RESEARCH ARTICLE

Decision-making in Poland's foreign policy. An organisational and bureaucratic perspective

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Abstract

The decision-making process is a key element of any state's foreign policy analysis. Research on how decisions are made feeds into the research of the Polish foreign policy as a whole and results in a better understanding of its determinants. Based on the analysis of primary sources collected in the archives of the government, the Sejm, the Senate and the President, as well as the statements of decision- makers, this article analyses the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy between 1992 and 1997. Two George Allison's models have been applied: the organisational process model (emphasises the formal-institutional dimension of the decision-making process) and the bureaucratic policy model (emphasises the bureaucratic- functional dimension). The article is intended to make it possible to answer the following research questions: How were the decisions taken in Poland's foreign policy, by whom, what mechanisms, formal or informal, were most important and can Allison's models be an effective tool for studying the entire decision-making process, and not only selected decision-making situations? The article proves that although the key decisions in Poland's foreign policy were taken by the Prime Minister together with the Foreign Minister, the influence of the President was also considerable. As a result of the study, it can be concluded that the President played an important role in foreign policy during the period of the Small Constitution. Allison's models can be a tool for analysing processual phenomena, and not only individual decision-making situations. In the case of Poland, one more centre should be taken into account, in addition to the dual executive, i.e. the Sejm and the Senate, which at the time had at least a controlling function. The decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy was clearly dominated by informal components based on parochial communities of values, experiences and an oppositional past.

Keywords

foreign policy decision-making, Allison model, Poland's foreign policy, Poland's foreign policy decision-making

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The goal of any analysis is to try to explain and understand reality. Theories and models are the tools that make it pos- sible. Making decisions is a key dimension for foreign policy analysis.[1] It is a multi-level, emergent and dynamic phenom- enon, whose complexity necessitates the constant search for models and theories and their testing in the process of examining reality.[2] This article is an example of such research.

The aim of this article will be to analyse the mechanisms of decision-making in Poland's foreign policy during the period of the so-called 'Small Constitution', i.e. 1992–1997. The theo- retical tool for this analysis will be the two models proposed by Graham Allison – the decision-making process model and the bureaucratic politics model. A detailed characterisation of the theoretical framework of both models will be presented in the first part of the article. The theoretical perspective applied to the study of the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy will allow to identify and define its actual key actors and its mechanisms and to assess the exploratory poten- tial of the selected models. Furthermore, it will make it pos- sible to identify the characteristics of the foreign policy decision-making process in Poland and the weaknesses of the application of models to the study of long-lasting phenomena.

The analysis presented in this article was based mainly on primary sources in the form of archival documentation produced by the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, the Sejm Foreign Affairs Committee, the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee and the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland. In addition, government documents, speeches by politicians, diaries and press articles were the source base for the analysis.

The article consists of three complementary parts. In the first one, the two models signalled above will be discussed, in the second – an analysis will be carried out with their appli- cation, and in the third, a summary and conclusions on the research potential of the models used will be made and the research questions from the introduction will be answered.

Tools, bureaucratic politics model and organisational process model

The models were presented by G. Allison in 1971[3], and have been refined and detailed in subsequent years and publications, including those co-authored.[4] The term 'model' is used deliberately because, it should be emphasised, Allison's proposals are not theories, let alone paradigms, comprehensive or complete models. They are rather a framework proposal to help the researcher identify the key actors/players and procedures in the decision-making process in specific situations. This accounts for both the strength and weakness of both models, as on one side they can be flexibly adapted to the analysis of decision-making situations, but on the other side, they are exposed to the objections that these situations should meet certain systemic and temporal conditions.

It should be noted here that, although G. Allison himself used the terms "paradigm"[5] and "analytic paradigm"[6] in his publications, it seems that when employing the concept of a para- digm, he did not have in mind the definition proposed by T. Kuhn.[7] G. Allison rather treated it as a proposal of cer- tain frameworks and directions for researchers and research, which does not constitute a compact, pragmatic, and logically closed analytical proposition into which concepts and ele- ments from analyses of successive cases could be fitted without the need to expand or introduce new elements. In the case analyzed in the article, these include not only elements absent from Allison's models, such as commissions or parliament, but also the nature of the relationships between them, based, for example, on shared experiences of opposition, a common his- tory, which are also not present in Allison's models. These

[1] For a structured article on foreign policy with a bibliography cf: W. Carlsnaes, Foreign policy [in:] W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse, B.A. Simmons (ed.), Handbook of International Relations, SAGE Publications, London 2016. For an overview of mainstream developments up to the early 21st c. cf: J.A. Garrison, J. Kaarbo, D. Foyle, M. Schafer, E.K. Stern, Foreign policy analysis in 20/20: A Symposium, International Studies Review 2003, vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 155–202.

[2] An example of the search for new analytical categories can be the concept of coding. Cf. in more detail: A. Dudek, Przydatność kodu i kodowania jako narzędzia analizy procesu decyzyjnego w polityce zagranicznej [Usefulness of a code and coding as a tool to analyse the decision-making process in foreign policy], [in:] Wrocławskie Studia Politologiczne, 33/2023.

[3] G. T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, Little, Brown, Boston 1971.

[4] G. Allison, P. Zelikow, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, Longman, New York 1999; G. T. Allison, Cuban Missile Crisis [in:] S. Smith, A. Hadfield, T. Dunne, Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2016; G. T. Allison, M. H. Halperin, Bureaucratic politics: A paradigm and some policy implications, World Politics 1972, vol. 24 (Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations); G. T. Allison, M. H. Halperin, Bureaucratic politics: A paradigm and some policy implications, World Politics 1972, vol. 24 (Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations).

[5] G. Allisona i M.H. Halperina (Bureaucratic politics: A paradigm and some policy implications, World Politics 1972, vol. 24 (Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations), pp. 40–79.

[6] G. Allison, Conceptual models and the Cuban Missile Crisis, The American Political Science Review 1969, t. 63 (3), s. 691; G. T. Allison, M. H. Halperin, Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications, [in:] World Politics, Spring, 1972, Vol. 24, Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations (Spring, 1972), pp. 40–79, p.44.

[7] T. S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 2d ed., enl. (Chicago: University of Press, 1970.

emerge from the specificity of time and place. Paradigms, on the other hand, create a kind of toolbox, representing a complete set of concepts, links, and relationships. The requirement to account for them makes it possible to avoid the trap of subordinat- ing theory to practice and overlooking certain elements of the studied case; the use of a paradigm precludes a simple descrip- tion and necessitates analysis. Moreover, useful paradigms provide a foundation for constructing effective, logical, and coherent theories, offering explanations and predictions. Allison's proposal does not have this nature; as mentioned above, it constitutes rather a meta-theoretical framework, and the author himself expresses the hope that "the framework is sufficiently general to apply to the behavior of most modern governments in industrialized nations."[8]

Although Allison refers to the concept of a paradigm devel- oped for sociological analyses by R. Merton, according to him, Allison's models do not perform the function of a paradigm. They rather have, in Welch's view – which is generally agreed upon – a meta-theoretical character.[9] The impression of con- ceptual ambiguity regarding the true nature of the models proposed by G. Allison persists and continues to generate discussion among scholars. Evidence of this is the fact that they are also referred to using terms such as framework or analytical schemes.[10]

The organisational process model (sometimes also referred to as the organisational behaviour model) and the bureaucratic politics model (later also referred to as the government politics model) are, according to their creator, complementary to each other and only when used together do they produce a synergy effect of full exploratory potential.[11] It is the organisational proc- ess model that facilitates the identification of dysfunctionalities and procedural deviations in relation to the bureaucratic politics model.[12] In both models, the government is not a unitary, aggre- gated actor – in the organisational process model, it is a system of interconnected organisations (institutions) headed by lead- ers (leaders), while in the bureaucratic process model it is kind of a game with participants with a certain position and potential for influence.

The organisational process model is a proposal that refers to the systemic and procedural dimension of decision-making and to the 'logic of appropriateness' understood as reaching for the most adequate, 'appropriate' solutions for a given situation. It is possible, because procedures, which are one of the corner- stones of the organisational model, result from experience and expertise, of which the organisation/institution and officials are the vehicle.[13] The form, on the other hand, is made of the formal procedures and frameworks, which are not an objectified, independent entity, but are again linked to the people who have created and implement them. Framed this way, decision-making has to refer to the organisational culture and even institutional identity, and the role of officials and directors vis-à-vis politicians, is considerably strengthened. It is the former ones who prepare decisions and the latter ones who basically just sign them.[14] In other words, participants in the organisational framing of decision-making not only act within the procedures and framework provided for the organisation, but also shape the position and power of their structures.[15]

The organisational model is considered too general and difficult to adapt.[16] It consists of elements that are in line with the logic and essence of the decision-making process such as: the actors (institutions, offices), the procedures within which they have to move (called SOPs, standard operation procedures), the infor- mation (and ways of obtaining it), possible actions to be taken (choosing from a certain range) and the implementation. It can be seen that this view of the decision-making is linear, rather than network or systemic. This is because Allison has not consid- ered the impact of implementation on the subsequent behaviour of the decision centre, with the analysis starting with a par- ticular decision situation and ending with implementation. This is a clear weakness of the model, and more about can be found in the final conclusions.

[8] G. T. Allison, M. H. Halperin, Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications, [in:] World Politics , Spring, 1972, Vol. 24, Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations (Spring, 1972), pp. 40–79, p. 43.

[9] D.A. Welch, Organizational Process and Bureaucratic Politics Paradigms: Retrospect and Prospect, [in:] International Security, Fall, 1992, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 112–146.

[10] N. Michaud, Bureaucratic politics and the shaping of policies: Can we measure pulling and hauling games? Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique 2002, v. 35, no. 2, pp. 269–300, footnote 9.

[11] G. T. Allison, Essence of Decision..., op. cit., p. 275.

[12] G.T. Allison, M.H. Halperin, Bureaucratic politics: A paradigm and some policy implications, World Politics 1972, vol. 24 (Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations), pp. 40–79.

[13] J. G. March, H.A. Simon, Organisations, Cambridge 1993

[14] G. Allison, P. Zelikow, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, New York 1999, p. 154.

[15] In a similar vein, Robert Keohane commented in: R. Keohane, International Institutions: Two Research Programs, [in:] International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 32, No. 4, 1988.

[16] D.A. Welch, The organisational process and bureaucratic politics paradigms: Retrospect and prospect, International Security 1992, vol. 17, no. 2, p. 138.

The basic unit of the decision-making centre is an institutional structure –it may be a ministry, department or any other entity that has the formal competence to make decisions on a specific matter and takes them only in that respect. It also enjoys certain autonomy as it operates within the framework of formally defined procedures, including, according to them, obtaining information, compiling it and, consequently, taking specific actions. This autonomy is purely formal in the sense that all decisions must be within the guidelines set by the decision- making centre. The coordination of activities of individual ministries is the responsibility of the leader, either the head of the government or the president, depending on the political system in the country. He or she has at his or her disposal certain tools for influencing the various ministries/institutions, among which Allison mentions a system of penalties and rewards.[17] These are mainly two areas – finance, i.e. the budget and within it the scope and criteria for penalties and rewards.[18]

The decision-making centre, with a leader (prime minister or president) is therefore a conglomerate of institutions (ministries or departments). Each of them has some information which it presents it to the leader, who ultimately makes a choice. The key, then, is what will appear in the range of possibilities presented to him/her, and how the ministries (or departments) process information. And since every leader operates according to specific procedures (SOPs), the value of information will depend on the decision-making situation. In routine cases, pro- posals will have more merit, while in crisis, they will not be able to cope with finding adequate, often non-routine, sub- tle solutions. In addition, the proposals are to some extent biased in the ministries (departments) as they pursue their own parochial interests.[19]

Therefore, in Allison's terms, it is ministries (or departments) that form the foundation of the institutional decision-making system. Their operating mechanism and objectives are crucial to explain and understand the decisions taken by the leader. Ostensibly, they should be guided by state policy objectives and implement them in accordance with framework procedures. However, as the author points out, more often than not they are driven by their own interests (i.e. those of the ministries), which leads them to form parochial communities[20], cemented by a desire to secure the best and strongest possible position for the institution in the power structure, including in relations with other institutions. These relationships can take the form of cooperation and agreement, including with regard to budgetary resources, but also rivalry and appropriation of competences where procedures are not sufficiently precise.

Institutions operate within standard operating procedures (SOPs) and in accordance with collaborative mechanisms within the government. These form the foundation, while Allison places them before relationships of sovereignty and instantiability.[21] SOPs are therefore nothing more than prescribed and for- mally defined mechanisms for the operation of ministries and, within them, individual units. As such, they are therefore static, simple, linear and relatively permanent, and result from accepted, rehearsed and established routines. On the one hand, ready-made prescriptions free officials 'from thinking' and individual search for solutions often fraught with error, but on the other hand, if circumstances never anticipated by the SOP before arise, the decision is highly likely to be suboptimal.

Standard operating procedures can be bypassed and this happens in crisis situations for which procedures have not been fully prepared or if they slow down the decision-making process. Then the leader can skip them (bypass them) or appoint ad hoc new actors that have not been foreseen at all in the system so far. Indeed, such situations require non-standard solutions and inventiveness on the part of the participants in the decision-making process, and thanks to the fact that there are no SOPs for them, such paths can be sought.[22]

Standard operating procedures are supposed to produce simple solutions, bringing ready-made prescriptions for specific cases. It might seem difficult to arrive at complex decisions in this way, which is crucial especially in such a complex matter as foreign policy.[23] However, as the practice highlighted by the two researchers Bendor and Hammond shows, a decision is always the result of various proposals, and procedures do not always restrict the choice of the decision-maker. This is because the decision-maker often optimises the range of possibilities also envisaged by the procedures for a given situation, and can thus adjust the organisational behaviour, and in this way the rules of organisation can be subject to negotiation or *faits accomplis*.[24]

Procedures are subject to evolution and change forced by reality. The system tends to be resistant to it, because arguments about the costs of such changes and the reluctance of individual parochial members often prevail. It seems, however, that in the long run change is a natural mechanism of adaptation of

[17] G.T. Allison, Conceptual models, op. cit., p. 698.

[18] Allison himself was extremely sceptical about the ability of US presidents to influence individual departments, pointing to the powerlessness of, for example, Kennedy or Roosevelt in the face of a State Department that had shown complete resistance to their attempts at change. Cf. G.T. Allison, Conceptual models, op. cit. pp. 701–702.

[19] Ibid, p. 703.

[20] Parochialism within institutions results, according to Allison, from several premises. Among these, the author mentions access to information (the same access brings closer), the way in which officials are recruited (the level of professionalism depends on this, the lower it is, the stronger the parochial ties), the length of time in office (the classic division between the 'old' and 'young') and the way in which rewards are distributed (the rewarded ones make their parochies, the unrewarded make theirs).

[21] Ibid, p. 698.

[22] T.J. McKeown, T.J. McKeown, Plans and routines, bureaucratic bargaining, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, The Journal of Politics 2001, vol. 63, no. 4, p. 1164.

[23] For the decision-maker should take into account the interests of foreign and domestic partners - Putnam's two levels game?

[24] G. Allison, P. Zelikow, Essence of Decision..., op. cit., p. 156.?

the system and the costs turn out to be small in view of the optimisation of the decisions taken.[25]

The bureaucratic politics model (hereafter MPB) introduces a 'human', non-institutional and irrational factor into the analysis of decision-making, namely the player and the constant negotiations and bargaining that populate this process.[26] This framing of foreign policy decision-making means that the behaviour of states is not always and only in pursuit of their interest, but very often a reflection of the position, interests and power of the actors in the decision-making process, as well as their interest group and parochia. Allison's position was that knowledge of the players, of the rules of the game between them and their interests would increase the predictive potential of the model.

The MPB was embedded, like the institutional model, in a specific conceptual framework, which consisted of the concepts of action channels (hereafter AC), players, players' and parochial interests, players' position and influence, and the rules and structure of the game.

Action channels can be understood as channels of activity or channels of action and denote a set of actions taken in specific situations involving both the procedures attributed to specific responses (e.g. the expenditure on a diplomatic mission is linked to the budget of the ministry of foreign affairs) and the structure of the game (who is part of the group of players, including the preselection mechanism) and the entry channels of individual players (e.g. in relation to the position held). ACs can also be seen as a kind of concentric circles, for which the centre is the decision-maker, and each circle has a specific range of competences and possibilities for action.[27] What needs to be emphasised is the informal dimension that permeates, as it were, AC, for although the actions taken are always subordinate to certain procedures, what fills them is of a non-formal nature and based on the preferences and interests of the players. The actual power and position of the players, their connections, alliances and participation in parochial communities are manifested precisely in their influence on the decisions taken and thus on their final shape. It seems that the informal dimension in the AC concept is particularly applicable for the analysis of processes in systems with considerable personalisation of positions and where informal relations between participants in the decision-making process contribute significantly to the whole.

The decision-making system in the bureaucratic model is thus a kind of a game with all the usual elements ascribed to it. The first of these is the player, whereby in Allison's terms it is the individual actor who acts in a system of connections, dependencies, interests according to the *pulling and hauling* mechanism that constitutes the essence of politics.[28] The player enters the game through ACs, which constitute a preselection mechanism in the form of competences and functions assigned to the player. Only players who are in the AC participate in the game and take part in decision-making. When a player, thanks to the formal component of the AC, enters the game, they build their position and influence through the aforementioned informal mechanisms according to the principle *where you stand depends upon where you sit.*[29] This complicates and relativises the power of the player, which on the one hand is limited by formal competences, and on the other hand is a relative measured in relation to other players, and finally, on the third hand, each player plays multiple roles (e.g. minister – head of the ministerial administration, and at the same time a source of information on foreign affairs, an entity controlled by the parliament, friend or foe of other key members of the decision-making process), each of which brings different opportunities and constraints.

Not all players are equal, and Allison makes a clear distinction between the so-called senior players and the other players, creating a stratigraphy of importance in which the criterion is to influence the shape of the final decision. At the top of the hierarchy, there are senior players and it depends on the prevailing system in a given country who they are. In the case of Poland, they would be the Prime Minister and the minister of foreign affairs, as it is the Council of Ministers that is responsible for foreign policy directions. The already mentioned variable that is important in the assessment of a player is his/her position/power. It depends on one hand on their competence, but to a large extent also on their ability to use the space created for their AC. Allison emphasises that a player can more or less skilfully use other capabilities such as access to and distribution of information, the ability to influence other players or the ability to be persuasive towards them.

The player's position in the decision-making process has a significant impact on their perception of the problem and stance towards it.[30] At the same time, it is worth stressing that it is not only about their formal competence and scope of authority, but also preferences and interests. These can be interests of a state, an individual or a group, be of parochial nature.[31] Indeed, a player may belong, or in fact always belongs, to a particular interest group (within, for example, a department or committee), in which case their choices are also influenced by parochial interests. Allison distinguished four types of interests: national (security), organisational (i.e. structure), national (domestic policy) and personal.[32] The relationship between them varies for each player, as it depends on their position, standing, education and, finally, dependence on the parochia.

[25] T.J. McKeown, op. cit., p. 1166.

[26] G.T. Allison, M.H. Halperin, Bureaucratic politics..., op. cit., p. 43.

[27] N. Michaud, Bureaucratic politics and the shaping of policies: can we measure pulling and hauling games?, Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne descience politique 2002, vol. 35, no. 2, p. 274.

[28] G.T. Allison, Essence of Decision..., op. cit. p. 144.

[29] The author of this phrase, which entered academic (and other) milieu as 'Miles' Law', was Arnold Miles, an official in the Federal Budget Office in 1940. cf. R.E. Neustadt, E.R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers, Free Press, New York 1986, p. 157.

[30] G. Allison, P. Zelikow, Essence of Decision..., op. cit., p. 307.

[31] E. Rhodes, Do bureaucratic politics matter?: some disconfirming findings from the case of the U.S. Navy, World Politics 1994, vol. 47, no. 1, p. 8.

[32] G.T. Allison, M.H. Halperin, Bureaucratic politics..., op. cit., p. 48.

So, what is the structure of the game? First and foremost, its central arena remains the government, which is made up of senior players with specific position and influence. In this area, the players can constantly compete with each other and always push for their own position, and this is one of the mod- els. In the second model, on the other hand, there is no rivalry between senior players and each relies on their own compe- tences and capabilities. Outside of the aforementioned arena, there remain aspiring persons who wish to enter the game, and in order to achieve this, they are prone to conjuncturalism and opportunism. Once they enter the game in the first stage, they focus primarily on consolidating their own position. An important element in the structure of the game is the rivalry between the parochies, which becomes more intense in the face of crisis situations, when everyone tries to protect their own interests and pushes for their own solutions. Therefore activities that require coordination and careful, multi-faceted preparation are avoided and individual activities are preferred. The final element in the structure of the game are its rules and, as Allison points out, 'they are neither random nor chaotic'[33]. Some of them are determined by the formal dimension of AC,
i.e. the procedures and mechanisms set out by the system, while the rest are in the nature of bargaining and negotiation between individual players. The game, however, is not played continuously, but from one situation to another, from the initiation of actions to the decision and its implementation. Each time a player is in AC, they enter the game and have to take a position and adopt a stance, decide on preferences, alliances and choices. In addition to decisions with clear ACs, such as the budgetary bill or the negotiation of an international agreement, participants and players can be found that were not included in the AC, but are significant, such as ad hoc coordination or inter-ministerial committees. These were completely new elements in the structure, and at the same time an ideal straight forward field for the implementation of typical games and bargaining between key players in the decision- making process. Their effectiveness depends on the negotiating advantage, individual skills and the perception of the other play- ers of these two elements. As Allison writes, each player has their own 'operational style' and the resonance or lack thereof with the styles of the other players is part of the bureaucratic game.[34]

Both models proposed by G. Allison have been thoroughly criticised.[35] The organisational model for being too general and lacking precision, while the bureaucratic process model has been considered too detailed, specific and complicated. From the point of view of foreign policy decision-making, the explora- tory potential of these allegations is doubtful. After all, it is a processual phenomenon of a continuous nature and can hardly be seen as a simple sum of decision-making situations. Mean- while, both models focus precisely on them, on individual decision-making situations, where all the elements can be identified – both SOPs and ACs, individual players, and even their interests, parochies and influence on the final decision. However, all this is possible post factum, meanwhile the predictive potential of the model is negligible, because in each decision- making situation, we have a different set of variables, players and interests. Some of them will be similar, if the same players are involved, their preferences or interests can be determined, but on top of these repetitive elements, completely new ones will be superimposed each time, and they will drastically limit the possibility to predict the decision-making situation and the players' behaviour in any follow-up situation.

The aforementioned criticism of Allison's models refers to their exploratory weaknesses. The first refers to the fact that a presi- dential system is a condition for the successful adaptation of the model, while it does not work in a parliamentary-cabinet system. The second is that the models work well in the case of specific decision-making situations rather than long-term processes and phenomena. The analysis in the next section of this article will address these concerns, as it will be applied to the analysis of decision-making in a parliamentary-cabinet system and to the study of a process rather than a single decision-making situation.

The objection raised by some researchers concerns the distinction between the two models. It stems from the convergence of the two models and the lack of a convincing and fundamental difference between them, the lack of a cognitively and analytically justified separation between them.[36] The analysis carried out later in the article confirms that when studying the decision- making process with the application of both models, it is difficult not to get the impression that the proposed components of each model are very close to each other, defining similar phenomena by other terms. It should be stressed, however, that both models are complementary to each other, modelling the same process in a different perspective – in the case of the

bureaucratic analysis, they put the emphasis on the play of interests of the participants in the process, and in the case of the organisational analysis, on the procedures and mecha- nisms. It seems, therefore, that when used together to analyse the decision-making process, they produce a synergy effect, an added value, and they do not need to be clearly distinguished from each other.

[33] Ibid, p. 50.

[34] G.T. Allison, Essence of Decision..., op. cit., p. 166.

[35] J.A. Rosati, op. cit., pp. 234–252; S. Smith, Allison and the Cuban Missile Crisis: A review of the bureaucratic politics model of foreign policy decision making, Millennium Journal of International Studies 1980, vol. 19, pp. 21–40; R. J. Art, Bureaucratic politics and American foreign policy: A critique, Policy Sciences 1973, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 467–490; M. Steiner, The elusive essence of decision: A critical comparison of Allison's and Snyder's decision-making approaches, International Studies Quarterly 1977, vol. 21,pp. 389–422; D.J. Ball, The blind men and the elephant: A critique of bureaucratic politics theory, Australian Outlook 1974, vol. 28, pp. 71–92; J. Bendor, T.H. Hammond, op. cit. pp. 301–321; D. Caldwell, Bureaucratic foreign policy making, American Behavioral Scientist 1977, vol. 21, pp. 87–110; L. Freedman, Logic, politics and foreign policy processes: A critique of the bureaucratic politics model, Inter- national Affairs 1976, vol. 52, pp. 434–449; D.C. Kozak, J.M. Keagle (eds.), Bureaucratic Politics and National Security. Theory and Practice, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO 1996; S.D. Krasner, Are bureaucracies important?..., op. cit. pp. 159–179; D.A. Welch, The organisational process..., op. cit., pp. 112–146.

[36] T.J. McKeown, Plans and routines, bureaucratic bargaining, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, The Journal of Politics 2001, vol. 63, no. 4, pp. 1163–1190. On p. 1187 we read: 'While one may want to preserve the distinction between the two models for some purposes (as a pedagogical strategy, for example), the distinction between the two now seems much more artifi- cial than it did when Alison first offered his theoretical account more than 30 years ago'.

Decision-making in Poland's foreign policy in an organisational and bureaucratic perspective

The models described above were used as a tool for the analysis of the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy during the period in which the so-called 'Small Constitution' was in force, i.e. 1992–1997.[37] This is an extremely interesting period from the research point of view, as it finally and unequivocally introduced the tripartite division of power (Article 1 of the Small Constitution), made an attempt to put the structure of power in order and provided mechanisms to avoid destabilisation (the multi-variant mode of elect- ing the government). The law itself was marred by a number of weaknesses. Work on the draft lasted a relatively short period of time, while the procedure and thoroughness of the work of the Extraordinary Committee for the Draft Constitu- tional Act on Mutual Relations between the Legislative and Executive Powers of the Republic of Poland were criticised.[38]

The time frame adopted for the analysis has been treated broadly for three reasons. First, it stems from the very nature of the decision-making process as a phenomenon that is not only complex, multifaceted, and dynamic, but above all processual, i.e. unfolding within a specific time and place, within a given context rather than within a single isolated decision-making situation.

Second, such a broad temporal scope is supposed to cover the key systemic transformations (and, consequently, the sys- tem of foreign-policy decision-making in Poland). The years 1989–1992 saw amendments to the binding constitution, while the years 1992–1997 marked the period during which the so-called "Small Constitution", the Constitutional Act of 17 October 1992 on the Mutual Relations between the Legislative and Executive Powers of the Republic of Poland and on Local Self-Government, was in force. This makes it possible to present the process of transformation at a pivotal moment of transition from communism to democracy, and the application of G. Allison's models serves to demonstrate this evolution in two dimensions: the institutional/organizational and the bureaucratic/functional. It is precisely the analysis of the evolution of processes, actors, and mechanisms identified as components of the models (e.g., senior players, standard operating procedures, action channels) that allows for capturing individual "paths of change" in all their complexity.

Third, delineating a broad temporal framework served the purpose of examining the explanatory potential of G. Allison's proposals in relation to a process, rather than merely a single decision-making situation. This process is not a simple sum of individual decisions but a dynamic and multilayered sequence of mutually interdependent events. It appears that the author of the model himself was aware of the processual nature of decision-making, as he acknowledges: "Each player is forced to fix upon his issues for that day, deal with them on their own terms, and rush on to the next. Thus, the character of the emerg- ing issue, and the pace at which the game is played, converge to yield a collage of government decisions and actions. […] decisions and 'foul-ups' (e.g., points that are not decided because they are not recognized, raised too late, or misunder- stood) are pieces which, when stuck to the same canvas, constitute actions relevant to an outcome."[39]

From the perspective of the organisational process, there were two central and competing decision-making centres in Polish foreign policy, each with its own leader – the president and the prime minister. This dualism did not result directly from the provisions of the Small Constitution, but from the political practice of appropriating and freely interpreting its provisions. Formally, the president had limited possibilities of influencing foreign policy: for it was a representative function, with gen- eral leadership in the field of foreign relations, powers relating to Poland's representatives abroad, powers to uphold and ratify international agreements, and powers in the sphere of the exter- nal (and internal) security of the state. 'General leadership' in the field of foreign relations was thus exercised by the presi- dent, but the competence to 'conduct foreign policy' and 'ensure internal and external security' was assigned to the Council of Ministers. This opened the way for the operation of a vague dualism of power, and this means that it is difficult to see the actors in the process that Allison refers to in the organisational model – i.e. a vertical organisation/ministry/centre understood as a compact and clearly separate decision-making centre, with a leader. In this situation, therefore, the organisational model can be adapted, but with this caveat.

What is symbolic of the domination of the informal dimension over the formal one in the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy remains the president's influence on the selection of ministers of foreign affairs, internal affairs and national defence. For Article 61 of the Small Constitution stipulated that 'a motion concerning the appointment of ministers for foreign affairs, national defence and internal affairs shall be presented by the head of the Council of Ministers after consultation with the president'. Political practice, however, turned out to be quite different, as it was the president who appointed candidates for ministers in the above-mentioned ministries. From an organisational perspective, such an arrangement meant that the president was a member of the executive power situated above the Council of Ministers (as in practice the president proposes the key ones) and at the same time, below the prime

[37] The concept of a small constitution is applied to the constitutional law of a transitional nature: the Constitutional Act of 17 October 1992 on Mutual Relations between the Legislative and Executive Institutions of the Republic of Poland and on Local Self-Government (Journal of Laws 1992, No. 84, item 426).

[38] Cf. in more detail: J. Ciapała, Prezydent w systemie ustrojowym Polski (1989–1997) [President in the Polish system], Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warsaw 1999; P. Winczorek, Między ideałem a rzeczywistością [Between the ideal and the reality], Rzeczpospolita of 27 August 1992; R. Chruściak, W. Osiatyński, Tworzenie konstytucji w Polsce w latach 1989–1997 [Creating the constitution in Poland], Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warsaw 2001.

[39] G. T. Allison, M. H. Halperin, Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications, [w:] World Politics, Spring, 1972, Vol. 24, Supplement: Theory and Policy in International Relations (Spring, 1972), pp. 40–79, p. 53.

minister – the second pillar of the executive power with actual decision-making potential. Meanwhile, the SOPs (standard operating procedures) shift this potential towards the Prime Minister – as he has a monopoly of information, channels for negotiations with foreign partners and the power to initiate actions and strategies in this area.

The second member of the executive remains the government with the prime minister – a classic leader with a conglomerate of organisations (ministries) surrounding them, easily identifiable in the perspective of the organisational model. The prime minister, as a leader, coordinates the activities of the ministries, influences their operation to a certain extent and has to respect the SOPs operating within the government. Individual minis- tries have a clearly defined remit, each dealing with a specific department of the administration and within it, a given 'slice' in the decision-making process. A characteristic feature of the ministries is the aversion to change, of which civil servants remained the bearers, which makes them a classic example of organisation in Allison's organisational model.

The government, according to the Small Constitution, conducts foreign policy while remaining a collegiate body.[40] In view of this, as J. Łętowski rightly observes, the practical use of these powers will only become possible when the prime minister assumes them.[41] The prime minister gained a strong position of a typical leader in the government, as they directed government policy, coordinated and controlled the actions of all ministers, and was the head of the entire government administration.[42] The government also had a number of SOPs that were the basis for its formal functioning – its organisation and working procedure was set out in the Act on the Council of Minis- ters of 1996.[43] The Council of Ministers, as a conglomerate of organisations, usually adopted decisions by consensus, which was like a standard operating procedure (SOP). The Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers were of a similar nature.[44] Separate procedures were provided for the settlement of dis- putes and reconciliation of discrepancies that arose within the government due to different positions of individual ministries, which was initiated by holding inter-ministerial reconciliation conferences.

The organisational process model also has a certain explora- tory potential when analysing the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the decision-making process. It is then one element of the conglomerate that remains, that is the gov- ernment, and it has a vertical structure with a clear leader – a minister, and clear SOPs at different levels of the ministry's functioning. The chronic underfunding of the ministry has resulted in the prime minister's influence on it, which was sig- nificant but often merely potential. Consequently, the ministry was susceptible to the formation of parochial interest groups, for which the important motive for action was to survive and expand their influence and opportunities, instead of carrying out tasks in the interest of the state.

In the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy, the bureaucratic politics model seems to have greater explora- tory potential. This is due to the peculiarities of the moment of system transformation in Poland and its bureaucratic and organisational culture. These features meant that the process in question was largely informal, with bargaining and games compensating for and filling in the blanks in the system. A significant personalisation of positions is evident, which meant that it was not the competences that determined the strong player/politician/decision-maker, but their personality.

The abovementioned ambiguity in the demarcation of the posi- tions of the two members of the executive, i.e. the president and the government with the prime minister, gave the president a large margin to appropriate competences, over-interpret and exploit mechanisms characteristic of the model of bureau- cratic games. This is evident when comparing the two presi- dents in office during the period in question – Lech Wałęsa until 1995 and then Aleksander Kwaśniewski. The former one, as a proponent of a strong presidential model, was of the opinion that the concept of power constructed in the Small Constitution was ineffective, because it was more conducive to competition than to balance.[45] Under this concept, the government and the prime minister fulfilled only managerial-administrative func- tions and would be exchangeable 'buffers'[46]. Lech Wałęsa was therefore a typical senior player in the bureaucratic model, but although part of the system, he was often driven by motives characteristic of young players such as power and expansion of influence, while the interests of the state played a secondary role.[47]

As President, Aleksander Kwasniewski saw his place in the bureaucratic game system differently. As a senior player, he

[40] More on the relationship between the concepts of conducting and direct- ing foreign policy cf.: Prawo reprezentacji w stosunkach międzynarodowych [The Law of Representation in International Relations] (1. Paweł Sarnecki, p. 120; 2. Andrzej Szmyt, p. 124; 3. Renata Szafarz, p. 127; 5. Ryszard Mojak, p. 134), Przegląd Sejmowy 1995, no. 4, p. 123.

[41] J. Łętowski, Administracja w Małej Konstytucji [Administration in the Small Constitution] [in:] M. Kruk (ed.), Mała Konstytucja, w procesie przemian ustrojowych w Polsce ['Small Constitution', in the process of systemic changes in Poland], Warsaw 1993, p. 164.

[42] R. Mojak, Parlament a rząd ustroju Trzeciej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, [Parliament and the Government of the Third Republic of Poland], Lublin 2007, p. 136.

[43] The original title read: Act of 8 August 1996 on the organisation and work procedure of the Council of Ministers and the scope of action of ministers (Journal of Laws 1996 No. 106, item 492).

[44] Resolution No. 13 of the Council of Ministers of 25 February 1997 Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers, M.P. 1997, No. 15, item 144.

[45] A. Nowakowska, W. Załuska, Kto chce ustroju à la Wałęsa?, [Who wants a system à la Wałęsa?], Gazeta Wyborcza of 24 October 1994, p. 3.

[46] 'The bumpers were the people who fought the battles, as it were, in place of the main persons of the historical drama, above all Lech him- self. They were destroyed and replaced by the next ones'. For more on the importance of Lech Wałęsa in the democracy of the transition period, cf. P. Pacewicz, Nasza kiepska demokracja [Our poor democracy], Gazeta Wyborcza of 13 June 1992, p. 11

[47] Lech Wałęsa said that 'Law is one thing and victory is the second thing, and these must be combined together'. Cf: Prawo i zwycięstwo w jednym [Law and victory as one], Rzeczpospolita of 13 October 1994.

respected the position of the government in foreign policy and followed the directions set by it, moreover, he had administra- tive and political experience and understood the mechanisms of the state and the necessity toc cooperate, even at the price of uncomfortable compromises.

The relationship between the two members of the executive did not have a formal dimension. It was only Article 38 of the Small Constitution that said that 'the Prime Minister shall inform the President about the basic problems that are the subject of the work of the Council of Ministers'. It was therefore a space dominated by informal relations, an area of games and bargain- ing and a high dependence of the mechanisms and frequency of consultation between the two office holders. Although the president could participate – at the invitation of the prime min- ister – in meetings of the Council of Ministers, Lech Wałęsa usually did not use this opportunity, especially when Oleksy was Prime Minister and there were disputes between the two of them.[48] The President made sure he had access to informa- tion and influence on foreign affairs by participating in the appointment of the foreign minister, who customarily had excel- lent relations with Lech Wałęsa, often better than with the prime minister. This was the case, for example, with Władysław Bartoszewski and Józef Oleksy. Aleksander Kwasniewski, on the other hand, when invited, took part in government meetings, did not generate conflicts and did not resort to expressing his opinion. He mainly participated in those government meetings which concerned the matters that were within his powers as president.

As mentioned above, informal mechanisms dominated consul- tations between the president, and the prime minister and the government. They usually took the form of invitations to the president addressed to the prime minister or selected members of the government: 'a custom that seems to be taken for granted: The president calls the prime minister or asks for a meeting by telephone.'[49] However, the frequency of these meetings or whether they happened at all depended on the interpersonal relationship between the two players – they were regular in the case of Lech Wałęsa and Krzysztof Bielecki, or almost non-existent when Waldemar Pawlak and Józef Oleksy were prime ministers.[50]

The games played between the senior players of the president and the prime minister had a significant impact on the posi- tion and influence of the latter within the government. This was because the president, having influence on the appoint- ment of the minister of foreign affairs, chose candidates who guaranteed his influence on the ministry and foreign policy. Which further weakened this influence on the part of the prime minister, who was in fact the superior of the foreign minister. Thus, this game of Lech Wałęsa, and the pursuit of maximising his power, clearly destabilised the position and the coordinating and leading function of the prime minister.[51]

The president participated in the bureaucratic foreign policy game using various action channels. The most important of these included foreign visits (relations with the minister of for- eign affairs), giving opinions about (and in fact appointing) the minister of foreign affairs, and appointing and dismiss- ing ambassadors. The effectiveness of the president's use of each of these channels depended on the person in office. Lech Wałęsa, despite strenuous attempts to do so, in practice had little influence over the direction of foreign policy, whereas dur- ing Aleksander Kwasniewski's term in office, the impression was that the centre of foreign policy decision-making shifted to the president's office.[52]

[48] For example, amidst the conflict over a trip to the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Moscow, Lech Wałęsa did not accept an invitation to a meeting of the RM. Such invitations to the President were sent by the Prime Minister, inter alia, in the spring of 1995, thus at a time when there were clear misunderstandings between the Prime Minister and Minister Bartoszewski, as well as between the Prime Minister and President Wałęsa (ARM, URM Team, Cabinet of the Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak and Józef Oleksy, ref. 3013/1, Letter of the Prime Minister Józef Oleksy to the President of the Republic of Poland Lech Wałęsa, Warsaw, 12 April 1995)ARM.

[49] This is how Waldemar Kuczynski, advisor to Prime Minister Mazowiecki, presented it. Cf. M. Subotić, Zerwanełącza, Rzeczpospolita of 22 April 1995.

[50] Constant disagreements with the president accompanied the functioning of the cabinet of Prime Ministers Waldemar Pawlak and Józef Oleksy. They became an immanent feature of the decision-making system, as they resulted from Lech Wałęsa's desire to expand his formal powers in practice. The President also influenced the resignation of Prime Minister Pawlak, which he regarded as his success. Cf. J. Eisler, Ewolucja sytuacji politycznej w Polsce w latach 1989–2000 [Evolution of the Political Situation in Poland 1989–2000] [in:] R. Kuźniar (ed.), R. Kuźniar, Polska polityka bezpieczeństwa 1989–2000, Warszawa 2001 op. cit., p. 37. Lech Wałęsa also referred the draft budget bill to the Constitutional Tribunal, which he promised to withdraw if the Prime Minister and the government were changed. Cf. Prime Minister Oleksy, Gazeta Wyborcza, 8 February 1995, p. 1;
A. Kublik, Wałęsa mówi, Pawlak milczy [Wałęsa speaks, Pawlak remains silent], Gazeta Wyborcza, 17 January 1995, p. 1; eadem, Prezydent bardzo nie chce premiera [The President very much does not want the Prime Minister], Gazeta Wyborcza, 10 January 1995, p. 1; Wałęsa wygrał, koalicja rządzi. Z politycznym doradcą prezydenta A. Zakrzewskim, rozmawiała A. Kublik [Wałęsa won, the coalition rules. With political advisor to the president A. Zakrzewski], interviewed by A. Kublik, Gazeta Wyborcza of 9 February 1995, p. 3.

[51] Such relations can be observed in the case of Krzysztof Skubiszewski in Jan Olszewski's and Hanna Suchocka's governments; Andrzej Olechowski in Waldemar Pawlak's government and Władysław Bartoszewski in Józef Oleksy's government. Cf. Z. Najder, Jaka Polska. Co I komu doradzałem [What and to whom I advised], Editions Spotkania, Warsaw 1993.

[52] This was also how the situation was perceived by politicians of the time: member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Sejm Tadeusz Iwiński. Cf. K. Grzybowska, W cieniu afery szpiegowskiej [In the shadow of the spies- gate], Rzeczpospolita of 9 January 1996. Minister of Foreign Affairs Dariusz Rosati assessed the situation in a similar way, cf: W dyplomacji bez zmian [In diplomacy without change], Gazeta Wyborcza of 28 February 1996.

The main stage of the bureaucratic game remained the government, headed by its leader, the prime minister, and the ministries and their officials who formed decision-making circles.

The government was a key arena for rivalries, influence-building and conflicts in which the interest of the state was not at stake, but rather the scope of competences, position and interest of one's own or one's own parochia. The most drastic manifestation of such games was the already signalled conflicts between the prime minister and the foreign minister appointed by the president: Waldemar Pawlak and Andrzej Olechowski, Józef Oleksy and Władysław Bartoszewski.[53] This meant that the prime minister's position as leader of a conglomerate of ministries and as coordinator may have been weakened, although the Act on the Council of Ministers of 1996 clearly strengthened his position in government. It must be admit- ted, however, that prime ministers in the period in question exercised their own rights, using the opportunities given to them, whether by blocking statutory reforms in the foreign ministry or by influencing the volume of the ministry's budget.[54]

In the Polish decision-making process, one of the action chan- nels was the adoption and direction of foreign policy, which was finalised during government meetings. The key player then was the foreign minister as the one who presented the proposal. However, if they did not build a consensus around it and coordinate it with other members of the Council of Ministers, they could face criticism and have it referred back to the inter-ministerial agreement. At that point, the actual game began, in which, one gets the impression, the interests of the minister or parochia (ministry or coalition party) were put before the interests of the state. Despite this, the foreign minister had additional trump cards in the game – information, the need to consult the foreign ministry on foreign visits or international agreements being prepared and negotiated by other ministries, meetings with foreign politicians and all contacts with foreign partners. However, the position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was constantly contested, with each ministry attempting to gain as much autonomy as pos- sible in foreign activity; the Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation, and as of 1996 the Ministry of Economy, were particularly active in this respect.[55] The contestation of the obligation to consult the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on all contacts of individual ministries with foreign countries led the Minister of Foreign Affairs to decide to set up a Foreign Visits Coordination Team[56]. It was supposed to work on developing ways to improve the situation, but after several failed and unsuccessful attempts, its work was suspended. Other attempts to improve the situation were made by setting up ad hoc inter-ministerial teams, for example the Team for Poland's Membership in NATO – appointed by the prime minister[57], the Inter-Ministerial Team for Poland's Presidency of the OSCE in 1998.[58] However, these activities were marked by the par- tisanship of intentions and interests of the players, both the older ones, who fought for their position and influence, and the younger ones, who focused on the interests of their parochies or entry into the game in general.

Conclusions

The assessment of the exploratory potential of the organisational and bureaucratic model for the study of the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy is not straightforward. Indeed, the potential of the bureaucratic model is definitely greater due to the significant component of informality in the process. However, without complementing it with a formal dimension, it is difficult to talk about the completeness of the process. And the importance of the organisational/formal dimension in the case of Poland varies depending on the institution and the politi- cian performing the function. This leads to the conclusion that the models can be applied to the analysis of a system with a dual executive, but need to be adjusted, in particular, to take into account other participants influencing decisions such as the Sejm and the Senate. The main difficulties posed to the researcher by the models are, firstly, as already mentioned in the introduction, that they were designed to study systems with a strong, single-member executive. Such an arrangement is transparent and relatively easy to analyse through the prism of the models in question. However, in Polish reality, as has been suggested, there was a division into two members of the executive, each trying to 'win' or 'defend' as much as possible

[53] The conflict resulted in Józef Oleksy organising consultations with the ministry's leadership. Although the Prime Minister tried to give it a routine character, the composition of the MFA representation suggested that this was not the case. Cf.: ARM, URM Team, Cabinet of Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak and Józef Oleksy, Co-operation with Foreign Countries, Ref. 3013/33/14, Note from the Meeting of the Government Management with the Management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20 July 1995, Warsaw, 26 July 1995, drafted by M. Kryński, PRM Advisor.

[54] A typical example is the dispute over the amendment of the statute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed by Andrzej Olechowski, which was not adopted by the government despite the positive opinion of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Sejm. Cf. MSZ bez statutu [MFA without a statute], Rzeczpospolita of 22 June 1994; E. Krzemień, Sam wobe crządu [Alone against the government], Gazeta Wyborcza of 22 June 1994.

[55] The Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation was abolished by the Act Introducing Laws Reforming the Functioning of the Economy and Public Administration of August 1996 (Journal of Laws 1996 No. 106, item 497). Pursuant to its Article 8(1)(2), the tasks and competences previously under the Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation were transferred to the Ministry of Economy.

[56] ARM, URM, Cabinet of the Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak and Józef Oleksy, Cooperation with Foreign Countries, Ref. 3013/33/9, Minutes of the meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Team for the Coordination of Foreign Visits, 13 February 1995 ARM.

[57] ARM, ARM Secretariat of the Secretary of State Marek Wagner, Information Notes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ref. 46/1/3, Information Note on the Poland-NATO accession talks, Warsaw, 1 September 1997.

[58] ARM, ARM Secretariat of Secretary of State Mark Wagner, briefing notes MSZ, Ref. 46/1/3, Information note on the Poland-NATO accession talks, Warsaw 16 September 1997.

for themselves, with the position of the two members looking different in the organisational perspective and different in the bureaucratic one.

Another weakness is models' adequacy to analyse long-duration phenomena – they are optimal for classical decision-making situations and decisions. Meanwhile, foreign policy is a sequence of spatially and temporally set decision-making situations, none of which has a clear beginning or end. Aware of this limi- tation, which essentially boils down to viewing decision-making as a sequence of decision-making situations, the analytical categories in the models, such as action channels, senior play- ers, standard operating procedures, can be successfully applied to the analysis of decision-making as a process.

The models do not foresee the participation of the parliamentary chamber of the Sejm in the decision-making process, which is obvious as it is the legislative body. However, the position and importance of the Polish Sejm in foreign policy should not be overlooked, if only because of the coalition governments, the participation of the Sejm's Foreign Affairs Committee in giving its opinion on ambassadors and, earlier, on foreign ministers, adopting the budget or, finally, the ratification of certain international agreements.

However, the use of Allison's models to analyse the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy allowed to answer also the rest of research questions. The dominant level in the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy between 1992 and 1997 was the informal dimension. Most often, domi- nant motives in the bureaucratic games of both senior players and participants in further decision-making circles were of personal/individual (position, influence, power) or parochial (party, ministry, office) nature. Parochial sub-communities within the Polish bureaucracy of the 1990s referred to a shared past and personal relationships realised within the interests of the organisation/department/ministry.

The analysis presented in the article covers a specific period of key systemic transformations in Poland – the transition from communism to democracy. The transformation that began in Poland after 1989 was concluded with the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland in 1997, which created an entirely new formal and legal framework, including the one for the decision-making process in Polish foreign policy. The Constitution altered the balance of power, reduced the role of the President and his influence on foreign policy, and shifted the center of gravity to the government, which is responsi- ble for foreign policy and bears political accountability for it. This opened a completely new chapter in the relations between the government and the President, which is the subject of further analysis by the author. In situations of cohabitation, when the President and the government come from opposing political camps, individual decisions begin to take on the character of political struggle rather than the pursuit of the national interest. This shift implies that the period during which power in Poland was held by the Kaczyński broth- ers, followed by Andrzej Duda and President Karol Nawrocki, as well as the PiS-affiliated prime ministers, and currently Donald Tusk, should be subjected to renewed examination.

In conclusion, the use of Allison's models to analyse the decision-making process in Poland's foreign policy has, on the one hand, made it possible to isolate certain features in it that would have been difficult to identify withoubt this tool (game, players, parochies, action channels, standard operat- ing procedures). On the other hand, by proving their usefulness, it made it possible to identify the elements of the concept that would need to be changed and reformulated and supplemented. However, as the analysis above shows, they have been successfully adapted to study decision-making in a dual executive system.

Ethics and consent

Ethical approval and consent were not required.

Data availability

No data are associated with this article.