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Pirates and STAN, fair-weather friends



In a moment of extreme candor, PM Andrej Babiš told [TV Prima on Jan. 3](#) that this year will be difficult, and next year probably also, but that we could return to normal in 2023. It was a starkly pessimistic assessment that, if accurate, means the parliamentary elections on Oct. 8-9 will be entirely about covid-19. Babiš has more or less followed the guidelines of the WHO, so centrist coalitions that want to defeat him will need to give a convincing alternative to the global pandemic response. Arguing vaguely that they would have done the same thing but better isn't a winning recipe. It will take some sort of brilliant plan. Not even a hint of such brilliance is visible in the [coalition agreement between the Pirates and the STAN mayors' group](#). "Pandemic" and "epidemic" are mentioned three times, but otherwise it's difficult to find even an allusion to what is going on in the outside world. For once, Babiš's opponents should take his words at face value. They need a foul-weather plan.

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