

Patterns of minority governments' stability in European parliamentary democracies

The article is dedicated to analyzing patterns of minority governments' stability in European parliamentary democracies, in particular in the European systems of positive and negative parliamentarism (in 1944-2016). The author found that minority governments are relatively less stable than majority governments. However, the researcher argued that the single-party minority governments on average are more stable than minority coalition governments.

Keywords: minority government, parliamentary democracy, systems of positive and negative parliamentarism, duration of minority governments, stability of minority governments.

ПАТЕРНИ СТАБІЛЬНОСТІ УРЯДІВ МЕНШОСТІ У ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКИХ ПАРЛАМЕНТСЬКИХ ДЕМОКРАТІЯХ

Проаналізовано патерни стабільності урядів меншості у європейських парламентських демократіях, зокрема в європейських системах позитивного і негативного парламентаризму (упродовж 1944-2016 рр.). Виявлено, що уряди меншості відносно менш стабільні, ніж уряди більшості. Водночас, аргументовано, що однопартійні уряди меншості усереднено більш стабільні, ніж коаліційні уряди меншості.

Ключові слова: уряд меншості, парламентська демократія, системи позитивного і негативного парламентаризму, тривалість урядів меншості, стабільність урядів меншості.

Government stability is one of the determinative and essential indices of expediency or in expediency of choice and quality of some or other political systems and political institutes and processes approved in them, as well as a predictor of system stability, democratic representativeness and accountability and prospects of further strengthening/consolidation of democracy¹. From this perspective minority governments are not the exceptions, especially in European parliamentary democracies, where institutional scenarios are determined though not in all countries, but in average they occur quite often and are not now interpreted as ad-hoc and necessarily as "critical and risky". Therefore, analysis and definition of stability among minority

¹ Z. Somer-Topcu, L. Williams, *Survival of the fittests? Cabinet duration in Postcommunist Europe*, "Comparative Politics" 2008, vol 40, nr. 3, s. 313-329.

governments, especially on the background of theoretical and methodological peculiarities and preconditions of a comparative research, types, theoretical and empirical principles, models and ways of formation and accountability, party-electoral, ideological and power-oppositional attributes and determinants of minority governments, as well as executive-legislative and intra-governmental relations and process of legislation in the context of minority governments in European parliamentary democracies is rather urgent and forward-looking, as they are capable of discovering certain patterns of inter-institutional relations.

We may conclude this on the basis of various theoretical-methodological and empirical works by such scientists as Z. Byaloblocki², C. Conrad and S. Golder³, D. Diermeier and A. Merlo⁴, L. Dodd⁵, R. Elgie and M. Maor⁶, J. Huber and C. Martinez-Gallardo⁷, M. Laver, K. Shepsle and N. Schofield⁸, V. Lytvyn and A. Romaniuk⁹, L. Martin and R. Stevenson¹⁰, F. Müller-Rommel, K. Fettelschoss and P. Harfst¹¹, G. Sartori¹², L. Savage¹³, Z. Maoz, Z. Somer-Topcu, B. Russett and L. Williams¹⁴, K. Strom¹⁵, P. Warwick¹⁶, S. Wesche¹⁷, E. Zimmerman¹⁸ and many others. They describe

² Z. Byaloblocki, *Stabilnist ta efektyvnist urjadiv u politychnykh systemakh krain Skhidnoyi Yevropy*, Wyd. Vydavnychyy tsentr LNU imeni I. Franka 2013.

³ C. Conrad, S. Golder, *Measuring government duration and stability in Central Eastern European democracies*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2010, vol 49, nr. 1, s. 119-150.

⁴ D. Diermeier, A. Merlo, *Government Turnover in Parliamentary Democracies*, "Journal of Economic Theory" 2000, vol 94, nr. 1, s. 46-79.

⁵ L. Dodd, *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 1976.

⁶ R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, "West European Politics" 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.; M. Maor, *The Dynamics of Minority Rule: A Bargaining-Based Theoretical Framework*, Presented at the ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, Bochum, Germany 1990.

⁷ J. Huber, C. Martinez-Gallardo, *Cabinet Instability and the Accumulation of Experience: The French Fourth and Fifth Republics in Comparative Perspective*, "British Journal of Political Science" 2004, vol 34, nr. 1, s. 27-48.; J. Huber, C. Martinez-Gallardo, *Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracies*, "American Political Science Review" 2008, vol 102, nr. 2, s. 169-180.

⁸ M. Laver, K. Shepsle, *Events, Equilibria and Government Survival*, "American Journal of Political Science" 1998, vol 42, nr. 1, s. 28-54.; M. Laver, N. Schofield, *Multi-Party Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*, Wyd. OUP 1990.

⁹ V. Lytvyn, *Kontseptualne vyznachennya ponyattya „urjadova stabilnist“*, „Naukovyy visnyk Uzhhorodskoho universytetu“, Seriya: Politolohiya, Sotsiolohiya, Filosofiya 2008, nr 10, s. 37-42.; A. Romaniuk, *Porivniálny analiz politychnykh system krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy: instytutsiyniy vybir*, Lviv 2004.; A. Romaniuk, *Porivniálny analiz politychnykh instytutiv krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy: Monografiya*, Wyd. Vydavnychyy tsentr LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2007.; A. Romaniuk, V. Lytvyn, *Porivniálny analiz politychnykh instytutiv krain Vyshehradskoi hrupy ta inshykh krain Tsentralno-Skhidnoi Yevropy: monografiya*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2016.

¹⁰ L. Martin, R. Stevenson, *Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies*, "American Journal of Political Science" 2001, vol 45, nr. 1, s. 33-50.

¹¹ F. Müller-Rommel, K. Fettelschoss, P. Harfst, *Party government in Central European democracies: A data collection (1990-2003)*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2004, vol 43, s. 869-893.; F. Müller-Rommel, K. Fettelschoss, *Cabinet Government and Cabinet Ministers in Central Eastern European Democracies: A Descriptive Cross National Evaluation*, Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, University of Uppsala, April 13-18, 2004.

¹² G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework of Analysis*, Wyd. CUP 1976.

¹³ L. Savage, *A product of their bargaining environment: Explaining government duration in Central and Eastern Europe*, "SEI Working Paper" 2012, nr. 130.

¹⁴ Z. Maoz, Z. Somer-Topcu, *Political Polarization and Cabinet Stability in Multiparty Systems: A Social Networks Analysis of European Parliaments, 1945-98*, "British Journal of Political Science" 2010, vol 40, nr. 4, s. 805-833.; Z. Somer-Topcu, L. Williams, *Survival of the fittests? Cabinet duration in Postcommunist Europe*, "Comparative Politics" 2008, vol 40, nr. 3, s. 313-329.; Z. Maoz, B. Russett, *Normative and structural causes of the democratic peace, 1946-1986*, "American Political Science Review" 1993, vol 87, nr. 3, s. 624-638.

¹⁵ K. Strom, *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. CUP 1990.; K. Strom, *Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality of Nonwinning Cabinet Solutions*, "Comparative Political Studies" 1984, vol 17, nr. 2, s. 199-227.

¹⁶ P. Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007.

¹⁷ S. Wesche, *Electoral systems and their effect on the survival of minority and coalition governments in parliamentary democracies*, Wyd. The University of Ottawa 2013.

¹⁸ E. Zimmerman, *Government Stability in Six European Countries During the World Economic Crisis of the 1930s: Some Preliminary Considerations*, "European Journal of Political Research" 1987, vol 15, nr. 1, s. 23-52.

definitive and methodological measurement parameters and evaluation of stability among different types of governments; however they lack a systematic, but not a descriptive focus on specialized statistics of minority governments' stability. Even despite the fact that minority cabinets, at least among European parliamentary democracies, are formed with high frequency and in fact make a third part of all party governmental cabinets.

We suppose that such historiographical situation is rather often caused by an intuitive (at the worst by a non-system) position of a number of scientists, especially from the countries where minority governments are not formed or are even impossible. The point is that in such a case scientists are inclined to study the analyzed political institutes as "short-term aberrance" of political systems, which are, first of all, generated by rather stable and, correspondingly, more effective majority governments. G. Sartori believes that such logics of non-studying minority governments' stability to some extent supplements perception of the latter as the cases, which "either disguise themselves as coalitional governments of majority, which de-facto enjoy support of the majority in legislature", or are often acting cabinets, which in general are "weak" and "non-durable"¹⁹. Z. Somer-Topcu, L. Williams²⁰ and L. Savage²¹ reckon that to instability of minority governments contributes the fact that they are less economically and socially efficient and thus it is more difficult for them to respond to social and political, as well as general system challenges. It, as V. Bogdanor²² and K. Strom²³ note, becomes especially clear on the basis of appealing to minority governments as to "tangential subjects" of wider scientific studies, in particular party-electoral systems and coalition theory. R. Elgie and M. Maor²⁴ state that the reason is that in such research the attention is mainly focused on peculiarities of formation and accountability of minority governments against the background of implemented institutional and procedural rules.

However, little attention is paid to the very nature of functioning, support (especially legislative initiatives and program policy) and "survival" (stability) of minority governments. It is rather relevant in cases when minority governments compose if not more than 75% of all governmental cabinets, then at least a half of them, though they and political systems within which they function in general, position themselves as quite stable, politically and socially-economically effective (as, for example, in Denmark, Spain, Norway, Croatia, and in due time Finland). Besides, it is relevant in the context, when a lot of minority governments in European parliamentary democracies have functioned over several years and full

¹⁹ G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework of Analysis*, Wyd. CUP 1976, s. 178.

²⁰ Z. Somer-Topcu, L. Williams, *Survival of the fittests? Cabinet duration in Postcommunist Europe*, "Comparative Politics" 2008, vol 40, nr. 3, s. 313-329.

²¹ L. Savage, *A product of their bargaining environment: Explaining government duration in Central and Eastern Europe*, "SEI Working Paper" 2012, nr. 130.

²² V. Bogdanor, *Multi-party Politics and the Constitution*, Wyd. CUP 1983.

²³ K. Strom, *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. CUP 1990.

²⁴ R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, "West European Politics" 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.

legislative terms (as, for instance, the governments of A. Van Acker A. (1954–195) in Belgium, A. Rasmussen (2001–2005) in Denmark, S. Lemass (1961–1965 pp.) and B. Ahern (1997–2002) in Ireland, F. Gonzalez (1989–1993), J. Aznar (1996–2000) and J. Zapatero (2004–2008 and 2008–2011) in Spain, G. Borg Oliveira (1962–1966) in Malta, O. Nordli (1977–1981), G. Brundtland (1985–1989) and K. Bondevik (2001–2005) in Norway, A. Guterres (1995–1999) in Portugal, W. Churchill (1951–1955) in the UK, T. Erlander (1960–1964 and 1964–1968), G. Persson (1998–2002 and 2002–2006) and F. Reinfeldt (2010–2014) in Sweden, B. Borisov (2009–2013) in Bulgaria, A. Brazauskas (2001–2004) in Lithuania, M. Zeman (1998–2002) in the Czech Republic and so on, and thus they were authorized to influence all significant changes in political and social-economic system of the corresponding countries. Therefore, it is obvious that minority governments are not always characterized by the intuitive and abovementioned logics of instability, but in general require detailed theoretical, methodological as well as empirical attention.

From the theoretical and methodological point of view it is rather important that specialized studies of government stability interpret this notion as the ability of a government to perform its duties and a stable state of governmental cabinet functioning which is characterized by its long-term existence, preservation of crucial internal and external characteristics of governments²⁵. At the same time, the most approved evaluation category for government stability is “government durability”, while “the index of governmental stability” is less used. Governmental durability is time measured between the “starting point” and “destination point” of certain government functioning. The index of governmental stability, in its turn, is a percentage or a fractional rate, which represents the percent of maximum possible period (in European parliamentary democracies it depends on a parliamentary term or its leading chamber under constitution or in practice) the government was functioning.

L. Dodd²⁶, P. Warwick²⁷, K. Strom²⁸, D. Sanders and V. Herman²⁹, I. Budge, J. Woldendorp and H. Keman³⁰, F. Muller, K. Fettelschoss and P. Harfst³¹ and others state that another theoretical and methodological addition is represented by the fact that a type of governmental cabinets (which is manifested by a number of governmental parties (single-party and coalitional governments) and

²⁵ V. Lytvyn, *Kontseptualne vyznachennya ponyattya „uryadova stabilnist”*, „Naukovyy visnyk Uzhhorodskoho universytetu”, Seriya: Politolohiya, Sotsiolohiya, Filosofiya 2008, nr 10, s. 38-39.; Z. Byaloblocki, *Stabilnist ta efektyvnist uradyiv u politychnykh systemakh krayin Skhidnoyi Yevropy*, Wyd. Vydavnychy tsestr LNU imeni I. Franka 2013, s. 15.; E. Zimmerman, *Government Stability in Six European Countries During the World Economic Crisis of the 1930s: Some Preliminary Considerations*, “European Journal of Political Research” 1987, vol 15, nr. 1, s. 23-52.; M. Laver, K. Shepsle, *Events, Equilibria and Government Survival*, “American Journal of Political Science” 1998, vol 42, nr. 1, s. 28.

²⁶ L. Dodd, *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 1976.

²⁷ P. Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007.

²⁸ K. Strom, *Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality of Nonwinning Cabinet Solutions*, “Comparative Political Studies” 1984, vol 17, nr. 2, s. 199-227.

²⁹ D. Sanders, V. Herman, *The Stability and Survival of Governments in Western Europe*, “Acta Politica” 1977, vol 12, nr. 3, s. 346-377.

³⁰ J. Woldendorp, H. Keman, I. Budge, *Party government in 48 democracies: An update (1945-1998)*, Wyd. Kluwer Academic Press Budge.

³¹ F. Müller-Rommel, K. Fettelschoss, P. Harfst, *Party government in Central European democracies: A data collection (1990-2003)*, “European Journal of Political Research” 2004, vol 43, s. 869-893.

by a character of their representativeness in legislature (majority and minority governments)) may hypothetically influence stability/duration of governments. In general, as P. Warwick³², J. Huber, S. Martinez–Gallardo³³ and B. Powell³⁴, K. Gonrad and S. Golder³⁵, F. Müller-Rommel and K. Fetzelschoss³⁶, A. Romaniuk and V. Lytvyn³⁷ speculate, it is represented in the fact that the most stable (at least among party governments) including those in European parliamentary democracies are majority cabinets (especially single-party) and the least stable are minority cabinets (especially coalitional ones).

Determined connection becomes much stronger in case when legislatures turn to be less factionalized and polarized, and on the contrary it becomes weaker, when legislatures are more factionalized and polarized. However, Z. Maoz and Z. Somer-Topcu³⁸ reckon that interconnection between polarization of party systems and government stability, especially in case of minority cabinets, is not unlitery and statistically significant, as it can adjust itself depending on other factors, including party- and institutionalized ones. Correspondingly, taking into consideration whether a party or parties, which assemble and support minority governments, are traditionally a subset of political forces of optimally ideological positioning, polarization of party systems is an important, but an additional factor, which explains stability among minority governments. Nevertheless, D. Diermeier, and A. Merlo³⁹ think that the number of parliamentary parties is even of greater significance as, for instance, growth of parties in number (as “veto-players”) in legislature leads to a conflict both within the frames of a cabinet and within relations between governments and legislature (or governmental and non-governmental parties). That is why, governments must quite often function on the grounds of “mutual acquiescence” mechanisms, which are revealed in the fact that governmental cabinets and parliamentary parties’ leaders, which compose them, must apply permanent rotations of cabinet ministers as an instrument of searching their support in legislature and a way to adjust “rewards” for both governmental and oppositional parties. Therefore, it is theoretically clear that governments’ stability, including minority cabinets, depends on difficulties in conducting negotiations between factions and legislative deputies⁴⁰. At the same time, it is quite expected that due to inadequacy of minority cabinets (which always are either governmental coalitions or coalitions of parliamentary

³² P. Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007.

³³ J. Huber, C. Martinez-Gallardo, *Cabinet Instability and the Accumulation of Experience: The French Fourth and Fifth Republics in Comparative Perspective*, “British Journal of Political Science” 2004, vol 34, nr. 1, s. 27-48.; J. Huber, C. Martinez-Gallardo, *Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracies*, “American Political Science Review” 2008, vol 102, nr. 2, s. 169-180.

³⁴ B. Powell, *Contemporary Democracies*, Wyd. Harvard University Press 1982.

³⁵ C. Conrad, S. Golder, *Measuring government duration and stability in Central Eastern European democracies*, “European Journal of Political Research” 2010, vol 49, nr. 1, s. 119-150.

³⁶ F. Müller-Rommel, K. Fetzelschoss, *Cabinet Government and Cabinet Ministers in Central Eastern European Democracies: A Descriptive Cross National Evaluation*, Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, University of Uppsala, April 13-18, 2004.

³⁷ A. Romaniuk, *Porivniabnyi analiz politychnykh instytutiv kraïni Zakhidnoi Yevropy: Monobrafia*, Wyd. Vydavnychyi tsentr LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2007.; A. Romaniuk, V. Lytvyn, *Porivniabnyi analiz politychnykh instytutiv kraïni Vyshebradskoi hrupy ta insykh kraïni Tsentralno-Skhidnoi Yevropy: monobrafia*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2016.

³⁸ Z. Maoz, Z. Somer-Topcu, *Political Polarization and Cabinet Stability in Multiparty Systems: A Social Networks Analysis of European Parliaments, 1945-98*, “British Journal of Political Science” 2010, vol 40, nr. 4, s. 805-833.

³⁹ D. Diermeier, A. Merlo, *Government Turnover in Parliamentary Democracies*, “Journal of Economic Theory” 2000, vol 94, nr. 1, s. 46-79.

⁴⁰ B. Powell, *Contemporary Democracies*, Wyd. Harvard University Press 1982.

parties, which compose governments and support them) to enjoy permanent “support” of legislatures such institutional constructions are less stable than majority governments⁴¹. The exceptions are the cases of such minority cabinets (single-party or coalitional), which are scenarios of formal agreements between governmental and non-governmental parties in legislatures.

In their turn R. Elgie, M. Maor⁴² note that durability/stability of minority governments depends on how effectively they can use the support of legislature (being a member of governmental and non-governmental parties), in particular from the perspective of minority cabinets' liabilities to conduct relations with non-governmental parties, their behavior, anticipated and factual results. It is especially actual in the case when minority governments gain votes of confidence concerning commencement and support for various legislations in legislatures (notably much more often, than in case of majority cabinets), as well as in context of avoiding parliamentary votes of non-confidence by minority governments. If such liabilities, and correspondingly possibilities to pursue policy through influence on the legislative procedure, are not presupposed, then “survival”/stability of minority governments is/can be a result of exclusively specific procedures of institutional process, within which cabinets are functioning. However, such rules conventionally cannot be a “resource” for continual “survival” of minority cabinets (and governments as a whole), and thus stability of minority cabinets traditionally depends on political and inter-party agreements within the frames of legislature⁴³.

In this context it is notable that minority cabinets substantially differ from majority cabinets, as the former in contrast to the latter, are not characterized by a dichotomy “government/governmental parties – opposition/oppositional parties”⁴⁴. Consequently, minority governments in comparison with majority governments are less determined by the existence of two straightly conflict blocs in legislature, as necessarily there are parties or separate deputies (groups of deputies) who: a) absolutely support minority cabinets; b) absolutely oppose minority cabinets; c) formally or informally do not support minority cabinets, but at the same time do not oppose them directly. And this determines the fact that relative (on the background of majority governments) stability or instability of minority governments is a result of constant negotiations between political parties or separate deputies (groups of deputies) of legislature, who, on the one hand, support minority cabinets and, on the other hand, do not oppose to minority cabinets, ensuring or not ensuring them permanent or situational majority in legislature. The point is that those political forces which are neither governmental nor oppositional must either support (directly – by means of voting or

⁴¹ C. Teare, *Cabinet Durability within Parliamentary Democracies: The Italian Model*, Wyd. Creighton University; C. Mershon, *The Costs of Coalition*, Wyd. Stanford University Press 2002.

⁴² R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, “West European Politics” 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.

⁴³ M. Maor, *The Dynamics of Minority Rule: A Bargaining-Based Theoretical Framework*, Presented at the ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, Bochum, Germany 1990.

⁴⁴ R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, “West European Politics” 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.

indirectly – abstaining from voting) or be against government’s initiatives, but in any case they cannot but express their position concerning the situation.

As a result such political forces must constantly reevaluate their strategy towards minority governments, and thus they always “swing between government and opposition”⁴⁵ or parties and deputies, who provide absolute support or unconditionally oppose minority cabinets. However, M. Laver, N. Schofield⁴⁶ state that such constant reevaluation of strategies can cause both intra-party and inter-party conflicts within governmental and non-governmental parties, and thus, especially when situational political forces use oppositional rhetoric and are “shifting” towards parliamentary opposition, it theoretically leads to reduction of legislative capabilities and consequently stability of minority governments. Therefore, minority cabinets are formed beforehand or initially and are constantly functioning (throughout the term of their being in office) in crisis mode. It is enhanced by the fact that minority governments, due to rational prospects in particular, first of all try to satisfy their own and party’s interests and political goals (namely electoral, official, party, ideological, organizational, as well as their combinations etc.), and thus they mainly “push off” and influence the positions of situational (non-governmental, but at the same time non-oppositional) political forces of legislature. Nevertheless, the nature of inter-party bargaining and negotiations between minority governments and political parties which assemble them and situational political forces in legislature are immanently more acute, than in case of majority governments and therefore minority governments are less stable/durable than majority cabinets⁴⁷.

Extremely rarely controversial situations concerns those minority governments, which are capable of successive (especially in long-term prospects) overcoming problems of bargains and negotiations between cabinets and political parties, which compose them, and situational political forces in legislature, and thus they can, in particular, on the basis of partial and overall formal agreements⁴⁸, stick to commitments, concerning their relations with non-governmental parties, their behavior and anticipated and factual results. Relatively stable are those minority governments, which do not function on the basis of formal agreements between governmental and non-governmental parties, but on the contrary use situational (ad hoc) strategies of their political behavior, concerning passing and adopting legislations⁴⁹. The point is that in such case minority governments’ ability to stick to commitments, concerning their relations with non-governmental parties, their behaviour, anticipated and factual results, is even smaller and more temporary/situational. And finally, as it was mentioned above, if minority governments cannot stick to their commitments and anything

⁴⁵ R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, “West European Politics” 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.

⁴⁶ M. Laver, N. Schofield, *Multi-Party Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*, Wyd. OUP 1990, s. 145-147.

⁴⁷ R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, “West European Politics” 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.

⁴⁸ A. Thomas, *The 1987 Danish Election*, “West European Politics” 1988, vol 11, nr. 2, s. 114-118.

⁴⁹ H. J. Nielsen, *The Danish General Election of 1981*, “West European Politics” 1982, vol 5, nr. 3, s. 305-307.; R. Elgie, M. Maor, *Accounting for the Survival of Minority Governments: An Examination of the French Case, 1988-1991*, “West European Politics” 1992, vol 15, nr. 4, s. 57-74.

else is constitutionally presupposed (on the basis of specific, though limited in time, rules of an institutional design), then it traditionally must be in advance terminated in their powers.

The abovementioned conclusion is supplemented by theoretical and methodological studies by S. Wesche⁵⁰ and N. Balke⁵¹, who mark that situations with parliamentary minority, and especially minority cabinets, when the latter are formed too often, but at the same time are very instable, permanently generate early parliamentary elections. It is presupposed by the fact that minority governments, keeping in view frequent early elections, are less burdened with a "risk" to lose their powers and authority, as they can easily regain them (in another inter-party environment) in future. A. Smith states that on the other hand governments (including minority ones) are more agreeable to pre-term parliamentary elections, when they are to a greater extent sure in their future victory⁵². It is especially the case for minority cabinets, in particular "those which are close to failure", as then they hope to get additional (in comparison with current composition of legislature) places in parliament, and thus can even strive for transformations of minority cabinets into majority governments. M. Laver⁵³ argues that realizing such relative insignificance of losing deputy's seats (and hoping to return to legislature in future), minority governments more often appeal to early parliamentary elections than majority governments do, and thereby they "artificially" reduce their durability and relative stability. However, such minority governments' strategies are mainly inherent to the institutional frames, described not by non-majoritarian or less-majoritarian electoral formulae, but by proportional or more proportional systems. Analogical situation, though different as to resources, can be observed, when situational (non-governmental and non-oppositional) parties and parties oppositional to minority governments expect growth in electoral preferences, as they can appeal to pre-term elections and therefore termination of minority governments against the will of the latter⁵⁴. But this mainly presupposes neutralization and reduction of stability among current minority governments as it is extremely difficult to achieve balance, when all non-governmental parties simultaneously and in general would gain better electoral results, than current governmental parties.

However, such theoretical and methodological approach does not fully correspond to the-orientation of problems concerning minority governments' stability, but on the contrary is mainly defined by K. Strom's⁵⁵ remarks that: in average minority governments are less stable (durable) than majority cabinets; single-party minority cabinets are traditionally more stable (durable) than coalitional minority governments; minority governments are relatively more stable (durable) in case when they are more often formed. Moreover, the researcher focuses on the fact that minority

⁵⁰ S. Wesche, *Electoral systems and their effect on the survival of minority and coalition governments in parliamentary democracies*, Wyd. The University of Ottawa 2013.

⁵¹ N. Balke, *The Rational Timing of Parliamentary Elections*, "Public Choice" 1990, vol 64, nr. 2, s. 201-216.

⁵² A. Smith, *Election Timing in Majoritarian Parliaments*, "British Journal of Political Science" 2003, vol 33, s. 397, 402.

⁵³ M. Laver, N. Schofield, *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1990.

⁵⁴ L. Martin, R. Stevenson, *Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies*, "American Journal of Political Science" 2001, vol 45, nr. 1, s. 33-50; S. Wesche, *Electoral systems and their effect on the survival of minority and coalition governments in parliamentary democracies*, Wyd. The University of Ottawa 2013.

⁵⁵ K. Strom, *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. CUP 1990, s. 116-117, 238.

governments are less stable than majority cabinets⁵⁶, if only because they often are “crisis” governments (which are formed during political crises) and oppose factual majority in legislatures⁵⁷, while minority governments can be more stable and can be called “a rational decision” under certain institutional and procedural and political conditions⁵⁸. On the other hand D. Dodd⁵⁹ notes that stability of minority governments is largely limited by the fact, that while pursuing their policy they constantly or permanently face negotiations conducted between non-governmental parties, and the latter, in their turn, may hypothetically discuss resignation of minority cabinets, as well as dissolution of legislatures (aiming at further parliamentary elections). For instance, it happened in 1993 in Slovakia, when at first on the basis of changes in composition of the coalitional government headed by V. Meciar, a single-party minority government was formed, however, later due to the intra-party crisis, majority transition to opposition in legislature and vote of non-confidence to the minority government, the latter was resigned⁶⁰. Generally speaking it reveals that minority governments’ “risks” are greater than “risks” of majority cabinets and that is why the former are less stable than the latter⁶¹.

However, the abovementioned and largely theorized conclusion does not fully work on the basis of empirical comparison, concerning the statistics of durability (stability) of minority governments in European parliamentary democracies, in particular within the systems of positive and negative parliamentarism. On the contrary, on the basis of the analysis of minority government stability in European parliamentary democracies, over the period of 1944-2016 (in different countries various time periods were analyzed) see Table 1, and on the basis of the statistical fact, which is known in the context of European parliamentary democracies, that single-party and coalitional minority governments are less stable than single-party and coalitional majority cabinets and party cabinets as a whole⁶², it has been studied and determined that: a) minority governments are more durable/stable than majority governments only in such Western European countries as Denmark, Spain, Norway and Sweden (as of 2004⁶³), as well as in such Central-Eastern European countries as

⁵⁶ P. Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007.; Z. Maoz, Z. Somer-Topcu, *Political Polarization and Cabinet Stability in Multiparty Systems: A Social Networks Analysis of European Parliaments, 1945-98*, “British Journal of Political Science” 2010, vol 40, nr. 4, s. 805-833.; J. Huber, C. Martinez-Gallardo, *Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracies*, “American Political Science Review” 2008, vol 102, nr. 2, s. 169-180.

⁵⁷ M. Taylor, V. Herman, *Party Systems and Government Stability*, «American Political Science Review” 1971, vol 65, nr. 1, s. 8-37.

⁵⁸ K. Strom, *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. CUP 1990, s. 199.

⁵⁹ L. Dodd, *Party Coalitions in Multiparty Parliaments: A Game-Theoretic Analysis*, “American Political Science Review” 1968, vol 68, nr. 3, s. 1101.

⁶⁰ J. Blondel, F. Müller-Rommel, *Cabinets in Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Palgrave 2001.; K. Henderson, N. Robinson, *Post-Communist Politics: An Introduction*, Wyd. Prentice Hall 1997.

⁶¹ Z. Somer-Topcu, L. Williams, *Survival of the fittests? Cabinet duration in Postcommunist Europe*, “Comparative Politics” 2008, vol 40, nr. 3, s. 313-329.

⁶² A. Romaniuk, *Porivniabnyi analiz politychnykh instytutiv krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy: Monobrafia*, Wyd. Vydavnychiy tsentr LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2007.; A. Romaniuk, V. Lytvyn, *Porivniabnyi analiz politychnykh instytutiv krain Vyshebradskoi hrupy ta inshykh krain Tsentrabno-Skhidnoi Yevropy: monobrafia*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2016.

⁶³ A. Romaniuk, *Porivniabnyi analiz politychnykh system krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy: instytutsiyniy vymir*, Lviv 2004, s. 206.; A. Romaniuk, *Porivniabnyi analiz politychnykh instytutiv krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy: Monobrafia*, Wyd. Vydavnychiy tsentr LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2007.

Lithuania, Romania, Croatia and the Czech Republic (as of 2015⁶⁴); b) minority governments are more stable in the parliamentary democracies of Western Europe as opposed to Central-Eastern European countries, however in the systems of negative and not positive parliamentarism; c) among the countries, where minority cabinets (even if they were formed once or several times) are the most stable/durable, we name Denmark, Norway, Greece, Ireland, Spain, Sweden and Malta (in order of increasing of the average duration of minority governments); d) to the countries, where minority cabinets (even if they were not so frequently formed) in average are the least durable/stable, belong Lithuania, Finland, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Iceland, Slovenia and the Netherlands (in order of decreasing of the average duration of minority cabinets); e) durability of minority governments does not directly-proportionally correspond with the frequency of minority government formation (especially it is observed in Greece and Malta, where minority governments are formed extremely rarely, however, they are very stable, as well as in Italy, Latvia and Finland, where minority governments are or were earlier formed quite often, though they were not very stable); f) in average temporary governmental cabinets (except Belgium and Iceland) are less durable, than permanent minority governments, moreover it can be observed both in Western European countries and Central-European countries, as well as in the systems of positive and negative parliamentarism; g) single-party minority cabinets are traditionally more stable, than coalitional minority cabinets, especially among European parliamentary democracies (in particular in Western and Central-Eastern Europe), both in the systems of positive and negative parliamentarism, however with several remarks: in average coalitional minority governments are more durable than single-party minority cabinets first of all in western European systems of positive parliamentarism (especially in Belgium, Ireland, Italy and France in 1945-1958); in average single-party minority governments are more stable than coalitional minority governments, first of all in western European systems of negative parliamentarism (except Austria, Denmark, Iceland, France, Sweden and the countries, where single-party minority cabinets are not formed); in average single-party minority cabinets are more durable than coalitional minority cabinets first of all in Central-Eastern European systems of positive parliamentarism (except Poland and Slovakia as well as the countries where single-party minority cabinets are not formed).

⁶⁴ A. Romaniuk, V. Lytvyn, *Porivniialnyi analiz politychnykh instytutiv krain Vyshebradskoi hrupy ta inshykh krain Tsentralno-Skhidnoi Yevropy: monografija*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2016.

DURATION OF GOVERNMENTS' OPERATION (IN DAYS) WITHIN THE SYSTEMS OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PARLIAMENTARISM IN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES IN WESTERN AND CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPE (1944-2016)

Country	Duration of all minority governments in days	Duration of permanent minority governments in days	Duration of temporary minority governments in days	Duration of all single-party minority governments in days	Duration of all coalition minority governments in days
I. PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES IN WESTERN EUROPE					
1.1. SYSTEMS OF POSITIVE PARLIAMENTARISM IN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES					
Belgium (since 1946)	347	341	362	69	458
Greece (since 1974)	795	795	–	795	–
Ireland (since 1944)	844	844	–	810	879
Spain (since 1977)	846	1019	155	846	–
Italy (since 1946)	269	279	9	199	364
Malta (since 1962)	1463	1463	–	1463	–
Germany (since 1949)	–	–	–	–	–
Finland (since 2000)	–	–	–	–	–
France (1945–1958)	203	203	–	30	289
In average	504	547	208	502	506
1.2. SYSTEMS OF NEGATIVE PARLIAMENTARISM IN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES					
Austria (since 1945)	533	533	–	529	536
Denmark (since 1945)	646	646	–	539	726
Iceland (since 1946)	202	201	203	197	213
Luxembourg (since 1945)	–	–	–	–	–
The Netherlands (since 1946)	178	516	129	–	178
Norway (since 1945)	694	715	328	767	537
Portugal (since 1975)	448	583	133	525	141
The UK (since 1945)	502	502	–	502	–
Finland (till 2000)	287	287	–	327	267
France (since 1958)	324	324	–	298	401
Sweden (since 1944)	861	861	–	869	993
In average	571	624	160	614	516
ALL PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES IN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES					
In average	549	598	173	576	513

II. PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES						
2.1. SYSTEMS OF POSITIVE PARLIAMENTARISM IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES						
Bulgaria (since 1990)	544	848	241	588	414	
Estonia (since 1992)	555	555	–	588	522	
Latvia (since 1990)	297	297	–	–	297	
Lithuania (since 1990)	503	503	–	–	503	
Poland (since 1989)	262	307	35	228	296	
Romania (since 1990)	420	420	–	528	377	
Serbia (since 2007)	–	–	–	–	–	
Slovakia (since 1990)	248	275	140	237	251	
Slovenia (since 1990)	180	180	–	–	180	
Hungary (since 1990)	349	349	–	349	–	
Croatia (since 2000)	527	527	–	706	408	
The Czech Republic (since 1990)	566	659	194	667	498	
Montenegro (since 2006)	–	–	–	–	–	
In average	401	421	170	496	361	
2.2. SYSTEMS OF NEGATIVE PARLIAMENTARISM IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES						
–	–	–	–	–	–	
ALL PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES						
In average	401	421	170	496	361	
ALL EUROPEAN SYSTEMS OF POSITIVE PARLIAMENTARISM						
In average	451	482	189	500	411	
ALL EUROPEAN SYSTEMS OF NEGATIVE PARLIAMENTARISM						
In average	571	624	160	614	516	
ALL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES (ALL EUROPEAN SYSTEMS OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PARLIAMENTARISM)						
In average	510	551	172	564	455	

Źródło: G. Ieraci, F. Poropat, *Governments in Europe (1945–2013): A Data Set*, Wyd. EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste 2013.; H. Döring, P. Manow, *Parliament and government composition database (ParlGov): An infrastructure for empirical information on parties, elections and governments in modern democracies*, Źródło: <http://www.parl.gov.org/> (odczyt: 01.02.2017.); K. Armingeon, D. Weisstanner, L. Knöpel, *Supplement to the Comparative Political Data Set – Government Composition 1960–2012* (36 OECD countries and/or EU-member Countries), Wyd. Universität Bern 2014.; K. Armingeon, D. Weisstanner, S. Engler, P. Potosidis, M. Gerber, P. Leimgruber, *Comparative Political Data Set 1960–2009*, Wyd. University of Berne 2011.

Besides, in generally and averagely (see Table 1) it is argued that key problems of durability/stability of minority governments in the systems of positive and negative parliamentarism in European parliamentary democracies are: a) a bigger number of possible scenarios, as in comparison with majority cabinets, concerning the loss of a vote of confidence or obtaining a vote of no confidence by minority cabinets (first of all it happens as a result of oppositional and situational parties' desire, which in fact compose majority in legislature, dictate their rules and political preferences as to parties that belong to minority governments, not entering cabinets and not taking direct political responsibility for the decisions taken by governments); b) lesser degree or insufficient degree of institutionalization of minority cabinets, as in comparison with majority cabinets; c) participation of a less, or insufficient number of political actors in the process of distribution of major posts and spheres of influence, as in comparison with majority cabinets; d) dominance of intuitive, but not always rational ideas concerning the fact, that minority cabinets are less effective and legitimate, than majority cabinets⁶⁵. Quite interesting is a fact that frequency of formation and stability of minority cabinets is higher in those European systems of positive and negative parliamentarism, political systems of which are based on the principles of consensus and corporatism, parliamentary support to minority governments is provided by parties with different (even oppositional) ideologies, as well as party systems which are not characterized by dominant parties.

At the same time, as it was mentioned above the highest stability level of minority governments is observed within the systems of negative parliamentarism, which can be found only in parliamentary democracies in western European countries. In average, especially on the background of a high frequency of minority governments' formation, it is peculiar of such countries as Denmark and Sweden, and earlier Norway, where support and "maintenance" of minority cabinets took place in accordance with the rule, due to which in the abovementioned cases systems of powerful parliamentary committees are "stereotyped", and therefore it means participation of both governmental and situational and oppositional parties to parliamentary and governmental/managerial activity and processes of taking political decisions. As a result the rule, according to which a part of minority governments' responsibilities is focused in various internal structures of legislature, has been institutionalized⁶⁶. However, even despite this it is argued that stability of minority governments in the system of negative parliamentarism would be higher, if all countries of this type (as it was presupposed earlier) were characterized by minority governments. And as the practice shows it is not peculiar of Austria, Iceland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France, where minority cabinets are not institutionalized, but on the contrary are positioned as exceptional and even "critical-risky" situations. And

⁶⁵ Z. Maoz, B. Russett, *Normative and structural causes of the democratic peace, 1946-1986*, "American Political Science Review" 1993, vol 87, nr. 3, s. 626.; B. Prins, C. Sprecher, *Institutional constraints, political opposition, and interstate dispute escalation: Evidence from parliamentary systems, 1946-1989*, "Journal of Peace Research" 1999, vol 36, nr. 2, s. 271-287.; M. Ireland, S. Gartner, *Time to Fight. Government Type and Conflict Initiation in Parliamentary Systems*, "Journal of Conflict Resolution" 2001, vol 45, s. 547-568.

⁶⁶ M. Mohunova, *Skandynawskiy parlamentarizm. Teoriya i praktika*, Moskva 2001, s. 37-38, 104-105.; D. Arter, *Scandinavian Politics Today*, Manchester 1999, s. 211-217.

eventually what concerns a slight instability, and consequently effectiveness of some minority cabinets in the systems of negative parliamentarism, where such institutional scenarios are rather widespread, it is quite obvious that it is presupposed by the fact, that they are characterized not by a “guaranteed”, but by a “silent” support of cabinets by legislatures.

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