4. A case-based, configurational, and time-sensitive research design for studying government formation with radical right parties

This chapter outlines the research design of this study. It first discusses the research designs found in previous studies of government formation and then elaborates on this project's case-oriented, configurational approach using QCA. After introducing the method, it goes on to develop an analytical model and to advance the hypotheses that guide the comparative analysis. The final section of this chapter addresses the operationalisation of the explanatory conditions and the outcome.

4.1 Research designs in the study of government formation

In addition to the theories of coalition formation, this research field has also developed certain traditions with regard to research design. Müller, Bergman, and Strøm (2008, 33–35) introduce a classification that builds on a distinction between complete and parsimonious theoretical approaches and intensive and extensive empirical designs. A very common research design for studying government formation combines a complete theoretical approach with empirical extensiveness or, in other words, uses a large variety of theories to explain the outcome of coalition formation in a large number of cases. These designs usually apply statistical methods (Warwick 1996; Martin and Stevenson 2001; Mitchell and Nyblade 2008; Döring and Hellström 2013; Bergman, Ersson, and Hellström 2015; Savage 2016). The combination of a parsimonious theoretical model with an extensive empirical design is somewhat less prominent. This strategy is particularly suited for investigating the influence of one, or a few, explanatory factors in a large number of cases. The classic game-theoretical works (Axelrod 1970; de Swaan 1973), and recent studies on the impact of electoral success, ideology, organisational structure, and incumbency on government participation (Mattila and Raunio 2004; Tavits 2008b; Martin and Stevenson 2010; Savage 2014) fall into this category, for instance. Such designs are usually also a domain of statistical methods.

The second common strategy for studying government formation uses (comparative) case studies to provide a comprehensive explanation of government formation in an individual case or a specific country over a certain period of time (Müller and Strøm 2000b; Kropp, Schüttemeyer, and Sturm 2002a; Bergman, Ilonszki, and Müller 2019a). These studies thus combine an intensive empirical design with a complete theoretical approach and use qualitative methods, such as process tracing. Quite often, such studies do not stand alone, but are published in edited volumes that apply a standard analytical framework across all cases in order to provide a cross-national summary of the results. These works make an invaluable contribution to the research field as they generate and compile consistent cross-national data and provide rich explanations of government formation in individual countries. In their cross-national analysis, however, this literature remains predominantly descriptive, leaving the investigation of causal relations and mechanisms to future research. The fourth and final research design in this typology combines an intensive case-oriented empirical design with a narrow theoretical focus, but authors use this strategy relatively rarely (Juul Christiansen and Brun Pedersen 2012).

Thus, research on government formation reflects the gap between qualitative case-oriented and quantitative variable-oriented research that exists in comparative social science research more broadly (Ragin 1989; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Brady and Collier 2004). Choosing between a qualitative or quantitative approach entails a trade-off between analytical depth and generalisable results (Gerring 2017, chap. 11). With 48 cases where radical right parties could have possibly participated in government, the present study falls into the lower end of extensive empirical designs, which usually use statistical methods. However, the primary goal of this study is to identify different patterns, or configurations, of factors that explain the participation of radical right parties in government. It is thus more interested in the complex interaction of explanatory factors and less in the probabilistic effects of individual variables. For this reason, this study seeks to apply a configurational case-oriented research design despite a medium number of cases (Müller, Bergman, and Strøm 2008, 34).

4.2 Analysing government formation with QCA

This project uses QCA as a method, because it was specifically developed for configurational case-oriented and medium-N research designs. In the subtitle of his seminal introductory volume on QCA, Charles C. Ragin describes his motivation for developing this method as "moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies" (Ragin 1989). In the context of ongoing methodological controversies between qualitative and quantitative research in comparative politics and social science (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Brady and Collier 2004; Gerring 2017), Ragin attempted

to find a middle ground between the generalisability of quantitative research and the thick, case-specific explanations typical of qualitative studies by developing a method for medium-N research (Ragin 1989, vii–ix; see also Ragin 2000, chap. 1). He explicitly intended to integrate "the best features of the case-oriented approach with the best features of the variable-oriented approach" (Ragin 1989, 84). The extent to which he achieved this goal is still a matter of debate, however (Seawright 2005; Jacobs 2009; Rihoux and Lobe 2009; Rihoux 2013).

Despite these methodological discussions, it is true that QCA combines at least some of the advantages of both approaches. As in quantitative methods, it reduces complexity and increases the replicability of research findings by reducing cases to a combination of factors, which can then be subjected to a reproduceable, comparative analysis of causal relationships. As with qualitative methods, QCA examines specific configurations of factors instead of probabilistic effects of individual variables. Therefore, the method is better able to account for causal complexity and the interactions between different explanatory factors in the respective case (Rihoux 2009, 367).[1] This capacity makes QCA the method of choice in this study. Its case-based approach is particularly well suited for evaluating hypotheses which entail complex interactions of various explanatory factors.

When compared to small-N or large-N research, studies with an intermediate number of cases make up only a very small part of social science research (Ragin 2000, 24–26). The possibility of reducing complexity and retaining the configurational character of the individual cases enables QCA to conduct a comparative analysis of complex causal relationships in more than a handful of cases. However, the presence of a medium number of cases is not the only reason for selecting this method. In her study of government participation of radical right parties in Western Europe, which includes a similar number of cases as this study, de Lange (2008) demonstrates that this phenomenon can also be investigated using a primarily quantitative-statistical methodology. Hence, this project's case-oriented approach also favours the selection of QCA because it employs configurational set-theoretic methods which are more appropriate than quantitative methods focused on probabilistic effects to test hypotheses in cases which exhibit high levels of causal complexity.

QCA has evolved significantly and become more diverse since its introduction in the late 1980s; therefore, choosing QCA also requires the selection of a specific methodological variant (Rohlfing 2019). Most importantly, it is necessary to determine whether the original crisp-set QCA (csQCA) (Ragin 1989), fuzzy-set QCA

1 Statistical methods can also account for more complex causal relations, for instance by analysing interaction effects. It has been demonstrated, however, that they reach their limits when interactions of more than two variables are involved (Braumoeller 2003, in Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 297).

(fsQCA) (Ragin 2000, 2008) or multi-value QCA (mvQCA) (Cronqvist 2004; Cronqvist and Berg-Schlosser 2009) applies best to the project's research questions.[2] Crisp set QCA works with dichotomous concepts, meaning that conditions or outcomes can be either present or absent. Fuzzy-set QCA and mvQCA allow for a richer and more fine-grained representation of concepts. Multi-value QCA is not an option in this study because it was developed specifically for multinomial concepts, which do not apply to any of the relevant conditions here. The choice is thus between fuzzy and crisp sets. Schneider and Wagemann (2012, 277) argue that fuzzy sets are preferable to crisp sets whenever possible as they enable researchers to capture the complexity and gradual nature of social reality with a lower loss of information and because they place higher demands on the parameters of fit (see below for further discussion of parameters of fit). Rohlfing (2020) shows, however, that the latter is not always true, but depends on actual empirical observations. He also points out that the choice should be based on "the research interest in set relations between differences in kind (crisp) as opposed to differences in degree (fuzzy)" (Rohlfing 2020, 86). While dichotomous explanatory factors can be integrated into fsQCA without great difficulty, the inclusion of a dichotomous outcome is more problematic (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 277). As this study examines the participation of radical right parties in government, which is a dichotomous rather than a gradual concept, it opts for csQCA despite the continuous nature of several explanatory factors.[3] Therefore, when this study refers to QCA in general, it refers to csQCA unless explicitly stated otherwise.

4.2.1 QCA as a set-theoretic method

QCA gains analytical traction from its ability to analyse causal relationships between necessary and sufficient conditions and the outcome in question. A condition is necessary if the condition is a superset of the outcome or, in other words, a set relation of necessity exists "if, whenever the outcome is present, the condition is also present" (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 329). A sufficient condition exists, in turn, "if whenever the condition is present, the outcome is also present" or the condition is a subset of the outcome (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 333).

2 The differences in the methodological foundations of the respective methods, such as the difference between crisp and fuzzy sets and the corresponding algebras, will not be discussed here (for a detailed methodological discussion, see Ragin 2000, 2008; Schneider and Wagemann 2012).

3 It is not impossible to calibrate the outcome as a fuzzy set (Fagerholm 2021), so a supplementary fsQCA has been carried out as part of the robustness check (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, chap. 11.2). This analysis yields similar results to the csQCA, albeit with lower coverage scores (see Appendix I).

Set-theoretic methods are well-suited for analysing complex causal relations, since they are able to reveal, and account for, the fact that an outcome is not always caused by the same condition(s). More precisely, set-theoretic methods are able to capture three aspects of causal complexity (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 76–82; see also Ragin 1989, chap. 2; Ragin 2000, chap. 4). The first one is precisely the notion that an outcome can have different causes, also referred to as equifinality. Second, they are particularly suitable for studying conjunctural causality, which is the assumption that an interaction between different factors can lead to a particular outcome. And third, they can account for asymmetric causality, which means that either the presence, or the absence, of a certain condition can cause the outcome, depending on the other factors that occur in combination with it.

As indicated in the discussion of the empirical model and the hypotheses, all three aspects of complex causality play an important role in the context of this study. There is, for instance, the assumption that different configurations of conditions explain why radical right parties are included in, or excluded from, government based on different temporal, or regional, contexts. Furthermore, the discussion so far suggests that it is rather unrealistic to believe that one individual factor can adequately explain the government participation of radical right parties. This analysis also expects to find examples of asymmetric causality, at least in some conditions. For instance, both small and large seat shares could lead to government participation of radical right parties depending on other pertinent factors.

INUS conditions are particularly important when investigating complex causality with QCA. The acronym INUS stands for an "insufficient but necessary part of a condition which is itself unnecessary but sufficient for the result" (Mackie 1974, in Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 79). An INUS condition is therefore by itself neither necessary nor sufficient for explaining an outcome, but it is an indispensable part of a combination of factors that together constitute a sufficient condition. Hypotheses 2a provides a good example of INUS conditions (see below). It posits that radical right parties should participate in government if they are on the same side as the formateur in a party system characterised by bipolar opposition and/or if their socio-economic and socio-cultural positions are proximate to the formateur. Socio-economic and socio-cultural proximity are conceptualised as INUS conditions. The hypothesis proposes that only their joint occurrence should cause the outcome, which implies that individually, each condition is insufficient. Moreover, neither of them, nor their joint occurrence alone, is hypothesised to be a necessary condition for government participation, because, in party systems characterised by bipolar opposition, the outcome could also occur regardless of whether radical right parties' socio-economic and socio-cultural positions are proximate to the formateur. Thus, according to this hypothesis, neither of the three conditions must be present in all sufficient explanations for the government participation of radical right parties.

4.2.2 QCA in three steps

An empirical study with QCA can be divided into three main steps: 1) case selection and model building, 2) data analysis, often referred to as the analytical moment, and 3) interpretation of results (Rihoux and Lobe 2009). Good practice in QCA dictates that the researcher should carry out two separate analyses—one for the outcome and one for its negation (Schneider and Wagemann 2010). This two-staged process results from QCA's sensitivity to asymmetric causal relationships, according to which the absence of a condition does not automatically lead to the non-occurrence of the outcome, when the presence of that condition contributes to its occurrence (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 81–83). In practice, QCA thus implements the three analytical steps, in particular step two and three, with regard to the outcome and its negation.[4]

Step 1: Case selection and model building

The first step is to familiarise oneself with the cases, and the theoretical literature, relevant to the research question. A deep understanding is particularly important in exploratory research designs. Research designs based on a diverse case selection also require a high level of familiarity with the cases because the investigator must select the ones that represent as many configurations of conditions as possible (Seawright and Gerring 2008; Gerring 2017). QCA practitioners emphasise that the method is not only a technique for data analysis, but also a specific research approach that requires an intensive dialogue between theories, concepts, and empirical evidence. Hence, developing an analytical model may include rejecting the initial model specifications on the basis of empirical evidence or rethinking the operationalisation of individual explanatory factors (Rihoux and Lobe 2009, 230–33; Ragin 1989, chap. 9; Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 10–12).

Model building in QCA requires paying particular attention to the number of cases and conditions. Crisp-set QCA, in particular, has been criticised for generating explanatory models from random datasets (Marx 2010, 139–41). Marx (2010) shows, however, that this problem only exists if the proportion of cases to conditions is too high. His results indicate that a valid model in a QCA including 14 cases, such as the analysis of the period before the first third-generation elections in this study, should not contain more than five conditions. In an analysis of 34 cases, such as the one related to the consolidating decades, the model can include up to six conditions, which he also identifies as the maximum in small-to-medium-N research (Marx 2010, 149–52, esp. Table 5). Moreover, limiting the number of explanatory conditions ensures that the researcher knows the cases well enough to interpret the re-

4 For an overview of the methodological foundations and the practical application of QCA, see e.g. Schneider and Wagemann (2012) or Mello (2021).

sults in a meaningful way—particularly the causal mechanisms behind the configuration of conditions in the solution paths (Mello 2021, 30). QCA practitioners have developed different approaches for reducing the number of conditions (Mello 2021, 31–34): For example, based on prior theoretical consideration, researchers can apply the same analytical model throughout the entirety of the analysis. They may also use different analytical models, either in order to test rival theories or to explore the explanatory power of several sets of conditions. If explanatory conditions can be distinguished according to their levels of causal proximity to the outcome, it is possible to conduct a two-step analysis of remote and proximate conditions (see also Schneider and Wagemann 2006; Schneider 2019). This study follows the first approach and develops a single model that will be applied to both periods under investigation. This model will include the most promising theories to explain why Central and Eastern European radical right parties enter government or remain in opposition based on the discussion in Chapter 3.

Step 2: Software-assisted analysis of necessary and sufficient conditions

The second step of a QCA is the computer-assisted data analysis. It begins with the creation of a data matrix that summarises the set membership of all cases in all conditions and the outcome. This process is also referred to as the calibration of cases (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 32). Here, the researcher defines the so-called "threshold of indifference" which marks the crossover point between set membership and non-membership (Rihoux and Lobe 2009, 233) and assigns the cases' set membership—or non-membership. This decision can be based on objective facts, theoretical concepts, and/or empirical evidence collected as part of the research process (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 32). The dataset can then be presented in a truth table, where each row displays one of the theoretically possible combinations of the binary conditions. By allocating the cases to the corresponding rows, the truth table also reveals which of the possible configurations of explanatory factors have been empirically observed and which have not (Ragin 1989, 87–89; Rihoux and Lobe 2009, 233–34; Schneider and Wagemann 2012, chap. 4; for an illustration, see Table 9.2).

QCA proceeds with separate analyses of necessary and sufficient conditions with the help of appropriate software, such as fsQCA (Ragin and Davey 2016) or the QCA package for R (Duşa 2019). While the analysis of necessity focuses primarily on the individual conditions, the analysis of sufficiency usually generates several solution paths, each of which can include more than one explanatory condition. When analysing necessary and sufficient conditions, QCA researchers use three parameters of fit, namely the measures of consistency, coverage, and relevance of necessity (RoN) (Ragin 2006; Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 233–38). Consistency indicates the degree to which there is a perfect set relation between the outcome and a necessary or sufficient condition. It thus provides a certain relaxation of the

deterministic nature of csQCA, which enables it to better deal with "noisy social science data" that does not always contain perfect set relations (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 117). The consistency value can range between 0 (no set relation) and 1 (perfect set relation). In order for a condition to qualify as necessary, its consistency should reach at least a value of 0.9 (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 143).

The coverage and RoN of necessary conditions determine whether a condition with a sufficiently high consistency score is analytically or trivially necessary (Ragin 2006, 302–3; Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 144–47). The coverage of sufficient conditions measures the proportion of the outcome that is explained by the respective sufficient condition or solution path. In the analysis of sufficient conditions, the aim is always to achieve the highest values for both parameters, but low coverage is less problematic than low consistency. Low coverage only indicates that there are other explanations for the outcome, whereas low consistency points at cases that contradict the theoretical assumptions of the analytical model (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, chaps. 5.2–5.3).

One of the main challenges in applied QCA is the problem of limited diversity. In almost every empirical study, theoretically possible configurations of explanatory factors go unobserved in the actual dataset. In QCA, limited diversity manifests itself in so-called logical remainders, or truth table rows that do not correspond with an empirical case. Schneider and Wagemann (2012, 155–75) describe different strategies for dealing with limited diversity. First, the analysis can be limited to only those configurations which represent empirically observed cases; therefore, the outcome of all logical remainders should be coded as 0. The disadvantage of this strategy is that it limits the possibilities for reducing the complexity in the solution. Alternatively, all logical remainders could be coded as 1 and thus be included in the minimisation. The disadvantage of this strategy is obviously that it generates a solution based on a large number of unobserved configurations. The third strategy takes a middle path. Here, the researcher includes a limited number of logical remainders in the analysis based on specific criteria, most importantly so-called directional expectations about the impact of certain conditions. If there are good theoretical reasons to believe that only the presence of a certain condition should relate to the outcome, and there is no initial empirical evidence to suggest otherwise, then only truth table rows in which this condition is present should be included in the minimisation.

The standard analysis procedure using the fsQCA software (Ragin and Davey 2016) performs three minimisations that generate different solution terms. The first one is the complex, or conservative, solution, which excludes all logical remainders. The second one is the parsimonious solution, which includes all logical remainders that reduce the complexity of the solution term. In a third step, an intermediate solution can be crafted based on the researcher's directional expectations (Ragin 2008, 173–75; Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 175–77; see also Ragin 2018). Schneider and Wagemann (2012, 198–219) point out, however, that the parsimonious solu-

tion generated by the software's standard analysis is often based on untenable assumptions about logical remainders. Therefore, they propose the (theory-guided) Enhanced Standard Analysis which modifies the procedure in several ways. They suggest that logical remainders should only be included in the minimisation if they do not contradict previous findings related to necessary conditions and if they do not contain combinations of factors that are impossible in the world as we know it.

Furthermore, it is important to note that all steps of the minimisation, including those leading to the conservative solution, are different ways of expressing the information contained in the truth table. Therefore, Schneider and Wagemann (2012, 107) highlight the researcher's discretion when choosing between different solution terms: "The principle that more than one solution term is an acceptable and logically correct representation of the data in the truth table is a general feature of QCA. The decision on which solution formula to choose as the basis for the substantive interpretation of the available information depends on many research-specific issues that have nothing to do with formal logic."

Step 3: Interpretation of results

The interpretation of results involves two main aspects: Relating the necessary and sufficient conditions to the empirical evidence in the individual cases and identifying cross-case patterns that allow for (limited) generalisations (Rihoux and Lobe 2009, 235–37; Schneider and Wagemann 2010, 2012, 280–81). Rihoux and Lobe (2009, 236) describe the case-based interpretation of results in QCA as follows: "each case is a 'black box', and the QCA minimal formula acts like a flashlight which indicates some precise spots to be looked at to better understand the outcome." The interpretation thus goes back to these illuminated spots and makes sense of the configuration in the solution formula.

Depending on the research design, it is possible either to illustrate the mechanisms behind the causal relations indicated by the solution term or to identify additional relevant conditions by looking at deviant cases (see also Schneider and Rohlfing 2013; Beach and Rohlfing 2018). The researcher can also interpret the results beyond individual cases, for instance by assessing a cluster of cases covered by a particular solution path in order to reveal what unites these cases and sets them apart from others. Solution paths can also be compared in terms of their relative weight, based on their individual coverage. Moreover, the interpretation can focus on the role of an individual condition, for instance, if it is present in multiple solution paths. However, the researcher must not ignore the configurational logic of QCA and should thus be careful not to discuss the impact of this condition independently from the configuration of the solution path(s) in which it occurs. Finally, of course, scholars may also make generalisations about the results based on the empirical evidence (Rihoux and Lobe 2009, 236; Schneider and Wagemann 2010).

4.3 Towards an analytical model

This section integrates the theoretical framework, the discussion of concepts and contexts, and the general remarks on the research design into an analytical model. The main objective is to identify those theories of coalition formation that help to explain the outcome of government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe and to draw out the connections between them in a meaningful way. The starting point for this endeavour is the existing knowledge on government formation with radical right parties in Western and, to a more limited extent, also in Central and Eastern Europe.

Research on the government participation of radical right parties in Western Europe has shown that, after an initial period of exclusion, mainstream parties came to regard these parties as "normal" coalition partners. Once they lost their pariah status, their participation in government could be explained with the help of office- and policy-related factors. The literature identifies the parliamentary seat share and the ideological proximity of radical right parties to the formateur, particularly regarding socio-cultural issues such as immigration, as decisive factors for explaining how they came to power. Moreover, the increasing polarisation in many Western European party systems, in part a result of the radical right's ascension, has further contributed to these parties' participation in government. In an environment characterised by polarised oppositions between two competing camps, conservative parties were often no longer able to form right-of-centre majority governments without cooperating with electorally successful radical right parties. Further, conservative mainstream parties' rightward shifts reduced their ideological distance from radical right parties, which eased cooperation from a policy-seeking perspective (Bale 2003; de Lange 2008, 2012).

The only study that addresses government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe provides some evidence that radical right parties' electoral successes and ideological preferences impact their inclusion in, or exclusion from, government. At the same time, however, these results highlight the need for further enquiry because they cover only a limited number of instances of government formation in the region (Fagerholm 2021). The model of party competition with the radical right in Central and Eastern Europe introduced in Chapter 1 also suggests that party-level electoral characteristics and policy preferences, as well as structure-level cultural factors and party system configurations, can affect the participation of radical right parties in government (Minkenberg et al. 2021; see Figure 1.1). Thus, it corresponds with literature on government formation, which also points to the relevance of these factors in Central and Eastern Europe (see Chapter 3, esp. Table 3.1).

The discussion of radical right parties and party systems shows that party competition functions similarly in Western and Central and Eastern Europe. Hence, the

basic argument of this study posits that, similar to Western Europe, government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe can be explained with the help of office- and policy-oriented theories, as well as the configuration of the party system. Despite this functional equivalence, however, there are certain features of the regional context that need to be taken into account, most notably in the early phase of the post-Communist transformation. This phase, in particular, is affected by the regime change and the triple transition, which entailed large-scale political and economic transformations and the recurrence of state- and nation-building. Likewise, party systems were more fluid and less institutionalised while party competition was less programmatic, although most parties developed an ideological core almost immediately after the fall of Communism. For this reason, the basic argument needs to be qualified with regard to three particular features of the early phase of the transformation: First, due to the salience of state- and nation-building immediately after 1989, Central and Eastern European radical right parties do not need to undergo a period of normalisation before they are considered as coalition partners. Second, the regime divide provides a powerful source of polarised opposition in post-Communist party systems. Third, in addition to the socio-cultural dimension, the socio-economic one is crucial for issue-based party competition because of the paramount role that economic reforms played in the context of the regime change.

4.3.1 Selecting the most promising explanatory conditions

Based on these preliminary considerations, this section presents the analytical model for studying government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe. The model focuses on the characteristics and preferences of radical right parties as well as the configuration of the party system. One of the main challenges here is to limit the total number of conditions in the model because of the configurational approach used in this study and the methodological requirements of QCA.

Characteristics and ideological preferences of radical right parties

Among the numerical and structural characteristics, the effect of electoral fortunes on radical right parties' participation in government has received substantial empirical support. The most decisive factor has been the size of a party's parliamentary group, referred to here as parliamentary strength. In the context of government formation, the number of legislative seats controlled by a party is more directly related to its participation in government than its vote share. Therefore, research on government formation generally uses the party's parliamentary, rather than its electoral, strength. Electoral gains and losses compared to the previous elections can also influence the outcome of government formation, but the parliamentary seat share has

a greater impact on government participation (de Lange 2008, 118–19; Döring and Hellström 2013; Fagerholm 2021). Therefore, the parliamentary strength of radical right parties is the only numerical characteristic at the party level that is included in the analytical model.

Other characteristics of radical right parties, such as their previous political experience, incumbency, and organisational structure, will not be included in the model. While the literature provides no empirical evidence for an impact of a parties' political experience on their participation in government in Central and Eastern Europe (Grotz and Weber 2011, 205–6; see also Savage 2016; Fagerholm 2021: Appendix D3), scholars have found that former ruling parties are at a disadvantage when it comes to government formation opportunities immediately after elections, while incumbency creates an advantage when new governments are formed during the course of a legislative session (Savage 2016, 524–28; see also Roberts 2008; Döring and Hellström 2013; Bergman, Ilonszki, and Müller 2019b). However, since the negative post-electoral incumbency effect is also reflected in the seat share of the radical right, this factor will not be included. The organisational structure of the radical right is excluded for a different reason. Here, missing empirical evidence results from a lack of reliable and comparative data on the internal structures of radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe, which cannot be obtained in this project either.

The literature discusses the impact of parties' ideological preferences on government formation in Central and Eastern Europe controversially. This study follows those who argue that ideology plays a crucial role in party competition and government formation in this region (Savage 2014; Fagerholm 2021). These works demonstrate that parties' ideological positions affect government formation in Central and Eastern Europe in general, and with radical right parties in particular, if the conceptualisation of the policy space pays attention to the regional context. Therefore, this study applies a two-dimensional conceptualisation of the policy space using separate socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions instead of the classic, unidimensional left-right dimension. Here, it diverges from Savage (2014) who constructs a single, country-specific left-right dimension based on issue salience. This project prefers the two-dimensional approach for two reasons: First, the socio-economic and socio-cultural divides are aligned in some countries but cross-cutting in others (see Chapter 2.2). Hence, separating the dimensions can account for cross-national variation more effectively than a single dimension. Second, an analysis which uses both the socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions generates more detailed in-

sights into party competition with radical right parties than studies focused on only one dimension (Spies and Franzmann 2011).[5]

Now that these general issues have been addressed, the discussion turns to selecting concrete ideology-based explanatory factors. Since Fidesz and PiS are not coded as radical right parties (see Chapter 2.1), all of the radical right parties in this study are junior coalition partners. Several studies demonstrate that ideological distance to the formateur is the best predictor of government participation for small parties, including the radical right (Bäck and Dumont 2008; de Lange 2008; Mattila and Raunio 2004). Therefore, the analytical model will include the ideological preferences of radical right parties using their socio-economic and socio-cultural distances to the formateur.[6]

The distance to the formateur is more relevant than distance to the median party, because despite its important ideological position, as a junior coalition partner the median party could lack real bargaining power. In Western Europe, the ideological distance of the radical right to the largest conservative, or Christian democratic, party can also provide information about their chances of participating in government, as these party families are their usual coalition partners (Bale 2003; de Lange 2008, 2012). The potential allies of radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe, however, can be found in a wide range of party families.

Context factors

The configuration of the party system, particularly the existence of bipolar opposition, can help radical right parties enter government (Bale 2003; de Lange 2008, 2012). Therefore, the model will include this factor to account for the ideological configuration of the party systems. Such a "bifurcation" of the party system is also related to the formation of minority governments in Central and Eastern Europe (Keudel-Kaiser 2014, 245–46). In the early transformation phase, bipolar opposition was usually rooted in the regime divide (Grzymała-Busse 2001; see also Beichelt 2001). By including bipolar opposition in the party system, the analytical model thus indirectly addresses the impact of the regime divide as well. Polarisation in the classic Sartorian sense is not included here, since the empirical evidence does not show that it is an influential factor for predicting radical right participation in Central and Eastern European government coalitions.

To account for the structural-numerical configuration of the party system, the analytical model includes the classic indicator of party system fragmentation. In

5 In his study on government formation with radical right and radical left parties, Fagerholm (2021, 263) also uses both dimensions, but he analyses only how socio-cultural issues relate to radical right parties and how socio-economic ones affect the radical left.

6 Radical right parties rarely occupy the median in a one- or multi-dimensional ideological space, so the median party theory does not apply (Laver and Schofield 1998).

Central and Eastern Europe, Grotz and Weber (2011, 202–3) find that fragmentation is a relevant explanatory factor when combined with the seat share of parties in parliament. Moreover, including a factor related to the structural-numerical dimension of party systems addresses party system fluidity in Central and Eastern Europe. Two-party electoral dominance also affects government formation in Central and Eastern Europe (Keudel-Kaiser 2014, 242–43). However, this factor is only present in five of the 48 cases covered by this study, so due to this low diversity, it is not included in the model.

In sum, this section identifies five factors that are most relevant for explaining the government participation of radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe. The first three, the parliamentary strength of radical right parties as well as their socio-cultural and socio-economic distance to the formateur, refer to the characteristics and ideological preferences of the radical right. The fragmentation and the existence of a bipolar opposition add two context factors at the level of the party system.

Supplementary analysis of the composition of coalitions

This project seeks to explain why radical right parties enter government or remain in opposition, so the primary unit of analysis is the radical right party, not the government as a whole. Nevertheless, the composition of coalitions will be used as a heuristic tool that contributes to a better, more comprehensive, understanding of government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe (de Lange 2012, 903). In order to do so, the analysis draws on established office- and policy-oriented, coalition-centred theories of government formation. Among the office-oriented theories, the theory of the minimal winning coalition (Riker [1962] 1984) is particularly useful for explaining the coalition format in Central and Eastern Europe. The analysis will thus take into account whether the government that formed was a minimal winning coalition, a minority government, or an oversized coalition. The assumptions that parties form coalitions with as few parties as possible (Leierson 1968, in de Swaan 1973) or with the lowest possible number of seats needed to control a parliamentary majority (Riker [1962] 1984) have been widely rejected across the continent. Hence, the analysis omits these two theories.

The classic policy-oriented coalition-centred theories of government formation have received limited empirical support in Central and Eastern Europe. This study argues, however, that this is largely the result of misconceptualising the policy space in Central and Eastern Europe. Therefore, it will use the minimal range theory in its open version (de Swaan 1973) and the minimal connected winning coalition theory (Axelrod 1970) in order to assess the ideological range of coalitions with radical right parties. The socio-economic and socio-cultural dimension will be examined separately.

4.3.2 Bringing the temporal dimension in

The last step in developing the analytical model concerns the temporal dimension. Time can affect political processes in many different ways, such as the duration and speed of processes or the timing of events (Grzymała-Busse 2011). The present study argues that the patterns of government formation change with growing temporal distance to the fall of Communism, because certain characteristics of the immediate post-Communist period, such as the fluidity of party systems or the impact of the regime divide, are in decline. Thus, temporality refers here to the duration of these processes of change. There are signs that Central and Eastern European party systems began stabilising around the turn of the millennium (Ágh 1998, 109–12; Toole 2000; Emanuele, Chiaramonte, and Soare 2020, 317). At that time, the influence of the regime divide on party politics was also declining in most countries.

Yet, instead of using the year 2000 as a fixed temporal threshold, the periodisation is based on the qualitative threshold of the first third-generation elections. Third-generation elections mark the point when two competing ideological camps, mostly parties from both sides of the regime divide, have governed a country (Pop-Eleches 2010, 236–38).[7] Pop-Eleches (2010) introduces the concept of election generations in an analysis of protest voting and the emergence of "unorthodox parties" in Central and Eastern Europe. He argues that participating in government results in voter dissatisfaction with ruling parties and, consequently, electoral losses that open a window of opportunity for new challengers. While this specific argument is of minor importance here, the underlying assumptions about structured party competition are relevant. Only after the first third-generation elections, the electorate is able to base their ballot decision on the actual track record of political parties and leaders from different camps and not merely on promises in manifestoes or electoral campaigns. The same applies to political parties, who also have a much better understanding about the behaviour and policy preferences of a competitor that has already participated in government. Hence, from the point of view of analysing structured party competition, the first third-generation elections mark a crucial stage of party system stabilisation.

In the countries covered by this study, the first third-generation elections were held around the year 2000 (see Table 4.1). Thus, the periodisation based on the qualitative threshold of the first third-generation elections reflects country-specific trajectories in the developments of party competition. At the same time, it ensures that the periodisation in all countries is similar enough to still enable a cross-national comparison. Moreover, the first third-generation elections also (roughly) coincide

7 The discussion of the configuration of the party systems in the case studies in Chapters 5 and 6 provides further details on the divisions and competing camps in the respective countries.

with the establishment of democracy and a market economy, at least at the procedural level, as well as the introduction of formal accession negotiations with the EU (Beichelt 2001; Vachudova 2005).[8]

Table 4.1: Election generations in Central and Eastern Europe

Country	Initial elections	Second-generation elections	First third-generation elections
Bulgaria	1990	1991, 1994, 1997	2001
Czech Republic	1990	1992, 1996, 1998	2002
Estonia	1990	1992, 1995	1999
Hungary	1990	1994	1998
Latvia	1990	1993, 1995	1998
Poland	1989	1991, 1993	1997
Romania	1990	1992, 1996	2000
Slovakia	1990	1992, 1994, 1998	2002

Source: Pop-Eleches 2010, 234.

After critics initially stressed QCA's limited capacity to address temporality, QCA practitioners developed various procedures to include temporal sequencing into their analyses (Caren and Panofsky 2005; Ragin and Strand 2008; Mahoney, Kimball, and Koivu 2009; Rubinson 2019; see also Schneider and Wagemann 2012). This study, however, seeks to explain government formation with radical right parties in two different periods of time, rather than the temporal sequence of different explanatory factors. When incorporating this aspect of temporality into QCA, some scholars introduce an additional time period condition. As the present study covers two periods, this option would be compatible with the binary logic of csQCA. However, since the number of truth table rows increases exponentially with each additional condition, this strategy would also increase the number of logical remainders. In order to avoid this problem, the strategy employed here is to

8 The actual date of EU accession could define a temporal threshold as well. While EU membership was a hallmark in the political development of Central and Eastern European countries, the criterion of the first third-generation election better reflects the changes in party competition most relevant to this study. The discussion suggests that crucial changes already occurred in the pre-accession period. The supplementary analysis and robustness checks, which use EU membership as temporal threshold (see Appendix I), support this interpretation.

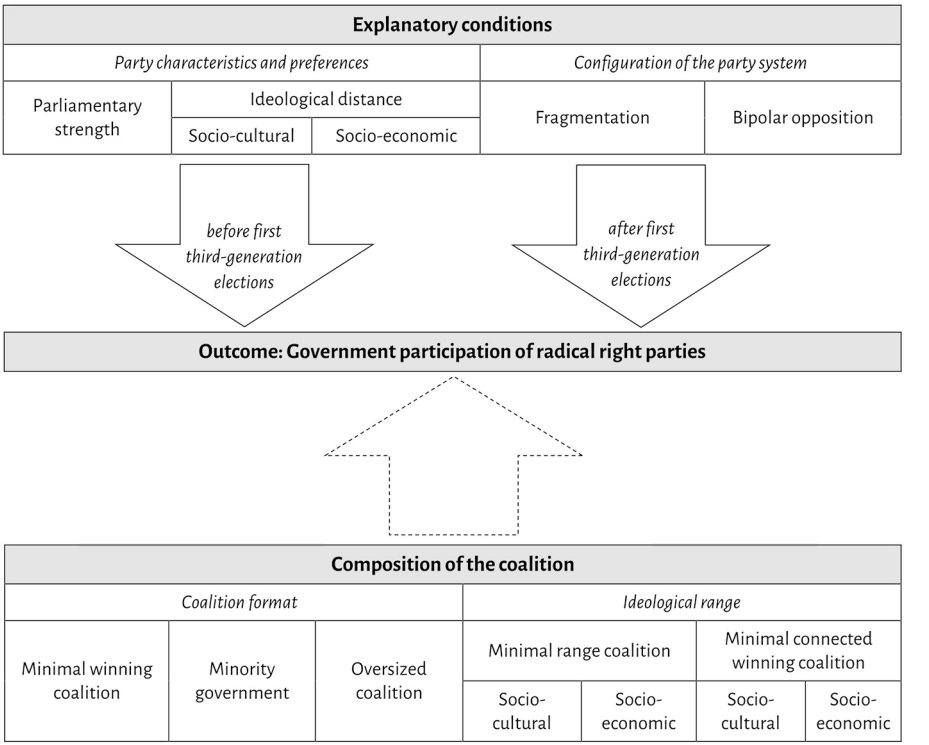
conduct two separate analyses for the respective periods and to subsequently compare their results (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 265–66). Dividing the dataset will also lead to an increase in logical remainders, particularly in the shorter period before the first third-generation elections, but this increase is much smaller than the exponential one caused by an additional condition.

4.3.3 The analytical model

Figure 4.1 summarises these specifications in a graphical model. The upper section of the model contains the five conditions that shall explain why Central and Eastern European radical right parties enter government or remain in opposition. The two separate arrows illustrate the periodisation based on the criterion of the first third-generation elections, which reflects the assumption that the patterns of government formation with radical right parties are expected to differ in the period before and after that threshold. The bottom section of the model adds the composition of the government as a whole. The dashed arrow that points towards the outcome denotes that the composition of coalitions is used as a heuristic and supplementary tool to better understand why radical right parties are included in, or excluded from government, rather than serving as an explanatory factor or an outcome to be explained itself.

The individual explanatory conditions in the model are connected by the overarching assumptions that government formation is a result of a) the strategic choices that parties make in their pursuit of policy and office, and b) the contextual constraints which limit those parties' decisions. Hence, the outcome of government formation hinges on the interaction of all the different conditions at the level of the individual parties and the party systems.

Figure 4.1: Analytical model of government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe



Source: Own composition.

4.3.4 Hypotheses

Before advancing some hypotheses recall that this study combines theory-testing and theory-generating approaches (Gerring 2017, 263–70). On the one hand, it seeks to evaluate existing coalition theories in the specific context of government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe. On the other hand, this study combines various theories in a context-specific analytical model. The exploratory nature of this approach aims at generating original theoretical insights, which is also reflected in the following hypotheses.

The first set of hypotheses concerns the numerical-structural factors—the parliamentary strength of radical right parties and the fragmentation of party systems. Radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe were, on average, less success-

ful in elections than in Western Europe (Minkenberg 2002, 336, 2017, 101; Mudde 2005a). Over the last three decades, however, they have improved their average electoral results, particularly in the 2010s.[9] With the exception of Romania, radical right parties entered parliament in all countries covered by this study in this decade. The party systems of Central and Eastern Europe are more fluid than in Western Europe, even though there is a trend towards convergence, particularly with regard to fragmentation (Enyedi and Casal Bértoa 2018; see also Emanuele, Chiaramonte, and Soare 2020).

The literature finds contradictory results and diverging theoretical arguments regarding how party system fragmentation and parliamentary strength affect radical right parties' participation in government. For instance, some scholars argue that parties benefit from gaining a large seat share because it increases their contribution to the government's majority in parliament and thus their bargaining power (Mattila and Raunio 2004; Döring and Hellström 2013). However, other studies also point out that the seat share of small parties should not be too large, because when junior partners are strong, the formateur must yield power to them (Warwick 1996, 499; see also Fagerholm 2021). A high degree of party system fragmentation increases the complexity of the bargaining situation (Dodd 1976; Kropp, Schüttemeyer, and Sturm 2002b; Müller, Bergman, and Strøm 2008), because more parties are needed to form a majority. Thus, high levels of fragmentation improve the chances for small parties to enter government. Since parties aim to reduce bargaining complexity by limiting the number of coalition partners while still ensuring a stable majority, however, small parties with a relatively large seat share should have an advantage when party systems are fragmented (Warwick 1996, 495; Grotz and Weber 2011, 202–3). This discussion illustrates the interplay between the two structural-numerical factors in the model, and it suggests that several configurations of the two factors enable radical right parties to enter government in Central and Eastern Europe. There is one, however, that should create a clear disadvantage—a small seat share in a compact party system (see Table 4.2). Moreover, the development of party systems and election results of radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe suggests differences in the two periods under investigation. Hence, the following hypotheses regarding the impact of the two structural-numerical factors shall be evaluated:

H1a: Radical right parties that are large, and/or in fragmented party systems, enter government, but radical right parties with a small seat share in a compact party system remain in opposition.

9 The average vote share for radical right parties in the elections examined in this study is 7.9 per cent in the 1990s, 10.3 per cent in the 2000s and 10.8 per cent in the 2010s. These numbers include only those radical right parties that passed the threshold of representation in the respective country.

H1b: In the period before the first third-generation elections, predominantly small radical right parties in fragmented party systems enter government.
H1c: In the period after the first third-generation elections, predominantly large radical right parties in compact party systems enter government.

Table 4.2: Theoretical expectations about the impact of seat share and fragmentation on government participation

	Large Seat Share	**Small Seat Share**
Low Fragmentation	Enter government (predominant configuration in the period after the first third-generation elections)	Remain in opposition
High Fragmentation	Enter government	Enter government (predominant configuration in the period before the first third-generation elections)

Source: Own compilation.

The second set of hypotheses concerns the socio-economic and socio-cultural distance between radical right parties and the formateur as well as the existence of bipolar opposition in the party system. The literature review demonstrates that parties prefer to form governments with partners that hold similar ideological positions (Axelrod 1970; Swaan 1973; see also Laver and Schofield 1998; Savage 2014). Western European radical right parties enter government when their socio-cultural distance to the formateur is small and bipolar opposition in the party system constrains coalition formation (Bale 2003; de Lange 2008, 2012). There are several features of the Central and Eastern European context, however, which demand adaptions of these findings and their theoretical underpinnings. First, the importance of the economic transformation, and the social hardships that it caused for large parts of the population in Central and Eastern Europe, make it impossible to disregard the socio-economic dimension from an analysis of government formation in the region, particularly in the period prior to the first third-generation elections. Second, this transformational period is strongly affected by the regime divide, which confined the choice of possible coalition partners to the parties within their respective camps (Grzymała-Busse 2001). Hence, the empirical analysis assesses the following hypothesis regarding the impact of ideological factors on government formation with radical right parties in the transformational period:

H2a: Before the first third-generation elections, radical right parties enter government if their socio-cultural and socio-economic distance to the formateur is small and/or they are situated on the same side of a bipolar opposition as the formateur.

In the consolidating decades, however, the salience of both the regime divide and the transformation of the economic system should decrease, and the patterns of government formation with radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe should resemble those in the western part of the continent more closely. Hence, the following hypothesis will be evaluated in this period:

H2b: After the first third-generation elections, radical right parties enter government if their socio-cultural distance to the formateur is small and/or they are situated on the same side of a bipolar opposition as the formateur.

Further hypotheses can be formulated regarding the composition of coalitions with radical right parties. Because the composition of coalitions is not the primary subject of this study, these hypotheses remain descriptive. Although mainstream parties in Central and Eastern Europe frequently adopted elements of radical right politics, some parties—and parts of society—are still critical towards governing with radical right parties. Therefore, the starting point for these hypotheses is the assumption that mainstream parties prefer moderate coalition partners over the radical right. In order to prevent conflicts that may arise from cooperating with the radical right, mainstream parties should not govern with radical right parties unless their participation is required to secure a majority. Supporting a minority government can be particularly advantageous for radical right parties, since keeping "one foot in and one foot out of government" (Zaslove 2012, 435) enables them to influence government policies while simultaneously upholding their oppositional appeal (see also Albertazzi and McDonnell 2005; Dumont, de Winter, and Andeweg 2011, 9–10). This constellation also makes it possible for mainstream parties to distance themselves from the controversial positions of their radical right support parties. Hence, the first hypothesis regarding the numerical format of coalitions is as follows:

H3a: Radical right parties are included in government as junior partners in minimal winning coalitions or as support parties for minority governments, but they do not participate in oversized coalitions.

Mainstream parties should certainly not govern with the radical right if they disagree on socio-cultural policies because these are the radical right's most salient core issues. Therefore, socio-cultural differences are particularly apt to cause conflicts within governments that include radical right parties. Hence, the following hypoth-

esis guides the supplementary investigation of the ideological range of coalitions with radical right parties:

H3b: Governments with radical right parties are socio-culturally homogeneous.

Similar to the above argument regarding the ideological factors at the party level, governments with radical right parties should also be socio-economically homogenous in the period before the first third-generation elections. However, since there is no suitable comparative data on party positions available for the transformational period (see below), this hypothesis cannot be evaluated in this study.

4.4 Operationalisation and measurement

After outlining the analytical model and presenting the hypotheses, this section turns to the operationalisation of the individual factors in the analytical model.

4.4.1 The outcome: What counts as a coalition government?

Before defining the outcome, it needs to be re-stated that the present study is concerned primarily with the formation of multi-party governments. Sometimes, the electorate equips a single party with an absolute majority of seats in parliament. Such parties are in the position to form a single-party majority government. They can fill the cabinet exclusively with their own representatives and do not depend on other parties' support in a vote of (no) confidence in parliament. Hence, the dynamics of government formation in majority situations are fundamentally different from those in which no single party controls a majority in parliament and inter-party cooperation is required (Müller, Bergman, and Strøm 2008, 7; Mattila and Raunio 2004, 278).

Multi-party coalition governments include a cabinet comprised of several ministers which constitutes the country's top executive body as well as parliamentary groups of political parties that support this cabinet with a legislative majority. Alternative definitions emphasise particular aspects of government coalitions. Müller, Bergman, and Strøm (2008, 6), for instance, prioritise the government's executive branch and define the government or, more precisely the cabinet, as "the sharing of executive office by different political parties" and a "coalition party" as "a party that has at least one designated representative that enjoys voting rights in the country's top executive policymaking body". Like Dodd (1976), this project is more interested in the partisan composition of the government coalition than the cabinet. Therefore, it defines a coalition government as formalised cooperation between legislative parties for the purpose of sharing executive power.

In empirical research on government formation, it is also important to define what constitutes a new (coalition) government. Therefore, such counting rules receive more attention in the literature than the definition itself. In this study, a new government is formed a) after an election takes place, b) when the partisan composition of the government has changed, or c) when the party of the prime minister alternates (Müller and Strøm 2000a, 12–13). Given this study's primary interest in the partisan composition of the government, a change of the prime minister alone does not account for a change of government (Müller and Strøm 2000a, 12; Müller, Bergman, and Strøm 2008, 6).

Even though these rules seem quite clear and straightforward to implement, there are certain challenges that need to be addressed. First, parties often form electoral alliances in order to improve their chances of entering parliament (Müller, Bergman, and Ilonszki 2019, 17).[10] These alliances can entail commitments for future cooperation in a joint parliamentary group or (coalition) government. It is sometimes difficult to determine whether or not electoral alliances should be considered a single entity in post-electoral coalition formation. The Bulgarian Ataka and the Latvian National Alliance (NA), for instance, competed in their first national elections in 2005 and 2010, respectively, as electoral alliances. Both alliances, however, formed a joint parliamentary group and eventually merged into a full-fledged political party a few months after their election into parliament. Therefore, they will be treated as political parties from the outset. The situation is more ambiguous in the cases of the Patriotic Front (PF) and United Patriots (UP) in Bulgaria. In the run-up to the 2014 elections, the PF was created as an electoral alliance including the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (VRMO), the National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria (NFSB), and some peripheral parties and organisations. Prior to the 2017 parliamentary elections, Ataka joined this alliance, which was subsequently re-named UP. Even though these alliances show lower levels of internal cohesion than the previous examples, they formed common parliamentary groups and jointly engaged in coalition negotiations. For this reason, they will also be treated as single entities in coalition formation, even though this stretches the unitary actor assumption (see Chapter 3.1).

The second challenge concerns the treatment of minority governments. Minority governments are a relatively frequent phenomenon, and they have proven to be viable alternatives to majority governments in European democracies (Strøm 1990b; Keudel-Kaiser 2014). The party-centred definition of coalition governments introduced above can also include support parties of minority governments if cooperation with the governing party (or parties) is formalised. This study follows those scholars who argue that parties which consistently support a minority government

10 Several countries have introduced higher electoral thresholds for electoral alliances which often increase with the number of parties included in the alliance.

may be considered part of the government, since they exert strategic influence on its activities and agenda well beyond individual policy proposals (de Lange 2008; see also Zaslove 2012; Fagerholm 2021). De Lange (2008, 41) introduces two criteria for formal support parties of a minority government. First, their support needs to be based on a mutual agreement and, second, the support relationship between the parties must be publicly known. Although formal support parties are considered part of the government coalition under these circumstances, there is still a substantial difference between support parties and actual coalition members—support parties do not receive cabinet posts. Therefore, a new government will be counted if a support party formally enters the ruling coalition or a coalition party resigns from the cabinet but continues as an official support party, even though the partisan composition of the government does not change in either situation.

The last issue to be addressed are so-called caretaker governments. Caretaker governments are provisional governing bodies which generally serve for a short period of time before (early) elections touched off by a government crisis. They often entail technocratic cabinets agreed upon by the majority of parties in parliament. Conventionally, caretaker governments do not make substantial policy decisions (Conrad and Golder 2010). These constraints illustrate that the power of caretaker governments is limited and that their formation does not involve the same trade-offs between parties' pursuit of policy and office, which drive regular government formation. Hence, caretaker governments will be excluded from the analysis of government formation in this study.

4.4.2 Party-centred conditions and party-system features

Parliamentary strength

Compared to the outcome, the operationalisation of the parliamentary strength of radical right parties is rather straightforward. Parliamentary strength is measured by the percentage of seats in parliament. In countries with bicameral parliaments, the distribution of seats in the lower chamber will be used. The data on the distribution of seats is drawn from the database on Parties and Elections in Europe (Nordsieck 2021).

Ideological distance to the formateur

The analytical model includes the ideological distance between radical right parties and the formateur of a coalition on the socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions. Given the problems associated with conceptualising and adequately measuring ideological positions in Central and Eastern Europe, operationalising this condition requires special attention. In modern comparative politics, two approaches have become predominant when measuring party positions: Expert surveys (Benoit

and Laver 2006; Jolly et al. 2022) and the standardised analysis of party programmes by the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2021).[11]

Marks et al. (2007) present a comprehensive discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches. The authors argue that expert surveys benefit from the ability to draw on multiple sources of information, such as programmatic documents, interviews with party members, and parties' behaviour, which scholars can use to assess party positions. Expert surveys also provide easily quantifiable and comparable data. They are disadvantaged, however, by the subjectivity of the experts' judgements, asymmetrical information regarding the individual parties, and the limited availability of data, particularly before the turn of the millennium. The Manifesto Project uses primary party documents and thus clearly distinguishes between what parties say and how they behave. This approach also enables the Manifesto Project to provide data on party positions retrospectively. However, the drawback of the Manifesto data is that programmes are strategic documents in which parties emphasise, or conceal, certain positions for tactical reasons (Marks et al. 2007, 26–27). In addition, the Manifesto Project sometimes captures the salience of a given issue dimension rather than the party's position on that issue (Kitschelt 2007, 1180).

The fact that party programmes are strategic documents is particularly important to this study. First, in order to attract a broader electorate and to avoid legal prosecution, radical right parties are known to downplay their ultra-nationalist, racist, and anti-democratic positions in official proclamations (Kitschelt 2007, 1180). It is therefore important to go beyond official programmatic documents when evaluating their ideological positions (Pytlas and Kossack 2015, 109). Second, political parties in Central and Eastern Europe often lack detailed programmatic documents, particularly in the early years of the post-Communist transformation. For these reasons, this study, like others in the field (Pirro 2016; Pytlas 2016; Minkenberg et al. 2021), draws on expert surveys to determine the positions of radical right parties and formateurs. Following Kitschelt's (2007, 1081) recommendation, the quantitative expert survey data will be supplemented by a qualitative assessment of party positions based on secondary literature.

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) is the most comprehensive expert survey on party positions. In Central and Eastern Europe, the CHES dataset covers the period between 2002 and 2019 in five waves (Jolly et al. 2022). In addition to positions on various issue dimensions, it also contains indicators that measure the socio-economic (LRECON) and the socio-cultural positions of the parties (GALTAN).[12] These

11 For a discussion of other approaches to measuring the ideology of radical right parties and their advantages and disadvantages, see Mudde (2007, 33–41) and Kitschelt (2007).

12 In his study on government formation with radical left and right parties across Europe, Fagerholm (2021, 9, Appendix C) calculated indicators for the socio-economic and socio-cultural

indicators correspond with the two-dimensional conception of party competition applied in this study and will therefore be used here. A problem with the CHES data, and expert surveys more generally, however, is the lack of data on Central and Eastern European parties prior to the turn of the millennium. In this period, the socio-economic and socio-cultural positions of radical right parties and formateurs will be assessed on the basis of secondary literature (Keudel-Kaiser 2014, 49–50). In order for these positions to be comparable, the study places parties from the pre-survey era on the same 11-point GALTAN and LRECON scales as the CHES.

Party system fragmentation

When evaluating the fragmentation of party systems, Sartori (1976, 121–27) opted to simply count all relevant parties, but a party was only considered relevant if it had either coalition or blackmail potential. Building on Sartori, Laakso and Taagepera (1979) presented their calculation for the effective number of parties, which adds the relative strength of the parties according to their share of votes or parliamentary seats. The effective number of parties has become the standard measure of party system fragmentation in contemporary research. Therefore, this study uses the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP), to measure fragmentation. Unlike the effective number of electoral parties, which includes all parties running for an election, this measure is limited to parties that achieve parliamentary representation, which is a precondition for their access to government formation. The ENPP is calculated as follows:

$$\text{“ENPP}=1/\Sigma s_i^2,$$

where s_i is the proportion of seats of the ith party” (Casal Bértoa 2013, 401). For most of the cases covered by this study, the effective number of parties is taken from the database on Who Governs in Europe (Casal Bértoa 2021).

Bipolar opposition

Bipolar opposition exists “when party competition as a whole is structured along a specific and deep dividing line” (Keudel-Kaiser 2014, 70), which separates the political parties of a country into two competing camps that are unable to cooperate with each other. Whether or not bipolar opposition constrains government formation to

dimensions, respectively, based on specific items in the Manifesto dataset. While this approach mitigates the problems associated with the Manifesto Project’s over-emphasis of the socio-economic dimension in its general left-right indicator (Savage 2014, 550; Pytlas 2016, 74), it does not solve the problems of the limited availability of detailed party programmes in Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s and the tendency of radical right parties to downplay their radical ideology in programmatic documents.

coalitions within these camps can only be determined by a qualitative assessment of the main lines of conflict in each party system.

Research has demonstrated that bipolar oppositions have different causes. A distinction can be made between affective and ideological polarisation (Nugent 2020; see also Iyengar et al. 2019; Gidron, Adams, and Horne 2020). Ideological polarisation results from fundamentally different views on policies. It thus refers to "the extent to which they [parties] disagree with each other" (Nugent 2020, 3). The concept of affective polarisation has gained popularity in the context of the United States' polarised two-party system, but it provides a useful tool for the analysis of party competition in European multi-party systems as well (Gidron, Adams, and Horne 2020; Wagner 2021). In contrast to ideological polarisation, the affective dimension concerns partisan identities and expresses "the extent to which groups dislike each other" (Nugent 2020, 3). The literature on affective polarisation is primarily concerned with voters' dislike for other parties, but some authors have begun to show how this antipathy is also connected to the relations among political elites (Banda and Cluverius 2018; Gidron, Adams, and Horne 2020). Because the present study deals with inter-party competition rather than party-voter relations, it applies the general ideas of affective and ideological polarisation to the elite level. In order to determine the intensity and nature of bipolar opposition in the party system, this study draws on the party system literature, and information about national election campaigns (Keudel-Kaiser 2014).

4.4.3 Format and ideological range of the government coalition

The format of coalitions with radical right parties is also determined by an analysis of secondary literature, such as the EJPR Political Data Yearbook. When comparing the format of governments with radical right parties to the format of governments without the radical right, the dataset on coalition politics compiled by Bergman, Ilonszki, and Müller (2019a) and their team will be used. This dataset includes a distinction between minimal winning coalitions, minority governments, and oversized coalitions.

Despite being very comprehensive, this dataset does not include information on the ideological range of Central and Eastern European governments. Hence, this study draws on the measures of parliamentary strength and ideological positions in order to assess whether the coalitions meet the criteria of a minimal connected winning or an open minimal range coalition. Because a qualitative assessment of the positions of all government parties is beyond the scope of this study, the evaluation of the ideological range of coalitions is limited to the period covered by the CHES data, which largely corresponds to the period after the first third-generation elections.

4.5 The structure of the empirical analysis

The empirical analysis follows the three steps of QCA. Chapters 2 – 4 already cover much of the first step, which entails the dialogue between theoretical knowledge and empirical evidence typical of QCA. For the sake of a coherent presentation, the discussions in these chapters did not always reflect the iterative nature of this process. The descriptive case studies in Chapters 5 and 6 add the last piece of the first step. They provide a description of the cases, focusing on the explanatory factors in the analytical model. The second step of the analysis begins in Chapter 7, which discusses the calibration of cases and generates the binary dataset required for the analysis of necessary and sufficient conditions. The following two chapters analyse this data and interpret the results. Chapter 8 deals with the transformational period and Chapter 9 discusses the consolidating decades. The results from both periods are then compared as part of the conclusions in Chapter 10.