Populism and Growing Welfare State Agenda: Elections of 2013 and 2017 in Czechia*

TOMÁŠ SIROVÁTKA⊛**, **LUCIE NOVOTNÁ**⊛ and **STEVEN SAXONBERG**⊛
Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University, Brno

Abstract: Although previous studies show that welfare policies are important for populist voters, few studies have analysed in depth the social policy proposals of different types of populist parties. Since the Czech Republic is one of the few countries with a strong centrist-populist party that has been in power, this article concentrates on the Czech case and compares this centrist-populist party to the largest right-wing populist party and the main non-populist parties. We argue that the centrist and rightist Czech populist parties have developed different types of welfare agendas. The centrist-populist party supports encompassing and universalist policies (which it links to economic efficiency and administrative improvements); in contrast, the right-wing populist party supports the protection of those in need while preserving the principles of merit and economic incentives.

Keywords: Czech Republic, centrist populism, right-wing populism, welfare state, election programmes

Introduction

The link between political populism and the welfare state has been attracting increasing research attention. However, most studies focus on the demand side — i.e. the voters (e.g. Greve, 2019; Mudde, 2007; Spruyt et al., 2016). Previous supply-side studies have concluded that populist parties are placing increasing emphasis on welfare issues (see below). Given the electoral success that Czech populist parties have had in recent years, it is important to investigate their welfare agendas. Consequently, this article contributes to the discourse on populism by analysing the welfare ideology of a strong centrist-populist party, showing

---

** Direct all correspondence to: Tomáš Sirovátka, Faculty of Social Studies, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Masaryk University, Joštova 218/10, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic, e-mail: sirovatk@fss.muni.cz.

how it differs from a right-wing populist party and non-populist centre-right and centre-left parties.

Scholars argue that populist parties emerge when voters do not think the main parties represent their views. When social-democratic and democratic leftist parties start implementing austerity policies, left-leaning voters are likely to turn to both left-wing and right-wing populist parties (e.g. Afonso, 2015; Ennser-Jedenastik, 2016; Ramiro, 2016; Swank & Betz, 2003; Schumacher & van Kersbergen, 2016).

While there has been an increasing number of studies on left-wing and right-wing populist parties, little has been written about centrist populist parties. Yet, centrist populist parties have become important political players in many countries. In the Czech case, the centrist-populist ANO (Action of Dissatisfied Citizens) has become one of the largest parties, leading the government from 2017 to 2021 and representing the junior partner in the coalition government from 2014 to 2017. According to Heinisch and Saxonberg (2017) and Saxonberg and Heinisch (2022), many Czech voters have social-liberal values, but they have not had any viable social-liberal parties to vote for, which left an opening for a centrist-populist party like ANO to emerge. They define social liberalism as support for a generous welfare state and centrist socio-economic values combined with a preference for private rather than public provision of welfare services, cash rather than services and market solutions rather than welfare issues.

In the 2013 Czech elections, two populist parties came into the Czech Parliament: (1) the centrist-populist party ANO, which received 18.7% votes in and joined the coalition government, and (2) the right-wing populist party UPD (Dawn of Direct Democracy, later SPD or Direct Democracy Party), which received 6.9% of the votes.[1] After the 2017 elections, ANO became the leading government coalition party, with 29.6% of the votes. Together with Social Democrats, it formed the government with the tacit support of the Communist party. Meanwhile, SPD has remained an opposition party, although it increased its votes to 10.6% in 2017. Thus, the Czech case shows that centrist-populist parties can become the largest parties under some circumstances, making it imperative to better understand what kind of welfare appeals such parties make.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to analyse whether ANO and UPD's/ SPD's welfare agendas helped them get voters' support. Rather than concentrate on the demand side, which would require an article in itself based on survey data, this article concentrates on the equally important supply side, conducting a qualitative content analysis of the election manifestos of four Czech political parties from the election years 2013 and 2017. We include two populist parties: the centrist-populist ANO and the right-wing populist UPD/SPD. We compare the key aspects of welfare state agendas of the populist parties with two traditional centre-left and centre-right parties in the Czech Republic.

---

[1] Regarding the classification of the Czech populist parties, see the following section.

The article is structured as follows: In the next section, we theorise about two key welfare dimensions: (1) the populist parties' welfare state objectives and (2) their deservingness criteria. Based on this discussion, we develop several hypotheses. Then, we explain our data and method of analysis, and in the fourth section, we present the findings. In the final section, we discuss the results and conclude the article.

Political populism and welfare state

The welfare state as a political card for populist parties

This article follows previous studies in defining populism as (1) a frame that sees people as a homogenous and pure entity (Mudde, 2007), (2) who suffer under a corrupt elite (Mudde, 2007), (3) during a period in which they claim a serious societal crisis exists (Rooduijn, 2014).

Supporters of right-wing populist and left-wing populist parties tend to come from the portions of the working class that are the losers of modernisation and globalisation processes (Betz, 1994; Kriesi et al., 2006; Kriesi, 2014; Spruyt et al., 2016). Meanwhile, centrist-populist supporters mostly come from the middle class (Heinisch & Saxonberg, 2017). Regardless of left–right orientation, populist voters tend to be concerned with the welfare state performance, although for different reasons. While losers of modernisation are interested in the redistributive programmes/functions of the welfare state, typical users of public social insurance schemes and public services comes from the middle class (e.g. Hill, 2003). Or, from the perspective of old versus new social risks challenges (e.g. Taylor-Gooby, 2004), the losers of modernisation support consumption/redistribution-oriented welfare, while the newly educated middle class supports social investment programmes (Abou-Chadi & Markus, 2019; Enggist & Piggera, 2021).

Some scholars also find that political disaffection with government policies increases support for populist parties (e.g. Mudde, 2007; Greve, 2019). Other studies conclude that contemporary populist parties in Western Europe want to maintain a generous welfare state, at a time when many mainstream parties advocate austerity measures (Afonso, 2015; Ennser-Jedenastik, 2016).

These factors imply that populist parties have incentives to emphasise their welfare agendas. Cenrist-populist parties declare themselves to be non-ideological (Pop-Eleches, 2010) and address a broader spectrum of voters than right-wing populist or left-wing populist parties by advocating generous social policies for distinct groups in different policy fields.

Studies have shown that disaffection, coupled with a lack of trust in traditional political parties in Central European post-communist countries, predicts support for populist parties (Havlík, 2019a; Hloušek et al., 2020). Pop-Eleches (2010) argues that protest voting is crucial for understanding the post-communist

electoral dynamic: In third-generation elections, which occur after at least two different ideological camps have governed in the post-communist era, voters face a shortage of untried mainstream alternatives and turn to populist parties, which typically come from the centre. Thus, populism may be a more general feature of certain political systems, particularly in contexts in which trust in political elites is low, such as in European post-communist countries, where confidence in traditional parties suffered because of political scandals, or where there is a general antipathy towards centralised and big governments (van Hauwaert & van Kessel, 2018, p. 70). Consequently, the anti-political technocratic discourse has become a common feature of Central and East European party systems.

Some populist parties claim that they can achieve better results for society by managing the state as a business, guaranteed by a non-party, non-political, competent administration. For this reason, some scholars have labelled these populist parties technocratic populist parties (Buštíková, 2019; Hanley & Vachudová, 2018; Havlík, 2019b; Vachudová, 2019). Others have labelled them entrepreneurial populists, claiming that the leaders do not base their arguments on the notion that they are the best-qualified technocrats; rather, they claim that since they are able to run a business efficiently, they would also be able to manage the state efficiently (Brunnerová, 2019; Hloušek et al., 2020; Heinisch & Saxonberg, 2017; Saxonberg & Heinisch, 2022). Although such populist parties declare themselves to be anti-political, they can still be classified based on their ideological stances (e.g. Rooduijn et al., 2019). In the Czech case, although both populist parties are entrepreneurial (Hloušek et al., 2020), scholars have labelled ANO as centrist populist (e.g. Havlík, 2019b; Saxonberg & Heinisch, 2022; Vachudová, 2019) and UPD/SPD (radical) as right populist (Rooduijn et al., 2019).

Welfare state dimensions: Populist accounts

We suggest that two welfare state dimensions related to political populism deserve the most attention: *welfare state objectives* and *deservingness criteria*. Some studies apply a similar approach for analysing the populist welfare agenda in that they focus on the principles of social justice (Ennser-Jedenastik, 2018) or which groups receive benefits (Ennser-Jedenastik, 2016). Our dimensions seem more suitable because policy objectives and deservingness criteria represent key policy choices in social policy (see the discussion below). At the same time, policy objectives are more concrete than social justice principles, while deservingness criteria imply that different groups will have different degrees of access to welfare provisions.

In conceptualising the potential welfare state objectives, we follow Barr and Whynes (1993), who distinguish several domains of objectives: (1) protection against social risks (including poverty alleviation, protection of living standards and income smoothing over the individual life cycle); (2) the elimination of social

Table 1. Welfare state objectives

Social objectives
1 Risk protection (protection against social risks, protection of accustomed living standard in the case of sickness, maternity, unemployment, old age, income smoothing over the life cycle)
2 Poverty alleviation (protection against falling below the recognised living standard)
3 Equal opportunities (equal access to institutions that leverage life opportunities, such as education, health care and employment)
4 Reducing inequalities (vertical and horizontal redistribution)
5 Social integration – risk sharing (building collectivity of risk, participation in one collective system of social protection, where people with high risks are included)
6 Social integration – targeted support for marginalised people; social inclusion
Economic and administrative objectives (instrumental objectives)
7 Economic efficiency:
Economic macro-efficiency (an efficient proportion of GDP allocated to social policy)
Economic micro-efficiency (efficient distribution of resources across policy fields corresponding to the urgency of needs)
8 Efficiency incentives:
Avoiding/minimising adverse incentives to work, to save to protect situations such as old age, illness
9 Administrative feasibility: intelligibility/smartness of the system (easy for citizens to understand the system, easy to administer the system), control over resources, effective use of resources (no wasting)

Source: Authors' own model based on Barr and Whynes (1993) and other literature cited above.

inequalities (vertical and horizontal redistribution); (3) social integration; (4) economic efficiency (which includes macro- and micro-efficiency and preserving incentives) and (5) administrative feasibility (which includes intelligibility/smartness and control over resources).

For our analysis, we have adapted Barr and Whynes's classification as follows: First, we treat poverty alleviation as a distinct objective, separate from risk protection, because poverty alleviation is the prime welfare state objective and the main criterion of welfare state effectiveness (Ringen, 1987). Second, we have included the objective of equal opportunities in our model since it represents one of guiding principles of social justice (Rawls, 1980) and is distinct from the objective of reducing inequalities through redistribution. Third, we have split the

social integration objective into two: risk sharing[2] (e.g. Baldwin, 1990) and social inclusion.

Thus, we distinguish the following *welfare state objectives*: (1) poverty alleviation, (2) risk protection, (3) equal opportunities, (4) reducing inequalities, (5) social integration/risk sharing, (6) social integration/social inclusion, (7) economic efficiency, (8) efficiency-incentives and (9) administrative feasibility. We consider the economic and administrative objectives (7, 8 and 9) to be instrumental ones; they underlie the effective achievement of the (main) social objectives. Our classification of the core welfare state objectives largely corresponds to recent debates on the fundamental policy choice between consumption-oriented policies (benefits) and social investments (education, employment policies, caring services) (see above). In our view, objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5 fall under consumption-oriented policies, while objectives 3 and 6 fall under social investments.

We summarise the welfare state objectives in Table 1.

Our second dimension is *deservingness*. In principle, there is a key policy choice between universalism (where welfare is a social right provided to all citizens[3]) and selectivism (where welfare is provided to groups that, according to some criteria, deserve it) (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 1990). When there is universal access to public goods, services and benefits, there are no deservingness criteria because everyone deserves the services and benefits; when access to services and benefits is selective, the distribution of these benefits and services is based on deservingness criteria. In our study, we employ the following deservingness criteria suggested by Van Oorschot (2006):

1) reciprocity: assessing people's level of contribution and whether they have earned support: the higher the contribution, the more deserving;

2) control: assessing people's control over their neediness and whether they are responsible for it: the less control, the more deserving;

3) need: the greater the need, the more deserving;

4) identity: the closer welfare claimants are to 'us', the more deserving;

5) attitude: assessing people's attitude towards support: the more compliant/docile welfare claimants are, the more deserving.

Enggist and Pinggera (2021) argue that universalism and particularism/selectivism comprise an essential dimension of populist voters' stances on the welfare state. They also associate universalism with support for social investments, while they associate particularism/selectivism with the backing for redistribution because redistribution implies the application of selectivist criteria.[4]

---

[2] Collective protection against social risks (building community of risks).
[3] This may include preferential support in access to welfare targeted at disadvantaged groups.
[4] Thus, there is apparently some correspondence between deservingness criteria and welfare state objectives. Since this is a complex issue, it is not a focus of this paper.

Studies suggest that the attitudes of the public toward deservingness shape support for different social groups (Ennser-Jedenastik, 2018; van der Waal et al., 2013). Deservingness criteria matter the most to right/wing populist parties since these parties espouse an exclusionary ideology: They are explicitly nativist and authoritarian, and they want to exclude non-natives, 'ree riders' and those who do not meet certain criteria from welfare benefits (e.g. Afonso, 2015; Ennser-Jedenastik, 2016, 2018). The right-wing populist party supports *welfare chauvinism* (Burgoon et al., 2019; Greve, 2019; Rooduijn & Burgoon, 2018), which promotes the interests of the 'modal' citizen over 'outsiders' and the 'undeserving/lazy poor' and seeks to restrict welfare benefits to 'deserving' natives (Burgoon et al., 2019). However, for right-wing populist supporters, welfare state issues are subordinated to the cultural dimension and competition (e.g. Spruyt et al., 2016) and the general refusal to accept and support immigrants and ethnic minorities.

So far, little has been written about how centrist-populist parties design their WS objectives, policy measures, deservingness criteria and target groups. Heinisch and Saxonberg (2017) and Saxonberg and Heinisch (2022) argue that centrist-populist parties hold the political centre by combining leftist ideas (e.g. increased social benefits) with rightist ideas (e.g. capping tax rates). However, they further argue that in the Czech case, their catch-all style appeals to new middle-class voters (whom they define as professionals and clerks) with social-liberal attitudes. These voters would have preferred a social-liberal party, but in the absence of a viable social-liberal alternative, the centrist-populist party's centrist image appeals to them. To attract these voters, centrist-populist parties, unlike right-wing populist parties, do not single out specific social groups (e.g. immigrants or ethnic minorities) as 'undeserving'. While right-wing populist parties claim that they can improve economic efficiency because they are not corrupt like the traditional elite, centrist-populist leaders assert that they can improve efficiency because they could reform the bureaucracy to make state administration perform better.

Hypotheses

First, we expect that populist parties (especially centrist-populist) will emphasise the welfare state objectives of administrative feasibility and economic efficiency. Indeed, this strategy may be an important political tool used in accusing the ruling political elites for crises and ineffective policy-making: *the policy efficiency hypothesis* (H1).

If studies are correct in stating that centrist-populist parties appeal to middle-class, social-liberal voters (Heinisch & Saxonberg, 2017) or to a broad spectrum of voters (Brunnerová, 2019; Pop-Eleches, 2010), we can hypothesise that the Czech centrist-populist party will emphasise a range of societal policy objectives that address a broad spectrum of voters. This includes social integration through

risk sharing and social inclusion, risk protection and equal opportunities. Further, we expect the RWP party to support less encompassing policy objectives while favouring benefits for the traditional working class and the self-employed: *the centrist-populist encompassing objectives hypothesis* (H2).

Given their centrist position and reliance on social-liberal, middle-class voters, in addition to their support for some amount of universalism in access to welfare benefits and services, we also expect the centrist-populist party to support some deservingness considerations, based on liberal and neo-liberal notions of deservingness, such as reciprocity and possibly control. This is because centrist-populist parties turn to the median voter, who rejects support for alleged 'free riders' and other undeserving groups. Since centrist-populist parties also appeal somewhat to left-wing voters, we expect the centrist-populist party to strongly emphasise the need criterion, along with equal/universal access to some welfare provisions: *the centrist-populist compromised deservingness hypothesis* (H3).

Last, we expect right-wing populist party to favour a generous welfare state. However, they will want to limit social benefits to the insider groups, like natives, traditional families and working people, while excluding outsiders: *the right-wing populist exclusionism hypothesis* (H4).

Method and data

Our research question is as follows: *What types of social policies do the different types of populist parties (centrist-populist and right-wing populist) propose in the Czech Republic, and how do their proposals differ from those of the main non-populist parties?*

To answer this question, we conducted a qualitative content analysis of the election programmes of four political parties that took part in the Czech elections in 2013 and 2017. Previous studies have already classified ANO, UPD/SPD as populist (Rooduijn et al., 2019). We compared the centrist-populist party ANO with the social democratic party (ČSSD), which is the leading centre-left party in the country, because these parties compete for voters close to the political centre. Then, we compared the right-wing populist party UPD/SPD to the liberal-conservative ODS, which is the leading non-populist right-wing party in the country. We view election manifestos as diagnostic frames of social demands with strategic framing through which the voter can identify with the party (Caiani & Porta, 2012; Tsatsanis, 2011). Election manifestos give a clear overview over where a party stands at a certain point of time. Further, election manifestos are reasonably comparable across countries and over time (Rooduijn & Pauwels, 2011). For this reason, we did not include other sources, such as speeches or press releases. Our approach is novel in that we examined the welfare state agenda of the populist parties in-depth while focussing systematically on two welfare state dimensions: objectives and deservingness. This allowed for a more systematic examination than the Party Manifesto Dataset, which only captures three general issues: WS

expansion of expenditure on the specified policy fields, equality in terms of protection of underprivileged groups and education expansion.

As noted in our theory section, we divided the policy dimensions into nine categories for objectives and six categories for deservingness criteria. We coded the proposals on social policy measures in each election programme and linked them to the pre-defined categories. Thus, each sentence in the election manifesto containing social policy proposal(s) was attributed to the specific policy objective(s) and deservingness criteria. In some cases, the policy proposal was attributed to more than one social policy objective and more than one deservingness criterion. Then, we counted the relative number of sentences (from all sentences) in which the specific social policy objectives and deservingness criteria appeared. We treated each sentence as a data unit of equal relevance. Thus, we did not subjectively assess the 'strength' of the statements to safeguard the reliability of our findings. Instead, in several cases we illustrated the wordings of the specific objectives and deservingness statements. We also performed a quantitative text analysis of the frequency of words associated with the central deservingness category *universalism* in the sentences on social policy proposals in order to discover the substance/contents of this category. The method of coding sentences according to pre-selected categories is common and has also been used in several studies exploring the profile of social policy in election manifestos of the populist parties, with categories including policy areas, social justice principles and targeted groups (e.g. Ennser-Jedenastik, 2016, 2018).

We conducted the analysis using axial coding, guided by the key dimensions and categories of the welfare state (see above). In total, we coded 4,001 sentences. To ensure the external validity of the coding, we had a second researcher involved in our project check the coding of the key sentences. In case of diverging views on coding the sentences, we discussed and agreed upon appropriate solutions.

The welfare agenda of Czech populist parties

Although the centre-left ČSSD emphasised welfare issues more than centrist-populist ANO in 2013 (19% of the sentences in its programme included social policy proposals compared to 16% for ANO), by 2017, social policy issues became more salient for ANO, with 21.5% of the sentences covering social policy proposals, compared to only 16% in ČSSD's programme. One reason for this shift could be that, in 2013, the opposition party emphasised more typical populist issues targeting the allegedly corrupt elite in 2013. After the elections, ANO joined the government coalition as the second largest party in terms of votes. It thus entered the 2017 race as one of the incumbent parties, which prompted it to emphasise socio-economic rather than anti-elite issues.

Surprisingly, the right-wing populist party (UPD) mentioned welfare policies more often (in 32% of sentences) than the centrist-populist party ANO and

the centre-left ČSSD in 2013 as well as the centre-right ODS party. In 2017, the percentage dropped to 18% of all sentences in the election programme of the successor party SPD, but it still slightly exceeded the centre-left ČSSD in this year. The right-wing populist party also clearly ranked higher than the non-populist right-wing ODS, with 32% compared to 13.5% of welfare-related sentences in 2013 and 18% compared to 10.5% of sentences in 2017, respectively.

H1: The policy efficiency hypothesis

The specific feature of the welfare state agenda of centrist-populist ANO that connects social policy proposals with populism is the strong emphasis on administrative feasibility and economic objectives based on the entrepreneurial populist notion that if one can run a business successfully, then one can run the country efficiently like a business (Saxonberg & Heinisch, 2022). Second, we may associate this feature with anti-elitism, particularly with a strong critique of the allegedly incompetent traditional political parties and elites. Thus, the party's main slogan in the 2013 election campaign was 'We are not like the politicians: we work!'

Most importantly, as shown in Figure 1, ANO increased its emphasis on economic efficiency (18% of sentences in the election programme in 2017 include relevant proposals on social policy issues compared to 6.5% in 2013). While the percentage of sentences dealing with economic efficiency increased for ANO, it decreased for the ČSSD, which devoted 8% of its sentences on social policy to dealing with economic efficiency in 2013 (slightly more than ANO's 6.5%), decreasing to 5% in 2017 (which is less than 1/3 as much as ANO's 18%).

Regarding administrative feasibility, a similar picture emerges. ANO increased its emphasis from 13% of all sentences dealing with social policy in 2013 to 26% in 2017. In comparison, ČSSD's emphasis on administrative feasibility was similar to ANO's in 2013 at 12.5%, but it decreased slightly to 11% in 2017, which is much less than half of ANO's total for that year.

Similar to centrist-populist ANO, the right-wing populist UPD/SPD gave increasing attention to the objectives of efficiency and administrative feasibility in its electoral programme. The welfare state objective that the SPD mentioned the most in 2017 was economic efficiency (in 34.5% of all sentences on social policy), mainly by strengthening economic incentives (31% of sentences on social policy). Administrative feasibility was another aim of the proposals: both in 2013 and 2017, 14% of all sentences on social policy in the UPD/SPD election programmes addressed administrative feasibility or smartness. Interestingly, the SPD took the agenda of economic efficiency from ODS, especially in supporting economic incentives, which is a traditional right-wing issue.

Meanwhile, ODS increased its emphasis on economic efficiency from 10% of all sentences containing social policy proposals in 2013 to 19.5% in 2017. However, this was still only slightly more than half of SPD's total. It also increased

Figure 1. Social policy objectives (ANO and ČSSD)
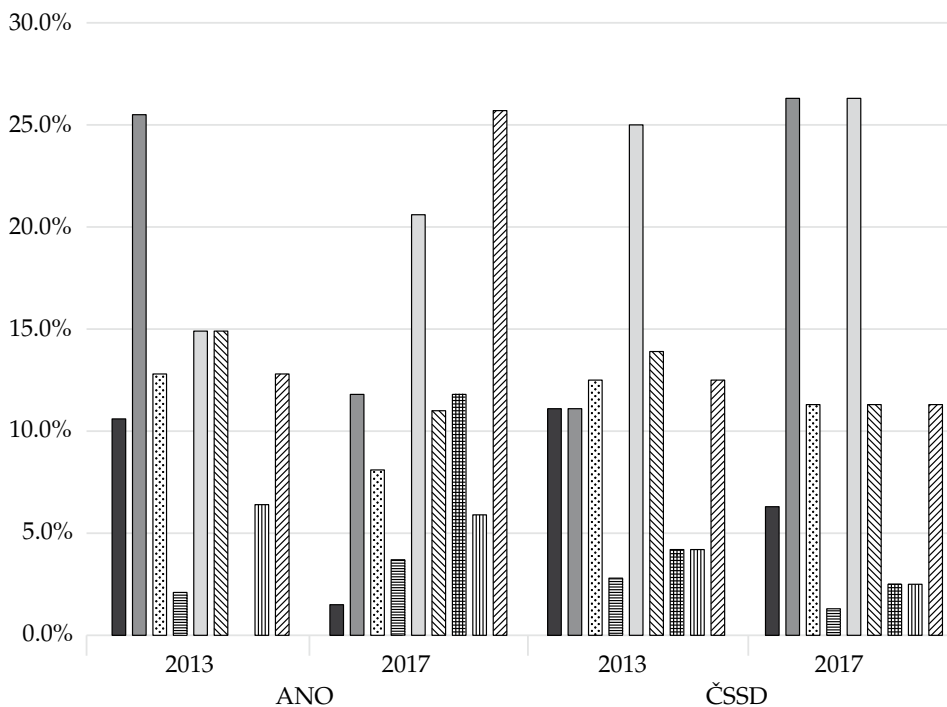
	ANO		ČSSD	
	2013	2017	2013	2017
■ Poverty alleviation	10.6%	1.5%	11.1%	6.3%
▨ Risk Protection	25.5%	11.8%	11.1%	26.3%
⊠ Equal Opportunity	12.8%	8.1%	12.5%	11.3%
▤ Reducing Inequality	2.1%	3.7%	2.8%	1.3%
▢ Social integration – risk sharing	14.9%	20.6%	25.0%	26.3%
◩ Social Integration	14.9%	11.0%	13.9%	11.3%
▦ Efficiency	0.0%	11.8%	4.2%	2.5%
▥ Efficiency – Incentives	6.4%	5.9%	4.2%	2.5%
▨ Feasibility/Smartness	12.8%	25.7%	12.5%	11.3%

Source: Authors' analysis of the election manifestos.
Note: In per cent of all sentences dealing with social policy.

Figure 2. Social policy objectives (UPD/SPD and ODS)
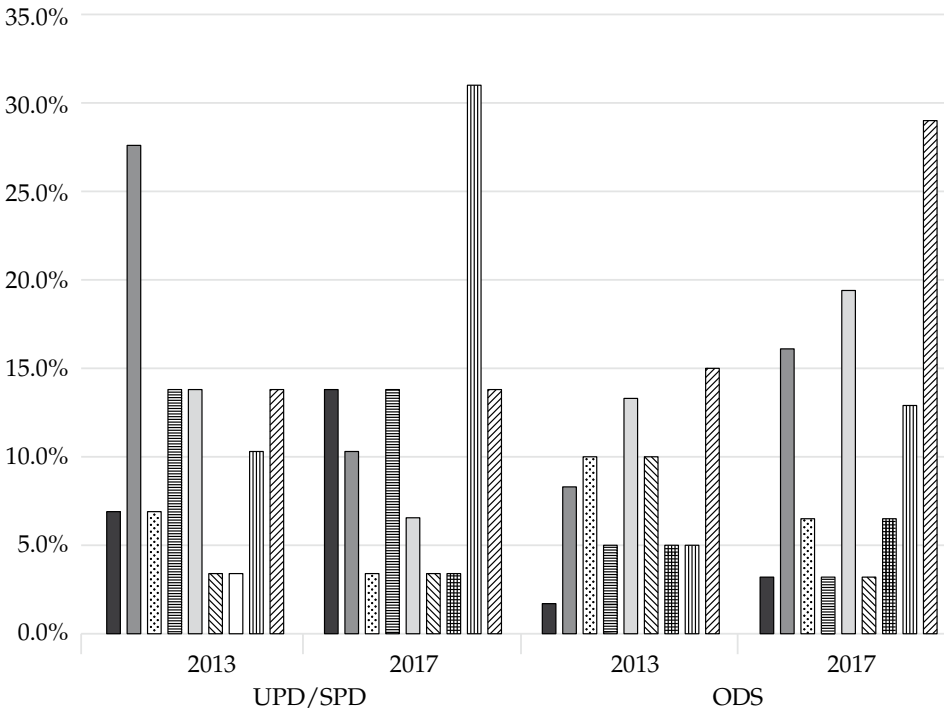
	UPD/SPD		ODS	
	2013	2017	2013	2017
■ Poverty alleviation	6.9%	13.8%	1.7%	3.2%
■ Risk Protection	27.6%	10.3%	8.3%	16.1%
⊠ Equal Opportunity	6.9%	3.4%	10.0%	6.5%
▤ Reducing Inequality	13.8%	13.8%	5.0%	3.2%
□ Social integration – risk sharing	13.8%	6.9%	13.3%	19.4%
⊠ Social Integration	3.4%	3.4%	10.0%	3.2%
▦ Efficiency	3.4%	3.4%	5.0%	6.5%
▥ Efficiency - Incentives	10.3%	31.0%	5.0%	12.9%
▨ Feasibility/Smartness	13.8%	13.8%	15.0%	29.0%

Source: Authors' analysis of the election manifestos.
Note: In percent of all sentences dealing with social policy.

its emphasis on administrative feasibility. In 2013, 15% of sentences containing social policy proposals dealt with administrative feasibility, which was slightly more than UPD/SPD. However, in 2017 this increased to 29%, more than twice as much as the right-wing populist party. This reflects the right-wing promise to slim down the state and increase efficiency (see Figure 2).

SPD connects economic efficiency and administrative feasibility objectives with the other welfare state objectives to protect the 'common people'. According to the UPD (2013), 'We don't want an expensive and non-functional social system but a system supportive to all clean-living/well-mannered people: seniors, families with children, physically handicapped and children at risk of poverty.'

The *policy efficiency hypothesis* holds somewhat. The emphasis on economic and administrative feasibility increased the most for the right-wing ODS (to 48.5% of all sentences on social policy) and right-wing populist UPD/SPD (to 48% of all sentences). Centrist-populist ANO was slightly behind (at 43.5%), clearly outpacing ČSSD (16.3%). It seems that right-wing ideology matters somewhat more than populist appeals regarding the promises of an efficient and effective welfare state.

H2: The centrist-populist encompassing objectives hypothesis

Comprehensive coverage of social welfare state objectives is a unique feature of centrist-populist ANO's election programme. This comprehensive coverage is reflected in the party's emphasis on social integration through risk sharing (15% of all sentences on policy proposals in 2013 and 21.5% in 2017), social integration through social inclusion (15% of sentences on social policy proposals in 2013 and 11% in 2017), risk protection (25.5% of all sentences in 2013 and 12% in 2017) and equal opportunities (13% of sentences in 2013 and 8% in 2017). Thus, in 2017, three social objectives scored above 10%, and one of them was above 20%. In 2017, ČSSD placed greater emphasis than ANO on these: Risk protection comprised 26% of social policy sentences compared to 12% for ANO; social inclusion through risk sharing comprised 26% of all social policy sentences compared to 21% for ANO; and equal opportunities comprised 11% compared to 8% for ANO. Meanwhile, support for social integration through social inclusion accounted for 11% of all social policy sentences for both parties in 2017. Thus, in 2017, for ČSSD, five social objectives scored above 10%, and two of them were above 20% (see Figure 1). However, ANO placed greater emphasis on social objectives than either UPD/SPD or ODS. ODS constantly emphasised risk sharing (13% of sentences in 2013 and 19% in 2017) and risk protection (8% of sentences in 2013 and 16% in 2017). Meanwhile, the party decreased its emphasis on social integration through social inclusion, falling from 10% of sentences in 2013 to 3% in 2017. Thus, only two social objectives scored above 10% in 2017.

As expected, right-wing populist UPS/SPD was more concerned with social objectives than right-wing mainstream ODS. Meanwhile, SPD focussed on
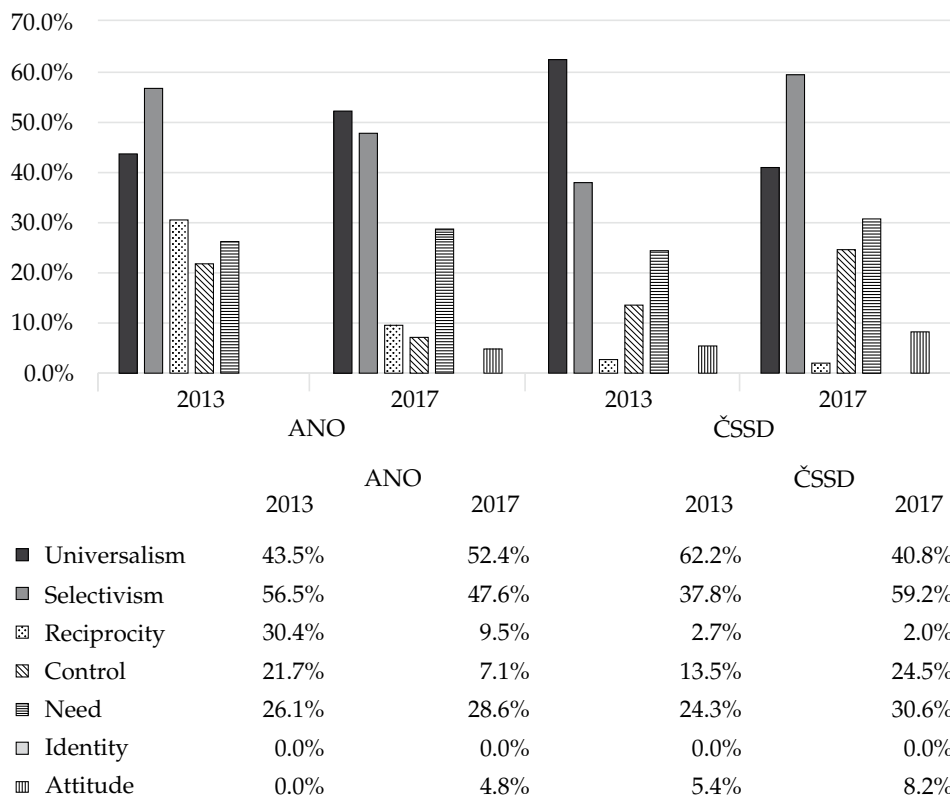
social consumption-related redistributive objectives. Consequently, it increased its emphasis on poverty alleviation from 7% of sentences in 2013 to 14% in 2017. Meanwhile, its objective of reducing inequalities remained stable at 14% of sentences. The objective of risk protection dropped from 28% of sentences in 2013 to 10% due to its increased emphasis on the instrumental objectives; three of the social objectives scored 10% or more in 2017 (see Figure 2).

In summary, the *centrist-populist encompassing objectives* hypothesis partly holds when comparing centrist-populist ANO (and right-wing UPD/SPD) to the right-wing ODS. Centre-left ČSSD emphasised social objectives the most due to its ideological position.

H3: Centrist-populist compromised deservingness hypothesis

Regarding deservingness, ANO strongly emphasised universal access to welfare state provisions and services in 2017 (in 52% of sentences dealing with social policy proposals), which was even more than in its 2013 election programme (43.5%). Its emphasis on universal access, particularly on the provision of public goods (see below), was stronger than ČSSD's in 2017 (52% for ANO compared to 41% for ČSSD), which is surprising since social democratic parties are usually the main advocates of universalism. At the same time, ANO applied a selective approach to welfare state provisions to some extent, although it did not use exclusionist criteria. Instead, ANO often used the deservingness criterion of need, for example, in its proposals to improve specialised services for the disabled and foster care for endangered children (in 26% of sentences on policy proposals in 2013 and 28.5% in 2017). In contrast, it decreased its emphasis on reciprocity between 2013 and 2017 (from 30.5% to 9.5% of sentences on social policy proposals) in proposals like the guarantee of a minimum pension for individuals who contributed and financial advantages rewarding childcare in the pension system, with an emphasis on control (from 22% of sentences on social policy proposals to 7%). In contrast, ČSSD's 2017 election programme was less orientated than ANO's on universal provision (ČSSD's mentioning of universalism decreased from 62% to 41% between 2013 and 2017). Instead, it aimed more at the 'needy' groups in society (see Figure 3).

Similar to ANO, ČSSD strongly stressed the need criterion (in 24% of sentences on policy proposals in 2013 and 31% in 2017). But, in contrast to ANO, it did not prioritise reciprocity, mentioning it in only 3% of sentences on policy proposals in 2013 and 2% in 2017. This was considerably less than ANO (10%). In contrast to what we would expect from a social-democratic party, ČSSD increased its emphasis on control from 13.5% of sentences on policy proposals to 24.5% between 2013 and 2017, applying it even more frequently than the right-wing populist UPD/SPD and centre-right ODS (see Figure 4). In conclusion, ANO seems to have a more even balance than ČSSD between universalism and selectivism, which enables the party to gain support from centrist, left-wing and right-wing voters.

Figure 3. Deservingness in the policy proposals (ANO and ČSSD)

	ANO		ČSSD	
	2013	2017	2013	2017
■ Universalism	43.5%	52.4%	62.2%	40.8%
▨ Selectivism	56.5%	47.6%	37.8%	59.2%
▦ Reciprocity	30.4%	9.5%	2.7%	2.0%
▨ Control	21.7%	7.1%	13.5%	24.5%
▤ Need	26.1%	28.6%	24.3%	30.6%
▢ Identity	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
▥ Attitude	0.0%	4.8%	5.4%	8.2%

Source: Authors' analysis of the election manifestos.
Note: In percent of all sentences dealing with social policy.

ANO's increased emphasis on universalism in 2017 represented a significant shift in the party's election programme. We analysed specific aspects of ANO's universalism using quantitative text analysis (in WordStat) and identified the most frequent words in sentences coded as associated with universalism in the ANO's and ČSSD's election programmes (see Annex) and their patterns. ANO's universalism seems to be all-encompassing. First, ANO effectively covers some of the key traditional centre-left social democratic issues. It stresses the provision of public goods by the state using words like 'services', 'care', 'healthcare' and 'education'. ANO associates universalism with the role of the state and with streamlining the system. At the same time, ANO's universalism is related to managerial competence promises, as indicated by words such as 'development',

'financing', 'management', 'investment', 'state' and 'system'. This pattern was similar in 2013. However, in 2017 it increased its emphasis on management and investment. Briefly, ANO addresses themes that appeal to centrist voters with social-liberal preferences by emphasising its competence in managing, financing and developing a social system that can become more generous without raising taxes. Yet, at the same time, the party supports the centre-left theme of state responsibility for providing public goods.

ČSSD is also somewhat supportive of universalist policies, but not as much as ANO. Additionally, ČSSD is much less concerned about the issue of managerial competency. Rather, it focusses more closely on specific subsystems related to public goods provision. Left-wing values are indicated by the words 'work', 'wages', 'growth', 'quality (of services)', 'housing' and 'taxes.' In 2013, the pattern was similar; only the party's stress on the quality of social services increased, while its stress on financing decreased in 2017. This means that ANO, more than the centre-left ČSSD, aims to address the middle-class preference for an efficient welfare state based on effective management, financing and social investments as well as accessibility of public goods and services for all, while ČSSD is more concerned with services than making the welfare state more efficient. ANO is less concerned with all left-wing topics, such as work accessibility and conditions, wages, housing and quality of services. However, it appeals to left-wing voters by promising universal access to public goods (see Table 1 in Annex).

A somewhat surprising finding is that in 2017, centrist-populist ANO had a greater emphasis than the centre-left ČSSD on universalism. The reason might be that ANO saw an opportunity to gain left-wing oriented ČSSD supporters when the social democrats started imploding. This assumption is consistent with Saxonberg and Heinisch's (2022) suggestion that entrepreneurial populist parties do not have a clear ideology but look for political openings. In the Czech Republic, this opening was in the centre in 2013, and in 2017 it also included parts of the centre-left.

H4: The exclusionism hypothesis[5]

We would expect right-wing populist parties to be much more exclusionist than mainstream or centrist-populist parties, particularly because of their tendency toward welfare chauvinism. Right-wing populist UPD/SPD has moved in an increasingly market-liberal direction in its social policy proposals. Whereas 73% of its sentences on social policy proposals in 2013 promoted universalist policies, in 2017, an even greater percentage (75%) promoted selectivist policies. Among selectivist proposals, need was previously the most important, but it has recently been surpassed by reciprocity. Need was the guiding criterion for 27% (2013) and

---

[5] Excluding 'undeserving' outsider groups from welfare (see the theoretical assumptions).

Figure 4. Desevingness in the policy proposals (UPD/SPD and ODS)
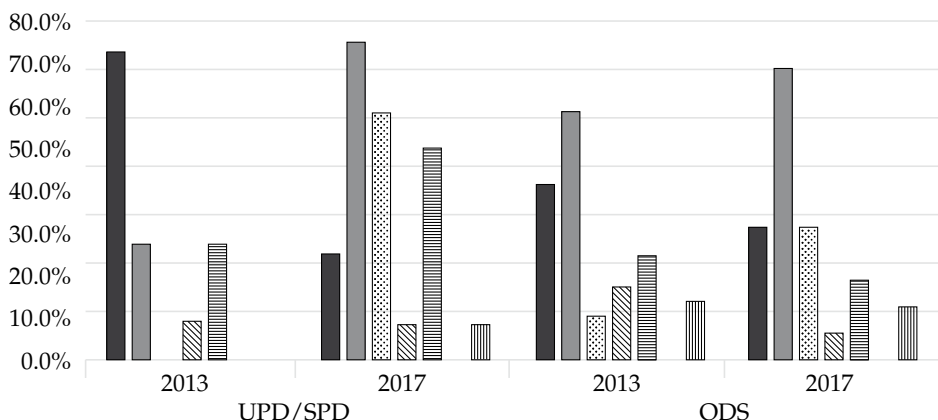
	UPD/SPD		ODS	
	2013	2017	2013	2017
■ Universalism	72.7%	25.0%	41.4%	31.3%
▪ Selectivism	27.3%	75.0%	58.6%	68.7%
▨ Reciprocity	0.0%	58.3%	10.3%	31.3%
▨ Control	9.1%	8.3%	17.2%	6.3%
▤ Need	27.3%	50.0%	17.2%	18.8%
☐ Identity	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
▥ Attitude	0.0%	8.3%	13.8%	12.5%

Source: Authors' analysis of the election manifestos.
Note: In percent of all sentences dealing with social policy.

50% (2017) of sentences on social policy proposals (remember that some sentences contained more than one welfare objective, which is why the total is more than 100%). The following is an example of the SPD's emphasis on need:

> We will significantly increase the lowest pensions. We will ensure regular indexation of the minimum wage, depending on average wage growth… We will … prepare an act that will retrospectively release citizens from the portion of their debt accumulated by usury/loan-sharking. (SPD 2017)

Reciprocity radically increased from 0% of sentences on social policy proposals in 2013 to 58% in 2017: 'Money to working families and pensioners. We sup-

port decreasing the retirement age depending on the number of properly raised children' (SPD 2017). In contrast, the control criterion only appeared in 8–9% of sentences on social policy proposals in both 2013 and 2017. The attitude criterion did not appear in any sentences on social policy proposals in 2013 and in only 8% of sentences in 2017. Actually, SPD social policy proposals represent a mixture of selective and universalist measures to support disadvantaged population groups based on the need criterion, but combined with the criteria of reciprocity and/or control (see Figure 4).

There are no measures based on nativism evidenced in UPD/SPD's social policy proposals, although this is one of the main features of right-wing populism. The reason for this is probably that the UPD/SPD does not need to employ welfare chauvinism since the party promises to halt all illegal immigration. The UPD/SPD welfare policies are not strongly exclusionary. The explicit exclusion of outsider groups based on the criteria of identity and control rarely appears related to the objectives of economic efficiency and administrative feasibility (see hypothesis 1). In 2013, the socially excluded—a term that is mainly linked to Roma in public policy discourse in the Czech Republic—were the subject of one exclusivist proposal, based on the identity criterion: 'We reject enforced social inclusion: the same money invested in the socially excluded children must also be invested in gifted children' (UPD 2013). In SPD's 2017 election programme, one proposal was exclusionary, based on the control criterion, targeting the unemployed who do not genuinely seek a job (SPD 2017).

ODS has placed greater emphasis on selectivism than UPD/SPD. In 2013, ODS devoted 58.5% of its sentences on social policy proposals to selectivism, compared to 27% for UPD. In 2017, the percentage increased to 69% for ODS, compared to 58% for the SPD (a successor of UPD). ODS has also paid much less attention than UPD/SPD to need, devoting 17% of sentences on social policy proposals to this criterion in 2013, compared to 27% for UPD. By 2017, it only increased its emphasis slightly to 19%, which was much less than SPD's 50%. Meanwhile, control was more important for ODS than for UPD/SPD in 2013, accounting for 17% of all sentences on social policy proposals, compared with only 8–9% for the UPD/SPD. However, its importance for ODS declined to 6% in 2017, thus dropping below the level of importance assigned to it by UPD/SPD (for whom it remained stable at 8–9% of sentences). In contrast, reciprocity became much more important for ODS policy proposals[6], increasing from 10% to 31% of sentences on social policy proposals, although still behind UPD/SPD (see above). ODS appears to be more neo-liberal when we also use the criterion of attitude (14% of sentences on policy proposals in 2013 and 12.5% in 2017) (see Figure 4).

---

[6] Like tax relief and direct rewards for informal carers related to the elderly and the possibility to contribute from pension social insurance payments to one's parent's pension.

Conclusions and discussion

Our findings partly confirm hypothesis 1: centrist-populist ANO places substantial weight on both administrative feasibility and economic efficiency objectives compared to the centre-left ČSSD, which could be an expression of entrepreneurial populism. In 2017, right-wing populist SPD out-scored ANO when it increased its focus on instrumental objectives by placing greater emphasis on economic efficiency. However, the mainstream right-wing ODS emphasises instrumental objectives as much as SPD. This corresponds to the right-wing ideology of a lean and cheap state.

Hypothesis 2 holds partly as well. In its programme, the centrist-populist ANO advocates comprehensive coverage of welfare state objectives. It emphasises redistributive measures less than does the centre-left ČSSD, but, similar to ČSSD, it also emphasises social integration through risk sharing and social inclusion as well as equal access/opportunity. It does so to attract voters from the political centre—including those on the centre-left. ANO thus addresses all social groups when emphasising instrumental objectives. Moreover, its coverage of social objectives is more comprehensive than that of right-wing populist UPD/SPD and the right-wing ODS. Meanwhile, UPD/SPD emphasises poverty alleviation and the reduction of inequalities more than ČSSD, as the right-wing populism targets voters from the lower classes and those dissatisfied with current social policies.

Hypothesis 3 holds well: centrist-populist ANO balances universalist measures that address most of the population with selective measures that target specific population groups. ANO stresses the criteria of need and reciprocity while giving less focus to the criterion of control, and it does not advocate excluding some groups from welfare provisions. Rather, it wants to make welfare policies more effective (through better management, improving incentives and eliminating the misuse of public finance). In 2017, ANO increased its emphasis on universalism and social policy issues in general, which it linked to its managerial competence. This strategy probably developed by identifying a political opportunity to attract former ČSSD voters when the social democrats imploded. The other reason might be that ANO entered the government coalition in 2013, so being part of government made it more difficult to promote an anti-elitist or anti-system attitude. Therefore, the party highlighted welfare issues more in 2017.

Hypothesis 4 partly holds. Right-wing populist SPD's welfare state agenda is exclusivist to some extent, as it distinguishes between the deserving and undeserving based on the criteria of reciprocity, control and attitude. However, contrary to expectations, welfare chauvinism does not appear in its programme. It also focusses on aid for disadvantaged and deserving groups of citizens based on the need criteria.

In summary, in the 2013 and 2017 elections, both populist parties pushed their welfare state agendas forward and linked them to their populist appeals. They achieved more balance between the instrumental objectives of economic

efficiency and administrative feasibility on the one hand and social objectives on the other hand, compared to the mainstream left-wing and right-wing parties. Centrist-populist ANO also out-scored the centre-left ČSSD in the universalism category. Our findings support Saxonberg and Heinisch's (2022) assumption that the entrepreneurial populist ANO saw a political opening in the centre in the Czech Republic and tried to appeal to voters with social-liberal welfare attitudes.

Meanwhile, UPD/SPD accentuates the need criterion while avoiding exclusionism. The right-wing populist party turned to the losers of modernisation, emphasising the principle of need. It combined need with the objectives of efficiency (mainly economic incentives) and reciprocity, which are traditionally right-wing stances. The party seeks support from modernisation losers with rightist views. Thus, Czech populist parties try to address broader segments of voters than their mainstream competitors, although they do not necessarily score higher in addressing the voters in any single dimension or subdimension (objectives—instrumental, social; deservingness).[7]

We have found that populist parties strongly emphasised the welfare agenda in their election programmes in 2013 and 2017. In 2017, this emphasis was stronger than for the centre-left ČSSD and right-wing ODS. During these years, there was a considerable flow of voters from left-wing parties to populist parties. According to Škop (2017), 360,000 ČSSD voters and 200,000 Communist party voters switched to ANO during the 2017 elections. Similarly, around 120,000 voters switched from the Communists, and around 70,000 voters switched from the Social Democrats to the SPD between 2013 and 2017. Left-wing parties suffered considerable losses to populist parties (see also Brunnerová, 2019). More research is necessary to determine the role of the welfare state agenda in populist parties gaining electoral support.

Since this article only analyses one country, further studies are needed to ascertain the extent to which our findings can be generalised to centrist-populist and right-wing populist parties cross-nationally, especially since the ideologies and programmes of populist parties vary depending on the national context. We are considering writing a follow-up article, which would include the 2021 elections, where ANO lost to a coalition of centre-right parties. ANO remained the single largest party in this election, and the SPD succeeded in keeping its position in parliament, in contrast to both the ČSSD and Communist Party, which failed to reach the 5% threshold.

---

[7] On the importance of multidimensionality in understanding populism, see Wutke, Schimpf, and Schoen (2000).

Tomáš Sirovátka is *professor of social policy and social work at Masaryk University in the Czech Republic. He has published on comparative welfare policies, particularly in Central Europe, employment policies, family policies, social inclusion, welfare attitudes and populism in journals and co-edited books on these issues.*
ORCID: 0000-0001-6891-2258

Lucie Novotná *is a doctoral candidate of Social Policy and Social Work at Masaryk University in the Czech Republic. Her research focuses on discursive institutionalism, gender equality, social and family policies, particularly in Central Europe. Her work was published in Social Policy and Society.*
ORCID: 0000-0002-6301-1079

Steven Saxonberg *is professor of sociology at Södertörn University in Sweden and research associate at the Masaryk University in the Czech Republic. He has published extensively on comparative welfare policies, gender and welfare, welfare attitudes as well as on populism, social movements and civil society, democratization and totalitarianism.*
ORCID: 0000-0001-6057-2762

References

Abou-Chadi, T., & Markus, W. (2019). The Electoral Appeal of Party Strategies in Postindustrial Societies: When Can the Mainstream Left Succeed? *The Journal of Politics, 81*(4), 1405–1419. https://doi.org/10.1086/704436

Afonso, A. (2015). Choosing Whom to Betray. Populist Right-Wing Parties, Welfare State Reforms and the Trade-Off Between Office and Votes. *European Political Science Review, 7*(2), 271–292. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773914000125

Baldwin, P. (1990). *The Politics of Social Solidarity: Class Bases of the European Welfare State, 1875–1975*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511586378

Barr, N. A., & Whynes, D. K. (1993). *Current Issues in the Economics of Welfare*. St. Martin's Press.

Betz, H. G. (1994). *Radical Right-wing Populism in Western Europe*. MacMillan Press. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-23547-6

Brunnerová, O. (2019). Not All Entrepreneurs are Created Equal: The Institutionalisation of Entrepreneurial Parties in Central Europe. *Central European Journal of Politics, 5*(1), 100–124.

Burgoon, B., Noort, S. V., Rooduijn, M., & Underhill, G. R. (2019). Positional Deprivation and Support for Radical Right and Radical Left Parties. *Economic Policy, 34*, 49–93. https://doi.org/10.1093/epolic/eiy017

Busemeyer, M. R., Rathgeb, P., & Sahm, A. H. J. (2021). Authoritarian Values and the Welfare State: The Social Policy Preferences of Radical Right Voters. *West European Politics, 45*(1), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2021.1886497

Buštíková, L. (2019). The State as a Firm: Understanding the Autocratic Roots of Technocratic Populism. *East European Politics and Societies and Culture, 33*(2), 302–330. https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325418791723

Caiani, M., & Della Porta, D. (2011). The Elitist Populism of the Extreme Right: A Frame Analysis of Extreme Right Wing discourses in Italy and Germany. *Acta Politica, 46*(2), 180–202. https://doi.org/10.1057/ap.2010.28

Enggist, M., & Pinggera, M. (2021). Radical Right Parties and Their Welfare State Stances – Not so Blurry After All? *West European Politics*, *45*(1), 102–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2021.1902115

Engler, S. (2020). Centrist Anti-establishment Parties and Their Protest Voters: More Than a Superficial Romance? *European Political Science Review, 12*(3), 307–325. , https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773920000132

Ennser-Jedenastik, L. (2016). A Welfare State for Whom? A Group-Based Account of the Austrian Freedom Party's Social Policy Profile. *Swiss Political Science Review, 22*(3), 409–427. https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12218

Ennser-Jedenastik, L. (2018). Welfare Chauvinism in Populist Radical Right Platforms: The Role of Redistributive Justice Principles. *Social Policy & Administration*, *52*(1), 293–314. https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12325

Ernst, N., Engesser, S., Büchel, F., Blassnig, S., & Esser, F. (2017). Extreme Parties and Populism: An Analysis of Facebook and Twitter across Six Countries. *Information, Communication & Society, 20*(9), 1347–1364. https://doi.org/10.1080/136911 8X.2017.1329333

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Polity Press. https://doi.org/10.1177/095892879100100108

Greve. B. (Ed.). (2019). *Welfare Populism and Welfare Chauvinism*. Policy Press. https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447350439.001.0001

Hanley, S., & Vachudova, A. (2018). Understanding the Illiberal Turn: Democratic Backsliding in the Czech Republic. *East European Politics, 34*(3), 276–296. https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2018.1493457

Havlík, V. (2019a). Technocratic Populism and Political Illiberalism in Central Europe. *Problems of Post-Communism, 66*(6), 369–384. https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2019.1580590

Havlík, V. (2019b). Economy and Political Distrust: Explaining Public Anti-partyism in the Czech Republic. *Human Affairs, 30*(1), 72–85. https://doi.org/10.1515/humaff-2020-0007

Heinisch, R., & Saxonberg, S. (2017). Entrepreneurial Populism and the Radical Centre: Examples from Austria and the Czech Republic. In R. Heinisch, C. Holtz-Bacha, & O. Mazzoleni (Eds), *Political Populism: A Handbook* (pp. 209–226). Nomos. https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845271491-209

Hill, M. (2003). *Understanding Social Policy, Seventh edition*. Blackwell.

Hloušek, V., Kopeček, L., & Vodová, P. (2020). *The Rise of Entrepreneurial Parties in European Politics.* Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-41916-5

Kriesi, H. K. (2014). The Populist Challenge. *West European Politics*, *37*(2), 361–378. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2014.887879

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschier, S., & Frey, T. (2006). Globalisation and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared. *European Journal of Political Research, 45*(6), 921–956. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2006.00644.x

Laclau, E. (2005). *On Populist Reason*. Verso.

Lee, M. J. (2006). The Populist Chameleon: The People's Party, Huey Long, George Wallace, and the Populist Argumentative Frame. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 92*(4), 355–378. https://doi.org/10.1080/00335630601080385

Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition, 39*(4), 541–563. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x

Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511492037

Pop-Eleches, G. (2010). Throwing Out the Bums: Protest Voting and Unorthodox Parties after Communism. *World Politics, 62*(2), 221–260. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887110000043

Ramiro, L. (2016). Support for Radical Left Parties in Western Europe: Social Background, Ideology and Political Orientations. *European Political Science Review, 8*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773914000368

Rawls, J. (1971). *A Theory of Justice*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674042605

Ringen, S. (1987). *The Possibility of Politics*. Oxford University Press.

Rooduijn, M. (2014). The mesmerising message: The diffusion of populism in public debates in Western European media. *Political Studies 62*(4), 726–744. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.1207

Rooduijn, M., & Burgoon, B. M. (2018). The Paradox of Wellbeing: Do Unfavorable Socio-economic and Sociocultural Contexts Deepen or Dampen Radical Left and Right Voting among the Less Well-off? *Comparative Political Studies, 51*(13), 1720–1753. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414017720707

Rooduijn, M., & Pauwels. T. (2011). Measuring Populism: Comparing Two Methods of Content Analysis. *West European Politics*, *34*(6), 1272–1283. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2011.616665

Rooduijn, M., Van Kessel, S., Froio, C., Pirro. A., De Lange, S., Halikiopoulou, D., Lewis, P., Mudde, C., & Taggart, P. (2019). *The PopuList: An Overview of Populist, Far Right, Far Left and Eurosceptic Parties in Europe*. Retrieved September 5, 2020, from http://www.popu-list.org

Saxonberg, S., & Heinisch, R. (2022). Filling the Demand Gap: Explaining the Success of Centrist Entrepreneurial Populism in the Czech Republic. *Europe-Asia Studies.* https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2022.2136624

Schumacher, G., & van Kersbergen, K. (2016). Do Mainstream Parties Adapt to the Welfare Chauvinism of Populist Parties? *Party Politics 22*(3), 300–312. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068814549345

Spruyt, B., Keppens, G., & van Droogenbroek, F. (2016). Who Supports Populism and *What* Attracts People to It? *Political Research Quaterly*, *69*(2), 335–346. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912916639138

Stanley, B. (2008). The Thin Ideology of Populism. *Journal of Political Ideologies, 13*(1), 95–110, https://doi.org/10.1080/13569310701822289

Swank, D., & Betz, H. G. (2003). Globalization, the welfare state and right-wing populism in Western Europe. *Socio-Economic Review 1*(2), 215–245. https://doi.org/10.1093/soceco/1.2.215

Škop, M. (2017). *Zisky a ztráty voličů v roce 2017 oproti roku 2013*. Retrieved December 5, 2020, from https://skop.eu/post/zisky-a-ztraty-volicu-2013-2017/

Taylor-Gooby, P. (Ed.). (2004). *New Risks, New Welfare: The Transformation of the European Welfare State.* Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/019926726X.001.0001

Tsatsanis, E. (2011). Hellenism under Siege: The National-populist Logic of Antiglobalisation Rhetoric in Greece. *Journal of Political Ideologies, 16*(1), 11–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2011.540939

Vachudová, M. A. (2019). From Competition to Polarisation in Central Europe: How Populists Change Party Systems and the European Union. *Polity, 51*(4), 689–706. https://doi.org/10.1086/705704

van der Waal, J., de Koster, W., & van Oorschot, W. (2013). Three Worlds of Welfare Chauvinism? How Welfare Regimes Affect Support for Distributing Welfare to

Immigrants in Europe. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice, 15*(2), 164–181. https://doi.org/10.1080/13876988.2013.785147

van Hauwaert, S. M., & van Kessel, S. (2018). Beyond Protest and Discontent: A Cross-national Analysis of the Effect of Populist Attitudes and Issue Positions on Populist Party Support. *European Journal of Political Research, 57*(1), 68–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12216

van Oorschot, W. (2006). Making the Difference in Social Europe: Deservingness Perceptions among Citizens of European Welfare States. *Journal of European Social Policy, 16*(1), 23–42. https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928706059829

Wuttke, A., Schimpf, C., & Schoen, H. (2020). When the Whole Is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts: On the Conceptualisation and Measurement of Populist Attitudes and Other Multidimensional Constructs. *American Political Science Review, 114*(2), 356–374. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055419000807

Election programmes of the selected political parties

ANO. (2017). *Teď nebo nikdy. Program hnutí ANO pro volby do Poslanecké sněmovny 2017. Ten jediný program, který potřebujete*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://www.anobudelip.cz/file/edee/2017/09/program-hnuti-ano-pro-volby-do-poslanecke-snemovny.pdf

ANO. (2013). *Resortní program*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://www.anobudelip.cz/cs/o-nas/program/volby-2013/resortni-program/

ČSSD. (2017). *Dobrá země pro život. Volební program České strany sociálně-demokratické (ČSSD) pro volby 2017*. Retrieved October 8, 2020. from https://www.cssd.cz/data/files/program-210x20-seda.pdf

ČSSD. (2013). *Prosadíme dobře fungující stát. Volební program ČSSD Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny PČR 25.–26. 10. 2013*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from http://www.cssd.cz/data/files/volebni_program.pdf

KSČM. (2017). *Jsme Váš hlas! Mír ve světě, spravedlnost a bezpečí doma. Volební program KSČM pro volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu České Republiky 2017*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://www.kscm.cz/sites/default/files/soubory/Program%20KSČM/volebni_program_kscm_pro_volby_do_ps_pcr_2017.pdf

KSČM. (2013). *Program pro budoucnost*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from http://old.kscm.cz/viewDocument.asp?document=6541

ODS. (2017). *ODS Silný program pro silné Česko*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://www.ods.cz/volby2017/program

ODS. (2013). *Volební program. Neexistují levicová nebo pravicová témata. Existují jen levicová nebo správná řešení*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://www.ods.cz/docs/programy/volebni-program-2013.pdf

SPD. (2017). *Volební program SPD*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from http://web.archive.org/web/20171022212422/http://www.spd.cz/program

UPD. (2013). *Chceme zavést politický systém s důsledným oddělením moci výkonné, zákonodárné a soudní a s přímou odpovědností volených představitelů*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://docplayer.cz/2506345-Chceme-zavest-politicky-system-s-duslednym-oddelenim-moci-vykonne-zakonodarne-a-soudni-a-s-primou-odpovednosti-volenych-predstavitelu.html

Annex

Table 1. Occurrence of 20 most frequent words associated with the category 'universalism' (absolute and relative count of words in sentences associated with universalism, weighted percentage)

ČSSD	Count	Weighted percentage (%)	ANO	Count	Weighted percentage (%)
Work	32	0.39	Development	47	0.31
Social	30	0.36	Services (genitive case)	46	0.30
Quality (adjective)	29	0.35	State	43	0.28
Care (genitive case)	27	0.33	Care (genitive case)	40	0.27
Services (genitive case)	26	0.31	All (genitive case)	36	0.24
Development	25	0.30	Financing	34	0.23
Wages	23	0.28	State (genitive case)	34	0.23
System	23	0.28	System (genitive case)	29	0.19
People	22	0.26	Healthcare	28	0.19
Care (accusative case)	21	0.25	Services	27	0.18
Healthcare	21	0.25	All (accusative case)	27	0.18
To all	20	0.24	Work	25	0.17
Life (adjective)	20	0.24	System	25	0.17
Growth	19	0.23	Management	25	0.17
All (accusative case)	19	0.23	Children	23	0.15
State	18	0.22	State (adjective)	23	0.15
Health (adjective)	18	0.22	Investments	23	0.15
Housing	17	0.20	Education	22	0.15
Taxes	16	0.19	Culture	20	0.13
Services	16	0.19	Citizens (accusative case)	20	0.13

Source: ČSSD and ANO election programmes, own coding and computations.