



# PNG Politics

## What to expect in the next 5 years

2022 PNG Update Conference

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- Parliamentary politics in a nutshell
- Stability under Somare & O'Neill
- Is political stability preferable?





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# Parliamentary Politics



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## Parliament term: 5 years in a nutshell

18 months

\_After PM is elected: 18 months 'grace period'  
\_Vote of no confidence cannot be moved

30 months

\_Period of instability  
\_Vote of no confidence can be moved against PM

12 months

Last 12 months before issue of writs for next election: vote of no confidence not possible

Section 145 of PNG Constitution



## Organic Law on Integrity of Political Party & Candidates 2003 (OLIPPAC):

- Support for PM throughout the five years
- Restrictions on MPs switching parties
- Declared unconstitutional in 2010



Extension of grace period from 18 to 30 months

Reduction of parliament sitting days

Changes to motion for vote of no confidence requirements

- increase in no. of signatures
- increase in days for notice





## O'Neill's 5 years (2012 - 2017): Constitutional Amendments

30 months (previously 18)

Amendments to the Constitution:  
ss. 145 (4): extended grace period  
ss. 124 (1): reduced parliament sitting days from (63 to 40)  
ss. 145 (1): increased days for notice, and number of MPs to sign the notice for the motion for VONC

18 months (previously 30)

Opposition had 60 days in 5 years, to have 22 MPs to sign the notice for VONC, and submit it one month in advance

12 months

Last 12 months before issue of writs for next election: vote of no confidence not possible

<https://devpolicy.org/will-james-marape-become-third-png-pm-to-complete-full-term>



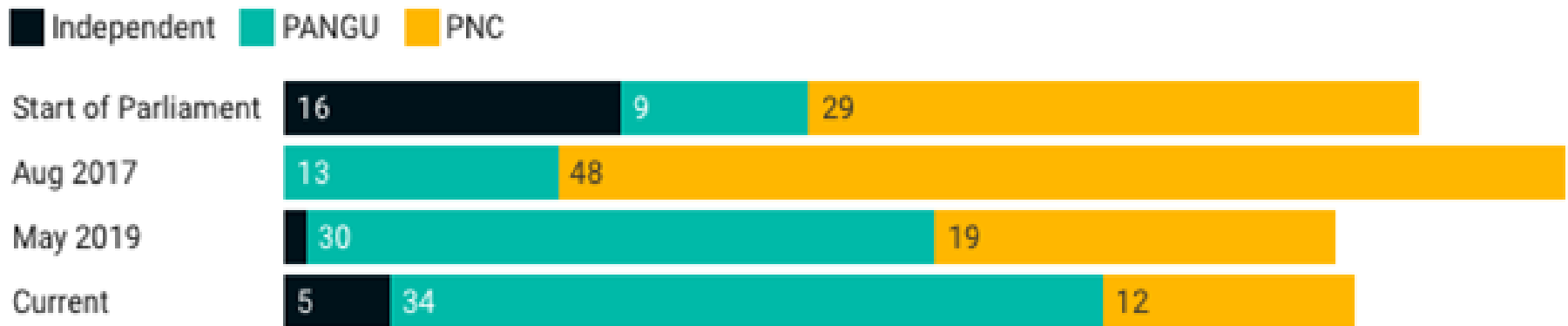


Will James Marape be the 3rd PM to complete his term in parliament?





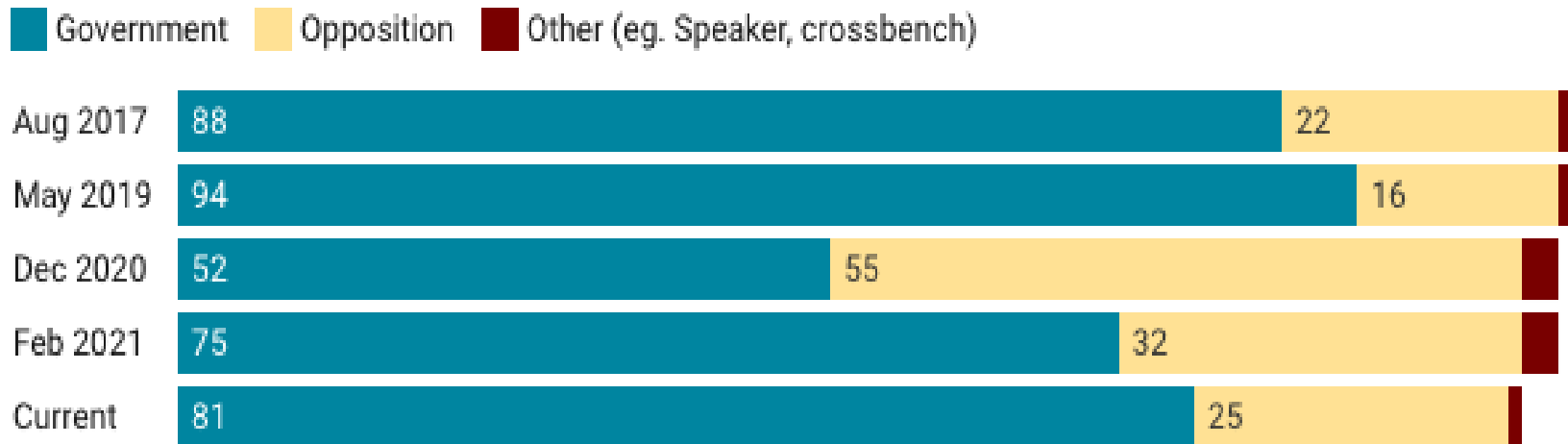
## The two major parties and independents throughout the Tenth Parliament



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## Support for government and opposition in the Tenth Parliament



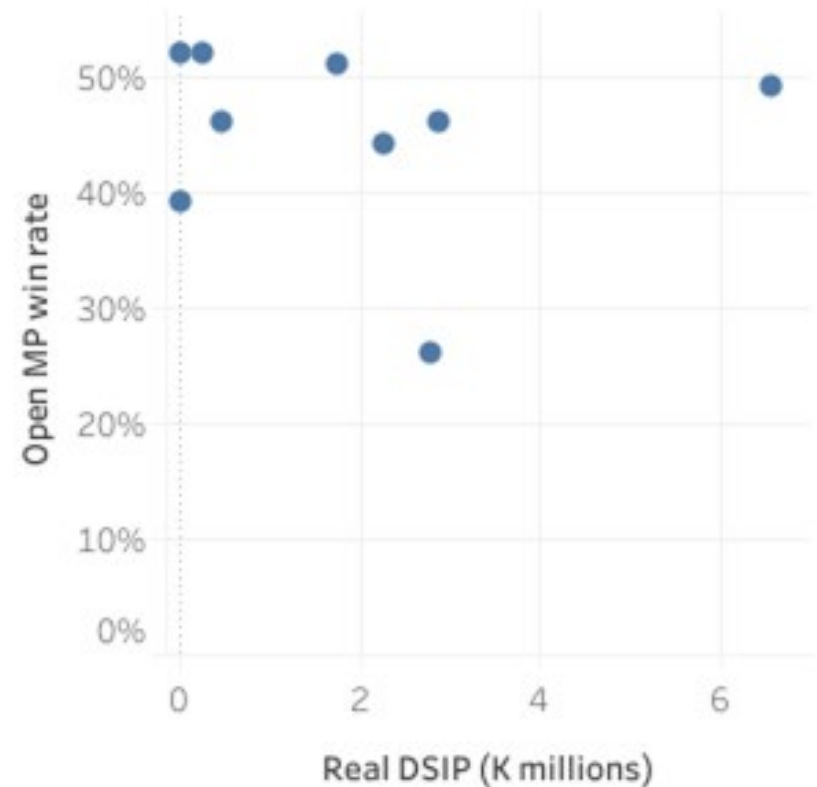
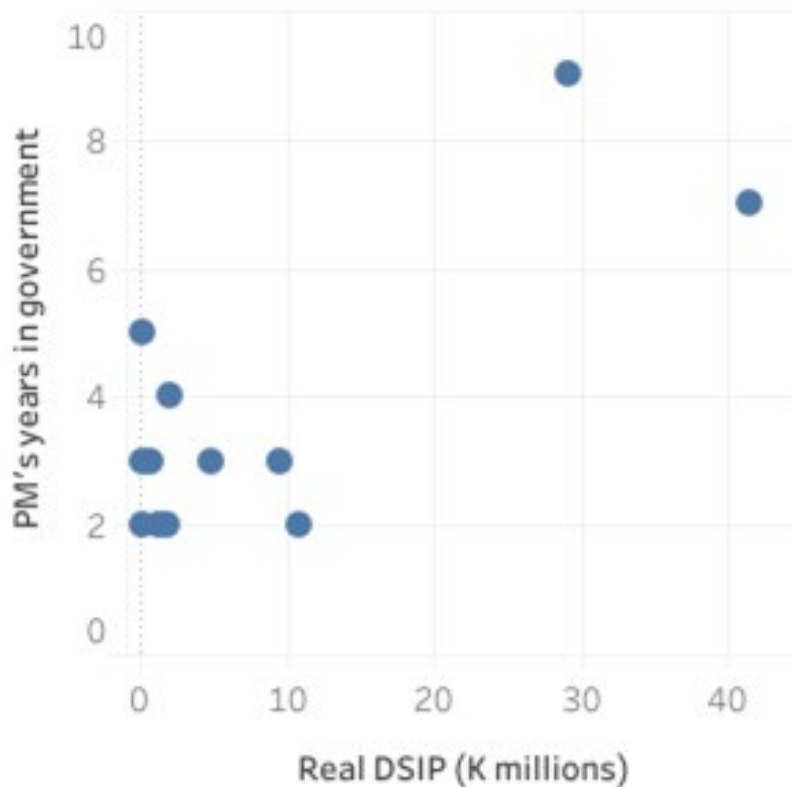
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# O'Neill: DSIP & political stability

## Prime ministers' years in government, open MP win rate, and real DSIP per open MP, 1975-2020



<https://devpolicy.org/does-mp-funding-work-politically-in-png-20210906/>



VONC motion vetted by Govt-dominated members:

- withdrawal of signatures
- Confidence in the PM





# Supreme Court: Non-justiciable

The affairs of the parliament are non-justiciable – or beyond the remit of the courts, except where: The parliament enacts or amends a law, including the constitution, or breaches a procedure *explicitly provided by the Constitutional Laws.*

In the *Haiveta versus Wingti* case the judge upheld this provision by stating:

*The net effect of all of these is that the proceedings of the Parliament are non-justiciable unless there is a procedure provided by a Constitutional Law that must be followed in the conduct of any parliamentary action.*





The Supreme Court has been inconsistent (Vote of no confidence)

Polye vs Zurenouc - Supreme Court intervened

Namah vs Marape - Supreme Court restrained, considered non-justiciable





30 months of political instability =  
MPs/PM more concerned with  
maintaining political support

Low focus on governing,  
representation and law making





Recommendation (glass half \_\_\_\_\_)

Remove the motivation for MPs switching sides (DSIP/PSIP), or make it a constitutional grant.

