



## SYSTEMIC PRECONDITIONS OF CENTRALIZED PERSONALIZATION OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN TO THE POLISH SEJM

### SYSTEMOWE UWARUNKOWANIA PERSONALIZACJI SCENTRALIZOWANEJ KAMPANII WYBORCZYCH DO SEJMU RP

*Wojciech Peszyński\** 

#### — ABSTRACT —

The aim of this article is to assess the susceptibility of chosen components of Polish political system on centralized personalization of the election to the Sejm. The method applied in this process is the qualitative-quantitative content analysis. The construction of the tool that could objectively measure this influence in any democratic country poses an extremely difficult task. For this reason, the author proposed his own catalog of variables, based on the criterion of the relevance of their impact on the process of personalization. This list includes the following determinants: the position of Prime Minister, the electoral system, competencies and the manner of creating the position of the President, the financing of political parties and the role of the mass media. Out of the above-mentioned variables, especially the Prime Minister's competences and the election system are the key factors that influence the level of centralized personalization, due to which

#### — ABSTRAKT —

Celem artykułu jest ocena podatności wybranych komponentów polskiego systemu politycznego na personalizację scentralizowaną wyborów do Sejmu. Metodą zastosowaną w tym procesie badawczym jest ilościowo-jakościowa analiza treści. Stworzenie narzędzia, dzięki któremu można byłoby obiektywnie zmierzyć ten wpływ w każdym państwie demokratycznym, jest zadaniem niezwykle trudnym. Dlatego też autor zaproponował katalog zmiennych, w których doborze bazował na kryterium istotności ich wpływu na proces personalizacji. Na tej liście znalazły się następujące determinanty: pozycja premiera, system wyborczy, kompetencje i sposób kreowania stanowiska prezydenta RP, finansowanie partii politycznych, reklama wyborcza oraz rola mass mediów. Spośród wymienionych zmiennych kompetencje premiera oraz system wyborczy w sposób kluczowy oddziałują na poziom personalizacji scentralizowanej, co prze-

\* Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Faculty of Political Science and Security Studies.

they were graded higher in the assessment of susceptibility.

**Keywords:** personalization; presidentialization; Prime Ministerialization; political system; electoral system

łożyło się na nadanie tym czynnikom większej rangi w ocenie podatności.

**Słowa kluczowe:** personalizacja; prezydencjalizacja; *Prime Ministerialization*; system polityczny; system wyborczy

## INTRODUCTION

Political personalization (including personalization of electoral campaigns) has become a popular area of scientific investigation in the recent decade. It seems, however, that the attempts to specify the importance of certain determinants in this process are made too rarely. In Poland, this subject was approached by Marek Mazur (2014), who still did not pose it as the main point of his investigation. As regards world literature, what is particularly worth attention are the texts included in the second chapter of a book by Marina Costa Lobo and John Curtice (2015), devoted to different aspects of personalization. Among older but still actual positions one should pay attention to the articles by John Curtice and Sarider Hunjan (2011), Soren Holmberg and Henrik Oscarsson (2011) and, last but not least, John Downey and James Stanyer (2010). The last of the mentioned articles presents the results of comparative studies concerning the power of personalization in 20 democracies. Its authors focused mostly on communicative factors, rather than on systemic determinants. While the content of this catalog does not cause any objections, the fact the political markets under analysis are under-recognized is highly controversial. Here one can include Poland, where common and direct election for the head of state let us classify the regime as the presidential one (Downey & Stanyer, 2010).

Taking into consideration all the aforesaid deficiencies, the indicators of assessment applied in particular areas of research as well as the effort that researchers put into their studies deserve special praise. This inspired the author of this article to construct the tool for investigating the level of countries' susceptibility to personalization and to test it on the Polish ground.

CENTRALIZED PERSONALIZATION  
AS THE MAIN THEORETICAL CATEGORY

Generally speaking, the personalization of campaign ought to be understood as a certain trend in which society, the mass media and the subjects of political rivalry focus on the person rather than on the party or its program. This is connected with the phenomenon of privatization that is growing importance of the politician's personal attributes which are not necessarily politically relevant (Mazur, 2017). The literature devoted to this subject, according to Gideon Rahat and Tamir Sheafer (2007), distinguishes three types of personalization: institutional, personalization in the media and in politicians' behavior.

The analysis presented in this article concentrates on the last of the aforesaid types, and to be more specific, on centralized personalization. The core for this concept are the leaders of election (Balmas, Rahat, Sheafer, & Shenhav, 2014; Mazur, 2014), that is, those figures who in German political discourse are referred to as *spitzenkandidaten* (Brettschneider, 2002)<sup>1</sup>. Due to the fact that the domination of the political leaders over the forms of organization increases the significance of the rivalry for the position of the head of government, or even gives the impression of certain similarity between parliamentary and presidential election, the author of this article uses the terms *Prime Ministerialization* (Dowding, 2013) and *presidentialization* (Poguntke & Webb, 2005) as synonyms of centralized personalization.

## METHODOLOGY

The aim of this article is to investigate the degree of susceptibility of certain components of Polish political regime on centralized personalization in the election to the Sejm<sup>2</sup>. To achieve this goal, the following two questions must be answered:

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<sup>1</sup> The categories of "election leader" or *spitzenkandidaten* are semantically wider than "party leader". They include not only party leaders but also other politicians who act as candidates for the Prime Minister during the election.

<sup>2</sup> The subject of this analysis was not parliamentary election as a whole, but only the election for the Sejm. Polish Constitution does not ascribe to the Senate such powers as introducing the vote of confidence or non-confidence towards the Council of Ministers (Art. 154–160).

- 1) What is the impact of certain components of political regime on centralized personalization in the election to the Sejm?
- 2) To what degree the political system of Poland as a whole is susceptible to centralized personalization in the election to the Sejm?

The analysis will be conducted in units, representing different components of the political system of Poland (Table 1). The six variables were chosen intentionally and classified according to the criterion of their impact on the process of presidentialization. Such a catalog was worked out on the basis of both the research conducted in numerous democratic countries and the specificity of Polish regime. This led to the conclusion that two out of six variables, that is, the constitutional position of the Prime Minister and the election system, mainly influence the level of personalization, and as a result, they were placed high in the scale of the systemic determinants as a whole. First of all, *Prime Ministerialization* applies to the rivalry of *spitzenkandidaten*, in which the highest prize for the leader of the winning party is the Prime Minister's office. Therefore, there is a direct relationship between the range of actual authority of the head of the government and the level of presidentialization of the parliamentary election. Secondly, the election system makes a key determinant for the party system. Providing the regulations are directed towards the creation of two-party settlement, the level of centralized personalization is likely to be higher.

**Table 1.** The Conceptualization of Certain Components of Political System

Components of the political system in Poland	Indicators	Scale
1. The position of Prime Minister	1.1. Prime Minister as a separate executive subject 1.2. The dominant position in the government	0 – 2
2. Electoral system	2.1. The method of determining the result of election favorable for big parties 2.2. Small constituencies 2.3. Model list – focus on the leader during the campaign	0 – 2
3. The competence and creation of the head of state	3.1. Representative competence 3.2. Indirect voting, through the parliament	0 – 1
4. The financing of political parties	4.1. Financing the parties from the national budget	0 – 1
5. Electoral advertisement	5.1. Paid commercials 5.2. Billboards	0 – 1
6. The role of the mass media	6.1. Strong position of the mass media 6.2. Weak position of the mass media	0 – 1

Source: author's own work.

The measurement of particular indicators was based on the scale proposed by Downey and Stanyer (2010), to which one additional point was added. The values were presented in the 0–1 scale, where 0 indicated lowest level (no adherence) and 1 – full membership to the set. When fewer arguments spoke for the affiliation of a given indicator, it gained 0,3 points. In an opposite case, the value ascribed was 0,7. In case of balance, the assessment was 0,5. Due to the key significance of the factors relating to the Prime Minister's position in the political system and the preconditions of the latter, the value of the indicators in this subject are doubled (Table 1), which is particularly relevant for the second question posed in this study.

All the systemic factors subjected to the analysis were assessed in the scale from 0 to 8. To clearly present the level of susceptibility of systemic preconditions to centralized personalization, five-degree gradation was introduced. The level of susceptibility will be determined by the achieved value of quantitative indicator (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Operationalization of the Level of Systemic Preconditions on Centralized Personalization

Value of all the indicators	Degree of susceptibility
0 – 1,7	Very weak
1,8 – 3,5	Weak
3,6 – 5,3	Average
5,4 – 6,3	High
6,4 – 8,0	Very high

Source: author's own work.

The method applied in this research process is the quantitative-qualitative content analysis. It is worth highlighting that the concept of content here concerns three different areas. The first one are normative acts. What was investigated here were the acts whose norms significantly influence the level of centralized personalization. These include the Polish Constitution (2 April 1997), the Election Code (5 January 1997), and the Broadcasting Act (29 December 1992). Also, the jurisdiction of the Constitutional Tribunal was mentioned. The second include the results of the research reports of both the National Broadcasting Council and the Stefan Batory Foundation, which present the results of quantitative analysis concerning the content of television programs as well as the timing and expenses on television advertisement. Thirdly, there are the results of and conclusions from the studies published in chosen monographs and scientific articles.

## THE POSITION OF THE PRIME MINISTER IN POLISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

The political system of Poland cannot be unequivocally classified as one specific model, since the solutions provided by the Constitution derive from three different models: parliamentary-cabinet, chancellor, or semipresidential (Glajcar, 2015). Despite its hybrid character, there are no doubts that Polish political system should be regarded as parliamentary one. First of all, the government is a collective body. Secondly, the cabinet is given the vote of confidence by the more important house of parliament. Thirdly, the position of government depends on the distribution of forces in the Sejm (Lijphart, 1994).

What is important for the competences of the Prime Minister and, in consequence, for the level of presidentialization of parliamentary campaign, is the dualistic character of the executive. According to Art. 2 paragraph 10 of the Constitution, the subjects responsible for the executive power in Poland are the President and the Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister, then, is not regarded as a separate subject of executive, but rather as a component of the government, which is confirmed by Art. 147 para. 1 of the Constitution.

Nevertheless, the position of the Prime Minister is dominant. This is mostly due to five factors. First of all, Art. 148 of the Polish Constitution is entirely devoted to the function of the Prime Minister. This particular article enumerates the competences reserved for the head of the cabinet, including representing the cabinet, controlling its work, performing and specifying the manner of performing the government policy<sup>3</sup>, that is, coordination and control of the governmental activity. Secondly, the Prime Minister decides of the composition of the government. Thirdly, the dismissal of the Prime Minister causes the dismissal of the entire cabinet, regardless of the cause mentioned in Art. 162 para. 2 of the Constitution. Furthermore, the vote of non-confidence in Poland is constructive, which means that at the moment such a motion is submitted, the name of the

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<sup>3</sup> At this point it is worth to mention the competence disagreement between the Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Lech Kaczyński. The battleground was the assignation of the subject that establishes the side and represents Poland during the sessions of the Council of Europe. The disagreement was arbitrated by the Constitutional Court on 20 May 2009. The fourth point of its decision stated that the Council of Ministers establishes the side of the Republic of Poland on the session of the Council of Europe and the Prime Minister represents the country during the session and presents its side. The third point says that the participation of the President in the session of the Council of Europe requires cooperation with the Prime Minister and a proper minister.

new candidate for the office must be publicly known. Provided that the vote of non-confidence is given (that is, the half of the members of parliament support the motion), the candidate is automatically appointed the Prime Minister (Art. 158). As regards the chancellor system, the legislator implemented only part of the typical solutions. This can be exemplified by the fact that according to Art. 65 of the German Constitution, only the chancellor has the right to dismiss the head of a resort. Polish Constitution, however, allows the Sejm to give the vote of non-confidence to a minister (Art. 159), which is still unlikely taking into consideration stable majority in the government.

To summarize, the office of Prime Minister is filled indirectly, and his or her position depends most of all on the distribution of seats in the Sejm. It does not constitute a separate subject of executive, but rather a component of the Council of Ministers. Nevertheless, its importance in the structure of government is unquestionably dominant. This leads to the conclusion that one of the analyzed factors is observed in Polish constitutional ground. It is worth reminding, however, that due to the significance of the systemic regulations, the measurement of the position of the Prime Minister are double counted. For this reason, the total value of the indicators relating to the position of the Prime Minister in Polish regime amounts to 1.

### ELECTORAL SYSTEM IN THE ELECTION TO POLISH SEJM

The rules governing political rivalry are key for the phenomenon of presidentialization of electoral campaign. The closer the system is to the two-party one, the higher is the level of centralized presidentialization. What favors such patterns of interaction between parties are strong electoral systems, that is, majority and “proportional contaminated” (Nohlen, 2004) systems. In such conditions the winning party is more likely to get the absolute majority and it is easier for its leader to become the Prime Minister. For this reason, a higher level of polarization implicates the growing concentration on the rivalry of *spitzenkandidaten* for the head of government office.

Polish legislation does not provide such institution as a “candidate for the Prime Minister” and parliamentary elections aim mostly at choosing the members of the Sejm and Senate. The election to the Sejm, that is the only house of parliament that participates in the creation of the government, are proportional,

which is specified by Art. 96 para. 2 of the Constitution. Neither the Ordination to Sejm and Senate of 23 April 2001 nor the Election Code of 5 January 2011 does not significantly “contaminate” the rule of proportionality, due to which the electoral system in Poland ought to be classified as weak.

The analysis of the provisions of the Election Code leads to the conclusion that the only factors that contribute to the effective reduction in the number of parties are electoral threshold (5% for political parties and 8% for coalition committees; Art. 196) as well as the application of d’Hondt method, which favors the subjects that can boast the higher support (Art. 232 para. 1).

Other components of the electoral system promote the shaping of a moderate multi-party system. This thesis most of all applies to the issue of relatively big constituencies. According to the attachment 1 to the Election Code, the country is divided into 41 constituencies, in which the mandates are divided among the authorized committees. This means that in an average constituency 11,2 members of parliament are elected, and the natural threshold in such a constituency amounts to 8,33. In this manner, the committees with average support can win a relatively large number of mandates. In none of the elections investigated in this article the national list of candidates was used. What is worth highlighting, the presence of this institution in elections in the 1990s had a little contribution in the reduction in the number of parties.

One of the factors that reduce the level of presidentialization is the character of electoral lists. In all the elections under analysis the lists were “semi-open” (Nohlen, 2004). As a result, individual candidates focus on the parliamentary mandate rather than on supporting the party leader (Mazur, 2014).

The impact of the rules that govern the system of elections to the Sejm on the decrease in the effective number of political parties is minimal, which gives the effective ground for the moderate multi-party system. What can support this thesis are such factors as the lack of “candidate for the Prime Minister” institution, proportional electoral formula based on relatively large constituencies, and the type of electoral lists. As regards the factor that may increase the level of centralized presidentialization, they include the method of calculating the outcome of elections and the statutory election threshold for parties and coalitions. This leads to the conclusion that the structure of Polish election system does not promote the phenomenon of *Prime Ministerialization*. Therefore, the implication of the electoral system on presidentialization ought to be counted as 0,3. Due to the key significance, the final grade of this group amounts to 0,6.



COMPETENCES AND CREATION OF THE HEAD  
OF STATE OFFICE

The hybrid character of Polish parliamentarism seems to be determined by the model of presidency proposed by the Constitution. It combines the features of the head of state typical of the parliamentary-cabinet system and the semi-presidential one. Therefore, for certain competencies of the President go far beyond his or her representative duties, the character of presidency in Poland can be described as “corrective” (Wojtasik, 2012). The strongest of the presidential authorities include the legislative veto (Art. 122 para. 5), which can be overridden only by the qualified majority of three fifths of votes in the presence of at least half of the members of Sejm. This prerogative can put limits on the political plans of the Prime Minister and his or her cabinet.

In Poland, the role of the President correlates with the position of the Prime Minister. It is also liable to other contextual factors, including the situation in the Sejm. It increases in case of certain fragmentation in this house of parliament and decreases when the majority in the Sejm is stable. The President’s position is stronger in periods of cohabitation, and weakens when the Prime Minister derives from the same political camp. Furthermore, the President’s activity on the political scene grows in the second term of office, as due to the impossibility of another reelection, his or her behavior becomes more independent from the public preferences.

What is important for the level of centralized presidentialization of the elections to the Sejm are the regulations concerning the choice of the head of state (Art. 126). Common and indirect character of the presidential elections results in their greater social popularity. First of all, the vote for the office of the President is by definition more personalized and, for this reason, more attractive for the public opinion. Secondly, there are usually several candidates running for this office, while in parliamentary election participate thousands of people. As a result, the voters have a bigger chance to remember the names of candidates, which is particularly visible in the second turn, where there are only two candidates. Thirdly, the process of choosing the winner is far less complicated in case of the presidential election.

The manner of creation of the head of state present in Poland limits the level of centralized presidentialization. What is worth highlighting is that a certain social and medial need to make parliamentary election more presidential-like increases in the regimes that lack common and direct election for the head of

state. Taking into consideration also the fact that the competencies of the Polish President clearly exceed representative functions, the conclusion is that these factors negatively influence the level of presidentialization of the election to the Sejm, and the grade here is 0.

## THE FINANCING OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The regulations present in the Polish electoral system favor the creation of multi-party relations. What limits the chances of organizations that are beyond the parliament to introduce their representatives into the Sejm are the rules of political parties financing. The means deriving from election subsidies constitute the main source of financing of Polish political parties (Skotnicki, 2016). After the novelization of the Act on Political Parties in 2001, the subsidies from the national budget are dedicated to those parties and coalitions whose support amounts to 3% and 6%, respectively (Art. 28 para. 1), which causes certain stability of the party system, as the subjects that get this kind of support are more likely to achieve their political goals. Obviously, the budget amount has a large impact on the performance during the election. Therefore, the major parties can afford more expensive campaigns, which contributes to the polarization of the spectrum of political rivalry.

Paradoxically, the possibility for the parties to get budget subsidies increased the position of their leaders. What is worth highlighting, the statuses of political organizations predominantly entrust the tasks related to the elections to collective bodies. These same documents, however, place the leaders in the main position within the organization. Therefore, in practice the decision-making competences are usually ascribed to the leaders or the elite gathered around the leaders (Matyja, 2018).

In conclusion, Polish parties are forbidden to obtain financial means from legal persons, which could be beneficial for the majority of political organizations. The budget subsidies strongly influenced the increase in the level of institutionalization of the Polish party system. Simultaneously, they strengthened the role of political leaders within their own parties. For these reasons, the impact of parties financing system on centralized personalization ought to be measured as 1.

## ELECTION ADVERTISING

The possibility to broadcast paid television advertisement is one of the factors that increase the level of presidentialization. Campaign committees can apply this technique due to the regulations of the Electoral Code (Art. 119) and the Broadcasting Act of 29 December 1992 (Art. 16–20). In numerous European countries, including France, Belgium or Great Britain, the law forbids the use of paid advertisement by political subject (Holtz-Bacha, 2017). In Poland such restrictions were regarded as unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court on 20 July 2011.

Since television advertisement is a relatively short message, it frequently uses personal symbols. The costs of producing and broadcasting often exceed the possibilities of the minor parties, which may increase the polarized character of the election. This thesis is confirmed by the data of the National Broadcasting Council (2011; 2015), which clearly show that the two major parties spent the largest amount of money on the airtime.

A similar conclusion can be also drawn in the aspect of applying billboards in the election campaigns. First of all, due to large costs, only the richest political subjects can afford this kind of promotion. Secondly, certain communication restrictions forces the senders of such a message to use symbolic forms, out of which personal symbols are the most common.

The above-mentioned issues allow to conclude that the use of paid television advertisement as well as billboards increase “more presidential image” of parliamentary campaigns. For this reason, the influence of these two components on centralized presidentialization are given the value 1.

## THE ROLE OF THE MASS MEDIA

Another important aspect that needs to be paid attention to is the strong position of the public broadcasters, the Polish Radio and the Polish Television, on the radio and television market. The activity of the public media is largely financed from the subscription. Both the Polish Radio and the Polish Television, by the regulation of the Election Code (Art. 225), are obliged to broadcast free electoral programs. This form of message can be used by political subjects who registered their candidate in at least half of the constituencies (Art. 252 para. 1). As regards

the rivalry between the party leaders, they participate in national debates that need to be organized by the public broadcaster (Election Code, Art. 120 para. 1)<sup>4</sup>.

What is particularly important for the level of presidentialization of electoral campaign are the regulations concerning the reporting of the course of campaign in the information services, especially by the public broadcasters. The fact that the public, not private, stations are legally obliged to “treat equally all the participants of the electoral rivalry” derives from Art. 23 para. 1 of the Broadcasting Act. However, the minimal amount of the airtime that should be devoted to a particular committee is not specified. The statistics presented by the Stefan Batory Foundation (2011) and the National Broadcasting Council (2015) show that the public media devoted more space to minor political subjects than the private broadcasters.

This allows a statement that the level of presidentialization in media reports is higher in the public media than in the private ones. It is worth reminding that the latter need to take into account commercial criteria in their work, which determines particular care for viewership. For that reason, often the message focus on the two major parties and, in consequence, exposes the presidential aspect of the parliamentary campaign.

Therefore, it seems legitimate to state that the relation between public (TVP) and private sectors (TVN and Polsat) of the Polish media market is relatively balanced. What is worth highlighting, the public broadcasters ought to be considered as strong subjects, mostly due to the regulations of certain normative acts and the subsidies. In the context of the impact of the general situation on presidentialization, it is marked as 0,5.

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to answer two questions: (1) What is the impact of certain components of political regime on centralized personalization in the election to the Sejm? (2) To what degree the political system of Poland as a whole is susceptible to centralized personalization in the election to the Sejm?

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<sup>4</sup> What is interesting, in 2015 the debate was attended by the leaders of all eight committees and its course had a large impact on the result of the election (Klepka, 2018). However, it is difficult to predict whether participation of leaders in such events would become a tradition, or, more likely, whether it would be determined by the context of particular election.

The investigation of the susceptibility of Polish systemic preconditions to centralized presidentialization lead to the conclusion that the power of the Prime Minister in Poland is weaker than in primeministerial or presidential models. This is caused not only by the regulations of the Constitution, but also by the rules governing the parliamentary and presidential elections as well as the prerogatives of the head of state. There is a strong possibility of a multi-party arrangement in the Sejm and the necessity of coalition of two or more parties. What follows is that the scope of the Prime Minister's authority is likely to be limited by the collegiate form of government, opposite fractions within its own party, the coalition's business and the threat of presidential veto, which is probable in such a cohabitation situation. The head of state, having the tool of veto, can informally influence not only the shape of the cabinet's policy implementation, but also its content. It must be remembered that due to common and direct character of presidential election in Poland, the legitimization of the head of state is much stronger than that of the Prime Minister, which in turn has a strong impact on the level of centralized personalization of the election to the Sejm. The fact that the President is chosen in direct voting, decreases the social anticipation of making parliamentary election more "presidential-like".

**Table 3.** The Outcome of the Research Process

Factor	Indicator	*WW	Grade	Weight	Final grade
1. The position of the Prime Minister in the political system	1.1. Prime Minister as a separate subject of executive	No	0,5	2	1,0
	1.2. Dominant position in the government	Yes			
2. Electoral system to the Sejm	2.1. The method of determining the result of the election beneficial for major parties	Yes	0,3	2	0,6
	2.2. Small constituencies	No			
	2.3. Model of electoral lists – focus on the leader during the campaign	No			
3. Competences and election of the head of state	3.1. Representative competences	No	0	1	0,0
	3.2. Indirect election, by parliament	No			
4. Financing of political parties	4.1. Financing from the budget	Yes	1	1	1,0

Factor	Indicator	*WW	Grade	Weight	Final grade
5. Electoral advertisement	5.1. Paid television spots	Yes	1	1	1,0
	5.2. Billboards	Yes			
6. The role of the mass media	6.1 Strong position of commercial media	Yes	0,5	1	0,5
	6.2 Weak position of the public media	No			
Final grade:					4,1

\*WW – indicator occurrence [Polish: występowanie wskaźnika]

Source: author's own work.

As results from the content of the above table, the level of the susceptibility of Polish systemic preconditions to centralized personalization can be increased by such factors as financing the political parties and the possibility to use of paid electoral advertisement. Also the regulations present in the Broadcasting Act may positively influence the level of presidentialization. All the aforesaid contributors effected in the final grade 4,1, which lets to assess the systemic preconditions of the Polish system as moderately susceptible to presidentialization of the parliamentary election (Table 2).

Last but not least, it is good to mention that the position of the Prime Minister strongly depends on his or her personality, in particular the ability to dominate the President and coalition partner or partners, as well as reducing the competition within the party. The case of Donald Tusk in the years 2010–2014 shows that the scope of power of the Polish Prime Minister can be “chancellorship-like indeed” (Matyja, 2013). His supremacy within the party as well as in the government and unquestionable domination over Jarosław Kaczyński as the leader of the main opposing party resulted in the “highly presidential” character of the 2011 parliamentary campaign (FB Report, 2011). Still, the personal attributes and statutory position of the *spitzenkandidaten* can be qualified as systemic regulations, and for this reason they could not be taken into consideration in this study.

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