Political Careers and Minister Turnover under Presidentialism

Marcelo Camerlo
University of Lisbon

Abstract. This paper examines the impact of political career on minister turnover in a presidential democracy. I distinguish between partisan and technocrats ministers and then I apply survival analysis to estimate the different risks of leaving office of these types of ministers, considering both institutional attributes and critical events. The findings point out that a) there is a clear and strong difference between technocrat and partisan ministers regarding their respective likelihood to remain in office; b) that difference varies according to whether there are critical events at stake. Technocrats have much more chances to remain in office under scenarios without conflicts, while they are at much more risk when conflicts emerge; and c) institutional attributes are not useful for explaining minister turnover in a democracy where single party cabinets are the rule. Neither the legislative status of the President nor the coalition status of the cabinet affects differently both types of ministers.
Political careers can be crucial to understand minister turnover. By definition, experienced ministers have more resources to manage the decision making process, to face unexpected situations, and consequently to control their own permanence and exit from cabinet. In addition, diverse kinds of experiences should affect minister turnover differently. For instance, partisan ministers would be expectable to be more sensible to factors such as the electoral cycle or the legislative support than independent ministers.

How is the relationship between political career and minister turnover in Latin America democracies? Despite of the last advances of the research on presidential cabinets, we still know little about the subject. On the one hand, the literature on political careers in Latin America is recent and mainly focuses on legislators or presidency candidates. The minister position, with its own particularities, has been marginally considered. On the other hand, there is little research on Latin American minister turnover. So far, the literature has mainly focused on cabinet as a whole at the moment of its formation, giving special attention to the legislative support of the President and party composition of the cabinet. These studies have made a crucial contribution on the field, showing that presidential cabinets also matter. However, there is still little evidence about
individual ministers during the administration life cycle, non-legislative supports, and non-coalition cabinets.
With the aim of facing these gaps, this paper examines minister turnover in a presidential democracy where single party cabinets are the rule. We categorize ministers according to whether they had a previous career oriented to administration functions -in order to discriminate between individuals with any kind of political supports and individual without any. We then estimate the risk of leaving office of these types of ministers, considering both institutional attributes and critical events.
The paper is structured as follows. The first section points out the advances and deficits of the literature on Latin American cabinet ministers. The second section proposes analytical distinctions for the study of minister turnover under presidentialism and poses the hypotheses to be tested. The third section describes data and method. We use survival analysis to estimate portfolio duration of 175 ministers in seven Argentinean administrations. The fourth section presents the results. The final section concludes.

CABINET MINISTERS IN LATIN AMERICA

The study of Latin American cabinet ministers is recent despite the relevance of the subject. A first reason for this situation is related to historical circumstances. Until few decades ago the main challenge for Latin American political systems, defined at the regime level, was the tension between democracy and dictatorship. Hence, scholarly attention focused on institutional arrangements as a whole and not on particular institutions such as cabinets, or on particular actors such as ministers. A second reason for the lack of research on this topic is related to the institutional set-up of Latin American political systems, namely presidentialism. Given the formal autonomy of the president and his or her dominance within the executive branch, cabinet members have not raised a great deal of scholarly interest (Linz, 1990; Lijphart, 1999; Sartori, 1994). More recently the survival of third-wave democracies has triggered a new research agenda. Latin American democracies are showing a previously
unknown capacity to survive, shifting attention to institutional dynamics within the system. The most significant phenomenon of the new era is the forced resignation of presidents without democratic breakdown, which triggered an innovative field of studies (Carey, 2002; Hochstetler, 2006; Hochstetler and Samuels, 2011; Llanos and Marsteintredet (eds.), 2010; Pérez Liñán, 2007; Valenzuela, 2004).

An emerging line of research that concentrates on the study of Latin American cabinets has begun to develop as part of this trend. This research challenges the notion that presidentialism provides weak incentives to build and sustain cabinet coalitions, as well as the association between minority presidents and high levels of executive-legislative conflict or democratic instability. In short, this field posed several empirical challenges to the previous literature by showing that coalition and minority cabinets are neither exceptional nor dysfunctional types under presidentialism (Altman, 2000; Altman and Castiglione, 2010; Amorim Neto, 2006; Chasquetti, 2001; Chasquetti, 2008; Cheibub, 2002; Cheibub and Limongi, 2002; Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh, 2004; Dehesa, 1998; Mejía, 2008; Negretto, 2003).

Although important progress has been made, the recent literature presents at least four gaps in the study of presidential ministers:

*Individual ministers.* The literature has mainly concentrated on the cabinet as a whole in order to identify types of cabinet, their determinants and their consequences. This approach overlooks individual ministers and internal cabinet dynamics, which are critical in presidential systems. For example, while recent studies document cabinet reshuffles in order to trace episodes of coalition formation and dissolution, portfolio reallocations in single-party cabinets remain in the shadows. In presidential democracies, where boundaries between one cabinet and the next are less clear and often less significant than in parliamentary systems, where party membership is less binding (and often weaker), and where decree instruments sometimes replace legislative support, some individual minister changes can considerably affect the decision-making process (Huber and Martínez-Gallardo, 2008; Martínez-Gallardo, 2011).

*Political support beyond the legislature.* Following the literature on parliamentarism, the emerging literature on presidential cabinets confers a
crucial role to the ministers in the relationship with the legislative branch. The presence of ministers belonging to multiple parties is taken as an indicator of the existence of a cabinet coalition, and the number of seats controlled by those parties in the legislature is taken as an indicator of the majority or minority status of the presidents. In presidential systems, however, presidents can bypass the legislature legally and politically. They can bypass congress legally through the use of executive prerogatives that allow them to act unilaterally vis-à-vis the parliament, and they can do so politically by mobilizing organized groups or by commanding high rates of presidential approval (Amorim Neto, 2006).

Beyond party affiliation. The partisan affiliation of a cabinet minister is usually taken to indicate that his or her party supports the president, and by extension to be a proxy for coalition duration (if the set of party affiliations in the cabinet changes, it is understood that the coalition has changed.) This assumption is tainted by two problems. On one hand, in presidential systems the party ID of a minister not always guarantees that his or her party will support the government in the legislature. On the other, going back to our previous point, once we consider patterns of political support beyond legislative coalitions, party affiliation becomes only one among other possible forms of social and political affiliation of cabinet ministers. The literature has ignored this issue, usually addressed under the broad label of ‘independent’ ministers (Siavelis and Morgenstern, 2008)

Minister turnover is more than an indicator of instability. Unlike ‘government duration’ in parliamentary democracies, minister turnover is an ambiguous indicator under presidentialism. The replacement of a minister may be related to situations of conflict (e.g., ministers disagreeing with the president), to positive situations (e.g., popular ministers running for legislative elections), or to non-political situations (e.g., the ministers’ health). That is, minister turnover can be ‘bad’, ‘good’ or ‘neutral’ for the government, and within these three situations, ministers’ departure or replacement can be forced, strategically decided upon, both, or neither. Both the literatures on parliamentary and presidential ministers are in its infancy on this point (Dowding and Dumont, 2009)
This section provides some analytical distinctions for the analysis of minister turnover under presidentialism. First, we distinguish two types of ministers, according to whether their previous careers were oriented to the administrative function. Second, we conceive minister turnover as an instrument of governance, and to define the conditions under which this instrument is expected to be used. Finally, we posed a set of hypotheses to be tested.

*Types of ministers*

The minister position has a double function, namely a political and an administrative functions. Using party affiliation as a criterion of reference, the literature has focused on the first dimension and distinguished between partisan ministers and the others, generally labeled as independents. Given the deficits that this criterion presents, especially for Latin American presidentialism, we propose to distinguish ministers by focusing on the second dimension of the minister position. Hence, we choose the attribute of ‘expertise’ and identify ‘technocratic’ and ‘non-technocratic’ ministers.

Technocrats are individuals that can be recognizable by their personal competence or skill on a specific area. And this skill can be assumed as the principal reason for their nomination as ministers. Technocrats can be members of collective corps such as parties or organized groups, but competence and skill appear as their main distinctive attribute. On the other side, non-technocrats are individuals with non-specific skills. The assumption here is that the reasons for their recruitment is related to their membership to an organized group such as a political party. Therefore, we call them partisans. These two types of ministers present differences regarding their resources, ambitions and needs.

The advantages of this distinction are the following: On the one hand, the category of technocrat allows us to put emphasis on one of the individual dynamics that enable presidentialism. Technocrats are single persons –or their recognition is based on a personal attribute. On the other hand, the category of partisan allows us to consider all kind of political support, not only the legislative one. The proposed category includes members of any kind of organized group that could bring support to the president.
How do these two types of ministers can be related to minister turnover? Given their differences regarding resources, ambitions and needs, it is expectable that each type of minister occupies the portfolio position differently. Furthermore, but more important, it is expectable that, for the same reasons, presidents will consider them differently. This point is crucial because nomination and dismissal is a prerogative of presidents.

*Portfolio allocation as a political instrument*

We conceive this prerogative as a political instrument of governability, mostly managed by the President. By *instrument of governability*, we are suggesting that portfolio allocation is a tool for achieving effectiveness and legitimacy. Effectiveness relates to the minister’s performance and then, though only in principle, to the person’s talent. That is, presidents can use portfolio allocation to appoint the most talented people in order to obtain good performance. However, as pointed out by Berlinsky et al. (2007), good performance can mean many things. For instance, it can mean control of civil servants, avoiding scandals, dominance of the mass media, designing innovative policies, or blind obedience to the president. Therefore the meaning of ‘talent’ is also broad, encompassing distinct attributes such as expertise, entrepreneurship, oratory skills or loyalty.\(^1\) For its part, legitimacy relates to the achievement of political support in different areas. Political support has different aims and different sources. As stated above, one of the most studied forms is parliamentary support for government formation. Yet the aims of political support are broader, including cabinet election, cabinet formation, cabinet performance, and cabinet survival. The sources of political support are also multiple, the most relevant being legislative bodies, the electorate and organized groups. For example, portfolio allocation can be used to generate the support of the electorate by renewing ministers with a negative image, especially in democracies that facilitate retrospective voting. Minister turnover can be related to situations of conflict (e.g. deficit of

---

\(^{1}\) Therefore is more appropriate to say that presidents are interested in using PR to appoint (not the most talented but rather) the ‘right’ person, according to the kind of performance that he expects from a given portfolio.
performance or loss of specific support), though not necessarily (e.g. aiming at better performance or new supports). 2

In sum, portfolio allocation can be used to increase performance or support (or to reduce conflict generated by the loss of performance or support). However, we conceive portfolio allocation as a potential instrument, which leads to two observations. Firstly, portfolio allocation is not the only instrument that presidents have at their disposal to obtain performance and support. Secondly, not every portfolio allocation is used to improve performance and support. For instance, as we have seen, ministers can leave the cabinet for non-political reasons (illness, desire to return to the private sector, retirement). Then, when is minister turnover used?

The applicability of minister turnover depends on the conditions of governability present at the time of the administration. In this regard, the parliamentary literature has distinguished between attributes - including structural variables such as legislative support, coalition status of the cabinet or party system- and critical events -including conjuncture variables such as scandals, protests or financial crises- (see Warwick, 1994).

In order to adapt these distinctions to Latin American democracies, we propose to consider the two basic presidential strategies and the arenas related to those strategies.

As outlined above, presidential constitutions offer presidents two basic strategies for policymaking, namely a statutory-based strategy and a strategy based on executive prerogatives. The president’s decision on which strategy to adopt depends on whether he or she has some specific attributes. Accordingly, presidents with a majority in parliament are expected to be more oriented towards a statutory strategy, while presidents with wide-reaching decree powers or high levels of popularity are expected to be more oriented towards an executive prerogative strategy. Presidents with any of those attributes are considered ‘strong’; otherwise, they are weak presidents. The coalition status of

---

2 Conflict can operate as the flipside both of support and good performance. That is, it is expected that important decreases of support and deficits of performance lead to the emergence of conflicts. And presidents can use PR to deal with these. For instance, the loss of a majority in the legislature, a decrease in popularity before elections, the dissatisfaction of specific groups, as well of deficits in performance, can be counteracted by the redistribution of portfolios.
the cabinet is not in itself an attribute of strength, but rather coalition cabinets are related to the statutory strategy, while single-party cabinets are related to the executive strategy (Amorim Neto, 2006: 417)

Furthermore, critical events refer to unexpected situations that presidents have to face during their administration. Critical event situations introduce changes (or are symptoms of changes) that can challenge performance or support. We propose to distinguish between events occurring in the institutional decisional-making channel – such as conflicts involving the executive and the legislative - and events occurring outside of the institutional channel – such as protests or media scandals. The idea is to discern events that could affect performance or support within the arena related to the statutory strategy from events that could affect performance or support within arenas related to the executive strategy.

All in all, we conceive portfolio allocation as a potential instrument for facing critical events that challenge the performance or the political support of presidents’ administrations. The effective use of portfolio reallocation will depend on the president’s attributes and the type of event in question.

How do different types of ministers can influence the president’s use of portfolio allocation? From the president’s perspective, technocrats have a double meaning, especially under turbulent contexts. On the one hand, technocrats are cheaper to remove than partisans. They are individual actors with any or minor external collective uphold. Behind them, there is neither an organized group to bargain nor an external political support to loose. On the other hand, technocrats are more capable to perform under unstable circumstances than partisans. Beyond the expertise and a likely greater control of the bureaucracy, technocrats are supposed to be more excluded from the regular political game than partisans. Consequently, they are less vulnerable to discontent citizens, media opposition, or pressures from other political actors.

The equation is quite different under calm contexts. Once at the office, the individual character of technocrats makes them less defiant to the president than partisans. In principle, technocrats are less politically ambitious and do not count on external support to uphold and encourage this ambition.

From the minister’s perspective, it is possible to expect similar strategies under different scenarios. Positive scenarios would promote the same inclination to
permanence in office (but for different reasons) for technocrats as well as for partisans. Vice versa, complicated scenarios would promote the same inclination to exit for both types of ministers.

**Hypotheses**

Consequently, we posed the following four hypotheses. To begin with, we expect that presidents consider differently technocrats and partisans according to the instability of the context.

*Hypothesis 1: Under calm situations, technocrats face a lower risk of leaving office than partisans*

When there is no critical event affecting the administration, we expect that portfolio reallocation affects more partisan than technocratic ministers. While both types of ministers are similarly inclined to remain in office, presidents use portfolio allocation to ‘discipline’ their cabinet and reinforce their respective inner circle removing the more defiant ministers.

*Hypothesis 2.a: Under turbulent situations, technocrats face a greater risk of leaving office than partisans*

*Hypothesis 2.b: Under turbulent situations, technocrats face a lower risk of leaving office than partisans*

We have two competing hypotheses for situations where conflicts are affecting the administration. According to our framework, presidents can decide to face conflicts by removing technocrats (the ‘cheaper’ option) or by removing partisans (the ‘competent’ option). In addition, we expect that strong presidents consider technocrats and partisans differently from weak presidents.

*Hypothesis 3: With strong presidents, technocrats face risk of leaving portfolio than partisans*
The reasoning is similar to that for calm contexts. We expect that strong presidents use portfolio reallocation to build or reinforce their respective inner circle. Partisan ministers, with their own political ambitions and supported by organized group, represent a bigger challenge than technocrat ministers.

*Hypothesis 4.a:* With weak presidents, technocrats face a greater risk of leaving office than partisans.

*Hypothesis 4.b:* With weak presidents, technocrats face a lower risk of leaving office than partisans.

As for hypotheses regarding conflicts, we have two competing hypotheses for those cases in which the presidents are weak. We expect that presidents will face their respective administration by removing technocrats (the ‘cheaper’ option) or by removing partisans (the ‘competent’ option).

**DATA**

The hypotheses posed previously will be tested with a dataset that observes every change of ministers within seven Argentinean administrations. The boundaries of an administration are defined by the entry and departure of a president, and the observed time period runs from the transition to democracy in December of 1983 to March 2011. The administrations considered are Alfonsín 1983-89, Menem I 1989-1995, Menem II 1995-1999, de la Rúa 1999-2001, Duhalde 2001-2003, Kirchner 2003-2007, and Fernández 2007-2011. The variables are the following.

*Duration in office.* This variable measures the number of days that a minister occupied a specific portfolio. The model distinguishes between departures occurring at the end of the administration (i.e. the ministers who leave office together with the president) from departures occurring during the administration. The dataset records changes in all portfolios. Descriptive analysis show that the observed effective durations range from a minimum of 6
days to a maximum of 1993 days, with an average permanence in office of 574
days (see table 1).

Technocratic ministers. This is a dichotomous variable that register whether the
subject is a partisan minister (technocrat=0) or a technocratic minister
(technocrat=1). The database registers a total of 175 individuals, of which the
48.9% belongs to the last category. The presence of technocrats within
administrations ranges from about 32% (Duhalde) to about 56 % (Menem II).

As stated in the previous section, unexpected events can be of two types, namely
institutional (internal) or extra-institutional (external). We will consider
disputes between the executive and the legislative branches as a case of the first
type, and social protests and media scandals as cases of the second type. We
observe the number of these conflicts per month. However, and unlike portfolio
reallocation, the temporal delimitation of conflicts is complex to precisely
establish. For instance, the effect of a scandal in t1 can have an impact on the
administration in t3. Given this attribute, we arbitrarily decided to assign
duration of 30 days to each type of conflict. The information gathered for the
construction of these variables derives from Lodola et. al 2007.

Scandals. This variable measures the number of media scandals in which the
president’s party, members of the cabinet, president’s family or friends, and the
president himself were involved in a given month. Scandals could refer to
administrative corruption, abuse of power, or character issues, such as sex
scandals. The total observed number of scandals for the whole period is 43 and
varies from 1 to 15 per each administration.

Protests. This variable registers the number of social protests that affected a
given administration during each month under study. Social protests are defined
as contentious mobilization in the streets targeted at the state (Lodola et al.,
2007), and could involve looting and riots, roadblocks, invasions of land,
occupations of public or private buildings, and marches and demonstrations. The
total observed number of protests for the whole period is 62 and varies from 6 to
18 per each administration.

Disputes. This variable measures the number of visible episodes of executive-
legislative confrontation per month. These confrontations could involve conflicts
related to approval of bills, the questioning of the right/authority/ability to rule
or to legislate, and/or the impeachment of ministers. The total observed number of disputes for the whole period is 19 and varies from 1 to 6 per each administration.

Presidents have two main strategies of policy making (statutory and executive). The applicability of one or other of these strategies depends on whether presidents have some specific attributes, and strong presidents are those who have the attributes to apply one or another strategy. There are several ways of establishing what strength attributes are, but we basically follow Amorim Neto (2006). Specifically, we will use the legislative status of the cabinet as a proxy for the statutory strategy. In turn, coalition cabinets are related to the statutory strategy and single-party cabinets are related to the executive strategy.

**Minority.** This variable registers whether the president enjoys minority legislative support in both chambers. Three presidents had minority during their respective whole administrations, namely Alfonsín, Menem I, and de la Rúa. Two presidents begin their respective administrations with a majority legislative support, and lost it after the intermediate elections, namely Menem II and Fernández.

**Coalition.** This variable registers whether the cabinet includes members of parties that are different from the president’s. Only two presidents formed coalition cabinets. The first one was de la Rúa (1999), who won elections with an electoral coalition. The second one is Duhalde (2002) who was the only president nominated by the congress and formed a cabinet of crisis.

The economic variables include *inflation* and gross domestic product annually, both from World Development Indicators. Inflation range from a deflation of 1.2% with Menem I in 1999 to an hyperinflation of about 3079% with Alfonsín in 1989. GDP ranges from a recession of -10.89% with Duhalde in 2002 to a growth of 12.7% with Menem I in 1991.

*Event history analysis allows us to estimate the probability that an individual will experience an event at time $t$ while that individual is at risk for having an event. Additionally, semi-parametric Cox proportional hazards models allows us to analyze phenomena without assuming a specific shape for the hazard function (Blossfeld et al., 2007). We will use this statistical technique in order to test
whether: a) technocrats have a different probability to leave office compared to partisans; and b) how presidents’ attributes and unexpected critical events impact on that difference.

The model will follow four specifications. The first specification includes the technocratic type, conflicts and institutional attributes. The second specification introduces interactions between the technocrats and the three different conflicts. The third specification introduces interactions between technocrats and institutional attributes. The last step introduces the macro economic variables, namely inflation and gross domestic product.

The effect of each covariate is shown as a hazard ratio. A hazard ratio of 1.5 means that an increase of one unit in the covariate will increase in 50% the likelihood of a minister to leave his or her portfolio while a hazard ratio of 0.5 means that an increase of one unit in the covariate will decrease in 50% the likelihood of a minister to leave his or her portfolio.

### Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alfonsin</th>
<th>Menem I</th>
<th>Menem II</th>
<th>de la Rúa</th>
<th>Duhalde</th>
<th>Kirchner</th>
<th>Fernández</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(days) min/max</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partisans</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>55.88</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td>44.83</td>
<td>68.42</td>
<td>47.37</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>53.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technocrats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>38.71</td>
<td>44.12</td>
<td>55.56</td>
<td>55.17</td>
<td>31.58</td>
<td>52.63</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>46.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scandals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>30.23</td>
<td>34.88</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>11.63</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protest</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>29.03</td>
<td>20.97</td>
<td>24.19</td>
<td>8.06</td>
<td>8.06</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disputes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>21.05</td>
<td>31.58</td>
<td>21.05</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition</strong></td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>May-Min</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Maj</td>
<td>Maj-Min</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inflation</strong></td>
<td>755.27</td>
<td>801.21</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>19.66</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>343.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP</strong></td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>-2.86</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>8.83</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANALYSIS

To begin with, the results show that technocratic ministers have a hazard rate different to 1, that is, they have a dissimilar risk to leave portfolio than partisan minister (the category of reference in the model). This hazard ratio is less than 1, meaning that the risk for these ministers is lower. Specifically, the first specification indicates that, at each survival time, the likelihood that a technocrat leaves his or her portfolio is 67% the likelihood of partisan ministers. This is an important difference, which becomes greater and more significant in the last two specifications of the model.

Besides, there are covariates that impact each type of minister in a dissimilar way. This differentiated impact is clear when interactions between the three kinds of conflict and technocrats are included into the model. The initial direct effect of scandals in specification 1 becomes non significant in the last two specifications. However the interaction between this conflict and technocrats becomes significant at p<.01, with a conditional hazard ratio of 5.73 (p<.00, z=5.39 ). These two coefficients indicate that while scandals do not affect the hazard rate of partisans they do positively affect the hazard rate of technocratic ministers. The greater the number of scandals the higher the risk of technocrats to leave the portfolio.

Disputes display a similar dynamic. As the interaction term shows, these conflicts only affect technocrats with a conditional hazard rate of 2.52.

The protests also have a differential impact on each of both types of ministers. However, they present two particularities. First, protests affect the hazard rate of partisan ministers and they do not alter the hazard rate of technocrats. The direct effect of protest is significant but the conditional coefficient for technocrats not. Second, the effect is in the opposite direction of the previous conflicts. The more the level of protest the less the likelihood of an earlier exit of partisans. The hazard rate of a partisan when there is a protest is about 25% of the hazard rate of technocrats.

The model shows not so clear effects for the institutional attributes. The first three specifications of the model indicate that minority presidents increase the hazard rate of all ministers in 60% compared to majority cabinets. So far and as
was expected, the risk of anticipated exit is higher when the president has minority legislative support. However this effect becomes non significant when economic variables are included. As shown in model 2, the interaction term is not significant (this result remains with the inclusion of the economic variables, not shown in the table) indicating that this covariate affects in a similar way both technocrats and partisans.

The results indicate a significant effect of coalition cabinets that remains significant through all the specifications of the model. However, the direction is in the opposite to was expected. Coalition cabinets increase considerably the risk of exit of their ministers. This effect is for all the ministers since the interaction term between this covariate and technocrat appears non significant.

Regarding the economic variables, the results indicate that inflation affects positively the hazard rate of ministers (the table show only two decimal of the coefficient, which actually is 1.000197). GDP does not have a significant effect on the hazard rate of ministers. In any case, the inclusion of these variables does not modify the differential hazard rate between both types of ministers (0.35 for technocrats in both last steps). The model was tested using administrations and portfolio as fixed effects. The results remain similar.
Table 1: Determinants of Minister Turnover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1) Hazard Ratio</th>
<th>(2) Hazard Ratio</th>
<th>(3) Hazard Ratio</th>
<th>(4) Hazard Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technocrats</strong></td>
<td>-.67* (-1.95)</td>
<td>.95 (-.12)</td>
<td>.35*** (-3.79)</td>
<td>.35*** (-3.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scandals</strong></td>
<td>2.72*** (4.30)</td>
<td>2.69*** (4.27)</td>
<td>1.38 (0.90)</td>
<td>1.52 (1.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protests</strong></td>
<td>(.51^ -1.90)</td>
<td>.5^ (-1.88)</td>
<td>.25* (-2.27)</td>
<td>.25* (-2.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disputes</strong></td>
<td>1.03 (0.07)</td>
<td>1.04 (0.09)</td>
<td>.29 (1.23)</td>
<td>.29 (1.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techno*Scan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.71** (2.86)</td>
<td>3.76** (2.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techno*Prot</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.0^ (1.86)</td>
<td>4.19* (1.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techno*Disp</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.9^ (1.85)</td>
<td>8.73* (1.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minority Presidents</strong></td>
<td>1.58* (2.03)</td>
<td>1.94* (2.17)</td>
<td>1.60* (2.11)</td>
<td>1.24 (0.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition President</strong></td>
<td>1.86* (2.33)</td>
<td>1.97* (2.04)</td>
<td>1.90* (2.45)</td>
<td>2.24* (2.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techno*min</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.62</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techno*coal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inflation</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.00** (2.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.99 (-0.47)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p <.05, ** p <.01, *** p <.001; ^ p <.1; Z values in parentheses.

These results confirm our first hypothesis. Technocrats have a different likelihood to leave office under calm scenarios. This difference is clear and strong in favor of technocrats. When there are no protests nor disputes or scandals, partisans have much more chances to leave portfolio. Our explanations for this situation is that presidents, when they are not forced to attend external conflict, remove partisans in order to build or reinforce their inner circle.

Technocrats have also different likelihood to leave office under turbulent scenarios. This evidence reinforces our basic expectation: there is a difference...
between technocrats and partisans, and this difference is confirmed by the
diverse way in which the chances to survive of each type minister is affected by
the presence of conflicts. When critical events emerge, the vulnerability of
remaining in office significantly increase for technocrats. This result confirms the
second alternative hypothesis. Our explanation for this is that presidents, when
facing conflicts, change the politically weaker minister.
The results are not the expected ones regarding the incidence of institutional
attributes. On the one hand, the legislative support of the president does not
affect the difference of risks between both types of ministers. That is, the risk of
technocrats, compared to the risk of partisans, is the same either with minority
and majority presidents. Moreover, even the overall hazard risk of ministers is
not modified. That is, the chance of all ministers to leave office does not increase
with minority presidents. This results goes against what is sustained by the
literature. Similarly, the coalition status of the cabinet does not alter the risk
difference between both types of minister. That is, technocrats and partisans
suffer in the same measure the change from single party cabinets to coalition
cabinets. However, the effect of this covariate goes in the opposite direction to
was established by the literature. Coalition presidents do more reshuffles than
non-coalition presidents.
The reasons for these results can be partially related to the kind of systems that
we are looking at, namely a presidential system where single-party cabinets are
the rule. In the Argentinean case, coalition cabinets are a peculiar output. Only
two of them occurred during the studied period. The first one was formed after
the sole experience of an electoral alliance that won the presidency, and ended
very badly. The second one was a cabinet of crisis, formed after the anticipated
resignation of the former president within in the most critical context of the
democratic era.
However, the situation is different when considering the distinction between
majority and minority presidents. There is an even distribution of majority
presidents and five minority cabinets. And all of them were similarly affected by
diverse political, economic and social conditions. Consequently, our explanation
for the non-significant impact of the legislative status is that this variable is not
an adequate indicator of the presidents’ strength. Beyond minority presidents
that were weak presidents (Alfonsín, the first year of Menem I and de la Rúa), there were also minority but strong presidents (the second terms of both Menem I and Fernández) and majority but weak presidents (Duhalde and Kirchner during his first years). Presidents’ strength seems to be related to a dynamic and volatile conjunction of variables, such as president popularity, own party control, articulation of the opposition, control of the ‘streets’, and economic situation.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though cabinet appointments are a key component of the political decision-making process, very little is known about this issue in Latin American democracies. Historical circumstances and presidential institutional design help to explain that state of affairs. With democratic breakdown becoming less likely, recent comparative literature has made important advances in the field. Bringing presidentialism to ‘normal’ political arenas, it has shown that those democracies can largely perform as well (or as poorly) as parliamentary democracies. Furthermore, coalition cabinets, initially considered as deviations or undesired outcomes under presidentialism, constitute one of the possible choices that political actors can strategically adopt. Inspired to a large extent by research on parliamentary systems, these studies emphasized the relationship between portfolio allocation and cabinet formation, taking party membership and legislative support as crucial explanatory variables.

Building on these advances, this paper aims to contribute to the study of portfolio allocation by focusing on cabinet appointments within administration, distinguishing types of ministers in function of their expertise, developing on how these types would influence the way in which presidents use portfolio allocation, and discriminating between turnover in calm as well as in turbulent contexts.

Our findings pointed out three main aspects. First, there is a clear and strong difference between technocrat and partisan ministers regarding their respective likelihood to remain in office. This evidence supports the importance to distinguish individual and collective dynamics.
Technocrats are mainly characterized by a personal attribute such as their expertise while partisan are mainly defined by their membership to an organized group. This distinction is also a straightforward way to include the dimension of political career in the analysis of minister turnover.

Second, the differences of chances to remain in office between technocrats and partisans vary according to whether there are critical events at stake. Technocrats have much more chances to remain in office under scenarios without conflicts, while they are at much more risk when conflicts emerge. On the one hand, this result shows that minister turnover is not only related to instability. On the other hand, this result would indicate that presidents use portfolio allocation both as a reactive and as a proactive instrument.

Third, institutional attributes are not useful for explaining minister turnover in a democracy such the Argentinean one. The legislative status of the President has effect neither on each type of minister nor on minister turnover as a whole. The level and type of minister turnover is the same both with majority and minority presidents. On its turn, the coalition status of the cabinet do affect minister turnover but not in the expected direction. Under coalition cabinet the risk for minister turnover increase. And this increase affects equally both types of ministers. We consider that these results are indicating the necessity of developing more accurate indicators to capture factors related to the strength of the head of the government, especially under democracies where single party cabinets are the rule.
References


Cheibub, José Antonio, Adam Przeworski, y Sebastián Saiegh (2004), Government Coalitions and Legislative Success under Presidentialism and Parliamentarism, British Journal of Political Science.


Lodola, Germán, Castagnola, Andrea Castagnola, and Pérez-Liñán, Aníbal (2007), Latin American Political Processes, 1980-2007, Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh


Negretto, Gabriel (2003), Minority Presidents and Types of Government in Latin America, Paper prepared for delivery at the annual meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Dallas, Texas, March 27-29.