

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**Technocratic Governments: Power, Expertise
and Crisis Politics in European Democracies**

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A thesis submitted to the European Institute of the London School of
Economics for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

London, February 2016

Declaration

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Statement of joint work

Chapter 3 is based on a paper co-authored with Christopher Wratil.
I contributed 50% of this work.

Acknowledgements

This doctoral thesis would have not been possible without the expert guidance of my two supervisors, Professor Sara Hobolt and Doctor Jonathan White. Each in their own way, they have been essential to the making of the thesis and my growth as an academic and as an individual.

I would also like to thank the Economic and Social Research Council for their generous financial support of my doctoral studies through their scholarship.

Friends and colleagues at the LSE have been a major part of my PhD life for three years, and I hope they will remain part of my life for years to come. Angelo, I am grateful for your patience with my hyperactivity and for the many crazy projects we shared together. Madalina, Paula, Pieter and Roch, thank you for being a reassuring presence in the PhD room. Eri, Thanasis, Abel and Ranj, I owe you some fun travelling and many stimulating discussions. A special thanks goes to the LSE100 crew, which made university teaching an enjoyable collegiate experience. All other European Institute doctoral students, from old and new cohorts, have also been a key component of my time at the LSE, sharing the ups and downs of PhD life: Mireia, Fabio, Marina, Chrysa, Sarah, Lukas, Lise, Toni, Sonja and many others.

It was great to work with co-author Chris. While not always in agreement, I found our collaborative efforts very fruitful.

My family deserves a special, big thank you. Mamma, Papà, Gillo and Otti believed in me, and accepted that I would be studying ‘just another year’... for several years.

I am extremely grateful to Marie, who put up with a moody version of myself for (too) many months. Thank you for your patience and, most importantly, love.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandma Deda and to Professor Maurice Fraser. Both passed away too soon to see its completion. I hope that this thesis would have made them proud.

Abstract

The aim of my thesis is to investigate the reasons for the appointment of technocratic governments in Europe. In order to do this, I conceptualise what technocratic governments are, both in terms of their own characteristics and in comparison with party governments. I problematize classic elements, such as independence, neutrality and expertise of ministers, and add further ones including the relation to electoral outcomes, their particular type of agenda, and the echo they have in the media.

Having established that technocratic governments require a shift in politicians' preferences away from typical office-seeking behaviour, I proceed to enquire as to the situations that make their appointment more likely. Through a statistical analysis on all European cabinets from 1977 to 2013, I identify situations of economic and political crises – in particular scandals - as the main variables influencing the likelihood of technocratic government appointments.

I further examine how these crises have lead to these appointments by exploring cases of over 25 technocratic governments in a range of countries and years. The qualitative illustrative evidence highlights the importance of institutional characteristics of the given political system in which such governments were appointed. The status of the party system, the role of the Head of State and external pressures coming from international or supranational institutions are thus shown to be important in technocratic cabinet appointments.

Finally, I assess whether technocratic governments fit within the European democratic standards and conclude that technocratic governments are symptoms of the decline of party democracy, identifiable in the loosening of delegation and accountability ties between parties and cabinets, increasing external pressures on domestic political actors, and the weakening of partisan ideology-based politics. The thesis adds further elements to reinforce the already vast literature on the crisis of – especially party – democracy in Europe.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The recent period of the Eurocrisis has seen a revival of debates on the so-called *technocratic governments*. The latest one of the series, headed by Prime Minister Ciolos, was appointed in November 2015 in Romania. Only a few weeks before, in August 2015 in Greece, another technocratic government was appointed to lead the country to elections after the resignation of the Syriza cabinet. The debate on these kinds of cabinets was particularly heated around November 2011, when people, media and academics alike responded very strongly to the nearly contemporary appointment in of technocratic prime ministers Lucas Papademos in Greece and Mario Monti in Italy. These two governments have caused both normative debates as to what they represent for European democracies, as well as accusations on their responsibility for the growing support for populist parties or for the ever-more worrying disaffection with party politics. However, very little is known about technocratic governments - even less so in a Europe-wide, comparative perspective. Because of their peculiarities and complex nature, these governments are often excluded from statistical analyses. When technocratic governments have been analysed in qualitative studies, they have been looked at from a national perspective, and have often been considered peculiarities of a certain political system. Moreover, there is also confusion as to their nature and significance that reaches beyond academia into the popular debate. Overall, clarifying and explaining the most important aspects of technocratic governments will help debates within as well as outside academia. This thesis will therefore focus on conceptualizing technocratic governments and explaining their appointment, as well as assessing their significance for European partisan democracies and voters.

1.1 Puzzle and research questions

The literature on the topic of technocratic government is very scarce. There is no unified, or even Europe-wide conceptualisation of what a technocratic cabinet is¹. The latter is particularly surprising given that technocratic governments are a puzzle in the context of the more established party democracies of European countries. The academic works that have considered the phenomenon tend to be focused on single cases of technocratic

¹ with the notable exception of McDonnell, Duncan and Marco Valbruzzi (2014). 'Defining and classifying technocrat-led and technocratic governments' *European Journal of Political Research* 53(4): 654-671. which will be critically assessed in the following chapter.

governments (Marangoni 2012, Hanley 2013), or single countries (Tucker and et al. 2000, Ehl 2009, Hloušek and Kopeček 2014), often treating technocratic governments as a special feature of that country (see for instance Kuusisto 1958, Lobo 2001b, Neto and Lobo 2009, Morlino 2012). There is the clear conceptual gap that needs to be filled, so the first question this thesis will answer is: what is a technocratic government?

Technocratic governments are an important cross-country phenomenon deserving attention, the main reason being their significance in terms of democratic practices in the context of the supposedly established European democracies. They are an exception to the rules and conventions of party democracy because they are not the direct result of elections, nor an arrangement following the typical partisan ministerial appointments. The number of ministries assigned to each party is not proportional to the shares of votes or parliamentary seats received by each party. When the cabinet is fully technocratic, this is even more evident, as all ministers are independent, non-partisan experts. In this respect, technocratic government appointment takes delegation to non-majoritarian institution to its extreme form, whereby partisan politicians delegate power and decision making to ‘non-majoritarian’ cabinets. Often technocratic ministers even pride themselves, at least in rhetorical terms, of not being influenced by their supporting partisan majority in parliament. There is the need to find what common elements can be identified as pertaining to a technocratic government, as well as assessing whether these elements fit within the broader framework of partisan democracies. Only following this ‘clarification of terms’, as it were, can the thesis proceed to the core of the problem: the empirical puzzle.

The empirical puzzle technocratic governments pose is as follows. Technocratic governments have been appointed in a third of European countries studied in this thesis², for a total of 36 technocratic cabinets within the period 1945-2015. They remain a small number compared to normal partisan governments, but are far from being an insignificant minority. The recent resurgence of interest in technocratic governments is due to the fact that a third (12/36) have been appointed since 2009, that is, the beginning of the Eurocrisis. These cabinets are anomalies in party democracies in so far as they are the result of a shift in politicians’ preferences. In a normally functioning partisan democracy, according to rationalist theories, partisan politicians are driven by desire for office and policy. In other words, if given the opportunity, they will try to achieve powerful positions and enact their

² Countries studied are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK.

preferred policy options. When politicians decide to delegate governing powers to non-partisan experts, this logic does not apply anymore. Moreover, voters find themselves governed by people they have not elected, and whose names were not even an option when elections took place, and yet they do not, as it were, take to the streets. Because of this, technocratic governments represent an empirical puzzle, both from the politicians' and from the voters' perspective, which can be summarised simply as: why are technocratic governments appointed in Europe?

This puzzle is an important one because governments of experts have been, and continue to be, part of the European democratic landscape. Understanding what they represent and why they are appointed provides a fundamental additional element to any study of comparative European governments – both in terms of government formation, of partisan politics and of people's political attitudes.

1.2 Why do politicians appoint technocratic governments?

The explanation for technocratic government appointment from the perspective of politicians in this thesis rests on principal-agent theory, and a rational choice institutionalist framework. In this perspective, technocratic cabinet appointments are the result of choices made by political parties and cabinet members, and those choices are embedded in a particular institutional context. The synthetic explanatory model, presented in Figure 1, outlines the main steps in the argument. The model has been constructed relying mainly on two strands of academic literature. It relies on cabinet formation and cabinet dissolution literature³ to identify which category of elements contributes to a situation in which politicians might be faced with the decision as to whether to delegate to technocrats or not. It then relies on delegation to non-majoritarian institutions literature to explain why politicians would ultimately decide to delegate to technocratic governments.

³ This is justified by the fact that often the same variables appear in both the literature on cabinet formation and in the literature on cabinet termination. For an overview, see Grofman, Bernard and Peter van Roozendaal (1997). 'Modelling Cabinet Durability and Termination' *British Journal of Political Science* 27(3): 419-451.

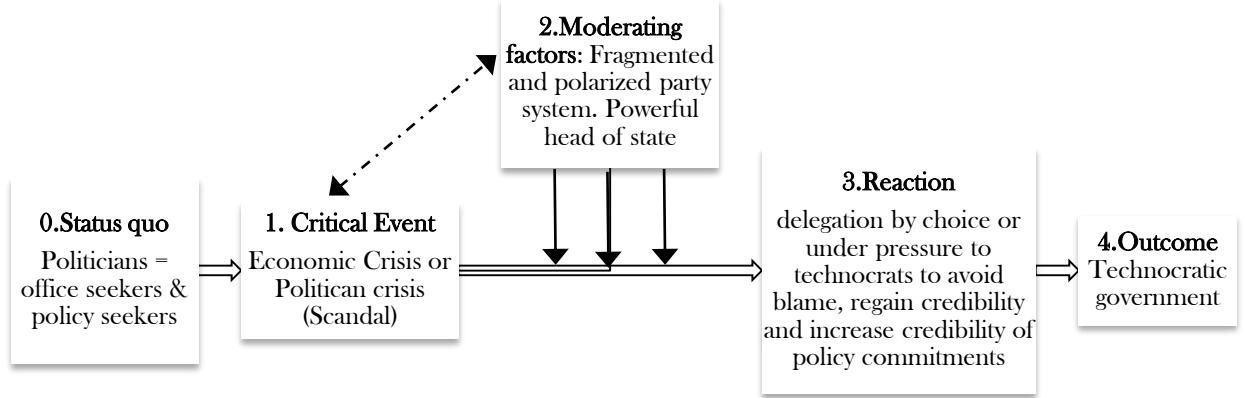


Figure 1-1: Process leading to technocratic government: a crisis model of technocratic government appointment.

Starting from the left side of the model, the initial position is one that can be labelled *status quo*. In normal circumstances, both politicians in government and in the opposition will be driven by concerns for office, and potentially policy. In Downs' seminal work, he put it thus: 'politicians...are motivated by the desire for power, prestige and income... their primary objective is to be elected [to public office]' (Downs 1957, 30). When governing powers are delegated to technocratic governments, these preferences are put to one side. More specifically, when technocratic governments are appointed, political actors, especially parties and their representatives in parliament, have given up on the highest office possible, that of prime minister, as well as ministerial positions. They have also given up on policy, in the sense that they might maintain some control over policy choices of technocratic ministers, but less so than if they had their own ministers in government⁴. Why would they limit their own office and policy benefits?

The explanation is that critical events (Browne, Frendreis and Gleiber 1984, Lupia and Strom 1995) as outlined in box 1 Figure 1, when coupled with certain institutional characteristics of the political system (box 2 Figure 1) make the delegation to technocratic governments more likely. This delegation can be explained in a two-step process. Crises affecting the system moderated by some structural factors spur politicians to react either by delegating to technocratic governments or not. The explanation is therefore a

⁴ Most of the literature assumes that policy outcomes are determined by ministry portfolio allocations, such that assigning a ministry to a particular party creates an outcome that corresponds to the most preferred policy of that party on the policy dimension that corresponds to the responsibilities of that ministry. See for instance Laver, Michael and Kenneth A. Shepsle (1995). *Making and breaking governments: cabinets and legislatures in parliamentary democracies*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge..

combination of event and structural approaches to cabinet termination and formation⁵. The reason why it makes sense to base the model on cabinet termination literature as well as cabinet formation is that in most cases technocratic governments are non-electoral replacements following the termination of a cabinet, while only rarely they follow elections directly.

A note is needed here to acknowledge that there might be a potentially endogenous relationship between the structural (or institutional) factors identified and the likelihood of critical events – hence the dotted line in the model. In short, it might be expected that critical events are more likely to happen in a weak troubled party system. Equally, it cannot be excluded that both the likelihood of the critical events and technocratic governments are increased by a unique, further element that is not considered in the analysis.

These two endogenous problems, which are related but not equivalent, can only partly be countered by making sure that the theoretical model puts forward a distinction between critical events as having a direct effect on the likelihood of technocratic government formation, and critical events in general. Moreover the structural factors provide the backdrop for the delegation to technocratic governments independently of their relation with the critical events.

Economic and political crises are identified as the two categories of *critical events* most likely to increase the likelihood of delegation to technocratic governments. Economic crises, in particular currency, banking or financial crisis, as well as general recession fall under the first category. Under the category of political crises political scandals are the main explanatory variable. Below follows a succinct explanation of how each of those can be thought to influence the delegation to technocratic cabinets. More on the definition and identification of those events will be provided in the relevant chapters.

Turning to the mechanism behind the economic crisis explanation first, the literature on delegation to non-majoritarian institutions identifies blame avoidance, enhancing the efficiency of rule-making and resolving commitment problems as the three main explanation for delegation (Thatcher and Sweet 2002). In the present case, a difficult economic situation that politicians seem unable, or are unwilling to solve is an incentive for delegation to technocratic governments for similar reasons, such as avoiding taking the blame for unpopular policies. Political parties, which could already be under pressure if

⁵ Similarly to what King et Al. have put forward for cabinet dissolution in King, Gary, James E. Alt, Nancy Elizabeth Burns and Michael Laver (1990). 'A Unified Model of Cabinet Dissolution in Parliamentary Democracies' *American Journal of Political Science* 34(3): 846-871.

considered responsible for the dire economic situation, might prefer to leave such hard tasks to others. In some countries, lack of past reforms and necessity for new ones has indeed been the main drivers for the appointment of technocratic governments (Fabbrini 2013). Moreover, if the country is in an economic crisis, concerns for efficiency could become predominant over disagreements of a redistributive nature (Neto and Strøm 2006). These efficiency concerns might lead to a policy shift even in the realm of economic policy, which is usually divisive and divided along partisan lines. Negative economic conditions and fear on behalf of the markets will increase the likelihood of technocrats entering the cabinet, as having technocrats as finance ministers and prime ministers reassures both markets and voters (Halleberg and Wehner 2013).

This reference to markets brings out another aspect of the delegation model, which shows that external pressures might be contributing to the overall incentive for delegation. Pressures coming from the outside could be linked to the ‘credible commitment’ aspect of delegation. Both in externally enforced and in self-enforcing agreements, agents are supposed to be bounded by rationality, but are often, where circumstances permit, given to opportunism. This is the case in business and in politics (Williamson 1984). Therefore, by changing the agent party to the contract which established the commitment, and by placing instead technocratic agents who are seen as less prone to opportunism and *shortermism*, parties can improve their position in the international arena. Commitment to the EU, and more specifically to targets for the Economic and Monetary Union is a classic example of how such international commitments interfere in national politics and can contribute to the decision to appoint a technocratic government. To sum up in terms of actors’ behaviours, the inability to deal with a difficult economic situation in an efficient or legitimate way, or the unwillingness to enact the reforms needed, as well as the preference for blame avoidance are the three main explanations put forward. These are the incentives for politicians to delegate to technocratic governments in situations of crises.

Scandals are the second major type of critical events triggering the appointment of technocratic government (also identified as one of the main causes of cabinet termination by Browne, Frendreis et al. 1984). They create a situation in which politicians are delegitimised and hence will consider alternative ways of going about government appointment and policymaking. Similarly to the economic crisis, the logic is that politicians would want to delegate either because they cannot govern anymore in a legitimate manner, or because they deem in their own interest to delegate power to a non-partisan executive to bridge the time until the next elections, re-organise and regain credibility. An example of

a ‘politics leads’ blame-avoidance strategy would involve a consensual solution among a coalition of the major political parties, such as those of national unity cabinets (Peters, Pierre and Randma-Liiv 2011, Lodge and Wegrich 2012). Technocratic governments are often cabinets of national unity in terms of parties supporting them, precisely following that logic. When corruption is discovered and exposed in episodes of scandals, disorder in voting patterns might lead to deadlock in cabinet formation and then to a technocratic government. Finally, often scandals are also not limited to personal failing of individual politicians but become ‘system failures’ of effective government (Barker 1994). This is particularly the case when the scandal involves more than one individual or more than one party. This might lead to not only a cabinet termination, but to a broader crisis of the party system, which might incentivize parties to delegate to a government of technocrats.

A similar pattern can be identified in terms of external pressures as a further incentive to delegate to technocratic governments. In this case the ‘international’ pressure is less of a factor, but there are still endogenous or exogenous pressures, either coming from within the party whose member/s experiences a scandal, or from another party/ies, or from the Head of State, if he is not involved in the scandal.

Structural conditions, or *attributes* as they are called sometimes in cabinet termination literature (Warwick 1979, Strøm 1985), are key to understand why politicians would delegate to technocratic governments. I identify the weakness of the party system as being a condition that will moderate the effects of the economic and political crises on politicians’ incentives to delegate. These characteristics also make political arrangements less stable when reacting to crisis situation, and, as already mentioned above, might in turn increase the likelihood of those critical events happening in the first place. More importantly, these weaknesses are best captured as the fragmentation and polarization of party system, both of which render bargaining environment more difficult (Laver and Schofield 1990, Golder 2010).

The other structural condition that influences the likelihood that a crisis moment will result in delegation to technocratic government is whether the head of state has the power to influence government formation and termination. The literature has already confirmed that a strong head of state is associated with higher percentages of independent ministers in cabinet (Neto 2006, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009a). Technocratic governments are often called presidential cabinets, precisely because of the strong influence of the president on the cabinet composition and appointment.

Therefore I posit that both structural conditions, an unstable party system with a strong head of state, will increase the likelihood of the appointment of a technocratic cabinet when the country is already in a situation of economic crisis or witnessing a scandal.

The model in Figure 1 continues in boxes 3 and 4 by capturing why crises coupled with the structural conditions in some cases fulfil their potential of bringing politicians to appoint a technocratic government. So while the first part of the model drew from cabinet formation and termination literature, the second one draws mostly on delegation literature. Majone argues that extensive independence will be accorded to non-majoritarian institutions when governments face credibility problems, while closer control will be kept when delegation is expected to increase decision-making expertise and efficiency (Majone 2001). His argument helps to understand the similar logic of delegations in both economic crisis and scandal cases, while still keeping in mind that parties could decide to keep more control on the technocrats, depending on the purpose they see them as fulfilling. This scale of levels of delegation is reflected in the mandate technocratic governments have, which spans from just caretaker until the next election, to being in charge of extensive reform of the welfare system.

Another characteristic of the delegation to technocratic governments is that stands somewhere in between the two types of delegation just outlined by Majone. On the one hand delegation to majoritarian institutions respects the ally theory, whereby the *principle* who delegates tries to make the agent as similar to himself as possible. On the other hand, delegation to non-majoritarian bodies violates the ally theory: the principal who delegates, does not try to make the agent as similar to himself and as controllable as possible, but purposely increases her autonomy (Bendor, Glazer and Hammond 2001). In the case of technocratic governments, members of parliament and parties in general retain some control (e.g. threat of cabinet dissolution) over the technocratic agent, but should not exaggerate this control, as the purpose of having technocratic governments is precisely for them to be independent policy makers. Therefore the delegation to technocratic governments retains some of the characteristics of both delegations to non-majoritarian and to majoritarian institutions, precisely because technocratic governments are a hybrid of the two.

In conclusion, the overall logic of Figure 1 is that when a crisis happens it will lead to the appointment of a technocratic government mostly when the party system is not stable enough to absorb that shock without changing its normal functioning. As Grofman and

Roozendaal rightly pointed out, ‘crises alone do not bring cabinets down. Only the choice of actors (especially parties that make up the cabinet) can do that’ (Grofman and Roozendaal 1994, 156). So in stronger and more stable political systems, not weakened by the presence of the structural factors mentioned above, the office-holders will capitalise on a good-stock of pre-crisis political capital, and will manage to communicate their crisis frames in a cogent and proactive way. If accused, they will not reject responsibility or blame for the crisis, nor for its costly solutions, and will just act according to normal patterns of crisis resolution (Boin, Hart and McConnell 2009). This also points out that a technocratic cabinet will be terminated when the political class, or a party in particular, is sufficiently sure to have regained credibility and to stand good chances of being elected in the next elections, or when the crisis is sufficiently mastered. That is, when the situation goes back to the status quo. A note is due here, on the nature of the explanations provided. While these hypotheses will be tested in a quantitative and qualitative way, in no occasion the thesis will be claiming that any crisis of the types described above, with the type of structural conditions outlined need necessarily to lead a technocratic government. The language used so far has been probabilistic precisely because these conditions are neither necessary nor sufficient, as there is large room for discretion by the political class as to which crisis is, in their eyes, sufficiently severe or meaningful to justify the appointment of a technocratic government.

1.3 Technocratic governments as symptoms of the crisis of party democracy

While the thesis will mainly revolve around the explanation as to why technocratic governments are appointed, the implications of this explanation will reach further. It will be a confirmation that technocratic governments are appointed when party democracy is incapable of, or unwilling to, function as it should. The reasons why parties fail have been explored extensively in the literature, especially the recent strand concerning the challenges to party governments (Mair 2008). The general decline in party politics is giving rise to many soul-searching exercises in mainstream political parties. The implication of the present thesis is a confirmation of the diagnosis of this illness, of which technocratic governments are yet another manifestation. Compared to party governments, technocratic governments meet the standards of party democracy because those standards have been eroding over time. Technocratic governments display in full the faults of party governments, but they are not *per se* a detrimental political solution, as will be argued in chapter 8.

This line of argument also dispels certain myths surrounding technocratic governments, which are accused of being part of the causes of the decline of the quality of European democracies. They are symptoms in the medical sense of the word, that is, *something caused by, or indicative of, a disease*. That disease is the decline of party systems and the erosion of party democracy, of which they are the extreme manifestation. In this respect, to avoid endogeneity problems, the present work clearly distinguishes the reasons why parties fail to fulfil their main tasks from the reasons why technocratic governments are appointed. The elements identified as increasing the likelihood of technocratic government appointment are not equivalent to what causes the decline in party government performance within European democracies. The failure of traditional party politics is to do with loosening of delegation and accountability ties between voters and parties, and parties and governments; increasing external pressures on domestic political actors; and the weakening of ideology-based politics. Technocratic government appointment is not due to these failings alone, but is due to how these failings make the party system more vulnerable and incapable of dealing with external and internal crises, such as economic downturns or scandals.

Interestingly, and contrary to what might be thought given the recent accent put on technocratic governments in the context of the Eurocrisis, this relationship has been the driving framework for all technocratic government appointments all along, not just in recent period. It is by no chance that, so far, technocratic governments have mainly been appointed in the younger democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, or right at the beginning of democratization of post-authoritarian countries, such as Portugal in the late 70s, or where the party system is crumbling and subject to easy earthquakes, such as Italy. Technocratic governments' appointment should therefore be taken as a warning sign that the usual mechanisms of decision-making and party democracy are not functioning as they should. Independently of time and place, the conclusion in that the poorer the quality of partisan democracies, the more political systems will turn to the technocratic solution, when faced with critical events.

1.4 Outline of the chapters and methodologies employed

The remaining of the present chapter will be dedicated, by way of introduction, to providing a brief outline of the structure and content, and an explanation of the research design. As anticipated above, the thesis will first explore the constitutive elements making up a

technocratic government. Then it will turn to the main puzzle of how and why technocratic governments are appointed, from a quantitative and a qualitative angle. The focus will then shift from government to voters, and analyse why voters could accept technocrats in power. Finally, it will assess technocratic governments' democratic credentials against the standards of partisan democracies. Because of the encompassing nature of the present study, different research methods have been employed for different parts of the work, as outlined below.

In [chapter 2](#) technocratic governments are conceptualized as a political phenomenon. The chapter first reviews the literature on technocratic cabinets and technocratic ministers in Europe and beyond. The review of the existing literature highlights several shortcomings: lack of inter-country, inter-time comparison, and focus on technocratic ministers rather than technocratic cabinets. The rest of the chapter responds mainly to the only, and latest work on the issue: McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014)'s article 'Defining and classifying technocrat-led and technocratic governments'. While the chapter agrees that their classification of technocratic governments according to remit and composition is factually accurate, it argues that McDonnell and Valbruzzi fail to take into account the paradigm shift required, both in the minds of partisan politicians and of citizens, to appoint independents to govern a democracy. They moreover underestimate the importance of rhetoric in presenting the 'technocrateness' of the cabinet, independently of its actual composition, as well as the role of the media in such recognition. To give an example, even cabinets composed fully of partisan political ministers and only with a technocratic prime minister can still come across as independent and neutral, through devices such as declarations to the media to this effect. The most famous recent example of this is the already mentioned Lucas Papademos in Greece. Linked to this, often promising of 'setting aside' partisan interests for the general good is a typical rhetorical strategy, which has been employed, to name just a recent example, by technocratic prime minister Gordon Bajnai in Hungary in 2009. In general the chapter problematizes key components common to most usual conceptualisations of technocratic governments, such as expertise, independence, knowledge. It also explores further other aspects, such as the link to electoral outcomes.

Methodologically, the chapter explores other characteristics of technocratic governments and technocrats drawing from different strands of literature. Technocracy as linked with science and technology is one, which identifies an increasingly scientific approach to governance, and the anti-democratic drift that ensues. These kinds of works are relevant in so far as they underline the logic behind empowering 'experts', and the ever-increasing tendency of society to rely and trust them, even to a detrimental extent. The literature on

technocracy in authoritarian regimes is also instructive to develop theories as to the European phenomenon, to assess it in normative terms and to pointing out at common features of technocratic governments. Academic articles focused on Latin America, South America and other non-European – and potentially non-democratic areas such as China or Russia are also considered. Literature on technocrats within national or European administrations, including the European Union, or external experts, or independent agencies and bodies such as the Central Banks is another useful starting point.

From all these different strands of literature a conceptualization is developed that problematizes objective criteria used in other definitions, such as independency of ministers or their expertise, and underlines the importance of discourse in presenting the cabinet as technocratic. However, it concentrates on the only necessary and sufficient condition for a government to be technocratic – a technocratic prime minister - in order to identify, which governments, from 1945 to today in European democracies, can be classified as technocratic. According to this classification, 36 technocratic governments have been appointed in Europe between 1945, or the moment a country became democratic, and 2015. They have been appointed in countries as diverse as Finland and Greece, Portugal and Bulgaria. As already mentioned, there has been an increase in the frequency of their appointment in the recent period of the financial turned Eurocrisis (12 out of 36 were appointed between 2009 and 2015)

Having established what technocratic governments are, chapter 3 addresses the main puzzle head on, and looks at what situations are more likely to lead to a technocratic government. A statistical analysis of all European cabinets from 1977 to 2013 shows that technocratic government appointments are more likely following problematic situations of political and economic crises, respectively identified as scandals and recessions. Technocratic governments, the chapter concludes, can therefore be considered as emergency governments. The chapter also tests how the effect of the crisis-related hypotheses is moderated by structural characteristics of the party system: parliamentary fragmentation, party system polarization and the powers of the head of state. These moderating variables are not significant per se in increasing the likelihood of appointment of technocratic governments, nor when tested as moderating variables. *Prima facie*, this implies that technocratic government appointment can happen independently of the kind of political system in place. However, there are problems linked to the statistical power of interactions due to the paucity of cases of technocratic governments. Therefore the subsequent three

chapters will explore the same question through case studies showing that these moderating factors play an important role.

Given the small number of ‘positive’ cases, i.e. cases of technocratic governments, chapter 3 develops a logistic regression model estimated using penalized maximum likelihood (Firth 1993) that corrects for bias and has been widely used in rare events analysis. A low number of predictors are tested in each model in order to sustain a workable ratio between positive outcomes and parameters. The dependent variable is whether a government is technocratic or not, based on the identification operated in chapter 2 – and checked also against McDonnell and Valbruzzi’s list. The total sample include all governments in 30 European democracies from 1977 to end of 2013. Most of the variables are taken from established datasets, while the ‘scandal variable’ has been coded according to the method used by Kumlin and Esaiasson (2012)⁶.

The link between scandals and technocratic government appointment is explored in chapter 4. Eleven cases of technocratic governments are analysed, as well as one counterfactual case of a government that could have been technocratic given the circumstances, but it was not. Cases are chosen on the basis of geographical and temporal variety, as well as type of scandal affecting the country, and they illustrate well how scandals prepare the terrain for the appointment of technocratic governments, following the logic already explained in the first few sections of the present chapter. It will show how scandals are triggers for cabinet termination, or when that is not the case, at least for cabinet reshuffle or substitution. Often scandals also cause popular upheaval and/or the intervention of the head of state, both of which are kinds of pressures internal to the system, which could lead to a technocratic government appointment. The cases allow teasing out the interaction between the political crises and the institutional factors, whereby if there is a narrow majority in government and the party system is fragmented, a scandal might have a greater effect on the overall balance of powers within parliament. Finally, the constructivist aspect of what constitutes a scandal is also brought to light, whereby definition and use of scandals in political competition is less a matter of objective gravity of the accusations, but more of which interests are behind their use as a political tool.

Chapter 5 will do a similar analysis as chapter 4, but for situations of economic crisis and economic downturns. The academic literature identifies moments of economic problems

⁶ See Annex 1 for more information on coding

as those in which experts are appointed as ministers, and the statistical analysis in chapter 3 confirmed this strongly. In this chapter the dynamics linking technocratic governments' appointments and economic crises are explored in more detail through the analysis of sixteen technocratic governments, as well as one counterfactual cabinet, selected once again on the basis of variation of types of crises, time and geographical scope. Similarly to chapter 4, the constructivist aspect of economic crises will be highlighted, in so far as the severity of an economic downturn, and whether it is considered and treated as an economic crisis, depends less on the objective numbers and more on the political circumstances. Actors can occasionally 'construct' a crisis as such or downplaying its importance depending on what is in their interest to do. The chapter also allows showing the importance of factors relating to the party system and the head of state in bringing about a technocratic government.

The main thrust of this section is to highlight how economic crises are difficult situations both for the incumbent and for the opposition. Neither wants to take the blame for the problems, nor to implement the painful reforms necessary to the economic recovery. The incumbent might therefore resign in a strategic way, and appoint a technocratic cabinet. In an opportunistic way, a technocratic government becomes a good solution whereby the crisis is solved and voters blame the experts for the hardship they might endure because of consolidation measures. Alternatively, technocratic governments arise out of necessity, in so far as the party/coalition in power is not able to tackle the situation. Economic crises trigger either the need, or the opportunity, to delegate to technocrats the crisis response policies.

Chapter 6 looks at an important figure in the cabinet appointment game in general, and in that of technocratic governments in particular: the head of state. The statistical analysis in chapter 3 has shown that the powers of the head of state are not significant in the appointment of technocratic governments, neither by themselves nor as moderating factors for the crises variables. However, the literature strongly points out at the importance of presidential interventions. This discrepancy, as the cases studies in this chapter illustrate, might be due to the fact that informal powers and personality traits play an important role in technocratic government appointments. Twelve cases of technocratic governments are selected on the basis of the varying powers of the president, from very weak to very strong, directly and indirectly elected, as well as two counterfactual cases. The selection will show that the head of state is more likely to intervene when he or she feels that the political system is sufficiently weak to accept it, such as in situation of crises. Several cabinets analysed in this chapter also figure in chapters 4 and 5, but they are analysed through the

different lens of the powers of the president. The ‘accordion’ nature of presidential powers, which can stretch or shrink depending on the circumstances and on the personality of the head of state are illustrated in details, as well as the variety of scenarios which can lead to a technocratic government.

Chapter 7 considers the question whether technocratic governments are compatible with the standards of party democracy. Because of the way they are conceptualized in chapter 2, they do raise questions as to whether they can still be considered to fit the standards of European democracies, as they are understood in Europe. The chapter draws on literature on party democracy and the general decline of party politics, as well as on the changing nature of political parties. Having established that technocratic governments do not breach any of the constitutional rules of European democracies, it argues that they maintain an – albeit more indirect – link with the voters. They are moreover not necessarily more susceptible to external influence, and still allow for deliberation to happen within the policy making process. However, this chapter is far from being a defence of technocratic governments. It is a reassessment of why it is correct to criticise the technocratic governments, and what aspects of these cabinets in particular. Taking inspiration from Mair’s 2008 article on the challenges to party governments, the chapter argues that technocratic governments in Europe are not undemocratic *per se* but are still a worrying phenomenon, in so far as they reveal shortcomings which remain hidden in normal party governments: loosening of delegation and accountability ties between voters, parties and cabinets, increasing external pressures on domestic political actors, and the weakening of partisan ideology-based politics. The chapter adds further elements to reinforce the already vast literature on the crisis of – especially party – democracy in Europe.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis by reinstating the underlying argument of the thesis. It will repeat the theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions of the thesis, and more broadly its contribution to existing literature. Because of the broad span of the work, it shows contribution to literature on technocratic governments but also beyond, including cabinet formation and termination, stealth democracy, party scholarship, delegation and so on. As the last chapter, it will also acknowledge some of the limitations of the thesis. It admits that the analysis of chapter 3 could be extended to include years 1945-1977, and after 2013. Moreover, electoral volatility could be tested as well, as it was put forward by McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014) as a potential proxy for a crumbling party system, which according to the two scholars, is one of the reasons why technocrats are appointed to govern European democracies. As there is no database on electoral volatility encompassing

both Western and Eastern European democracy, and an in depth knowledge of each political system is required to construct the database itself, the hypothesis could not be tested within the limited timespan of the thesis research.

To finish, the chapter suggests further alleys of research on the theme of technocratic government. It suggests four potential directions, which correspond to the different strands of literature employed to develop the thesis: an analysis of the ‘technocratic discourse’ employed by technocratic governments; the expansion of the research beyond European borders; the assessment of technocratic government’s impact on democracies, in terms of policy effectiveness, effects on electoral choices and so on, the potential contagion effect between countries, whereby one country takes inspiration from another to appoint a technocratic government, and finally the details of which parties supported technocratic government appointment and why. The latter is particularly important to feed into current research on government formation dynamics for cabinets that are, with some rare exceptions, not taken into consideration as simple ‘mind-the-shop’ ones.

Annex I provides a full list of the scandals identified for chapter 3, detailing year, country, government affected, details of the scandal and of which journal reported it.

Annex II gives the perspective of the technocrats themselves on these governments. It reports interviews conducted with technocratic ministers, prime ministers, as well as advisors. These interviews cover some of the main points addressed in the thesis, namely how to define technocratic governments, and why they are appointed.

Chapter 2 An alternative conceptualization of technocratic governments

Technocratic government is a term that has become of current use in the recent Eurocrisis but whose contours remain quite vague. Although debated by media, people and academics alike, it remains an underexplored and misrepresented political arrangement, which deserves closer academic attention. To the author's knowledge, McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014) are the only scholars to have considered in a comprehensive and comparative manner technocratic governments in Europe. Their classification of technocratic cabinets is welcome but not fully satisfactory, as it focuses exclusively on the composition and remit of technocratic governments. The present chapter will provide an alternative take on the question, taking into account key interaction mechanisms between the said cabinets and the electorate, notably political discourse, claims and media declarations. The ultimate aim is not to give a box-ticking list of characteristics that should be employed as a manual for the categorization of a government as either technocratic or not, but to conceptualize technocratic government in a more nuanced manner. It is important to have a full understanding of what a technocratic government is, or claims to be, because this political configuration is increasingly common in European democracies, especially in periods of crisis like the last decade (see table 1).

The chapter proceeds as follows. Firstly, it reviews past attempts at defining technocratic governments, and finds them either too country/situation specific, and thus hard to generalize, or based on excessively strict criteria to be really meaningful in the context of the relationship between citizens and governments in a democracy. It then focuses on the most developed classification of technocratic cabinets, that already mentioned of McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014). By exploring and questioning its constitutive elements, it problematizes them, going beyond the 'hard facts' about these cabinets. The main theoretical assumption, which is carried on through the remainder of the thesis, is that technocratic governments demand a real preference shift both from politicians and from voters, and thus they are all equally important in the democratic life of the country, independently of how long they are in power, or how many independent ministers they include. From this approach follows that, to mention just one aspect, the straightforward conceptualization of a technocrat as an independent expert is put into question. Moreover, the relationship between technocratic governments and elections, as well as between technocratic governments and parties' agendas is explored drawing from existing strands

of literature on government formation, delegation, accountability, and European elites. These analyses bring to light commonalities amongst technocratic cabinets that exude remit and composition criteria. Finally the chapter concludes by stressing that those elements exercise a double function. On the one hand they are what constitutes, and allows for, an in depth conceptualization of technocratic governments. On the other hand they are employed as, and become, a justification for technocratic governments' appointment and power.

2.1 Scarce and sparse literature on technocratic governments

The literature on ‘technocracy’ as a broad term is quite extensive, but far less so in the sense of technocratic governments. The possibility that technocrats could be themselves occupying the highest political positions in a modern established democracy, that is, that of prime minister and cabinet minister, is hardly considered at all. When scholars do consider that option, it is defined it as a highly unlikely scenario (see for instance Meynaud 1969, 31). Other scholars, looking at the reality of the political history of European democracies, have come to the same conclusion. Fabbrini, in his interesting analysis of technocracy at national government level, concludes that in Europe technocracy is a limited phenomenon (Fabbrini 2000b). He moreover argues that in no case one can talk about a proper period of technocratic rule in Europe, where technocratic rule is defined as the situation in which two conditions are fulfilled: technics have substituted politicians in power, and they can use that power as an institutionalised group (*idem*, p.117). By analysing data from 1945 to 1984 across 14 European democracies, he notes that only 4.7% of national ministers have been what he calls “outsiders”, that is, people who have not belonged to any political party or been parliamentarians before taking office. He also underlines that these outsiders, mostly consisting of ex professors or high-level civil servants, tend to be appointed ministers of finances, and that the majority of the distribution happens in consensual democracies, such as Belgium and Italy.

Other scholars have taken a middle position, arguing that technocratic governments exist but that they are a phenomenon typical of only one country, and specific to the political situation of that particular country. Morlino asserts that nowhere other than in Italy, and partially in Greece, can one really talk about technocratic governments (Morlino 2012). He also denies that the Finnish governments of the 50s, 60s and 70s are properly technocratic governments. Finnish scholars disagree with him (Kuusisto 1958, Bergman and Strøm 2011) but agree that the governments in Finland are a special type of technocratic

governments, often defined as ‘presidial governments’ in light of the strong influence of the President⁷. Portuguese scholars see Portuguese technocratic governments of 1978-1979 as a special kind of ‘presidentially-inspired’ cabinets too (Braga da Cruz 1994, Martins 2006, Neto and Lobo 2009, Laplaine Guimarãis, Diniz de Ayala et al. 2011). The Czech Republic’s three technocratic governments have been the objects of academic interest, for instance by Tucker and et al. (2000), Hanley (2013), Hloušek and Kopeček (2014). However, these authors focus on what is typical of the Czech political and partisan history, namely its culture of non-political politics and its tradition of mistrust in political parties, rather than integrating those cabinets in a broader comparative analysis. In general, political science scholars of Central and Eastern Europe have either dismissed the phenomenon of technocratic government as transitional and temporary, especially in the context of political transformation in Eastern Europe (Protsyk 2005a), or have defined it in diverse ways, without seemingly agreeing.

The confusion on what a technocratic government is and how it should be defined stems on the one hand from the close resemblance to, and sometimes overlap with, other kinds of unusual cabinets, such as caretaker, presidential, national unity, emergency governments, bridge-governments, truce-governments, summer governments, governments of national effort etc. Panagiotis Pikrammenos, himself technocratic prime minister of a technocratic government in Greece, admitted that ‘There are similarities and differences between a caretaker cabinet and a technocratic one [...] The composition of caretaker government and a technocratic one could be similar’ (Pikrammenos 2014). On the other hand diverse political arrangements seem to fall under the umbrella definition of technocratic government. During the Eurocrisis, for instance, two very different kinds of cabinets were labelled as technocratic: Papademos’ in Greece, a short lived cabinet, with a limited mandate, composed of partisan ministers with a non-partisan Prime Minister; and Monti’s in Italy, with a longer and broader mandate, composed uniquely of independent ministers. Monti himself, when questioned on the matter during an interview with the author, concluded ‘I guess the concept “technocratic government” covers many different political arrangements’ (Monti 2014).

To give a flavour of other kind of definitions of a technocratic government to be found in the literature - and a non-exhaustive one - we can quote Halleberg and Wehner (2013, 13): ‘[...] governments composed of individuals who are known for their expertise rather than

⁷ Chapter 6 is dedicated to the influence of the head of state in technocratic government appointments, and the Finnish case is explored extensively.

career politicians. In parliamentary systems, technocrats are sometimes appointed to government in a caretaker function, pending the resolution of a political crisis of leadership.' Protsyk writes that: 'a cabinet was defined as technocratic when neither a Prime Minister nor a majority of cabinet members had formal party affiliation and when parliamentary factions that supported the cabinet explicitly distanced themselves from the cabinet by stressing the non-party nature of the cabinet' (Protsyk 2005a, 140-141). Fabbrini defines technocratic rule in Europe as the situation in which two conditions are fulfilled: technicians have substituted politicians in power, and they can use that power as an institutionalised group (Fabbrini 2000b, 117). Morlino, with Italy in mind, describes a technocratic government as 'a government that does not represent a direct expression of political parties, although it is accepted and voted by those same parties in Parliament' (Morlino 2012). Neto and Lobo, referring to the three Portuguese technocratic cabinets, describe them as 'administrations composed mostly of non-partisan figures [...] they had no stable parliamentary support and [...] were opposed by the major parliamentary groups' (Neto and Lobo 2009). Tucker et al., in relation to the Czech Republic, characterize the technocratic government of Tosovsky as made of non-political experts and politicians not tainted by corruption (Tucker and et al. 2000). All of the above definitions have some elements in common, but none of them is sufficiently detailed to take into account realities of countries as different as the ones making up the European Union.

The most complete and accurate conceptualization that has been produced so far is McDonnell and Valbruzzi's (2014). For them technocratic government is the opposite of party government, is so far as:

- a) All major governmental decisions are not made by elected party officials
- b) Policy is not decided within parties which then act cohesively to enact it
- c) The highest officials (ministers, Prime Minister) are not recruited through parties

They further classify technocratic governments in Europe as belonging to one of four categories: fully technocratic, technocrat-led partisan, nonpartisan caretaker and partisan caretaker governments. Their classification is based on objective *facts* about the cabinet in question: the percentage of non-partisan ministers and the duration and remit of the cabinet.

McDonnell and Valbruzzi's definition, as well as the other ones cited above, all overlook the relationship between cabinets and voters in terms of rhetoric and discourse. The actual characteristics of the government – such as the party affiliation of ministers – and the

discourse that is employed by those governments are equally important when it comes to discussions about technocratic governments. After all, ‘actors establish their legitimacy and the legitimacy of their actions through the rhetorical construction of self-images...and other actors contest or endorse these representations through similar rhetorical processes’ (Reus-Smit 2007, 163). None of those hard-facts can account fully for the perceived shift from partisan democracy to ‘technocratic democracy’. The latter is a situation where, while the democratic elements of the political systems are kept in place, most importantly parliament is not dissolved, yet the country is ruled by figures that are unusual in several ways. It is precisely this ‘unusualness’, which is made up of the elements listed in the sections that follow, which requires a shift in both politicians and voters’ preferences, and that makes all technocratic governments important.

In the following paragraphs all of these definitions are taken into account to identify elements pertaining to the ‘unusualness’ of technocratic governments. As mentioned, particular emphasis will be put on McDonnell and Valbruzzi’s, as the most complete and recent. It is argued that only one component of this definition is necessary and sufficient, and will be used in the operationalization of such cabinets in the rest of the thesis. However, there is a range of other aspects that have to be discussed and problematized, and that offer a more nuanced understanding of such cabinets.

2.2 Technocratic Prime Ministers and their ministers: what is a “technocrat”?

The only necessary and sufficient element that makes a government technocratic is a technocratic prime minister. The head of government is the person setting the tone for the rest of the cabinet, and the one that will receive more media and popular attention. So if the cabinet is to present itself credibly as a technocratic one, it must have at least one technocratic prime minister. What does this mean in practice? By technocratic, mostly the literature refers to some kind of independence, that is, non-partisanship⁸. McDonnell and Valbruzzi’s (2014) definition of what an independent non-partisan Prime Minister is composite, and can be usefully employed at this stage. At the time of his/her appointment to government, the technocratic prime minister must be fulfilling the following three conditions:

- (1) never held public office under the banner of a political party;

⁸ Independent and non-partisan will be used interchangeably in the article.

(2) never have been formal member of any party;

(3) possess recognized non-party political expertise which is directly relevant to the role occupied in government.

Considering countries that are democracies at the time of the technocratic government, i.e. countries that have held at least one democratic election resulting in a non-technocratic government⁹ this definition of technocratic prime minister results in the following list of technocratic governments which will be used subsequently in the remainder of the thesis:

Table 2-1: Technocratic Governments in Europe¹⁰, 1945-2015.

	Country	Prime Minister	Start Date	End Date
1	Bulgaria	Dimitar Lliev Popov	07/12/1990	08/11/1991
2	Bulgaria	Lyuben Berov	310/12/1992	02/09/1994
3	Bulgaria	Reneta Indzhova	17/10/1994	18/12/1994
4	Bulgaria	Marin Raykov	13/03/2013	12/05/2013
5	Bulgaria	Georgi Bliznashki	06/08/2014	06/11/2014
6	Czech Republic	Josef Tosovsky	02/01/1998	20/06/1998
7	Czech Republic	Jan Fischer	08/05/2009	29/05/2010
8	Czech Republic	Jiri Rusnok	10/07/2013	29/01/2014
9	Finland	Sakari Severi Tuomioja	17/11/1953	08/03/1954
10	Finland	Rainer von Fieandt	29/11/1957	18/04/1958
11	Finland	Reino Kuuskoski	26/04/1958	07/07/1958
12	Finland	Reino Ragnar Lehto	18/12/1963	12/09/1964
13	Finland	Teuvo Aura I ¹¹	14/05/1970	15/07/1970
14	Finland	Teuvo Aura II	29/10/1971	03/01/1972
15	Finland	Keijo Liinamaa	13/06/1975	22/09/1975

⁹ thus excluding transition technocratic governments such as Janez Drnovsek in Slovenia

¹⁰ The thesis will consider 30 European countries, that is, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK.

¹¹ Mc Donnel and Valbruzzi do not classify Aura's two cabinets as technocratic, but country experts do define them as independent non-partisan cabinets. See for instance Karvonen, Lauri (2014). *Parties, Governments and Voters in Finland: Politics Under Fundamental Societal Transformation*. ECPR Press.

16	Greece	Ioannis Grivas	12/10/1989	05/11/1989
17	Greece	Xenophon Zolotas I	23/11/1989	13/02/1990
18	Greece	Xenophon Zolotas II	13/02/1990	11/04/1990
19	Greece	Lucas Papademos	11/11/2011	17/05/2012
20	Greece	Panagiotis Pikrammenos	17/05/2012	17/06/2012
21	Greece	Vassiliki Thanaou-Christophilou	27/10/2015	21/09/2015
22	Hungary	Gordon Bajnai	14/04/2009	25/04/2010
23	Italy	Carlo Azeglio Ciampi	29/04/1993	13/01/1994
24	Italy	Lamberto Dini	17/01/1995	07/01/1996
25	Italy	Mario Monti	16/11/2011	14/02/2013
26	Latvia	Andris Šķēle	21/12/1995	06/08/1997
27	Poland	Marek Marian Belka	11/06/2004	31/10/2005
28	Portugal	Alfredo Nobre de Costa	29/08/1978	15/09/1978
29	Portugal	Carlos Mota Pinto ¹²	22/11/1978	11/06/1979
30	Portugal	Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo	31/07/1979	02/12/1979
31	Romania	Theodor Stolojan	16/10/1991	27/09/1992
32	Romania	Nicolae Văcăroiu I	19/11/1992	06/03/1994
33	Romania	Nicolae Văcăroiu II	19/08/1994	01/09/1996
34	Romania	Nicolae Văcăroiu III	02/09/1996	03/11/1996
35	Romania	Mugur Isarescu	21/11/1999	26/11/2000
36	Romania	Dacian Ciolos	17/11/2015	Present ¹³

Sources: McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014); Morlino (1998), Protsyk (2005b), Neto and Strom (2006), Neto and Lobo (2009), Bergman and Strom (2011), McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014), Sonntag (2014) Protsyk (2005); Morlino (1998); national parliaments and governments websites.

¹² Similarly as for Aura's cabinets in Finland, McDonnell and Valbruzzi do not include Mota Pinto in their list. I have relied on local Portuguese academics' definitions on the matter, such as Macqueen, Norman (1985). 'Portugal and Africa: the Politics of ReEngagement' *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 23(1): 31-51, Laplaine Guimarães, Alberto , Bernardo Diniz de Ayala, Manuel Pinto Machado and Miguel Félix António (2011). *Os Governos da Repùblica 1910-2010*. Dos Autores, Lisbon. Martins, Ana (2006). 'Presidential Elements in Government' *European Constitutional Law Review* 2(1): 81-100.

¹³ Updated as of February 2016

As far as the Prime Ministers of technocratic governments are concerned, the definition of an ‘independent technocrat’ given by McDonnell and Valbruzzi holds in most cases¹⁴. However, that is less so for the other ministers composing the technocratic cabinet. In general, the 3 conditions making up the definition of technocrat are not as straightforward as they might seem, and include much more constructivist elements to it. Further analysis of what makes a minister a technocrat will stress the problematic nature of the attributes of *technocrateness*: independence, knowledge and expertise (conditions 1 and 2, and 3 respectively). The lack of clear identifiable standards for defining a technocrat justifies taking a more constructivist stance on the importance of technocratic discourse. Following that, more constitutive elements of what makes a government technocratic will be explored and problematized, in particular looking at the cabinet’s agenda, its link to electoral results and the media’s acceptance of such cabinets.

2.3 Neutrality vis-à-vis political parties

(Conditions 1 and 2 of what is it to be a Technocrat)

I chose my ministers first of all by their skills and impartiality in order to fulfil the main goal of my cabinet [...] I also tried to include all the political tendencies and in the same time stay away from the influence of the parties, which wasn’t easy’. (Pikrammenos 2014, , interview with the author)

Greek technocratic Prime Minister Pikrammenos’ quote seems to confirm that conditions 1, 2 and 3 are the driving motivations behind the choice of ministers in his cabinet. However, whether this is truly the case is questionable. The most striking difference between a technocratic government and a partisan government is the relationship between the executive and political parties. Technocratic ministers are supposed to have the kind of objective independence from political parties that has been equated with non-partisanship in the literature (Cotta and Verzichelli 2002, Sotiropoulos and Bourikos 2002, De Almeida, Bermeo and Pinto 2003, Neto and Strøm 2006, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009b, Neto and Samuels 2010, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2010). Cotta and Verzichelli define technocratic ministers as ‘persons totally lacking in both a parliamentary and party political background’ (2002), thus distinguishing between parliamentary experience, and non-parliamentary party experience. Along similar lines, Fabbrini distinguishes *insiders* from *outsiders*, the former being members of a political party and members of Parliament (MPs) for more than five years, the latter being non-partisan non-MPs (Fabbrini 2000b). While both these classifications work in terms of assessing how much a minister is part of the

¹⁴ See previous two footnotes

political system, they cannot be used univocally in the present case. The fact that a minister was an MP before making it to government makes him no more, or no less, partisan than someone who has been a party militant all his life but never obtained a seat in Parliament. Conversely, having a seat in Parliament is not by itself indication of partisanship, as independent candidates can be rather frequent in certain Parliaments¹⁵. Moreover, occasionally party members resign their membership in order to become ministers in technocratic governments, (e.g. some members of the Fischer technocratic government in the Czech Republic).

The clear cut distinction between partisan and independent technocratic ministers is further blurred when one considers that once a non-party person gets appointed to be a minister, she will, as it were, start playing the political – and hence partisan - game. In other words, ‘when highly trained experts assume positions that qualify them as positional elites, they cease to be experts – even if they continue to use professional knowledge as a base or justification for executive decisions’ (Brint 1990, 364). This hints at a useful distinction outlined by Bon and Burnier between a *technicien*, and a *technocrate*. The first is purely a technical or a scientific expert, while the second is already a sub-breed of politician (Bon and Burnier 1966, Chapters 4-5). The first is busy with the application of knowledge, the second, as the etymology of the word suggests, with the exercise of power. Centeno similarly identified the Mexican *tecnócrates* led by Carlos Salinas as pertaining to that category: a ‘hybrid’ elite who seemed to combine the educational credentials of the *técnicos* with the political access and acumen of the *políticos* (Centeno 1994: 106). So the neutrality of partisan ministers is a nuanced and complicated concept, in which non-partisanship is only one of the potential criteria alongside non-involvement in previous political posts and others.

Given the above, prior dealings with and involvement with politics are not to be absolutely excluded when trying to define the distinctive elements of ministers appointed in technocratic governments. Neutrality vis-à-vis political parties cannot be confined to non-partisanship, because independence/neutrality is not necessarily opposed to some kind of political experience, and it can also be an attribute of politicians who, in their role as ministers of technocratic governments, behave differently towards their party of belonging. Some technocratic (but partisan) cabinets ‘effectively “locked out” ruling parties from substantive governing circles’ (Williams 2006, 130). Finnish technocratic Prime Minister

¹⁵ They have been so for instance in the Irish Oireachtas. There have been ‘more Independents in the Irish parliament than the combined total elected to the national parliaments of Western Europe’ Weeks, Liam (2002). ‘The Irish parliamentary election, 2002’ *Representation* 39(3): 215-225. See also Bolleyer, Nicole and Weeks Liam (2009). ‘The puzzle of non-party actors in party democracy: Independents in Ireland’ *Comparative European Politics* 7(3): 299.

von Fieandt succinctly put this in his programme declaration in 1957: ‘*The new government has been assembled with professional men, not politicians. Some of us belong to a political party, and all of us have, of course, used the right to vote. But I do not ask who each minister has voted, as it is not where he is politically that matters. This fact does not interest me - the main thing is that every one of them is capable of expertise in their field*

As a further confirmation of the blurring of non-partisan and partisan elements in a technocratic government, one can look at the careers paths of the supposed ‘technocrats’ after the termination of their appointment. Quite a substantial number of ex-technocrats continue their career into politics, as if ‘once a politician, always a politician’. Examples include notably Mario Monti, who, after his stint at technocratic prime minister from 2011-2013, ran in legislative elections in 2013. Always in Italy many members of the 1995 technocratic government of Lamberto Dini then served as ministers in political governments (Tiziano Treu and Franco Frattini to mention just two, but also, most notably, Dini himself). In other cases they apply to political office maintaining their independence claims, such as technocratic Prime Minister Reneta Indzhova in Bulgaria, who ran for Mayor of Sofia and then for President as independent, failing in both occasions. Mugur Isarescu, technocratic prime minister of Romania, and Jan Fischer in the Czech Republic, both also attempted to run for President as independents, and also failed. These diverse experiences underline the fact that the independence and neutrality vis-à-vis political parties are more claims than an objective reality.

This cautious approach to what independency from partisan politics means in the context of technocratic governments contrasts with what McDonnell and Valbruzzi argued, that ‘fully’ technocratic governments, as opposed to technocratic-led cabinets, are only those cabinets where all ministers are non-partisan. Cabinets partly composed of partisan ministers can be equally technocratic if ministers declare their neutrality towards parties, and agree to give up their partisan affiliation for the duration of the cabinet. Certainly, for voters’ perceptions, the two are very similar. Moreover, if the percentage of ministers were to be translated directly into a sort of technocracy index, many non-technocratic governments would reach a high score. To give some concrete examples, a high number of technocratic ministers is registered in Austria, France or the Netherlands (Blondel 1985, 62) which never witnessed a technocratic government. Portuguese political government of Guterres in 1995 had a surprisingly high figure of half non-partisan ministers, and those of Cavaco Silva in 1985 and of Santana Lopez in 2004 nearly 40% (Neto and Lobo 2009). So

a non-partisan cabinet is not necessarily technocratic and a technocratic cabinet is not necessarily fully non-partisan.

2.4 Knowledge and expertise

(Condition 3 of what it is to be a Technocrat)

Even according to the contrasting definitions quoted above, technocratic cabinets have the common characteristic of being composed of experts who acquire political power – hence *techno-crats*. McDonnell and Valbruzzi somehow vaguely talk about non-party political expertise. It is unclear why the expertise needs to be political, as opposed to general expertise. From Plato onwards, technocrats have been defined in terms of their knowledge and expertise, not necessarily related to the realm of the political. Plato's Guardians, considered the prototypes of modern technocrats, lovers of wisdom, philosophers kings who are to rule the Republic, had 'a constant passion for any knowledge that will reveal to them something of that reality which endures for ever and is not always passing into and out of existence' (Plato 1966, 186) and rejected beliefs, as they can be false. Two thousand years later, in the 18th century, Saint Simon too thought '... political decisions should be made on the basis of knowledge, not the parochial interests of untutored value preferences of politicians' (Saint-Simon quoted in Fischer 1990, 20) and, even more recently, Francis Bacon's Salomon House experts in his *New Atlantis* (Bacon 1974) echo that. Borrowing Gaetano Mosca's language, knowledge is the expert's *political formula*, in the same way that divine right was the political formula of absolutist monarchies. Philosophers aside, in the period that is of interest to this thesis, condition 3 of McDonnell and Valbruzzi's definition can be at least further divided into two main components, which are overlapping but not equivalent. The first one is knowledge, that is, a certain level of educational credentials, and the second is expertise, which relates to the ministers' professional track record. These two are explored in turn.

Knowledge: A high level of educational credentials providing them with knowledge-based authority (Brint 1990, 364) and knowledge-based legitimacy (Schudson 2006, 499)

It has been observed that, controlling for customary occupation and career indicators, the degree of specialization is higher among the non-parliamentary ministers than among parliamentarians (Nousiainen 1988). If the level of education is an indicator for the degree of '*knowledge*' that technocratic ministers have, these educational credentials must also provide them with expertise in a field that is useful in the circumstances that they are called to deal with. To recall three of the most recent technocratic Prime Ministers, Lucas

Papademos in Greece, Mario Monti in Italy, Jan Fischer in the Czech Republic, for instance, have a postgraduate degree in Economics. Their appointments are ‘examples of leadership changes that were meant to bring more “competent” people into government’ (Hallerberg and Wehner 2013, 2). Moreover, as they had been appointed to solve economic crises, they all had *expertise* – i.e. professional experience - in economics and finance. Lucas Papademos was a former central banker of Greece and former vice-president of the ECB, Mario Monti, former Internal Market European commissioner and renowned economist, Jan Fischer an economist and head of the National Statistics Office. The same logic could apply to all portfolios, so that a degree in law will ensure better management of the ministry of Justice, a degree in international relations will be useful to lead the Foreign Ministry and so on. Cotta and Verzichelli put this succinctly, defining a technocratic minister as a ‘person [...] having rather, some specialist background that is related to the ministry he or she occupies’ (Cotta and Verzichelli 2002, 145). Such appointments follow the logic of finding the right expertise, as more competent leaders mean better outcomes, and as ‘those who have specialised professional skills can be expected to have substantial authority vis-à-vis their colleagues as well as be on equal terms with the civil servants in their department’ (Neto and Strøm 2006, 619). So we can say that, as well as having knowledge, the second characteristic of technocratic ministers is:

Expertise: A high level of professional specialization that prepares technocratic ministers to govern in certain policy areas.

If these two criteria of knowledge and expertise were applicable to all Prime Ministers and ministers of technocratic governments, identifying technocratic ministers could be done along similar lines to the work of Hallerberg and Wehner (2013) and Dreher et al. (2009), and indeed McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014). There are, however, some objections to such narrow definition of what *knowledge* and *expertise* mean in the context of technocratic governments.

Firstly, it is debatable whether there exists such an obvious correspondence between education or professional background and a minister’s portfolio. As Centeno remarks, ‘clearly, some expertise is necessary to operate a statistical office or build a bridge. It is not so obvious, however, that one need be familiar with econometrics to be able to discuss economic policy or be an engineer in order to judge the merits of a new airport site’ (Centeno 1993, 318). As the tasks of ministers are quite varied, political and managerial skills might be more important indicators of competences than expertise in a certain field (Beckman 2006, 113), or maybe ‘oral presentation of ideas’ is the most important

characteristic of a minister (Rose 1971, 403). Secondly, and more fundamentally, technocratic governments have been made up of ministers who had very different knowledge-s and expertise-s, from economic to judicial, from mathematical to literary: there is no one set of qualifications for someone to be deemed an expert. Marin Raykov, recently appointed technocratic Prime Minister in Bulgaria, is a former diplomat, not an economist, even though he was expected to restructure the country's finances. In Portugal Carlos Mota Pinto, appointed in 1978, was a jurist. So were the Greek Ioannis Grivas and Panagiotis Pikrammenos, both appointed for a short period of to lead the country to elections according to a constitutional provision. It is furthermore unclear, in the case of technocratic cabinets in Finland in the 50s, 60s and 70s, where the problems were mainly political and not economic, what kind of expertise would have been needed.

It might be possible to find broad categories under which to subsume all the different qualifications of the ministers serving in technocratic governments because there are some recurring professions and titles. 'Professor' is one, and seems a particularly apt to incorporate *knowledge* in terms of high level of education, and *expertise*. In fact in Italy both Monti's technocratic government in 2011 and Dini's technocratic one in 1995 have been defined as *governments of professors* (La Repubblica 1995, XIX 2011). President Havel proposed to the Czech parliament, when Prime Minister Klaus resigned in 1998, four candidates for a technocratic government, two of which were professors¹⁶. The Portuguese technocratic Prime Minister Mota Pinto was a professor. The list could be longer.

However, there are fundamental problems with such classification too. The professional category of professor, or any other professional category for that matter, does not denote anything unique to technocratic governments. Cabinets, technocratic or not, have seen from the end of the Second World War an increase in the number of ministers who were professors and lawyers (De Almeida, Bermeo et al. 2003) both in countries which had technocratic governments as well as in those which did not and the general trend in the past decades is a growth in technically specialized ministers (Blondel 2001). In Italy for instance the percentage of professors as ministers went up from about 21% in the 1950s to 43% in the 1990s (Cotta and Verzichelli 2002). Portugal shows similar figures, with 'professors' constituting the 22% of ministers in the period 1974-1976 and 32% in the period 76-99, and lawyers remaining at a stable 22% (De Almeida and Pinto 2002). In Greece 41% of ministers between 1974 and 2001 have been lawyers (Sotiropoulos and

¹⁶ Eventually Tosovsky was appointed, who was an economist and former governor of the Czech National Bank

Bourikos 2002). As technocratic minister Franco Frattini pointed out, ‘*Political ministers in normal governments can be, and indeed more often than not are, just as competent. If anything, the difference lies in the independence, or non-independence, of the minister from partisan forces. Technocratic ministers are chosen only on the basis of their expertise, while partisan ministers are chosen also on the basis of their expertise, but on the basis of their partisan affiliation too*

In sum, in the words of Cotta and Verzichelli, ‘labelling members of the ministerial elites solely on the basis of their ‘private’ occupations can offer only a limited understanding of the factors determining their selection’ (Cotta and Verzichelli 2002, 138). In the present case too, the education level and previous professional occupation of ministers is only a partial criterion to define the kind of *knowledge* and *expertise* technocratic ministers are supposed to have. It has to be complemented by a more inter-subjective definition of knowledge, given by the self-definition and discourse adopted by ministers, arguing that ‘what passes as authoritative knowledge in society is socially constructed, subject to the play of power and the occupational self-interest of groups that produce or use knowledge’ (Schudson 2006, 493). This idea was powerfully conveyed in Foucault’s well known power-knowledge relationship, and in Shapiro’s work, which was very suspicious of technical knowledge as separated from power (Shapiro 1994). Taking a more constructivist stance, the way such claims by technocratic ministers, and especially Prime Ministers, play out in reality is fundamental to understand how technocratic governments define and also justify and legitimize their appointment in the eyes of the people – and of their parliamentary supporters. Of particular importance is the way the Head of State presents such governments, and explains the rationale of appointing experts, as will be explored in details in a later section. Therefore we can conclude that one of the main characteristics of technocratic governments is the ministers’ knowledge and expertise - and most importantly claims to them - and the knowledge and expertise-based discourses that legitimize them.

2.5 An agenda of supposedly value-neutral, ideology-free solutions

Recalling once again McDonnell and Valbruzzi’s definition of a technocratic government as the opposite of party government, one of the elements they identify is the fact that policies of that government are not decided within parties (condition b on page 30 above). Indeed technocratic rule is not only the rule of the knowledgeable and independent ministers, but of those people who act in the pursuit of what is today’s equivalent of the

platonic knowledge or ‘truth’, i.e. pareto optimal, efficient, value neutral solutions. Technocratic governments’ programmes in particular reflect this independence, as any government agenda is conditioned by the purpose of the government and its time horizon. If on the one hand the expertise of the ministers justifies their mandate, the actual policies enacted while they are in power are justified in a logic of ‘(economic) efficiency, rather than representation, responsiveness or the expression of identity’ (Hanley 2013, 5). As ex-technocratic Minister Frattini rightly identified in an interview with the author, the difference between a technocratic government programme and that of a party government lies not in the policies, but in the approach to those policies, which stems from the role that technocratic ministers are called to play (Frattini, 2014). Often technocratic ministers are seen as treating the state as an enterprise whose profits one should maximize – or whose losses one should minimize (Centeno and Wolfson 1997, 226). In particular in the recent Eurocrisis, metaphors of ‘medicine’ and clinical-related concepts were very widespread amongst heads of technocratic governments (Borriello 2013), pointing towards an understanding of politics as a problem-solving, illness-curing exercise. This aspect is also fundamental in terms of legitimisation of their agenda and policy choices, which can happen

‘in a realist, rather than normative, context, close to what Habermas identifies as “pragmatic political decisions”, as a “necessary evil”, required to rid society and politics of the malpractices and inefficiencies of the past ... built on the premise that only epistocrats who have excelled in the field of economics can be successful in fighting the root causes of the current economic crisis’ (Michailidou 2013, 9).

In other words, technocracies of all times already have their specific discourse (McKenna and Graham 2000).

While the abandonment of political vision in the name of economic efficiency is already visible in the narrowing of the ideological gap between the left and the right in normal party governments (Theret 1991) technocratic governments bring that tendency to its extreme consequences¹⁷. Firstly, during their mandates often both left and right abide to the necessary measures that the technocratic cabinet will implement, so that there is a temporary levelling up of ideological cleavages. Secondly, those cabinets deny any ideologically specific political intention, or any vision for the future, and present their agenda as solving the here-and-now problems (Fourcade- Gourinchas and Babb 2002). In Putnam’s words, ‘they reject ideological and moralistic criteria preferring to debate policy

¹⁷ Why this is problematic for democracies will be discussed in chapter 8 in more details.

in practical, “pragmatic” terms’ (1976, 387). Thirdly, the often restricted and temporary nature of the government’s mandate limits the incentives for interests groups to put pressure on it, and conversely, not being subject to electoral pressures, technocratic ministers have less incentives to seek the approval of interest groups.

Therefore it is plausible to imagine that technocratic governments can claim that their efficiency comes from the possibility to ignore such pressures and to work in an insulated environment. Technocratic Czech prime minister Fischer for instance ‘felt that his government could – and did - stand above interests groups and lobbies [...] His June 2009 speech to parliament was notable in putting dialogue with interest groups and civil society on an equal footing with its relationship with parties and politicians’ (Hanley 2013). That is clearly an idealized vision of reality, but one that technocratic governments have tried to reinforce and that confirms that the ministers’ claims to independence, both in terms of their own person and of their policies, from political parties and other third actors are crucial.

While McDonnell and Valbruzzi concentrate on whether the technocratic government can change the status quo or not, and use that as a watershed, it seems crucial to include what all technocratic governments have in common in terms of agenda. While there might be no one policy that can be found as pertaining to all of them, there is certainly an technocratic approach to policy making as well as, somehow contradictorily, a technocratic ideology that permeates the action of any technocratic government. This might be related to the condition of the appointment of technocratic governments, which are times of political and/or economic crisis¹⁸. This will weigh heavily on the rhetoric they will use to justify their policy choices and their agenda.

2.6 An indirect link to electoral outcomes

Once again, turning to McDonnell and Valbruzzi’s definition of a technocrat, the independence and expertise of members of cabinet, as well as their attitude to policy making, even assuming they can be determined univocally, are not sufficient conditions to identify a technocratic government. There have been cases of elections in which voters elect a non-partisan expert as their representative. This is for instance the case of Cyprus, where George Vassiliou, an independent businessman, was elected as president in 1988. He formed what by any standards would be called a technocratic government, as ‘his first

¹⁸ The conditions making technocratic government appointment more likely are fully tested in chapter 3. Political and economic crises are shown to increase the likelihood of technocratic government appointment.

cabinet had only two ministers who had previously held office [... and] appointed several who had not served in previous cabinets' (Solsten 1991). This is not a technocratic government, because the Prime Minister in question was elected. What is missing from the definition is that there is a difference in the way in which the cabinet is linked, or stems from, the electoral results. This is not to say that there is *no* link to the elections¹⁹. The present section is devoted to exploring such link.

Technocratic cabinets appointed during the Eurocrisis were accused of being composed of 'unelected technocrats' (BBC News 2011, DemocracyNow 2011, Economist 2011a, Phillips 2011, Plumer 2011, Skelton 2011, Tucker 2011). While this is technically correct, it is not what distinguishes the technocrats from partisan ministers. A part from those countries whose constitutions prescribe ministers to be members of the chambers (such as the UK and Ireland), ministers in Europe are mostly appointed, not elected. However, what such accusations bring out is that the link that technocrats have to elections is formally the same as normal ministers, but substantially very different.

The difference lies in the functioning of the chain of delegation from voters to elected representatives to cabinets. In parliamentary systems, when technocratic governments are appointed, the head of state can become more responsible for the appointment of cabinet ministers than he would otherwise be in normal circumstances. This is so to the point that during the periods preceding the appointments of technocratic cabinets some commentators have argued that parliamentary regimes become a hybrid between a parliamentary system and a presidential one, as voters delegate - albeit indirectly - to the head of state (Morel 1997). This is confirmed by the body of literature, which sees the appointment of technocratic non-partisan ministers as a sign that the head of state 'has had it his way' (e.g. Kuusisto 1958, Nousiainen 1988, Baylis 1996, Neto and Strøm 2006, Neto and Lobo 2009, Neto and Samuels 2010, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2010) as well as by individuals who have had a first-hand experience of it. For instance Italian technocratic Prime Minister Lamberto Dini confirmed: '*I completely agree that the head of state plays a key role in the appointment of technocratic governments, much more than in partisan governments. It is him who decides to resort to this kind of exceptional government, and it oversees its action in a much more active way than with partisan government*' (Dini 2014). This means that while the appointed technocratic cabinet retains its legitimacy, such legitimacy might not stem from the same sources as 'normal' partisan governments, that is, from the elected representatives of the people.

¹⁹ Chapter 8 will explore why this different link to electoral outcomes, and to the electorate in general, is problematic

The second and most important way in which technocratic cabinets differ in terms of electoral delegation is that they do not correspond to the choice of the voters. Admittedly, many constitutions ‘designate parliamentarians as representatives of all citizens, not simply those that elected them’ (Braun and Gilardi 2006, 31). This is explicitly the case, for instance, in the Italian and German constitutions (art. 67 and art. 38 respectively). Therefore they are entitled to choose what is best for the people as a whole, rather than to respect the partisan will of the electorate. This gives potentially a normative justification for such ‘crack’ in the chain of delegation.

While this argument might work in terms of normative justifications for the democratic or non-democratic nature of the cabinet, it remains the case voters do not vote for a political party to suggest - or accept - technocrats as ministers. Non-partisan ministers in technocratic governments do not compete for support and votes preceding the elections: there is no electoral campaign. Nor can voters in the next elections vote them out of office as, bar some exceptions, they will not compete in those elections, so they have no incentive to campaign for them. Their mandate is normally for a much shorter period than that imposed by the electoral cycle, and they are therefore not interested in gaining the support of the voters. Finally, technocratic governments, while of course supported by a *parliamentary* majority, are not the expression of a *partisan* majority, and as parties are the channels through which voters can express their preferences, these same preferences are lost with the appointment of technocratic governments. These elements link back to the initial necessary and sufficient condition of a non-partisan head of cabinet. An interesting illustration is Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy in Hungary in 2001. While he was indeed non-partisan, he was nonetheless proposed as a candidate by the Socialist Party (MSZP), campaigned with them and was eventually elected. In the same way that there are independent but elected MPs, so there can be independent, but elected, prime ministers or presidents, with strong ties to the electoral results.

The reason why the relation between elections and technocratic governments matters is that elections are at the heart of any well-functioning democracy, and therefore the weakness of the link between cabinet and elections is a particularly sensitive issue. However, the link with voters is indirectly maintained through the vote of confidence that all governments, including technocratic ones, have to obtain to rule. To give an example, Romanian economist Lucian Croitoru was appointed by President Basescu in October 2009 as a Prime Minister of a technocratic government following the defeat of Emil Boc's government because of a motion of no confidence. However, a majority of Parliament

opposed such solution, and adopted a declaration asking for his withdrawal. Croitoru's proposed cabinet was voted down by Parliament on November 4. This example shows that technocratic governments 'essentially face the same constraints as partisan governments composed of elected politicians' (Hopkin 2012).

Technocratic cabinets' indirect link to election is not only manifest in the composition of the cabinet, but is also reflected in the kind of parliamentary majority that supports them. As Czech technocratic Prime Minister Fischer himself explained in his programmatic declaration of June 2009 'Unlike standard political governments, [the cabinet] has been not formed by a coalition of political parties. It is formed of non-party experts and does not rest on a politically clearly defined, coalition majority in the Chamber of Deputies' (Hanley 2013). The majority is not the reflection of party politics and factions, but it is a vote of confidence across the political spectrum. Villone, looking at the Italian case, agrees with this: 'A technocratic government is not supported by a political coalition or by a political majority. It means that the government has a numerical majority but not necessarily a political majority. A political majority can crack and new alliances can be formed. On the contrary the majority and the opposition can come together to give a vote of confidence to the technocratic government (Villone 2011). To give an example for Italy, which requires a formal vote of confidence for any new cabinet, the three technocratic governments since the 90s clearly show the highest degree of cross-partisan support, especially in Parliament. Ciampi obtained 52% in the Senate and 78% in Parliament, Dini 61% and 91%, and Monti, even more exceptionally, 89% and 88% respectively. The average support for all other political cabinets is around 55-60% (Marangoni 2012, 138).

The quality of cross-party majorities supporting technocratic cabinets is different from similarly cross-party majorities in the case of grand-coalitions. In grand coalitions more than one party supports the government because of their 'political' link with ministers who belong to that party, and because they have 'not [been] presented with a *fait accompli* at the moment of investiture, but are regularly sounded out as coalition talks proceed' (Döring 1995, 132). In the case of technocratic government, the cabinet is not supported because of being representative of the political forces, but rather the political forces agree to line up behind a technocrat. To give just one example, the Greek arch-rival parties of Pasok and New Democracy became coalition partners under technocratic Prime Ministers Zolotas and Papademos because of the need to shift the blame and regain credibility nationally and internationally.²⁰

²⁰ More on this mechanism can be found in chapter 3

The above discussion has highlighted that technocratic governments are subject to the same mechanisms of censure as normal governments, in particular the vote of confidence, and maintain their link with voters in an indirect way. However they differ from normal governments in so far as they do not represent the majority party or coalition that won the election, they are not supported necessarily by that same parliamentary majority – or that majority alone. They are often the result of a stronger intervention of the head of state than what the political system would expect, especially in those countries where the head of state is directly elected.

2.7 Media recognition of the technocratic nature of the cabinet

Especially in the context of the current Eurocrisis, an interesting phenomenon happened: the media ‘intuitively’ knew when to label a cabinet as technocratic, even though its composition was not straightforwardly technocratic (e.g. Papademos’ cabinet which, as already explained, only had a technocratic prime minister but partisan ministers). The framing performed by the media in terms of definition, reception and interpretation of technocratic governments seems to indeed play a key role in defining a government as technocratic. Theoretically it makes sense to expect that especially in the context of crisis the framing performed by the media is especially important. If technocratic governments are crisis governments, as the rest of the thesis will show convincingly, theories of crisis exploitation, underline the importance of frame and counter frames in assessing the severity of the crisis, its nature and causes, the responsibility attribution and the implications for the future (see for example Boin, Hart et al. 2009). In their view, crisis exploitation is ‘the purposeful utilisation of crisis-type rhetoric to significantly alter levels of political support for public office holders and public policies’ (*idem*, p83).

Within this theoretical framework it makes sense to expect that technocratic governments, as governments happening when there is a crisis in the political system, would be subject to this framing exercise. Moreover, the media take their cues from what the politicians themselves say, and how such governments are presented. Hence the inaugural speeches of the head of state when presenting the new cabinet will establish a benchmark against which the media will react. To give some examples, Napolitano, just before Monti’s appointment, referred to the truce government, as it was defined back then, of Giuseppe Pella in 1953 and the media picked up on the reference and discussed Monti’s cabinet in light of that (see for example Panebianco 2011). More recently, Napolitano was very clear in stating that the new April 2013 Letta government was a political one, even though it

featured several technocrats, and has been treated accordingly by the media since. Bulgarian President Plevneliev, referring to the technocratic cabinet of Raykov that was about to be appointed, said: 'I wish we could work like Monti did in Italy' (Plevneliev 2013a).

The Prime Minister's inaugural speech as well is key in this respect too, as it will be picked up by the media, and conversely, the Prime Minister might use the media as a loud speaker for the validation of technocratic governments as, precisely, technocratic. The media's decision to endorse the self-definition of technocratic government and to underline the technocratic character of the government is key to its continued understanding - and potentially acceptance - by the people. Conversely, the unmasking of technocrats as just a thin veneer of independence over a thick layer of partisan politics will undermine the technocrats' claims for independence (Ceccarelli 1993). Prime Minister Mario Monti was painfully aware of this: '*people take their cues from media, so media endorsement and recognition of our expertise and of our emergency mission was absolutely central to our success in fulfilling that core mission [...]. To be fair, the media had also an important role in amplifying the discontent of the political parties as the painful effects of some of our measures were widely felt and as elections were approaching*' (Monti 2014). Finally, the media can chose to take a more proactive stance, calling for such technocratic governments to be appointed, thus becoming an active actor in the political process (see for instance Fabbrini 2013c). This is less often the case, but it is not inconceivable.

Evidence of a non-anecdotal kind would of course be required to support this argument. In the future it would be interesting to conduct a complete analysis articles from major national newspapers at the time of cabinet appointment to confirm this, and of technocratic Prime Ministerial programmatic speeches. Such analysis, due to its magnitude and the obvious language barriers, is unfortunately beyond the scope of the current work. Nonetheless there remains good theoretical reasons to assume that media recognition is both fundamental in peoples' assessment of technocratic cabinets' legitimacy claims, and, to a minor extent, in the appointment procedure.

2.8 Conclusion: non-partisan, and yet political cabinets

The fact that so many different expressions of 'technocracy' are included in both scholarly and popular definitions of technocratic governments is justified in the above exploration of the elements pertaining to a technocratic government. The analysis illustrates the complicated and fuzzy nature of such category of cabinets. The difficulty of operationalizing who is and is not a technocrat, in terms of the major attributes of

independence, expertise and knowledge make their unequivocal identification problematic. Therefore definitions of technocratic governments which rely mainly on standards of cabinet composition are not based on as solid grounds as they appear. There are nonetheless some common features of technocratic governments, in terms of their approach to policy and their link to electoral outcomes which makes identifying them more straightforward. Such identification can also be helped by media analysis, where the media takes on board and magnifies the claims to *technocratism* of a cabinet. In general, the difficulty of locating the boundary between everyday public administration and technocratic governance has led some authors to define technocracy more in terms of what it is *not* (Hanley 2013, 12). The starting point of McDonnell and Valbruzzi was precisely to identify technocratic governments as the opposite of party government. The current chapter, on the contrary, has tried to define what technocratic governments *are* by underlining that what technocratic governments *say they are* is equally fundamental. What emerges in the current conceptualization of technocratic governments this chapter and distinguishes it from previous ones is the importance of discourse. The ‘ideal’ of a technocratic government, i.e. what technocrats claim to be and to do, is as important as the reality of what a technocratic government objectively is.

The need to convince both the people and the parliament who supports them of their neutrality, efficiency and expertise stems from the fundamentally contradictory position of a government that pretends it is not doing politics but only policies. Many political theorists have wondered whether it is possible to have a non-political government at all, generally coming to the conclusion that it is hardly possible. The chapter agrees that ‘no government can be compared to a car mechanic. A government is political!’ (Villone 2011) and that therefore there is no such thing as government as an exercise in a-political management (Hanley 2013). While the justification and legitimization strategies of technocratic cabinets would require a completely different analysis, the conceptualization just delineated identifies the main difference between party government and technocratic government not in composition or remit of the cabinet, but in the fact that technocratic governments cannot count on a logic of electoral representation. Technocratic governments in this sense often pretend they are a-political and problem fixing, because they need this to justify their *unusual* characteristics. The elements described above, in this understanding, become both their constitutive elements and what justifies their appointment.

In terms of the remaining of the thesis, given the need to operationalize technocratic governments in very specific term, I will retain from the nuanced conceptualization given

above the main element, that is, a technocratic prime minister. This will allow to unequivocally identify the governments that are to be analysed while still admitting that as far as the rest of the cabinet is concerned and as far as policies and attitudes to policy making, there are more nuances than what it is normally conceded. This narrowing down of the definition for purposes of analysis does not take away the complexity just described, but rather it admits that more media and discourse analysis might be conducted in the future to provide evidence to prove that such elements identified pertain to those governments.

Chapter 3 Technocratic governments as crisis governments

In what situations and according to what logic technocratic governments have been appointed in Europe.

Technocratic governments are a particular kind of cabinets, as the previous chapter has illustrated. They present a puzzling case in the context of European party democracies: why would a party democracy resort to the technocratic mode of governance? Or more precisely, why would partisan politicians prefer to leave the highest offices, those of Prime Minister and cabinet ministers, to non-party members? Given that in order for parties to deliver policies to their voters, they need to control the most prominent political offices of the state (Strøm, Müller et al. 2003, 663) it seems at least puzzling that they should voluntarily renounce to do so. And if parties' essential function is that of representation, then it is central to study the one occurrence in which such function is at least partially abdicated. No academic work has systematically looked into what elements increase the likelihood of technocratic government appointment in European democracies. The pages that follow enquire into what brings a partisan political system to adopt the technocratic solution. Understanding what increases the likelihood of the appointment of technocratic government is not only interesting *per se*, but it is also necessary to evaluate the significance of these appointments in terms of what they tell about the status of European party democracies.

The chapter will proceed as follows. It will first reinstate in more details why understanding the origins of technocratic governments is central. Then it will outline the two situations, during the cabinet appointment process, when there is a window of opportunity, politically and constitutionally speaking, for technocratic governments to be appointed. The two are when a cabinet resigns and when there are inconclusive elections which lead to a cabinet formation deadlock. Subsequently it will develop some hypotheses as to the conditions that might influence the appointment. These hypotheses will revolve around the idea that actors' preferences shift before the technocratic solution is chosen. Political partisan actors involved become concerned with efficiency rather than with redistribution, and with governability over representation. These shifts will mostly happen in situations of crisis of a political or economic kind, so the chapter presents in more details the relevance of the 'crisis model' of technocratic government appointment explained in chapter 1, figure 1. The hypotheses are tested with statistical analyses of a time-series-cross-section dataset of all cabinet appointments in 30 European democracies between 1977 and 2013. The analysis confirms the logic of the theoretical model. Technocratic governments

are crisis governments, appointed in emergency situations in similar ways across countries, independently of the political system. In showing that the presence of economic and political crises alone remains the one dominant factor increasing the likelihood of the appointment of technocratic government, the results go against some of the theoretical expectations of the model. The latter expected the status party system and the powers of the Head of State as important moderating factors.

The chapter concludes by explaining that the discrepancy between the theoretical models and the results are due to data problems, in particular the paucity of positive cases of technocratic governments compared to the overall samples of ‘normal’ European cabinets. It will therefore present the subsequent chapters (4, 5 and 6) in which a qualitative exploration of the factors identified as being the main driving motives behind technocratic cabinet appointment is conducted. This complementary analysis will show the importance of moderating factors relating to the party system and to the powers of the Head of State.

3.1 Actors, motivations and processes

As discussed in the introduction as well as in chapter 2, technocratic governments are a political phenomenon that is understudied and under-conceptualised in the academic literature. For the current analysis, I will employ the list of technocratic governments developed in chapter 2, based on the presence of a technocratic prime minister, but also compare it to McDonnell and Valbruzzi’s list (2014). According to my classification, 26 technocratic governments have been appointed in the 27 members of the European Union (i.e. not including Croatia) plus Norway, Switzerland and Iceland, between 1977- 2013²¹. For McDonnell and Valbruzzi the equivalent number for the same period is 21. Testing the hypotheses on both will allow assessing, amongst other things, whether the disagreements between the two go beyond definitional issues, and have an impact on the substantial analysis.

I hypothesise that all technocratic cabinets are underpinned by a similar logic of appointment. They are members of a family of cabinets which represent a preference shift for both politicians and voters. Therefore this chapter unequivocally puts forward the thesis that a common mechanism increasing the likelihood of the appointment of a technocratic government can be identified independently of the ‘kind’ of technocratic government in

²¹ Only considering governments in the democratic period of the country. Hence Spain, Portugal and Greece will only be considered from the 70s onwards, and Central and Eastern European countries from 1989 onwards.

While in the previous chapter I have provided a list of all technocratic governments from 1945 to 2013, for this chapter I will restrict the sample to 1977 for issues of data availability.

McDonnell and Valbruzzi's classification (caretaker, technocrat-led, fully technocratic etc). The two scholars themselves are unclear in their article as to whether appointment dynamics differ or not depending on whether a technocratic cabinet is in power for a longer or a shorter period of time, as well as on whether it is fully composed of technocratic ministers or only lead by a technocratic prime minister.

The hypotheses are derived from literature on government formation and termination, and on the appointment of technocratic ministers - though it is worth stressing once more that technocratic governments are not comparable to a few technocratic ministers in a cabinet. I argue that looking at common influencing factors for technocratic government appointment is justified by the preference shift required in all cases, which is as follows. It is assumed, in a rationalist framework, that politicians are motivated by their desire to increase vote share or being elected to office, and putting forward their preferred policies. When politicians allow major power positions such as that of Prime minister or cabinet ministers, to be occupied by non-partisan candidates, they are overriding traditional concerns for redistribution, policy preference and office seeking instincts. In a mirror-like way, from the electorate's perspective, when voters accept technocratic governments they subscribe to a logic of output legitimacy and agree that the majority of policies become equivalent to valence issues. They forfeit for some time their claims to set the policy agenda through the usual partisan channels.

These preference shifts occur in moments of *emergency* or, as they will be identified from now onwards, in moments of crisis. Crises raise widespread doubts about the effectiveness and the legitimacy of incumbent office holders, existing institutions, established policy paradigms, or even of the political order as a whole (Hart 1993, 119). Critical events, a familiar concept in the government formation and termination literature (see for instance Browne, Frendreis et al. 1984, Lupia and Strom 1995) make delegation to non-partisan politicians a viable option which in normal government formation circumstances would not be considered.

The motivations for politicians to delegate to technocrats, borrowing from the delegation to non-majoritarian institutions literature, are blame avoidance, enhancing the efficiency of rule making and resolving commitment problems (Thatcher and Sweet 2002). Technocrats are thought to govern in a more responsible - though less responsive - way, to use a well-known dichotomy developed by party scholar Peter Mair (2009). That makes them viable candidates for government posts in moments of emergency, when objective criteria of efficient policy making are preferred over partisan ideological considerations (Manfrelliotti

2013). So technocratic governments represent in all of these respects a form of ‘emergency politics’, which nonetheless remain within the boundaries of constitutional norms (Pastorella 2015).

3.2 When do technocrats get appointed in cabinet? Two scenarios of technocratic government appointment

Technocratic government appointments are not the direct result of elections, as explained also in the previous chapter²². It is therefore necessary to understand when, in the cabinet appointment process, the occasion arises in which technocratic governments can be appointed. There are two situations in which there is an opening up of political space. The first one is between the dissolution of a cabinet and the next election, where a ‘normal’ party government does not fill such temporary power gap (Scenario 1). The second possibility is when, following elections, the results are such, and the situation of the party system is such, that there is a deadlock in cabinet formation not followed by immediate elections. In this case too (Scenario 2), a technocratic government can fill the temporary power gap. These two possibilities are explored more in details in the next two sections.

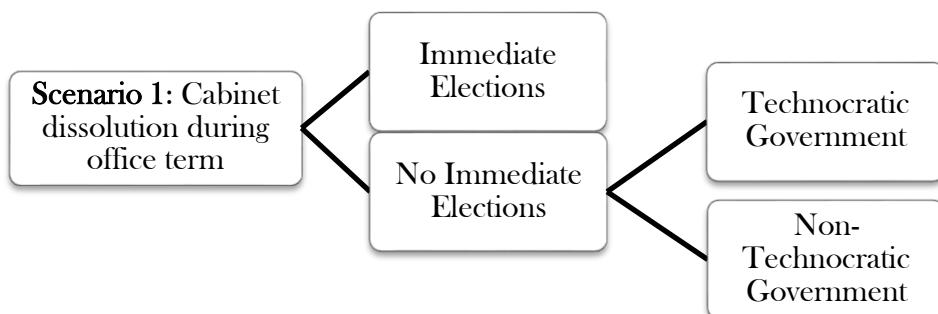


Figure 3-1 Scenario 1: Cabinet dissolution leading to a technocratic government

Cabinet dissolution, also called government termination, can happen, from the point of view of the cabinet, either voluntarily or involuntarily. Although strategic dissolution is mostly linked to parliament dissolution (Strøm and Swindle 2002), a cabinet can also voluntarily resign in an opportunistic way to make room for elections, for a non-electoral replacement cabinet which is perceived as being in its own interest (Schleiter and Issar 2015) or to prevent a no confidence vote (Mitchell 2003). Alternatively, it will be forced to resign by a vote of no confidence by parliament, or because of the intervention of Heads of State with the exclusive right to dissolve the government (Bergman, Müller and Strøm

²² Section: ‘An indirect link to electoral outcomes’

2003). Whether voluntary or involuntary, cabinet dissolution has been explained in two ways. One school of thought sees it as a function of measured, predictable and institutionally fixed explanatory variables. Another school of thought identifies stochastic processes such as a shock to the system that was not fully anticipated at the time when the government was formed (Laver and Shepsle 1995, 45) as the key explanation. For instance ‘government scandal, intra-government disagreement, or death of a prime minister’ (King, Alt et al. 1990, 849) or an economic critical condition with a subsequent defeat over a major bill (Döring 1995, 136) are examples of shocks to the system.

Both those sets of explanations can lead to a resignation or vote of no confidence, and to a non-electoral cabinet replacement in the form of a technocratic government. The hypotheses below take both schools of thoughts into consideration.

Scenario 1 moreover is in line with the crisis model of technocratic government appointment, as cabinet dissolution can be considered in itself a mini-crisis that destabilizes the political system.

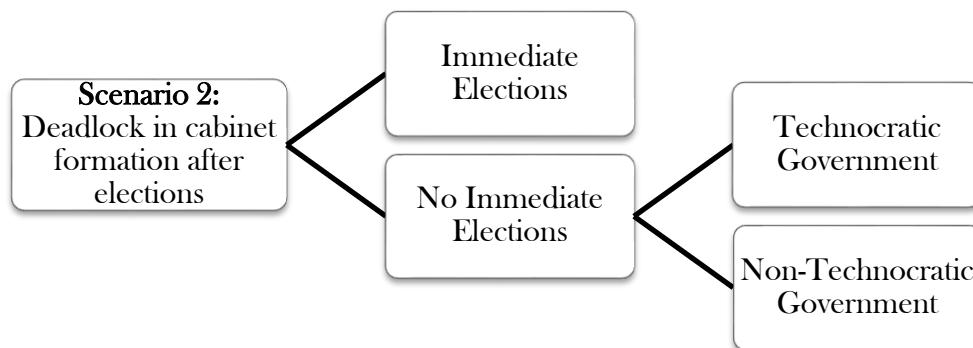


Figure 3-2 Scenario 2: Deadlock in cabinet formation leading to a technocratic government

The appointment of a technocratic government is also possible when there is a deadlock in cabinet formation after elections have taken place and have not yielded clear results. The deadlock can happen for lack of support by Parliament for a proposed government/coalition, or failure to form such government/coalition in the first place because of practical (number of votes) and ideological conditions, or a combination of social as well as economic disagreements between the winners of the elections. Occasionally European constitutions specify what needs to be done in such event²³, but mostly there is a discretionary margin of manoeuvre as to what next steps to take in the appointment

²³ e.g. the Greek constitution mandates the appointment of the President of the Supreme Administrative Court or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court or of the Court of Auditors to form a Cabinet, so effectively suggests the appointment of a technocratic government.

process. This margin leaves room to potentially appoint a technocratic government. This, however, seems to be a more unlikely scenario for technocratic government appointment because all parties in the post-election moment will have incentives to form a cabinet, and, excluding very rare cases, at least some parties will always have the ‘numbers’ to do so. Therefore, if parties have the means and the motivation to form a partisan cabinet, a peculiar situation would need to occur to convince them to do otherwise. Overall it would seem sensible to assume that scenario 2 is less frequent than scenario 1, and the data confirms this (31 out of 36 technocratic governments appointed between 1945 and 2015 are non-electoral replacements).

3.2 Why do technocrats get appointed? A crisis model of technocratic government appointment

Having seen the two pathways potentially leading to a technocratic government, one can now turn to which factors bring them about. In both Case 1 and Case 2 the system is faced with two choices: early elections or non-electoral replacement of the cabinet (Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009a). The hypotheses identify the reasons why the latter, in the form of a technocratic government, is preferred to the former. As mentioned, a situation of crisis would affect the status quo in which parties and politicians are concerned with office, redistribution and ideology. Recalling from the section above and from the introductory chapter, the model in figure 3 below is proposed.

The crisis literature supplies the best framework for identifying the types of crisis that are relevant for technocratic government appointment. Laver and Shepsle (1998) classification is the ideal starting point for clarity and because of their focus on how crisis affect political actors’ preferences, rather than simply government duration. They describe critical events as falling under four categories: policy shocks altering policy positions (e.g. fall of Berlin Wall), agenda shocks altering parties’ saliency weights attached to policy positions (e.g. a new law on abortion), decision rule shocks which change the legislative decision rule (e.g. an electoral reform), public opinion shocks affecting commonly held expectations. Out of all the possible events falling under these four categories, the literature on cabinet termination identifies ‘economic shocks and scandals’ as the two principal events ‘influencing bargaining about government termination’ (Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009a, 500) see also (Warwick 1994).

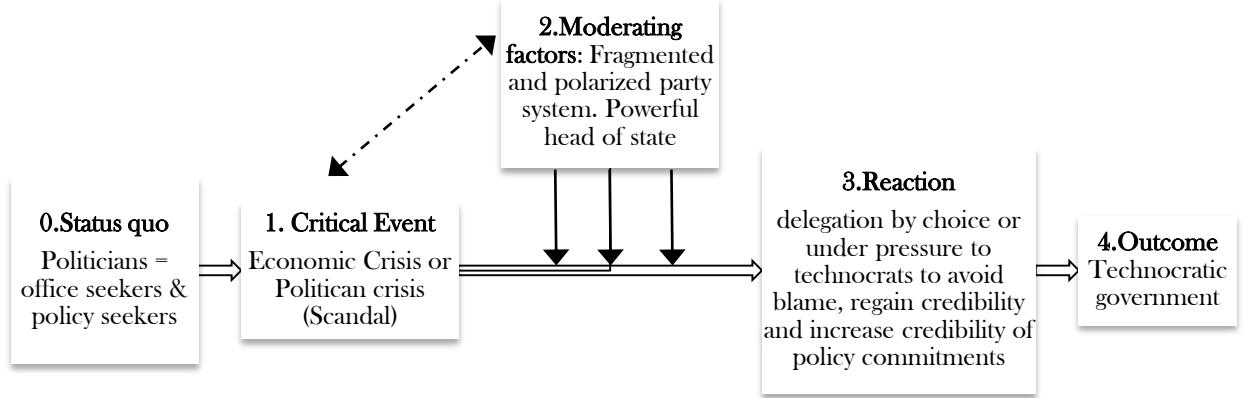


Figure 3-3 Process leading politicians to appoint a technocratic government.

Focusing on public opinion shocks first, they are often due to politicians' misconduct (corruption, dishonesty, immoral behaviour, clientelism etc.). These behaviours have been singled out as one of the potential explanations of the weakening of the political class as such, and consequently of a diminished trust in that very class by the voters. Corruption in particular is seen as one of the main cause of the failure of politics and rise of anti-politics feelings (Schedler 1997, 37). The effects of discovery of corruption in episodes of scandals on political systems are studied with increased scholarly interest (Markovits and Silverstein 1988, Garrard and Newell 2006, Berlinski, Dewan and Dowding 2012). From the voters' perspective, according to this literature, scandals have an effect of *elite damage*, in so far as the image of the political elite is tarnished in the eyes of the voters. This in turn will bring about 'disruption of societal routines and expectations [which will] open up political space for actors inside and outside government' (Boin, Hart and McConnell 2009, 82). They create disorder in voting patterns, and by decreasing the number of votes given to the party involved in the scandal, might lead to a lack of clear majority in parliament and then to a technocratic government. Scandals have been also shown to make citizens less satisfied with party democracy (Kumlin and Esaiasson 2012) opening room for alternative political or non-political configurations, in terms of anti-corruption non-aligned 'parties', especially in the newer democracies of Central and Eastern Europe (Bågenholm and Charron 2014).

In the present case, such configuration could be a technocratic cabinet.

From political parties' perspective, scandals discredit them and diminish their reservoir of democratic legitimacy, where democratic legitimacy is understood not only as requiring the absence of coercion, but also 'a tissue of relationships between government and society' (Rosanvallon 2011, 9). These scandal episodes have the potential to change parties' preferences: rather than being in power, it might be better for them to delegate governing

to technocrats for a period and regain credibility. Some scholars have already pointed out that the appointment of technocratic governments is occasionally used as a remedy to prevent people's distrust of politicians from becoming too rooted (Tucker and et al. 2000, Cotta and Verzichelli 2002, Kysela and Kuhn 2007). Often scandals are not limited to personal failing of individual politicians but become 'system failures' of effective government (Barker 1994). This is particularly the case when the scandal involves more than one individual or more than one party. This might lead to not only a government collapse (Scenario 1), but to a broader crisis of the party system, which might make the intervention of a government of technocrats more welcome. Finally, scandals are not always just events that happen, but can purposely be brought to light by, for instance, the opposition, which thinks to gain from their disclosure. Overall:

*H1 Political scandals increase the likelihood of the appointment of a technocratic cabinet*²⁴

Returning to Laver and Schepsle, and considering another category from their list, policy shocks 'create a need for both government and opposition parties to reassess their policy position or, in some instances to take altogether new policy positions' (p.36). The authors provide the example of bankruptcies and currency crises as such policy shocks that will alter policy position on economic matters. Stretching their suggestion further, these policy shocks might explain shifts in preferences of the kind required to appoint a technocratic government and to delegate decisions as important as economic policies. In normal cabinet appointments, concerns for redistributive gains (in terms of assigning cabinet positions to members of a certain party) will win over concerns for efficiency, in the very important field of economic policy too. Economics is one of the major axis of traditional differentiation between parties to the right and the left of the political spectrum. In the conclusion to the classic '*The political control of the Economy*', Tufte put it succinctly thus: 'the single most important determinant of variations in macroeconomic performance from one industrialised democracy to another is the location on the left-right spectrum of the governing party' (Tufte 1978, 104). However, if the country is in a crisis, concerns for efficiency will be predominant over disagreements of a redistributive nature (Neto and Strøm 2006) and these concerns might lead to a shift even in the realm of economic policy, which is usually divisive and divided over partisan lines.

²⁴ For a full list of scandals, when they occurred and who they involved, see Annex I.

In situations of economic crisis, negative economic conditions and fear on behalf of the markets might increase the likelihood of technocrats/independents entering the cabinet. Having ‘technocrats’ as central bankers, finance ministers and prime ministers reassures both markets and voters (Halleberg and Wehner 2013). Moreover in the case of economic crises, there will be the need to enact unpopular reforms and politicians might decide to delegate decision making to technocratic governments in order to avoid taking the blame for them (Weaver 1986, Thatcher and Sweet 2002). In some countries, scholars have already identified the lack of ability and willingness to reform as the main driver for the appointment of technocratic governments (Fabbrini 2013). Another aspect of the blame avoidance strategy is for parties to find a consensual solution underpinned by ideals of national unity (Peters, Pierre et al. 2011, Lodge and Wegrich 2012) in which all parties share the blame for the tough measures. Technocratic governments are often called governments of national unity and supported by broad cross-party coalitions, precisely following that logic.

Similar logics of blame avoidance and credibility enhancement are at play when economic crises are co-existing with international financial arrangements, either to contain the damage or to plainly help the country overcome the crisis (such as through IMF programmes or EU bailouts). External pressures to carry out economic reforms can therefore play a role too in making technocratic government appointment more likely. The same can be said about pressures to comply to certain international rules which constrain the actions of economic policy makers in the country, such as joining the Euro-area (Dyson and Featherstone 1996). They can make dealing with an economic crisis a twice-fold difficult task. So economic crises coupled with external pressures maximise the chances of technocratic government appointment.

Finally, a rapidly deteriorating economy is a quintessential valence issue (Clarke, Scotto and Kornberg 2011), which in line with the expectations of the model is the perfect environment for a technocratic government to be accepted by the population. Analysis of available data up to 2000 already shows significant correlation between economic problems and the appointment of non-partisans members of the executive (Neto and Samuels 2010) as party politicians would want to prioritise technical expertise over partisanship. Recent works also show that non-electoral replacement of cabinets following cabinet termination is often due to shaky economic conditions (Schleiter and Issar 2015).

The expectation would therefore be the following:

H2 Economic crises are positively associated with appointment of technocratic cabinets

The two hypotheses developed above regarding scandals and economic crises as situations which increase the likelihood of appointment of technocratic governments do not only follow their individual logic, but might also be linked between themselves and work in tandem. Parties might have more incentives to politicise corruption when there are unfavourable economic conditions, and corruption as an issue could be linked with economic mismanagement (Bågenholm and Charron 2014). Economic difficulties might also be considered delegitimising situations for democracies in the same way as scandals are. If good economic performance can be seen as fostering legitimisation of democratic regimes (Anderson 1995), conversely, bad economic performance in the case of a crisis might cause legitimacy crisis that will bring about a change in the relationship between civil society, parties and governments and will leave more political room for the appointment of a technocratic government.

A note of caution should be added here. There could be an endogeneity problem in so far as it is theoretically possible that both the two types of crises and the technocratic governments have in fact been made more likely by a third other element which is not accounted for. While this problem cannot be resolved in the current set up of the analysis, it is nonetheless appropriate to recognise such possibility and to therefore acknowledge the limitations of the present chapter.

3.3 Moderating variables: the importance of institutional factors

The model in Figure 1 indicates that, even though crises are the main direct influencing factors of technocratic government appointment, there are also moderating factors making the appointment in situations of crisis more likely. It should be noted that while there is a temporal sequence between the status quo, the occurrence of the crisis, and the outcome which can be delegation to technocrats or not, the moderating factors are not necessarily posterior to the crisis event. These factors, which relate mainly to institutional characteristics of the political system, have a longer lifespan than the crises, on average. So moderating factors related to the party system and to the presidential powers are providing the backdrop against which events like crises happen. Moreover, as explained in chapter 1, the double dotted arrow in the model signals the fact that moderating institutional variable and crisis variables are closely intertwined. In other words, while theoretically the main triggering factor for technocratic government appointment are crises, the occurrence of these crises could be more likely because of the situation of the political system, which is captured by the moderating factors. This potentially endogenous relationship does not

affect the validity of the theoretical model. However, in order to ensure that moderating factors are not by themselves in fact directly responsible for technocratic government appointment, these moderating factors will be tested as if they were direct effect variables.

The first hypothesis on a moderating factor concerns the influence of the Head of State in technocratic government appointment. The more powerful the Head of State, the more the likelihood of technocratic government appointments increases in situations of crisis. The literature provides various justifications as to why the Head of State would want to intervene in technocratic government appointments. Starting from the no familiar McDonnell and Valbruzzi's article, it hypothesises technocratic government appointments are influenced by constitutional provisions on the powers of the Head of State (McDonnell and Valbruzzi 2014). The article does not test such hypothesis however.

Literature on government formation also points at the fact that parties are not alone in determining the cabinet composition, and in fact that the effects of a stronger president on cabinet composition can be identified (Blondel and Müller-Rommel 2001). In particular in political systems where tensions between the president's mandate and that of his or her legislative party are considerable (Samuels and Shugart 2010), cabinet members drawn from the president's party are not automatically good agents for a president (Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2010). This points at the fact that technocratic ministers could be a good option for even very partisan Heads of State. Indeed Neto and Strøm (2006) find strong evidence that presidential and semi-presidential systems, where Heads of State are more powerful, are the most likely to appoint non-partisan-ministers. Schleiter and Morgan-Jones (2009b) have also confirmed this, calculating that in semi-presidential regimes the average of non-partisan ministers is 17%, against 4% in parliamentary democracies. From all of the points above it follows that in normal circumstances a powerful Head of State has more incentives to intervene in cabinet formation to appoint independents.

The model presented in figure 1 builds on such suggestions from the literature but goes further than simply saying that powerful Heads of State are more likely to appoint a technocratic government. It argues that these incentives become stronger in situations of crises. When the country is experiencing a crisis period, the president is more likely to intervene either because of his role of guarantor of stability for the country, or because he sees the opportunity to put forward his interests which, as already mentioned, are not necessarily best served by partisan ministers. A directly elected and powerful president might prefer a technocratic government to a partisan government of the opposing faction.

Such arrangement can be particularly useful if the president's own party has been tainted by a scandal²⁵ and needs some time to clean up while not losing its grip on the cabinet completely. The president might also prefer a technocratic government to a partisan government if there is need for swift economic reforms which are going to have a negative effects on the electoral chances of the party/ies in power.

Knowledge of the cases of technocratic governments in Europe points at the direction of the president as a key agent too. In some countries technocratic governments were called 'presidential governments', that is, cabinets formed by the president and relying primarily on the presidential support. Portugal (Bergman, Müller et al. 2003, 559, Neto and Lobo), Finland, (Kuusisto 1958, Metcalf 2000, Raunio 2004) and Italy (Olivetti 2012, Fusaro 2013, Scaccia 2015) are three such examples. Therefore:

H3 A powerful Head of State increases the likelihood that an economic crisis and scandals will lead to the appointment of a technocratic government.

Other important moderating factors concern the quality and status of the party system. The less stable the system because of fragmentation and polarization, the more likely it is that a situation of crisis will turn into a favourable setting for the appointment of technocratic governments. To begin with, the literature on government formation identifies strong relationships between the characteristics of the party system and their effects on the appointment of technocratic ministers. Neto and Samuels (2010) have shown that proportion of non-partisan ministers in the cabinet tends to increase as legislative fragmentation increases across all regimes: presidential, semi-parliamentary and parliamentary systems. Schleiter and Morgan-Jones (2010) agree with this, and calculate that an increase of parliamentary fragmentation by one effective party raises the odds of non-partisan cabinet formation in semi-presidential systems by 39%. In terms of the moderating effects on the main crises variables, fragmented parliaments might lead to more fragile coalitions which would break in the event of a scandal – where for instance a coalition partner wants to distance itself from the tainted party. A fragmented parliament could potentially have more troubles agreeing and carrying out difficult economic reforms in the event of an economic crisis, as tough consolidations measures are difficult to pass without a strong and stable majority. Finally, linked to Hypothesis 3, when party fragmentation is

²⁵ A more detailed explanation of the Head of State incentives can be found in chapter 6

high, the Head of State can use a *divide et impera* tactics to appoint ministers of his own choice, often of non-partisan description. Therefore:

H4 High legislative fragmentation increases the likelihood that an economic crisis and scandals will lead to the appointment of a technocratic government.

However, it has to be noted that some authors have argued that in fact parliamentary fragmentation might have the opposite effect. Neto and Strøm (2006) for instance argue that ‘the parliamentary opposition is the counterweight to the prime minister’s coalition, and the more fragmented the parliament, the less likely it is that a rival coalition could emerge to displace the incumbent prime minister’ (p.634) and that therefore the more the parliament is fragmented, the less it is likely that there will a situation as such described in Scenario 1 above. The variable legislative fragmentation, however, is not significant in their study. In sum, the literature seems to be divided on the issue from a theoretical perspective. The hypothesis which is tested in this chapter expects the effects of scandals and economic crisis to be more disruptive if the system is fragmented, and therefore to make the political environment more conducive to technocratic government appointment.

The second hypothesis concerning the party system considers the polarization of such system, which is more conducive to technocratic governments. This is linked to the previous hypothesis, as parties’ strategic incentives in a polarized party environment – often to be found in proportional electoral systems - are less to take a centrist position, and more to express their real and potentially more extreme partisan belief. This, in a situation of crisis, would make crisis management more complex, especially when there is the need to find common solution. Rather than compromising towards a centrist position, polarized party systems might see in the option of a technocratic government a way not to give up their policy positions overtly, but still to find a solution to the crisis.

On the contrary, in a majoritarian system, office-seeking parties trying to maximize their vote shares - since the largest party is likely to become the governing party- will adopt a centrist policy positioning which tends to enhance parties’ vote shares (Dow 2011). This means that in such systems crisis management without resorting to technocrats would be easier, both because of the more centrist attitude of parties, but also because of the more stable quality of cabinets. With regards to the latter point, and in line with the previous hypothesis, as the number of competing parties in an election increases, so does the average level of party-system polarization (Cox 1990). Coalition formation is more difficult in polarized systems (Golder 2010), making them more subject to end up in either scenario 1 or scenario 2 described above. To give an example, if a cabinet collapses because of a crisis

situation and a coalition needs to be formed mid-term, a deadlock where only a technocratic government is a viable solution is quite likely (Scenario 1 above). Therefore:

H5 High party system polarization increases the likelihood of an economic crisis and scandals will lead to the appointment of a technocratic government.

As for party system fragmentation, in the case of polarization too there are dissenting voices in the literature that argue that in fact polarized systems are more stable, and therefore more equipped to resist political and economic crisis without the need to appoint technocratic governments. For instance: 'Parties in polarized systems are more reluctant to initiate political crises – due to ideological or other reasons – for fear of breaking up a coalition. This is so because they see no alternative to the present coalition except early elections' (Maoz and Somer-Topcu 2010, 805). Nonetheless, the expectation from the theoretical model is once again that a polarized system will be a more fragile system, thus opening up opportunities for technocratic government appointments in situation of crises.

3.4 Data and measurements

In order to test these expectations, a time-series-cross-section dataset of all cabinet appointments in thirty European democracies between 1977 and 2013 is built. This comprises of 473 cabinets in this period across countries. The dependent and independent variables are measured as follows.

Government type

The dependent variable is binary with 1 indicating the appointment of one of the 26 technocratic governments, and 0 if the appointed prime minister was partisan. The list of technocratic government is the one presented in chapter 2, but a subsequent model will also test McDonnell and Valbruzzi's (2014) list that differs in some assignments.

Political scandal

Information on whether a political scandal occurred in the period preceding the appointment of the cabinet is taken from a database built by Kumlin and Esaiasson (2012), which codes for major political scandals mentioned in country election reports published in *Electoral Studies* and *West European Politics*. While this database covers Western European democracies from 1978 to 2007, the present work has extended it using the same method to include Eastern European democracies and the years 2007-2013. Moreover, approximate dates and durations for each and every scandal have also been determined in order to assign

it to the appropriate cabinet appointment.²⁶ Coding instructions, assessments of validity and inter-coder reliability as well as a list of all identified scandals can be found in Annex I. The scandal variable is operationalized as a dummy, that is 1 if a scandal occurred in the period between the previous and the new cabinet appointment, and 0 otherwise.²⁷

Economic crisis

The theoretical expectations see appointment of technocratic prime ministers to be a result of dramatic crises rather than usual macro-economic cycles. The measure of economic crisis should reflect this severity: a dummy variable for economic recession that is 1 if the country's GDP growth (in real terms) falls below 0 in the appointment year. This information is taken from World Bank data. The advantage of this measure is its simplicity as well as its availability across countries and time.

An alternative measure of banking, debt, and currency crises compiled from two databases constructed by the European Central Bank (Babecký, Havránek et al. 2012) and the International Monetary Fund (Laeven and Valencia 2013) is also used in robustness checks. To operationalize the severity of the crisis, the sum of the types of crises reported for the appointment year is employed. Hence, the variable runs from 0 (no crisis) to 3 (banking, debt, and currency crisis).

Powers of the head of state

There are several ways in which presidential powers have been measured in the literature. Alan Siaroff's coding of 9 different presidential powers (Siaroff 2003) is the most complete measure in terms of geographical scope and time-frame. However, Siaroff's assessments do not include constitutional monarchies. Given the ceremonial role of monarchs, in countries where there is a monarchy, the head of state powers will be coded as 0, in line with common practice (e.g. Elgie 2011)²⁸. The variable will therefore have a value between 0 and 9, and the powers detailed in the article are the following:

²⁶ This information is sufficiently precise to recover the temporal ordering between scandals and appointments, but it is often not precise enough to ascertain the exact time elapsed since the initial discovery or last public attention related to the scandal.

²⁷ Notice that this period can vary considerably. However, as technocratic governments most often occur after cabinet dissolution their preceding cabinet is typically short-lived. This makes it *ceteris paribus* less likely for a scandal to occur in this period. Our results on scandals are therefore likely to be conservative estimates.

²⁸ Alan Siaroff himself agreed in an email exchange with the author that assigning 0 to monarchs is the most sensible value to attribute powers, as this captures the fact that monarchs are the least powerful and the least partisan of all heads of state.

Table 3-1 Presidential powers, adapted from Siaroff (2003)

PE	President popularly elected (1) or not (0)
CE	Concurrent elections of legislature (1) or not (0)
AP	Discretionary appointment by the president of some key individuals such as the prime minister, other cabinet ministers, high court judges, senior military figures and/or central bankers (1) or not (0)
CM	Ability to chair formal cabinet meetings and thus engage in agenda setting (1) or not (0)
VT	Power to veto legislation, or more accurately the right to return legislation for further consideration
EDP	Broad emergency or decree powers for national disorder and/or economic matters which are effectively valid for an unlimited time (1) or not (0)
FP	A central role (or indeed the central role) in foreign policy, including presiding over a security or defence council and/or having a say in the choice of foreign and defence ministers, attending and speaking for the country at international political meetings and summits, and generally ‘making’ foreign policy in at least certain key areas (1) or not (0)
GF	A central role in forming the government, i.e. ability to select, remove and/or keep from office a given individual as prime minister, and/or a given party as part of the cabinet (1) or not (0)
DL	Ability of the president to dissolve the legislature at will, at most subject to only temporal restrictions (1) or not (0)

Legislative fragmentation and party system polarization

Legislative fragmentation is operationalized as the effective number of parliamentary parties at the time of appointment, taken from Gallagher (2013).

Party system polarization is measured on the basis of party positions from the Comparative Manifesto Project's coding of election manifestos (Volkens, Lehmann et al. 2013). The focus is on left-right polarization as the major dimension of party competition throughout Europe (Huber and Inglehart 1995, Bakker, Jolly and Polk 2012) that is captured by the CMP's RILE scale. Polarization of the parliamentary parties is operationalized according to Dalton (2008)²⁹.

$$\text{Polarization} = \sqrt{\sum \text{Party's seat share} * \left(\frac{\text{Party's RILE} - \text{Average RILE}}{5} \right)^2}$$

²⁹ Re-estimating the models with alternative polarization measures consistently show *no* association with the appointment of technocratic cabinets.

3.5 Analysis and results

The data is modelled with logistic regressions. The main problem is the small number of technocratic governments ('positive' outcomes on the dependent variable) restricts the quantity of information that can be extracted from the sample. On the one hand, the rather low ratio between technocratic vs. partisan governments ($\frac{26}{473} = 0.055$) introduces 'rare events' bias of logistic regression estimators that will generally yield probabilities of technocratic government appointment ($Pr(Y = 1)$) that are too small (King and Zeng 2001a, 2001b). However, as technocratic governments still make up 5.5% of the sample, they are much more frequent than most outcomes in typical 'rare event' analyses (such as wars or coups).

On the other hand, maximum likelihood estimation of the logistic model is more generally known to be biased in finite samples and this bias starkly depends on the absolute number of the rarer outcome. From this perspective, 26 technocratic governments are very few. Two remedies are adopted to address this problem. First, penalized maximum likelihood (Firth 1993) is used to estimate the models, as that method corrects for bias of the ML estimator in finite samples and has been widely used in rare events analysis. Second, a low number of predictors is employed in each model (typically not more than 2-3 substantive predictors) in order to sustain a workable ratio between positive outcomes and parameters.

Two further issues need to be addressed: the country-clustering and the time dimension of the data. With regard to countries, fixed-effects specifications cannot be used given the associated stark loss of degrees of freedom. However, the robustness of the results can be checked with a random intercept on the country level as well as with country-clustered standard errors which are obtained from a nonparametric bootstrap of the major model. In contrast, dynamics over time are modelled explicitly. Beck, Katz and Tucker (1998) have outlined the work horse model for 'taking time seriously' in binary time series cross section (TSCS) data. Their fundamental insight is that this data is identical to grouped duration data and that researchers should therefore think about the 'hazard rate' associated with the event they model. In the present context, the issue of serial correlation boils down to the substantive question of whether the baseline likelihood of technocratic appointments is constant over time *or* depends on how many cabinets (or time) have passed since the last technocratic cabinet. The theoretical conjecture is that further technocratic appointments should indeed be more likely in the aftermath of an (initial) technocratic government as actors get 'used' to the situation. To model these time dynamics the approach recently

suggested by Carter and Signorino (2010) is the most appropriate: including a variable indicating the number of cabinets since the last technocratic government as well as its quadratic and cubic polynomials in our models (t, t^2, t^3).³⁰

As a last modelling choice, it has to be taken into account the fact that 21 of the 26 technocratic governments analysed were appointed as a result of cabinet dissolution and only 5 directly after elections. To avoid omitted variable bias from this difference between the two contexts and to model the two scenarios of cabinet appointment outlined above, a dummy variable that is 1 for post-election appointments and 0 otherwise is included.³¹

In a first analysis step, the 'crisis model' of technocratic appointment is analysed. All results are reported in *Table 3-2*. As there are some missing data, especially when country election reports for the scandal variable are not available, predictive mean matching with chained equations are used to create a multiply imputed dataset. Model 1A regresses the dependent variable on the modelling fundamentals – t and its polynomials as well as post-election appointment dummy – excluding any substantive predictor. The results demonstrate that the theoretical expectations about dynamics and scenarios of appointments to technocrats' appointment were appropriate. Technocratic governments are less likely to be appointed after elections and this effect is highly statistically significant.

Table 3-2 Crisis model of technocratic appointment

	Model 1A	Model 2A	Model 3A	Model 4A
<i>Post Elections</i>	-1.934 (0.521)***	-2.458 (0.622)***	-2.099 (0.545)***	-2.592 (0.651)***
<i>t</i>	-0.457 (0.125)***	-0.503 (0.136)***	-0.438 (0.126)***	-0.482 (0.138)***
<i>t2</i>	0.013 (0.006)**	0.014 (0.006)**	0.013 (0.006)**	0.013 (0.007)**
<i>t3</i>	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
<i>Political Scandal</i>		2.005 (0.613)***		1.985 (0.641)***
<i>Econ Recesson</i>			1.077 (0.475)**	1.075 (0.526)**
<i>Constant</i>	0.250 (0.458)	-0.138 (0.513)	-0.103 (0.493)	-0.511 (0.567)

³⁰ This approach is much less parameter-intense than the dummy variable approach suggested by Beck and his co-authors that would be infeasible in the present case. Monte Carlo simulations by Carter and Signorino indicate that it generally outperforms the dummy variables and performs as well as splines. The number of cabinets since the last technocratic appointment is used rather than days/years as a pseudo-time variable as it is assumed that actors will rather think about the last 1, 2, 3 formation occasions than about the physical time elapsed. However the same results are obtained with weaker time dynamics when using days as t . Equally the same results are obtained when using a single dummy variable κ_{1i} (essentially a lagged dependent variable) as in Beck et al. (2001).

³¹ The results are substantively the same if this dummy variable is not included with the effect of economic recessions being reduced to significance at the 10% level.

Countries	30	30	30	30
N	473	473	473	473

Notes: Logistic regression models estimated with Firth's penalized ML method;

Multiple imputation using predictive mean matching with chained equations;

Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

In terms of time, the coefficient on t is clearly negative indicating that technocratic governments tend to follow each other and become less likely as party cabinets alternate for long. However, the positive and significant coefficient on t^2 indicates that this trend is not linear but flattens out, and potentially technocratic governments become more likely again after long periods of party rule. *Figure 3-4* plots the dynamics in terms of predicted probabilities.

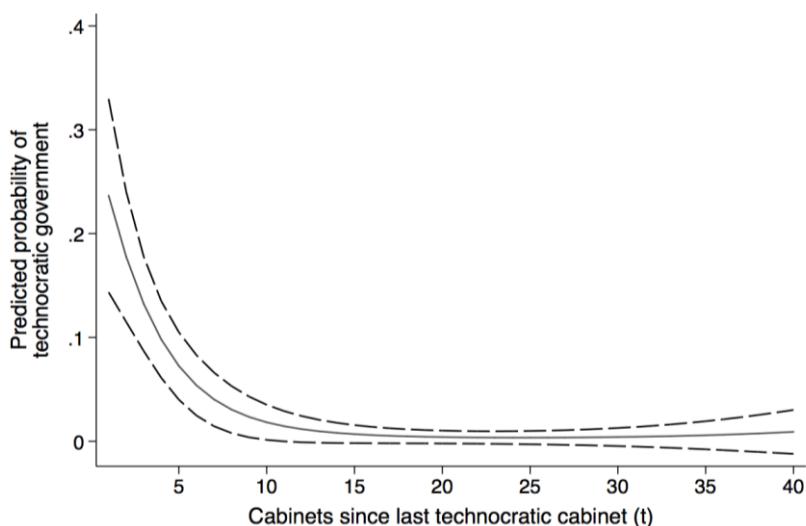


Figure 3-4 Dynamics of technocratic government appointments over time

It indicates that the baseline 'risk' of two technocratic government immediately following another is about 23% but drops below 10% after three consecutive partisan cabinets.³²

Reverting to Table 3-2, model 2A tests whether political scandals increase the likelihood of technocratic governments by adding the scandals dummy variable. The results provide strong support for the hypothesis. The coefficient is positive and highly significant at the 1% level. Model 3A test the second hypothesis that economic recessions increase the odds for the appointment of technocratic governments. Again, the hypothesis is supported by the data with a significant coefficient at the 5% level. As both variables are dummies, their effects can be directly compared, which illustrates that the marginal effect of scandals is about twice the magnitude compared to economic recessions. Model 4A confirms that

³² The effects in the figure were estimated with 'normal' maximum likelihood estimation due to technical restrictions.

these effects hold independently. An interaction effect between scandals and economic recession was also tested but did not yield any significance. Clearly, interactions are very much squeezing the effective sample, i.e. there are only 19 cases in the entire sample in which scandals and economic recession occur together.

In a second step, the moderating institutional factors are tested. As mentioned, they are tested both as moderating in line with the theoretical model, but also as having a direct effect to verify the endogeneity of these factors with the crisis variable. The results of the former are presented in table 3-3. The results of the latter are presented in table 3-4. In neither case the results are significant.

Beginning with Table 3-3, it shows the interactions between the institutional and the crisis variables. All of the interactions terms are negative, and not statistically significant. There could be two sets of explanations as to why the theoretical model is not confirmed by the statistical results. One set is to do with the nature of the data and the possibility of analysis, given the data set. Another is to do with variable measurement. With regards to the former, the statistical power of the interactions is significantly reduced by the paucity of positive cases, i.e. cases of technocratic governments. This means that while in the real world such interaction might be taking place, and the next three chapters will be dedicated to showing precisely this, in the present analysis the statistical power is not enough to detect them. Secondly, the measurements chosen, while the best possible, might fail to capture some relevant aspects of the complex mechanisms behind the appointment of technocratic governments. As will be explored in more details in the coming chapters, how the party system will react to a crisis depends on polarization and legislative fragmentation, but also on more contingent factors, such as particular configurations of parliament, or relationship between parties. It is also the case that the personality and informal powers of the head of state, that is, how the president stretches or reinterprets his constitutional prerogatives, are also key and cannot be captured in the otherwise accurate measure used in the analysis.

Table 3-3 Institutional moderating variables in technocratic government appointments

	Model 1B	Model 2B	Model 3B	Model 4B	Model 5B	Model 6B
<i>Post elections</i>	-2.692 (0.656)***	-2.429 (0.603)***	-2.227 (0.572)***	-2.261 (0.578)***	-2.307 (0.579)***	-2.074 (0.561)***
<i>Political Scandal</i>	2.800 (0.881)***	1.866 (1.187)	2.302 (1.266)*			
<i>Powers President</i>	-0.098 (0.168)			-0.064 (0.125)		
<i>Political Scandal*Powers President</i>	-0.278 (0.232)					
<i>t</i>	-0.531 (0.138)***	-0.504 (0.135)***	-0.454 (0.134)***	-0.454 (0.127)***	-0.460 (0.130)***	-0.404 (0.128)***
<i>t2</i>	0.014 (0.006)**	0.014 (0.006)**	0.012 (0.006)*	0.013 (0.006)**	0.013 (0.006)**	0.011 (0.006)*
<i>t3</i>	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
<i>Legislative Fragmentation</i>		-0.155 (0.214)			-0.184 (0.172)	
<i>Political Scandal*Legislative Fragm</i>		-0.008 (0.268)				
<i>Polarization</i>			0.137 (0.215)			0.198 (0.183)
<i>Political Scandal*Polarization</i>			-0.178 (0.372)			
<i>Economic Recession</i>				1.670 (0.721)**	-0.079 (1.139)	2.056 (1.358)
<i>Economic Recession* Powers President</i>				-0.194 (0.234)		
<i>Economic Recession*Legislative Fragm</i>					0.309 (0.248)	
<i>Economic Recession*Polarization</i>						-0.276 (0.476)
<i>Constant</i>	0.224 (0.653)	0.515 (1.058)	-0.739 (0.932)	0.162 (0.625)	0.826 (0.965)	-0.868 (0.864)
<i>Countries</i>	30	30	30	30	30	30
<i>N</i>	473	473	473	473	473	473

Notes: Logistic regression models estimated with Firth's penalized ML method; Multiple imputation using predictive mean matching with chained equations; Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Moving on to Table 3-4, the table tests the moderating variables as if they had direct effect. This is to show the validity of the crisis model against alternative explanations which see the party system and the powers of the Head of State as being directly responsible for the appointment of technocratic governments.

Model 1C ascertains whether the powers of the head of state make a difference for the appointment of technocratic governments, yielding negative results. Model 2C investigates the effects of party system fragmentation. The data does not support the logic that more fragmented party systems, in which coalition-building is expected to be more complicated, are more likely to divert to the option of electing non-partisan prime ministers into office independently of whether the country is experiencing a situation of crisis. So while in the literature the logic of parliamentary fragmentation as a variable that increases the likelihood of appointment of individual technocratic ministers holds, it does not explain fully the preference shift that is required for a system to appoint a technocratic government. Even if fragmented, a party system will always attempt to appoint a partisan prime minister of another party over a technocratic prime minister. Only a situation of crisis could be the trigger for such a shift.

Model 3C adds an ideological dimension to the party system argument and tests whether parliaments that are more polarised along the left-right spectrum may embrace or at least tolerate technocratic governments, as they are unable to strike deals among themselves. While this is the only coefficient of the alternative explanations that points in the right direction, it is far from statistical significance. This once again confirms the ‘crisis narrative’ whereby ideological preferences will be put aside, be they strong or weak, mainly when the need for technocrats is felt as most pressing.

The fact that there is no direct effect on technocratic government appointment of the institutional factors supports the theoretical model presented at the beginning of this chapter, the crisis model, whereby there needs to be a trigger in the form of a critical event for the delegation-to-technocrats process to happen. It implies that the institutional factors might be partially linked to whether the country experiences crises in the first place, but have no independent effect on the appointment of technocratic governments when such crises do not happen.

Table 3-4 Institutional variables as having a direct effect on technocratic cabinet appointment

	Model 1C	Model 2C	Model 3C	Model 4C
<i>Post Elections</i>	-2.010 (0.529)***	-2.010 (0.533)***	-1.906 (0.519)***	-2.087 (0.546)***
<i>t</i>	-0.469 (0.126)***	-0.474 (0.126)***	-0.440 (0.127)***	-0.472 (0.130)***
<i>t2</i>	0.013 (0.006)**	0.014 (0.006)**	0.012 (0.006)**	0.014 (0.006)**
<i>t3</i>	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
<i>Powers President</i>	-0.116 (0.112)			-0.113 (0.112)
<i>Legislative Fragm</i>		-0.113 (0.130)		-0.140 (0.136)
<i>Polarization</i>			0.076 (0.154)	0.098 (0.155)
<i>Constant</i>	0.632 (0.581)	0.822 (0.783)	-0.026 (0.727)	0.975 (1.012)
<i>N</i>	473	473	473	473

Notes: Logistic regression models estimated with Firth's penalized ML method; Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

To illustrate the substantive magnitude of these effects, predicted probabilities are obtained for all the cabinets in the sample and are compared to predictions for scenarios in which hypothetically the value on the dummy variables are changed. In other words, counterfactuals are asked: what if there had been a scandal / no scandal? This reveals that experiencing a scandal or not induces a change of about 8 percentage points in the predicted probability of a technocratic government for the average cabinet formation in the sample. The respective figure for economic recessions is 5 percentage points. However, the range of values is wide as the marginal effects in terms of probabilities depend on the values of the covariates.

Figures 3-5 and 3-6 plot the strongest predicted effects for political scandals and economic recession from the sample, i.e. those which make probability of appointment change by more than 30 percentage points. They provide clear face validity for the theoretical model when considering a few examples. For instance, in the case of the Italian technocratic Dini cabinet, the model predicts that the "clean hands" scandal had a huge effect of 40 percentage points on the probability of a technocratic government that surged from about 20-30% respectively to 60-70%. This is in line with extant case studies that associate Dini's appointment with this 'mother of all political scandals'. Yet, even where the model makes inaccurate predictions, case knowledge often suggests that it has good reason to do so. One example is the appointment of the Romanian Vasile government. While the model expects this government to be technocratic, it largely attributes this assessment to the economic recession. Indeed, Vasile proved unable to start economic reforms facing miners' riots

on Bucharest's streets, Romania remained in recession, and the next government to be appointed turned out to be led by technocrat Mugur Isărescu. So the prediction in the end resulted right.

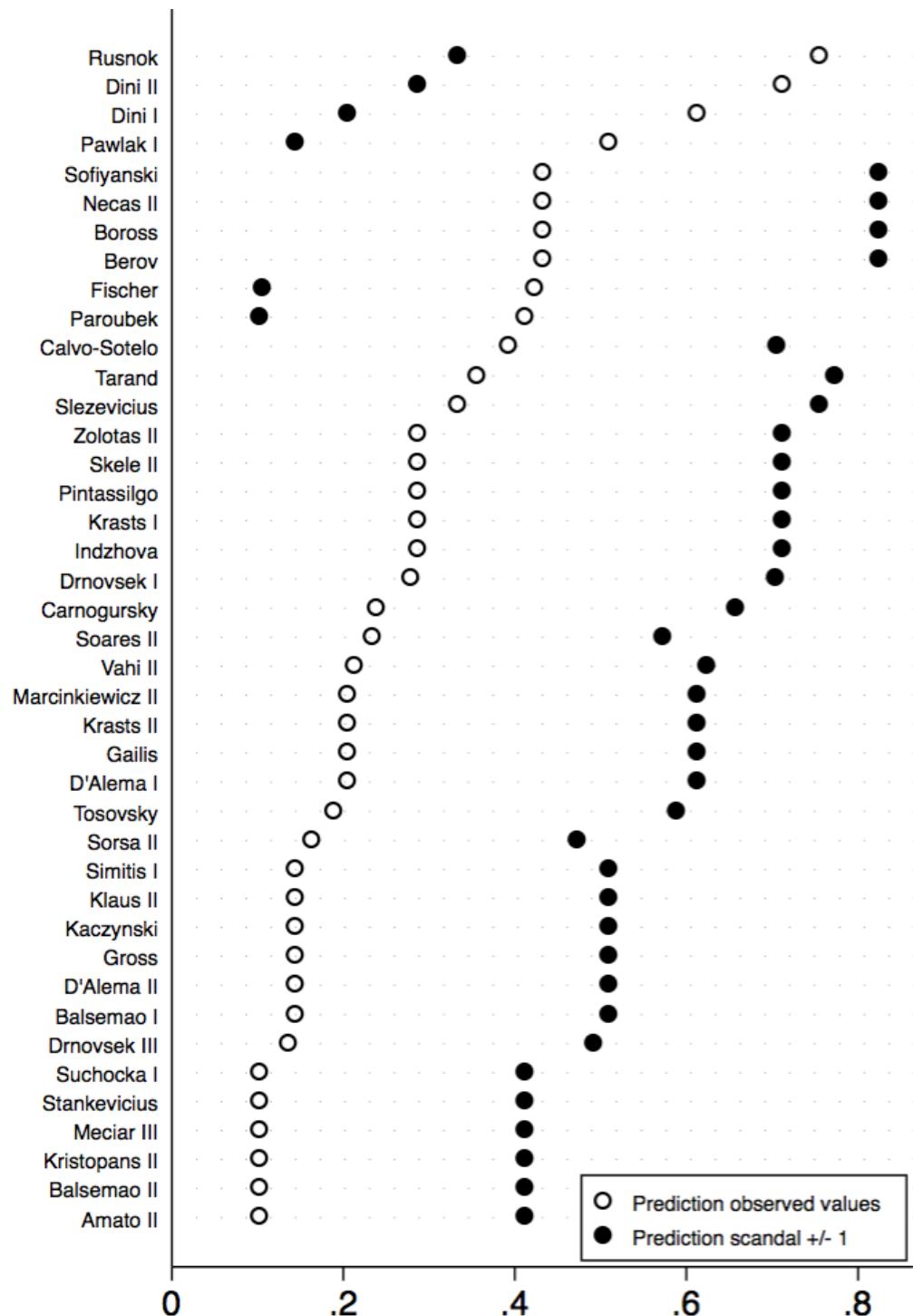


Figure 3-5 Predicted scandal effects in sample

Notes: Graph shows all cabinets with changes in predicted probability of more than 30 percentage points.

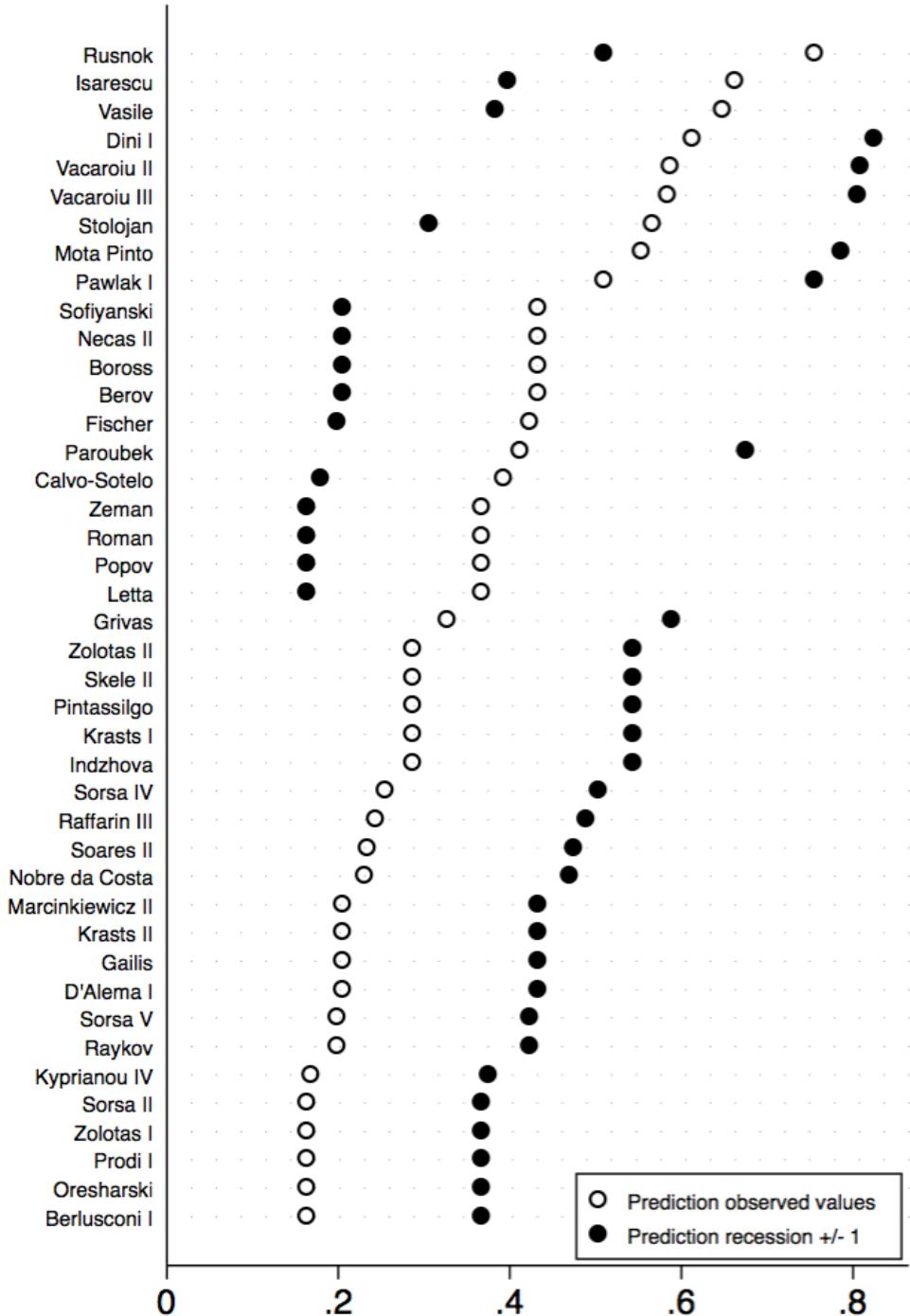


Figure 3-6 Predicted economic recession effects in sample

Notes: Graph shows all cabinets with changes in predicted probability of more than 20 percentage points.

In a last step, several robustness checks are performed and reported in Table 3-5. First, the alternative measure of economic crisis taken from ECB and IMF databases that is the count of the number of economic crisis a country is facing in the appointment year (banking, debt, currency) are tested. The results with this measure are almost identical to those with the economic recession

dummy. This implies that the economic crisis does not necessarily have to be a punctual shock, such as a banking crisis, to have an effect on increasing the likelihood of technocratic government appointment. Even an on-going recession, which can be thought of a ‘softer’ or less abrupt crisis, can nonetheless be sufficient to increase the likelihood of triggering the appointment of technocratic governments. Moreover, and interestingly, an unreported analysis shows that banking crises seem to contribute most to this effect. This is reflected in the fact that a significant number of technocratic prime ministers have been ex-central bankers, or bankers, brought in as experts on precisely these issues.

Secondly, concerns about the clustering of observations within countries are addressed, as the main models do not account for them. Including a random intercept at the country level and estimating the model with ML as well as performing bootstrapping on the clusters with 500 replications using the Firth method on randomly re-sampled datasets do not change the results. Third, and related concern is that the results may be driven by single countries, for instance, with very idiosyncratic sequences of short-lived technocratic governments (e.g. Văcăroiu I-III in Romania, Dini I-II in Italy). For this purpose, a jack-knife test is employed, that re-estimates the model 30 times, leaving out one country each time and obtaining standard errors from the variation in the estimates across the replications. The results are virtually identical demonstrating that the results are not driven by ‘influential countries’.

Lastly, but importantly, the identification of technocratic governments developed in chapter 2 and used in the analysis is challenged, and instead the classification by McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014) is used. While their classification differs in 7 cases, the results are exactly the same. This underlines the fact that, while not equivalent, the two conceptualizations capture essentially a very similar type of cabinet, and that the one put forward by this thesis, even though based less on objective facts and more on discourse, is equally valid. It also points out that the distinction the two authors make regarding the various ‘types’ of technocratic governments is not influencing the overall narrative of why technocratic governments are appointed in general.

Table 3-5 Robustness checks

	Economic Crisis Measure	Country Random Effect	Clustered bootstrap	Country Jack-knife	McDonnell&Valbruzzi TG List
<i>Post Elections</i>	-2.345 (0.615)***	-3.049 (0.760)***	-3.088 (0.883)***	-3.088 (0.694)***	-2.632 (0.690)***
<i>Scandal</i>	1.942 (0.599)***	2.210 (0.718)***	2.021 (0.669)***	2.021 (0.385)***	1.843 (0.607)***
<i>Econ Crisis (ECB/IMF)</i>	0.833 (0.405)**				
<i>t</i>	-0.422 (0.142)***	-0.514 (0.162)***	-0.435 (0.251)*	-0.435 (0.158)**	-0.482 (0.153)***
<i>t2</i>	0.011 (0.007)	0.014 (0.008)*	0.011 (0.017)	0.011 (0.006)*	0.013 (0.007)*
<i>t3</i>	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
<i>Econ recession</i>		1.248 (0.601)**	1.720 (0.508)***	1.720 (0.492)***	1.288 (0.542)**
<i>Constant</i>	-0.890 (0.650)	-0.904 (1.586)	-0.475 (1.003)	-0.475 (0.763)	-0.790 (0.676)
<i>Random effect (std. dev.)</i>	-	0.636	-	-	-
<i>Estimation method</i>	PEML	ML	PEML	PEML	PEML
<i>Countries</i>	30	30	30	30	30
<i>N</i>	473	473	383	383	473

Notes: Logistic regression models estimated with Firth's penalized ML method;

Multiple imputation using predictive mean matching with chained equations (not for 'Clustered bootstrap' and 'Country jack-knife');

Standard errors in parentheses;

ML = Maximum likelihood; PEML = Penalized maximum likelihood;

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

In summary, statistical analyses provide very strong support for a crisis model, whereby crises are proven to be strongly linked with technocratic government appointment across Europe, independently of the political system in place. Parliaments elect and/or tolerate non-partisan prime ministers when major political scandals have erupted and when the country is in deep economic recession. Once technocrats have been appointed, the probability of re-appointments of

technocrats remains at rather high levels of 10-20% over the next couple of government formations. In contrast, institutional factors like the powers of the head of state and a variety of patterns of party competition – ranging from fragmentation to polarisation – are not proven to be associated with the technocratic governments. This can be explained because of the lack of statistical power to detect their effect, which could have resulted in a type II error. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will be dedicated to precisely showing that such interactions took place in the real world and were very significant.

3.6 Conclusions

In this chapter the main drivers behind the appointment of technocratic governments have been identified and tested. The model that results most convincing and statistically relevant, as derived from the literature and inferred from the theoretical expectations based on the trade-off between redistribution and efficiency in political actors, is the ‘crisis’ model proposed. That is, situations of crisis, economic or political in the forms of scandals, are triggers that provoke shifts in political actors’ preferences towards a technocratic government.

The analysis has shown that the kind of political system in place (be it with a powerful head of state, polarised parties, a fragmented party system or other) seems not to influence the process, neither directly, nor indirectly as moderating effects. This is on the one hand an interesting finding in so far as it implies that any country, in a situation of crisis, is vulnerable to these kinds of appointments independently of its institutional circumstances. On the other hand, the failure to find statistical significance for variables that in the theoretical model play an important role could be due to the limitations of the data sample. In general, the mechanisms identified in this chapter should not be taken in deterministic terms, clearly, but rather in probabilistic ones: when there are crises, it is more likely that a technocratic government will be appointed.

A major shift in politicians’ incentives, in which redistribution become less important in the face of severe crises in the political and economic systems and are replaced by the need for valence and efficiency, seem to be the main driver behind delegation to technocratic government. To this, motivations of blame avoidance and need to regain credibility can be added. How each of these rationales influences the occurrence of technocratic governments will be explored in more details in the chapters that follow. Chapters 4 and 5 will complement the statistical analysis with some more qualitative exploration of some real-existing scandals and economic crises, as well as of the intervening moderating institutional factors, tracing back the process that might link them to the appointment of a technocratic government. This will allow the analysis to be more nuanced, in terms for instance of whether particular types of scandals seem to be more relevant, or what is it

about a particular moment of recession of the economy that is such to encourage parties to appoint a technocratic government.

Chapter 6 will explore how the powers of the head of state, even though not significant in the statistical analysis, nonetheless retain an important place in the explanation of technocratic government appointment. As mentioned already, this is due to certain characteristics not captured by the Siaroff measurement, notably the informal powers and the influence of personalities. The reasons why case studies might tell a different story is that the formal powers of the head of state are not inclusive of the informal powers as well as of the influence of personality traits, and longevity of office. All of these characteristics of a presidential office-holder cannot be captured by the statistical analysis, but can be identified by looking at specific cases.

The analysis carried out in this chapter is important not only because nothing of the sort has been done before – and it can therefore be used as a starting point for subsequent analysis – but also because it provides a clear and univocal narrative to explain the occurrence of a group of cabinets that was often seen as responding to different logics depending on which national context or time they were appointed in. This reinforces the notion, developed in chapter 2, that even though they might differ in remit, composition and length of office, technocratic governments are all appointed because of similar concerns. They can, from now on, rightfully be referred to as *crisis governments*.

Chapter 4 A case-based analysis of technocratic government appointment

4.1 Introduction to chapters 4 and 5

Technocratic governments are crisis governments, in so far as they are more likely to be appointed in situation of crises. Economic crisis and political crisis in the forms of scandals in particular are the two types of critical events more apt to bring about such governments, as the statistical analysis carried out in the previous chapter confirmed. But how precisely difficult economic conditions enable for the appointment of technocrats in power? How does a scandal change actors' preferences and incentivise them to appoint a technocratic government?

The current and the next chapter (chapters 4 and 5) will answer these questions by illustrating two key aspects of the mechanisms outlined in chapter 1. They will trace how from a situation of scandal or economic crisis a technocratic government ensues. This will be done through a qualitative analysis of how these two conditions acted in different countries and different historical circumstances, affecting actors' preferences and motivations, changing political equilibria and power relations. The chapters will also consider how the stability and configuration of the party system act as moderating factors to the impact of different kinds of crisis. The case-based analysis will assess the role played by political parties, members of parliament, head of states and other actors in the process of appointment of technocratic governments, and how those actors have interpreted, used or fallen victim of a crisis.

The pages to follow will also consider what can be labelled the 'pressure' issue. That is, whether politicians, following scandals and economic crises, decide to delegate to technocratic governments because of external or internal pressures or because they see it as being in their interest. Do they do it 'spontaneously', or constrained by other actors external to the government or parliament in question? Example of external pressures is the role played by international actors, especially EU institutions in the case of the Eurocrisis. Examples of internal pressures are the pressure of the opposition party or coalition, or popular demonstrations, or the intervention of the head of state.³³

The present and next chapter will also capture in their unfolding the more *constructivist* aspects of crisis dynamics in a given political system. That is, a crisis can be perceived as such, without

³³ With regards to the latter, chapter 6 will be dedicated to the influence of the head of state in different technocratic governments appointments. The reasons to dedicate a whole chapter to this will be explained in the introduction to that section, but can be briefly summarised as the fact that there are aspects of the powers of the head of state which could not be captured by the measurement in the statistical analysis, namely, informal powers and personality traits. Those play a major part in whether the head of state played a role or not in the appointment game, sometimes more than official constitutional provisions.

necessarily being very severe, or vice versa, a severe crisis can be dealt with so effectively as to not to influence the status quo in any meaningful way. This constructivist aspect has been described well by Boin, Hart et al. (2009) as ‘events or developments widely *perceived* by members of relevant communities to constitute urgent threats to core community values and structures’ (p.83, emphasis added). Hence crisis can be seen as an opportunity to change the status quo, or a threat to such status quo, depending on the interests of actors, and will be exploited accordingly. To give a less abstract examples, critical events can become an input into bargaining over cabinet survival or formation (Diermeier and Stevenson 2000). Finally, another unavoidable shortcoming of the statistical analysis is the limited statistical explanatory power due to the paucity of ‘positive’ cases, i.e. cases of technocratic governments. This is particularly problematic in assessing the explanatory power of the interaction terms, with the moderating institutional variables of party system fragmentation, party system polarization and the influence of a powerful head of state. The following three chapters will be able to illustrate such interactions.

The focus of the next pages will therefore be on identifying and describing what crises are, to show how they impact the appointment of technocratic governments, and how the institutional factors moderate such impact. The present chapter 4 will concentrate on the political crisis represented by the scandal variable. The chapter that follows (chapter 5) will apply a similar structure to the analysis of the economic crises. As with the previous chapter, the endogeneity problem has to be recognised, though it cannot be addressed.

The material will be arranged according to country, and within country, according to the chronological order of the chosen technocratic governments. The selection of cases has been done on the basis of a variation in the main independent variables (scandal and economic crises) as well as of the other moderating factors, such as external pressures, the state of the party system and the intervention of the head of state. More on the case selection criteria will be explained at the beginning of each analysis. One example of counterfactual cabinet per chapter will also be included, i.e. a government which, given the situation, ‘should’ or ‘could’ have been technocratic, but ended up not being so. These are situations when technocratic governments were proposed or supported by political actors, or that option was vented in the popular press or in political circles, but for several reasons they were not appointed. These examples allow the importance of the combination of the crisis factors with the institutional moderating factors to be explored even further. They will confirm that the elements identified increase the likelihood of technocratic government appointment, but they are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for such appointment to happen.

Overall, the pages that follow are neither an encompassing descriptive list of all the technocratic governments whose appointment has been influenced by the presence of an economic crisis or a scandal, nor another ‘test’ of the hypotheses with a different method. They aim at problematizing and understanding the nuances and national idiosyncrasies of the appointment of technocratic governments. They are also an exploration of the relation between the independent and dependent variables, as well as the moderating factors, in a more complete and complex manner.

4.2 Scandals and technocratic governments

The mechanisms of technocratic government appointment after a scandal are quite complex. The occurrence of a scandal modifies both the incentives and the preferences of politicians in power, according to the schema in Figure 1 below. Scandals engender a situation in which the political class is delegitimised and hence will consider alternative ways of going about government appointment and policymaking. Politicians might want to delegate to technocrats because they cannot govern anymore in a legitimate manner, or because other actors in the system force them to (see box 3 “*under pressure*” tag in Figure 1 below). These actors could be the opposition, the Head of State or voters’ reactions in opinion polls. In fact some academics have seen technocratic governments as a remedy to prevent popular distrust from becoming too rooted (Tucker and et al. 2000, Cotta and Verzichelli 2002, Kysela and Kuhn 2007). Alternatively, politicians might want to delegate to technocrats because they deem in their own interest to delegate power to a non-partisan executive (see box 3 “*by choice*” tag in Figure 1 below) to bridge the time until the next elections, re-organise and regain credibility. They might also want to clean the party’s image by showing, through delegation, their commitment to good governance despite the scandals. Finally, often scandals are not limited to personal failing of individual politicians but become ‘system failures’ of effective government (Barker 1994) which might lead to not only a government collapse ³⁴, but to a broader crisis of the party system which might make the intervention of a government of technocrats preferred to the status quo.

While the previous chapter confirmed that scandals have a strong impact on increasing the chances of technocratic government appointments, the effects of scandals are not the same if the scandal affects the party/coalition in government, or the opposition, or both. If the party in government is affected, it will be in its own interest to prevent immediate elections by putting a technocratic government in power, while still pursuing the same policies with the same parliamentary majority backing. If the opposition is affected by the scandal, then it is less likely that a technocratic

³⁴ Scandals have been identified as one of the causes for government collapse by Browne, Eric, John Frendreis and Dennis Gleiber (1984). 'An 'Events' Approach to the Problem of Cabinet Stability' *Comparative Political Studies* 17: 167-197.

government will be appointed, as the party/ies in power will simply retain their positions, and capitalize on the scandal in the next election. Finally, if both government and opposition parties are affected, they will have the incentive to appoint a technocratic government to avoid the gaining of votes by new, often anti-corruption parties. This is linked to the fact that increased fragmentation of the party system is a likely consequence of a strong delegitimization of traditional parties because of scandals, so traditional parties, to avoid excessive shift in voters' support might show good will and appoint neutral competent technocrats until next elections. Finally, in the latter situation in which both government and opposition are tainted by corruption, it is also more likely that the Head of State will intervene. The logic is that, as the only legitimate figure still in a powerful position, the Head of State will feel compelled because of his institutional role to appoint a technocratic government to ensure governability and stability.

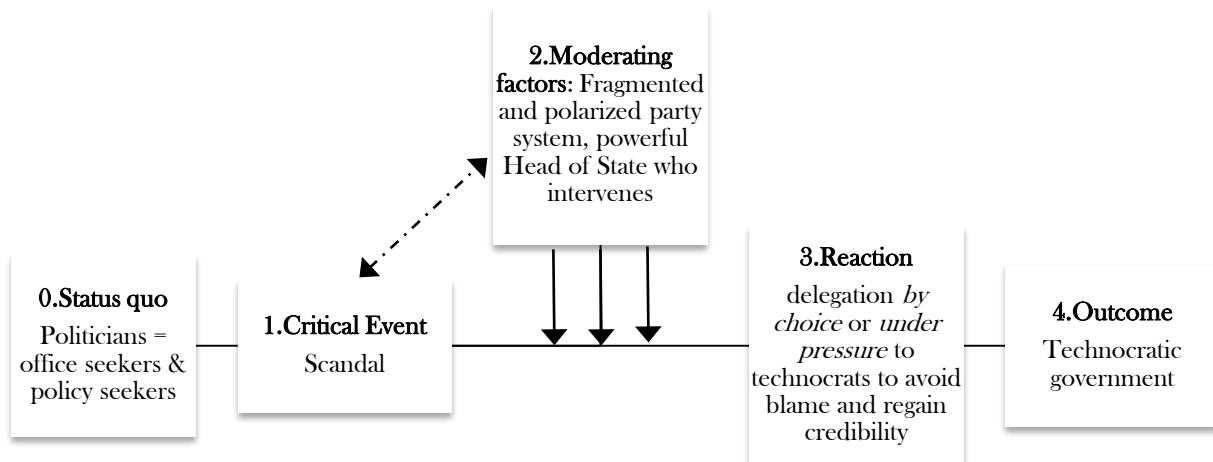


Figure 4-1 Scandals increasing the likelihood of technocratic government appointment

The effects of crisis events (in this case, scandals) are moderated by the institutional attributes of the political system. If a scandal happens in a country where the partisan system is fragmented and there is a complex equilibrium in the coalition in power, it is more likely that the coalition in government will break up if one of its member parties is involved in a scandal. It is also the case that if the party system is strongly polarized, the opposition will have more incentive to put pressure on the scandal-affected party to give up power, as they will have no reason to consider them as potential allies in the next elections. Finally, when corruption is discovered and exposed in episodes of scandals, disorder in voting patterns when the offer of parties is wide, might lead to a deadlock in cabinet formation. This in turn might pave the way for the appointment of a technocratic government. In sum, a scandal will be more likely to influence the appointment of a technocratic government the higher the instability of the political system.

4.3 Scandals' impact on voters

Scandals, as much as economic crises, have an impact on voters which can directly feed back to the political class through changed voting patterns, or indirectly through opinion polls, in ways which might heavily influence the behaviour of political actors. This is why the impact of scandal on voters cannot be ignored, and on the contrary can be identified as part of the incentive-changing components of the mechanism described in Figure 1. In particular voters' pressure plays a key part. Firstly, the literature confirms that scandals make citizens less satisfied with traditional party democracy (Funk 1996, Clark 2009, Kumlin and Esaiasson 2012), opening room for easier acceptance of alternative political or non-political configurations. In particular anti-corruption non-aligned 'parties', especially in Central and Eastern Europe, as explained by Bågenholm and Charron (2014) are often the winners post-scandal elections. Scandals can therefore be expected to have an effect of elite damage, whereby the political elite's image and reputation is damaged in the eyes of the citizens. This in turn will bring about 'disruption of societal routines and expectations' (Boin, Hart et al. 2009, 82) and might change the power equilibria within parties. The destabilizing effect, especially when combined with an already weak or divided party system, could make the technocratic solution appealing to both voters and politicians.

Secondly, corruption is likely to be an important component people use to judge political institutions, and perceptions of corruption have been treated by scholars as equal to evaluation of actual performance (Chiru and Gherghina 2012). In this sense perceptions of corruption will influence the voting behaviour of people, and will affect party loyalties. This change in popular support for parties could have an effect on government decisions, including turning technocratic government into an attractive option to give the affected parties some breathing space. This could allow them to regain some of the lost support.

Thirdly, corruption is seen as one of the main cause of the rise of anti-politics feelings (Schedler 1997, 37), thus softening voters to possible alternative forms of politics. Together with direct democracy, technocracy, or stealth democracy as it has been recently called (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002), is the preferred option amongst voters who are disaffected with politics.

Finally, corruption leads people to believe that the political system performs worse than it could and that those who work for the state cannot be trusted. Therefore informal political practices—such as corruption and bribery—can have important consequences for the legitimacy of a political system as well. Thus, both economic and political performance matter for understanding trust in government' (Anderson and Tverdova 2003, 105).

All of the above seems to be confirmed by the fact that compared to party governments, technocratic governments often achieve broad support in the population, sometimes broader even than that for their partisan equivalents³⁵. Politicians are generally seen as corrupt, or prone to corruption at least while technocrats less so (Klingemann 1999). That might explain the surprising support they receive, and point at the effectiveness of the technocrats' own discourse in portraying themselves as untainted by corruption. In a paradoxical manner, technocratic governments might help regain some of the trust in the political system that the occurrence of scandals decreased. In fact some scholars have assessed the occurrence of scandals as a positive feature of liberal democratic politics because scandals allow for the exit of bad actors, incentivise necessary institutional reform, and might even increase institutional efficacy as a reaction (Brenton 2012). 'Individuals might be crossing the line, but media watchdogs and responsible politicians make sure wrongdoers are exposed and dealt with' (Kumlin and Esaiasson 2012, 264). They might therefore ultimately boost trust in public institutions, and technocratic governments might help bring about these positive unintended consequences. While all this would require a proper statistical analysis to confirm, it is not unreasonable to imagine how such reversal could take place, and the role technocratic governments could play in it.

4.4 What is a scandal?

Before moving to the actual case studies, a few words should be devoted to what a scandal ultimately is, and how scandals are identified in the case studies. The statistical analysis' categorization of scandals of the previous chapter was aimed at capturing all kinds of scandals. All events reported in the Electoral Studies and West European Politics electoral reports which fit the broad definition of 'A sequence of events in which significant public attention is focused on alleged illegal, immoral or otherwise inappropriate conduct by identifiable politicians or high-rank officials' were considered. This was in line with what Kumlin and Esaiasson had done in their operationalization (Kumlin and Esaiasson 2012) and its reliability was checked by inter-coding. This means that all kinds of scandalous events were included in the database (corruption, moral misbehaviour, party financing scandals, issues linked to national interest, espionage scandals etc.) involving one or more politician, and one or more political parties.

The reason to be so 'unselective' is that the mechanisms described in Figure 1 above function, from a rational institutionalist perspective, independently of the kind of scandal considered. However, the definition is not indiscriminately all-inclusive. Bad policy performance and decision making is excluded from the list, so for instance failure to act upon natural disasters is not included.

³⁵ Data for popular support for technocratic governments will be provided case by case in the analysis below

The encompassing definition implies that the effects of the occurrence of a scandal on the likelihood of appointment of technocratic government might vary in magnitude depending on how severe the scandal itself is. The diversity of the elements classified under this definition will become evident in the following case studies. While the diversity is therefore kept in the same vein as the statistical analysis, the case studies will underline the ‘political’ nature of these scandals, in so far as not only they affect the political class, but are to do with the politicians’ role in society. Hence why, even though these scandals might vary in magnitude, it is not necessarily the case that the magnitude will be precisely reflected in the reaction of the system.

4.5 Case selection criteria

Table 1 below presents the overview of the cases analysed in this chapter, including a brief outline the variables in question. While necessary a simplistic summary, it should nonetheless help the reader to navigate some of the complexities of national politics, and the details of the different cases. A few words should be added on how those cases were selected in the first place. As mentioned, the selection was done on the basis of variation of the independent variables. The selection spans to Western and Eastern European countries, from the late 80s up to 2013, showing geographical and chronological diversity. More importantly, it includes different kinds of scandals: from generalised corruption, to military/intelligence related ones, to specific party financing issues and, of course, sex-related scandals. The common thread is that they have an impact on the relationship between voters and politicians, and create a power vacuum or disruption that, for the combination of reasons outlined in the chapter, resulted in a technocratic government. The table also includes the counterfactual government of Amato. As will be explained below, this non-technocratic cabinet was appointed in circumstances of the greatest corruption scandal of post war Italian history, which lead to a complete debacle of the old party system, in the presence of a relatively active Head of State. While most of the circumstances seemed right for a technocratic government appointment, it did not happen.

Table 4-1 Overview of the case studies selected and relevant variables

Country	Cabinet	Year	Name + Type of Scandal	Party System	HoS intervenes	External pressures
Bulgaria	Berov	1992	Espionage/Military scandals: 'List' scandal. Mishev-gate	Opposition chose technocratic government	n/a	n/a
Bulgaria	Indzhova	1994	Generalised corruption, various scandals	n/a	Yes, Zhalev	n/a
Bulgaria	Raykov	2013	'Tapegate/Watergate' and National Health System scandal	n/a	Yes, Pleniev	Compliance to receive EU funds.
Czech Republic	Tosovsky	1998	Bamberg Affair and other party financial scandals	Split in the major centre-right party ODS	Yes, Havel	n/a
Czech Republic	Rusnok	2013	Military, sex and political scandal	n/a	Yes, Zeman	n/a
Greece	Zolotas I/II	1989	Koskotas (party financing scandal involving the prime minister)	High polarization between ND and Pasok	n/a	EC pressures (e.g. Delors' letter to Greece)
Hungary	Bajnai	2009	Leaking of discrediting comments by the Prime Minister.	Previous government had become minority government	n/a	Public demonstrations
Italy	<i>Amato (counter factual)</i>	1992	<i>Tangentopoli (Bribesville) corruption scandal</i>	<i>Still same partisan arrangement as the 1st republic</i>	<i>Partially yes, Scalfaro</i>	<i>European Monetary System pressures</i>
Italy	Ciampi	1993	Tangentopoli (Bribesville) corruption scandal	Transition from 1 st to 2 nd republic – new party system	Yes, Scalfaro	Euro-criteria
Italy	Dini	1995	Tangentopoli (Bribesville) corruption scandal	Fragmentation. New parties: Berlusconi and Northern League	Yes, Scalfaro	Euro-criteria
Poland	Belka	2004	Rywingate (corruption scandal involving the prime minister)	n/a	Yes, Kwasnieski	n/a

4.6 Bulgaria: diffuse and specific corruption as a trigger for technocratic government appointment

Bulgaria is a country that ranks low on the corruption perception index developed by Transparency International. There is little enforcement of the anti-bribery OECD convention and not only corruption is objectively widespread, but also people's perception especially of political corruption

is particularly high. To give just one example, in 2013, 76% of respondents thought political parties were very corrupt or corrupt (Transparency International 2013). Bulgaria is therefore, unsurprisingly, a country where the effects of scandals on the appointment of technocratic governments can be observed in all their magnitude. Nonetheless, there is a caveat when considering the Bulgarian case. Precisely because of the diffuse nature of the corruption in the country, it is more difficult to assess specific instances of scandals that can directly be linked to the appointment of technocratic governments. One could argue that the majority of government change, and cabinet formation, in Bulgaria was in some way or other influenced by corruption. This could in turn have an effect on voters, in so far as ‘publics can become tired of scandal and desensitized to even the most shocking material... this can occur where public institutions are in a constant state of scandal’ (Sass and Crosbie 2013, 857). Keeping this in mind, three Bulgarian technocratic governments can nonetheless be brought as examples of how scandals have affected their appointments: Berov, Indzhova and more recently Raykov.

Table 4-2 Technocratic governments in Bulgaria appointed following a scandal

Prime Minister	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Lyuben Berov	30/12/1992	02/09/1994
Reneta Indzhova	17/10/1994	18/12/1994
Marin Raykov	13/03/2013	12/05/2013

The first technocratic cabinet was appointed after the fall of Bulgaria’s first democratically elected government headed by the centre right party Union for Democratic Forces (UDF)’s leader Philip Dimitrov. He resigned in 1992 following the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF)’s withdrawal of support to the government. The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), which was in the opposition, put forward at the end of 1992 a technocratic team of non-party experts headed by Lyuben Berov, an economic historian. In February 1992, before the appointment of Berov, the country had been shaken by the ‘List’ scandal. It involved classified documents brought to the Turkish Embassy by MRF’s leader Dogan. These documents contained the identification of Bulgarian intelligence service agents. To give some background, the Turkish part of the Bulgaria population supported Zhalev, the president, who was in conflict with Prime Minister Dimitrov, but a close ally of Dogan. Dogan was sentenced, but Dimitrov’s UDF decided to declare Dogan innocent and accuse the former State Security Services of having organised the story as a provocation. Despite this attempt at covering and silencing the scandal on behalf of the UDF, Dogan still told his party to withdraw the confidence to the government a few months later, bringing about the collapse of the Dimitrov government (Stanchev 2015). Dimitrov saw the MRF

move as a treachery, given the efforts made by his party to help Dogan. The BPS, by putting forward such government, managed to ‘get away from the image of the politician and get into the image of the technocrat’³⁶. Interestingly, behind the BPS suggested technocratic government, was also the MRF, as Dogan openly admitted a decade later (Katsikas 2011, 72). During the Berov government the MRF’s influence continued to grow. So the appointment dynamics reveal, as per explanation above, that the opposition gained from the scandal affecting the coalition in power, but that paradoxically the scandal ridden MRF was able to clean its image by supporting the technocratic government.

Another interesting aspect to the Berov appointment is that the Dimitrov government’s loss of confidence happened over a vote regarding another scandal. One of Dimitrov’s close advisors was accused of having attempted arms sale to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which was subject to a U.N. embargo on the former Yugoslavia³⁷. The arms scandal called Mishev-gate erupted when Brigo Asparuhov, chief of the National Intelligence Service, revealed on September 18th that a government adviser allegedly was involved in an arms deal with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Asparuhov initially ignored Dimitrov’s demands for information on the alleged arms talks, but divulged details when a meeting with Dimitrov, President Zhelyu Zhelev and top security officials was convened. Subsequent press reports identified the adviser as Konstantin Mishev, one of Dimitrov’s close advisers (Zhelev 1992). Overall, both scandals contributed to the impression of the general inability of the government to face the difficulties of transition to democracy, and the fact that UDF tried to cover them up did not help. ‘It is widely believed that [the Berov government was appointed] in an effort to avoid responsibility for the current and multifarious problems that ·are plaguing the nation and to thereby maintain the accusation that the national economic and social crises are the fault of the fleeting yet inept Democratic [UDF] leadership’ (Kramer 1993, 175). It was a case where delegation to technocrats was a choice of two parties, the Socialist and the MRF, to distance themselves fully from the governing party of Dimitrov, and to project a different image. However, such attempt was not as successful as it could have been: Berov’s technocratic government itself fell because of scandals.

The second technocratic government to be appointed in Bulgaria followed directly Berov cabinet’s collapse. The Berov government came under increasing attack for inactivity and corruption during the summer 1994 (Analytica 1994) and by September, Berov despaired of his ability to control his

³⁶ Interview with Dainov, Bulgarian academic, in Giatzidis, Emil (2002). *An introduction to post-communist Bulgaria: political, economic and social transformations*. Manchester University Press, Manchester.

³⁷ Human Rights Watch, org. (1999). A REVIEW OF BULGARIA’S ARMS TRADE, Human Rights Watch. available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/bulgaria/Bulga994-01.htm> Report quoting Evgenia Manolova, “Arms Scandal in Bulgaria,” Warsaw Voice, November 18, 1992. (not available online)

ministers. The situation was one of political crisis due to widespread misconduct of the cabinet. Reneta Indzhova, previously head of the Bulgarian privatization office, was selected by President Zhelev to head a caretaker government composed entirely of independent ministers. During her brief time in office, she succeeded in leading wise economic policies and gained some popularity for her efforts to combat organized crime. Her main task was to make sure that elections took place. Little can be said about the reasons behind her appointment, as her cabinet was just a stop-gap before the elections. It was, clearly, though, a choice of President Zhelev, who in those years was advocating for stronger presidential powers (Robinson 1996). The second Bulgarian technocratic cabinet, therefore, was not solely due to the widespread corruption of the previous (technocratic) government, but in this case, is also ascribable to the pressure put by the head of State. Zhalev was able to play on that corruption to justify his appointment of the caretaker government. Overall, both Berov's and Indzhova's cabinets were due to political instability coupled with economic decline, in which scandals and general corruption were widespread, and political parties were incapable of tackling the situation. Moreover, Bulgaria had then an active Head of State who intervened, especially when he was at odds with the governing party's position.

The more recent appointment of Ambassador Raykov's technocratic cabinet in March 2013 is another example of how scandals contribute to increasing the likelihood of appointment of technocratic governments in Bulgaria. The previous government of Boyko Borisov collapsed following protests and social disruption because of perceived general corruption, widespread poverty, high unemployment (12%) and disputes over high energy prices. More specifically, the government was involved in the 'Tapegate', leaking to the public of discrediting conversations between the PM and several key business and regulatory figures, such as the Director of the Customs Agency Vanya Tanov, and the owners of businesses Ledenika, Lukoil and Billa (Sofia News Agency 2011). Furthermore, Borisov's health minister Konstantinov resigned over a scandal involving skyrocketing medicine prices and huge bonuses received by the leadership of the National Health System (Detrez 2014, 82). Illegal wiretapping was also thought to be current practice under Borisov (Euractiv 2013, G.K. 2013). The Bulgarian population and businesses welcomed the appointment of an interim technocratic government, as they had done previously with Reneta Indzova (Alexiev 2013), especially because of the impression that this kind of cabinet might be less corrupt. President Pleniev, who had been responsible for such appointment, presented it thus:

The formation of a caretaker government was my own responsibility. I have not allowed anyone to pressure me and have not been guided by party affiliations in my choice. I believe that the prime minister of Bulgaria's caretaker government should be a good diplomat who knows how to listen and be heard. He should be moderate, reasonable, competent. [...] He should defend the Bulgarian interests in Brussels in these critical months, when tens of billions

in aid for this country will be decided and important integration processes in Europe will take place [...] The caretaker cabinet will work to restore public trust in the institutions and secure greater transparency and civil control. The caretaker government will be a guarantor of free and democratic elections. (Plevneliev 2013b, , emphasis added).

This extract underlines the presence of international pressures in forms of EU aid, as well as the key role played by the Head of State in such appointment. The rhetoric of the government as 'moderate, reasonable and competent' clearly tries to reinforce in the eyes of the public the image of the technocratic government as uncorrupted and as a government of experts. Such government has, by the admission of the president himself, the tasks of restoring public trust in politicians and political institutions. There is a clear direct link between the purpose of the appointment and the effects of the widespread corruption and of specific scandals. Whether that in the end happened in reality is quite a different matter. In fact during the electoral campaign under Raykov more corruption and irregularities happened, showing the die-hard nature of the political problems of Bulgarian parties and of the political system in general. International observers noted that 'use of nationalistic, at times inflammatory language, allegations of vote-buying, as well as allegations of wire-tapping conducted by the Ministry of Interior involving public figures, have characterized the campaign discourse' (Abadzhiev 2013).

Different, but equally damaging accusations, had also been moved to the technocratic government of Berov. The Berov political period was dubbed by the right-wing opposition as the ' "Berov's timelessness": bazaar capitalism and restoration of the nomenclature cadres into leading economic positions' (Avramov 2005, 122). These two observations point at some conclusions that can be drawn regarding Bulgarian technocratic governments and scandals. Both technocratic and non-technocratic governments have been tainted by scandals, and corruption plays almost always a role in determining government falls and government appointment in Bulgaria. This is no exception for technocratic governments, but the difference lies in the fact that the appointments of technocratic governments seem to have been conducted with the rationale of allowing parties to find the time to regain credibility ahead of the elections as well as to ensure a certain stability in a system which is still subject to frequent changes of cabinets and crises.

4.7 Czech Republic: non-political politicians are preferable to 'untrustworthy figures'

The Czech Republic has been characterised by country experts as having an unusually sceptical attitude towards political parties. This attitude of distrust of political parties, which is a legacy of

communism affecting most Central and Eastern European countries (Rose 1994), seems to be particularly rooted in the Czech Republic. It remains still to date a prominent feature of both popular and, most surprisingly, of politicians' attitudes. The latter, at least in the initial stages of the democratization period, used the anti-party rhetoric in an auto-critical way. This legacy is extremely relevant to how scandals affect the appointment of technocratic governments, as it entails that the Czech people will be even more prone to be critical of politicians involved in scandals, and potentially more willing to accept technocratic ministers as a good alternative to corrupted politicians. The preference for 'non-ideological, participatory democracy' (Hanley 2004, 516) lead to three technocratic governments, also called episodes of 'non-political politics' (Tucker and et al. 2000). Two of those three aptly illustrate the relationship between scandals and technocratic governments in the Czech Republic: the cabinet of Tosovsky and that, more recent, of Rusnok.

Table 4-3 Technocratic governments in the Czech Republic appointed following a scandal

Prime Minister	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Josef Tosovsky	02/01/1998	20/06/1998
Jiri Rusnok	10/07/2013	29/01/2014

Tosovsky was appointed after Klaus' government fell due to the consequences of several scandals. In November 1997, the incumbent right wing minority government led by Vaclav Klaus' Civic Democratic Party (ODS) had to resign after a financial scandal. The ODS' coalition partners from the Christian Democratic Union (KDU-CSL) and the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) had left the coalition earlier that month, precisely because the ODS had been unable and unwilling to explain its dubious party financing. The scandal affected mainly the then ODS executive deputy chair, Libor Novák, and the trial established that some donations coming from business interests involved in the privatisation process had been illegally channelled to the party in a Swiss bank (Rutland 2000). Prime Minister Klaus's integrity itself was put in question, and he was asked to resign by the interior minister Jan Ruml and the Finance minister Ival Pilip. In the end it came to light that the donation letters were forged, and that in fact it was a former professional tennis player turned entrepreneur, Mikan Strejber, who had made the contribution (Stroehlein, Culik et al. 1999). Nonetheless Klaus's party's image was tainted by the accusations. Moreover, as Kopecky and Mudde put it, it was not just the ODS who was involved in scandals: 'during the run up to the June 1998 elections, Czech politics were dominated by the financial scandals involving virtually all major political parties' (1999, 416). The opposition CSSD party was deep into a scandal too, the so-called

Bamberg³⁸ Affair. The affair, briefly, consisted in the CSSD offering prominent state positions to a group of Czech-Swiss businessmen as a reward for funds for their campaign. To add to the general disarray, CSSD regional governor David Rath was arrested for another unrelated instance of corruption (Linek 2013). Both parties, ODS and CSSD were therefore deeply unsettled by these allegations. Similarly to what just seen with the Bulgarian president, Czech President Havel reinforced the image of the corrupted politicians and uncorrupted technocrats in his discourse. In his address to Parliament on 9 December 1997 he underlined: '*...power is again in the hands of untrustworthy figures whose primary concern is their personal advancement instead of the interests of the people...*' (Havel 1997).

The situation of the party system in relation to the formation of a new post-Klaus cabinet was complex. The cross-party nature of the scandals made government reshuffle an unviable option. That is why early elections were called for June 1998. To lead the country until then, technocratic Prime Minister Josef Tosovsky was appointed. He was governor of the Czech Central Bank and his mandate as a Prime Minister was rather limited. Moreover, as in many cases of technocratic governments, his survival also depended on the opposition's support, so that his room for manoeuvre in terms of policies was also quite narrow. His name was proposed by Josef Lux, chairman of the ODS ex-coalition partner KDU-CSL. As mentioned, Lux's party and the ODA had left the coalition because of the scandal, and did not want to govern in collaboration with the tainted ODS. In this particular case the scandal had the effect of making coalition building more complicated by effectively eliminating from the chessboard one major political party. It moreover made the solution of a technocratic government a good option for the parties of the ex-governing coalition. By appointing a technocrat they would not lose power, but at the same time take some distance from the scandal-ridden ODS and to prepare for elections.

The effects of this isolation and of the scandal itself were also felt within the ODS. The ODS's members hostile to Klaus split up to form a separate faction which demanded more transparency, a sort of clean-hands programme, called Freedom Union (US). The Freedom Union supported, unsurprisingly, the Tosovsky government, as a way once again to underline their distance from the corrupted politicians close to Klaus. New party formation in Central and Eastern Europe has been seen as a result of 'bouts of public frustration with reform or the widespread perception of politicians in the region as self-seeking and corrupt' (Sikk 2005, Pop-Eleches 2010). In the significant election of 1998 the new US party presented itself as a purifying party, that is, placed at the centre, seeking to offer an improved and reformed ideology. These kind of purifier parties have been explained as filling a vacuum left by traditional political parties which have failed (Hanley

³⁸ The name comes from the fact that the agreement had been signed by CSSD party leader Zeman during a meeting in Bamberg, Germany, in 1995

2012) and it is not by chance the US party was established after a technocratic government which also, arguably, took the place that the traditional parties had left vacant.

The influence of scandals on the appointment of technocratic governments is maybe even more evident in the most recent case of technocratic government appointment in the Czech Republic, that of Jiri Rusnok. In 2013 Prime Minister Necas' coalition government, made up of the ODS, of TOP09 conservative ministers and of liberal VV cabinet members, was brought down by one of the highest profile scandals of the entire Czech democratic history. The police arrested in June 2013 Necas' chief of staff Nagyova and lover, three former MPs, two intelligence service directors, a high level official from the intelligence service and a lobbyist (Stegmaier and Linek 2014, 386). Nagyova in particular, was involved in illegal political bargaining with deputies of the Czech parliament, when in November 2012 three ODS MPs were awarded lucrative posts in state companies in exchange for their resignation and loyalty to the party during an important parliamentary vote. Nagyova was also charged with abusing her authority by tasking the military intelligence to track Petr Necas' wife (Hornat 2013). This whirlwind of allegations about corruption and marital infidelity involving the prime minister's top aide brought Necas to resign. President Zeman decided not to follow the centre-right coalition parties' suggestion to continue under ODS MP Miroslava Nemcova, or the left's suggestion to hold early elections. He chose a third option and appointed as technocratic Prime Minister Jiri Rusnok.

Rusnok had been Finance Minister in Zeman's own cabinet in 2001-2002, economic advisor to the President and head of a pension fund. He declared his government a cabinet of experts but in fact it was mainly made of Zeman sympathisers from the opposition Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD). This is an example of how 'external' pressures to the ruling party (in this case, pressures coming from the president and his CSSD allies) can become constraining and convince the political class to accept a technocratic solution. This is very similar to what explained above regarding technocratic minister Raykov in Bulgaria. Necas' ODS party by itself would have not chosen this solution. An alternative ODS cabinet would have been the preferred option, probably because the ODS leadership thought the delegitimization due to the scandal was not too severe. At the same times these pressures provided the ODS time to recover from the stains of the scandals, so it was beneficial even if it prevented the party from holding key position for some time. Nonetheless, the subsequent elections saw the CSSD get into government in a grand coalition with the Christian democrats of the KDU-CSL, demonstrating once more than supporting a technocratic government in times of scandal might be a reasonable option for the opposition, as well as for the cabinet party tainted by the scandal.

In both the examples of Czech technocratic governments given above, what stands out is that unstable parliamentary majorities as well as tensions amongst coalition partners were important factors in amplifying the effects of the scandals on the survival of the incumbent, but also on the choice of appointing technocratic governments. The intervention of the Head of State has also been highlighted³⁹. Overall the formation of these two ‘non-standard governments allowed [political parties] to resolve the political crisis, restructure their forces and select a new strategy before the election combat’ (Cabada, Hloušek and Jurek 2014, 151), be they the incumbent or the opposition.

4.8 Greece: technocrats as *cathartic* elements for a corrupt clientelistic political system

Greece provides an excellent example of the consequences of the contemporary occurrence of a scandal and an economic crisis, in terms of appointment of technocratic government. While more will be said in the next chapter regarding the precise effects of the economic crisis, the two technocratic cabinets headed by Prime Minister Xenophon Zolotas provide a telling story as to why traditionally opposed parties would be incentivized, against all odds, to unite to appoint technocratic cabinets in the wake of a scandal.

Table 4-4 Technocratic governments in the Greece appointed following a scandal

Prime Minister	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Xenophon Zolotas I	23/11/1989	13/02/1990
Xenophon Zolotas II	13/02/1990	11/04/1990

The scandals leading to the resignation of the incumbent Papandreu government in July 1989 were impressive even for a country, which is used to clientelism and corruption (Featherstone 2005, Costas 2010). What became known as the Koskotas scandal, involved the Prime Minister Papandreu himself. He was accused of embezzlement because he had ordered state corporations to transfer their holdings to the Koskotas Bank of Crete, where the interests were taken to benefit his party, the centre-left PASOK. Although Papandreu was eventually acquitted in 1992, in the meanwhile ministers in his government and people close to him were involved, including a former Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Minister, Agamemnon Koutsogiorgas; a former Minister of Transport and Communications, Georgios Petsos; a former Cabinet Secretary, Ionnioannis Mantzouranis; a close personal friend of the Prime Minister, George Louvaris, and the former

³⁹ of which more in chapter 6

heads of four public utilities and corporations. Ministers in Papandreu's government started to resign, and he himself could not hold the situation together because of health problems. Parliament eventually passed a vote of no confidence and the situation of political uncertainty was further worsened by two inconclusive elections, in June and November 1989. The 1989 June elections in particular saw candidates representing nearly 25 political parties running, which is very unusual in the usually bipartisan Greek system. Greece went to the polls again on 5 November 1989, but produced another deadlocked parliament. ND, despite having obtained 46% of votes, did not manage to put together a government. The Communists were not yet ready to form a coalition with PASOK before the scandals were cleared out and the *Catharsis* (purification) was completed. The inability of either major party to form a government was thus linked not only to problems in 'numbers' of parliamentary seats, as it were, but more importantly, to the legacy of the scandals which made PASOK an unattractive coalition partner. Knowing this, PASOK was also pushed by the scandal to change the electoral law in favour of more proportionality which made it more difficult for ND to win a majority, as the electoral results confirmed. In short, the Koskotas scandal 'acted as a catalyst for political developments' (Rickinson 2015, 87), both in terms of electoral reforms and in terms of the unexpected outcome of a technocratic government.

This series of rushed events highlights powerfully the aggravating factors of the instability of the party system, its fragmentation and the volatility of voters that led to the absence of a clear majority twice in the space of a few months. The three cabinets that followed are also indicative of the chaotic period: a coalition government (rare species in Greek political history), a short judge-led and constitutionally mandated government, and finally the technocratic government of Xenophon Zolotas. Briefly, the coalition government was between New Democracy (centre-right ND) and the Communists (Coalition of the Left and Progress), and Supreme Court judge Ioannis Grivas headed the caretaker technocratic government⁴⁰. Technocratic Prime Minister Xenophon Zolotas was finally appointed when ND and PASOK struggled to find an agreement after the November 1989 elections. Each party wanted its leader as prime minister, but that would have been unacceptable for the other party. The solution for the two major parties to this deadlock was to appoint the 85 years old former director of the Bank of Greece Zolotas as prime minister. He was known years for his economics expertise, which, as will become clear in the next chapter, was much needed at that point in time. Greece was on the verge of bankruptcy and Jacques Delors, the then

⁴⁰ Ioannis Grivas, head of the Supreme Court, was in office from 12/10/1989 to 05/11/1989 to mind the shop and lead the country to elections. He did not have a mandate to change the status quo, and his appointment is just a result of the constitutional provision of art. 37.7. Such well-established entity in Greek history, enshrined in the constitution, is different from other countries, where caretaker governments are partisan, or are simply the incumbent leading on until elections are held and the new government is formed. Hence why it is not considered in the present section as representing a good case of how scandals influenced the appointment of technocratic governments

president of the European Commission, published a letter warning Greece to change its economic policies to avoid the worst (Verney 1990).

Zolotas' first cabinet (12 October – 23 November 1989) was still only partly composed on technocratic ministers⁴¹, but his second (23 November 1989- 13 February 1990) was more technocratic⁴². The difference between the first and the second Zolotas cabinet is significant (see dedicated section in McDonnell and Valbruzzi 2014, 7). As the head of press of the Zolotas cabinet confirmed in an interview to the author, differences were both in composition and remit: ‘the first was the more proactive one, installed to deal with the immediate bankruptcy, while the one following the reshuffle was on the contrary just a caretaker one to bring the country to the elections – and as soon as possible’ (Vassilopoulos 2014). It shared a significant number of independent ministers with Grivas' caretaker technocratic cabinet, which preceded Zolotas', underlining again how Zolotas' second cabinet was different from the first. The declining economy despite its reform efforts, and the clear revolt of the Pasok ministers who left the cabinet eventually forced Zolotas to resign. This points out at familiar dynamics by now, where scandal-ridden parties hide behind, or some would more kindly say support, technocratic governments until they feel sufficiently strong and cleared of the scandal to face new elections. It is at that point that they often withdraw their support, and in the Greek case new elections were indeed held in April 1990. New Democracy finally managed to win with a small majority and form a one party majority government. This has been the case in most of Greece's post-dictatorship history (Verney 1990, Pridham and Verney 1991, Verney 2014) and remained so until the earthquake elections of 2012.

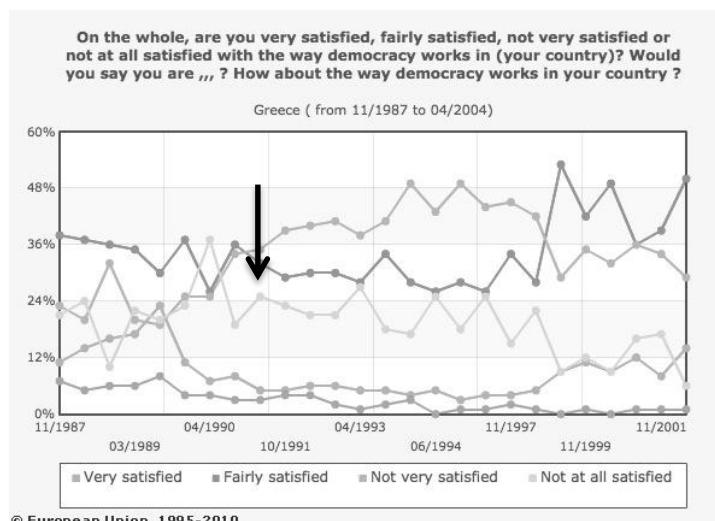


Figure 4-2 Satisfaction with democracy in Greece (1987-2004)

Source: Eurobarometer

⁴¹ Grivas's cabinet, had 14 independents out of 22 ministers and Pikrammenos 14 independent out of 17 ministers, while Zolotas had 7 out of 28, and Papademos 4 out of 19

⁴² see Appendix to this chapter for details on the composition of the two cabinets

For what concerns the two technocratic cabinets of Zolotas, Morlino is right when he writes that 'behind the short cabinets between 1989 and 1990 there is the uncovering of corruption, strong ideological and radical party conflicts, and serious economic problems' (Morlino 1998, 67). The presence of a scandal delegitimising the highest rank of the political class including a Prime Minister put the country in a situation of crisis, and people's dissatisfaction with their national democracy was at its highest in that time (see figure 2 above). It was not just one party to be delegitimised, but the whole party system and its relationship with the state and its finance⁴³. The countries' experiences of technocratic governments were a collaboration – under Zolotas - between opposed major parties that would have been unthinkable in other, less grave situations, given the history and nature of the Greek party system. His technocratic cabinets were a consequence of a party system not sufficiently stable to form a government, too conflictual to accept a 'grand-coalition' headed by one of the major parties, and still recovering from the effects of the 'mega scandal' (Garrard and Newell 2006, 132). It was easier for Greek political parties to justify to their constituency an agreement with the opposite party when both parties were agreeing to obey the same implacable law of technocracy, rather than one another. There is no submission or compliance to the other party, but to an 'impartial' Prime Minister. For Greek voters too, the Koskotas scandal and the technocratic government had a profound effect, as 'Greek society went through a terribly traumatic experience' (Garrard and Newell 2006, 133).

4.9 Hungary: losing credibility because of a scandal but maintaining influence through technocrats

Hungary's only technocratic cabinet, that of Gordon Bajnai, is an excellent case to show the impact of a very specific scandal as delegitimising not only the governing party, but the political class as a whole. There was a clear link between the 'tape' scandal at the time, then leading to the resignation of the then Prime Minister Gyurcsány, and subsequently clearing the grounds for the Gordon Bajnai technocratic government.

Table 4-5 Technocratic government in Hungary appointed following a scandal

Prime Minister	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Gordon Bajnai	14/04/2009	25/04/2010

⁴³ Nonetheless, the effects of the scandals could have been far worse: PASOK lost some votes and ND acquired some, but overall voters remained faithful Featherstone, Kevin (1990). 'The 'party-state' in Greece and the fall of Papandreu' *West European Politics* 13(1): 101-115. and the importance of maintaining the political cleavage between left and right was more important than the abuse of power Verney, Susannah *ibid*. 'Between coalition and one-party government: The Greek elections of November 1989 and April 1990' (4): 131-138.

A scandal exploded in September 2006 when a tape was leaked of Prime Minister Gyurcsány's speech from May and reproduced in the Magyar Rádió (Hungarian Radio). The recorded speech was from a meeting between the PM and his Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) MPs⁴⁴ delivered a mere month after the elections in which his coalition with the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) took 210 of the 368 seats in Parliament. In the leaked speech Gyurcsány admitted amongst other things that he had intentionally lied to the public about the state of the economy during the 2006 election campaign (Palonen 2009): 'we have obviously been lying for the last one and a half to two years', he stated. The speech was not only sprinkled with obscenities that provoked much criticism, but it was also an admission of the inability of the government to do much in general. Gyurcsány admitted: '[...] we screwed up. Not a little, a lot. No European country has done something as boneheaded as we have' (BBC News 2006). The government, following more amateurish economic policy decisions in the aftermath of the scandal, was seen as incapable of carrying out the reforms needed to put the country's economy back on track (Korkut 2010) and the Prime Minister himself admitted his inability publicly (BBC News 2009).

The leaked speech had the expected consequences, which are conducive to increasing the likelihood of the appointment of a technocratic government, of affecting public perception of the Prime Minister's credibility. There were demonstrations involving thousands of people⁴⁵ outside the Hungarian Parliament, for several days. Gyurcsány refused initially to resign after having won a vote of confidence in October. In the same month, however, a blow was dealt to the government in the shape of electoral defeat in the local municipal elections, which signalled the disaffection of voters with a party that has openly admitted of having lied to them for a long period of time. The opposition Hungarian Civic Alliance (FIDESZ) won 18 out of the 19 councils of the country with an anti-corruption rhetoric. In March 2007 more protests threatened the government, and to respond to public concern regarding lack of transparency and accountability, it established an independent budget monitoring body. The government, and MSZP in particular, was further weakened by having lost the support of coalition partner SZDSZ, so that Gyurcsány's party was heading a minority government since March 2008. On 21 March 2009 Gyurcsány announced his resignation, admitting that he would be a hindrance to further reforms, and in accordance with the country's constitutional rule on the constructive vote of no-confidence, the governing party proposed several names for the new Prime Minister. The only one that was seen as being acceptable was that of the independent and yet politically savvy Gordon Bajnai. The move was a clear attempt by all parties at regaining credibility and leaving some room to an untainted figure to carry out in a credible manner the needed reforms.

⁴⁴ MSZP, the legal successor of the Communist party in Hungary effectively

⁴⁵ figures vary depending on sources

Gordon Bajnai, a businessman who had been economy minister in Gyurcsány's government, was appointed as Prime Minister on 14 April 2009 to lead the country till the elections in April 2010. He formed a minority government, supported externally by the SZDSZ composed half by MSZP ministers and half by independents like him. Bajnai was appointed, amongst other things, to clear up the situation regarding corruption⁴⁶. He had a shaky start in this respect: the person he wanted to appoint as economy minister was found out by Transparency International as having participated in a price fixing cartel. But subsequently he recovered and passed relevant legislation, such as the mandatory reporting of salaries for state enterprises, and a far-reaching anti-corruption bill (Mootz 2010). Even though a considerable period of time elapsed between the occurrence of the initial scandal (2006) and the eventual resignation of the prime minister (2009), a thread can be followed from one event to the other in the form of increase public disaffection and distrust in the governing party. Public manifestations were frequent at the time.

The initiatives of the government to 'clean itself up' are also indicative of the awareness that the scandal had undermined the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the public. Contrary to the Greek case just discussed above, this task was not left to the opposition but was carried out by the 'guilty' party itself (MSZP). It was this awareness of the need to carry out their own *Catharsis* that lead MSZP to the decision, instead of having a simple party government, to replace Gyurcsány's with a technocratic government. Such decision was also influenced by the need to seek approval of most parties, due the constructive vote of no confidence constraints. An independent, although clearly MSZP-favourable, candidate was the best solution both for the majority and for the opposition. Unfortunately for MSZP, their effort to use Bajnai's time in government to regain credibility was not successful. Even though Bajnai did well in handling the economic crisis and received international plaudit, he did not manage to stop the rise of anti-socialist feelings and his efforts at cleaning the image of the party his government half-represented were not far fetching enough. Fidesz won the subsequent elections and Jobbik, the far right party, entered parliament for the first time (White, Lewis and Batt 2013).

4.10 Italy: technocratic governments as a bridge between the first and second Italian Republic

The first two technocratic governments in Italy were appointed during and in the aftermath of the most blatant example of a scandal on national scale, touching all parties and all levels of government and public administration, as well as the financial and industrial world. The reference here is to the

⁴⁶ He was also appointed to deal with the economic crisis, of which more in the next chapter

Tangentopoli (Bribesville) scandal and the subsequent regeneration and cleaning campaign of Mani Pulite (Clean Hands). The story is well known and has been analysed by scholars of both Italian and comparative politics and history (see for instance Guzzini 1995, Burnett and Mantovani 1998, Curini and Martelli 2009, Almagisti, Lanzalaco and Verzichelli 2014). Concentrating on the events that are relevant to the present case, the following paragraphs will look at how the two technocratic governments of Carlo Azeglio Ciampi and Lamberto Dini were appointed, and how their appointments and legitimacy was linked to the scandals shaking Italy at the time. A caveat should be nonetheless put forward. The Bribesville period in Italy was so peculiar that ascribing the technocratic governments of Ciampi and Dini just to the scandals would be reductive, as the scandals permeated and affected the entire political and economic system of Italy. Schmidt and Gualmini summarise the situation of Italy at the time in a colourful but effective way: ‘The Italian state had a weak executive, an incompetent, if not corrupt, civil service, a strong but ineffective parliament, and a system of *partitocrazia*, or the politicization along party lines of all aspects of political and administrative life – including the appointments along party lines of managers of nationalised enterprises’ (Schmidt and Gualmini 2013, 365). Therefore, while the importance of the scandal should not be ignored, it is only part of the explanation for two cabinets that were appointed during an existentially threatening period for the country.

Table 4-6 Technocratic governments in Italy appointed following a scandal

Prime Minister	Start date	End date
Carlo Azeglio Ciampi	29/04/1993	13/01/1994
Lamberto Dini	17/01/1995	07/01/1996

The *Mani Pulite* investigation has discovered since 1992 a strikingly vast network of systemic corruption, and investigations had been undergoing since then. The Amato socialist government⁴⁷ was appointed in 1992, after the elections gave insufficient majority for the first time in decades to the coalition headed by Democrazia Cristiana (DC). Ciampi’s cabinet was appointed in April 1993, following the fall of the Amato government, after seven of Amato’s ministers were forced to resign because indicted by magistrates. A Socialist-Christian Democratic majority backed Ciampi, ex Bank of Italy’s governor, in parliament. His cabinet lasted until May 1994 (it remained in place after his resignation till the next election result was known and Berlusconi came to power) and was staffed with 4 independent ministers and himself an independent Prime Minister, 8 ministers from the

⁴⁷ In chapter 2 it is not included it, as it violates the basic condition of having an independent prime minister, but it will be used towards the end of this chapter as a counterfactual example of a cabinet that could have easily been technocratic, and was one step away from being so.

Christian Democratic party that had ruled Italy till then, 5 ministers from the Socialist Party, and the rest from smaller parties. For the first time in the post-war period parties were largely excluded from the choice of ministers (Gilbert 1995, 148). Ciampi's appointment, moreover, came right after the success of the 'Yes' in all the 8 questions of a referendum proposed by the Radical party (amongst which were changed to the electoral system, drug law, and party financing). This was interpreted by commentators as a sign that the Italian population wanted 180° change in direction of how the country was run. More importantly in that period an event happened that remains to these days indelibly written in Italian memory: the killings of anti-mafia prosecutors Falcone and Borsellino.

So 'in the climate of legitimacy crisis of the political system, which the referendum had underscored, there was a diffuse sense that the new Prime Minister should not be a professional politician' (Pasquino and Vassallo 1994, 71). Ciampi's appointment is the result of a mix of explosive events, which include the scandals of Bribesville and more particularly those involving the members of the previous Amato government, but go beyond them with episodes of violence and clear manifestations of public discontent with the status quo. The continuing weakness of the majority of political parties, constantly under the vigilant eye of the magistrates, meant that they had no interest in snap elections. This represented a leverage tool for Ciampi both in terms of government survival and reform implementation (Stolfi 2008). Threatening resignation was a common tactic to make sure parties minimized the obstacles to the implementation of the government's programme, which also included administrative reform (Marconi, Mercati and Montebugnoli 1998, 143) so as not to risk precipitating the elections (Chimenti 1994, 46, Stolfi 2008).

The importance of Italy's first technocratic cabinet should not be underestimated in providing a sense of the great disarray of Italian politics and society in those years. Such disarray is evident in figure 3 below, where there is an unprecedented peak of Italians completely dissatisfied with their national democracy around 1993, and potentially in need for more competence and reliability of the ruling class (Sassoon 2008). Moreover, Ciampi's government marked the transition to what is now known as the Second Republic: a neutral bridge which allowed the processes of the Clean Hands operation to continue under it, while the political class renewed itself. The landslide victory of the 'new entry' Berlusconi at the subsequent March 1994 elections is indicative of the desire for change strongly present in the Italian population, willing to entrust their country in the hand of a businessman rather than in those of the old traditional parties which had lost their trust with the Bribesville scandals.

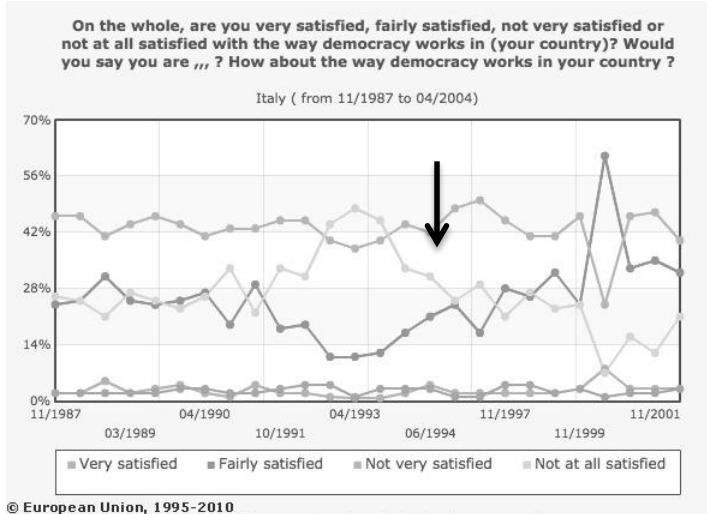


Figure 4-3 Satisfaction with democracy in Italy (1987-2001)

Source: Eurobarometer

The second technocratic government headed by Prime Minister Lamberto Dini was appointed in January 1995 and in office for 355 days, until the elections of 1996. Dini's cabinet followed the short interlude of Berlusconi's centre-right political government elected in 1994 in a coalition with the extreme right secessionist party Northern League (Lega Nord). Berlusconi, after his electoral victory, was quickly associated with several scandals for bribery and conflict of interest in relation to his vast private holdings of which he failed to divest himself (Hancock, Carman et al. 2004). His brother too was subject of a pre-trial arrest order because of corruption, and his ally Bossi, from the Northern League, too because of illicit financing. During his seven months in office, Berlusconi tried to reform the judiciary so as to make it more difficult to investigate political and business corruption cases, thus protecting himself and his entourage from future investigations.

In December 1994 Berlusconi's coalition partner, Bossi's Northern League, withdrew its support and passed a vote of no confidence. This shows how much, despite the new electoral law, which was attempting to turn the system from proportional to majoritarian, smaller parties still retained a relevant power of leverage. 'The small parties turned out to be hard and successful bargainers for coalitional spoils' (Bartolini and D'Alimonte 1998, 156) and had significant bargaining potential in the making and breaking of government (Giannetti and Laver 2001). The electoral reform failed to make the party system less fragmented. Paradoxically became even more fragmented as the years went by (see Table 7 below).

Table 4-7: Effective Number of Legislative Parties, Italy 1987-1996

Year	# legislative parties
1987	4.35
1992	5.71
1994	5.75
1996	6.15

Source: Giannetti and Laver (2001, 534)

Going back to the first Berlusconi government collapse, President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro⁴⁸, instead of dissolving parliament and calling for new elections, which was also what Berlusconi was requesting, decided to suggest Lamberto Dini, former central banker and IMF official, as a prime minister. This move prevented the potential reinforcement of the attempts at bipolarism in Italy, which was Berlusconi's ultimate solution for the instability and fragmentation of the party system. The appointment of Dini's technocratic government, can be, and will be in chapters 5 and 6, explained also in terms of the economic crisis affecting Italy at the time and the strong will of the head of state. However, it is undeniable that the atmosphere generated by the Bribesville scandal, and the subsequent clean-up campaigns had a strong, if more diffuse, effect. The more definite, explicit scandals affecting Berlusconi and Bossi in 1994 are just the cherry on the cake, and contributed to the overall impression that Dini's government was a welcomed initiative. The population strongly supported it, according to opinion polls, and 58% wanted him and a few of his technocratic ministers to become minister again in the following government⁴⁹.

As warned at the beginning of this section, the Italian technocratic governments of the early 90s were not directly traceable to the scandals, probably because scandals in that period were so widespread and so far-reaching into all layers of society that their impact can only be understood under the general connotation of political crisis. If the internal political crisis of the party system was responsible, so were external pressures of an economic type and internal ones coming from the Head of State. Between 1992 and 1995 Parliament was absent and unable to work because of the corruption scandals while technical governments were responding to the Maastricht requirements' (Schmidt and Gualmini 2013, 375). In Italy, overall, the early technocratic

⁴⁸ The role played by the Head of State Scalfaro is extremely important, but will be explored in chapter 6

⁴⁹ Adnkronos (1995). Governo: Sondaggio, super-promossi Dini, Agnelli e Frattini. Gli Italiani li vorrebbero ministri anche in futuro available at

http://www1.adnkronos.com/Archivio/AdnAgenzia/1995/12/09/Politica/GOVERNO-SONDAGGIO-SUPER-PROMOSSI-DINI-AGNELLI-E-FRATTINI_120000.php

governments were filling the gap left by the old parties, but not yet ready to be filled with the new ones. When new parties managed to attain power, such as Berlusconi's coalition with the Northern League, they did not keep in power for very long. New parties were simply still too new and confrontational or tainted by scandals themselves to take care of the reforms needed from within the country and demanded from without. Against this backdrop, technocratic governments were appointed to ensure economic and political reforms, credibility internally in the eyes of the population, and externally in the eyes of the European partners. Both those kinds of reforms, because of the scandals that affected them, could not be carried out by the old parties, which had lost the confidence of voters and international actors.

4.11 Poland: unpopular choice of a technocratic government by an undependable cabinet

Poland's only experience of a technocratic government is instructive because, contrary to some of the other Central and Eastern European countries which experienced those cabinets in the early years of democratization, such cabinet came after more than one decade of established democracy. It was only in 2004 that Marek Belka, former finance minister, was proposed as a replacement to the incumbent Prime Minister Leszek Miller by the Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski. Miller's resignation came one day after the country joined the EU, so the timing is also rather unique. For the purpose of this section, it is relevant to discuss the case of Belka because he was appointed following the Rywingate scandal that affected the previous government, brought it down and represented an incentive for the formation of a technocratic government rather than new elections.

Table 4-8 Technocratic government in Poland appointed following a scandal

Prime Minister	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Marek Marian Belka	11/06/2004	31/10/2005

Miller announced he would resign after 30 deputies from the Sejm (Parliament) and senators quit the ruling Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) at the end of April to found a new party, the Polish Social Democrats. Support for the SLD had dropped, to the point that opinion polls showed less than 10% popular support. While this drop was also due to the harsh budget cuts operated by the government, the interesting part for the present purposes is the corruption scandal that affected Miller's cabinet: the Rywin affair. Rywingate, as it was then called, involved Mr Rywin, a film producer, who claimed it could arrange, under compensation, for a law on press and film regulation to be changed. He proposed this deal to various newspapers, which would have greatly benefited

from the changed law, and he said he was acting on behalf of a ‘group holding power’, which could pass or change any legislation. Rywin thought he could sell a law, and was effectively doing it. This reinforced the suspicion of many Poles at the time that a small political and economic elite often called the ‘sitwa’ Polish for ‘net’ or ‘web’, ruled their country. It turned out that the arrangement concerning the changed press law also potentially involved the then Prime Minister Miller, who could have been the mastermind behind Rywin’s mission⁵⁰.

The scandal exploded in December 2002, when one of the newspapers to which the deal had been proposed published a transcript of the conversation between Rywin and the newspaper owner. In early 2003 the Polish parliament set up a special committee to investigate the affair. This resulted in a condemnation of Rywin for fraud in 2004, and subsequently also Miller was put on trial, as well as his chief of cabinet and deputy minister of culture. The Rywingate exposed the corruption of the ruling party, which was left-leaning and had paradoxically built its image on combating corruption. Politicians from Miller’s SLD were also named in corruption scandals about money laundering in the gambling industry and involvement in organized crime (Jasiewicz and Jasiewicz-Betkiewicz 2003, 1052-1057) and Miller himself was also implicated in the Orlen Affair. He was accused of having arranged, in 2002, the dismissal of the chief executive of the oil refiner and petroleum retailer Polski Koncern Naftowy Orlen, one of Poland’s largest companies. According to a former state treasury minister in the government, Miller had sought to replace the dismissed CEO with someone favourable to the government (Vermeersch 2013).

In line with the mechanisms identified in Figure 1 at the beginning of the chapter, scandals have the capacity, especially when they involve more than one party, to affect the credibility of the political class as a whole. The fall in popular support that followed in the Rywingate made the appointment of a technocratic government a viable option for a discredited political class, both in the majority and in the opposition. By April 2003 those who assessed the government’s performance positively dropped from 24 to 12%, while those viewing it negatively rose from 61 to 71%. And politics was seen as the number one area where corruption was widespread, overtaking the public health service in 2004 (Millard 2009, 121). The governing party tried to remedy the débâcle, for instance by setting up a mandatory lobbying register in the aftermath of the scandal (OECD 2012). But eventually Miller had to resign. At that point support for his party was at a mere 5%, so the advantages of going to the polls were non-existent. Not only the party was unprepared and unpopular, but also it had not yet selected a new leader. Going immediately to the polls after Miller’s resignation would have also proven complicated because the first European

⁵⁰ Rywin’s connections to Miller could not be proven fully. For a discussion, see Karklins, Rasma (2005). *The System Made Me Do it: Corruption in Post-communist Societies*. M.E. Sharpe.

elections were scheduled a month later. This points out at another interesting fact in the Polish case, which is that there was the added variable of Poland's entry into the EU, which was due to happen under Miller. When the scandal came out, President Aleksander Kwasniewski suggested in an interview with the newspaper *Rzeczpospolita* that Miller should resign because his reputed involvement in the scandal could turn voters against his government in a referendum scheduled for June 8 on joining the European Union (Green 2003) and thus jeopardise the country's chances of joining the economic block. The government resigned one day after Poland's entry in the EU, on May 2, 2004.

Against this background, President Kwasniewski appointed Marek Belka as a non-partisan leader of what was essentially a hybrid cabinet of experienced SLD ministers and non-party experts. Belka himself had been finance minister under Miller, but had resigned in 2002 because of disagreement with the Prime Minister⁵¹. This is why some scholars call it technocratic, while others argue that it was just yet another SLD cabinet. While never plumbing to Miller's depths of unpopularity, Belka failed to develop any significant momentum. Moreover, since his government retained virtually all the key ministers from the previous administration, he was too closely associated with its predecessor to manage to present a truly independent and un-corrupted image. Indeed in the first vote of confidence that he lost on May 14th, the opposition lawmakers argued that they rejected Belka because the governing SLD had lost the legitimacy to govern after the corruption scandals (New York Times 2004). He eventually managed to obtain parliamentary confidence on June 11th. Tellingly of the status of crisis and confusion, Belka resigned on 5 May 2005 to join the new Democratic Party, which was part of the opposition to his own government. This should give a sense of the quickly shifting and confusing moments in those months of crisis. A survey in March 2005 confirmed the crisis was deeply felt in the population too. 74% evaluated the political situation as 'bad', the worst result in the post-communist period (Millard 2007). President Kwasniewski refused Belka's resignation, because the Polish Parliament Sejm proved unwilling to countenance a summer election. They did not put together the supermajority needed for the dissolution of the parliament, so Belka had to remain as Prime Minister until the autumn.

Belka was never popular with the public nor with the other parties (Millard 2009, 15). His government was not stable, and the perception throughout the rest of his parliamentary term was that there was a political crisis going on (Millard 2009, 126). He survived largely because the Sejm failed to generate an alternative candidate and the often grudging support of the left (SLD and Unia Pracy, UP) and Marek Borowski's new Polish Social Democracy (Socjaldemokracja Polska,

⁵¹ Miller was too 'bossy' according to Belka.

SdPi) together with the growing corpus of ‘independent’ deputies. The latter had defected from their parties but wished to postpone losing their parliamentary seats. Overall Belka’s administration was problematic because it wanted to come across as independent, but failed in practice to do so. Belka himself lacked the consensus of other parties, which is a fundamental characteristic of most technocratic prime ministers analysed so far. It was a political appointment made to help the recovery of the SLD under the pretence of a ‘neutral’ period. Recalling from chapter 2, here the importance of the rhetoric in defining the ‘technocratness’ of government and maintaining its credibility is evident.

The Polish case is a complex one, where the appointment of the country’s only technocratic government was driven by the concomitant presence of a scandal, the key issue of joining the EU, a general political crisis in a divided and confrontational parliament, as well as the willingness of the ruling party to deal with its own ‘cleaning up’ by itself, rather than leaving the task to the opposition.⁵² The importance of the scandal should not be underestimated, as it brought out in the population a resentment on old issue related to the communist legacy. As Koczanowicz noted, ‘the whole political class stood accused that, after overturning the oppressive communist regime, it could not create a more just state, but in fact could only repeat the practices of the communist political system’ (Koczanowicz 2008, 11). The opposition Law and Justice centre-right party (PiS) sought to benefit from the scandals and framed the implosion of the SLD as not just a result of corruption, but of the refusal to break with the traditions of the left and the communist past. The PiS recoded a protest against corruption as a fundamental criticism of “left-wing” politics. According to them, the SLD corruption scandals illustrated that Polish left-wing politicians were still deeply implicated in a network of people with roots in the Communist establishment. They adopted a rhetoric of anti-corruption, and opposition to left-wing political parties, ideological conservatism, and national belonging (Vermeersch 2013, 140). By constructing a tight association between the narrative of anti-corruption and the promotion of “national” values, the PiS campaign effectively accused left-wing politicians of national betrayal. This shows to what extent scandals can have an upsetting effects on the dynamic of a whole political system, and for the party affected by the scandals, a technocratic government as a clean façade is an option that might be considered useful at the time – but that is not always successful.

⁵² There was also an economic crisis affecting the country at the time, and Belka, who studied in the US, at Columbia University and the University of Chicago, including a period of study under the professor Milton Friedman, was selected to ensure the austerity programme could be carried out effectively. He had left Miller’s government precisely because he saw it as being too lax in economic terms.

4.12 The path not taken: attempt at technocratic government appointment

4.12.1 The Amato cabinet in Italy (1992)

The Amato government illustrates the importance of scandals in increasing the likelihood of appointment of technocratic government, but their non-sufficiency. Before the appointment of Italy's first technocratic government led by central banker Ciampi, which has been analysed above, the Italian parties and the Head of State had already come very close to appointing a technocratic government. They had chosen 'a socialist better known for his competence and technical expertise than for his commitment to party politics' (Salvati 1995, 76): Giuliano Amato. The Amato government was appointed in 1992, as already explained above, after the elections gave insufficient majority to the coalition headed by the Christian Democrat (Democrazia Cristiana, DC). This was due to the on-going crisis of political parties following the revelations of Bribesville. Amato's cabinet only comprised of a few independent ministers, most of the others having been nominated by the parties, and the prime minister himself was affiliated to the Socialist party. According to the criteria of chapter 2, the cabinet does not fit the definition of a technocratic cabinet because Amato was not an independent technocrat.

Given the circumstances, however, Amato's government could easily have been technocratic. Most of the elements described as being conducive to technocratic government's appointment were present: a scandal, a powerful head of state, and a fragmented and unstable party system. Moreover, as will be explained in the next chapter more in details, Italy was also going through difficult economic times, which put the country under external pressures. Amato was appointed to 'weather the full impact of the financial and foreign exchange crisis which lead to the exit of the Lira from the EMS and to devaluation' (Salvati 1995, 82). It had the additional interesting feature of being rapidly substituted with a technocratic cabinet. Even more telling is the fact that such cabinet behaved like a technocratic one, to the point that several academics as well as interviewees would add him to the list of technocratic governments. 'I would add that the Amato government, albeit not technocratic in composition, also behaved in all its policy choices and declarations as a technocratic government', said Frattini, minister in the Dini technocratic government (Frattini 2014). Masera, minister in the Monti technocratic government, also confirmed this suggesting that 'the Amato cabinet is another potential candidate for the list [of technocratic governments]. There the Prime Minister was a politician but the intention behind the appointment of the cabinet was for it to behave as if it were technocratic' (Masera 2014).

Italian academics are divided on the issue. Morlino agrees with including it in the category (Morlino 2013) while Fabbrini defines it as a centrist government that was soon transformed into a caretaker

(Fabbrini 2000a, 175). In the same piece of work he states ‘the Italian solution to the problem of introducing the necessary policy changes requested by the European partners became the suspension of ordinary parliamentary activity between 1992 and 1998. The government was placed in the hands of experts (the university law professor Giuliano Amato, who led the government from June 1992 to April 1993; [...]): governments supported by the confidence placed in them internally by the president of the Republic and externally by European bankers, rather than by the confidence of a parliamentary majority’ (p.188-189). These characteristics remind very much of the characteristics typical of a technocratic government, and certainly the rhetoric employed at the time by the government was a similar crisis rhetoric to be found in other technocratic governments. When justifying for instance the capital levy of 0.6 on all banks, Amato declared in the press conference that ‘we [Italians] were on the edge of the abyss’ (Polidori 1992).

However, the Italian system had not gone all the way to the technocratic solution with Amato. The reason was that the annihilation of the old political order (and the parties that formed it) was not yet completed, so it did not justify a cabinet completely overlooking the existing parties. In fact the Amato government was composed of the Christian Democrats (DC), the Socialists (PSI), the Social Democrats (PSDI) and the Liberals (PLI). These same parties at the time felt that having one of their ‘cleaner’ members heading a government would be enough to restore voters’ trust, without having to abdicate power completely in favour of a technocratic government. They were still in control, even though the floor was crumbling under their feet because of the scandals, which were eventually going to bring them to extinction (Cecco 1995). The reason for the fall of the Amato government, which fell because several of its ministers were found to be implicated in corruption, gave the last push to the already unstable parties of the First Republic, and allowed for the Head of State Scalfaro to intervene more strongly than he had the chance to do in the Amato case. This is not only because of the resilience of the traditional parties of the first republic, but also because Scalfaro himself had been appointed only weeks before Amato’s cabinet took office, so he did not have yet the legitimacy of an established figure in those difficult times.

4.13 Conclusion

The cases analysed in the pages above have illustrated the mechanisms presented in Figure 1 in this chapter, but have also highlighted some of the national peculiarities that make such processes different in each country, while sharing similar logics. They have also indicated something that will become even clearer in the next three chapters: the intertwined nature of the explanatory as well as moderating variables. The overview table 1 presented at the beginning of this chapter illustrates at a glance how there are different combinations of both the explanatory and the moderating variables that could lead to the appointment of technocratic governments, and most combinations

in any case are not *always* conducive to a technocratic government. In this chapter the analysis has concentrated on the scandals, but often the scandal is coupled with an economic crisis, and quite as often with a more-powerful-than-usual intervention of the Head of State, and with a fragmented or polarized party system. The occasional ‘unfinished’ sense given by the case studies above is due to the fact that the same government can be analysed according to these different elements, and indeed some technocratic cabinets are covered in chapters 4, 5 and 6 as they display all characteristics at once.

Leaving aside this caveat, the cases above have shown that scandals appear most effective in pushing for the technocratic solution when they affect an already weakened political class. If politicians cannot make the most of the crises to demonstrate top political leadership, like it might happen in other moments of crisis (Gourevitch 1986) they might think that technocracy is a useful tool to regain credibility. With some notable exceptions (Poland and partially Greece) the opposition too could use technocratic governments as a way to avoid being blamed for collaborating with the majority tainted by a scandal, and subsequently use the argument of corruption as an electoral weapon.

Sketching out the cases has moreover highlighted the importance of the impact of the scandals on voters’ perceptions of the reliability and legitimacy of the political class, so that political ‘crisis is the process of [...] divorce and change in relations among civil society, parties and government institutions’ (Morlino 1998, 11). The relationship of trust between people and government (or political parties in general) is eroded, and the need for time to regain credibility, and for someone to ensure governability in the meanwhile incentivises politicians to appoint technocratic governments. Brief references to the destiny of the scandal-ridden parties in some countries have also shown that technocratic governments have not always been successful in their mission to ‘clean up’ the guilty party. This was due either to the extent of the scandal which was too blatant to recover from (Greece) or because the Prime Minister lacked the right kind of credibility (Belka in Poland). In this sense the importance of external pressures, meant as pressures from outside the party touched by the scandal, have also been touched upon. The importance of ensuring a continuity of government and potentially reforms⁵³, often under pressure by international bodies or governments is one example as to why after a scandal political parties have decided to appoint a technocratic government, as was for instance the case in the Czech Republic. The pressures of the mounting opposition, threatening not only electorally, but also in terms of ideology, is also another instance of pressure which made parties opt for a technocratic government rather than

⁵³ Especially of economic and fiscal nature, as will become clearer in the next chapter

risking elections. A good example of such (unsuccessful) attempt was Hungary, where eventually the party affected by the scandal was discredited and put out of office despite the good work carried out by the technocratic government supported by it. More will be said in chapter 6 on pressures put by the Head of State, as guarantor of stability or as a partisan politician, on parties to appoint a technocratic government after a scandal.

Occasionally there have been difficulties in isolating single instances of scandals. This mainly happens in cases, like Bulgaria and Italy, where technocratic governments were appointed in periods of such diffuse and all-encompassing corruption that it mattered little to identify which scandal was more relevant. Those cases of pervasive corruption are also cases where the population is more prone to see with positive eyes the appointment of a technocratic government. For other, more historical reasons, we have also seen this being the case in other former communist parties – most evident in the Czech Republic - where distrust for political parties is confirmed in its righteousness by scandals. This made technocratic governments not only an acceptable, but also a welcomed solution (Tucker and et al. 2000).

In the next chapter it will become clear that the logic underpinning economic crises as a factor influencing the appointment of technocratic government is similar but not equivalent to that of scandal, as the accent is more put on the need for efficacy and outcome-oriented politics. As Lowi remarked, economic crises promote technocratic solutions for which experts are supposedly better prepared (Lowi 1964). In the case of scandals, crises related to the discovery of corruption and other scandalous behaviours incentivize the appointment of a technocratic government as a neutral buffer between the scandal and the next election to ensure the best electoral outcome. Which shows that, after all, delegation to technocratic government is not totally against partisan politicians' preferences.

Chapter 5 Economic crises and technocratic governments.

How incentives of blame avoidance, efficiency maximization and legitimacy enhancement increase the likelihood of appointment of technocratic governments in periods of economic crisis.

This chapter focuses on tracking how situations of economic crisis contributed to a shift in actors' preference and subsequent delegation to technocratic governments in European countries. Economic crises, both measured as simple economic recession and as more complex measures of banking, currency and debt crises (Reinhart and Rogoff 2009, Babecký, Havránek et al. 2012, Laeven and Valencia 2013), have been shown in the analysis in chapter 3 to be moments in which a country would be more likely to appoint technocratic governments. According to the theoretical model of technocratic government appointment, structural factors such as a divided and polarized party system and a strong head of state increase the impact of the economic crisis, hence in turn increasing the overall incentive to delegate to technocratic governments. This chapter, in a mirror-like way to the previous one, presents case studies of technocratic governments in different European countries to highlight the interactions between economic crises, technocratic governments and the moderating variables, as well as problematizing the concept of economic crisis as such. Before proceeding to the actual case studies, it is worth recalling what the theoretical logic behind delegating to technocratic governments is, in the case of an economic crisis, from a rational institutionalist perspective. To sum up, figure 1 displays what process will be traced in the course of the next pages.

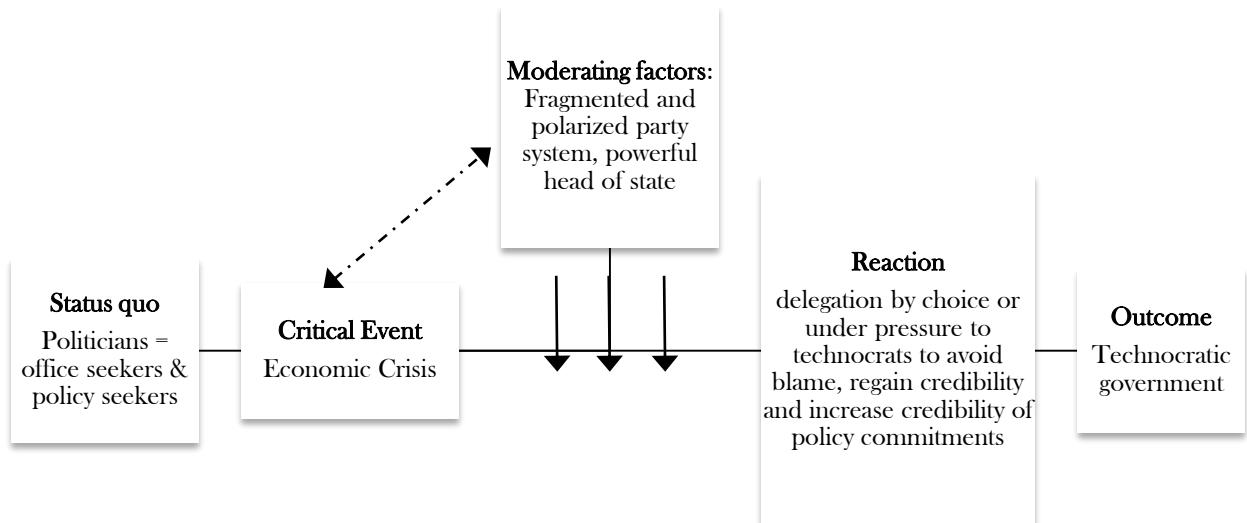


Figure 5-1 Economic crisis increasing the likelihood of technocratic government appointment

The literature on delegation to non-majoritarian institutions identifies blame avoidance, enhancing the efficiency of rule-making and resolving commitment problems as the three main explanations for delegation to non-majoritarian institutions (Thatcher and Sweet 2002). A difficult economic situation that the political class is unable or is unwilling to solve is an incentive for delegation to technocratic governments for similar reasons.

Firstly, politicians might decide to delegate decision making to technocratic governments in order to avoid taking the blame for unpopular policies. ‘...You know, any democratic system, in my long experience, tends to take the more comfortable decision, if you have the alternative to do so’⁵⁴ said Wolfgang Schäuble, German minister of Finance. Opportunistically partisan governments might decide to leave ‘less comfortable’ decisions to technocrats. In fact in some countries, lack of past reforms and necessity for new ones has been the main drivers for the appointment of technocratic governments (Fabbrini 2013).

Secondly, in a situation of economic crisis, concerns for efficiency could become predominant over disagreements of a redistributive nature (Neto and Strøm 2006) so that partisan disagreements could be put aside in a common effort to solve the pressing economic issues. Negative economic conditions and fear on behalf of the markets might increase the likelihood of having technocrats as central bankers, finance ministers and prime ministers, as this reassures both markets and potentially voters (Halleberg and Wehner 2013).

Thirdly, technocratic governments can be appointed to enhance the credibility of policy commitments. Both vis-à-vis internal and external expectations, experts are more likely to be carrying on with their policy making without being subject to demands of electoral pressures. This capacity to develop high credibility in response to demands coming from external or internal will be particularly explored in those cases of technocratic government appointments during the Eurocrisis. Demands of the Troika on debtor countries come to mind immediately when thinking about external pressures as being responsible for technocratic governments. But external pressures to the political system can also come from closer to the politicians, in the forms of popular protests, or from further away than the EU, such as conditions attached to IMF loans pre-EU accession.

In short, technocratic governments are more likely to be appointed when government and opposition are either unable to deal with the economic situation in an efficient or legitimate way, or they are unwilling to carry out the reforms needed.

⁵⁴ Wolfgang Schäuble ‘Eurozone at a crossroad (again)’ Washington, Brookings Institution, 16/4/2015 Transcript available at http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/events/2015/04/16-wolfgang-schauble-eurozone-crossroads/20150416_germany_eurozone_schauble_transcript.pdf

All of the above is explored in case studies, arranged by country in alphabetical order, and within each country, by cabinet in chronological order. Not all technocratic governments will be analysed in each country, as only some of them will be relevant in terms of economic crisis explanation. The selection of cabinet is explained further below in the section ‘Case selection criteria’, and has been done on the basis, similarly as the previous chapter, of variation in both the main independent variable ‘economic crisis’ and the moderating factors related to the party system, the head of state and external pressures.

5.1 What is an economic crisis?

It has been remarked, there is no commonly accepted definition nor a common theory of economic crisis (Jonung, Kiander and Vartia 2009, 159), and that the literature on crisis is itself in a crisis (Rose 2001). However, this does not mean that it is impossible to identify economic crises, but simply that one has to take into consideration several different aspects. This is why in this chapter there will be two ways of identification. On the one hand the objective economic indicators used in the statistical analysis capture the fact of both a recession, and of specific banking, currency or debt crisis will be used. These often are complemented by relevant international reactions, such as IMF programmes and, more recently, EU bailouts, which are part of the ‘objective’ measurement of crisis and external pressures. However, those are just one way in which crises can, and are, identified in this chapter. A crisis (economic or of other kind, as the previous chapter has shown) is not just happening, but can also be constructed. A minor economic downturn could be perceived as being much more serious, and vice versa a severe crisis, if managed well, can have very little political effect, as the counterfactual at the end of this chapter will show. Mass media play a crucial role in the framing contest that ensues in the wake of a crisis (Boin, t Hart and McConnell 2009, 95) and in turn such framing has to be sold by political elites to both the media and public opinion (Ulmer, Sellnow and Seeger 2007). Moreover, political actors might have an incentive to either downplay or give weight to an economic crisis for a variety of reasons. Crisis rhetoric can help reinforce or legitimise a decision, such as the demise of a cabinet or, more to the point, the appointment of technocrats in power. Parties can use problems linked to the economy against each other in electoral contests. Therefore the case studies will identify both moments which were objectively crisis moments, but also those when academic literature or other country-relevant documents point at a situation that was perceived as an economic crisis.

The initial overview table will compare the actual crisis measurement provided by the ECB and the IMF and what comes out of the more qualitative literature. Discrepancies seem to be the norm, rather than the exception, which does not undermine the results of the statistical analysis but on

the contrary reinforces it by showing that there might be a lot more cases of economic crisis that the analysis has not captured. Moreover, for each country, a graph tracing GDP growth over the period of technocratic government rule will be presented, where the ‘Xs’ will indicate the appointment of a technocratic government. This will help to get at a glance whether the governments were appointed in a period of growth or recession, compared to the previous year, and to help recall the various episodes analysed for each country.

5.2 Cases selection criteria

Table 1 below presents the cases, that is, the cabinets analysed and an overview and some quick words about the variables in question. Similarly than for the equivalent table in the previous chapter on scandals, Table 1 is necessarily a simplification. It is nonetheless useful to help the reader navigating the details of the different national cases. Once again, like for the previous chapter, a few words should be added on how those cases were selected. The selection was done on the basis of variation of the independent variables. The table shows the geographical and chronological span of the selection, which includes Western and Eastern European countries, from the late 50s up to 2013. More importantly, the selection aims at including different kinds of ‘economic’ crisis: from mild recession to full blow risk of bankruptcy. This is why the table includes both the measurement of the crisis as per ECB database (Babecký, Havránek et al. 2012) and IMF (Laeven and Valencia 2013), as explained in chapter 3, as well as what came across through the qualitative research. This helps to underline the difference between the objective economic indicators, and what academics and commentators have perceived in a more constructivist way.

Table 5-1 Overview of the case studies selected and relevant variables

Country	Cabinet	Year	Economic crisis (ECB+ IMF)	Economic Crisis (other sources)	Party system	HoS intervenes	External pressure
Bulgaria	Berov	1992	none	Problems linked to privatization	Still consolidating	n/a	IMF Stand-by arrangement
Bulgaria	Raykov	2013	Not available	Eurocrisis	Lacking credibility	n/a	Popular protests
Czech Republic	Tosovsky	1998	Banking crisis	1996 financial crisis	Lacking credibility	Yes, Havel	n/a
Czech Republic	Fischer	2009	none	Global financial crisis	Fragmented	Yes, Zeman	n/a
Finland	Tumioja	1953	Currency crisis	Internal disagreement over export	Fragmented	n/a	n/a
Finland	Von Fieandt	1957	none	Inflation, unemployment, adverse balance of payment, leading to currency crisis	Fragmented and in contrast with president	Yes, Kekkonen	n/a

Finland	Lehto	1963	none	Disagreement over budget	Fragmented and in contrast with president	Yes, Kekkonen	n/a
Greece	Zolotas I and II	1989/1990	none	Budget deficit, high borrowing rates, almost bankruptcy	Polarized	n/a	EU
Greece	Papademos	2011	Banking Crisis	Eurocrisis	Stable	n/a	EU bailout
Italy	Ciampi	1993	Banking crisis	Currency and financial crisis	Fragmented (from 1 st to 2 nd republic)	Yes, Scalfaro	Euro requirements
Italy	Monti	2011	Banking crisis	Eurocrisis	Polarized	Yes, Napolitano	EU
Portugal	Nobre da Costa	1978	None	Deficit, unemployment, inflation	Still forming, and contrast with president	Yes, Eanes	IMF programme
Portugal	Mota Pinto	1978	None	Deficit, unemployment, inflation	Still forming. Contrast with president	Yes, Eanes	IMF programme
Portugal	Pintasilgo	1979	None	Deficit, unemployment, inflation	Still forming. Contrast with president	Yes, Eanes	IMF programme
Romania	Stolojan	1991	Banking crisis	Country close to bankruptcy, efforts for privatization	Still consolidating	n/a	Popular protests
Romania	Vacariou	1992	Banking crisis	Country close to bankruptcy, efforts for privatization	Still consolidating	n/a	n/a
Romania	Boc II (Non-TG)	2009	None	<i>Sharp drop in capital inflows, external and fiscal imbalances</i>	Fragmented	Yes, Basescu	IMF stand-by arrangement

The list also includes, like in the previous chapter and in the one which follows, a counterfactual cabinet, i.e. a cabinet which given the circumstances could have easily been technocratic, but for the failure of one of the variables to play a sufficiently strong role, it was not. The case in question for this chapter is Romania in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. In 2009 in Romania the economic situation was critical, and different actors in the divided party system were suggesting a technocratic government as a solution to problems of reform implementation, credibility and blame avoidance. However, the Head of State Basescu did not see it as an appropriate step to take. His opposition was enough to prevent a technocratic government from being appointed, showing once again how even though most of the conditions were present – in this case in particular a severe economic crisis, and the will of the party system – the lack of support of the Head of State was central in preventing such appointment to be made. The previous PM was instead reappointed, and parties had to take the full responsibility for the reforms and the austerity that ensued.

5.3 Bulgaria: a difficult transition to market economy, and the Eurocrisis

In Bulgaria the transition to full market economy after the fall of the Berlin wall was particularly difficult. Its economy in the USSR years had become extremely dependent from Comecon. When such organization collapsed, the path to growth was slow, as the graph below shows, and Bulgaria had to build from scratch new patterns of trade with the EU and the dollar area. This was difficult because, to mention just one aspect, of the low quality of exported goods, which only a controlled market would buy. Other issues were also responsible for the difficult democratization, and that included corruption, as has been explored in the previous chapter.

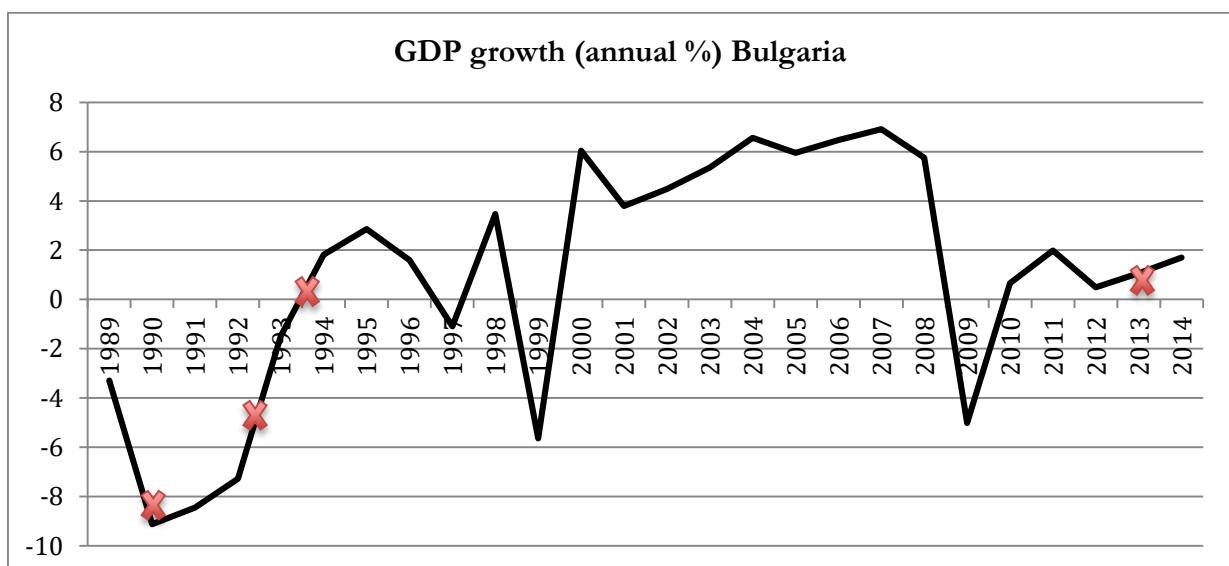


Figure 5-2 GDP growth in Bulgaria, 1989-2014

Source: *Worldbank*

Bulgaria is also a country that has seen four technocratic governments in its relatively short democratic life, identifiable as the 'Xs' on the graph. In this chapter, the technocratic governments of Berov and Raykov provide the best examples of the influence of a difficult economic situation on the appointment of a technocratic government.

Table 5-2 Technocratic governments in Bulgaria appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Lyuben Berov	Economic Adviser to the Presidency	30/12/1992	02/09/1994
Marin Raykov	Ambassador	13/03/2013	12/05/2013

In October 1991, Philip Dimitrov was elected Prime minister at the head of a coalition government composed of the Union of Democratic Forces Party and the Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedoms Party. He continued the austerity programme that had been recommended by the World Bank Mission, which had come to Bulgaria in the summer of 1990. ‘State enterprises cut employment, government subsidies were substantially reduced, real wages were cut, and the inflation rate moderated to only 2% a month by mid-1992. In addition, legislation implementing privatization of large state enterprises was passed in April (Wight and Fox 1998, 133). The IMF Directors for Bulgaria ‘commended the authorities on the achievements of the first year of their economic reform efforts, particularly with respect to stabilization. Prices and interest rates were liberalized, the economy was opened to international trade, and private sector activities began to develop’ (IMF 1992, 26). Bulgaria had signed a Stand-by arrangement with the IMF for \$394 million.

Nonetheless, this virtuous path was not maintained for very long, as the coalition split by the mid-1992. The Turkish movement started pushing for less austerity and more government aid, while the Union of Democratic Forces, on the contrary, was unhappy with the slow pace of the privatization. The result of these disagreements was a policy reversal, by the second third of 1992, which saw the deficit growing, wage policy being relaxed, and inflation growing quickly. The unsuccessful stabilization programme launched in 1991 was seen as a direct cause of the 1996-1997 financial, debt and currency crises, probably the most profound crisis of any transition country (Dobrinsky 2000). Following the policy reversal mentioned, Bulgaria’s GDP fell and the government lost a vote of confidence in October and stepped down. The Dimitrov government had failed to implement the privatization and other reforms that were needed and ‘UDF reformers crashed against the unexpected scope of the economic disaster and created the impression that democracy means chaos, insecurity and the constant threat of poverty’ (Giatzidis 2002, 67). This situation was worsened by the Mishev-gate affair, a scandal involving Dimitrov himself of which more in the preceding chapter, and when he asked for a vote of confidence, he lost 11 votes to 120.

The vacuum left by the Dimitrov government could not be filled by any of the political parties on the scene at the time. The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) could not command sufficient numbers in the assembly and his new leader had not established himself yet. The Movements of Rights and Freedom (MRF) could also not form an administration (Crampton 2005, 224). It nonetheless agreed to support the newly formed Berov cabinet, a non-party cabinet composed largely of experts. Berov, who had PhD in Economics, had been previous to his appointment, economic

adviser to the presidency, so he was not completely un-politically aware. Indeed according to an interview the author conducted with the head of State Protocol from 1997 to 2002, Ivan Pirovski, the Berov cabinet was not as neutral as it was portrayed to be. *'Even though Berov himself was an independent economics professor, his ministers all had party affiliation. Berov moreover did not really have any real power and he was of frail health. In short, although an honest prime minister, he did not really have much say in the government policies. In fact the government, both in newspapers and by other Prime ministers was often referred to as "the government of the big oligarchs", showing once again how Berov was nothing more than a formal head'* (Pirovski 2014).

The example of the appointment of the Berov cabinet shows two interesting points. The first is that government inability to initiate and carry to completion the needed reforms was at the core of the need for a technocratic government - which could potentially do so better. Hence it is not so much an economic crisis itself determining the appointment of the technocratic government, but rather how the government reacted to economic difficulties represented by the transition to a full market economy. According to some scholars, the Dimitrov cabinet spent too much time and energy on ill prepared legislation on such issues as the decollectivization of agriculture, and too little on effective economic reforms (Crampton 2005, 224).

The second interesting aspect is that, while the head of the cabinet Berov was clearly chosen for his economic expertise, the composition of the cabinet undermined such expertise. His cabinet was defined as 'the product of an unorthodox political compromise that might not be particularly stable' (Engelbrekt 1993, 1) Hiding once more behind a thin layer of neutrality were politicians who thought such government had more chances of reforming the system, but in fact followed closely the step of his predecessor, by 'spending generously to support old-economy interest...[carrying out] indiscriminate lending by state commercial banks' (Frye 2010, 199) all of which eventually lead to the currency crisis of 1994. Berov then resigned to avoid a vote of no-confidence, when he felt that the parties supporting him had 'enough of this government' and wanted to 'govern by themselves' (interview with Berov quoted in Stone 2002, 217).

The period of the Eurocrisis obviously provides a good example of a time when technocratic governments were brought into power to deal with complicated economic and financial situations. The recent appointment of Ambassador Marin Raykov's cabinet was, by the President Plevneliev's own admission 'the third time that an interim government will be built in Bulgaria⁵⁵'. The appointment came following not only the broad economic crisis which was affecting most of

⁵⁵ Interview with Austrian newspaper Der Standard, reproduced in Focus Information Agency, 11/03/2013
<http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=f3193>

Europe, but within the country it stemmed especially from the high rise of electricity bills and the austerity policies carried out by Boyko Borisov's cabinet, which resigned in February 2013. Two days before resigning, Borisov had fired his finance minister Djankov, a former World Bank economist, unpopular with the public because of his stringent austerity policies. Mr Djankov squeezed the budget deficit from 2% in 2011 to 0.5% of GDP, one of the lowest in the EU. This did not appease popular discontent; on the contrary, it spurred even more protests, as Bulgaria under austerity had become even poorer than before. After Borisov resigned, the third biggest party in the Parliament - the Movement for Rights and Freedoms - declined a formal offer to attempt to form a cabinet, so that the President appointed a technocratic government under Ambassador Raykov. It was a cabinet fully composed of independent ministers, and it is not surprising that President Plevneliev compared it to another fully independent technocratic cabinet, that of Mario Monti in Italy. He stated: 'I wish we could work like [Prime Minister Mario] Monti did in Italy,' referring to the approach to politics and reforms of Monti's technocratic government. In another speech he confirmed that 'I have not allowed anyone to pressure me and I have disregarded the party affiliations'⁵⁶ legitimising through his own words Raykov's 'technocratness'. Raykov himself opened his first Council of Ministers saying that: 'we are not a party government, but we're not anti-party government, because we believe in the values of representative democracy, which are the basis of modern European civilization'⁵⁷

The Raykov technocratic government is an interesting case compared to other technocratic governments, in so far as it was not the result of the previous governments' unwillingness to carry out reforms – the Borisov government had done so successfully – nor of needing credibility in the eyes of the European partner. Unique in its genre, it is an example of popular intervention in the collapse of a government. So while the economic crisis was the backdrop for its appointment, other forces were at play in his appointment: it is a case in which not only fear of electoral defeat, but also of popular unrest that made a technocratic government an interesting option for the political system. After the elections in May 2013, interestingly, the cabinet which was appointed, led by BPS-affiliated Plame Oresharski, was one that some commentators have defined as technocratic (Buckley and Sofia 2013). It was, once again, brought down by popular protest because of the tough austerity reforms it had to carry out.

⁵⁶ 'On 13 March President Rosen Plevneliev will appoint a caretaker cabinet with Prime Minister Marin Raykov', Bulgarian Presidency website <http://www.president.bg/news1090/on-13-march-president-rosen-plevneliev-will-appoint-a-caretaker-cabinet-with-prime-minister-marin-raykov.html&lang=en>

⁵⁷ Bulgarian government website <http://www.government.bg/>

The examples from Bulgaria underline the complementarity of the various factors which have been identified in the theoretical model as being conducive to increasing the likelihood of appointing a technocratic government, in particular given the nature of the country the concomitant presence of scandals and economic crises. To these, other elements particular to the national context have been added to explain such appointment – notably popular protest and external pressures from creditors such as the IMF.

5.4 Czech Republic: preference for non-political politics

The Czech Republic is an interesting case for all the relevant variables influencing the likelihood of appointment of technocratic governments. In the previous chapter, Rusnok and Tosovsky have been shown as a particularly telling example of technocratic government following a political scandal. However, the same Tosovsky technocratic government is also a valid case of how a difficult economic situation can increase the likelihood of technocratic government appointment, and so is Fischer's cabinet. Those two are going to be therefore the focus of the next few paragraphs. Let us recall the dates of the technocratic governments below in table 3.

Table 5-3 Technocratic governments in the Czech Republic appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Josef Tosovsky	Governor Czech National Bank	02/01/1998	20/06/1998
Jan Fischer	President Czech Statistical Office	08/05/2009	29/05/2010

Starting from Tosovsky, his cabinet of experts was appointed when the 'Czech economic miracle' as it was called at the time, started to fail. The incumbent Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, leader of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), had been a key figure in this miracle since his election in 1992. Klaus considered himself a right wing politician and a follower of Thatcher-like style of economic reforms. He pushed for swift privatization, even though he was less market-liberal when it came to social policy, as he knew that the Czech people would not accept excessive reduction of welfare provisions. His line of action was quite successful. In 1996 unemployment was 3.5% compared to 12.1% in Hungary and 15.7% in Poland, inflation was only 8.8% compared to 23.6% in Hungary and 19.9% in Poland, economic growth was a healthy 4.1%, and the budget had only a 0.1% deficit. This however quickly changed around 1996, and the first few cracks started to appear, as the figure below shows clearly.

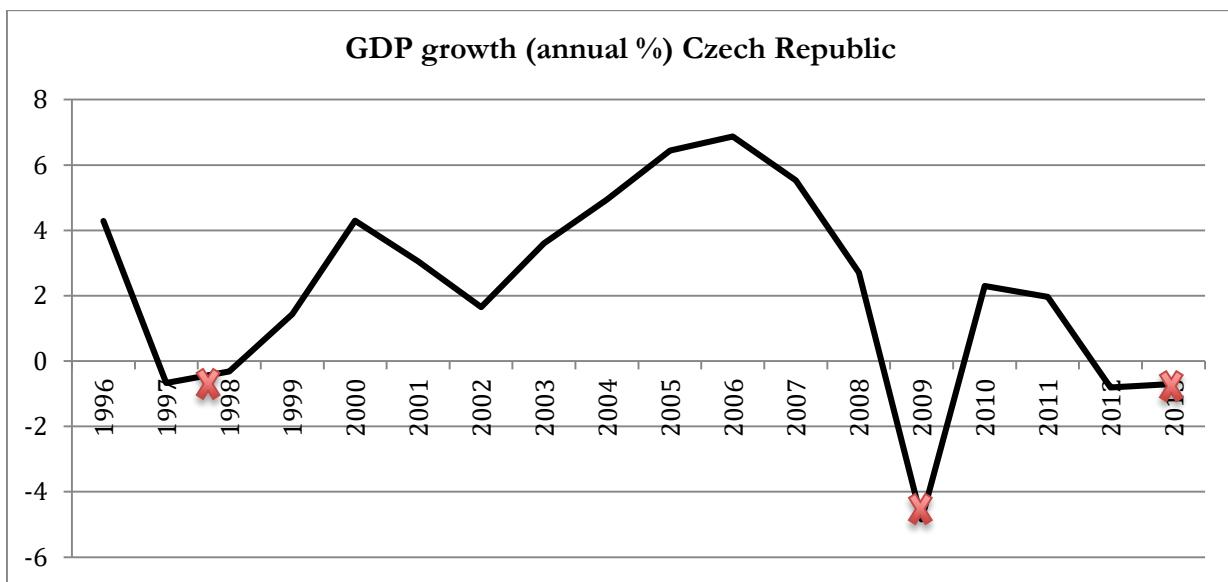


Figure 5-3 GDP growth in the Czech Republic, 1996-2013

Source: Worldbank

The economic instability was reflected in a political instability, notably lack of clear majority in parliament for the incumbent Klaus-led coalition after the 1996 elections. The centre-right coalition of ODS, Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) and Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-CSL) failed to gain an absolute majority by one seat. The ODS received 68 seats; the ODA, 13 seats; the KDU-CSL, 18 seats: together only 99 of 200 seats. After having struck a deal with the Social Democrats to ensure a majority in parliament, the ODS led-government coalition was further shaken by economic failures. In 1996, eight banks failed due to incompetence or fraud. Investment funds also started to go bust and fund directors fled amid financial scandal (Stroehlein, Culik et al. 1999). The lack of government legislation and regulation of financial markets was seen as responsible for many of these events. In terms of public finances, a large trade deficit began to accumulate. In April 1997 Klaus passed a mini-budget to try to solve some of those issues, which was made up, essentially, of austerity measures. These were also indirectly a way to admit that the economy had not been managed properly, and public satisfaction with the ruling coalition dropped ten percentage points in one month to 24% at the end of April⁵⁸. Scandals contributed to the general decline in support, as explained in the previous chapter, but, most importantly, for the present case, a severe currency crisis took place in May 1997. A further fall in popularity of Klaus' government followed swiftly, and the ODA and KDU-CSL announced they would leave the coalition.

⁵⁸ Institute for Public Opinion Research polls in RFE/RL Newsline, 29 April 1997 and RFE/RL Newsline, 15 May 1997.

Klaus eventually resigned in December 1997, and the subsequent collapse of the government can be attributed both to the scandals, but also to the economic mismanagement that resulted ultimately in an economic crisis and in the loss of the glue that kept the coalition together until then: economic success. The need to enact swift reforms was not just responsible of government collapse, but also of the appointment of technocratic Prime Minister Tosovsky that followed in January 1988. After Klaus' fall, the KDU-CSL was mandated to form a government, and the party carried out this task in the hope that the government could credibly distance itself from what Klaus had done, both in terms of scandal and in terms of economic decisions. This is why the governor of the Czech national bank, Josef Tosovsky, was appointed. His cabinet was a mix of independents and of partisan ministers affiliated with parties opposed to Klaus (Rutland 2000), once again underlying the need to have an independent government but also one that would be seen as a break with the past.

In terms of what Tosovsky was effectively called to do, there were some delicate structural issues that the parties hoped he could address, and these included the privatization of the three main State banks, which were to be sold to foreign investors. The appointment of Tosovsky was well received by economists and investors. 'He is a better choice than a lot of the other possibilities because he has credibility, independence and a track record', said Gabor Bognar, an economist at Goldman Sachs in London who specializes in Central Europe (Perlez 1997). The 'credibility of commitment' logic, as outlined in the theoretical model above, must have been very present in Klaus's opposition when they decided to support Tosovsky. There was a need for credibility not so much towards external stakeholders such as international financial institutions or creditors, but rather towards internal national stakeholders, that is, the Czech people. Moreover, the logic of blame avoidance for the tough reforms needed to put the country's economic position back on track is also evident in the choice of appointing an independent. The ex-coalition partner KDU-CSL agreed in principle with the need for swift economic reforms, as they had left Klaus over disagreements on the lack of reform, amongst other things. However, they thought they stood in a better position to carry them out under the banner of technocracy.

Moving to the other technocratic government case considered in the Czech Republic, Jan Fischer was appointed in 2009 after Topolanek's cabinet lost parliamentary confidence. The economy was heading towards a recession, both because of internal problems and because of the repercussions of the global financial crisis of 2008. Government spending plans were under pressure, and Topolanek's coalition struggled to govern as it relied on independent or opposition lawmakers to pass the necessary laws to review government economic policies. Whether Topolanek had difficulties in passing the reforms because of lack of a strong majority or because of lack of

willingness to bear the consequences of those reforms is still debatable. According to the opposition leader Paroubek, the latter option is more credible: ‘the government has been “reluctant” to take steps needed to tackle the impact of the global financial crisis’ (Dudikova and Tomek 2009). When Topolanek fell because of a vote of no-confidence⁵⁹, it was impossible to imagine another coalition, as the elections had created a fragmented parliament where no one party had the majority. Both Topolanek’s party and the opposition ‘faced strong incentives to reach agreement about the caretaker government and a route to early elections. Both feared the intervention of President Klaus, who was empowered to designate a new prime minister’ (Hanley 2013, 8). Fischer was in power therefore in a period when the economy was facing a sharp slowdown, the GDP contracted, and the government coalition was unable to tackle that because of weakness in numbers, and no single party could – and wanted - take the relay when Topolanek fell.

Prime Minister Fischer, ex-president of the Czech statistical office, did not initially have a very broad mandate, so newspapers at the time were worried that he would not be able to tackle the crisis in as swift and efficient manner (Economist 2011b, 2011a). This indicates, however, that reforms were expected, and that his appointment was made with that in mind. The idea behind the appointment was also to avoid parties making tax promises or spending promises in hope of electoral gains, which would undermine the 2010 budget. Fischer’s cabinet drew up and passed an austerity budget in 2010, meeting the targets he had set out in his programmatic declaration in April 2009. He was thus able to reduce the budget deficit from a projected 7.4% of GDP to 5.2% of GDP.

There are other interesting aspects to the Fischer cabinet, which is telling for the logic of blame avoidance and search for credibility, which is at the basis of the explanation of how an economic crisis increases the likelihood of a technocratic government. The Fischer cabinet initially was conceived as a bridge to allow parties to change the constitutional rule to allow for early elections and a more stable outcome. Even when such possibility was introduced, the Social Democrats prevented elections from happening and preferred to make the Fischer administration remain in power for another 8 months, totalling a year and two months in power. This shows how some political parties can use a technocratic government opportunistically, not only to delegate uncomfortable reforms, but also to get more breathing space before the subsequent elections. While this ‘postponing’ function was typical of several scandal-rooted technocratic governments,

⁵⁹ On 24 March 2009, after four failed earlier attempts, the opposition ČSSD and communists party succeeded in leading the lower house of the Czech parliament to a no confidence vote in Topolánek’s government. The measure passed with 101 votes to 96.

as explained in the previous chapter, the same mechanism can be found in this case of economic crisis- rooted technocratic government. It should also be added that if Fischer was asked to remain in power for so long, it was clearly because the population gave it broad support (Hloušek and Kopeček 2014). As far as satisfaction with the government's activity goes, for instance, Fischer stands out as particularly successful, with a support rate of 66%, that is, 20 point percentage higher than any other partisan government in the Czech Republic⁶⁰(Hanley 2013).

The overview of the Tosovsky and Fischer cabinets have shown a pattern in Czech political history where technocratic governments have been appointed in difficult economic circumstances, but those circumstances were only partly the incentive to appoint them. In fact it seems that, while the economic conditions created a difficult environment for the fragile ruling coalitions and brought them down, the reasons for then appointing technocratic governments were more self-serving political ones than really concerns for an efficient management of the economy. Blame avoidance and delegation of policy-making in difficult times are the key interpretative concepts in this national case. In the Czech Republic such delegation was facilitated by the favourable reception of these kinds of non-partisan arrangements by the population. Both Tosovsky and Fischer had high public backing and satisfaction, especially compared to partisan government (Hanley 2013). Popular level of satisfaction with the government's programme was at an all-time high with Fischer (56%) and dissatisfaction with the same government's programme was at an all-time low with Tosovsky (16%) followed closely in second place by Fischer again (24%). This is indicative of the fact that Czech voters were in fact reassured by the idea of having a technocratic government to deal with the difficult situation, be it political in terms of scandals or economic crisis.

5.5 Finland: A fragmented party system in difficult economic circumstances

Finnish technocratic governments have been appointed earlier than anywhere else in Europe, with a particular concentration in the first post-war decades⁶¹. Of those cabinets, the most significant cases to explore how an economic crisis represents an incentive for politicians to delegate to a technocratic government are the cabinets headed by Tuomioja, von Fieandt and Lehto.

⁶⁰ Data taken from Hanley, Seán (2013). Unexpected consequences of an unexpected Prime Minister? The 2009-10 Fischer administration in the Czech Republic. EUSA Thirteen Biennal Conference. Baltimora. available at elaborated from CVVM, the Centre of Independent Public Opinion Research <http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/en/>

⁶¹ See chapter 2 for a full list. The Worldbank provides data for GDP growth only from 1960, hence why the GDP growth graph for Finland has not been included.

Table 5-4 Technocratic governments in Finland appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Sakari Severi Tuomioja	Head of the Bank of Finland, 1945-1955	17/11/1953	08/03/1954
Rainer von Fieandt	Head of the Bank of Finland, 1955-1957	29/11/1957	18/04/1958
Reino Ragnar Lehto	Lawyer and Permanent Under-secretary of state.	18/12/1963	12/09/1964

From 1950 to 1974, Finland's gross national product grew at an average annual rate of 5.2%, considerably higher than the 4.4% average for OECD members. So effectively it is hard to talk about an objective economic crisis in the period under consideration, with the exception of a currency crisis around 1953, called by experts 'the latent crisis of the turbulent fifties' (Hjerpe 1989). However, at the heart of technocratic government appointment in Finland was disagreement over economic issues, and the unwillingness of the politicians to deal with them. This is one of the best examples of what outlined in the introduction to this chapter, that is that the importance of economic issues, and crises, is as much about perceived gravity as it is about the objective gravity of the situation. Although the case of Finland is best seen from the point of view of the influence of the head of state, as will become clear in chapter 6, nonetheless in the three technocratic governments of Tuomioja, von Fieandt and Lehto economic issues played a major role.

All first post-war elections (1945, 1948 and 1951) had turned around domestic economic issues (Wuorinen 1954) and it is those same economic issues that lead to some of the collapses of various coalitions which, in turn, led to technocratic governments.

The first technocratic government, headed by Sakari Severi Tuomioja, chairman of the Bank of Finland, was in power from November 1953 to March 1954. It was established as a group of experts to hold the administrative fort until parliamentary elections in July 1954. Its ministers included some who were then party leaders in Parliament as members of the National Coalition, Swedish, and Finnish People's parties (Kuusisto 1958). Parties supporting the government asserted that their members had gone into the Cabinet as private individuals rather than party representatives.⁶²

Tuomioja was appointed after the coalition between the Social Democrats and the Agrarians collapsed due disagreements over how to tackle economic difficulties. These difficulties were mainly linked to the decline in the price of some Finnish export goods. Kekkonen, then Agrarian prime minister, tried to rule without a parliamentary majority and to pass measures to try and alleviate the economic situation. He introduced for instance a budget to reduce government

⁶² see chapter 2

expenditures, and gave tax relief for the hardest hit strata of the population. Nonetheless his cabinet did not last long after the coalition split, and that is when the cabinet of experts lead by Tuomioja was appointed. This brief account shows that while not directly the cause of the technocratic government, economic difficulties were clearly one of the causes behind the instability and eventual collapse of the previous government. Moreover the identity of the technocratic Prime Minister is also indicative of his role, as it was not by chance that a governor of the bank of Finland was appointed.

Interestingly in this respect, an economist also headed the second Finnish technocratic government. Rainer von Fieandt, a long-time member and eventual Chairman of the Governing Board of the Bank of Finland, was in power from November 1957 to April 1958. His cabinet was supported by a coalition of Social Democrats and Agrarians which was eventually defeated in a vote of confidence on the price of grain (Lentz 2013), but his Ministers were professional experts with no active parliamentary or party role. His cabinet was compelled to take a stand on urgent fiscal and budgetary questions, as both governments which preceded him had fallen because of economic issues: inflation, growing unemployment and adverse balance of payment eventually resulted in a currency crisis, with the Finnish mark devaluating by 39% (Jussila, Hentilä and Nevakivi 1999, 274). The government before Von Fieandt, that of Sukselainen, fell because the Swedish People's party exit the coalition in protest for the government's failure to tackle the economic situation. And Von Fieandt was eventually appointed after six long weeks of talks, showing that the environment for government formation was complicated, and the party system not stable enough to produce a viable majority to substitute the outgoing coalition. Von Fieandt programmatic speech captures very well the logic behind his appointment, and the awareness of his duty as technocratic prime minister:

We all know the major economic problems. Economic policy has set the goal of full employment, but unemployment has only increased. We've been trying to get the whole nation to enjoy a high standard of living, but the standard of living has declined in recent years. We've talked about a stable currency, but we have fallen in such huge inflation, that is cause of social injustice and has ruined our reputation. I do not tamper with the causes of all this, but I cannot, when only this morning I was still at the Bank of Finland, fail to point out that these problems are due to the fact that in the post-war years we have not used the opportunities provided by sensible and determined monetary policy. [...] Our new government has been assembled with professional men, not politicians. Some of us belong to a political party, and all of us have, of course, used the right to vote. But I have not asked anyone whom he voted, as it is not where he is politically that drove my choice [...] the main thing is that every one of them is capable of helping. [...] Our only strength is in the fact that our decisions are correct and that consist of contributions we get respect for. [...]

The new government has not drawn up any program. We believe that the Finnish people know us and we certainly know our position as much as they, unfortunately, do: we are confronted with many difficult problems⁶³.

The third technocratic government of interest to the present discussion is that of Reino Lehto. He was a lawyer, in power as prime minister from December 1963 to September 1964. As the previous government lead by Ahti Karjalainen's had failed to achieve agreement over essential issues such as how to balance the budget, the creation of a new majority government was going to be a very difficult task. On 18 December 1963, President Kekkonen appointed Lehto, who was then Permanent Under-secretary of state. The Lehto Cabinet was intended to be a temporary solution, but it remained in office for almost nine months, while the parties tried to reach an agreement concerning the conditions and program for a new majority coalition of non-Socialist parties. He eventually passed legislation that increased pensions and secured price stabilization. In his programme, Lehto tellingly declared:

'A caretaker government's job in the current state of difficult economic circumstances is first and foremost getting things done within the framework of the legal system, as well as the decisions of Parliament and enjoying the confidence until the country is once again governed by a parliamentary government. The cabinet will make every effort to ensure that the state safeguards its liquidity, and that the issue of employment is properly dealt with [...] The government due to its nature has no purpose and no possibility at all to undertake extensive reforms. We envisage a program of strict austerity in public finances for 1964 with the aim to balance the state economy. The government will promote the economic policies of our national economy healthy development.⁶⁴',

As a Finnish scholar has succinctly put it, early post-war technocratic governments in Finland were 'increasingly used to deal with Finland's economic questions...when parties retreat officially from all responsibility for policy decisions which could lead to defeat at the polls' (Kuusisto 1958, 349). This broad explanation points to the veracity of some of the mechanisms identified in the theoretical model presented at the beginning of this chapter. In particular delegation can be chosen in order to increase credibility of policy commitments with regards to reforms, and to avoid the blame for these very reforms, which could undermine electoral chances. Moreover, the examples of Finland show how the impossibility to create stable cabinets, which could carry out the reforms necessary, was also at the origin of the appointment of technocratic governments. More will be said about the role of the Head of State in those appointments, but the three examples just provided

⁶³ Available at <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/government/history/government-programmes-since-1917-new> in Finnish

⁶⁴ Available at <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/government/history/government-programmes-since-1917-new> in Finnish

point out how technocratic cabinets in Finland were expected to tackle the various economic and financial crises the country went through, objectively or portrayed as such for political reasons.

5.6 Greece: risking default, a polarized conflictual party system agrees to unite under technocratic leadership

In Greece the appointment of the two main non-caretaker technocratic governments can be traced back to an economic crisis fairly straightforwardly. Though Greece had 5 technocratic cabinets⁶⁵, Zolotas' two cabinets, and Papademos' government are the ones of interest to the present case. They were composed of ministers belonging to parties either in government or from the opposition, where only the prime minister was an independent, non-partisan politician⁶⁶. The nature of Greek party politics is conflictual, and tends to be based on systems of patronage and opposing social identities (Verney 2014). The appointment of a technocratic government involving the two major parties from the centre-right (New Democracy) and the centre left (PASOK) working together could only be the outcome of a very difficult situation, and such unity, until recently, could only be acceptable if the leader was not coming from one of the two main camps, i.e. is a technocrat. Politically, therefore, uniting under a technocratic banner was the best way to justify an unlikely grand-coalition.

Economic crises in Greece differ from normal times in that the relationship between the state (as in, the government) and the economy changes. Normally ‘state-economy relations are marked by... incestuous and sometimes corrupt relationship with respect to the allocation of favours and contracts’ (Featherstone, 2005)⁶⁷. In situations of deep crisis, such mode of functioning of the economy means that the institutional capability of the state to deliver the required reforms is limited because of these entangled interest and culturally-based attachments. Only overcoming such deeply rooted divisions can allow the situation to be solved, and Greek politicians seem to think technocratic governments allow precisely this to happen. The Zolotas and Papademos government are cases where the enduring nature of Greece’s polarisation has been suspended momentarily. This is certainly in line with the expectations that in times of economic crisis redistributive concerns are trumped for concerns of efficiency (Neto and Strøm, 2006), so even parties that are traditionally enemies, such as the centre right New Democracy (hereafter ND) and the centre left PASOK, agree to collaborate because the situation is dire.

⁶⁵ See chapter 2 for a full list

⁶⁶ Grivas and Pikrammenos’ cabinets are constitutionally dictated caretaker cabinets, with no power and very short mandates, just leading the country to elections.

⁶⁷ see also (Featherstone, 1990)

Table 5-5 Technocratic governments in Greece appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Xenophon Zolotas I	Director Bank of Greece, Professor	23/11/1989	13/02/1990
Xenophon Zolotas II	Director Bank of Greece, Professor	13/02/1990	11/04/1990
Lucas Papademos	Governor Bank of Greece, Vice-president ECB	11/11/2011	17/05/2012

The origins of the two technocratic of Zolotas and Papademos are to be found (also) in economic motives. Periods of stagnation (late 70s to mid-1990s) and straightforward crisis (2008 onwards) in the Greek economy, as identified by Michaelides, Papageorgiou and Vouldis (2012) correspond with the periods of technocratic governments as shown in the graph below. The profiles of the two technocratic Prime Ministers Zolotas and Papademos are also telling in this respect. Both were high profile economists, both had been directors of the Bank of Greece, both were respected internationally, and Papademos was one of the architects of Greece's entry in the Euro.

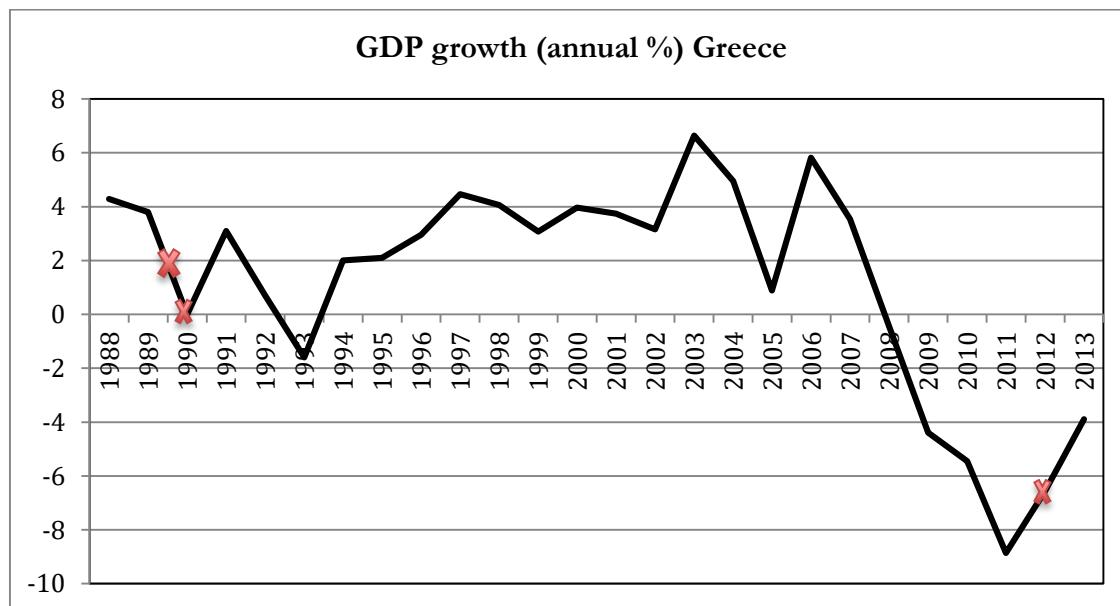


Figure 5-4 GDP growth in Greece, 1988-2013

Source: *Worldbank*

Looking at them individually, and starting from Zolotas, the origins of its appointment lie in the disastrous economic policy pursued by his predecessor Papandreu. Between 1981 and 1985 the PASOK government led by Papandreu borrowed heavily, so that public sector borrowing

requirement jumped from 8.1% in 1980 to 17% in 1985. Hours of work were reduced while wages were raised with the expected consequences (Dragoumès 2004, 78-80). In October 1985 PASOK tried to introduce a stabilization program, which secured a \$1.75 billion loan from the then European Economic Community, which included some of the standard measures, such as devaluation, tightening of monetary policy and reduction in borrowing. The economic situation only briefly improved, but then Papandreu, dismissed economic minister Professor Costas Simitis, the person behind the stabilization programme. Jacques Delors, the then President of the European Commission, published a letter warning Greece to change its economic policies or fail (Verney 1990). Moreover, the uncovering of the Koskotas scandal was undermining the Prime Minister's authority and credibility, as it involved Papandreu himself, who was indicted by Parliament⁶⁸. This brought the end of the Papandreu cabinet, who resigned. After two short lived cabinets, and the urgency of the economic situation, former director of the Bank of Greece Xenophon Zolotas was appointed. He was 85 years old at the time, known and respected for his economics expertise, which was badly needed because by that point the country was on the verge of bankruptcy.

Zolotas' first cabinet (12 October – 23 November 1989) was only partly composed on technocratic ministersⁱ, but his second was fully so (23 November 1989- 13 February 1990). At the time, the understanding was that because of the sense – and reality - of economic emergency, and because of the bi-partisan, cross-partisan support, Zolotas' government would have had ample room for manoeuvre. Indeed Zolotas begun his mandate with hopes of developing a consensual approach to economic reforms and other problems, but he soon realised that this could not be achieved unless parties were fully on board. And despite their outward 'agreement', they were not. ND showed it by withdrawing its ministers when it did not approve a major tax evasion bill and anti-pollution measures. Greek parties were 'united' under Zolotas only for the minimum time possible, and only for absolutely necessary reforms. The confrontational and conflictual nature of Greek politics was ready to spring up again at the earliest moment.

Lucas Papademos' technocratic cabinet is the offspring of one of the worse economic and financial crisis in the country's history. It had the clear mandate to implement the international agreements and carry out the necessary austerity measures to obtain the bailout funds from the Troika. The logic of its appointment was precisely that the technocratic cabinet would succeed, where the previous government of Papandreu had failed. It is clearly an appointment driven by concerns of credibility, and it is a most interesting case to show the influence of external pressures on such appointments. Indeed between Zolotas and Papademos there were some major differences: '*Zolotas*

⁶⁸ More on this in chapter 4

was perceived ‘internally’ as being necessary to save the country from default while Papademos was felt as externally imposed by the creditors. So the logic was rather different’ remarked Pericles Vassilopoulos, head of press of the Zolotas cabinet in an interview with the author (2014).

The ‘externally-imposed’ narrative has been object of wide speculation, especially surrounding Papandreou’s resignation following the announcement of a referendum on the bailout, but speculations cannot be used as evidence. George Pagoulatos, Senior Advisor and Director of Strategy to the technocratic Prime Ministers Papademos and Panagiotis Pikrammenos, rebuffed in an interview that ‘*Papademos was not EU-imposed, as some media seemed to suggest, and certainly not undemocratic. He was chosen by the domestic political leaderships as the most competent to represent Greece’s national interests (manifesting Greece’s commitment to the euro and the EU) at that most critical juncture, which required a Prime Minister whom EU partners, institutions, and the markets could trust*’ (Pagoulatos, 2014). For other commentators, there was no imposition but just a blame avoidance game played by the two major parties, which did not want to take the responsibility for the crisis nor for its difficult resolution. According to others, it was true that ‘in Greece (and Italy), elections were viewed as a luxury that these two countries could not afford’ (Bosco and Verney 2012, 131) so that there was a sense in which the external pressure to deal with the crisis made a fully democratic solution unwise. Certainly the fact that the formation of ‘the hybrid tripartite entity called “Troika,” to deal with the indebted country, raised the stakes since it converted the crisis to an issue of intense global media attention, influence and spin’ (Kaitatzi-Whitlock 2014). And the approval of the Papademos cabinet by the international bodies mattered in its appointment ‘The agreement to form a government of national unity opens a new chapter for Greece,’ read a joint statement from European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy at the time. ‘We warmly welcome this news’ (CGH 2011). The international pressure for Greece to find a credible head of government to carry out the reforms needed to comply with bailout rules was high, and could be considered an incentive behind the appointment of Papademos.

To sum up, Greece provides good examples of both the importance of the pre-existing internal party system situation in the appointment of technocratic governments, but also of the key role played by external pressures, not necessarily directly but as indirect constraints. Vassilopoulos reinforces this point underlining the emergency nature of such cross-partisan agreements: ‘*Regarding the Zolotas and Papademos cabinets [...] I would call them ‘transition’ or ‘emergency governments’ [...] It’s not by chance that the two of them were Central Bankers before. Central Banks are organisations of last resort and by definition emergency entities*’ (Vassilopoulos, 2014). Greek political parties have played, in those two cases, a game of blame avoidance which is not unique to Greece and typical of moments of

emergency when often ‘... a strategy which involves a consensual solution among a coalition of the major political parties and ideas of ‘national unity’ are put forward’ (Lodge and Wegrich, 2012).

5.7 Hungary: technocratic government as a surprising result of a constructive vote of no confidence

Hungary is an interesting case where the appointment of the only technocratic government in the history of the country, that of Gordon Bajnai, is an example of the concurrency of both a severe recession and economic crisis, coupled with a scandal, which created strong incentives for technocratic government appointment. Briefly, Hungary’s political system is considered very polarised and confrontational, but one where party system consolidation is advanced compared to other Central and Eastern European countries, and that ‘parties’ control of the whole political process is taken for granted. However, authors have pointed out that the parties fulfil relatively few social functions and tend to be unpopular as institutions’ (Enyedi and Tóka 2007). In terms of economy almost a decade of insufficient economic structural reforms and large domestic and external debts brought the country to the edge of bankruptcy in 2006 with the highest borrowing in the developed world—9.3 per cent of its GDP (Korkut 2010, 21). Hungary, without the possibility of increasing the deficit to finance fiscal-stimulus packages because of lack of confidence of the markets, became the only EU country (at that time) to get an international bailout – €12.5 billion (\$16 billion) from the International Monetary Fund and another €7.5 billion (\$9 billion) from the EU and the World Bank as early as October 2008.

In March 2009, Prime Minister Gyurcsány promised he would resign if his economic plan failed to pass in parliament. He recommended, if that were the case, that the new PM should have wider support for dealing with the economic crisis. A constructive vote on no-confidence was held in mid-April, and Gyurcsány accordingly resigned. The ruling Socialist Party (MSZP) and its coalition partner, the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), understood the need to avoid early elections, as that would have been equivalent to committing political suicide. However, they could not agree on a successor for Gyurcsány. The constructive vote of no-confidence implied that a candidate approved by a majority had to be proposed as an alternative to the outgoing premier, but choosing the next Prime Minister was not easy. The SZDSZ rejected several candidates proposed by the Socialists, and the ultimate deadlocks convinced Gordon Bajnai to overcome his reluctance and agree to become prime minister. He demanded, as a precondition, that every Socialist and Free Democrat MP sign a memorandum in support of his tough austerity program to not only tackle the recession but also to try and seriously reform Hungary.

Table 5-6 Technocratic government in Hungary appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Gordon Bajnai	Businessman, ex-minister of the economy	14/04/2009	25/04/2010

Gordon Bajnai's cabinet was therefore backed by the MSZP and the SZDSZ. The Hungarian Parliament appointed him with 204 votes for, 8 abstentions. The remaining 174 MPs did not vote. Bajnai presented his government as being without party affiliation, although out of 16 ministers, half were MSZP members, and half were independents. Independents occupied key positions, for instance Peter Oszko, a 36 year-old tax consultant with no political experience but a successful career in international accounting firms, was chosen as finance minister. Bajnai himself was a neutral and independent expert⁶⁹ and had been Commissioner for the European Union funds allocated to Hungary, and then the Minister for Local Administration and Regional Development, before being promoted in May 2008 to the position of Minister of Economics. Bajnai came across as a competent and honest technocrat (Garret 2010).

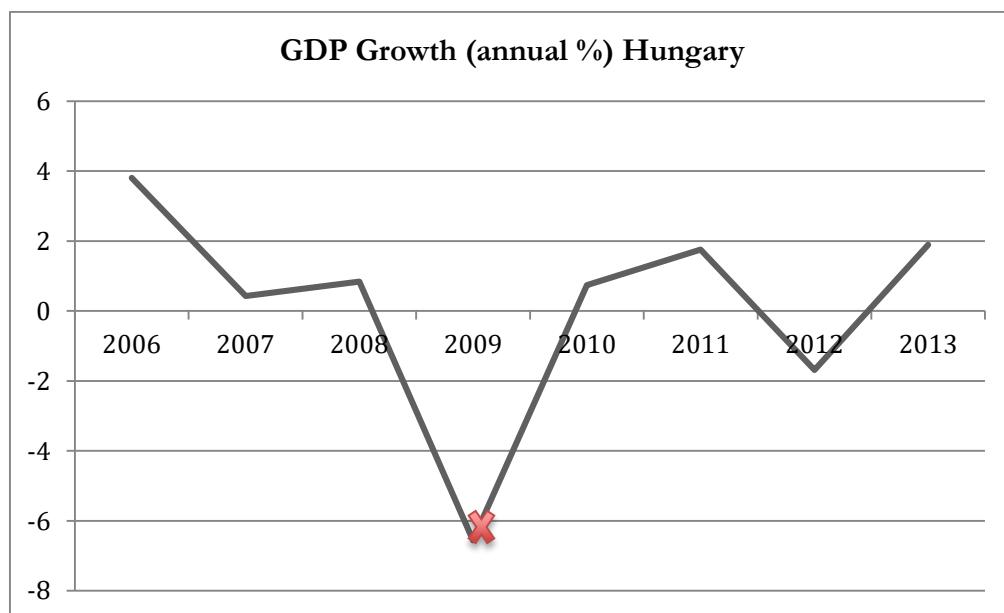


Figure 5-5 GDP growth in Hungary, 2006-2013

Source: Worldbank

Looking at the circumstances of Bajnai's nomination, it is clear that both the scandal of the leaked speech (of which more in chapter 4) and the economic situation fit within the definition of a crisis. In fact in his own maiden speech, Bajnai referred to the logic of crisis as underpinning his own appointment '*The world crisis is an extraordinary situation, which forces an extraordinary solutions from politics,*

⁶⁹ with the caveats described in chapter 2

the state and the people alike' (Bajnai 2009). He also regretted the time and efforts wasted by previous governments in fruitless fights amongst parties. He warned of the sacrifices ahead which will be necessary to carry out reforms, and he immediately carried out tough spending cuts to pull Hungary away from the brink of fiscal crisis (Balazs and Forelle 2009). During his mandate, he pursued some of the strictest financial austerity measures since the transition to democracy (Korkut 2010). However, the economic situation continued to be dire. The country remained in a deep recession, one of the most severe recessions among OECD countries, according to the OECD itself. Predictably, in the April 2010 elections, MSZP lost a significant share of votes: from 48% in 2006 to 15% in 2010. This was presumably due to having failed twice in government, both in a partisan and in support of a supposedly non-partisan cabinet.

Bajnai represents a good example of a technocratic government appointment following the logic outlined in the theoretical model. After an economic crisis, technocratic government is a good mean to ensure credible commitments to reform and pass tough austerity measures the parties are not ready to take ownership of. There is also a further dimension that makes it different from other technocratic cabinets, which stems from the concurrent events of economic crisis and scandals. In his maiden speech Bajnai recalled the need to regain the political trust of citizens, which had clearly been lost. As he claimed to the Budapest Times, '*the crisis does not follow any ideology. It is simply there, and forces one to take appropriate measures*' (Martin 2010). This highlights another facet of technocratic government appointment, which is to ensure and regain credibility in the eyes of the citizens themselves, as well as of the markets and of the international economic and financial actors. This is similar to what explored in the case study of the Czech Republic, but each country has different dynamics, and in Hungary the logic of emergency was particularly present.

5.8 Italy: economists called in to recurrently 'save the country'

The interaction between economic crisis, the failure of the political system to deal with the crisis and the need to reform is most evident in Italy, where all three technocratic governments experienced by the country can be explained with reference to the interaction of the two. Schmidt and Gualmini have aptly summarized the relationship between politics and economic crisis and reforms in Italy as follows: 'Italy's trajectory since the post-war years has taken it back and forth between opportunistic, ideologically divided political leadership acting mostly as a hindrance to national economic development for long stretches of time, and pragmatic technocratic leadership for short moments at critical junctures, which overcame both political and institutional constraints to liberalise and modernise' (Schmidt and Gualmini 2013, 362).

Recalling the details of the Italian technocratic governments, the professions of two of the three prime ministers appointed to lead them is telling in this respect. The following paragraphs will concentrate on Ciampi and Monti, as Dini's cabinet is best explained with reference to scandals (see chapter 4) and the intervention of the head of state (see chapter 6) in government formation.

Table 5-7 Technocratic governments in Italy appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of Cabinet
Carlo Azeglio Ciampi	Governor Bank of Italy	29/04/1993	13/01/1994
Mario Monti	Economist, University rector, Competition Commissioner	16/11/2011	14/02/2013

The economic situation of Italy in the early 90s, when Ciampi's technocratic government was appointed, was dire. Italy was in a deep financial crisis and marked financial turbulences (Miniaci and Weber 1999) which reached their peak in September 1992, leading to a dramatic currency depreciation. The Italian Lira, strongly devaluated, was forced out of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. At the same time, in 1992, Italy signed the Maastricht Treaty, including the clause that it would join the Euro. Therefore the crisis was coupled with a pressing need for reform in order to meet the Euro entry criteria. In the 1990s privatization and deregulation began in earnest under technical and centre left governments, as did reforms of pension systems and labour markets. In particular 'in the run-up to European Monetary Union...elections brought to power 'technical' governments of pragmatic technocratic elites that in this initial period pushed through major liberalizing and modernizing reforms without any party vetoes and demands (Schmidt and Gualmini 2013, 365).

The situation in Italy before Ciampi's appointment was one 'weak parties and weak parliaments, plus – probably – a real feeling of emergency' (Salvati 1995). But the economic dimension of the problem should not be underestimated.

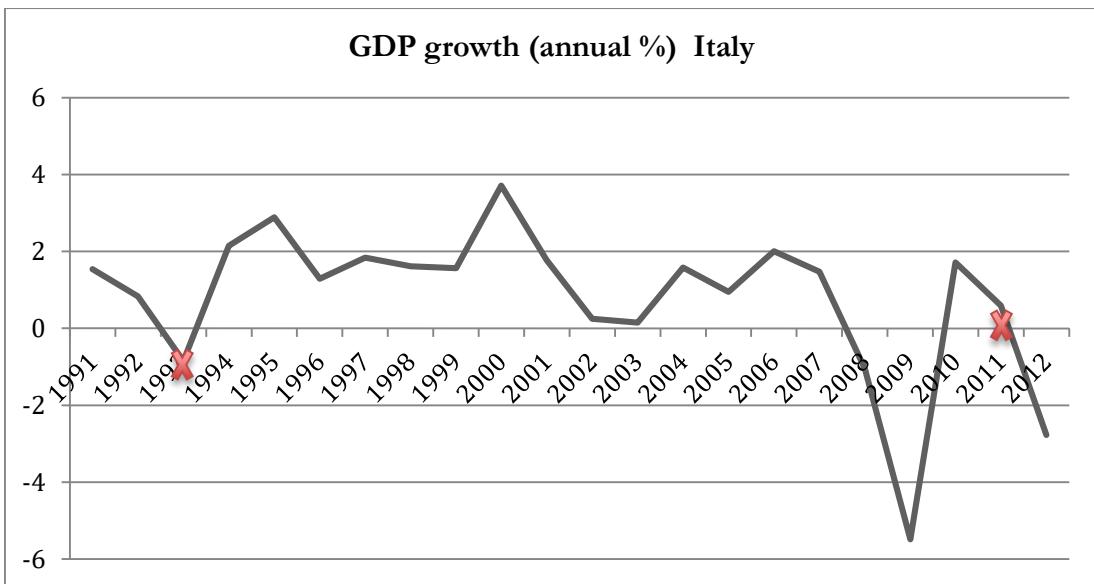


Figure 5-6 GDP growth in Italy, 1991-2012

Source: Worldbank

Ciampi was a former Governor of the Bank of Italy. His professional background already gives a hint of where his technical expertise lied. And if it is true that technocrats are called to power to provide help in the field of their expertise, then clearly Ciampi was valued for his economic qualities. In fact the Bank of Italy at the time had the monopoly in terms of providing economic expertise in the country due to the high level training of its staff (Quaglia 2005). What is more, Ciampi's political views were 'a matter for speculation outside the circle of his personal friends' (Salvati 1995: 77) so he was perceived as being a stranger to all the party dealings, viewed with suspicion at the time because of the Bribesville all-pervasive scandal. Ciampi was appointed in April 1993 following the resignation of the first Amato government. The Amato cabinet had passed financial measures to redress the public finances and resigned over an approval of major reforms through a referendum. These reforms were effectively a public popular reaction to the *partitocracy* and were felt as anti-party votes. Ciampi was to lead a cabinet whose main task was to respect the Maastricht convergence criteria and cut public expenditure.

Ciampi's technocratic government was rather successful in tackling the economic emergency, reducing public debt and inflation. Some academics have argued that compliance with Maastricht rules was used by Italian politicians as a 'vincolo esterno' (Dyson and Featherstone 1996), i.e. an external voluntary tie to force Italy to reform. Interestingly, the Ciampi government managed to achieve its goals with the cooperation of the three leading trade union confederations (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro CGIL, Confederazione Italiana Sindacati dei Lavoratori CISL, Unione Italiana del Lavoro UIL) as well as with Confindustria, the Confederation of Italian industries. This was known as 'concertation' and it was a process that lasted until 1998

(Morlino 2013). It is particularly important as a legitimisation tool for technocratic governments in the 1990s: they needed alternative support, given that their parliamentary backing was not a full electoral investiture⁷⁰. Each of the three parties involved had something to gain from collaboration. More importantly, this ensured support for the technocratic governments that, while it might not explain why they have been appointed, certainly is part of the explanation as to why it was not brought down.

Ciampi remained 259 days in office, the shortest of the three technocratic government of Italy, but compared to other technocratic governments in Europe his government lasted a substantial time-span. It should also not be forgotten that Ciampi's government was appointed against the backdrop of an extremely fragmented party system, as can be seen by the table below. This points out at the moderating effect of a fragmented party system on a government that is already weakened by its ability to deal with the financial pressures. In the case of Italy in the 1990s, the party system was in its deepest transformative phase ever, when the country was moving from the 1st to the 2nd republic. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to dwell into the significance of the complete changeover of the party system. Suffice to say that the Italian party system was at its most unstable and fragmented, and this explains why technocratic governments were seen as a solution to some of the problems engendered by such fragmentation, especially when external pressures from the EU were pushing to reform the system to adapt to international standards.

Table 5-8 Indices of Fragmentation of the Italian Party system, chosen years

Selected Years	Number of groups (Chamber of deputies)	Effective number of parties (Chamber of deputies)	% of votes of the two major parties (Chamber of deputies)
1948	8	2.9	69.5
1976	10	7.1	73.1
1987	12	4.1	60.9
1992	13	5.7	45.8
1994	8	7.3	41.5
2001	8	5.2	46.1
2006	13	5.1	40.8

Source: (Cotta and Verzichelli 2008)

⁷⁰ See chapter 2. For Dini's technocratic cabinet this is even more interesting. Berlusconi accused the Dini government of being the result of a ribaltone. This is a very Italian expression that means that the government was supported not by the majority that had won the elections, but precisely by the opposition. Indeed, the Dini cabinet had support of many 'left' parties, including the post-Communists, and of the Lega Nord which had abandoned Berlusconi. This was at odds with the fact that several of the Dini ministers had centre-right leaning agendas, which was then demonstrated by the fact that several of them ended up in the next Berlusconi government.

Mario Monti's technocratic cabinet was the longest of the three Italian technocratic cabinets in office. It was composed entirely by unaffiliated technocrats, headed by a university professor, ex-European commissioner. However, as Marangoni rightly pointed out, the premises in 2008 were anything other than pessimistic for the partisan government in power (Marangoni 2013). The centre-right two-party coalition headed by Berlusconi had emerged with a strong majority in both houses, and the process of evolution of the Italian political system towards a 'bipolar alternating democracy' (Marangoni 2013, 71) seemed to be close to completion. This was a rather unlikely ground for the development of a technocratic government. However, after three and a half years in office, in November 2011, Berlusconi resigned and Monti was appointed first Senator, and then Prime Minister of a technocratic government.

The political situation in terms of parties in parliament was unusual. While when Berlusconi resigned, the usual Italian party fragmentation had been reassembled instrumentally in the lower chamber within the two major political poles, in fact such poles were internally very divided (Fabbrini 2013). The effective number of parliamentary parties increased dramatically from the elections in 2008 to the elections in 2013 (from 3.12 to 4.54 in the Chamber of Deputies, and from 2.86 to 4.16 in the Senate). Interestingly though, such fragmentation did not prevent the majority of MPs from voting compact to support Monti in the vote of confidence. Only Dini's cabinet had a higher support in the lower chamber, but overall Monti had the highest support of all cabinets in post WWII Italy (Marangoni 2012). Monti had also, at least after the first year in power, also the support of the Italian population. When asked whether Monti had done better or worse than its predecessors, 54% said he had, while only 26% thought he did not (Istituto Piepoli 2012). The reason they gave is that the government had acted in a serious and honest way, showing that the image of the neutral, 'uncorrupted' technocrats was being conveyed well, independently of the reality. Interestingly another poll, asking Italians what kind of governments they hoped for after Monti, showed that 30% would have liked another technocratic government to continue the work the Professor started.

There have been wide debates as to what Berlusconi's resignation was due to, and how Monti was chosen and appointed. Contrary to expectations, there seems to be an agreement over the fact that the various scandals involving Berlusconi, from bribery to underage prostitution, were not responsible. A more likely hypothesis is to do with the failure of the government to pass the necessary reform to tackle the economic issues of Italy. Monti was in fact appointed in the midst of an economically unsustainable situation. Pressures from both the President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano and from other European partners and institutions have been fingered as the main reasons for the resignation. In terms of external pressures, 'in ways that never occurred in the

past, during the budgetary crisis of Summer 2011 it seemed that Italy was being governed by external institutions: the European Central Bank and the governments of Germany and France' (Fabbrini 2012: 19). The resignation of Berlusconi followed closely the failure to implement the 'instructions' of a letter coming from the European Central Bank published on 5 August 2011 (BBC 2011).

Napolitano moreover had warned several times Berlusconi that the role of his government was not only that of securing and keeping a majority in Parliament, which he was doing by distributing minor governmental offices and other posts to reticent MPs, but also to govern. The legislative activity of the fourth Berlusconi government was certainly declining (Marangoni 2010, 2011). Moreover, between April and September 2010 Fini, who was the co-founder of Berlusconi's party Popolo della Libertà, separated and created his own party. This split took away around 30 deputies and 10 senators, and made Berlusconi's majority much weaker and less able to pass reform.

The external pressure hypothesis, already explored with Greece, comes forcefully into play once more. There are many hearsay and complot theories surrounding Berlusconi's resignation and Monti's appointment, which cannot be taken for evidence, but it is worth mentioning here that and the appointment of Monti is still controversial. On safer grounds one can argue that there are similarities between EMU as 'vincolo esterno' or as a 'Trojan horse for 'modernization' (Pirounakis 1997) in the case of Ciampi, and the Euro demands as vincolo esterno for Monti. In the latter case, 'in order to introduce at least the more urgent structural reforms requested but the country's membership in the Eurozone since 2001, reforms that the governments of the 2000s were unable to introduce [...] Italy had to exonerate parties' politicians from exercising governmental power' (Fabbrini 2013: 4). Both EMU and demands during the Eurocrisis have been used by politicians as a justification for technocratic governments and, in turn, by those governments to carry out overdue reforms 'in the name of Europe'.

Monti thought the technocratic quality of his cabinet was particularly useful in terms of reforms needed to comply with European demands, and also in terms of showing whom to blame for the lack of previous reforms. Monti said in an interview: 'I quickly realised that there were also advantages in having non-party ministers. Measures or legislation passed by the Council of Ministers were presented to parliament in their 'pure' shape. All modifications – and occasionally watering down – of legislation were seen directly and publicly, as they indeed were, the result of parliamentary amendments' (Monti 2014). The way the Monti government acted was clearly in an emergency mode. The number of confidence votes used to pass measures (29% of the total measure passed, as recorded by Marangoni 2013) is indicative of this. The fact, anecdotally, that

his main package of reform was called the ‘Save Italy decree’ can be also taken as a sign of the rhetoric of emergency employed by the technocratic cabinet.

In sum, Ciampi’s and Monti’s technocratic governments were called in power to tackle difficult economic crises. The former is an example of the negative influence of a fragmented and weak party system on reform implementation, while the latter of the influence of external pressures on technocratic government appointments. Both, nonetheless, managed to create a ‘highly successful macroeconomic discourse about the necessity and appropriateness of sound monetary policy that pushed state and societal actors alike to accept the austerity budgets and the labour and pension reforms necessary’ (Schmidt and Gualmini 2013: 366).

5.9 Portugal: democratization and consolidation of state’s finances through technocratic governments

All three Portuguese technocratic governments have been appointed in the late 70s, not long after the end of authoritarian rule in the country. It is to be expected, therefore, that in a period following so closely the transition to democracy, reasons to appoint a ‘presidential’ technocratic cabinet (Lobo 2001b, Neto and Lobo 2009) should lie more in politics than in economics. Nonetheless, economic circumstances also played the kind of trigger role described above which, when met with the weak reaction of a partisan system that is still establishing itself, were difficult to face.

Table 5-9 Technocratic governments in Portugal appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Alfredo Nobre da Costa	Engineer	29/08/1978	15/09/1978
Carlos Mota Pinto	Law Professor	22/11/1978	11/06/1979
Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo	Chemical Engineer, ambassador to UNESCO	31/07/1979	02/12/1979

Looking at the economic situation in that period, as the graph below shows, the three technocratic governments were appointed one after the other when growth needed to regain momentum after having plunged after the transition to democracy in 1976. Between 1977 and 1978 Portugal was under IMF programme. It had requested assistance to mitigate deficits and sharp increases in unemployment, energy prices, and inflationary pressures, amidst political and social changes and a global recession. The amount of financing provided totalled an equivalent to €111 million at current

exchange rates. Not only the country was in an IMF program, but this ‘objective’ crisis situation was also perceived amongst the population as Bacalhau and Bruneau show with survey conducted in 1978 (Bacalhau and Bruneau 1999, 139). The proportion of respondents who felt there was an economic crisis, however, was far smaller than one could expect, given the ‘numbers’. In particular supporters of the party in power were less inclined to think that there was a crisis. Bacalhau concludes that the definition of a crisis is political, and it is about the perception of crisis as much as the crisis itself. This, though it cannot be explored further for reason of space, hints at the importance of the constructivist aspect to the crisis narrative in the appointment of technocratic government which has been outlined in the introduction to this chapter.

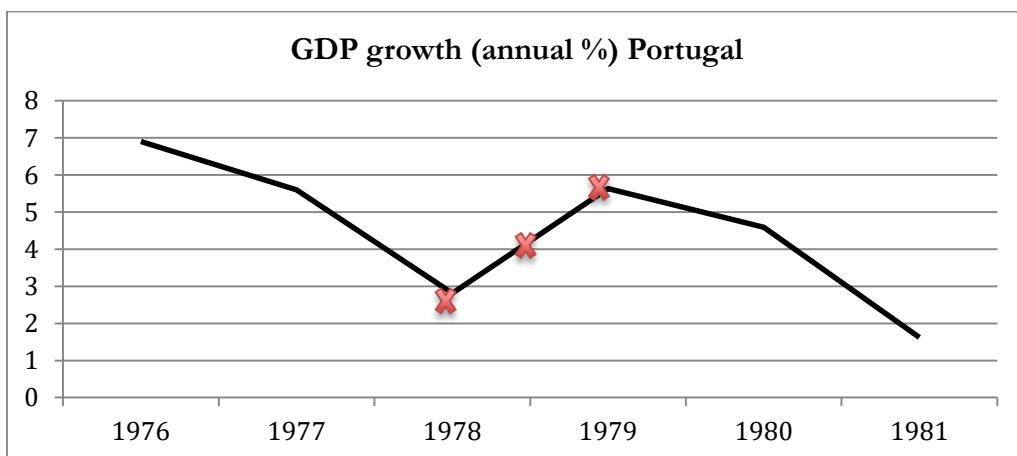


Figure 5-7 GDP growth in Portugal, 1976-1981

Source: Worldbank

The coalition in power after the first democratic elections of the country in 1976 was one between Partido Socialista (PS) and Partido Popular. This lost a vote of confidence which Prime Minister Soares had called following criticism of the IMF deal, which was poorly received in the country (Manuel 1996). Critics at the time accused Soares of having humiliated the country by asking for this help. Soares then headed a new coalition of the PS and the Right-wing Centre Social Democrats (CDs), which was a difficult one to manage because of diverging interests between the socialists and the democrats. The centre-Left part of the government wanted a policy of growth and the centre-right part supported a deflationary package (Gallagher 1979). The government proved unable to improve Portugal's economic performance, and this badly dented the party's national reputation. Internal divisions over economic policy paralysed the coalition and postponed decisive action to halt the economic backslide to very late in the mandate. The delay in formulating a clear economic strategy was responsible for the termination of the cabinet, as well as some scandals affecting members of the Partido Socialista. The opposition parties were reluctant to bring down the government for fear a renewed military intervention in politics, but Soares' government eventually collapsed by itself because of its internal divisions.

Following the vote of no confidence, Soares refused to collaborate to form a government till the next election. President Eanes thought it unwise to have early elections, as they would have not brought stability in economic and political terms (Manuel 1996). He therefore proposed a presidential technocratic government made up all of independents, headed by the engineer and industrialist Nobre da Costa, which proposed swift cuts to implement the IMF programme. His cabinet however only lasted a couple of weeks, as his economic programme was rejected by the assembly. This points out that the economic crisis was both at the origin of the collapse of the government preceding the technocratic government, and at the very heart of the technocratic cabinet of Nobre da Costa. The latter sought to do precisely what the party government had been unable to implement: tough economic reforms and austerity.

President Eanes then immediately proposed another cabinet, based on the same non-party formula, headed by Mota Pinto, which found approval from parliament at the end of 1978. Mota Pinto was a law professor at university of Coimbra, and although he was an independent, at one point he was the Social Democratic Party (PSD) leader in the constitutional assembly, but then abandoned the party for personal quarrels with the party leader Sa Carneiro. His cabinet was a rather conservative one, which quickly lost the support of the left in parliament. The opposition PSD, and especially his leader Sa Carneiro, assumed an increasingly detached position vis-à-vis the government and the president of the Republic, who supported it, until they successfully brought it down in a motion of no-confidence. Sa Carneiro did this in the hope to have swift elections to become the successful new leader, given that Mota Pinto's government was well viewed by the population. This is in line with the expectations that the technocratic government will only last until the parties believe it serves their purpose, in terms of initiating economic reforms as well as taking the blame for austerity measures. Having seen that after all the reforms were going well, Sa Carneiro deemed time for party politics to return on the scene. President Eanes thought the same, and he agreed to anticipate elections in December. He nonetheless appointed a caretaker technocratic government to lead the country until then. Maria de Lurdes Pintassilgo was tasked to form the third and last of the non-party Governments of 1978-79. She was a chemical engineer and the only woman to date to have been Portuguese prime minister. Her political orientation was a mixture between a catholic socialist, and her cabinet was meant to ensure the country's stability during the new election campaign.

This brief overview of the three cabinets, all related by a similar appointment dynamics have highlighted how at the origin was an economic failure of the previous government, which was incapable of dealing with the consequences of the laxity and profligacy of its economic policies.

Between 1976 and 1979 Portugal was in a deep recession, and this was worsened by a divided party system due to the fact that the country was still in a transition phase. Portugal was moreover in need for stability to avoid recession into un-democratic practices. In line with the theoretical expectations, therefore, the economic crisis had the effect of opening up the space for president Eanes to appoint technocratic governments of presidential inspiration. In all three technocratic governments in Portugal, President of the Republic Eanes decided to intervene because of the inability of parties to find a solution to problems of cabinet formation and, consequently, the inability to tackle the economic recession and to implement the reforms attached to the IMF funding. This was helped by the difficult collaboration between parties even of similar political orientation, and it will be explored in more details in the next chapter.

5.10 Romania: early steps into democracy and capitalism led by technocrats

Romania's experience of technocratic governments explored in this section happened early on in the country's democratic life, and for a considerable amount of time, as the table below shows clearly⁷¹. Romania transitioned to democracy fairly quickly after the fall of the Berlin wall and established its first free and fair elections on 20 May 1990. The following paragraphs will concentrate on the appointment of technocrats Stolojan and Vacariou, because technocrat Isarescu's appointment will be dealt with in chapter 6 as a clear case of presidential intervention.

Table 5-10 Technocratic governments in Romania appointed in a situation of economic crisis

Prime Minister	Profession	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Theodor Stolojan	Deputy director of the Department for Foreign Exchange and International Financial Relations	16/11/1991	27/09/1992
Nicolae Vacaroiu I	Economist in Committee for State Planning	19/11/1992	06/03/1994
Nicolae Vacaroiu II	Economist in Committee for State Planning	19/08/1994	01/09/1996
Nicolae Vacaroiu III	Economist in Committee for State Planning	02/09/1996	03/11/1996

⁷¹ The more recent appointment of technocratic Prime Minister Ciolos in late 2015 is too recent to analyse it meaningfully, but it would have been an excellent example of a technocratic governments appointed after a scandal, so in the future it could be explored along the lines of the cases in chapter 4.

Theodor Stolojan, Romanian's first technocratic prime minister, ruled the country from November 1991 to September 1992. He has been defined plainly as a free market economist (Williams 1991) and was appointed after the fall of the Peter Roman government due to miners' protests which killed three and wounded hundreds. He had to take drastic economic measures both as part of the ongoing transition of the country to become a market economy, but also because he was appointed in a situation of economic crisis, when living standards were declining and economic conditions deteriorating (Shen 1997). It was a particularly difficult task because Romania was the most centralised economy of Central and Eastern Europe. At the time, all three State banks were close to bankruptcy. Stolojan took the decision to recapitalize them and to liberalize prices. During his rule, Romania experienced a wave of trade union protests, while inflation continued to rise sharply. Economic and financial instability resulted in a delay of the appearance of foreign investments in Romania in relation to other countries of the former communist bloc. However, during his mandate, he enjoyed popularity among citizens and when he finished his mandate, he left politics and joined the World Bank. His government was more than just a caretaker, as his economic reforms were far reaching for the standards of post-communist Romania, and he had to make sure the financial help asked to the IMF by his predecessor came through.

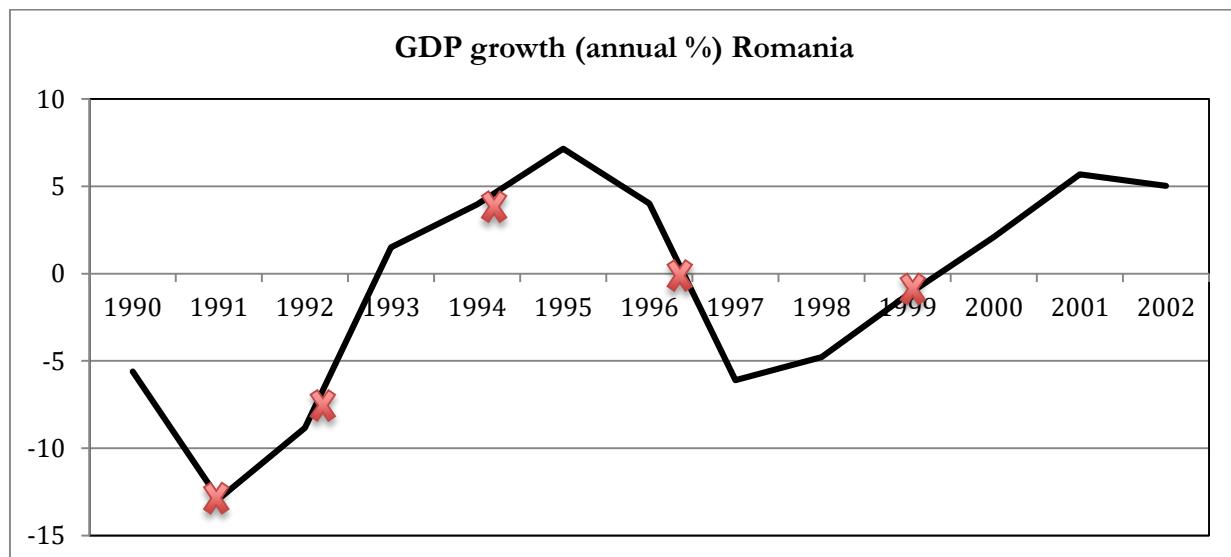


Figure 5-8 GDP growth in Romania, 1990-2002

Source: Worldbank

The second technocratic government, that of Nicolae Vacaroiu, was appointed on 19th November 1992 and lasted until 11th December 1996, even though in different configurations. He was an economist, and had been, tellingly, head of a tax department in the Economy Ministry during the Stolojan technocratic government. Moreover, during the communist era, Stolojan and Vacariou worked together at the Committee for State Planning. The appointment of Vacaroiu ended a five-

week long search for a new Prime Minister after inconclusive elections on September 27 produced a hung Parliament. His cabinet was largely made up of independent civil servants, or technocrats, as even a report of the US Department of State (1994) labelled them. The most obvious example is the deputy Prime Minister Misu Negritoiu, a banker and economics professor in charge of economic reform⁷². Vacariu was a presidential appointment, as his name was not vented before the elections as one of Stolojan's possible successors. Vacariu was responsible for the second phase of economic reforms, some of them quite successful, as the table below shows.

Table 5-11 Romania's selected macroeconomic indicators, 1992-95.

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Real GDP (%)	-13.8	1.0	3.4	6.9
Gross Investments	-26.5	-0.7	0.8	10.5
Share of Private Sector in GDP (%)	26	32	35	38
Annual Inflation Rate	210.9	256.1	61.7	25
Trade Balance (Million \$)	-1,421	-1,128	-330	-700
Unemployment (%)	8.4	10.2	10.9	9.9

Source: Korka (1995)

The hallmark of his government was gradualism, as there were fears that too excessively quick reforms would end up provoking the kinds of social unrest which had made the Roman government topple (Crampton 2002). The new legislation was supposed to improve the economic situation, with price reforms and – albeit weak – privatization efforts, which encountered a lot of opposition from popular classes (Ramet 1998, 231). What is of interest to the present case, however, is not so much whether the reforms were successful, but why the Prime Minister had to do them. Without arguing that this was unexpected, as most of the post-Communist countries were in similar situations, this shows how technocratic governments were left with the unwanted task of reforms, and, when successful, like in Vacariu's case, they were then reappointed in office.

Both governments analysed in this section have proven quite unequivocally the urgency of the economic reforms needed, and the incapacity of the partisan majorities in power to carry them out. Not only the profile of the Prime Ministers and their eventual programme, but also the circumstances of their appointment have shown a consistent story. Pressures both in the forms of external help by the International Financial institutions, and internally from dissatisfied populations have also been identified as key moderating factors in these appointments. While clearly it is difficult to compare the situation of an early democracy with some of the more advanced ones in other cases, there is nonetheless an indication that the appointment of technocratic governments

⁷² He resigned in 1993 because ministers in the government were accused of corruption Bideleux, Robert and Ian Jeffries (2007). *The Balkans: A Post-Communist History*. Routledge.

in the early days of Romanian democracy had more to do with the economic situation than with the political one.

5.11 The path not taken: attempt at technocratic government appointment

5.11.1 The second Boc cabinet in Romania (2009)

Paradoxically, and potentially more interesting in terms of the causal mechanisms of how technocratic governments are appointed, is the case when a country decided not to appoint such cabinet, even though the conditions were present. This is the case of Romania, which, faced with the economic crisis following the 2008 financial crash, decided *not* to have a technocratic government, even though that was an option that vented overtly in media and discussed amongst political actors. The situation a familiar one by now: a broken coalition, the need for a new vote of confidence that fails, and then the bargaining between parties and the head of state as to how to solve the political crisis, while redressing the economy as well.

In Romania, the first Boc government was a grand coalition government between the PSD (Social Democratic) and the PDL (Liberal Democrats). On 1st October 2009, the Deputy Prime Minister Dan Nica was removed from office. Nica's fellow PSD members perceived this as unjust, and their ministers resigned in bloc. Because of the new government formation, the cabinet had to obtain the confidence of parliament again. Parliament, however, did not receive such vote on 13th October 2009. Indeed the parliament gave a vote of no confidence and Boc's cabinet became just a mind-the-shop cabinet until a new government was formed. At that moment the main party in the opposition and third-largest party, the National Liberals, wanted a technocratic solution after the first Boc incumbent government fell. Crin Antonescu, leader of the National Liberals, declared 'if the vote [of no confidence] passes, Basescu will have to accept a technocratic government with no political affiliation, which must immediately draw up a budget for next year to make sure we can pay public wages and pensions even after the IMF money is gone' (McLaughlin 2009). The PSD mentioned technocratic government as a solution too, with his spokesperson declaring 'We agree to a technocrat government, what's important is the government should be supported by a parliament majority ... so it can respect its commitments to international institutions' (Ilie 2009).

To put the situation into context, the IMF had given emergency funding to Romania, 'a 24-month €12.9 billion Stand-By Arrangement for Romania to support an economic program designed by the Romanian authorities and intended to cushion the effects of the sharp drop in capital inflows while addressing the country's external and fiscal imbalances and strengthening the financial sector' (IMF 2009). In terms of partisan politics, the National-Liberals were the President's opponents,

especially since the difficult relationship between Basescu and the then National Liberal chief Calin Popescu Tariceanu. So when they asked president to nominate a non-partisan prime minister, who would be allowed to assemble a team of technocrats, they were acting according to the logic exposed elsewhere that a technocratic government is better than a government of the opposing party, but it does not require a new election and especially can carry out the necessary reforms to redress the economic situation. Interestingly, the long-serving central bank governor Mugur Isarescu, which had already been technocratic prime minister of the country (see chapter 6) was mooted as possible caretaker prime minister, as well as Klaus Johannis, widely-respected mayor of the town of Sibiu (Bivol 2009).

Clearly there was a situation of economic crisis, as well as fragile successive cabinets due to the instability of the coalitions supporting those governments.

Directly elected Romanian president Basescu, however, refused such option. He justified it thus: 'I do not believe in the adequacy of a technocratic government. Romanian democracy is not as it was in the '90s when technicians would take responsibility for politicians who sit back and play puppeteer with serious directives. I cannot accept the idea of appointing a government for two months' (MediaFax 2009). The point the President underlines is precisely that, no matter how complex the economic situation is, in evolved democracies, technocratic governments should not happen. While parties were allowed in the 90s, when Romanian democracy was still taking its first steps, to delegate important decisions to technocrats, now this is not acceptable anymore: they should be able to deal with the problems themselves, without recourse to the blame-avoiding solution of technocracy. He also argued that no renowned technocrat would accept the compromise of taking charge of the Government for two month time until the Presidential elections. 'We can discuss the issue of an independent Premier on condition that the rest of the Government is political in nature. I am willing to talk if all parties will agree on an independent Premier. But at this point I do not opt for any independent Premier, the governing has to be assumed'. Basescu moreover added, turning to the representative of parties attending the consultation. 'Are you so ashamed of the status of political party that you would throw the responsibility on the shoulders of some technocrats that you would then manipulate from behind the scenes?' (Alina 2009). This points at once again the blame shifting often implied in a technocratic government appointment, which is here shown for what it is by the President. Eventually, after the presidential elections took place, Boc was reinstated as Prime Minister, mainly with the support of Basescu, who had been re-elected president and favoured that solution.

In conclusion the brief example of Boc's government in Romania underlines that the mechanisms identified in the cases of chapter 4, as well as in this chapter, are not about necessary or sufficient

conditions for technocratic government appointments. In Romania, in a situation of deep economic crisis, it was political parties pushing for a technocratic government, and the President refusing. In the Romanian case, in particular, the two logic of why the economic crisis is the ideal precondition for the appointment play out clearly. On the one hand, the need for efficiency and expertise is felt very much at parties' level, which might explain why at least one party wanted such government. At the same time, parties wanted to pass on painful reform efforts onto someone else, the technocrats, who could then take the blame. The President opposed this blame shifting game. But the Romanian case also shows clearly how technocratic governments can be used as a preferred option compared to having a government of the opposing political force. This is what the president read between the lines, and did not like⁷³.

5.12 Conclusions

The case studies explored above have provided more qualitative evidence for the theoretical assumptions on the role of economic crisis in the appointment of technocratic governments. This evidence illustrates the workings of the hypothesis that technocratic governments are more likely to be appointed in a situation of economic crisis than in one of economic success. The cases have put flesh on the crisis narrative explained in chapter 3. Without claiming to prove the economic-crisis related hypothesis, the case studies have allowed the interaction between the crisis narrative and the moderating factors to be shown more evidently. This has added further layers to the somehow simplistic crisis explanation, more precisely illustrating how economic crises will be particularly detrimental to fragmented and weakened party system. This is both because those systems will be more prone to cabinet instability in general, but also because tough reforms needed in times of crisis need strong stable majorities to be approved.

The importance of pressures coming from outside the partisan political system has also been shown to be key in explaining the appointments of technocratic governments. Pressures in forms of popular protests have been occasionally very effective in making the previous cabinet resign, paving the way for a technocratic government, and not just in the early years of democracy (Stolojan in

⁷³ Interestingly, the following president Klaus Iohannis in November 2015 felt the opposite, and nominated Dacian Ciolos a former European commissioner for agriculture and currently an adviser to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker to head another technocratic government. This was a move designed to ensure stability until elections and contain protests that toppled Prime Minister Victor Ponta. Timu, Andra and Irina Vilcu (2015). 'Juncker Adviser Picked for Romanian Technocrat Premier Role' Bloomberg available at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-11-10/romanian-president-nominates-former-eu-commissioner-for-premier..> This appointment can however be linked more to the 'scandal' motivation, as president Iohannis explained "Romania really needs to strengthen the rule of law and political parties must be cleaned up from the inside."

Romania) but also far more recently, with Raykov in the Czech Republic. Such protests often manifest voters' dissatisfaction with the way the economy is run, and reinforce indirectly the legitimacy of the technocratic choice. Pressures coming from outside the political systems have also been well represented in the cases above, with Euro-related pressures being the most recent (e.g. Papademos in Greece, or Monti in Italy). In these cases, the need to increase efficiency of reforms and credibility of policy commitments is crystal clear. However, Europe is not the only non-state actor that might unwillingly put pressures on governments to reform the economic system, eventually leading to the appointment of technocratic. The IMF - and the strings attached to its loans and programmes - is another important player in the technocratic appointment game, albeit an indirect one. The need to comply with its requests has put constraints on government actors and government appointment choice, as was clearly illustrated by all three early Portuguese technocratic governments (Nobre da Costa, Mota Pinto and Pintasilgo).

Probably the most important aspect that was brought out by the cases above is the occasional discrepancy between the perception and the reality of the economic crisis, and how both influence the appointment of technocratic government. Whether the economic crisis is present effectively in numbers, or only perceived as such in people's mind and in media, that seems have equally magnifying effects on their appointment. This is particularly striking when the crisis narrative is used politically. Similarly to scandals, economic downturns can be used as weapons in the political game to justify government change. And similarly to scandals, these economic crises can be exaggerated or downplayed, depending on who is using them as a tool for their own political partisan - or non-partisan - aims.

Chapter 6 Technocratic or presidential governments?

How the Head of State is a key player in the technocratic government appointment process, even when constitutionally her role is minor, and her powers minimal.

In non-technocratic government appointment game, that is, appointment of a party government, the Head of State (or president⁷⁴) can play very different roles depending on the political system. Broadly speaking, in parliamentary systems the president has less power to influence cabinet formation than in semi-parliamentary ones, where the population directly elects the president. The Head of State often has the first-mover advantage, and such advantage has been widely analysed in the literature on cabinet bargaining (Shugart and Carey 1992). However, even acknowledging these broad common trends, the role of the president varies enormously depending not only on constitutional provisions, but also on the circumstances of the party system and the country in general. He might be tasked with finding an acceptable prime minister when elections did not provide a clear majority, or to substantially select the prime minister out of the candidates proposed by the majority parties. Alternatively, he might just ‘rubber stamp’ the decision of parties, especially when his role is largely ceremonial.

Regarding cabinet termination and parliament dissolution, the Head of State, depending on the country, has very diverse roles to play too. This is relevant for the present question because the majority of technocratic cabinets were appointed after a cabinet was dissolved. To give some examples, the Head of State can unilaterally dissolve parliament in France and Italy, and could do so in Portugal until 1982 and in Finland until 1991. This is more likely to happen, as it will be shown in the examples below, if there is a disagreement between the Prime Minister and the President (Strøm and Swindle 2002), be it of a partisan or non-partisan nature. In general, with dissolving parliaments Presidents cannot gain a further term in office, but they can advantage their co-partisans or disadvantage the opposition (Freire and Lobo 2006). The more frequent model of parliamentary dissolution, however, is that the Prime minister proposes, and if the coalition partner accepts the proposal, the Head of State can decide whether to dissolve parliament or to veto the decision. This shows that even in less ‘presidential’ models, the Head of State still has a say in cabinet termination.

In the theoretical framework put forward to explain why politicians would depart from the status quo to appoint a technocratic government, the Head of State has been identified as a key player.

⁷⁴ The two terms are used interchangeably in this chapter

To remind briefly, politicians are more likely to opt for the technocratic solution in periods of crisis if the party system is fragmented and polarised, and if the Head of State is powerful enough to intervene in the government formation process. The literature confirms that a strong Head of State, such as that found in semi-presidential systems, is associated with higher percentages of independent ministers in cabinet (Neto 2006, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009a). The same literature often interprets appointment of non-partisan cabinet ministers as the victory of the Head of State over other actors (Kuusisto 1958, Nousiainen 1988, Baylis 1996, Neto and Strøm 2006, Neto and Lobo 2009, Neto and Samuels 2010, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2010). Non-partisan ministers, in some cases, correspond to presidential preferences if the president decides to govern taking less into account the assembly and its electoral mandate (Shugart and Carey 1992).

Along similar lines, Neto argued that if the Head of State is thinking of a cabinet that will mostly rely on normal legislative procedure to pass laws, then it is more likely that he will appoint, or allow parties to appoint, party politicians. If, on the contrary, he wants the cabinet to act mainly according to executive prerogatives, then he will more likely appoint technocrats (Neto 2006). Finally, in those countries where the President has at least part of the dissolution powers, government termination by non-electoral replacement is more likely (Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009a), and hence a technocratic government as one form of non-electoral replacement might also become more likely. The little literature on technocratic governments also sees in the president a key actor in the appointment (McDonnell and Valbruzzi 2014). Finally, technocratic governments are sometimes called presidential cabinets (Kuusisto 1958, Braga da Cruz 1994, Laplaine Guimarãis, Diniz de Ayala et al. 2011, Martelli 2012), indicating a link with presidential interventions.

The dynamics just described are represented schematically in Figure 1.

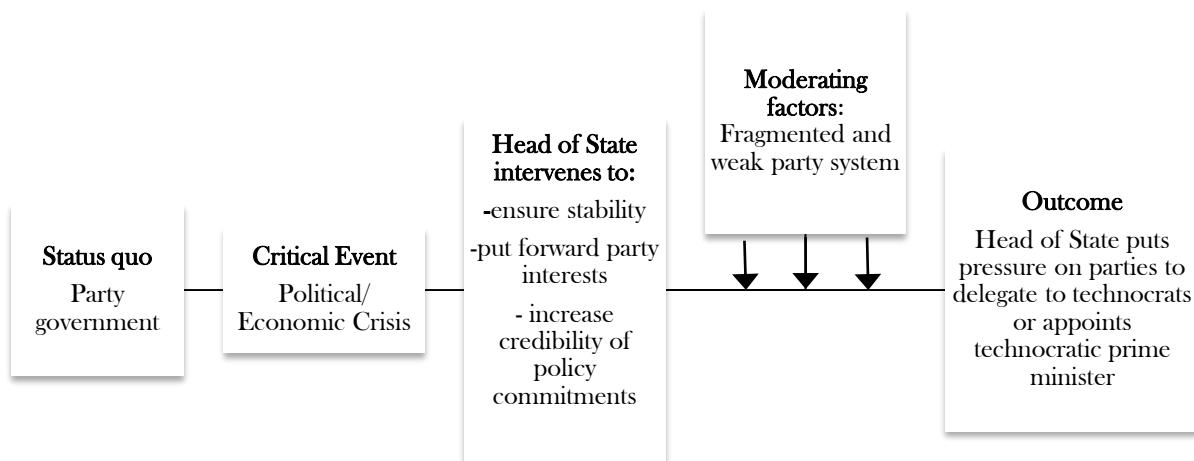


Figure 6-1 Head of State's involvement in the appointment of technocratic governments

Assuming an initial situation of crisis, and assuming the dissolution of the previous cabinet, the Head of State might decide to intervene in government formation. He might, in particular, push

for a technocratic solution for different reasons. If directly elected by the people (DE), i.e. if the political system is semi-presidential, the President is more likely to have a partisan affiliation. Hence he might consider that a technocratic government is more in his interests than a partisan government of the opposite party – not least because the president might more easily influence a technocratic government than parliament. If he is not directly elected by the people (IE), i.e. in parliamentary systems, he might genuinely think that a technocratic government is a good solution to ensure or increase credibility of policy commitments, both internally within the country and externally to European and international counterparts. He might also consider that a technocratic government is a good solution to ensure general stability and governability of the country. In both cases (IE and DE), presidential intervention will be more likely, when the party system is fragmented and weak. This situation makes room for the Head of State to exercise his powers and strengthen his role in government formation, and in a sense justifies his intervention. This explains why, in the theoretical framework presented in chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5 the intervention of the Head of State makes technocratic government appointment more likely in a crisis situation if combined with an unstable party system.

The present chapter looks at cases of technocratic government appointment in which the Head of State played a significant role in the ways described above. It will, similarly to the previous chapters, complement the statistical analysis carried out in chapter 3, which did not confirm that the powers of the Heads of State increase the likelihood of appointment of the technocratic governments, either by themselves, or as a moderating variable. The failure to achieve statistical significance can be explained both as a problem of measurement, and as a problem of quantity of data. In terms of the latter, the fact that the cases of technocratic governments are so few creates limitations in terms of the number of independent variables tested, and the explanatory power of the interactions, as already mentioned for the other moderating variables. In terms of the former, the measurement adopted to capture the powers of the Head of State as developed by Siaroff (2003), is the most comprehensive one available in terms of time and geographical scope, as well as approach to presidential powers. However, it might have failed to capture the importance of informal powers and personality, as well as the impact previous experience on the interpretation of the role of the Head of State.

To expand on this, constitutional provisions on the powers of the Head of State are not alone in determining his effective powers and influence in the appointment game: informal norms might be equally important, and ‘detailed contours depend to a large extent on the practice’ (Blondel and Müller-Rommel 2001, 8). If formal rules are central, so is the interpretation given to them by the actors, and the usual political practice that becomes unsaid convention (Bogdanor 1983). For instance, in some multi-party parliamentary systems, where the process of government formation

is long and difficult, such as the Netherlands, or Italy, the President exerts more power than what is formally expected from him (Blondel and Muller-Rommel 1997, 6-7). Other authors remark that in Belgium and Denmark the ‘behind the scene’ influence of the monarch is also not negligible (Döring 1995, 123), even though formally the monarch is just a ceremonial figure. President Walesa in Poland for instance did not have the *de jure* right to dismiss governments but *de facto* did so (von Beyme 2000, 14).

So not all Heads of State interpreted their prerogatives in the same way and some presidents played historically a greater role in cabinet appointment than others independently of their formal powers (Kang 2009). The Siaroff Index, furthermore, does not capture the importance of personality traits of the various Heads of State. Hloušek makes a strong case for this in the context of Central and Eastern Europe (Hloušek 2013) but even in Western Europe this can often be the case. In Italy for instance, ‘all three presidents during the transition [to technocratic governments] have prevented any dangerous alteration of the inter-institutional equilibrium and, whenever necessary, have, each with his own style and political cunning, contributed to the accomplishment of the best temporary equilibrium’ (Pasquino 2012).

This chapter does not claim to prove what the statistical analysis was not able to show, but it is rather a way to explore those aspects, which could not be captured in chapter 3, and show how they might have been working in certain key cases. This examination will look at the cases of technocratic governments from the particular angle of the Head of State, to try to illustrate to the best of the possibility, given the nature of the material (often media and personal accounts, as well as academic) how such key player acted in those cases.

6.1 Case selection criteria

The technocratic governments chosen to illustrate the mechanisms behind presidential interventions in technocratic government appointments have been selected to ensure the maximum chronological and geographical span. They have also been selected on the basis of a variation in the variable under consideration. There is variation in terms of constitutional presidential powers, going from 1 to 6 on a scale of 9⁷⁵. There is variation in so far as the sample includes both elected and unelected presidents, which entails that both semi-presidential and parliamentary systems are considered. Including both parliamentary and semi-presidential systems will show different types of technocratic government resulting from the intervention of the Head of State. A technocratic government which is just a cover up for a party government is often the result of the intervention

⁷⁵ which is the minimum for non-Monarchs, and no technocratic government has been appointed under a Monarch. 9 was not given to any European Head of State in a country where technocratic governments were appointed, so the full range 1-9 cannot be shown

of a directly elected Head of State, while a fully technocratic cabinet is most likely to happen under an unelected Head of State.

The final section of the chapter will be dedicated, like in both previous two chapters, to a counterfactual case, the Portuguese cabinets of Pedro Passos Coelho (2011 and 2013 reshuffle). In the extreme economically critical situation of the Eurocrisis, in the middle of EU bailouts, in both 2011 and 2013 the President Cavaco Silva suggested to parties to appoint a technocratic government, or at least a government of national unity. The logic was that this sort of cabinet would be more suitable to tackle the economic crisis. However, parties, who had managed to weather the impact of the financial crisis turned Eurocrisis without the need to blame shift and without having lost credibility, did not see the interest of such a solution and opposed it. Cavaco Silva did not have enough powers to push his preferred solution through, contrary to what his predecessor did in the later 70s. This shows the importance of the intervention of the Head of State, while at the same time underlying that it alone is not enough to bring about the appointment of a technocratic government, even assuming other facilitating conditions are present (such as the economic crisis, in this case). So like previous one, it provides an examples of partisan government appointed in a moment when all the conditions were present to appoint a technocratic government. This case will also underline the complementary of the various moderating factors listed to explain the appointment of technocratic government with the main crisis-related explanations, in particular the importance of the intervention of the Head of State.

Each case is presented in the following manner. In order to assess the extent of the discrepancy between the *de facto* and *de jure* powers of the Head of State, Siaroff's categorization of presidential powers at the time of the technocratic government is reported for each case of technocratic government. For each government moreover a table will be provided with the name of the technocratic prime minister, the start and end date of his cabinet, as well as the name of the Head of State during whose mandate the technocratic government was appointed. In addition the table will specify whether the president was directly elected by people (DE) or indirectly elected (IE).

To recall Siaroff's categories of presidential powers, they are reported in table below:

Table 6-1 Presidential powers, adapted from Siaroff (2003)

PE	President popularly elected (1) or not (0)
CE	Concurrent elections of legislature (1) or not (0)
AP	Discretionary appointment by the president of some key individuals such as the prime minister, other cabinet ministers, high court judges, senior military figures and/or central bankers (1) or not (0)
CM	Ability to chair formal cabinet meetings and thus engage in agenda setting (1) or not (0)
VT	Power to veto legislation, or more accurately the right to return legislation for further consideration
EDP	Broad emergency or decree powers for national disorder and/or economic matters which are effectively valid for an unlimited time (1) or not (0)
FP	A central role (or indeed the central role) in foreign policy, including presiding over a security or defence council and/or having a say in the choice of foreign and defence ministers, attending and speaking for the country at international political meetings and summits, and generally ‘making’ foreign policy in at least certain key areas (1) or not (0)
GF	A central role in forming the government, i.e. ability to select, remove and/or keep from office a given individual as prime minister, and/or a given party as part of the cabinet (1) or not (0)
DL	Ability of the president to dissolve the legislature at will, at most subject to only temporal restrictions (1) or not (0)

6.2 Czech Republic: a historically important figure and a newly elected president intervene in favour of technocratic governments

The president in the Czech Republic, indirectly elected according to the 1992 constitution Art.54(2) and directly elected since 2013, has a 5 year mandate, renewable once. The indirect election was motivated by the conviction that an indirectly elected president would have less autocratic tendencies and would be more ‘morally responsible’ (Ameller 1966, 267). Overall, nonetheless, commentators have found that, even if indirectly elected, the President of the Czech Republic was more powerful than most presidents of other parliamentary systems (such as Slovakia or Hungary, but also Germany), but less powerful than those in semi-presidential systems (Kysela and Kuhn 2007). Formally, as Siaroff’s categorization shows in the table below, the President had very little powers till 2013, and not many more since then.

Table 6-2 Presidential powers in the Czech Republic, 1992-today

Years	PE	CE	AP	CM	VT	EDP	FP	GF	DL	Total
1992-2000	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
2000-2013	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
From 2013	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3

The Czech Republic is an interesting case study to look at the presidential influence on technocratic government appointment. Three reasons can be given for it. One is precisely the fact that the ‘official’ powers are not many or significant, and yet the country had three technocratic governments where stronger than usual presidential intervention happened. This points at the importance of unwritten rules and informal leeway for action. Secondly, because of constitutional changes, in the same country we can observe directly (Zeman) and indirectly (Havel) elected presidents. This allows us to tease out whether being directly elected changes anything in the attitude and actions of the president vis-à-vis the appointment of technocratic prime ministers. Thirdly, one of the presidents under consideration, Vaclav Havel, has been a most prominent figure of the democratization and independence of the country, so he is a case of an important personality being assigned a role that, on paper, is not particularly powerful. The importance of personality traits and personal reputation when taking presidential office can therefore be extrapolated from the examples. Two of the three technocratic governments of the Czech Republic, Tosovsky, and Rusnok, provide good evidence for the three elements just listed and will be analysed.

Table 6-3 Presidents and Technocratic Prime ministers in the Czech Republic

Head of State	Prime Minister	Start date	End date
Vaclav Havel (IE)	Josef Tosovsky	02/01/1998	20/06/1998
Milos Zeman (DE)	Jiri Rusnok	10/07/2013	29/01/2014

Starting with Tosovsky, president Havel’s role had become nearly ceremonial in the years preceding 1997, that is, since his first election as president of the Czech Republic in 1993. This lack of powers has been explained by the fact that the political scene of the early 1990s in the country was dominated by Vaclav Klaus who, knowing that Havel would be the most likely candidate for the function of president, did not want him to have excessive powers (Kysela and Kuhn 2007). Havel delegated most economic decisions to Prime Minister Klaus who, in turn was very much against any presidential involvement in policy making (Tucker and et al. 2000). Havel, before and after the Tosovsky cabinet was a marginal player in politics, because neither of the two big parties Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) and the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) were particularly

favourable to his political influence. This changed in the difficult situation of 1998, which eventually resulted in the appointment of technocratic Prime Minister Tosovsky. Havel in that context became ‘one of the major architects of the short-term ‘technical’ government’ of Tosovsky (Kysela and Kuhn 2007: 102). After Klaus’ cabinet resigned in January 1998, Havel had to face a high degree of legislative fragmentation – see table below - which made it difficult for Parliament to get organized efficiently, and, conversely, made it easier for President to intervene.

Table 6-4 Effective number of parliamentary parties for each cabinet, Czech Republic.

Cabinet	ENPP
Pithart	2.22
Klaus I	4.8
Klaus II	4.8
Klaus III	4.15
Tosovsky (TG)	4.15
Zeman	3.71
Spidla	3.67
Gross	3.67
Paroubek	3.67
Topolanek I	3.1
Topolanek II	3.1
Fischer (TG)	3.1
Necas I	4.51
Necas II	4.51
Rusnok (TG)	6.12

Source: Gallagher (2013)

When intervening, Havel was not going against the Czech constitution. In terms of government appointment, it laconically stipulates that the president names the Prime Minister without specifying details or limitations in doing this. Havel made use of the power ‘AP’ in Siaroff’s categorization, which refers to discretionary appointment of key figures and he was able to use it because party elites at the time were incapable of agreeing on a government with strong backing or at least capable of winning a vote of confidence in parliament (Hloušek and Kopeček 2014).

Hence Havel interpreted his - so far - ceremonial prerogative of appointing the Prime Minister in a much more ‘literal’ way and took charge of the appointment (Kopecky and Mudde 1999, 421). The political crisis that led to the appointment of Tosovsky’s government needed a drastic solution.

Havel was very clear on this: '*However unpleasant and distressing our present experience is, and however dangerous it may be in certain respects, it can be a valuable lesson, and eventually bring some good: it can set off a catharsis - the traditional climax of all classical dramas. It can generate a feeling of profound purgation and redemption, of reborn hope, of liberation*' (Havel 1997). Tosovsky's government was therefore a result of a political crisis due to scandals (of which more has been said in chapter 4) combined with the presence of a Head of State ready to use the powers given to him institutionally. As an indirectly elected president, he put the accent on his stabilization role, and downplayed his partisan affiliations, in a time when parties were associated with wrongdoings and scandals.

The legitimization mechanisms for the Head of State to intervene were telling in this respect. Havel, in those circumstances of crisis (economic and political) was able not only to assume the role of the guarantor of the stability of the country. He went further and portrayed himself as the guarantor of the relationship of trust between citizens and politicians, for instance declaring that his newly appointed Tosovsky cabinet would bring '*new spirit, new dynamics and renew the confidence of citizens in a democratic system and politics*' (Irish Times 1998). He also legitimized his intervention in light of the moral failures of political parties, thus raising himself above them, and with him the new independent technocratic government. In his address to Parliament on 9 December 1997 he declared: '*...power is again in the hands of untrustworthy figures whose primary concern is their personal advancement instead of the interests of the people...*' (Havel 1997). This brief account points out at the interconnectedness of the role played by a crisis and how that opens up space for the president to intervene legitimately in government formation.

The Rusnok technocratic cabinet is the other example of presidential intervention in government appointment, and it happened under the presidency of directly elected Milos Zeman. In 2013 Rusnok was appointed as technocratic caretaker government after the incumbent Prime Minister Necas resigned because of a scandal. The will of president Zeman in favour of Rusnok overcame the preferences of political parties, who had proposed Miroslava Nemcova, speaker at the Chamber of Deputies for the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), as their preferred candidate. Rusnok was personal friends with Zeman. Also, although the Rusnok cabinet was declared a cabinet of experts, it was actually composed of Zeman sympathizers from social-democratic Party of Civil Rights (SPOZ) and the Social Democrats of CSSD (Stegmaier and Linek 2014)⁷⁶. Rusnok's cabinet lost the confidence vote on August 7, 2013 with 93 votes for and 100 against, but nonetheless President Zeman declared that the Rusnok cabinet would govern even without a vote of confidence until the

⁷⁶ In this case, incidentally, we see once more at work the power of rhetoric (technocratness) against the reality of objective characteristics of the cabinet (being made of political ministers), which has been outlined in chapter 2

trial on the corruption scandal and intelligence service misuse began in court. This was indeed the case and the cabinet ruled until the early elections of October (Stegmaier and Linek 2014).

From the beginning, Zeman knew that Rusnok had little or no chance of winning a vote of confidence in the Chamber of Deputies. Despite this, he was also aware that in the Czech constitution there is nothing that prevents the Head of State from making the cabinet exercise authority up until the moment the president nominates another government. There are no deadlines for this, so that it exists the possibility of a cabinet serving for several months without support from parliament until a new government is in place following elections⁷⁷. Ultimately, the parties opposing the appointment of Rusnok (that is, centre-right ODS and conservative party TOP09) then manifested their support for early elections, even though opinion polls predicted poor results for them. On the 20th of August, Parliament voted to dissolve itself, and Zeman announced early elections for October 25th and 26th. However, he also insisted that Rusnok's cabinet would govern until a new government was formed after the elections.

The way Zeman relentlessly and against parliamentary will, supported his own candidate shows that he had on his side the conviction that his direct election provided him with a legitimacy that allowed him to take such strong stances, and which was further reinforced by the loss of legitimacy experienced by parties because of the scandals. However, it was clear to most people that the presidential technocratic cabinet was put in place primarily to advance Zeman's own interests, and those of his Party of Civic Rights (SPOZ) which did not have elected representatives in the Chamber of Deputies. This was further confirmed by the appointment of the SPOZ deputy president Radek Augustin as the president of the Office of the Government under Tosovsky. Therefore the intervention of the president, while justified by the legitimacy conferred by direct popular election and by the crisis situation lived in the country at the time, also shows that a directly elected president will be more likely to further his own interests by appointing a technocratic government. A further conclusion that can be drawn is that, as anticipated in chapter 2, technocratic governments are not necessarily just neutral cabinets, but can serve the interests of politicians, especially of the Head of State as the key player in the appointment game. Their rhetoric becomes essential to maintain the appearance of neutrality and independence, both by the cabinet itself and by the Head of State.

To sum up for the Czech Republic, in the case of Havel appointing Tosovsky, an indirectly elected president who would not normally intervene in government formation, feels entitled to do so when it comes to appointing a technocratic government. This could be due to the special crisis situation

⁷⁷ This happened in the past, during Mirek Topolanek's first cabinet as explained by Groszkowski, Jakub (2013). "A presidential cabinet in the Czech Republic." OSW The Centre for Eastern Studies available at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2013-06-26/a-presidential-cabinet-czech-republic>

which saw the Klaus government fall because of a serious series of scandals. It seems from the public declarations at the time that the intervention of the Head of State was justified by the situation in which the political class had put itself in. In Rusnok's example on the surface the situation was similar, with partisan politicians being discredited because of scandals and mismanagement of the economy. However, the second example has underlined how the fact of being directly elected confers a different sort of legitimacy and also a different sort of role to the Head of State. President Zeman was much more partisan and could use appointing a technocratic government to advance his partisan interests against the will of parliament.

6.3 Finland: the longest lasting, most powerful president in Finnish history dictates his law in fragmented early post-war party system

Finland represents probably the best example to illustrate the role of the Head of State, when he is particularly powerful, in the appointment of technocratic governments. In Finland the President was, in the period under consideration when technocratic governments were appointed, the key actor on the political scene. The protagonist was Urho Kekkonen, president of Finland from 1956 to 1982, for a stunning total of 26 years. Not by chance, the Finnish 'trend' of appointing presidential technocratic governments, ended as soon as Kekkonen was removed from the role of president and his successor started a series of reforms. They culminated in the March 2000 constitution and revised Council of State Law, taking effect in April 2003. In this new legal framework, the president is excluded from government formation process (see the absence of the power GF from the table below), and can only intervene in coalition building if the parties could not reach agreement. He became, like in other European countries, a figure of stability and an actor of last resort, albeit with still significant powers in other domains, notably foreign policy.

Table 6-5 Presidential powers in Finland, 1919-2000

Years	PE	CE	AP	CM	VT	EDP	FP	GF	DL	Total
1919-1956	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	5
1956-1994	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	6
1994-2000	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	5

The challenge is to explain why Kekkonen used his powers to appoint technocratic governments. The mere fact that he had wide powers does not make the system per-se more prone to the appointment of technocratic governments, or him more likely to intervene in that sense. So the paragraphs to come will not stress how and why Kekkonen had the incentive to intervene, as that follows from the central role the president plays, but rather why he would intervene in favour of

technocratic governments. Those cases were cases where the president had wide powers not only on the Siaroff scale, but according to the relevant country literature too. He is constantly identified as the kingmaker of – also - technocratic governments. (Wuorinen 1954, Kuusisto 1958, 1961, Arter 1981, Nousiainen 1988, Paloheimo 2003, Raunio 2004). It is moreover to be noted that all the Finnish cases of technocratic governments have been excluded from the statistical analysis of chapter 3 because of the time-span taken into consideration by the analysis (1977-2013).

Finland since 1919 has fluctuated between a presidential and parliamentary system by remaining in the grey area of semi-presidentialism. Whether it was closer to one extreme or the other depended on the salience of foreign policy issues where the president has most responsibilities. The President was directly elected, and had extensive powers, to the point that Duverger called Finland a country with a dual executive (Duverger 1980). Particularly in the first decades after the end of the second world war, ‘parliamentarism in Finland involves the government enjoying the confidence not so much of the legislature as of the president’ (Arter 1981, 226). It is moreover to be noted that Finland, up to the recent days, was a unitary state, which has no democratically elected regional institutions. Municipalities have a say in revenue spending, but not in political decisions and do not constrain national government. This centralised system is a potentially fertile soil for a powerful executive, and a powerful Head of State too. The party system in the period of interest (1945-1982) and up to the present day is the most fragmented of all European democracies, with an average of parliamentary parties of 5.1

Year	Cabinet	ENPP
1946	Pekkala	4.77
1948	Fagerholm I	4.54
1950	Kekkonen I	4.54
1951	Kekkonen II	4.78
1951	Kekkonen III	4.78
1953	Kekkonen IV	4.78
1953	Tuomioja	4.78
1954	Torngren	4.71
1954	Kekkonen V	4.71
1956	Fagerholm II	4.71
1957	Sukselainen I	4.71
1957	Sukselainen II	4.71

Year	Cabinet	ENPP
1970	Aura I	5.58
1970	Karjalainen II	5.58
1971	Karjalainen III	5.58
1972	Aura II	5.58
1973	Paasio II	5.51
1974	Sorsa I	5.51
1975	Liinamaa	5.51
1976	Miettunen II	5.31
1977	Miettunen III	5.31
1978	Sorsa II	5.31
1979	Sorsa III	5.31
1980	Koivisto II	5.21

1957	Fieandt	4.71
1958	Kuuskoski	4.71
1958	Fagerholm III	4.87
1959	Sukselainen III	4.87
1961	Miettunen I	4.87
1962	Karjalainen I	5.09
1963	Lehto	5.09
1964	Virolainen	5.09
1966	Paasio I	4.96
1968	Koivisto I	4.96
1981	Sorsa IV	5.21
1982	Sorsa V	5.21

Table 6-6 Cabinets and legislative fragmentation in Finland, 1946-1982

This fragmentation was helped by the highly proportional voting system. Governments were frequently composed of several parties, including those from opposite ends of the partisan spectrum. And the cabinets did not last very long, Finland being second only to Italy in terms of number of cabinets appointed between 1945-2000. This shows the instability and volatility of government formation and partisan alliances.

'the prime minister operated in the shadow of the Head of State. The prime minister was chosen by the president and on occasions was removed by him; cabinets were mainly short-lived; and the president, in conducting foreign policy, accrued enormous influence through his personalised and successful management of Finno-Soviet relations. The president was the dominant political figure [...] and brooked no competitors.' (Arter 2004, 113)

In the following pages the technocratic presidential governments of Kuuskoski, Aura I and II will be analysed, with partial reference to the technocratic government of Von Fieandt too.

Table 6-7 Presidents and Technocratic Prime Ministers in Finland

Head of State	Prime Minister	Start date	End date
Urho Kekkonen	Rainer von Fieandt	29/11/1957	18/04/1958
Urho Kekkonen	Reino Kuuskoski	26/04/1958	07/07/1958
Urho Kekkonen	Teuvo Aura I	14/05/1970	15/07/1970
Urho Kekkonen	Teuvo Aura II	29/10/1971	03/01/1972

Potentially justified by the lack of a bi-polar dynamics in the party system, Kekkonen pushed for what have been called, alternatively, presidential, caretaker, or expert cabinets, but which for the purpose of the present analysis will just be called technocratic governments. Some academics have seen them as uniquely Finnish phenomenon (Kuusisto 1958) in so far as, while being outwardly just caretaker governments, appointed to avoid early elections, the practice in fact revealed that they were far more active than similar cabinets elsewhere.

The appointment of technocratic Prime Minister Reino Kuuskoski is probably the clearest example of President Kekkonen's intervention in government formation. He was appointed on 26th April 1958 following the resignation of another technocratic government, that of von Fieandt, at the hand of parliament. Finnish parliament, in particular the Agrarians and the Social Democrats MPs, simultaneously attacked the von Fieandt government and gave it a vote of no confidence because of issues related to bread prices. The obvious path to follow would have been to replace the experts with a true parliamentary government. Von Fieandt himself, in his programmatic speech recognised that presidential – or presidentally suggested- technocratic governments are not necessarily part of the normal practice of Finnish democracy:

'[The President] had sensed all the possibilities from the government, which would have the support of all political parties, and thus the unanimous support of Parliament, from a variety of minority governments. But all attempts to solve the issue drifted aground. In such circumstances, the President took a path of rarely used parliamentary procedure. He gave the mandate to form a government yesterday to experts in various fields'.⁷⁸

Despite the general feeling that technocratic government are not the norm, after von Fieandt's dismissal, continuous discussions not resulting in any agreement led Kekkonen to intervene and appoint Kuuskoski at the head of a technocratic government. He was formerly a top ranking civil servant in the Justice Ministry and subsequently director of the National Pension Institution. He was technically a neutral politician but he was known as a sympathiser of the Agrarian party. 'This latter fact, along with the Agrarian party association of several other Ministers and the long-time leadership of President Kekkonen in the party, created the impression that Kuuskoski's Cabinet was a covert Agrarian-led Government passing under the protective colouring of a Presidial Cabinet' (Kuusisto 1958, 345). This points once again at two factors: that a directly elected Head of State is more likely to appoint a technocratic government which is only technocratic in rhetoric,

⁷⁸ Available at <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/government/history/government-programmes-since-1917-new> in Finnish

but is in fact a partisan government, and that the ‘technocratism’ of technocratic governments is, as argued in chapter 2, a constructed quality and not an objective one.

The case of the technocratic premiership of Teuvo Aura (I) is another, even though slightly less evident, example of the president’s intervention. This time, arguably, Kekkonen intervened more in his role as guarantor of stability when the party system is deadlocked. In the 1970s, Teuvo Aura was appointed prime minister of two caretaker governments, the so-called ‘Aura voluntary fire brigades’ (Jussila, Hentilä et al. 1999, 304). This already gives an indication of the crisis atmosphere and circumstances of Finland in those years. His first cabinet was due to unexpected and inconclusive election results. After the parliamentary elections of March 1970, no political coalition could be established because of radical changes in support of the traditional parties. The first two parties, the leftist Social Democratic Party, and the right leaning National Coalition Party, obtained 23% and 18% of votes respectively. Previous to the elections, between 1966 and 1970, two popular front cabinets⁷⁹ with left-leaning majorities, Paasio and Koivisto, from the Social democratic party, governed Finland. During the election campaigns, the left parties made clear that they would only want to form a government with parties of their same political families. So when the electoral results came out, and the left had lost its majority in Parliament, the Social Democratic party could not form a government.

As it is convention in Finland and elsewhere, the parties went for discussions to the presidential office, in what in Finland is called ‘the round of the president’. They decided they preferred a majority government with as broad parliamentary support as possible, but the personality in charge of achieving that, Rihtiemi from the National Coalition party, failed to gather enough support. So failed his successor and Speaker of the House, Paasio, from the Social Democratic Party. After a few attempts, he gave up trying to reconcile programmatic positions that were too distant to be reconcilable, stating ‘As a matter of fact we are still at the same starting point as we were three weeks ago when I was given the task’ (Sankiaho and Laakso 1971). Rihtiemi tried once again to form a government with himself as the prime minister, but encountered the opposition of the Social Democratic Party and even the Centre Party expressed its wish to remain in the opposition rather than forming a government together. This situation shows the fragmented nature of the party system and the opposing position of some of its main components, refusing to collaborate.

Moreover commentator labelled those elections ‘earthquake elections’ because of the rise of new populist parties, in particular the Finnish Rural Party. This is why it did not come as a surprise that, opening the Diet in 1970, Urho Kekkonen said: ‘After the people who were called to the polls had

⁷⁹ In Finnish partisan history, this term refers specifically to cabinets composed by communists, social democrats and agrarians

cast their votes, which is necessary in a democracy, the situation, as far as the forming of a government is concerned, was difficult and confused. Even though we have had difficulties in making governments in the past, too, it will be no exaggeration to say that now especially it will be difficult to find useful alternatives' (Sankiaho and Laakso 1971). In a now-familiar fashion Kekkonen, intervened to appoint technocratic Prime Minister Teuvo Aura, Mayor of Helsinki. His declaration points at a rather reluctant Kekkonen, who chose Aura as a last resort, rather than in his own interests. Clearly things had moved on since the earlier technocratic governments. This is also confirmed by the fact that as soon as one of the parties (the Centre party) gave signs of being ready to collaborate to form a government, Kekkonen welcomed their efforts. Because of this, Aura's first technocratic government lasted only sixty-three days (May-July 1970), until a coalition government was formed under the premiership of Ahti Karjalainen.

Karjalainen's fragile coalition fell already in October 1971. Early parliamentary elections were called and took place in February 1972. Until then, Aura was again appointed to lead a second short caretaker cabinet⁸⁰. Aura's programmatic speech is telling in how it describes not only its own mission, but also its relationship with the President. '*Caretaker governments like the present does not necessarily have to publish a political programme like a political Government, but rather to demonstrate by concrete actions its operations goals. [...] You, Mr President of the Republic of Finland, in foreign policy have given us a leader in the direction of the journey, which we will definitely follow. We are temporary helmsmen and we only get the ship safely to port. [...] We know this government task for a fixed term and a new Government of then I assure you, Mr President of the Republic, the government hopes a parliamentary government will be created as soon as possible after the election ... we aim to prepare the ground for future input to policy solutions that parliamentary government will eventually do'*⁸¹.

The three case studies presented above can be assessed overall as helping to understand the specific characteristics that explain why the Head of State is very important in technocratic government appointment even though it did not appear as such when tested statistically. While constitutional prerogatives are important, the paragraphs above has shown that how Kekkonen used these prerogatives was also key in the appointment of technocratic governments. Anckar has aptly provided a metaphor for this. Before the 60s, presidential powers were seen as dishes on a buffet, where the president could pick and choose according to his personal taste. By the 60s Kekkonen had become a real *gourmand* and made the most of all of them at the same time (Anckar 2000). The instability at the cabinet level - there was a new cabinet nearly every year – was balanced by the

⁸⁰ Interestingly, as a side note, Aura appointed Linamaa, another technocratic minister, as justice minister in his first cabinet and as Minister of Labour in the second. This shows the interconnectedness of the various technocratic caretaker governments appointed in Finland

⁸¹ Available at <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/government/history/government-programmes-since-1917-new> in Finnish

great stability of the presidency, and at the same time it was partly caused by it. As Karvonen remarks, ‘Kekkonen’s leadership style did not encourage coalition parties to work out their differences and hammer out collective long-term policy commitments. As cabinet decisions were frequently bypassed by presidential interventions, and as the fate of individual ministers was decisively affected by the president’s decisions, a spirit of aloofness and lack of collective responsibility characterised cabinet politics’ (Karvonen 2014, 79).

Kekkonen has never overstepped the constitutional boundaries, but he often – some argue too often - intervened in a logic of overcoming deadlock and being the grand mediator that eventually brought the country increasingly towards political stability. Compared to his predecessor Paasikivi he has been defined at the beginning of his first mandate as ‘less experienced but perhaps more opportunistic’ (Lukacs 1992, 60). In this explanatory framework, technocratic governments were not just necessary steps to react to political crisis, as in other countries, but conscious decisions of the Head of State for his own agenda. As Nousianen put it succinctly, as a conclusion, ‘Kekkonen stretched [the presidential authority] from the core areas to wider and wider circles of influence. He used his presidential regulative powers in a very personal way: he selected prime ministers, pushed parties into coalitions, forced governments to resign *appointed non-partisan presidential cabinets* and dissolved parliaments’ (Nousiainen 2000, 343 emphasis added).

6.4 Italy: a weak unelected presidential office, which becomes mighty when *partitocracy* fails

If Finland is the most likely case of country that should have technocratic governments, Italy, together with Greece, is probably the least likely. The Italian president, constitutionally, does not have much power. The now familiar table below shows that he only scores 2 on the power scale. However, there are several elements that tell a different story.

Table 6-8 Presidential powers in Italy, 1945-today

Years	PE	CE	AP	CM	VT	EDP	FP	GF	DL	Total
1945- today	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2

Firstly, the powers that are captured by the table might be few, but are rather indicative. While on the one hand vetoing legislation (VT) does not have a directly identifiable impact on the appointment of technocratic governments, the fact that he has the right to appoint key figures (AP) has. The

constitution is not precise on this, which already points out at the marge for manoeuvre the President has, without having to necessarily use it at every change of government.

Secondly, independently of presidential powers, and of the political or economic situation, Italy is prone in general to having technocratic/independent ministers. The index of partyness of government (ratio between the number of non-partisan ministers and the total number of ministers included in a cabinet) in Italy is surprisingly low, especially in the period that is of interest to us (1993-2012). It is 0.62 compared to 1 or a little less than 1 for all other parliamentary democracies (Pasquino and Valbruzzi 2012). This suggests that the fact that the president has little official powers to put forward his non-partisan interests has not translated into very ideologically-based ministerial choices.

Thirdly, while constitutionally the Italian presidents' powers have remained the same for decades, his role and influence have increased over the years in all aspects of government formation and governance in general, according to scholars of Italian politics (Morel 1997, Olivetti 2012, Pasquino 2012, Simoncelli 2013, Scaccia 2015, 15). This has been attributed to a decline of support for political parties, thus making room for alternative representative figures in the public's trust, and to the increased mediatisation of the figure of the president (Simoncelli 2013).

Fourthly, it seems that in Italy the traditional interpretation of the Head of State as a 'passive guarantor' of the respect of the constitution is only one of the possible interpretations. Often the Head of State has been seen as having an 'active guarantor' role, whereby he becomes the reserve executive power, should crisis make normal functioning of parliamentary democracy impossible (Gorlani 2012). This is precisely the mechanism seen at play during the formation of technocratic governments, and it is therefore an excellent example as to why the Siaroff index measurement used in the analysis in chapter 3 might fall short of explaining everything. The fact that he has the AP power does not mean he uses it all the time, or always in a similar manner. Measuring it simply as being present in the constitution or not fails to capture fully some of the informal mechanisms and the evolution of interpretation of these same constitutional provisions.

Finally, and slightly anecdotally, interviews conducted with two of the three Italian technocratic prime ministers have confirmed the special role of the Head of State, while also stressing the fact that he never overstepped constitutional rules. Prime Minister Mario Monti for instance declared in an interview to the author that '*Certainly the President of the Republic played a key role in the appointment of both my cabinet (President Giorgio Napolitano) and previous technocratic cabinets, such as Lamberto Dini's in 1995 (President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro). But it can be said that in the appointment of each and every cabinet, including the most political ones, the President plays a crucial role - a role that is clearly spelt out by the Constitution. Also the crisis in the majority that brought to the resignation of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in November*

2011, President Napolitano acted in full adherence to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution, including extensive consultations with the political parties’ (Monti 2014). Dini also talked about presidential role in his interview with the author, arguing in an interview with the author that ‘*It is Scalfaro who decided to resort to this kind of exceptional government, and it oversaw its action in a much more active way than with partisan government. He plays (and played) also a role in choosing the ministers, in consultation with the political forces of course*’ (Dini 2014). These of course could be criticised as being a way for those two prime ministers to legitimise their premiership in alternative ways to the ‘electoral’ legitimization proper to partisan prime minister. Nonetheless, given the controversies surrounding presidential interventions in government appointment, such admissions can be given the benefit of the doubt.

From the arguments above, there seems to be very little doubt that the presidents in Italy have been heavily involved in government formation, in particular the appointment of technocratic governments. The following paragraphs will articulate how this involvement happened, and especially what were the motives behind it. The involvement of the Head of State in Italian technocratic government appointments illustrates well the three different logics at play, as outlined in the theoretical model above:

- a) further his own political/partisan goals
- b) maintain governability and stability in the country.
- c) be ‘the guarantor not only of the internal political order, as prescribed in the constitution, but also of Italy’s external role, especially in the economic sphere, a role that is not envisaged directly in the constitution’ (Furlong 2015, 77)

The technocratic governments analysed will be those of Lamberto Dini and Mario Monti.

Table 6-9 Presidents and Technocratic Prime Ministers in Italy

President	Prime Minister	Start date	End date
Oscar Luigi Scalfaro (IE)	Lamberto Dini	17/01/1995	07/01/1996
Giorgio Napolitano (IE)	Mario Monti	16/11/2011	14/02/2013

Starting with Dini, in the period following the outburst of the scandal of Bribesville (Tangentopoli), the traditional parties which had governed Italy since the end of the war had been extremely weakened. This situation was the ideal setting for the President to make the most of his powers (Morisi 2006), which he had not done so far. Oscar Luigi Scalfaro was the president at the time. He was a magistrate, then MP for the Christian Democrats DC uninterruptedly from 1946 to 1992. He was often associated with the DC’s more left-wing faction. He became president in 1992 and

remained in charge until 1999⁸², to then become Senator for life, as it is customary for ex-presidents. This brief biography already gives a sense of the political animal Scalfaro was.

His decision to engineer a technocratic government, led by the unelected Lamberto Dini⁸³, followed the fall of the first centre-right Berlusconi government in 1994. Scalfaro never was on good terms with Berlusconi, and particularly he did not appreciate those DC members who moved to Berlusconi's party. Scalfaro justified this appointment in terms of the need to avoid early elections nine months after the previous ones had taken place. Stability was especially needed, in his argument, because at the time Italy was deep both in an economic crisis and in the Mani Pulite (Clean Hands) investigation following Bribesville (Hine and Poli 1997, Balboni 1999). He declared himself unable to approve the formation of a new government majority made up of the Northern League plus other groups, such as the Progressives and the Popolari, which had lost the 1994 elections, which would have constituted a "ribaltone" (overhaul of parliamentary majority) (Pasquino 1997). But eventually this is precisely what happened, as the parliamentary majority which supported Dini was made of Northern League, Popolari, Progressives and, occasionally, Communist Re-foundation. So the motivation of the need for governability and stability (b in the list above) was invoked as the main rationale behind Scalfaro's move to appoint Dini.

The level of Scalfaro's involvement in selecting Dini as candidate for the post of Prime Minister and negotiating support for him among the major parties was unusual for Italian standards (Furlong 2015, 80). The President of the Republic even took the unprecedented step of asking the appointed Prime Minister to choose as ministers and undersecretaries only persons not holding elective offices (Pasquino 1997, 42) and then, when the support for the government started waning, he tried first to sustain it, and then to find a successor (Mannin 1997, 142). All of this revealed the importance of motivation a) above, which is to put forward party interests. As Sergio Romano accusingly wrote 'the "technical" government formed by Lamberto Dini has, in fact, from the start, been the government of the president, and it is difficult to conceive how a cabinet can be responsible to a man who is "not responsible for any action accomplished in the exercise of his functions" (Art. 90 of the Constitution)' (Romano 1996, 10).

Berlusconi was of course very vocal in his complaints that Scalfaro had overstepped his role, even though Dini had been a minister in Berlusconi's own government. But then again, Berlusconi's and Dini's relations had already deteriorated by that point, which explains precisely why Scalfaro thought choosing Dini was in Scalfaro's own interests against the rising star of Berlusconi. Ex-

⁸² presidents in Italy remain in power for 7 years

⁸³ Ex-treasury minister of the Berlusconi government

technocratic minister Franco Frattini, who served in the Dini cabinet, remarked similarly in an interview with the author that '*the Dini government, despite some of the rhetoric at the time, was not born out of an emergency, like the Monti government, but out of a clash of political will between the Head of State and the [former] Head of government*' (Frattini 2014).

At the time another aspect not to be overlooked was the necessity to proceed with reforms in order to abide with the Euro criteria. As Fabbrini succinctly put it 'the Italian solution to the problem of introducing the necessary policy changes requested by the European partners became the suspension of ordinary parliamentary activity between 1992 and 1998. The government was places in the hands of expert [...] governments supported by the confidence placed in them internally by the president of the Republic and externally by European bankers, rather than by the confidence of a parliamentary majority' (Fabbrini 2000a, 188-189).

In sum, Scalfaro appointment decision has been criticised as not taken out of considerations for the neutral nature of a technocratic government and its benefits for the governability of the country, but as a very political decision to avoid potential landslide victory of Berlusconi at subsequent elections. He was trying to undo what the elections had done, and commentators have argued that Scalfaro's choices were his way to 'use underhand scheming to give back to Parliament something that had been taken away by the decision of the people's vote (p.13) [...] The president's institutional decisions, though formally irreproachable, put the operation of Parliament before the expression of people's will' (Berselli 2001: 19). The years just considered can be seen as the beginning of a presidential activism in Italy that has not stopped since, that has 'altered the balance of the political system which has historically been based on parliamentary sovereignty' (Morisi 2006) and that has found its apex in the appointment of the Monti government, to which we now turn.

As already mentioned in the previous chapters, the premises in 2008, that is, at the beginning of the 16th legislature under Prime Minister Berlusconi - who was then to resign in favour of Monti's technocratic government - were anything other than pessimistic in terms of government stability. The centre-right coalition had emerged with a strong majority in both houses, and the process of evolution of the Italian political system towards a 'bipolar alternating democracy' (Marangoni 2013, 71) seemed to be close to completion. The main coalition was composed of only two parties with a strong leader at their head, the centre right Silvio Berlusconi. This was a rather unlikely ground for the development of a technocratic government. However, after three and a half years since the beginning of the legislative term, in November 2011, Mario Monti was appointed.

There have been wide speculations as to the real role of President Napolitano behind the appointment of the Monti technocratic government. Evidence of negotiations between Napolitano and Monti already in summer 2011, when the Berlusconi government had not yet given signs of weakness, lead many to question Napolitano's legitimacy, and whether with his interventions in politics he 'stretched his constitutional powers to their limits – or even beyond' (Friedman 2014). In this instance, contrary to Scalfaro, the Italian president was not moved by personal political or partisan objectives, even though he had been a longstanding member of the Communist Party. He mainly acted out of the 'stability and governability' motivation b) above, and out of the motivation related to external pressure, in particular from EU partners – motivation c) above. The two will be analysed in turn.

In terms of the stability and governability motivation, throughout the course of the Berlusconi government, President Napolitano had warned Berlusconi that the role of his government was not only that of securing and keeping a majority in Parliament, which he was doing by distributing minor governmental offices and other posts to reticent MPs, but also to govern. The legislative activity of the fourth Berlusconi government was certainly low and as ever declining (Marangoni 2010, 2011) and this was also remarked by Berlusconi's international homologues. There have been debates as to what Berlusconi's resignation was due to in November 2011. Despite the various scandals that have involved Berlusconi, from bribery to underage prostitution, there seems to be agreement that his resignation had nothing to do with his personal affairs. When Berlusconi eventually resigned because of lack of support, the situation in parliament was the following: while the usual Italian party fragmentation had been reassembled instrumentally in the lower chamber within the two major political poles, such poles were internally very divided (Fabbrini 2013b) so the president had leeway to impose his own candidate.

This connects with the second motivation of Napolitano, which is to be the guarantor of Italy's external role, especially in the economic sphere. Berlusconi's resignation and the subsequent Monti appointment can be explained with reference to international pressures due to the economic situation of the country, externally from other European actors, and internally from, precisely, the Head of State. In fact the website of the presidency announced that Berlusconi would resign and that his resignation would be accepted by the president, even before Berlusconi had actually done so (Scaccia 2015, 39). Napolitano had consulted with European leaders, American leaders and various central banks governors ahead of Berlusconi's resignation. The Quirinale website⁸⁴ gave regular reports of calls with US President Obama, French President Sarkozy, European Council President Van Rompuy and so on. Napolitano's choice of Prime Minister was also carried out to

⁸⁴ website of the Presidency of the Republic

reassure markets and international actors (Ruggeri 2011). And he had suggested Monti as a candidate, clearly on the basis on Monti's personal expertise and experience in both economic and EU-related matters. Monti was appointed senator by Napolitano in a clear move to guarantee Italy's credibility in the international arena. As Fabbrini succinctly put it: 'In order to introduce at least the more urgent structural reforms requested but the country's membership in the Eurozone since 2001, reforms that the governments of the 2000s were unable to introduce [...] Italy had to exonerate parties' politicians from exercising governmental power' (Fabbrini 2013b, 4).

Thanks also partially to President Napolitano's 'lobbying' for Monti (Breda 2011), the new technocratic prime minister rallied in his parliamentary vote of confidence an incredible number of votes, second only Dini's technocratic government. And the popular support for both the president and the newly appointed prime minister was also surprisingly high. In a Demos poll conducted right after the appointment (see graph below), almost 79% of interviewees agreed that a technocratic government was the best choice⁸⁵. This trust in government is also matched by equally high numbers for trust in the President, who throughout Italy's recent history is always top of the polls, well ahead of political parties. To give an example from the Monti time, Napolitano scored 68% against 24% for political parties⁸⁶.

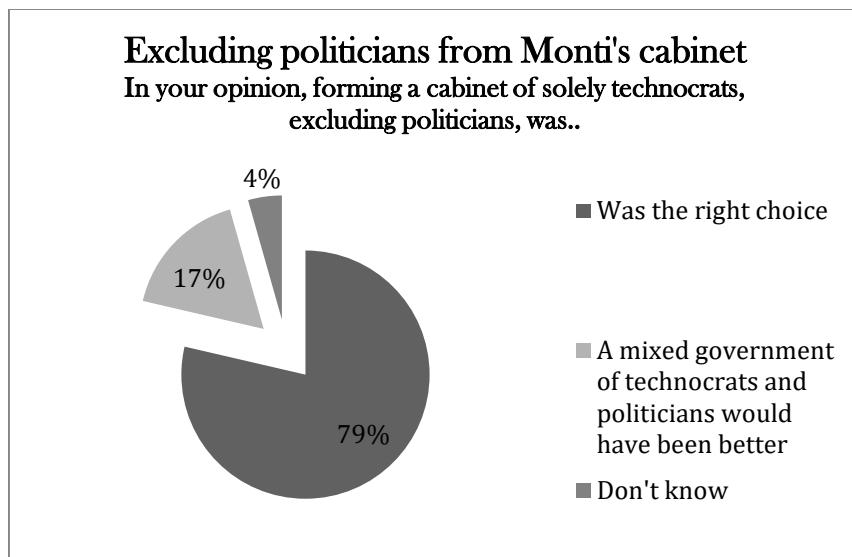


Figure 6-2 Support for a government made solely of technocrats, Italy 2011

Source: Demos&Pi survey, November 2011 (base: 1021 respondents)

⁸⁵ <http://demos.it/a00652.php>

⁸⁶ data24news (2011). Sondaggio Eurispes: +22% degli italiani delusi da istituzioni, ma si fidano di Napolitano (67,9%) available at <http://www.data24news.it/sondaggi-nel-mondo/politici/9165-sondaggio-eurispes-22-degli-italiani-delusi-da-istituzioni-ma-si-fidano-di-napolitano-679/#sthash.yc91BszX.dpuf>

In conclusion, for what concerns Italy, commentators who have defined presidential powers in that country as ‘an accordion’ (Tebaldi 2005), expanding or contracting according to needs, have a point. In the particular cases above, it is clear that those powers have been heavily expanding when it came to the appointment of technocratic governments, as those coincided with periods of crisis (Morlino 1998, 84). Presidents have acted as politicians with their own partisan convictions (in the case of Scalfaro with Dini) or because of the need to ensure stability and the international credibility of the country (in the case of Napolitano with Monti⁸⁷). Overall presidents in Italy ‘prevented any dangerous alteration of the inter-institutional equilibrium and, whenever necessary, have, each [president] with his own style and political cunning, contributed to the accomplishment of the best temporary equilibrium’ (Pasquino 2012).

6.5 Portugal: president versus prime ministers in early democratization years

Portuguese technocratic governments were appointed in the early days of Portuguese democracy, that is, after 1976 and before the constitutional reforms of 1982. In those years, Portugal was a fully semi-presidential system (Martins 2006, Neto and Lobo 2009). The president, elected directly, had officially the similar powers to the Finnish one, but the circumstances were very different.

Table 6-10 Presidential powers in Portugal, 1976-1982

Years	PE	CE	AP	CM	VT	EDP	FP	GF	DL	Total
1976-1982	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	6

To give a sense of the historical circumstances, Portugal was coming out of its dictatorial period, and was in transition to become a stable democratic system. On April 25th, 1975 the constituent assembly was elected, and one year later a constitution was formulated and brought out. This first Portuguese constitution reflected the fear of an overly powerful assembly by balancing it with a directly elected president. This was inspired by the German constitution of Weimar and the French constitution of 1958, both of which had clear division of power between president, parliament and government. Portugal, however, also kept the Council of the Revolution as the fourth organ of power till the first round of constitutional reforms in 1982. This was an advisory body headed by the President, comprising members of the armed forces.

⁸⁷ It is worth mentioning here that the resignation of Berlusconi and the appointment of Monti still now are controversial topics whose nature has not been explained yet.

For the current purposes, Portuguese technocratic cabinet of Nobre de Costa is the most useful example to illustrate how the Head of State in Portugal acted as the main player behind the appointment of technocratic governments⁸⁸. References will also be made to the technocratic cabinet of Mota Pinto, appointed right after Nobre da Costa.

Table 6-11 Presidents and Technocratic governments in Portugal

Head of State	Prime Minister	Date of appointment	End of cabinet
Antonio Ramalho Eanes (DE)	Alfredo Nobre da Costa	29/08/1978	15/09/1978
Antonio Ramalho Eanes (DE)	Carlos Mota Pinto	22/11/1978	11/06/1979

President Antonio Ramalho Eanes was elected as an independent two months after the new constitution was approved, with 61% of the votes (De Almeida and Pires 2008), equivalent to 3 times more than the second candidate. However, he was in fact a member of the Armed Forces Movement (MFA). Before becoming a politician he had a long military career in Portugal's colonies, including Angola, from which he returned in 1975. This belonging influenced his actions especially when it came to debates between the Council of the Revolution and the Ministerial cabinet. Eanes was re-elected president for his second mandate, until 1986, and subsequently headed a political party for a year. In the first democratic constitution, president had 'representative functions for the state and [was] a warrantee of national independence and unity, and of the regular functioning of democratic institutions. He was also the commander in chief of the armed forces and was elected under a two-round majority run-off system, by direct, universal and secret suffrage on a personal candidacy, on proposal by a list of a minimum of 7500 signatures' (De Almeida and Pires 2008, 361). He had the right to veto legislation and decree laws, to dissolve the Assembly within certain limits, the power to appoint government following electoral results and the power to declare the state of siege and the state of emergency (Martins 2006, 85). These are not exceptional powers, but if considered together with the political responsibility of the government to the president, make the Portuguese political system of the late 70s have very markedly semi-presidential.

In those early years after democratization,

'in the five constitutional governments between July 1976 and January 1980, the President played an increasing role which served to draw power away from the Assembly as he sought to ensure some stability and effectiveness [...] he formed three governments on his own initiative with varying degrees of consultation with the political parties. He met extensively

⁸⁸ The two technocratic cabinets appointed right after Nobre da Costa, (MotaPinto and Pintasilgo) were reiteration of a similar pattern of presidential intervention.

with ministers in the three governments of his initiation [...], utilised the pocket veto, and through public statements influenced policy as well' (Bruneau 1984, 78).

This increased role has been seen as an unwanted consequence of the status of the party system, as expected from the theoretical model. The progressive ascendancy of the president to the detriment of parliament and government was caused by 'lack of a coherent and permanent majority in parliament [which] made the constitution of stable governments impossible' (see also Rebelo de Sousa 1984, Martins 2006, 86). So the party system situation opened up opportunities for the president to act strongly on his prerogatives. There is little objection to be raised on whether the President played a role or not in government formation, as his constitutional powers also allowed him to do. However, similarly to the Finnish case, it still remains to be explained why Eanes would appoint technocratic governments instead of partisan ones. And this is the focus of the following paragraphs, which will consider the dynamics of president-parliamentarism in Portugal and the explanation for Eanes' interventions in favour of technocratic presidential governments.

As mentioned, because of his military background, President Eanes was heavily involved in the Council of the Revolution, and had a style of exercising the presidency that was subsequently relabelled 'institutional guerrilla' (Braga da Cruz 1994, 245). This translated very often in a high degree of conflict between the President, the Prime Minister and the Assembly, and resulted in a great deal of government instability (Colomer 2008, 175). The two technocratic governments were not only based on presidential initiative according to most academic and contemporary sources (Laplaine Guimaraes, Diniz de Ayala et al. 2011) but also, because of lack of coherent parliamentary support, were mainly concerting with the president in order to achieve policy decisions (Braga da Cruz 1994). Contrary to the expectations about a directly elected president and the evidence for that in other countries, the logic behind Eanes intervention was of a different type. He was unaffiliated, and his main concern was to ensure stability and governability in a country that had just come out of a long dictatorship. Eanes' main motives were not partisan political, but were still political.

The decision to appoint Nobre Costa was taken after the fall of the Soares government in 1977, which was an alliance between the Socialists and the Democratic and Social Centre. Pressures to reform coming from the IMF were strong at the time, so a solution had to be found quickly to ensure the country continued on its path to capitalism and democratization. Contemporary commentators, such as Marco Robello de Sousa, declared that there were 'three possibilities: either the government will succeed in solving the problems and will be fine; if not, we would go to a strong presidential system; or third, this government can stagger and cripple along for several more years until it falls, and the regime with it' (interview quoted in Jackson 1978). In those early

years, it was more than the stability of the government that was at stake: it was the very stability of the country as a democracy. The poor performance of the government justified, in the eyes of Eanes and his supporters, his strong intervention. The extract just quoted nonetheless also shows that it was not given for granted that the president would have acted in the way he did, as the mere fact of having the constitutional right to do so, was not a sufficient incentive for action.

Incumbent prime minister Soares, following his resignation, had proposed a minority government (Avillez 1996, 78), but was rejected by President Eanes, who appointed Nobre da Costa, an engineer, instead. Soares, unsurprisingly, harshly criticised Eanes' decision. The President felt nonetheless in a strong position: sufficiently constitutionally backed and popularly legitimate to justify a decision taken without consulting political parties and against the will of a number of them. The debate that followed between the two executives (between Eanes and Soares, but also with successive Prime Minister Sa Carneiro) is best understood not as a clash between partisan factions, but as a clash between a presidential and a parliamentary conceptions of democracy (Manuel 1996, 33). Soares argued that it was precisely continuous presidential intervention that prevented partisan governments from becoming more long lasting and stable. Eanes felt he was representing the entire nation, and thus was entitled to take major political decisions in the interest of stability, and beyond partisan clashes. Eanes' 'disinterestedness' in partisan terms was reinforced by Eanes' conviction that a presidential technocratic government would be better equipped to deal with the instability because it was not justified by partisan interest. He himself, as a non-partisan military-affiliated figure, had a very specific interpretation of government.

The fate of the Nobre da Costa cabinet and the successive moves of Eanes are also telling. Nobre da Costa, after only two weeks in government, failed to obtain a parliamentary majority, with 252 against 141, for his programme (Matos 1992, 780). Eanes, instead of trying to construct a party based legislative majority, decided to appoint another presidential government, that of jurist and professor Mota Pinto, who had been a non-party minister under Soares. As Elgie writes, however, the rhetoric at the time was more consensual than with the appointment of Nobre da Costa (Elgie 2011, 136). Eanes declared he hoped the government would evolve in 'in time into a form of cross-party agreement' (Miranda 1984, 214). This rhetoric did not convince Sa Carneiro, the Social Democratic (PSD) leader who would subsequently win the 1980 elections. He was particularly strong in his condemnation of Eanes, accusing him of having deliberately chosen Mota Pinto as a PSD dissident to weaken further the party, thus challenging the authority of one of the two major parties in the political system.

Even if in the case of Mota Pinto, Eanes had smoothed the sharp edges and used a more conciliatory tone to justify another presidential appointment, the political attitude of the president was nonetheless clear. ‘Given the absence of a comprehensive political deal, all actors, including the president, had an incentive to destabilize any agreement that had been reached in an attempt to derive an incremental benefit from any new arrangement that could be brokered’ (Elgie 2011, 137). During Mota Pinto’s government, Eanes repeatedly gave his support to the cabinet, including threatening parties to intervene once again in government formation if they did not facilitate the cabinet’s task, especially in economic reforms. Similarly to what already seen in the Czech Republic and in a few other cases, the President was stressing his *super-partes* role against the detrimental partisan attitudes of politicians. He declared: ‘*The most terrible enemies of democracies are not the outright anti-democrats, but those democrats who let themselves be absorbed by secondary problems, thus postponing finding a solution to national problems*’ (Guardiola 1979). Repeatedly in public speeches he made references to the inability of the party system to function properly, and this attitude was not so much a consequence of the political system put in place after democratization, but also of the interpretation of Eanes’ own role.

To conclude, in Portugal the presidential technocratic governments (Laplaine Guimarãis, Diniz de Ayala et al. 2011) of Nobre da Costa and Mota Pinto have been justified as the result of a president who, ‘in the face of weak governments and unstable majorities in the Assembly, became prominent at all levels of the governing process’ (Bruneau 1984, 79). This supports the hypothesis that technocratic governments are more likely, all other things being equal, when the party system is weak and divided. That was clearly the case in the early years of Portuguese democracy, where there were many successive political crises and political parties were incapable of solving them (Blanco de Morais 1998, 145). It also confirms that if the president feels he has the legitimacy to do so thanks to its direct elections and wide powers, he is more likely to dare challenging the authority of parliament by appointing governments of presidential initiative.

These dynamics of division of powers and legitimacy changed partially after the 1982 constitutional reform. In that reform the powers of the president are curtailed significantly and the MFA abolished altogether. Both those moves were done with Eanes in mind. While the president maintained the power to dissolve parliament, appoint and dismiss prime ministers, the Prime Minister became responsible politically to Parliament, not to the president anymore. The president’s legislative veto also became inoperative and could be opposed by a simple parliamentary majority. The president ceased to have the right to nominate ministers and, most importantly for the case of technocratic governments, ‘was submitted to strong limitations regarding his intervention in the designation and removal of the Prime Minister and the dissolution of the

Assembly' (Colomer 2008, 191). Subsequent revisions to the Portuguese constitution (1989, 1992 and 1997, 2001, 2004 and then in 2005) did not significantly alter the president's powers, and since then Portugal has become more stable in terms of government duration (Moreira 2005, 30). The country had switched from president-parliamentarism to premier-presidentialism, and technocratic government ceased to be appointed. From 1982 onwards, the president restricted himself 'to exercising, essentially, protocol powers and limited powers of arbitration' (Blanco de Morais 1998, 154).

While many of the later actions of President Eanes showed that presidential technocratic governments were a 'thing of the past' (Matos 1992, 783), nonetheless Eanes still exercised the powers left in a very forceful manner, such as in 1985 when the collapse of – another – Soares government was followed by a presidential decision for early elections. Soares had pledged Eanes' support for even a non-socialist government, to avoid elections at any cost, but Eanes chose early elections thinking they would benefit a new party which he was expected to lead after standing down as president (Lobo 2001a, 191). This shows how similar dynamics of presidential intervention can lead to different outcomes, and not necessarily to a technocratic government depending on the interests of the parties involved.

6.6 Poland: A rarely invoked constitutional procedure justifying presidential partisan preferences

Poland became semi-presidential when its first post-communist constitution, adopted in 1992, declared that the president should be popularly elected. This might explain why at the in the early 1990s the president was considered the main political actor in Poland (Jasewicz 1997). However, subsequent constitutional reforms, especially the 1997 one, as evident from the table below, and increasingly independent governments reduced the Polish president to a ceremonial role.

Table 6-12 Presidential powers in Poland, 1992-today

Years	PE	CE	AP	CM	VT	EDP	FP	GF	DL	Total
1992-1997	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	6
From 1997	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3

Elgie argues that if Poland had been a president-parliamentary system instead of a premier-presidential, then President Lech Walesa (1990-1995) would have appointed presidential technocratic governments. However, Elgie also affirms, with reference to president Kwasniewski that, 'at no time, though, could the president decide either to replace the government with a presidential administration or refuse to cohabit' (Elgie 2011, 166). According to the theoretical

model presented in the thesis, Elgie is certainly right on his first point. On the second, he seems to be overlooking the fact that Poland did have a presidential technocratic government. Belka's cabinet in 2004 is an instance of technocratic government in which the president decided to replace the fallen government with a presidential administration. This points to the fact that presidential intervention in government formation is not solely determined by presidential constitutional powers, but how those are interpreted and what the personality and personal history of the president are.

In Poland the government is elected according to the following procedure (Prokop 2010, 99):

- 1) The President proposes a Prime Minister, who designates ministers. The president approves of the government and the Sjem (Parliament) gives the vote of confidence based on the programme proposed by the PM.
- 2) If 1) does not work because the Sjem does not grant the vote of confidence, the Sjem assumes the initiative to appoint a new government. The PM has to be proposed by at least 46 members of the Sjem, and voted in office by an absolute majority of votes.
- 3) If 1) and 2) do not work, the President can chose the Prime Minister and the remaining members of the Council of Ministers. The Sjem grants a vote of confidence by simple majority. This means that it is possible to appoint a minority or a technocratic government supported by a parliamentary majority.

All governments in post-communist Poland have been appointed according to the procedure described in point 1. The only exception is the technocratic government of Marek Belka, where step 3 was adopted. President Kwasniewski followed the constitutional procedure, but at the same time came across strongly as the mastermind of government formation in that turbulent period. According to Millard, President Kwasniewski 'benefited from his considerable political experience and solid political backing to carve out a self-conscious, overt and productive system-shaping role. The reduction in formal presidential powers in 1997 did not reduce the capacity of the president to influence the polity' (Millard 2000).

Table 6-13 President and Technocratic Prime Minister, Poland

Head of State	Prime Minister	Start Date	End Date
Aleksander Kwasniewski (DE)	Marek Marian Belka	11/06/2004	31/10/2005

Belka was first proposed by President Kwasniewski according to the procedure detailed in point 1, but the Parliament (Sejm) did not vote its confidence. The lower house voted 262-188 against Belka, but then failed to propose another candidate (step 2). So president Kwasniewski proposed Belka again, and obtained the required number of votes. While therefore this mode of appointment is within the constitution (art. 154-155), it is still a demonstration of the influence of the Head of State who stubbornly re-proposed his own candidate at stage 3. Kwasniewski was an ex-Communist leader, a professional politician of the old regime with much experience, politically affiliated to the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and Belka was also affiliated with the SLD. Belka had been Kwasniewski's personal economic adviser, and was considered to have a suitable profile in terms of economic expertise and non-involvement in politics. He was nonetheless only half-convincing as an independent, and many commentators at the time, both from the opposition and from the SLD itself, criticised Belka for being at worse SLD Prime Minister in disguise, and at best a caretaker leader of a dying government (Lansford 2015). This is a clear example of a clash of Presidential will and parliamentary will, in which the former managed to achieve its goal by making the most of the internal divisions of parliament and of his own personal klout. However, it also once again underlines the fine line between a technocratic government and a partisan government, and how the rhetoric of 'technocratness' plays an important role.

Another important event related to the interplay between president and parliament on the matter of technocratic government is the presidential refusal of Belka's resignation on 5 May 2005. Belka wanted to resign to be able to join the new Democratic Party. President Kwasniewski's refusal has been explained in several ways. One is that it was in the interest of the President, whom, as mentioned, was affiliated with the SLD, to postpone elections and maintain the technocratic government in power. Officially, however, the reason Kwasniewski gave was to be doing it in the interest of stability given important meetings coming up with European partners: '*I will not accept Prime Minister Belka's resignation before the end of the European Council's summit*' (Warsaw Voice 2005). Others explained the decision was taken for the good of the country, as the Belka government was carrying out necessary reforms towards liberalization, and austerity measures to contain the economic crisis. Had Kwasniewski accepted Belka's resignation and called for early elections, parties would have suspended all these in favour of more relaxed policies electoral gains. The reasons, as it is often the case, are debatable and hard to determine without direct access to the main players involved, but it is clear that the President intervened forcefully to keep Belka in office as he had done to put him there in the first place. Kwasniewski used fully his constitutional powers, and felt legitimized to do so (McMenamin 2008).

The brief overview has stressed that in Poland in particular the presidential capacity to influence the democratic process is not therefore limited to a number of legal instruments but, on the other

hand, is potentially vast as the office has been tailored to perform the constitutional duties of the Head of State. The position of the President thus is not inherently strong, but constitutional practice can make him a powerful figure (Wyrzykowski 2006, 254). This is especially the case when he can benefit from a situation in which parliament is divided, and early elections are not in the interest of parties.

6.7 Romania: An unexpected and contested presidential dismissal of a cabinet followed by an uncontested choice of technocratic prime minister.

Romania has been catalogued by Siaroff as one of those ‘parliamentary system with a presidential corrective’ (Colliard 1978). This means that it is a country where the president is more than a figurehead but lacks considerable powers, as the table below also indicates.

Table 6-14 Presidential powers in Romania, 1996-today

Years	PE	CE	AP	CM	VT	EDP	FP	GF	DL	Total
1996-today	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	5

In terms of technocratic government, the clearest example of presidential intervention on such appointment is the cabinet of Mugur Isarescu. He had been the Head of Romania’s Central Bank since 1990. He was respected as an independent technocrat, and was called to power in December 1999 to lead the country for about a year until the next elections. His appointment followed a most extraordinary dismissal of the previous Vasile cabinet, not due to a parliamentary vote of no confidence, but to the resignation *en masse* of 10 of his 17-strong cabinet because of complaints over the prime minister’s performance. The PM and the President were of the same party (the Christian Democrats), and so were 7 of the 10 ministers who resigned, and three Liberals.

The President Emil Constantinescu took that as equivalent to a no confidence vote, and dismissed Vasile. The dismissal also came after the cabinet was accused of making too slow progress on the reforms needed for EU membership, and the 1999 inflation rate topped 45%, exceeding the 25% laid down by the IMF. There were more than 1m unemployed in a country of 23m, and the ECB had warned that the growth pace was worrying. Conditions were therefore ‘ideal’ for the appointment of a technocratic government, in so far as the economy was in a poor state, there were external pressures for reforms, and the party system was very fragmented, including leaders from the same party attacking each other, and a powerful directly elected Head of State was in power.

The appointment of the technocratic government, however, did not come smoothly, mainly because of opposition against the dismissal of Vasile, rather than opposition to the nomination of

Isarescu. The dismissed prime minister accused the President of having performed an unconstitutional move, and the country had become a presidential system (BBC News 1999) and former President Ion Iliescu, joined in, declaring political war on the leadership and complaining too that Constantinescu's dismissal of prime minister was unconstitutional. Vasile eventually agreed that he had to 'resign as Prime Minister of Romania...for the national interest, to solve the crisis which seriously affected Romania's democratic regime and its image abroad' (Lovatt 2000).

Table 6-15 President and Technocratic Prime Minister, Romania

Head of State	Prime Minister	Start Date	End Date
Emil Constantinescu (DE)	Mugur Isarescu	21/11/1999	26/11/2000

On television, Constantinescu described Isarescu as 'an economic specialist respected in Romania and abroad', and said 'Isarescu would have more credibility than previous prime ministers because he is not a member of any political party' (Press 1999). His cabinet was made up of ministers from four parties, and Isarescu himself was the only independent. He formally started the negotiations with the European Union and is also credited with having started important reforms in the country, and until recently is considered by reputed international publications as 'the country's most respected public figure' (Economist 2012). Indeed even at the time of his appointment he did not face much opposition. The Christian Democrats themselves had wished for 'a new government able to tread the road to EU admission. We need team spirit, faster solutions than those provided by Vasile', as party vice president Remus Opris declared (CNN 1999).

Isarescu's credibility internally, good reputation externally, speediness of reform and lack of partisan affiliation were qualities that were recognised unanimously by both parties and by the President. The President declared him 'the best premier after 1989 and one of the best Romania ever had' (reported in Gallagher 2005, 241). His appointment was welcomed nationally and internationally, and in 2000 Isărescu had an popular approval rate of 50%, unusually high for Romanian governments (Freyberg-Inan 2002, 132). His vote of investiture also reflected this approval, with only 35 MPs voting against him, against an average between 1991 and 2014 of 159 (Bjørn Erik Rasch 2015). His reform plans, including familiar measures such as limiting deficits and inflation, tightening public spending and improving income policy, business climate and market functioning for 2000-2004 – with strategic planning until 2010- were well received by business leaders (BBW 1999). Admittedly Isarescu's image was then 'tainted' with partisan politics when he ran, supposedly as an independent, for the subsequent presidential elections. He was however too closely associated with the Christian democrats to be able to convincingly maintain his outlook of independent (Ayata and Ergun 2005, 72) and failed to be elected.

This case illustrates how directly elected Presidents do not necessarily have to act against prime ministers or opposing parties to appoint a technocratic cabinet. They can do so in the interest of the nation, against their own party's leadership, and with the full backing of most parties. As Constantinescu declared, the collaboration was a matter of credibility in the international stage too. *I had a very good cooperation with Mugur Isarescu and I promised then that no one will interfere in central bank policy. Given that Romania had a huge deficit on the external image and that the World Bank and IMF put pressure in '98-'99 [...] we went together with the governor at the two institutions and we put our guarantee that we can overcome the credibility crisis* (Business Magazin 2008).

6.8 The path not taken: attempt at technocratic government appointment

6.8.1 Cavaco Silva proposing a technocratic government in Portugal (2011 and 2013)

The way to show the importance of the Head of State intervention maybe even more convincingly than in the ‘positive’ cases outlined above is to choose a counterfactual case. By that, similarly to the previous chapters, we mean a country which is in a situation of crisis that, notwithstanding the presence of such crisis and the discussion of the technocratic hypothesis amongst political actor, does not appoint a technocratic government because the Head of State’s intervention is not successful. This situation was to be found in Portugal in 2011 and 2013.

Starting from the key year of 2011, when in Greece and in Italy technocratic governments were brought to power, president Cavaco Silva vented the idea of a government of national unity, after Socrates’ Socialist cabinet resigned when unpopular austerity reforms were refused by parliament⁸⁹. Parties refused, and elections held in April 2011 brought Pedro Passos Coelho from the Social Democratic Party to power. The new cabinet was not technocratic, but it did have a technocratic finance minister, Vitor Gaspar, in line with predictions regarding the appointment of technocratic finance ministers during economic crises (Halleberg and Wehner 2013). When Gaspar proposed austerity measures and some of them, especially the most severe cuts to spending, were judged unconstitutional by the Constitutional court, he decided to step down in July 2013. Gaspar argued that the consistent failure of all economic predictions and divisions within the government made it impossible for him to continue (Hoernig 2013, 195). A day later, the leader of the junior coalition centre-right People’s Party, stepped down too from his position of Foreign Affairs minister,

⁸⁹ "Beyond the country divisions, there should be a patriotic commitment to unity that should unite the Portuguese people," said a message posted on the Facebook page of the Portuguese presidency. "Different ideas should not prevent from unity in what is essential for the country"

objecting to the nomination of the new finance minister Albuquerque. The government seemed to be on the point of collapsing, and Portugal's president Cavaco Silva made a long speech to the nation, explaining that early elections would be disastrous both for the economic situation, but also for the political one appealed to the three main parties to form a government of 'national salvation' (Cavaco Silva 2013).

This solution proposed by the president implied an agreement between the three main parties, so that together they could fulfil the conditionalities attached to the bailout which the country received from the Troika. He also suggested in his speech that such agreement could be speedily had if one 'personality of prestigious reputation'⁹⁰ could promote and facilitate such dialogue. Commentators were wondering whether this intervention would lead to the equivalent of a technocratic government (Afonso 2013, Efe 2013), where the main parties would unite behind an independent figure, like in the case of Papademos in Greece, or even appoint a whole cabinet of independent ministers, like in the Monti case. During a week of repeated negotiations, an agreement proved elusive, in part because the opposition party was fully aware that entering an agreement would only spoil its chances of winning the next parliamentary elections' (Hoernig 2013, 195). Writing in 2015 after the recent October elections, Hatton remarks that 'Cavaco Silva has asked for a grand coalition before, urging the main parties to come together two years ago [in 2013] when the Constitutional Court blocked government efforts to cut some pensions and endangered the budget deficit goal, but the parties were unable to overcome their differences' (Hatton 2015). Nonetheless, a technocratic government was not appointed, and Coelho's cabinet was simply reshuffled to meet coalition parties' concerns.

The severe economic crisis created the ideal situation for the appointment of a technocratic government, and the president repeatedly pushed for that option. However, as explained above, both in 2011 and in 2013 the political parties refused. There are two explanations. Firstly, the Head of State in Portugal was not seen as the last and only actor capable of providing stability and legitimacy of a crumbling party system, like it was in Italy. So Silva's intervention could not be as successful as Eanes' intervention was in the late 70s, not only because of the greater stability and strength of the parties, but also because his 'formal' powers as a president had been curtailed in the 1982 constitutional reform. Secondly, and more importantly for the purpose for this chapter, the political parties in Portugal were not in such bad shape as the Italian or Greek ones in the same situation. This 'strength' of the parties in the face of the economic crisis, and paradoxical stability

⁹⁰ The original read: "um acordo desta natureza não se reveste de grande complexidade técnica e poderá ser alcançado com alguma celeridade, podendo recorrer-se a uma personalidade de reconhecido prestígio que promova e facilite o diálogo". Translated by the author

of the partisan actors in the system was the reason why the parties resisted the intervention of the Head of State much more than their Italians counterparts did. Afonso (2013) explains this resilience of traditional parties despite the disastrous economic circumstances in terms of blame redistribution. In Italy and Greece it was easy to identify the culprits of the crisis and the responsible party for the austerity that followed, and the votes for alternative parties rose accordingly. In Portugal on the contrary it was less so because of the minority status of the previous government (Socrates) and the coalition nature of the Coelho government. Portuguese parties feared a technocratic government of national unity would send a strong signal to their electorate about their inability to govern. Major parties that resisted the crisis had also kept intact their legitimacy, showing that the economic crisis, even in the presence of a Head of State favourable to the technocratic solution, will lead to a technocratic government if the parties also see it as being in their interest. That was not the case in Portugal, so that even the worst economic crisis in decades was not enough to bring about a technocratic government.

As an interesting aside, it should be noted that in October 2015, Cavaco Silva discussed the option of a technocratic government much more openly, and calling it by its name (Khan 2015, Rapidis and Coelho 2015, Silva 2015). Such option was once again rejected in the end, and the result was first a centre-right led minority government led by Passos Coelho, and then a centre-left coalition led by Socialist Antonio Costa.

6.9 Conclusions

The case studies of technocratic governments analysed above might seem to be very disparate, with diverging interests and different behaviours displayed by the Heads of States analysed. This is because presidents are individuals, or rather, a category of individuals which are bound by different rules and have different personal traits. Despite this variance, which make the famous Schmittian notion of the unpredictability of sovereign power⁹¹ seem ever so relevant, some broader conclusions can be drawn.

The analysis has captured both general and contingent factors which explain how the Head of State plays a role in the appointment of technocratic governments. The general factors refer to what constitutional powers were available to the president at the time. The contingent factors on the contrary are whether the president decided to use those powers, to stretch them, or to reinterpret them. This could depend both on the Head of State's personality, and on the status of the party system. Although the chapter did not stress it because it has been explored in the previous two chapters, the importance of crisis situation in determining whether the Head of State decides to act

⁹¹ Schmitt, Carl (1985). *Political Theology*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

in favour of the technocratic solution remains a key aspect of the explanation. It should always be kept in mind that technocratic governments are crisis governments, and that the Head of State will have a stronger incentive to intervene as a guarantor of stability and governability when the country is in a problematic set of circumstances. Linked to this, the situation of the country as a whole is also a structural factor that should not be underestimated. Whether the country has just become a democracy after a period of authoritarian rule, such as in the case of Portugal, or whether the country is under external pressures from European partners, such as in the case of Italy, are also elements that will influence how the Head of State will act.

The benefits of inter-country comparison, which have been already explained in the previous two chapters, were complemented in this chapter by benefits of intra-country comparisons. The most evident case is the Czech Republic, which has the unique characteristic amongst all European countries of having had technocratic governments under an unelected, and under an elected president. The cases have also allowed including elected and non-elected presidents, which have different incentives and legitimization mechanisms for their interventions in technocratic government appointments. While the usually an elected president would appoint technocrats to further his partisan interests while an indirectly elected one would do so in the interest of stability and governability, there are exceptions that complicate the picture. For instance in Portugal a directly elected president did not have primarily partisan concerns in mind, both because of his personal past as an independent military figure, but also because of the institutional configuration of the newly democratized country. Another notable exception is Italy. Within the same country, and in cases of presidents with exactly the same constitutional powers, presidential prerogatives were extended like an accordion (Pasquino 2012) either for partisan interests (Scalfaro) or for credibility and stability concerns (Napolitano).

So the qualitative analysis has highlighted the complexity of the mechanisms and incentives behind presidential interventions, which include a combination of personality, structural and contingent factors, as well as national peculiarities rooted in historic experiences. Nonetheless, they have confirmed that, notwithstanding these differences, there is a recognizable pattern which should be very familiar by now. In a situation of crisis, when the party system is weak or unstable, and unable to cope with the crisis, the president is more likely to intervene and appoint a technocratic government. This has always been done within the limits of national constitutions, and was generally legitimized in the eyes of the public. So far from accusing the presidents of undue or excessive intervention, the chapter has shown how they were skilled politicians to act within constitutional boundaries and still pursue their own interests, or the interests they thought their countries would benefit from.

Chapter 7 Technocratic Governments and Party Democracy

How technocratic governments are symptoms, rather than causes, of European party democracies' decline.

In the previous chapters technocratic governments have been explored from various angles, be it in terms of their essence, the causes of their appointment, the actors involved in them and their effects on people's trust in democracy. It is therefore right to conclude this work with a fundamental question: are technocratic governments democratic? More specifically, do technocratic governments meet the standards of democracy as it is understood in Europe, that is, party democracy (Mair 2008, Van Biezen 2012, van Biezen and Borz 2012)? Common sense, even etymology, would seem to indicate that technocracy is, by definition, incompatible with any democracy. It generally partners well with autocracy. Together with populism they are the Scylla and Charybdis of democratic ideals. Technocratic governments have even led some to mourn the 'end of democracy as we know it' (Brunkhorst 2012). It is not clear, however, whether such accusations rest on any stable grounds, both in terms of democratic theory and democratic practice. Exploring such matters is important on the one hand to fully understand the underexplored political phenomenon - that of technocratic cabinets – which has been the focus of the present work, and on the other hand, and more importantly, to add an additional perspective to assess the status of European democracies.

The chapter will therefore proceed as follows. After clarifying some of the terminology and concepts used, it will address major criticisms aimed at technocratic governments, touching upon problems related to constitutionality, electoral competition, policy choices, accountability and legitimacy. It will show that technocratic governments have been criticised on wrong assumptions or against unrealistic democratic standards. In the second part, the chapter will nonetheless identify some fair criticisms aimed at technocratic governments, that can be traced back to Mair's challenges to party government (Mair 2008). In line with other scholars lamenting the decline of parties and the diminished quality of European democracies, Mair argued that there is a broad reshaping of political systems in non-majoritarian terms, with increasing use of experts and regulatory agencies, decreased policy alternatives due to various national and international constraints, and increased ideological convergence of mainstream parties. These factors have a negative impact on the quality of democracies, and this chapter will argue that such democratic shortcomings - which in normal governments remain somehow hidden behind the layer of deeply rooted and established partisan alliances and practices - appear in their fullness in technocratic cabinets. In this respect, technocratic governments can be added to the list of the ways in which parties are failing to perform their intended roles within the democratic process (Lawson and Merkl 1988).

The underlying argument of the chapter is therefore that the difference between the challenges to the democratic quality of party governments and to the democratic quality of technocratic governments are not differences in kind - as most of the criticisms aimed at technocratic governments seemed to imply - but differences in degree. This reinforces the case of the decline of European party systems - which has been made convincingly by many eminent scholars (e.g. Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, Scarrow and Gezgor 2010, Van Biezen, Mair et al. 2012) - while defending the position that technocratic governments *per se* are not to blame for this decline. They are symptoms, rather than causes, of the diminishing quality of European partisan democracies.

7.1 Some Definitions: Technocratic Government, Normal Government, Democracy

Definitions and conceptualization of technocratic governments vary in the academic literature, as seen in chapter 2. The present chapter will leave that debate aside and will consider a ‘prototype’ technocratic government:

a cabinet composed of all non-partisan, expert ministers and headed by a non-partisan prime minister, who has a sufficiently long period of time in power and sufficiently broad mandate to change the status quo.

If accusations of being anti-democratic or non-democratic do not stand for this type of extreme technocratic government, necessarily they will stand even less for weaker, shorter or more partisan types of technocratic governments.

When the chapter mentions ‘normal’ government, it will mean party government that broadly reflects Katz’s (1987) definition of it. This is admittedly a contestable choice, not in the sense that current European cabinets are not mainly party governments, but in the sense that party government is not equivalent to, or synonymous with, democratic government. As Rose rightly points out, party government is ‘potentially central in many different types of political system: a single-party state in Eastern Europe or Africa, a decentralized federal government in North America, or a parliamentary democracy’ (Rose 1969, 415). It is however reasonable to claim that European democracies are partisan democracies, and that therefore party government is a good benchmark against which, in Europe, to assess whether a technocratic government is democratic.

As far as democracy is concerned, the chapter will judge technocratic governments using the standards of party democracy. It is the case that parties are seen today as ‘procedurally necessary and democratically desirable’ and ‘reflect the fundamental values and principles upon which the policy is based’ (van Biezen and Borz 2012, 328). In many democratic constitutions democracy’s

constitutive principles - such as representation, pluralism, political participation, deliberation and competition - have come to be associated with political parties. For instance, in Central and Eastern Europe – incidentally, where most technocratic governments were appointed - the transition to democracy coincided with, and was seen as one with, the establishment of parties as well as of free elections. Clearly there are many conceptions of party democracy, even within European democracies, depending on what role is ascribed to parties: instrumental role, defenders of democratic values, mechanisms of participation and representation etc. (idem 348-351). Equally clear is the fact that party democracy is not equivalent to party government, as a reference to any one-party state illustrates rather directly. Therefore - to avoid going through a list of aspects of party democracy against which to benchmark technocratic governments - this chapter will do the reverse: it will start from the criticisms aimed at technocratic governments themselves and subsequently check them against standards of party democracy. These responses will include reference to how well or how poorly party governments fare, if presented with the same criticisms. Due to the scarcity of academic literature on the topic, the criticisms aimed at technocratic governments are sourced from outside academia, too. This does not make the criticisms less poignant, but only more immediate and less abstract, which adds to the overall point that technocratic governments do raise concern for citizens, as well as for academics, and therefore their democratic credentials should be urgently assessed.

7.2 Common Criticisms Refuted

The (non)democratic nature of technocracy as the empowerment of a technocratic elite has been discussed extensively in the academic literature. Briefly, on the one hand there are those writers that consider technocratic élites as either not posing a danger to democracy (Burnham 1970, Centeno and Wolfson 1997, Schudson 2006, Williams 2006) or as unable to challenge political leadership anyway (Price 1965, Galbraith 1971, Bell 1973). On the other hand, and maybe more intuitively, others have warned of the authoritarian consequences of the *scientification* of politics, where increased reliance on scientific evidence by policymakers moves democracy from being the tyranny of the majority to being the tyranny of experts. Such debates indicate that there is no agreement on whether bureaucratic empowerment is democratic or undermines democracy. This literature, however, can help place technocratic governments in the broader context of the evolution of the relationship between technocracy and democracy in terms of the increasingly central role of experts in European democracies, which is one of the challenges identified by Mair (2008).

Adapting the scale designed by Brint (1990) about the policy influence of experts as articulated along four main positions, technocratic governments are to be placed at the extreme end of the scale:

1. Experts as servants of power (who become hired guns at the service of politicians who use them as “window dressing” for decisions made for entirely non-technical reasons).



2. Experts with limited mandates (i.e. who are limited to solely technical policy areas and not dealing with issues of public import)



3. Experts with extensive mandates (who enjoy broad unchallenged policy mandates as a function of their role and legitimate claims to exclusive authority in their area of competence)



4. Technocracy (rule by technical experts who take political decisions in place of politicians)

↓(my addition) ↓

5. **Technocratic governments** (experts who take the role and position of politicians in government)

Figure 7-1 Influence of experts in policy making.

Adaptation from Brint, S. (1990). 'Rethinking the Policy Influence of Experts: From General Characterizations to Analysis of Variation' *Sociological Forum* 5(3): 361-385

While there is ample literature on situations 1-4 in Figure 1, less has been written on situation 5 - that of technocratic governments. Some scholars have tackled more specifically the issue of technocratic governments during the Eurocrisis, but these views are limited to informal fora of discussion rather than academic journals (Schmidt 2011, Hopkin 2012, McDonnell 2012b), and democratic theorists seem to have yet to consider the question in depth. There is therefore the need to consider the various criticisms aimed at technocratic governments in a rigorous manner to understand whether they really are a political pathology, and in what sense, if any, they are detrimental to party democracy.

7.2.1 Unconstitutional

The first and gravest accusation, albeit rather rare, aimed at technocratic governments is, as one commentator put it, that ‘the Constitution does not contemplate them’ (Formica 2011). While it might seem the gravest accusation, in terms of democratic theory it is not necessarily destructive. Democracy - and in particular the rule of law - does require ‘that the exercise of power...should be exercised in accordance with and through a general system of principles, rules and procedures’ (Tully 2002, 206), i.e. the constitution. However, something that is constitutional is not necessarily democratic and vice-versa. Fulfilling the criteria of democratic constitutionalism, i.e. being in accordance with the constitution, is only a necessary, but not sufficient condition for a system/government to be democratic. Therefore, it is still appropriate to check whether technocratic governments infringe any of the rules enshrined in national constitutions or not. Evidence shows that constitutions in those countries which had technocratic governmentsⁱⁱ not only allow for them, but sometimes even provide for them explicitly. In Italy, art.64 explicitly allows for ministers who have not previously been members of parliament to be appointed (Romanelli 1995, 71). The Portuguese constitution also allows for the President to choose the prime minister ‘taking into account election results’ (art.136) but leaving his choice otherwise free. The same is true in the Czech Republic, where ‘the President, therefore, in practice appoints the person considered to be most capable of forming an acceptable government, which is not necessarily a representative of the most powerful political party’ (Kysela and Kuhn 2007, 98). No specific requirements are present in Finland or in Hungary either, and so on. Greece is an even more telling case, as its constitution (art. 37.3) dictates that, in case all other options of government formation failed, ‘he [the head of state] shall entrust the President of the Supreme Administrative Court or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court or of the Court of Auditors to form a Cabinet as widely accepted as possible to carry out elections and dissolve Parliament’. Far from being unconstitutional, therefore, technocratic governments respect the criteria of democratic constitutionalism in those countries where they occur.

7.2.2 A break in the chain of delegation

According to some scholars, technocratic governments, or even the presence of technocratic ministers, are a ‘break in the chain of [democratic] delegation’ (Neto and Strøm 2006) on which representative democracy rests: the chain which goes from voters to elected representative to government. In the case of technocratic ministers, Gamson’s law, which sees the very high correlation between cabinet portfolio allocation and seats in parliament, does not apply. The

argument runs, because elected representatives of parties are not necessarily in control of, or responsible for, the appointment and the working of non-partisan ministers - as they are sometimes appointed by the head of state or by the technocratic prime minister -, the delegation chain between the government and voters is broken. From a purely electoral perspective, there is a weak link between cabinet composition and electoral outcome⁹²: technocratic ministers do not compete for votes, and they take away part of the meaning of ‘the right to vote’ as voters cannot throw the – technocratic - rascals out (Riker 1982). Clearly the reason why such criticisms should matter is that elections are at the heart of any well-functioning representative democracy.

While all of the above is intuitively correct, there are several counterarguments. First and foremost, the link with voters is indirectly maintained through the vote of confidence that all governments, including technocratic ones, have to obtain to rule. This can be explicit in the vote of investiture, or implicit in those countries where such provision does not exist, and it implies that elected representatives in the legislative chambers agree on a mandate and a programme adopted by the technocratic cabinet. Democratic control is furthermore maintained, similarly to the case of party governments, by the fact that technocratic governments can be voted out of office, or not given parliamentary confidence in the first place. Parties in parliament maintain ultimate control and therefore indirectly voters do, too. Secondly, technocratic governments could have, and indeed often do have, a widespread, cross-partisan support as they are seen as government of national unity. This not only legitimises them further, but it addresses the problem of the supposed impossibility of throwing the ‘technocratic’ rascals out. If there is a similar support between grand coalition governments and technocratic governments, ‘throwing the rascals out’ would be equally difficult in both situations. In both cases it is likely that at least one of the parties in the grand coalition will be re-elected. Admittedly, voters might feel differently about this: when giving their vote to a party, they did not anticipate the delegation of decision-making to someone with different – or allegedly no – political orientation. Although no overall evidence has been gathered in this respect, it seems to be the case that voters do punish those parties that support technocratic governments, often by turning their votes to other minor or new parties⁹³. This indicates that voters

⁹² The indirect link to elections is helpful to distinguish between technocratic governments and governments of ‘technicians’. The first is appointed with no direct link to elections’ outcomes. The latter, on the contrary, has a direct link to elections in which voters decide to choose a non-politician as their representative. This is for instance the case of Cyprus, where George Vassiliou, an independent businessman, was elected as president in 1988. He formed what by any standards would be called a technocratic government (Solsten, Eric (1991). Cyprus: A Country Study. Country Studies/Area Handbook Series. Washington, Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress. available at <http://countrystudies.us/> However, because he was normally elected, his cabinet cannot be called a technocratic cabinet.

⁹³ This has recently been the case, for instance, in the earthquake 2012 elections in Greece – after the two technocratic governments of Papademos and Pikrammenos – and in Italy – after the Monti technocratic government. In both cases, the two major parties had to get into a grand coalition because of their diminished vote shares, and new or protest parties acquired many of those votes.

still identify well the chain of delegation, despite the smoke screen of technocratic governments, and act upon it as they would do with normal party governments. This also addresses in part the criticism of diminished accountability, of which more below. If voters are ready to punish parties that supported technocratic governments, it means that they hold them accountable for the policies implemented by those governments.

Finally, commentators who object that technocratic ministers are ‘not merely unelected in the Gordon Brown sense of taking up the premiership midterm, but truly unelected in the sense that Mr Brown would only have been if he had entered No 10 without having bothered to stand as an MP’ (Guardian 2011), are misrepresenting what happens in normal circumstances of ministerial appointments. This is also reflected in the most common terminology used to refer to technocratic ministers: ‘unelected technocrats’. Ministers in most European democracies are not directly elected, but appointed through a variety of mechanisms, in almost complete freedom from voters’ preferences. They are not empowered by the voters directly but by parties (Pasquino 2013). The result is a surprising number of non-partisan ministers even in those countries that never had a technocratic government in power, such as France (Neto and Strøm 2006). So it seems in line with partisan democratic practice to appoint independent ministers, when deemed appropriate for the functioning of governments, and there are no grounds to suppose that the quality of democracy is diminished because of this, or that the chain of delegation is less solid (see for instance Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009b). Whether this be negative in terms of the quality of policy-making performances, it is beyond the scope of the present work to determine, but it does not seem to be necessarily the case; on the contrary, studies which have had a look at this issue in practice would seem to suggest the opposite (Yong and Hazell 2011).

A related criticism is that the alleged break in the chain of delegation means that technocratic governments are not the result of the internal, normal working of partisan representative democracies, but of some other mechanisms. In the recent Eurocrisis, technocratic governments were for instance accused of being imposed from ‘above’ (e.g. from the EU or the IMF) or from outside national borders (e.g. from Germany). This criticism is refuted in two ways. Firstly, the present analysis is meant to consider *any* technocratic government, and not in particular those that happened during the Eurocrisis. Technocratic governments appointed in the past have been of the presidential kind (Kuusisto 1958, Nousiainen 1988, Lobo 2001b, De Almeida and Pinto 2002, Neto and Lobo 2009), namely whose appointment can be easily traced back to the head of state. Therefore the ‘imposition’ - if one can still call it an imposition - is coming from within the democratic system, and not from without. They have also been appointed before countries were members of the EU, once again underlying that external impositions were not easily identifiable,

assuming there were any. As for the recent events, in particular with reference to Greece and Italy in 2011, the perception of the imposition of these governments from outside is refuted by the fact that other countries, put under the same kind of pressures from the EU and other actors, did not resort to the option of technocratic governments⁹⁴. This does not imply that EU pressures have not increased the likelihood of the appointment of technocratic governments, but such pressures are neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for technocratic governments' appointment. So against the criticism of imposition of technocratic governments against voters' and parties' preferences as an undemocratic procedure, the response is that there is no clear evidence of such imposition, and indeed evidence that does exist points out, if anything, the fact that they are national solutions to national problems.

7.2.3 Preventing political deliberation

Technocracy, together with populism, is seen to be preventing deliberation about policies (Wolkenstein 2015). On the one hand populism worsens the tendency of citizens in democracy to avoid deliberation, public consultation and discussion on the common good, by 'channelling and controlling collective negative passions of hatred and fear in rather monolithic positions' (Esposito, Laquière and Manigand 2012, 15). On the other hand the *technicisation* of political life imposes solutions that have been determined by experts bypassing the deliberative stage. Technocratic governments and their claim to neutrality and 'knowing best' delegitimize the sort of healthy opposition and make 'all criticism "irresponsible"—or "populist", which has become synonymous' (D'Eramo 2013). Not only is the opposition delegitimized, but the rationale for explaining to voters why they have to endure certain sacrifices also becomes less fundamental, as there is an assumption that technocratic governments are doing what needs to be done according to scientific evidence, which requires no further democratic justification. In other words, party democracy in its deliberative form is undermined by the appointment of technocratic governments.

This argument against technocratic governments, while attractive, is not straightforward. Firstly, there are academics that indeed defend the idea that depoliticized institutions might be better placed to deliberate in a purely democratic way (Pettit 2004, Schudson 2006) and that technocracy might even trigger democratic externalities (Schudson 2006). It is a long-standing debate whether parties are actually harmful and/or incompatible with deliberative democracy (see for instance Muirhead 2010), or on the contrary absolutely central (White and Ypi 2011). In the case of

⁹⁴ For example, Portugal, where, after Prime Minister Socrates' cabinet resignation in 2011 and in a situation of deep economic trouble, despite the support of the head of state for the option of a technocratic government, parties decided to hold new elections.

technocratic governments, it might be argued that, if the objective of deliberation within a democratic policy is to determine the common good, then technocratic ministers are equally well placed to do so. This is because they will not be subject to the pressure of the upcoming electoral deadline and are free from excessive politicization that often accompanies partisan politics. In other words, what are seen from one perspective as shortcomings in terms of electoral democracy, might be seen equally rightfully as positive aspects when it comes to policy decisions. Technocratic governments might - in other words- increase the quality of deliberation by their very nature, which is non-partisan. Finally, and in a non-negligible way, because of their perceived inferior direct legitimacy, they will have to justify their choices even more in the eyes of the public. This last point is particularly key, and underlines that the absence of a well-established basis of partisan support in the case of technocratic ministers exposes them more to public criticism of their policies, and compels them to adopt evidence-based decisions. In sum, there is no compelling evidence for assuming that political deliberation, indeed a key aspect of democracy, is not happening under technocratic governments. At most, what can be argued is that it might not happen along partisan lines, but this is not necessarily a democratic deficiency, even by party democracy's standards.

7.2.4 A pretence of neutral, ideology-free agenda

Technocratic governments are in the broad sense crisis governments - that is, governments that are appointed when there is a political or economic crisis needing solutions which cannot be provided by political parties. So technocratic governments present their agenda as solving the 'here and now' problems (Fourcade- Gourinchas and Babb 2002) of a crisis which, as Morlino defines it, is 'the process of decline in institutional efficacy as well as divorce and change in relations among civil society, parties and government institutions' (Morlino 1998, 11). Understandably, as technocratic governments present themselves as 'politically neutral', such bias leads to criticism that they are Trojan horses for a certain economic view and that 'lurking in the spread sheets of technocrats, is ideology' (Odugbemi 2011). This criticism is difficult to refute, if what it is aiming at is to bring out the fact that there is no such thing as neutral knowledge, or - to bring this to Foucauldian extremes -there is no such a thing as 'genuine technical knowledge' (Foucault and Gordon 1980, 131). It is the case that technocrats are, after all, called to cabinet positions as willing implementers of the broad direction set up by political parties. So while technocratic ministers might be experts and non-partisan, as per definition, they will clearly have a preference for a certain set of policies. The other aspect of the criticism which this point brings out is that while neutrality is in practice impossible to achieve, technocrats try to keep up the pretence that non-neutrality is possible to escape: technocrats avoid value claims, disavow party labels and often achieve cross-

party support. So if on the one hand it would seem excessive, maybe even unreasonable, to expect them to be completely neutral policy-making machines, it is reasonable to expect them to admit that non-neutral positions are there.

The criticism can only be partially refuted. If interpreted in a narrower way, it could be seen as a critique of the link between technocratic government and so-called neoliberalism (Stiglitz 2003). To this the technocrats could respond that their driving principle is neutrality in so far as it is an ‘ideology of method’ (Centeno and Wolfson 1997, 230). Such ideology can be applied with equal success to democratic, neoliberal, communist or simply autocratic regimes⁹⁵. Its link with neoliberal policies is contingent at best, and non-justifiable at worst. Moreover, this ideology implies that the burden of the responsibility of the redistributive implications of economic policies –neoliberal or otherwise - is not on the technocrats, who are carrying out the mandate given to them by their appointees. In simple terms, the ideology of method, which can be relabelled *technocratic ideology*, is achieving a given outcome efficiently, rapidly, effectively, without regards to the redistributive consequences. This, in empirical terms, is confirmed by the fact that technocratic governments have often clearly defined mandates which were established beforehand by the parties (Marangoni 2012). Moreover, literature has found that partisan effects on policy choices are modest, if budgetary and economic statistics are controlled for (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, chp 10). This, in theoretical terms, has been identified by Mair. He has seen the signs that public policy is often not decided by parties, and not even under their direct control, in the rise of the regulatory state (Mair 2008, 227). Partisan control is weakly related to output, so that, in normal or technocratic governments, most of the policies chosen will be chosen because of broad international conditions rather than because of a party in government. Finally, it is increasingly the case that partisan government explain their policy choices in value neutral terms, and even parties traditionally more prone to defining their policy according to their values (left) are shunning away from such discourse. Hence the pretence to an ideology neutral programme, one that is ‘best for all’, is also a problem of party government.

7.2.5 Illegitimate and unaccountable

The underlying and encompassing criticism that captures all the previous aspects is that for technocratic governments, ‘democratic legitimacy is clearly regarded as an unaffordable luxury’ (Skelton 2011). A *caveat* should, however, be that proving that technocratic governments are legitimate does not prove that they are democratic. Central banks and regulatory agencies are

⁹⁵ Centeno (1993) gives the example of the Soviet Union, where technocratic politics were obviously not neoliberal, and of Argentina’s Keynesian technocrats.

legitimate, but not democratic in a majoritarian sense. Legitimacy is a necessary but not sufficient condition for technocratic governments to be democratic.

There are multiple answers to the criticism that technocratic governments are not legitimate. The first is to argue that technocratic governments might lack ‘the political legitimacy that elected, party politicians can bring to government’ (Incerti 2011), but enjoy a different kind of legitimacy which one could label *technocratic legitimacy*. It would be similar to the legitimacy of non-majoritarian institutions, or ‘legitimacy as impartiality’, as Pierre Rosanvallon (2011) calls it. And precisely as Rosanvallon argues, this legitimacy is compatible with party democracy because it stems from the convergence of ‘[t]he technical requirements of certain types of regulation’ with the ‘democratic aspirations for (...) greater impartiality’ (Rosanvallon 2011, 82). Indeed these institutions have multiplied in recent years, confirming the tendency of European democracies to move away from a purely electoral understanding of legitimacy and a monolithic vision of popular sovereignty. Technocratic governments could be in this sense seen as yet another manifestation of this ambition for a less partisan, more effective and transparent European governance. Secondly, adapting Shapiro’s (2005) argument on the EU’s , technocratic legitimacy and democratic legitimacy operate on a zero sum game basis, so when the democratic legitimacy of normal party government becomes shaky, such as in cases of scandals, technocratic governments are often appointed. Broadly, this is also how Rosanvallon sees the increasing role for institutions with ‘impartial legitimacy’: a compensatory mechanism for the legitimacy deficit of traditional legislative processes and representative bodies. As Professor Ian Begg put it in an interview in the New York Times, ‘the mere fact that they have been asked in such difficult circumstances means that they have a mandate. Granted, it’s not a democratic one, but it flows from disaffection with the bickering political class’ (Begg 2011). Thirdly, there is an argument for comparing technocratic governments’ legitimacy to the well-known output legitimacy (Scharpf 1999) which, in brief, consists of achieving effective outcomes. Clearly this rests on the notion that ‘for efficiency to deliver legitimacy, an actor must be effective in delivering outcomes deemed appropriate’ (Reus-Smit 2007, 165). Given the supposedly high level of expertise of the technocrats of the ideal technocratic government defined above, there is no a priori reason why such outcomes should not be achieved. And whether these outcomes are appropriate or not, is easily assessed: those outcomes are established by the legitimate representative of the people who are appointing technocratic governments, i.e. members of parliament or the directly elected head of state in semi-parliamentary democracies. This argument is reinforced by empirical evidence that consistently shows high popular support for technocratic governments at the beginning of their mandate (Granitsas 2011) - and a sharp decrease as soon as there is the perception that the outcome of their policies is not as successful as intended. The initial support is based on the promise of results, and the waning of support is the consequence of the

lack of those results. Technocratic governments can, and often did, enjoy high support in parliament. Monti's cabinet, which has all the characteristics of the ideal type of technocratic government, had the highest support in both parliament and senate in the history of the Italian republic (Marangoni 2012, 138), followed closely by Dini's cabinet, another fully technocratic one. Of course not all technocratic governments had high popular support, but theoretically there is nothing that prevents them from achieving that level of support, both within and outside parliament. And parliamentary support is one of the signs of input legitimacy in so far as it involves representation of the people (Schmidt 2013). Finally, in some cases, because of culturally specific attitudes, technocratic governments' popular legitimacy comes precisely because of their neutrality and lack of partisan ideology. The most interesting case in this respect is the Czech attitude to non-political politics. At least until quite recently, democracy was for the Czech voters not necessarily an emanation of - or limited to - party politics, and there is a sense in which a non-partisan government is more legitimate (Tucker and et al. 2000, Protsyk 2005a, Hanley 2013). As scholars have used support as a proxy, if not quite equivalent, to legitimacy (Gibson, Caldeira and Spence 2005), we could similarly argue that this is so in the present case too.

To sum up if 'democratic legitimacy is based on the belief that for a particular country at that particular juncture no other type of regime could assure a more successful pursuit of collective goals' (Linz 1978), then technocratic governments, under certain circumstances, must indeed be the *best* regime that would still command legitimacy.

The sections above, which explored criticisms aimed at technocratic governments and refuted them, might aptly be summarised by adapting Moravcsik's famous stance on the EU's democratic deficit: 'if we adopt reasonable criteria for judging democratic governance, the widespread criticism of [technocratic governments] as democratically illegitimate is unsupported by existing empirical evidence. At the very least, this critique must be heavily qualified' (Moravcsik 2002, 605). Criticisms aimed at technocratic governments rest on either 'unreasonable' criteria - such as the necessity of complete neutrality - or on wrong premises - such as that ministers are elected representatives -, and are generally not supported by evidence - such as in the accusation of unconstitutionality.

7.3 Technocratic governments and the challenges to party government

The above paragraphs have illustrated how the major criticisms aimed at technocratic governments are ineffective. In this second part of the chapter, further criticisms will be addressed which can be traced back to what Mair has identified as the challenges to party government (Mair 2008). The choice is dictated first of all by the comparison that the chapter is making. If technocratic governments are comparable to party governments, then criticisms to party governments might

apply to technocratic governments as well. More importantly, criticisms to party governments bring out the shortcomings of party democracy, so they can be used as guiding principles to explore technocratic governments in relation to party democracy. Some of Mair's challenges have already been covered in the sections above - such as the rise of the regulatory state which diminishes the decision-making capacity of parties in power. The subsequent sections will concentrate on criticisms against which technocratic governments cannot be defended - yet, nor can normal party government. This will reinforce the case that there is a general trend of erosion of the quality of party democracies, and while this erosion is more evident when technocratic governments are in power, it is nonetheless present independently of them.

7.3.1 Representation and responsiveness

The first challenge to party government that can be found in its extreme form in technocratic governments, is that governments are increasingly becoming just neutral executors of policies. This corresponds to what Mair (2009: 6) has identified thus: 'the parties have moved from representing interests of citizens to the state, to representing interests of the state to the citizens'. The representation of citizens, then - to the extent that it occurs at all - is increasingly left to other, non-governing organizations (Van Biezen 2014). Similarly, Saward has argued that parties, including when they achieve governing positions, are increasingly speaking as trustees of depoliticized and flexible issue-based positions (2008, 283). Technocratic governments, in this respect, bring this new mode of representation, which Saward calls the statal mode, to its excess (Saward 2008). The challenge lies in the fact that, as Sartori (1976) reminds us, 'parties belong, first and foremost, to the means of representation: They are an instrument, or an agency, for representing the people by expressing their demands' (p. 27). If they do not carry out this mission anymore when in government, then they have failed on the democratic standard of representation. It is debatable whether such demand of representation can really be translated as the obligation for politicians - be they partisan or technocrats – to only represent the views of constituents. It seems the case, on the contrary, that they should also be responsible to that constituency by making the decisions that they think are best for all constituents⁹⁶. In fact, the concept of party government is mainly an academic one, 'which does not rally much public support behind it in its fully fledged version...after all, it should be the government of the nation, not of a party' (Müller 2000, 311). Assuming however, for the present purposes, that a democratic government - partisan or technocratic - be aiming at representing demands of the electorate in order to be accountable to it, both technocratic governments and party governments have been faring poorly in this respect.

⁹⁶ See Edmund Burke's 1774 speech to the voters of Bristol quoted in Rosenthal et al. (2003).

This is also due to the many mechanisms- such as supranational rules and EU law - which need to be implemented by all governments, technocratic or not, and that decrease governments' accountability to voters. Governments are being called to account for their actions to actors other than voters. The 'present and future lack of accountability to voters which remains the sorest point in a democracy' (Pasquino and Valbruzzi 2012) is thus a plague that affects both technocratic governments and partisan governments.

Tightly linked to the point on representation is that of responsiveness. Recalling the standard and increasingly debated dichotomy responsive/responsible government (for recent debates, see Bardi, Bartolini et al. 2014, Mair 2014), technocratic governments would be placed more on the responsible side than on the responsive one. They are often accused of responding more to pressures of external actors than to those of parties - and indirectly of voters. In particular international systemic constraints are increasingly tight. As discussed above, there is no data to prove that this is the case, but even if there were, by party scholars' own admission, the problem of lack of responsiveness to voters is widespread in party governments, too (Streeck and Schäfer 2013). For some decades now the literature has been complaining about a decline in responsiveness, defined as congruence between citizens' interests and political outcomes (Eulau and Karps 1977) and of the fact that normal party governments have been plagued by their ministers' limited commitment to party policy (Rose 1969, 430). Mair expressed this thus:

Even beyond those directly engaged in the chain of delegation itself, there are therefore many other competing principals that intervene along the way and that might seek to divert the agents in a different direction than that intended by their immediately prior principals in the chain. Indeed, the agents may sometimes even be persuaded that they owe a greater duty of accountability to these 'external' principals than to their own domestic principals.
(Mair 2011, 2)

Once again, in technocratic governments in its most severe form, but in party governments too, demands of governments are trumping the demands of representation. The difference, if a small defence is to be offered for technocratic governments, is that they are appointed at a time of crisis, where responsible politics are preferred to responsive ones anyway (Bardi 2014).

This brings to light a related criticism concerning the time of political debate to achieve policy solutions, and links back to the criticisms expressed by deliberative democratic theorists. Democratic deliberation and democratic decisions take time, but technocratic decision-making is all for efficiency and rapidity. Technocratic governments are particularly prone to this kind of

accelerated policy-making because their mandate is clear from the start, and often relatively restricted. Moreover the supporting coalition in parliament is often broad and cross-party, which leads to more compromise and less blockage of legislative proposals. Technocratic governments, in other words, take decisions in a sort of modern, non-dictatorial, ‘state of exception’ (Hloušek and Kopeček 2014). This seems to be a problem that does not only apply to technocratic governments, but is increasingly afflicting party governments too (White 2014). So both the tendency to adopt a responsible over a responsive kind of policy choices, as well as a crisis-mode policy making, are problematic characteristics of technocratic governments and party governments alike. Once again, by their very nature technocratic governments cannot conceal this from voters, while party governments still have the means to do so.

7.3.2 Ideological convergence and its consequences

Recalling from the discussion above, technocratic governments put forward a supposedly neutral agenda, in the best general interest. This appeal to as broad a constituency as possible is not just a characteristic of technocratic governments, but one that is increasingly manifest in party governments too, in the form of ideological convergence. Indeed, as Mair has convincingly argued, ‘parties might still compete with one another for votes, sometimes even intensively, but they came to find themselves sharing the same broad commitments in government and being bound to the same ever-narrowing parameters of policy-making’ (Mair 2008, 216) and coalition-making has hence become more promiscuous than ever. Populist or protest parties intuitively know that technocratic governments are one with traditional party politics, and play exactly on this *technocratic consensus* as a target of their criticism of the connivance of traditional parties. To give an example from recent years, mainstream political parties have converged on a pro-EU agenda, and so have technocratic governments, while populist parties on the right and left converge on an anti-EU agenda. Ideological convergence, therefore, whether under the ‘banner’ of a technocratic prime minister or whether under normal party government, is a problem that, according to Mair, makes it impossible to maintain full legitimacy (Mair 2008, 230). This challenge has not been met convincingly by either type of government, but if anything, technocratic governments would have more rights to claim that ideological convergence is not a problem. They can refer to the technocratic ideology, which has been discussed above, while political parties have no excuses for becoming, as it were, less partisan.

An indirect consequence of the changes in the *supply* of party politics as exemplified by the ideological convergence and the progressive blurring of the left-right divide is, on the *demand* side,

increasing disaffection with traditional party politics, as exemplified by party membership decrease (Van Biezen, Mair et al. 2012). Could this decrease be at least partly imputed to technocratic governments which - by their very appointment - decrease people's trust in the political class as a whole, and in traditional political parties in particular, which are seen as incapable of governing? Do they increase the likelihood of people turning their attention – and their votes – to populist parties, causing an anti-élite voter backlash which expresses itself in the rise of new populist parties or breakthroughs by previously marginal radical groupings (Leonard 2011, Skelton 2011, Leonard 2012, McDonnell 2012a, Bickerton and Invernizzi 2013)? Although the link (or absence of link) between populism and technocracy is a topic that would require a whole book in itself, this criticism can be turned around into a criticism of party governments, and reinforce the mainstream argument that, by their own fault, mainstream parties are losing supporters. Once again, it is useful to recall the critical situations in which technocratic governments are appointed. In such moments, it is reasonable to expect that trust in, and even loyalty to, traditional parties would diminish. This can be so either because the parties are in the eye of the storm - for instance in episodes of scandals - or because they are accused of being the causes of that very critical situation, such as in cases of economic crises. It should come as no surprise that voters will have less confidence in representatives who - of their own volition - have decided to vote into power ministers outside their ranks. Disaffection with politics, manifested in decreased engagement in the internal workings of parties, is therefore a cause, and not a consequence, of technocratic governments, but an attitude that will grow more evident during their mandate, when traditional politics and traditional parties step aside.

7.4 Conclusions: technocratic governments as a symptom of party democracy's problems

The present chapter set out to enquire whether political rhetoric against, and criticism of, technocratic governments should be confirmed or dismissed. It has done so in a positive, rather than normative way, starting from the neutral standpoint that technocratic governments are a reality of European democracies and should be assessed as such. It has concluded that, compared to party governments, technocratic governments meet the standards of party democracy only because those standards have been eroding over time. Indeed technocratic governments display in full the faults of party governments, but they are not *per se* a detrimental political solution. They are symptoms in the medical sense of the word, that is, *something caused by, or indicative of, a disease*. That disease is the decline of party systems and the erosion of party democracy, of which they are the extreme manifestation. Aspects of such erosion include loosening of delegation and accountability

ties between voters and parties, and parties and governments; increasing external pressures on domestic political actors; and the weakening of ideology-based politics.

As the title of the chapter implies, the analysis above aimed at getting the critique of technocratic governments within European democracies right. It has dispelled some of the ungrounded doubts surrounding those non-partisan political arrangements, while reappraising their role within European democracies. Technocratic governments are not, contrary to what Van Biezen (2014) and others argue, part of the ‘technocratic challenge’ to democratically elected politicians. It is not the advent of technocratic governments that constrains the policy autonomy and therefore democratic legitimacy of political parties, but vice versa: parties which have chosen to support technocratic governments have undermined their own democratic legitimacy and role within the polity. They have allowed problems with party democracy to come to the surface and be visible to all voters. This chapter aims at being the starting point for further research, as it has set out the argument that technocratic governments confirm the inadequacy of current settings of party functioning for a healthy performance of democracy. The hope is, as Honig (2009) suggests, that in a period of crisis unusual solutions - such as the technocratic one - will uncover the flaws of the system, thus spurring desire for change.

Chapter 8 Conclusions and further research

8.1 Introduction: an academic perspective on a non-academic phenomenon

Against the backdrop increased frequency of technocratic cabinet appointments in European democracies, the present thesis, which this chapter concludes, has sought to provide an explanation for the fundamental empirical puzzle of why party democracies would turn to the most ‘extreme’ option of technocratic governance, i.e. technocratic governments. Why would politicians delegate decision-making powers to allegedly neutral experts? To put it even more crudely, why would democracy choose technocracy?

With reference to the recent appointment of Mr Cioloş’ technocratic government in Romania in November 2015, New York Times’s journalist Kit Gillet captured some of the main points of the present thesis:

Mr. Cioloş [...] has served as the agriculture commissioner on the European Commission [...] He is considered politically independent (1) [...]. The lawmakers approved the new cabinet by a vote of 389 to 115 (2). Many people blamed the government corruption and inaction (3) for the disaster⁹⁷. Protesters had been demanding a new government made up of technocrats (4), and Mr Cioloş’s cabinet includes ministers with experience in domestic and international organizations and the business sector (5). “I wanted to pick competent and expert people in their fields, honest and open to dialogue (6),” Cioloş told reporters after announcing the nominees on Sunday. It is unclear whether his government will have the time or political capital to enact wide-ranging new policies (7), or whether it will simply be a caretaker government (8). (Gillet 2015)

Technocratic governments have independent prime ministers, or at least prime ministers who are considered and portrayed to be independent (1), as well as often independent and expert ministers (4). These governments are appointed either following external pressures coming occasionally from the people (4) and/or are the answer to internal needs of the system. This often means that these cabinets are supported by large majorities in parliament (2). The profiles of the prime ministers and ministers underline the importance of other external pressures, such as those coming from

⁹⁷ A fire in a nightclub in which over 50 people died and over 100 were injured.

European partners. Technocratic governments are deemed more open to dialogue than strictly partisan governments, but also potentially less subject to interest groups pressures. They are appointed in moments when wide-ranging reforms are needed (7), but parties are unwilling or unable to carry them out, because of, amongst others, corruption (3). Technocratic governments can often be relegated to a caretaker role, depending on the situation (8), but that will depend on the political capital they manage to leverage, so have the potential to be as active in terms of policy making as ‘normal’ partisan governments.

The fact that a journalist has captured the gist of the thesis does not make it banal, but on the contrary shows two important points. On the one hand it points at the relevance of the debates on technocratic governments beyond academia and into the ‘real’ world of politics and voters. On the other hand the fact that in this, as well as in numerous other parts of the thesis, newspaper articles were the main source of information underlines the importance of setting out these arguments in an academic context in a rigorous and complete manner. The complementarity of the thesis and the reality of the phenomenon of technocratic governments has been the driving force behind this work, which hopes to be relevant to politicians and citizens who care about politics, as well as to political scientists.

The overall argument in answer to the main question of the thesis is that only democracies in crisis would appoint technocratic governments. When the country is facing difficult economic or political situations, and structural conditions make the political environment unstable, politicians have the incentives, either out of need or out of strategic considerations, to hand over their power to non-partisan technocrats. These incentives are avoiding taking the blame for unpopular policies, enhance the efficiency of rule making and resolve commitment problems.

This chapter will conclude by presenting the main findings in more detail and showing how they constitute additions on the existing body of academic literature on the phenomenon of technocratic governments. It will also assess how the present work contributes to, and has implications for, different academic fields related to, but not principally concerned with, technocratic governments. Finally, in a third section, the chapter will suggest further avenues for research on the topic of interest, which could not be explored in the present work but would complement it appropriately, were they to be undertaken.

8.2 Main findings and additions to existing body of knowledge on technocratic governments

The contribution of the thesis is conceptual, theoretical and empirical.

The conceptualization of technocratic governments in chapter 2 has added to the existing literature on technocratic governments an encompassing conceptualization of the phenomenon which goes beyond the specificities of countries or historical moments, and that can be therefore used in future European comparative politics works of qualitative kind. In answering the question ‘how can we conceptualise technocratic governments?’ the chapter, and the thesis more broadly, critically evaluated current definitions, both national and comparative, and added to the academic understanding of the phenomenon by developing a new framework. This new typology, which incorporates not only hard facts on composition and duration of cabinets, but also more constructivist aspects, was strengthened by the case studies presented in the middle part of the thesis, which outlined with practical examples how there are common elements pertaining to technocratic governments in all sorts of cabinets across countries and decades. On the contrary, for the statistical analysis, the main element of the definition – a technocratic prime minister – was used and proved appropriate for the purpose of chapter 3.

From a stricter conceptual perspective the conceptualization in chapter 2 intended to:

- (1) improve the academic conceptualisation of the term by identifying how technocracy in terms of neutrality and expertise of ministers in technocratic cabinets, can be socially constructed, and can also be just a form of rhetoric serving political purposes;
- (2) contribute towards ‘measuring the dependent variable’ for quantitative analysis that tended to shun these cabinets for lack of safe grounds on which to identify them; even though not all elements of the conceptualisation have been backed up by evidence, there is nothing that prevents that gap from being filled by future researchers and therefore operationalizing even those more constructivist aspects which are key to the conceptualisation;
- (3) show that while national differences matter, but not to the extent that the family of cabinet cannot be identified with certainty. What they have in common is that they represent a real preference shift for both politicians and voters, independently of their actual composition, remit or even duration.

The empirical contribution sits in the central part of the thesis, from chapter 3 to chapter 6 Chapter 3 is, to the knowledge of the author, the first study quantitatively analysing the conditions that are likely to bring about technocratic government appointments. The analysis adds further information that could be useful in future works on government formation, where normally technocratic governments are excluded. The analysis is a novelty not only in terms of the question it asks and

the hypotheses it puts forward, but also in terms of the data it employs. In particular, a new database on scandals in European democracies has been built using the method developed by Kumlin and Esaiasson (2012). The database builds on their work expanding it in terms of geographical scope as well as time-frame. The findings of this chapter are only partially satisfactory with relations to the theoretical expectations. Results fully confirm the relevance of the main crisis variables - economic crisis and scandals - in increasing the likelihood of technocratic government appointment, as expected from established literature. These variables have an effect independently of the moderating factors related to the party system situation - in particular fragmentation and polarization - and to the role of a more powerful Head of State. In short, the analysis seems to point out at the fact that in situations of crises, regardless of the kind of political system, a country will be more exposed to the 'risk' of these appointments.

Such results are complemented by qualitative evidence collected and analysed in chapters 4,5 and 6. These investigated on a case-by-case basis over 25 technocratic governments, covering a large time and geographical span. Chapter 4 concentrated on illustrating the interaction between the occurrence of a scandal and the various institutional moderating variables, the combination of which lead the country to appoint a technocratic government. Chapter 5 has performed a similar task with situations of economic crises. Similarly, chapter 6 looks at the importance of the Head of State as a major player in the cabinet appointment game, and in particular in cases of technocratic governments. The chapter has highlighted that the Head of State can play an important role even though on paper his powers linked to government appointment are limited, because informal conventions and particular personalities can act by stretching those formal powers.

This part of the project has provided insights into how different structures of party competition and interaction between the executive and the head of state across European countries impact on the appointment of technocratic governments. It has also highlighted the interaction between internal and external pressures on technocratic government appointments, with particular reference to European and international financial institutions, but also national voters. Finally, the chapters have also drawn attention to the constructivist dimension of what can be considered a crisis, which can inform further analysis of technocratic government appointments. While the emphasis was on underlying how the processes of scandals, economic recessions and presidential intervention had an impact on the appointment of various technocratic governments, a by-product of going through these different governments is of providing the first detailed reasoned catalogue of a majority of these cabinets and how they came about. The peculiarities of each appointment are therefore teased out, while remaining well captured in the established theoretical framework.

Chapter 7 has taken a step back from the actual existing technocratic governments which have been the focus of chapters 2 to 6, to consider an ideal case of technocratic cabinet, independent from any country-specific or constitution-specific circumstances to assess whether this arrangement is actually compatible with the standards of such democracies. More broadly, the chapter has considered the relationship between technocratic governments and party democracy, and it has concluded that these cabinets embody an extreme version of all the latent problems of party democracy: loosening of delegation and accountability ties between voters, parties and cabinets, increasing external pressures on domestic political actors, and the weakening of partisan ideology-based politics. The chapter added further elements to reinforce the already vast literature on the crisis of – especially party – democracy in Europe, and identified technocratic governments as one of the symptoms of this crisis.

8.3 Academic contribution

Because of a shortage of academic work on technocratic governments, the thesis could not build on an established academic literature to develop its arguments, nor could it go against established academic position on the matter. On the contrary, it had to borrow concepts and theories from other fields of research in order to put together the appropriate theoretical framework. This, far from being a disadvantage, implies that this thesis has contributed to several fields of academic research, and each of these fields potentially opens up new avenues for research on the same topic.

The main literature the thesis drew on to develop the hypotheses on the formation of technocratic government is, predictably, government formation literature (for instance the works of Hermeren 1976, Bergman 1993, Strøm, Budge and Laver 1994, Martin and Stevenson 2001, Protsyk 2005b, Neto 2006, Bäck and Dumont 2008, Kang 2009, Debus and Müller 2013, Bjørn Erik Rasch 2015) as well as government termination (e.g. Budge and Keman 1993, Grofman and Roozendaal 1994, Lupia and Strom 1995, Ieraci 1996, Grofman and Roozendaal 1997, Laver and Shepsle 1998, Diermeier and Stevenson 2000, Huber and Martinez-Gallardo 2008, Schleiter and Morgan-Jones 2009a, Schleiter and Issar 2015). The thesis has added to that literature a way to identify both a new type of government, and how that is formed, as well as what types of government termination often precedes its appointment. As mentioned, technocratic governments are often overlooked in analyses of factors influencing government formation, either because they are dismissed as caretaker cabinets, or because of lack of conceptual clarity. The present analysis has started to provide some explanations for the formation of those cabinets, but there remain margin for further exploration in this direction, as will be explained below.

Because of the pre-eminence of the ‘crisis model’ of appointment of technocratic governments, the thesis has helped to build on already existing crisis/emergency politics literature, which has seen a resurgence with the recent Eurocrisis (Boin, Hart et al. 2009, Gamble 2009, Honig 2009, Lazar 2009, Costas 2010, Burnham 2011, Clarke, Scotto et al. 2011, Wagner 2011, Bosco and Verney 2012, Pepinsky 2012, Brunkhorst 2012, Fabbrini 2013a, Schmidt and Gualmini 2013, Culpepper 2014, Vasilopoulou, Halikiopoulou et al. 2014, Verney 2014, White 2014). It has explored one of the side-effects of crises, and a political phenomenon that is part of the manifestations of crisis politics. The work has sided however with Scarry (2011) against the more Schmittian school of emergency politics, to argue that emergency politics is not necessarily a suspension of democracy. In particular chapter 8 has argued that the type of emergency politics which are technocratic governments are a way for democracy to continue working while being put under the double pressure of the crisis – economic or political – and of the general challenges to party democracy and party government (Mair 2008).

Chapter 5 and 6 have added further dimensions to the comparative European politics literature, in so far as they have compared European countries along a dimension not explored before, that of technocratic governments. By selectively exploring those appointments, those chapters have contributed to explain the differences in how the political systems have accommodated, or decided to appoint, technocratic governments, and also explored the different party systems and their role. These elements could be useful in the future for comparative politics researchers when considering the internal political and partisan dynamics of a country.

The thesis has also touched upon the major issue preoccupying democratic theorists and party scholars alike, that of the decline of party democracy and the general crisis of traditional representative party systems. To this the present work, and in particular chapter 8, has added a new way of understanding the decline and challenges to party democracy and party government. As already stated, it has for the first time argued that technocratic governments are the extreme manifestations of the problems of party government, and are therefore part of the consequences, rather than of the causes, of the declining quality and effectiveness of traditional mainstream parties as well as the system they were originally fitting into.

The contribution to the broader field of party scholarship might be more difficult to assess, in particular given that the ‘party-related’ variables in the statistical analysis were not significant (party system fragmentation and party system polarization). However, the contribution is indirectly present in the definitional chapter 2. After all, technocratic governments have been defined in the literature as the opposite of party government (McDonnell and Valbruzzi 2014), while the current

work shows that the relationship is more complex. They are a manifestation albeit abortive, of party government, rather than their opposite. There is still a strong link between the partisan supporters and the executive, both in terms of appointment, accountability, responsiveness and the most basic features of party government. Moreover, chapter 8 has also contributed to this area of studies through the assessment of party democracy and the role technocratic governments play in its increasingly evident shortcomings.

8.4 Potential avenues for further research

Building on the above suggestions regarding the wider applicability of this study's analytical model and theoretical argument, the chapter proposes several further alleys of research on the theme of technocratic government. Others have been hinted at in the course of the thesis, so they require no repetition here. These alleys can be called, to simplify: Technocratic discourse, Beyond Europe, Technocratic policies, Technocratic government formation and parties, Technocratic contagion, Impact of technocratic governments.

Technocratic discourse

It would be interesting to conduct a further analysis that would shed light on the peculiarities of technocratic governments by looking at the discourse they employ. This would allow a more accurate operationalization of the definition provided in chapter 2, and it could be done, for instance, by taking the programmatic statements of technocratic prime ministers and, with the help of text analysis software, compare them with the same speeches delivered by partisan prime ministers. The differences should be identifiable and a theory of a 'technocratic discourse' could be developed on that basis. Given the work done in this thesis, I expect this discourse to be focused around the concepts of crisis and emergency, but also some of the defining concepts for technocratic governments, such as efficiency, neutrality, problem-solving, etc. Some tentative work in this direction has given similar encouraging results (Borriello 2014) but a more comparative approach is needed to be able to draw broader conclusions. Media analysis could also be a good basis for the discourse analysis just outlined, with potentially further ramifications between national and international media, and their uptake of the technocratic discourse – or not.

Beyond Europe

The thesis concentrates on a very specific population about which findings and observations are made, and that is European democracies. This is because it seems that the puzzle as to why democracies would turn to technocracy expresses itself more evidently in democracies that are considered "established", and it is also in Europe that the debate over the meaning of technocratic

governments and their democratic impact was more vocal. It would nonetheless be interesting, in the future, to expand the scope of similar research beyond Europe. As mentioned in chapter 2 as well as in the introduction, there is quite a substantial literature on technocracy outside Europe (e.g. Domínguez 1997, Ward 1998, Huneeus 2000, Xiao 2003, Williams 2006), but once again not much on technocratic governments. This gap could be usefully filled.

Technocratic policies

Given that this thesis has concentrated mainly on assessing the causes of technocratic governments, it would be complementary to look at the policy effectiveness – or ineffectiveness – of these governments. In other words, this thesis has focused on all that happens before and up to the appointment of technocratic governments, but not on the aftermath of these appointments: what happens once technocrats are in power? A study could for instance identify their mandates and programmes, and/or check whether they managed to implement or obtain what they had set out to do. The question ‘do they work better than normal governments’ is absolutely central, given their rhetoric of effectiveness, efficiency and problem solving. Once again, there are some works dedicated to this kind of evaluation but they tend to be very nation or case specific (see for instance Marangoni 2012, Hanley 2013).

Technocratic government formation and parties

With regards to the information the thesis has added to the government formation literature, more could be said about which parties supported in parliament technocratic governments, not only in terms of their ideological affiliation, but also their status – in opposition, part of the incumbent government, main parties or minor ones, new or established etc. Mapping these kinds of information would allow the researcher to find patterns that could reveal interesting aspects of these cabinets. Do they tend to be supported by main parties, as theoretical expectations about the convergence of mainstream left and right parties tend to point at? Or do they gather fringe parties that see it as a vehicle for power? And, in terms of presidential intervention, does the party of the president often back them? The angles through which this question can be approached are many.

Technocratic contagion

Given the comparative nature of the present work, another avenue for research, which follows naturally, would be to identify whether there are any influences across country in terms of technocratic government appointment. Some of the research questions that remain unanswered, in terms of ‘contagion effect’, could be: is it the case that when a country chooses the technocratic solution other countries might follow the example more easily? Would this provide a sort of across-the-border legitimacy to these appointments? It is the case that in the past there have been

examples of this, for instance Bulgaria backer of a new technocratic prime minister calling him ‘our Mario Monti’ (Buckley 2013) but it remains to be seen whether this can be confirmed as a trend in a more systematic manner.

Impact of technocratic governments

It would be extremely relevant to consider the effects of the experience of technocratic governments on different aspects of democratic life. Assessing the legacy of these governments, on electoral turnout, support for new and potentially populist parties – or general electoral volatility, but also support for the specific party or coalition that, as it were, put the technocratic government in power could be an interesting avenue for research. Such research could also look at the general impact of technocratic governments on satisfaction with democracy, and other more ‘diffuse’ forms of support and trust in representative institutions. Unfortunately the data is scarce and scattered, with only the Eurobarometer potentially providing such indications, but it is a research agenda that is worth pursuing.

8.5 Concluding remarks

Technocratic governments are puzzling in the context of European party democracies. And yet technocratic governments are in line with parties’ interests in certain circumstances, they are becoming part of some countries’ political repertoire as a normal evolution of politics, and they have also become increasingly frequent in the past decade. These reasons are enough to justify why they should be further explored by democratic theorists, party scholars and political scientists alike. The main thrust of the thesis has been to suggest that democratic theory has not yet caught up with democratic practice so there is scope for further academic enquiry beyond what this work has achieved so far.

The thesis’ task was to provide an encompassing analysis that is theoretically, empirically and normatively relevant.

Theoretically, it was necessary to conceptualise these cabinets in a more nuanced way. They are a type of cabinet that has refrained categorization until very recently, but that has nonetheless played an important role in European democracies from as early on as the post-war years, up to a few months before the publication of the current work. There has in particular been a recent pattern of technocratic government appointment in recent years, most of which are a mixture of reactions to the economic situation influenced by external pressures coming from European partners. But the types of cabinets that fall under the label are more varied, and hence why difficult to categorise

without reference to some of the more constructivist aspects of these cabinets, in particular their rhetoric.

Empirically, there was the clear need to understand how and why these cabinets are appointed, given that they often have created mixed reactions: either they were considered the saviours of the nation – from corruption and economic mismanagement - or a sort of *coup d'état* of agents of neoliberal international institutions against partisan democracies. Understanding that crisis circumstances interacting with weakened and divided partisan actors, and a potentially strong presidential actor, helps to frame their appointment more in terms of incentives and interests, and less in normative terms.

Normatively, there is an underlying message in the thesis. After the analysis, it becomes clear that technocratic governments should be taken as warning signs for any democratic system in which they are appointed. They are crisis or emergency governments, which show the shortcomings of that system. While they should be considered the results, or symptoms, as chapter 8 called them, of the diminished quality and stability of European partisan political landscape, they are not the causes of it. But whenever such appointments happen, they should lead to a soul-searching exercise within that political system to assess why it had to arrive at that solution. The more and more frequent appointment of technocratic governments in recent years could therefore be interpreted, if the analysis is correct, as a sign of erosion of an old model of party governance which goes hand in hand with the resurgence of alternative parties, from populist to hyper-libertarian ones that propose not only different policies, but different ways of understanding the relationship between voters, policy making and their policies. It should come as no surprise that, as the stealth democracy literature shows, often the same people who support technocracy are also in favour of other alternative to classical representative party democracy, such as direct democracy. Technocratic governments fit in this broad narrative of crisis of party government, exacerbated by more punctual crisis events – such as scandals or economic shocks.

Aside from these normative considerations, the thesis hopes to be a starting point for further research. Technocratic governments are a political phenomenon which is inextricably linked and part of, as explained, broader patterns of evolution of partisan democracies and which has become more and more common in the recent years of the Eurocrisis. It is therefore entitled, in light of this, to receive full academic attention especially if the trend of increased appointment of technocratic governments continues to grow at the rate it has done in the past decade.

Chapter 9 References

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Chapter 10 Appendices and Annexes

10.1 Appendix to Chapter 4

Table 10-1 Zolotas' First Cabinet (23/11/1989 – 13/02/1990)

Office	Incumbent	Party
Prime Minister	Xenophon Zolotas	Independent
Minister for the Presidency of the Government	Nikolaos Themelis	Independent
Minister for National Defence	Tzannis Tzannetakis	New Democracy
Minister for Foreign Affairs	Antonis Samaras	New Democracy
Minister for the Interior	Theodoros Katrivanos	Coalition of the Left and Progress
Minister of National Economy	Georgios Gennimatas	PASOK
Minister for Finance	Georgios Souflas	New Democracy
Minister of Agriculture	Stavros Dimas	New Democracy
Minister of Labour	Apostolos Kaklamanis	PASOK
Minister for Health, Welfare and Social Security	Georgios Merikas	Independent
Minister for Justice	Konstantinos Stamatis	Independent
Minister for National Education and Religious Affairs	Costas Simitis	PASOK
Minister for Culture	Sotiris Kouvelas	New Democracy
Minister for Public Order	Dimitrios Manikas	Independent
Minister for Macedonia and Thrace	Ioannis Deligiannis	New Democracy
Minister for the Aegean	Antonis Foussas	New Democracy
Minister for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works	Konstantinos Liaskas	Independent
Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology	Anastasios Peponis	PASOK
Minister of Trade	Ioannis Varvitsiotis	New Democracy
Minister for Transport and Networks	Akis Tsochatzopoulos	PASOK
Minister for Mercantile Marine	Nikolaos Pappas	Independent

Minister for Tourism	Tzannis Tzannetakis	New Democracy
Alternate Minister for National Defence	Karolos Papoulias	PASOK
Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs	Ioannis Pottakis	Panhellenic Socialist Movement
Alternate Minister of National Economy	Giannis Dragasakis	Coalition of the Left and Progress
Alternate Minister for National Education and Religious Affairs	Vassilis Kondogiannopoulos	New Democracy
Alternate Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology	Grigoris Giannaros	Coalition of the Left and Progress
Alternate Minister for Transport and Networks	Ioannis Kefalogiannis	New Democracy

Table 10-2 Zolotas' Second Cabinet (13/02/1990-11/04/1990)

Office	Incumbent	Party
Prime Minister	Xenophon Zolotas	Independent
Minister for the Presidency of the Government	Nikolaos Themelis	Independent
Minister for National Defence	Theodoros Dagiannis	Independent
Minister for Foreign Affairs	Georgios Papoulias	Independent
Minister for the Interior	Theodoros Katrivanos	Coalition of the Left and Progress
Minister of National Economy	Giorgos Kontogeorgis	New Democracy
Minister for Finance	Georgios Agapitos	Independent
Minister of Agriculture	Ioannis Liapis	Independent
Minister of Labour	Ioannis Koukiadis	PASOK
Minister for Health, Welfare and Social Security	Georgios Merikas	Independent
Minister for Justice	Konstantinos Stamatis	Independent
Minister for National Education and Religious Affairs	Konstantinos Despotopoulos	Independent
Minister for Culture	Georgios Mylonas	Coalition of the Left and Progress
Minister for Public Order	Dimitrios Manikas	Independent
Minister for Macedonia and Thrace	Ioannis Deligiannis	New Democracy
Minister for the Aegean	Antonis Foussas	New Democracy

Minister for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works	Konstantinos Liaskas	Independent
Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology	Pavlos Sakellaridis	Independent
Minister of Trade	Theodoros Gamaletsos	Independent
Minister for Transport and Networks	Georgios Noutsopoulos	Independent
Minister for Mercantile Marine	Nikolaos Pappas	Independent
Minister for Tourism	Tzannis Tzannetakis	New Democracy

10.2 ANNEX I: Scandals (1977-2013)

10.2.1 Codebook

In order to assess whether there was a scandal

- 1) Check WEP/ES electoral report for parliamentary elections for mentions of a scandal, defined as: 'A sequence of events in which significant public attention is focused on alleged illegal, immoral or otherwise inappropriate conduct by identifiable politicians or high-rank officials' As used by Kumlin and Esaiasson (2012).
 - a. Keywords used to find mentions: scandal, corruption, allegation, misconduct, process, trial and synonyms.
 - b. If no result with the keyword search, read through the whole WEP/ES report.
- 2) Code the scandal as SP if it involves one or more politicians from one party, and MP if it involves more parties.
- 3) Code the election as having no scandal, if there is no mention
- 4) Code the election as having no report, if there is no WEP/ES report
- 5) For countries with a presidential regime (i.e. Cyprus) include presidential elections.

In order to assess the time frame of the scandal

- 1) Check WEP/ES article to establish:
 - a. The beginning of the scandal: when the scandal is uncovered and comes under public scrutiny, independently of the date of the wrongdoings themselves.
 - b. The length of the scandals: whether events related to the scandal (such as trials, rulings, jailing etc.) are still on-going.
- 2) If WEP/ES is unclear, check whether WEP/ES report for the following elections still mentions the same scandal.
- 3) If dates are still unclear, check chronological first mention of the said scandal in Oxford Analytica daily briefs.
- 4) If dates are still unclear, consult other WEP/ES articles (i.e. non-electoral reports).
- 5) If dates are still unclear, consult alternative reliable academic and media sources (academic books, peer reviewed journals, BBC-type media etc.)

In order to assess which government appointment the scandal affected

- 1) Check scandal dates against the dates of the duration of each government.
- 2) Assign 1 to the government appointed *after* the beginning of the scandal.
- 3) Assign 1 to any government appointed after a period in which the scandal was on-going.

10.2.2 Scandals list, by country in chronological order

Country	Report	Multi/ Single Party	Description	Cabinet	Year/s of scandal	Journal(s)
Austria	1979	SP	The Androsch affair (financial misconduct).	Kreisky IV	1978	WEP only
Austria	1983	SP	Scandals related to construction works (coinciding with Androsch resigning over a hospital construction scandal...)	Sinowatz	1980	WEP/ES
Austria	1986	MP	The Reder Affair (WWII war criminal personally welcomed to Austria by the defence minister)	Vranitzky I	1984	WEP/ES
			The Androsch affair - resignation			
			The Sekanina affair (financial misconduct)	Vranitzky I	1985	WEP/ES
			The Waldheim controversy (President accused of Nazi-related crimes)	Vranitzky I	1986	WEP/ES
Austria	1990	SP	Scandals in the Social Democratic Party SPÖ	Vranitzky III	Since 1986	WEP/ES
Austria	1994	SP	Corruption in the Social Democratic Party SPÖ	Vranitzky IV	Since 1990	WEP/ES
Austria	1999	SP	The Rosenstingl affair (financial misconduct of an MP)	Klima II	1999	WEP only
Austria	2006	SP	The BAWAG scandal (financial misconduct)	Gusenbauer	Late march 2006	ES /WEP

Austria	2008	SP	<p>None</p> <p>The ÖVP reported to the public prosecutor the alleged theft by an unnamed Chancellor Office SPO^o functionary of a secret strategy plan on how it might provoke premature elections for June 2008.</p> <p>Article also refers to 2006 scandal centred on a bank owned by the SPO^o -oriented Austrian Trade Union Federation (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, or ÖGB) to push through a ban on the traditional practice of placing senior ÖGB functionaries on SPO^o electoral lists. (see above)</p>	Faymann	n/a 2008	ES WEP
Austria	2013	MP	Party funding scandals (ÖVP, FPÖ, BZÖ and SPÖ). The Greens remained the only party without any scandal.	Faymann II	2012-2013	WEP
			Not found		Not found	ES
Belgium	1995	MP	The Augusta affair (financial misconduct)	Martens IX Dehaene I Dehaene II	1991-1999	WEP/ES
Belgium	1999	SP	The Augusta affair (continued)	Verhofstadt I and II	1991-1999	WEP/ES
Belgium	2003	SP	The Antwerp city administration affair (financial misconduct)	Verhofstadt III	2000-2003	WEP/ES
Belgium	2010		NONE		n/a	ES
			Not found			WEP
Belgium	2014		Not found			ES
			NONE		n/a	WEP

Bulgaria	1990	MP	Electoral scandals (partiality of commissions affecting final results and killing of members of electoral scrutiny groups)	Popov	June 1990	ES
Bulgaria	1991		Not found		n/a	ES
Bulgaria	1994		NONE		n/a	ES
Bulgaria	1997		NONE		n/a	ES
Bulgaria	2001	MP	Illegal party financing (UDF) and organised-crime related scandal (Civil Party for Bulgaria) in presidential elections. Generalised corruption allegations during election campaign.	Stanishev	November 2001	
Bulgaria	2005		NONE		n/a	ES
Bulgaria	2009		NONE		n/a	ES
Bulgaria	2013	SP	Wiretapping scandals and a pre-election discovery of overprinted ballots.	Raykov	Early 2013	ES
Bulgaria	2014	SP	Organized-crime related scandal (Delyan Peevski as the head of the National Agency for National Security (DANS)).	Oresharski	May/June 2013?	ES
Czechoslovakia	1990		NONE		n/a	ES
Czechoslovakia	1992		NONE		n/a	ES
Czech Republic	1996		NONE		n/a	ES
Czech Republic	1998	MP	Party financial scandals (all major parties)	Zeman	April-June 1998	ES
Czech Republic	2002	MP	Corruption scandals connected with Jan Kasl resignation (ODS) Private life scandal (Hana Marvanová, US-DEU)	Spidla	May 2002	ES
Czech Republic	2006	SP	Corruption scandal (Gross, from ČSSD) and Organized-crime related 'Kubice Report' scandal (ČSSD)	Paroubek	April 2005	ES

Czech Republic	2010		NONE		n/a	ES
		SP	Topolanek stepping down because of anti-semitic and homophobic views. (ODS)	Fischer	2009	WEP
Czech Republic	2013	MP	Jana Nagyova scandal (ODS) Regional governor David Rath's corruption scandal (CSSD)	Rusnok	June 2013 Also 1998	ES
Cyprus	1985		NONE		n/a	ES
Cyprus	1988 (presidential)		NONE		n/a	ES
Cyprus	2008 (presidential)		NONE		n/a	ES
			NONE			WEP
Cyprus	2011		Not found			ES/WEP
Denmark	1984	SP	The Mogens Glistrup affair (financial misconduct)	Schluter II	July 1983 (imprisonment)	ES
Denmark	1994	SP	The Poul Schlüter affair (misconduct)	Rasmussen N II	January 1993	WEP/ES
Denmark	1998	SP	The Hans Engell affair (drunk driving)	Rasmussen N IV	February/March 1997	WEP/ES
Denmark	2011		NONE		n/a	WEP
			NONE		n/a	ES
Estonia	1990		NONE		n/a	ES
Estonia	1990		Not found			
Estonia	1992		NONE		n/a	ES
Estonia	1995		NONE		n/a	ES
Estonia	1999		NONE		n/a	ES

Estonia	2003		NONE		n/a	ES
Estonia	2007	SP	EKRE party chairman Villu Reiljan resigned as Environment Minister. One of his heads of department helped real estate developers to obtain state land through illegal property trading scheme.	Ansip II	October 2006	ES
Estonia	2011		Not found			
Finland	1983	MP	Malpractice among politicians	Sorsa IV Sorsa V Sorsa VI	Throughout government 1979-1983	WEP/ES
Finland	2007	SP	“Iraqgate” (misuse of secret documents)	Jaatteenmaki	March 2003 in a debate prior to the 2003 elections, and then onto 2003 and made the government fall	WEP/ES
Finland	2011	SP	Vanhanen (KESK) resigned because of private life scandals and party financing irregularities. General campaign financing scandals (mainly KESK).	Kiviniemi	April 2010 and before elections	ES
		SP	Ilkka Kanerva affair (KOK foreign secretary dismissed because of text messages to an erotic dancer)	Katainen	Early 2011	WEP
France	1986	SP	The Rainbow Warrior affair	Chirac	September 1985	ES
France	1988	SP	Luchaire affair	Rocard I	1987	WEP
			The Carefour du development affair (financial misconduct)	Rocard I	1987	WEP
France	1993	SP	The Pechiney affair (insider trading)	Cresson	November 1988	WEP/ES
		SP	The Urba-Technic affair (campaign finance misconduct)	Rocard I	1987	WEP
		SP	The “contaminated blood” affair (unnecessary delays in HIV-testing)	Cresson	1991	WEP

France	1997	SP	Toubon, Longuet and Thoma scandals	Jospin I	1995-1996-1997	WEP/ES
France	2007	SP	The Alain Juppe affair (financial misconduct)	Raffarin III	February 2004	WEP
France	2012		NONE		n/a	ES
			Not found		Not found	WEP
Germany (West)	1987	MP	The Flick affair (corruption)	Kohl III	Came out in November 1984	WEP
			The Neue Heimat affair (financial misconduct)	Kohl III	May 1986	WEP
Germany	1994	SP	Corruption scandals (CSU, Waterkantgate, Amigo affair)	Kohl V	Since previous elections?	WEP only
Germany	2002	MP	The Kohl affair (financial misconduct)	Schroeder II	November 1999-December 2001	WEP/ES
			Refuse incineration affair (corruption)	Schroeder II	March 2002	WEP
			The Scharping affair (financial misconduct)	Schroeder II	January-July 2002	WEP
Germany	2009		NONE	Merkel II	n/a	ES
			NONE	Merkel II	n/a	WEP
Germany	2013	MP	PhD Plagiarism scandals (Christian Democrats Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg and Annette Schavan)	Merkel III	February 2013	WEP
			Political clientelism (FDP)	Merkel III	2010	ES
Great Britain	1987	SP	The Westland affair (controversies related to helicopter manufacturer)	Thatcher III	January 1986	WEP/ES
	1997	SP	The Scott investigation (government sales of weapons)	Blair I	February 1996	WEP

Great Britain		SP	The “Cash for questions” affair (corruption)	Blair I	1995	WEP
			Sex scandals among MPs	Blair I	Early 1990s under Major	WEP/ES
Great Britain	2010	MP	MPs expenses scandal	Cameron I	Spring 2009	ES
		MP	MPs expenses scandal	Cameron I	Spring 2009	WEP
Greece	1989a	SP	Papandreu scandals – (corruption and embezzlement and illegal financing of parties)	Grivas Tzannetakis	Autumn 1988 to 17/1/1994	WEP/ES
Greece	1989b	SP	The Koskotas affair (PASOK, corruption)	Zolotas I Zolotas II	Autumn 1988 (before October) 10/1989 revelation Papandreu Acquitted 17/1/1994	WEP/ES
Greece	1993	SP	The Mitsotakis affair (corruption) about phone tapping	Papandreu IV	In the run up to 1993 elections	WEP/ES
Greece	2004	SP	Corruption	Karamanlis I	2000	WEP/ES
		SP	The Porto Carras scandal	Karamanlis I	January 2004	WEP
Greece	2007	MP	Voulgarakis tax fraud and bond-trading scandal (ND), Siemens (PASOK and ND)	Karamanlis II	2006 + March 2007	ES
		SP	scandals (cartel among milk industries and detrimental investment of pension funds by highly ranked bureaucrats)	Karamanlis II	After March 2007	WEP
Greece	2009	SP	PM Karamanlis’s (ND) speech at the International Exhibition of Thessaloniki covering up corruption of a cabinet minister.	Papandreu	September 2008	ES
		SP	Economic scandals (ND)	Papandreu	2008-2009	WEP
Greece	May and June 2012		NONE		n/a	WEP
			NONE		n/a	ES

Hungary	1990		NONE		n/a	ES
Hungary	1994		NONE		n/a	ES
Hungary	1998		NONE		n/a	ES
Hungary	2002	SP	Corruption allegations for József Torgyán (FKGP)	Medgyessy	2000	ES
Hungary	2006		Not found			
Hungary	2010		Not found			
Hungary	2014		Not found			
Ireland	1982b	SP	Government scandals (including the handling of a murder in the defence minister's apartment)	Haughey II Fitzgerald II	Feb- 1982- Nov 1982	WEP
Ireland	1992	SP	Corrupt dealings between the meat industry and the government	Reynolds II	July-Nov1992	WEP
Ireland	1997	SP	The “Mercs and perks” affair (abuse of government cars)	Ahern I	Between 1992 and 1997 (in any case during the labour-Fianna Fail government)	WEP only
Ireland	2002	SP	Government Financial scandals	Ahern II	1997- 2002	ES
Ireland	2007	SP	The Ahern affair (financial misconduct)	Ahern III	April 2007	WEP/ES
Ireland	2011		NONE		NONE	ES
			NONE		NONE	WEP
Iceland	1987	SP	The Gudmundsson affair (tax fraud)	Palsson	19 March 1987	WEP/ES
	1995	SP	Scandal in the Social Democrat party	Oddsson II	Nov 1994	ES
Iceland	2007		NONE		NONE	ES
			Not found			WEP

Iceland	2009	SP	Party financing scandal during electoral campaign (IP)	Sigurdardottir	From February onwards 2009	ES
			Not found			WEP
Iceland	2013		Not found			ES/WEP
Italy	1983	MP	The petrol scandal	Moro IV	Early 1974	ES
		SP	Corruption in the PSI	Craxi I	March 1983	WEP/ES
		SP	The Ambrosiano bank affair and Calvi mystery (the murder or suicide of the chairman of the Ambrosiano bank and loss of a large sum of money)	Spadolini II Fanfani V Amato I	Early 1980s Also in February 1992	ES
		SP	The Camorra affair (ties between the mob and political parties), a week before polling days	Craxi II	June 1983	ES
Italy	1992	MP	Corruption in the socialist party, ties between Christian Democrats and the mob	Amato Ciampi	Since previous election?	WEP/ES
Italy	1994	MP	Operation Clean Hands	Ciampi Berlusconi I	Feb 1993 onwards	WEP/ES
Italy	1996	SP	The Cesare Previti affair (bribery) (Clean Hands continued, Multi party scandal affecting Dini I Dini II)	Prodi I	Feb 1993 onwards March 1996	ES
Italy	2008	SP	Political corruption, leading to the arrest of Mastella's wife (UDEUR).	Berlusconi IV	Before elections	WEP
			NONE		NONE	ES
Italy	2013	SP	Monte dei Paschi scandal (PD)	Letta	Jan 2013	WEP

			NONE		NONE	ES
Latvia	1990		NONE		NONE	ES
Latvia	1993		NONE		NONE	ES
Latvia	1995		NONE		NONE	ES
Latvia	1998		NONE		NONE	ES
Latvia	2002		NONE		NONE	ES
Latvia	2006		Not found			ES
Latvia	2010	MP	<p>“Umbrella revolution,” against the firing of Aleksejs Loskutovs, head of the anti-corruption bureau (People’s Party, TP)</p> <p>Book on prime minister designate Ainārs Šlesers revealing his father had killed his mistress (PLL)</p> <p>Bribery, money laundering and abuse of office by Aivars Lembergs’s (For Latvia and Ventsipolis)</p>	Kalvitis III Dobromvskis III	2007 and September/October 2010	ES
Latvia	2011	MP	Corruption scandals preceding the election (Latvian Way and the Union of Greens and Farmers)	Dombrovskis IV	2007 and 2011	ES
Lithuania	1990		NONE		NONE	ES
Lithuania	1996	SP	Accusations of political corruption of LDLP leaders, including the former Prime Minister A. Slezevicius.	Vagnorius II	?	ES
Lithuania	2000		NONE		NONE	ES
Lithuania	2004 (also pres)	SP	Impeachment of incumbent president Rolandas Pakšas (Order and Justice party) for corruption.	Brazauskas II	April 2004	ES
Lithuania	2008	SP	Financial scandals and subsequent legal investigation during the campaign (Labour).	Kubilius III	Between the two elections!	ES
Lithuania	2012	SP	Party financing scandals (Labour)	Butkevičius	Between 2008 and 2012?	ES

Luxembourg	1989	SP	The Mondorf affair (financial misconduct)	Santer II	Sometimes in 1988 (12 months before elections)	ES
Luxembourg	2009		Not found			ES/WEP
Luxembourg	2013		Not found			ES/WEP
Malta	1981		NONE		NONE	WEP
Malta	1987		NONE		NONE	WEP
Malta	1992		NONE		NONE	WEP
Malta	1996	MP	Accuses of corruption and abuse of power (MLP, PN) referring to earlier events	Sant	1996	WEP
Malta	1998		NONE			WEP
Malta	2003		NONE		NONE	WEP
Malta	2008		Not found		n/a	
Malta	2013	SP	Ministers had given themselves a pay rise, building of a new power station run on polluting heavy fuel oil and wrong handling of public transport reform	Muscat	2008 (as soon as they were appointed)	WEP
Netherlands	1986	MP	The RSV of Rotterdam affair (improper government grants)	Lubbers II	1984-1985	WEP
Netherlands	2006	MP	The Ayaan Hirsi Ali affair (lying MP)	Balkenende IV	2004	WEP/ES

Netherlands	2010		NONE		NONE	ES
			NONE		NONE	WEP
Netherlands	2012	MP	Co Verdaas (PvdA) resigned in expense claims scandal. Frans Weekers (VVD) campaign financing scandal.	n/a	Nov/dec 2012 (post elections..)	ES
			Not found		Not found	WEP

Norway	1997	SP	Planning minister scandal (financial misconduct)	Bondevik II	September 1993	WEP only
Norway	2001	SP	Deputy leader sex scandal	Bondevik II	March-September 2001	WEP
			The Bastesen affair (politician had indirect investments in a pornography channel)		September 2001	WEP
Norway	Sept 2009		NONE		NONE	WEP
Norway	2013	MP	Campaign funding violations (Centre Party), Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, Audun Lysbakken, resigning over inappropriate public funding to members of the youth organisation (Socialist Party)	Solberg	Between 2009 and 2013	WEP
			NONE		NONE	ES
Poland	1989		NONE		NONE	ES
Poland	1990		NONE		NONE	ES
Poland	1991		NONE		NONE	ES
Poland	1993	MP	'Lustration' affair (Internal Affairs Ministry files containing names of secret police collaborators from the communist era)	Pawlak I	June 1992	ES
Poland	1997	SP	President lied about educational qualifications. Prime Minister Oleksy had to resign under accusation of collaboration with KGB between 1990-1995.	Cimoszewicz	During Oleksy premiership	ES
Poland	2001	SP	Corruption scandals and budget deficit lies in Buzek's government	Miller I	Summer 2001	ES
Poland	2005	SP	Corruption scandals in the ruling Alliance of the Democratic Left (SLD).	Belka	2004 (before Belka)	ES
Poland	2007	MP	Lepper case (RP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture involved in corruption). Sawicka case (PO ex-deputy involved in alleged corruption)	Tusk I	July 2007	ES
Poland	2011		None		NONE	ES

Portugal	1980	SP	The Sá Carneiro affair (financial misconduct - laundering of debt) and breach of electoral law	Balsemao	July-August 1980	WEP
Portugal	1991	SP	Several scandals (one involving the minister of finance)	Silva III	January 1990	ES
Portugal	1995	SP	Government scandals (corruption)	Guterres I	Between 1991 and 1995	WEP/ES
Portugal	2005	SP	Government scandals, illegal building permissions	Santana-Lopes	September 2002	WEP/ES
Portugal	2009	SP	NONE	Socrates II	NONE	ES
			Prime minister José Socrates involved in a case of corruption		2008	WEP
Portugal	2011	SP	Prime Minister José Socrates associated with scandals during his government	Passos-Coelho	Between 2009 and 2011	WEP
			Not found		Not found	ES
Romania	1990	SP	Irregularities during the campaign by the FSN	Roman	1990	ES
Romania	1992		Not found			
Romania	1996		Not found			
Romania	2000	MP	Corruption scandal in Alliance for Romania (ApR) A number of scandals centering on corruption and incompetence of previous government.	Natase I	Autumn 2000	ES
Romania	2004	MP	Coalition for a Clean Parliament' identified more than 200 candidates who had criminal records or illegal activities. Irregularities in Presidential elections too.	Popescu-Taricenau	Autumn 2004	ES
Romania	2008	SP	President Băsescu impeached, charged with power abuse.	Boc I	April 2007	ES
Romania	2012	SP	Ex-Social Democratic Prime Minister Adrian Nastase shot and minimally wounded himself in a suicide attempt after being sentenced to prison on corruption charges. Social Democratic Prime Minister Ponta accused of having plagiarized his PhD.	Ponta II	June 2012	ES

Slovakia	1990		See Czech Republic			
Slovakia	1992		See Czech Republic			
Slovakia	1994		NONE		NONE	ES
Slovakia	1998		NONE		NONE	ES
Slovakia	2002		NONE		NONE	ES
Slovakia	2006		NONE		NONE	ES
Slovakia	2010	MP	Growing number of scandals and ministerial resignations, clientelism and politicization of the judicial system (Smer-SD and SNS)	Radicova I	From 2009 up to the elections	WEP/ES
Slovakia	2012	MP	Party 99% – Civic voice accused of faking petition signatures ‘Gorilla’ corruption case (uncovering strong links between the economic and political spheres, all parties)	Fico	2012	ES
Slovenia	1990		NONE		NONE	ES
Slovenia	1992		Not found		Not found	
Slovenia	1996		NONE		NONE	ES
Slovenia	2000		Not found		Not found	
Slovenia	2004	SP	Scandals (LDS)	Rop II	?	ES
Slovenia	2008		Not found (but see below)		Not found	
Slovenia	2011	MP	Gregor Virant (Civic List) receiving unemployment payments after leaving ministerial office. Patria scandal (bribes paid by a Finnish defence contractor to Slovenia Democratic Party)	Jansa	2008 (during the electoral campaign) 2011	ES
Spain	1993	SP	The Filesa case (corruption in the PSOE)	Gonzalez IV	Early 1993	WEP/ES
			The Guerra affair (financial misconduct)		1991	WEP
Spain	1996	SP	Government corruption	Aznar I	1994 (April/May)	WEP/ES
			The GAL affair (illegal death squad)	Aznar I	December 1994	WEP/ES
Spain	2000	SP	The José Borrell Affair (corruption)	Aznar II	May 1999	WEP/ES
Spain	March 2008		NONE		NONE	ES
Spain	2011		NONE		NONE	WEP

Sweden	1988	SP	The Ebbe Carlsson affair (illegal private investigation of the assassination of Olof Palme)	Carlsson II	February/May 1988	WEP/ES
Sweden	1998	SP	The Mona Sahlin affair (abuse of credit cards)	Persson II	Spring 1996	WEP/ES
Sweden	2002	MP	The campaign booth report affair (improper statements by politicians)	Persson III	September 2002 (final days of the campaign)	WEP/ES
Sweden	2006	SP	The spy scandal (campaign espionage)	Reinfeldt I	September 2006 (two weeks before elections)	WEP/ES
Sweden	2010		Not found		Not found	WEP
			NONE		NONE	ES
Sweden	2014 September	SP	Scandals related to racist language (Sweden Democrats)	Reinfeldt II	2010	WEP
			NONE		NONE	ES
Switzerland	1987	SP	Corruption in the People's party	Bundesrat 1987	Since previous elections?	WEP
Switzerland	1991	MP	The Kopp affair (discovery of secret files)	Bundesrat 1991	August 1988 – end of 1988	WEP only
Switzerland	1999	SP	The Bellasi scandal (financial misconduct and smuggling of arms to criminal organizations by the intelligence service)	Bundesrat 1999	August 1999	WEP
Switzerland	2003	SP	Business scandals (Radicals)	Bundesrat 2003		WEP
			NONE			ES
Switzerland	2007		NONE		NONE	WEP
Switzerland	2011		NONE		NONE	WEP
			NONE		NONE	ES

Legend for data taken from Kumlin&Esaiasson: “SP”: Single party scandal. “MP” Multi-party scandal. “WEP/ES”: Scandal reported in both journals. “WEP”: Scandal reported in West European politics but not in Electoral Studies. “ES”: Scandal reported in Electoral studies but not in West European

politics. “WEP only”: Scandal reported in West European Politics, election context not covered by Electoral Studies. “ES only”: Scandal reported in Electoral Studies, election context not covered by West European Politics.

Legend for data post-2007: “SP”: Single party scandal. “MP” Multi-party scandal. NONE: no scandal reported in the journal. “Not Found”: electoral report not found

10.3 ANNEX II: Interviews

10.3.1 PRIME MINISTERS

10.3.2 Interview with Mario Monti (13/03/2014)

Prime Minister Technocratic Government, Italy 2011-2013

How would you define a technocratic government, or, as you prefer to call it, a government of national commitment?

I defined my own government a "government of national commitment" because cross-party efforts were required at that moment, and I had the support of both the centre-left and centre-right, as well as of the centre. It was, in other words, what the Germans would call a "grand coalition" and the Italians a "governo di larghe intese". In Italy over the last three years - characterized by a high, although declining, degree of economic and financial emergency - there have been three governments in a row (chaired in the order by myself, Enrico Letta and Matteo Renzi) featuring each a grand coalition. Of these, only the first one has been named a "technocratic government". In case of emergency, a left-right coalition cabinet might be the best answer, be it a technocratic one or not.

How should we then define a "technocratic government"? I would say that it is a government that is composed wholly or mainly by a prime minister and ministers who are not, and were not in the past, politicians. Of course there are different degrees of 'technocracy' that the prime minister and the ministers might display. So for instance I consider myself a European politician, which is less 'political' than a national politician, and yet more political than, say, the head of the other technocratic government in 2011, Lucas Papademos'. This is because the public function I had exercised in Europe, i.e. member of the European Commission, is by its nature more political than the function of vice-president of the ECB, whose decisions, although highly relevant, are designed so as not to be influenced by political considerations. In fact our two cabinets were the opposite: mine was headed by a semi-politician, myself, and composed by purely technocratic ministers, while his was headed by a pure technocrat, but composed by political ministers. I guess the concept 'technocratic government' covers many different political arrangements.

What is the reason why, in the case of your government, the political system as a whole resorted to a solution that is not 'natural' to a partisan political system, that is, a technocratic government?

The economic situation clearly played a major role. There were necessary measures that needed to be taken and that none of the parties, neither in government nor in the opposition, wanted to carry out. On the one hand the PDL-Lega government coalition struggled on the question of pensions, and PDL could not find enough votes in parliament to approve the pension reform. On the other hand, the opposition could not overtly support those measures that would cut pensions, as traditionally it does not want to undermine the interests of their elderly constituencies. Hence the necessity of a grand coalition, where both left and right parties accept that measures that are against their interests are passed. Both sides pay some price, but both, at the end, also share the gains. And the responsibility falls on the technocrats that propose those reforms.

One key episode that shows that parties had a clear preference for a fully technocratic solution is the following. When I imagined my cabinet, before I started the customary consultations of the political parties, I thought I could select some ministers from my predecessor's government (Berlusconi's, N.d.R.) and some from Prodi's cabinet, to achieve a balance between left and right.

However, this proved impossible, as parties preferred to have technocratic ministers rather than their own representatives in my cabinet, perhaps because they feared the unpopular consequences of the measures that were obviously necessary.

You just mentioned that parties refused to provide you with partisan ministers when you were forming a government, even though most of them supported you in parliament. In fact your vote of confidence is the one which received the most votes in the history of the Italian Republic. How do you explain their reluctance to get involved at all, and yet their ultimate responsibility in supporting you in government? Just a blame-shifting game or something more?

Certainly an amount of blame shifting was happening. However, the motive that much more forcefully pushed parties to accept my government, and even welcome it, while remaining distant from it, is what I call the ‘family-picture syndrome’. What I mean by this is that the heads of opposite parties, in my case Angelino Alfano from the centre-right and Pierluigi Bersani from the centre-left, could not be seen as acting together, or even just be *seen* together after years of extremely tough confrontations. By shifting the burden of the decision making onto us, they could not be criticised by their grass-root members as collaborating with the enemy, as it were. Of course they had to do so under the Letta government only a few months later, but that is another story.

What was your criterion for choosing ministers for your government? In other words, what is, for you, a good capable technocrat?

In terms of the selection criteria, my key concern was to reconnect Italy with Europe. Before my mandate, I felt that Italy was in a situation of constant misunderstanding with Europe, and the EU in particular. So I chose ministers with some kind of European experience. To give you an example, rather than having a ‘Minister for the South (Ministro per il Mezzogiorno)’, I chose to have a minister for territorial cohesion, Fabrizio Barca. He was an internationally recognised figure in terms of his knowledge and experience of EU Structural and Cohesion Funds, which are also invested in the South (Mezzogiorno) in Italy. So I gave a European dimension to national problems such as the geographical divide.

Another implementation of this criterion was the key position that I gave to the minister for European Affairs, Enzo Moavero-Milanesi. He had long European experience for many years at the Commission, including as my head of cabinet, and later in the European Court of Justice. His intimate knowledge of issues, procedures and personalities at the EU level made of him, reporting directly to me, a fundamental piece in the confidence building and negotiating process with the EU institutions but also with the offices of the key heads of governments in Europe.

Given moreover that parties did not condition my choices - whereas of course, as required by the constitution, the list of ministers was thoroughly discussed with, and then approved by, the president of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano - I was able to follow the criterion that I wanted, i.e. ministers with professional expertise in their portfolio areas. So I chose an Admiral for defence, a University Rector for Education and so on. On the same ground, after an initial period in which I had myself the portfolio of Finance Minister, as well as that of Prime Minister, I selected Vittorio Grilli to become Finance minister, as he combined experience as an academic economist with that of director general of the Treasury. Again in the European vein, Grilli had also been the chairman of the crucial EU Economic and Financial Committee.

Initially, I preferred the idea of having political ministers as through them I could have sensed the ‘mood’ of the parties, and presented packages of measures to Parliament that would have been already informally discussed at party level. However, when I actually took office as Prime Minister,

I quickly realised that there were also advantages in having non-party ministers. Measures or legislation passed by the Council of Ministers were presented to parliament in their ‘pure’ shape. All modifications – and occasionally watering down – of legislation were seen directly and publicly, as they indeed were, the result of parliamentary amendments.

In your opinion, what has been the role of the head of state in the appointment of your cabinet, and in previous technocratic governments, especially in terms of conferring legitimacy to the new cabinet?

Certainly the President of the Republic played a key role in the appointment of both my cabinet (President Giorgio Napolitano) and previous technocratic cabinets, such as Lamberto Dini’s in 1995 (President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro). But it can be said that in the appointment of each and every cabinet, including the most political ones, the President plays a crucial role. A role that is clearly spelt out by the Constitution. Also the crisis in the majority that brought to the resignation of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in November 2011, President Napolitano acted in full adherence to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution, including extensive consultations with the political parties.

Often technocratic governments are not technocratic by composition (i.e. the ministers are partisan politicians), and yet because of the definitions of the media, they are considered as technocratic by the voters. For instance, the media were largely responsible for tagging with one single label your cabinet and Papademos’, despite their differences. Would you say that this is a fair assessment of media’s role in defining, and supporting, technocratic governments?

Yes, absolutely. In this, like in other matters of current affairs, people take their cues from media, so media endorsement and recognition of our expertise and of our emergency mission was absolutely central to our success in fulfilling that core mission: to avoid Italy’s default, to contribute to substantial improvements in the governance of the Eurozone and to initiate a long-delayed process of structural reforms.

To be fair, the media had also an important role in amplifying the discontent of the political parties as the painful effects of some of our measures were widely felt and as elections were approaching.

It is a widespread belief that technocracy and populism are two sides of the same coin. Would you agree that one of the effects of technocratic governments on political systems might indeed be that of increasing chances (and votes) for populist parties? And in your particular case, do you feel at least partly responsible for Grillo’s success?

Both technocracy and populism are indeed at least sceptical of, and occasionally fundamentally opposed to, the traditional ways of doing politics. In this, I feel that Grillo and I have, paradoxically, something in common. But while populism proposes simplistic solutions to the problems facing the country, technocracy offers rather more complex solutions that try to take into consideration also international implications and constraints – in other words technocracy, and our technocratic government in particular, was always keeping an eye beyond the national borders. Technocracy, by doing so, can answer on policy issues, while populism sometimes struggles to adapt their simple solutions to the very complex problems of our interdependent world, and even of our integrated Europe.

However, I want to stress the fact that my government has not only passed ‘technical’ or economic measures. We have also tackled corruption and passed a law on the exclusion from being a Member of Parliament following definitive conviction for criminal violations above certain thresholds.

These measures, although key instruments in the fight against corruption and tax evasion, hence helping the economy to become more efficient and fair, clearly go beyond the realm of pure technocracy: they are in fact highly political and on occasions controversial decisions.

As for populism, I would not say that it is technocracy that causes it. Rather, if technocrats are brought in, as they often are, at the last minute, and they have to pass unpopular decisions such as austerity measures, people will turn to populism only if there is no international recognition of these efforts. Let me explain. When we passed the austerity measures that were of course hitting ‘the pockets of Italians’, as we say, we expected the spread to go down. However, the value of the spread was determined not only by the behaviour of national economies – such as ours, Portugal’s, Spain’s etc. - but also by the perceived risk intrinsic to the Euro system as a whole. On the basis of this line of reasoning, we argued strongly that some stabilization effort should be made to prevent unorderly increases in the spreads of countries that are fully complying with the rules and policy recommendations set out by the EU. We were then very pleased when at the European Council of 29/06/2012 we were able to promote, and achieve, the unanimous agreement on this policy guideline by the Eurozone’s heads of states and governments. It was this agreement at the top political level that provided Mario Draghi, the President of the ECB, with the political will and capital to then make the declarations that he made and later to decide the creation of an appropriate instrument, the OMT (Outright Monetary Transactions), to implement the new policy objective. That calmed down the markets and rewarded the countries’ struggles.

Technocratic governments are often seen as having a strong ‘neoliberal’ inclination, maybe because of their nature of emergency governments brought in during periods of economic crisis. Would you say that your government is an example of this, and do you see any necessary link between technocracy and neoliberalism?

I cannot generalise, but in the case of my cabinet I do not see such connection. Our most famous intervention in terms of economic reforms has been IMU (real estate tax, N.d.R.), which, under a different name, is basically a tax on assets, which is arguably a rather left-leaning policy. As I mentioned at the beginning, my government was a grand coalition, one which passed measures that were each time liked and others that were disliked, by the left or the right.

Especially in recent cases of technocratic governments, there is a widespread tendency to see them as EU-imposed. Did you ever feel that the Italian political class followed external orders when supporting your government?

The EU did indeed put pressure on Italy, as on other countries, but only by indicating which reforms were the appropriate ones to carry out, certainly not in terms of what kind of government should have carried them out. During the summer of 2011 the EU, the IMF, the ECB put strong pressures on the Italian government led by Berlusconi. He accepted most of the commitments asked for by those institutions. When, in spite of such unprecedented tying of Italy’s hands, market tensions became ever worse, the Berlusconi government resigned. His party, in supporting the formation of my government, insisted that they would consider it as a priority for us to honour all the constraints and commitments that the Berlusconi government had accepted. Only one year later did he and his party become highly critical with our government because we were doing precisely that. In participating in new EU policy decisions, such as the growth pact or the stabilization of the spreads, our government took since the beginning a more proactive and assertive stance than the one followed by the previous government.

How would you assess your period in power in terms of quality of democracy? Would you see technocratic governments as a flexibility mechanism of a system in which party democracy is not yet stable and mature enough to face all circumstances? Or are they just normal governments with different composition? What about the kind of legitimacy they

enjoy: clearly they have the confidence of parliament but they also seem to enjoy what Scharpf would call 'output legitimacy' (legitimately linked to the results achieved), rather than the kind of input legitimacy of an elected government.

Besides fighting the financial emergency of Italy and of the Eurozone, my "technocratic" government had in fact also a highly political, and difficult, objective : to start reconciling citizens with politics. This is why my colleagues and I worked with the Parliament with a particular deference and intensity of relationship. This had an interesting by-product : at a time when parties were going through an unprecedented crisis, many MP's felt freer and more motivated - so, at least, many of them were telling us - than they used to be when political governments demand tighter party-political alignment of their respective MPs. This had some good effects, in terms of allowing people to regain trust in their politicians. Clearly it was in the interest of politicians to let our government take a number of unpopular decisions, that however they felt necessary for the country. All considered, I believe that relying on a "technocratic government" in such a difficult phase for the credibility of political parties and of course for the financial emergency must have been of some relief for them.

10.3.3 Interview with Lamberto Dini (20/05/2014)

Prime Minister Technocratic Government, Italy 1995-1996

What is a technocratic government?

I would say that Ciampi's cabinet cannot really be defined as a technocratic one, as Ciampi himself was the only technocrat in his cabinet. By technocrat I mean someone who has not had a political role before, or rather, a partisan role, such as being a member of parliament. So a technocratic government is a government composed of independent ministers, and that has a very specific mandate, for a rather short period of time. And generally there are some reforms to be carried out rather quickly. In my case, I chose my ministers for their seniority and standing in their areas of expertise, which corresponded to their portfolios.

How and why are technocratic governments appointed?

Technocratic governments are appointed when it is impossible for the political forces to find an alternative government, and for whichever reason, there is a preference for avoiding new elections. Technocratic governments, in this sense, are not the result of a failure of politics, but rather of exceptional circumstances that make it the best solution. This does not mean that it is a 'normal' solution that should happen often, and indeed it has not happened often.

The role of the head of state and of the EU

I completely agree that the head of state plays a key role in the appointment of technocratic governments, much more than in partisan governments. It is him who decides to resort to this kind of exceptional government, and it oversees its action in a much more active way than with partisan government. He plays (and played) also a role in choosing the PM and the ministers, in consultation with the political forces of course.

Technocratic governments and partisan democracy

My government, similarly to all other governments in the Italia republic, had the support of a majority in parliament, and that is where it got its legitimacy from. I would say that technocratic governments have nothing to do with the failure of party politics. It is not a failure when a majority breaks down, such as it happened in the case of my cabinet, when the Lega Nord left Berlusconi's coalition. It is simply a question of not managing to find another solution, or another coalition, and not wanting to have new elections. Technocratic governments are part of the normal evolution of politics in those situations where other kinds of governments cannot be formed.

10.3.4 Interview with Panagiotis Pikrammenos (7/8/2014)

Prime Minister Technocratic Government, Greece (2012)

How would you define a technocratic government, especially in the Greek context? Do you agree that in Greece there have been 4 technocratic cabinets, Zolotas, Grivas, Papademos and your own?

The Greek Constitution does not have any provisions for a technocratic cabinet so it would be very risky, from a legal point of view, to give a definition of it. Zolotas and Papademos cabinets could be defined as coalition cabinets and Grivas' and mine as caretaker cabinets.

Some think Grivas' and your cabinets should be defined as caretaker cabinets, and not technocratic cabinets. Do you agree that there is a difference between a technocratic cabinet and a caretaker one in the Greek case? Is this because of the different mandates (i.e. the caretaker government does not have the power to pass important pieces of legislation)? Or in the composition? Or in the duration? Could you comment on the kinds of expectation that cabinets like yours have to fulfil?

There are similarities and differences between a caretaker cabinet and a technocratic one. According to the Constitution, the caretaker government does not usually pass important pieces of legislation because its first and most important goal is to carry out free and equal elections. However, there is no constitutional obstacle for a caretaker cabinet to pass a presidential decree or a ministerial act, especially in case of emergency. The composition of caretaker government and a technocratic one could be similar. As for the duration, a caretaker government is usually short lived.

What was the criterion for choosing ministers for your government? In other words, what makes a good technocratic minister?

I chose my ministers first of all by their skills and impartiality in order to fulfil the main goal of my cabinet. I also tried to include all the political tendencies and in the same time stay away from the influence of the parties, which wasn't easy.

The Greek constitution, art. 37, prescribes that:

2. The leader of the party having the absolute majority of seats in Parliament shall be appointed Prime Minister. If no party has the absolute majority, the President of the Republic shall give the leader of the party with a relative majority an exploratory mandate in order to ascertain the possibility of forming a Government enjoying the confidence of the Parliament.

3. If this possibility cannot be ascertained, the President of the Republic shall give the exploratory mandate to the leader of the second largest party in Parliament, and if this proves to be unsuccessful, to the leader of the third largest party in Parliament. Each exploratory mandate shall be in force for three days. If all exploratory mandates prove to be unsuccessful, the President of the Republic summons all party leaders, and if the impossibility to form a Cabinet enjoying the confidence of the Parliament is confirmed, he shall attempt to form a Cabinet composed of all parties in Parliament for the purpose of holding parliamentary elections. If this fails, he shall entrust the President of the Supreme Administrative Court or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court or of the Court of Auditors to form a Cabinet as widely accepted as possible to carry out elections and dissolves Parliament.

a) If Papademos' cabinet corresponds to the part of art.37 highlighted in yellow, why do you think there was such a negative reaction to it? Opinion polls in Greece show quite high support for it, and yet it was also criticised vocally by many as EU-imposed and as

undemocratic. Was it just because of its unpopular policies or also because of its very nature, which was (perceived?) as technocratic and distant from the people? Was there a similar reaction to Zolotas? Yet in both cases ministers were politicians, thus representing the ‘will of the voters’.

I would prefer not to answer to this question. It's my opinion that this question should be answered by Mr Papademos.

b) Your own cabinet, in my understanding of the Greek constitution, corresponds to art.37.3. From a foreigner perspectives it seems strange to say the least that the constitution should contemplate an occurrence of this kind. Could you comment on why you think that this clause is there, and what it says about the Greek political system?

I would like to point that this article of the Constitution is one of the last remaining prerogatives of the President of the Republic and it was not included in the first version of the current Constitution but it was added with the revision of 1986. Greece had a very long tradition of single party governments. This was mainly due to the electoral system which enhanced the representation of the winning party in the parliament. Because of this tradition and the total lack of trust and understanding, Greek politicians were unable to agree to a coalition government. The constitutional solution to this problem was to allow as many elections as necessary, guaranteed by a supreme judge, in order to have a single party government.

Often technocratic governments are not technocratic by composition (i.e. the Papademos government is a case where the ministers were partisan politicians). Yet the media defined them as ‘technocratic’ regardless: they lumped together under one label Papademos’ cabinet and Monti’s, despite their differences. How would you assess the role of the media in legitimising (or delegitimising) technocratic governments in Greece?

I agree that Papademos' cabinet was a political government despite the technocrat Prime Minister. The media usually like to categorise and not to deepen especially when the categorisation helps them to support a goal. In Papademos case, the goal was the PSI which the majority of the media supported.

How would you assess Papademos’ and your period in power in terms of quality of democracy – real and perceived by the people? Do you think, given that the parties that supported the cabinet had been elected by the people, there was, as it were, no need to worry? And yet commentators went as far as saying that the nearly contemporary appointment of Papademos and Monti marked ‘*the end of democracy as we know it*’. Could you comment on this and on the general reaction of public opinion to your cabinet?

My first priority as Prime Minister was to fulfil my constitutional role: carry out free and equal elections, as soon as possible. While doing that, there were also other current things that had to be done. For example, Greece had undertaken some international obligations, especially in the memoranda signed with the IMF, the ECB and the European Commission, which had to be fulfilled during my government. It was obvious that I had to keep a balance between the lack of direct legitimisation of my government and the need to be consistent with my country's obligations. In order to do that, I decided to refer to all the parties about the political issues that occurred. However, I have to admit that the most important issues (merge of the banks and closure of national enterprises) were postponed. Generally speaking, I think that these cabinets (technocratic, caretaker etc.) in Europe are the product of the unthinkable economic crisis that occurred and the need to take extreme measures in a very short period of time.

Some scholars see technocratic governments as a flexibility mechanism of a political system in which the partisan forces are unstable or unable to face difficult circumstances.

However Greece has always been considered a very stable two-party system. How would you explain the appointment of technocratic governments in your country? Just the fulfilment of constitutional prescriptions? Or a useful compromise for political parties?

The constitutional provision about the caretaker cabinet was, as I've already mentioned, the product of the very stable two-party system, of the inability of these parties to reach to an agreement and form a coalition government and finally of the electoral system which was driven towards single party governments. So I think that the appointment of a caretaker cabinet is just fulfilment of a constitutional prescription and sometimes a useful gain of time for the parties in order to be better prepared for the next elections.

10.3.5 MINISTERS

10.3.6 Interview with Mario Catania (7/05/2014)

Minister for Agriculture in the Monti cabinet

How would you define a technocratic government?

A technocratic government is a government of experts who are not, at the moment of their appointment, and have not previously been playing a role in politics. Both the Prime Minister and individual ministers have to fulfil these conditions for a government to be called technocratic.

If that is the case, how can you explain the fact that Papademos' cabinet in Greece was called *technocratic* even though only the Prime Minister was officially a non-political, independent expert?

The media have been responsible for that mistake; as for them what mattered was that for the international community a responsible technocrat governed Greece. The Papademos government in my mind cannot be called a technocratic government.

Can you describe how ministers in the Monti government have been selected, in terms of criteria and experience required?

I can only talk about my personal experience here. Mario Monti has contacted me around 48 hours prior to the vote of confidence. This is in line with constitutional requirements in the Italian Republic. In terms of experience and selection criteria, I had 8 years of experience in Brussels, including when Monti was European Commissioner, so certainly this counted towards my appointment.

What interests might political parties in Italy have in appointing a technocratic government? It is not counterintuitive that they would give up their power in favour of 'unelected technocrats'?

Indeed, a technocratic government implies that politics and politicians give up their role. Or rather, to be more precise, it is the governing majority that admits a defeat. Monti was the reflection of such failure of the political majority in power in 2011. Our government was the result of very specific circumstances, and the intervention of the President of the Republic, was absolutely crucial. Napolitano explored, together with all the major political forces present on the arena at the time, what options there were apart from elections - hence why both the opposition and parties in power supported the Monti government.

Clearly another factor that made the appointment of the Monti government possible in our country was the lack of trust in the political class (both government and opposition), which can also be seen as the reason why parties like the Five Star Movement are so successful and why Grillo's support keeps growing.

Would you say that a technocratic government is a suspension of democracy – and hence to be avoided at all costs - or rather a flexibility mechanism that allows a democracy to face moments of crisis?

Most certainly a technocratic government is, in my view, a useful flexibility mechanism. It is a *political* solution, suitable to overcome moments of crisis. In the last 25 years, Italy has had three

experiences of technocratic governments, which took place in difficult situations. They have been, nonetheless, very positive experiences for Italy. The Monti government, to mention one, has found Italy on its knees, and made it stand up again by the end of its mandate. Moreover, I disagree with the definition of a suspension of democracy, as Italy is a parliamentary democracy where power resides in the chambers. Both chambers have given their strong support to the Monti government, as it is evident from the vote of confidence, so it was certainly not a coup d'état! Parliament has not been frozen to allow for a dictatorship.

Often technocracy and populism are seen as interconnected. Sometimes technocracy is even identified as the cause of the rise of populism, especially in the context of the latest Eurocrisis. Do you agree that they are linked somehow?

The rise of populism in Europe is not a cause of technocratic governments, as demonstrated by the fact that support for populist or extremist parties has risen also in countries where a technocratic government has never been appointed. I would look for the cause of the growing support for populism in a general crisis of Europe, which lacks an overall objective to push it forward. It is moreover faced with difficult challenges resulting from enlargement, with immigration problems and of course the economic and financial situation. All of these factors together might account for the rise of populism.

However, I do agree that in a sense it is the failure of the political forces that leaves an empty political space that can be filled by either technocracy or populism. And interestingly, pollsters at the time of the electoral campaign of Scelta Civica told us that we were competing for the same share of the electorate that was likely to vote for the Five Star Movement of Grillo, a populist. We both represented alternatives to traditional forms of politics.

Having looked at several technocratic governments in Europe, what is striking is the fact that the so-called ‘technocrats’ often become politicians after such experience. Would you agree that it is tempting for a technocrat who has tasted power to continue his or her career as a politician?

I would not say that is the case for all technocratic ministers. In fact those who came from the private sector, to my knowledge, mostly went back to it. In terms of my own experience, and that of other ministers coming from the civil service, it is difficult to go back. So while of course politics should be a vocation, occasionally it can also be simply the most reasonable option.

Commentators have argued that both Monti’s and Papademos’ cabinets were ‘EU-imposed’. How do you rate the role and influence of the EU, and of Berlin, on those two appointments?

Of course Brussels and Berlin had a marked preference for dealing with Monti rather than his predecessor, but that does not make Monti a puppet of either. On the contrary, Monti made the unprecedented move of opposing both the Commission’s will and Berlin’s. No other Italian Prime Minister up to that moment had dared as much. Monti managed to say very clear NOs at European level and to bargain for much higher stakes.

Finally, would you agree that because of their insulation from politics, and the weaker chain of delegation between people, MPs and ministers, technocratic governments are freer to pursue really what they think it is the best policies for the country?

Undoubtedly our government had more freedom, because of the reasons you mentioned, and, I think, had a more idealistic drive. In the occasion of two European councils, Monti proved to be driven by normative goals, and ideas were the main motor behind the government’s action. Rather

than looking at individual or corporate interests, the government tried to look for what was best in the national interest. I am not saying that politicians do not aspire to do that too, but maybe we in the Monti government were facilitated in attaining that level of detachment.

10.3.7 Interview with Elsa Fornero 15/05/2014

Minister of Labour, Social Policies and Equal Opportunities in the Monti cabinet

General introductory remarks

I felt extremely honoured when I was called to be part of Monti's cabinet, not only because I hold Mario Monti in very high esteem, but also because of the role we were asked to play. As a friend of mine put it on the day of my appointment, we were effectively appointed to 'save the country and thus save the Euro'.

I was of course also conscious of the challenges lying ahead. However, as a non-partisan minister in a technocratic government, I soon found out that the most central, and at the same time most difficult, aspect of my role was a rather unexpected one. I was faced with the struggle to find the best way to communicate and explain the need for, and content of, the reforms we put forward. In my specific case, of course, I am referring primarily to pension system reform and labour law reform. The difficulty lied in their hybrid nature, combining a highly technical content, dictated by economic and financial needs, as well as European requirements, with value-loaded redistributive logics and implications. In particular we, as a technocratic cabinet, lacked the normative ideological /normative framework that characterizes political parties, within which they can justify and legitimize their policy choices in the eyes of their constituencies. We had to justify our reforms without any reference to such pre-established normative basis, and could not count on a basis of stable support and well functioning networks on the ground to echo our explanations and justification.

What is a technocratic government and a technocrat

A technocratic government is a government composed by experts, where by expert I mean someone with an expertise in an area. While he or she can of course have, and even show, certain political preferences, his or her activity preceding the appointment as a minister should not directly linked to that of a political party. Technocratic ministers are in other words characterized by independence. This can be both a strength and a weakness. The weakness lies in its tendency to lead to isolation: without the backing of the parties it is hard to justify policy choices. Independence comes at a price.

Indeed technocrats are experts in their fields, and to my knowledge this was the criterion used by Monti when he chose his ministers. As far as my expertise is concerned, I was known to Mario Monti mainly as an expert of pension systems. I suppose he considered me, as an economist, also capable of dealing with labour market reforms, if not for other reasons because no pension system can function well without a properly functioning labour market. As I said, independence does not mean lacking political awareness or partisan preferences. I have always been rather leaning towards the centre-left and I have even been part of the municipal council of Turin from 1994 to 1997. Similarly to my participation in the Monti government, however, I accepted the role in Turin only because at the time politics had failed, so there was the need for experts. I did not run for a second mandate precisely for the reason for which I did not run for elections after my time with Monti - that would have made me become a politician, and I have never wanted that.

The Monti cabinet and its reforms

It is known to everyone what the Monti government had been called to do. I knew as well as anyone else that the situation was extremely serious and that our mission was indeed to save the country. There were necessary reforms, required by the ECB which would not be easy to propose. Parties too, knew this all too well. The majority in power at the time did not want to carry them out, and towards the latter part of its time in office could not carry them out because of internal

divisions and lack of a stable majority in power. The Partito Democratico in the opposition was also not ready to step in to carry them through, as this could have lead to a potential electoral defeat in the next election because of lost popularity. Hence, it was in both sides' interest to leave such chore to the technocrats.

Sometimes I used to think that if people could have been present when those reforms were designed, they would have seen how in our cabinet we strived hard to really only consider the general interest of the country, without caring whether the reform would displease this or this other party, or interest group. We were thinking of the good of the country as a whole, not of its parts, and of the long-term, beyond the shortermism usually linked to electoral cycles. Nonetheless, our technocratic government never adopted the omniscient and arrogant attitude of 'we know best'. We simply followed out beliefs and the evidence we had. In my pension reforms in particular I was trying to redress the imbalances between generations. The labour market reform combines a strong concern for both the stagnant labour productivity and loss of competitiveness with a social awareness of workers' problems, something that could be called 'leftist' attitude to labour market, which however was not welcomed by political forces, not even by those nearer to workers' interest. As mentioned before, without the help or backing of political forces, the mixture of technical and political content of the reform was not easy to explain to the public, and often I would be misinterpreted. Political parties remained instead distant, as if did not share any responsibility with us. On the contrary they seem to go along with the flow of discontent that was growing among the population as more and more reforms were passed. I suppose parties behaved like this to regain the support of their electorate, but without much success.

The Monti cabinet and the political forces

Political forces were very supportive in the beginning of our mandate, but kept backing our reforming efforts only as long as they felt it was in their interest. As soon as the immediate emergency was over, politicians began to discredit us and to oppose our initiatives. This, far from being an accusation, is plainly an accurate description of reality. It might be worth thinking about Parliamentary majorities in this respect. Dini and Ciampi's cabinets were supported by rather homogeneous political majorities in parliament. With Monti the cross-partisan support was on the contrary difficult to manage and maintain. The problems of such divided party system, centered around the for-Berlusconi and against-Berlusconi sides, is at the heart of many issues the Monti government was faced with. In other words, problems affecting core structural aspects of the Italian economy preceded the Eurocrisis. Our government maintained equal distance from both majority and opposition, and limited itself to its areas of competence, which, as I mentioned already, were mainly economic. Whenever one of us ministers overstepped its technical role, like it happened to me in the context of discussion on homophobia, we would be quickly reminded that our role was not political.

Technocracy and populism

I see no link between our appointment as a cabinet and the growing support for Grillo's Five Star Movement. On the contrary we made many efforts to contrast and fight populism. I would say that the responsibility for Grillo's success lies in the parties' inability to play their historical role of educating people to think in terms of civic collective interest. They are increasingly trying to please the electorate, do not show anymore a coherent sense of direction for the country, and are unable to explain what the real problems are to their electorate. Indeed the economic reforms put forward by the Monti government were supposed to be complemented by political reforms carried out by political forces, but this never happened. The political apparatus remained the same, and people ended up accusing technocrats of not having been able to contrast the *malapolitica* (evil/bad politics). But this was not our duty, and indeed was not within our mandate.

10.3.8 Interview with Vittorio Grilli (15/05/2014)

Minister for Economy and Finance in the Monti cabinet

How would you define a technocratic government? And a technocratic minister? What differences or similarities can you identify between the three technocratic governments appointed in Italy, Ciampi, Dini and Monti?

Whether a government is technocratic or not does not depend on the Prime Minister alone. Each member of the cabinet should be an expert in its portfolio. To give you an example, the minister in charge of the economy should be an economist. Apart from the need for expertise, technocratic ministers should also be independent from political parties – both directly in terms of involvement and indirectly in terms of being indicated by political parties as their representatives in the government. Because of these requirements, it seems to me that Monti's cabinet is different from the other two governments that you have identified as technocratic. Both Dini's and Ciampi's cabinets were issued from, and representative of, a political agreement while in the Monti government political parties were not represented at all. Moreover while Ciampi was indeed completely independent, Dini had previously been a minister so he cannot be classified as 'as technocratic' as Monti. In other words, I think there are shades of technocratic governments.

Why, in your opinion, do political parties opt for a technocratic government? And why do political parties in Italy seem to be particularly prone to this arrangement?

Of course I can only speculate, as I was not part of the discussions that brought the Monti government to power. It seems to me that at the time the situation was so deeply problematic that parties saw being in government as a risk rather than as an opportunity. The need for tough and hence unpopular reforms was evident to everyone, so no party wanted to take the responsibility for them. Moreover, the Italian party system is such that a grand coalition was at the time deemed impossible, or at least not overtly possible. With the Monti government an interesting compromise was achieved, in so far as there was effectively a grand coalition in parliament supporting the government, but this grand coalition – or bipartisan support – was not seen by the public as being responsible for the policies of the government. Often both parties would vote in support of a measure whose vote equivalent to a vote of confidence in the executive, but would publicly declare that they were against the content of the measure.

The Monti cabinet has been appointed in a moment of very serious crisis, and was given a very specific mandate, namely to restructure the Italian debt and to regain credibility on the financial markets. Despite these 'necessary' measures, citizens were not always supportive of the policy decisions taken to achieve those goals. One explanation might be that while the reforms your government put forward were the appropriate technical solution but lacked the ideology that normally justifies government choices. Do you feel that you lacked this sort of ideologically based legitimacy?

I slightly disagree on the wording of your question. People, if anything, had had enough of ideologies and promises by the time we were appointed in power. It was the failure of ideology-based politics in the first place, that made room for our government. Parties tried in the years preceding our mandate, to propose ideas and values but they did not manage to obtain consensus for the simple reason that people want certainties in life. So we stepped in, where politics left a void.

The problems we faced in passing and implementing these reforms was linked more to that very independence which I mentioned before. If on the one hand it was a strength, as it allowed us to take our decisions insulated from partisan pressures, on the other hand it meant that we lacked the network of support that is necessary to pass reforms. Parties have their established networks of supporters based on the protection of privileges of certain categories of voters. In other words, legitimate interests are protected by parties, and parties in exchange receive votes. For the reason mentioned before, in the case of the Monti government, this tight link was missing. That represented a great weakness in so far as our persuasive power went, and was responsible for some of the failures of our attempts at reforming the country.

Monti's government had a clear economic focus to its mandate. The main lines of action were dictated, or at least suggested, by the EU in the shape of the ECB and the objectives were clear. Did you ever feel that because of this you were limited in your action as a cabinet? Did this constrain your scope for reform?

I would say that our action as a government was indeed primarily limited to what Europe asked of us – and of Italy. The letter the ECB sent to Monti's predecessor is no secret. So initially our cabinet legitimised the first measures in these terms. However, we were still not immune from the classic problems any reformer encounters, that is, that reforms had unintended consequences, did not benefit everyone equally and did not yield immediate results. So as soon as it was convenient for them, parties adopted the rhetoric of accusing us of not having delivered on our promises. This shows how the times of politics and the times of reforms do not always coincide.

As far as the extent of our competences and mandate, at the time it was, as you mentioned, rather clear that the technocratic government was in charge of reforming the economy and the financial system, while more 'political' reforms, such as the reform of the electoral law, were left to the political world in the shape of parliament. The Monti government had indeed started the reforms in the area of its competence, but even the most economic and technical of reforms necessarily touches on some politically sensitive areas. In fact, as soon as we started digging deeper into the fabric of the country to ensure a long-lasting impact of these reforms, parties manifested their opposition. In particular in matters of liberalisation of the economy, political parties stood up to defend the interest of their constituencies. In the last period of our mandate, the consociationalist and corporativist nature of the Italian party system came out really clearly. Unfortunately we had no weapons to fight them.

An unusual aspect of the 'unusual' Monti cabinet was that it was a cabinet supported by a cross-partisan majority, composed of parties that were traditionally fiercely opposed to each other. What impact do you think this 'grand coalition' had on the legislative process during your mandate? Was it easier to pass laws adopting a *divide et impera* technique or did it make everything more complicated?

I would say that although parties traditionally opposed to each other did support the Monti government together, in fact most of the votes that took place during its mandate were still cast along party lines. This is why Monti adopted a very clever technique of government, which consisted in passing reforms that were, in turn, equally damaging for the constituencies of the two main parties (PD and PDL, n.d.r.), so that neither of them felt particularly under attack. This approach worked initially, when the need for reforms was pressing. It started to work less when, later on in Monti's term of office, he began to try to modify the core of the country, the 'fabric' of the economic system on which Italy relies, and which is essentially made of interest groups of various natures. At that point, both parties refused to collaborate: instead of accepting painful measures because the other party accepted them too, they both ceased to accept them *tout court*.

Some have criticised Monti's and other technocratic government as being the end of democracy as we know it. Others have accepted it as a flexibility mechanism, which the system adopts when faced with such a crisis, others still have seen it as the best possible solution given the incapacity of political parties to find a political solution. Which of these positions is the closest to you? In other words, how do you see the relationship between technocracy in the forms of technocratic governments, and democracy?

Technocratic governments are certainly not anti-democratic! If that were the case, then the US, where all ministers are often technocrats, would be a very undemocratic country. There is nothing in our constitution that prescribes that ministers should be politicians, and the technocratic government, like any other government, is subject to parliamentary scrutiny. Finally, our technocratic government, and indeed any government, obtained the confidence of the chambers on its programme, not on its composition, or whether it reflects the results of the elections. So I would argue that there is no reason to think that a technocratic government is not a good – albeit short lived - solution in a difficult time for the country.

GP: Technocracy and populism have often been seen as two sides of the same coin. Some see excessive technocracy as the main cause of people's support for populist parties, as the 'other' alternative to traditional politics. So if on the one hand technocracy is the preferred solution of political forces, on the other support for extremism or populism is the people's response to their discontent with politics. Do you feel that the fact of having had a technocratic government might have influenced Italians' support for Grillo?

VG: I would slightly rephrase the terms of the question. I would not put populism and technocracy on the same level, and even less our technocratic government and Grillo's anti-system movement. We were within the system, had parliamentary support and thus were democratically controlled. Grillo wants to destroy the system. Therefore we are very different.

Coming to the substance of the question, that people all over Europe are unhappy with traditional politics is nothing new. The Italian political system in particular has been unable to manage a changing world and a changing society. Traditional politics in this sense made a mistake that might explain the success of Grillo. Traditional political forces should have re-built their credibility on the success of the technocratic government, rather than accusing it of having failed. By recognising the success of the Monti government, a government appointed by traditional political forces themselves, they could have used that success in their favour. Instead they de-legitimised our action too, thus de-legitimising indirectly themselves.

10.3.9 Interview with Rainer Masera (12/06/2014)

Minister for Economic Affairs and Budget Planning, Dini cabinet

How would you define a technocratic government? And a technocratic minister? What differences or similarities can you identify between the three technocratic governments appointed in Italy, Ciampi, Dini and Monti?

A technocratic government is a government in which the Prime Minister takes on his role without having a parliamentary mandate, or rather, a political mandate. Even if all ministers are non-partisan, the cabinet could still be a partisan cabinet if the Prime Minister is not independent. The best example of such configuration is the US government, where often the President is the only elected member.

Having said that, there are some ambiguous cases. In Italy, for instance, you mentioned Ciampi, Dini and Monti as the three technocratic governments but the Amato cabinet is another potential candidate for your list. There the Prime Minister was a politician but the intention behind the appointment of the cabinet was for it to behave as if it were technocratic.

So while I suppose it is not always as clear-cut, it appears that in most cases ministers in technocratic governments are mostly independent. By that I mean that they are not the direct expression of political parties nor have they got the ambition to become partisan political actors one day. Occasionally they do of course, and Monti and Dini themselves are the best example of technocrats who have become politicians. Although of course motivations are only known to those directly involved, in those cases, one could argue that for those two Prime Ministers the technocratic governments became vehicles to step into the political world. This makes the technocratic cabinet progressively more similar to a normal cabinet as time goes by. Overall it seems to me that the concept of technocratic government in general presents many different nuances, and it is hard to pin down exactly what its necessary characteristics are.

Why, in your opinion, do political parties opt for a technocratic government? And why do political parties in Italy seem to be particularly prone to this arrangement?

A technocratic government is legitimised by parliament. Of course, contrary to what some commentators have argued, parliamentary rule is not suspended during its mandate. Parties give up their governing function while retaining their representative one.

Regarding Italy in particular, technocratic governments were appointed by parliament not to solve a difficult situation, like the widespread narrative would make us believe, but to implement immediate reforms which were either decided at national level (like in the case of Dini) or at European level (in the case of Monti). In both cases parties from the left and from the right decided to cooperate.

Some have criticised Monti's and other technocratic government as being the end of democracy as we know it. Others have accepted it as a flexibility mechanism, which the system adopts when faced with a crisis. Others still have seen it as the best possible solution given the incapacity of political parties to find a political solution. Which of these positions is the closest to you?

As mentioned before, a technocratic government still has the legitimacy derived from parliament. However, it seems to me that technocratic governments are dangerous for two reasons:

- the normal political process is undermined and the chain of delegation between voters, parliamentarians and governments is cracked.

- There is the widespread impression that the model of technocratic government can replace the model of election of the head of government as the expression of the political process. The head of government should have a popular mandate, and when this does not happen (i.e. in the case of the technocratic governments), then democracy is in danger.

It is therefore only acceptable in the very short term and in exceptional circumstances. If its mandate is prolonged beyond what is necessary, it becomes dangerous.

Furthermore, it is necessary to bear in mind that while technocratic governments might solve some immediate problems, such as an economic crisis, they are not capable, nor have they got the mandate or authority, to resolve the fundamental structural problems that affect Italy: its incompetent, inefficient and corrupted political class. I would say that this is what is unique about Italy, and what explains the tendency of our party system to turn to the technocratic solution.

Why were you chosen to take part in the Dini government and why did you leave it before the end of its mandate? What was your experience as a minister like?

Like all other ministers, I was selected to become minister on the basis of my lack of political experience but high level of expertise in my portfolio. Such expertise was built in years of positions held, amongst other, in the Italian Central Bank where I worked with Dini. We had established over the years a relationship of mutual trust.

I left the Dini government when I felt it was becoming too political. I was, and wanted to remain, independent from parties, so I preferred to leave.

The experience was overall a very positive one. Dini was a very good technocrat but had also great political leadership in leading the government. Moreover, as we were independent ministers, we were not subject to pressures coming from interest groups or political parties. As far as I was concerned, economic efficiency was my only criterion for designing and implementing economic policies.

Interview with Franco Frattini (23/05/2014)
Minister for Civil Service and Regional Affairs in the Dini cabinet

What is a technocratic government? And a technocrat?

A technocratic government is a cabinet needed for a short period of transition, when traditional partisan politics cannot guarantee stability and governability. There can be several causes. In the Italian case, technocratic governments have had very different causes, especially Dini's and Monti's cabinet. Overall, when for several reasons the political forces cannot guarantee a stable majority and governability, technocratic governments are called to step in.

I disagree with those commentators who define technocratic governments in terms of the expertise and competencies of their ministers, or rather, that argue that partisan governments are incompetent, while technocratic one are competent. I was in both kinds of governments, first as a technocrat under Dini and then as a politician under Berlusconi, and I think, and hope, that I fulfilled my role equally competently in both situations. Leaving my rather particular case aside, I think it is wrong to contrast the expertise of technocratic ministers with the incompetence of partisan ministers. Political ministers in *normal*/partisan governments can be, and indeed more often than not are, just as capable and qualified. If anything, the difference lies in the independence, or non-independence, of the minister from partisan forces. Technocratic ministers are chosen *only* on the basis of their expertise and skills, while partisan ministers are chosen *also* on the basis of their expertise, but on the basis of their partisan affiliation too.

Admittedly, it is a common misperception that I cannot share, but I can understand. The reason is that technocratic governments are called when, as mentioned, partisan politics has shown signs of weakness, it is reasonable for people, who have had enough of politics, to contrast partisan ministers with the experts

I also disagree with those who see a necessary advantage of technocratic governments in so far as they give certain portfolios to personalities that have worked in the area. Let me give some concrete examples. While it is right, and has been a rather successful choice when made, that the economic minister should be an economist, or a professor of economics, it is far less the case for three key ministries: justice, foreign affairs and home affairs. In those cases the worse choice would be, respectively, a judge, a diplomat and a prefect because they bring with them a very specific way of thinking and orientation within their field that will make their policy choices very biased. In those three ministries someone external to the respective professional world should be brought in. Monti, in his choice of ministers, has unfortunately made that mistake. Dini made less that mistake. So for instance he chose as justice minister a well-respected magistrate, but who was at the time retired. And for Home Affairs he chose the president of the Supreme Court of Cassation.

I do agree with your identification of three technocratic governments (Ciampi, Dini and Monti) but I would add that the Amato government, albeit not technocratic in composition, also behaved in all its policy choices and declarations as a technocratic government.

A final point concerns the step, often taken by technocrats, of becoming politicians. This has been the case of Dini and Monti, who both run their own electoral campaign after their technocratic government. As far as I am concerned, in 1996 I felt that I could not reconcile the 'technocratic' role I had been playing with the government with a political campaign, so I did not follow Dini in his political efforts. I let some months pass before I accepted Berlusconi's offer (to become an MP n.d.r). Incidentally, many people reproached Dini for having undertaken his political adventure while still being Prime Minister of his supposedly 'technocratic' government. This can easily be explained, and in a sense justified, by the fact that in the last months of Dini's premiership, Italy had the presidency of the EU. Italy needed someone to preside over the presidency, and Dini remained in office to ensure continuity during our semester.

What are the causes of the appointment of technocratic governments in Italy?

Two conditions need to be present at the same time for a technocratic government to be appointed:

- 1) There should not be a viable majority anymore, often because of the collapse of a coalition, like it happened before Dini was appointed, or because a new majority is impossible to find without going against the result of the elections. This last option was precisely what happened in the case of D'Alema's government after Prodi fell. D'Alema's was a centre-left/centre-right coalition when voters had expressed a clear centre-left preference. This is called *ribaltone*, and is another unusual Italian arrangement, as much as a technocratic government.
- 2) There should be reasons that make holding new elections not a suitable options. These reasons can be of different kinds (more below)

Can you say some more about the genesis of Dini's government in particular?

Dini's government happened because, as I mentioned, Berlusconi lost the support of Lega Nord, and hence the majority in power. The President of the Republic, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, who was a left-leaning politician, was worried that, had there been new elections, Berlusconi would have obtained a landslide victory. In 1994 for the first time Italians had indeed voted as if Italy had been a two-party system, and, had there been new elections after the split in the Berlusconi-Bossi coalition, it would have been possible for Berlusconi to obtain a straight majority and make a one-party government. President Scalfaro therefore proposed the solution of a technocratic government, and Berlusconi accepted with the condition that he could choose the Prime Minister. The coalition had fallen because the Lega Nord was against the reform of the pension system that the Treasury minister at the time, Lamberto Dini, was proposing. So Berlusconi chose Dini as the new prime minister and gave him the task to carry on with the reform that Lega opposed, and that Prof. Fornero concluded recently. This is how Dini came into office. And Berlusconi, as we know, supported the government by making his MPs abstain in the vote of confidence. Only later he expressed his opposition to the government.

All of this can show clearly that the Dini government, despite some of the rhetoric at the time, was not born out of an emergency, like the Monti government, but out of a clash of political will between the head of state and the head of government.

Would you consider technocratic governments as good flexibility mechanisms for democracies or would you hope that such arrangements should not happen any more in the future?

Technocratic governments are only in power for limited periods of time, with a limited mandate, and are usually justified by the circumstances. So I would argue that they are useful in certain cases, and the Monti cabinet in particular was the best option to deal with the emergency that neither the weak majority of Berlusconi nor the unwilling Partito Democratico wanted to tackle, for fear of unpopularity. This is why I have supported the Monti government, and I have resigned from Forza Italia when Berlusconi withdrew his support to Mario Monti's cabinet.

Do you see any link between technocracy and populism, and in particular between the Monti government and the rise of Grillo's M5S?

Technocracy takes the place left empty by traditional politics which has failed. Citizens know that these technocratic governments are there for a good reason, and support them as the solution that is most in the interest of the country. Populism is just due to the crisis, and the loss of faith in traditional politics due to scandals. The reason why populism grew after the Monti government, while it was not present at the time of the Dini government, is that the scandals were of different kinds. In the 1990s, politicians were seen as taking illegal money to finance their parties, so in a sense to carry out their duty as politicians with more funds. Nowadays, after the law on the financing of parties, which took away that need, some politicians act illegally in their own personal interest. In simpler words, they steal money for themselves. It is understandable that people should turn to those anti-system parties which propose to get rid of a system populated by individuals that rather than thinking of the good of the country think of their own interests.

10.3.10 ADVISORS and other interviews

10.3.11 Interview with George Pagoulatos (20/5/2014)

Senior Advisor and Director of Strategy to the Prime Ministers Lucas Papademos and Panayiotis Pikrammenos

Introductory remarks

Before discussing more in details our cases of Technocratic Governments, it might be useful to recall what the situation was like before the appointment of Prime Minister Papademos. Pasok, and Prime Minister Papandreu at the time, was bearing alone the cost of painful adjustment programs. The situation was becoming untenable, with protests everywhere, to the point that even a military coup was not to be excluded. The gravity of the situation can also be seen in the reaction to the proposed referendum. People were so afraid of the consequences and the potential upheaval that could have happened in the meanwhile that they opposed what could have been a quick return to direct democracy.

In the face of this, Prime Minister Papandreu tried to convince New Democracy to share the burden of signing the memorandum, but New Democracy agreed only on the condition of having a new head of government as well as some share of ministerial portfolios, so this explains why Papademos was appointed. Papademos' government was a grand coalition government, or rather as we call it, a government of national unity or national responsibility.

How would you define a technocratic government, especially in the Greek context?

Papademos' government was a political government, not a technocratic one, if by technocratic government we mean a government formed by independent non-partisan expert ministers. Ministers were either the same ministers which carried on from the Papandreu government, or new ones indicated by New Democracy. Neither of them were strictly speaking technocrats, if by technocrats we mean independent from political parties. Papademos himself was indeed a technocrat, and his independence and profile was needed in the country in order to regain international credibility. There were not many Greek public figures at that moment who had the characteristic required for the post, namely independence, expertise and established European credentials. Papademos knew how to deal with debt restructuring, and knew the banking system while not being a banker, despite what some of the media claimed.

The Greek constitution, art. 37, prescribes that:

2. The leader of the party having the absolute majority of seats in Parliament shall be appointed Prime Minister. If no party has the absolute majority, the President of the Republic shall give the leader of the party with a relative majority an exploratory mandate in order to ascertain the possibility of forming a Government enjoying the confidence of the Parliament.
3. If this possibility cannot be ascertained, the President of the Republic shall give the exploratory mandate to the leader of the second largest party in Parliament, and if this proves to be unsuccessful, to the leader of the third largest party in Parliament. Each exploratory mandate shall be in force for three days. If all exploratory mandates prove to be unsuccessful, the President of the Republic summons all party leaders, and if the impossibility to form a Cabinet enjoying the confidence of the Parliament is confirmed, he shall attempt to form a Cabinet composed of all parties in Parliament for the purpose of holding parliamentary elections. If this fails, he shall entrust the President of the Supreme Administrative Court or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court or of the Court of Auditors to form a Cabinet as widely accepted as possible to carry out elections and dissolves Parliament.

If Papademos' cabinet corresponds to the highlighted part of art.37, why do you think there was such a negative reaction to it in the country? Was it just because of its unpopular

policies or also because of its very nature, which was (perceived?) as technocratic and distant from the people? Was the reaction similarly negative in the case of Zolotas?

Papademos' government was technically none of the above. The cabinet was not composed of all parties in Parliament (but only 3) and its purpose was not to hold parliamentary elections but to complete the PSI and the negotiate, vote and implement the new economic program. Holding new elections was the purpose of the caretaker government under Pikrammenos (President of the Supreme Administrative Court) but not of Papademos, which was a government actively opposed by all Parliament's opposition parties of that time (Syriza, KKE, Independent Greeks) (thus not an ecumenical government like that of Zolotas). Thus the Papademos government did not correspond to any of the special cases described in the Constitution. It was a case where PM Papandreu offered to step down (in fear of his government losing the Parliament majority) and the main leaders of the pro-EU/ pro-euro political spectrum (or, if you like, those supporting the "Memorandum" and the need to successfully complete the debt restructuring) (PASOK, ND, LAOS) convening under the President of the Republic to decide whom to nominate as mutually accepted PM.

I would disagree with your claim that the government was unpopular. It was popular not only in parliament but also in society. When Papademos stepped down his popularity was still high. And indeed his credibility was never put into question. He behaved in a very different way compared to other Prime Ministers. He did not appear often in the media, he was not very communicative: he was totally focused on governance and on delivering on his government's programmatic objectives. Some political groups invited him to join them but he refused to become a political player after stepping down from PM. His exclusive concern was doing the job with which he was entrusted – a huge task in itself taking into account the extremely adverse surrounding economic, political, and market conditions.

You mentioned in an email that you think Grivas and Pikrammenos cabinets should be defined as caretaker cabinets. Could you explain where, in the Greek case, you think lays the difference between a technocratic government and a caretaker one in the Greek case?

In Greece caretaker governments (or transition or interim governments) are non-political governments, usually led by a supreme court judge, entrusted with the task of preparing the elections. Cases when judges such as Grivas and Pikrammenos are called to be Prime Ministers are due to the impossibility of forming a cabinet accepted by all parties in Parliament. So to ensure governance between elections they are appointed on the basis that they will simply lead the country to the voting polls. I would go as far as saying that caretaker governments are non-governments: parliament is often closed during their mandate, and they do not need the vote of confidence. Occasionally they are called to play more important role. The Pikrammenos government for instance had to make sure some of the extreme risks that were present between May-June 2012 (most notably the risk of a catastrophic bank run) would not materialize.

What was the criterion for choosing ministers for Papademos' government? In Monti's case, there was a European dimension to most of the ministers' CVs, and their portfolios corresponded to either their education or their professional background. They were, moreover, independent from political parties.

Papademos' ministers were of good quality compared to other cabinets, but they were not independent. They did claim that they would behave independently in their time in office, or rather, that they would behave responsibly and look beyond partisan interests, especially as both Pasok and New Democracy were linked in people's minds to the crisis. Therefore it was in the ministers' interest to claim to be acting outside that usual political framework that brought the country in the dire straits were it was. Papademos' was a government of special purpose, with very limited scope of action, so this was reflected in the action of the ministers.

In your opinion, what has been the role of the head of state in Papademos' appointment, and in previous technocratic governments? Greece's presidents are usually considered as having little power. Would you agree that that is the case also when parties fail to agree on a cabinet?

I agree that the Head of State is a purely ceremonial figure in Greece, and that he had no significant influence in the appointment of the Papademos government.

Often technocratic governments are not technocratic by composition (i.e. the Papademos government is a case where the ministers were partisan politicians). Yet the media defines them as 'technocratic' regardless. The media lumped together under one label your cabinet and Monti's, despite their differences. How would you assess the role of the media in legitimising (or delegitimising) technocratic governments in Greece?

The Media was supportive of the Papademos government, the mainstream media, because they had realised that the country was on the brink of collapse, and that the completion of the Papademos government's mission (successful conclusion of the PSI and adoption of the economic program) was necessary to avert a disorderly default and a catastrophic Grexit. Most of the mainstream media supported the need for Greece to remain in the Euro (as did around 70% of the Greek public). The media was also supportive of Papademos himself, as a personality, recognizing that he was the only one who commanded the necessary credibility both domestically and abroad, including towards the markets. They communicated to their readers and viewers their confidence in the fact that the country was in safe hands.

It is a widespread belief that technocracy and populism are two inseparable companions on the political scene. To put it crudely, the more technocracy in the system, the more populism. Would you agree that one of the effects of technocratic governments on political system might indeed be that of increasing chances (and votes) for populist/extreme parties? And in your particular case, do you see any link between Papademos' actions and the growth of support for Golden Dawn?

To my mind, the reason for the rise of populism in Greece is the perceived failure of the two party system regardless of technocracy. The main parties, Pasok and New Democracy, were viewed as being responsible for the disastrous debt crisis and economic crisis and this is why people reacted by turning to populist alternatives. The two main parties, of course, had their own fair share in nurturing populism in the past. In Greece I would moreover talk about nationalism-populism, rather than just populism, as nationalism is a safe psychological refuge when traditional politics fail. Nationalism as a reaction to EU-imposed austerity policies, combined with (perceived) excessive immigration, not a reply to technocracy. Technocracy, if anything, is a target of populism.

How would you assess Papademos' period in power in terms of quality of democracy – real and perceived by the people? Do you think, given that the parties that supported the cabinet had been elected by the people, there was, as it were, no need to worry? And yet commentators went as far as saying that the nearly contemporary appointment of Papademos and Monti marked 'the end of democracy as we know it'. Could you comment on this?

Greece is a parliamentary democracy, so democratic legitimacy lies in the hands of parliament. The Papademos' government had the full confidence of parliament, by very high percentages (2/3), so it was fully legitimate, and did not pose a threat to democracy as such.

The main challenge I can see in terms of democracy was the alarming mismatch between the proper democratic deliberation procedures of parliamentary politics and the extreme urgency and time

pressure characterizing governmental decision-making during not just Papademos' mandate but throughout the last 4+ years since the MOU. Because of the emergency nature of his government, decisions had to be taken under the pressure of expiring critical deadlines and occasionally parliamentary deliberations had to be side-lined to speed up procedures. A disorderly default of the country had to be avoided at all costs. It therefore became a case of 'edge of the cliff' diplomacy, where a compromise between emergency and the normal democratic process had to be found. Moreover, the troika modality was a structure that operated outside normal democratic parliamentary institutions and procedures, national and European, as the spring 2014 EP report also underlined.

Finally, markets, and in our case the Eurozone governance, were indeed imposing measures to governments and the transfer of power from democracies to markets is a regrettable aspect of the way in which democracy operates at times of deep financialization and globalization; but it would be taking it too far to suggest that markets are directly imposing governments or Prime Ministers to countries. Papademos was not EU-imposed, as some media seemed to suggest, and certainly not undemocratic. He was chosen by the domestic political leaderships as the most competent to represent Greece's national interests (manifesting Greece's commitment to the euro and the EU) at that most critical juncture, which required a PM that EU partners, institutions, and the markets could trust.

Some scholars see technocratic governments as a flexibility mechanism of a system in which the party system is not stable enough to face difficult circumstances. However Greece has always been considered a very stable two-party system, so this explanation does not seem to tally. How would you explain the appointment of technocratic governments in your country? A result of diminished confidence in political parties, rather than as a failure of the system as such? Where do you think the main explanation lies?

Personally I am not a big fan in general of technocratic governments, for the very simple reason that technocrats, as their name suggests, are not necessarily capable of the necessary political and communicational activism to achieve their goals, and as all governments have to deal with parliaments to pass laws, it might happen that technocrats are in fact less capable than politicians to implement what their expertise would suggest them. Successful government and governance requires a great deal of political management, a political "technology". Technocratic governments are useful especially at times of crisis, but they are not the only option, as the experience of countries other than Greece and Italy showed in 2011-2012. A great advantage of technocrats, however, is that they face a relatively low exit cost from the political scene compared to professional politicians who have invested their whole lives in political careers. They can thus more easily defy the political cost and take the necessary unpopular decisions that are required in order to advance the broader public interest.

10.3.12 Interview with Pericles Vassilopoulos (28/7/2014)

Head of Press Office, Zolotas Cabinet

How would you define a technocratic government? In my work I have identified 4 Greek cabinets as technocratic: Grivas, Zolotas, Papademos, Pikrammenos, But some commentators claim that in fact Zolotas' and Papademos' cabinets were political, not technocratic, because of their composition (i.e. political ministers). Others, on the contrary, argue that they were technocratic because of their 'attitude' and the circumstances of their appointment. Others still argue that Grivas and Pikrammenos cabinets should be defined as caretaker cabinets, while Zolotas and Papademos as technocratic. Could you clarify which one you think is the correct interpretation?

Grivas and Pikrammenos governments were clearly caretaker cabinets. Regarding the Zolotas and Papademos cabinets I am not too convinced by the use of the terminology 'technocratic governments'. I would rather call them 'transition' or 'emergency governments'. And I would further distinguish between passive and active state of emergency governments, the first being just a measure against default, the latter a bridge to change. It's not by chance that the two of them were Central Bankers before. Central Bankers are organisations of the last Resort and by definition emergency entities. Zolotas and Papademos have only managed to be the passive kind, even though Zolotas had started his mandate with the idea of changing the country significantly. He soon discovered that it would have been a very difficult task given that the three main political parties, and especially New Democracy and Pasok, had something very specific in mind when they appointed him to power. We could say that Zolotas Government was a so called Parenthesis. That was clearly stated during the weekly meetings of the 3 Political Leaders with Professor Zolotas. I can assure you for that. So while I see why you - and you are not alone in this – see them as technocratic governments, I would say that there have been no 'pure' technocratic governments of the type of Monti in Greece.

Some scholars see technocratic governments as a flexibility mechanism of a system in which the party system is not stable enough to face difficult circumstances. However Greece has always been considered a very stable two-party system, so this explanation does not seem to tally. How would you explain the appointment of technocratic governments in your country? Where do you think the main explanation lies, with particular reference to the Zolotas government?

Zolotas was called to power when Greece was on the edge of bankruptcy/default. He was chosen for his economic credentials (both in terms of his professional experience in the Bank of Greece and because he was the descendant of a wealthy family, and hence more immune to bribery attempts), and for the fact that he was internationally recognised. He was good friend with Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Mitterand, Kohl and others. And was especially appreciated by Jacques Delors, the then president of the European Commission, who gave his full support to most measures Zolotas proposed. In particular Delors was very positive regarding the 26 measures he proposed to the 3 political parties on 3/1/1990 to avoid default, and which were only partially passed on 11/1/2014. He also sent a letter to the heads of parties explaining why it was necessary to implement what Zolotas was proposing.

A similar story can be said for Papademos, who was called in an appropriate figure in Greece who had expertise in economics, a knowledge of the working of the European institutions, and especially of the European Central Bank, and who was non-partisan. So in both Zolotas' case and Papademos' case I would say that the economic situation was the main driver behind the appointment. Of course one should not ignore the role of the parties. Political parties in both cases did not want, and were not capable of, carrying out the necessary measures.

The interesting difference in the two cabinets, is that Zolotas was perceived ‘internally’ to the system as being necessary to save the country from default while Papademos was P.M. in a situation where the external constraints imposed by the creditors were of capital importance. So the logic and the possibility of action were rather different. Zolotas theoretically had the possibility to promote a radical change, Papademos not. The country was on the verge of collapse and the creditors called the pipe and had the money, the freedom of action was minimal.

What was the criterion for choosing ministers for the Zolotas’ government? In Monti’s case, for instance, there was a European dimension to most of the ministers’ CVs, and their portfolios corresponded to either their education or their professional background. They were, moreover, independent from political parties.

Almost all ministers were designated by the three parties (New Democracy, Pasok and the Coalition for the Left), but interestingly the immediately related entourage of Zolotas, including myself, were of the P.M. choice. I am thinking in particular about the director for European Affairs and the Economic Councillor.

Do you think Zolotas and Papademos had more difficulties governing because of the kind of majority they had in parliament, i.e. a cross party majority of the kind one finds in Grand coalitions?

The history of the Greek partisan system is one of confrontation, not collaboration, so it made sense that in both Zolotas’ case and Papademos’ case, parties preferred to collaborate under a neutral head of government than under a partisan one. In both cases the government had a cross-party majority uniting left and right. However, I would not say that it is because of the ‘grand-coalition’ kind of support that they enjoyed that they struggled to pass certain legislations. Papademos in particular had difficulties because the measures he proposed were extremely severe. In Zolotas’ case, it is interesting to notice that in fact the communists (Coalition of the Left) were more supportive of Zolotas’ new idea of pragmatic liberalism than the two main parties Pasok and Democracy, who were rather disruptive throughout the mandate.

Would you argue that there is a difference between the first and the second Zolotas cabinet?

Definitely. The second was just a caretaker cabinet which had the only duty of leading the country to elections. The reshuffle was caused by Mitsotakis who wanted elections to be held as soon as possible. The first was a real government that had responsibilities and the capacity to make policies as well as politics.

How would you assess Zolotas’ period in power in terms of quality of democracy – real and perceived by the people? Do you think the Greek people perceived that cabinet as different, and potentially less legitimate or democratic than partisan governments? In recent times, commentators went as far as saying that the nearly contemporary appointment of Papademos and Monti marked ‘the end of democracy as we know it’. Would you agree with this statement, also with reference to the Zolotas cabinet?

What is worrying to my mind was not so much the two cabinets in question – those were justified by the situation, and Zolotas was a great statesman and a great Prime Minister - but the fact that we might be entering in an era where the logic of emergency is the rule and not the exception. The many technocratic governments you have identified in the recent years of the Eurocrisis are the best proof of that.

In general, it is a sad truth that at the time of Zolotas, and probably also today, Greece has a very strong informal state, or rather, the State as such is an empty cell filled in turns by the party in power. Zolotas wanted to change that but it was too enshrined in the mentality of the Greek people and bureaucracy to be possible in such a short period of time. Back in 1990 Zolotas already said that if parties keep refusing to change, they will bring the country on the brink of default again, and he identified in the Greek membership of the Euro the only way out. As we now know, it was not finally a solution. Greece was and is guided with a logic of neoliberal partitocracy. That means neoliberalism as a guiding principle of decisions at the upper core of the state in close relationship with the oligarchic economic elite and statism with extended red tape for all the others. It's a really bizarre combination with a superficial contradiction in terms- neoliberalism and statism don't go normally together- but for Greece is the reality. Although this neoliberal partitocracy developed mainly after 1990, Professor Zolotas knew this possibility very well and as a P.M. experienced that every day in the state affairs (the OTE affair, the private TV affair).

10.3.13 Interview with Ivan Pirovski (27/11/2014)

Head of State Protocol from 1997 to 2002

Which Bulgarian governments in your opinion should be identified as technocratic, and why?

Popov and Berov are, to my knowledge, the only ones which could be defined as technocratic. They have been officially voted in office by the parliament with the normal procedure of the confidence vote but not right after elections. This implies that the parliamentary majority supporting them was not the same majority that won the elections.

Looking at Popov first, he was a judge in the Sofia court. The first democratic elections in Bulgaria took place in June 1990, and he was in government from December 1990 to November 1991. It was a government of 'national salvation', backed by 3 parties, which also provided the various ministers. But the situation at the time was everything other than democratic, so it is difficult to compare this (or subsequent) governments to their equivalent in Western Europe. The judiciary was next to non-existent, and certainly malfunctioning, and accountability of governments was very low, the economic situation was catastrophic.

The logic for appointing Berov was to have a cabinet supposedly working for the good of the country. But in fact the cabinet was not neutral as it was portrayed to be. Even though Berov himself was an independent economics professor, his ministers all had party affiliation. Berov moreover did not really have any real power and he was of frail health. In short, although an honest prime minister, he did not really have much say in the government policies. In fact the government, both in newspapers and by other Prime ministers was often referred to as 'the government of the big oligarchs', showing once again how Berov was nothing more than a formal head.

The majority coming out of the elections supporting the government before Berov included the Turkish party but the secret services disapproved of the Dimitrov government and discredited it so that eventually it had to resign. The majority that supported the Berov government, which included parliamentarians that had been 'bought', was not the same as the preceding one, confirming what I said before about changing majorities. The Berov government was mainly responsible of the privatisation of the State goods, which saw the State assets being sold for little value to ex-head figures of the communist party, which would in turn re-sell them to Western companies for a higher price, thus making profit.

What about the governments of Indzhova, and, more recently, Raykov ?

Those to my mind can only partly be called technocratic governments, as they were more 'interim' or 'caretaker' governments. During their mandate, parliament is suspended so no law is passed. The idea is to lead the country as quickly as possible to elections by providing a neutral bridge between one government and the next. The Prime ministers for those governments are chosen and appointed by the president. For instance Prime Minister Sofianski, which I would also include under the label caretaker governments, he was of the same party of the president and that is why he was chosen, as well as for the fact that he was popular.

Any further thoughts?

As a general principle, I would be cautious in comparing Bulgaria with Western European nations, and also with some of the other Central and Eastern European countries. In Poland for instance the secret services had been dismantled and did not have as much influence. In the Czech Republic and Hungary private property existed also before the end of Communism. Bulgaria (and potentially Romania too) are the only countries where between 90 and 100% of the country was nationalised.

Bulgaria has a higher level of corruption, a more developed black market, a more influential mafia, a less independent central bank and lower trust in government than any other country. In general the quality of democracy in Bulgaria is very low, the economy is not independent, and both of these elements make comparing it to other countries problematic.
