Non-partisan ministers in Spain (1977–2010)

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the appointment of non-partisan ministers in Spain. Its political system has constituted a major example of one-party cabinet with highly presidentialization and increasing cabinet dominance over the party. We provide empirical evidence of the change in minister partisanship. Some Spanish cabinets have been formed only by party ministers while others cabinets have had a majority of non-partisan ministers. We propose to explain this variation in both cabinet and ministerial levels of analysis. Our results show the impact of individual factors on the probability that independent ministers might be appointed in specific political and parliamentary contexts.

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Political parties are a key factor to explain the internal dynamics of democratic governments (Katz, 1986, 1987, Garcia-Pelayo, 1986, Budge and Keman, 1990; Ware, 2004; Keman, 2006). However, its role depends, among others, of how is organized the separation of powers in the political system (Samuels and Shugart, 2010). In parliamentary systems, the development of party governments usually left to political parties a greater influence on public policy, patronage and appointments (Blondel and Cotta, 2000). Conversely, in presidential and semi-presidential systems the role of political parties is mainly located in parliament, while the influence on the executive seems weaker and will depend on the relationship with the president (Amorim, 2006; Amorim and Strom, 2006, Samuels and Shugart, 2010).

One dimension where we can see differences more conspicuously is the representation of the ruling parties in the cabinet (Andeweg, 2000). Overall, the characteristics of parliamentary systems lead to a quasi-monopoly of the parties on the cabinet appointments and a high presence of national party leaders in the executive (De Winter, 1991). As a result, the presence of non-partisan ministers has been considered a rarity in the parliamentary executive (Strom, 2000). However, recent studies have devoted more attention to the weight of the parties in the cabinet, which has shown that this phenomenon is more diverse than it might seem. In some parliamentary systems, ministers always belong to the party. In others, do not.

In this paper we look at the Spanish case, an example of a parliamentary system where the party monopoly in the cabinet has been broken several times. Since 1977, 23.1% of the ministers were not members of the ruling party at the time of his appointment. And at times, this group has been 50% of the cabinet (Rodriguez, 2011). Some authors have linked this phenomenon to the presidentialization of Spanish politics (Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2005). However, the high variation of this group over time does not match the growing and steady evolution suggested by this argument. In some cases, it may even be contradictory.

In order to explain the presence of non-party ministers in the Spanish government, we will address the problem from two levels of analysis: the degree of cabinet partisanship and the reasons that help to understand the appointment of non-party ministers.

1. Theoretical framework and methodology

1.1. The selection of ministers and partisanship

The scholar literature on executives has pointed out the political consequences of the separation of powers on the top of the government (Rose, 1980, Lijphart, 1992, 1999, Linz, 1997; Cheibub, 2007; Samuels and Shugart, 2010). One of these consequences
deals with the role of political parties. These have a greater influence on the government when it needs the confidence of parliament to survive (Sartori, 1995, Blondel 2000). By contrast, in presidential systems, political parties face more difficulties to maintain parliamentary cohesion and to dispute the power of the president (Cheibub, 2007, Carey, 2009). Another consequence is related to the selection of ministers and to the development of his ministerial career. In the parliamentary system, competition to enter the cabinet is more closed than in a presidential system where the pool of eligibles is more open (Dogan, 1989: 5). On the other hand, the ministers in presidentialism often have a shorter ministerial career over time and with little chance to repeat in the post or to move to a second portfolio (Blondel 1985: 265), which is consistent with their increased level of expertise (Blondel, 1985: 200). In comparison, parliamentarian ministers have a longer and more mobile career, although their degree of specialization is the lowest of all the ministerial elites in the world (Blondel 1985: 203).

Differences in the ministerial elite have been explained by the different incentives and political circumstances to be considered by heads of government when they choose ministers. In presidential systems, the profile of the ministers and the government party status depends on the president’s strategy in policy-making over the legislature (Amorim, 2006). In this case, the president’s strategic decisions will probably be determined not only by their own preferences, but also by institutional incentives and political and economic context (Amorim, 2006). These same factors also apply in the semi-presidential systems, specially in the of cohabitation between a president and a prime minister from different political parties (Amorim and Strom, 2006).

Certainly, the situation is very different in parliamentary systems. The parliamentarian origin of the executive leads to a party government, where leaders of parliament and of party organization come into the cabinet to rule the key portfolios. The relationship between the executive and the party is implemented on three main dimensions: appointments, public policy and patronage (Blondel and Cotta, 1996). Two distinctive features of parliamentary government strength the influence of the party on the cabinet: the establishment of multiparty coalition governments and the coincidence of the roles of prime minister and leader of the party on the same person. These two factors determine how the relationship between executives and parties will work. As a consequence, appointments may become an instrument in the hands of the head of government to control the party from the public office (Blondel y Cotta, 1996: 250-252). When the head of government gains autonomy to decide the profile and background of ministers, she may opt for independent candidates or individuals less linked to the party organization. This situation produce cabinet-dominance over the party, since party members in cabinet have strengthened its position within the party. Even a successful ministerial career capital can be a decisive advantage to improve party careers, to the extent that long-lasting ministers tend to be those of the party oligarchy (Blondel y Cotta, 1996: 253).

In general, non-partisan ministers are a rare situation in most contemporary democracies and in many countries they simply do not exist (Strom, 2000; Schleiter and Morgan-Jones, 2009). But this is an extreme which has notable exceptions. At the moment of selecting ministers, a prime minister must face institutional, party and intra-cabinet strategic constraints (Dowding and Dumont, 2009). These restrictions may explain some differences in the partisan nature of government. For example, in some parliamentary republics, the influence of the head of state may lead to the appointment
of non-partisan ministers, following the logic of the situation of cohabitation in semi-presidential republics (Amorim and Strom, 2006). Sometimes the head of government can veto ministerial appointments from the party (Gallagher et al. 1995: 34). Focusing on party rules, it has been argued that parties with open system for selecting candidates have more tendency to appoint independent cabinet ministers (Pennings, 2000). More generally, it has linked the presence of non-partisan ministers with the degree of presidentialization of parliamentary governments (Poguntke and Webb, 2005).

So far, these explanations have not been systematically applied to the parliamentary government, so there are still gaps in understanding what is the rationality of forming party cabinets without party ministers, regardless of caretaker governments. A deeper observation allows to detect some interesting failures of the theory.

Spain belongs to the third-wave democracies and is characterized by a system of majoritarian government with a strong prime minister, combining elements from the Westminster model (Lijphart, 1999) and the German chancellor model (Helms, 2003). One of the key elements showing the dominance of the Spanish prime minister is the process of cabinet formation after a general election (or a change of prime minister between elections): the parliament gives confidence to the Prime Minister and then he chooses the rest of the cabinet, establishing a relationship of subordination between him and the other cabinet members from the very beginning (Bar, 1988). This position of superiority is reinforced by other institutional and political arrangements, which has led to consider the Spanish prime minister as a clear example of presidentialization (Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2005). In Spain, the head of government do not fear any influence of the head of state, the King of Spain, which is a symbolic figure, devoid of any real power in cabinet formation. Finally, the prime minister has strengthened its position in the cabinet due to the absence of coalition governments, although in most of the legislatures, any party achieved an absolute majority in parliament. Spain is a peculiar example in which minority governments have been the most rational choice in the absence of a parliamentary majority party (Strom, 1990).

In this situation, the only challenges for the prime minister has come from the internal life of political parties and from multilevel politics. Most Spanish prime ministers have faced factional crisis in their party. On the other hand, decentralization experienced by Spain in the beginning of the democratic system has led to strong regional governments, which have often acted as counter-national governments, especially in cases of incongruence in the partisan composition between the national and regional (Stefuriuc, 2009).

Since 1977, one out of five ministers did not belong to the ruling party at the time of his appointment (Table 1). In fact, there have been independent ministers in almost all the cabinets, with few exceptions (1981, 1986-88 or 2003) However, this is an incomplete picture. In some cabinets, all members belonged to the party, while in other governments only a half did (Figure 1). This high variation raises questions for the traditional explanation of the non-partisan ministers in parliamentary governments.
1.2. Hypothesis

We will employ two levels of analysis to explain the selection of non-party ministers. The aggregate level aims to explain the degree of partisanship of governments. In some cabinets, the prime minister appoints more party ministers than in others. What explains the variation in the amount of non-party ministers? At the individual level, we consider the reasons why somebody coming from outside the parties may be appointed in the cabinet. What factors increase the probability for a non-partisan candidate to become a minister? These reasons may be connected with the aggregate level, but the analysis of individuals add some information that could lost by only analyzing the cabinets.

To understand the reasons considered by the Spanish Prime Minister to appoint cabinet members, we must take into account the nature of their model of government: a government parliamentary majority with very strong head of government, which dominates the parliamentary group and the party leader. Our main argument is that prime minister will appoint party ministers as an instrument of control on both the party and parliamentary group, in order to keep loyalty and support. Yet when problems arise with the parliamentary confidence (because of the lack of majority) or with the confidence of the party (because of internal factional crisis), he will try to hold and balance the weight of the party in the cabinet. Then, the primer minister will seek ministers beyond his own party and will prefer to appoint independent from his or from other parties, reflecting a presidential logic, aiming to reduce the degree of rejection to the executive and to appeal to the whole electorate instead of seeking multiparty coalitions with the opposition. This leads to a result not covered by the explanations of presidential and parliamentary governments (Poguntke and Webb, 2005; Amorim, 2006): it is the prime minister’s weakness, not his strength, which explains the choice of non-partisan ministers. On the contrary, this logic is closer to the dilemma facing government leaders in semi-presidential systems, where minority situations are associated with the non-partisan appointment of ministers (Amorim and Strom, 2006).

According to this argument, we might ask the following hypotheses to explain why there are more independent ministers in a government than in another. For the cabinet level, three main factors will be considered. When the ruling party does not obtain an absolute majority (and decides not to build coalitions with other parties), in situations of parliamentary minority the prime minister will prefer to appoint a higher number of technical, non-partisam ministers with lower political profile in order to facilitate agreements with parties from the opposition and to favour a consensual image amongst the voters.

The second hypothesis states that in situations of intense factional fighting within the ruling party, the president will prefer to appoint non-party members in order to limit the impact of the party crisis on the government and strengthen the loyalty of the cabinet members, to the detriment of the party.

The third hypothesis reflects the influence of the two previous scenarios, assuming that, as time goes by, crisis in the party or the parliamentary majority will be more likely to arise and erode prime minister’s position. As a consequence, we expect to find more non-party ministers in the cabinet over the prime ministers’ tenure. This third hypothesis could also be considered within each legislative term.
1.3. Method and data

To test our hypotheses, we will use the data of cabinet ministers elected from July 1977 and February 2011, contained in the database “Carreras Ministeriales 1976-2010.sav”. This database consists of 187 cases, of which we will exclude the four prime ministers without previous ministerial experience in democracy and the 14 ministers who only belonged to Suarez’s cabinet between July 1976 and July 1977, which was not formed upon a democratic representative parliament. For those ministers appointed before July 1977 and that entered also in the cabinet after that time, we consider their partisanship in the first appointment after that time.

To answer our research questions, we will use two different methods. For the first question, we will make a tour of the different cabinets of government by using the process tracing technique. Thus we will identify the presence of the factors related to the variation in the number of non-partisan ministers, in order to check whether our hypothesis are upheld. The hypothesis related to the second question are checked using a multivariate logistic regression analysis. The dependent variable will be the probability of being an independent minister at the time of first appointment of an individual in the cabinet. We will employ eight predictors to implement the regression:

- Parliament estatus: It distinguish cabinets having majority or minority;
- Party control: It identifies the presence or absence of intra-party conflicts with the prime minister during a legislative term. We use a proxy, defined by the legislative term, and we distinguish between conflictive and non-confictive terms. We have identifies as conflictive terms 1977-1982, 1989-1996 and 2004-2008.

- Incumbency: It measures how long the prime minister has been in power since he was elected head of government;

- Type of portfolio: There are portfolios from economic and social affairs (value 1) and other portfolios (value 0), which we consider political departments (as Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Justice or those supporting directly the prime minister);

- Specialization: It identifies those ministers with professional or political background on the affairs of their first portfolio. In particular, we consider professional background and experience in sub-minister positions of the same portfolio;

- Sub-minister positions: It includes those who were junior ministers or other sub-minister positions in any portfolio (called altos cargos);

- Gender: Women (value=0) and men (value=1);

- Outsiders: having had a post in any political arena (local, regional, national and european) of either representative nature or at the higher executive level (regional ministers or mayors).

In the individual level of analysis, variables 1-3 are also employed to control the influence of the political context (analysed in the cabinete level) on each individual appointment. The remaining variables correspond to the individual characteristics of the ministers, who will complete the answer to the second question.

2. Non-partisan ministers in Spain: a cabinet perspective

In this section, we will conduct a process tracing analysis of the formation of cabinets in Spain since 1977, paying attention to the appointments of non-party ministers. The objective is to identify to what extent the conditions provided by our model help to understand the presence of independent members in the cabinet.

The government of Adolfo Suárez of July 1977 was the first cabinet arised from a democratically elected parliament. Suárez had been named head of the executive a year earlier, under the laws of the authoritarian regime. The context of the transition to democracy substantially conditioned the development of the legislative term and the internal dynamic of the cabinet. This two-year term (between 1977 and 1979) was mainly devoted to the adoption of a democratic constitution, which was negotiated by the parties seated in the parliament. This favoured a general consensus on the main policies amongst the main parties. The fact that the ruling party (Unión de Centro Democrático, UCD) did not obtain an absolute majority nor made any general legislative agreement with other parliamentay group fostered the consensual approach of the executive during the whole term. This strategy went beyond the negotiation of the
Constitution and allowed important agreements amongst parties in economic and social fields. Finally, we should note that the UCD did not exist as a party by 1977, but it was an electoral coalition of parties that supported Suárez as a candidate for the executive. During the following months after the general election, the parties of the coalition merged into one single organization and created the UCD. This party-building process was not free of tensions, which in some cases affected the cabinet.

During this term, one in three ministers appointed by Suarez did not belong to UCD. In some cases they were professors and professional from the private, some had even participated in the UCD electoral list, but without joining the party. In others cases, they were top bureaucrats coming from the administration, particularly from those ministerial area affected by the deep economic crisis. The presence of several independent ministers was a Suárez’s strategy to keep control over the cabinet at the expense of the party and to promote agreements with the opposition in public policy aiming to avoid problems during the negotiation of the Constitution. However, it didn’t prevent at the same time the strong presence of party leaders in cabinet, representing the various factions of the UCD. The presence of the main party leaders and relevant non-partisan specialists led to a cabinet of celebrities, which provided a conflict regulation based on a consociational strategy (Huneeus, 1985: 197; Beyme, 1970). This case seemed to reveal the subordination of the party to the president and made the UCD “the government’s parliamentary tool (Hopkin, 2000: 114). However, the balance between party and government was hardly unproblematic. A few months after its formation, one of the leaders of the party quit the cabinet because of disagreements with the process of creation of the UCD. In February 1978 Suárez was forced to make a cabinet reshuffle, due to hostility between the Minister of Economy (independent) and other ministers of the party.

Once the constitution was approved, new elections were held in April 1979 and a new government was appointed. Since any party obtained an absolute majority, Suárez opted again for a minority cabinet, with occasional support from other parliamentary groups. The president chose to appoint ministers of the party in almost all ministries, but leaving the other party leaders out of the executive. Thus, he wanted to reaffirm his authority over the cabinet and strengthen the autonomy of the executive over the parliamentary group and the party (Powell, 2004: 164). However, this combination of presidential and coaliational models of party management (Hopkin, 2000: 171) applied to the cabinet did not obtain none of the two objectives pursued by Suarez. First, his authority was not strengthened, since he took upon himself the responsibility of the government’s policies, assuming directly the payoffs of their implementation, and was exposed to the attacks from his rivals within the party (Hopkin, 2000: 169; Caciagli, 1989: 413). Second, the system of party government without party leaders did not preserve the executive from party tensions as expected (Hopkin, 2000: 169). In contrast, the exit of the barones gave them time and reasons to conspire against Suarez from outside the government, free from the loyalty and the cabinet collegiability that would have given his position in the cabinet (Powell, 2001: 242). The internal fight in the UCD created enormous tensions and led to some departures by dissenting party factions. Less than two years after elections, Suárez unexpectedly resigned as head of government in January 1981.

This crisis does not end up in new elections, because UCD feared an electoral defeat. Instead, the leaders of the party factions chose Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo as a new
candidate for primer minister. After his parliamentary election, Calvo Sotelo formed a new cabinet composed exclusively of party members, where the main leaders of the different factions joined the executive. The cabinet kept its minority status and indeed Calvo Sotelo should be chosen in the second round due to the lack of necessary parliamentary votes. In the following months, the UCD internal crisis not only was not solved but it extended to the parliamentary group and lead to some ministerial resignation. In this situation, Calvo Sotelo decided to appoint a few ministers of high confidence from outside the party and reduced steadily the presence of UCD leaders in the cabinet. But that was not enough neither to keep internal cohesion nor to promote executive policies. A year and a half after being elected prime minister, Calvo Sotelo resigned and called for an early election.

The 1982 general election resulted in a resounding victory of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), which lead it to an absolute majority with 58% of the seats. Felipe Gonzalez was elected president. The PSOE kept this electoral and parliamentary dominance after the elections held in 1986 and in 1989. During these years, Gonzalez enjoyed an undisputed authority in the party, and party internal tensions did not affected the cabinet. In this time of political calm for the government, the cabinet was composed almost entirely by members of the party (there was no independent ministers between 1986 and 1988). In addition, Gonzalez decided to separate party and government by the general incompatibility between party posts and cabinet portafolios. The members of the party board could not be ministers and vice versa.

Nevertheless, internal dissent emerged during the third term related to the succession of Gonzalez. The clash between supporters of González and supporters of Alfonso Guerra (deputy prime minister and deputy leader of the party) gained weight and reached the executive when Guerra was forced to resign as minister due to a scandal. This resignation broke the balance between factions within the party and the cabinet, and weakened the link between party and government. Moreover, Gonzalez increased the presence of independent ministers, mostly recruited from sub-ministerial positions, in order to avoid the spread of the internal party crisis on the cabinet. In April 1993, Gonzalez was forced to call for an early election to prevent a rebellion of a part of the parliamentary group, controlled by the sector guerrista.

In the June 1993 general election, the PSOE lost the absolute majority and Gonzalez decided to seek parliamentary support of the Catalan nationalist Convergència i Unió (CiU). González formed a minority cabinet, with almost half of independent ministers, with the aim of promoting parliamentary agreements with CiU and foster an image of renewal to balance the internal strife in the party. However, during the fourth term, the executived suffered from some serious corruption scandals that affected members of government. Simultaneously, the PSOE began to lose elections (the 1994 European election and the 1995 local and regional elections) and Gonzalez should bring some leaders who had lost the regional government into the cabinet. The rest of ministers appointed during this term were bureaucrats coming mostly from the administration and were not party members. When Gonzalez decided to call again for an early election in January 1996, more than half of his ministers were not members of the PSOE.

The Partido Popular (PP) won the 1996 general election but did not reach the absolute majority as expected. On the contrary, it was forced to reach agreements with the nationalist parliamentary groups, although without forming a coalition government.
José María Aznar appointed a cabinet composed mostly of party members, most of whom were leaders of the party and had accompanied Aznar during the years in opposition. In this context, the control of the party by Aznar was very solid and there were not significant internal divisions. The parliamentary agreements with CiU and other nationalist parties were stable and the legislature expired completely. In the 2000 general election, the PP won an absolute majority, which reinforced Aznar’s leadership on the government and the party. At the end of the legislature, he formed a government composed entirely of members of the party, after one of the independent ministers appointed in 1996 joined the party. The control of Aznar over both the party and the cabinet allow him to arrange its succession as a prime minister without major internal dissent.

Nevertheless, the PSOE won the 2004 general election unexpectedly, in very exceptional political conditions (three days after the attack of 11-M). The new prime minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, had been elected party leader four years before by a narrow difference in a contested ballot and had not yet consolidated its position within the party. The high polarization of Spanish politics and the political opposition of the PP, as a reaction to the unexpected defeat, allowed Zapatero to form a minority government without stable parliamentary agreements. During his first term in the government, Zapatero ruled mostly with the left parties of the chamber. Yet in the second half of the term, the parliamentary support weakened since the PSOE lost some of its allies and the internal situation of the party also deteriorated because some policies of the cabinet were quite unpopular. Despite winning re-election in March 2008, the economic crisis fueled the political dissent within the party and led the standing of the president to very low levels.

In these adverse conditions, Zapatero preferred to form cabinets with lower partisanship profile than Aznar. In the first term, one third of cabinet ministers were independent. Some of them were not totally outsiders since had been appointed in the electoral list or had been previously appointed in sub-minister positions. Overall Zapatero substantially reduced the number of party leaders in the cabinet, as it happened in the González government. In the second term, the number of party members declined even further, reaching half of the cabinet. Zapatero tried to address the crisis of confidence of socialist voters by appointing more party leaders, but it did not reduce the number of independent ministers.

In sum, since 1977 there have been ten legislative terms, where can observe a relationship between parliamentary status and the degree of ministerial partisanship. During minority governments, cabinets had lower levels of party ministers. Only two presidents, Gonzalez and Aznar have ruled with an absolute majority in some terms (1982-1993 and 2000-2004). In this time we find the highest amount of party ministers, ranging between 80% and 100% (Table 3). By contrast, during the second term of the UCD (1979-1983) and the first of Aznar (1996-2000) the number of independents was also low (below 15%), despite being minority governments. In the case of UCD, this can be explained by the political conditions at the beginning of democracy and the need to consolidate the new party UCD from the government. The failure of the process of consolidation led to an electoral defeat and the collapse of the party.

On the other hand, internal problems within the party, in the case of the PSOE, has led to an increase in the number of independent ministers. Not so in the case of UCD, due
to the very particular transitional context mentioned earlier. Aznar did not suffered any remarkable intraparty difficulty. Finally, in the case of Calvo Sotelo, González and Zapatero, there has been a progressive strengthening of independent ministers over time and sometimes even over the legislature. On the contrary, Suárez’s and Aznar’s executive experienced the opposite evolution.

This analysis provides empirical evidence supporting the hypotheses 1 and 2 in the governments of PSOE and UCD 1977-79, but this support is weaker in the cases of PP and UCD 1979-82. Similarly, Hypothesis 3 is clearly confirmed by three presidents, but not with Suárez or with Aznar. In the case of UCD, we can explain deviations from expected by the exceptional political context: the party-building process during the consolidation of a new democracy and a new party system. In the case of PP, the failure of the hypothesis may be due to the fact that the minority government situation actually hid a strong stability of the parliamentary coalition with CiU. The absence of serious problems in the parliament and the party shows Aznar’s very strong leadership. Following our main argument for this level of analysis, we can interpret the strength of the Prime Minister blocked the access to independent ministers.

3. Non-partisan ministers in Spain: a ministerial perspective

In order to explain support for intra-party democracy amongst party delegates, we have conducted a multivariate analysis (Table 4). By building a logistic regression model, the effects of each of the independent variables selected on the analytical framework and operationalized on the previous section can be estimated. The logistic regression was conducted to assess whether our predictor variables significantly predicted whether Spanish prime minister appoints a party or a non-party minister. The assumptions of observations being independent and independent variables being linearly related to the logit were checked and met. We have tested a model with nine predictors, which significantly predicted the partisanship of cabinet appointments.

Our model shows the positive impact of all the predictors as we expected, except for the evolution within each legislative term and the typ of ministry. The odds of appointing non-party ministers are significantly greater when they are women, when they haven’t had any previous political post, when they are specialist in the departamental area and when they are going to be appointed in political ministries. The amount of non-party ministers will also increase significantly over the time a prime minister is in the cabinet.

The relationship between type of portfolio and partisanship performs the other way around, what is contradictory with the high impact of specialization, since most of the political ministries were classified as non-specialists. Probably we need to control here the high impact of the incumbents in Justice and Defense, who are very likely to be independents and use to have a high turnover (so there are more ministers in those departaments that in the rest of ministries from the political area).

Other predictors also produce a different impact from what we expected. Prime minister seems to be more likely to appoint non-party ministers at the beginning of the term that at the end, and it is more likely to do it in political ministries rather than in economic and social affairs. However, these relationships are not very significant, as it happens with other contextual predictors (parliamentary status, intra-party conflicts).
From these results, we can confirm or reject some of the hypotheses put forward above. In particular, we can confirm hypothesis 3, 5, 7 and 8 and reject hypothesis 1, 2 and 6. We must reconsider hypothesis 4, with a significant opposite impact from expected. We can conclude that there is a strong relationship between partisanship in cabinet and some individual characteristics, while the contextual factors are weaker, at least measured by this method.

4. Preliminary conclusions

The first results of this work-in-progress shows that variation in minister partisanship parliamentary cabinets might be higher than previous works have suggested. Although in parliamentary systems political parties control most of the key decisions in the executives, like cabinets appointments, it does not always lead to the predominance of party ministers. On the contrary, the process of presidentialisation might affect the careers and partisanship of cabinet ministers. The case of Spain provides a good example of the consequences of the strengthen experimented by the prime minister. In this situation, prime minister’s strategies produce different choices and models of appointment. When the head of government appoint ministers in such political conditions, his choices may be not too far from what it has been suggested about presidential preferences on ministerial appointments.

The partisanship of ministers in the executive has consequences (De Winter and Dumont, 2005). In presidential systems, this feature tells us the type of strategy that the president is going to deploy in the policy-making (Amorim, 2006). In parliamentary governments, a decline of party members could cause problems in the democratic delegation chain that holds the relationship between parliaments and governments (Amorim and Strom, 2006; Rodríguez, 2010). In particular, it might affect the stability of governments and the success of these to address the conflicts that arose within him, since ministers with political experience are better able to solve these problems in the context of political and economic obstructed (Pennings, 2000). Other authors have also shown how cabinets are formed and the ministers are chosen determines the subsequent operation of governments and their results (Laver and Shepsle, 1994).
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Table 1. Partisanship profile of ministers depending on prime minister

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Suárez</th>
<th>Calvo-sotelo</th>
<th>González</th>
<th>Aznar</th>
<th>Zapatero</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-party</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non leaders</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s own data from oficial sources.

Figure 1. The evolution of party ministers and party leaders in Spanish cabinets

Source: Author’s own data from oficial sources. Notes: Los datos muesran el perfil de los ministros en el momento de iniciarse cada gabinete. (*) En el gabinete de Aznar 18-1-99, la remodelación tuvo lugar pocos días antes del congreso del partido. Hemos contabilizado los cargos de partido de esos ministros después del XIII Congreso y no en el momento de su nombramiento, puesto que debemos considerar los dos eventos como simultáneos.

Table 2. Partisanship of Spanish ministers depending on premiership’s time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Suárez</th>
<th>González</th>
<th>Aznar</th>
<th>Zapatero</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Party</td>
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<td>8.9</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>61.2</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non leaders</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exec. Off.</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Author’s own data from oficial sources. Nota: I (inició, primera legislatura de la presidencia); F (final; última legislatura de la presidencia).
### Tabla 3. Partisanship profile depending on parlimentary status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>González</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Asnar</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>76.7</td>
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<td>Non-party</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non leaders</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>66.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
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<td>62.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exec. Off.</td>
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<td>32.9</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s own data from oficial sources.

### Table 2. Logistic Regression predicting non-partisan ministers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary status</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>.807</td>
<td>2.176</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intra-party conflict</td>
<td>.640</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>1.896</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>.142 **</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>1.153</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moment in term</td>
<td>-.273</td>
<td>.512</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of ministry</td>
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<td>.504</td>
<td>.413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialisation</td>
<td>1.949 ***</td>
<td>.553</td>
<td>7.024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-minister positions</td>
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<td>.570</td>
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<tr>
<td>No political career</td>
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<td>1.062</td>
<td>55.930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>1.778 **</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td>5.917</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| R² (Nagelkerke) | .461 |
| X²              | 61.943 *** |
| Df              | 9 |
| N               | 169 |

Significance levels * p < 0.1 ** p < 0.05 *** p < 0.001