This January, Czechs vote their president for the third time in the country‘s history. Until 2013, the president was elected by Parlament, but this system seemed less democratic to some people, and the now leaving president Miloš Zeman, who has held the office since 2013 until now, took the advantage, used his excellent rhetorical skills and became the first president of the Czech Republic elected only by people. Despite the fact, that he won again in 2018, he has got very unpopular and the majority of Czechs are happy to see him go after 10 years in office (which is the period set written in the Czech Constitution).

Czech election has always two rounds (because it is unrealictic for one od the candidates to get more then 50 % of votes). This year, the first round has already passed and two main candidates are facing each other in the second round on January 27 and 28. Their names are Petr Pavel and Andrej Babiš.

Petr Pavel is bearded, well-looking man, former army general who served also in NATO. He is seen as a more modest and representative then Andrej Babiš, who is very controversial bussiness man and former Czech Prime minister.

Both of those two candidates have a history tied with the communist regime which was in power in the Czechoslovakia at that time. It is very interesting and maybe little bit worrying too, because Czechs chose two former communist guys instead of for example Danuše Nerudová or Pavel Fisher, who were also a hot candidates in the first round but had to conections to the communist regime of the 20th century.

Presidential debates are very popular in Czechia – voters like to watch the candidates facing each other in a live broadcasting and privat-own and state televisions are competing to lure as many viewers as possible. But this year is a little bit different, because both of the candidates, Petr Pavel as well as Andrej Babiš lead a large campaigns on social media like Twitter or Instagram. The goal is clear – to persuade the young voters. The ousted candidate Danuše Nerudová, who was the youngest of them all and also the only female, led the largest campaign online and as a result, her main supporters were voters between the ages of 18 and 30. But most likely not enough of the voted, so she didn´t enter the second round despite the expectations.

But as soon as the results of the first round went public, she immediately expressed her support to Petr Pavel, and now, just a few days before the election day, she is running the campaign with him, visiting every corner of the small country.

On the other hand, Andrej Babiš has made a few very controversial comments – for example, in the debate in the Czech state television, when asked whether he would send army to Ukraine if Poland, czech NATO partner, would be attacked by Russia, he said no, because he wants a piece and not a war. It certainly shocked not just Poland, but all of the NATO members. And it is very likely that they heard it also in the Kremlin.

Despite the fact that the president is usually only a representative figure, it still has power to change the direction the country is heading. Both of the candidates have their pros and cons, but in the end, one of them will be elected. And because the Czech Republic is a democratic state, I hope that everybody will accept the results.