

ТЕОРІЯ ТА ПРАКТИКА ДЕМОКРАТІЇ

УДК 328.1:321.7

Movchan U.

V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

THE THEORY OF COALITION PRESIDENTIALISM: LESSONS FOR UKRAINE

The article is considered the concept of «coalition presidentialism». It has been considered the features in building coalition in parliamentary and presidential systems. Among the indicators of coalition building in parliamentary system are investiture rule, the formateur party, motives of politicians, agreement on the coalition formation, and political fragmentation. In presidential system, they are cabinet appointments, pork, and patronage.

Key words: coalition, coalition building, presidential system

Мовчан У.І.

ТЕОРІЯ КОАЛІЦІЙНОГО ПРЕЗИДЕНЦІАЛІЗМУ: УРОКИ ДЛЯ УКРАЇНИ

Розглянуто концепцію «коаліційного президенціалізму». Також розглянуті особливості побудови коаліцій в парламентських і президентських системах. Серед факторів, які впливають на побудову коаліцій в парламентських системах, виділяють: правило інвеститури, партія-форматор, мотиви політиків, угода з приводу формування коаліції, і політичну фрагментацію. У президентських системах цими факторами виступають: призначення в уряд, патронаж та "заохочення".

Ключові слова: коаліція, побудова коаліцій, президентська система

Мовчан У. И.

ТЕОРИЯ КОАЛИЦИОННОГО ПРЕЗИДЕНЦИАЛИЗМА: УРОКИ ДЛЯ УКРАИНЫ

Рассмотрена концепция «коалиционного президенциализма». Также рассмотрены особенности построения коалиций в парламентских и президентских системах. Среди факторов, которые влияют на построение коалиций в парламентских системах, выделяют: правило инвеституры, партия-форматор, мотивы политиков, соглашение по поводу формирования коалиции, и политическую фрагментацию. В президентских системах этими факторами выступают: назначение в правительство, патронаж и «поощрения».

Ключевые слова: коалиция, построение коалиций, президентская система

Presidential systems have been criticized for a long time in political science literature. But last wave of study presidentialism has turned the investigation in away. The political scientists argue that presidents could work with multiparty parliaments and it leads to establish democracy. The goal of the paper is gathering together the existing theory and indicators of coalition formation and how we could apply them to presidentialism and what we know about coalition in presidential republic.

The theory about coalition for a long time has been considering only in parliamentary context, and in the past decade it has started to apply to presidential systems. But as we would see below the process of building coalition are not the same as in parliamentary system. So, firstly we define the institutes that influence on coalition building in parliamentary system.

The ability in an initiating of negotiation about coalition building is the one of institutes that has significant influence on the structuring and formation process. Party is called formateur party that has such power, and it has to be able to form the coalition in a way which would ensure its mandatory inclusion to government, and also its ability to change the ideological dimension of the cabinet to its purpose.

The investiture rule is another norm that has influence on the coalition formation. This rule influences on the kind of majority that would be formed. The minority government would be form where there is no investiture rule. Also the rules that restrict party composition in parliament and the size of parliamentary majority have influence on coalition formation. Therefore it is very important which type of majority has to be formed: normal majority (50%+1) or absolute majority (2/3 or more). In some political systems the type of majority depends on the fact that to control majority of seats in parliament is enough to make the «ordinary» political decisions, and at the same time the special majority (2/3 or more) is necessary for political reform's passing [1, c. 54-55].

It is so important to study who can appoint prime minister for the results of coalition [2, p. 36]. Prime minister is the most influence member of the cabinet. He plays a significant role in a political decision-making of cabinet. He has an ability to make a decision in all political issues where he has particular interests. These decisions could define the change of government politics. Moreover, prime minister define ideology that produces further decisions in almost all political issues, therefore it limits

the freedom of other ministers and such situation makes them as agents of prime minister [3].

In most cases the largest party has got the post of prime minister. The dominant party tends to be the largest party for a long time and it is likely that it would become a member of any coalition government. This party has a significant advantage in the coalition bargain and would form the agenda of the coalition. The dominant party is a key party. The combination of such central position and size allows to control the agenda and to form the next coalition [4, p. 360] Thus, a dominant player is an especially strong actor in the case where there are two mutually losing coalition where each might become winning in case of dominant player's joining, but by combining with one another. In most cases, the dominant player becomes the largest party [1, c. 56]. Examples of countries, where the dominant parties play a key role, are France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Russia.

It is also important to study the influence of institutions that lead the government decision-making after the formation of the cabinet. These rules included: rules of the cabinet (such as the balance between collective decision-making in the government and single decision-making of prime minister in the area of its jurisdiction, political responsibility and resignation), parliamentary rule (a qualified majority, dissolution of parliament and call of new elections), electoral system, veto-players (the head of state, foreign government, pressure groups).

Analysis of the government formation is also characterized by the motives of politicians who want to get into the office. Politicians, who are motivated by getting seats in the government, are called office-seeking [1, c. 56-57]. Government portfolios are the most significant gain for them. Those politicians, who want to get a place in the government for reasons that are strictly defined by special policy, are called policy-seeking [5, p. 5]. It is not so important to get seats in the government for these parties, if they are confident in their ability to dictate policy from other key positions in parliament. At the same time, office-seeking parties can go on agreement with other to join policy-making if it would allow them in the future to win the support of the electorate. Also policy-seeking parties can fight for a place if it would affect on the direction of government policy [6, p. 60].

Agreement on the coalition formation is one of the important elements of the coalition's study. There are two opposing views on the political significance of coalition negotiations. Supporters of the coalition agreement consider it forming as a real possibility of parties to influence on the future agenda of the government. At the same time, skeptics consider the coalition agreement as a politically insignificant, as they act as a certain "ritual", which is held to facilitate the transition from competitive campaign to inter-governmental cooperation; or coalition agreements are only conditionally meaningful, that is when the strategic proposals mentioned in the coalition agreement, supported by the party that receives significant ministerial positions. Empirical research tends to maintain the supporters of the coalition agreement. In most countries, political agreement is the main subject of bargaining in the formation of the coalition. Thus, the Western governments tend to increase government agreements from 33% in 1940 to 80% in 1990. In most countries this stage of the negotiation process takes most of the time (weeks or months), while the issue of distribution of portfolios settled within hours or days. In almost all countries (except Italy) the distribution of portfolios is at the final stage, after the conclusion of the agreement between the parties which would enter the government [7].

Thus, the coalition agreement appears as one of the key institutions that makes collective coalition cabinet viably. The coalition agreement is a vital element that makes the coalition government possible, helps to avoid some difficult and complex problems of bargains, as well as to avoid the weakness of coalitions (limited information, the lack of performance of contracts ambiguity of voting). Coalition is more likely to be established if the parties conclude an agreement about the formation of particular government before election.

Most Western democracies combine parliamentary system with proportional representation election. As a result multiparty governments are the norm. In this case, one of the most interesting aspects of the coalition government is that this form of «separation of powers» raises a serious problem for the parties involved in the study. Giving a high level of «devolution» is the cabinet in the legislative process, the coalition that try to implement «a policy of compromise» that takes into account the benefits of all members of the coalition, faced with the potential problem of «principal-

agent» [8, p. 24]. Parliaments are important not only as a forum in which government and opposition parties interact. The legislative process also provides an institutional mechanism that could be a key to the ability of coalition governments to resolve conflicts within these coalitions [8, p. 25].

Political fragmentation also has a significant influence on the coalition formation. The difficulty of finding "common ground" increases with the increasing of number of parties. There is a significant relationship between party system and the type of cabinet. With the number of effective parliamentary parties increases, then the likelihood that the one-party majority cabinet will be formed decreases. However, low average size of political party in a highly fragmented system reduces costs of including additional party to the coalition, so the formation of grand coalitions are more likely in this fragmented party system.

At the same time, creating oversized cabinets and minority cabinets has another explanation. One important explanation is the intentions of the parties. Participation in the coalition gives the power to the party, which means obtaining cabinet portfolios. But at the same time, getting of ministerial portfolios may not be constant goal of political parties, because not always carrying out the government responsibility is electoral advantage, and as a result, a period in opposition would enable the parties to get votes, and to increase the chance of participating in the cabinet in future. If this assumption is important for several parties, it creates a high possibility that a minority cabinet would be formed.

The main reason for establishing majority cabinet, and not the minimum winning cabinet, is «information effect»: in the negotiations on the cabinet formation of the exact number of possible loyal coalition parties that suggest the creation of the cabinet, might not be determined. Thus, additional parties may join the coalition as insurance that some of the participants may go to the other side, and as a guarantee of winning cabinet status.

The necessity of minority party representation in parliament could encourage the formation of oversized coalitions. For example, Belgian government is oversized cabinet due to a constitution norm, which requires the balance of linguistic groups. For example, if the Flemish Socialists form the cabinet, in this case the rule, where there is the demands of linguistic balance, increases the possibility that the French-speaking Socialists

also be included, even if they do not need additional parties to create a parliamentary majority. Special majority, which is required for the adoption of constitutional amendments or ordinary laws, can be a significant reason for the formation of oversized coalitions [1, pp. 58-60].

The logic of the presidential system is different from the parliamentary system. This is arisen from the fact that the presidential system is based on the separation of powers and an elected head of executive, because of which the president becomes more autonomous from legislators and colleagues in the executive than the prime minister.

In parliamentary system while the leader is more independent from the party, the party in the legislature could also feel the independence from the leader, and thus more ready to rebel. In addition, although the leader can be very strong during “the electoral and political advantage, s/he can also be more vulnerable at times of disadvantage, precisely because s/he lacks a real power base within the party; in traditional parliamentary parties, such power bases can offer some shelter from political storms” [9, p. 252]. In presidential system, president has the real power inside his or her party, and does not face those problems which prime ministers do.

In presidential systems, coalitions are also the norm when the president’s party does not hold a majority in the legislature. In minority situations, coalitions occur 62% of the time in presidential systems and 77% in parliamentary ones [10, p. 247].

Multiparty coalition in presidential systems are not dictated by the constitution and governed by some laws, and they are not bound by the contract of mutual survival. Although collective decision-making is not required in presidential systems, coalitions are necessary for the president to govern [10, p. 248]. The important thing is that the president's party plays an important role in shaping policy within the cabinet [10, p. 259].

The study of presidential coalitions primarily draws attention to the increase or decrease of president’s power in a coalition. For example, researchers have come to the conclusion that «as the ideological distance among coalition parties increases, ministerial participation in the executive's agenda will decrease and policy making will concentrate in the president's party» [10, p.249]. It is also worth noting that the «larger coalitions decrease concentration on the president's party and that greater ideological difference between

government and opposition increases concentration» [10, p.264].

The useful indicator of the president's ability to build a coalition is successful in obtaining the passage of the potentially most important legislative initiatives [11, p. 60].

The system of checks and balances is designed to produce moderate legislation through the process of agreements and compromises, which takes into account the opinion of the minority. The transparency and deliberative nature of this process creates the legitimacy of the legislative process. But at the same time, checks and balances complicate the coalition building [11, p. 62].

The most important resource for the president in building coalitions is like-minded members of parliament. Most often, these members are members of the presidential party. Divided government has important implications on the president's policies. Under the unified government president is more successful in obtaining the passage of important legislative proposals than in a divided government [11, p. 63].

One of the limitations in building coalitions is differences policies within the president’s party. The division within the presidential party is another limitation to build coalitions. Party members are independent from the parties due to the fact that they have independent different terms, and president and parliament have different accountability.

But the president also has a variety of ways to get the votes within the party. Among them are: the patronage of the president and an active role in the elections to the parliament (they are in the USA) [11, p. 64].

The author suggests the following factors that influence the coalition building in parliament:

- «Checks and balances force the president to build multiple coalitions on any bill and supermajorities on treaties.
- The rules for separate elections for separate terms create the potential for divided government.
- The independence of the tenures of the president and parliament discourage intraparty unity. (In the USA the system for nominating and electing members of Congress also weakens party leadership.)
- Some electoral system invites the president and members of parliament to define their constituencies differently.

- Limitations on the president's tenure encourage different time perspectives in the executive and legislature.
- The hierarchical nature of the executive, in contrast to the more decentralized legislature, highlights the president's accountability while obscuring Congress's (in the USA)» [11, p. 72].

The definition of «coalition presidentialism» is new to the Ukrainian political science. If we have a look how coalitions build in Verkhovna Rada, the study of P. Chaisty and S. Chernykh shows that Ukrainian presidents often use cabinet appointments as a way to attract members to join the coalition [12, p. 189]. Usage of this tool depends on the strength of the pro-presidential party. For example, Yanukovich's coalition consists of the majority made up of representatives from the Party of Region, that's why he did not need to expand his cabinet by including many other parties to the cabinet [12, p. 191]. The reasons why the Yanukovich's cabinet was so strong, are the following: 1) to repay those who supported him; 2) CPU received the influential place outside the cabinet; 3) V. Lytvyn gained control of the Parliament; 4) to protect business interests [12, p. 194]. In their study, P. Chaisty and S. Chernykh have concluded that the coalition dynamics influenced the presidential calculations over the government formation. Ukrainian presidents were willing to share power for strengthen coalition inside the parliament [12, p. 194]. This power of the presidents has helped to strengthen their legislative power. As to the last coalition and cabinet under President Poroshenko, 12 ministers from 22 belong to the pro-presidential party, i.e. President's power remains strong. We could conclude, although the coalition presidentialism calls to mitigate conflicts between the branches of power, but in the Ukrainian context it undermines the credibility of democratic institutions [13].

Thus, it is necessary to pay attention to what changes in the institutions of the political system of Ukraine should be done on the basis of scientific and practical achievements which exist in the scientific literature, not only come from the model of majoritarian democracy where «the government acts against the opposition». Perhaps the best option would be to integrate the other large party (proportional to the received seats) to the cabinet. This reduces the weight of the president in the political field as well as his or her impact on the Cabinet of Minister.

REFERENCES

1. Теорія коаліційних урядів: світовий досвід та коаліційна практика // Політичні проблеми сучасної України: аналітичні доповіді Інституту політичних та етнонаціональних досліджень ім. І.Ф. Кураса НАН України. – К.: ППЕНД ім. І.Ф. Кураса НАН України, 2012. – 600 с.
2. Martin L. Government formation in parliamentary democracies / L. Martin, R. Stevenson // *American Journal of Political Science*. – 2001. – Vol. 45, No.1. – P. 33-50.
3. Müller-Rommel K. Party Government in Central Eastern European Democracies: A Data Collection (1990–2003) / K. Müller-Rommel, P. Fettelschoss, P. Harfst // *European Journal of Political Research*. – 2005. – №43. – P. 869-894.
4. Sened I. A Model of Coalition Formation: Theory and Evidence / I. Sened // *The Journal of Politics*. – 1996. – Vol. 58(2). – P. 350-372.
5. Laver M. Models of Government Formation / M. Laver // *Annual Review of Political Science*. – 1998. – Vol.1. – P. 1-25.
6. Laver M., Schofield N. Multiparty government: the politics of coalition in Europe / M. Laver, N. Schofield. – New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
7. De Winter L. The State of Art in Coalition Research: Critical Appraisals and Alternative Avenues / L. De Winter, R. Andeweg// Paper for the workshop «Government Formation: a theoretically informed inductive approach» directed by L. De Winter and R.B. Andeweg during the Joint Sessions of the European Consortium for Political Research, Torino, March 22-28, 2002.
8. Martin L. Policing the Bargain: Coalition Government and Parliamentary Scrutiny /L. Martin, G. Vanberg // *American Journal of Political Science*. – 2004. – Vol. 48. – No.1. – P. 13-27.
9. Poguntke T. Presidentialization and the politics of coalition: lessons from Germany and Britain/ T. Poguntke, P. Webb // *Italian Political Science Review*. – 2015. – Vol. 45. – No.1. – P. 249-275.
10. Gaylord S. Opening the Black Box: Cabinet Authorship of Legislative Proposals in a Multiparty Presidential System / S. Geylord, L. Renno// *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. – 2015 – Vol. 45. – No.2. – P. 247-269.
11. Edwards G. Coalition Building / G. Edwards// *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. – 2000 – Vol. 30. – No.1. – P. 47-76.
12. Chaisty P. Coalitional presidentialism and legislative control in post-Soviet Ukraine/ P. Chaisty, S. Chernukh // *Post-Soviet Affairs*. – 2015. Vol. 31. – №3. – P. 177-200.
13. Fisun O. The Future of Ukraine's Neopatrimonial Democracy / Oleksandr Fisun // *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo*. – 2015. – No. 394. – P. 1-7.