

The Early Parliamentary Elections of 1998: An Analysis of Voting Behaviour in Comparison to the Parliamentary Election of 1996*

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Abstract: The aim of the paper is to describe the voting behaviour of various social and demographic groups of voters in the early general election in 1998. It firstly compares the electorates of the left and of the non-left. Secondly it compares the electorate of particular left-wing parties (ČSSD and KSČM) and the electorate of particular non-left-wing parties (ODS, US, KDU-ČSL). Thirdly it focuses on the similarities and dissimilarities of ODS and ČSSD voters. In addition to this three levels of comparison it also deals with the changes in the voting behaviour between the 1996 and 1998 general elections. Finally it presents the profile of a typical voter of each of the parliamentary parties, e.g. ČSSD, ODS, KSČM, US and KDU-ČSL.

Czech Sociological Review, 2000, Vol. 8 (No. 1: 7-26)

1. An Outline of the Pre-Election Situation

Although this article deals with the voting behaviour of different groups of voters in the early parliamentary elections of 1998, there is no alternative but to start with the results of the elections of 1996, which had a significant impact on subsequent development. The 1996 elections to the Chamber of Deputies, which brought major gains for the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), resulted in a situation that has been described as political stalemate, because the parties of the governing coalition (the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Christian Democratic Union-Czech People's Party (KDU-ČSL), and the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA)) lost their parliamentary majority, and were therefore unable to put together a stable majority government. In comparison with 1992, the elections of 1996 also brought a distinct weakening of the position of the largest right-wing party (ODS) inside the coalition, since among those who voted for the coalition, the proportion of KDU-ČSL voters increased at the expense of ODS voters, while the proportion of ODA voters remained unchanged [see Řeháková 1998].

The coalition of right-wing parties formed a minority government that lacked internal cohesion. A political struggle therefore took place on two levels: between left and right, but also within the right. During 1997, economic problems began to grow, and the governing parties found it difficult to reach consensus on how to tackle them. A quantity of sleazy affairs, frauds, internal pillaging of banks and investment funds continued to emerge, as well as the first scandals relating to the funding of political parties. As was

*) This work was part of the grant project "Sociální trendy" funded by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic (Grant No. 403/96/K120) and the grant project "Sociální problémy, sociální politika a sociální struktury" funded by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic (grant No. 403/96/0386).

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clear from a wide range of surveys, public satisfaction with the economic and social situation, and especially with the political climate, began to fall sharply.

All this found logical expression in changes in voting preferences for the individual political parties. Polls taken using questions of the type, "Which political party would you vote for if elections to the Chamber of Deputies were held next week?" showed that potential ČSSD voters were consistently growing in numbers, while ODS was continually losing ground. Preferences for KDU-ČSL and ODA were fluctuating and expressed reactions to their policies of the day, with the additional factor, in the case of ODA, of public expectations of change in the party leadership. People began to talk seriously of the necessity for early parliamentary elections.

Scandals linked to the funding of ODS were apparently the last straw, causing the disintegration of the coalition. In the Autumn of 1997 the coalition fell and there was a split in ODS that resulted in the founding of the Freedom Union (US). This created an entirely new political situation, in which at the beginning of 1998 the decision was taken to hold early elections in June of that year. A caretaker government led by prime minister Tošovský and composed of members of KDU-ČSL, ODA, US and a number of non-party figures gained a temporary and politically limited mandate. ODS, which took no share in putting together the government, went into the opposition and lost a significant proportion of its voters.

After the crisis in ODS, the smaller ODA came into difficulties as well. Scandals linked to sponsorship gifts to the party almost led to its extinction. Most of its leaders abandoned it, and were followed by its voters. When its support had dropped to a mere one percent, ODA decided to field no candidates in the early parliamentary elections. In the spring of 1998 a whole series of other scandals came to light (such as the ČSSD Bamberg Affair, and new obscurities surrounding sponsorship gifts to ODS), but these no longer had such perceptible effects, since it appears that the main shift of voting preferences to the left had already taken place during 1997 [see Řeháková 1998]. One of the new parties hoping to win parliamentary seats in the early elections was the Pensioners for Social Security Party (DŽJ), whose supporters increased rapidly, even though the party was often branded as being further to the left than the Communist party (KSČM).

The early parliamentary elections brought some immediate surprises. The first was the resurrection of ODS, which had attracted only 10% of voter preferences at the beginning of 1998 but captured 27.7% in the actual elections, which represented a loss of less than 2% as compared with the elections of 1996. Another surprise was the failure of the Republicans (SPR-RSČ) and the DŽJ to win the 5% share necessary for representation in the Chamber of Deputies. While some political scientists had predicted this result, the pre-election polls had been far more equivocal. For example, according to one poll by the STEM agency in April 1998 there was almost 7% support for the SPR-RSČ and 5% for the DŽJ. The winning ČSSD won 32.3% of the votes, which was almost 6% more than in the previous elections. The KDU-ČSL and the KSČM improved their positions by almost one percent to 9.0% and 11.0% respectively. The US result of 8.6% was sufficient for the party to gain parliamentary seats, but was still below the expectations raised by pre-election polls in March and April 1998 (according to STEM preference for the US had risen as high as 18% in April 1998). The left-wing parties as a whole (the ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, and SDL in 1996 and the ČSSD, KSČM, and DŽJ in 1998) registered a 5% growth in votes (a rise from 41.4% to 46.4%), while the non-left, including the right-wing

parties and one centre party (ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP in 1996, and ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU in 1998), lost overall only 0.1% (a fall from 46.9% to 46.8%). The 5% gain by the left was therefore at the expense of the other parties standing, which together won only 6.8%, while in the previous elections they had won 11.7%. Five of the thirteen parties standing got into parliament, as compared to six parties out of sixteen in 1996.

2. Surveys Used and Characteristics Analysed

We use data from polls conducted on both election days among voters leaving randomly selected polling stations during the elections in 1996 and 1998. Both polls were carried out by the firms IFES and SC&C for Czech Television, on a sample of 13,792 voters in 1996 and 13,388 in 1998. Stratified cluster sampling was used for selection of voting precincts, and systematic sampling for the voters. This meant for random sample from the group of all persons taking part in the elections, and not from the set of all citizens of the Czech Republic with the right to vote. A survey of this kind (known as an exit poll) is conducted by asking voters leaving the polling stations to fill in a short questionnaire in which the key question is which party they have just given their vote to. There are further questions relating to highest achieved education, main employment, religious affiliation and the party for which they voted in the previous election. In 1998 there was also a question asking when the voter had decided on which way they would vote. The polls did not involve any questions on attitudes, and therefore analysis of voter motivation is not possible.

The primary purpose of exit polls is to create a forecast of election results for television and radio before the real results become available. The first forecasts are usually made public immediately after the polling stations close and are then continuously adjusted as the Central Electoral Commission gradually releases the real results from the individual constituencies. After declaration of the final results the sample is then re-weighted so that the performance of the individual parties as reflected in the exit poll matches that of their real performance. This is sociologically valuable evidence because it provides a series of other kinds of data about voters, and so makes possible an analysis of voting behaviour at real, not hypothetical elections.

3. Method of Data Processing

The processing of the data is based primarily on logit and multinomial logit models which are a special case of log-linear models. Their special character lies in the fact that in the group of categorised variables analysed, one is defined as the variable to be explained and the others as explanatory variables. They take their name from the term “logit” which is the logarithm of the proportion of two numbers. Logit models are created specifically for logits and, by derivation for the proportion of two frequencies, for example for the proportion of the number of women who vote for the left to the number of women who do not vote for the left. This particular proportion is then termed the odds of a vote for the left by a woman. The odds of a particular event also means the ratio of the probability that the event will occur to the probability that it will not occur.

While logit models can only be used for dichotomic dependent variables, multinomial logit models are not limited in this way. They can therefore be used for categorical dependent variables which take on three or more values. They therefore work again with logits, but simultaneously (for example with logarithms of the ratio of votes for US and ODS and with logarithms of the ratios of votes for the KDU-ČSL and ODS at the same

time), or with generalised logits, when they do not work with the logarithm of the ratio of category frequencies, but of a more complex construction. Here generalised logits will not be used. We can also look at logit and multinomial logit models as a certain way of testing of very complex hypotheses. The reliability of the models is checked by means of goodness-of-fit tests. One of the main advantages of log-linear modelling is its capacity to distinguish the strength of an association between variables from the other changes present, specifically from the changing overall gains of political parties in the elections and from the changing sizes of social and educational groups, age categories and so on. For this reason we give this modelling priority over other methods especially when comparing results over time.

Apart from these two types of model we also employ analysis of correspondences, by means of which we define the characteristic profile of typical voters for different parties. The starting point is a two-dimensional table of numbers, in which the rows are individual parties and the columns for example categories of employment or age. With the help of analysis of correspondences we identify the difference or similarity between two variables graphically, in multidimensional space. Thus we identify, for example, which age categories correspond with which party (this is far from necessarily a matter of modal categories). Since the analysis of correspondences, unlike the logit or multinomial logit models does not work with the odds, the conclusions to be derived from these two methods are not necessarily always entirely the same.

We analyse the results of the elections from two points of view. First we focus only on the 1998 elections and comparison of voters of selected left-wing and non left-wing parties. I place the ČSSD, KSČM and DŽJ in the group of left-wing parties, and the ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, and DEU in the group of non-left-wing parties. With the exception of the KDU-ČSL, which over time has been crystallising as a centre party, these latter are parties of the centre-right to right. We shall not be considering the election results of the SPR-RSČ and the composition of their voters, but refer the reader here to the work of Kreidl a Vlachová [1998, 1999]. Since the programmes of the parties, the degree of their left-wing or right-wing orientation and thus the composition of their voters differed even within the groups of left-wing and right-wing parties, a further step is taken by comparing voters for the ČSSD with voters for the KSČM, and comparing voters for the ODS, KDU-ČSL and US. The DŽJ and DEU are not included in comparison because they attracted only a small percentage of voters. Finally we focus on the changes in the ratios of votes for left-wing and non-left-wing parties, specifically for the ČSSD and for the ODS (as their most important representatives) in different groups of voters between the 1996 and 1998 elections.

4. Look at the 1998 Elections from the Point of View of the Odds of Voting for the Left

The variable to be explained here has two categories: 1) the casting of a vote for ČSSD, KSČM or DŽJ, and 2) the casting of a vote for ODS, KDU-ČSL, US or DEU. The explanatory variables will be gender, age, education, employment, religious affiliation and size of the place of residence. First we shall describe voting behaviour in subsets created by the different explanatory variables, and then we shall also use a multi-dimensional perspective, i.e. voting behaviour in subsets created by combining two or three explanatory variables. We shall also make certain limited comparisons with voting results in 1996, although this is a theme that we shall consider in detail only at a later stage.

The odds of casting a vote for the left are 1.06 for men and 0.93 for women. These two figures differ significantly, and we can therefore assert that men emerge as more left-wing than women in the elections. The same pattern was evident in 1996. The age of voters was ascertained in the poll in terms of six categories: 18-19, 20-21, 22-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60 and over. The odds of casting a vote for the left in these age categories are, respectively, 0.79, 0.62, 0.76, 0.80, 1.28, 1.23. This means that voters of up to 44 years of age vote for non-left-wing parties more often than for left-wing parties, while among voters above that age the reverse is the case. In this respect too, the result is the same as it was in 1996. Moreover, differences in voting behaviour as between the first four groups are not significant, and the same is true of differences in the behaviour of the last two groups. We can then conclude that there exists an important difference between the behaviour of voters up to 44 years of age and the behaviour of voters above that age: older voters are more left-wing than younger voters.

Highest completed education was stated only in terms of four basic types: primary, vocational, secondary, university. These four groups also showed significantly different patterns of voting behaviour. The observed chance of voting for the left in these groups was, respectively, 1.66, 1.43, 0.77, 0.58, and we can therefore state that the odds of voting for the left decrease with the increasing level of education (once again the same result as in 1996). The decrease was not, however, smooth and even, since there was a particularly steep drop between the behaviour of voters with vocational education and voters with secondary education. This represented a certain change as compared to 1996, when the difference in the preferences of these two groups was not so marked.

The voters fell into five groups in terms of main employment: employees with university education (professionals), employees without university education (routine non-manual workers), self-employed (independently economically active), manual workers and agricultural workers, pensioners (including those on disability benefits). The way in which the question on employment was posed made more detailed classification impossible. Other groups, such as housewives, students and apprentices, the unemployed and others, are not analysed in this context. The observed odds of voting for the left in the groups listed above are, respectively, 0.65; 0.96; 0.39; 1.82; 1.28 and can be placed in the following order from the most left-wing to the least: manual workers and agricultural workers, pensioners, routine non-manual workers, professionals, self-employed. This is the same order as in 1996, but certain changes have nonetheless occurred. For example, the difference between the voting behaviour of pensioners and routine non-manual workers has increased, as has the difference between professionals and self-employed. By contrast, the difference between the voting behaviour of professionals and routine non-manual workers has decreased. This reflects a situation in which the odds of a left-wing vote among routine non-manual workers and among the self-employed has remained constant, while increasing among the other social groups.

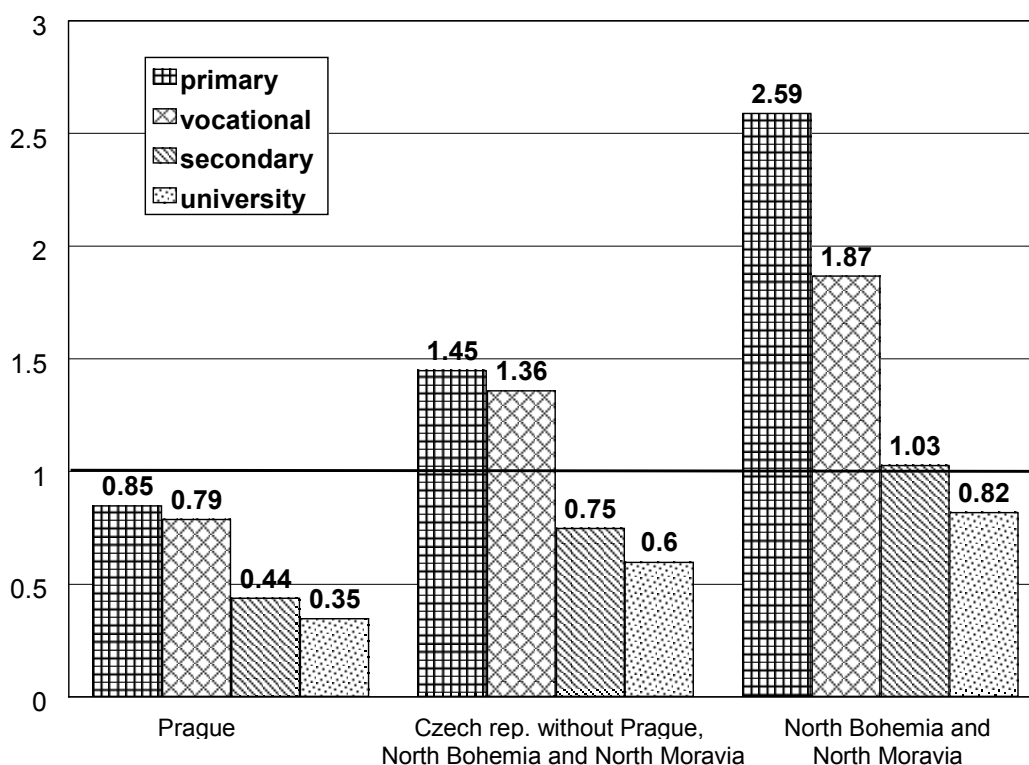
If we subdivide the groups of pensioners and self-employed according to education between those who have at most vocational education and those who have at least secondary education, then in terms of their voting behaviour the voters fall into only four significantly distinct groups. The first is composed of manual workers, agricultural workers and pensioners with vocational education at most, and this group is the most left-wing. The second group is composed of routine non-manual workers and pensioners with at least secondary education. The third is made up of professionals and self-employed with at most vocational education. The fourth group is composed of self-employed with at

least secondary education, and it is this group that is least left-wing. The odds of voting for the left as derived from the logit model are as follows in sequence from the first to the fourth group: 1.73; 0.95; 0.62; 0.31.

The question on religious affiliation allowed for four possible answers: without religious affiliation, Roman Catholic, other Christian, other than Christian. None of the selected voters indicated the last category. The odds of a left wing vote are 1.11 for voters without religious affiliation, 0.88 for Roman Catholic voters, and 0.82 for voters of other Christian affiliations. The difference between the last two figures is not significant, and so we can divide the voters into two groups: voters without religious affiliation and voters claiming some Christian religious affiliation. The first are more left-wing than the second.

Size of the place of residence was not established by a question, but derived immediately from the sampling design. Places were divided into four categories: large towns (more than 100,000 inhabitants), middle-sized towns (from 15,000 to 99,999), small towns (from 2,800 to 14,999), villages (2,799 and less). The odds of casting a left-wing vote were 0.65 in the large towns, 1.06 in middle-sized and small towns, and 1.17 in villages. There is therefore a significant connection between voting behaviour and size of the place of residence: voters from large cities are less left-wing than voters from other towns, and these are less left wing than voters from villages.

Figure 1. The number of votes for the left (ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ) to the number of votes for the non-left (ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU) in the 1998 election: estimation from the logit model

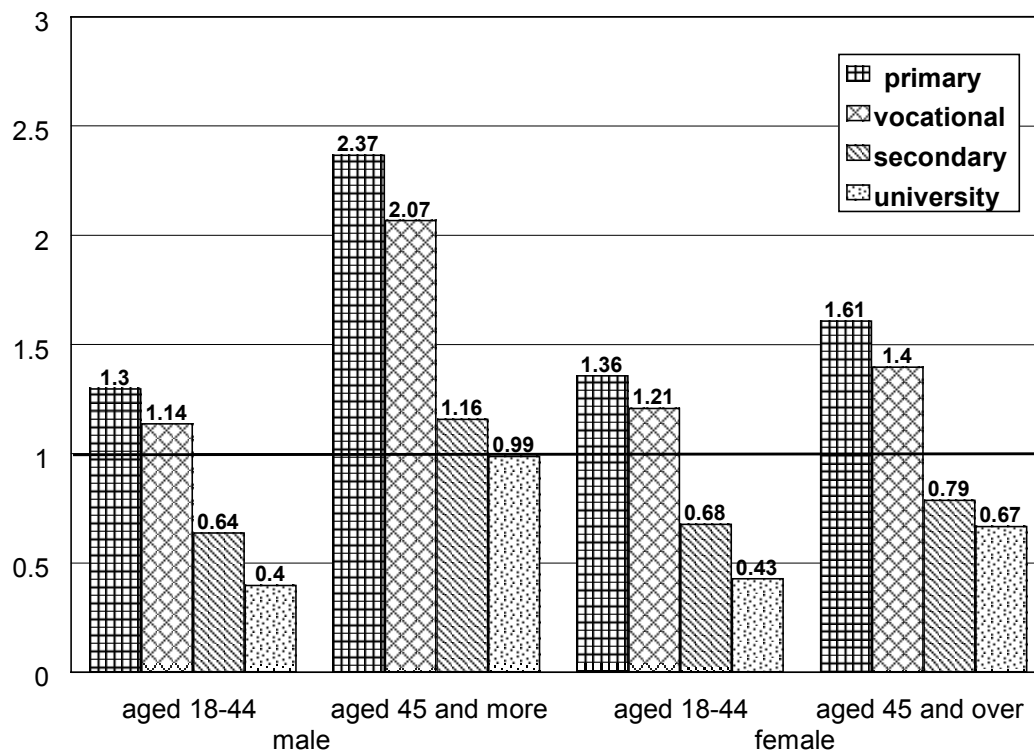


Source: IFES/SC&C for the Czech television (June 1998).

The different odds of casting a vote for the left in the different regions that are set out below are not calculated from the sample of voters, since this does not cover the individual regions sufficiently precisely, but are calculated from the real election results as printed in the daily press. We list the regions in order from the most left-wing to the least, with the figure in brackets representing the odds of a left-wing vote: North Moravia (1.36), North Bohemia (1.29), West Bohemia (1.09), Central Bohemia (1.04), South Moravia (1.02), South Bohemia (0.94), East Bohemia (0.86), Prague (0.50). In 1996 the order was only slightly different: North Bohemia (1.18), North Moravia (1.14), West Bohemia (0.97), Central Bohemia (0.93), South Moravia and South Bohemia (0.87), East Bohemia (0.79), Prague (0.47).

The question on the time when the voter decided on the party that they would vote for offered four possible answers: today, in the last fortnight, in the last two months, prior to the last two months. More than half the voters (59.2%) had decided more than two months prior to the elections, and within that group voters of the left-wing parties predominated (the odds of a vote for the left = 1.12). 11.6% of the voters had decided on the day of the election, 15.4% of voters within the preceding fortnight, and 13.8% within the preceding two months. Voters of non-left parties predominated in all three of these groups (the odds of a vote for the left in these groups were respectively 0.95; 0.75; 0.83).

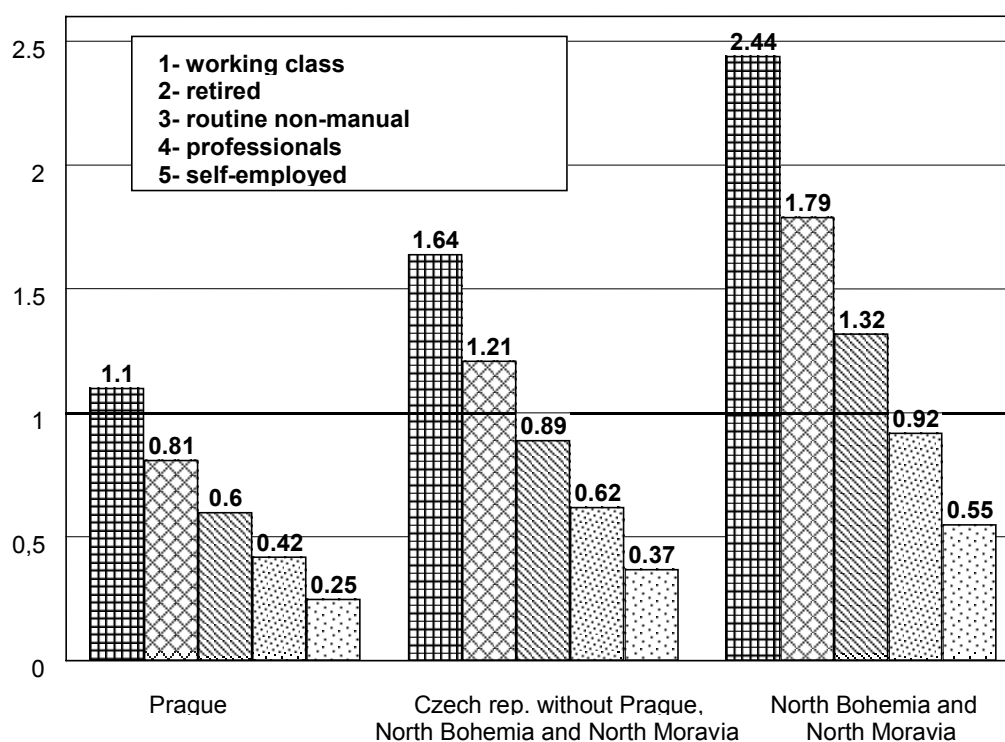
Figure 2. The number of votes for the left (ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ) to the number of votes for the non-left (ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU) in the 1998 election: estimation from the logit model



Source: IFES/SC&C for the Czech television (June 1998).

For readers interested in multi-dimensional relationships we present four models which relate voting behaviour to education (or employment) and the place from which the voter comes, or to gender and age. These are therefore two three-dimensional and two four-dimensional models. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between voting behaviour (the variable to be explained), education of the voters and region that they come from (explanatory variables). We distinguish between three regions: Prague, the Czech Republic without Prague, North Bohemia and North Moravia, and finally North Moravia and North Bohemia. Both explanatory variables have a significant differentiating effect on voting behaviour, and do so not independently, but in mutual dependence. Several conclusions can be read from Figure 1. The higher the education, the lower the attraction of left-wing parties for voters. This principle applies to all regions, but with one difference: while in the first two regions there is only a small (although still significant) difference between voters with basic education and those with vocational education, in the area composed of North Bohemia and North Moravia, this difference is strikingly larger. Figure 1 also vividly demonstrates the striking differences between the voting behaviour of citizens with the same type of education, but living in different regions.

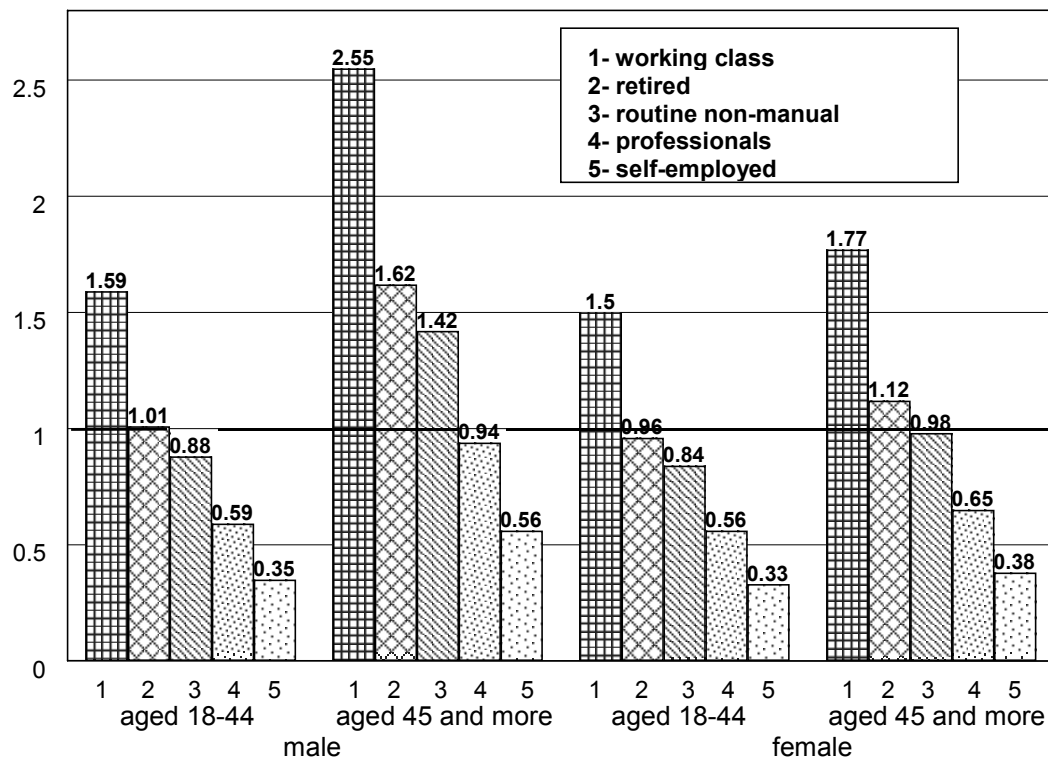
Figure 3. The number of votes for the left (ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ) to the number of votes for the non-left (ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU) in the 1998 election: estimation from the logit model



Source: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (June 1998)

Figure 2 demonstrates the connection between voting behaviour, and education, age and gender. All the explanatory variables have a significant differentiating effect on voter behaviour, and once again their relationship to voter behaviour is mutually inter-dependent, reflecting the interacting influence of education and age, and also of gender and age on voter behaviour. In all the sub-groups produced by breakdown in terms of gender and age, the expected effect of education is evident, i.e. the attraction of the left diminishes with increased level of education. The difference between the behaviour of voters with primary education and those with vocational education is not large (although it is still significant), and is the same in all sub-groups. The major difference is between the behaviour of voters with vocational education and voters with secondary education, and is again uniform in all sub-groups. The difference between the behaviour of voters with secondary education and those with university education is large among young men and women, but much smaller among older men and women. From Figure 2 we can also deduce that the voting behaviour of younger men and women with the same type of education is practically identical, while there is a very marked gender difference in the case of the voting behaviour of older men and women with the same type of education: here the men are more left-wing.

Figure 4. The number of votes for the left (ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ) to the number of votes for the non-left (ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU) in the 1998 election: estimation from the logit model



Source: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (June 1998)

The relationship between voting behaviour on the one hand, and the voter's employment and region on the other, is shown in Figure 3. In contrast to the two preceding situations, the relationship between employment and voting behaviour is independent of region, i.e. it is the same in all the three regions considered. It is clear from Figure 3 that in each region manual workers and agricultural workers are the most left-wing, followed by pensioners, routine non-manual workers, professionals and self-employed in that order. Figure 3 likewise exposes how the behaviour of voters of the same employment category differs in the different regions.

The relationship of voting behaviour to employment, age and gender is presented in Figure 4, from which the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a) employment influences voting in the same way in men and women, and in younger and older voters, and is therefore a factor that is independent of gender and age,
- b) there is practically no difference in the voting behaviour of younger men and women in the same employment groups, but there is a marked difference in the voting behaviour of older men and women in the same employment groups, in the sense that the men are more left-wing than the women,
- c) the older generation is more inclined to the left than the younger generation,
- d) older men differ from younger men in their voting behaviour much more than older women differ from younger women.

5. Comparison of ČSSD (Social Democrat) and KSČM (Communist) Voters

The overall ratio of votes for ČSSD and votes for KSČM is 2.93. This means that almost three times more voters chose ČSSD than chose KSČM. Gender seems to play no part in voters' choice between ČSSD and KSČM, but age is of great importance: the younger the voter, the stronger the preference for ČSSD over KSČM. The number of ČSSD votes per KSČM vote in the age categories 18-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60 and over, are respectively 7.07; 4.27; 2.57; 1.55. The attraction of ČSSD as compared to KSČM increases with the level of education from primary education to secondary education. The number of votes for ČSSD per KSČM vote is 1.66 in the groups with primary education, 3.07 in the group with vocational education, and 3.47 in the group with secondary or university education. ČSSD voters are therefore not only younger than KSČM voters, but also more educated.

There is also a connection between the proportion of ČSSD votes to KSČM votes and religious affiliation. Voters without religious affiliation show less preference for ČSSD than Roman Catholic voters, who again show less such preference for ČSSD than voters claiming affiliation to another Christian church. In these groups the number of ČSSD votes per KSČM vote are respectively 2.57; 3.44; 4.60. In relation to the question of how far before the elections voters made up their minds for ČSSD or KSČM, we can say that the proportion of ČSSD voters who made up their minds more than two months before the elections is lower than the proportion of such voters among the total number of voters for the two parties together (2.22 as against 2.93). In the other categories, i.e. decision on the day of elections, within the preceding two weeks, or within the preceding two months, the proportion of ČSSD voters is higher than the proportion of such voters among the total number of voters for the two parties (4.79, 6.34, 6.34 as against 2.93). This means that KSČM voters had made up their minds much earlier than ČSSD voters.

Preferences for ČSSD over KSČM are the strongest among professionals (the vote ratio is 4.55), among routine non-manual workers (4.21), and among self-employed (4.07). Among manual workers and agricultural workers the vote ratio (3.04) is roughly equivalent to the overall vote ratio for these two political parties (2.93), or to be more precise, there is no significant difference between these two ratios. The comparative attraction of ČSSD is the lowest for pensioners (1.64). We may summarise by saying that left-wing oriented professionals, routine non-manual workers and the self-employed strongly prefer ČSSD to KSČM, whereas left-wing oriented pensioners have a marked preference for the KSČM. Age is clearly a major factor in the latter case.

Size of the place of residence also has a perceptible differentiating effect on the ratio of votes cast for ČSSD and KSČM. The larger the place, the greater the sympathy for the ČSSD. The vote ratios are the following: 4.12 for large towns, 3.39 for middle-sized towns, 2.79 for small towns and 2.30 for villages. The preponderance of votes for ČSSD over votes for KSČM is greatest in the North Moravia region (3.46), followed in descending order by Prague (3.35), East Bohemia (2.99), Central Bohemia (2.84), West Bohemia (2.79), North Bohemia (2.76), South Bohemia (2.71), South Moravia (2.58). The break point, which means less sympathy for ČSSD than would correspond to the overall ratio of votes between ČSSD and KSČM, comes with the Central Bohemian region.

6. Comparison of ODS, KDU-ČSL and US Voters

The overall ratio of votes for ODS and US is 3.23. While the gender of the voter, size of the place of residence and type of religion do not significantly change the ratio of votes for these two parties, age, education and social group emerge as important differentiating factors. The ratio of ODS and US voters in the age group 18-29 is 2.74 and in the older age categories it is 3.44. This means that voters up to age 29 prefer US to ODS, while voters age 30 and over favour ODS over US. The ratio of voters for ODS and US in the group of voters with university education is 2.20, which shows that US is more attractive than ODS for this kind of voter. Voters with other types of education favour ODS over US, as is clear from the fact that the ratio of votes for ODS and US reaches 3.54 for voters with primary education, vocational education, or secondary education. The self-employed give preference to ODS over US, since in this group the vote ratio is 4.10. Professionals, by contrast, give preference to US over ODS, since in this group the vote ratio of ODS to US is 2.18. The attitude of routine non-manual workers, pensioners, and manual workers and agricultural workers to the two parties is approximately the same. In these groups the ratio of votes for ODS and US varies around 3.50. As far as region is concerned, the ratio of votes for ODS and US emerges in the following order: Central Bohemia (3.79), North Moravia (3.61), North Bohemia (3.37), South Bohemia (3.32), West Bohemia (3.31), Prague (3.17), East Bohemia (3.06), South Moravia (2.70).

The overall ratio of votes for KDU-ČSL and for ODS is 0.32, and the overall ratio of votes for KDU-ČSL and US is 1.04. The first difference between KDU-ČSL voters and ODS or US voters lies in the fact that women prefer KDU-ČSL while ODS or US is more attractive to men. Another difference between KDU-ČSL voters and voters for the other two named right-wing parties is a question of age. Voters of up to 59 years of age give preference to ODS or US over KDU-ČSL, while older voters prefer KDU-ČSL to ODS and to US. Education also has a differentiating effect between KDU-ČSL voters on the one hand and ODS or US voters on the other hand. The votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and for ODS in the group of voters with primary education or vocational education is 0.77,

while in the group of voters with secondary education or university education it is 0.27. The attractiveness of KDU-ČSL over US rapidly decreases with increase in level of education: the votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and US is 2.73 in the group with primary education, 1.22 for the vocationally educated, 0.95 for the voters with secondary education and 0.59 among university graduates.

Voters from the ranks of manual workers and agricultural workers, and also pensioners, give preference to KDU-ČSL over both ODS and US. The votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and ODS among manual workers and agricultural workers is 0.55, and among pensioners 0.50. The votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and for US among manual workers and agricultural workers is 1.96, and among pensioners 1.79. KDU-ČSL has not managed to attract the self-employed. In this group the vote ratio for KDU-ČSL and ODS (or US) is only 0.11 (or 0.45). Professionals and routine non-manual workers also prefer ODS and US to KDU-ČSL, although not as strongly as the self-employed. Voters who declare Roman Catholic affiliation strongly prefer KDU-ČSL both to ODS and to US. In this group the votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and ODS (or US) is 0.68 (or 2.27), i.e. more than twice as large as the overall ratio. Conversely, voters without religious affiliation have a marked preference for both ODS and US over KDU-ČSL. Among such voters the votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and ODS (or US) is 0.13 (or 0.41). The behaviour of voters with religious affiliations other than Roman Catholic varies between these two extremes, and in this group the votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and ODS (or US) does not differ significantly from the overall ratios, i.e. from 0.32 and 1.04. With increase in size of the place of residence, the votes ratio for the KDU-ČSL and ODS declines as follows: 0.54, 0.37, 0.26, 0.18. The same pattern is evident in the votes ratio for KDU-ČSL and for US: 1.75, 1.19, 0.82, 0.56.

In terms of the ratio of votes for ODS and for KDU-ČSL, the order for the regions is as follows: Prague (6.90), North Bohemia (6.34), Central Bohemia (4.61), West Bohemia (4.07), South Bohemia (2.87), North Moravia (2.47) East Bohemia (2.40), South Moravia (1.70). The break point in favour of KDU-ČSL occurs with the South Bohemian region, because the votes ratio for ODS and for KDU-ČSL for all voters is 3.08. Calculation of the votes ratio for US and for KDU-ČSL gives the following regional order: Prague (2.18), North Bohemia (1.88), West Bohemia (1.23), Central Bohemia (1.22), South Bohemia (0.86), East Bohemia (0.78), North Moravia (0.68), South Moravia (0.63). The order is similar to the order of votes ratios for ODS and for the KDU-ČSL. The break-point in favour of KDU-ČSL comes with the South Bohemian region, because the votes ratio for US and for KDU-ČSL for all voters is 0.96.

In relation to the time at which voters decided for particular parties, ODS voters had more often decided earlier than two months prior to the elections than had KDU-ČSL voters, and especially US voters, and had less often decided in the shorter periods before the elections. Comparison of US and KDU-ČSL voters shows that US voters were more likely than KDU-ČSL voters to have decided within the previous fortnight or the previous two months, while KDU-ČSL voters were more likely than US voters to have decided either on the day of elections or more than two months prior to the elections.

7. Typical Profiles of Voters for Different Parties

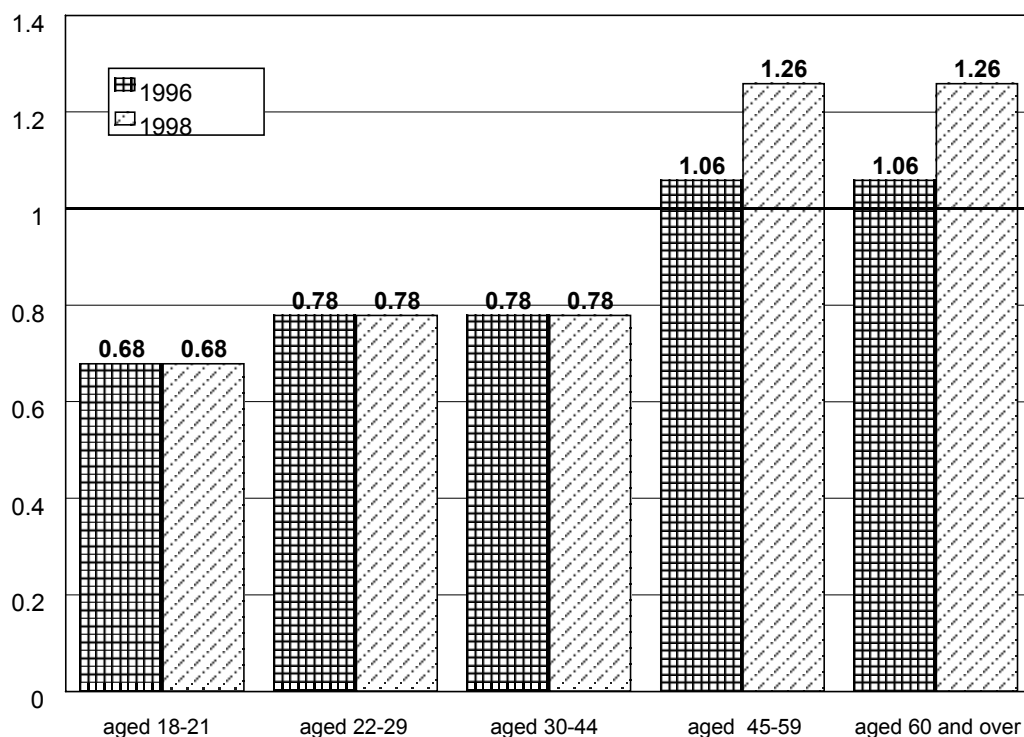
While in Parts 5 and 6 we compared voters for the two left-wing parties, and voters for ODS, US and KDU-ČSL separately, here the profiles presented are the result of comparisons made between all the five parties mentioned at once. The typical ODS voter is a man or women in the age range 18-44 living in a large town, and with at least a completed

secondary education, self-employed, professional or a routine non-manual worker, without religious affiliation or with Christian but not Roman-Catholic affiliation. It is also someone who decided to vote for this party more than two months prior to the elections and who in 1996 had voted ODS or ODA or one of the small parties that had not made it to parliament, or who had not voted before because of being underage at the time or for some other reason. As far as region is concerned, they are particularly likely to live in Prague.

The typical US voter differs from the typical ODS voter especially in having decided for US a shorter time before the elections, specifically in the previous fortnight or the previous two months. There is a certain educational difference as well. Once again this is a voter with at least completed secondary education, but also more likely to be a university graduate than the typical ODS voter. The typical KDU-ČSL voter is, of course, entirely different. She is a woman of pension age, with primary education, Roman Catholic religious affiliation, living in a village or small town in the South Moravian or East Bohemian region, and she has already voted for this party in the previous election.

The typical ČSSD voter is a man with vocational education employed as a manual worker in the age-range 33-59, who lives in a middle-sized or small town and has no religious affiliation. He is most likely to be from the North Bohemian or North Moravian region. In the previous elections he voted ČSSD or SPR-RSČ or for one of the small parties that did not get a seat in Parliament, or he did not vote at all because he was still underage, or for some other reason. The typical KSČM voter is a man with primary education, a pensioner, from a village or small town, and from North Bohemia, North Moravia, but also from the South Moravian region. He has already voted for the party in the previous elections, and made his voting decision more than two months prior to the elections.

Figure 5. The number of votes for the left to the number of votes for the non-left: estimation from the logit model



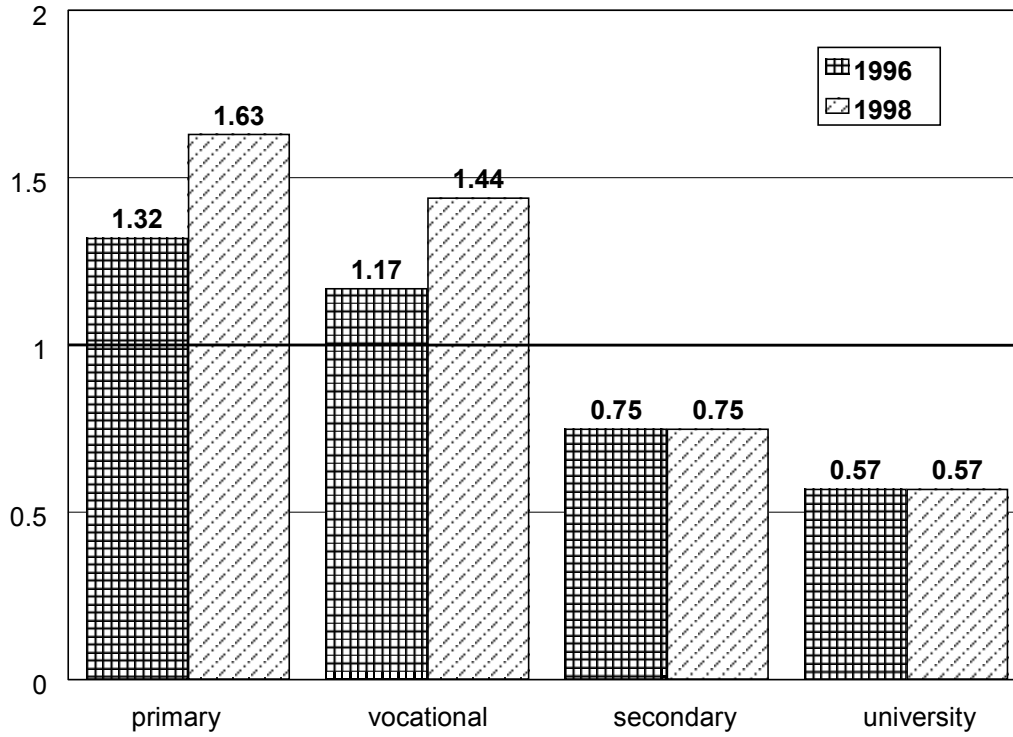
Note: The left in 1996: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, SDL; left in 1998: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ; the non-left in 1996: ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP; non-left in 1998: ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU.

Sources: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (1996, 1998).

8. Comparison of the Results of the 1998 Elections with the Results of the 1996 Elections

As has already been stated at the beginning, the results of the 1998 election brought a further shift to the left. In 1996 the ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, and SDL were together classified as left-wing parties, and in 1998 the ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ were classified as left-wing parties. In 1996 ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, and ČP were classified as non-left-wing parties, and in 1998 ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, and DEU were classified as non-left-wing parties. Of course, the shift was not necessarily as marked in some sub-groups as in others, and in certain sub-groups there was no shift at all. In order to clarify the issue, we shall speak of a shift to the left where the ratio of votes for left-wing parties to votes for non-left-wing parties, i.e. the odds of a vote for the left, is significantly higher in 1998 than it was in 1996.

Figure 6. The number of votes for the left to the number of votes for the non-left: estimation from the logit model

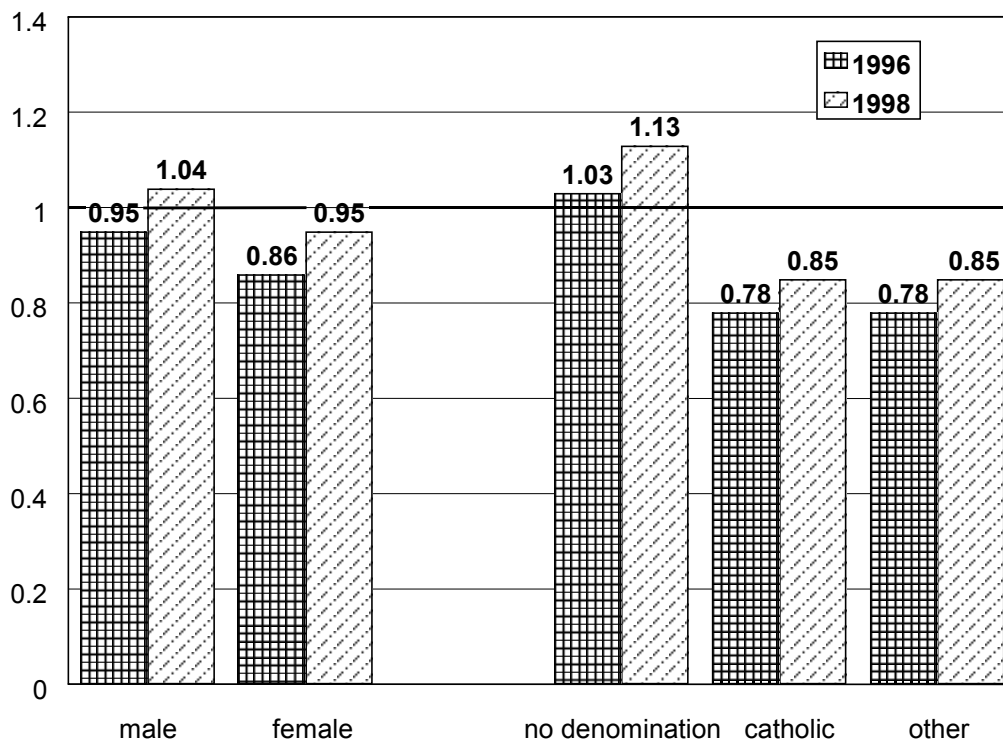


Note: The left in 1996: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, SDL; the left in 1998: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ; the non-left in 1996: ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP; the non-left in 1998: ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU.

Sources: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (1996, 1998).

Figure 5 shows the relationship between the odds of a vote for the left, and the age of the voter and year of elections. It makes clear that a shift to the left occurred only among older voters, i.e. in the age categories 45-59, and 60 and over. The shift in these two categories is statistically significant. Figure 6 shows the relationship between the odds of a vote for the left and the education of the voter and year of elections. Once again we see that the shift to the left did not occur in all educational categories, but only among voters with primary education or vocational education. Again this shift is statistically significant.

Figure 7. The number of votes for the left to the number of votes for the non-left: estimation from the logit model

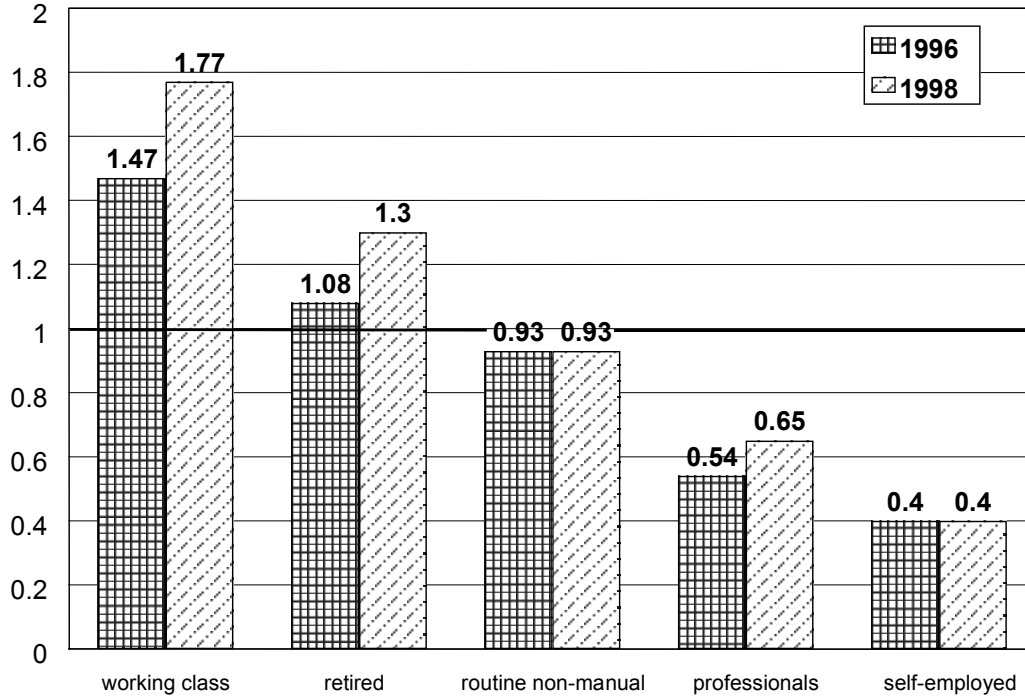


Note: The left in 1996: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, SDL; the left in 1998: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ; the non-left in 1996: ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP; the non-left in 1998: ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU.

Sources: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (1996, 1998).

A shift to the left occurred among both men and women, and was just as strong in both cases. The same applies to the groups created by decomposition according to religious affiliation (see Figure 7). A shift to the left did not occur among the self-employed or routine non-manual workers. Professionals, manual workers and agricultural workers, and pensioners all shifted to the left to the same extent (see Figure 8). Figure 9 shows the relationship between the odds of voting for the left and the education of voters and year of elections. A shift to the left did not occur among men and women in the age-range 18-44 and with at least secondary education. The greatest shift was to be found among men and women of 45 and above with primary education or vocational education. A smaller but still significant shift to the left occurred among men and women of age 45 and over with secondary or university education.

Figure 8. The number of votes for the left to the number of votes for the non-left: estimation from the logit model



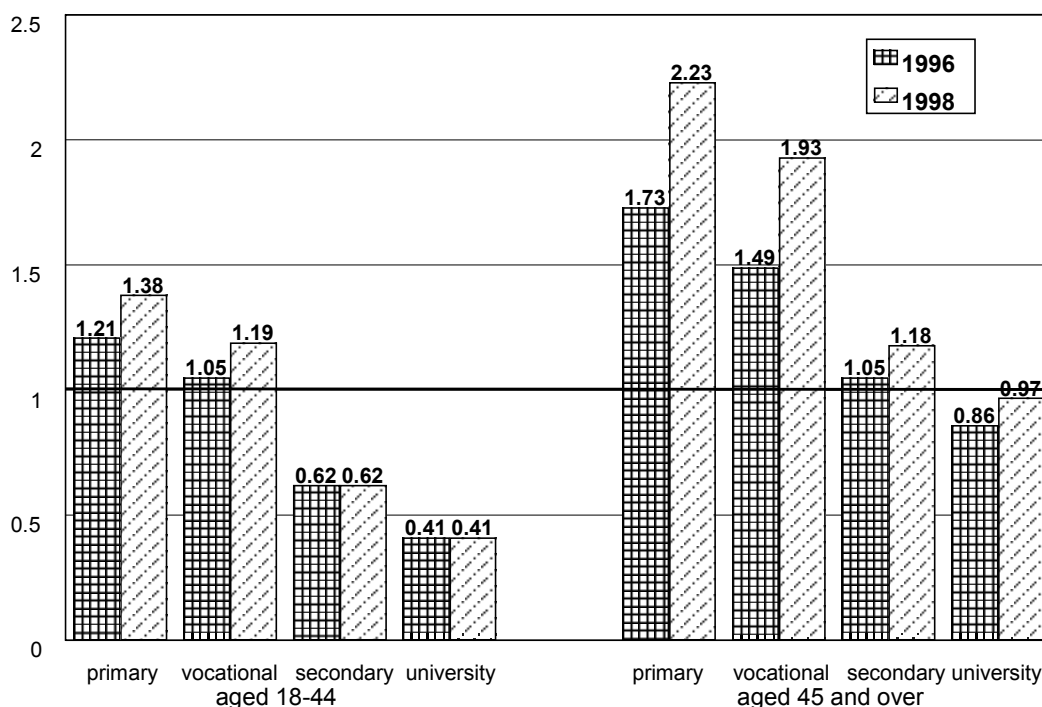
Note: The left in 1996: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, SDL; the left in 1998: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ; the non-left in 1996: ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP; the non-left in 1998: ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU.

Sources: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (1996, 1998).

The overall shift to the left also varied between different regions. It was smallest in Prague (the odds of a vote for the left were 0.47 in 1996 and 0.50 in 1998), and then in ascending order South Bohemia (0.87; 0.94), North Bohemia (1.18; 1.29), East Bohemia (0.79; 0.86), Central Bohemia (0.93; 1.04), West Bohemia (0.97; 1.09), South Moravia (0.87; 1.02), North Moravia (1.14; 1.36). This data makes clear that Moravia shifted to the left more than Bohemia.

In the elections of both 1996 and 1998 the main rivals and the parties with the highest support from voters were ČSSD and ODS. The votes ratio for the ČSSD as compared to ODS increased in 1998 in all age and educational categories and in almost all social groups. The only exception was among the self-employed, where there was no change. The votes ratio for ČSSD as compared to ODS grew only slightly among voters of up to 44 years of age (from 0.95 to 1.04). This result also applied to the individual age groups: 18-21, 22-29, 30-44. A much greater growth in sympathy for the ČSSD can be observed among voters in the 45-59 age group (the votes ratio for ČSSD as compared to ODS grew from 1.12 to 1.47) and even more among voters over 60 (from 0.66 to 1.14).

Figure 9A. The number of votes for the left to the number of votes for the non-left: estimation from the logit model (males)



Note: The left in 1996: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, SDL; the left in 1998: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ; the non-left in 1996: ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP; the non-left in 1998: ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU.

Sources: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (1996, 1998).

Figures 9A and 9B represent one logit model and are presented separately for the sake of lucidity.

As far as the educational criterion is concerned, the ratio of votes for ČSSD as compared to ODS showed the highest increase among voters with primary education (from 1.12 to 1.79). The votes ratio among voters with other types of education grew with roughly the same intensity: from 1.32 to 1.66 among those with vocational education, from 0.75 to 0.95 to those with secondary education, and from 0.57 to 0.71 among university graduates. The rise in the votes ratio in favour of ČSSD as compared to ODS in different social groups was quite uneven. As has been stated, among the self-employed this ratio remained on the same level as in 1996 (0.41). It grew the most among pensioners (from 0.74 to 1.22), professionals (from 0.64 to 0.98) and manual workers and agricultural workers (from 1.87 to 2.53). Among routine non-manual workers the ratio increased only slightly (from 1.05 to 1.20).

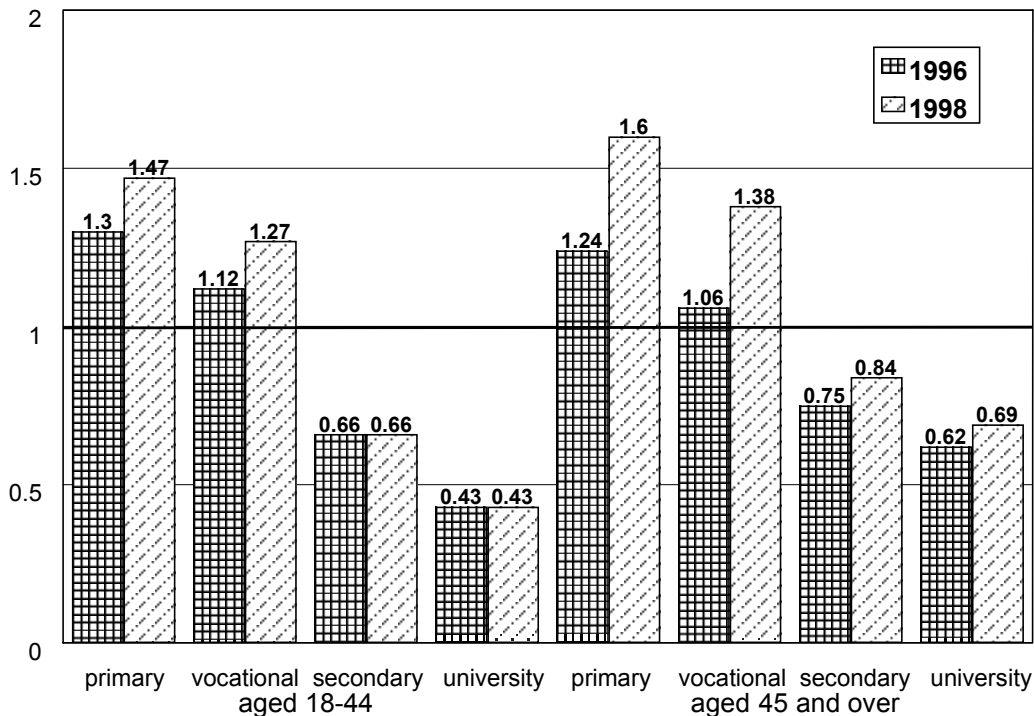
9. Conclusion

The early parliamentary elections of 1998 were supposed to make possible the establishment of a stable majority government. This goal, however, has remained out of reach. While the non-left-wing parties gained a small majority, they lacked the will to create a government. Likewise, negotiations between ČSSD, KDU-ČSL and US ended in failure.

In the end ČSSD formed a minority government maintained by what is known as the “opposition agreement” between the biggest rivals and most successful parties in the elections – the left-wing ČSSD and the right-wing ODS.

A year after the early elections we are witnessing a deep decline in support for ČSSD, and a gradual but solid growth in support for KSČM. Citizens who are disappointed by the policies of ČSSD are not turning to the non-left-wing parties but looking for salvation in KSČM. This is definitely an alarming fact. I believe, however, that as long as the non-left-wing parties fail to change their programmes and priorities in any fundamental way, and as long as there is no visible growth of the middle class, they do not have much hope of acquiring more voters in the near future.

Figure 9B. The number of votes for the left to the number of votes for the non-left: estimation from the logit model (females)



Note: The left in 1996: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ, LB, SDL; the left in 1998: ČSSD, KSČM, DŽJ; the non-left in 1996: ODS, KDU-ČSL, ODA, DEU, ČP; the non-left in 1998: ODS, KDU-ČSL, US, DEU.

Sources: IFES/SC&C for Czech television (1996, 1998).

Figures 9A and 9B represent one logit model and are presented separately for the sake of lucidity.

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Appendix

List of Abbreviations of Political Parties

- ČP – Czech Right (Česká pravice)
- ČSSD – Czech Social Democratic Party (Česká strana sociálně demokratická)
- DEU – Democratic Union (Demokratická unie)
- DŽJ – Pensioners for Social Security (Důchodci za životní jistoty)
- KDU-ČSL – Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party (Křesťanská demokratická unie-Československá strana lidová)
- KSČM – Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy)
- LB – Left Bloc (Levý blok)
- ODA – Civic Democratic Alliance (Občanská demokratická aliance)
- ODS – Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana)
- SDL – Party of the Democratic Left (Strana demokratické levice)
- SPR-RSČ – Association for the Republic-Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (Sdružení pro republiku-Republikánská strana Československa)
- US – Freedom Union (Unie svobody)