

Abstract

Research on political parties and their organizational stability presents one of the most important research agendas in modern comparative politics. Especially among newly democratized countries of the Central and Eastern Europe, the consolidation of democratic political institutions used to be considered as a key factor for the successful finishing of the whole transitional process. Despite the fact that most of the transitologists optimistically perceived the consolidation of the new democracies as a one-way process, the most of party systems in the eastern countries experienced serious changes and periods of instability within the last ten years. The most notable change was definitely the unexpected electoral success of genuinely new political parties and movements usually led by a political entrepreneur and formed without solid organizational background or solid ties to society. This tendency further turned into a new wave of unpredictability even within the party systems commonly perceived as fully stabilized and consolidated. Based on such new conditions, the contemporary party researchers turn their attention towards possible interpretations of this unprecedented phenomenon. This dissertation contributes to this discussion by the attempt to operationalize and explain the level of institutionalization of political parties in the Czech Republic. The party institutionalization is understood as a multidimensional concept, which is not directly measurable. For this reason, the original set of quantitative indicators is set to perform long-term comparative analysis. Furthermore, the robustness of conclusions derived from the empirical analysis is verified by the simulation study.