

The Policy Influencing Capacity of the Hungarian Parliament

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My paper aims to analyze the policy influencing capacity of the Hungarian Parliament in the light of the amount and the variance of the proposed amendments to the government bills. I will show which circumstances and features of the bills can facilitate more amendments, and I will examine which of these variables prove to be determinant in the Hungarian Parliament, thus what factors foster the deliberative function of the Parliament and on the contrary how can governments avoid receiving overwhelming amount of amendments in the legislature.

The Role of the Parliaments in Law-making

As it has been argued by many scholars, parliaments in modern democracies have limited influence on the law production (Bryce, Blondel, Polsby, Mezey, Norton, Döring). The decline of the legislatures can be observed parallel to the raise of the party group discipline in the legislatures (Bryce).

As a consequence, basically we can only talk about the influence or the resistance parliaments can mean on law production. The notion of viscosity introduced by Blondel also aims to reflect much legislatures can resist the dominance of the government and can affect the law-making: 'As the legislatures become freer, the time spent on debate increases and amendments are discussed and indeed passed' (Blondel 1970, pp 200-207).

Norton distinguished the following types of legislatures: (1) policy-making legislature, which can formulate and substitute a policy proposed by the government and have to capacity to initiate and pass own bills, (2) policy-influencing legislatures can modify or reject government bills but can not substitute a policy of their own. Finally (3) legislatures with little or no policy impact are the ones which can not do any of these (Norton 1984, pp178). Norton finds that the vast majority of the Western democracies have policy-influencing parliaments, accordingly in case the governing party or coalition has the majority in the parliament, the will of the government prevails regarding both agenda setting and decision making, thus voting. The relevance of agenda setting is ensured by the fact that parliaments have the monopoly of law production, thus only those proposals can become an act, which could get on the agenda of the parliament.

Hence the law production is clearly dominated by the government and the supporting governing party groups. As long as they can maintain the party and the coalition discipline in the parliament, the opposition has not got a chance to influence the law-making in case of simple majority legislation.

The decision making became highly centralized, the legislative and the executive power is fused, the decision making core of the governments and the party groups is often merged, even though where the decisive power lays can differ. Dealing with the party group roles Heidar and Koole argue that there are four types of relationships between the party, the government and the party group, specifically (1) the party group rules the government and the party, (2) the party group is a tool of the government but it rules the party outside, (3) the party group rules the government, but not the party outside, (4) it is only a voting body. Blondel and Cotta also categorizes the governments based on the measures of their dependence on their parties, they distinguish (1) patrimonial party government, (2) partisan government, (3) limited party-dependent government, and (4) semi-autonomous government. (Blondel & Cotta 2000, pp 215-221).

Based on these findings it can be stated that contraire to the opposition parties the government parties have a significant chance to influence the decision making including law production in a lot of cases.

In the European democracies the governments are typically elected by the members of the parliament and generally also dependent on them through the motion of non-confidence. Hence the relationship of the MPs and the government can be interpreted as principals delegating their authority of decision making to agents to reach more specialized and effective ways of the preparation of decisions. Yet, the delegation always carries the risk of agency loss, thus the agents deviate their mandate and follow their own ideas. This can happen since the agents have more information and as separate actors they can often have different interest as well. Therefore it is important for the principals, in our case for the MPs to have the possibility to prevent or at least decrease the chance of agency loss (Strom 1995, pp59-61).

Kiewet and McCubbins identify four ways to safeguard against agency loss: (1) contract design by establishing shared interest, (2) screening and selection mechanisms, (3) monitoring and reporting requirements and (4) institutional checks.

From these methods the first two has an important role when formulating the government, namely drafting the coalition contract and nominating the Prime Minister. But to control the operating government, to monitor their activity and apply institutional checks the legislation provides suitable arena. Here the MPs and party groups can overview and discuss in detail the proposals of the government, what can be especially interesting in case of a proposal coming from a coalition partner, thus from an other party.

This is why Tsebelis argues that not the number of the parties in the parliament, but in the government matter for law-making, namely the number of important laws passed in a legislature is inversely related to the number of parties in government, the ideological distance between them and their internal cohesion. The reason for this is that to reach policy change there must be a common win set of the parties, a new solution closer to all the coalition parties' preference than the status quo, otherwise it is not possible to get the support for the proposal in the parliament. This means that all the government parties are veto players. (Tsebelis 1995, pp83).

It is easy to see that if the party groups do not agree on the proposals of the government, a compromise has to be reached through a deliberation in order to gain their approval and to pass a law. This way the deliberative and the legislative function is connected. The more discussion helps to inform and educate the MPs themselves as well as the voters. On the other hand the more discussion also gives the chance for more influence on the legislative outcome for the Parliament.

This explains why I decided to examine the measures of amendments rather than the proposed non-governmental bills, since here there is more space for the parliaments in general to have an effect on the law production in this perspective, and luckily this is also a question what was not studied in details concerning the Hungarian legislation so far.

The Scope of the Analysis

I will analyze which conditions lead to more proposed amendments to the bills initiated by the *government*¹ between 1998 and 2006.² This question has relevance since the modern

¹ Excluding ratification bills, which do not get amendments in the national parliaments by nature

parliaments are rather policy influencing than policy making bodies, which mean that they can rather amend government bills, the measures of their successful initiations is under the relevant measures. In the case of the Hungarian Parliament this means that 90 % of the adopted bills were proposed by the government, so these are the bills the Parliament is really occupied with therefore it makes more sense to examine the amendments proposed by the MPs and committees than the proposed bills themselves. An other reason why the amount of proposed amendments is important is that they have influence on the time needed to pass a bill and can put a burden on the law production, given that time is a scarce resource for the governments in the parliaments (Döring, 1995, pp223-224), so they have concentrate on effective time management, plus they can result in an amended text in case they are voted and decrease the coherence of the content of the bill and derive from the policy intention of the government. Consequently the government has an interest in keeping the number of the proposed amendments low.

My analysis only deals with the number of proposed amendments regardless of the initiator and the acceptance of the amendments. Obviously, the amendments proposed by the committees³ and government MPs have a way higher chance to be accepted than the proposals of the opposition, because of the reasons explained above. Accordingly distinguishing the initiators is relevant, but not part of my recent paper. Also, comparing the number of proposed amendments with the measures of alteration of the originally proposed text will speak about the success and is definitely interesting to study. This comparison needs further research what will be conducted in the near future.

Examined Circumstances and Hypotheses for fostering Amendment Proposals

When we take a look at the number of the proposed amendments there can be several variables with a significant influence, yet this analysis is restricted to deal with the following ones: type of coalition, policy field, the number of designated committees, the length of the bill, whether the bill is a new regulation or an amendment bill, whether it is

² The data was collected in the framework of the Central European Observatory: Executive Governance and Patterns of Legislation in Central Europe project at the European Institute of the London School of Economics conducted by Radoslaw Zubek

³ The ratio of the of the seats of the Party Groups is reflected by the ratio of the seats in the standing committees

an EU transposition or domestic regulation, urgency procedure, and whether urgency procedure was applied.

Even though my analysis is restricted to the listed explanatory variables, I would like to note that there can be other relevant variables, which can be subject of further analysis like whether the bill needs supermajority, how much support it gained on the final vote (whether it was supported by the overwhelming majority of the Parliament), how much time was left till the end of the session when it was submitted, or whether it was put on the legislative plan of the government or was it submitted extra to it.

Coming back to the examined variables, Tsebelis discusses the effect of the *type of governments and coalitions* on law-making. During the considered period there was one oversized majority and two minimum winning coalitions in Hungary, so I will only compare the effects of these types of coalitions here. Tsebelis argues that minimum winning coalitions are more likely to be successful in law production because the number of the veto players is lower than in the case of the oversized coalitions where even though the one of the coalition partners could be ignored when passing a bill, but this can lead to serious conflicts in the coalition, endangering the future of cooperation and even the existence of the coalition, therefore the oversized majorities tend to regard the preferences of all coalition partners even if their vote would not be necessary to adopt an act. (Tsebelis 2002, pp91-96). Based on this we can assume that it takes more compromise to reach the consensus in the case of the Fidesz government, consequently more amendments are proposed to shape the bill submitted by the government.

The policy field of the bill is also regarded important. Blondel and Cotta concluded that the policy fields differ from the party influence and that the foreign policy is mostly in the hands of the government while the social and economic affairs are also influenced more by the parties and PPGs (Blondel & Cotta, 2000, pp 208), thus we can expect more amendments in the parliament for domestic policy fields, probably especially in those topics which are especially important for the voters and have a high effect on shaping their party preferences.

One of the most important characteristics of the transformative legislatures contrary to the arena type of legislatures are the strong standing *committees* (Polsby 1975, pp129-135), specialized on a certain policy field ensure the best possibility for deliberation for the MPs. As Norton concludes the greatest policy influencing capacity can be achieved when the committees are permanent and are authorized to take evidence (call witnesses, require

written materials) and to amend or reject bills and to determine their own topics of enquiry. Also, committees with small and informed membership is likely to give a stronger capacity to constrain the government, he even defines the optimum number of members between 10 and 20. The capacity of the committees to set their own agenda is also considered to be an important factor (Norton 1998a pp9-11). As it will be described in detail under the Hungarian legislative process, the standing committees do fulfill the criteria described by Norton, thus we can suppose that they have a major influence on the legislation, therefore it can be supposed that the higher the number of the legislative committees the more amendment proposals appear to the bill.

It is easy to assume a connection between the *length of the bill* and the number of amendments proposed to it (Zubek 2006, pp10-12), since the more articles it contains, the more points it is possible to disagree on and try to amend. Similarly, we can assume that the *new regulations* gain higher attention from the MPs since it is a new coherent regulation of a certain policy field, and as such most probably significant regulation. While amendment laws can bring only minor changes in the existing regulation, therefore are also shorter on average. Of course amendment bills can also mean important policy shift, but not exclusively, so I assume that the amendment bills attract less amendments as new bills on average.

EU transposition or domestic regulation can also mean a difference as Zubek finds it (Zubek 2008, pp10-12), since the government has the chance to prepare the national position and to participate in the EU working groups, the government has a more thorough knowledge about the objective of the directive to be transposed, hence the MPs and committees may show less activity in pushing through own ideas in amendments to these bills.

Urgency procedures as an extraordinary procedure they fasten legislation may also have a decreasing effect on the proposed amendments leaving less space for the committees and MPs to formulate their counter opinion (Zubek 2008, pp10-12), so it can be a useful tool in the hands of the government to fasten the adoption of the bill and foster the preservation of its integrity at the same time.

Hungarian Legislative Process

As the Hungarian Constitution describes ‘the Parliament is the supreme body of State power and popular representation in the Republic of Hungary’, since this is the political institution which has the most direct authorization of the people, the Parliament shall ensure the constitutional order of society and define the organization, orientation and conditions of government. Hence the most important decisions have to go through the Parliament, therefore the legislation has a chance to try to amend the proposals of the government.

According to the Standing Orders (Resolution 46/1994 (IX.30.)) the right of initiating a bill beside the government is also given to the standing committees as well as the MP’s, more over even the President of the state can propose bills, but so far he didn’t practice it, it only happened three times during the first term that he used this granted tool. The initiator can ask for applying urgency procedure during the legislation process of the bill, when the deadlines are shorter for the committees and the debates are curtailed. The urgency procedure is voted by the same majority as the bill demands. There is one restriction on the MPs’ proposals, that it needs the support of one third of the members of the designated committee. The designated committee is, the standing committee dealing with the policy field the proposal concerns, and is appointed by the Speaker of the House, to whom the proposal was handled in. In this case the designated committee also decides about a proposal, whether it gets on the agenda of the house and gets discussed in the plenary, but also in the case of other initiators the proposal is first discussed by the designated committee before it would get on the agenda of the plenary. According to the presumptions of the literature this means, that the committees can have a significant influence on the proposals, which also strengthens the policy influencing capacity of the house. However the government proposals are meant to be put on the agenda of the plenary automatically (after the committee discussion) according to the standing orders, it happens often that a government proposal ‘disappears’, before it would get to the floor, if it doesn’t get the support.

After the designated committee gave its opinion about the proposal the general debate takes place in the plenary. The same actors can propose an amendment, who can initiate a

bill with the exception, that the initiator of the given bill can not propose amendments. Because of this rule, if the government wants to amend the bill after submission to the Parliament, it can only ask its MP to propose it, but can not do it on its own. The amendments are also discussed in the designated committee, but only one third support of its members is needed for the amendment to be discussed in the plenary, ensuring that opposition amendments also get considered. Then comes the debate in detail, where only the amendments are discussed and the mentioned actors can propose amendments to the amendments, which also need the support of the designated committees. After that the MPs vote about the amendments, before the voting the government representative has the right to announce whether the government supports a given amendment, but basically that is the only privilege the government has in the legislative process. After that the closing vote takes place, when the amended or original bill is adopted or rejected by the plenary. If there is a legal incoherence correcting amendments can be submitted again (at this point the initiator of the bill can also submit an amendment), and a closing debate about its correction by the constitutional committee also takes place. In case the bill got adopted the Speaker of the house signs it and sends it to the President, who also has to sign it for its validation. If he finds, that the adopted bill might be against the Constitution, he can send it to the Constitutional Court before signing it, for asking their opinion whether it is against the Constitution (legal veto), or if he simply disagrees with it, he can send it back to the house for reconsideration (political veto).

Evaluation of the Working Mechanisms of the Hungarian Parliament

The committees as the field of specialization got into the focus of the international literature and also the Hungarian writings deal with them in details, I will outline the main features of them. The membership in each committee follows the ratio of the MP's as it is common in the European countries, so they make a micro cosmos of the house. The structure of the committees matches the structures of the government, with slightly more committees than ministries. The number of members varies between 10 and 30, and it also shows the strength of the committees. Usually the members of a given committee also have the adequate professional background (Ilonszki, Kurtán), what increases the competence of the committee. As Ágh found the east-central European parliaments developed an extensive committee system, concerning the working methods of the

parliament he emphasizes the important of professionalization of politicians and their experts', which already evolved a different elite layer in 1998 than the first, transitory elite (Ágh 1998, pp85), even though Ilonszki claims that the role of the committees in the legislation decreased by the second term and in the third with the increasing professionalization and party pressure (Ilonszki 2007, pp50-55) and since 1998 we can observe high party and coalition discipline (Ilonszki-Jáger 2008 pp126-129), so there is an effective centralized decision making, the role of the Parliament is rather subordinate in law-making, with a clear government dominance (Ilonszki 2007, pp56-57), the influence on the law-making can be expected from the coalition PPGs, thus the working mechanisms are similar as they are described in the literature in the modern democracies, so we can expect that similar variable explain the variation in the amount of amendments.

Analyzing the Results of the Model Made from the Variables

My paper examines the government bills from 1998 till 2006. I ignored the ratification bills, since their text is not object of amendments in the Parliament that is the reason why these bills do not have a debate in detail. The other special bills which I left out from the regression model are the budget bills, since in this case all the substantial standing committees are designated according to the Standing Orders and these bills also attract huge number of amendments and amendments to amendments, especially in the second term what would bias the results of the regression model. The measures of these amendments are shown in table 1 as an illustration.

Amendments to the budget bills

	Amendments	Amendments to amendments
2006	915	318
2005	1519	623
2004	1917	974
2003	830	609
2001-2002	364	207
2000	430	192
1999	435	187

Table 1

The total number of the examined government bills after all these distractions is 641, and the average number of amendments per bill is 32,32. The number of the amendments does not contain the number of the amendments to amendments, the reason for deciding that the model excludes them is that they intend to amend an amendment and not the bill itself, so they do not endanger the coherence of the bill. They also do not mean too much of a burden for the legislative process since they are far less amendments to amendments proposed, their average number is 6,33 per bill⁴.

⁴ Yet I also ran the model including the amendments to amendments and the results were very similar.

Regression model for explaining the number of the proposed amendments

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.75	12.142		1.297	0.195
Parliamentary term	-10.581	3.548	-0.097	-2.982	0.003
EU	1.343	3.749	0.012	0.358	0.72
Amendment billss	-7.87	3.572	-0.069	-2.203	0.028
Urgency procedure	-3.741	3.516	-0.034	-1.064	0.288
Number of the articles of the bill	0.462	0.032	0.474	14.43	0
Number of designated committees	3.786	0.532	0.233	7.112	0
Budget	-5.129	11.046	-0.037	-0.464	0.643
Economy	9.814	11.886	0.049	0.826	0.409
Local Government	25.629	11.979	0.124	2.139	0.033
Agriculture	7.718	11.998	0.037	0.643	0.52
Foreign Affairs	-6.708	21.286	-0.011	-0.315	0.753
Health	13.079	13.121	0.048	0.997	0.319
Regional Development	57.062	17.793	0.118	3.207	0.001
Human Rights	-12.679	17.755	-0.026	-0.714	0.475
Employment	3.486	12.485	0.015	0.279	0.78
Deffense	-29.445	15.807	-0.075	-1.863	0.063
Youth & sport	90.698	23.116	0.133	3.924	0
Environment	40.053	14.94	0.113	2.681	0.008
Culture	3.469	14.288	0.01	0.243	0.808
Education	47.385	13.376	0.165	3.543	0
Information	13.736	16.398	0.033	0.838	0.403
National Security	-9.049	21.065	-0.015	-0.43	0.668
Civil Organization	12.144	25.868	0.015	0.469	0.639
Constitution	-2.616	10.73	-0.022	-0.244	0.807
Law Enfocement	-1.009	14.159	-0.003	-0.071	0.943

Table 2

Table 2 shows all the considered variables in a regression model, what is able to describe how much they explain the dependent variable, thus the number of proposed amendments. The chosen variables do explain the number of the proposed amendments to a high extent,

namely to 42,1 %.⁵ The explanatory variables do not have too high correlation among them to bias the estimation, so there is no multicorrelation in the model. Consequently it is possible to test the hypotheses on the model.

Starting with the policy fields, the variable was created from the primary designated committees for the bill, so the primary committee's policy field is coded to be the policy field of the bill here. The other option would have been to differentiate the policy field is the policy field of the minister, who proposed it. The reason for choosing the committees was that they are more detailed, so there are more committees than ministries, but more stable in structure as well, the reorganization of the ministries happened more often. Besides I also wanted to see whether the significantly more or less amended fields have pattern in the party color of the committee chair, but it varies without pattern. After all there are five policy fields which have significant connection to the number of the amendments. All of them attract more amendments showing weak correlation, the standardized Beta is between 1,2 and 1,8. On the other hand only youth and sport was significant under both of the examined parliamentary terms. Environment and local government was only significant during 1998-2002, while regional development and education was only significant 2002-2006. So there is a very slight correlation, what is shifting with the terms and they do not show a clear pattern. We can not state that the important domestic fields gain more amendments, since for example health and economy is not significant.

EU transposition bills can be detected because of the transposition clause at the end of the transposing domestic piece of legislation referring to the considered directives. Yet this variable did not prove to have a significant effect on the number of amendments. This means that the government can not convince the Parliament to respect the legislative task derived from the EU as it would belong to the governments competence and the MPs and committees do have an opinion even if they have weaker connections to the EU.

Surprisingly the application of the urgency procedure also does not have a significant effect on the proposed amendments, so it is not possible to keep their number lower by calling for this extraordinary procedure.

⁵ Adjusted R Square is 0.421

On the other hand the length of the bill shows a strong correlation with 0,474 standardized Beta, what is the strongest among the examined variables. This correlation is rather obvious, the longer the text is, the longer the surface to call for amendments. What would be interesting to compare to filter this variable is whether the text of the longer bills is changing to a higher percentage in the parliamentary phase than the text of the shorter ones.

The second strongest explanatory variable is the number of designated committees with the Standardized Beta 0,233. So the transformative effect of the committee contribution is confirmed by the Hungarian Parliament as well.⁶ According to this the detailed discussions in the committees do have a deliberative effect, the more committees discuss the bill, the more amendments are proposed. This supposedly encourages both the committees themselves and the MPs as well to propose amendments to the overviewed bills.

Significant, but weak correlation is shown between the new bills and the number of amendments. Yet the bills amending existing acts are also shorter and this second correlation is stronger, so this variable does not have a relevant explanatory effect.⁷

The parliamentary term is also significant with a weak standardized Beta -0.097, this means that there were on average 10,58 *less* amendments per bill between 2002-2006, than 1998-2002, what supports the hypothesis derived from Tsebelis's veto player theory, thus the more coalition partners there are, the smaller the win set of the policy making, the more difficult is to find the compromise between the preferences, so the more amendments are needed.

Because of the significant relationship between the terms and proposed amendments it is interesting to see, whether the bills submitted by ministers from the junior and senior coalition partners attract different measures of amendments, supposing that the bills of the junior coalition member receive more amendments derived from the assumption that the coalition leading party is concerned about influencing the text of the proposals of the junior partners in the parliamentary phase.

⁶ Correlations: proposal number-article number 0,577, number of committees-proposal number 0,507, article number-number of committees 0,386

⁷ Correlations: amendment-article number -0,198, amendment-proposal number -0,069

Average number of amendments by coalition partner proposals 1998-2002⁸

Fidesz-FKGP-MDF Coalition	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
MDF	19.83607	61	29.184
FKGP	38.36111	36	61.22192
Fidesz	46.53659	164	62.9696
Total	39.16858	261	57.52373

Table 3

Average number of amendments by coalition partner proposals 2002-2006⁹

MSZP-SZDSZ Coalitions	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
SZDSZ	43.21311	61	83.20219
MSZP	24.62696	319	40.71347
Total	27.61053	380	50.33289

Table 4

The average number of amendments per bill is shown in Table 3 and 4 for each coalition member. There is significant, but very weak relationship between the initiator by coalition member and the number of amendments. In the case of the Fidesz-FKGP-MDF Coalition it is the Fidesz, the coalition leading party, whose bills attracted the most amendments, while in the case of the MSZP-SZDSZ Coalitions it is the SZDSZ, the junior coalition partner, whose bills received significantly more amendments. The reasons for this contradiction need further consideration.

The policy fields of the junior coalition members have to be excluded as the reason for this difference. This can be done because in the first coalition only one policy field¹⁰ of the

⁸ Eta square is 0,018

⁹ Eta square is 0,037

¹⁰ Only the environment was significant in the model, justice, agriculture, and defense not

junior coalition partner ministries was significant for attracting more amendments, and that was the same for the MSZP-SZDSZ Coalitions as well¹¹.

An other reason could be that the oppositions policy preference diverge more from one coalition member than the other and the opposition submits more amendments to their bills. This can partially explain the higher number of amendments of the SZDSZ bills, but can not explain why the FKGP received fewer amendments than the Fidesz.

An other explanation can be that the difference in the coalition contracts and the difference in the nature of the cooperation of the coalitions. Specifically the coalition contracts in 1998 divided up the policy fields among the partners the way that it created clear responsibility for the ministries, thus for the policy fields. The ministries were divided among the coalition members reflecting the weight of their PPGs. On the other hand the contracts did not ensure veto right for the junior partners to the proposals of the Fidesz ministries. It can be the case that the Fidesz wanted to leave the responsibility for the coalition partners for their policy fields, therefore the Fidesz PPG was not that interested in dealing with and amending their bills, while the junior partners wanted to express the differences in their policy preferences, which may not be considered to by the Fidesz before they submitted their bills.

The cooperation was different during both MSZP-SZDSZ Coalitions. They also created clear division between the ministries, but the junior member SZDSZ bargained more ministries than their PPG weight, it can be said that they were overrepresented in the government compared to the Parliament¹². Yet both governing parties had the veto right to the proposal of the other. This overrepresentation of the junior coalition member in the government decision making might lead to compensation in the Parliament, so that the MSZP PPG and its members might try to hinder the overrepresentation of the junior member's preferences.

Beyond these possible explanations there is further research needed to resolve this contradiction and to find a clear explanation.

¹¹ Education was significant, economy and environment not

¹² They held 27 % of the ministries while only 10 % of the coalition seats in the parliament.

Conclusions

The main findings of my paper are that besides the length of a bill the number of the designated committees determines the most the number of the proposed amendments to it. Thus these variables predict the most how smoothly a bill can be passed in the Hungarian Parliament. This proves that the standing committees do matter, the more of them get a chance to overview the bills, the more preferences are expressed by the committees and MPs regarding the content of bills submitted by the government. Moreover the proposed amendments result in further discussions and chances to express preferences in the legislative process.

What is also significant is the parliamentary term, or the type of the coalition. In case of the oversized majority, thus first examined term, the number of proposed amendments is higher per bill than in the case of the minimal winning coalition of the second examined term.

Unexpectedly the application of urgency procedure does not decrease the number of the proposed amendments significantly, so this tool may speed up the legislative process, but it does not make it smoother from the point of view of handling amendments.

Furthermore policy fields, whether a bill is an amendment bill or a new one and whether it is coming from transposition obligations or from domestic needs do not have a clear effect on the number of proposed amendments.

Nevertheless it can be stated that the deliberative function of the Hungarian Parliament works, even if the agenda of the legislature is set by the government and the circle of the discussed, and mostly the circle of adopted bills are determined by the government, the Parliament has the chance to overview the government bills and to suggest amendments to it, thus they have the chance to express their preferences. We can also suppose that when these preferences are expressed by the governing PPGs, they are taken into consideration, thus the MPs use the chance to monitor their government.

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