The Politics of Minister Retention:
Technocrats, Partisans, and Government Approval

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This paper examines the impact of presidential approval and individual minister profiles on minister turnover. It claims that, in order to prioritize sustainable policy performance and cabinet loyalty, government chiefs protect and remove technocrats, partisans, and outsider ministers conditional on government approval. The study offers an operational definition of minister profiles that relies on fuzzy-set measures of technical expertise and political affiliation, and tests the hypotheses using survival analysis with an original dataset for the Argentine case (1983-2011). The findings show that popular presidents are more likely to protect experts and partisan ministers, but not loyal cronies.

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Presidents and prime ministers often introduce policy adjustments by reallocating cabinet portfolios, and shield their favorite policies by protecting key cabinet members. In guiding such decisions, individual minister profiles are a crucial factor. The retention of partisan ministers, who are politically savvy, usually helps consolidate legislative support while the retention of technocrats, who are less vulnerable to the pressures of political parties and constituents, usually guarantees policy continuity. Different types of ministers are therefore protected or sacked in different political contexts. Given these alternatives, what types of ministers enjoy longer tenures and under what conditions? How do individual profiles and electoral incentives affect minister turnover?

We argue that the effect of ministers’ profiles on portfolio reallocation is conditioned by the popular approval of an administration. When the government is unpopular, external factors drive cabinet turnover and the loyalty of cabinet members to the chief executive is fragile. Partisan ministers leave the cabinet as the government coalition crumbles, and technical ministers are replaced in response to public pressures. In such contexts, government chiefs only command the loyalty of an inner circle of ministers without partisan careers, autonomous expertise, or independent policy agendas. When the government is highly popular, by contrast, external pressures for cabinet turnover decline and the cabinet aligns with the chief executive. In those situations, partisan and technical ministers are safer in their posts but technocrats in charge of the administration’s successful policies have more leverage and a lower risk of exit than most partisan ministers.

In the following pages we contend that weak heads of government are forced to engage in defensive reallocation strategies, which result in a higher rate of turnover for most ministers. By contrast, when the government is strong the chief executive can engage in unilateral portfolio
reallocation in order to strengthen his or her control of the cabinet. This pattern typically involves the preservation of technocrats responsible for successful government policies but not necessarily of loyal cronies, who become less necessary in a context in which ministers have incentives to align with the head of the government. As a result, the conventional distinction between partisan and non-partisan ministers proves to be insufficient to understand conditional retention strategies.

The paper is structured in six sections. In the first section we discuss the literature on minister turnover and cabinet expertise, arguing that portfolio reallocation has predominantly been depicted a reactive tool used to deal with government crises, and that minister profile classifications have mainly relied on rigid dichotomies. The second section introduces an analytical framework that conceives portfolio reallocation as a proactive tool that chief executives can employ depending on their political strength. We develop a typology of minister profiles that includes partisan ministers, technocrats, and outsiders, and present four hypotheses about the conditions under which these ministers will enjoy longer tenures in office. The third section presents a comprehensive operational definition of minister profiles that considers different levels of technical expertise, political affiliations, and political careers. We employ a fuzzy-set approach to integrate this information, allowing for a nuanced characterization of individual ministers. The fourth section describes our data: we test our hypotheses with extensive information for 159 ministers who served in the Argentine government from the transition to democracy (1983) to 2011. In the fifth section we present the results of several survival models to estimate the duration of cabinet tenures under different levels of government approval and for different types of ministers. The findings support the claim that increasing popularity strengthens the position of partisan ministers and technocrats, but not necessarily the standing of political
outsiders. As a result, the tenure of different non-partisan types tends to diverge when governments are successful. In the concluding section we explore the implication of these findings for the nascent literature on portfolio reallocation strategies.

**From Cabinet Appointments to Minister Survival**

Portfolio reallocation has been primarily depicted as a tool to deal with difficult situations, such as the presence of “undesirables” and “opportunists” within the cabinet (Huber Gallardo 2008, Indridason and Kam 2008), the decline of government popularity (Dewan and Dowding 2005), low policy performance (Berlinsky, Dewan and Dowding 2010) or economic and socio-political conflicts (Dewan and Myatt 2007; Camerlo and Pérez-Liñán 2013; Martínez-Gallardo 2011).

This ongoing research agenda departs from the well-developed literature on cabinet formation. In the classic approach, portfolio allocation was conceptualized as a tool to obtain legislative support for the establishment, performance, and survival of governments. This perspective focused on the partisan composition of the cabinet, underscoring the role of institutional conditions (e.g., legislative majorities and the nature of coalitions) as the main explanatory variables. Initially developed to explain the politics of European parliamentary democracies (see Martin and Stevenson 2001; Laver 2003), the approach later disseminated to the realm of Latin American presidentialism (Alemán and Tsebelis 2011; Altman 2000; Altman and Castiglioni 2010; Amorim Neto 2006; Chasquetti 2008; Cheibub 2002; Cheibub and Limongi 2002; Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh 2004; Dehesa 1998; Martínez-Gallardo 2012; Mejía Acosta 2009; Negretto 2006).
Differently, portfolio reallocation studies focus on the appointment and removal of individual ministers *within* cabinets, and privilege explanations that underscore the role of critical events and individual attributes above and beyond partisanship. The emphasis on individual traits has led to a renewed interest in aspects such as the technical skills, gender, and extra-party affiliation of ministers, as well as the development of more exhaustive and sophisticated datasets on individual backgrounds.¹

A central theme in this emerging line of research has been the role of non-partisans in government. The issue of “independent” ministers has been tackled by the literatures on parliamentary and presidential regimes, although from different angles. Research on European democracies has focused on the increasing presence of “outsiders” in the cabinet over the last decades, evidencing a deviation from traditional career paths. The need to recruit technical skills to face the growing complexity of multilevel governance and the organizational decline and discredit of political parties have been posed as the main explanations for the new phenomenon, together with factors such as the “presidentialization” of politics and the institutional separation between executive and legislative powers (Amorim Neto and Samuels 2010; Amorim Neto and Strom 2006; Bermeo et al. 2003; Blondel et al. 2007; Costa Pinto and Tavares de Almeida 2009). In presidential democracies, where rulers are expected to nominate more ministers without party backgrounds, scholarly attention focused on experts without political experience but with considerable political power.² Initially triggered by the performance of successful “technopols” during the first part of the nineties (Domínguez 1997; Centeno and Silva 1998), this research has tended to link technocratic politics with the role of economists, neoliberalism, and structural reforms (Conaghan 2005; Dávila 2010; Estrada Alvarez 2005; Silva 2010; but see de la Torre 2013).
Despite the relevant contributions of these research agendas, three implicit assumptions present in the literature hamper an adequate consideration of minister profiles and their role in contemporary governments. First, portfolio reallocation is conventionally depicted as a reactive tool, used by weak heads of government to confront negative situations. We show in this article that portfolio reallocation can also be a proactive tool, used selectively by well-positioned chief executives to consolidate their control over the cabinet.

Second, the presence of non-partisan ministers in government is conventionally linked to the de-politicization of public policy. The European literature has largely seen the surge of non-partisans as a reflection of major trends related to the complexity of modern governance, such as modernization, democratization, or Europeanization; the Latin American literature, in turn, has linked strong non-partisan ministers to the resolution of acute economic crises and the introduction market-oriented policies. In both cases, non-partisan ministers are considered apolitical individuals (at least in traditional terms) who join the highest levels of the decision-making process when there is a suspension of regular politics. We argue that this image of non-partisans can be misleading for two reasons. To begin with, non-partisan ministers are a heterogeneous category that may include technocrats, who presumably implement an independent policy agenda, as well as cronies, who owe personal loyalty to the chief executive. Moreover, the idea that technocrats represent the de-politicization of public policy mostly reflects the fact that professional politicians allocate blame for unpopular policies to technical ministers and claim credit for successful policies for themselves. This suggests that the framing of the relationship between government leaders and non-partisans in the cabinet is mediated by public approval rates.
The third deficit relates to the assumption that minister profiles can be properly captured by rigid dichotomies: outsider/insider, specialist/generalist, or politician/amateur (Yong and Hazelt 2011; Verzichelli 2010). The early European literature developed binary taxonomies (Blondel 1985; Blondel and Thiebaut ed. 1991) that mostly remained unchallenged in subsequent research (Beckman 2006; for exceptions see Bakema and Secker 1998 and Rodríguez Teruel 2011). In turn, the Latin American literature focused on a very specific profile – successful technocrats with significant political clout– without considering other types of non-partisans and their relations with partisan ministers. Additionally, these taxonomies overlooked portfolios not specifically related to economic policy, and relied on a very basic operationalization of technocratic profiles that reflected whether ministers had PhDs in economics. We address this problem by developing a systematic typology of minister profiles, and by operationalizing the concepts of technocrats, partisans, and outsiders based on this conceptual scheme.

**Portfolio Reallocation and Minister Profiles**

To overcome these limitations, we broadly define portfolio reallocation as a government tool for managing multiple political resources through either cooperative or unilateral strategies. We argue that the choice of either strategy is conditioned by the political strength of the chief executive. Our argument therefore involves three claims.

1. **Portfolio reallocation is a political instrument for managing different resources.** The literature suggests that heads of government allocate portfolios with the goal of optimizing three important resources: political support (governability), technical skills (competence), and loyalty (preference alignment). Political support is maximized through the appointment of ministers affiliated with external collective actors, such as parties or mass organizations. The
crafting of legislative coalitions by a formateur is the most common and the best studied mechanism of this kind (see Laver and Shepsle 1990; Strom, Muller and Bergman 2008), but it is not the only strategy to secure governability. Cabinet appointments also mobilize support from organized groups such as trade unions, churches, or the military, which may be crucial in certain historical contexts. In turn, technical skills are secured through the appointment of expert ministers with instruction or experience in the area of competence. The literature has emphasized skill requirements among those responsible for market-oriented reforms, but we claim that concerns about expertise may affect most cabinet appointments, and are per se independent of ideological preferences (de la Torre 2013; Escobar-Lemmon y Taylor-Robinson 2009a, 2009b, 2011). Lastly, ideological proximity between the chief executive and cabinet members has been a critical factor in studies underscoring adverse selection and moral hazard problems (Huber and Martínez-Gallardo 2008; Indridason and Kam 2008). We therefore consider that the alignment of cabinet preferences is the third goal pursued through portfolio reallocation strategies.

Although the three goals are not mutually exclusive, political support, technical skills, and loyalty are hard to maximize simultaneously and they may become salient in different contexts. We argue that different types of ministers map distinctively into these priorities. Partisan ministers, who command strong political affiliations, are uniquely positioned to deliver political alliances. Technocrats, who command expertise, are renowned for their competence. Lastly, ministers without party ties or independent policy expertise (e.g., cronies) are selected to be loyal agents of the chief executive. Following Carreras (2012), we refer to members of the third group as outsiders.
Figure 1 summarizes our typology of minister profiles. This typology underscores an important conclusion commonly overlooked by dichotomous classifications. To the extent that the search for technical skills and loyalty presents important tradeoffs, the appointment of non-partisan ministers by the head of the government may serve opposite purposes.

2. Government heads may choose between cooperative and unilateral reallocation strategies. The management of cabinet portfolios can serve a majoritarian or a consensual model of policymaking (Lijphart 2012). For example, Amorim Neto (2006) showed that presidents can implement their policy agendas through a “statutory” strategy, which follows the standard legislative procedure, or through an “executive” strategy which relies on executive prerogatives to avoid negotiation with Congress. Each model has important implications for the composition of the cabinet, particularly in multi-party systems. While the first modality requires the formation of coalition cabinets with a proportional selection of partisan ministers, the second modality allows for the formation of single-party minority cabinets populated by cronies, technical experts, or members of organized groups (Amorim Neto 2006).
We extend this approach by defining as a cooperative strategy any management of portfolios oriented towards the inclusion of “other” parties or social actors in the cabinet, and as a unilateral strategy any management of portfolios oriented towards the inclusion of the chief executive’s “own” people. The concrete content of these strategies (the meaning of “others” and “own”) will depend on the specific circumstances for each particular case, but in general unilateral strategies are easy to implement when the chief executive is politically strong and cooperative strategies are necessary when the chief executive is politically weak. This perspective allows us to conceptualize majoritarian and consensual government styles beyond more conventional assumptions about coalition politics. For instance, the head of a single-party cabinet recruiting partisan ministers who previously opposed the leader’s nomination within the party would be an instance of the cooperative modality, while the head of a coalition cabinet using his or her party quota to nominate outsiders who are personally loyal to the individual leader would be an instance of the unilateral strategy (Inácio 2013).

3. The power of the chief executive is volatile. The political strength of governments has been commonly assessed through indicators that present limited variation (if any) during the life of an administration, such as the composition of the legislature and the constitutional powers of the executive branch. However, actual leverage of government leaders may fluctuate significantly over time. Argentine President Fernando de la Rúa illustrates this fact in dramatic ways. Sworn in office with considerable electoral, legislative, and party support in late 1999, he was forced to resign before completing the first half of his term in 2001. Following an opposite trajectory, Argentine President Néstor Kirchner started his administration with limited electoral and legislative support in 2003, but managed to finish his administration in 2007 as one of the most successful presidents in the country’s history. Thus, the need to secure political support,
technical competence, or personal loyalty may vary during the lifetime of an administration. Recent studies underscore the relevance of maintaining legislative support after the initial moment of cabinet formation (Raile et al. 2011). Moreover, the use of executive prerogatives is mainly conditioned by specific circumstances. Grimaldi (2012) shows that while some European presidents have extensive constitutional powers but hardly make use of them, other rulers with fewer prerogatives are frequently forced to invoke them. In general, the exercise of formal prerogatives has political costs and its effectiveness largely depends on non-formal factors such as the leader’s charisma.

To the extent that government strength can be a volatile factor, public approval for the chief executive is the most sensitive indicator reflecting its fluctuation over time. Approval rates are a real-time indicator of possible electoral outcomes, and as such facilitate (or imperil) the relations of the government with the legislature, the ruling party, and the main interest groups. As a marker of specific support (Easton 1975), popularity creates incentives for the alignment of partisan ministers with the goals of the chief executive, and strengthens the credibility of technocrats blessed by the administration.
Table 1. Conditional Strategies of Portfolio Reallocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Unilateral (popular executive)</th>
<th>Cooperative (weak executive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political support</td>
<td>Retain loyal partisan ministers, replace distant partisan ministers.</td>
<td>Cabinet reshuffles (restructure partisan coalitions).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>Retain successful technocrats.</td>
<td>Replace unsuccessful technocrats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Retain outsiders? (They are loyal but less necessary).</td>
<td>Retain outsiders? (They are loyal but easy to replace).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our main argument is that approval rates condition the ways in which government chiefs can employ portfolio reallocation strategies to manage political support, technical expertise, and internal alignments in the cabinet. Table 1 summarizes this argument. When government leaders are popular, they can avoid the more complex, time-consuming, and conceding cooperative modalities. Strong leaders are able to implement unilateral strategies in the management of cabinet portfolios, protecting close party members but replacing more distant partisan ministers to the extent that coalition agreements allow them to do so. With governability assured, articulators of political support will be kept in cabinet as long as they do not challenge the chief executive. At the same time, the protection of ministers with technical skills becomes a priority, as they are critical to sustain the successful policies that generate public support. Heads of government may also preserve loyal outsiders in office, but they have few reasons to do so. Given the incentives of all ministers to align with the chief executive, mere loyalty is less of an advantage to secure a position in the cabinet.

By contrast, the leaders of unpopular governments are forced to adopt more cooperative strategies in order to secure governability. In bad times, coalition members who represent other parties or even alternative factions within the ruling party may abandon the cabinet to distance
themselves from the government, and the chief executive often needs to renegotiate the composition of the government. Even though technocrats may promise successful outcomes over the long run, public pressures against unpopular policies may force their removal. In this context, incentives for shirking among cabinet members are great, and outsiders may be the only source of loyalty in the cabinet. Yet, because of their limited weight outsiders are also easier to replace as part of reallocation bargains.

Table 1 integrates the three main claims developed in this section and suggests two important sets of hypotheses. The first set refers to the effects of public support on government stability. A comparison of the table’s columns indicates that

H1. The higher government approval, the lower the risk of exit (i.e., the longer the survival) for partisan as well as technical ministers; yet

H2. Government approval may not affect the survival of outsiders.

At the same time, Table 1 also outlines a set of additional hypotheses about the heterogeneous nature of non-partisan ministers. A comparison of the table’s rows indicates that

H3. Technocratic ministers will confront a lower risk of exit than partisan ministers when governments are popular, but a similar (or higher) risk when governments are unpopular; while

H4. Outsiders will confront a higher risk of exit than partisan ministers when governments are popular, but a similar (or lower) risk when they are unpopular.

The two sets of hypotheses are logically related. Hypotheses 1 and 3 suggest that public approval will benefit partisan and technical ministers, but technocrats should benefit considerably more when policies are successful. Hypotheses 2 and 4 suggest that the effect of
public moods on the fate of loyal outsiders is uncertain and thus partisan ministers (as well as, by implication, technocrats) will gain a relative advantage during periods of greater public support. Together, these hypotheses underscore that non-partisan ministers are far from being a uniform group.

**Minister Profiles: An Operational Definition**

The previous section has emphasized that different minister profiles are functional to secure different political resources. For instance, while partisan ministers are more able to mobilize support from their parties in parliament, experts provide more technical skills. However, two issues complicate the operationalization of minister profiles. Our discussion above suggests that non-partisan ministers are a heterogeneous group. Additionally, ministerial traits may be present to different extents. Ministers may have stronger or weaker party affiliations, or they may display more or less expertise in a policy area. Here we propose an operational definition of minister profiles that deals with those challenges.

As reflected in Figure 1, the main distinction between minister profiles introduced by the literature is driven by party affiliation, which results in the identification of partisan and non-partisan cabinet members. In turn, the most distinguishing feature among the latter is expertise, which allows for the distinction between experts and outsiders. Let \( A \) refer to the set of ministers with strong party affiliations and \( E \), to the set of individuals with technical expertise. Because the ideal type of a technocrat refers to a minister who is an expert and lacks strong political affiliations, we define this set as \( T \equiv (E \cap A') \), where \( E \) denotes technical expertise and the superscript for \( A \) denotes the complement (i.e., negation) of this set. In turn, because the ideal
type of an outsider refers to individuals with no political affiliation and no expertise, we define this set as $O \equiv (E' \cap A')$.

Given this conceptual scheme, any operational definition of minister profiles must rely on systematic criteria to determine a minister’s membership in the sets of technical experts and of politically affiliated officials. Membership in those sets, however, is not clear-cut. For instance, an outsider who remains in office through several administrations of the same party may be increasingly recognized as a partisan. This transition illustrates a *progressive passage* from not being a member of set $A$ to becoming a full member. To the extent that affiliation and expertise are variable attributes, the minister types identified in Figure 1 should be considered poles in a continuous property space rather than discrete categories.

In order to capture the idea of partial membership in any given set, we employ fuzzy set notation (Zadeh 1965). Rather than being dichotomous and exclusive, membership in a fuzzy set is determined by a continuous membership function ranging between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating the complete absence of the attribute, 1 the complete presence of the attribute, and 0.5 being the cross-over point—values below the cross-over point indicate that an element is “rather outside” the set and values above indicate that the element is “rather inside” the set. The degree of membership in the complement (negation) of a fuzzy set is given by $1 - f_i$, where $f_i$ is the membership score for element $i$ in the original set. In turn, the degree of membership at intersection of two fuzzy sets is defined by the minimum score for the two membership functions (Ragin 2000, 2008). This approach provides greater flexibility to code the nuances of minister profiles while preserving a logically consistent conceptual framework. We operationalize the two constitutive sets using empirically observable attributes as follows.
Technical Expertise ($E$). Following the literature, we identify technical expertise with the presence of ($E_1$) advanced academic training in the policy field; or ($E_2$) extensive on-the-job training in the specific bureaucracy. The first item is coded trichotomously, with values of 0 if the minister has a degree unrelated to the portfolio area, 0.5 if the minister has a related B.A. or equivalent (e.g., B.A. in economics for ministers of Economics and Finance, in medicine for ministers of Public Health), and 1 if he or she has a related graduate degree (M.A., M.S., M.B.A., Ph.D., or equivalents). The second item was defined as an ordinal scale reflecting whether the minister had administrative experience in the specific policy area or professional experience in a related field (e.g., school administrators for ministers of Education, union leaders for ministers of Labour), and the amount of that experience. We assign values of 0 if the minister has never worked in a related field before, 0.25 if he or she served in a related field during one administration, 0.50 if he or she previously served in the same policy area in one administration, 0.75 if he or she served in a related field for more than one administration, and 1 if he or she acquired experience in the specific policy area for more than one administration. Because the two attributes $E_1$ and $E_2$ are interchangeable, membership in set $E$ is defined as the maximum score for $E_1$ and $E_2$ (i.e., as the union of the two conditions).

Political Affiliation ($A$). The idea of affiliation reflects the extent to which a given minister may serve as an agent of a party or other complex organization in the cabinet, or simply represent his or her personal views. We coded four dichotomous indicators reflecting whether the press identified the minister as a ($A_1$) well-known member of a political party, ($A_2$) leader of the trade unions, ($A_3$) representative of business associations, or ($A_4$) spokesperson for other powerful groups (the military, the church, the bureaucracy, etc.). The membership function is an
ordinal scale: 1.00 for ministers affiliated with a political party, 0.50 for ministers affiliated with other political organizations; and 0.00 for ministers with no affiliation.

Based on the operationalization of the two components, membership in the set of technocrats and outsiders was measured as:

[1] \[ \text{Technocrat} = \min (E, (1 - A)) \]

[2] \[ \text{Outsider} = \min ((1 - E), (1 - A)) \]

where \( \min \) denotes the minimum membership score (i.e., the intersection of the two defining conditions), \( E = \max (E_1, E_2) \), and \( A = \max (A_1, 0.5A_2, 0.5A_3, 0.5A_4) \). The resulting variables range between 0 (e.g., for non-technocrats of any kind) to 1 (e.g., full members of the technocratic “club”). The degree of membership in the set of partisan ministers is given by \( A \); full members of this group are by implication individuals for whom the variables Technocrat and Outsider have a score of 0.

**Data and Method**

The Argentine political system is a crucial case for testing our hypotheses. It is among the democracies with highest levels of minister turnover and it presents considerable variance for our key explanatory variables as well as for most alternative explanations. Additionally, it is a presidential system, which assures that decisions about portfolio reallocation are mainly handled by the head of the government, a tendency that is consolidating in parliamentary democracies (Poguntke and Webb 2005).

In order to test our hypotheses we observed all 159 ministers in office in seven Argentine administrations from 1983 to 2011. The boundaries of administrations are defined by
presidents’ inauguration dates. The dependent variable is the duration of each minister in a specific portfolio. Because we are interested in the use of portfolio reallocation during the administration’s life cycle, we treated all ministers leaving the portfolio at the end of the administration as censored cases. Exits caused by health reasons were censored as well. We identified 94 ministers leaving their portfolios in the midst of an administration.

The key explanatory factors in our argument, summarized by Table 1, are public approval for the government and minister profiles. Our independent variable approval reflects the proportion of respondents who approved the work of the incumbent administration in national polls between 1983 and 2011. Aggregate monthly figures were compiled from surveys conducted by IPSOS-Mora y Araujo, and the data was interpolated to impute missing values. Figure 2 reflects the evolution of this predictor, with peaks of popularity for Raúl Alfonsín in 1984, Carlos Menem in 1989, Fernando de la Rúa in 1999, and Néstor Kirchner in 2003. The average approval rate was 45% with a minimum of 7% to a maximum of 84%.

**Figure 2: Presidential Approval in Argentina, 1983-2011**

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Source: IPSOS-Mora y Araujo (interpolated)
To capture minister profiles, two additional independent variables follow the operational definition of *Technocrat* and *Outsider* proposed in the previous section. Table 2 shows the profile distribution in each administration. The average membership score in the set of technocrats is 0.46, while the average score for outsiders is 0.17. About 43% of the ministers in our sample are members of the set of *technocrats* to some extent: 1.7% of the ministers have a membership score of 0.25; 14.3% of 0.50; 4% of 0.75; and 22.9% match the ideal type of technocrat, with a membership score of 1.0. In turn, about 33% of the ministers have some membership in the set of *outsiders*: 8% at 0.25; 18% at 0.50; 1.7% at 0.75 and 24% at 1.0.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics

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<td>41-82</td>
<td>17.4-2</td>
<td>9-72</td>
<td>7-24</td>
<td>47-84</td>
<td>22-57</td>
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<td>0.48</td>
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<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.59</td>
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<td>0.32</td>
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<td>1461</td>
<td>706</td>
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<td>11.8(4)</td>
<td>11.1(2)</td>
<td>10.3(3)</td>
<td>10.5(2)</td>
<td>15.8(3)</td>
<td>12(3)</td>
<td>12(21)</td>
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<td>Age (mean)</td>
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<td>52.1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>0.0 (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>10.3 (3)</td>
<td>15.8 (3)</td>
<td>21.1 (4)</td>
<td>20 (5)</td>
<td>9.4 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economist</td>
<td>12.9(4)</td>
<td>14.7(5)</td>
<td>27.8(5)</td>
<td>27.6(8)</td>
<td>36.8(7)</td>
<td>31.6(6)</td>
<td>20(5)</td>
<td>22.9(40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>12.9(4)</td>
<td>5.6(2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.9(2)</td>
<td>21(4)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12(3)</td>
<td>8.6(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>12.3(4)</td>
<td>20.1(7)</td>
<td>38.9(7)</td>
<td>27.6(8)</td>
<td>21(4)</td>
<td>31.6(6)</td>
<td>32(8)</td>
<td>25.1(44)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values in percentages (except when is indicated). Number of cases in parenthesis. *Days

Following the previous literature, we introduce three sets of control variables. The first set reflects the institutional context. *Minority* captures whether the president’s party or coalition has
a minority in any of the legislative chambers. We observed minority governments for about half of the period in our study. *Coalition* registers whether the cabinet includes members of parties other than the president’s. Only two out of seven administrations had coalition cabinets. These attributes are commonly used by the literature to measure institutional constraints and government strength. In addition, all administrations in our sample were controlled by either the PJ (Partido Justicialista) or the UCR (Unión Cívica Radical). Because those parties have different levels of institutionalization and styles of leadership (De Luca 2008), *UCR* is an indicator that captures whether ministers belong to an administration of the Radical party. The possibility of reelection and the time left to the end of the term have been identified as critical factors affecting the strategic use of portfolio reallocation (Camerlo and Pérez-Liñán 2013). *Re-eligible* indicates whether the incumbent president can run for immediate reelection (we observed five re-eligible presidents out of the seven), while *calendar* measures the number of days left to the date of the next presidential inauguration (as provided by the constitution). As indicated previously, research on ministerial expertise has paid special attention to officials in charge of the economy. The *finance* variable identifies ministers occupying this specific portfolio.

The second set of control variables registers the state of the economy, a conventional explanation for portfolio reallocation. *Growth* records quarterly percent change in the gross domestic product and *inflation* registers the monthly percent change in consumer prices. Both indicators were taken from the Argentine National Institute of Statistics and the Census (INDEC). Average economic growth was 3.9%, ranging from -16.3% to 12.6%, while average inflation was 5.7% ranging from -0.75 to 196.6%. Since market-oriented policies were presumably related to the presence of technocrats in the cabinet, we introduce a dichotomous
variable to capture the period when the neoliberal economic plan (“Plan de Convertibilidad”) was in force (April 1991 - December 2001).

The last set of control variables registers the individual background of ministers, including their age and gender. In models not including the measure of technocracy, we also control for whether a minister was an economist and his or her level of formal education (basic, college, graduate). The average age of the observed ministers was 52 years, ranging from 30 to 74, being women only 9.4% of them. Less than 9% had only basic education while about 25% had a graduate degree. Economists represent 23% of the total observations.

We model the duration of ministers in office using a Cox proportional hazards model. Event history analysis allows us to estimate the probability that a minister will exit the portfolio at time $t$. The use of a semi-parametric model allows us to analyze this phenomenon without assuming a specific shape for the hazard function (Blossfeld et al., 2007; Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004).

**Results**

Table 3 presents the results of the hazard analysis of minister turnover. The effect of each covariate is shown in the table as a hazard ratio; for instance, a ratio of 1.5 indicates that a unit increase in the covariate will, *ceteris paribus*, increase the probability of a minister leaving the portfolio by half, while a hazard ratio of 0.5 indicates that a unit increase in the covariate will decrease the current probability of a minister leaving office by half. Model I estimates the unconditional effect of presidential approval on minister turnover controlling for the covariates related to institutional features (*minority, coalition, UCR, re-eligible, calendar, and finance*), economic factors (*economic growth, inflation, and neoliberalism*) and individual backgrounds.
(age, woman, economist, basic education and graduate education). Model II introduces the two non-partisan profiles (technocrat and outsider) as predictors, keeping partisan ministers as the category of reference. Presenting our main results, model III assesses the conditional effects of popular approval and minister profiles. (Model IV addresses issues of endogeneity, discussed in the next section.) Equations II through IV exclude three individual background variables that contain information already incorporated by the minister profile scores (economist, basic education, graduate education).

Model I shows a significant and negative effect of presidential approval on the risk of exit. Each additional percentage point of popular support for the president reduces the relative risk of a minister leaving his or her portfolio by about 2%. This result confirms previous findings (Martínez Gallardo 2011), as well as general presumption that weak presidents are inclined to engage in portfolio reallocation to manage adverse conditions.

Regarding institutional controls, both coalition and minority have positive but insignificant effects. Calendar shows a significant and positive effect, suggesting that the longer the time to the end of the term, the higher the risk of ministers leaving office. All other institutional attributes have insignificant effects, indicating that ministers were equally exposed to anticipated exits irrespective of whether presidents belonged to the UCR or PJ or whether they could be re-elected. Ministers occupying the finance portfolio appeared to be at greater risk; this effect is not significant in Model I but it becomes statistically significant in II and III. The set of economic covariates shows a positive effect for inflation (which encouraged portfolio reallocations) and insignificant results for economic growth and neoliberalism. Finally, none of the variables capturing ministers’ individual backgrounds present significant effects.
Table 3. Proportional Hazard Models of Minister Duration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approval</strong></td>
<td>.976** (.009)</td>
<td>.976* (.009)</td>
<td>.974* (.010)</td>
<td>.972º (.017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technocrat</strong></td>
<td>-.488* (.151)</td>
<td>.866 (.556)</td>
<td>.452 (.334)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outsider</strong></td>
<td>-1.501 (.457)</td>
<td>-.456 (.334)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technocrat*Approval</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.015 (.015)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsider*Approval</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.030º (.016)</td>
<td>1.031º (.017)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Attributes (Strength)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>1.300 (.443)</td>
<td>1.220 (.421)</td>
<td>1.149 (.403)</td>
<td>1.140 (.406)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition</td>
<td>1.188 (.703)</td>
<td>1.013 (.599)</td>
<td>1.042 (.605)</td>
<td>0.989 (.701)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Attributes (Other)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCR party</td>
<td>1.607 (.699)</td>
<td>1.802 (.176)</td>
<td>2.047 (.894)</td>
<td>2.130 (1.142)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-eligible</td>
<td>1.813 (.686)</td>
<td>1.918º (.728)</td>
<td>1.847 (.699)</td>
<td>1.906 (.859)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>1.000* (.000)</td>
<td>1.000º (.075)</td>
<td>1.000 (.000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Portfolio</td>
<td>1.990 (.799)</td>
<td>2.405** (.811)</td>
<td>2.365** (.805)</td>
<td>2.368* (.808)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Conditions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation</td>
<td>1.102* (.005)</td>
<td>1.011* (.005)</td>
<td>1.010º (.005)</td>
<td>1.010º (.006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>.971 (.023)</td>
<td>.972 (.023)</td>
<td>.975 (.023)</td>
<td>.977 (.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neoliberalism</td>
<td>.942 (.273)</td>
<td>.868 (.258)</td>
<td>.871 (.258)</td>
<td>.866 (.259)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Features</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.982 (.016)</td>
<td>.992 (.015)</td>
<td>.994 (.015)</td>
<td>.995 (.015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>.821 (.320)</td>
<td>.919 (.360)</td>
<td>.900 (.353)</td>
<td>.892 (.356)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economist</td>
<td>.678 (.229)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education</td>
<td>1.007 (.379)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Education</td>
<td>.740 (.197)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control function</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.002 (.020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR $\chi^2$</td>
<td>(15) 47.72</td>
<td>(14) 53.43</td>
<td>(16) 58.34</td>
<td>(17) 58.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-373.428</td>
<td>-370.572</td>
<td>-368.118</td>
<td>-368.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob &gt; chi2</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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<td>Observations</td>
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<td>Subjects</td>
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<td>159</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failures</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entries are hazard ratios (standard errors in parentheses); º p < .10, *p <.05, **p <.01.
Model II estimates the risk for technocrats and outsiders, when compared to partisans (the reference category when both fuzzy membership scores are zero). This model confirms that non-partisan ministers are a heterogeneous group with different career dynamics. While technocrats show a lower (and statistically significant) risk of exit, outsiders present a greater (but statistically indistinguishable) risk than partisan ministers. The effect of approval remains negative and significant.

Our argument, however, claims that presidents protect or remove cabinet members depending on popular approval and the minister’s profile. Model III evaluates our hypotheses about conditional effects by including two interaction terms: technocrat*approval and outsider*approval. In this model, the coefficient for approval captures the effect of government popularity for partisan ministers (i.e., when individuals score as 0 for both technocrat and outsider). This effect remains negative and significant: consistent with Hypothesis 1, partisan ministers are more secure in their posts when the government is politically stronger.

Hypothesis 1 also anticipates that technocrats should also be safer in contexts of higher popular support. By contrast, our second hypothesis suggests that the survival of cronies should be independent from government approval. To assess those empirical expectations, Figure 3 compares the marginal effects of approval for different degrees of membership in the sets of technocrats (3.1) and outsiders (3.2). The figure supports both predictions: the effect of approval is negative (i.e., reduces the risk of exit) for partisan as well as technocratic ministers, but it is statistically indistinguishable from zero for ministers with any meaningful degree of membership in the set of outsiders.
Figure 3: Marginal Effect of Presidential Approval for Technocrats and Outsiders

3.1. Effect for Technocrats

3.2. Effect for Outsiders

Note: Values in the vertical axis represent conditional Cox regression coefficients (95% confidence intervals) for Model III. The value when membership in the fuzzy sets is zero (-0.026) reflects the unconditional effect for partisan ministers. The second mediating variable is set to zero in each graph.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 focus instead on the consequences of minister profiles for minister tenure. They predict that when governments are popular, technocrats will confront a lower risk of exit but outsiders will confront a greater risk of exit than partisan ministers. Testing those hypotheses requires reversing the analysis of conditional effects for Model III. Rather than comparing the effect of approval for different minister profiles, in Figure 4 we contrast the marginal effect of profiles at different levels of presidential approval.
Figure 4: Effect of Minister Profiles at Different Levels of Government Approval

4.1. Effect for Technocrats

4.2. Effect for Outsiders

Note: Values along the vertical axis represent conditional coefficients for Cox regression model III (dashed lines are 95% confidence intervals).

Figure 4.1 reflects the consequences of being a technocrat for tenure stability. The coefficient for technocrat in Model III captures the expected effect of individual expertise (i.e., of becoming a full member of the technocratic group) when presidential approval is 0. In this hypothetical scenario, the effect is negative but non-significant. The interaction technocrat*approval reflects the marginal change in the effect of technocracy for each additional percentage point in presidential popularity. The first panel of Figure 4 shows that the conditional...
coefficient for *technocrat* (that is, the effect of technocracy when approval is greater than zero) is negative and significant (at p<.05) for the most relevant range of approval levels. The effect becomes significant when *approval* is higher than 33%, with a hazard ratio ranging from 0.53 (when approval is at 33 points) to 0.30 (at 70 points). That is, when presidential popularity is high, the relative risk of technocrats leaving their portfolios is 70% smaller than the risk for non-technocratic ministers.

Similarly, Figure 4.2 assesses the conditional effect of being an outsider at different levels of popular approval. The coefficient for *outsider* in Model III captures the expected consequences of being an individual with no expertise and no party affiliation when presidential approval is 0. As in the previous case, the effect is negative and not-significant. The interaction *outsider*\**approval* reflects the marginal change in the effect of *outsider* for each additional percentage point in the presidential popularity. This estimate is positive and significant. The second panel of Figure 4 shows that the conditional coefficient for *outsider* becomes positive and significant (at p<.05) when approval is above 49%, with a hazard ratio ranging from 1.98 (when approval is at 49 points) to 5.00 (at 80 points). That is, when presidential popularity is very high, the risk of outsiders leaving their portfolios may be 400% higher than the risk confronted by other ministers.

The comparatively fragile position of outsiders when the government is popular does not reflect an intrinsic change in the position of cronies in the cabinet. Figure 3.2 showed that public support does not affect the tenure of outsiders. However, Figure 3.1 offers strong support for our first hypothesis anticipating a longer tenure for technocrats and partisans. Therefore, it follows that the relative increase in the proportional hazard for outsiders in contexts of high popularity
simply reflects the safer position achieved by the other two groups under such favorable political conditions.

The systematic analysis of conditional effects of popular approval and minister profiles evidences that that fate of different ministers is hard to distinguish when adverse political conditions force governments to engage in reactive portfolio reallocation strategies. However, minister types matter above some threshold of popular approval. Differences in the length of minister tenure become more pronounced as popularity increases and the government is able to employ reallocation strategies more proactively. Our findings clearly support the theoretical expectations articulated in Table 1.

**Endogeneity Concerns**

A potential concern with the findings presented in Table 3 is that presidential approval rates may be correlated with the residual of equations I through III. Reverse causality or (more plausibly) omitted variables could cause endogeneity bias. For example, presidential approval would be endogenous if charismatic presidents were more likely to mobilize mass popular support and also to retain faithful ministers for longer periods. An increase in presidential charisma would simultaneously make the administration more popular and its ministers more durable. But because presidential charisma cannot be measured directly and is omitted from the equation, residual variance in minister duration would be correlated with approval. As a result, empirical estimates for the effect of approval on minister survival would be biased (upward).

Conventional treatments of endogeneity based on instrumental variables are complicated in this context by two features of our study. First, the effect of the potentially endogenous variable is mediated by minister profiles (*technocrat* and *outsider*), meaning that estimates for the two
interaction terms may also be biased. Second, because the main equation is a proportional hazards model, most available implementations of 2SLS or GMM estimators are of little use.

To overcome these limitations, we introduce a control function in Model IV. The control function approach relies on the same foundations of instrumental variable models (Heckman 1978, Hausman 1978), but it allows for a more flexible implementation in non-linear settings (e.g., Petrin and Train 2010, Smith and Blundell 1986). The estimator is implemented in two stages: in the first stage, we predict the level of presidential approval using the exogenous variables in our model and four additional instruments, discussed below. We retrieve the residual of this equation as the control function. In the second stage we re-estimate the proportional hazards model, adding the control function as an independent variable. The intuition behind this procedure is that the new variable in Model IV controls for the portion of presidential approval that is potentially endogenous. In a linear model, this procedure yields the same estimates as the 2SLS estimator, but in a model with interaction terms, it produces more reliable estimates of the parameters of interest (Wooldridge 2010, Sec. 6.2).  

In order to instrument presidential approval, we added four exogenous predictors to the first-stage equation. The first two instruments reflect the performance of the Argentine soccer team in the World Cup. A good role in the World Cup presumably boosts public sentiment, while poor results presumably make public opinion grumpy. To capture those effects, we included a dummy variable reflecting the timing of the World Cup in June and July every four years, and another dummy variable for the same months when the Argentine team made it to the final game. The effect of both variables is significant at p < .01. The first coefficient is negative (-2.1) and the second one is positive (7.4), indicating that bad soccer outcomes slightly hurt presidential approval, while good results may lift approval in about 5 percent points.
The third instrument reflects the growth rate of China’s GDP (as reported by the World Development Indicators). An expansion of China’s economy produces a favorable environment for Argentina’s agricultural exports, indirectly boosting public revenue and thus the image of the incumbent administration (Campello and Zucco 2013). The coefficient for this variable is positive and significant \( (p < .01) \), suggesting that every additional point of economic growth in China represents an improvement of about 1.9 percent for the image of the president in Argentina.

Our last instrument takes advantage of the institutional design of presidential regimes. Comparative studies indicate that presidential approval declines considerably by the third quarter in office (Carlin et al. 2012). Unlike heads of government in parliamentary regimes, presidents cannot control the election calendar, so the timing for this effect in the series is determined exogenously by constitutional design. We included a dichotomous indicator capturing the first six months in office of elected presidents. The coefficient was positive and significant, reflecting a honeymoon advantage of 29 points on average \( (p < .01) \).^{12}

The results of the equation including the control function, presented as Model IV, indicate that our initial estimates are reliable even after accounting for potential endogeneity. Estimates in Models III and IV are almost equivalent in size. Statistical significance for the effect of presidential approval declines slightly for partisan politicians \( (p < .10) \) but it remains at conventional levels for technocrats. The conditional hazard ratio for a unit increase in presidential approval when the minister is a technocrat is 0.956 \( (p < .05) \). Consistent with our previous findings, the effect remains insignificant for outsiders \( (1.00, p = .92) \).^{13}
Discussion and Conclusions

Our results underscore four conclusions of considerable relevance for the emerging literature on cabinet portfolio reallocation. First, although cabinet reshuffles have been conventionally presented as a reactive tool employed by leaders forced to confront adverse situations, we have shown that portfolio reallocation can be employed as a proactive tool. When governments are weak, the chief executive may be forced to pursue cooperative strategies to appease the opposition, but when governments are politically strong, leaders have great leeway to consolidate their control over the cabinet. The empirical evidence indeed confirms that minister survival is considerably more fragile during hard times, but it also shows that leaders are able to engage in selective choices about minister retention and removal when they secure popular support.

Second, the analysis of the Argentine case questions static definitions of government strength focusing exclusively on institutional conditions, such as the level of partisan support in the legislature or the constitutional prerogatives of the executive branch. Because government approval is a real-time proxy for electoral outcomes, it drives the alignment of most political actors in the cabinet and the legislature, and thus allows for changes in portfolio reallocation strategies even while institutional factors remain stable over the short run. Our analysis documented a consistent effect of public support on minister survival, even after we accounted for possible endogeneity of approval rates.

Third, our operationalization of minister types has challenged the assumption that career profiles can be properly captured by a clear-cut dichotomy. We started from the conventional distinction between partisan and non-partisan ministers, but augmented the typology by
identifying two distinct non-partisan profiles: technocrats, who command ample competence in a
given policy area, and outsiders, who lack partisan affiliation as much as expertise and typically
serve as faithful agents of the chief executive. Decisions to retain or replace ministers of each
type reflect divergent incentives, as government leaders seek to maximize different political
resources: governability, competence, and loyalty. Moreover, we have argued that minister
profiles are fruitfully conceptualized as continuous rather than discrete personal attributes, and
advanced an original operationalization that relies on fuzzy set theory.

A more nuanced conceptualization of government strength and minister profiles leads to a
reconsideration of the claim that conventionally links non-partisan ministers and the de-
politicization of public policy. Our empirical findings indicate that technocrats enjoy longer
tenures when the government is more popular and the chief executive can claim credit for
successful policies. At the same time, loyal outsiders remain unscathed by shifts in public
approval. The interaction of credit-claiming and loyalty-procuring incentives among government
leaders creates a pattern by which non-partisan ministers are hard to distinguish (among
themselves and vis-à-vis partisans) in bad times, but technocrats have safer jobs than cronies in
good times.

Each of the four lessons opens new venues for theory development and empirical research
in the field of cabinet reallocation strategies. Because data limitations constrained our analysis to
a single country, further studies will need to explore these insights in other geographic or
institutional contexts (e.g., in parliamentary systems). It is undeniable, however, that the
management of cabinet portfolios may have great political significance beyond the initial
moment of government formation.
Notes

1 See the SEDEPE network datasets (http://sedepe.net/)

2 For the role of technocrats in authoritarian presidentialism see Collier (1979).

3 More recently, post-neoliberal technocrats have been characterized as a new generation of interdisciplinary academics critical of market-oriented policies and international financial institutions. Yet, similar to neoliberal experts, they provide specialized knowledge for the implementation of macro structural policies (de la Torre 2013:35).

4 There is little research on the role of broadly-defined non-partisan ministers in presidential democracies. For an interesting exception see Martínez-Gallardo and Schleiter (2013)

5 Similar concerns are currently being posed by the collective project “Experts and non-partisan ministers in European Democracies”, coordinated by Antonio Costa Pinto (ICS-University of Lisbon) and Antonio Tavares de Almeida (Nova University).

6 The administrations covered are: Alfonsín (1983-1989); Menem I (1989-1995); Menem II (1995-1999); De la Rúa (1999-2001), Duhalde (2001-2003); Kirchner (2003-2007); and Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2011). We ignored three presidents who were in office for less than a week in early 2002 because, since those administrations did not have enough time to make any portfolio reallocations, they do not provide any relevant information for testing our hypotheses.

7 The survey item reads: “In general, do you approve or disapprove the work the national government is doing?” (how much?). National surveys usually involve 1200 respondents. Because the number of categories in the response scale changed in 2004, we applied a correction for later data equivalent to the one used by Gervasoni (2010). Mora y Araujo conducted surveys since October 1984; to anchor the interpolation for earlier dates we employed a data point from an Edgardo Catterberg survey conducted in April 1984. In the absence of previous polls during the democratic transition, we assumed that presidential approval between December 1983 and April 1984 was steady at that level (84%).
Because several ministers served uninterruptedly in office during more than one administration, the total number of subjects of this table increases to 175, exceeding the 159 included in the analysis of the next section.

INDEC figures for the consumer price index have been seriously questioned since 2007. We do not attempt to adjust the series for this (downward) bias in the analysis.

Note that the standard error for the control function in Model IV is technically inaccurate, because the second-stage estimator does not account for the fact that the new variable is an estimate retrieved from the first stage. The problem can be addressed using standard corrections for two-step estimators or bootstrapping the standard errors. For ease of implementation, and since the control function has no substantive meaning in our application, we simply ignored this problem.

To save space we do not report the complete table for the first-stage model, but results are available in the replication file for this study. All the included instruments had significant effects in the first-stage model, with the exceptions of Technocrat and Minority.

To assure exogeneity for this instrument, the indicator does not code a honeymoon for second terms in office (because the possibility of a second term depends on levels of approval by the end of the first term, and because a second inauguration term may involve a reorganization of the cabinet), for Eduardo Duhalde (because he was an appointed caretaker and the timing of his arrival was determined by the collapse of the de la Rúa administration), and for Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (because her inauguration in 2007 was partly seen as a continuation of Nestor Kirchner’s administration).

Excluded instruments in Model IV are relevant, in the sense that they contribute meaningfully to the explanation of the endogenous predictor. The $R^2$ for the approval model using only the exogenous variables in Model III is .55, while the addition of the excluded instruments increases the $R^2$ to .69. We have offered substantive reasons to argue that the four excluded instruments are exogenous, that is,
uncorrelated with minister survival. Moreover, in a hazard model akin to equation III but including the
four instruments, these variables showed insignificant effects.
References


