Cabinets and Ministerial Turnover in the Scandinavian Countries

Martin Ejnar Hansen

Brunel University London

martin.hansen@brunel.ac.uk

Chapter invited for *Routledge Handbook on Scandinavian Politics*,

Edited by Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel

Word count: 6546 (including references)

3rd Draft 5 January 2016

Introduction

When the votes are counted, pundits have spoken and it is clear how many seats the parties have won, the negotiations about forming a government begin. The Head of State, or in the case of Sweden the Speaker of the Parliament, takes advice from the party leaders and based on this decides who should be asked to form a government. All of the Scandinavian countries enjoy negative parliamentarism (see Bergman, 1995), where no investiture vote is necessary, and only when a majority against the government is shown is the government obliged to resign. The scholarship on cabinet formation is vast and much too broad to cover in this chapter. However, when discussing the making and breaking of governments (see Laver and Shepsle, 1996) in this chapter it is possible to limit the theoretical discussion of government formation to a very simple proposition. For all the Scandinavian countries cabinets come in two forms; majority or minority, both can be composed of either a single party or of more than one party through a coalition.

Where there is a formation of a government there must also be a termination, or turnover, of a government. Defining the type of cabinet is an easy matter, but more debate has been forthcoming about how cabinet termination and cabinet change must be defined (for an overview see Lijphart, 1999). Generally, the consensus is that a government is terminated or changed when a) there is an election, b) the Prime Minister changes, c) the partisan composition of the cabinet changes, or d) a voluntary or involuntary resignation by the government is accepted by the Head of State (Browne et al, 1984; 1986). This definition is both sufficiently broad to cover all aspects and sufficiently detailed to allow for categorisation, and as Michael Laver (2003: 23) aptly puts it "…no graduate student will be taken out and shot for using this definition…".

There are limitations to this definition, a situation where the Prime Minister stays the same, but all other cabinet posts change, will be counted as the same government despite a radically different make-up of cabinet personnel. Contrary, a government that wins an election and continues unchanged will be seen as a different government to the one before the election as the bargaining environment has changed with the election. This definition allows us to examine more in detail why cabinets terminate. Majority governments are more stable, more fractionalised party systems have more government terminations, where there is greater support for extreme opposition parties there are more terminations, and lastly, the higher the number of attempts needed for forming the government the more unstable the government (Laver, 2003).

Changes within the cabinet, ministerial turnover or more popularly termed reshuffles, are a matter for the Prime Minister and if in a coalition the party leaders of the governing parties. While changing ministers is not without risk for the Prime Minister (Hansen et al., 2013: 229), it does happen and the international literature suggests a wide range of reasons for this. It might be due to

policy failure or scandal that can be pinned on one particular minister or a general goal of increasing the government popularity among the electorate (Dewan and Dowding, 2005). Intra-party rivals may need to be stopped or placated, or new talent and competence is required for the survival of the government (Huber and Martinez-Gallardo, 2008; Kam and Indridason, 2005). In a study of ministerial turnover in Norway, Sweden and Denmark it was found that the saliency of the ministerial portfolios matter for turnover, but that this effect is moderated by government popularity (Hansen et al., 2013). It should be noted here that in the Scandinavian parliamentary democracies the Prime Minister has the formal power to hire and fire cabinet ministers with the only limitation being the ability to maintain the confidence of the parliament. Under coalition governments the hiring and firing and of ministers might be decentralised informally to the participating party leaders, although the formal power is vested with the Prime Minister.

In the next sections of the chapter each of the five Scandinavian countries will be discussed in relation to cabinet formation, cabinet type, cabinet stability and ministerial turnover, before a concluding section drawing out the similarities and differences between the countries.

Sweden

Swedish governments are formed under an unusual form of negative parliamentarism. Since 1975 the monarch (Head of State) plays no role in the government formation procedure, this role is taken on by the Speaker of the Parliament who presents a Prime Minister candidate for the Parliament to vote on. Before the new government can be formed it must be shown that an absolute majority backs the candidate, i.e. not more than half of the MPs must vote against the candidate. This element was also introduced in 1975 alongside the role of the Speaker in the government formation process (Bergman, 2000: 202). The role played by the Speaker is in reality relatively small and equivalent to that of the Head of State in the other Nordic countries, the parties bargain internally and once it is clear that a candidate can form a government with an absolute majority behind it the Speaker will name that person as his or her candidate.

Historically Sweden has seen a large proportion of single-party minority governments, all but one led by the Social Democrats, though since 2005 coalition governments have been the norm. When the centre-right parties form a government this has since 1979 been exclusively coalition governments. The last single-party centre-right government was the short-lived liberal government, led by Ola Ullsten, which was only in office for little more than a year 1978-1979. After the 2014 election the Social Democrats formed a minority coalition government, the first Social Democratic coalition since Tage Erlander's coalition with the Centre Party in the 1950s, the 2014 government under Stefan Löfven is also the first government where the Greens take part. The 2014 government

came about after an election that produced no majority for either the incumbent centre-right government or the Social Democratic opposition and the right-wing Swedish Democrats holding the balance of power. This resulted in the 'December agreement' in December 2014 where six of the eight parties in the Swedish Parliament agreed that the leader of the largest block should become Prime Minister and that minority governments would get their budgets through, this was done to keep the Swedish Democrats from having any parliamentary influence. However, in October 2015 the Christian Democrats decided to leave the agreement and was swiftly followed in their exit by the three other centre-right parties. At the time of writing the breakdown of the agreement have not had any influence on the position of the Swedish Democrats in the Swedish Parliament, for all intent and purposes their seats are not used by the opposition to place the government in a minority nor are they sought out by the government to help bring its policies through.

Swedish governments are for the most part stable. This is undoubtedly due to the fixed four-year interval between elections.[1] While the possibility of an early exists it is in effect a very limited power, as the Prime Minister cannot call an early election within three months of the last election and it cannot happen after the government have resigned and serves as a caretaker government (Bergman 2000: 204). The Speaker can also call early elections is four successive prime ministerial candidates are voted down by more than half the MPs, however, in all cases the new elections are only held for the period until the next fixed time comes up (Bergman, 2003: 603), and this significantly diminishes the return of holding an early election, which is undoubtedly a reason why this is not used as a Prime Ministerial tool more often, while it is possible de jure to call early elections in Sweden, it is de facto not the case.

Before the constitutional reform of 1970 the risk of government turnover was higher due to the need for a majority in both chambers of the bicameral legislature, with the change to a unicameral legislature this element disappeared (Bergman, 2000: 201). The office of Prime Minister has also seen much stability, Tage Erlander formed ten governments and served from 1946-1969, before Olof Palme took over. Swedish politics in the 1970s were, like Danish politics, quite challenging for the duration and stability of governments. From 1976-1982 saw four governments formed and terminated over the six years. Only four times has the post of Prime Minister changed outside of elections, twice due to the death of the incumbent; Per Albin Hansson passed away in 1946 and Olof Palme was murdered in 1986, once due to the retirement of the party leader, Ingvar Carlsson in 1996, and once when the coalition led by Torbjörn Fälldin broke down in 1978 and was replaced without an election by the liberal single-party government led by Ola Ullsten.

[1] This changed from three year intervals to four year intervals in 1994.

Ministerial turnover outside of elections and outside of the entire government resigning is relatively small in the Swedish cases, Hansen et al (2013) reports 63 cases from 1967-2008, which is nearly 40% below the corresponding number for Norway and Denmark. This might be due to the fixed electoral periods and the use of junior ministers, which are excluded from the 63 cases. However, like in other countries there are examples of ministers serving a very short period of time and resigning or being fired due to scandal or ill-health. Most notably Maria Borelius from the Conservatives who were appointed Minister of Trade in 2006, but resigned after eight days due to a scandal about her not reporting the labour she was using for child care, and hence not paying the correct social fees. The Social Democrat Börje Andersson resigned as Minister of Defence in 1982 after two months on the post due to home sickness, while Social Democrat Sture Henriksson became Minister of Communication in 1957 but committed suicide one month after his appointment. Long-serving ministers are also found in Sweden, with Tage Erlander being the most well-known example with 23 years as Prime Minister and two years of previous cabinet experience, but also Gunnar Sträng who served for more than 21 years as Minister of Finance (1955-1976) deserves a mentioning as a long serving minister on what is usually seen as the most important post after that of the Prime Minister.

Denmark

Danish governments are formed after the party leaders provide their advice to the Queen on who should form the government and what type the government should be. The Queen will appoint the person with the most seats behind him/her as a Royal Examiner to examine the possibilities for forming a government under the instructions given by the party leaders. This process can take anywhere from a day to several weeks, and several rounds examiners might be needed. Once it is clear that there is no outright majority against one person and that person has the most support among the parties, he or she will be asked to form the government and become Prime Minister.

Since 1945 Denmark have primarily had minority governments, with majority governments (all coalitions) only present from 1957-60, 1968-71 and, depending on how the situation of some party defectors are judged, also 1993-94. Single-party governments had until 2015 not been known since the resignation of the Social Democratic government in 1982, but after the 2015 election the Liberals formed a single-party government with only 34 seats of the 179 possible, this is still a much more comfortable situation since last time the Liberals attempted government alone, where they for just over twelve months from 1973-75 formed a government with only 22 parliamentary seats.

In comparison to other Scandinavian countries, Danish governments are less stable. This is first and foremost due to the Prime Minister having the right to call early elections and this right has

been used extensively. Erik Damgaard (2000: 253-258) demonstrates that Danish Prime Ministers in the vast majority of cases make use of this right and dissolve parliament before the four-year electoral period is over. Government turnover without an election has only happened twice; the Social Democrats left office in September 1982 after a long and arduous fight to right the economy, the Conservative led coalition who took over managed to stay in power until 1993 when they themselves turned over power without elections to the Social Democrats due to a scandal regarding the Ministry of Justice's handling of Tamil (from Sri Lanka) refugee cases. Government change where a coalition partner left the government and it continued without the partner has been equally limited; the Centre Democrats left the Social Democratic led coalition in 1996 and most recently the Socialist People's Party left another Social Democratic led government in 2014, both cases did not result in a new election. New elections are also not called when a Prime Minister resigns between elections or passes away. The latter happened twice in the 1950s, Hans Hedtoft and H.C.Hansen both died in office, whereas Viggo Kampmann, Jens-Otto Krag and Anders Fogh Rasmussen all resigned without an election and were replaced as Prime Ministers by a member of their own party.

While the Danish governments are less stable than their Scandinavian counterparts the internal turnover of ministers is very much aligned with the Norwegian rate, while Sweden is much lower (Hansen et al., 2013: 238-239). This is both with respect to general turnover, i.e. where the government changes, but also turnover within the period. Generally, Danish Prime Ministers tend to turnover their ministers for the well-established reasons; new blood and new ideas. Yet, there are also numerous examples of long-serving ministers who have successfully changed ministerial posts, but stayed in government for longer periods; the Liberal Bertel Haarder was first appointed a minister in 1982 and left with the government in 1993. He was re-appointed under a new Liberal government in 2001 and served until its demise in 2011. After the 2015 election he was once again made a cabinet minister. These examples are rare, more often occurring are the removal of ministers for various reasons. Health reasons play a less important role than it used to, but scandals and party internal issues are more prevalent leading to direct firings of ministers. A noted example of this befell the Centre Democrat Bente Juncker in 1994 who served two weeks before being fired over derogatory statements made about mentally disabled people living near her vacation house. An example of internal party issues becoming an issue for ministerial turnover happened when the Socialist People's Party changed party leader in October 2012. This meant that two of their ministers were fired by the new party leader to make room for herself and another colleague. While the changes in Danish governments are the prerogative of the Prime Minister there is a norm that each coalition partner is responsible for their ministers and the party leader can hire and fire somewhat freely.

Finland

The prerogative of selecting who should form the government used to lie with the Finnish President after taking advise from the party leaders. This used to be extremely important for the fragmented Finnish party system that the President could select the candidate for the post of prime minister and provide the instructions under which the government was to be formed. However, since 2000 it is the Parliament that elects the Prime Minister who is then officially appointed by the President. Generally government formation through coalition building in Finland can take some time to be complete, not least due to less clear party alliances. This has also had an impact on the type of governments Finland has seen. The Finnish Presidency has also undergone changes which mean that it today is a less powerful office than it was during most of the latter half of the 20th Century. The main reason for this was a move under President Urho Kekkonen who from 1956-1982 moved the Finnish presidency towards a very activist role and expanded his authority to domestic politics (Nousiainen, 2001: 101). The Finnish presidency was always important when it came to foreign policy. The geographical location of Finland which saw it neighbouring the Soviet Union meant that Finnish foreign policy had to balance the wishes of the Soviet Union with that of a democratic nation. This approach was termed 'Finlandization' which was a policy that by many was seen as subservient to the Soviet Union (Karvonen, 2014: 34-35) and meant that President Kekkonen used his powers to secure governments that were not questioning this element of policy. When Mauno Koivisto became President in 1982 a gradual normalization towards the Soviet Union began coinciding with reforms within the Soviet Union itself. President Koivisto also turned out to be a less activist president than his predecessor and the presidency returned to its more traditional pre-Kekkonen style (Nousiainen, 2001: 101).

For many years Finland saw primarily over-sized coalitions and one explanation given was that a number of laws required a two-thirds majority to pass, e.g. taxation (Nousiainen, 2000: 269), which meant the governments not enjoying this majority were limited in what policies they could pass. However, this does not hold when taking into account that his requirement was abolished in 1991 and yet, since 1983 Finland has only had oversized coalitions, and where they did exist in earlier times, they were often replaced with single-party or caretaker governments (Karvonen, 2014: 78-79). Though an explanation traditionally given more precedence is the wish to avoid bloc coalitions, although in recent years this might have diminished somewhat. In relation to the other countries examined in this chapter Finland is the country with most instability when it comes to governments, although as Nousiainen (2000: 273) remarks there appears to have been a shift in the

stability from the early 1980s onwards towards much more stable cabinets. Karvonen (2014: 103) goes as far as to argue that the change of President from Urho Kekkonen to Mauno Koivisto in 1982 can be seen as an important event for the durability of Finnish cabinets which is notably longer post-1982 than it was under before and under Kekkonen.

Since 1945 Finland has seen 38 cabinets, of which seven have been caretaker cabinets formed when the President decided that government formation was problematic and new elections would not yield a better outcome. The caretaker cabinets have been a mixture of partisan and non-partisan, though Finland has not required such a cabinet since 1975. The election periods are for four years and have been so since 1956, since 1991 it has become very difficult to call early elections (Karvonen, 2014: 101); though no early election has been called since 1975. The high number of cabinets is also a function of the tendency of governments to change very little, but according to the definitions discussed earlier in this chapter requiring the counting as new governments. Take for instance the electoral period 1975-1979 which saw five governments; a caretaker government followed by a Centre Party led coalition with four other parties, a Centre Party led coalition with two of the previous governing parties having left the previous coalition, a Social Democratic led coalition consisting of the same parties as the first Centre Party led coalition, and finally another Social Democratic led coalition with one of the parties of the previous government leaving the new one.
This complexity does result in a large number of cabinets, although it must also be pointed out that in recent years more stability has been present. Though the record for the shortest cabinet is from recently, where Anneli Jäätteenmäki from the Centre Party only survived 68 days a Prime Minister after the 2003 election where it was found that she had lied about how she obtained confidential documents from the Foreign Ministry and had used them in her election campaign. However, the coalition which was formed after the 2003 election continued just with a different Prime Minister.

The large turnover of governments, especially in the earlier periods covered in this chapter also means that there is less scope from ministerial turnover outside of an entire party leaving the government. Despite the often turnover ministers have had long tenure when combining their service. Johannes Virolainen served nearly 17 years between 1951 and 1979, and Paavo Matti Väyrynen served over 16 years between 1975 and 2011. On the shorter tenures, death and illness are obvious explanations for some short tenure, Swedish People's Party minister Henrik Kullberg served for 17 days in Sakari Tuomioja's caretaker government before his passing. Paavo Rantanen, who was appointed as a non-partisan Foreign Minister in 1995 after his predecessor Heikki Haavisto had to resign due to ill health, only served for two months until the election in 1995 where Esko Aho's government was replaced by a large oversized coalition without Esko Aho's Centre Party.

Norway

The Norwegian Constitution places the responsibility for appointing cabinet ministers with the King. In practice the King asks each party leader for advice and once it is clear that one party leader is preferred the King will ask him or her to form the government. The process is usually very short and rarely takes more than one round (Narud and Strøm, 2000: 172). Norwegian governments require no vote of investiture and the government is assumed to have the confidence of the parliament until otherwise proven. The government can even suffer defeats in parliament and only if the lost motion has been designated a motion of no confidence must the government resign (though see Rasch, 1987).

For a long time coalition governments in Norway were the prerogative of the centre-right parties, and except for Per Borten's government in the 1960s, they rarely survived an election. Up until the 2005 election the Social Democrats had never taken part in a coalition government and Jens Stoltenberg was the first Social Democratic Prime Minister to lead such a government. Only one non-social democrat single-party government has seen the light of day in Norway, a single-party Conservative government from 1981-83, which was replaced by coalition government led by the same Conservative Prime Minister, Kaare Willoch. Coalition governments in Norway have so far been equally split between majority and minority ones, whereas single-party governments have seen a slight overweight of minority governments. Hanne Marthe Narud and Kaare Strøm (2000: 159) reported that coalition governments had become less likely, which was undoubtedly true at the time, but from 2001 onwards Norway has seen nothing but coalition governments.

The Norwegian Prime Minister cannot call an early election, which means that if the government experiences a vote of no-confidence a new government will have to be formed without an election being called. This was for instance the case when the Conservative led Willoch government could not secure a majority for its budget in 1986 (Narud and Strøm, 2000: 186). The lack of early elections means that many Norwegian governments last the entire four years. However, there have also been some examples of governments being formed and lasting only a short period of time, not least the first centre-right coalition led by the Conservative John Lyng in 1963 which only lasted 24 days and was defeated on its government declaration, incidentally John Lyng only formed a government after the Labour party was forced to resign mid-term. A similar situation happened in 1972 when Social Democrat Prime Minister Trygve Bratteli chose to resign and Christian Democrat Lars Korvald was given the chance to form another coalition, which lasted a few days short of a year. After the 1989 election Conservative Jan P. Syse formed a coalition government but little more than

a year later had to resign and let previous Prime Minister, the Social Democrat Gro Harlem Brundtland form her third government.

The ministerial turnover outside of elections and collective resignation of the entire government is at the same level as in Denmark. Government serving for a short period of time, like that of John Lyng, produces ministers with equal short seniority, although as the government resigned as one it does not count as ministerial turnover as such, neither does the person with the shortest ministerial tenure, Astrid Heiberg, who only managed three weeks in 1986 before Kaare Willoch's government fell. Ministerial turnover can have several reasons, this wish for new blood is one, but also ill-health and scandal can play a role. The latter happened when Terje Rød-Larsen left government less than three weeks after being appointed after questions were asked about his private financial dealings in relation to a government funded project he had previously been involved with. Likewise forced to resign was Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen in 1998 just four months after taking office as Minister for Children and Equality due to accusations of her appointing a close personal friends as Ombudsman for Children instead of renewing the tenure of the incumbent. Health reasons saw the leader of the Centre Party Åslaug Hauga resign in June 2008 after a prolonged media critique concerning violations against the building code at her home. Though these examples are in the minority, ministerial turnover in Norway appears primarily to be used for party political reasons, and it is far from all ministers who end up with a short tenure, though the frequent change over between centre-right coalitions and Social Democratic single-party governments in the 1970s and 1980s naturally meant short tenures were not unusual, but ministers mostly went when the entire government went. Contrary, the longest serving ministers in Norway it has turned out to be mostly those who end up a Prime Ministers, of the five with most seniority post-1945 it is only Halvard Lange who did not become Prime Minister, but served as Foreign Minister for nearly twenty years (1946-1965) only interrupted by John Lyng's short-lived government in 1963.

Iceland

The Icelandic President is the person who, after taking advice from the party leaders, decides who will be given the chance to form a government. This would normally fall to the leader of the largest party who can command support for his or her premiership. There is no vote of investiture to pass for a new government, and a loss on a parliamentary vote is not equal to a loss of confidence in the government. This negative parliamentarism is usually seen as conductive for the formation of minority governments (Bergman, 1995), however, something very different can be observed in Iceland.

Icelandic governments are alongside Finland outliers in the Scandinavian context with the frequency of majority coalition, and it is coalition formation appears much more competitive than its Scandinavian partners not least due the clientelistic roots of Icelandic politics (Indridason, 2005: 439). The roots of Icelandic clientelism can be traced to two main issues. First, the formation of Icelandic parties, which despite its legislative home rule from 1874 did not get executive home rule until 1904.[2] Second, the lack of an effective and strong bureaucracy meant that the parties were not held in check and could each develop their strong clientelism towards specific groups (see also Kristinsson, 2001; Kristjansson and Indridason, 2011).

Iceland has seen no minority government and no single-party government since the 1979 Social Democratic government led by Benedikt Gröndal, which only lasted little over three months. Indeed, Iceland has only seen four single-party governments since 1945 none of which have survived in office much longer than six months. All of the coalitions have involved at least one of the three major parties; the Social Democrats, the Conservatives, and the Progressive Party, with the latter two forming the more obvious coalition. Coalitions of all three major parties used to be normal, but was last seen in the government led by Thorsteinn Palsson from 1987-1988.

The Icelandic Prime Minister has the right to call early elections, and this has been used in about half of the Icelandic cabinets for various reasons, for instance it was used in 1974 by the then Prime Minister Olafur Johannesson to avoid a vote of no confidence. Despite the possibility of calling early elections there has been quite some turnover of cabinets without elections. In one instance this was due to ill-health of the Prime Minister, Olafur Thors, who left office for Bjarni Benediktsson in 1963, but the coalition stayed the same. This was also the case when Bjarni Benediktsson passed away in 1970 while Prime Minister and was succeeded by Johann Hafstein with the same coalitional makeup. Yet cabinet turnover between elections also happens for policy reasons. In 2009 heavy protests broke out in Iceland in relation to the financial crisis which hit the country hard, then Prime Minister Geir Haarde called an early election and announced he was stepping down after the election due to suffering from cancer. However, long before the elections could be held Geir Haarde was forced to resign and turned the premiership over to Social Democrat Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, the first female Icelandic Prime Minister, who also formed the government after the 2009 general election was held.[3]

[2] From 1917-1944 Iceland was the Kingdom of Iceland under an act of union with the Kingdom of Denmark and declared its independence from Denmark in 1944.

[3] Geir Haarde was later indicted for negligence in relation to the financial crisis on Icleand and convicted on one count but would face no penalty.

Generally Icelandic cabinets appear to have been relatively sheltered from between elections turnover due to scandals. Nevertheless, a few situations which led to ministerial turnover have happened. Notably, Albert Guðmundsson, the first Icelandic professional football player, who had to resign as Minister of Industry in 1987 due to a tax scandal, and Björgvin G. Sigurðsson who stepped as Minister for Business Affairs in 2009 taking responsibility for how the financial crisis impacted Iceland. Most recently Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir had to step down in 2014 as Minister of Interior after serving about 18 months due her attempt to interfere with a police investigation of a leak stemming from her office. While these are just some examples, there is very little turnover within cabinets. The earlier Icelandic cabinets were very small and when they functioned for a very short time it rarely meant that turnover in form of reshuffles took place. With the somewhat more stable governments from the mid-1990s onwards there have been more reshuffles, not least due to the usual reason of getting new blood into the government.

Comparing the Scandinavian Countries

Depending on what the goal is, a comparative study including all five of the countries covered in this chapter might provide some issues. All five countries form their government under negative parliamentarism with the involvement of a Head of State, or similar person, to select who forms the government. However, the outcome in terms of government type varies considerably.

Finland is an outlier due to its frequent oversized majority coalition governments and Iceland can similarly be viewed as an outlier due to its frequent majority coalitions. Denmark has only very infrequently seen majority governments and has gotten used to minority coalitions, although the latest general election in 2015 returned a single-party minority government with the least parliamentary support of a government since 1973. Sweden also has many minority governments although single-party ones, mostly formed by the Social Democrats, have been a frequent occurrence in the past. Indeed, it was not before the 2014 election in Sweden that the Social Democrats went into a coalition government. Very knowledgeable researchers almost spelled the end of coalition governments in Norway around 2000, their demise might have been predicted a tad too early as all cabinets in Norway since 2001 have been of the coalition type. Table 1 presents an overview of the cabinet types of the Scandinavian countries.

Table 1: Majority Status of Scandinavian Governments 1945-2015

	Majority		Minority	
	Single-party	Coalition	Single-party	Coalition
Denmark	0	4	11	17
Norway	4	6	9	6

Sweden	2	6	15	3
Finland	0	30	3	5
Iceland	0	29	4	0

Note: From Narud and Strom (2000), Bergman (2000), Damgaard (2000), Nousiainen (2000), Karvonen (2014), Indridason (2005) and updated by the author.

In Table 2 an overview of the broad reasons for cabinet termination in the five Scandinavian countries is presented. It is possible to identify two broad types of termination and hence turnover, electoral and non-electoral. Electoral termination requires either a regular or an early election. Non-electoral termination is either due to the resignation or death of the Prime Minister, a change in the partisan composition of the cabinet or a defeat in parliament not resulting in an early election. Danish governments are by far terminated by early elections, which might stem from defeats in parliaments. While it is de jure possible in Sweden to call early elections it is de facto not the case, in Norway it is not possible under any circumstances to call early elections. Finnish governments are just as often terminated due to changes in the cabinet composition as for other constitutional reasons. Whereas Icelandic cabinets stand an equal chance of being terminated early and serve the full electoral period of four years.

Table 2: Cabinet termination 1945-2015

	Regular election	Other constitutional reason	Death of PM	Early election	Change of cabinet composition	Defeat in parliament
Denmark	6	4	2	21	3	10
Norway	17	6	0	0	1	4
Sweden	20	2	2	1	1	0
Finland	15	8	0	4	8	3
Iceland	12	2	1	12	3	1

Note: From Narud and Strom (2000), Bergman (2000), Damgaard (2000), Nousiainen (2000), Karvonen (2014), Indridason (2005) and updated by the author.

It is more difficult to present a comparative view of ministerial turnover in the five Scandinavian countries. Lack of research on Finland and Iceland means that the findings that can be presented are based on Sweden, Denmark and Norway (see Hansen et al, 2013) which finds only limited support for the hypothesis of Huber and Martinez-Gallardo (2008) that coalition governments experience fewer turnovers than single-party governments. Regardless of whether the studies of ministerial turnover were to be expanded to Finland and Iceland, it does not include focus on the intricacies of why ministers turnover, i.e. the extent to which it is a resignation by a minister

or whether the minister was actually fired. Some examples have been put forward in this chapter of situations that lead to turnover, but mostly this is in relation to scandals. More difficult is the type of turnover that appear to have no particular background, but where a thorough examination of the party situation and the parliamentary spoils given or not given to previous ministers might yield more information than what we currently know.

Scandinavian cabinets are all governed by negative parliamentarism, yet there are differences in terms of early termination, but also in the usage of oversized coalitions and stable coalition patterns that makes the five countries discussed in this chapter alike in some aspects and different in others. The traditional comparisons of the Scandinavian systems tend to focus on Sweden, Norway and Denmark with Finland and Iceland often not included. From the discussions presented here this is perhaps not surprising. The most notable difference being the very strong presence of majority coalition governments in the two countries where minority governments are more prevalent in the three countries traditionally compared. In this respect there are still many questions that remain unanswered when it comes to cabinet and ministerial turnover in the Scandinavian countries, for instance are majority coalitions more stable when it comes to ministerial turnover, or is the stability circumvented by frequent changes in coalition partnerships? But also questions like the reason for ministerial turnover that cannot be strictly attributed to scandal. Hansen et al (2013) presented one view on this topic where the connection between portfolio saliency and government popularity was explored, but did not examine in detail the particular reasons for changeover. For comparisons the differences between the Finnish and Icelandic systems on the one hand and the Swedish, Norwegian and Danish systems on the other hand must be considered. Yet, also the large differences between the relative instability in Finland before the early 1980s should be taken into consideration in a cross-temporal comparison as it might not be entirely correct to view the case as similar across time. This also suggests that while a most-similar systems design is obvious for comparison of the Scandinavian countries there are minor differences that should be heeded when comparing cabinet and ministerial turnover.

References

Bergman, Torbjörn, 1995. *Constitutional Rules and Party Goals in Coalition Formation*. Umeå: Department of Political Science.

Bergman, Torbjörn. 2000. Sweden: When Minority Cabinets Are the Rule and Majority Governments the Exception. In Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strøm (eds.) *Coalition Government in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.192-230.

Bergman, Torbjörn. 2003. Sweden: From Separation of Power to Parliamentary Supremacy – and Back Again?. In Kaare Strøm, Wolfgang C. Müller and Torbjörn Bergman (eds.) *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Browne, Eric C., John P. Frendreis and Dennis W. Gleiber. 1984. An "events" approach to the problem of cabinet stability. *Comparative Political Studies*17: 167-197.

Browne, Eric C., John P. Frendreis and Dennis W. Gleiber. 1986. The process of cabinet dissolution: an exponential model of duration and stability in Western democracies. *American Journal of Political Science* 30: 628-650.

Damgaard, Erik. 2000. Denmark: The Life and the Death of Government Coalitions. In Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strøm (eds.) *Coalition Government in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.231-263

Dewan, Torun and Keith Dowding. 2005. The Corrective Effect of Ministerial Resignations on Government Popularity. *American Journal of Political Science* 49: 46-56.

Hansen, Martin Ejnar, Robert Klemmensen, Sara B. Hobolt and Hanna Bäck. 2013. Portfolio Saliency and Ministerial Turnover: Dynamics in Scandinavian Postwar Cabinets. *Scandinavian Political Studies* 36: 227-248.

Huber, John D. and Cecilia Martinez-Gallardo. 2008. Replacing Cabinet Ministers: Patterns of Ministerial Stability in Parliamentary Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 102: 169-180.

Indriðason, Indridi. 2005. A theory of coalitions and clientelism: Coalition politics in Iceland, 1945-2000. *European Journal of Political Research* 44: 439-464.

Kam, Christopher and Indridi Indriðason. 2005. The timing of cabinet reshuffles in Five Westminister Parliamentary Systems. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 30: 327-364.

Karvonen, Lauri. 2014. *Parties, governments and voters in Finland*. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Kristinsson, Gunnar Helgi. 2001. Clientelism in a Cold Climate: The Case of Iceland. In Simone Piattoni (Ed.) *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kristjansson, Svanur and Indridi H. Indridason. 2011. Iceland: Dramatic Shifts. In Torbjörn Bergman and Kaare Strøm (eds.) *The Madisonian Turn: Political Parties and Parliamentary Democracy in Nordic Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Laver, Michael. 2003. Government Termination. *Annual Review of Political Science* 6: 23-40.

Laver, Michael and Kenneth Shepsle. 1996. *Making and Breaking Governments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Narud, Hanne M. and Kaare Strøm. 2000. Norway – A Fragile Coalitional Order. In Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strøm (eds.) *Coalition Government in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.158-191.

Nousiainen, Jaakko. 2000. Finland: The Consolidation of Parliamentary Governance. In Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strøm (eds.) *Coalition Government in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 264-299.

Nousiainen, Jaakko. 2001. From Semi-presidentialism to Parliamentary Government: Political and Constitutional Developments in Finland. *Scandinavian Political Studies* 24: 95-109.

Rasch, Bjørn Erik. 1987. Manipulation and Strategic Voting in the Norwegian Parliament. *Public Choice* 52: 57-73.