



PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES AND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA OF THE NOVO PARTY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN 2019

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Abstract: Studies on the functionality of parties and party systems considering the ideological and programmatic dimensions of party competition, through party congruence, provide a better understanding of the definition of legislative agendas. This work makes it possible to analyze the congruence between the thematic priorities, expressed in the clauses of the NOVO party's Statute, and its subsequent legislative agenda, providing supporting elements for understanding the degree of representation between Congress and the party. We applied the Content Analysis methods to analyze the proposals of the eight federal representatives of the NOVO party, in the 2019 mandate, to identify recurring themes. This empirical analysis corroborates the hypothesis that the NOVO party has significant party congruence, because its parliamentarians present proposals that reflect the programmatic guidelines prioritized in its party's Statute and Manifesto.

Keywords: Legislative Agenda; Congruence; NOVO Party; Thematic Priorities.

Introduction

There are a variety of scientific studies, both theoretical and empirical, that assess the diversity and functionality of parties and party systems. Thus, considering the ideological and programmatic dimensions of party competition, in substantive content, in the study of parties and party systems would provide a better understanding of this diversity (RODRIGUEZ; MONTERO, 2002). We also highlight a notable normative consensus in the literature that addresses the issue of the relationship between strong, coherent and cohesive parties and the success of democratic consolidations in Latin America (DIAMOND; HARTLYN; LINZ; LIPSET, 1999). These characteristics indicate the need for an intra-party unit capable of mobilizing and producing alignment between ideological and programmatic content, which the literature calls party coherence.

A central issue for contemporary democracies would be the alignment between the electoral promise and government action, because it relates the degree of responsiveness of elected political representatives to the demands of citizens (DAHL, 2015). Studies on the

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formation and definition of an agenda, on the other hand, emphasize the role of political parties in the construction of agendas, as centralizers of themes of greater relevance, both in relation to recent issues and in thematic issues that are more advantageous to the party (ALDRICH, 2011). Based on these theoretical arguments, an analysis of the degree of party congruence of party members in their ideological and programmatic positions provides tools for understanding the functionality of parties and party systems in recent democracies, mainly in two dimensions: responsiveness of elected political representatives and party congruence

In Brazil, empirical studies related to the most central institutions, such as government and the Legislature, and with the mediation of political parties, contribute to a significant production of the theme of representation, but from different approaches to the debate on studies on congruence. In this way, these works provide tools that help in the understanding of some elements such as political preferences, the ideological positioning of representatives, through their legislative production, although they do not try to compare them directly with the preferences of voters, which is what characterizes congruence studies (CARRERÃO, 2015).

During elections, parties make appeals to voters, adopting positions in public policies and emphasizing certain themes (EGAN, 2013; PETROCIK, 1996). Therefore, political parties are able to contribute to the definition of the agenda and their impact varies according to the type of agenda and the moment, but the electoral conflict is established from the defense and congruence of their "programmatic commitments of campaign. For Fagan (2018), the relationship between the platform and the Congress agenda varies according to the subject, type of agenda and alignment with the government, indicating that policies emphasized on the party platform can predict issues emphasized in Congress, but only immediately after the presidential election. Thus, the analysis of the congruence between the construction of the legislative agenda of the representatives of a party in their first mandate for the House of Representatives, such as the NOVO (NEW) party, from its electoral program, contributes to the understanding of the factors and elements in the debate that establishes a relationship between the existence of political parties with a more or less defined programmatic and ideological content.

The main objective of this work is to describe and analyze the party congruence between the thematic priorities, expressed in the clauses of the NOVO party's Statute and the subsequent agenda of the eight representatives elected by the party (Adriana Ventura; Alexis Fonteyne; Gilson Marques; Lucas Gonzalez; Marcel Van Hattem; Paulo Ganime; Tiago Mitraud and Vinicius Poit), for the House of Representatives, included in their first year of mandate in 2019. The data used were collected directly on the digital platform of *Sigalei*², a company

² We would like to thank the *Sigalei* team after enabling a user account and accessing its portfolio and data for the period of construction of this work, aiming at bringing the third sector and the university (UFSCar) closer together to clarify the role of scientific work and its benefit to society.

specialized in monitoring and processing legislative data, considering all the proposals made by the representatives of the NOVO party in the period considered.

We built a group of seven thematic categories based on the Term of Commitment and Legislative Action, present in the NOVO party's Statute. From these categories, we employ a classification, through the Content Analysis method, of all the proposals of the federal representatives of the party, investigating the degree of congruence of these two dimensions (thematic and agenda). Parallel to this descriptive analytical objective, the study of this work contributes by dimensioning attitudes and values in the construction of the legislative agenda by a part of the political elite, from which the principles of representative democracy are sustained.

After this first introductory part of the definition of the research object, in the second part of this work, we provide a bibliographic synthesis about the representation debate, relating accountability, responsiveness and congruence, which serves as theoretical support to identify our object of study and clarify the hypothesis and the verified results. Subsequently, in the third part, we explain the methodological operationalization of the data, both for the construction of categories, based on the NOVO party's Statute, and for the subsequent categorization of legislative, procedural and substantive proposals, through the Content Analysis. In the fourth part, we highlight the main findings of our work through the discussion and presentation of empirical data. In the final part, we present some conclusions and questions, pointing out some paths for new research.

Congruence studies: representation, accountability and responsiveness

The diversity of empirical studies on the formation of the legislative agenda in Brazil contributes to the understanding of both institutional arrangements at different levels of government and the provision of responsive policies that contribute to the health of representative democracy. Thus, political parties are configured as a relevant actor in the construction of this agenda based on their ideological party programs. Rodriguez and Montero's (2002) argument that Latin American parties are organizations that perform functions different from those of Western political parties points to the movement that led to the exclusion of certain issues from the investigators' agenda and explain the almost systematic inattention to issues related to the program and the ideology of the parties, in general, and to the degree of congruence in the programmatic and ideological stances of the members of the parties.

With the consolidation of party systems, after the process of redemocratization in Latin America and, specifically in the Brazilian case, which originates an identifiable and institutionalized system of political parties, there is an advance in the substantive study of political parties, which entails discussion of dimensions, such as the formation of a legislative

agenda, party discipline³ and political-party congruence. According to Coppedge (1997), the focus of these studies in Latin America prioritized dimensions such as volatility, fragmentation, the effective number of parties, among others, that favor a comparative analysis between these party systems, instead of a discussion about problematic aspects such as the program and the ideology of the parties.

When considering recent democracies as partisans, we must consider the importance of setting agendas in the political process. Thus, political parties would be responsible for mobilizing and determining the priorities of legislatures, drawing up a workable government program. During the elections, the parties emphasize issues, adopting positions that establish a relationship of appeal to voters (EGAN, 2013; PETROCIK, 1996), to enhance the identification between the programmatic themes of the party to the defenses of individual interests of voters in the process electoral decision-making. Therefore, government programs could be understood as mechanisms by which voters are linked to elected representatives. That is, if the parties in the governments do not represent the promised priorities, the electoral conflict between the parties would not structure the political conflict in the government on the political agendas (FAGAN, 2018).

Although the discussion on political representation is widely explored in Brazil, there is an increasing need to discuss and assess the extent to which the political actions of representatives effectively express alignment and representation with the electorate. Such an empirical analysis focus on political representation is characterized by a study of political-party congruence whose central idea that guides and justifies these studies is that in representative democracy, representatives are expected to be responsive to citizens' preferences, opinions or interests (CARRERÃO, 2015). The preferences and decisions of the representatives, acting as policy makers, by the construction of a legislative agenda based on parliamentary proposals⁴, establishes a link with the decision on who to choose, between choosing different policy programs.

For Anthony Downs (1957), one of the main references of the Theory of Party Competition, the most significant aspect of political parties is that they formulate policies to win elections, with ideologies being seen as a means to come to power. Thus, political actors behave rationally to achieve their goals, similarly to economic agents in a market. John Aldrich (2011), like Downs, joins the perspective of rational choice. However, in Aldrich's new institutionalism,

³ The contribution of Figueiredo and Limongi, expressed through a series of articles (1995b; 1996a; 1996b; 1997; 1998a; 1998b), is to characterize what the authors call "institutional bases of coalition presidentialism", showing the degree discipline of the parties.

⁴ According to the Internal Regulations of the House of Representatives, a proposal is any matter subject to the deliberation of the House. Despite this broad definition, the types of proposal considered main, as they originate the rules described in art. 59 of the Federal Constitution, are (acronyms in Portuguese): Proposed Amendments to the Constitution (PEC), Complementary Bills (PLP), Ordinary Bills (PL), Legislative Decree Bills (PDC), Resolution Bills (PRC) Provisional Measures (MPV). There are still more types of proposal appreciated by the House, such as: opinions, amendments, control inspection proposals, indications, etc.

obtaining positions would be only one of the goals of professional politicians and when acting expressing values and preferences, politicians would formulate and shape the agenda of their parties.

Another contribution by Aldrich (2011) in the field of party competition theory was to consider the role of party activists, who embarrass party leaders and their candidates. Activists in space theory are motivated by policies and their actions are driven by their preferences about the government plan. Thus, their voting behavior is determined by their perceptions of which candidates seem most willing to do what these citizens believe to be the best. Once elected, politicians must defend government positions that are congruent with their party's electoral and ideological platform.

In fact, the study of party behavior has been increasingly influenced by the tradition of rational choice in Political Science, providing some models of analysis that presuppose parties with a small and well-defined set of objectives. The work of Strom and Müller (1999) develops a more general behavioral description of competitive political parties, maintaining the premise that party leaders value three different spheres: votes, office and policy. In this scenario, the authors distinguish (1) office-seeking, (2) policy-seeking and (3) vote-seeking as three independent models of party behavior in which party leaders are involved.

1. Parties in the office-seeking model maximize their control over the benefits of political offices (office), that is, of private goods granted to recipients with politically discretionary government commitments.

2. Policy-seeking parties seek to maximize their impact on public policies (policy). This model derives mainly from coalition theory and specifically challenges the assumption that all parties are equally viable coalition partners, that is, that parties are indiscriminate in relation to their coalition partners.

3. Contributing to Downs' (1957) argument that political parties seek to maximize votes (members), vote-seeking parties aim to maximize their electoral support to control the government, that is, “the parties formulate policies to win the elections, instead of winning elections to formulate policies” (DOWNS, 1957: 28).

For Strom and Müller (1999), political parties crave all these goods. However, in many situations these activities come into conflict and, as a result, a change in party behavior through choices or trade-offs between the prioritized spheres. In effect, a link is established between voters and parties and it is essential to understand the type and under what circumstances these trade-offs occur. This is because in order to come to power, the parties offer voters a programmatic platform. In this case, parties are understood as office-seekers. Voters, in turn, compare the platforms offered by the parties and choose the one that most closely matches their preferences, that is, the voter positions himself/herself on a scale of preferences, as a policyseeker (DOWNS, 1957). Thus, we must consider that voters act both on a selective basis,

when establishing a rational choice between the best alternative, and on an evaluative basis, insofar as they evaluate the fulfillment of candidates' commitments in future elections.

The strict procedure of presenting proposals in the House of Representatives represents a low cost for its actors, which Mayhew (1974) classifies as fleeting acts of advertisement or position taking. However, the costs of the decision-making process in legislative action are high, involving consensus, because it considers, mainly, an equation between losses and gains in relation to which themes will be inserted in the agenda, becoming legislative proposals and, ultimately, culminating in policies. According to Egan (2013), the most salient issues would be those arising from a consensus, in a context of stability, in which information about the priorities of policy makers is more relevant to voters than the diagnosis of the outcome of these decisions. Thus, despite the literature that defines the legislative agenda to minimize the role of political parties (BAUMGARTNER; JONES, 1993), we must consider the fundamental role of parties in establishing priorities in relation to party programs.

In addition to the costs of decision-making and consensus, the combination of the fact that the voter establishes his/her preferences as policyseekers and that the parties act as office-seekers, according to Hofferbert and Budge (1992), would encourage greater responsiveness⁵ to voters. In this way, voters would evaluate both the political parties' programmatic priorities, expressed in the electoral period, and the electoral performance evidenced in the legislative proposals, selecting the good policies or the politicians that support good policies, in which the winning party platform becomes the mandate⁶ that governments seek to accomplish (CARRERÃO, 2015).

In this sense, the relevance of this work would be in this gap to understand to what extent the alignment between the party program and the subsequent construction of the legislative agenda establishes a relationship of party congruence and provides tools to analyze the debate between the identification of parties with programmatic and ideological content more or less defined. For this, it is necessary to understand the relationship between the concept of representation, accountability and responsiveness in which it assumes that representatives make decisions considering the previous issue of voters' interests. Thus, a responsive government would adopt policies in which citizens signal as being relevant (MANIN; PRZEWORSKI; STOKES, 1999).

⁵ Considering that re-election requires ratification by constituents, members must be in a position to provide the types of benefits that voters are concerned. Thus, for Mayhew (1974), responsiveness means that legislators are able to meet the needs and requests of their constituents.

⁶ Note that mandate representation is a situation in which the policies adopted by the representatives follow their electoral platforms and these policies are the best for citizens under the conditions observed by the representatives (MANIN; PRZEWORSKI and STOKES, 1999).

According to Carrerão (2015), the relations between representation through elections would be understood through two spheres, either from the point of view of the mandate or of accountability. Thus, the complexity of this relationship derives from the control relationship between citizens and governments: on the one hand, voters are unable to constrain governments to follow certain mandates, and on the other, the elected could be controlled by accountability mechanisms, whose reelection would be the objective of the representatives as a result of success in aligning the agenda and citizens' interests. Therefore, in a responsive government, on accountability bias,

[...] elections serve to hold the government accountable for the results of its past actions. By anticipating voters' judgment, government authorities are induced to choose policies, thinking that they will be well evaluated by citizens at the time of the next election (MANIN; PRZEWORSKI; STOKES, 2006, p. 105-106).

The seminal work of David Mayhew - *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, published in 1974, on electoral connection and Congress highlights that the institutional development of the House derives directly from the self-interest of its members. The work points out that the post-World War II period witnessed a significant expansion in the number of roll-call votes in Congress, a fact that constrained legislators to increase their participation in votes and, consequently, in the chances that a series of inconsistent positions in roll-call votes become costly for the next election. This phenomenon, according to Mayhew, contributed to legislators acting as mere "single-minded seekers of reelection" and, in this persistent search for reelection, regularly used some types of activities such as advertising, credit claims and position taking. Thus, as components of the Mayhew's conception of electoral incentive, members of Congress, whenever possible, would engage in various forms of taking a position in an ambitious, autonomous and receptive manner.

In this scenario, the concept of representation is similar to that of responsiveness and, consequently, it is associated with the idea of causality with political congruence. Thus, for Carrerão (2015), the analysis of political congruence would have as a reference the expressed preferences and not just the interests, a characteristic that allows a strand of studies to verify the correspondence between public opinion and the opinion of the representatives, expressed by the construction of the agenda and policy approval. For the author, although there is a vast literature, in Brazil, on parliamentary behavior, type of legislative production and party discipline, the gap in congruence studies would be in considering the programmatic positions of the parties as an element of relevance for this investigation.

We can highlight the work of Tarouco and Madeira (2013), which analyzes these positions, through a vast content analysis of programmatic documents of Brazilian political parties, especially with the purpose of identifying and classifying the parties ideologically.

Therefore, our work develops an essay on this party congruence, by analyzing the congruence between the thematic priorities, expressed in the clauses of the NOVO party's Statute, and the subsequent legislative agenda of the party, providing tools for understanding the degree of representativeness between the Congress and Brazilian parties.

Categorization and Methodology

To describe and analyze the congruence between the thematic priorities and the subsequent legislative agenda of the NOVO party, we used as a methodological criterion to verify, among all the proposals of the NOVO issued in the 2019 mandate, the percentage of those that referred to the programmatic commitments of the party.

Conducting this analysis demanded the use of the Content Analysis method, considering that the content of the legislative proposals is compared to the content of the programmatic commitments of the NOVO's Statute. This comparison allows the verification of congruence between a given proposal and a certain programmatic commitment. Its execution, however, is possible only after the definition of units of analysis. These, as well as the choice of counting rules, and the choice of categories, constitute, according to Bardin (2002), the process of exploring the material in the Content Analysis.

For the choice of units of analysis, the procedure adopted was the semantic type, that is, we chose to identify and classify thematic segments in certain categories. These are operations of breaking up a text into units, to discover the different nuclei of meaning that constituted communication. This dismemberment results in fragments, which for Chizzotti (2006) can be significant words, terms or phrases in a message. Precisely, it is the smallest cut of a semantic order that comes from the text (BARDIN, 2002). From a conceptual perspective, we refer to the registration unit as our unit of analysis in the Content Analysis.

According to Bardin (2002), the importance of a classification registration unit, as a thematic unit, varies according to its frequency of appearance. Thus, the methodological procedures adopted were from the creation of categories to the identification and counting of their frequency. Different weights were not assigned to the categories. After checking the number of appearances for each, their frequency was calculated.

The construction of the analysis categories was elaborated based on an evaluation of the Party Program and the NOVO party's Statute. The Statute contains six programmatic and legislative action commitments, which express the main guidelines also identified in the Manifesto. From them, six categories of analysis were then created – “Public Policy Management”; “Reduction of Privileges”; “Training and Transparency”; "Economic Liberalism"; "Political System" and "Taxation", and an additional category "Others", to classify

the cases in which the programmatic content of the proposals does not fall into any of the six categories.

These categories are excluding to the extent that the variables that comprise them delimit only the criteria for which they serve as an explanation. Thus, we consider it of salutary importance to highlight the main characteristics and specifications of each category of analysis from the set of information present in the Party Program and the NOVO party's Statute. The category "Public Policy Management" refers to the proposals that establish a set of plans and goals that can be implemented by the State in the short, medium and long term, fully those linked or associated with the areas of health, education and infrastructure.

The second category "Reduction of Privileges" includes proposals with specific content that discusses the greater efficiency and effectiveness of government spending, whether by reducing privileges linked to elective or career positions in the Government and State (salaries, bonuses, office fees, among others) or, in a greater sense of change, provides for the extinction of the Party Fund. On the other hand, the category "Training and Transparency" condenses the various proposals, substantive or procedural, that discuss the construction of a team with trained professionals, the predominance of a technical staff of specialists. And, in parallel, the increase in government accountability, which assist in the decision-making process and make it possible to structure more accurate and meaningful reports on revenues, expenses and contracts at all levels of government.

By "Economic Liberalism", we understand, exclusively, proposals with measures that guarantee individual liberties, in the face of greater fiscal responsibility and make economic liberalism practices viable, whether by reducing the role of the State to the minimum possible or by measures that encourage free enterprise and the commercial opening (Bresser-Pereira, 2017). The "Political System" category is responsible for understanding proposals that defend the effective fiscal, political and administrative decentralization of the country, emphasizing its centrality as a mechanism of action of the public authority in solving regional problems and specificities. Therefore, supporting measures that optimize the bureaucratic process of processing documents and services in the relations between public authorities and citizens.

The "Taxation" category includes proposals with a specific content on the simplification of the tax burden, in the face of a favorable scenario for the improvement of the collection and distribution system of revenues and contrary to the creation or increase of taxes. The link between the categories of analysis and the programmatic commitments assumed in the Statute can be observed, in summary, in Table 1 below, through the guidelines of the Term of Commitment and Legislative Action⁷ of the party.

⁷ Art. 100 of the NOVO party's Statute assigns the candidate's duties and expresses in its item IV the duty to sign and comply with the Party Commitment Term as provided previously in "Art. 6 - The request for party affiliation must be made on the party's website, by filling in the Membership Form, accepting the Party Commitment Term, the Party Code of Conduct and paying the party contribution" and under the terms of model to be issued by the National

Table 1 – Structuring and description of categories

Category	Express commitment to the NOVO party's Statute
1. Public Policy Management	I – To establish goals and planning in the areas of health, education and infrastructure, as measurable as possible, to achieve short, medium and long term results.
2. Reduction of Privileges	II – To work for the benefit of the citizen, aiming at the extinction of the party fund, the reduction of privileges, the reduction of State costs.
3. Training and Transparency	III – To constitute its team with trained professionals, observing technical criteria for hiring, with the realization of selective processes and with the monitoring and support of the Support Department for the Representative; IV – To institute, propose and support actions that make possible the public transparency and information on revenue collection, resource allocation, payments and contracts of the Legislative and Executive branches.
4. Economic Liberalism	V – To institute, propose and support measures that encourage and guarantee fiscal responsibility, individual freedoms, entrepreneurship, free competition and, whenever possible, the transfer of activities carried out by the public authorities to the private sector.
5. Political System	VI – To propose, defend and advocate measures aimed at the effective fiscal, political and administrative decentralization of the country, aiming at the implementation of an effectively federative State, which respects regional diversities and the interests of the citizen; VII – To work for the benefit of the citizen, against projects or measures that have the practical result of creating, increasing or maintaining bureaucracy, interfering with public authority in the lives of citizens.
6. Taxation	VII – To institute, propose and support projects or measures that have the practical result of simplifying the tax burden.
7. Others	Various subjects that do not fit among the programmatic priorities expressed in the NOVO party's Statute.

Source: Source: Own elaboration based on the Term of Commitment and Legislative Action of the NOVO party, Title III - Performance of the Representatives, art. 7th.

Directory. That said, the Party Commitment Term is a document attached to the Statute, provided and responsible for synthesizing the programmatic guidelines present in the Statute.

Data and Discussions

The data collection work after the definition of analysis methods and procedures had been carried out directly on the *Sigalei* website, considering the proposals of the eight federal representatives of the NOVO party, for the 2019 mandate, in the House of Representatives: Adriana Ventura; Alexis Fonteyne; Gilson Marques; Lucas Gonzalez; Marcel Van Hattem; Paulo Ganime; Tiago Mitraud and Vinicius Poit. The digital platform provides all the proposals of federal representatives, as well as facilitating tools for searching and refining data, together with a previous evaluation of the elected representatives in their main profile panel, which consists of five tabs, called overview; strategy; legislative production; votes and legislature.

Our study focused on the area of legislative production of each of the representatives on which it was possible to search all the proposals of the first year of the mandate of 2019. In a secondary and referential analysis, we still consider the information contained in the representatives' overview tab, present on the *Sigalei* website, on which we can check a general summary panel on each of the elected, serving as a conference to the set of verified proposals. Finally, to produce greater reliability and refinement of the database under analysis, we consult the legislative production of each representative directly on the House of Representatives website, contrasting them with those verified together with the *Sigalei* website.

In this way, our sample universe of data gathers 438 proposals from the eight federal representatives of the NOVO party distributed between substantive and procedural. According to the work of Mancuso (2014), substantive proposals carry merit capable of modifying the legal *status quo* after specific processing and approval by legislative houses, expressed by Bills, Proposed Amendments to the Constitution, Legislative Decree Bills and Resolution Bills. In addition, in turn, the procedural proposals deal with diverse requirements aimed at the instruction and definition of the procedure that precede and conform the substantive ones, such as urgent requests, withdrawal of the agenda, postponement of discussion, granting of time for voting, among others.

Observing the defining characteristics of each of the groups, we should not refute or diminish the importance of the role played by the procedural proposals. In short, even if they do not modify the rights and duties included in the legal frameworks, they have a fundamental impact on the progress of substantive votes⁸ and on the definition of themes prioritized by representatives. Therefore, this work develops content analysis of both substantive and procedural proposals, in search of a greater understanding of congruence between program content and legislative actions, through the formation of an agenda by proposals.

⁸ For Mancuso (2014), substantive votes occur when representatives evaluate the merits of full legislative proposals, amendments to the proposals, or even parts that are highlighted for separate voting. On the other hand, procedural votes deal with requirements that precede substantive votes and play a central and defining role in the progress of substantive votes.

In the table below, the analysis of alignment⁹ with both the party and the government, in voting with recommendations, corroborates the argument of Figueiredo and Limongi (1995)¹⁰ which shows a disciplined plenary and representatives who, in the vast majority of votes, follow the orientation your leader. This analysis was carried out by the *Sigalei* platform and appears in the overview tab of each candidate. Thus, it follows the representation in an explanatory way of the effective number of proposals of each candidate.

Table 2 – Total number of proposals of the NOVO party

Federal Representative	Proposals (in number)			Alignment	
	Procedural	Substantive	Total	With the Party (%)	With the Government (%)
Adriana Ventura	23	16	39	98	90
Alexis Fontayne	39	55	94	97	89
Gilson Marques	12	29	41	96	88
Lucas Gonzalez	28	49	77	97	89
Marcel Van Hattem	8	22	30	97	89
Paulo Ganime	16	40	56	98	88
Tiago Mitraud	19	28	47	97	87
Vinicius Poit	19	35	54	97	90
TOTAL	164	274	438		

Source: Own elaboration based on data collected on the *Sigalei* website.

We emphasize that the 438 verified cases were obtained considering only the representatives' proposals as the main author, avoiding double counting. Of this total, the vast majority of proposals are substantive, 62.56% of the total verified (274 proposals), and express substantial content and changes in its legal-legislative structure, manifested mostly by Bills and Proposed Amendments to the Constitution.

In addition, the other 164 proposals, 37.44% of the total cases, were identified as procedural, expressed by requirements with specific content, either through the creation of a special committee, mainly for specific bills in the areas of health, education and resource management; summoning experts to participate in seminars and special committees in the areas of health, education and economics; for holding a solemn session and congratulations; for urgent voting requirements. In proposals related to Electoral Reforms or to the reduction of State spending, such as the extinction of the party fund and the reduction of representatives' privileges; due to requests for withdrawal of the agenda of topics that are already being processed by the legislative houses; for requiring a public hearing in debates on issues related to

⁹ The *Sigalei* calculated the alignment data from the observation of the legislators' position in all the votes held in 2019.

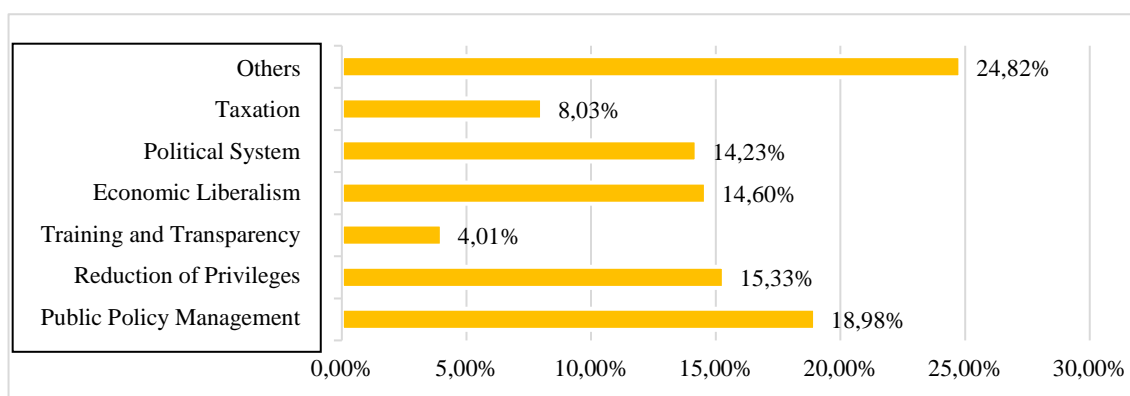
¹⁰ Figueiredo and Limongi (1995a: 505), "the traditional view, according to which Brazilian parties are not very cohesive, is not supported by the data". Figueiredo and Limongi (1995a: 516), "political parties have a degree of internal cohesion sufficient to make the action of the plenary predictable".

the fiscal situation and regulatory frameworks, the public budget and the mobilization of resources for infrastructure, technology and inspection; among others, that supplies significant content and provides arguments for categorization.

The further refinement of data had been conditioned by observing the characteristic profile and specificities of each of the two types of proposals. The substantive proposals, due to their profile of juridical-legal change, were subjected to a categorization among the seven pre-defined categories, resulting in values that indicate a high level of congruence among the priority issues defended in the party manifesto and in the Statute of the NOVO party and the formation of the legislative agenda. At the same time, for the analysis of the procedural proposals, we verified the frequency of the types of requirements. In addition, subsequently, we verified the incidence of the subjects to which they referred, whose results allow to highlight a significant framing between the themes prioritized by the federal representatives of the party and the programmatic preferences verified in the manifesto and in the Statute of the NOVO party and which served as support for the construction of the analysis categories. Such elements corroborate with our initial hypothesis that the legislative action of the NOVO party would have a better-defined ideological and programmatic content, that is, ideologically clearer and more consistent.

Graph 1 below shows the result of dividing the substantive proposals into the seven categories of analysis, the result of which indicates a congruence of 75.18% distributed among the six categories. The category Others, responsible for 24.82% of the proposals, includes a diverse content in its proposals and not expressed among the programmatic priorities of the NOVO party. However, they focus on local and specific issues for representatives, such as questions about vehicle tracking and identification, specific bank guarantee orders, processes to decriminalize conduct such as injury and defamation, improvement of protective measures, among others.

Graph 1 – Frequency of substantive proposals (by categories)



Source: Own elaboration through data analysis.

With greater prominence, around 18.98%, is the Public Policy Management category. This fact refers to a tendency of the party to propose, by means of a Bill or a Constitutional Amendment, in the areas of infrastructure, health care and education and restructuring of energy matrices (oil, gas and energy). This behavior indicates an alignment with the programmatic content of the party in these respective areas, mainly because it links the improvement of quality of life and access to quality public services to the simplification of bureaucratic procedures and the improvement of public management and administration. An essential characteristic of this group of proposals would be to consider that its instrumentalization accompanies plans and goals achievable in the short, medium and long term and its reorganization and implementation through public policies of Government.

Second, with 15.33% of the proposals, there is the category of Reduction of Privileges, which has as its central content the greatest efficiency and effectiveness of government spending, whether by reducing or extinguishing privileges linked to elective or career positions in the Government and State. They are mostly expressed by proposals to reduce office advisory funds, by the extinction of gratuities and by measures that provide for the extinction of the Party Fund. In parallel with this legislative action and in accordance with the programmatic content to which it refers, the NOVO party implemented internal procedural measures¹¹ to reduce the amount of public resources used by its representatives at the end of the first year of mandate.

In order, the Economic Liberalism category groups 14.60% of the cases, mostly composed of proposals with measures that guarantee individual freedoms, greater fiscal responsibility and enable economic liberalism practices. In this sense, they include proposals and procedures that encourage entrepreneurship, the simplification of labor laws and enable the transfer of activities carried out by the public authorities to the private sector, whether by reducing the role of the State or by incentives to free enterprise and commercial opening.

The Political System category, on the other hand, condenses 14.23% of the cases analyzed and deals exclusively with issues associated with the country's fiscal, political and administrative decentralization. Such proposals, in addition to covering measures that seek to optimize the bureaucratic process of processing documents, emphasize the expansion of private investment as central mechanisms for the effective performance of the public authority in combating regional problems and in the distribution of quality care and services to citizens.

As in previous arenas of labor and fiscal reforms, the lowest index in the Taxation category, responsible for 8.03% of the proposals, which is explained by the need for specific processing and approval in the Legislative Houses (Federal House and Senate) on its specific

¹¹ The NOVO party's transparency and accountability process includes specific procedures and detailed material on its official platforms. This mechanism provides, in addition to the waiver of the amount referring to the Party Fund – invested in a public bank and waiting for official channels of return to the State, a composition of studies and reports that help and prove the savings of resources by the party in the House in various segments. Being them through the waiver of benefits (moving, housing and health care); the efficient allocation of the cabinet budget (reduction of the staff in the cabinets); and promoting the rational use of the parliamentary quota.

theme and, concomitantly, for having large Constitutional Amendments bills processing in these houses during the 2019 mandate. Completely composed of bills for simplification and reduction of the tax burden, the lower index is also justified by the difficulty of articulation between the parties on this particular topic.

The Training and Transparency category, with 4.01% of the total proposals, clearly expresses the programmatic priority of the party and discusses the construction of teams composed of trained professionals. Therefore, the predominance of an increasingly technical and specialized staff in the Government would assist in the decision-making process, either contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of resources in public policies or in the development of an effective link with citizens through a greater government transparency and accountability. In this case, the low frequency of cases is justified to the extent that the majority of legislative proposals dealing with this topic are procedural, and require, on a recurring basis, the creation of special committees, the summoning of specialists for discussion in committees and seminars and the systematization of the means of public transparency.

The understanding of the particularity measured in the previous category leads us to the second stage of analysis of this work, consisting of a detailed examination of the procedural proposals. The refinement of these proposals, composed strictly by requirements, made it possible to allocate them in four major types of requirements: holding a public hearing; creation of a special committee or subcommittee; inclusion of guests and committees' experts; and a last one, miscellaneous, responsible for grouping specific and low frequency cases. Subsequently, we measured the incidence of the subjects to which the proposals referred, correlating them to the pre-defined categories of analysis.

The division of these proposals resulted in a distribution by frequency of incidence of each of the types of requirement according to Table 3 below. We emphasize that the "Miscellaneous" category comprises a sum of cases composed of requirements that have no significant frequency (less than 2% of cases) and, therefore, do not constitute a particular category. Among them, we highlight the requirements: emphasis on separate voting (3 cases); dispatch review (3 cases); urgency for voting (3 cases); requesting information (3); withdrawal of the agenda (2 cases); inclusion of co-authorship in bills (2 cases); disengagement from bills (2 cases); among other cases of diverse, specific and individual requirements, directed to the instruction and definition of the procedure.

Table 3 – Number of procedural proposals by types of requirement

Types of requirement	Total cases (N)	Frequency by type
Public hearing	60	36.59%
Creation of a special committee or subcommittee	29	17.68%
Inclusion of guests and committees' experts	28	17.07%
Miscellaneous	47	28.66%
Total	164	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration based on data collected on the *Sigalei* website.

Unlike the Bills and Proposed Amendments to the Constitution, the requirements are not intended to change the juridical and legislative framework. However, there are important procedural decisions, and the development of an individual analysis on its subject makes it possible to frame and associate each of the requirements with the categories of analysis. Thus, unlike the congruence evidenced in the previous analysis on substantive proposals, this investigation allows to identify the thematic preferences that these devices carry. Table 4 below shows the distribution between the crossing of 164 procedural proposals, guided by the categories of analysis, in each of the four types of requirements.

Table 4 – Frequency of procedural proposals (by categories)

Types of Requirement	Categories of Analysis						
	Public Policy Management	Reduction of Privileges	Training and Transparency	Economic Liberalism	Political System	Taxation	Others
Holding a public hearing	4.27%	-	32.32%	-	-	-	-
Creation of a special committee or subcommittee	8.54%	0.61%	5.49%	-	0.61%	-	2.44%
Inclusion of guests and committees' experts	0.61%	-	12.80%	-	-	0.61%	3.05%
Miscellaneous	1.83%	8.54%	2.44%	0.61%	2.44%	0.61%	12.20%

Source: Own elaboration through data analysis.

We observed the predominance of all four types of requirements in the “Training and Transparency” and “Public Policy Management” categories. In the categories “Reduction of Privileges”, “Economic Liberalism”, “Political System” and “Taxation” there is a low frequency or absence of values regarding the types of requirements. This phenomenon, in agreement with the previous analysis on the substantive proposals, is explained by the content of real juridical-legal change that these categories carry, mainly for dealing with economic variables and on Structural Reforms (Party, Tax and Social Security) that need specific processing. The characteristics expressed by these requirements contribute to the decision-making process and make it possible to structure more accurate and meaningful reports on revenues, expenses and contracts at all levels of government, corroborating the previous discussion regarding substantive proposals.

When representing a set of plans and goals that can be implemented by the State in the short, medium and long term, the category “Public Policy Management” requires proposals with structure and content that modify the juridical-legal system. Thus, the procedural decisions of this category, both for the creation and inclusion of experts in committees and for holding a public hearing for the areas of health, education and infrastructure, only organically assist the current process that the substantive proposals refer to. In contrast, the “Training and Transparency” category, which represents the process of building a team formed by trained professionals, with the predominance of a technical staff of specialists and, in parallel, effective government accountability, has a current order mainly composed of requirements. In fact, decisions about holding a Public Hearing, creating a Special Committee or Subcommittee and including experts in committees are expressed in procedures, without the need to change the rights and duties included in the legal framework, even if they carry important decisions.

In general, we note the predominance of substantive and procedural proposals, a characteristic that indicates the duality between a well-defined programmatic feature of the NOVO party and the current need for requests to assist in the exercise of mandate, expressed in proposals that have significant content juridical-legal change. We emphasize the categories “Economic Liberalism” and “Taxation”, which in almost all were represented by substantive proposals and, conversely, the category “Training and Transparency”, which mostly includes procedural proposals, with content that prioritizes training of Committees made up of specialists, the significant increase in thematic Public Hearings and the use of mechanisms and technological tools to improve the government database, helping to increase transparency.

On an exploratory basis, we have evidenced that, in the period under analysis, there was a parallel project of Electoral Reform and Social Security Reform in the Legislative Houses, explaining the smaller number of proposals on this topic, in view of the need for substantial structural changes through Reforms. As a second explanatory variable, we emphasize the management and internal transparency of resources of the representatives of the NOVO party,

simultaneous to the proposals presented that aim to reduce privileges and the cost of the State, for a better management of public resources.

Conclusions

Considering the assumption that democratic principles ensure greater representation, we consider the argument of Manin, Przeworski and Stokes (1999) that in recent democracies they need electoral institutions that increase the transparency of accountability and facilitate the choice of voters regarding the identification of more defined programs and agenda for the parties. Thus, our observations provide positive indications for the debate that links party programs as a preamble to a future governmental agenda.

The observed results indicate a significant congruence between the programmatic salience of the NOVO party and the legislative agenda of its respective federal representatives, regarding the substantive proposals. Concomitantly, because of the evaluation of the procedural proposals, we highlight a significant framework between the themes prioritized by the federal representatives of the party and the programmatic preferences verified in the manifesto and in the Statute of the NOVO party. We show that the term legislative agenda must include the commitments assumed during the electoral dispute and, thus, the evaluation of the success of the mandate or functionality of the Brazilian political system could encompass dimensions other than that exposed in this proposal, such as congruence between campaign promises and government actions, exploring government advertisements and programs.

In addition to identifying the topics considered priority by federal representatives, associating them with the programmatic content of the party, this work provides variables that assist in the analysis of the responsiveness of those elected before the electorate and in future studies of party congruence, agenda setting and legislative behavior. Thus, resuming Mayhew's (1974) argument that the presentation of proposals alone does not represent an effective effort to mobilize the agenda, we cannot infer to what extent there was a mobilization to fulfill the promises expressed in the party programs. However, the results presented here contribute as explanatory variables in the future analysis of this phenomenon and suggest that parties can influence the legislative agenda.

The mobilization of an agenda involves other activities that require political effort, considering the influence of other factors endogenous and exogenous to the NOVO party, such as fighting for the approval of proposals in committees and plenary, which involves getting attention from the leaders, participating in meetings, mobilize civic and media campaigns, among others. Therefore, new studies, for example, could verify the effect of attention to issues on formal political agendas, including the analysis of possible effects on main legislation and attention to politics by political appointees in the bureaucracy (CARRERÃO, 2015).

Finally, our results may indicate a prediction of legislative agendas through the analysis of party platforms, considering them as dependent variables. In this sense, it would be convenient to explore ways of correctly operating variables such as the size of the party, the context in which it is born, the types of internal elections that exist and the type of leadership, and to investigate its impact on party coherence. This argument allows us to broaden our understanding of the representation process and the search for new explanatory variables for party coherence, both institutionally and programmatically in the party coherence investigation process.

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