

Finland

Vanderbilt

During the pre-1945 period Finland was a democratic state with a semi-presidential system (see Lijphart, 1999: 121; Shugart and Carey, 1993:5; Stepan and Skach 1993: 5). Thus, we code this period as a mixed regime. Following its independence from the emerging Soviet Union in 1917, Finland entered a period of civil strife. After the civil war, Marshal Mannerheim acted as regent overseeing a new constitution and elections. He was an interim leader. In general elections, Mannerheim was then defeated by Janko Ståhlberg of the National Progressive Party (Kansallinen Edistyspuolue – ED) who became the first president and would govern until 1925 (Biografiakeskus 2011; Office of the President 2009; wordstatesmen.org).

To determine whether there is a SOLS change from Mannerheim to Stahlberg, Stahlberg's SOLS needs to be compared to the last regular leader's. The leader prior to Mannerheim was Svinhufvud. Svinhufvud was approved as leader by the parliament of the newly independent Finland in 1917. Civil war broke out shortly thereafter and Svinhufvud) was voted provisional leader on May 18, 1918. Because he can be considered the regular leader of Finland for a short period after independence (Prakke and Kortmann 2004: 188, Upton 1980: 177), we compare Stahlberg's SOLS to Svinhufud's. Stahlberg's SOLS was the ED, while Svinhufvud he belonged to the National Coalition Party (see Finish Parliament HP). This is a SOLS change.

Following the 1925 elections, parliament elected the candidate from the Agrarian Party (Maalaisliitoksi – ML), Lauri Kristian Relander, as president, which is a SOLS change, given the different party affiliation. Relander governed for six years, but was then replaced by Svinhufvud of the conservative National Coalition (Kansallinen Kokoomus – KOK) following the 1931 elections, which is another SOLS change.

In 1937 the Agrarian Party (ML) returned to power under president Kallio who governed until 1940. This is a SOLS change. (Note that Kallio endured health issues during large parts of 1938 and 1939 (*Biografiakeskus 2011, office of the president 2009, wordstatesmen.org*)).

Kallio was succeeded in 1940 by Risto Ryti (ED), who, as prime minister, had increasingly become responsible for Finland's foreign policy due to Kallio's illness. Though Ryti was initially only appointed as interim President until the end of Kallio's term in 1943, the realities of the Second World War led parliament to prolong his presidency and he became a regular President. Thus this transition is a SOLS change.

In 1944, Finland saw itself in a losing war with the Soviet Union and accepted Soviet peace terms. This led to a change of government. Consequently, Marshal Mannerheim returned to power supported by a majority in parliament (SOLS change) (Biografiakeskus 2011, office of the president 2009, wordstatesmen.org). We code Mannerheim's SOLS as non-party. Although Mannerheim was Marshal, his government was not military in nature.

In 1946 "Mannerheim resigned for health reasons" (Library of Congress 1988) and Juho Paasikivi of the conservative National Coalition Party (KOK) became president. This is a SOLS change. In 1956 Urho Kekkonen of the Farmers League- Finnish Centre Party (ML/KESK)

became president. This is a SOLS change. In 1981, Mauno Koivisto of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) initially became acting president and then regular president. This is a SOLS change. In 1994 Martti Ahtisaari, SDP, became president. This is not a SOLS change. In 2000 Tarja Halonen, SDP, became president. This is not a SOLS change.

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