

Nomination of Ministers According to the Areas of Electoral Support for Political Parties in Elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic¹

PETR DVOŘÁK AND MICHAL PINK



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Abstract: *Following identification of the areas of electoral support for the ruling parties since 1996 and subsequent analysis of the selection of ministers by each party, it was found that centre-right parties nominated more ministers from their areas of electoral support, mainly from Prague and other large cities. On the other hand, left-wing parties nominated ministers from similar areas to centre-right parties, even if they did not draw their electoral support from there. The Public Affairs party, which was established in Prague, nominated all its ministers from Prague, despite the fact that for the party it was not an area of electoral support. It is evident that, for the completion of a minister's mandate, it is not important whether he or she comes from an area of electoral support. Only TOP 09, the Greens and KDU-ČSL (1998 elections) used the nomination of ministers to maximise votes within electoral regions, which could be identified as areas of electoral support in the previous elections. On the other hand, with ODA and ANO 2011, ministers were used outside the territory of electoral support, which may be related to the improvement of the election result in regions where the party was not so successful.*

Keywords: *geographic representativeness, government, Czech Republic*

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Introduction

For representative bodies to adequately represent the interests of their citizens, they must be as similar as possible to the population they represent (Pitkin, 1972). It is therefore important that the essential elements of society are reflected in the representative body in the form of MPs who are elected or nominated to their positions. For example, their place of residence would give them geographical representativeness. The division of a country into constituencies, regions or other defined territorial units provides some assurance of this by taking representatives from different areas. Elections in the Slovak Republic, Serbia, Israel and the Netherlands are held within a single electoral district. In the Slovak Republic, a significant over-representation of Bratislava and the western parts of the country at the expense of the east is evident (Charvát 2019; Madleňák 2017). A similar over-representation of specific areas has been noted in the Netherlands, Israel and Serbia (Stamenković 2022). Geographical representativeness at the parliamentary level has been studied by Latner and McGann (2005), using the example of the Netherlands and Israel, and they conclude that the capital city, peripheral regions and regions with a strong identity are more represented than regions close to the capital. Even in the mixed electoral system used in elections to the Bundestag, the overrepresentation of urban districts was found at the expense of the countryside (Haffer 2021). By contrast, elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic have been associated with 14 constituencies since 2002, whereas in previous elections there were only eight. This arrangement guarantees a certain degree of representativeness of the Chamber at a national level through the place of residence of each candidate. The actual geographical representativeness of MPs during the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938) and the Czech Republic up to 2013 has been studied by Mikešová and Kostelecký, who conclude that there has been a gradual reduction in the number of MPs coming from the capital city to the benefit of smaller districts (2016). Similar trends have been confirmed at government level in the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, both in administrations formed by the agreement of political parties and in technocratic governments. Thus, one of the reasons for the greater representativeness of governments in terms of territorial units may be related to the different conception of the distribution of constituencies (Dvořák et al. 2021).

In this paper, we focus on the composition of Czech governments since 1996 with respect to where ministers live. We observe over time whether government parties nominated their ministers with respect to the electoral results in the districts or whether greater electoral support in individual districts was not relevant for them in deciding whom to nominate as a minister. We also look at whether parties used individual ministers to improve their electoral performance at the next election by nominating them to the districts where they lived

or elsewhere. In doing so, we seek to answer a number of questions and prove hypotheses as follows:

Q1) Do political parties differ in their nomination of ministers with respect to electoral support within the districts of the Czech Republic in elections to the Chamber of Deputies?

H1) A certain number of people from Prague and other large cities (Dvořák et al. 2021) are always represented in government, and centre-right political parties receive significantly more votes in Prague and other large cities than left-wing parties (volby.cz). Centre-right parties will have more ministers who fall within areas of electoral support².

Q2) Do ministers from areas of electoral support have more chance of completing their mandate?

Q3) Do political parties differ in their use of ministers when drawing up their lists of candidates? Do they use them as leaders of regional candidate lists? Do they run candidates in their place of residence?

H2) Political parties nominate ministers to the strongest constituencies to maximise electoral performance.

H3) Political parties with fewer members and thus also potential candidates make greater use of non-party ministers as candidates in the next elections due to their greater media exposure.

Theory of descriptive representation

The theory of political representation is based on the basic premise of the representation of people living in a certain place by representatives who are endowed with a degree of autonomy in their decision-making. There is a delicate relationship between the representative and the represented, since the representative must take into account the wishes of the people represented, but on the other hand must have sufficient autonomy to act. Thus, both parties must be sufficiently independent, otherwise this fragile balance is in danger of being upset. This paper will not discuss the issue of political representation in detail but will focus on one of the four types of political representation identified by Hanna Pitkin (Pitkin 1972: 60–91), namely descriptive representation. In descriptive representation, visible external characteristics and the similarity between the represented and the representative are important. Pitkin writes about mirror representation, where the representative body rep-

2 The method for determining areas of electoral support is described in more detail in the methodology section.

resents all the features of society. However, this is a completely unrealistic idea as there are countless features that cannot be mediated in a representative body (Dovi 2010; Goodin 2004; Pitkin 1972). It is thus essential that groups in society associated with relevant and important topics that would otherwise be overlooked are represented in the representative body (Dovi 2010; Mansbridge 1999; Pitkin 1972; Urbinati 2000; Williams 1998). If only relevant elements of society shared by the whole group are included (Pitkin 1972), there is no risk of the excessive fragmentation of the representative body (Williams 1998). On the other hand, it is possible that despite the representation of the group, its interests will not be automatically defended (Mansbridge 1999; Young 1997), the represented people will not accept someone as their representative despite shared characteristics (Dovi 2002) or a marginalised group is 'oppressed' by the majority within the representative body (Williams 1998).

One of these relevant elements is geographical representation, i.e. the representation of an area by a representative who can defend the interests of the inhabitants of that area, as each area is different in the economic or political interests and identity of the inhabitants (Mikešová – Kostelecký 2016). Moreover, during the formation of government bodies, a situation arises where members of the government are selected by parties that have received sufficient support in elections. Therefore, we cannot speak of voters from different parts of the country having a direct influence on the structure of government bodies. Frances E. Lee considers that the need to fragment representative bodies so that they may reflect territorial differences is less urgent today than it was in the past, as these differences in the population are less pronounced. It is now more important that political parties express values than that they represent particular segments of society (Lee 2007). On the other hand, it cannot be argued that the presence of a person from a given area does not have a direct impact on the redistribution of funds from the state coffers (Mikešová – Kostelecký 2016).

A number of authors focus on pork-barrel politics, pointing to the fact that representatives prefer their own areas of residence (André – Depauw 2018) when they make decisions about the distribution of public funds (Grossman – Helpman 2005; Latner – McGann 2005; Hána 2013). At the same time, voters better identify with candidates who live in, or come from, the same area as them. This effect, referred to as the candidate effect, was first established by Vladimir Orlando Key (1949) through an analysis of elections in southern US states and has been confirmed by a number of authors (e.g. Arzheimer – Evans 2012; Heron – Lynch 2019; Put et al. 2020). In the Czech Republic, Voda and Pink (2009), for example, based on an analysis of the 2006 Chamber of Deputies elections, found that party leaders who ran in their region of residence received more support from that area than leaders who ran elsewhere. Closely related to this is the neighbourhood effect: the fact that voters are directly influenced in their choices by their local social networks (Campbell et al. 2019; Kostelecký – Čermák

2004; Johnston et al. 2007; Malcová 2012). It can be argued that voters to some extent select individuals because of where they live, just as districts or counties that are not represented in representative bodies may be disadvantaged in the distribution of public resources and overall representation. Similarly, the sense of representation may be questioned if a citizen of a district is represented by an MP of a political party with which he or she disagrees on fundamental issues. For this reason, it is important to assess the nomination process of specific parties in the light of their performance in the given district during the elections to the Chamber of Deputies. In cases where a party nominates a minister from a district with strong electoral support, a sense of representation can be expected to be fulfilled among a significant number of party and district voters. However, does this affect the stability of the ministerial position? Is the minister more likely to complete his or her mandate if he or she comes from the territory from which the given party draws electoral support?

Since Czech ministers (except for the Sobotka and Babiš I and II governments) have been chosen mainly from districts where the regional capital is located or from Prague (Dvořák et al. 2021), it can be assumed that left-wing parties will have significantly fewer people who fall into the areas of electoral support. One of the possible explanations for this is that the district and regional organisations of parties based in these districts play an important role in the nomination of candidates (Outlý – Prouza 2013; Spáč 2013). In the selection of non-party ministers, it is evident that these experts hold their positions in large cities, where they also live. The use of non-party members for election to the Chamber of Deputies is expected to be more pronounced in political parties with few members, i.e. new (TOP 09, US-DEU and ODA) or populist parties (ANO 2011 and Public Affairs), especially in cases where the political party (ANO 2011) held more positions in the government.

When nominating ministers for elections to the Chamber of Deputies, we assume that parties exploit the popularity of ministers in different ways. As noted by Latner and McGann (2005), parties nominate ministers to their strongest constituencies to maximise electoral performance. The party has its strongest base there and party members are able to push their candidate to the top of the list. It is therefore likely that parties that poll better in a limited number of regions are more likely to nominate ministers to these regions in order to maintain their electoral gains.

On the other hand, we must consider the situation when the political party tries to use the familiarity of the minister to improve the election results in a constituency where it previously received fewer votes, or where in the last elections the candidate narrowly failed to obtain a parliamentary mandate. It can be assumed that in smaller regions, where the party has a real chance of winning one seat, the minister will be nominated as the first-place candidate (Young 1994; Put 2016).

Methodology

In the Czech Republic, eight elections to the Chamber of Deputies have been held during the country's independent existence, but there have been more governments than that. Since 1996, 15 governments (see Appendix 1) have been formed,³ with those of Tošovský, Fischer and Rusnok being technocratic governments and thus not included in this analysis. Similarly, there is no analysis of the government of Petr Fiala, which is still in office at the time of writing. Elections to the Chamber of Deputies have been held in the Czech Republic since 2002 in 14 constituencies (before then there were eight), one of which is the city of Prague. The parties can therefore create 14 lists of candidates, with 14 people who will lead the candidates in the election contest. This article uses data from the Czech Statistical Office, specifically the *volby.cz* server, which allows for a comparison of the results of the Chamber of Deputies elections for both regions and districts. In other cases, the place of residence was obtained from the *justice.cz* server (*justice.cz*).

We draw conclusions based on a widely used method for determining areas of electoral support. The topic of electoral geography has been widely discussed in the Czech Republic, mostly in terms of determining the (stable) areas of electoral support and the elements that cause a particular distribution of support by region for a given party (Balík 2006; Daněk 1993; Jehlička – Sýkora 1991; Kostecký 2009; Maškarinec 2011; Navrátil 2010; Pink – Kabát 2006; Pink 2006, 2010; Šaradín 2004; Voda 2012). However, at present there are no studies of the ministerial nomination process with regard to the electoral performance of parties in districts in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies. Identifying areas of electoral support involves ranking all territories (in our case, districts) according to electoral performance, expressed as a percentage, from the highest to the lowest for each election. We then count the votes obtained for each district from the most successful district until the sum of the votes reaches a supermajority of all votes obtained by the party. All districts that have not already been counted cannot be considered areas of stable support for a particular party. Having established the districts that can be identified as areas of electoral support for a given party in a particular election, we then follow the nomination process of each government party in filling government seats. We are interested in whether parties take into account their own electoral performance (electoral support in territories) in each election when making nominations, or whether preference is given to people from the top of each regional ticket when choosing cabinet members. We also look at the use of for-

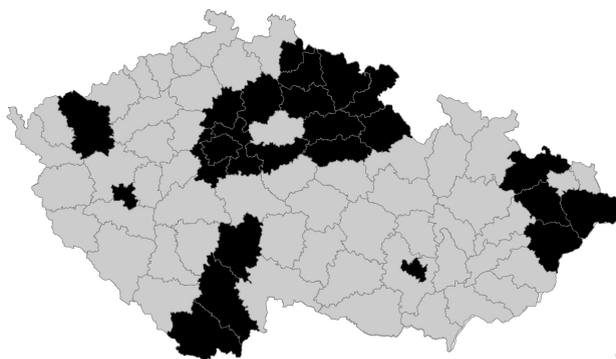
3 We analyse the following political parties: the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), the Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL), Public Affairs/Lidem, the Freedom Union–Democratic Union (US-DEU), the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA), the Green Party, TOP 09 and ANO 2011. Ministers who were only entrusted with the management of a ministry are not included in the analysis.

mer ministers in the next election – are they chosen as leaders of the regional candidate lists? We are interested in whether ministers are nominated for the region of their residence and the party thus takes advantage of the proximity of its candidates to the electorate or whether it tries to appeal to voters mainly by the familiarity of the minister, e.g. by name.

Nomination process for ministerial positions by party⁴

ODS was involved in four governments during the study period, in three of which it was the strongest party (Klaus II, Topolánek II and Nečas); in one case it formed a single-party government (Topolánek I). In terms of the nomination of ministers according to the area of electoral support associated with the formation of these governments, it is clear that in the Klaus II government, 10 out of 11 people were nominated from a district that can be described as an area of electoral support (from Prague eight times, Prague-West and Frýdek-Místek), while the minister Stanislav Volák came from the district of Domažlice. In the first Topolánek government, the situation was different, as 11 of the 15 nominated ministers came from an area of electoral support (Prague seven times, Brno, Ústí nad Labem, Kladno and Pilsen-City). The other ministers came from the districts of Frýdek-Místek, Olomouc, Teplice⁵ and Vsetín. In Topolánek's second government, the situation changed only in the number of ministers from Prague, which dropped from seven to three. In the Nečas government, ODS nominated nine out of 11 ministers from areas of electoral support (Vsetín, Prague three times, České Budějovice, Pilsen-City, Brno-City, Příbram and Kladno), plus one minister each from the Karviná and Opava districts.

Map 1: Areas of electoral support for ODS during the Klaus II. government



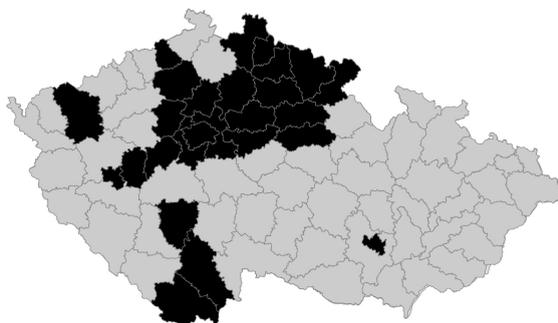
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4 Four ministers were nominated in the Nečas government (Jan Kubice, Vlastimil Pícek (Prague-East), Petr Fiala (Brno-City) and Radek Šmerda (Prague)) jointly by ODS, VV/Lidem and TOP 09.

5 The Teplice district was just below the threshold defining an area of electoral support.

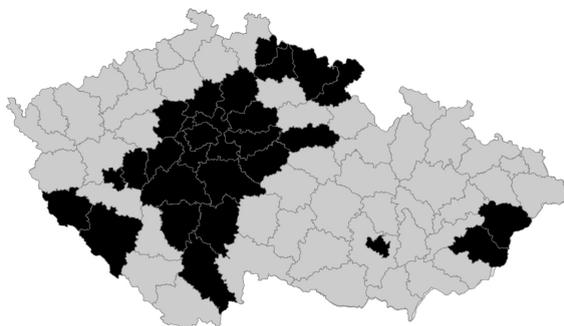
Map 2: Areas of electoral support for ODS during the Topolánek I. and II. government



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Map 3: Areas of electoral support for ODS during the Nečas government



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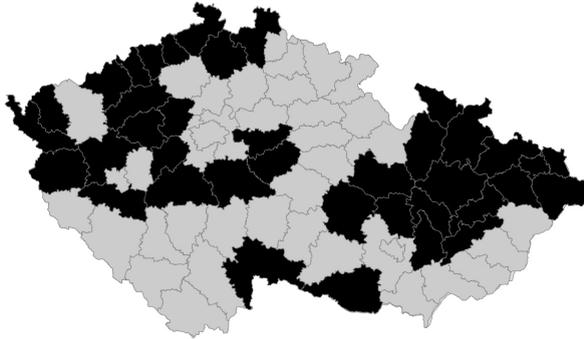
It was typical of all four governments that more than two-thirds of the personnel were elected to the lower chamber of parliament before they were appointed minister and in more than half of cases future ministers led their list of candidates. However, following their government engagement, less than half of ministers participated in the next elections (in the Klaus II government, only Václav Klaus and Ivan Pilip did), and all of them, except Jiří Pospíšil in Nečas's government, completed their ministerial mandate. In most cases, they ran as leaders in the regions where they were permanently resident, except for Ivan Pilip, who in both 1996 and 1998 ran in the East Bohemia region, although he did not live there. It can thus be concluded that ODS favoured proven electoral performers. If a minister decided to run in the next election, he would be nominated in the region in which he was resident. In terms of ODS strategy in selecting its ministers, there was a preference for people who, on the one hand,

led the candidate list in the last election to the Chamber of Deputies and, on the other, were from areas that could be considered a place of ODS electoral support.

ČSSD was involved in six of the ten governments in the study period; in four cases it was the strongest party in the coalition (Špidla, Gross, Paroubek and Sobotka), in one case each it formed a single-party government (Zeman) or was a minor coalition partner (Babiš II). In Zeman's government, the party nominated only three of the 27 ministers from areas of electoral support (Vladimír Špidla for the district of Jindřichův Hradec, Petr Lachnit for Ostrava and Jan Fencel for Hodonín), as it favoured people from the most populous cities in the Czech Republic (Prague 15 times, Brno four times), or from the districts of Prague-West, Prague-East, Jihlava, České Budějovice or Hodonín. This fact is problematic mainly because the party received the smallest percentage of votes in Prague and its surroundings. In Špidla's government, seven out of 15 ministers came from areas of electoral support (Brno-City, Kutná Hora, Jindřichův Hradec, Bruntál, Olomouc, Ostrava and Vyškov), supplemented by Zdeněk Škromach from the Hodonín district, while the number of people coming from Prague (seven) decreased correspondingly. In Gross's government, five out of 12 ministers were nominated from areas of electoral support (Kutná Hora, Bruntál, Olomouc, Pilsen-City and Vyškov), supplemented by a minister from the Hodonín and Brno-Country districts and five ministers from Prague. Paroubek's government also mostly nominated ministers from outside areas of electoral support (Prague-West, Svitavy, Hodonín, Brno-Country and Prague six times), as only six of the 16 ministers came from districts that can be described as such (Kutná Hora, Tábor, Havlíčkův Brod, Olomouc, Pilsen-City and Vyškov). Sobotka's government did not deviate from the trend of the Social Democrats and only six out of 13 ministers came from areas of electoral support (Vyškov, Ostrava, Karviná, Tábor, Kutná Hora and Rakovník). The other ministers came from the districts of Pilsen-City, Chrudim, Brno-City and Prague (four times). In Andrej Babiš's second government, the Social Democrats nominated the fewest ministers so far, yet its preference for people from outside areas of electoral support persisted. Only three of the eight ministers came from such areas (Olomouc, Ostrava and Žďár nad Sázavou), while three ministers resided in the Prague district, one in Mladá Boleslav and one Mělník.

Before their appointment to government positions, three-quarters of future ministers in the Špidla and Gross governments, three-fifths of ministers in the Zeman, Paroubek and Sobotka governments and only three of eight ministers in the Babiš II government participated in elections. After their appointment, less than half of the ministers stood as candidates in the next election, namely a third of the ministers in the Zeman, Babiš II and Špidla governments, while Špidla's government collapsed mid-term and eight of its ministers were not reappointed to the successive Gross and Paroubek governments. Even so, one minister took part in the elections, namely Josef Kubinyi, who stood as

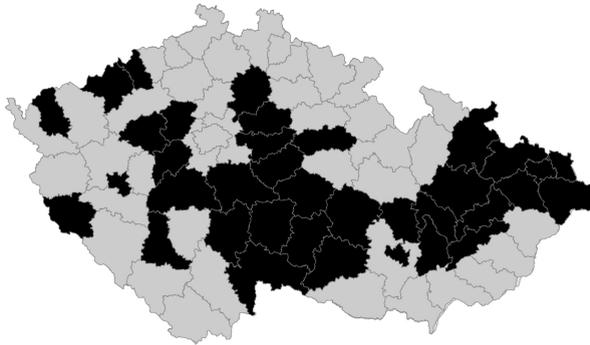
Map 4: Areas of electoral support for ČSSD during the Zeman government



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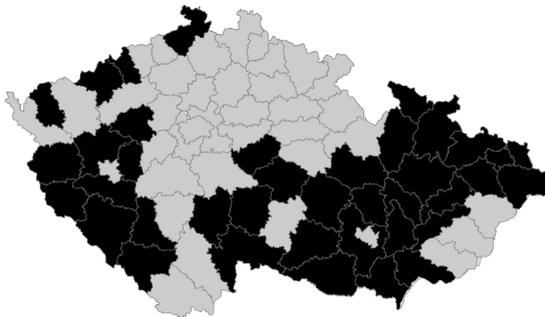
Map 5: Areas of electoral support for ČSSD during the government of Špidla, Gross and Paroubek



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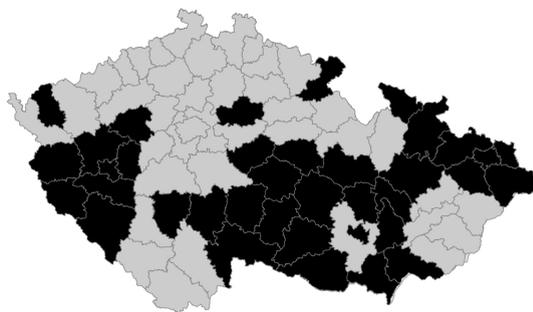
Map 6: Areas of electoral support for ČSSD during the Sobotka government



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Map 7: Areas of electoral support for ČSSD during the Babiš II. government



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a candidate for 14th place in the Moravian-Silesian region. For the remaining three governments, the number of ministers standing as candidates in the next elections was halved and only ministers who completed their governmental engagements continued to stand as candidates, except for Jan Mládek in 2017, who stood as a candidate outside his region of residence in South Bohemia in seventh place. With the exception of Zeman's government (50 % of cases), ministers became leaders of candidate lists in 70–80% of cases, while in the first five governments they were used as leaders outside their place of residence. It was only in the 2017 elections (Sobotka's government) that four of the five ČSSD ministers led a candidate list in the region of their residence, and in 2021 all three ministers running for office did so. It can thus be concluded that the party has repeatedly tried to use the familiarity of individual ministers to lead regional candidate lists outside the ministers' place of residence, for example, in the Zlín and Ústí nad Labem regions.

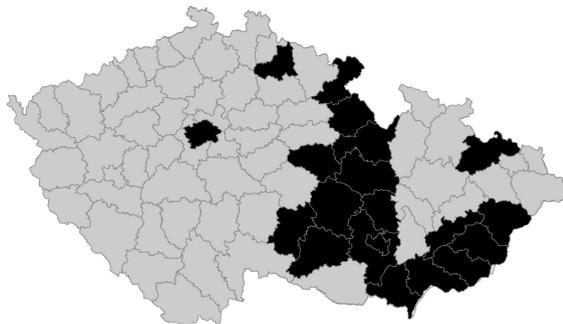
In terms of the selection of ministers, the party preferred people from larger cities (Brno and Prague), which can mostly not be described as areas of electoral support for the ČSSD. This led to more than half of ministers in all the governments not coming from districts that could be described as areas of electoral support. This discrepancy is most evident in the Zeman government, where Prague and its surroundings, and the district of Brno-City, were strongly favoured, despite ČSSD achieving some of its worst election results in these districts.⁶

KDU-ČSL participated in six governments (Klaus II, Topolánek II, Sobotka, Špidla, Gross and Paroubek), in the three last-mentioned cases in coalition with the US-DEU. Each time, it had a weaker role in government, which corresponded to the smaller number of ministers. In terms of the participation of KDU-ČSL and US-DEU in the Špidla, Gross and Paroubek governments, KDU-ČSL drew

⁶ The party received the most votes in the Karviná district (46.9%), the least in the Prague district (23,4 %) and 29,43 % in the Brno-City district.

all of its three ministers from districts in areas of electoral support (Prague, Hodonín and Brno-City). Two of the three US-DEU ministers came from areas of electoral support, namely Prague, and one minister came from the district of Tábor, which did not fall within an area electoral support for the Coalition of Four of which US-DEU was a member.

Map 8: Areas of electoral support for the KDU-ČSL and US-DEU during the Špidla, Gross and Paroubek government



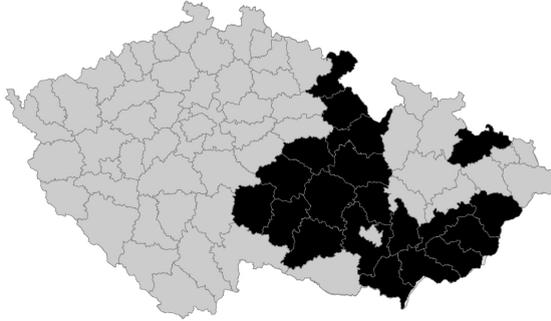
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During KDU-ČSL's own government involvement, specifically in Klaus's second government, the party nominated three of the five ministers from areas of electoral support (Ústí nad Orlicí, Chrudim and Zlín), Tomáš Kvapil from the Olomouc district and Jaromír Talíř from České Budějovice. In Topolánek's second government, the party nominated only two of the seven ministers from areas of electoral support (Vsetín and Jihlava). The remaining ministers came from the Prague district (three), despite the fact that the party polled weakly in Prague, and Tábor (two) where its performance was just under the threshold defining an area of electoral support. In Sobotka's government, the party nominated Pavel Bělobrádek from an area of electoral support (Náchod) and Marian Jurečka from the Přerov district, which again was just short of meeting the criterion of an area of electoral support, and Daniel Herman from the Prague district.

In KDU-ČSL's coalition with US-DEU (2002–6), five of six future ministers participated in the elections, and in the last Paroubek government four of six future ministers stood for election (Libor Ambrozek was a leader in a constituency in which he lived). The same was true of four out of five future ministers in the Klaus II government, three of seven future ministers in the Topolánek II government and three future ministers in the Sobotka government. The situation in the next election changed for US-DEU, with Pavel Němec (minister in the governments of Špidla, Gross and Paroubek) as leader in Prague, even though he was resident in Tábor, and Karel Kühnl (minister in the governments

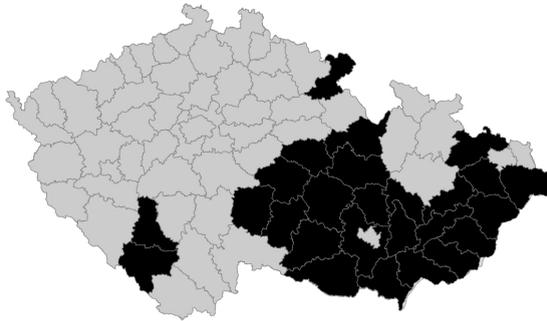
Map 9: Areas of electoral support for KDU-ČSL during the Klaus II. government



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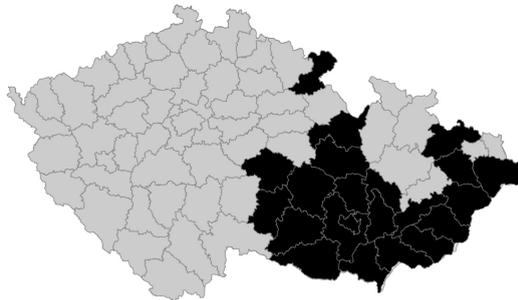
Map 10: Areas of electoral support for KDU-ČSL during the Topolánek II. government



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Map 11: Areas of electoral support for KDU-ČSL during the Sobotka government



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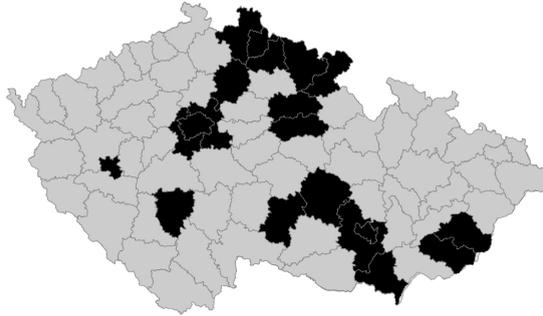
of Gross and Paroubek) as the number three in the Ústí nad Labem region, even though he lived in Prague. The situation in KDU-ČSL was stable throughout all three government coalitions, as two of their three ministers were leaders in Prague (Cyril Svoboda) or in the South Moravia region (Milan Šimonovský), where Libor Ambrozek stood as a candidate in second place. Prior to their appointment to Klaus's second government, four out of five future ministers stood as candidates (three as leaders), in two cases in their region of residence. Subsequently (1998), all five ministers stood as candidates in their regions of residence, two as leaders or runners-up on the candidate list. In his region of residence, Jaromír Schneider stood as the 12th candidate on the South Moravian list, despite the fact that he did not complete his mandate. In Topolánek's second government, three of the seven future ministers stood as leaders on the candidate lists of KDU-ČSL; Cyril Svoboda stood as a candidate in the region of his residence (Prague). In the subsequent elections in 2010, Miroslav Kalousek and Vlasta Parkanová decided to stand as candidates for a new party, TOP 09, and when the next elections were held, Cyril Svoboda stood as leader outside the Hradec Králové region, where he lived, and Pavel Svoboda stood as a candidate in the Karlovy Vary region, even though he resided in Prague. Before and after their engagement in the Sobotka government, three ministers stood as leaders in constituencies where they lived. These were Pavel Bělobrádek (Hradec Králové), Marian Jurecka (Olomouc) and Daniel Herman (Prague).

Overall, the results can be summarised by saying that in its first government engagement KDU-ČSL favoured ministers who tended to come from areas of electoral support. After the government engagement associated with the formation of the Coalition of Four, where the parties preferred ministers residing in Prague, which corresponded to the electoral support territory of this coalition, KDU-ČSL continued to prefer ministers who came from Prague, although its electoral performance in the capital fell into the worse half of all districts. At the same time, the party chose from among the leaders of the candidate lists when nominating people to government, and consequently used its ministers in the region of their residence for the top positions on the candidate lists.

ODA participated only in the Klaus II government, in which five of the six ministers came from Prague – area of electoral support. Vlasta Parkanová came from the Tábor district. In the election, the party used candidates from the capital as leaders in other regions before and after the governmental engagement. At the same time, however, the party did not nominate anyone from the Brno-City district, despite the fact that the party obtained the best electoral result there.

The Green Party was a part of Mirek Topolánek's second government, with four of the six ministers coming from districts that could be described as areas of electoral support (two from Prague, and one each from Brno-City and Chomutov) for the party. The remaining two ministers came from the districts of Rakovník (Karel Schwarzenberg) and Český Krumlov (Dana Kuchtová), where

Map 12: Areas of electoral support for ODA during the Klaus II. government

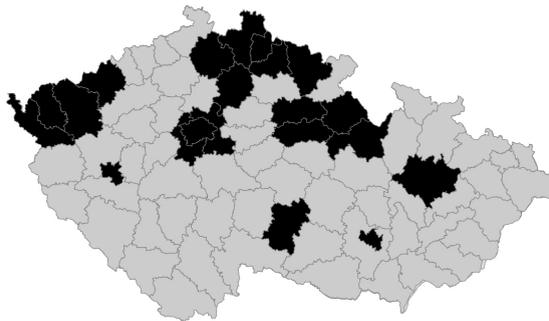


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the party obtained a middling electoral result. As there were frequent splits in the party, it is not surprising that Karel Schwarzenberg decided to stand as a candidate for TOP 09 in the next election. Moreover, the party did not use its two ministers as leaders in the region of their residence (Martin Bursík, a resident of Chomutov, stood as a candidate in the Ústí nad Labem region; Ondřej Liška, who lived in Brno, stood as a candidate in Prague), and nominated Džamila Stehlíková for the sixth seat in the region of her residence, i.e. Ústí nad Labem, despite her earlier termination of her governmental engagement.

Map 13: Areas of electoral support for Green Party during the Topolánek II. government



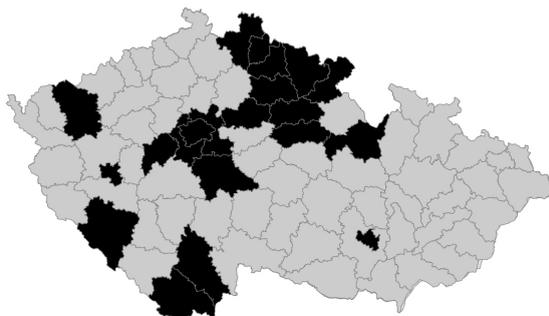
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Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

TOP 09 participated only in the Nečas government, where it nominated four ministers from areas of electoral support (Hradec Králové, Ústí nad Orlicí, Jablonec nad Nisou and Beroun). The other three ministers were from the districts of Rakovník, Tábor and Zlín, while no minister was from Prague, where the party had its best electoral result (20% of the total vote). Six of seven ministers were elected before being appointed, in four cases standing as leader, three of

them outside their region of residence. Only three ministers took part in the next elections, all of them as leaders, Leoš Heger in the region of his residence (Hradec Králové region).

Map 14: Areas of electoral support for TOP 09 during the Nečas government

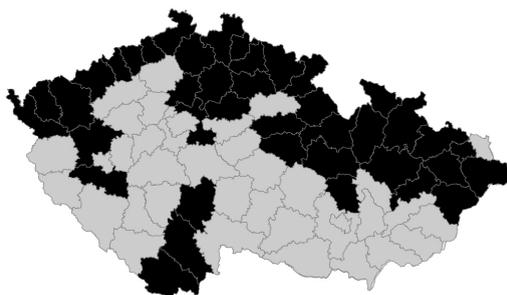


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Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

Public Affairs was born as a party in Prague and the Prague City Council, so the fact that all of its nominations of ministers (seven) were from Prague in the Nečas government is not surprising, despite Prague not being a clear area of electoral support for the party. The party did not stand candidates in the next election, so it is impossible to determine whether it would have used its ministers as leaders in the various regions. Only Vít Bárta stood as a leader of the Pilsen region for the party Dawn of Direct Democracy, although he did not live there.

Map 15: Areas of electoral support for Public Affairs during the Nečas government



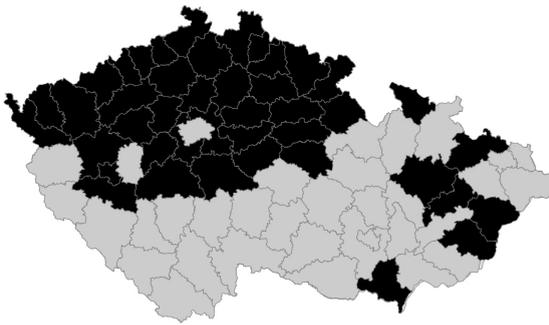
Používá technologii Bing.
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Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

ANO 2011 was part of two government coalitions (Sobotka and Babiš II) and one single-party government (Babiš I). In Sobotka's government, four of the 10 ministers came from areas of electoral support (two from Prague-West and one each from Litoměřice and Přerov), while the other ministers were nominated from

the districts of Prague (four), Třebíč and Brno-City. In Babiš's first government, only five out of 15 ministers came from areas of electoral support (Šumperk, Jičín, Frýdek-Místek, Litoměřice and Karviná), supplemented by ministers from the districts of Prague (four), Prague-West (three), Brno-City (two) and České Budějovice. Even in Babiš's second government, a significant number of ministers came from districts outside areas of electoral support. Specifically, only five of the 18 ministers were from such areas (Frýdek-Místek, Hradec Králové, Jičín, Litoměřice and Ostrava); the other districts were Prague (four), Brno-City (two), Prague-West (two), Brno-Country (two), České Budějovice, Žďár nad Sázavou and Kladno.

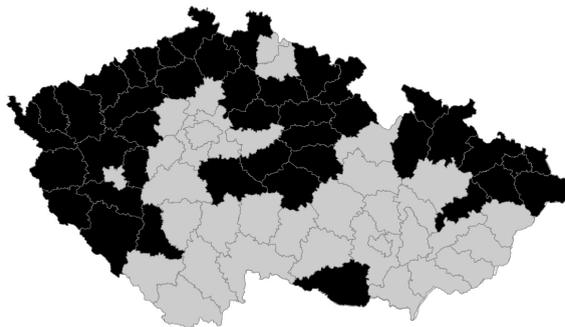
Map 16: Areas of electoral support for ANO 2011 during the Sobotka government



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Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

Map 17: Areas of electoral support for ANO 2011 during the Babiš I. and II. governments



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Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

In the 2013 elections, six of the ten ministers were elected, five of whom led the regional candidate list (Helena Válková was second on the list in her region of residence, Prague), while Věra Jourová (Vysočina region) and Richard Brabec (Ústí nad Labem region) were second on the lists in the constituencies of their

residence. In other governments, eight of the 15 future ministers of Babiš's first government stood as candidates in the 2017 elections, with four of the six leaders standing in their region of residence. In Babiš's second government, six of the 18 future ministers stood as a candidate, five as leader. Dan Ťok stood in the Karlovy Vary region, although he listed Prague as his place of residence. In the 2017 elections, ANO 2011 used seven of the nine ministers (the tenth minister, Antonín Prachař, ran for STAN in 22nd place in the Olomouc region), all of whom stood as candidates in the region of their residence, with only Dan Ťok (Karlovy Vary region) and Karla Šlechtová (Pilsen region) standing as candidates outside their regions of residence. In the 2021 elections, six ministers from both the first and second Babiš governments and two ministers belonging only to Babiš's second government (Karel Havlíček and Taťána Malá) stood as candidates for ANO 2011. In total, seven of the eight ministers stood as a candidate in the region of their residence, with only Jaroslava Němcová not leading the regional candidate list in the Central Bohemia region, as she was in tenth position on the candidate list led by Karel Havlíček. Three candidates did not lead the list in the region of their residence, namely Andrej Babiš, who became the leader in the Ústí nad Labem region, Taťána Malá, who stood in fourth place (the list was led by Alena Schillerová), and Lubomír Metnar, who stood in second place, just behind Ivo Vondárek (the governor of the Moravia-Silesia region). It can thus be concluded that the party was using the position of minister as a benchmark for leadership within the regional candidates, taking advantage of the familiarity of ministers who had completed their mandate to serve as leaders.

What might have caused the differences between the parties?

It turned out that centre-right parties nominated more ministers from areas of electoral support, mainly from Prague and other large cities. Arguably, left-wing parties nominated their ministers from similar areas to centre-right parties, even if they did not have areas of electoral support there. These political parties (ANO 2011, ČSSD and KDU-ČSL after 2009) received the most votes in rural districts, but the nomination of ministers did not correspond to this. A possible explanation is that when choosing ministers, political parties preferred people who came from large cities, where these political parties had their largest membership base and where the leadership of the regional or district organisation is located. In the selection of non-party members as ministers, parties exploited the fact that these were experts in their respective fields, holding senior positions within large companies, hospitals or schools. These experts are often based in large cities, in which these parties do not have an area of electoral support. This fact was confirmed for the populist parties (ANO 2011 and Public Affairs/Lidem).

Table 1: Number of ministers by political parties since 1996–2022 (the percentage of ministers from areas of electoral support is given in brackets)

	ODS	ČSSD	KDU-ČSL ⁷	ODA	SZ	TOP 09	VV	ANO 2011
Klaus II	11 (90.9)		5 (60.0)	6 (83.3)				
Zeman		27 (11.1)						
Špidla		15 (46.6)	3 (100)					
Gross		12 (41.7)	3 (100)					
Paroubek		16 (37.5)	3 (100)					
Topolánek I	15 (73.3)							
Topolánek II	11 (63.6)		7 (28.6)		6 (66.7)			
Nečas	11 (81.8)					7 (57.1)	9 (0)	
Sobotka		13 (46.2)	3 (33.3)					10 (40.0)
Babiš I								15 (33.3)
Babiš II		8 (37.5)						18 (27.8)

Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

In the following section, we focus on whether ministers who were nominated from districts that fell within areas of electoral support had a greater chance of completing their mandate than those who were nominated outside areas of electoral support. We included in the analysis only ministers who were nominated immediately after the formation of the government. This decision was made because all ministers have as similar starting conditions as possible when they are appointed to their positions. At the same time, we excluded the governments of Topolánek I and Babiš I from this comparison, as these were only bridging governments in which the phenomenon we investigate could not fully manifest itself. The results (Table 2) clearly show that the strong electoral support (area of electoral support) that can be associated with the fulfilment of the representation of party voters does not play a role in whether a minister is more likely to complete the mandate. It has not been shown that ministers with stronger support from the electorate are more likely to withstand various pressures during their mandate, as opposed to ministers out of an area of electoral support. Intra-party relations, political scandals or coalition disputes are more important variables in terms of staying in office.

⁷ In the Špidla, Gross and Paroubek governments, KDU-ČSL was in coalition with US-DEU.

Table 2: Number of ministers from areas of electoral support / outside areas of electoral support (the percentage of ministers who ended their mandate early)

	ODS	ČSSD	KDU-ČSL ⁸	ODA	SZ	TOP 09	VV	ANO 2011
Klaus II	9 (66.7)/ 0		3 (66.7)/ 1 (100)	5 (60.0)/ 0				
Zeman		2 (100)/ 16 (43.8)						
Špidla		5 (100)/ 6 (50.0)	5 (100)/ 1 (100)					
Gross		5 (100)/ 7 (100)	5 (100)/ 1 (100)					
Paroubek		4 (50.0)/ ⁹ 8 (88.9)	5 (100)/ 1 (100)					
Topolánek II	5 (80.0)/ 4 (75.0)		1 (0)/ (75.0)		2 (50.0)/ 2 (50.0)			
Nečas	5 (20.0)/ 1 (0)					3 (33.3)/ 2 (100)	0/ 4 (25.0)	
Sobotka		5 (40.0)/ 3 (66.7)	1 (100)/ 2 (100)					3 (33.3)/ 3 (33.3)
Babiš II		2 (0)/ 3 (100)						4 (75.0)/ 7 (57.1)

Source: Volby.cz, own processing.

Only the TOP 09 and the Green Party (in 100% of cases) and the KDU-ČSL (in 80% of cases in the 1998 election) used the nomination of their ministers to maximise the election results within electoral regions that could be identified as areas of electoral support in the previous elections. On the other hand, with ODA, ministers were used outside the territory of electoral support, which may have been in the hope of improving the election result in regions where the party was previously not very successful. A similar trend was established in ANO in 2021, as the party primarily nominated ministers in constituencies where they lived. For the remaining parties, it was not possible to clearly determine the strategy of using ministers with regard to the territory of electoral support considered regionally.

⁸ In the Špidla, Gross and Paroubek governments, KDU-ČSL was in coalition with US-DEU.

⁹ Pavel Dostál died in office and is therefore not included in the analysis.

Table 3: Number of ministers who stood as candidates in the next elections to the Chamber of Deputies (the percentage of ministers who were nominated to the constituencies in areas of electoral support is given in parentheses)

	1998	2002	2006	2010	2013	2017	2021
ODS	2 (50.0)			5 (40.0)	6 ¹⁰ (50.0)		
ČSSD		Can't compare	10 (60.0)			7 (42.9)	3 (33.3)
KDU-ČSL	5 (80.0)		Can't compare	2		3 (33.3)	
ODA	2 (0)						
US-DEU			Can't compare				
SZ				3 (100)			
TOP 09				3	3 (100)		
ANO 2011						8 (62.5)	8 (37.5)
Public Affairs/ Lidem					Can't compare ¹¹		

Source. Volby.cz, own processing.

Our hypothesis that parties with a small membership base will use the nomination of non-party ministers in the next election has only been partially proven. There is an insufficient number of non-party ministers nominated by political parties. Also, some parties were only included in a government once, so the number of cases is limited. The ČSSD used the largest number of non-party ministers in the 2006 elections, which can be explained by the greater popularity of these ministers who ran in regions where they did not live. František Bublan (Vysočina region) and Vítězslav Jandák (South Bohemia region) stood as leaders in regions that could be described as areas of electoral support. David Rath ran as a leader in Prague. Our assumption is confirmed by the tactics of the ANO movement, when in the 2017 elections it used both of its non-party ministers in regions that could be identified as areas of electoral support, but outside their residence. Karla Šlechotvá stood as a leader in the Pilsen region and Dan Ťok in the Karlovy Vary region. In the first and second Babiš governments, ANO

¹⁰ One of them was Petr Fiala, who was nominated by all the government parties; he stood as a leader of the ODS in the South Moravian region in the election of 2013.

¹¹ Only Vít Bárta stood as a leader of the Pilsen region for the Dawn of Direct Democracy party.

2011 nominated 15 non-party ministers and nine party members. However, only three non-party ministers (three out of five) who had completed their mandate were used for the elections in 2021. Specifically, Alena Schillerová at the head of the South Moravian candidate list (a region outside the territory of electoral support, but her place of residence), Klára Dostálová (Hradec Králové region; she also ran in previous elections) and Lubomír Metnar (Moravia Silesia) also stood as candidates in the regions where they lived, while these regions could be identified as areas of electoral support for ANO 2021. As with party ministers, the parties also used non-party ministers for the next election if they completed their ministerial mandate. The assumption that fewer party members can lead to a more frequent use of non-party ministers in elections, thanks to their media familiarity, was confirmed in the case of ANO 2011.

Table 4: Number of non-party ministers by political party from 1996-2022 (percentage of non-party ministers who stood as a candidate for the next election to the Chamber of Deputies is given in parentheses)

	1998	2002	2006	2010	2013	2017	2021
ODS	2 (0)			6 ¹² (0)	0 ¹³		
ČSSD		2 (0)	7 (42.9)			1 (0)	1 (0)
KDU-ČSL	0		0	1 (0)			
ODA	0						
US-DEU			1 (0)				
SZ				2 (0) ¹⁴			
TOP 09					1 (0)		
ANO 2011						2 (100)	15 ¹⁵ (20.0)
Public Affairs/Lidem					1 (Can't compare)		

Source. Volby.cz, own processing.

12 Five were members of the Topolánek I government.

13 Petr Fiala, who was nominated by all the government parties he stood as a leader of the ODS in the South Moravian region in the 2013 election.

14 Karel Schwarzenberg stood as a leader of TOP 09 in Prague in the 2013 election.

15 Four were members of the Babiš I government.

Conclusion

From the point of view of descriptive representation, it is important whether people with certain characteristics are represented by MPs sharing these characteristics. In the context of this paper, we answer the question of whether political parties consider electoral outcomes within districts in the ministerial nomination process by identifying areas of electoral support for these parties. From the existing literature (Dvořák et al., 2021), it was clear that the governments were made up of ministers coming mainly from regional capitals or Prague, even though the number of ministers from Prague is gradually decreasing. When drawing conclusions, we worked with the assumption that left-wing parties have stronger electoral support in rural and peripheral districts and, in contrast, centre-right parties are supported in districts that are connected to regional capitals. This difference turned out to be significant from the point of view of the choice of ministers by parties. Centre-right parties nominated significantly more ministers from areas of electoral support than left-wing parties, which directly reflects the difference in areas of support of the parties. It is not mainly the area from which individual ministers are selected that changes, but the election results of the parties as such. For TOP 09, no minister from Prague could be found, even though it was the party's electoral stronghold. On the other hand, four of the seven ministers resided in the party's areas of electoral support. Even though Public Affairs/Lidem was founded and established mainly in Prague, which corresponded to all of its nominations of ministers coming from the capital, it was not possible to identify the Prague district as the party's area of electoral support. We were also interested in whether the nomination of ministers from areas of electoral support could increase their chances of completing their mandates. We assumed that such ministers would have more support within the party and especially among voters. This turned out to be inconsequential, as ministers failed to complete their mandates to the same extent across all parties, whether they came from areas of electoral support or not.

In the next section, we investigated whether parties used ministers in the immediately upcoming elections to the Chamber of Deputies as leaders of the constituencies in which they lived. Except for Sobotka's government, the ČSSD used ministers in constituencies outside of their residence as leaders of candidate lists. The same was the case with TOP 09, ODA and the Green Party. The opposite situation occurred with ODS, KDU-ČSL and ANO 2011, which used their ministers within their region of residence, in most cases as leaders of regional candidate lists. The parties therefore differed in terms of the nomination of ministers to the constituencies in which they lived. On the other hand, it has not been proven that parties try to maintain their electoral support within constituencies that can be characterised as areas of electoral support, as the

theory assumes (Latner and McGann (2005)). This strategy was chosen only by TOP 09, the Green Party and KDU-ČSL in 1998. In contrast, ANO and ODA tried to use the familiarity of their ministers in constituencies outside areas of electoral support and thus increase the party's chances of electoral success there. In the same way, it was not possible to fully prove the greater use of non-party ministers by parties with fewer members. This assumption was confirmed for ANO 2011, which nominated more non-party ministers who completed their mandate, which may be because there were not enough well-known faces who were also party members.

Further research is needed to assess the extent to which power relations within parties, the influence of party leadership and the strength of individual party cells – and hence the preferences and requirements for candidates with specific skills and experience – play a role in the nomination of ministers by individual parties. However, any such research project is likely to run into the basic problem of data availability, linked to the number of members in parties, the number of party organisations within districts or municipalities, and the assessment of the actual influence wielded in parties by the various party organisations.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Government of the Czech Republic

Name of government	Duration	Members of government
Václav Klaus II.	4. 7. 1996 – 2. 1. 1998	ODS, ODA, KDU-ČSL
Josef Tošovský	2. 1. 1998 – 22. 7. 1998	non-partisans, US, ODA, KDU-ČSL
Miloš Zeman	22. 7. 1998 – 15. 7. 2002	ČSSD
Vladimír Špidla	15. 7. 2002 – 4. 8. 2004	ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, US-DEU
Stanislav Gross	4. 8. 2004 – 25. 4. 2005	ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, US-DEU
Jiří Paroubek	25. 4. 2005 – 4. 9. 2006	ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, US-DEU
Mirek Topolánek I.	4. 9. 2006 – 9. 1. 2007	ODS
Mirek Topolánek II.	9. 1. 2007 – 8. 5. 2009	ODS, KDU-ČSL, SZ

Name of government	Duration	Members of government
Jan Fischer	8. 5. 2009 – 13. 7. 2010	non-partisans nominated by ODS, ČSSD and Green Party
Petr Nečas	13. 7. 2010 – 10. 7. 2013	ODS, TOP 09, Public Affairs (than LIDEM)
Jiří Rusnok	10. 7. 2013 – 29. 1. 2014	non-partisans, KDU-ČSL, ČSSD
Bohuslav Sobotka	29. 1. 2014 – 13. 12. 2017	ČSDS, KDU-ČSL, ANO 2011
Andrej Babiš I.	13. 12. 2017 – 27. 6. 2018	ANO 2011
Andrej Babiš II.	27. 6. 2018 – 17. 12. 2021	ANO 2011, ČSSD
Petr Fiala	17. 12. 2021 – still in office	SPOLU (ODS, KDU-ČSL, TOP 09), Pirates and Mayors

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Petr Dvořák (corresponding author) is a doctoral student at the Department of Political Science at the Faculty of Social Studies of the Masaryk University. He got a master's degree in political science from Masaryk University in 2019. He deals with electoral behaviour, personal characteristics of elected politicians, whether at the regional or parliamentary level in the Czech Republic and other countries. He deals marginally with topics related to the municipal policy. E-mail: 413425@mail.muni.cz.; Orcid ID: 0000-0002-3107-6070.

Michal Pink is an associate professor at the Department of Political Science at the Faculty of Social Studies of the Masaryk University. He deals with elections, the spatial distribution of electoral support and the individual characteristics of political party voters. E-mail: mpink@email.cz. Orcid ID: 0000-0003-2629-1689.