



GOVERNABILITY OF PRESIDENT JAIR BOLSONARO IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF OFFICE (2019-2020)

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Abstract: This article sought to describe and compare the governability of President Jair Bolsonaro during the first two years on office in the Chamber of Deputies. This research calculated the rollover rates and the coalescence rate of the parties, supplementing them through the Executive's dominance coefficient and the success coefficient of the provisional measures. In this sense, there was an absence of a coalition concerning the parties and of a robust parliamentary support base dissociated from the party logic. Converging with the possibility raised by Almeida (2020), of the existence of an alternative legislative agenda headed by the National Congress, there is an evident need to review the conceptual framework developed on the impact of management strategies at the discretion of the head of the Executive Branch regarding its governability.

Keywords: Governability; Executive-Legislative; Chamber of Deputies; Legislative Branch

1. Introduction

President Jair Bolsonaro was elected in November 2018 defending a neoliberal and neoconservative project that, supported by a religious discourse of defense of the traditional values of the family and property, has positioned his electoral campaign contrary to the coalition presidentialism, considered by him as an immoral exchange of favors, since the beginning of his electoral campaign (SOLANO, 2018; COELHO, 2019; OLIVEIRA, 2019; LIMA; LIMA, 2020). During the first year of office, the President expressed an explicit resistance to the formation of a party coalition, which, according to the narratives made available by the press, has changed in 2020 with a gradual approach of the President to the parties of the so-called "Centrão" (OLIVEIRA, 2020; VASCONCELLOS; CALCAGNO, 2020; PORTINARI; MAIA, 2020).

Circumscribed amid a pandemic scenario, resulting from the new coronavirus (Covid-19), and occasional friction with representatives of other Branches, the second year of the Bolsonaro government has raised a series of questions regarding the maintenance or modification of the management strategies adopted by the federal government, from 2019 to 2020, and the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on the governability of the Chief Executive in the National Congress (OLIVEIRA, 2019; OLIVEIRA, 2020).

That said, we sought to verify whether there was the formation of a partisan coalition, or *ad hoc*, by the President of the Republic, Jair Bolsonaro, in the Chamber of Deputies from

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January 2019 to November 2020, and the impact of this management strategy adopted by the federal government on the legislative production of the period under review.

Governability is considered the ability to build a positive agenda over and above the minimum of obstruction to the approval of the matters adverse to the interests of the government. In this sense, we analyzed the governability in the first two years of the term of office of President Jair Bolsonaro, in the Chamber of Deputies, verifying the formation of the coalition by calculating the rollover rate and the rate of coalescence, and the results of the alternative strategies at the disposal of the head of the Executive Branch by calculating the coefficient of the dominance of the Executive and the coefficient of success in the proceedings for provisional measures (FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 1999; AMORIM NETO, 2000; AMORIM NETO, COX; MCCUBBIN, 2003; FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 2007; PEREIRA, 2017; BERTHOLINI; PEREIRA, 2017; ALMEIDA, 2020).

Verifying the absence of a coalition in partisan forms or evidence of a robust parliamentary support base (dissociated from party logic), as well as a weakening in party support to the President in 2020 compared to the previous year, the results presented in the article converge with the possibility raised by Almeida (2020) of the existence of an alternative legislative agenda headed by the National Congress and reinforce the need for revision of the conceptual framework developed concerning the office of each president.

2. Literature Review

In the process of consolidation of Brazilian legislative studies, the interpretation of Executive–Legislative relationships transitioned from an exclusively institutional analysis, centered on the debate of distributive and partisan perspectives, to a managerial approach, regarding the different presidential strategies of management of the current institutional framework (PALERMO, 2000; FIGUEIREDO; SANTOS, 2016; CUNHA, 2017; FREITAS; GUARNIERI, 2018).

Influenced by the neo-institutionalism of rational choice and the debate between the distributive perspective, pessimistic about the governance and the performance of the parliament, and the party perspective, optimistic about the discipline and the stability of the coalition, we began from the criticism to the distributive work that deduced the behavior later adopted by parliament in the interior of the National Congress from the electoral strategy of the candidates and the parties, without, however, systematically analyzing the empirical data for legislative production and parliamentary action (MELLO, 2002; FIGUEIREDO; SANTOS, 2016; FREITAS, GUARNIERI, 2018).

At first pessimistic, the distributive prognosis was based on the dilemmas of coexistence between presidentialism and the proportional open list vote in a context marked by the discontinuity of the party system and the Federative Organization (LAMOUNIER, 1991, 1992;

MAINWARING, 1993; AMES, 1995). Following the causal thread of the independence of the office of the President, elected by a majority vote, and that of the members of parliament, elected by proportional vote, would result in a multi-party system with an Executive without the support of parliament and with unstable coalitions, which would be exacerbated by the patronage trend of the open list that it could stimulate the action of the individual in the seats in place of an ideological line and party program agenda (LAMOUNIER, 1991, 1992; MAINWARING, 1993; AMES, 1995; MELO, 2002; FIGUEIREDO; SANTOS, 2016).

However, despite the initial assumption of ungovernability of the institutional arrangement defined in 1988, the multi-party system was questioned by the observation of high levels of party discipline and ideological consistency between parties, as demonstrated by Figueiredo and Limongi (1999).

In contrast to the predictions of decision-making paralysis previously listed, the later works, of partisan inspiration, sought to explain the centralizing mechanisms that would compensate for the disaggregating characteristics of the electoral system, based on the analysis of incentives and constraints, internal to the decision-making process in the Legislative Branch (FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 1999; FIGUEIREDO; SANTOS, 2016).

According to these authors, the formation of predictable and disciplined majorities would be due to a reduction in the success of the actions of individual parliamentarians, by political leaders and the head of the Executive Branch controlling the agenda, given its procedural and constitutional prerogatives and the control of resources and the positions by the President of the Republic (FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 1999; AMORIM NETO, 2000; AMORIM NETO, COX; MCCUBBINS, 2003; VASSELAI, 2009; MELO, 2002; NEIVA, 2011).

After the first debate of the ungovernability or governability of Brazil, with the admission of its governability, the discussion shifted its axis of questioning to the conditions and forms in which governability would occur, considering the spaces of managerial decision of each president. In this sense, by exploring the role of the coalition government, of the appointment of ministers, and the legislative prerogatives of the Executive as new variables involved in strengthening or moderating the lines in favor of ungovernability, or governability, of the political system of the country (PALERMO, 2000; MELO, 2002; FREITAS; GUARNIERI, 2018; VASSELAI, 2009), works such as those conducted by Abranches (1998, 2014); Amorim Neto (2000), Amorim Neto, Cox, and McCubbins (2003), Vasselai (2009), Figueiredo and Limongi (2007), Pereira (2017), Bertholini and Pereira (2017), and Almeida (2020) are examples of research that begin from the relevance of management styles for the performance of the presidential office.

The technical note “Relações Executivo-Legislativo e governabilidade à Luz da Crise da Covid-19”, written by Almeida (2020), focused on clarifying the relationship between the

federal government and the National Congress in the 56th legislature, in the light of governability and the Brazilian institutional framework.

To operationalize the technical note, the author began with a question regarding the feasibility of preserving governability in a scenario unfavorable to the Executive, associated in this case to the presidential aversion in the constitution of a support base, through the approval of an alternative agenda headed by the Legislative, referring to the supposed congressional control of the legislative agenda (ALMEIDA, 2020).

Based on the observations of Colomer and Negretto (2005), of the US “Congressional Government”, the rollover rate of each party was calculated, that is, the percentage of the plenary roll-call votes in which the party voted overwhelmingly against a matter. However, the matter was approved, for verification, anchored in Amorim Neto, Cox, and McCubbins (2003), of the existence of minimal indications of a coalition since insignificant rollover rates would be key features of majority coalitions, given the existence of a binding minimum agreement between the parties. When such an agreement is in force, only parties that are not part of the coalition are rolled over with significant frequency (ALMEIDA, 2020).

Noting high rollover rates in the opposition; lower but not insignificant for the presidential party (Partido Social Liberal – PSL), and almost zero in the political parties that make up the “Centrão”, indicating the presence of a majority coalition organized around political parties of the “Centrão,” the author continued with the research stating that there should be an increase in the internal capability of the coalition to build a positive agenda to obtain good governance, in terms of the production of laws, exceeding the commitment to a minimum of impediments to the adoption of the matters that are contrary to the interests of its members. In this process, we observed the relationship between the management strategy adopted by the government and the legislative production in the post-1988, based on an analysis of the evolution of the total number of ordinary (non-budget) and complementary laws that originated in the Executive and Legislative Branches, per year of enactment, by classifying the strategies of the organization of the coalition, in different terms, in accordance with a logic of partisan or presidential (non-partisan) logic (ALMEIDA, 2020).

By verifying a predominance of the initiatives of the Executive Branch from 1989 to 2007, when this pattern is reversed, from 2008, with the production of congressional origin surpassing the presidential one, although with oscillations, the author established that if the President builds a majority coalition in partisan forms, no matter contrary to his interest or the parties allied to him should be put to vote in the plenary, implying a zero objection rate. In turn, if the president has the resources to impose discipline but not the power to filter what can be submitted to the plenary, he will build a majority coalition without observing partisan criteria, whose trampling rates should be zero, but with significant objections. By elimination, significant rates of party rollover rates indicate that they are not organized in the form of a

majority coalition (ALMEIDA, 2020).

Most of the presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Sarney (1989); Lula (2007 and 2010); Dilma (2011) and Temer (2016) are classified as partisan coalitions and most of the presidencies of Itamar and Lula's first term; Collor (1990); Lula (2008 and 2009); Dilma (2012), and Temer (2017 and 2018) are classified as presidential coalitions. Collor (1991 and 1992); Dilma (2013 to 2015), and Bolsonaro (2019) are classified as bases not organized in the form of coalitions. The evaluation of the relationship between the type of support base and the legislative production of the Executive was carried out through a multivariate statistical analysis, which revealed significant differences in the level of legislative production between the three types of organization. The results indicate an improvement in the legislative performance of the Executive when it organizes its support base as a majority coalition following partisan criteria, and a significant increase in legislative production of congressional origin (ALMEIDA, 2020).

3. Data and Method

Taking as a reference point the technical note, "Relações Executivo-Legislativo e governabilidade à Luz da Crise da Covid-19", elaborated by Almeida (2020), the analysis seeks to describe and compare the governability of the first two years in office of President Jair Bolsonaro in the Chamber of Deputies by verifying the construction of a party coalition and analyzing the results, in terms of legislative production, of the strategies adopted by the federal government in both periods.

The research was operationalized by calculating the rollover rate of each party in the roll-call votes of the Chamber of Deputies in 2019 and 2020. Considering the limitations of the rollover rate in the evaluation of governability, we chose to use the coalescence rate, employed by Bertholini and Pereira (2017), the coefficient of dominance of the Executive in the legislative production of each year, as explained by Figueiredo and Limongi (2007) and the calculation of a coefficient of the success of provisional measures to expand the understanding of the conjunctural context in which the analysis is inserted.

Questioning governability, which was conceived as the ability to build a positive agenda that exceeds the minimum of obstruction to the approval of the matters adverse to the interests of the government, the choice of using the rollover rate, adopted by Almeida (2020), is justified by the assumption that in a highly fragmented system, such as in Brazil, the head of the Executive Branch is forced to "form a government" in the face of the construction of a partisan coalition, which continues its legislative agenda through a cartel, blocking the matters adverse to their interest (FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 1999; AMORIM NETO, COX; MCCUBBIN, 2003; ALMEIDA, 2020).

In this context, the rollover rate refers to the frequency at which a majority of the

members of parliament, of a party, have voted against a proposition that was, however, approved. In other words, it is clear that if there is an agreement binding the parties, which is evidence crucial to the existence of the partisan coalition, only the parties that are not part of the coalition are rolled over with significant frequency since they do not have the power of veto on the agenda. This rate is an empirical validation of a coalition verified in the presidential cabinet since it does not have a formal existence (AMORIM NETO, COX; MCCUBBIN, 2003).

Inspired by the methodology proposed by Amorim Neto, Cox, and McCubbins (2003), the rollover rate, in the technical note, was calculated based on the roll-call voting data available on the Chamber of Deputies website, verified through the 5% cut-off percentage, given the admission of the possibility of a coalition member's disagreement being high enough to manifest him/herself against the approval of matters unfavorable to his/her interest, after the coalition partners placed it in the agenda, but low enough to not result in his/her departure from the coalition.

In this sequence, the research used the *Dataset* made available by the Chamber of Deputies, in the Open Data section on their website². The database offered by the Chamber of Deputies was chosen due to its observance of the characteristics of purity (the data are raw, not having visual formatting, processing, or analysis), structure (the data are structured, organized according to a rigid structure previously planned to store them), accessibility (the data are open to the public due to Law n° 12,527 of access to information of 2011, allowing replication and verification of the results obtained), and actuality (the data are updated daily).

Only roll-call votes were used as an object of analysis, similar to the technical note, due to the registration and publication of the voting option of each parliamentarian. However, due to the absence of specifications regarding the scope of the proposals analyzed (compulsory and/or requested roll-call votes), we preferred the examination of roll-call votes of subjects that require, by constitutional or regimental requirement, their approval by means of a qualified quorum that mandatorily submits them to this type of vote, that is, votes concerning constitutional amendment bills, complementary law bills, and requests for emergency urgency³. In this sequence, roll-call votes of ordinary legislation, provisional measures, and parliamentary requests, which could be voted in roll-call after the request by means of a quorum verification request, were not analyzed (FIGUEIREDO and LIMONGI, 1999).

The option for the exclusion of roll-call votes on matters subject to symbolic voting occurred due to the limitations found in the *Dataset* and a concern regarding the distortion of results. The limitations of *Dataset* concern possible gaps in the voting records of some types of requests and highlights in the plenary, as reported by the Chamber website. The concern

² The data relating to roll-call votes in the plenary until December 11th, 2020 were used to calculate the rollover rates of 2020.

³ Although it does not require compulsory roll-call voting, the request for the adoption of the emergency urgency rite was included due to the need for its presentation by the absolute majority of deputies.

regarding the distortion of the results is related to the conclusive power available to the commissions, which have the competence to vote bills that dispense with the vote in the plenary, apart from an appeal of one tenth of the members of the Chamber or the request of a leader representing an alliance with equivalent number. According to the considerations made by Figueiredo and Limongi (2007), the roll-call votes for the request to verify a quorum submitted by a leader of a party that, in accordance with the internal rules may only submit a new request after a period of no less than one hour after the vote is taken, the matters of greater importance and political sensitivity shall have to be reserved. Therefore, the incorporation of these propositions, as a sample of convenience, could highlight the trends that do not necessarily correspond to the entire population.

The calculation of the rollover rate, conceived as a nominal categorical variable, was corroborated by producing a table of relative frequencies, in percentage terms, of the binary rollover variable, measured according to the congruence between the approval of the propositions and the guidelines given by the leaders of the parties and blocks, in addition to the government leadership⁴. Unlike the technical note, which resorted to the use of the vote of the majority of parliamentarians of a party to calculate its rate, this research chose the voting guidelines to measure the control capacity of the parties concerning the legislative agenda due to the explicit presence of the position of the government and the parties regarding the matters in the agenda. We considered that the vote of the majority of parliamentarians of a party, favorably or contrary to a matter, would not necessarily indicate the position of the party, given the possibility of releasing the bench during the vote of matters of low relevance to the party, as well as the fact that the parliamentarians present an unruly behavior due to conflicts and internal partisan disputes (FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 1999, p. 117).

Regarding the identification of building a partisan coalition, this article also differed from the technical note, which chose the 5% cut-off percentage, through the option to verify, in the votes of the nominal members of the coalition and the government, a zero rollover rate since the requirement of approval through a qualified quorum would encourage the scheduling of previously negotiated and agreed matters between the coalition partners.

Considering the statement of Amorim Neto (2000) concerning the possibility of presupposing the formation of a coalition in presidential offices that have a high correspondence between the percentage of ministerial posts and the parliamentary weight, we chose to complement the rollover rate by using the coalescence rate with the aim of highlighting more subtle changes in the strategies adopted by the federal government, which would be imperceptible if the rollover rate was used, in addition to the incorporation of another indication of the presence of a partisan coalition.

⁴ The guidelines of the majority, minority, and opposition leaders were not used in this research.

The coalescence rate is a continuous variable based on the rule of proportionality to assess the degree of coalescence of the offices. In other words, the smaller the deviation from the proportionality between the ministry quotas of the parties and their weights, the higher the levels of coalescence. On the other hand, the greater the deviation from proportionality in the allocation of ministerial positions, the lower the levels of coalescence (AMORIM NETO, 2000).

The rate was calculated considering the party affiliation of the ministers (if any), the parliamentary weight of the parties to which the ministers belong (if any), and the period of stay,⁵ dividing by two (2), and subsequently subtracting one (1) from the absolute value of the difference between the percentage of ministries of each party, including non-partisan ministries, to the percentage value of seats of each party that makes up the “coalition” from the total number of seats that they occupy in parliament, including those ministries whose minister does not have party affiliation (AMORIM NETO, 2000). The absolute value of the percentage of ministries occupied by each party was calculated by the sum of the ratios of ministries occupied by each party by the total number of ministries and secretariats with ministerial status, while the absolute value of the percentage of seats was calculated by the sum of the ratios of seats that each party controls in the Chamber of Deputies by the total number⁶.

Therefore, ranging from zero, no correspondence, to 1, perfect correspondence, the rate was elaborated based on the data collected individually on the websites corresponding to each ministry and arranged in accordance with the six presidential offices determined, from January 2019 to November 2020, by means of the criterion of party composition adopted by Amorim Neto (2000). Therefore, it was assumed that every time there was a change in the party composition of a ministry, there was also the creation of a new office, which, consequently, required a new coalescence rate, calculated considering the changes in party affiliations (parliamentary weight of each party), according to the available information on the history of parliamentary movement and⁷ on the website of the Chamber of Deputies.

Thus, we analyzed the proportionality of the “presidential offices” identified from January 1st 2019 to February 18th 2019, with the original formation (**Office - 1**); from February 19th 2019 to February 11th 2020, with the departure of Gustavo Bebianno (PSL) and the inauguration of Floriano Peixoto as Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic (**Office**

⁵ $1 - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1} (|S_i - M_i|)$ (AMORIM NETO, 2000).

⁶ According to Vasselai (2009, p. 7), “in the formula, for each party, the percentage of ministries received by a coalition alliance (M) is subtracted from the percentage of seats owned by this party in the CDF in relation to the total number of seats added by the members of the governing coalition (S), considering S=0 for non-partisan ministers. The sign is disregarded from the result for each alliance. The value found for all the parties of the team of ministers is then added, dividing the result by 2 so that the result can not vary from 0 to 2, which could occur since we were previously forced to disregard signs and would result in difficult reading. Subtracting this new resulting value from 1 also has a mere function of facilitating the reading of the index since the value 0 will mean greater coalescence and 1 the smaller, if we do not do this, causing confusion”.

⁷ We found inconsistencies in the history of parliamentary movement made available on the website of the Chamber of Deputies during the update of the parliamentary weight of each party. Such inconsistencies were reported to the competent department and corrected by the provision of the history of parliamentary movement of the PP.

- 2) from February 11th 2020 to February 18th 2020, with the departure of Gustavo Canuto and the inauguration of Rogério Marinho (PL) in the Ministry of Regional Development (**Office - 3**) from February 18th 2020 to April 16th 2020, with the departure of Onyx Lorenzoni (DEM) and the inauguration of Walter Braga Neto as the President's Chief of Staff, and departure of Osmar Terra (MDB) and the inauguration of Onyx Lorenzoni (DEM) in the Ministry of Citizenship (**Office - 4**) from April 16th 2020 to June 17th 2020, with the departure of Luiz Henrique Mandetta (DEM) and the inauguration of Nelson Teich in the Ministry of Health (**Office - 5**), and from June 17th 2020 to November 22nd 2020, with the creation of the Ministry of Communications and the inauguration of Fabio Faria (PSD) (**Office - 6**).

This being said, the evaluation of governability through the formation of a coalition from the premise of the “agenda cartel”, although relevant to the concept of governability adopted, considering that control over the agenda is configured as the main mechanism of the parties to implement the coalition agreement, demonstrates flaws when incorporated in the analysis the constitutional prerogatives of the President of the Republic, who may choose to use alternative scheduling strategies instead of the formation of an “agenda cartel” (partisan coalition). In this sense, it is necessary to complement it by weighing the results in terms of legislative production of the strategies adopted by the federal government, considering the scope of governability provided by the centralizing institutional environment and parliamentary support to the head of the Executive Branch dissociated from party logic.

Thus, we aimed to add to this analysis by considering the powers of the presidential agenda by evaluating the involvement of the Executive and the legislative production each year, with the introduction of the coefficient of dominance of the Executive (FIGUEIREDO and LIMONGI, 2007), and examining the mismatch of the Legislative in relation to the agenda of the Executive, the provisional measures for calculating the coefficient of the success of the proceedings for interim measures (PEREIRA, 2017).

Accordingly, the coefficient of dominance⁸, considered a continuous variable, was calculated by the percentage of projects of the Executive's initiative, approved in relation to the total matters approved in the Chamber of Deputies in 2019 and 2020, using ordinary laws, complementary laws, constitutional amendments, and provisional measures, obtained in the statistics of the matters appreciated in the Chamber of Deputies⁹ available on the website of the Chamber in the section referring to the "Reports of legislative activity", and through the direct request to the General Secretariat of the Bureau in the Chamber of Deputies, as objects of

⁸ This research did not consider the changes made to the projects of the initiative of the Executive Branch in the course of its processing, which may have changed the original text to the point that the project approved not necessarily represent the policy agenda of the President of the Republic, bearing in mind that incorporating these considerations without a more in-depth analysis of the nature of the changes is not justified since the coefficient of dominance represents a generous estimate of the real participation of the Executive in the legislative production of each year.

⁹The coefficient of dominance of the Executive, in 2020, was calculated based on the propositions approved in the Chamber of Deputies (regardless of its situation in the Federal Senate) until October 15th, 2020.

investigation.

On the other hand, the success rate of the provisional measures¹⁰, considered a continuous variable, was calculated by examining the percentage of approved provisional measures in relation to the total number submitted to the National Congress that year, using the approved provisional measures (enacted or sanctioned), rejected, and that lost their effectiveness over time, obtained in the statistics of the subjects assessed in the Chamber of Deputies in 2019¹¹ and 2020¹² and on the website of the National Congress.

4. Results

The rollover rates, employed as empirical validation of a nominally verified coalition in the "presidential offices", between the federal government and the parties: Democrata (DEM); Patriota (Patri); Partido Liberal (PL)¹³; Partido Progressista (PP); Movimento Democrata Brasileiro (MDB)¹⁴; and Partido Social Democrata (PSD)¹⁵, portrayed, in 2019, high rates of rollover in **PSOL** (2.33%); **PT** (1.16%); **PDT** (1.16%), and **PCdoB**(0.90%); drops in **Patri** (0.12%); **PL** (0.12%); and **PSL** (0.12%); not irrelevant drops in the government (0.25%); and zero in **DEM**; on the **PSL – PP – PSD - etc.** block, and on the **PP – MDB – PTB - etc.** block, as presented in Graph 1.

¹⁰ This research did not distinguish between the provisional measures approved in the form of a conversion law bill, sanctioned with vetos or enacted, despite recognizing that over the course of the projects, the initiative of the Executive Branch may undergo significant changes during the process of negotiation, to the point that they do not necessarily represent the policy agenda initially proposed by the President of the Republic, but to be in line with the interests of the members of parliament, whereas the incorporation of these considerations, without a more in-depth analysis of the nature of the changes, will not be justified since the ratio of the success of the provisional measures represents a generous estimate of the true success of the presidential agenda submitted to the National Congress by means of the issue of provisional measures.

¹¹ The success rate of the provisional measures in 2019 was calculated based on the provisional measures issued in 2019, which were enacted, sanctioned, rejected, or lost their effectiveness in 2019 or 2020.

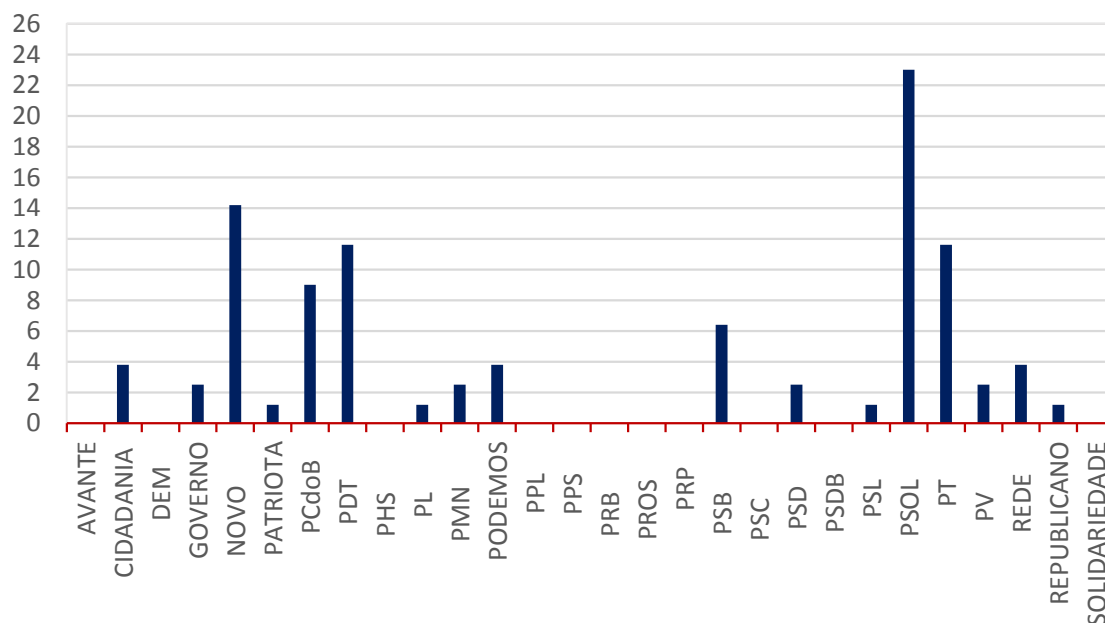
¹² The success rate of the provisional measures in 2020 was calculated based on the provisional measures issued in 2020, which were enacted, sanctioned, rejected, or lost their effectiveness by December 10th 2020. In this sense, the provisional measures pending during that period were not considered.

¹³ The bill becomes part of the nominal coalition in the third office, with the departure of Gustavo Canuto and the inauguration of Rogério Marinho (PL) in the Ministry of Regional Development, on February 11th 2020.

¹⁴ The MDB leaves the nominal coalition government in the fourth office, with the departure of Osmar Terra (MDB) and inauguration of Onyx Lorenzoni (DEM) in the Ministry of Citizenship, on February 18th 2020.

¹⁵ The PSD becomes part of the nominal coalition in the sixth office, with the re-creation of the Ministry of Communications and the inauguration of Fábio Faria, on June 17th 2020.

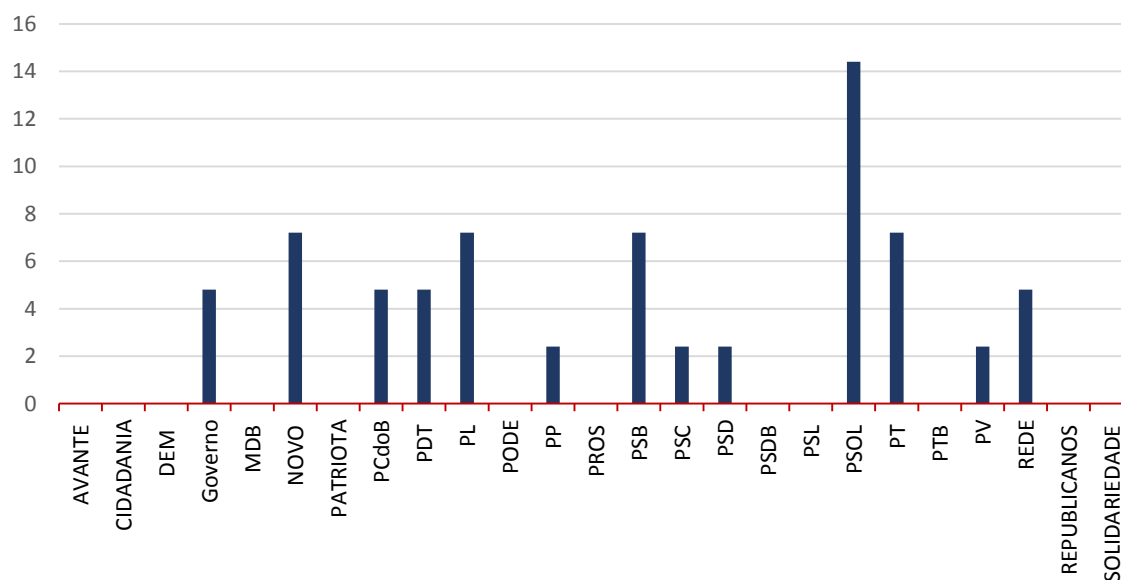
Graph 1 – Rollover rate of all parties in 2019, without the benches, multiplied by 10^3 to facilitate visualization.



Source: The author, 2020.

Concerning the extension of the analysis to 2020, shown in Graph 2, there was a reduction in opposition rates, zero rates in the **DEM**; **MDB**; **PSL**, and **Patri**, low but significant rates in **PP** (0.24%) and **PSD** (0.24%), and an increase in **PL** (0.72%) and the government. While parties such as **PSOL** (1.4%); **PT** (0.72%); **PCdoB** (0.48%); **PDT** (0.48%), and **PSL** (0%) reduced their rollover rates. The rate observed in the government increased from 0.25% to 0.48%.

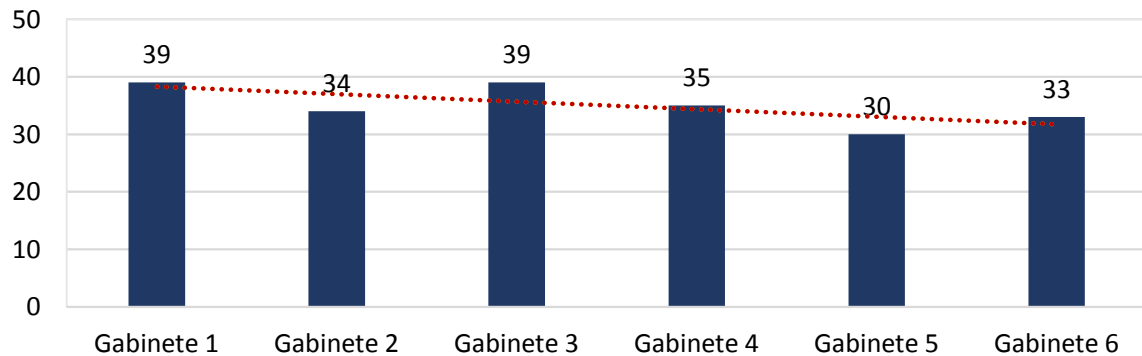
Graph 2 – Rollover rate of all parties in 2020, without the benches, multiplied by 10^3 to facilitate visualization.



Source: The author, 2020.

The coalescence rates, represented in Graph 3, denoted a low proportionality and little variation over the analyzed period, whose greatest deviation is presented in the third office. However, it lasted only seven days. That said, a coalescence rate of 0.39 was found in the first office (Office 1); 0.34 in the second office (Office 2); 0.39 in the third office (Office 3); 0.35 in the fourth office (Office 4); 0.30 in the fifth office (Office 5), and 0.33 in the sixth office (Office 6).

Graph 3 – Coalescence rates in percentage



Source: The author, 2020.

The second part of the research, which sought to explore the results of scheduling strategies available to the Executive Branch in the absence of the construction of a party coalition, found a coefficient of dominance of the Executive, in the Chamber of Deputies, of 31% in 2019, compared to 69% of congressional origin¹⁶, and 43%¹⁷ in 2020, compared to the 55% of congressional origin, in addition to success rates of the provisional measures of 46.8% in 2019 and 46.1% in 2020.

Considering that 48 and the provisional measures were submitted to the National Congress in 2019, compared to the 97 submitted until December 10th 2020, the change in the coefficient of dominance of the Executive in 2020 does not necessarily indicate an improvement in the robustness of the President's support in the National Congress since that may be the result of a significant increase in the issue of provisional measures.

5. Final Considerations

Aiming at the description and comparison of the governance system, designed as the ability to run on a positive agenda that exceeds the minimum obstruction to the approval of the matters adverse to the interests of the government for the first two years of the term of office of

¹⁶ Of the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate.

¹⁷ Calculated based on the proposals approved in the Chamber of Deputies until October 15th 2020, when the coefficient of success of the provisional measures was of 49.2%, the coefficient of dominance of the Executive may be outdated compared to the success rate of the provisional measures calculated based on the data collected until December 10th 2020.

President Jair Bolsonaro in the Chamber of Deputies, this research found the absence of a coalition in partisan forms or signs of a robust base support in parliament (apart from the partisan logic), in addition to a decline in partisan support for the President of the Republic in 2020 compared to the previous year.

The rollover rates of the Bolsonaro government and its increase from 0.25% to 0.48% in 2020 indicate the absence of the formation of a coalition between the federal government and the member parties of the presidential office (coalition nominally verified in the presidential office) since, if there were a minimum agreement of the bond between the parties and the government, which is an evidence crucial to the existence of the coalition in the partisan form, the rollover rate by the federal government and political parties members of the coalition would be zero. Significant rollover frequencies occur when considering only the parties that are not part of the coalition due to the absence of the power of veto on the appointment, as observed in the center and center-right parties in relation to each other in 2019 and 2020.

When this did not occur, the coalescence rates of the "presidential offices" presented a low proportionality between the parliamentary weight of each party and the distribution of ministerial portfolios, indicating that the distribution of portfolios tended to comply with a criterion of ideological alignment. Despite the increase in the rollover rate, the President showed little interest in readjusting the proportionality of his ministerial office to preserve the governability of his management. This context intensifies the hypothesis, raised by a strong opposition of the President to coalition presidentialism, that the allocation of ministerial portfolios in the first two years of office of President Jair Bolsonaro tended to predominantly obey the criterion based on the defense of a project-specific policy, the neo-liberal, neoconservative, and of agriculture and livestock, that is, that the logic of the partisan coalition moved by the political feasibility of his government (SOLANO, 2018; COELHO, 2019, LIMA, and LIMA, 2020).

In this sense, regarding the use of scheduling strategies available to the Executive Branch, we observed relatively low coefficients of dominance of the Executive in the total of matters approved in the Chamber of Deputies compared to considerations in previous governments, which probably results from structural changes in the legislative process over the last years (FIGUEIREDO and LIMONGI, 2007). The following changes stand out: EC nº 32/2001, which established new rules for the reissue of provisional measures; the interpretation of the president of the Chamber at the time, Michel Temer, on the closure of the agenda by the provisional measures in 2009; the decision of the Federal Supreme Court on the obligation to install the mixed commissions (ADI 4.029/2012), and the assignment that the Federal Supreme Court conferred on the President of the Chamber of Deputies of defining what constitutes matters strange to the provisional measures (ADI 5,127/2015) (GUIMARÃES, PERLIN, and MAIA, 2019). At the same time, the success rates of the provisional measures, of 46.8% in 2019

and 46.1% in 2020, converge with the reflections of Figueiredo and Limongi (2007), that before carrying the weight of a unilateral imposition of the will of the Executive to the Legislative, the provisional measures have a limited utility in politically weak governments, given the need for a parliamentary support base for their approval. In the absence of the formation of a partisan coalition, the success rate of the provisional measures validates the absence or presence of a non-partisan support base, which, according to the results of this article, is low in terms of the support necessary to pursue the economic and political agenda of the current management. Therefore, it is insufficient for the approval of the legislative agenda of the President to guarantee its governability (FIGUEIREDO; LIMONGI, 2007).

It should be highlighted, in sequence, that despite the absence of evidence of the formation of a partisan or *ad hoc* coalition, according to the theoretical framework previously exposed, resulting in a decision-making paralysis, we found the approval, with a considerable margin of votes, of a pension reform (PEC 06/2019) with high political and electoral costs (MELO, 2002).

Contrary to the relevance attributed to the managerial decision spaces of responsibility of each President, as the main variable intervening in strengthening or moderating the traits favorable to ungovernability, or governability, of the country's political system, the results observed by this research suggest the need for a review of the conceptual framework developed on this topic since the absence of the formation of a partisan or *ad hoc* coalition by the President of the Republic, verified by means of a conservative methodology¹⁸ that has tended to overestimate the legislative dominance of the Executive Branch, and the success rate of the provisional measures, antagonises the attribution given to the incentives and internal constraints to the decision-making process in Congress, materialized in the control of the agenda and is practiced by political leaders and the head of the Executive Branch to compensate for the divisive features of the electoral system, which would lead to the ingovernabilidade of the Brazilian political system.

Given that some of the possible implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on the governance of the head of the Executive Branch in Congress may also be found in the reduction of the rollover rates of the opposition and in the increase of the rollover rates of the government, as well as a significant increase on the issue of provisional measures in the period, the results presented in this article converge with the possibility raised by Almeida (2020) for the existence of an alternate legislative agenda led by the National Congress, given the minimal evidence of governability of a "legislative coalition" apart from the coordination of the head of the Executive Branch, formed by the center political parties. Therefore, there is a need for greater

¹⁸ The methodology is conservative since it does not consider the modifications made by parliamentarians during the processing of the projects of initiative of the Executive Branch in the National Congress, given that these can substantially modify the legislative agenda initially proposed by the President.

investigations on the participation of parties in the legislative agenda effectively approved, between 2019 and 2020. The hypothesis raised that the public health crisis, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, required the mobilization of parliamentarians to meet the demands imposed by Governors and Mayors, resulted in a greater convergence of positions and guidelines between the different parties, leading to a reduction in their rollover rates.

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