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# Isolation and taxonomy of semi-presidentialism with nominal presidents in central and Eastern European Countries of the eu: as exemplified by Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia

The article is dedicated to theoretical, methodological and empirical justification for different types and systems of republican government. The author conducted the comparative analysis of the presidential powers in various systems of republican government and explained the nature and different types of semi-presidential systems of government as exemplified by Central and Eastern European countries of the EU. The researcher also argued and identified the main attributes of semi-presidentialism with nominal presidents in the context of its distinction from parliamentarism as exemplified by Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia and defined the correlation between parliamentary democracy, semi-presidentialism and parliamentarism.

***Keywords:*** *semi-presidentialism, parliamentarism, parliamentary democracy, system of government, nominal president, cohabitation, Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia.*

# ВИОКРЕМЛЕННЯ ТА ТАКСОНОМІЯ НАПІВПРЕЗИДЕНТАЛІЗМУ З НОМІНАЛЬНИМИ ПРЕЗИДЕНТАМИ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНО-СХІДНОЄВРОПЕЙСЬКИХ КРАЇНАХ ЄС: НА ПРИКЛАДІ БОЛГАРІЇ, ЧЕХІЇ, СЛОВАЧЧИНИ ТА СЛОВЕНІЇ[1]

Запропоновано теоретико-методологічні визначення та емпіричні обґрунтування різних видів і систем республіканського державного правління. Здійснено порівняльний аналіз сили повноважень президентів у різних системах республіканського державного правління і пояснено природу та різні типи напівпрезиденталізму на прикладі центрально-східноєвропейських країн ЄС. Аргументовано й окреслено головні атрибути напівпрезиденталізму з номінальними президентами у контексті його відокремлення від парламентаризму на прикладі Болгарії, Чехії Словаччини та Словенії й означено кореляцію між парламентською демократією, парламентаризмом і напівпрезиденталізмом.

***Ключові слова:*** *напівпрезиденталізм, парламентаризм, парламентська демократія, система державного правління, номінальний президент, когабітація, Болгарія, Чехія, Словаччина, Словенія.*

[1] An earlier and Ukrainian version of the article was published in one of the previous bulletins.

## Introduction

Nowadays Political Science literature singles out two foremost methodological approaches to understanding political (constitutional) systems of republican government – *dichotomous* and *trichotomous*. *The first* one views two classical systems of republicanism – presidentialism and parliamentarism. *The second* adds to scientific analysis the category of 'semi-presidentialism', sometimes calling it 'mixed republicanism'. However, we consider it is methodologically incorrect as the 'mixed' combination can occur within both classical ('pure') presidentialism and classical ('pure') parliamentarism, not to mention semi-presidentialism. We support the trichotomous analysis of contemporary systems of government (or political systems) and understand that initiating the splitting in the given theoretical and methodological direction is caused by an ambiguous vision of political systems, some of which, on the one hand, are close to parliamentarism or presidentialism, and on the other hand, cause definitive requirements for semi-presidentialism. This occurs in two directions: in the perspective of research of some similarities and in the differences between the semi-presidential and presidential systems of government and between the semi-presidential and parliamentary systems of government. Thus, the key point of distinction is the formal and actual positioning of the powers of such institutions as the president, prime minister and parliament[2].

When shifting the problem to Central and Eastern European countries of the EU we must realise that some republics have a significant correlation of powers, in particular, of the presidents, who are elected, on the one hand, popularly and, on the other hand, in the parliaments. Consequently, the question arises and refers to the point how to interpret these systems and is it necessary to distinguish between them? This is why the political systems of Central and Eastern European countries of the EU are the objects of research, and the main problem of the research are semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents/heads of state in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU, in particular Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Accordingly, the objective of the article is to distinguish theoretically, methodologically and empirically between the principles/attributes of parliamentarism and semi-presidentialism in the context of republican systems of government *with popularly elected, but nominal (weak or ceremonial) presidents*. To solve this problem, we suggest to consider several problems. The first part of the study focuses its attention on the conceptual and empirical parameters of constitutional systems of government and the powers of presidents in Central and Eastern European countries of th EU, the second part of the study concerns theoretical and practical dimension of the problem of distinction between semi-presidentialism or parliamentarism with the position of nominal presidents in Central and Eastern European countries of th EU, and the third part of the study affects the problem of constitutional systems' varieties in parliamentary democracies.

[2] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

## The constitutional systems of government and the powers of presidents: conceptual and empirical parameters of scientific analysis in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU

The suggested research focuses on the problem of conceptual definition and distinguishing between forms and systems of government in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU, which have the positions/institutions of nominal presidents, who in some republics are popularly elected and in other republics are elected in the parliaments. The common feature of these two scenarios is the fact that the cabinet and the head of the cabinet are collectively responsible only to the parliament/legislature. The Political Science traditional classification of constitutional systems typed by Elgie[3] makes it clear that in a case when president is popularly elected it is used to say about semi-presidentialism or presidentialism. In return, in a case when president is elected in parliament it is used to say about parliamentarism.

It is clear according to the definitions of three different types of republican systems of government. *The semi-presidential type of republican government* is a constitutional system, which is characterised by the position of a president, popularly elected for a fixed term, as well as a prime minister and cabinet, who are necessarily collectively responsible to a parliament. *The presidential type of republican government* is a constitutional system, which is characterised by the position of a president, popularly elected for a fixed term, while the members of presidential administration (cabinet) are not considered collectively responsible to a parliament. *The parliamentary type of republican government* is a constitutional system, in which a president is authorised because of indirect elections (e.g. in parliament), and a prime minister and cabinet are necessarily collectively responsible to a parliament. This interpretation does not consider the powers of presidents, but the latter significantly affect the actual positioning of certain constitutional (especially semi-presidential) systems.[4] There is a possibility of presidentialisation or parliamentarisation (generally personalisation) of different constitutional systems. Therefore, the latter may function on practice as more presidential or parliamentary systems, constitutionally remaining semi-presidential systems. Nonetheless, they can also function as semi-presidential systems. This is the characteristic of such Central and Eastern European countries of the EU as

[3] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

[4] This is an advantage of the classification of constitutional systems, which value lies in the fact that we should not refer to the relative properties of political process. Therefore, there is an avoidance of the elements of subjectivity in the classification. This means that the separation of different constitutional systems should be performed without interpretation of presidential powers. The powers of the latter vary depending not only on the constitutional, but also on the political preconditions. All political preconditions, especially within semi-presidentialism, are created after elections, including parliamentary elections, because they are concentrated at the institution of cabinet, which is collectively responsible to a parliament. See detailed: V. Lytvyn, *Podviyna Vykonavcha Vlada: Teoriya ta Praktyka Yevropeys'koho Piviprezydentalizmu*, "Osvita rehionu: politolohiya, psykholohiya, komunikatsiyi" 2009, vol 3, s. 25-33.; R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.; R. Elgie, *Variations on a theme: a fresh look at semi-presidentialism*, "Journal of Democracy" 2005, vol 16, nr 3, s. 1-21.; R. Elgie, *Semi-Presidentialism: Concepts, Consequences and Contesting Explanations*, "Political Studies Review" 2004, vol 2, nr 3, s. 316-317.; R. Elgie, *The Politics of Semi-Presidentialism*, [w:] R. Elgie (ed.), *Semi-Presidentialism in Europe*, Wyd. OUP 1999, s. 1-21.

Poland, Lithuania and Romania.[5] The given perspective poses a theoretical and methodological viewpoint of the article. Its essence is represented in Table 1.

It is immediately clear (using the definitions of Elgie[6]), that among the analysed Central and Eastern European countries of the EU we may define (as of 2016) semi-presidential republics in Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia, and parliamentary republics in Estonia, Latvia and Hungary. Furthermore, it is clear that presidential republics do not represent any case in the region, because in each analysed country a cabinet is collectively responsible only to a parliament.

Nevertheless, in the analysed cases of the presidential powers in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU for 1994–2016 (see detailed Table 1), there are the examples of commensurability of presidential powers in formally semi-presidential and parliamentary republics (as defined by Elgie[7])[8]. In particular, in McGregor's[9] unweighted and weighted methods of calculation of presidential powers in Central and Eastern European countries (estimated for 1994), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Slovenia, on the one hand, and parliamentary Czechia, Estonia and Latvia, on the other hand. According to Fry's[10] method (estimated for 1997), the commensurate countries were, on the one hand, semi-presidential Bulgaria and Slovenia and, on the other hand, parliamentary Czechia, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia. According to Roper's[11] method (estimated for 2000), the commensurate semi-presidential countries were, on the one hand, Lithuania (with weaker president) and, on the other hand, Slovenia (with stronger president). According to Siaroff's[12] method (estimated for 2003), the commensurate countries were, on the one hand, semi-presidential Slovenia and Slovakia and, on the other hand, parliamentary Czechia, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia. According

[5] It certainly means that the formal and actual powers of presidents affect the separation of different types of semi-presidentialism. In particular, there may be semi-presidential systems with nominal/ceremonial presidents (prime ministers and cabinets are much more powerful), semi-presidential systems with strong/omnipotent superpresidents (prime ministers and cabinets are significantly weaker) and semi-presidential systems with different correlation of the 'approximate balance' of presidents' and prime ministers' powers. The latter group includes the countries dominated by presidents or prime ministers, but their prevalence is not crucial. See detailed: O. Amorim Neto, K. Strom, Breaking the parliamentary chain of delegation: Presidents and non-partisan cabinet members in European democracies, "British Journal of Political Science" 2006, vol 36, nr 4, s. 619-643.

[6] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

[7] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

[8] According to Elgie, Bulgaria (since 1991), Croatia (since 1991), Czechia (since 2012), Lithuania (since 1992), Poland (since 1990), Romania (since 1990), Slovakia (since 1999) and Slovenia (since 1992) are contemporary semi-presidential republics in the region. Instead, Estonia, Latvia and Hungary are contemporary parliamentary republics in the region (previously Slovakia (until 1999) and Czechia (until 2012) also were parliamentary republics). See detailed: R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.; R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism: An increasingly Common Constitutional Choice*, [w:] R. Elgie, S. Moestrup, Y.-S. Wu (eds.), *Semi-Presidentialism and Democracy*, Wyd. Palgrave Macmillan 2011, s. 1-20.; R. Elgie, *The Politics of Semi-Presidentialism*, [w:] R. Elgie (ed.), *Semi-Presidentialism in Europe*, Wyd. OUP 1999, s. 1-21.

[9] J. McGregor, *The Presidency in East Central Europe*, "RFR/RL Research Report" 1994, vol 3, nr 2, s. 12-16.

[10] T. Frye, *A Politics of Institutional Choices: Post-Communist Presidencies*, "Comparative Political Studies" 1997, vol 30, nr 5, s. 523-552.; T. Frye, *Changes in Post-Communist Presidential Power: A Political Economy Explanation*, Wyd. Center for Continuing Education 1999.

[11] S. Roper, *Are All Semipresidential Regimes the Same? A Comparison of Premier-Presidential Regimes*, "Comparative Politics" 2002, vol 34, nr 3, s. 256-263.

[12] A. Siaroff, *Comparative presidencies: The inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2003, vol 42, nr 3, s. 287-312.

**Table 1.** Comparative analysis of the presidential powers in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU (1994–2016)[1]

| The method of calculation (year of estimation) | Bulgaria | Croatia | Czechia | Estonia | Hungary | Latvia | Lithuania | Poland | Romania | Slovakia | Slovenia | Minimum and maximum percent or points in the method |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| McGregor unweighted method (1994) | 51 | 50 | 44 | 41 | 56 | 31 | 52 | 56 | 48 | 47 | 30 | '0' – '100' (%) |
| McGregor weighted method (1994) | 46 | 46 | 37 | 36 | 52 | 30 | 47 | 51 | 45 | 39 | 27 | '0' – '100' (%) |
| Frye method (1997) | 10,0 | 14,5 | 9,5 | 9,0 | 14,5 | 9,5 | 12,0 | 13,0 | 14,0 | 10,0 | 11,0 | '0' – '27' (pts) |
| Roper method (2000, only for some SP) | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | 1 | 8 | 7 | N.A. | 3 | '0' – '24' (pts) |
| Siaroff method (2003) | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | '0' – '9' (pts) |
| Krouwel method (2003, only for the pre-EU) | –0,5 | N.A. | –4,5 | –4,5 | –2,0 | –2,5 | +0,5 | 0,0 | –2,0 | –2,0 | –3,0 | '–7' – '+7' (pts) |
| Shugart & **Carey** method **(**2004, not for all) | 2 | N.A. | 3 | 2 | N.A. | N.A. | 3 | 3 | 6 | 4 | N.A. | '0' – '40' (pts) |
| Taghiyev method (2006, only for post-USSR) | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | 14,0 | N.A. | 14,0 | 20,5 | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | '0' – '56' (pts) |
| Armingeon & Careja method (2007) | 12,0 | 10,5 | 11,0 | 8,5 | 13,0 | 7,5 | 13,5 | 13,5 | 13,0 | 12,0 | 9,0 | '0' – '29' (pts) |
| Armingeon & Careja unweighted method (2008) | 1,83 | 1,76 | 1,76 | 1,59 | 1,90 | 1,52 | 1,93 | 1,93 | 1,90 | 1,83 | 1,31 | '0' – '3' (pts) |
| Armingeon & Careja weighted method (2008) | 1,83 | 1,76 | 0,88 | 0,79 | 0,95 | 0,76 | 1,93 | 1,93 | 1,90 | 0,91 | 1,31 | '0' – '3' (pts) |
| Siaroff modified method (2008, only for SP) | 2 | 3 | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | '0' – '7' (pts) |
| Fruhstorfer method (2011) | 19,7 | 24 | 15,0 | 21,3 | 18,0 | 21,3 | 20,2 | 24,7 | 25,8 | 26,5 | 17,8 | '0' – '56' (pts) |
| Shugart & **Carey** method **(2013,** not for all**)** | 4 | N.A. | N.A. | 2 | N.A. | 4 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 4 | '0' – '40' (pts) |
| Lucky method (2013**,** not for all**)** | 15,3 | N.A. | 16,5 | N.A. | 15,5 | N.A. | 27,0 | 15,75 | N.A. | 20,5 | N.A. | '0' – '38' (pts) |
| Krouwel method (2013**,** not for all**)** | –2,5 | N.A. | –1,5 | –2,5 | –0,5 | N.A. | +2,5 | –0,5 | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | '–7' – '+7' (pts) |
| Taghiyev method (2013**,** not for all**)** | 26,0 | N.A. | 18,6 | 18,0 | 25,1 | N.A. | 26,0 | 25,1 | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | '0' – '56' (pts) |
| Frye method (2013**,** not for all**)** | 15,5 | N.A. | N.A. | 11,5 | 10,0 | 9,0 | 11,0 | 10,0 | 13,5 | N.A. | 10,5 | '0' – '27' (pts) |
| Siaroff modified method (2013**,** only for the EU**)** | 6,5 | N.A. | 5,5 | 2,5 | 6,5 | 3,5 | 6,0 | 8,0 | 7,0 | 7,0 | 2,5 | '0' – '10' (pts) |
| Elgie, Bucur, Dolez & Laurent method (2014) | 0,25 | 0,33 | 0,18 | 0,18 | 0,18 | 0,12 | 0,32 | 0,29 | 0,31 | 0,14 | 0,14 | '0' – '1' (pts) |
| Elgie & Doyle method: Prespow1 (2015) | 0,183 | 0,291 | 0,257 | 0,184 | 0,275 | 0,010 | 0,282 | 0,241 | 0,250 | 0,189 | 0,118 | '0' – '1' (pts) |
| Elgie & Doyle method: Prespow2 (2015) | 0,293 | 0,372 | 0,270 | 0,174 | 0,380 | 0,067 | 0,380 | 0,443 | 0,463 | 0,314 | 0,169 | '0' – '1' (pts) |
| Siaroff modified method (2015) | 6,5 | 3,5 | 5,5 | 2,5 | 6,5 | 3,5 | 6,0 | 8,0 | 7,0 | 7,0 | 2,5 | '0' – '10' (pts) |
| Popular presidential elections (as of 2016) | + | + | + | – | – | – | + | + | + | + | + | '+' or '–' |

Źródło: K. Armingeon, R. Careja, *Comparative Data Set for 28 Post-Communist Countries, 1989-2007*, Wyd. University of Berne 2007.; R. Elgie, D. Doyle, *Maximizing the reliability of cross-national measures of presidential power*, Wyd. International Political Science Association biennial conference, Montreal, 20–24 July 2014.; R. Elgie, C. Bucur, B. Dolez, A. Laurent, *Proximity, Candidates, and Presidential Power: How Directly Elected Presidents Shape the Legislative Party System*, "Political Research Quarterly" 2014, vol 67, nr 3, s. 467-477.; J. Fortin, *Measuring Presidential Powers: Revisiting Existing Aggregate Measurement*, "International Political Science Review" 2013, vol 34, nr 1, s. 91-112.; A. Fruhstorfer, *Putting Presidents Power into Place: A Measurement of Constitutional Presidential Strength in Non-Presidential Systems*, ECPR General Conference 2014.; T. Frye, *A Politics of Institutional Choices: Post-Communist Presidencies*, "Comparative Political Studies" 1997, vol 30, nr 5, s. 523-552.; T. Frye, *Changes in Post-Communist Presidential Power: A Political Economy Explanation*, Wyd. Center for Continuing Education 1999.; A. Kounov, E. Mazo, *Reexamining Presidential Power in the Post-Soviet States*, "Stanford University Working Paper" 2004.; A. Krouwel, *Measuring Presidentialism and Parliamentarism: An Application to Central and East European Countries*, "Acta Politica" 2003, vol 38, s. 333-364.; A. Krouwel, *Measuring presidentialism of Central and East European Countries*, "Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit. Working paper" 2003, nr 2.; C. Lucky, *Table of presidential powers in Eastern Europe*, "East European Constitutional Review" 1993-1994, vol 2, nr 4, s. 81-94.; P. Magalhães, B. Fortes, *Presidential Elections in Semi-Presidential Systems: Presidential Powers, Electoral Turnout and the Performance of Government-Endorsed Candidates*, Wyd. Digital CSIC 2008.; E. Mazo, *Duverger's Dilemma: Debating the Uniqueness of Semi-Presidential Constitutions in Eastern Europe*, [w:] "Social Science Research Council": Dissertation Development Workshop on Governance in Eurasia, Wyd. University of Texas March 4-7, 2004.; J. McGregor, *The Presidency in East Central Europe*, "RFR/RL Research Report" 1994, vol 3, nr 2, s. 12-16.; A. Romanyuk, V. Lytvyn, N. Panchak-Byaloblotska, *Politychni instytuty krayin Tsentral'no-Skhidnoyi Yevropy: porivnyal'nyy analiz*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014.; A. Romanyuk, V. Lytvyn, *Porivnyal'nyy analiz politychnykh instytutiv krayin Vyshehrads'koyi hrupy ta inshykh krayin Tsentral'no-Skhidnoyi Yevropy: monohrafiya*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2016, s. 102-111.; S. Roper, *Are All Semipresidential Regimes the Same? A Comparison of Premier-Presidential Regimes*, "Comparative Politics" 2002, vol 34, nr 3, s. 253-272.; M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992, s. 148-158.; A. Siaroff, *Comparative presidencies: The inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2003, vol 42, nr 3, s. 287-312.; E. Taghiyev, *Measuring Presidential Power in Post-Soviet Countries*, "CEU Political Science Journal" 2006, vol 3, s. 11-21. Additionally see Elgie data from the 'Presidential Power' site, available at: http://presidential-power.com/?page_id=2148, accessed November 30, 2015.

[1] An earlier and Ukrainian version of the article was published in one of the previous bulletins.

to Krouwel's[13] method (estimated for 2003), the commensurate countries were, on the one hand, semi-presidential Slovenia and, on the other hand, parliamentary Czechia and Latvia. According to Shugart's and Carey's[14] method (estimated by Kounov and Mazo for 2004), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Bulgaria, Lithuania and Poland, as well as parliamentary Czechia and Estonia[15]. According to Armingeon's and Careja's[16] initial, weighted and unweighted methods (estimated for 2007 and 2008), the commensurate countries were mostly semi-presidential Slovakia and Slovenia and parliamentary Czechia, Estonia and Latvia[17]. According to Siaroff's modified method (estimated for 2008, only for semi-presidential countries), the commensurate semi-presidential countries were Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia[18]. According to Fruhstorfer's[19] method (estimated for 2011), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Bulgaria, Lithuania and Slovenia, as well as parliamentary Czechia, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia. According to Shugart's and Carey's[20] method (estimated for 2013), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Poland and Slovakia, as well as parliamentary Estonia. According to Lucky's[21] method (estimated for 2013), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Bulgaria, Czechia and Poland and parliamentary Hungary. According to Krouwel's[22] method (estimated for 2013), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, as well as parliamentary Estonia. According to Taghiyev's (Taghiyev, 2006: 11–21) method (estimated for 2013), the commensurate countries were parliamentary Estonia and the semi-presidential Bulgaria and Czechia. According to Fry[23] method (estimated for 2013), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Poland and Slovenia and parliamentary Hungary and Latvia. According to Siaroff's modified method (estimated for 2013 and 2015), the commensurate countries were semi-presidential Slovenia and parliamentary

[13] A. Krouwel, *Measuring Presidentialism and Parliamentarism: An Application to Central and East European Countries*, "Acta Politica" 2003, vol 38, s. 333-364.; A. Krouwel, *Measuring presidentialism of Central and East European Countries*, "Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit. Working paper" 2003, nr 2.

[14] M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992, s. 148-158.

[15] A. Kounov, E. Mazo, *Reexamining Presidential Power in the Post-Soviet States*, "Stanford University Working Paper" 2004.; E. Mazo, *Duverger's Dilemma: Debating the Uniqueness of Semi-Presidential Constitutions in Eastern Europe*, [w:] "Social Science Research Council": Dissertation Development Workshop on Governance in Eurasia, Wyd. University of Texas March 4-7, 2004.

[16] K. Armingeon, R. Careja, *Comparative Data Set for 28 Post-Communist Countries, 1989-2007*, Wyd. University of Berne 2007.

[17] J. Fortin, *Measuring Presidential Powers: Revisiting Existing Aggregate Measurement*, "International Political Science Review" 2013, vol 34, nr 1, s. 91-112.

[18] P. Magalhães, B. Fortes, *Presidential Elections in Semi-Presidential Systems: Presidential Powers, Electoral Turnout and the Performance of Government-Endorsed Candidates*, Wyd. Digital CSIC 2008.

[19] A. Fruhstorfer, *Putting Presidents Power into Place: A Measurement of Constitutional Presidential Strength in Non-Presidential Systems*, ECPR General Conference 2014.

[20] M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992, s. 148-158.

[21] C. Lucky, *Table of presidential powers in Eastern Europe*, "East European Constitutional Review" 1993-1994, vol 2, nr 4, s. 81-94.

[22] A. Krouwel, *Measuring Presidentialism and Parliamentarism: An Application to Central and East European Countries*, "Acta Politica" 2003, vol 38, s. 333-364.; A. Krouwel, *Measuring presidentialism of Central and East European Countries*, "Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit. Working paper" 2003, nr 2.

[23] T. Frye, *A Politics of Institutional Choices: Post-Communist Presidencies*, "Comparative Political Studies" 1997, vol 30, nr 5, s. 523-552.; T. Frye, *Changes in Post-Communist Presidential Power: A Political Economy Explanation*, Wyd. Center for Continuing Education 1999.

Estonia[24]. Finally, according to Elgie's and Doyle's[25], Elgie's, Bucur's, Dolez's and Laurent's[26] methods (estimated for 2014 and 2015), the commensurate countries were parliamentary Estonia and Latvia and semi-presidential Bulgaria, Czechia (much less), Slovakia and Slovenia. Popularly elected presidents (as of 2016) were typical for Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

## Semi-presidentialism or parliamentarism with the positions of nominal presidents in Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia: theoretical and practical dimension of the problem

Based on this (according to the frequency of the commensurability of the presidential powers in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU), we define (as of 2016) the similarity of the presidential powers, on the one hand, in semi-presidential Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia and, on the other hand, in parliamentary Estonia, Hungary and Latvia. Elgie's[27] logic shows that it is definitively clear that the analysed constitutional systems are to be taken literally. There is no invisibility in the cases of treatment the republicanism types, where presidents are elected in state legislatures (parliaments), as parliamentary systems of government. On the other hand, from the theoretical and methodological perspective, there is a request for clarification on how it should be actually (based on the presidential powers) interpreted the republican systems of government with nominal/ceremonial, but popularly elected presidents in Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia – as semi-presidential (semi-presidentialism) or parliamentary (parliamentarism) republics. Along with that, it is proved that Lithuania, Poland and Romania are certainly (formally and actually) semi-presidential systems. Therefore, the primary hypothesis of the article lies to test the opinion that in democratic countries of Central and Eastern Europe with nominal/ceremonial, but popularly elected presidents, semi-presidentialism is prevailing. However, these countries in their political practice are often operating on some components and principles of institutional/procedural logic of parliamentary republics.

However, one should take into account, that other attempts to define these political systems, in particular, are extremely parliamentary. This, for example, is typical for Siaroff[28], who treats these systems as models of parliamentarism with nominal/ceremonial presidential powers. The scientist being a fan of the dichotomous approach to the classification of republican systems of government does not single out semi-presidential republic as a separate system of

[24] A. Romanyuk, V. Lytvyn, N. Panchak-Byaloblotska, *Politychni instytuty krayin Tsentral'no-Skhidnoyi Yevropy: porivnyal'nyy analiz*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014.; A. Romanyuk, V. Lytvyn, *Porivnyal'nyy analiz politychnykh instytutiv krayin Vyshehrads'koyi hrupy ta inshykh krayin Tsentral'no-Skhidnoyi Yevropy: monohrafiya*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2016, s. 102-111.

[25] R. Elgie, D. Doyle, *Maximizing the reliability of cross-national measures of presidential power*, Wyd. International Political Science Association biennial conference, Montreal, 20–24 July 2014.

[26] R. Elgie, C. Bucur, B. Dolez, A. Laurent, *Proximity, Candidates, and Presidential Power: How Directly Elected Presidents Shape the Legislative Party System*, "Political Research Quarterly" 2014, vol 67, nr 3, s. 467-477.

[27] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

[28] A. Siaroff, *Comparative presidencies: The inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2003, vol 42, nr 3, s. 287-312.

government. That is why his position is clear. Instead, Ozsoy[29] treats these systems as 'unusual parliamentary models with elected but weak presidents'. The scientist bases this on fact that these varieties of republicanism (even prototypes of republicanism for their little representation in the world) should be defined as 'hybrid' cases for their institutional functioning. We believe that there is a positioning error of republican systems of government with popularly elected but weak/nominal presidents in this context. 'Hybridity' is often regarded as controversy on the 'pure types' of republicanism, meaning presidentialism and parliamentarism. 'Hybridity' is often understood as a 'synthesis of presidentialism and parliamentarism', i.e. actually semi-presidentialism. However, Ozsoy[30] believes that parliamentary systems of republican government sometimes may include the combination of 'pure' parliamentary systems of government (when legislature and executive is concentrated in hands of permanent or situational parliamentary majority, regardless of the cabinet type) and the option of direct and popular presidential elections. Instead, the researcher ignores the point that parliamentary systems do not inherent an idea of 'dual legitimacy' and 'dual executive' of political power. The author comes solely from a subjective judgment that weakness of presidential powers transforms 'formally' semi-presidential systems (defined by Elgie[31] and partially by Duverger[32]) into 'actual' parliamentary systems. However, there are no comments on the possibility that any formal parliamentary type of republicanism (when the president is elected in the parliament, also as defined by Elgie[33]) with the fairly/moderately strong head of state can be positioned as semi-presidentialism or can be transformed into semi-presidential system of government. The key observation in the set of Ozsoy's[34] perspective is that republican systems of government with popularly elected but nominal presidents are parliamentary republics, because they have cabinets, which are collectively responsible only to parliaments. However, these features of political systems, according to the statement of Strom[35], are not considered as clear attributes of the system of government, because they primarily indicate the system and method of coming to power and the method of exercising the power, which are more correlated to the questions about democratic or autocratic type of government. Therefore, we are committed to the claim that the way of cabinet accountability and responsibility to parliament is a measure of parliamentary democracy (and of such its special attribute, as the 'chain of delegation and accountability' between parliament and cabinet) and not of parliamentary system of government.

[29] S. Ozsoy, *An Unusual Parliamentary Model with Elected but Weak Presidents and Its Virtues and Vices*, Presented at Conference of International Political Science Association "Political Regimes, Democratic Consolidation and the Quality of Democracy", São Paulo, February 18, 2011.

[30] S. Ozsoy, *An Unusual Parliamentary Model with Elected but Weak Presidents and Its Virtues and Vices*, Presented at Conference of International Political Science Association "Political Regimes, Democratic Consolidation and the Quality of Democracy", São Paulo, February 18, 2011.

[31] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

[32] M. Duverger, *A New Political System Model: Semi-Presidential Government*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1980, vol 8, nr 2, s. 166.

[33] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

[34] S. Ozsoy, *An Unusual Parliamentary Model with Elected but Weak Presidents and Its Virtues and Vices*, Presented at Conference of International Political Science Association "Political Regimes, Democratic Consolidation and the Quality of Democracy", São Paulo, February 18, 2011.

[35] K. Strom, *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2000, vol 37, nr 3, s. 261-289.

In order to test our hypothesis, we proceed with the formal interpretation of semi-presidentialism (as in Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia, which are really semi-presidential, because they have popularly elected presidents and their cabinets are collectively responsible to parliaments), trying to verify it factually. The logic of the verification of semi-presidentialism in these countries lies in comparing procedural and institutional features of parliamentarism and semi-presidentialism (obviously, presidentialism is not to be checked). Meanwhile, additionally we try to match the analysed countries in terms of their convergence to formal/actual parliamentarism and semi-presidentialism (as sometimes they have more or less attributes of different types of republican government).

Moreover, for fairness, it should be noted that the analysed countries could not even be interpreted as semi-presidential systems, using the 'classical' definition of semi-presidentialism, provided by Duverger. The scientist defined semi-presidentialism as a political system ('regime' or system of government), where: a) The president, elected under the universal vote, has many powers; b) The president has the prime minister and ministers opposite himself, who possess executive power and stay in the cabinet for as long, as the parliament express them a vote of confidence (or until the parliament express them a vote of no confidence)[36]. However, the definition provided by Duverger is not enough, as it is difficult to define whether president has significant powers. In addition, such treatment of semi-presidentialism introduces the elements of subjectivity (which the Table 1 reflects) and therefore it loses its scientific value and integrity.

Nevertheless, the approach proposed by Duverger helps us to understand that formal semi-presidential systems of government (based on the presidential powers) can actually function (based on the discrepancy of constitutional texts and political events) as semi-presidential or parliamentary systems of government (or can function logically following the specified varieties of republicanism). In this regard, Elgie[37] notes that constitutionally strong presidents sometimes are actually institutionally and politically weak, or vice versa. In addition, the actual positioning of systems of government types depends on the type of political culture and on the institutionalised patterns of how national constitutions carry out in practice. At the same time, it is not possible not to mention in the theoretical and methodological analysis the importance and impact of political parties and party systems on the actual positioning of any constitutional type of political system. On this basis, we offer to outline the institutional and procedural parameters of political systems in the analysed Central and Eastern European countries of the EU (based on the application of case studies and regional comparisons).

The critical evidence of whether the analysed systems of government are semi-presidential lies in the verification of their experience of *cohabitations*. Cohabitation is a scenario of institutional and procedural development of only semi-presidential system of government, when

[36] M. Duverger, *A New Political System Model: Semi-Presidential Government*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1980, vol 8, nr 2, s. 166.

[37] R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, "Taiwan Journal of Democracy" 2007, vol 3, nr 2, s. 53-71.

president and prime minister represents the opposing parties, but the presidential party has no representation in cabinet[38]. Considering the existing researches, it should be urgently noted that different types of republican government could be tested in different institutional scenarios. For example, parliamentarism, presidentialism and semi-presidentialism most often enable the existence of the unified majority systems[39], but semi-presidentialism also enables the existence of the divided minority systems[40] and the divided majority systems (the latter incorporates cases of cohabitations)[41].

Therefore, we decided to use the scenario of the divided majority systems as a test mechanism to verify existence or nonexistence of semi-presidentialism in republican systems of government in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU with nominal, but popularly elected presidents. We would like to note that in the first group of analysed countries (Bulgaria and Slovenia) there are direct obligations of presidents to consult with parliamentary majority (absolute or relative majority in parliaments) or the largest parties, when presidents propose candidates for prime ministers. That is why cohabitation automatically occurs when a political party (or coalition) is opposed to president and when it is dominant in parliament. In the second group of analysed countries (Czechia and Slovakia), the preconditions for resolving disagreements about presidential and parliamentary candidates for prime minister post are not provided. This is because constitutionally in these countries presidents and prime ministers are charged on the structure of the executives. Given these assumptions, we consider the actual examples of cohabitations in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU with nominal, but popularly elected presidents (see detailed Table 2).

It is also advisable as a case, which reflects the logic of cohabitation, to verify and consider how the real (actual) powers of formally weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents are changed and if they are change at all. For this, we appeal to the first two-year experience of cohabitation (01.1995 – 02.1997) between Prime Minister Zhan Videnov (BSP) and President Zhelyu Zhelev (SDS) in Bulgaria. During the period of cohabitation (since 1995 and even earlier, i.e. before the formation of Videnov cabinet), president Zhelev filled his formal powers with some actual levers of political, imperative and powerful influence. Consequently, we must clearly understand the differences between de facto and de jure powers of the presidents and prime ministers in the terms of cohabitations. In fact, President Zhelev participated in the formation of Videnov cabinet and in the choice of cabinet ministers. Identical procedures took

[38] R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, "Taiwan Journal of Democracy" 2007, vol 3, nr 2, s. 53-71.; D. Samuels, M. Shugart, *Presidents, Parties, and Prime Ministers: How the Separation of Powers Affects Party Organization and Behavior*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press, 2010.; V. Lytvyn, *Teoriya ta Praktyka Kohabitatsiyi v Napivprezydents'kykh Systemakh Yevropy*, "Osvita rehionu: politolohiya, psykholohiya, komunikatsiyi" 2011, vol 4, s. 140-149.

[39] The unified majority system is the least institutional conflict scenario of any republican system of government, because head of state is a supporter of the cabinet party (parties) course, while president and prime minister have the support of the same parliamentary majority.

[40] The divided minority system is a conflict scenario of only semi-presidential systems of government, when president and prime minister (and none at all in this respect) have no support of the legislative majority.

[41] The divided majority system is a conflict scenario of only semi-presidential systems of government, when president, unlike prime minister, has no support of the parliamentary majority.

place before the period of cohabitation when two non-party (technocratic) cabinets in Bulgaria were created and led by Berov and Indzhova. President Zhelev also participated in the decisions to dismiss the cabinet and to appoint early parliamentary elections[42]. However, the constitution of Bulgaria does not formally provide selecting cabinet ministers as a direct prerogative of the president of Bulgaria. Therefore, it is clear that cohabitations play the roles of 'accelerators and generators of the heads of state additional powers' in republican systems of government with popularly elected, but weak (nominal) presidents. It has led to the fact that these republican systems function in some completely different parameters than it is typical for traditional cases. Similar positions were demonstrated in the researches of Schleiter, Morgan-Jones[43] and Baylis[44]. They are not enough in order to interpret, for example, Bulgaria and other similar republican cases as parliamentary systems of government[45].

[42] V. Ganev, *Bulgaria II*, "East European Constitutional Review" 1994, vol 62, nr 3, s. 62-64.

[43] P. Schleiter, E. Morgan-Jones, *The Eastern Enlargement of the EU and The Semi-Presidential Revolution*, "Journal of European Affairs" 2004, vol 2, nr 4, s. 10-12.

[44] T. Baylis, *Presidents versus Prime Ministers: Shaping Executive Authority in Eastern Europe*, "World Politics" 1996, vol 48, s. 317.

[45] O. Protsyk, *Intra-Executive Competition between President and Prime Minister: Patterns of Institutional Conflict and Cooperation under Semi-Presidentialism*, "Political Studies" 2006, vol 54, s. 220.; T. Sedelius, *The Tug-of-War between Presidents and Prime Ministers: Semi-Presidentialism in Central and Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Örebro Studies in Political Science 2006, s. 314.; M. Shugart, *Semi-Presidential Systems: Dual Executive and Mixed Authority Patterns*, "French Politics" 2005, vol 3, s. 323-351.; M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992, s. 41.

**Table 2.** The cases of cohabitation in republican systems of government with nominal, but popularly elected president in in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU (as of 2016)[46]

| Country | The president, years | The party of the president* | The prime minister, years | The party of the prime minister* | The party composition of the cabinet | The period of cohabitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria (1991–2016) | Zhelev (1992–1997) | SDS | Videnov (01.1995–02.1997) | BSP | BSP + BZnS (AS) + PKE | 01.1995–02.1997 |
| | Stoyanov (1997–2002) | SDS | Sakskoburggotski 1 (07.2001–03.2004) | NDSV | NDSV + DPS | 07.2001–01.2002 |
| | Purvanov 1 (2002–2007) | BSP | Sakskoburggotski 1 (07.2001–03.2004) | NDSV | NDSV + DPS | 01.2002–03.2004 |
| | | | Sakskoburggotski 2 (03.2004–02.2005) | NDSV | NDSV + DPS | 03.2004–02.2005 |
| | | | Sakskoburggotski 3 (02.2005–08.2005) | NDSV | NDSV + DPS + NV | 02.2005–08.2005 |
| | Purvanov 2 (2007–2012) | BSP | Borisov (07.2009–02.2013) | GERB | GERB | 07.2009–01.2012 |
| | Plevneliev (2012–2016) | GERB/ independent | Oresharski (05.2013–07.2014) | BSP | BSP + DPS | 05.2013–07.2014 |
| Czechia (2012–2016) | Zeman (2013 – incumbent) | SPOZ/ CSSD (by 2009) | Nečas (04.2012–06.2013) | ODS | ODS + TOP09 + LIDEM (VV) | 01.2013–06.2013 |
| | | | Sobotka (01.2014 – incumbent) | CSSD | CSSD + ANO + KDU-CSL | 01.2014 – incumbent |
| Slovakia (1999–2016) | Gašparovič 1 (2004–2009) | HZD | Dzurinda 3 (12.2003–09.2005) | SDKU | SDKU + SMK–MKP + KDH + ANO | 06.2004–09.2005 |
| | | | Dzurinda 4 (09.2005–02.2006) | SDKU | SDKU + SMK–MKP + KDH | 09.2005–02.2006 |
| | | | Dzurinda 5 (02.2006–06.2006) | SDKU | SDKU + SMK–MKP | 02.2006–06.2006 |
| | Gašparovič 2 (2009–2014) | HZD (SMER) | Radicova (07.2010–03.2012) | SDKU-DS | SDKU–DS + SaS + KDH + MH | 07.2010–03.2012 |
| Slovenia (1992–2016) | Drnovšek (2002–2007) | LDS | Janša 1 (12.2004–09.2008) | SDS | SDS + NSi + SLS + DeSUS | 12.2004–12.2007 |
| | Pahor (2012 – incumbent) | ZLSD/ independent | Janša 2 (01.2012–01.2013) | SDS | SDS + NSi + SLS + DeSUS + DL | 12.2012–01.2013 |
| | | | Janša 3 (01.2013–02.2013) | SDS | SDS + NSi + SLS + DeSUS | 01.2013–02.2013 |

* List of parties:
*Bulgaria*: SDS – Union of Democratic Forces; BSP – Bulgarian Socialist Party; BZnS (AS) – Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union 'Aleksandar Stamboliyski'; PKE – Political Club 'Ecoglasnost'; NDSV – National Movement Simeon II / National Movement for Stability and Progress; DPS – Movement for Rights and Freedom; NV – 'New Time'; GERB – Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria.
*Czechia*: SPOZ – Party of Civic Rights – Zemanovci; ODS – Civic Democratic Party; TOP09 – Tradition Responsibility Prosperity 09; LIDEM – LIDEM – Liberal Democrats; VV – Public Affairs; CSSD – Czech Social Democratic Party; ANO – Action of Dissatisfied Citizens; KDU-CSL – Christian Democratic Union – People's Party.
*Slovakia*: SDKU – Slovak Democratic and Christian Union; SMK–MKP – Party of the Hungarian Coalition; KDH – Christian Democratic Movement; ANO – Alliance of the New Citizen; HZD – Movement for Democracy; SMER – Direction – Social Democracy; SDKU–DS – Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party; SaS – Freedom and Solidarity; MH – Most-Hid.
*Slovenia*: LDS – Liberal Democracy of Slovenia; SDS – Slovenian Democratic Party; NSi – New Slovenia – Christian People's Party; SLS – Slovenian People's Party; DeSUS – Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia; ZLSD – United List – Social Democrats; DL – Civic List.

*Źródło:* Table 2 was partly compiled according to Elgie data, available at: http://www.semipresidentialism.com/?p=3099, accessed November 30, 2016.

[46] Among the examples of cohabitations, we demonstrate some cases with the participation of the minority cabinets. This is due to the peculiarities of cabinets' vote of confidence in the sample of countries. For example, in Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia (in specific cases), at least a relative majority of MPs from the nominal compositions of the parliaments must express an investiture vote. An interesting specificity is inherent to nonparty presidents and nonparty prime ministers. Presidents classed as nonparty (required that without the support of parliamentary parties) cannot generate any periods of cohabitation. Prime ministers and cabinets classed as nonparty/technocratic also cannot generate any periods of cohabitation. It was typical for Bulgaria during the presidency of Zhelev (1992–1997) from SDS and nonparty premierships of Berov (1992–1994) and Indzhova (1994–1995), during the presidency of Plevneliev (2012–2016) from GERB and nonparty premierships of Raikov (2013) and Bliznashki (2014). It was typical for Slovakia during the nonparty presidency of Schuster (1999–2004) and premierships of Dzurinda (1998–2002 and 2002–2006) from SDKU, during the nonparty presidency of Kiska (2014 – incumbent) and premierships of Fico (2012 – incumbent) from SMER. It was also typical for Slovenia during the nonparty presidency of Kučan (1992–1997 and 1997–2002) and premierships of Drnovšek (1992, 1993–1997, 1997–2000 and 2000–2002) from LDS and Bajuk (2000) from SLS. The situation was similar in the case of the formally nonparty presidency of Türk (2007–2012) and premierships of Jansa (2004–2008 and 2012–2013) from SDS and Pahor (2008–2011 and 2011–2012) from ZLSD. The specificity was that the President Türk was supported by ZLSD. The situation was also typical for Czechia during the presidency of Zeman (2013 – incumbent) from SPOZ and nonparty premiership of Rusnok (2013–2014). However, Zeman is the former leader of the CSSD. CSSD is also the predecessor of SPOZ. The former CSSD PM Zeman and ministers of his cabinet (1998–2002) formed SPOZ on October 17, 2009. Therefore, we suggest this case as the example of cohabitation, because of the moderate confrontation between the former (Zeman) and the current (Sobotka) leaders of CSSD. Simultaneously SPOZ is not the member of Sobotka cabinet.

However, in this perspective, there is one hidden and problematic element of comparative analysis. It lies in the fact that in times of cohabitations a 'shading' of formal constitutional (de jure) powers of presidents usually happens with the addition of behavioural and political factors and actual (de facto) powers of the presidents. This is why some researchers interpret the dynamics of displacement of formal presidential powers with actual presidential powers as an undemocratic practice. Nevertheless, it is difficult to accept such an idea, because the formal dynamics of presidential powers is the prerogative of the constitutional (or legal) perspective and the actual dynamics of presidential powers is the prerogative of the electoral (or political) nature. The only controversy in this case is the fact of undemocratic elections. Conversely, if the electoral process is estimated as pluralistic and transparent, then it is not possible to talk about the undemocratic substitution of the formal presidential powers with actual presidential powers. Consequently, cohabitations in democratic republics with weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents are quite normal results of the political process, which calls into the question the parliamentary nature of such republics.

Based on analysed empirical data we reached the conclusion that semi-presidentialism is formally and actually implemented in Central and Eastern European republics with weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents. Based on this comparative analysis tool, we can prove that such political systems inherent dualism of executive power (dual executive), which is considered to be the crucial and the most cited attribute of semi-presidentialism. This argues that the dualism of executive power (dual executive) should be considered formally (or constitutionally) and actually (or politically). Every analysed country of Central and Eastern Europe, according to its constitution text, provides two centres/cores of the executive power, i.e. president and prime minister. Czechia and Slovakia make it even more clearly. However, in fact it occurs more noticeably during the periods of cohabitations, when the dualism of executive power is being politicised. This means that the formal powers of presidents are minor (nominal), but they can correlate and even grow politically or informally during the periods of the divided majority systems. In parallel, it outlines the operational logic of the republics with weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents. In the case of the formal type of dual executive and weaknesses of the presidential powers, such systems often operate on the model of parliamentary republics (parliamentarism). Instead, in the case of the actual type of dual executive and growth of the informal presidential powers, such systems clearly work as semi-presidential republics (semi-presidentialism). Meanwhile it is impossible to generate two concurrent and simultaneous findings of the varieties of the same political system, we conclude that Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia (as for 2016) are semi-presidential republics with nominal presidents. Considering their recent periods of cohabitations (especially in 2009–2016), we should indicate the growth of the informal presidential powers, i.e. the strengthening of the actual dualism of executive, which would last until the return of the republican governments into the phase of the unified majority system, which tends to semi-presidentialism with dominance of parliament.

The proposed logic is largely consonant with the ideas of Elgie[47]. Based on the marker of leadership of president or prime minister, the researcher has identified several types of semi-presidential systems: the system of dominance of president; the system of dominance of prime minister; the system of transition of dominance from president to prime minister; the system of transition of dominance from a balanced leadership to prime minister; the system of balanced leadership.

Additionally, we offer to outline such variety of semi-presidentialism as the system of limitations of the prime-ministerial dominance. According to this logic, Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia in conditions of the unified majority systems follow the semi-presidentialism based on the dominance of the prime minister (i.e. semi-presidentialism with nominal president). Instead, in conditions of the divided majority systems (cohabitations) these courtiers follow the semi-presidentialism based on the limitations of the prime-ministerial dominance. Essentially, this means that formally semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents may change by phases from the dominance of prime ministers to the scenarios of cohabitations.

Nevertheless, the indicated logic of institutional analysis of republican governments with weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents in Central and Eastern Europe countries of the EU is incomplete. It needs clarification with the help of the comparison of special (separate) cases. The matter is that the conventional distinctions among the formal (constitutional) and actual (political) systems in the region do not fully determine the distribution of the roles and functions between the branches of power because there is a wide variation of power possibilities of presidents (heads of states), prime ministers and parliaments within each country. Therefore, with the aim to assess additional properties of constitutional systems' extrapolating in practice and to check whether semi-presidentialism is peculiar to the analysed countries it is suitable to use the information about the peculiarities of the main political and institutional actors among which there is a comparative distinction. This is distinction of president, prime minister and parliament at least in a problematic area attributed to the authorities of the executive branch of government. Based on the consideration of the main political institutions within the context of foreign affairs of each analysed country and on the above-suggested data we make conclusions about every political system in our sample.

In *Bulgaria*, constitutionally and politically there exists a peculiar and quite unclear position of the president, especially in the context of realisation of executive power. However, it does not prevent us from classifying the position of the president of Bulgaria as nominal, weak or ceremonial[48]. Nonetheless, according to the constitution, it is clear that the president represents the country in international relations and concludes international agreements. Instead of it,

[47] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.; R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, "Taiwan Journal of Democracy" 2007, vol 3, nr 2, s. 53-71.

[48] S. Andreev, *Corruption, legitimacy and the quality of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America*, "Review of Sociology" 2008, vol 14, nr 2, s. 93-115.; T. Sedelius, *The Tug-of-War between Presidents and Prime Ministers: Semi-Presidentialism in Central and Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Örebro Studies in Political Science 2006, s. 141-144.

the cabinet (as the highest executive body) is responsible for the implementation of domestic and foreign policy of Bulgaria. This proves that the president at least partially is a part of the structure of the dual model of executive power (dual executive), which has been objectified during some periods of cohabitation.

In *Slovakia*, we can define a formally weak, ceremonial and nominal head of state. However, foreign policy is included constitutionally to the scope of the powers of the president who represents the country in the international relations and holds negotiations or procedures of international agreements ratifications. Despite this, the president may delegate the cabinet to conclude international treaties. That is a characteristic feature of almost all presidents since 1993 (when Slovakia was formally a parliamentary republic, because by 1999 the presidents were elected in legislature). According to various scientific data, the foreign policy of Slovakia actually and usually (except for brief cases of cohabitations) has been assigned to the area of cabinet powers. The reason for this is the absence of sufficient political resources of the presidents for the exercise of executive power. Nevertheless, the political resources of the presidents significantly increased twice (as was demonstrated above) during the scenarios of the divided majority systems when the presidential powers multiplied based on the scenarios of actual dualism of executive power[49].

In *Czechia* (which only in 2012 introduced the post of a popularly elected head of state), the role of the president is also significantly limited. Nevertheless, the president represents the country abroad, negotiates and ratifies treaties. The Czech President may delegate the cabinet to conclude international treaties. This fact confirms the similarity of the Czech and Slovak systems of government. The highest specificity of the Czechia lies in the fact that almost immediately after the beginning of testing of this system of government (with weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents) it put into the practice the divided majority system (cohabitation). In other words, this system of government has worked at once as a semi-presidential one[50].

In *Slovenia*, we can also define a weak, ceremonial and nominal head of state. However, constitutionally and politically it is foreseen hat the president should directly represent the country abroad[51]: even though the cabinet is responsible for foreign and, in particular, European policy and the signing of international treaties. In fact, this is a direct testimony of dualism of executive power (at least in foreign affairs).

[49] M. Rybář, D. Malová, *Slovakia's Presidency: Consolidating Democracy by Curbing Ambiguous Powers*, [w:] R. Elgie, S. Moestrup (eds.), *Semi-Presidentialism in Central and Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Manchester University Press 2008, s. 180-200.; M. Tavits, *Direct Presidential Elections and Turnout in Parliamentary Contests*, "Political Research Quarterly" 2009, vol 62, nr 1, s. 42-54.; M. Tavits, *Geographically Targeted Spending: Exploring the Electoral Strategies of Incumbent Governments*, "European Political Science Review" 2009, vol 1, nr 1, s. 103-123.; M. Tavits, *Presidents with Prime Ministers*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2009, s. 119-129.

[50] M. Kubät, *Co je a co neni poloprezidentsky rezim a proc je dobre to vedet nejen v souvislosti s ceskou politikou*, [w:] M. Kubat, T. Lebeda (eds), *O komparativni politologii a soucasne ceske politice. Miroslavu Novákovi k 60. Narozeninám*, Wyd. Karolinum 2014, s. 45-55.; M. Brunclik, M. Kubat, *Contradictory Approaches: Discussing Semi-Presidentialism in Central Europe*, "Analele Universităţii din Bucureşti. Seria Ştiinţe Politice" 2016, vol 18, nr 1, s. 67-79.; J. Kysela, *Prima volba prezidenta pootevrela dvere poloprezidentskemu systemu*, "Ceskä pozice" 2013.

[51] A. Krasovec, D. Lajh, *Have democratization processes been a catalyst for the Europeanization of party politics in Slovenia?*, "Journal of Southern Europe and The Balkans" 2008, vol 10, nr 2, s. 183-203.

According to Elgie's[52] classification, the definitive institutional and procedural attributes of republican government are shown in Table 3. They help to verify the presence or absence of semi-presidentialism in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU with weak (nominal), but popularly elected presidents, i.e. in Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Table 3 additionally confirms the already suggested conclusion that the model of semi-presidentialism with a nominal (ceremonial) head of state is implemented formally and actually in Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia. In the conditions of the unified majority systems, such models of semi-presidentialism operate in a parliamentary-like way, when the president is positioned as the symbolic leader of a nation that has almost no significant constitutional powers, is not an active creator of political decisions, though the president is a part of the dual executive. The absence of influential presidential powers means that the presidential authority legitimacy in case of the unified majority system manifestations will not be directed against the prime minister. It also will not point the head of state as a political rival of the head of cabinet.

**Table 3.** Central and Eastern European countries of the EU with weak (nominal) presidents, which constitutions formalise the semi-presidential system of government (as of 2016)[53]

| Country | Dualism of the executive power (dual executive) | Direct popular election of president | The powers of president in executive | The right of president to appoint prime minister | Cabinet collective responsibility to parliament |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria | + | + (93) | + (98–103) | + (99, 102) | + (111, 112) |
| Czechia | + | + (54) | + (62–65) | + (62) | + (68) |
| Slovakia | + | + (101) | + (102) | + (110) | + (115) |
| Slovenia | + | + (103) | + (107–108) | + (111) | + (116) |

This means that real political (including executive) power traditionally belongs to prime minister who is responsible to parliament for all aspects of the country's political course. Nevertheless, very rarely (in periods of the divided majority systems) these systems of government (as mentioned above) can function in a divergent manner. There is a special influence on this of the hypothetical dangers of increase of conflicts' power in the system with a formally dual executive. Actual manifestations of a dual executive influence the system of government even more. In particular, it should be understood that a popularly elected president is a 'veto-player' that can have a significant impact on the manifestations and actions of prime minister, especially

[52] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.; R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, "Taiwan Journal of Democracy" 2007, vol 3, nr 2, s. 53-71.

[53] Figures in parentheses are constitution articles' numbers, which regulate the use of these procedures. It is important that the constitutions of Czechia and Slovakia attribute presidents to the structures of the executive. The constitution of Bulgaria indicates the need for use of a parliamentary system of government. However, according to the provisions of Article 1 of the Constitution of Bulgaria, it means that Bulgaria is not a parliamentary republic (parliamentary system of government), but parliamentary democracy. Table 3 has been compiled based on the constitutions of Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

in the field of controversial powers of president and prime minister. A president (in the most of the analysed countries) can veto international agreements and therefore block the foreign policy of the state. In addition, president, even in semi-presidential systems of government with nominal heads of state, is a chief of the armed forces. It breaks the integrity and monism of the executive power of cabinet and prime minister in defence policy. This proves that even in these systems, especially at times of cohabitations, executives work at least in part as dual branch of power. That is the classification attribute of semi-presidentialism. At the same time, it is necessary to understand the specific features of semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents:

1. There is a limited opportunity of institutional conflicts in the executive between president and prime minister in these systems. They mostly occur only under conditions of cohabitation and usually concern the issues and problems of foreign affairs and foreign policy of a country[54].
2. The conflicts in the executive of semi-presidentialism with the nominal heads of state are always unidirectional. This means that president being characterised and determined with the limited constitutional powers and roles tries to expand his (or her) political influence at least concerning certain things. Therefore, president purposefully opposes cabinet headed by prime minister.
3. There are occasional and even rare manifestations of attributes of diffuse responsibility between the head of state and the head of cabinet in these systems. As a result, the political and power processes almost do not get dual and controversial meaning.
4. In such systems, the possibility of an actual constitutional ambiguity is excluded as much as possible, even during periods of cohabitations when actual powers of the presidents relatively increase. This is because in these scenarios the models and systems of power begin to act in accordance with the requirements of constitutional regulations and reglamentations.
5. In such systems it is always clear who is a dominant player/actor of executive (to more or less extent it depends on whether the prevailing model of dual executive is the unified majority system, the divided majority system or the divided minority system). It is a prime minister. However, it is interesting that only informal powers of prime minister decrease. This is usually the case of cohabitation, when informal powers of president increase.

The important definitive feature of semi-presidential systems with nominal president lies in the fact that they are obligatory introduced, according to Shugart and Carey[55], as primer-presidential systems. This means that in the construction of dual executive there is a peculiar

[54] M. Tavits, *Presidents with Prime Ministers*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2009, s. 31.

[55] M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992, s. 148-158.; M. Shugart, *Semi-Presidential Systems: Dual Executive and Mixed Authority Patterns*, "French Politics" 2005, vol 3, s. 323-351.

feature of semi-presidentialism: prime minister always (at least formally and in most cases actually) dominates president. In such structure of the power, prime minister solely and cabinet collectively are responsible only to parliament. Some researchers (for example, Siaroff[56]) often use this institutional attribute (especially if the head of state and the head of cabinet represent the same political party or parties, which are the members of the parliamentary coalition) as a sufficient prerequisite of reinterpretation of premier-presidential systems with nominal presidents as parliamentary systems with nominal presidents. By this logic, the premier-presidential systems with slightly stronger presidents should be classified as parliamentary systems with 'corrective' presidents, and premier-presidential systems with very strong presidents should be classified as parliamentary systems with presidential dominance. In fact, this interpretation leads to considering the dichotomous classification of political systems obsolete in contemporary Comparative Politics. Respectively according to Elgie[57], such systems in terms of the logic of institutional and political process should better be classified as semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents. Therefore, the previous conclusion is incorrect, because it does not include neither institutional nor procedural nature of origin of the presidential post: in parliamentary systems of government a president is elected only in parliament, while in the premier-presidential semi-presidential systems (regardless of the powers of presidents) he or she is elected popularly. This means that the systems of parliamentary republicanism actually prevents from cohabitation. An exception is the situation when president, elected by the previous composition of parliament, performs his or her powers during the formation of new cabinet and during the change of the position of a president on the results of the next composition of parliament. This is the inherent feature of higher political institutions' formation in parliamentary systems of government. Instead, cohabitation, as demonstrated above, can take place in the premier-presidential semi-presidential systems. This is revealed in the following categorical feature of premier-presidentialism, in particular, with a nominal president: if legislature chooses a prime minister, who ideologically and partly opposes the president, then the latter will have to accept the appointment and this will be the reason for the beginning of cohabitation. Therefore, the interaction among semi-presidentialism (even with the nominal president) and party system defines how the interrelationship between president and prime minister will work in practice: whether prime minister will be subordinated to president, president will be subordinated to prime minister or president will stay with prime minister in cohabitation. Instead, in parliamentary systems of government, president at all is not hierarchically taken into account in the process of cabinet formation, because president is elected within the legislative body. Since the positions of president and the head of cabinet in parliamentary systems are replaced mainly by the representatives of the same parties or parties that entirely (or almost) are the members of

[56] A. Siaroff, *Comparative presidencies: The inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2003, vol 42, nr 3, s. 287-312.

[57] R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime type: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1998, vol 33, nr 2, s. 219-238.

the same coalitions or even (in periods of political crisis) non-party candidates, then samples and examples of parliamentarism function as the unified majority system.

In return, semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents (and almost all other types of premier-presidential systems) actually and mainly operate under the parliamentary-like logic of primer-presidentialism. This, similarly to classical parliamentary republics, occurs in periods of prevalence of the unified majority systems in formally semi-presidential republics. However, it is always preserved the institutional capacity of semi-presidentialism as constitutional system of dual executive. It depending on the party composition of parliament and the will of the electorate in the process of presidential elections can stop working at any time for the parliamentary-like logic. Instead, based on the formation of the divided majority system (cohabitation) or the divided minority system semi-presidentialism can turn towards actual strengthening of the presidential powers. This means that unlike the parliamentary system of government semi-presidentialism (even with nominal president) retains/reserves the immanent influence of president on the structuring of the current system of government in a country. Such institutional capacity of the analysed countries of Central and Eastern Europe is incorporated within the existing constitutions of these countries.

## Instead of conclusion. Constitutional systems' varieties in parliamentary democracies

A significant observation in the perspective of distinction among parliamentary systems and semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents should be implemented in the context of the category of 'parliamentary democracy', which is now referred to almost all Central and Eastern European countries of the EU. It is particularly important to understand that parliamentary democracy is not equal to the parliamentary system of government (i.e. parliamentarism). Parliamentary democracy is a format of a democratic government in which cabinet is at the top of the executive, but simultaneously under the condition that prime minister and cabinet are always responsible only to the popularly elected parliament. There is the serial communication and connection between the delegation and representation of powers in parliamentary democracy: from voters to parliament and from parliament to cabinet. There is also the serial relationship between responsibility of officials and responsibility of voters: cabinet responsibility to parliament and parliament responsibility to electorate. This means that in terms of democratic government semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents (and other premier-presidential systems) and parliamentary systems both are parliamentary democracies. In other words, we can observe the differences among distinctive republican systems of government within the same political regime (democratic or autocratic). The discrepancy lies in the fact that, in general, in semi-presidential systems of government the conflicts in dual executive (or intra-executive conflicts) have the interinstitutional nature. We are talking about the conflict between a president and a prime minister who get their 'credentials' in different ways, but the initial mechanisms of them are nationwide elections. In return, in parliamentary systems of government

the conflicts in monistic executive (or intra-cabinet and intra-parliament conflicts) have the intra-institutional nature. We are talking about the conflict between the parliamentary majority and opposition, between the partners in a coalition, between prime minister and ministers representing distinct political parties[58]. Therefore, it is clear that the semi-presidential system with a nominal president and the parliamentary system, for which a ceremonial president is peculiar a priori, differs institutionally: herewith the former are much more complicated than the latter.

Therefore, it is clear that the parliamentary democracy can be diverse and can be outlined as a semi-presidential or parliamentary system of government. In the first case, there is always a latent potential of struggle for influence in executive. In the second case, this is not a necessarily characteristic. In general, semi-presidential systems of government in this context are positioned as institutionally unstable patterns, especially when it comes to formal proportionate of powers of president and prime minister as the centres/cores of executive (i.e. a balanced semi-presidentialism). The fact is that the head of state in this scenario may require the exercise of a dominant influence on the political process. At least with regard to the fact that president is popularly elected to protect the interests of the whole country: as opposed to prime minister who is elected by parliament only because of the influence of the cabinet parties' electorate. Therefore, president can represent himself as 'more legitimate'. Thus, popularly elected presidents clearly, but always subjectively understand the point that their formal powers do not exactly correspond to the mandate by which they are endowed by voters[59]. It also happens that because of a reliance on their personal social popularity presidents, who are formally weaker than prime ministers (scenarios of the premier-presidential systems), try to act as 'the interpreters of the will of the people' in an attempt to find additional actual instruments of influence on the political system. Instead, prime ministers face the dilemma of exercising executive power in the context of the 'political arenas' or 'domains' that are positioned as constitutionally contradicting and controversial. The indicated problem gets especial emphasis when the realisation of social and economic reforms in a country is a failure, for which are directly responsible the heads of cabinets and not presidents. This point informally increases the powers of the heads of state. Moreover, the specified institutional paradox illustrates the dilemma of dual legitimacy of the premier-presidential forms of semi-presidentialism, which is not typical for parliamentary republics and makes a very substantial institutional and contextual difference between them. This observation takes a particular importance in the political scenario when president is more popular and socially influential (by the virtue of his or her dissociation with the political parties that form a cabinet) then prime minister. In fact, this situation leads to 'technical or

[58] T. Bergman, E. Damgaard, *Delegation and Accountability in European Integration: The Nordic Parliamentary Democracies and the European Union*, "Journal of Legislative Studies" 2000, vol 6, nr 1, 192 s.; T. Bergman, W. Muller, K. Strøm, *Parliamentary democracy and the chain of delegation*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2000, vol 37, nr 3, s. 255-260.; K. Strom, *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2000, vol 37, nr 3, s. 261-289.; K. Strøm, W. Müller, T. Bergman, *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2003.

[59] T. Sedelius, *The Tug-of-War between Presidents and Prime Ministers: Semi-Presidentialism in Central and Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Örebro Studies in Political Science 2006, s. 251.

partial cohabitation' (when the non-party president opposes the party prime minister), when president is often considered as more legitimate than cabinet.

With this in mind, the specificity of semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents (as a kind of premier-presidential system and the model of parliamentary democracy) in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU is the moment that their potential of institutional imbalance is minimised with the minor constitutional powers of presidents. It makes the system of government in terms of the unified majority system to function in more parliamentary-like patterns. However, it makes the system of government in terms of the divided majority system (cohabitation) to function in parameters of semi-presidentialism. This means that the hypothetical possibility of turning president of the ceremonial head of state into the influential (or at least more powerful than prime minister) official is to a lesser extent peculiar for the semi-presidential systems with nominal presidents. Therefore, the analysed samples of premier-presidentialism are rarely subjected to institutional crisis scenarios because they usually formally and actually operate within the concept of semi-presidentialism. From this point of view, the republican systems of government with nominal/ceremonial, but popularly elected heads of state should be interpreted as sufficiently stable, but also as sufficiently consistent with the principles of parliamentary democracy[60]. This directly and conclusively proves the hypothesis that the republican systems of government with nominal, but popularly elected presidents in Central and Eastern European countries of the EU are inherently/formally and consequently/actually the cases of semi-presidentialism.

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[60] T. Sedelius, *The Tug-of-War between Presidents and Prime Ministers: Semi-Presidentialism in Central and Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Örebro Studies in Political Science 2006, s. 201-204.; M. Tavits, *Presidents with Prime Ministers*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2009, s. 143.

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