



ADİYAMAN ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ DERGİSİ
ISSN: 1308–9196 / e-ISSN:1308-7363

Yıl : 15 Sayı : 42 Aralık 2022

Yayın Geliş Tarihi: 19.09.2022 Yayına Kabul Tarihi: 13.12.2022

DOI Numarası: <https://doi.org/10.14520/adyusbd.1177405>

Makale Türü: Araştırma Makalesi/ Research Article

Atıf/Citation: İsmayıl, T. & Necefoğlu, A. (2022). The Evolution of Presidential System in Russian Federation: From Semi-Presidentialism to Super Presidentialism. *Adiyaman Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, (42), 817-859.

THE EVOLUTION OF PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION: FROM SEMI-PRESIDENTIALISM TO SUPER PRESIDENTIALISM

Toğrul İSMAYIL* Ali NECEFOĞLU**

Abstract

Today, the presidential system in Russian Federation, by gradually evolving, has been taking another turn. The topic of article is the evolution of Russian semi-presidential system. The article consists of three parts. First of all, different governmental systems (parliamentary system, presidential and semi-presidential system) were examined in order to comprehend semi-presidential system properly. In the second part, semi-presidential system formed with the Russian Federation's Constitution of 1993 was explained diffusively. And in the last part, the article was finalized by analyzing structural process which takes Russian Federation to super presidentialism and in this context by shedding light on legislations series. The contribution of this study to the literature is to diversify the examples about political systems on the basis of the evolution of the Russian political system and to reveal the unique

* Prof. Dr., Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü, tismayil@ksu.edu.tr, Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye

** Arş. Gör., Kafkas Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü, alincefoglu@hotmail.com, Kars, Türkiye

structure of this political system by taking into account the discussions within Russian Federation.

Keywords: *Russian Federation, presidential system, parliamentary system, semi-presidential system.*

RUSYA FEDERASYONU'NDA BAŞKANLIK SİSTEMİNİN EVRİMİ: YARI BAŞKANLIKTAN SÜPER BAŞKANLIĞA

Öz

Rusya Federasyonu'ndaki yarı başkanlık sistemi günümüzde git gide evrimleşerek, bambaşka bir hâl almaktadır. Makalenin konusu Rus yarı-başkanlık sisteminin evrimidir. Makale üç bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk olarak, yarı-başkanlık sisteminin tam anlaşılabilmesi için hükümet sistemleri (parlamenter sistem, başkanlık ve yarı-başkanlık sistemi) incelenmiştir. Daha sonra, ikinci bölümde, Rusya Federasyonu'nun 1993 Anayasasıyla biçimlenen yarı-başkanlık sistemi ayrıntılı bir şekilde anlatılmıştır. Son bölümde ise Rusya Federasyonu'nu süper başkanlığa götüren yapının nasıl oluştuğu açıklanmış ve bu bağlamda çıkarılan yasalar dizisi belirtilerek makaleye son verilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın literatüre katkısı siyasal sistemler hakkındaki örnekleri, Rus siyasal sisteminin evrimi temelinde çeşitlendirmek ve Rusya Federasyonu'nun içindeki tartışmaları da göz önüne alarak bu siyasal sistemin kendine has yapısını ortaya koymaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Rusya Federasyonu, başkanlık sistemi, parlamenter sistem, yarı-başkanlık sistemi.*

1. INTRODUCTION

There are different types of presidential and parliamentary systems in the world. Each state has formed its administrative structure in accordance with its own political culture. Some states are governed by an authoritarian president with the fusion of powers, whilst some countries have adopted the separation of powers that is an essential element of democracy. Though each state has its own presidential or parliamentary system, there are also states that should be examined in a separate classification.

There are three main approaches within the Russian Federation for the type of the form of government established in line with the Constitution of 1993.

According to those who support the first view, a presidential republic was established in the Russian Federation with a head of state that could not be controlled by the parliament (*the Federal Assembly*), and elected by the people. According to those who support the second view, the executive power in the government is constitutionally divided between the president and the parliament, and it is a semi-presidential (mixed) republic. According to the supporters of the third approach, there is a *sui generis* republic, in which the head of state becomes a "Tsar" with broad powers (Кондрашев, 2018: 34).

To determine the type of republic established in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, it is helpful to look at the three main approaches in detail mentioned above. According to the first approach, a presidential republic was established in the Russian Federation with certain characteristics that did not shake the classical establishment in principle (Гелиева, 2008: 41). Two arguments have been emphasized to support this widespread view: the executive branch is controlled by the President and the President is elected by the people. At the same time, in theory, the main feature of the presidential republic is the strict separation of powers system. The strict separation in legislative and executive is accepted only on the condition that executive organ have an obligation to abide by laws passed by parliament. In governments where such an approach is seen, such as the United States, the the head of state as executive branch has no tools to influence the parliament (Мартынюк, 2015: 60). In line with this view, reference can also be made to the views of current President Vladimir Putin and former president Dmitriy Medvedev, who claim that Russia Federation is a presidential republic and that the President does not intend to change his key role in the political system of state (Российская газета, 2003; 2007; 2008).

According to the supporters of the second view, in the Russian Federation, the semi-presidential (mixed) republic, in which there is a dual executive power between the president and the parliament, is adopted as a government system (Краснов, 2003: 16; Баглай, 2000: 123; Безуглов & Солдатов, 2001: 332; Козлова & Кутафин, 2006: 152). Those taking this view point out that the President is elected by the people and has the ability to influence the composition of the cabinet, and that the *Federal Assembly* has the power to approve and dismiss the government (Пушкарев, 2012: 9). Thus, Kokotov and Kukushkin (Кокотов & Кукушкин, 2007: 106), analyzing the provisions of the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation, characterizes this form of government in which the president has enormous powers as mixed. In addition, Kutafin, an distinguished professor of the Russian Academy of Sciences, tends to characterize the current form of government as a semi-presidential republic and calls it presidential-parliamentary (Козлова & Кутафин, 2006: 153). It should be particularly noted that even leading Russian constitutionalists have had serious difficulties trying to bind Russia to one form of government, constantly dragging from one definition to another. The milestone in this discussion is Professor Chirkin's position. He (Чиркин, 2006: 12) points out that the Constitution provides elements of both a parliamentary republic and a presidential republic. In another work, Chirkin (Чиркин, 2008: 16-17) specifically states that Russia, like other post-Soviet countries, is a presidential-parliamentary republic, although its form of government is defined as a presidential republic.

According to the third view, the form of government of the Russian Federation is defined as super-presidentialism (Кондрашев, 2018: 36). So, what are the distinguishing features of the super-presidential republic? Some of the most important can be described as follows:

- By de facto, the government is not under the control of the parliament. (The threat of dissolution prevents parliament from controlling the appointment of cabinet chief).
- To have an opportunity to dismiss ministers individually or to force the entire cabinet to resign.
- To have the power to issue a decree without the approval of the parliament without specifying the validity period.
- Appointing the head of government and having the power of law to dissolve parliament for the purpose of controlling the expression of distrust of government.

In such states, the president is a legal or de facto chief executive. Thus, the president has the right to dissolve parliament in the legislative and judicial branches, pass legislation on delegation, appoint individual judges and elect candidates for all senior officials (Кондрашев, 2018: 36).

The point that should be taken as a benchmark when examining government systems is the relations between forces. Administrative structures are classified as "separation of powers systems" and "fusion of powers" in terms of separating or fusing legislative, executive and judiciary powers in one hand (Huntington, 2002: 105-157). While the legislative and executive powers are concentrated on one junta or in a single person, authoritarian regimes and monarchies are formed. If it gathers around a parliament, a parliamentary government system is formed. In this context, it will be useful to examine the government systems and their characteristics in general terms in order to better understand the system and the changes in Russian Federation.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE ANALYSIS

2.1. Government Systems and Features

Although political scientists classify government systems in different ways (Shugart & Carey, 1992: 160), the generally accepted classification is as follows: parliamentary system, presidential system, and semi-presidential system.

Parliamentary System

The Modern Parliamentary System is a system created in England in the 18th century to control the government and restrict its authority in a parliament where the people are represented (Kahraman, 2012: 435). In a parliamentary system, the government emerges from an elected assembly, and the prime ministers continue to be members of the parliament at the same time. The feature of this system is the “soft” separation of legislative and executive powers from each other. The administrative structure of the country is double-headed: “head of state” and “head of government” (Gözler, 2000 :329). However, the heads of state were generally not held responsible for the actions of the government, as they were in a supra-political position in these systems and represented the whole of the people. The duties of the head of state are representative.

The most known weakness of the Parliamentary System has been the establishment of unstable governments. The government is ready to be overthrown at any time if it fails to achieve the required majority in parliament. Parties that could not obtain the necessary majority and created a coalition with the support of other parties could not continue their governments for a long time. For example, between 1948-1992, 50 governments were established in Italy in 44 years (Pierre, 1992: 202). Since the prime minister who will form the government is not directly elected by the people, but by the parliament, he must always look to the support of the parliament. This will lead to a weak prime minister figure. In addition, if the head of state is not content with his representative role and tries to dominate the executive, it can lead to a government crisis (Gözler, 2000: 29). This often leads to the formation of

undesirable coalition governments. However, the undesirability of party coalitions does not always cause instability, as in the case of Germany, which has been governed by a coalition since 1949. As it is known, since the decisions are taken by "unanimity" in the council of ministers, decision-making in coalition governments is a more sensitive process as it requires the parties to reach an agreement continuously (Sartori, 1997: 152). Likewise, another problem arising from coalitions is that the citizens do not know who to hold responsible for the serious problems that arise. In such a case, the citizen sees all parties participating in the coalition as responsible. After the coalitions that could not cope with serious problems, it was seen that the citizens did not give their vote to these parties and turned to a new search.

Presidential system

In the Presidential System, although the president is the head of state, the executive responsibility also belongs to the president. The president is directly elected by the people (Szilágyi, 2009: 308). In the presidential system, the legislature and the executive are sharply separated from each other. The head of state cannot participate in legislative activities and cannot dissolve parliament. Likewise, the parliament cannot dismiss the head of state. The president and the government formed by the president cannot be members of parliament (Gözler, 2000: 40). Lijphart (1996: 92) listed two conditions for a system to be a presidential system. First, the president cannot be dismissed by the legislature. The second is that the president is elected directly or indirectly by the people. The President exercises all the powers of the executive. Therefore, the president is the only person responsible for forming and running the government. It governs the country according to the laws created by the parliament, and while doing so, it cannot even propose a law (Erdoğan, 2003:

174). In this system, unlike the parliamentary system, there is a strong head of state. The responsibilities and duties of the President are not representative.

The most important feature of the presidential system is the stability of the government (Uluřahin, 1999: 57-99). Precisely, the president cannot be removed from office and the government cannot be overthrown before the presidential term specified in the constitution expires. In the Presidential System, since the president is directly elected by the people, the president can take bolder decisions based on his legitimacy over the people. This ensures that the country is run by a stronger executive power (Uluřahin, 1999: 105-106). Moreover, according to the political scientists who defend the presidential system, the election of the president by the people is more democratic than the parliamentary system (Uluřahin, 1999: 142). According to the same view, the system can be interpreted as more democratic since the person to be held responsible for the problems is known. Contrary to the possibility that the party that comes out first in the parliamentary system will not take part in the government, in the presidential system, who will head the executive is determined by popular vote.

Criticisms of the presidential system, on the other hand, include waiting for the expiry of the mandate to replace the president while he misuses his office, and in cases where the political party supported by the president cannot obtain the necessary majority in the parliament, there are situations where the wishes of the opposition dominate the parliament. In such cases, the legislative-executive apparatus of the country may go into complete lockdown, and this may cause crises (Gözler, 2000: 41). In addition, if a conflict arises, both forces can argue that they are legitimate due to the popular vote of the president and parliament. Therefore, cooperation between the legislature and the executive will be damaged (Uluřahin, 1999: 106).

The rule that the winner takes all or loser loses all, which is not in the parliamentary system, is extremely valid in the presidential system. The party that cannot win the election is excluded from the system. For this reason, the elections are in an "all or nothing" atmosphere, which increases the political polarization (Uluşahin, 1999: 126) in the countries governed by the presidential system and causes politicians to gather around two parties, as in the case of the USA. As a result, the president, who is elected with a high vote in the presidential system, can say that he made most of his decisions in accordance with the will of the people and may try to legitimize his decision in this way.

Semi-Presidential system

The semi-presidential system, which is located between the presidential system and the parliamentary system, is known as a system that includes the features of both systems (Yazıcı, 2002: 91). In this system, the president is the head of the executive, as in the presidential system, has quite wide powers and is directly elected by the people, which are the elements that bring this system closer to the presidential system. On the other hand, the fact that the president (executive) is responsible for the legislature, can participate in the legislative process and the legislative and executive powers have the authority to dismiss each other caused this system to resemble the parliamentary system. Therefore, there is no accepted classification and definition about the general features of this system.

Duverger (1992: 142) listed three conditions for a system to be a semi-presidential system: the president should be elected directly by the people, the president should be given significant constitutional powers, and finally, the executive power should consist of a prime minister and his cabinet, and this government should survive by a vote of approval by the parliament. Sartori (1997: 161-162) gathered the conditions of the semi-presidential system under

five headings. These are the president being elected by the people, the prime minister being "subordinate" to the parliament and, on the contrary, being "independent" against the president, the president sharing the executive power with the prime minister, the executive power being exercised only through the government because the president is independent from the legislature, and the double-headed executive structure (Elgie, 2007: 59-60). According to Sartori, who makes one of the broadest definitions, the balance between the head of state who shares the executive power and the prime minister does not always shift in favor of the head of state.

Based on all these assumptions, when the general characteristics are examined, the president is equipped with more authority than is known in the semi-presidential system. In the parliamentary system, it is not possible to talk about a powerful president as the president has representative duties. Since the executive and the legislature are separated sharply in the presidential system, the head of the state can control the executive wing, and he cannot be able to participate in the legislative activities. However, in the semi-presidential system, the president can have a high impact on the legislative and executive system, as the president is elected by the people, is not responsible to the legislature, but does not impose restrictions on participating in legislative activities. In this context, in the rest of the study, the infrastructure of the political system and the semi-presidential system in Russian Federation will be examined. Just as every country has its own government structure, the administrative structure in Russia has its own unique character. Although it is accepted as a semi-presidential system, from time to time this structure becomes "monist". Examining in detail what kind of legal changes this semi-presidential system in Russian Federation has transformed into super-presidentialism over time will shed light on our better understanding of this country.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Russian Type Semi-Presidential System: Constitutional and Political Structure of Russian Federation

The 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation was created by the first head of state, Yeltsin, and was adopted by a referendum on 12 December 1993 (Constitution.ru, t.y.). According to the first article of the constitution, The Russian Federation is a federative state of law that has adopted the republic as its form of government. It is emphasized in Article 10 that the legislative, executive and judiciary are separated from each other. The Russian Federation consists of 85 federated units (art. 65). The classification of federated units is as follows: republic, oblast, krai, autonomous okrug, federal city (Moscow and St. Petersburg) and autonomous oblast. This complicated federative structure that came to life in the Russian Federation is rarely seen in other countries of the world (Güler vd., 2009: 499). This structure, which is formed by the bringing together of quite different ethnic identities, realizes an asymmetrical distribution in terms of sharing the administrative structure of the state.

Head of State

The form of government of the Russian Federation is a "Presidential Republic" as stated in Article 1 of its Constitution. This general provision is confirmed in many articles of the Constitution. The President of the Russian Federation is the head of state. In general, his task is to ensure harmony and cooperation between government agencies. In this framework, he determines the domestic and foreign policy of the state in a way that does not contradict the Constitution and federal laws (art. 80). According to the article about the election of the head of state (art. 81), the head of state is directly elected by the people for a period of 6 years. The presidency is limited to two terms (Simon &

Gueorguieva, 2008: 79). The only changed article of the 1993 Russian Constitution is the 81st article. With the constitutional amendment made in 2008, the term of presidency was increased from 4 to 6 years. The first president to take office for 6 years is Vladimir Putin. The Constitution of the Russian Federation has given the head of state quite wide powers. In Chapter 4 of the Constitution, the position of the Head of State is explained in a wide range. The duties of the head of state are detailed between articles 83 and 90. The Russian Presidency has a supra-power structure as per article 81. The head of state has very broad powers related to the legislative, executive and judicial powers.

In this context, the important duties of the head of state regarding the 'executive' are as follows:

- To appoint the head of government (prime minister) with the approval of the Duma,
- To preside over governmental meetings,
- To approve international treaties, (art. 86)
- To evaluate/accept the resignation of the Prime Minister,
- To manage the foreign policy of the Russian Federation,
- Issuing decrees and orders that do not contradict the Russian Constitution (art. 90)
- Appointing and dismissing the Deputy Prime Minister and ministers upon the proposal of the Prime Minister, (art. 83)
- To decide whether the regulations of the executive bodies of the federated units of the Russian Federation are unconstitutional, and when he considers that they are, to suspend the decision until the relevant court decision, (art. 85)

The important duties of the Head of State in relation to the 'legislature' are as follows:

- To determine the *Federal Assembly* elections,
- To determine a referendum,
- To present a bill to the parliament,
- To approve, veto federal law. (art.107)
- To approve the laws created by the parliament,
- To dissolve the parliament as stipulated in the Constitution (art. 111-17)
- Presenting his message to the *Federal Assembly*, stating the main aspects of the state's domestic and foreign policy, (art. 84)
-
- The important duties of the Head of State regarding the 'judiciary' are as follows:
 - Presenting his message to the Federal Assembly, stating the main aspects of the state's domestic and foreign policy, (art. 84)
 - Notifying the Federation Council of the candidacy of the judges and Chief Prosecutor of the Constitutional Court and submitting a proposal to the Federation Council for the dismissal of the Attorney General,
 - To appoint judges of other federal courts, (art. 83)
 - To resolve disputes that may arise between federal state bodies and federated units, in accordance with the procedures for resolving disputes, and to bring the matter to the relevant court if necessary. (art. 85)

Other powers of the Head of State are:

- Establishing and managing the Security Council of the Russian Federation,
- Appointing and dismissing higher ranks of the Armed Forces, (art. 83)
- To act as the “high commander-in-chief” of the Armed Forces,

- To apply martial law in case of attack, in a region or in the whole of the Russian Federation in case of imminent attack, by informing the Duma and the Federation Council, (art.87)
- To impose a state of emergency throughout the Russian Federation or in certain regions under the conditions provided for in the federal constitutions. (art. 88)

As mentioned above, the first head of state of the Russian Federation is Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin, who took office after winning the 1991 and 1996 elections, resigned in 1999 and Putin took his place. Vladimir Putin, who won the 2000 elections, became the second president of Russia. Putin, who won the 2004 elections with a high vote (71.3%), left his place to Medvedev in 2008 "for safekeeping" (Karahöyük, 2012). Putin, who was elected again in 2012, this time for 6 years, took office as the President of Russia in March 2018.

As seen in the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the President of the Republic has been given wide powers, which is not uncommon. A head of state with full executive power also has broad powers over the legislature. The President's power to propose laws and the power to dissolve the parliament in cases written in the constitution, which are not found in the ordinary presidential system, are among the elements that strengthen the Russian president's hand against the legislature.

In order to remove the President from office, a very complex series of processes must take place. The only institution that can accuse the Head of State is the State Duma. The process begins when a third of the State Duma declares the accused crime in the form of a motion. The Duma must approve the accusation of crimes against the Head of State by a two-thirds majority. These crimes include treason and more serious crimes. Then, following the Supreme Court's acknowledgment of the existence of these crimes, the Constitutional Court

must also state that the accusation procedures are followed. At the end of this whole process, the decision was left to the Federation Council. If the Council finds the Head of State guilty by a two-thirds majority, the Head of State may be removed from office.

The Federal Assembly

The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation consists of two chambers, the Federation Council and the State Duma. The State Duma is more comprehensive in terms of its powers and the legislature; The Federation Council is also seen as an advisory body more like the “approval authority” (Güler vd., 2009: 479). The Federation Council is rather the authority that facilitates the adaptation of the laws enacted by the Duma to the federated units. Representatives of the federated units are present in this council. Unless otherwise stated by law, decisions are taken in both assemblies by majority vote (art. 102-103).

The Federation Council is the assembly where there are two representatives from each of the 85 federated units, one from the legislative and one from the executive branch (art. 95). Accordingly, there are currently 170 representatives in the Federation Council. Members of the Federation Council are not directly elected by the people. The legislature of each federated unit elects a member from among themselves. The representative from the executive branch is appointed by the head of the executive branch. However, the nominated representative candidate must be approved by its own federated assembly. If the assembly elects this candidate by a two-thirds majority, it will be able to become a representative (Erdem, 2014: 190). The duties of the Federation Council are described in Article 102 of the Constitution. When we look at these

duties, they do not have significant powers other than making judicial appointments.

The State Duma consists of 450 deputies directly elected by the people for a period of four years (art. 95). The law on the election of the State Duma was amended twice, in 2005 and 2013. In the system prior to 2005, half of the members of parliament were elected by a proportional majority based on party lists, and the other half by a single-name majority system (Erdem, 2014: 189). In other words, the voter casts two votes while choosing his deputy, in the first he votes for his party and in the second he votes for the individual he supports. In this system, not only the policy of the party, but also the recognition and love of the deputy in that region gains importance. In 2005, this system was abolished and proportional representation system was introduced. 2011 Duma elections were held with the party-based system and Putin's United Russia reduced its votes from 64,3% to 49,3% (Vybory.izbirkom.ru, 2007). In 2013, the old system was reinstated. In order for a party to be represented in the State Duma, that party must receive at least 7% of the votes.

Among the duties of the State Duma detailed in Article 103 of the Constitution, the most striking one is to approve the prime minister appointed by the President and to give a vote of confidence to the Government. In addition, in the Russian Federation, bills are submitted to the State Duma and examined by the State Duma deputies (art.104). The Federation Council has no authority to debate the law; either accepts or rejects.

When we look at the laws passed in the Duma between 1996 and 2006, an interesting statistic emerges. While only one-third of the proposals of the Duma members and only one-eighth of the proposals from the federated units were enacted in the parliament, the vast majority of the proposals from the executive branch were enacted. While 30% of the government-based bills were enacted in

Yeltsin's term, 60% in Putin's term and 83% in Medvedev's term between 2008-2012; Only 24% of the laws coming from the Duma wing were enacted (Erdem, 2014: 207).

Government

In the Russian Federation, the government consists of the prime minister, deputy prime ministers and federal ministers (art. 110). The prime minister is appointed by the head of state and sent to the State Duma for approval. If the Prime Minister cannot receive a vote of confidence by the State Duma, the President appoints the same prime minister for the second and third times and the Duma does not accept it for the third time, the President either appoints the Prime Minister and dissolves the State Duma, a new election is held; or by suspending the appointment of the Prime Minister and appointing a new Prime Minister (art. 111). The prime minister presents the candidates to the head of state for the appointment of the deputy prime minister and ministers (art. 112).

The important tasks of the government are as follows: to prepare the federal budget and submit it to the State Duma, to ensure the implementation of the federal budget, to ensure the implementation of a single policy in the social, cultural and economic fields, to carry out activities for the defense and implementation of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation (art. 114), Russian Federation to issue decrees in accordance with the constitution, federal laws and presidential decrees (art. 115). The government is seen as the "Ministry of Economy" for the Russian Federation, with a broader scope. The government can produce policies in the fields of economy, culture, education, health and social security. The government, whose powers are limited to these, functions as an "economic management body". It is tasked with managing and executing the policies produced (Güler vd., 2009: 495).

In general, when the Constitution of the Russian Federation is examined, it is clear that the Constitution has given the President absolute power over the legislative, executive and judicial organs. The President can appoint the prime minister he wishes, and the parliament has no chance to dislike the prime minister. The government is nominally dependent on the parliament. The only thing that parliament needs in practice is to pass the necessary laws. However, the constitution went ahead of this and empowered the head of state and the prime minister with the authority to issue decrees. Even if the head of state leaves his post in extraordinary circumstances such as death or resignation, the fact that he is replaced by the prime minister he appoints for three months reinforces his strong position. There are issues in which the acting prime minister does not have the authority as acting head of state: he cannot dissolve the Duma and take the country to a referendum (art. 92). In other words, even when the President leaves office, the system does not function in a way that he does not want.

As a country that comes from political cultures such as tsarism and socialism, Russian citizens demanded that they get themselves out of that situation by giving extraordinary powers to a person they trusted when they feel weak (Karahöyük, 2012: 7). That's why, in a survey conducted by Russian State Television in 2008 with the participation of 50 million Russians across Russia, the question "Who is the most popular historical figure of all time?" was asked and Stalin came in third (Solovyov, 2008).

Understanding the formation process of Russia's current constitution will also help to understand how a constitution that gave so much power to the head of state was adopted. Boris Yeltsin, Speaker of the Assembly of the Russian Federative Soviet Socialist Republic, who tried to achieve its sovereignty within the USSR, became the first president of the Russian Federation elected by the

people in 1991 (Walt, 1999: 217). From the first day he took office, he tried to change the order and started the process of transferring the state from a planned economy to a liberal economy. Yeltsin, who started by liberalizing prices and liberalizing imports and exports, was also supported by the parliament in his early days. The parliament even authorized Yeltsin to make appointments for radical economic programs (Uluşahin, 2007: 81). According to the 1977 Constitution, the political assembly (politburo), composed of communist party members, dominated everything. By 1993, despite the disintegration of the USSR, this Constitution was still in use and the former communists were in the parliament. Yeltsin's reforms could only be made so long as this did not affect the former communists. However, Yeltsin later tried to increase his authority over all the institutions of the state in order to implement the reforms more quickly, which the parliament did not like. Finally, the parliament reinstated the extraordinary powers it had given to Yeltsin in March 1993. From that day on, the Yeltsin-parliament conflict began to intensify (White, 2000: 77-81). The idea of solving this conflict with a referendum before it escalated further was put forward and a referendum was held on April 25, 1993. In this referendum, people were asked whether they were satisfied with the president, whether they supported reforms, and whether they wanted early presidential and parliamentary elections. As a result of the referendum, 58.7% of the people supported the president, 53.1% supported his policies, 49.5% wanted early presidential and 67.2% early parliamentary elections (Saivetz, 1996: 263). As Yeltsin's desired result came out of this referendum, his legitimacy in the eyes of the people was reinforced.

With the results of the referendum, Yeltsin increased his work on the constitution, but the Assembly continued to try to block Yeltsin's reforms. In this atmosphere, Yeltsin announced that he had dissolved the parliament in his statement on September 21, 1993. Arguing that the President does not have

such a right according to the 1977 Constitution, the Assembly announced that it had removed Yeltsin from the presidency. While the legitimacy debates were taking place, Yeltsin had the support of the army and the Russian Army bombed the Parliament building and arrested the members of the parliament. Subsequently, a draft constitution was drawn up and submitted to a public vote on 12 December 1993. The Constitution was accepted with 54.4% turnout and 58.4% votes (Центральная избирательная комиссия РФ, 1993).

3.2. Differences in the Implementation of the Constitution: Transition to the Super Presidency

In the Russian Federation, looking at the relations of the Head of State with the Parliament, it can be seen that the head of state is vested with constitutional powers over the legislative power. The most important of these is the President's power to dissolve the Duma. If the Duma rejects the three-time-appointed Head of Government when the Head of State appoints the him, or if the Duma does not vote when the government asks for a vote of confidence, the President either dismisses the government or dissolves the Duma. Making a decree, presenting a bill to the Duma, vetoing laws are among the elements that strengthen the President against the Parliament. The Duma's only power over the President is to bring charges against him. This is a very complex process – as explained above.

Despite these powers over the Duma, the President cannot directly control the legislative agenda. For this reason, Presidents have needed the support of the Parliament constitutionally to pass the necessary laws to do what they wanted. Yeltsin, who was the Head of State between 1991-1999, could not be as strong as Putin and could not benefit from the support of the Parliament during his own terms. In the 1993 Duma Elections, no party won a majority in the Duma, and the Duma was divided into three poles: reformists, centralists and anti-

centrists (Remington, 2007: 127). This tri-polar structure has brought the parties together and it is no longer about parties but factions (Erdem, 2014: 197). An equal vote rule was introduced for each faction and group in the Duma Council. It would be what everyone said in the parliament now. The composition of the Duma formed in the first period was generally a left-centered coalition (Remington, 2007: 127). During this period, Yeltsin had to agree with the Duma in order to enact the laws he wanted. In the 1995 elections with 43 parties, 4 parties passed the 5% threshold and won seats in the parliament. These are the Communist Party, the Russian Liberal Democratic Party, Our Home Russia, organized around Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, and the Yablaka (Яблоко/Apple) Party. The Communist Party was the most successful of the parties that passed the election threshold and entered the parliament (Remington, 2007: 129).

The Head of State does not have the power to dissolve the Federation Council. For this reason, the Council can act more “independently”. However, the Council, which does not take part in the law-making process, is not authorized in this respect. In the first period, there were usually heads of legislative and executive organs in the Council. Considering their reputation in front of the public, these representatives did not approve the laws against their people (Sakwa, 2020: 199-200) and, when necessary, voted against appointing the members of the Constitutional Court and the Attorney General. After all, these representatives of this upper house are mainly engaged in the affairs of their own regions.

With his resignation in 1999 and Yeltsin's successor, Vladimir Putin, acted as the Head of State for three months, and as a result of the elections held in 2000, he was elected the second Head of State of the Russian Federation. Before these elections in 2000, media giant Berezovsky, a member of Yeltsin's group known

as "family", supported Putin at Yeltsin's request. Berezovsky, who can reach 98% of the households in the country, has repeatedly broadcast images of Putin like responding to the wishes of the people, who seem to be self-disciplined and refrain from acting with his personal interests. In these broadcasts, Putin emphasized that he would fight terrorism, end it with an iron fist and bring Russia to the place it deserves. Thus, the source of terror was shown to the people as the "Chechens" (Michael, 2012: 430), and thus, the opinion was established that a nation should fight against the common enemy. In addition, Putin rebuilt the feelings of nationalism and national pride that weakened after the collapse of the Soviet Union and gathered the support of the people. In the words of Ronald Gregor Suny (Yapıcı, 2007: 80), Putin brought the "Soviet" out of the people again.

When we look at the relations between the parliament and the president during the Putin period, it is seen that Putin, unlike Yeltsin, has the support of the Parliament behind him. In the 1999 Duma elections, the Communist Party received the highest percentage of votes. The following parties are the Unity Party (Putin supporter) and the Fatherland – All Russia Party. Before long, the Union Party united with other parties, albeit, and gained the majority in the parliament (White, 2011: 36). Later, in 2001, the Fatherland – All Russia Party and the Russia's Regions Parties merged to form the United Russia Party, that already became Putin supporter. This party won the majority in the 2003 and 2007 elections, and with the support of the independents, it reached the level of amending the constitution. Most importantly, the votes of the opposition decreased to a great extent in the election results, and even the Liberal Democrat Party could not pass the election threshold. In the 2011 election, however, the votes of United Russia decreased relatively and received 49.3% of the votes (White, 2011: 40).

The fact that the Parliament came under the influence of a single Putin-backed party increased the power of Vladimir Putin as President. The parliament has become a place that gives legitimacy to the wishes of Putin as the executive. So much so that the Russian Federation has entered a period in which the parliament and the presidency get along very well. Yeltsin vetoed 39% of the bills that came before him in 1994-1995 and 26% of the bills in 1996-1999; From the moment he took office, Putin used his veto power in only 5% of the laws in three years, and accepted 95% of them (Remington, 2007: 131). If we look at the relationship between the Duma and the Federation Council, the rate of return of the Duma's bills from the Council has decreased due to the fact that the Federation Council loses its autonomy year by year (Pravda, 2005: 135).

With the support of the Parliament, Putin also made major changes in the internal structure of the Duma and the Federation Council. First of all, it changed the way in which the members of the Federation Council, which were not elected in 2000, were determined. In the Council, where the governors directly represented the federated element and the governors acted as a head of state, there will now be a permanent representative nominated by each of the executive and legislative organs (Sakwa, 2020: 201). Thus, the governors were prevented from entering the Council, and their influence in the federal units and the importance of the Council were reduced. In 2001, the Duma authorized the President to dismiss the governor when necessary (Sakwa, 2020: 277). In 2004, with the right to determine the managers of the federated units was given to the Head of State, half of the Federation Council became representatives of the government.

In 2002, the election threshold was raised from 5% to 7%, thus blocking the opposition. Another change in the internal structure of the Duma in 2003 was the increase in the number of members required to form fractions with equal

rights in the Duma Council from 33 to 55 (Chaisty, 2008: 434). With this change, it was difficult for the independents in the parliament to form a faction, and they also had to join the party (United Russia). Likewise, the influence level of the opposition, which has a minority in the parliament, has been reduced.

As explained earlier, with the amendment made in 2005, there were significant changes regarding the election of Duma members. According to this change, the practice of electing half of the Duma members through independent lists has been abolished. In the new system, the members will be determined by the proportional representation system, completely according to the party lists (Erdem, 2014: 202). According to this system, the election was left completely under the control of political parties, and independents were completely blocked and it became compulsory to join a party. However, this system did not suit the United Russia Party, and the contribution of independents to the votes of the United Russia Party was also seen. In the 2011 Duma elections, United Russia reduced the vote from 64.3% in the previous elections to 49.3% (Vybory.izbirkom.ru, 2007). "For this reason, the old system was returned in 2013. With a change in 2006, the 'right not to choose any party' (*against all*) was taken from the voters (White, 2011: 38), so it was thought that the votes would go to United Russia. The bylaws amendment of 2007 determined that the "penalty" for leaving the fraction was to forfeit membership (White, 2011: 65). Another change is a newly introduced practice. With the practice of "zero reading", a bill would be discussed between the government and the factions before going to the parliament, and compromise would be sought for possible conflicts (Remington, 2007: 136). This practice also reduced the functions of the parliament.

These changes in the internal structure of the Duma and in the electoral system are such changes that target those outside the United Russia Party and prevent

the formation of opposition in the Duma. Opposition and independents were tried to be prevented. These regulations, which were successful in terms of opposition, cannot be said to be effective in terms of independents. Today, many articles are written in Russia and in the west such as "Opposition in Russia" and "Re-emerging the Russian Opposition". It seems that the opposition in Russia will continue to be pushed into the background for a long time.

On the other hand, in the first year that Putin took office, he issued a decree to increase the power of central dominance and divided Russia into 7 federal regions. The governors appointed directly by the President of these federal districts were composed of bureaucrats (five of whom were military origins) who had previously worked with Putin. The powers of the governors, on the other hand, are determined to supervise the activities of federal bodies and local governments, and to prevent illegal acts (Güler vd., 2009: 503). These federated units are the Central Federal District, the Northwest Federal District, the North Caucasus Federal District, the Volga Federal District, the Ural Federal District, the Siberian Federal District and the Far Eastern Federal District. With these first actions of Putin, his power, which was dispersed during the Yeltsin period, started to gather in favor of the center again.

Among the reasons that push Putin to pursue such centralist policies, two events are of particular interest. The first of these is the attack on Dubrovka Theater by Chechen terrorists in 2002. In this attack, about 40 Chechen militants took 1000 hostages and held them hostage for three days. At the end of three days, the operation by the Russian special unit Spetnaz had a disastrous result. During the operation, the walls were exploded with devastating ammunition and chemical gas was sprayed inside. This disaster resulted in the death of 119 people. The Russian people do not trust the official figures released as a result of this attack. In a survey conducted in 2010, 74% of

the public stated that they did not trust the official statements made after the event. The reasons that lead the public to think like this are, firstly, the reluctance of Russian prosecutors to initiate an investigation into the incident, and secondly, the court dismissal of the cases brought. After this incident, Putin accused NTV television of provoking the masses and afterwards NTV suffered a serious loss of power (Krechetnikov, 2012). Another issue that needs to be mentioned in this regard is the Beslan Incident, which took place on September 1, 2004. The mentioned incident started with the taking hostage of approximately 1200 students in a school in the Beslan region of North Ossetia by Chechen militants. Three days after the hostage incident, Russian special forces launched an operation on the school and as a result, 334 people, 186 of whom were children, lost their lives (Kapamaev, 2004). In both incidents, the Russian administration acted with the principle of “no bargaining with terrorists” and showed that no one would profit from such a hostage event at the expense of its own citizens.

Russian domestic and foreign policy has undergone a radical change after these events. According to Masha Gessen (Michael, 2012: 432), Putin took these events as an opportunity to centralize his power. Not long after the Beslan Incident, Putin claimed that the federated units were indifferent to this issue as the responsible for terrorism. On September 13, 2004, the federated unit managers emphasized that the state should be strengthened in the meeting they held with the cabinet members, and in this context, the management of the federated units should be gathered in one hand. Subsequently, Putin enacted many laws that centralized power and concentrated powers in the president, limiting the powers of parliament and other groups. In doing so, he used his majority in the parliament. According to the new law enacted, the managers of the federated units will be appointed with the approval of the candidate nominated from the center (Kremlin) in the federated parliament. If

this candidate does not get the confidence vote of more than half of the parliament, the head of state will nominate the second person. If the latter is not approved, the head of state will be able to appoint anyone he wishes and dissolve the federated unit's assembly. It was stated that the main purpose of this regulation was to prevent the administrative organs of the remote units from falling into the hands of the oligarchs (Güler vd., 2009: 500). These centralist policies of Putin bring Russia closer to a unitary structure and distance it from the federation.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation rapidly liberalized and Yeltsin privatized many state institutions. However, these privatizations were generally made illegally and a class called "oligarchs" emerged. When using these capitals, the oligarchs often evaded taxes and acted as an autonomous body. So much so that with the collapse of the USSR in Russia, liberalism was misunderstood and the power of the center of the state decreased in politics as well as in the economy. Centralist Putin has aimed to fight these oligarchs and make them do what he wants. As a matter of fact, Putin succeeded in gaining great public support by using the "terror" card in this struggle against the oligarchs (Yapıcı, 2007: 80). Putin primarily dealt with the media bosses due to their importance. First, an investigation was launched against Vladimir Gusinski of Jewish origin, who became an oligarch in newspapers, magazines, television and radio, alleging that he illegally bought the 11th channel of Petersburg and evaded taxes (Michael, 2012: 431). Gusinski, the owner of the news portal RTVi and NEWSru, fled abroad because of this investigation. Secondly, Berezovsk, which owns 75% of NTV, TV-6 Moscow and the newspaper 'Kommersant', obtained a parliamentary seat in the Duma elections in 1999, but was demoted in July 2000. A lawsuit known as the "Aeroflot" case was opened against him for the same crimes. Berezovsky also fled abroad. As a result of these events, in less than a year, all three of the

three federated TV channels in Russia came under state control (Michael, 2012: 431-432).

Another issue that should be mentioned here is the murders of journalists in Russia. According to the 2015 report of the Committee to Protect Journalists, the number of journalists who have been murdered in Russia since 1992 is 58 (Russia Archives-CPJ, 2022). The fact that these journalist murders are not clarified and the perpetrator remains unsolved makes the Russian people uneasy. Anna Politkovskaya is the most well-known murderer of journalists. Politkovskaya, who harshly criticized Putin's attitude in the Chechen War and called it the "Dirty War", was poisoned on the plane to the Beslan School Disaster in 2004, but survived. The author, who survived many attempts to be killed, was found dead in the elevator of his house in 2006 (Биография Анны Политковской, 2006).

After Putin took over the media, it was the turn of the oil oligarchs. Mikhail Khodorkovsky, owner of Yukos, one of the largest oil companies in the world, became one of Putin's biggest opponents shortly after he announced that he would enter politics. He was arrested in October 2003 for crimes such as tax evasion, fraud and bankrolling. In May 2005, he was found guilty and sentenced to nine years in prison. In 2010, while he was still serving his sentence, a new investigation was opened against him (Parfitt, 2010). The common point of this struggle with the oligarchs and the media is that all those who were exposed to the accusations took part in the opposition or harshly criticized Putin. For example, the CEO of Surgutneftgaz, Bogdanov, who can be considered as an oligarch, did not take any action against the Putin administration (Yapıcı, 2007: 86), and he received his reward without being touched. Putin, who has removed all obstacles for himself, continues his policy of being the only power.

Putin continued his centralist policies in state institutions as well. In this context, the multi-headed structure of the intelligence units was abolished and all of them were gathered under the roof of the FSB (Federal Security Service), which Putin came from and therefore knew all about its structure and bureaucrats very well (Yapıcı, 2007: 80). The year Putin took office, he reconstituted the State Council that existed during the Soviet Union but was later abolished. The council consists of the managers of the federated units, and its main task is to advise the head of state on matters of great importance. While doing this, Putin acted with the thought of benefiting from the managers of the federated units and ensuring harmony in each unit. In fact, the establishment of this council can be seen as part of Putin's policy of centralizing the state (Güler vd., 2009: 493).

There are some reasons why Putin can still stay in power despite his authoritarianism. First of all, there is no opposition in Russia that will meet the demands of the people and appeal to the masses. Secondly, Russia has experienced a revival in the economy with the rise in oil prices since 2000. While the barrel price of oil was around 35 dollars in Putin's first term; in the third term, it was around 65 dollars and increased even more, but it decreased to these levels again due to the invasion of Crimea in 2014. From the 1998 crisis to 2008, the Russian economy grew by an average of 7% every year, and the GDP doubled. In addition, with the increase in per capita income, a middle class of around 30 million people has emerged. Unemployment fell from 12.9% to 6.3% and taxes were lowered for incentive holders (Kotkin, 2015). Looking at such data, it can be understood that the Russian people are satisfied with Putin's economic reforms.

When we look at the government formation processes in the Yeltsin and Putin periods, we see various differences in both periods. While Yeltsin, who was

deprived of the support of the Duma, had to take into account the majority in the parliament when choosing the prime minister he would appoint, Putin had the ability to act more strategically. Yeltsin worked with six prime ministers and eight governments over a nine-year period; Putin has worked with only four prime ministers in fifteen years. During Yeltsin's period, the majority in the Duma disapproved of the appointment of an undesirable prime minister, and thus was able to obtain some powers from Yeltsin in their favor. To give an example, the Duma did not approve Viktor Chernomyrdin as prime minister in 1994, and Yeltsin, who did not want to face the same result in the second vote, dismissed the Minister of Agriculture and appointed someone from the opposition (Harvey, 2009). Likewise, after the 1998 economic crisis, Yeltsin dismissed the then Prime Minister Sergey Kiriyenko and wanted to replace him again with Chernomyrdin. In the first two votes, the parliament did not give a vote of confidence to Chernomyrdin, evaluated that Yeltsin could not send the same candidate for the third time, and threatened the president with criminal charges. With the surveys, it has been understood that there will be no change in the Duma in the event that the Duma is dissolved and new elections are held. Thereupon, Yeltsin took a step back and nominated Yevgeny Primakov and Primakov became the prime minister (White, 2011: 8). In Putin's era, a similar situation did not occur.

If we look at the relations of the President and the Prime Minister, in the Russian Federation, the "strong president-weak prime minister" analogy is appropriate. When the Head of State is with ultimate authority over the formation and survival of the government; on the other hand, the Prime Minister has no significant authority other than to implement the policies except for the economic policy (Erdem, 2014: 213). The institutions that get along best and have the least disagreements in Russian Federation are the Presidency and the Prime Ministry. However, these issues differed between

2008 and 2012 when Dmitry Medvedev was President. When Putin was stuck with the constitution for the third term, he wanted a president who would not disrupt his own policies and would "do what he was told". This structure was also followed by Medvedev. During the Medvedev era, the principles of a strong prime minister and a weak head of state were adopted. So much so that during this period when Medvedev was the head of state, he was often called Medvezhonok (*Teddy Bear*).

In addition to all these, a new and important event should not be overlooked in the centralization and the formation of the super presidency in the Russian Federation. It is 2020 amendments to the Constitution of Russian Federation. As mentioned above, the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation has undergone various changes since the day it was ratified. Most of these changes were made to centralize the state and increase the power of the Head of State. With the start of 2020, Putin proposed a new amendment to the Constitution in his speech at the Federal Assembly. (Kremlin.ru, 2020).

As is known, according to paragraph 3 of article 81 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the same person cannot hold office in the Presidency of the Russian Federation for more than two consecutive terms. This meant that Vladimir Putin would not be able to participate in the 2024 presidential election. Because Putin, who came to power in 2000, left his one-term seat to Dmitriy Medvedev after a two-term presidency until 2008, and subsequently took the presidency again in 2012. With the constitutional change in 2008, the presidential term was increased from four to six years, and in the 2018 election, Putin started his second term for the second time. However, the problem of not being able to participate in the elections in 2024 has been on the agenda of the Russian Federation since 2018. The same Putin, in an interview with the famous US anchorwoman Megyn Kelly, said that he has no intention of changing the

Constitution and that he will enter the 2024 Presidential Elections with the current constitution ("Путин заявил, что не намерен менять Конституцию", 2018).

As mentioned above, by 2020, Putin spoke at the Federal Assembly about his plan to change the Constitution. Shortly after his speech on January 15, the president formally submitted the bill to the State Duma on 20 January. The proposal, approved by the State Duma on March 11, passed the Federation Council on March 13 and received the approval of the Constitutional Court on March 16 (Teague, 2020: 307). The key amendments proposed by Putin in his address, and almost unchanged during the discussion in the State Duma on January 15, concern the redistribution of powers between the branches of power. Their main idea is to move away from the super-presidential republic established in 1993, with the parallel creation of a new system of checks and balances. For example, as a result of the reform, the Duma would have the right to approve not only the prime minister, but also deputy prime ministers and non-MP ministers; and the president would be obliged to appoint them (Камышев, 2020).

The voting, originally scheduled for April 22, 2020, has been postponed to a later date due to pandemic restrictions. Voting, postponed for face-to-face, took place from 25 June to 1 July. According to the official results, 79% of the valid votes supported the constitutional amendments (Hutcheson & McAllister, 2021: 365). Shortly after, Putin accepted the results and enacted them. As a result of this constitutional amendment, Putin's presidency was extended until 2036, but it also brought different results. These can be summarized as (Belov, 2021):

- The international law and decisions of international organizations should not have priority over the Russian Constitution.

- The minimal residency requirement for presidential candidates is raised from 10 years to 25.
- The new principle of unity of public government should appear in the Constitution unifying the local self-government and the state instead of the divide between these two.
- The State Duma can have the right to approve a Prime Minister's candidacy (as mentioned above).
- The President should appoint heads of the security agencies after consultations with the Federation Council.
- The Federation Council can be able to propose to the President to dismiss Federal judges.
- Marriage is defined as a relationship between one man and one woman.

Another new and important event that was overlooked in the formation of the centralization and super-presidency in the Russian Federation, especially on the eve of the Ukrainian occupation, was the re-narrowing of the status of the Tatarstan Federated Republic. Short and the long of it, in 1990, Tatarstan declared its sovereignty with a declaration. in 1992, Tatarstan held a referendum on the new constitution, and 62% of participants voted in favor of the constitution ("Провалились попытки провалить референдум в Татарстане", 1992). However, the referendum and constitution were declared unconstitutional by the Russian Constitutional Court. The former President Boris Yeltsin, who had to renegotiate the federative agreement with the rebel regions to prevent further fragmentation of the country, had to sit down with Tatarstan. As a result, in 1994, an agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan were signed. Thus, Tatarstan came the only Russian region that was allowed to promote indigenous national culture beyond its borders (Перцев, & Харисов, 2021). This power-sharing agreement was renewed on July 11, 2007. However,

following the 2011-2012 mass protests and the 2014 annexation of Crimea, the Kremlin's domestic policies took a much more authoritarian turn - including strengthening control over regions. As a result of these, in 2017, the autonomy agreement signed in 1994 between Moscow and Kazan expired, making Tatarstan the last republic of Russia to lose its special status. In late 2021, Tatarstan lost another symbol of its special status when Russia adopted a new law on public administration (Tóth-Czifra, 2022). With the new bill passed, all of Russia's 83 regions (including occupied Ukrainian region of Crimea) will be run by "regional heads" instead of presidents, governors, mayors, and the like. To sum up, this bill aimed unify the titles of the executive-branch heads of all Russia's regions. Thus, the president of the Republic of Tatarstan will now have to use the title of "head" instead of the title of "president". The title of president in Tatarstan was not only the title of the head of the republic, but also a symbol of leadership for the 7 million Tatars around the world. According to Vadim Sidorov, an expert, that could be exactly why the Kremlin wants to see the title abolished (Coalson, 2021).

To conclude, as a result of the events that took place in the last two decades, especially in the last two years, the centralization in the Russian Federation has increased excessively and the power of the Head of State has been consolidated. It is clear that in the minds of those in the Kremlin lies the desire to transform the Russian Federation from a federation into a unitary state. They see this domestic political goal as the solution to keeping the Russian Federation alive, whose union is hanging by a thread. In addition, in foreign policy, it is aimed to regain the lands under the control of the Kremlin during the Soviet Union period.

4. CONCLUSION

The most important feature that distinguishes the parliamentary, presidential and semi-presidential systems is the relations between the forces. To define a system, it is important to look at the interrelationships of the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. The most distinctive feature of the parliamentary system is the “soft” separation of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, and the executive branching out from within the legislature. The Head of State is mostly not elected by the people, he is generally tasked with representing the state and does not have strong powers. In the presidential system, on the other hand, the legislature and the executive are sharply separated from each other. The head of state cannot participate in any of the activities of the parliament or even propose a law. The parliament and the head of state do not have the authority to dissolve each other. Unlike the parliamentary system, the Head of State is endowed with extraordinary powers.

Perhaps the most complex system, the characteristics of which are unknown, is the semi-presidential system. The general features of the presidential and parliamentary system are similar and can be listed on the basis of countries. However, the definition and conditions of the vice-presidential system differ from author to author. In this context, the semi-presidential system in general has the following features: The president is directly elected by the people. After this election, the Head of State appoints a prime minister and shares the executive power with the prime minister. The prime minister he has appointed is also responsible to the parliament and needs the parliament's vote of confidence. Unlike the parliamentary system, the Head of State is vested with extraordinary powers. The president is elected independently of the parliament, but also has legislative influence. In this context, the semi-presidential system can turn into a structure that gives more authority to the

president than the presidential system, as examined in the example of the Russian Federation.

When we look at the Russian constitution, we see that the head of state is equipped with extraordinary powers. The Head of State, who has powers in all three of the legislative, executive and judicial powers, dominates the system. The most important power of the Head of State before the legislature is the power to dissolve the Duma during the approval of the prime minister. Three times in Russian political history, radical changes have been experienced, regimes have been destroyed and new ones have been established. Due to its political culture, Russia has always been ruled by a powerful Emperor or Head of State. When the state weakened, the Russian people gave extraordinary powers to a statesman admired by them. So much so that, as stated above, in the survey conducted between Russians with the question "Who is Russia's favorite statesman ever?", Stalin came in third.

Since 2000, when Putin came to the throne, he has been the only man in the Russian Federation. He tried to gather the state administration, which was lost during the Yeltsin period, in the center (Kremlin). First of all, he divided Russia into seven super regions in order to resurrect the state in distant regions and directly appointed the governors of these regions who were responsible for supervising and establishing the state administration. Later, he turned his attention to the media and launched an investigation against all media bosses who were in opposition to him on various charges. In a short period of about a year, the most important media organs of the Russian Federation came under state control. Having the 'support' of the media behind him, Putin continued with other oligarchs in opposition to his centralist policies. Putin, who arranged the electoral system and the internal structure of the parliament according to

his wishes, also changed the election system of the members of the Federation Council and Duma; took measures to suppress the opposition.

The economic reasons lie behind Putin's central and oppressive regime still standing. Indeed, the Russian economy displayed a rapid growth chart with the increase in the price of oil after Putin came to power. The most important reason for Putin to follow a centralist policy is the overwhelming United Russia Party majority in the parliament. The parliament has become a structure that gives legitimacy to what Putin wants. It is not expected in the near future to form an opposition party against United Russia, which won the overwhelming majority in the parliament in all the last three Duma elections and even reached the number to change the constitution – thanks to the changes made in the structure of the parliament and the electoral system.

The reasons leading Russia to the "super presidency" are listed above. The most important of these is the majority of the Parliament in favor of the president. The similar powers of the current Head of State had also belonged to Boris Yeltsin. However, Yeltsin, who could not get the support of the parliament, could not implement the policies he wanted, and he often had to compromise with the parliament. For this reason, Yeltsin could not even appoint the government freely and had to dismiss some ministers. When Yeltsin wanted to act freely, the Duma threatened to attempt to impeach the Head of State. In the Putin period, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, who had the support of the parliament, acted freely and could pass the law he wanted without difficulty. In this context, it centralized the administration and killed the opposition. While Yeltsin was a "semi-president", Putin became a "super-president".

Conflict Of Interest Statement:

The authors do not have any competing interests.

Funding Acknowledgements:

There was no specific grant for this research from any funding source.

Ethics Committee Statement and Intellectual Property Copyrights:

Ethics committee rules were followed in this work, and appropriate rights were obtained in compliance with intellectual property and copyright principles.

REFERENCES

- Belov, S. (2021). 2020 Constitutional Amendments in Russia: A Constitutional Update? IACL-AIDC Blog. Retrieved from <https://blog-iacl-aidc.org/2021-posts/2021/3/30-constitutional-amendments-in-russia>
- Chaisty, P. (2008). The legislative effects of presidential partisan powers in post-Communist Russia. *Government and Opposition*, 43(3), 424-453.
- Coalson, R. (2021). Putin's Power Play? Tatarstan Activists Say Loss Of 'President' Title Would Be An Existential Blow. Retrieved from <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-tatarstan-president-federalism/31519341.html>
- Duverger, M. (1980). A new political system model: Semi-presidential government. *European journal of political research*, 8(2), 165-187.
- Elgie, R. (2007). Varieties of semi-presidentialism and their impact on nascent democracies. *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, 3(2), 53-71.
- Erdem, K. (2014). *Karşılaştırmalı Hükümet Sistemleri: Yarı Başkanlık Sistemi (Fransa, Polonya ve Rusya Örnekleri)*, Ankara: TBMM Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları.
- Erdoğan, M. (2003). *Anayasal demokrasi* (Vol. 7). Siyasal Kitabevi.
- Gözler, K. (2000). Türkiye'de hükümetlere nasıl istikrar ve etkinlik kazandırılabilir? *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 62(25.47).
- Güler, B. A., Karahanoğulları, O., Karasu, K. (2009). *Kamu yönetimi ülke incelemeleri*. İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi.
- Harvey, C. J. (2009). *The Double-Headed Eagle: Semi-Presidentialism and Democracy in France and Russia* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh).
- Huntington, S. P. (2002). *Üçüncü dalga*, çev. Ergun Özbudun, Ankara, TDV Yayınları.

- Hutcheson, D. S., & McAllister, I. (2021). Consolidating the Putin Regime: The 2020 Referendum on Russia's Constitutional Amendments. *Russian Politics*, 6(3), 355-376.
- Kahraman, M. (2012). Hükümet sistemi tartışmaları bağlamında başkanlık ya da yarı-başkanlık sistemlerinin Türkiye'de uygulanabilirliği. *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 9(18), 431-457.
- Karahöyük, M. (2012). Rusya Federasyonu'nun siyasal sistemi ve devlet yapısı.
- Kotkin, S. (2015). The Resistible Rise of Vladimir Putin: Russia's Nightmare Dressed like a Daydream. *Foreign Affairs*, 94, 140.
- Krechetnikov, A. (2012). Moscow theatre siege: Questions remain unanswered. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-20067384>
- Kremlin.ru (2020). Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly. Retrieved from <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62582>
- Lijphart, A. (1996). *Çağdaş demokrasiler*, Çev. Ergun Özbudun–Ersin Onulduran, Ankara: Yetkin.
- Michael, G. (2012). *The man without a face: The unlikely rise of Vladimir Putin*, by Gessen, Masha: New York: Blue Riverhead Books, 2012. ISBN: 978-1594488429.
- Parfitt, T. (2010). Mikhail Khodorkovsky sentenced to 14 years in prison. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/30/mikhail-khodorkovsky-jail-term>
- Pierre, P. (1992). Institutions politiques. *Droit constitutionnel et science politiques*. Paris: Mason.
- Pravda, A. (2005). Leading Russia: Putin in perspective: essays in honour of Archie Brown. OUP Oxford.
- Remington, T. F. (2007). The Russian Federal Assembly, 1994–2004. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 13(1), 121-141.
- Russia Archives-CPJ. (2022). Retrieved from <https://cpj.org/europe/russia/>
- Saivetz, C. R. (1996). Russia: Problems and Prospects for Democratization. In *Establishing Democracies*. Colorado: Westview Press.
- Sakwa, R. (2020). *Russian politics and society*. Routledge.
- Sartori, G. (1997). *Karşılaştırmalı anayasa mühendisliği*, Çev. Ergun Özbudun, Ankara: Yetkin.
- Shugart, M. S., & Carey, J. M. (1992). *Presidents and assemblies: Constitutional design and electoral dynamics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Simon, R. J., & Gueorguieva, V. (2008). *Voting and elections the world over*. Lexington Books.
- Solovyov, D. (2008). Stalin voted third most popular Russian. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-stalin-idUSTRE4BR17620081229>

- Szilágyi, I. M. (2009). Presidential versus parliamentary systems. *AARMS*, 8(2), 307-314.
- Teague, E. (2020). Russia's Constitutional Reforms of 2020. *Russian Politics*, 5(2020), 301-328.
- Tóth-Czifra, A. (2022). How to be a successful region in Russia: the case of Tatarstan. Retrieved from <https://imrussia.org/en/analysis/3413-how-to-be-a-successful-region-in-russia-the-case-of-tatarstan>
- Uluşahin, N. (2007). Saf hükümet sistemleri karşısında iki başlı yürütme yapılanması. Ankara: Yetkin.
- Uluşahin, N. (1999). *Anayasal bir tercih olarak başkanlık sistemi*. Ankara: Yetkin.
- White, S. (2011). *Understanding Russian Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- White, S. (2000). *Russia's new politics: the management of a postcommunist society*. Cambridge University Press.
- Walt, S. (1999). "Russia". In *Semi-presidentialism in Europe*. OUP Oxford.
- Yapıcı, U. (2007). *Yeni Soğuk Savaş: Putin, Rusya ve Avrasya*. İstanbul: Başlık Yayın Grubu.
- Yazıcı, S. (2002). *Başkanlık ve yarı-başkanlık sistemleri: Türkiye için bir değerlendirme*, İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Баглай, М. В. (2000). Конституционное право Российской Федерации. Москва, М: Издательство Норма.
- Безуглов, А. А., & Солдатов, С. А. (2001). *Конституционное право России*. Москва, М: Издательство Проспект.
- Биография Анны Политковской. (2006). Retrieved from <http://politkovskaya.novayagazeta.ru/bio.shtml>
- Vybory.izbirkom.ru, (2007). Выборы депутатов Государственной Думы Федерального Собрания Российской Федерации пятого созыва. Выборы референдум. http://www.vybory.izbirkom.ru/region/region/izbirkom?action=show&root=1&tvd=100100021960186&vrn=100100021960181®ion=0&global=1&sub_region=0&prver=0&pronetvd=null&vibid=100100021960186&type=242
- Constitution.ru, (t.y.). Конституция Российской Федерации. Constitution.Ru. <http://www.constitution.ru/index.htm>
- Гелиева, И. Н. (2008). Некоторые вопросы формы государственного правления в России. *Общество и право*, 1, 41-45.
- Камышев, Д. (2020). Россия при новой Конституции. Retrieved from <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2020/06/21/833103-konstitutsii>
- Карамеев, С. (2004). Бесланская школа: как это было Как развивались события в Беслане 1-3 сентября 2004 года. Retrieved from <http://www.lenta.ru/articles/2004/09/07/beslan>

- Кокотов, А. Н., & Кукушкин, М. И. (2007). *Конституционное право России: учебник*. М.: Норма.
- Кондрашев, А. А. (2018). Суперпрезидентская Республика в России: Миф или Реальность? *Вестник Университета имени О.Е. Кутафина (МГЮА)*, (6), 34-42.
- Козлова, Е. И., & Кутафин, О. Е. (2006). *Конституционное право России*. Издательство Проспект.
- Краснов, М. А. (2003). Россия как полупрезидентская республика: проблемы баланса полномочий (опыт сравнительно-правового анализа). *Государство и право*, (10), 16-23.
- Мартынюк, Р. С. (2015). Президентская республика: особенности формы правления и логика организации государственной власти. *Евразийская Адвокатура*, (7), 60-66.
- Перцев, А., & Харисов, А. (2021). Мне очень нравится название моей должности. Retrieved from <https://meduza.io/feature/2021/10/28/mne-ochen-nravitsya-nazvanie-moej-dolzhnosti>
- Провалились попытки провалить референдум в Татарстане. (1992). Retrieved from <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3761>
- Пушкарев, С. В. (2012). Правовые матрицы суперпрезиденциализма на постсоветском пространстве. *Современное право*, (12), 9-12.
- Путин заявил, что не намерен менять Конституцию. (2018). Retrieved from <https://ria.ru/20180310/1516070848.html>
- Российская газета. (2003, 25 Aralık); (2007, 11 Aralık); (2008, 2 Haziran).
- Центральная избирательная комиссия РФ (1993). Итоги Всенародного Голосования по Проекту Конституции Российской Федерации 12 декабря 1993 года. Retrieved from http://cikrf.ru/banners/vib_arhiv/referendum/1993_ref_itogi.html
- Чиркин, В. Е. (2006). Россия, Конституция, достойная жизнь: анализ взаимосвязей. *Государство и право*, (5), 5-13.
- Чиркин, В. Е. (2008). Постсоциалистическое государство XXI века. *Журнал российского права*, 5(137), 3-17.

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Rusya siyasi tarihinde üç defa köklü bir değişim yaşamış, çeşitli rejimler yıkılmış, bunların yerine yenileri kurulmuştur. Çarlık'tan Sovyet'e, Sovyet'ten Federasyon'a geçen bu köklü değişimler, yönetimde güce sahip erki ise pek değiştirmemiştir. Rusya, farklı ideoloji ve yönetim biçimlerine sahip olsa, siyasi kültürü gereği günümüze kadar büyük oranda güçlü bir imparator/devlet başkanı tarafından yönetilmiştir. Rus devletinin güçsüzleştiği kırılma evrelerinin akabinde, yönetime olağanüstü bir güce sahip yöneticiler geçmiştir.

Bu tek adam yönetimlerinde parlamentonun ve güç gruplarının sahip olduğu etkiler tırpanlanırken, tek adamın kontrolünde hükümetler kurulmuştur. Günümüzde de Rusya Federasyonu'nda var olduğu iddia edilen yarı-başkanlık sistemi, gün geçtikçe farklı boyutlara girmektedir. 1993 Anayasası ile şekillenen yarı-başkanlık sistemi, özellikle Vladimir Putin'in cumhurbaşkanı seçildiği 2000 yılından itibaren önemli değişikliklere maruz kalmıştır. Bu değişiklikler, rejimi daha otoriterleştirirken, gerek dış gerekse iç politikada onu daha kırılğan hale getirmiştir.

Bu makalede Rusya Federasyonu'nun yarı-başkanlık sisteminin evrimi ve süper başkanlığa giden süreçteki dönüşüm anlatılmaktadır. Yaptığımız çalışmalar doğrultusunda, Rusya Federasyonu'nda 1993 Anayasası'na göre oluşturulmuş olan hükümet şeklinin tipolojisi için Rusya'nın kendi içinde üç ana yaklaşım tartışıldığını sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Birinci görüşe göre, halk tarafından seçilen Devlet Başkanı ve Parlamento tarafından kontrol edilemeyen yürütme gücüyle Rusya'da başkanlık cumhuriyeti kurulmuştur. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ndeki yönetim sistemine benzer olduğu iddia edilen bu Cumhuriyette, teorik olarak katı bir güçler ayrılığının varlığı iddia edilmiştir. Yürütme ile yasama arasındaki keskin ayırım, yürütme organının yasama organından geçen yasalara uymakla yükümlü olmasıyla ayırt edilir. Başta Cumhurbaşkanı Vladimir Putin olmak üzere, mevcut yönetimi destekleyenlerin temel iddiası bu görüş çerçevesinde şekillenmektedir. İkinci görüşü savunanlara göre, hükümetteki yürütme gücü anayasal olarak Cumhurbaşkanı ile Parlamento arasında bölünmüş bir karma cumhuriyet özelliği taşımaktadır. Bu görüşü benimseyenler, günümüzdeki Beşinci Fransız Cumhuriyeti'ne benzer olarak, ülkedeki yönetimin bir yarı başkanlık olduğu iddiasında bulunmaktadır. Bu fikre göre, ülkede başkanlık sistemi olmakla birlikte, yürütme ve yasama arasında keskin güçler ayrılığı bulunmamaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, yürütme erki olan Cumhurbaşkanı'nın yasama erki meclise müdahil etme gücü ve yetkisi olmasına paralel olarak, iki kamaralı parlamentonun da Cumhurbaşkanı'na ve hükümetini onaylama ve görevden almak yetkisi vardır. 1993 Anayasası'na dayandırılan bu görüş, Cumhurbaşkanı Putin'in 2008 yılında ardı ardına üçüncü kez başkan olamamasından dolayı, Dmitri Medvedev'in cumhurbaşkanı olduğu 2008-2012 yıllarına atıf yaparak, Anayasa'nın sorunsuz uygulandığını ve bir yarı-başkanlık sisteminde cumhurbaşkanının yürütmede dengeleyici bir rol üstlendiğini savunmaktadır. Üçüncü yaklaşımı savunanlara göre ise, Devlet Başkanı'nın geniş güçleri onu bir mutlak güce erdirmiş, nevi şahsına münhasır yeni bir cumhuriyet biçimi oluşturmuştur. Bu cumhuriyet biçiminde, Cumhurbaşkanı Parlamento'yu feshetme, yetki devrine ilişkin yasa çıkarma, Parlamento onayı olmadan kararname çıkarma, bireysel olarak hakim atama ve tüm üst düzey yetkililer için aday seçme hakkına sahiptir. Bu görüşte olanlar, bu tarz süper başkanlığa bir günde gelinmediğini ve zaman içinde Anayasa'da yapılan önemli değişikliklerle Cumhurbaşkanı'na olağanüstü görevler verildiğini söylemektedirler.

Ayrıca, Putin'in her başkanlık döneminde basın-yayın üzerinde daha fazla kontrol sağlamış olması, bu tarz tek adam tipli başkanlık karşısında Rusya toplumunun da duyarsızlaşmasına sebep olduğu iddiası bulunmaktadır. Özetle yasama organı olan Parlamento'nun işlevsiz hale getirildiği iddia edilen bu sistemde, tüm güç yürütmenin tek elinde toplamıştır. Süper başkanlık iddiasına giden yol da bu görüş etrafında şekillenmiştir.

Bu görüşleri tartışmak amacıyla Rusya Federasyonu 1993 Anayasası'na baktığımızda, yirmi yılı aşkın süre içerisinde Rusya Devlet Başkanı'nın olağandışı yetkilerle donatıldığını görmekteyiz. Yasama, yürütme ve yargı erkinin bulunduğu de yetkileri bulunan devlet başkanı sisteme tamamiyle hâkim hale gelmiştir. Ülkeyi kararnameler doğrultusunda yönetebilmesinin ve yasama ile yargıda birçok bürokrati atama yetkisiyle birlikte, Rusya Devlet Başkanı'nın yasama önündeki en önemli yetkisinden biri de Başbakan'ın onaylanması esnasında Duma'yı feshedebilme yetkisidir. Bu çalışmanın sınırlılık dönemi olan 2000-2020 yılları arasına baktığımız zaman, kontrolündeki parlamentonun desteğini arkasına alan Vladimir Putin, serbest hareket kabiliyeti elde ederek tüm yetkileri elinde toplamış ve istediği yasayı zorlanmadan çıkartabilme gücüne sahip olmuştur. Bu kapsamda yönetimi merkezileştirmiş ve muhalefeti sindirebilmiştir. Çok basit tabirle anlatmak gerekirse, 1990'lı yıllarda Boris Yeltsin "yarı-başkanlık" görevini icra ederken, Vladimir Putin yirmi yıl içerisinde, başkanlık statüsünü "süper" yetkilerle donatmıştır.

Makale üç bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk olarak, yarı-başkanlık sisteminin tam anlaşılabilmesi için hükümet sistemleri (parlamentar sistem, başkanlık ve yarı-başkanlık sistemi) incelenmiştir. Özellikle Rusya'da var olduğu iddia edilen yarı-başkanlık sistemi üzerinde durulmuş ve bu sistemi oluşturan koşullar ele alınmıştır: cumhurbaşkanının halk tarafından seçilmesi, yürütme gücünün esas olarak başbakanda olması, yürütmenin meclis onayından geçmesi gibi. Daha sonra, ikinci bölümde, Rusya Federasyonu'nun 1993 Anayasasıyla biçimlenen "yarı-başkanlık" sistemi ayrıntılı bir şekilde anlatılmıştır. Burada federasyonun kuruluşunda temeli atılan sistemin temel özellikleri sıralanmış ve nasıl bir sistem tahayyül edildiği ele alınmıştır. Son bölümde ise Rusya Federasyonu'nu süper başkanlığa götüren yapının nasıl oluştuğu açıklanmış ve bu bağlamda çıkartılan yasalar dizisi belirtilerek makaleye son verilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın literatüre katkısı siyasal sistemler hakkındaki örnekleri, Rus siyasal sisteminin evrimi temelinde çeşitlendirmek ve Rusya Federasyonu'nun içindeki tartışmaları da göz önüne alarak bu siyasal sistemin kendine has yapısını ortaya koymaktır.