

September 2025

# country report

Czech Republic



## Czechia before the Election

### Stability or Change of Course? Foreign Policy Orientation under Scrutiny

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On 3–4 October 2025, Czechia will elect a new Chamber of Deputies. The political landscape is polarized, the security and budgetary challenges are considerable, and populist as well as extremist forces are gaining influence. Yet the country now more than ever needs responsibility and a clear anchoring in Europe.

### Party Landscape: Irreconcilable Camps

According to recent polls, the strongest force is ANO (Patriots for Europe in the European Parliament) led by Andrej Babiš with 31.2%. However, Babiš is under pressure due to the possible illegal use of EU subsidies for his company. The main hearing in this matter will take place after the elections. A conviction is possible. This is one of the reasons why he is rejected as prime minister by the democratic parties of the center. In addition, his populist rhetoric and Eurosceptic tones unsettle many who value the pro-European and pro-Atlantic continuity of the country's foreign policy.

The governing SPOLU coalition, consisting of ODS (European Conservatives and Reformists), TOP 09 and KDU-ČSL (both European People's Party), is led by Prime Minister Petr Fiala and stands for a liberal-conservative, pro-European course. In the polls, the alliance stands at 20.9%. Together with their centrist-liberal partner STAN (EPP), led by Interior Minister Vít Rakušan, they categorically reject cooperation with Babiš. STAN currently polls at 10.1%. Thus, the governing parties are roughly tied with ANO. Until a year ago, the government bloc also included the Pirates (Greens/European Free Alliance), led by former Prague mayor Zdeněk Hřib. Polling at 8.9%, they still oppose Babiš and call for renewed constructive cooperation with SPOLU and STAN.

On the fringes, the far-right SPD (12.8%, Europe of Sovereign Nations) and the far-left Stačilo! – "Enough!" (6.5%, non-attached) act aggressively against the EU and NATO. The new party *Motoristé sobě* ("Motorists for Themselves", 5.1%, Patriots for Europe) promotes national sovereignty and populist promises. Its rhetoric is polarizing and its program - e.g. opposing the Green Deal and the ban on combustion engines - is widely seen as unrealistic. All three fringe parties could imagine forming a government with ANO.

### Campaign Issues: Prosperity and Security

The parties' answers to economic concerns - inflation, energy costs, housing - differ fundamentally. ANO promises tax cuts combined with massive subsidies, while SPOLU advocates fiscal responsibility and sustainable budgeting.

Foreign policy is also at stake: if ANO were to govern with extremist partners, NATO commitments could be questioned, Czech support for Ukraine could end, and relations with

the EU would deteriorate. This would mark a sharp break with the values-based foreign policy of the SPOLU-STAN government, which has demonstrated responsibility and leadership, e.g. through the Czech Munitions Initiative (an international effort to deliver over 800,000 artillery shells to Ukraine) and the successful integration of more than 380,000 Ukrainian refugees - the highest per capita in the EU.

### **Fears of Electoral Fraud and Disinformation**

Constitutional complaints were filed against the candidate lists of Stačilo! and SPD, alleging hidden coalitions trying to circumvent stricter thresholds for electoral alliances. The Constitutional Court dismissed the cases - likely also to avoid fueling fraud narratives. Such fears are already amplified in social media by disinformation campaigns aiming to delegitimize elections and institutions. They warn of a "Romanian scenario," claiming the courts are being "misused." According to recent polls, nearly half of the population believes electoral fraud is possible.

### **Conclusion: No Easy Path to Government Formation**

A fragmented parliament with up to seven parties will make government formation extremely difficult and compromise-laden. An ANO coalition with extremists or a minority government relying on them would have the most damaging foreign policy consequences. Democratic parties might therefore come under pressure to consider cooperation with ANO merely to avoid this scenario - even though both sides currently rule it out. A caretaker or expert government could become a temporary solution.

What is at stake is whether Czechia can remain a constructive and reliable partner in the EU and NATO - and whether citizens' trust in democratic institutions will be strengthened rather than further eroded.

President Petr Pavel has already signaled that he intends to play an active role in government formation, particularly if anti-EU or anti-NATO forces gain influence. His position is clear: Czechia belongs to the Western community of values - even after the election.

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