Party Institutionalisation in the Czech Republic: Towards a New Measurement of the Theoretical Concept[1]

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Abstract: *The overall stability of the party system is usually studied on the basis of system-level aggregates such as electoral volatility or the effective number of political parties. Such an approach can be problematic, because it primarily measures just one dimension of stability, which is defined as the stability of electoral support. The article argues that this external dimension of stability should be further analysed in the context of the development of intra-party structures. The institutionalisation theory includes both dimensions, so it is capable of interpreting complex relations between them. Based on empirical data, the article systematically compares nine relevant political parties in the Czech Republic to better understand differences in the stabilisation of different types of party organisations in the context of party system changes in recent years.*

Keywords: *Institutionalisation; Political Parties; Czech Republic; Newness; Organisational Stability*

1. Introduction

The Czech party system was considered relatively stable in the region of East Central Europe. However, since the general election in 2010, it has been possible to observe the growing importance of genuinely new political parties and movements in terms of electoral gains and their presence in governmental coalitions. As can be seen in Table 1, after a certain movement towards

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stabilisation, the Czech party system has become more volatile and fragmented. The impact of newcomers such as Public Affairs (VV) and ANO 2011 (ANO) was demonstrated by the fact that both actors achieved representation in government in 2010 and 2013, respectively. Such developments have predominantly been analysed on the level of the party system by using comparative indicators such as aggregated volatility and decreasing party membership, or in the context of increasing distrust in political parties as such (Šedo 2011; Linek 2014). However, very little is known about differences between the institutional characteristics of new and established political parties and about the different strategies used by political parties in general to ensure persistence in nationwide party politics. In other words, how are Czech political parties institutionalised in the context of a de-institutionalising party system?

Table 1: Aggregated Indicators of Stabilisation of the Czech Party System

Year	1996	1998	2002	2006	2010	2013
Electoral turnout (%)	76.41	74.03	58.00	64.47	62.60	59.48
Volatility*	-	18.12	16.05	18.53	35.31	36.93
ENP**	5.33	4.72	4.82	3.91	6.75	7.63

Source: Author's own calculations; Data: Český statistický úřad (2015)
* Pedersen index of aggregated electoral volatility
** Effective number of legislative parties
Note: Pedersen index is calculated from total net changes in electoral gains of all parties participated in general election.

Using empirical data, the article compares nine Czech political parties, namely the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL), the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM), TOP 09, Public Affairs (VV), ANO, Dawn of Direct Democracy (ÚSVIT), and the Green Party (SZ), to examine the extent to which political parties established themselves as stable institutions in terms of internal and external characteristics. The analysis also describes the main differences between newly established parties and those with a longer tradition or rather a more stable position in the party system, because initial success has far reaching consequences for the development of the internal organisational structure of new political parties. New parties are eligible for additional funding from public budgets and become accepted as a part of the party system by established political actors and institutions. Electoral success is very often connected with the personalised leadership of a political

entrepreneur. These new trends also influence the established parties, which are required to react to new challenges. The article focuses only on political parties with a parliamentary presence, because of the easier possibility of comparing cases that fulfil a wide range of functions of political parties and, given their parliamentary presence, operate on a higher level of complexity. The period between 2006 and 2013 was chosen because it constitutes a specific situation highly interesting from the point of view of institutionalisation theory; that is, it encapsulated changes in electoral behaviour that resulted in greater support for new political parties and movements and the subsequent responses of established actors.

Beside the analysis of selected empirical cases, the article's goal is to further develop scientific discussion on the possibility of using institutionalisation theory as a tool for the analysis of political parties. The most problematic part of applying the concept can be identified in its operationalisation, because there is no one set of operational criteria accepted among scholars. The approaches not only differ in selected criteria and levels of analysis, but Levitsky (1998) even argues that the whole concept of party institutionalisation should be disintegrated and every dimension should be analysed separately. Unfortunately, Levitsky does not offer empirical evidence for his claim or even the criteria necessary to decide whether it is possible to measure institutionalisation in terms of one single value. To respond to Levitsky's argument, this article tests a new composite indicator based on the assumption of conceptual multidimensionality. Thus, every dimension is first evaluated separately in order to describe differences among the organisational forms of political parties and then the performance and limitations of the composite indicator are evaluated. Despite the fact that the article analyses a relatively small number of empirical cases, its construction is especially useful when it is necessary to observe differences among different political parties and changes in time. This fact combined with conceptual multidimensionality results in the necessity to develop a more systematic approach to comparison. Thus, the study operates on the "party-electoral year" level of analysis, which means a comparison of 20 unique cases in the context of three dimensions. Under these conditions, the construction of a composite indicator seems to be reasonable solution.

The general theoretical framework for comparison is based on institutionalisation theory applied to the internal organisations of political parties – in particular, on the approach suggested by Randall and Svåsand (2002, to be explained in the following section). For the operationalisation of the theoretical concept, a new Political Party Institutionalisation Index is developed. This index is based on indicators defined in scientific discussion on political parties and includes indicators connected with the abovementioned dimensions (e.g. the number of alternations, party membership, multisource funding, or electoral stability).

2. Institutionalisation Theory

Originally, the process of institutionalisation was analysed in the sociology of organisations, namely in its sub-field of structural functionalism. From the functionalist perspective, Talcott Parsons defined institutions as certain patterns which are characterised by the fact that certain behaviours of persons performing structurally important roles in the social system can be legitimately expected by other social actors (Parsons 1954: 239). Regarding the process of institutionalisation, Philip Selznick (1984: 5–6) differentiates between organisation and institution. While an organisation usually serves as an expendable tool created for a particular goal, an institution is rather characterised by the "concern for self-maintenance" (Selznick 1984: 20).

In the field of political science, the concept of institutionalisation has been used in variety of studies including the analysis of democratic transitions (Huntington 1968), authoritative regimes (Levitsky 1998), and political parties or party systems (Janda 1980; Panebianco 1988; Randall and Svåsand 2002; Kouba 2007; Tomsa 2008; Casal Bértoa 2012; Croissant and Völkel 2012). For the particular context of the institutionalisation of new political parties, see Hopkin and Paolucci, 1999; Jarmara, 2011; Mierzejewski-Voznyak, 2013; and Arter and Kestilä-Kekkonen, 2014.

Probably the best known definition of party institutionalisation was formulated by Angelo Panebianco (1988). He further developed Selznick's concept and stated that "[i]nstitutionalisation is, in fact, the process by which an organisation incorporates its founders' values and aims. […] The organisation slowly loses its character as a tool: it becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it" (Panebianco 1988: 53). To measure the degree of institutionalisation, Panebianco suggests five indicators, namely the development of a central bureaucracy, the homogeneity of organisational structures, the plurality of financial sources, the character of relations with collateral organisations, and correspondence between *de iure* and *de facto* internal power structurs. As can be seen, Panebianco uses the term in the context of intra-party relations. Nevertheless, institutionalisation can be perceived in a broader perspective as the ability of a political party to establish itself as rooted in society. This notion is particularly prominent in Janda's definition, where "an institutionalised party is one that is reified in the public mind so that 'the party' exists as a social organisation apart from its momentary leaders" (Janda 1980: 19).

As can be seen, both definitions stress different aspects of institutionalisation. While Panebianco's definition points to organisational characteristics, Janda emphasises the importance of rootedness in society. In recent approaches towards party institutionalisation, these dimensions are equally important (see Randall and Svåsand 2002; Yardımcı-Geyikçi 2013; Arter and Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014).

It is possible to identify more definitions of institutionalisation in scientific literature, and Levitsky (1998) even argues that some authors tend to mix several distinct phenomena into one concept. Levitsky especially disagrees with using institutionalisation as a single indicator or variable in the framework of causal analysis. Levitsky then concludes: "Rather than lump together several different dimensions into a single concept, it may be more fruitful to break the concept down into its component meanings and to use more specific terms" (Levitsky 1998: 88).

To respond to this substantive critique, every measure consisting of more than one dimension that is applied in the analysis of party institutionalisation should be controlled in terms of reliability by means of psychometric tests, such as Crombach's Alpha. Reliability testing is able to respond to the degree to which the phenomenon measured by a composite indicator is unidirectional. Although such standards are not so widespread in scientific literature on party institutionalisation, at least one example can be pointed out. Casal Bértoa (2014: 18) developed a composite indicator measuring party system institutionalisation and also used this reliability testing procedure with success. This would partially contradict Levitsky's (1998) argument and suggest that institutionalisation is applicable as a single concept, even at the level of political parties.

Nicolle Bolleyer (2013) formulated another critical argument when she pointed out the fact that successful institutionalisation is sometimes considered synonymous with building large extra-parliamentary organisational structures. Nevertheless, in some cases, this view can be wrong. Bolleyer argues that so-called organisation-based institutionalisation is not an exclusive pathway, as leadership-oriented institutionalisation is able to reach the same result. Bolleyer defines the distinction between these two types of institutionalisation as a difference in loyalty structure, i.e. the loyalty of members is derived through attachment to the leader or to a certain set of core values, instead of through building a large extra-parliamentary organisation. On the other hand, Bolleyer admits that the latter has some advantages; primarily, a larger extra-parliamentary structure can stabilise a political party against potential organisational shocks (e.g. a leadership vacuum or electoral decline). A network of local branches can also strengthen recruitment capacity as it is able to preselect particular types of candidates.

As Vicky Randall and Lars Svåsand (2002) suggest, institutionalisation should be perceived as a multidimensional concept which is not only connected with the development of formal organisational structures but also with the construction of a specific attitude or identity. Furthermore, organisations become institutionalised in two other aspects, namely internal and external ones. The internal aspect refers to the development of intra-party structures, while the external aspect is understood as the sum of relations between the political party

and its social surroundings (e.g. another political parties, political institutions, voters, etc.). The authors cited above defined four dimensions of institutionalisation: 1) systemness, 2) value infusion, 3) decisional autonomy and 4) reification (see Table 2).

Table 2: Dimensions of Party Institutionalisation

	Internal	External
Structural	Systemness	Decisional autonomy
Attitudinal	Value infusion	Reification

Source: Randall and Svåsand (2002: 13)

Systemness is defined as an internal aspect of the structural dimension and refers to the increasing routinisation and development of stable conventions in the internal party structure. The term value infusion explains the ability of a political party to create its distinctive culture or identity among its members and supporters. The fundamental question in this concept is whether the identification of members with a political party transcends their self-interested motivations for involvement.

The impact of autonomy, an external aspect of the structural dimension, on party institutionalisation can be seen from various perspectives. According to Randall and Svåsand, it is important to analyse and evaluate the form of interdependence. In general, the absence of an external sponsoring institution indicates a higher degree of institutionalisation. Nevertheless, in some cases (e.g. the linkage of socialist parties to trade unions), interdependence could have positive consequences towards strengthening the adaptability of a political party to the changing societal context. As a possible solution to this dilemma, Randall and Svåsand suggest that an institutionalised party should at least have a significant degree of decisional autonomy in the formulation its policies (Randall and Svåsand 2002: 14).

Finally, the fourth category is defined as an external aspect of the attitudinal dimension. The reification refers to the extent to which a political party is accepted by other political actors, either individuals or institutions, as a legitimate part of the political system.

Based on a review of theoretical literature, the article by Randall and Svåsand proposes a complex conceptual framework which can be used as a basis for further research. Unfortunately, being written mainly from the perspective of qualitative methodology, the article lacks a set of operational criteria suitable for reproducible analysis, thus empirical indicators need to be operationalised separately. For a more rigorous operationalisation of party institutionalisation, it would therefore be necessary to derive measures from recently published articles on the topic, but with several corrections resulting from adopting party

organisation as the level of analysis (see the discussion in the chapter on Conceptualisation and Operationalisation below).

The theoretical chapter presents seminal approaches to party institutionalisation. So far, two broad dimensions of institutionalisation have been outlined, i.e. organisational characteristics and rootedness in society. Recent theoretical discussion adds new criteria based on the necessity to analyze less formal functional aspects of party organisations, which are mainly presented as the ability to generate and sustain a distinct culture or identity. The analysis also adopts the theoretical assumption by Bolleyer (2013) that according to party organisation type, the strategies leading to institutionalisation can be substantially different. This means every dimension of institutionalisation should be weighted equally and that the analysis has to emphasise their different configurations.

3. Conceptualisation and Operationalisation

The operationalisation of political party institutionalisation presents the most problematic aspect of the analysis. On the basis of the literature review, we can conclude that there is no unified or commonly accepted analytical framework which could simply be transferred and used to explain the phenomenon of party institutionalisation in another country or region. Authors usually tend to measure some country-specific variables or focus only on certain organisational types of political parties (see Basedau and Stroh 2008, Tomsa 2008, Yardımcı-Geyikçi 2013; Arter and Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014).

Firstly, it is necessary to clarify the level of analysis, because there are two basic themes in the application of institutionalisation theory in political party research, i.e. party institutionalisation and party system institutionalisation. In general, party system institutionalisation refers to regularity in the patterns of competition and cooperation among different political parties. Among recent contributions to this topic is the book *Party Systems in Post-Soviet Countries* by Meleshevich (2007). Meleshevich's contribution to the application of institutionalisation is a proper definition of operational indicators measuring selected theoretical concept. The author suggests five indicators of party system institutionalisation: 1) the number of independent deputies in parliament, 2) the participation of parties in the formation of a cabinet, 3) geographical patterns of voting, 4) the percentage of votes taken by "old" parties, and 5) the Pedersen index of electoral volatility (Meleshevich 2007: 27). Party system institutionalisation in East Central Europe has been further researched in Casal Bértoa, 2012 and 2014.

In contrast, party institutionalisation research focuses on a single political party from the perspective of its stability and change, not only in the sense of its formal characteristics, but also in its ability to establish specific roots in society. The present article approaches the issue from this second perspective, i.e. party

institutionalisation. As was pointed out in the introduction, party institutionalisation lacks a coherent set of operational criteria; thus, a new analytical framework will be suggested in the following discussion.

As a starting point for a more general approach, the operationalisation suggested by Kenneth Janda (1980) could be utilised. Janda systematically collected data on political parties across different countries and regions. In the context of institutionalisation, the author defines several quantifiable variables by which he predominantly aims to measure symptoms of organisational instability or continuity. Janda accepts Huntington's definition: "Institutionalisation is the process by which organisations and procedures acquire value and stability" (Janda 1980: 19). On the basis of this definition, he operationalises institutionalisation with six variables: year of origin, name changes, organisational discontinuity, leadership completion, legislative instability, and electoral instability. The composition of variables aims to describe the concept in terms of internal and external dimensions. However, Janda does not include variables related to organisational autonomy, because he points out that the degree of party institutionalisation can be relatively high although a party lacks full autonomy (e.g. the Labour Party in Great Britain). This is probably more of a terminological problem, because different authors tend to stress different aspects of autonomous political organisation. Therefore, it is necessary to define a concrete notion of autonomy. As Arter and Kestilä-Kekkonen (2014: 935) put it: "[…] institutionalised parties are organisationally autonomous; they should not be dependent for their existence on, or dictated to by, the leadership and/or an extra-parliamentary organisation; and they should exist as an independent entity in the minds of the public."

As can be seen, there is no commonly accepted analytical framework measuring the degree of institutionalisation. Probably, the most significant obstacle to using the concept in comparatively oriented research is its multidimensionality. There are two possible solutions. The first is to compare cases on the basis of variables as such and then summarise different aspects of party institutionalisation. This approach can be especially useful for the analysis of a small number of cases (see Yardımcı-Geyikçi 2013; Arter and Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014). Yardımcı-Geyikçi divides the concept into two categories: organisational development and roots in society. The first category is operationalised on the basis of membership strength, territorial comprehensiveness, and financial resources. The second category is indicated by the electoral volatility of individual parties, party identification, and public legitimacy. Even though variables are defined and operationalised rigorously, the research design does not include any data normalisation technique and the data are compared by means of single variables rather than in a broader conceptual context. Arter and Kestilä-Kekkonen employ an even more complex design in which they analyse institutionalisation on different

organisational levels, namely the electoral party level, the internal party level, and the legislative party level.

The second approach, which is more suitable for a larger number of cases, could be to construct a composite indicator integrating directly measurable variables into a scheme which would enable the conceptual complexity to be simplified. Probably the most complex conceptualisation of political party institutionalisation is formulated in a working paper by Basedau and Stroh (2008) in which the authors compose an index of four dimensions and a combination of 15 quantitative and qualitative variables. As a technique for the normalisation of data they use categorical scaling, so measured values are recoded into several categories regarding a given threshold. It should also be noted that the conceptualisation cannot be simply applied in more general comparative designs, because it includes several variables specific to party institutionalisation in developing countries.[3] The potentially problematic part of the conceptualisation could be the classification of qualitative data, especially when no additional pieces of information about the processes of collection and interpretation are specified.

Regarding the preceding discussion, the index should reflect several assumptions. It should primarily consider that the process of institutionalisation consists of more dimensions which can affect the degree of institutionalisation in specific ways. The composition of variables should further operate with the presumption that institutionalisation is influenced by relations on different organisational levels. For the selection of variables, it is also necessary to avoid the "unit-jump fallacy"; thus, the level of analysis is set to political parties and not to the aggregated level of the party system. Practically, the index should be developed more as a comparative indicator which would be able not only to categorise political parties on the basis of presented theoretical presumptions, but also to identify specific patterns, i.e. combinations of dimensions, which are used by political parties to be more persistent in the party system. The next important aspect is how institutionalisation changes over time, because it is not an irreversible process and a political party can potentially face de-institutionalisation. Thus, it has to be emphasised that the calculated values of the index refer only to specific periods.

The first problem is the selection of criteria. Although a clear consensus among scholars is missing, the seminal studies introduced in this chapter are connected by the argument that institutionalisation *de facto* consists of two broader phenomena. The first is institutionalisation perceived as organisational stability, which usually deals with longevity, the development of official organisational structures, and de-personalisation. This phenomenon is often researched under different terminology, e.g. Levitsky (1998) suggests the term *behavioural routinisation*,

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[3] Party age is used in two variables on the one hand relative to country independence and on the other hand relative to reintroduction of multiparty system.

but Yardımcı-Geyikçi (2013: 4) refers to *organisational development*. For the purposes of this article, the terminology developed by Randall and Svåsand (2002) is adopted because of its conceptual clarity. Thus, the organisational dimension is called *systemness*. The second dimension analyses different aspects of institutionalisation which are focused on a party's ability to develop and sustain stable *roots in society* (Yardımcı-Geyikçi 2013) or, as Randall and Svåsand (2002) put it, *reification*. The lack of consensus is then clearly observable in the question of whether further conceptual dimensions should be added. Levitsky (1998) and Randall and Svåsand (2002) suggest the dimension of *value infusion*. Value infusion is especially important, because it covers organisational aspects in the sense of building a distinct internal culture and identity among party supporters. The separate operationalisation of value infusion then brings benefits in terms of the possibility to analyse certain new types of political parties that rely more on building a community of supporters than on a formalised organisational structure.

The last widely discussed topic is the role of *autonomy* in the process of institutionalisation. As Panebianco (1988: 55) put it: "A position of autonomy is reached when the organisation can directly control exchange processes with its environment. An organisation is, on the other hand, dependent when its indispensable resources are in part controlled by other organisations." Janda (1980), on the other hand, rejects autonomy as a separate dimension of institutionalisation and points to the case of the British Labour Party, which is, according to him, highly institutionalised while being organisationally and personally dependent on trade unions. Therefore, the suggested analytical framework does not separately operationalise the dimension of autonomy. The main reason for deciding not to include this dimension is that the impact of autonomy on the degree of institutionalisation is relatively unclear, as is shown in the theoretical part. It can be accepted that "[…] a way around these complexities is to specify the party's need for a significant degree of decisional autonomy, or freedom from interference in determining its own policies and strategies" (Randall and Svåsand 2002: 14). In this sense, all three other dimensions include indicators strengthening a particular party's position as an autonomous political actor (e.g. the number of changes of party leader, the ability to multiply the sources of party finance, or the number of members). As these variables indicate a party's potential to build more formalised bureaucratic structures, the decisional autonomy is broadened as well, because these structures generally outweigh the influence of a particular leader or different external actors.

The suggested index of party institutionalisation is composed of three dimensions, namely *systemness*, *value infusion*, and *reification*. Each dimension is operationalised by three indicators. As Randall and Svåsand (2002) do not provide a set of operational criteria, it is necessary to define them anew. Where

possible, the analysis relies on the operationalisation by Basedau and Stroh (2008), because their study provides the most comprehensive set of indicators. The dimension of systemness should reflect the degree of organisational development and stability. Randall and Svåsand (2002: 13) mention the ability of a political party to increase the scope, density and regularity of intra-party interactions. Systemness, which could primarily reflect the routinisation of intra-party processes, is indicated by three variables. The first is the age of a political party, because according to criteria suggested by Huntington (1968: 13-15) and Dix (1992: 491) it can be hypothesised that the longer a political party exists, the more formalised internal structures it creates and the more effective patterns of behaviour it establishes. The next indicator is the absolute number of changes of party leader, as a successful change in leadership requires the setting of formal rules for intra-party electoral process and also strengthens the political party as a structure regardless of which personalities are involved (Basedau and Stroh 2008: 12). The third indicator based on Panebianco (1988) evaluates whether a political party is able to differentiate its financial resources or depends rather on a single source, e.g. state subventions or sponsorship.[4] The differentiation is operationalised as a reversed value of the Gini coefficient (Zeileis 2014) calculated from the proportions of all categories of income reported by political parties. The reversed coefficient ranges from zero, which means all party income comes from a single category, to one, which indicates that party income is equally distributed among all lawful possibilities.

Value infusion "[…] refers to the extent to which party actors and supporters (whether or not falling into a more formalised category of membership) acquire an identification with and commitment to the party which transcend more instrumental or self-interested incentives for involvement" (Randall and Svåsand 2002: 13). Value infusion is thus measured by three variables. The first is characterised by party membership as a percentage of the overall electorate for the whole country (Yardımcı-Geyikçi 2013: 4). The second variable refers to the stability of the parliamentary organisation and measures the percentage of deputies who left the parliamentary group in the analysed electoral term (Basedau and Stroh 2008: 12). To cover less formalised categories of supporters, the third variable indicates the percentage of respondents who identify strongly with a particular political party[5] (Basedau and Stroh 2008: 12).

Reification reflects how the political party is grounded in the public imagination and to what extent other actors in the political system perceive the party as taken-for-granted (Randall and Svåsand 2002: 14). The first indicator

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[4] For further details about party funding in the Czech Republic see (Haughton 2014).

[5] CSES data used for 2006 and 2010, cross tabulation of variables C3020_3: Q20B. WHICH PARTY DO YOU FEEL CLOSEST TO and C3020_4: Q20C. DEGREE OF CLOSENESS TO THIS PARTY, missing values removed. CVVM data used for 2013, cross tabulation of variables PV.4 and PV.112, missing values removed.

is the stability of electoral support between the last and the second last general election, operationalised as the average loss or gain in both percentage and percentage points (in order to cover both the absolute and relative changes, as these are important for a more precise description of the wider context of political support; see Basedau and Stroh 2008: 12–13). The second indicator refers to the identification of voters with a particular political party (Yardımcı-Geyikçi 2013: 4). Based on survey data, the percentage of respondents identifying with a particular political party indicates its ability to keep support outside of electoral campaigns. The last variable measures the absolute number of organisational mergers and splits occurring during the analysed electoral term, because such organisational changes represent a serious obstacle to building a distinct party identity that is recognised by the electorate, other political parties, and political institutions (Janda 1980: 24). Splits are counted regardless of the size of the group changing its party membership, as the indicator should mainly reflect the role of publicly known party elites in the external dimension of party institutionalisation.

All defined variables are normalised to a scale from zero to one using the "min-max"[6] procedure. The advantages of this procedure are that differently measured variables can be compared, that all are evenly weighted in the resulting index, and that setting arbitrary thresholds is not necessary. On the other hand, the value of the index is strictly tied to analysed empirical cases and refers to differences among them. Thus, values resulting from two different datasets are not directly comparable; therefore, those datasets would have to be merged. Also it should be mentioned that potential outliers could cause distortion in the transformed indicators.

4. Data

The data used for analysis were collected from different sources. For indicators relating to party funding, the database politickefinance.cz collected by the NGO Center of Applied Economics affiliated with the Institute of Economic Studies at Charles University in Prague served as the main source. The database contains digitalised data from annual financial reports on political parties in the Czech Republic from 2006 to 2014 (Politické Finance 2014).

Electoral results including registers of candidates are accessible in the database of the Czech Statistical Office (Český statistický úřad 2015). For more frequent observations of public support, data from the CVVM polling agency on party preferences were also used. The data are accessible on-line via the Czech Social Science Data Archive (CVVM 2014).

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[6] Min-Max normalises variables by subtracting the minimum value and dividing by the range of the variable values. $v = \dfrac{x_i - \min x}{\max x - \min x}$

Individual level data on attitudes towards political parties are cited from The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES 2013) for the years 2006 and 2010. The year 2013 is analysed using data from the "Naše společnost" Czech opinion polls conducted by CVVM in 2014. Both surveys use a very common concept of party identification, in which the degree of closeness to a political party is scaled to three categories – very close, somewhat close, and not very close; thus, the recoding of values was not necessary. Different wording is used in the question on which party respondents support. In CSES the question is "Which party do you feel closest to?", but in the CVVM survey it is "If the General Election was taking place today, who would you vote for?".

Data on changes in membership of parliamentary groups for all electoral terms are accessible from the archives of The Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic.

Besides publicly known information from media monitoring, data on internal party structure and party membership were collected on a continual basis using techniques based on field research strategies such as the observation of party conferences and semi-structured interviews of party members or party staff.

For analysis, the data were managed in long format, so cases are defined as political party 'x' in time 't'. This procedure was applied to increase N, to increase the variability among values in order to demonstrate the effects of normalisation techniques (see above), and to analyse institutionalisation over time. Missing data occurring in the case of political parties with just one electoral participation (VV, ANO, ÚSVIT) or parties facing discontinuity in parliamentary representation (KDU-ČSL, SZ) were omitted from the calculations.

As the analysis deals with the success of genuinely new political parties, it should be noted that data for the electoral term 2013 are still incomplete. The article benefits from including the last electoral term mainly because it provides an opportunity to put into context the significant electoral gains of the political movement ANO. It is also useful to observe the development of newcomers from 2010, mainly the internal consolidation of TOP 09.

5. Systemness

Regarding financial resources, political parties in the Czech Republic have several possibilities with respect to differentiating their incomes. Besides state subventions, donations, and member's contributions, Czech parties can profit from cultural and publishing activities or renting property. In total there are 11 funding options. According to annual reports, political parties rely predominantly on state subventions and private donations. Contributions by members are more significant in the case of parties with larger memberships, e.g. KSČM, KDU-ČSL, ODS and ČSSD. Especially in the case of new political parties, it is common for party elites to invest their own private funds in the

formative period before electoral success. This can be illustrated in the case of ANO. In 2012, donations to ANO amounted to 63 981 964 CZK representing 99.88 % of its annual income, and almost 90 % of such donations were provided by Andrej Babiš, party founder and leader, or by different companies associated with Agrofert Holding, of which Andrej Babiš is the owner.

Measured by the gini coefficient (see Table 3), better differentiation of incomes is characteristic of parties with a developed membership structure and some kind of organisational continuity with previous historical subjects, e.g. KDU-ČSL. In contrast, new political parties often rely on a single source, mainly private donations before electoral breakthrough, after which donations are partly replaced by state subventions. Thus, there is no clear linear relationship between electoral gains and the differentiation of resources, yet a higher degree of differentiation supports party stability in the case of unpredictable organisational shock, such as a temporary reduction in state subventions caused by a decrease in votes.

Table 3: Indicators of Systemness

| Party	Year	Financial Resources Structure*	Leadership Alternations**
ČSSD	2006	0.44	5
KDU-ČSL	2006	0.43	3
KSČM	2006	0.35	3
ODS	2006	0.40	1
SZ	2006	0.20	7
ČSSD	2010	0.36	5
KDU-ČSL	2010	0.45	5
KSČM	2010	0.38	3
ODS	2010	0.39	2
SZ	2010	0.29	8
TOP 09	2010	0.27	0
VV	2010	0.26	3
ANO	2013	0.25	0
ČSSD	2013	0.34	6
KDU-ČSL	2013	0.46	6
KSČM	2013	0.36	3
ODS	2013	0.44	3
SZ	2013	0.23	8
TOP 09	2013	0.32	0
ÚSVIT	2013	0.14	0

Source: Author's own calculations

* Reversed value of gini coefficient, interval [0:1] where 1 means the most even distribution among categories. Based on data (Politické finance 2014).

** Total number of changes at the position of party leader until the date of general election.

Successful alternation in leadership can be considered as one of the strongest indicators of institutionalisation, because it indicates a party's sustainability without reference to the influence of a particular leader. The collected data show that political parties with historical backgrounds were not the only ones able to repeatedly change their leaders, e.g. VV underwent three alternations before its electoral success in 2010. Nevertheless, the third change represented a deep organisational change because it occurred on the back of a pragmatic decision to achieve success in the general election. The result was the appointment of a publicly known writer and investigative journalist, Radek John, as the party leader, however without him having real power to organise the internal functioning of the party itself. Further changes in leadership following certain controversies suggest that the party's subsequent marginalisation in terms of electoral support occurred because it did not have a publicly known and accepted leader, although it possibly achieved a higher degree of systemness.

Figure 1: Dimension of Systemness
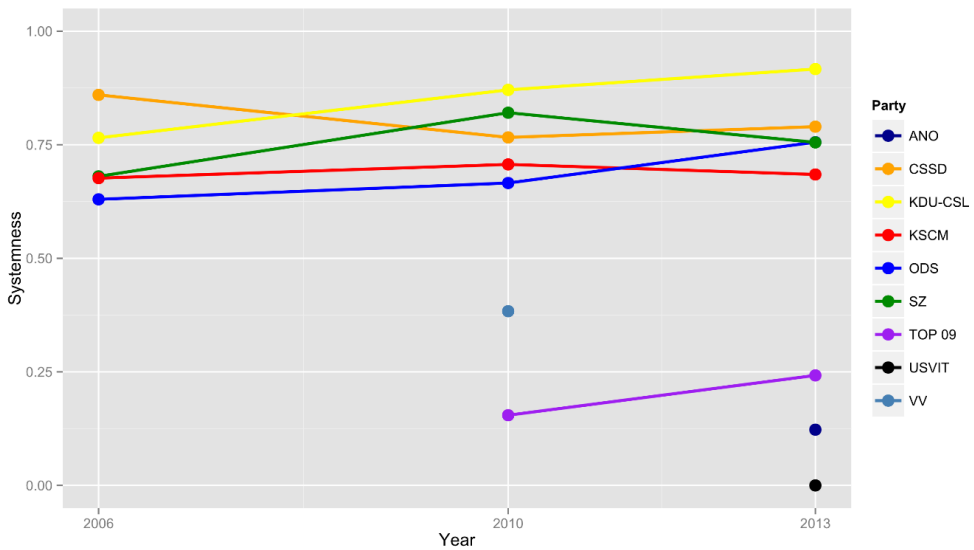
Source: Author's own calculations

With respect to systemness (see Figure 1), it is possible to divide the analysed political parties into two groups. The first group consists of parties established in the 90's in the context of democratic transition. These parties tend to perform better in the differentiation of financial resources and have undergone several alternations in leadership. The group of new political parties is characterised by recent formation before an election. The financial resources of these new political parties also tend to have a less differentiated structure. Furthermore, one of the most typical characteristics is strong personalisation, i.e. when new party

is formed around a certain leader. Although the VV party achieves a higher score in comparison with other new parties, as it was established already in 2002, it only nominated candidates and succeeded in first-order election in 2010, after deep organisational changes resulted in an end to changes of party leaders.

6. Value Infusion

Comparison with other European countries shows that total party membership in the Czech Republic is among the lowest (Van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke 2012). Two parties, KSČM and KDU-ČSL, constitute an exception with respect to membership structure, which partly refers to the mass organisation of the former Communist party and the ČSL party as its "satellite" within the communist-controlled National Front. As can be seen in Table 4, both parties have relatively high membership densities, which means that a significant proportion of voters are recruited form party members. Nevertheless, both parties have faced a substantial decline in membership. This trend can support organisational changes in the direction of a more professionalised leadership, or the externalisation of electoral campaigns (Polášek, Novotný and Perottino 2012).

New political parties can be located at opposite extremes of the spectrum. The membership of such parties is very rudimental and they are mainly organised as electoral vehicles formed around a particular leader. Instead of building a formal membership organisation, new parties try to mobilise their supporters using less formalised communication channels. From 2009 to 2011, VV practiced an organisational model in which registered supporters were given the option to participate in referenda formulating political priorities and even to choose the party leader in a direct election. ANO and ÚSVIT preferred more professionally managed communication with supporters on social networks. These new parties also differ significantly from longer established small parties, e.g. SZ, by their high electoral support. It should also be noted that the claim concerning low levels of membership which are observable in the cases of new political parties still applies, even in comparison with the period of transition to democracy when some of the analysed parties were established (ODS) or renewed (ČSSD). Immediately after being recreated, ČSSD claimed to have 10 785 members in 1990, and ODS even reported 18 557 members in 1992, just one year after its establishment (Linek and Pecháček 2007: 262).

The next fact observable in the context of Czech parties is the volatile character of membership, which is connected with conjunctural trends in electoral support and temporary success. This is the most visible in the case of ODS, which played the role of the largest right-wing party until the election in 2013, but, as a result of political scandals, faced a sharp decline in electoral support and also in membership. While in 2010 ODS reported 31 011 members, in 2013

membership was down to 21 591, and the last report released in 2015 showed membership had further declined to 14 771.

Table 4: Party membership in the Czech Republic

Party	Year	Total membership	M/E*	M/V**
ČSSD	2006	17000	0.317818	0.983326
KDU-ČSL	2006	42504	0.794619	10.9913
KSČM	2006	88081	1.646689	12.85239
ODS	2006	26155	0.488972	1.382053
SZ	2006	2000	0.03739	0.594377
ČSSD	2010	24486	0.468107	2.11951
KDU-ČSL	2010	34875	0.666716	15.18172
KSČM	2010	66627	1.27373	11.29721
ODS	2010	31011	0.592847	2.931673
SZ	2010	1500	0.028676	1.173424
TOP 09	2010	1700	0.032499	0.194545
VV	2010	1683	0.032174	0.295716
ANO	2013	713	0.014346	0.076895
ČSSD	2013	23613	0.475112	2.322219
KDU-ČSL	2013	29976	0.603141	8.895747
KSČM	2013	53500	1.076462	7.219544
ODS	2013	21591	0.434428	5.62011
SZ	2013	1397	0.028109	0.878478
TOP 09	2013	3811	0.07668	0.639047
ÚSVIT	2013	9	0.000181	0.002629

Source: Author's own calculations
* Membership of parties in relation to total electorate.
** Membership of parties in relation to number of voters of a given party.

On the basis of survey data (see Table 5), it appears that the ability to attract a stable body of supporters exhibiting high identification with the respective party is predominantly tied to parties with larger organisational inertia, namely KSČM and KDU-ČSL. About 20 % of respondents who identified with KSČM or KDU-ČSL also declared themselves to be very close to the party. Only one other party was able to exceed the 20% mark: namely, more than 22 % of supporters felt very close to the political movement ÚSVIT in 2013. Nevertheless, it is questionable whether this is the beginning of a trend; the party was formed around the popular political leader Tomio Okamura and at the time of survey it had just nine formal members. Thus, it seems probable that the majority of support was connected with the leader's personality and not with loyalty to a certain political organisation.

**Table 5: Percentage of respondents reporting "very close" identification with given political party**

	2006	2010	2013
ODS	14.39	6.25	7.7
KDU-ČSL	18.67	21.62	27.8
ČSSD	5.9	5.88	10.9
SZ	5.94	11.11	11.1
KSČM	26.54	24.79	27.7
TOP 09	-	7.5	1.9
VV	-	12.87	-
ÚSVIT	-	-	22.2
ANO	-	-	6.6

Source: Author's own calculations; Data: 2006 and 2010 CSES module 3, 2013 CVVM Naše společnost.

Figure 2 shows the averages of normalised values in three consecutive elections. The party with the highest degree of value infusion is KSČM, which is primarily a result of the fact that it still profits from the largest membership, a highly stable and disciplined parliamentary organisation, and a specific base of supporters declaring themselves to be very close to the party. KDU-ČSL differs from KSČM mainly in the sense that it underwent an organisational split in 2009 and part of its deputies became independent. The score for KDU-ČSL is also further reduced, because it failed to gain parliamentary representation in 2010. The two main opposing parties, ODS and ČSSD, are located in the middle of the spectrum. This is primarily the result of somewhat similar characteristics with respect to membership, a generally moderate level of supporter identification, and minor defections from parliamentary groups.

New political parties perform slightly worse than established parties, mainly because of their small memberships and also moderate levels of identification. The score for VV is further reduced by the disintegration of the parliamentary group. The only exception is SZ, which has older organisational subjectivity; however, it is classified as the party with almost the lowest level of value infusion. The reason for this classification is a combination of moderate supporter identification, small membership, and the fact that it underwent two electoral terms (2010 and 2013) without parliamentary representation.

Figure 2: Dimension of Value Infusion
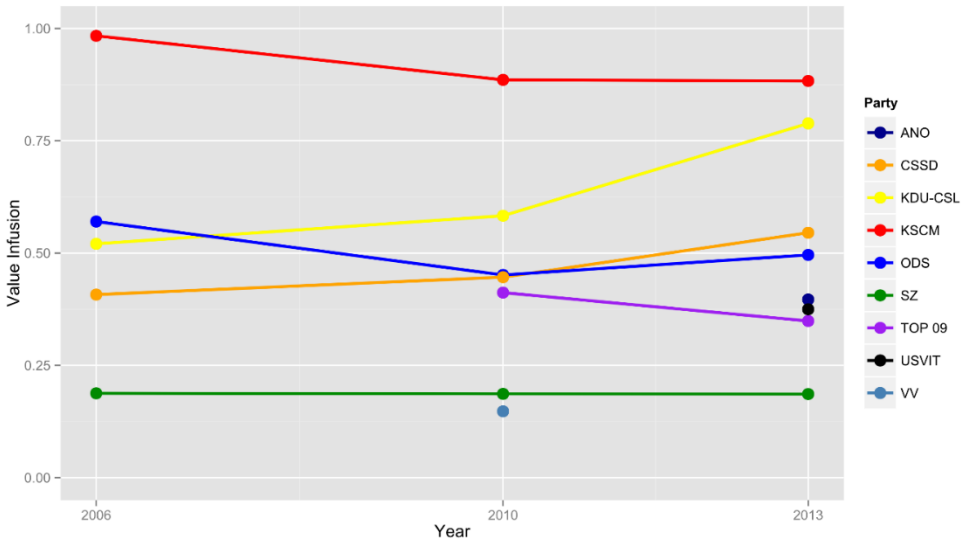
Source: Author's own calculations

7. Reification

The degree of reification is mainly influenced by the degree of general support for a certain party. Thus, it seems difficult to find concrete patterns or trends (see Figure 3). In the case of ODS, continuous decline caused by decreasing electoral gains and identification can be seen. The low scores for VV in 2010 and ÚSVIT in 2013 are related to their organisational and personal instability, which arose after successful electoral breakthroughs. In both cases, the parliamentary groups split shortly after the election and some members immediately established new parties. The first split in VV occurred after the 2012 crisis in the ODS–TOP 09–VV coalition government, when some deputies left the party and founded the new political subject LIDEM, which replaced VV in the coalition. Despite having nine formal members, ÚSVIT split after internal disputes over party finances. In this case, the popular party leader Tomio Okamura left ÚSVIT and established the new political party SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy).

Such a lack of organisational inertia is not, however, a general reason for a low degree of reification. The significant exception seems to be the case of ANO, which received high electoral support despite being established just one year before the 2013 general election. In addition, ANO has not faced organisational discontinuities. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the success of ANO is connected with personalised leadership and that the party benefits from extensive use of advanced marketing techniques. On the other hand, the party has not fully developed an extra-parliamentary organisational structure.

Among parties with higher degrees of reification, the most serious decline in this dimension of institutionalisation occurred in the case of ODS. This was primarily the result of continually increasing electoral volatility between the elections in 2006 and 2013. While in 2006 ODS gained 35.4 % of the votes, in 2010 it received only 20.2 %. The decline further continued in 2013, when the party recorded its worst ever electoral result, receiving just 7.7 % of the vote. The same trend is observable in party identification.

A quite opposite trend was expressed by SZ. In this case, increasing reification was to a large extent caused by the stabilisation of electoral support. In fact, the high level of electoral volatility in 2006 was connected with exceptional electoral gains. Thus, two subsequent elections rather represented a return to the previous level of electoral support. Furthermore, SZ faced minor organisational splits in the periods of 2006–2010 and 2010–2013, which also contributed to a lower resulting score.

Putting the KDU-ČSL and its organisational split, TOP 09, under comparison, it can be seen that despite achieving a lower score in systemness and value infusion, TOP 09 performed better in terms of reification, the new party achieving a slightly lower degree of electoral volatility and a higher degree of identification.

In general, the dimension of reification, as an indicator of party rootedness as regards its relations with other actors within the political system, seems to correlate little with internal dimensions – particularly in the sense that parties without a stabilised formal organisational structure are able to attract a significant proportion of the electorate, although their position is relatively weak in comparison with more organisationally institutionalised parties. Due to splits and overall internal instability, these new parties are less reified as reliable and persistent actors with respect to other political institutions.

Figure 3: Dimension of Reification
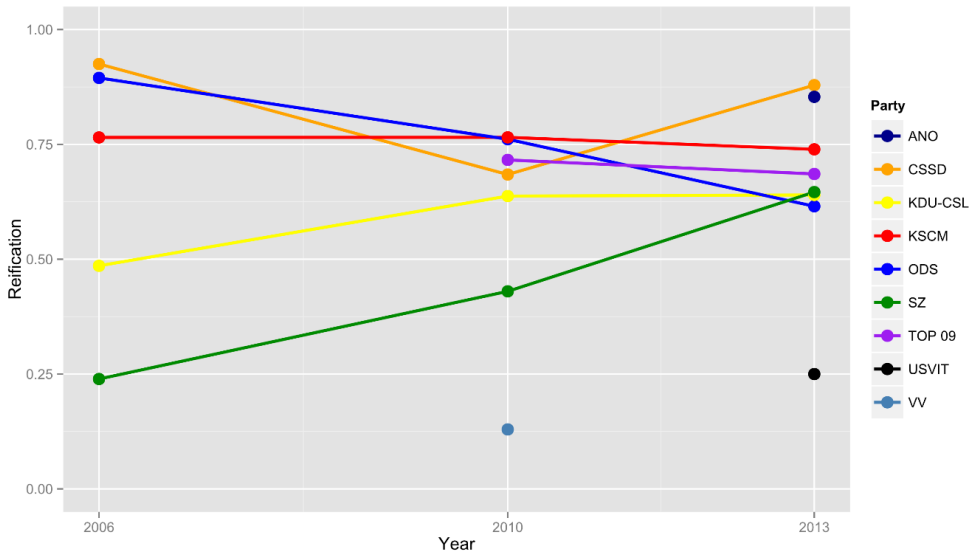
Source: Author's own calculations

8. Party Institutionalisation

Summarising the three presented dimensions, the index ascribes a higher classification to those political parties with a more developed organisational structure and distinctive ideological profile (see Table 6). In the role of challengers, new parties are able to attract a high proportion of the electorate using advanced techniques of political marketing, but they seem to be highly vulnerable in the context of internal controversies, which leads to a loss of public trust. In this sense, organisation-based institutionalisation produces more stable political parties due to the fact that potential internal problems are tied to particular persons and do not influence party identity as a whole.

Table 6: Political Party Institutionalisation Index

Party	Year	Party Institutionalisation Index	Systemness	Value Infusion	Reification
ČSSD	2006	0.73	0.86	0.41	0.92
KDU-ČSL	2006	0.59	0.77	0.52	0.49
KSČM	2006	0.81	0.68	0.98	0.77
ODS	2006	0.70	0.63	0.57	0.89
SZ	2006	0.37	0.68	0.19	0.24
ČSSD	2010	0.63	0.77	0.45	0.68
KDU-ČSL	2010	0.71	0.87	0.58	0.64
KSČM	2010	0.79	0.71	0.89	0.77
ODS	2010	0.63	0.67	0.45	0.76
SZ	2010	0.52	0.82	0.19	0.43
TOP 09	2010	0.39	0.15	0.41	0.72
VV	2010	0.23	0.38	0.15	0.13
ANO	2013	0.41	0.12	0.4	0.85
ČSSD	2013	0.74	0.79	0.55	0.88
KDU-ČSL	2013	0.78	0.92	0.79	0.64
KSČM	2013	0.77	0.68	0.88	0.74
ODS	2013	0.62	0.76	0.5	0.62
SZ	2013	0.57	0.76	0.19	0.65
TOP 09	2013	0.43	0.24	0.35	0.69
ÚSVIT	2013	0.20	0	0.37	0.25

Source: Author's own calculations
Note: Reliability test (Cronbach alpha = 0.73) across all variables suggests that they are components of single scale. That is, variables together measure the same theoretical concept.

From a long-term perspective, the key variable influencing organisational stability is how a political party with a strong leader approaches the situation of alternation, because "[a] leader can socialise people who operate in public into certain values. This process, if successful, will lead to a form of group attachment that transcends to a specific leader as an individual" (Bolleyer 2013: 58). Indeed, this development can be seen partially in the case of ODS. ODS was established by Václav Klaus in 1991 as one of the successors of Civic Forum (OF), the main actor of democratic transition in the Czech Republic. The party's electoral success and further institutionalisation were, to a large extent, based on Klaus' popularity, and the first alternation occurred after more than 10 years of the party's existence. So, despite its previous leadership-oriented pattern of institutionalisation, ODS has become institutionalised as a more organisation-based political party in the context of several alternations, party membership, or the differentiation of financial resources. In this sense, the main prerequisites for long-term sustainability and potential organisational change with respect to leadership--oriented parties seem to be a sufficient amount of time for the party founder

to internalise the leader's values as basic party principles and at least a moderately well-developed level of extra-parliamentary organisation.

Regarding stability across all dimensions, KSČM should be classified as highly institutionalised (see Figure 4), because, in spite of the continual decrease in its membership, not only is it still capable of sustaining one of the most developed extra-parliamentary organisations in the Czech Republic, but it is also supported by a relatively stable group in the electorate exhibiting strong identification with the party. This probably results from the fact that the party did no undergo deeper organisational reforms after the transition to democracy and, to a large extent, base their support on voters dissatisfied with the political, social and economic changes after 1989.

In the context of the 2013 election, the trend of increasing institutionalisation can be seen in the case of KDU-ČSL. The lower score it received in the previous election was mainly connected with a lower overall level of electoral support, as electoral gains by KDU-ČSL varied at around the 5 % threshold, and with internal disputes resulting in an organisational split and the establishment of the electorally successful party TOP 09. Compared to VV, TOP 09 seems to be institutionally stabilised at a particular level, because it was able to sustain electoral support in 2013, after participating in the governing coalition. The party is also organisationally stable in terms of its parliamentary organisation. Two challenges facing the future development of TOP 09 are alternation in leadership, which will probably be necessary in the near future, and potential limitations on cooperation with the political movement Mayors and Independents (STAN).

Figure 4: Institutionalisation in terms of three analysed dimensions
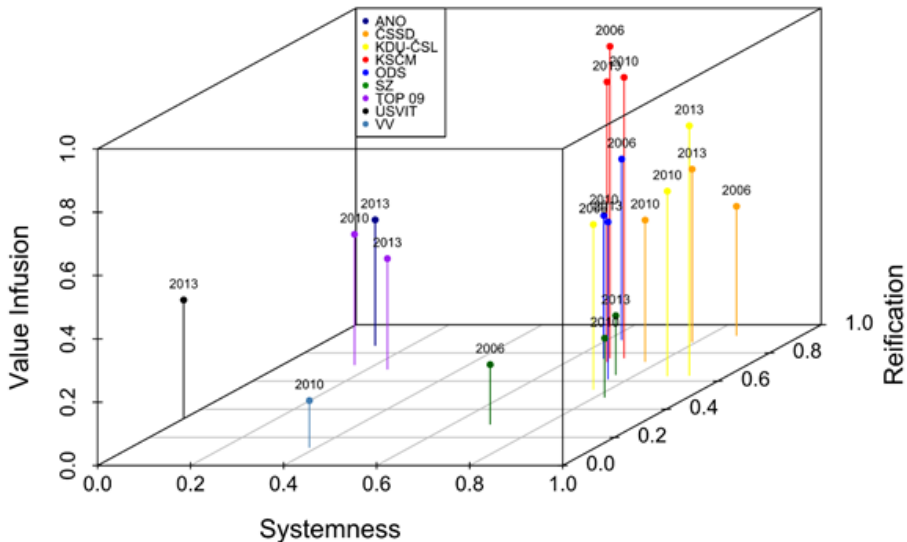
Source: Author's own calculations

Figure 4 above provides a multidimensional perspective on party institutionalisation in the Czech Republic. It shows two different clusters of political parties, distinguished by their overall level of systemness. The first consists of so-called "old" political parties with a stabilised role in the party system. They are mostly distinguished by their higher level of systemness, not only as a result of chronological age, but also as a result of their better ability to differentiate financial resources and to successfully alternate their leadership. With respect to value infusion, greater variability is observed. KDU-ČSL and KSČM benefit from a larger membership base and strongly identified supporters. In contrast, the lower score achieved by SZ is the result not only of its smaller membership and of the fact that it lost its representation in the lower house, but also of the particularly small number of its supporters that exhibit strong identification with the party.

The second cluster includes new political parties electorally successful in the context of the last two electoral terms. The interpretation is consistent with Bolleyer's (2013) hypothesis about different sources of institutionalisation. Particularly in the case of TOP 09, which achieved re-election after its electoral breakthrough in 2010, it can be seen that a significant degree of systemness is not a necessary condition for achieving higher degrees of value infusion and reification. From preliminary data on ANO, the same logic can be identified. Nevertheless, as seen in the cases of VV and ÚSVIT, a small degree of systemness leads to a party's higher vulnerability in the face of organisational shocks.

9. Conclusion

The article proposes a new composite indicator of party institutionalisation enabling a more systematic comparative analysis of political parties to be conducted. On the basis of empirical data, it provides an interpretation of how a certain pattern of institutionalisation can influence persistence in the party system. Data on parties in the Czech Republic show that institutionalisation can be operationalised and interpreted as a single linear variable, measurable in absolute values. Furthermore, this approach yields results with a satisfactory level of significance, as shown by the applied test of reliability; thus, Levitsky's (1998) argument is weakened. In fact, combining different aspects of institutionalisation empirically supports the theoretical assumption that these dimensions are parts of one broader phenomenon. However, every composite indicator measuring a multidimensional theoretical concept should also be unpacked and the dimensions discussed separately, because it provides a more complex picture of reality. The presented index is useful in terms of comparative analysis, as it helps to interpret the highly complex phenomenon of institutionalisation in a more easily understandable way.

In organisational terms, the analysed political parties are divided into two distinct groups. The first group consists of political parties existing since the transition to democracy and is characterised by long term stability in most of the measured indicators. Significant internal sources of institutionalisation can serve as stabilisation factors against external shocks – in particular, losing parliamentary representation for one or more electoral terms or even organisational splits. This can be clearly seen in the cases of KDU-ČSL and SZ. Thus, a higher degree of institutionalisation does not automatically lead to higher electoral gains, but rather supports the survival of the organisation as such regardless contemporary obstacles.

The usefulness of the concept lies in its ability to analyse complex relations among the levels at which political parties operate, namely how combinations of internal and external sources of institutionalisation generate specific organisational patterns. Thus, in further research, it would be fruitful to analyse whether and to what extent political parties without long-term organisational continuity in newly-formed party systems would reach sustainable positions in the system without deeper organisational changes, i.e. without building stronger extra-parliamentary structures, these functionally replaced by professional advisors and experts. The presented analytic framework could also be used for large-N comparative research designs in order to understand regional differentiation in the development and stability of political parties after the transition to democracy in CEE or to further explain differences in the functioning of political parties in new and old party systems, because it is still unclear whether parties in new democracies remain organisationally different from their counterparts in old democracies or whether a significant degree of convergence occurred during the development of democracy in post-communist countries.

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