

HISTORY, PARADIGMS, PERSPECTIVES AND FEATURES OF THE STUDY OF MINORITY GOVERNMENTS IN CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL SCIENCE: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The article deals with the consideration and systematisation of the history, paradigms, perspectives and features of the study of minority governments in contemporary political science, in particular in the theoretical and methodological context. The author found that the number of scientific and theoretical researches devoted to minority governments is directly proportional to the number of empirical cases of minority governments in different countries. It was stated that all researches on minority governments should be divided into three clusters or groups: from the standpoint of the theory and tradition of rational choice, from the standpoint of the new institutionalism approach and from the standpoint of party theory. In view of this, it was argued that the studies of minority governments are basically determined by a combination of different theoretical and methodological paradigms, which focus on outlining the various factors of formation and functioning of minority governments. Among them, the article highlighted such as: strategic factors that outline the electoral prospects of various political actors; institutional factors that are determined primarily by the peculiarities of parliamentary norms and procedures and the parameters of their implementation; structural factors that are described by intra-party and inter-party interactions of different parties.

Keywords: government, governmental cabinet, minority government, formation, functioning, responsibility and stability of minority governments.

HISTORIA, PARADYMATY, PERSPEKTYWY I CECHY RZĄDÓW MNIEJSZOŚCIOWYCH W PERSPEKTYWIE WSPÓŁCZESNYCH NAUK POLITYCZNYCH: KONTEKST TEORETYCZNY I METODOLOGICZNY

Artykuł dotyczy rozważań i systematyzacji historii, paradygmatów, perspektyw i cech badań rządów mniejszościowych we współczesnych naukach politycznych, w szczególności w kontekście teoretycznym i metodologicznym. Autorka stwierdza, że liczba badań naukowych i teoretycznych poświęconych rządowi mniejszości jest wprost proporcjonalna do liczby empirycznych przypadków rządów mniejszości w różnych krajach. Stwierdzono, że wszystkie badania dotyczące rządów mniejszościowych należy podzielić na trzy skupienia lub grupy: z punktu widzenia teorii i tradycji racjonalnego wyboru, z punktu widzenia nowego podejścia

інституціоналізму oraz z punktu widzenia teorii partii. W związku z tym argumentowano, że badania rządów mniejszości są zasadniczo zdeterminowane przez połączenie różnych paradygmatów teoretycznych i metodologicznych, które koncentrują się na nakreśleniu różnych czynników formowania i funkcjonowania rządów mniejszości. Wśród nich w artykule zwrócono uwagę na: czynniki strategiczne, które określają perspektywy wyborcze różnych aktorów politycznych; czynniki instytucjonalne, które są determinowane przede wszystkim przez specyfikę norm i procedur parlamentarnych oraz parametry ich wdrażania; czynniki strukturalne, które są opisane przez wewnętrzne i międzypartyjne interakcje różnych stron.

Słowa kluczowe: rząd, gabinet rządowy, rząd mniejszościowy, tworzenie, funkcjonowanie, odpowiedzialność i stabilność rządów mniejszościowych.

ІСТОРІЯ, ПАРАДИГМИ, ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ Й ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ УРЯДІВ МЕНШОСТІ У СУЧАСНІЙ ПОЛІТИЧНІЙ НАУЦІ: ТЕОРЕТИКО-МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНИЙ КОНТЕКСТ

У статті розглянуто та систематизовано історію, парадигми, перспективи та особливості дослідження урядів меншості у сучасній політичній науці, зокрема в теоретико-методологічному контексті. Виявлено, що кількість науково-теоретичних праць, які присвячені урядам меншості, прямопропорційна кількості емпіричних випадків урядів меншості різних країнах. Встановлено, що всі розвідки, присвячені урядам меншості, потрібно розподіляти на три кластери чи групи: з позиції теорії та традиції раціонального вибору, з позиції неонституціонального підходу та з патологічної позиції. З огляду на це, аргументовано, що дослідження урядів меншості у своїй основі детерміновані поєднанням різних теоретико-методологічних парадигм, які орієнтуються на окреслення різних факторів формування і функціонування урядів меншості. Серед них у статті виокремлено такі, як: стратегічні фактори, які передбачають окреслення виборчих перспектив різних політичних акторів; інституційні фактори, які визначаються передусім особливостями парламентських норм і процедур та параметрами їхньої реалізації; структурні фактори, які описуються внутрішньопартійними та міжпартійними взаємодіями різних партій.

Ключові слова: уряд, урядовий кабінет, уряд меншості, формування, функціонування, відповідальність і стабільність урядів меншості.

The issue of minority governments in modern political science is broad and multifaceted. It is mainly outlined by the works of scholars representing Western political science, although it is partly represented in the search for researchers from the post-communist and even post-Soviet space, in particular in Poland. In this context, a notable attribute of this issue is that the number

of scientific papers devoted to minority governments is directly proportional to the number of cases of minority governments in certain countries of the world. This is clearly evidenced by the history of the emergence and actualization of research by minority governments in political science. Especially, those studies which, being popular and widely cited in the scientific literature, have already become classics for modern political science. Therefore, in this context, special attention needs to be paid to the selection and systematization of the history of development, prospects and features of the study of minority governments in modern political science, mainly in the theoretical and methodological direction.

Perhaps the first known study of minority governments belongs to the pen of F. Yanson, who is the author of a scientific article “Minority Governments in Sweden”, published in 1928 in the “*American Political Science Review*”¹. This paper outlines the party-electoral parameters of the formation and functioning of some minority governments in Sweden in the early 20th century and the influence on the formation of minority governments of the formal attributes of the system of parliamentarism after its reform in Sweden in 1866. After that, however, for a considerable period of time, minority governments received too little attention in political science, for several reasons. First, before, after the Second World War, the perspective of political science has shifted significantly from the study of political institutions to the study of political behavior in the framework of institutionalism and behavioralism.

Second, minority governments until the mid-1930s were not as common in political practice as after World War II. Accordingly, the need for research by minority governments was insignificant, and therefore they were either not analyzed or analyzed very briefly.

The situation partially changed after the Second World War, but it was most noticeable in the mid-60 – early 70’s of the 20th century, when interest in the study of political institutions and processes began to revive. From this period, the number of studies on minority governments began to intensify and gradually increase. They are not identical and do not apply to the same parameters and attributes of minority governments. However, even so, among all the studies of minority governments, some have become fundamental and even acquired the status of classics. Instead, other studies of minority governments have become new, albeit relevant to modern political science. In addition, taking into account the most notable studies of minority governments is inevitable, as they are the basis of modern scientific ideas about the theoretical and empirical features of minority governments in different countries and regions, as well as taxonomies of key issues of minority governments in modern political science.

In considering the key scientific works on the issue of minority governments in political science, we can’t miss the classic article by W. Herman and J. Pope “Minority Governments in Western Democracies”², which was published in 1973 in the “*British Journal of Political*

¹ Janson F., *Minority Governments in Sweden*, “*American Political Science Review*” 1928, vol 22, nr 22, s. 407–413.

² Herman V., Pope J., *Minority Governments in Western Democracies*, “*British Journal of Political Science*” 1973, vol 3, nr 2, s. 191–212.

Science”. Scholars have applied existing coalition theories to the phenomenon and features of minority governments in Western democracies and concluded on the attributes of the formation and termination of minority governments in this paper. In particular, scholars have found that minority governments are most often formed when they rely on the regular support of the situational majority in parliament on a particular legislative issue or when they are so large that they are sure that no victorious coalition (which has a majority in parliament) will be formed. Accordingly, scholars have argued that instead of gaining victorious status, minority governments are often “controlling”. In contrast, however, not very large minority governments are incapable of blocking the formation of victorious coalitions, and therefore they are not “controlling”. In this regard, scholars have concluded that the more the minority government appears as “controlling”, the freer it is program and its political course.

In 1979, another classic work on minority governments appeared. This is an article by L. Geller-Schwartz “Minority Government Reconsidered”³, which is published in the “*Journal of Canadian Studies*”. This paper discusses the specifics of the correlation between minority governments and their parliamentary accountability, as well as the behavior of parliamentary parties that provide support to minority governments. L. Geller-Schwartz analyzed the legislative role of parliaments and identified the extent to which it is changing in the functioning of minority governments, as well as tested the hypothesis of whether parliamentary accountability of minority governments is increasing. Her work has challenged the then-established practical and empirical assumption that minority governments are necessarily more sensitive and accountable to parliament than majority governments. Instead, it was argued that the legislative effectiveness and parliamentary accountability of minority governments depended significantly on the use of one type of parliamentary strategy and the tactics of parliamentary parties. However, the most significant scientific result of L. Geller-Schwartz in this context was her position on the expediency of identifying five options or models of cooperation between political parties in the context of minority governments. These include a coalition, a formal pact or treaty, an informal agreement formed by a specific majority (ad hoc majority), and the “restraint” of the opposition, as a result of which the ruling party or parties function as if they have the support of a parliamentary majority⁴.

During the 80’s of the 20th century several studies of the minority governments, by K. Strom, perhaps the most famous researcher and theorist of minority governments in the history of world political science, have been published. In particular, in 1984 a scientific article by the researcher “Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality of Non-winning Cabinet Solutions” was published in the scientific journal “*Comparative Political Studies*”⁵.

In it, K. Strom: managed to offer one of the first statistics of minority governments in Western democracies after the end of World War II; he argued that minority governments make up

³ Geller-Schwartz L., *Minority Government Reconsidered*, “*Journal of Canadian Studies*” 1979, vol 14, nr 2, s. 67–79.

⁴ Geller-Schwartz L., *Minority Government Reconsidered*, “*Journal of Canadian Studies*” 1979, vol 14, nr 2, s. 68.

⁵ Strom K., *Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality of Non-winning Cabinet Solutions*, “*Comparative Political Studies*” 1984, vol 17, nr 2, s. 199–226.

more than a third of all governments in Western Europe; argued that minority governments make up more than a third of all governments in Western Europe; refuted the view that minority governments are only associated with political crises and instability, ideological polarization and parliamentary fractionalization, and party failures in the bidding process for the formation of majority governments. Instead, the scholar proved that minority governments are cases of rational decision-making with specific preconditions. This is eloquently demonstrated by the fact that minority governments are formed even when all opposition parties are able to influence the legislative activity of parliaments and when participation in government is often seen as an instrument of party accountability before elections. This interpretation of minority governments from the standpoint of the theory of rational choice has received significant empirical support for the example of different parliamentary democracies around the world, and thus influenced the modification of theories of minority governments and approaches to their interpretation.

However, perhaps the most relevant intelligence, which in 1990 was devoted to minority governments, was K. Strom's scientific monograph "Minority Government and Majority Rule"⁶. In it, the scholar identified the essence and key features of minority governments in parliamentary democracies, refuted the previously accepted position that minority governments must be unstable and ineffective. This was based on an analysis of more than 350 minority governments in Western Europe after World War II. In addition, they are sometimes even more stable and effective than majority governments. Based on empirical examples, the scientist proved that minority governments are mostly formed when very competitive elections take place, and opposition parties are able to influence legislative decisions, even if they are far from governmental. K. Strom's study outlines and solves the problem of the essence and purpose of minority governments, the rationality of the formation of minority governments and the distribution of positions in minority governments, the reassessment of the feasibility and meaning of the formation and consequences of minority governments. However, even today, the "Minority Government and Majority Rule" survey needs to update and include a much larger body of practical and empirical data.

In the early 90's of the twentieth century. The intelligence of another well-known researcher of minority governments, T. Bergman, was published. For example, in 1993 he published his scientific paper "Formation Rules and Minority Governments"⁷, published in the "European Journal of Political Research". The paper focused on the formation of minority coalition governments in parliamentary democracies. The scholar argues that not only majority coalitions are victorious, as minority coalitions are often victorious and controlling, even if they do not control more than half of all members of parliament. The reason is that there are at least two sets of rules for forming governments – positive and negative – which are manifested in the so-called systems of "positive" and "negative" parliamentarism, respectively. Among them, according to T. Bergman, minority

⁶ Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990.

⁷ Bergman T., Formation Rules and Minority Governments, *European Journal of Political Research* 1993, vol 23, nr 1, s. 55–66.

governments are often characterized by negative rules of government formation, i.e. minority governments are more often formed in systems of negative parliamentarism.

A very relevant study of minority governments on a par with other types of governments in parliamentary democracies was published in 1996 by K. Crombez in the *European Journal of Political Research*. Its name is “Minority Governments, Minimal Winning Coalitions and Surplus Majorities in Parliamentary Systems”⁸. The study is aimed at a comparative analysis of the formation of different types of governments in parliamentary democracies. The formation of minority governments is viewed through the prism of the so-called “formal model”, in which the largest parliamentary party and the share of its parliamentary mandates and the party’s location in the left-right ideological spectrum have a decisive influence. K. Crombez proved that the more the main and largest party becomes centrist, the better the chances of becoming a minimally victorious surplus coalition and the greater the chances of becoming a minority government of a minimally victorious coalition.

In 2004, T. Kalandrakis published the intelligence “Genericity of Minority Governments: The Role of Policy and Office”⁹, in which he presented the theory of the emergence of minority governments in multi-party parliamentary democracies, based on the “bargaining model”. The study proves that minority governments are formed with a strictly positive probability when the benefits of political parties receiving government and ministerial portfolios are insignificant in terms of party-political differences. Otherwise only majority governments are formed. The scientist came to similar conclusions in a study, “A Theory of Minority and Majority Governments”¹⁰, published in 2007 in the journal *Political Science Research and Methods*, which argued that minority governments are formed when ideologically polarized parties are represented in parliament.

In the context of the study of minority governments is P. Russell’s “Two Cheers for Minority Government: The Evolution of Canadian Parliamentary Democracy”¹¹, published in 2008 is of particular interest. In it, the scholar argues that the phenomenon of minority governments significantly contributes to the formation and consolidation of deliberative democracy, which emphasizes communication processes, and does not depend on a simple consideration of the strength and representation of certain political parties. Also in 2008, D. Ruza’s dissertation study “Constructing Minority Governments”¹² was published, in which statistics on the functioning of minority governments in European parliamentary democracies were proposed, and the essence of minority governments was analyzed from the standpoint of rational choice theory and from the standpoint of coalition theory, the prospects for the interpretation of minority governments

⁸ Crombez C., *Minority Governments, Minimal Winning Coalitions and Surplus Majorities in Parliamentary Systems*, “*European Journal of Political Research*” 1996, vol 29, nr 1, s. 1–29.

⁹ Kalandrakis T., *Genericity of Minority Governments: The Role of Policy and Office*, “*University of Rochester: Wallis Institute of Political Economy Paper*” 2004, nr WP39.

¹⁰ Kalandrakis T., *A Theory of Minority and Majority Governments*, “*Political Science Research and Methods*” 2015, vol 3, nr 2, s. 309–328.

¹¹ Russell P., *Two Cheers for Minority Government: The Evolution of Canadian Parliamentary Democracy*, Wyd. Emond Montgomery Publications 2008.

¹² Rueth D., *Constructing Minority Governments*, Omaha 2008.

are outlined. The property of the proposed study was that it attempted to synthesize and test existing theoretical models of minority government formation based on the size and ideology of parliamentary parties.

In 2012 and 2013, two studies of minority governments in presidential democracies by J. Canello, A. Figueredo, and M. Vieri appeared. These are, respectively, “Minority Governments in Latin American Presidentialism: Political and Institutional Determinants”¹³ and “Minority Governments in Latin American Presidentialism: Cabinet Stability and Effectiveness”¹⁴, which were presented at international scientific conferences. They raised the issue that minority governments had long ceased to be treated as institutional “anomalies” of parliamentary democracies. Instead, they are still problematic in presidential democracies, especially when combined with the unilateral powers of presidents. As a result, the proposed study analyzed the features of the formation of minority governments in Latin American democracies in 1979-2011, and on this basis identified the institutional and political determinants of minority governments, the parameters of their stability and efficiency. It has been found that in presidential democracies, the frequency of formation of minority governments increases with the growth of key veto players, and decreases with the increase in the appointing powers of presidents and the increasing factionalization of parliaments.

A notable recent scholarly work on minority governments was a study by H. A. Cheibub, S. Martin, and B. E. Rush, “The Investiture Vote and the Formation of Minority Parliamentary Governments”¹⁵ published in 2013 at an international conference in Bordeaux. It focuses on the impact of parliamentary procedures on the formation of minority governments. For example, it was confirmed that all parliamentary democracies should be divided according to the mechanisms of government formation into systems of positive and negative parliamentarism, which are characterized by a positive or negative vote of confidence in the formation of governments. Scholars have argued that minority governments are formed in systems of positive and negative parliamentarism. However, according to different institutional patterns and procedures, which are considered in detail and comparatively in this study.

In 2016, B. E. Rush, S. Martin and H. A. Cheibub presented the extended results of their research in the collective monograph “Parliaments and Government Formation: Unpacking Investiture Rules”¹⁶ in which several chapters are devoted to the peculiarities of minority government formation in countries where they often occur.

Finally, in 2014, for the first time, the features of minority governments in Central and Eastern Europe were comprehensively assessed. This was done in the monograph “Government Formation in

¹³ Canello J., Figueredo A., Vieira M., *Minority Governments in Latin American Presidentialism: Political and institutional determinants*, Paper prepared for presentation at 22nd World Congress of Political Science: Session No. 765 (Madrid, July 8–12, 2012).

¹⁴ Canello J., Figueredo A., Vieira M., *Minority Governments in Latin American Presidentialism: Cabinet stability and effectiveness*, Paper presented at 2013 Annual Meeting of Western Political Science Association (March 28–30, 2013).

¹⁵ Cheibub J., Martin S., Rasch B., *The Investiture Vote and the Formation of Minority Parliamentary Governments*, Paper presented at the workshop on “The Importance of Constitutions: Parliamentarism, Representation, and Voting Rights” (Istanbul, October 23–25, 2013).

¹⁶ Rasch B., Martin S., Cheibub J., *Parliaments and Government Formation: Unpacking Investiture Rules*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2016.

Central and Eastern Europe: The Case of Minority Governments”¹⁷ by D. Kaidu-Kaiser. This is the work in which it is argued that the formation of minority governments is not always logical, although empirically relevant, as minority governments make up more than a third of all government cabinets in Europe. The scientist suggested an analysis of the conditions that lead to the formation of minority governments, and also demonstrated in detail the features of the process of forming minority governments based on the interaction of the parameters of party systems.

For example, emphasis was placed on the decisive factors of party systems, such as their strong bifurcation, caused by the dominance of two antagonistic political parties or strong socio-political divisions that structure party systems and inter-party competition, and the removal of a significant percentage of party formation and processes a small number of parties that share the main positions and problems.

Along with these studies of minority governments, in modern political science there are many very well-known and influential investigations, which are devoted to the problems of governments (especially party) as such, their classification, the peculiarities of formation and functioning. In them, in parallel or in passing, much attention is paid to minority governments as a separate format for exercising executive power. In general, consideration of key scientific works on minority governments shows that the peculiarity of the tradition of studying minority governments in political science is that it is not monolithic and unidirectional, because in political science there are at least two theoretical paradigms or perspectives on which to describe the essence and the role of minority governments. The first paradigm or perspective involves the study of minority governments on the basis of an appeal to the category of coalition governments or government cabinets, i.e. governments or government cabinets that consist of two or more political parties. The fact is that European and other countries have considerable experience in forming coalition governments in parliamentary minority situations. In this regard, P. Russell in his work on minority governments – “Two Cheers for Minority Government: The Evolution of Canadian Parliamentary Democracy”¹⁸ – notes that in parliamentary democracies, coalition governments are the most common type and format of cabinets. As a result, in political science there is a wide array of literature on the peculiarities of the formation, functioning and responsibility of coalition governments.

Instead, the second paradigm or perspective involves the study of minority governments as such and in essence (per se). The fact is that scholars studying minority governments have come to similar conclusions that minority governments are common, but some political systems are more likely to form minority governments than others¹⁹, and that despite the significant frequency of minority governments they are often interpreted and outlined in a negative light and context. The problem is that, historically, majority governments have been considered the norm. Instead, as K. Strom notes in his

¹⁷ Keudel-Kaiser D., *Government Formation in Central and Eastern Europe: The Case of Minority Governments*, Wyd. Verlag Barbara Budrich 2014.

¹⁸ Russell P., *Two Cheers for Minority Government: The Evolution of Canadian Parliamentary Democracy*, Wyd. Emond Montgomery Publications 2008, s. 79.

¹⁹ Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990, s. 239–243.

survey “Minority Government and Majority Rule”, scholars have often described the phenomenon of minority governments as “deviations”, which they have determined “as a consequence of political instability, conflict, and malaise”²⁰. But it later became apparent that the negative treatment of minority governments was limited in scope, as it provided no real explanation for why some minority governments were more successful than some majority governments, particularly in the context of advancing and implementing their plans and intentions. As a result, the study of minority governments as such has become essentially taxonomic: more negative in the context of the formation and accountability of minority governments, but more positive in the context of the formation and functioning of minority governments²¹. This argued that the problem of minority governments is not unilateral, one-component and one-order, but should be addressed comprehensively and multilaterally.

This is pointed out by K. Strom, who notes that in the political science literature on minority governments, the assessment of the effectiveness of their functioning is usually based on the peculiarities of the formation and “survival” (or stability) of minority governments, but not on the basis of their political, social and economic results²². This, according to B. Grofmanat P. van Roozendaal²³, for example, is characteristic of the classic intelligence on minority governments by W. Herman and J. Pope – “Minority Governments in Western Democracies”²⁴.

Instead, as K. Strom argues, if the research literature on the reasons and features of the formation of minority governments is absent or insignificant, then it is not appropriate to talk about research on the effectiveness of minority governments²⁵. Contrary to what R. D’Alimonte²⁶ points out, research on the effectiveness of governments tends to revolve around two criteria: the stability of governments and the effectiveness of the legislature (or the effectiveness of the legislative process). It is important to note that these two criteria for the effectiveness of governments are not always studied separately and independently of each other, but are often used as indicators of each other.

Such a criterion for the effectiveness of governments, in particular minority governments, as stability, is usually examined on the basis of two indicators – longevity and the specifics of the termination of government²⁷. Mr. Warwick²⁸, for example, notes that if we assume that the length of time a government operates affects its ability to govern effectively, it is clear that the interpretation of a particular political system depends on such a correlation. Moreover, as regulated by existing

²⁰ Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990, s. 237.

²¹ Laver M., Schofield S., *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1998.

²² Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990, s. 237.

²³ Grofman B., van Roozendaal P., Modelling cabinet durability and termination, “*British Journal of Political Science*” 1994, vol 27, nr 3, s. 419–451.

²⁴ Herman V., Pope J., Minority Governments in Western Democracies, “*British Journal of Political Science*” 1973, vol 3, nr 2, s. 191–212.

²⁵ Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990, s. 237.

²⁶ D’Alimonte R., Competizione elettorale e rendimento politico: il caso Italiano, “*Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*” 1978, vol 8, s. 457–493.

²⁷ Grofman B., van Roozendaal P., Modelling cabinet durability and termination, “*British Journal of Political Science*” 1994, vol 27, nr 3, s. 419–451.

²⁸ Warwick P., Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies, “*The Journal of Politics*” 1996, vol 58, nr 4, s. 1244–1246; Warwick P., *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007.

developments, the academic literature on the stability of governments focuses mainly on three approaches: a) a critical approach that interprets acts of government termination as a response to exogenous events or “shocks”²⁹; b) the approach of structural factors, which interprets government stability on the basis of taking into account the peculiarities of cabinets, party and electoral systems, as well as the features and characteristics of political regimes³⁰; c) an approach of strategic interaction, which implements behavioral explanations of all processes that lead to the termination of the powers of governments during the bidding of positions and powers by political parties³¹.

Regarding the study of such a criterion of government effectiveness as the effectiveness of the legislative process, it should be noted that it has not been studied holistically and systematically. As K. Strom argues, today there is still no systematic cross-national study of the legislative effectiveness of minority governments³².

Instead, some intelligence focuses on specific elements or components of the effectiveness of the legislative process in the context of minority governments: the negative results of the minority principle itself and the minority system; lack of consent for majority support; lack of “effective decision-making support” in the legislature. Other existing studies focus on calculating the number and percentage of effective (adopted by parliaments) legislative initiatives proposed by minority governments³³, but seldom determined and focused on minority governments. This means that studies of legislation, which in the case of structuring governments and government cabinets are devoted to the effectiveness of the legislative process initiated by the executive, are incomplete, differentiated and insufficiently outlines the specifics of minority governments. Although the definition of the peculiarities and effectiveness of the law-making process in minority governments, when the correlation of governmental and opposition parties in parliament is peculiar, according to M. Atkinson and P. Thomas, is even more relevant and urgent than in the case of legislative activity involving majority governments. It forces them to conclude that, with some exceptions, the influence of minority governments on government-parliamentary relations and the conduct of the bureaucracy is still not thoroughly and comprehensively (cross-nationally) researched and justified³⁴. Exceptions are studies of the legislative effectiveness of minority governments in some democracies of the world³⁵ or in general at the level of

²⁹ Browne E., Frensdreis J., Gleiber D., An «Events» Approach to the Problem of Cabinet Stability, *“Comparative Political Studies”* 1984, vol 17, nr 2, s. 167–197; Browne E., Frensdreis J., Gleiber D., The Process of Cabinet Dissolution: An Exponential Model of Duration and Stability in Western Democracies, *“American Journal of Political Science”* 1986, vol 30, nr 3, s. 682–650.

³⁰ Warwick P., Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies, *“The Journal of Politics”* 1996, vol 58, nr 4, s. 1244–1246; Warwick P., *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007.

³¹ King G., Alt J., Burns N., Laver M., A unified model of cabinet dissolution in parliamentary democracies, *“American Journal of Political Science”* 1990, vol 34, nr 6, s. 846–871.

³² Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990, s. 237.

³³ Cheibub J., Przeworski A., Saiegh S., Government Coalitions and Legislative Success under Presidentialism and Parliamentarism, *“British Journal of Political Science”* 2004, vol 34, nr 4, s. 565–587.

³⁴ Atkinson M., Thomas P., Studying the Canadian Parliament, *“Legislative Studies Quarterly”* 1993, vol 18, nr 3, s. 447.

³⁵ Black P., *What Factors Need to be Present for Minority Government to Work? A Comparative Analysis of the 1998–1999 and 2003–2006 Minority Governments in Nova Scotia*, Wyd. Dalhousie University 2007; Lyon V., *Minority Government in Ontario, 1975–1981: An Assessment*, *“Canadian Journal of Political Science”* 1984, vol 17, nr 4, s. 685–705.

some administrative-territorial units of individual countries, as well as some surveys to assess certain aspects of the effectiveness of minority governments. On the other hand, the problems of parliamentary dynamics in the context of minority governments are extremely little studied, especially in the case of federal forms of government or bicameralism (or bicameralism). Nevertheless, even in the scientific literature, there is some intelligence related to the problem of legislative or parliamentary effectiveness of minority governments, as well as their assessment as an “independent” type of government.

In general, the analysis of general theoretical perspectives and features of the of minority governments’ research shows that all known intelligence on these governments should be divided into three clusters or groups: from the standpoint of the theory and tradition of rational choice, from the standpoint of the neo-institutional approach and from the partological standpoint, i.e. through taking into account the role of parties, party politics and party systems.

Methods and methodology of the minority governments analysis based on the theory and tradition of rational choice are based on the phenomenon of “rational” calculations by political actors, especially political parties. This approach is logically and systematically based on the idea that “rationality” implies the best and most optimal choice among the many ordered preferences of political actors or groups of political actors, including political parties. For example, the way and time when one chooses one political preference over another depends on a combination of individual or party assessments and decision-making cost alternatives.

In the study of minority governments, the approach based on the theory and tradition of rational choice was tested in his 1990 work “Minority Government and Majority Rule” by K. Strom³⁶. This independent study is entirely devoted to the formation and effectiveness of minority governments in parliamentary systems of government, based on previous work by K. Strom, including “Party Goals and Government Performance in Parliamentary Democracies”³⁷ and “Deferred Gratification and Minority Governments in Scandinavia”³⁸. The key thesis of these studies is that the decision of the participants in parliamentary negotiations not to form a majority government is always based on a rational calculation of political parties. However, in this regard, J. Robertson³⁹ points out that although the analysis of minority governments by K. Strom is mostly based on the definition of “costs” and “benefits”, he also focuses on factors of institutional and partological (party-oriented) nature, in particular the ability of the opposition to influence public policy, the expression of various dimensions of electoral competition, the sensitivity of the electoral system to the preference of voters’ preferences, the factionalization and polarization of inter-party cooperation.

³⁶ Strom K., *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1990, s. 237.

³⁷ Strom K., Party Goals and Government Performance in Parliamentary Democracies, *American Political Science Review* 1985, vol 79, nr 3, s. 738–754.

³⁸ Strom K., Deferred Gratification and Minority Governments in Scandinavia, *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 1986, vol 11, nr 4, s. 583–605.

³⁹ Robertson J., Review of the book *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, by K. Strom, *The Journal of Politics* 1991, vol 53, nr 3, s. 907–909.

Eventually, within the framework of the theory and tradition of rational choice, the study of minority governments (as controversies of majority governments) became the subject of coalition theory. In particular, coalitions in the understanding of V. Bogdanor⁴⁰ – as a type of government with its own “conventions and rules, which are inherited from the fundamental principle of separation of powers.” Given this, it is clear that the purpose of coalition theory is to provide a rigorous explanation and prediction of the coalition governments’ formation⁴¹. But, as M. Laver and J. Budge⁴² point out, it is necessary on the basis of different methods of comparative analysis – case study, binary, regional, cross-national or cross-temporal comparison, as well as applying or not applying game theory. It is noteworthy that all studies of minority governments, which are constructed within the theory and tradition of rational choice, are primarily based on the motivation of politicians, including party leaders. Accordingly, according to W. Mueller and K. Strom⁴³, the question of how party leaders make decisions on behalf of their organizations, what compromises they make and how they resolve them, and what are the limitations of party leaders within and outside political parties.

The theory of rational choice, in particular the theory of coalitions, assumes that the answers to these questions depend on three main and interrelated motivations – the desire to control the preconditions for the formation and functioning of minority governments, the desire to pursue political goals and the desire to maximize voter turnout. That is why the decisions made by party leaders to achieve their goals and priorities within minority governments are influenced by many complex and interdependent factors, including organizational and institutional factors and situational determinants, such as the type of party system in which they operate. At the same time, theories and traditions of rational choice, including game theory, have been criticized in the context of minority governments for paying too much attention to various targeted factors that influence politicians and their decision-making. Instead, theories of rational choice in the context of minority governments pay little attention to the context and features of individual political decision-making within minority governments.

To address this misunderstanding and lack of rational choice theory in structuring the characteristics of minority governments, many minority government researchers have resorted to an institutional approach focused on studying the rules, norms, and structures of governmental and parliamentary (or executive and legislative) institutions. The institutional approach, and especially its neo-institutional version, has proved useful in understanding and explaining the behavior of political actors in minority governments. This is especially true in the context of A. Przeworski’s verified position that the theory of neo-institutionalism consists of two “proposals”⁴⁴. First, that “institutions are important”, they influence norms, beliefs, and actions and thus

⁴⁰ Bogdanor V., *Coalition Government in Western Europe*, Wyd. Heinemann Educational 1983, s. 264.

⁴¹ Lijphart A., Power-sharing versus Majority Rule: Patterns of Cabinet Formation in Twenty Democracies, *Government and Opposition* 1981, vol 46, nr 4, s. 395–413.

⁴² Laver M., Budge I., *Party Policy and Government Coalitions*, Wyd. Sage 1992.

⁴³ Müller W., Strom K., *Policy, Office or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1999, s. 1–2.

⁴⁴ Przeworski A., Institutions Matter?, *Government and Opposition* 2004, vol 39, nr 4, s. 527.

shape results. Second, those institutions are endogenous because their form and functioning depend on the conditions in which they arise and continue. Although there are a number of forms of neo-institutionalism, they involve the same fundamental approach to the interpretation of government policies, including a shared interest in studying public sector structures and how governments influence policy outcomes⁴⁵. Instead, neo-institutionalism rejects the interpretation that institutions are a reflection of social forces and tools that can be easily manipulated by political actors. In this regard, A. Lecours⁴⁶ notes that neo-institutionalism promotes the idea that institutions represent autonomous forces in politics, the weight of which affects political actions and results. This means that in this approach to the study of minority governments, institutions should be understood as a starting, intermediate or independent variable of analysis.

The expediency of various neo-institutional studies of minority governments was due to the fact that on the basis of this approach the institutional and strategic factors that shape the executive-legislative relations, inter-party competition and intra-party dynamics within minority governments were clarified. First, neo-institutionalism as a theoretical model and approach allows for international comparisons. In this case, A. Lecours' remark that the idea of explaining common events, processes or socio-economic situations from a spatial and cross-national point of view leads to different results in different countries and regions⁴⁷. Second, neo-institutionalism, in particular structural institutionalism, focuses on the impact of political institutions on government efficiency. This is often noted by R. Weaver and B. Rockman⁴⁸, as well as G. Peters. In particular, the latter notes that structural institutionalism determines political institutions in a broad sense – as a set of “veto points”, i.e. points in the “chain” of decisions in which a political actor can prevent a political action⁴⁹.

This approach to defining the nature and specificity of minority governments is known as the “veto-players” theory and is commonly associated with the name and research of J. Tsebelis⁵⁰. Thus, in the survey “VetoPlayers: How Political Institutions Work”⁵¹ J. Tsebelis determines the features of the veto process. The researcher argues that in order to change policy (i.e. change the “legislative status quo”), a number of individual and collective policy actors must agree to the proposed changes. Such political actors are called “veto players”. They come in two types: constitutional and “generated” by the political system, or institutional veto players and party veto players. The theory of “veto players” determines that political stability increases when the

⁴⁵ Peters G., *Political Institutions, Old and New*, [w:] Goodin R., Klingemann H.-D. (eds.), *A New Handbook of Political Science*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1996, s. 205–222; Steinmo S., Thelen K., Longstreth F., *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1992.

⁴⁶ Lecours A., *New Institutionalism: Theory and Analysis*, Wyd. University of Toronto Press 2005, s. 8.

⁴⁷ Lecours A., *New Institutionalism: Theory and Analysis*, Wyd. University of Toronto Press 2005, s. 14.

⁴⁸ Weaver K., Rockman B., *Do Institutions Matter? Government Capabilities in the United States and Abroad*, Washington 1993.

⁴⁹ Peters G., *Political Institutions, Old and New*, [w:] Goodin R., Klingemann H.-D. (eds.), *A New Handbook of Political Science*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1996, s. 212.

⁵⁰ Tsebelis G., Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidential, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartisan, *British Journal of Political Science* 1995, vol 25, nr 3, s. 289–325; Tsebelis G., Veto Players and Institutional Analysis, *Governance* 2000, vol 13, nr 4, s. 441–474.

⁵¹ Tsebelis G., *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 2002.

number of veto players increases and the ideological distance between them enhances. In other words, the greater the number of veto players and the greater the ideological distance between them, the more difficult it is to change the status quo due to the growing lack of cohesion and agreement. Those vetoes that control politics and change the status quo are often referred to as “agenda-makers”. In this regard, J. Tsebelis points out that if we know the benefits of veto players, the status quo and the peculiarities of the agenda setters (i.e. the sequence of moves of different actors), we can predict the results of the policy-making process, including government⁵².

Another attempt to integrate rational choice theory and neo-institutionalism in the context of minority governments was made by F. Sharpf, who applied an actor-oriented institutional theoretical construction based on the assumption that social phenomena can be explained as the result of interaction between “intentional actors”, i.e. individuals corporate entities, but provided that these interactions are structured and the results are framed by the characteristics of the institutional conditions within which they occur⁵³. Similar theoretical positions are expressed in the scientific literature, which determined the emergence of such areas of research as “institutional analysis and development”, “actor-system dynamics”, as well as “situational-structural approach”⁵⁴.

However, despite the particular importance of party institutions in neo-institutionalism, some scholars insist on distinguishing as a separate partological approach to the analysis of minority governments, i.e. an approach based on the analysis of the role of parties, party politics and party systems. The nature of all inter-party agreements and various types of inter-party competition plays a constitutive role in determining the stability, efficiency and success of government cabinets, including minorities. As a result, much research has focused on government survival (stability) with an emphasis on the role of party politics and party systems. In particular, L. Dodd⁵⁵ explains the differences in the longevity of governments on the basis of a “broad” theory of cabinet formation and functioning, which combines two positions: the first emphasizes the influence of the parliamentary party system on the duration of governments, and the second – the importance of “game” situations in the formation and functioning of governments. The scholar emphasizes that there are three party-system variables that play a decisive role in influencing the formation and / or functioning of coalition governments: ideological polarization, parliamentary factionalization, and the stability of governments. M. Taylor and W. Herman, on the basis of the statement that the more divided the opposition, the more stable the government, confirmed the positive correlation between the three defined party-system variables⁵⁶.

⁵² Tsebelis G., *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 2002, s. 3.

⁵³ Sharpf F., *Games Real Actors Play: Actor-Centered Institutionalism in Policy Research*, Wyd. Westview Press 1997.

⁵⁴ Sharpf F., *Games Real Actors Play: Actor-Centered Institutionalism in Policy Research*, Wyd. Westview Press 1997, s. 36.

⁵⁵ Dodd L., *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*, Wyd. Princeton University Press 1976.

⁵⁶ Taylor M., Herman V., Party Systems and Government Stability, *American Political Science Review* 1971, vol 65, nr 1, s. 35–37.

Other partological attributes of governments, including minorities, were of interest to S. Bowler, D. Farrell and R. Katz⁵⁷, who explored the problems of cohesion and discipline in multiparty parliaments. Scholars have studied what is happening within parliamentary parties in terms of forming an intra-party consensus and supporting the party leadership. They concluded that party competition can usually be understood as one of the factors shaping party cohesion and discipline, as competitive pressure over fear of losing a majority or vote and about the hope of winning an election can contribute to a significant “concentration” of the party⁵⁸. In a similar way, P. Warwick⁵⁹ examined how ideological factors determine the stability of governments, including minorities, in parliamentary democracies. The scholar singled out two competing approaches that explain the duration of governments: based on the ideological diversity of governments, which emphasizes the destabilizing effects of intra-coalition political conflicts, and on the complexity of inter-party bargaining and inter-party agreements, which underscores the instability of governments as a result of the existence of many coalition options. Accordingly, P. Warwick concludes that the most important factor in the stability of governments, including minorities, is ideological cohesion within the cabinet, not the number of parties in the coalition.

The synthetic denominator of the three groups of theories, which differ in defining the characteristics of governments, including minority governments, is the idea that governments in democratic political systems operate in a competitive environment characterized by constant negotiation, bargaining, compromise, and cooperation. Accordingly, in most of the available studies of governments, political, in particular parliamentary, opposition is of particular importance, which has a permanent influence, especially in the case of minority governments, on the efficiency and stability of governments and the specifics of government policy. This problem was highlighted in 2004 in his study “Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition: Lessons from the Advanced Democracies”⁶⁰ by L. Helms, who examines political institutions and the democratic process in general from the point of view of the opposition. Basing on the classic study of the patterns of political opposition in Western democracies, presented in the 60s of the twentieth century by R. Dahl⁶¹, the scientist presented and discussed the main models of institutionalization of the political opposition at the constitutional level. In particular, the scientist found that certain institutional mechanisms can have a huge impact on the strategies and successes of opposition parties. That is why they are especially noticeable in the case of minority governments, which are opposed by very strong (especially in terms of size) parliamentary oppositions.

⁵⁷ Bowler S., Farrell D., Katz R., *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Government*, Wyd. Ohio State University Press 1999.

⁵⁸ Bowler S., Farrell D., Katz R., *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Government*, Wyd. Ohio State University Press 1999, s. 13.

⁵⁹ Warwick P., Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies, “*The Journal of Politics*” 1996, vol 58, nr 4, s. 1244–1246; Warwick P., *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2007; Warwick P., Policy Distance and Parliamentary Government, “*Legislative Studies Quarterly*” 1998, vol 23, nr 3, s. 319–345.

⁶⁰ Helms L., Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition: Lessons from the Advanced Democracies, “*Government and Opposition*” 2004, vol 39, nr 1, s. 22–54.

⁶¹ Dahl R., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, Wyd. Yale University Press 1966.

Summarizing the topic of theoretical perspectives and peculiarities of the study of minority governments in modern political science, it is worth noting that although the total volume of scientific works on the analyzed issues is somewhat limited, it is still mostly structured and allows making some general remarks and conclusions. First, studies of minority government policy are largely based on taking into account and rationally calculating the role of parties and other political actors, which are based on three interrelated and basic motivations – the desire to get votes, the desire to be represented in parliament, the desire to form a government. This is also complemented by the peculiarities of intra-party competition for inter-party cooperation. Second, all the non-institutional scientific literature on minority governments insists on the role of institutional norms in shaping the strengths and strategies of political actors, including those related to inter-party cooperation. Third, much of the scientific literature emphasizes the role of parties, party politics, and party systems as determinants in explaining the stability and effectiveness of minority governments.

However, because research perspectives are not mutually exclusive, individual scholars use them on their own or in various combinations in their research on minority governments. For example, some scholars focus on “rational perspectives” such as taking into account the specifics and preconditions of dissolving parliaments and determining the timing of elections as closely linked to each political party’s assessment of its electoral and governmental potential. Other researchers mostly focus on another rational dimension of minority governments, including the legislative effectiveness and parliamentary accountability of minority governments, which depend on the specific use of different parliamentary strategies and tactics. Still other scholars in their research accumulate features and patterns of parliamentary cooperation, which depend on how political, in particular parliamentary, actors interpret and adhere to the institutional norms of parliamentary behavior. That is, they mostly focus on the institutional perspective. Instead, some scholars determine minority governments partologically, focusing on intra-party cohesion and discipline as the key to the stability and effectiveness of minority governments. It also happens that scholars take into account the peculiarities of inter-party agreements as an important factor in determining and determining the duration of governments. Moreover, they assume that governments that can rely on the support of one key player in parliament, with whom a more or less formal agreement can be reached to support the minority government’s program, are more stable. In this perspective, there is a unification of rational and partological paradigms of the study of minority governments. Many scientific papers, along with the use of a policy-oriented approach to the interpretation of the behavior of minority governments, use the neo-institutional paradigm and the theory of rational choice in parallel or at the same time, etc.

In general, this allows us to argue that modern research on minority governments is basically determined by a combination of different theoretical and methodological paradigms and perspectives, which focus on outlining the various factors of formation and functioning of minority governments. Among them are such as: 1) strategic factors, which provide for outlining the electoral prospects of various political actors; 2) institutional factors, which are

determined primarily by the peculiarities of parliamentary norms and procedures, as well as the parameters of their implementation; 3) structural factors that are described by intra-party and inter-party interactions of different parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties. At the same time, there are many theoretical gaps in modern political science that are insufficiently related to explaining the peculiarities of the influence of parliamentary activities, strategies and tactics on the functioning of minority governments, in particular on their stability, efficiency, etc.

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