

Theoretical and methodological approaches to the assessment of modern political systems as an indicator of comparative analysis of governments in Eastern European countries

The article is dedicated to analyzing the theoretical and methodological approaches of evaluating contemporary political systems and systems of government. The author argued that the modern Political Science mostly appeals towards trichotomous distinction of systems of government, including presidentialism, semi-presidentialism and parliamentarism. The study showed that these options had at different times received applications in Eastern Europe, but semi-presidentialism was the dominant one in 1990-2016. The researcher stressed that different political systems and systems of government distinctively affect the assessment of governments and therefore are the independent indicators of their comparative analysis.

Keywords: political system, system of government, government, presidentialism, parliamentarism, semi-presidentialism, Eastern Europe.

ТЕОРЕТИКО-МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНІ ПІДХОДИ ДО ОЦІНЮВАННЯ СУЧАСНИХ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ СИСТЕМ ЯК ІНДИКАТОР ПОРІВНЯЛЬНОГО АНАЛІЗУ УРЯДІВ КРАЇН СХІДНОЇ ЄВРОПИ

У статті запропоновано теоретико-методологічний розгляд підходів щодо оцінювання сучасних політичних систем та систем державного правління. Аргументовано, що сучасна політична наука здебільшого апелює стосовно трихотомічного виокремлення систем державного правління, зокрема президенталізм, напівпрезиденталізму та парламентаризму. Прослідковано, що ці варіанти в різний час отримували застосування в країнах Східної Європи, однак домінуючою впродовж 1990–2016 рр. залишалась та залишається напівпрезидентська система правління. Підкреслено, що різні політичні системи та системи державного правління дистинктивно впливають на оцінювання місця урядів, а тому є незалежними індикаторами їхнього порівняльного аналізу.

Ключові слова: політична система, система правління, президенталізм, напівпрезиденталізм, парламентаризм, уряд, Східна Європа.

In the course of generating modern ideas of governments' activity, effectiveness and stability, one should take into account the influence, which is exerted on them by political systems that exist in some countries or other. The fact is that various constitutional attributes of political systems in different ways influence the role and functions, carried out by a government within the executive vertical, and the elements the latter is made of. Regulatory and constitutional preconditions and peculiarities of legislative and executive relations have significant influence on interpretations of governments' activity, effectiveness and stability, since they determine the parameters of government formation, their life cycles, as well as they touch upon the roles of the president and parliament within this process¹. Eastern European countries, namely Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine, which since the collapse of the USSR have experienced longtime and rather complicated, and sometimes even contradictory history of their political system formation, are no exception. Such conclusion can be drawn, due to the scientific research conducted by the following scholars: T. Colton and C. Skach², M. Kasapovic³, V. Lytvyn⁴, K. Weinberger⁵, M. Zolyan⁶ and other. Moreover, it is quite reasonable to appeal to the scientific papers, which at the theoretical and methodological levels determine the essence of the political systems and forms/systems of government that will be examined in detail in our research. For instance, these are the works by such scholars as: R. Albert⁷, H. Bahro, B. Bayerlein, E. Veser⁸, V. Canas⁹, M. Duverger¹⁰, R. Elgie¹¹

¹ L. DeWinter, *The Role of Parliament in Government Formation and Resignation*, [w:] H. Doring (ed.), *Parliaments and Majority Rule in Western Europe*, Wyd. St. Martin's Press 1995, s. 123.

² T. Colton, C. Skach, *Semi-Presidentialism in Russia and Post-Communist Europe: Ameliorating or Aggravating Democratic Possibilities?*, III General Assembly of the Club of Madrid.

³ M. Kasapovic, *Parliamentarism and Presidentialism in Eastern Europe*, „Politička misao” 1996, vol 33, nr. 5, s. 120–135.

⁴ V. Lytvyn, *Napii prezydent'ska sistema pravlinnya: konstytutsiyno-pravovi vyklyky ta perspektyvy dlya Ukrayiny na foni svitovoho instytutsiynoho dosvidu*, [w:] *Vseukrainska naukovu-praktychna konferentsiya: Konstytutsiia Ukrayiny: polityko-pravovi vyklyky i perspektyvy*, Wyd. LNU im. I. Franka 2014, s. 38–63.

⁵ K. Weinberger, *Armenia's Constitutional Reforms: Forward Movement or Momentous Fallacy?*, „Regional Studies Center (RSC)” 2015, vol 4, nr. 4.

⁶ M. Zolyan, *Parliamentary Democracy or One-Party State: What is behind Armenia's Constitutional Reform*, „Regional Studies Center (RSC)” 2015, vol 4, nr. 3.

⁷ R. Albert, *The Fusion of Presidentialism and Parliamentarism*, „American Journal of Comparative Law” 2009, vol 57, nr. 3, s. 531–577.

⁸ H. Bahro, *Virtues and vices of semi-presidential government*, „Journal of Social Sciences and Philosophy” 1999, vol 11, nr. 1, s. 1–37; H. Bahro, B. Bayerlein, E. Veser, *Duverger's Concept: Semi-Presidential Government Revisited*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1998, vol 34, s. 201–224; E. Veser, *Semipresidentialism – Duverger's Concept: A New Political System Model*, „Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences” 1997, vol 11, nr. 1, s. 39–60.

⁹ V. Canas, *The Semi-Presidential System*, „Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht: Heidelberg Journal of International Law” 2004, vol 64, s. 95–124.

¹⁰ M. Duverger, *A New Political System Model. Semi-Presidential Government*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1980, vol 8, s. 165–187.

¹¹ R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism, Cohabitation and the Collapse of Electoral Democracies, 1990-2008*, „Government and Opposition” 2010, vol 45, nr. 1, s. 29–49; R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism in Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1999; R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime types: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1998, vol 33, s. 219–238; R. Elgie, *The perils of semi-presidentialism. Are they exaggerated?*, „Democratization” 2008, vol 15, nr. 1, s. 49–66; R. Elgie, *Variations on a theme: a fresh look at semi-presidentialism*, „Journal of Democracy” 2005, vol 16, nr. 3, s. 1–21; R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, „Taiwan Journal of Democracy” 2007, vol 3, nr. 2, s. 53–71.

and I. McMenamin¹², A. Lijphart¹³, T. Moe and M. Caldwell¹⁴, G. Sartori¹⁵, M. Shugart and J. Carey¹⁶, A. Siaroff¹⁷, C. Skach¹⁸ and A. Stepan¹⁹, K. von Beyme²⁰ and other.

The survey of the scientific papers, dedicated to the abovementioned range of problems, let us make a conclusion, that until quite recently theoreticians of political systems and forms/systems of government have spoken rather unambiguously in favor of the most obvious allocation line of executive and legislative relations, in the words of W. Bagehot²¹ and T. Moe²², between parliamentary and presidential systems. Furthermore, the main principle of distinguishing between the systems was a mere appointment of the main actor in the processes of cabinet formations and resignations. This distinction became a classical one in political science, but in the second half of the 20th century it faced a methodological challenge²³, while applying to the political system in France. This, for example, was done in works by such scholars as: K. von Beyme²⁴, G. Sartori²⁵, M. Shugart and J. Carey²⁶ and other. The point is that the concept of the “semi-presidential form/system of government” was introduced into scientific and practical circulation, which, as time has shown, became peculiar of the majority/all post-Soviet and post-Communist Eastern European countries. In particular, till 2000 all Eastern European countries, which are the subject of the research, namely Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine, had been determined as the semi-presidential ones (however, not all scholars who analyze these forms/systems of government approve their definition as semi-presidential, but determine them as “mixed political systems”). In the course of 2011-2015 all countries of the region, except Moldova, were also formally designated as semi-presidential, and in 2015 and 2016 the number of constitutional changes took place in Armenia, due to which the latter transformed

¹² R. Elgie, I. McMenamin, Divided executives and democratization, „Working Papers in International Studies Series” 2006, vol 2, 39 s.; R. Elgie, I. McMenamin, Explaining the onset of cohabitation under semi-presidentialism, „Working Papers in International Studies Series” 2010, vol 12, 28 s.

¹³ A. Lijphart, *Nomination: Trichotomy or Dichotomy*, „European Journal of Political Research» 1997, vol 31, nr. 1-2, s. 125–128.

¹⁴ T. Moe, M. Caldwell, *The Institutional Foundations of Democratic Government: a Comparison of Presidential and Parliamentary Systems*, „Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics” 1994, vol 150, nr. 1, s. 171–195.

¹⁵ Sartori G., *Comparative Constitutional Engineering. An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*, Wyd. New York University Press 1994.

¹⁶ M. Shugart, *Comparative Executive-Legislative Relations*, [w:] R. Rhodes, S. Binder, B. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2006, s. 344–365.

¹⁷ A. Siaroff, *Comparative presidencies: the inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction*, „European Journal of Political Research” 2003, vol 42, s. 287–312.

¹⁸ C. Skach, *Borrowing Constitutional Designs: Constitutional Law in Weimar Germany and the French Fifth Republic*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 2005.; C. Skach, *Constitutional origins of dictatorship and democracy*, „Constitutional Political Economy” 2005, vol 16, s. 347–368.; C. Skach, *The „newest” separation of powers: semi-presidentialism*, „International Journal of Constitutional Law” 2007, vol 5, nr. 1, s. 93–121.

¹⁹ A. Stepan, C. Skach, *Constitutional frameworks and democratic consolidation. Parliamentarism versus presidentialism*, „World Politics” 1993, vol 46, s. 1–22.

²⁰ K. von Beyme, *Die parlamentarischen Regierungssysteme in Europa*, München 1973.

²¹ W. Bagehot, *The English constitution*, Wyd. Chapman and Hall 1963.; M. Shugart, *Semi-presidential systems: Dual executive and mixed authority patterns*, „French Politics” 2005, vol 3, nr. 3, s. 323–351.; M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.

²² T. Moe, M. Caldwell, *The Institutional Foundations of Democratic Government: a Comparison of Presidential and Parliamentary Systems*, „Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics” 1994, vol 150, nr. 1, s. 171–195.

²³ V. Lytvyn, *Podviynna vykonavcha vlada: teoriya ta praktyka yevropejs'koho pizprezycyentalizmu*, „Osvita rehionu: politolohiya, psykholohiya, komunikatsiyi” 2009, vol 3, s. 25–33.

²⁴ K. von Beyme, *Die parlamentarischen Regierungssysteme in Europa*, München 1973.

²⁵ G. Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering. An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*, Wyd. New York University Press 1994.

²⁶ M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.

into the parliamentary system²⁷, and Moldova returned to the semi-presidential form/system of government²⁸. As a result of this, since 2016 all Eastern European countries, except Armenia, have been presenting themselves as semi-presidential.

In this regard one should address the ideas expressed by R. Albert²⁹, V. Canas³⁰, J. A. Cheibub³¹, R. Elgie³², W. Huang³³, M. Kasapovic³⁴, F. Shmitter³⁵, M. Shugart and J. Carey³⁶, G. Di Palma³⁷, T. Landman³⁸ and other, who note, that every post-Soviet/post-Communist country in the course of its democratic transition chose its personal type of political system and forms/systems of government by means of solving dilemmas and procedures and all this was connected with the challenges of the transitional period. Moreover, the choice of the system of government in the countries "in transition" was determined by a variable, within the course of the democratic transit (progress/democratization or regress/authoritarianization) correlation between the opposition's (traditionally, it sets itself up as democratic) and the "ruling class" (it is usually associated with the old regime) power. As the experience of the Eastern European countries show, the main format of how the division of executive and legislative relations took/take place is represented by semi-presidentialism. That is why the latter (together with evaluation of parliamentarism and presidentialism) must undergo thorough theoretical, methodological and empirical analysis.

From the theoretical and methodological perspective, reasonability of conducting a deep comparative analysis of evaluation of semi-presidentialism derives from the phenomenon, which M. Shugart and J. Carey³⁹ called "The index of cabinets' parliamentary powers" on assumption of the existence of the nationally elected president (in fact, it must be taking into account as one of the approaches to determining the notion of semi-presidentialism). The essence of the suggested correlation

²⁷ M. Zolyan, *Parliamentary Democracy or One-Party State: What is behind Armenia's Constitutional Reform*, "Regional Studies Center (RSC)" 2015, vol 4, nr. 3.; K. Weinberger, *Armenia's Constitutional Reforms: Forward Movement or Momentous Fallacy?*, "Regional Studies Center (RSC)" 2015, vol 4, nr. 4.

²⁸ A. Fruhstorfer, *Constitutional Politics in Moldova*, [w:] A. Fruhstorfer, M. Hein (eds.), *Constitutional Politics in Central and Eastern Europe*, Wyd. Springer 2016.

²⁹ R. Albert, *The Fusion of Presidentialism and Parliamentarism*, "American Journal of Comparative Law" 2009, vol 57, nr. 3, s. 531–577.

³⁰ V. Canas, *The Semi-Presidential System*, "Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht: Heidelberg Journal of International Law" 2004, vol 64, s. 95–124.

³¹ J. A. Cheibub, *Reforming Presidential and Semi-Presidential Democracies*, "Making Presidentialism Work. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)" 2009.

³² R. Elgie, I. McMennamin, *Divided executives and democratization*, "Working Papers in International Studies Series" 2006, vol 2, 39 s.; R. Elgie, I. McMennamin, *Explaining the onset of cohabitation under semi-presidentialism*, "Working Papers in International Studies Series" 2010, vol 12, 28 s.; R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism, Cohabitation and the Collapse of Electoral Democracies, 1990-2008*, "Government and Opposition" 2010, vol 45, nr. 1, s. 29–49.; R. Elgie, S. Moestrup, *Semi-presidentialism outside Europe: a comparative study*, Wyd. Routledge 2007.; R. Elgie, *The perils of semi-presidentialism. Are they exaggerated?*, "Democratization" 2008, vol 15, nr. 1, s. 49–66.; R. Elgie, *The politics of semi-presidentialism*, [w:] R. Elgie (ed.), *Semi-presidentialism in Europe: Comparative European politics*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1999, s. 1–21.; R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, "Taiwan Journal of Democracy" 2007, vol 3, nr. 2, s. 53–71.

³³ W. Huang, *The President Refuses to Cohabit: Semi-Presidentialism in Taiwan*, "Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal" 2006, vol 15, nr. 2, s. 375–402.

³⁴ M. Kasapovic, *Parliamentarism and Presidentialism in Eastern Europe*, "Politička misao" 1996, vol 33, nr. 5, s. 120–135.

³⁵ F. Shmitter, *Razmyslennyya o hrazhdanskom obschestve i konsolydatsyyi demokratii*, "Polys" 1996, vol 5, s. 16–27.

³⁶ M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.; M. Shugart, *Semi-presidential systems: Dual executive and mixed authority patterns*, "French Politics" 2005, vol 3, nr. 3, s. 323–351.

³⁷ G. Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies: an essay on democratic transitions*, Wyd. University of California Press 1990.

³⁸ T. Landman, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, Wyd. Routledge 2003.

³⁹ M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992, s. 150.

is in comparative study (which requires empirical verification), according to which the easier it is for the government to deviate from the line of political and legislative norms and liabilities, the less is its duration, and consequently – its efficiency. Herewith, it is quite notable, that the index of cabinets' parliamentary powers is disposed within the following continuum: 1) parliament's authority in government formation is shifted from voting for investiture (or confidence) for every minister in parliamentary schemes towards the needs/requirements for voting for investiture (or confidence) for ministers within presidential systems (there are even cases, when the cabinet in general enjoys parliament's confidence or when it is necessary only for the prime minister, who, in future, is at liberty to build the cabinet); 2) a right for a vote of no confidence in the cabinet (which obligatory results in the government's resignation) is determined as the main criterion of parliamentary systems (on the contrary, within presidential systems there is no right of no confidence in the cabinet, except the cases when the members of the government violate the legislation or constitution, that is the vote of no-confidence in the cabinet's members); 3) ministerial shifts in the cabinet is a lever of parliamentary control over the government (sometimes every change in the cabinet must be approved by the parliament; sometimes the vote of confidence is required only when a fixed number of ministers is changed); 4) dissolution of the parliament is the government's or president's threat (or both of them simultaneously), aimed at stabilizing and discipline the former.

In general, semi-presidentialism should be methodologically determined by nature and origins of the state/political authority, which is disclosed in the structure of its branches, namely executive, legislative and judicial. Executive power (in a concentrated form it is mainly referred to the government) is connected with implementation of laws, approved by the parliament (which is an institute of the legislative branch), actualization of power in accordance with the laws, and then it (executive branch) is determined by institutional and functional elements. This cross-institutional logic of the political system was justified at the end of the 20th century by M. Duverger as a "concept of semi-presidentialism"⁴⁰: political/constitutional system was interpreted as a semi-presidential one, when several preconditions were combined within it, namely the election of the president (the head of the state) on the basis of direct and universal suffrage; to endow the president with powers; existence of the position of the prime minister and ministers, who represent the executive and governmental branches and who occupy the cabinets until the parliament expresses vote of no-confidence⁴¹. But G. Pasquino⁴² admonishes, that the criterion of the universal suffrage is rather ambiguous, as to the way "direct" or "indirect" the president is elected. That is why the scholar uses the following principle: "the president is elected by general elections – directly or indirectly". In their turn A. Stepan and C. Skach specify that the weak point of M. Duverger's definition is in the question – who is responsible for the fact, that according to

⁴⁰ M. Duverger, *A New Political System Model. Semi-Presidential Government*, „European Journal of Political Research“ 1980, vol 8, s. 165–187.

⁴¹ Similar definition was proposed by P. O'Neil, who stated, that semi-presidentialism is unitary, since the executive power is divided between the president and government, and the former certainly has significant powers. See: P. O'Neil, *Presidential power in post-communist Europe: the Hungarian case in comparative perspective*, „Journal of Communist Studies“ 1993, vol 9, nr. 3, s. 177–201.

⁴² G. Pasquino, *Nomination: Semi-presidentialism: A Political Model at Work*, „European Journal of Political Research“ 1997, vol 31, nr. 1, s. 130.

the constitution it is predetermined that the president has “significant powers”. The point is, that the scholars can personally decide, which powers are significant and which are not⁴³.

As a result of this G. Sartori has modified the concept of semi-presidentialism and used its determinate criteria: election of the head of the state (president) for a distinct term by means of general elections – direct/indirect; allocation of executive powers between the head of the state and the prime minister – construction of the dualism of executive powers⁴⁴. At the same time G. Sartori stated, that the elements of the dualism of executive powers were the following indicators, due to which: 1) the president (the head of the state) is independent of the parliament, but does not have a right to govern personally and directly, and thus their will is designated by the president’s administration; 2) the prime minister and the cabinet are independent of the president (the head of the state), but are dependent on the parliament, as are the subject to the parliamentary vote of confidence/no-confidence (confidence and no-confidence), and require support of majority; 3) probable various power correlations and power shifts within the frames of the executive structures, on the condition that “the potential of autonomy” for every structural unit within the executive vertical is clearly determined⁴⁵. In this prospect, of great interest is the position of H. Bahro, B. Bayerlein, E. Vesper⁴⁶, A. Lijphart⁴⁷, C. Skach⁴⁸ and E. Suleiman⁴⁹, as they state that the precondition for the dualism of executive powers is the situation, when the president (the head of the state) opposes the prime minister, while the latter is in position to executive and governmental power and stays in the government till the parliament expresses its vote of no-confidence. Such interpretation of dualism leads to construction of factual dimensions of semi-presidentialism, since the president is not always in opposition to the prime minister within one and the same constitutional system. Similar construction was developed in R. Elgie’s early ideas, on the basis of which relative characteristics of political regimes were predominantly studied⁵⁰. In this respect J. Blondel⁵¹ and V. Bogdanor⁵² modified interpretation of the dualism of executive powers and mentioned, that

⁴³ A. Stepan, C. Skach, *Constitutional frameworks and democratic consolidation. Parliamentarism versus presidentialism*, „World Politics” 1993, vol 46, s. 8–9.

⁴⁴ G. Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering. An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*, Wyd. New York University Press 1994, s. 131–132.

⁴⁵ G. Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering. An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*, Wyd. New York University Press 1994, s. 131–132.

⁴⁶ H. Bahro, B. Bayerlein, E. Vesper, *Duverger’s Concept: Semi-Presidential Government Revisited*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1998, vol 34, s. 201–224; E. Vesper, *Semipresidentialism – Duverger’s Concept: A New Political System Model*, „Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences” 1997, vol 11, nr. 1, s. 39–60.

⁴⁷ A. Lijphart, *Nomination: Trichotomy or Dichotomy*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1997, vol 31, nr. 1-2, s. 125–128; A. Lijphart, *Presidentialism and majoritarian democracy*, [w:] J. Linz, A. Valenzuela (eds.), *The failure of presidential democracy: Comparative perspectives*, Wyd. Johns Hopkins University Press 1994.

⁴⁸ C. Skach, *Borrowing Constitutional Designs: Constitutional Law in Weimar Germany and the French Fifth Republic*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 2005.

⁴⁹ E. Suleiman, *Presidentialism and political stability in France*, [w:] J. Linz, A. Valenzuela (eds.), *The failure of presidential democracy: Comparative perspectives*, Wyd. Johns Hopkins University Press 1994, s. 137–162.

⁵⁰ R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism in Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1999, s. 219–238.

⁵¹ J. Blondel, *Dual Leadership in the Contemporary World: A Step towards Executive and Regime Stability*, [w:] D. Kavanagh, S. E. Finer, G. Pele (eds.), *Comparative Government and Politics*, Wyd. Westview Press 1984.

⁵² V. Bogdanor, *Semi-presidential Systems*, [w:] V. Bogdanor (eds.), *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Political Institutions*, Wyd. Basil Blackwell Publishers 1987, s. 561–562.

the elected president is not the head of the state, which lacks political power, but also is not the head governor, due to the existence of the powerful prime minister, which is not the president's subordinate.

Similar, but factually distinctive variant of interpretation of semi-presidentialism was in due time suggested by C. Nino, who singled out its indicators and preconditions: the positions of the head of the state (president) and the prime minister must be separated; the cabinet of ministers (government) is formed by means of parliament's interference; the government is formed (in the prospect of its legitimacy) according to the 'electorate's will'⁵³. The main drawback of C. Nino's approach is the fact that his definition does not include the key characteristic of semi-presidentialism, namely the procedure of resignation of the government. Aiming at making up for this situation T. Poguntke and P. Webb use the so-called "procedural approach" concerning the interpretation of semi-presidentialism and state that this is the process based on the results of which parliamentary systems are becoming more presidential in their practice, not changing their formal constitutional structure or form of the state government (it is referred to "presidentialization" of the parliamentary systems)⁵⁴.

The problem of the abovementioned approaches, as V. Lytvyn believes⁵⁵, is that they "include the reference to the relative characteristics of the political processes, and that is why introduce the element of subjectivity in the process of classification". Moreover, these approaches stimulate scholars to identify "various" sets of countries as semi-presidential. This causes a possibility to establish some very problematic alternatives. Thus, interpretation of the notion "semi-presidentialism" must outline the number of the countries, which can be classified as semi-presidential, and this requires conclusions, which can be used to analyze activity of the semi-presidential systems. With a view to this, it is desirable to apply R. Elgie's interpretation of semi-presidentialism, which is derivative of dispositional characteristics of political regimes (both democratic and non-democratic). Therefore, semi-presidentialism must be studied as the situation, when the president is publicly elected for a certain term, "coexists" with the prime minister and the cabinet, which are responsible to the parliament⁵⁶. The suggested construct at most removes subjectivity, as it does not depend on formal and informal presidential powers: they can be changed in accordance with the influence of political specificity of the system. It means that semi-presidentialism can be adequately and equally compared, as one may single out and analyze countries, classified as semi-presidential⁵⁷.

That is why we support the conceptual idea, that the semi-presidential (constitutional) form/system of state (republican) government is in the combination of the "president which is directly elected for a certain term" and the prime minister, which "is responsible to the legislative power". Thus,

⁵³ C. Nino, *Hyperpresidentialism and Constitutional Reform in Argentina*, [w:] A. Lijphart, C. H. Waisman (eds.), *Institutional Design in New Democracies: Eastern Europe and Latin America*, Wyd. Westview Press 1996, s. 170.

⁵⁴ T. Poguntke, P. Webb, *The Presidentialisation of Politics: A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2007, s. 1.

⁵⁵ V. Lytvyn, *Porivnyal'nyy analiz stabil'nosti uryadiv krayin Tsentral'noyi Yevropy ta Ukrayiny*, Wyd. Lvivskyy natsional'nyy universytet imeni Ivana Franka 2010, s. 93.

⁵⁶ R. Elgie, *Variations on a theme: a fresh look at semi-presidentialism*, „Journal of Democracy” 2005, vol 16, nr. 3, s. 1–21.

⁵⁷ R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime types: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1998, vol 33, s. 219–238.

we argue that “semi-presidentialism” is a republican form (system) of the state government, which presupposes the position of the nationally elected president, as well as the prime minister, responsible to the legislative power, but requires introduction of the parliamentary practice and its comparison with the head of the state. Based on the above stated definition of semi-presidentialism and R. Elgie’s research paradigm, it is reasonable to propose definitions of parliamentarism and presidentialism, as this will provide theoretical and methodological equality of the research. “Presidentialism” is a system of government (constitutional system of government), which predetermines the existence of the president, which is nationally elected for a certain term, as well as their administration (or cabinet), members of which are not in general responsible to the legislative branch. “Parliamentarism” is a system of government (constitutional system of government), where exists the monarch or not publicly elected president, as well as the prime minister/cabinet of ministers, which are collectively responsible to the legislative branch.

This classification scheme of political systems is rather promising, as it shows, that “constitutionally” the system of government does not depend on the fact, whether the country is democratic or authoritarian (totalitarian), and is based only on the constitutional theory, what allows it to consider other approaches/interpretations of the empirical assessment of semi-presidentialism in practice. Besides this definition is effective as it gives a possibility to confirm a stable list of “technical” requirements for the constitutional theory and political practice.

Of greater interest is the fact that among the transitional countries (in particular in Eastern Europe) the significance of such form (system) of government as semi-presidentialism has been increasing. This construction has become a popular variant of political systems in the countries of the regions at the stage of “democratic” constitutional transformations in the midst of 1990s and in majority of countries it is still dominating. Moreover, according to O. Amorim Neto and K. Strøm⁵⁸, it is quite obvious that nowadays in Europe semi-presidentialism is the most common construction of the political system. From this perspective and from theoretical and methodological point of view one should evaluate prospects of democratic transit, as well as the criteria of the governments’ performance. L. Metcalf in due time⁵⁹ proved, that the semi-presidential systems have not become less democratic for the five years since they confirmed constitutions. Nevertheless, many countries have experienced it in further development of the political regimes. That is why A. Stepan and E. Suleiman suppose that “transformational” semi-presidentialism provokes more risks than transformational parliamentarism⁶⁰. The scholars appeal to the easiness intrinsic to the fact how a non-party candidate for presidency can enter upon the office, to difficulties, which appear while removing such a politician (especially in the context of “presidentialization”), elected for a certain term. In conclusion, G. Sartori and V. Lytvyn show that semi-presidentialism is not necessarily presented as the best form of the republican

⁵⁸ O. Amorim Neto, K. Strøm, *Breaking the Parliamentary Chain of Delegation: Presidents and Non-partisan Cabinet Members in European Democracies*, „British Journal of Political Science” 2006, vol 36, s. 623.

⁵⁹ L. Metcalf, *Measuring presidential powers*, „Comparative Political Studies” 2000, vol 33, nr 5, s. 660–685.

⁶⁰ A. Stepan, E. Suleiman, *The French Fifth Public: A Model for Import? Reflections on Poland and Brazil*, [w:] H. Chehabi, A. Stepan, J. Linz (eds.), *Politics, Society and Democracy: Comparative Studies*, Boulder 1995, s. 394–414.

government. However, the researchers stress, that in case of two extremities – “pure presidentialism” and “pure parliamentarism” – it is stronger⁶¹.

Taking this into consideration, it is quite obvious that semi-presidentialism is a heterogeneous category. On the basis of R. Elgie’s methodological comments, it becomes clear, that there is a necessity to discuss relative advantages of different forms of semi-presidentialism. We elaborate this idea by M. Shugart and J. Carey’s position (they were the first who started to define theoretically various types of semi-presidentialism) as to the fact that different construction of semi-presidentialism must be interpreted as “independent variables”, since the nuances of various types, forms and systems of the state government can have dissimilar influence upon the political processes, especially when it is referred to evaluation of the governments’ activity, stability and effectiveness⁶². On the basis of the above stated theoretical and methodological analysis one can conclude that at least it is necessary to single out semi-presidential countries with nominal presidents and powerful prime ministers and semi-presidential systems with powerful presidents and so on. However, such positioning would be incomplete and conceptually not so well-defined, if the scholars did not apply different variables while determining semi-presidential types⁶³: presidential powers (R. Elgie⁶⁴, M. Shugart and J. Carey⁶⁵: president-parliamentarism and premier-presidentialism), index of both presidential and prime-ministerial powers and party composition of the parliament (C. Skach distinguishes systems of consolidated majority, divided majority, divided minority⁶⁶).

R. Elgie’s classification is based on the criterion of presidential and prime-ministerial powers. According to this all semi-presidential countries must be divided into: 1) systems of dominating power: a) prime-ministerial systems (the prime minister acquires greater powers than the president); б) presidential systems (the president dominates over the prime minister); 2) systems, shifted from the authority domination: a) powers transfer from the president to the prime minister; б) powers transfer from the balanced model to the prime minister; 3) systems of balanced powers (rotation of periods of alternated, presidential and prime-ministerial government)⁶⁷. The researchers (R. Elgie, A. Stepan, C. Skach) most often criticize the model of balanced (president’s and prime minister’s authority) semi-presidentialism: it presupposes a possibility of “blocked constitutional and governmental conflicts” in the context of the dualism of executive powers: especially in case, when the electorate do

⁶¹ G. Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering. An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*, Wyd. New York University Press 1994.; V. Lytvyn, *Napri prezident’ska sistema pravlinnya: konstitutsiyno-pravovi vyklyky ta perspektyvy dlya Ukrainy na foni svitovoho instytutsynoho dosvidu*, [w:] *Vseukrayins’ka naukovo-praktychna konferentsiya: Konstytutsiya Ukrainy: polityko-pravovi vyklyky i perspektyvy*, Wyd. LNU im. I. Franka 2014, s. 38–63.

⁶² M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.

⁶³ V. Lytvyn, *Podviynna vykonavcha vlada: teoriya ta praktyka yevropejs’koho pizprezidentyalizmu*, „Osvita rehionu: politolohiya, psykholohiya, komunikatsiyi” 2009, vol 3, s. 25–33.

⁶⁴ R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism in Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1999.; R. Elgie, *The classification of democratic regime types: conceptual ambiguity and contestable assumptions*, „European Journal of Political Research” 1998, vol 33, s. 219–238.; R. Elgie, *Varieties of Semi-Presidentialism and Their Impact on Nascent Democracies*, „Taiwan Journal of Democracy” 2007, vol 3, nr. 2, s. 53–71.

⁶⁵ M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.

⁶⁶ C. Skach, *Borrowing Constitutional Designs: Constitutional Law in Weimar Germany and the French Fifth Republic*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 2005.

⁶⁷ R. Elgie, *Semi-presidentialism in Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1999, s. 282–286.

not grant the majority of votes to any center of the executive branch. These problems may appear even, when the president and the prime minister represent one and the same political party or coalition. Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that such conflicts escalate, when the president and the prime minister represent different parties⁶⁸.

This method is rather close to the classification of semi-presidentialism, proposed by C. Skach⁶⁹. As it was mentioned above, the semi-presidential system is characterized by such method of regulatory authorities division as the double (dual) executive system. It predetermines the following peculiarity of semi-presidentialism as the existence of “two executives”. On the contrary, under the classical version of division of executive and legislative relations (one refers to the dual model – parliamentarism and presidentialism) executive power is split between the president and the prime minister, and this division, due to its definition excludes “absolute dualism of power” and its “constitutional ambiguity”. But legitimacy and responsibility of “both executives” under the condition of semi-presidentialism are substantially different: for instance, the government depends on the procedure of delegation of authorities by the legislative body and is responsible to it; the president is independent of the legislative body and can act without its support. Such autonomy is the president’s “stimulus-reaction”, as a result of which the head of the state forms and suggests the agenda and course of actions, even when it presupposes interference in the sphere of the prime minister’s authority. By all means, tense relations between the president, prime minister and parliament are obvious: they are caused by the very structure of semi-presidentialism, and thus they must be considered as constant. However, the presence of the legislative majority, mutually positive relations between the president and the prime minister may reduce the possibility of aggravation of tense relations, which bear cross-institutional form into notable cross-institutional conflicts.

On this basis C. Skach singles out three variants of coexistence among power centers (balance and disbalance) within semi-presidentialism: 1) system of consolidated majority; 2) system of divided majority; 3) system of divided minority. According to the first one, the least conflict among variants, the head of the state is an adherent of the certain party’s course, in case when the president and the prime minister enjoy support of the parliamentary majority. Under such conditions the president is mainly believed to be unquestionable leader of the nation, while the prime minister acts as “a head of the president’s main office”⁷⁰, thus the logic of the presidential systems is predominating⁷¹. On the other hand, domination of the prime minister is theoretically possible. According to the second, reasonably conflict variant, the president unlike the prime minister does not enjoy the support of the parliamentary majority, therefore the prime minister is responsible for taking the most crucial

⁶⁸ V. Lytvyn, *Teoriya ta praktyka kohabitatsiyi v napiuprezident-s'kykh systemakh Yevropy*, „Osvita rehionu: politolohiya, psykholohiya, komunikatsiyi“ 2011, vol 4, s. 140–149; A. Romanyuk, V. Mel'nyk, *Instytut kohabitatsiyi ta politychni naslidky yoho realizatsiyi v Ukraini*, „Suchasna ukraiyins'ka polityka: Polityky i politolohy pro neyi“ 2009, vol 17, s. 69–73.

⁶⁹ C. Skach, *Borrowing Constitutional Designs: Constitutional Law in Weimar Germany and the French Fifth Republic*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 2005.

⁷⁰ M. Duverger, *A New Political System Model. Semi-Presidential Government*, „European Journal of Political Research“ 1980, vol 8, s. 171–172.

⁷¹ T. Gschwend, D. Leuffen, *When Voters Choose Regimes: The Issue of Cohabitation in the French Elections of 2002*, „Mannheim: Arbeitspapiere - Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung“ 2003, vol 63, 23 s.

decisions, as a result of what this political system approaches the parliamentary one⁷². In accordance with the third, the most conflict variant, neither the president, nor the prime minister are supported by the parliamentary majority, thereby such a case combines features of the most problematic variant of the presidential system (split system) and the most troubled variant of the parliamentary system (system of minority). The described variant often leads to authoritarianism and personalization of authority (mostly by presidents)⁷³.

Another classification of semi-presidentialism has been offered by M. Shugart⁷⁴ and J. Carey⁷⁵. The scholars, as it was mentioned before, single out two types – premier-presidential (premier-presidentialism) and president-parliamentarian (president-parliamentarism). The distinction between them lies in the fact that in the context of premier-presidentialism the head of the government (the prime minister) and their cabinet are responsible only to the parliamentary majority; under the condition of president-parliamentarism the head of the government and their cabinet are responsible both to the president and the parliamentary majority⁷⁶. M. Shugart tried and analyzed the presidential right for dissolution of the parliament. Having combined them with the dichotomy of the missed government systems the researcher worked out four subtypes of semi-presidentialism, the common feature of which is the ability of the legislative branch to resign the prime minister and the cabinet. The first variation concerns the fact whether the government is responsible to the legislative branch: if it is – parliament-presidential, if it is not – premier-presidential. The second variation touches the question if the president has the right to dissolve the parliament. On this basis four subtypes of semi-presidentialism have been concluded: 1) president-like (“pure”) president-parliamentarism, when the president can resign the prime minister and the cabinet, but cannot dissolve the parliament; 2) president-parliamentarism, when the president can resign the prime minister and the cabinet, as well as dissolve the parliament; 3) premier-presidentialism, when the president cannot resign the prime minister, but has the right to dissolve the parliament; 4) parliament-like premier-presidentialism, when the president can resign the prime minister and the cabinet, but does not have the right to dissolve the parliament.

Besides, naming dispositional (when the attention is focused on formal and factual powers of main veto-actors, who participate in a political process) characteristics of semi-presidentialism, considerable significance is put on their combination with temporal and factual determinants. The point is that semi-presidentialism can vary within temporal frames. Thus, it is rational to study the system of government within the context of five phases, singled out by T. Jung-Hsiang: balance-of-powers,

⁷² A. Knapp, V. Wright, *The government and politics of France*, Wyd. Routledge 2001, s. 59.

⁷³ T. Colton, C. Skach, *Semi-Presidentialism in Russia and Post-Communist Europe: Ameliorating or Aggravating Democratic Possibilities?*, III General Assembly of the Club of Madrid; R. Elgie, I. McMenamin, *Divided executives and democratization*, „Working Papers in International Studies Series” 2006, vol 2, 39 s.; R. Elgie, *The perils of semi-presidentialism. Are they exaggerated?*, „Democratization” 2008, vol 15, nr. 1, s. 49–66; C. Skach, *The „newest” separation of powers: semi-presidentialism*, „International Journal of Constitutional Law” 2007, vol 5, nr. 1, s. 93–121.

⁷⁴ M. Shugart, *Comparative Executive-Legislative Relations*, [w:] R. Rhodes, S. Binder, B. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2006, s. 344–365; M. Shugart, *Semi-presidential systems: Dual executive and mixed authority patterns*, „French Politics” 2005, vol 3, nr. 3, s. 323–351.

⁷⁵ M. Shugart, J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.

⁷⁶ M. Shugart, *Comparative Executive-Legislative Relations*, [w:] R. Rhodes, S. Binder, B. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2006, s. 357.

cohabitation, president-dominant, premier-dominant, parliament-dominant⁷⁷. Suggested classification is based on the previous samples and combines constitutional authority of the parliament together with the president's authority and party composition of the parliament. According to this, it becomes clear that semi-presidentialism must be interpreted along with "adjectives", which refer it to certain phases that signify the stages of semi-presidentialism in its mutual relations with the constitutional regulations and political practice. The point is that "constitutional authority and power" are significant indicators of semi-presidentialism. But such analysis does not require linear correlation of formal/factual powers and authority, including those of the head of the state. Besides, authority and its influence on the legislation implementation mean that certain branch of power (or political institute) has the accomplishing points as to the essence of legislation⁷⁸. Thus, even if the parliament is interpreted as the highest legislative body in every country, in practice it is not obligatory an institution, which carries out legislative power. In semi-presidential systems legislative power may depend either on the president or the parliament, both on the president and the parliament or on the president's opposition to the parliament⁷⁹. According to this, there are five stages of events or sub-types, which show how semi-presidentialism can function: 1) president-dominant (the president has considerable unilateral authority, and controls majority in the parliament, and thus is capable of carrying out legislative process); 2) premier-dominant (the president does not possess any significant authority, is a symbolic leader, whereas the prime minister governs the parliamentary majority and has the power to conduct legislative proceedings); 3) parliament-dominant (the president does not have any significant authority, the cabinet is supported by minority, the opposition governs the legislative majority against the president and prime minister, as a result of which namely the parliament gets the right to conduct legislative proceedings); 4) cohabitation (the president has "reserved" authority, the prime minister controls the legislative majority and represents a party or coalition oppositional to the president, what results in division of legislative power between the president and the prime minister); 5) balance-of-powers (the president and the parliament are in opposition to each other and possess factually equal political powers, as a result of which they vie for the right to conduct legislative processes).

Despite the above mentioned classifications of semi-presidentialism they must be regarded as comparable, complementary and equal. But therewith, it is necessary, from the methodological point of view, to appeal to other constitutional systems, which were at various times incorporated in Eastern European countries. Special place among them is held by the parliamentary systems, where factual executive power belongs to the cabinets headed by the prime ministers, which are elected for certain terms by their parliaments (fixity of terms in the region is determined by regular and pre-term parliamentary elections). These systems are characterized by the fact that the head of the state, elected by the parliament, has just "ceremonial" authority. The government cannot exist without parliament's or its lower chamber's support. Cabinet is the body of parliamentary majority. The parliament's right to exchange

⁷⁷ T. Jung-Hsiang, *Sub-types of Semi-presidentialism and Political Deadlock*, „French Politics” 2008, vol 6, s. 63–84.

⁷⁸ H. Bahro, *Virtues and vices of semi-presidential government*, „Journal of Social Sciences and Philosophy” 1999, vol 11, nr. 1, s. 1–37.

⁷⁹ C. Skach, *Constitutional origins of dictatorship and democracy*, „Constitutional Political Economy” 2005, vol 16, s. 347–368.

the government by means of vote of no-confidence and imperative right of the head of the state (at the prime minister's suggestion) for an early dissolution of the parliament and setting the elections ensures the dependence of the legislative and executive branches, what makes them cooperate and seek an agreement. That is why such systems can be named "regimes of mild division of power", or according to M. Duverger "regimes of power cooperation". Under A. Siaroff's methodology, in case of Eastern European countries one can speak only of the parliamentary system with a neutralized presidential power⁸⁰.

In general theoretical and methodological grounding of systems of government gives a possibility to analyze them thoroughly and in an integrated manner on the example of different countries of the world, in particular Eastern European countries, especially in the context of distinguishing the procedures of government formation and resignation. But it should be realized, that political systems and systems of government in the institutional dimension (in particular in the context of cabinet formation and resignation) function not only due to the systems of government, but in the sphere of one or other types of political regimes. It means that any political regime influences the system of government, and the system of government has impact on the political regime. The fact is that the political regime is an institutionalized set of main formal and informal procedures, which structure relations in the "center" of political power (or horizontal relations) and its correlation with the society in general (or vertical relations). To outline horizontal relations one usually uses the relationship between the branches of power, in particular those concerning cabinet formation and resignation, what influence their stability and effectiveness. To determine vertical relations one often implies the ways of accession to power, mechanism for its implementation and limitation of political power in general. Different variants of combining relations within political systems are the main reasons for forming various types of political regimes, and the consequent distinctive positioning of the basic political institutions (in particular governments), which function within the political system. In this context one should trace the difference between the notions, which determine and influence elaboration of the political regimes. These are "political system", "state" and "government" (and "system of government"). A political system is interpreted as the sum of activities and relations of political actors, which help political values to achieve their authoritative significance and to expand within society. The political system points out the total number of political processes in the society. Therefore, the components of the political systems are the state, government and political regime. The state should be treated (from this perspective) as the stable set of public management elements, compulsion and order in an organizational plan, which possesses monopoly over the processes of decision making by the political authority, which are obligatory for certain territories. Thus, the government must be interpreted as a public organization, which consists of a small group of people, who take decisions, control and coordinate their implementation. In this context it is obvious that political regimes, as a rule, are more stable forms of political organization, than governments.

⁸⁰ A. Siaroff, *Comparative presidencies: the inadequacy of the presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary distinction*, „European Journal of Political Research“ 2003, vol 42, s. 287–312.

However, it should be mentioned and concluded, that nowadays in comparative political studies the following three “wide” types of political regimes have been singled out, namely – democratic, hybrid (mixed), and authoritarian. They are applicable in many countries of the world, and thus have different degrees of influence over the processes of cabinet formation, their stability and effectiveness. According to this, in Eastern Europe (as of 2016) one should distinguish hybrid (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and authoritarian (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia) political regimes (or electoral democracies or competitive authoritarianism⁸¹). Therefore, the peculiarities of cabinet formation and resignation in Eastern Europe should be studied with reference to the types of political regimes and systems of government in various countries.

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⁸¹ S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive authoritarianism: hybrid regime changes in Peru and Ukraine in comparative perspective*, Wyd. University of Strathclyde 2001.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2010.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: International Linkage, Organizational Power, and the Fate of Hybrid Regimes*, Paper prepared for the Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, Chicago August 30 – September 2 2006.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism*, „Journal of Democracy” 2002, vol 13, nr. 2, s. 51–65.

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