

Abstract

Political parties play a key role in democratic political systems. In recent years, they have experienced a decline in the members of their membership bases. A common reason for members leaving is an ideological dissonance between the individual and the direction of the party. It is thus a question whether there are also other motives leading to members leaving in parties with an unanchored ideology. This thesis focuses on the specific case of the movement ANO in Czechia. The research was conducted as a case study using qualitative methods, specifically in-depth semi-structured interviews combined with written structured interviews. In total, there were 17 interviews, which were later codified based on theoretical underpinnings. Since for the specific case of the ANO party the theory was incomplete, hence three new categories of motives for leaving were added. The conducted interviews show that a combination of long-term factors results in members leaving. The main motives are cognitive engagement – expressed as having small influence on the functioning of the movement – issues with fellow party members, and an ideological dissonance between the member and the party. Moreover, meeting member's former expectations does not guarantee remaining in the party. Therefore, political parties should strengthen the stability of their membership base by focusing on member participation in decision-making, resolution of internal party conflicts, transparent communication, and alignment of visions between the members and the leadership.