

## **INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES OF POLITICAL PROCESS AND GOVERNMENT STABILITY: PARAMETERS OF THE RELATIONSHIP**

The article is devoted to analysing the parameters of correlation and interrelation of institutional features of political process and government stability. It was stated that the issue of governments and their stability is extremely multifaceted, since it concerns both institutional and non-institutional parameters and determinants of government stability. This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, governments are institutionally positioned as the highest executives, and therefore, on the other hand, that governments are not isolated from other political institutions, because they are in direct and indirect relations with them within the systems of inter-institutional relations, which are determined by different forms and systems of government, different forms of government and different types of political regimes. It was argued that in general the problem of the relationship between the institutional features of political process and government stability is mainly manifested in the correlation of stability of different types of governments within different institutional designs and different reasons for the formation and functioning of them.

*Keywords: government, political process, political institutions, government stability.*

## **CECHY INSTYTUCJONALNE PROCESU POLITYCZNEGO I STABILNOŚCI RZĄDU: PARAMETRY RELACJI**

Artykuł poświęcony jest analizie parametrów korelacji i współzależności instytucjonalnych cech procesu politycznego i stabilności rządu. Stwierdzono, że problematyka rządów i ich stabilności jest wieloaspektowa, gdyż dotyczy zarówno parametrów instytucjonalnych, jak i pozainstytucjonalnych oraz determinant stabilności rządu. Wynika to z faktu, że z jednej strony rządy są instytucjonalnie pozycjonowane jako najwyższe kierownictwo, a zatem z drugiej strony nie funkcjonują w izolacji od innych instytucji politycznych, ponieważ pozostają z nimi w bezpośrednich i pośrednich relacjach w ramach systemów stosunków międzyinstytucjonalnych, które są zdeterminowane różnymi formami i systemami rządów i różnymi typami ustrojów politycznych. Argumentowano, że generalnie problem relacji między instytucjonalnymi cechami procesu politycznego a stabilnością rządu przejawia się głównie w korelacji stabilności różnych typów rządów w ramach różnych projektów instytucjonalnych i różnych przyczyn ich powstawania i funkcjonowania.

*Słowa kluczowe: rząd, proces polityczny, instytucje polityczne, stabilność rządu.*

## ІНСТИТУЦІЙНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПОЛІТИЧНОГО ПРОЦЕСУ ТА УРЯДОВОЇ СТАБІЛЬНОСТІ: ПАРАМЕТРИ ВІДНОСИН

У статті проаналізовано параметри кореляції та взаємозв'язку інституційних особливостей політичного процесу й урядової стабільності. Констатовано, що проблематика урядів і їхньої стабільності є надзвичайно багатогранною, оскільки вона стосується як інституційних, так і позаінституційних параметрів та детермінант стабільності урядів. Зумовлено це тим, що, з однієї сторони, уряди інституційно позиціонуються як вищі органи виконавчої влади, а відтак, з другої сторони, що уряди не перебувають в ізоляції від інших політичних інститутів і органів влади, адже перебувають з ними в безпосередніх й опосередкованих відносинах у рамках систем міжінституційних відносин, які зумовлюються різними формами і системами правління, різними формами державного устрою і різними типами політичних режимів. Аргументовано, що загалом проблематика взаємозв'язку інституційних особливостей політичного процесу й урядової стабільності головно виявляється у кореляції стабільності різних типів урядових кабінетів у рамках різного інституційного дизайну та різних причин формування та функціонування таких урядів.

*Ключові слова:* уряд, політичний процес, політичні інститути, урядова стабільність.

The issue of government stability is quite popular in political science, as it focuses on a fairly large number of researchers. And this was typical of political science both a few decades ago and is relevant today. At the same time, the issue of governments and their stability is extremely multifaceted, as it concerns both institutional and non-institutional parameters and determinants of government stability. This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, governments are institutionally positioned as the highest executive bodies, and therefore, on the other hand, that governments are not isolated from other political institutions and authorities, because they are in direct and indirect relations with them within the systems of inter-institutional relations, which are determined by different forms and systems of government, different forms of government and different types of political regimes. Accordingly, in the presented scientific intelligence the attention is focused on the parameters of correlation of mainly institutional features of the political process and governmental stability. And this is done mostly in the theoretical and methodological context, although with the inevitable link to the political practice of mainly democratic countries in Europe.

The issues stated in the study are largely represented in the scientific achievements of such researchers as D. Diermeier and R. Stevenson<sup>1</sup>, E. Browne, J. Frendreis and D. Gleiber<sup>2</sup>, M. Gallaher,

<sup>1</sup> Diermeier D., Stevenson R., Cabinet Survival and Competing Risks, *American Journal of Political Science* 1999, vol 43, nr 4, s. 1051–1068.

<sup>2</sup> Browne E., Frendreis J., Gleiber D., An "Events" Approach to the Problem of Cabinet Stability, *Comparative Political Studies* 1984, vol 17, nr 2, s. 167–197.

M. Laver and P. Mair<sup>3</sup>, B. Grofman, P. Straffin and N. Novello<sup>4</sup>, B. Grofman and P. van Rosendaal<sup>5</sup>, M. Ireland and S. Gartner<sup>6</sup>, G. King, J. Alt, N. Burns and M. Laver<sup>7</sup>, M. Laver and N. Schofield<sup>8</sup>, A. Lupia and K. Strøm<sup>9</sup>, N. Panchak-Bialoblotska<sup>10</sup>, W. Riker<sup>11</sup>, Romanyuk<sup>12</sup>, K. Strom<sup>13</sup>, E. Zimmerman<sup>14</sup> and many others. Based on the findings of their research, we will try to review and systematize the parameters of the correlation of mainly institutional features of the political process and government stability.

At one time, N. Balke stated that in most European democracies, prime ministers are authorized to directly and independently dismiss government cabinets and call new parliamentary elections, or instead demand such actions from nominal heads of state, whether presidents or monarchs, who, in turn, quite rarely refuse such requests from heads of government<sup>15</sup>. This can be seen, for example, in the case of countries such as Denmark, Ireland, Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, etc., where government cabinets can call early parliamentary elections. In turn, this is also true of Italy and France, where the heads of state, the presidents, are also empowered to call elections of legislatures at their own discretion. Finally, in countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden, etc., early parliamentary elections can only be called by parliaments, in particular through the application of the results of parliamentary no-confidence votes. However, in most European countries and the rest of the world, cabinets serve their maximum terms of office, which are traditionally four or five years.

In this regard, N. Balke argued that countries in which governments can call elections of legislatures at their own discretion, do so much more often than countries in which early parliamentary elections are preceded by a vote of no confidence in governments<sup>16</sup>. In this context, the issue of the time required to call early parliamentary elections needs special attention. Some

<sup>3</sup> Gallaher M., Laver M., Mair P., *Representative Government in Western Europe*, McGraw-Hill Education 1992.

<sup>4</sup> Grofman B., Straffin P., Novello N., The Sequential Dynamics of Cabinet Formation, Stochastic Error, and a Test of Competing Models, *Collective Decision-Making: Social Choice and Political Economy* 1996, vol 50, s. 281–293.

<sup>5</sup> Grofman B., van Rosendaal P., Toward a Theoretical Explanation of Premature Cabinet Termination: With application to post-war cabinets in the Netherlands, *European Journal of Political Research* 1994, vol 26, nr 2, s. 155–170.

<sup>6</sup> Ireland M., Gartner S., Time to Fight: Government Type and Conflict Initiation in Parliamentary Systems, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2001, vol 45, nr 5, s. 547–568.

<sup>7</sup> King G., Alt J., Burns N., Laver M., A unified model of cabinet dissolution in parliamentary democracies, *American Journal of Political Science* 1990, vol 34, nr 6, s. 846–871.

<sup>8</sup> Laver M., Schofield N., *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Western Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Lupia A., Strøm K., Coalition Termination and the Strategic Timing of Parliamentary Elections, *American Political Science Review* 1995, vol 89, nr 3, s. 648–665.

<sup>10</sup> Panchak-Bialoblotska N., *Uriady menshosti v yevropejskykh parlamentskykh demokratiakh*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Riker W., *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, Wyd. Yale University Press 1962.

<sup>12</sup> Romanyuk A., Uriady menshosti v systemi uriadiv krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy, *Visnyk Lvivskoho universytetu. Seriya: Filozofski nauky* 2006, s. 88–94.

<sup>13</sup> Strom K., Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality on Non-winning Cabinet Solutions, *Comparative political Studies* 1984, vol 17, nr 2, s. 199–226; Strom K., Browne E., Frensdreis J., Gleiber D., Contending Models of Cabinet Stability, *The American Political Science Review* 1988, vol 82, nr 3, s. 923–941.

<sup>14</sup> Zimmerman E., Government Stability in Six Countries During the World Economic Crises of the 1930s: Some Preliminary Considerations, *European Journal of Political Research* 1987, vol 15, nr 1, s. 34–44.

<sup>15</sup> Balke N., *The Timing of Parliamentary Elections*, Wyd. Southern Methodist University 1988.

<sup>16</sup> Balke N., *The Timing of Parliamentary Elections*, Wyd. Southern Methodist University 1988.

authors, and in fact most of them, state that the time before the next / early parliamentary elections is a purely technical issue that affects the reliability of assessments of political stability and danger, in which any analytical model is unable to use statistically appropriate methods<sup>17</sup>.

Instead, some other authors assess the time before the next / early parliamentary elections as a component of a rational choice model as to when the completion of a government cabinet may be a maximization of benefits for members of the current government. For example, in contrast to the first approach, in which the time remaining before the forced dissolution of parliament does not relate to the likelihood of the completion of a government cabinet, A. Lupia and K. Strom argued, mainly in the second approach, that the completion of a government cabinet becomes much more likely as the passage of time is limited by confidence in the conditions of new parliamentary elections<sup>18</sup>. Accordingly, scientists believe that the advantage of maintaining the status quo begins to “spin” and inflate, resulting in an increase in the value of a kind of “danger function”. A similar construction of the interpretation of inter-institutional balance, which concerns the stability of governments, was once proposed by D. Diermeier and R. Stevenson<sup>19</sup>. The authors found that it is almost always useful to look for theoretical predictions and predictions that will be factorial invariant over time. Therefore, in the statistical structural model of political danger and inter-institutional equilibrium, it is expedient to consider invariant factors in connection with the existence of a whole list of different types of government cabinets, each of which is characterized by a constant but different norm of danger and inter-institutional equilibrium.

In this context, it is important and interesting that today there is controversy over whether these norms and parameters of danger and inter-institutional balance in European government cabinets are intensifying, in particular since the Second World War. In this regard, E. King argues that the norms of danger and inter-institutional balance are really constant, when institutionalized adequate means of governance and management of government offices. In contrast, P. Warwick and E. Easton seek additional support for the growing norms of danger and inter-institutional balance in some European countries. And B. Grofman and P. van Roozendaal, in turn, analyzing only the data of the Benelux countries and appealing to the statistics of the interim governments, confirm the support of constant norms of danger and inter-institutional balance in some countries and support for positive norms in other countries. In this context, it should be understood that such an empirical contradiction raises and concerns mainly statistical problems, which are often beyond the capabilities of comparative and theoretical and methodological analysis in political science.

In addition, different countries apply very different rules, according to which the process of forming government cabinets is organized. Until recently, such an institutionalized reality was

<sup>17</sup> Browne E., Frensdreis J., Gleiber D., An “Events” Approach to the Problem of Cabinet Stability, *Comparative Political Studies* 1984, vol 17, nr 2, s. 167–197.

<sup>18</sup> Lupia A., Strom K., Coalition Termination and the Strategic Timing of Parliamentary Elections, *American Political Science Review* 1995, vol 89, nr 3, s. 648–665.

<sup>19</sup> Diermeier D., Stevenson R., Cabinet Survival and Competing Risks, *American Journal of Political Science* 1999, vol 43, nr 4, s. 1051–1068.

recognized in the theoretical literature on the formation of government cabinets, in particular by such researchers as B. Grofman, F. Novello, and N. Straffin<sup>20</sup>.

This is manifested, for example, in the fact that in countries such as Italy or Iceland, presidents determine the “formers” of government cabinets. At the same time, in Italy the shaper is always or at least should be the leader of the largest party, and in Iceland this is often, but not necessarily. In Belgium and the Netherlands, the appointment of a former is often preceded by the position of an informant, whose task is not to form a governing coalition or a one-party government, but to monitor and study coalition agreement signatories and explore opportunities to form viable, stable and capable government cabinets. Belgium also has an interesting institutionalized constraint on the separation of French-speaking members of the government cabinet and Dutch-speaking cabinet members. In turn, in Norway and Sweden, the parliamentary elections are not immediately followed by a real period of government cabinet formation.

In this regard, it should be noted that the literature on the correlation between the types of government cabinets and the nature of institutionalized rules for the formation of government cabinets, in particular in relation to the expected duration of government cabinets or the probability of government crises, has become quite representative in political science prime ministers to initiate early parliamentary elections. A pioneer in this direction at one time was K. Strom, who argued that the formalized requirement for the appointment of governments – the so-called investiture of governments before parliaments – hypothetically should reduce the average length of government offices<sup>21</sup>. This logic was supplemented by E. King, who investigated the expected negative sign of this fictitious variable. However, in political science there is another hypothesis that countries in which the process of forming government cabinets is positioned as relatively defined, say, for the largest party, will have the primary chance to form government cabinets and will have shorter cabinet lengths, other things being equal and compared to cases where the formation of government cabinets is more questionable<sup>22</sup>. The fact is that a political party that is waiting for a second or second (not the first in order) chance to form a government cabinet obviously has fewer options to lose from dissolving the legislature than a political party that can be severely constrained in the political process, especially if it ends with the resignation of the government.

On this basis, K. Strom includes in his study the duration of government cabinets a variable that measures the peculiar proportion of the distribution of seats within the cabinets. In contrast, E. King criticizes this variable as insufficient information that contains data on the duration of offices. Instead, he uses a fictitious variable to show whether the government cabinet was indeed

<sup>20</sup> Grofman B., Straffin P., Novello N., The Sequential Dynamics of Cabinet Formation, Stochastic Error, and a Test of Competing Models, *Collective Decision-Making: Social Choice and Political Economy* 1996, vol 50, s. 281–293.

<sup>21</sup> Strom K., Browne E., Frensdreis J., Gleiber D., Contending Models of Cabinet Stability, *The American Political Science Review* 1988, vol 82, nr 3, s. 923–941.

<sup>22</sup> King G., Alt J., Burns N., Laver M., A unified model of cabinet dissolution in parliamentary democracies, *American Journal of Political Science* 1990, vol 34, nr 6, s. 846–871.

formed immediately after the election. Even when other control variables are used, the authors argue that post-election government offices are longer than other government offices also substantiate that there are statistically significant negative effects of the impact of their fictitious variable on government cabinets. Thus, B. Grofman and P. van Roosendaal in a study of the duration of government cabinets in the Benelux countries note that the norms of danger and inter-institutional balance for the first (following the parliamentary elections) government cabinets differ from similar norms for the second and subsequent (within the same the parliamentary cycle itself) of government cabinets<sup>23</sup>. As a result, and in response, K. Strom hypothesized that autonomous and specialized parliamentary committees could facilitate the formation of governments, especially minority governments, although this could inevitably affect the duration of the latter.

All this inevitably confronts us with the need to consider the institutions and institutional parameters that are agents, variables and actors in the political process. The influence of various factors on the governmental stability of European countries was thoroughly analyzed by the German researcher E. Zimmermann, and therefore we consider them according to the scheme proposed by this author: governmental stability is negatively correlated with the number of parties in parliament legislature; government stability is higher the more seats the governing parties in parliament rely on, the majority government is more stable than the minority government, the stability of a one-party government is greater than the stability of a coalition government, and the stability of coalition governments is greater in minimally victorious coalitions, decreasing from larger to smaller coalitions and being the smallest in a minority coalition government, the stability of a one-party majority government is greater than that of a minimally victorious coalition, decreasing as the number of votes and mandates relied on by a minimally victorious coalition government and is lowest if the government relies only on a minority in parliament, the more seats in the opposition the parliament has, the shorter the government will be, government stability is negatively correlated with parliamentary factionalization / fragmentation, government stability is negatively correlated with governmental factionalization / fragmentation; there is a sphere of control of the opposition in the parliament, the shorter the duration of the government; government stability correlates positively with the factionalization / fragmentation of opposition parties, and government stability is highly negatively associated with the percentage of seats controlled by anti-system parties; the stability of the government is positively related to the factionalization / fragmentation of anti-systemic parties, the stability of the government is negatively related to the previous crisis in the process of forming the government<sup>24</sup>. On this basis, a summary scheme of the dependence of governmental stability in direct connection with various institutional factors and features of the political process proposed in Table 1.

<sup>23</sup> Grofman B., van Roosendaal P., Toward a Theoretical Explanation of Premature Cabinet Termination: With application to post-war cabinets in the Netherlands, *European Journal of Political Research* 1994, vol 26, nr 2, s. 155–170.

<sup>24</sup> Zimmerman E., Government Stability in Six Countries During the World Economic Crises of the 1930, Some Preliminary Considerations, *European Journal of Political Research* 1987, vol 15, nr 1, s. 34–44.

**Table 1.** The scheme of dependence of governmental stability with various institutional factors and features of the political process

Institutions and institutionalized political factors	Range of variables	
	From	Till
Government cabinets	Concentration of executive power in one-party majority governments	Separation of executive power in broad multiparty coalitions
Executive and legislative relations	Executive-legislative relations in which the prime ministers are dominant	Executive and legislative balance of political forces of government cabinets
Party systems	Two-party systems	Multiparty systems
Electoral systems	Majority and disproportionate electoral systems	Proportional electoral systems
Interest groups	Interest group systems with publicly available competition among socio-political groups	Coordinated and corporate systems of interest groups aimed at socio-political compromise
Distribution of power	Unitary and centralized government cabinet	Federal and decentralized government cabinet
Parliaments (legislatures)	Concentration of legislative power in a unicameral legislature	The division of legislative power between two equally strong but differently composed chambers
Constitutions	Flexible constitutions that can be modified by an absolute or even a relative majority of seats	Rigid constitutions that can only be modified by a qualified or extraordinary majority of mandates
Political systems	Political systems in which the legislature has the final say on the constitutionality of legislation	Political Systems in which laws are subject to judicial review and constitutionality by supreme or constitutional courts
Central banks	Central banks, which depend on government offices	Central banks independent of government offices

At the same time, it is necessary to understand to which classification of government cabinets the above proposed table of political variables and indicators of government stability should be attributed. In this case, we begin with the use of the model once proposed by A. Leiphart.

He constructs a classification that is exhaustive and based on two different variables: between multi-party or coalition and one-party government cabinets, and between minority government cabinets and minimally-victorious and over-victorious government cabinets. These models can be defined as follows. A governmental cabinet is a minority cabinet if it represents a smaller percentage or share of seats than a voting or casting majority in the legislature. A government cabinet is a minimally victorious coalition if it becomes a minority government if any of its member parties withdraw. A government cabinet is a surplus-winning coalition if it is neither a minimally-victorious coalition nor a minority government (i.e., a minimally-victorious coalition is also a one-party majority government). In other words, a surplus-winning coalition is a government if it has at least one member party, the loss of which does not make the cabinet a minority government. The direct consequence of this definition is indicated in Table 2, according to which a one-party cabinet cannot be a redundant coalition by definition.

**Table 2.** Scheme of classification of government offices and the possibility of their existence in the model of A. Leiphart

<b>Variable classifications of government offices</b>	<b>Minority government</b>	<b>Minimally victorious coalition</b>	<b>Excessively victorious coalition</b>
Multi-party government	+	+	+ (only)
One-party government	+	+ (only)	Does not exist by definition

Źródło: Lijphart A., *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Wyd. Yale University Press 1999.

However, it is necessary to address two main requirements for the influence of political institutions and processes on government stability, to which A. Leiphart also appeals. First, most types of government cabinets are statistically most one-party governments and minimally victorious coalitions. That is why it is clear that minimally victorious coalitions and majority one-party governments are a kind of majority patterns of the political process. Second, the most coherent types of government cabinets are multi-party governments and overly victorious coalitions, as they are the ones that express the signs and scope of political agreement and consensus to the greatest extent. It is also interesting that the classification of A. Leiphart’s government cabinets outlined above arose under the influence of W. Riker’s ideas<sup>25</sup>. W. Riker’s coalition theory contained, in particular, the prediction that the type of government cabinets that would, in fact and most often arise would be the type of minimally victorious coalitions. Therefore, in this analytical context, we will say a few words about this theory, as well as about another theory, which is similarly present in many arguments of A. Leiphart, and more precisely about the theory or theorem of the average voter. But these two kinds of theories are actually different kinds of policies or understandings of politics. However, their important differences often collide or are taken into account, and therefore the almost simultaneous use of theories, on the one hand, creates methodological mixing, however, on the other hand - methodologically enriches the picture<sup>26</sup>.

W. Riker’s coalition theory belongs to a broad class of “zero-sum games” theory. The actions studied in this theory can be seen as a redistribution of resources among the participants in the political game, because the sum of the losses of some players is exactly equal to the sum of the achievements of other actors. However, when the above conditions are met, the number of exploited participants in the “game” is of course maximized, and the number of winners of the “game” is minimized. This is mainly reflected in the theorem of minimally victorious coalitions. Thus, it is obvious that the formation of government cabinets in democratic systems is explained purely theoretically in the manner described above. However, in contrast, the theory or theorem of the average voter belongs to a completely different type of policy concepts. A fundamental feature of this type of idea is the extent to which actors,

<sup>25</sup> Riker W., *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, Wyd. Yale University Press 1962.

<sup>26</sup> Lijphart A., *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Wyd. Yale University Press 1999.



such as politicians or voters, produce or occupies positions according to their views or preferences. In this context, the scale of the positioning of political actors is often ideological in nature, for example, in relation to the left-right ideological spectrum of party programs. It is in this process that the theorem of the average voter is based. Moreover, she argues that when the simple principle of majority is used, the exit decision is the position of the middle voter, i.e. the voter who represents as many voters on one side of the ideological spectrum as on the other side. Therefore, in such redistribution there are no necessary results of political activity, although they may occur as a result of the nature of the ideological spectrum. If, for example, left-wing party positioning means that the rich should be taxed and money should be given to the poor, then left-wing party positioning leads to such redistributions. However, even this is not a necessary feature of the outlined theoretical model.

Thus, we can say that the theory of minimally victorious coalitions belongs to the concept of politics, in which the redistribution of “zero sums” is fundamental and in which any political ideologies may be completely absent. And this can be characterized as a policy of short-term goals and interests. Instead, the middle voter theorem, on the other hand, belongs to the concept of politics, in which positioning in the ideological spectrum is fundamental, and short-term interests may be completely absent. Therefore, in order to avoid misunderstandings, we take into account the fact that both types of understanding of the political process can manifest themselves in parallel and together, i.e. as different components in the same country or even situation. Therefore, government policy can be composed of both elements of interest and ideological elements.

As a consequence, to complete the analysis of the impact of the political context, we offer two examples of the analysis of government stability. The first example is parliamentary democracy, which is characterized by a majority electoral system and, as a consequence, a bipartisan party system. That is why any hypothetical country of this type traditionally has one-party government cabinets. In addition, it can be assumed that the policy considered by the political parties of such a country will be represented by the ideological left-right spectrum. In this way, we will deal with ideological policy. We also assume that the policies of both parties, according to the middle voter theorem, will be close to the middle position of the voters. This means that the left party will support the policy proposed by its right wing, and that the right party will, accordingly, pursue the policy of its own left wing. The main reason for this phenomenon is that the middle position of voters is the middle position of all voters, and therefore in this specific sense, all voters are interested in the outcome of the formation of the government cabinet. That is why one-party majority governments that pursue the policy of the middle voter can be considered to be the most stable in the sample.

The features, patterns, and frameworks of the first example are represented by bipartisan systems, one-party governments, the spectrum of the spatial model, and the policies of the middle voter. Interestingly, some or all of these attributes occur in several basic investigations

in this regard. Thus, G. Hotelling in 1929 in his work “Stability in Competition”<sup>27</sup> showed that competing political parties, at least when there are only two, tend to keep positions very close to each other in the middle of the political spectrum. Thus, for example, the contest for votes between Republicans and Democrats in the United States does not lead to the construction of outright problems, accepted by two opposing provisions of the spectrum, between which the voter must decide. Instead, each party seeks, as far as possible, to make its platform the same as the others.

In turn, E. Schattschneider in 1942 in a study “Party Government”<sup>28</sup> argued that the two-party system brings to power moderate political parties: “When every political actor stops to consider the number of opinions devoted to efforts to protect people against unjustified oppression, it is difficult to imagine anything more important than the tendency of parties to avoid emergency politics: liberals and conservatives tend to shift to the center of the political spectrum, that is, they seek to be ideologically similar.” Therefore, accordingly, the inclusion of parties with the representation of the interests of middle voters in the government cabinet undoubtedly stabilizes the latter. In addition, W. Kay in his work “Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups”<sup>29</sup> stressed that “the party leadership seeks to maintain and ensure its own loyalty; it is interested in large blocks of voters, neutral to any party. These influences tend to draw the party leadership from consolidating it in comparison with the center. That’s why party appeals often seem very similar.” Interestingly, in this context, A. Leiphart speaks of three models of majority – Great Britain, New Zealand and Barbados – and notes that the main parties here are usually not very far from each other in their policy perspectives, because they tend to mix closely to the political center. In addition, the researcher emphasizes that the policy of such countries is largely described within the structure of a one-dimensional spatial political model. Therefore, the limit of the influence of two-party systems is that they tend to be one-dimensional party systems. That is, the programs and policies of the main parties usually differ mainly only on the basis of one dimension of understanding of politics.

In contrast, the second example is a parliamentary democracy with proportional elections (proportional electoral system) and a multiparty system as a consequence of the type of parliamentary elections. The multi-party system, in turn, means that the country usually has coalition government cabinets. In addition, we assume that the agreement underlying the formation of each new government cabinet is essentially in support of a mutual political interest. Each member of the political party of the government cabinet thus promises other members to support their interests instead of supporting their own interests. If so, we are dealing with a policy of interests to which the theorem of minimally victorious coalitions can be applied. Therefore, we have a typical majority situation: the majority, represented by the

<sup>27</sup> Hotelling H., Stability in Competition, *“The Economic Journal”* 1929, vol 39, nr 153, s. 41–57.

<sup>28</sup> Schattschneider E., *Party Government*, Wyd. Rinehart 1942, s. 85.

<sup>29</sup> Key V., *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, Wyd. Thomas Y. Crowell Company 1964, s. 220.

government cabinet, satisfies its own interests at the expense of an external minority, which is exploited by the majority in the cabinet.

However, we do not argue that the features of these two examples are necessary consequences of majority systems with one-party government cabinets and proportional electoral systems with coalition government cabinets, respectively. We insist, however, that such two cases are quite possible, and that this possibility has important implications for Leiphart's thesis on the logical connections between institutionalized features and the principles of majority and coalition, regardless of the positions of party or state leaders on such issues. In addition, various scholars offer arguments in favor of such considerations. If the situation described in the first example is possible, and it is, then the elections of the majority and the coalition can obviously coexist. But if such coexistence is possible, then: majority elections imply the principle of majority, and the coalition agreement implies proportional elections. Similarly, if the situation in the second example is possible, proportional elections and majoritarianism can coexist. And if so, then: proportional elections mean consensus, and majority means majority elections.

The formation of overly victorious coalition government cabinets is also considered quite interesting from the point of view of ensuring government stability. One of the reasons for the redundancy of government coalitions is the desire to guarantee "reasonable security" for the status of victorious cabinets when some political parties or political actors in general are not considered completely reliable. Such "coalition-government security" can be achieved by including one or more additional parties in the parliamentary and governmental majority. Interestingly, this type of government is not a mechanism that leads to a large size of government coalitions, but rather a way to ensure a mostly minimal-winning status in the case of really uncertain institutional conditions and contexts. Another reason for the emergence of overly victorious (over) government cabinets is the existence of external threats, such as from hostile countries or blocs, or internal threats, such as anti-democratic movements. This argument is usually valid in the sense that dangers of this nature can give rise to government cabinets with much broader support than is permissible as a result of "minimal victory" in parliaments. However, such arguments are not always of significant interest. First, situations in which redundant government cabinets occur can in fact be interpreted as a confirmation of the idea of minimally victorious coalitions. If a formally minimally victorious government cabinet is threatened by "dangers", it means that there is in fact a "game" that is broader in the political spectrum than normal decision-making in the legislature and that includes many actors involved in this "game". Given the existence of a broad coalition "game", a government cabinet that is normally redundant may in fact be a minimally victorious coalition, especially if there are insufficient resources to form even a minimally victorious cabinet. Thus, it is quite possible to interpret the situations described in full agreement with V. Riker's theory of coalitions. Second, the argument of the importance of redundant government cabinets

can be ignored because it has very limited expediency, as “threat” situations of the nature described above are considered exceptional. Another reason for the formation of overly victorious coalition government cabinets, which was proposed by A. Leiphart, is the existence of specific institutionalized conditions, which, for example, are illustrated by Colombia and Belgium. Such specific conditions generally require that some parties and groups be represented in the cabinet. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are large. It is true that cabinets are probably larger than in other countries, but such cases are only a reflection of constitutional or institutional rules. Interestingly, the notion of a minimum victory, as defined above, is related to the constitutional rules and norms by which a government cabinet is usually supported by a simple / relative majority to become a form of a minimum victory (albeit if it is similar to a surplus coalition). The same conclusion can be drawn for countries that require an absolute majority for certain important decisions. Therefore, what we are seeing is not necessarily a large size of cabinets, but only an adaptation to the serious rules of forming minimally victorious government cabinets. The purpose of the constitutional rules is to reach a certain agreement and ensure political credibility and expediency.

Leiphart promotes another reason for the redundancy of government cabinets, or rather the desire of each political party to take a position in the middle of the government cabinet and thus strengthen its own position (government power). In fact, the advantage of party policy can be considerable: instead of minimizing the size and range of coalitions, it can increase them. Each political party naturally prefers to form a government cabinet that follows a policy close to its own advantage; and the cabinets in which parties of approximately equal weight participate on both the left and right flanks of the ideological spectrum are ideal in this respect. However, the scientific legitimacy of such an argument can also be questioned: since W. Riker’s basic prediction about minimally victorious coalitions is obtained within the framework of a theoretical structural “game”, the arguments about the large rather than the minimum size of victory formed within this structure seem logical. Suppose, for example, that we are dealing with a situation in which six parties (A-F) are characterized by a position in the left-right spectrum, and the number of their shares in the legislature of 100 seats for each party. Now, imagine that there is a government that consists of parties B, C and D and pursues a policy of P. Suppose that party D is dissatisfied with this policy and tries to move it to the right side of the ideological spectrum, choosing party E in the cabinet. Of course, this situation is attractive for E, because the policy to the right of P is better for E than policy of P. For other parties, however, the situation is different. Thus, for parties B and C, which are members of the primary / initial cabinet, right-wing policy regulation is a positional deterioration, and therefore these parties are unlikely to support D in its efforts to attract E to the cabinet. In fact, it seems that any proposal to change the composition of the government cabinet faces some difficulties and that the composition of the cabinet, having members B, C and D, is not reliable. But this situation is refuted by the impossibility of explaining the

coalition government cabinet within the structure of a one-dimensional spatial model – a certain “impossibility of ideological leaders of the coalition.” And it is this feature that must be taken into account in the consideration of coalition government cabinets in our analysis<sup>30</sup>.

Separately, we also try to analyze the government cabinets of the minority. In the domestic social science and political science literature, we have not come across a thorough analysis of minority governments. However, despite the formal paradox of their existence and the prospect of stability, minority governments during the postwar period were actively formed and functioned and continue to do so in many countries of Western and Central and Eastern Europe. For example, between 1945 and 1987, researchers M. Gallagher, M. Laver, and P. Meyer counted seventy-one minority governments in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, and Sweden<sup>31</sup>. Today, in these countries, they continue to take shape and in some even constitute an absolute majority of all types of government. As for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, this is especially true for Romania, where minority governments predominate. Also in this region, minority governments are specific to almost every country. This is clearly evidenced by the statistics on the basis of table 3, in particular as of 2016.

<sup>30</sup> Moberg E., *The Expanding Public Sector – A Threat to Democracy?*, [w:] Eliasson G., Karlson N. (eds.), *The Limits of Government – On Policy Competence and Economic Growth*, Wyd. Transaction Publishers 1999.

<sup>31</sup> Gallagher M., Laver M., Mair P., *Representative Government in Western Europe*, McGraw-Hill Education 1992, s. 189.

**Table 3.** Classification and statistics of government cabinets in European parliamentary democracies (as of December 2016)<sup>32</sup>

Country	P	NP	OB	KB	OM	KM	MPK	HPK	NK	UNE	T/N	In total
<b>PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES OF WESTERN EUROPE</b>												
Austria (since November 1945)	34 (5)	–	4 (0)	28 (5)	1 (0)	1 (0)	26 (5)	2 (0)	15 (0)	1 (0)	–	34 (5)
Belgium (since March 1946)	46 (7)	–	3 (0)	36 (5)	2 (0)	5 (2)	18 (2)	18 (3)	4 (0)	–	–	46 (7)
Greece (since November 1974)	21 (2)	2 (2)	13 (0)	6 (2)	2 (0)	–	4 (0)	2 (2)	–	2 (2)	3 (3)	24 (5)
Denmark (since October 1945)	39 (0)	–	–	3 (0)	15 (0)	21 (0)	3 (0)	–	–	–	–	39 (0)
Ireland (since May 1944)	27 (0)	–	6 (0)	8 (0)	7 (0)	6 (0)	8 (0)	–	–	–	–	27 (0)
Iceland (since June 1946 p)	33 (3)	–	–	27 (0)	4 (2)	2 (1)	24 (0)	3 (0)	1 (0)	–	–	33 (3)
Spain (since June 1977)	15 (2)	–	4 (0)	–	11 (2)	–	–	–	–	–	–	15 (2)
Italy (since June 1946 p)	63 (1)	2 (0)	–	37 (0)	15 (1)	11 (0)	5 (0)	32 (0)	–	1 (0)	3 (3)	66 (4)
Luxembourg (since October 1945)	21 (1)	–	–	21 (1)	–	–	17 (1)	4 (0)	10 (0)	1 (0)	–	21 (1)
Malta (since February 1962)	15 (0)	–	14 (0)	–	1 (0)	–	–	–	–	–	–	15 (0)
Netherlands (since July 1946)	32 (9)	–	–	24 (2)	–	8 (7)	13 (2)	11 (0)	9 (0)	–	–	32 (9)
Germany (since September 1949)	25 (0)	–	–	25 (0)	–	–	21 (0)	4 (0)	3 (0)	–	–	25 (0)
Norway (since November 1945)	31 (1)	–	6 (0)	5 (0)	13 (0)	7 (1)	5 (0)	–	–	–	–	31 (1)
Portugal (since April 1975)	22 (3)	–	3 (0)	8 (0)	9 (3)	2 (0)	5 (0)	3 (0)	1 (0)	–	2 (1)	24 (4)
United Kingdom (1945)	26 (0)	–	22 (0)	1 (0)	3 (0)	–	1 (0)	–	–	–	–	26 (0)
Finland (since March 1945)	48 (1)	1 (0)	–	39 (1)	3 (0)	6 (0)	8 (1)	31 (0)	–	2 (0)	6 (6)	54 (7)
France (since November 1945)	65 (5)	7 (2)	1 (0)	53 (5)	7 (0)	4 (0)	12 (0)	41 (5)	–	–	–	65 (5)
Sweden (since September 1944)	31 (0)	–	2 (0)	6 (0)	19 (0)	4 (0)	6 (0)	–	–	–	–	31 (0)
In total, №	594 (40)	12 (4)	78 (0)	327 (21)	112 (8)	77 (11)	176 (11)	151 (10)	43 (0)	7 (2)	14 (13)	608 (53)
As a percentage (excluding acting governments) %	100	2,0	13,1	55,0	18,9	13,0	53,8	46,2	13,1	2,1	2,3	100
	100	2,0	100	100	100	100	100	100	7,2	1,2	2,3	100
												100
<b>PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES OF CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE</b>												
Bulgaria (since October 1990)	9 (2)	1 (1)	1 (0)	3 (0)	3 (1)	2 (1)	1 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)	–	4 (3)	13 (5)
Estonia (since September 1992)	16 (0)	–	–	12 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)	12 (0)	–	–	–	–	16 (0)
Latvia (since May 1990)	24 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)	14 (0)	–	9 (0)	10 (0)	4 (0)	–	–	–	24 (0)
Lithuania (since March 1990)	19 (1)	–	3 (1)	10 (0)	–	6 (0)	3 (0)	7 (0)	–	2 (0)	–	19 (1)
Poland (since June 1989)	21 (2)	–	1 (0)	14 (1)	3 (1)	3 (0)	9 (0)	5 (1)	–	1 (0)	–	21 (2)
												100
												100
												100

Romania (since May 1990 p)	21 (1)	4 (1)	1 (0)	6 (1)	4 (0)	10 (0)	1 (0)	5 (1)	1 (0)	–	1 (1)	22 (2)
Serbia (since January 2007)	5 (0)	–	–	5 (0)	–	–	5 (0)	–	–	–	–	5 (0)
Slovakia (since June 1990)	17 (1)	–	1 (0)	10 (0)	1 (0)	5 (1)	7 (0)	3 (0)	–	–	–	17 (1)
Slovenia (since April 1990)	16 (0)	–	–	12 (0)	–	4 (0)	10 (0)	2 (0)	–	–	–	16 (0)
Hungary (since April 1990)	11 (0)	1 (0)	–	9 (0)	2 (0)	–	3 (0)	6 (0)	–	–	–	11 (0)
Croatia (since January 2000)	11 (0)	–	–	5 (0)	2 (0)	4 (0)	3 (0)	2 (0)	–	–	–	11 (0)
Czech Republic (since June 1990)	14 (1)	2 (1)	–	9 (0)	2 (0)	3 (1)	8 (0)	1 (0)	–	–	2 (2)	16 (3)
Montenegro (since September 2006)	5 (0)	–	–	5 (0)	–	–	5 (0)	–	–	–	–	5 (0)
In total, №	189 (8)	10 (3)	8 (1)	114 (2)	19 (2)	48 (3)	77 (0)	37 (2)	2 (0)	3 (0)	7 (6)	196 (14)
As a percentage (excluding acting governments), %	100	5,3	4,2	60,3	10,1	25,4	67,5	32,5	1,8	2,6	3,6	100
	100	5,3		100			100		1,1	1,6	3,6	100
						96,4						3,6
<b>ALL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES</b>												
In total, №	783 (48)	22 (7)	86 (1)	441 (23)	131 (10)	125 (14)	253 (11)	188 (12)	45 (0)	10 (2)	21 (19)	804 (67)
γ As a percentage (excluding acting governments), %	100	2,8	11,0	56,3	16,7	16,0	57,4	42,6	10,2	2,3	2,6	100
	100	2,8		100			100		5,7	1,3	2,6	100
						97,4						2,6

32. Zdrojlo: Panchak-Bialoblotska N., *Uřady menshosti v yevropejskych parlamentskych demokratiakh*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2017, s. 51–52

32. Symbols: P - party governments; NP - semi-party governments; OB - one-party majority governments; KB - coalition governments of the majority; OM - one-party minority governments; KM - minority coalition governments; IPC - minimally victorious coalitions; NPK - surplus-victorious coalitions; VK - large coalitions; UNE - governments of national unity; T / N - technocratic / non-partisan governments. All types of government cabinets are counted together with acting cabinets (where they exist, the number of acting governments is given in parentheses). Large coalitions and governments (coalitions) of national unity are not distinctly introduced into counting the number of governments, as they are examples of minimally victorious or overly victorious coalitions. Therefore, they are presented exclusively in the perspective of the total number of coalition governments of the majority. Semi-party government cabinets are also not included in the calculation of the total number of governments, as they are atypical samples of party governments and are calculated on the basis of the classification of party governments. This means that such cabinets are calculated in relation to the total number of party governments in countries that are parliamentary democracies. In each country, the analysis of government cabinets was conducted from the date of the first post-war (after or at the end of World War II) and at the same time democratic parliamentary elections.

K. Strom, who specifically researched one-party government cabinets in parliamentary democracies, believes that the practice of such governments has shown that one-party minority government should be seen as a normal result of political competition because it is common in many Western European countries<sup>33</sup> and Central and Eastern European countries, etc. On the basis of the study, he concluded that the reason that determines the parties in the case of an alternative situation – the government or the opposition – to choose the opposition, due to the availability of opportunities to implement the party's course, supported by voters. The perception of this argument, as well as the political process in general in European countries, implies an appeal to the existing approaches to the essence of politics. Instead, the dominant approach in the Soviet Union and its satellites to politics as a relationship and activity aimed at gaining and retaining power very well reflected the understanding of politics by the communist parties. However, this approach does not make it possible to understand the motivation of the "opposition majority", which allows minorities to come to power and run the country. If we move away from this simplistic and vulgarized understanding of the essence of politics, and consider the basic paradigm of politics as the ability to defend the interests of certain groups and implement its own party program, it becomes clear that this program can be implemented from the opposition, not only from government offices mainly the majority.

Returning to the formation of minority governments, it should be noted that the consent of political parties represented in parliaments to form them may be based on the existence of ample opportunities for parliamentary committees and commissions to influence the domestic and international life of countries. Parties that have their own party factions in parliaments can focus their influence on the activities of parliamentary commissions. G. Luebert<sup>34</sup> drew attention to another factor that determines the existence of minority governments. In particular, he linked the frequency of their formation to the activities of interest groups in countries where corporatism was widespread. Given that political parties have good relations with interest groups, these groups can put pressure on the government and obtain the desired results, while adhering to the positions formally stated in the party declarations. Thus, according to G. Luebert, the Social Democratic parties use trade unions in a similar way; bourgeois parties – federations of owners' entrepreneurs; agrarian parties – farmers' organizations. This factor of G. Luebert certainly should not be considered as self-sufficient, but only in interaction with other factors. That is, parties that elect the opposition, having a majority in parliament, are aware that they can influence the political development of the state both through formal legislative institutions and through informal mechanisms of political pressure.

Finally, the third factor that explains the existence of minority governments is cited by M. Laver and N. Schofield<sup>35</sup>. According to them, the nature of relations between political

<sup>33</sup> Strom K., *Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality on Non-winning Cabinet Solutions*, "Comparative political Studies" 1984, vol 17, nr 2, s. 212–215.

<sup>34</sup> Luebbert G., *Comparative Democracy: Policy Making and Governing Coalitions in Europe and Israel*, Wyd. Columbia University Press 1986.

<sup>35</sup> Laver M., Schofield N., *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Western Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1990.



parties plays an important role in the formation of minority governments. From this point of view, minority governments are possible provided that there are special, mostly competitive, relationships between parties that can hypothetically constitute a majority. As a result, granting the right to form a minority government to one party will be less evil for the other parties and they will be interested in maintaining the inter-party status quo. Under these conditions, this type of government can be quite viable and stable. In particular, this position is logical when the right to form a minority government is given to the centrist party, and the majority in parliament has parties that belong to different parts of the left-right party spectrum. It should be added that the majority of centrist parties in Europe are among the most powerful, which is reflected in the fact that they hold a significant percentage of deputies to the legislatures of their own countries. That is, the formation of a minority government becomes a natural way out of the situation, provided that there is confrontation between the parties in the parliament from ideological positions. Of course, the government in such a situation can be criticized for its actions on both sides, but ideological confrontation is a deterrent to uniting representatives of the ruling parties to overthrow the government. In such situations, on the contrary, there are many examples of blocking with the government to oppose its ideological opponent. Thus, minority government has become a traditional form of government in most European countries (see Table 3). The existence of this type of government is associated with the understanding of policy as an area of activity that aims to achieve and protect the interests of groups and implement their own program. The formation and existence of this type of government requires an appropriate level of political culture of the main political actors<sup>36</sup>.

In general, focusing on executive constraints within different types of democracies, mainly in European countries, we expect that minority governments, as forced cabinet structures, can be even longer than other types of governments. In this regard, S. Maoz and Russett, in particular in the study "Normative and Structural Causes of a Democratic World"<sup>37</sup>, believe that minority governments are not more limited than one-party governments and, as a result, should be less conflicted than majority governments.

B. Prince and K. Sprecker, in turn, disagreed with this theoretical statement in "Institutional Constraints, Political Opposition, and the Escalation of International Dispute: Evidence of the 1946-1989 Parliamentary Systems"<sup>38</sup> disagreed with this theoretical statement and argued that coalition-driven goals were more likely to be resisted when pressure on government cabinets increased. Thus, looking at the initiation of conflicts, we examine these competing statements and

<sup>36</sup> Romanyuk A., Uriady menshosti v systemi uriadiv krain Zakhidnoi Yevropy, "Visnyk Lvivskoho universytetu. Seriya: Filosofiki nauky" 2006, s. 88–94.

<sup>37</sup> Maoz Z., Russett B., Normative and structural causes of the democratic peace, 1946–1986, "American Political Science Review" 1993, vol 87, nr 3, s. 626.

<sup>38</sup> Prins B., Sprecher C., Institutional constraints, political opposition, and interstate dispute escalation: Evidence from parliamentary systems, 1946–1989, "Journal of Peace Research" 1999, vol 36, nr 3, s. 271–287.

hypothetically identify the majority or coalition governments of the majority as more dangerous in the escalation of institutional conflicts<sup>39</sup>.

In general, it can be stated that the relationship between the institutional features of the political process and governmental stability is mainly manifested in the correlation of the stability of different types of government cabinets within different institutional designs and different reasons for the formation and functioning of such governments. However, at the same time, this issue is inevitably supplemented and deepened due to the fact that the change of government cabinets and their types has profound effects on democratic political behavior, because the formation of government is inevitably at the heart of any representative democracy.

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