



**Doctoral School of
International Relations
and Political Science**

SUMMARY

László Galambos

Technocratic Governments in Europe

Crisis and Blame Avoidance

Ph.D. dissertation

Supervisors:

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Department of Political Sciences

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1. Research topic

The topic of technocratic governments had been belonged to the neglected issues of political science until the global financial and economic crisis drew the scholars' attention to it (Pastorella, 2013), as several so-called technocratic governments had been formed by reason of crisis. An economic crisis can also be featured as a political crisis, particularly if the political parties want to sort it out by ostensibly non-partisan cabinets. The phenomenon cannot be considered as a novelty, because so-called technocratic governments have been established in European countries since the end of World War II due to economic and political deadlocks.

Case studies in political science had dealt with technocratic and non-partisan governments before (Gianetti, 2013; Hanley, 2013; Pasquino & Valbruzzi, 2012). As the topic became more current in the international discourse and literature, papers have been written about the definition, the typology (McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014), and the genesis of technocratic (or technocrat-led) governments (Brunclík, 2015; Brunclík & Parízek, 2019; Pastorella, 2014, 2016b; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018) in comparative perspective as well, in order to understand why these cabinets have been formed. So, there has been an increased academic interest finding patterns between these cases.

In the Hungarian political science literature, I have elaborated the topic in comparative perspective (Galambos, 2018), and we have written a case study about the Bajnai cabinet with Éva Ványi (Ványi & Galambos, 2019). Notwithstanding, more and more studies have been dealing with technocracy (Beiser-McGrath et al., 2022; Bertsou & Caramani, 2020, 2022) and the topic of technocratic ministers (Alexiadou & Gunaydin & Spaniel, 2021; Costa Pinto & Cotta & Tavares de Almeida, 2018), but the definition and criteria of technocratic government have become uncertain or softened.

Systematic works on technocratic governments define them as a dichotomy of party government and technocratic government (e.g. McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014), but the label of technocratic government and the related ones (technocrat-led government) have been applied in rather confusing ways. Therefore, using the same notion for labelling different cabinets can also be problematic (Morlino, 2012). Most of the scholars apply the notion of technocratic government or technocrat-led government, but these cabinets differ from each other. Hence, the notion needs to be define accurately.

The essential problem is that most of the scholars intend to build robust models by more and more cases (McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014; Pastorella, 2016b; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018), thus they usually have to soften the originally strict criteria. Pastorella elaborated the

technocratic governments in her previous studies (Pastorella, 2013, 2014), but in her latter ones (Pastorella, 2016b; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018) she analysed only the technocrat-led cabinets. McDonnell & Valbruzzi (2014) created strict criteria for full technocratic governments, but in their typology differentiated between the cabinets only by composition and remit. In my opinion, we have to take into consideration other factors as well defining technocratic governments. Instead of building robust models, I would like to use precise notions identifying the real technocratic cases. From the so-called technocratic governments only a few cabinets can be labelled as full technocratic ones, where the prime minister has autonomy against the parties, in order select technocratic ministers and set his or her own (politically neutral) agenda.

Besides, the topic of technocratic government is not just a technical problem of selecting technocrats or party politicians to the cabinet. As argued by the academic literature technocratic government is a crisis phenomenon (Brunclík, 2015; Brunclík & Parízek, 2019; Gyulai, 2010; Morlino, 2012; Pastorella, 2014, 2016a, 2016b; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018). Literature claims that technocratic cabinets have been formed due to *political* (party failure – Brunclík, 2015; fragmented party system – Pastorella, 2014; blame-avoidance strategies – Alexiadou & Gunaydin, 2014; Zulianello, 2013) and *economic context* (economic crisis – Brunclík, 2015; Pastorella, 2014) and *institutional features* (position and power of head of state – Brunclík, 2015; Fabbri, 2015; Morlino, 2012). As a crisis phenomenon with non-elected (non-partisan) technocrats, the existence of this kind of cabinet has a serious theoretical aspect. Representative democracy is based upon party competition and party government, and the parties constitute the linkage between the voters and the government in it (Bergman & Ecker & Müller, 2013; Caramani, 2017; Frogner, 2000; Katz, 1987; Mair, 2009). Every government is political as a matter of course (Morlino, 2012), but political events and reality warn that we have to distinguish a technocratic government from a party government. As the parties constitute the linkage between the voters and the government in modern representative democracies what explains that technocratic governments have been formed in them? Are the technocratic governments compatible with representative democracy? Hence, we need argue what kind of legitimacy a non-elected (non-partisan) cabinet has in representative democracy.

The position of a technocratic government is not anti-political but non-partisan, and the technocratic cabinets are called in a moment of crisis for solving the democratic crisis as well as acting and governing instead of the parties (Morlino, 2012). When political parties decide that they do not want to govern (Zulianello, 2013), a blame avoidance (Weaver, 1986) occurs. If an action needs to happen, but there is no legal or constitutional form to sort the problem out, a technocratic government can be that actor. It means need to act politically managing the crisis,

so the technocratic government is a kind of political but non-partisan solution of it (Morlino, 2012). Though the technocratic government does not have support from the voters, but constitutional and political institutions (head of state, parliament) ensure its appointment and support.

The principles of party government are responsiveness, accountability, and responsibility (Mair, 2009). A technocratic government can neither be responsive, nor accountable, but perhaps this cabinet can only be responsible in a crisis (McDonnell, 2012). Consequently, a technocratic government is not unconstitutional, but not democratic, and cannot be seemed as an alternative form of partisan representation, because it cannot act up to the democratic principles of party government. In addition, the technocratic cabinets has to be distinguished according to its function from others government types. Therefore, not just from the (elected) party government (with political profile), but from the (also elected) managerial government (with technical issues) either.

In conclusion, the technocratic government is a crisis phenomenon and the notion is cited wrongly as non-political, because it means non-partisan. This type of cabinets can be formed when parties empower non-partisan technocrats for governance avoiding their own blame for it. For this reason, the technocratic government differs from the party government and the managerial government either.

In the first part of my dissertation on the basis of former research findings I aimed to accomplish the theoretical clarification of concepts for technocratic government on the one hand, and on the other hand I aimed to correct the existing typology of technocrat-led governments (by McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014) in comparative perspective via elaborating on particular cases. My purpose is not only complementing the typology by one or two criteria. The existing typology disregard relevant dimensions, therefore applying the notions and the criteria results a false typology.

The scholars usually seek for the boundary between the partisan and the technocratic government by counting the number of party politicians and technocrats in the cabinets (McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014; Pastorella, 2014). However, according to my thesis, the essence of a technocratic government does not depend on the proportion of technocrats and party politicians, but the technocratic prime minister's (temporary) autonomy from the political parties. Thus, I would like to rebuild McDonnell & Valbruzzi's notion of full technocratic government, because there are just a few cabinets that can be labelled this way. According to my *first main thesis*, technocratic governments tend to be formed by the blame avoidance of political parties. Compared to that, other aspects (like McDonnell & Valbruzzi's typology with

the composition and remit of cabinets) can be considered as necessary but not sufficient conditions in order to label a government as a full technocratic one. Indeed, between their full technocratic governments there are just a few cabinets where the prime minister is temporary autonomous due to the blame avoidance of parties. Consequently, those governments can be labelled as full technocratic cabinets where the prime minister has autonomy to select technocratic ministers and create an own politically neutral agenda due to the blame avoidance strategy of political parties.

Besides that, I analyse the presidents' role in the genesis of technocratic governments, because the literature (Brunclík, 2015, 2017; Morlino, 2012; Pastorella, 2014, 2016b) highlights their role in the formation of technocratic cabinets, sometimes by calling them as presidential governments. It is important to study their roles, because if we label a cabinet this way, we suppose that the head of state is sovereign in the government, and by accepting that we cannot speak about the prime minister's autonomy.

Another under-developed issue in the literature is the reselection of technocratic prime ministers. By examining it, I would like to reflect on an important problem, i.e. the relation between technocracy and party government. Can the technocratic image rival with partisan representation (and the technocratic government with party government)? (Caramani, 2017; Hanley, 2018). The technocratic government and technocracy are not only interesting phenomena per se, actually reflect on the problem of party government's crisis. The challenges of party government can be explained by the parties' transformation, i.e. the cartel party (Katz & Mair, 2001) and by the governance's transformation with new tasks and new actors (Mair, 2009). These processes entail the weakening of demands for party government (responsiveness, responsibility, accountability) and increase the tension between them (Mair, 2009). The problem tends to arise, if the political parties cannot balance between these demands and try to avoid the accountability for austerity measures in crisis momentums. In these moments, the technocrats can undertake the responsible governance instead of the parties, without the demands of responsiveness and accountability. It is the theoretical framework that I would like to present in the dissertation. My *second main thesis* is about the crisis of political parties. I assert it is only a temporary crisis, because democracy and governance stay the partisan way. It can also be illustrated by the reselection of technocratic prime ministers. Thus, the dissertation deals with two main topics and tries to verify two main theses that relate to each other. The first is about the technocratic governments and the blame avoidance of the parties, and the other one is about the temporary crisis of party government and its relationship with the technocratic governments.

2. Methods

2.1. Applied Methods

In the empirical chapters of my dissertation, I apply qualitative methods, i.e. comparative case studies. The case selection is based on the criteria of the already applied typology (by McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014) and the similarities of cases (*Most Similar Systems Designs*). The necessity of using qualitative methods can be verified by the insufficient findings of (large-N cross-national) quantitative analyses (Pastorella, 2016b; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018) about the full technocratic governments. Therefore, I apply comparative but qualitative studies (Eisenhardt, 1989; Gyene, 2015; Horváth & Mitev, 2015; Ragin, 1989; Takács, 2017). My inquiries are based upon the analyses of secondary sources of the literature, relevant press and media sources, the databases of Keesing's – World News Archive and Hungarian Telegraphic Office, and also the Comparative Political Data Set 1960–2018 (Armingeon et al., 2020).

By the case studies, I mainly focus on institutions, structures, events, and processes that induce political and institutional changes. Instead of a few quantitative variables, I applied in-depth case studies. Case study method uses a contextual description for complex explanation of limited numbers of events and their circumstances, moreover verifying and creating new theories by this method can also be carried out (Horváth & Mitev, 2015: 129–131). It is worth using case studies for designing new theories when the existing theories cannot be applicable for explanation (Eisenhardt, 1989). Applying comparative method needs to keep in mind the 'few cases, many variables' anomaly (Gyene, 2015: 26). Those scholars who created typology or applied statistical analysis increased the number of cases sorting this problem out (McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014; Pastorella, 2016b; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018). However, they softened the criteria of technocratic government, and it has resulted a bigger set of technocrat-led governments but a loss of relevant information. In order to identify the relevant cases, i.e. the real technocratic cabinets (full technocratic governments), I cannot use statistical methods but comparative case-centred studies. This comparative method is able to explore historical causes, testing hypotheses, creating complex explanations or typologies by a holistic approach and a deductive logic (Ragin, 1989: 15–45).

2.2. Case selection

I intend to find those cabinets between the so-called full technocratic governments (by McDonnell & Valbruzzi's minimalist criteria) that match to my modified criteria. McDonnell and Valbruzzi differentiated between the cabinets by composition and remit, but their

identifying of full technocratic governments is only based upon these features. In my opinion, their three features (1. the prime minister is a technocrat, 2. the majority of ministers are technocrats, 3. the cabinet has a mandate to change the status quo) are not sufficient to label a cabinet as a full technocratic government. McDonnell and Valbruzzi did not deal with those factors that determine the genesis of full technocratic governments. Their three features are the consequences of those factors that determine the creation of a full technocratic cabinet. According to my hypotheses, the parties' blame avoidance strategy, the necessity of a grand coalition, and the contribution of a proactive head of state can result the formation of a full technocratic government. I am looking for the relevant cases (in McDonnell and Valbruzzi's technocrat-led cabinet list) and intend to test my hypotheses on them.

The technocrat-led governments have usually been formed due to crises, political, institutional features or changes, and the 'technocratic streams' connected to certain periods or phenomena. In Finland and Portugal, the appointments of technocratic prime ministers tended to be in line with the power of head of states under the presidency of Urho Kekkonen and António Ramalho Eanes (Szilágyi, 2005). In Greece, the constitution (Article 37.3) allows to the head of state appointing the president of the Supreme Administrative Court or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court or of the Court of Auditors to form a caretaker cabinet in case of a deadlock in cabinet formation. In Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and in the so-called Second Republic in Italy, in the early 1990's a technocratic stream can be observed due to the regime changes and the under-institutionalized party systems. The economic crisis (after 2008) caused another stream. In the most countries, we cannot only speak about particular cases, because the technocrat-led crisis management have been become an accepted practice. Thus, I am seeking those cabinets that can be labelled as full technocratic governments between 30 technocrat-led ones in nine EU member states after 1945 (*Table 1*).

I created a technocratic government criteria based on the literature (Gyulai, 2010; McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014; Morlino, 2012; Pastorella, 2014; Protsyk, 2005). According to that, a technocratic government is 1. non-elected; 2. it has a temporary (but not caretaker) mandate; 3. non-partisan cabinet with technocratic ministers who 4. are not selected by parties; and 5. it has politically neutral agenda. I am looking for those cabinets that can be labelled by these criteria and I take into account 1. the circumstances of the cabinet formation; 2. the mandate and the agenda; 3. the composition and the selection of ministers; and 4. the presidents' role in the cabinet formation. The units of analysis are the governments (not the cabinet members). The population consists of the technocrat-led governments in the current EU member states (N=30), and it comes from McDonnell and Valbruzzi's modified cabinet list (by

Comparative Political Data Set 1960–2018 – Armingeon et al., 2020). I take a sample from that: those cabinets that are labelled as full technocratic governments by McDonnell and Valbruzzi's criteria and those (two) technocrat-led governments that can be relevant from the perspective of technocratic governments' evolution. So my sample is from nine cabinets (n=9): Berov, Văcăroiu, Cioloș, Tošovský, Fischer, Ciampi, Dini, Monti, Bajnai.

Table 1. Technocrat-led governments in the European Union, 1945–2022

Member State		Prime minister	Period in office	Days in office	Technocratic ministers (%)
Austria	1	Bierlein	3 June 2019 – 7 Jan. 2020	219	100
Bulgaria	4	Berov	30 Dec. 1992 – 17 Oct. 1994	656	80
		Indzhova	18 Oct. 1994 – 25 Jan. 1995	99	100
		Raykov	13 March 2013 – 29 May 2013	77	100
		Bliznashki	6 Aug. 2014 – 7 Nov. 2014	93	100
Czech Republic	3	Tošovský	1 Jan. 1998 – 22 July 1998	203	38
		Fischer	8 May 2009 – 13 July 2010	431	100
		Rusnok	10 July 2013 – 29 Jan. 2014	204	93
Finland	3	Von Fieandt	29 Nov. 1957 – 18 Apr. 1958	140	100
		Lehto	18 Dec. 1963 – 12 Sept. 1964	269	100
		Liinamaa	13 June 1975 – 21 Sept. 1975	100	100
Greece	6	Grivas	12 Oct. 1989 – 23 Nov. 1989	40	76
		Zolotas I	23 Nov. 1989 – 13 Feb. 1990	82	32
		Zolotas II	13 Feb. 1990 – 11 Apr. 1990	57	68
		Papademos	11 Nov. 2011 – 16 May 2012	187	17
		Pikrammenos	16 May 2012 – 17 June 2012	31	100
		Thanou	27 Aug. 2015 – 21 Sept. 2015	26	79
Hungary	1	Bajnai	14 Apr. 2009 – 14 May 2010	395	50
Italy	4	Ciampi	29 Apr. 1993 – 10 May 1994	376	44
		Dini	17 Jan. 1995 – 17 May 1996	486	100
		Monti	16 Nov. 2011 – 27 Apr. 2013	528	100
		Draghi	13 Feb. 2021 – till now		38
Portugal	2	Nobre da Costa	29 Aug. 1978 – 22 Nov. 1978	86	100
		Pintasilgo	31 July 1979 – 3 Jan. 1980	157	100
Romania	6	Stolojan	16 Oct. 1991 – 27 Sept. 1992	347	10
		Văcăroiu I	13 Nov. 1992 – 18 Aug. 1994	644	50
		Văcăroiu II	19 Aug. 1994 – 1 Sept. 1996	745	32
		Văcăroiu III	2 Sept. 1996 – 3 Nov. 1996	101	41
		Isărescu	21 Nov. 1999 – 26 Nov. 2000	373	5
		Cioloș	17 Nov. 2015 – 4 Jan. 2017	415	100
Total	30				

Source: McDonnell & Valbruzzi's (2014) modified (Armingeon et al., 2020) table

Consequently, I selected those cabinets that are categorised as full technocratic governments by McDonnell and Valbruzzi and some other ones that resemble to them in some regards. I listed the Ciołoş cabinet as a new one, because it can be labelled as a full technocratic government by their minimalist criteria. I selected the Ciampi and the Tošovský cabinets as well. The analysis of Ciampi government can help to understand the creation of Dini and Monti cabinets as a predecessor of them, and the Tošovský government was much less constrained by party influence as Tošovský was to a large extent autonomous in contrast with Fischer cabinet (the latter one is also labelled as a full technocratic government by McDonnell and Valbruzzi).

The technocratic cabinets sometimes are mentioned as presidential governments in the literature because of the presidents' proactivity (Brunclík, 2017; Morlino, 2012). In the dissertation, I analyse these issues in comparative perspective by elaborating Giorgio Napolitano's and Miloš Zeman's presidency, because the Monti and Rusnok cabinets are also labelled as presidential governments. I apply comparative case study (Most Similar Systems Design) about the presidential activity under crisis momentums that causes the creation of technocrat-led governments. I compare Napolitano's and Zeman's activity for approving and sustaining technocrat-led governments as critical cases. Selecting a critical case is a kind of procedure when we choose a case that is the most typical one according to the theory's prediction, but we will prove that it does not verify the given theory (Takács, 2017: 128). Napolitano's and Zeman's activity can be considered as critical cases, because according to the literature these cabinets (Monti and Rusnok) are typical cases of presidential governments (Brunclík, 2017; Morlino, 2012), and I am about to prove that they can not be labelled that way.

For the comparison, it needs to highlight the similarities of the Czech and the Italian political systems in historical and institutional perspective:

1. There are parliamentary systems in both countries;
2. A regime change happened in both countries in the early 1990's. The Czech Republic was born in 1993, and the so-called Second Republic in Italy with a new party system was born in 1994.
3. A high prevalence of government crisis can be observed in both countries because of the volatile party systems. Therefore, the Italian and the Czech presidents have been relevant actors in the politics since the 1990's (Bin, 2013; Grimaldi, 2011; Hamberger, 2013; Tebaldi, 2014);
4. Technocratic governments have been formed in both countries since the 1990's, and the presidents have contributed in the cabinet formation or in the triggering of government crises (Galambos, 2016).

Referring to the reselection, I am looking for those technocratic prime ministers who tried to gain new political positions in elections or by an appointment. I examine the 1960–2022's period, the population consists of the prime ministers of technocrat-led governments in the current EU member states (N=26). So, the units of analysis are the prime ministers, not the governments. Furthermore, there are prime ministers who intended to gain positions as independents but unsuccessfully (Pintasilgo, Indzhova, Isărescu, *Monti*, *Bajnai*, *Fischer*, and *Cioloş*). In the last four cases, I am about to present the causes of the failure taking into consideration 1. their aims; 2. their chances and support; 3. who were their supporters; 4. their results and causes of their failure; and 5. any further attempt to gain a political position and its result. The comparison is based upon that all of these prime ministers had received the mandate to change the status quo before and their reselections happened in the 2010's, after the global economic crisis (not in the period of party systems' consolidation).

3. Main findings

3.1. Ideal types of governments

I intended to present a complex view about the interpretations of technocratic government from Hungarian and European perspectives. I have elaborated the literature of the topic and I have done empirical researches with reflections on the statements of literature and by correcting the existing typology. Technocratic government is a crisis phenomenon, the result of a temporary crisis of political parties. I interpreted the creations of technocratic cabinets as a blame avoidance strategy by parties in crisis momentums when they shift the blame for governance to a technocratic prime minister. In consequence of that, the new head of government becomes temporarily autonomous, he or she is able to select technocratic ministers and set his or her own politically neutral agenda. Hence, the ideal type of technocratic government differs from the ideal-typical party governments and managerial government (*Table 2*).

The members of party government are selected by political parties, and the cabinet operates by political governance with a partisan agenda. It can be formed by normal circumstances, and it has legitimacy and authorisation from the voters by a democratic parliamentary election. The majority of MP-s support it, and the cabinet aims to govern to the end of parliamentary term. It is responsive to the voters, governs responsibly according to the domestic and international agreements, and it is accountable for its actions by the parliament and the voters (in an election). It is able to govern by the prime ministerial government, the ministerial government, and the coalition compromise model as well.

Table 2. Ideal types of governments

Type of the cabinet	Party government	Managerial government	Technocratic government
Profile	political governance	technical governance	expert governance
Genesis	normal	normal	crisis
Mandate	full	full	temporary
Authorisation	voters and parliament	voters and parliament	parliament
Accountability	voters and parliament	voters and parliament	parliament
Responsiveness	responsive	responsive	irresponsive
Responsibility	responsible	responsible	responsible
Agenda	partisan	partisan / neutral	neutral
Composition	partisan	partisan / technocratic	technocratic
Selection of ministers	parties	parties	technocratic prime minister
Legitimacy	democratic	democratic	meritocratic
Governance model	min. / pr. min. / coalition compr.	ministerial	prime ministerial

Source: Designed by my own research

The managerial government can have a partisan and a politically neutral agenda as well, but it manoeuvres by technical governance. It is also supposed to be formed by normal circumstances, and it has legitimacy and authorisation from the voters by a democratic parliamentary election. The majority of MP-s support it, and the cabinet intends to govern to the end of the parliamentary term. It is featured by responsiveness to the voters, responsibility to its partners, and accountability by the parliament and the voters. The selection of ministers is based upon their expertise and the parties' approval. Hence, the cabinet members can be technocrats and politically experienced experts as well. The appropriate paradigm for this kind of governance is the ministerial government model, but it can be feasible in the coalition compromise model depending on the autonomy of ministers.

The technocratic government can be formed in a crisis situation with a temporary mandate, and it begins a new government term during the legislative period by the authorisation of parties but without of voters. According to its profile, it is an expert government. The technocratic prime minister selects technocratic ministers and creates an own politically neutral agenda. It is featured by the prime ministerial government model, and the head of cabinet has autonomy from the (supportive) political parties temporarily. It governs according to the domestic and international agreements responsibly, but it is irresponsive to the voters' requirements and accountable for its acts only by the parliament. The cabinet's legitimacy is based upon the ministers' expertise, so it has no democratic but meritocratic elements.

3.2. Cases of full technocratic governments

The full technocratic cabinets are close to the ideal-typical technocratic governments. We can say that a full technocratic government is *non-elected*, and it can be formed by a *temporary mandate* when the parties *avoid the blame* for governance and shift it to a technocratic prime minister. The head of government becomes *autonomous*, he or she can *select technocratic ministers* and create an own politically *neutral agenda*. The temporary mandate is a relevant feature of the government, because lacking of it the cabinet becomes a partisan government. The prime minister's autonomy is also a crucial element of the cabinet, but there is no necessary to a grand coalition gaining a new majority from the both sides of aisle (*Table 3*). If the head of state or the parties involve into the governance by selecting ministers or creating an agenda, we cannot speak about a blame avoidance strategy and a full technocratic government (Galambos, 2018: 71).

Table 3. Cases of full technocratic governments

Cabinet	Non-elected	Temporary mandate	Blame avoidance	Autonomous technocratic premier	Technocratic ministers	Neutral agenda	Active president	Grand coalition
Dini	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Monti	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cioloș	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Berov	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Văcăroiu	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Ciampi	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Tošovský	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Fischer	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Bájnai	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

1 – Yes, 0 – No

Source: Designed by my own research

The Berov cabinet cannot be labelled as a full technocratic government. It was non-elected and it had politically neutral agenda, but its mandate was not supposed to end before the parliamentary cycle terminates. Most of the ministers were just ostensibly independents and the prime minister had no autonomy.

Neither the Văcăroiu government can be considered as a full technocratic cabinet. It was formed after the parliamentary election in 1992, but not by its result. The government's mandate

was not temporary, because the prime minister established three cabinets during the parliamentary term, but he had not autonomy in the ministerial selection and the agenda setting.

Cioloș was non-elected and his cabinet's mandate was temporary. The parties avoided the blame for governance, so he had autonomy in the ministerial selection, whereby every cabinet member could be independent and Cioloș could create an own neutral agenda. As a matter of fact, the Cioloș cabinet was the first full technocratic government in Romania.

The Tošovský cabinet was not formed by an election, and it had a temporary mandate with a politically neutral agenda. However, the government was composed mostly of party politicians, it did not happen a blame avoidance action, and it was not a full technocratic cabinet, just a caretaker government. Nevertheless, compared to the Fischer cabinet, Tošovský had greater autonomy in his own government. Fischer's cabinet was non-elected, it had a temporary mandate and a politically neutral agenda, but actually it was a grand coalition between the parties. So they did not shift the blame, Fischer could not select his own ministers, because the parties delegated them. Therefore, the Fischer government cannot be labelled as a full technocratic one.

The Ciampi cabinet was non-elected and it had a temporary mandate, but there was no blame avoidance, so it was not a full technocratic government. Albeit Ciampi was the first (non-elected, outsider) technocratic prime minister in the history of Italian Republic, so he could affect the future tendencies of selecting technocratic prime ministers and cabinets.

The Dini government was non-elected with a temporary mandate, and the prime minister had autonomy in the cabinet members' selection and in the (politically neutral) agenda setting. All ministers were technocrats in the government, so Dini's cabinet can be labelled as the first full technocratic government in Italy, but it was not supported by the both sides of aisle.

When Monti established his cabinet in the midst of crisis, the parties shifted the blame to him, so he had autonomy in the ministerial selection and in the agenda setting, therefore every cabinet member became a technocrat and the government had a politically neutral agenda. His government was the second full technocratic one in Italy, and it was supported by a grand coalition in the parliament. President Scalfaro and Napolitano played a crucial role in the technocratic government formation in Italy, and it generated debates about their contribution in them.

The Bajnai cabinet was non-elected and it has temporary mandate, but half of the cabinet was made up of party politicians, so there was no blame avoidance and Bajnai had no autonomy in the government formation. The cabinet has a politically neutral agenda by a crisis management program, but its policies did not deal with solely the crisis.

Between the analysed technocrat-led (so-called full technocratic governments by McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014) governments, the Dini, the Monti, and the Ciołoş cabinets can be labelled as full technocratic ones. In the other cases, the parties did not shift the blame to the prime minister, thereby he did not have autonomy to select technocratic cabinet members and create an own politically neutral agenda. In the cases of identified full technocratic governments, the head of state was proactive and facilitated the government building process, therefore these cases can be considered as presidential technocratic governments.

3.3. Technocratic governments and the president's role

The president's role can be crucial when needs to have consensus between the parties creating a non-partisan technocratic cabinet. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that in case of parliamentary systems this kind of presidential contribution is legitimate, if the parties are unable or unwilling to govern and avoid the blame for it. The presidents realise the party failure and intervene into the processes. Thus, it is not a kind of arbitrariness, they act according to the crisis' demands. Notwithstanding, technocratic cabinets sometimes are mentioned as presidential governments in the literature because of presidents' proactivity (Brunclík, 2017; Morlino, 2012). By my findings, technocratic cabinets cannot be labelled as presidential governments in parliamentary systems. The presidential activism is a result of temporary weakness of the parties, and the president intervenes as a crisis manager. However, the presidential acts need to be approved by the parties, and those can be rejected by them as well. Therefore, the correct label can be the presidential technocratic government for this type of cabinet, but 'presidential' refers to the technocratic and not to the government.

In my dissertation, I analysed these issues in comparative perspective by elaborating the presidency of Giorgio Napolitano and Miloš Zeman, because the Monti and the Rusnok cabinet were labelled as presidential governments. Napolitano's and Zeman's conception about crisis management by a technocratic government was not different from the usual practices in their countries. However, their roles, their motivation, and their behaviour differ from each other. In the Italian case, the parties accepted Napolitano's proactivity, and he could prevail due to the blame avoidance strategy of parties. In the Czech case, the parties refused Zeman's proactivity, because they wanted to find a solution on their own account. So, Napolitano tried to sort the crisis out, but Zeman deepened it better. Napolitano's acts were in accordance with the constitution, and his role corresponded to the triangle (Bin, 2013) and the accordion (Tebaldi, 2014) analogy. He extended his powers when the parties' functional incapacity paralysed the government by being incapable to obtain a new majority and create a new government,

eventually he assumed not just the role of ‘ruler’, but the role of guardian for the functioning of parliamentary system (Tebaldi, 2014: 564–577). By contrast, Zeman founded a so-called technocratic government from his loyalists on his own account, despite the parties’ will. However, the cabinet failed to win the parliamentary vote of confidence, thus the parliamentary systems have not been become a semi-presidential one by a presidential government.

In conclusion, the crisis management by a technocratic government with the surveillance of president can be considered legitimate when the parties tend to be incapable for governance by avoiding the blame for it. The parliamentary system will not become semi-presidential by that, the presidents just fulfil their constitutional duty by creating a consensus.

3.4. Reselection of technocratic prime ministers

The reselection of technocratic prime ministers had not been elaborated in comparative perspective before, therefore I aimed to make up the shortage. Numerous ex technocratic prime ministers took part in elections or appointed to new political positions, in contrast with the literature’s predictions (Blondel, 1991; Cotta, 2018). In the most cases, those technocratic prime ministers returned to the political arena who had received mandate to change the status quo before (and only a few ones who had just a caretaker administration). However, the rational, technocratic image and attitude did not seem successful against party politicians in an electoral situation. The tendencies of reselection demonstrate that the voters prefer party politicians rather than technocrats in elections. The case studies (Fischer, Monti, Bajnai, and Ciolos) show that the technocrats were defeated by party politicians when they tried to run as independent candidates with a technocratic image. The only way their reselections can be successful, if they accept the rules of the game in politics and try to build alliances, and also engage themselves to political actors or parties in order to gain new political positions (Galambos, 2013).

Therefore, the technocrats on their own cannot be considered as rivals of party politicians in competitive situations, albeit the technocratic reasoning can be present in the executive and in the decision-making processes. As against the literature claims (Caramani, 2017; Hanley, 2018), by technocracy can be considered as an alternative of representative democracy and party government, it has been found that representative democracy and party government will not be replaced by technocracy in elections. Thus, in accordance with Katz and Mair (2001), we cannot speak about the lasting crisis of party government.

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