

The determinants of the executive weekly agenda in Portugal: party mandates vs media attention

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Abstract

National executives are the engine of policy change in political systems. Unsurprisingly, the formation of executive agendas attracted a lot of attention in scholarly research: a number of works were devoted to the analysis of the policy content of government programs (Breeman et al., 2009; Jennings et al., 2011; Mortensen et al., 2011). These documents are set on a periodic basis, at the beginning of either the legislative mandate or each legislative session. On the other hand, we still know little about how executives micro-manage their agenda on a weekly basis. How do they reconcile party commitments and external pressures coming from society and conveyed by the media at this micro-level? This paper contributes to understand the mechanisms of short-term executive agenda-setting by analysing the policy content of Council of ministers weekly press releases in Portugal from 2002 until 2015. By means of time-series cross-sectional models it investigates how the executive weekly agenda responds to governing and opposition platform commitments as well as to the issue focus of the mass media. It also asks how economic conditions may affect these dynamics.

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Introduction

In recent years, the burgeoning literature on political agendas has given pride of place to the study of governments' policy priorities (eg. Jones and Baumgartner, 2005; Jennings and John, 2009; Baumgartner et al., 2011; Mortensen et al., 2011). Indeed, understanding the patterns of governments' issue prioritization is a central matter in the study of democratic political systems. Among the extant literature, a traditional indicator of governments' policy priorities has been government's budget spending (eg. Blais et al., 1993: 43-47; Kang and Powell 2010; Baumgartner et al., 2011; Wlezien and Soroka 2012; Joly, 2014; Miller et al., 2014). However, because public spending responds to conjunctural circumstances, this proxy the government agenda has serious drawbacks.¹ More recently research has started looking at more "symbolic" agendas (Walgrave and Van Aelst, 2006; Walgrave et al., 2008: 817), using for instance the content-coding of prime minister or queen's speeches (eg. Jennings and John, 2009; Mortensen et al., 2011). They are referred to as "symbolic" because their policy concerns and priorities are expressed, but they do not have immediate policy consequences. More rarely, studies have looked at substantive agendas such as the policy content of debates in Council of Ministers regular meetings (Walgrave et al., 2008 and Baumgartner et al. 2010), namely to agendas concerned with tangible policy proposals or policy-making decisions (such as budgetary allocations or bills). This is also the focus of the present paper.

This paper aims at contributing to the literature on agenda-setting by testing a series of hypotheses on the factors driving the executive agenda in the course of the mandate. There is still little research on this topic, mostly because of the lack of detailed data on the myriad of decisions taken by executives on a periodic basis. From the literature, we

¹ For example, an ageing population may lead to an increase in spending on pensions, but that does not necessarily translate into a policy priority decision (Mortensen et al., 2011: 978).

already know that the media to some extent affect government and parliament agenda-setting (Walgrave et al., 2008). On the other hand, the impact of other important factors such as the party electoral mandate has not been analysed yet. This paper fills this gap by comparatively assessing the effects of media and party mandates (in electoral platforms) on governments' agenda-setting. Empirically, it uses data on Portuguese Council of Ministers' decisions as detailed in the weekly press releases.

In parliamentary systems, the Council of Ministers is a collegial body in which the Prime Minister, the ministers and other cabinet members without portfolios regularly convene in order to define government's core political and policy orientations. The Council discusses and approves bills, decrees and resolutions, make appointments and sign international treaties. In the Portuguese case, it may also request authorizations to the Parliament to legislate on a specific subject. This is, therefore, a privileged source of data to measure substantive government policy priorities.

As anticipated, we are interested in analysing the effects of two agendas – party and media- on governments' policy decision-making. Electoral platforms are the primary instrument for parties to communicate their political aims to the public. What parties promise during campaigning and the subsequent level of pledge fulfilment while in government is a core indicator of party mandate accomplishment. Because electoral platforms summarise parties' policies and are the basis on which voters hold them accountable for concrete policy decisions (Schedler 1998: 197; Laver 2001; Bara, 2006), they are a fundamental mechanism to evaluate the performance of a democracy (Maravall 2013; Mansbridge 2003). Furthermore, party pledges literature has been reiterating that political parties tend to fulfil their campaign promises most often than not (eg. Klingemann et al. 1994; Moury 2011; Artés 2013: 144-145), which means that manifestos are largely the basis for policymaking. Notwithstanding its importance, to date, there still exists little knowledge about how campaign promises affect the executive's substantive agendas between elections.

Although the magnitude of its effects varies, also the media can be expected to be a critical factor driving executive agendas (for a comprehensive literature review, see Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2016). Remarkably, this research area remains largely uncharted (Kingdon, 2003: 57-61; Walgrave and Aelst, 2006: 89-91), but for a few studies. In general, these studies did detect media effects on executive agendas, albeit smaller than the effect of symbolic agendas (Walgrave et al., 2008; Joly, 2014; Miller et al., 2014). Furthermore, all of these studies test media impact on its own, without controlling for alternative explanatory factors.

By considering the effects of both agendas – party and media – we are including two of the expectedly most important determinants of government agendas. On top of this, we are also testing two additional hypotheses. First, when assessing party platform's influence, we also distinguish between two types of opposition: challenger parties and mainstream parties (Vries and Hobolt, 2012). Challenger parties are a subset of opposition parties who have no office experience and whose likelihood of joining governing coalitions is rather low. Mainstream parties, on the opposite, have a track record of alternation in office and a coalition potential. Second, we analyse how the variation of the economic context impacts on the above-mentioned executive agenda-setting dynamics.

The study of the Portuguese case is appropriate to answer our research goal for two main reasons. First, Portugal has a diversified and very stable party system, with two mainstream parties alternating in government (the centre-left Socialist Party, PS, and the centre-right Social Democratic Party, the PSD). When coalition cabinets are formed instead of the one-party government, they are typically on the right-wing between the PSD and the conservatives, CDS-PP. The remaining two parties in the Portuguese party system can be properly classified as challengers, the radical left-wing CDU and BE, as

until recently they have never backed up a government.² We argue that this stability facilitates the testing of party agendas' influence on the government over time. Second, the Portuguese case is also useful to unravel the impact of the recent Sovereign Debt Crisis on government agendas, being Portugal one of the Southern European bailed-out countries.

The paper begins with an overview of the relevant literature and it then sets the hypotheses to be tested. Afterwards, it introduces the data and methods of research and presents the findings. Finally, some concluding remarks are provided.

Literature and Hypotheses

Policy agenda research points to different reasons underlying political actors decisions to selectively pay attention to some issues instead of others: the preferences of decision-makers, the political and economic environment, political institutions, the media, the influence of interest groups or the public opinion (Kingdon, 2003; Jones and Baumgartner, 2005; Jennings and John, 2009; Baumgartner et al., 2011: 948-953; Mortensen et al., 2011). The connection between electoral promises and parties' decision-making is at the core of the party mandate model. According to this model, it is up to the voters to make a conscientious, rational electoral choice based on information about the parties, and it is up to the elected MPs to fulfil the mandate they were given by the voters. The mandate mechanism gives constituents indirect control over political decisions, as the party is expected to keep the promises that presumably reflect their voters' wishes (Downs 1957; Miller et al. 1999; Powell 2004). This is a delegate view of representation. Although some contest that governments frequently

² The CDU is the Unitary Democratic Coalition, formed by the Portuguese Communist Party, PCP, and the Greens. The Left Block, BE, the most recent party to emerge in the Portuguese Parliament, is a left-libertarian party.

fail to keep their electoral pledges (Manin 1997: 163-183), recent empirical studies have been by and large supporting the view that governments do fulfil their promises more often than not (eg. Artés 2013: 144-145; Klingemann et al. 1994; Moury 2011; Royed 1996). Party mandate agenda as conveyed by electoral platforms is, therefore, expected to play a significant role in executive's agenda-formation.

As far as the agenda impact of the media is concerned, recent research demonstrated that mass media coverage does contribute to shaping the attention of political elites (Soroka, 2002; Vliegenthart and Walgrave, 2011; for a discussion of the literature see Wolfe et al., 2013). Mass media was proven to have an impact on policy makers issue prioritisation based on factors such as party characteristics, the position of parties in government or opposition or issue ownership (Walgrave and Aelst, 2006). Some studies even found that media effects on government agendas can be stronger than public opinion preferences (Jones and Baumgartner, 2005; Jennings and John, 2009; Baumgartner et al., 2011: 948-953; Mortensen et al., 2011).

Based on previous findings, showing that the media affect symbolic more strongly than substantive executive agendas (Walgrave et al., 2008; Joly, 2014; Miller et al., 2014), our expectation is to find significant media effects over the agenda decisions of the Council of Ministers, although smaller in comparison with the impact of the party government platform. Although in Portugal Council meetings take place behind closed doors, they receive significant media coverage. We expect that the government takes this into account while selecting the policy decisions to emphasise in press releases, showing to the public that it is effectively reacting to important events. At the same time, the government may find it an opportunity to state before the public that he is responsive to its electoral commitments. Our first hypothesis is therefore that both the media and the electoral mandate as expressed in the majority platform are expected to influence the executive agenda, but government platform agenda should have a stronger effect than that of media agenda (H1).

According to the normative premises of the party mandate model (Downs, 1957, pp.118-125), significant differences would be expected in issue attention across political parties (ie. political parties are supposed to offer distinct packages of policy promises, expectedly alongside ideological lines, and also according to the position they occupy in party competition). Opposition parties generally differ from government parties in that they have more freedom in selecting their topics (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010). Opposition parties can politicise a new dimension of conflict by allocating attention to certain issues with the purpose of enlarging their electoral support (Klüver and Spoon 2014; Wagner and Meyer 2014), without being held responsible for providing an immediate solution. They also tend to have a more significant effect on party-system agenda as they are less compelled to respond to issues that arise in the party-system agenda than government parties (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010). For these reasons, the expectation is that opposition platforms have an influence over cabinet agendas, but their effect is dependent on the type of opposition party. Differently from challengers, mainstream parties are held responsible for resolving problems as they emerge in the "party system agenda" (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010), since they are traditionally parties that are either in the cabinet or in the waiting line to form government. As mainstream opposition is in a direct competition with parties in government, their agenda is expected to be taken more into consideration by the parties in government than the one of challenger parties, that do not compete for cabinet. Our second hypothesis is thus that the main opposition parties' platform has a stronger influence on the executive agenda than the challenger opposition platform (H2).

Research demonstrated that the economic environment has an influence on the policy agenda (Baumgartner, Jones and Wilkerson, 2011, pp.948-949; Mortensen, et al., 2011). The severe worsening of economic conditions and austerity policies in Europe, it was shown, led parties to modify their previous policy positions, increasing electoral

polarisation around issues such as economic and welfare policies (Bosco and Verney, 2012; Magalhães, 2014). In general, during recession time, economic and social issues tend to get an overwhelming amount of attention from party contenders at election time (Singer, 2011). For these reasons, the burst of the economic crisis in Portugal, in 2011, is expected to have affected cabinet's policy priorities.

Portugal started to plunge into the economic crisis earlier than that but only in March 2011, the Socrates Government was compelled to request the intervention of international lenders, the so-called troika (made up of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund). The external intervention programme included a package of severe austerity measures that were implemented by the newly elected PSD/CDS-PP majoritarian coalition led by Passos Coelho (2011-2015). The programme generated a downward spiral of recession being the overall outcome a sharp decline in the standards of living in Portugal. Whereas, from a formal point of view, the government had no choice but to implement such programme or risk the cutting of financial help, on the other recent studies showed that the Troika recommendations corresponded to a great extent to structural reforms that PSD leaders had for a long time wished to implement in Portugal (Moury and Freire, 2013; Moury and Standring, 2017). The prime minister even admitted in front of the media that its cabinet went beyond what the assistance program requested in the implementation of the structural policy reforms. Rather, the pressure of the market served the purpose of curbing the clout of opposition parties. Our third and last hypothesis is, therefore, that the influence of the majority platform on the executive agenda is expected to have increased in times of crisis (H3).

Data and methods

The hypotheses presented above are tested using data on the Portuguese case. The following analysis combines data sets on the agenda of the executive, the parties and

the media. To capture variation in the distribution of attention for the same set of issues across different actors, relevant documents were classified according to one of 21 policy codes (see Appendix A) making up the Portuguese Policy Agenda codebook. Topic coding was done by pairs of coders working under the supervision of the two authors.

Executive agendas use data on the official press releases of the Council of Ministers (<http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/o-governo/arquivo-historico>). These documents report in detail the decisions taken by the Council of Ministers during their weekly meetings, which take place normally on Thursdays. These are the best documents available to document the Council working, lacking the official minutes of the Council discussion. They are also very heterogeneous in terms of content. Executive decisions range from initiating legislation (either by adopting a bill to be submitted to Parliament, by using executive decrees or asking authorizations to legislate to the Parliament when the latter has got exclusive competence on the matter), to appoint officials (not only in the civil service but, for example, in the army and in hospitals), create new agencies, filling in the details of existing legislation through secondary measures (resolutions) and approving international treaties. Since each bullet point of a press release contains a decision on a specific topic, this became our unit of analysis. During an average meeting, ministers discuss 10 issues (standard deviation of 5.6). To account for the fact that a portion of these decisions regards the upkeep of existing policies – cyclical appointments of top civil servants – or the rubber stamping of decisions taken elsewhere – treaty approvals – these decisions were excluded. The final dataset consists of 7419 decisions taken over the course of 13 years (4 legislatures). Figure 1 presents the distribution of decisions by topic.

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

Party agendas were reconstructed using party platforms. Coders parsed the platforms of the main elected parties (excluding the tiny Green Party), extracted all policy pledges according to the method developed by the Party pledges project (Royed 1996) and assigned a CAP policy code. Party agendas are obtained by computing the share of pledges for each policy sector.³ Then, for each legislative term, we aggregated the agenda of respectively the majority, the main opposition and the challenger parties. Following de Vries & Hobolt (2012), we define challenger parties as a sub-set of opposition parties who have no office experience and whose likelihood of joining governing coalitions is low. Mainstream parties, on the opposite, have a track record of alternation in office and a coalition potential. While the PSD/CDS-PP coalition and the PS have alternated in office during the period under the analysis, the BE and the PCP fall neatly into the category of challenger opposition as they have never held political office. To take into account the different political weight of parliamentary group inside each cluster (for instance PSD and CDS-PP parliamentary groups differ in size), we computed policy-specific averages weighting for the share of party seats in parliament.

The mass media agenda relies on the coding of the headlines of all front-page news of one of the main Portuguese newspapers: *Publico* (www.publico.pt). On the one hand, newspapers have been demonstrated to exert more influence on the political agendas than TV (Walgrave et al., 2008: 826-827). On the other, newspapers in Portugal do not follow a clear party line and, for that reason, we can track media attention solely based on one newspaper. The final dataset contains a total of 22994 front page articles.

³ She classifies a 'pledge' as: 'the commitment to carry out some action or produce some outcome, where an objective estimation can be made as to whether or not the action was indeed taken or the outcome produced' (1996: 79). Her method simply consists of collecting the pledges and then verifying if they are accomplished or not, searching many different sources, such as experts and journalists' reports, official websites, direct phone calls to public departments, or legislative databases.

Our expectations on the impact of the media and the party platforms on the executive agenda can be summarised by the following equation:

$$Gov_{it} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 Media_{it-1} + \beta_2 Platform(Gov)_{ik-1} + \beta_3 Platform(Main\ Opp)_{ik-1} + \beta_4 Platform(Challenger\ Opp)_{ik-1} + \beta_5 Gov_{it-1} + \beta_6 Gov_{it-12}$$

Gov_{it} and $Media_{it}$ are respectively the share of items in press releases and front page articles devoted to a specific topic i in month t . The subscript $t-1$ refers to the value of the agenda in the preceding month. We followed Vliegthart et al. (2016) and selected months as the temporal unit of analysis because: a) they allow sufficient time for the cabinet to process media signals and organise a response; b) lower aggregation levels “would result in too low values and too many zeros” (Ibid. p.290). The subscript $t-12$ refers to the value of the cabinet agenda in the same month but one year before. This lagged control variable enables checking for seasonal effects, such as the cyclical impact of the budget process (taking place in November) or the summer period. $Platform(Gov/Main\ Opp/ Challenger\ Opp)_{ik-1}$ measures the share of mentions of topic i respectively in the electoral agenda of the government, main opposition and challenger opposition parties at the most recent election k .

In order to test H3, we created a monthly index of the state of the Portuguese economy and finance ($Economy_{t-1}$) using two indicators that are widely used in the public debate, especially in media outlets: the overall unemployment rate and the 10-year government bond yields. Before summing up the two indicators, we normalised them to remove the problem of different units of analysis. As the subscript reveals, the model uses a lagged monthly value of $Economy$. In order to test H3, we interact $Economy_{t-1}$ with the main independent variables, namely $Platform$ and $Media$. Figure 2 plots the series against a timeline illustrating majority turnover in Portugal over the last 13 years.

INSERT FIGURE HERE

Our model clearly violates the assumption of independence between observations, since attention to a topic is dependent on the attention to all others and attention at time t is dependent on its value at time $t-1$. To account for the cross-sectional autoregressive nature of our data, we used ordinary least squared (OLS) regression models with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE) (Beck & Katz 1995).

Analysis

Table 1 reports the result of three time-series cross-sectional models, presenting the estimates for the main effects of our three independent variables. The first noteworthy finding is the strong autoregressive nature of the government agenda, with more than one-fifth of the cabinet agendas in the previous month accounting for the distribution of cabinet attention in the following month. The statistically significant coefficient of Gov_{it-12} indicates that the persistence of the agenda has also a seasonal dimension, although the effect is slightly smaller in comparison with Gov_{it-1} . As expected, cabinet business exhibits a significant level of stability, with specific issues never leaving the monthly agenda.

Our first hypothesis, H1, holds that the government platform agenda should have a stronger effect than the lagged value of media on Cabinet agenda. Model 1 shows that this is indeed the case. Both the media and government party platforms have an impact on the cabinet agenda which is statistically significant (at least $p < 0.01$). Cabinets have to constantly strike a balance between responding to events calling for an urgent short-term solution and delivering on issues that are part of their electoral mandates. On the other hand, as expected, government platforms exert a stronger effect on cabinet agendas. Simply put, a substantial portion of media news are about facts that do not require an immediate cabinet reaction.

Our second hypothesis stated that also opposition platforms have an influence on cabinet agendas, but the effect should be smaller in comparison with government platform and dependent on the type of opposition. Model 2 and 3 offer support for these expectations. First, Model 2 reveals that both $Platform(Main\ Opp)_{ik-1}$ and $Platform(Challenger)_{ik-1}$ have a statistically significant impact on the cabinet agenda, although only in the first case the P value is less than 0.001. Second, when both government and the two types of opposition platforms are incorporated in model 3, the effect of $Platform(Main\ Opp)_{ik-1}$ gets halved (0.07) and $Platform(Challenger)_{ik-1}$ is no longer statistically significant. In substantive terms, the overall thematic composition of government party pledges in front of their voters counts almost three times as much as the main opposition's. These findings are consistent with what we know about the Portuguese case, namely its progressive transformation into a strongly majoritarian and centralised political system (Lobo 2005).

The second set of models in Table 2 include the interactions between our main independent variables and the state of the economy. H3 posits that the impact of the government party platform on the cabinet agenda is conditioned on the state of the economy. This hypothesis finds support in the model too. The statistically significant coefficient of the interaction between $Platform(Gov)_{ik-1}$ and $Economy_{t-1}$ indicates that, as the economic situation in Portugal worsens, the government party platform increases its impact. Vice versa, the coefficient of the interaction between $Economy$ and both types of opposition (Main and Challenger) is negative but never statistically significant. When the economy is equal to 0 (coefficient of the constitutive terms), $Platform(Main\ Opp)_{ik-1}$ remains significant but lower than $Platform(Gov)_{ik-1}$, whereas the effect of $platform(Challenger)_{ik-1}$ is weaker and not-significant at conventional levels. Finally, in the complete model (number 6), $Media_{it-1}$ does not seem to be affected by the state of the economy.

Figure 3 illustrates the interaction effect between $Platform(Gov)_{ik-1}$ and $Economy_{t-1}$ by plotting for topic i the predicted values of attention it receives in the cabinet agenda at different levels of attention in the government party platforms (with other variables set at their mean). The three lines represent different economic scenarios: the mean level of $Economy_{t-1}$ (0.19) and its values respectively one standard deviation above (1.9) and below (-1.52) the mean. The predicted value of a topic that takes 10% of the platform is around 5% when the economy is in good shape and around 6.3% when it is in distress.

Remarkably, the three lines start to diverge only for topics that take on average at least 5% of manifesto attention. This indicates that our model captures a trend characterising a subset of topics lying at the core of government functioning (see the 8 hottest topics in Figure 1).

INSERT FIGURE 3 HERE

Conclusion

Cabinets are the driving force in contemporary democracies and the Council of Ministers is its decision-making engine. Mapping out the policy content of decisions taken in the Council allows a glimpse into the complexity of the administrative machinery. This paper represents a first attempt to test which factors affect this most important agenda.

We found evidence that the Portuguese executive does indeed form its agenda based on the content of its programmatic platform. This finding confirms the image of a strongly centralised majoritarian political system, the result of constitutional and party system changes which have started in the mid-1980s (Lobo 2005). This does not completely exclude the possibility of the executive taking up some issues from the opposition platform in anticipation of attacks during the next electoral campaign or to challenge the “ownership” of specific issues. Yet, it does so selectively, mostly picking

up issues in the agenda of their most credible electoral opponents. Vice versa, the impact of challenger parties' priorities remains marginal.

We found some level of correlation between the lagged media and the Council agendas. This is not unexpected since executives are often the first institutional actor to detect potential or actual problem sources (through the administrative apparatus) and respond to societal events (being a relatively small committee their decision-making is more flexible than the one of the legislative branch). Furthermore, their response can also be triggered by parliamentary oversight, which – as other studies have consistently shown (Thesen, 2013; Vliegenthart et al., 2016; Vliegenthart and Walgrave, 2011) – strongly interact with the agenda of media outlets. On the other hand, one of the most robust findings is that the media effect is weaker when compared to the impact of the party platform of the elected government. We argue that, while executives follow the cue of the media, they are also in charge of a wide range of micro-decisions – some of them made on a routine basis – in reactions to events that do not hit the headlines of main published media.

Our most interesting finding is the strengthening of the government party platform effect on the cabinet agenda as the state of the economy worsens. This result is in line with previous accounts of the political impact of the recent sovereign debt crisis in Portugal (Moury and Freire, 2013; Moury and Standing, 2017). They show that the Portuguese executive saw an increase in its margin of manoeuvre during the crisis and was given a greater capacity to advance its agenda within the terms of the Memoranda of Understanding and the supervision of the Troika. Interestingly, this argumentation is confirmed when using micro-level quantitative data and a longer time-frame.

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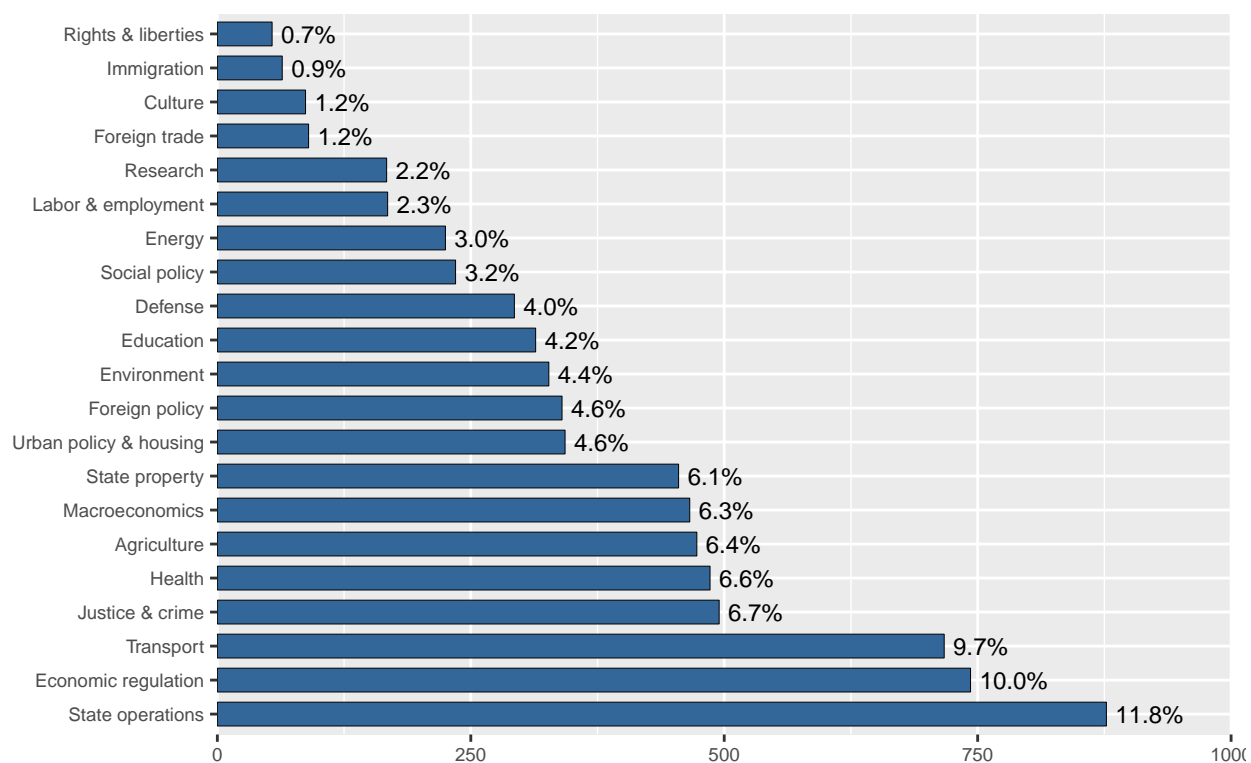
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Analysis media gov

Figure 1. Distribution of Council of ministers decisions by topic

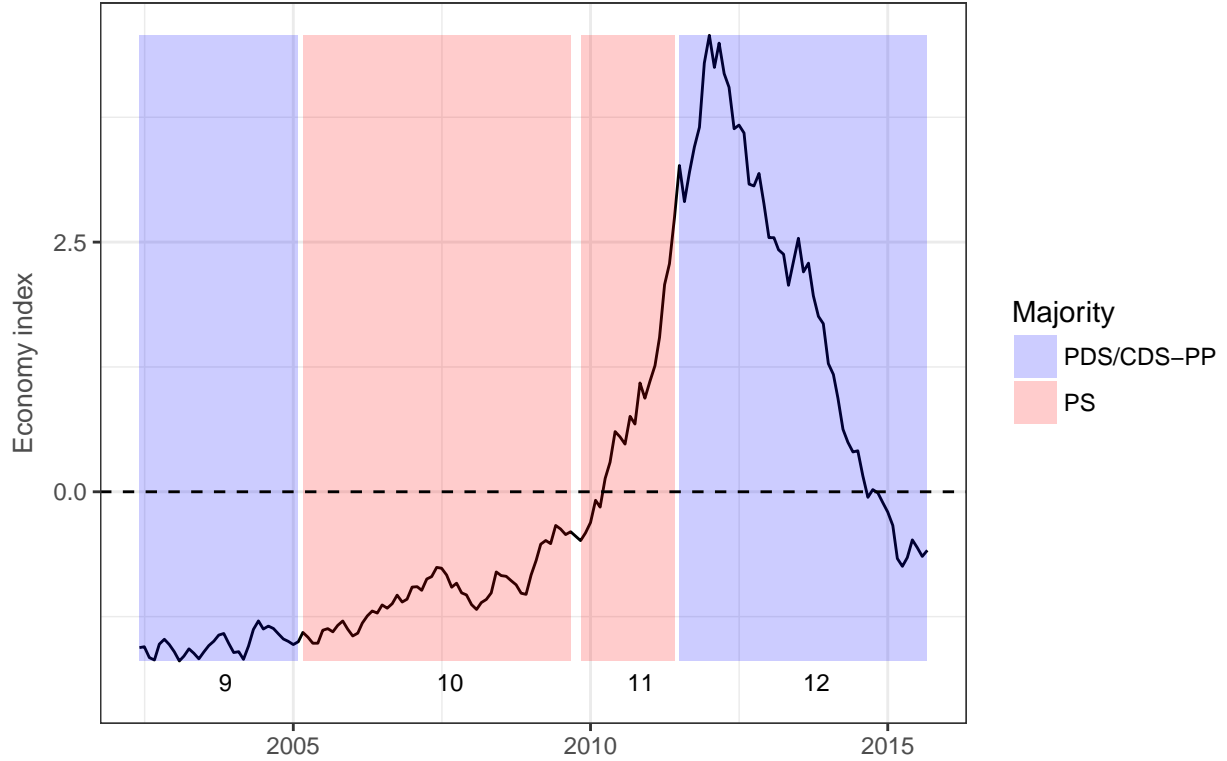


	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Constant</i>	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
<i>Gov_{it-1}</i>	0.22*** (0.02)	0.23*** (0.02)	0.22*** (0.02)
<i>Gov_{it-12}</i>	0.17*** (0.02)	0.18*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)
<i>Media_{it-1}</i>	0.08** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.02)	0.07** (0.03)
<i>Platform(Gov)_{ik-1}</i>	0.23*** (0.03)		0.19*** (0.04)
<i>Platform(MainOpp)_{ik-1}</i>		0.14*** (0.03)	0.07** (0.03)
<i>Platform(Challenger)_{ik-1}</i>		0.06* (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
R ²	0.24	0.23	0.24
Adj. R ²	0.24	0.23	0.24
Num. obs.	3087	3087	3087

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 1: Time series cross-sectional analyses of executive agendas

Figure 2 Economy index



	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<i>Constant</i>	0.02*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
<i>Media</i> _{it-1}	0.08** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.02)	0.07** (0.03)
<i>Gov</i> _{it-1}	0.21*** (0.02)	0.22*** (0.02)	0.21*** (0.02)
<i>Gov</i> _{it-12}	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.16*** (0.02)
<i>Economy</i> _{it-1}	-0.00* (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
<i>Platform</i> (<i>Gov</i>) _{ik-1}	0.21*** (0.03)		0.15*** (0.04)
<i>Pf</i> (<i>Gov</i>) _{ik-1} * <i>Eco</i> _{it-1}	0.05** (0.02)		0.07*** (0.02)
<i>Media</i> _{it-1} * <i>Eco</i> _{it-1}	-0.01 (0.02)	0.04** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.02)
<i>Platform</i> (<i>MainOpp</i>) _{ik-1}		0.15*** (0.03)	0.11** (0.04)
<i>Platform</i> (<i>Challenger</i>) _{ik-1}		0.05 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
<i>Pf</i> (<i>MainOpp</i>) _{ik-1} * <i>Eco</i> _{it-1}		-0.01 (0.01)	-0.03 (0.02)
<i>Pf</i> (<i>Challenger</i>) _{ik-1} * <i>Eco</i> _{it-1}		0.00 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
R ²	0.24	0.23	0.25
Adj. R ²	0.24	0.23	0.24
Num. obs.	3087	3087	3087

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 2: Time series cross-sectional analyses of executive agendas (interaction with misery index)

Figure 3 Interaction effect between attention in government platform and economy

