

Abstract

The Czech Republic has seen a multitude of anti-system protests in recent years, as well as a surge of online dissemination of disinformation, misinformation and conspiracy theories. The Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's military invasion in Ukraine, as well as the consequences of these events, have generated deep dissatisfaction among thousands of people across the country. At the same time, activities directed primarily against the current Czech government in light of these events have attracted considerable attention from local and international media. However, the motivations of individuals who have been involved in such activities have not been explored in-depth in an academic environment in order to understand what exactly drives people to anti-system activism in the Czech Republic. The present study seeks to fill this research gap and reveals the motivations and the underlying psychological factors that generate this type of behavior. In order to do so, the Significance Quest Theory proposed by Kruglanski and colleagues is applied to primary qualitative data collected between the years 2022 and 2023 from sample population consisting of protest organizers and participants, while a thematic analysis of the data is conducted to generate conclusions pertaining to the phenomenon of radicalization in Czech society. The study concludes with a discussion of the findings as well as its limitations and suggestions for future research.