

# A Czech Presidential election of uncertain outcome

1) Analysis : page 01 to 03

2) Results 1<sup>st</sup> round : page 04 to 05

3) Results 2<sup>nd</sup> round : page 06 to 08

**Corinne Deloy**

**Analysis**

On 12th and 13th January next 8.3 million Czechs are being called to ballot to appoint their President of the Republic. If one of the candidates wins more than 50% of the vote he or she will be declared winner of the election; if this is not the case a second round will be organised on 26th and 27th January.

The Czech Presidential election is taking place exactly three months after the legislative election that took place on 20th and 21st October last which witnessed victory for ANO (Yes), led by Andrej Babis, who won 29.64% of the vote and 78 of the 200 seats in the House of Deputies. Andrej Babis was appointed Prime Minister on 6th December last by the outgoing President of the Republic Milos Zeman (Citizens' Rights Party SPOZ) so that he could take part in the European Council on 14th and 15th December in Brussels. The leader of ANO formed his government on 13th December. It comprises 14 ministers all of whom are ANO members. The head of government now has one month to win the MPs confidence. The head of State, Milos Zeman promised Andrej Babis however that he would be given a second chance to form a government if he failed to win a majority of votes in the House of Deputies.

## The function of President in the Czech Republic

The Czech President was elected by universal direct suffrage on 1st October 2012. To run in the presidential election all candidates have to win the sponsorship of at least 20 MPs or at least 10 Senators or the signatures of 50,000 voters.

The head of State represents the Czech Republic abroad. He negotiates and ratifies international treaties and he is the head of the armed forces.

He has the power to reject a bill adopted in Parliament, except for constitutional laws. The president of the Republic appoints the judges in the Constitutional Court, its president and the vice-presidents and the members of the banking council of the Czech Central Bank.

With the House of Deputies consent the Senate can lodge a complaint against the head of State with the Constitutional Court, not only for treason but also if the upper house believes that the President of the Republic has breached the Constitution or the constitutional order. A complaint like this requires however 3/5 of the Senators' votes and 2/3 of the MPs.

The Czech electoral law limits the campaign spending of candidates running for the supreme office to 40 million crowns (ie 1.5 million €) (50 million for two rounds of voting, ie 2 million €).

9 people are officially standing in the presidential election on 12th and 13th January next:

- Milos Zeman Citizens' Rights Party, SPOZ), 73 years old, outgoing President of the Republic (1998-2002). He has 113,000 voters' signature;
- Jiri Drahos (independent), former president of the Academy of Science, supported by the Christian Democratic Union-People's Party (KDU-CSL), a centrist party led by Pavel Belobradek, and Mayors and Independents (STAN), a party led by

## Presidential election in Czech Republic 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018

---

Petr Gazdik. He has 142 000 voters' signatures;

- Michal Horacek ((independent), entrepreneur, author, composer, journalist and music producer. He has 86,000 voters' signatures;
- Mirek Topolaneck (independent), supported by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), former Prime Minister (2006-2009) and businessman. He has the support of 10 Senators;
- Vratislav Kukhanec ((independent), former director of Skoda auto. He has the support of 23 MPs;
- Jiri Hynek (independent), chair of the Association for arms and defence of the Czech industry has the support of 22 MPs;
- Pavel Fischer (independent), director of the pollster STEM, former ambassador of the Czech Republic in France (2003-2010). Il a recueilli le soutien de 17 sénateurs ;
- Marek Hilser (independent), doctor and civic activist. He has the support of 11 Senators;
- Petr Hannig, President of Rozumi (Sensible Party), singer, composer and music producer. He has the support of 20 MPs.

It is interesting to note that no party is putting its own candidate forward – each political party has

understood the mistrust it causes amongst the electorate who prefer to vote on an independent personality.

### The Electoral Campaign

Outgoing President Milos Zeman announced on 9th March that he wanted to run for a second term in office as head of the Czech Republic. He is campaigning under the banner Zeman znovu (Zeman again). According to the polls the head of State is due to get to the second round of voting on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January next. His health problems might complicate his electoral campaign however and compromise his possible re-election.

Jiri Drahos and Michal Horacek seemed to be the two main challengers to the outgoing president. According to the most recent poll by Stem/Mark at the beginning of December Milos Zeman is due to come out ahead in the first round of voting on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January with 33% of the vote; Jiri Drahos is due to win 22%, Michal Horacek 16% and Pavel Fischer, 5%. The five other candidates are due to win 5% of the vote each.

**Reminder of the results of the Presidential election on 11th and 12th January and 25th and 26th January 2013 in the Czech Republic.**

Turnout: 61.31% (1st round) and 59.11% (2nd round)

Candidates	Number of votes won (1st round)	% of votes won (1st round)	Number of votes won (2nd round)	% of votes won (2nd round)
<b>Milos Zeman (Citizens' Rights Party, SPOZ)</b>	1 245 848	24,21	2 717 405	54,80
<b>Karel Schwarzenberg (Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity 09, TOP 09)</b>	1 204 195	23,40	2 241 171	45,19
<b>Jan Fischer (Independent)</b>	841 437	16,35		
<b>Jiri Dienstbier (Social Democratic Party, CSSD)</b>	829 297	16,12		
<b>Vladimir Franz (Independent)</b>	351 916	6,84		
<b>Zuzana Roithova (Christian Democratic Union-People's Party, KDU-CSL)</b>	255 045	4,95		
<b>Tana Fischerova (Green Party, CZ)</b>	166 211	3,23		
<b>Premysl Sobotka (Democratic Civic Party, ODS)</b>	126 846	2,46		
<b>Jana Bobosikova (Sovereignty, SBB)</b>	123 096	2,39		

Source : <https://www.volby.cz/pls/prez2013/pe2?xjazyk=CZ>

## Ahead after the first round of the Czech Presidential election, outgoing President Milos Zeman will however find it difficult

### Results 1<sup>st</sup> round

As forecast by all the polls, the outgoing President of the Czech Republic, Milos Zeman (Citizens' Rights Party, SPOZ) came out ahead in the first round of the presidential election on 12th and 13th January. He won 38.65% of the vote and pulled ahead of Jiri Drahos (independent), former chair of the Academy of Science, who has been supported by the centrist People's Christian Democratic Party (KDU-CSL), led by Pavel Belobradek and also Mayors and Independents (STAN), a party led by Petr Gazdik, which won 26.60% of the vote. The two men will face each other in a second round on 26th and 27th January next.

Pavel Fischer (independent), director of pollster STEM and former Ambassador for the Czech Republic in France (2003-2010), came third with 10.23% of the vote; Michal Horacek (independent), entrepreneur, author/composer, journalist and music producer, won 9.18% and Marek Hilser (independent), doctor and civic rights activist won 8.83% of the vote. The four other candidates including the former Prime Minister (2006-2009) and businessman Mirek Topolanek (independent), supported by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) won under 5%.

The 12,000 voters living abroad placed Jiri Drahos ahead with 45.20%, ahead of Pavel Fischer (20.51%) and Marek Hilser (11.50%), Milos Zeman came 5th with 7.47% of the vote.

Turnout was almost the same as registered in the first round of the previous presidential election on 11th and 12th January 2013 (+ 0.61 point) lying at 61.92%.

### Results of the 1st round of the Presidential election on 12th and 13th January 2018 in the Czech Republic

Turnout: 61.92%

Candidates	No. of votes won (1st round)	% of votes won (1st round)
<b>Milos Zeman (Citizens' Rights Party, SPOZ)</b>	1 985 547	38.56
<b>Jiri Drahos (independent)</b>	1 369 601	26.60
<b>Pavel Fischer (independent)</b>	526 694	10.23
<b>Michal Horacek (independent)</b>	472 643	9.18
<b>Marek Hilser (independent)</b>	454 949	8.83
<b>Mirek Topolanek (independent)</b>	221 689	4.30
<b>Jiri Hynek (independent)</b>	63 348	1.23
<b>Petr Hannig (Common Sense Party)</b>	29 228	0.56
<b>Vratislav Kukhanec (independent)</b>	24 442	0.47

Source : <https://www.volby.cz/pls/prez2018/pe2?xjazyk=CZ>

*"There has hardly been an electoral campaign. Jiri Drahos will have to do more than offer an anti-Zeman discourse. He will have to distinguish himself and take position on the main issues that interest the Czechs,"* declared Balik, a teacher of political science at the University of Masaryk of Brno. *"The results of the first round are a severe setback for Milos Zeman, even though formally he won. Indeed, the outgoing President has a weak reserve of votes in view of the second round on 26th and 27th January,"* stressed Josef Mlejnek, a political expert who added, *"partisans are now going to try to depict Jiri Drahos as friend of migrants, an agent of the European Union."*

*"The second round will be a tight duel. Milos Zeman has an enormous problem because it is clear that the candidates that came behind the leading duo; ie Pavel Fischer, Marek Hilser and Michal Horacek, will asked their electorates to vote for Jiri Drahos,"* indicated Jiri Pehe, political analyst. *"The candidate facing Milos Zeman, in the second round will have to rally all of those who want the supreme office to follow the prestigious heritage of Vaclav Havel,"* says Jacques Rupnik, a political expert at the Centre for International Research (CERI) at Sciences Po, Paris.

A novice in politics, Jiri Drahos defends the establishment of a modern, pro-Western State and the Czech Republic's membership of the European Union, as well as Prague's adoption of the euro. He is however, against the quota mechanism introduced by Brussels for a better distribution of refugees from the Middle East and Africa between the Member States and hopes for greater control on the EU's borders. *"The Euro-Atlantic establishment of the Czech Republic will one of the main themes in my electoral campaign in the upcoming second round,"* he declared when the results were announced. Jiri Drahos, who won the support of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) led by Petr Fiala in the second round the day after the release of the results of the first round, accuses his rival, Milos Zeman, of dividing society.

The outgoing President of the Republic is against the sanctions introduced by Brussels against Moscow and deems that the annexation of Crimea by Russia to be *"an established fact"*. He also supports American President Donald Trump (Republican) and wants Prague to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in the wake of Washington. Milos Zeman, who has said he is a fan of Norbert Hofer (Freedom Party, FPÖ), a populist candidate in the Austrian Presidential election in 2016, qualified the arrival of refugees in Europe as *"an organised invasion"* and that it will provide a *"breeding ground for terrorist attacks"*. Criticised by intellectuals and the more urban Czech, the outgoing Head of State, who did not undertake an electoral campaign for the first round, would like to be seen as the representative of those forgotten by the economic transition. *"I have to be prepared for a difficult position in the second round,"* he declared, complaining about the *"national Czech character"* meaning that *"those who are losing join forces to bring down those who are beating them."*

Jiri Drahos has said that he would like to face *"Milos Zeman in a one-to-one debate"* between rounds. The latter who has refused to take part in the debates organised prior to 12th and 13th January answered: *"I have never been afraid of taking part in a debate, I am still young and full of energy and any kind of debate would be a pleasure. I have just listened to Jiri Drahos on the television and I am happy to satisfy his request."*

All of the polls undertaken prior to the first round of voting predicted Jiri Drahos's victory on 27th January next with approximately a five-point lead. Although the Czech president does not enjoy any great power, the duel on 26th and 27th January is of the greatest importance for the Czechs and also for the Europeans, because as Jiri Pehe says, *"it is a conflict between a part of post-Communist of Czech society represented by Milos Zeman and the other half, should we say, modern, pro-Western and which simply no longer wants the present head of State."*

## Milos Zeman manages to stay as President of the Czech Republic

### Results 2<sup>nd</sup> round

On 27th January the Czechs finally re-elected outgoing head of State Milos Zeman (Citizens Rights Party, SPOZ). With 51.36% of the vote he won against Jiri Drahos (independent) who won 48.63% of the vote. Milos Zeman easily won the first round of voting on 12th and 13th January last with 38.56% of the vote ahead of Jiri Drahos, who won 26.6%

Two-thirds of the Czechs turned out to ballot for the second round, with turnout totalling 66.6% i.e. +7.49 points in comparison with the second round of the previous presidential election on 25th and 26th January 2013.

#### Presidential election results on 12th and 13th January and 26th -27th January 2018 in the Czech Republic

Turnout: 61.92% (1st round) and 66.6% (2nd round)

Candidates	No. of votes won (1st round)	% of votes won (1st round)	No. of votes won (2nd round)	% of votes won (2nd round)
<b>Milos Zeman (Citizens' Rights Party, SPOZ)</b>	1 985 547	38.56	2 853 390	51.36
<b>Jiri Drahos (independent)</b>	1 369 601	26.60	2 701 206	48.63
<b>Pavel Fischer (independent)</b>	526 694	10.23		
<b>Michal Horacek (independent)</b>	472 643	9.18		
<b>Marek Hilser (independent)</b>	454 949	8.83		
<b>Mirek Topolanek (independent)</b>	221 689	4.30		
<b>Jiri Hynek (independent)</b>	63 348	1.23		
<b>Petr Hannig (Common Sense Party)</b>	29 228	0.56		
<b>Vratislav Kukhanec (independent)</b>	24 442	0.47		

Source : <https://www.volby.cz/pls/prez2018/pe2?xjazyk=CZ>

"The trust of the Czech citizens will give me energy over the next five years and I am convinced that they will not be disappointed," declared Milos Zeman when the results were announced. He also said that he wanted to show that "some journalists and politicians were less intelligent than ordinary people". He intends incidentally, to allow the latter to express their opinion more regarding major issues, and notably on the Czech Republic belonging to the European Union, an issue on which the president would like to organise a referendum.

"Milos Zeman dearly promoted his anti-immigration stance, which helped him win the presidential election. He attracted voters who are earning the least and who are the least qualified in the country and who are convinced that they have found someone who defends them at the highest level of State," stresses Jakub Charvat, professor of political science at the University of Prague.

"We didn't win but we didn't lose either," indicated Jiri Drahos after the announcement of the results, adding "I am very happy with the wave of

*"The trust of the Czech citizens will give me energy over the next five years and I am convinced that they will not be disappointed,"* declared Milos Zeman when the results were announced. He also said that he wanted to show that *"some journalists and politicians were less intelligent than ordinary people"*. He intends incidentally, to allow the latter to express their opinion more regarding major issues, and notably on the Czech Republic belonging to the European Union, an issue on which the president would like to organise a referendum.

*"Milos Zeman clearly promoted his anti-immigration stance, which helped him win the presidential election. He attracted voters who are earning the least and who are the least qualified in the country and who are convinced that they have found someone who defends them at the highest level of State,"* stresses Jakub Charvat, professor of political science at the University of Prague.

*"We didn't win but we didn't lose either,"* indicated Jiri Drahos after the announcement of the results, adding *"I am very happy with the wave of energy that emerged during this election and which will not disappear. I promise that I shall continue to feed this energy and hope, I am not leaving public life.*

*"Jiri Drahos did not really extend a hand to the voters of the candidates in the first round who called to vote for him and it was a mistake. It seems that some of them preferred to stay at home or even voted for the outgoing President. Incidentally Jiri Drahos's lack of political experience undoubtedly cost him some points during the two TV debates during which he did not perform very well,"* indicated Jiri Pehe, a political analyst.

*"Jiri Drahos's campaign in the second round probably was not convincing enough in the eyes of the voters whose candidate was eliminated in the first round, and for whom, quite clearly he did not know how to be a second choice. The simple fact of not being Milos Zeman was not enough. Jiri Drahos did not succeed in creating strong enough dynamic or support around his name, declared Lukas Macek, director of the Sciences Po Campus in Dijon.*

Aged 73 and from Kolin, near Prague Milos Zeman is a trained economist. He joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC) in 1968 before being excluded from it two years later. In 1992, he became a member of the Social Democratic Party (CSSD), of which he took the leadership the following year. In 1996 he was appointed leader of the House of Deputies, the lower house of the Czech Parliament. Appointed Prime Minister in 1998 he signed an agreement for the creation of a stable political environment in the Czech Republic with the Democratic Civic Party (ODS) led by Vaclav Klaus at the time. According to the terms of this agreement the ODS promised not to place a vote of no confidence against the social democratic government led by Milos Zeman for the entire legislature. In exchange the Democratic Civic Party was to be consulted before the vote on any major project and achieved for its member's access to strategic posts in various institutions. (Hence the leadership of the House of Deputies went to Vaclav Klaus).

After a first failed attempt to become President in 2003 (at the time the head of State was elected by the Czech Parliament), Milos Zeman chose to withdraw from political activities. However, he returned to front stage seven years later and in 2010 he founded the Citizens' Rights Party (SPOZ), which, with 4.33% of the vote, failed to enter parliament in the general elections on 28th and 29th May 2010 (a minimum of 5% of the vote cast is obligatory to be represented). Milos Zeman then resigned as leader of his party.

On 26th January 2013 he won the first presidential election organised according to direct universal suffrage with 54.8% of the vote against Karel Schwarzenberg (Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity 09, TOP 09) who won 45.19% of the vote.

On 27th January the Czechs decided therefore that they wanted him to retain this post for another five years. Milos Zeman will be sworn in on 8th March next in the Wenceslas Hall at the Castle of Prague with the members of both Houses of Parliament in attendance. (200 members of the House of Deputies and 81 members of the Senate).

The Czech President has given Andrej Babis (ANO)

## Presidential election in Czech Republic 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018

---

whom he appointed as Prime Minister on 6th December last another chance to form the next government. The first attempt by Andrej Babis was a failure since on 16th January the House of Deputies rejected him in a vote of no confidence by 117 votes.

Milos Zeman asked the ANO leader to present him with his new bid in a document laying out a government

that would be supported by at least 101 MPs. After his re-election as head of the country, the Head of State said that Andrej Babis could take the time he deemed necessary to form his government. "Since I have been re-elected I see no reason to hurry Andrej Babis in terms of the appointment of his government," declared Milos Zeman.

You can read all of our publications on our site:  
[www.robert-schuman.eu](http://www.robert-schuman.eu)

Publishing Director: Pascale JOANNIN

---

THE FONDATION ROBERT SCHUMAN, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organisation of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.