system and how much change is acceptable? Measuring change and its impact on the party system is a similarly challenging task closely related to challenges of institutionalization (see Nwokora – Pelizzo 2017). In Central and Eastern Europe, where a transition from a non-democratic political system occurred, the situation is much more complicated as there is no point of reference for the ideal state of institutionalization. From this perspective the institutionalized party system is something like the ideal type in which political parties maintain their value and stability for a long period of time. This is impossible due to a lack of stable cleavages and voter's volatility, which is present from the early beginning in some part systems (Novagrockine 2001). The party systems in Eastern and Central Europe are 'unfrozen' and the trend is exactly the opposite: new parties with undefined ideologies which may be better labelled electoral projects based on marketing methods rather than classical political parties. In this way the party systems of Central and Eastern Europe are specific and differ from those in Western Europe where political parties enjoyed stable electoral support so that many authors considered them at least partially frozen (Wolinetz 2006). From the intra-state perspective, party systems develop much faster than other political institutions. As pointed out by Pippa Norris and Geoffrey Evans (1999) assessing British politics: 'party politics are in a state of constant flux, following the fortunes of the latest opinion poll or parliamentary division' (Norris – Evans 1999: XXVI).

The presence of new parties and electoral behaviour necessarily opens the issue of complexity. For this reason, some political scientists are going far beyond a focus on political parties as they assess also the influence of the electoral systems on the institutionalization. They deal with electoral volatility, fragmentation, party system openness, pluralism, party regulatory law and regulation finances, or historical influences (see Enyedi – Bértoa 2016; 2018; Fink-Hafner – Krašovec 2013; Manning 2005). The situation may be even more complicated if we consider other factors such as party identity, party communication or media presentation (see Pinterič – Žúborová 2014), all of which may influence how voters value the party. It is impossible to deal in complexity with the Slovak party system. Instead, the following article focuses on key characteristics which may be explored by indexes and their values in the longer period.

Trends presented by indexes

Contemporary comparative political science uses various indexes to provide some idea about the characteristic of the party system. It is important to note that every index may be criticised from the point of 'incomplexity' or mathematical logic. Each party system is unique and constantly developing. Fewer numbers may hardly express the complexity of living forms of organization or institutions. However, numbers allow us to transform some characteristics into

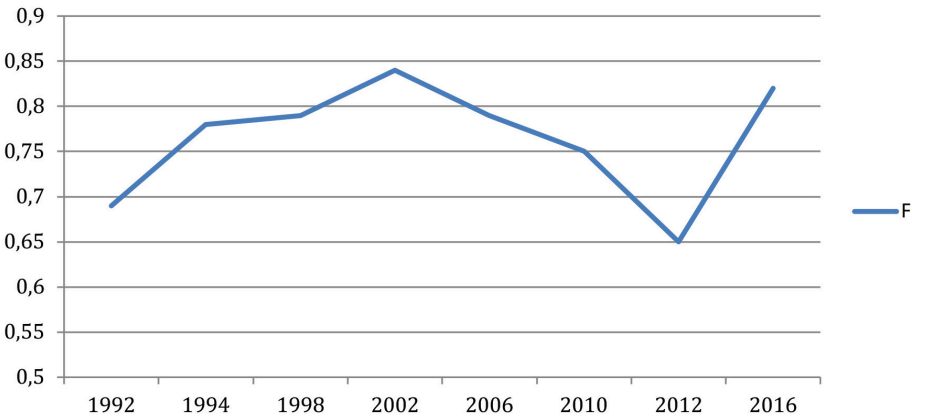
a measurable point of reference which might be compared among countries. Nevertheless, numbers as such must always be put into a deeper context of the individual party system.

Among most important indexes used in contemporary political science is the index of the party system fragmentation. This index, introduced by Douglas W. Rae, may be counted as follows: from the number 1 is deduced the sum of proportions which are counted as the percentage of mandates within a selected chamber multiplied by the other. It means that the index varies from 1 to 0 and represents the likelihood that two randomly selected deputies belong to different parties. In ideal cases, the value 1 describes a situation in which all elected members belong to the same party and the value 0 represents the almost impossible situation in which all members belong to different parties (Novák 1996: 413). In relation to this explanation Czech political scientist Miroslav Novák refers to Lijphart, who says that the fragmentation index can help us better imagine as it simply reflects our intuitive judgement (Novák 1996: 413). However, an important element within the index is the multiplication by the other. From the logic of multiplication by the other the index makes some (bigger) parties more relevant than other (smaller) parties. The index is counted according to this formula:

$$F = 1 - HH = 1 - \sum p_i^2$$

In chart 1 we observe that the 2016 elections in Slovakia increased party system fragmentation to a level similar to that of 2002. Unfortunately, the index alone will not tell us how healthy the party system is since it is hard to define a good value of the index because every party system is unique. However, the value is usually ranked between 0,5 – 0,7 (Pecháček 1999), values higher than 0,7 refer to multiparty systems and values between 0,5 to 0,67 are characteristic for bipartisan settings. A relatively high index in the Slovak case refers to a shift towards the atomization of the multi-party system. As for 2016 the number of parties present in the National Council increased from six to eight and their relative size was adjusted.

Figure 1: Rae's Index of Party System Fragmentation



Source: Author, based on electoral results.

Note: Results of 2012 are slightly deformed by Smer, who got up to 55 % of the mandates and during the 1992 elections almost one third of the votes were wasted.

The changing number of political parties present in the Parliament had an impact on the effective number of parties, which is another important index used within political science. The index presented by Laakso and Taagepera is similar to the index of fragmentation but instead of deducing the sum of proportions, which are counted as the percentage of mandates within a selected chamber multiplied by the other, the number 1 is divided by the sum of such proportions:

$$N = \frac{1}{HH} = \frac{1}{\sum p_i^2}$$

Laakso-Taagepera's index is one of the most used indexes within comparative political science (Chytilek 2007). As pointed out by Taagepera and Shugart (2003), it represents a number of hypothetically identical parties, which have the same effect on the fractionalization of the party system as does the effect of the real number of parties with a different size (Taagepera – Sugart 2003: 456). Since 2016 the number of effective parties in Slovakia increased from 3.5 to almost six (see chart 2), which might be interpreted as a positive development. However, as noted earlier, indexes just represent numbers which need interpretation. In the ideal conditions increasing the number of effective parties creates a higher likelihood of effective politics but this strongly depends on the ideology of the political parties as some parties present anti-democratic and anti-system elements. This is also the case of Slovakia and Kotleba's neo-fascist party, which might be labelled an anti-system party in the terms of criteria presented by Giovanni Capoccia and Giovanni Sartori. Ad absurdum, if the number

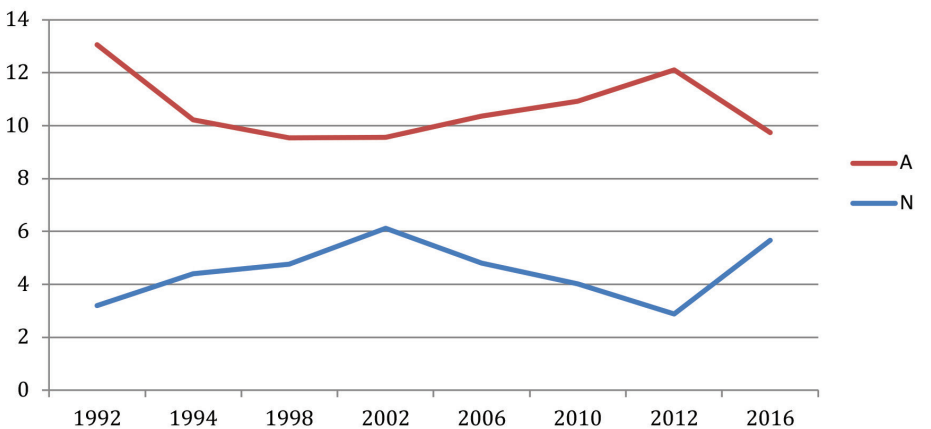
of effective parties is five and they belong to communist, fascist, Islamist (or other fundamental ideology) party blocs, then we can in no sense talk about a healthy party system. For this reason anti-system parties shall be reduced from the number of effective parties. This step, however, is not without problems as the presence of anti-system party in the party system changes the dynamics of party competition from extra-centric to in-centric and may stimulate positive cooperation among parties, which cannot be expressed by the index. In other words, the presence of an anti-system party in the party system creates pressure on remaining democratic parties to cooperate and leaves only blackmail potential to the bad newcomer, as defined by Giovanni Sartori.

Another important element within the party system related to an effective number of parties is the issue of the strongest party's position (as visible in chart 2 the aggregation index is reversibly mirroring the number of effective parties index). For this purpose L. Mayer introduced the Aggregation index, which measures the relative size of the strongest party (seats) in the parliament to the number of other parties (N) and is simply counted as follows:

$$A=SN$$

The higher value of the index, the higher distance between the leading party and the higher concentration of the party system. The index is counted as S (percentage of mandates of the strongest party within a body) divided by the number of political parties presented in a political body:

Figure 2: Laakso-Taagepera's Index of Effective Number of Parties (N) and Mayer's Index of Aggregation (A)



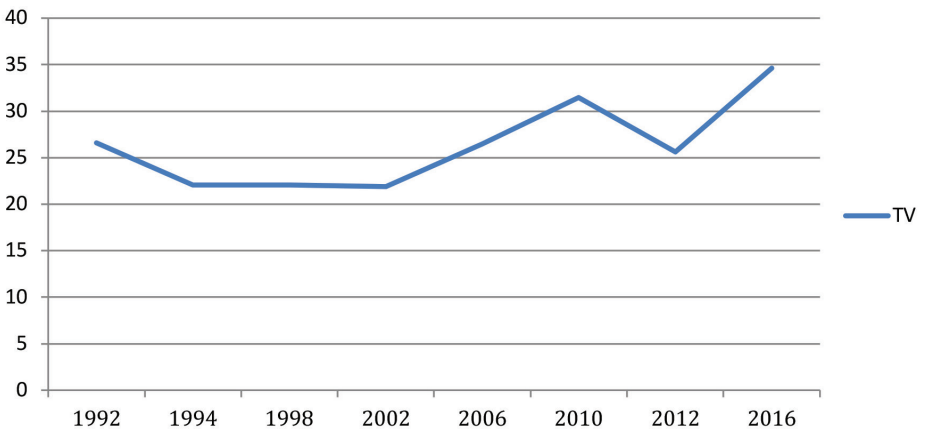
Source: Author, based on electoral results.

In the case of Slovakia the aggregation fell from about 12 to 10, which means that the winner of the previous elections lost its relative influence within the

Parliament. However, strength of the party is not only defined by the number of seats, but also by other formal and informal aspects (such as position within government, access to functions, negotiation skills, relation with other parties etc.). In this sense the index value is dependent on the performance of the leading party, which in Slovakia is Smer – social democracy. Despite Smer being the long term winner of four elections since 2006, the party may suffer from internal (domestic) and external problems. For example, we can talk about changes in popular support after the murder of the Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová, which resulted in the resignation of key party figures including the prime minister, Robert Fico. As the external challenge we can talk about general decline of Social Democracy in Europe, which has been materialized elsewhere in the form of decreased popular support and which is linked to the tendencies described by Tony Judt more than a decade ago (Judt 2011).

In general, people are losing trust in traditional political parties with a consolidated ideology based on cleavages (Rokkan – Lipset 1967). This trend may also be observed in Slovakia and may be expressed by the index of volatility presented by Mogens Pedersen in 1979. His index is based on the percentage gains of the parties present in the party system. The index is equal to the net percentage of voters who changed their votes for a different party and ranges from 0 to 100. While 0 represents a situation without changes, 100 represents an earthquake scenario where all parties have disappeared and have been replaced by new parties. In other words, a volatility index represents the change among voters and may be calculated as summing the absolute values of all gains and losses divided by the number of parties present. As present in chart 3, during the 2016 elections the volatility was jumping close to 35 %, which is a relatively high number (see Vincenzo – Chiaramonte – Soare 2018).

Figure 3: Pedersen's Index of Total Volatility



Source: Author, based on electoral results.

To brief, the Slovak party system is more fragmented, the position of the leading party (aggregation) is lower and the parties experienced an increased volatility of voters. The only potentially positive element is the increased number of effective parties, however, it shall be noted that the presence of an anti-system party in the party system is another feature of an unhealthy party system. Considering all factors together, the Slovak party system is in its worst condition since its emergence. Unfortunately, there are also other disturbing elements which cannot be revealed by indexes, but rather by a deeper analysis of individual party characteristics or focusing on the personal element of political parties – the party representatives themselves.

Trends presented by variables

As noted earlier, the issue of consolidation and stability is closely related to new political parties. It is then a question of what is a new political party? Surprisingly, one of the first concepts they do focus on is not time but rather new issues. Simply said, a new party is such a party which brings new issues or new conflicts of dimension into the political arena (see Harmel 1985: 405). This attitude, however, requires a precise definition of what is understood as a new issue as the border between existing and new may be sometimes problematic. Other authors adopt more complex views and look at changes in party name, ideological change, changes in electoral base, legal status or attitudes to policies (Barnea and Rahat 2010: 306) or even a personal basis (Emanuele and Chiaramonte 2016: 3). For example when measuring party newness Krystyna Litton looks at changes within the programme, leadership and name plus combinations of such changes on one axis and institutional changes on the another (Litton 2014: 720). Also, Daniel Šárovec is working with two axes based on Lucardie's (2000) and Sikk's (2012) typology, assessing ideological motivations and relationships to established parties (Šárovec 2018: 85). Some authors, such as Allan Sikk and Philipp Köker (2017), are proposing composite indexes to measure party newness.

Despite this, approaches are various and highlight different aspects; most of them working within a time perspective and focusing on institutional aspects. This attitude is observed within this contribution. While institutional issues such as change of name, change of the party statute, date of registration or date of dissolution are easy to observe from the register, there shall be a principal question answered regarding how to count time: how to count the age of political parties within party system consolidation? There are several important milestones in the yearly life of political parties.

Option one is to measure the age from when the party was officially established. This time is remarkable by some party congress where the existence of the party was officially declared or might be the same as the date indicated

in the decision of competent authorities to register the party. This is also the case of Slovakia where, according to law, parties are created when registered (§ 6(1) of the Act no. 85/2005 Coll.). However, measuring the age of political parties since formal establishment may be problematic as the party may exist out of the parliament without any serious influence and activity. Parties simply may be in a state of hibernation. Moreover, when 'awakened' and entering into the parliament then the average age of the party's age will jump significantly without its members having serious practical experience.

Option two is to measure the age from when the party enters the parliament, which is an important moment for every political party. However, in many cases before succeeding into primary elections parties are often successful in local, regional or even elections to the European Parliament before entering national parliaments. For this reason by using this option researchers avoid relevance and experience of the party on the different levels of politics. Moreover, the vast majority of the registered political parties usually never enter parliament or even succeed on a regional level.

Option three is somewhere in between, as the age might be measured from when the party registered for their first elections. This may happen a) regardless of the body or b) with regard to a specific institution. Nevertheless, this option is related to a party's specific character as the aim of the political parties is to seek power and participate in the elections. However, even here parties are facing similar problems. While some take elections seriously and have a fully professional campaign, others may have a very indifferent attitude. In this sense a date of establishment, a date of registration or even party intention and presence on the local level may have different relevance when considering party newness.

Unfortunately, there also other issues that present problems, such as when to measure the age of political parties as parties change their name, parties merge with other parties, creates joint lists or split. As mentioned by Harmel and Robertson, new parties may occur as the consequence of a merger, split, natural creation or by reorganization of former parties (Harmel and Robertson 1985: 509). Sometimes parties are outside the parliament for a long period, fight for its survival, get resurrected and then again enter into the parliament. Sometimes parties are exposed with significant personal changes in membership structure or political programme. What if 50 % of the members split and create a new party? Shall the age start completely from the beginning or shall it continue? And what if the party changes its name or is re-established, for example, as a result of an Administrative Court decision for violating democratic standards in the case of far-right/left wing parties? For example, the contemporary party Kotleba (People's Party Our Slovakia) entered into the National Council for the first time after the elections of 2016, which took place on 5 March and its deputies started to execute the mandate on 23 March. However, the party

was active in local politics before March 2016, as the party secured one seat in November 2013 during the elections to self-governing regions and thus played a relevant role in local politics. Moreover, the roots of the party are much longer. At the beginning there was the Civic Association called Slovak Togetherness (*Slovenská pospolitosť*) which had existed since 1996 and briefly as the Slovak Togetherness – National Party (*Slovenská pospolitosť – Národná strana*) which was dissolved by the Slovak Supreme Court due to its non-compliance with the Constitution. On 20 October 2000 a new party was registered – The party of Wine Friends (*Strana priateľov vína*), which in May 2009 changed its name to the People's Party of Social Solidarity (*Ľudová strana sociálnej solidarity*) and in February 2010 to the People's Party Our Slovakia (*Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko*) until 9 November 2015 when the party adopted its current name Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia (Kotleba – *Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko*). From its beginning, the party of Wine Friends was full of radicals; however, it was still not the party as transformed by Kotleba. According to formal rules, the party shall not be considered new in 2016 due to almost two decades of existence. However, according to the Slovak register it is impossible to identify the moment when the party was transformed close to its contemporary form.

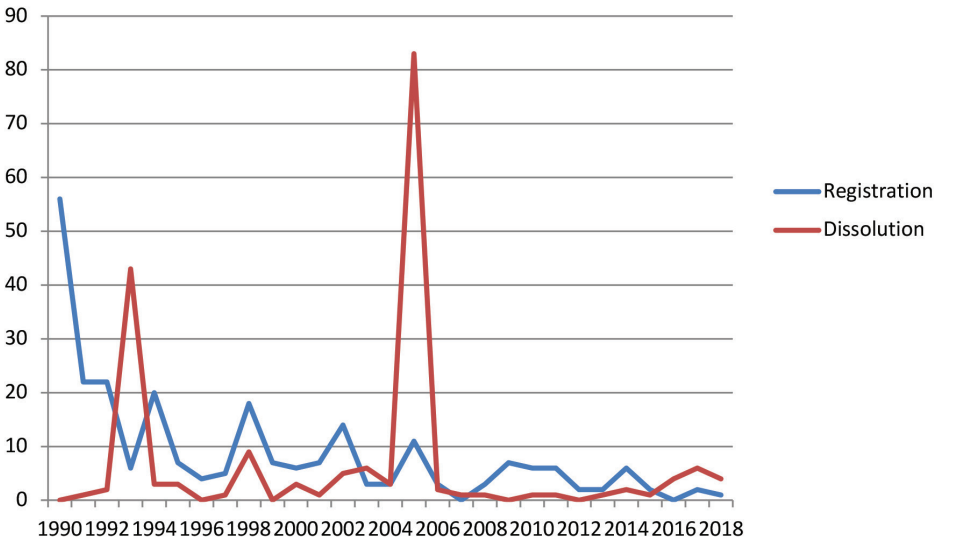
As the genealogy of Kotleba shows, there were several changes in names thus they are not a suitable indicator of party newness. Moreover, some parties are using different names than that of what is registered. The case of Kotleba also showed that a party might be relevant on the local level before entering the national arena in the parliament. Thus, the best criteria of how to measure the newness of the party, as later used in this article, is according to its legal entity. For this purpose the official date of registration by a competent authority is important (in the case of Slovakia it is the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic). When parties are making pre-election coalition then the age shall be measured as the average age of parties in the coalition.

Nevertheless, there is another related question: how long might a new party be considered new? One approach suggests that it might be considered new if one electoral cycle has not passed. For example, if there are elections to the parliament in 2012 and the party is established in 2013, then the party might be considered new also in 2016 if we consider a four-year term of the parliamentas regular cycle. Another approach may be to consider a party new until it succeeds to gain seats in a public body for the first time. However, this second approach means that the party is rather 'new in the parliament' as opposed to 'new as such'. In order to avoid confusion it is better to follow the first approach.

Measuring party newness in Slovakia is a very challenging task due to data availability and gaps within the law. It is possible to bypass the law and not register a new political party. Instead, one of the older, already registered parties may be used, followed by status change and change of name. For this reason

date of registration is not decisive and each party shall be treated individually, which is almost impossible. The Slovak register of political parties contains 253 political subjects registered, out of which 59 are active, 95 are in the process of dissolving and 99 have been deleted. Since its registration between 1990 and 1. 2. 2019, all 253 parties have made 209 changes in statutes, adopted 40 new statutes and together made 238 changes in names.[4] Some of them made repeated changes and changed the statute several times per year, or made many changes in statute due to the long existence of the party. For example, the Party of the Hungarian Community (SMK) made 17 changes, the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) made 15 changes and the Slovak National Party (SNS) made 13 changes of the statute. The party New Parliament adopted 4 new statutes and changed its name twice. The changes are presented in charts 4 and 5.

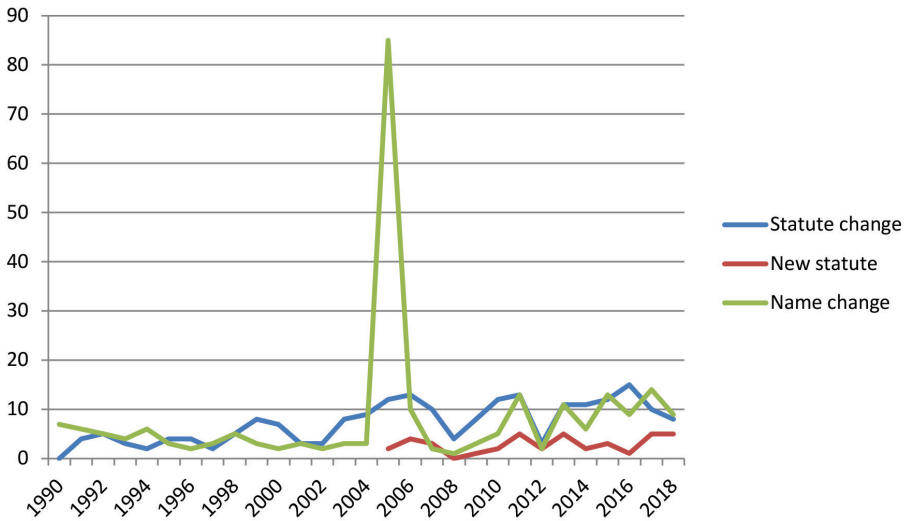
Figure 4: Registration and Dissolution of Political Parties in Slovakia



Source: Author, based on the Ministry of Interior.

4 When entering the process of dissolution a party name is changed automatically with adding after the name – 'in dissolution'. This approach, however, has only come into use more recently, which is why data are inconsistent and also why change of name is problematic indicator.

Figure 5: Statute, New Statute and Name Change of Political Parties in Slovakia



Source: Author, based on the Ministry of Interior.

Due to data inconsistency, it is very difficult to derive conclusions. However, from chart 4 it is evident that after the fall of Communism there were more than 50 new parties registered and later incorporated into the online register. The majority of them did not survive the creation of independent Slovakia and thus were deleted in 1993. The establishment of an independent state was another impetus for the registration of new political parties, almost of the same importance as 1998, which in Slovakia is associated with fall of the Mečiar's government. Most of the political parties were dissolved in 2005 due to the adaption of a new law (Act no. 85/2005 Coll. on political parties and political movements which has been updated 13 times. In 2005 a total of 83 political parties were dissolved, out of which 79 were due to § 34(4), which set a deadline for political parties to comply with the requirement to deliver to the Ministry of Interior data about party seats and statutory body. The obvious purpose of § 34(4) was to clean out the inactive parties. Since 1990 there have also been, however, other reasons for dissolving parties. For example, the radical *Slovenská pospolitosť – národná strana* of Marian Kotleba was dissolved after the decision of the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic (§ 17) and 9 political parties were dissolved due to failure to submit an annual report (§ 30). In 17 cases, which is the second highest reason, parties were dissolved on a voluntary basis. In chart 5 it is evident than in the last five years changes in statutes are much more frequent than in the 1990s,

which may be a sign of lesser consolidation, but also caused by other factors such as legislative changes. For example, this is evident in the case of law for the establishment of new political parties. A previous requirement of 1,000 signatures was extended to 10,000 in 2005 which encouraged some leaders to 'retake' an already registered party.

Nevertheless, the date of registration is the only date with some relevance that might be used for analysing all political parties in the register. On the 5th and 6th of June 1992 there were the last elections to the Slovak National Council (*Slovenská národná rada*), which resulted in the success of five political parties: Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (Hnutie *za demokratické Slovensko*; HZDS), The Party of the Democratic Left (*Strana demokratickej ľavice*; SDĽ), The Christian Democratic Movement (*Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie*; KDH), The Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*; SNS) and the Hungarian Coalition composed of the Coexistence (*Maďarské kresťanskodemokratické hnutie Együttélés-Spolužitie-Wspólnota-Soužití*; COEX; in Slovakia better known as MKM-EGY), registered on 1 March 1990 (see Kopeček 2003), and The Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (*Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Mozgalom, Maďarské kresťanskodemokratické hnutie*), registered on 19 March 1990. Among the five political parties only HZDS may be considered a new political party as HZDS was registered on 3 May 1991, just 13 months before the elections took place. The remaining four parties were established before the 1990 elections to the Slovak National Council, which took place in June. During the 1992 elections, parties had an average age of 23,4 months and KDH (which was registered on 23. 2. 1990) become the oldest successful party (the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic 2019; Kopeček 2000). The low average age of political parties is not surprising as the elections of 1992 are considered to be the beginning of the party system in Slovakia (see for example Leška 2013: 74).

Since 1 January 1993 the National Council of the Slovak Republic (*Národná rada Slovenskej republiky*) was established and between 30 September and 1 October 1994 the elections took place. Before the elections HZDS made a coalition with the Peasants' Party of Slovakia (*Roľnícka strana Slovenska;* RSS), which was established on 10. 10. 1990. Also the Hungarian Coalition (*Magyar Koalíció, Maďarská koalícia; MK*) was created from several parties established during 1990/1991 including the Hungarian Christiandemocratic Movement (*Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Mozgalom – Maďarské kresťanskodemokratické hnutie*), MKM-EGY and Hungarian Civic Party (*Magyar Polgári Párt – Maďarská občianska strana*). Another coalition was Common Choice (*Spoločná voľba*), composed from the Party of the Democratic Left (*Strana demokratickej ľavice*; SDĽ), The Social Democratic Party of Slovakia (*Sociálnodemokratická strana Slovenska*), the Farmers' Movement (*Hnutie poľnohospodárov Slovenskej republiky*) and the Slovak Green Party (*Strana zelených na Slovensku*), which scored second (Plešivčák 2013: 177). Also in this coalition, parties were established between

1990 and 1991 and thus can not be considered as new. Among those successful old parties were also present KDH and SNS (Puskásová 2009: 91).

If there are some new parties during 1994 elections it is certainly the Democratic Union of Slovakia (*Demokratická únia Slovenska*; DEÚS), registered on 18 March 1994 and the Union of Workers of Slovakia (*Združenie robotníkov Slovenska*; ZRS) registered on 26 April 1994. As for 1994 the average age of the parties present in the parliament was 36,9 months or slightly more than 3 years.

Another election took place four years later. The elections of 1998 not only changed the course of Slovak politics set by Vladimír Mečiar and HZDS (see Hloušek – Kopeček 2003: 19) but also resulted almost in doubling the average age of political parties present in the parliament. This is mainly due to presence of well-established political parties such as HZDS, SDĽ, SNS and SMK. There was also The Party of the Hungarian Coalition (*Strana maďarskej koalície, Magyar Koalíció Pártja; SMK-MKP)*, which is not completely new as it was created from the parties of Hungarian Coalition as a result of changes within electoral law establishing 5 % threshold for each party within coalition, while Hungarian Christiandemocratic Movement, Hungarian Civic Party and MKM-EGY later ceased to exist. Later, in September 2012 the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (Magyar Koalíció Pártja) changed its name to the Party of the Hungarian Community (Magyar Közösség Pártja). According to the register, the party just changed its name without changing registration and for this reason can be considered as the follower of the older parties (and thus counted as the average of merged subjects).

A similar problem is with the Slovak Democratic Coalition (*Slovenská demokratická koalícia*, SDK), which is from certain perspective new, because it was registered on 19 March 1998. However, the party acts as purposefully established subject to overcome obstacles caused by electoral law amendment. The party is not new, as it was established by five already existing opposition parties: Democratic Union of Slovakia, KDH, Democratic Party[5], Social Democratic party of Slovakia and the Green Party under the leadership of Mukuláš Dzurinda from KDH. The parties were established in between 1989 and 1994, with an average age of all subjects 7,6 years. Moreover, SDK was created by 150 people who were members of their „mother" parties. It implies that the only successful party, which may be considered as new, is the Party of Civic Understanding (*Strana občianskeho porozumenia*, SOP), registered on 19 February 1998. Despite new, the average age of political parties present in the national parliament rose from 6 to 8 years.

Another election took place in 2002. Next to HZDS, SMK, KDH and KSS (Communist Party of Slovakia, *Komunistická strana Slovenska*, KSS), which was

5 Most probably, there is a mistake within Slovak register as it states that the party has been established on 1. 1. 1000. In fact, the party was renewed in December 1989.

registered already on 19 March 1991, there were three successful new political parties: The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (*Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia; SDKÚ* and since 2006 when merged with the Democratic party also *Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia – Demokratická strana*; SDKÚ – DS),[6] was registered on 18 February 2000. On 8 November 1999 there was registered also SMER (since Jane 2003 named as „*SMER (tretia cesta)*" and later since 2005 with contemporary name *Smer – sociálna demokracia*, Smer – SD), and the Alliance of the New Citizen (*Aliancia Nového Občana*; ANO), registered on 14 May 2001. Despite three new actors the average age of political parties rose to 8,15 years. Nevertheless, it is important to note that SNS failed to enter parliament which was another factor pressing the average age of successful parties down. The reason was that SNS shortly split as former president Anna Malíkova prevented supporters of controversial leader Ján Slota to take positions on a candidate list. As a result Slota established „True Slovak National Party" (*Pravá Slovenská národná strana*) which existed shortly between 2001 and 2005 (when again merged with SNS). Due to split SNS lost many potential votes.

During the June 2006 elections there were no new political parties among those successful as only *Smer – sociálna demokracia*, SNS (which returned into the parliament), SMK, HZDS and two Christian democratic parties SDKÚ and KDH made it to the parliament (Štefančík 2008: 62). As a result the average age of parties rose to 13,2 years, setting maximum average age of the Slovak party system.

Following the June 2010 elections there were two new political parties in the parliament which reduced the average age, moreover HZDS went out from the parliament which contributed to decrease of the average age. Among new political parties were Freedom and Solidarity (*Sloboda a solidarita*; SaS), registered on 27 February 2009 and Most-Híd (the bridge), registered on 3 July 2009. However, even in the case of Most-Híd the „newness" can be questioned, as the parte has been created after many its members left SMK, including its president Bela Bugár. However, there is no legal predecessor and that is why according to register may be considered as new and as a result the average age of political parties dropped to 10,7 years.

The average dropped also in after the following elections in March 2012 to 8,9 years. While Direction – Social Democracy, KDH, Most-Híd, SDKÚ-DS and SaS continued their presence, SNS after six years for the second time failed to enter the parliament which contributed to average age drop. Moreover, there was a new coming Ordinary People (in full Ordinary People and Independent Personalities; *Obyčajní Ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti*, OĽaNO), registered on 11

6 However, many members of the SDKÚ were until 2002 members of the SDK so full „newness" may be also questioned.

November 2011. However, newness in this case might be also questioned on the ground that party was new, but some of its members were during previous elections elected to the parliament on the candidate list of SaS. On the other side they often demonstrated loyalty different to SaS. These factors contributed to the drop in average age of political parties present in the parliament by 4,3 years, which is more than one electoral cycle.

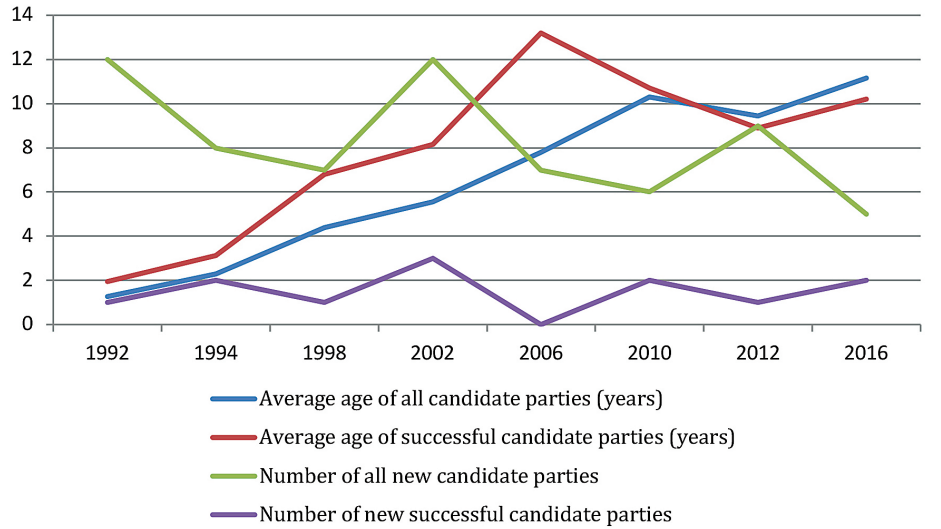
The last elections in March 2016 brought to the parliament three „newcomers" (Garaj 2018: 149). However, the „newness" shall not be questioned only in the case of one of them. It is the case of the party named as #Network (*#Sieť*), which was registered on 12 July 2014 under a different name – the Slovak Conservative Party (*Slovenská konzervatívna strana*; SKS). On the other side the already mentioned Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia was also a newcomer to the parliament, but not new as such due to registration made on 20 October 2000. Despite new in the parliament it became third oldest party after Smer-SD and SNS. Very tricky is dealing with the third newcomer party We are Family – Boris Kollár (*SME RODINA – Boris Kollár*) which according to rules relying on registration cannot be considered as new (it was registered already on 6 July 2011). However, the movement itself was established in November 2015 with completely different content than its formal predecessor. The reason of difference in date and content is that Slovak law allows changing name of the party without new registration. As a result the current party leader Boris Kollár acquired registration of an already existing party: the Party of Citizens of Slovakia (*Strana občanov Slovenska*), registered in July 2011, and just changed its name on 30 November 2015 just 3 months before the elections. It was purposeful step to avoid formal requirements for new party registration which might be time demanding. For this reason in this particular example date of registration shall not be binding as it is completely different party and for this reason shall be considered as „new". As a result the average age of political parties presented in the parliament increased from 8,9 years in 2012 to 10,2 years in 2016.[7] Based on all 253 entries into Slovak party register we can say, that as of 2019 the average age of all parties in the register is 8,4 years.[8] The development of party age average is present in the chart 6.

From the graph 6 there are evident several trends in the Slovak party system. First, until 2012 the average age of successful parties was higher than that of all candidate parties which might be explained as the tendency to vote for established subjects. This was most visible in 2006 where the distance between both averages is highest. This situation however changed with the 2012 elections and continued in 2016. Nevertheless, the difference in age average is minimal.

7 In the Czech Republic the average age of political parties after 2017 elections was approx.16 years.

8 Counted as the average from the difference between year of party registration and party dissolution in the case of dissolved parties and difference between year of party registration and 2019 in the case of active parties.

Figure 6: Number of New successful parties and Average Age of successful Parties in Years



Source: Author, based on party registrations.

Second, from the long term perspective the number of new candidate parties is slightly decreasing with only little impact on success of new candidates. In 2016 the number of new candidate parties was lowest in history, while the average of successful new candidates was kept at two. Third, there is visible negative correlation between number of new parties (both successful and all) and the average age of the political parties. Despite negative influence of new political parties on the average age, the number is increasing which may indicate increasing consolidation of the party system. Moreover, as pointed by Bardovič, the changes are not only of formal significance but are observable also in the party behavior. Political parties in Slovakia are more pragmatic than in recent years and that there is close party association with their leaders and that parties are more tied to the political system as a such (Bardovič 2016: 108)

As the graph shows, there were 12 parties running for elections in 1992, which may be considered new, because they were registered between 9 June 1990 when last elections took place and 6 June 1992 when 1992 elections took place. The relative high number is caused by the birth of democracy. Also later during 1994 elections there were 8 out of 17 running parties which may be labelled as new and situation continued also in 1998 and 2002. Relatively high number of new parties in this period is caused by democratic consolidation. Despite the line in chart 6 has „up and down" tendency, however, instead of using absolute numbers it is worth to count in relative numbers. Then the tendency is decreas-

ing over time. As of 1992 new political parties counted for 52 % and the share decreased to 47 % in 1994 and 1998, to just 35 % in 2012 or 22 in 2016 which is well visible from the table 1. In other words, with increasing time there is lesser proportion of new political parties, which may be interpreted as a sign of increasing consolidation or increasing political passivity. On the other side, there is a second long term trend, that on average there are two successful political parties among new. In combination of both factors we can expect, that there is increased predictability of the environment which allow to new political parties recognize the moment for establishing new political party. This development is summarized in the table 1.

Table 1: Parties development and wasted votes

Year	Parties total	New parties	Share of new parties among parties (no.)	Wasted votes (total)	Wasted votes (new parties)	Effective votes (new parties)	Average age of candidate parties (all)
1992	23	12	52 %	23,8 %	12,4 %	37,3 %	1,3
1994	17	8	47 %	13 %	4,1 %	15,9 %	2,3
1998	17	7	41 %	5,8 %	1,1 %	8 %	4,4
2002	25	12	48 %	18,2 %	7,9 %	36,6 %	5,6
2006	21	7	33 %	12 %	4,7%	0 %	7,8
2010	18	6	33 %	14,9 %	1,3 %	20,3 %	10,3
2012	26	9	35 %	19,4 %	3,4 %	8,6 %	9,4
2016	23	5	22 %	13,3 %	3,9%	12,2 %	11,2
Average	**21,3**	**8,3**	**38,9 %**	**15,1 %**	**4,8 %**	**17,4 %**	**x**

Source: The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

The wasted votes of new political parties is ranging between 12,4 % in 1992 and 1,1 % in 1998 with similar explanation. We can claim that on average new political parties are responsible for one third of wasted votes in Slovakia, with considerable exceptions in individual years (most significantly in 2010). However, in almost all years (with exception of 2006) new political parties were much more effective in changing votes into the seats. On average the effective votes are 3,5 times higher than the share of wasted votes. This means that some new political parties are very effective in transferring votes into mandates while other are extremely ineffective.

Some indexes presented in the previous chapter showed that regarding fragmentation, the aggregation or the effective number the current Slovak party

system is in similar condition as in 2002. Decreasing number of new political parties running for elections together with increasing average age of political parties running for elections and those who are successful and present in the National Council we can claim, that Slovak party system shows some features of progressing consolidation. However, the average age or number of new parties is rather short in providing characteristic of the party system. It is evident, that the Slovak party system changed significantly in terms of political ideologies. As visible from the comparison of tables 1 and 2, the Slovak party system evolved rapidly in terms of ideology represented.

Table 2: Composition of the National Council in 2002 (21 September).

Party	Share of seats	Registration/ Newness	Ideology
Movement for a Democratic Slovakia	24 %	3. 5. 1991 (existing)	National and Social Conservatism Populism
Slovak Democratic and Christian Union	18 %	18. 2. 2000 (new)	Liberalism Christian Democracy
Smer	16,67 %	8. 11. 1999 (new)	Social Democracy Left-wing nationalism (right-wing populism)
Party of the Hungarian Coalition	13,33 %	19. 3. 1990 (existing)	Minority interests (Autonomism) Christian Democracy Conservatism
Christian Democratic Movement	10 %	23. 2. 1990 (existing)	Christian Democracy Social Conservatism
Alliance of the New Citizen	10 %	14. 5. 2001 (new)	Liberalism
Communist Party of Slovakia	7,33 %	19. 3. 1991 (existing)	Communism Marxism-Leninism

Source: Own elaboration based on electoral results.

Note: As pointed by Marušiak (2006) it is hard to classify Smer passed many positions towards programme: from not affiliating to any ideology but „rationalism and pragmatism“, via „third way“ to „social democracy“ (see Marušiak 2006).

Table 3: Composition of the National Council in 2016 (5 March)

Party	Share of seats	Registration/ Newness	Ideology
Direction – Social Democracy	32,66 %	8. 11. 1999 (existing)	Social Democracy Left-wing nationalism
Freedom and Solidarity	14 %	27. 2. 2009 (existing)	Liberalism Libertarianism
OĽANO-NOVA	12,66 %	11. 11. 2011 (existing)	Conservatism Christian Democracy
Slovak National Party	9,66 %	7. 3. 1990 (existing)	Nationalism National and social conservatism Right-wing populism
Strana priateľov vína, later Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia	9,33 %	20. 10. 2000 (existing)	Neo-fascism National and social conservatism Anti-ism
We Are Family	7,33 %	6. 7. 2011; 30. 11. 2015 (new)	Populism
Most–Híd	7,33 %	3. 7. 2009 (existing)	Minority interests Liberal conservatism
Network	6,66 %	12. 6. 2014 (new)	Conservatism Economic liberalism

Source: Own elaboration based on electoral results.

Note: We Are Family shall be counted as new despite much older registration as the old registration was used to bypass legal requirements to establish new party.

In the terms of radical elements and anti-system parties the Slovak party system changed from radical left to radical right. The presence of Communist Party of Slovakia in the party system after 2002 was short. However, the party was composed mainly by anti-reformist politicians who were against transformation to party of democratic left under the leadership of Jozef Ševc, the son-in-law of the Vasil Biľak – Czechoslovak hard-line „normalizator" from the conservative wing of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia, which was reinstalled after 1968 invasion. After 2016 radical elements are presented by anti-system neo-fascist Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia, which is more than 2 % successful than Communists in 2002. In both periods of the party system there is a party representing Hungarian minority. However, while Party of the Hungarian Coalition had more than 13 % of votes, Most-Híd in 2016 had just 7 % despite its attempt to address also non-Hungarian voters (such as Ruthenians), and a more liberal attitude than the Party of the Hungarian Coalition and charismatic leader Béla Bugár.

Generally, there is less Christian democracy which after 2016 is presented only by relatively the weak OĽANO-NOVA[9] and in 2002 was represented by Slovak Democratic and Christian Union and Christian Democratic Movement having together more than 28 % of votes (KDH later in 2016 closely failed to enter the Parliament). And despite Freedom and Solidarity in 2016 gaining second place during elections with 14 % of votes, there is also less liberalism represented. The decline in representation of these ideologies is balanced by the increase of nationalism, conservatism and populism which is reflected also *vis-á-vis* the European Union and Slovak foreign policy.

Conclusion

The main aim of this article was to reveal and analyze ongoing trends within Slovak party system in the context of 2016 general elections to the National Council. Whether elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 2016 established a completely new, less predictable period of Slovak party system or whether this denotes a shift back to an already known set of the party system. For searching the answer author was focusing on various indexes used for assessing the changes within party system and revealing challenging tends.

In the terms of party system fragmentation measured by index introduced by Douglas W. Rae, the Slovak party system after the 2016 elections went closer to the maximum fragmentation experienced in 2002. The result is more visible as it rose from minimal fragmentation approx. 0,65 in 2012 to almost 0,83 in 2016. In other words, fragmentation increased but to the values which are characteristic for a multi-party system. On the other side 2016 elections led to an increase of the number of effective parties measured by the Laakso-Taagepera's index. Also this index increased significantly from 2,5 in 2012 to almost 6, which is approx. same value as in 2002. Moreover, Mayer's index of aggregation dropped in the same period from 12 to less than 10 which is another feature similar to 2002. These characteristic provide by indexes implies that the Slovak party system „returned in time" back to 2002. However, this is very reductionist conclusion. As expressed by Pedersen's index of total volatility since 2002 total volatility increased from approx. 22 to almost 35 in 2016. In other words, the Slovak party system experienced in 2016 its highest volatility in history.

Measuring the impact of „new" political parties on the Slovak party system is very challenging task due to inconsistent data within Slovak party register and gaps in law which allows to „retake" already registered party without registration. Moreover, as indicated in the theoretical overview in the first section, assessing party system requires deeper knowledge of realities and sometimes

9 OĽANO (Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti) made in june 2015 coalition with NOVA, a movement registered already on 25. 10. 2012 under the name *„Nová väčšina"* (New Majority), associated mainly with Daniel Lipšič.

arbitrary decision about the value of intervening variables (party membership, party leadership, name, programme etc.). For this reason, assessment of any party system is challenge which might be complicated by legal gaps.

However, still it is the only way how to acquire data about registration, changes in names, changes in statutes etc. After assessing data from register it can be concluded that Slovak party system is increasingly consolidated. Average number of parties running for elections in the long term perspective dropped from 12 in 2002 to just 5 in 2016 while the number of new successful parties is still around two per election. In general, new political parties are successful in making votes effective as the ratio between wasted votes and effective votes is on average 4,8 to 17,4. Despite new political parties have negative impact on average age of political parties there is long-term increasing tendency within Slovak party system. Both average age of parties present in the parliament and average age of the parties running for elections is up to 10 years, which is more than two institutional cycles. For comparison, average age of all parties present in the register (including that already non-existent now) is 8,4 years.

Despite increasing consolidation regarding the age of political subjects into the system there is limited space for optimism. Compared to 2002, the current Slovak party system is slightly unhealthier due to stronger presence of anti-system opposition which changed from the radical left (*Communist Party of Slovakia*) to radical right (*Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia*). The success of Kotleba contributed to the destabilization of the party and unlocking its potential for unsatisfied voters. For this reason it will be interesting to continue analyzing the challenging trends within the Slovak party system.

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How to run an efficient political machine: the billionaire Andrej Babiš and his political-business project[1]

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Abstract: *This paper contributes to the debate on entrepreneurial parties with the empirical example of the Czech ANO party. The authors focus on selected aspects of the internal organisation and functioning of the party, emphasising the points where business methods and practices are transferred to the environment of party politics. The empirical part shows how the leader has built loyalty inside the party, and analyses its methods of control and coercion that are similar to the human resources recruitment techniques used in businesses. The authors investigate such matters as the vetting of candidates for public offices, the significant barriers created against those wishing to join the party and the party leadership's strict control over membership. The article also describes the development of ANO's electoral-professional services and the creation of mass media support. In conclusion, the authors discuss the broader future for the internal workings of entrepreneurial parties – including their lack of intra-party democracy – and their relationship with the changing landscape of contemporary party politics.*

Keywords: ***internal party organisation, intra-party democracy, Andrej Babiš, ANO, entrepreneurial party***

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Introduction

In recent years, the concept of entrepreneurial parties has become frequently used, albeit in various modifications (cf. Arter 2016; Krouwel 2006, 2012). Beyond accentuating the role of the entrepreneur – the founder and driver of the project, whose resources are crucial for the start-up and stabilisation of the party-project – the main characteristics of this type of political party include its strong centralisation and minimal intra-party democracy, features that are linked with the fact that, like the leader, the party elite is typically recruited from the business environment. It is precisely this interconnection of politics and an organisational model (or way of working) typical of the commercial sphere that makes entrepreneurial parties interesting for empirical investigation, and is the subject of this article.

There are several factors that inform our focus. First, the literature on entrepreneurial parties and political-party organisation tends to emphasise their centralisation and limited or absent internal democracy, whereas the parallel between a business firm and a political party tends to be drawn in the areas of political funding, the adoption of marketing strategies to attract voters and the interconnection of the business and political interests of the leader. The translation of organisational forms from the business sphere to that of politics, however, has so far been given little attention, with a number of exceptions noted below.

Second, in terms of their occurrence and importance, entrepreneurial parties are on the rise in many European countries. Beyond a new political style, they also bring new forms of internal organisation. The choice of the case analysed in this article is connected with this fact. The paper is conceived as a study of one party: ANO (meaning 'yes' in Czech) in the Czech Republic, founded by the billionaire Andrej Babiš, which scored a significant success in the 2013 parliamentary elections and went on to win the next elections in 2017.[2] An investigation of this party can unearth interesting material for further comparative studies, conceptual discussions of entrepreneurial parties as a new organisational form, as well as for normative debates about the challenges that the mediatisation and marketisation of politics – not just of political communications, but also of political organisation and the execution of politics – pose to contemporary European liberal democracies.

The case of ANO is also relevant because unlike many other episodic efforts – including the Czech Public Affairs party, the Slovak New Citizen Alliance and the Polish Palikot's Movement – it has proved durable (e.g. Hloušek and Kopeček 2017; Kosowska-Gąstoł and Sobolewska-Myślik 2017; Marušiak 2017). Further-

2 For a detailed description of ANO's emergence and evolution, see e.g. Hloušek and Kopeček, 2017; Kopeček, 2016; for a political profile e.g. Hanley and Vachudova, 2018; Havlík 2015.

more, ANO is much more successful with voters than these other parties and, like Forza Italia, has government (coalition) potential. All of these facts, on the one side, help to stabilise ANO organisationally, and on the other, urge us to undertake a longitudinal study of the role played by business-firm elements in political-party organisation; their persistence and transformations. The main research question of this study is the following: how does the entrepreneurial origin of ANO manifest itself in its organisational features and party processes?

In order to answer this question, we have structured the article as follows. First we discuss the existing literature on entrepreneurial and business-firm parties, new forms of organisation and the state of the art as far as empirical examples from other European countries are concerned. Then we define our study in terms of the data and methods used. Next part focuses on organisational forms and party processes, with special attention given to the exclusivity of membership in ANO and its candidate selection. In order to understand party mechanisms better, we combine thematic and chronological approaches, allowing us to capture the dynamic evolution of the formation under study. In the conclusion, we summarise our findings and examine the generalised implications of these findings for the discussion about entrepreneurial parties in contemporary European politics.

A business firm as a model of organisation: discussion of literature

The conceptualisation of entrepreneurial parties has enjoyed significant attention since the late 1990s, and the paper by Jonathan Hopkin and Caterina Paolucci (1999) remains the most-cited, though there were earlier reflections on related phenomena in party politics. For instance, Angelo Panebianco's classic work (1988) considered 'electoral-professional parties' among others, and, somewhat later, Robert Harmel and Lars Svåsand (1993), having analysed new right-wing parties in Scandinavia, came up with the notion of 'party enterprise'. Nonetheless, the definitions and descriptions of these new parties provided by individual academics differ. This is because authors highlight their various aspects, and sometimes also environmental differences. Thus, designations have appeared, such as 'media-mediated personality-party' (Seisselberg 1996), 'personal vehicle party' (Lucardie 2000), 'resilient entrepreneurial party' (Arter 2016) and 'corporation-based party' (Barndt 2014). André Krouwel (2006: 251) wrote about a 'business firm party cluster', which he places among the evolutionary models of political parties, i.e. cadre, mass, catch-all and cartel party. Beyond his own notion of 'entrepreneurial parties', Krouwel also noted Klaus von Beyme's (1985) 'parties of professional politicians' and R. Kenneth Carty's (2004) 'franchise organisations'.

For this study, however, our starting point is Hopkin's and Paolucci's article, because ANO combines elements of a business firm and a political party. As argued by Hopkin and Paolucci (1999: 332–334), a tendency to centralised organisation built upon the dominance of the founder-leader and an understanding of voters as political consumers. Remarkably, Hopkin and Paolucci did not conceptualise in detail the organisational implications of a private businessperson's entry into politics, even if their analysis of Berlusconi's Forza Italia offered several empirical examples of the translation of business-firm practices into party-political organisation. This aspect of the matter was grasped by other authors who studied the evolution of Berlusconi's party (Kefford and McDonnell 2018; Orsina 2014; Porro and Russo 2000; Seisselberg 1996). Incidentally, Berlusconi repeatedly proclaimed that a country should be run rationally, 'as a firm' (Ignazi 2010: 67) – and we can find literal analogues to this in Babiš's utterances. Similarly, a transfer of organisational models from the business sphere was empirically documented for Viktor Uspaskich's Labour Party in Lithuania (Simonaityté 2014) and Team Stronach in Austria (Pühringer and Ötsch 2013).

Krouwel (2006) highlighted the following traits as crucial to the concept of a business-firm party: a great emphasis on professionals – typically electoral experts and consultants; the exploitation of marketing techniques and the business (commercial) background of the leader; and the insignificance of a classic party apparatus that is common in mass parties. Barndt (2014) argued that organisational resources drawn from the business facilities of the founders – e.g. infrastructure, personnel, funding, advertising and promotional instruments and access to voters – were crucial for the success of business-firm parties. Drawing on Panebianco (1988, pp. 49–59) and other authors, Harmel and Svåsand (1993) noted the leader's organisational capabilities during the process of party institutionalisation (see also Arter 2016; Randall and Svåsand 2002).

We note that the existing literature tends to discuss some select characteristics of the penetration of commercial ways of thinking, organisation and management into politics, but remains insufficient in terms of considering the organisational, personnel and other managerial models employed in entrepreneurial parties. Our analysis of the mechanisms operating within ANO hopes to fill this lacuna to at least some extent. ANO represents a party which is empirically demonstrates very high level of penetration of business practices into organisation and internal life of a party. We will demonstrate that this translation of business organisational and steering models leads to specific centralisation which takes different shape compared to stratarchy envisaged by the concept of the cartel party (Katz and Mair 1995: 20–21) which on the one hand increases independence of the party leadership, yet leaves local branches of the party in relatively autonomous position. We will show how the temporary tools of intra-party power relations as well as mechanisms of selection of

candidates were fixed following the logic more similar to a centralistic private company than to a internally democratic political party.

Methods and data

Our study is conceived as a qualitative analysis of party organisation and decision-making mechanisms within ANO. The timeframe of our study is the period 2012/2013–2018. There were two parliamentary elections within this period. In the first (early) elections in 2013, ANO placed second with 18.5 per cent of the vote and became a member of a coalition government alongside the Social Democrats and their junior partner, the Christian Democrats. ANO went on to win the next elections in 2017 by a landslide, polling 29.5 per cent of the vote and, after much rigmarole (including an unsuccessful attempt to push through its own single-party government), in summer 2018 formed a minority coalition government with the Social Democrats, supported by the Communists during a parliamentary vote of confidence. The party's electoral successes – including at other levels of politics such as local and regional – and its continued ability to access government positions have had positive effects on ANO's gradual stabilisation. This means that a qualitative analysis can produce conclusions concerned with the principles according to which the party is administered and the presence of managerial structures within it, while noting the limits to their implementation – given that, after all, the party does have some autonomy vis-à-vis the corporate structure of Babiš's holding company, Agrofert.

The data for our analysis come from three main sources. The first is the party's statutes: we tracked how they changed over time and sought traits that corresponded to a corporate model of organisation and management rather than to principles of intra-party democracy. Evidently, these formal rules could not capture all the aspects of the party's functioning; there was an informal intra-party culture with its own mechanisms that might have changed or stabilised throughout the period observed. For this reason, we used journalistic articles on ANO's functioning as our other source. Interviews with party representatives at various levels of politics and with people who were involved in election campaigns or were responsible for the party's organisational and personnel matters provided a third source. These interviews suitably filled us in on missing information and helped us to understand the 'blind spots' in ANO's functioning.

Financial and media resources and their exploitation

The ANO project was born in 2011 when Andrej Babiš, the owner of a large agricultural and chemical business empire Agrofert, consisting of more than 200 companies with nearly 30,000 staff, started to appear widely in the media with his censure of political corruption and incompetence of politicians. One

of Czechia's richest inhabitants, Babiš did not mince his words, speaking about a 'Czech Palermo' and 'Godfathers', pitching his message to appeal to a population disgruntled with economic recession and the unpopular centre-right coalition government led by the Civic Democrat, Petr Nečas (Havlík 2015). The scandalous circumstances of this government's fall in summer 2013 played into Babiš's hand: the police raided the Government Office, arresting the head of the prime minister's office (who was also the PM's lover), several Civic Democrat ex-MPs and leading figures in military intelligence; they were charged with corruption and misuse of office.

Babiš began already in late 2011 by establishing a civic association which he soon transformed into an organisation that could stand for election. However, the founding father stewarded his property carefully, and had the main identification marks – i.e. the party name, logo and its principal slogan for the 2013 elections, 'YES, things will get better' – registered as trademarks with the Industrial Property Office (the patent office) in his own name (Štický 2017). He left the basic activities necessary for the party's day-to-day functioning in his holding company. For instance, ANO's accounts were managed by Agrofert's financial director (Stauber 2015) and, similarly, local firms within the group usually let their offices to ANO regional branches. For the 2013 election campaign, thousands of company cars were covered with ANO advertising and, arguing that it wanted to strengthen the image of its products, one of Babiš's firms booked extensive coverage for a TV advert on the major private TV stations prior to the election, in which a cheery Babiš appeared selling a chicken to the country's most popular ice-hockey player.

The size of the funding invested by Babiš into his political project corresponded to the business-firm party concept. Until 2013, all expenditure on the ANO start-up flowed from the business activities of Babiš's holding company and his own pocket. After its electoral success, ANO became eligible for substantial state subsidy, thus weakening but not completely eliminating the party's dependency on funding from Babiš and Agrofert – a dependency that had been total at the outset. Babiš has remained a major source of investment for ANO, now taking the form of regularly-granted interest-free loans. He granted the first such loan immediately before the 2013 elections and others followed. Thus, in late 2016, the party owed Babiš nearly 6,000,000 euros. To grasp the importance of this interest-free lending, we note that in the same year ANO's total income was about 9,700,000 euros and its expenditure exceeded 6,800,000 euros (Party financial report 2017; Šíp 2018).

Financially the party has remained closely tied to its leader. Babiš's words from the time he founded ANO – that he would give 'as much as will be necessary' (Fejtková 2011) – have held true. In 2017, however, a new law forbade lending by natural persons to political parties – importantly the law was adopted in connection with public criticism of the manner in which ANO had been funded.

Another important change was the introduction of spending limits on electoral campaigns. This was again connected with the fact that in the 2013 elections ANO had practically unlimited financial resources at its disposal, placing it at a significant advantage over other parties, which could invest much less in campaigning. Thus, for elections to the Chamber of Deputies (the lower chamber of the Czech parliament), a legal limit of 3,500,000 euros per party was established. This created minor complications for ANO ahead of the 2017 elections, because it could not put on as massive a campaign as it wanted to, and had to moderate its expenditure much more than in 2013 (Pustějovský 2018). However, this was not a major obstacle and the efficient party machine managed to cope.

Beyond direct investment in party operations, Babiš's purchases of media assets are noteworthy. Unlike Berlusconi, the ANO leader owned no media outlets until very shortly before his entry into politics. He bought media gradually, his most important acquisition was the Mafra media group including two dailies and the most popular radio station shortly before the 2013 election (in details e.g. Havlík 2015; Cabada 2016). Completing this purchase, Babiš was quoted saying that he wanted 'the newspapers not to write lies about him' (Sacher 2013). In early 2017, Mafra together with all the other Agrofert group companies were put into trust funds not directly controlled by Babiš, but indirectly influenced by him; this changed nothing in practices of the media outlet to campaign for the politicians of ANO and to spin doctoring of controversies surrounding Babiš.

Building the organisation structure: a shift from informal to fixed mechanisms

To make ANO a lasting success, it was necessary not just to provide funding and media support; a party organisation also had to be built, including local and regional branches. In doing so a top-down approach was applied from the very beginning. The founders of local and regional organisations were coordinators selected and paid by the headquarters in Prague. Very much like recruitment to a business, when they joined the party they were subjected to psychological tests. At the same time, these coordinators became the very first ANO members. The building of a strictly centralist party with the leader as the focal point was nevertheless affected by the leader's lack of political experience. Thus, at a congress in spring 2013, people were elected into the party leadership group who understood ANO as an opportunity to promote their own, sometimes idealistic, ideas about how social and political change ought to be pursued in Czechia. (The psychometric testing they had undergone at their admission to the party failed to uncover such 'aberrations' and so the party discontinued it.) In an ensuing conflict with most of his deputy chairs, who sought to gain influence over the direction of ANO, Babiš easily asserted his superiority by arguing, 'I pay, I decide' (Koděra 2013). This easy pacification of dissent in his party was much facilitated

by the controls exerted from party headquarters; by the fact that his supporters had a majority in the party presidium (an inner leadership made of the party chair, deputy chairs and a few other members elected by the Congress); as well as by the ANO statutes, which concentrated most power into his hands and allowed him to act 'independently in all matters' (Statutes ANO 2013).

Let us demonstrate it on the candidate selection process before 2013 elections. For the 2013 elections, ANO candidate lists were compiled by the party's regional organisations, in accordance with the statutes. But it was Babiš and a not entirely fixed circle of people around him, largely made up of hired electoral experts and members of the party presidium, who had the main say in choosing the candidates for the top – i.e. the most attractive – positions in the candidate lists (Kopeček 2016). In selecting these top candidates, the emphasis was placed on creating the most attractive offer possible to voters. Thus, national or local notables who joined ANO ahead of the elections were frequently selected. Professionally they were often managers or businesspeople. In some cases they were recruited under time pressure as late as August 2013. This was because the elections were called early. Those approached sometimes had no prior links with ANO.

A good example is Martin Kolovratník, the director of the Pardubice station of Czech Radio, who was approached by the ANO (and Agrofert) human resources officer, Daniel Rubeš. Kolovratník described it as follows: 'The offer came on Friday. I said this is an interesting offer, but before I make a decision – this would completely change my life – I'd like to meet Mr Babiš personally. That was arranged over the weekend and on Monday I saw Babiš for half an hour [...] in the evening I received the following from Rubeš: OK, you've convinced him, you've attracted his attention, we offer you the position of regional leader' (Kolovratník 2018).

When nominating ministers for ANO into the coalition government after the 2013 elections, Babiš proceeded in a similarly informal manner: he discussed the matter with a few of his closest collaborators, and conducted *ad hoc* consultations with experts in relevant areas (Kolovratník 2018; Pilný 2018). He did likewise when replacing ministers in this government, in creating a minority single-party ANO government after the 2017 elections (which failed to win the parliament's confidence) as well as the next government in summer 2018. Whether the ministers nominated were or were not ANO members mattered little to Babiš.

At ANO's inception, the people who came together under its banner often had no prior acquaintance with each other. For this reason, in creating candidate lists for the 2013 parliamentary elections, ANO headquarters sought to run basic checks on its candidates, concerned with such matters as their debts, whether they were subject to distress warrant as well as their prior membership of other parties. However, due to lack of time, the checks on candidates below the level

of leader in any given region were superficial. This meant that before and after the elections, ANO found itself in embarrassing situations that attracted media attention. In two cases, two of ANO's MPs even had to give up their seats due to their past sins: one had been a political commissar before 1989, i.e. he had indoctrinated a military unit in communist ideology, and the other had massive debt problems (Kopecký 2013).

With the 2014 local elections approaching, ANO responded to those affairs that attracted undesired media attention with more thoroughgoing checks on its candidates. The vetting was overseen by the party's new general manager. Her team first established as much as they could about the candidates' pasts from publicly available sources – they focused on similar matters as when parliamentary candidates had been checked before selection – and then interviewed them. This vetting from the party centre was unprecedented among post-1989 Czech parties, as it affected several thousand people. Based on their findings, ANO substantially revised the order of candidates on some lists; rejected a number of candidates; and even completely scrapped several local candidate lists (Kudláčková 2014).

The results were not particularly satisfactory, because soon after the local elections there appeared numerous conflicts among the newly elected ANO office holders – some of these were differences of opinion, others of personalities. Some of the elected refused to obey instructions issued by the party headquarters. These problems affected not just the non-partisans elected on ANO's ticket but party members as well. In pacifying these conflicts, the ANO leadership expelled rebellious members *en masse* and shut down local and even district-level organisations, even in large cities such as Ústí nad Labem, Karlovy Vary and Liberec. The price the party paid for this was a damaged image, as well as loss of many of the recently won local public offices. Contrasting with this was strong cohesion of the ANO parliamentary party throughout the period 2013–2017, with its MPs united as one when voting on bills (Hájek 2017). This was despite most of the ANO MPs not knowing each other at the time of the 2013 elections; many of them being distinctive personalities; and overwhelmingly having no prior links with Agrofert.

Certainly, one reason for this cohesion was the shared managerial or business origin of many of the MPs (Cirhan and Kopecký 2017). Also important was the approach of Babiš himself, who proved a good human resources manager. Unlike his ministers, for instance, he could not simply replace his MPs. He was not authoritarian when approaching them and did not sternly push through his views on the matter under discussion; he was careful to listen to his MPs. He would expect ANO ministers to explain their actions in the ANO parliamentary party on request. An even more essential role was played by Jaroslav Faltýnek, a member of the Agrofert inner leadership, who was the chair of the ANO parliamentary party and a good communicator. Faltýnek was valuable to

Babiš not just for his loyalty and organising skills but also because prior to ANO's founding he had been a Social Democrat for many years – albeit only in local and regional positions – and thus had significant political experience. As the chair of the parliamentary party, Faltýnek acted as a mediator, quelling disputes and always finding time to listen to rank-and-file MPs. This helped to attenuate conflict and dissent (Kolovratník 2018; Pilný 2018).

Let us now return to the evolution of candidate control mechanisms in ANO and the early expulsion of those found unsuitable. The experience of parliamentary and local elections, described above, led the party leadership to enshrine in ANO statutes efficient instruments for altering candidate lists. This meant that, at a party congress in early March 2015, the powers of the leadership were broadened. Beyond its existing power to approve candidate lists, the committee (*výbor*, a broader leadership body consisting of the members of the presidium and chairs of regional organisations) was given the power to strike off and reorder candidates on lists for elections to all public offices. The presidium was then given the option to nominate candidates for all elected public offices (Statutes ANO 2015). These two amendments gave the party leadership practically unlimited power to amend candidate lists in the future.

Similarly, the 2015 congress passed a motion that clarified the process by means of which the party presidium approved regional chairs once they were elected by regional congresses. This measure drastically limited the autonomy of ANO regional organisations; although it had been previously present in the statutes, the wording had been vague. The purpose of this amendment, effectively giving ANO leadership a veto, was similar to the power, also granted to the leadership, to freely amend candidate lists. The party leadership was given the power to prevent anyone 'objectionable for media or other reasons' from becoming a regional chair (Pustějovský 2018). This also sent a clear signal to the regional organisations to the effect that the party leadership had a powerful instrument to correct any 'aberrant behaviour' by regional leaders.

Equally remarkable was how the March 2015 congress was masterminded. Lessons were learned from the uncontrolled course of the previous congress in 2013. In 2015, Babiš, the only candidate for party chair, obtained the votes of all delegates in a secret ballot. The election of other members of the leadership then observed the views of the chair. Babiš publicly announced that he would like his loyal Faltýnek to be elected the first deputy chair, and the counter-candidates duly resigned their candidacies. Similarly, the leader's opinion was decisive when other deputy chairs were elected. There was virtually no discussion at the congress – a marked contrast to the two previous congresses in 2012 and 2013. Rather than a party-political event, the congress was redolent of the annual general meeting of a company dominated by a single shareholder.

The 2015 congress was a watershed, marking the shift from a rather informal model of management, where influence in the party derived not so much from

holding party office as from actual closeness to the leader, to a model that was substantially determined by official party positions. This brought greater stability and clarity to decision-making, but did not actually alter in any way the pivotal role of the leader and the party's strong centralism.

The next congress in 2017 adopted another safeguard, giving the power to strike off candidates and freely amend candidate lists – previously a matter for the presidium – also to the party chair. This safeguard had been previously in place informally, as confirmed by Richard Brabec, a deputy chair, after the congress: 'Mr Babiš, of course, has always had that informal position, even within the presidium, of being able to influence matters personally, because whether you put it into the statutes is one thing, but whether your influence in the movement is such that you can simply do it, is another' (ČRo Plus 2017).

After the 2016 regional elections, there was much less conflict among ANO elected office holders than there had been following local elections two years previously. In part this was due to the fact that many fewer people stood for regional election on ANO's tickets than in local elections, and thus could be more easily vetted. More importantly, most of them were ANO members, and as such subject to checks under an already established regime, described below.

The situation prior to the 2017 elections to the Chamber of Deputies was different compared to 2013. When it was time to draft candidate lists for these elections, the party's geographical structure was already stabilised, in marked contrast with the 2013 elections to the same body, when party structure was still nascent. Now, ANO regional congresses approved lists of candidates as suggested by regional presidiums, and the order of candidates was influenced by the views and agreements of self-confident local elites who could rely on their numerous positions on local and regional politics. To some extent, ANO came closer to earlier Czech parties, whose geographical branches (especially regional organisations) traditionally exerted significant weight. And yet, there was always the risk that the ANO leadership and chair would use the strong powers awarded to them, and this effectively prevented any serious autonomy among regional branches. Indeed, during the nomination process, Babiš sent out signals of his readiness to interfere with candidate lists to the party's geographical branches. For example, comprehensive information was sent to the regions about the work of the party's MPs in the Chamber, accompanied by the leader's statement that 'when discussing candidate lists one must have a clear evaluation of them' (Adamičková and Königová 2017).

Thus, situations where a popular ANO face wishing to stand for re-election did not obtain a position at the top of the candidate list or below, or people were placed on candidate lists who proved problematic for the party headquarters for one reason or other, were rare. The ANO presidium and committee corrected the greatest 'deviations' during the final approval of candidate lists in late June 2017. Thus the chair did not have to exert his special power of veto.

At the end of the party's founding period, the statutes as amended granted the party chair and leadership efficient control over candidate selection. The newly installed safeguards worked well.

Exclusive membership

Alongside the checks on candidate lists, it was the extreme exclusivity of ANO membership that played an important role in securing party cohesion. A few figures will help to orient the reader. Shortly before the 2013 elections, ANO had only about 800 members but nearly 7,000 membership candidates (Smlsal, 2013). This reflected the attractiveness of these elections' emerging black horse, one that prospective politicians were well advised to mount. However, most of those interested were left standing outside the party's gates. This was a deliberate strategy. Before the 2013 elections, Babiš claimed that his party was not about having 'thousands of members, but, primarily, sympathisers and prospective voters' (Válková 2013; cf. Charvát and Just 2016).

Nor was there a significant increase in the following years and in late 2017 ANO still had only about 3,000 members, despite the substantial interest after the party had won the parliamentary elections. To compare, we note that in 2017 other Czech parliamentary parties had much larger memberships, to wit, the Social Democrats, ca. 19,000; the Civic Democrats, ca. 14,000; the Christian Democrats, ca. 25,000; and the Communists, ca. 40,000 (Brodničková and Danda 2018).

The origin of the exclusivity of ANO's membership is again found in the party's statutes. Prospective members have to agree with the party's statutes and its moral code, submit a CV and declare that they are free of debts and have no criminal record. Since the 2015 congress, they also have to attach a statement from the state criminal record repository, thus giving the documents they produce a seal of official approval. A candidate's application must be approved by local party presidium. This triggers a six-month waiting period, after which the membership is approved (or rejected) by the ANO presidium, i.e. the inner leadership. This admission process makes ANO much less accessible than earlier political parties.

Interviews with ANO politicians show that this is no formality, but has gradually become a stable and strictly followed procedure. The most important filter is applied to membership candidates at the very beginning of the process. As explained by the chair of the party's organisation in the second largest Czech city, Brno: 'We collect all those documents and only when the dossier on the person is complete does the admission process start [...] Obviously, if there were some fundamental issues, for instance in the criminal record, there would be consequences' (Dvořák 2017). The documents submitted by applicants are today checked by professionals: regional ANO managers.

The half-a-year waiting period to which membership candidates are subjected is understood 'as a protection period from unknown people', as it has been aptly described by the chair of a regional organisation and ANO chief manager in 2017 (Pustějovský, 2018). In other words, this period is another safeguard. During the waiting period it is established whether the candidate is willing to become involved in party activities. The period can be shortened or waived for people in which ANO has a special interest, typically popular mayors or other notables.

ANO checks not only its prospective but also its actual members. This is clearly stated by a requirement added to the statutes at the 2015 party congress, requiring members to notify the party if they are subject to 'any proceedings, especially criminal, offence or distrain proceedings' (Statutes ANO 2015). Thus, in theory, members should notify the party even of such minor failings as parking offences. Such a broadly conceived control mechanism has no parallel in any other Czech party. In practice, this provision is applied benevolently, because it is difficult to enforce. Its main purpose is damage limitation to the party image; what matters is that, should a senior party figure commit some misdemeanour, they will be ready to answer journalists' questions and avoid being caught out (Malá 2018).

ANO also has a simple and effective mechanism for getting rid of an undesirable member (or membership candidate). The decision to expel a member is taken by the party presidium, with immediate effect. In this process the party's geographical branches play a secondary role, and should a dispute arise it is the party leadership which has the main say. Although the expellee can appeal to the party's arbitration and conciliation commission, this does not have a suspensory effect. Some of the reasons for expulsion are vaguely formulated in the statutes, even though they have been made more specific over time. According to current statutes, 'acting at variance with the interests' of the party is a sufficient reason for expulsion (Statutes ANO 2017). There is nothing more specific than this, and what this means is ultimately decided by the presidium. Thus, Babiš's party can easily and quickly expel problematic or undesirable members. The greatest wave of expulsions in ANO followed the conflicts at the local level, as described above.

'We're Babiš's team!' The stabilisation of electoral-professional background

Electoral and marketing experts and analysts have been essential for ANO's political success. What prior to the 2013 elections was a quickly assembled group of people working on the campaign has in subsequent years developed into stable communications, marketing and analytical service facilities of ANO. Top experts, originally hired temporarily, have become a permanent fixture of these facilities. This establishment of services has been connected with the frequency

of elections in the country: in 2014 alone, there were no fewer than three polls (European, local and to the upper chamber of the parliament). Even more important was the decision to wage a permanent campaign in support of Babiš's and ANO's government image. The analysts have also undertaken other tasks, for example, preparing materials for the party's MPs and updating data collected on voters and other matters (Bastlová 2016; Matušková 2015; Prchal 2017).

The entrepreneurial origin of the party has, curiously, left its marks on its terminology. For several years and based on a managerial decision, the ANO expert facilities were split into 'divisions' (*divize* – a term that in Czech has evident business connotations). This was more of a formal matter without fundamental consequences, but it did illustrate how party politics was colonised by the corporate thinking brought over from Agrofert. According to Marek Prchal, a marketing expert and officially the chief of the new media division, what remained crucial was a 'strong informal structure' associated with creativity; it was not essential that people sit together in an office ('we are not an authority'), because 'I can work anywhere' (Prchal 2017).

Crucially, Andrej Babiš has continuously informed the contents of ANO political communications. As Prchal expressed it, 'We work for the Boss, others [i.e. ANO politicians] can have an opinion, but he decides, he lives for it' (Prchal 2017). These words confirm a widely shared perception of Andrej Babiš within ANO. The substantial impact of well-managed party communications is documented by the fact that Babiš's profile on Facebook – the most important social network in the Czech Republic – has long been among those with the largest numbers of followers in the country.

The victorious wave which ANO has ridden since 2013 increased the certitude and self-confidence of the people in charge of its political message, and created a nearly boundless trust within ANO in their abilities. Thus, electoral and marketing experts could act with a substantial degree of autonomy, and not pay too much attention to the views of the broader ANO party elite. This included even highly visible materials such as a massive billboard campaign in a playful spirit, featuring Babiš and smileys, deployed by the party at the climax of the 2017 election campaign. The party's regional leaderships were not aware of these before they were put up, and some regional chairs disliked them very much (Malá 2018). The electoral-professional service facilities in ANO, with the leader as the focal point, therefore maintained their privileged position within the party even after the end of its foundation period.

Conclusions

To introduce the summary of our findings about ANO's internal functioning; the following quotation from the chair of one of its regional organisations seems apt: 'When you put your money into something, you've an interest in the

thing working well. And it'll work as long as it is managed.' (Pustějovský 2018) This aphorism characterises the dynamic and the logic of the party's transformations. ANO was born as a political project based on Andrej Babiš's objection to the corruption and incompetence of politicians and his offer of a technocratic solution, which fit well with the popular moods at the time. Essential for the success in the party's first phase of existence were the resources of the leader – including funding, personnel and other matters – that permitted the foundations of the party's organisation structure and its electoral-professional facilities to be built.

A stabilisation and routinisation of many party mechanisms was crucial for the establishment of ANO. The party's initial relatively informal management was soon replaced by much more official processes and structures, without this substantially affecting the centralism of its decision-making, concentrated on the figure of the leader. The creation of a robust system of safeguards was important for turning ANO into an efficient and loyal machine, operating on all levels of Czech politics. This included the vetting of candidates for public offices; significant barriers created to those wishing to join the party; strict control over membership; and approval of regional chairs by the party leadership. The beginnings of this system date from ANO's founding phase, but it was developed, made more precise and consistently implemented into party life only in the second phase of its development after the 2013 elections. Essential for this consolidation of the organisation were the amendments to statutes adopted in 2015 and, to a lesser extent, in 2017. The safeguards were set up in such a way as to effectively eliminate disloyalty of lower party branches and the rank-and-file. In some cases – such as the presidium's power to approve chairs of regional organisations and the leader's power to amend candidate lists freely – the safeguards have been primarily preventive and cautionary in character.

The party's electoral-professional service facilities, which are crucial for ANO's efficient political communications, also underwent a change after 2013. Starting as a quickly assembled group of experts who were improvising, it quickly mutated into a self-confident team enjoying a strong position in the party, which continues to be closely linked with the leader. Also important for ANO is the media empire that Babiš created during his involvement in politics: this supports the party's communications and improves its image.

What are the general implications of these results for the discussion about entrepreneurial parties in contemporary European politics? The example of ANO shows both how business practices are translated into politics and their limits. Interestingly, the mechanisms of centralised and strongly executive decision-making are present not just in the internal life of entrepreneurial parties, but also in their discourse. One of the interesting fields for future research, then, will be to observe how the activities and successes of entrepreneurial parties in European countries blend with such trends as the personalisation (Karvonen

2010), de-parliamentarisation (Strøm et al. 2006) and presidentialisation (Poguntke and Webb 2005) of politics.

This article was, however, focusing on the translation of business firm practices into internal organisation and internal life of the party. The analysis of the transformation of ANO in the period 2013–2017 showed constant presence and even increasing importance of these organisational features. The many informal but also formal control mechanisms applied to candidate and member selection show that entrepreneurial parties have been relatively successful in transferring the principles of human resource management from the business to the political sphere. Although these mechanisms cannot fully prevent the appearance of defiant or problematic politicians, they evidently allow for the quick and flexible replacement of inconvenient or discredited candidates. Ultimately, this application of human resource management principles strengthens the position of the leader and the central party apparatus, making the position of the party elite dependent not on the will of its membership – which in any case is not very populous – but on selection and control exercised from above. We demonstrated that the entrepreneurial parties differ not only from cartel parties but from other types of new political parties and movements filling the niches on electoral market in the context of the economic crisis in Europe (Coller et al. 2018: 1–9). Such parties are typically offering much wider space for intra-party democracy than the incumbents. Entrepreneurial parties are following exactly opposite strategy centralising internal decision-making and candidate selecting processes. The analysis of ANO demonstrates not only this very fact but encourages further elaboration of the very concept of the entrepreneurial party by stressing business-like intra-party mechanisms as well as analysing the limits posed by still present 'political' features.

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Is the "new" always "new"? Theoretical framework problems of new political parties' research: The Czech Republic experience[1]

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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 – Bytzek 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; Žúborová 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 *"genuinely new organization that appoints, for the first time, candidates at a general election to the system's representative assembly."*
Allan Sikk	*"(...) 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."*
Shlomit Barnea, Gideon Rahat	*"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."*

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 difficulties[5], 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; Pšeja 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 SZ[8] 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 VV[10] 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 PP[12] – 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 Dawn[14], 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 registration[17] and (f) activity.

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

Party	Founded	1st 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 (Späč 2013: 129; Havlík – Hloušek 2014: 556; Šárovec 2016: 20).

19 Subsequently, there was an internal split and the creation of the LIDEM party (see Späč 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 Späč 2013: 135–138).

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

Party	Founded	1st 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 years[27] 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 (Lidovky.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; Cirhan – Kopecký 2017; Hájek 2017; Brunnerová 2018; Buštíková – 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 2010[41].

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]	*with TOP 09*	*with TOP 09*	**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 Piráti – 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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Does Novelty Necessarily Mean Change? New Political Parties within the Polish Party System

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Abstract: *The aim of the paper is to assess new political parties in Poland and to examine the question of their perceived novelty and influence on the party system. We employ Barnea and Rahat's analytical framework to evaluate the newness of Polish parties in three party facets: party-in-the-electorate, party-as-organisation, party-in-government. This multi-dimensional analysis allows one to identify those fields in which any novelty may occur. Among the analysed factors is the new parties' electoral base that enables one to assess whether the parties managed to mobilise a new electorate or rather attracted supporters from existing parties instead. Last but not least, we study the changes caused by these parties within the whole party system. In our research we include parties that entered the parliament for the first time after the last two elections: in 2011 and 2015. Before that time the parliamentary scene in Poland seemed to be firmly closed with a nearly constant set of actors. Both in the 2005 and 2007 elections no new parties entered parliament. Hence the 2011 election is considered to be an opening for new parties, but does not necessarily bring about a significant change in the Polish party system in terms of the electoral support for the two largest parties or within patterns of electoral competition.*

Keywords: ***new political parties, Polish parties, party system change, political change***

Introduction

The second decade of the 21st century has brought about a lot of changes in the more or less institutionalised party systems of both Eastern and Western Europe[1]. The economic crisis of 2008 and the migrant crisis of 2015 have contributed to political instability and uncertainty. The establishment parties in Western Europe have been blamed for not being able to solve these emerging problems, hence disappointed voters have been increasingly willing to support new political groups. These trends are well known in the poorly institutionalised party systems of the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where new entities have been brought into parliaments with almost every election. The Polish party system also followed these patterns, till 2001 all subsequent elections enabled new parties to enter the parliament. However, after the radical change that occurred in the early 2000s, the system stabilised in a sense that in two subsequent elections (2005 and 2007) no new parties appeared in the Sejm[2]. It seemed as if the costs of entry were really high (Cox 1997; Hug 2001; Tavits 2006), mainly in terms of the availability of public funding for the incumbent parties. This resulted in a party cartel (Katz – Mair 1995) and severely limited new parties' access to the parliament (Wojtas 2008; Zbieranek 2015). Despite this, in 2011 one party (the Palikot Movement) and in 2015 two other entities (Kukiz'15, the Modern of Ryszard Petru) managed to overcome the entry barrier. It was hardly expected; hence it is worth studying these organisations as well as their impact on the party system. Therefore, the main aim of the article is to address the question as to whether these parties should be perceived as genuinely new or whether they refer to previously existing entities and in which areas. The second aim is to consider whether the appearance of these groupings in the parliament caused has significant changes in the party system.

In our opinion the Polish case is worth attention because of the paradox we observe and which we made as our preliminary assumption i.e. the entry of new parties has not caused meaningful changes in the party system as a whole. After the major shift referred to as 'a hurricane' or 'an earthquake' that occurred in 2001 (Haughton – Deegan-Krause 2015; Casal Bértoa – Guerra 2016) and which paved the way to the new cleavage, the party system seems to be quite stable, with the entrance of new parties making no significant change, especially in terms of the patterns of electoral competition as well as the type of party system. However, it must be admitted that so far only a short-term pattern can be

1 We can observe this for example in Austria or Germany where the level of support for the two biggest parties has decreased from election to election, but even more so in France and Italy where new political forces (En Marche! and Five Star Movement respectively) were able to beat the traditional parties in parliamentary elections in order to take state power.

2 The lower albeit more influential chamber of the Polish parliament.

observed after the subsequent elections, hence further research on this subject need to be conducted.

Returning to the first goal of the article (considering whether parties that entered the Polish Sejm for the first time in 2011 and 2015 were genuinely new) it is worth emphasising that perceiving parties as new or not depends to a great extent on the theoretical approach adopted by the researcher. Parties sometimes arise as a result of a split, merger or reorganisation in existing parties. They change their labels, programmes, structures, leadership or even electoral base and it is crucial to consider whether this is already the beginning of a new party or simply a change occurring within an existing one; and therein to assess to what extent and in which areas this novelty (if any) occurs. In order to assess newness of the analysed parties, a framework elaborated by Shlomit Barnea and Gideon Rahat (2011) has been used as it best suits the purposes of our article. The concept allows one not only to examine whether a party is new or not, but also to distinguish in which areas it is new and in which should be deemed as a continuation of the possible predecessor. The realisation of the aforementioned aim is perceived as crucial in order to achieve the second goal. The impact the new parties have within the party systems depends to a great extent on the previous assessment concerning party novelty as such. If changes within the party do not bring about the emergence of a genuinely new one, but it is still considered as novelty within the party system, these may create a misconception concerning the change of the party system or cause a mistaken perception as to its instability. Hence, only after proving that the parties that entered the parliament for the first time were genuinely new can we move on to analysing their impact on the system.

As far as the second goal is concerned, the choice of model for party system change is more complicated as the occurring changes are very diverse, so are the models (Flanagan – Dalton 1990: 232). After considering the usefulness of some concepts elaborated below, we decided to base our model for party system change on the classic definition of party system by Giovanni Sartori (2005) composed of two elements (*format* and *mechanics*) and perceive the party system change as modification of these components. Therefore, the party system shift here means the appearance of new relevant parties and/or changing relations between them, mainly in terms of competition patterns.

The article is divided into six parts. In the first, existing approaches and concepts are sketched in order to substantiate the research framework used in the article. First of all, definitions and measurements of party newness are outlined and the contribution of Barnea and Rahat is presented in more detail. There is also an overview of party system change models. Special attention is paid to the definition of party system by Sartori as it is used as a point of departure for the analysis of the Polish case. However, it is not our purpose to provide a thorough review of the literature on new parties and party system change,

but only to draw attention to the diversity occurring in this field and to point to the definitions and research approach that will be used in the article. In the second part, the contemporary Polish political scene at the parliamentary level will be presented in a nutshell. Subsequently, in using this outlined framework the newcomers are analysed in the three dimensions of party activity in which novelty can occur: party-in-the-electorate (third part), party-as-organisation (fourth part) and party-in-government (fifth part). The last and sixth part is entirely devoted to changes in the whole party system in order to assess to what extent the newcomers brought about changes within the Polish party system, particularly in the level of electoral strength of the two leading parties and the patterns of competition. In our research we used various datasets: party statutes and manifestos, data from the National Electoral Commission, national election studies, public opinion polls as well as the official websites of the parties analysed.

The concepts of party novelty and party system change

As was already suggested in the introduction, the question of party novelty is a complicated one, because the response largely depends on the criteria of newness that have been adopted. In the subject literature are many definitions and measurement tools that bring us closer to the issue of how novelty can be understood. Overall they can be divided into two groups: these perceiving party novelty as a dichotomous variable and helping us to answer unambiguously whether a party is new or not (Harmel 1985; Harmel – Robertson 1985; Bartolini – Mair 1990; Hug 2001; Birch 2003; Sikk 2005; Barnea-Rahat 2011; Hinto 2012; Bolleyer 2013; Mainwaring *et al* 2016), and those regarding it as a non-dichotomous variable and focusing on various aspects of party activity in order to explain in which areas and to what extent a party is new (Barnea, Rahat 2011; Litton 2015; Sikk – Köker 2017). These approaches not only help justify the choice of analysed parties but also assess areas in which they are genuinely new.

Newness as a dichotomous variable

Definitions and tools placed in this group simply enable us to recon what distinguishes a new party from an old one and helps address the question as to whether all the parties that have emerged should be considered new. According to Robert Harmel: 'New parties are, quite clearly, not all alike' (1985: 409), he included in his researches all those groupings created in the analysed period that could be identified in available sources regardless of size or electoral strength.[3]

3 Included in the analysis were 233 new parties formed in 19 West European and Anglo-American democracies from 1960 through 1980.

In the research conducted by him together with John D. Robertson they define a political party as 'an organisation that purports to have as one of its goals the placement of its avowed members in governmental office' (Harmel – Robertson 1985: 507). Within the scope of their interests were not only parties created from scratch ('naturally'), but also by merger, split or the reorganisation of a former party or parties. They included both parties that were created around 'new issues' (ecology, devolution, separatism, immigration, religious issues etc.) and those offering an alternative on an 'old issue' (mainly the right-left dimension) (Harmel – Robertson 1985: 509).

Narrower definitions encompass mergers and splits only with additional conditions. For example, if the party resulting from the merger has a new name (Birch 2003) or if the party originates from a minor split of an established party (Bolleyer 2013). In the case of a split sometimes the largest successor party is omitted and only the other splinter parties are qualified as new (Mainwaring *et al* 2016). In other definitions, parties are perceived as new if they appoint candidates at a general election to the parliamentary assembly for the first time, including genuinely new parties and splits, but not electoral alliances or parties resulting from mergers (Hug 2001; Kreuzer – Pettai, 2003). In even narrower definitions only parties that do not derive from the existing structures are regarded as new, hence mergers and splits are excluded (Bartolini – Mair 1990). Allan Sikk's definition excludes from the set of new parties not only all those resulting from splits and mergers, but also those in which there is continuity in terms of political leadership and personnel, a 'genuinely' new party changes party politics substantively in contrast to those that are essentially continuations of old parties (2005).

The aforementioned definitions do not constitute a comprehensive overview, because this was not our aim, however they shed light on different approaches to party newness and enable one to define the scope of analysis. The starting point when defining the subject of our research is Simon Hug's definition (2001), hence we take into consideration parties that were for the first time on the ballot in elections held in the analysed period encompassing the 2011 and 2015 elections, but at the same time we limit the scope of the analysis to parties that managed to overcome the electoral threshold. This is in compliance with the Airo Hinto concept of party 'emergence' that refers to the existence of a new party at both the electoral and legislative level. At the electoral level a party must have contested elections and at the legislative one a party must secure at least one seat in parliament to be taken into consideration (2012: 8). There are three such parties in the analysed period, one that entered the parliament after the 2011 election (the Palikot Movement) and two that managed to do the same in 2015 (Kukiz'15, the Modern of Ryszard Petru). This narrowing of the subject of the study will enable us to pursue an in-depth analysis of the particular cases.

Newness as a non-dichotomous variable

Dichotomous definitions of party newness deliver the criterion (a kind of threshold) that enables one to assign each party to one of two groups and to classify it as simply 'old' or 'new'. However, it is obvious that even if organisations are included within the group of new parties, they can be new in only some dimensions or to some extent, hence a few interesting multi-dimensional frameworks were created that enable the areas and the level of party novelty to be recognised (Barnea – Rahat 2011; Litton 2015; Sikk – Köker 2017). Sikk and Köker's concept is interesting as it allows us to assess both areas and level (extent) of party newness in each of these areas. However, the authors took into consideration only three dimensions (areas) of party activity: organisational structure, party leader change and party candidate selection; excluding, for example, party programmes, which we consider a serious omission. In turn, Litton's conceptualisation of party novelty is a 'thick' one as it encompasses changes in party attributes (name, leaders, programme) as well as organisational changes within parties (structural affiliation). The last one is recorded using eight categories describing various forms of party genesis including *inter alia* splits, mergers, alliances or being created from scratch. In our opinion this framework is useful especially in order to do comparative research based on many cases and electoral cycles as it enables us to compare them over time[4]. All in all, even if this framework is really complex, it does not suit our purposes since, firstly, the scope of our interests involves only three organisations; secondly, we tend to analyse them at the moment of their entrance to the parliament and within the ongoing parliamentary term; and thirdly, the introductory assumption is that all three were created from scratch ('start-up parties', Litton 2015), hence they all belong to the last category distinguished by Litton.

Barnea and Rahat's framework is also comprehensive as it employs as much as eight criteria of party novelty, but it is more suitable to do in-depth research on case studies and does not require longer time perspective, hence it is useful to assess whether the analysed parties should be perceived as genuinely new or they refer to the previously existing groupings and possibly in which areas. It is why we have decided to use this concept in our research starting from presenting it in detail. Barnea and Rahat took as a starting point the well-known concept of parties as 'tripartite systems of interaction' elaborated on by Valdimer O. Key (1942). According to this, a political party is composed of three 'faces': party-in-the-electorate, party-as-organisation and party-in-government. Their contribution consists of taking the concept from the theoretical to the analytical level, proposing criteria of newness referring to these three dimensions

4 She recorded and mapped 502 cases of party change over four EU electoral cycles from 1989 to 2009 (Litton 2015: 723).

and operationalising them. This results in a checklist to assess the newness of political parties (Table 1).

Table 1: The analytical framework for measurement of party 'newness' by Barnea and Rahat

Party face	Criterion	Operational definition
Party-in-the-electorate	Party label	Is the name genuinely new or does it contain an 'old' party name?
	Ideology	How different is the 'new' party platform from the old party/ies platform/s?
	Voters	How different is the 'new' party electoral base from the old one?
Party-as-organization	Formal/ legal status	Is the party registered as new?
	Institutions	Were the party institutions separated and differentiated from those of the old party/ies?
	Activists	Does the 'new' party have new activists or did they 'immigrate' to it from the old party/ies?
Party-in-government	Representatives	Are the top candidates new (non-incumbents)? Did most or all of them come from a single party?
	Policies	How different are 'new' party's policies from the old party's/ies policies?

Source: Barnea nad Rahat (2010: 306).

In the first aspects, party-in-the electorate, Barnea and Rahat placed three criteria: party label, ideology and voters in order to answer the question as to whether a party under assessment has a name, platform and electoral base that distinguish it from previous parties. The second 'face', party-as-organisation, is also connected with three criteria: a formal/legal base, activists and institutions that allow one to evaluate whether a party is registered as new and its institutions and activists that are different from the party sources of the kind belonging to the former party or parties. In the third area, party-in-government, two criteria were employed (representatives and policies) that enable one to assess top party candidates and the party's policies from the viewpoint of party newness in comparison to a previously existing party or parties. Those eight criteria will serve to analyse three Polish parties in order to consider in which arenas they are genuinely new.

Some concepts of party system change

Party system change is one of the most elaborated upon subjects in the literature, hence there are also many concepts attempting to explain different kinds of such shifts. Some of them are tailored for special purposes, others are more universal. After a brief overview of various frameworks (*inter alia* Lipset, Rok-

kan 1967; Wolinetz 1979; Mair 1990), including these related to the new party entry (Cox 1997; Hug 2001; Tavits 2006, 2008; van Biezen – Rashkova 2014; Haughton – Deegan-Krause 2015), the attention is paid to the more general concept of party system by Sartori (2005). It allows us to disaggregate changes occurring in the number of relevant parties (*format*) and in relations between them (*mechanics*) from election to election and does not require long-term perspective, hence it perfectly serves our aim here.

One of the first, now classic, frameworks for explaining party system change revolves around the concepts of alignments and realignments. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan' s cleavage theory (1967) enables us to explain party systems' responses to challenges occurring in their environment, including the emergence of new social issues. As established parties may not be able to pick up new demands and mobilise discontent quickly and credibly enough, new parties can emerge to articulate these issues and concerns (Wolinetz 1979), hence whether new parties appear or not may depend on the established partiers' response to the new issue (Flanagan-Dalton 1990: 245). Moreover, as Wolinetz aptly noticed: 'a newly emergent issue that might force a realignment of a two-party system may effect only one or two of the parties in the multi-party system and so the change may be localised to the extent that the party system as a whole is unaffected' (1979: 3). Apart from 'the location of change' Peter Mair pointed to the other parameters of party system change: 'the extent of change' that assesses its significance for the party system as a whole and 'the duration of change' that enables us to assess whether a new party can survive. A party that emerges quickly will also quickly disappear, the more gradual the party system change the more likely the party can adapt (Mair 1990).

Research on new parties focuses largely on the broadly understood cost of their entry. The theory of strategic entry is related to the calculations of political elites about the costs and benefits of entering the electoral arena (Cox 1997). Rules of registering a party and rules that determine winning parliamentary seats (van Biezen – Rashkova 2014) as well as public funding available for parties can also be of great importance (Hug 2001). These should be compared with the potential benefits of holding office. However, what matters are not only the elite-level decisions to enter or not to enter politics but also voter-level decisions to support the newcomers or not (Tavits 2008). Even if the concept of strategic entry is a key to understanding party system stability and change (Tavits 2006: 99), it is rather related to conditions of new parties' emergence, hence it does not address the question of what these entries mean for the whole party system.

In the subject literature one can find the assumption that new parties shall cause political shifts. According to Haughton and Deegan-Krause, party system changes depend to a large extent on the entrance of newcomers and the exit of established parties (2015: 62). In turn, Tavits aptly claims that even without replacing the established parties with new ones, their mere presence has an

impact on electoral competition by driving votes away from existing parties and thus destabilising the electoral arena (Tavits 2006: 99). However, this is not always the case. Firstly, as was already mentioned, new parties can only claim that they are new, but in fact they are a continuation of previously existing which have been rebranded. Secondly, even if newly created parties are genuinely new, their impact on the party system can be limited because of the aforementioned 'location of change' (Wolinetz 1979; Mair 1990). They may simply replace the parties that were newcomers in the previous parliament, but which have ceased to exist after only one parliamentary term. In this way the overall impact of new parties remains at the same level without causing any harm to established parties, their electoral gains and therefore competition patterns. In this case we are dealing with a situation in which a party system is divided into an 'established parties subsystem' and a 'new parties subsystem'. Whereas the changes occur in the second one and new parties replace one another, 'the established parties subsystem' remains unaffected (Haughton – Deegan-Krause 2015).

Following Wolinetz's as well as Haughton and Deegan-Krause's aforementioned claims about a possible lack of impact of new parties on the party system or 'the established parties subsystem', the definition of party system by Sartori is employed to assess the Polish case. A party system encompasses political parties themselves (*format*) and relations between them in terms of competition and cooperation (*mechanics*) (Sartori 2005: 113, 129). The party system shift means that its *format* or *mechanics* or both were changed. The former occurs when new relevant parties (possessing coalition or blackmail potential) have appeared contributing to a more fragmented system. The latter concerns the mode of interaction between relevant parties. It is related to the level of polarisation in the system and to the appearance of a new dimension of party competition (Mair 2000: 30–31). With this concept in mind, the Polish party system and parties which entered the Sejm for the first time after the last two elections in 2011 and 2015 are analysed

The Polish party system at the time of new parties' entries

It is worth mentioning that since the first democratic election in 1991, the Polish party system has been highly pluralistic, and all subsequent elections enabled new parties to enter the parliament until 2001. Nevertheless, quite clear patterns of party competition occurred with the main cleavage related to the electoral struggle between the post-communist and post-Solidarity parties (Grabowska 2004). The first camp was composed mainly of the Democratic Left Alliance (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*, SLD) and the Polish Peasant Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, PSL), the latter consisted of some post-Solidarity parties that have experienced several splits and mergers. However, in 2001 two new parties entered the parliament: the Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO) and Law

and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS) and this was such a significant change for the whole party system that it was referred to as an 'earthquake'. In 2005 the patterns of party competition were changed with the main rivalry line being drawn between these two main post-Solidarity parties: PO and PiS, the first one represents 'liberal Poland' or transition winners, the latter 'social Poland' or transition losers (Obacz 2018; Casal Bértoa – Guerra 2016).

Both in the 2005 and 2007 elections no new parties entered the Sejm, hence the Polish party system seemed to be firmly stabilised with a near constant set of actors (Stanley, Cześnik 2016). In the parliament of 2007 only four parties were represented, these related to the two dominant cleavages mentioned above: Law and Justice, the Civic Platform, the Democratic Left Alliance and the Polish Peasant Party. Both the electoral system and the party financing system from public sources looked as if they had served to preserve the existing set of parties at parliamentary level. This was to change in 2011, hence the election held then is considered an opening up for new parties. In this year the Palikot Movement (*Twój Ruch*, TR) entered parliament and four years later this party was replaced in the election by two others: Kukiz'15[5] and the Modern of Ryszard Petru (*Nowoczesna Ryszarda Petru*, N).

The party in the electorate

The party label

According to Barnea and Rahat's criterion of party label, a party to be considered new must have a new name which clearly differentiates it from previous (existing) parties. In all three cases discussed here that condition was fulfilled. All three parties were started from scratch, in all three cases the name of the organisation included the surname of its founder. The Palikot Movement (*Ruch Palikota*) was established by former PO deputy and businessman, wine and vodka producer, Janusz Palikot. His party was registered in June 2011, and under this name it contested the election in October 2011, when it obtained 10.2% of the vote and 40 seats in the Sejm (PKW 2011). Later on in 2013, it was renamed Your Movement (*Twój Ruch*). The party also took part in the 2015 parliamentary election as part of a broader coalition: the United Left (*Zjednoczona Lewica*); however, it was not able to reach the electoral threshold and found itself outside of parliament.

Kukiz'15 was created by the well-known rock-musician Paweł Kukiz and took part in the elections of 2015 as an Electoral Committee of Voters (a legal form of electoral participation in Poland, designed for groups and individuals who are not part of any political parties), obtaining 8.81% of the vote and 42

5 Kukiz'15 is not formally registered as a political party; however, it fulfils the functions ascribed to parties, hence we have decided to include it in our research.

seats in the Sejm (PKW 2015). The official name of Kukiz'15 is the Association for the New Constitution Kukiz'15 (*Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Nowej Konstytucji Kukiz'15*), which is fully original. The Modern of Ryszard Petru (*Nowoczesna Ryszarda Petru*) was established by the economist Ryszard Petru and registered in August 2015. In the election held in October of the same year it gained the support of 7.6% of voters and 28 seats (PKW 2015). The name of the party can also be treated as new, because neither of its two elements were previously used by any other political party. In 2017 the party was renamed the Modern (*Nowoczesna*), dropping the name of its founder, Ryszard Petru.

Party ideology

Moving on to the issue of ideology it must be underlined that the analysed parties are not split or mergers, hence there are no specific party programmes (e.g., of their predecessors) to which their platform could be compared. Taking this into consideration we have simply analysed their programmes looking for criticism of the existing solutions and for suggestions of changes in order to identify whether their propositions make any difference for the political stances represented by the existing parliamentary parties. The Palikot Movement's proposals are studied on the basis of the party programme 'A Modern State. A Secular State. A Friendly State' (Ruch Palikota 2011a), the parliamentary election programme of 2011 (Ruch Palikota 2011 b), as well as the draft 'A plan for changes 2014–2019' (Twój Ruch 2014). The main principles of the Modern of Ryszard Petru can be found in 'Programme directions' adopted in 2015 before the parliamentary election (Nowoczesna 2015) and especially in the 'Programme Modern Poland for everyone', approved a year later (Nowoczesna 2016). The analysis of Kukiz'15 is based on the only programme this association adopted in 2015: 'A Strategy for Changes. You can do it Poland! Kukiz'15' (Kukiz 2015).

The programmatic stances of the parties differ significantly between the Palikot Movement and the Modern of Ryszard Petru on the one hand and Kukiz'15 on the other. When considering economic issues, the first two should be positioned as making a commitment to liberal values. In the socio-cultural dimension characterised by the GAL – TAN division (ecological, alternative and libertarian *versus* traditional, authoritarian and nationalist values) both parties should be placed definitely on the side of the former (Stanley – Czesnik 2014: 707; Casal Bértoa – Guerra 2016: 233). Kukiz'15 is dissimilar in both dimensions, it tends to combine conservative principles in the social-cultural dimension with an economic nationalism that claims the economy should serve the nation (Markowski 2016). Comparing the party programmes we have noticed that even though their position on many issues differs significantly, what they have in common is disapproval towards the situation contemporary Poland is in.

The main area of criticism is related to the political establishment and mainstream parties as well as the inappropriate functioning of state institutions, which are perceived as repressive towards citizens. The lack of transparency in the decision-making process and public finances is condemned as well. All parties point to an ailing legislative process, excessive bureaucracy and the inept functioning of the court system as matters that should be fixed. Kukiz'15 points to corruption and nepotism as being among the most important problems, whereas for the Palikot Movement and the Modern of Ryszard Petru it is the reduction in economic freedom and the privileged position enjoyed by the Catholic Church within public life.

The analysed parties have not limited themselves to mere critique, as they also have proposed some solutions for how to fix the existing problems. First of all, they are for a reform of the electoral system that should serve citizens (not parties) and advocate the abolishment of party financing from public state sources. Whereas the latter is important for all three parties, the former is a key matter for Kukiz'15 as this formation was created around the issue of single member districts to be introduced in Poland. They all aim at simplifying the tax system and the reduction of the national budget deficit. Their solution for improving the court system is to speed up court cases and to change the career path of judges, so that judicial appointments are granted to persons with professional and life experience and constitute the culmination of a legal career rather than its beginning. The Palikot Movement and Kukiz'15 are for an increase in the use of direct democracy, especially by using referendum as well as including citizens in the candidate selection process before public elections, something they tried to do starting with themselves (see below).

Moreover, the Palikot Movement and the Modern of Ryszard Petru postulate deregulation of the economy emphasising the need for competition as well as underlining the equality of women and men throughout public life. For both parties Poland's European integration is of great importance. They also agree that the privileged position of the Catholic Church in the public sphere should be reduced. Kukiz'15 is much more sceptical about European integration and more positively evaluates the engagement of the Church.

Potential similarities in these programmes to the platforms of existing parties could be found in the case of the Palikot Movement and the Modern of Ryszard Petru, as both have had something in common with the Civic Platform (PO). The leader of the former, Janusz Palikot, was an MP of this party and as such ran the parliamentary committee 'Friendly state'. It must be admitted that some concepts that arose there were then to be continued by the new party; however, they should be considered to be more Palikot's own projects than ideas of the PO. These two parties are close to each other on the Polish political spectrum; however, the Palikot Movement cannot be considered a formation that emulates the PO platform (Stanley – Czesnik 2016: 708).

In turn, the Modern of Ryszard Petru has sometimes been called 'the Civic Platform bis' by the media because of its liberal stance and because in the 1990s its leader Ryszard Petru was connected with the political milieu from which the Civic Platform partially arose. It is true that Ryszard Petru openly declared that his target was former, disenchanted voters of this party (Dąbrowska 2015). However, at the same time the Modern of Ryszard Petru was supposed to be a clear alternative to PO. This intention was visible in the above-mentioned postulates for changes in the political system which were completely absent from the PO programme in 2015 and which can be interpreted as characteristic for the challenger party. The demands for more economic freedom or deregulation in the many spheres of the economy were much more radical than the economic propositions of the Civic Platform. In the electoral campaign before the parliamentary election in 2015, the candidates of the Modern of Ryszard Petru emphasised the 'unfulfilled promises' of PO such as tax reductions, privatisation and improvement in the functioning of the courts (Nowoczesna prezentuje 2015). All those demands were presented by the new party to be in contrast to PO.

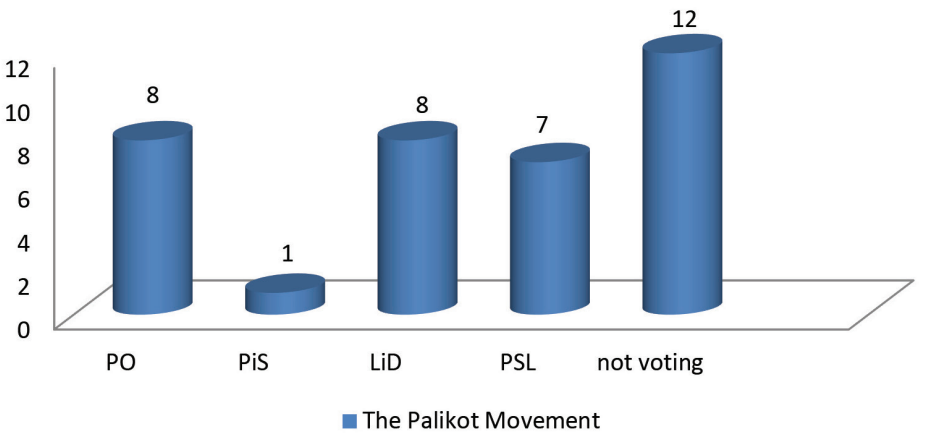
The party voters

In the analysis of the electorate of the discussed parties, we would like to draw attention to those voters who either switched their votes or declared they had not voted in the previous election. In the figures below we have used the data from public opinion surveys conducted by CBOS, and we have focused on the declarations made by those voters who in previous elections had voted for other parties and then switched their votes respectively in favour of the Palikot Movement (in 2011), Kukiz'15 and the Modern of Ryszard Petru (in 2015). We particularly consider the four parties which belonged to the political mainstream in the 2007–2011 and 2011–2015 parliamentary terms: the Civic Platform (PO), Law and Justice (PiS), the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) and the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). In 2007 this was the electoral coalition Left and Democrats (*Lewica i Demokraci*, LiD), which was formed by SLD and the Democratic Party-demokraci.pl (*Partia Demokratyczna-demokraci.pl*, PD).

In 2011, the Palikot Movement was able to attract more or less similar numbers of voters from the three mainstream parties as were voted for in 2007: PO (8%), PSL (7%) and the leftist LiD (8%), with the smallest group being former supporters of PiS (1%). However, taking into account the size of the electorate of each party in absolute numbers, it is worth mentioning that those 8% of former PO voters who supported the Palikot Movement, formed 43% of the whole electorate of the said election (Cybulska 2011:6). Also worth emphasising is the figure which illustrates those supporters of the Palikot Movement who did not vote in 2007. Out of the whole group of non-voters in 2007, 12% decided to

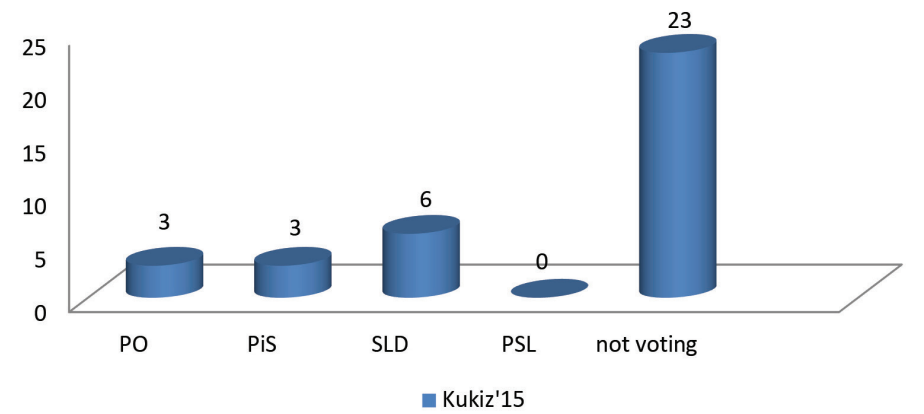
support this party in 2011. This may be interpreted as the potential to mobilise new voters, particularly if we take into account that (as is shown by another set of data) 24% of the youngest voters, who had not been eligible to vote in 2007, decided in 2011 to support the Palikot Movement (Cybulska 2011:7).

Figure 1: Voters of the Palikot Movement (%) in 2011 who in the previous election voted for the other parties



Source: Developed by the authors on: Cybulska, Agnieszka (2011): Wierność wyborcza-przepływy między elektoratami partyjnymi z roku 2007 i 2011, Warszawa: CBOS, Komunikat z Badań BS 151/2011.

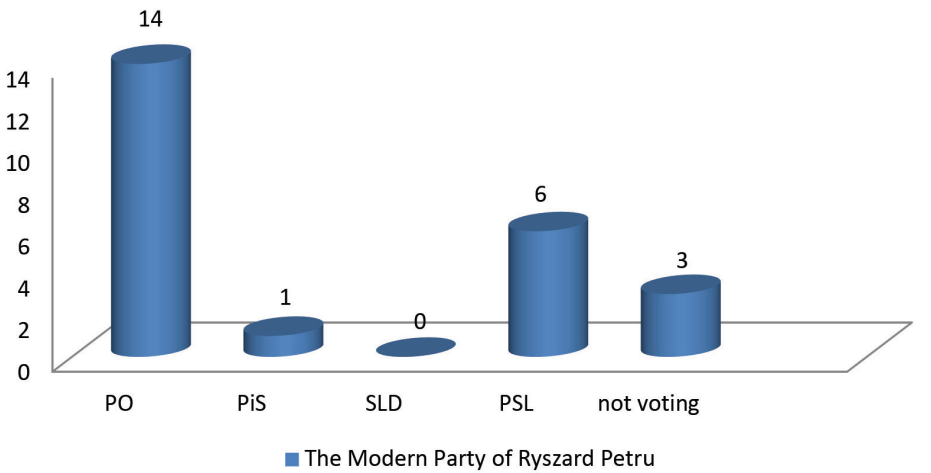
Figure 2: Voters of Kukiz'15 (%) in 2015 who in the previous election voted for the other parties



Source: Developed by the authors on: Cybulska, Agnieszka (2015): Przepływy elektoratów w wyborach parlamentarnych 2011–2015, Warszawa: CBOS, Komunikat z Badań No 166/2015.

Figure 2 shows that Kukiz'15 was able to attract a really large group of people who declared themselves non-voters in the election of 2011. Taking into account the rather conservative profile of this formation, the decision by 6% of former voters for the leftist SLD to switch their votes may seem surprising. Similar groups of former supporters of PO and PiS (3%) decided to switch vote in favour of Kukiz'15, however it is important to note that no previous voters of PSL decided to back Kukiz'15 in the 2015 elections.

Figure 3: Voters of the Modern Party of Ryszard Petru (%) in 2015 who in the previous election voted for other parties



Source: Developed by the authors on: Cybulska, Agnieszka (2015): Przepływy elektoratów w wyborach parlamentarnych 2011–2015, Warszawa: CBOS, Komunikat z Badań No 166/2015.

In the case of the Modern of Ryszard Petru it is significant that the biggest group of switched votes came from former PO supporters (14%). It is also important to note the absence of any former leftist voters of SLD. The Modern of Ryszard Petru was able to attract quite a significant group of switched voters from PSL (6%), yet far fewer from PiS (1%). Taking into account the fact that it was a new party, the small group of former non-voters (3%) may be surprising; however, the figures showing notable numbers of former PO supporters may induce one into thinking that the Modern of Ryszard Petru was more attractive for disillusioned voters than for those who had not been mobilised to vote in previous elections.

In our opinion it may be also worth observing the voting decisions of the youngest group of voters, because in the case of the two new parties analysed here (i.e. the Palikot Movement and Kukiz'15) their ability to mobilise those

voters was strongly emphasised (Marzęcki – Stach 2013, Roguska 2017).[6] In 2011 the most popular party among voters in the 18–24 age group was the Civic Platform, which gained 36% of their support. Law and Justice obtained 24%, the Palikot Movement 20%, the Polish Peasant Party 6%, while the Democratic Left Alliance got 5% (Hipsz 2011). In the case of 2015 we have data encompassing a broader group of youth, namely people from 18–29. Law and Justice gained 26.6% support, Kukiz'15 received 20.6 % of their vote, the Civic Platform 14.4%, the Modern of Ryszard Petru 7.8%, the Polish Peasant Party 3.7%, and the United Left, which was a coalition of various leftist parties and organisations, including SLD and Your Movement, got 3.4% (Wiadomości. wp.pl 2015). As to the other socio-demographic characteristics of the electorate in the case of Palikot Movement more than average religious indifference was emphasised (Pankowski 2011). Except for their young age, supporters of Kukiz'15, were not significantly different from those of the other parties (Roguska 2017:3). The one important element which made them outstanding was their very critical opinion of Polish politics and the Polish government which was in office at the time of the 2015 elections (Roguska 2017:6). In the case of the Modern of Ryszard Petru the research shows that among their supporters the groups that may be distinguished were people with a higher education, and those living in cities with over 500 000 inhabitants. Conversely it was least popular among inhabitants of villages and voters with a primary education (Głowacki 2017:3).[7]

Summarising data concerning switched votes one can say that two parties, the Palikot Movement and Kukiz'15, were able to mobilise fairly significant groups of voters who might be described as a new electoral base in the sense that those were the voters who had not previously engaged with any defined political force. The matter seems different in the case of the Modern of Ryszard Petru, which might be perceived as the voter choice of those disillusioned with the Civic Platform. For two out of the three parties analysed here (i.e. Palikot Movement and Kukiz'15) the young age of the supporters was strongly emphasised, partly because among those voters the biggest group of previous non-voters can be found. As to the other socio-demographic characteristics, the new parties analysed here did not significantly differ from the other Polish mainstream parties.

6 We focus on the four mainstream parties and three new parties analysed in this paper.

7 More detailed socio-demographic characteristics of the voters of all parties in 2015 can be found in Wyniki wyborów (2015).

The party as organisation

The legal status

All three organisations discussed here started with the formal status of an association. Firstly, because they programmatically criticised the existing parties and wanted to present themselves as alternative forms of political activity. Secondly, because in Poland there are *strict* rules concerning party financing and it is much easier for associations rather than for parties to collect money from individuals (Wojtasik 2012: 167). Nevertheless, in order to be entitled to state subsidies any formation has to be registered as a political party according to the rules set down by the Party Law of 1997 and obtain at least 3 % of the vote, or 6 % in the case of party coalitions (Party Law 1997). The other important difference is the possibility to run in elections. The right to present electoral lists in Poland belongs to electoral committees, which may be created by political parties and voters (Electoral Code 2011). Thus the association willing to run in elections should register its lists as electoral committee of voters. Two of the three analysed entities, the Palikot Movement and the Modern of Ryszard Petru, – decided to register themselves formally as political parties before the first election in which they took part, in 2011 and 2015 respectively, whereas Kukiz'15 has kept the status of an association. In this way it has emphasised its criticism towards the political parties as political institutions that 'cheat people' (Kukiz 2015) instead of representing them.

From the view point of Barnea and Rahat's criteria it is important to analyse whether the parties were registered as new ones. In Poland this can be easily verified in the 'Register of political parties' kept by the District Court in Warsaw. When a new party is created, the Court allocates it the next number in the register; however, when an existing party changes its name, it is entered in the register under the same number.[8] In 2011, the Palikot Movement was placed in the register under the new number EwP 313 and when this party changed its name to Your Movement in 2013 it retained the same number. So, regarding its legal status the Palikot Movement was a new party and Your Movement its continuation.[9] It's the same case for the Modern of Ryszard Petru, which was

8 For example there is the Union of European Democrats (*Unia Europejskich Demokratów*) entered under number 12. Initially there was the Democratic Union (*Unia Demokratyczna*), then the Union for Freedom (*Unia Wolności*) and the Democratic Party-democrats.pl (*Partia Demokratyczna-demokraci.pl*), hence from the formal viewpoint these parties can be considered a continuation of the same formation (Register 2019).

9 However, to be completely *strict* it is necessary to notice that Janusz Palikot's first party (the Movement for Support, *Ruch Poparcia*) had already been established in autumn 2010 and registered under the number EwP 306. The party had not submitted its financial report for 2010 that should have been delivered to the State Electoral Committee before the end of March 2011, hence it was running the risk of being crossed off the register. Taking into consideration the upcoming parliamentary election in autumn 2011, Janusz Palikot immediately decided to establish a new party, the Palikot Movement

introduced into the register under the new number EwP 362 in 2015. When its founder and leader Ryszard Petru left in 2018, his name was removed from the formation label, but the party retained the same number, something that should be considered a continuation in the legal sense (Register 2019). All in all, as far as formal status is concerned, both the Palikot Movement and the Modern of Ryszard Petru were registered as genuinely new parties. Kuiz'15 has never applied for the status of a political party, hence it exists beyond the register. However, it should also be regarded as a new entity functioning in the form of an association.

The party institutions

With minor differences mostly concerning the number of organs, each discussed subject has a central decision-making body, which is a collective organ composed of delegates of the lower structures. Each have executive bodies, usually encompassing a collective and single-person one, the leader of the party (Statut Kukiz'15 2015; Statut Nowoczesnej 2017; Statut RP 2011). Such a structure is usually emulated at lower levels, with differences visible in the number and character of the levels themselves. A very important change in the Statute of Your Movement concerning the party institutions occurred in 2015: this being the introduction of two co-leaders instead of one, and that these posts had to be filled by a man and a woman in accordance with the party postulate on gender equality (Statut TR 2015). In all three cases the party institutions may be considered to be new, because neither of the analysed entities had any party predecessor which could have served as an institutional base.

The party activists and candidates

In each case the structures, particularly the basic ones gathering grass-roots members, were built gradually. This took some time and, particularly in the cases of Kukiz'15 and the Palikot Movement, was not fully successful in terms of a structural representation over the entire territory of Poland (Twój Ruch 2016; Kukiz 2016). As a result of all three formations being organised shortly before elections, the most important task concerning the mobilisation of activists was the construction of candidate lists. Each organisation declared its aim to base these lists on new people, ones without previous engagement in politics and particularly in other parties. As one of the activists of the Modern of Ryszard Petru put it: they did not want to attract 'party hoppers'. So the party based its strategy of looking for worthwhile candidates on the activity of local coordinators, whose task was also the building of the local party structures

analysed in this article. The Movement of Support is treated very much as a kind of false start (Ruch Poparcia 2017: 517)

(Nyczka 2015; Deja 2015). Kukiz'15 turned to the Internet as a tool to recruit candidates without previous political ties, which was widely commented on in the media (wyborcza.pl 2015). The Palikot Movement used local coordinators but also encouraged those willing to run in elections to send e-mails to the party office (Gazeta.pl 2011).

However, in all three cases the final result (i.e., the pool of candidates) included persons with some previous political engagement. In the case of the Palikot Movement a group of candidates came from another party, the Reason of the Polish Left (*Racja Polskiej Lewicy*). Additionally, single members came from the Democratic Party-democrats.pl (*Partia Demokratyczna–demokraci.pl*), the Polish Peasant Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*) and the Democratic Left Alliance (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*) (Kandydaci Ruchu Palikota 2013: 311–332). Some candidates were activists of NGOs connected with the LGBT movement or the initiative Free Hemp and the Campaign Against Homophobia.

In the case of Kukiz'15 some candidates had been previously active or at the time of the election were still active in various structures, including small political parties. The most notable group (about 30 people on all the lists registered by Kukiz'15) were members of the National Movement (*Ruch Narodowy*), a kind of umbrella organisation for nationalist activists, which in February 2015 was registered as a political party. The second largest group were members of the Congress of the New Right (*Kongres Nowej Prawicy*), a party which had also registered its own lists (PKW 2015). Those two groups provided individual top candidates who won parliamentary seats, only one of whom having once been a deputy in the European Parliament (Sylwester Chruszcz Biografia 2019). Among Kukiz'15 candidates there were also members of several other parties such as the Libertarian Party (*Partia Libertariańska*), the Union of Real Politics (*Unia Polityki Realnej*) or Direct Democracy (*Demokracja Bezpośrednia*). However, all of those candidates, except for one, failed to enter parliament. It is worth mentioning that among candidates advanced by Kukiz'15 were also activists engaged in promoting Single Mandate Districts, the flagship postulate of Paweł Kukiz both as a presidential candidate and in his earlier political activity. There were also persons connected with the conservative KoLiber Association (*Stowarzyszenie KoLiber*) and the Republican Foundation (*Fundacja Republikańska*).

The Modern of Ryszard Petru also attracted some people who had previously been connected with political or social activity. Some of them were former members of the Democratic Union (*Unia Demokratyczna*, UD) or its successor, the Union for Freedom (*Unia Wolności*, UW) including Ryszard Petru himself (Ryszard Petru. Biografia 2018). However, most of them were no longer members of any party. The lists of the Modern included mostly candidates who declared no partisan affiliation, except in a few cases where affiliation with the Modern itself was declared (PKW 2015).

The party in government

The party representatives

Taking into account the third area of party activity distinguished by Valdimer O. Key (1942) 'party in government', Barnea and Rahat have pointed to the two criteria that help to measure party novelty: party representatives in government institutions and party policy. The former relates to the share of non-incumbent representatives, incumbent representatives originating from the same party and incumbent representatives coming from various parties (Barnea-Rahat 2011: 308). Analysis of the candidate lists and the parliamentary representations of the Palikot Movement in 2011 and the Modern of Ryszard Petru and Kukiz'15 in the 2015 election has proven that there were mainly non-incumbent candidates and representatives. Even if it has been shown above that in the candidate selection process some political milieux were engaged, it is important to highlight that the candidates were overwhelmingly new in a sense that they were not MPs and had not even served as candidates in the previous parliamentary election. The parties and the organisations (mentioned in the previous point) that co-created the candidate lists were mostly small, often niche formations, or parties that had already had their best years while the candidates were not foreground politicians.

The detailed comparison of parliamentary representations of the analysed formations has shown that almost all the MPs were new. After Palikot Movement entered the Sejm in 2011 only one out of its 40 MPs was an incumbent representative that had held a parliamentary mandate in the previous term of office, Janusz Palikot himself, who had been an MP of the Civic Platform (PKW 2007, PKW 2011). As far as Kukiz'15 and the Modern Party are concerned, all 42 MPs of the former and all 28 MPs of the latter that were elected to parliament following the 2015 election were new; none of them had been an MP in the previous parliamentary term (PKW 2011, PKW 2015). The novelty was visible within the pool of top party candidates as well. The results of research conducted by Allan Sikk and Philipp Köker have shown that the level of the weighted candidate novelty (WCN ranks from 0 – no new candidates to 1 – all candidates are new) in all three parties allows one to consign them to the group of highly new formations, where the WCN is greater than or equal to 0. 75. Palikot Movement's WCN index value is 0.95, Kukiz'15 it's 0.91 and for the Modern of Ryszard Petru the value of the WCN is the highest – 0.97 (Sikk – Köker 2018: 19).[10] On the whole, all three formations are extremely new in the area of party representatives.

10 Full details on calculating the WCN index can be found in Sikk – Köker (2017 b: 27).

Party policies

The second criterion in the area 'party in government' is that of party policy. It involves a comparison of party policies to its own previous policies (in order to identify a continuation or a change) and to the policies of other parties. However, none of the analysed parties has ever been in government, hence they were not able to put their programmes into practice, therefore it is impossible to produce any comparison of this kind. The only issue that can be considered here is their parliamentary activity. As oppositional parties they should not be expected to be able to influence governmental policies in this way. However, the parliamentary arena may also be used as a channel to formulate some political propositions using the legislative initiative. Elsewhere we have analysed speeches and legislative initiatives of two out of the three parties discussed here (i.e. Palikot's Movement and Kukiz'15) and we found that their MPs advanced legislative initiatives which were in compliance with party programmes (Kosowska-Gąstoł, Sobolewska-Myślik 2018). Some of those initiatives concerned the flagship proposals of the reforms which those parties perceived as necessary in the Polish political system and were also mentioned above in the analysis of party ideology, such as the reform of the electoral system or the abolishment of the party financing from state resources. Most of these initiatives were rejected at the introductory stage of legislative work or even before this was commenced and only a few acts were adopted following the initiatives of the formations. However, because the legislative initiatives cannot be equalised with the government policies, we do not elaborate those problems further.

The changes in the Polish party system

New parties as permanent elements of the Polish party system?

As was already mentioned in the introduction, the Polish party system at the parliamentary level seemed to be stable after the 2005 and 2007 elections in a sense that no new parties had entered the Sejm. In 2011 the Palikot Movement crossed the electoral threshold and after the 2015 election Kukiz'15 and the Modern of Ryszard Petru also managed to enter parliament. However, these parties do not seem to be lasting elements of the party system. This is due to their weak institutionalisation (with the meaning of Panebianco 1988; Harmel – Svåsand 1993) and the strong position of the party leader who treats the party as his 'personal vehicle', something (Lucardi 2000) that is surely not conducive to party institutionalisation.

Despite some efforts to develop organisational structures after the 2011 election, the Palikot Movement did not succeed in establishing them in the country as a whole, it was also not able to keep its MPs' and voters' loyalty long

enough to enter parliament in 2015. Deputies who were offended by the way of its leader's party managing, left the formation one by one. Needless to say, while at the beginning of the term of parliamentary office the party occupied 40 seats, at the end it had only 11 MPs. Some of them decided to be non-affiliated MPs, some joined the Democratic Left Alliance, others created their own parliamentary circles. One of them was called the Dialogue Initiative (Inicjatywa Dialogu 2013), however their members finally decided to join the Polish Peasant Party. The second, the Red and White Circle (*Koło Biało-Czerwoni*), survived to the end of the parliamentary term (PKW 2011; Koła i kluby 2015). The defeat of 2015 meant that even if the party still exists, it is no longer active and its founder has announced his withdrawal from politics.

Kukiz'15 and the Modern are still present in Polish parliament, however both are getting weaker in terms of organisation and supporters' loyalty. Throughout the whole period of time which had elapsed since the beginning of the parliamentary term in 2015, the number of Kukiz'15 representatives decreased from 42 to 26. Some MPs stepped out of its parliamentary group creating two separate circles, Free and Supportive (*Wolni i Solidarni*) and Freedom and Effective (*Wolność i Skuteczni*), some decided to become non-affiliated MPs (PKW 2015; Koła i kluby 2019). The same is with the Modern of Ryszard Petru that in 2015 election won 28 parliamentary seats, but currently has only 15 MPs. There was division in the party in May 2018 as its founder Ryszard Petru, after his defeat in an internal election process for party leader, decided to leave the formation with two other MPs and they created a new party 'Now' (*Teraz*) and the parliamentary circle under the same name. Some other MPs decided to join the Civic Platform parliamentary group or became non-affiliated (PKW 2015; Koła i kluby 2019).

In December 2018, about 5% of voters declared support for Kukiz'15 and 2% for the Modern Party (Pankowski 2018: 4). With the elections to be held in 2019 it seems really questionable as to whether those two parties will be able to stay in parliament and serve as relevant actors in Polish politics. However, even if these parties disappeared from the Sejm, their place could be taken by other formations. Currently the mass media inform about two initiatives that can be important during the EP election in May 2019 and the parliamentary election in the autumn of this year.

One was created by the leftist politician Robert Biedroń, a former deputy of the Palikot Movement, then the highly popular mayor of the city of Słupsk. He openly declared himself to be homosexual, something rather unusual in Polish politics. In 2018 Biedroń started a kind of social movement, crossing the country, meeting people and discussing issues that are important for them. This action under the slogan 'Brain storm' aims at creating a programme for a new formation (Kalukin 2018). Its purpose is to oppose the existing political elites and to become an alternative to PiS and PO. A new party was established in February 2019 and only then was its name revealed (Partia Roberta Biedronia

2018), 'Spring'. The second initiative comes from the opposite side of the political spectrum, the founder and owner of the Catholic station 'Radio Maryja', the priest Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, who hitherto supported PiS. Formally the True Europe Movement was established by the MEP Mirosław Piotrowski, who applied for its registration as a political party. However, he has not had any of his own political backing and as a close collaborator of Father Rydzyk can surely count on his support, which could cause a decrease in the PiS electorate (Nowa partia Rydzyka 2018).

All in all, it must be admitted that the new parties in Polish parliament seem to be labile formations. As was discussed above, the Palikot Movement was the first new party able to enter Polish parliament after two terms of stability; it was supposed to express protest against the existing parties and to create a new quality in the Polish party system. After only one term, it was replaced by two other new parties expressing almost the same ideas. Both quickly lost their supporters and their MPs are leaving them, creating even newer groups, which so far have not passed the electoral test. Their chances of becoming relevant after the upcoming election appear slight. However, outside parliament other formations have been established that criticise the mainstream parties, present themselves as an alternative and can replace the hitherto new parties in the Sejm. Therefore, it looks as if new parties have become a permanent element of the Polish party system in the sense that new entities enter and exit the parliament one by one.

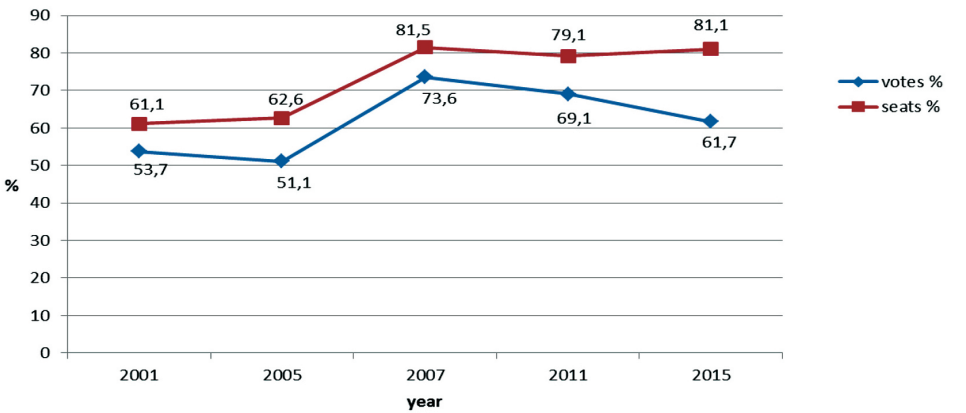
The level of support for the two largest parties and the patterns of electoral competition

Surprisingly, the new parties' entrance at the parliamentary level both in 2011 and 2015 did not cause the instability of the whole party system. The votes polled and seats share of the two largest formations have stayed almost untouched. As can be seen in Figure 4, the level of support for the two biggest parties (since 2005 these being Law and Justice and the Civic Platform) is very stable in terms of parliamentary seat numbers, reaching 81.5 % in 2007, 79.1 % in 2011 and 81.1 % in 2015.

Such a dominant position for these two parties is sometimes diagnosed as a 'lock' in the Polish party system or 'duopoly', which is the leading motive of the criticism of the newly emerging parties (Szczerbiak 2013:482). On the other hand, this duopoly seems to have been slightly changing. It is interesting to observe the figures of voters' loyalty to those two biggest parties. In 2011 PiS was able to keep 56% of its voters from the previous elections. PO, despite the appearance of the Palikot Movement that took 8% of PO disillusioned voters, was slightly better off keeping 58% of its former voters (Cybulska 2011). In terms of the seats share PO lost in 2011 in comparison with the 2007 election

only two mandates, it had 209 seats (41.45% votes) and 207 seats (39.18% votes) respectively (see Figure 5). After the election it managed to keep itself in a coalitional government with its hitherto partner PSL.

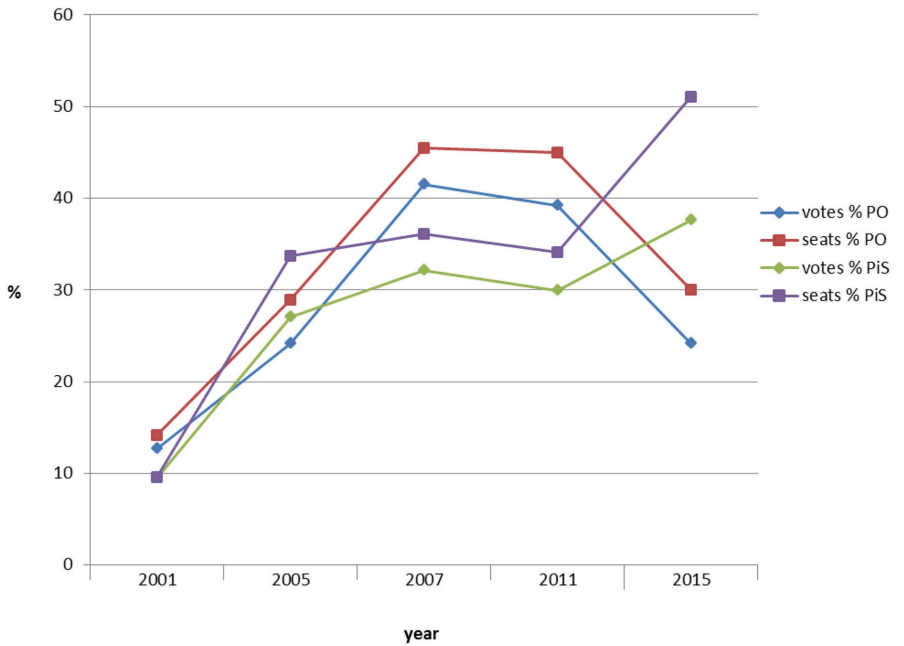
Figure 4: Votes and seats share of two biggest parties (%) in the parliamentary elections 2001–2015



Source: Developed by the authors on PKW data: available at https://pkw.gov.pl (15 December, 2018).

In 2015 the situation changed in favour of PiS. The latter kept 81% of its voters from the previous elections in 2011, while PO managed to keep only 43% of the loyal electorate (Cybulska 2015). In 2015 this party obtained merely 24.09% of votes, and 138 seats (Figure 5). It might be tempting to connect such a sharp decrease in voters' loyalty and support of the Civic Platform with the appearance of new parties. On the one hand, it is worth remembering that in 2015 quite a large share of the previous supporters of the Civic Platform switched their votes in favour of the Modern of Ryszard Petru, as has already been discussed. On the other hand, however, it cannot be taken for granted that the former PO voters who supported the Modern of Ryszard Petru would have voted for PO if a new party had not arisen. Voters disappointed with the PO government and with scandals related to its members could well have not taken part in the election or even supported PiS. Another new formation in the 2015 election, Kukiz'15, did not take away significant portions of voters from the two leading parties, only 3% of the former voters of each (PO and PiS) decided to switch their loyalties in favour of Kukiz'15 (Cybulska 2015).

Figure 5: Votes and seats share of PO and PiS (%) in the parliamentary elections 2001–2015



Source: Developed by the authors on PKW data: available at https://pkw.gov.pl (15 December, 2018).

Employing the definition of party system by Sartori (2005) that encompasses its *format* (parties) and *mechanics* (relations between them in terms of cooperation and competition), it can be admitted that the new parties' entrance did not cause changes in the Polish party system. We would have dealt with a format change had new relevant parties appeared. Meanwhile none of the three analysed groupings can be considered relevant because none of them has a coalition or blackmail potentials[11]. The party system *mechanics* have also stayed untouched as the appearance of new parties did not change the patterns of party competition. Since the 2005 election the main division line remains that between PiS and PO. In 2015 some fluctuation in the support of PO occurred; however, it cannot be assumed that this trend will continue in future elections, leading towards the significant weakening of PO and as a result towards a change in the patterns of competition. All in all, new parties' entrance to the Sejm should not be considered a party system change at the parliamentary level.

11 The lack of change is also visible as far as the effective number of legislative parties is concerned. In 2007 (when no new parties entered parliament) it was 2,8. In 2011 and 2015 (when new parties entered) it was 3 and 2,7 respectively (Casal Bértoa – Guerra 2016: 232).

Conclusion

The detailed analysis of the three parties that entered the Sejm after the 2011 and 2015 elections has proven that they were genuinely new in terms of all eight criteria elaborated on by Barnea and Rahat in order to measure party newness (2011). Starting with 'party-in-the-electorate', it was confirmed that the parties have had new labels, programmes and voters. Some doubts can be highlighted only in the case of the Modern of Ryszard Petru which is sometimes perceived as 'the Civic Platform bis'. Even if it is not true in the case of the party label and programme, it must be admitted that this party has taken some voters who supported PO in the previous election. Moving on to 'party-as-organisation', it was recognised that the analysed formations have been new also in terms of their formal status, institutions and activists. They were created from scratch and registered as entirely new entities, they also (with varying results) have tried to create their own structure. Some doubts can be stated as far as their activists are concerned. Although they were supposed to attract new people, this was not always the case. Some of their activists were earlier engaged in political activity; however, with only a few exceptions, they were not known politicians and people who had not performed state functions before. Finally, 'party-in-government' was the most difficult to assess as none of the analysed parties have ever been a governing party. Two criteria placed in this dimension by Barnea and Rahat are related to the newness of party representatives (candidates) and party politics (2011). All three parties put on their electoral lists mainly non-incumbents and their representatives in the Sejm, and all of the MPs were new except for Janusz Palikot. They have tried to exert an impact on the legislative process through fostering their own initiatives, but this has usually failed as they have not had enough seats in the Sejm to win on voting matters through. Hence, even if they have proposed new policies, their influence has been very limited because they were not able to bring new topics into public discourse. To recapitulate, the research has proven that all three parties can be considered new in all the dimensions developed by Barnea and Rahat. However, it does not mean that their entrance into parliament caused any meaningful changes in the whole party system.

First of all, none of the analysed parties has had coalition or blackmail potential, hence none of them can be deemed relevant. Secondly, neither the appearance of the Palikot Movement in 2011, nor Kukiz'15 and the Modern of Ryszard Petru in 2015 influenced the patterns of electoral competition to a large extent, the main political competition is still that between PO and PiS. There was a certain fluctuation in the support for PO in 2015, which could have resulted in the longer perspective in changes to those patterns. However, the formation which caused the mentioned fluctuation seems to be losing its organisational integrity and voters' support, so it is unlikely that it will stay a relevant actor

in the next election. The conclusion that may be drawn from the above analysis is that we can observe a kind of paradox here: the three discussed formations, despite their novelty in the party system, did not bring about much change. It is due to 'the location of change' (Wolinetz 1979, Mair 1990) and 'the extent of change' (Mair 1990). New parties have been located on the margin of the main line of political competition and have not been able to create any new cleavage. In addition, 'the extent of change' has been insignificant because of newcomers' lack of coalition and blackmail potential. To sum up, the Polish party system has been divided into two subsystems: one of established parties and one of new ones (Haughton – Deegan-Krause 2015). Whereas the former has stayed stable, the latter has changed as parties that have emerged quickly have also quickly disappeared (Mair 1990); however, the location of the changes means that they do not affect the whole party system that seems to be secure despite the occurring changes.

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New Parties and Democracy in Slovenia

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Abstract: *While no stranger to new political parties, Slovenia's party system became much more unstable after 2008 with the constant arrival of electorally very successful parties. Further, while the citizens' satisfaction with democracy and trust in political institutions has never reached the heights seen in Western Europe, the crisis years saw them drop to historical lows. In these circumstances, one may expect successful new parties to assure greater responsiveness, or a balance between responsible and responsive politics, and to bring improvements to citizens' opinion on their satisfaction with democracy and trust in political institutions. In addition, new parties are usually more prone to democratic innovations, which can be associated with the popular idea of introducing stronger intra-party democracy in their internal functioning. The analysis shows that in 2014 Slovenia experienced both the nadir of public opinion on democracy and the political system, and the most electorally successful new party. Nevertheless, improvements in satisfaction with democracy and the political system only slowly emerged after 2014, to a considerable extent coinciding with the return to economic prosperity, while even these improvements left enough room for yet another successful new party at the 2018 elections. Concerning innovations in intra-party democracy, we are only able to identify some smaller democratic innovations. Given this, it seems that the new parties themselves have had a relatively limited impact on democracy in Slovenia.*

Keywords: ***Slovenia, new parties, intra-party democracy, satisfaction with democracy, trust in politics***

Introduction

The last decade has seen Central European polities confront the dangers of both hollowing, namely, the loss of a connection between citizens and the political system, especially political parties (Greskovits 2015; Cianetti 2018), and backsliding, the actual degradation of democratic institutions and rule of law, seen especially in Hungary and Poland (Bogaards 2018). Although the hollowing and backsliding of democracy are typically associated with questions of the quality of governance and democracy (Brusis 2016; Hanley – Sikk 2016), they are also frequently linked with political destabilisation. In this regard, developments across the region have been strongly associated with the economic and financial crisis starting in 2008. Yet, the quality of democracy does not exist merely in the eyes of experts, but is felt and understood every day by the people who live in it (Krause – Merkel 2018).

Slovenia was also unable to avoid some of the patterns observed in Central European countries. However, the first serious signs of the hollowing or backsliding of democracy, at least in terms of satisfaction with the way democracy works in Slovenia and trust in political institutions, started to appear already in the mid-2000s (European Commission 2019), then deepened with the economic and financial crisis which hit Slovenia badly. The consequences of these developments are not only apparent in public opinion surveys, but also in the electoral landscape's increased volatility, especially in instability of the party system. While before the 2008 elections only one new party in Slovenia had managed to cross the parliamentary threshold at each election (except in 2004 when there were no newcomers), and none had come close to 10% of the vote (Fink-Hafner – Krašovec 2013) – with the Slovenian party system having been regarded, together with the Hungarian and Czech party systems, as the most stable until the late 2000s (Lewis 2001; Enyedi – Casal Bértoa 2011) – this changed radically with the 2008 elections. In the 1992–2008 period, it was precisely small new parliamentary parties that for a long time played an important role in mitigating the population's anti-party sentiments (Fink-Hafner 2012). Many things changed in 2008 with the arrival of the first, somewhat bigger new parliamentary party, a process continuing today with the 2018 elections, with newcomers even receiving the biggest share of votes at the 2011 and 2014 elections. Raising expectations that the latter can stem the tide and restore a balance between responsibility and responsiveness[1], this new party system has so far been characterised by either partial or full turnover since, respectively, some or most new parties are being replaced by

1 Responsibility is defined as the decisions of political parties and leaders that take account of the long-term needs of their people and countries, and the claims of audiences other than the national electoral audience. We can talk about responsiveness when political decisions sympathetically respond to the short-term demands of voters, public opinion, interest groups, and the media (Bardi et al. 2014 b: 237).

newer ones (Haughton – Deegan-Krause 2015), further raising concerns with instability (Cabada – Tomšič 2016: 44).

The question then is whether the arrival of electorally successful new political parties has brought greater responsiveness, or a balance between responsible and responsive politics, and led to improvements in citizens' opinion on their satisfaction with democracy and trust in political institutions. Moreover, since political parties are believed to have detached themselves from the public at large (Mair 2013) or are seen as being in cahoots with vested interests (Crouch 2004), a second question is whether these new parties have introduced democratic innovations in the way they work. Our goal is to provide insights by analysing the case of Slovenia, especially in light of its poor track record in public opinion surveys and the very successful new political parties since 2008.

We begin with a theoretical section examining the appearance of new political parties generally, and more recently in Central Europe in particular. This is followed by a discussion on new parties, intra-party democracy and why political parties integrate it into their functioning and what the expected benefits are for the wider functioning of democracy, with the last part of that section dealing with questions on satisfaction with democracy and trust in political institutions. The third section briefly presents the political situation in Slovenia, followed by an introduction to our methodology in the fourth section, with the next two sections analysing the result of both the development of selected public opinion survey indicators, and the presence of intra-party democracy in Slovenian parliamentary parties, and connect them with the emergence of new highly successful parliamentary parties. In the final section we summarise the main findings.

Theoretical section

New political parties

The usual starting point when studying the emergence of new political parties is cleavage theory (Lipset – Rokkan 1967) because party systems respond to changes in their environment with the arrival of newcomers competing with the established parties in representing new social issues (Deschouwer 2017), also termed electoral market failure (Lago – Martínez 2011). The systematic study of new parties gained strength in the mid-1980s (Harmel 1985) when the Green parties (Müller-Rommel 1985) became a special focus along with the rise of post-materialist values (Bürklin 1985). Although Green parties made some democratic innovations in their internal functioning, they soon had to adapt their structures and behaviour to the 'traditional' style of party functioning in their efforts to win elections (Poguntke 2017; Spoon 2007).

In the first decade of the 2000s, a fresh wave of interest swept over new parties. Krouwel and Lucardie (2008) distinguish four ways new parties emerge: transformation, merger, split, or birth, with only the latter formed *ex nihilo*. More important than how new parties as organisations come to be are the forms new parties take on. The first are prolocutors, which represent neglected groups (perceived or otherwise), without referring to a specific ideology, followed by purifying parties or challengers, whose vision of existing parties that have strayed from the 'path' has given them the goal, as the name implies, to restore it to that ideal, and third are the prophetic parties that try to represent new ideologies or cleavages (Lucardie 2000). Sikk (2011) expands this classification by adding „project of newness" parties that, while occupying the niche of an established party like the purifiers, have a weak ideological motivation like the prolocutors. Newness can be a major boon if properly handled as such parties can convince voters „that they are better than the old ones in some other respects, for instance the capability of integrity of their leaders" (*ibid.*: 480), which plays right into the conditions of politics of distrust and focus on transparency (Rosanvallon 2008), individualised societies (Lange 2015) and the personalisation of politics (Rahat – Kenig 2018).

Newness has found an expression in Central Europe where many of their supporters believe that new parties can solve problems the existing parties cannot. However, in explaining their success, a greater role is played by distrust or, more precisely, its source – corruption. The politicisation of corruption has become an ever more pressing issue during elections and been successfully used by new and main opposition parties in high-corruption environments (Bågenholm – Charron 2014; Polk et al. 2017) and provides the mould for the form taken on by new parties in more recent democracies in Central Europe. In her analysis of corruption's role in the region's elections, Engler (2016: 294) discovered that: „the historically derived, country-specific corruption level reduces the electoral support for new political parties, whereas an increase in the perceived corruption above the country-specific corruption level leads to a loss of trust in the political elite, therefore raising the electoral support for new competitors". This has given birth to „anti-establishment reform parties" (AERPs) „which exhibit – to different extents – three core features: (1) a politics of *mainstream reformism* (2) usually framed in terms of *anti-establishment* appeal to voters and (3) *genuine organizational newness*" (Hanley – Sikk 2016: 523, italics in original). They emerge during periods of economic distress when the crisis' impact is reinforced by the fact government parties are less responsive to voter demands (Klüver – Spoon 2016), the perceived high and rising levels of corruption, and electoral support for genuine new parties shown in the past (Hanley – Sikk 2016: 525–526).

New political parties may be seen as an indicator of democracies' poor performance and, despite some doubt as to whether they are the remedy (Deschouwer

2017), in trying to either improve matters or simply in the hope of gaining votes such new parties introduce innovations that bring them closer to the citizens (Bardi et al. 2014a) and give what few members political parties still have (Seyd 1999) a greater say in how parties are run in the hope of re-energising them.

Intra-party democracy

Intra-party democracy (IPD) is a very broad term describing a wide range of methods for including party members in intra-party deliberation and decision-making. Some advocates of IPD argue that parties employing internally democratic procedures are likely to select more capable and appealing leaders to ensure they have more responsive policies, while others converge on the premise that parties 'practice what they preach' in the sense of using internally democratic procedures for their deliberations and decisions, to strengthen democratic culture generally (Scarrow 2005: 3). Scarrow (2005: 3) also notes the ideal of IPD has gained in attention in recent years due to its apparent potential to promote 'a virtuous circle' that links ordinary citizens to government, benefiting the parties that adopt it, and more generally contributing to the stability and legitimacy of the democracies in which these parties compete for power.

More recently, IPD may be defined as rules that maximise „the involvement of party members in the decisions that are central to a party's political life, including programme writing, and personnel selection (leaders and candidates) and other intra-organizational decision-making (referring to the relative strength of party bodies like congress and executive)" (Poguntke et al. 2016: 670–671). Poguntke et al. (2016) also identify two variants, an assembly-based IPD, which is how we usually view parties' inner functioning with meetings followed by decision-taking, and a plebiscitary IPD, where only decisions are submitted to a membership-wide vote via ballot (*ibid.*). Some also go further by measuring different dimensions like participation, representation, competition, responsiveness and transparency that are able to capture a party's inner workings outside of what is written down in the party statute (Rahat – Shapira 2017) and posit that, in addition to the inclusion of party members, we should look at ensuring the guarantee of pluralism and rights of diverse groups, the use of elements of deliberative democracy and the distribution of power between different party layers (Ignazi 2018).

Considerable focus in IPD studies is given to the selection of the leadership and candidate selection for elections, both what it entails and its consequences. Concerning candidate selection, Rahat and Hazan (2001) set the standard by distinguishing four dimensions: candidacy (who can run as candidate), the selectorate (the body that selects the candidates), decentralisation (territorial as to which party layer the selection is made or corporate when it allows for the functional representation of intra-party interest bodies), and voting/appoint-

ment systems (in a pure voting system, candidates cannot be changed after the selection body votes, while with a pure appointment there is no need for further approval by any organ other than the nominating one). Following this distinction, we focus on enlargement of the selectorate and greater decentralisation, which is also recognised by the authors (*ibid.*: 309) as an expression of the democratisation of candidate selection. Enlarging the selectorate has been shown to improve both citizens' trust in political parties and their satisfaction with democracy; yet, parties that decentralised either show supporters with lower trust levels or no change in their level of satisfaction with how democracy works in their country (Shomer et al. 2017; Shomer et al. 2016). However, more democratic or inclusive candidate-selection rules can also be detrimental as they „fundamentally alter the relationships between the parties and the candidates, between the parties and the voters, and between the party representatives and the party leaders" (Pennings – Hazan 2001: 271), as they produce „*dual sources of legitimacy* for candidates – party legitimacy and popular legitimacy" (Rahat – Hazan 2001: 313, italics in original), reinforcing the development of individualisation and personalised politics.

Similar analysis and arguments come into play with the selection of party leaders. Regarding the selectorate, it can range from open primaries on the inclusiveness side to only the parliamentary caucus on the exclusive side (LeDuc 2001), with Kenig (2009) expanding the analysis of the selectorate with candidacy, voting method/majority requirement and de-selection mechanisms. Like candidate-selection democratisation, leadership-selection democratisation is ringing alarm bells due to: "(a) the populist potential inherent in the unmediated leader–follower relation; (b) the demobilization of all the party actors and strata beyond and between members and leaders; and (c) the tighter control on the lower party strata from above" (Ignazi 2018: 8). Research also shows that an enlarged electorate does not lead to less leadership domination (Schumacher – Giger 2017) and, while leadership coronations are less common, large selectorates tend to produce less competitive contests (Kenig 2008). This concern also feeds into 'project of newness' parties and personalised parties that might seek to publicly offset the view of single-person dominance with rules that make their selection appear democratic and thereby improve their party's image.

We have already noted one reason new parties decide to increase their IPD is because, as novel entities, they are trying something new or feel they have to innovate in the fluid social and political environment (Poguntke et al. 2016). Other reasons include the pressure parties feel to open up that comes with growing distrust in them (Cain et al. 2003), the need to increase the appearance of democratic legitimacy and fairness (Ashiagbor 2008), to better reflect the modern individualised patterns of political participation (Gauja 2015), to ensure a comeback after losing elections or to adapt to changes introduced by others (Cross – Blais 2012), and the need to create new democratic links with

the developments enabled by modern information and communication technologies (Bennett et al. 2018).

Political parties in Central Europe have also introduced IPD in their internal functioning. For example, von dem Berge – Obert (2018: 660) found that before 2011 new parties had displayed „lower levels of IPD as compared to transformed communist or revived precommunist parties".

Despite the popularity of enhancing IPD in new and old parties and in old and new democracies, Cross and Katz, eds. (2013) more generally problematised the concept of IPD in different ways. Based on many analyses, Mair (1994: 17) also warned that on paper democratisation is often meaningless and/or illusory and may actually coexist with the influence of a powerful elite/leader in practice. On the other hand, Sartori (1965) already had second thoughts concerning IPD, claiming that state-wide democracy need not be the sum of many smaller democracies. Finally, we must not overlook Michels' (1911/1999) famous observation that the very fact of organisation renders democratic internal relationships in parties impossible.

Satisfaction with democracy and political parties

We have already seen the impact IPD can have on satisfaction with democracy and trust in political parties as one of the political institutions, yet our focus on the role of new parties deserves closer examination. First, we must distinguish between old and new democracies as the latter are shown to be more discontented with the way their democracies function. Another apparent difference is that in established democracies it is the quality of governance that determines satisfaction with democracy, while in post-communist ones it is the government's ability to perform its functions and provide public goods (Dahlberg et al. 2015). Linde (2012), however, shows that the quality of governance also plays a major role in post-communist democracies. Regardless of what drives it, (dis)satisfaction with democracy has been revealed to be positioned closer to Easton's definition of specific support, that is, with political outputs, rather than diffuse support, the loyalty to one's political community, meaning that while it increases when „economic performance is strong, when corruption is low, when citizens are politically engaged, and when electoral institutions ensure fair and wide representation" (Bellucci – Memoli 2012: 36; also see Christmann 2018), its lack thereof does not put democracy as a system of governance into question.

Developments and new parties in Slovenia

While in the 1990s Slovenia was portrayed as a country with relatively stable party system and quite low anti-party sentiments, at the start of the new century

the situation began to change. First, the new century saw the beginnings of the disintegration of the long-term leading governmental party, Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (Liberalna demokracija Slovenije; LDS), which was primarily seen as able to assure a balance between responsible and responsive policies. In addition, at the turn of the century clientelism and corruption, especially systemic corruption, were put on the agenda (Krašovec et al. 2014). The economic downturn which had resulted in a severe government crisis finally transformed Slovenia from a country with a relatively stable system into one of the most volatile systems. While not appearing on the agenda before the critical juncture election of 2004 (Krašovec – Johannsen 2016: 315), the presence of „ideologization, incompetence, clientelism, corruption, and other dysfunctional practices" (Cabada – Tomšič 2016: 43) created a positive feedback loop that merely reinforced the resulting political 'hurricane' (Haughton – Deegan-Krause 2015). Further, by doing very little to alter its institutional setup and by copying from the West rather than adapting to its own, changed conditions (Bugaric – Kuhelj 2015), the country's weak foundations were further undermined by the crisis, fuelling greater „dissatisfaction and anti-political attitudes as well as fatigue and apathy" (Krašovec – Johannsen 2016: 313). In addition, while like in the rest of Europe since the crisis the political system was chiefly dealing with responsible policies, responsiveness saw a decline, adding fuel to the fire.

The consequence of these developments was an explosion of new successful parties in the Slovenian party arena, with the first big parliamentary success being achieved by Zares, which entered parliament in 2008. This was followed at the 2011 elections by the List of Zoran Janković – Positive Slovenia (Lista Zorana Jankovića – Pozitivna Slovenija; LZJ-PS, PS) and the Civic List of Gregor Virant – Civic List (Državljanska lista Gregorja Viranta, Državljanska lista; DLGV, DL), with the former gaining the most votes in that election. In 2014, this happened with the Party of Miro Cerar – Modern Centre Party (Stranka Mira Cerarja – Stranka modernega centra; SMC), which was also victorious, the Alliance of Alenka Bratušek – Alliance of Social-Liberal Democrats (Zavezništvo Alenke Bratušek – Zavezništvo socialno-liberalnih demokratov, Stranka Alenke Bratušek; ZaAB; SAB) and the United Left coalition (Združena Levica; ZL) (now renamed 'the Left'). Finally, at the 2018 elections it was the List of Marjan Šarec (Lista Marjana Šarca; LMŠ) which entered parliament. With the exception of Zares and the (United) Left, all these parties were centred around their party leader, with Cerar representing the high point of the Slovenian electorate's search for a properly behaving political leader as he claimed to „transcend traditional political and ideological divisions and brought new standards of political culture" (Cabada – Tomšič 2016: 42).

Table 1: Electoral gains in percent of votes received and MPs[2] of new political parties since the 2008 elections

	2008		2011		2014		2018	
	%	MPs	%	MPs	%	MPs	%	MPs
Zares	9.37%	9						
PS			28.51%	28				
DL			8.37%	8				
SMC					34.49%	36	9.75%	10
SAB					4.38%	4	5.11%	5
(United) Left					5.97%	6	9.33%	9
LMŠ							12.60%	13

Source: Državna volilna komisija Republike Slovenije (2019)

Given the almost collapse of citizens' trust in political institutions and their dissatisfaction with democracy's functioning on one hand, and the very successful newcomers in the parliamentary arena on the other, Slovenia makes for an interesting case study for analysing the impact of new political parties on both the above-mentioned perceptions of its citizens as well as innovations to the internal organisation and functioning of parties themselves.

Methodology

First, it is necessary to select the parties we will be analysing. When it comes to defining a party as new, Sikk (2005) excludes party mergers and splits as new parties, Engler (2016) and Tavits (2008) exclude from the definition of a new party only merged parties, while we follow Krouwel and Lucardie (2008) and Powell and Tucker (2014) by considering as a new party each party established from scratch or that came into being due to some mergers or splits, or was a successor to certain other party (parties), with our additional criterion that it must have entered parliament. The new parties that meet these criteria were already presented in the previous section. We add to these the 'old' parliamentary parties (including parties in the parliament for years but then later failed to enter parliament, but managed to return (such as New Slovenia (Nova Slovenija – Krščanski demokrati; NSi) and the Slovenian National Party

2 The Slovenian National Assembly comprises 90 MPs; 2 of the 90 seats are reserved for representatives of the Italian and Hungarian minorities.

(Slovenska nacionalna stranka; SNS)). This then includes the Democratic Party of Retired People of Slovenia (Demokratična stranka upokojencev Slovenije; DeSUS), New Slovenia, the Slovenian People's Party (Slovenska ljudska stranka; SLS), the Slovenian Democratic Party (Slovenska demokratska stranka; SDS) and the Social Democrats (Socialni demokrati; SD)[3]. The time period for our study is from 2008 to date or as far the data allow.

To answer the question of what effect, if any, the arrival of new parties had on citizens' satisfaction with democracy and trust in political institutions, we shall analyse the responses given in the Slovenian segment of the European Social Survey (ESS). The availability of rounds 4–8 of the ESS, from 2008 to 2016, fits nicely with our chosen timeframe and also took place after the elections, allowing us to more precisely monitor the public's attitude to parties and their functioning for democracy.[4] In addition, we also look at their trust in parliament, politicians and political parties.[5] Unfortunately, the latest iteration, round 9, which would have allowed us to analyse the outcomes of another new party's success at the 2018 Slovenian parliamentary elections is not yet available.

To analyse the presence and development of IPD among Slovenian parliamentary parties, we considered party statutes[6] as available on the respective party websites. Since most parties have amended their statutes several times, we used the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine in order to obtain previous versions of those statutes. We selected statutes in place from the 2008 elections onwards for all parliamentary parties, as well as statutes in force prior to the 2008 elections for old parties for comparison. Following Poguntke et al. (2016), we look at who is eligible to vote during the party congress, who proposes and selects the party president, who proposes and selects candidates for national-level elections (European and Slovenian parliament, president of the republic) and local-level elections, and whether parties were open to a plebiscitary type of IPD, with the entire membership voting or being consulted on a policy/issue. We also rely on Rahat and Hazan's (2001: 304–305) definition of an inclusive selectorate to range from the electorate, through party members, the selected party agency, the non-selected party agency, to the party leader on the exclusive side, and the decentralised selection of candidates to range from local through

3 The Slovenian National Party (SNS) is not included in the analysis due to the unavailability of its old and new statutes.

4 The elections we are interested in occurred on 21. 9. 2008, 4. 12. 2011, 13. 7. 2014 and 3. 6. 2018. ESS data gathering in Slovenia took place at the end of the year, with the 2011 elections being covered by the 2012 round.

5 Answers to our selected survey questions are provided on an 11-point scale which we recoded as follows: values 0–3 as no trust in political institutions/dissatisfied with the way democracy works, 4–6 as somewhat trusting/satisfied, and 7–10 as trust and satisfaction.

6 As Van Biezen (2003) warns, although party statutes are a good starting point for analysing internal organisational party structures and life, they can differ from the *de facto* party organisation.

regional to national as concerns the geographical level of selection, and from sub-sectors/social sub-groups as functionally decentralised through large sectors/social groups to national as a centralised functional selection. This enables us to determine if the new political parties have introduced democratic innovations into their internal functioning which may, as we have seen, shape their impact on the broader political landscape.

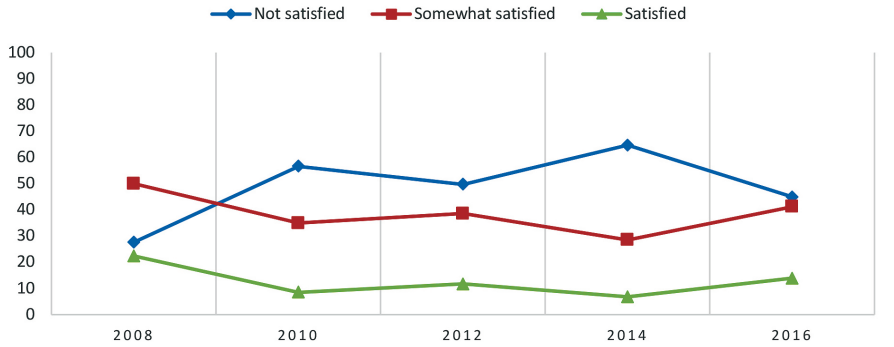
New Parties and Trust in Political Institutions in Slovenia

Even before the crisis, political parties and politicians were not well regarded and, ever since Slovenian independence, those dissatisfied with the functioning of the country's democracy have outnumbered those satisfied (Krašovec – Johannsen 2016: 316), a situation that has only worsened after 2008. Looking at data on satisfaction with democracy and trust in politicians, political parties and parliament reveals the period between 2008 and 2010 was indeed a major critical juncture for the Slovenian political system. While in 2008 just 27.6% of Slovenians were in no way satisfied with the way democracy was working, this share jumped to 56.6% in 2010 and up to 64.7% in 2014, the year the new SMC received the highest number of MPs since the country's independence. This short overview shows the new parties from 2008 and 2011 did not fulfil the expectations (for different reasons) the public had for them, but did provide an extra boost to SMC which was able to play an anti-corruption, rule of law and 'new faces in politics' card in 2014. In 2016, dissatisfaction with democracy dropped to 44.9%, while those fully satisfied remained at around half the level seen in 2008. Based on the 2016 data, it would appear the new parties that appeared in 2014 were better able to give the public what it desired, although this is also a period when the economic situation[7] improved (in a country heavily dependent on developments in a few of the most developed European countries), but not the perception of corruption.[8]

7 GDP per capita rose from EUR 18,769 in 2008 to EUR 17,540 in 2012, the lowest during the crisis, back to EUR 18,238 in 2014 and EUR 19,547 in 2016 and EUR 20,815 in 2017, both well above the pre-crisis levels (SURS 2019). A huge drop in GDP was recorded in 2009 (–7.9%) and only minimal growth in 2010 and 2011, followed by smaller drops again in 2012 and 2013. GDP growth began again in 2014 (3.1%) and continued in the following years. In 2011, the national debt was 46.6% of GDP, and in 2015 it reached its highest point of 83.1%. After that, it started to decrease. The unemployment rate started to drop after peaking in 2013 (10.1%), reaching 6.6% in 2017.

8 Looking at the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, while its values decreased from its pre-crisis heights (67 out of 100 points in 2008, with higher numbers indicating less corruption), the situation in 2014 (58) was only slightly worse than in 2016 (61) and what it is now (60) (Transparency International 2018). But Slovenia usually recorded much worse results when the question of systemic corruption was exposed (Krašovec et al. 2014).

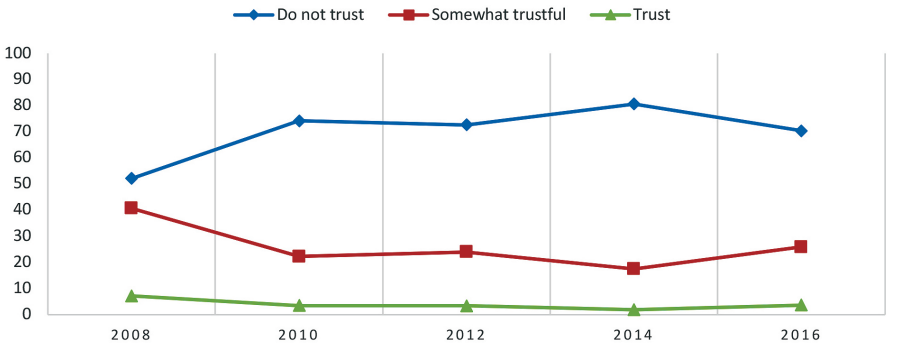
Chart 1: Satisfaction with democracy



Source: ESS Round 4–8 (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016); authors' own calculations

Now turning to trust in politicians, while following a similar trajectory as satisfaction with democracy, it becomes clear that Slovenians were still more satisfied with how their democracy was working than with their political representatives, as those claiming they trusted politicians reached just 7.2% of the population in 2008 and plummeted to as low as 1.9% in 2014, while those who distrusted them skyrocketed from 52.1% to 80.6%, respectively, at the height of the crisis. This raises the question of how the new parties' successful appeals for new faces and/or new politics have actually impacted trust in politicians.

Chart 2: Trust in politicians

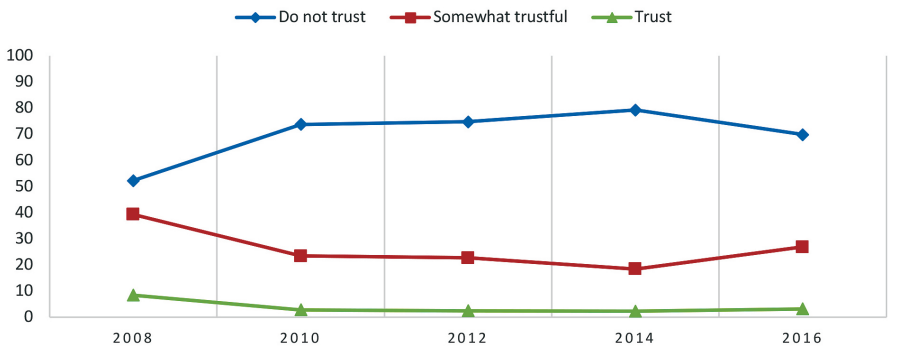


Source: ESS Round 4–8 (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016); authors' own calculations

Unsurprisingly, political parties seem to share the fate of their politicians, with strikingly similar opinions on both being held by Slovenians. In 2008, 8.4% of citizens trusted them, 39.3% were in the middle, and 52.3% openly distrusted

political parties. In 2014, a mere 2.3% of citizens trusted parties, while in 2016 this share was 3.2%. Those distrustful reached 79.3% at the peak in 2014, returning to just under 70% after the era of new parties achieved its full bloom, according to the data available to us.

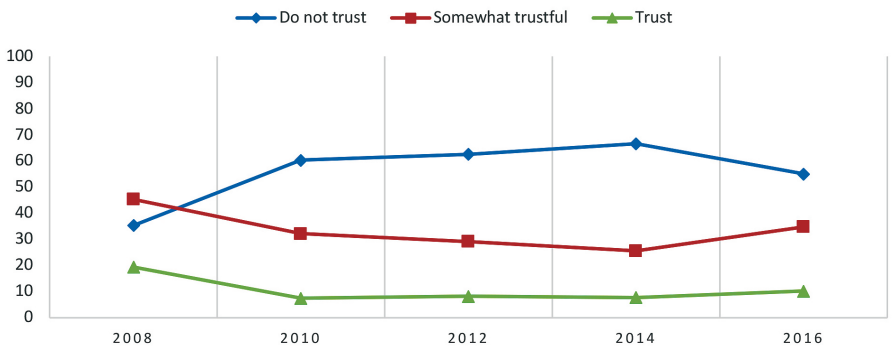
Chart 3: Trust in political parties



Source: ESS Round 4–8 (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016); authors' own calculations

Trust in parliament is locked in with trends in trust in politicians and political parties, but has, however, overall fared better than the individuals and entities represented by it. In 2008, 19.4% of citizens trusted it, and a little over one-third, namely 35.3% were distrustful. The share of citizens trusting parliament fell to 7.8% while the share of citizens distrusting parliament climbed to 66.6% in 2014, before returning to better scores later. However, here it is also difficult to credit the new parties alone for these improvements.

Chart 4: Trust in parliament



Source: ESS Round 4–8 (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016); authors' own calculations

Democratic innovations in Slovenian parties

Turning now to IPD as revealed by the analysis of the statutes of Slovenian political parties, the first general observation refers to the homogeneity of parties concerning how often they amend their statutes to introduce/modify IPD policies. Although they might amend their statutes quite often, with Zares being the outlier among the new parties with a new statute in every year of its existence (6 in total) and SDS among the old parties with 7 (counting the one before the 2008 elections), changes to IPD elements have been rare and even then, with a few exceptions, were only minor modifications rather than wholesale changes or, for the old parties, reactions to the inner workings of their new counterparts.

Looking at the first indicator of IPD, namely, eligibility to vote at the party congress or congress composition, we note the new political parties have generally introduced democratic innovations or improved IPD compared to the old parties. Taking the lead here are Zares, PS and SAB whose congresses are composed of all party members, which is also the case with LMŠ and the Left, while DL and SMC are closer to the old parties by giving voting rights only to national-level representatives such as Council and/or Executive Board members[9] and delegates from local or regional committees. These democratic innovations made by the new political parties in terms of congress composition did not spread since as no party altered its rules in this regard in the time period under study.

The importance of the congress's composition becomes evident when addressing the question of who has the final say in electing the party's president, which for all of the analysed parties is the Congress. Following LeDuc's (2001, 325) categorisation of party-leadership selectorates, this places Slovenian parties somewhere in the middle as it is more open than a party agency or only its MPs, but more closed than a primary or a caucus. Yet, as mentioned, the composition of a congress differs among parties and a congress allowing all members to vote allows for higher levels of IPD than a congress with a more limited selectorate, especially when at their very beginning new parties might not have many local or regional committees.

Another important topic is who can nominate a candidate for party president. Zares simply mentions it is the Council that puts a candidate list together. DL perhaps has the most direct and open way of nomination as the Executive Board compiles a list of all nominees that received written support from at least 50 members. PS, SAB and LMŠ do not regulate this process in their statutes, while the Left has a complicated procedure whereby its president, named Coordinator of the Council, is a *primus inter pares* of its members that are regional

9 Generally, members of a party's Executive Board are also members of its Council, which is the decision-making body between congresses and is in session only 3 or 4 times a year.

delegates (selected by local delegates) and congress-elected members. On the other hand, it is interesting that nominations are made in old parties by party organs/bodies, territorial and/or functional, making the old parties more decentralised in this regard (notwithstanding the previously mentioned caveat) than the new parties. However, one old party, SDS, radically altered how it regulates the election of its president in its 2018 statute that introduces municipal electoral conferences at which a candidate receiving the highest share of votes is elected. Although via a different way, this old party joins a group of several new parties (congress composition where all party members have a right to vote) regarding the empowering of the party membership in selecting the party president.

In relation to national-level candidate selection and nomination, there is remarkable similarity between the new and old parties, with the former not leading the change to any more inclusive practices. In all of the analysed parties, the final decision on the candidate list lies in the hands of the Executive Board or Council, which can be composed of either only a small number of national-level representatives (the case in all new parties, a partial exception is SAB, and in some the party president proposes certain members to be elected) or with some assured local/functional representation. In a few new parties (PS, SAB and SMC), the President makes the final proposal to be voted on by the Executive Board (Council in the SMC's case). The exception to this rule is the Left with its Council being a highly delegated organ from the local level upwards. The nomination of candidates, however, is considerably more open with all old parties opening up nominations (also) to local/regional committees and interest organisations within the party (e.g. youth, gender etc. organisations) while, among the new parties, DL and the Left allow nomination by any party member. Other new parties do not specifically mention this part of the candidate-selection process. Therefore, the selection of candidates puts Slovenian parties somewhere in the middle of inclusiveness while, once again, we see no democratic innovations in either in the new or old parties.

It is not very surprising that, compared to the practices of many other parties in Europe, the candidate-selection process is more decentralised, but not also much more democratic in the case of local elections, with territorial party organisations holding more power in this regard, despite national party organs in many Slovenian parties also having (at a minimum) the final word. However, a clear division between the new and old parties should be mentioned, with the former tending to record less by way of territorial organisational development (Krašovec 2017).

It is plebiscitary IPD that lies at the forefront of parties' efforts to open up by way of internal democracy. Here, the biggest innovator is the Left that in its 2014 statute permitted for one-third of members to call for an internal referendum, reduced in the 2017 statute to 10% or following a decision of the Council on

topics such as entering a government coalition[10], joining a pre-election coalition, deciding on the electoral manifesto or other decisions within the Council's jurisdiction.[11] A more reduced version of plebiscitary IPD would be party-wide consultations, which were an option for the Council of Zares, the Executive Board of DL and, uniquely among old parties following its 2018 statute reform, SDS, whose Executive Board is obliged to conduct a quick, internal vote of its members on political decisions of the highest importance.

An interesting comparison among parties emerges by looking at who has the final vote on the most important policy document of every party, its programme. Here, all Slovenian parliamentary parties, new and old, have the same rule that the party congress adopts the programme. Yet, as mentioned, who makes up the congress determines how open these parties actually are in also allowing their members rather than simply their leadership to shape the development of future policies.

The analysis shows that, although (some) new parties introduced certain democratic innovations (congress composition, internal referendum), Slovenian parties do not generally record a high level of IPD.

Analysis of the party statutes enables us to draw some other interesting observations. It seems that Slovenian parties may be divided in terms of the IPD prescriptions (and in some cases also party statues in general) into three political family groups. The first group is the social/liberal bloc and contains Zares, PS and SAB (the latter two having been one party at one point). The same can be said for the other two groups, with second containing more social democratic oriented parties, the SD and DeSUS, and the third being a conservative one, with SDS, NSi and SLS, with the latter two having strong similarities since they were merged at one stage. Despite the strong familiar relationship among Slovenian parties, the statutes of four new political parties (DL, SMC, LMŠ and the Left) may be regarded as noteworthy, although as shown, with the exception of the latter, their IPD rules are mostly similar to those of the old parliamentary parties.

The second observation is one of stagnation because not only have the few IPD innovations that were introduced not been copied by other parties but, once introduced, parties have not changed them, sticking with what they know best.[12] The only major shift in this sense is SDS which introduced both some kind of membership ballots for the selection of its president and consultations with its membership as practised by the Left. However, based on previous studies,

10 An internal referendum was held by the Left when deciding whether to support the current minority government; 85% of members casting a vote in favour of supporting the current minority government (L. L. – G. C. 2018).

11 However, only the Council can decide whether to submit these other decisions to an internal referendum.

12 Two decades ago, SD was experimenting with membership ballots in the candidate-selection process, but quickly returned to a more traditional way of selecting its candidates (see Krašovec 2000).

these 'democratic innovations' are more likely, in general, to lead to a reduction of power of the middle party elite and to the atomisation of the party members, both of which indeed usually further empower the party leader(ship).

Conclusion

Even though the Slovenian political arena since 1990 has never known a moment of great stability or the political class being held in high esteem by its citizens, the shocks following the 2008 elections led to apparent freefall in terms of trust in political institutions and satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and this should be of a particular cause for concern. Exacerbated by the economic crisis, the political crisis seemed set to develop into one of constant turnover and incessant volatility, and the new parties have since started to record very good electoral results. The economic situation has been improving since 2014 and obviously the economic growth and greater prosperity have been slowly accompanied by some improvements in the citizens' satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and in their trust in politics in general. However, the very good hard economic data (GDP growth, GDP per capita, unemployment rate) and the still low level of inequality (Gini coefficient on inequality) more recently have not led to a return to the pre-crisis levels in relation to citizens' satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and their trust in the main political agents and representatives. As our analysis shows, the mere emergence of the new, very successful parties can hardly be connected with these improvements in citizens' opinion. Indeed, a large share of the new parties' success is due to disappointment with the previously successful new parties. Moreover, the new parties have generally introduced some small democratic innovations yet, all in all, Slovenian parties have so far not shown themselves to be great democratic innovators or do not see these innovations as a requirement for re-gaining the trust of the citizenry.

Future research, which would include many other factors and developments in different fields, is needed to better answer the many questions concerning the role of new political parties in post-communist societies, especially in connecting the citizens with the state. Slovenia proved to be a valuable case study as it finds itself, despite the many democratic weaknesses recorded especially after 2008, in quite a unique position among its Central European peers, having avoided the backsliding of democracy and possibly even reducing the hollowness of its political system.

Abbreviations

Demokratična stranka upokojencev Slovenije – Democratic Party of Retired People of Slovenia (DeSUS)

Državljanska lista – Civic List (DL)

Nova Slovenija-Krščanski demokrati – New Slovenia-Christian Democrats (NSi)

Pozitivna Slovenija – Positive Slovenia (PS)

Slovenska demokratska stranka – Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS)

Slovenska ljudska stranka – Slovenian People's Party (SLS)

Slovenska nacionalna stranka – Slovenian National Party (SNS)

Socialni demokrati – Social Democrats (SD)

Stranka Alenke Bratušek – Party of Alenka Bratušek (SAB)

Stranka LMŠ (Lista Marjana Šarca) – Party of the List of Marjan Šarec (LMŠ)

Stranka Mira Cerarja/Stranka modernega centra – Party of Miro Cerar/Modern Centre Party (SMC)

Združena Levica/Levica – United Left/The Left

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Riding the wave of distrust and alienation – new parties in Serbia after 2008

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sciendo

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Abstract: *Serbian party system is in the phase of reconfiguration which can be perceived as the outcome of domestic incentives (crisis of democratic transition and of democratic rule) and the international one (economic and migrant crisis). On one side, this reconfiguration includes emergence of predominant ruling party (Serbian Progressive Party, SNS) with strong leader and popular support; on the other side, the opposition camp has been atomized into number of smaller parties. Most of these parties are the new one (including the SNS) and founded after 2008 elections and creation of pro-EU consensus among relevant parties; post-2008 period has been characterized by the decline of almost all old parties, followed by emergence, partial success and fast decline of a large number of new actors. In this paper I am investigating if these new parties can be explained as the unexpected consequence of ideological and political stability after 2008 elections, tactical narrowing of the ideological space and cartelization of the party system. Analysis will focus at populist and anti-partisan ideas, their interplay and different ideological interpretation.*

Keywords: Serbian politics, new parties, populism, Serbian progressive party, democratic crisis.

This paper analyzes the recent wave of new political actors in Serbia. They are perceived as the outcome of simultaneous incentives, both from the outside – a contemporary crisis of democracy followed and strengthened by the economic (2008) and the migrant crises (2015), and from the inside – crisis of the democratic transition and Serbian party system. In these conflictual circumstances and in contrast to expectations after the 2008 elections in which democracy

and the party system in Serbia had reached its stable and institutionalized form, the party system entered an extremely volatile and turbulent stage. This stage is characterized by the crisis of the entire political system and the decline of almost all old parties, followed by the emergence, partial success and fast decline of a large number of new actors. However, some of those new actors had become important and stable parts of political life.

The goal of this paper is to investigate whether these new actors can be explained as the unexpected and unwilling consequence of ideological and political stability after the 2008 elections, the tactical narrowing of the ideological space and the cartelization of the party system. Analysis will focus on new ideas promoted by new parties, populist and anti-partisan standpoints, their interplay with the main issues of Serbian politics and different ideological interpretations and outcomes.

In the first part I will present a theoretical understanding of party system development, followed by insight into the main driving forces behind the changes and challenges to the established order. In the second part I will present the stages of the development of the Serbian party system. The third part will be dedicated to a description of the new actors, their ideological platforms, and the tactics and participation in the political process. Finally, in the fourth section my focus will be on the consequences of the emergence of these new parties for the party system and structure of social cleavages, as well as on potential for institutionalization of the analyzed new actors.

Theoretical framework – the stages of development of the party system

Eastern European democracies have provided political scientists with extraordinary opportunities to observe the development and potential institutionalization of party systems in vivo and to test hypotheses that were developed based on the old democracies. However, it was very soon observed that in most cases post-communist societies needed alternative and adapted approaches that would address the specific traits and uniqueness of these societies, as well as the significant differences between them.

The core issue of the debate between those new approaches was on the interpretation of the social structure of post-communist societies and whether it has the potential to provide political articulation of the socio-structural differences (as in the case of the original cleavage theory proposed by Lipset and Rokkan (1967)). Some scholars argue that these societies were 'flattened' by the communist rule and that they represent 'a tabula rasa' which allowed leaders to create political parties in a top-down manner and without constraints imposed by the social structure (Shabad – Slomczynski 1999). The other approaches hold that, although social differences are not articulated as in consolidated

liberal democracies, there are still important social differences (ethnicity, level of modernization, etc.) which will provide a foundation for party competition within the new pluralist environment (Evans – Whitefield 1993). For example, Kitschelt argues that occupational-based positions have the capacity to serve as a basis for cleavage formation, especially under the influence of 'marketisation' (Kitschelt 1992), while Deegan-Krause (2007) puts an emphasis on non-economic issues like the role of the church, abortion, minority issues and consumerism. However, regardless of the understanding of social structure, it was noted that it takes some time for the creation of links between parties and citizens and that we can observe different stages of this process (Agh 1994). Voters also needed some time and experience to understand their positions on the left-right scale, as well as parties to create and to develop their ideological profiles (Mateju – Rehakova – Evans 1999). Therefore, formation of the party system was initially understood as a process that might last some time. Olson argued that party systems are formed „through a sequence of elections and parliamentary terms" that allows participants (both politicians and voters) to learn and to adapt (Olson 1998: 432), which puts the emphasis on the change and instability, as well as on the institutional dimension of party politics (in contrast to focusing on the organizational aspect and linkages between parties and civil society) and on tactical choices made by political parties (Sitter 2002).

One example of adaptations of the old ideas to new post-communist circumstances is Bielasiak's concept of the five-stage development of the party system (Bielasiak 1997). In contrast to previous attempts, Bielasiak links the (substantive) cleavages approach to the process approach (which is oriented on electoral processes and the creation of governing coalitions) in order to combine the understanding that social cleavages, although not the sole foundation of CEE politics, structure politics throughout salient and fundamental issues and that the party system institutionalizes itself through the series of electoral cycles or processes. In this way we are „appreciating both the content of political cleavage and dynamic evolution of these divisions into more structured, competitive party system" (Bielasiak 1997: 26) and keeping the balance between stability (structure) and the role of politicians (actors). In other words, Bielasiak's approach enables us to understand the change and the evolution of the party system and at the same time perceive the elements of stability.

In more concrete words, he argues that most post-communist party systems have gone through the five-stage process of consolidation and institutionalization. The first stage is the hegemonic party system, which presumes the predominance of one ruling hegemonic communist party. This stage is followed by a polarized party system which depicts the division between the old regime and the emerging opposition, or between the old one and the transformative regime (Beyme 2002). This phase and the following phase can potentially have many variations, depending on the different sizes and strengths of the opposition to

the communist or successor regime. For example, in some Balkan countries like Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia, old communist elites transformed themselves partially and continued to govern for some additional time within the formal pluralist environment (Kasapović 1995; Sobolewska-Myślik – Kosowska-Gąstoł – Borowiec 2016). Also, as Kitschelt pointed out, there are many structural variations between countries and those differences provide obstacles and incentives for the future stages of party systems development. These variations can include, among other things, type of communist regime, politically mobilized social groups or the method of the regime change (Kitschelt et al 1999). Depending on these characteristics, the next stage of development can come sooner or later and be more or less chaotic.

In Bielasiak terminology, the next phase is the fragmented system, where the new ruling coalition falls apart without an arch-enemy and unifying goal. Differences between former opposition parties grow bigger and set the scene for the establishment of new cleavages. In the fourth stage (pluralization of the party system) fragmentation is reduced into fewer rooted parties that are expected to create links with civil society and to end the „isolation of parties from society" (Agh 1994). This stage is finally succeeded with the creation of a polyarchical party system which is expected to be the last stage of the development and represents „a stable, self-sustaining party environment along well-defined axes of competition" (Bielasiak 1997:30). The polyarchical model, therefore, presumes stability of party competition and establishment of links between parties and civil society. The polyarchical model resembles strongly institutionalized party systems defined by Mainwaring (2001) as systems with the stability of inter-party competition and a relative stability in parties' ideological positions.

As Bielasiak argues, those phases are analytical and they can vary from one case to another. This article aims to demonstrate how strongly the Serbian case fits to this theoretical framework, even though it was primarily designed for central-European countries. Analysing the Serbian case from Bielasiak's perspective is interesting because the party system entered a highly turbulent stage after the 2008 and 2012 elections and „creation of shallow and superficial pro-European consensus" (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2018) in contrast to expectations that the party system reached some form of stability and balance.

What are the reasons behind the turbulence and crises of the Serbian party system? Is it a country specific characteristic or can it be related to a wider Eastern European context? For example, in contrast to initial cleavage and/or party system stability, Croatian and Slovenian party systems are also showing signs of instability and volatility (Henjak – Zakošek – Čular 2013; Zajc 2013). Additionally, some countries (e.g. Hungary, Macedonia and Poland) are facing a crisis of democratic performances (Freedom House 2019). It seems that political crisis and (consequential) crisis of party systems is a common feature of many post-communist societies and that there could be a common ground

between the decline in the democratic performances in Hungary, Poland or Serbia, or between the lack of trust in the old parties and the increased space for new actors in Croatia, Slovenia or Serbia. For example, Agh argues that there is a triple crisis in the Hungarian case: the first one is related to the transformation of post-socialist societies, the second one is the post EU-accession crisis and the third caused by the global economic-fiscal crisis. In his opinion „democratic backslides" or „the golden age of populism" can be understood as some of their outcomes (Agh 2013: 5–6). In case of candidate states (i.e. Serbia or Macedonia), a post-accession crisis could be substituted with the crisis of a long-accession process and the enlargement fatigue that produces similar effects.

Therefore, the following parts present the stages of party system development in Serbia, while seeking the roots of democratic crisis, structural conditions for party system development and change (i.e. the structure of social cleavages), and the old and new parties' response to the mentioned crisis and trends. Focus will be placed on anti-partism and populism as the most visible ideological outputs. Populism, which is understood as an thin-centre ideology that divides society between true, „honest people" and a „corrupted elite" (Mudde 2004), can be related to distrust in politics and alienation from political parties, two trends that are very important incentives for the emergence of new parties in the Serbian case.

The presentation of development stages of the party system and newly emerged parties will be oriented towards electoral campaigns instead of party programs and documents. In the Serbian case, party programs are not that relevant for understanding party politics since party leaders have the strongest influence on the interpretation of ideological positions or policies (Orlović 2008); political parties also very rarely produce electoral manifestoes. Therefore, analysis of the content of electoral campaigns and secondary sources on campaigns are often the primary or the only source of relevant data on political parties (Stojiljković 2012). Focus on electoral processes is also very compatible with the Bielasiak theoretical framework.

Serbian party system – five stages of development

The Serbian party system represents the mixture of structural characteristics common for Eastern European transitional democracies with some very strong post-Yugoslav traits. Specifically, the Serbian party system is weakly institutionalized (Mainwaring 2001), with high volatility and a dominance of identity based divisions (Elster – Offe – Preuss 1998) related to the break-up of the former Yugoslavia – war crimes, separation of Montenegro and Kosovo, and a consequential lack of consensus on EU and NATO membership (Komšić – Pantić – Slavujević 2003; Mihailović 2008).

Regardless of its specific characteristics, the development of the party system followed Bielasiak's phases to a significant extent. The first phase of the

hegemonic party was during the communist Yugoslavia when the Communist Alliance held a monopoly over political life. In contrast to many ECE cases, Yugoslavian communists were more liberal and they provided elements of autonomy for certain areas of life (e.g. culture and education). However, the last stage of Yugoslav communism was driven by political pluralism that was allowed within the constituent parts – the Yugoslav Republic, but not on the national level (there were no Yugoslav elections). This circumstance propelled nationalism and conflicts between the nations as the key issues behind the breakup of the Yugoslav federation. The hegemonic stage was just an introduction for the first transitional period(s) – polarization. In the Serbian case, it lasted for almost ten years, until the opposition found a way to unite itself as the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (*Demokratska opozicija Srbije*, DOS) and to defeat Slobodan Milošević in the 2000 presidential elections.).

As predicted by Bielasiak, the DOS coalition was not a governing coalition, but rather an electoral one. Soon after the democratic changes it was divided into several camps depending on their ideas on how fast and deep the transition should be and what the outcome of the process should be. „The lack of consensus was mostly visible regarding the European integration issue that divided the party system into three groups: euro-friendly (led by the Democratic Party (Demokratska stranka, DS)), centrist euro-skeptic (led by the Democratic Party of Serbia (Demokratska stranka Srbije, DSS), and anti-European parties (Serbian Radical Party (Srpska radikalna stranka, SRS)) and the Socialist Party of Serbia (Socijalistička partija Srbije, SPS))" (Spasojević-Stojiljković 2018:149). Since the foundation for this division was based on values, scholars define this cleavage as a cleavage between traditionalist and modernist (Mihailović 2008; Spasojević 2016) or as a „cleavage of world-views, authoritarian and traditionalist versus modernist and libertarian" (Todosijević 2013: 523)

Due to very intensive debate between the new ruling parties and the lack of national consensus on EU membership, old regime parties were much stronger and less reformed, compared to the other ECE countries. The strongest one – SRS, however, did not have any coalition potential which kept the radicals outside of power sharing mechanisms on almost all levels of administration. The peak of polarization of the party system in the post-Milošević period was between 2007 and 2008, when the pro-EU block won two important consecutive elections – presidential and parliamentary, and set the course for Serbian transition in an EU direction. Victory of pro-EU parties „caused a decline of euro-skeptic parties: the DSS never recovered after this failure, the SPS initiated partial ideological reconfiguration towards a pro-EU social democratic party, and the SRS split. The SRS continued to exist, but their leadership and a majority of members founded the Serbian Progressive Party (Srpska napredna stranka, SNS) in 2008, defining it as a popular center-right and pro-European party" (Spasojević – Stojiljković 2018: 149). At that time, the split of the old

Serbian Radical Party was perceived as „the final step in consolidation of the electoral democracy" in Serbia (Spasojević 2011) and as a point of no-return in terms of the creation of basic social consensus and EU integrations. It seems that both of these claims are being challenged with the recent events in Serbia (as I will discuss in detail in the concluding parts).

After the breaking point, between 2008 and 2012, we witnessed an example of moderate pluralism with two large catch-all parties and with several smaller ones (Orlović 2011). The level of consensus, at least formally, was so high that the SNS and the DS even discussed the possibility of a „grand coalition" and it seemed that the party system had successfully gone through the stage of pluralization and initiated the formation of a 'polyarchic' model. This model would include the creation of a stable party system with stronger and long-lasting ties between the parties and civil society, interest groups and other interest-based actors.

So, in terms of Bielasiak's theoretical framework, it seemed that the party system in Serbia had solid foundations and was quite stable between 2008 and 2012. Main cleavage lines depending on identity issues (e.g. EU and Kosovo) were pushed lower on the political agenda, and for the first time it looked like the economy or „the politics of interest" would become the driving force behind party competition. So, what happened and what prevented the formation of a polyarchic model?

There were two main developments. As a reaction to the 2008 economic crisis, the Serbian government increased spending, but that also included clientelistic networks and a significant level of corruption (Jovanović 2013; Dolenec 2013; Radeljić 2014). On the other side, in terms of EU integration as the key electoral promise from the 2008 elections, the DS failed to deliver a satisfactory level of progress due to slow and complicated negotiations with Kosovo and a lack of political determination from the state and DS president Boris Tadić. For example, the DS government tried to keep balance in foreign affairs (between pro-EU and pro-Russian positions), which resulted in a number of mixed messages and indecisive proposals. Since Serbian citizens had very high (and probably unrealistic) expectations from democratic changes and a lack of better results ten years after 2000 created difficult circumstances for the ruling politicians. Disaffections and distrust rates were high as the most trusted institutions were the Orthodox Church and the army, whereas political institutions (government, parliament), parties and even civil society and trade unions remained at the bottom of the scale with less that 30% of support (Stojiljković 2016). In these circumstances, formation of the new party (SNS) created a viable option for many disappointed voters, especially because it was clear that the SNS had coalition potential and a real chance to win the elections. In other words, during 2012 elections post-DOS parties were, for the first time, faced with party that could actually win the elections and form a government.

In terms of political processes, besides the foundation of the SNS, one additional challenge came from the liberal end of the political spectrum as the „Blank ballot campaign", which was organized as a protest against the political elite and their lack of responsibility (Spasojević 2012). The blank ballot campaign argued that „politicians are all the same" and that citizens should annul the vote (or vote blank) in the 2012 parliamentary and presidential elections because it is „irrelevant who governs". Interestingly, this campaign was driven by individuals with strong political and/or civil experience, and with a strong academic background. In other words, it was an elite revolt against the political elite.

Since most visible proponents of the blank ballot campaign were from the liberal and pro-EU end of the political spectrum, this campaign created more political damage to parties from that end – i.e. the DS and the Liberal Democratic Party (Liberalno-demokratska partiija, LDP) (Kovačević 2013). Some understood this campaign as an additional criticism because of too-pragmatic and too-centrist politics of the DS and president Tadić, as well as criticism against the „creation of Tadić cult" and dominance of PR and media-oriented politics over the substantive one (Slavujević 2017). In this perspective, the blank ballot campaign had an additional twist – some proponents (e.g. Vesna Pešić, former leader of Civil Alliance of Serbia) called for voting for the opposition candidate in the second round of presidential elections in 2012, not because they favored Tomislav Nikolić (candidate of SNS), but for tactical reasons in order to end the Tadić rule (Trivić 2012). Since Nikolić won with a very small margin (70 000 of votes), we can argue that blank ballots did cause significant damage to Tadić as a candidate, but also that they expressed growing dissatisfaction among the DS and Tadić constituency.

The defeat of Boris Tadić in the presidential elections in 2012 formally initiated the new developments of the party system. Foundation of the new government by the SNS, Socialist and the smaller regional party the United Regions of Serbia (Ujedinjeni regioni Srbije, URS) also meant formal resurrection of the *ancient regime* parties and their governing within the new democratic setting. The SNS/SPS government tried to prove that they have been reformed and acted with caution in the first mandate period, especially concerning sensitive issues that could be related to ancient regime policies like EU integration, relation to civil society and media or negotiation with Kosovo (in 2013 the government confirmed the Brussels agreement with Kosovo). However, in regard to the position of the DS there were fewer considerations and the SNS launched a strong campaign using the state resources (prosecution, public media, etc) framing the DS as the main source of corruption and crime. This campaign affected the DS's capacity and started internal debates and processes which led to a series of splits within the party. The most notable taking place just before the 2014 elections when Tadić decided to split the DS and found the New Democratic Party, later renamed the Social Democratic Party of Serbia (Socijaldemokratska

stranka, SDS) just weeks before the elections (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2016). In a wider perspective, splits between democrats decreased their electoral power, but also created more opportunities for the new actors in the ideological space that was once dominated by the DS (pro-EU, modernist and liberal parts of political space). The split of the DS also restarted the competition for the leading oppositional party among several smaller parties. The new actors that can be related to this ideological space were Enough is enough! (Dosta je bilo, DJB) and the former ombudsperson Saša Janković who ran against Aleksandar Vučić in the 2017 presidential elections and who later founded The movement of free citizens (Pokret slobodnih građana, PSG).

Catch-all politics created a space on the far-right end as well, as the SNS tried to go as far as possible towards the political center. Also, the SRS (that has been occupying the far-right end since the beginning of party pluralism) has been perceived as an old and conservative party without the ability to adapt to new circumstances and with special ties to the SNS. This relationship was similar to the one they had with the SPS during Milošević's rule when they acted as „fake opposition", that is, opposition that works in collusion with the governing parties (Spoerri 2015). The available political space on the right and traditional end of the political spectrum has been taken up by Dveri[1], a new right-wing populist and socially conservative/religious party.

Finally, some new actors have tried to offer political options that were not previously available or that cannot be compared to the old parties. Do not drown Belgrade (Ne davimo Beograd, NDVBGD) occupied the left populist position and Ljubiša Preletačević Beli (candidate for president in 2017) offered– a satiric and imaginary character running for the presidency. The following parts of this paper present and analyse new actors and their main ideas.

New actors – description and analysis of tactical issues

The previous section has highlighted the new parties and actors examined in this study. Namely, SNS, Dveri, DJB and NDVBGD, and two individuals who have run for president of Serbia, Janković and Beli. A formal criterion for selection was that the parties were founded and registered after the 2008 elections and that they have participated in at least one election since. Also, the two candidates that were added to the sample appeared for the first time in the 2017 presidential elections and had no previous political experience. However, most of selected parties/actors would fulfill stricter criteria of „newness", as well. Their party labels and ideological standpoints were new; they managed to attract new voters and new activists; their candidates and policies were also

1 In literal translation Dveri is the archaic word for doors; it can also refer to the doors of iconostasis (a wall of icons and religious drawings that's separates the space in a church)

new (Barnea and Rahat 2010:306). Furthermore, most of the parties included in the sample have clear ideological profiles (especially when compared to the old, established parties), refer to new issues and try to occupy new ideological niches. In this regard they would be classified as prophets (leaders or parties that are developing new ideologies around new issues). Partial exceptions to this would be the SNS and Saša Janković, who would be closer to the role of purifiers (those who claim to purify 'the original' ideology from its current interpretation), according to Lucardie's concepts (Lucardie 2000).

The only border-line case could be the status of the SNS, as they became a new party by the split of the former SRS. They are the largest new party and the ruling party. However, it is not clear if they are a new party or not? From one perspective, the SNS initially inherited the majority of the SRS leadership, most of its infrastructure, a group of former SRS MPs in the national parliament (without participating in elections) and significant political experience and skills. Without any doubt, the SNS can and should be perceived as one of the successors of the SRS, although the SRS continued to exist as well. From the other perspective, and the one applied in this article, (), the SNS represents a new party because they introduced a new label and their policies are significantly different from those of the old party because the SNS has tempered its nationalist rhetoric, declared itself open to the prospects of European integration, and emphasized economic issues" (Todosijević, 2013:535). Moreover, a vast majority of their candidates and officials are different from the Serbian radical party (Barnea and Rahat 2010). Finally, as their leadership constantly argued during the first years of this party, insisting on newness was a significant part of their project and success (Sikk 2011).

Being perceived as something new was one of the party's main goals after the foundation. The SNS leadership tried to detach itself from the radical legacy while not breaking all ties with former constituencies. Political circumstances were in favor of this transition „and the SNS benefited from shifting away from issues like EU [sic] and Kosovo toward the economy-oriented issues" (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2018: 115). During the electoral campaign in 2012, the SNS presented themselves as „the movement of the discontented people" (Jovanović 1013: 12) and promised a „radical fight against corruption and organized crime" (Stojiljković 2012: 18). In a nutshell, the SNS tried to ride the wave of disaffection with a transitional outcome and blame the DS and other governing parties for the poor results. As most of their voters were transitional losers (Orlović 2011; Vuković 2014), this was an excellent and logical choice; the SNS emphasized their positions by using a populist framework and claiming that the DS represented a unified block together with tycoons, international organizations and foreign investors who were getting all benefits and state subsidies. Also, „the SNS was in a better position to reach medium voters based on an anti-corruption agenda compared to the incumbent Democratic Party (DS) idea

of anti-corruption, as the core campaign issue better suited conservative voters who always demand more 'law and order' policies" (Spasojević 2019: 131). This ideological position also provided the party with continuity in relation to the old SRS positions, but within the usual populist twist that they were defending the people and the democracy against the usurpers that took power after the democratic changes in 2000 (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2018). Also, promoting democracy as a value, instead of authoritarian alternatives, was something new that the SNS added in comparison to the Radical period.

In terms of other parts of the ideological portfolio, the SNS was quite careful not to include too much nationalism, although their ideological baggage was full of potential „others". This issue is another example of the tactical balance between new and old – the two main enemies or „the others" were still the international community and other Yugoslav nations, but new confrontation is much softer. For example, the SNS was accusing Brussels of rigid and anti-Serbian attitudes, but they continued with EU integrations and praised individual European states (e.g. Germany or Austria); in regional relations, the key messages were peace and cooperation, and then followed by harsh evaluations of the position of the Serbian minority in Croatia or Montenegro (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2018: 117). This complexity and these contradictions of ideas will remain part of the SNS ideological portfolio and they would go on to further intensify it later by creating ideologically heterogeneous coalitions and by assigning roles of „good cop and bad cop" to different party officials. This would also include an increase in radical and nationalistic positions, especially after the 2016 and 2017 elections (Stojiljković 2017; Spasojević 2019). However, the party still keeps its formal EU position and distances itself from its radical past and the SRS. It is very important to note that this kind of ideological profile is only possible in situations when the government is in significant control of the media system and in societies without a free and independent media and public sphere that would question these issues and contradictions (Freedom House 2019).

In contrast to most Serbian right wing and nationalistic parties that are rooted in issues that can be related to the post-Yugoslav conflict, Dveri are the most salient in relation to their social and conservative agenda (Vukov 2013). The party is driven by social conservatism that can be traced to the teachings of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Family issues and family values are the cornerstones of Dveri's ideological portfolio. This does not mean that Dveri do not share strong standpoints on Kosovo or war crimes, but they identify more with social values and issues. In this regard, Dveri are the first and a unique post-Milošević right wing party that came out of right-wing civil society that started to emerge in the early 2000s. When members of the social movement decided to transform into a political party, it created a division between founding members because some of them perceived party politics as immoral (Vukov

2013); the division was extended when the party changed its statute in 2015 in order to strengthen the position of the party president and to become more efficient. Regardless of these divisions, it still holds strong ties to right-wing civil society groups and uses them as a legitimacy tool and a tactical advantage.

Dveri are quite similar to many new right-wing populist parties across Europe. They perceive Brussels as an alienated center that imposes „European values" that are in conflict with local and traditional values. Dveri participates in the anti-immigrant movement, even though Serbia is a society with almost no immigrants. In 2011 and 2014 Dveri organized protests against camps for immigrants and refugees that existed in Serbia (Rudić 2014). In economic terms, Dveri are arguing for economic protectionism and economic patriotism (Stojanović 2017), which should serve as a shelter from international corporations and a globalized economy. Dveri are against the influence of the EU and IMM on domestic economy and, generally, against the neo-liberal model (Pavlović – Stanojević 2016; Vukov 2013). Initially, Dveri criticized all of the other parties, but later found a way to cooperate with most opposition parties. In the 2016 parliamentary elections they entered parliament in a coalition with the DSS and in 2017 they ran in the Belgrade elections in a coalition with Dosta je bilo. In the 2019 protest waves, Dveri were active as a part of a wider coalition called the Alliance for Serbia (Savez za Srbiju, SZS), together with almost all of the other opposition parties. This coalition activity is important because it shows that Dveri (although still perceived as a far-right party) are changing their positions in regard to other parties and are that some are even open to coalition agreements.

Dosta je bilo (DJB) was initiated by a group of experts who believed that transparency and a reduction in public spending were the key to solving the main problem in Serbia, which is worsening corruption and partocracy (Stojiljković 2017). This approach was the driving force behind the initial success of DJB and the most notable representative of this belief was Saša Radulović, a former bankruptcy trustee and prominent blogger (well known for his criticism of uncontrolled public spending and corruption), who accepted the position of Ministry of Economy in the SNS/SPS government However, very soon he encountered conflicts with Vučić because of proposed austerity measures and a lack of transparency and he left the government just before the elections in 2014 (Avakumović 2017). Radulović founded DJB together with several prominent public figures that had not been active in political parties. This gave the DJB campaign a head start because they were at least recognizable to one part of the public; however, they failed to win the necessary 5% threshold in 2014.

DJB used anti-party positions to criticize both the SNS/SPS and former ruling parties like the DS. Between 2014 and 2016 Radulović became very popular because of his effective and simplified criticism that demanded change of the

entire system, not only government parties. DJB used the space and ideas laid by the „blank votes" campaign and a general discontent among the voters. However, we cannot classify DJB as a populist party because they neither anti-elitist nor anti-pluralist. In contrast, as they belonged to some sort of elite, DJB promoted a technocratic image and ideas among the voters (Avakumović 2017).

DJB's ideological portfolio affected their organizational style, in a word non-conventional or completely different from the other parties. The party used an open process to write the manifestoes, had an open call for MP candidates and even used computer software to decide the order of candidates for MPs on the party list (Avakumović 2017). However, behind this smoke screen, there were many oligarchic and centralizing forces in place as Radulović made all of the important decisions and eventually alienated most members of the party leadership (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2016).

In 2014, DJB failed to win the 5% threshold, but in 2016 they entered parliament as the strongest opposition party with 6% votes and 16 MPs. Their 2016 success was more impressive because DJB relied solely on social media for its campaign (Klačar – Živković 2018). Their campaign was without a single TV clip. Also, since they generated loyal and passionate voters, the SNS perceived them as a threat and actively attacked them during the campaign. Undergoing attacks from the regime and being positioned as critical against all other parties created a complicated situation for DJB. The party tried to create a balance between conflict and cooperation with opposition parties, but it was not that successful, in part because of a lack of political experience and skill on behalf of DJB. They even proposed that there should be a new opposition made of parties without negative background and political baggage (Radulović 2016).

Lack of cooperation became most visible during the presidential elections in 2017 when Radulović simultaneously ran for president and supported the candidacy of fictional candidate Ljubiša Preletačević Beli. At the same time, the opposition supported ombudsperson Janković, who was perceived as the „new face" in politics and as someone the DJB could genuinely support. In 2018 the DJB ran in the Belgrade elections together with Dveri under the slogan „the current politicians should leave power, but the old ones should not return" (N1 2018). However, this coalition failed to win the local elections threshold and Radulović won only 1.5% in the presidential elections. This signaled a changing trend, and soon after the presidential elections several prominent members left the party, a trend which continued in the following months., Eventually, out of 16 MPs that got mandated as part of the DJB lists in 2016, only three remained members of the party.

The presidential elections in 2017 had two unexpected candidates that reflected two opposing trends. On one side, as a result for the demand for new politicians without „baggage" there was the candidacy of Saša Janković, who was serving as ombudsperson and who had become a harsh critic of the SNS

government (especially in regards to the Savamala controversy[2]). On the other side, as a continuum of the blank ballots campaign and the „they are all the same" approach, there was the candidacy of Ljubiša Preletačević Beli, a fictional character performed by Luka Maksimović.

During local elections in 2016 a small group of activists in Mladenovac (urban area of Belgrade) ran using a satirical political party platform and a mock leader called Ljubiša Preletačević Beli[3] and won almost 20% of the votes. Their campaign was a satirical expression of disaffection with local politics that is perceived as corrupt, clientelistic and too-dependent on the national parties (Hopkins 2017). In many towns is Serbia it was quite usual for one politician to serve as mayor under one party in one mandate and under a different party in another mandate. In order to confront such a trend, the SPN used humor and a satirical campaign of fake promises, the most notable probably being the promise to open a euthanasia department for retired people in order to reduce the cost of living for them and their families (Sekulović 2016).

Following local success, Beli decided to run in the presidential elections in 2017. Initial expectations were quite humble, but after going viral and becoming extremely popular (Čančarević 2017), Beli had become politically relevant. He followed a path similar to the blank ballots campaign, arguing that it is completely irrelevant who rules the country; one part of his supporters were very political and disaffected by the existing political offer, but he also attracted voters that were not interested in politics and who simply found him funny and amusing (Estatie 2017). During his campaign Beli acted as saviour of the nation (dressed in white, with a „royal" scepter and often riding a white horse), he promised many unrealistic things, claiming that there were no real differences between him and the other politicians (Čančarević 2017). After receiving higher scores in public opinion polls, Beli was faced with constrained and moderate criticism from the other opposition candidates with arguments that his mockery benefited the Vučić regime because it did not contribute to the change of government. However, due to his enormous popularity and the expectations that his voters might vote for the opposition in the second round of elections, no one actually engaged in serious criticism. Some parties like DJB even worked hard to support his candidacy. Beli won 9% of the votes and defeated some long-standing and well-known politicians in the first round.

2 The Savamala controversy refers to the demolition of several houses and restaurants in the Savamala district in downtown Belgrade during the night after the parliamentary elections in 2016. This action was conducted by masked individuals who were not stopped by police. Most probably this demolition was related to construction deadlines for the Belgrade Waterfront project (a government backed project with significant political importance).

3 Beli means White, whereas Preletačević is a fake family name suggesting someone flipped/defected party membership; *Preleteti* literally means to fly from one place to another.

How is it possible to have every 10th vote go to a fictional character? It is evidence of how voters were disaffected with the political offer (Klačar 2018; Elez 2017), although we should not minimize the influence of those who voted for Beli just for fun and without serious political intentions. After the presidential elections, Beli tried to continue with his role of politician, but some members of his team left and he came under the scrutiny of the public. He managed to gather signatures for candidacy in the Belgrade local elections, but it seemed that his 15 minutes of fame were over and he failed to generate similar support. During the local campaign he was openly criticized and accused of being a Trojan horse of the government and it seemed that he was not able to answer those accusations in an appropriate manner, although he remained quite popular among non-political citizens.

As stated above, the presidential elections created an opportunity for another new actor – Saša Janković, who was serving as the first Serbian ombudsperson since 2007. In recent years the ombudsperson position had been personalized and indentified by Janković, because his work became more visible during the SNS rule due to an increased number of human rights violations and especially after the Sava Mala incident (although he did engage in legal battles against the DS government as well). As his second mandate was coming to an end, there were growing rumors that he would start a political career. Indeed, he ran for Serbian president in 2017 as a representative of modernist, liberal and pro-European Serbia (Čančarević 2017). Basically, Janković used an empty space left after the crisis of the DS. His campaign was supported by the DS but with his legal background and culture (former DSS constituency) he also managed to create a wider front that included a significant portion of civil society (Čolović 2018) and some centrist voters. Janković managed to raise significant expectations and hopes among the opposition block, to gather many non-political individuals behind him as part of the „Appeal of 100" (Čančarević 2017) and to some extent to decrease the negative perception of politicians. At the same time, the DS was quite hidden during his campaign, although their organizational support was enormous (Stojiljković – Spasojević 2018: 119).

Janković was the only new actor that did not flirt with populism and anti-party sentiments. By focusing on issues related to political systems, democracy and human right (Elez 2017) he tried to articulate widespread discontent and to frame it as a consequence of the usurpation of politics and the state by the current regime. At the same, he tried to keep balance between the old opposition parties and new actors that ran for the presidency as well. As he was the strongest candidate from the opposition (tallying 16% of votes in the first round), he was under a severe campaign of the SNS friendly tabloids (Čolović 2018).

In the post-election period, Janković tried to transform the electoral support into everyday politics. However, his relations with the DS became too complicated, and at one point there were rumors that he was considering a run for the

DS presidency. This conflict in the post-electoral period was based on a dilemma of how much of the 16% of votes could be contributed to the candidate and how much to the supporting parties. Because of this situation, Janković decided to make a new party and name it the Movement of Free Citizens (Pokret slobodnih građana, PSG).

In 2018, PSG ran in the Belgrade local elections together with other opposition parties in the coalition led by Dragan Đilas (former DS president and former Belgrade mayor), but they failed to establish a long-term cooperation. PSG insisted on a pro-European identity as the cornerstone of this coalition, whereas Đilas (as the most prominent leader) opted for a wider coalition that might include euro-skeptic parties like Dveri. After remaining outside of this coalition and without an agreement with the DS, PSG was left alone on the political scene and many problems surfaced. Similar to the case of the DJB, the party failed to establish itself and to become relevant. Janković was accused of centralization and a lack of understanding for different opinions. Most founding members left the party and finally Janković decided to politically retire in January 2019, just two years after challenging Vučić in the presidential election. He was substituted with Sergej Trifunović, a prominent actor without any experience in politics; following Trifunović's election many members of the presidency announced their resignations. Regardless of PSG's future, there is still an empty space on the pro-European pole of political spectrum in Serbia.

Finally, the last Belgrade elections added another actor – Initiative Do not Drown Belgrade (Ne davimo Beograd, NDVBGD) as a leftist, citizens list. NDVBGD has become recognizable to the wider public after a series of demonstrations against the Belgrade Waterfront project (Greenberg – Spasić 2017). This project is transforming and gentrifying a large space on the right bank of the Sava river in the centre of Belgrade, from a railway station and old industrial area to more residential and business usage. The project is very important politically because it was an electoral promise of President Vučić and something that was very high on the political agenda. NDVBGD protested from the beginning of the project arguing that it was against public interest, against the legal framework and that it would decrease the quality of life in downtown Belgrade by serving only the interests of large capital (Greenberg – Spasić 2017). However, only after the Sava Mala incident) has this issue become very important and visible (Kmezić 2017). NDVBGD organized a series of large protests, but they had no formal effect except that President Vučić acknowledged that the highest officials of Belgrade were responsible for the demolition (Blic 2016).

This issue was enough to make a head start for the NDVBGD initiative and they positioned themselves as the civic, grassroots and leftist option. Members of the initiative had been active for a longer period in different areas that could serve as the programmatic base for the initiative, including housing and property issues (house evictions), usage of public and free spaces, envi-

ronmental issues, etc. The initiative was faced with dilemmas similar to those of the previously analyzed actors. As they perceived themselves as the local initiative, they ran in local elections outside of coalitions and won only 3% of votes, but NDVBGD supported Janković during the presidential campaign. However, members of the Initiative shared a distrust of politics and politicians, and some of them publicly supported Beli as a candidate. I could argue that there were elements of populism (similar to the leftist populism of Spanish Podemos), although they were not as visible as in the case of Dveri. NDVBGD kept distance between themselves and other established politicians. However, the initiative worked closely with other oppositional parties as part of the 2019 protest on the improvement of democratic conditions in Serbia. At the same time, the initiative was preparing to launch a new national left party that would gather several similar initiatives across Serbia (Danas 2019). Although there is a political space for this initiative (far left and liberal left), it is hard to predict whether they will manage to fulfill it and to earn the necessary 5% threshold for the national elections. Because of this, parts of the initiative were still very active as civil society organizations in order to increase capacity to influence the decision-making process.

The structure, the tactics and the change

In the previous part I have presented the most relevant and interesting new actors in the post-2008 period. The list of new actors is not limited to the ones mentioned, as other newly-registered parties have so far failed to fulfill the criteria of relevance, newness or were founded outside of proposed time-frame. For example, former DS official Vuk Jeremić established a new party called the Peoples' Party (Narodna partija, NP), former DS president Dragan Đilas established the Party of justice and freedom (Stranka slobode i pravde, SSP) and a number of factions from Dosta je bilo and PSG are in the process of forming new parties.

The presented cases have proved that applying Bielasiak's theoretical framework to the Serbian case can be fruitful, but somewhat challenging. Namely, after the 2008 elections and creation of the consensus on the issue of EU membership, the cleavage structure in Serbia significantly changed. Identity-based issues were in decline, because the main conflict between EU- and Kosovo centered politics was, at least temporarily, resolved in favor of pro-EU parties and also because of tactical interest of the main actors (the SNS leadership wanted to avoid issues that were salient during their period in the SRS). However, a lack of alternative cleavage line that would take the highest position and impose a new main line of competition (e.g. economic cleavage between free market and distributive economy), provided political actors with more freedom to search for new ideas and to propose new issues.

From an ideological standpoint, this lack of constraints and incentives (usually provided by social cleavages) prevented the party system to develop into a polyarchic phase. However, the instability and change did not make equal influence on both sides of the political spectrum. The conservative and traditional pole has been solidified by the foundation and enormous success of the SNS (which took on the role of the predominant party), and consolidation of the SRS and proliferation of Dveri. On the other side, the modernist and liberal block has been atomized in the last ten years. Splits of the DS, caused by internal debate and external pressure by the SNS, led to the foundation of a number of parties that can be linked to this pole. In Bielasiak's terms, I could argue that the modernist pole of the Serbian party system has been restored to a „fragmented" phase; interestingly, his argument is that fragmentation occurs in situations without an „arch-enemy and unifying goals" which could be used for this situation as well. Transformation of the SRS into the SNS (and the previous 'modernization' of the SPS) left the DS without archrival(s) and the general pro-EU consensus among most Serbian parties left the DS without a goal that would be party-specific. In these circumstances on the modernistic pole of the party system, it is not surprising that new parties are mushrooming and that the old parties are having trouble finding viable ideological standpoints.

This process of changing cleavage structure and party system configuration coincided with multiple crises. The first was economic (the global economic crisis), followed by a crisis of democracy and political representation in Serbia caused by authoritarian tendencies gradually introduced by Vučić and the SNS government. The level of democratic erosion has increased since the 2014 elections leading to Serbia's classification as a „partly-free" country in 2018 (Freedom house 2019). The mentioned crises all had a considerable impact and reinforced each other. In Serbian context, this means that the economic crisis hit society with very low trust rates in political institutions and with a high level of discontent with the results of the first transitional decade. Even without the global wave of populism and the narrative about the crisis of democracy, this would create circumstances that would promote anti-partism, anti-politics standpoints and anti-elitism, and most of the new actors responded to this call.

However, they did not use the opportunity in the same way and they applied different tactics. Right wing parties combined populism with different elements – the SNS decided to join the pro-EU camp and to carefully avoid confrontations in order to not jeopardize coalition and ruling potential. Dveri, on the other side, chose to remain anti-EU and to imitate most European anti-immigrant right wing parties with a local twist emphasizing social, religious and family values. Liberal and modernist parties like DJB also could not resist this opportunity, but they framed the argument in terms of anti-partism without anti-elitism and even combined it with technocratic concepts. Saša Janković was even softer in this perspective, and his response to public discontent was

mostly tactical and observable through the absence of parties in his campaign. Finally, NDVBGD offered leftist populism, grassroots participation and civic engagement as a response to the crisis of democracy.

Interestingly, all of the new parties had a dilemma on cooperation and conflict with the old parties with the exception of the SNS, which was founded in order to increase coalition potential. Cooperation with the old parties would mean the difference between the new and old ones was not that important; at the same time, that difference was one of the most important incentives for the voters of the DJB and Dveri and the driving force behind their success. On the other side, a lack of cooperation and an ability to make coalitions with similar parties was often punished by the voters and members. It seems that rapid formation of the parties on the wave of distrust and alienation was not enough to create sustainable and institutionalized parties and that other ideological elements have to be added as well. Also, support and enthusiasm around new parties has to be carefully developed and articulated because voters have less understanding for oligarchic tendencies in the case of new leaders/parties and expect higher democratic performances in internal party relations.

Conclusions

In contrast to Bielasiak's theoretical and empirical expectations that a polyarchic phase would come after the pluralist phase, especially after the formation of basic consensus on the main issue since the defeat of Milošević's regieme (i.e. EU integration process), the Serbian party system still does not belong to the group of stable and institutionalized ones. Even more, it seems that the modernist pole of the party system has been reversed into the stage of fragmentation and atomization, creating the asymmetry of the party scene.

There are many reasons behind the current crisis of the party system and some of them can be common for other eastern European countries as well. Our initial argument is that stability and centripetal competition after the decisive 2008 elections created conditions for moderate pluralism. However, political actors overemphasized established consensus on EU accession and narrowed the political space to an extreme level. This, in return, provided more space at the ends of the political spectrum and encouraged radical and centrifugal options.

These circumstances did not automatically produce a crisis of the party system. However, when the effects of Agh's triple crisis started to show, politicians got the incentive to change their behavior and to pay more attention to growing discontent among citizens and growing alienation between them and politics. In most cases, parties adopted some form of populism and anti-partism in order to respond to the newly emerging political market. The Serbian case is interesting because there are many variations – from left (NDVBGD) to right

wing populism (Dveri), anti-partism without anti-pluralism and anti-elitism (Dosta je bilo) and, finally, even examples of pro-European populism (SNS).

Most of these new parties so far failed to establish viable organizations and recognizable ideological profiles. Two main exemptions are Dveri and the SNS. Dveri used the current *zeitgeist* to seize the opportunity, but they combined it with an already existing ideological profile and civil society behind those values. The SNS did something similar by using the populist wave to strengthen their centre-right and peoples' party profile and to promote issues (e.g. corruption) that could bring more benefits to them in comparison to their opponents. Once in power, the SNS used weak democratic institutions to re-shape the entire political system in their favor and, by doing so, challenged the democratic character of Serbian society. Ironically, their success was enabled because of criticism against the previous government and the SNS continued with the anti--democratic practices which had caused distrust and alienation in the first place. However, different constituencies allow different styles of rule and it seems that the SNS will not face something similar to the blank ballots campaign.

Once again, it seems that searching for solutions outside of the usual pluralist and multi-party democracy is unlikely to generate stability and democratic standards. In terms of Bielasiak's frameworks, the Serbian party system is still far from the polyarchic and stable formation and it seems that populism and anti-partism cannot serve as a solid and long-lasting foundation, unless they are attached to the existing cleavage structures and old and recognizable issues and narratives

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Springing up like mushrooms after the rain: „New" parties in Montenegro's institutionalised party system

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Abstract: *Recent years have seen the formation of new parties across Europe that challenge established patterns of party competition and coalition-building during elections. While a similar trend of party creation has occurred in Montenegro, these new parties have failed to „deinstitutionalise" the party system. This article tracks the development process for new parties. At the same time, it looks at factors and settings that have enabled (or impeded) the institutionalisation of these parties and their relative success in parliamentary elections. Two peculiar findings arise from my analysis. First, it appears that the fragmentation of the traditional party system has only happened among opposition parties (with the notable exception of a split among social democrats). This raises questions about the reasons for this process and its effect on party competition. It also leads to a second finding: though more than five effective political parties have been created since 2012, they have failed to change established party competition. To a limited degree, these parties have shifted the focus of public debate from identity politics to the economy, but the party system remains highly ientrenched. In other words, coalition-building is as predictable as ever.*

Keywords: Montenegro, new parties, fragmentation, party system institutionalisation

Introduction

Montenegro, the smallest of the former Yugoslav republics, regained its independence and established a sovereign state following an independence referendum in May 2006. Although the country's relatively small population of 600,000 means it has not attracted much scholarly attention, what it lacks in size, it makes up for with its vibrant political scene. Here the critical feature is the hegemonic power of the Democratic Party of Socialists (*Demokratska partija socijalista*; DPS), the successor of the League of Communists of Montenegro (*Savez komunista Crne Gore*), which has decisively won all free elections since the introduction of a pluralistic system in 1990. This dominance has significantly affected electoral competition as well as the potential for coalition-building and the emergence of new parties. Even so, over the last few years, Montenegro has seen the emergence of a number of new political parties starting with Positive Montenegro (*Pozitivna*) in 2012. Despite their novelty value, these parties have not substantially changed the national electoral landscape. This article aims to answer several questions about these developments: What conditions have fostered the emergence of new parties? What are the organisational features and identities of these parties, and have they succeeded in electoral terms? What is their effect on the institutionalised party system?

This study builds on the seminal work of Cox (1997) and applies a theory of strategic entry to evaluate the favourability of conditions in Montenegro for those planning to enter the electoral arena. At the same time, I outline some of the peculiarities of the Montenegrin case and sketch the development path of important new political actors. Finally, I look at the effects (or lack thereof) of these new actors on the political scene in Montenegro.

This study makes two significant contributions. First, it identifies the political strategy that has enabled DPS to completely neutralise the impact of new parties on the institutionalised party system. Here I argue that DPS has managed to structure the party contest around an ethnic divisions, thereby limiting the potential of new parties to reduce predictable party politics and coalition-building. Second, I outline the development path of new parties in Montenegro, a topic that has entirely escaped scholarly attention.

How do new parties emerge?

In order to assess the process of new party creation, we need first to consider the concept of a new party and decide what such an entity actually consists of. Although this might seem to be a straightforward and easy task, some care is required since how this concept is defined will guide our evaluation of the party system, that is, whether it is seen as frozen and stable or volatile and in the midst of change (Barnea – Rahat 2011). Clearly delineating what a new party

is, is, thus, fundamental. Applying a restrictive definition, Bartolini and Mair (1990) regard all parties that have been created from splits and mergers as the continuation of old parties. Others differ and argue that smaller split-offs from bigger parties may be seen as new parties (Mainwaring – Scully 1995) or that a mere label change is enough to render a party a new political actor (Dalton 2008). Evidently, the choice of concept will limit or expand the pool of possible cases for analysis.

While the concepts described above are useful, I do not agree with any of them entirely. Nevertheless, they do drive the idea of new parties employed in this study. Evaluating a party's newness requires a more nuanced approach than the ones that have been listed so far. A focus on how a specific party was created (by a merger or split, etc.), while informative, does not provide sufficient information to classify a party as new or old. On the other hand, factors such as internal organisation, a party's „label" (including its overall image and identity) and formal status do. Here I build partially on the analytic framework of Barnea and Rahat (2011) to evaluate party newness. These scholars outline eight criteria for assessing new parties: party label, ideology, voters, formal status, institutions, activists, representatives and policies. While extensive, this list does not exhaust all potential criteria. Furthermore, Barnea and Rahat (2011) provide these criteria in order to evaluate the *degree of party newness*, which implies that none of these conditions is essential though it may be sufficient. In this study, I focus primarily on three of these criteria – party label, official status and institutions – to assess whether a given entity is a new party. The choice of these conditions is guided by their relative importance as signs of newness and sources of symbolic meaning for a new party (Barnea – Rahat 2011). Since, however, these factors alone cannot determine whether a party is sufficiently new, this analysis is complemented by some additional considerations.

In applying the model to specific cases, I consider several possible scenarios. First, there is the clear-cut case of a grassroots movement that transforms into a political party. This party's label, formal status and institutions are created from scratch and cannot be associated with another political entity. In contrast, the situation is often far more complicated when a split or merger gives rise to a potential new party. In such a case, the new entity does not automatically reflect either the continuation of the old party or the emergence of a new one. In the case of split-offs, some of these parties will not be successors of the old party or retain its infrastructure, ideology, ownership structure and so on. Similarly, some of these parties do not retain the old party name, and indeed these splits usually occur because one faction wishes to distinguish itself from the traditions (positive or negative) of the mother party. A new party may, thus, emerge from a split if significant effort is put into creating a new party identity, brand, institutions and – possibly though not necessarily – ideology. In the case of mergers, to qualify as a new party, an entity will need to develop new party

infrastructure and be registered as a new political player. It will also require a new party label and identity. Moreover, the old (now merged) parties must fully embrace that new identity.

In the empirical part of this study, I first analyse the name of each affected party and then assess whether it was created from a split or a merger, how different it is from its mother party and what the different label symbolises. Second, I look at the party's formal status and whether it is registered and has acquired legal status. This is the most clear-cut indicator of a party's newness since it produces a binary „yes" or „no" response. Third, I analyse the internal organisation of the party and the presence of institutions separate from those of the mother party (in the cases of a split or merger). Here I focus on the existence of local committees, executive bodies, rules about the inclusion of women and the organisation of young people. To recapitulate: to be classified as new, a party must have developed its own infrastructure, been legally registered and acquired a separate party label (identity).

With this idea of political parties in mind, I turn next to conditions that foster the emergence of new parties. Early research focused on conditions that were specific to the emergence of left or right parties. More recently, however, the literature has suggested that a common underlying logic informs the emergence of new parties regardless of the ideological family they belong to (Hug 2001). This logic is usually understood through the lens of game theory. Here the game takes place in the structured environment of a political system between players who are established parties or groups considering forming a party. Along the same lines, the critical work of Cox (1997) provides a starting point for any analysis of party creation. According to Cox's analysis and the theory of strategic entry, new parties are formed based on the decision of an elite to enter the political arena when the probability of success is high. The specific conditions that determine the likelihood of success may be evaluated differently. As a very general principle, Tavits (2008) suggests that electoral systems with more proportional seat allocation are more favourable to the emergence of new parties. Hug (2001) points out that the chance of new parties forming is higher when there is no significant threshold for entering the election contest. More specific rules that favour new parties' emergence include low financial costs of party registration, a low number of signatures being required for registration and greater availability of party funding.

As for the institutional costs of creating a party, party funding regulations are a key concern of this study. It is almost a truism that the availability of funds enables new parties to emerge. Nevertheless, this relationship is also affected by the duration of the democracy in question, with new parties more likely to emerge in young democracies (Tavits 2008). Booth and Robbins (2010) propose an even more complex qualification, highlighting the connections between public funding rules and private funding and donation provisions. On

the other hand, some scholars have argued that funding thresholds have no effect on the stability of the party system and, more specifically, the formation of new parties (Van Biezen – Rashkova 2014). Still, even if party formation *per se* is not affected, it is clear that funding thresholds do limit a party's potential electoral success (Van Biezen – Rashkova 2014). As Katz and Mair (1995) point out, what makes the issue of party regulations and funding so significant is that it is parties themselves that guide and determine these rules. In their work on party cartelisation, Katz and Mair (1995) discuss the nature of party funding regulations and argue that some kind of reinforcement is taking place. Since parties are in charge of creating the rules of the game, they are also in a position to strengthen their own standing and impede the establishment and success of new challenger parties. As such, they use their positions to stay in power.

In addition to the low institutional costs of creating a party, several other criteria are crucial when strategically calculating a potential party's success, as Tavits (2006) points out. These factors include the weakness of corporatist arrangements in the system and the probability of attracting voters. Lago and Martinez (2011) provide a framework for evaluating this second criterion. Drawing on the case of Spain, they argue that new parties can attract voters when the failure of the electoral market (i.e. the failure of existing parties to satisfy voters' ideological demands) combines with a high degree of voter flexibility. Voter flexibility is higher in young democracies since neither the electoral base nor voter-party links are strongly defined (Golder 2003). Even in older established democracies, however, these associations are not set in stone. Flexibility can also be induced by external shocks that open up the space for voter-party realignment (Golder 2003).

On a slightly different note, Bartolini and Mair (1990) argue that voter flexibility is linked to the heterogeneity of parties in the political system. While this heterogeneity may lead to the establishment of many parties especially if dominant splits are ethnically based, once minority parties are established, their supporters may be less likely to change their vote than voters in a more homogenous system (Bartolini – Mair 1990). Furthermore, even when voters are flexible and there is a high degree of volatility, this does not automatically mean that new parties will succeed in attracting voters. Looking at the significant volatility in eastern Europe, Sikk (2005) argues that this has not translated into support and success for new parties. Instead, volatility had merely led to the transferring of votes between *existing* parties. Similarly, Tavits (2008) points out that volatility is a consequence of the success of a new party and not the primary driver of its emergence and success.

As well as considering the favourability of conditions, several scholars have taken a more functionalist approach to new parties. In this vein, Lucardie (2000) argues that new parties may develop by marketing themselves as the saviours of the ideology of established political actors (thereby assuming the roles of

„prophets, purifiers and prolocutors"). This stress on ideological division comes from a cleavage-based notion of party competition (Sikk 2012). Not all new parties, however, market themselves as ideologically pure or different from established parties. Instead they may simply pursue an image of *newness* (Sikk 2012). The latter is not an ideological feature but refers rather to the fact that the party leadership is new on the political scene. In certain conditions, this newness is powerful enough to ensure electoral success (Sikk 2012).

Building on the theory of strategic entry (Cox 1997), my analysis gives nuance to the enabling factors that lower the costs of strategic entry for a given party. The surveyed scholarship suggests that the calculus for strategic entry is highly context-specific and that different factors contribute to making a specific party viable. While none of the identified enabling factors is essential, each of them may be sufficient to prompt the emergence of a new party. Each of these factors is therefore empirically evaluated to determine its importance in the context of Montenegro.

Aside from conditions that foster the emergence and success of new parties, it is important to consider the consequences of that success. Here the primary question is, what effect do new parties have on the institutionalisation of the party system? In the first instance, a high degree of institutionalisation may deter the emergence of new parties (Mainwaring – Torcal 2006). A highly institutionalised party system is one where the main parties are stable and exhibit predictable patterns of behaviour and party competition. At the same time, voter attachments are stable and the parties are seen as legitimate political actors that are not subject to the whims of their leadership (Mainwaring – Torcal 2006). Traditionally, party system institutionalisation was measured through voter volatility. A high degree of institutionalisation meant a low level of voter volatility, and thus, little chance of electoral success for new parties. If increased institutionalisation limits the emergence of viable new parties, then the reverse scenario is also worth exploring. How do new parties affect the institutionalisation of the political system? The key issue is, thus, whether new parties alter the predictability of party competition. Does the potential for coalition-building change because of the entry of these new political actors, or does the situation stay predictable as ever? Furthermore, can these new parties introduce new issues and alter the most salient concerns of the day? Does the emergence of new parties serve to weaken voters' attachments to traditional parties? If new parties can change the degree of institutionalisation, we should expect to see greater volatility in the electorate and a realignment of coalition-building. After introducing the Montenegrin situation, I therefore explore the impact of new parties on these two specific issues.

Montenegro: Fertile ground for new parties?

On paper, Montenegro has a short political history that starts with the national independence referendum in 2006.[1] Nevertheless, though it spent most of the 20th century as part of federalist variations of Yugoslavia, the specificities of Montenegrin culture and politics remained prominent. Having gone almost unchallenged by the people under communist rule (Bieber 2008), new party elites managed to transform the League of Communists of Montenegro into the Democratic Party of Socialists (*Demokratska partija socijalista*; DPS) and win significant and long-lasting public support. It is precisely this phenomenon, i.e. the predominance of one party, DPS and its ability to control political life entirely (Komar – Živković 2016; Fink Hafner 2008), which makes Montenegro such an interesting case study. Apart from a short period from 1998 to 2002 when the Socialist People's Party threatened to establish a two (bloc) party system (Bieber 2013),[2] DPS's rule has remained relatively uncontested. This period of dominance has been characterised by several trends. First, especially in the wake of independence in 2006, Montenegro saw an abundance of new parties, most of which did not achieve any lasting presence in the political system. This trend may be seen as an extension of the party fragmentation that Bieber (2013) has identified in the early years of Montenegrin parliamentary life. Second, despite this fragmentation, these parties failed to seriously challenge the rule of DPS, change the nature of the party system or alter the salient issues of the day. In what follows, I explore the conditions that fostered and enabled the emergence of these new parties.

It is worth beginning with the conditions favourable to the emergence of new parties that were identified in the previous section. Montenegro represents a favourable context on many of these counts. The use of a proportional electoral system in local and national parliamentary elections, the relatively low election threshold (3% voter support) and the short duration of democratic practices in the country are all features of the Montenegrin political system which should favour the emergence of new parties according to the literature (see Tavits 2008). Furthermore, each electoral cycle would seem to provide a chance for new parties to attract voters, particularly from those segments of the population that are undecided and traditionally abstain from voting. Depending on the election,

1 Before this referendum, party competition was inevitably influenced by Montenegro's role in the federal structures of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992–2003) and the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (2003–2006).

2 In 1997, a split occurred within DPS based on different factions' positions on Belgrade and the policies of Slobodan Milosevic. As Vuković (2015) points out, the initial clash between Belgrade and Podgorica arose from the economic consequences of international sanctions and later intensified amidst growing debate over Montenegrin independence. The DPS faction that supported the regime in Belgrade lost an internal power struggle and created the Socialist People's Party (SNP). [Again: Please let me know if I've misunderstood the intended meaning]

a base of between 10 and 15% of the electorate abstains from voting because of dissatisfaction with the country's political scene. In this sense, Montenegro would seem to be a good example of electoral market failure (Lago – Martinez 2011) since no existing political parties match the political preferences of these voters or can drive them to the polls. Since traditional political parties fail to reflect these voters' political preferences, the *newness* (Sikk 2012) of alternative parties is what marks them as worthy of support. New parties appear, then, to have a strong chance of attracting voters. As such, the strategic entry calculation suggests that party elites should have no trouble in deciding to enter the election competition.

All these favourable factors are, however, outweighed by a number of unfavourable conditions. To begin with, party funding regulations play a major role in determining the success of new parties (Tavits 2008; Booth – Robbins 2010). On this count, though registering a party in Montenegro is relatively easy and requires only 200 signatures and no fee payment, party financing laws are less supportive of the emergence and establishment of new parties. Non-parliamentary parties are entitled to some funding from the state or local budget, albeit only during and specifically for a given election campaign. On this basis, 20% of total election campaign funding should be equally distributed across all officially competing parties, while the remaining 80% should be proportionally distributed based on the election results of parties entering (local or national) parliament. This approach to funding seems to favour established parties, especially those that have been successful, while still providing some sort of security for new parties wishing to enter the political fray. To access funding for normal operations between election cycles, parties need to fulfil the funding threshold by gaining one seat at the national or local level depending on the elections in question.

Second, there is a high degree of party heterogeneity in the Montenegrin political system. In young democracies, such heterogeneity may be a factor that enables new parties to succeed, but in Montenegro, the competition is frozen along ethnic lines (Džankić 2013), making voter volatility across ethnic groups highly unlikely. In other words, the fact that the established parties of ethnic groups (that is, Montenegrin, Serbian, Bosniak, Albanian and Croatian parties) dominate the system means voters are less likely to switch allegiances (Bartolini – Mair 1990). Furthermore, the party system is highly institutionalised, a situation that deters the emergence of new parties (Mainwaring – Torcal 2006). It is precisely because ethnicity is the primary driver of political mobilisation that party competition remains highly predictable. Traditional DPS coalition partners including Albanian, Croat and Bosniak parties cannot realistically be expected to collaborate with Serbian parties, which seldom support Montenegrin nationalism. In this situation, new parties can hardly be expected to change established patterns of party competition since they are forced to position them-

selves along ethnic lines. In consequence, the space for political manoeuvring is greatly reduced and limited to parties from „proper" ethnic blocs.

On the whole, then, there would seem to be more deterrents than factors enabling the emergence of new parties in Montenegro. Still, there have been numerous instances of new parties emerging in the last nine years. In this regard, the Montenegrin case is of particular interest to wider audiences since at a glance, it disproves the main predictions in the literature. Crucially, we find that factors that increase the costs of strategic entry interact with a system in which one party (DPD) predominates and plays a critical role. Faced with the seeming invincibility of DPS (Komar – Živković 2016), and even though the strategic calculation might be unfavourable, opposition forces realign themselves every electoral cycle through new parties or party lists. This is their main strategy to attract as many voters as possible.

New parties in Montenegro

The following sections outline the developmental paths of the major political parties that have appeared since the independence referendum in 2006.[3] Here I draw on the model of party newness outlined above, with an emphasis on three factors: party label, formal registration and institutions. A summary of the results for all these parties can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Degree of newness of political parties in Montenegro

	Political parties						
	Positive Montenegro	SD	URA	DF	Demos	UCG	Democratic Montenegro
Distinctive party label	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Formal status	+	+	+	–	+	+	+
Distinctive institutions	+	–	+	–	+	–	+
Party newness	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**

Positive Montenegro (*Pozitivna Crna Gora*)

The first major new party to appear on the Montenegrin political scene was Positive Montenegro (*Pozitivna Crna Gora*). The party was founded on 26 May 2012

3 As of January 2018, there were 54 political parties legally registered with the Montenegrin Ministry of Public Administration. Taking into account the population size, this amounted to one party for around every 12,000 people.

and had a very successful first election campaign, winning 8.4% of the vote in the national parliamentary elections later that year. Positive Montenegro was a clear-cut case of a new party, with party leadership that had not previously engaged in politics,[4] a distinctive party identity, a new label (including logo) and ideology (focusing on economic policy) and an internal party organisation built from scratch.

The initial election success of Positive Montenegro can be ascribed to factors identified in the previous sections. By highlighting its Montenegrin identity, the party was able to attract dissatisfied and undecided voters who had supported the former Liberal Alliance. This combination of party identity and voter dissatisfaction made for a strong case for strategic entry. The party's success was, however, due above all to its cultivation of an image of *newness* (Sikk 2012). Before the 2012 election, Positive Montenegro's leadership had insisted that it was a party of „new people, new ideas and new energy" (Pozitivna Crna Gora 2018). This was, they argued, an alternative political force unwilling to cooperate with either the government or opposition parties (Koprivica 2012). The party's electoral viability was tied to its status as a new political entity untainted by affiliations with established parties and their clientelistic and corrupt strategies.[5] The newness was expressed not only in rhetoric but through the development of a different internal organisation system. In its bylaws, Positive Montenegro stressed the importance of its forums for young people and women and demanded gender equality across all party structures. At the same time, its election campaign was filled with programmes for young people, indicating a strategy quite different from those of established parties. The party's vice-president, Azra Jasavić also had a prominent place in the campaign, serving as a symbol of the commitment to gender equality. In sum, Positive Montenegro met many of the requirements of the analytic model I have outlined above: it was a new party with a distinctive label and institutions, and it was legally registered.

Despite its initial success, Positive Montenegro was soon shown to be lacking in the organisational capability needed to operate amidst fierce political competition. Though the party's newness had brought electoral success, its appeal quickly faded after it failed to establish strong infrastructure across all Montenegrin municipalities. At the time of writing, the party has only 12 local offices across 24 municipalities. Not only has it failed to establish strong party infrastructure in all parts of the country but it has not been able to control its

4 At the time when the party was founded, its president, Darko Pajović was an in vitro fertilisation specialist while its vice-president, Azra Jasavić was a lawyer.

5 The popular wisdom expressed in the Montenegrin media and advanced by opposition leaders was that DPS's election success and ongoing power were primarily due to widespread clientelism based on state patronage and vote-buying. For more details about clientelism in Montenegro, see Džankić and Kiel (2018).

own officials in the cities where it is organised. Two cases highlight this situation. First, in the 2012 local elections in Budva, Positive Montenegro gained 10.8% of votes, earning it three seats in local parliament. The first blow to its integrity and prospects came immediately after this victory. Ignoring the party's instructions, two of the three Positive Montenegro MPs voted to appoint DPS candidate Lazar Rađenović as city mayor. Soon after, the MPs in question, Časlav Perović (the local party head listed first on the ballot) and Milan Balević, left the party and formed an independent group in parliament without surrendering their seats to Positive Montenegro.[6] In the days that followed, the two entered into a coalition with DPS. Eventually, two years after the elections, the third Positive Montenegro MP also left the party, opting to remain an independent local MP and so capping off the Budva fiasco. This was only one example of Positive Montenegro's inability to control its members' adherence to its primary political message – that it would not cooperate and enter coalitions with the ruling party DPS.[7]

In fact, a very similar situation played out after the local elections in Nikšić. Positive Montenegro won one seat in local parliament having gained 6.6% of the vote, only to suffer the same fate it had met in Budva. Soon after the party's local MP, Drago Đurović, defected, choosing to support DPS's candidate for mayor despite the fact that opposition parties had a parliamentary majority. Once again DPS was able to dismantle Positive Montenegro's election success based on the weakness of the party's internal organisation. This was a major blow to the party's public image, with the prevailing view being that voters had been cheated and duped by Positive Montenegro, which was clearly incompetent in dealing with DPS's party machinery.

The final straw for the party came with the 2016 parliamentary elections. Months before, DPS's traditional coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party, had left the ruling coalition, forcing a political realignment. Without parliamentary support from Positive Montenegro, DPS would have been hit hard politically and fallen from government. Under these circumstances, Positive Montenegro's president, Darko Pajović agreed to support DPS's minority government, a move that resulted in a split in the party and the creation of the United Reform Action Party (*Ujedinjena reformska akcij*a;URA). Over subsequent months, Positive Montenegro formed a coalition with DPS on the pretext of creating a caretaker government.[8] In the process, Pajović rose to the

6 Both national- and local-level elections in Montenegro are based on a closed list proportional representation system using the D,Honts formula.

7 In a speech at a party rally in Žabljak on 1 October 2012, party president Darko Pajović vowed that Positive Montenegro would not cooperate with either government or coalition parties.

8 This was a singular state of affairs with traditional opponents of DPS and its policies agreeing to join the government in order to secure a fair playing field for the 2016 parliamentary elections. This crisis led to several splits within both the governing and opposition parties.

position of national parliament president[9] while Azra Jasavić became the government's vice-president. After so many dramas, the party failed, however, to meet the parliamentary threshold in the 2016 elections and its short political life may now be considered over.

How does Positive Montenegro's fate relate to the theoretical models outlined in the preceding sections? Certainly, the party's initial success was proof that parties could use their newness to establish themselves as viable options and mobilise voters. Once Positive Montenegro formed a coalition with DPS, however, the image of newness was completely shattered, and this contributed to the party's demise. To be clear, the party's longevity could not be predicted based on the simple fact of its newness. Or, to put this another way, its specific identity, formal structure and institutions shed little light on why it dissolved. On the other hand, understanding how the party's newness steered the decision to enter politics was more helpful. Once the appeal of newness had faded and the party's lack of control over its internal organisation became clear, Positive Montenegro also dissolved.

Social Democrats (*Socijaldemokrate*; SD)

In the previous section we encountered the biggest crisis to affect DPS's hold on political power in the last decade: the installation of a caretaker government in the lead-up to the 2016 elections. Since 1998, DPS had formed national governments with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) as well as various Albanian, Bosniak and Croat parties. The new crisis of power began when SDP's leader raised objections to the government's economic policy and several privatisation plans. This opposition was, however, far from unanimous within SDP itself. On the one hand, it had the support of the party's president, Ranko Krivokapić, who had also served as the president of national parliament for the last 13 years. Krivokapić openly criticised and opposed the government's economic plans in a stance that foreshadowed the biggest shake-up of Montenegro's institutionalised party system to date: the end of SDP's position as a potential coalition partner for DPS after the 2016 parliamentary elections.

At the same time, Ivan Brajović, Montenegro's transport and maritime affairs minister, led a pro-DPS faction within SDP. These internal tensions in the party remained unresolved at its eighth congress in March 2015 where Krivokapić and Brajović competed for the party leadership. Ultimately Brajović decided to break away from the party, creating the Social Democrats (SD) in July 2015. This new entity barely managed to meet the 3% threshold in the 2016 parliamentary elections, gaining two seats in national parliament with just 3.26% of the vote.

9 Pajović would ultimately be rewarded for his role in saving the DPS government. After the debacle of the 2016 elections, he was named Montenegrin ambassador to the People's Republic of China starting from May 2018.

Despite this low level of electoral support, Brajović is now president of national parliament and SD was rewarded with two ministries in the government of current prime minister Duško Marković.

Unlike Positive Montenegro, SD was not a clear-cut case of a new political party. From the standpoint of our model, the main grounds for such a classification would be its official registration as a new political entity and the small (albeit almost negligible) difference between its name (label) and that of its mother party. On the other hand, SD cultivated an image of itself as a „purifier" party (Lucardie 2000) whose ideology and political alliances were consistent with the traditions of a mother party that had lost its political compass. This reliance on the mother party's established electoral base likely reduced the costs of strategic entry and increased the chances of electoral success. In other words, SD's viability was contingent on its appeal to voters of the mother party. To this end, its slogan for the 2016 parliamentary elections, „Ivan Brajović – Consistently" had a twofold aim: to highlight the potential for a traditional coalition with DPS and paint the remainder of the mother party SDP as traitors to political alliances and party ideology.[10]

Returning to our theoretical model, SD's institutions, infrastructure and internal organisation remain the same as those of the mother party. Articles 16 and 17 of SD's bylaws, which prescribe rules for internal organisation and operations, are identical to Article 17 of SDP's bylaws. Regarding internal organisation, SD established local committees in all Montenegrin municipalities in the short period after its foundation. This step was possible because it could utilise SDP's infrastructure across the country. Furthermore, all prominent members of SD, including its president and both its vice-presidents, are former members of the mother party. In view of all these factors as well as SD's assumption of the mother party's ideology, SD may be understood as the continuation of the mother party rather than a new political entity. Not only are its activists and policies the same, but its leadership is part of the old leadership of the mother party and its internal organisation is basically identical.

United Reform Action (*Ujedinjena reformska akcija*; URA)

United Reform Action (URA) was established in March 2015 as a new political entity with a distinctive label and official party status. The party brought together untested new politicians such as its first president businessman Žarko Rakčević, and members of Positive Montenegro – most notably current URA president

10 Speaking at an election rally in Nikšić on 29 September 2016, SD's leader, Ivan Brajović stressed the party's important role in shaping Montenegrin politics, arguing that it was carrying on the traditions of an independent, euro-oriented, multi-ethnic and secular state. In contrast, he noted that SD's most troubling political opponents were its friends of yesterday, who would stop at nothing to regain power and cooperate with literally anyone including Serbian anti-independence parties.

Dritan Abazović – who had opposed the minority government of Milo Đukanović in February 2015. Strategic entry costs were low for URA for two main reasons. First, the party was partly the creation of national parliamentary representatives with prominent personal profiles. These individuals remained committed to the founding principles of Positive Montenegro including not cooperating with the government. As such, they sought to reinvigorate the part of Positive Montenegro's electoral base that felt betrayed by the support for Đukanović. Second, the election threshold (3%) was not higher for coalitions than it was for single party lists. URA took advantage of this rule and has succeeded in every major election since its foundation by forming coalitions. The rules on thresholds for coalitions have, thus, lowered the cost of strategic entry so long as the party can create political alliances.

Referring again to the party newness model, we find that URA managed to introduce enough new elements to prevent it from being a mere reconfiguration of Positive Montenegro. First, the party's brand clearly differed from that of any other party in the Montenegrin political landscape. Second, URA was legally registered and attained official status shortly after its split from Positive Montenegro, and the key figure in the party was a political outsider. Third, while the party's institutions and infrastructure were similar in some ways to those of Positive Montenegro, they also differed in key respects. Both parties put an emphasis on forums for women and young people, but URA approached the territorial organisation of its local executive and political boards very differently. The party's bylaws underscored the importance of local committees, detailing their role in its internal organisation.[11] After setting up institutions, URA went through a period of infrastructure development period in which it quickly established local committees in major cities across the country.[12]

Taking all this into account, URA can be seen as a new party in the Montenegrin system. Even so, its true strength and importance remain to be seen. As part of the Key Coalition (*Koalicija Ključ*) in the lead-up to 2016 parliamentary election and an alliance with Democratic Montenegro in the 2018 local elections in the capital, Podgorica, URA has never competed independently in a major election. Moreover, that the party – like Democratic Montenegro, SDP and DEMOS – has boycotted the plenary sessions of national parliament has not enhanced its public visibility and recognition.[13] As such, it is still unclear whether URA can and will become an institutionalised party.

11 This approach was likely a response to Positive Montenegro's negative experiences in Budva and Nikšić.

12 Party infrastructure and local committees were established in all cities in the southern and central regions as well as in the larger cities of northern Montenegro.

13 The 2016 election day was disrupted by an alleged coup that aimed to topple DPS and possibly kill Milo Đukanović. According to special state prosecutor Milivoje Katnić, this coup was sponsored and financed by Serbian extremists and Russian intelligence agencies with the goal of stopping Montenegro's accession to NATO. The alleged culprits have been on trial since 2017. After this major political and social

Democratic Front (*Demokratski front*; DF)

The Democratic Front was established in the lead-up to the 2012 parliamentary elections under the leadership of Miodrag Lekić, who had been a Yugoslav ambassador in the 1990s. Unlike all the other parties discussed in this study, the DF is not a party *per se* but an alliance between New Serbian Democracy (NOVA) and Movement for Change (PzP), which decided to join forces with Lekić as their leader to try to dethrone DPS. DF was also the first proper attempt at opposition unity against DPS, and it gained 22.8% of the vote in the 2012 parliamentary elections.

While the case may be made that the DF is a party rather than a coalition, it clearly does not meet the relevant criteria set out in the model in this study. Above all, DF lacks official legal status (it is not a registered political party) and distinctive institutions and infrastructure. In addition, there are no formal rules concerning governance at alliance level. The alliance has an informal presidential structure based on the presidents and vice-presidents of its constituent parties. It also has no distinct infrastructure network outside those parties. In this sense, the DF is really a platform for coordinating activities across the separate local committees of its constituent members, primarily NOVA and PzP.

On the other hand, what makes the DF's case interesting is the merger that has taken place among several of the constituent members. This is most evident in the public comments of coalition leaders who tend to advocate for the DF's agenda rather than that of their mother party.[14] As a result, the political activities of these leaders have become interchangeable. Putting aside the question of the DF's formal status as a new party, it has changed the face of Montenegrin politics. This includes the emergence of two new parties – DEMOS and UCG – that resulted from a split in the DF.

DEMOS

In March 2015, four national MPs from the DF decided to leave the coalition and form a new party. That party, called DEMOS, was headed by Miodrag Lekić, a candidate in Montenegro's 2013 presidential election. It was precisely the results of that election where Lekić had fallen short of victory by less than 8000 votes that prompted him to try to organise a new party. In other words, Lekić's success in the presidential elections was what lowered the costs of strategic entry. By using the DF's resources, Lekić was able to establish himself

crisis, several parties (URA, Democratic Montenegro, SDP, DEMOS and DF) contested the election results, arguing that voters had known of the alleged coup from noon on election day and this had influenced their preferences. As such, voters' decisions were said not to be expressions of free will but a fearful reaction to the threat of bloodshed on the streets of Podgorica.

14 The constituent parties do not, for example, have their own specific MP factions. Instead there is a DF MP faction in national parliament.

as a viable political option and ensure DEMOS's initial electoral success. The main idea behind the new party was that of a hub for a united opposition in the 2016 parliamentary elections, a concept that appealed to those convinced of the need for unity to bring down DPS. The party stayed true to its founding goals and, together with URA and the Socialist People's Party (SNP), created a pre-election alliance called Key Coalition under Lekić's leadership. That coalition won 11.5% of the vote in the 2016 elections to take nine seats in national parliament. Nevertheless, this success was followed by another rift that led to the creation of United Montenegro. More recently, DEMOS also failed to meet the election threshold in the 2018 Podgorica local elections and its fate now seems unclear.

DEMOS's creation reflected a clear trend in Montenegrin politics – the emergence of new parties out of splits rather than grassroots movements. Lekić had appeared on the Montenegrin political scene under the DF's umbrella and as a leader of that alliance. When the DF parliamentary whip Goran Danilović decided to join him in a party split, this did nothing to support the image of a distinctly new party. From an organisational perspective, DEMOS's activists were former participants in the DF. On the other hand, since the DF had included no institutions or infrastructure *per se*, DEMOS had to develop an independent party organisation and build new local committees.[15] Furthermore, unlike the DF, DEMOS had official status and was registered as a political party. All things considered, DEMOS may, thus, be seen as a new party albeit one that is peculiar since it was created from a split in a coalition rather than in another party.

United Montenegro (*Ujedinjena Crna Gora*; UCG)

After yet another disagreement among opposition parties, Goran Danilović, the former interior minister in the caretaker government, decided to leave DEMOS and found a party under the name United Montenegro (UCG). According to Danilović, United Montenegro did not result from a split within DEMOS; rather, it simply reflected the need to create a new entity after the Ministry of Public Administration failed to instate him as DEMOS party leader despite his „clear support from a majority within the party " (Portal Analitika 2017). Because it had been part of DEMOS, UCG held two seats in national parliament which it decided to keep after the split.

As for whether UCG was a new party, UCG created a distinctive name (identity) for itself and had official status. After the split, the party also organised local committees in 12 municipalities, however these were composed predominantly of party supporters who were former DEMOS members. UCG's bylaws

15 When he announced DEMOS's formation, Miodrag Lekić noted that he was embarking on this endeavour alone and all party infrastructure would need to be built from scratch.

and institutional setup were also identical to those of DEMOS.[16] Given that UCG is still the mirror image of DEMOS in infrastructural and institutional terms, I would argue that UCG does not constitute a new political party.

This lack of newness was most evident in the 2018 local elections in Podgorica where UCG failed to distinguish itself from other political actors. The party did not meet the voter support threshold to enter local parliament. After this defeat, Danilović stepped down as leader, adding that he felt morally and politically responsible for the party's failure (Standard 2018).

Democratic Montenegro (*Demokrate*)

The single most important new party to enter Montenegrin political life emerged in 2015 when part of the Socialist People's Party (SNP) split to form Democratic Montenegro. The political identity of this party emphasised newness (Sikk 2012) and the purification of an ideology that had been betrayed or diluted by existing parties (Lucardie 2000). In its early months, the party established a complex organisational structure with a central headquarters and committees in every local municipality in Montenegro. It also devoted itself to developing strong local party infrastructure, a feature lacking in all of the parties we have discussed so far. This infrastructure is, I would argue, the reason why Democratic Montenegro has emerged as a serious political force, maintaining support from election to election.[17] In its first electoral bid at the national level, the party managed to win 10.01% of votes and pick up eight seats.

Like all other parties in Montenegro, Democratic Montenegro has a party congress (forum) which serves as its main decision-making body. This body is responsible for the party programme and should convene at least once every four years. Between regular congress sessions, an executive committee serves as the party's chief management body, with members including the party leader and the presidents and vice-presidents of municipal party committees. The executive committee is subject to a quota system which requires that at least 30% of members are women and 30% are individuals under the age of 30, a similar approach to the one taken by Positive Montenegro (see above). This approach and the youthfulness of party leader Aleksa Bečić, who was 29 when he founded the party, are the layers on which the party's identity is built. Democratic Montenegro prides itself on being a youthful force in Montenegrin politics.

16 At a press conference after UCG's founding congress, a senior member of the party, Vladimir Dobričanin pointed out that the bylaws of the two parties were the same.

17 While Democratic Montenegro has competed in only one national parliamentary election, its success in local elections suggests it is an institutionalised party. Electoral support for the party is stable in large towns though it has failed to attract voters in rural areas. Democratic Montenegro won 24.22% of the vote in Herceg Novi, 19.5% in Budva and 17.16% in Mojkovac but the figures were far lower in smaller communities in Petnjica (3.25%) and Tuzi (5.3%) (State Electoral Commission 2018). More recently, a pre-election coalition between the party and URA gained 25.5% of the vote in the local Podgorica elections.

While the party's visibility relies primarily on Bečić's public profile, the role of local councils can also be felt in Democratic Montenegro's extensive door-to-door campaigning, social media platforms and commitment to local issues. On this count, several of the party's local campaigns have taken a new tack by focusing on local issues and problems rather than on the national showdown between different party headquarters. Past local elections tended to be dominated by issues of state loyalty and ethnic affiliation. Democratic Montenegro has broken with this tradition of cleavage-based politics, however, by campaigning on the slogan „Victory, not division!" (*Pobjede, ne podjele*!) at national level and emphasising local issues in municipal elections. A sense of newness has been fostered not only through the party's young and energising leadership but through its abstention from ethnicity-based politics, a dominant feature of party competition. Nevertheless, despite its efforts to shift attention away from ethnicity to the economy, the rule of law and living standards, Democratic Montenegro has had only a limited influence on party politics. And though it may be the most successful of the plethora of new parties to emerge since 2015, DPS and its leader Milo Đukanović have managed to situate the party on one side of the ethnic divide. As such, Democratic Montenegro is depicted as a Serbian party, an association that limits its outreach to Montenegrin voters.

While Democratic Montenegro emerged from a party split, a combination of factors (label, official status, infrastructure, institutions) make it a genuinely new party in the Montenegrin political system.

Role of the governing party

The discussion so far has shown that party fragmentation has primarily occurred on the opposition side of the political spectrum. In fact, DPS has had a significant role in enabling and fostering this fragmentation. Three specific mechanisms can be identified.

First, parties that have threatened DPS's dominance have been neutralised from within. This was the case with Positive Montenegro. After the party's success in the national and several local elections, DPS managed to undo its gains by encouraging defections. This is what happened in the municipal parliaments in Budva and Nikšić, where the votes of Positive Montenegro MPs were crucial in determining whether a DPS candidate would be mayor. On both occasions, local Positive Montenegro councillors defected and provided DPS with the necessary majority.

Second, by offering positions at the executive level, DPS has been able to offset the threats posed by traditional coalition partners and discredit opposition parties. After SDP began to openly oppose the government's economic policy, SD was rewarded for creating a split in the party and supporting DPS. SD representatives now hold a disproportionate number of ministerial posts

as well as the parliamentary presidency (the party obtained a mere 3.26% of votes). Meanwhile opposition parties that joined the caretaker government have suffered in subsequent elections. By offering them a seat at the table, DPS helped to dismiss these parties as serious future threats and effectively removed them from the political landscape. Positive Montenegro failed to meet the parliamentary threshold in the national elections, and the same was true of United Montenegro in the local elections in Podgorica.

Third, where a party's organisation has been strong enough to resist attacks from within and it has rejected any kind of cooperation with DPS, one strategy has remained available: DPS has realigned party competition along ethnic lines by highlighting divisive issues such as support for Montenegrin independence and NATO membership. In this way, it has neutralised new parties' attempts to emphasise their newness. This was particularly clear in Đukanović's 2018 presidential campaign in which he insisted on depicting Democratic Montenegro as a mere successor to SNP. Đukanović argued that while there might be young and new people involved in the party, its ideology, Serbian ethnicity and opposition to Montenegrin independence were part of an old familiar story (CdM 2018). By returning to this cleavage-based politics, DPS neutralised Democratic Montenegro's potential to appeal to a wider electorate as an agent of political change. The party, thus, failed to make the economy, living standards and the rule of law the salient issues of the day.

Effects on party system institutionalisation

The numerous new parties in Montenegrin political life may have affected party competition. The impact of these parties can be evaluated across three dimensions. The first one considers influence on the predictability of the game. Was there any realignment of potential coalition-building after the election? This issue is important since the potential for coalition-building should influence the cost of strategic entry. If new parties have the potential to build coalitions and hold executive positions, then the cost of forming a new party should be lower.

In this regard, several new parties (Positive Montenegro, URA, UCG, DEMOS) chose to join Montenegro's 2016 caretaker government. Their decisions backfired, however, and resulted in these parties' virtual disappearance from the political scene, suggesting that there was no room for parties willing to cooperate with DPS. As such, DPS's coalition-building potential remains the same as ever. On the other hand, SDP has left the government and could potentially be a partner to opposition parties. The fact, however, that this Montenegrin party formed a coalition with DEMOS (known as a Serbian party) for the Podgorica local elections and then failed to reach the election threshold, suggests that SDP's days are perhaps numbered. In other words, even SDP has been unable to change the state of institutionalised party competition in Montenegro.

The second dimension relates to whether the emergence of new parties has increased voter volatility. Such volatility has traditionally been used as a measure of party system institutionalisation (Mainwaring – Torcal 2006). In a recent working paper, Kapidžić and Komar (2019) estimate that electoral volatility in Montenegro stands at around 19.3% depending on the electoral cycle, i.e. an average level compared to other eastern European countries (Bértoa – Deegan Krause – Haughton 2017). However, if we look closely at the data, almost all volatility can be ascribed to *internal bloc volatility* (Bartolini – Mair 1990), that is, the fact that voters change their choices but only within an ethnically limited party bloc (Kapidžić – Komar 2019). Almost all volatility (i.e. 13.98% of 19.3%) takes place within the same bloc (Kapidžić – Komar 2019), supporting the thesis that Montenegro is the most closed party system in eastern Europe (Enyedi – Bertoa 2018). The low level of *inter-bloc volatility* (Bartolini – Mair 1990) suggests that new parties have failed to change party competition or attract the voters of leading parties.

The third dimension concerns whether new parties have managed to change the dominant political issues. Given the limited success of Democratic Montenegro in local elections, it is clear that the key political issues are still predominantly ethnically based and reflect established cleavages. Occasionally events capture the Montenegrin public's attention,[18] but this tends to be short-lived with little impact on the electoral success of parties on either side.

Conclusion

This article has sketched out the development paths of the major political entities that have appeared on the Montenegrin scene over the last ten years. While these are nominally new political entities, I have argued that they are mostly reconfigurations of established parties and can hardly be distinguished from their mother parties. Only those that developed as (largely) grassroots movements (Positive Montenegro, Democratic Montenegro and URA) or clearly abandoned their mother party identity (DF) can be regarded as new political parties.

Through my analysis, I have identified two primary reasons for the large number of new parties in Montenegro. First, strategic calculations favour entering the political arena because of the high number of abstaining voters (the turnout for the 2016 parliamentary elections was just 73.2%). Furthermore, new political entities believe that abstaining voters can only be mobilised by a sense of newness. Second, by offering executive posts at the local and national

18 A recent example is the so-called envelope scandal in 2016 in which a local businessman was filmed handing 97,500 euros to the mayor of Podgorica probably in order to pay off a large clientelistic voter networkOnce again, however, the opposition parties failed to capitalise on this affair. It now seems that the political consequences will probably be contained and borne by the now former mayor of Podgorica Slavoljub Stijepović, who was officially charged with money laundering on 1 February 2019.

levels, DPS has succeeded in creating fissures within opposition parties that have led to several party splits. This has discredited specific opposition leaders and stopped their chances of bringing about a change of power.

Not only have new parties been unsuccessful in bringing about a change of power, but their effect on party system institutionalisation has been negligible. Party competition remains as predictable as ever and coalition blocs are well established. Meanwhile voter volatility is isolated to parties within the same ethnic bloc and Montenegrin politics is still dominated by cleavage-based issues.

The case of Montenegro has several important theoretical implications. First, regarding the role of newness in the strategic entry calculus, it may make sense to make newness the basis of a party's identity if additional conditions are met. Above all, there must be a significant level of voter dissatisfaction with traditional parties. So long as this dissatisfaction exists, the initial costs of creating a party may be low even in cases where the party system is highly institutionalised and dominated by ethnic divisions. In other words, new parties may form even in unfavourable conditions. Putting aside their influence on strategic entry calculations, however, negative conditions do affect party longevity. The institutionalisation of a political party will depend on its effectiveness in dealing with these conditions. In the context of Montenegro, it may be no coincidence that Democratic Montenegro – the only new party with well-developed institutions and infrastructure and stable electoral support – has had most success in deinstitutionalising the party system and escaping cleavage-based politics.

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REVIEW

Caiani, Manuela and Císař, Ondřej (ed.) (2019). *Radical Right Movement Parties In Europe*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge. 246 p. ISBN 978-1-138-56676-7

JAN BENEŠ[1]

The success of new political entities in parliamentary elections over the last decade has intensified the discussion of the group of parties known as the radical Right, the extreme Right or the populist radical Right in Europe. These parties share certain politics, features and identities. While some of them display anti-Roma or anti-Jewish views, others maintain anti-EU and anti-Islamic policies. To date, most analyses have approached the radical far Right in Europe as a homogenous group of subcultures, political parties or interest groups. There is, however, growing interest in a new object of investigation: movement parties, which represent new hybrid political organisations.

A significant number of these movement parties in Europe reflect elements of the radical Right or directly represent its platforms and ideology. What, then, are the defining features, life cycle events, structures and strategies of these radical right parties? This is one of the main questions addressed in the wide-ranging research that Manuela Caiani and Ondřej Císař have collected in this volume. The two are associate professors; while Caiani is based in the political science and sociology department at Scuola Normale Superiore in Florence, Císař works in the sociology department of the social sciences faculty at Charles University in Prague. One of the book's crucial goals is to describe how the creation of movement parties relates to radical right groups in Europe. The analysis focuses on specific types of movement parties and tries to explain the differences in their intensity, interactions and ideological basis.

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Over twelve chapters, the editors and contributing authors, who are mostly specialists in topics like the radical Right, populism, social movements and political mobilisation, consider radical right movement parties in western and central-east European countries. The book contributes to research in three areas: theoretical, methodological and empirical. The first part of its empirical research focuses on radical right party movements and related politics and policies in Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, Greek and Sweden. The second part provides an overview of the new radical Right in Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Kosovo and Macedonia. The authors apply a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Each chapter highlights three points: contextual explanations, resources and the cultural dimension (p. 6).

The introductory chapter provides a theoretical framework for understanding radical right movements and parties. It also outlines the new category of movement parties and its application to the radical Right. In defining movement parties, Caiani and Císař refer especially to an account by scientist Herbert Kitschelt, who stresses the hybrid nature of these parties and their „origins in the transformation of social movements into political parties" (p. 12). Put otherwise, these groups have the features of both political parties and social movements. At the same time, they are an alternative to traditional parties in their public profile and organisational structure. Some of these movement parties oppose mass membership and have not created any organisational infrastructure (p. 203). A few of the book's contributors capture the spirit of this enterprise: „from the streets to [parliamentary] seats" (p. 216), „remain on the streets" (p. 124) and „from the old to the new" (p. 62).

Caiani and Císař also endorse the analysis of Lanzone and Woods, who write that movement parties see the political elite and dominant political class as their enemies. On this front, these parties belong to a new class of political entity that has been emerging at times of crisis (recent examples include the economic and financial crisis, the refugee crisis, Brexit and the Ukraine crisis). Under these conditions, the appearance of populist political and social groups can hardly be surprising whether they represent the Right or the Left.

Two German contributions point out the links between these parties and social movements on the radical Right. In the first, Jakob Schwörer analyses Alternative for Germany (AfD), whose leadership has successfully exploited the financial and economic crisis since 2008. Schwörer notes that AfD is not a party created by social movements but one based on a well-organised network and it „is distancing itself from the traditional parties" (p. 42). In its role as a parliamentary party, it works with PEGIDA, an anti-Islamic organisation. When a local AfD chairman urged party members to head out to the streets and public squares (p. 34), these were tactics typical of PEGIDA members.

PEGIDA never became a movement party and its members' attempts to enter party politics have all failed. Meanwhile, AfD dominates the radical Right space

in German politics. What is the secret of this success? According to data on PEGIDA analysed by Weisskircher and Berntzen, PEGIDA „benefited from some resources [from] individual AfD members at [the] start" (p. 124). The important cooperation between AfD and PEGIDA was also on show at the huge far right protests in Chemnitz in 2018; in other words, it had significant cultural and social aspects. PEGIDA has remained a street-based movement which focuses on campaigns and protests rather than politics and policy. Nevertheless its features and identifications (anti-establishment, anti-Islamic and anti-immigration positions) are similar to those of AfD, and the future with AfD remains open.

Changes in the structure of movement parties over time can best be seen in the chapter on Front National (France) by Gilles Frigoli and Gilles Ivaldi. This party has been transformed over the last decade and its strategy and programme have also changed. Frigoli and Ivaldi are moved to ask whether Front National is still a radical right movement party. Party leaders, they note, have tried to sever ties with many extreme right organisations across Europe and establish new organisational strategies. The goal has been to maximise voter support. On this point, the authors mention the concept of „de-demonization" (p. 66). This strategy has helped Front National become more institutionalised while retaining its status as a movement party that " occup[ies] the centre of an informal interaction network which consists of a plurality of movements, groups and individuals" (p. 77). The party's agenda (i.e. immigration and Islam-related issues) has been reformulated and is still being advanced.

The extreme Right developed very differently in central and eastern Europe to the trajectory in western Europe. These differences in regional development were, however, no longer visible after some of these countries entered the European Union. Substantial research on radical right groups has already taken place in central and eastern Europe. To date, the most comprehensive pan-European comparative analysis concerning these parties themselves was carried out by Cas Mudde in 2007. After the most recent parliamentary elections, however, it is clear that new radical right parties and movements are cropping up, especially within central eastern Europe. It is therefore essential to ask who these groups are and what is innovative about them.

In Hungary, the radical Right is associated especially with the Jobbik movement. Parliamentary elections in the country in April 2018 confirmed a steady rise in support for Jobbik, which won for the third time in a row, gaining 28 seats in the national assembly (*Országgyülés*). As Andrea L. P. Pirro rightly notes in her chapter, Jobbik is a symptom of the Hungarian system's entanglement in political and economic crisis (this was also apparent during the violent demonstrations against Ferenc Gyurcsány's government in 2006). In this respect, Jobbik continues the work of Hungarian movement parties (p. 154). This relationship „can be traced at the organizational level through the links that Jobbik sustained with pre-existing far-right networks" (p. 162). Among the common ground are

anti-establishment attitudes, anti-Roma sentiments and anti-Semitism. On the other hand, Jobbik also breaks with some patterns. The movement combines a populist anti-establishment framework with an ethno-pluralism model. In this way, it „substantially contribute[s] to the *rejuvenation* of nativist discourse in Hungary" (p. 163). For now, as a movement party, it continues to bring together different interest groups and engage in extra-parliamentary activities.

Just like Jobbik, the Slovak far Right has benefited from political and economic crises. Slovak nationalist movements and right-wing and populist political parties have been fixtures of the political scene since the start of the democratic transition. Contributor Oľga Gyárfášová focuses on a key player in this respect, the parliamentary radical movement party Kotleba- ĽSNS (Kotleba–People's Party of Our Slovakia). A historical narrative of national (collective) identity has been very important to this party. The name „Kotleba–ĽSNS" is a reference to the Slovak state that was part of the Third Empire during World War II. In this connection, the movement party refuses to acknowledge the Slovak national uprising and „instead praises the Slovak wartime fascist state" (p. 200). Kotleba–ĽSNS also glorifies Andrej Hlinka and Jozef Tiso, two representatives of the wartime state whom it treats as heroes, and the historical reference resonates on symbolic level. The movement party rejects the entire concept of human rights and discriminates against all minorities in Slovakia including Roma people, Muslims and Hungarians. Moreover, Kotleba–ĽSNS reiterates an anti-establishment and anti-system message. In sum, it marries two features of radical rights ideology: xenophobia and nationalism.

Changes to the party system in the Czech Republic after 2010 saw a rise in new parties and movements along with the greater promotion of radical right--wing ideas. The SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy) movement, founded during the 2015 migration crisis, currently embodies these positions. SPD built on the ÚPD (*Dawn of Direct* Democracy) movement and its programme, which attacks migration and especially Islamisation. Even so in their chapter, Ondřej Císař and Jiří Navrátil conclude that the „Czech radical right was not born from [the] migration crisis" (p. 195) but existed far earlier. The crisis, they argue, may rather have accelerated the Czech far Right's success and put anti-migration and other similar stances into the political mainstream. At the same time, Císař and Navrátil highlight another very important phenomenon: the gap – both before and after the crisis – between party politics and extra-parliamentary activism. One explanation, they write, is that the „Czech radical right has not even tried to mobilise a movement, it mobilises on the basis of a business model" (p. 196).

This is the first book to compare radical right movement parties in west and east-central Europe. As it makes clear, the main proponents of radical right ideas are (more or less) movement parties. These parties therefore warrant examination, and the contributors to this volume have developed a framework for in--depth analysis of the link between radical right party politics and the mobilising

of social movements. Some of the examples given reveal key differences in the structure, culture and contextual opportunities available to particular parties. This is not just about the split between western European and central European countries. Major differences are detected among two groups in single country (for example, AfD and PEGIDA in Germany) and among the V4 countries (the latter, for example, include three countries and three distinct versions of the radical Right). Rather than looking for the differences between western and central European countries, it is, thus, crucial to find common denominators among them.

The research in this new volume highlights a number of notable facts. In particular, we are reminded that most right-wing movement parties emerged or sharpened their rhetoric in the wake of the financial and migration crisis. The decisive years seem to have been from 2008 to 2015. Moreover, the contributors apply their extensive understanding of cultural and historical contexts to illuminate the success of the radical Right in Europe. The climate generated increasing opportunities for parties with similar ideological positions, especially anti-establishment and anti-elite attitudes and an emphasis on refugees, law and order, anti-Islamisation, anti-Semitism and opposition to liberal European policies.

An open question for analysts of these parties remains: Who are radical right voters and what do they expect? Caiani and Císař's book does not focus on this issue though some of its contributors provide a partial answer: the radical Right grows at times of crisis and becomes stronger when its agenda enters the political mainstream.

This collection should not be overlooked by anyone interested in exploring and analysing current developments affecting the radical Right in Europe. That remains a important topic, particular at the time when, as Jakob Schwörer puts it, „right-wing populism is on the increase" (29).

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Two or more authors:

Degnbol-Martinussen, John – Engberg-Pedersen, Poul (1999): *Aid. Understanding International Development Cooperation,* Zed Books, Mellemfolkelight Samvirke, Danish Association for International Cooperation, Copenhagen.

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George, Alexander L. (2004): Coercive Diplomacy, in Art, Robert J. – Waltz, Kenneth N., eds., *The Use of Force. Military Power and International Politics.* Sixth Edition, 70-76, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

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Haas, Ernst B. (1961): International Integration. The European and the Universal Process. *International Organization* 15 (4): 5–54.

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Cooper, Robert (2002): Why We Still Need Empires, *The Guardian Unlimited* (7 April): available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4388915,00.html (2 November 2003).

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Waisová, Šárka (2005): Czech Security Policy – Between Atlanticism and Europeanization, Bratislava: Ministry of Defence, Working Paper No. 05/2.

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