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Dissertação de Mestrado

**Pre-Electoral Coalitions and Government Formation in  
Presidentialism**

Lucas Almeida Couto

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Adrián Albala

Julho de 2023

Lucas Almeida Couto

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Dissertação apresentada como pré-requisito para a obtenção do título de Mestre em Ciência Política pela Universidade de Brasília.

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**Professor Dr. Adrián Albala**

Universidade de Brasília

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**Professor Dr. Frederico Bertholini**

Universidade de Brasília

---

**Professor Dr. Raimondas Ibenskas**

University of Bergen

Brasília-DF

2023

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# Resumo

## Coalizões Pré-Eleitorais e Formação de Governo no Presidencialismo

Esta dissertação avalia quais condições possibilitam a transição de coalizões pré-eleitorais em governos de coalizão nos regimes presidenciais latino-americanos através de um desenho de pesquisa multimétodo. Por mais que a literatura aponte que as coalizões pré-eleitorais exerçam um impacto não negligenciável na formação de governo no presidencialismo, eu apresento uma nuância para essa relação ao argumentar que coalizões pré-eleitorais não são automaticamente transformadas em gabinetes de coalizão no presidencialismo. Isso acontece por causa da natureza das instituições presidenciais, que concedem às presidentes a oportunidade de revisar os acordos pré-eleitorais uma vez que elas estão no poder ao mesmo tempo que diminui a medida em que os membros da coalizão pré-eleitoral podem puni-las. Nesse plano de fundo, o primeiro artigo empírico apresenta e testa a ideia de que os pactos pré-eleitorais devem ser mais vinculantes à medida que a polarização legislativa é mais extensiva no sistema partidário. O motivo para isso é que uma divisão ideológica aumentada ao nível do sistema partidário reduz a margem presidencial para construir gabinetes de coalizão não baseados no pacto pré-eleitoral, já que a complexidade de barganha dificulta a habilidade presidencial para reunir partidos com preferências políticas conflitantes em um mesmo gabinete. Além disso, com base em um raciocínio configuracional, o segundo artigo empírico investiga o que faz coalizões pré-eleitorais servirem como bases de gabinetes de coalizão pós-eleitorais, dado que os comprometimentos pré-eleitorais podem ser ampliados, mantidos ou diminuídos até a inaguração do novo governo. Os resultados destacam a importância de cinco condições, apesar de conferir maior proeminência para o status legislativo da coalizão pré-eleitoral, o baixo nível de polarização entre os parceiros da coalizão pré-eleitoral e a alta polarização legislativa. Em conjunto, os resultados dessa dissertação ampliam nosso conhecimento acerca da relação entre coalizões pré-eleitorais e formação de governo no presidencialismo ao mostrar a sua justaposição com a polarização legislativa.

**Palavras-Chave:** Presidencialismo de Coalizão, Análise Logística Condicional, América Latina, Coalizões Pré-Eleitorais, Gabinetes Presidenciais, Presidencialismo, QCA

# Abstract

This dissertation assesses which conditions enable the transition of pre-electoral coalitions into coalition governments in Latin American presidential regimes through a multimethod research design. Even though most literature praises the fact that pre-electoral coalitions exert a non-negligible impact on government formation in presidentialism, I present a nuance to this relationship by arguing that pre-electoral coalitions are not automatically transformed into coalition cabinets in presidentialism. This is so because of the nature of presidential institutions, which grants presidents the opportunity to revise the pre-electoral agreement once they hold office at the same time that diminishes the extent to which pre-electoral coalition members can punish them. Against this backdrop, the first empirical paper puts forward and tests the claim that pre-electoral pacts should be more binding to the extent that legislative polarisation is more pervasive in the party system. The reason is that an increased ideological dividedness at the party system level reduces presidents' margins to build coalition cabinets not based on the pre-electoral pact, as complexity bargaining hampers the presidential ability to assemble parties with conflicting policy preferences in the same cabinet. In addition, based on a configurational rationale, the second empirical paper investigates what makes pre-electoral coalitions serve as the foundations of post-electoral coalition cabinets, given that pre-electoral commitments can be enlarged, maintained or shrunk until the government's inauguration day. The results highlight the importance of five conditions, albeit with more prominence for the pre-electoral coalition majority status, the low polarisation between pre-electoral coalition members and the high legislative polarisation. Taken together, the findings of this dissertation enlarge our knowledge of the relationship between pre-electoral coalitions and government formation in presidentialism by showing its entanglement with legislative polarisation.

**Keywords:** Coalitional Presidentialism, Conditional Logit Analysis, Latin America, Pre-Electoral Coalitions, Presidential Cabinets, Presidentialism, QCA

# 1 Introduction

Over the last years, pre-electoral coalitions have been spotted in parliamentary and presidential democracies in the most diverse regions of the world (Golder, 2006; Ibenskas, 2016; Kadima e Owuor, 2014; Kellam, 2017; Kim, 2008). To be more precise, extant scholarship points out that the formation of pre-electoral coalitions is not even a particular feature of our times. Instead, the first signs of electoral cooperation and coordination among parties can be found in the first decades of the twentieth century (Borges et al., 2021; Kellam, 2015).

However, the importance of studying pre-electoral coalitions goes beyond their long-standing presence in democratic regimes. The formation of pre-electoral alliances plays a substantial role in several areas of politics, ranging from influencing electoral systems and party systems to enhancing the accountability between parties and voters. To see how this can be the case, pre-electoral coalitions prevent some electoral outcomes while simultaneously encouraging others by modifying the parties' share of seats in the legislature (Borges, 2019; Borges e Turgeon, 2019). For instance, even if parties do not expect to have a successful election, they can trick the electoral system by joining forces and coordinating their electoral campaigns in order to acquire more votes. By doing so, the very same pre-electoral pacts that help the coalesced parties may impinge upon the performance of the parties who opt for not coalescing with any other organisation, as these potentially have a worse-off ratio between votes and parliamentary seats (Ibenskas, 2016). Turning to accountability, pre-electoral coalitions improve the relationship between parties and voters by what is known as "signalling", in which parties reveal to voters that they are capable of forming an upcoming government and, most importantly, with whom they intend to govern (Allern e Aylott, 2009; Christiansen et al., 2014; Falcó-Gimeno e Muñoz, 2017; Golder, 2005; Jang et al., 2022).

More importantly to the scope of this dissertation, though, previous research has argued that pre-election coalitions<sup>1</sup> drive the processes of government formation and portfolio allocation to some extent (Carroll, 2007; Freudenreich, 2016; Martin e Stevenson, 2001; Peron, 2018). That is, pre-electoral alliances would not only influence electoral affairs but would also directly affect the days after the elections (Albala,

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<sup>1</sup> The terms *pre-election* and *pre-electoral* are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

2021; Chiru, 2015; Golder, 2005; Ibenskas, 2016; Spoon e West, 2015). However, this claim is contentious for presidential regimes, albeit unproblematic for their parliamentary counterparts. This is because presidentialism and parliamentarism differ with regard to the vote of no confidence, a mechanism by which the executive is directly accountable to the legislature. This particular feature is present in parliamentary democracies but absent in presidential ones by default (Golder e Thomas, 2014). Hence, heads of government serve fixed terms with their tenure constitutionally prescribed under presidentialism, according to which they can only be removed from office under atypical circumstances (Cheibub, 2007; Samuels e Shugart, 2010). To make a long story short, this distinct characteristic of presidential regimes makes some scholars put forward the idea that pre-electoral coalitions ought not to have too much impact on post-electoral coalition governments in presidentialism, as the president-elect can opt for breaking prior alliances unilaterally without further consequences (Kellam, 2017; Linz, 1990, 1994). On the other hand, others argue that more than the independence of the executive from the legislature is needed to reverse the bidding character of pre-electoral commitments. In this way, pre-election coalitions are important insofar as they signal to the parliament that the presidential party is a credible coalition partner, grant a majority to the president-elect, influence the distribution of portfolios among governing parties, and make coalition governments last longer (Albala, 2021; Albala et al., 2023; Borges et al., 2021; Carroll, 2007; Peron, 2018).

Against this backdrop, the object of this dissertation is the government formation in multiparty presidential regimes. My interest, therefore, lies in the intersection between pre-election coalitions and government formation. The focus on cabinet formation further means that I am mostly concerned with the first chapters<sup>2</sup> of coalition governments, deliberately not delving into considerations about the governance and breaking of coalition cabinets. This is in line with the initial accounts of coalition governments, especially those aimed at discovering the patterns behind “who gets in” the government (De Winter et al., 2002; Müller e Strøm, 2006; Riker, 1962). Even though the literature has increasingly heeded the dynamics around the governance and dissolution of coalition governments in presidential regimes (e.g. Araújo, 2017; Bersch et al., 2022; Bertholini e Pereira, 2017; Freitas, 2016; Martínez-Gallardo, 2012), devoting a whole dissertation to government formation under presidentialism

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<sup>2</sup> In other words, the interest of this dissertation lies exclusively in the first stage of the coalition life cycle, wherein multiparty bargaining is concerned with the formation of governments (Bergman et al., 2021; Strøm et al., 2008).

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is justifiable as this is still an under-explored field and, as such, “deserves more attention than it has received so far” (Freudenreich, 2016, p. 95).

Thus, the general question that drives this dissertation is: what drives the transition of pre-electoral coalitions into coalition cabinets in presidential regimes? In order to answer it, this research is divided into two empirical papers. Firstly, I assume an “effects-of-causes” stance with regard to causal inference and search to which degree pre-electoral coalitions make potential governments more likely to form. My core argument is that pre-electoral alliances are more pertinent to government formation as legislative polarisation increases. As ideological polarisation deepens in the legislature on the left-right policy dimension, the *formateur*<sup>3</sup> faces increasingly more hurdles to building a coalition cabinet other than the one envisioned by the pre-electoral pact. I then flip my approach to one centred around “causes-of-effects” with the purpose of delving into the configurations behind the coalition formation. More specifically, the second paper aims to unravel which combination of conditions explains the degree to which coalition cabinets resemble pre-electoral alliances. Taken together, this dissertation adopts a multimethod research strategy to gauge the link between pre-electoral commitments and government formation in multiparty presidential regimes.

It is worth mentioning that this study lays its foundations upon rational choice principles. As such, I depart from the instrumental rationality premise, by which political actors behave in a way to seek their interests and preferences (Shepsle, 2006, 2010). Applying it to the relation between pre-election alliances and coalition governments, this means that pre-electoral commitments do not transform themselves into coalition governments automatically. Much to the contrary, coalition governments are not a mere by-product of commitments made prior to the elections but a logical consequence of a thoughtful bargaining where all involved actors strive to maximise their utility. Hence, I do not expect parties to behave according to a supposed internalised norm where pre-electoral pacts are inexorably followed or dismantled after each election; rather, pre-electoral commitments are honoured or broken, in terms of office, if that is the most desirable outcome for pre-electoral coalition members.

The rational choice approach, though, is not strange to research on coalitional presidentialism. For instance, Ariotti e Golder (2018) argue that *formateurs* in Afri-

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<sup>3</sup> The *formateur* is the party responsible for forming the upcoming government. While virtually any party with parliamentary representation can be the *formateur* in parliamentary regimes, only the president-elect party is in charge of building the government in presidential countries.

can presidential regimes enjoy an advantage when it comes to portfolio allocation in comparison to their counterparts in African parliamentary regimes because the former cannot be removed from office as easily as the latter. In a similar vein, [Silva \(2019, 2022\)](#) shows that presidents distribute more portfolios to their own parties as their policy-making powers increase. Accordingly, these studies show how political actors behave strategically to maximise their political gains under presidential institutions. Thus, this dissertation follows a stream of studies on coalition cabinets in presidential democracies based on the rational choice rationale.

The empirical tests will be carried out in Latin American presidential democracies. By and large, Latin America has been a historical locus of study for scholars interested in coalitional presidentialism. This can be seen by the fact that the first accounts of multiparty presidential democracies were mostly made with anecdotal evidence from Latin American countries ([Linz, 1990, 1994](#); [Mainwaring, 1990](#); [Mainwaring e Shugart, 1997](#); [Stepan e Skach, 1993](#)). In spite of this historical aspect, this trend has not been bucked thus far, as seen by the still-growing number of studies with emphasis on coalition cabinets in Latin America<sup>4</sup> ([Albala, 2018](#)). As such, this dissertation aims to be a valuable contribution to the already robust bulk of studies on Latin American presidential regimes.

However, looking at the other side of the coin, the literature's excessive focus on Latin American democracies may unnecessarily cast a cloud on our knowledge of coalition cabinets in other regions marked by multiparty presidentialism, such as Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe ([Chaisty et al., 2018](#); [Hanan, 2012](#); [Kim, 2008, 2011](#)). This is because some patterns hold true across different presidential regimes. Returning to the aforementioned examples, the distribution of portfolios in presidential democracies tends to favour the presidential parties, irrespective of whether the country is located in Africa or Latin America, for example ([Ariotti e Golder, 2018](#); [Silva, 2019, 2022](#)). Nevertheless, a caveat is in order as within-region features may still be present, thereby ultimately influencing the purported relationship between independent and dependent variables and leading to different results across the regions (e.g. [Hochstetler e Edwards, 2009](#)).

Bearing that in mind, the main reason for concentrating efforts on Latin American presidential countries is to warrant the so-called unit homogeneity of this research. In plain words, the unit homogeneity assumption is the bedrock of com-

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<sup>4</sup> It is remarkable how the research on coalition governments in presidential systems has not reached its plateau yet, despite initial concerns ([Chaisty et al., 2014](#)).



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parative politics. This assumption implies that cases hold constant innumerable relevant characteristics to the comparison in hand so as to not interfere in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (King et al., 1994). That is, the unit homogeneity is behind the rationale in which researchers must strive to compare comparable cases, instead of just looking for strategies to boost their number of cases under analysis (Lijphart, 1971; Peters, 1998; Sartori, 1991). In the scope of this study, a more compact case selection precludes an amiss comparison, especially as the extent to which pre-electoral alliances in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe resemble their counterparts in Latin America is unknown<sup>5</sup>.

In this way, this dissertation focuses on a comparative study of the link between pre-election commitments and government formation in thirteen Latin American countries, namely Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The temporal coverage is uneven across the empirical papers due to their respective case selection, but the overall period is roughly a 50-year period ranging from 1970 to 2022.

The dissertation is structured as follows. The first chapter delves into the discussion about whether or not pre-electoral commitments influence government formation in presidential systems. After presenting the arguments related to both views, the chapter adds a nuance to the debate by highlighting the importance of legislative polarisation when it comes to the presidents' decision to build their cabinets. The second chapter moves on to a rationale more case-oriented and focuses on the actual formed governments. Based on a configurational approach, the chapter gauges which combinations of conditions account for the similarity between coalition cabinets and pre-election pacts. In a complementary fashion, it also assesses which conditions explain the dissimilarity between governments and the pre-electoral alliances that preceded them. The final chapter is dedicated to my final remarks on the link between pre-electoral commitments and government formation. More specifically, the conclusion is charged with summarising the arguments and findings of this dissertation, presenting its limitations, discussing to which degree my results are generalisable, and suggesting new avenues of research on government formation and pre-electoral alliances.

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<sup>5</sup> The fact that the literature on pre-election coalitions is still incipient in other regions further reinforces this point (Kadima e Owuor, 2014; Kim, 2008).

# 2 Government Formation in Presidentialism: disentangling the combined effects of pre-electoral coalitions and legislative polarisation

## 2.1 Introduction

In the present day, scholars concur that forming coalition governments are a common tool to engender legislative majorities (or quasi-majorities) in presidential polities ([Chaisty et al., 2014, 2018](#); [Raile et al., 2011](#)). However, this understanding did not have an ex-nihilo creation; rather, it comes from a lengthy and fruitful debate about the viability of coalition governments under presidential regimes ([Albala, 2018](#)). In the long run, this debate has ultimately driven scholarly literature to back the empirical regularity and feasibility of multiparty governments in presidentialism ([Cheibub et al., 2004](#); [Garrido, 2003](#)). As a result, the literature has seen a massive development of research topics underlying the presidential coalition cabinets, especially in the last decades

In fact, research on presidential coalition governments shares many of the same topics covered by research on their parliamentary counterparts. That is to say, we can roughly separate the literature on coalitional presidentialism into three broad fields of study ([Couto et al., 2021](#); [Laver e Schofield, 1990](#); [Müller e Strøm, 1999](#)). First of all, some scholars have especially been interested in the formation of coalition governments ([Alemán e Tsebelis, 2011](#); [Freudenreich, 2016](#)). Others have sought to delve into coalition governance ([Bertholini e Pereira, 2017](#); [Pereira e Mueller, 2003](#); [Silva e Medina, 2022](#)). Finally, some are keen on unpacking the reasons behind the breaking of presidential coalitions ([Altman, 2000](#); [Chasquetti, 2006](#)).

Even still, we can further divide studies on the formation of coalition governments into two connected but quite different research streams. Coalition formation is actually an umbrella field that encompasses both studies concerned with the partisan composition of coalitions and the portfolio allocation within multiparty cabinets

(De Winter et al., 2002). This paper is preoccupied explicitly with the former, asking about the degree to which pre-electoral coalitions influence the formation of subsequent governments.

Until recently, the literature had largely overlooked the timing issue in coalitional bargaining. As a matter of fact, the negligence of the temporal aspect had been the norm rather than the exception for a long time in different areas of study within political science (Gibson, 1999; Pierson, 2004). Nevertheless, accompanying the discipline evolution, the scenario has drastically changed in the past few years when it comes to coalition cabinets. Irrespective of the form of government, the literature has shown the different ways in which bargainings prior to elections affect and constrain the behaviour of coalition governments (Carroll, 2007; Golder, 2006; Kellam, 2017; Strøm et al., 1994). In a similar vein, the literature has also discussed how legislative polarisation impinges on the different facets of coalitions in distinct systems of government (Golder, 2010; Kellam, 2015; Laver e Shepsle, 1994). For instance, research on legislative polarisation has shed light on how the divisiveness of party systems affects not only the formation but also the rupture of coalition governments (Albala et al., 2023; Chiru, 2015; Indridason, 2011; Martin e Vanberg, 2003). In stark contrast, the interplay between legislative polarisation and pre-electoral agreements to bring about new governments has received much lesser treatment thus far, even though the scholarly literature has paid attention to either separately. In order to take the first step towards filling this gap in research on presidential regimes, I thus ask: Whether and to what extent does legislative polarisation exert influence on cabinet formation?

The starting point is that pre-electoral coalition formation might impact government formation in presidential regimes. However, this is a contested claim in coalition theories. Indeed, on the one hand, some argue that parties lacking competitive presidential candidates would be deprived of office-oriented incentives to join pre-electoral pacts since the president-elect could decide not to stick to her end of the bargain and simply decide not to designate any executive office position to members of the original pre-electoral agreement (Kellam, 2017). On the other hand, others argue that pre-electoral pacts not only play a role in forming the next governments (Freudenreich, 2016), but parties which were members of pre-electoral coalitions receive portfolios more proportionally to their legislative contribution than their counterparts that did not make part of the pre-electoral coalition (Carroll, 2007). Hence, the second line of thought implies that pre-electoral coalitions ought to have an impact on government formation, whilst the first denies this relation.

Against this backdrop, my core claim departs from the argument that pre-electoral agreements matter for government formation. However, I take a step back and argue that the extent of legislative polarisation may grant leeway for presidential parties towards government formation. More specifically, I contend that the effects of pre-electoral coalitions upon government formation may be conditional on legislative polarisation. The reason is that high ideological polarisation in the legislature substantially increases bargaining complexity. As reaching a multiparty agreement is not a simple task in polarised settings, *formateurs* have great incentives to build governments around the original pact, especially as breaking already-established commitments is increasingly risky and costly under polarised contexts. Hence, I argue that pre-electoral coalitions serve as focal points on which presidential parties can objectively lay their foundations when party systems have parties far apart from one another on the left-right dimension. Conversely, party systems barely polarised allow presidents to seek better bargains than those made pre-electorally insofar as parties do not have highly antagonistic ideological preferences. As such, pre-election coalition members can fail to make it into the cabinet if the *formateurs* have more leeway to choose with whom to govern.

The remaining of the work proceeds as follows. The first section brings the literature on pre-electoral coalitions in parliamentary and presidential regimes to the fore. Thereafter, I present how legislative polarisation influences government formation. The third section shows the connection between pre-electoral alliances and legislative polarisation on the unrolling of government formation under presidentialism. In this section, I outline how governments based on pre-election coalitions are more likely to form than fully post-electoral coalitions. The fourth section is devoted to presenting my research design. Subsequently, the fifth section displays and discusses the results. I then wrap up the article by summarising my claims and findings, in addition to suggesting new paths of research.

## 2.2 Discussing Matters Prior to the Elections

Forming pre-electoral agreements is not a mere ‘flavour of the month’ issue in either parliamentary or presidential regimes. Pre-electoral commitments have been around since the end of World War II in parliamentary polities (Golder, 2005), whereas trails of pre-electoral pacts trace back to 1925 for their presidential counterparts (Borges et al., 2021; Kellam, 2015). Continuing the trend, more recent elections have also been marked by pre-electoral commitments. More recently, the literature has recognised that pre-electoral alliances are beyond the contours of Central Europe

and are pretty common today in parliamentary systems located in Eastern Europe (Ibenskas, 2016). Similarly, presidential regimes continue to testify the presence of pre-electoral pacts as both the 2021 Chilean and the 2022 Colombian presidential elections had various parties taking part in different alliances<sup>1</sup>.

Early scholarship on pre-electoral coalitions revealed that potential governments coalesced at an early stage of the electoral cycle are more likely to form as the actual governments than purely post-electoral governments in parliamentary systems (Martin e Stevenson, 2001; Strøm et al., 1994). The rationale is pretty consolidated: political parties engage in pre-electoral bargaining to increase their likelihood of either forming or being part of the upcoming government (Golder, 2006; Debus, 2009; Ibenskas, 2016). In other words, parties join efforts and resources once they rationalise they can form the government together. The point is that parties expect to receive more votes in general elections when they form pre-electoral alliances than when they compete on their own (Allern e Aylott, 2009; Christiansen et al., 2014). In general, in this context, parties coalesce around other parties with not-so-distant ideological preferences, and this is so for two solid reasons. Firstly, parties strive to not lose potential voters to other parties or coalitions. Secondly, it is way more challenging to strike policy agreements when parties disagree over several issues than it is when coalition partners have preferences close to one another (Cutler et al., 2016; Golder, 2010).

The picture is quite different when we take a glimpse at presidential regimes. Initial research on presidentialism would deem the construction of pre-electoral agreements as unreasonable. The president-elect and her party would have no incentive to abandon some presidential perks in favour of their pre-electoral coalition partners since powers are fundamentally independent of one another (Stepan e Skach, 1993), and the presidential election is basically a zero-sum game (Linz, 1990, 1994). Conversely, as presidents dispose of constitutionally fixed terms, even if they do not keep to their word and opt for dismantling the pre-electoral pact after the elections, the parties that comprised the pre-electoral coalition would not be able to expel them from office earlier than expected<sup>2</sup>(Cheibub, 2007; Samuels e Shugart, 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> Four out of seven candidacies to the presidential office in Chile relied on pre-electoral agreements in 2021, whilst the major presidential contestants arranged themselves around pre-electoral pacts a couple of months later in the 2022 presidential election in Colombia.

<sup>2</sup> There is an ongoing debate about what drives presidents out of office prior to the end of their terms. Thus far, the literature has found mixed results regarding the effect of the size of the presidents' legislative contingent on their survival (Hochstetler e Edwards, 2009; Lehoucq e Pérez-Liñán, 2014; Negretto, 2006; Pérez-Liñán e Polga-Hecimovich, 2017). Hence, what we

Nonetheless, as shown previously, pre-electoral alliances are not a rare phenomenon under presidentialism. [Albala \(2021\)](#) goes even to say that presidential polities have far more coalition cabinets derived from pre-election alliances than their parliamentary counterparts. Then, how does the literature explain the emergence of pre-electoral coalitions in presidentialism? More accurately, why would a party with a competitive presidential candidate search to make pacts with other organisations to back its own candidacy for the presidential office? Contrariwise, why would parties prefer to support someone else's application for the presidency rather than launching their own contestant?

To flesh out the reasons behind the construction of pre-electoral coalitions in presidential systems, I start by responding to the first question. Firstly, mirroring what happens in parliamentary regimes, parties with competitive presidential candidates seek to strike a deal with other parties to increase their candidacies' votes in the election looming on the horizon. As a matter of fact, recent scholarship has brought to attention how presidential tickets envisage having a vice-presidential candidate who enlarges their potential number of voters ([Lopes, 2022](#)). Even in the absence of a viable presidential candidate, other parties might still provide politicians well-suited to a vote-seeking strategy in the presidential arena as vice presidents. This is only a single instance of how parties in a pre-electoral coalition combine different kinds of assets to leverage their odds of winning the presidential election<sup>3</sup>.

Outside vote-seeking considerations, engaging in pre-electoral alliances also enhances the presidential party's likelihood of securing a legislative majority in the aftermath of the election ([Borges et al., 2021](#); [Carroll, 2007](#)). Despite minority governments not being stripped out of their governability ([Strøm, 1990](#)), it bears noting that presidential parties have compelling incentives to look for a majority parliamentary basis even prior to the elections. Majority status confers governments with higher capabilities of passing their legislative agenda, thus circumventing possible stalemates in the legislature and making governability more straightforward ([Amorim Neto et al., 2003](#); [Cheibub et al., 2004](#); [Hiroi e Renno, 2014](#); [Kim, 2008](#)). In addition to increasing the likelihood of forming majority governments, pre-electoral

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can take out of the discussion is that presidents are not necessarily doomed to fail if they lack control of a majority in the legislature.

<sup>3</sup> As another example, in the Brazilian presidential elections, pre-electoral coalition members take advantage of the electoral legislation to increase the amount of free political advertising time on the media of their presidential candidate. The contribution of each party depends on their size in the legislature. Hence, reliant on both their parties and their coalesced parties, presidential candidates might have a more extensive time of electoral free broadcasting in relation to their foes.

coalitions are also the underpinning for long-standing coalition cabinets (Albala et al., 2023). Accordingly, the formation of pre-electoral coalitions grants legislative support for a long time for presidents to get their bills approved.

Hence, political parties with competitive presidential candidates have clear-cut reasons to go after pre-electoral agreements. Still, we have not addressed the other side of the coin yet. Why do parties relinquish from running in the presidential elections on their own? In brief, the response lies in the fact that parties are able to reap vote, policy and office benefits from being a member of a successful pre-electoral coalition, whereas they could have gotten out of the presidential contest with empty hands had they chosen to launch a frail candidate.

The premise is that political parties without presidential aspirations do not abide by pre-electoral agreements at no cost. To start with, support in the presidential elections might come in exchange for benefits in elections at other levels, notably in gubernatorial, senatorial, and congressional electoral disputes (Borges, 2019; Borges e Turgeon, 2019). In this sense, some parties deliberately opt not to run for the national majoritarian election in order to focus on other electoral disputes (Borges et al., 2017; Spoon e West, 2015). In return, presidential parties might endorse directly or indirectly their partners' contestants in other electoral races by withdrawing their own candidates. In fact, this was a standard procedure in the Chilean centre-left coalition *Concertación* in the wake of the fall of Pinochet (Albala, 2013; Siavelis, 2002).

Additionally, in a similar vein to parliamentary coalition agreements (Moury, 2011), parties constrain the president-elect to stick to her electoral policy promises (Kellam, 2017). Although governing coalitions do not necessarily form and display written agreements in presidential systems, the enacted public policy might be close to the preferences of pre-electoral parties because presidents might feel compelled to fulfil their electoral pledges not to disappoint their voters.

To seal the deal, pre-electoral coalitions also envision distributing office rewards to their members (Carroll, 2007). As a result, parties engage in pre-electoral agreements while knowing beforehand that they will probably have a seat in the cabinet if the pre-electoral coalition succeeds in the presidential election.

Yet, pre-electoral agreements are not set in stone. A colourful example is that not rarely pre-electoral coalitions are enlarged to accommodate other parties in post-electoral settings (Albala, 2017; Freudenreich, 2016). This article points out a nuance around the government formation hitherto not explored in presidential regimes. The whole procedure of forming governments does not occur in a vacuum; instead, it ta-

kes place on a board where parties are spread across ideological preferences. Put differently, the government formation game takes place in party systems where political parties are ideologically less or more separated from one another. This study puts forward the idea that pre-electoral coalitions are more binding the degree to which ideological polarisation increases in the legislature, and the following sections explain why this should be so.

## 2.3 Legislative Polarisation and Government Formation

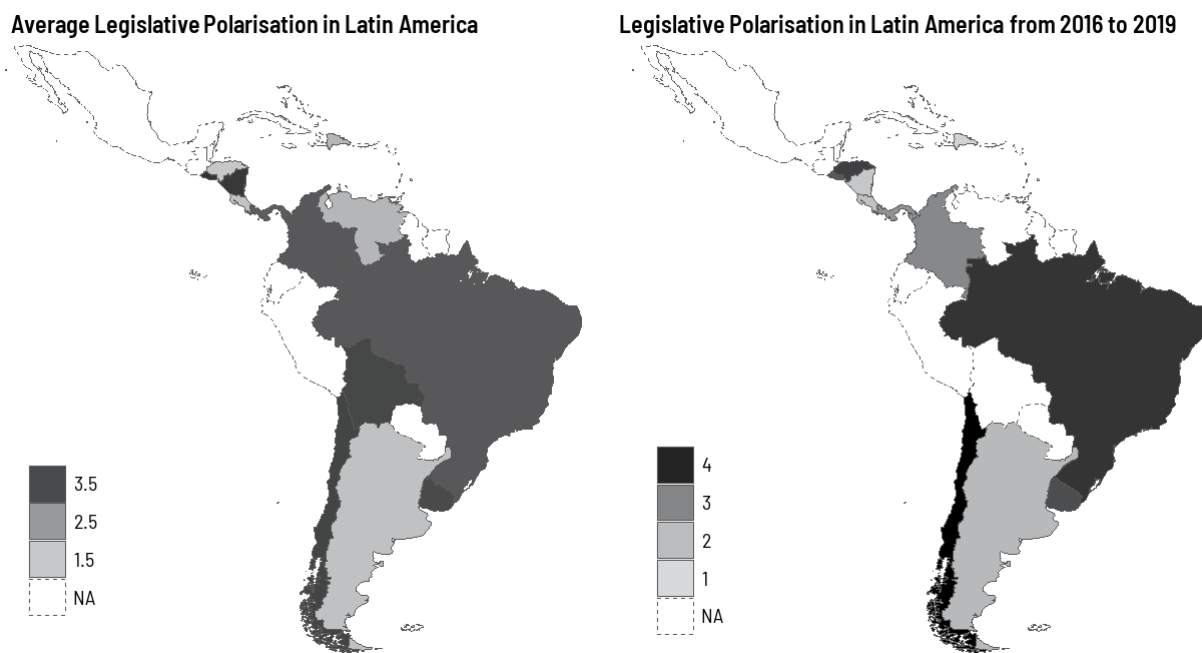
In plain terms, polarisation is a broad concept that refers to the distance between groups regarding their stance on a specific issue. Just to cite a few examples, [Collitt e Highton \(2021\)](#) address activist polarisation in the U.S., [Levendusky \(2009\)](#) is interested in studying mass polarisation also in the U.S., and [Smith \(2019\)](#) aims to explain the emergence of religious polarisation in Brazil. In this paper, I am more concerned with ideological polarisation in the legislature.

Legislative polarisation depicts how far political parties are ideologically distant from one another in the legislature of a given party system. By and large, party systems have varying levels of legislative polarisation over time. There is only a single instance where polarisation is null: when all parties share the very same political preferences. However, this is hardly the case in any democratic regime. To demonstrate this point, the left panel of Figure 1 shows the average level of legislative polarisation in Latin America in the period under study. In a complementary manner, to show how legislative polarisation is not stationary over time, the right panel of Figure 1 illustrates the degree of ideological polarisation at the party system level from 2016 to 2019 in the same region. As can be seen, Brazil's 2018 and Chile's 2017 general elections resulted in a degree of polarisation above the countries' respective averages, as opposed to Colombia's 2018 and Panama's 2019 general elections, which were below their countries' average levels of ideological polarisation.

At the outset, coalition theories ruled out the influence of ideological preferences on government formation. Based mostly on office-seeking assumptions, scholars argued that actual governments should be comprised either of minimal winning coalitions or coalitions containing the fewest number of parties whilst still retaining a majority status ([Leiserson, 1966](#); [Riker, 1962](#)). In summary, either form would emerge as a consequence of parties' unwillingness to share the spoils of government with more parties than needed. However, initial models on government formation



Figure 1 – Legislative Polarisation in Latin America



Note: Parties' size and ideology come mostly from the DPEILA (Borges et al., forthcoming). Legislative polarisation has been measured by means of Dalton's Index and runs from 0 to 10 (see below for more information).

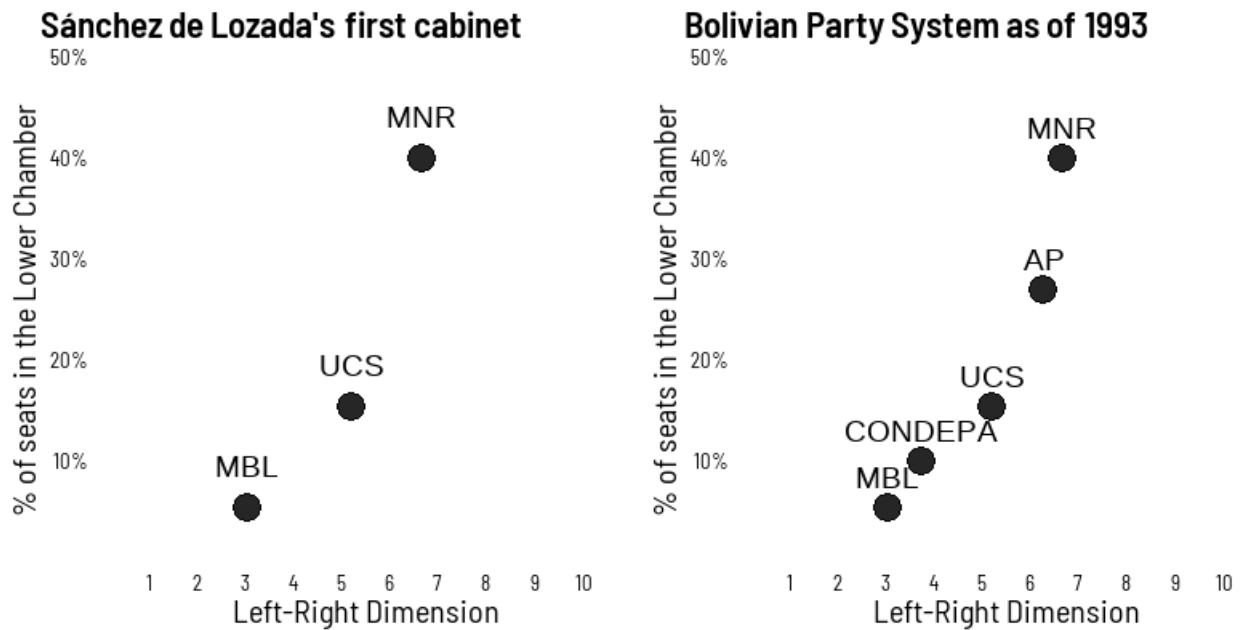
suffered from dismaying predictive power and, more often than not, failed to explain the process underlying the rise of governments (De Winter et al., 2002; Laver e Schofield, 1990). As a result, coalition theories soon embraced that political parties are also pushed by policy-seeking motivations (Axelrod, 1970; De Swaan, 1973).

More recently, most studies include both office- and policy-seeking propositions in their models of coalition formation (Druckman et al., 2005; Eppner e Ganghof, 2017; Freudenreich, 2016; Giannetti e Pinto, 2018). The background is that potential cabinets marked by high ideological division are far less likely to form the actual government than cabinets ideologically homogeneous. Despite taking policy penchant seriously, the literature still has a tendency to resort to a crude measure of the policy-seeking approach (Indridason, 2011). In general, the bulk of studies on government formation operationalise ideological division as the distance between the most left-wing and the most right-wing parties within each potential government, thereby leaving aside the overall division among the parties comprising the party system.

As such, this measure entails one major problem: it disregards the general polarisation of party systems. To see how this can be troublesome, consider Bolivia's

Sánchez de Lozada's first cabinet in his first term in 1993. Figure 2 displays the percentage of seats in the lower chamber and the position of each political party in Bolivia along the economic left-right dimension<sup>4</sup>, except for minor and regionalist parties.

Figure 2 – Sánchez de Lozada's Government Formation



Note: Parties' size and ideology hail from the V-Party dataset (Lindberg et al., 2022). The original 7-point scale was transformed into a 10-point scale for the sake of better visualisation. There was no available information on minor and regionalist parties. Patriotic Accord (AP, *Acuerdo Patriótico*) was a coalition composed of the Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN, *Acción Democrática Nacionalista*) and the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR, *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario*), for which there are no data for each party individually.

On the left, Figure 2 shows the composition of Sánchez de Lozada's first cabinet. Overall, the cabinet was comprised of three parties: the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR, *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario*), the Civic Solidarity Union (UCS, *Unión Cívica Solidaridad*), and the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL, *Movimiento Bolivia Libre*). The ideological position of each party present in the party system and their respective size in the legislature can be seen on the right side of the Figure 2.

The Bolivian party system in 1993 helps to understand why the lack of proper attention to polarisation may cast a shadow on our knowledge about government

<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of this study, the policy dimension refers only to the traditional economic left-right lines.

formation in presidential regimes. From a theoretical standpoint, the less likely outcome of the formation game in such a scenario would be the emergence of a coalition composed of the MNR and the MBL, as both parties are located at each extremity of the ideological camp. However, this is exactly what happened. How could one explain this incongruence? As I shall elaborate in the next section, the answer may lie in the combination of legislative polarisation and the formation of a pre-election coalition. The bottom line is that legislative polarisation and pre-electoral coalitions constrain the government formation to the point where the decision as to whom to invite to the cabinet does not depend solely on the parties that ultimately were invited to take a seat but also on the other parties available in the pool of parties (Indridason, 2011, p. 692). That is, amongst other things, the MNR's decision to form the cabinet in tandem with the UCS and the MBL was made consciously after grasping how far parties were apart in the party system and considering that there was already a pre-electoral coalition up and running.

## 2.4 The Entanglement between Pre-Electoral Coalitions, Legislative Polarisation, and Government Formation

The vast majority of the literature on pre-electoral coalitions in presidential regimes argues that being part of pre-electoral pact matters for portfolio allocation in the post-electoral scenario (Albala, 2021; Albala et al., 2023; Borges et al., 2021; Carroll, 2007; Freudenreich, 2016; Peron, 2018). I take a step back and claim that the degree of legislative polarisation has a decisive impact on converting pre-electoral coalitions into coalition cabinets.

Ideological polarisation in the legislature is known for increasing the complexity around multiparty bargaining in parliamentary regimes. This is materialised by the fact that governments take longer to form as legislative polarisation increases (Falcó-Gimeno e Indridason, 2013; Golder, 2010; Martin e Vanberg, 2003). This clearly cannot happen under presidentialism because both the executive and the legislature have constitutionally fixed terms (Linz, 1994), which means that governments have not only a date to end, but also a date to begin their tenure. Nevertheless, this does not preclude legislative polarisation from disturbing the government formation in presidential regimes.

Multiparty negotiations are inherently more difficult as legislative polarisation

increases since parties hold increasingly irreconcilable views on a host of issues. Consequently, highly polarised settings present presidential parties with a smaller set of viable alternative governments, thereby reducing presidents' leeway to build their cabinets. Conversely, slight legislative polarisation represents the best scenario for the executive once they have a great variety of feasible coalition alternatives.

My point is that pre-electoral agreements counteract the effect of legislative polarisation on cabinet formation. Although polarisation implies more bargaining complexity, pre-electoral agreements make parties abide by several compromises even *before* the elections take place. In the midst of these compromises, parties discuss common grounds over public policies to be implemented, which policies should be left aside, and ministries to be distributed amongst coalition members (Peron, 2018). Thus, presidential parties have significant incentives to keep to their end of the bargain under polarised contexts. The rationale is straightforward: building the new government around a previous, settled pre-electoral agreement is much simpler than finding the middle ground amongst other arrays of parties in an inhospitable party system.

Note that my contention does not implicate that legislative polarisation leads to greater or lesser formation of pre-electoral coalitions. On the contrary, my claim starts from the fact that pre-electoral pacts have already been made and, subsequently, are more binding to the extent that *formateur* parties face greater ideological hurdles in parliament. Also, I do not argue that parties far apart from one another cannot be part of the same pre-electoral pact. Even if their ideological positions are starkly different, they can make concessions to each other and meet at the halfway. This can be exemplified by the pre-electoral coalition formed between the National Convergence (CN, *Convergencia Nacional*) and the Movement toward Socialism (MAS, *Movimiento al Socialismo*) in 1993 Venezuela, two parties located at opposite ends of the ideological camp. In spite of the distance between the parties at the same pre-electoral pact, my argument continues the same: the CN had more incentives to build the realised government around the pre-electoral coalition to the extent that legislative polarisation was moderately acute in the party system<sup>5</sup>.

By contrast, meagre polarisation along economic and social policy lines provides fewer incentives for presidents to form governments based on pre-electoral alliances.

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<sup>5</sup> The 1993 Venezuelan party system would have a low legislative polarisation in comparative terms. From a national perspective, however, the ideological polarisation in 1993 was at its peak at the time. In the end, the CN preferred to form the government with the MAS as opposed to inviting other right-wing parties into the cabinet.

Consider the following chain of events. To start, as legislative polarisation decreases, parties become less differentiated from one another and, as a consequence, have fewer disagreements over policy issues. In this sense, coalition bargaining is more amenable to be undertaken and might have a ton of different outcomes. The greater resemblance in the party system ultimately favours presidential parties since they can forgo their original pre-electoral pact and strive to build a bargain more beneficial to themselves. In a hypothetical situation, where the party system would look like an undifferentiated amalgam of parties from similar ideological positions, presidents could dismount their pre-electoral coalition and, rather than building a multiparty cabinet, decide to govern through *ad-hoc* bargainings.

This discussion relates to the question of fairness in coalition governments and returns to the conundrum of whether presidents share office payoffs with pre-electoral coalition parties. Some scholars suggest that coalition governments under parliamentarism have an internalised norm by which executive office positions are proportionally allocated in relation to each member's size in the legislature (Browne e Rice, 1979; Browne e Frendreis, 1980). The rationale is that proportional portfolio allocation does not derive from a purely rational approach but rather from a social norm about fairness<sup>6</sup>. This reasoning could be roughly applied to pre-electoral agreements under presidentialism, where one could argue that pre-electoral coalitions should naturally transform into post-electoral coalition cabinets. Coalition cabinets fully composed of pre-electoral coalitions should be the fairer outcome amongst all possible alternative governments once all parties relinquishing from launching a presidential candidate would still be compensated by being part of the next government.

Arguments based on norm-driven behaviours, though, remain untested in the studies on government formation in presidential regimes. The literature is, nevertheless, split into different explanations based on the rational choice theory. On the one hand, presidential parties lack incentives to maintain a bargain struck prior to the elections since their survival is not reliant upon the legislature (Kellam, 2017). On the other hand, presidents honour the pre-electoral pact because, in rational choice terminology, governing is a repeated interaction between presidents and parties in the legislature, in which presidential parties reap the benefits of keeping their word in pre-electoral agreements by demonstrating to be credible coalition partners (Borges et al., 2021).

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<sup>6</sup> Of course, other scholars firmly disagree with the view that coalitions work under norm rules and argue that coalition governments are primarily driven by rational thinking (Bäck et al., 2009; Ecker e Meyer, 2019; Falcó-Gimeno e Indridason, 2013).

These contradictory claims can be illustrated through the Brazilian case. Following the first stream of studies, as office-seeking would be out of the question, parties should join pre-electoral coalitions based solely on policy-seeking considerations (Kellam, 2017). In this way, pre-electoral agreements should not thrive in Brazil as office-seeking parties abound in the country (Borges, 2021). However, much to the contrary, the Brazilian presidential elections have been inundated with pre-electoral coalitions since the return to democracy, in 1985. More surprisingly, several party leaders only agree to engage in multiparty bargaining if they can have an eye on portfolio distribution, even if the presidential and legislative elections have not taken their place yet (Peron, 2018). Taken together, the Brazilian experience has pointed out that parties without viable presidential candidates do expect office perks by joining a pre-electoral pact. Of course, though, anecdotal evidence from a single-case study still suffers from low generalisability.

That being said, my theory adds a nuance to the discussion about pre-election coalitions and their post-electoral fulfilment. Although the literature has mainly supported the idea that pre-electoral agreements matter once the government is in place, (Kellam, 2017) still has a point when she argues that presidents might enjoy their constitutional privileges and try to exploit the payoffs of being the *formateur* of the coalition. In other words, presidents might break out from pre-electoral arrangements when they can construct a more beneficial bargain for themselves. This should be most likely to happen when the legislative polarisation is low, where presidential parties have more feasible alternative governments to build than they would have when parties are far apart from one another in the standard left-right dimension. This is in line with previous studies that have stood out how presidents resort to institutional features to favour themselves in the coalition formation and law-making process (Amorim Neto, 2006; Silva, 2019, 2022). By contrast, presidential parties have compelling incentives to form governments around pre-electoral agreements when the ideological polarisation in the legislature is high, as pre-electoral pacts serve as focal points that reduce bargaining costs, especially in comparison to forming a new government from scratch. Thus:

**H1:** Governments based on pre-electoral coalitions are more likely to form as presidents face higher legislative polarisation.

However, legislative polarisation is not bound to have an impact on government formation only through pre-election coalitions. It is also expected to affect most features of coalition formation (Indridason, 2011). Consequently, several secondary

hypotheses can be derived from the inclusion of legislative polarisation in the discussion of government formation. By taking size variables into account first, minority governments should be more likely to form under highly polarised legislatures since ideological differences augment transaction costs related to increasing the coalition. By the same token, potential governments containing many parties should be less likely to form under polarised instances. Naturally, cabinets with a high number of members have more difficulties to form due to the cost of arranging an agreement amongst several parties (Leiserson, 1966). These difficulties should be reinforced as legislative polarisation increases. Hence, we stand:

**H2:** Minority coalitions are more likely to form to the extent that legislative polarisation increases.

**H3:** Coalitions comprising a high number of parties are less likely to form when legislative polarisation increases.

Regarding ideological division, governments with high ideological heterogeneity should be less likely to form in polarised parliaments inasmuch as polarisation pushes parties to pertain to different blocs. This situation discourages presidents from forming governments with parties situated across different ideological blocs as bargaining tends to be plagued with disagreements over a series of policy issues. Furthermore, potential governments with low to moderate levels of ideological heterogeneity may emerge as a result of “constraint negative coalitions” in the sense that parties without a close ideological link strike a deal in order to prevent the formation of what would be a worse-off government. This can be seen, for example, at the outset of the *Concertación* in Chile. Even if parties had some policy disagreements, acting in unison was a better option than running the risk of losing to the *Alianza*. All arguments considered, potential governments with high ideological heterogeneity should be less likely to form than the ones with low to moderate ideological variety as polarisation grows.

**H4:** Coalitions with high ideological division are less likely to form to the extent that legislative polarisation increases.

In opposition, governments comprising the median party should be the norm as ideological polarisation in the legislature increases. The reason is that alternative coalitions without the median party tend to have antagonistic views on policy in party systems marked by high ideological dividedness (Indridason, 2011, p. 700).

For a similar reason, alternative coalitions containing extreme parties should be less likely to form as legislative polarisation increases.

**H5:** Coalitions comprising the median party are more likely to form to the extent that legislative polarisation increases.

**H6:** Coalitions comprising extreme parties are less likely to form to the extent that legislative polarisation increases.

## 2.5 Research Design

In order to test my arguments, I analyse patterns of government formation in twelve Latin American countries. A comparative research design appears well-suited to the task as coalition governments are quite common in presidential regimes (Cheibub, 2007; Cheibub et al., 2004), especially in Latin America (Chaisty et al., 2018; Couto et al., 2021). In other words, coalitional presidentialism is not a whim of a handful of countries but rather is a real tool to engender legislative majorities in the region.

My focus resides in Latin America for a few reasons. First, focusing on a single region helps to preserve the unit homogeneity of the research (King et al., 1994). Otherwise, the results could be biased if the study had drawn on presidential regimes across different continents once non-observable features could be at play. At the same time, however, it could be said that the same logic discussed above regarding pre-electoral coalitions and legislative polarisation could be extended to encompass presidential government formation outside the Latin American scope. This leads to a second reason for centring the analysis on the Latin American context. Despite a few remarkable exceptions (Ariotti e Golder, 2018; Hanan, 2012; Kim, 2011), data on presidential coalition governments in regions other than Latin America are not aggregated yet, thereby hindering comparative enterprises. Last but not least, pre-election agreements have been scarcely addressed in African, Asian and Eastern European presidential countries (Kadima e Owuor, 2014; Kim, 2008) in contrast to the well-documented evidence when it comes to Latin American countries (Albala, 2021; Borges et al., 2021; Freudenreich, 2016; Kellam, 2017).

To effectively test my hypotheses, I follow Freudenreich's (2016) lead and employ conditional logit models to study the patterns of government formation in presidentialism. In fact, the use of models based on conditional probabilities is not strange



to political science. This can be exemplified by the fact that conditional logit techniques are widely employed by the scholarship on party-switching (e.g. Desposato e Scheiner, 2008; Radean, 2019). Most remarkably, conditional logit techniques have a close-knit relationship with the literature on government formation under parliamentarian (e.g. Martin e Stevenson, 2001). As Freudenreich (2016, p. 90) well noted, though, studies on presidential regimes have not followed the same methodological approach. A plausible reason for such a difference is that presidential systems significantly restrain the set of potential cabinets once the presidential parties are, most of the time, the *formateur* parties<sup>7</sup>. This institutional feature might have prompted scholars to consider only the actual presidential cabinets in their analyses regarding the characteristics of presidential cabinets, such as their status in the legislature (e.g. Figueiredo et al., 2012).

The most popular statistical techniques to deal with coalitional presidentialism, however, provide misspecified estimates to grasp patterns of government formation. This happens because the structure of government formation makes the likelihood of forming a specific cabinet contingent on the other potential governments that could have borne out. In this way, government formation is a choice problem in which parties contrast the utility of forming each alternative government with one another. To put it in presidential terminology, presidents have a whole set of possible governments from which they can choose only a single instance to come into existence. That is, just like passengers choose among different transportation systems to get to a destination (McFadden, 1974), presidents are confronted with varying alternatives from which they have to choose one to form.

This process can be illustrated with the Uruguayan party system in 2000. By the end of the century, the Uruguayan party system was comprised of four political parties<sup>8</sup>: the Colorado Party (PC, *Partido Colorado*), the National Party (PN, *Partido Nacional*), the Broad Front (FA, *Frente Amplio*), and the New Space (NE, *Nuevo Espacio*). Against this backdrop, as soon Batlle was sworn into office, he could have built his cabinet in eight different ways<sup>9</sup>, as listed in Table 1. The go-

<sup>7</sup> Strictly speaking, the presidential party can even stay out of office. The justification for that resides in the fact that some presidents maximise their utility by not including their party in the cabinet, thus opting for reaping the benefits of building co-optation or non-partisan cabinets (Albala, 2013; Amorim Neto, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> The Uruguayan party system is much more complex than the one depicted here. The Uruguayan political parties are composed of several disparate factions. Following the comparative literature on Latin America, I refer to political parties *per se* instead of focusing on the intraparty dimension.

<sup>9</sup> In presidential polities, the number of potential governments is given by the formula  $2^n$ , where

Table 1 – Potential governments following the 1999 Uruguayan general election

Formateur	Coalition Partner(s)
PC	–
PC	FA
<b>PC</b>	<b>PN</b>
PC	NE
PC	FA - PN
PC	FA - NE
PC	PN - NE
PC	FA - PN - NE

Note: The actual government is highlighted in bold.

vernment formation process ultimately led to a coalition between the PC and the PN. Thus, the interest resides in explaining why this potential coalition emerged at the expense of the others. In this context, the conditional logit model is particularly well-equipped to provide a broad overview of the reasons for government formation in Latin America.

The dependent variable depicts whether the potential government was formed by assigning one to actual governments and zero to all others that remained only in the theoretical plan. Take the 1999 Uruguayan party system in Table 1 to further elucidate matters. In this specific case, the only option to be coded as 1 is the actual government formed between the PC and the PN, while all the remaining options are coded as 0. Presidential cabinets are deemed to begin (or end, depending on one's perspective) whenever a legislative or presidential election takes place and whenever the party composition of the cabinet changes, either by ushering in a new member or by expelling a former party from the government.

Data on government formation opportunities come from the ground-breaking work done by [Freudenreich \(2016\)](#), which I have updated to cover more recent cases of cabinet formation<sup>10</sup>. This dataset is particularly useful as it allows to handle

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$n$  is the number of parties excluding the president's party. In their parliamentary counterparts, the number of potential governments is calculated through  $2^n - 1$ , where  $n$  is the number of parties in the party system. This slight difference is due to the fact that the *formateur* cannot be any other party than the presidents' party in presidentialism, whereas any party can be the *formateur* in parliamentarism.

<sup>10</sup> I briefly outline the updated process here. The first step was ensuring that only democratic periods were inserted in the dataset. To do so, I checked which country-years were democratic

the contrasting levels of party system institutionalisation found in Latin America (Mainwaring et al., 2018). Following the standard procedure in parliamentary studies, only significant parties are taken into account for government formation processes. That is, parties with extremely minor legislative contingents are excluded from the analysis since their size in the legislature does not influence interparty negotiations<sup>11</sup> (Budge et al., 2001; Sartori, 1979). In practical terms, parties with less than one percentage of seats<sup>12</sup> in the legislature are disregarded<sup>13</sup>.

Table 2 displays the countries included in the dataset, their respective temporal coverage and their number of actual governments.

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based on Bjørnskov e Rode (2020) and Polity V (Marshall e Gurr, 2020). Country-years deemed as either undemocratic or scoring below score six on Polity V Index have been cast aside. Next, I retrieved information on the Latin American party systems to be updated from the DPEILA (Borges et al., forthcoming) and the V-Party dataset (Lindberg et al., 2022), such as the number of parties in the parliament, their seat share, and their location on left-right terms. In the next stage, I looked for data on the composition of presidential cabinets and coded actual governments following Amorim Neto (2019), Camerlo e Martínez-Gallardo (2018), Nyrup e Bramwell (2020) and Silva (2022). Then, the last step consisted of coding which potential governments were based on pre-election coalitions. Data on most recent Latin American pre-election coalitions come mostly from Borges et al. (2021) and Lopes (2022), and, for the cases not covered by scholarly literature yet, I relied on the countries' respective electoral committees or similar departments charged with electoral affairs.

<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, excluding very small parties from the sample is a way to deal with measurement errors, as experts get into trouble in estimating their policies' position (Marks et al., 2007).

<sup>12</sup> To avoid falling victim to the violation of the independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA), a different procedure was made to include Brazil's case in the wake of its 2018 legislative and presidential elections. In the aggregate, thirty parties gained representation in the lower chamber after the elections, with twenty-two holding more than one per cent of the share of seats. As a consequence, this number of parties would have generated more than two million potential governments and, thus, would make conditional logit regressions inviable. The solution found was to raise the threshold for inclusion in the dataset for this specific election from one to roughly two-and-a-half per cent of seats. However, to prevent losing information, I also considered relevant parties with known policy positions on the DPEILA, despite not holding two-and-a-half per cent of the seats of the Chamber of Deputies.

<sup>13</sup> This is far from being a mere subtlety. More often than not, research on government formation considers that *formateur* parties have various coalition alternatives from which they choose one actually to form. Taking out non-significant parties from the analysis prevents researchers from stumbling at measurement errors. To see why this is the case, let me consider the 2002 pre-electoral coalition led by Lula. Despite being comprised of five parties, the pre-electoral coalition embraced two very small parties, the Party of National Mobilization (PMN, *Partido da Mobilização Nacional*) and the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB, *Partido Comunista Brasileiro*). Together, both parties accounted for exactly one seat following the 2002 general election in Brazil. Not surprisingly, neither party was invited to be part of the upcoming government. If the PMN and the PCB had been in the dataset on government formation, they would have caused two problems of major concern. Firstly, they would have wrongly generated more options of feasible coalition alternatives than there actually were. Secondly, and posing a graver threat to the research design, the inclusion of these petite parties would have made the researchers incorrectly assign the formed government as non-driven by a pre-election pact, as the two members had been dropped.

Table 2 – Dataset Summary

Country	Period	Actual Governments	%
Argentina	1983-2019	23	12.30
Bolivia	1982-2018	14	7.48
Brazil	1989-2022	23	12.30
Chile	1989-2018	9	4.81
Colombia	1978-2021	23	12.30
Costa Rica	1970-2021	17	9.09
Dom. Republic	1978-2020	15	8.02
El Salvador	1984-2019	19	10.16
Honduras	1982-2018	11	5.88
Nicaragua	1997-2016	5	2.67
Panama	1989-2019	11	5.88
Uruguay	1985-2020	10	5.34
Venezuela	1974-1999	7	3.74
Total	1970-2022	187	100

Information on political parties' ideological preferences and legislative polarisation comes from the Dataset of Parties, Elections and Ideology in Latin America (DPEILA) (Borges et al., forthcoming). The DPEILA offers the positioning of parties along the traditional economic left-right dimension by transforming the V-Party (2020) scores to a twenty-point scale. Along with it, ideological polarisation in the legislature is measured by means of Dalton's (2008) Polarisation Index through the following formula<sup>14</sup>:

$$LegislativePolarisationIndex = \sum_{i=1}^n Pi \left( \frac{Si - Mj}{9.5} * 10 \right)^2 \quad (2.1)$$

Where  $Pi$  is the share of seats of the party  $i$ ,  $Si$  is the position of the party  $i$  in the left-right divide, and  $Mj$  is the average left-right position of the party system  $j$ . In plain terms, Dalton's Polarisation Index allows grasping the degree to which party systems are divided in the post-electoral scenario by weighting parties' position by

<sup>14</sup> As a matter of fact, this calculation is a slight alteration from the original account (Dalton, 2008, p. 906). This is not necessarily a problem, as the reason for such a difference lies in the fact that the measures of ideological preferences are different. While Dalton relies on a ten-point scale, the DPEILA makes use of a twenty-point scale to locate parties across the ideology continuum.

Table 3 – Variables, Operationalisation, and Expected Signs

Variable	Operationalisation	Expected Sign	Expected Interaction Sign with Legislative Polarisation
Minority	1 if a potential government does not attain a majority in the lower house, 0 otherwise	-	+
Number of Parties	The number of parties included in a potential government.	-	-
Ideological Division	The ideological distance between the leftmost and the rightmost parties in a potential government.	-	-
Median Party	1 if a potential government includes the median party in the cabinet, 0 otherwise.	+	+
Extreme Parties	1 if a potential government includes parties considered "extremist" from the presidential parties' perspective, 0 otherwise.	-	-
Runner-up Party	1 if a potential government includes the second-most voted party, 0 otherwise	-	Not Applicable
Pre-Electoral Coalition	1 if a potential government is based on a pre-election pact, 0 otherwise	+	+

their size in the legislature<sup>15</sup>. More importantly, in the current ocean of different measures of polarisation, Dalton's index was explicitly built with party systems in mind. As such, it comes as no coincidence that this measurement has gained prominence among scholars in the last years (e.g. [Carroll e Kubo, 2021](#); [Ecker e Meyer, 2015](#); [Lupu, 2015](#)).

Table 3 summarises which are the independent variables employed by the models, their operationalisation and expected sign<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> It is worth mentioning that the index is not intended to measure the difference in legislative polarisation from the pre-electoral to the post-electoral scenario; instead, it is aimed to measure the ideological polarisation in the legislature after all actors know the election results. This point raises the question of whether political parties are fully aware of the policy preferences of one another when it is time to form a new cabinet after a general election. This situation is further aggravated by the fact that political actors are in a context inundated with imperfect information and bounded rationality ([Shepsle, 2006](#)). In order to circumvent this problem, [Curini e Pinto \(2016\)](#) resort to the "average ideological range" of party systems by looking at the distance between the rightmost party to the leftmost party on a host of policy domains taking into consideration the previous government. However, this solution is far from ideal to be applied in this work for several reasons. Firstly, the most important hypothesised causal effect put forward here concerns only *the degree* of legislative polarisation, not its *change* in comparison with a previous setting. Secondly, the "average ideological range" is blind to parties' size, thus assigning disproportional weight to small extremist parties and, consequently, not tapping neatly into the concept of legislative polarisation. The final nail in the coffin is the fact that this paper measures ideological polarisation in the legislature for only one dimension, namely the standard economic left-right cleavage, whereas [Curini e Pinto \(2016\)](#) had data for party preferences in eight domains. To sum up, despite the fact that the literature has come up with alternatives to deal with the uncertainty around government formation, changing the polarisation index to a mere ideological range does not seem fruitful to this work.

<sup>16</sup> Descriptive statistics for the variables can be found in the Appendix.

## 2.6 Results

Table 4 provides the results of the conditional logit models for government formation in Latin America. The first two models encompass only minority bargaining situations, as coalition formation is more natural in these environments than when presidents hold a majority contingent in the legislature.

Table 4 – Government Formation in Latin America

	Minority Presidents		All Presidents
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Minority	-1.171*** (0.265)	-1.245*** (0.270)	-1.131*** (0.259)
Number of Parties	-1.287*** (0.108)	-1.306*** (0.110)	-1.302*** (0.103)
Ideological Division	-0.213*** (0.045)	-0.213*** (0.046)	-0.195*** (0.042)
Median Party	0.922*** (0.252)	0.947*** (0.257)	0.898*** (0.250)
Extreme Parties	0.515* (0.306)	0.550* (0.324)	0.497 (0.317)
Runner-up Party	-1.509*** (0.317)	-1.457*** (0.319)	-1.134*** (0.269)
Pre-Electoral Coalition (PEC)	3.340*** (0.350)	0.064 (1.284)	-0.200 (1.117)
PEC * Legislative Polarisation		1.099*** (0.408)	1.174*** (0.365)
Cabinets	151	144	187
Number of Alternative Cabinets	292,972	292,344	294,204
Log Likelihood	-504.186	-483.972	-550.500

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

To start our analysis, the first model employs most of the original variables

used by [Freudenreich \(2016\)](#) to assess whether patterns of government formation in Latin America's presidential regimes have changed in the last years in some way. It turns out that the drivers of cabinet formation have primarily remained the same compared to [Freudenreich's \(2016\)](#) analysis. All else being equal, cabinets with a high number of parties and high internal ideological division are still less likely to form than cabinets with fewer parties in their composition and with a lower degree of ideological division, respectively. In a similar vein, the inclusion of the runner-up party still makes cabinets less likely to occur. Having the median party and extreme parties in their ranks also increases the likelihood of the formation of cabinets. A further result that deserves attention is that potential governments based on pre-election coalitions are more likely to form still continues to be true. The major difference is that minority status reaches statistical significance at 0.01 and shows that minority cabinets are roughly 67% less likely to be materialised into the actual cabinet than majority cabinets, which is a novel finding if we compare it with [Freudenreich's original analysis](#)<sup>17</sup>.

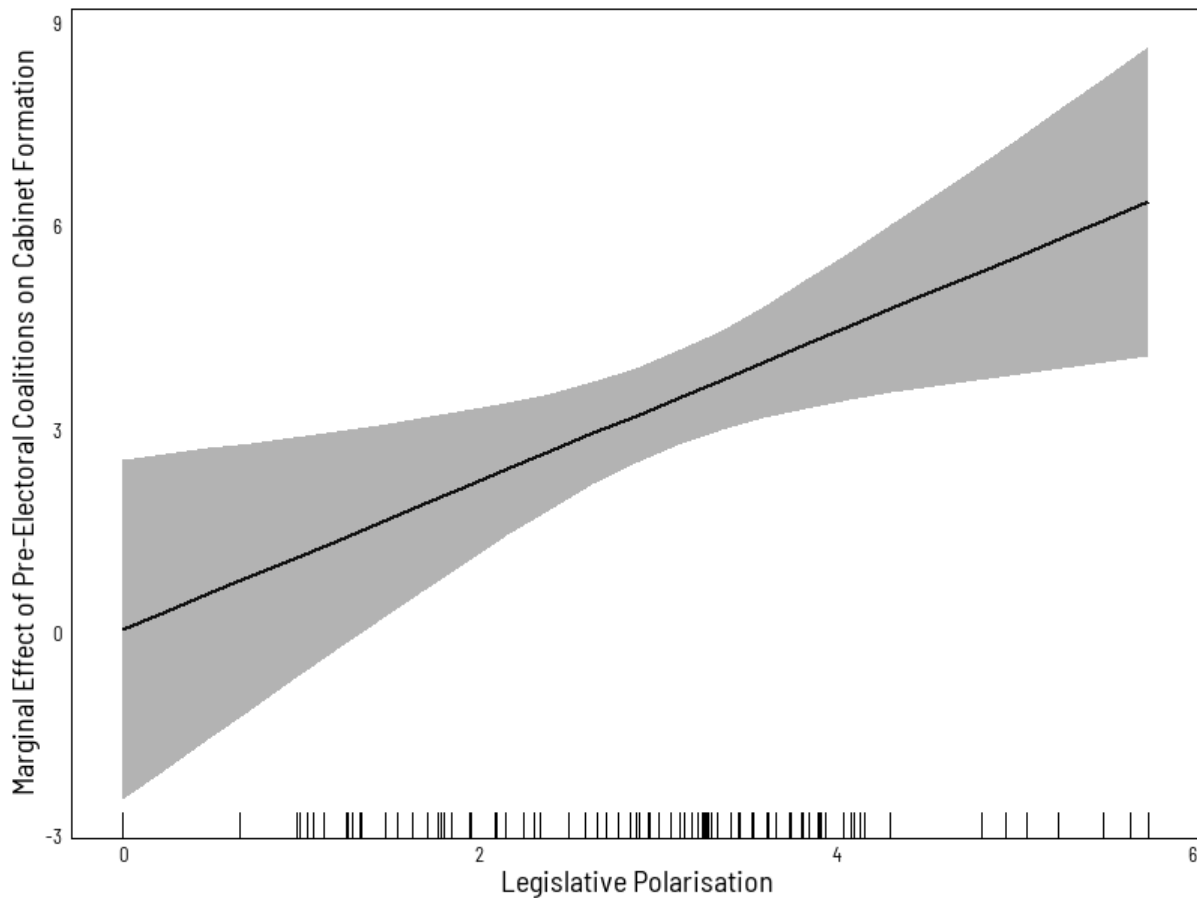
Moving on to the second model, the effect of pre-electoral coalitions appears to be conditional on the degree of legislative polarisation. As legislative polarisation never reaches zero, I focus mainly on the interaction term, as the interpretation of the individual variable is uninteresting in such a scenario ([Brambor et al., 2007](#)). This model tells us that, on average, the increase of one unit of legislative polarisation makes potential governments based on pre-electoral coalitions approximately three times more likely to form than other alternative governments. However, to have a better view and a most consistent analysis of this relationship, [Figure 3](#) plots the marginal effect of pre-election coalitions on government formation across a range of values of legislative polarisation.

[Figure 3](#) confirms the previous finding and shows that legislative polarisation indeed conditions the effects of pre-electoral coalitions on cabinet formation. Except for trim levels of ideological polarisation, where the 95% confidence intervals do not let us assure the exact impact of pre-electoral pacts on the formation of presidential governments, pre-election coalitions matter most as parties are more distanced from one another on the left-right policy dimension. From a Legislative

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<sup>17</sup> Due to data unavailability on party's seat share in upper chambers across Latin America, I have not been able to test whether upper house minority status's effect on government formation has remained the same. More pertinent to present purposes, my main concern is to gauge whether the lack of this information confounds the entangled relation between pre-electoral coalitions and legislative polarisation on the formation of presidential cabinets. To do so, I conducted a few robustness tests regarding bicameral settings, as will be described below.

Figure 3 – Conditional Marginal Effect of Pre-Electoral Coalitions on Cabinet Formation



Polarisation Index of 1.43 onwards, the construction of pre-electoral pacts exerts increasingly more pressure on cabinet formation, increasing from 1.64 (0.19; 3.08) to 6.38 (4.09; 8.66) times the likelihood of formation of potential governments based on pre-electoral alliances. To attest to the empirical importance of this finding, 130 out of 144 formation opportunities analysed by the second model score more than 1.43 in the index of Legislative Polarisation, which means that disregarding legislative polarisation when studying pre-electoral affairs and government formation in Latin America is quite inadvisable.

The hypothesised causal relationship put forward here remains statistically significant even if we include majority presidents in the analysis, as seen in Model 3. Notwithstanding the inclusion of majority bargaining situations, all variables point in the same direction and have the same level of statistical significance as in Model 2.



Table 5 – Legislative Polarisation and Government Formation in Latin America

	Minority Presidents	All Presidents
	(1)	(2)
Minority	0.120 (0.816)	0.285 (0.733)
* Legislative Polarisation	-0.474* (0.265)	-0.505** (0.242)
Number of Parties	-1.591*** (0.395)	-1.486*** (0.316)
* Legislative Polarisation	0.091 (0.125)	0.057 (0.103)
Ideological Division	0.039 (0.133)	0.034 (0.103)
* Legislative Polarisation	-0.084** (0.041)	-0.081** (0.034)
Median Party	0.776 (0.938)	0.616 (0.913)
* Legislative Polarisation	0.025 (0.285)	0.065 (0.278)
Extreme Parties	0.835 (1.149)	0.746 (1.118)
* Legislative Polarisation	-0.101 (0.356)	-0.078 (0.347)
Runner-up Party	-1.279*** (0.323)	-0.984*** (0.273)
Pre-Electoral Coalition (PEC)	0.622 (1.378)	0.152 (1.178)
* Legislative Polarisation	0.917** (0.444)	1.062*** (0.390)
Observations	144	187
Number of Alternative Cabinets	294,204	294,204
Log Likelihood	-550.500	-544.429

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 5 presents the extent to which legislative polarisation affects government formation in Latin American presidential regimes. Once again, I focus the interpretation on the interaction terms. Overall, the results are pretty mild and, as a result, it is fair to say that legislative polarisation does not shape all patterns related to government formation, as the models laid out in Table 5 do not represent so much a better fit than the models presented previously.

To begin with size-related variables, surprisingly, only the interaction between legislative polarisation and minority status passes traditional statistical levels of significance at 0.10 and 0.05 in the first and second models, respectively. Put differently, the increase in legislative polarisation makes minority governments less likely to emerge as a result of cabinet formation. Conversely, polarisation does not seem to have any impact on the number of parties in cabinet composition, as the interaction failed to attain statistical significance.

Policy-related hypotheses also render mixed findings. Even though the interactions between legislative polarisation with median and extreme parties are not statistically significant, the relationship between ideological division and legislative polarisation is statistically significant at 0.05 level for both models 1 and 2. This interaction implies that, as legislative polarisation increases, potential governments with lesser internal ideological division are more likely to form. In other words, as party systems have parties with growing irreconcilable ideological preferences, actual cabinets tend to be composed of parties with similar policy views.

More importantly for current purposes, even if models are inundated with interactions, the interaction between pre-electoral coalitions and legislative polarisation is still statically significant at 0.01 level for both models. That is, the inclusion of size and ideological variables does not strip the statistical significance from our principal (interaction) variable. Thus, the statistical models lend support to the principal claim put forward by this article: the importance of pre-electoral coalitions is boosted as ideological polarisation increases in the legislature. As my argument goes, this is due to the fact that the greater ideological distance among parties restrains the presidential party's leeway from building a governing coalition other than the one envisioned by the pre-electoral pact.

To probe whether the above findings are robust, I conduct a series of robustness tests. The first consists of finding out whether the lack of information on upper chamber status is detrimental to the purported relation between legislative polarisation and pre-electoral pacts on government formation. With that in mind, I first re-run models with [Freudenreich's \(2016\)](#) original data, which have information on

minority status for both lower and upper chambers. Then, I divide the original dataset into bicameral and unicameral countries and re-run models for bicameral countries only. I wrap up this part by repeating the last procedure on the updated dataset.

Next, I replace the V-Party measure with Baker e Greene's (2011) ideological classification of Latin American Parties. Then, I restrict the sample to include only those party systems with more than 2.5 effective number of parties and once again re-run the conditional logit models. Whilst the former test allows checking whether the results remain the same regardless of the choice of ideological measure, the latter takes into account that coalitional bargaining is more typical in more fragmented settings.

The last battery of tests concerns gauging whether specific aspects of electoral systems and party systems have empirical implications for my argument. The first characteristic that may influence the transformation of pre-electoral coalitions into governing coalitions is the undertaking of common party primaries. Suppose a set of parties agreed on defining its presidential and legislative candidates by means of conjoint party primaries. In that case, pre-electoral coalition members naturally have a higher likelihood of composing the next government if the pre-election alliance is successful in the electoral arena, as breaking the pre-electoral coalition apart is immensely costly. Consequently, cabinet formation would not have too much to do with legislative polarisation, but rather with party primaries *per se*. However, coding common party primaries proved to be extremely difficult, partly due to the own nature of the scholarship on party primaries, which has not had a comparative empirical focus (Navarro e Sandri, 2017). To deal with it, I rely on a *proxy* measure by coding whether or not presidential parties chose their candidate through a primary election. Even if I do not tap perfectly into the concept of *common* party primaries, this measure captures the degree of formalisation around the process of selecting presidential candidates and encapsulates pre-election coalitions that chose their presidential runner by resorting to a primary election.

Lastly, I control for the possible confounding effect of electoral institutions on the relationship between pre-election pacts and legislative polarisation. This is because electoral institutions can encourage interparty coordination across different levels of competition and, consequently, make pre-electoral pacts less prone to breaking in a post-electoral scenario, as parties have made concessions to one another in various arenas. Hence, I control for the use of proportional electoral systems and the application of D'Hondt formulae.

Table 6 exhibits the results for all tests. Overall, the robustness checks yield essentially the same results as compared to the previous models, except for minor details. More remarkably, the interaction between pre-electoral coalitions and legislative polarisation never loses statistical significance and, in fact, in some models, has a more pronounced coefficient than what was previously registered.

Table 6 – Robustness Checks for Government Formation in Latin America

	Freudenreich Original (FO)	Bicameral Systems in FO	Bicameral Systems	Baker and Greene (2011)	ENPP >2.5	Without Primaries	Proportional Systems	D'Hondt Method
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Lower Chamber Minority	-0.763** (0.344)	-1.354*** (0.434)	-1.614*** (0.324)	-1.005*** (0.359)	-1.347*** (0.278)	-1.498*** (0.318)	-1.282*** (0.287)	-0.659 (0.480)
Upper Chamber Minority	-1.641*** (0.389)	-0.988** (0.439)						
Number of Parties	-1.553*** (0.150)	-1.400*** (0.159)	-1.189*** (0.120)	-1.101*** (0.139)	-1.298*** (0.110)	-1.152*** (0.120)	-1.295*** (0.114)	-1.712*** (0.214)
Ideological Division	-0.214*** (0.055)	-0.224*** (0.061)	-0.211*** (0.053)	-0.252*** (0.062)	-0.217*** (0.047)	-0.252*** (0.051)	-0.224*** (0.048)	0.001 (0.082)
Median Party	0.855** (0.336)	0.836** (0.402)	1.085*** (0.311)	1.008*** (0.390)	0.908*** (0.261)	0.693** (0.289)	0.932*** (0.273)	1.056** (0.487)
Extreme Parties	0.724 (0.443)	0.966* (0.520)	0.686* (0.362)	1.091*** (0.397)	0.545* (0.326)	0.362 (0.360)	0.821** (0.352)	0.283 (0.581)
Runner-up Party	-1.790*** (0.423)	-1.734*** (0.453)	-1.712*** (0.379)	-1.496*** (0.412)	-1.414*** (0.325)	-1.516*** (0.378)	-1.498*** (0.342)	-0.671 (0.477)
PEC * Legislative Polarisation (BG)				2.504*** (0.724)				
Pre-Electoral Coalition (PEC)	-0.626 (1.495)	-1.465 (1.589)	-0.501 (1.371)	-5.471** (2.496)	0.032 (1.283)	0.169 (1.592)	0.641 (1.504)	-1.535 (2.223)
PEC * Legislative Polarisation	1.388*** (0.471)	1.503*** (0.504)	1.132*** (0.437)		1.096*** (0.408)	0.970* (0.503)	0.909* (0.464)	2.337*** (0.798)
Cabinets	100	70	97	81	134	103	129	55
Number of Alternative Cabinets	89,400	83,300	284,900	122,304	292,252	286,208	286,848	26,928
Log Likelihood	-295.678	-248.132	-389.626	-300.045	-473.899	-386.756	-441.111	-144.485

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

To wrap up the robustness analyses, the conditional logit models have a particularity of being fixed-effect models, thereby soaking up all countries' features that remain constant over time. This entails two consequences. First, as the estimation is based on fixed effects, there is no need to control for country when employing conditional logit models. Second, and perhaps unexpectedly, differences in the number of alternative coalitions provided for each country are unproblematic insofar as country units do not bias the results. This last consequence is of particular interest as countries starkly differ from one another with regard to the number of potential coalitions. To give an example, Brazil accounts for much more than half of the alter-

native governments in the dataset. Even still [Freudenreich \(2016, p. 95\)](#) conducts several analyses excluding one country at a time to assess to which extent his results are robust. Taking it as a good practice, I repeat the same procedure and re-run the models, excluding one country each time. The results can be found in the appendix. Our main implication, which is that the conditional effect of legislative polarisation on pre-election coalitions, never fails to reach standard levels of statistical significance in twelve opportunities. In other words, the results are not driven by any specific country. All in all, to sum up the discussion, the findings are consistent once again across different specifications.

## 2.7 Concluding Remarks

Pre-electoral coalitions are a trademark of electoral democracies. This paper has been concerned primarily with the impact of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation in presidential polities, albeit agreements that pre-date elections are equally pivotal in parliamentary regimes ([Golder, 2006](#); [Ibenskas, 2016](#)). This focus arises from the fact that the literature on coalitional presidentialism has long been puzzled about whether pre-electoral pacts matter or not to government formation. On the one hand, the impact of pre-election coalitions is belittled as presidents' party need not act in accordance with the pledges made towards other parties ([Kellam, 2017](#)). After all, presidential parties' survival in the executive is not reliant on the legislature ([Linz, 1990, 1994](#); [Samuels e Shugart, 2010](#)). On the other hand, pre-electoral coalitions are seen as the spearhead of coalition cabinets. In this view, presidents do commit to allocating office pay-offs to pre-electoral coalition members, even if they are not constitutionally obliged to stick to their electoral promises ([Carroll, 2007](#); [Freudenreich, 2016](#); [Peron, 2018](#)).

This paper has sought to bring nuance to this discussion. I argue that presidents do not behave in such a black-and-white manner. Actually, their decision to build coalition cabinets around pre-electoral agreements depends on which context the government is embedded in. More specifically, pre-electoral pacts should be more binding to the extent that legislative polarisation is more pervasive in the party system. The explanation resides in the fact that an increased ideological dividedness at the party system level reduces presidents' wiggle room to build governing coalitions since parties have conflicting policy preferences. In this context, the utility of forming governments around pre-electoral pacts increases as they largely reduce bargaining costs. Conversely, agreements struck prior to the elections do not offer the same advantage when legislative polarisation is shallow. When a party system

is not composed of parties with too many disagreements on the left-right ideological dimension, presidential parties have varying possible multiparty governments at their disposal, and they may end up forming a government different from the one envisioned by the pre-electoral pacts.

To test my claims, I relied on a dataset comprising alternative coalitions of twelve Latin American countries from the redemocratisation period up to 2021. The conditional logit models highlight across different specifications that the effect of pre-election coalitions is substantially conditional on the degree of legislative polarisation. In other words, potential governments based on pre-electoral agreements are more likely to form as ideological polarisation increases in the legislature.

Looking down the road, the literature would greatly benefit from taking any policy dimension other than the traditional economic left-right division into consideration, even if it means sacrificing a comparative perspective. It is highly unlikely that Latin American party systems could be thoroughly subsumed by the economic cleavage since the redemocratisation. Indeed, prior scholarship notes that party competition in Argentina and Chile was not driven solely by different points of view on economics not so long ago ([Albala, 2013](#); [Siavelis, 2002](#)).

Additionally, another avenue to explore is to gauge the impact of polarisation within alternative governments and opposition upon coalition formation. This has already been done by studies accounting for government formation in parliamentary systems ([Indridason, 2011](#)). However, research on such a topic in Latin America is sorely hampered by data limitations since the ideological preferences of small and regionalist parties are frequently unavailable.

Finally, it should be stressed that pre-electoral coalitions not only influence party and electoral systems but also the accountability between voters and parties. As well noted by [Spoon e West\(2015, p. 401\)](#), even if pre-electoral coalitions may be mutually beneficial to pre-electoral coalition members, they are not necessarily a blessing for representation. Much to the contrary, interparty electoral coordination may preclude voters from casting a vote on their favourite option, as pre-electoral alliances shrink the number of available candidates on election day. However, to the best of my knowledge, the link between pre-election coalitions and representation has not been explored thus far, either from a theoretical or an empirical standpoint. Hence, future investigation would thrive from closing the gap in our knowledge about the relation between pre-electoral coalition and representation, especially in presidential regimes in Latin America, which are known for their low levels of partisanship.

## 3 The Drivers of Resemblance in Presidential Regimes: explaining the conversion of pre-electoral coalitions into coalition cabinets

### 3.1 Introduction

In 2010, the Workers' Party (PT, *Partido dos Trabalhadores*) launched Rousseff's presidential candidacy with an eye on extending its streak of presidential election victories in Brazil. In order to increase its candidate's odds, the PT built a broad pre-electoral coalition, encompassing not less than ten parties. However, even if the PT ultimately won the presidential contest, not all electoral coalition party members were invited to take a seat in the cabinet when Rousseff was sworn into office. Despite still providing informal support for the government, the Social Christian Party (PSC, *Partido Social Cristão*) publicly voiced its dissatisfaction with being excluded from the coalition cabinet. The PSC's party leader emphatically complained that they did not have a single portfolio seat despite being a former member of the pre-electoral alliance and having a legislative contingent similar to other coalition party members (Azevedo, 2012).

In a similar story, the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR, *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria*) formed a pre-election alliance so as to back its candidate in the 1989 Bolivian presidential election. Once again, notwithstanding the alliance's win, the president-elect party broke up with the pre-electoral pact and gave birth to a government not envisioned by the original multiparty coalition. This case is especially symbolic as the MIR did not assign any top office position to the former electoral coalition party members, thereby favouring the construction of a brand-new post-electoral coalition arrangement<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The original multiparty alliance was composed of two minor parties, namely the Vanguard Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR-V, *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario Vanguardia*) and the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCML, *Partido Comunista Marxista Leninista*), besides the MIR itself. The ensuing coalition cabinet, however, was comprised of the MIR and the right-wing party Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN, *Acción Democrática Nacionalista*).

In addition to reducing the size or replacing the members of the pre-electoral coalition altogether, the president-elect party can also enlarge the original pact to include other parties in the agreement (Albala, 2017; Freudenreich, 2016). This is neatly exemplified by Santos' second term in office in Colombia, where the pre-electoral coalition had its size expanded to include the Radical Change (CR, *Cambio Radical*) in the cabinet<sup>2</sup>. In stark contrast, although frequently taken for granted, *formateur* parties can still remain utterly faithful to the commitments made prior to the elections and not include or expel any party encompassed by pre-electoral pacts, as exemplified by most coalition governments found in Chile after its redemocratisation process (Borges e Turgeon, 2019; Siavelis, 2002).

Together, these cases raise the question as to what drives the translation of pre-election alliances into coalition governments in presidential regimes. This question features prominently as the previous chapter has demonstrated that pre-electoral coalitions are not automatically transformed into coalition cabinets, albeit the former exert notable influence on the latter (Borges et al., 2021; Carroll, 2007; Peron, 2018). Hence, the main aim of this chapter is to explain why some coalition governments closely match the pre-electoral pacts that brought them forth while others do not.

Studying the process by which pre-election coalitions are turned into coalition cabinets is pertinent for several reasons. To begin with, parties' strategies rely to some extent on the knowledge of whether they will be in the government. Even though parties have different approaches to making their organisations grow (Borges et al., 2017; Casiraghi et al., 2022; Panebianco, 1988), coalition party members may be counting on the fact that they will have access to the spoils of being in the cabinet if the pre-election alliance succeeds in the national contest. As such, being excluded from the government potentially undermines parties' objectives in the short and long run, especially if they aimed to control portfolios to channel pork barrel resources to their constituencies (Batista, 2022; Meireles, 2024) or expected to hold a highly regarded portfolio, which could boost their votes in the next elections (Batista et al., 2023). In addition, although elected governments have plausible reasons for not deviating grossly from policy commitments made prior to the elections (Kellam, 2017; Naurin et al., 2019), being a member of the coalition government enhances parties' chances of implementing public policies close to their likings, since parties

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<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, the CR had made part of the Santos' coalition government in his first term. However, the party opted to resign and launch its own presidential candidate for the 2014 presidential election in Colombia. The CR then returned to the government as a coalition member in the wake of its poor display in the national election.



may even use the portfolio allocation process to keep tabs on which policies are to be implemented by the government (Fernandes et al., 2016). Finally, finding out why *formateurs* stick to their pre-electoral coalitions contributes to the bulk of studies interested in gauging to which extent presidents use their institutional powers for their own benefit (Ariotti e Golder, 2018; Inácio e Llanos, 2015; Silva, 2022).

I argue that the extent to which coalition cabinets resemble pre-electoral coalitions depends on the blend of five conditions: i) the pre-electoral coalition's legislative status, ii) the level of polarisation within pre-electoral coalitions, iii) ideological polarisation in the legislature itself, iv) the temporal constraint between the end of the elections and the inauguration day, and v) presidents' legislative power. In so doing, my claim draws on several but different theories of government formation, namely explanations based on office, policy and institutional assumptions. In this way, this chapter strives to further add to the discussion about when and why presidential parties make credible office commitments when building pre-election alliances.

To do so, this paper subscribes to a configurational approach to dealing with the dynamics of coalition governments. To be sure, research on coalition cabinets based on set-theoretic methods is not uncommon in the literature (e.g. Albala, 2016, 2017, 2021; Oppermann e Brummer, 2020). Even still, it bears noting that set theory appears to be especially appropriate for the research question at hand for two reasons. In the first place, coalition formation seems to have its roots in causal complexity, as shown by the fact that the effects of pre-electoral coalitions are not independent of the levels of legislative polarisation. Consequently, the reasons behind government formation appear to lie in the combination of conditions rather than in the independent effects of each. Additionally, the research design suffers from the lack of variety in the dependent variable, which can be seen by the fact that all cases derive somehow from pre-electoral coordination. As set-theoretic methods have an intrinsic link to qualitative approaches, employing Qualitative Comparative Analysis (henceforth, QCA) allows me to handle better my case selection than resorting to a purely quantitative approach.

I start in the next section by briefly presenting the literature on government formation in presidentialism and raising empirical expectations to explain the similarity of coalition cabinets with their pre-electoral inception. Thereafter, the third section showcases my research design. More specifically, this section is divided into three parts, in which I first discuss the advantages of QCA to the study of coalition formation, then I detail my case selection, and lastly, I show the calibration process of the outcome and the conditions. In the fourth section, I conduct and reveal the

results of necessity and sufficiency analyses, which feed into the robustness checks performed in the following section. The sixth section is concerned with illustrating the QCA findings based on the discussion of some cases, and finally, the last section presents my concluding remarks along with suggestions for future research.

## 3.2 The High Road between Pre-Electoral Coalitions and Coalition Cabinets

In presidential and parliamentary regimes alike, it is challenging for parties to attain a parliamentary majority on their own in multiparty democracies. As a consequence, even if minority governments are not necessarily doomed to have a poor governability (Figueiredo et al., 2012; Strøm, 1990), coalition governments arise as a commonplace tool to grant majority status to the government and, therefore, prevent troublesome deadlocks in the legislature (Chasquetti, 2001; Cheibub, 2007; Cheibub et al., 2004; Warwick, 1996). As such, it comes as no coincidence that one of the reasons for forming pre-electoral coalitions is to foster the parliamentary basis of the upcoming government (Borges et al., 2021; Golder, 2006; Ibenskas, 2016).

For the present purposes, this means that the president-elect party searches to increase the coalition share of seats when the pre-electoral alliance fails to reach a majority in one or both chambers after the elections' results (Albala, 2017). In this regard, the composition of post-electoral governments must differ from the pre-electoral pacts' when the latter falls short of securing a majority legislative basis.

Reversing the argument, *formateur* parties ought not to look out for new partners when pre-electoral coalition members successfully hold a majority in the legislature. By adopting a purely office-seeking premise, this would happen because none of the parties would be willing to share the spoils of being in power with parties needless in terms of reaching a legislative majority (Leiserson, 1966; Riker, 1962). Yet, as parties have other motivations beyond attaining office, the majority status of pre-electoral coalitions is hypothesised within an INUS condition<sup>3</sup>:

**H1:** Majority pre-electoral coalitions operate as INUS conditions to yield coalition cabinets and pre-electoral with a similar composition relative to their pre-electoral

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<sup>3</sup> The acronym INUS stands for Insufficient condition but still Necessary to an Unnecessary but Sufficient path towards explaining the outcome of interest (Mackie, 1965). This sort of condition is neither necessary nor sufficient to bring about an outcome on its own, but it is nonetheless an essential component within a specific combination that accounts for the outcome (Mello, 2022).

composition.

High within-pre-electoral coalition polarisation is another potential triggering of changes in the composition of pre-electoral alliances in their way to forming coalition governments. Even if parties tend not to coalesce when the ideological distance between them is significant (Kellam, 2017), some pre-electoral alliances are still composed of parties from different sides of the political spectrum. In this context, pre-electoral coalition members may disagree over several issues on coalition governance, such as who gets which portfolio, which policy is to be prioritised, and whether and which party should be invited to be part of the coalition cabinet. As a consequence, high levels of ideological polarisation may ultimately lead to the fracture of pre-election pacts, while low levels may account for a smooth conversion into coalition cabinets.

**H2:** Low within-pre-electoral coalition polarisation is an INUS condition to render coalition cabinets alike to their pre-electoral origins.

Turning to the party system level, in Chapter 2, I argued that the effects of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation are moderated by the degree of existing legislative polarisation. Similarly, I argue that legislative polarisation also plays a role in the process of pre-electoral coalitions becoming coalition cabinets. Even though the full-fledged rationale can be seen in the last chapter, it is worthwhile remembering that lower levels of legislative polarisation make multiparty bargaining more straightforward for the *formateur* parties insofar as they have more leeway to break from the pre-electoral alliance if they wish to do so.

Nevertheless, it bears noting that the impact of legislative polarisation on government formation does not occur in a vacuum. In other words, ideological polarisation in the legislature does not influence coalition formation's dynamics *per se*; rather, polarisation matters only when accompanied by other conditions. To see how this is the case, consider a pre-electoral coalition in a context where parties are not too ideologically different from one another. Even though the *formateur* party arguably has more freedom for rearranging with whom to ally in this scenario, why would it change the composition of the pre-electoral alliance in the first place? Conversely, if *formateur* parties have an underpinning reason to break from their original pre-electoral commitments, legislative polarisation should facilitate or complicate *formateurs'* endeavours.

In summary, I expect legislative polarisation to be an INUS condition for explai-

ning the similarity between pre-electoral pacts and coalition cabinets in multiparty presidential regimes. That is, party system legislative polarisation is individually uninteresting but potentially relevant in conjunction with other conditions to explain the process by which pre-electoral parties turn into coalition cabinets. Thus, following the overall argument of this dissertation:

**H3:** High levels of legislative polarisation are an INUS condition to render coalition cabinets similar to their pre-electoral origin.

One of the main characteristics of presidential regimes is that presidents serve constitutionally fixed terms, thereby not being responsible to an elected assembly (Cheibub, 2007; Samuels e Shugart, 2010). Based on this, the literature draws attention to the fact that constitutional or electoral rules clarify when presidents' tenure must end. However, scholars more often than not overlook that the same institutions are also explicit when presidents are to be sworn into office (Albala, 2017). That is, presidential regimes, unlike their parliamentary counterparts (Golder, 2010), cannot have several rounds of multiparty bargaining before the *formateur* gets into office because there is a temporal bound between the end of the elections and the beginning of their tenure.

Overall, institutional claims have found mixed support in research on coalitional presidentialism (Albala, 2016; Amorim Neto, 2006; Freudenreich, 2016). Still, the existing literature has pointed out that pre-electoral pacts are influenced by institutional settings (Ferrara e Herron, 2005; Spoon e West, 2015). As such, I argue that the temporal distance between the end of the elections and the next government's inauguration day influences the extent to which coalition cabinets resemble pre-electoral pacts. A shorter distance constraints president-elect parties from drastically changing coalition members, then encouraging them to build the government around pre-electoral alliances. By contrast, a longer distance between elections and the inauguration day allows presidents to think more thoughtfully about the composition of the coalition government.

However, it is not expected that presidents change the partisan composition of their pre-election deals just because they have fewer constraints to do so. This is similar to legislative polarisation at the party system level. Just like different levels of legislative polarisation do not lead presidents to make changes in their coalitions on their own, neither does a short temporal distance until the inauguration day. Hence, the effects of the time-related boundness should not appear alone but in tandem with other conditions to explain the transformation of pre-election commitments

into coalition cabinets. Thus:

**H4:** A short distance between the end of the elections and the first day of the mandate is an INUS condition to the likeness between pre-electoral alliances and subsequent coalition cabinets.

As the last piece of the puzzle, the transition of pre-electoral pacts to coalition cabinets may also depend on the extent to which presidents are granted tools to deal with governability issues. Indeed, prior research has shown that presidential powers influence overall patterns of coalition formation (Amorim Neto, 2006; Martínez-Gallardo, 2012; Silva, 2019, 2022). More specifically, presidents with extensive powers to influence the lawmaking process may care less about fulfilling office-pre-electoral commitments than those without substantive legislative powers. This is because the former can still govern by issuing decree-laws, dictating legislative agenda or vetoing undesired bills, while the latter must come to terms with the legislature to guarantee their governability. This is especially true for the transition period between pre-electoral coalitions into coalition cabinets, as presidents are prone to enjoy the honeymoon in their first year in office, thus further discouraging constitutionally weak presidents from disturbing executive-legislative relations at the outset of their tenure. In this regard:

**H5:** Low presidential powers are sufficient for engendering coalition cabinets similar to the pre-electoral pacts that preceded them.

### 3.3 Research Design

To evaluate the claims around the process by which pre-electoral coalitions become coalition cabinets, I make use of QCA. In broad terms, QCA is a set-theoretic method and technique which aims to approximate variable- and case-oriented approaches (Berg-Schlosser et al., 2009; Ragin, 2008; Schneider e Wagemann, 2012). By doing so, QCA puts cases in the limelight while also allowing the detection of empirical patterns (Mello, 2022). As mentioned in the introduction, despite not being ubiquitous, QCA has been applied to the study of coalition politics. In the scholarship, the primary motivation for its application lies in the fact that QCA provides further leverage to causal inferences by allowing researchers to explore causal complexity.

In this chapter, I am most interested in grasping the conjunctural causation in-

volved in government formation under presidentialism. That is, I rely on QCA to investigate whether conditions can individually account for a given outcome. The difference is that I do not throw them away if they do not, as it is plausible that they can be meaningful only when interacting with other conditions (e.g. [Andersson e Harkness, 2018](#)). This aspect of causal complexity is precisely in line with some empirical expectations of the last section. As a side effect of applying QCA, this chapter also takes a glimpse at equifinality and causal asymmetry. In the context of this work, the former examines whether different combinations of conditions explain the emergence of coalition cabinets similar to pre-electoral pacts, while the latter implies that kinship and divergence between pre-electoral coalitions and their subsequent coalition cabinets do not have to share the exact same reverse accounts ([Schneider e Wagemann, 2012](#)).

The hallmark of this dissertation is the study of Latin American presidential regimes. This chapter keeps down this path and delves into the government formation of Latin American countries. However, the case selection is slightly different as I deliberately select my observations based on the dependent variable. Despite being a criticised approach following the standards of the conventional quantitative literature ([Geddes, 2003](#); [King et al., 1994](#)), this strategy makes sense depending on the researcher's aims ([Ragin, 2008](#)). In this study, I do not intend to generalise my findings to all instances of government formation in Latin America. Rather, I am most concerned with coalition cabinets derived from pre-electoral alliances. Given that most coalition governments emerge from some sort of interparty pre-electoral coordination in multiparty presidential regimes ([Albala e Couto, 2023](#)), this research design still enables me to cover a substantial portion of the landscape concerning the formation of coalition cabinets in Latin America.

As a result, to reflect this paper's main interest, the case selection must cover only coalition cabinets that result from multiparty pre-electoral bargaining. This means that coalition governments without any pre-electoral inception are outright excluded from the analysis<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, this work focuses exclusively on coalition governments and, as a consequence, single-party cabinets are also ruled out, even if the president-elect party had committed to a multiparty pact prior to the elections<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> To provide a couple of examples, in Colombia, Samper and Pastrana won their presidential elections without building any pre-electoral alliance. For such a reason, these cases, and others with similar trajectories, are not analysed here.

<sup>5</sup> Prior to the 1978 Venezuelan presidential election, the Political Electoral Independent Organization Committee (COPEI, *Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente*) had built a pre-electoral coalition with the Democratic Republican Union (URD, *Unión Republicana De-*

I also distinguish between *pre-electoral* and *electoral* alliances (Allern e Aylott, 2009), thereby leaving the latter out of the analysis at first. This is because electoral alliances are comprised chiefly of run-off agreements in presidential regimes, when the first-round losers provide support for one of the two main contestants left in the dispute (Albala, 2021; McClintock, 2018). However, run-off agreements do not fit precisely into the concept of *pre-electoral* coordination, as talks take place amidst elections. Even still, as scholarship on run-off agreements is still emergent and has not tapped into how they impact the government formation process, I include electoral alliances made between the first and second rounds of presidential elections in a second moment in order to test the soundness of my results.

Lastly, the analysis covers solely the first cabinet formed in each government, since the main objective of this paper is to capture the conversion of pre-election pacts into coalition cabinets. In this way, even though the effects of pre-electoral pacts may surpass the first stage of coalition governments, as suggested by coalition theories (Albala et al., 2023; Chiru, 2015; Freudenreich, 2016), the long-lasting impacts of pre-electoral pacts on government formation are out of this work's length.

Table 7 presents the pre- and post-electoral coalition composition of the 31 cases to be analysed in this chapter.

The calibration process of the conditions and the outcome provides the basis for running QCA analyses. As a set-theoretic method, the calibration accounts for whether cases are in or out of a given set. Notwithstanding the proliferation of QCA variants in recent years (Mello, 2022), QCA has three more well-known specifications (crisp-set QCA, multi-value QCA, and fuzzy-set QCA), each holding specific ways for calibrating conditions (Medina et al., 2017). The fuzzy-set QCA (henceforth, fsQCA) is the most suitable QCA variant for current purposes, as it allows to consider to what extent cases belong or not to a set by inputting a continuous value membership between 0.0 and 1.0 (Ragin, 2008). The great asset of fsQCA, thus, resides in the fact that it relies on more grain-fined information and, consequently, provides researchers with better tools to deal with more complex concepts.

At this point, it is worthwhile to make clear that the calibration process is not enmeshed in probabilistic thinking (Ragin, 2008, Chap. 5; Schneider e Wagemann, 2012, Chap. 1). Set membership scores do not reveal the probability that cases

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*mocrática*). However, the pact was broken, and the URD did not make part of the incoming COPEI's single-party government. Having that in mind, similar cases where pre-election coalitions were broken are excluded from the analysis to ensure conceptual accuracy.

Table 7 – Pre- and Post-Electoral Governments in Latin America

Country (N)	Government	Start of the term	Pre-Electoral Coalition Composition	Coalition Cabinet Composition
Argentina (2)	De La Rúa	1999	UCR - Frepaso	UCR - Frepaso
	Macri	2015	PRO - UCR - ARI	PRO - UCR - ARI
Bolivia (3)	Siles	1982	MNRI - MIR - PCB	MNRI - MIR - PCB - PDC
	Paz Zamora	1989	MIR - MNR-V - PCML	MIR - ADN
	Banzer	1997	ADN - NFR	ADN - CONDEPA - MIR - UCS
Brazil (6)	Cardoso I	1995	PSDB - PFL - PTB	PSDB - PFL - PTB - PMDB
	Cardoso II	1999	PSDB - PFL - PTB - PPB	PSDB - PFL - PTB - PPB - PMDB - PPS
	Lula I	2003	PT - PL - PCdoB	PT - PL - PCdoB - PDT - PPS - PSB - PTB - PV
	Lula II	2007	PT - PCdoB	PT - PCdoB - PMDB - PP - PR - PSB - PTB - PV
	Rousseff I	2011	PT - PCdoB - PDT - PMDB - PR - PRB - PSB - PSC	PT - PCdoB - PDT - PMDB - PR - PSB - PSC - PP
	Rousseff II	2015	PT - PCdoB - PDT - PMDB - PP - PR - PRB - PROS - PSD	PT - PCdoB - PDT - PMDB - PP - PR - PRB - PROS - PSD - PTB
Chile (7)	Aylwin	1990	PDC - PPD - PR - PSch	PDC - PPD - PR - PSch
	Frei	1994	PDC - PPD - PRSD - PSch	PDC - PPD - PRSD - PSch
	Lagos	2000	PDC - PPD - PRSD - PSch	PDC - PPD - PRSD - PSch
	Bachelet I	2006	PSch - PDC - PPD - PRSD	PSch - PDC - PPD - PRSD
	Piñera I	2010	RN - UDI	RN - UDI
	Bachelet II	2014	PSch - PCch - PDC - PPD - PRSD - MAS - IC	PSch - PCch - PDC - PPD - PRSD - MAS - IC
	Piñera II	2018	RN - UDI - EVOP	RN - UDI - EVOP
Dom. Republic (1)	Medina II	2016	PLD - PRD	PLD - PRD
Colombia (2)	Uribe II	2006	CR - PCC - PU - ALAS - PD	CR - PCC - PU - ALAS - PD - PDA
	Santos II	2014	PU - CR - PLC	PU - CR - PLC - PCC
Panamá (7)	Endara	1990	PPA - MOLIRENA - PDC - PLA	PPA - MOLIRENA - PDC - PLA
	Balladares	1994	PRD - LIBRE - PALA	PRD - LIBRE - PALA - SOLID
	Moscoso	1999	PPA - MOLIRENA - MORENA - PCD	PPA - MOLIRENA - MORENA - PCD
	Torrijos	2004	PRD - POPULAR	PRD - POPULAR
	Martinelli	2009	PPA - MOLIRENA - PCD - UP	PPA - PCD
	Varela	2014	PPA - POPULAR	PPA - POPULAR - PCD
	Cortizo	2019	PRD - MOLIRENA	PRD - MOLIRENA
Venezuela (3)	Lusinchi	1984	AD - URD	AD - URD
	Caldera	1994	CN - MAS	CN - MAS
	Chávez	1999	MVR - MAS - PPT	MVR - MAS - PPT - PCV

Source: Amorim Neto (2019); Borges et al. (2021); Freudenreich (2016); Lopes (2022); Silva (2022); and the countries' respective electoral committees.



have to belong to a set; instead, they reflect whether cases are (more) in or out of the reference set. A closely related aspect is that cases are an instance (or not) of a set, which is, in turn, linked to an underlying concept. Hence, the conceptualisation of sets is a crucial step of the calibration process. Rather than referring to broad terms, sets have to mirror and be in accordance with the part of the concept which is of interest to the researcher (Goertz, 2020; Mello, 2022). In this way, besides the outcome of Coalition Resemblance (CR), I construct five conditions: Majority (MAJ), Low Within Polarisation (LWPOL), High Legislative Polarisation (HLPOL), Low Temporal Constraint (LTEMP), and Low Presidential Power (LPP).

The scholarship on configurational comparative methods has developed different procedures to transform raw data into fuzzy sets. Here, I make use of the direct assignment and the direct method<sup>6</sup>. Below, I briefly discuss the decision-making process to calibrate conditions and the outcome.

To begin with, the outcome Coalition Resemblance captures to what extent coalition cabinets are similar to the pre-electoral coalitions that preceded them. To calculate membership in the outcome, I take into account the percentage of the share of seats pre-electoral coalition members contribute to the coalition's total share of seats in the lower house. In this measure, I disregard the president-elect party's legislative contingent, as very few presidential parties fail to make part of the upcoming government (Amorim Neto, 1998). If *formateur* parties' share of seats had remained in the calculation in the first place, the outcome Coalition Resemblance would have inflated values and, thus, unduly lessen the contribution of pre-electoral coalition members.

Overall, this measure is very similar to the one developed and employed by Albala et al. (2023) to study the effects of pre-electoral coalitions on cabinet duration in Latin America. In fact, this measure is straightforward if coalition cabinets keep the same partners from the electoral period or are enlarged. However, this calculus fails to incorporate coalition reductions, as pre-electoral coalition members would still account for all the coalition's seats of share. In order to hold a holistic view of all the possible changes a pre-election alliance can undergo, I slightly change the formula to also account for such occurrences by inverting the relationship between pre-election and coalition cabinets. That is, when pre-electoral coalition members are expelled from the coalitional pact, I measure the percentage of the post-electoral

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<sup>6</sup> For more information on the extant calibration procedures and their differences, see Dusa (2019, Chap. 4) and Mello (2022, Chap. 5).

coalition cabinet's share of seats from the total share of seats pre-election coalitions would have if their composition had not changed<sup>7</sup>.

Regardless of whether pre-electoral coalitions are changed or not, full set membership in the set of Coalition Resemblance indicates that coalition cabinets thoroughly resemble pre-electoral coalition members — meanwhile, full non-membership points out that coalition cabinets and pre-electoral coalitions are entirely different from each other.

Moving on to explanatory conditions, Majority indicates whether pre-electoral coalitions hold legislative majority status after the election results. To be more in than out of this set, I consider that pre-election coalitions should have at least a semi-majority (more than 45% of the share of seats) in one of the legislative chambers. In this circumstance, cases are assigned a 0.6 score, while cases with a legislative contingent more robust receive higher set membership scores. Conversely, pre-electoral pacts that fail to reach at least a semi-majority are more out than in the Majority set and receive lower scores according to their share of seats.

Next, Low Within Polarisation refers to the ideological distance between pre-election coalition members, while High Legislative Polarisation concerns the ideological polarisation in the legislature. The qualitative anchors across both sets are not exactly reversed to one another, albeit they are based on the same polarisation index developed by Dalton (2008). The reason is that legislative polarisation naturally tends to be higher than polarisation found within pre-electoral alliances. The former bear in mind all parties of party systems, including extremist parties, whereas the latter, more often than not, revolve around parties with close ideological preferences (Kellam, 2017).

Low Temporal Constraint corresponds to the distance, in days, between the end of the election and the day presidents are sworn into office. The empirical anchors of this set are established mostly by looking at observed patterns found in the data,

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<sup>7</sup> To illustrate the procedure in the case of coalition shrinkage, let us consider the formation of the Martinelli cabinet in 2009 Panama, in which a pre-electoral alliance of four parties resulted in a post-electoral coalition of only two parties. Initially, the pact was composed of the Panameñista Party (PPA, *Partido Panameñista*), the National Renewal Movement (MOLIRENA, *Movimiento de Renovación Nacional*), the Democratic Change Party (PCD, *Partido Cambio Democrático*), and the Patriotic Union (UP, *Unión Patriótica*). However, in the wake of the electoral process, the coalition was reduced to only two parties, namely the PPA and the PCD. To measure the extent to which the post-electoral cabinet resembles the pre-electoral alliance, I calculate the percentage of the PCD's share of seats relative to the combined share of seats of the MOLIRENA, the PCD, and the UP. Note that the legislative contingent of the presidential party, the PPA, is not included in this calculation.

since the time lapse that separates the end of elections from the beginning of a new government in presidential regimes has not been profoundly studied yet. The use of days as an explanatory condition should not come as a surprise, since such a measure has been employed elsewhere in the literature on coalition politics (e.g. [Meyer et al., 2023](#)). Either way, set full membership is defined as 55 days, which is equivalent to a one-month-a-half period, whereas full exclusion is set at 85 days, which is a long period even by the standards of parliamentary regimes ([Golder, 2010](#)).

At last, Low Presidential Power is associated with the degree to which presidents are powerful actors in the political scene. While indexes of presidential powers abound, the calibration rests specifically on [Doyle e Elgie's \(2016\)](#) measurement. This is so because this measure considers presidential powers as a whole instead of choosing to focus on a single particular dimension. For example, rather than using decree and veto power as proxies for presidential powers, this measurement entails encompassing all the president's prerogatives, such as their capability to introduce bills, appoint and dismiss ministers at their discretion, and so on. To locate empirical anchors, I once again rely on empirical gaps found in the data, positioning full membership at 0.3, the cross-over point at 0.405<sup>8</sup>, and the full exclusion from the set at 0.5.

To summarise the calibration process, an overview of the conditions and the outcome, along with their calibration, is displayed in Table 8.

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<sup>8</sup> The cross-over point is deliberately chosen not to be at 0.4 to avoid placing a case, namely Medina II, on the maximum point of indifference. A calibration process resulting in instances with set value memberships of exactly 0.5 represents a grave pitfall in configurational comparative methods, thus being important to be circumvented. For more details, see [Oana et al. \(2021, Chap. 2\)](#).

Table 8 – Overview of the Calibration of the Outcome and the Conditions

Set	Definition	Procedure	Calibration
Coalition Resemblance (CR)	The degree to which pre-electoral coalitions resemble coalition cabinets	Direct Assignment	Percentage to which pre-electoral coalitions reflect post-electoral cabinets' composition in terms of seat share.  1 = Pre-electoral parties grant a majority legislative status in both chambers 0.8 = Pre-electoral parties grant a majority legislative in at least one of the chambers
Majority (MAJ)	Pre-electoral coalition legislative status	Direct Assignment	0.6 = Pre-electoral parties grant a semi-majority legislative in at least one of the chambers 0.4 = Pre-electoral parties grant nearly 35% in both chambers 0.2 = Pre-electoral parties grant nearly 35% in at least one of the chambers 0 = Pre-electoral parties grant less than 35% in both chambers
Low Within Polarisation (LWPOL)	To what extent pre-electoral coalition members are far apart on the left-right ideological dimension	Direct Method	FM = 1.0 in the Dalton's Polarisation Index CO = 2.0 in the Dalton's Polarisation Index FE = 3.0 in the Dalton's Polarisation Index FM = 4.0 in the Dalton's Polarisation Index
High Legislative Polarisation (HLPOL)	Ideological dividedness in the party system	Direct Method	CO = 2.7 in the Dalton's Polarisation Index FE = 1.5 in the Dalton's Polarisation Index
Low Temporal Constraint (LTEMP)	The temporal distance between the end of the elections and the inauguration day	Direct Method	FM = 55 days CO = 70 days FE = 85 days
Low Presidential Power (LPP)	The strength of presidents	Direct Method	FM = 0.3 in Doyle and Elgie (2016) CO = 0.405 in Doyle and Elgie (2016) FE = 0.5 in Doyle and Elgie (2016)

Source: [Borges et al. \(forthcoming\)](#); [Dalton \(2008\)](#); [Doyle e Elgie \(2016\)](#); [Freudenreich \(2016\)](#); [Silva \(2022\)](#); and the countries' respective electoral committees.

Note: FM stands for full membership in the set, CO for cross-over point, and FE for full exclusion in the set.

### 3.4 Empirical Analysis

The empirical analysis of configurational comparative research is based on statements of necessity and sufficiency. On the one hand, when one says that certain conditions are necessary to bring forth an outcome, it means that they are indispensable for the occurrence of the outcome ([Ragin, 2008](#)). That is, the outcome does not come into existence without these specific conditions. On the other hand, when a condition (or a combination thereof) is sufficient for an outcome, it should be interpreted that this condition suffices to render the outcome on its own ([Medina et al., 2017](#); [Mello, 2022](#)).

Unless the interest lies in finding minimally necessary disjunctions of minimally sufficient combinations ([Haesebrouck e Thomann, 2022](#)), QCA empirical analysis operates analyses of necessity and sufficiency separately. In order not to produce

Table 9 – Necessity Test for Coalition Resemblance

Disjunction	Consistency	Coverage	Relevance
MAJ + LTEMP	0.907	0.852	0.600

Note: In configurational rationale, the sign “+” is equivalent to the logical OR.

untenable assumptions in the analysis of sufficiency, it is advised that the analysis of necessity must be conducted beforehand (Schneider e Wagemann, 2012). In the analysis of necessary conditions, the literature argues that a 0.9 consistency threshold and a 0.6 relevance of necessity score should be in place to find meaningful non-trivial necessary relations between conditions and the outcome (Oana et al., 2021; Schneider, 2018; Schneider e Wagemann, 2012). By applying these recommendations, Table 9 shows the results of the analysis of necessary conditions for the resemblance of post-electoral coalition governments vis-à-vis their pre-electoral composition.

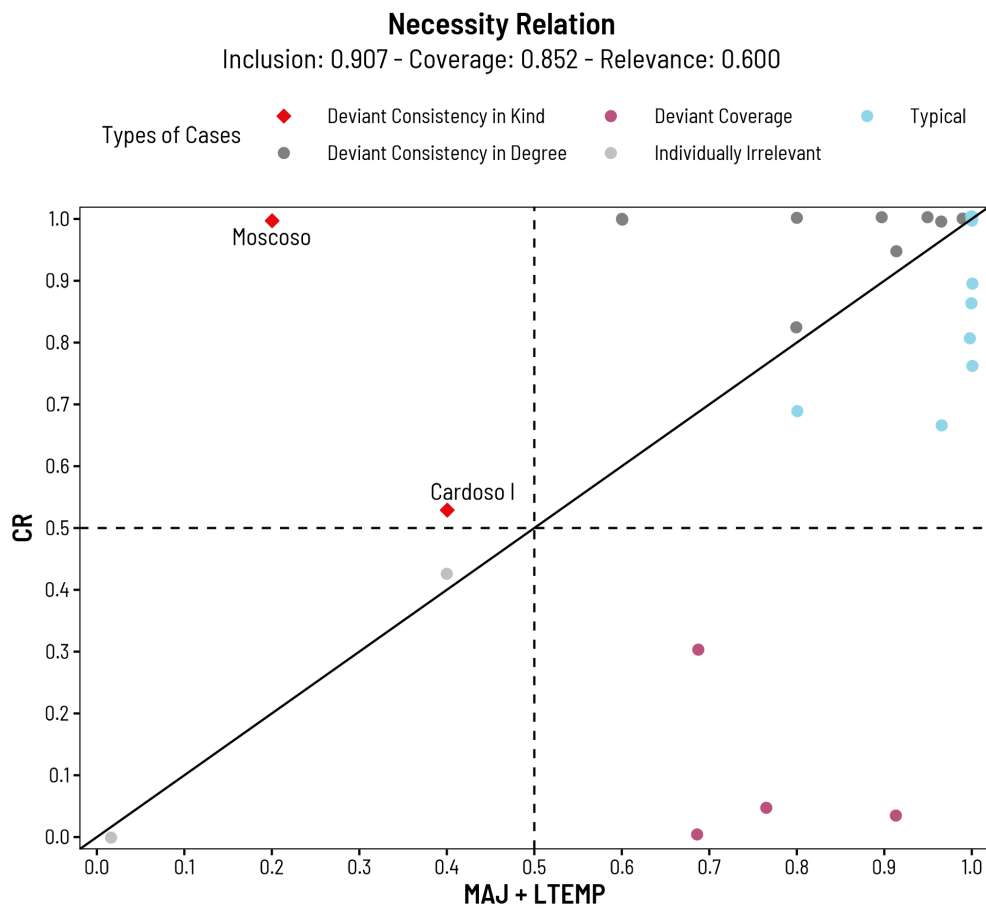
The necessity test points out that only a single combination of conditions is necessary to explain the commonalities, in terms of coalition composition, between pre-electoral pacts and post-electoral governments. The analysis reveals that either achieving a majority status (MAJ) or facing a short period until the government officially is set in motion (LTEMP) is pivotal for a smooth transition from pre-electoral to post-electoral coalitions.

As literature strongly recommends integrating necessary disjunctions into a higher-order concept to ensure conceptual meaningfulness (Mello, 2022; Schneider, 2018; Oana et al., 2021), I refer to the combination between MAJ and LTEMP as the higher-order necessary condition of ‘convenient manoeuvre’. The rationale is that both the pre-election majority status and the short period until the beginning of the governments’ tenure discourage the president-elect party from reformulating the pre-electoral alliance, thereby representing a convenient means to hold together the pre-electoral coalition members until the post-electoral stage.

However, to further leverage claims of necessity relations, it is also argued that the number of cases that violates necessity statements should not be exacerbated. More specifically, the underlying set relation should not be fraught with deviant cases in kind (Schneider e Rohlfing, 2013). To inspect if this is the case here, Figure 4 shows the XY plot between MAJ + LTEMP and the outcome CR.

In set theory, necessity relations imply that (the combination of) conditions are

Figure 4 – XY Plot for the Purported Necessary Disjunction



a superset of the outcome. In a perfect set relation, this means that all cases present in the outcome are also part of the condition set. As can be seen in Figure 1, this is not precisely what happens with the data at hand, as some cases contradict the statement of necessity, according to which coalition resemblance cannot occur in the absence of majority status or low temporal constraining, by having a higher membership score in the outcome than in the disjunction set<sup>9</sup>.

The first aspect to note in Figure 4 is the existence of several deviant consistency cases in degree. Despite not being the most troublesome deviance for necessity claims, they have higher score values in the outcome than in the disjunction set, thereby distorting the necessity relation. More remarkably and of particular interest here, two pre-electoral coalitions represent deviant consistency cases in kind: the first government of Cardoso in 1994 Brazil and the Moscoso minority government in

<sup>9</sup> There are a handful of different types of cases in QCA results. To understand their differences and, consequently, their position in an XY Plot, see [Oana e Schneider \(2018\)](#).

1999 Panama. In spite of having a considerable time until government inauguration or not holding a majority of seats in the parliament, both presidents still built their respective post-electoral governments based on the multiparty bargainings that took place before the elections. In other words, these cases are in the outcome set, but are out of the disjunction set. Hence, they are not only in contrast but also undermine the statement that the ‘convenient manoeuvre’ is necessary to produce post-electoral governments similar to the pre-electoral coalitions that originated them. Given this, even if the disjunction has substantial consistency, coverage and relevance scores, the statement that  $MAJ + LTEMP \leftarrow CR$  must be taken with a grain of salt. I return to this discussion after running the analysis for sufficient conditions.

As mentioned earlier, following the necessity test closely, the next stage in a typical QCA framework involves engaging in sufficiency analysis. Much of the analysis of sufficient conditions boils down to the construction of the truth table and its subsequent minimisation process. This is so because the truth table lays out all possible combinations of conditions in different rows, assigns empirical cases to them according to their degree of membership to every set, and shows to what extent each row is associated with a sufficient relation with the outcome. In turn, based on the truth table information, the minimisation process is charged with applying Boolean algebra to generate a recipe that supposedly explains the outcome of interest.

Based on several arguments within coalition theories, the previous sections devised five empirical expectations to account for the convergence between pre-electoral coalitions and their post-electoral heirs, which resulted in the creation of five explanatory conditions. Against this backdrop, the truth table for coalition resemblance generates 32 logically possible combinations, as the number of rows in a truth table is given by  $2^n$ , where  $n$  is the number of conditions in the study.

As listed in Table 10<sup>10</sup>, the empirical instances are distributed along 13 configurations, with all the remaining rows representing logical remainders<sup>11</sup>, which have been omitted for ease of interpretation. As a result, the present sufficiency analysis is confronted with limited diversity (Ragin e Sonnett, 2008), as logical reasoning provides a far greater number of possible combinations than those that actually exist in the real world.

<sup>10</sup> A raw data matrix and the ensuing calibrated data are available in the appendix.

<sup>11</sup> Logical remainders are simply truth table rows devoid of empirical cases. Without a counterfactual analysis, these rows do not make part of the minimisation process of the truth table, as it is impossible to calculate their membership in the outcome set given their lack of empirical evidence.

Table 10 – Truth Table for Coalition Resemblance

MAJ	Condition				Outcome		Consistency	PRI	Cases
	LWPOL	HLPOL	LTEMP	LPP	CR	N			
1	1	1	0	0	1	5	0.986	0.981	Aylwin, Frei, Bachelet II, Piñera II, Torrijos
1	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.977	0.969	Cardoso II, Endara
1	1	1	1	0	1	6	0.976	0.971	De La Rúa, Lagos, Bachelet I, Piñera I, Martinelli, Cortizo
1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0.973	0.961	Rousseff I, Rousseff II
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0.937	0.904	Uribe II
1	1	0	1	1	1	3	0.930	0.909	Medina II, Santos II, Lusinchi
0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.920	0.871	Siles
0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.884	0.836	Chavez
0	1	1	0	0	1	3	0.858	0.775	Cardoso I, Balladares, Moscoso
0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0.765	0.618	Lula I
0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0.722	0.628	Banzer, Caldera
0	1	1	1	0	0	3	0.629	0.553	Macri, Lula II, Varela
0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0.514	0.275	Paz Zamora

However, as limited diversity is ubiquitous in empirical research, QCA does have some remedies for treating logical remainders. All in all, the answer lies in the different ways to handle them in the minimisation process. For present purposes, I opt for partially including logical remainders in the logical minimisation of the truth table. More specifically, while difficult counterfactuals are dismissed, easy counterfactuals, which are logical reminders in line with theoretical and substantive knowledge (Dusa, 2019, Chap. 8; Ragin, 2008, Chap. 9), are included in the analysis. In doing so, the counterfactual analysis allows inputting educated hunches in the sufficiency test on what would have possibly occurred had the empty truth table rows had empirical cases. Hence, as only a fraction of the counterfactuals is in the minimisation process, the analysis of sufficient conditions rests on the intermediate solution<sup>12</sup>.

Given the existence of a necessary disjunction, I employ the Enhanced Standard

<sup>12</sup> For the differences between solution terms, see Medina et al. (2017, Chap. 2); Mello (2022, Chap. 7); Schneider e Wagemann (2012, Chap. 6). Following the standard of good practices, I report both conservative and parsimonious solutions in the chapter's appendix.



Analysis (ESA) to minimising the truth table. In contrast to the Standard Analysis (SA), the ESA guarantees that untenable assumptions are not made during the Boolean minimisation procedure, thus preventing the counterfactual analysis from including logical remainder rows that would violate necessity claims in the analysis for sufficient conditions (Schneider e Wagemann, 2012, Chap. 8). As such, in the present work, upon applying the De Morgan’s law, the negation of the necessary disjunction is the conjunction set composed of  $\sim\text{MAJ} * \sim\text{LTEMP}$ <sup>13</sup>. Due to the application of the ESA procedure, all logical remainders based on this conjunction are outright excluded from the sufficiency analysis.

As the final steps before assessing set relations based on sufficiency, the inclusion score for consistency is set at 0.8, a value slightly above the bare minimum 0.75 consistency threshold recommended by the literature (Mello, 2022, Chap. 6; Ragin, 2008, Chap. 3). Furthermore, the directional expectations have the exact directions as the hypothesised conditions, such as majority is expected to lead to coalition resemblance, as does low within polarisation and so forth. Coupled with the previous features, this setting leads to a solution composed of four causal pathways to account for coalition resemblance, as shown in Table 11.

Table 11 – Enhanced Intermediate Solution for Coalition Resemblance

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
MAJ * LWPOL	0.969	0.964	0.618	0.157	Aylwin, Bachelet I, Bachelet II, Cardoso II, Cortizo, De La Rua, Endara, Frei, Lagos, Lusinchi, Martinelli, Medina II, Piñera I, Piñera II, Santos II, Torrijos, Uribe II
MAJ * HLPOL * LTEMP	0.966	0.959	0.317	0.055	Bachelet I, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Lagos, Martinelli, Piñera I, Rousseff I, Rousseff II;
HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP	0.904	0.870	0.191	0.061	Chavez, Siles
LWPOL * HLPOL * $\sim\text{LTEMP}$ * $\sim\text{LPP}$	0.902	0.874	0.306	0.047	Aylwin, Balladares, Bachelet II, Cardoso I, Frei, Moscoso, Piñera II, Torrijos
Solution	0.930	0.920	0.796		

The first path indicates that pre-electoral coalitions marked by majoritarian sta-

<sup>13</sup> The sign ‘\*’ must be interpreted as a logical AND. In this sense, the ESA excludes all counterfactual cases that lack a majority status and hold a medium to long period until the inauguration of the new government’s term from the minimisation process.

tus and pre-coalition party members with close policy preferences engender coalition cabinets heavily based on the composition of these pre-electoral alliances. To attest to the prominence of this configuration, it has the highest scores for consistency and raw coverage, besides uniquely covering the pre-elections that ultimately led to Cardoso II, Endara, Lusinchi, Santos II and Uribe II governments. From a theoretical standpoint, it is understandable that *formateur* parties work towards preserving pre-electoral pacts that grant a majority of the seats and are ideologically coherent through the first moments of the government.

Next, the second path highlights the combination of majority, high legislative polarisation and a short period until the government's first day in office to the conversion of pre-electoral pacts in coalition governments. Similarly, high legislative polarisation and low temporal constraining are also part of the third path. The difference resides in the fact that, instead of holding a majority of the seats in the parliament, Path 3 envisions that this combination occurs in tandem with weak presidents.

The last pathway poses an intriguing combination together. It tells us that, even facing a considerable time until official government formation and with constitutionally moderated to strong presidents, pre-electoral alliances serve as a basis for post-electoral governments when the party system they are embedded in is highly polarised, but their coalition members are ideologically next to one another. This combination is particularly noteworthy for severely threatening the necessary claim between coalition resemblance and the disjunction between majority and low temporal constraint. The point is that the fourth path accounts for the outcome even without including the necessary disjunction in its mix. However, if statements of necessity require that the outcome cannot be reached without necessary conditions, then the higher-order concept of 'convenient manoeuvre' should not be considered necessary to produce coalition cabinets alike their pre-electoral coalitions. To be sure, Path 4 configuration can only uniquely cover the aforementioned Cardoso I and Moscoso cases because it breaks from the purported necessary statement.

Together, the four paths result in an overall solution formula with a high consistency score of 0.930 and a significant proportional reduction in inconsistency (PRI) of 0.920, covering roughly 80% of the cases in the analysis. These scores amount to a solution formula that contains very few instances which weaken its sufficiency claims and covers a non-insignificant number of the cases, in addition to not being plagued by simultaneous subset relations.

The analysis of sufficient conditions simultaneously challenges one empirical ex-

pectation while rendering support to others. To start with, hypothesis 5 asserted that low presidential powers would be sufficient to make coalition cabinets resemble the pre-electoral pacts that preceded them. However, the analysis of sufficiency indicates that no condition is individually sufficient to account for the outcome, though it does not mean that the explanatory conditions are thoroughly irrelevant. Rather, the sufficiency test reinforces the conjunctural causation aspect of configurational comparative methods, in the sense that the explanatory conditions are individually uninteresting but jointly sufficient to bring about the outcome. In this way, the hypothesis testing lends support to hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4, as pre-election coalition status, low within polarisation, high legislative polarisation and low temporal constraint only produce their effects in combination with one another and low presidential powers.

To a lesser or a greater extent, the findings indicate that every condition works as INUS conditions. Nevertheless, high legislative polarisation stands out in the results for a few reasons. Firstly, ideologically polarised party systems are in three out of the four paths leading to coalition resemblance, while other conditions, such as low presidential powers, only appear in a single alternative route. Secondly and equally importantly, the fact that legislative polarisation is a prominent condition to explain the degree to which post-electoral coalition cabinets resemble pre-electoral coalitions speak to the argument put forth in the last chapter, according to which the effect of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation is moderated by levels of legislative polarisation in the party system.

If the set-theoretic analysis for sufficiency for coalition resemblance has yielded a wealth of findings, the results for the non-outcome (the dissonance in composition between pre-electoral coalitions and coalition cabinets) are largely uninteresting given their complexity and low coverage. However, this was expected to some degree, as the conditions were primarily calibrated to examine the factors behind explaining the similarity between pre-election coalitions and coalition cabinets. Consequently, a handful of potential explanatory conditions to account for the difference between the pre-electoral and post-electoral stages, such as a profound ideological difference among pre-electoral coalition members, were not properly captured. As dictated by good practice, the necessity and sufficiency analyses for the non-outcome are nevertheless available and can be found in the appendix.

### 3.5 Robustness Tests

By default, several methodological decisions in configurational comparative methods lie in the researcher's discretion, such as which procedure should be used to calibrate conditions, which benchmark should be applied in necessary and sufficient analyses, and so on. Naturally, these decisions raise concerns about the validity of QCA results, since they could be driven purely by researchers' decisions. To appease this issue, the literature has come up with several tests to probe the soundness of QCA results (Ide, 2015; Oana e Schneider, 2021), which have been widely employed in QCA recent empirical research (e.g. Janzwood, 2020; Paustyan, 2021). For current purposes, these tests consist in changing the study's case selection and conditions, the conditions' calibration decisions and, finally, the consistency benchmark of the analysis of sufficient conditions.

Initially, the case selection encompassed both majority and minority governments. This is so because the interest lies in detecting the patterns for why pre-electoral coalitions keep most of the partners in their transition to becoming coalition cabinets, regardless of the president-elect's party status. However, most studies on coalition governments opt to focus on minority presidents (Freudenreich, 2016), as their rationale in regard to government formation is different from those of majority presidents. Following this trend, I thereby exclude Lusinchi, Medina II, and Torrijos cases from the analysis. Furthermore, most governments initiate a few months after the election results are known. However, the Siles government deviated from the norm, as a military coup prevented the government from taking office for roughly two years. For this reason, I also disregard Siles' coalition cabinet in this first test.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the cornerstone of this paper is the study of *pre-electoral* alliances rather than purely *electoral* alliances. As such, coalitions derived from run-off agreements have remained out of the length of the first analysis. To assess whether their inclusion would disturb the findings somehow, I input the Uruguayan cases into the dataset since the Colorado Party (PC, *Partido Colorado*) and the National Party (PN, *Partido Nacional*) have historically launched their own candidate for the presidential elections but chosen to support each other's candidature in the second round<sup>14</sup> (Albala, 2013). This results in including Batlle and Lacalle Pou coalition cabinets in the analysis.

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<sup>14</sup> The same story repeated in the 2019 Uruguayan presidential election, where the PC supported the PN's presidential candidacy of Lacalle Pou. This time, however, other parties, such as the Open Cabildo (CA, *Cabildo Abierto*) and the Independent Party (PI, *Partido Independiente*), also coalesced with the PN after the first round.

The second test examines whether the previously explanatory conditions set out should be called into question. However, except for the temporal boundness argument, a hitherto non-tested claim, all conditions have solid theoretical roots. Hence, excluding a condition from the analysis appears to be a fruitless exercise. Nonetheless, another condition could be inserted into the QCA analysis: the concurrence of national and legislative elections. Extant studies have elaborated on how parties coordinate efforts across electoral levels, refraining from maximising their utility in one dispute to leverage their gains in the other(s) (Borges, 2019; Borges et al., 2017; Borges e Turgeon, 2019). By doing so, the probability that pre-electoral coalition members will simply not enjoy the post-electoral perks should diminish considerably, as the costs of coalition participation become apparent even before the elections occur. Hence, theoretically, a set labelled Concurrence Elections (CE) should be derived, and the necessary and sufficiency tests should be re-run. However, very few cases did not have concomitant elections<sup>15</sup>, namely Lagos in Chile, Uribe II and Santos II in Colombia, and Chávez in Venezuela. With few instances that would belong to the CE set, the necessary and sufficiency analyses would mainly become meaningless. As a result, I prefer to perform a cluster analysis to assess whether the difference engendered by not having concurrent elections changes the results in any way. An additional cluster analysis is run to investigate whether the original solution formula fails to explain the patterns of coalition formation of a country in particular. In other words, this additional clustering allows verifying whether some countries drive the results of the analysis of sufficient conditions to the detriment of others.

In the third and fourth batteries of tests, I slightly alter the calibration of some conditions and raise the consistency threshold for the analysis of sufficiency. More specifically, I start by modifying a few parameters for inclusion and exclusion in HLPOL, LTEMP and LPP. Beginning with high legislative polarisation (HLPOL), I now set the cross-over point at 3.0 and full exclusion at 2.0, contrasting with the former 2.7 and 1.5 benchmark values, respectively. As countries scoring 4.0 in Dalton's Polarisation Index are deemed to have highly polarised party systems, there is no reason to change the benchmark for full membership in the HLPOL set.

For the temporal boundness set (LTEMP), the full exclusion is increased in a few days, namely from 85 to 92 days. Moreover, the cross-over point is lowered from

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<sup>15</sup> Notwithstanding the occurrence of midterm polls in some countries, such as Argentina, the vast majority of presidential elections are still accompanied by simultaneous elections for the legislative branch.

70 days to 61 days, reflecting a distinction between *formateurs* having or not more than two months to renegotiate interparty affairs. The cross-over point is not raised because the 70-day mark is paramount to distinguishing elections won in the first round from the elections that went to the distance in the second round for countries that adopt a presidential two-round system.

Furthermore, I increase the value for the complete exclusion of LPP from 0.5 to 0.6. In a final test, the consistency threshold is raised firstly from 0.80 to 0.85, and then to 0.9.

Overall, the results found in the original analysis remain largely the same throughout all the tests, though a few differences arise. To give an example, the analysis of sufficient conditions based on the new case selection does not have the original third pathway comprised of  $HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP$  in its solution, nor does it display the necessary disjunction of ‘convenient manoeuvre’. Most surprisingly, this small difference does not come from the addition of the typical run-off agreements of the Uruguayan cases; instead, it comes from excluding Siles’ case from the analysis. This configuration is replaced by  $LWPOL * HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP$ , which only accounts for Chávez’s coalition cabinet. Furthermore, in the first cluster analysis, it is clear that the solution formula applies equally for both cabinets formed under simultaneous and separate elections. In turn, for the most part, the clustering for countries also points out that there is no significant deviation from one country to another when it comes to the solution formula’s consistency and coverage, except for minor differences for the Bolivian cases. Changing the calibration process and raising the consistency threshold from 0.8 to 0.85 does not entail any new modification to the findings, albeit a setting consistency benchmark at 0.9 renders a slightly different solution formula, which is more consistent but less overarching in terms of coverage. The results of the robustness tests can be found in the chapter’s appendix.

### 3.6 Discussion and Case Studies

Even if QCA excels at bringing the cases to the fore, the present study has been much closer to a condition-oriented QCA than a case-oriented QCA so far<sup>16</sup>. With the aim of filling this gap, I now pass on to the discussion of how the solution derived in the last sections applies to some cases. From reading the solution formula, the

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<sup>16</sup> For more on the discussion between approaches to cases and causality in configurational comparative methods, see [Haesebrouck e Thomann \(2022\)](#).

explanation of what makes coalition cabinets similar to their pre-electoral origins resides in four paths. Thus, I select a few cases from each configuration to represent how conditions operate as gears towards the outcome.

The first route towards coalition resemblance is marked by majority pre-election coalitions composed of ideologically aligned members. This path is neatly exemplified by most of the Chilean coalition cabinets present in the analysis, such as Bachelet I and II, Frei, and Lagos. By securing a legislative majority in one chamber and at least a semi-majority in the other, there was little reason to expel someone from the alliance or to bring in a new partner. Moreover, the closeness between pre-electoral coalition members on the socio-economic dimension further reinforces the reasons for maintaining the pre-electoral pact. Despite bringing the Chilean cases as examples, it is worth mentioning that this combination is not a unique feature of Chilean coalitions. In Colombia, the right-wing pre-election coalitions led by Uribe and Santos, in their re-election attempt, share the same features: despite minor changes, pre-electoral coalitions that held close to a majority in the parliament and were composed of parties with similar points of view on policy issues served as the bedrock for the upcoming governments.

Instead of highlighting the low polarisation within the pre-electoral coalitions, the second path combines majority status with high overall ideological polarisation in the legislature along with a short period until the government's inauguration. This configuration resonates especially with Rouseff I and II in Brazil, where the ideological distance between pre-election coalition members on the left-right dimension should result in the dismantling of the agreements after the elections. Even if the distance between government and opposition figured among the lowest levels in the country in both governments (Borges, 2021), indicating high within-polarisation within Rouseff's government, pre-electoral coalitions still formed the basis of the first coalitions following each election. Why was this the case? According to the second path, the explanation for this resides in the fact that (a) pre-electoral coalition members had granted the *formateur* a majority basis in the parliament twice, (b) the polarisation at the party system level was quite high, thereby implying that rearranging interparty negotiations would be costly, (c) especially with a short in-between period until the new governments took place. Together, these conditions increased Rouseff's utility in building cabinets around pre-election coalitions while discouraging her from seeking new partners.

High legislative polarisation and low within polarisation are also at the core of the third and fourth paths, but now in conjunction with other conditions. In broad

terms, legislative polarisation is combined with formally weak presidents in the third path, whereas the fourth path connects it to non-weak chiefs of executive and the absence of low temporal constraint. Chávez's first government in Venezuela is a colourful example of the former path. Even if he proceeded to take his first steps towards an autocratic rule in the coming years by engaging in a constitution-making process (Landau, 2019), at the time of his election, the then constitution did not grant Chávez enough power to defy the existing order on his own. Coupled with the fact that the parties were far from one another regarding economic policies and the ideological distance within the pre-election coalition was rather insignificant, it made little sense for Chávez to not base his government on the pre-electoral pact.

By contrast, the latter path diverges precisely for not counting on presidents with low policy-making powers<sup>17</sup>, besides being marked by *formateurs* with medium or long periods until they officially hold office. The cases of Cardoso I and Moscoso, which deviate from the results of the necessity test, are two cases covered by the fourth scenario. In both cases, high legislative polarisation and low polarisation within pre-electoral coalitions were responsible for exerting significant influence on the post-electoral coalition cabinets, in the sense that they were heavily based on the composition of pre-electoral pacts. Even if Cardoso and Moscoso had roughly three months before taking office and would soon be relevant actors in the law-making process, Cardoso opted only for enlarging the original pact by inviting the median party to the government, whereas Moscoso preferred to maintain the same composition as before the elections.

However, as the fourth configuration is the only one with a deviant case in consistency for the sufficiency analysis, its causal link should naturally be questioned<sup>18</sup>. This notwithstanding, Balladares' case is not too troublesome. Even if it fits into the path but fails to be more in than out in the outcome set, Balladares' pre-election pact was composed of small parties. Excluding the presidential party, the pre-electoral coalition parties accounted for only 4% of the parliament's total share of seats. The-

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<sup>17</sup> I am extremely cautious with statements based on the negation of conditions, as these do not always represent the opposite concept from the original set (Goertz, 2020, Chap. 1; Schneider e Wagemann, 2012, Chap. 3). To see how can this be the case, the opposite of weak presidents are not necessarily strong and powerful presidents, since the negation also includes presidents with moderate levels of power.

<sup>18</sup> The XY Plot for sufficiency also reveals that the results fail to explain the cases of Caldera and Macri. Despite having pre-electoral and post-electoral coalition cabinets alike, these cases are not exemplary of any causal pathway. Hence, they serve as perfect cases for an *a posteriori* in-depth analysis to complement or cast doubts on the arguments developed in this study. The XY Plot can be found in the appendix.



refore, the explanation for this case lies in the simple fact that the *formateur* party sought out another party to secure a majority in the legislature, thereby making the post-electoral coalition cabinet not appear so much like the pre-electoral pact.

### 3.7 Concluding Remarks

Thirty years ago, there was barely any study interested in examining how pre-election coalitions impact government formation processes, with the notable exception of [Strøm et al. \(1994\)](#). Fortunately, the literature has undergone tremendous changes, as a large body of research today is dedicated to studying the relationship between pre-electoral alliances and coalition formation, governance and survival across different systems of government (e.g. [Ferrara e Herron, 2005](#); [Ibenskas, 2016](#); [Spoon e West, 2015](#)).

In presidential cabinets in particular, pre-election coalitions are not automatically transformed into coalition governments, as executive-legislative relations in presidential democracies are marked by the independent election of the executive and legislative branches. Against this backdrop, this paper's main aim was to take a closer look at the process by which pre-electoral pacts become post-electoral coalitions in Latin-American presidential democracies from a different perspective on causality. Instead of relying on conventional statistical methods, I subscribed to a configurational approach to study which conditions lead to building post-electoral coalitions with compositions similar to their pre-electoral origins.

The findings point out that pre-electoral coalition status and composition, the ideological polarisation in the legislature, the distance between the end of the elections and the government's inauguration day, and presidential policy-making powers are all pertinent conditions to explain the conversion of pre-electoral into post-electoral coalitions, albeit in varying ways. The most important aspect is that no condition is individually sufficient to account for this process; rather, the explanation resides in different combinations of conditions.

As a consequence, two main takeaways can be retrieved from this work. First, pre-electoral coalition majority status clearly matters for post-electoral coalition formation. However, different from what coalition theories would dictate, majority status only produces coalition cabinets similar to pre-electoral alliances that preceded them in tandem with other conditions. Second, and of great interest to this dissertation, the conjunction between low polarisation within pre-electoral pacts and high ideological polarisation in the legislature is highly prominent in bringing out

coalition resemblance, thus lending more credence to the overall argument that an increased level of legislative polarisation shrinks the president's utility to form a coalition government not based on a pre-electoral coalition.

While recent years have testified to a wealth of research on pre-electoral coalitions, there still remains, of course, significant potential for further advancements. Based on the developments put forward here, future research would greatly benefit from differentiating types of conversion of pre-electoral coalitions into full-fledged coalition governments. In this paper, despite analysing the reasons behind the similarity between pre- and post-electoral coalitions, all changes in pre-electoral coalitions were treated as if they were equivalent to one another, though bringing in another party is very different from expelling a member from the pact. As a consequence, the different changes that pre-electoral coalitions suffer from the electoral to the post-electoral period are worthy of future consideration.

In addition, another potential avenue for future research is examining the translation of pre- to post-electoral coalitions from the perspective of within-case studies. Despite throwing light on some cases, the discussion brought up here is bounded by the typical cross-case nature of QCA and limited to typical cases of each causal pathway, thus relinquishing from fully exploring the richness of QCA different types of cases, each of which is associated with a specific aim in relation to providing causal explanations to social phenomena (Oana e Schneider, 2018). Thus, case studies can be conducted on different types of cases to complement (or cast doubt on) this paper's findings.

Lastly, the coalition literature would greatly enrich with case studies also conducted at the party level. While this work has been limited to studying the interparty aspect of pre-electoral coalitions, it is undeniable that intra-party tensions play their role in parties' fates. Even if coalition governments result from interparty bargaining, case studies on intraparty politics can help us better understand the processes by which pre-electoral coalitions are formed, enlarged and dissolved, even before presidents are sworn into office.

## 4 Conclusion

With few exceptions, such as Finland, Great Britain and Uruguay (Chiru, 2015; Freudenreich, 2016), pre-electoral coalitions are a commonplace feature of most electoral democracies. This dissertation focused on investigating the relationship between pre-election coalitions and government formation in Latin American presidential regimes, a thriving research topic in the field of coalition studies in the last decades (Borges et al., 2021; Carroll, 2007; Freudenreich, 2016; Peron, 2018). More specifically, the main goal of this dissertation was to uncover which (or whether any) conditions provide the means to make pre-electoral coalitions become coalition cabinets.

To be sure, the formation of pre-electoral alliances is naturally a binding process, by which pre-electoral party members let go of possible benefits in some domains in exchange for gains in other arenas. By engaging in multiparty bargaining before the elections take place, parties may be seeking to maximise the number of votes cast in their favour, either in the presidential national election (Lopes, 2022; Spoon e West, 2015) or in disputes at other levels (Borges, 2019; Borges e Turgeon, 2019), to influence the policy-making of the next government (Kellam, 2017) or/and to carve out their place in the next cabinet (Carroll, 2007; Peron, 2018). However, in the presidential system of government, *formateur* parties lack an instrumental inducement to be a credible coalition partner when it comes to the distribution of cabinet positions: the non-existence of the vote of no confidence (Golder e Thomas, 2014). As presidents are not endogenously selected from the legislature, and their tenure is not formally tied to the fate of the latter, *formateur* parties can opt for not fulfilling their office promises to pre-electoral coalition members and get away with the construction of a post-electoral coalition cabinet in contrast with the pre-electoral alliance.

It is against this backdrop that the first empirical chapter of this dissertation revisits and qualifies the statement following which potential governments based on pre-electoral coalitions are more likely to emerge from the government formation game than those options that are not based on pre-electoral commitments (Freudenreich, 2016). More precisely, I propose that the effect of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation in presidential regimes is moderated by the levels of extant legislative polarisation. The reasoning is that pre-election coalitions lay the foundation of post-electoral governments in party systems with a greater ideological divide

between parties, as president-elect parties would have difficulty forming a coalition cabinet other than the pure version or the enlargement of the pre-electoral pact. Drawing on data from 13 Latin American countries covering approximately four decades, the findings lend support to the hypothesised conditional effect of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation depending on how pervasive is ideological polarisation in the legislature. Except for small levels of legislative polarisation, namely up to 1.43 in Dalton's Polarisation Index, the results point in the direction that pre-electoral coalitions are increasingly more important for coalition formation as ideological polarisation intensifies in the legislature.

In the second empirical chapter, my perspective on causality shifted from a probability thinking to a configurational rationale. Yet, the emphasis on the first moments of coalition governments remained the same. One of the differences is that, instead of measuring whether potential governments based on pre-electoral coalitions were more likely to be the next government, the starting point of the chapter was the winning pre-electoral coalitions themselves. My main aim was to grasp what conditions make pre-election alliances serve as the bedrock upon which post-electoral coalition cabinets lay their foundation. In light of the fact that pre-electoral coalitions are not automatically converted into post-electoral coalition cabinets under presidentialism, this chapter was especially motivated by the scope of change that pre-electoral pacts can be undergone until government formation, from minor to significant overhauls of their members. The results suggest the existence of four alternative paths to explain the resemblance between pre-electoral pacts and post-electoral coalition governments, from which the majority status and the low polarisation within pre-electoral coalitions and high levels of legislative polarisation are noteworthy conditions to bridge the gap between pre-electoral to post-electoral coalitions.

With the results in hand, the next matter of importance is to spell out what is the contribution of this dissertation to the literature. In the first place, this work brings a novel chapter to the discussion of the impact of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation in presidential regimes. While most recent studies claim that pre-electoral coalitions matter for government formation (e.g. [Borges et al., 2021](#); [Carroll, 2007](#); [Peron, 2018](#)), with the exception of [Kellam \(2017\)](#), the present study shows a nuance by arguing and demonstrating that the effects of pre-electoral bargaining on cabinet formation are *conditional* on the levels of legislative polarisation. As a result, the existence of multiparty electoral coordination and the subsequent engagement in pre-electoral commitments do not mean that the post-electoral government will necessarily derive from pre-electoral coalitions in presidential demo-

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cracies.

In addition, another contribution of this dissertation is presenting a new way by which polarisation affects the political arena. Overall, the literature has seen an upward interest in polarisation lately, especially in the wake of dividing governments, such as the Trump government in the U.S. and the Bolsonaro government in Brazil. This trend has been marked by the study of diversifying themes related to polarisation, such as affective polarisation (Garzia et al., 2023), mass polarisation (Levendusky, 2009), voter polarisation (Han, 2020), and so forth. This dissertation has centred its analysis mostly on legislative polarisation, which refers to the distance between political parties on the economic dimension in the legislature of a given party system. Together, the two empirical chapters composing this dissertation highlight the importance of legislative polarisation when it comes to building governments in presidentialism. Whereas the first empirical paper points out that potential cabinets based on pre-election coalitions are more likely to form as legislative polarisation increases, the second empirical work sheds light on how ideological polarisation in the legislature is one of the relevant conditions to explaining why post-electoral coalition cabinets revolve around the composition of their pre-electoral antecedents.

However, even if this dissertation has been preoccupied with the reliability of its findings, which can be seen by the extension of the robustness tests conducted in each empirical chapter, one major concern remains: to what extent are the results of this dissertation generalisable to presidential democracies located outside the contours of Latin America? Despite being an esteemed region to investigate the patterns of coalition politics in presidentialism, recent scholarship has drawn attention to the fact that there are presidential democracies governed by coalition governments in other regions other than in Latin America (Ariotti e Golder, 2018; Chaisty et al., 2018; Kim, 2011; Silva, 2022). Therefore, do the findings regarding the relationship between pre-electoral coalitions and government formation hold true for these cases? The precise answer to this question depends on whether political competition of the party systems in African, Asian, and Eastern European presidential democracies can be at least *minimally* subsumed in the typical economic left-right spectrum. If this is the case, then it follows logically that we could extend the claims of this dissertation about the conditional effect of pre-election alliances on government formation according to the degree of legislative polarisation to non-Latin American presidential democracies.

Nonetheless, playing against the generalisability of my results, African, Asian and Eastern European presidential democracies seem to have other prominent political

cleavages shaping their party systems other than the traditional left-right divide. For example, stances in regard to macroeconomic policies are not as much as salient as positions on foreign policy in explaining partisan politics in South Korea (Kim, 2011). Similarly, political discussions cannot be disassociated from the religious dimension in Indonesia and the Maldives (Hanan, 2012). Outside of Asian examples, it is noteworthy to point out that ethnicity plays a non-trivial role in African politics (Arriola, 2009). In contrast, Latin American party systems have historically concentrated way more on economic policies than foreign<sup>1</sup>, religious<sup>2</sup> and ethnic<sup>3</sup> issues. Of course, this does not mean that party positions along the standard left-right dimension encapsulate party competition in Latin America thoroughly; rather, they provide, at a bare minimum, an essential, meaningful dimension where party ideas conflict with those of one another in a way to position their party labels for the voters.

All in all, the generalisability of the results of this dissertation to presidential regimes outside of the Latin American borders should be taken with a grain of salt, as their political competition does not seem to be centred primarily on the economic left-right divide. Against this backdrop, I suggest that the effect of pre-electoral coalitions on government formation is not conditional solely on legislative polarisation based on the economic policy dimension in multiparty presidential democracies of Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe, but on multidimensional legislative polarisation. That is, rather than the mere distance between parties regarding their preferences on macroeconomic policies, the legislative polarisation should be measured on

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<sup>1</sup> This can be exemplified by the Brazilian case, wherein the Ministry of Foreign Affairs consistently does not rank amongst the most important portfolios in the country, either by expert and elite assessments or by objective measures of portfolio salience (Batista, 2017; Mauerberg e Pereira, 2020; Zucco et al., 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding the increasing number of evangelicals in Latin America (Boas, 2021), the average Latin American party system has not seen a corresponding rise in political parties rooted in religious constituencies. Moreover, religious themes have not been pervasive in party systems even if congregants and clergy have increasingly engaged in political activities (Smith, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> It would be wrong to state that ethnicity is irrelevant to Latin American politics whatsoever. Yet, ethnic issues are not as ubiquitous in Latin America as they are in Africa. While Bolivia and Ecuador stand out in the former, the importance given to ethnicity is unparalleled in the latter since it crosscuts the continent. To probe whether there is a confounding problem between systems of government, democracy, and ethnicity in Africa and Latin America, I compare ethnic diversity in these two regions based on Fearon's (2003) index of ethnic fractionalisation. In spite of the problems of every measure of ethnic diversity (Posner, 2004), African presidential democracies still have a substantially higher average score in Fearon's index of ethnic fractionalisation (0.75) than Latin American presidential democracies (0.42). A T-test reveals that this difference is statically significant with the following parameters:  $t = -4.7323$ ,  $df = 20.611$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.01$ .

the basis of cross-cutting ideological lines to moderate the impact of pre-election commitments on government formation.

Either way, the generalisation of the results put forward here regarding the entanglement between legislative polarisation, pre-election coalitions and government formation under presidentialism represents a distant goal in the field of coalition studies. From a comparative perspective, the next step consists in systematically charting the existence of pre-electoral coalitions in African, Asian and Eastern European presidential democracies. Despite being a painstaking entrepreneurship, some scholars have started by tapping into the formation of pre-electoral coalitions in a few countries, such as Kenya ([Kadima e Owuor, 2014](#)) and South Korea ([Kim, 2008](#)). Coupled with the recommendations made at the end of each empirical chapter, exploring pre-election coalitions in non-Latin American presidential democracies seems to brighten even more the future of the scholarship on the *timing* aspect of coalitional presidentialism.

After a quick overview of the dissertation and a brief comment on its main findings, the main takeaway is that there is still too much room for future research. With all difficulties related to the search for causal inferences, I hope, at the very least, that this dissertation has brought creative insights and interesting and/or provocative findings to the discussion of pre-electoral coalitions and cabinet formation under presidentialism. By no means will this dissertation bring the debate to an end, but hopefully, it will contribute to novel research on the topic.

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# A Appendix

## A.1 Supplementary Information for Chapter 2

Table 12 – Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max	N
<b>DV:</b>					
Actual Government	0.0006	0.0259	0	1	294,864
<b>IV:</b>					
Minority	0.3513	0.4774	0	1	294,864
Number of Parties	7.9602	2.2025	1	17	294,864
Ideological Division	6.7775	1.8623	0	10	294,864
Median Party	0.5384	0.4985	0	1	294,864
Extreme Parties	0.6465	0.4780	0	1	294,864
Runner-up Party	0.4972	0.4999	0	1	294,864
Pre-Electoral Coalition	0.0632	0.2433	0	1	294,864
Legislative Polarisation	3.2555	0.5443	0.0006	5.7494	294,204

Table 13 – Benchmark models: iterative exclusion of countries

	Without Argentina	Without Bolivia	Without Brazil	Without Chile	Without Colombia	Without Costa Rica	Without Dom. Rep.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Minority	-1.364*** (0.282)	-1.009*** (0.274)	-0.757*** (0.291)	-1.101*** (0.264)	-1.245*** (0.279)	-1.189*** (0.272)	-1.120*** (0.265)
Number of Parties	-1.132*** (0.107)	-1.258*** (0.108)	-1.822*** (0.139)	-1.316*** (0.105)	-1.316*** (0.115)	-1.241*** (0.107)	-1.303*** (0.105)
Ideological Division	-0.252*** (0.045)	-0.211*** (0.046)	-0.076 (0.047)	-0.171*** (0.042)	-0.243*** (0.046)	-0.204*** (0.044)	-0.222*** (0.044)
Median Party	0.688*** (0.263)	0.732*** (0.271)	1.262*** (0.281)	0.884*** (0.255)	0.823*** (0.279)	0.846*** (0.259)	0.998*** (0.254)
Extreme Parties	0.252 (0.345)	0.551 (0.338)	0.087 (0.428)	0.502 (0.318)	0.793** (0.354)	0.456 (0.320)	0.559* (0.321)
Runner-up Party	-1.111*** (0.279)	-0.948*** (0.270)	-0.599** (0.284)	-1.095*** (0.270)	-1.562*** (0.330)	-1.120*** (0.280)	-1.053*** (0.279)
Pre-Electoral Coalition (PEC)	0.509 (1.364)	-1.584 (1.391)	-0.060 (1.164)	0.0004 (1.137)	-0.246 (1.143)	-0.239 (1.112)	-0.661 (1.203)
PEC * Legislative Polarisation	0.988** (0.434)	1.914*** (0.497)	1.343*** (0.385)	0.969** (0.378)	1.127*** (0.368)	1.151*** (0.363)	1.318*** (0.390)
Cabinets	164	173	164	178	164	170	172
Number of Alternative Cabinets	279,880	279,452	53,564	293,180	279,892	292,500	294,138
Log Likelihood	-489.139	-492.071	-368.357	-537.655	-448.271	-514.103	-530.903

Note:

\*p&lt;0.1; \*\*p&lt;0.05; \*\*\*p&lt;0.01

Table 14 – Benchmark models: iterative exclusion of countries (continued)

	Without El Salvador	Without Honduras	Without Nicaragua	Without Panama	Without Uruguay	Without Venezuela
	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Minority	-1.195*** (0.269)	-1.299*** (0.266)	-1.090*** (0.261)	-1.132*** (0.265)	-1.004*** (0.264)	-1.163*** (0.264)
Number of Parties	-1.272*** (0.105)	-1.328*** (0.105)	-1.265*** (0.104)	-1.284*** (0.106)	-1.314*** (0.105)	-1.259*** (0.104)
Ideological Division	-0.184*** (0.044)	-0.192*** (0.042)	-0.206*** (0.043)	-0.187*** (0.042)	-0.169*** (0.042)	-0.198*** (0.042)
Median Party	1.043*** (0.271)	0.861*** (0.255)	0.894*** (0.251)	0.914*** (0.259)	0.948*** (0.257)	0.879*** (0.253)
Extreme Parties	0.509 (0.323)	0.521 (0.320)	0.481 (0.318)	0.621* (0.334)	0.480 (0.317)	0.502 (0.319)
Runner-up Party	-1.167*** (0.278)	-1.254*** (0.282)	-1.111*** (0.270)	-1.216*** (0.281)	-1.299*** (0.292)	-1.182*** (0.274)
Pre-Electoral Coalition (PEC)	-0.257 (1.116)	-0.212 (1.118)	-0.206 (1.114)	-0.485 (1.170)	-0.196 (1.116)	0.367 (1.205)
PEC * Legislative Polarisation	1.151*** (0.364)	1.174*** (0.365)	1.164*** (0.364)	1.229*** (0.385)	1.180*** (0.365)	0.972** (0.384)
Cabinets	168	176	182	176	177	180
Number of Alternative Cabinets	293,620	294,086	293,644	289,492	294,060	292,940
Log Likelihood	-525.583	-533.027	-544.667	-525.386	-534.911	-535.825

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01



## A.2 Supplementary Information for Chapter 3

Table 15 – Raw Data Matrix

Cases	Government Status	PEC's Legislative Contingent in the Lower Chamber (%)	PEC's Legislative Contingent in the Upper Chamber (%)	PEC's Within Polarisation	Legislative Polarisation	Temporal Constraint	Presidential Power	Coalition Resemblance
De La Rúa	Minority	50.7	29.1	1.267	3.262	47	0.407	1
Macri	Minority	33.85	19.44	1.256	3.894	18	0.407	1
Siles	Minority	38.7	37.03	2.087	4.155	38	0.289	0.807
Paz Zamora	Minority	25.38	29.62	0.599	3.803	91	0.289	0
Banzer	Minority	26.92	40.74	2.010	1.939	66	0.319	0
Cardoso I	Minority	35.85	40.74	1.850	3.150	90	0.486	0.530
Cardoso II	Minority	57.48	49.38	1.286	2.662	89	0.486	0.685
Lula I	Minority	25.12	20.98	2.795	3.225	66	0.486	0.299
Lula II	Minority	17.1	14.81	0.334	3.257	64	0.486	0.049
Rousseff I	Minority	60	59.26	2.969	3.333	62	0.486	0.860
Rousseff II	Minority	59.22	65.43	3.660	3.279	67	0.486	0.899
Aylwin	Minority	49.17	40.42	1.400	2.780	87	0.523	1
Frei	Minority	57.5	45.65	1.526	3.257	90	0.523	1
Lagos	Minority	57.5	48.97	1.312	3.002	55	0.523	1
Bachelet I	Minority	52.5	52.63	1.051	3.937	55	0.523	1
Piñera I	Minority	45.83	42.10	0.948	4.037	53	0.523	1
Bachelet II	Minority	52.5	50	1.847	3.906	86	0.523	1
Piñera II	Minority	46.45	44.18	1.047	4.298	84	0.523	1
Medina II	Majority	66.84	90.62	0.244	1.174	62	0.400	1
Uribe II	Minority	48.7	56.86	1.956	3.746	71	0.381	0.822
Santos II	Minority	55.42	46.07	1.909	2.594	53	0.381	0.670
Endara	Minority	82.2	Not Applicable	1.412	2.089	227	0.452	1
Balladares	Minority	44.66	Not Applicable	1.564	3.446	116	0.452	0.428
Moscoso	Minority	33.8	Not Applicable	0.755	3.615	122	0.452	1
Torrijos	Majority	55.33	Not Applicable	0.408	3.509	122	0.452	1
Martinelli	Minority	52.11	Not Applicable	1.192	3.657	59	0.452	0.761
Varela	Minority	23.93	Not Applicable	0.46	3.117	58	0.452	0.038
Cortizo	Minority	56.3	Not Applicable	1.224	2.841	57	0.452	1
Lusinchi	Majority	58	63.63	0.181	1.614	60	0.391	1
Caldera	Minority	24.8	22	3	2.337	59	0.391	1
Chávez	Minority	34.4	31.48	0.599	2.893	58	0.391	0.945

Table 16 – Calibrated Dataset

Cases	MAJ	LWPOL	HLPOL	LTEMP	LPP	CR
De La Rúa	0.8	0.89643	0.78123	0.98917	0.48450	1
Macri	0.2	0.89940	0.93728	1	0.48450	1
Siles	0.4	0.43630	0.96427	0.99813	0.96277	0.807
Paz Zamora	0	0.98409	0.92401	0.015950	0.96277	0
Banzer	0.2	0.49263	0.13385	0.68679	0.91771	0
Cardoso I	0.4	0.60865	0.73482	0.019342	0.075123	0.53
Cardoso II	0.8	0.8911	0.47670	0.023439	0.075123	0.685
Lula I	0	0.087797	0.76658	0.68679	0.075123	0.299
Lula II	0	0.992	0.77929	0.764	0.075123	0.049
Rousseff I	1	0.054518	0.80747	0.82783	0.075123	0.86
Rousseff II	1	0.007481	0.78774	0.64310	0.075123	0.899
Aylwin	0.6	0.85404	0.54517	0.034322	0.025153	1
Frei	0.8	0.80149	0.77929	0.019342	0.025153	1
Lagos	0.8	0.8834	0.66463	0.95	0.025153	1
Bachelet I	1	0.94236	0.94277	0.95	0.025153	1
Piñera I	0.6	0.95679	0.95383	0.96567	0.025153	1
Bachelet II	1	0.61075	0.93886	0.041457	0.025153	1
Piñera II	0.6	0.94300	0.97390	0.060191	0.025153	1
Medina II	1	0.99435	0.023104	0.82783	0.53499	1
Uribe II	0.8	0.53234	0.91444	0.45108	0.66217	0.822
Santos II	0.8	0.56658	0.43534	0.96567	0.66217	0.67
Endara	1	0.84958	0.18254	0	0.18896	1
Balladares	0.4	0.78309	0.84417	0.00011979	0.18896	0.428
Moscoso	0.2	0.97505	0.88819	0	0.18896	1
Torrijos	1	0.99087	0.86204	0	0.18896	1
Martinelli	1	0.915	0.89729	0.89653	0.18896	0.761
Varela	0	0.9893	0.72000	0.91337	0.18896	0.038
Cortizo	1	0.90761	0.57916	0.92769	0.18896	1
Lusinchi	1	0.9953	0.065087	0.87685	0.59690	1
Caldera	0	0.050000	0.29096	0.89653	0.59690	1
Chávez	0	0.98409	0.60757	0.91337	0.59690	0.945

Table 17 – Conservative Solution for Coalition Resemblance

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
$\sim$ MAJ * HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP	0.899	0.863	0.122	0.067	Chavez, Siles
MAJ * LWPOL * HLPOL * $\sim$ LTEMP	0.979	0.972	0.256	0.010	Aylwin, Bachelet II, Frei, Piñera II, Torrijos, Uribe II
MAJ * LWPOL * $\sim$ LTEMP * $\sim$ LPP	0.972	0.965	0.293	0.038	Aylwin, Bachelet II, Cardoso II, Endara, Frei, Pinera II, Torrijos
MAJ * HLPOL * LTEMP * $\sim$ LPP	0.981	0.977	0.282	0.202	Bachelet I, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Lagos, Martinelli, Piñera I, Rouseff I, Rouseff II
LWPOL * HLPOL * $\sim$ LTEMP * $\sim$ LPP	0.902	0.874	0.306	0.047	Aylwin, Bachelet II, Balladares, Cardoso I, Frei, Moscoso, Piñera II, Torrijos
MAJ * LWPOL * $\sim$ HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP	0.930	0.909	0.112	0.045	Lusinchi, Medina II, Santos II
Solution	0.935	0.924	0.711		

Table 18 – Enhanced Parsimonious Solution for Coalition Resemblance

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
MAJ	0.950	0.943	0.734	0.410	Aylwin, Bachelet I, Bachelet II, Cardoso II, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Endara, Frei, Lagos, Lusinchi, Martinelli, Medina II, Piñera I, Piñera II, Rouseff I, Rouseff II, Santos II, Torrijos, Uribe II
HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP	0.904	0.870	0.191	0.061	Chávez, Siles
LWPOL * HLPOL * $\sim$ LTEMP * $\sim$ LPP	0.902	0.874	0.306	0.047	Aylwin, Bachelet II, Balladares, Cardoso I, Frei, Moscoso, Pinera II, Torrijos
Solution	0.915	0.904	0.855		

Table 19 – Necessity Test for the non-Outcome

Disjunction	Consistency	Coverage	Relevance
$\sim$ MAJ + $\sim$ LWPOL	0.935	0.426	0.625
$\sim$ MAJ + LPP	0.953	0.419	0.606

Table 20 – Intermediate Solution for the non-Outcome

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
$\sim$ MAJ * $\sim$ LTEMP * LPP	0.816	0.739	0.292		Paz Zamora
Solution	0.816	0.737	0.294		

Table 21 – Robustness Test: Case Selection

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
MAJ*LWPOL	0.966	0.960	0.602	0.133	Aylwin, Bachelet I, Bachelet II, Batlle, Cardoso II, Cortizo, Endara, De La Rúa, Frei Lacalle Pou, Lagos, Martinelli, Piñera I, Piñera II, Santos, Uribe II
MAJ*HLPOL*LTEMP	0.963	0.957	0.322	0.063	Bachelet I, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Lagos, Martinelli II, Piñera I, Rousseff I, Rousseff II
LWPOL*HLPOL* $\sim$ LTEMP* $\sim$ LPP	0.899	0.868	0.318	0.051	Aylwin, Bachelet II, Balladares, Cardoso I, Frei, Moscoso, Piñera II
LWPOL*HLPOL*LTEMP*LPP	0.911	0.876	0.151	0.036	Chávez
Solution	0.929	0.919	0.766		

Note: Intermediate Solution for Coalition Resemblance.

Table 22 – Cluster Analysis: Concurrent Elections

Parameters of Fit	Pathways			
Consistencies	MAJ * LWPOL	MAJ * HLPOL * LTEMP	HLPOL * LTEMP * LPP	LWPOL * HLPOL * $\sim$ LTEMP * $\sim$ LPP
Pooled	0.969	0.966	0.904	0.902
Between Cases without Concurrent Elections (4)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Between Cases with Concurrent Elections (27)	0.965	0.957	0.863	0.896
Distance from Between to Pooled	0.013	0.016	0.052	0.039
Coverages				
Pooled	0.618	0.317	0.191	0.306
Between Cases without Concurrent Elections (4)	0.552	0.451	0.439	0.148
Between Cases with Concurrent Elections (27)	0.629	0.295	0.149	0.332

Table 23 – Cluster Analysis: Country Effects

Parameters of Fit		Pathways		
Consistencies	MAJ *	MAJ *	HLPOL *	LWPOL *
	LWPOL	HLPOL *	LTEMP *	HLPOL *
		LTEMP	LPP	~LTEMP *
				~LPP
Pooled	0.969	0.966	0.904	0.902
Between Argentina (2)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Between Bolivia (3)	0.667	0.749	0.725	0.015
Between Brazil (6)	0.909	1.000	0.924	0.820
Between Chile (7)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Between Colombia (2)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Between Dom. Republic (1)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Between Panamá (7)	0.964	0.908	0.734	0.858
Between Venezuela (3)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Distance from Between to Pooled	0.041	0.031	0.044	0.134
Coverages				
Pooled	0.618	0.317	0.191	0.306
Between Argentina (2)	0.500	0.491	0.485	0.005
Between Bolivia (3)	0.496	0.496	1.000	0.002
Between Brazil (6)	0.345	0.450	0.095	0.363
Between Chile (7)	0.708	0.338	0.024	0.430
Between Colombia (2)	0.737	0.594	0.594	0.249
Between Dom. Republic (1)	0.994	0.023	0.023	0.023
Between Panamá (7)	0.786	0.256	0.080	0.468
Between Venezuela (3)	0.338	0.022	0.324	0.068

Table 24 – Robustness Test: Calibration Process

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
MAJ*LWPOL	0.969	0.964	0.618	0.473	Aylwin, Bachelet I, Bachelet II, Cardoso II, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Endara, Frei, Lagos, Lusinchi, Martinelli, Medina II, Piñera I, Piñera II, Santos II, Torrijos, Uribe II
$\sim$ LWPOL *HLPOL * $\sim$ LPP	0.918	0.873	0.198	0.044	Lula I, Rouseff I, Rouseff II
$\sim$ LWPOL *LTEMP *LPP	0.901	0.846	0.152	0.027	Caldera, Siles
Solution	0.943	0.934	0.721		

Note: Enhanced Intermediate Solution for Coalition Resemblance.

Table 25 – Robustness Test: Consistency Threshold of 0.85

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
MAJ*LWPOL	0.969	0.964	0.618	0.157	Aylwin, Bachelet I, Bachelet II, Cardoso II, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Endara, Frei, Lagos, Lusinchi, Martinelli, Medina II, Piñera I, Piñera II, Santos II, Torrijos, Uribe II
MAJ*HLPOL*LTEMP	0.966	0.959	0.317	0.055	Bachelet I, Cortizo, De la Rúa, Lagos, Martinelli, Piñera I, Rouseff I, Rouseff II
HLPOL*LTEMP*LPP	0.904	0.870	0.191	0.060	Chávez, Siles
LWPOL*HLPOL* $\sim$ LTEMP* $\sim$ LPP	0.902	0.874	0.306	0.050	Aylwin, Bachelet II, Balladares, Cardoso I, Frei, Moscoso, Pinera II, Torrijos
Solution	0.930	0.919	0.796		

Note: Enhanced Intermediate Solution for Coalition Resemblance.

Table 26 – Robustness Test: Consistency Threshold of 0.9

	Consistency	PRI	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Cases
MAJ*LWPOL	0.969	0.964	0.618	0.359	Aylwin, Bachelet I, Bachelet II, Cardoso II, Cortizo, De La Rúa, Endara, Frei, Lagos, Lusinchi, Martinelli, Medina II, Piñera I, Piñera II, Santos II, Torrijos, Uribe II
MAJ*HLPOL*LTEMP	0.966	0.959	0.317	0.055	Bachelet I, Cortizo, De la Rúa, Lagos, Martinelli, Piñera I, Rousseff I, Rousseff II
~LWPOL*HLPOL*LTEMP*LPP	0.946	0.910	0.109	0.024	Siles
Solution	0.972	0.967	0.700		

Note: Enhanced Intermediate Solution for Coalition Resemblance.

Figure 5 – XY Plot for Sufficiency

