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Case study Czech Republic

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Issue I - Sudety area

The role of so called “German issue” in the Czech politics has almost the political and societal mainstream. Therefore, it is surprising that this question of post-war displacement of German minority appeared again and became one of the most relevant campaign issues. Miloš Zeman, current Czech president, repeatedly blamed Karel Schwarzenberg, presidential candidate, for supporting Germans in their demands to gain their belongings back. This issue is called the Beneš Decrees.

KSČM

Although this issue does not play a key role in the Czech politics, still, the Communist party use this policy to provoke the society in every possible occasion for example during the official visit of on Bavarian minister president. Nonetheless, the party policy shows its emphasis on international equality of all minorities and it strictly opposes its “German policy”. To get the complete picture of constituting party policy, the official explanation says that party stands to this position for long period. This implies that Communist party did not change its view towards Sudet Germans since 1945. Interestingly, this issue belongs to the “hot issues” in the party; quite a large number of party members express their opinions in party friendly newspaper “Haló noviny”, in local party newsletters, or during public events.

The 2006, 2010, and 2013 election manifestos are very unfriendly towards foreign interest groups, such as the Sudetendeutschen Landsmanschaft and any kinds of efforts to revise the post-WW II order, including the so called Beneš Decrees (ceeidentity.eu 2014a).¹ KSČM also calls for the closing of the office of the Landsmanschaft in Prague, which may be explained in line with the sovereignty principle, yet is not particularly friendly towards the other nations and ethnic groups, nor is in keeping with the multicultural society that KSČM promotes.

The party argumentation is based on three argumentation typologies:

- a) Be against so called europenisation of the Sudet issue in the EU. The reason is that Sudet Germans will be able to push their right of self-determination and to get back their belongings in the former Czechoslovakia and to cause destabilization of whole Europe. As MEP Jiří Maštálka points out *“(...) the right to self-determination of certain national groups will lead to transformation of ethnic and national issues into collective law subjects that will force against the EU integration. This process can from long term perspective cause reviewing of state borders. Therefore nationalism is dangerous for the European integration and its sophisticated form – right to self-determination - of national groups as well”*

¹ For more insights into topic see ceeidentity.eu 2014a:
www.c eeidentity.eu/database/manifestoesoun/communist-party

(KSČM 2014) ² Another MEP, Miroslav Ransdorf, argued that the rigid European federalization can enable to open the Sudet issues in context to the Lisbon Treaty. He pointed out that “... *the road of Sudet Germans back to the Sudety area is able on in the federalized EU.*” (ceskatelevize.cz 2014)³

- b) Defending national interests against Sudet Germans demands and refusing any kind of rapprochement between Germany and the Czech Republic. From this perspective, the Communist MPs strongly opposed the 2010 visit of Bernd Posselt in Lidice and Petr Nečas speech in May 2013 in Munich. In case of Posselt’s visit in Lidice, where he apologized for Nazi crimes during World War II, Marta Semelová, MP, interpellate the government “ (...) *how is possible that in Prague are officially take up representatives namely Mr. Posselt that force the right to get their former belonging back (...) Thirdly, who defends the national interests of the Czech Republic?*” (psp.cz: 2012)⁴ Petr Nečas, former Prime Minister, surprised by his very open speech towards Czech-German relations. In Prague, he was criticised among others by Vojtěch Adam, the Leader of Communist party, that “(...) *Petr Nečas does not defend the national interests of the Czech Republic (...) his behavior is inappropriate in regard to the Czech history, state sovereignty, and war veterans. He does not respect the Constitution and vilifies his own people.*”⁵
- c) Labeling Karel Schwarzenberg, the Leader of Conservative party TOP 09 and candidate for president in the 2013 election, so called as German *collaborator*, “*Vaticants*” or *aristocracy*. The Communist party used this term during the presidential election campaign on various levels by the party officials, party members, and local party groups such as “Club of Czech Borders Land – Klub českého pohraničí”. The Sudet Germans issue popped up during the second round of presidential election and was heavily supported by tabloid newspaper Blesk. Schwarzenberg was described as a leading person of Sudet Germans movement defending in the Czech Republic and *their* interests instead of the Czechs ones. KSČM argues that Schwarzenberg betrays the national interests and, in that time, he should resign as a foreign minister.

The deep rooted policy position well describes an answer given by Kateřina Konečná, KČSM MP, regarding the question “How does KSČM evaluate Bernd Posselt’s activities in the Czech Republic”; Konečná answered that they evaluate that *negatively, because the party does so for such a long time*. However the party do not mention the reason of the policy position nowhere in the party materials or given speeches, and one should focus on role of KSČ after 1945, when the party constituted its strong anti-German rhetoric. The reason for this swing, however, when

² KSČM 2014: Jiří Maštálka – Nacionalismus je pro integraci zhoubný; www.kscm.cz/nasi-lide/evropsky-parlament/jiri-mastalka/44217/mastalka-nacionalismus-je-pro-integraci-zhoubny?preview=archiv

³ ceskatelevize.cz 2014: Bilance českých europoslanců; www.ceskatelevize.cz/program/porady/1126672097/text/209452801380001_1.txt

⁴ psp.cz 2012: Marta Semelová, zápis ze schůze PSP; www.psp.cz/eknih/2010ps/stenprot/009schuz/s009239.htm

⁵ psp.cz 2012: Marta Semelová, zápis ze schůze PSP; www.psp.cz/eknih/2010ps/stenprot/009schuz/s009239.htm

the party stresses internationalist brotherhood among nations, was that West Germany was pictured as instigator of war crimes.

The party does not develop its Sudet German policy directly by using policy argumentation or its substantiation. This is an ideal case for developing myth of external threat. Above described policies are supporting tools for developing mythology of threats of national interests

The party has developed three-stage typology:

- External influence keeps on defend interests against national state. European integration is seen as a revisionist platform; in this understanding the integration is generally perceived with a distance
- Using national history in favor of the party goals. Referring to the historical “truth” that Germans caused the war and therefore they had to be punished properly – so as Sudet Germans. The explanatory role of history is moved as an issue of national interests.
- Personification; having presidential candidate Karel Schwarzenberg as a representative of interests whose goal is to damage the Czech national interests. This argumentation was used during the presidential campaign and was one of the key decision factors of Milos Zeman victory. Nonetheless, the personification of Czech citizen defending other than Czech interests has been used at the first time since 1989.

TOP 09

Analyzing the party positioning towards the Sudet Germans can be undertaken from two different perspectives. The first one compares the party position with the KSČM; the second one is focusing on party’s historical experience.

Comparing position of TOP 09 with KSČM in case of this case study offers two departure points: a) opposing to KSČM activities; b) active framing of good relations with Germany, in this case namely with Sudet Germans. To find a proper analytical chain, one should consider the position of TOP 09 as government party holding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; so that the Communist party defines its public activities on behalf of or against minister Schwazenberg. Therefore, for instance the high time of disagreeing activities of KSČM took place in time of official Bavarian minister visit in Prague or official visit of Bernd Posselt in Lidice.

During the presidential campaign Karel Schwrzenberg expressed the idea that the Beneš Decrees have been overcome and that this issue should not be a burden in developing of good bilateral relations. After that, Schwarzenberg was accused, among others by KSČM as well, that he wants to open the possibility for Germans to get their belongings back and de facto break a post-war status quo. The reason why TOP 09 keeps on cultivating good relations is given by its foundations – plural, open, and European idea supporting party. Slightly surprisingly, applying this principle to politics, the opposition against that appears immediately; like in case of KSČM.

Focusing on historical experience of TOP 09 the party is not a natural successor as any political party that have participated on neither displacement of Germans after 1945, nor on negotiation of Czech-German Declaration in nineties. However Karel Schwarzenberg participated indirectly in both occasions, the party misses direct institutional link. According to the party's commitment to the centrist liberal-conservative ideology, party respects and develops the regional as well as national traditions. At the same time, party respects the commitment of European integration.

Regarding to the Sudet Germans issue, the party constitutes its policy as follows:

- a) Orientation towards future: the European Union is a platform of mutual cooperation. Karel Schwarzenberg for instance expressed support for continuing of Czech-German Foundation for Future. In regard of first Horst Seehofer visit in Prague, Bavarian Prime Minister, Schwarzenberg mentioned that *"I'm not supporter of huge gestures (...) I welcome a real and natural cooperation between the Czech Republic and Germany."* (Karel Schwarzenberg 2013)⁶
- b) Less considering the past: speaking about Sudet Germans, the debate shortly ends up with the Beneš Decrees and their abolishing. As Schwarzenberg mentioned during the presidential election, the Decrees should not be again considered in context of bilateral relations
- c) Respecting Sudet Germans as a part of German nation and having equal attitude towards them as to any other nation. As Jan Farský, MP and mayor of Semily quoted: *"We perceive Sudet Germans as autonomous community as Italians, or French are. They respect our autonomy as we do."*⁷

Due to the fact of absent institutional experience from period when the relations had to face a real political and societal challenges, the party does not have to solve the historical ties and can focus on future cooperation. One has to consider that no relevant party official has represented negative oriented "German policy". It cannot be ignored that the party's representatives, at least on the highest level, have enviable personal relations such as the one with Angela Merkel. Nonetheless, the language skills are still a significant obstacle.

TOP 09 shape its policy as follows:

- Cooperation and future oriented relations on both regional and national level
- Respect to the commitment of the European integration; it means cooperation between nations as well
- Respect of historical experience, but perceiving that as an obstacle

⁶ Karel Schwarzenberg 2013: Election debate; www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4YyclNaGkc

⁷ Facebook communication with Jan Farský on his official Facebook profile

Issue II - the Roma minority

Although the topic of societal status of Roma minority is lively discussed in a public, the political parties reflect this issue very poorly. During the summer months of 2013, many anti-Roma protests took place (mainly in north Bohemia and in several regional centres such as České Budějovice or Ostrava). Especially the protests in České Budějovice on July 22nd and in Ostrava a month later radicalised the Czech population. The riots were attended not only by right-wing radicals but by many so called “decent people” as well. The public discussion is characterised by term that describes the people dependent on social assistance as those who misuse the taxes paid by “normal people”. Often, it is targeted on Roma minority as a proof of misusing state social assistance; so far the latest development.

The Roma issue is for the long period of time still unsolved societal and political problem. Although in time of centre-right cabinet (2006 – 2009), this issue has been shifted up in the agenda. For instance, the Ministry for Human Rights with cooperation of Greens introduced these topics into public discourse. Nonetheless, in the same time Jiří Čunek, the leader of Christian Democrats, and as a mayor of Vsetín, decided to move the Roma people out of the city centre or even to resettle them to small villages in border region. Paradoxically, he was the member of the same government as Greens were. Therefore, the impact of Greens was limited just in the beginnings.

Greens (Green Party)

The general emphasis on human rights is evident, when it comes to minorities’ issues, especially in the case of the Roma minority. Greens strongly reject the discrimination of Roma, caused for example by placing Roma children in special schools for mentally disabled pupils. The party policy towards Roma minority emphasises: a) the equal principle of all groups living in the country with regards to their historical experience; b) inclusion of disadvantaged regardless of their origin; and c) understanding of diversity as an added value of current societal order.

- a) Concerning the equality of all groups, minorities, and individuals in general, the party *emphasis solving the situation of socially excluded as well as ethnic minorities*. As Liška quoted in speech in Lety u Písku “*no one tries to solve the alarm situation in excluded ghettos (...) the situation is getting still worse.*” (romea.cz 2014)⁸ The Greens publicly opposed to the anti-Roma riots in summer 2013 as only actor officially defending minority rights and their position within public discourse. Nonetheless, the party strongly supports establishment of Roma memorial in Lety u Písku as a remembrance place for Nazi crimes during WW II.

⁸ romea.cz 2014: Ondřej Liška: Romové a Romky vstupujte do veřejného života;
www.romea.cz/cz/zpravodajstvi/domaci/ondrej-liska-romove-a-romky-vstupujte-do-verejneho-zivota-a-hajte-svoji-budoucnost

- b) Stressing inclusion of Roma minority: the party keens on supporting both major and minority society. The Greens stress this process on different levels: participating Roma pupils on basic school education instead of school for mentally disabled pupils; involving Roma people into decision making processes on different levels; and
- c) supporting Roma to joining already existing political parties instead of founding their own one.
- d) Understanding diversity as a positively contributing element of society; therefore Greens supports Roma culture. As a sign or real effort to support the diversity, Greens built up a coalition with Roma Democratic Party for the 2013 election (jihomoravskenoviny.cz 2014).⁹

The party emphasises the Roma minority as an excluded group on behalf of its social situation and ethnical belonging. Nonetheless, this approach can be applicable on other minority groups as well. The idea is to perceive Roma from the individual equality perspective. Therefore, all individuals living in the country should have same conditions such as social conditions, educational possibilities and if possible to support their culture. The reason for this approach is that from involving all groups/individuals, the society will benefit in general.

Dawn of Direct Democracy

Before Tomio Okamura, the leader of Úsvit movement, came up with idea to participate in parliament election, he created a “big success story” around his personality. Nonetheless, he elaborated selected policy fields in order to catch their public relevancy in high time. This was the case of Roma issue as well.

During the summer of 2013 anti-Roma riots, he appeared in public with prepared plans how to solve the situation. Although he presented himself as a mediator of both groups, all his proposals have been perceived as a weak or were not able to be implemented. Nevertheless, his initial intention was to reach publicity by not to solve the problem in reality. Seeing the movement’s activities in context, this is a good starting point for analysis. Contrary to other parties that are covered by the case studies analysis, Okamura did not have certain ideological standpoint that scholars could go from. His political profile fills up the definition of populist movement perfectly. Therefore, Okamura started parliament election campaign right during the summer with this issue. His argumentation is consisted of three basic elements:

- a) Right to self-determination for national minorities: as movements argue, all ethnic minorities should have a right to live in their own state. *“The Gipsies should wake up their elites... and to struggle for their own state. The right to self-determination is right of every nation and therefore the Czech Republic should support this endeavour to create conditions*

⁹ Jihomoravskenoviny.cz 2014: Zelení a Romové by měli mít své zastoupení v parlamentu; www.jihomoravskenovinky.cz/zpravy/regiony/zeleni-romove-by-meli-mit-zastoupeni-v-parlamentu/

*to settle back to their origin county to India.” (blog.idnes.cz 2013a)¹⁰ The reality seems to be more simplistic. In order to attract votes, the movements representative did not even elaborate this idea; but the goal was reached: they were in public discourse. Off the record, the one MP has confirmed this intention. As he said, *we had to promise something to the people.**

- b) Equal principle in social system: as movement argues, the Roma people are very successful in gaining the social assistance even if they are obliged to gain it. Therefore, Úsvit proposes for instance to address the assistance namely or to enlarge the possibility to stop the payments if the conditions are not fulfilled – if they lose the assistance in gaming machines or spend on alcohol. The movement does not refuse inclusion as such. Nevertheless, the message delivered by the election is that individuals must respect the rules and habits of majority. Secondly, Okamura refuses that 20 years-old Roma people should receive social assistance “... *such a 20 years guys should work as a bricklayers or helpers... or they should participate in forest jobs during summer.*” (parlamentnilisty.cz 2013)¹¹ Similarly to previous case, the movement did not publish any proposal how this idea should be implemented. Even the MP, we interviewed, acknowledged that such a proposal does not simply exist.
- c) Multicultural myth delivered by Brussels: the movement refuses to be labelled as a xenophobic or populist in sense of refusing immigration or gaining Roma minority space for developing their own culture. However the movement does not stress the negative attitudes against multiculturalism, some proclamations that they should be observed carefully. Two weeks after elections, the leader of Úsvit’s MPs, Radim Fiala, published the article on his blog, where he expressed a whole volume of *anti-claims* such as: “*the immigrants can be beneficial for the society... but often it is right opposite case. (...) I would follow the basic principle: we are here at home. If immigrant wants to be a part of our society, he/she has to show that will be beneficial and respect our rules. (...) otherwise, it would lead to the destabilization of the society. (...) We do not have to follow the liberal principles only because of Brussels.*”

Fiala does not define any policy or procedures. He tries to delimit against the EU wide immigrant policy that is not relevant in the Czech Republic yet. It seems that Úsvit tries to find policy that will resonate in the Czech society. After all, Úsvit gained 8 MPs and they have a great possibility to utilize this chance.

To analyse any kind of ideological trust of the movement is extremely hard. The only identifiable line is that the party policies are strategy and on purpose drive much more than in case of traditional parties. On the other side, this approach demonstrates, how the movement acts

¹⁰ blog.idnes.cz (2013): Tomio Okamura: Sociální programy vyrábí podvodníky a lenochy; <http://okamura.blog.idnes.cz/c/328881/Socialni-programy-vyrabi-podvodniky-a-lenochy.html>

¹¹ parlamentnilisty.cz 2013: Cikani vystehujte se; www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Cikani-vystehujte-se-napsal-Okamura-a-zacal-narez-l-knize-se-zapojil-277312

as “people” wish. Therefore, the party opens sensitive feelings without having on mind the possible impact.

The movement operates with following tools:

- Excluding disadvantaged group: One particular (minority) group is given advantage to the majority; in this respect, the movement rejects the others that do not follow their rules
- Externally delivered multicultural policy that is not accepted by the people in the country. This terminology is used as an accusation of external influence that can be easily cruised but hard to be involved. Regarding to the party international cooperation, the movement does not intend to focus on explaining how the things in the EU work.

Nevertheless, the movement still gives very amateur impression. One could say that representatives do not enough endeavours to build up well functioning populist movement once presenting in the parliament. The movement and Okamura itself never fills up any issue completely. For instance the case of Roma minority; after the anti-Roma riots calmed down, Tomio Okamura moved its interest towards the immigrants. In same respect, the interest was moved to the critique of multiculturalism and Brussels. (blog.idnes.cz 2013b)¹² None of these issues have been elaborated with intention to be a possible societal cleavage; even if Radim Fiala in his blog used almost whole list of simplifications regarding the EU. Does the movement fear that it is a too big deal for the movement? Maybe the representatives consider a weak institutional structure.

Issue III - Joining Eurozone

ČSSD

The Czech Social Democratic Party (*Česká strana sociálně demokratická, ČSSD*) is generally in support of the Czech adoption of the EU common currency. Why? The main argument for adoption presented by the ČSSD is that it is in the economic interest of the Czech Republic to do so – above all because the Czech economy is heavily dependent (even more so than many other Euro zone states) on the economic cycle of Germany, a core Eurozone country. The party exercises more caution in talking about the timing of accession to the Eurozone, however: first, at the European level, it is important to address all issues of the Eurozone that have been exposed by the recent economic and financial crisis (such as the responsibility for debt), as well as the necessity to create a banking union first, ČSSD maintains. While the Czech Social Democratic Party acted as a supporter of the Eurozone, as well as the Czech accession to it even during the peak of the recent economic and financial crisis, Jan Mládek, who has in the meantime become the Minister of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, did not omit pointing out that *“the Czech Republic should not be paying*

¹² blog.idnes.cz 2013b: Radim Fiala: nedopustme, aby se na ceskou lod vrhla tlupa cernych psazeru; <http://fialaradim.blog.idnes.cz/c/375960/Nedopustme-aby-se-na-ceskou-lod-vrhla-tlupa-cernych-pasazeru.html>

for “mistakes that occurred prior to our [envisioned] accession to the Eurozone.” (cssd.cz 2012)¹³ More specifically, it estimates that in approximately five years, it could become an issue to be seriously considered, with 2019-2021 being the possible date for accession to the Eurozone. Moreover, with regard to the domestic level, ČSSD stresses that without a wide support for the Euro across the political spectrum, as well as consensus among experts and the business community and, above all, the central bank, the adoption of the Euro will not materialize. A look at the 2013 election manifesto of the party shows that this topic is mentioned only once and in relation to the timing of this step. “We will prepare the Czech Republic for its accession to the Eurozone. We want to enter when it is economically and socially advantageous for our country to do so.” (ČSSD 2013)¹⁴ Importantly, ČSSD treats the decision regarding the timing of the Czech entry into the Eurozone as a sovereign decision of the Czech government. Bohuslav Sobotka, the party's leader has said that “the issue of the timing of our adoption of the Euro is an issue which will be decided in a sovereign manner by the Czech Republic - our government, our citizens, our parliament.” (youtube.com 2012)¹⁵

In any case, considering the Czech Socialist Party is the leading political party advocating European integration and the Czech Republic's active role in the European Union, one may legitimately ask whether this topic might not deserve more attention in the 33-page-long document. Half a year later, the 2014 European Parliament election manifesto stresses the importance of a “more stringent regulation of the banking sector, a crucial step in preventing the repetition of the crisis, which was brought about by the greedy financial speculators.” (cssd.cz 2014)¹⁶ It is interesting to note that the Euro is not explicitly mentioned – contrary to the practice of many other political parties during the campaign (which however use rather the rejection of the Euro in the campaign). This is likely related to the fact that ČSSD generally frames the issue of the adoption of the Euro as something that the Czech Republic has agreed to in principle, a decision which was affirmed by the accession referendum, which has been used by the Bohuslav Sobotka, who has in the meantime become the Prime Minister, as a legitimating arguments:

“I'd like to stress that this commitment [to adopt the Euro] is one to which we agreed upon our accession to the EU. The Accession Treaty was the only one to have been affirmed in a referendum, meaning that the majority of Czech citizens have agreed to the adoption of this treaty, including the commitment to adopt the common European currency in the future. (...) In my opinion it would be very unfortunate to open a discussion on altering the Accession Treaty and leaving out this commitment. Firstly, it would be a negative message to the Eurozone as such (...) as this message could undermine the stability of the whole Eurozone; it would also make the Czech Republic the subject of legitimate criticism by important members of the EU. Secondly, it would present a negative message about the Czech Republic itself; someone might ask why we don't want to adopt the Euro and whether it means that we don't want to commit ourselves to decreasing public

¹³ cssd.cz 2012: Jan Mládek: V zájmu naší země je Euro přijmout; www.cssd.cz/aktualne/nazory-a-komentare/j-mladek-je-v-zajmu-nasi-zeme-prijmout-euro/

¹⁴ ČSSD 2013: Volební program ČSSD pro volby do PSP 2013.

¹⁵ youtube.com 2012: Bohuslav Sobotka – debata o Euru; www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4BFXKjnLwY

¹⁶ cssd.cz 2014: Cesta k přijetí Eura; www.cssd.cz/ke-stazeni/videogalerie/video-novinky/cesta-k-prijeti-aura/

deficits in the future, as well as to fiscal discipline which is a natural part of being a Eurozone member.” (youtube.com 2012)¹⁷

ODS

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS), on the other hand, is one of the main opponents of Euro on the Czech political spectrum. This party also asserts that the adoption or non-adoption of Euro should be understood primarily in terms of the Czech national interest. Contrary to the ČSSD, however, it maintains that it would be economically advantageous for the Czech Republic to refrain from adopting the common European currency. The Civic Democratic Party has strong views about how the direction outlined by them should be followed. While it recognizes that the adoption of the Euro has been agreed to by the Czech citizens in a referendum (as part of the Accession Treaty), it asserts that conditions have changed since then – particularly with regard to the Euro and the recent Eurozone crisis, which is why it wants to negotiate an exception for the Czech Republic, in order for it to be keep its national currency, the Czech crown. In any case, the decision should be subject to a referendum: *“I am convinced that the reasonable solution is to hold a referendum about Czech accession to the Eurozone as soon as possible. At this moment, I would not under any circumstances recommend our accession to the Eurozone,” (parlamentnilisty.cz 2011)¹⁸* said the MEP Evžen Tošenovský. Similarly to the ČSSD, ODS seeks to legitimize its step: it holds that when citizens agreed to the adoption of the Euro as part of the Accession Treaty, they agreed to something that has since then changed fundamentally and hence, a new referendum needs to take place. The main argument, however, is likely one relating to how the party perceives the European Union and the integration process in general. Jan Zahradil, who is now the party's leader for the 2014 elections to the European Parliament and perhaps the most visible politician representing the ODS with regard to the EU, has argued that a fiscal union (and a common tax policy), which the party opposes, is a further step in EU's federalization. Fiscal autonomy is asserted to be a crucial element of state sovereignty, which ODS maintains the Czech Republic should guard more carefully. In light of this information quite understandably, ODS was also an opponent of the Pact for the Euro, which the Czech Republic rejected. Moreover, having a control over a state's currency is an important instrument for dealing with economic turmoil and should be therefore kept in the hands of the state. Banking union is also out of the question for the Civic Democratic Party, at least until Czech Republic will have adopted the Euro. Other arguments cited by the 2014 European Parliament election manifesto include the concern that the adoption of the Euro would lead to inflation and would devalue citizens' savings. Moreover, *“due to the current crisis of the common European currency, the adoption of the Euro would for the Czech Republic mean providing the amount of 350 billion CZK to the fund designated to solve the problems*

¹⁷ youtube.com 2012: Bohuslav Sobotka – debata o Euru; www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4BXFKjnLwY

¹⁸ parlamentnilisty.cz 2011: Vstup do eurozóny bych nyní určitě nedoporučoval; www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/politici-volicum/Tosenovsky-ODS-Vstup-do-eurozony-bych-nyni-rozhodne-nedoporucoval-234876

of governments that manage their economies in an irresponsible manner.” (ceskatelevize.cz 2012)¹⁹
Bearing this in mind, it must be noted that the former Prime Minister, Petr Nečas, represented a deviation from the opinion prevailing in the ODS in this regard. He perceived the Czech adoption of the Euro as a Czech commitment to the other EU member states; an attempt to obtain an exception to the Accession Treaty would present an unnecessary political cost:

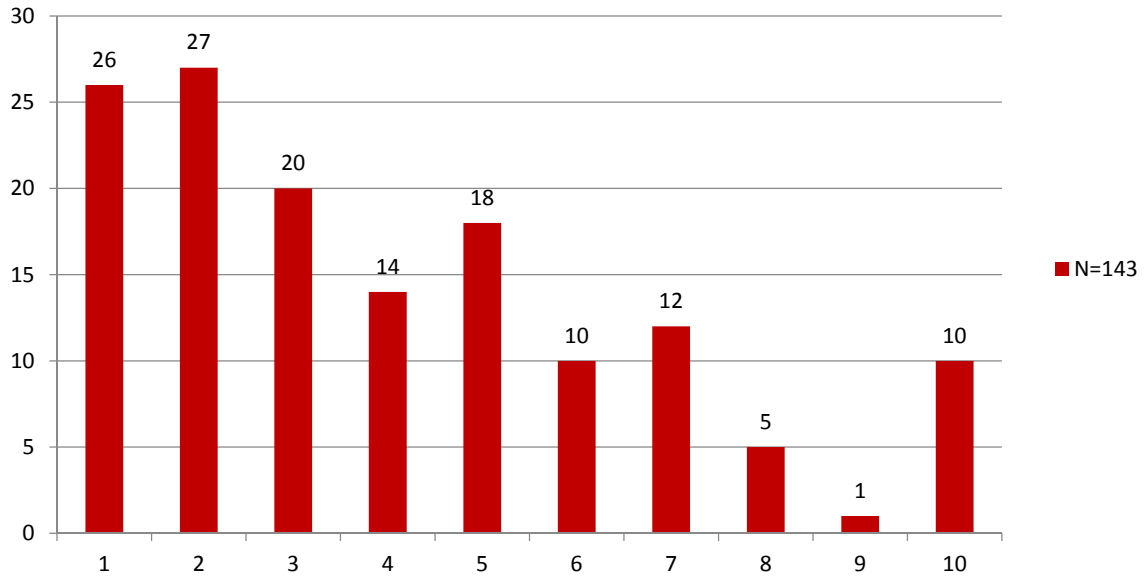
“I don't see any reason to send an absolutely false and redundant political signal as well as to pay unnecessary political costs, because any potential withdrawal from the Eurozone has to be confirmed by all the other member states. It would damage both the Czech Republic and the Eurozone,” (zpravy.e15.cz 2012)²⁰ he said on the topic.

¹⁹ ceskatelevize.cz 2012: Necas: o prijeti eura musi rozhodnout volici;
www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/ekonomika/223911-necas-o-prijeti-eura-musi-rozhodnout-volici-v-referendu/

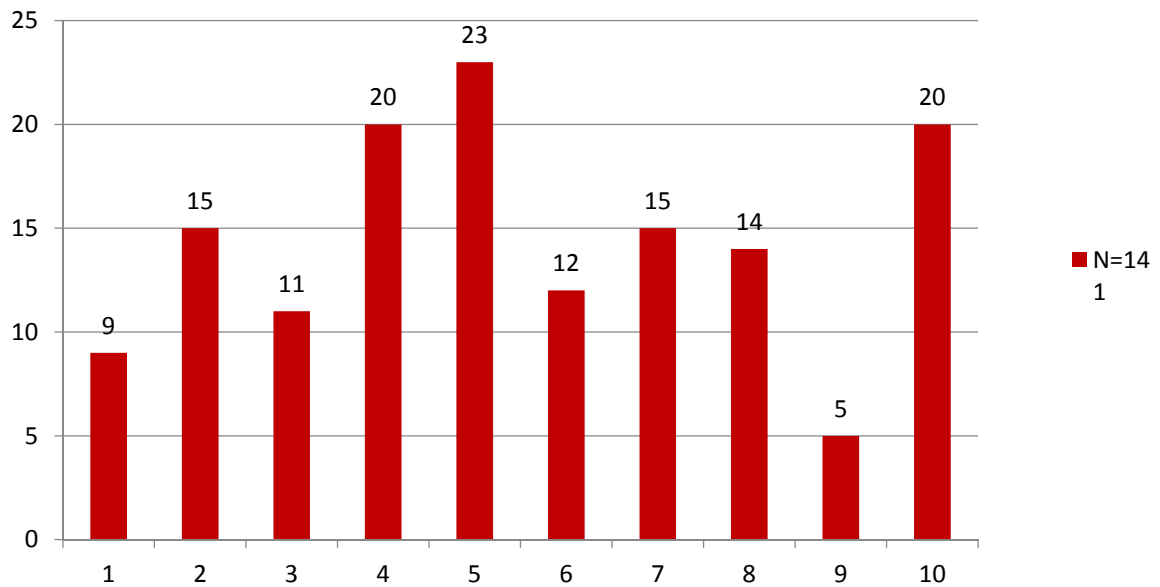
²⁰ zpravy.e15.cz 2012: Česko počítá s přijetím eura I přes odpor prezidenta;
<http://zpravy.e15.cz/byznys/finance-a-bankovnictvi/necas-cesko-pocita-s-prijetim-eura-i-pres-odpor-prezidenta-750687>

Attachments

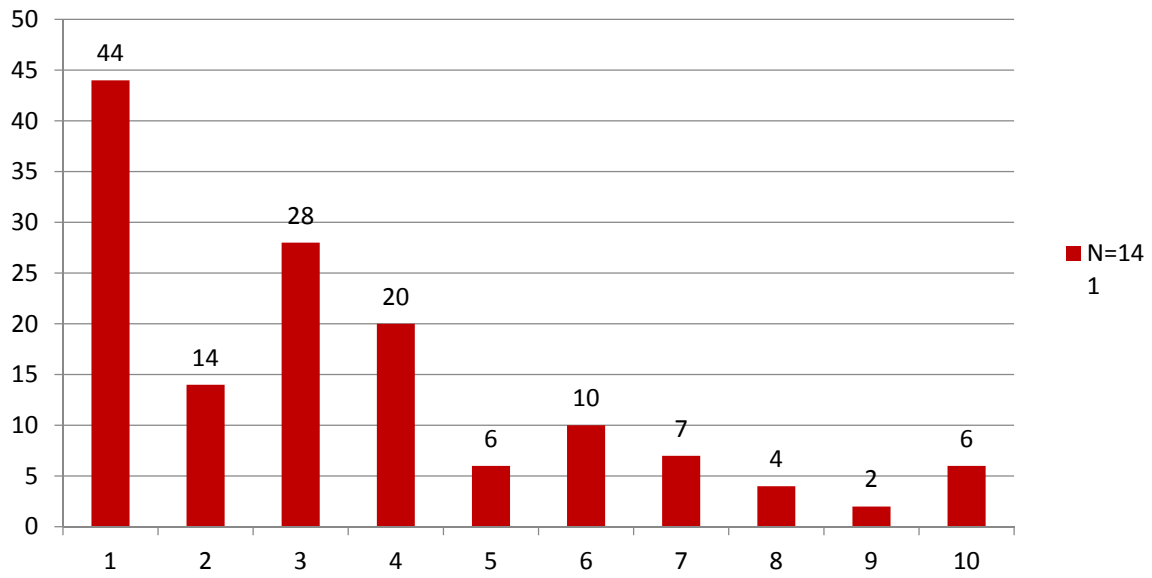
Do you talk about politics with your friends, e.g. about which political party do you vote for?



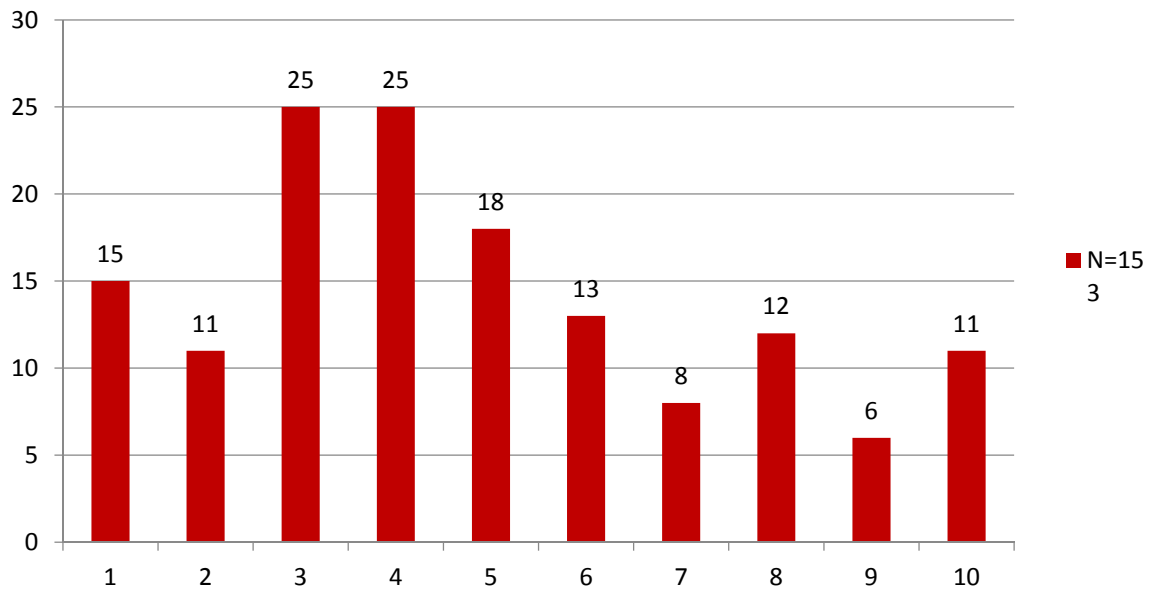
Do you talk about politics with your parents? Do you know which political party do they vote for?



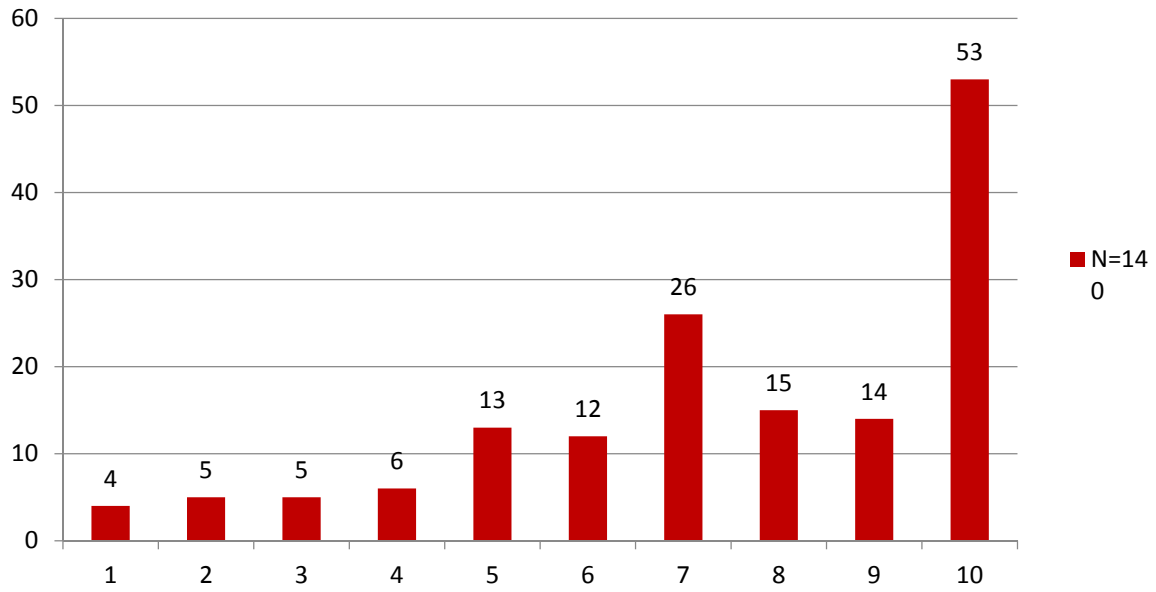
Are political parties able to draw your attention?



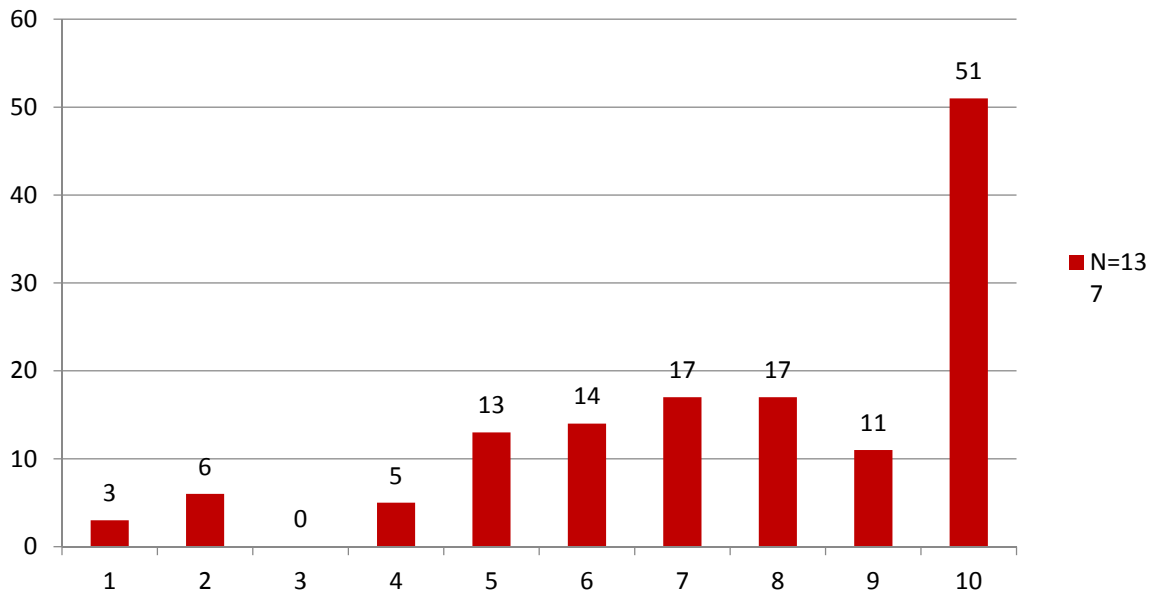
It is important for me, how the parties refer to the nation



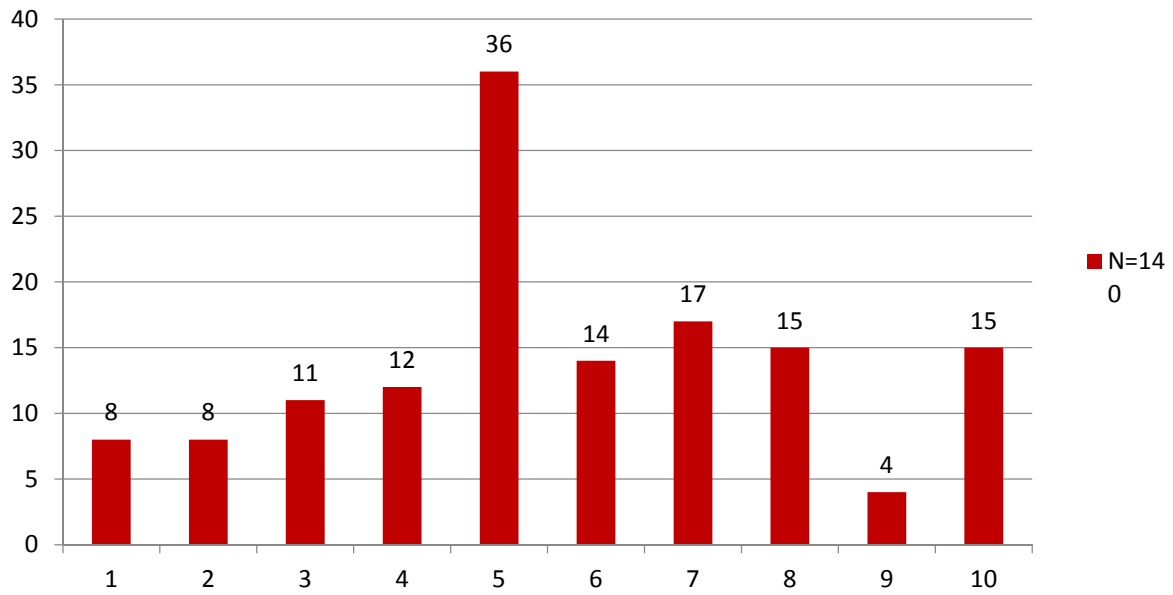
Cohabitation of Roma minority with the Czech society is a source of serious problems in the society.



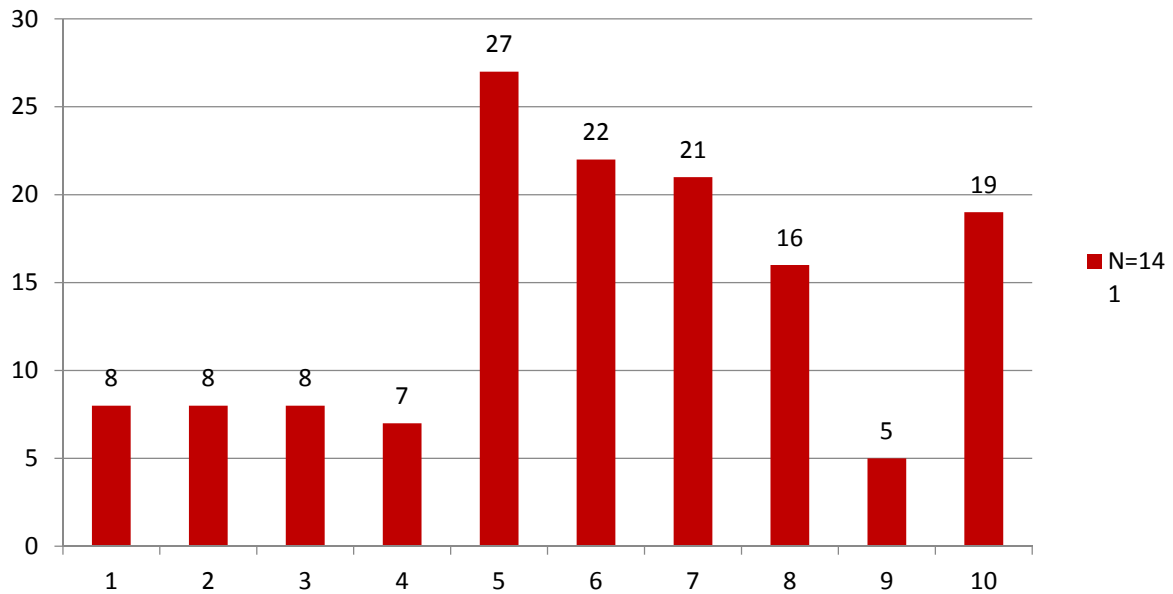
Roma as a minority should fully adapt in their habits to the Czech society.



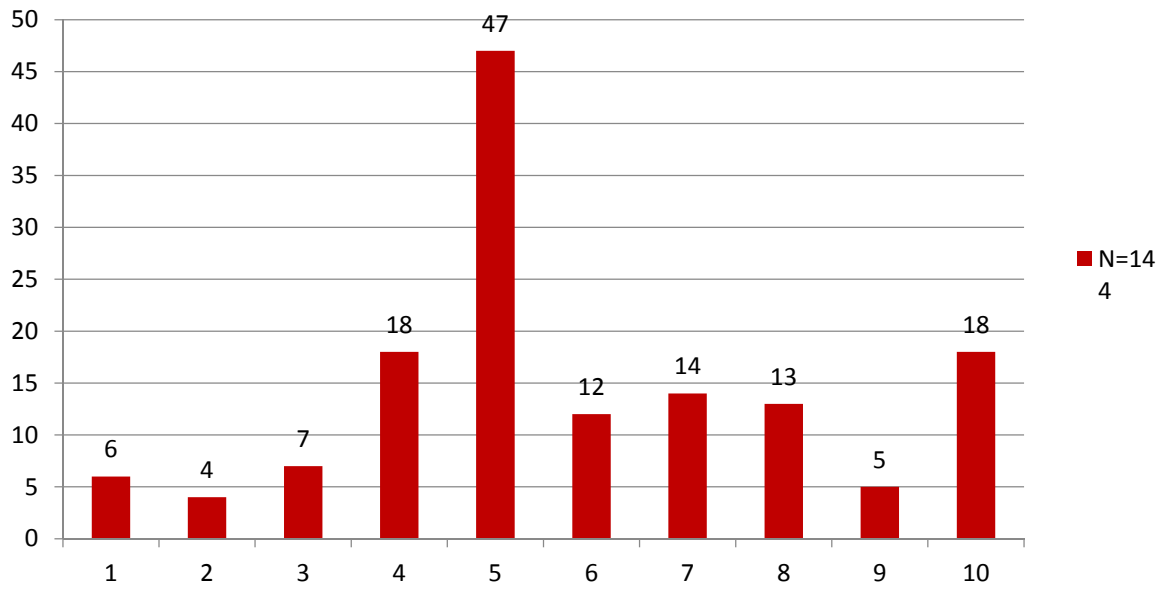
I find the idea of a uniqueness of the Czech nation attractive.



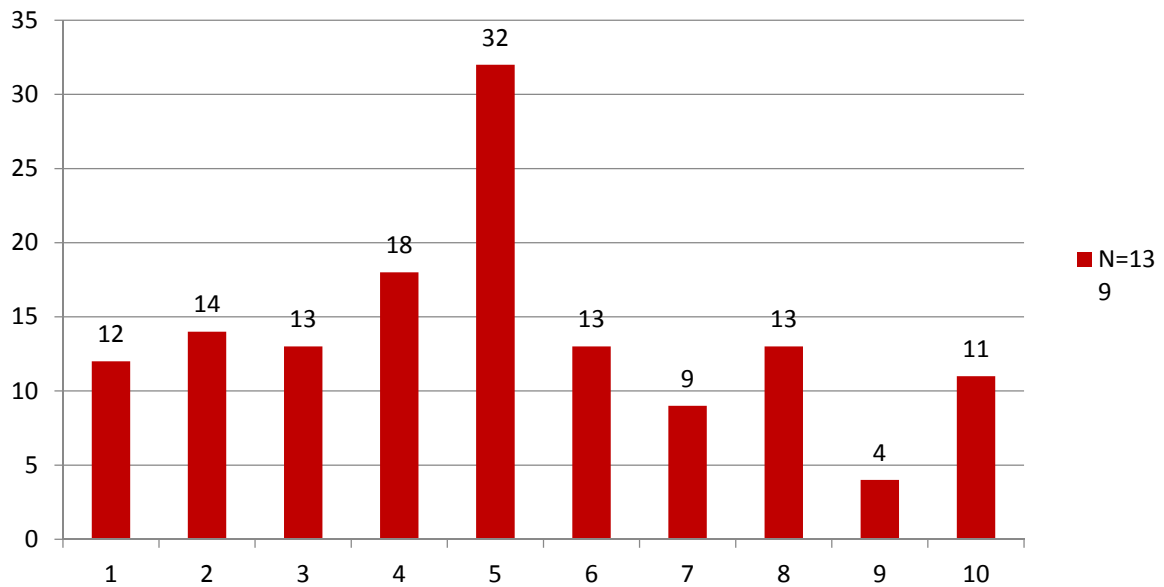
Teaching about national history in schools should support patriotism related to the Czech nation.



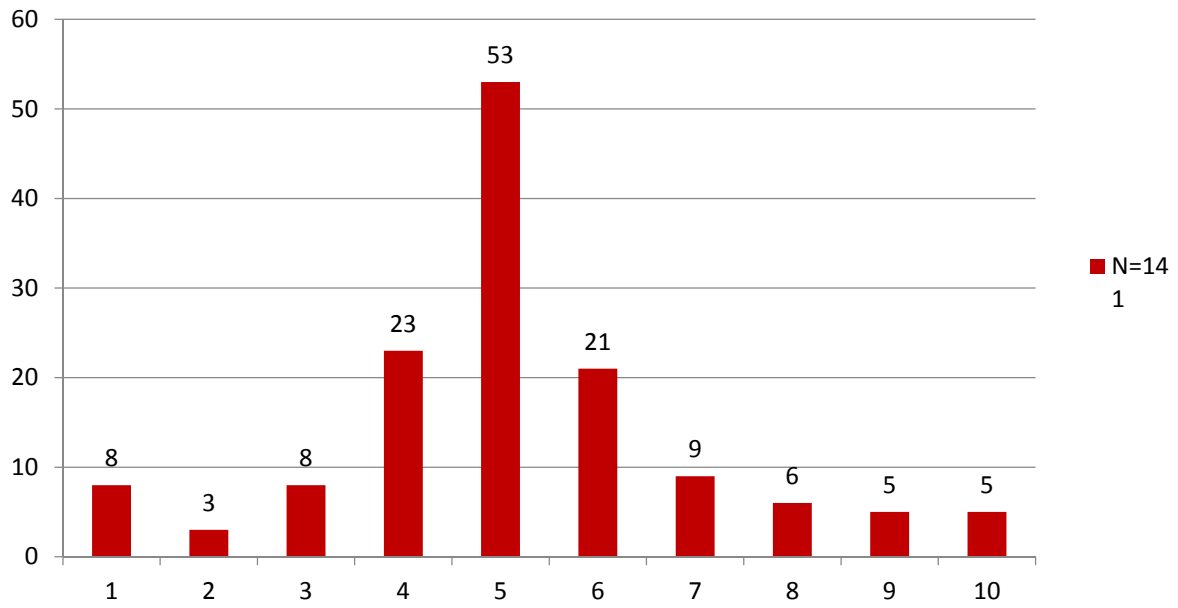
The issue of expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia is a closed chapter of both Czech and German history.



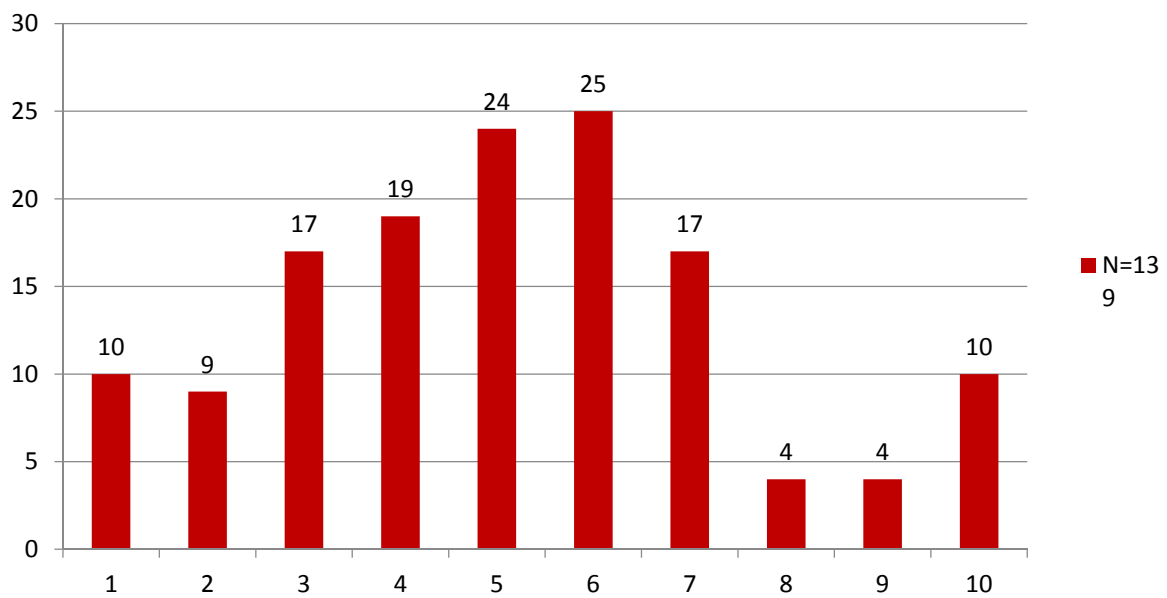
State should take an active interest in the issues of compatriots living abroad and create conditions for their contact with the homeland.



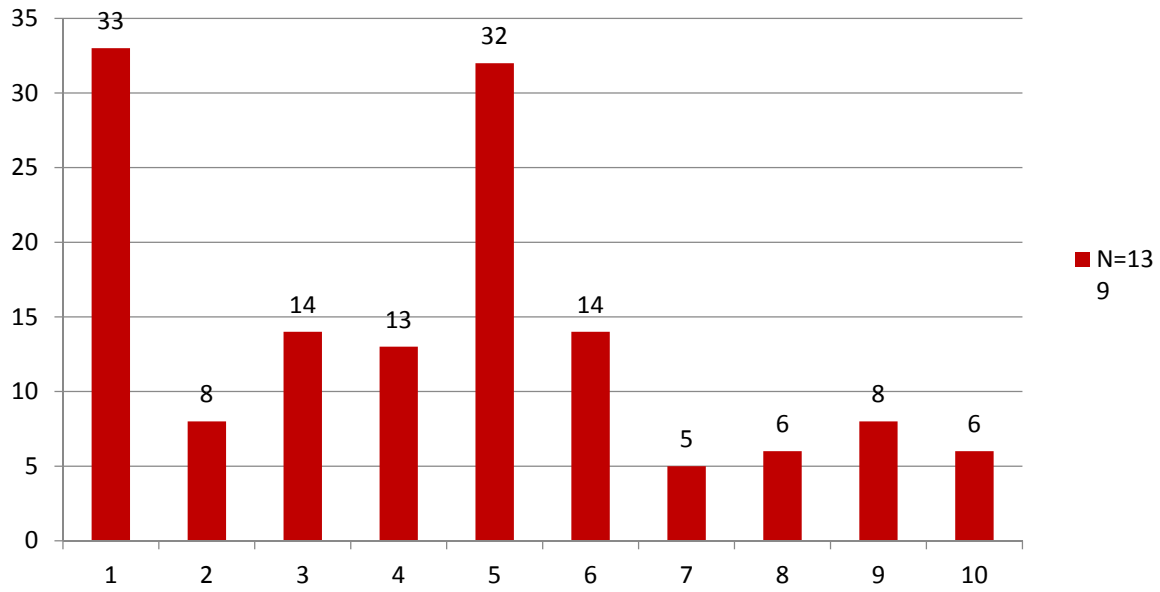
Foreign policy towards Russia should be based exclusively on promotion of economic interests.



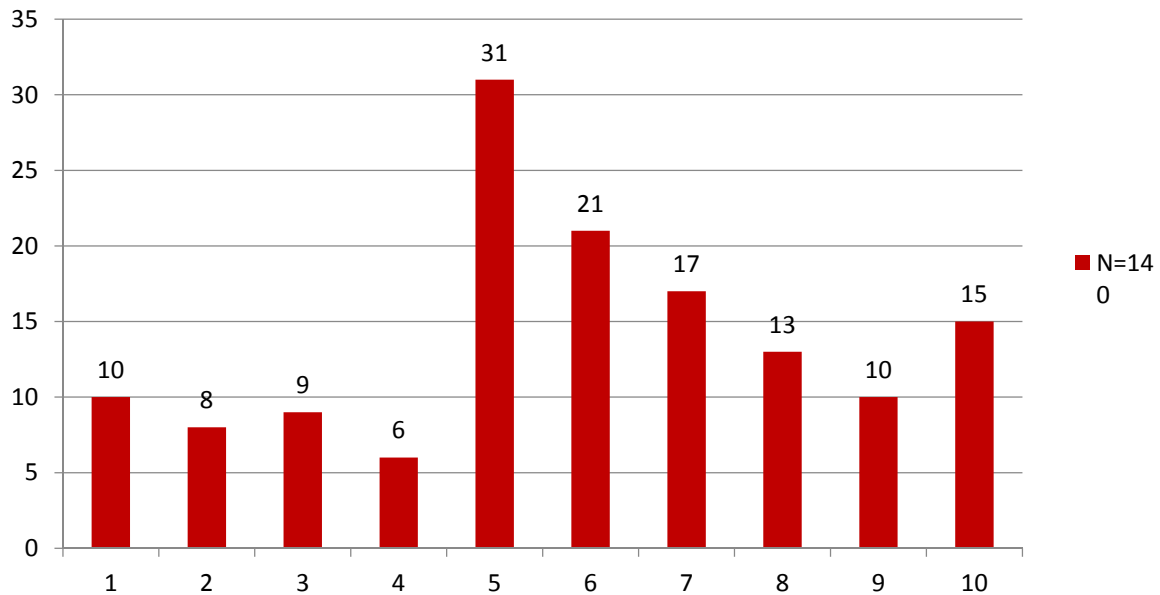
Czech's membership in the EU poses a threat to Czech sovereignty.



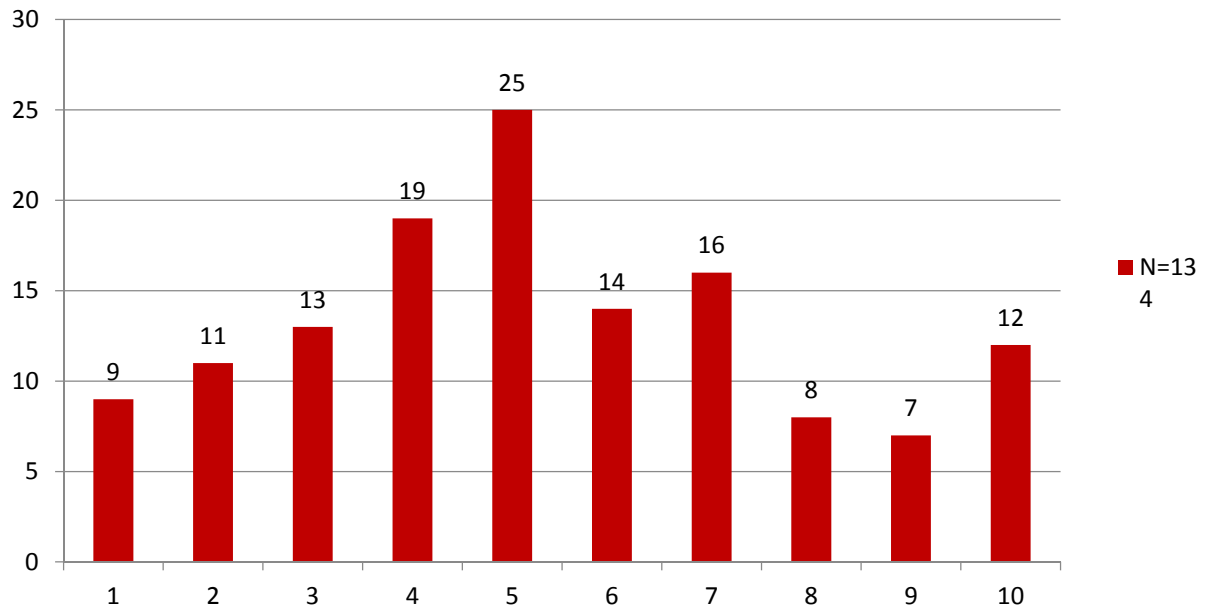
I find the idea of a united European nation attractive.



I agree that the EU states should be more interconnected.



Immigration (foreigners who want to settle in Czech Rep.) are a source of problems in our society.



Conditions for granting permanent residence and citizenship in Czech Rep. should be simplified.

